

## Master Sub-Creator: Tolkien as My Mentor

I sometimes get weird looks when I tell people that my greatest mentor is someone who is dead. But it doesn't take long before they realize that I wouldn't be the person I am today if I hadn't discovered the works of one of the twentieth century's greatest authors, J.R.R. Tolkien.

My passion for Tolkien began when I was twelve, and *The Hobbit* is one of the first books I remember reading in a day. *The Lord of the Rings* took me a bit longer than a day to finish, but they became my favorite books as soon as I had read them. I read Tolkien incessantly throughout middle and high school to the point that my mom would force me to intersperse my reading with books by other authors, telling me that I needed to broaden my mind by reading more diversely. I obliged, but I certainly felt that my mind was getting just about all the broadening it could handle by exploring the universe this man had created. There was no question that I loved this man's books, but I still wasn't fully aware of the formative impact he was having on me, even thirty years after his death.

Slowly but surely, my collection of his books began to grow. I loved and collected books of all kinds, relishing every opportunity to scour used book stores, but my first stop in every book store I visited was always the Tolkien section. It wasn't enough for me to borrow his books from a local library; I needed to have the works of this author I loved so much always at hand, keeping me company. I even developed a relationship with the owner of our local bookstore, and she would sometimes call me when a new Tolkien book would come in that I had told her I was looking for. So even as a teenager, I had the beginnings of a rather respectable collection.

By the time I graduated high school, I had no idea what sort of a career I wanted to pursue, but the task of declaring a college major stood before me. If the option had been available, I would probably have majored in "Tolkien Studies," but since the college I had chosen offered no such major, I chose to study something this man had taught me to love: language.

My college studies made a rather significant dent in the amount of time I was able to spend reading my favorite author, but I found time for him here and there and always proudly displayed my ever growing collection of his works somewhere in my dorm room. This love for Tolkien was the spark that ignited some of my closest friendships in college. If you had asked my college friends what was the first thing that came to mind when my name was mentioned, odds are that more than one would have answered "Tolkien." I remember one particular evening, while I was waiting for my laundry to finish, having a two-hour long conversation with an acquaintance in which we discussed the elvish genealogies of the great elven families of *The Silmarillion*—he became one of my best friends after that conversation.

As I learned more about who I was as a person and my place in the world during my college years, Tolkien was one of the people who showed me important things about myself and my responsibilities in the world. I had many questions, and while I seldom looked specifically to Tolkien for answers, I can look back now and see the ways that my interaction with his works and thought shaped my thinking profoundly as I explored questions about faith, art, and relationships.

My senior year provided a wonderful opportunity to study Tolkien formally as a part of my education: Literature Capstone. We five brave souls who took that class greeted each other with trepidation on the first day of class, about to undertake the most daunting writing project of our lives. Having made the obvious choice to write on my favorite author, I emerged from that class with a paper on Tolkien's life and works that I am still proud of to this day, and I wasn't

upset that the class also provided me with an excuse to add a few more volumes to my Tolkien collection.

That class, however, provided me with more than just an impressive paper (one that eventually helped gain me a place to study in the Graduate Institute at St. John's) and a few more books for my collection; it prompted me to think deeply about my interaction with this man and his ideas and the ways I had been shaped by that interaction. And I realized something: the passion for creativity I have today is because of this man. He taught me about what it means to be a sub-creator and the responsibility I have to exercise my creative abilities. He was the first to provide an example for me, though I hadn't realized it at the time, of the importance of the relationship between faith and the arts and that, as a person of faith, I have more than permission to be creative—I have a calling.

