

# Lindisfarne Layout for Award Scrolls

Dame Asa Gormsdottir - Ealdormere



# Class Description

- Explore the layout of the Lindisfarne Gospels
- Practical tips on how to create the distinctive capitals, half-uncial calligraphy, border formation, and typical motifs
- Examples of Lindisfarne-inspired SCA scrolls included
- Handouts of the Lindisfarne capital and half-uncial alphabets as interpreted by the teacher will be provided



# Early Medieval Insular Manuscripts

- Refers to those manuscripts made in the British Isles from 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries (approximately)
- Famous examples:
  - Lindisfarne Gospels
  - Book of Kells
  - Echternach Gospels
  - Book of Deer
  - Book of Durrow
  - Codex Aureus
- Iona and Wearmouth-Jarrow particularly important centres for manuscript production



# Lindisfarne Gospels – Overview

- Made in Lindisfarne, Holy Island, Britain
- Date range 710-725 CE
- Believed to be the work of a single scribe – Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne
- Intact and exceptionally well-preserved
- Made of the highest quality vellum, ink and pigments
- Intended to enhance the monastery's prestige and its relationship to St. Cuthbert (tourist attraction)



# Typical Layout for Insular Gospels

While the precise page order varies, several elements are usually found:

1. Cross carpet page
2. Incipit page
3. Apostolic portraits with their animal symbols
4. Body text pages
5. Canon tables

Paper size is roughly equivalent to 11x14”



# Cross-Carpet Page



BOOK OF LINDISFARNE. CARPET PAGE. LINDISFARNE, LATE SEVENTH CENTURY. (10<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> ")  
COTTON MS NERO D. IV, FOLIO 2 VERSO, BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON.

Source: Andre Grabar and Carl Nordenfalk. *Early Medieval Painting: From the Fourth to the Eleventh Century*. Trans. Stuart Gilbert. Editions D'Art Albert Skira: 1957. Page 116.



# Carpet Pages

- Essentially the shape and artistic density of a Middle Eastern carpet
- Typically a rectangular or square layout broken into symmetrical geometric zones that include squares, rectangles, oblongs, crosses and circles
- Ornamentation can be simple and direct (The Book of Durrow, Echternach Gospels), or microscopically complex (Lindisfarne Gospels, Book of Kells)
- Beautiful way to add “wow” factor to an important SCA award scroll

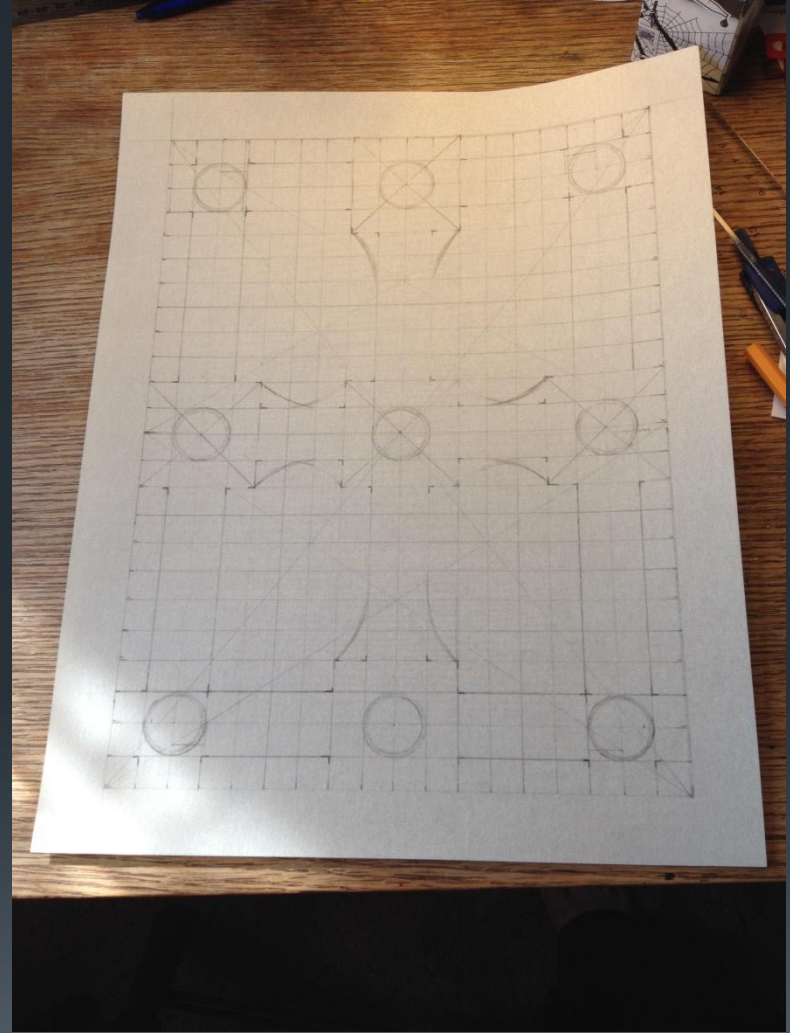








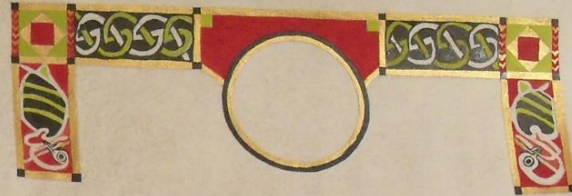
Photo courtesy of Kyle Andrews. Used with permission.











