

*Robert de Boron, Joseph of Armathea - a
romance of the grail. Translated by Jean
Rogers*

Article

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**Robert de Boron; Joseph of Arimathea
- a Romance of the Grail. Translated
by Jean Rogers.** London, 1990, pp x + 60,
ISBN 085440 426 0.

Jean Rogers has used the text published by William Nitze of Robert de Boron's *Le Roman de l'estoire dou graal* (CFMA, Paris, 1971). Her translation follows the text exactly and renders it into English with great accuracy. She has also succeeded in finding a style which is easy to read and yet stays close to the French original, so that it is possible to follow the text word for word. Very occasionally for the sake of the English style she has rendered a phrase by an adverb but without ever falsifying the sense of the text. Without being in any way archaic she has managed to produce a style which never jars with the original so that the English seems perfectly appropriate to a late twelfth-century text. Her brief introduction is clear and to the point although it is somewhat surprising that she seems to be shocked by the virulent anti-semitism expressed by Robert de Boron. The twelfth century had not been kind to the Jews, and as Robert comes at the end of that century, there is no reason to expect him to be any different from the majority of his contemporaries, especially when he is writing on a topic which lends itself to renewed denunciation of the Jews. It is a pity that Rogers gives no notes to her introduction. It would be interesting to have references to some of her comments. She should also explain why pages 46 to 48 are in italics in her text. The reader who is using the translation together with Nitze's edition will find the explanation in Nitze (there is a lacuna in the manuscript which is filled by using the text of the prose version), but Roger's book is presumably meant to be used on its own, and an explanation would be useful. It is also highly regrettable that there is no bibliography. Even a very brief list would be helpful to the reader desirous of furthering his or her knowledge of the period. These criticisms apart, however,

this is an outstandingly good translation, much better than some produced recently by more famous scholars. It is a pleasure to read stylistically while remaining precise and accurate down to the last detail.

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