

468. Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket A. 135
Gospel Book ("Codex Aureus Holmiensis")
[Ker 385; Gneuss 937; Lowe, *CLA* 11.1642]

HISTORY: An extra-large-format, deluxe gospel book of alternating natural and purple-dyed pages in multicolored uncial letters consisting of an eclectic mix of antique-style illustrations, insular decoration, uncial script, Vulgate prefaces, Hieronymian canon tables, and a melange of Old Latin texts differing in tradition for the four gospels (cf. Marsden in Gameson 1999: 294, 309 n. 46). The miscellaneous elements, implying a plurality of models, as well as the elaborate production of the book, argue for a place of origin that had first-rate library and scriptorial facilities, not to mention ample economic resources. The Old Latin text(s) of the gospels have affinities to several early Italian gospels on purple, to two 8c gospels from Echternach, to the 8c English "Barberini Gospels," and to a late 12c French New Testament (Gameson in Gameson 1999: 339–40; but cf. Marsden in Gameson 2012: 414). The script, as well as symptoms of the decoration, align it with certain late 7c to mid 8c charters produced or owned in East Kent and other circumstances suggest the middle decades of the 8c (Gameson 2001/02: 17). Kuhn (1948: 591–8) supposed it a royal Mercian production, and Nordenfalk (1977: 96) suggested it was made for King Aethelbald of Mercia, a known benefactor of Christ Church, but Gameson disallows a royal patron, as the house of Kent was in disarray in the mid-8c and there is no evidence of there ever having been any Mercian provenance for this book. Gameson (2002/03: 1.74) thinks that an ecclesiastical occasion or patron is more likely and speculates that it may have been produced in conjunction with the reforms of Archbishop Cuthbert (740–761), for the glorification and use of the house that produced it, also perhaps spurred in some obscure way by the recent revival of the archbishopric of York. But if so, it is odd that there is no dedication or colophon declaring such a pious purpose. The three possible houses possessing the necessary resources at this time to produce so sumptuous a book were the two major monasteries in Canterbury, Christ Church and St. Augustine's (Sts. Peter and Paul), and

the perhaps double monastery at Minster-in-Thanel. Only circumstantial evidence exists for any of these: for the last, for example, that St. Boniface wrote to his frequent correspondent Abbess Eadburgh about 735, asking to have written for him a copy of the epistles of Peter in gold letters and that, being on the coast, this house was most exposed to viking attacks (see below); for St. Augustine's that it undoubtedly possessed the 6c Italian "Gospels of St. Augustine," (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 286 [47]) which likely provided a model for the Evangelist portraits and uncial script (but not for the text), and possessed also the "Vespasian Psalter" (B.L. Cotton Vespasian A.1 [238]), closely related in script and decoration to "Codex Aureus," at least from the 15c and perhaps earlier (a 10c charter in St. Augustine's favor was inscribed in it, Kelly 1995: no. 24); for Christ Church, that in the mid-8c it possessed a copy of the "Carmen figurata" of Porphyrius of Constantinople (fl. 325), the purported model for the system of colored letter-patterns used throughout the book (cf. Nordenfalk 1951: 153–55), also, that Eadwine Basan, an 11c Christ Church, scribe wrote an inscription in "Vespasian," hence that that psalter might have been in Christ Church's possession by then and before, and, finally, the fact that "Codex Aureus" was given to Christ Church after it was recovered from the vikings might argue that it was known in the mid-9c to have belonged there. In any case, the two Canterbury houses, though rivals, were in such close physical and cultural proximity, that any book or model available to the one was doubtless available to the other.

On f. 11r, the Chi-Rho page, has been entered a lengthy and elegantly written OE inscription declaring that Ealdorman Ælfred and his wife Werburg have with "clean money, pure gold" recovered ('begetan') these "books" (presumably referring to the four gospels) 'æt hæðnum herge' and 'willað heo gesellan' to Christ Church in perpetuity for the good of their souls. The hand has been identified with three charters of Christ Church interest of the 820s and 830s (Brooks 1984: 360, n. 70, cf. 167–74). Ælfred was ealdorman of Surrey not before 853 and had documented connections with Kent; his extant will is dateable 871 × 889 (ed. Sweet/Hoad 1978: 216–18; Surrey dialect, Campbell 1957: §14). The OE "Aureus" inscription, both because of its script and considering the career span of a scribe, must be dated no later than in the 850s. Viking raids on Kent are recorded for 851, 853, and 855, and it may have been immediately after one of these raids that Ælfred was commissioned to negotiate for the ransom of the recently looted book. Gameson (2001–02: 76–7) points this out, as well as that the excellent condition of the book argues that it was not in the possession of the pirates for long. A somewhat later (probably early 10c) semi-cursive in-

scription is at the top of f. 1r: ‘+ orate p(ro) ceolheard p inclas 7 ealhhun 7 wulfhelm aurifex’. The word ‘aurifex’, “goldsmith,” suggests to Gameson that ‘inclas’ may be resolved as “inclusor,” “jeweler,” rather than “inclausus,” “hermit,” suggesting that this writing was added at the time that a splendid new cover was provided (perhaps to make up for one stripped off by the vikings). A-S staffless neumes were added in the second half of the 10c above ‘Hierusalem hierusa|le(m)’ (f. 49vb/18–19 = Matt. 23:37). There are no other medieval intrusions. Large water-stains in the John part (ff. 150–191), which occurred before the foliation (see below), and a few water-spots on ff. 1–4 are the only noticeable damage, besides some rubbing and cockling caused by an over-tight early modern binding.

