# WRITING ON THE HAND IN INK: A LATE MEDIEVAL INNOVATION IN FEVER CHARMS IN ENGLAND

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This paper reviews the types of charms employed to relieve fevers in medieval England from the Anglo-Saxon period to the end of the fifteenth century with attention to the manuscript contexts in which the charms are found. In the second part, the paper focuses more closely on charms and practical rituals for healing fevers that involve inscribing and consuming communion hosts. It argues that the method of writing sacred words on the hand with ink to be washed into a potion and consumed came into favour in the late Middle Ages at a time when writing on wafers was becoming problematic.

**Keywords**: verbal charms, textual amulets, medieval medicine, writing, fevers, medieval manuscripts

## INTRODUCTION

Unlike charms to stop bleeding, which people expected to take effect quickly, fever charms offered relief from the symptoms of a sickness with an expectation that it would have an effect over time, often days, from the time of the performance. Unlike charms for toothache, which prevented painful attacks in the future, fever charms and some lengthy religious rituals including masses, addressed the possibility that the patient might die if the current fever did not abate. The variation known as the *Petrus ante portam* acted as a preventative. It relied on a narrative formula or *historiola* (Roper 2005, Bozoky 2003) that could be written down for use as a textual amulet (Skemer 2006). The amuletic use may be the reason that this charm was so popular that throughout the period it was repeatedly appended to or embedded in other fever charms.

Fever charms found in medieval English manuscripts differ from other healing charms in at least three ways: First, they employ a wide variety of forms and types of formulas, ranging from lengthy exorcistic rituals to inscriptions on the hand with ink; second, fever charms confronted an illness which healers

of all kinds understood to be more complex than many other illnesses treatable by charms[1]; third, the fever charms depending on the consumption of liturgical phrases on communion hosts or wafers seem to have flourished in English manuscripts to an extraordinary degree over the whole of the medieval period from the Anglo-Saxons before 1000 through to 1500.


## FEVERS IN CHARMS

Medieval concepts of fever, whether of Anglo-Saxon, Norman, or later medieval origins, did not correspond to modern ones. The most obvious difference between ancient and medieval versus modern views of fever(s) is that medieval fevers were conceived by the medical authorities to be a disease, rather than a symptom of various diseases.[2] Fevers could manifest themselves as either hot or cold. Patients suffered repeated attacks alternating chills and feverishness over several days (Wilson 1993: 384-388). Modern English retains the phrase, "chills and fevers". Fevers were described in the medieval medical literature according to their recurring patterns, for example, daily (*quotidian/quotidiana*), every two (*biduana*) or three days (*tertian/tertiana*), every four days (*quartan/quartiana*).[3] From late antiquity and the early medieval period, those who cared for the sick understood that fevers often took the form of cyclical episodes of alternating chills and high heat. [4]

   In charms the cyclical types stood for the names of fevers, which were conceived as evils, demons, or foreign invaders that could be exorcised by Christian formulas.[5] Moreover, charms extended the number of the cyclical fevers beyond the four types common to medical sources, naming seven types, often giving the names of the demon sisters, but also continuing to as many as twelve cyclical types (e.g., Louis 1980: 167). In one case, in a fifteenth-century manuscript, a charm intended to relieve a tertian fever states that the treatments start early on the day of an attack.[6] However, in charm titles, specific applications were often reduced to general terms, such as, "for fevers," "for all fevers" or "all manner of fevers," "against fevers" (*contra febres*), or "for fevers cold and hot." The English word "access" (or "axes") referred to the abrupt onset of recurring attacks of fevers.[7]


## CHARMS AGAINST FEVERS

Roughly speaking, in manuscripts from England eleven categories of charms and longer rituals to curb fevers circulate during the medieval period. Distinct

motifs were often linked with each other in ways that reflect the cultural beliefs and sensibilities of a particular time. Thus, the contents surrounding fever charms, their popularity, and the mode of performance of a motif often changed over the centuries. In this section, I survey the range of charms for fevers that appear in the medieval manuscripts of England. In the next two sections, I aim to investigate how the three-fold verbal formulas that were written on hosts (communion wafers) in "wafer charms" might have come to be written in ink on the hands of fever sufferers.

Charms and rituals to relieve fevers are found in manuscripts of England written in Latin, Old English, Anglo-Norman French, and Middle English. The various languages do not necessarily signal historical shifts in the popularity of charms, although they sometimes point to different contexts for their use. Latin persists throughout the period as a language of charms, and charms in French and English appear in manuscripts alongside Latin versions.

The categories of fever charms that I have identified here do not correspond simply to verbal motifs or motif-types of charms, as understood by charms scholars.[8] Thus, in order to include, as far as possible, a full range of medieval verbal charms for fevers,[9] the categories below designate not only verbal formulas, but also efficacious images, and material rituals. I have noted the appeal to saints generally in one category, but also have discussed Architriclinus and the Seven Sleepers separately. Accordingly, a rough list of motifs for fever charms in manuscripts from England will include: (1) mythic attackers, (2) conjuration (exorcism) of cyclical fevers, (3) conjuration (exorcism) of fever sisters, (4) Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, (5) evocation of the cross and triumphant Christ,[10] (6) Christ trembling, (7) sacred names, unknown words, and letters, (8) saints, especially Peter (*Petrus ante portam*),[11] (9) stick ritual/Architriclinus, (10) writing on wafers, sage leaves, apples, etc., (11) writing on the hand in ink. These categories can be illustrated with representative examples.

Charms to relieve fevers were available in England before 1000 C.E. Charms and remedies for fevers implicate elves in the Old English *Bald's Leechbook*, *Leechbook III* (Hall 2007: 121-122) and *Lacnunga*. "Dweorh " which could be translated simply "dwarf" was also an Old English term for "fever" for which we have a protective charm.[12] The name suggests an early etiological association with a mythical attacker. This charm opens with elaborate instructions that the names of the Seven Sleepers be written on hosts, as discussed below; then it abruptly shifts to a metrical charm (*galdor*) featuring a dynamic mythic attacker (*inspiden wiht*) and subsequently his sister. The metrical charm was to be spoken into the ears and over the head of the feverish person and hung round the neck as an amulet.[13]

A long clerical ritual, in a twelfth-century manuscript containing works attributed to Pope Gregory the Great, conjures the fevers, named according to the patterns of recurring attacks, that is, daily, two-day, three-day or four-day (Appendix no. 1).[14] The list continues without a break, 'five-day, six-day, seven-day, eight,' adding 'and up to the ninth generation' (*et usque ad nonam generationem*).  In this enumeration, the fever types are conceived as a family, generations of fevers, as if related in a family tree.[15] The cure is brought about by a series of conjurations that exorcise the fever, invoking, in turn, the Trinity and Mary, the mother of God; the seventy holy names of God; the powers of the heavens, all saints and creation.

The notion that cyclical fevers were evils and were generated in families resembles conceptions of fevers as sisters, or demons.[16] Latin prayers with other liturgical matter in Vatican Palatinus latinus MS 235[17] identify the fevers by their cyclical names and command them not to harm the fever sufferer. These prayers invoke the names of the Seven Sleepers (twice), the Trinity, Holy Mary, all the saints and several named saints including St. Sigismund.  This insular collection of prayers goes on to identify the chills and fevers (*frigores et febres*) as the seven evil sisters. Their individual names are concealed in code, but they are conjured directly "from whatever region you are" (*de quacunque natione estis*) that "you" do not have the power to harm this servant of God who is named, "but you should return from whence you have come" (*sed redeatis, unde uenistis*).[18] The fever sisters can be found five hundred years later in England. In a late fifteenth century manuscript in a charm labelled "a good prayer," we read,

> . . . I conjure (*coniuro*) you who are seven sisters, the first Daliola, the second Vestulia, the third Fugalia, the fourth Suferalie, the fifth Affrecta, the sixth Lilia, the seventh Luctalia through the Father and Son and Holy Spirit and through the day of days and through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ and through all the angels, archangels and through the apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins and all the saints of God though all the powers of heaven and earth and sea and all that are in them . . . [19]

Their names vary.  In another, longer, more carefully written version of the charm from the fifteenth century, they are conjured as Ylya, Saytulia, Viole, Sursoralia, Seneya, Deneya, and Emyra in that order one to seven (Appendix no. 4). Moreover, this charm, like its early predecessor conjures the fevers from whatever nation (*nacione*) or world (*mundo*) they come from. It then addresses the fevers by their type-names starting with one-day, or daily recurring fever (*cotidianis)* up to a twelve-day fever (*duodecim*).[20]

The motif of the seven saints known as the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus opposes the demonic fever cycles and seven sisters.[21] The Sleepers' names were

invoked in prayers, written down on textual amulets, and consumed on small communion wafers. In the Anglo-Saxon charm for fever (*dweorh*) mentioned above, the first part of that two-part charm calls for the names of the Seven Sleepers to be written on communion wafers. It is likely, since fevers were seen to cause disruption to normal sleep, that this perception coalesced with the popularity of the saints' legend to appropriate this motif for use against fevers. This charm stipulates that each name be written on separate hosts "such as one is accustomed to offer" (*lytle oflætan swylce man mid ofrað*), meaning those offered at the mass.[22] The scribe joins this Sleepers narrative to a poetic mythic narrative in Old English. The mythic narrative is to be recited in the sick person's ears and over her or his head, then an unmarried young person is to tie the written text around the neck of the sick. This amulet should remain in place for three days, after which time, we are told, the client's health will improve. Although the two rituals, writing the names on wafers, on the one hand, and recitation and application of a written amulet, on the other, are drawn from different traditions, their joint use does not trouble the Anglo-Saxon scribe.[23]

During this period, the names of the Sleepers are sometimes changed, not only because spellings are misunderstood, such as Cerofyon for Serapion, but also because the lists descend from different sources. In one late tenth or early eleventh century manuscript, two different strings of names appear. The charm ends, "afterwards drink these names, written in sage leaves" (*postea bibat ista nomina in foliis saluie descripta*), + Achilleusus . + actellidis . + Diomedis . + Eugenius . + Stephan*us* .+ Sepati*us* . + probati*us* . + Quiric*us*. + maximian*us* .+ malch*us* . + martinian*us*. + dionisi*us* . + Ioh*annis* . + Serapion . Constantin*us*.[24] The names through Quiricus/Quiriacus correspond in part to those used by Gregory of Tours.[25] The rest—Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Dionisius, Iohannis, Serapion, and Constantinus—appear most commonly in early English manuscripts.[26]

