Leeds Studies in English

New Series XLIV

School of English
University of Leeds
Leeds, England

ISSN 0075-8566

Leeds Studies in English

New Series XLIV

2013

Magic and Medicine
Early Medieval Plant-Name Studies

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Leeds Studies in English

<www.leeds.ac.uk/lse>
School of English
University of Leeds
2013

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<www.leeds.ac.uk/lse>

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Abbreviations

ADS	Archaeology Data Service
ASPNS	Anglo-Saxon Plant-Name Survey
BML	British Medieval Latin
BSBI	Botanical Society of the British Isles
CGL	*Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*
CNo.	Catalogue Number
COD	*Concise Oxford Dictionary*
DMLBS	*Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*
DOE	*Dictionary of Old English* (Toronto)
DOEPN	*Dictionary of Old English Plant Names* (online)
DOEWC	*Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* (online)
DOI	Digital Object Identifier; *Dictionary of the Irish Language Based Mainly on Old and Middle Irish Materials*
DOST	*Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*
DSL	*Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online)
EDD	*English Dialect Dictionary*
EPNE	*English Place-Name Elements* (A. H. Smith)
Gk, Gr.	Greek
HTOED	*Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary*
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
LAE	*Linguistic Atlas of England*
Lat	Latin
MCOE	*Microfiche Concordance to Old English*
ME	Middle English
MED	*Middle English Dictionary*
MHG	Middle High German
MLG	Middle Low German
ModE	Modern English
ModIce	Modern Icelandic
ModLG	Modern Low German
ODEE	*Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*
OE	Old English
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
OF	Old French
OHG	Old High German
OI	Old Irish
OIce	Old Icelandic
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary*
ON	Old Norse
OS	Old Saxon
PASE	*Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England* (online)
PIE	Proto-Indo-European
PN W	*Place-Names of Wiltshire* (J. E. B. Gover et al.)
PN Wo	*Place-Names of Worcestershire* (A. Mawer et al.)

RCHM(E)	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments (of England)
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*
spp.	species (botanical, singular)
ssp.	species (botanical, plural)
TOE	*Thesaurus of Old English*
VEPN	*Vocabulary of English Place-Names*

Short Titles

Old English source texts may be indicated by short titles assigned by the *Dictionary of Old English* and *Microfiche Concordance to Old English*, which refer to specific editions of the texts. They occur particularly in the appendices, and examples include: Lch II (1); Med 3 (Grattan-Singer). The key to these references can be found at the DOE website under 'Research Tools' then 'List of Texts'. See http://www.doe.utoronto.ca.

Botanical Latin

Plant-names in botanical Latin aim to provide an international identification for a particular plant or group of plants. They are followed by abbreviations indicating the botanist who assigned and/or reassigned the name, and the most common abbreviation is 'L.' indicating 'Linnaeus', the famous Swedish botanist. Examples include: *Bellis perennis* L. (daisy); *Betula pendula* Roth. (silver birch).

Dates

Manuscript dates are often given in a form beginning 's.' (for *saeculo* 'in the century'). Some examples follow:

s. xi^{in} beginning of the 11th century
s. xi^{1} first half of the 11th century
s. xi^{med} middle of the 11th century
s. xi^{2} second half of the 11th century
s. xi^{ex} end of the 11th century

An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon Plant-Name Studies and to this Special Issue

Carole Biggam

1. The basics of plant-name studies

At first acquaintance, it would appear that the study of plant-names constitutes a branch of onomastics (name studies), but it is not in the mainstream of this subject. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines onomastics as 'The study or science of the history and origin of … proper names', and the word *proper* is crucial to the understanding of name studies. A proper noun designates an individual and specific entity, and the OED gives the following examples: a person, a tame animal, a star, planet, country, town, river, house or ship. Unlike any of these, plant-names do not label individual plants, but a *type* of plant, of which there may be tens of thousands (or more) of specific individuals.

A noun which is not 'proper' is referred to as a 'common noun', for example, *chair, sea, pen, road* and thousands more. It is possible for common nouns to designate individual examples of their type, but they need the help of additional information, for example, *my father's chair*, *the Red Sea*, *John's favourite pen*, and *the Great North Road*. Many common nouns function as superordinate terms (referred to as *hyperonyms* by linguists) which act as 'umbrella-terms' for several sub-divisions of the basic type. Thus *chair* can be subdivided into *armchair*, *Windsor chair*, *kitchen chair,* and many others, and some of these can be further sub-divided, for example, *a leather armchair*, *a reclining armchair*, *a swivel armchair,* and so on. This provides us with a semantic classification and hierarchy: *a leather armchair* belongs to the category of *armchair*, and *armchair* itself belongs to the superordinate category of *chair*. This example of chairs is simple and quite obvious to any society which uses a variety of chairs, but it should be noted that many speakers of the language will select different distinctive features, especially at the bottom level of the hierarchy. Some people, looking at the very same leather armchair, will regard its size or design as more significant than its covering material, and will refer to it by a different name. Moreover, a chairmaker or furniture dealer is likely to have a much more extensive and standardized terminology for chairs than the general public, and may even be exasperated by their lack of precision when they describe what sort of chair they want. This brief visit to the world of furniture demonstrates the way in which humans deal with a very complex world — they classify concepts and locate them in hierarchies because remembering groups of things is much easier than mentally coping with large numbers of

ungrouped different types. The classified concepts are also assigned names so they can be referred to and discussed by speakers of the same language, but it must not be imagined that the multitude of concepts, classifications and hierarchies operate in the same way in every culture or group (or, sometimes, even among individuals in the *same* group).

All that has been said above about features of the concepts and vocabulary relevant to chairs, can also be found in much more complex and extensive schemes, for example, those relating to the world of plants. Just as the chairmaker uses an expert classification of chairs, and the householder uses a popular one, so these two types of classification can be found in plant terminology. It is important to understand that the purposes of the two types of classification are completely different. The expert type, the scientific botanical scheme in the case of plants, aims, broadly speaking, to achieve two goals. It seeks to classify and place in a hierarchy every botanically distinct type of plant, and, secondly, to designate them with internationally understood (by botanists) Latin names. Thus, in a botanical hierarchy, a sub-species belongs to a species, the species belongs to a genus, and the genus belongs to a family. To take one example, a type of plant has been classified as a variety of spring crocus, and assigned the name *Crocus vernus albiflorus*. This plant features in the following hierarchy: the *Crocus vernus albiflorus* is a sub-species of the species *Crocus vernus* (Spring crocus), all spring crocuses belong to the genus *Crocus*, and this genus belongs to the Iridaceae (Iris) family (Stace 1997: 956).[1]

While botanical Latin names are not devoid of interest to semanticists, these researchers, whether concerned with historical or modern plant-names, usually research the *popular* names and the popular types of classification which occur in 'natural' speech. Examples of such classifications are often referred to as 'folk' classifications (or 'folk taxonomies') and they have an entirely different purpose from the scientific aim of providing a universal and standardized scheme based on botanical features. A folk taxonomy is not universal, or standardized, or complete, or scientific or stable. This is what makes folk classifications and popular plant-names a fascinating but frequently puzzling and frustrating subject of study.

A folk classification does not aim for comprehensiveness, but merely groups certain plants according to various aspects of significance to a particular culture. Thus they may be grouped by their use, for example, as food, medicine or timber; by their appearance, for example, their height, flower-colour or leaf-shape; or by their habitat, for example, meadows, fields or woods. The folk-names given to plants reflect these, and many other criteria, resulting in what often appears to be a chaotic variety across the country. Thus the same plant may be found with various names, one name may be applied to several different plants, the names may change over the years, and they may be (in logical terms) completely nonsensical.[2] It is probably clear by now why popular plant-names vary so much: different communities are likely to stress different features of a plant — it may be considered a medical remedy in one village, but that use may be unknown elsewhere; a plant may only be known from a folk-tale in one region but, elsewhere, be better known as a pest of the cornfields. In contrast to the multiple names of some plants, others, in spite of being native to a particular area, may not have a popular name at all, suggesting that the inhabitants do not find it visually striking, useful or even a pest.

[1] The hierarchy can be more complicated than that of the present case (including sub-families, for example).

[2] In recent years, efforts have been made to provide standardized English plant-names which can be related to botanical species (see, for example, Dony, Jury and Perring 1986). This is useful for the purpose of discussing plants using unambiguous English names, but the precision and fixedness of such schemes are not (nor are they intended to be) natural to everyday English.

A few examples will suffice to demonstrate the confusing nature of English plant-names.[3] The name *witches' thimble(s)* is, or has been used of at least all the following plants: the sea campion, foxglove, ivy campanula, harebell and cornflower. If we find *witches' thimbles* mentioned in, for example, an eighteenth-century diary, how do we interpret it? Turning from a name with several plants to a plant with several names: over fifty names are recorded by Grigson (1955: 82–3) for the red campion: they include *soldiers' buttons* from Yorkshire, *plum-pudding* from Suffolk, and the intriguing *gramfer-greygles* from Dorset. These names are not uniquely attached to the red campion, however, since, to take one example, *soldiers' buttons* can refer to the marsh marigold in Somerset, and the Herb Robert in Buckinghamshire. Worse still, without leaving Somerset, we may find the name *soldiers' buttons* also used of the wood anemone, the buttercup and the columbine, to name but a few. This may seem chaotic, but it follows a different logic to that of the scientist. People may be interested in the fact that certain flowers are as bright as buttons, and they then apply the name to any plant which fulfils this criterion. If there is no practical need for a community to distinguish between such plants, its members remain content with such a scheme. A person with more specialized requirements, however, for example, a local herbalist, may well require more names. As for the researcher, it is unwise for him or her to assume (s)he knows the meaning of a particular plant-name — supporting evidence is always required.

It may seem to the reader that the above complications are bad enough but at least there are considerable surviving records from the modern period, and the possibility of asking elderly people in various English regions about the plant-names remembered from childhood. When the subject of study is the plant-names of late medieval England, however, the difficulties increase. There is less documentation, there are influences from the French dialect, Anglo-Norman, and, of course, there is nobody still alive from that period who could offer their memories to the researcher. It is inherently unlikely that the complex web of various plant-names recorded from the modern period would have been any simpler or more stable in the late medieval period. Indeed, with a complete lack of mass media at that time (printed books were still rare before 1500) it is most likely that there was an even greater regional variety of plant-names than in modern times, and a great many must have been lost to us. Relatively recently, efforts have been made to search for these names in various manuscripts, to identify them, as far as possible, and to publish them (for example, Hunt 1989).

