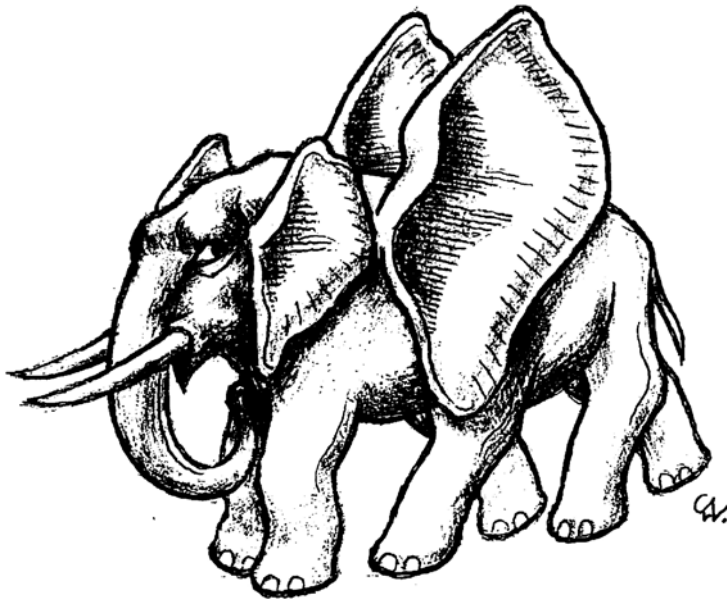


Marc Van de Cruys sent this cartoon which he found on the internet:



*"I'll start with the knight in shining armor,  
then have the maiden rare and radiant."*

Carl-Alexander von Volborth has kindly allowed us to show his "Elephantom."



*BY WAY OF AN APOLOGY* —

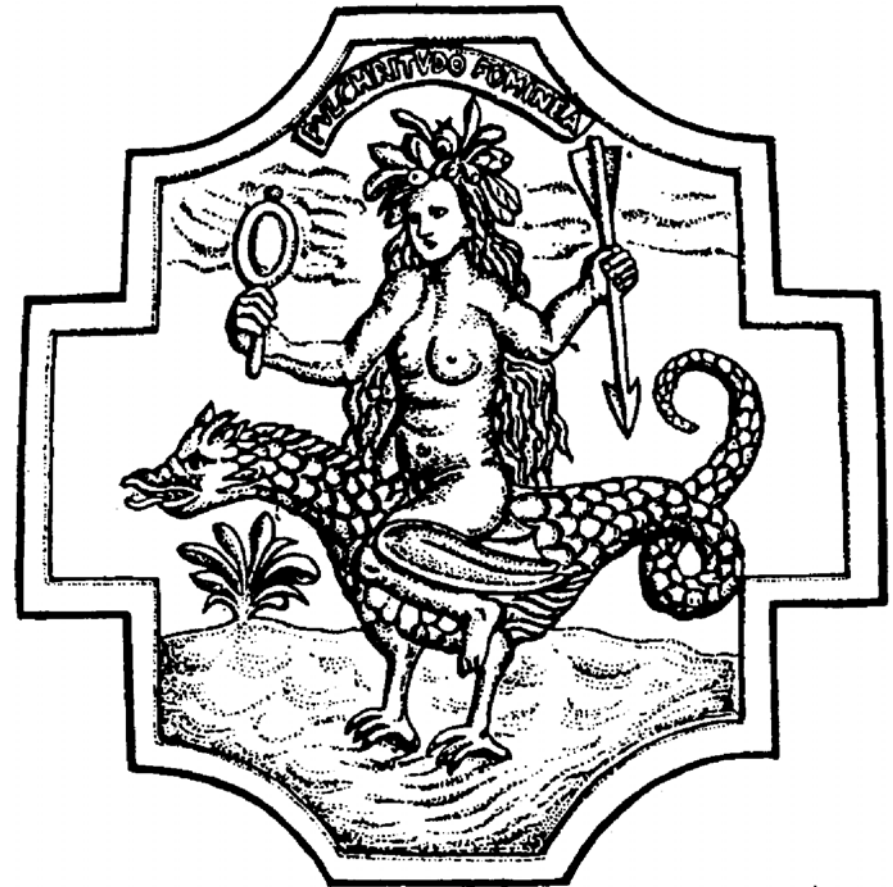
*The lateness of this and the previous issue is partly because our hard-working Technical Editor took a break on the Franco-Spanish border in pursuit of the fabled Pyrenean Mountain Dog which we are told has the legs on one side longer than on the other so that it can keep on an even keel while traversing the steep mountain slopes. He was hoping to discover whether they come in two distinct varieties, one adapted to circle the mountains clockwise and the other, anti-clockwise. Unfortunately, he saw not a single specimen, but he did get in some good ski-ing.*

