

The repeal by the Welsh Language Act (1967) restored a separate Welsh identity to its counties, including Monmouthshire. Notwithstanding pre-1967 legislation would not be revisited, nothing now invalidates the Welsh claim to be recognised in the flag of the United Kingdom, the monarch's coat of arms, and dare one say by the England and Wales Cricket Board.

ANTHONY WOOD, Copacabana, New South Wales

### Here be dragons

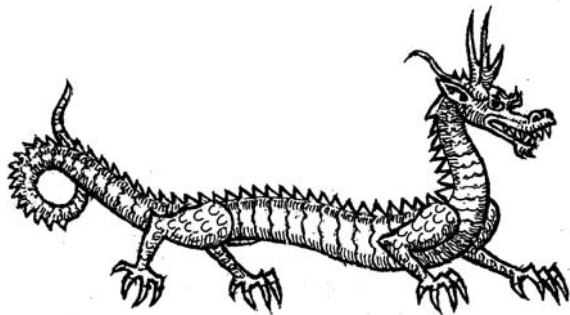
Sir, Anthony Wood (letter, August 21) urges the Welsh claim to be recognised in the flag of the United Kingdom and the monarch's coat of arms. He may be comforted to know that between 1485 and 1603 the Tudor monarchs used the red dragon as one of the supporters to the royal coat of arms and also used the dragon on their banners.

With the accession of James Stuart, King of Scotland, the Scottish unicorn replaced the Welsh dragon supporter and the lion of Scotland was included in the royal arms, as was the harp of Ireland.

That there had been no Prince of Wales from 1509 until 1603 meant that the heraldic claims of Wales were largely a gentry concern.

LAWRENCE BUTLER, Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambs.

What is needed now, to satisfy these Welsh claimants, is for the Queen to declare, through her Ministers, that she now recognizes that Wales should be promoted from a Principality to a Kingdom, with the quarterly gold and red arms with four lions currently used by the Prince of Wales as an inescutcheon on his shield replacing the fourth quarter in the royal arms that at present merely repeats the English arms (some would say, the arms of England and Wales), and at the same time for the Welsh to agree that a proper flag to represent St David would be not the gold cross on black as used at present, but a white cross on blue, as some have indeed proposed, and they would then find that this is already included in the Union Jack. Sadly, the dragon would find no place, but could still be used on its own as a flag of the Welsh people. We can but dream!



Japanese Dragon drawn by Carl-Alexander von Volborth

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# Dragonlore

The Journal of The College of Dracology

No. 94 King Charles, Martyr 2008



Unicorn (Eenhoorn) drawn by Carl-Alexander von Volborth

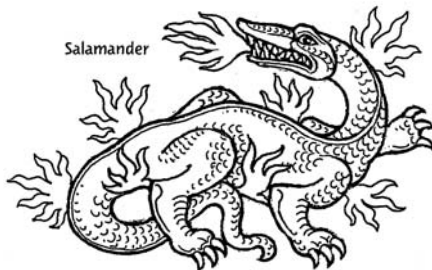


## The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts

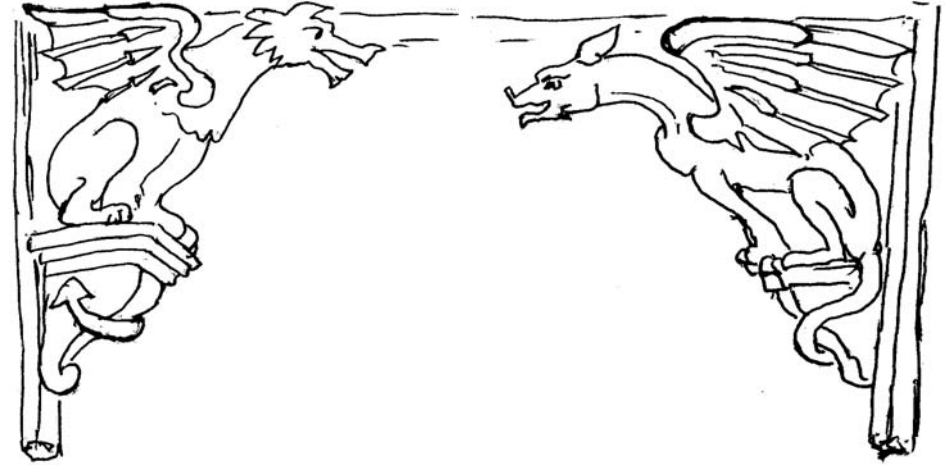
We thank all those members who have sent stamps to help with the postage. Such generous assistance is very much appreciated.

