

YET ANOTHER PHOENIX



Arms granted to Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson by the Canadian Heraldic Authority upon her becoming the Governor General of Canada

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Phoenix in the arms devised for Professor Amartya Sen



The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts



Saint Andrew was the first of the disciples of Jesus, with his brother Simon Peter, and came from his calling as a fisherman to be a “fisher of men.” He has become the Patron Saint of Scotland where his emblem of a diagonal cross, said to be the instrument of his martyrdom, features as a saltire on the national flag (*right*). His feast day, which falls on the 30th November, is greatly celebrated in that country, especially by heraldists.

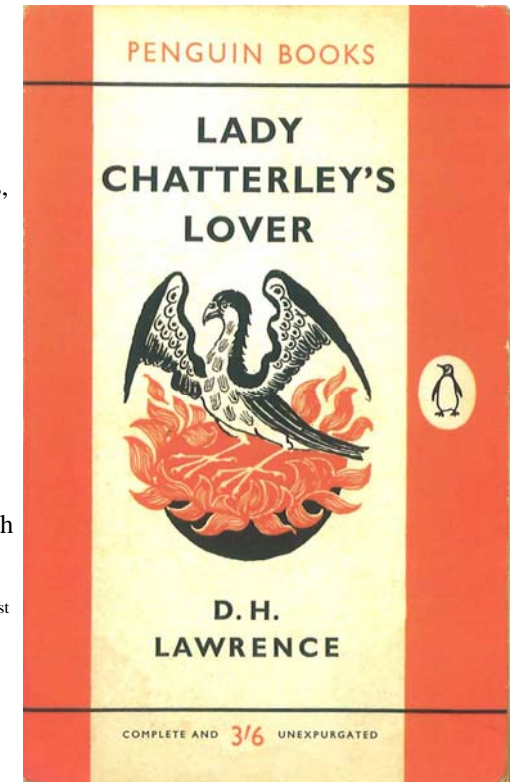


Professor Amartya Sen was a winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics and for a couple of years was Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. I met him there at a breakfast in college, and he was a delightful man, but I found that he was a Master without a coat of arms. To remedy this situation, I devised a suggested design of arms for him (*see right and cover*) and sent them off to him. The Phoenix symbolizes his work on the renewal of the economy and the shield has simplified emblems for the Trinity and the economy, while the helm is a Mughal pattern and the motto a play on his family name. He wrote back a charming letter in which he said that he admired the design and liked it very much, but thought that a grant of arms would not be appropriate for a man in his position – perhaps because he was not a British citizen. In fact, he was of Indian origin (like the helm) and had gone to America to pursue his career. After his term at Trinity, he returned to the States to resume his professorial duties. We shall never know whether the Kings of Arms would have approved this design. (And see also *The Heraldic Craftsman*, No 47, March 2004 page 15.)



CORRECTION: Close examination will reveal that the badge of HMS Swiftsure (No 130, p2) is not a Griffin but a winged Heraldic Tyger. The clue is in the head.

Tony Denning found a card showing an early Penguin Book cover (*right*) with a rather splendid, though crestless, Phoenix. I have not been able to trace the artist; has anyone?