This collection is a small testament to the genius of this man and the person he has helped me to become. As far as I am aware, none of the items in the collection are extremely valuable, but their worth to me lies in many other factors: the length of my search for a particularly special volume, the memories connected to those gifted by a friend or family member, or the setting in which they were acquired. A few volumes are part of what I call my "Oxonmoot acquisition." These are books I bought during my trip to Oxford, England for the yearly conference of the Tolkien Society a few years ago, among which is a first edition of *The Silmarillion*. One of my most cherished sets is my Chinese edition of *The Lord of the Rings*, which I received from a dear Chinese friend during one of my trips to China to teach English several years ago. Also among my most prized volumes is *Pictures by J. R. R. Tolkien*, an oversized volume containing many of Tolkien's original illustrations for his works. I stumbled across this somewhat rare volume in a very unexpected place: a coffee shop. When the owner of this establishment, one of whose goals is to foster a space for creative collaboration in the spirit of the Inklings, heard that I was going to buy this book, he came out from the back room to congratulate me and express his delight that it was being purchased by an avid Tolkien fan and collector.

These stories and many others like them represent the joy and beauty I have experienced through reading and collecting works by and about this man. I can't wait to see which volumes the coming years add to my collection, and I will continue to sit at his feet, learning in wonder from the beauty born from his genius.

Adams, Doug. *The Music of the Lord of the Rings Films*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing, 2010.

This volume explores the musical genius of Howard Shore's scores for the film trilogy. Adams traces the development of musical themes and motifs and their relationships to characters and storylines over the course of all three films. The book is filled with wonderful pictures and includes the notation for many of the musical themes discussed. Uniting two of my passions, Tolkien and music, this work was an exciting find for me while attending a concert at which the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a choir, and soloists performed the entire film score live during a showing of the film. I was even able to have the book signed by the author, who was also present.

Becker, Alida, ed. *A Tolkien Treasury*. Philadelphia: Running Press, 2012.

This minuscule volume is the smallest in my collection, measuring in at about a three inch square. It contains a collection of quotations, poems, and illustrations about Tolkien and his works and adds a bit of novelty to my collection.

Blok, Cor. *A Tolkien Tapestry: Pictures to Accompany the Lord of the Rings*. Edited by Pieter Collier. London: HarperCollins, 2011.

Cor Blok is a Dutch illustrator of Tolkien's works with a rather unconventional style. Tolkien himself liked Blok's work enough to purchase a few of his illustrations for his own collection. This volume includes over one hundred of Blok's illustrations for *The Lord of the Rings*. Working primarily with gouache on silk paper and including some collage, Blok's sparse paintings often have an eerie quality that causes the viewer to pause and reflect deeply on his subject matter.

Carpenter, Humphrey, ed. *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

This is the only published collection of Tolkien's letters and covers over sixty years of Tolkien's correspondence. Included are letters to his wife Edith, son Christopher, other contemporary writers such as W. H. Auden and C. S. Lewis, and many responses to fans of his works.

Carpenter, Humphrey. *Tolkien: A Biography*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

Considered the authoritative biography of Tolkien, Carpenter is writing as someone who knew Tolkien personally. He describes many wonderful vignettes from Tolkien's childhood and early school years, recounting experiences that shaped his imagination and interest in languages and including numerous details about Tolkien's family life. I used this volume when writing my senior capstone paper on Tolkien as an undergraduate.

Drout, Michael D. C., ed. *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

This impressive volume is the largest in my collection. Drout has compiled entries for nearly everything that relates not only to Tolkien's fictional writings but also his scholarship. While many think only of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* when they hear Tolkien's name, this work is truly an encyclopedia of the man himself and all his

work. Drout also provides helpful evaluations of scholarly critical works surrounding Tolkien's legendarium and lists for further reading at the end of each entry.

Fonstad, Karen Wynn. *The Atlas of Middle-Earth*. New York: George Allen & Unwin, 1991.

This is a wonderful volume filled with maps of nearly every place in Tolkien's invented world, and Fonstad provides descriptions of many of the geological and topographical features of Middle-earth and Valinor. Some of these maps provide an overview of entire continents, while other show details from specific locations, such as Helm's Deep and Isengard. Also of special interest are the maps tracing the journeys of many of the characters from the story; readers can follow Frodo and Sam along their journey to Mount Doom or Gandalf as he musters the forces of the free peoples of Middle-Earth.

Forest-Hill, Lynn, ed. *The Return of the Ring: Proceedings of the Tolkien Society Conference 2012*. 2 vols. Edinburgh: Luna Press Publishing, 2016.