Many fever charms invoke Christ's triumph over death in the crucifixion with the acclamation, "Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ commands" (*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*[27]). In addition, the power of the cross itself to heal fevers is expressed through the written sign as well as the verbal invocation.[28] A charm written in a twelfth-century hand in a manuscript dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries[29] brings together Christ and the sign of the cross with the words "Depart, fevers" (*fugite febres*) to be written on a slip of parchment (*carta*) and hung around the neck of the sufferer.[30] The devotional invocation of the cross, "Behold the cross of the Lord, be gone, evil powers" *Ecce crucem domini, fugite partes aduerse*)[31] occurs in charms against fevers of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.[32] Yet Franz docu-

ments an address to the cross (*Crux Christi*) in a ninth-century benediction to free a "servant of God" from fevers.[33]

In sharp contrast to these early evocations of the triumphant power of Christ's crucifixion and its representation in the cross  stands the image of Christ trembling (or not trembling) at the crucifixion. The formula, which has a remarkably long life, associates the fevers (*frigora*, literally "chills") with Christ shivering.[34] The healing power lies in Christ's trembling (or lack of trembling) before Pilate or the Jews.  The trembling is analogous to the chills that were part of attacks of fevers ("access" or "ague") and these are resolved through the dialogue with Christ (Roper 2005: 102-103). This motif becomes the most popular fever charm in the English language during the post-medieval period. Davies (1996: 22-23) and Roper have shown that the charm, which seems to have emerged in the seventeenth century (Roper 2005: 101), survives through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Sacred names (*nomina sacra*) and unknown words and symbols (*voces magicae*) also serve as apotropaic motifs in charms against fevers. The "name above all names" is Christ; the acclamations (*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*) reinforce its authoritative, kingly power . In an ecclesiastical manuscript of the early twelfth century,[35] the names of the evangelists and the Seven Sleepers and the sign of the cross constitute an amulet to be kept on the person as a protection.[36] Fevers can also be sent away under the sign of the cross with words that name their own effects:  "+ I burn + I freeze + I flee + I feel +" (+ *Ardeo* + *algeo* + *fugio* + *sentio* +).[37]

In addition, Greek and Hebrew names for Christ and God were called on to cast out demons.  A long charm in a fifteenth-century manuscript casts out demons[38] with the formula, "In the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit Amen. + on + on + on + on + on + In my name saints cast out demons + Otheos + Accanatos [for Athanatos] + hyskyros +." "On" means "all" expressing the unity of the One. The other names are transliterations from Greek: "the God," "the Eternal,"  "the Mighty." This charm also names the evangelists and the Seven Sleepers and includes a supplicatory prayer addressed to Christ that asks that the woman (*maritam*) carrying this amulet (*hoc breue*) be free of fevers and all the plots of the devil, illusions, and enemies, visible and invisible, ending with the *Christus vincit* plus eleven repetitions of "on."

Thus, sacred names derive from unfamiliar languages, but include abbreviations of divine words or phrases, or employ signs and exotic characters. A fever remedy (*wiþ dweorh*) in the Anglo-Saxon *Lacnunga*, combines "+ T + þ + T + N + ω + T + UI + M + ωA" to be written along the arms and accompanied by the administration of a medicinal herb drink and the invocation of two early Irish saints.[39] The crosses with T's for Tau are probably meant for apotropaic

markings such as in Exodus 12:7. The alpha and omega, here reversed (ωA), referring to God and Christ (Apoc. 1:8, 21:6, 22:13), appear on Greek healing amulets of the fifth and sixth centuries (Jones 2016: 66), as well as those of the Anglo-Saxons.[40]

Toward the end of the medieval period a variety of *nomina sacra* for God or Christ also appear in charms for fever. Often such names appear among the efficacious words on hosts, for example, Alpha and Omega, Emanuel, and Tetragrammaton.[41] In another fifteenth-century example, word clusters to be inscribed separately progress sequentially from Hebrew to Greek to Latin: "+ E + Eles + Sabaoth +*,* Adonay + Alpha and oo + Messias, + Pastor + Agnus + Fons +."[42]

Since antiquity, fevers had been relieved by diminishing formulas such as abracadabra (Dornseiff 1922: 64).[43] This technique continues, for example, on a thirteenth-to-fourteenth-century written amulet (*scedula*) against fever, where letters are dropped off somewhat irregularly (*braccalleus . braccalleu . braccall* [sic] + *.braccal . + . bracca . + bracc + brac + .bar + bea + be*). The scribe leaves off the sequence before it finishes and turns to *Christus vincit* etc.[44]

Thus, in the medieval period, names (known and unknown) call for and bespeak power, functioning variously as invocations, declarations of divine presence, word magic, or as signs of authority like seals attached to documents.

Fever charms that invoke the power of saints, as we have seen in the case of the Seven Sleepers, also call upon the apostles and evangelists, who are frequently named in fever charms. Other individual saints in fever charms include Machutus, Victoricius, John the evangelist, Michael the archangel, John the Baptist, and Agatha, through allusions to her veil and motto. Peter was by far the most important figure, after Christ, in rituals and charms to cure fevers. The biblical narrative of Christ healing Peter's mother-in-law from a fever (Matt. 8:14, Luke 4:38-39) opens a long exorcistic ritual to cure fevers that also conjures the fever sisters and the cyclical fevers.

> + And [entering] with them into the house of Simon Peter, Jesus saw his [Peter's] kinswoman lying sick and feverish. But standing over her he called out the fever and immediately it departed and she served Him. Syon + Syon + Syon. In memory of your beloved son, ruler of the world, free .N.[45]

The Latin charm known as "Peter before the gates" (*ante portas* or *ante portam*)[46] narrates an encounter and dialogue between Peter, who suffers from a fever and Christ who cures him and grants the efficacy of a written amulet against fevers. Variants place Peter lying or standing before gates in different locations: *ante portas Ierusalem*,[47] *ante portam Latinam,*[48] *ante portam Galilee*.[49]

Occasionally, Peter suffers fevers on a stone and the *super petram* motif and dialogue functions as the *historiola* to cure fevers, although it is most often favoured to prevent toothache[50]. The practice of wearing or carrying textual amulets written on parchment or paper was one of the most common forms of protection and healing through words (Skemer 2006:1-19).[51] This charm narrative of Peter's cure with its resulting textual amulet seems to have become an essential addition to certain verbal fever rituals.[52]

A charm invoking the elusive saint, Architriclinus, incorporates a ritual that appears in British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112v (Thorndike 1923-1934, 1: 725-26). The ritual requires breaking a green stick or stem of hazel in two and rejoining the parts with an incantation.[53] In an early example (Appendix, no. 5), the ritual and charm were used against an enemy who has held back too much wine from his cellar.[54] The episode calls to mind the wine steward at the marriage of Cana. His title, *architriclinus*, in the vulgate New Testament (John 2:9) supplies the name of the central figure, subsequently the saint, in these charms. In the fever charms, the rejoining of the stem is the miraculous sign of the cure.[55] In a fifteenth-century version in English, French, and Latin, the joining or "kissing" of the joined stems becomes analogous to the priest at the high altar "making" the body of Christ or God "with his hands." I have translated into modern English:

> Take and shear a hazel [stem] off a growing hazel plant and when you shear it say a pater noster in the name of God and afterward say this charm that follows: 'Architricline sat on high, holding a branch of hazel in his hands and said, 'as truly as the priest makes God in his hands even so truly I command and conjure you, virgin branch of hazel, that you embrace in love and deliver this man or woman from this kind of fever.' In the name of the Father & Son & Holy Spirit amen. The Father is the beginning and end, the Son is truth, the Holy Spirit is the cure. In the name of the Father and Son' etc. And have the sick say 5 Paternosters in the worship of the 5 wounds of our Lord.[56]

In one Latin version, the two virgin stems are conjured to join by kissing just as Christ nursed from and was kissed by the unpolluted Virgin.[57] In another, the seven kisses Lady Saint Marie bestowed on Christ on the cross cures the fevers, while the hazel stem ritual serves as a sign of the cures ("in tokenyng of his hele"). This charm appears as one of several such fever charms in a manuscript belonging to the infirmarer of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary's Coventry.[58] This last charm makes clear that when the stems have joined, the healer takes that part where they were joined and, having cut off the ends, places the growing twig in a drink for the sick. In another Latin charm in the same manuscript,

the newly joined piece, once cut from the rest, should be hung around the neck of the patient for seven days (Hunt 1990: 360, note 115). This last method was favoured by the physician Thomas Fayreford.[59] Fifteenth-century Middle English charms in which Archidecline/Seynt architeclyn/Sent arche de clyne sat on a bank or bench holding a hazel stem are short and unelaborate (Roper 2005: 93-94); one has explicitly been repurposed for a horse that is "wranch"(*sic*, wrenched or sprained?).[60]

## FEVER CHARMS WRITTEN ON COMMUNION WAFERS, PLANT LEAVES, APPLES, ALMONDS, AND PAPER

Adolf Franz called attention to a tenth-century benediction performed not only over salt and water, but also over apples or cheese to bring relief of the sufferings of chills and fevers (Franz 1909: II. 477-8). Swallowing, as one did when receiving pax bread or the host, was a fundamental way of accepting the power of salvation and healing.[61] In England during the long medieval period, the most frequently recurring fever charm in the manuscripts required performance over consecutive days and involved administering wafers[62] or sage leaves, apples or less obviously edible commodities, not excluding parchment and paper.