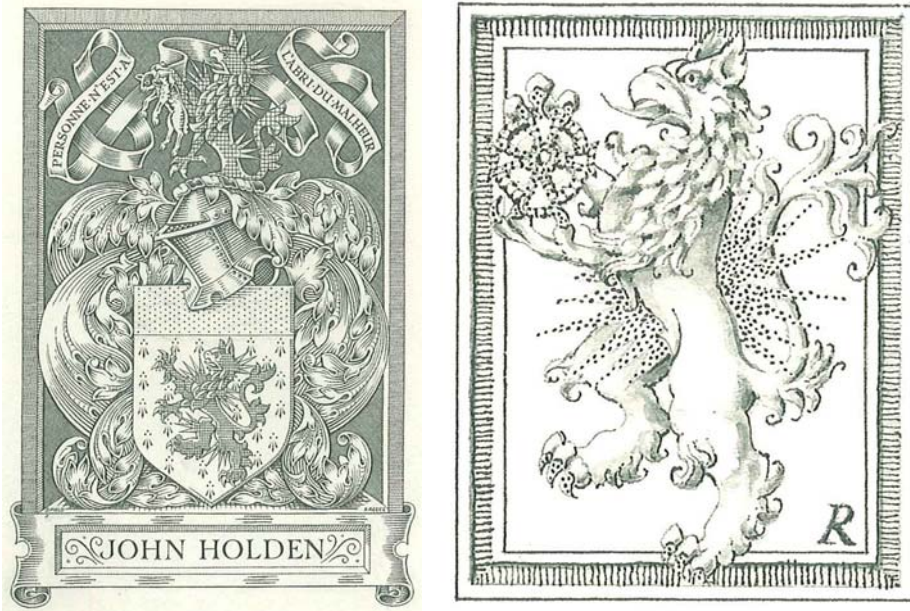
David Vaudrey sends lots of good things, among them this 3d postage stamp (*below*) commemorating the VIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games held in Wales (as is apparent from the Dragon) and issued on my 31st birthday, and thanks to **Bob Grainger** for confirming the date of issue as 18th July 1958. David also sent the picture on page 8.



available with the same design, all from the Royal Mint. We are grateful to **Peter Giles** for sending these pictures.

JOURNAL SCAN

The Bookplate Journal (Autumn 2011) has, apart from a Griffin, a Unicorn and a Dragon, some very fine Ormogriffs (otherwise, male griffins) drawn by Stanley Reece, notably on a bookplate for John Holden, on shield and crest, and another on a preliminary sketch for an unknown client who did not proceed with the commission.



The B/C Yukon Blazon (Issue 11, Summer/Fall 2011) treats the Queen's Beasts at length, and all in colour, a fitting tribute to their current residence in the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec (just over the river from Ottawa).

CORRESPONDENCE

Tony Ryan has sent pictures of various beasts carved on the ends of choir stalls in Bath Abbey. They represent part of the major Victorian restoration of the Abbey, 1864-1874, undertaken by Sir George Gilbert Scott. Hand carved from English oak, they follow the style copied from pre-Reformation patterns still existent in some Somerset churches. The best of the bunch is this Griffin (*right*).

