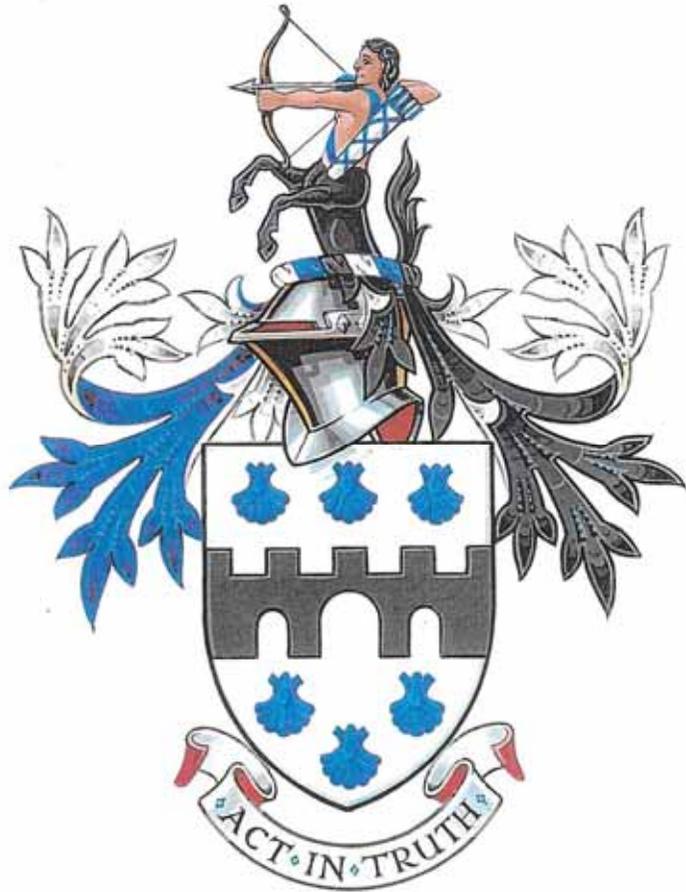


colour, red, blue or green. Not liking those very much, I asked, "What about black?" and received the reply, "Of course, Sable is an heraldic colour. I 'll tell you what! We can compromise, and have the hairy bits Sable and the fleshy bits pink." I then insisted that Centaurs lived out of doors in Mediterranean climes and would be well tanned, and this view prevailed.



Argent a Fess embattled the base pierced by a major arch between two minor arches Sable all between six Escallops Azure, and for a Crest upon a Wreath Argent Azure and Sable a demi-Sagittarius proper the equine parts Sable pendant from the shoulders on a baldric Azure a Quiver Argent bound Azure with Arrows Argent flighted Azure. Mantled Azure and Sable doubled Argent. Motto: 'Act in Truth' Granted 12 November 1997.