For use in charms, communion wafers were prepared by "writing" on them liturgical phrases, crosses, and sometimes pricking a hole. The "writing" in some cases may only have consisted of making the sign of the cross over the wafers while speaking the required words. Much longer ecclesiastical rituals to relieve fever sufferers existed very early. A mass devoted to St. Sigismund to cure fevers was mentioned by Gregory of Tours in the sixth century and votive masses have been identified outside of England between the eighth and the twelfth centuries (Paxton 1994: 26). In England an elaborate ritual, including masses, appears in the Anglo-Saxon medical writings.[63] However, a short, private, repeatable ritual employing inscribed wafers or other materials survived as a fever charm in England through the fifteenth century in manuscripts written in Old English, Anglo-Norman French, Latin, and Middle English.[64]

Instructions varied regarding the specific words to be written. The customary invocation of the The customary invocation of the Trinity is supplemented by phrases and divided to be written on three hosts: *Pater est alpha, Filius est vita, Spiritus Sanctus est remedium.*[65] Another trinitarian formula to be written on three hosts was *El elye sabaoth, Adonay alpha and ω, Messias, pastor, agnus fons.* The power of the cross to overcome fevers is conveyed by crosses inserted between the holy names usually in red ink, as in other charms. In addition to the crosses and Latin phrases, making a point or prick in the wafer

is indicated in one group of fifteenth-century charms in Middle English.[66] One Middle English example reads,

> ffor ye feueres . Take .iii. oblyes & wryte, *pater est alpha et oo* vpon
> oon & mak a poynte. and lat ye secke ete yt ye fyrste day. & the .ii.
> day wryte on yat oyer obely, *ffilius est vita* & make ii. poyntes.
> & gyfe ye seeke to ete. and on ye iii day wryte on yat oyer obly,
> *spiritus sanctus est remedium* & make .ii[i]. poyntes. & gyfe ye
> seke to ete. & ye fyrste day late ye seek saye a *pater noster* or  he ete
>  it, and ye ii. day .ii. *pater noster*. ar he ete it, and ye iii day
> iii *pater noster*, & a crede.[67]

The points ("poyntes") sometimes designated as one, two, or three may have served to mark which wafer was to be dispensed on each of the three successive days. A more likely possibility is that in these late medieval charms, the stabs represented the wounds received by Christ on the cross, as they were invoked in charms and appeared on amulets.[68] A fifteenth-century verse describes the two sides of the host "On one side well written/ On the other side lightly struck."[69] A fifteenth century charm from a vernacular medical collection (Morrissey 2014) is quite explicit about how one should write in three hosts (hostys): "In the first host, write around the edge, *Pater + est + Sanitas +* and a knot (nudde)," probably a dot of ink, which like the crosses in the manuscript could be in red ink, resembling the wounds.[70]

The practicing physician Thomas Fayreford[71] does not mention making points, but recommends a ritual of first writing (how we are not told) on three wafers (*oblata*), which are then moistened in holy water and given to the patient early in the morning.  Afterwards, on each of the three days of treatment, the patient is also administered an herb drink mixed with beer.[72] In this way, the popular wafer charm could be tailored to the individual healer's practices or, as elsewhere, simply copied with minimum ritual or medicinal elaboration. The wafers in these charms were probably understood to be consecrated hosts because the power to heal largely resided in the wafers having been prepared for the Eucharist by a priest.[73]

However, various materials conveyed the holy words to the sick. For example, three Anglo-Norman charms in the same manuscript require inscriptions on apples[74] and *oblies*.[75] Fever charms written on plant leaves, especially sage, also employing trinitarian formulas, such as, *christus tonat, angelus nunciat, iohannes predicat*,[76] flourished in Middle English manuscripts during the fifteenth century (Keiser 1998: 3869). The sage plant (*salvia officinalis*) had appeal for use in charms because it was used in accompanying herbal drinks against fevers.[77] One charm reads, "Afterwards, let him drink these names [namely,

the Seven Sleepers'] written on sage leaves."[78] The Latin name *salvia* or *salgie*, could be associated with the adjective *salvus*, meaning "sound, unharmed, safe," and also meant spiritually "saved" in theological contexts, as in Psalm 17:14, *salvum me fac*.[79]

Other materials were options for use in these charms. An apple, divided and inscribed, was used very early instead of wafers. Such an alternative might be needed for healing where there was no easy access to a priest, as in female orders or laymen's home surroundings, and would have worked well in a remedy for a Jew (Saye 1935). We find, "Take three wafers or three almonds, write with a pen's point upon the first wafer . . ." [80] A fifteenth-century charm reads, "Write these nine words on paper and give the sick a drink of one word + *Christus* +." [81] The practice of writing holy words or crosses on some medium, then washing the words off into a medicinal drink was also an old one in England (Pettit 2001, 1: 16, 17).

Within a personal collection of medieval craft and medicinal texts from the middle of the fifteenth century, Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd.5.76, [82] on folio 24r, a rubric reads, "here beginnes medicines for all maneres of feveres proved." Under this title appear medicinal recipes and one charm to cure fevers to be discussed below. In the same manuscript, a Latin fever charm appears on folio 5v. It reads in translation:

> A good charm for the fevers proved. In the name of the father + and the son + and the holy spirit + Amen + *The Father is alpha + the Son is life + the Holy Spirit is the remedy* + This is the triumphal title + *Jesus Nazarenus King of the Jews* + I command (conjure) you fevers + daily + two-day + three-day + four-day + five + six + seven + eight + nine + that you depart instantly without delay from this servant of god, male or female, N [give the person's name] who carries upon his or her body that highest name that is above every name. + *Christ conquers + Christ rules + Christ reigns* + Christ in his great mercy and piety +. Free your servant, male or female, from every type of diverse fevers; everywhere always may He guard me day and night Amen.[83]

The opening formula of this charm corresponds to those written on hosts—except there are no wafers or hosts mentioned here. The rhetorical climax of this charm is an exorcism of fevers, "Depart instantly without delay" (*statim exeatis sine mora*) from this servant of God, who is named. Nine fevers are exorcised by name, their names being precisely the names of their cyclical types. The patient is to carry the divine name represented in the threefold acclamation of the power of Christ, *Christus vincit+Christus imperat+Christus regnat* with him

as a textual amulet.[84] The scribe of Cambridge, University Library MS Dd.5.76, fols. 1-27v evidently thought highly of this charm, because at the end of his list of fever remedies, he reminds his reader that he has already recorded this "fair charm for the fevers" and tells exactly where it is located twenty pages previous. Nevertheless, in this favorite charm, the scribe has relied on speaking the liturgical words in the place of writing on wafers. Here, instead of consuming the words on wafers, the patient carries an amulet. The production of an amulet seems reminiscent of the popular "Peter before the gates" (*Ante portas)* formula.

## WRITING IN INK ON THE RIGHT HAND

The scribe of the Cambridge manuscript includes a second fever charm, which requires writing on the hand, washing and drinking sacred words and signs composed in a ritual performed three days in a row. The right hand of the healing saint was considered sacred and a means of salvation (Van Dam 1993: 259). Moreover, Christ first took the hand of Peter's mother-in-law, when he healed her of fevers: "he touched her hand and the fever left her"/ *tetigit manum ejus, et dimisit eam febris* in Mathew 8:15; also "And approaching he raised her, after taking her hand, and at once the fever left her"/ *Et accedens elevavit eam, apprehensa manu ejus : et continuo dimisit eam febris* at Mark 1:31. This scene is represented in an early charm (Appendix no. 2), without mention of Christ's act of touching the hand, but with emphasis on the spoken command as in Luke 4:38-39. The Cambridge manuscript ink charm, written in Middle English, reads,

> Take and write in his reght hande with ynke iii. crosses and in ilk[each] a quarter of his hande write + *xpc vincit* + *xpc regnat* + *xpc imperat* + and afte[r] on þe same hand write + *on pater* + *on filius* + on *spiritus sanctus* and wesche of þat writing in a litell water and drink it. þe seconde day þou schall write [f. 24v] +*on ar[i]es* + *on ouis* + *on Agnus* + and drinke þa*t* as þe tother day yan*ne* Write þus + *on leo*+ *on vitulus* + *on vermis* + and drink þa*t* as þe tother day.[85]

This medicine appears in the middle of a list of eight medicines, all for fevers. The fever remedies form a group introduced by its own title.[86] The two preceding recipes are for drinks prepared from plants; the charm is introduced as "another", so the scribe evidently thought of it as a third drink.

A comparable charm, requiring the healer to write on the right hand of the patient, appears in London, British Library, Harley MS 2558 in a part of the

manuscript written in the late fourteenth century. It appears within a cluster of familiar charms for fevers.[87] The Harley charm requires the healer to write on the right hand with ink for fevers. It, however, is written in Latin, which I have translated, except for the sacred words.

> On the right palm of the one suffering fevers make three crosses [and write] *Domine, christus vincit + christus regnat + christus imperat +*. And afterwards in the middle of his palm, write + *On pater + On filius + On spiritus sanctus +*. Then wash off the writing with holy water and have the patient drink it. And the next day write *On aries + On ovis + On agnus +* [that is, ram, ewe, and lamb]; and the third day write +*On leo + On vitulus + On vermis +* [lion, calf, worm]. Then it is proved, and without a doubt he will be freed from fevers.[88]

The Cambridge manuscript charm in English could be a rough translation of this Latin one.[89] But English is not the only vernacular language in which we find this charm. An Anglo-Norman version appears in a manuscript probably written for the private use of a gentry family in the last half of the fourteenth century (Hanna 1998: 108).

> For fevers, a good charm. Take the right hand of the sick person and make a cross with your right thumb on this hand and say 'In the name of the Father + and Son + and Holy Spirit Amen.' Then make the sign of the cross three times with the same thumb and each time say, 'Christ conquers + Christ reigns + Christ rules +' and then write in ink the first day on the same hand of the sick, ' + On Father + On Son + On Holy Spirit +.' The second day do as before and write '+ On Ewe + On Ram + On Lamb +'. The third day do as before and write 'On Lion + On Calf + On Worm +' Thus it will stop the attack of fever through the grace of God, and it is a good and proven charm for each type of fever. But do not charm anyone except as an act of charity.[90] [translated]

A charm for fevers to be written in ink on the hand appears in a fifteenth-century manuscript that contains various medical texts, benedictions, *experimenta*, and charms.[91] Sometimes this scribe uses codes to hide words.[92] The ink charm, like the Harley one, is written in Latin. Translated, it reads,

> Take the right hand of the sick and in the palm write three [crosses ?] and each time say, *Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ commands*. And afterwards in the same palm, write + *On pater + On filius + On Iesus*. And next dissolve what has been written with water and let the sick drink

it. On the next day, write +*On* + *aries* + *On* + *ovis* + *On* + *agnus*. And similarly let him drink it. On the third day + *On leo* + *On vitulus* + *On vermis* +. And again have the sick drink without question. On the third day she (or he) will be cured. In the name of the father, etc.[93]

The *Petrus ante portas* with its amulet follows immediately. Another charm to write on and eat three wafers follows on the same folio; however, the word "oblates" for wafers in the instructions is coded into stacked dots leaving only "bl" legible.[94]

Writing sacred words on wafers, plant leaves, or apples to be consumed over days to cure a feverish patient or help a woman in childbirth has been well documented (Keiser 1998; Hunt 1990; Jones and Olsan 2015). The very act of writing acquires significance in these rituals as the means of conveying divine healing through words to the believing Christian. Not only were the words, written or spoken, a sign of divine presence, but the cross too, in gesture and written sign, did the same work as the sacred words and names in fever charms.[95] To the fever victim, the cross made Christ's protective power visible and present.

