



The municipality of Vedra, Galicia



The municipality of Ibias, Asturia



The District of Egorievsky, Moscow Region



The City of Sayansk, Irkutsk Region

Dragonlore

The Journal of The College of Dracology

No.105 St Margaret's Day 2008



A new monster, the Delgryphus, as supporter in a new Canadian grant,
drawn by Linda Nicholson



The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts

The arms on the cover of the last issue were chosen for their content, but when they were put together it seemed that there was so little colour in them (just some yellow) that the expense of colour printing would not be justified. However, it was scanned in colour and Roger did manage to print off a few coloured versions, though not enough to go round. Those who were disappointed not to see colour could either try to colour in the grey bits on three of the arms with a yellow pencil, or else look on the website, if the facility is available, under "Publications" where their full glory is displayed.

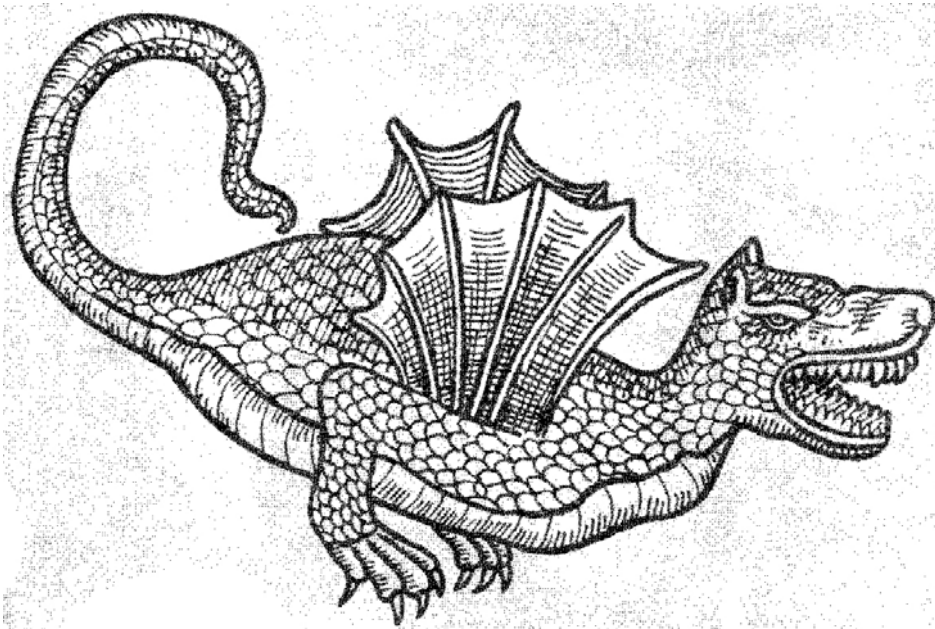
Saint Margaret, Queen of Scotland, was born about 1046 as an English princess in exile, as her father, Edward the Atheling, son of Edmund Ironside, had been banished to Hungary, the land of her mother, Princess Agatha. In 1057 she arrived in England at the court of Edward the Confessor, her great-uncle, but after the Norman Conquest had to flee, this time to Scotland, where, in 1070, in deference to the wishes of her mother, and in spite of her preference for the devotions of the religious life, she married King Malcolm III to whom she bore six sons and two daughters. Her beauty and learning won over the King, and indeed, all Scots, to Christian ways, and with the help of Archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury she reformed ecclesiastical life, removed Celtic customs, founded Dunfermline Abbey and was a great benefactress of the poor. She died in 1093 in Edinburgh and was canonized in 1249. Her tiny chapel at the very highest point of Edinburgh Castle is well worth a visit, with a special service to commemorate her life every 16th November.

The arms on the cover were devised by **Darrel Kennedy, Assiniboine Herald**, and granted by Claire Boudreau, Chief Herald of Canada, in July 2008 to Paul's Restaurants Ltd of Victoria, British Columbia, the proprietors of the celebrated Inn at Laurel Point on the waterfront of Victoria's Inner Harbour. The blazon reads:- *Gules a bezant between in chief an earl's coronet and in base two laurel leaves conjoined at the base Or*; and for a crest: *A man sejant affronty on a bench, his dexter hand grasping a staff ensigned by an orca contourné embowed, his sinister hand raised, all Or embellished Gules and in the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation style*. The supporters are: *Two delgryphi Or embellished Gules and in the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation style, issuant from Barry crested Argent and Azure on either side of a rocky outcrop proper*.

William Buttayotti has sent another of his Dragon drawings (*see No 95*). Note the interesting anatomy of the creature, the snake's head at the end of its tail, and the tiny helmeted dragon-rider on its neck, perhaps William himself in daring mode. He asks if he "can come with you to the land of Madregaskre" and suggests that these monsters had evolved from small dinosaurs. His Mum Veronica adds a note that William "would like to go dragon hunting one day." He is just eleven!



several wicked black dragons, the huge griffin that devastated the countryside and was eventually demolished by Merlin's secret magic (Gaius had found out that griffins were born of magic and could only be defeated by magic, even though all magic had been prohibited in the powerful kingdom of Camelot), and a creature said to be a unicorn, but actually a white horse in fancy dress (being pedantic again!). Judging by the glimpses seen in the trailers, there may yet be more to come. Nonsense maybe, but entertaining nonsense.



