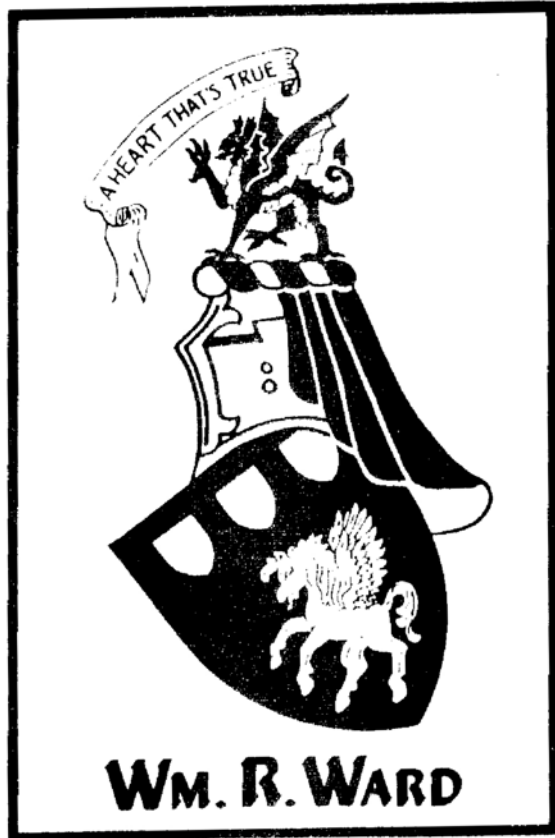


William Ward has provided a sample of his bookplate, adorned with his coat of arms, granted in Spain in 1985 and drawn by himself, which has a Pegasus on a green shield with three little white escutcheons in chief for his interests in family history, genealogy and heraldry, and a green and silver Dragon for the crest.



Dan Dyoss has provided a photograph of a giant green lizard-like dragon with tiny wings crawling up the wall of the former Bird's Custard Factory in Birmingham, now an arts and entertainment centre; it is all of three stories high and fully modelled.

Dave Perks has drawn a Dragon fantasy specially for us, which we might be able to use some day as a cover design or the like.

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Dragonlore

The Journal of The College of Dracology

Number 66 St Edmund's Day 2005



The arms of Sherborne Town Council drawn by Andrew Jamieson



The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts

Sadly we report the death of Terry Westphal, who felt spiritually at home with fabulous beasts and was a generous supporter of our efforts.

Saint Edmund, King and Martyr, was born in 841 and became King of East Anglia in 855 at the age of fourteen. Known for his piety, he attempted to keep the peace during the Danish invasion which started in 866, but when the Danes burned down Thetford in 870 he took up arms against them. He was captured, stripped naked, tied to a tree and shot full of arrows and then beheaded. His body was eventually recovered and buried at the place now called Bury St Edmunds. It is said that his head was brought in by a wolf (some say a bear) to be united with his body. In 1020, King Cnut ordered the building of an Abbey on the site of the Martyr's shrine, raised to the status of a Cathedral Church in 1914 with largely new buildings, recently enhanced with a splendid new central tower, raised to mark the Millennium. A statue of a wolf holding a crowned head stands by the Bishop's Throne, and the martyr's emblem of a crown with crossed arrows adorns the arms of the town of St Edmunds bury (but not the Diocese, which has the crowns without the arrows) and of the County of Suffolk. There are several legends of Suffolk dragons, but none associated with St Edmund, who was probably too busy dealing with the Danes to worry about mere serpents. His feast day falls on 20th November.

The Sherborne arms on the cover are taken from Stephen Friar's *New Dictionary of Heraldry* (Sherborne, 1987) under the heading "Corporate and Civic Heraldry" as an example of an elegant and uncluttered design that nevertheless carries a wealth of references to local historical associations. The shield is blue with a silver fretted cross between red-on-white roses on golden suns, combining elements from no fewer than six aspects of the town's history. The crest is a double-headed and twin-tailed silver Wyvern, indicating that Sherborne lies close to the border between Dorset and Somerset, two of the five shires into which the ancient kingdom of Wessex was divided. The Griffin supporters, though carrying their traditional connotations, are newly compounded beasts, with silver aquiline parts from the armorial eagles of a prominent historical figure, Roger de Caen, and golden leonine parts from the armorial lions of Dorset, and ultimately, England. Also included are three ancient crowns, standing for Ethelbert, Ethelbald, and Aldheim. The final composition looks superb in colour, as seen in John Hayward's Millennium Window in Sherborne Abbey, and fully deserves the accolade "rich, not gaudy," as advocated by Polonius. It is good to see ancient fabulous beasts being newly adapted to serve modern needs. In

England Insurance Company (*below*), showing the figure of King Alfred holding a sword and a mace and supporting a shield decorated with the red dragon of Wessex, in fact the only dragon that Brian came across in this survey, although it looks more like a Griffin.