Writing Christian symbols on the body as a means of curing fevers appears in Anglo-Saxon fever remedies ("Write this along the arms against fever").[96] We also find directions for writing words to be washed off into a drink.[97] The Greek symbols for alpha and omega within an array of crosses, as found in British Library, Harley MS 585 (fol. 167r), could be written on a dish or paten and washed off. In the same ritual, longer texts were subsequently sung over the drink. The ritual required that the written words be washed into the herbs mixed with water, then sacred wine was added to it. The medium in which they were written is not mentioned in the Harley manuscript (*Lacnunga*). In the other Anglo-Saxon source, *Bald's Leechbook* (London, British Library, Royal MS 12.D.XVII, fol. 51r), the words are washed off with holy water into a drink made of herbs and ale and fresh water. In both these remedies, the performers focused on the words being consumed. The words were conveyed to the sick simultaneously with the healing power of the herbs and holy water. All parts of the recipe were medicinal, for body and soul were not conceived of separately. But in these early texts, even though ink was certainly available, at least to the scribes who recorded the recipes, the texts do not mention ink as an ingredient and writing symbolically may not have implied the necessity for it.

However, ink is specified in a fifteenth-century charm designated "A medicine for the access" (*axes*), that is, attacks of fevers: "Take a sawge (i.e., sage) lef that is not pierced and write thereon with a penne with ink"[98] (Appendix no. 7). The leaf, the pen, and the ink indicate a new materiality, even though the central feature remains the consumption of holy words containing the power

or virtue. The clean sage leaves, "not previously pierced," might mean they now carry pen-pricks with ink as the means of writing on the leaf. The patient takes the pricked leaves by mouth. Additional prayers are prescribed for each new leaf, and, as with other fever remedies, this ritual is repeated over three days. [99] This method moves a step away from the wafer charms, which were the most widespread and long-lasting remedies for fevers throughout the medieval period in England.

In Harley MS 2558 and in Cambridge, University Library MS Dd.5.76, the ink charms follow similar Latin versions of the Letter of Aristotle to Alexander. This Letter was part of the Secret of Secrets material; it circulated as knowledge useful to a ruler or great man. In its expanded forms, such knowledge ranged from how to take care of one's health to how to choose advisors and carry on war. Its subjects ranged from astronomy and alchemy to craft and medical recipes. All kinds of knowledge were thought to be suitable for the would-be educated man. The compiler of Cambridge, University Library MS Dd. 5.76, fols. 1- 27v evidently thought of his little book as a suitable collection of knowledge texts, even though his recipes dealt with inks, colours, and glues to decorate books and medical cures for cankers, sores, gout, and remedies for fevers, including two charms.

In the Harley collection, on the other hand, a wealth of fever charms are crowded together in various hands with an herbal remedy and a toothache charm.[100] The first six seem to be in the same hand: (1) *Petrus stabat ante portas* (2) *Crux sacra + Crux splendida + Crux salua . . .* (3) *In monte cebon requiescunt vii dormientes* (4) *+ Hel + Heloy +ya* (5) *in dextera palmi . . . fac 3es cruces* (6) *In nomine . . . Christus vincit + christus regnat.* (7) *In nomine . . . on . + on . + on .* invokes holy names. (8) *In nomine . . . christus vincit + christus regnat + christus imperat* conjures the fevers by types. (9) *Cape et diuide in tres et scribe,* that is, divide into three parts and write paraliturgical words on each to be given to the patient over the course of three days, is familiar. But there is no mention of what to write on, and the something to be divided may be paper or parchment. (10) Last on the folio is a barely legible charm that opens with the exorcism, *fugite partes aduerse,* but then abruptly adds the *Petrus ante portas* formula. These Harley charms offer us a useful collection of late-fourteenth-century fever charms. While the charm ritual of writing on the hand in ink and washing it into a potion is included, the charm employing three wafers does not appear here. Moreover, no later scribe added it to the list, although other charms were added. One charm comes close, but it does not mention the medium of wafers; rather, some consumable medium is to be divided into three parts, inscribed with holy names, and given to the fever victim over three days. This is a ghost of the wafer charm. Thus, in this late medieval collection, the

long-term popularity of the wafer charm seems to be passing away. That is not to say devout piety has diminished by the fifteenth century.[101] A meditative, rhetorical piety dominates in these charms through the prevalent use of holy names and liturgical prayers, but the charm consuming "obleys," or wafers like the communion host, that Fayreford elaborates on for his patients a decade or two later is not found here.

## CONCLUSION

Bringing a diachronic perspective to these charms to relieve fevers, we can tentatively draw together the following observations with regard to the materials and techniques: Writing on hosts or communion wafers for the patient to eat over several days—a formula and ritual prescribed from the tenth century—persists as a recommended remedy through the fifteenth century. But to what extent was writing in ink on the hand a new mode of treating fevers in the late medieval period? Charms that required writing on the body were known to the Anglo-Saxons before 1000CE.[102] Similarly, a charm from the fifteenth-century began, "Write in the right hand of him that bleeds with the blood of the same man that bleeds the word *Grecopolutum*."[103] Thus, writing on the body was not a new technique in the fifteenth century, although writing in ink may have been. If so, what might have given rise to this innovation in the performance of a ritual for writing on the body?

The charms and manuscript contexts explored in this paper indicate that writing in ink on the hand emerged relatively late in the English Middle Ages. Moreover, the manuscript contexts for the ink charms correspond to the period of growing vernacularization of medicine (Voigts 1995) and a growing interest in crafts and craft knowledge among the merchant and artisan classes, which included widespread familiarity with making inks (Clarke 2016). Since fevers were a perennial threat to the English in the fifteenth century, there persisted a call for medical recipes and palliative charms to cure them.

Popular fifteenth-century remedy books record traditional host charms (Appendix nos. 8 and 9) as the preferred charms against fevers (Olsan 2009: 217, 221-222, 226). However, charms characteristically preserve older traditions even as new forms develop.[104] Thus, while the specific verbal formulas applied in ink were the same as those traditionally "written" on hosts, the ink charms did not employ the ecclesiastical wafers, a move which might have been motivated by a number of things. Attitudes toward the host changed in the later Middle Ages. Within the Catholic Church, apprehension of abuse of the host increased, and access to hosts diminished. For example, at the Lateran Council of 1215,

decrees were passed to protect the consecrated hosts from theft for magical purposes (Browe 1930, 152). On the other hand, when the Feast of Corpus Christi was officially established in the West in the mid thirteenth century, reverence for the host grew and spread. Not only was a liturgy of the mass provided for its feast day, but it was also preached on, venerated publicly in processions, and celebrated in fraternities and plays (Rubin 1991, 213-287). Increased reverence for the host within church circles shaped its use in pious healing charms, such as those that implicate elements of the passion, while at the same time making aquisition and handling by lay women and men less common than previously. From the eleventh century, a side-effect of the doctrine of transubstantiation had been to imbue the host with transformative powers that could be employed for private magical purposes (Browe 1930, 134-149). At the same time, it also maintained its ancient attribute of miraculous healing (Browe1938: 58). In this regard, it seems significant that the fever charms employ a consumption ritual that mirrors the Eucharist itself. Nevertheless, from the late fourteenth-century, reform-minded Christians objected to the "superstitious" practices involving the host. In England Wycliffites and Lollards raised objections based on their rejection of faith in transubstantiation and therefore its physical transforming powers. Catholic reformers, as for example, the preacher Bernadino of Siena, specifically rejected the unholy use of the host for healing fevers, a practice he saw as venerating the devil. (cited in Foscati 2015: 217). By the second quarter of the sixteenth-century the English reformation, instigated by Henry VIII, was in full force. As a result, host charms that had been recorded in remedy books less than a hundred years earlier began to be blotted or crossed out (Olsan 2009:155-159).

The manuscripts in which we have found the technique of writing in ink on the hand are mainly personal collections or remedies put together by lay persons. Yet, since the ink charm occurs in Latin, as well as English, it is likely to have arisen within at least quasi-learned circles, although Latin does not necessarily restrict it to either ecclesiastical or professional ranks of society. The ink charm, while preserving the traditional Christian formulas and symbols to heal fevers, seems to have provided a medium for conveying the power of the incantation to the patient in a way that was less ecclesiastical than the wafer or host charms did. Writing on the hand in ink and washing the ink into a medicinal potion, confirms the reception of Christian healing power into the body of the fever sufferer as had long been practiced, while effectively transforming an ancient clerical ritual into a lay Christian's medical remedy.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## NOTES

[1] Compare, for example, epilepsy or "falling sickness" was more mysterious medically and spiritually.

[2] Timothy P. Newfield, "Malaria and malaria-like disease in the early Middle Ages," *Early Medieval Europe* 25, Issue 3 (August 2017), 251 300, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/emed.12212/epdf

[3] Learned medieval medicine distinguished other kinds of fever as well; see Demaitre 2013: 35-60.

[4] e.g. a sixth-century Christian Greek ritual mentions the cyclical types of fevers in Jones 2016: 134-135. Also, see, the Latin ritual *Contra febres* in Cambridge, Queens' College, MS 19, fol. 142v (Appendix, no. 1).

[5] e.g.London, British Library, Sloane MS 405, fol. 48v, *Si estis cotidyane aut biduane aut treduane aut quartane aut quintane aut sextane aut septane aut ottane aut none aut qualiscumque estis . . . .* (Appendix, no. 2).

[6] "*ad febrem tercianam . . . quas tres oblatas mane ante accessionem egris commedat*" in Cambridge University Library, MS Dd. 5.53, fol.104v

[7] See "acces(se)" in the *Middle English Dictionary*.

[8] Elsewhere, I have used the term "semantic motifs" to refer to the central images in healing charms, as a means of understanding how medieval charms relate to their functions or puposes (Olsan 2004). On classification, see Ohrt 1929/1930, Agapkina and Toporkov 2013, Roper 2005, Pócs 1985-86, 2: 706-726 [in English].

[9] For a review of fever charms in German manuscripts, see Schulz 2003: 104-117.

