

# **The Grail Diary of Henry Jones**

# The Grail Diary of Henry Jones

New Haven, Connecticut  
April 3, 1898

Last night I experienced a vision. I was in my study, preparing a gloss of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzifal* for Professor Zeiler's vernacular lit. seminar. I was sipping claret, and a half-filled glass sat before me on my desk. I had reached the place in the narrative where Perceval, the holy innocent, first beholds

"...a thing called the Grail,  
Which passes all earthly perfection."

—when all at once the room seemed to grow brighter. At first I thought it was a surge in the gas line; then I remembered that at Mary's insistence we were living in a *modern* building, lit by electricity.

It was my wine glass that was glowing—shining with a light more incandescent than a dozen electric bulbs. And then before my eyes (and I had *not* drunk to excess), the vessel rose from the table and began to flicker. One moment it shone like the full moon and seemed to have a row of pearls about its rim; then in the blink of an eye it turned to tarnished metal and in place of the pearls appeared writing; in the next instant it looked to be made of wood. And the room was filled with a voice that roared like a tornado and yet whispered like a lover's secret; and it said, "Henry Jones, as knights of old sought this treasure, so shall you!" And then—the entire incident could not have lasted ten seconds—the room was silent, and my glass was a glass once more.

Now, I am not a religious man, nor am I given to belief in "signs and wonders." But I cannot deny what my eyes saw, nor what I heard with my own ears. There is no question in my heart that I have received a calling. I have been sent upon a quest. I, Henry Jones, have been granted an opportunity to find that prize of the centuries, that shining object of man's spiritual yearning since the time of King Arthur—the Holy Grail.

From this day I devote my life, my fortune and my scholarly efforts to the fulfillment of this awesome commission. I shall find the Holy Grail if it takes me a lifetime, and this book shall be a record of my quest.

Would that I prove worthy!

Western Massachusetts  
August 24, 1900

In a sleeping car aboard the *Lakes Flyer*, returning home from the conference of the Association of American Medievalists. I am anxious to be home with my wife and my infant son. Never again will I be such a naïf as to believe that a document certifying one as a Doctor of something-or-other represents an automatic conferral of dignity and respect.

My conference paper was greeted with embarrassment, skepticism and ridicule. My colleagues are unanimous in their belief that the Holy Grail is a fairy tale; that I would better serve scholarship by studying the inventories of manorial estates or the effects of the Black Death on the development of cities—worthy subjects, I suppose, if one wishes to be an academic drudge, if one possesses no imagination, no inner fire, no...vision. But I am heartened by the knowledge that Schliemann was likewise mocked when he set out to find the ruins of Troy. *Toujours l'audace!*

What poses more of an obstacle than the skepticism of colleagues is the sparse and contradictory nature of existing accounts of the Grail. There is no certainty as to what it looks like, or even what it *is*. The primary legend, of course, has it as a wine cup—the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper, in which Joseph of Arimathea caught His blood when He was crucified. Yet the word *grail*, or *graal*, could mean "a wide-mouthed shallow vessel"—not a cup, but a *bowl*. In some accounts it is not a vessel at all, but a *stone*. Indeed, Wolfram

calls it *Lapsit excellis*, by which he may mean *lapis ex coelis* (stone from heaven) or perhaps *lapis exilis*, the "philosopher's stone" of the alchemists, by which all things are possible.

Chrétien de Troyes (late 12th century) is the earliest author to use the word "grail." Chrétien's grail is "of pure gold and richly set with precious stones." From it streamed such pure light that "the luster of candles was dimmed."

Wolfram von Eschenbach, a generation later, describes it as a stone fallen from heaven, carried on a piece of green silk. Wolfram maintains he heard the legend from a minstrel named Kyot, or Gyot; who found it in Spain in a book by a Jewish astrologer, written in a "heathen tongue" (probably Arabic or Hebrew).

Robert de Boron and other 14th-century writers offer no specific description but clearly have it as a *cup*, not a bowl. They tell us that it appeared in a vision to King Arthur and his knights, covered with a cloth of white velvet. It seemed to "glow with its own light," gave off "a pleasing fragrance" and dispensed food to the company.

