

Pillars sequel outline notes 3

04 August 2004

D:\KENMS\Pillars Sequel\Outline notes 3.doc

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
<i>General</i>					
<p>Brother Langley is an enigma. He is tall and strong, obviously a one-time soldier. He is literate, which is unusual for a knight. He works hard at being humble, but when the mask slips he acts like an earl. He knows about architecture and carpentry, and is a skilful politician within the cloisters. He admits that he fled to the monastery because he had committed a murder, but he will naturally give no details. His desire to retire from the world is clearly genuine.</p>	<p>Philemon is a zealous reformer, arrogant and unscrupulous. He believes in the currently dominant philosophy of anti-rationalism. In 1277 the works of Aristotle and Aquinas were banned from the curriculum at the University of Paris and replaced by conservative "faith and revelation" texts. Philemon was schooled at Kingsbridge Priory, then sent to Kingsbridge College, a cell of the priory at Oxford where eight monks live and study. Philemon graduated in law.</p> <p>Philemon believes he wants purity. In fact what he wants is control. At bottom he is frightened in any situation where he is not making the decisions.</p>	<p>The townspeople are inhibited in their commerce by the conservative rule of the priory. They want the freedom to expand and prosper, but the priory clings to ancient privileges and restrictions.</p> <p>Eadmund is a wool trader and head of the parish guild. He is a Falstaff, a bon viveur but cunning. He gets on well with lazy Prior Anthony, but will clash with Philemon.</p> <p>His beautiful daughter Charis is clever with numbers and a good manager, but she cannot take over his business because she has a brother. She is a troublemaker, scornful of illiterate priests, lascivious monks, spendthrift earls and hidebound aldermen.</p> <p>Charis is angry about injustice and poverty caused by the hidebound conservative rule of the monastery, and she fights for</p>	<p>Merthin as a child was clever, naughty and precocious. He becomes an apprentice carpenter and shows a brilliant intuitive understanding of structures. He mistrusts the church, and is interested in heretical theories about the origin of the world. He despises his elders' respect for authority and fights for intellectual and artistic freedom.</p>	<p>Glynis and Wulfric embody the peasant's longing to rid himself of feudal obligations and restrictions, the better to orient his farming to the market and make money. His overlord, selfish and short-sighted, fights to cling to traditional privileges.</p> <p>Glynis comes from the lowest stratum of legitimate society. Her father is a landless labourer, hiring himself out to anyone. There is always work at harvest time, but for much of the year the family scrape by on the edge of the law. Their home is a one room hut.</p> <p>Glynis is a girl of spirit. She is fiercely determined not to live as her mother has, in poverty and squalor. Her assets are determination and physical strength. She is not beautiful. She is dark-skinned, dark-haired, and plain, with big hands and feet. She is uneducated but shrewd, and willing to use</p>	<p>Ralph represents the old feudal ethic of might equals right. As a child he was a bully who usually got his way. As a young man he is strong and aggressive, a great soldier. His father is a poor knight, but Ralph has high ambitions.</p>

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
		<p>a more just and rational way of life.</p>		<p>any weapon that comes to hand, including sex, to get her way.</p> <p>She has her heart set on marrying Wulfric.</p> <p>Wulfric comes from an affluent peasant family. He is dogged, faithful and proud. He sees his father's farm as the source of all security and identity. He believes the priest when he says that a man who works hard, pays his dues, and goes to church will be smiled upon by God and the landlord.</p>	