[10] e.g. *Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*.

[11] *Petrus super petram*, most common in the toothache charms, also appears for fevers, e.g., in London, British Library, Sloane MS 122, fol. 163r.

[12] Hutcheson 2012: 175-202. Cameron 1993: 152, Doyle 2008.

[13] London, British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 167r-v. I translate the Old English section of the charm: Here came entering the 'spider' spirit/ He held his harness in his hands, said that you were his steed./ He laid his bridle on your neck, they began to move off over the land./ As soon as they went off the land, then his limbs began to cool./ Then entered the beast's sister./ Then she ended [it], and swore oaths/ that this

[one] might never harm the sick person/ nor one who could get this charm/or knew how to sing this charm. Amen. Let it be done. (*Her com ingangan inspiden wiht./ Hæfde him his haman on handa, cwæð þæt þu his hæncges wære./Lege þe his teage an sweoran. Ongunnan him of þæm lande liþan./Sona swa hy of þæn? lande coman þa ongunnan him ða liþu colian./þa com ingangan deores sweorstar./þa geændade heo, 7 aðas swor/ ðæt næfre þis ðæm adlegan derian ne moste,/ne þæm þis galdor begytan mihte, oððe þe þis galdor ongalan cuþe./Amen. Fiað*. Regarding the use of this metrical charm as an amulet, cf. Skemp 1911: 294; Hutcheson 2012: 182; Cameron 1993: 151. Communion wafers are usually distributed to be consumed by mouth, not hung on the body, while verbal charms are often worn as amulets, as well as sung over the sick.

[14] Cambridge, Queens College MS 19, fol. 142v. My transcription. I am grateful to Dr. Tim Eggington, the Librarian of Queens' College, for access to the manuscript. Cf. Storms 1948: 295-296, no. 64.

[15] A note, added in the manuscript in a smaller contemporary hand says, "This charm should be said nine times on the first day, eight times on the second, seven times on the third, six times on the fourth" and so on decreasing the number for nine days until only one recitation is left by which time the fevers will have abated."

[16] On fever sisters in other charm traditions, see Ryan 2006, Toporkov 2011, Timotin 2013: 77-132, Kencis 2011.

[17] Codex Vaticanus Palatinus Latinus 235, fols. 44r- 45r, printed in part in Franz 1909 2, 481-484, item VIII. Online at https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Pal.lat.235. The earliest part of the manuscript, written in England, contains the poetry of Paulinus of Nola and was used by Bede. The liturgical material that concerns us dates from the late ninth or tenth century (Brown and MacKay 1988: 24).

[18] Franz 1909: 2, 482: *orationes contra frigores. Coniuro uos, frigores et febres -- VII sorores sunt--siue meridianas, siue nocturnas, siue contidianas, siue secundarias, siue tercianas, siue quartanas, siue siluanas, siue iudeas, siue hebreas, uel qualicunque genere sitis, adiuro uos per patrem* . . . and ibid., 483, *Epistula contra frigores: . . . coniuro uos, de quacunque natione estis . . . coniuro uos, frigores et febres, ut non habeatis ullam licentiam, nocere huic famulo dei N. nec eum fatigare, sed redeatis, unde uenistis, nec potestatem habeatis nec locum in isto famulo dei amen.*

[19] London, British Library, Sloane MS 389, fol. 91v-92r. The relevant excerpt reads: *coniuro vos quo septem estis sorores prima daliola secunda vestulia tercian fugalia quarta suferalie quinta affrecta sexta lilia septema luc/talia per patrem + et filium et spiritum sanctum + et per diem in diebus et per misericordiam domini nostri Ihu xpi + per omnes angelos + archangelos + per apostolos + martires + confessores atque virgines + omnes sanctos dei per omnes virtutes celorum et per celum et terram + mare et omnes que in eis sunt.*

[20] The charm featuring "St. Peter before the gates" for fever follows on the last line and begins, + *Ante portas galilee iacebat sanctus petrus* . . . .

[21] e.g., in Harley MS 585, fol. 167r-v. On the seven sleepers of Ephesus in charms and legend in Anglo-Saxon England, see Bonser 1945 and 1963: 403-405, Cubitt 2009, and Liuzza 2016. For an overview of the legend, see the *Catholic Encyclopedia* at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05496a.htm

[22] The exact form that the eucharistic hosts took during Anglo-Saxon era has not been settled, since no molds for "mass bread" have been found in England.

[23] Scribes were not averse to appropriating materials from traditions other than their own. For example, Mesler 2013 has shown how Jewish translators of the Magi charm for epilepsy altered, adapted, or transmitted Christian matter. Cf. Jolly 1996: 146 on the *Lacnunga* scribe's lack of compulsion to "Christianize" the charm "for a sudden stitch."

[24] "A charm for fever. You should stand behind the fever patient and say, 'In the name of the father and son and holy spirit. May the right hand of heaven free you from this evil. amen.' Chant a Pater Noster [and say], 'In the name of the father and son and holy spirit. May the strength of heaven free and defend you. amen.' Again [chant] a Pater Noster. Afterwards have the patient drink these names, written in sage leaves. ++ Achilleusius . + actellidis . + Diomedis . + Eugenius . + Stephanus .+ Sepatius . + probatius . + Quiricus. + maximianus .+ malchus . + martinianus. + dionisius . + Iohannis . + Serapion . Constantin*us* ." London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v-23r. (Appendix, no. 6b).

[25] Achillides, Diomedes, Diogenus, Probatus, Stephanus, Sambatus, Quiriacus. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Seven Sleepers of Ephesus."

[26] e.g., London, British Library, Royal MS 2 A XX (flyleaf), London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius MS C III, fol. 83v, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 E XX, fol. 162v, London, British Library, Cotton Faustina MS A X fol. 116r (2 charms), Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby MS 86, fol. 29v. See Bonser 1945 and 1963:226, 403 n. 2; Pettit 2001, 2: 176-180, and Hunt 1990: 84,89.

[27] On this phrase opening eighth-century litanies, see Kantorowicz 1958: 21-31 and *Dictionnaire d'archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie* VIII, "Laudes Gallicanae."

[28] On the cross in Anglo-Saxon healing rituals and charms, see Jolly 2006.

[29] London, British Library, Cotton MS Faustina A X, fol. 116r. *Contra frigora omnibus horis scribis in carta & cum licio ligas ad collum egroti hora deficiente.* [In the left margin, a red cross] + *In nomine domini crucifixi sub pontio pilato . per signum crucis xri. fugite febres . seu frigora cotidiana . seu tertiana. uel nocturna. a seruo dei . N . septuaginta xiiii milia angeli per sequentur uos*. The large red cross introducing the next item (*Ista nomina scribe et super se portat qui patitur*) an amulet with the names of the seven sleepers, suggests that it was a separate text. Pettit 2001, 2: 177 prints them together as one charm in spite of the separate instructions.

[30] A charm similarly dependent on belief in Christ and the curative power of the sign of the cross appears in Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v. (Appendix, no. 6a)

[31] The words appear in a series of devotions to the cross found in London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius MS A III (Liuzza 2008: 316). Later they become associated with the Latin hymn (*Ecce crucem Domini / Fugite partes aduerse / Vivit Leo de tribu Iuda / Radix David Alleluia*) attributed to the Franciscan friar, Anthony of Padua (d. 1228).

[32] Oxford, Bodley, Digby MS 69, fol. 95; London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195v.

[33] Franz 1909: 2, 480-81: *Crux Christi qui pendebat in cruce, liberet istum famulum dei . . . Ecce crucem domini, Ayos, Sanctus, sanctus inmortalis, qui per signum . . . Crux Christi qui pendebat in cruce liberet istum famulum dei ab omni malo et ab omni infirmitate febris uel frigoris.* Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14179, fol. 1. My transcription. MS is accessible online through https://app.digitale-sammlungen.de/bookshelf/

[34] The trembling may have been associated first with the earth quaking at the death on the cross (Matt. 27:35), subsequently developing into a *historiola* featuring a dialogue between Pilate and Christ. See Schulz's argument and documentation of the trembling/quaking motif in German charms in manuscripts dating from the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries (Schulz 2003:114-5).

[35] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475 has two parts: folios 1-124 have been dated to the twelfth century and folios 125-231 to the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century. The manuscript is available online at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=sloane_ms_475_f125r#

[36] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, f. 22v. (Appendix 6a).

[37] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 69, fol. 95r: *Ad febres. + Ardeo + algeo + fugio + sentio + In nomine patris + et filij + spiritus + sancti + Ecce crucem domini fugite partes aduerse . + christus uincit + christus regnat + christus imperat . . . .* Cf. *Ardeo, sentio. fugio.* to be written on a lead cross to be worn by the fever patient in Durham, Cathedral, Hunter MS 100, fol. 117r (Skemer 2006: 80, note 11).

[38] London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195va.

[39] London, British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 165r. Online at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=harley_ms_585_f130r.

[40] This is one of two versions of this fever remedy. For other interpretations of the letters, see Pettit 2001, 1: 70 and 2: 168-169.

[41] London, British Library, Sloane MS 2457/2458, fol. 29v. On this manuscript, see Morrissey 2014.

[42] London, British Library, Sloane MS 2584, fol. 25v. For to charme. Three obleys for the feveres. Tak .3. obleys and wryt on the on: + *e* + *eles* + *sabaoth* +. And on the tothyr: + *adonay* + *alpha and oo* + *messias*. And on the thrydde: + *pastor* + *agnus* + *fons* +. And geue the syke to ete eche day on rygt as they ben ywryte, the first day the first obley, the secunde day the secunde, the thryd day the thrydde and at yche obley that he etyth lat hym saye that is syke .3. Pater Noster and .3. Aue Maria os he ete hyt.

[43] On abracadabra also see, Laurence Totelin, "Healing Words: Quintus Serenus' Pharmacological Poem" at The Recipes Project blog http://recipes.hypotheses.org/7342.

