

# The Tolkien Society: Timeline of J.R.R. Tolkien's Life and Work

## Early Life

- 1857** Birth of Arthur Reuel Tolkien, Tolkien's father, in Birmingham.
- 1870** Birth of Mabel Suffield, Tolkien's mother, in Birmingham.
- 21 January 1889** Birth of Edith Mary Bratt, Tolkien's future wife, in Gloucester.
- 16 April 1891** Arthur Tolkien and Mabel Suffield get married in Cape Town Cathedral.
- 3 January 1892** **Birth of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien in Bloemfontein, Orange Free State (now part of South Africa).**
- 17 February 1894** Birth of Tolkien's younger brother, Hilary.
- Spring 1895** Mabel Tolkien returns to England with her two boys.
- 15 February 1896** Death of Arthur Tolkien in Bloemfontein.
- Summer 1896** Mabel Tolkien rents a cottage near Sarehole Mill, Moseley, on the outskirts of Birmingham.
- June 1900** Mabel is accepted into the Roman Catholic Church.
- Autumn 1900** Tolkien attends King Edward's School, Birmingham as a fee-paying student, but he does not attend in December.
- c. 1901** Mabel and her boys move to King's Heath, another suburb of Birmingham.
- 1902** The Tolkiens move to Edgbaston, Birmingham. The boys are enrolled at St Philip's Grammar School, but later in the year Ronald is educated at home.
- January 1903** Tolkien attends King Edward's School again, this time on a scholarship.
- Spring 1904** Mabel is diagnosed with diabetes, and is hospitalised for a few weeks. She dies in November. Ronald and his brother Hilary become wards of Father Morgan, a priest at the Birmingham Oratory.
- 1905** Aunt Beatrice accepts the boys into her home in Stirling Road.
- Autumn Term 1907** Tolkien probably invents his private language 'Naffarin' based on Spanish and Latin.
- 1908** The boys move to Duchess Road and live with Mrs. Faulkner. Tolkien meets Edith Bratt, another lodger.
- Autumn 1909** Father Francis Morgan discovers the romance between Tolkien and Edith. Ronald fails a scholarship to Oxford.
- January 1910** The Tolkien brothers move to new lodgings where Ronald's romance with Edith continues until Father Francis forbids him to communicate with her.
- March 1910** Edith moves to Cheltenham.
- 4 November 1910** Tolkien speaks in his school debating society deploring the occurrence of the Norman Conquest.
- 17 December 1910** Tolkien obtains a scholarship at Oxford's Exeter College.
- March 1911** Tolkien's poem 'The Battle of the Eastern Field' is printed in the *King Edward's School Chronicle*.

- Summer Term 1911** Tolkien becomes school librarian, and the T.C.B.S. is formed.
- August 1911** Tolkien visits Switzerland before starting university.

## **Oxford and Early Career**

- October 1911** Tolkien begins studying at Oxford.
- November 1911** Tolkien begins studying Finnish.
- 3 November 1912** Tolkien becomes a member of the Exeter College Essay Club.
- 1913** Tolkien writes to Edith on his 21st birthday, and soon after they become engaged.
- Late Jul-Aug 1913** Tolkien is paid to accompany two Mexican boys and their aunts to Paris and Dinard. One of the aunts is hit by a car and dies.
- January 1914** Tolkien and Edith become betrothed after she is received into the Catholic Church.
- 24 September 1914** Tolkien writes his first identifiable “Middle-earth” fragment ‘The Voyage of Éarendel the Evening Star’.
- Autumn 1914** Tolkien begins to write *The Story of Kullervo*.
- 27 November 1914** Tolkien revises the poem later called ‘The Horns of Ylmir’ [ie. Ulmo].
- April 1915** The poems ‘You & Me and the Cottage of Lost Play’ and ‘Kôr’ are written. Tolkien gains a First Class Honours degree. He obtains a commission in the Lancashire Fusiliers and trains in Bedford and Staffordshire.
- 12 September 1915** Tolkien writes the poem ‘A Song of Aryador’ while stationed in Staffordshire.
- 25-6 Sep 1915** Final meeting of all four main members of the T.C.B.S. in Lichfield.
- c. 8 Nov 1915** Tolkien writes the poem ‘Kortirion among the Trees’.
- December 1915** Tolkien’s poem ‘Goblin Feet’ is published in *Oxford Poetry 1915*.
- Jan-Feb 1916** Tolkien writes ‘Over Old Hills and Far Away’ a poem featuring Tinfang Warble.
- 22 March 1916** **Ronald and Edith are married in Warwick.**
- Apr-May 1916** Tolkien was based in Otley, near Leeds as he took an army signalling course. Edith lives in Great Haywood.
- 6 June 1916** Tolkien travels to France. On the boat he writes the poem ‘The Lonely Isle’. Tolkien becomes a Battalion Signalling Officer.
- 1 July 1916** **Battle of the Somme begins. Rob Gilson, close friend and member of the T.C.B.S. dies.**
- 27 October 1916** Tolkien reports sick.