quick the king's road  
 ausing stones  
 ice bound boudsmen  
 let the halls hear

down as dachy  
 asked again  
 to and gather  
 mark this mase

life and life blood  
 in halls hallowed  
 ask but this too  
 marked grace greatly

alching answered  
 reale and regu  
 if bound boudsmen  
 in grace remans

let it be done this day, let none transay this right, quilliam, by his own hand  
 twice made king, now is honoured with estates and duchy fitting his worth  
 take from our hand this coronet, and know that through your service to  
 the people of the north you have earned the title, and all who see you  
 shall know your grace and honour  
 sing out! let the halls ring! today is a good day!

done by our hand and seal this twenty-eighth day of april, anno saccatis  
 xlvii at spring coronation in our kingdom of ealdornere

edward the red II  
 rex

kylyu buchavau II  
 RESINA







# The Incipit Page

- A kind of title page
- Opening words of the four gospels
- Features one or two very large primary initials, heavily illuminated
- Followed by one or two sentences in Lindisfarne Capitals, descending size
- Usually decorated with a partial border
  
- Useful for shorter SCA scrolls

IN THE  
YEAR OF THE  
SOCIETY INC  
CORPORATION  
48 I HIGEL  
WITH THE FAVOUR  
OF

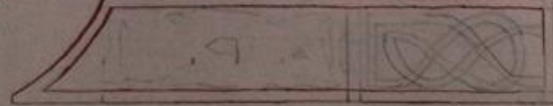
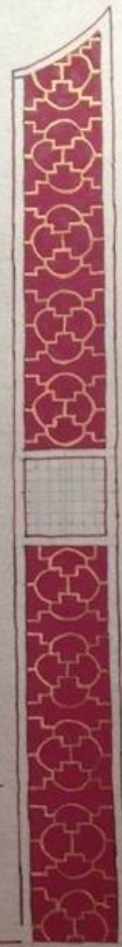






Photo courtesy of Kyle Andrews. Used with permission.



ICS CAGIE CHILD FLEET AND FAIR  
THE TEACHERS FULL

INED OUR WODLE ORDER OF  
THORBJORN'S HAMMER

GIFTS OF RED GOLD  
WROUGHT WITH HONOUR  
RANG WITH HAMMER  
SCULPT THE DOWMAN.

AT WINTER WAR  
IN OUR SHIRE OF  
TRINOVANTIA NOVA

FOR EXCELLENCE IN ARCHERY  
WE TRAMDRAND KING  
AND KAYLAN QUEEN  
OF EADOMERE

THIS SEVENTH DAY OF MARCH  
CANTO SOCIETATIS FORTY-NINE.

DO HEREBY INDUCE  
AUDAN SCOTERUS AET THAM  
MISCUM MERUM

REX

RESINA





many are the beautiful handsewn works created by Dubhessa in William. she uses linens, wools and silks intelligently and with a fine eye for colour and detail.

her interest in Roman and Russian clothing, her love of silks, and her quests to obtain more are well known.

she led an able team at doth of gold and proved her skills at break the back of winter.

for her efforts and success in creating fine clothing, we, Roak the magnificent and Elizabeth of Gentle Grace bestow upon Dubhessa in William the award of the Oriou and the right to bear its badge, purple, an Irish harp, on a bordure or five mullets purple.

done this 15th day of December a.s. xlvii at Wassail in our caucion of Oriouan throung.