2. Plant-names in Anglo-Saxon England

The main concern of this book, and of the Anglo-Saxon Plant-Name Survey (ASPNS), is the plant-names of the Anglo-Saxons, in other words, names from the *early* medieval period, even earlier than the names researched by Hunt, as mentioned above. The surviving written records which can be attributed to the Anglo-Saxons date mostly from the seventh century to c. 1100. Linguistically speaking, the Anglo-Saxons spoke a phase of the English language now referred to as Old English (OE), and this language gradually evolved into Middle English (ME), which is generally recognizable by c. 1150. However, not all the plant-names known to the Anglo-Saxons were English. Some Old Norse plant-names, for example, *askr* 'ash-tree' can be found in English place-names, especially in the former Danish territories of eastern England, and Celtic plant-names, such as Primitive Welsh **coll* 'hazel-tree' occur in river-

[3] The source for all the names in this paragraph is Grigson (1955).

names in England. While it seems likely that the Old Norse names were understood by the Anglo-Saxons, this is perhaps not the case with Brittonic plant-names, but they still require investigation in the Anglo-Saxon context.

The most prolific source of plant-names in a non-English language known to the Anglo-Saxons is, however, Latin. This language provides considerable information about Old English plant-names, through the evidence of translations and glossaries, but it also points to a serious weakness in our evidence. Inevitably, the principal source of our information for Anglo-Saxon plant-names is manuscripts, and that means, of course, that the vast majority of Anglo-Saxons, who were illiterate, are excluded from passing on their local plant-names directly to us. Since this silent majority were mostly agricultural workers and country-dwellers with knowledge of regional and dialectal names, this must represent a great loss of evidence. The educated Anglo-Saxons, almost all ecclesiastics, who wrote the manuscripts and texts which survive today, certainly knew many English plant-names but, apart from the fact that they could not represent the naming systems of every English village, they were often influenced by their Latin texts, and, for example, translated some Latin plant-names literally, so that Latin *canis caput* is translated as *hundes heafod*, both names meaning literally 'dog's head'. We have to ask ourselves whether any Anglo-Saxon villager would have used this English name.[4]

Latin plant-names used by educated Anglo-Saxons are often found in medical texts. The Old English *Herbarium*, for example (translated from a Latin compilation) often gives a Latin plant-name with an English equivalent, before discussing the medical properties of the plant. Such cases would appear to provide an absolutely secure translation, enabling researchers to identify the plant indicated. Sadly, all that can be said with confidence is that the scribe who originally added the English plant-name to the Latin text believed the two names to be equivalents. The English name, however, may have had a different meaning elsewhere in England, it may have been unknown to a substantial proportion of the English population, or it may even have belonged to the technical vocabulary of a specialized group, such as physicians. Similar caveats must also be applied to Anglo-Saxon glossaries (dictionaries) which list Latin words and supply Old English equivalents for many of them. The researcher must never consider such evidence as successfully closing the case — it merely offers partial illumination on the problem of plant identification.

Research into Anglo-Saxon plant-names is clearly not a straightforward matter. All the problems mentioned in the first section of this introduction, in connection with Modern English plant-names, such as their ambiguity, variability and geographical limitations, also apply to Anglo-Saxon names, but the latter present additional problems to the researcher, of which the most serious are the random and sparse survival of manuscripts, and the rarity, within those manuscripts, of the voice of the common people. It is pointless to weep tears over this difficult situation, since nothing can be done about it, but researchers and readers should always bear in mind the limitations of the evidence.

[4] The best source for the plant-names of the ordinary Anglo-Saxon people is place-names, provided they feature in early medieval sources, or in the land boundaries of early charters.

3. Research into Anglo-Saxon plant-names

Anyone who wants to know the meaning of an Old English plant-name can look it up in an appropriate dictionary. So, looking up *clæfre* in the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE) will produce the definition 'clover, trefoil'. This may seem convincing, but dictionary definitions may be based on minimal research. Sometimes the lexicographer benefits from an existing detailed semantic study of a particular plant-name, but many plant-names have never been investigated, and the lexicographer has to review the evidence and come to a conclusion, almost certainly without the luxury of as much research time as (s)he would like. Old English dictionaries compiled before 1980 were not based on a complete Old English concordance, so the lexicographer would frequently have to operate on the basis of incomplete evidence.[5] In earlier times, it was easy to assume that, where an Old English plant-name had an obvious modern descendant, as with *clæfre* and *clover*, the designated plant must be the same in both cases. Such a conclusion was correct for some plant-names but not for all. In addition to this variable reliability of dictionary definitions, there are many cases in which the lexicographer admits defeat or near defeat, entering definitions with a question-mark, or simply concluding 'a plant'. It should be understood, therefore, that there is much more work to do on Anglo-Saxon plant-names, either in terms of revision of existing definitions, or in terms of supplying a definition for previously undefined names. It should also be understood that the aim of research is to reach the most likely conclusion we can from all the available evidence.[6] Even when that often sparse evidence has been thoroughly investigated, however, it cannot reveal the full extent of the name's regional and dialectal varieties as they were used in the living language of the Anglo-Saxons.

A number of scholars have been involved in researching individual Anglo-Saxon plant-names over the years, and much of their work can be found recorded in the *ASPNS Bibliography* at <http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/STELLA/ihsl/projects/ASPNS/bib.htm> (under construction) and in *The Dictionary of Old English Plant Names* (DOEPN) at <http://oldenglish-plantnames.org> (online only). Such work is vitally important, but this section of the introduction will present just three major attempts to understand plant-names through different approaches. The first project to be mentioned here is the work of Peter Bierbaumer of the University of Graz, Austria who, between 1975 and 1979, published three volumes of Old English plant-names (Bierbaumer 1975–9). Each volume presented names in alphabetical order from particular Anglo-Saxon medical and glossarial sources, along with brief explanatory and comparative notes, and an attempt to identify the designated plants as precisely as possible. Bierbaumer's volumes are still vitally important to the subject, and are regularly consulted by researchers in this field. It seems churlish, therefore, to offer criticisms of such a seminal work, but it is worth pointing out that there is a tendency to aim for a species definition for each plant-name, when it is likely that many names were broader in application. Furthermore, because of the broad coverage of Bierbaumer's volumes, it is unrealistic to expect in-depth research to have been done on each plant-name.

[5] A complete concordance was established by the *Dictionary of Old English* team in the University of Toronto for the purpose of basing the definitions in their new dictionary on as much textual evidence as possible. This was made available to the public on microfiches in 1980 (Healey and Venezky 1980), and is now available online as the *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* (DOEWC) at <http://www.doe.utoronto.ca/pub/corpus.html>.

[6] Some guidelines for Anglo-Saxon plant-name research, often followed in ASPNS studies, can be found in Biggam (2007).

His volumes have since provided the basis of DOEPN, mentioned above, which is a joint project with Hans Sauer of the University of Munich, Germany. This valuable online resource incorporates research carried out after the publication of Bierbaumer's work, including Sauer's morphological studies (described below), a bibliography for each plant-name, and illustrations of the potential identifications.

The second important project on Old English plant-names is the work of Hans Sauer, who has concentrated on the morphology (structure) of the plant-names, and it will be useful for readers of the following papers if a flavour of his findings is given here (principally from Sauer 2003).[7] The principal division in the forms of the plant-names is between simplex and complex. Simplex names are those which are not, or are no longer, analyzable, such as *rose* 'rose'. Complex names, which form the majority of Old English plant-names, consist of at least two elements, and such names can be further classified into various types depending on the nature of the elements.[8] They can be formed, for example, with two nouns, such as *beo-wyrt*, literally 'bee-plant'; with an adjective and a noun, such as *wilde-popig*, literally 'wild poppy'; or with a verb stem and noun, such as *spring-wyrt*, literally 'spring-plant'. Plant-names can also be formed with prefixes, such as *sin-grene*, literally 'ever-green', and with suffixes, such as *apul-dor*, literally 'apple-tree'. In addition, there are several Old English names which represent loan-words from Latin, such as *bete* from Latin *beta* 'beetroot', and there are also translations, such as *dæges eage* from Latin *oculus diei*, both names meaning literally 'eye of the day'. Some plant-names are hybrid formations from both English and Latin elements, such as *leon-fot* based on Latin *pes leonis*, literally 'lion's foot', but with Latin *pes* 'foot' translated into Old English *fot*. The analysis of a name's structure in this way offers many insights into the naming process, including the concepts involved in plant recognition, the elements which needed to be adopted from other languages, and the presumed basicness of the simplex names.

The third project to be mentioned here is the Anglo-Saxon Plant-Name Survey (ASPNS), set up in late 1999 as a research project of the Institute for the Historical Study of Language, based in the University of Glasgow. As Director of ASPNS, I planned the work as a long-term project with a particular philosophy of approach, namely, to make maximum use of the appropriate surviving evidence, regardless of the discipline in which it could be found. ASPNS should be seen, therefore, as a primarily lexical semantic project in which the plant-name interpretations are influenced by the findings of any other appropriate discipline. The ASPNS researchers are, of necessity, supported in their work by an international team of advisors. These are scholars representing many disciplines who have kindly agreed to guide the researchers in subjects which may be unfamiliar to them. This extra dimension is vital, and often saves the unwary semanticist from falling into fatal traps. The linguistic evidence may suggest a particular plant, but a botanist may inform us that that plant was introduced into Britain as late as the eighteenth century; or a landscape specialist may explain that the plant requires a heathland habitat while the location referred to in the text was woodland in earlier times; or the records may imply a lack of that plant in a particular area but an archaeobotanist may be able to show material proof that it did exist in that location at the appropriate time. Many more examples could be given here of the value of consulting specialists in the history of food, medicine, agriculture, art, place-names and many other subjects, where those subjects are appropriate to a particular word-study. ASPNS also seeks to broaden the knowledge base

[7] The account which follows merely offers a selection from Sauer's full classification of forms.

[8] A former doctoral student of Hans Sauer's, namely Ulrike Krischke, has recently published an impressive study of Old English complex plant names (Krischke 2013).

about early medieval plants in another way, namely, by including in its remit, not just Old English plant-names, but names in any other language, provided they were understood or used by the Anglo-Saxons.