- 9 November 1916** Suffering from trench fever, Tolkien returns to England.
- 3 December 1916** G.B. Smith, a member of the T.C.B.S., dies from wounds received 4 days earlier.
- Jan-Feb 1917** Tolkien works on *The Book of Lost Tales* during convalescence in Great Haywood.
- 12 February 1917** The first version of *The Cottage of Lost Play* is completed by this date.
- Spring 1917** 'The Fall of Gondolin' is probably written before June. He is posted to Yorkshire, but he suffers recurring bouts of illness.
- c. May 1917** **Tolkien is inspired by watching Edith dance in a 'hemlock' glade near Roos. This is the germ for the meeting of Lúthien and Beren in his legendarium.**
- Before 13 Aug 1917** Tolkien is admitted to Brooklands Officers' Hospital, Hull, where among other things he works on 'The Tale of Tinúviel', 'The Grey Bridge of Tavrobel', and on a lexicon and grammar of his Gnomish language.
- 16 November 1917** The Tolkiens' eldest son, John, is born in Cheltenham.
- Late 1917** Tolkien probably starts work on *The Tale of Turambar*.
- c. Jul-Sep 1918** Tolkien is readmitted to Brooklands Officers' Hospital.
- November 1918** **The Tolkiens return to Oxford. Tolkien obtains employment with the *New English Dictionary* [*Oxford English Dictionary*]. Tolkien probably begins work on the first version of 'The Music of the Ainur'.**
- 1919** Tolkien works as a freelance tutor in addition to work for the *Oxford English Dictionary*. He probably writes an early version of 'The Chaining of Melko', 'The Coming of the Elves and the Making of Kôr' and 'The Theft of Melko and the Darkening of Valinor'.
- 10 March 1920** Tolkien reads a shortened version of 'The Fall of Gondolin' to the Exeter College Essay Club.
- Autumn 1920** **He begins work as a Reader in English Language at Leeds University. Michael, the Tolkiens' second son is born on 22 October.**
- December 1920** Tolkien writes a letter to John as if from Father Christmas, which is the first of *The Father Christmas Letters*.
- March 1921** Tolkien finds suitable rented rooms in Headingley, Leeds for his family, who move up from Oxford to join him a few weeks later. Tolkien may have begun an alliterative poetic version of *The Children of Húrin* once he was settled in Leeds.
- Late August 1921** The Tolkiens move nearer to Leeds University at St Mark's Terrace, Woodhouse Lane. Tolkien and E.V. Gordon begin work on their edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.
- 11 May 1922** **A *Middle English Vocabulary* is published. Tolkien and E.V. Gordon begin work on their edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.**
- Summer 1923** Convalescing from pneumonia on his brother's farm, Tolkien turns to his mythology again, and probably works on an early form of Qenya.
- Oct/Nov 1923** 'The Cat and the Fiddle: A Nursery-Rhyme Undone and its Scandalous Secret Unlocked' is published in *Yorkshire Poetry*.
- December 1923** *The Father Christmas Letters* become more elaborate.

