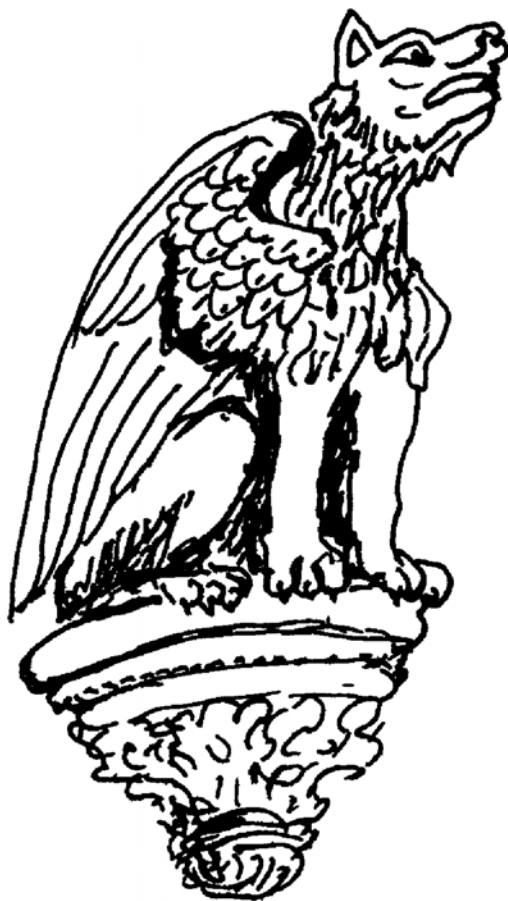


FROM THE POSTBAG

Roger Seabury has sent yet another example of a Welsh Dragon-based logo, this time for the National Assembly for Wales / Cynulliad Cenediaethol Cymru..



Dan Dyoss has provided some more photographs taken on his travels. One shows some very handsome terracotta winged lions adorning the outside of the Spring Hill Library in Birmingham (*one seen here*), while a couple more show contrasting treatments of the Crewe Arms on the Hotel of that name in Crewe, one in which the Griffin supporter is shown black with white wings, and the other, white with golden wings, though this latter beast looks more like a Pegasus or perhaps a winged fawn than a Griffin. The arms, too, are quite differently coloured on the two achievements. I should think that one of them is correct and that the other has been “tastefully redecorated.”



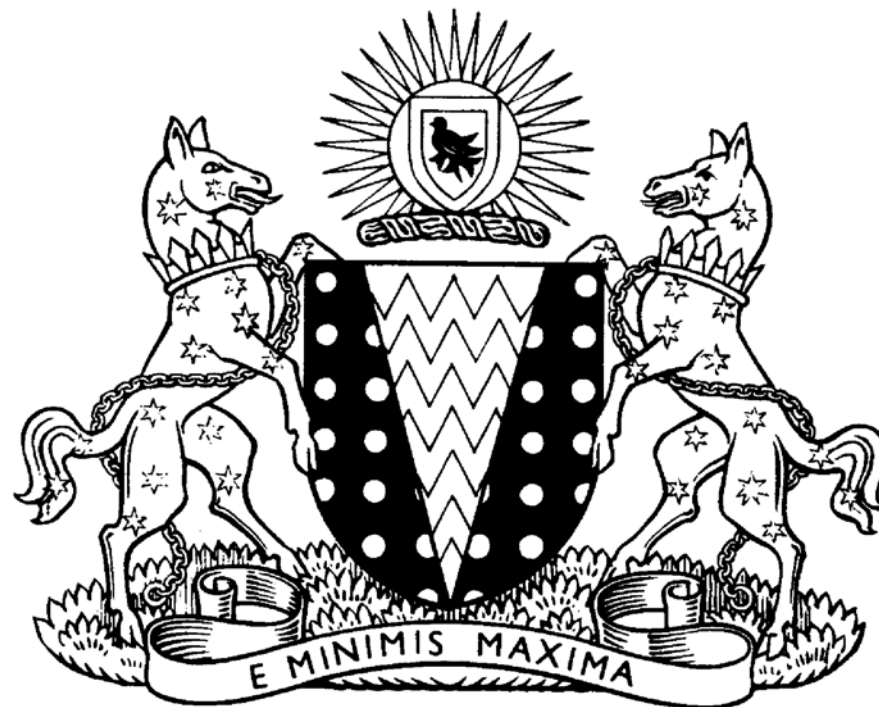
Pete Taylor has very kindly displayed the fully-coloured version of Mark Dennis’s dragon (seen in No 62) on the front cover of *The Heraldic Craftsman*, The Journal of the Society of Heraldic Arts, No 55 (March 2006) which he edits. It is worth joining the Society (£15 p.a.) for the Journal alone. This issue also contains some lively Griffins in a colourful border by Andrew Jamieson, a Winged Bull from Roger Barnes’ Christmas card and a pair of Sea-Horses supporting the arms of Rochester in a stained glass window by Judy Hill – and all in colour! – as well as a double-headed eagle from an old Saracenic coin and Pete’s own crest of a Sea-Unicorn., truly a feast for dracologists.