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
Prologue: 1327					
<p><i>The reign of Edward II is coming to an end. He has been an unpopular king, mainly on account of his "favourites". When he came to the throne he gave power and privilege to his friend Peter Gaveston, popular supposed to be his homosexual lover (even though both men were married with children). The barons rebelled against this, partly through jealousy and partly because Edward and Peter together ruled badly. Eventually Peter was disgraced and executed, but other favourites followed. In 1327 Edward's wife, Isabella, and her lover, Roger Mortimer, deposed Edward, replacing him with his sixteen-year-old son, Edward III. The old king was imprisoned, first in Kenilworth, then in Berkeley Castle. Despite two attempts to free him, he never emerged. However, there are three rival accounts of what happened to him. (i) It was announced that he had died of natural causes in September 1327. His body was interred in Gloucester Abbey. (ii) There was a story that he had been murdered by a particularly gruesome method—a hollow horn inserted into the anus and a red-hot poker thrust through the horn into the entrails, which is said to leave no outward evidence of murder. (iii) Additional rumours persisted that he had escaped, first to Corfe Castle, then elsewhere.</i></p> <p><i>His tomb at Gloucester Abbey soon became a pilgrim shrine.</i></p>					
<p>In the forest outside Kingsbridge, some adolescents are misbehaving. They are not supposed to be in the forest, mainly because of the danger from outlaws, but also because their parents know they may get up to mischief there. They see a strange scene.</p> <p>A well dressed knight is hiding. His companion appears and says he has sold the knight's warhorse in Kingsbridge at today's Fleece Fair. They then dig a hole and put the knight's weapons and fine clothes into it.</p> <p>The two men say a fond farewell. The watching adolescents are fascinated by the lascivious kiss the men exchange. But a bigger shock is coming.</p>	<p>Brother Philemon returns from seven years' study at Oxford with a law degree. He is full of reforming zeal, and at this stage his piety seems genuine. His arrogance is pardonable in a young man, and his unscrupulousness is not yet apparent. He has not yet developed the smug self-righteousness that will characterise the mature man.</p> <p>He finds in the library the Book of Timothy, a chronicle of the building of the cathedral in the time of Prior Philip, now seen as a golden age. Using this, Philemon proposes a series of reforms, to return the priory to the strict observance of the monastic rule. He wins support among some monks, but in the end he is slapped down.</p>	<p>The old wooden bridge across the river is now woefully inadequate, causing long queues on market days; but hidebound old Prior Anthony will not rebuild it. Eadmund and the parish guild propose to rebuild it, paying for it themselves, in exchange for every second penny toll. The master mason in charge of maintenance at the cathedral, Elwyn, has never done a bridge, and secretly fears that he can't. Anthony thinks the deal means giving up half his income, and refuses.</p> <p>He gets Elwyn to build a river wall to speed the flow of water to the mill.</p>	<p>Merthin notices that the river wall has altered the flow of water around the wooden piers of the bridge. By a combination of education and instinct, he sees that the water will undermine the bridge. He warns of this danger, but no one listens.</p> <p>On market day, when hundreds of people and carts are attempting to cross, the bridge collapses, killing 50 people. Elwyn responds by accusing Merthin of witchcraft and sabotage.</p>	<p>The adolescent Glynis loves Wulfric, but he favours pretty Annette, the daughter of a prosperous peasant. They all come to Kingsbridge for the annual Fleece Fair.</p> <p>Wulfric's father has an altercation with Harold Reeve, the agent of the Earl of Shiring. In front of Annette and Glynis, Wulfric's father is humiliated. Wulfric burns with shame.</p> <p>Later, when the dancing starts, he hopes to get Annette on her own; but he fails. Feeling sorry for himself, he gets drunk and makes advances to Glynis. She knows she is second best, but accepts him anyway.</p>	<p>Ralph as a young bully.</p>

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
<p>The knight draws a long dagger and stabs his companion, killing him. He puts the body into the hole with the clothes, and fills it in.</p> <p>He walks across the bridge into the town and goes to the priory, where he gives his name as Thomas Langley and begs to be admitted as a novice monk. Prior Anthony pretends not to know him, but we realise this has been prearranged. The knight is admitted.</p>					