REX

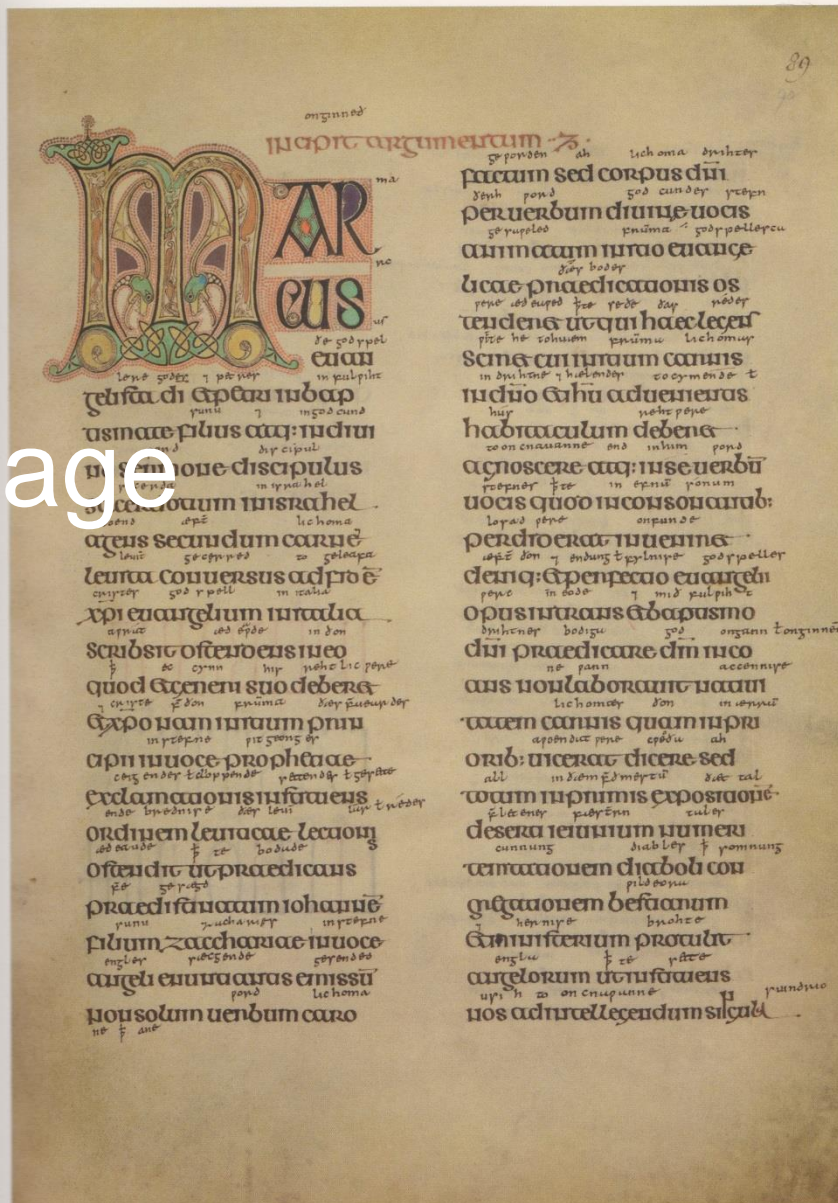
REGINA

- Design adapted from the "Quoniam" page from Book of Kells, f. 374 of 677. See <http://digitalcollections.tcd.ie/> for a page-by-page look.





# Text Page



Pl. 13. Lindisfarne Gospels (BL, Cotton MS Nero Div), f. 90r, Mark prologue.

Source: Michelle P. Brown. *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality & the Scribe*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. Plate 13.



# Text Pages

- Familiar format for SCA scrolls
- One or two illuminated initials
  - Kells is famous for its humorous stock of creative, often animal-based initials, some on virtually every line
- Two columns of double-spaced half-uncial script

# DIVINE GRACE

KING OF ealdormere and adrielle my queen, led by divine love foreordained by the same divine right in the last hours of our reign, have not been forgetful in the duties of governance and have taken care to commit this to writing, so that our words and deeds should not be negated with the passage of time either through the lack of care of our successors or through some kind of envy or dishonesty.

**W**ITH the agreement and authorisation of many nobles, including our beloved companions of the wain, we, striving with sincere intent, do bestow upon mistress aelfwæn a grant of arms and do induct her into our order of the wain and grant unto her the right to wear the badge of the order. FOR she has performed exemplary and long-standing service to our kingdom as officer, marshal, artisan, leader, champion, always as one who provides an example of courtesy and chivalry worthy of emulation. ON account of such faithful service and loyalty we do further grant this charter bestowing on her for all time that place which is called by rustics the redwood. IN order that the aforementioned mistress aelfwæn should favourably possess without intermission this royal gift as long as ealdormere should thrive all that is recognised as belonging to that same place by law, both in large and in small matters, in fields, pastures,

meadows, woods and fisheries may the aforementioned redwood continue, be free from all worldly impediment, except these three: military service, and the construction of bridge and fortress. THE aforementioned redwood is seen to be surrounded by these bounds. FROM THE CUNINGSLOE'S SOUTH TO RAMSAYVILLE, IN THE EAST FROM THE GREEN DAUN TO THE MORKISIONDEG. IF any, however, should cry, against our wishes, to harm this charter, THROUGH THE SPITE OF OPPRESSIVE COVETOUSNESS, may they, falling down to the storming masses of noisome darkness, be cursed into everlasting fire, where they may be tormented in a cruel punishment by demons with heated iron instruments of torture IF they do not change this before their death with appropriate penitence.

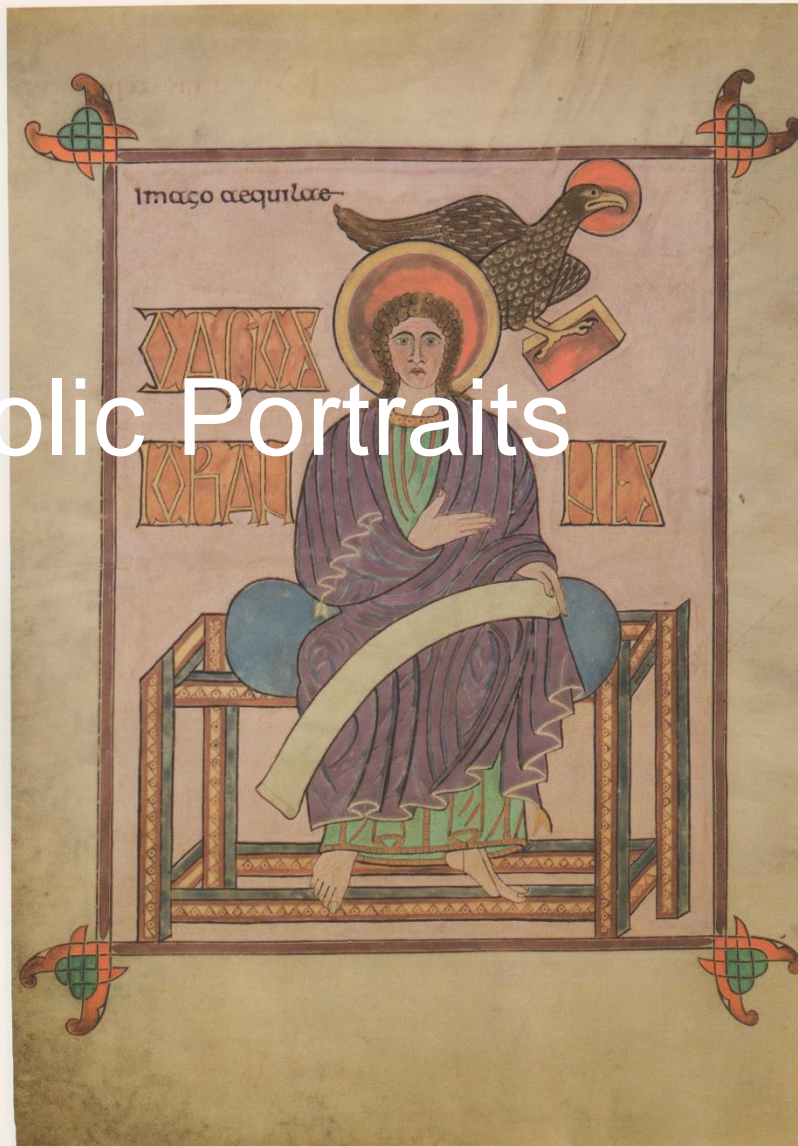
**B**UT, so that it will not be discontinued as long as ealdormere thrives, we have also recorded these things in writing. THIS aforementioned liberty was created in the year of the society's incarnation 48, on this 26th day of april.