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# Dragonlore

The Journal of The College of Dracology

Number 68 St Kentigern's Day 2006



Vanity riding a Dragon from Henry Peacham, 1612



## The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts

We welcome new member Jan Keuzenkamp.

The picture on the cover, which carries the motto PULCHRITUDO FOMINEA, possibly meaning “The allure of beauty,” is taken from Henry Peacham’s book of 1612 entitled *Minerva Britanna, or a Garden of Heroical Devices*. He explained the fashionable cult of emblems as the “wish to feede at once both the minde and the eie by expressing mystically and doubtfully our disposition...” This particular emblem was apparently one used in the rather extravagant decoration of a room in the house of John Hobart, the second Earl of Buckinghamshire, along with the Hobart arms and symbols of the five senses and so on, and was kindly sent in as a cutting from a handbook for visitors to the house. This device seems to carry the warning that if you rely too much on worldly charms, you may be risking the dragon of destruction.

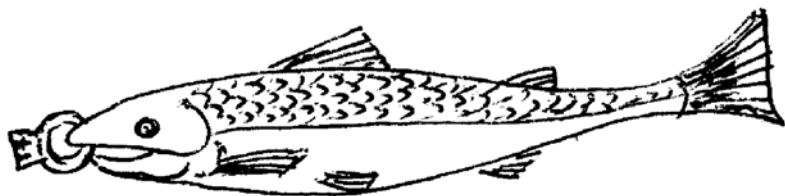
.....  
Saint Kentigern, known also as Mungo (darling), is believed to have been born in Lothian in Scotland, and to have been a hermit-monk and missionary who was consecrated as the first bishop of the Britons of Strathclyde. He was driven away by persecution and as a result became a missionary, first in Cumbria and, later, perhaps in North Wales. He eventually returned to Glasgow where he again served as bishop, died in 612 or thereabouts, and was buried.

His emblems, a ring and a salmon, are displayed on the heraldic arms of Glasgow (both diocese and city). This stems from a legend in which the queen of Strathclyde gave her royal husband’s ring to her lover. The king, discovering this infidelity, repossessed the ring and secretly threw it out to sea, then ordered the queen to return it to him. She asked Kentigern for help, and one of his monks miraculously caught a salmon which had swallowed the ring. The saint was thus able to rescue the queen.

Kentigern’s Feast Day falls on 13 January.

From *Saints* by Elizabeth Hallam et al, (London, 1994)

Whether it was a miracle or a lucky coincidence remains a matter of opinion, but what we want to know is whether this fabled salmon should be counted as a fabulous fish.



**June Marriage** supplied a couple of items from the Dragon Hall, Norwich. One is closely based on the spandrel carving we showed in No 65, and the other (*seen here*) is a more popular figure and might be considered an improvement over the Beer Festival model we showed in No 49.



**James Pettigrew** kindly sent a colourful little enamelled lapel badge shewing a mediaeval dragon, one from the Macclesfield Psalter.

**Roger Seabury** gave us some photographs he had snapped on his travels, including a couple of life-like Salamanders from a Loire Chateau, and several of the pew-end carvings we noted in North Cadbury, as reported in No 66.