Presumably the codex was still at Christ Church at the time of the Reformation. In the 16c it was foliated in red crayon in the manner typical of the books of Archbishop Matthew Parker (1559–75). Before the foliation several leaves had already been lost, including the portraits of Mark and Luke; no folios have gone missing since (unless some unnumbered fragments). Nothing further is known for sure until 1690, when the manuscript was on 8 January 1690 sold to Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeldt (1655–1727), as a note on f. 3r records: ‘Preciosissimum hunc Euangelium Codicem | emi ex famosa illa Bibliotheca Jll^{mi} Marchionis | de LICHE mantua(e) Carpent: Å 1690 – d. 8 jan: | Ego Joannes Gabriel Sparwenfeldt nob: Suecus’. It was a distress sale by Catalina, daughter of Gaspar de Haro, Seventh Marquis de Heliche (d. 1687) (see Breeze 1996). Beyond that the history is increasingly speculative: probably Gaspar had inherited the books of his father Luis de Haro (1598–1661), Sixth Marquis de Heliche; and some of these *might* have passed to him from the famous library of his uncle, Gaspar de Guzmán, Conde-Duque de Olivares (1587–1645). At any rate, Sparwenfeldt was in Spain on a bookbuying expedition as an agent of King Charles XI of Sweden, but bought this one for his own collection, which he donated to the Royal Library in 1707 (Fries 2006: 1).

[**Note:** Olivares’ ownership, often cited, is speculative. According to Ker (*Cat.* 456), an earlier Spanish owner may have been the historian and bibliophile Jerónimo Zurita (1512–80) who donated most of his library to the Carthusian house of Aula Dei near Zaragoza in 1571; in 1626 Olivares took possession of Zurita’s library against the objections of the house, and perhaps then acquired the “Codex Aureus,” though this manuscript is not mentioned in Olivares’ library catalogue of 1627 (a weakness of this theory is that the “Parkerian” foliation must have been added sometime in the 1570s, making for a very tight time-frame for the manuscript to have reached Spain); even more speculative is the idea that the book may have come to Spain with English Catholic refugees in the 16c (see Breeze 1996: 397). Gameson

(2001–02: 78) supposes the codex left Christ Church before ca. 1630, because about then the chapter became more interested in preserving and enhancing its library and he points (98) to alleged copies of the Chi-Rho page made about 1600 in BL Arundel 504 (ff. 27r/28r/29r.)]

The manuscript was probably rebound in Spain in the 17c – at least the old binding removed in 1962 is thought to have been Spanish (cf. Fries 2006: 1, Blaschke 2007: 7–8; its tooled leather cover is seen on the fiche; and the remains of the covers are included at the end of the online digital images; see below). An 18c header on f. 13r, ‘Matth 3.’ Old 18c shelfmarks on f. 1r (bottom): ‘no | 5-2.’ and ‘n° 4. VL.’ Its present shelfmark, “A.135,” dates from about 1900 × 1905 when the ecclesiastical manuscripts were reclassified.

The codex has undergone considerable change in the past 50 years and has probably not settled down even yet. It was released from its over-tight 17c binding in 1962 by Kuniglga Bibliotheket conservator Sven Wikander; an attempt to rebind the manuscript was made about then, but abandoned (see below); at the time of Gameson’s inspections in the 1990s, it remained in a disbound condition, kept in a box wrapped in a green mole-skin cloth. It was microfilmed before the disbinding (the fiche are from this pre-1962 film) and was photographed in color for the EEMF facsimile in 1990. Ff. 9 and 11 were exhibited in Aachen in 1965, in Stockholm (Kuniglga Bibliotheket) in 1971, on a tour of England in 1981–82, at the British Library in 1992, in Frankfurt a. M. in 1994, and (with ff. 115, 116) in Washington D. C. in 2006. In 2007 the manuscript was conserved and experimentally rebound by Kristina Blaschke (Blaschke 2007; see below for details). It was released from this arrangement in 2013; the folios presently are kept in customized, individual folders in boxes; the new digitized images are from about March 2014 (p.c. Christina Svensson, 22 Dec. 2016). This full digital facsimile is now available at “The World Digital Library” (Library of Congress): <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/17185/>.

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION:

[Note: This description is based on a first-hand examination of the manuscript but also relies heavily on the conclusions and judgements of Gameson 2001–02, which the user should consult, not only for its detailed arguments and data but also for the color reproduction of the entire manuscript; but see now the digital facsimile at <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/17185/> (which appeared after this description was substantially completed); see also, in summary, Gameson in Gameson 1999: 336–46. The extensive description by Gameson and the photos in his facsimile edition (2001–02) are of the manuscript in its post-1962, disbound state. In 2007 it was conserved and rebound by Kristina Blaschke (see Blaschke 2007 and the note at the end of this section), the individual folios being sewn to guards without regard

to original quire-structure; as a result, though it was again disbound in 2013, many of Gameson's observations concerning the sewing holes, inner edges, etc., are no longer confirmable. The following takes account of information made available by Blaschke and by a direct examination of the manuscript in April 2010. The describer wishes to thank Christina Svensson of Kungliga Biblioteket staff for considerable advice and support during the examination of this item.]

Foll. [i] + 194, foliated in red crayon (16c) [i] 1–62 [62b] 63–148 [148B] 149 [149B] 150–191, the [unfoliated] leaves being the original front flyleaf plus cut-down remains of leaves. Jumbo-size pages are 380/95 × 310/20 mm., forming a near-square rather than rectangular shape, which is thought to betoken the influence of a large-format late-antique deluxe book (see Gameson in Gameson 2012: 28; Netzer in *ibid.*: 239). The pages are somewhat trimmed-down (as shown by trimming of the OE inscription on f. 11r) from something like an original 400 × 325 mm. The bifolia (most of which are now split) were thus about 650 mm. wide, which was about the maximum regular length which could be obtained from a single calf's skin. Apart from the loss of leaves mentioned and the splitting of most of the bifolia with consequent degeneration of the inside edges, the entire manuscript remains in reasonably good condition, with minor damage resulting from cockling caused by the overtight old binding; this led to unmatching "waves" on facing leaves, the rising portions of which rubbed and abraded on their opposite numbers, partially effacing text and decoration in these areas (see e.g., ff. 7r, 116v, illustrated Blaschke 2007: 12). There is also considerable fading on most of the purple leaves, especially towards the edges, where light could penetrate in the time of the old binding, which was so tight at the spine that the book could not be completely closed at the foreedge. Water damage is evident, especially on the natural leaves from f. 182 on.

