

To The Scribes of Aethelmarc

The Office of Sylvan Signet for the Kingdom of Aethelmarc, which assigns the scrolls requested by the King and Queen, has always held with the policy of presenting a scroll rather than a promissory note whenever possible--even if the recipient's name has not been registered with the SCA College of Arms.

While this policy makes many recipients happy, it means that many scrolls must be completed quickly. Even with the pressure of turning out completely done scrolls for each King and Queen, we have managed to keep up with the demand. This would not be possible without you, the artists. It is hoped that these guidelines for scroll production will make your job a bit easier.

It is important to keep some things in mind when working on scrolls for the Signet Office. The Signet Office views scrolls as both heraldic documents AND works of art. Therefore we, as artists, should try to keep a professional artistic attitude toward scroll production. While most recipients will greatly and enthusiastically appreciate your efforts, some will not. We should do each scroll with the philosophy that it is a learning experience; with every scroll we complete, our skill is increased.

This philosophy of professionalism should carry over into selection of materials and creativity within a Medieval framework. Signet Office artists should use the best materials within their financial capabilities in order to do the best job possible. Creativity is, of course, very important, but we should not forget to do some research as well. Artistic freedom is respected, but scrolls necessarily need an authentic Medieval flavor.

Recommended source books are included in the bibliography at the end of this booklet; they are only as far away as your nearest library, art store, bookstore, or local group's Guild Minister.

Finally, remember that we are all servants of the Crown, entrusted with the most privy confidences of the Realm - the knowledge of who is to be honored with what awards. Use discretion. Do not discuss your assignments with others, and if another scribe confides his or her assignments to you, do not pass the information around-- tempting as it may be. Many a King and Queen have been chagrined to find Their surprise for a worthy gentle has become common knowledge of the Kingdom long before it is was given. Even worse, the Royalty change Their minds after the scroll is assigned, but the recipient has already heard about it through the grapevine...

Any questions you may have on these guidelines can be discussed with the Sylvan Signet or local Guild Minister. Remember that your efforts are well appreciated by the Signet Officers, the Royalty, and the people of Aethelmarc.

Keep up the good work!



Inspired by Plutarch, Parallel Lives
Girolamo da Cremona, Venice, Italy c. 1478
page 94 *The Painted Page*

Typical to this style is a frame of rasied gilding surrounding a trompe-l'oeil design of jewel toned amber, red, green and blue. Gems, beads and pearls are commonly found on strings draped on corners, over leaves or through eyelets conveniently placed throughout the illumination. Pages of this style are often pre printed, but Humanistic script is a good substitute. Although Italic is a hand better suited to writing notes than formal declarations. It does look especially nice and can be used as an SCA adaptation. the Italic hands are documentable to this period and location.

Yvianne

CONTACTS

Please feel free to contact any of these people for more information on the scribal arts

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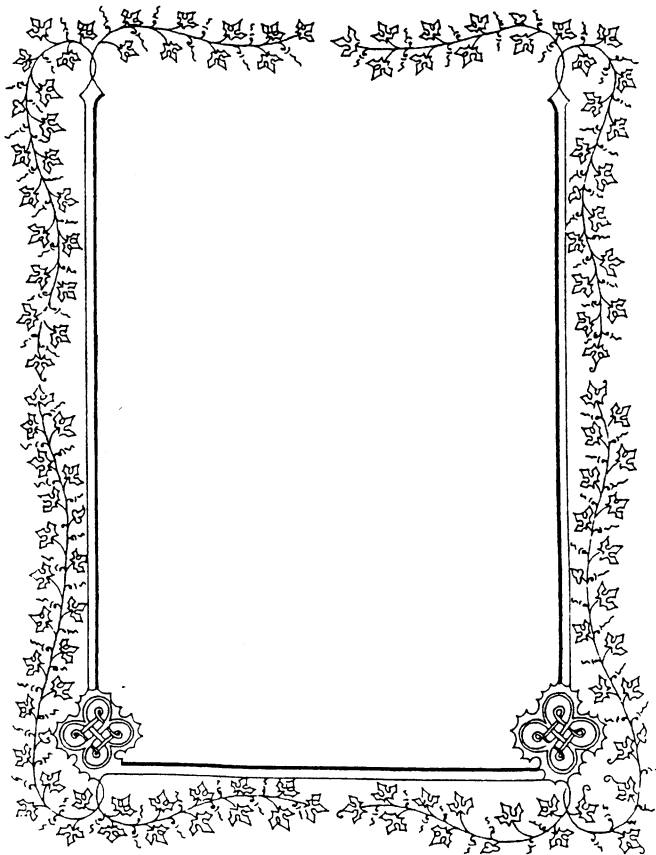
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Based on French 14c. manuscripts, the most common scripts used with this style are Gothic. The long borders on the sides are usually red or blue with very fine whitework. The corner knots are painted in a similar fashion. The areas around the knots would have been gilded, as would the leaves.

