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### *Bibliography (part 2)*

As stated in the last number, an attempt would be made at gathering together the numerous book reviews by the trinity of JB-L, OStJ and FXL. This represents that attempt. As with the main section of the bibliography published last time, it is doubtless far from complete, and only a few reviews outside the pages of this journal have been tracked down; missing data would be gratefully received by the editors. Even so, it is an interesting list, and reveals some unusual features on close inspection. Reviews are by JB-L unless attributed otherwise.

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# ARGENT A CROSS GULES

## THE ORIGINS AND ENGLISH USE OF THE ARMS OF SAINT GEORGE

Jonathan Good

*Figure 1: Rood screen paintings from Filby Church, Norfolk and Somerleyton Church, Suffolk. From J. L. André, 'Saint George the Martyr, in legend, ceremonial, art, etc.,' *Archaeological Journal* 57 (1900), following p. 125.*



St George, in late-medieval western European iconography, was commonly identified by two main attributes: a dragon, and a coat of arms consisting of a white field with a plain red cross on it, the limbs of which are of uniform width and which extend to touch the edge of the shield – that is, *Argent a cross gules* (**Figure 1**). St George was usually shown killing the dragon with a sword or lance, and bearing his arms on a shield, surcoat or banner; he was usually also dressed in armour, was often mounted, and was sometimes accompanied by other details from his *vita* as well, such as the princess he rescued, her sheep, her parents, or the buildings and walls of their city Silene. Only very rarely, however, was he shown without both his dragon and his coat of arms – if he was not shown with both, he was usually shown with one or the other. A consensus exists that the *Golden Legend*, a collection of saints lives composed by the Dominican archbishop of Genoa Jacobus of Voragine in the 1260s, was the major source for the widespread western popularity of the dragon story,<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> John Matzke, 'Contributions to the history of the legend of Saint George, with special reference to the sources of the French, German and Anglo-Saxon metrical versions', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 17 (1902), p. 451; Jennifer Fellows, 'St George as Romance hero', *Reading Medieval Studies* 19 (1993), pp. 31-32; Timothy Wilson, 'Saint George in Tudor and Stuart England' (M.Phil. diss., Warburg Institute, 1976), p. 15.