- 17 March 1924** The Tolkien move into a three-storey house in Darnley Road, West Park, Leeds.
- May 1924** Tolkien writes the poem 'The Nameless Land'.
- 16 July 1924** Tolkien is appointed as Professor of English Language at Leeds University.
- 21 November 1924** Christopher, the Tolkiens' third son is born.
- Early 1925** Tolkien works on the alliterative poem 'The Flight of the Noldoli from Valinor'.
- 23 April 1925** **Tolkien and E.V. Gordon's edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is published by the Clarendon Press.**
- June 1925** Publication of the poem 'Light as Leaf on Lindentree' in *The Gryphon*.
- Summer 1925** Tolkien begins work on the *Lay of Leithian*.
- Early Sep 1925** **On holiday in Filey, Yorkshire, Tolkien relates the story of a toy dog, 'Rover', which is posthumously published as *Roverandom*.**
- Autumn 1925** **Tolkien takes up an appointment as Rawlinson and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford. He purchases a house in Oxford.**
- 7 January 1926** The Tolkien family move to 22 Northmoor Road, Oxford.
- February 1926** Tolkien forms the Kolbítar club (Coalbiters).
- 11 May 1926** First known meeting between C.S. Lewis and Tolkien, and they soon become friends.
- Autumn 1926** Tolkien lectures on *The Old English Exodus* for the first time. Tolkien probably writes the *Sketch of the Mythology* and the first version of *Farmer Giles of Ham* may date from this year.
- January 1928** *A New Glossary of the Dialect of the Huddersfield District* with Tolkien's foreword is published.
- Mar-Apr 1928** Tolkien works on Cantos IV-IX of *The Lay of Leithian*.
- Summer 1928** Tolkien probably illustrates and writes *Mr. Bliss*.
- 18 June 1929** Priscilla, the Tolkiens' only daughter, and youngest child is born.
- December 1929** C.S. Lewis reads and critiques the *Lay of Leithian*.
- 14 January 1930** The Tolkiens move next door to 20 Northmoor Road.
- Spring 1930** Tolkien composes a large part of *The Fall of Arthur*.

### ***The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings and Academic Career***

- Summer 1930** **About this time, Tolkien may have written the first sentence of *The Hobbit*: "In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit".**
- Sep-Oct 1930** Tolkien works on Cantos X-XIII of *The Lay of Leithian*.

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**September 1930** Tolkien completes a fair manuscript copy of *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*.
- Autumn 1930** *Quenta Noldorinwa*, an expansion of the *Sketch of the Mythology* may have been written at this time.
- September 1931** Tolkien works on *The Lay of Leithian*, but abandons it at Canto XIV, line 4223.
- 19-20 Sep 1931** Tolkien and Hugo Dyson talk with C.S. Lewis, who begins to shift from believing in God to accepting Christ. This event also inspires Tolkien to later write the poem 'Mythopoeia'.
- Autumn 1931** The essay *A Secret Vice* about inventing private languages is probably written at this time.
- Late? 1932** Tolkien probably lends the typescript of *The Hobbit* to C.S. Lewis, which at this time ends with the death of Smaug.
- Early Autumn 1933** Tolkien probably writes lectures on *Beowulf*, which will provide the basis for his famous essay *Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics*.
- Autumn 1933** **The Inklings meetings under the auspices of C.S. Lewis become an important part of Tolkien's social life.**
- 9 November 1933** His poem 'Errantry' is published in *The Oxford Magazine*.
- 15 February 1934** The poem 'The Adventures of Tom Bombadil' is published in the *Oxford Magazine*. Tolkien's paper *Chaucer as a Philologist: The Reeve's Tale* is published in the second half of 1934.
- 11 June 1935** Death of Father Francis Morgan, Tolkien's guardian.
- Early 1936** Susan Dagnall of Allen & Unwin reads the unfinished manuscript of *The Hobbit*. She urges him to finish the narrative, and it is accepted for publication.
- 7 August 1936** An excerpt from Tolkien's translation of *Pearl* is read on BBC Radio. Some time this year *Songs for the Philologists* by Tolkien, E.V. Gordon *et al* is privately printed by students at University College, London.
- 25 November 1936** Tolkien delivers his lecture, *Beowulf: the Monsters and the Critics*, to the British Academy in London. Tolkien probably wrote *The Lost Road* at about this time, which marks the invention of Númenor.
- April 1937** Tolkien takes an exhausting walking holiday in the Quantock Hills with C.S. Lewis and Owen Barfield.
- 1 July 1937** ***Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics* is published.**
- 21 September 1937** ***The Hobbit* is published. Because of its success, Stanley Unwin subsequently urges Tolkien to write a sequel, which he begins. This is the germ of *The Lord of the Rings*.**
- 15 Nov-19 Dec 1937** Tolkien resumes work on the *Quenta Silmarillion*, but abandons this to work on 'The new Hobbit'.
- 14 January 1938** Tolkien's talk *Anglo-Saxon Verse* is broadcast on BBC Radio.
- 14 February 1938** Tolkien reads an expanded early version of *Farmer Giles of Ham* to the Lovelace Society.
- 4 March 1938** Before this date the Black Riders have appeared during the writing of *The Lord of the Rings*.