“King Charles walked and talked half an hour after his head was cut off.” This tantalizing childhood teaser was solved by putting a full stop after “talked” and a comma after “after.” The actual date this occurred was 30 January 1649, an event that led to many years of Puritanical Commonwealth rule which became increasingly unpopular and was eventually followed by the Restoration. After that, King Charles was recognized in some quarters as a Martyr and even as a Saint, celebrated each year on the date of his beheading. The Stuarts had, of course, replaced the Tudor Dragon in the Royal Coat of Arms with a Unicorn – one fabulous beast in place of another – but today there is a clamour to represent Wales once more in the National Flag, the Royal Arms and the Royal Standard, and it is to be hoped that if this were done, it were done tactfully. No Welsh Dragon plonked down in the Union Jack, please! (More about this later!)

The picture on the cover is taken from the artist’s latest production, *Fabelwezens uit mythen, sagen, folklore en de heraldiek* (Wijnegem, Belgium 2007), a handy booklet published by another of our dracologists, Marc Van de Cruys, under his imprint Homunculus. It contains 135 pictures of fabulous beasts and beings, three of them in colour, and though the brief foreword and introduction and the captions are all in Flemish, most of them are quite easy to comprehend. *Dragonlore* is mentioned in the bibliography of 36 items, several of which we have reviewed here, and quite a few of the creatures depicted have already appeared in our pages, for instance, the Hippogriff, the Catoblepas, one of a number of different Basilisks, and amongst Carl-Alexander’s own inventions, the Swinehorn, the South American Hippocondor and the North American Grizzly Owl. No doubt more will appear in future. For a further taste, here are his Wyvern and Salamander :-



**Megan Tait, Dracologist**, has e-mailed some fruits of her researches, including some pictures of a pair of handsome blue dragons with gilded highlights decorating an alleyway entrance near Lady Stair’s Close in Edinburgh’s Royal Mile (*below*), and a fierce creature taken from a computer game called “World of Warcraft” that was labelled a “wyvern” but which she thinks may have been a mantichore.



**David Vaudrey** sent a whole bundle of stuff, including pictures and plans of the International Dragon class sailing boat (which he used to sail), cuttings from Letters to the Editor of *The Times* about Welsh Dragons (see below), another cutting showing the Qing Dynasty vase (see above), a stunning coloured picture of a ceremonial Chinese Dragon from the journal *Professional Engineering* (highlighting an article on doing business with China!), and a copy of pages from *Motley Heraldry* by Wilfrid Scott-Giles, some of which we saw in No 60.

These two letters to The Times are worth quoting in full, the first from 21 August 2007 and the next from 23 August, even though we do not have the one from 18 August that is referred to by the first writer.

## Where be dragons

Sir, The Red Dragon of Maxim Wletic (383) is the oldest national flag in Europe and was, some say, carried into battle by Cadwaladar in 641. Dewi Sant (6<sup>th</sup> century) as (former) Christian patron of Wales predates both England’s St Edmund (9<sup>th</sup> century) and his Norman replacement St George. The annexation as aptly called by Denis Ayers (letters, August 18) began with the statute of Rhuddlan (1284), confirmed by the so-called Act of Union (1536) passed by the English Parliament without any Welsh representation, and was further cemented by the Wales and Berwick Act (1746).

**Angela Goschen** sent a picture of a relief carving from the Apollo Temple in Didima, Turkey, showing a pair of Griffins (*below*), although they would be called Opinicus in modern British heraldry, as their forelegs are undoubtedly leonine rather than aquiline; but why should we follow the whims of the Tudor heralds? There is no doubt that these particular creatures, and all similar ones from classical antiquity, were intended to be Griffins and should be recognized as such.



**Gregor Macaulay** sent some pictures of a Dragon decorating the façade of the Fire Station in Dunedin, New Zealand, which was built in the 1930s (*below*).



**Annie Robertson** gave us a splendid calendar for 2008 based on the *Dragonology* books, and also a packet of “Dragon” brand coffee beans from the Far East, which, although it had an authentic-looking Chinese Dragon pictured on the front, spoiled the effect by calling it the “Komodo Dragon Blend” – and we know that the giant lizard from Komodo is NOT A DRAGON ! (But the coffee was excellent, rich and mellow, with earthy undertones, according to the label.)

## MORE ON THE UNICORN

Although we saw Andrew Jamieson’s illustration of the Unicorn on the cover of *Dragonlore No 14*, the accompanying essay by Margaret Young from Friar’s *New Dictionary of Heraldry* has not appeared hitherto in these pages, so here it is, this time illustrated by Andrew’s drawing of the badge of Scotland’s **Unicorn Pursuivant of Arms** (blazoned as *A Unicorn couchant Argent gorged of a Coronet of four Fleur-de-lis and four Crosses paty proper*. The title of this officer of the Lyon Court was created after 1381, and was derived from the Scottish Royal badge and supporters.):



**Unicorn** The mystery and magic of the unicorn has been known to all civilizations; the stories and fables concerning it are without number. In the world of heraldry it became known as an elegant and beautiful animal, like a horse but with cloven feet, a lion’ tail and a goat’s beard, and a delicate spiralling horn on its forehead. To earlier civilizations it had been known with a different appearance, the flamboyant *ki-lin* of Chirin, and the *kirin* of Japan. In Arabia and Persia it was the *karkardanh*, sometimes a violent and blood-thirsty creature, sometimes more graceful. The mount which Alexander the Great tamed and called Bucephalus was said to be a *karkardanh*.