REX

REGINA



# Apostolic Portraits



Pl. 22. Lindisfarne Gospels (BL, Cotton MS Nero D.iv), f. 209v, John evangelist miniature.

Source: Michelle P. Brown. *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality & the Scribe*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. Plate 22.





ECHTERNACH GOSPELS. SYMBOL OF ST MARK. IRELAND (?), CA. 690. ( $10\frac{1}{16} \times 7\frac{9}{16}$ )  
MS LAT. 9389, FOLIO 75 VERSO, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.

Source: Andre Grabar and Carl Nordenfalk. *Early Medieval Painting: From the Fourth to the Eleventh Century*. Trans. Stuart Gilbert. Editions D'Art Albert Skira: 1957. Page 112.



# Apostolic Portrait

- Posed or iconic figure, sometimes with apostolic animal symbol
  - e.g. Lion of St. Mark
  - The Book of Kells includes the “Doubtful Christ” portrait
- Sometimes the animal alone is present
- Presented within a border
- Accompanying text is usually limited
  
- Can be a fun format for SCA scrolls

# STEINMAR

O IROKI-BORN FOREST  
 HEWER, WINTER PILGRIM  
 ON THE NORTHERN CREK  
 YOUR HARNESS RANG  
 WITH SILVER BELLS AND  
 ICE SHOE BENEATH YOUR  
 HORSE'S FEET. THE  
 FROZEN LAKE WARMS  
 AT YOUR APPROACH  
 FLOWERS TRACE THE

ROCKY HEIGHTS THE  
 PEOPLE COME OUT TO  
 STREET YOU YOUR  
 HOST HAS GAINED THE  
 GREAT KEEP.

ENTER  
 STEINMAR  
 KING OF  
 CALDORMERE  
 DELOVED RUIGH  
 FATHER AND  
 HUSDAID.  
 BE TO  
 CALDORMERE AS  
 YOU ARE TO US.

FALL PATIENT  
 WITH GENTLE  
 WHATEVER  
 WITH ALL  
 OUR LOVE

IN COURTESY, STRAIGHT  
 LESS, RESOLUTE IN WAR  
 TRIM TIDES MAY COME  
 JORDA ENRICHES DOCTR  
 DAX STEINMARSON

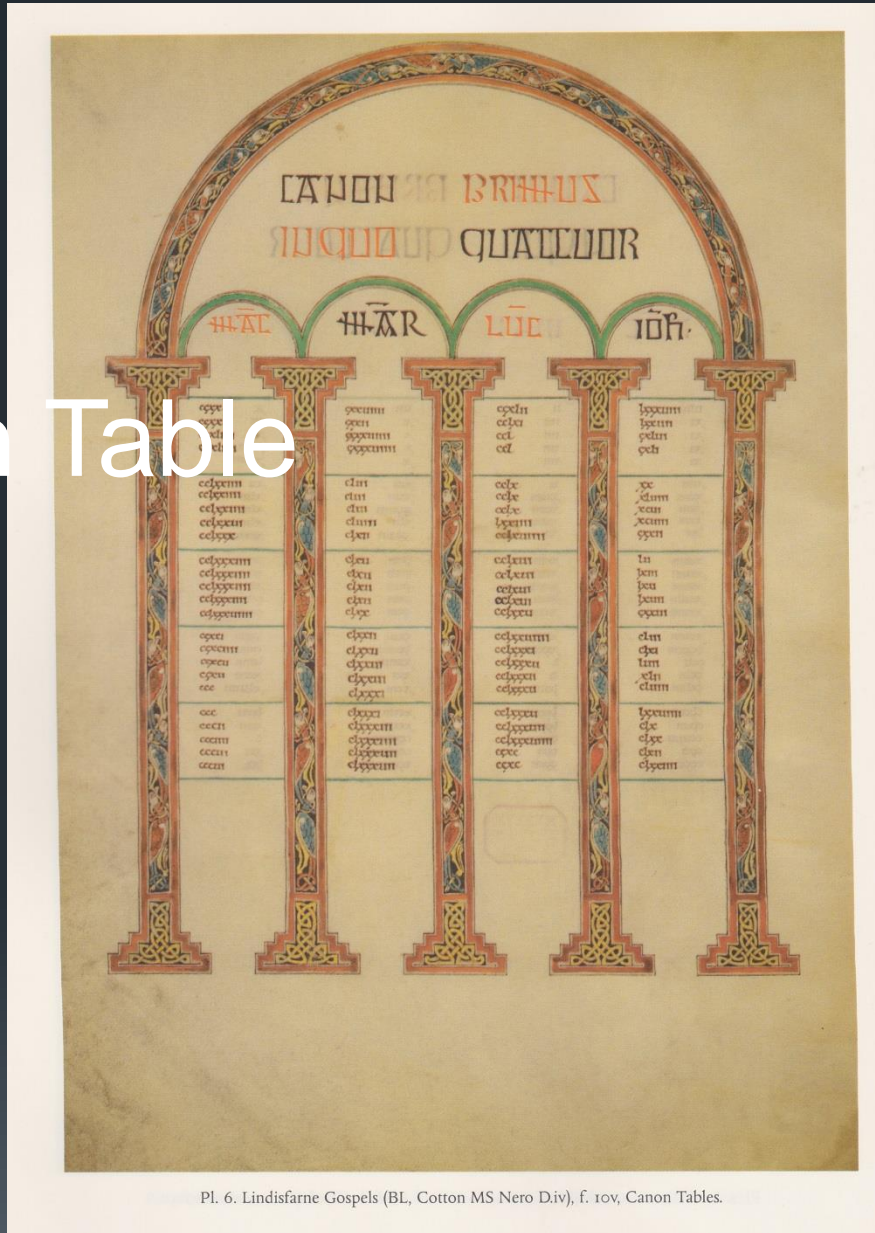
IN THE SHIRE OF BASTILLE DA LAC  
 THIS TWENTY-FIFTH DAY OF APRIL ANNO SOC. 49.