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
Part I: 1337-1339					
<p><i>Edward III was 16 when he came to the throne. In those days he was the pawn of his mother and Roger Mortimer. Sooner than anyone expected, he asserted himself, arresting Mortimer and forcing his mother into quiet retirement. Now he declares war on France. However, he has trouble raising money and troops. He announces that anyone who joins up will automatically be pardoned for any crimes, including murder.</i></p> <p><i>In 1339 he invades France.</i></p>					
<p>Philemon becomes curious about Thomas Langley. He did not arrive empty-handed: the priory acquired a village in Buckinghamshire as the price of his entry. Philemon also learns that the late Prior Anthony identified the body of Edward II in 1327. Philemon suspects that Thomas Langley is one of the murderers of Edward II. (OR Charis does this?)</p>	<p>Prior Anthony dies. Brother Philemon puts himself forward for election as prior on a reform ticket.</p> <p>He wins the support of Eadmund Wooller and the townspeople by promising a new bridge.</p> <p>He also makes deals with the Bishop of Kingsbridge and the Earl of Shiring.</p> <p>He is elected. He keeps his promise on the bridge, though insists on the financial deal proposed ten years ago by Eadmund.</p> <p>In other respects, he proves reactionary. Within the priory, he forbids rational argument about theology, insisting that belief must be founded only on revelation and faith. He reforms the medical school, banishing anatomy and surgery, scorning barbers, apothecaries and wise women, teaching only traditional theoretical</p>	<p>Eadmund supports the election of Philemon, hoping his reforming zeal will include an enlightened attitude to commerce. (Charis personally loathes Philemon and thinks her father is making a terrible mistake.)</p> <p>Philemon forbids the townspeople to have their own mills, warrens or fishponds, insisting they use the priory's—at a price, of course. Eadmund and the townspeople fight against Philemon's new regime. They are particularly bothered by having to use the priory's fulling mill, built by Jack Thomson in the time of Prior Philip, now old and slow as well as expensive.</p> <p>Eadmund appeals to the royal court. He has a good case. But Philemon—a lawyer—demonstrates that the townspeople are technically serfs of the priory and therefore do not have the right to appeal to the</p>	<p>Merthin proposes a design for the new bridge. So does Elwyn. But it is clear that Elwyn cannot do the job. So Philemon, despite his preference for the sycophantic Elwyn, gives the job to Merthin.</p> <p>Merthin starts the foundations and makes the complicated hoists and cranes needed. Then Philemon sacks him and gives the job to Elwyn. Merthin leaves town in disgust.</p> <p>Elwyn does not follow Merthin's design faithfully. In particular, Merthin has specified that the upstream end of each pier must be surrounded by a pile of large jagged stones, called riprap. Elwyn thinks these are pointless decoration, and leaves them out to save money, pleasing Philemon.</p>	<p>Annette's father, Perkin, has his eye on Wulfric's family farm, and encourages the romance between Wulfric and Annette. Annette goes along with this, being a manipulative cow.</p> <p>Then a run of bad luck brings starvation to Wulfric's family, and they all die in the winter. Annette quickly loses interest in him.</p> <p>Desperate to keep the farm, he begs Harold Reeve to give him the chance to bring in the harvest. The faithful Glynis offers to work for him free.</p> <p>Harold at first refuses. Unknown to Wulfric, Glynis meets Harold in the forest and offers him sex as a bribe. He accepts. She lies down on her back, but the monk makes a grimace of disgust and says: No, in your mouth...</p> <p>Between them, Wulfric and Glynis bring in the harvest. During the long, hot</p>	<p>Ralph is a squire in the household of the Earl of Shiring. When his uncle dies, Ralph murders his cousin (Charis's lover?) and inherits a small estate. The murder is found out, but Ralph escapes punishment by joining Edward III's army and going to France.</p>

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
	<p>medicine. (The nunnery continues to practise herbal medicine against his will.) He also reimposes on the town ancient customs and taxes which Prior Anthony had allowed to lapse, quoting the Book of Timothy as his authority.</p>	<p>royal court. He wins.</p> <p>Charis gets into some kind of trouble. Her only way out—to her horror—is to become a nun. She enters the priory.</p>		<p>summer they also become lovers, although Wulfric still foolishly longs for Annette.</p> <p>There is a tax to pay on inheritance, called heriot. Wulfric cannot afford it, but assumes he will be allowed to pay in instalments, now that he has proved his ability to farm. But Perkin bribes Harold to give the farm to him.</p> <p>Wulfric is now a landless labourer. Perkin offers him a job. He would like to refuse—but Glynis is now pregnant, so he accepts. He also marries Glynis.</p> <p>Harold contrives to see Glynis again and demands sexual favors. When she refuses, he threatens to tell Wulfric about the first time. She gives in, but she will get her revenge.</p>	

