

The Tabard in May 1976:

Since the first number of Tabard appeared, Professor Gerard J. Brault has written concerning the unusual drawing of a dragon which set me on my quest, as follows: "When I drew up the specifications for Mr Scott-Giles' illustrations of my *Early Blazon*, I tried to find 13th century heraldic examples for all the designs. The Dragon was based on a sketch of the arms of Baudouin de Corbeil in Adam-Even and Jequier's edition of the Wijnbergen Roll." Spurred on by this information, I enquired at Bath Reference Library and The Heraldry Society Library for this Roll. Both turned up trumps; the Heraldry Society was able to supply my needs immediately, but the Bath Library, albeit in slower time, was able to provide me with a complete photocopy of the Roll for the bargain price of 10p postage. Baudouin de Corbeil's dragon is certainly a curious beast (*Fig 10*), but I am inclined to believe that he has only two legs, and his wings are certainly feathery. Professor Brault has given me a number of very helpful references to early examples of the dragon, which will carry me further down the Dragon Trail, and I am busy following them up, so perhaps there may yet be further reports on the Quest for the Dragon.

Terry O'Neill

Sadly, Terry was killed in a car accident in November 1978.

An Alphabet of Queries (13)

Is the Juggernaut a jealous monster or just a monstrous vehicle? The name is nowadays applied to any large multi-wheeled truck, particularly when it appears to be intimidating local people when passing through small country villages. We are indeed accustomed to naming frightening vehicles after monsters - we had a **Centaur** tank fighting in Normandy, and before that there was a **Dragon** artillery tractor - but in this case the name Juggernaut comes from a huge carriage that was used to transport an idol depicting the god Vishnu to a holy place near the town of Puri on the Orissa coast of India. In this particular manifestation, the god was called *Lord Protector of the World*, which in the native tongue was *Jagannatha*, and of the many pilgrims accompanying the carriage on its journey, some would occasionally be crushed beneath its wheels, probably by accident rather than wilfully, but nevertheless the name Juggernaut became associated with a large vehicle that ruthlessly pursued its course. When properly applied to the Divine Being, it would be rash to say it was the name of a monster, however much we may disapprove of its behaviour. So again, I am afraid, no score.

Issued 1st March 2003 by Ralph Brocklebank, Orland, Clent, Stourbridge, DY9 9QS

Dragonlore

The Journal of The College of Dracology

Number 29

St David's Day 2003



Badge for H M S DRAGON newly drawn by Robert Parsons
for the Type 45 Destroyer now ordered.

The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts

Now that we have at last caught up with our cover date, not perhaps as soon as had been hoped, the date of issue (on the back page) will in future coincide with that on the front page. So, no more p-words. We shall not say “published” because Dragonlore is circulated privately to members and friends, thus avoiding registration fees, copyright restrictions, subscription lists and other hassles. The College of Dracology is possibly a somewhat pretentious title (though I could not resist the assonance) for a group of those who believe that the study of dragons and other fabulous beasts, including heraldic monsters but not limited to them, is a worth-while pursuit, to be undertaken with a degree of seriousness and academic responsibility, which is not to say that it should not be great fun. Membership is open to all who hold such a belief, whether actively engaged or not. From the nature of the subject matter, research will be conducted mainly in the spheres of literature and art history, though some knowledge of zoology may prove helpful.

So, who are the members? Dracologists fall into three classes:- 1) those whose names have appeared in these pages; 2) those who have sent in material that has not as yet appeared; and 3) those who have until now sent in nothing. (*A list of names is at hand, but there is not enough space for them in this issue. Should you not wish your name to appear in the next issue, please send word at once!*) We might consider as Masters of Dracology those who have published important contributions to the subject, and as Honorary Masters those who have so published without being in contact with the College, such as John Cherry, Joe Nigg, JK Rowling or Karl Shuker. We shall endeavour to review all such work and to follow up any original insights or explorations of unresolved matters without necessarily repeating in detail what is readily available elsewhere. There is scope for all our members to contribute as much as they feel able.

The badge for HMS DRAGON (on the cover) is the same in content as the old badge shown in No 23, but with new art-work, as Thomas Woodcock, Norroy and Ulster King of Arms and Admiralty Adviser on Heraldry, kindly explained. The old pentagonal shape, once used for Cruisers, is now reserved for ships of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, and all Royal Navy ships now have circular badges. The dragon is the standard College of Arms depiction of a Welsh Dragon; compared with the one shown in No 19, p 2, the only difference seems to be the spurs added to the back legs, apart from the fact that it is gold on a red field instead of red on gold, so still not a truly Welsh Dragon. Other ships in the class are to be Daring, Dauntless, Defender, Diamond and Duncan.

Heures di Duc de Berry of 1415, but he only has two legs - as most of the early dragons do. It is holding its head at an odd angle because St Michael has just hit it a good swipe with his fiery sword (*Fig 4*). About the same time a four-legged type appears in the Book of Hours of Marichal de Bouciout, being pegged to the ground by St George’s lance (*Fig 5*).