<b>Late August 1938</b>	The narrative has reached the seventh chapter – the Hobbits arrival at the Prancing Pony.
<b>1-15 Sep 1938</b>	Tolkien continues writing and reaches Rivendell.
<b>15 Sept-Oct 1938</b>	Tolkien rewrites earlier parts of the narrative, and continues to alter the names of the Hobbits.
<b>8 March 1939</b>	At St. Andrews University, Scotland, Tolkien gives his lecture <i>On Fairy-Stories</i> .
<b>27-29 March 1939</b>	Tolkien in London does 3 days' code and cipher training.
<b>Autumn 1939</b>	Charles Williams starts attending meetings of 'The Inklings'. Tolkien works on early versions of 'The Council of Elrond', 'The Ring Goes South', and a first draft of 'The Mines of Moria'.
<b>26-7 August 1940</b>	Tolkien invents Saruman as a reason for Gandalf's delay in reaching Bag End in <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> .
<b>Autumn 1940</b>	He rewrites many sections of <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> before taking the narrative beyond Balin's tomb in Moria.
<b>Late 1941</b>	Tolkien works on the Lothlórien chapters and the first versions of 'The Breaking of the Fellowship' and commences work on the early chapters of <i>The Two Towers</i> .
<b>9 February 1942</b>	After this date 'The King of the Golden Hall' is written.
<b>c. April 1942</b>	Tolkien writes <i>Leaf by Niggle</i> .
<b>Mid 1942</b>	Tolkien writes what becomes 'Helm's Deep', 'The Road to Isengard', 'Flotsam and Jetsam', 'The Voice of Saruman', and 'The Palantír'.
<b>1943</b>	Tolkien is busy with university duties, work as an air-raid warden plus other distractions and is unable to work on <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> .
<b>December 1943</b>	Tolkien writes his final <i>Father Christmas Letter</i> to Priscilla.
<b>April 1944</b>	Tolkien works on 'The Taming of Sméagol', 'The Passage of the Marshes', 'The Black Gate is Closed' and 'Of Herbs and Stewed Rabbit'.
<b>May 1944</b>	Tolkien writes early versions of the later chapters 'The Window on the West', 'The Forbidden Pool', 'Journey to the Cross-Roads', 'The Stairs of Cirith Ungol', 'Shelob's Lair' and 'The Choices of Master Samwise'.
<b>January 1945</b>	<i>Leaf by Niggle</i> is published in the <i>Dublin Review</i> .
<b>23 June 1945</b>	<b>Tolkien becomes Oxford's Merton Professor of English Language and Literature.</b>
<b>December 1945</b>	<i>The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun</i> appears in the <i>Welsh Review</i> .
<b>Christmas 1945</b>	Tolkien works on <i>The Notion Club Papers</i> .
<b>Summer 1946</b>	Tolkien reads his newly-completed <i>The Drowning of Anadûnê</i> to his son, Christopher.
<b>Autumn 1946</b>	Tolkien works on the chapters 'Minas Tirith', 'The Passing of the Grey Company', 'The Muster of Rohan', 'The Siege of Gondor', 'The Battle of the Pelennor Fields', 'The Pyre of Denethor', 'The Houses of Healing', 'The Last Debate' and 'The Black Gate Opens'.

- March 1947** The Tolkien family move to Manor Road, Oxford.
- 4 December 1947** *On Fairy-Stories* is published in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*.
- Aug-Sep 1948** Tolkien drafts the chapters 'The Land of Shadow', 'Mount Doom', 'The Field of Cormallen', 'The Steward and the King', 'Many Partings', 'Homeward Bound', 'The Scouring of the Shire' and 'The Grey Havens'.
- Autumn 1948** Tolkien probably writes a new version of *The Downfall of Númenor*.
- Feb-Oct 1949** Tolkien types up *The Lord of the Rings* making corrections as he works.
- c. Autumn 1949** Tolkien begins negotiations with Milton Waldman at the publishers Collins about publishing *The Lord of the Rings*.
- 20 October 1949** *Farmer Giles of Ham* is published.
- Winter 1949** Tolkien resumes work on *The Lay of Leithian*.
- Early 1950** Tolkien resumes work on the *Quenta Silmarillion* including 'Of Valinor and the Two Trees', 'Of the Coming of the Elves' and 'Of Men and Dwarves'.
- April 1950** Tolkien gives an ultimatum to Sir Stanley Unwin requesting an immediate response in answer to his suggestion to publish both *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. Later that year Waldman informs Tolkien that *The Lord of the Rings* must be cut.
- August 1950** Tolkien probably works on 'Durin's Folk' from Appendix A of *The Lord of the Rings* after this date.
- Summer 1951** Tolkien probably works on the *Annals of Aman*, reworks *The Tale of Years*, and begins to write *The Grey Annals*. He writes a 12-page manuscript which is later named 'Of Maeglin'.
- July-August 1951** The Tolkiens holiday in Ireland.
- 10-13 Sep 1951** Tolkien gives a paper at an international conference in Liège.
- Late 1951** Tolkien probably writes a long letter to Waldman explaining why *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings* are indivisible and interconnected. During this year Tolkien probably works on a prose version of the later part of *Narn i Chîn Húrin* from 'The Return of Túrin' to his death.
- April 1952** Collins, the publishers, decline to publish *The Lord of the Rings*.
- Late August 1952** Tolkien makes some recordings of the Gollum chapter in *The Hobbit*, and some poems from *The Lord of the Rings*.
- September 1952** Tolkien polishes the text of *The Lord of the Rings* including 'Eärendel was a Mariner' and 'The Tale of Aragorn and Arwen'.
- November 1952** Allen & Unwin confirm that they would like to publish *The Lord of the Rings* on a profit-sharing basis.
- Early Spring 1953** Tolkien finishes his translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.
- 30 March 1953** The Tolkiens move to Sandfield Road, Oxford.
- 15 April 1953** Tolkien gives a lecture on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in Glasgow.

