

**A FORGOTTEN GOD REMEMBERED:
THE WAYLAND SMITH LEGEND IN
*KENILWORTH AND PUCK OF POOK'S HILL***

J.S. Mackley

Hidden away in a grove of trees, not far from the B4507 and the villages of Uffington and Compton Beauchamp in Berkshire, is a Neolithic burial site. For the last millennium this site has been associated with a mythological smith named Wayland. Previously it had been called 'Wayland Smith's cave'; however, at least since the sixteenth century, it has been called *Wayland's Smithy* (Spinage 3). In the nineteenth century, there was an unprecedented interest in attempting to preserve and interpret antiquities and listen to the voices from long ago. As well as the restoration of Wayland's Smithy, these understandings included the reconstruction of a seventh-century whalebone casket and a translation of a tenth-century Anglo-Saxon elegiac poem called *Deor*. Together these items hinted at the dissemination of the legend of Weland the Smith from Scandinavia where it is told in a poem called *Volundarkviða* found in a collection of Old Norse poems known as the *Elder Edda*. It also suggests his importance in Saxon mythology.

This paper will Wayland as a diasporic character, both in terms of 'spatial diaspora' – someone who has moved on from his place of origin, perhaps for colonial reasons or through exile (Cohen 6). Wayland will also be considered in terms of 'temporal diaspora' – a 'remembered life' which is a particular theme in the first chapter of Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill*. In this, the character of Puck, although described as the 'oldest Old Thing in England', is still a visitor to the shores; likewise, Weland is the conquering God who

enforces his rituals onto the people and is remembered from the old times (Peeren 68).

A note on the name

In ninth and tenth century poems, for example, *Deor*, the name *Weland* is used; this is the Anglo-Saxon version of the name *Völundr*, which is how he appears in the Scandinavian poems. Likewise, the Neolithic burial mound near Uffington is referred to as *welandes smiððan*; however, by 1586, Camden's *Britannia* refers to the legend of Wayland Smith. The character is called *Wayland Smith* throughout Scott's *Kenilworth* (1821), although this is an allusion to the legend. Finally, when the character first appears in Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* he is called *Weland*; however, towards the end of the chapter 'a year or two before the Conquest' he complains 'I'm not even Weland now... They call me Wayland-Smith' (53). Kipling, it appears, recognised that there was a shift in the character's name around 1000AD. For the purposes of this discussion, the name has been used to correspond with how the authors of each book have used it in relation to the time it has been used. Etymologically, the name 'Weland', as Kipling uses it, derives from a Proto-Germanic verb **welan* which probably meant to work dexterously, with craft; the Old Norse word 'Völundr' gave words such as *vela* 'create, construct with art' (J.Bradley 41). Conversely, the name 'Wayland' is closer to the English 'wily' which is how Scott uses it (Lowy 143).

The stones

In his 1859 book, *The Scouring of the White Horse*, Thomas Hughes criticises Sir Walter Scott, arguing that he should have known better than to claim the Danish King, Bagsecg, killed at the Battle of Ashdown in 871, was buried at the site of Wayland's Smithy. Ironically, Scott had learned the legend from Mrs Hughes, wife of the vicar of Uffington, who was Thomas Hughes's grandfather (Grinsell 1991 235).

Woolner argues of Scott that 'it is evident that he never saw Wayland's Smithy for himself' (103). The description of Wayland's Smithy being the burial site of Bagsecg is described in a 1738 letter from the Rev. Francis Wise, a learned antiquarian and eventually the Radcliffe librarian at Oxford, to Dr Richard Mead, a physician and Patron of the Arts (Wise 34–35). It is also found in Camden's *Britannia* (1586) where the burial place of 'Baereg' is described as

A parcel of stones, less than a mile from the hill, set on edge, enclosing a piece of ground somewhat raised. On the east side of the southern extremity stand three squarish flat stones, of about four or five feet over either way, supporting a fourth, and now called by the vulgar *Wayland Smith*, from an idle tradition about an invisible smith replacing lost horse-shoes there.

Hughes accepted that the 'better opinion amongst antiquaries' was that the Long Barrow was over a thousand years old, but perhaps he hadn't realised just how old (157).

The legend of Wayland's Smithy probably developed in England when the Saxons settled in the mid-fifth century and their mythology gave a coherent purpose for the 'cave' that was already ancient. Wayland's Smithy is a Neolithic burial site or cromlech. The oldest part of the tomb, a stone and timber box, dates back some three and



Wayland's Smithy, Berkshire. Photograph © J.S. Mackley

a half millennia BC. It sits on the Ridgeway, a road which follows the ancient chalk route used by prehistoric man from Overton Hill near Avebury and West Kennett to Ivinghoe Beacon in the Chiltern Hills and which has been travelled for five thousand years. Eventually, a larger barrow was constructed in the style of older monuments such as the West Kennet long barrow near Avebury. The similarity meant the builders could claim a long ancestral connection to the land.

Clearly the site was considered important: it is mentioned as a boundary marker in Saxon charters dating from 955AD (Stevenson I, 158–9). Further along the Ridgeway, Wayland is associated with another boundary mark on Whiteleaf Hill, near Princes Risborough in Buckinghamshire, called *Welandes Stocc*, which we can conjecture was a Neolithic fertility symbol like the Cerne Abbas giant, although the image has been Christianised now to the Whiteleaf Cross. Presumably, at some time in the fourteenth century, when monks came to the area, they adapted the pagan symbol into something more acceptable to them. Ancient monuments were often used as boundary markers because they had a spiritual, perhaps even supernatural purpose. Boundaries are where the fabric between this world and the otherworld becomes thinner. Wayland has a foot in both worlds.

The origins of the legend

Francis Wise's 1738 letter to Richard Mead outlined the legend of Wayland's Smithy:

At this place lived formerly an invisible Smith, and if a traveller's Horse had lost a Shoe upon the road, he had no more to do than to bring the Horse to this place with a piece of money, and leaving both there for some little time, he might come again and find the money gone, but the Horse new shod (37).

In addition to Wise's discussion of the old legend, there was a further story that claimed that if the traveller tried to see the smith at work, then the charm would fail. When Wayland's Smithy was excavated in 1921, two iron bars, used as currency during the Iron Age, were discovered. One may speculate that, at one time, a smith *did* work here, and was paid in iron, long after the tomb had ceased to function as a burial mound (Davidson 1958 147).

Legend describes Weland as a craftsman: aspects of his life are remembered in the first fragment of the Anglo-Saxon epic *Waldere*, which dates from around 1000AD. In this poem Hildegyth tells Waldere that no one should ever fear if they hold Munning (another name for Mimming) a sword forged by Weland (*welandes geweorc*) for Widia, his son. The legend of Weland was also known to Alfred the Great who, in the ninth century, translated Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* from Latin to Anglo-Saxon and included the lines:

Where now are the bones of the famous and wise goldsmith,
Weland? I call him wise, for the man of skill can never lose his
cunning, and can no more be deprived of it than the sun may be
moved from his station. Where are now Weland's bones, or who
knows now where they are?

