## 206. London, British Library, Cotton Nero D.iv "Codex Lindisfarnensis," "The Lindisfarne Gospels"

[Ker 165, Gneuss 343, Lowe 2.187]

[Note: This manuscript was not made available for photography or examination. The images are from a microfilm of the facsimile (Kendrick et al., 1956) provided by the British Library and the following description depends generally on the voluminous materials in Volume 2 (Kendrick et al., 1960) of the facsimile and other published sources as cited.]

HISTORY: The four Gospels in the Italo-Northumbrian recension of the Vulgate with the usual attendant materials and splendidly illuminated. Latin text is Wordsworth and White's "Y" (see also Glunz 1930: 94-102). References to St. Januarius in the liturgical readings preceding Matthew and John (f. 208v/24a) and to a dedication of a basilica to St. Stephen preceding Matthew relate to Naples, indicating a south Italian exemplar (Morin 1891). Written and illuminated at Lindisfarne, probably by the hand of Eadfrith, bishop of Lindisfarne (698-721), after March 687 (death of Cuthbert) and probably before Eadfrith's consecration as bishop in 698. Original binding of quires in leather (now lost) attributed to Bishop Ethelwald of Lindisfarne (721-740) with jeweled ornaments for the covers provided by Billfrith the anchorite (fl. 3rd quarter of 8c). A Northumbrian OE continuous gloss was added in the second half of the 10c by a scribe, Aldred; according to Elliott and Ross (1968), the gloss on John may go back in part to the translation made by Bede. The basis of the information about the physical book is a colophon added on f. 259r in Aldred's own hand:

Eadfrið biscop lindisfearnensis æcclesiæ | he ðis boc avrát æt frvma gode 7 s(an)c(t)e | cvðberhte 7 allvm ðæm halgum `gimænelice´ ða ðe | in eolonde sint. 7 eðilvald lindisfearneolondinga `bisc(op)´ | hit vta giðryde 7 gibélde sva he vel cuðe. | 7 billfrið se oncre he gismioðade ða | gihríno ða ðe vtan ón sint 7 hit gi |hrínade mið golde 7 mið gimmvm éc | mið sv`o'lfre of(er)gylded faconleas feh:- | 7 aldred p(res)b(yte)r indignus 7 misserrim(us) | mid godes fvltv(m)mę 7 s(an)c(t)i cvðberhtes | hit of(er)glóesade ón englisc ....

This information is confirmed by Symeon of Durham (early 12c), who, however, may simply be following the colophon or Durham tradition, though he says Ethelwald commissioned the binding rather than making it with his own hand (Symeon 2.12, ed. Arnold 1882/1965: 65-68). The colophon is generally regarded as substantially correct and authoritative: in 970 Aldred was the provost of the house in charge of Cuthbert's relics and his entry was probably an official act, as was his glossing; he says he glossed Luke "for the community with eight ores of silver for his own induction" (as priest), so probably the work was undertaken before he rose to provost. Stylistic similarities and historical associations between the book and the other cultic objects (coffin, altar cover) belonging with the relics of St. Cuthbert suggest they were produced in the same Lindisfarne workshop to serve the cult, hence between the death of Cuthbert (687) and the ordination of Eadfrith as Bishop (698). The examination of the manuscript for the 1956 facsimile established that the main texts and the illuminations are by the same hand. Both Eadfrith and Ethelwald were contemporary witnesses of Cuthbert's life and both the anonymous prose Life of Cuthbert and Bede's Life are addressed to Eadfrith. Aldred's hand has been detected also in glosses added to Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodl. 19 (Bede's Commentary on Proverbs) and in four collects dateable to 970 added to Durham, Cathedral Library A. IV. 19 (the Durham Ritual [119]), in which he is named as provost of Chester-le-Street. The Lindisfarne Gospels were at Chester-le-Street from 883 to 995.