**CEJ (“Sedge”) Smith** sent pictures of three small dragons he had found while browsing, complete with book references. His favourite is from a carved desk end at Abergavenny; another is from a thirteenth-century Belgian gilt bronze crozier, and the third is from a late thirteenth-century English pottery jug found in London. The latter two were both located in books by John Cherry, the Master Dracologist. Sedge also sent a quotation from *King Lear*, Act I, Scene ii, about the “Dragon’s tail,” a feature of astronomy that had a peculiar astrological significance.

**Roland Symons** has an inexhaustible supply of RAF badges with Dragons on them, and sends a new one pretty well every time he writes. Here is one from a Fighter Control Unit, with a red Somerset Dragon, blue arrow and golden lightning flash.



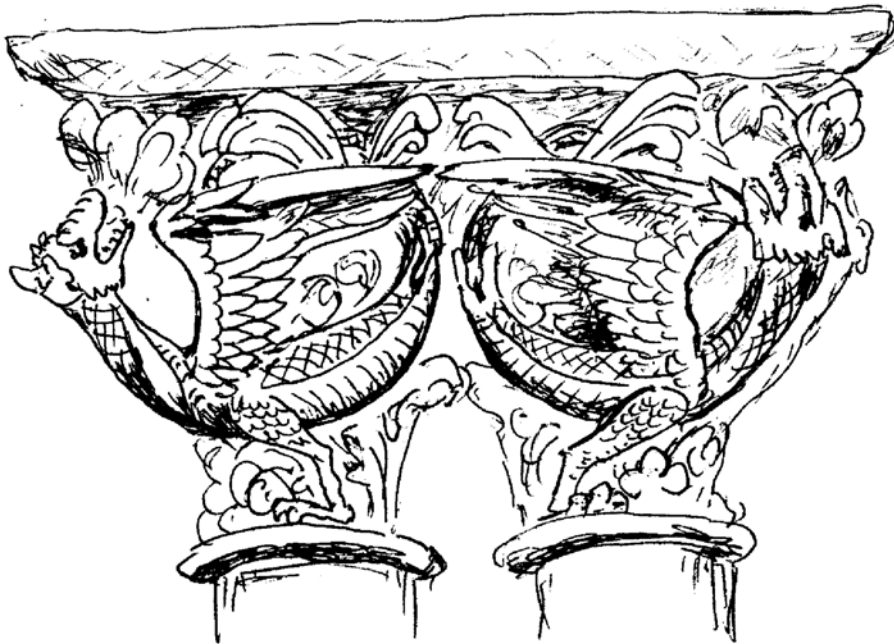
## From the Postbag

**Hugh Antrobus** has sent a colour photograph of the Beaufort arms at Christ College, Cambridge, in which the horns of the Yale supporters are almost straight.

**Roger Barnes** kindly donated a calendar from New Zealand with fantastically colourful drawings of different kinds of Taniwha – mythical monsters – including the Moko-hiku-waru (eight-tailed lizard), Mangapuera (a sort of bird-headed dragon), Te Ihi (giant water reptile), Hotupuku (giant land reptile) and eight others, all in the rather diagrammatic Maori style – a real treasure.

**Dan Dyoss** sent a picture of an enormous moulded armorial device on the wall outside the railway station in Derby, showing the assumed arms of the old Midland Railway Company with its famous legless Wyvern crest and what appear to be a Dragon and a Dolphin as supporters.

**Leslie Hodgson** found some carved wyverns on a capital in the Church of St James the Less, Thorndike Street, London, depicted in a book on *English Parish Churches*. The architect of this remarkable church was George Edmund Street, who was the original inspiration of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The capitals were carved by Thomas Farmer.



## The Ch'i-lin

The Ch'i-lin, or Ky-lin or Qi-lin (pronounced "tsi-lin"), depending which part of China you are in, is also known in Japan as the Kirin. It is one of the four cardinal spiritually endowed creatures in Chinese mythology, the others being the Tortoise, the Dragon and the Feng Hwang or Chinese Phoenix, who between them control the whole of creation. The Ch'i-lin is reputed to be the leader of all the creatures that live on the land, and is the epitome of purity, peace, prosperity and good fortune.



