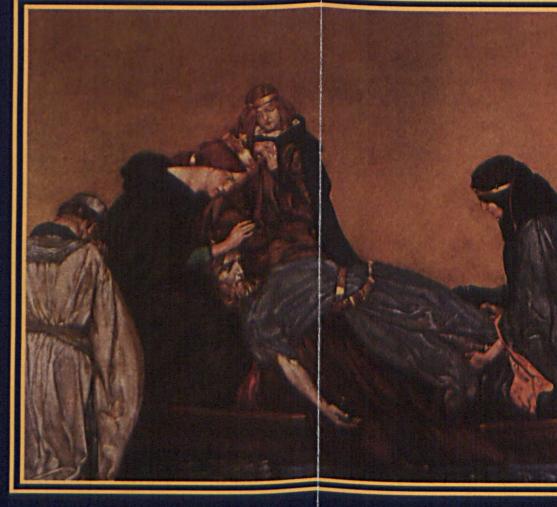


A Traveling Exhibition to America's Libraries

November 1994 - December 1996

The Many Realms of KING ARTHUR

The legends of King Arthur rise out of the early Middle Ages when Celts are struggling to hold the land they call Britain against Germanic invaders. Briefly glimpsed in fragments of Welsh poetry, in chronicles, and in saints'



the Arthur of legend. This is the Arthur who has been celebrated for nearly 1,500 years, the Arthur who inspired countless works of literature, music, and art. This is the Arthur whose story is at once timeless and ever timely.

lives, Arthur is a warrior, one so successful that he wins for his people years of relative peace. - Did Arthur really exist? While most people who have studied the matter think so, no evidence remains. Archaeological digs have produced signs of refortification in the fifth and sixth centuries when a historical Arthur would have lived. Some scholars have proposed Cadbury Castle, a hill fort in Somerset, as the site of Camelot. One recent theory suggests that Arthur was the personal name of a high king of Britain known in chronicles as Riothamus. While it is interesting to search for the historical Arthur, the truth is that it does not matter whether we find him. The "real" Arthur is

"The Many Realms of King Arthur" traces the development of the Arthurian legends from their origins in the Middle Ages to their latest adaptations in the twentieth century. It considers versions of the legend told in Britain, in America, and on the continent while suggesting some of the other places to which they have traveled. It demonstrates the various forms in which the story has been told: poetry, drama, prose, opera, popular song, musical theatre, film, dance, novels, children's literature, comics, video games. All of thesecountries, centuries, artistic forms-constitute the realms of which Arthur is king.

Illustration: W. Russell Flint in Sir Thomas Malory, Le Merte Darthur, vol. II. London: The Medici Society, 1920, Collection of the Newberry Library.

A Traveling Exhibition to America's Libraries

Organized by the American Library Association, in cooperation with and based on the renowned Arthurian collections of the Newberry Library, Chicago, and the New York Public Library.

Funding provided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C., a federal agency,

THE BIRTH AND FOSTERING OF ARTHUR

Arthur Rackbam



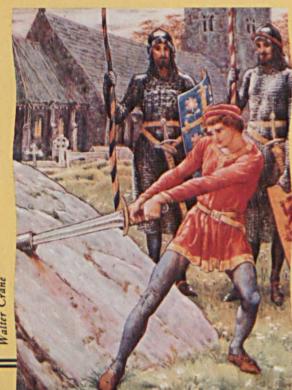
When Uther Pendragon, King of all Britain, sees Igraine, the wife of Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, at a feast, he covets her. His desires, however, are frustrated, both by the lady's virtue and by her removal from court, so Uther seeks aid from Merlin. In exchange for his magical assistance, Merlin asks for the child that will be born from Uther's

union with Igraine. When the child is born, Merlin carries him to a knight, Sir Ector, for fostering, and has him christened "Arthur."

THE SWORD IN THE STONE

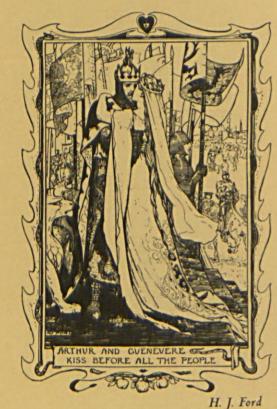
Within two years after Arthur's birth, Uther dies. For a long time, the strongest men in the realm vie to become king. Then a sign appears: a sword set in an anvil and stone with gold letters that announce "Whoever pulls out this sword from this stone and anvil

is rightfully born king of all England."
Arthur, along with Ector and his foster brother Kay, comes to the jousts that celebrate this sign. On New Year's Day when Kay forgets his sword, Arthur finds him another—by pulling the sword from the stone and thus becoming king.



