



Since *After the Flood* was first printed in 1995, a great many accounts of historically attested dinosaurs have surfaced, most of them containing contemporary illustrations as well as eyewitness descriptions of these creatures. And the phenomenon is global, not just local to the United States or Europe. Dyed-in-the-wool evolutionists are, naturally, quick to decry such accounts - sometimes (as in my own case) even casting doubt on the sanity and moral integrity of the reporting author. It would be useless to argue with them, so here we will consider a few more of the great many items of contemporary evidence which speak to us of the fact that our forebears were more than familiar with these then living creatures, and thought it perfectly natural to record them as well as the places which they frequented.

Surprisingly, many of these historical accounts are not records of isolated

instances. Many of them, even though they appear in different times, countries, cultures and languages, describe verbally and pictorially the same creature as each other, with no reasonable possibility of collusion or copying being involved. This tells us that these creatures were seen separately in farflung places and, because they are attested and depicted by more than one eyewitness from more than one geographical location and even time, are described and depicted accurately.

Beowulf's Merefixa

Let us take as our first example the creature named in *Beowulf* as a *merefixa* (pr. *merefisher*). Without any other witness to this creature, it is highly unlikely that we would ever have discovered what a *merefixa* actually was, or even what it looked like; yet *Beowulf* is not our only written source for this creature. It also is named (“*merefisch*”) in the 1493 *Nuremberg Chronicle*, and



Fig. 1: A *merefisch* being dragged from a German river in 1285. Image in the public domain.



Fig. 2: A *merefisch* as depicted on the prow of a Viking longship. Image in the public domain.

moreover is depicted in one of its woodcut illustrations (see Fig. 1).¹ The illustration - which no critic seems to have noticed - shows a *merefisch* being dragged from a river estuary in Germany. The event, which seems well enough organised to suggest that it was not uncommon, is recorded for February AD 1285 (“Jar. cristi i^m. ii^c. lxxxv”).

The creature is well depicted. It has a short muzzle, ears towards the back of its head, forward-looking eyes, and scales, indicating a reptile. The fact that it was so described in late 13th-century Germany is of immense interest to us, for it exactly corresponds to a depiction of such a creature made some centuries earlier in Scandinavia and which once adorned the prow of a Viking longship (Fig. 2). Here we see exactly the same physical characteristics as those of the creature depicted in the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, namely a short muzzle, ears toward the back of the head, forward-looking eyes, and even scales, though in the sculpture these are heavily stylised.

Even the facial expression is the same. This tells us that the Viking figurehead (dating from several centuries earlier) is a likeness of the same creature named and depicted in the *Nuremberg Chronicle* in 1493 as a *merefisch*, or as the Saxon *Beowulf* epic has it, a *merefixa*. And that’s how we know what *Beowulf*’s *merefixa* actually looked like. I wonder that our more critical commentators never mention that fact.

Living Sauropods

This would all be remarkable enough if it were the only instance in which creatures that we would call dinosaurs are depicted in different times and cultures, and which are easily recognised as belonging to the same kind, because the accounts and depictions of them are so similar. The same phenomenon is seen in the following example concerning long-necked quadrupeds which evolutionists have named Sauropods. We encounter one scene depicting these creatures in a sculpture from ancient Egypt known as the Narmer Palette.²



Fig. 3: The Narmer Palette. Image in the public domain.



Fig. 4: The Uruk cylinder seal depicting living Sauropods. Image in the public domain.

Here, in Figure 3, we see a remarkable and very clear depiction of strange Sauropod-type creatures. They appear to be of gigantic stature, and yet have clearly been domesticated or tamed, firmly under the control of their two handlers. We might, perhaps, have been able to dismiss them as fanciful, especially as critics have named them ‘serpopards’ – hybrid crosses between serpents and leopards!³ – and assure us that their intertwined necks represent nothing more than the unification of the two kingdoms of Egypt, the north and the south. Quite.

The great spoiler of this notion, however, is the depiction of high identical creatures on an ancient cylinder-seal from the Biblical city of Uruk (Erech) – see Fig. 4. These also are depicted with their necks intertwined, yet the engraver of the seal can have had no interest in allegorizing the kingdoms of Egypt – nor yet his own kingdom for that matter. A close comparison of the Uruk Sauropods with those depicted on the Narmer Palette reveals several identical features, surely showing that the same creatures are depicted in each of these artworks, and that therefore these respective artists – both from different times, cultures, and speaking different languages - are portraying the same kind of animal, a kind which they must have seen with their own eyes and which were still living when they saw them.