FROM THE POSTBAG

Jan Patton sent a letter from Canada with some very exotic postage stamps on it. One is labelled “Year of the Dragon / Annee du Dragon” with an elegant Imperial Chinese Dragon embossed and in full colour, and is valued at 46 cents, while another has “Year of the Rooster / Annee du Coq” appropriately decorated, and comes at 50 cents.

Darrel Kennedy, also from Canada, very kindly sent a DVD on Dragons, which purports to tell the story of the discovery of some frozen dragon remains in a remote mountain cave, and the attempts by a group of “scientists” to analyse the bits and so to reconstruct the creature’s life and habits. Much of the material, showing an early dragon’s fight with a dinosaur, its escape from an older rapacious dragon, its phases of evolution through a marine version and a serpentine woodland species, to the final mountain-dwelling form, were actually the same as that used in the TV film of “The Last Dragon,” as reviewed in No 58, but the background story was quite different – no desperate young palaeontologist from the Natural History Museum, for instance. There is also a whole section at the end showing how the film was made, with its computer-generated imagery, and a discussion of the argument that dragons were once real. The remark of my old tutor, a humanist, came to mind, to the effect that one should not trust zoologists about dragons, because they are all materialists. To such people, nothing can be real unless it has or had a material existence, and the possibility of any kind of spiritual reality never occurs to them. As a zoologist myself, at least by training, I would say that their dragon fails to convince either anatomically or aerodynamically, and as a scientist I was appalled by their total lack of sound scientific method. They started by saying that because legends of dragons are so widespread in so many different cultures, which did not seem to have any interconnections, they deduced therefrom that there must have been some real dragons living during the same time as humans to give rise to the legends. They then showed rapid flashes of dragon images from various cultures, which were often repeated throughout the film, but apparently failed to notice that nearly all of them showed serpentine creatures, some with legs but practically none with wings, nor any breathing fire. From that they supposed that there must have been giant winged fire-breathing reptilian monsters in ancient times, a conclusion which certainly does not follow from the evidence. As entertainment, the film was not too bad (though not as exciting as *The Last Dragon*) but as educational material it was abysmal and a disgrace to dracology. Darrel wrote that on a first viewing he found it quite engaging, but on a second visit he began to have serious doubts.

Brian Wright has sent the draft of an article he has written on *Heraldry and Mythology on British Fire Marks*, and among those illustrated the oldest shows a



Phoenix (*left*), which became quite popular, and others display a Salamander (*right*). Since both these creatures overcome or resist flames, they were considered appropriate for this purpose. The most elaborate mark is one for the West of



fact, Stephen tells me that he designed these arms himself, all except for the crest, which was suggested by Garter, and that the fees were met from contributions by local industry. It just shows what can be done!

FOURTH HARRY POTTER FILM

Whereas the books describe the monsters and make you use your imagination to visualise them (apart from the one shown on the book’s jacket), in the films they have to be portrayed in detail. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* is just out on the screen and is said to have lots of splendid monsters in it – dragons, merpeople and all.

Fabulous Beasts from North Cadbury in Somerset

A visit to the Church of St Michael the Archangel in North Cadbury, with the Somerset Heraldry Society, revealed the famous beasts carved on the bench ends in the sixteenth century. As one enters the perfectly symmetrical church, built in a pure perpendicular style, these carvings immediately catch the eye, and one of the first to fall into view was illustrated in Brian Wright’s *Somerset Dragons* (2002), described as “two dragons apparently hatching from scaled eggs” (*see right*) and also in Tisdall’s *God’s Beasts* (1998 – see review in No 16)



where they are identified as Lindworms rising from the ground to plague us, and “are held to symbolise the dangers and temptations hidden about our way.” To be fair, Brian does mention this alternative explanation. For those who need reminding,

Lindworms were earth-dwelling dragons that lacked wings or legs or both, and are still used in the heraldry of Scandinavian countries and northern Germany, though largely forgotten in Britain outside church decorations. They were supposed to be found mainly in churchyards or other burial grounds. Brian also illustrates, in colour, the bench end showing “a dragon preening its wing” (surely this is a bird, not a dragon – *see left*) and the one with “St



Margaret escaping from within the dragon,” while Tisdall also shows the carving of the “Yale or Eale” (*right*) as well as those showing a cat sitting on a mousetrap and playing with a mouse, and the Stork or Heron. Other carvings of interest show Griffins, a Pelican in her Piety and a Dolphin, all with heraldic links to families of local importance, as well as a wealth of other pictures and emblems with social, religious or heraldic content. Tisdall says that the Yale, too, is of heraldic importance and “has no moral significance.”