- August 1953** The subtitles *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* are chosen for individual volumes of *The Lord of the Rings*.
- October 1953** **Publication of *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son*.**
- 6 December 1953** Tolkien's translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is broadcast on BBC Radio.
- 1954** The early part of the year is taken up with correcting proofs for *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien works on the appendices and index throughout much of the second half of the year.
- 20 July 1954** Tolkien is awarded a D.Litt from Dublin University.
- 29 July 1954** **Publication of *The Fellowship of the Ring*.**
- 11 November 1954** **Publication of *The Two Towers*.**
- 3 December 1954** BBC Radio broadcast *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son*.
- January 1955** Tolkien reworks 'Tal-Elmar' in-between more work on the appendices.
- 30 Jul-14 Aug 1955** Tolkien and Priscilla cross Europe by train for a holiday in Italy.
- 2 October 1955** Tolkien is awarded an honorary doctorate at Liège University.
- 20 October 1955** **Publication of *The Return of the King*.**
- 21 October 1955** Tolkien gives the first O'Donnell lecture, *English and Welsh*.
- Nov-Dec 1955** *The Fellowship of the Ring* is serialised in 6 half-hour episodes on BBC Radio.
- 3 December 1955** Tolkien's poem 'Imram' is published in *Time and Tide*.
- 1956** Tolkien spends an increasing amount of time answering fan mail, and is involved with translators working on *The Lord of the Rings*.
- Nov-Dec 1956** BBC Radio serialises *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* in 6 half-hour episodes.
- 1957** Many Tolkien manuscripts are purchased for £1500 by Marquette University.
- 23 April 1957** Tolkien is elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.
- August 1957** Tolkien wins an International Fantasy Award.
- September 1957** Tolkien meets Forrest J. Ackerman to discuss an animated film of *The Lord of the Rings*.
- 1958** Tolkien is on sabbatical leave for the first part of the year.
- August 1958** Tolkien struggles to complete his edition of *Ancrene Wisse*.
- April 1959** Although he had toyed with the idea previously, at about this time, Tolkien begins developing his round-earth cosmology of Arda.



## Retirement and Later Life

- 5 June 1959** Tolkien gives his valedictory address in Oxford.
- Autumn 1959** Tolkien probably works on 'The Converse of Manwë and Eru', 'Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth' and the 'Reincarnation of Elves'.
- Early 1960** Tolkien probably works on 'Quendi and Eldar', 'Cuivienyarna' and the fragments 'Orcs', 'The Elessar', and 'Concerning Galadriel and Celeborn'.
- March 1960** Tolkien probably writes 'Aldarion and Erendis', 'A Description of the Isle of Númenor' and 'The Line of Elros: Kings of Númenor'.
- 17 August 1961** Pamela Chandler photographs Tolkien for the first time.
- 26 October 1961** The Puffin paperback edition of *The Hobbit* is published.
- 22 November 1962** *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* is published.
- 12 December 1962** An interview with Tolkien is broadcast on BBC TV.
- 8 July 1963** Tolkien's lecture *English and Welsh* is published.
- 22 November 1963** Death of C.S. Lewis.
- 28 May 1964** *Tree and Leaf* is published.
- January 1965** Tolkien expands *Aldarion and Erendis*.
- 20 January 1965** Tolkien is interviewed for 2 hours by Denys Gueroult.  
The Tolkien Society of America is formed.
- c. May 1965** *The Fellowship of the Ring* is published in an unauthorised American paperback version by Ace books.
- late May 1965** Tolkien reworks his translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.
- Summer 1965** Tolkien has to spend a lot of time revising the text of *The Lord of the Rings* to establish copyright in the US.
- July 1965** Unauthorised paperbacks of *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* are published by Ace books.
- August 1965** Tolkien expands 'The Heirs of Elendil' for Appendix A.
- Oct-Dec 1965** Ballantine Books publish the 3 paperback volumes of the revised text of *The Lord of the Rings*.
- 1966** *The Jerusalem Bible* is published, which includes Tolkien's translation of the book of Jonah.
- 22-3 March 1966** The Tolkiens celebrate their Golden Wedding and enjoy a performance of Donald Swann's song-cycle of *The Road Goes Ever on*.
- c. Jun-Sep 1966** Clyde S. Kilby attempts to assist Tolkien with the 'Silmarillion' material.
- 7 August 1966** Tolkien is photographed by Pamela Chandler for the second time, this time entirely in colour.
- September 1966** Publication of *The Tolkien Reader*.

