

writes about and illustrates two little-known creatures, the **Chicheface** and the **Bigorne**, under the title **The Monsters of a Misogynist**. He also writes about the **Sirrush** (No 112, Winter 1979/80).

**Brief Notes on the Musimon** by Henry Beckwith (No 165, Spring 1994) and **Really Up the Pole** by Lesley A. Holt (No 166, Summer 1994) about the **Opinicus** are worth a mention, the latter provoking some pertinent letters in response. John Brooke-Little reviews **Mythical Beasts** edited by John Cherry (No 173, Spring 1996) with very favourable comments, and rather more space than we gave it in **Dragonlore** No 12, and August Vachon writes on **The Unicorn in Canada** (No 175, Autumn 1996). A review of Peter Spurrier's **Heraldic Art Source Book** (No 180, Winter 1997) specifically refers to his excellent coverage of **Monsters**, whilst Anthony Jones has an informative section on **The Dragon** in an article on **Aspects of Welsh Heraldry** (No 181, Spring 1998). Finally, an article reviewing the work of George W. Eve, Heraldic Artist (No 183, Autumn 1998) who was the principal illustrator for Fox-Davies, gives examples of his Griffin, Dragon, Wyvern, Unicorn and Antelope.

There are many other illustrations of fabulous beasts in the pages of *The Coat of Arms*, mostly incidental to other heraldic topics but occasionally included as a page-filler. All in all, it is evident that this magazine is an important contributor to the study of dracology.

### An Alphabet of Queries

The Antelope, is it a fabulous beast or just an imaginative creation by an artist unfamiliar with the real animal and working from hearsay? In heraldry it is reckoned a monster to distinguish it from the natural African ungulate.



Two Tudor antelopes redrawn by Carl-Alexander von Volborth, from his 1996 book. Note that the serrations on the horns are on the front in one case and on the back in the other.



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# Dragonlore

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Unicorns in the arms of John Brooke-Little with his badges of office, drawn by Bruno Heim, from his *Armorial* (1981)

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

At the same time that we were tentatively forming our College, at another school in the West Country, John Brooke-Little was starting The Society of Heraldic Antiquaries, with its quarterly newsletter *The Escutcheon*. But whilst our College became dormant, his Society flourished and in 1950 was transformed into The Heraldry Society with a new quarterly magazine, *The Coat of Arms*, which John edited, as he does to this day, and in 1957 he launched *The Heraldry Gazette*. From the beginning, heraldic monsters were prominently featured, and as John entered the heraldic profession, first as Bluemantle Pursuivant and then as Richmond Herald, his involvement with dracology also progressed. His book **An Heraldic Alphabet** (Macdonald, London 1973) contains no fewer than 70 entries for various monsters, 32 of which are illustrated. His next publication, **Royal Heraldry: Beasts and Badges of Britain** (Pilgrim Press, Derby 1977) features Unicorns, Dragons, Yales, Griffins, Panthers and Antelopes, many of them in colour, and established John as a knowledgeable dracologist.

*John's own arms, a white shield with three black unicorn's heads with gold horns and manes and blue tongues, between drops of red blood, and a crest of a black demi-unicorn with a red and gold collar attached to a golden chain, together with his badges as Richmond Herald (the red rose dimidiating a white rose-en-soleil all imperially crowned) and Bluemantle Pursuivant (a blue mantle lined with ermine and with golden cords and tassels) and the Maltese Cross, the badge of the Order of St John, are shown on our cover. These were drawn by the Swiss armorer Archbishop Bruno B. Heim in 1974 and published in his book **Armorial** (van Duren, Gerrards Cross 1981) which illustrates 143 pages from his personal visitors' book with armorial sketches in his inimitable vivid style, including 25 with fabulous beasts: plenty of unicorns (10), 4 griffins, 3 dolphins, a couple each of harpies and martlets, and a melusine, a centaur, a sea-dog and a dragon. Heim's art shows that it is possible to be lively and still heraldically correct, but he can be more formal when required, as shown by his drawings of the arms of several Popes, also included in this book.*