The physical features of this manuscript are very unusual because of the plan to present on each opening the contrast of a "natural" page with its opposite purple-dyed page. Three general points are important. First, this plan entailed alternating natural bifolia with purple ones within a quire. But in order to maintain the contrast on every opening, the number of leaves in a quire had to be uneven, that is, an extra, contrasting singleton had to be introduced into the center of each quire. The gospel text quires are always arranged with an extra center singleton, usually in quires of 7, once of 9 (quire XVII), once of 5 (quire XIII); this system fails in the last quire, XXVI, which is of 6, with a natural bifolium in the center opening. Prefatory matter, on natural vellum, is arranged in other, various configurations of singletons and bifolia (see "Collation"). Singletons are prone to be lost in

the center and at the ends of quires and such positions for them are normally avoided. Gameson thought that the method of securement had been to sew the central singleton into the normal central holes of the quire allowing only a tiny stub (often invisible, even as when detached), and then to secure this arrangement by sewing it directly to leaves of the quire; sewing holes remain set out on each leaf from the center crease by a few millimeters (see Gameson 2001/02: 1.38–39 and e.g. Gameson's reproduction of f. 14v, which clearly shows the central crease and the auxiliary sewing holes on either side). Sven Wiklander, who released the book from the old binding, saw three sewings, one he identified as of the 8c, one of the 16c, and one, the "auxiliary holes" mentioned above, as of the 1850s, "side-stitching" which left traces in the form of seven holes on the inner margin of every leaf. Whatever the system, it worked to hold the book together for more than a millennium, with no loss of central singletons. Secondly, as visual contrast rather than harmony was the principle within an opening, any attempt to match hair to hair and flesh to flesh was irrelevant and the arrangement of H to F within each quire is virtually random; in fact, "randomness" is a virtue because an attempt to arrange the bifolia of the quire in any regular way would have accentuated the "regular" anomaly in every quire of an irreconcilable central singleton. Third, this is a manuscript of extraordinary luxury, and its plan required unusually large bifolia; but as its producers had to rely mainly on local materials, that is, the skins of nearly 100 locally-produced calves, the vellum varies considerably in thickness, color, and quality. The purple sheets vary in stiffness and thickness, as do the natural ones, those with pictures and extensive decoration tending to be thicker and stiffer; many sheets are very thin, smooth, and flexible. Some sheets show considerable H/F contrast, occasionally evident even on purple leaves, a few leaves even showing hair-stubble, while many others show little or no contrast. There are a number of natural holes that the scribe works around and some sheets are extremely veiny or varying in themselves in color, texture and thickness. The anomalies are most evident, and also most random-seeming, on the run of natural pages in the prefatory material (ff. 1v–9r). The purple pages vary considerably in tone-color, ranging from deep, blackish carmine to violet, to almost rose, or brown, much of this due to fading over time, though there was never uniformity. (A scientific determination of the nature of the dye has not been published but the analytical chemist Dr. Maurizio Aceto has recently undertaken an examination [p.c. Christina Svensson of KB, 22 Dec. 2016].) Several of the purple pages are so thin as to be almost translucent (f. 125 is actually transparent). The contrast within openings was further heightened by entirely different

palettes and patterns of colored inks, varying greatly from page to page, systematically reserved for the purple pages while the natural pages maintain, with a couple of notable exceptions, a more or less uniform use of ink and color throughout the texts.

Beginning after the ensemble of introductory matter, original signatures are on the last verso of each quire, in colored ink and in enclosing lines, running 'I-XXVI', while Luke, on quires 'XIII-XX', has a second, partially erased, set of signatures in small, colored uncial letters beginning on quire 'XIIII' and running to quire 'XVIII': 'b' [partially erased] -'g'; these latter signatures as they appear on purple pages are not erased; this second set probably indicates that Luke was written in a separate or parallel campaign from the rest and then the roman numeral signatures were added to the combined, finished book. The architecture is such that each gospel and its attendant materials form a self-contained unit. Only a few leaves have been lost (after ff. 3?, 8, 62b, 93?, 96, 140, 148B) and several are mutilated remains (ff. 62b, 148B, 149B). Only a few bifolia remain conjoint, to wit ff. 13/17, 14/16, 10/25, 20/24, 21/23, 27/31, 56/58, and the mutilated bifolia ff. 147/148B, 149/149B (f. 148B is 173 mm. wide × 176 mm. high, f. 149B is 163 wide × 155 high); the rest have been split. Unfortunately, two of the lost leaves contained the evangelist portraits, of Mark (after f. 62b) and Luke (after f. 96); in all four cases the evangelist portraits were on natural singletons, the outer on-side leaf of a quire or ensemble; the remaining Matthew (f. 9) is the outside leaf in an ensemble of 3 singletons, and John (f. 150) a singleton on the outside of f. XXI. The lost Mark and Luke portrait pages were in a position that was especially vulnerable to loss, but most likely they were deliberately abstracted for their art, perhaps after having already become detached and lying loose in the book. All the losses occurred before the 16c foliation.

Preparation of the gospel text pages was diverse but followed a general system. The text area is ca. 235 × 240 mm., "a" columns about 117 mm. wide, "b" columns about 98 mm. wide with text running out of lines up to 110 mm. For the column-block of text a prick was made (variously with a knife or awl) at each corner to guide the verticals, and in the middle, either between the columns or along one of the inside verticals, a line of pricks was made to guide the horizontals, so that on most bifolia, regarded as open, two sets of vertical prick-lines existed to guide the horizontal ruling across the entire sheet, and two pricks were present to guide the verticals for each column. Ruling was done with a dry point, usually from the flesh sides and one sheet at a time, five verticals to the page, and twice as many horizontals as there were lines of writing. Some quires were folded then opened and

