

A Fugitive Poem of Myrddin in His Grave

Red Book of Hergest col. 583 1.39--585 1.23

He who speaks from the grave
Knows that before seven years
March of Eurdein will die.

I have drunk from a bright cup
With fierce and warlike lords;
My name is Myrddin, son of Morvryn.

I have drunk from a goblet
With powerful warlords;
Myrddin is my given name.

When the black wheel of oppression
Comes to destroy exhausted Llogres
Defence will be bitter and sustained.
The White Mount will see sorrow
A long regret to the people of the Cymry.

Protection won't be found
From the Boar of the Hosts,
Even in the heights of Ardudwy

When the red one of Normandy will come
To charge the Lloegrians with enormous expense,
There will be a tax upon every prediction
And a castle at Aber Hodni.

When the Freckled One comes
As far as Ryd Bengarn, men will face disgrace,
Their sword-hilts will break,
The new King of Prydain will be their judge.

Henri comes to claim
Mur Castell on Eryri's border
Trouble across the sea will call him.

When the Pale One comes to London
Upon ugly horses
He will call out the lords of Caergain.

Scarce the acorns, thick the corn
When a young king appears
Who will cause men to tremble.

A youth of great renown
Conqueror of a hundred cities--
Tender and frail will be his life.

Strong to the weak will he be
Weak towards the strong of the upland--

One whose coming will bring dark days.

Wantonness will rule,
Women will be easy prey--
Even children will need to confess.

A time of order will follow
When even churls will do good deeds;
Maidens will be lovely, youths resolute.

A time will follow, towards the end of the age,
When the young will fail from adversity
And cuckoos die of cold in Maytime.

There will be a time of great hunting dogs,
And buildings in secret places,
When even a shirt will cost a fortune.

There will be a time of great profanity,
When vices are active, and churches empty.
Words and relics will be broken--
Truth will vanish, falsehood spread
Faith will grow weak, and disputes abound.

There will be a time when everyone delights in clothing
When the lord's counsellors become like vagrants;
Bards will go empty-handed, though happy the priest;
Men will be despised, and frequently selfish.

There will be the time of windless days, without rain,
With little ploughing and less food,
One acre of land worth nine.

Men will be weak and unmanly
And corn grown under trees--
Though feasts will still occur.

When trees are held in high estate
There will be a new spring
There will be after the chief of mischief--
The cowhouse worse than a single stake.

On Wednesday, a time of violence,
Blades will wear out,
Who will be bloodied at Cynghen.

At Aber Sor there will be a council
Of men following on the battle,
A bright ruler ruling the camp.

In Aber Avon the host of Mona congregate
Angles gather at Hinwedon;
Moryon's valour will be long remembered.

In Aber Dwyver the leader will fail
When the actions of Gwidig occur
After the battle of Cyvarllug.

A battle will be on the River Byrri,
Where Britons will have victory;
Gwhyr's men will be heroes.

An Aber Don a battle will occur
And the spears be unequal.
Blood on the brows of Saxons.
Servile you are today, Gwenddydd!
The mountain ghosts come to me
Here in Aber Carav.