It is in the ninth-century Anglo-Saxon elegy *Deor* that we find sketchy details of Weland's life:

Weland, by way of the trammels upon him, knew persecution ...
often he met with misfortune once Nithhad lad laid constraints
upon him, pliant sinew-fetters upon a worthier man ... To Beadohild
her brothers' death was not so sore upon her spirit as her own
situation, in that she had clearly realised that she was pregnant.
Never could she confidently consider what needs become of that
(S. Bradley 364).

Deor describes how Weland was captured by King Nithhad, and maimed so that he wouldn't escape. However, Weland killed Nithhad's sons and impregnated his daughter having first secured a promise from Nithhad that no harm would ever come to her. In another version of the story, Weland's brother, Egil, fashions wings from feathers and Weland is able to fly to safety. As well as the Norse *Elder Edda* poems, these stories are told through the images on the Franks Casket and the Swedish Ardre stones.



Franks Casket Front Panel © Trustees of the British Museum

The Franks Casket is a whalebone casket, which was found by Augustus Franks in 1857. It is now held in the British Museum except for one panel which is in Florence. Originally made in Northumbria or Yorkshire around the first half of the seventh century, the casket shows scenes from the Bible, History, and Classical and Teutonic mythology. The left hand side of the front panel shows three scenes from the Weland legend as it appears in the *Elder Edda* and where the character is called Völundr. The smith, who learned his craft from the mountain dwarves, is maimed by king Nithhad. He fashions trinkets from the bones, and goblets from the skulls, of his adversary's

children: their decapitated bodies lie at his feet. Nithhad's daughter Beaduhild is seen bringing the cup of drugged beer. Völundr will rape and impregnate her. Having achieved his revenge over his enemy, Völundr can now leave. Egil, Völundr's brother, kills the birds so that Völundr can make the wings to fly to freedom (Swanton 28).



Photo: Bengt A Lundberg / National Historical Museum, Stockholm

The story is told on one of the Ardre stones which dates from the eighth or ninth century. These are a collection of rune and image stones from Gotland, Sweden, the most famous of which is Ardre VIII. Ardre VIII includes images of Völundr including the forge where he worked, the decapitated sons, Nithhad's daughter, Beaduhild, and

finally, Völundr escaping with wings (Bailey 104–5). In these versions of the legend, Völundr represents diaspora because he is taken captive in a foreign land and is unable to return to his place of origin.

Wayland's skill is described in *The Vita Merlini*, written by Geoffrey of Monmouth between 1148 and 1151. In this story, the King of Cumberland attempts to assuage Merlin with priceless gifts, gems and cups fashioned by Wayland: *pocula qu(a)e sculpsit Guilandus* (Christie 289; J.Bradley 42; Gillespie 141). Not only does this correspond with the *Volundarkviða* legend where Völundr fashions goblets from the skulls of his enemy's sons. It also links Wayland with King Arthur's father Uther: in the *Scouring of the White Horse*, Hughes adds a note that 'E. Martin Atkins esq., of Kingston Lisle', a local landowner involved with the scouring of the horse, had opened the barrows nearest to the Horse. He dismisses the idea that this was the burial place of 'Bægseek' and posits that one could 'assume that our friend Uter Pendragon's remains had originally been deposited here, but that he had been disturbed in his repose by the decapitation of the barrow' (Hughes 25). Writers have also tried to forge links between Wayland and Arthurian mythology, likening Weland with the Celtic smith Gofannon, who forged a sword for King Arthur called *Caladfwlch*. This name became the Latinate *Caliburnus* with Geoffrey of Monmouth in the *History of the Kings of Britain* and later was influenced by the French to become *Excalibur*. However, one of the most popular transmissions of the legend was the way that the story was adapted by Sir Walter Scott in *Kenilworth*.

Exploiting the Legend: Kenilworth

Written by Sir Walter Scott in 1821, *Kenilworth* is set around 1575 ('the eighteenth [regnal year] of Queen Elizabeth'). The subtext of the

novel is the transition from the old ways of Catholicism to the considerably newer Anglicanism. The inclusion of the Wayland legend in *Kenilworth* demonstrates the credibility of the story 'even when applied to times so late as those of Elizabeth Tudor' (Christie 289).

The reader is introduced to the legend of Wayland in *Kenilworth* when the Cornish Knight, Tressilian, becomes lost when travelling from Cumnor to the public road to Marlborough. After his horse loses a shoe, he enquires in a village at a cottage 'of rather superior aspect' (86) where he might find a blacksmith. The descriptions of Wayland from Gammer Sludge, the landlady, and Erasmus Holiday, the schoolmaster for the Vale of the White Horse, are informed by either local superstition or learning. In the first instance, Gammer Sludge's accounts border on melodrama: 'It is a mere sending of a sinful soul to the evil un ... the sending of a living creature to Wayland Smith' (87). Gammer Sludge claims that she has 'sown a sprig of witch's elm' in her grandson's doublet (92) and 'a spring of the mountain-ash' in his collar (93). These were considered as wards to protect against sorcery.

Holiday, despite having a more rational view of the subject, also describes Wayland in terms of superstition, referring to Wayland Smith as 'the best *faber ferrarius*' within miles of the village (87). While it is common for Holiday to employ Latin phraseology, his interpretation relies on Alfred the Great's translation of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*: Alfred took Boethius's Latin phrase 'the bones of the faithful Fabricus' (*fidelis ossa Fabricii*) and adopted a Platonic approach where names and characteristics are interchangeable; hence, from the Latin, the proper name 'Fabricius' becomes an appellative for *faber*, 'Smith' (Davidson 1958 145). Consequently, Alfred's translation reads 'Where now are the bones of the famous and wise goldsmith, Weland?' When considering the battle of Ashdown in the Vale of the White Horse which was fought by Alfred in 871 against the invading

Danes, logically, Alfred connects the word 'Smith' with the local legend of Wayland.

While Holiday does not directly accuse Wayland of being a practitioner of Dark Arts, he does suggest guilt by association: Wayland was servant to Doctor Demetrius Doboobie, who, although sceptical about his qualifications, Holiday cites his occupations as including being 'a brother of the Rosy Cross ... He cured wounds by salving the weapon instead of the sore – told fortune by palmistry – discovered stolen goods by the sieve and shears ... and affected to convert good lead into sorry silver' (90). Thus, Holiday suggests that in addition to palmistry and dowsing, Doboobie was engaged in alchemy, turning base metals into precious metals, and was a member of the theosophic brotherhood of the Rosicrucians, and at the time that *Kenilworth* is set, the order was limited to eight members (Black 306). Tressilian is unimpressed and summarises Doboobie's career as 'a quack salve and common cheat' (90). However, as Holiday explains, the 'evil reputation' and sudden disappearance of Wayland's master 'prevented any, excepting the most desperate of men, to seek any advice or opinion from the servant' (91). Wayland does not reveal himself to anyone and, furthermore, like the order of the Rosicrucians, he receives no money for his work, which Gammer Sludge argues is 'a sure sign he deals with Satan ... since no Christian would ever refuse the wages of his labour' (91).

