

Fact Sheet: 1 Top 10 Facts about the Book of Kells

The Book of Kells™




FACT 1

Approximately  **185 Calves** were required to create the vellum pages in the Book of Kells.



FACT 2

To produce the vellum pages in the Book of Kells, calfskin was **soaked** in a bath of lime, **scraped** and **dried** under tension on a wooden frame. 



FACT 3

Illustrations of **snakes** weave throughout most pages of the Book of Kells, with the shedding of each snake's skin symbolizing **Christ's resurrection**.



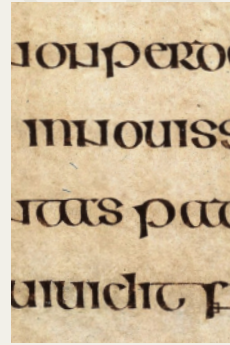
FACT 4

Illustrations of **peacocks** feature in the major pages of the Book of Kells and are thought to symbolize **Christ's immortality**, due to the ancient belief that peacock flesh does not decay.



FACT 5

Christ is depicted with long golden red hair in the Book of Kells.



FACT 6

The text in the Book of Kells was written with a **brownish ink**, made from crushed **oak apples** and **sulphate of iron**, in a medium of gum and water.



FACT 7

The **blues** in the Book of Kells were made using a yellow flowered plant called **woad**, which was dried, powdered and fermented.



FACT 8

The **orange** red pigment in the Book of Kells was derived from **red lead**.



FACT 9

A **three-dimensional effect** was created in parts of the Book of Kells by **layering three pigments** on top of a ground layer.



FACT 10

The **Bishop of Meath** presented the Book of Kells to Trinity College Dublin for **safe keeping** between 1661 - 1682 and it has been housed in the University's Library ever since.