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St Andrew's Day 2016



Wyvern on Cap-badge of Wessex Regiment

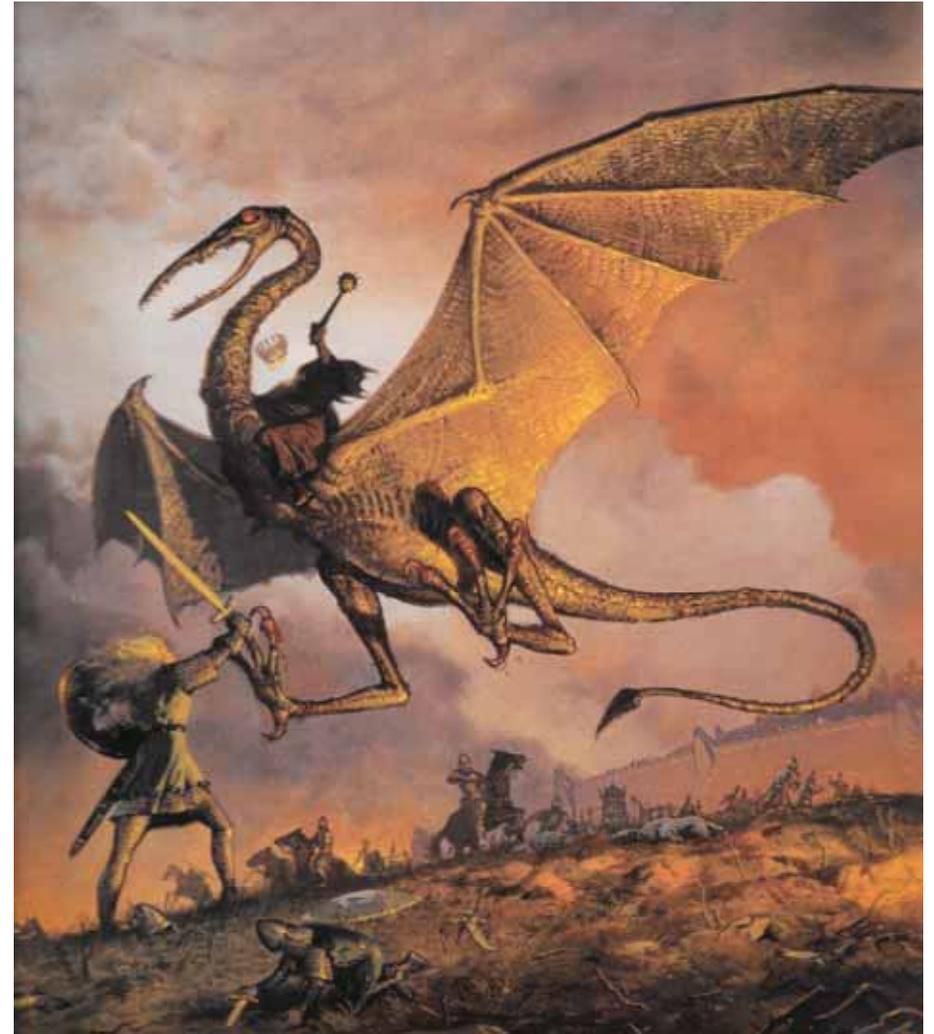


The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts



It is some time since we appeared on St Andrew's Day. In 2013 we showed a picture of him as seen in Leonardo's painting of the Last Supper. Well known locally as the Patron Saint of Scotland, he also patronizes Greece, Romania, Russia and Barbados, so what with expatriate communities of Scots throughout the Commonwealth, his feast day of 30 November is now celebrated worldwide.

The cap-badge on the cover was a present from Roger Seabury, and this issue of Dragonlore should be dedicated to him, as he provided the bulk of its content. The Wessex Regiment was an infantry unit of the Territorial Army, covering the area of several West Country counties whose regiments were amalgamated, and commemorates the Wyvern totem of the ancient Saxon Kingdom of that name. It is curious that the modern British Army likes to refer to the past for the titles of its units, another example being the former Royal Mercian & Lancastrian Yeomanry, an amalgamation of some West Midland regiments which had the two-headed eagle on the red rose of Lancaster for its badge, as seen in No 53, now seen here in colour (*right*). Having coloured enamel patches on an army cap-badge was most unusual, and put up the price considerably. There is actually not much evidence that the two-headed eagle was the totem of Mercia, but it makes for a good badge. On the other hand, there is no doubt that Wessex used the two-legged Dragon as its totem, even up to the Battle of Hastings. It was not until the Tudors came to London and brought their four-legged Dragon with them that the Heralds were obliged to think of another name for the ancient two-legged variety. I believe that the four-legged Dragon arose from a confusion between Dragons and Griffins. Wessex and Mercia were two of the seven kingdoms into which Saxon England was divided before they had a common King, and each was shired (that is to say, sheared or divided) into five parts. Wessex later conquered the adjacent Kingdom of Devon and added it as a sixth shire, and when the Normans came they made each of the shires into a county, so that Wessex and Mercia as such lost their identity. Meanwhile the Saxon Kingdoms of Essex, Kent and Sussex each became a Norman county and so kept their identities intact. Wessex remained a mere historical reference until Thomas Hardy revived the name for the West Country areas he wrote about in his novels. Now it is widely accepted as the name for the region or area, and has even received royal approval with the bestowal of the title Earl of Wessex upon Prince Edward. Perhaps one day Mercia will be similarly recognized. There is already a West Mercia Police Force!



ROGER SEABURY'S ARMS

Since this issue is full of Roger's work, we may as well finish with his arms, which have a fabulous beast as the crest. When first proposed, the shield had waves of the sea in base, but they were banned as an overdone cliché, so we settled on sea shells. The black bit is a stylised entrance to a borough or else an old-fashioned stage proscenium, stage-craft being one of Roger's specialities. The finished shield was much admired by Cecil Humphery-Smith. For the crest, Roger being a champion archer, I had proposed a Sagittary proper, but Garter insisted it should be an heraldic

TOLKIEN FANTASIES

Roger has recently unearthed two old calendars with pictures of Dragons, one showing Smaug, from Tolkien's story of the Hobbit (*below*) and the other a fantasy Dragon painted by Ted Nasmith to illustrate a scene from another Tolkien work, *The Return of the King* (*opposite*).

Fantasy artists have had great fun illustrating Tolkien's version of the Dragon he called Smaug, not all of them the same. This one is rather emaciated compared with others we have seen. I am not at all sure that these artists really understood the true nature of Dragons, which were fairly well stabilised by the medieval illustrators of Bestiaries. On the other hand, one might think that recent imaginations are just as valid as more ancient ones, and it is always fun to see what they come up with.



ROGER'S RESEARCHES

In No 184, under the heading "Some Mediterranean Monsters," we briefly described some of Roger's discoveries in Italy, but at that time the computer was reluctant to reveal the pictures that had been placed in its scanned store. Now, after some expert advice, they are available. First was a giant mural welcome to Ravello with its strange beast (*below*)



Next were a couple of Griffins from the ruins of Herculaneum (*bottom and top of next page*).





Then came a statue of a Centaur from the same site (*below*),



and finally two pairs of Grotesques from a couple of majolica plates in the museum (*below*).