Tressilian is led to Wayland by Dickie, Gammer Sludge's grandson, also called Flibbertigibbet, 'a queer, shambling, ill-made urchin' (92). The name 'Flibbertigibbet', which is an onomatopoeic word in the Yorkshire dialect meaning 'an overly talkative person', is also used in *King Lear* (KL III.IV.112; IV.I.64). Here, Shakespeare uses the names of the devils that he finds in Samuel Harslett's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603), a treatise that condemned the fabrication of

demonic possession and exorcism. In effect, the theatricals summoning of the supernatural smith would be considered a similar fraud. In *Kenilworth*, Dickie Sludge admits that his 'play-fellows' call him 'hobgoblin'; consequently, by association, the name Flibbertigibbet can be linked with Puck: 'those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck' (*MND* II.I.40). Thus Flibbertigibbet directs the characters to the story of Wayland just as Puck orchestrates the events shown to the children in *Puck of Pook's Hill*. Scott claims not to have known a local legend around the Vale of the White Horse that concerns Wayland's apprentice: an imp called Flibbertigibbet or Snivelling. This imp may correspond with the dwarves who taught Völundr his craft in the *Volundarkviða* (Woolner 106; Spinage 35). In the legend Wayland sends his apprentice on an errand to buy some nails; however, he tarries, looking at birds' eggs instead. The apprentice returns hours later having forgotten his errand. Enraged, Wayland throws a giant sarsen stone at him, which pins the imp, and unable to move, he sits crying on the stone. An alternative version of the legend is that Wayland threw the apprentice far into the Vale where he became petrified. Hence there is an area near Odstone Farm known as 'Snivelling Corner' where a Neolithic boundary stone can be found.

The smithy to which Dickie Sludge leads Tressilian is described as being in a 'bare moor' with a 'ring of stones, with the great one in the midst, like a Cornish Barrow' (96). This largest stone, Sludge explains, is Wayland Smith's counter and he describes how the charm works:

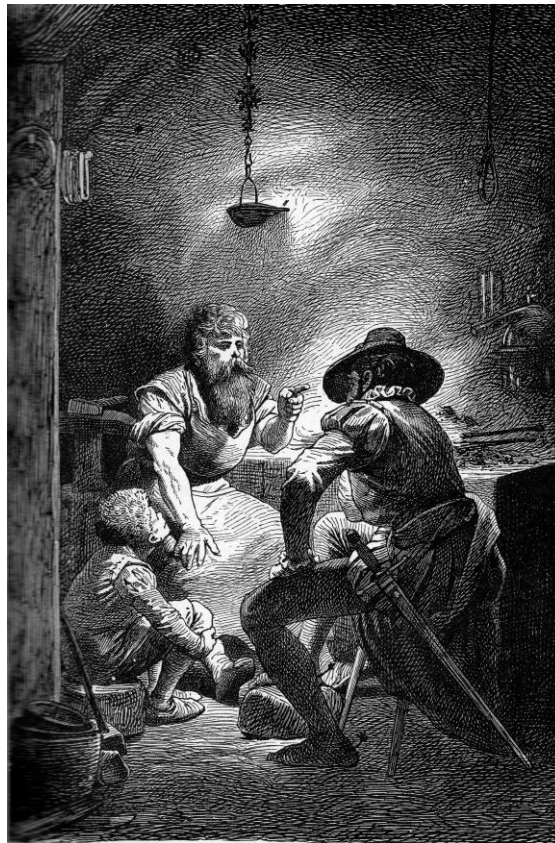
You must tie your horse to that upright stone that has the ring in't, and then you must whistle three times, and lay me down your silver groat on that flat stone, walk out of the circle, sit down on the west side of that little thicket of bushes, and take heed you look neither right nor left for ten minutes, or so long as you shall

hear the hammer clink, and whenever it ceases ... come into the circle, you will find your money gone and your horse shod (96).

Although sceptical, Tressilian attempts to comply with this 'mummery', but feels, as he hears 'the light stroke of a hammer', that this is a 'concerted stratagem' (98). He rushes to confront the smith who he finds 'in a farrier's leathern apron, but otherwise fantastically attired in a bear-skin dressed with the fur on, and a cap of the same, which almost hid the sooty and begrimed features of the wearer' (98–99).

When challenged, Wayland replies with grandiose allusions to his supernatural role using alchemical terms to inflate his importance, but which ends with 'quell, crush and consume' (98), a reference to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (MND V.I.264–6), but which Tressilian dismisses this threat as a 'gipsy cant' (99).

Wayland Smith, it transpires, is no more supernatural than Tressilian or Dickie Sludge, and the illusion of Wayland's mysterious appearance in the 'bare moor' was performed by a trapdoor which leads to an underground laboratory built by Doboobie where he could practice his alchemy and astrology. It is revealed that Wayland and Tressilian have met before, although Tressilian commands 'peace' when Wayland speaks on the subject. When the smith discusses his own past, it emerges that, although he had trained as a blacksmith, Wayland became apprentice to a juggler, then became a juggler in his own right before taking to the stage. From his blacksmith training, he recognises that the preparation of medicines for horses can also be applied to humans: 'the seeds of all maladies are the same' (103). Wayland explains that, because of his association with Doboobie, he was cursed and assaulted and yet still needed to work 'amongst these ignorant boors, by practising upon their silly fears' (105).



Dickie Sludge, Wayland and Tressilian from an edition c. 1877 of
Kenilworth (published by Marcus Ward)

The legend surrounding Wayland at the Neolithic burial site, which was already associated with a supernatural smith, and the ritual of summoning him to perform his trade, is perpetuated by Dickie Sludge – ‘Flibbertigibbet who hath spread my renown’. Thus, Scott intrudes into the narrative to delineate that Wayland Smith ‘was the name this adept had adopted’ (105), although he later explains that the character’s real name was Lancelot Wayland (126). Consequently, Tressilian charges them to follow him for a short time ‘till thy pranks here are forgotten’: Wayland smartens his appearance and soon the legend becomes inconsequential to the narrative. However, through Wayland’s experiences, we see that he has become an ‘occupational diaspora’, moving from one career to the next, his environment

constantly changing. Ultimately, he is able to apply the knowledge and his experience as he moves away from the home he has created at the burial mound and travels with Tressilian.

The character who professes to be named Wayland Smith in Walter Scott's *Kenilworth* is consciously aware of the tradition of the supernatural smith and his association with the Neolithic burial mound in the Vale of the White Horse. Indeed, when they return through Berkshire, Tressilian wonders if Wayland fears recognition, but Wayland argues that his fame will