- 14 Sep – 6 Oct 1966** The Tolkiens cruise round the Mediterranean, as far as Venice and back.
- 27 October 1966** The second edition of *The Lord of the Rings* is published.
- November 1966** The Royal Society for Literature awards Tolkien the A.C. Benson silver medal for outstanding services to literature.
- 16 January 1967** Tolkien has finished *Nomenclature of The Lord of the Rings* by this date.
- Late Feb-Mar 1967** Tolkien works on corrections for the first one-volume paperback edition of *The Lord of the Rings* and writes about the *palantíri*.
- c. March 1967** Humphrey Carpenter visits Tolkien, and later describes the encounter in his biography.
- 15 June 1967** Tolkien makes recordings of poems at home for Caedmon records.
- 31 October 1967** *The Road Goes Ever On* is published in the US.
- 9 November 1967** *Smith of Wootton Major* is published.
- 8 January 1968** Tolkien makes a final typescript of 'The New Shadow'.
- 5-9 February 1968** The BBC film Tolkien in various Oxford locations.
- 30 March 1968** The documentary *Tolkien in Oxford* is broadcast on BBC TV.
- Summer 1968** Ronald and Edith move to Poole, near Bournemouth. Tolkien has a bad fall and is hospitalised for over a month.
- Sep-Nov 1968** The BBC broadcasts an 8-part half-hour radio dramatisation of *The Hobbit*.
- October 1968** While helping Tolkien with his new office and library, Joy Hill finds the manuscript of *Bilbo's Last Song*. Tolkien may have written 'The Shibboleth of Fëanor' about this time.
- July 1969** Tolkien probably writes 'The Disaster of the Gladden Fields', 'Cirion and Eorl' and 'Part of the Legend of Amroth and Nimrodel'.
- 6 November 1969** The 'informal' beginning of The Tolkien Society.
- Early 1970** Tolkien makes some changes to the story 'Of Maeglin'.
- 2 May 1970** Tolkien receives an honorary D.Litt from Nottingham University.
- July 1970** Allen & Unwin produce the poster *A Map of Middle-Earth* by Pauline Baynes.
- 16 December 1970** Tolkien's 1965 interview with Denys Gueroult is broadcast on BBC radio for the first time.
- 25 May 1971** Tolkien is photographed by Lord Snowdon.
- 29 November 1971** **Death of Edith Tolkien.**
- 1 January 1972** Tolkien is awarded a CBE in the New Year's honours list.
- 13 March 1972** Tolkien moves to rooms in 21 Merton Street, Oxford.

- 28 March 1972** Tolkien receives his CBE from the Queen at Buckingham Palace.
- 3 June 1972** He is awarded an honorary Doctorate of Letters by Oxford University.
- 27 June 1972** The Tolkien Society's founder, Vera Chapman, meets Tolkien at a reception at Allen & Unwin's offices in London. Tolkien consents to becoming the Society's Honorary President and states, "*If I can help your society in any way, I will.*"
- Nov/Dec 1972** Tolkien probably wrote material which was later published as 'Glorfindel' and 'Círdan'.
- 12 July 1973** Tolkien receives an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters from Edinburgh University.
- August 1973** Tolkien writes about Galadriel and Celeborn – probably the final addition to his legendarium.
- 2 September 1973** **Death of J.R.R. Tolkien from a stomach ulcer.**

