



Lindisfarne Commission, 2000

LINDISFARNE COLLEGE, A PRESBYTERIAN PRIVATE BOYS' SCHOOL IN HASTINGS HAVE BEEN GOOD patrons to Dibble with three large works in their grounds. The first sculpture was situated outside the main office and attempted to give a focus and identity to the school.

DETAILS
Bronze
2700 x 900 x 900 mm
2000

FUN FACT
The head is a reference to King Oswald's head, a sacred relic. Originally Dibble made the head from polished bronze but, much later when the surface had tarnished, the artist gilded the head with gold sheet.

The first sculpture for Lindisfarne College was commissioned to be situated outside the main office, as a focus and identity for the school. Dibble studied some of the Gaelic stories that were founding tales of the College. His personal work at this time featured a series loosely referred to as the "geometric figures". They were human figures but highly abstracted with the reduction of the form to simple mathematical shapes of cones, squares, and spheres. Imagery and elements of Celtic stories were blended with this more abstract identity.

One element included, which had been utilized by the school as motif was that of St. Oswald's head, appearing on the crest of the school's distinctive red blazer. King Oswald established the first bishop at the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. The church Oswald built was destroyed by Viking raiders but was later rebuilt. Relics, including Oswald's head, were sacred artefacts of the church and were often protected by moving them to the English mainland temporarily, when attacks were imminent, and then returning them in more peaceful times.



Dibble combined this idea of keeping safe this religious relic along with the Celtic patterning and grafted them onto an abstracted figure. In the finished design he included Oswald's head abstracted in a manner somewhat reminiscent of a head stylised by Brancusi contained in a square, held safe, and incorporated within the figure, suggestively placed near the heart. It was initially highly polished, to make the head pronounced, and in 2018 the head became gilded when this became a common technique in the artist's practice.



The pattern work modelled onto the surface of the figure was taken from designs in Ireland's famous Book of Kells.

