

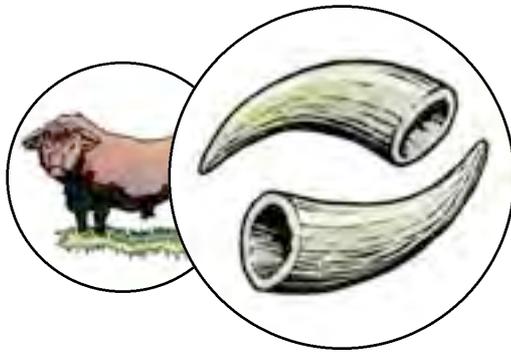
# THE SCRIPTORIUM



The Monks of Micklegate made beautiful books in a special room called a Scriptorium. The pages of the books were made from either parchment or vellum. Parchment was made from the skins of sheep or cows; vellum was made from the skins of very young calves.

Here are some of the strange things that the monks would have used in the Scriptorium to make their illustrated books. Can you guess what they were used for?

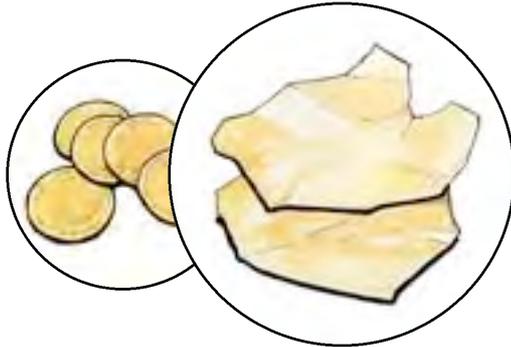




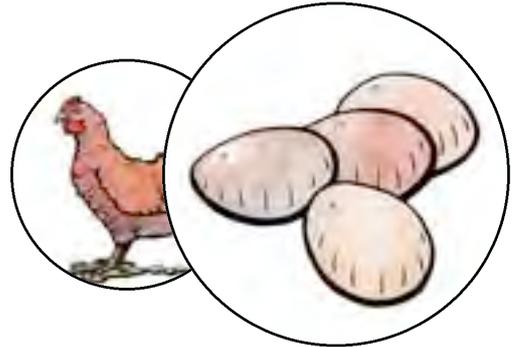
Bull horns - for holding red and black ink



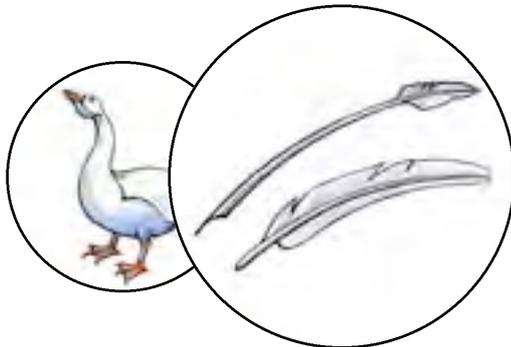
Animal fur - the finest fur is used to make brushes



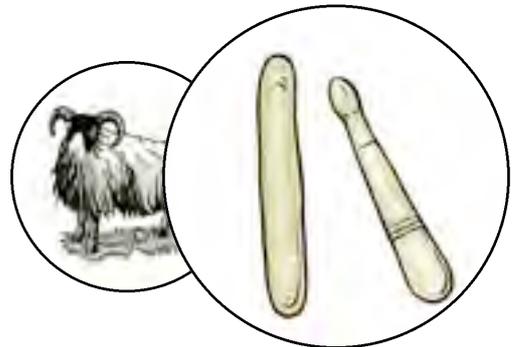
Gold coins - to be hammered into thin sheets to make gold leaf



Eggs - to be mixed with powdered pigments to make paint



Goose feather - for making quill pens used to write the text



Sheep bones - for making burnishers used to smooth down and polish the gold leaf



Mortar and pestle - used to mix the ingredients to make paints.



Insects, roots, plants and stones - to be crushed and turned into different coloured paints.

# IN THE SCRIPTORIUM

## First Make Your Ink!

The monks of Micklegate could not buy their ink from a shop; they had to make their own.

Did you know that the main ingredient of medieval black ink is a lumpy growth on an oak tree? These growths are caused by a gall wasp laying its egg into a growing bud of the tree, and are called *oak galls* or *oak apples*.

- 1) The scribe would first of all collect his ingredients:
  - oak galls
  - rain water, or water from a still pool, or wine or vinegar
  - Green vitriol - iron salts
  - Gum arabic - a gum from the acacia tree, still used today in making gum drops and marshmallows
- 2) Then he would grind up the oak galls and soak them in rain water for about three days.
- 3) He would then heat the mixture over the fire and boil until only a third of the water was left.
- 4) Then he would strain the liquid and stir in the iron salts.
- 5) Finally he added the gum arabic to thicken the ink, stirring all the time until the ink was cold.
- 6) The ink was then stored in a cold, damp place. It would need to be used quickly as it went off after three weeks.



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4



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## THE BOOK OF BEASTS

The Monks of Micklegate were very gifted artists. They produced a 'Book of Beasts' which described all kinds of real and imaginary animals. The creatures were painted using lots of rich colours and with gold leaf in the background which made the pictures glow.



God naming the animals

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1

3



2



4



5

1) **The Bonnacon**; when attacked it would discharge a horrible dung which could cover three acres and singe the hair off hunting dogs. 2) **The Hyena**. 3) **Cat and Mouse**. 4) **The Cinnamon Bird** in its nest made of the cinnamon plant, a much prized herb. 5) **The camel**.