pricked as a unit before ruling (quire VI), some were pricked and ruled in a more *ad hoc* fashion (quire II); some single bifolia were pricked and ruled straight across, some single leaves pricked and ruled separately, some leaves ruled on both sides, and some ruled and reruled. The horizontal rulings generally run across the page through the columnar space. As would be expected given the structure of the quires and the plan to fit each gospel into its own complete, self-contained unit, there was much variety of treatment from quire to quire. Writing lines were indicated by double horizontal ruling, the uncial letters filling the approx. 5–6 mm. space. On the gospel text leaves the number of writing lines varies from 22 to 27, and this variation occurs even within quires, apparently as the amount of text needing to be copied within a quire was calculated. On many or most pages, but obviously randomly, at the end of columns “surplus” words of the text are written in smaller letters with the text carrying on unbroken to the next column or leaf, indicating that an exemplar was being followed column by column (or page by page?) so that each column began with the same words as the exemplar’s did. The natural leaves are written in very black ink with reddish titles and capitals, and red-highlighted or gold *nomina sacra* and proper names, key words, etc. and with various restrained decorative effects; the last lines of Matthew’s gospel (28.16–20) on the natural f. 61 are written in gold letters. On the purple pages the letters are written in gold or white pigment (as a general tendency, on the versos of the purple pages the gold is much brighter and shinier than the versos and seems to be a more metallic gold than on the rectos, whose gold is dull and orangish) and the canon-table references are in silver, mostly now oxidized to a dull gray. On about half of the purple pages letters are organized into patterns by colors and extra vertical rulings in various configurations have been applied to guide this work. At its extreme, on f. 125, the leaf is scored for a grid 48 × 32 but, as it happens, one letter fills each space with no special color effects. The ruling was often careless, with uneven lines extending into center and margins in haphazard ways. Nevertheless the overall appearance of the preparation is one of evenness, balance, and uniformity throughout the book.

The preparation of the preface pages (all on natural leaves) was different, with single verticals bounding the columns, which are 292 mm. high and 99–105 mm. wide. Each line of text, of which there were 37 or 38, was written in correspondingly smaller uncial script than that of the Gospel texts. Those pages with capitula (e.g. f. 4rv) had an additional vertical on the left side of the column giving a space 10/11 mm. wide to guide intermediate-sized initials for each item. F. 93 is aberrant in several ways: it contains Jerome’s preface to Luke but is a purple singleton which has been single-

ruled for 23 lines (with two long lines squeezed in at the bottom of the verso to complete the text).

The four extant canon table leaves (ff. 5r-8v) are on natural vellum, and prepared variously: f. 5 has 30 horizontal lines; f. 6 has verticals to mark the columns, but no horizontals; f. 7 is ruled for every fifth line. The eight painted canon tables, ff. 5r-8v, are basically squares 180/186 × 233 mm. for the tables, surmounted by compass-drawn semi-circular arches (inside curve 87/83 mm., outer curve 118/119 mm. from the central puncture; the tables on f. 5rv and 8rv are divided into literal late-antique architectural “columns” having capitals and bases and bounded by lintels and plinths; the lintels are finished by fantastic beast-heads and, on f. 5v, so is the base. The tables on f. 6rv and f. 7rv utilize more abstract dividers finished at top and bottom by compass-drawn roundels, the four outer roundels bearing portraits of the evangelists (the bottom two roundels on f. 7v blank). The inner spaces of columns and arches are filled with multi-colored decorations in celtic-insular style of interlace and coils, except that the inner two columns of the table on f. 6r, the second and fourth on f. 8r, and the outer and middle on f. 8v are in a restrained late-antique style. The tables on each recto/verso are mirror images of its reverse, utilizing the same scored guidelines. F. 8rv, with the last two tables, is a page which began to be pricked in the normal way for two column-blocks of writing, the central pricks appearing every two lines; one of these has been utilized as the central point for the compass; but Gameson (2001–02: 46) interprets this as a rectilinear grid extending beyond the arch at the top of the table as if prepared for a square canon table. Nordenfalk (1977: 98–101, pls. 34, 35) brings out well the contrasts in the canon tables, those on ff. 6 and 7 being by a different painter. The two still-extant evangelist portrait pages (f. 9v, f. 150v) are on unscored natural leaves; the portraits on the versos face the first (purple) page of the gospel text, rectos blank; the Matthew and John portraits are the work of different artists according to Nordenfalk (1977: 105).

The text is written in uncial script similar to that used in another English uncial gospel book of the 8c written in Kent (Avranche, Bibl. mun. 48 [ff. i-ii], 66 [ff. i-ii], 71 [ff. A-B] + St. Petersburg, Publ. Lib. O.v.I.1 [CLA 5.730, Gneuss 842], but Gneuss-Lapidge 2014: 604, and previously Gneuss, *Handlist* no. 842, say Northumbria; cf. Gameson 2001/02: 51 & 90 n10, and 55, remarking how Kentish uncial books vary greatly from page to page). The gospel texts are written in a monumental uncial adorned with finials, letters 5–6mm. high, written between the double lines provided, about 12 mm. of space in all for each line, with no punctuation, few abbreviations, and no word-division. On natural pages the ink is for the most part black

except for colored capitals and titles in red or brownish-red. Titles are in uncial capitals. *Nomina sacra* and certain other names and words are often highlighted by color, gold, surrounding dots, boxes, or extra decoration (sometimes with gold leaf). On the purple pages the ink is in several colors (white, orange-gold, silver) and often the strokes making up the letters are thicker and less clear-edged than on the natural pages. The references to the canon-numbers have been supplied in text-margins, with a fine-nibbed pen in text-ink on the natural pages, and, on purple pages using a thicker nib, in silver now oxidized to various dark-gray, blackish colors (sometimes darker than the vellum background, sometimes contrastingly lighter), often very hard to decipher. The writing of the main texts aspired to a single high and uniform standard of calligraphy, but variations in aspect occur, beyond those expected in a long project caused by passage of time and differing stints; it is likely that several scribes worked on the book, the main division being between Matthew/Mark and Luke/John. The imposing capitals introducing the title line “*Nouum Opus*” (f. 1r) and occupying the Matthew Chi-Rho page (f. 11r) are three or more lines high in heavily decorated and fantastically shaped monumental capitals (see below).

The prefatory texts are on natural vellum, in black ink, in a smaller and even squarer type of uncial, about 4 mm. high, with 11 mm. between the bottom of one line and the next, with no punctuation and sparse abbreviation, but there is distinct word-division by use of spaces; titles and initials are in a slightly rounder uncial script with longer descenders in reddish-orange. Original headers appear at the beginning of Matthew, f. 12r (white ink on P), 12v (red ink on P), 15r (red ink on N), 16r, 18r (carmine ink on P), 19r (red ink on N, erased) and then abandoned for the rest of the codex. Points, probably contemporary, added on f. 137r; a probably later 10c hand, probably the same hand that provided neumes on f. 49v, has added *punctus elevati* in two openings, ff. 49v/50r and 19v/20r). Doodles or pen trials on f. 158r, bottom.