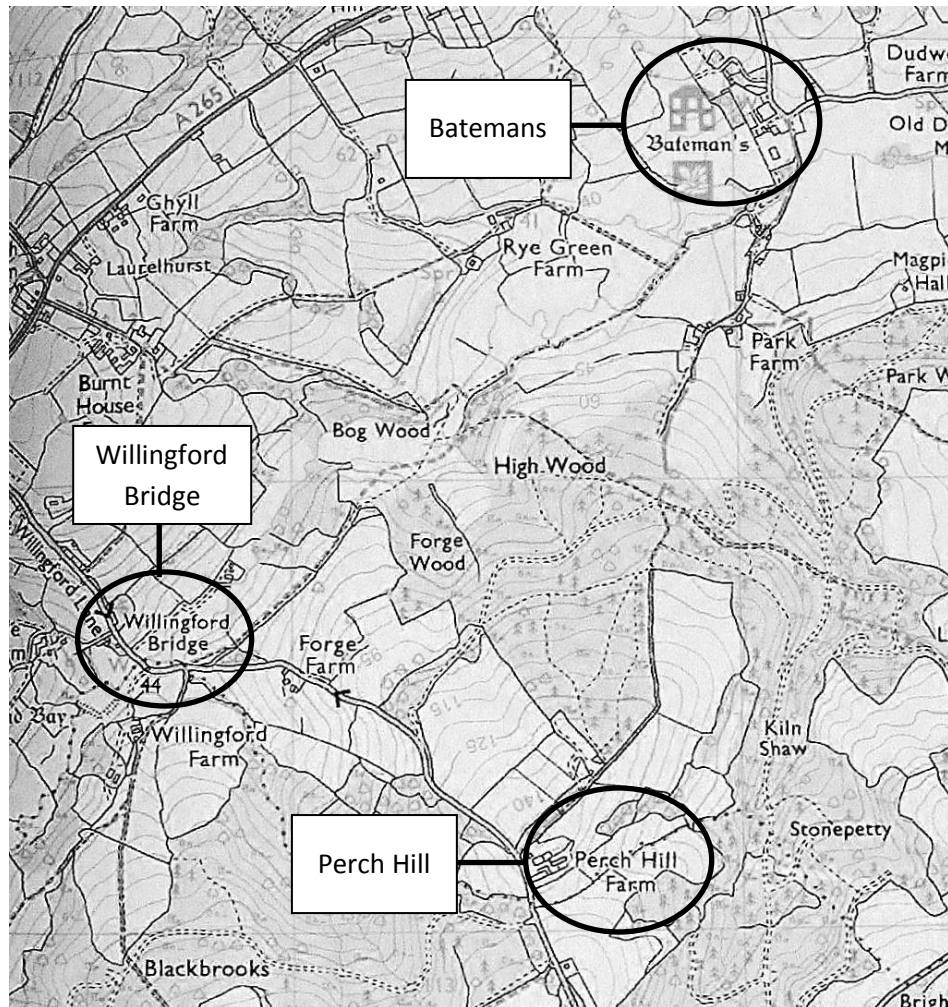
haunt the Vale of the White Horse long after my body is rotten;
and that many a lout ties up his horse, lays down his silver groat,
and pipes like a sailor whistling in a calm, for Wayland to come and
shoe his tit for him (126)

The narrator then suggests that 'an obscure tradition of his [Wayland's] practice in farriery prevails in the Vale of the White Horse even unto this day' (126). Yet, there is no mention of the Scandinavian legends which form the foundation of the Weland story. In *Puck of Pook's Hill*, Kipling does not explain the place from which Weland has originally travelled; however, the legend of the supernatural smith is expanded to explain how the smith came to be shoeing horses for humans.

The legend in *Puck of Pook's Hill*

Puck of Pook's Hill was published in *The Strand* magazine in ten parts between January and October 1906, and, on 8 October, the ten stories and sixteen poems were published as a single volume by MacMillan. The stories present small snapshots of the mythology and history of England, and most particularly, Kipling's Sussex, in a form that the children of the time would have been able to digest, and perhaps

incorporate in their re-enactment plays. Wayland appears in the first chapter, 'Weland's Sword'. Although Wayland is now more traditionally associated with the burial mound near Uffington, Kipling localises the encounters so that they occurred locally to Bateman's near Burwash, where he lived from 1902 until his death in 1936. Sometimes the etymology of his locations is accurate; on other occasions he fictionalises the details to make them correspond with his story. Kipling used the Sussex Archaeological Collections as a source for the local legends; consequently, Pevensey was originally believed to have been known as Peofn's Island; Pook's Hill, as Kipling calls it, was originally 'pucu healh', but it is still known as 'Perch Hill'; and Willingford, which also Kipling suggests is a corruption of 'Wayland's Ford' for the purposes of his story (which is, coincidentally, near Forge Wood), but it is actually associated with the Wynham family; finally, Kipling describes Beacon Hill as Brunanburgh. Brunanburgh itself was the site of a battle between Ælethstan of England against the combined forces of the Scots, the Danes and Norwegians in England around 937, but the battle was probably fought in the north of England. Thus, through the names, Kipling creates the illusion of a link with the country's ancient heritage. However, other names around the country, for example, Lincolnshire, Andover and the Isle of Wight keep their modern names.



Topographical features associated with Wayland near to Batemans.
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The stories in *Puck of Pook's Hill* are framed by Puck himself, more commonly recognised from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He appears when the children practise their play in a meadow where 'a large old fairy Ring of darkened grass ... was the stage' (43). Puck joins in with the children's play, quoting lines from Shakespeare: 'I'll be an auditor,/ An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause' (*MND*, III.i.78–79). In the story, he is initially presented as being indifferent

to the events that he recounts, although, in the case of Wayland, he manipulates events to Wayland's eventual advantage.

Puck appears because the children have 'broken the hills' by performing their play 'three times over, *on* Midsummer Eve, *in* the middle of a Ring, and ... right *under* one of my oldest hills in Old England' (45). He represents the opportunity for the children to experience *England* beyond the confines of their frames of reference. They understand the events about which Puck speaks by referring to their own reading, or what they have been taught at school, while Puck explains events within the confines of what the children can understand, at the expense of other details: for example, he describes how he met Weland on 'a November afternoon in a sleet storm' (51) but does not add the detail of what year it was.

To Kipling's audience, the character of Puck represents a way of re-discovering the ancient past: as with the Victorian interest in medieval culture, there was also widespread interest in the supernatural; however, a belief in woodland sprites was considered more acceptable than a belief in ghosts (Bown 2). These are not *fairies*, a word which C.S. Lewis says has been 'tarnished by Pantomime and bad children's books with worse illustrations' (123). Puck describes 'fairies' as 'made-up things the People of the Hills have never heard of – little buzzflies with butterfly wings and gauze petticoats and shiny stars in their hair' (49), and while Puck doesn't explain what the Old Things are, the fact that they are described as The People of the Hills aligns them with the a Romantic association with the natural world and as such they are more associated with earth-spirits rather than air-spirits.

Puck himself is 'the oldest Old Thing in England' (45). He represents the last link to the forgotten Old England: 'The People of the Hills have all left. I saw them come into Old England and I saw them go' (47). He

will stay until 'Oak, Ash, and Thorn are gone', although he plans to plant 'a lot of acorns'. Nicola Bown observes that the

departure of the fairies is a tradition in itself, a genre of lament for the passage of time and the loss of innocence. Fairies always belong to yesterday, because today's world is corrupt, sophisticated, urbane and disenchanted (163).

Even so, there is a sense of having lost something: Puck knows that all the Old Things are gone, although, ironically, until the children had 'broken the hills', *they* did not realise that something had been lost. However, there is no melancholy in Puck's account of their departure. He observes 'I belong here' and of those who came later 'most of them were foreigners' (50) and opens a discourse with the reader as to what it *means* to be English. Puck himself is a settler, although he remembers when Stonehenge was new. Where he came from is not revealed, although the name of '(a) Puck' is likely to be derived from Teutonic or Old Norse, so perhaps he had been in one of those lands before coming to England, or perhaps it was the otherworld of the Old Things.

