The art of the Book of Deer

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KEYWORD(S):
Metalwork

PERIOD(S):
Tenth Century

ABSTRACT
Describes and discusses artistic elements in the work of the four gospels dating back to the tenth century, now held by Cambridge University Library. Concludes that although the form of the pocket gospel is related to the Irish tradition, the patterns and artefacts found in the work clearly have their origins in Scotland and that the artist may have been copying from manuscripts and metalwork damaged in Viking raids.

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Although informal and general appearance the book conforms to a group of Irish pocket gospels, it is possible that the book was produced in Scotland, with Deer Abbey being the most likely location. On f4v a sword of Anglo-Saxon or Viking type is depicted. The implications of this are examined in terms of surviving artefacts and other manuscript depictions. Click here to download/read this article (PDF file).

Sign up to get a Weekly Email from Medievalists.net. The original Book of Deer described as "one of the principal antiquities of Scotland" is a ninth century Celtic/Pictish Gospel illuminated manuscript, preserved in the Library of Cambridge University UK. It was copied and illustrated by unknown monks in the Celtic monastery of Deer near Aberdeen. The illustrations have a childlike quality, and such colour as remains is washes mainly now in pastel colours. Strangely for what was intended to be an important ceremonial book there are obvious errors in the Knotwork borders. The text is in rather bad Latin with later Scottish Gaelic addit Book of Deer celebrates women who have influenced the world we live in today in a print that features 96 unique portraits. As well as depicting the more well-known faces of activism, academia, art and heroism, the print also features women who have achieved amazing things or overcome huge social obstacles but may have been overlooked in mainstream history. A perfect gift for mothers-to-be, this swaddle can also be used as a pram cover, burp cloth, nursing cover and more. The blanket is accompanied with a little book naming all the iconic women depicted in the print. Buy now!