In-depth multidisciplinary research of this nature requires a great deal of time, and none of the ASPNS researchers are full-time employees of the project. Nonetheless, the Survey has already held two international conferences, and published the proceedings. The first conference took place in the University of Glasgow in 2000 (see Biggam 2003), and the second in the University of Graz in 2007 (see Bierbaumer and Klug 2009). The principal purpose of the first book is to explore the potential of multidisciplinary studies for plant-name research, while the second presents several case-studies and the progress of lexicographical and digital approaches to the subject.

4. The present special issue

As mentioned above, the first book from ASPNS explored the various disciplines which could be brought to bear on the problem of elucidating Anglo-Saxon plant-names. The disciplines represented were landscape studies, place-names, botany, archaeobotany, food studies, pharmacy, semantics, morphology, lexicography, art history, and literary studies. One paper presented a full-length multidisciplinary word-study (of OE *æspe*), as an example of a possible research methodology (Biggam 2003: 195–230; see also Biggam 2007). With the present special issue, the ASPNS authors have produced a number of word-studies which all include any supporting evidence which helps the linguistic approaches at the core of the investigations. The subjects cover a wide range of plants concerned with, among other things, hallucinatory plants (Hall), climbing plants (Wotherspoon), poisonous plants (Wotherspoon, Meaney), a plant involved in a puzzling place-name (Coates), and an exotic, medicinal shrub (Biggam). The papers uncover a number of problems of interpretation which their authors have valiantly tackled. Both the problems and the approaches to them will provide valuable help in future ASPNS research.

The collection opens with a tour-de-force essay by Markey which acts as a European (and a little beyond) cultural background to the other contributions, presents and utilizes important ethnobiological research techniques, and shows most clearly the power of etymology to uncover semantic shifts that may otherwise appear somewhat puzzling. Markey's co-star is the humble leek which is revealed as a member of an early 'grerb' package (a term denoting grass+herb+weed) which later gained its nomenclatural independence, extended its influence from southern Europe to the north, became a medical and ritual stalwart of female fertility and reproduction, and provided a metaphor for sexuality, virility and even nobility. If anyone doubts the crucial role of certain plants in early societies, Markey's biography of the leek will convince them otherwise.

The second and third contributions to this collection are by Alaric Hall, who has tackled an example of the problem, described in Section 1 above, of plant names which refer to more than one plant. That name is Latin *elleborus* in an Anglo-Saxon context. In his first article, Hall presents *elleborus* in the sense of 'woody nightshade' as a plant which seems to have been both the cause and cure of madness (often associated with elves), and which acted (by intention or by accident) as a mind-altering agent and promoter of prophetic states. In his second article on *elleborus*, however, Hall shows that the meaning(s) of this name in tenth- and eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon texts vary considerably from those of the earlier period, and appear to

represent a deliberate break from the earlier Latin scholarship of the age of Aldhelm. He hunts down every last clue from the three extant forms of the problematic Old English plant-name *tunsingwyrt* and reveals it as an allium, probably specifically wild garlic. In the process of his investigation, he also provides a window on the developing (and sometimes stumbling) text of the Old English *Herbarium*, a crucial document in our knowledge of Anglo-Saxon herbal medicine.

Irené Wotherspoon contributes two papers on superficially similar plant-names: *hymlic* and *hymele*. *Hymlic* has traditionally been interpreted as 'hemlock' but apparently straightforward identifications such as these need to be questioned in case other species are hiding within the often broader semantics of Old English names. Wotherspoon navigates her way through various plant-name confusions and errors in the earlier records, considers several similar-looking *hymlic*-candidates with their white-lace flower-heads, and discusses the three most important associations with such plants in later times, namely, edges and borders, poisonous qualities, and long, hollow stems. Such associations, even of a post Conquest date, reveal the most memorable features of a plant within an English rural community, and this can offer clues to Anglo-Saxon impressions of the plant. In her *hymele* paper, Wotherspoon uncovers a veritable jungle of climbing, creeping and trailing plants, several of which seem to have an affinity with wet and marshy locations, and each one appearing at various times to provide the solution for problematic Greek, Latin and Old English names. One of these plant-candidates is of particular interest, namely, the hop, which leads to an investigation of Anglo-Saxon beer-making, and discussion of the long-term quandary as to whether hops were cultivated in England at such an early date.

The next contribution, by Richard Coates, is also involved in watery areas, especially in Lincolnshire where a parish- and village-name incorporates a difficult plant name. Thanks to some meticulous botanical, topographical and dialectal studies, Coates unearths the marsh marigold as the most likely plant denoted by the Old English word *bulut*.

Audrey Meaney then heroically tackles the long-standing mystery of what exactly is (or are) *lybcorn*? She reviews over thirty plant-names which appear to have some relationship with *lybcorn*, and uncovers a panorama of changing meanings, the vicissitudes of early medieval trade with Asia, and the worrying apparent confusion of a flavouring with a poison. In the process, the reader is treated to fascinating, but sometimes disturbing, details of early emetics and purgatives.

Finally, my own paper turns to shrubs and trees, and tackles the question as to which type of juniper figures so strongly in Anglo-Saxon medicine. The trail leads to Dorset, involving the topography of Purbeck, memorial stones at Wareham, and the ancient shale industry. It may surprise the reader that such studies lead to a consideration of enlarged livers and spleens, and to the probable recognition of an exotic 'expeller' medicine, but that journey is typical of Anglo-Saxon plant-name investigations in which the most unlikely clues, retrieved from disparate types of evidence, can illuminate a semantic problem.

I would like to thank all the contributors to this volume for their detailed research into problematic subjects, and their laudable patience in staying with a long-term project. All the authors are most grateful to Alaric Hall who has seen our work through to publication in *Leeds Studies in English*.

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‘Garlic and Sapphires in the Mud’
‘Leeks’ in their Early Folk Contexts

Tom Markey[1]

1. Introduction

The so-called ‘leek-inscriptions’ in Germanic runes pose numerous unanswered questions, the most important of which are ethnobotanical in scope. As this is the only botanical term recorded in runic inscriptions, one immediately asks why leek-terms were uniquely tied to runes and, particularly, to inscriptions on bracteates that were presumably talismanic amulets, or on other luxury items for women, rather than, say, on rune-stones proper.[2] Did the leek promise some particular magical power or medical benefit? Did it hold some particular saliency for women in early Germanic ethnobotanical tradition? If so, what was the nature and origin of that tradition? How widespread was it? Was it an exclusively Germanic tradition or one deeply embedded in Indo-European culture generally? If borrowed, then what was its source? How was the leek classified and appreciated in early Indo-European ethnobotany? Was it a native cultivar in Germanic Europe or an introduction? If an introduction, then what was its source?

To answer these and related questions we necessarily visit ethnobotanical archaeology, for our goal is historical, to uncover and/or reconstruct a substantial chapter in the ethnobotanical history of Europe. By seeking the ethnobotanical significance of Germanic **laukaz*, the parent of *leek*, we enter a demanding interdisciplinary arena, one that bridges ethnobiology and historical linguistics. Given the essentially diachronic nature of our problem, we are fundamentally deprived of various avenues of inquiry open to those concerned with synchronic issues. Fieldwork is rarely an option. Quite simply, the historian of ethnobiology is compelled to reconstruct folk biology without immediate access to the ‘folk’. Instead, he or she must proceed indirectly by ‘interviewing’ texts, archaeological artifacts and paleobotanical data. Even though infrequently applied to ethnobiological problems, our primary heuristic tools are necessarily those of comparative linguistics (see Friedrich 1970; Witkowski and Brown 1981, 1983; and Diebold 1985). We may find, however, that we must refine conventional tools or even develop new approaches, a tack suggested here in our analysis of ethnobiological

[1] The title quotation is from T. S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton* (Part II, line 1).

[2] Bracteates are coins or ornaments of thin metal, often found with a suspension loop so, presumably, intended to be worn around the neck as an amulet.

'respecification cycles' (Section 7). Nevertheless, throughout our discoveries, our most powerful tools will remain those of traditional etymology. The plan for this paper is to proceed from the earliest evidence, as found in runic inscriptions, through the place of these 'leek'-named plants in ethnobotanical classification, to consideration of the long-term roles of, particularly, the leek in European magic and medicine, as illustrated by various texts and etymologies.

2. Runic inscriptions

The Proto-Norse and runic word *laukaʀ* 'leek' is descended from a Proto-Germanic parent form which historical linguists reconstruct as **laukaz* (whose etymology is discussed in Sections 7.2–8).[3] As a result of perfectly regular, indeed predictible, phonological changes, *laukaʀ* became Old Icelandic (OIce) *laukr* (Modern Icelandic (ModIce) *laukur* 'onion, garlic'). Proto-Germanic **laukaz* became: Old English (OE) *leac* (not a Norse loan), the anterior form of *leek*; Old Saxon (OS) *lok* (Modern Low German (ModLG) and Modern Dutch *lok* 'leek'); and Old High German (OHG) *louh* (Modern High German *Lauch* 'leek').

Proto-Norse *laukaʀ* occurs in numerous runic inscriptions that are typically highly formulaic. In these inscriptions, *laukaʀ* either occurs in combination with a limited set of other words known to be formulaic, or in solitary splendor. It never appears in a sentence, and it is never 'glossed'. Runic *laukaʀ* is either written out in full or abbreviated as follows: *lakʀ*, *lkaʀ*, *lauʀ*, *luʀ*, *lʀ*, or simply *l*.[4] The *l* abbreviation is ambiguous, for *l* alone could stand for *laukaʀ* or the runic 'mystery' word *alu*, a word that apparently denoted protection. It co-occurs with *laukaʀ* on the Skrydstrup bracteate, on which these are the only lexemes of the inscription (Krause and Jankuhn 1966: 247–8; Markey 1998: 188–9).

The majority of runic 'leek-inscriptions' are on gold bracteates of accomplished artistry. In round numbers, these 'leek'-bracteates date from about 400 to about 600 AD and most are from Denmark. Runic bracteates, whether inscribed with *laukaʀ* or other words or abbreviations, are generally thought to have had some talismanic or other numinous purpose as amulets.[5]

Other objects on which 'leek'-inscriptions occur, such as hide- or meat-scrapers (Norwegian *kjøtkniv* 'meat-knife'), must have belonged to women. The woman in southwestern

[3] Germanic **laukaz* has never received an acceptable etymology, and runological discussions of the ethnobotany of 'leek' are typically cursory and frequently ill-informed. The following statement by Krause and Jankuhn (1966: 85), in reference to the inscription on the Fløksand meat-knife, is representative: 'and the "leek" is a plant which is regarded by many people as a means of preservation, for retaining freshness and youthfulness' (*und der Lauch ist eine Pflanze, die bei vielen Völkern als Mittel zur Konservierung, zur Bewahrung von Frische und Jugendlichkeit gilt*).