In medieval times the unicorn became the symbol of Christ because of its purity and virtue. Besides these qualities it was believed to possess medicinal powers. The horn was an antidote to poison and no animal would drink from a pool until the unicorn had stirred the water with its horn, thus rendering innocuous any poison that a dragon or serpent had deposited therein. Powdered unicorn horn was used as a cure for many ills, and cups made from it were invaluable against poisoning.

The unicorn appeared in many fine tapestries, such as ‘The Hunt of the Unicorn’ now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and ‘The lady and the Unicorn’ in the Cluny Museum in Paris, in which the arms of the de Viste family appear.

The unicorn does not appear to have been used in early heraldry, because it was considered too sacred, but from the fifteenth century has become increasingly popular. Appropriately the Society of Apothecaries in London has two golden unicorn supporters, and in Scotland unicorn supporters were adopted in the hope that their virtue and purity would be a strength to the country in her struggles against foes.

MY

The Unicorn gets at least a mention in many an issue of *Dragonlore*, often with illustrations, but it is defined in the A-Z in No 11, with perhaps the most important discussions in Nos 14 and 40. The arms of the Society of Apothecaries will feature in the next issue, No 95.

## Fabulous Beasts in the Arms of New Life Peers

In *The Heraldry Gazette* for December 2007, Peter Gwynn-Jones, Garter Principal King of Arms, continues his series of arms granted to new life peers with six examples, four of which contain fabulous beasts.

**Baron Griffiths of Fforestfach** has for supporters: *On either side statant upon a Stack of two closed Books Vert garnished Or a Male Gryphon regardant Gules beaked forelegged and rayed Or.*

**Baroness Coussins** has for supporters: *On either side a Heraldic Dolphin Argent finned Or holding in the beak a Quill Argent spined Or.*

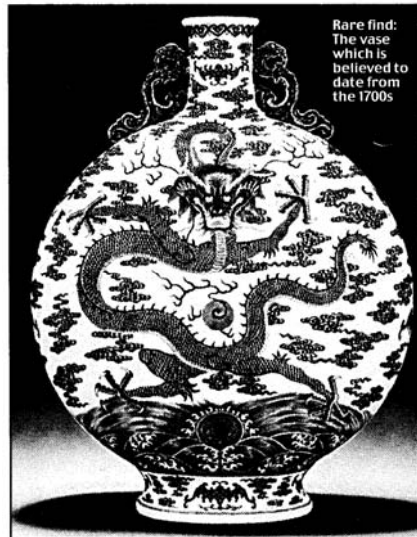
**Baron Lee of Trafford** has for a crest: *On a Helm with a Wreath Argent and Gules a Male Griffin sejant erect Sable beaked forelegged and rayed Or supporting a Staff also Or attached thereto a triangular Pennon Argent.*

**Baron Woolf** has for a badge, and also as charges on his shield: *A Harp the pillar terminating in the head neck and wings of a Pegasus Or.*

Garter adds a note to say that “the spellings of gryphon or griffin are both found in contemporary heraldry.” The novel harp with a Pegasus replacing the traditional lady is an allusion to the Inner Temple’s emblem combined with the arms attributed to King David. It is obviously too much to expect Garter to abandon the established usage of “Male Griffin” for some less confusing name, such as Garter Cole’s suggestion of Keythong or our own Ormogriff, though we can still hope that such a change might be adopted by some future Garter.

## A Rare Dragon Vase from the Qing Dynasty

Several newspapers reported the sale for a record price of a rare vase that had lurked in the bottom of a wardrobe for some thirty years before being recognized as more than a mere copy. Dated from the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Qing Dynasty, and just 20 inches in height, it was decorated with an Imperial Chinese Dragon with his “pearl” and was sold at auction by Sotheby’s on 7 November 2007 for £2,820,500 (*right*).



## FROM THE POSTBAG (including e-mails)

**Chas Charles-Dunne** has sent a picture of a “Dragon Lamp” (*right*) that has been in his family for over a hundred years, having been brought from India by his grandmother. It has been converted from an oil lamp to electric (spot the flex!), but remains a much-prized family treasure, and is already coveted by the next generation.



**Jane Connell** sent a delightful children’s book, *The Lord Mount Dragon*, by Keith Ruttle, illustrated by Rowan Barnes-Murphy (Cambridge 2005) which retells an ancient fairy tale with some modern twists. It is now in the caring hands of my great-grand-daughter. (*See page 20 from this book below.*)

At last, they arrived at the dragon’s swamp.

The dragon came out of the swamp. It was enormous and very ugly!