# ACCARSON





# Canon Table



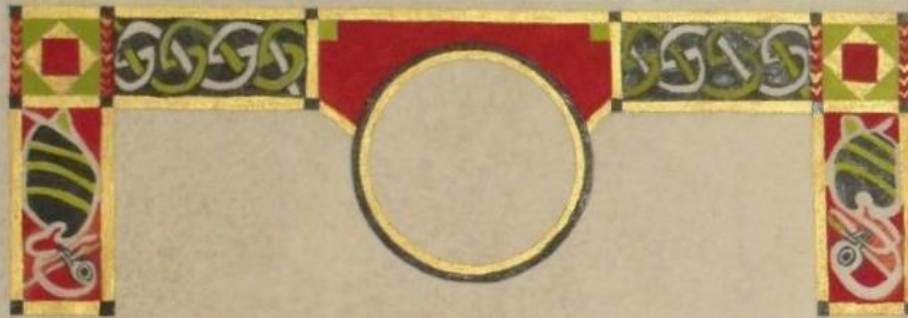
Pl. 6. Lindisfarne Gospels (BL, Cotton MS Nero Div), f. 10v, Canon Tables.

Source: Michelle P. Brown. *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality & the Scribe*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. Plate 6.



# Canon Table

- Intended to serve as a table of contents or page guide
  - Not always functional
- Arched format with pillars
- Two or more columns of text
  
- Useful format for SCA scrolls



quick the king's road  
unusing stores  
ice bound bondsman  
let the halls hear

dark as duty  
asked again  
to and gather  
mark this mane

life and lifeblood  
in halls hallowed  
ask but this boon  
marked grace greatly

althing answered  
rule and reign  
if bound bondsman  
in grace remain

let it be done this day. let none gainsay this right. quilliam, by his own hand  
twice made king, now is honoured with estates and duchy fitting his worth  
take from our hand this coronet, and know that through your service to  
the people of the north you have earned the title peer and all who see you  
shall know your grace and honour.  
sing out! let the halls ring! today is a good day!

done by our hand and seal this twenty-eighth day of april, anno societatis  
xvii at spring coronation in our kingdom of ealdornere.

edward the red II  
Rex

regina buchanan II  
Regina



# Lindisfarne Capitals



Source: Michelle P. Brown. *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality & the Scribe*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. Plate 11, excerpt.



# Lindisfarne Capitals

- Distinctive Pictish-Celtic-Germanic alphabet
- Tall, narrow angular letter form
  - Roughly 3:1 height-width ratio
- Embellishments may include:
  - Internal space filled with colour
  - Special handling of the terminals, e.g. animal heads, triskele shapes, knotwork
  - Red dotted outlines