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
Part II: 1348					
<p><i>In 1339 a community of Nestorian Christians living near Lake Issyk Kul in central Asia were afflicted by the plague. Their town was on the great trans-Asia trade route between Europe and China. In 1345 the plague struck the north coast of the Black Sea, where Italian merchants had trading colonies. From there it spread south, to the Middle East and North Africa, eventually killing about 40% of the world's Islamic population. It also spread west, reaching Genoa in 1347. In January 1348 it reached Marseille, then by summer of the same year Bordeaux, a town in English possession that had a huge wine trade with England. In September 1348, Gascon ships brought the plague to the Dorset port of Melcombe Regis. From there it spread rapidly along the coast and to London. Independently, it reached Bristol in August of 1348.</i></p>					
<p>Charis learns more about Thomas.</p>	<p>The old prioress dies, and Charis becomes prioress—much against the will of Philemon.</p> <p>She immediately takes up the issue of control of the nunnery's assets. Over the years, many pious women have given land and other wealth to the nuns. Philemon has taken control of all these assets, claiming to manage them on behalf of the feeble women who obviously cannot do it themselves. The result is that he spends their money. Charis attempts to regain control, but fails.</p> <p>Then the plague strikes. Philemon's medical school proves useless.</p> <p>Charis says that nuns have nothing to fear from death. They must simply do their duty of caring for the sick as best they can.</p> <p>Monks and nuns alike swiftly fall victim. One night, Philemon and a group of his</p>	<p>Eadmund and the townspeople apply to the kind for borough status, which would free them from the control of the priory. Philemon successfully fights against this.</p>	<p>Merthin is on his way home to Kingsbridge, having worked in Paris and Florence. Coming to a fork in the road, he realises that at this point most people turn towards Shiring, not Kingsbridge, because the town can be seen in the distance. This sets him thinking.</p> <p>When he arrives at Kingsbridge, he sees that the bridge is cracking up. Elwyn blames Merthin's design. Merthin retrieves his original plans and shows that Elwyn left out the riprap. Elwyn admits this, but scorns the idea that this is the problem. Merthin sends a boy to dive the river and investigate the foundations of the piers. He predicts that underneath the upstream end of the central pier will be found a hole as big as a man, where the flow of the river has scoured out the soil. He is proved right.</p>	<p>Philemon has embarked on a programme of clearing woodland to make new farms (called assarts). In order to attract tenants, these have to be offered with low cash rents and free status.</p> <p>Glynis hears about this and persuades Wulfric to take one. They do not ask permission, which they fear will be refused; but run away.</p> <p>Wulfric is happy at last with a farm of his own. He even seems to forget Annette. Then by bad luck Harold Reeve sees them.</p> <p>Normally, earls do not chase runaways; and, if they happen to be found, they pay a fine rather than return. After all, who wants a troublemaker? But the Black Death is making labour scarce, and Harold insists on their return.</p> <p>They go back to their village and Wulfric resumes work as a labourer.</p>	<p>Ralph returns from the war wealthy and respected, though missing three fingers and walking with a limp. He wants to be Earl of Shiring, but someone else gets it.</p> <p>Ralph marries the widow of a knight and gains a substantial estate. He soon tires of the widow.</p>

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
	<p>cronies flee, taking food and wine. Charis later learns that they have moved into a remote cell in the forest and barricaded themselves in, refusing admittance to anyone.</p> <p>Charis now controls the priory and what is left of its estates.</p>		<p>The hold is filled in, the bridge is repaired, and riprap is installed to prevent this happening again.</p> <p>The great central tower of the cathedral is leaning dangerously. Elwyn proposes shoring it up. Merthin says it should be rebuilt. He proposes a new tower that could be seen from the fork in the road. This would hugely increase the number of pilgrims and traders coming to Kingsbridge.</p> <p>Elwyn says no building so tall has ever been built, and Merthin admits this is true. Philemon nixes the plan.</p>		