If Puck represents Old England, then the children are a representation of 'New England'. In heraldry, on the Royal Coat of Arms, England is represented by two lions: the Imperial Lion *statant gardant*, and the Supporter Lion *rampant gardant*. Thus, Kipling chose two names associated with lions: 'Dan' derives from the Old Testament prophet, and Una from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. However, the children are the descendants of the many races that have traded with, or invaded, or settled, in England including the Phoenicians, Gauls, Jutes, Danes, Frisians and Angles. Each of these races brought their own Gods with them, although Puck observes that 'England is a bad country for Gods' most of whom 'couldn't stand our climate' (50). Those 'Old Things' who stayed 'insisted on being Gods'. In this way

they were enforcing their customs and traditions, their 'temples, and altars, and priests, and sacrifices' on the indigenous population.

Puck describes one of the deities brought over by foreign invaders as Weland, a smith to 'some Gods' as the 'only one Old Thing ... who honestly worked for a living after he came down in the world' (51). Puck describes how Weland made swords and spears and claimed kinship with Thor. Here Kipling, through Puck, is alluding to a number of legends concerning Weland. As a fabled craftsman, he is named as the smith who forged the armour worn by Beowulf, and evidence of his presence in the Scandinavian pantheon survives through such tales as the Old Norse *Volundarkviða*, and, as discussed above, this story is depicted on the Franks Casket and the Swedish Ardre stone.

The account of Weland's arrival in England begins with elements that the children would know, but with altered details. Puck speaks of the local Beacon Hill, but refers to it as Brunanburgh; Pevensey Level towards the south coast of Sussex is described as marshland. He explains that the pirates that brought Weland's image were 'Peofn's men'. Historically, it is not known who Peofn was, but the etymology of the name Pevensey, as discussed above, is 'Peofn's Island'. Writing at the end of the nineteenth century, Jessopp describes that 'some 1,500 years ago a certain Peofn won it and held it' (21). This story is also likely to be a fabrication: William the Conqueror landed in Pevensey Bay; thus, Kipling has merged the legends of the conquering God with the details from the conquering king. However, the story of Peofn is also legendary as the etymology of the name is likely to be Welsh: *pau* (pastureland), *aven* (river), and *aig* (sea). Puck describes the events in a matter-of-fact manner, describing a 'November afternoon in a sleet storm' and the 'pale flame that burning thatch makes'. The pirates 'were burning a village on the Levels' and they had arrived in a 'black thirty-two-oar galley' (51). Weland's image is described as a

'big, black wooden thing with amber beads round its neck ... and there was ice on Weland's lips' (51) The amber perhaps refers to fire worship, with Weland being a smith. So, in order to establish the God on the conquered land, there needs to be a physical presence or effigy: in this instance the God cannot rule through the words of the disciples or by faith alone.

Puck himself cannot explain why he tells the 'Smith of the Gods' that there will be a time 'when I shall meet you plying your trade for hire by the wayside' (51); however, when seeing Puck, Weland begins 'a long chant in his own tongue'. It is most likely that Kipling meant that Puck could understand Weland because of his magical abilities, however, as suggested above, the etymology of the name 'Puck' and the origin of the Weland legend are both Teutonic or Old Norse, so it is possible that Weland is communicating with Puck in a language that Puck himself used before coming to England, and the use of this language is what inspires Puck to recall Weland's mythological heritage.

Leaving Weland for 'about a thousand years', Puck recognises during this time the widespread reputation of Weland's cult with 'temples everywhere – from Lincolnshire to the Isle of Wight' (52). Earlier, Puck mentions how the Old Things demanded sacrifices, whether these were human sacrifices or horses, livestock, or mead, which Puck calls 'metheglin ... I never liked it' (50). However Puck explains the downfall of these cults:

Men don't like being sacrificed at the best of times; they don't even like sacrificing their farm-horses. After a while men simply left the Old Things alone, and the roofs of their temples fell in, and the Old Things had to scuttle out and pick up a living as they could (50).

Thus, it is the demand for tribute that causes the decline in popularity. This is seen in other mythologies where the principal characters evolve

away from being recognised as Gods, first becoming demigods, then heroes, who become exceptional men; so it is that Puck witnesses the Gods become the People of the Hills, who eventually 'flitted off to other places because they couldn't get on with the English for one reason or another' (50-1) or 'were foreigners who couldn't stand the climate' (50). The invading diaspora demand that the conquered natives conform to their rituals, but they are unable to conform to the climate themselves, or indeed, to tolerate the people that they have invaded.

After a millennium, however, Puck observes the image at Weland's temple, and notices that the congregation seemed quite happy. This was unusual: Puck explained that the congregation were usually unhappy until they were assured that the priests would not choose *them* for sacrifice.

It is believed that Weland's Feast Day was the Saxon first day of winter as the sun moves into Sagittarius, a fire sign – this would be 23 November on the modern calendar. November was called Blodmonath by the Saxons – the Blood, or sacrifice, month. Dan asks Puck if the sacrifices were 'people burned in wicker baskets?' (50); this is most likely based on the descriptions in Julius Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* in which he describes the druidic practice of human sacrifice (Julius Caesar 141). The snapshot that we get of the horrifying rituals of sacrifice is understated by Puck, who describes them as 'scandalous', and although Weland 'preferred horses to men' (52), it suggests that human sacrifice *did* occur. Later, the smith admits that he was not a 'gentle God'. The descriptions are, of course, appropriate for a children's book; however there is evidence of human sacrifice in some of the Icelanders' sagas, for example, *Eyrbyggja Saga* which describes a court: 'The circle where the court used to sentence people to be sacrificed can still be seen, with Thor's Stone inside it on which the

victims' backs were broken, and you can still see the blood on the stone' (Pálsson and Edwards 37).

Now, when Puck witnesses the sacrifice, the actions are theatrically symbolic instead of literal: 'When the service began a priest rushed out, dragged a man up to the altar, pretended to hit him on the head with a little gilt axe, and the man fell down and pretended to die' (52).

Likewise, the priests bring a 'splendid white horse' for 'sacrifice'. The original sacrifice, one imagines, may have been similar to the sacrifice for the inauguration of a new king by a tribe in Ulster as described by Gerald of Wales in *The History and Topography of Ireland* (109–10). Gerald explains that the king approaches a mare as a mating stallion. The mare is sacrificed, the flesh cooked, the king then drinks from, and bathes in, the broth, and then eats the flesh. Some commentators observe that Gerald presents his readers with anecdotal evidence, arguing this was only *symbolic* practice in twelfth-century Ireland; however, there are parallels with a Viking ritual, where horses were sacrificed as a symbol of power of virility and the king drank the broth of the cooked horse (Davidson 1988 53–56). The original Wayland legend *may* recall, even in a diluted form, a version of ritual sacrifice. However, in the same way that the human sacrifice that Puck witnesses is a theatrical representation, strands from the horse's mane and tail become a *pars pro toto* sacrifice and together they 'counted the same as if a man and a horse had been killed' (52).