[4] See Nos. 37, 38, 109–15, and 120–1 in Krause and Jankuhn (1966). See Düwel (1988), particularly pages 103 *passim* and 106, where he inventories the canonical abbreviations (*l* occurs ten times on No. 38 in Krause and Jankuhn), and see Hauck (1985–) for an annotated research history, noting particularly his useful distribution map (Fig. 2, p. 45).

[5] The gold bracteates have been inventoried, photographed, classified as to artistic and representational format (into Types A, B, C and so on), and tediously described with runological commentary by Düwel in the magnificent multi-volumed *Die Goldbrakteaten der Völkerwanderungszeit* under the general editorship of Hauck (1985–). Runology is, to be sure, a rich and well-documented field, but only the bare bones, or operative facts of the runic evidence are surveyed here. These facts, nonetheless, are sufficient for the task at hand. For detailed discussions of individual inscriptions, the reader is referred to secondary literature such as that cited in the references at the end of this article.

Norway who owned the so-called 'Fløksand meat-knife' with its formulaic *linalaukaʀf* 'linen-leek-f' inscription from about 350 AD, was apparently so fond of it that she took it with her to the grave (Krause and Jankuhn 1966: no. 37).

The Norse acrophonic letter name for runic *l* is 'leek' (Proto-Norse *laukaʀ*). 'Acrophonic' refers to a name which begins with an appropriate letter, such as *l is for leek*, like our *a is for apple* (see, for example, Musset and Mossé 1965: 111, 134, 151). The runic acrophonic letter names are, however, comparatively late historically and are generally considered pedagogical.[6]

3. The ethnobotanical context

In addition to the medical-magical-fertility associations of the leek in runelore,[7] particularly the runelore of Stanza 8 in the mid-twelfth-century Old Norse Eddaic poem *Sigrdrífumál* (see Section 5), there are also flashes of such associations in the precious evidence provided elsewhere in the Poetic Edda; in *Óláfs saga Helga* (The Saga of Saint Olaf, see below) by the medieval Icelandic warrior-poet, Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241); in the so-called *Vǫlsa þáttr* (Vǫlsi Episode, see Section 4.7), a near contemporary of the *Canterbury Tales*; and in skaldic verse. In Snorri's *Óláfs saga Helga* we read: 'there in the stone kettle she had fixed diced leeks and other herbs, and she gave it to a wounded man to eat, so that the leeks might heal the wound, as he was pierced to the innards' (*hón hafði þar gǫrt í steinkatli strappalauk ok ǫnnur grǫs, ok gaf at éta einum sárum mǫnnum, þvíat kenndi af laukinum út ór sári því er á hol var*) (Snorri Sturluson 1945: line 223).

The citation from Snorri is of both ethnobotanical and anthropological interest: it tells us that leeks were used in internal, rather than external, homeopathic medicine and that leeks were classed as herbs (*ǫnnur grǫs* 'other grasses and herbs'): OIce *gras* denoted 'grass', 'herb' and 'weed'. In ethnobotanical terms, OIce *gras* was the life-form taxon that Brown (1984: 13–14) and others have termed *grerb* (indicating 'grass+herb+weed'), an ethnobotanical class that includes small herbaceous (leafy, green, non-woody) plants. To provide contextual scaffolding, we necessarily next chronicle Indo-European grerb-terms.

3.1 Latin

Latin had one basic, all-purpose grerb-term: *herba* 'herb' (glossed by Greek *phorbē* (φορβή) 'fodder'), and *herba* was diligently handed down as the major grerb-term to each of Latin's Romance successors; so, for example, Rumanian *iarba*, French *herbe*, Italian *erba*, and Spanish *hierba*.

3.2 Baltic and Slavic

Baltic has two basic grerb-terms: Lithuanian *augalas* 'plant, herb' (equivalent to Latvian *augs*), and Lithuanian *zole* 'grass, herb' (equivalent to Latvian *zale*). Slavic also has two basic grerb-terms: *trava* (for example, Bulgarian *treva*, Polish *trawa*) for 'grass, herb', and *zelje* (for example, Russian *zelie*, Slovene *zelje*, Polish *ziolo*) also for 'grass, herb'. A Venn diagram of Slavic *zelje* : *trava* would necessarily show the two sharing significant semantic space as grerb-terms. Etymologically, Lithuanian *zole* is cognate with Latin *holus* 'vegetables, greens,

[6] There are no 'leek' (*laukʀ*)-inscriptions in the Latin alphabet.

[7] For an extensive survey of rune magic, see Andersson (1997), critically reviewed by Williams (1997).

cabbage, colewort, turnips'. Bulgarian contextually specifies *treva* 'grass' as 'herb' (*lekoviti trevi* 'medicinal herbs'), and Lithuanian does the same for *zole* (*vaistines zoles* 'medicinal remedy, herbs'). So too does Old Icelandic with its *læknis-gras* 'herb' (literally 'healing grass').

3.3 Albanian

Albanian *bar* 'grass' also covers 'weed' and 'herb'.

3.4 Armenian

The Armenian grerb-term is *xot*, which covers 'grass, weeds, herbs', but which, despite Pisani (1944), still lacks a convincing etymology.

3.5 Sanskrit

Vedic Sanskrit *trna*, later *trina* (cognate with Gothic *þaurnus* 'thorn') covers 'grass, weeds, herbs', but the Vedic grerb-term *par excellence* is *ósadhi-* (from H_2*us-dheH*$_1$-) literally 'to place in the light' (Nagy 1990: 150, footnote 25), denoting some unspecified medicinal plant or herb. This word occurs ninety-five times in the *Rig-Veda*.[8]

3.6 Hittite

For GRERB, Hittite has *welku-* (neuter) 'grass, herb', a word that is also contained in personal names (compare French *Malherbe*) (Laroche 1966: 339).

3.7 Germanic

Germanic is remarkable for having the largest arsenal (three) of grerb-terms in Western Indo-European: **gras-*, **wurt-*, and **krud-*. Two of these terms were pan-Germanic: **gras-* and **wurt-* are attested from all dialects, but **krud-* is strictly West Germanic. From this, one infers that Germanic continued to encode GRERB after the break-up of Common Germanic (c.100 AD). Latin *herba* 'herb' and Germanic **grasa-* 'grass' are ultimately from the same Indo-European root.[9]

Old English *wyrt* 'herb, plant, root' is cognate with Gothic *waurt-*, OIce *urt* 'herb', OHG *wurz* 'herb, plant', and Middle High German (MHG) *würze* 'spice, brewer's wort'. Old English *wyrt* is featured in the *Nine Herbs Charm*, and became *wurt* (*wort*) in Middle English. The word is preserved in contemporary compounds such as *mugwort* and *colewort*, but it was generally replaced by *herb* or *plant* from Norman French after the Conquest. This word stems from Indo-European **wred-*, a North European radical that also supplied Latin *radix* 'root'.

German *Kraut* (singular), *Kräuter* (plural) from **krúdis* : **krudizá* respectively, 'herb, vegetable, weed' was a Continental Germanic, and, by later immigration, Anglo-Saxon term.[10] It has a near congener in Lithuanian *grudas* 'grain, corn', with a plural *grudai* 'grain (cereals)', *grudinis* 'cereals', cognate with the Latvian verbal adjective *grudenis* 'mashed hemp'.

[8] See the commentary on *Rig-Veda* 10.97.1–6 in Section 9 below.

[9] State I **ghér-dh-* gives *herba*, and State II *ghr-é H2-so-* gives **grasa-*.

[10] Compare Dutch *kruid*, OS *krud* 'weed' (attested only from the ninth-century *Heliand*), OHG *krut*, and English *crowd* in *crowd-weed*, *crowd-grass.*

The WEED sense of Scandinavian *gras* is marked by the negative prefix *u-*, as, for example, in Norwegian *ugras*, literally 'non-herb', a strategy that is paralleled in German by *Un-* in *Unkraut* 'weed'.

Obviously, it was the special purpose application feature [+/– magical-medicinal] that distinguished grerbs as 'weeds' [–], from grerbs as 'herbs' [+]. As shown by the Baltic and Slavic examples above, specification of this feature periodically entailed disambiguating descriptive text.

3.8 Celtic

Celtic must have exercised the same grerb classification for 'leek' as Germanic. The etymological evidence is as follows. Old Irish (OI) *lus* is a general label for any herbaceous plant or vegetable (compare the cognate Middle Welsh *llys* (plural *llysiau*), Old Cornish *les*, Middle Cornish *leys*, Breton *louzou* 'plant, herb, remedy, balm'). However, in passages in which there is a contextual reference to plants or herbs as dietary items, the typical lemma of OI *lus* is Latin *porrum* 'leek', and both Old and Middle Irish *lus* sometimes specifically signified 'leek' (*Dictionary of the Irish Language*, under *lus*)

3.9 Classification strategies

As Brown (1984: 59) summarizes, four major semantic strategies are typically employed in ethnobiological classification:

1. metaphor: 'spear-leek' denotes 'garlic';
2. description: 'white leek' denotes 'garlic';
3. expansion of reference: Germanic **lauk-* denotes 'onion, garlic, leek', evidenced by polysemy (more than one meaning);
4. restriction of reference, typically by contextual deterrence: OI *lus(s)* signified 'leek' only in dietary contexts.

Germanic (as evidenced by Old Norse) and Celtic (as evidenced by Old Irish) employed diametrically opposed strategies for ethnobotanical classification of the leek as a grerb: expansion (Germanic) versus restriction (Celtic) respectively.

4. Fertility and sexuality

In Germanic Europe, the leek had medical-magical-fertility associations, and was deployed as a metaphor for sexuality, virility, or even nobility. These associations were apparently concentrated in Scandinavia and Anglo-Saxon England. None of them is found in Gothic, which is but fragmentarily attested from the fourth century AD, or in Old High German or Old Saxon (both c. 750–c. 1050 AD), and but rarely in later medieval Netherlandic or medieval German. This is the conclusion of Petrus Tax (personal communication), after an intensive search, and I am also grateful to him for several of the citations below. However, as Tax insightfully notes, textual silence (irrevocable testimony) in Continental Germanic does not necessarily imply absence.