A collection of papers presented at a conference held in 2012 and organized by the Tolkien Society to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of *The Hobbit*, these two volumes represent the immense interest and enthusiasm Tolkien's works have created across the globe and across disciplines. The first volume contains papers that focus primarily on Tolkien's life and the wartime, philosophical, and religious influences on his work. The second volume covers a wider range of topics and focuses on themes as diverse as medievalism, fantasy, modernism, and romanticism.

Hammond, Wayne G. and Christina Scull. *J.R.R. Tolkien: Artist and Illustrator*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

This beautiful volume details Tolkien's little-known artistic works and, while not entirely comprehensive, gives a robust picture of Tolkien's sources of inspiration as an artist and illustrator. Starting with some of his earliest artistic efforts that have nothing to do with his later stories and progressing on to his illustrations for *The Hobbit*, *The Silmarillion*, and *The Lord of the Rings*, Hammond and Scull provide a wonderful look at some of Tolkien's lesser known creative endeavors.

Hazell, Dinah. *The Plants of Middle-Earth: Botany and Sub-creation*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2006.

This delightful volume takes its readers on a botanical tour of Middle-earth, focusing especially on the Shire. With beautiful illustrations and a list of the plants of Middle-earth, Hazel discusses the relationships of the hobbits to their gardens and their naming of certain plants. This is a wonderful little book that indulges both my love for Tolkien and for plants.

Judd, Walter S. and Graham A. *Flora of Middle-Earth: Plants of J.R.R. Tolkien's Legendarium*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

This newest addition to my collection is one of the most gorgeous books in my library. Uniting two of my greatest passions, gardening and Tolkien, this book takes an in-depth look at the plant life of middle earth, feeling at times like a delightful botany textbook. With a detailed description of each of the more than 140 plants mentioned by

Tolkien in his works and guides to identification and plant morphology, this work is a delight for anyone who wants to explore the floral elements of Tolkien's works.

Olsen, Corey. *Exploring J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012.

This book on *The Hobbit* started as a collection of talks given by Olsen (Known popularly as "The Tolkien Professor,") on his *The Tolkien Professor* podcast, started in 2009. I discovered the podcast shortly after it started and listened to these talks as they were being released. When Dr. Olsen announced that he would be expanding his work in those lectures and publishing a book, I knew that it would end up in my collection.

Salo, David. *A Gateway to Sindarin*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2007.

David Salo has written a work so detailed and comprehensive that if one were not aware that Sindarin is an invented language, one might think it to be a real language spoken somewhere in the world. He starts by chronicling the history of the language and works his way through phonology, morphology, lexicography, syntax, and grammar. This work is a wonderful testament to Tolkien's mastery of language and sheer inventive genius.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Beowulf: A Translation and Commentary*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2014.

This is Tolkien's prose translation of the great Old English epic. Along with the translation is a commentary by Tolkien's son Christopher and a short tale, "Sellic Spell" that Tolkien wrote "suggesting what might have been the form and style of an Old English folktale." As I love the story of Beowulf, I had to have my favorite author's translation of it in my collection.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Beren and Lúthien*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2017.

This is the most recent book edited by Christopher and published by the Tolkien estate, and it explores one of Tolkien's most beloved tales. The story of Beren and Lúthien evolved greatly over time as Tolkien changed various elements of plot and character. This book traces those changes by providing the manuscripts of Tolkien's various drafts of the story. Because Tolkien himself never decided upon a finalized version of this tale, this book allows readers to follow the creative process of Tolkien as he writes this beautiful tale. The accompanying illustrations by Alan Lee further enhance the beauty of this book.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Book of Lost Tales: Part I*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

This is the first volume in *The History of Middle-Earth* series and includes some of the earliest tales Tolkien wrote. A sort of proto-Silmarillion, Christopher Tolkien provides a great deal of helpful editorial content and commentary that discusses the changes that took place in the development of people and place names and compares elements of the stories to later versions of the tales.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Book of Lost Tales: Part II*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