Dragonlore

The Journal of The College of Dracology

Number 70

St Chad’s Day 2006



Pantheons supporting the arms of the UKAEA, from Briggs (1971)



The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts

Sadly we record the death of John Brooke-Little, Master of Dracology among many other achievements, and a strong supporter of Dragonlore. Our tribute to him appeared in issue No 17, which also contains a thorough listing up to 1999 of Fabulous Beasts mentioned in The Coat of Arms, the magazine he founded and edited. Apart from the many works from his own pen and the numerous standard heraldic books that he edited and revised, he was always most generous with advice and help to other authors, this one included.



Saint Chad is much revered in the Midlands and the distinctive three-spired cathedral of Lichfield is dedicated to him, as well as thirty-one other churches in the region. This is what my encyclopaedia says about him:-

Chad or **Ceadda**, St. (d.673), b. Northumbria, a follower of St Aidan. He was Bishop of Mercia, with his see at Lichfield. His feast is on 2 Mar.

Vince's 2001 book adds that he was probably the youngest of four brothers who all became eminent priests, that he was at first the Bishop of Northumbria before moving to Mercia, and that there he removed the bishopric from Repton to Lichfield. He had a reputation for humility, walking everywhere rather than riding. His name, altered slightly to Mr Chad, was mysteriously applied to this strange figure, said to be derived from an electrical wiring diagram, and usually accompanied by the phrase, "Wot, no beer!" or some other missing ingredient. He was rife during the second World War.



The arms of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, shown on the cover, were granted in 1955 and depict an heraldic representation of an atomic pile, being blazoned thus:-

Sable semee of plates, a pile barry dancetty Or and gules. Crest: On a wreath argent and sable, A sun in splendour of thirty-two points Or charged with a voided escutcheon gules, therein a martlet sable. Supporters: On either side a pantheon gules, unguled Or, semee of mullets, thirteen of six points, two of seven, and gorged with a crown palisado, affixed thereto and reflexed over the back a chain gold..

The martlet is a reference to Lord Rutherford, the 'father' of British atomic science. According to Dennys (1975), the Pantheon was an invention of one or other of the

The other shows the dragon giving a ramping performance for the villagers' benefit.



THE GROCKLE

In issue No 65, we asked whether anybody could identify the monster in George Morrow's cartoon. Now somebody has kindly given me a cutting which shows an excerpt from the children's comic *The Dandy*, with a somewhat similar creature. Is this a related species? The horns, ears, wings and tail-barb are all different. Perhaps the Grockle was just a dragon, after all, and young Jimmy did not know any better. In Devon, 'grockle' is the name given to a summer visitor, known as an 'emmet' in Cornwall. Emmet is an old name for an ant, and ants too swarm all over the place in the summer.



