

## Chapter Summary: Bridge at War

A chapter-by-chapter breakdown of [Bridge at War](#), a modern fantasy novel by [Trevor Hopkins \(email\)](#).

The story is set just after the end of the Second World War, with the action split between our own world and the mysterious world of [Lyndesfarne](#). In Lyndesfarne, everyday technology from our own world simply fails to work, but a society every bit as sophisticated as our own is supported by pervasive [magic](#).

The story is set in 1946/7 and at various points in the past, and follows three young men, [Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#), all recently demobilised from the Army.



**Disclaimer:** The world of Lyndesfarne described in these books is entirely fictitious, and bears no resemblance to the charming Holy Island of [Lindisfarne](#) in North East England.

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### [Chapter 1](#) [ [Top](#) ]

[Tom](#), together with his companions [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#) have just been released from active military service in Europe at the end of the Second World War. Neither Tom nor Alistair have any close family, and are uncertain where their future lies. After discharging some personal commitments in and around London, the three friends meet up in a pub under the arches near King's Cross railway station, then catch a train north to Berwick-on-Tweed. Having decided to seek farm work for the summer, they sleep in a carriage compartment that 'Lucky' Bram had managed to locate for them.

### [Chapter 2](#) [ [Top](#) ]

[Tom](#) thinks back to the time that he and [Alistair](#) had first met [Bram](#). At the time, Tom and Alistair were on active service in Normandy, a battleground in that maze of hedgerows known as 'bocage'. Bram had suddenly appeared, as if by [magic](#), in the middle of a moonlit field, standing unconcernedly and jotting in his [notebook](#).

Bram is shot at and wounded by an enemy sniper and Tom and Alistair bravely risk their own life to rescue him. After Bram recovers, he seeks out Tom and Alistair to thank them, and the three men become companions and friends.

### [Chapter 3](#) [ [Top](#) ]

[Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#) arrive in Berwick and seek out a cafe for breakfast. In the cafe, they meet a farmer, [John Smith](#), who offers them employment at [Holme Farm](#), not far from the [crossing](#) to Lyndesfarne.

The companions arrive at Holme Farm, where Farmer John's wife [Edna](#) organises suitable working clothing for the young men. The three men rapidly settle to the farm labouring.

### [Chapter 4](#) [ [Top](#) ]

A story that [Alistair](#) tells to [Tom](#) and [Bram](#) when they are in barracks in Berlin. The story concerns Alistair's [Grandfather](#) who undertakes a series of perilous trading journeys in Siberia. On the last trip, he is turned back for unexplained reasons, and later witnesses a huge explosion in the sky.

(We later learn that this was actually a [crossing](#) to [Agrea](#), a country in another part of the [Other World](#). This crossing was closed explosively at the beginning of the Twentieth Century.)

### [Chapter 5](#) [ [Top](#) ]

[Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#) take a trip from [Holme Farm](#) to [Alnwick](#). The companions explore the large market, and Tom declines the opportunity to have his fortune told.

The three young men take lunch in the [Crossed Keys](#) public house, where they are unexpectedly approached by a mysterious [Irish Lady](#), who asserts that she has two messages for them. The first message enigmatically suggests that the lives of the three men will continue to be closely intertwined.

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The [Irish Mystic's](#) second message is a tale of old Ireland, and the [crossings and pathways](#) that used to be present leading to the land of [Faerie](#). Her story describes [magical](#) beings at war in our world.

Her tale concludes with a heroic mission to warn both of the warring factions of the presence of an invader - Oliver Cromwell - the squabbling between the factions from the [Other World](#), and the rapid, forced and explosive closure of all of the crossings in Ireland.

## [Chapter 7 \[ Top \]](#)

After the harvest at [Holme Farm](#), [Bram](#) invites [Tom](#) and [Alistair](#) to join him on a visit to his family, on the 'island' of Lyndesfarne. They use [St. Cuthbert's Way](#), a hidden track through the countryside, and get their first view of the stone [causeway](#) and the [Old Bridge](#). They also gain their first sight of Lyndesfarne [castle](#).

## [Chapter 8 \[ Top \]](#)

During the sojourn on [Holme Farm](#), [Bram](#), [Tom](#) and [Alistair](#) frequent the nearby public houses: the [Black Bull](#) and the [Ship and Anchor](#).

One evening, Tom and Alistair, not on this occasion accompanied by Bram, visit the Ship and Anchor. There, they encounter a badly-wounded [gunner](#), who tells them a story of some strangers who visited his battery during the War, and added [magical sprites](#) to the shells, so that they would not miss their target.