Sir Thomas Malory a century later speaks of this vision, but the white cloth is described as velvet, not silk. Maddeningly, Sir Thomas offers no description either; but maintains that Sir Galahad found the Grail on a silver table, contained in a chest covered with precious stones.

Such a bundle of contradictions! Such an abundance of confusion! Because of this uncertainty as to the very appearance of the object of my Quest, I shall reserve the following pages of this diary as a ready reference for various descriptions and accounts of the Grail, so that I may by comparing them better be able to evaluate their accuracy.

Fragment in Old Irish found in abbey of Cantanez, Brittany 7/8/06, attrib. to survivor of the sack of Iona by the Vikings in the ninth century. Obvious Anglo-Saxon influence, but parchment, ink and style of illumination seem to indicate authenticity. (Translation by H. J.):

*Their ships like sharks, like shades of Satan,  
Rumbled like whales that walked on the water,  
Their thirsty axes, slaked on our blood,  
Ran with red in the endless night.  
And the holy books they set to the torch,  
Throwing monk and manuscript alike on the flame,  
The word and the flesh to perish together....  
...The Cup of Our Lord  
Carven of wood from the tree of peace  
On salver of silver, on samite of emerald,  
Borne to our house by Galhaut the Pure  
In the days of Arthur, when fair Logres fell,  
This holiest of relics they ravished away  
To their land of darkness where the Devil is lord.*

Of the identity of "the Cup of Our Lord," there can be no doubt! "Tree of peace" would seem to imply that it is made of olivewood. The "salver (tray) of silver" and "samite (silken cloth) of emerald" are identical with the silver table and green cloth described by Chrétien and others. "Logres" is Britain; while "Galhaut" is none other than Sir Galahad himself!



Muhammad Ali al-Jawf  
Museum of Islam  
Baghdad, Iraq

14 November 1909

Dear Dr. Jones:

In Qom recently I had the occasion to examine a Persian manuscript of Nur ed-Din al-Musafir, a remarkable figure of the twelfth century of your calendar who traveled extensively in Asia, Africa and Europe. It contained this fragment found in no other edition of al-Musafir known to me. Being aware of your special interest in the item he discusses, I took the liberty of translating it for you:

"Also at Cordoba I met a man who claimed to have seen the vessel that is said to have caught the life's blood of the prophet Isa [Jesus]:...A shallow bowl of pewter, dented in many places, engraved with a design of grapes and grape leaves as well as writing in the script of the Jews. [It was] wrapped in a cloth of golden silk, and seemed to glow with its own light when the cloth was removed. Where on Allah's earth he saw this marvel the man would not say; only that it was near the source of a river which he reached after traveling south from an oasis."


I hope this is of more than passing interest to you.

Peace be upon you,

al-Jawf

Professor Charles B. Hawken of Oxford, spoke on his researches near Abergavenney, Wales. He has found fragments of a journal kept by a Christian hermit in the Welsh mountains in the early 8th century. The journal illuminates several aspects of piety and religious practice of the British people during the Dark Ages. Of especial interest is the account of a vision, experienced in the year 717 or 719 by this anonymous chronicler, of the Holy Grail of Arthurian legend: "...the humble wooden cup that held God's blood, which resided at Avalon in the days of King Arthur, carved with holy symbols and shining with the light of grace."

5-7-15: Clipped from *The Celtic Scholar*, spring issue, concerning a conference on Celtic-British literature after the Saxon invasions. Must get to England to meet Hawken once this European war is over. Young Brody must certainly know him.

Indicazioni d'urgenza							Circuito sul quale si deve fare l'invio del telegramma	
<b>Ufficio Telegrafico di ROMA</b> T E L E G R A M M A								
Qualifica	Destinazione	Provenienza	Numero	Parole	Data della presentazione Giorno e mese	Ore e minuti	VIA d'istradamento	Indicazioni eventuali d'u cio
2/21/12	DOTTOR HENRY JONES FOUR CORNERS UNIVERSITY LAS MESA COLO USA							
HAVE OBTAINED JOURNAL PAOLO OF GENOA 13TH CENTURY MERCHANT STOP RELATES ADVENTURES AMONG TURKISH TRIBES CENTRAL ASIA STOP TRIBESMAN TOLD HIM OF SEEING LARGE CERAMIC DRINKING CUP GLOWED LIKE MOONLIGHT OBSCURE LOCATION GUARDED BY CHRISTIAN KNIGHT AND LETHAL PROTECTIVE DEVICES STOP PAOLO CONJECTURES HG STOP VISITING AMERICA THIS SPRING WILL BRING IT FOR YOUR EXAMINATION STOP SAILING APRIL ON NEW BRITISH LINER TITANIC STOP CORIROLI								
Il Governo Italiano e la Società Italcable non assumono alcuna responsabilità civile in conseguenza del servizio cablografico telegrafico e radioelettrico.								

