

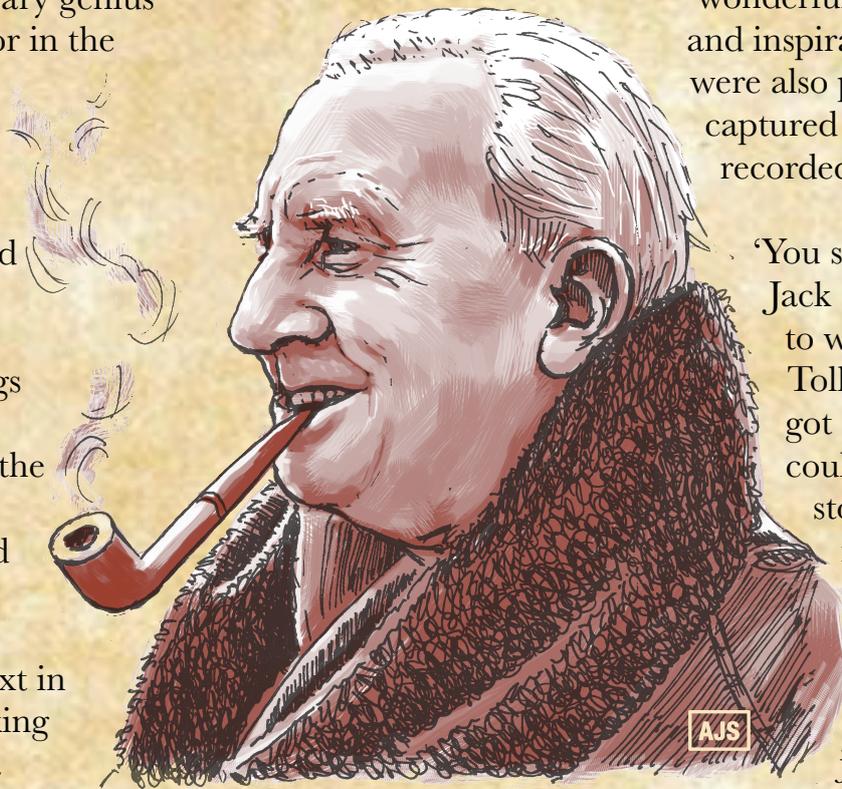
THE CHRONICLES of MALVERNIA

J.R.R. Tolkien

The Lord of the Rings

JR.R Tolkien, the 20th century literary genius and famous author in the realm of fantasy novels, with his creation of Middle Earth in his most renowned works of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of The Rings* has understated connections with the magnificent Malvern Hills and Great Malvern.

C.S Lewis (the next in the series of *Walking Stories*) brought a friend with him from Oxford to join George Sayer (teacher and Headmaster of Malvern College and friend of C.S Lewis) to his regular stays in Malvern. This person being none other than J.R.R. Tolkien.



Tolkien soon joined Lewis and Sayer for regular gatherings in the Sayer's home, for drinks in the local pub, The Unicorn, and for walks on the Hills. These walks with 'Jack', 'Tollers'

and George were a time of wonderful fellowship, joy, and inspiration, but they were also playful affairs, as captured in this anecdote recorded by Sayer:

'You should have seen Jack (C.s Lewis) trying to walk with J.R.R. Tolkien! Once Jack got started a bomb could not have stopped him and the more he walked, the more energy he had for a good argument. Now Tolkien was just the opposite.

If he had something to say, he wanted you to stop so he could look you in the face. So, on they would go, Jack charging ahead and Tolkien pulling at him, trying to get him to stop - back and forth, back and forth.

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What a scene!

Is it little wonder than that Tolkien invented, and felt an affinity for, Hobbits! The influence of The Malverns upon Tolkien's creation of Middle Earth was both general and specific.

For example, in Middle Earth, the border between the kingdoms of Rohan and Gondor is marked by the Ered Nimrais mountain range, known colloquially as the White Mountains. This is where Tolkien locates the Dead Men of Dunharrow, cursed for betraying King Isildur at the end of the Second Age and doomed to live on as wraiths beneath the mountains, until Aragorn comes to redeem them. In a rare admission, Tolkien acknowledged that these White Mountains were,

The dragon Smaug



indeed, based on The Malvern Hills.