### Posthumous Events

- 16 February 1974** The Tolkien Society, at Christopher Tolkien's suggestion, acclaims J.R.R. Tolkien as Honorary President *in perpetuo*.
- 26 November 1974** *Bilbo's Last Song* is published as a poster illustrated by Pauline Baynes.
- September 1975** *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl and Sir Orfeo* translated by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited by Christopher Tolkien is published.
- 2 September 1976** Publication of *The Father Christmas Letters* edited by Baillie Tolkien.
- 5 May 1977** Publication of *J.R.R. Tolkien: a Biography* by Humphrey Carpenter.
- 15 September 1977** **Publication of *The Silmarillion*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.**
- 27 November 1977** Release of *The Hobbit* animated film, directed by Arthur Rankin, Jr and Jules Bass.
- 15 November 1978** Release of *The Lord of the Rings* animated film, directed by Ralph Bakshi.
- 1 November 1979** Publication of *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien*, with foreword and notes by Christopher Tolkien.
- 11 May 1980** Release of *The Return of the King* animated film, directed by Arthur Rankin, Jr and Jules Bass.
- 29 May 1980** Publication of *Poems and Stories*, illustrated by Pauline Baynes.
- 2 October 1980** **Publication of *Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.**
- 8 Mar-30 Aug 1981** Broadcast of *The Lord of the Rings* radio series on the BBC, written by Brian Sibley and Michael Bakewell.
- 20 August 1981** **Publication of *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, edited by Humphrey Carpenter with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien.**

- 1982** Publication of *The Road to Middle-earth* by Tom Shippey.
- 20 September 1982** Publication of *Mr. Bliss*.
- 20 January 1983** Publication of *Finn and Hengest*, edited by Alan Bliss.
- 3 March 1983** Publication of *The Monsters and The Critics*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 27 October 1983** Publication of *The Book of Lost Tales, Part 1* (volume 1 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 16 August 1984** Publication of *The Book of Lost Tales, Part 2* (volume 2 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 22 August 1985** Publication of *The Lays of Beleriand* (volume 3 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 21 August 1986** Publication of *The Shaping of Middle-earth* (volume 4 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 27 August 1987** Publication of *The Lost Road and Other Writings* (volume 5 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 25 August 1988** Publication of *The Return of the Shadow* (volume 6 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 7 September 1989** Publication of *The Treason of Isengard* (volume 7 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 23 August 1990** Publication of *The War of the Ring* (volume 8 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 6 January 1992** Publication of *Sauron Defeated* (volume 9 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien. Publication of *The Tolkien Family Album* by John and Priscilla Tolkien.
- 17-24 Aug 1992** The Tolkien Society hosts the “J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference” conference to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Tolkien’s birth. The conference was attended by several Tolkiens, including Priscilla and Christopher.
- Aug-Sep 1992** BBC Radio 5 broadcasts *Tales From the Perilous Realm*, which includes: *Farmer Giles of Ham*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, *Leaf by Niggle* and *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*. The latter is an adaptation of the Tom Bombadil chapters from *The Fellowship of the Ring*, and not the 1962 book.
- 23 September 1993** Publication of *Morgoth’s Ring* (volume 10 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 20 October 1994** Publication of *The War of the Jewels* (volume 11 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 27 October 1995** Publication of *J.R.R. Tolkien: Artist & Illustrator* by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull.
- 2 September 1996** Publication of *The Peoples of Middle-earth* (volume 12 in *The History of Middle-earth* series), edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 3 February 1997** Publication of *Tales from the Perilous Realm*.