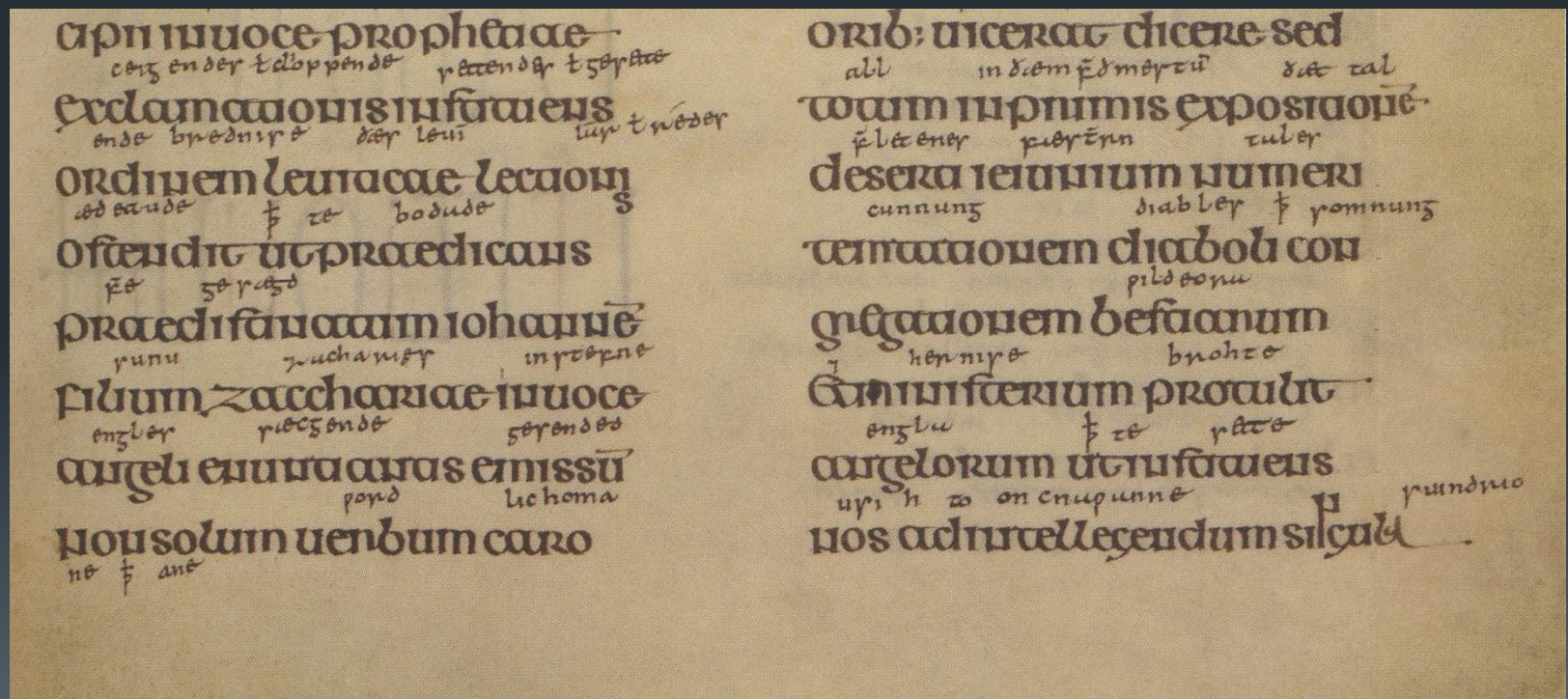
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SOCIETY OF THE







# Lindisfarne Half-Uncial



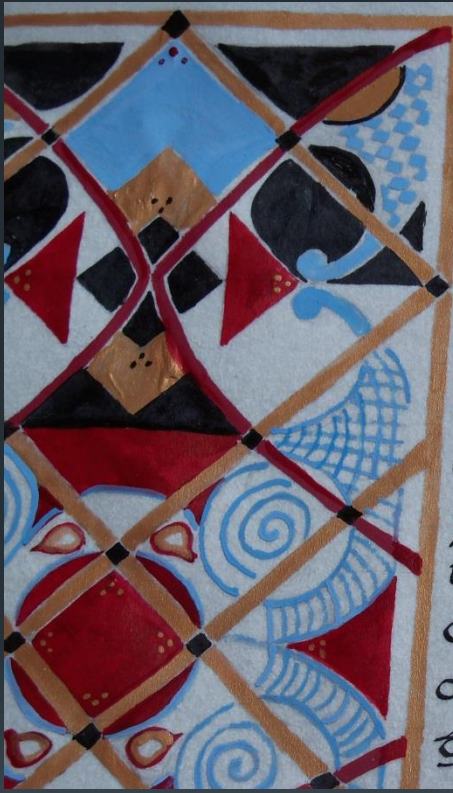
Source: Michelle P. Brown. *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality & the Scribe*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. Plate 13, excerpt.



# Lindisfarne Half-Uncial

- Straight, not slanted
- Fairly fast script to work with
- Most letters require only two strokes
- C-series nibs, especially C-4 or C-5 work well





THEREFORE DO WE WISH TO  
RECOGNIZE HIM WITH OUR  
AWARD OF THE ORION, AND  
GIVE HIM THE RIGHT TO WEAR  
THE BADGE OF THE AWARD.

DONE BY OUR HANDS AND  
SEAL THIS 25 TH DAY OF  
AUGUST, ANNO SOCIETATIS  
XLVII WHILE SITTING ON OUR  
THRONES IN OUR CANTON  
OF BRUNIAU TQUYNIOS  
AT MIDDLE AGES ON THE  
GREEN.

SPITE OF OPPRESSIVE COVETOUSNESS, MAY  
THEY, FALLING DOWN TO THE SINKING  
MASSES OF NOISOME DARKNESS, BE CURSED,  
INCO EVERLASTING FIRE, WHERE THEY MAY  
BE TORTURED IN A CRUEL PUNISHMENT  
BY DEMONS WITH HEATED IRON INSTRUMENTS  
OF TORTURE IF THEY DO NOT CHANGE THIS  
BEFORE THEIR DEATH WITH APPROPRIATE  
PENITENCE.

**B**

UT, SO THAT IT WILL NOT BE  
CERMINATED AS LONG AS EALDORMERE  
PREVAIS, WE HAVE ALSO RECORDED THESE  
THINGS IN WRITING. THIS AFOREMENTIONED  
LIBERTY WAS CREATED IN THE YEAR OF THE  
SOCIETY'S INCARNATION 48, ON THIS 26 TH  
DAY OF APRIL.