Follow in the footsteps of J.R.R Tolkien on this walk across the Malvern Hills, including Herefordshire Beacon - an ancient iron-age hill fort with its myths and legends about infamous battles, and with view across to where you can imagine Hobbits climbing the undulating peaks, along with an opening of a cave; walk along Shire Ditch - a location of struggle between historic landowners and through an old quarry, which possibly

influenced where dwarves used to mine for gold and gems, and of course the forests on the lower slopes where the Elves may have once lived. There are also views across to steeple of Little Malvern Prioory and the Obelisk which is close

to the towers of Eastnor Castle. Along with the tale of Jack o' Kent, a wizard with his connections to Sugar Loaf Mountain betting the devil it was higher than the Malvern Hills.

There's plenty of connections across the Malvern Hills to have inspired J.R.R Tolkien, so don't be surprised if you feel compelled to pause and be inspired during your own walk to jot something down and write your own imaginative story or literary masterpiece.

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BRITISH CAMP

At 338m tall (1,113ft) British Camp is a huge Bronze Age era hillfort at the southern end of the Malvern Hills. It's many tiered ramparts are estimated to be up to 3,500 years old. Built on top of the ramparts was a later norman era building known as Colwall Castle.

MILLENNIUM HILL

So named in the year 2000 by the Malvern Hills Conservators to mark the 3rd millennium. (Malvern Hills Conservators leaflet)

BLACK HILL

A hill with two summits.. It has a north and south top and has the 'Shire Ditch' running down it's spine which is rumoured to have been built to separate the lands of two prominent past landowners.

Route Map



Route Heights



PINNACLE HILL

At 357m (1,171ft) Pinnacle Hill is rumoured to have two Bronze Age round barrows or Tumuli on it's peak. The views either side to west and east are spectacular looking out over the vale of Evesham or out over the green rural pastures and woods of rural Herefordshire.

JUBILEE HILL

At a height of 327m (1073ft) was so named in 2002 in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee by the Malvern Hills Conservators.

PERSEVERANCE HILL

Sitting just south of the narrow Wych Cutting one of only a few crossing points of the hills, Perseverance Hill sits largely in the 'Lower Wych' of Worcestershire.

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Directions

1 Park at the Wych Cutting Innovation Centre car park at WR13 6PL or (W3W moguls.remodels.mailings). Turn left uphill on to the Chase Road. Continue uphill to the 'T' junction with West Malvern Road. Cross to the wooden pavillion and head up the steps behind them to the ridge walk.

2 Continue along and up the ridge, notice the ridge of earthworks on the spine of the ridge. This is the ancient 'Shire Ditch' built to separate the land of two feuding landowners. Bear right on this path as it undulates up towards Jubilee Hill.

3 Continue up and along the ridge towards the open summit of Pinnacle Hill. You can look across either side of the hills across some amazing views at this point. Your route now descends sharply down towards Black Hill and a thin gap between woods.

4 After passing between the woods the path bears down right down towards the car park. Pass the information board and turn right down to the main road and Jubilee Drive. Follow the roadside path around and past the Malvern Hills Hotel to a 'T'

junction with the main road (A449). There's a central island crossing here we recommend using, bear slightly right after this and continue to the gate up to British Camp next to an information board and map. After the gate you'll see the old memorial stone talking about the hill and it's history. Turn right shortly after and follow the path as it winds it's way up to the top of the British Camp hillfort (also called Herefordshire Beacon). Continue over the hill's summit and down onto the ridge to the south of the hillfort and along and up this to it's more minor eventual summit (Millenium Hill).

5 Now walk down the path as it winds it's way down through earth ramparts to a low saddle/dip and junction of paths. Turn right here and follow the main path (The Three Choirs Way at this point) downhill to Cutter's Cave on your left set back in some rocks. After the cave turn back on yourself back uphill to the saddle and then straight ahead along the main path and it curves around the base of British Camp towards the car park.

6 Once back at the car park retrace your steps back across the A449 and past the Malvern Hills Hotel. Instead of continuing on the road bear right uphill after the hotel on a distinct path that takes you up along and then bears left and up towards higher Black Hill proper.

7 As this path slowly goes uphill look out for a gate on your right and turn down this track through woods. Continue until it meets a track crossing it on which you will need to turn left on and follow as it snakes along a contour on the side of the hills. You should shortly pass an old quarry on your left.

8 Continue on this path as it passes through more woods. Ignore tracks that go off downhill from this to the right and er on staying 'left' (sometimes heading back uphill slightly) as you continue along.

9 The path takes a final turn uphill and back on to the ridge leading to Perseverance Hill. Continue along and down back to the Wych Cutting and your start point and car park.

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