[Note: Gameson 2001/002: 53 considers that the work was apportioned between two main scribes, one who wrote Matthew and Mark and the other Luke and John; this supposition is supported also by the fact that Luke has a separate, and subsequently erased, set of signatures. He sees a third hand writing the prefatory texts (except to Luke), a fourth doing the rubrics in the general prefaces to the prefatory material to Mark and Luke and most of the numbers in the canon tables, and a fifth writing cols. 1 and 3 on f. 8r and all of 8v.]

The writing on the purple pages requires special comment. On roughly half these pages, the text is written in an unpatterned single gold-orange or whitish ink that contrasts sufficiently with the purple surface (the canon

table references are in silver). But of these, about two-thirds are in Luke and John (47, vs. 24 in Matthew and Mark), another indication of the separate campaigns of the two halves of the book. The other half are pages with texts written in gold, silver, and white inks set against one another so as to bring out on the page decorative or symbolic “patterns” (Gameson’s word); some patterns are horizontal, some columnar, a few in grids, four using washes, four having large cross-patterns, and several combining two designs (see Gameson 2001/02: 48 for a table presenting the data). For example, on f. 12v a “horizontal” pattern of contrasting groups of two or more lines (plus the odd word) written in white or gold ink alternate (the use of colors does not correspond to any textual features); on f. 18r the alternation of these colors at the same intervals in each line of writing serves to divide each text-column into five columns of contrasting hue; on f. 34v, in the a-column, a grid-pattern is used to make white crosses in the text contrasting with the orange letters that predominate and in the b-column mostly white text-letters are set against orange letters for the initial of each line and the whole of each sixth line; on ff. 24v, 38r, 117r, 123r some letters were “washed” with a different color to produce not-very-conspicuous patterns; and on ff. 16r, 73r, 91v, 144v large crosses involve the entire page. Gameson (48–49) notes that only once does this system of patterning connect definitely to the text on the page, on f. 91v, where a large gold cross-design covers the passage about the crucifixion (Mark 15:19–31). Patterning occurs on only five of the natural pages, three at the beginning of Matthew (ff. 23v, 25r, 27r), perhaps an experiment abandoned because the patterning (done mostly in red highlights and flourishes) does not after all stand out very successfully against the natural background. Corrections on the purple pages had to be inserted in the prevailing color of the text ink without aid of erasure for fear of spoiling the dyed surface and are thus often awkward or *ad hoc*.

Painted designs occur on natural pages. The italic capitals of the “No-uum opus” headline on f. 1r (mentioned above) and the ‘PL’ monogram of ‘Plures fuisse’ on f. 2r (which does not fit comfortably into the space left for it), are decorated in somewhat tentative multicolored vegetative interlace patterns in insular style; the elaborate and assertive Chi-Rho page (f. 11r) presents an entire page in golden monumental capitals outlined in dark colored inks, each of its seven lines of text (‘CHR(IST)I AVTEM . . . HABENS’) are within frames and as high as four (the first) or three normal lines of writing; the first line, showing an enlarged “Chi-Rho” monogram and a profuse use of interlace animal-patterns and coil/spiral designs across the line reflects the insular tradition of decoration for Chi-Rho pages; the total effect is, as Gameson notes (64), like metalwork; it is a not very successful

compromise between antique restrained magnificence and barbarian exuberant elaboration. The two remaining brilliantly colored but flatly painted evangelist portraits (Matthew, f. 9v, John, f. 150v) are arranged so as to face and contrast with the purple opening page of the gospel, their reverses blank (almost certainly the lost Mark and Luke were arranged the same way). The overall design of the evangelist pages is similar to, but slightly smaller in dimensions than the canon table pages, with a square lower space bounded by architectural columns, surmounted by compass-drawn roundels (Matthew's filled with busts of male figures, John's with coil-designs), topped by an arch, within which is the evangelist's attribute. The tonsured evangelist figure sits enthroned, staring directly forward, in an open stage-like space, curtains pulled back in revelation; the details are classicising, but the elements, throne, cushion, figure, background are like separate paper cut-outs producing a bewildering abstract effect. There is a limited amount of interlace border-work in Matthew; John's surrounds are attempted in a more "naturalistic" style, with acanthus architectural and faux-marble effects.

[Note: For the color details consult Gameson's facsimile or the digital facsimile. (It should be noted that the colors in Gameson's facsimile are much brighter than in the manuscript itself.) Gameson, 2002/02: 67–68, distinguishes two artists (on the natural pages), one who did most of the canon tables, on ff. 5v, 6v, 7rv and possibly ff. 5r and 8v, and also the "Nouum opus" and "Plures" decorations, the second, much the more skillful, who did the canon tables on f. 6r and 8r, the evangelist portraits, and probably the Chi-Rho page.]

The decoration on the purple pages, aside from the patterning already mentioned, is limited to large capitalized headlines at the opening of gospels facing the evangelist portraits. On f. 10r, Matthew, the opening words, 'LIBER GENERATIONIS', are in uncial capitals two ordinary lines high running across both columns, in the orange ink of the rest of the text, but faded and blending with the purple hue of the membrane, with white squiggles decorating the 'L' which is three lines high, the recto patterned in white grid lines; the letters on the verso are alternating gold and white. F. 63r, the opening of Mark (portrait wanting), has no decorative beginning, the page being unpatterned and the opening words 'Initium euangelii i(e)su' being written as ordinary text within the column (the 'I' slightly larger and washed with white). The opening of Luke (portrait wanting), f. 97r, is written in enlarged uncial capital letters (11 mm. high) across both columns: 'QUONIAM QUIDEM MULTI CONATI', enclosed in a saw-tooth frame drawn in text ink, filled with triads of tiny white dots, the initial 'Q' having a bowl three lines high, filled with star-like designs in white and yellow, and a

descender going to the fifth line; the entire page in goldish-orange ink with multiple grids in white, with white infill to most letters, making the page quite striking. John has the most elaborate opening, on f. 151r, the headline across both columns, 'IN PRINCIPIO ERAT' being in monumental capitals three lines high painted in alternating red and white, their double outlines being partly filled with fine white interlace patterns and surrounded by a similarly decorated frame, the initial 'I' being four lines high. The text letters of the page are a subdued rose with white grid-lines, the better to highlight the most striking element on the page, the heavy use of gold leaf filling all the interstices of the letters in the headline. About half of this gold has flaked off, leaving a much reduced impression. The lettering of the headlines is by the text scribes, with perhaps some additions by one or other of the artists; certainly more than one hand is at work on the John headline.