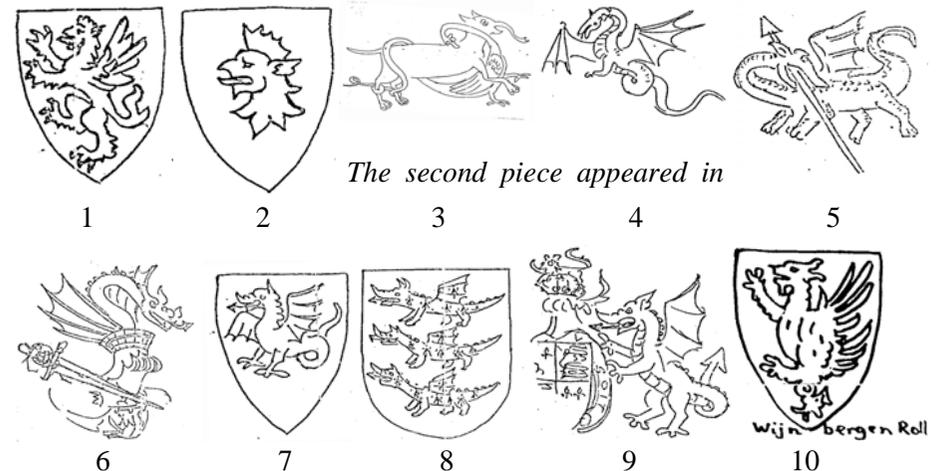
H.S.London found the earliest heraldic use of the dragon was in the time of Richard II who had a cup engraved with the impaled arms of the King and the Emperor, with dragons. Henry VI in his seal for the Principality of North Wales had two four-legged dragons who support the shield on their backs, and grasp a large ostrich feather in one set of claws. Jean de Luxemburg in 1440 is shown with a splendid dragon crest of the batwinged variety (*Fig 6*).

The first appearance of a dragon on a shield that I have found is in the attributed arms of Uther Pendragon, in Harleian MS 2167 of about 1460, which shows a two-legged monster of the kind we would call today a wyvern, but which was certainly intended as a canting charge for Pendragon (*Fig 7*).

Peter Le Neve’s book a little later (about 1480) gives the arms of Blossum as *Gules 3 dragons Ermine* and these have all but one of the characteristics of the modern dragon: bat wings, four feet, barbed tongue and spinal ridge, but lack the barbed and twisted tail (*Fig 8*). A few years later, and the dragon takes his place as one of the Royal Supporters in much the form we know today (*Fig 9*).

The Quest is still unfinished. I have yet to discover where Brault found his feathery leonine dragon, but travelling is the best part of the journey, and the encounters on the way may well surpass the pleasures of arrival.

Terry O’Neill (illustrated by the author)



The second piece appeared in

a 15th century embroidered Badge of the Order of the Dragon, an Order of Chivalry founded in 1408 by King Sigismund of Hungary to combat the infidel. This dragon is not biting his tail, but has it wrapped around his neck, so he still makes the circular form that symbolizes eternity. The strange formation on his back may be folded wings, and is overlaid by a form of cross. Further information on this Order would be welcomed.



IN QUEST OF THE DRAGON

Roland Symons has sent some reprints from early numbers of *The Tabard*, the Newsletter of the City of Bath Heraldry Society, with essays by the late Terry O'Neill. These show that although the standard of scholarship in the field of dracology has always been high (and often repeats earlier work!), there have been great advances in the technology of producing newsletters. Terry's own sketches made to illustrate his work have been used, but we have taken the liberty of editing the text to remove misprints. The first piece comes from the issue of January 1975:

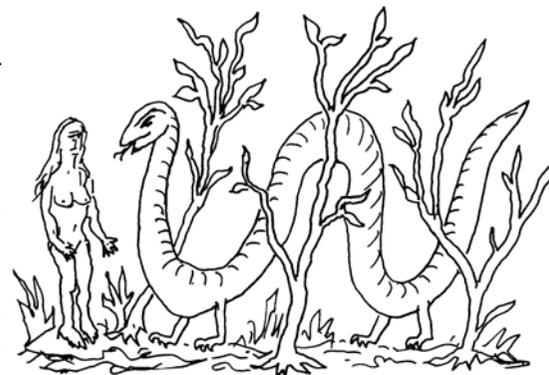
My search began when reading Gerard Brault's "Early Blazon". I was puzzled by two figures on page 94 of his book. They looked like this :- (*Fig 1*, *Fig 2*) and I took them to be some variant of the Lion-based monsters such as the Griffon, Opinicus, Tyger, and so forth. I was therefore somewhat surprised to find on reading further that these arms were a Dragon and a Dragon's head. This led me to think about Dragons in heraldry, and when I cast my mind back I could not recall a dragon earlier than the Tudor supporter of Henry VII such as we see over the west door of Bath Abbey.