All early Germanic peoples, particularly commoners in the Middle Ages, may well have been conversant with these folk customs but did not write about them for reasons (especially) of taboo or simply because they could not write at all. And taboo there must have been, for, as pointed out in the conclusion, the earnestly Christian Prudentius (348–c. 409 AD) persistently railed against the pagan leek, which, as we shall see, was a well established Greco-Roman symbol for, and reputed stimulant of, female fertility. As detailed below, Greco-Roman tradition also considered the leek an able assistant in childbirth.

4.1 Anglo-Saxon sources

The leek is frequently prescribed as a medicinal herb in Anglo-Saxon folk medicine, but mention of its powers for enhancing fertility or desire are often carefully covert and, hence, enticingly oblique. The Anglo-Saxon *Herbarius* of Pseudo-Apuleius glosses *satyrion* as the 'raven's leek' (*refnes leac*), perhaps the 'ravenous leek' (De Vriend 1984: Chapter 16), but for further elucidation one has to know that the *satyrion* (σάτυριον), sometimes identified as the common ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea* L.), was the legendary Greco-Roman plant that supposedly excited lust (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VII.338–41; Bk 26.63). The *Herbarius* also informs us (De Vriend 1984: Chapter 49) that:

> *Đeos wyrt þe man temolum & oðrum naman singrene nemneð þæs þe Omerus sægð ys wyrta beorhtust & þæt Mercurius hy findan sceolde ðysse wyrte wos ys swyðe fremful & hyre wyrttruma ys synewealt & sweart eac on ðære mycele þe leaces.*
>
> This [is] the herb which some call *temolum* [Latin *temulentis*] and others *sengreen* [houseleek] of which Homer says it is the brightest herb and that Mercury should find this herb's juice is very useful, and its root is rounded and dark much like that of the leek,

and the dalliances of Mercury were well entrenched in medieval lore.

4.2 German sources

In his *Buch der Natur* (composed about 1349–50), Konrad von Megenberg, who was not known for his originality as he based his work on Latin sources, says, in part, of the leek that: 'it brings urine and the intimacy of womankind and brings lack of chastity and most of all its seed' (*er pringt daz harmwazzer und der frawen haimleichait und pringt unkäusch und allermeist sein sâm*) or, quite simply, leeks make men urinate and women both horny and fertile (Konrad von Megenberg 1861: 415–16; *Von dem pforren* 63). These are features to which, in an oblique fashion, the pious Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179), authoress of the *Ordo Virtutum*, alluded in her *Physica*: 'and in humans it causes the disquiet of desire' (Hildegard of Bingen 1991: 104). Similar assertions were made by Albrecht von Scharfenberg (c.1270) in his *Titurel* (line 3256).

4.3 Chaucer

In his *Canterbury Tales*, good old Geoffrey Chaucer (c.1340–1400) gives us a glimpse of the 'folk' in a piece of what German folklorists termed *gesunkenes Kulturgut* ('sunken cultural value').[11] In the prologue to his tale, the Reeve presents himself as an old man — 'Gras tyme is doon; my fodder is now forage' (Chaucer 1987: 77, line 3868) — who is well beyond the

[11] I am grateful to Siegfried Wenzel for this information.

rowdy tale of the Miller, his predecessor. He then slips into pure bawdiness by saying (lines 3876–80):

We hoppen alwey, whil that the world wol pype.
For in oure wyl ther stiketh evere a nayl,
To have an hoor heed and a grene tayl,
As hath a leek; for thogh oure myght be goon,
Our wil desireth folie ever in oon.

Aye we hop when the world will pipe.
For in our will there sticks ever a nail,
To have a hoary head and a green tail,
As hath a leek, for though our might be gone,
Our will desireth folly ever anon,

which demonstrates that the leek must have survived as a sexual metaphor well into the late fourteenth century. We dance to the world's tune, and *grene* 'green' here is, presumably, a pun on *green* in its senses of 'young' and 'randy'.

Chaucer was ever careful to use earthy images entirely familiar to his prospective audience, several of whose dialects he could ably imitate. He is, however, known to have traveled extensively on the Continent, though never to Scandinavia.

4.4 Scandinavian sources

In early Scandinavian folklore, as we shall see, the leek apparently had strong associations with sexuality, physical well-being and perhaps general prosperity, the thing the Germans call *Gedeihen*. The one occurrence of leeks in the Eddic *Vǫlospá* (Stanza 4)[12] is in the creation sequence, a strophe that has been read by some as an allusion to the leek's powers of fertility and healing:

Áðr Burs synir biǫðom um yþþo,
þeir er miðgarð, mœran, scópo
sol scein sunnan á salar steina,
þá var grund gróin grœnom lauki.

Before Bur's sons lifted the bottoms,
When they created mighty Midgard,
The sun shone from the south upon the stones of the hall,
Then was the earth grown (healed) with green leek.

In the 'heroic' poems of the *Edda*, leek (also garlic) is used as a metaphor for virility and as a symbol of power and nobility. The occurrences are: *Guðrúnarqviða in fyrsta* (Stanza 18)

Svá var minn Sigurðr hiá sonom Giúca,
sem væri geirlaucr ór grasi vaxinn,
eða væri biartr steinn a band dreginn,
iarcnasteinn yfir ǫðlingom.

So was my Sigurth among Gjuki's sons,
As if he were a spear-leek (garlic) grown from the grass,
Or the bright stone placed on the band,
Or a glittering jewel over princes.

Guðrúnarqviða ǫnnor (Stanza 2)

[12] All Eddic passages which follow are taken from Neckel (1962).

Svá var Sigurðr af sonom Giúca,
sem vœri grœnn laucr ór grasi vaxinn,
eða hiǫrtr hábeinn um hvǫssom dýrom,
eða gull glóðrautt af grá silfri.
So was Sigurth to Gjuki's sons,
As if he were a green leek grown from the grass,
Or a tall-legged stag to nipping beasts,
Or glow-red gold to grey silver.

and *Helgaqviða Hundingsbana in fyrri* (Stanza 7)

Drótt þótti sá dǫglingr vera,
qváðo meþ gumnom góð ár komin;
siálfr gecc vísi ór vígþrimo
ungom fœra ítrlauc grami
The king's host thought that to be a king (a descendant of Dag),
They said to the men the 'good times are come,'
Then the prince himself went forth from battle tumult,
To bring the young warrior a noble leek

where *ítrlaukr* 'noble leek' has been seen by some as a kenning for scepter or sword (or the sword-lily plant). The etymology of *ítr-* remains contested, but it is contained in the Odin epithet *Ítrekr*, and it designated the king in board games. Other than with *-laukr*, it is found compounded only with *-borrin* 'well born', *-scapaðr* 'nobly shaped', *-vaxinn* 'of fair stature', *-mannligr* 'noble, manly bearing', and *-þveginn* 'clean washed, well scrubbed'.

4.5 Celtic, Baltic and Slavic traditions

In Celtic tradition, the leek was a victory talisman and a protection against wounds, and it was the emblem of the god Aeddon. The leek is the Welsh national plant; it is worn on St. David's Day (March 1st), and its symbolic association with Wales is said to date back to the sixth- and seventh-century struggles against the English. There is, however, nothing in Celtic tradition that suggests an association between leeks and sexuality or fertility.

The same is true of Baltic and Slavic. Moreover, leeks are simply not, as Maruta Lietins Ray (personal communication) informs me, part of Baltic culinary culture, nor, for many Balts, is garlic. Latvian *loki*, a late borrowing from Low German *lok*, signifies 'green onion tops or chives', a garnish. Latvian *puravs* 'leek' (also as a surname) is clearly a recent nativization of a ModLG dialectal *purs*, while Latvian *luoks* 'leek' is marginal for many Latvian speakers. Lithuanian *lúkai* is derivationally ambiguous: either from Slavic *luku* or Germanic **lauk-* (or **luk-*), while Latvian *luoks* is from Low German *lok*. As a garlic and leek phobic culinary area, the Baltic is comparable to Hungary. Hungary knows the leek, but uses it only for flavoring; there is no leek soup.

4.6 Classical sources

In Western Europe it is Greco-Roman tradition (later introduced to Armenia) that provides the closest parallel with the early Scandinavian veneration of the leek, but particularly so in Italic tradition as recorded by Pliny the Elder in his *Natural history*. This erudite naturalist was born at Como (ancient Comum) in 23 or 24 AD and died in the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD. He must certainly have been versed in early north Italian, including Rhetic, Venetic and Etruscan,

traditions. He tells us (1942–83: II.98–9; Bk 3.20) that the Rhetic peoples were Etruscan, and contemporary linguistic inquiry has shown him to have been correct (Markey 2001). Pliny, who had held a military command in Germania and was governor of Spain, was not an original thinker, but an epitomist, a derivative encyclopedist, who recorded Classical 'knowledge'. He nevertheless provides a window on the Classical, primarily Greek, ethnobotany known in Rome during his day.

Pliny considers the benefits and properties of two kinds of leek which he terms *Porrum sectivum* (1942–83: VI.28–9; Bk 20.21) and *Porrum capitatum* (VI.30–31; Bk 20.22), the latter being a calque on Greek *prason-kephaloton* (πράσον-κεφαλοτον), which is the leek proper as we know it. The former (perhaps the chive or some more temperate garlic leek) stops, so he informs us, hemorrhaging after miscarriages or abortions (*item ex abortu profluuia poto suco*). When crushed in honey it cures ulcerations, but when mixed with vinegar it detoxifies the bites of snakes and other venomous animals (*ulcera cum melle trito, uel bestiarum morsus ex aceto, item serpentium aliorumque uenatorum*). As for the leek proper (*porrum capitatum*, today's *Allium porrum* L.), Pliny states that Hippocrates[13] prescribed that it be given to women without any accompanying ingredient, and thought that it opened the contracted womb (in childbirth) and, when taken as nourishment, that it increased female fertility (*Hippocrates et sine alia mixtura dari iubet uuluasque contractus aperire se putat, fecunditatem etiam feminarum hoc cibo augeri*). The reference is to Hippocrates' *De morbis mulierum* (Bks 2.89 and 6.98, on intercourse and pregnancy, see Hippocrates 1923–95: V), which must have been accessible to Pliny as a source.