[Note on the 2007 binding: After the disbinding in 1962 the conservator Sven Wiklander and Börje Westlund, Head of the Manuscripts Department at Kungliga Biblioteket, attempted to rebind the codex. Strips of natural and colored parchment were glued to the disjunct pages to restore them as bifolia. Apparently the project got no further and in 1986 the parchment strips were removed by Monica Steijer and replaced with new strips of Japanese paper; paper interleaves were supplied and the manuscript was stored thus, boxed and unbound. The Japanese paper had a pH-value of about 6/6.5, too acidic to be ideal for conservation and the unbound manuscript was virtually unusable for study and essentially off-limits to scholarship after Gameson had described it (Fries 2006). A new binding was undertaken via experimental processes by Kristina Blaschke in 2007. Because the detached leaves had no usable stubs, normal binding methods for manuscript books were not feasible. Instead, a sort of "photo-album" arrangement was devised: six of the seven holes of the pre-existing "side-stitching" were reused to sew the leaves to thick acid-free paper guards; new holes drilled on the guard with an awl matched the placement of the old holes on the leaf; the stitching, about 27 mm. out from the crease, going over the guard for two stitches and over the membrane for three; the guards extended 40 mm. over the membrane and extended beyond the crease 17 mm. There was one such arrangement for each leaf. Extra guards were placed as spacers as needed between leaves to relieve the effects of cockling of the leaves caused by the old over-tight binding. Small segments of the paper guards were torn out along their edges wherever they impinged on text or decoration. The single leaves with their guards were then sewn with linen thread to four calfskin bands and loosely drawn together, causing a pronounced "rise" of the spine compared to the foreedge, much like a photo-album. The manuscript was disposed in four such volumes, with acid-free endpapers and goat parchment-covered boards slightly larger than the manuscript pages (410 × 359 mm.), corresponding to the four Gospel sections: I, ff. 1–61, II, ff. 62–93, III, ff. 94–148, IV, ff. 149–191. Each volume was kept in its own purpose-made clam-shell box. Unfortunately any sense

of the original quire-structure of the book was lost, as each leaf was an individual entity. Blaschke argued that this method had the advantage of not imposing upon the object itself a theoretical reconstruction of the quire structure. The obvious conservation advantages were that strain was relieved from all leaves, effects of cockling were minimized, no glue or other known potentially harmful materials used, the process was easily reversible, and individual pages could be extracted for exhibition, study, etc. The practical disadvantages, in the describer's experience (April 2010), was that, besides all sense of a "codex" being lost, these four ensembles were difficult to handle and make frequent and multiple page-referencing awkward, and that consultation of the manuscript required the constant assistance of a trained staff member. Apparently disadvantages were recognized by Kungliga Biblioteket staff and the manuscript was released from this arrangement in 2013, the leaves now kept flat in individual folders (see above)]

COLLATION:

[Note: Because the manuscript was disbound in 1962 without the old disposition being meticulously recorded, because most of the bifolia are split, and because it has recently been rebound with each leaf in an individual guard and then disbound again, a collation of the manuscript in the usual sense is no longer possible. Gameson (2001-02: 1.12-16, 2.10-16) gives a somewhat speculative and idealized collation of what he takes to be its original state, which is derived from his examination of the disbound and split leaves and that is what is generally followed here. Blaschke's configuration is given in a note following the Collation. In the superscript leaf notes '+ 1' denotes the inner singleton. P denotes "purple" leaf, N "natural."]

General Prefatory material: 1a^{6†} all singletons, 5 lacking? (ff. [i] + 1-4) all N; no signature; 1b^{4+2†} (all singletons, one or two lacking after 4 (ff. 6-8) all N; no signature);

Matthew preliminaries: 1c³ all singletons (ff. 9-11) N/P/N; no signature;

Matthew: I⁶⁺¹ 1 and 7 singletons (ff. 12-18) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'I'; II⁶⁺¹ (ff. 19-25) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'II'; III⁶⁺¹ (ff. 26-32) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'III'; IV⁶⁺¹ all singletons? (ff. 33-39) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'IIII'; V⁶⁺¹ (ff. 40-46) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'U'; VI⁶⁺¹ (ff. 47-53) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'VI'; VII⁶⁺¹⁺¹ extra singleton after 7 (ff. 54-61) PNP/N/PNP(N), sig. 'VII';

Mark preliminaries: 2² a mutilated bifolium (ff. 62, 62b) N, no signature; [1 leaf, N singleton, excised between f. 62b and f. 63, Mark portrait page]

Mark: VIII⁶⁺¹ 3/5 original singletons (ff. 63-69) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'VIII'; IX⁶⁺¹ (ff. 70-76) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'VIIII'; X⁶⁺¹ (ff. 77-83) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'X'; XI⁶⁺¹ 2 and 6 original singletons (ff. 84-90) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'XI'; XII⁴ 3 and 4 original singletons, 4 wanting (ff. 91-93) PN|P[N] (no

signature, presumably on lost natural leaf, which may have been blank and hence was cut out);

Luke preface: 3² singleton + bifolium? (ff. 94–96) PN|N; [lost Luke portrait after f. 96 (N)];

Luke: XIII⁴⁺¹ 1/5 original singletons (ff. 97–101) PN/P/NP, sig. 'XIII' [& "a" omitted?]; XIV⁶⁺¹ 1 and 7 may be singletons (rulings do not match) (ff. 102–108) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'XIIII'; [& 'b' erased, slightly visible]; XV⁶⁺¹ (ff. 109–115) PNP/N/PNP, sigs. 'XV' / 'c'; XVI⁶⁺¹ (ff. 116–122) NPN/P/NPN, sigs. 'XVI' / 'd'; XVII⁸⁺¹ 3 and 7 singletons (ff. 123–131) PNP/P/NPNP, sigs. 'XVII' / 'e'; XVIII⁶⁺¹ (ff. 132–138) NPN/P/NPN, sigs. 'XVIII' / 'f' erased and rewritten? XIX⁶⁺¹ 3 wanting after f. 140 (ff. 139–144) PN[P]/N/PNP, sigs. 'XVIII' 'g'; XX⁶⁺¹ 6, 7 lacking, 148B (sheet 5) is now a small fragment (ff. 145–148, 148B) NPN/P/N (signature lost with excised leaf?);

