



SÄNDNINGSDATUM: 2013-11-23  
PRODUCENT: PAMELA TAIVASSALO WIKHOLM

ENGELSKA  
PROGRAMMANUS

PROGRAMNR: 103173ra4

# The Legends of King Arthur

## The Knights of the Round Table

### Script and Word list

#### Keith Foster:

Once upon a time there were one hundred knights and a round table.

The knights were men of courage, honour, dignity, courtesy, and nobleness.

They protected ladies and damsels, honoured and fought for kings, and undertook dangerous quests.

The table was round so that no one person, not even King Arthur himself, would be able to sit at the head of such a table. Everyone who sat around the table was seen as an equal.

“Thou must keep thy word to all and not be feeble of good believeth and faith.”

Could King Arthur trust every knight around the Round Table?

#### Cliff Eastabrook:

After Arthur becomes King of all the Britons and he's travelling around, he meets with King Leodegrance. And of course Leodegrance's daughter Guinevere, who is of great beauty, if a little flighty. But she captures Arthur's heart and he loves her dearly.

He asks Merlin about her, and Merlin, being wise and able to see forward, says: “Do not set your heart on this girl. Beautiful as she is, there is only trouble there. She will cause destruction to the kingdom.”

**courtesy** *artighet, hövlighet*

**damsel** *ung ogift kvinna, ungmö*

**quest** *sökande*

**feeble** *svag*

**flighty** *oberäknelig, flyktig, pimpinett*



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But Arthur, as so often happens, does not heed his advice on this occasion. He marries Queen Guinevere and at first this brings him good fortune, for Leodegrance sends a dowry with her of a hundred knights. And more than this, he sends, as a gift to Arthur, a table. A vast, round table.

**dowry** *hemgift*

And this becomes the Round Table at which Arthur and his knights sit. For seeing the round table, Arthur says: "This is the kingdom I would like to make, where all men are treated as equal and no one acts as a tyrant above the others."

And when the Knights of the Round Table first convene, he says: "You will conduct yourselves in this way. All women and children are under your protection and you shall do them no harm, and your first duty is to do good and be kind."

**convene** *samlas*

**KF:**

The Knights of the Round Table play an important part in the story and legend of King Arthur.

The Arthurian legend revolves around the code of chivalry that King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table followed. The basis for the code of chivalry were honour, honesty, valour and loyalty.

**revolve** *kretsas*

**chivalry** *ridderlighet*

**valour** *tapperhet, mod*

**loyalty** *lojalitet*

One could say that King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table were "brothers in arms". No one can sit at the head of the table if the table is round. The Round Table at Camelot enforced the concept of equality.

**enforce** *tvinga fram*

**equality** *jämlikhet*

**King Arthur (Graham Chapman):**

Camelot!

**Sir Galahad (Michael Palin):**

Camelot!

**Sir Lancelot (John Cleese):**

Camelot!

**Patsy (Terry Gilliam):**

It's only a model.



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**King Arthur (Graham Chapman):**

Shh! Knights, I bid you welcome to your new home. Let us ride to Camelot!

**SONG: “KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE (CAMELOT SONG)” – MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL**

*We're knights of the round table  
 We dance whene'er we're able  
 We do routines and chorus scenes  
 With footwork impeccable  
 We dine well here in Camelot  
 We eat ham and jam and spam a lot*

**Pamela Taivassalo Wikholm:**

Tintagel is believed to have been King Arthur’s castle. I met Matt Ward from the English Heritage.

**Matt Ward:**

It must have been a seat of someone quite important, an ancient Cornish king. We don’t know who that king was, we’re not sure if it was King Arthur, but in 1998, there was a group of university students from Glasgow University and they were doing some excavations. And what they found, they found this piece of slate and it had this engraving and writing on it. And what it basically said, in mixed Latin and ancient Cornish, it said that there was this guy called Arthur who’d built a building up on the island.

Now, it doesn’t mean to say that it was King Arthur, but there’s evidence that in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> century, there was a guy called Arthur or Arthneu who’d built a building up on the top of the castle.

Now, when you look at the name Arthur and you look at Arthus, Arthneu, they’re all derivatives of the same name. The “art” part – a-r-t of Arthur – means “the bear”. You know, there was loads of different tribes of Celts all living around and maybe all of them had an “Arthur the Bear” as their big warrior.

**impeccable** *felfri, oklanderlig*

**spam** *köttkonserv (spiced ham= spam)*

**Cornish** *kelter bosatta i sydvästra England i det område som nu heter Cornwall*

**excavation** *utgrävning*

**slate** *skiffersten*

**engraving** *inristning*

**derivative** *avledning (ordbildning)*



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I reckon if you came here in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, I reckon if you shouted “Oi, Arthur,” maybe twenty people would all stick their hand up and go “Hello”. So maybe historically, there were lots and lots of Arthurs and down through generations, these stories of this guy Arthur have been passed down and merged into one, and out of it you’ve got this great king King Arthur.