In 875 the monks of Lindisfarne, led by Bishop Eardulf, evacuated the island because of Viking raids, taking the relics of Cuthbert as well as the bones of Eadfrith, Ethelwald and other saints and the gospels on a seven-year's wandering which, according to Symeon of Durham, included a legendary rescue of the book from the sea. The community of St. Cuthbert settled at Chester-le-Street, where the relics and the book remained until 995, when Viking raids forced a brief sojourn at Ripon, followed by the permanent establishment at Durham in the same year. From that time until the Reformation, the Lindisfarne Gospels probably remained at Durham, except for a known brief period in 1069–1070, when Ethelwine, the last Anglo-Saxon bishop of Durham, retreated to Lindisfarne with the relics of Cuthbert and this manuscript. Whatever

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the vicissitudes, between 698 and 1104 the book remained with the relics of St. Cuthbert. The whereabouts of the book in the Middle Ages up to the Dissolution are obscure. It may be one of the Gospels mentioned in an inventory of Cuthbert relics drawn up in 1383 by Richard de Segbruck (Durham, Cathedral Library B. II. 35) or it may be the Gospel book mentioned as being in 1367 at the Lindesfarne Priory reestablished as a Durham dependency (as part of the cult objects reintroduced at the site of the first tomb of Cuthbert). Neither reference is clearly to this book.

In 1539 Durham Cathedral Priory was dissolved, and about this time the book lost its jeweled gold cover. A 16c inscription on f. 211r, now completely effaced, but still partly visible in the 19c, read "Thomas Turner semel." The person is unidentified. The same hand has scribbled on f. 9r/14-15b. In 1567 Nowell used Lindisfarnensis for his "Vocabularium Saxonicum" (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Selden supra 63). Nowell added chapter numbers on ff. 34v, 121r-129v, 143r-200r. An unidentified hand added chapter numbers (ff. 213v-257v) as well as a few corrections to the text and gloss; this is the same hand that transcribed the OE gloss on John and the Prefaces, also the OE colophon, onto pages facing a Wycliffite version of John into London, British Library, Royal 1 B. ix (late 16c? a manuscript owned by John Theyer). During the mid 16c Lindisfarnensis was probably owned by William Bowyer, Keeper of the Records in the Tower (before 1576). It was certainly owned by his son Robert, who suceeded him as Keeper and was later Clerk of the Parliaments (1601-1621). The signature "Rob. Bowyer" is visible in UV light in the upper margin of f. 2v. Cotton acquired the manuscript from Robert Bowyer sometime between 1609 and 1612/14 (London, British Library, Harley 6018, no. 323). First printed notice was by William Camden in Remaines of a Greater Worke Concerning Britane (1605).

The Lindisfarne Gospels survived the Cottonian fire of 1731 without damage and went to the British Museum in 1753. In 1852–1853 the book was elaborately rebound in red velvet over oak boards with silver gilt ornamentation and gems using motifs taken from the illuminations. The work was paid for by Edward Maltby, bishop of Durham and carried out by Smith, Nicholson, and Co., silversmiths (color photograph in Backhouse, 1981: 89).

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: Foliation, ii + 258, foliated in pencil (in 1884) 2–259, the foliation followed here (the older Cottonian

foliation, in ink, 1–258, is more conspicuous in the photos; it also numbers every 10th verso at top left, starting on 2v; on f. 259v "Cons. fol 258"). Two unoriginal leaves before f. 1, the first a medieval flyleaf, blank except for "323" on the recto, the number the manuscript bore in the oldest Cottonian handlist, followed by a single inserted leaf, probably Cottonian, and counted as "1" in the Cotton foliation. Fine soft, supple, thick, and suede-like vellum of calf-skin; hard to tell hair sides from flesh, but close examination of quire IX showed FHFH while gathering XIX is FHFF (Kendrick 1960: 61). The manuscript appears to be intact, retaining its original structure, except that the last quire, XXXIII, is slightly damaged by damp (see collation). Other negligible damage on illuminated pages from handling over the centuries and superficial waterstaining on many pages. Mark of a cord on f. 117v; a rusty mark on opening 198/199 apparently from a pair of scissors laid there; green stains near fold of f. 2v may be from bronze rivets in original cover.