Francis Wise's letter to Dr Mead describes Wayland's Smithy in terms of an altar and argues that 'it is not improbable' that 'these burial mounds were applied to the purpose of sacrificing'. Wise believes that Wayland's Smithy is a *cromlech* and cites the *Danicorum monumentorum* of Olaus Wormius which observes that a single *cromlech* (such as those found in Anglesey) should be considered as 'a Sepulchral Altar, where sacrifices were to be annually performed in

honour of the defunct'. Wormius continues that the Welsh word *cromlech* is derived from the Hebrew *cherem-luach* meaning 'altar stone' (Wise 37).*

After a thousand years, one would have thought that Weland would be considered as a native god. This is not completely addressed by Puck who considers it inevitable that Weland will eventually leave, 'I'd seen too many Gods charging into Old England to get upset about it' (51), and by the time he speaks with the children, he knows that all the Old Things will have left. However, Weland has become part of the native consciousness and Weland himself has demonstrated that he can also *endure* in England, tolerating both the natives and the climate; but, familiarity breeds contempt, and after a millennium, his worship, or at least the *sincerity* of his worship, is in decline. Initially establishing himself as a terrifying God, now, during the sacrifice, he looks 'disgusted and hungry and all he had to satisfy himself was a horrid smell of burning hair' (52). The sacrifice is intended as a token gesture. Weland is powerless to inflict any kind of punishment upon his worshippers.

Weland is a temporal diaspora: we can estimate the time that he arrived in England was around 350 BC. After 'about a thousand years', around 650 AD, Puck describes how he visited one of Weland's temples 'near Andover'. This could potentially be a reference to the Neolithic burial site near Uffington, which is some twenty five miles away. By this time Weland's cult was in decline, and, as described above, the ritual had become more theatrical than ceremonial: ('as much pretence as a dolls' tea party' [52]). Of course, Puck does not use exact figures to describe the passing of time; however the Christian missionary St Birinus arrived in Wessex in 634 and founded

* The etymology of the word is Gaelic: *crum*: curved/concave and *llech*: (flat) stone.

an abbey at Dorchester near Oxford the following year (Woolner 107). This was only forty miles away from Andover, but it is likely that Christianity spread quickly and incorporated the pagan sites into their churches. As Richard Taylor argues, the Pagan and Christian religions co-existed for a while: early Christians built their altars next to pagan sites, purifying them and establishing them as temples of the True God. Later, when churches were built to protect the altars from the elements, the pagan symbols were incorporated into the Church. Thus, people would come to the location where they had always worshipped, except this was now a Christian site (41).

Another 'few hundred years' pass, (which would actually be around 410 years, as Puck manipulates the events that lead to Weland's freedom 'a year or two before the Conquest'). All evidence of Weland and his temple are gone, and the People of the Hills are unable to tell Puck anything about him. Instead, 'there was a Christian bishop in a church there' (52). The Christians are, effectively, a later diasporic group who settle in the land. The irony of the Weland section in *Puck of Pook's Hill* is that *he* arrives in England as one who forces his rituals and sacrifices onto the people, but ends up having to conform to Christianity as Pagan religions are incorporated into Christian ritual. Both the worship of Weland and Christianity serve as an interruption to what has happened before.

Thus, the People of the Hills are no longer able to tell Puck about Weland and it is left to folklore and the topography to remember the story. Puck hears one of the locals refer to 'Weland's Ford', the name of which has been corrupted from the modern name 'Willingford Bridge' which is also close to Kipling's home near Burwash. It is at this point that Kipling's story becomes synonymous with the traditional legend of Wayland, although Kipling has added his own embellishments. Puck describes that, although he does not initially

find Weland, he does see a 'fat old farmer' on a 'shocking bad road' whose horse had cast a shoe (53). The farmer ties his horse to an oak tree and leaves a penny on the stone.

When the smith appears, he is no longer the conquering God: Puck describes him as 'a white-bearded bent old blacksmith in leather apron' (53). As discussed earlier, this is the point of appellative change: 'I'm not even Weland now... They call me Wayland-Smith'. It is not clear as to why he is condemned to stay on earth except 'I was not a gentle God in my Time and my Power. I shall never be released till some human being truly wishes me well' (54). From this we can surmise that because of the viciousness of the sacrifices and the fear felt by his cult, he is denied the praise and worship that would have carried other Gods to Valhalla (or, as Puck observes: 'wherever it is you come from').

Earlier, Una had asked whether Thor, Wayland's kinsman, was the same as appeared in her book *Heroes of Asgard*. Valhalla, the hall where those who have died in battle may enjoy eternal combat during their afterlife is located within Asgard. Consequently, although a God, Wayland is not a warrior, so this would not be the location to which he would travel. The name Asgard means 'God-enclosure' which, generically, would be a more appropriate location for Wayland.

In the final section of the Weland episode in *Puck of Pook's Hill*, Weland's physical diaspora is built around tension between 'home' and 'abroad': 'abroad' he is a conquering God who enforces his worship, while 'home' is when he is humiliated as a blacksmith for hire and desires to return to his place of origin. Conversely, the temporal diaspora leads to a loss of identity: Weland is demoted from conquering god to supernatural smith, and this loss of identity leads to Weland being unable to recognise Puck at first.



Wayland Smith forging the sword from the 1906 version of
Puck of Pook's Hill, illustration by H.R. Millar

Wayland explains that he is bound to this earth and will 'never be released till some human being truly wishes me well' (54). However, despite the fact that Wayland shod his horse, the farmer rides away without a word of thanks. Enraged by this Puck decides to 'teach the old sinner politeness'. He causes the farmer's horse to walk around in circles, and the farmer, speculating there has been an enchantment, begins to pray and shout. However, as Puck has already demonstrated, he is not concerned by the usual wards that affect 'fairies'. In this instance, Puck observes that he is 'as good a Christian as he'. Clearly, the farmer only claims to be a Christian when it profits him, and in this instance it is to claim superiority over Wayland, and whatever he believes is causing the enchantment. Bruno Bettelheim argues that while myth is pessimistic, the fairy story is optimistic (38); consequently the myth of Weland in Kipling is one of decline,

whereas, once Puck takes an active role in remedying Wayland's situation, it becomes a progressive movement towards home.

The farmer is met by a novice called Hugh who recognises that the horse has been shod by the supernatural smith, and demands that the farmer shows his gratitude to Wayland, pointing out that a penny is 'less than a Christian would have charged' (55). However, the farmer objects on the ground that 'Wayland-Smith's a heathen' and demands whether he 'ought to say "thank you" to Satan if he helped' (55). The farmer threatens to tell the Abbot that the novice wants him to worship heathen gods. At this, Hugh loses his temper and forces the farmer to vocalise grudgingly his gratitude. He follows up, 'I am ashamed of this rude farmer, but for all you have done in kindness and charity to him and to others of our people, I thank you and wish you well' (56). Thus the curse on Wayland is broken. However, Wayland had always worked honestly and considers that he needs to repay Hugh for *his* deed. His final action on this earth is to make a gift for the novice, a rune-carved sword so refined that 'even the user will never know how good it is' (56). Wayland is famed for the swords that he forged: as well as Mimming, the sword carried by Widia in the Anglo-Saxon fragment of *Waldere*, the *Karlamagnús saga* reports that he forged *Durendal*, carried by Roland and King Arthur's sword, *Excalibur* (Gerritsen *et al* 72). A 'named sword' was considered a prized possession, with the name alone imbuing it with a supernatural power. However, although Weland's sword in *Puck of Pook's Hill* is not named, it does demonstrate supernatural attributes, including singing 'as a Dane sings before battle' (91), when it appears in later chapters.