The Wyvern – A Bipedal Reptile

There is one creature (now mercifully extinct) that figures heavily in illustrations from the Medieval Period, particularly in heraldic devices. That is the very large flying serpent known as a Wyvern (similar creatures are recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 793). Our first illustration (see Fig. 5 below) is a 14th-century stone carving from Trent Cathedral in Italy. The detail



Fig. 5: The Wyvern of Trent Cathedral. 14th century. Image: Matteo Ianeselli.

is remarkable, and shows a wyvern being attacked by a dog. We may notice immediately several distinctive features of its anatomy, namely a scaly skin, a pair of wings, two clawed legs, turned-down ears, a short muzzle, and eyes set in the side of its head. Its coiling body is that of a serpent-like creature.



Fig. 6: The Wyvern from f.236v of Tyndale's 1534 New Testament. Image in the public domain.

Our second example of this creature appears on folio ccxxxvi (verso) of William Tyndale's 1534 New Testament (Book of Revelation) – see Fig. 6. Here we can see the front half of a wyvern clearly depicted, displaying precisely the same features and proportions of the wyvern of Trent Cathedral. Now Tyndale's 1534 New Testament was printed at Antwerp in Belgium, and the Trent wyvern was carved some 200 years earlier in Italy, yet both depict wyverns with identical features.

resides today, having once served as a capital in an earlier building, in the exhibition area of the Benedictine monastery at Moissac in France. It shows in full profile a wyvern that is in the process of eating a man. The physiological detail exactly corresponds with that of the Trent wyvern: scaly skin, a pair of wings, two clawed legs, turned-down ears, a short muzzle, and eyes set in the side of its head. Its coiling body is likewise that of a serpent-like creature.

However, dating some 300 years earlier than even the Trent Cathedral wyvern and some 500 years earlier than the Tyndale, namely from the 11th century, comes the following example (Fig. 7). It

So, from the 11th to the 16th centuries, covering a period of 500 years, we have three clearly defined examples of a creature called a wyvern. There are



Fig. 7: 11th-century Wyvern from Moissac, France. Image: CSM.

numerous other examples from the Middle Ages, pictorial, carved and written, which could be added to these, but these three examples alone tell us plainly that these were creatures which were known all over Europe, and were noted and described consistently in records, illustrations and sculptures. So vivid is the Trent Cathedral example, and so graphically portrayed are the movements and expression of the wyvern in its moment of terror, that we are doubtless looking at an event that was witnessed by people. Even the Moissac wyvern's devouring of a man may be a once-witnessed event commemorated in stone. But yet there's more.

The following 13th-century illustration of a wyvern confronting an elephant (Fig. 8) appears in Harleian MS 3244 (British Library) f.39v. Including the sculpture from Trent Cathedral that shows a dog attacking a wyvern, this makes two illustrations in which a

wyvern appears next to recognisable animal species which are alive today on the earth. Elephants and dogs are not mythical, so why should we suppose that the wyvern depicted with them never existed simply because we ourselves have never seen one? Ensuring that no collusion could take place, if we asked an Englishman, a Frenchman, a Belgian and an Italian,



Fig. 8: A 13th-century confrontation between a wyvern and an elephant. Image in the public domain.

each living in his own country, to make up and draw an entirely fanciful creature, is it likely that they would all produce an identical animal? No, it isn't at all likely. In fact, we can say that it would be impossible. So why should it be impossible today, but likely to have occurred many dozens of times all over Europe in the Middle Ages? I think we should be told.

However, to illustrate the consistency of detail whenever our medieval forebears dealt with the wyvern, here (Fig. 9) is one last illustration from a copy made in 1460 of the *Liber Floridus* (Book of Flowers – an encyclopaedia of natural history first penned in the 12th century): Need more be said or shown than this? Probably, for some, yes.

Notes

1. *Nuremberg Chronicle*. 1493. f. 217v. (published in facsimile by Taschen. Hohenzollernring, 2001).
2. The Narmer Palette is housed in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo, cat. no. CG14716.
3. Whoever coined this clever word cannot have known what a leopard's



Fig. 9: A wyvern from *Liber Floridus* f.61v. (Universiteitsbibliotheek Gent). Image in the public domain.

face looked like. Stylistically depicted on the Narmer Palette, the face resembles more that of a lioness. But I suppose that 'serponess' or 'leopent' would have seemed ridiculous.

Bill Cooper

Front page header: *T. rex animatronic model*, composite image, © CSM.

Creation Science Movement

PO Box 888, Portsmouth PO6 2YD, UK

www.csm.org.uk; info@csm.org.uk; 02392 293988

Pamphlet 396, November 2014

by Dr Bill Cooper