Verse fragment in the Welsh language attributed to Taliesin, sung by a shepherd and folklorist at Mochdref, Wales and translated by H.J., 7/31/20:

...Silver\* as the foam of the sea,  
Bright as the mirror of Bronwyn,  
 Fragrant as the flesh of Blodeuwedd,  
 Mighty as the sword of Bran;  
Carven with spells of blessing  
 In the shrouded tongue of the East,  
 This vessel, the coracle of God  
 Drives out the old before the new.

N.b.: A coracle is a round boat such as are still employed by fisherfolk in Wales and western England; and thus Taliesin's verse would seem to support the theory that the Grail is a bowl, not a cup.

\*The native Welshmen tell me that this word would be more accurately rendered as "frothy" or "crystalline" or "luminescent." In any case it describes a quality of appearance and should not be taken as a reference to the metal silver.

Account of a vision of Abbess Hildegard of Bingen, found in a manuscript in the library of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Gallen, apparently in Hildegard's own hand. (Translated from the Latin and excerpted by H.J., 9/2/20)

"On Good Friday [of the year 1163], I was in chapel at the hour of Matins.... And of a sudden it seemed that the chapel was filled with a light brighter than the day, though outside there was darkness.... And I was visited by the Holy Ghost and granted a vision of Our Lord on the Cross. ...And by his side stood Joseph of Arimathea, who held a chalice of brass to catch Our Savior's blood, and on it was inscribed as it seemed in the Greek language, the words, "Take ye, this is my blood."...

Excerpt from the journal of Byzantine merchant in Kiev, early-10th century, translated by G. Codirolli and shown to me 9-29-20

"...And though the Kingdom of Rus is pagan, there are many Christians among its people, and Jews and Saracens as well. And in the market a man, knowing me to be a Christian, offered to sell me a chalice which he said was the holy cup that caught the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. But I have been to Jerusalem, and to Antioch, and many liars and charlatans have tried to sell me bones of saints and pieces of the Cross and fragments of Christ's garments. And the cup he had was plain, of base metal and with no ornamentation, and surely could not have been the glorious Cup of Our Lord....

Lady Eleanora Ferrers-Lansdowne  
 The Meadows  
 Chetfield, Berks.

2 June 1923

Dear Henry,

I was reminded of you today in an unexpected fashion. I was taking tea with Sir A\_\_\_\_\_ D\_\_\_\_\_, a gentleman but no scholar, who in his youth was a confidant of Sir Richard Burton, the late adventurer and linguist. As you know, upon Sir Richard's death Lady Burton burned many of his priceless journals of his travels in the Orient, holding them to be lascivious and obscene. Now, Sir A\_\_\_\_\_ informs me that he was able to rescue a few of Sir Richard's fragments from the fire, and one that he described would be of interest to you. It seems that a Sufi master in some Mohammedan land told Sir Richard that he knew the location of "the ceramic bowl the infidels revere as the Grail"; that it had "heathen designs on it" and writing that was not Arabic, "nor was it in the script of the Jews or the Greeks or any other he had ever seen." Unfortunately, the surviving fragment gave no clue of where this Moor had seen the vessel; only that he had traveled "eastward from the city" and referred also to "passing the three trials." The rest was burnt.

I think of you often, and look forward to the day when your search should bring you back to England. I remain as ever,

Yours,

Eleanora Ferrers-Lansdowne



## New Gospel's Authenticity Disputed

ALEXANDRIA (Reuters)— Experts examining the so-called "Gospel of Joseph of Arimathea" unearthed last month have cast doubt on the document's genuineness, British Museum sources reported today.