Comparable information is detailed by Dioscorides (c.20–70 AD) in his *De materia medica* (Dioscorides 2000: Bk 2.149), which, among other things, tells us that leeks rubbed with (salt) water produce a sort of sexual slime that dilates the womb, a practice considered particularly beneficial at childbirth. In this, he continues the folk medicine of Hippocrates. Thus it was that Greco-Roman folk medicine ascribed womb dilation and/or female fertility enhancement to leeks, but not to onions or garlic. As detailed in our conclusion, these conventions were later incorporated intact into Armenian folk medicine.

4.7 Horse magic

Perhaps the most telling evidence for the leek's role as a fertility emblem in early Scandinavia is provided by the so-called *Vǫlsa þáttr* (Heusler and Ranisch 1903: 124), an early fourteenth-century *þáttr* (short tale or episode), and thus a near contemporary of Chaucer's *Reeve's Prologue*. This *þáttr* relates how a farmer's wife in northern Norway had covered a horse's penis with leeks and then wrapped both in linen, presumably as a phallic fetish. At each evening meal in the autumn, the time of harvesting and butchering, the annual culmination of fertility, she passed the fetish around the table, and each person who received the fetish was to recite a strophe over it. One of these strophes reports:

> *Aukinn ertu, Vǫlsi, ok upp tekkin,*
> *líni gæddr, en laukum studdr.*
> You're distended, Volsi, and picked up,
> endowed with linen and by leeks supported

which contains the same formulaic components, linen and leek, as were inscribed (*linalaukaʀ*) on the Fløksand meat-knife (see Section 2).

[13] Hippocrates (c. 460 BC–c.377 BC) was the Classical world's most famed mortal physician, as opposed to the

Although the matter has been debated, these lines are traditionally considered by runologists as an illustration of fertility magic (Musset and Mossé 1965: 151; Krause and Jankuhn 1966: 85–7). *Vǫlsi* meant 'horse dick', a word as vulgar in Old Icelandic as it is in English, and formed from OIce *vǫlr* 'a round stick, staff or cylinder'. The combination 'linen (as a blanket) + leek + horse penis' probably implies affiliation with the Indo-European fertility ritual known as the *Asvamedha*. This was what many consider to have been the most spectacular ritual of early Indic tradition, a horse-centered celebration of public copulation *more ferarum* that involved intoxication (Puhvel 1987; Mallory 1989: 135–7; Watkins 1995: 265–76). In the course of the *Asvamedha*, a virgin stallion was suffocated by a woollen or linen blanket (no blood was shed), after which the king's chief wife 'co-habited' with the victim under covers. The horse was then dismembered into three parts, and each part was dedicated to a deity assigned one of the three (Dumézilian) estates of Indo-European society.[14]

An *Asvamedha* was recorded in Celtic society in medieval Ireland by the Norman Giraldus de Barri ('Gerald of Wales'), and from the *Feis Temro* 'Feast of Tara'.[15] In Rome it was known as the *October Equus*, and it is seemingly represented in both Hittite and Venetic plastic art. Venetic implementation of the *Asvamedha*'s copulation *more ferarum* is signaled by the Adrian terracotta '*Asvamedha* vase', prominently displayed in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Adria in Italy, but unpublished. This vase is a composite figurine with a female nude astride a horse, the tail of which is unmistakably shaped like an exaggerated *penis erectus*. The contents of the vase were poured through an opening in the rider's head and consumed through a spout in the horse's mouth. Moreover, horse sacrifices (by smothering) are well attested in the archaeological record of the pre-Roman necropolis of Canal Bianco at Adria, a cosmopolitan trading center comprised of Venetians, Etruscans and Greeks. A Hittite *Asvamedha* is seemingly presented in the friezes of appliqué relief figures and images depicted on a large vase from Inandik, Turkey (Özgüç 1988). The initial frieze shows preparation of food by cooks, but the leek is absent, though the garlic-onion (*šuppi-wašhar*) is known to have been used for Hittite ritual purification.

A horse penis held erect by leeks and wrapped in linen would definitely seem to be a *pars pro toto* representation of an *Asvamedha*. Note that it is a woman who passes the fetish around, not a male priest (OIce *goði*). Note too that, as in comparanda *Asvamedha*, public, rather than individual, mantra-participation is mandatory.

An inversion of the *Asvamedha*, with its goal of fertility, is rendered by the Nordic 'scorn pole' cursing rite with its parallels in medieval England (Markey 1972). In this ritual, the severed head of a horse was mounted on a scorn pole (*níðstǫng*) pointed in the direction of an accursed person's home. The pole carried the message that the man so scorned was to be *argr*/*ragr* (metathesis variants, and metathesis is typical of Indo-European taboo formulas) 'an effeminate coward'; that is, that the accursed was to be afflicted with a lack of fertility.

As a demonstration of the leek's persistent sexual connotations in Norse, we note that, in Modern Icelandic, the word *lókur* (from OIce *lókr*),[16] a vocalic (apophonic, ablaut) variant of the Germanic root **lauk-* that supplied Proto-Norse *laukaʀ*, is slang for 'penis'.

divinized Aesculapius.

[14] Georges Dumézil, a twentieth-century French philologist and mythographer, proposed the Trifunctional Hypothesis whereby early Indo-European society was divided into warriors, priests and farmers.

[15] For textual details, see Watkins (1995: 265–6).

[16] Compare Färoese *lókur* and related Old Swedish *lok*, *luk*, *luuk* 'grass, herb, weed'.

5. Medicine

Leeks and their relatives can also be found in early contexts in which the medical content is more evident than the magical. From the runelore regarding the leek that Brynhild (Brunhild) delivers to Sigurth (Siegfried) in Stanza 8 of the Poetic Edda's *Sigrdrífumál*, it seems as if Brunhild had read both Homer and Pliny or taken an advanced degree in Classics:

Full scal signa oc við fári siá
oc verpa lauki í lǫg:
þá ec þat veit, at þér verðr aldri
meinblandinn miǫðr.

A toast shall you dedicate and thus keep unharmed,
And cast a leek in the liquid,
Then shall I know will never befall you,
Harm-blended mead,

that is, 'venomous, poisonous' mead, literally, mead blended with 'harm', although OIce *mein* also signified 'disease' or 'sore', and is contained in *meinburgir* 'impediments, hindrances (that make a marriage unlawful)', the very thing which Brunhild had a vested interest in avoiding. Then too, *mein* denoted the venom of vipers, perhaps an oblique reference to Siegfried as a dragon-slayer. The Homeric *krom(m)uon* (κρόμ(μ)υον) 'onion/garlic' (see Section 6.2.1) is an ingredient of a guest-friend ritual refreshment while the *laukr* 'leek' of the *Sigrdrífumál* is preventive/curative medicine.

'Leeks' are included in various early English recipes for internal medical treatments, and an example can be found in the Old English translation called the *Peri Didaxeon* (Löweneck 1896: Section 38).[17] It reads: 'Then shall you do thus for him. Take a leek and pound it and wring the sap out [and] give him soup, and he will soon be better' (*Þæt scealt þu hym þus don: Nim leac and cnuca hit and wring þat wos of, syle hym supan, and hym byð sona bet*).

Further, in Bald's *Leechbook* (Cockayne 1864–6: Bk 1, 39.3): 'A tonic for swelling: *sigsonte* (some kind of plant), onion, leek, the nether part of the plantain; boil it all in water and sweeten with honey' (*Drenc wiþ onfeallum, sigsonte, cipe, leac, wegbræde nioþoweard, wyl ealle on wætre & geswet mid hunige*). And for leprosy, again in Bald's *Leechbook* (Cockayne 1864–6: Bk 1, 32.3): 'For leprosy, plantain, 'medicinal herb', leek, mint, chamomile, elecampane (field inula), sulphur; beat with lard; the sulphur should be two thirds that of the herbs' (*Wiþ hreofle*, *wegbræde*, *læcewyrt*, *leac*, *minte*, *magþa*, *eolone*, *swefl*, *gecnuwa wiþ rysle*, *do þæs swefles swilcan þara wyrta twæde*). There are further Anglo-Saxon remedies that prescribe the leek for fever and headaches, and as a component in plasters for wounds.

6. Alliums and their names

6.1 Botanical background

As any reputable handbook tells us, the leek (*Allium porrum* L.), believed to derive from the wild Eurasian *Allium ampeloprasum* L., originated in western Anatolia and the South Caucasus. It is closely related to both garlic (*Allium sativum* L.) and the common onion

[17] Not all scholars believe the language of the *Peri Didaxeon* to be Old English. Some regard it as transitional between Old and Middle English.

(*Allium cepa* L.). All three are members of the Liliaceae family. Domestic garlic (*Allium sativum*) is believed to have originated from *Allium longicuspis* Regel, the wild garlic of central Asia, northern Iran, and southeastern Turkey. *Allium porrum* is known only from cultivation. All varieties of leeks require frequent watering and are known to have been native to swampy, bog-like environments. They do not like acid soils. They can, however, be grown under a wider range of conditions than onions. Most early, summer-ripening varieties are frost resistant, although they prefer temperatures ranging between 13 and 24 degrees centigrade. The leek could, therefore, have been cultivated in early southern Scandinavia, the probable Germanic homeland. In fact, some modern American varieties, such as *Blue Solaise* (105 days to maturity), survive the heavy frosts of Vermont and northward, and there is no reason to doubt but that some early cultivars could have done the same. The distribution of wild ancestors of the onion, garlic and leek definitely points to their collective origin in southwest Asia. The Egyptian domesticates of wild forms of these vegetables, which are fortuitously evidenced archaeologically, were clearly not native to the Nile Valley (Zohary and Hopf 1993).

The onion, garlic and leek were late introductions to Northern Europe as an *Allium* crop package from the Mediterranean. There are, for example, no remains of these plants in the Swiss lake dwellings (inhabited until c. 800 BC), the sites (such as Bienne, Morat, Neuchâtel) that have so far provided the best evidence for early organic remains in Europe.

6.2 Etymological background

For all of Western Indo-European there were but three primary labels for 'leek' (*Allium porrum*): Celtic **kanena* and cognates, Latin *porrum* and cognates, and Germanic **lauk-* and cognates.

