

## LINDISFARNE

Saturday, May 8, 1993

In England the green grass – short-cropped by sheep and lambs – grows everywhere: up to the edges of old stone walls, up to the edges of the ruins of the old Priory, and up to the very edge of the peninsula/island, forming a sharply demarcated shelf around the edge. I chose a place to sit on that edge, my feet on the small stones (yellow, brown, gray, white) which ran down as a beach to the ocean.

The slowly rolling waves quietly breaking on that stony beach. Each one rolled in very gradually, breaking from right to left for a long way around me.

I sat there for a long time. It was planned. I wanted to travel to the most eastern part of the country, sit down, and look as far out across the Atlantic Ocean as I could, to see as far as I could – the sky, the sea, uninterrupted. First I let my eyes wander out across a nearly still sea. Except for the small, regular breakers, the ocean was still – very little or no wind that day. My eyes were slowly, slowly, drawn – no matter where they started looking – toward the center of the horizon, and to a clear break in the clouds just above that part of the horizon.

Five minutes probably went by. Then I began to look far to the left: the stony beach stretched far out, then curved gently out into the green, then ended: but ones gaze carried out on that same line toward the horizon – the center of the horizon and that clear area of sky. Then I looked far to the right. The stony beach soon was dominated by ongoing green, close-cropped, covering a peninsula that curved out and around, then ended. That same curve was carried on by a distant peninsula across the water with – of all things – a castle on the curve. Then ones eye was borne out across the ocean to the horizon and at that same center – and that same bit of clear sky.

The beauty and the quiet was complete. Nor was it interrupted by occasional slow flights of gulls – which seemed to be always flying across my view from left to right or right to left. The sky was quiet, too. High puffy small clouds scattered from horizon to horizon with small patches of blue here and there. A long way up. And spread across a vast sky. As I looked up my gaze would go slowly to the small blue breaks in the clouds – looking far up through them, then down gradually to the sea, the center of the horizon and the small clear area - way off through that area across the ocean, curving around the globe and out into space.

It all came together there. No matter where I let my gaze wander it always came back to that same point. All became at one. A different peace gradually came over me.

I think probably thirty minutes went by. Then, thinking I'd spent enough time, I looked around. The green spread over the whole island. This island has a castle, too, and ruins of the old Priory. It is Lindisfarne. And now I know what brought these Monks to settle here. What better place to feel at one with the God whose Gospels were their work for hundreds of years?

- Peter Mott