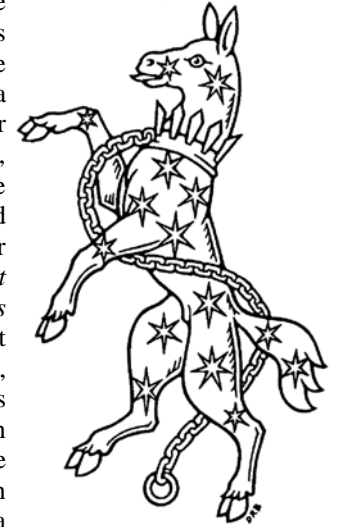
THE FAVOURITE WONDER BOOK

This is the title of a somewhat battered children's annual that I was thinking of discarding until I looked at its contents. In spite of the lack of the title-page, so that I do not know the publisher or the date, there is an inscription on the fly-leaf that says, "To Terry from Auntie Beat, Xmas 1943" which is confirmed by the war-time utility standard paper and production, yet the contents are of an excellent quality, with stories by A.A.Milne, Karel Capek, Eleanor Farjeon, Lord Dunsany, J.B.Morton, Charles Dickens, Lewis Carroll, E.Nesbit, Oscar Wilde, Hans Andersen and other eminent authors, and poems by Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Blake, Longfellow, Thomas Hood, Walter de la Mare and lots more, all with pictures by the leading book illustrators of their day. The story that caught my attention was THE RELUCTANT DRAGON, by Kenneth Graham, illustrated by E.B.Thurstan. It is a story within a story, and tells of a young brother and sister who are out playing in the snow when they find the tracks of an unknown animal that they think might be a dragon, and follow them across fields and valleys until they come to a cottage where an old man invites them in for tea. When it is time for them to go home, he offers to walk with them, and on the way he tells them a story which he said belonged to that part of the country from olden times. It is about an elderly shepherd and his bookish young son who discover a dragon hiding in a cave. The boy makes friends with the dragon, who is really quite lazy, but when the nearby villagers hear about it, they assume that it must be a fearsomely terrible monster, and call up a professional dragon-slayer to do him in. This champion turns out to be none other than Saint George (or perhaps all professional dragon-slayers in those days went under that title) and the boy manages to persuade him that the dragon is actually harmless.. Nevertheless, the villagers, and indeed the young boy himself, are looking forward to a splendid fight, so St George and the dragon privately arrange to put on a great display in which neither of them gets hurt. After the show, everybody retires to the village for a great banquet, and St George tells everybody that the dragon has repented of his evil ways, so that he can join in the fun. Afterwards, the boy and the saint have to accompany a very tired dragon back to his cave, and just as the story ends, the two children find themselves back home.. Was it really true, they ask, and what happened next? "No more, at least, not tonight," said the man, and that was the end of it.

There are enough pictures to tell the whole story, but here are just a couple. In the first, the dragon says, "I'm such a confoundedly lazy fellow," when he meets the boy.



Tudor heralds, being entirely unknown in the Bestiaries, the source of so many of their wondrous beasts. Usually black or dark blue, the colour of the night sky, and covered with stars, it was thought to be a cosmic creature, but a set of three 'Pantheons in their proper colours' granted in 1556 by Sir Gilbert Dethick, Garter, to Henry Northey of Bocking in Essex, are shown as red, powdered with silver stars. Perhaps red was seen as a cosmic colour, but the crest of Sir Christopher Baynham in 1531 was a *Pantheon statant sable powdered with gold estoiles, the ears and legs gules*. Dennys also illustrates the arms of a Paulet Marquess of Winchester with two Pantheon supporters, and one of these is shown by Roger Barnes in his *Monsters of Heraldry* (2001) along with his stylish rendering of one of the UKAEA pantheons, though he puts all fifteen mullets on the one supporter, rather than spreading them between the two (the blazon may be a bit ambiguous there).