6.2.1 Celtic **kanena* and cognates

Celtic **kanena* from **kapena* (or the like), gives Brittonic **cinnin*, OI *cainnenn*, and Welsh *cennin* 'leeks', also 'daffodils'. (Compare Middle Breton *quinghen* attested in Balbus' *Catholicon* from 1286, and in Cornish as *kennin*.) Compare also **kapena* as a Celtic proto-form with Hesychius of Alexandria's *kapia* (κάπια) in his authoritative lexicon, which he glosses as 'garlic': 'ta skoroda Kerynitai' (τα σκόροδα Κερυνυται).[18]

Homer does not attest *prason* (πράσον) 'leek' or *skorodon* (σκόροδον) 'garlic', but he does attest *krom(m)uon* (κρόμ(μ)υον) 'onion/garlic',[19] considered by some an assimilation outcome of Hesychius' *kremuon* (κρεμυον) (compare Modern Greek *kremmydi* (κρεμμύδι) 'onion'), ultimately from an Indo-European **krémHu-*. This is supposedly *Allium cepa*, but cognate Germanic descendants of Indo-European **krémHu-*, such as OE *hramsa* (singular), *hramsan* (plural), which gives Modern English *ramson*, denote the *Allium ursinum* L. (German *Bärlauch*). This is the *bear-garlic* or wild garlic that is still common in European herb gardens today, also called *dog-leek* (compare the French *poireau de chien*, first recorded in 1611), *crow-leek*, *house-leek*, or *corn-leek*. The same Indo-European root is reflected in the (originally Gallic) north Italian city-name *Cremona* and the Greek city-name *Kremōnē* (Κρεμώνη).

Indo-European **krémHu-* supplied the Western Indo-European word for 'onion/garlic',

[18] The lexicon partially survives in a single manuscript: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. 622.

[19] It occurs in the *Iliad* 11.630 and the *Odyssey* 19.233.

but Western Indo-European and Indo-European in general originally lacked a term for 'leek', a plant that Indo-Europeans apparently did not know until they were introduced to it, presumably firstly in the leek's native Anatolia and/or the South Caucasus. In Homer's *Odyssey* (19.233), *krom(m)uon* 'onion/garlic' occurs as a simile for tanned skin, and, while this passage may be of interest to the literary historian, it sheds no light on the topic at hand. It is Homer's *Iliad* (11.630) attestation that is supremely interesting in the present context, for it looks like a ritualistic analog of Hippocrates' knowledge. In welcoming Nestor and Eurymedon, Hecamede, the daughter of Arsinous, sets forth an onion/garlic (*krom(m)uon*) as a relish for their drink along with pale honey, the ground meal of sacred barley, and a huge cup which Hecamede proceeds to fill with Pramnian wine, after which she makes a potion of the lot.

6.2.2 Latin *porrum* and cognates

Conventional wisdom has to date considered this group as descendants of a 'Mediterranean', that is, a pre- and, therefore, *non*-Indo-European, **pr-so-* (or the like) that is said to have been realized in Greek as *prason* (πράσον) (consider *prasia* (πρασία) 'bed of leeks', and the name of a frog: *Prass-phagos* (Πρασσ-φάγος) 'leek eater'). **Pr-so-* is also said to have independently entered Italic, whence Latin *porrum* (from **porsom*).[20] 'Mediterranean' **pr-so-* is said to have eventually spread to Turkish (*prasa*, *pirasa*), Albanian (*presh*), Romance, Armenian (*pras*) and thence to the Caucasus (for example, Georgian *prasa*, Laz *prasa*, and Tsova-Tush (also called Batsby) *pras*). It also penetrated Germania (German *Porree*, OS *porro*) and Balkan Slavonic (Old Church Slavonic, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and also Bosnian with its *praziluk*), as well as Balto-Finnic (Finnish *purjolaukka*), Hungarian (*póréhagyma*), and Basque (*porro*).

The supposedly 'Mediterranean' **pr-so-*, the presumed parent of Greek *prason* and Italic *porrum*, is unknown from any recorded ancient Middle Eastern language. Other than as a loan from Greek, it is unknown from any Eurasian language: it is not even remotely reconstructible for 'onion/garlic/leek' in any Eurasian language. The Altaic protoform for 'garlic/onion' is surely **soYEnV-*, that for Proto-Tungus **seYkuk*, for Proto-Mongolian **soYgina-*, for Proto-Turkic **sogan* (for example, Turkish *sogan*, and so on in numerous other Turkic languages with the legendary inter-dialectal homogeneity that typifies this phylum). Note further, Manchu *seÿgule*/*seÿkule* 'garlic', Mongol *songino* 'onion', Chuvash *suŋəan* alternating with *soŋəan* 'onion'. Hungarian *hagyma* (with *h-* from *s-* as in a well-known set of historically intermediary loans) stems from a Turkic source (**sogan*), which is also the case with Lithuanian *s*(*v*)*ogunas*.

Herodotus (5.15–17) refers to a Lake Prasias (*Prasias limnē*, Πρασιας λιμνη), literally 'leek-bed mere', in Thrace, which is the modern Lake Tachino on the lower Struma. Duridanov (1976: 45) suggests that *Prasias* is a Hellenized form of a Thracian **Prausias* comparable to Lithuanian *prausti* (*prausiù*, *-siau*) 'to wash (oneself)', *prausynes* 'washing, laundry'. As demonstrated below, it is much more likely that the lake was named *Prasias* because it was

[20] One might well anticipate a generalized Doric (Adriatic) **parson* (*πάρσον) as the input for an Italic **pors-* giving Latin *porr-um*. For an account of the mechanism behind *ra* (ρά) ~ *ar* (άρ) in Greek, see Kuryłowicz (1956: 181). Note paradigm internal alternation of *ra* and *ar* in Pindar's *Olympian* (13.81): 'stout-footed', a kenning for 'bull', has a nominative singular *kartaipous* (καρταύπους) but a nominative plural *krataipode* (κραταύποδε). Compare also Attic *kratos* (κράτος) and Ionic *kartos* (κάρτος), both meaning 'strength'. Cretan generalized *ar* occurs (beside *er*), and the same appears to have been true of Corcyrean and Doric in general (Buck 1955: Article 49.2).

shallow and green with vegetation and surrounded by hills like a recessed garden-plot, a *prasiē* (πρασιή), as Homer (*Odyssey* 7.127 and 24.247) calls such gardens.

Herodotus also informs us that garlic is distinct from onions and leeks, for garlic consists of several separate cloves, and that the workers on the Egyptian pyramids were fed radishes, onions and garlic (2.125.6), a myth long since proven a fabrication. But why does Herodotus even bother with such information unless he is describing exotics, particularly so in the case of the leek, like telling Eskimos about papayas? Is this because the leek was a relatively new plant in early Greece?

Greek *prason* 'leek' must be reconciled with *prasiē* which, in post-Homeric times, signified a 'bed of leeks', but in Homer, it means a 'garden-plot' or 'garden-bed' and had nothing to do with the leek. There are just two occurrences (*Odyssey* 7.127 and 24.247) in Homer, but it is the passage in the seventh book of the *Odyssey* that provides a firm clue for a convincing etymology: 'there to well-ordered garden plots beside the lowest (last) row of vines (or fruit trees)' (εμηα δε φορλγσαι πθαρια παθα μειασομ οθωομ παμσοιαι πευταρμ, επγεσαμομ χαμοξρα). Any Mediterranean farmer even today would instantly recognize this as referring to the shaded, scooped out garden-plot at the edge of a vineyard, that gathers moisture and manages run-off nutrients so that vegetables may grow at their best (Moody 1992). Anyone who has even attempted leek cultivation knows that they must be 'trench grown', with earth gradually mounded up around them as a rampart (inverted hilling) as they mature.

Semantic narrowing of *prasia* from 'garden-bed' to 'leek-bed' was occasioned by the one vegetable that presumably dominated early Greek *prasia*-type furrow gardening, namely, the leek. Homeric *prasia* (Lesbian, Attic-Ionic) points to a Doric **pratia* (*πρατια) from a Proto-Indo-European **prH$_2$-ti-ya-* (a participial noun rebuilt as an abstract collective, presumably after Gk *skorodon* 'garlic', which accounts for *-s-*), which permits relationship with Latin *pratum* 'meadow' (compare Italian *prato*, Spanish *prado* and French *prairie*, the source of English *prairie*, which presumes a related Vulgar Latin **prataria*). Latin *pratum* actually denoted an indentation in the ground and ultimately derives from Indo-European **prH$_2$-to-*. Compare Middle Irish *rá*(*i*)*th* from **prH$_2$-ti-* 'earthen rampart, burial ground (within an earthen rampart)', later 'garden-bed'; Breton *bez-ret* 'burial place, cemetery'; Middle Welsh *bed-rawt* 'grave, grave mound, hillock'; Gallic (French) place names such as *Argento-rate*, and so on (Pokorny 1959: I.843–4). Precision of the details of syllabification and elimination of the initial *p-* in Celtic would constitute an excursus, and these matters are both peripheral and inessential to the task at hand.

I conclude that Lat. *porrum* was yet another item of garden-plant nomenclature taken from Greek, the primary source for such labels in Latin. The conjectured 'Mediterranean' **pr-so-* 'leek' may now be confidently expunged from our handbooks.

Latin-based monastic culture with its Mediterranean-type herb gardens and non-native plant names evidenced by early glosses such as OS *porro* 'porrum' (*St Peter Glosses*, c. 900–1000, see Gallée 1894: 301), introduced Latin *porrum* to the medieval Netherlands, Switzerland, Bavaria, Saxony, Scandinavia and Anglo-Saxon England, as a competitive, unambiguous alternative to a native 'leek'-term (*louh*/*lok*/*leac*). So we find: Middle Dutch *poreye* (*porreye*, *pareye*, *pureye*), *poret*(*te*), *poreilooc*; MHG *porre*, *phorre*, *pforr*, *pfarr*, *pfarren*, *por*, *pork* (from *porlok*); Middle Low German (MLG) *por*, *porlok*; and OE *por*, *porr*, *porleac*.