The manuscript, discovered in the ruins of Kozra, an early Christian colony being excavated by archaeologists south of here, is a previously unknown account of the life of Christ attributed to Joseph of Arimathea, the "rich man" who buried Jesus after the crucifixion as recounted in the New Testament.

The papyrus scroll, written in the Coptic language of ancient Egypt, was hailed by churchmen and lay scholars alike as "the find of the millenium" when made public by Dr. Robert Hawes of Ivy University, leader of the team that made the discovery. But other expert sources close to the Hawes expedition are of the opinion that the document was written no earlier

than the late 2nd century A.D., and possibly as late as the 7th century.

"As an eyewitness account the 'Joseph' papyrus just doesn't ring true," said one knowledgeable source who requested anonymity. "It smacks too much of medieval fable. That holy-grail business simply has no place in early-Christian literature."

The so-called Holy Grail, the wine cup said to have been used by Jesus at the Last Supper and by Joseph to catch the blood of Jesus as he died on the Cross, figures prominently in the manuscript. Joseph describes it as a *plain, shallow vessel of bronze*, which forever after its association with Jesus "gave forth sweet odours and *glowed* with the light of heaven."

The Grail became an object of veneration and knightly quest in the tales of King Arthur and other legends of the middle ages.

Fable, my hind foot! Must speak to Hawes at earliest opportunity!

WOLFGANG S. STAUBIG, PH. D.  
HEIDELBERG DEUTSCHLAND

14 September, 1932

My dear Dr. Jones,

I would apologize for my long silence, were I not certain that my news will render apologies superfluous. While on holiday last month in Dubrovnik, I found in an antiquarian bookstore an apparently genuine manuscript of *The Book of the Spells of Merlin*. As you know, the last known copy of this forbidden compendium of Celtic magic was burned by the Inquisition in 1384, and so my copy may be unique.

I would be pleased to allow you to examine the manuscript on your next visit, but I thought you would be eager to learn that among its contents is a purported illumination of an object of particular interest to you. It is described as a chalice of pewter with a flared base. Around the circumference below the lip are etched in Aramaic the words "av bar ruach ha-kodesh"—father, son, holy ghost. A fitting formula for a work attributed to a sorcerer, you will agree, as this early Christian invocation is believed to be the origin of the magician's "abracadabra."

In the text, "Merlin" offers an incantation for conjuring up an image of the vessel. Unfortunately this spell is rendered not in Latin transliteration but in runic characters; and the monastic copyists, apparently unfamiliar with the arcane symbols, have reduced them to gibberish. Professor O'Lochlainn of Dublin is eager to attempt a restoration of the runes, and a young French scholar named Belloc has expressed a similar desire. (Do you know him, by the way? His erudition is impressive, but I find distasteful his association with certain political elements in my country.)

In any event, I hope this felicitous discovery will soon occasion a visit. It has been entirely too long, Dr. Jones, since you and I last toasted one another's health.

Yours most truly,

Staubig



Las Mesas, Colorado

November 14, 1905

The seeds I planted on my European journey this summer are beginning to bear fruit: received today a most interesting letter from Marcus Brody, a young scholar I met at Oxford. He informs me that the abbey of Cantanez on the coast of Brittany is in possession of some old Irish manuscripts, one of which is said to refer to the Grail and as a genuine object, not a legend. I cannot wait to return next year to confirm!

At last I feel that my Quest has truly begun. When I think of the single-minded dedication of the knights of King Arthur's court, who seem to have interrupted their own pursuit of the Grail only to slay the occasional dragon or to rescue a castle full of maidens now and then, it is plain that not one among the lot of them was ever troubled with the necessities of supporting a wife and a young son.

To be fair, I have no dragons to contend with on my quest—only the occasional snake. Right now Junior is sulking in his room, to which he has been banished after bringing home a rather large specimen which somehow found its way into my desk drawer. He is quite an intrepid child—when not hunting rodents in the cellar or running with the Indian children from the reservation, he is usually finding some trouble to get into. Yet he is smart as a whip—already he can count to twenty in Latin and Greek (and swear resoundingly in Navajo)—and I am confident that I can make a scholar of him.