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In the company of [Bram](#), [Tom](#) and [Alistair](#) enter the world of Lyndesfarne for the first time. Bram changes [money](#) at the tiny tented market just before the [crossing](#). Tom and Alistair get their first sight of the [communications tower](#) before crossing the [causeway](#) and the [Old Bridge](#).

## [Chapter 10 \[ Top \]](#)

During the harvesting work on [Holme Farm](#), [Tom](#) witnesses one of the gleaners in the fields using a strange ritual (involving some kind of necklace) to find hidden ears of wheat.

Also, while digging ditches around the farm, [Alistair](#) uncovers a stoneware box containing a strange pendant. [Bram](#) suggests that he keep his find, and Alistair resolves to renovate both box and necklace.

(Tom later learns that the gleaner was using a [magical Finder](#), and that the pendant discovered by Alistair contains just such a Finder [sprite](#).)

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[Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#) arrive in Lyndesfarne and make their way to the [Dragon's Nest](#) public house. There, they enjoy a pleasant meal and several pints of beer before Tom spots the head of a [dragon](#) stuffed and mounted over the fireplace. They make the acquaintance of [Old Ged the Dragonhunter](#).

## [Chapter 12 \[ Top \]](#)

Over a pint of beer, [Old Ged the Dragonhunter](#) tells [Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#) tales of hunting dragons, with nets and crossbows and [magic](#), and using piglets as bait. They also learn of smaller, domesticated dragons, including [Nightwings](#), as well as appreciating the virtues of the Lyndesfarne preference for underground living.

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After [Old Ged's](#) tale, [Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#) retire to bed in the basements of the [Dragon's Nest](#). In the middle of the night, Tom awakes to observe Bram writing in his [magical notebook](#).

The following morning, the three companions continue their journey on foot through country roads and well-tilled farmland, finally arriving at Bram's family home. Tom and Alistair are introduced to Bram's mother, [Yellez](#), and his father [Briz](#), as well as Bram's sister [Yise](#).

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[Tom](#) recalls his family, growing up with his [Granny](#) in Long Benton in Tyneside. He was taught about the care and maintenance of motor vehicles by his 'Uncle' [George](#). He remembers being told by Granny about the strange disappearance of his parents ([Brad](#) and [Lizzie](#) (Elizabeth)) when he was a tiny child.

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[Tom](#) and his companions are treated to a wonderful lunch by [Yellez](#). He also meets [Bram's](#) uncle [Hamet](#), who he immediately dislikes, as well as Hamet's wife [Preda](#), who seemed permanently distracted. After lunch, Tom volunteers to help in the garden, while [Alistair](#) assists [Yise](#) in the stables.

That evening, Tom, Alistair and Bram are invited to join [Briz](#) in his study. Bram and Briz explain about the [Two Worlds](#) and the [barrier](#) located at the exact centre of the [Old Bridge](#). They explain that machinery does not work in Lyndesfarne, and that [magic](#) is used everywhere instead.

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In the study, [Briz](#) formally thanks [Tom](#) and [Alistair](#) for saving his son [Bram's](#) life. Briz then swears both Tom and Alistair to secrecy.

Briz then explains about the importance of safeguarding the [crossing](#) as well as the secret of the [Two Worlds](#). He explains that, when a crossing was severely threatened, then it has been to close the crossing permanently. Apparently, this is happened many times in the past, and Briz confirms the underlying truth of the [Faerie](#) tales told by the [Irish Mystic](#) and the story Alistair related from his [grandfather](#).

Finally, Briz invites Tom and Alistair to join the [Guardians](#); they both accept immediately.

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The following morning, [Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#) return to the [Other World](#), driven by [Hamet](#). At the [crossing](#), Tom and Alistair are introduced to a few of the [Guardians](#), including [Fred](#) and [Duty Warden Arden](#).

Again travelling along [St. Cuthbert's Way](#), the three companions return to [Holme Farm](#). There, they pack their belongings and take their leave of [Farmer John](#) and his wife [Edna](#). They are collected by truck and driven to the [Reserve Defence Training Establishment](#) (RDTE) based at [Cliviger Grange](#). Before they arrive, Bram suddenly departs.

At the [Grange](#), Tom and Alistair are shown around by [Arnie](#) and are formally welcomed by [Warden Markham](#).

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[Tom](#) and [Alistair](#) undergo training at the [Reserve Defence Training Establishment](#) (RDTE) based at [Cliviger Grange](#). They attend classes in [magic](#) and its control using [gestures](#). They learn the basics of the written and spoken language of Lyndesfarne, which Alistair finds particularly easy. Because of his increasing fluency, Alistair is offered a place in the [Travellers Guidance Group](#), also known as the [Guides](#).