# Colour Palette

- Early insular manuscripts typically use a limited palette
  - Orange (red lead)
  - Yellow (ochre or orpiment, sometimes gold)
  - Green (verdigris)
  - Black (various recipes)
  - White (white lead, bone white or natural parchment)
- Richer manuscripts (including Lindisfarne and Kells) may include:
  - Blue
  - Folium (plant-based) pinks and violets



# Inks

- Rich black ink for letters
  - Lindisfarne's ferrous-oak gall recipe is still intensely black 1300 years later
- Weak oak gall or brown calligraphy ink for outlining
  - Less harsh/recedes well with reds, yellows and golds





# Gold

- Actual gold is initially rare in insular manuscripts
- Lindisfarne Gospels has only two initials done in chrysography (gold ink)
- Book of Durow uses orpiment to great effect as a gold substitute
- The Codex Aureus (mid-8<sup>th</sup> century, originally Canterbury), lavishly used gold (and silver) in major capitals and gold ink on dyed purple parchment

# Tools

- 11"x14" Pergamenata (or actual parchment, if available)
- Pencil/lead point, white eraser, compass and ruler
  - The Lindisfarne Gospels is considered to be the first evidence for the use of a lead point in illumination
  - Also has evidence of compass use (pricked shapes)
- C-4/C-5 nibs work well for half-uncial calligraphy
- 20/0 brushes for fine detail work



# Handling the large capital

- The large capital on an incipit page is generally an enlarged/elongated version of the regular Lindisfarne Capital
- Typically features a variety of fill designs in layers of outlining:
  - Gripping beasts
  - Intricate knotwork shapes (often in mirror-reflection)
  - Fractal-like triskeles
  - Cartouches (narrow rectangles) which may enclose any of the above





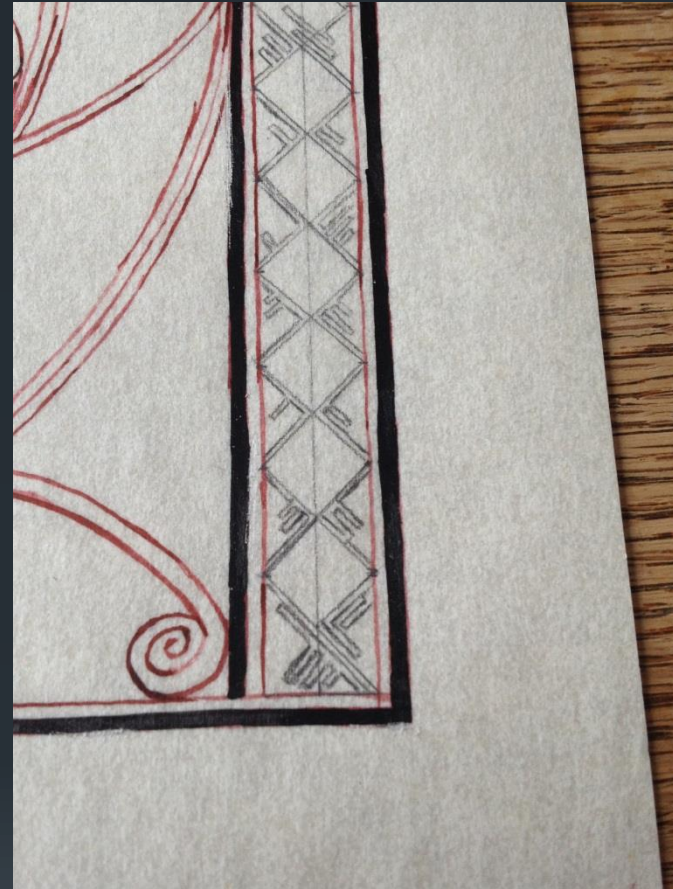
# Outlining

- Major initials, borders, and motifs may have up to seven layers of outlining:
  - A thin black line
  - a gold/yellow line
  - a thicker black line
  - a void or thin white line
  - a thin black line
  - a void or thin white line
  - two rows of red dots (said to be a Coptic inheritance)



# Border Fill/Motif Ideas

- Simple knotwork
- Greek key designs
- Garnet/gemstone and gold cloisonné
- Gripping beasts (zoomorphs)



Anglo-Saxon border fill and modern adaptation.

Excerpt from *The Hereford Gospels*, f.102.

From Leslie Webster and Janet Backhouse, ed. *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600-900*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