[44] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 69, fol. 22rb. *Ad febrem . terc . cotian . et quartan . In nomine patris etc.braccalleus . braccalleu . braccall +.braccal . + . bracca . + bracc + brac + .bar + bea. + be + christus uincit + christus . regit + christus imperat . + . christus me liberet +. christus me protegat + et ab omnibus febribus protegat et defindat . amen . + mentem sanctam spontaneum honorem domino et prime liberationem*

*. amen . Scribantur hi: scedula et baiulet paciens . circa collum donec sanetur postea conburatur . uel . contra alius qui indigit modo predicto portet.*

[45] "Syon" is the place where the Lamb of God was worshipped (Apocalypse 14:1) Cf. the eleventh-century "quasi-official liturgical healing" cited by Paxton 1994: 41-42, notes 85 and 86. London, British Library, Sloane MS 405, fol. 48v. (Appendix, no. 2)

[46] Roper (2005: 124) found one version in English from Hereford in the nineteenth century. A charm for toothache from Devon begins, "Peter stood by the gate of Jerusalem weeping." See Davies 1996: 22.

[47] London British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195; London, British Library, Royal MS 12 B XXV, fol. 61v.

[48] Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MS O.1.13, fol. 53v, London, British Library, Additional MS 33996, fol. 112r, printed in Heinrich 1896, 166-167, and London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195r.

[49] London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius MS C III, fol. 83v; also in the fifteenth century Commonplace Book of Robert Reynes, printed in Louis 1980: 167 and 384.

[50] London, British Library, Sloane MS 122, fol. 163r. London, British Library, Additional MS 33996, fol. 138v-139r, Heinrich 1896: 220-221.

[51] In sources influenced by late antique practices, words and signs were inscribed on thin metal plates called *lamellae* or *laminae*, e.g. in London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 111r.

[52] *Petrus ante portam* appears attached to conjurations/exorcisms of cyclical fevers and the fever sisters in London, British Library, Sloane MS 389, fols 91v-92r and in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 10, Robert Reynes' commonplace book (Louis 1980: 167), Sloane MS 140, fol. 45v (*ante portas*).

[53] The incantation begins *Ellum super illam sedebat. et uirgam uiridem in manu tenebat.* London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112v.

[54] *Ibid. Si inimicus tuus aut plures modios habuerit uini in suo cellario. 7 non uis ut inde gaudead[for t] . hoc fac. . . .*

[55] Printed in Hunt 1990: 86, no. 21 from John of Greenborough, London, British Library, Royal MS 12.G.IV, fol. 156va.

[56] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS 1444, fol. 157v: "Tak & schere an hesell of azele growyng & when you schere it say a *paternoster* in ye nome of godde & afterward say þis charme yat folowes: 'Architricline seaunte en haute enteint vn vierge de coudre in sez maynys & dit auxy uerement le prestre fait deu en sez mayns & auxi uerement ieo[je] vous comaunde & coniure virgyne vierge de coudre que ensemble baysetz per charitee & aydetz cest home ou femme de cest manere fyvere.' *In nomine patris & filij & spiritus sancti amen. pater est alpha et O[mega], filius est veritas spiritus sanctus est remedium. In nomine patris et filij et etc.* & gar ye sek say v paternoster in ye worchip of ye v wowndes of owre lord." Cf. London, British Library, Sloane MS 962, fol. 38, printed in Hunt 1990: 93.

[57] London, British Library, Sloane MS 3160, fol. 168v, printed in Hunt 1990: 98.

[58] London, British Library, Royal MS 12 G IV, fol. 156va, printed in Hunt 1990: 86-87.

[59] London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 122. Fayreford writes the directions in Latin, but the incantation in French.

[60] London, British Library, Sloane MS 962, fol. 135v, "Item for an hors þat is wranch" printed in Hunt 1990: 97 and 361, note 146 on veterinary background.

[61] See Milner 2013 for a model for understanding the transfer of healing grace into the feed for a sick horse at the very end of the Middle Ages.

[62] "Wafers" translates the Latin noun, *oblata* from the past participle of *offerre*. Unconsecrated hosts were to be dispensed to the poor after mass on Maundy Thursday, according to Lanfranc's *Constitutions* (Knowles 2002: 46, 47). In most cases, the texts imply that the wafers are consecrated, therefore possessing the powers of the Eucharist.

[63] In London, British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 137r-138r, the fever cure follows three stages: an herb drink is prepared with holy words written and washed into it; the drink is carried into the church, where masses are sung; the healer sings psalms and prayers and administers the drink to the sick.

[64] For examples, see Hunt 1990, Keiser 1998, Braekman 1997, Olsan 2009.

[65] For fifteen Middle English sources of this particular formula, see Keiser 1998: 3870. London, British Library, Sloane MS 3160, fol. 160r reads *filius est veritas* in the second position, but records the alternative in a comment: "But summe bocus sayn that man schuld write in this maner as her folous . *filius est vita + pater est alpha & o + spiritus sanctus est remedium*." The *filius est veritas* formula also occurs in a French version in London, British Library, Sloane MS 3564, fol.54v (Hunt 1990: 91, no. 44)

[66] Versions of this charm, one of two wafer charms, occur in ten Middle English remedy books (Olsan 2009: 226).

[67] Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 0.1.13, fol. 47v. My transcription closely represents the spellings in the manuscript. "y" sometimes stands for a late Middle English thorn, that is modern 'th'; the punctuation setting off numerals (.) is presented just as it appears in the manuscript; the ampersand (&) is the manuscript sign for both "and" and *et*. The words "or" and "ar" are alternative spellings for the same word, meaning "before."

[68] In a charm for fevers in London, British Library, Additional MS 33996, fol. 112r: *per vertutem + dei sint medicina mei pia crux et passio christi + quinque vulnera dei sint medicina mei .N.* Cf. Heinrich 1896: 166-167.

[69] "*In una parte dulcis descriptio*" translated in Middle English, "On þe to halfe wel y-wrete» and «*In alia parte levis percussio*," translated, "On þe tother halfe þynne ysmete" Wenzel 1978: 182-183, also 1991: 102.

[70] London, British Library, Sloane MS 2457, fol. 29r.

[71] On Thomas Fayreford the fifteenth-century physician, see Jones 1998. On his charms, see Olsan 2003 and Jones and Olsan 2015: 422-23.

**72** London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, in Fayreford's hand, *De Febribus* [top of leaf] *Pro omnibus febribus// R*[*ecipe*] *.3. oblata et scribe in primo + pater + est + vita + In 2o filius est + virtus + nazarenus + In 3o + spiritus sanctus + est + remedium + rex + Iudeorum + et commedat paciens mane primum oblatum madefactum in aqua benedicta et bibat postea absinthium febrifugium et taniz*[*ur?*]*etur similiter cum servisia temperata teste arr.*[?] *plena/ et sic fac per .3. dies continuens cum aliis oblatis in aqua benedicta intinctis ut prius/ et probatum est* (fol.123)

**73** The availability of hosts within religious houses, or dispensed by the clergy to lay people after services or in their homes is beyond the scope of this paper. See Snoek 1995: esp. ch. 3 and pp. 341-44 on the development of the use of hosts as relics. Veneration of the host increased in England after the introduction of the feast of Corpus Christi in the 1320s, as did abusive uses (Rubin 1991: 199-204; 323, 334-342). On the production of wafers, see Kumler 2011. I am grateful to Martha Bayless for bringing Snoek and Kumler to my attention.

**74** For example, British Library, Sloane MS 3564, fol. 54r-v Hunt 1990: 91 "Pernez un poume et le trenchez en .iii. partyes, si escrivez en la primer partye *In principio erat verbum . . ."*; Ibid.: "Pernez un poume et escrivez leyns ces treys vers *Increatus Pater, inmensus Pater, eternus Pater etc . . . ."*

**75** Ibid. "Pernez .iii. oblez et en le primer festes un croys, si escrivés *Pater est Alpha et Omega . . . ."*

**76** Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.1.15, fol. 16v. (Appendix, no. 3). My transcription.

**77** For example, in the Anglo-Saxon cure for fevers called *lencten adle*. London, British Library, Royal MS 12.D.XVII, fol. 51r.

**78** London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v. See above note 24 and Appendix, no. 6 b.

**79** Vulg. *Sana me, Domine, et sanabor : salvum me fac, et salvus ero : quoniam laus mea tu es* and Psalms passim. See definitions 1 and 5 in *DMLBS*.

**80** Cambridge, Gonville and Caius Library MS 457, fol. 8v: "tak iij oblyis or iij almaundys wryte with a pynnys poynt vpon ye ffyrst oblyi."

**81** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud misc. MS 553, fol. 71v. Cf. the Sator formula written on three bits of paper for malarial fever in Vaitkevičienė 2008: 844 no. 1388.

**82** On this manuscript, see Clarke 2016: 216-222 and Olsan 2019:107-17.

**83** A gode charme for þe feveres proofed. *In nomine patris+et filij+et spiritus sancti+ Amen +Pater est alpha+ Filius est vita+ Spiritus sanctus est remedium+ hic est titulus triumphalis + Jhs nazarenus rex iudeorum+Coniuro vos febres +cotindianas+biduanas+triduanas+quartanas+quintanas+sextanas+septanas +octanas+nonanas vt statim exeatis sine mora ab hoc famulo vel famula dei .N qui* [*feminine que* above] *istud nomen altissimum quod est super omne nomen super se portaverit* [f.6r] + *christus vincit+christus imperat+christus regnat+christus pro sua maxima misericordia & sua pietate libera famulum tuum uel famulam tuam .N. ab omni specie diuersarum februm. vbicumque semper custodiat me die ac nocte Amen.*

[84] A verb may be missing, "*christus pro sua maxima misericordia*?" (Christ for his own deepest compassion [hanged/ *pependit*]).

[85] Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd 5.76, fol. 24r. This scribe writes the letters thorn (þ), an open thorn (y) or "th," where modern English would write "th." In this transcription, I have silently expanded abbreviations.

[86] "Here begynnes medicine for al manereres of feueres proued."

[87] The other charms on the leaf rely on motifs, such as, a) *Petrus ante portas ierusalem,* b)*Crux sacra, Crux splendida* (Roper's Crux Christi), c)Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, d) invocations of  names of God, and e)triple acclamations beginning *Christus vincit* acompanied by conjurations. As in the Cambridge manuscript, fever charms are entered just after a Latin copy of the *Epistle of Aristotle to Alexander*.