This second volume in *The History of Middle-Earth* series picks up where vol. 1 ends and provides the same sort of editorial content for the tales that make up the latter portion of what came to be published as *The Silmarillion*.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Children of Húrin*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

Tolkien wrote many versions of the story of the children of Húrin over the years he was building his mythology. This edition, edited by his son with beautiful illustrations by Alan Lee, is presented as a novel length work and is the longest published version of the tale. The tale follows the life of Túrin, son of Húrin, and the effects of Morgoth's curse on him and his family. A tale of great sorrow and beauty, this is considered one of Tolkien's greatest stories.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The End of the Third Age*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

Fourth in *The History of the Lord of the Rings* series and ninth in *The History of Middle-Earth* series, this volume provides some textual history for the final part of *The Lord of the Rings* with commentary by Christopher Tolkien.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Fall of Arthur*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2013.

Tolkien's only known incursion into the Arthurian tradition, this unfinished poem deals largely with the character of Gawain. Though unfinished, it is still a moving poem pervaded with the haunting beauty characteristic of so many of Tolkien's other tales. Christopher Tolkien also provides some commentary and a discussion of this poem's relationship with the wider Arthurian legendarium.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Hobbit*. London: HarperCollins, 2016.

This recently published edition is a facsimile of the first edition of *The Hobbit* published in 1937, and the reproduction is incredibly detailed. I had always wanted to add a first edition of this work to my collection, because significant changes were made to the story in the second edition, many of which were made to ensure *The Hobbit* was more consistent with *The Lord of the Rings*, and this edition provided a much more affordable alternative to a true first edition.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Hobbit*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2013.

This gorgeously bound and illustrated edition features over 150 illustrations by the talented Jemima Catlin. Her illustrations, of all that I have seen for *The Hobbit*, are my favorite, because they capture the childlike sense of wonder and adventure pervading *The Hobbit* that makes it distinct from many of Tolkien's later works.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Hobbit and the Lord of the Rings*. 4 vols. New York: Ballantine Books, 1977.

This four-volume set contains the inscription “To Beth, Love Uncle Jim, Christmas 1978” on the first page. Uncle Jim happens to be my great-uncle, and he is especially well known in our family for his habit of gifting books. While my mom never did become a fan of Tolkien’s writings, I am thankful she kept the set long enough for me to add this bit of nostalgia to my own collection.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Hobbit and the Lord of the Rings*. 4 vols. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.

This pocket sized boxed set is the set I normally travel with when I want to read *The Lord of the Rings* or *The Hobbit* on a trip. The nice binding and smaller size make it perfect for stuffing in a backpack without getting damaged. Both my sisters and I have the same set; we all discovered it around the same time and each bought it for one of the other siblings as either a birthday or Christmas gift that year.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Hobbitus Ille* [The Hobbit]. Translated by Mark Walker. London: HarperCollins, 2012.

This edition of *The Hobbit* provides constant motivation to continue the Latin studies I abandoned in elementary school so I can enjoy this work in a classical language.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Huo bite ren* 霍比特人 [The Hobbit]. Translated by Wu Gang. Shanghai: Shanghai Peoples Publishing House, 2013.

Another of the most beautiful and well-made books in my collection, this edition is filled with illustrations by Alan Lee and also includes thoughtful details like a runic inscription with the runes that Tolkien himself developed. This, too, was a gift from my Chinese friend along with my Chinese edition of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Jiezhi zhi wang* 戒指之王 [The Lord of the Rings]. Translated by Zhang Guoruo. Nanjing: Yilin Press, 2011.

This Chinese boxed set of *The Lord of the Rings* is one of the jewels of my collection, with gorgeous red cloth binding and beautiful Alan Lee illustrations on the slipcase and dust jackets. This set is also particularly dear to me because it was a gift from one of my Chinese friends. During my first summer teaching English in China in 2013, I became friends with one of our Chinese assistants who was an English literature major. As soon as we started discussing our love for literature, we discovered a mutual admiration for Tolkien, and she gave me this set as a parting gift.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*. Edited by Verlyn Flieger. London: Harper Collins, 2016.