CORRESPONDENCE

Jan Keuzenkamp sent a lot of arms with fabulous beasts, as recorded in the last issue, and now we can show some of them. Two from Spain: the municipality of Vedra in Galicia has a pair of well-drawn wyvern-dragons, while that of Ibias in Asturia has a dragon that may even be a crocodile being subdued by a knight in a castle. Then two from Russia: the District of Egorievsky in the Moscow Region has a splendid dragon being speared from out of a cloud, while the City of Sayansk in the Irkutsk Region has a stately classical griffin. (*These are all on page 8.*) More later!

David Vaudrey visited the Drachenfelsbahn. The Dragon Rock has its own railway whose emblem is a stylish dragon within a gearwheel, quite appropriate! He also donated a British 20p postage stamp commemorating "The Hobbit of JRR Tolkien" with a picture of a fierce dragon frightening the little fellow away.



The **delgryphus** is a new monster combining parts of a griffin with the tail of a member of the family *Delphinidae*, which includes dolphins and porpoises and, in this case, the orca or killer whale, a creature which abounds in the waters round Victoria. The crest represents the idea of a potlatch. The chief is welcoming those to whom he intends to distribute gifts, and the design symbolizes a place that welcomes people. Darrel deserves congratulations for his ingenuity, and thanks for informing us of this development.

BOOK REVIEWS

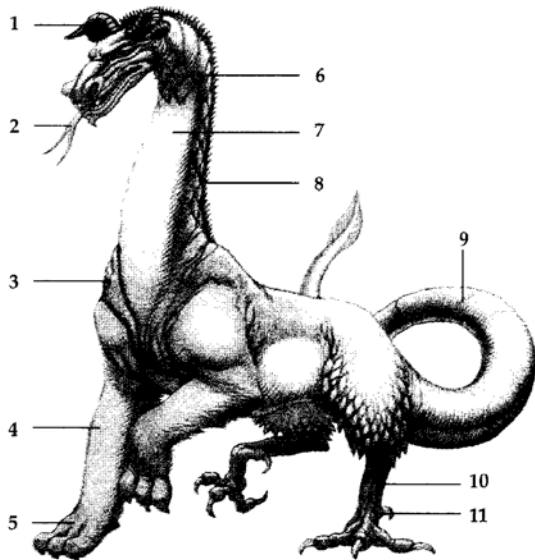
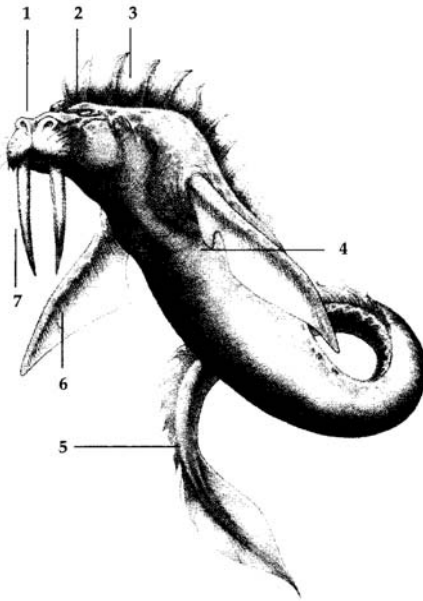
Another magnificent volume from the *Dragonology* stable "edited" by Dugald Steer is **Mythology: The Gods, Heroes and Monsters of Ancient Greece** (Dorking, 2007) which again has a story within a story. It purports to be a book written in 1825 by Lady Hestia Evans, lent to a Mr John Oro to accompany him on a visit to Greece and who annotates the book in the margins with comments on his adventures. Monsters appear throughout, and there is a useful family tree which shows how most of them – Cerberus, Orthus, Chimaera, Hydra, the Nemean Lion and the Sphinx – are the offspring of Typhon and Echidna, while Medusa, Pegasus and the Minotaur are descended from Posiedon. Ladon, the dragon who guarded the Garden of the Hesperides, was a brother (or sister?) of Echidna, and like several of the others, was slain by Heracles during one of his twelve labours and then placed in the sky as the constellation Draco. There is one chapter devoted to "Monsters and Mythical Beasts" which deals with and illustrates a Harpy, a Siren, a Fury, the Graeae, Perseus and the Gorgons, the Sphinx (with the story of its overcoming by Oedipus – *see picture*), the Boar of Calydon, and a little inserted booklet covering Python and Apollo, Ladon and Heracles, Typhon and Zeus, and Echidna and Argus, and passing references to Chiron and other centaurs and the story of Theseus and the Minotaur. Some of these monsters are illustrated on a picture of a classical Greek dish, as shown below.



This is a worthy member of the series from Templar Publishing, with its mixture of imaginative presentation and informative content, and a spirited picture of Heracles fighting a nine-headed dragon on the cover. The illustrations, in various styles, are by Nick Harris, Nicki Palin and David Wyatt, and all in all Dugald Steer deserves our unstinted praise.