Mediaeval Bestiaries of the 12th century call the Dragon "The biggest of all serpents, its strength is not in its teeth but in its tail. Even the elephant is not protected by the size of its body, for the dragon lying in wait near paths along which the elephants usually walk lassoes them with its tail and destroys them by suffocation." Here is a picture (*Fig 3*) showing one doing so, the artist's idea of the elephant is a little wide of the mark, but the dragon is shown as a long-necked snake-tailed creature with feathered wings and two feet. When we visited the Temple Church, London, we found just such a feathery snake-tailed dragon lying under the feet of a tomb effigy dated c 1280. The earliest example of the modern batwinged dragon I have found is in *Les Tres Riches*

A Feast of Dragons

On Saturday 15th February 2003, Ben Elliott addressed the Chiltern Heraldry Group at White Waltham on the subject of **The Biblical Origin of Dragons in Christian Art**, a development of the theme he wrote about in *Dragonlore No 26*, illustrated with a wealth of slides taken from a wide variety of sources. One picture in particular caught my attention, showing the old serpent

tempting Eve in the Garden of Eden before he was cast out to crawl on his belly for the rest of his life, and therefore still with four little legs (*drawn here from memory*). Interestingly, an Israeli palaeontologist has argued that some early snake fossils he has examined suggest that they evolved from lizards in the sea and not in burrows as was widely supposed, and that they did have little legs, perhaps lots of them. Some pythons today have a mode of locomotion which is similar to walking on the tips of their ribs, centipede-like, although the ribs are of course covered by skin, but they can advance thus in a straight line without curving from side to side as most snakes do. So, early serpent-dragons living in the water and losing their legs? Maybe the Bible was not so wrong, after all!



Another striking image in Ben's talk showed a dragon vomiting forth a river, and the thought occurred to me that at a later date this might have been misunderstood as breathing fire, as it was an outline drawing without colour. There were several pictures of Ketos the Water-Monster, including one of the constellation, part of the group with Perseus and Andromeda (and not to be confused with Draco) and numbers of dragons and wyverns from bestiaries and early heraldic seals. Among the appreciative audience of some thirty heraldists were no fewer than eight dracologists.

Afterwards, Ben recommended the book **Somerset Dragons** by Brian Wright (Tempus, Stroud 2002) which gives an excellent summary of the origin, history and appearance of dragons in folk-lore, church carvings and stained glass, inn signs and the like in this ancient county. There is a bibliography of 95 titles covering a wide field of relevant topics. It is very well illustrated, with 26 plates in colour and lots of black-and-white pictures, including several depictions, carved, painted and worked in tapestry, of the arms of Somerset County Council (*see issue No 1*). On the title page is a version of this little

rhyme which Mary Rose Rogers has sent, having found it in her father's father's Common Place Book:-

St George, to save a mayde, a dragon slew.

A brave exployte it was, if it be trew.

Som saye there are no dragons and 'tis said

There's no St George. Pray God there be a mayde.

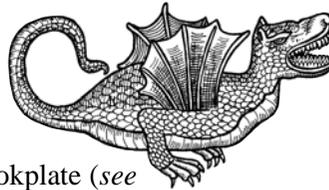
Wright says that his slightly different version was quoted by John Aubrey in the late seventeenth century.

Much earlier than that, and few would have doubted the existence of St George, or even of dragons.

Another of Ben's contributions has been the loan of the book **An Essay towards a Natural History of Serpents** by Charles Owen DD (London 1742) which includes a picture of *The Ethiopian Dragon*, very similar to this much-reproduced dragon from *The Historie of Serpents* by Edward Topsell (1608).



A Wyvern in a stained glass window in All Saints church, Alford (Somerset).



Some Modern Dragons

Mark Dennis has kindly sent his drawing for a bookplate (*see opposite*) done for the late Sheriff David Bogie, who sadly died before the plate could be used in his extensive library of law books. The Bogie arms were: *Per chevron Argent and Azure two anvils of the second and in base a dragon's head erased and breathing fire of the first*. The crest: *A dragon's head erased breathing fire Azure*. So, a silver dragon's head on the shield and a blue one for the crest. These charges refer to the Bogie family's foundry. It is a pleasant thought that such a crest might actually be made to spurt flames at the touch of a button inside the helmet. They had the technology to do this even in the middle ages.

Roger Seabury has been enormously supportive, not only doing much of our printing, but providing a stream of dragon-related items from giant jig-saw puzzles and posters to books such as **A TOLKIEN BESTIARY** by David Day (Mitchell Beazley, London 1979, 9th reprint 1992) and illustrated by a dozen artists in a wealth of imaginative scenes, many in colour, showing Beasts, Monsters, Races, Deities and Flora (not to mention evocative landscapes and mysterious buildings and interiors). Smaug the Dragon is duly present. The text takes the form of an alphabetical encyclopaedia, and the pictures, though quite magical, are too difficult to reproduce, but the book is an excellent source of reference for Tolkien fans.

Roger also found this unusual dragon brooch made in pewter, but taken from

