

THE ARMS OF TWYFORD SCHOOL



The winged Bull in the crest is not the emblem of St Luke, but an amalgam of features of the arms of two former Headmasters of the school, the black bull's head crest of the Wickhams and the wing of the white eagle on the Kitchin arms.

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Racing Stripes by Katie Hofgard



The College of Dracology for the Study of Fabulous Beasts



Midsummer is traditionally celebrated on 24 June each year, the feast day of St John the Baptist, and used to see bonfires widely spread across the country, though these are now quite rare. At one time it also harboured the Festival of the Light, but that too seems to have been forgotten. What is left? Wagner's opera *The Mastersingers of Nuremburg* is evidently a tribute to St John's Day, starting with the chorale "As Our Saviour came to Thee," though not a lot of people make the connection. I have even noted a famed music critic chiding Wagner because his only comic opera is not at all funny, whereas the term 'comic' does not imply 'humorous' but only that the story has a happy ending. At least it is performed from time to time, and the music is gloriously stirring, Walther's Prize Song being one of the showpieces of the tenor's repertoire.

Katie Hofgard is an artist who specializes in fantastic Dragons, and the one on the cover is said to be the fastest dragon in the sky. It is the illustration for June in this year's Dragon Calendar, a present from Annie Robertson, and the best of the twelve to show you. Here are a couple more, *Sautheran* for May (left) and *Protector* for July (right).

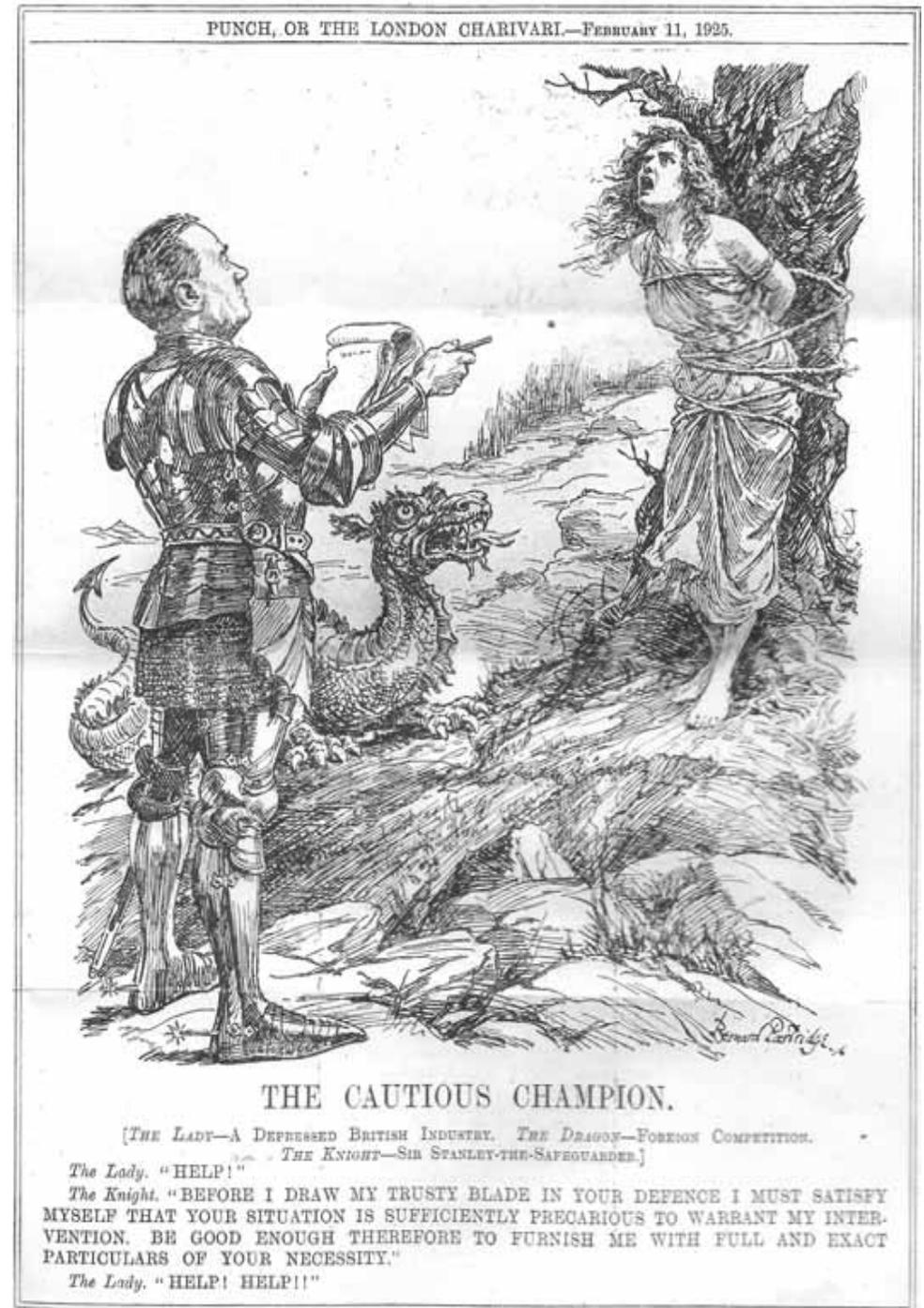


Phil Hewitt has been browsing through old volumes of *Punch* and came across this cartoon from 1925 with a very recognizable Stanley Baldwin and a representative Dragon (opposite). Phil says that he is not a great admirer of Bernard Partridge's style, much preferring the work of Ernest Shepherd, who somewhat surprisingly did lots of political cartoons for *Punch* as well as the illustrations to *The Wind in the Willows* and the Pooh books for which he is famous.



BOOK REVIEW

LIONS, DRAGONS, & OTHER BEASTS: Aquamanilia of the Middle Ages, Vessels for Church and Table edited by Peter Barnet and Pete Dandridge (London, 2006) is in fact the Catalogue for an Exhibition held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York where the world's largest collection of these artefacts is held. Thirty of these aquamanilia (water jugs in the form of a beast) from the exhibition are shown in detail, but the book covers many from elsewhere, including that from the Victoria and Albert Museum that we showed in our No 183. Of the main group of thirty, a dozen are standing Lions with one seated Lion, three are Horses, two are of Samson with a Lion, another two of a Knight on Horseback and then one each of a Falconer on Horseback, a Mounted Man at Arms, Aristotle and Phyllis, a Head, a Bust, a Cock, a Dragon (Wyvern), a Centaur with a Dragon, a Unicorn and a Griffin. The book also describes the mediaeval craftsmanship that went into their making and the type of use to which they were put. Here are pictures of the four fabulous beasts, the Dragon, the Centaur, the Unicorn and the Griffin (*opposite*). As a bonus, here is a fabulous beast from North Germany, a product of the 14th century, made of brass and kept in Berlin (*below*).



A MASTER OF MECHANICAL KITES



Zhang Tianwei displays one of his elaborate and delicate works of art. This Chinese artist and technician builds the most extraordinary kites which perform unbelievable manoeuvres, all made from simple materials. The Dragon head will find its place in the sky.