The Pantheon

Here is Andrew Jamieson's drawing of this creature, from Friar's 1987 *Dictionary*, which follows the Winchester version, together with Margaret Young's description:-



Unlike most other mythical animals the pantheon does not seem to be of great antiquity, nor are there any legends appertaining to it. It is, however, a very decorative creature which appears to have been invented by the heralds of Tudor times, when it was used in a number of grants of arms. A painting in *Prince Arthur's Book* depicts it as a star-spangled hind with a bushy tail like a fox.. It gradually deteriorated into a somewhat nondescript creature, but has been used again to great effect in the present day as supporters to the arms of the Atomic Energy Authority, where the points of the stars on the two animals add up to 92, which is the number denoting uranium in the table of physical elements

The Peryton

It is said that the Sybil of Erythraea foretold that Rome would be destroyed by a flock of Perytons, but since all the Sybilline records were lost in the burning of the library at Alexandria in 642 AD, this prediction survived only as an oral tradition until, in the sixteenth century, a rabbi discovered a fragment of what appeared to be a transcription of part of the Sybilline books, and it included a passage on the Peryton.

Originating in Atlantis, and flying in great flocks round the Straits of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean Narrows near Sicily, the Perytons were half bird and half deer, with the strange characteristic that their shadows were each in the form of a man, until the beast had slain one, when his shadow became his own shape. They were the mortal enemies of the human race, but each Peryton can slay only one man, though a whole flock can do irreparable harm, such as that suffered by Scipio's fleet when he sailed to conquer Carthage and was attacked by a swarm of these beasts. They were last seen in Ravenna, where they were said to have light blue plumage, although their feathers were dark green.

Further details will be found in Borges (1974) and Hargreaves (1990) who drew this picture of it.



More 'Dragons' from China

On Thursday 9 February news broke of an extraordinary discovery in the Gobi in northwest China. "Great crested dragon with a fuzzy fur coat was T Rex's ancestor" was the headline in *The Daily Telegraph*, while *The Daily Mail* had "The big-nosed dragon from 150m years BC" and both referred to the fossil dinosaur (*seen here*) now named *Guanlong wucaii*, a name meaning 'crowned dragon' in Mandarin, and given to this species of Tyrannosaur, the earliest yet found. But were dinosaurs dragons?



It is unlikely that the human race had experience of these monsters at the time they were alive, as our ancestors at that time were small creatures rather like furry

newts, whose main advantage was their survivability. When the dinosaurs all died out, these primitive mammals continued to evolve, eventually producing humans, amid the enormous variety of animals we know today, from monkeys to marsupials, bats to beavers, and weasels to whales. Would the primitive mammals have had the imagination and memory to produce the legends of dragons such as we know today?

On the other hand it is just possible that early humans may have come across fossils similar to those recently discovered, and recognizing that they had been some form of animal, tried to imagine what they would have been like when alive. This process might have led to the idea of the dragon, but all the historical evidence seems to indicate that the earliest dragons of legend had evolved from snakes or serpents. Nevertheless, we must recognize that in the popular mind today (even in that of a science correspondent) dinosaurs are dragons, tangible evidence that such monsters once existed for real. Remember that, for materialists, reality does not cover creatures of the imagination.

Dragons in Eurythmy

Eurythmy is an interpretative art, expressing the nature of sounds in gesture and movement, either speech sounds or music (but not both at once, since in singing the speech is already interpreted in the music of the song). It was developed by Rudolf Steiner in response to the request by a girl who wanted to make a career as a dancer but was thoroughly dissatisfied with the style of dancing that was then prevalent. He used his insight into the nature of sounds to produce an entirely new art-form, which is now used by groups all over the world to present stage performances. One such group in the West Midlands recently gave a performance in the Sunfield Theatre in Clent, which was a true delight.

The subject was a fairy story, *The Flower Queen's Daughter*, probably taken from an East European source, judging by its form and content, and tells the story of a young prince who falls in love with "the most beautiful girl in the world" but then has to undergo a series of trials to win her hand. The story was read out by the reciter, with musical interludes written and played by Alan Stott, and acted out on the stage by the eurythmists, with magical coloured lighting effects. Some of the prince's trials involved him in outwitting a family of dragons, and these creatures were portrayed most imaginatively, with the eurythmy gestures adapted to a kind of 'dragon-speak' in a most appropriate manner. One of the dragons had three heads (as they are wont to do) and was acted by three eurythmists working together as if with one body, a truly remarkable piece of technique. I felt that these performers had truly mastered their art, and though the story was primarily intended for an audience of children, it was a marvellously uplifting experience.