4

Page size about 340 x 240 mm. (trimmed); writing space about 235/ 245 x 185 mm. Text-pages ruled for two columns, each about 80 mm. wide; text-pages pricked (variously with a knife or stylus) after folding; each text-leaf ruled with a double-pointed instrument (Backhouse 1981: 28) on verso for 24 or 25 lines, with some rectos lightly reruled; extra vertical rulings on ff. 34r/1-24a, 34v/1-8a, 147v/7a-148r/9b; ff. 9v, 18r, 25r, 209r pricked but not ruled; f. 28v ruled vertically only. The design of the canon table pages (ff. 10-17, all in quire II) depends on a single hole at the center of a compass-circle that describes the main arch over the tables; this hole, punched through the quire from f. 10 (and visible on ff. 12rv, 13rv), is at the level of the tops of the capitals. Figures in the columns are divided into five blocks by two vertical lines of eight holes in right and left margins, the topmost being level with the bottom of the capitals and the lowest with the tops of the bases. These holes from f. 10r are reinforced by fresh prickings on f. 15r. Other prickings and rulings are added for the lines of writing on the various tables. The canon tables are pricked, ruled, and decorated by the main hand and the texts are written by the "rubricator."

Main text in single splendid Insular majuscule (or Insular half-uncial) hand with a tendency to minuscule (exaggerated ascenders and descenders) although the bodies of the letters are meticulously kept within the double rulings provided for each line of writing (on the nature of the hand and its influence and relationships, see Brown 1989). Very dark ink, applied with a thick nib, with pen kept parallel to the vertical rul-

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ings. Text written *per cola et commata*. In-text capitals of the lowest order are touched with color; capitals of higher orders are elaborately decorated and colored (see below). Rubrics (in Insular majuscule) are written by another, less elegant, hand, which also added some corrections. A third contemporary hand (also found in Durham, Cathedral Library A. II. 17, the Durham Gospels [118]) has added some few small corrections. Aldred's added continuous interlinear OE gloss, extending sometimes to the margins, has no guiding lines and is relatively small, somewhat disorderly and cursive in appearance, but consistently legible. Aldred has also written numerous marginal commentaries (ed. Boyd; see also Ker 1943).

5

Elaborate decoration in Hiberno-Saxon style of unsurpassed intricacy, minuteness, variety, and restraint (Henderson 1987: 109), including 15 pages devoted almost entirely to decoration (four evangelist portraits, five carpet pages [decorated cross-image], six decorated initial pages); 16 pages of decorated Eusebian canon tables (making up quire II); and elaborate smaller decorated initials throughout at major textual divisions. Unusually wide, subtle, and well-preserved palette, carried in egg-white and/or fish-glue mediums, including red and white lead, verdigris, yellow ochre, yellow arsenic sulphide, kermes (red), gall, indigo or woad (blue). Design elements of bars, channels, and pillars filled with intricately fine interlace motifs, many including life-like bird and animal motifs, as well as such Celtic and Germanic motifs as the pelta, trumpet, spiral, step, fret, key, and knot patterns. Most initials are further decorated with tiny dots of red lead arranged in elaborate patterns; it is estimated that the Luke initial (f. 139r) has 10,000 such dots. The evangelist portraits and their symbols are from Italian prototypes, the Matthew portrait probably modelled on the Ezra portrait in the Codex Amiatinus (Henderson 1987: 119-122). The blank sides of many decorated pages show elaborate preparation according to geometrical principles using compass, templates, and free-hand drawing (see Guilmain 1987 for a reconstruction of the designer's procedures and Stevick 1983 for an analysis of the mathematics underlying f. 138v; also, more generally, Stevick 1994). Bruce-Mitford (in Kendrick et al. 1960: 1.7-8) argued persuasively that the decorations were designed and executed by the same hand that wrote the main text (Aldred); on f. 205v, under each of the two large rubrics, erased preparatory outlines for a large decorated intial "M" and following text were visible in UV light (lower-right-hand bow of second erased "M" partially visible on film); the erased elements and their smaller decorated replacements and following text were done by the same hand in

the same campaign to make room for the rubrics. Guilmain (1987: 51) sees evidence of several hands, perhaps indicating a "well-organized workshop." (See Backhouse, passim, for color reproductions of most of the decorated pages.)