The two men also receive more military training, including use of weapons (at which Tom excels) and unarmed combat (taught by [Mister Giles](#)). They also get to know the comrades at the Grange, including the cousins [Stan](#) and [Charlie](#), the amazonian [Sophia](#), bright and bubbly [Marjorie](#) and little [Ifor](#) from Wales.

Trainees are also expected to undertake supervised duty at the [causeway](#). For this, Tom is accompanied by [Fred](#), who appears to acting as a kind of mentor to the younger man. Tom first catches sight of a [Watcher](#).

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On duty at the [causeway](#), [Tom](#) receives further instruction from [Fred](#) in dealing with unexpected [Visitors](#) from Lyndesfarne, as well as attempted smuggling and drunks. He also has his first exposure to the Official

[Messengers.](#)

## [Chapter 20 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) and [Alistair](#), together with others from their intake at [Cliviger Grange](#), are guided on their first official visit to Lyndesfarne and the [School for Guardians](#). The group is guided by Sergeant [Brasham](#) of the [Reserve Defence Training Establishment](#).

The party is transported by trucks to the [crossing](#), march across the [causeway](#) and the [bridge](#), then use a [portal](#) to the Guardian School. They are welcomed by [Warden Acris](#), while Tom wonders about the [magical windows](#) which allow daylight into lower floors.

## [Chapter 21 \[ Top \]](#)

While undertaking springtime chores outside [Cliviger Grange](#), [Tom](#) skives off to re-establish his acquaintance with [Edgar](#), the garage foreman. Later, Tom wanders idly along little-used pathways behind the stables and garage blocks, and chances upon a furtive meeting between [Major Markham](#) and [Bram's](#) uncle [Hamet](#).

## [Chapter 22 \[ Top \]](#)

On a trip from [Cliviger Grange](#), [Tom](#), [Alistair](#) and the other trainees are guided on a visit to the [communications tower](#) on the coast near to the [causeway](#). Unusually, the group is escorted by [Major Markham](#) himself. The tower is used to send and receive messages across the [straights](#), encoded as flashes of light using an Aldis Lamp.

Later, during their trip to the [School for Guardians](#), Sergeant [Brasham](#) guides the trainees on a tour of the corresponding tower on the Lyndesfarne coast. Tom is impressed by the use of [magic slates](#) for onward communications.

## [Chapter 23 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) has now graduated from the [Reserve Defence Training Establishment](#) at [Cliviger Grange](#), and is now a propationary member of the [Guardians](#). [Alistair](#) has left the [Grange](#) to further his life in the [Guides](#).

One day, Tom is on duty at the [crossing](#) when [Police Constable Percival Nelson](#) appears on his bicycle. Later on, Tom cadges an early lift back to the Grange in a truck, and spots Nelson's bicycle - and his dead body. He returns at speed to the [causeway](#) to warn the Guardians. Suddenly, three armed motorcyclists carrying explosives roar through the guard post. Tom manages to bring down the leader with a rifle shot, and [Ifor](#) and the others quickly overwhelm the riders before they can detonate the explosives.

The attackers remain much of a mystery, even after extensive investigations. Tom is publically congratulated by [Major Markham](#) and more informally by [Fred](#).

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[Tom](#) is patrolling the coastline to the south of the [crossing](#), again in the company of [Fred](#). Fred tells the other man the truth behind the story of Grace Darling's daring rescue of the crew of the *Forfarshire*. The rescuers were actually members of the Lyndesfarne [Guardian](#) force, and their names were actually [Graz](#) and [Farrar](#). Both recuers were in fact women, but Farrar was able to [shapeshift](#) before they crossed the [barrier](#).

## [Chapter 25 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) is on leave for a few days. He is unable to catch up with either [Alistair](#) or [Bram](#). He decides to walk over to Lyndesfarne and once again stay overnight in the [Dragon's Nest](#) pub. On the way, he stops off at the old [castle](#) which is just visible across the [straights](#).

## [Chapter 26 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) has dinner in the [Dragon's Nest](#) public house. He again encounters [Old Ged](#), the [dragon](#) hunter he and his companions met last year. Ged tells Tom about a new group of dragon hunters that has just been established, who decline the offer of Ged's services. Annoyed, Ged follows the hunters secretly, and observes them capturing dragons alive, caging them carefully and, he suspects, transporting them via secret [portals](#).