John prefatory material: 4² mutilated bifolium (ff. 149, 149B) N|N; no signature (see Gameson's comment 2.15 on structure of remains and present configuration); 5¹ singleton (John portrait) (f. 150) N (Gameson makes this part of XXI);

John: XXI⁶⁺¹ (ff. 151–157) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'XXI'; XXII⁶⁺¹ (ff. 158–164) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'XXII'; XXXIII⁶⁺¹ (ff. 165–171) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'XXIII'; XXIV⁶⁺¹ 2 and 6 singletons (ff. 172–178) NPN/P/NPN, sig. 'XXIII'; XXV⁶⁺¹ 3 and 5 probably original singletons (ff. 179–185) PNP/N/PNP, sig. 'XXV' [difference in quality of parchment in 3/5 suggest they were not of the same sheet]; XXVI⁶ (ff. 186–191) NPN|NPN; sig. 'XXVI' (partially effaced).

[Note: Most of the original bifolia have been split but a few conjoints remain. Blaschke (2007: 40–46), who conserved and rebound the manuscript in 2007, gives the extant configurations, the roman numerals conforming to the signatures on the last versos of its group: 1. ff. 1–3 (3 singletons), 2. f. 4 (singleton), 3. ff. 5–8 (4 singletons), I ff. 9–18 (ff. 13/17, 14/16 conjoint, the rest singletons), II ff. 19–25 (ff. 19/25, 20/24, 21/23 conjoint, 22 singleton), III ff. 26–32 (ff. 27/31 conjoint, the rest singletons), IV ff. 33–39 (all singletons), V ff. 40–46 (all singletons), VI ff. 47–53 (all singletons), VII ff. 54–61 (ff. 56/58 conjoint, the rest singletons), VIII ff. 62/62b/63–69 (all singletons, 62b half folio), IX ff. 70–76 (all singletons), X ff. 77–83 (all singletons), XI ff. 84–90 all singletons, XIII [sic] ff. 91–101 (all singletons), XIV ff. 102–108 (all singletons), XV ff. 109–115 all singletons, XVI ff. 116–122 (all singletons), XVII ff. 123–131 (all singletons), XVIII ff. 132–138 (all singletons), XIX ff. 139–144 (all singletons), XXI [sic] ff. 145–157 (ff. 147/148B, 149/149B leaves with conjoint stubs, the rest singletons), XXII ff. 158–164 (all singletons), XXIII ff. 165–171 (all singletons), XXIV ff. 172–178 (all singletons), XXV ff. 179–185 (all singletons), XXVI ff. 186–191 (all singletons). The following corresponding leaves, judging by mismatch of hair/flesh, ruling, etc., were apparently original singletons: 2/3 N, 12/18 P, 65/67 P, 85/89 P, 92/93 P, 97/101 P, 125/129 P, 173/177 P, 181/183 P;

that all of these except the first were purple sheets suggests that many more purple leaves may have been less-detectable singletons, and that perhaps the splitting of the purple sheets had something to do with the limitations on sheet-size imposed by the dyeing process itself.]

CONTENTS:

Entire manuscript [except texts added later as noted] is written in two columns, in uncials; initials and larger letters represented as caps; transcription-edition Belsheim 1878.

original endleaf, blank rv

ff. 1ra/1- 2ra/26 Jerome's Epistle to Damasus: **INCIPIT EPIS<TOLA> HIERON<YMI> AD PAPA DAMASO BEATO HIERON<YMUS> IN CHR<IST>O / SA/LU/TE/M/+ \ 'NOUVM OPVS | facere me co|gis . . . et memineris mei | papa beatissime.' Expl<icit> epist<ola> | hieronimi;**

f. 2ra/27-3ra/36 Jerome's Preface to the Four Evangelists: **Incipit praefatio eiusdem.** | 'Plures fuisse qui euan|gelia conscriberunt'; ends: 'quam ecclesiasticis uiuis | canendas' (Belsheim 1-5) [rest of 3ra and all of 3rb blank].

f. 3v blank.

[Note: At top of f. 1r is 10c insular minuscule inscription: '+ orate p(ro) ceolheard p inlas 7 ealhhun 7 wulfhelm aurifex'; f. 3rb, bottom, 17c inscription recording purchase of the manuscript by Gabriel Sparwenfeldt in 1690 (see "History").]

f. 4ra/1-4va/38 capitula to Matthew: **Natiuitas IE<SU> CHR<IST>I magorum munera | occultatio . . . et resurrec|tio eius itemque mandata et | doctrina eius de baptismo'** (Belsheim 7-8) [f. 4vb blank].

ff. 5r-8v eight Ammonian/Eusebian canon tables (Belsheim 9-14, one or two leaves wanting, probably two or four canon tables are lost). (cf. Nordenfalk 1977: 98).

f. 9r blank.

f. 9v Matthew portrait page (cf. Nordenfalk 1977: 103).

ff. 10r-61v Gospel of Matthew:

ff. 10rv "Liber Generationis" (Matt. 1.1-17): **'LIBER GENERATIONIS | ie(s)u(m) chr(ist)i fili da|uid fili abraha[m] . . . est ie(su)s qui uoca|tur chr(istu)s';**

f. 11r decorated Chi-Rho page (Matt. 1.18): **'CHR<IST>I AVTEM . . . HABENS';**

Old English Content:

f. 11r/(informal lines) 1-2, 1-7 up, and outer margin [bottom and side margins trimmed] A mid-9c OE inscription (two lines at top and six lines

at the bottom) recording the gift of the manuscript to Christ Church from Aldorman Ælfred and his wife Werburg: 'IN nomine d(omi) ni n(ost)ri ie(s)u chr(ist)i. Ic aelfred aldormon 7 wérburg min gefera begetan þas bēc æt haeðnu(m) herge . . . ðatte ðas halgan beoc aselle oððe áðeode from cristes circan. ða hwile | [bottom line, trimmed] ða fulwiht [s]t[on]da[n mote] \ [spaced along outer margin, trimmed] Aelfre[d] Werbur[g] Alhðryð eorum [filia]' (ed. Belsheim 1878: 17; Harmer 1914: 12–12; Whitelock 1979: 539–40; Sweet/Hoad 1978: 115).