**pass down** gå i arv

So when Geoffrey wrote his book in 1136, people loved King Arthur, and then the kind of legend slumbered slightly. And then there was a guy called Sir Thomas Malory who wrote *Le Morte d’Arthur* in 1485.

**slumber** slumra

That was the time in English history, of the time of chivalry and the time of knights, and so people were jousting, people wore plate armour. And Malory updated the stories of King Arthur for that period in history and created this romantic King Arthur with all the legends and all the quest for the Holy Grail.

**plate armour** rustning av skiffersten

**KF:**

Anon withal came there upon him two great giants, well-armed all save the heads, with two horrible clubs in their hands.

Sir Lancelot put his shield afore him and put the stroke away of the one giant, and with his sword he clave his head asunder.

**clave** klöv

**asunder** sönder

When his fellow saw that, he ran away as if he were wood, for fear of the horrible strokes, and Lancelot after him with his might, and smote him on the shoulder, and clave him to the navel.

**smote** träffade

Then Sir Lancelot went into the hall, and there came afore him three score ladies and damsels, and all kneeled unto him, and thanked God and him of their deliverance

“For Sir,” said they, “the most party of us have been here since seven years their prisoners, and we are all great gentlewomen born.”



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“And blessed be the time, Knight, for thou hast done the most worship that ever did knight in this world, that will bear record.”

“And we pray you tell us your name, that we may tell our friends who delivered us out of prison.”

“Fair damsel,” he said, “my name is Sir Lancelot du Lake.”

**PTW:**

Sir Lancelot falls in love with King Arthur’s wife Queen Guinevere, and there we have maybe the most famous medieval love triangle in literature.

Queen Guinevere and Sir Lancelot’s betrayal of King Arthur was often considered as having led to the downfall of the kingdom.

The French author Chrétien de Troyes added Lancelot to Arthur’s court as a Knight of the Round Table.

Not everyone is happy with the inclusion of Sir Lancelot to the saga of King Arthur. Our storyteller Cliff Eastabrook:

**CE:**

For all the whole Arthurian cycle has had really strong mythological underlay. Most of what we have now is not in fact folk tale, it’s literary constructions. And within these, it has been used because it’s a popular story, for all sorts of political ends.

Various times changes are made to it by people to say: “These people are bad, those people are good.” The worst one from my point of view is the whole inclusion of Lancelot. Lancelot in fact starts life as a Frankish hero in his own right, has his own stories and has nothing to do with the Arthurian collection at all.

Eventually, Chrétien de Troyes, a French writer, inserts Lancelot, a French knight, into the story and makes him the lover of the British queen.

underlay underlag



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Now, it's very clear, at a time in the Middle Ages when Britain and France were at war on an almost permanent basis, that this is a political move, that placing a French knight cuckolding the British king, and making him the best knight of all the knights, the finest, the strongest, etc., is having a joke on the British. And he's there for purely political purposes, and the whole thing is just terrible. Even his name is a dodgy sex pun.

**PTW:**

Sir Lance-a-lot?

**CE:**

Yes, exactly.

**PTW:**

I mean, you read the modern stories of today, you can find the legacy of King Arthur almost anywhere.

**CE:**

Yes. It turns up... Of course there are elements of it in the classics, *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*. It's there within that and Dumbledore is clearly a Merlin-style character. If we place Harry in the role of Arthur, then Ron effectively is actually Lancelot. Yeah, they do a much better job on that love triangle in *Harry Potter*, I think. Yes, *Game of Thrones*... You can even see echoes of it in *Star Trek*, for instance, where Spock plays Merlin to Kirk's Arthur.

**PTW:**

Wise man, old wise man helping a young boy, a good guy, and they're fighting together against evil.

**CE:**

Yes, yes. It's the classic story, it's the hero tale. There are so many elements of classic story... You can, some people just start the story with Arthur as Kay's squire. Poor boy done good. But like so many other stories of that nature, there's the bit beforehand, where actually he's of noble birth. He becomes poor, then he becomes wealthy and powerful again. And that's a classic story arc that gets used again and again.

**cuckolding** göra till en  
bedragen äkta man

**dodgy sex pun** snuskig  
erotisk ordlek

**lance** genomborra, sticka  
med lansett



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**KF:**

In this programme, you heard Cliff Eastabrook, Matt Ward and myself, Keith Foster. Pamela Taivassalo Wikholm produced the programme. Ingela Håkansson was the sound engineer. And if you wish to know more, please go to [UR.se](http://UR.se) and look for *The Legends of King Arthur*.