One of Tolkien’s incursions into real-world myths, this volume, edited and with commentary by esteemed Tolkien scholar Verlyn Flieger, contains the story of a childless Breton lord and lady and the woes that befall them when Aotrou seeks the help of a *corrigan*, or malevolent fairy, in giving them a child. Also containing two shorter “Corrigan” poems, this book is evidence of the breadth of Tolkien’s literary and mythological interests.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lays of Beleriand*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Ballantine Books, 1994.

This third volume in *The History of Middle-Earth* series, along with some other abandoned poems, includes two long poems that Tolkien began composing for two of the most important tales from his legendarium. Unfortunately, they are both unfinished, but they do demonstrate Tolkien's not unremarkable skill as a poet while providing versions of these tales to complement their prose counterparts.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Leaf by Niggle*. London: HarperCollins, 2016.

"Leaf by Niggle" is one of Tolkien's more well-known short stories following the life and afterlife of the artist Niggle and is believed by some to be Tolkien's only truly allegorical work. Recently, this story was turned into a one-man show that toured the United Kingdom. I acquired this copy after attending a performance of this show at Oxonmoot in Oxford, England and had my copy signed by the actor, Richard Medrington.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2009.

This book contains Tolkien's verse retellings of tales from the Elder Edda in an attempt to unify and smooth out some of the contradictions and ambiguities in that ancient work. He seeks to maintain the feel of ancient Norse verse in his own poetry and produces a work that is mysterious yet inviting. This book is a testament to the breadth of Tolkien's literary and linguistic expertise, and the commentary provided by Christopher Tolkien sheds a great deal of light on Tolkien's creative process and the impulses that led him to such writing.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings*. 3 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

This set features the beautiful dust jackets designed by Juniper Press with artwork spread out across the three volumes that depicts the western gate of Moria.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lost Road and Other Writings*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Fifth in *The History of Middle-earth* series, this book concludes the history of Tolkien's writings concerning his invented world up to the time of his work on *The Lord of the Rings*. The first portion of the book takes up the development of the tales surrounding Númenor, and the second deals with writings about Valinor and Middle-earth.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Return of the Shadow*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988.

First in *The History of The Lord of the Rings* series and sixth in *The History of Middle-Earth* series, this book details the very beginnings of Tolkien's work on what would become his most popular writing. In this volume, we are introduced to Bingo, who would later become Frodo; and the ring of Bilbo's, which in *The Hobbit* was simply a magic ring, becomes the Ruling Ring of Sauron.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Roverandom*. Edited by Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.

Originally told as a bedtime story to his son who had lost a toy dog figurine, this tale follows the adventures of a toy dog who comes to life and visits places as fantastic as the moon and the ocean floor. Accompanied by some of Tolkien's original illustrations, this is a charming tale that showcases Tolkien's skill across storytelling genres and his appreciation for whimsy.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Shaping of Middle-Earth*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

Fourth in *The History of Middle-Earth* series, this volume contains a great deal of information regarding the geographical and chronological details of Tolkien's invented world. It includes the "Ambarkanta," the only account Tolkien ever gives of the nature of his invented universe, along with many other maps and diagrams.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Silmarillion*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. London: The Folio Society, 1997.

I have always admired Folio Society editions, and I was able to acquire this beautiful edition of *The Silmarillion* while attending Oxonmoot, the yearly conference of the Tolkien Society, in Oxford a few years ago.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Silmarillion*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977.

This first edition has my favorite dust jacket artwork of any edition of the *Silmarillion* that I have seen—the heraldic device of Luthien, a character that was most dear to Tolkien because he modeled her in part after his wife, Edith. I was thrilled to make this find during my aforementioned trip to Oxford.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Silmarillion*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

There is nothing particularly remarkable about this edition itself, but I still value it highly because it is the edition in which I took extensive notes while writing my senior literature thesis during my undergraduate studies, which later became my application essay for St. John's.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Silmarillion*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.

This edition is replete with illustrations by Ted Nasmith, who is, generally speaking, my favorite Tolkien illustrator.

