

Dragonlore

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No.113

St Nicholas' Day 2009



Garuda in the Arms of Midden Java drawn by Jan Keuzenkamp



A Dragon from a mediaeval manuscript, being attacked by a warrior with a sword whilst standing on the shoulders of a man who is stabbing the dragon with a spear.

Issued 6 December 2009 by Ralph Brocklebank, Orland, Church Avenue, Clent, Stourbridge DY9 9QS
Website:- www.dragonlore.co.uk E-mail:- ralph@dragonlore.co.uk



The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts

A Happy Saint Nick's Day to all our Members.

Saint Nicholas, whose feast day is celebrated on 6 December, is widely accepted as the main source of the figure of Father Christmas, as his other name of Santa Claus indicates. He was the Bishop of Myra, Lycia in Asia Minor, in the 4th Century, and is remembered for his many acts of kindness, helping those who were very poor or under threat, especially children. One of his good deeds was to throw three bags of gold through the window of an impoverished nobleman to ransom his three daughters who were due to be sold into slavery. This act was the basis of his symbol of three golden balls, an emblem that was adopted by pawnbrokers as a trade sign and is still occasionally seen today. Another example of his generosity to children is commemorated annually with the filling of their Christmas stockings with presents. Let us therefore use this opportunity to greet all our members with Christmas good wishes and the best of health and happiness in the coming New Year.

The picture on the cover was described in the last issue under Correspondence, but we have removed the crown and the lion supporters to make the most of the distinctive Garuda bird, now used as the emblem of the Indonesian Airline. We are very grateful to Jan Keuzenkamp for sending us this copy of his artwork, the whole of which is shown below. The crown and lions should be coloured a rich reddish gold.



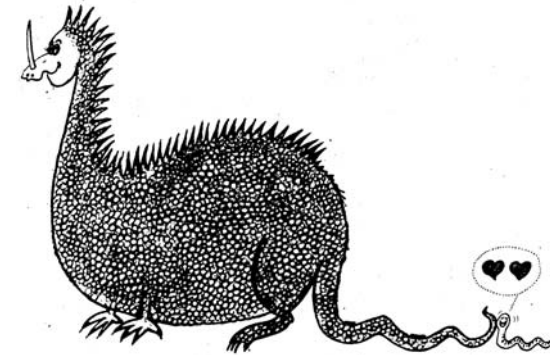
CORRESPONDENCE

Tony Denning wrote: "Thank you for number 112 (St.Martin's Day). I always enjoy reading about the saints as well as the dragons and other beasts. I wonder how the C XVI accountants would have worked the parallel lines of the dollar into their design? It is strange to think that in the days of quills, without computers or calculators, without electric light or central heating there was time to doodle to such effect."

Tony was referring to the capital S shaped dragon from Wells, and I suppose that a couple of spears or lances would have done the trick, appropriately transfixing the monster.

Cathie Constant is always sending snippets, but this cartoon (*below*) by Danilo Aquisti from Italy was more than I could resist, showing a mistakenly amorous worm.

Another of her contributions is shown on the back page.



Roger Seabury supplied some photographs of dragons that he had taken on his travels, as did his son **David**, from the celebrations at Dudley Castle.

Roland Symons so often comes up with RAF badges that we have not seen before, and this time it is the Pegasus for 267 Squadron, granted in June 1944 (*right*). The Pegasus should be coloured black, 'crined Or' – that is with golden mane and tail, and probably golden hooves as well – and was thought to be appropriate for a Transport Squadron.



JOURNAL SCAN

The New Zealand Armorerist (No.112, Spring 2009) has this lively drawing by Roger Barnes (*right*) of a new interpretation of the crest of Charles Darwin:- *Upon a wreath of the colours, in front of a demi-griffin Vert, holding between the claws an escallop Or, three escallops fesswise Argent.* This year marks the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Darwin (1809-1882). I was at Trinity College with his great-grandson George, and the family home, Newnham Grange, is now the home of Darwin College in the University of Cambridge.



Tak Tent (No.45, October 2009) has a picture by James Floyd of a fully-carved brown Unicorn leaping from the wall of a warehouse in Bryggen, the Hanseatic quarter of Bergen in Norway. The keen-eyed will notice a few other Unicorns of the Scottish variety lurking in the background of some of the other pictures.

The Bookplate Journal (Vol 7, No 2, September 2009) includes pictures of a large number of armorial plates with several dragons and a griffin or two, but especially notable are these two – a Dolphin crest for His Highness The Nawab Nazim of Bengal (*left*) and this delightful Basilisk crest for Matthew Worgan of Woolley (*right*).



TWO MONUMENTAL DRAGONS

As he was glancing into a skip, **David Perks** noticed an old book that seemed to be of interest, so he retrieved it. It was *The Water-Babies, A Fairy Tale for a Land-Baby*, by Charles Kingsley (London, Macmillan and Co, 1896 - Fourth Edition) with one hundred illustrations by Linley Sambourne. Two of these latter, facing each other on pages 14 and 15, were these splendid monumental dragons (*below*), though Dave could find no reference to them in the text. Perhaps they would have been well known to his readers.



ADVERTISEMENT

Our College tie is still available (*see No 58*) and in spite of increases in postal rates they are still to be had for £8, inland postage included. The emblem of the Modresford Dragon from Herefordshire, to be seen on page 2, is picked out in gold on the deep blue polyester fabric of the tie, and is repeated throughout in shadow form, together with the letters CDFSB whose meaning may be found again on page 2.

A SPLENDID BOOKPLATE



This plate for Henry Duke of Kent, 1713, has one of the best pair of supporters in the genre, two exquisitely drawn Wyverns.

ANOTHER SOMERSET DRAGON

In a little booklet entitled “Heraldry, Glazed and Carved, in Bath Abbey” (no date) by John Ede and Roland Symons, there is, among other delights, this unusual rendering of the arms of Somerset County Council, which, in a more conventional version drawn by Wilfrid Scott-Giles, adorned the cover of our very first issue. For those who wish to colour it in, the shield is gold, the dragon red and the mace he is holding is blue.