COLLATION: I<sup>7</sup> f. 7 a half-sheet, tag of cut-out sheet 2 projecting before f. 3 (ff. 2–8), II<sup>9</sup> f. 9 a half-sheet, may have originally belonged with I (ff. 9–17), III<sup>7</sup> f. 18 a half-sheet (ff. 18–24), IV<sup>9</sup> f. 26 a halfsheet (ff. 25–33), V–XI<sup>8</sup> (ff. 34–89), XII<sup>5</sup> f. 90 a half-sheet (ff. 90–94), XIII<sup>8</sup> (ff. 95–102), XIV<sup>8</sup> (ff. 103–110), XV–XVII<sup>8</sup> (ff. 111–134), XVIII<sup>9</sup> f. 138 a half-sheet (ff. 135–143), XIX–XXVI<sup>8</sup> (ff. 144–207), XXVII<sup>9</sup> f. 210 a half-sheet (ff. 208–216), XXVIII–XXXII<sup>8</sup> (ff. 217– 256), XXXIII<sup>3</sup> bifolia damaged along fold: after repair, f. 259 is the singleton (ff. 257–259).

[Note: the "first hand" (Ealdfrith) has written ".u." on bottom right of last page of XVII (f. 134v) and ".ui." on bottom left of f. 135r, the first page of XVIII; this implies a count back to the quire beginning Mark (f. 95r, first leaf of XIII).]

CONTENTS: (entire contents, Latin and OE, ed. Skeat 1871-1887)

- f. 1r Cottonian table of contents (ff. 1v-2r blank).
- f. 2v Carpet page.
- ff. 3r-5v/3b Epistle of Saint Jerome to Damasus: incipit prologus x canonum | 'NOUUM | OPUS FA |CERE ME COGIS EX | UE-TERI UT POST | EXEMPLARIA SCRIP | turarum' [gloss:] 'onginneð forerím | (above) (ve>l tal (ve>l saga | (on line) tenu ðara canona | (above) (ve>l reg`o lra | Niwe | werc ge |wyrce mech neddes of | álde ðæt æfter | bissena writta'.
- 2. ff. 5v/4b-8r/15a Prologue to the Four Gospels: inci(pit) præfatio eius|dem | 'PLURES | fuisse qui euan|gelia scribserunt' [gloss:] 'monige | werun da de godspel|las awritton'.
- 3. ff. 8r/16a-9r Epistle of Eusebius to Carpianus: INCIPIT PRAEFA-|TIO EUSEBII: || 'EUSEbi|us | carpiano | fratri in d(omi)no salutem' [gloss:] 'ongi[n]nes foresægdnise | eusebies || eusebius | ðe carpian|isca | ðæ(m) broðer in drihten hælo' [f. 9v blank].
- 4. ff. 10r-17v Eusebian canon tables [f. 18r blank].
- 5. ff. 18v-19r/25a Preface to Matthew: incipit argumentum matthei

'MAT | theus | in iudaea | sicut in ordine primus' [gloss:] 'onginnes sc(ea)rpsmeung matheis | swelc in endebrednise f(or)ðmest (ve)l ærest'.

