

The Virgin at the Dragon's Rock¹

The legend tells that the Dragon's Rock lies next to the Rhine (in German: Rhein²) among the mountains of the Siebengebirge³. The dragon that lay in the cave was worshipped by the local people. The inhabitants would bring the dragon human sacrifices, mostly war prisoners. Among the people there was a beautiful virgin who was a Christian. She was of such high beauty that two leaders fought over her. After a while the Elders of the town decided to sacrifice the virgin to avoid further unrest. Dressed in a flowing white gown and a flower crown adorning her head, they took her to the dragon and tied her to a tree next to the dragon's cave. When the dragon came out of his cave he was used to seeing his offerings there. But when the virgin saw him, she suddenly pulled out her cross and waved it in the dragon's direction. The dragon was so frightened that he fell backwards into the chasm screaming and roaring. The people ran to the virgin and begged her to teach them the meaning of the cross and to send them a priest to baptize them. This is supposed to have led to the development of Christianity in the Rhineland (German: Rheinland⁴).

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Source (photo): <https://c8.alamy.com/compde/geb38g/drachenfels-berg-ruine-burg-und-schloss-drachenburg-siebengebirge-7-gebirge-rheintal-deutschland-geb38g.jpg>, 28.02.2019.

¹ Dragon's Rock: *Drachenfels* (in German)

² Rhein: a large river in Germany

³ Siebengebirge: a special name for seven mountains

⁴ Rheinland: a region in the west of Germany