Having forged the sword, Wayland performs a ritual, cooling the sword twice in running water, once more in evening dew and then laying it in moonlight, before speaking a runic charm and then carving Runes of Prophecy into the blade. Here, the moonlight and the water

represent purity; water is, of course, the opposite element to fire and running water is an effective ward against 'fairies'. Likewise, the triple immersion represents the Primary triad of the Scandinavian Gods, Odin, Thor and Freyr.

Wayland takes the sword 'as far as he dared' into the chapel: as a pagan God he is unable to enter holy ground. Here he leaves his blacksmith's tools 'to show that he had done with them forever' (56). At the same time he leaves the sword with the novice, and the Abbot acknowledges that 'it needed no sign from a heathen god to show me that you will never be a monk' (57). The smith's tools are hung before the altar because 'Weland worked honestly for a living and made gifts to Mother Church' (57). So, the inclusion of Wayland's tools in the church is not unlike when Christianity first came to England and the missionaries incorporated Pagan material into their worship.

Puck describes Wayland as 'moving through the thickets towards Horsebridge' (57), that is, towards the south coast. However, a part of Wayland remains in the form of his sword which passes from Hugh the Novice to Sir Richard Dalyngridge, a knight who came over with William the Conqueror. The runes save the lives of Hugh and Sir Richard when Witta the Viking pulls them from the sea: on account of the 'Singing Sword' (84), Witta considers 'the Gods sent ye to my ship for a luck-offering' (83) and it also warns Sir Richard and Hugh of an impending attack by 'devils' (91).

Wayland leaves, but some of his power remains in the runic inscription on his sword. The runes on the sword are 'translated' after Chapter Four: "The Old Men of Pevensey" (116); the sword gives a rather cryptic summary of the four 'settlement chapters' of *Puck of Pook's Hill* in the form of a rune poem in the style of the one that frames the scene of Völundr on the Franks casket (see p. 00). The stories culminate in the signing of the Magna Carta, and, as Puck

explains: 'Weland gave the sword! The Sword gave the Treasure, and the Treasure gave the Law, It's as natural as an oak growing' (208). Thus, through the runes, Kipling presents a link forward from Weland to the Magna Carta; however, he also presents a link back from his version of the Weland legend and the Scandinavian heritage, and even though he moves the story to Sussex, part of the Scandinavian legend is conveyed by allusion. Conversely, although Scott conveys some of the local legend in *Kenilworth*, Wayland was important to local tradition in ways other than those expressed by Scott. It is not just tied to the Neolithic burial mound in Berkshire, but it is also possible to see the legend in Berkshire landmarks, most particularly the boundary markers, and also to trace those that are no longer visible through Anglo-Saxon charters.

The legend in the landscape

Mythology gives reasons for natural or unusual features in the landscape, when the original purpose has been forgotten. Gods become symbols of the natural process. There are, or were, other sites in the local area that perpetuate the legend. A few miles along the Ridgeway is the Uffington White Horse which was dated by optically stimulated luminescence dating methods to have existed for at least three millennia (Miles and Palmer 372–8). According to legend, the White Horse awakes every century and leaves the hill to thunder across the sky to Wayland's Smithy, where the smith is compelled to shoe the horse again. This, apparently, last happened in about 1920.

Local archaeology and a study of the Saxon charters for the area show sites that are associated with the Wayland legend. The Woolstone charter names a place two miles north from Wayland's

Smithy as *Beahhildæ byrigels*, arguably a scribe's error for 'beadhildæ', and the name means Beahhild's Barrow or burial place (Birch CS 491). Huntingford argues that that this name 'was deliberately applied to this site on account of its association with Weland' (21); Beadohild is named in the Anglo-Saxon poem *Deor* and is depicted on both the Franks Casket and the Ardre Stone as the woman whom Weland/Völundr violently raped and impregnated. The burial mound was a boundary marker located near Cowleaze Farm on the road to Uffington. The barrow would have been on the parish boundary between Woolstone and Compton Beauchamp (Grinsell 1938 105–6). Now the land has been ploughed out and no evidence of a mound remains, although it was excavated in 1850 where various items including ornaments of jet and bronze were found.

Weland and Beadohild's son, Widia, is represented by a barrow known as 'Hwittuces hlæw' which is mentioned in the tenth century Compton Beauchamp charter (Birch CS 908). Grinsell describes this as 'the natural rise north of the Icknield Way and just north of Hardwell Wood' (1938 106). The Icknield Way runs up to the Whiteleaf Cross near Princes Risborough, which was, as discussed earlier, referred to in a Saxon charter as *Welandes Stocc*.

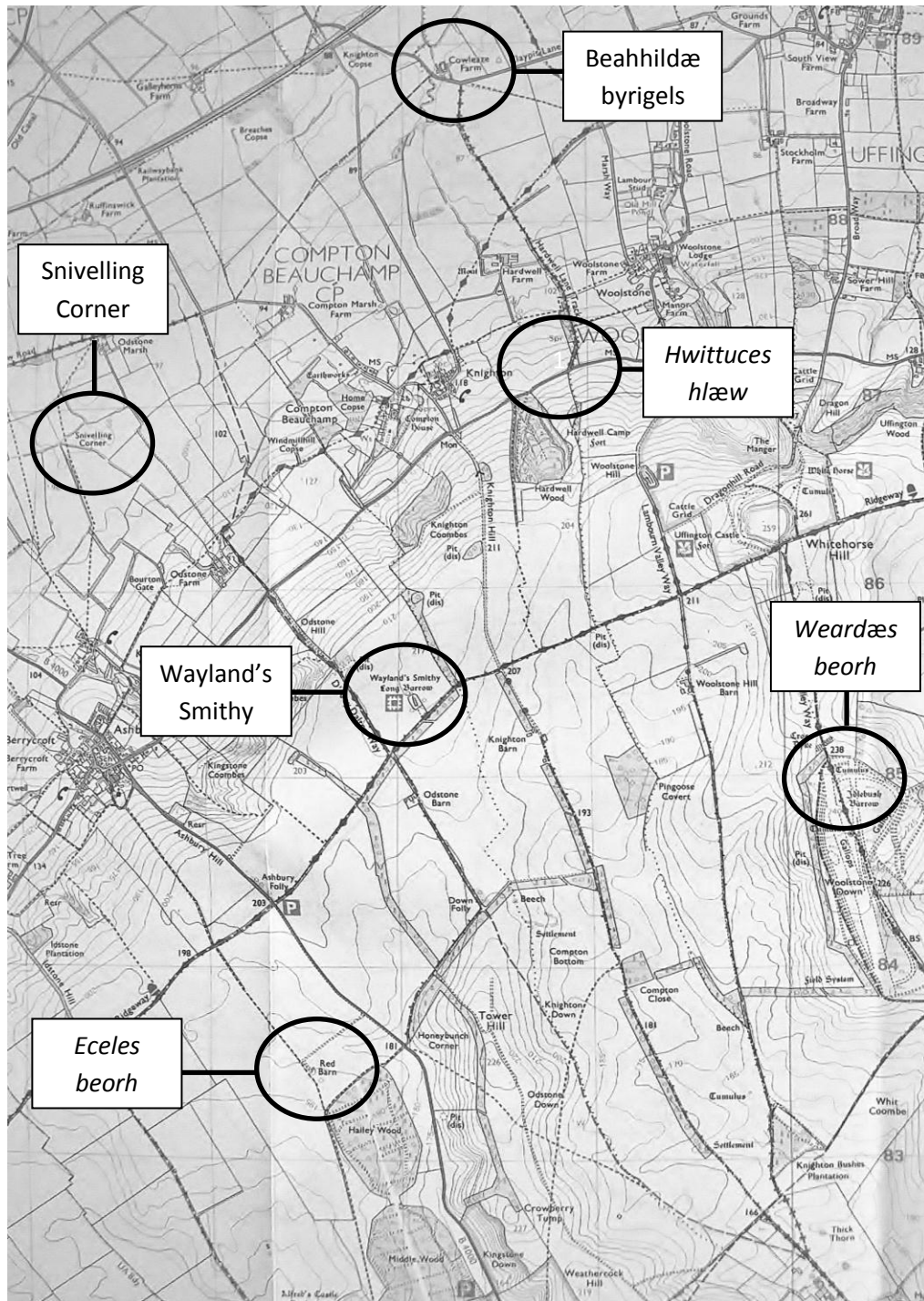
Snivelling Corner refers to a boundary stone located in the corner of a field at Odstone Farm on the footpath between Kingstone Winslow and Odstone Marsh. As discussed above, local legend recalls that the stone trapped Flibbertigibbet by the heel, and was reported to have once had a heel print in the stone. Spinage suggests that the stone is now weathered and the mark is no longer visible; however, he also posits that the word *heol* refers to the sun (*helios*), and the 'heel stone' often appears at a tangent to stone circles to mark the position of the midsummer sunset; in this instance, the alignment is