- 6. ff. 19r/1b-23v Numbered table of chapters to Matthew: incip(iunt) capitula lectio(num) sec(undum) mattheum | 'GENERA|TIO-NUM | quadraginta duaru(m)' [gloss:] 'onginneð f(ore)wueard (ve)l heafudwueard ðara reda | æft(er) matheus | cne |ure |ruu | (ve)l cyn |nres |uu:- | 7 feortig tuu'.
- 7. f. 24r-24v Table of feast days for lessons from Matthew: 'Pridu natale d(omi)ni' [gloss:] 'ærist accenisse drihtnes' (ed. Morin 1891: 485-88) [f. 25r blank].
- f. 25v Matthew portrait [f. 26r blank].
- f. 26v Carpet page.
- 8. ff. 27r-89v/7a Gospel of Matthew: illuminated title page (at top of page) [Chi-Rho monogram] ie(su)s chr(istu)s . Matheus homo | (*in text*) incipit euangelii | gene[a]logia mathei | LIBER | GEN-ERATI|ONIS IE(S)U | CHR(IST)I FILII DAVID ΦLII ABRA| HAM [gloss:] 'onginneð godspelles | (*in right margin*) cynn |recce| nisse | (*in decorative capital*) bóc | (*in right margin*) cneu |rise | hælen|des | cristes | dauides | sunu | abraham|es sunu'. On f. 29r another illuminated page and incipit: incipit euangelium secundun mattheu(m) | CHR(IST)I | AUTEM GENE|RATIO SIC ERAT CVM | ESSET DESPONSATA | MATER EIUS MARIA IOSEPH [gloss:] 'onginneð godspell æft(er) matheus | christes | soðlice | cynnreccenise (ve)l cneuresu(m) suæ (ve)l ðus wæs mið ðy | wæs biwoedded (ve)l beboden (ve)l befeastnað (ve)l betaht | moder his' (f. 89v, lower right margin, OE prayer for the makers of the book [see Kendrick et al. 1960: 2.10]).
- 9. f. 89v/8b-90v/10b Preface to Mark: INCIPIUNT | CAPITULAE | SECUNDUM | MARCUM || incipit argumentum . | 'MAR | CUS | euan |gelista d(e)i & petri in bap |tismate' [gloss, f. 89v:] 'onginneð | heafudweardo (*in right margin*) | (ve)l f(or)e |cuido | (ve)l f(or)e |mercunge | æfter | marcvs || onginneð | (*beside initial*) ma |rc |us | (*in text*) ðe godspel |lere godes 7 petres in fulwiht'.
- 10. ff. 90v/14b-93r/14b Numbered table of chapters to Mark: INCIPI-UNT | CAPITULA | LECTIONUM || 'ESAI|AE | testimo|nium iohannis angelus' [gloss:] 'onginneð | f(or)ecuido | ðara reda || cyðnise | engel'.

- f. 93r/15b-21b Table of feast days for lessons from Mark: 'Sabbato s(an)c(t)o mane | post penticosten' [gloss:] 'de set(er)nes dæg halig arlig aft(er) fifteig dæg' (ed. Morin 1891: 488).
- f. 93v Mark portrait [f. 94r blank].
- f. 94v Carpet page.
- 12. ff. 95r-130r/19a Gospel of Mark: incipit euangelium secundum marcum (above and within frame Mar|cus leo) 'INITIUM | EUAN|GELII IE(S)U | CHR(IST)I FILI D(E)I SICUT | SCRIBTUM EST | IN ESAIA PROPHETA' [gloss:] 'onginneð godspel(e)l æft(er) marc(um) | fruma | (in right margin) godspelles | hælendes | (in text) crist sunu godes suæ | awritten is | in esaia ðone witgo'.
- 13. f. 130r/1b-130v Table of feast days for lessons from Luke: 'SEcundum lucan | ieiunium s(an)c(t)i iohannis | baptistae' [unglossed except for first line:] 'æft(er) luc(am)' [with OE marginal commentary] (Latin ed. Morin 1891: 488-90).
- 14. f. 131r-131v/4b Preface to Luke: 'LUCAS SYRUS | anthio|censiae | arte medicus discipulus' [gloss:] 'lucas de syrisca | dæræ burge | (ve)l dære ceastra fostring | mid cræfte léce discipul (ve)l larcnieht | (ve)l fostring'.
- 15. ff. 131v/5b–137r Numbered table of chapters to Luke: INCIPIUNT | CAPITULA 'PRAEFATIONE | lucas theofilo | euangelium indicat' [gloss:] 'onginnað | ða mercunga | mið forasaga | luc(as) ðeofi | godspell sægeð (ve)l becneð' [f. 136v/1–3a decorated paschal lesson: quod prope pascha | legendum est | 'IUDAS PACISCITUR | pretium parant' [gloss:] þ(æt)te neh eostro | is to redenne | iuðas sipbode | mearde geruað'; f. 137r Ox-symbol of Luke retraced from evangelist portrait on verso].
- f. 137v Luke portrait [f. 138r blank].
- f. 138v Carpet page.
- 16. ff. 139r-203 Gospel of Luke: incipit euangelium secundum lucam (above, + Lucas uitulus,) 'QUO |NIAM | QUIDEM | MULTI CONA |TI SUNT ORDINA |RE NARRATIONEM' [gloss:] 'onginneð godspell æft(er> lucas | forðon | aec soð | monigo cunnendo | woeron þ(æt)te hia ge |endebrednadon ðæt gesaga'; f. 140r/14a decorated chapter opening: 'FUIT IN DIEBUS | herodis regis' [gloss:] 'wæs in dagum | heroðes cyninges'.
- 17. ff. 203v-204r/15a Preface to John: incipit argumentum secundum iohannem 'IOHANNES | euangelista unus | ex discipulis d(e)i qui |