Since then, John went on to become, first, Norroy and Ulster King of Arms, and then Clarenceux, until reaching retirement age in 1997. He is still President of The Heraldry Society and Editor of *The Coat of Arms*, and in the mean time he has edited **Boutell's Heraldry** through many editions (the one I have has 16 monsters detailed under Heraldic Charges with a colour plate illustrating a dozen of them, drawn by V. Wheeler-Holohan) besides editing up-dated and annotated editions of classic textbooks by Fox-Davies, Foster and Neubecker and giving his advice and encouragement to countless authors, including myself. Although only a by-product of his life-long work for heraldry, John has proved himself a master dracologist.

## Fabulous Beasts in *The Coat of Arms*

Sir George Bellew, who was then Garter Principle King of Arms, contributed a number of articles to early issues of *The Coat of Arms* of interest to dracologists, which for cogency and lucidity have seldom been equalled and might well deserve being reprinted. **Three Dragons** (No 9, January 1952) covered the Dragon of the West, the Wyvern and the Oriental Dragon. **Two More Monsters** (No 12, October 1952) dealt with the Griffin and the Phoenix, whilst **The Chimaera** came next (No 13, January 1953). Then came **Seraphim and Cherubim** (No 14, April 1953), scarcely monsters but certainly fabulous, and **Heraldic Birds** (Pelican, Peacock and Dove) followed (No 15, July 1953). **Six Marine Symbols** (No 17, January 1954) included the Dolphin, and this series ended with **Four Monsters from the Near East** (No 18, April 1954) covering the Greek Sphinx, the Egyptian Sphinx, Pegasus and the Centaur. My set of these early magazines is not complete, so I may have missed a few.

Next came a series of eight contributions from H. Stanford London with the generic title **Minor Monsters** (running from No 19, July 1954 through to No 25, January 1956, plus a final addition in No 28, October 1956) covering (i) the **Yale**, (ii) the **Bagwyn**, (iii) the **Calygreyhound**, (iv) the **Pantheon**, (v) the **Theow, Thoye or Thos**, (vi) the **Tragopan**, (vii) the **Bonatus or Bonacon** and the **Boreyne**, and lastly (viii) the **Alphyn** and the **Ypotryll**. These all give rather more particulars than were included in our A to Z.

An interesting piece by C. R. Humphery-Smith on **Tiger and Mirror** (No 32, October 1957) discusses the curious legend summarised in the quaint heraldic image of the wild beast overcome by looking at her own reflection. In an article on **Indian Heraldry** by Harold Pereira (No 33, July 1965), the **Garuda Barunda** is clearly illustrated with two goose heads, and holding two little elephants in its claws, perhaps to indicate how vast this fabulous bird was supposed to be. The drawing is based on a temple sculpture in Vellore; it is a symbol of omniscience protecting its devotees, and may have inspired the double-headed imperial eagle known in Europe and the Near East.

Dr Kathleen Briggs wrote on **Heraldic Beasts in Folk Tradition** (No 74, April 1968) and there was an impassioned letter from Major T. R. Davies (No 91, Autumn 1974) on **The Ethics of Monsters** in which he argued against the arbitrary creation of hitherto unknown hybrids, and which provoked a number of responses in subsequent issues. J. G. Storry, writing on **Heraldry in Africa** (No 92, Winter 1974-5), describes two monsters, the "Leazelle" (a hybrid of lion and gazelle) and the Great Zimbabwe bird, while Colin Cole, reviewing Rodney Dennis' book **The Heraldic Imagination** (No 98, Summer 1976) remarks that **Keythong** is the correct name for the "Male Griffin". Paul Franke writes about **The Questing Beast** (No 106, Summer 1978) and provides a drawing of his reconstruction of this Arthurian monster and later (No 110, Summer 1979) he