The Yale by Margaret Young (from Stephen Friar's *New Dictionary of Heraldry*)

The first recorded description of the yale was by Pliny, and it is thought that he had in mind the antelope Gnu. A number of natural animals are quoted as being the possible origin of the yale, but the most important feature of the mythical beast is that it can swivel its horns in any direction. In a twelfth century bestiary it is described as being the size of a horse and having the tusks of a boar. It had extremely long horns which were not fixed but could be moved according to necessity in fights. If the first one got broken, the second could still be brought into use. But in a very fierce battle, both horns could be used at once to meet aggression from any direction.

The yale of armory has retained the swivelling horns and the tusks of a boar, but has become more like an antelope than a horse. It was used as a supporter by John, Duke of Bedford, third son of Henry IV and so became one of the Royal Beasts of England. It was represented as a dainty creature with very long, thin horns. Later, members of the Beaufort family adopted it as supporters, although in appearance it became a much heavier, goat-like animal, and its horns, instead of being straight, were curved and serrated. The two yale supporters of Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, are well known, as her arms are carved above the gateways of Christ's College and St John's College, Cambridge.

MY
(Illustration above by Andrew Jamieson, evidently of the Beaufort variety)

Rodney Dennys, in *The Heraldic Imagination* (1975), illustrates both types, each taken from a Garter stall plate as drawn by Colin Cole (see below). Note that the Cadbury Yale seems to fall between the two, nor does it have hooves.



The Bedford Yale



The Beaufort Yale

MOCK NESS MONSTER

[Under this headline the Daily Mail of 17 August 2005 ran the following report]

The giant creature rose from the depths, evil eyes burning, water streaming from its terrifying jaws.

Here at last, after decades of doubt, was living proof of the Loch Ness Monster's existence... or so some onlookers thought.

Others remained sceptical, and rightly so, for the 'monster' was actually a £100,000 television stunt.

Yesterday, Channel Five revealed that the 16ft mythical beast was a 440lb animatronic model called Lucy who spent two weeks roaming the murky depths of the Scottish loch, occasionally breaking the surface to test the responses of sightseers. In all, around 600 people caught a glimpse of Lucy and the station said reactions ranged from utter conviction that they were seeing Nessie to certainty that it was a gimmick.

The results can be seen in Loch Ness Monster: The Ultimate Experiment later this month. [This was last August. Did anybody see it?]

Lucy was made from fibreglass and polyurethane rubber by Crawley Creatures, a Buckinghamshire special effects company whose owner, Jez Harris, helped create Jabba the Hutt for the Star Wars film Return of the Jedi.

The model took 14 weeks to build. It had to be aided in the water by divers and was fitted with air mechanisms to allow movements of the head, neck and jaws.

During two weeks of filming last September, Lucy appeared in the water near a campsite, at the ruins of Urquhart Castle and in front of the Royal Scot cruise ship which runs tours of the loch.

Five's senior programme controller, Chris Shaw, said: 'The Loch Ness Monster is one of the world's most enduring myths and we thought it would be fascinating to see if the general public, fed on a diet of movie special effects, could still believe in Nessie – the results are really quite surprising.' A Five spokesman added: 'Some people were thinking "What is it?" They couldn't quite work it out.

'Whereas other people thought it was the waves and some were saying they had definitely seen a green hump.

'I think it shows that people still want to believe in the myth.'

Mr Harris, whose company has also made models for the BBC's Walking with Dinosaurs series, said: 'Making the monster itself was not difficult, it was getting it buoyant so it could raise itself to the surface.

'Some people were convinced they had seen the Loch Ness Monster whereas others thought it was a log or a rock, even though it was moving around.'

Ronald Mackenzie, who runs Royal Scot boat cruises, said; 'The first time Channel Five put the monster in the loch even we were unaware of it, so we were pretty shocked.

'There were a lot of Americans who were impressed, some people who believed it and others who thought it was just part of the tour.'