Las Mesas, Colorado

February 22, 1912

Can it really have been six years since my last entry? Could academic obligations, lack of funds and the responsibilities of fatherhood truly have kept me so long from pursuit of my quest? Worst of all has been Mary's tragic death, a blow from which neither I nor Junior have yet recovered. I fear I am unfit to raise a son alone—Junior grows wilder and more undisciplined by the month—yet my heart will not admit any other woman to take Mary's cherished place.

Necessity may have required me to devote these years to more conventional scholarship and to my teaching duties, but I have not by any means forsaken my sacred affirmation. It seems I

am not the only scholar in pursuit of this "fable." There are other "crackpots" who share my passion, and still others who, though skeptical, nevertheless indulge my unconventional interest and keep me apprised of new discoveries concerning the lore of the Grail. Perhaps there is more romance in their souls than they would care to reveal to their respective institutions. Besides young Brody at Oxford, there is Staubig in Germany, the eminent Byzantine scholar Codirolli at Bologna, even an Arab in Baghdad who has been so kind as to pass along relevant information to this "infidel." Must arrange to meet them all on my next sabbatical.

Today I received a cable from Codirolli, occasioning this long-overdue entry. I am most eager to see the journal of this Paolo of Genoa he is bringing on his lecture tour. He is to sail on the maiden voyage of this new luxury liner *Titanic* that has been so much in the news this winter. I am envious!

Philadelphia

August 19, 1916

It has been a bleak year in every respect. First the European war, which again has occasioned the postponement of my long-anticipated year of research. Then came my estrangement from Junior, which has caused such grievous injury to my spirit that I can hardly speak of it even in this private journal. And now, here at the conference, ridicule heaped upon scorn.

God, grant me the strength of will to continue this quest! Sometimes my resolve almost fails me. This week I gave two brilliant papers on mainstream topics in medieval literature; yet everywhere I went, it was "Here comes Sir Galahad," and "Heard you were at the North Pole seeking the historical Santa Claus," and "Have a chair, Jones, we've saved the Siege Perilous for you!" This last from Carruthers, who is still smarting from that little comedy in San Francisco two years ago when he was boasting about his acquisition of a "genuine 15th-century Inca funeral urn" from some antiquities dealer in Bolivia. I'm sure I embarrassed him when I pointed out the tiny inscription just under the lip, the one that said "Made in Japan."

And the other day he returned the favor. Blast it to blazes! I should be oblivious to such conde-

scension—God knows I've subjected myself to it long enough—but I had to resist the urge to land him one on that smug little grin of his. Right. Henry Jones, the white hope of Las Mesas. Perhaps I am not worthy of finding the Grail after all.

Aboard the steamer *George S. Pilkington*

The North Atlantic

June 29, 1920

At last I can resume my research in earnest! Can it really have been fourteen years since I last saw the Old World? The Great War is over, Europe is unlocked once again, and I have a year to poke around in ruins and libraries before I resume my duties...at *Princeton*! My "legitimate" scholarship has gained sufficient recognition that I have been granted tenure at that distinguished institution, despite what the academic community regards as my fanciful obsession. I am not sorry to leave Four Corners. I have appreciated the solitude of the desert, but it is too far from the mainstream of medieval scholarship and it contains far too many memories of Mary.

And of Junior. He truly loved Colorado, for all he decided that the state wasn't big enough for the both of us; and his systematic explorations of the old Anasazi ruins during the year before he left home gave me hope that I had indeed raised a scholar.

I have no idea where my son is. I pray that he is alive, healthy, and not in prison. It still breaks my heart that he scorned the opportunity for a university education—not to mention his own father—for a life devoted to dissipation and ruin. Wherever he is, I assume he is at this moment galloping across open country on horseback, tearing about in an automobile, or getting some young girl in trouble. (Just this evening on the promenade deck I was talking to a young lady I met at dinner with my own thoughts of romance—until I realized that this woman who spoke so frankly of female emancipation, speakeasies, and the scandalous theories of Dr. Sigmund Freud was a girl of the same age as Junior! It made me feel *very* old.)