correct from Wayland's Smithy, although Spinage admits that it would be obscured by the brow of a hill (33).

Weland's father, Wade is associated with a barrow on the eastern Woolstone boundary, south of Uffington Castle and is mentioned in the charters of Woolstone and Ashbury (Grinsell 1938 108). The barrow is named as *Weardæs beorh* and is the northernmost of two barrows along this boundary line (Birch CS 491, 902). In Saxon times, in addition to the reference to Wade, the two barrows were known as 'Hawk's Low' and 'Hound's Low' and also Idlebush Barrow which is how it now appears on maps.

Finally, Grinsell suggests that *Eceles beorh* that is mentioned in the Ashbury and Uffington charters refers to Ecel's Mound, or the mound of the church, but notes that Searle's list of Anglo-Saxon Proper names, the *Onomasticon anglo-saxonicum* does not include Ecel as a proper name (1938 109). However, the name *Egil* appears in the Scandinavian versions of the Weland story: he is Völundr's brother who gathers the feathers for Völundr to fashion the wings for his escape. Grinsell gives an approximate location of this site as 'somewhere between Alfred's Castle [an Iron Age hill fort] and the Icknield Way, and was probably near or south of the Ridgeway'. He continues that a barrow on arable land just north of Red Barn (which is itself just north of Hailey Wood) corresponds with the data provided by the charters (109).

The topographical details attest to how important the Weland legend was in Berkshire, a story that, with the scarcity of written records, is retold through the landscape and explains why the story presented by Lancelot Wayland in *Kenilworth* was met with such credulity, even though the majority of these details are omitted from



Topographical features associated with Wayland in the Vale of the White Horse Mapping reproduced from Ordnance Survey mapping and data by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2012, All Rights Reserved

Scott's novel. By moving the legend to Sussex, the legend itself becomes a diaspora, moved from its place of origin, and adapted to fit in with its new surroundings.

Conclusion

In both *Kenilworth* and *Puck of Pook's Hill*, the authors present the character of Wayland Smith as someone who existed in the past; Scott recounts events that occurred two and a half centuries before he was writing, and part of his descriptions of 'merry England' are idealised and romanticised. Kipling, by contrast, was writing for a contemporary audience, but used Puck as a frame for stories that represented important moments in England's history.

All through the 'Weland's Sword' chapter of *Puck of Pook's Hill*, there are echoes of diasporas, initially through the allusions of the departure of the People of the Hills, as well as Puck's own, inevitable departure. Through these descriptions of ancient settlers and conquerors, Puck gives the children a link to Old England and an ancient authority, in the same way that Geoffrey of Monmouth established a noble heritage that extended back to Troy to give the country a more credible presence on the world stage. The passing of the People of the Hills is a loss of the pastoral innocence of the past, while the departure of Weland is partially on account of the waning sincerity in the ritual, where sacrifice becomes symbolic and then forgotten. At the same time, England faces a new diasporic ideology, and Christianity interrupts what had gone before: what we see in *Puck of Pook's Hill* is the Pagan God humiliated and enslaved by the new religion.

In both representations of Wayland, we have a spatial diaspora where the character has left his original home: Lancelot Wayland leaves to follow new opportunities and eventually arrives at Wayland's

Smithy where he first appears in the novel. For Kipling, Weland represents a voluntary diaspora as he is brought to England with the invading pirates, although there is also the tension as his arrival brings with it a subjugation of the people. Through the enforcement of his worship, the God becomes acclimatised within England; however, after a thousand years we witness the dilution and eventually the withdrawal of his cult. In Kipling, Wayland has a desire to return to his place of origin, in Scott it is merely a mild curiosity. Even so, despite moving on, both characters leave a lasting impression on their environment: in *Kenilworth*, it is the perpetuation of the legend of the supernatural smith, whereas for Kipling, Wayland's sword begets the treasure, which begets the Law. The spatial diaspora also occurs as the legend is translated from Berkshire, where it developed over many centuries, to Sussex, where the legend is overlaid on Kipling's landscape and names have been changed to make the details fit.

One 'movement' that affects Wayland in both stories is that of identity. Both characters have a change of occupation: in *Kenilworth*, at first, Lancelot Wayland is a blacksmith, then a juggler, then an actor, then an apprentice to an alchemist and astrologer, before becoming servant to Tressilian; in Kipling, the change in 'occupation' is from conquering and oppressive deity demanding sacrifices to becoming the repressed blacksmith to whom local farmers will not even express their gratitude. Significantly, both characters change their names when they 'become' Wayland Smith: for Lancelot Wayland it seems to be a happy coincidence that his surname and first training corresponds with the Berkshire legend where Demetrius Doboobie happens to establish his laboratory.

While Scott reveals only the part of the legend that he has read in Camden's *Britannia*, Kipling knew more about Weland's origins, but

he chooses not to include this detail to his audience and effectively silences that part of the legend. Neither author is interested in representing the complete legend of Wayland or looking into his origins. Thus there is a temporal diaspora as the ancient legend is hidden in tantalising clues in the Anglo-Saxon poetry, Scandinavian Art and in the names of boundary markers in the Berkshire landscape.

Both Scott and Kipling use the legend of Wayland to advance their stories: for Scott, there is a certain mysticism surrounding the blacksmith, which is a mantle that Lancelot Wayland can wear for a while, before following Tressilian; for Kipling, the legend of Wayland reinforces his message concerning colonisation and subjugation, although for Kipling the underlying question considers the question of what is 'Englishness'. In doing so, both authors have called forth the lost voices of a long-lost mythology and, in two distinctly different forms, have helped to convey the story to new audiences.

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