Glynis

Policies of the Sylvan Signet

The Sylvan Signet is an autonomous office directly responsible to the Royalty. It works in conjunction with the Offices of Heralds and Arts & Sciences to foster the scribal and heraldic arts. The Sylvan Signet appoints deputies as necessary.

I. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SYLVAN SIGNET

A. The Sylvan Signet promotes the arts of calligraphy and illumination in the Kingdom.

B. The Sylvan Signet receives requests for scrolls that have been, or will be awarded by Æthelmearc Royalty.

1. The Sylvan Signet communicates directly with Royalty about the status of Æthelmearc scroll assignments.

C. The Sylvan Signet provides the College of Scribes of Æthelmearc with support, information, and aid in the production of scrolls. The College of Scribes of Æthelmearc consists of all those gentles who have produced at least one scroll for the Kingdom within the previous year.

D. The Sylvan Signet brings to the attention of the Crown candidates who are deserve recognition for their work in the scribal arts, including those who produce scrolls, those who teach scribal classes, and local guildministers.

E. The Sylvan Signet maintains a list of scribes who are willing to produce scrolls and teach classes.

F. The Sylvan Signet arranges for the purchase of vellum for the County scrolls; the expense (up to \$125 per reign) is paid by the Kingdom.

II. SCROLL REQUESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

A. There is no such thing as making a scroll request "too early"!

B. A minimum of one month's lead time for the completion of most scrolls is recommended, with six to eight weeks needed for high-level awards.

C. Last-minute scroll assignments (giving the scribes two weeks' notice or less) will be made with the understanding that the scroll may not be completed for the event. Should last-minute scroll assignments result in a situation wherein said scrolls cannot be assigned or finished, those assignments will be placed at the bottom of the backlog listing, to be completed as soon as possible.

D. Promissory and on-site scrolls should be avoided. Scrolls done on short notice rarely allow scribes the chance to produce quality work. Also, scribes who constantly work on short notice tend to burn out very quickly.

E. The Sylvan Signet assigns scrolls to specific scribes based on closeness to the recipient, time constraints, and the scribe's skill level and reliability. Scroll assignments may also be made through local Guildministers.

F. Scribes wishing to do scroll assignments for specific individuals may contact the Sylvan Signet with their "special requests." While the Signet will do their best to honor requests, there is no guarantee of getting the assignment.

G. Kingdom scribes may accept scroll assignments for Shire events, Baronial awards and awards from other kingdoms (with approval from that kingdom's Signet), but these assignments are to be considered private commissions and are not handled through the AEthelmearc Signet Office.

H. Should situations arise which prevent a scribe from completing an assignment or delivering a finished scroll on time, please notify the Signet Office as soon as possible. Arrangements can be made to have scrolls re-assigned or to have promissories at the event, but only if the Signet Office knows about problems in advance. Scribes must clear any re-assignments of scrolls through the Signet Office BEFORE passing assignments to another scribe, as there are sometimes special requests by the Royalty, the recipient, and other scribes that factor into the re-assignment of a scroll. If you cannot complete an assignment, but you have another artist interested in it, include that information when you notify the Signet Office that you cannot finish the assignment.

III. BACKLOG ASSIGNMENTS

A. Scribes with backlogged scroll assignments should finish said backlogs as soon as possible, preferably before accepting new assignments.

B. Any assignments backlogged for more than one year may be subject to re-assignment to a new scribe.

C. Backlog protocol

1. Before you begin, confirm the assignment with the Sylvan Signet who will make sure the assignment is valid and not currently assigned. (Invalid assignments include awards that are not listed on the OP and replacement scrolls for scrolls already signed by the Royalty.) Scrolls marked as promissories when given in court are valid as backlogs, but must still go through Signet to make sure the permanent scroll has not already been assigned.