"The Purple Dragon" Mochdref, Wales

July 27, 1920

Eureka! Just when I was beginning to suspect that this Welsh excursion was a wild goose chase, we stumbled upon this village. A local folk legend

has it that the poet Taliesin, whom the chronicles speak of as a pupil and companion of Merlin, came to this valley after the death of Arthur and the breaking of the fellowship of the Round Table. The natives were most avid informants once I had proved my worthiness by quoting some of Taliesin's verses to them (and by matching them drink for drink in the common room of the inn). Taliesin was reputed to be a shape-changer, and one of the local traditions is that the poet would often take the form of an eagle and observe the knights disporting themselves. On occasion he is said to have gazed upon Sir Perceval in his hermitage (*n.b.*: not Galahad, as in the later accounts) after he had fulfilled the quest of the Grail; and of the sacred relic the bard sang a verse that I have recorded elsewhere in this notebook.

To my embarrassment, I awoke this morning with an ax-blade in my skull, on a straw cot in the local jail. I will admit to having had a bit too much to drink last night, but only the solemn confirmation of a dozen witnesses convinces me that I indeed ended the evening standing on the bar of "The Purple Dragon," roaring out a medley of Yale College songs. It did not make matters any easier that it took Brody most of the morning to find his way there to pay my fine. How a man who can smell out a rare manuscript with the instinct of a bloodhound can get lost in a village of twenty houses is a mystery known only to the Creator.

Bologna, Italy

September 29, 1920

Codirolli continues to amaze me. He is past seventy, but his energy is equal to that of a twenty-year-old. Right now he is out carousing somewhere, leaving me to pore over the fruits of his remarkable labors of the war years. Hostile borders have been no barrier to him, nor has revolution, as he was able to slip into Constantinople (or, as we now must call it, Istanbul!) and Russia (or, as we now must call it, the Soviet Union!!) and bring out some of the most amazing items.

I have before me a parchment this wonder obtained from the ruin of Kaffa, in the Crimea. It is a testament written in good Byzantine Greek by a Jewish physician who was in attendance at the death of a Franciscan friar in that city in the year 1267. As it happens, in one of those happy accidents of scholarship, this was the same Francis-



can who painted the Crucifixion I saw so many years ago at Klasenheim—the friar who was said to have met a crusading knight who claimed that he and his brothers had found the Grail!

The physician relates that the friar was sick at heart and fearful of damnation because he “had known for years of the location of the Holy Grail and failed to restore it to Christendom it for fear he was not worthy ‘to feel the breath of God and live, to tread upon [?] the word of God and be saved, or to walk the path of God and not tumble into the abyss.’”

I have no clue as to the meaning of all this, but I must believe that to one armed with the proper knowledge it provides directions to the location of the Grail!

Also before me is a translation of another of Codirolli’s findings, a much older account of a Byzantine merchant which offers yet another confounding description of the item. Its provenance—Russia—and its date—the mid-10th century—imply a connection with the fragment I found at Cantanez that refers to the Vikings having stolen the Grail from Iona. From Kiev, with all the trading and raiding that were going on during those centuries, it could easily have made its way south to where it could have been found by knights of the First Crusade.

Bingen was a bust. There was nothing in the voluminous manuscripts of Abbess Hildegard that yielded a clue to the musical notes in the St. Gallen codex; and seeing the devastation wrought in the Rhineland by the war was dismaying. But what a journey this has been! A few more findings such as these and I may discover the Grail before I must return home!

Aboard the steamer *Atalanta*  
The North Atlantic  
June 21, 1921

Midsummer day. The *Atalanta* is steaming westward across a perfectly calm sea, bearing me home from what I must on balance consider a failed voyage. The heady successes of the summer months have been overshadowed by the three subsequent seasons of false trails, blind alleys and near misses—in Italy, Germany, the Balkans, Turkey and the Near East. I will not say that the year was without its joys—the Holy Land was a precious experience, to say nothing of my

encounter with Lady E.—but as regards my quest, everything after Bologna was disappointment and frustration.

Yet I have Princeton to look forward to, new adventures in scholarship and future opportunities to return to the Old World. I am only forty-five, and I have Codirolli to look to as an example of what can be accomplished at an advanced age. The search for the Grail is a lifetime quest. I was summoned to this mission two decades ago, and I can only believe that I have been chosen by some higher power to fulfil it.