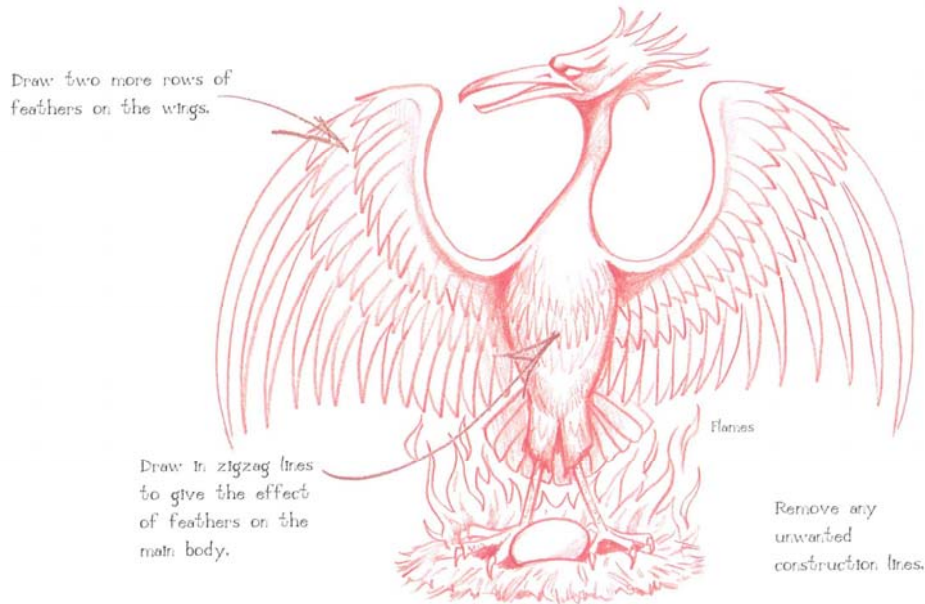


THE DACRE BEASTS were illustrated and described in No 21, just eleven years ago, but in their newly refurbished display in the Victoria and Albert Museum it is worth having another look at them, this time in colour. They are, from the left, the Red Bull with the Dacre arms, the Black Gryphon with a variant of the Dacre arms, the Buff Ram or Lamb of De Multon or De Mouton with their arms and the Pink Dolphin of Greystoke with their arms, all carved from a single 450-year-old oak trunk in 1520 AD or thereabout and with the metal banners added around 1845 after the carvings had been rescued from a terrible fire at Naworth Castle in Cumberland, the home of the Dacres.

BOOK REVIEW

How to Draw MAGICAL CREATURES and MYTHICAL BEASTS by Mark Bergin (Brighton, 2007) is a practical handbook with some excellent drawings of our favourite monsters. After some helpful hints on starting, perspective, using photos, materials and sketching, there are two-page spreads on each of the Centaur, Dragon, Gryphon, Hydra, Minotaur, Pegasus, Phoenix, Troll and Unicorn with a Glossary to finish. I have chosen the Phoenix to illustrate here because it ties in well with the

picture on the cover. For more on the Phoenix, see Dragonlore No 80. We are grateful to **Cathie Constant** for sending us this book, which she came across in a bookshop in Helensburgh while on a visit to Scotland.



THE MONGOLIAN DEATH WORM - An Addition to the A to Z

Q – Is the Mongolian death worm a real creature?

A - There have been no verified sightings of this mythical beast or cryptid, though many Mongolians believe it exists.

It is known to Mongolia's nomadic tribesmen as the *alghoi khorkhoi* – the 'intestine worm' – as it resembles a cow's intestine. This reddish creature is 2ft to 5ft long and as thick as a person's arm, with no discernible limbs, head end, or tail end, though it is sometimes said to bear spiked projections at both ends.

The creature is said to be able to spray an acid-like substance that causes instant death. It is also claimed that this creature has the ability to kill from a distance, possibly using an electrical charge.

It is reported to hibernate for most of the year except for June and July, when it becomes active. It is believed that touching any part of the worm will bring instant death, and its venom supposedly corroders metal.

Its habitat is the Southern Gobi Desert, one of the least explored areas in the world.

The first reference in English to this beast appears in Professor Roy Chapman Andrews's 1926 book *On The Trail Of Ancient Man*.

When meeting with a group of Mongolian elders, he describes how: 'None of

those present ever had seen the creature, but they all firmly believed in its existence and described it minutely.' American palaeontologist Andrews is said to be the inspiration for the character Indiana Jones.

The Czech cryptozoologist and explorer Ivan Mackerle has made three trips to the Gobi to try to locate this creature, all of which have been unsuccessful.

It is regarded with a superstitious fear, but the only supernatural characteristic it has picked up is the reputed ability to kill from a distance, without spraying its venom.

Similar mythical abilities have been attributed to snakes – such as the rattlesnake's supposed power to kill people who are miles away by biting their footprints – so it is quite possible that the mythology has built up around a real animal,

Many witnesses say it has smooth skin with no scales, which suggests it might be a skink – a widespread family of legless lizards that resemble snakes

Paul Butler, Wolverhampton.

[From the Daily Mail, Thursday 27 October 2011]

This creature qualifies as a fabulous beast on account of its mythical attributes, and in case you wondered, this is what one species of skink looks like:-



A NEW GOLD SOVEREIGN FOR THE 2012 DIAMOND JUBILEE



Her Majesty The Queen has approved a new design for the reverse of the gold sovereign to be issued next year in time for her Diamond Jubilee celebrations. As is traditional, it shows St George slaying the Dragon, but in a fresh interpretation by the British sculptor Paul Day. On the left we see his draft drawing for the design and on the right the actual gold coin in low relief, which will sell for £495. Only 5,500 sovereigns will be minted, but half-sovereigns and quarter-sovereigns will also be