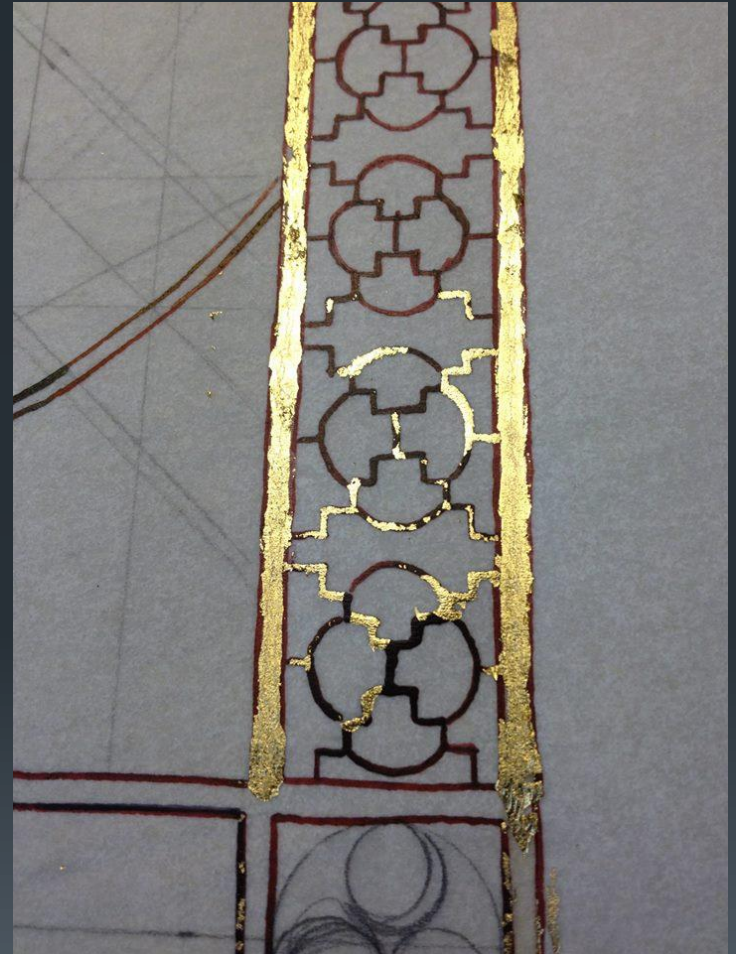


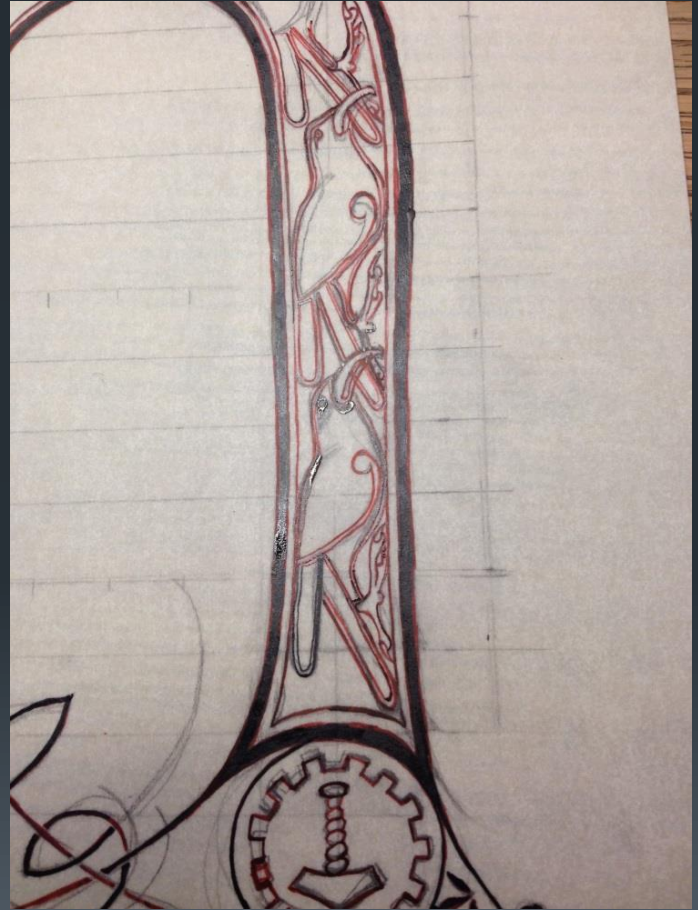


undersides.



The function of these garnet-inlaid gold strips is not known, but suggested uses include scabbard mounts, book-cover mounts and saddle fittings.







# Adapting a gripping beast

- Gripping beast shapes in metalwork, including crosses, jewellery, arms and armour are related to those found in contemporary illuminations
- Knotwork and gripping beasts follow a sine wave design with a kink





# Staffordshire Hoard Cross

- Similar to an animal interlace design found in The Book of Durrow
  - See:
    - [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/6f/Meister\\_des\\_Book\\_of\\_Durrow\\_002.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/6f/Meister_des_Book_of_Durrow_002.jpg)





IN THE  
 YEAR OF THE  
 SOCIETY INC  
 ARHATION  
 48  
 WITH THE FAVOR  
 OF

**DIVINE GRACE**

...of ealdormen and abbat...  
 ...the same divine right...  
 ...the last hours of our reign...  
 ...not been forgotten in the duties...  
 ...of governance and here we have...  
 ...committed this to you, so that...  
 ...our words and deeds should not...  
 ...be regarded when the people of this...  
 ...either through the lack of some...  
 ...of our successors or through some...  
 ...kind of error or dishonesty.

**W**ITH the agreement and  
 authorization of many nobles,  
 our beloved companions of the town,  
 we, King, with sincere heart, do  
 bestow upon mistress Aelfric a  
 grant of lands and do induce her  
 into our order of the town and  
 estate, which has the right to wear  
 the badge of the order, for she has  
 performed exemplary and long-  
 standing service to our kingdom as  
 officer, marshal, adviser, leader,  
 champion, although as one who provides  
 an example of courtesy and Christian  
 working of emulations on account of  
 such faithful service and loyalty we do  
 further grant this charter bestowing  
 on her for all time that place which is  
 called by justice the Redwood in order  
 that the aforementioned mistress  
 Aelfric should favorably possess  
 without interruption this royal gift  
 as long as ealdormen should remain  
 all that is recognized as belonging  
 to that same place by law, both in large  
 and in small matters, in fields, pastures,



Photo courtesy of Kyle Andrews. Used with permission.





# Further Reading

Andre Grabar and Carl Nordenfalk. *Early Medieval Painting: From the Fourth to the Eleventh Century*. Trans. Stuart Gilbert. Editions D'Art Albert Skira: 1957.

Janice Anderson. *Illuminated Manuscripts*. Singapore: Todtri Productions Limited, 1999.

Kevin Leahy and Roger Bland. *The Staffordshire Hoard*. London: The British Museum Press, 2009.

Leslie Webster and Janet Backhouse, ed. *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600-900*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

Michelle P. Brown. *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality & the Scribe*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

Thank You