Cambridge, Massachusetts  
October 2, 1928

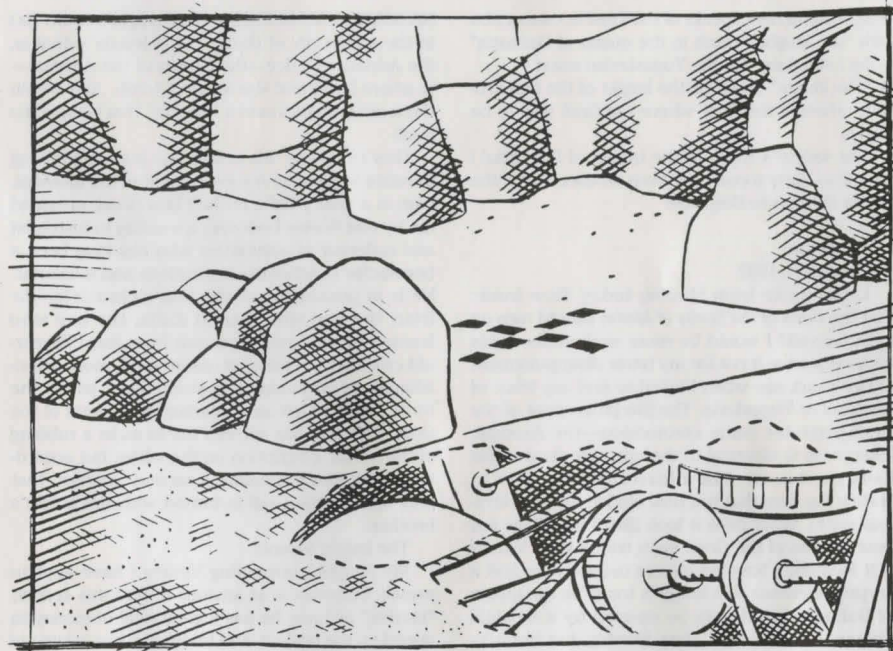
Have seen the Hawes papyrus at last. I have nothing to add to the controversy over its genuineness, about which only a theologian would care. It is clearly of great antiquity and of interest to historians whether or not it is really an eyewitness account of Joseph of Arimathea. It is a transcription and a translation in any case: Joseph would have written in Aramaic or perhaps Greek, certainly not Coptic, which did not exist as a written language until perhaps 200 A.D. Only when I find the object of my quest will I be able to attest to the accuracy of the author’s description.

Do I sound discouraged? Perhaps I am, after all these years of false hopes, flimsy discoveries and disappointments? Perhaps I am. The search for the Holy Grail is the search for the spark of the divine in all of us. But just now I feel all too mortal, and I fear I have wasted my life in pursuit of a chimera.

Salisbury, England  
September 17, 1930

I am shivering, but neither from cold nor fear.

I write this entry in a cell that has graciously been lent to me by one of the canons of the Cathedral, where in a secret alcove high up in the building’s stonework a badly damaged copy of a diary of St. Anselm was found this summer by a mason making repairs. Brody advised me by cable last month of the discovery. How the manuscript came to be here instead of at Canterbury, where Anselm was archbishop, I do not know; but it appears to have been hidden away because of one very un-Anselmlike visionary lacuna that some priest may have adjudged “Satanic.” Thank God this unknown did not destroy the manuscript utterly!



The passage seems to date from the period of the great theologian’s exile from England. In the midst of a typical philosophical discourse on the nature of God the Father, Anselm broke off and wrote the words *EQUESTRI SEPULCRUM IN* (obscured) *REGINA* (obscured) *DALMATIAE*—“the knight’s tomb in (the crypt of?) Queen (her name?) of Dalmatia.”

Below this sentence is a crude representation of a wine cup surrounded by a nimbus, over which are written the words *CHRISTI CALIX*—cup of Christ. And below *this* was written the following passage:

“The challenges will number three. First, the breath of God, only the penitent man will pass. Second, the word of God, only in the footsteps of God will he proceed. Third, the path of God; only in the leap from the lion’s head will he prove his worth.” In the margin next to these words are two drawings (reproduced here) of a mechanical

device resembling a pendulum, and a man, seemingly walking on air.