uirgo electus a d(e)o est' [gloss:] 'onginneð insiht (ve)l ætea`u´vnis æft(er) ioh(hannem) | ðe godspellere án | of ðegnvm godes se ðe | hehstald gecoren fro(m) gode is'.

- 18. ff. 204r/16a-208r/2b Numbered table of chapters to John: INCIPI-UNT | CAPITULA | SECUNDUM | IOHANNEM | 'IN PRIN|cipio uerb(um) d(eu)s apud | d(eu)m per quem | facta sunt omnia' [gloss:] 'onginnas | forueard mercyngu | æft(er) | iohan(nem) || infrvma (ve)l | inf(or)ma uord (ve)l crist uæs | god mið | gode ðerh ðone ilca | geworht weron alle' (with divisions, LEGENDA | PRO DEFUNCTIS [f. 205v/1a], LEGENDA IN QUA|DRAGE-SIMA [f. 205v/9b]; decorated heading at f. 208r/10 quae lectio cum in natale | s(an)c(t)i petri legitur | á loco incoatur | quo ait 'DICit simoni | petro', this lesson unglossed).
- f. 208r/3b-208v Table of feast days for lessons from John: 'IN S(an)c(t)i iohannis | apostoli & | euangelista' [unglossed] (ed. Morin 1891: 490-93) [f. 209r blank].
- f. 209v John portrait [f. 210r blank].
- f. 210v Carpet page.
- 20. ff. 211r-259r/6b Gospel of John: incipit euangelium secundum iohan(nem) (above, + Iohannis aquila, [gloss:] 'earn') 'IN PRIN|-CIPIO | ERAT UERBUM | & UERBUM ERAT | APUD D(EU)M & D(EU)S' [gloss:] 'onginneð godspel æft(er) iohan(nen) | in frvma | væs uord | 7 uord þ(æt) is godes svnv væs | mið god feder' [f. 259v, right margin opposite explicit, two Latin hexameters].
- 21. f. 259r/7-12b "Five Sentences on the Gospels" (added and glossed by Aldred): '+ Trinus & unvs d(eu)s evangelivm hoc ante | (*lines moving up*) sæcvla con|stitvit' [gloss:] 'ðe ðrifalde 7 ðe anfalde god ðis gods|pell | ær | vorvlda | gisette' (see Kendrick et al., 1960: 2.5).
- 22. f. 259r/13-35b Colophon by Aldred: '+ Eadfrið biscop lindisfearnensis æcclesiæ' (see "History" above for text; ed. Harmer 1914: 36 [no. 22], also 123-25; see Kendrick et al., 1960: 2.5-10) [f. 259v blank except for note in hand of earlier foliation, "Cons. fol. 258"].

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