Because it has a fleshy protuberance on its head that looks rather like a horn, it is often thought to be a variety of Unicorn, or at least the Chinese equivalent of the European animal. Its attributes and legendary appearances are summed up in Joyce Hargreaves' *Bestiary* (Glastonbury, 1990), from which our illustration of a metal sculpture of the beast is taken, and I remember that my parents had a precious porcelain statuette of a Kylin which was greatly admired.

Benjamin Lee, a Canadian living in Hong Kong, has a Qi-lin as the principal charge on his coat of arms, and it looks really splendid in full colour.

## The Alphyn

We last dealt with this beast in Number 34, as a possible linguistic derivative of the Onchu of Ireland, the legendary giant sea-otter, as explained by Nicholas Williams, in parallel with the Enfield to which it bears a resemblance. In Tudor times the Alphyn appears in a book of badges as the property of Richard West, Lord de la Warr (see Peter Spurrier's illustration in No 31) and some have argued that it should remain exclusive to that family, though in another Tudor usage an "Alfyn's head" appears as the crest on Sir William Chamberlain's Garter stall plate. See Dennys, 1975, for more details. Here is what Margaret Young has to say about it, in Friar's *New Dictionary of Heraldry* (1987) as illustrated by Andrew Jamieson:-



This curious creature, which does not appear very often in armory, is very much like an heraldic tyger but is stockier and has tufts of hair on its body, as well as a thick mane. It has a long thin tongue, long ears, and its tail is knotted in the middle. Sometimes its forefeet are depicted like an eagle's claws, and sometimes they are cloven. Occasionally all four feet are claws like a lion's.

In English heraldry the alphyn was used as a badge of the Lords de la Warr, and it also appears on the guidon held by the knight in the Millefleur Tapestry at Montacute House, Somerset.

M Y

*(It would seem that the variations in this animal's feet and tail were a result of artistic licence, the artists involved never having seen the original.)*

## Fabulous Beasts from Narnia

In the magnificently imaginative recent film version of *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, based on the book by C.S. Lewis, there is a rich supply of exotic fauna. In the great climactic battle scenes there are splendid Centaurs and Fauns, a Unicorn, a fiery Phoenix and a whole flock of Griffins on the Lion's side (the goodies), as well as big cats, beavers and rhinoceroses, while the wicked White Witch is supported by Minotaurs, Cyclopes, Ogres of all descriptions and a great green bat-winged Vampire, besides bears, wolves and ravens. On the vast screen there is so much going on that it is hard to take in everything at a single showing, but I was reminded of the contrast between Griffin and Minotaur outlined in Number 46, and was sorry to see bears on the side of the baddies, as they had always been one of my favourite animals, perhaps because of Rupert and Winnie-the-Pooh.

## Yet Another Sad Unicorn Joke

Two topee-hatted explorers stumble over the fossilized skeletons of a pair of Unicorns, and say, "We should be nearing the site where they built the Ark..."

## A Sovereign Issue

In spite of the hopes expressed in Number 56, the gold sovereign coin issued for the year 2006 has reverted to the traditional Pistrucci design (see Number 22).

## More Wizardology

Here are two more of the entries from Dugald Steer's book reviewed in the last issue.



♠ UNICORN ♠

Unicorns are swift, dwelling in deserts or on the tops of mountains. They have a raucous bray and are enemies of the lion. They are most easily tamed by maidens, and their shed horn, powdered or cut into pieces, is a wonderful antidote to many poisons. It also has the power to assist greatly in the cure of a number of diseases.



♠ DRAGON ♠

There are various types of dragon. Some have wings and no feet, some feet and wings, others neither feet nor wings. They are scaly, most breathe fire, and they have the keenest sight of any creature. Dragon fat cures creeping ulcers. Mixed with honey it helps eye complaints. In small doses dragon blood is a powerful medicine.