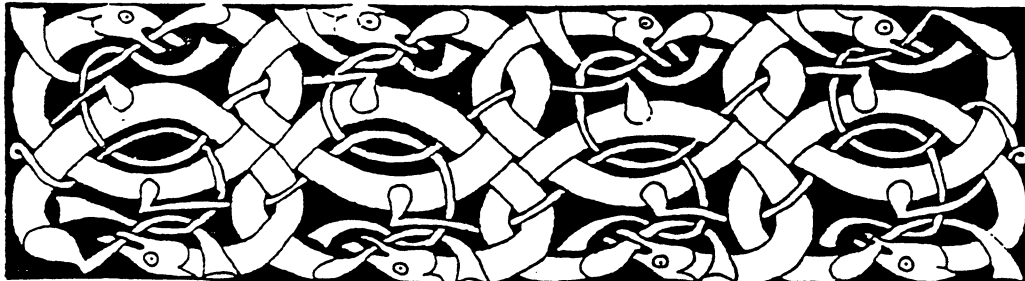
Any scribe who does a scroll that is not valid risks losing the honor of receiving future kingdom assignments.

2. Once you have a backlog assignment from Signet, contact the recipient and make sure that they do not have a scroll yet. Get any additional information they can supply (Royalty [were they King & Queen? or Prince & Princess?], name of event, sponsoring group, reasons for recognition). If you cannot complete this step, return the assignment to the Sylvan Signet

3. Complete scroll in compliance with Kingdom Standards (See Section V. It would be a gesture of kindness on your part to get the scrolls signed by the Royalty, but it is not being demanded of you. Most recipients would rather have an unsigned scroll ASAP than wait several extra months to receive one with signatures. The exception to this is if the recipient lives out of kingdom. There is very little chance for someone who now lives in Trimarisis to run into the Aethelmearc royalty who Awarded them Arms 10 years ago. Please get these scrolls signed. If you need assistance with this, let the Sylvan Signet know.

4. Deliver scroll - the Sylvan Signet can help with this if asked.

5. Contact the Sylvan Signet when the scroll is done *AND* delivered. It will only be removed from the list after verification that it is in the hands of the recipient.



Cori

IV. BECOMING A KINGDOM SCRIBE

Anyone who wishes to be assigned Kingdom scrolls may do so by fulfilling the following qualifications:

- A. Send a letter providing your modern name, address (postal and electronic, if available), and telephone number to the Sylvan Signet, along with your preferred amount of lead time, favorite styles, and any "special request" scrolls you would like to do.
- B. Familiarize the Sylvan Signet with your abilities via any one of the following:
 - 1. Show or send the Sylvan Signet a sample of your work. For illumination, this would consist of an uncalligraphed, blank border in an appropriately period style, suitable for use as an Award of Arms scroll. For calligraphy, any original sample in an appropriately period style is acceptable.
 - 2. Along with your letter (See Section III.B.1), include the name(s) of any scribal Laurel, Fleur, Sycamore, or Guildminister who will vouch for your skill level and reliability.
 - 3. Belong to a local Scribes' Guild and be assigned a Kingdom scroll directly by the Guildmaster of that Guild. (The Sylvan Signet would like those who follow this path to send in the letter requested in Section III.B.1, but it is not required.)
- C. Having accepted scroll assignments, you must do careful and authentic work, and complete and deliver scrolls in a timely manner.

V. SCROLL STANDARDS

Acceptable Kingdom scrolls meet these guidelines:

- A. They include the necessary information and spaces for appropriate signatures.
- B. They are made of suitable materials.
- C. Proper credit is given for all work. Please sign your work in pencil on the back. Calligraphy by (scribe X) and Illumination by (scribe Y) are fairly common ... and vague. The more information you give, the more you educate others.

Please include information like:

Calligraphy by (scribe) based on (manuscript)

Calligraphy by (scribe) in a (name of hand) script

Painted by (scribe) - someone else drew the layout and you painted it

Illumination copied from (manuscript/s or source/s) - if you trace a layout *

Illumination based on (manuscript) - if the layout is hand drawn, but based on an existing piece

Illumination inspired by (manuscript/s or style) - if you combine elements from period pieces and original designs