## [Chapter 27 \[ Top \]](#)

After a restless night in the [Dragon's Nest](#), [Tom](#) rushes back to the [Guardians](#) at the [causeway](#). He finds [Fred](#) and tells him [Old Ged](#)'s about the [Dragon](#) hunters.

Tom's warning is just in time. A flight of starving dragons follows a panicking herd of pigs who have somehow been allowed to get onto the causeway. Tom manages to start the cranky old engine which powers the fire pumps, and he, together with Fred, [Ifor](#) and the other Guardians beat the dragons (who hate water) back with powerful water jets.

## [Chapter 28 \[ Top \]](#)

One wet evening at [Cliviger Grange](#), [Fred](#) tells [Tom](#), [Ifor](#) and the other trainees a story from the War, of an attempted infiltration of the [crossing](#) by German troops. The attack was repulsed, with losses, and Fred himself was wounded. The objectives of the mission remained unclear, especially since no explosives were recovered.

## [Chapter 29 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) becomes a full member of the [Guardians](#), now holding the rank of Junior Guardian (Third Class).

Tom takes summertime leave. He has continued a correspondence with both [Alistair](#) and [Bram](#), and the three young men decide to congregate at Bram's family home again. Tom expects to have to walk from the [crossing](#) alone but, when he leaves the [causeway](#) on the Lyndesfarne coast, he is unexpectedly joined by Alistair. Alistair shows off the knowledge of the [portal](#) network he has gained in the [Guides](#) and rapidly directs Tom through a sequence of portals to one close to Bram's house.

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On the way to [Bram](#)'s family home, [Alistair](#) tells [Tom](#) of a strange sequence of events. On his very first unaccompanied engagement as a [Guide](#), Alistair's [Visitor](#), a VIP from the [Board of Control](#) called [Tarm](#), is collected from Bram's house after a meeting with [Hamet](#). He is then escorted to the [Other World](#), where he meets secretly with [Markham](#) in the [Crossed Keys](#) public house in [Alnwick](#). Shortly afterwards, Tarm disappears.

## [Chapter 31 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) and [Alistair](#) finally arrive at [Bram](#)'s family home. Alistair, in particular, is warmly welcomed by [Yise](#), Bram's sister.

Tom and Alistair are interviewed by a tired-looking Bram and his father, [Briz](#). While [Yellez](#) serves them all [chocolate](#), Tom retells the story of the motorcycle attack and the dragon invasion. Tom learns that Bram's uncle [Hamet](#) has disappeared, and that his wife [Preda](#) is understandably worried.

## [Chapter 32 \[ Top \]](#)

[Briz](#) explains his role as a spymaster for the [Board of Control](#) to [Tom](#) and [Alistair](#), and [Bram](#) admits that he is, as suspected, an agent for his father.

Briz explains the circumstances of [Hamet](#)'s disappearance, which appears to have utilised a long-defunct [portal](#). Tom repeats [Old Ged](#)'s gossip about hidden portals being re-opened. They realise that Hamet's position in the Board of Control might have enabled him to steal information which would allow portals to be re-opened easily.

Alistair repeats to Briz his story about [Tarm](#) meeting with Hamet and later meeting with [Major Markham](#), and reports that Tarm, too, has gone missing. Finally, Tom repeats his story about seeing Hamet meeting in secret with Markham.

## [Chapter 33 \[ Top \]](#)

[Briz](#) delegates [Bram](#) to travel to [Cliviger Grange](#) to interview [Major Markham](#), and [Tom](#) and [Alistair](#) volunteer to accompany him. Bram disguises himself as a [Messenger](#) and they return by [portal](#) to the [crossing](#) in a worried

state of mind.

The [Guardians](#) on either end of the [causeway](#), including [Fred](#) and [Ifor](#), have seen nothing unusual, but are noticeably more alert when the three companions leave. Using Messenger privileges, they commandeer a staff car from [Oliver](#). Tom drives, having previously learned from his 'Uncle' [George](#) and [Edgar](#).

On arrival at the [Grange](#), the companions make their way to [Warden](#) Markham's office, and are surprised to find [Duty Warden Arden](#) sitting at the desk. Arden reports that Markham left unexpectedly just a few minutes ago.

### [Chapter 34 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) remembers the evening at [Cliviger Grange](#) before the graduation as [Guardians](#). Tom, together with [Ifor](#) and [Sophia](#), will be policing the [crossing](#), while [Alistair](#) will be joining the [Guides](#). [Stan](#) and [Charlie](#) will be joining the [Guild of Directions](#) as interpreters, while [Marjorie](#) will be attached to a mysterious intelligence organisation based at the [Grange](#).