The breath of God, the word of God, the path of God—the same enigmatic words that were spoken *more than a century and a half after St. Anselm’s death* by the Franciscan friar who knew the location of the Grail—spoken as if they were tests of some kind that he was unworthy to pass.

Suddenly everything begins to connect:

- Both Anselm and the friar refer to these three tests.
- The Burton fragment refers to “passing the three trials.”
- The lost journal of Paolo of Genoa refers to the grail as being guarded by “lethal protective devices.”
- The drawing in the Anselm manuscript certainly could be some sort of lethal contraption!
- Abbess Hildegard in her vision of the Grail heard musical notes “by which you shall open the tomb.”



- St. Anselm here speaks of the Grail in connection with "the knight's tomb in the queen of Dalmatia"—the Latin name for the Yugoslavian coast.

- "The knight" could be the knight of the first crusade whotold the Friar where the Grail was to be found.

The knight's tomb in the queen of Dalmatia! I am off to Paris tomorrow, from whence I take the Orient Express to Belgrade!

Princeton

October 1, 1932

Letter came from Staubig today. How ironic that the *Book of the Spells of Merlin* should turn up in Dubrovnik! I would be more excited about his discovery were it not for my bitter disappointment of two years ago when I failed to find any trace of the Grail in Yugoslavia. The Merlin account of the Grail provides some connection—the Aramaic inscription is identical to the one described in the Kaffa parchment—but it leaves me no closer to finding the item that has now eluded me for thirty-four years. What does it look like? I now have ten descriptions of the Grail, each one unique. Where is it located? I have an almost useless map and a cryptic reference to a knight's tomb "in the queen of Dalmatia" that may be opened by a musical phrase. *Danke Schon*, Herr Staubig, but unfortunately your discovery comes under the heading of too little, too late.

News of Junior continues to reach me through the popular press, most recently from Indo-China where he is apparently in pursuit of a jade idol—"the demon monkey of Loeng-Tran"—that is said to possess some sort of occult power. I simply can't understand his obsession with such fanciful nonsense. My God, what will he be after next? The lost cities of Cibola? The ark of the covenant? How could I have raised such a son?

And why must he insist on going by that ridiculous name?

New York

December 9, 1937

What a fool I have been! I have held the key to the Grail in my hand for more than seven years and have failed to recognize it!

Not Yugoslavia but *Venice*. The cryptic reference in the Anselm manuscript should be reconstructed as *EQUESTRI SEPULCRUM IN URBE REGI-*

*NA MARIS DALMATIAE*—"The knight's tomb (is) in the queen *city of the sea* of Dalmatia"—that is, the Adriatic. Venice—the Queen of the Adriatic—is where I will find the knight's tomb. And within the tomb is to be found a "marker" that locates the grail!

How I came by this knowledge is a tale too long to relate in detail in my excitement of the moment. I am in a luxury suite in the Plaza Hotel, provided me by one Walter Donovan, a wealthy industrialist and collector of antiquities who has long been a benefactor of scholarly institutions and museums. He is in possession of the friar's chronicle—the friar, the one who died at Kaffa, the one who learned of the Grail's location from the 150-year-old crusader, *et cetera, et cetera*—and, more astonishingly, of an incomplete stone tablet which the three brothers left as a "marker" to seekers of the Grail. Donovan has allowed me to make a rubbing of the partial inscription on the tablet; but according to the friar's account, a second "marker" that may lead to the Grail is buried with the knight's brother.

The knight's tomb!

My insight concerning Venice I have kept to myself. Donovan is as anxious to find this second "marker" as I am; he has a great deal of money to spend on the project, and tonight he has asked me to lead his research team. As soon as I can extricate myself from my obligations at Princeton, I am to sail—no, *fly*—to Berlin to meet with a Dr. Schneider, who will be working on the project with me. I do not intend to mention Venice until I am ready to depart. Donovan may well have this Schneider begin the investigation without me. (I've never heard of any Schneider. Must ask Staubig if he knows him.) Besides, it will be rather embarrassing if I am proven wrong.

But I am right. This time I am sure of it.