Tolkien, J. R. R., and E. V. Gordon, eds. *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960.

Another of what I call my Oxonmoot acquisitions, this is a Middle English text of this famous poem edited by Tolkien and one of his colleagues during his time at Oxford.

With a helpful glossary of Middle English vocabulary and notes on language, meter, spelling, and syntax, this volume is a great resource for anyone wanting to dive into this story in the original language.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Story of Kullervo*. Edited by Verlyn Flieger. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2016.

Tolkien was fascinated by the mythologies of many different peoples, but the tales from Finland recounted in *The Kalevala* captured his imagination particularly. Kullervo is the main character in several of these tales, and this book explores Tolkien's retelling of the Kullervo story. This character also prefigured one of the main characters from what would come to be a prominent story within his later legendarium and, in Tolkien's words, was "the germ of my attempt to write legends of my own."

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Tales from the Perilous Realm*. London: HarperCollins, 2008.

This volume contains Tolkien's most famous short stories as well as his essay "On Fairy-Stories." "Smith of Wootton Major" provides a small glimpse into Tolkien's ideas concerning the realm of faerie; "The Adventures of Tom Bombadil" is a delightful romp in verse and song through some of Tom's whimsical excursions; and "Farmer Giles of Ham" is a slightly silly meditation on the conditions of hero-hood.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Treason of Isengard*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989.

Second in *The History of The Lord of the Rings* series and seventh in *The History of Middle-Earth* series, this book begins its textual history after the Fellowship exits the mines of Moria and continues its account until they enter Rohan. Included is a full account of the original map Tolkien created for Middle-earth and the drafts it went through as Tolkien was imagining the geography of his invented world.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Tree and Leaf*. London: Unwin Hyman Limited, 1988.

This small but beautiful volume includes three of Tolkien's works that all deal with Tolkien's ideas about sub-creation generally and myth-making in particular: the short story "Leaf by Niggle," the poem "Mythopoeia," and the essay "On Fairy-Stories." Throughout these three works, he explores the nature of myth and Story and the spiritual implications of myth-making.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-Earth*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980.

This book is a collection of tales edited and published posthumously by Tolkien's son Christopher. It covers a broad range of topics, from the creation of the palantíri, or seeing stones of Númenor, to the history of Galadriel and Celeborn to the fate of the Istari, or wizards. This first edition, also acquired in Oxford, features a beautiful illustration of a Númenórean helmet on the dust jacket.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The War of the Jewels*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1994.

Eleventh in *The History of Middle-Earth* series, this volume contains many of Tolkien's later writings concerning tales which comprise the latter half of *The Silmarillion*. Written after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, these fragments are largely the result of Tolkien's love for many of the tales he had written years earlier and could now return to after *The Lord of the Rings* was finished.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The War of the Ring*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

Third in *The History of The Lord of the Rings series* and eighth in *The History of Middle-Earth* series, this book traces the history of the writing of what would eventually be published as the latter half of *The Two Towers* and the first part of *The Return of the King*. Included is an account of the entrance into the story of Faramir, about whom Tolkien declared, "I am sure I did not invent him, though I like him, but there he came walking into the woods of Ithilien."

Tolkien, J. R. R., and Christopher Tolkien. *Pictures by J. R. R. Tolkien*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979.

This large volume, filled with full-sized facsimiles of many of Tolkien's original illustrations for his works, is one I had been hunting for for many years before I finally found a copy and is one of the most prized volumes in my collection. I was visiting Lancaster, PA with a friend when we happened upon an Inklings themed coffee shop and bookstore called The Rabbit and the Dragonfly. When I declared my intention to buy the book for my collection, the owner came out to congratulate me in delight that the book was being sold to a dedicated Tolkien collector.

Tyler, J. E. A. *The Tolkien Companion*. New York: Avon Books, 1977.

This impressive reference work is invaluable for anyone interested in Tolkien's works. From the first entry on "Accursed Years" to the final entry on "Zirak-zigil," Tyler has compiled a list of all the essential facts into one volume that allows one to quickly explore all corners of Tolkien's invented world.