[88] *Pro febres carmen* [title in red letters] *Ad ffebres res probata. in dextera palmi febret[an] tis fac 3es cruces. Domine christus vincit + christus regnat + chistus imperat + et postea medio palmis scribe + On pater + On filius + On spiritus sanctus + et mox in aqua benedicta ablue scripta. et bibat et alia die scribe . On aries + On ovis + on agnus + et tertia die scribe + On leo + On uitulus + on uermi[s]+* [brown, not red] *tum probat et sine dubio liberabitur.* (London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195rb)

[89] A little confusion is detectable, since the Latin version says write three crosses then offers the acclamations as if they are to be spoken, then 'afterwards' adds the three parts of the trinity are to be written 'in the middle of the palm'.  The English version suggests that both the acclamations and the invocation to the trinity are to be written the washed off and drunk.  It is not clear to me what 'in each quarter' of the hand means.

[90] Oxford, Digby MS 86, fol. 28v. My transcription slightly alters Hunt 1990: 84, no. 10. Pur febres bone charme. Pernez la main destre[sic] al malade . e fetes une croiz de vostre pouz Dextre . en cele main . e dites *In nomine Patris + et Filii + et Spiritus sancti, amen*. Pus[not r] treis feze le seynez de memes le pouz e a checune feze dites + *Cristus vincit + Cristus rengnad* [*sic*] + *Cristus imperad*  + e pus escrivez od enke le premer jour en cele main au malade +*on Pater + on Filius + on Spiritus Sanntus*[sic]. +. Le secund jour fetes cum au premer. e escrivez +*on ovis + on aries +angnus* [sic] +. Le terz jour fetes cum au premer e si escrivez + *on leo + on vitu[lu]s + on vermis* .+. Si estaunchera l'accés par la grace Deu e a checune manere de fevre est bone charme e esprove. Mes ne charmez de ceste nuli si ne vous prie par charité. Amen..

[91] London, British Library, Royal MS 12 B XXV.

[92] e.g. in the title to his childbirth charm, fol. 61 and in the last of his fever charms.

[93] *Apprehende manum dextram egroti et in palma eius scribe ter* [*cruces* omitted?] *et in vnaquaque vice dicas, Christus vincit + Christus regnat + Christus imperat +. Et postmodum in eadem palma, scribe + on pater + on filius + on ihs. Et mox aqua dilue scripta et bibat egrotus. In alia die scribe + on + aries + on + ovis + on + agnus. Et similiter bibat. In 3d* [*tertio*] *die + on leo + on vitulus + on  vermis +. Et iterum bibat procul dubio. In tercio /die sanabitur. In nomine patris, etc. Ante portas Ierusalem Petrus iacebat et superveniens Dominus dixit ei, Cur hic iaces Petre? Respondit ei Petrus, Iaceo de febre mala. Dixit ei Iesus, Surge, dimitte illam et dimissa febre mala. Ait illi Petrus, Obsecro, Domine, quicumque hoc secum scripta portaverit, non pos-*

*sint ei nocere febres calide nec frigide.  Et ait Jesus Petro, Fiat tibi sicut petisti. Iesu Nazarene Rex Iudeorum, libera famulum tuum N[omen] a febribus et omnibus malis amen. Et dicatur ter pater noster in honore trinitatis.* (London, British Library Royal MS 12. B . XXV, fol. 61v).

[94] *Item scribe in iij.* [4 stacked dots]*bl [1 dot ] t*[3dots] *xps vincit sabaoth In altera xpc regnat agios. In 3cia . xpc imperat saday*.

[95] Much has been written about the significance of the Cross in early medieval England, e.g. Jolly 2005, Keefer 2007, Liuzza 2007, Banham 2010.

[96] *Writ þis onlang ða earmas wiþ dweorh* in British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 165; Storms 1948: 282, no. 44. See above pp. 14-15.

[97] London, British Library Royal MS 12.D.XVII, fol. 51r, for *lencten adle* containing an adjuration against chills and fevers; London, British Library MS Harley 585, fol. 137r-138 against *aelfsiden*, or elf-sickness, and fiends' temptations.

[98] Cambridge, University Library MS Dd. 4.44, fol. 29r.

[99] Compare the late fifteenth-century English charm in Cambridge, University Library MS Ee. 1. 15, fol. 16v. (Appendix no. 3)

[100] There are nine healing recipes in total. Besides seven charms for fevers, there is one, *sanctus Petrus sedebat super marmoram* for toothache and one herb drink with prayers for fever.

[101] In Cambridge, University Library MS Dd 5.53, fol. 104, both the ink charm and the *oblates* charm occur on the same folio for different kinds of fevers. The former recommends that if the patient is not cured in a week by the potion, she or he should be confessed, presumably as a preparation for death.

[102] As in the *Lacnunga* fever charm mentioned above (see note 39) in London, Harley MS 585, fol. 165r.

[103] British Library, Sloane MS 3160, fol. 145v: "ffor to staunche blode. Rite in the ryght honde of hym þat bledes with þe blode of the same mon þat bledes, this worde *Grecopolutum*" printed in Sheldon, 1978, no. 42. Also, British Library, Royal MS 17 A III, fol. 120r: "Wryte aboue hem that bledis, *veronix* and if it be a womman *veronixa* and it schal staunche anoon."

[104] Note the use of parchment in Lincoln, Lincoln Cathedral MS 91 (Thornton, *Liber de diversis medicinis*) fol. 306v: Or tak iij obles & write firste in ane + *Pater est Alpha & O+Filius+vita+Spiritus sanctus remedium+*& tak & write in percemyn +*Agios+O theos+Atanatos+yskiros+ymas+eleson+Ego sum Alpha+&O+Christus vincit+Christus regnat+Christus imperat+*and, when he es hale, caste þe charme in the fire.

## MANUSCRIPTS

Cambridge, Gonville and Caius Library, MS 457/395
Cambridge, Queens' College Library, MS 19

Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MS O.1.13
Cambridge, University Library, Additional MS 9308
Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd. 4.44
Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd 5.53
Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd 5.76
Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.1.15
Durham, Cathedral, Hunter MS 100
Lincoln, Lincoln Cathedral MS 91
London, British Library, Additional MS 33996
London, British Library, Cotton MS Faustina A X
London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius A III
London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius C III
London, British Library, Harley MS 585
London, British Library, Harley MS 2558
London, British Library, Royal MS 2 A XX
London, British Library, Royal MS 12 B XXV
London, British Library, Royal MS 12.D.XVII
London, British Library, Royal MS 12 E XX
London, British Library, Royal MS 12.G.IV
London, British Library, Royal MS 17 A III
London, British Library, Sloane MS 122
London, British Library, Sloane MS 140
London, British Library, Sloane MS 389
London, British Library, Sloane MS 405
London, British Library, Sloane MS 475
London, British Library, Sloane MS 962
London, British Library, Sloane MS 2457/2458
London, British Library, Sloane MS 2584
London, British Library, Sloane MS 3160
London, British Library, Sloane MS 3564
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm 14179
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS 1444
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby MS 69
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## APPENDIX

Note on transcription: The transcriptions in this paper including the Appendix are not intended to serve as formally edited texts. They represent my readings of the texts from the manuscripts. Latin has been set in italics to distinguish it from vernacular languages. Abbreviations are expanded silently. Modern English "th" appears variously in Middle English as thorn "þ," open thorn "y" and "th." The ampersand (&) is sometimes used for English "and" and Latin "*et.*" The tironian sign (7) stands for Latin "*et*" or Old English "and." I have for the most part left unchanged the use of the point in the manuscripts, as it appears with numerals (. ii . ) or with the abbreviation (.N.) for "Nomen,"(Name), indicating that a personal name should be inserted.

1. Cambridge, Queens' College Library, MS 19 (formerly Horne 19)fol. 142v

> +[1]*Contra febres. In nomine patris filij 7 spiritus sancti amen. Coniuro uos febres per patrem 7 filium 7 spiritum sanctum 7 per sanctam mariam genitricem dei ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei. N . Coniuro uos febres per deum uerum per dominum sanctum per septuaginta nomina dei sancta et immaculata. elyon.*[2] *elyon . eloy . eloy. eloy. vs ne . te*[3] *Adonay . tetragramaton. immutabilis?*[4] *inuisibilis . eternus . simplex. summum bonum . incorporeus creator, perfectus christus messias . sother. emanuel. dominus . viii genitus . homo. vsyon. principium situs. imaculatus . altissimus. sapiencia. stella . omnum leticia . mercator . sponsus .othos . sebes . carus . agathos . primus 7 nouissimus . caritas. gaudium . fons.splendor . admirabilis. paraclitus. on . bonus . nobilissimus . aries . leo . uitulus . serpens . ouis . agnus . Per ista nomina. 7 per omnia cetera dei nomina coniuro uos febres 7 per angelos ac?per archangelos. thronos.  7 dominationes. principates 7 potestates per cherubin 7 seraphin. 7 per omnes. 7 per uirtutes celorum . ut non habeatis potestatem super* [col. b] *hunc famulum dei. N . Coniuro uos febres per omnes sanctos dei qui in celo et in terra sunt. 7 per omnia que creauit deus in septem diebus. 7 in septem noctibus ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei. N . Coniuro uos febres. siue cotidianas. siue biduanas. siue triduanas. siue quartriduanas. siue quintanas .siue sextanas.siue septanas.siue octanas. et usque ad nonam generationam ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei. N . Postea dican-*

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[1]  Red cross in the left margin opposite title, also in red.
[2]  Hole in manuscript around which letters have been fitted.
[3]  Storms 1948: 295 reads *Us .Ne. Te*. He cities the MS as, Queens' College 7, M. R. James's numbering in his 1905 *Catalogue of the Western Manuscripts of Queens College Cambridge.*
[4]  Storms 1948: 295 reads *inimitabilis.*

*tur hij tres psalmi. Ad te leueui oculos. Deus misereatur. Quincunque uult. cum gloria patri. et kyriel. Christeel. Kyriel[5]. Pater noster. Et ne nos. Saluum fac seruum. Esto ei domine. Memor esto congregationis . Domine deus uirtutum. Domine exaudi. Dominus uobiscum. Oremus. Respice domine super hunc famulum tuum. N. in infirmitate corporis sui laborentem et animam refoue quem creasti ut dignis castigationibus emendetur et continuo se senciat esse saluatum. per dominum.*

[The charm is followed by the following note, added in smaller contemporary hand]:

*Istud carmen debet dici in primo die nouies, in secundo viiies[6] tercio septem. Quarto die . vi . Quinto die ves Sexto die quater Septinuo die ter. Octauo die .bis Nono die Semel.[7]*

2. London, British Library, Sloane MS 405 fol. 48v. *Pro febribus*

*In nomine patris +[8] et filii + et spiritus sancti Amen + Et inter istos Iesus in domum symonis Petri vidit socium[9] eius iacentem et febriscitatem. stans auc super illam vocauit febri et dimisit illum continuo et ministrauit illi syon + syon +syon[10] Pro commemorationem dilecti filii tui segra [sic] mundi regis libera [11] N. In nomine patris + dico vobis febres[12] + In nomine filii + contradico vobis febres + In nomine spiritus sanctus + coniuro vos febres quorum sunt septem sorores. prima lya . secunda reptilia tercia fugalia quarta astrata [5th is missing], sexta ruta Septma Ignata.*

*Si estis cotidyane aut biduane aut treduane aut quartane aut quintane aut sextane aut septane aut ottane aut none aut qualiscumque estis vos et contestor per patrem + et filium + et spiritum sanctum + per sedem magestatis per sanctam trinitatem et per sanctam mariam matrem domini nostri Jesu Christi et per sanctum raphaelem qui dicitur medicinam dei per sanctos angelos et Archangelos per thronos et dominaciones per*

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[5] MS] Xr*iste*l. kyriel*yson.*

[6] vi]MS 'es' above the numbers viij., vi., v.