Inevitably, the success of the *Dragonology* books has led to imitators, but it would be wrong to think of

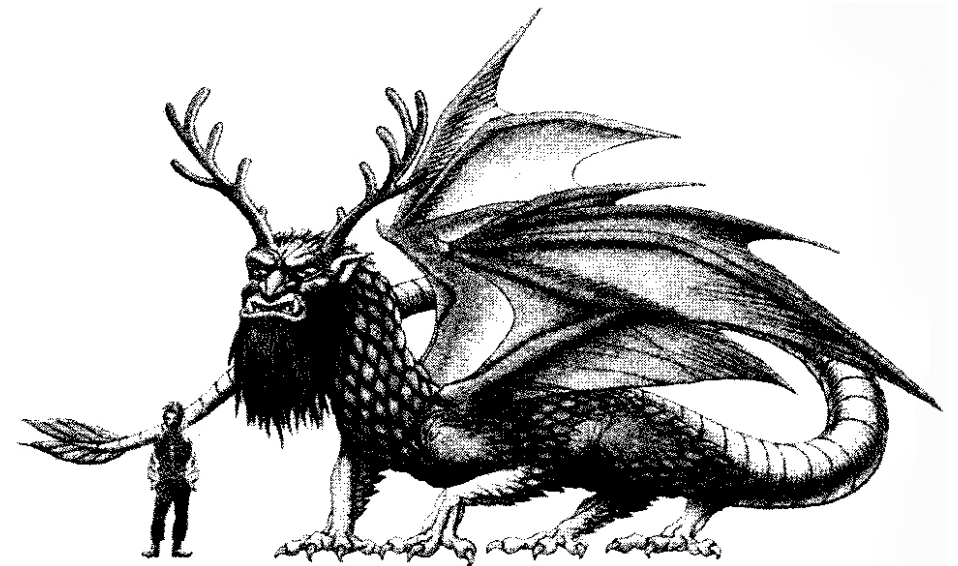
How to Raise and Keep a DRAGON by John Topsell (London 2008) as in any way inferior. The author claims to be a descendant of the famous Edward Topsell, but may be fictional, as the book is “edited” by Joseph Nigg, and he is well known as an expert on fabulous beasts, and we have reviewed several of his books in these pages. The list of Dragon Breeds reveals wide scholarship, as it includes such species as the Mushussu, the Piasa and the Tarasque as well as the more familiar Cockatrice and Salamander, apart from nine other dragon varieties, of which the so-called Joppa Dragon is identified with the classical Cetus (Roman, = Greek *Ketos*) but in the illustration (*right*) looks remarkably like the Bunyip we showed in No 102, page 5. The book leads off with the question, “Should you own a Dragon?” and after some basic definitions goes on to deal with matters of Raising the Perfect Dragon, Training your Dragon and Presenting your Dragon, finishing with “Best in Show.” All rather improbable, but good fun, and superbly illustrated by Dan Malone. Here is his drawing of the Mushussu (also known as SIRRUSH), not quite like the one we are used to from the Ishtar gate of Babylon (*see No 38*), but undoubtedly the same genus (*left*).



Then again, although we included the Piasa in our A to Z (in No 15, “the man-eating dragon-bird of Illinois, known from cliff carvings above the Mississippi River, recorded by an early missionary but since destroyed”), we have never had a picture of it, so here is Dan Malone’s version (*below, next page*). Nigg’s text goes into greater detail:

French priest Jacques Marquette was the first to describe the Piasa. While exploring North America’s Mississippi River in 1673, he and his companion, Louis Joliet, saw images of two

grotesque figures on a cliff face above a stretch of turbulent water. Painted in red, black and green, each beast was: “as large as a calf, with horns like a deer, red eyes, a beard like a tiger and a frightful expression of countenance. The face is something like that of a man, the body covered with scales; and the tail so long that it passes entirely round the body, over the head and between the legs, ending like that of a fish.” A local Algonquin Indian tribe called the monster Piasa, meaning “the bird which devours men.” In legend, it carried off members of the tribe until warriors ambushed it and killed it with poison arrows. The original rock art of the Piasa is gone from the site that is near the town of Alton, Illinois, but the composite beast now glares from a restored painting on a bluff overlooking the river.



“Merlin” on the BBC

This series of programmes is not a documentary nor a faithful retelling of ancient legends, but a thoroughly anachronistic romantic invention using (or perhaps misusing) various characters from the old chronicles. The producers have said that anything between the tenth and sixteenth centuries would be appropriate, but they may even have overstepped those limits. Did Druids survive into the tenth century? When a fierce monster is reported to be devastating the countryside, Gaius the wise old doctor, a part played by Richard Wilson, looks up a book illustrated with pictures that we recognize from Topsell’s *Historie of Serpents* (1608) – *see next page*. And the armour worn varies from early Norman chain-mail to late Tudor plate. But pedantry aside, the stories are imaginative and exciting and very well produced, and include a number of animated fabulous beasts. There is a silvery benevolent dragon,