Illumination by (scribe) - should be used if the piece is an original design

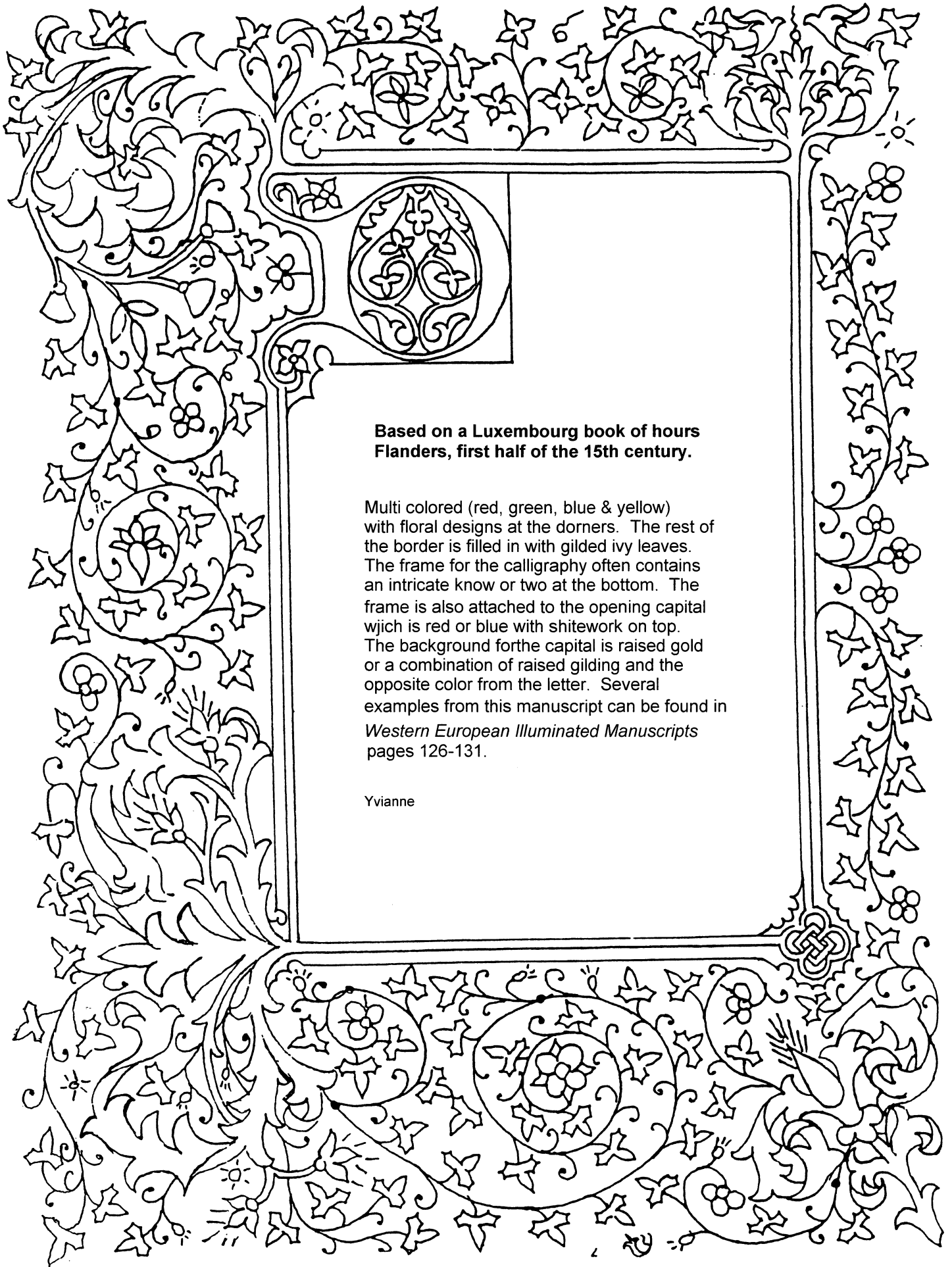
*Tracing is an acceptable method of creating scrolls, both in period and modernly. Plagiarism laws aside, the Society is based on the ideals of chivalry and honor. Please credit any work you trace.

D. They "look medieval" (like they came from a medieval manuscript rather than from the cover of a modern bodice-ripper or comic book).

E. They fit in standard-size picture frames.

F. They represent your best effort; ideally each piece should be better than your previous one.





**Based on a Luxembourg book of hours
Flanders, first half of the 15th century.**

Multi colored (red, green, blue & yellow) with floral designs at the corners. The rest of the border is filled in with gilded ivy leaves. The frame for the calligraphy often contains an intricate know or two at the bottom. The frame is also attached to the opening capital which is red or blue with whitework on top. The background for the capital is raised gold or a combination of raised gilding and the opposite color from the letter. Several examples from this manuscript can be found in *Western European Illuminated Manuscripts* pages 126-131.

Yvianne