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
Part III: 1349					
<i>The plague may have eased, or paused, over the winter, then in 1349 it spread to the rest of England, and Wales, Scotland and Ireland. It continued into 1350, possibly taking other forms. It killed something like half the population of Europe, though this average figure conceals wide disparities: many villages were wiped out never to reappear.</i>					
<p>Thomas Langley dies in the plague.</p>	<p>Charis sets herself the task of bringing people and industry back to the town and the priory's estates.</p> <p>To do this, she has to offer the peasants a better deal than heretofore. On the estates, she offers free tenure and low cash rents to anyone willing to take over a deserted farm. This works, but brings her into conflict with the Earl and the Bishop, who are trying to hold on to the old ways. Restrictive legislation bans mobility of labour, but everyone ignores it.</p>	<p>As part of her plan to resurrect the town, Charis negotiates a borough charter. Eadmund has at last got what he wanted.</p>	<p>Charis commissions Merthin to build the tower.</p>	<p>Wulfric gets his father's farm back. Glynis counsels him to drive a hard bargain, but he is so happy that he takes it on the same terms, accepting servile status and customary dues. Glynis is so angry she comes close to leaving him.</p>	<p>The plague kills the Earl of Shiring but not his wife. If Ralph were single he could marry the widow. He kills his wife and becomes the Earl.</p> <p>He responds to the plague by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grabbing for himself all abandoned lands • Trying to force labourers to work for pre-Plague wages

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Edmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
<i>Part IV: 1361</i>					
<i>The plague returns, this time killing about 20% of the English population.</i>					
	<p>The second plague wipes out much of the progress Charis has made over the last decade.</p> <p>As part of her renewed effort, she produces a mystery play about the martyrdom of St Katharine, with a sensationally realistic beheading. It attracts pilgrims by the thousands.</p>	<p>Now that the town is prosperous again, the prior and the bishop try to claw back some of the priory's ancient rights over the town, challenging the legitimacy of the charter. They seem to be about to win, when the second plague strikes, changing everything.</p> <p>The prior tries to reassert control over the nuns' assets; but Charis fights back.</p>	<p>The tower is built, all but the spire. No one can imagine how Merthin is going to erect the centering for this. (Centering, or formwork, is a temporary wooden structure that supports the stonework until the construction is complete and the mortar is dry.) Merthin says he will build it without centering. No one believes he can, except Charis.</p>	<p>Wulfric's farm does well. Wulfric and Glynis and their sons cultivate madder, a plant whose roots produce the purple dye so much in demand by Kingsbridge cloth manufactures.</p> <p>But their efforts are constantly frustrated by the landlord, who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forces them to plant a different crop • Commandeers their car • Forces them to harvest his crop before their own. <p>When the second plague strikes, and the land is depopulated again, Wulfric negotiates cash rent and free status.</p> <p>The earl still tries to force him to work on the demesne, albeit for pay; but now Wulfric can appeal.</p>	<p>Again Ralph sees the plague as an opportunity for self-aggrandisement.</p>

Thomas Langley	Philemon	Eadmund	Merthin	Glynis	Ralph
Part V: 1377—1381					
<p><i>Edward III has increasing trouble financing the French war, which has now gone on for forty years (and will go down in history as the Hundred Years War). He invents a new tax, the poll tax. In 1377 a charge of 4d per head on every male and female over 14 years except beggars raises £22,000. In 1379 a more complex graduated tax raises only £18,000. In 1380 a tax of 12d on every man and woman over 15 should raise £160,000, but is widely evaded. Brutal enforcement leads to a series of uprisings all over the country which will go down in history as the Peasants' Revolt. The young king Richard II meets Wat Tyler and agrees to all his demands, then kills him. Every concession made to the peasants during the revolt is later repudiated by Parliament. Nevertheless, the poll tax is forgotten.</i></p>					
<p>The mystery man is revealed to have been Edward II himself.</p>	<p>Charis is now old. She tries to mitigate the poll tax by understating returns. However, when revolt comes she opposes it, predicting it will end in bloodshed and disappointment. She is right, but is herself killed in the riots.</p>	<p>The townspeople rebel against the poll tax.</p>	<p>The spire is finished.</p>	<p>Wulfric and Glynis negotiate a copyhold lease. They build up a small reserve which is threatened by the poll tax.</p>	<p>Ralph is merciless in punishing rebels.</p>