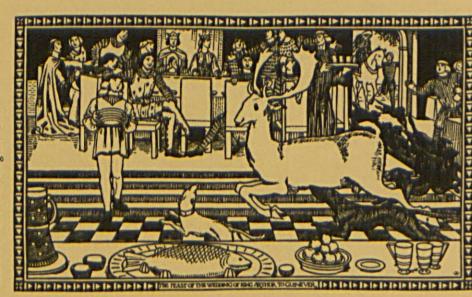
THE WEDDING OF ARTHUR AND GUINEVERE

For years Arthur's rule is contested, but he is always victorious. In a time of peace, Arthur decides to marry Guinevere, the daughter of King Leodegrance of Cameliard. Merlin warns Arthur against the marriage, but Arthur's wishes prevail. Guinevere brings with her Leodegrance's wedding gift: a Round Table and one hundred knights. At the wedding feast new knights are created to begin to fill the remaining fifty seats at the table.



THE FOUNDING OF THE ROUND TABLE

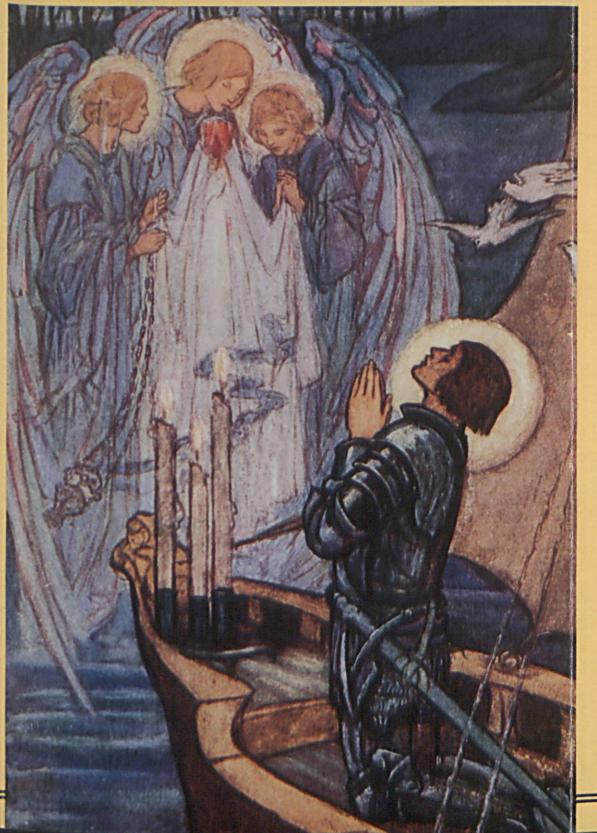
After several of the knights return from quests that have provoked disasters, including the death of a lady, Arthur charges the knights of the Round Table never to do outrage or murder or participate in wrongful quarrels, to flee treason, to give mercy to those who ask mercy, and always to help women in need. This oath was sworn by the knights every year thereafter at Pentecost when they returned from their adventures and told tales of their deeds.



THE QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL

One Pentecost is full of portents. Galahad, Lancelot's son, is brought to court to be made knight. To the surprise of all, Galahad's name appears on the "Siege Perilous," a seat at the Table never before used. At supper the Holy Grail, covered with a white cloth, appears. The hall is filled with good odors, and each person has whatever food or drink he or she likes best. The knights vow to search for the Grail so that they can see it more clearly. After years of searching and the loss of many knights, only three achieve the quest: Percival, Bors, and Galahad.







THE LOVE OF LANCELOT AND GUINEVERE

Guinevere and Lancelot, Arthur's best knight, have loved each other for years, though each also loves Arthur. Arthur suspects their relationship but for love of them both will not do anything about it—as long as it remains private. After the Grail

quest, two disgruntled knights, Agravaine and Mordred, force Arthur to lay a trap for the lovers. Lancelot flees but returns to rescue Guinevere, who has been sentenced to burn at the stake. During the rescue Lancelot accidentally kills two of Arthur's nephews. Gawain, their brother, swears revenge and, along with Arthur, declares war on Lancelot.



THE TREACHERY OF MORDRED

When Arthur leaves Britain to lay siege to Lancelot, he entrusts the kingdom to Mordred, his illegitimate son. Mordred soon spreads the rumor that Arthur has died in the war, then has himself crowned king. He also tries to force Guinevere to marry him, but she flees, saying she would rather kill herself. Upon hearing this news, Arthur ends the siege against Lancelot to return home and reclaim his kingdom.