ff. 11va/1–61va/12 the rest of Matthew: 'de sp(irit)u s(an)c(t)o Ioseph au|tem uir eius eum esset | homo iustus'; ends: 'usque ad | consu(m)- mationem | saeculi' (Belsheim 16–118) [rest of f. 61v ab blank].

f. 62ra/1-b/26 Jerome's preface to Mark: **Incip(it) præph(atio) euang(elii) secun(dum) /ma/rc/um** | 'MARCUS EUAN|gelista d(e)i electus et petri | in baptisate filius . . . sunt qui aute(m) | incrementum praestat d(eu)s est' | **Exp(licit) præp(hatio) euang(elii)) secund(um) marc(u)m** (Belsheim 119);

ff. 62rb/27–62vb/37 + 62bra/1–36 numbered capitula to Mark: **Incip(it) brebis. eiusde(m) euangelistę** | 'I Erat ioh(an)ne baptiz(atus) ie(su)m [sic] et ue|nit super ie(su)m sp(iritu)s s(an)c(tu)s et in deser|to temp- tatus . . . XLV Post resurrectionem appa|ruit ie(su)s apostolis . . . est in caelis d(omi)n(u)s' (Belsheim 119–21) [f. 62bv is blank];

[Note: Ff. 62 and 62b were a bifolium, but its second sheet was split in half lengthwise, and the outer, blank, half removed; previously, the remaining column (f. 62b) was pasted by means of a narrow strip to the inner side of f. 62, as can be seen in Gameson's facsimile.; f. 62b is now sewn to its own guard as a separate leaf. A (natural) leaf is wanting after f. 62b which carried the portrait of Mark.]

ff. 63ra/1–93va/21 Gospel of Mark: (no title or special initials) 'Initium euangelii ie(s)u | chr(ist)i fili d(e)i sicut scrip|tum est in esaia pro|pheta'; ends: 'confirmante prose|quentibus signis' (Belsheim 123–84) [rest of f. 93a and all of b-column blank].

f. 94ra/1–94vb/22 + two long lines squeezed in at the end, Jerome's preface to Luke + f. 95ra/1: 'Lucas syrus antiocen|sis arte medicus dis|cipulus . . . agri|cola(m) oporteat de | fructib(us) suis edere | uitauimus publica(m) curiositate(m) ne non ta(m) uolentib(us) d(ominu)m ui|deremur qua(m) fastidientib(us) prodidisse' || **Exp(licit) præp(hatio) evan(gelii) luçę** (Belsheim 185–86);

[Note: Jerome's preface is, exceptionally, written with the same layout and lineation as the gospel texts and on a purple leaf.]

ff. 95ra/1–96rb/34 capitula to Luke: **incip(it) breb(is) /ei/us/de(m) | I 'ZACHARIAE SACERDOTI | angelus gabriel et adnuniauit . . . LXX-**

VIII Post resurrectionem apparuit . . . ascendit in caelis' (Belsheim 187–89);

[Note: F. 96v is blank and a (natural) page containing the portrait of Luke on verso is wanting after f. 96.]

ff. 97r/1–148vb/27 + 148Br Gospel of Luke: (first line written across page in larger letters, then two columns) 'QUONIAM QUIDEM MULTI CONATI | sunt ordinare | narrationem re|ru(m)'; (purple) leaf wanting after f. 140 = Luke 21.8–30; ends on 148Br: 'et | erant semper in te(m)|plo laudantes et be|nedicentes d(eu)m' (Belsheim 191–295).

[Note: F. 148B is the upper inner quartile of a mutilated leaf, containing the last 11 lines of the copy of Luke in the a-column of the recto. Presumably the rest of recto and verso were blank.]

f. 149ra/1-b/19 Jerome's preface to John: **Incip(it) pręph(atio) euan(gelii) secun(dum) ioha(nnis) | 'JOHANNIS EVAN(GELI)A VNVS | ex discipulis d(e)i qui uirgo elec|tus a d(e)o . . . fructus laboris et d(e) o magis|terii doctrina seruetur' | exp(licit) pręp(hatio) eua(ngelii) ioh(annis)** (Belsheim 297);

149vb/38 + 149Br capitula to John: **incip(it) brebis eiusde(m) | 'IJOH(AN)-NES TESTIMONIV(M) P(ER)HIBET | de chr(ist)o dicens non sum dignus | corrigiam calciamenti eius | soluere . . . (f. 149Br) XXX/VI \ Et cum tertio manifesta|ret se . . . et sequere me'** (Belsheim 297–99);

[Note: F. 149B is the upper inner quartile of a mutilated leaf, presumably otherwise blank, containing the last six headings of the capitula (16 lines of writing); f. 149B and 148B have been treated in exactly the same way.]

f. 150r blank.

f. 150v John portrait page (cf. Nordenfalk 1977: 105).

ff. 151r/1–191rb/18 Gospel of John: (first phrase in monumental capitals across both columns, with gold infill) **'IN PRINCIPIO ERAT | uerbum et uer|bum erat apud d(eu)m'**; ends: 'capere | eos qui scribendi svnt | libros' (Belsheim 301–81).

f. 191v blank.

IMAGE NOTES: A full digital facsimile is now available at <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/17185/>. Blank pages are not included on the film/fiche. The purple pages do not photograph well in black and white (f. 65rv is particularly hopeless); foliation is generally invisible on film. Slightly enhanced selected images of natural pages f. 70v/71r, f. 151r, f. 190v, marked (2), have been intercalated from the original microfilm. The film at least has the advantage of showing the manuscript in its older (17c) binding and configuration. For details of color and text Gameson's facsimile may be consult-

ed, though his images are now somewhat supplanted by the digital images, which present a more accurate impression of the colors. In Gameson's facsimile, the photos of f. 166rv are reversed due to an error in production.

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