[7] My transcription. Cf. Storms 1948: 295-96.

[8] Sloane MS 405, fol. 48v. Crosses are in red and have dots at the end of their branches.

[9] Luke 4.38-39: *Surgens autem Jesus de synagoga, introivit in domum Simonis. Socrus autem Simonis tenebatur magnis febribus: et rogaverunt illum pro ea. Et stans super illam imperavit febri : et dimisit illam. Et continuo surgens, ministrabat illis.*

[10] The place of the veneration of the Lamb of God in Apocalypse 14.1: *Et vidi : et ecce Agnus stabat supra montem Sion, et cum eo centum quadraginta quattuor milia, habentes nomen ejus, et nomen Patris ejus scriptum in frontibus suis.* This verse might serve a good precedent for the ritual of writing the names of God on the forehead of a patient as a mode of healing.

[11] Cf. Paxton 1994: 41, note 87.

[12] Sentence has been underlined by a subsequent reader.

*principatus et potestates per virtutes celorum et per cherubyn et seraphyn Coniuro et contestor vos febres per quatuor ewangelistas per centum quadraginta quatuor milia innocentium per magnum filium dei patris et per omnes virtutes que in celo et in terra sunt et intra continentur per solem et lunam et per sanctum Johe?nnes Baptistam qui deum et homi-nem in Jurdanis fluminem Baptizauit. Coniuro et contestor uos febres et contradico uos per magistatem dei per Annunciationem et incarnacionem per natiuitatem et remissionem + per passionem et resurrexcionem + per gloriosam Ascencionem + per gratiam sancti spiritus paracliti per lumen et stellas celi per Apostolos + martires per confessores et per virgines et per omnes sanctos dei vt amplius non noceates huic famulo tuo N dic ter pater noster et tociens Aue maria + christus vincit + christus regnat + christus imperat + In nomine meo demonia eicient li[n]guis loquentur nouis serpentes collent et si morteforum quid biberint non eos nocebabit super egros manus imponent et benedicti habebunt [below]se altera patris*

3. Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Ee. 1.15, fol. 16v.

For the feuere a souereyne medcyne provyd.[13] Take a sauge leff and wr-tye theron*n christus tonat* and gyff hit the syke to ete & charge hym to sey a *pater noster* and *aue maria* wi*th* a credo // the secunde daye take another sawge leff & wryte ther on *Angelus nunciat* and gyf hit hym to ete & lete hym sey ij pater nosteris ij Aue maria & ij credys // The thyrde daye take Another sawge leff and wryte ther onn *Iohannes predicat* & gyff hit hymm to ete & let hymm sey iij pater nosteris iij aue maria and iij credys & he shall be hole // Charge hym to here a mass of the holy gost another of seynt mychell & the thyrde of se[y]nt Iohn baptiste and whan þou heryst any man speke of the feuer// lete hem blysse hym & sey & [sic] *aue maria* + *Saron* and + *Saronn* and +[14] *Sararionn*/ bere thyse iij namys abowte ʒow are gode for the feuer here ʒowre mass when ʒe be hole etcetera.

4. London, British Library, Sloane MS 140 fol. 44v-45v. as in recto.

*Add omnem febrem carmen boni [paragraphus] probatum In nomine patris et filij et spiritus sancti amen. omnipotens sempiterne deus qui fecisti mundum beatro petro apostulo tuo. N . famulo tuo vt non amplius febres nec dolores nec frigores habeant potestatem super famulum tuum + coniuro vos febres qui estis septem sorores. prima vocatur + ylya+ se-cunda saytulia + tertia + violecta + quarta + sursoralia + quinta + seneya*

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[13] After the title the charm is xed out, but completely readable.

[14] The crosses are distinctly thick and neatly made before the three words.

*+ sexta + deneya + septima + emyra + coniuro vos febres de quacumque nacione et de quocumque mundo* [erasure] *estis per patrem et filium + et spiritum sanctus + per pietatem dei + per aduentum suum +*[ fol. 45r] *per nativitatem suam + per circumcissionem suam + per baptismum suum + per crucem suam + per nominem suum + per passionem suam + per mortem suam + per sepulturam + per statim resurrecionem suam + per admirabilem assencionem suam + per gratiam sancti spiritus paracliti + et per sanctam mariam + per omnes sanctos angelos + et per archangelos dei + per tuos*[15] *per diuinaciones + per cherubyn et seraphyn et per vigilati quartuor seniores qui stant ante tronum + per sanctum Johannem baptistam + per duodecim apostulos + et per quartuor evangelistas + per martires et confessores et omnes sanctos martires atque virgines in celis congregatos + per totam terram et lunam et stellas et solemet omnia que ferit deus in celo et in terra vt non amplius habeat .* [smudged] *potestatem* [word lined out and dotted for removal] *super hunc famulum tuum .N. +*[fol. 45verso] *cotidianis + biduanis + tertianis +quartanis + quintanis + sextianis + septemnani?s et ss*[abbreviation smudged] *s*[. . .]*do singularis vsque in duodecum +*

5. London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112v

*Si inimicus tuus aut plures modios habuerit uini in suo cellario. 7 non uis ut inde gaudead* [d for t] *. hoc fac. Collige unam uirga[m] inde collura* [lu replaces e dotted] *cum oracione dominica 7 recide eam usque ad iiiior cubitos . Postea s[c]inde eam totam per medium . 7 fac illas duas partes a duobus hominibus per capitam a[m]barum . sublatam teneri. Et dec[i] ens signum crucis faciens. Sic [dicit?] e*am *carmina [sic]. Ellum . super ellam sedebat . et uirgam uiridem in manu tenebat. et dicebat. Uirgam uiridis. Reuertere in simul. et oracio dominica. Hoc tam diu dicit. usque sibi in uicem. ille due partes in medio iungantur. Statim autem ut uideris eas sibi in uicem copulari . stinge eas per medium pugno. et recede quod supra et infra manum. est . nisi illum durnum quem retinuisti de uirga . iacta* [illeg. letters]

6.a London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v *Contra FEBRES CARMEN.* [title lined with red]

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[15] tuos? o abbr above t: te*r*nos ? [erasure] p*er* d*iui*nacio*n/nes.*

*Christus est natus . et passus . christus iesus de morte: resurexit et celos ascendit . christus . est . uenturus ad diem iudicii christus dicit. Secundum fidem tuam fiad* [for fiat] *tibi. Iupsius nomine signum hoc salutare: + . et hec sacra uerba mecum habeo ut intercedentibus sanctis dei. matheo . marco. luca Iohnnem. Maximiano . malcho malcho* [sic]. *Martiniano . dionisio . Iohannenes. serapione. constatino. a febri merear liberari. In nomine christi qui sanat infirmos iube deus pater ut quisquis hanc scrip-turam in tuo nomine portat a spiritu infirmitatis citius redi matur Amen.*

6.b London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v-23r. Ite*m. AD FEBREM CARMEN.*

*Ad dorsum hominis febricitantis debes stare dicentis . In nomine patris . et filii . et spiritus sancti . Dextera de supernis te liberet a male . amen. Canta pater noster . In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti . Dextera de supernis te liberet et defendat . amen.*

*Item . Pater noster. postea bibat ista nomina . [fol.23r] in foliis saluie de-scripta . + Achilleus . + actellidis . + Diomedis . + Eugenius . + Stephanus .+ Sepatius . + probatius . + Quiricus. + maximianus .+ malchus . + martinianus. + dionisius . + Iohannis . + Serapion . Constantinus .*

7. Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd. 4.44, fol. 29r. A medicyn ffor þe axes.

Take a sawge lef þat is not perced and write þeron with a penne with ynke. *In principio* [*principio* added] *yat verbum angelus nunciat amen.* þanne gif hit þe seke to ete and let þe seke seye ["first," inserted above] *pater noster* in þe worshippe of þe v woundes of oure lord iesu christe criste [*sic*] and v aueys in þe worship of þe v ioyes of oure lady and þanne In þe secunde day take a noþer lef . and write þeron *Et verbum* ["*bum*" added above the line] *erat apud deum. Iohannes Johannes* [*sic*] *preducat* and seye þe prayers forseyde and þe þridde day take a noþer lef and write þer on *Et deus erat verbum cristus tonat* and gif hit þe seke an[d] let hym seye þe prayers forseyde and by goddis grace he shal be hole.

8. Cambridge, University Library, Additional MS 9308 fol. 14v. For þe feuers

Tak thre obleyes & in þat on writ *pater est alpha & oo.* & mak a point . and ete þat þe ferst day. þe secunde day writ on þat oþer oblye *filius est vita* and mak two titelis & ete it. þe thridde day writ on þe thridde oblie *spiritus sanctus est remedium.* & mak iii points and ete it. but þe ferst day or þu ete þe oblie sey a pater noster and þe secund day two & þe thridde thre with ·as fele Ave and credo.

9. Cambridge, University Library, Additional MS 9308, fol. 53r. For þe feueres.

> Tak. iii. vbles & write on oon þerof + *el* + *elþe* + *Sabaoth* & ete þu þat þe ferst day. þe next day writ on þat oþer + *adonay* + *alpha & o[mega]* + *messias* . and ete it. þe thrid day writ on þat oþer + *pastor* + *agnus* + *fons* + & ete and it and aftir ech vble eting sey iii pater noster and iii aue maria . & i credo.