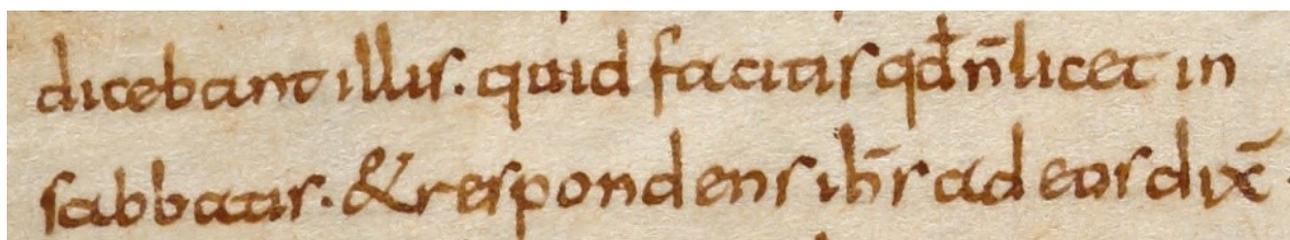# COMPETITION 6: CAROLINGIAN MINUSCULE



My transcription:

dicebant illis. quid facias q__d n___ (non?) licet in sabbatis. & (et) respondens il_is ad eas dix__ .

Having studied Latin GCSE, I recognise a few of these words, which has helped me to identify the start of new words and deduce some of the more abstract characters (particularly the letter 's') . These are some of the conclusions I have drawn from the "Carolingian minuscule" script of the 9th-century Brittany Gospel:

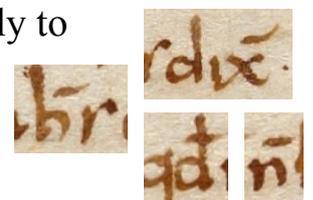| Carolingian minuscule | Modern day alphabet equivilent | My observations |
|---|---|---|
|  | a | Often joins to following letter. |
|  | b | |
|  | c | Joins to 'e' or 'i' in every case in this section. |
|  | d | |
|  | e | Sometimes joined to previous letter, (e.g 'c', but not 'r' or 'd'). Cross stroke is more slanted. |
|  | f | |
|  | i | No tittle is used over 'i'. |
|  | l | |
|  | n | |

| Carolingian minuscule | Modern day alphabet equivilent | My observations |
|---|---|---|
|  | o | |
|  | p | |
|  | q | |
|  | r | |
|  | s | 's' is the character that is least recognisable in this script, similar to 'r' but it is an ascender, and the top is more arched. |
|  | t | In this script 't' isn't an ascender, as we are used to seeing it in the modern alphabet. |
|  | u | |
|  | x | |

Other observations:

**Word spacing** - The words, as in many Latin manuscripts, don't have obvious spaces in between them, as the characters were spaced evenly across the line. However, slight hesitations/gaps between words are noticeable in this extract.

**Character spacing** - The script has a few characters joined for fluidity, but for the main part, each individual character is isolated and evenly spaced.

**The '~'** - Some form of abbreviation is used in this script (probably to speed up the writing, or to take up less space). In this small extract, there are four examples of '~'. I think they are probably common shortening of the endings used on these words (I would guess that 'ñ' is probably short for 'non').

**Use of ampersand (&)** - In the place of "et" (and), the scribe uses an ampersand, again - for similar reasons as using abbreviations.

**Punctuation** - The only use of punctuation (other than the ampersand) in this section is a full stop. They are used in the same way as we use them in modern literature, however the first word of a new sentence is not capitalised.