- 5 January 1998** Publication of *Roverandom*, edited by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull.
- 19 December 2001** Worldwide release of *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* live-action film, directed by Peter Jackson.
- 16 August 2002** Publication of *The Annotated Hobbit* (second edition) by Douglas Anderson.
- 18 December 2002** Worldwide release of *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* live-action film, directed by Peter Jackson.
- 20 October 2003** Publication of *Tolkien and the Great War* by John Garth.
- 17 December 2003** Worldwide release of *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* live-action film, directed by Peter Jackson.
- 11-15 Aug 2005** The Tolkien Society hosts “Tolkien 2005: The Ring Goes Ever On” conference in honour of the 50th anniversary of *The Lord of the Rings*. Priscilla Tolkien gave the opening speech.
- 21 October 2005** Publication of the 50th Anniversary Edition of *The Lord of the Rings*.
- 27 December 2005** Publication of *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader’s Companion* by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull.
- 6 October 2006** Publication of *The J.R.R. Tolkien Companion and Guide* by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull.
- 16 April 2007** **Publication of *The Children of Húrin*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.**
- 1 May 2007** Publication of *The History of the Hobbit Part 1: Mr Baggins*, edited by John D. Rateliff.
- 18 June 2007** Publication of *The History of the Hobbit Part 2: Return to Bag End*, edited by John D. Rateliff.
- 1 July 2008** Publication of *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*, edited by Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson.
- 3 May 2009** Online release of *The Hunt for Gollum* live-action fan film, directed by Chris Bouchard.
- 5 May 2009** Publication of *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 1 December 2009** Online release of *Born of Hope* live-action fan film, directed by Kate Madison.
- 27 October 2011** Publication of *The Art of the Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien* by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull.
- 16-20 Aug 2012** The Tolkien Society hosts “The Return of the Ring” conference in honour of the 75th anniversary of *The Hobbit*. Michael Tolkien was a guest speaker.
- 14 December 2012** Worldwide release of *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* live-action film, directed by Peter Jackson.
- 21 May 2013** Publication of *The Fall of Arthur*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 13 December 2013** Worldwide release of *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* live-action film, directed by Peter Jackson.
- 22 May 2014** Publication of *Beowulf: A Translation and Commentary, together with Sellic Spell*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.
- 17 December 2014** Worldwide release of *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies* live-action film, directed by Peter Jackson.

- 27 August 2015** Publication of *The Story of Kullervo*, edited by Verlyn Flieger.
- 8 October 2015** Publication of *The Art of The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien* by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull.
- 7 April 2016** Publication of *A Secret Vice: Tolkien on Invented Languages*, edited by Dimitra Fimi and Andrew Higgins.
- 22 September 2016** Publication of *The Hobbit Facsimile First Edition*.
- 3 November 2016** Publication of *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*, edited by Verlyn Flieger.
- 4 May 2017** **Publication of *Beren and Lúthien*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.**
- 13 November 2017** Amazon announce they have secured the rights to produce a five-season TV series of *The Lord of the Rings*. They subsequently announce it will be set in the Second Age.
- 6 April 2018** The International Tapestry Museum in Aubusson, France, unveils its first tapestry of Tolkien's artwork: "Bilbo comes to the Huts of the Raft-Elves". It is the first of 14 tapestries with the final one unveiled in 2021.
- 1 Jun-28 Oct 2018** The Bodleian Library holds an exhibition of Tolkien's manuscripts, "Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth".
- 30 August 2018** **Publication of *The Fall of Gondolin*, edited by Christopher Tolkien.**
- 3 May 2019** A biopic of Tolkien's early life, *Tolkien*, directed by Dome Karukoski, is released.
- 7-11 August 2019** The Tolkien Society hosts "Tolkien 2019" conference in honour of the 50th anniversary of the Society. Tom Shippey, Christina Scull, Wayne Hammond, Dimitra Fimi, Alan Lee, Ted Nasmith, Brian Sibley and John Garth are in attendance.
- 22 October 2019** The Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF) in Paris opens the exhibition "Tolkien, voyage en Terre du Milieu".
- 16 January 2020** Christopher Tolkien dies.
- 16 February 2020** The BNF exhibition "Tolkien, voyage en Terre du Milieu" closes.
- 29 October 2020** The Centenary Edition of *Letters from Father Christmas* is published.
- 10 June 2021** New Line Cinema and Warner Bros. announce a new anime film, *The War of the Rohirrim*, is in development. It will be set during the time of Helm Hammerhand, 250 years before the events of *The Lord of the Rings*.
- 2 September 2021** Publication of *The Nature of Middle-earth*, edited by Carl Hostetter.
- 19 January 2022** Amazon announces their forthcoming television series will be called "*The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*" and will premiere on 2 September.
- 28 February 2022** Priscilla Tolkien dies.
- 24 June 2022** Publication of *The Great Tales Never End: Essays in Memory of Christopher Tolkien*, edited by Catherine McIlwaine.

- 19 August 2022** The exhibition “J.R.R. Tolkien: The Art of the Manuscript” opens at Marquette University.
- 2 September 2022** Amazon’s *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* series premieres.
- 10 November 2022** Publication of *The Fall of Númenor*, edited by Brian Sibley.
- 23 December 2022** The exhibition “J.R.R. Tolkien: The Art of the Manuscript” at Marquette University closes.

### Acknowledgements

This timeline was compiled by Tolkien Society member Michael Flowers. References include:

- Humphrey Carpenter, *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography*
- Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, “Addenda and Corrigenda to Our Writings”
- Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, *The J.R.R. Tolkien Companion & Guide*
- Tolkien Gateway, “Writings by year”