Tom and Alistair sort out their belongings before departure. Alistair asks Tom to take care of his [Grandfather's](#) old watch, as well as the pendant he found while digging ditches around [Holme Farm](#).

### [Chapter 35 \[ Top \]](#)

[Bram](#), together with [Tom](#) and [Alistair](#), prepare to leave [Cliviger Grange](#). On the way out, they encounter [Sergeant Brasham](#), who recognises Bram. Brasham admits he has been watching [Major Markham](#), as well as admitting that he was the other person watching the secret meeting between [Hamet](#) and Markham. Tom begins to suspect that Brasham is a member of the [Watchers](#).

Prompted by Bram, Alistair recalls the strange pendant that he had dug up when working on [Holme Farm](#), which he suspects contains a [magical sprite](#) - a [Finder](#). Alistair has left this item in the care of Tom, who volunteers to retrieve it from his locker.

### [Chapter 36 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) thinks back to a historical tale that he and [Alistair](#) were told by [Briz](#) on their first acquaintance. It concerns the political situation around the [crossing](#) from Siberia to [Agrea](#), the crossing that Alistair's [grandfather](#) had used, and was later destroyed in a vast explosion.

Bris explains that the political situation between the Bolsheviks and the Imperials was so tense that many groups in the world of Lyndesfarne wanted the Agrea crossing closed. Agrea disagreed, wishing to retain the political and economic benefits that the crossing enabled. Lyndesfarne and other countries engage in covert military action, culminating in the explosive closure of the Agrea crossing.

### [Chapter 37 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) uses the [magical](#) pendant (a [Finder](#)) to try and locate [Major Markham](#), but without success. However, the pendant reveals [Hamet's](#) location in the fair near to the [causeway](#).

Tom drives [Bram](#) and [Alistair](#) back to the [crossing](#). They decide to split their forces. Bram and Alistair will cross to Lyndesfarne and track down Markham and [Tarm](#), while Tom will locate Hamet.

Tom spots a mystery man he believes to be Hamet emerging from a caravan near the crossing. The stranger sneaks behind the [Guardians](#) who are distracted by a battle on the opposite shore of the [straights](#). Followed by Tom, the other man makes his way to the [communications tower](#) where, using a magical weapon, he disables the Guardians on duty.

Tom bravely alerts the other Guardians, then tackles the mystery man, who is in fact Hamet. He is trying to operate the emergency magic that destroys the crossing. During the struggle, Tom falls from the tower.

### [Chapter 38 \[ Top \]](#)

[Tom](#) has a strange, lucid dream while unconscious from his fall. He dreams of his childhood with [Granny](#), and a visit from his supposedly-missing parents [Lizzie](#) and [Brad](#). They explain a little of why they were forced to abandon young Tom and go into hiding.

The dream ends when the young Tom is presented with a [magic](#) marble that (he later suspects) contains a [mind-wipe sprite](#).

### [Chapter 39](#) [ [Top](#) ]

[Tom](#) wakes in hospital, injured but safe, accompanied by an anxious [Bram](#). Tom's heroic action on the [communications tower](#) alerted the [Guardians](#) and prevented the [crossing](#) from being destroyed. [Hamet](#) was killed in the struggle, and [Tarm](#) and [Major Markham](#) have been apprehended.

While recuperating, Tom has many visitors. [Fred](#) is to succeed Markham as [Warden](#) of [Cliviger Grange](#). [Alistair](#) and [Yise](#) visit to announce their engagement, and to ask Tom to be their Best Man. Tom's colleagues ([Ifor](#), [Sophia](#), [Marjorie](#), [Stan](#) and [Charlie](#)) from the [Grange](#) visit to extend their good wishes and to hear his story first-hand.

### [Chapter 40](#) [ [Top](#) ]

While [Tom](#) recuperates at [Cliviger Grange](#), he has several further visitors including [Sergeant Brasham](#), who makes it clear that Tom must keep his speculations about Brasham's membership of the [Watchers](#) to himself. He is also visited by [Old Ged](#) and the aloof [Irish Mystic](#).

He is also visited by [Bris](#), to whom Tom tells of his strange dream about his parents. Bris delegates [Bram](#) to find out everything he can about Tom's missing parents [Lizzie](#) and [Brad](#). Later, Bram reports his findings - that he and Tom are distant relatives. More importantly, he reports that [Major Markham](#) himself was instrumental in Brad and Lizzie's disappearance.

Bram believes that Tom's parents may still be alive, perhaps in some distant part of Tom's world. Bram presents Tom with the [Finder](#) that [Alistair](#) found, with instructions to use it to track down his family.

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