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HOW SYR AGRAVAYNE & SYR MORDRED WERE BESY UPON SYR GAWAYNE FOR TO DYSCLOSE THE LOVE BETWENE SYR LAUN-CELOT & QUENE GWENEVER CAPITULUM PRIMUM

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THE DAY OF DESTINY

Mordred attacks Arthur as he lands, and Gawain is mortally wounded in the battle. A peace conference turns into a second battle, one so fierce that almost no one is left alive. Across the battlefield Arthur sees Mordred, rushes toward him, and runs him through with a spear. With his last breath Mordred brings his sword crashing down on Arthur's head. At the wounded Arthur's command, Bedivere, the last knight, returns the king's sword, Excalibur, to the Lady of the Lake, then carries Arthur to the water's edge. There a ship filled with ladies waits to take Arthur to the Vale of Avalon to be healed of his wound.



verto Sanoorski

THE TRAVELING EXHIBITION

The Many Realms of King Arthur is a national traveling exhibition organized by the American Library Association in cooperation with the Newberry Library, Chicago, and the New York Public Library. It is based on these two libraries' renowned Arthurian collections.

The traveling exhibition is funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C., a federal agency. Library programming is supported by local funding.

EXHIBITION CATALOG

The Many Realms of King Arthur. Written by the exhibition's curator, Dr. Ruth E. Hamilton, the catalog tells the story of King Arthur in further detail and examines the characters and the ways they have changed over the centuries. The full-color illustrations highlight additional treasures from the Newberry Library's Arthurian collection. The Many Realms of King Arthur exhibition catalog is available from the American Library Association. For order information, call 800-545-2433.

ADDITIONAL READING

Ashe, Geoffrey. The Discovery of King Arthur.

Berger, Thomas. Arthur Rex.

Davies, Robertson. The Lyre of Orpheus.

Malory, Sir Thomas. Le Morte d'Arthur, ed. Keith Baines.

Malory, Sir Thomas. Works.

The New Arthurian Encyclopedia, ed. Norris Lacy.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, tr. Marie Borroff.

Stewart, Mary. The Crystal Cave, The Hollow Hills,

The Last Enchantment.

Tennyson, Alfred. Idylls of the King.

Twain, Mark. A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.

White, T.H. The Once and Future King.

EXHIBITION SITES

Exhibition sites are local public libraries except in cities marked by asterisk(s).

* = academic libraries ** = state libraries/archives
*** = private library

1994

November 4-December 15 Wichita Falls, Texas Kansas City, Kan. Tiffin, Ohio Loudonville, N.Y.

December 22-February 2 Tulsa, Okla. Des Moines, Iowa Ann Arbor, Mich. Derry, N.H.

1995

February 10-March 23 Albuquerque, N.M. LaCrosse, Wis. Columbus, Ohio* Burlington, Vt.*

March 31-May 11 Boulder, Colo. Green Bay, Wis. Houston, Texas Portland, Maine

May 19-June 29 Cheyenne, Wyo. Marquette, Mich. Houston, Texas Worcester, Mass. July 7-August 17 Salt Lake City, Utah Duluth, Minn. Lafayette, La. Providence, R.I.

August 25-October 5 Ogden, Utah Brookings, S.D. New Orleans, La. Westfield, N.J.

October 13-November 23 Glendale, Ariz. Mankato, Minn. Cleveland, Miss.* Brookville, N.Y.*

December 1-January 11 Yuma, Ariz. Peoria, Ill. Nashville, Tenn. Norristown, Pa.

1996

January 19-February 29 Boise, Idaho St. Louis, Mo. Birmingham, Ala. Harrisburg, Pa.

March 8-April 9 Carson City, Nev.** Western Springs, Ill. Albany, Ga. Williamsburg, Va. April 26-June 6 Honolulu, Hawaii South Bend, Ind. Miami, Fla. Washington, D.C.

June 14-July 25
San Marino, Calif.***
Los Angeles, Calif.
Grand Rapids, Mich.
Charlotte, N.C.
Pittsburgh, Pa.

August 2-September 12 San Marino, Calif.*** Los Angeles, Calif. Toledo, Ohio Richmond, Va. Buffalo, N.Y.

Salem, Ore. Indianapolis, Ind.* Baltimore, Md. Chesterland, Ohio

November 8-December 20 Portland, Ore.* Indianapolis, Ind.* Louisville, Ky. Rochester, N.Y.

American Library Association 50 East Huron Street Chicago, Illinois 60611 800-545-2433

Exhibition curator: Dr. Ruth E. Hamilton, the Newberry Library, Chicago Brochure design: Karen Kohn & Associates, Ltd., Chicago Traveling exhibition design: Chester Design Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C. Project direction: Deb Robertson and Susan Brandehoff, American Library Association

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