Presumably, it was a Frankish **lok* that was replaced by **porro* in concocting a word for 'leek' in early Gallo-Romance. In the Rhineland we find the 'fusion form' *öllich* 'onion',

a tautological composite formed from Latin *unio* 'onion' plus Ripuarian/Saxon *lok* 'leek'. German dialects in language contact zones display an incredibly rich inventory of variants; for example: East Frisian (Low German) *prei*; Schleswig-Holstein *Borre*, *Burri*; Rhenish *purets*, *pore*, *purs*, *purat*, *prei*; Swabian *Bores*, and so on. This wealth of variation betokens competing classifications of 'leek'.

French *poireau* 'leek' represents analogical alignment (in the nineteenth century?) of an earlier **porro* with *poire* 'pear', a process that began as a regionalism, but which is now accepted as the standard: Old French (OF) *porre* giving Middle French *poret* (*porette*, beside *porre*) giving ME *poret*, which, as we have seen, Chaucer shunned. In a snobby pretense to be provincial, some contemporary Parisians (who probably contrived *poireau* in the first place) may now say *porreau*, but this is officially regarded as a *patois* pronunciation that is found in Geneva, Savoy, eastern France, and parts of Belgium, with similar pronunciations throughout southern France, such as Gascony's *pourret* and Provençal *por*, and in northern Spain, where Basque and Catalan *porro* contrasts with Standard Spanish *puerro*.

The Latin neuter *porrum* (plural *porri*) is paralleled by an early masculine *porrus* (plural *porri*). As shown by the citation above (see Section 4.6), for Pliny, *porrum* referenced two kinds of 'leeks': *porrum capitatum* 'leek proper' and *porrum sectile* 'chives(?)'. For Pliny, *porrum* is a generic taxon. Gender distinction with masculine or feminine (animate) to designate a plant versus the neuter (inanimate) to designate its fruit was a common strategy in Latin. For example, feminine *pyrus* designated the pear tree, the plant itself, while neuter *pyrum* designated its fruit. This is the same marking strategy that Greek used, and it was simply carried over into Latin, so important was Greek nomenclatural influence on Latin botanical tradition.

Given masculine *porrus* and neuter *porrum*, one might well expect a (rustic, regional) feminine **porra*. Although such a Latin feminine is unattested, it may be inferred from *porraceus* 'leek-like, pertaining to a leek'. If there were no **porra*, then one would expect **porreus* or even **porrucus*, but not *porraceus*. One therefore infers that *porraceus* was formed from a (rustic, regional) **porra*, just as *rosaceus* 'of roses, rose-like' was formed from *rosa*, or *cretaceus* 'chalky' from *creta* 'chalk', and so on. Moreover, *porrus/porrum* has a pattern like *acinus/acinum*, 'berry, particularly, grape', and *acinus/acinum* also includes, though it is but feebly attested in early Latin, a collective feminine *acina*. One therefore anticipates a collective feminine **porra* 'leekness'. Note further, *porrina* (feminine) 'bed of leeks', and compare *rapina* 'bed of turnips' to *rapum* (neuter) 'turnip (plant)' versus *rapa* (feminine) 'turnip (fruit)'.

Here too belongs *Porrima*, a goddess of childbirth, presumably also of sex determination. Porrima was an epithet of Carmentis, who was credited with having prophetic powers. The superlative suffix *-ma-* is isomorphic with the *-ma-* that formed Roman women's names. This permits the inference that Porrima was the personification of *leekness*, 'great leekness' if you will, as an epithet of Carmentis, and the Roman penchant for personification is well known. Incidentally, the Carmentalia festivities were celebrated on January 11th and 15th; that is, just after the 'delivery' of a new year (Varro 1951: 6.12).

Porrima is a hapax in the *Carmentalia* of Ovid's *Fasti* (I.633) where the context is a rite in which divines were invoked to determine a child's sex and secure its successful birth:

> *Si quis amas ueteres ritus, adsiste precanti,*
> *Nomina percipies non tibi nota prius:*
> *Porrima placatur Postuertaque, siue sorores,*

> If you love the old rites, stand near those praying,
> And you will hear names unknown to you before:
> Porrima is being appeased, and Postverta, or their sisters.

The dichotomy, Porrima (good) versus Postverta (evil), is ritually significant. Postverta is an epithet for the evil manifestation of Carmentis in birthing, as Postverta ('inverted end') denoted a breech birth, while Porrima is an epithet for the good, the normal birth, and thus the benefactive manifestation of Carmentis. A breech birth meant death. The normal birth, over which Porrima presided, was that in which the womb might be dilated with the leek (*porrum*) as prescribed by Greco-Roman folk medicine.

6.2.3 Germanic **lauk-* and cognates

The basic *allium* term and *allium* plant for Germanic was **lauk-*, which supplied Slavic (for example, Slovene *lók*), Baltic (for example, Lithuanian *lúkai*, in which *u* is equivalent to Germanic *au*), and Balto-Finnic (for example, Estonian *lauk*). Germanic **lauk-* was later extended with prefixed qualifiers (yielding binominals) to cover garlic; for example, **gair-lauk-* 'spear leek'. In other words, *gair* was apparently taxonomized as a varietal with reference to a basic, generic *lauk-* in a manner that approached Linnean classification.

We seek early attestation, turning first to Gothic, but the Bible translator Wulfila is notoriously uninformative about plants. In Matthew 6.28, for example, he turns *krina* (κρινα) 'lilies' into just plain 'flowers' (*blomans*). Deprived of evidence from Gothic, Old Icelandic and Old English are considered diagnostic: a basic generic Germanic **lauk-* was simply retained for 'leek' and then secondarily metaphorically specified by **gair-* 'spear' to fill the GARLIC-slot in both Old English and Old Icelandic. In Old English, binominalization was carried one step further into the ONION-slot. After introduction of Vulgar Latin *cipe* from Lat *cepe* 'onion', Old English forged binominal *cipe-leac* 'onion', literally 'onion-leek'. After the introduction of Lat *unio* producing OE *ynne*, Old English forged *ynne-leac* (*enne-leac*), again 'onion-leek'. In both *cipeleac* and *ynneleac* (*enneleac*), the generic point of reference is obviously *lauk-*. Binominalization was continued in later Scandinavian with *vit* 'white' as a replacement for *geir-* 'spear' (so Swedish *vitlök*), and binominalization was also applied in German: early OHG *louh* 'leek' became later OHG *chlobo-louh*, literally 'the cloven leek' (garlic), Modern German *Knoblauch*.

Bulgarian (presumably indicative of a general trend in early Slavic) represents reverse polarity as a starting point. In Bulgarian, the borrowed term, *luk* 'onion' (not 'leek'), is basic (generic), and qualified versions of *luk* were deployed in the GARLIC and LEEK-slots:

	↓	↓	↓
Old English	*cipeleac/ynneleac*	*garleac*	*leac*
	'onion'	'garlic'	'leek'
Bulgarian	*luk*	*cesnov-luk*	*praz-luk*
	'onion'	'garlic'	'leek'

Table 1. A comparison of naming patterns for alliums in Old English and Bulgarian.

An ultimately satisfying Indo-European source for and etymological explanation of Germanic **lauk-* has yet to be given. Since the days of the Grimm Brothers, **lauk-* has been

associated with 'to lock (a door, etc.)' or 'lock (of hair)' or compared with Greek *lygos* (λύγος) 'pliant rod or twig, willow-like tree'. None of these 'root etymologies' has ever been entirely appealing.

In Norwegian dialects, *lok*, a vocalic (apophonic, ablaut) variant of **lauk*-, signifies 'fern' (regarded as an invasive weed in pasture land), while its Faroese counterpart (*lok*) signifies 'weed' (Torp 1919: 388b). In fact, Faroese *lok* is used as a cover term for any invasive plant, or so we experienced it during fieldwork on Hestö some thirty years ago (compare Swedish dialectal *luk* 'weed(s), pulled weeds'). So too, OIce *lok*, a word that is considered archaic in this sense in the modern language, was a cover term for weeds, especially weeds in low-lying cultivated fields.

7. Cycles of respecification

7.1 Snakes and ferns

A relic pocket of central Swedish dialects in contiguous areas of Värmland, Närke and Västergötland along the northeastern littoral of Lake Vännern presents *lok* in the compound *orm*(*e*)*lok*, literally 'serpent fern'. The corresponding Standard Swedish (*rikssprå̊k*) word is *ormbunke*, the supra-dialectal term for the common bracken (Friesen 1940: 95; Hellquist 1948: 1.593b, under *luka*).[21] In view of such regional diversity, it is small wonder that Uppsala's Carl Linné found the Swedish countryside's ethnobotany his very best laboratory for classification. Dialectal *orm*(*e*)*-lok* and Standard Swedish *orm-bunke* merit further attention.

Despite Faroese *frænarormur* 'speckled snake or dragon (in ballads)', equivalent to OIce *inn fráni ormr* 'the speckled snake' (an Eddic formulaic phrase), and Norwegian dialectal *frånarorm*, meaning the same, the Faroese, Icelanders and Norwegians know of no snake that fits this term or description. They fail to discern a reptile designator, but recognize a literary formula: *pecavit* De Vries (1962: 140a). Semantically, compare *frånarorm* and Greek *argēs ophis* (αργης οφις) 'glistening, bright serpent' (Hippocrates 1923–95: VII; *Epidemics* 5.86), and see Watkins (1995: 383–4) for a discussion of the Greek and Norse formulas, though Watkins is oblivious of Norse fern designations.

What is at stake here is obviously respecification resulting from semantic transfer precipitated by metaphoric extension: *från* SNAKE → *från* (snake-like) PLANT → (snake-like) *lok* (WEED) = FERN (*orm*(*e*)*lok*). This can be compared with the formation of *snakeroot* (*Sanicula canadensis* L.). The derivational dynamics that engendered Swedish *orm*(*a*)*bunk*(*e*) and *orm*(*a*)*lok* (*orm*(*a*)*låk*) involved idiosyncratic restructuring of an archaic formula in an ethnobotanical 'respecification cycle': **lok som frånarorm* 'a weed that looks like the speckled snake (of ballad and myth)' → **frånarorm*(*a*)*-bunke* 'a heap or pile (*bunke*) of such speckled snakes' → *orm*(*a*)*-bunke* 'snake heap' (or the like), that is, 'a fern-clump that looks like a heap of speckled serpents'. This echoes Aeschylus' *argēstēn … ophin* (αργηστην οφιν), 'bright serpent' (Aeschylus 1971–3: II; *Eumenides* lines 181–4), a highly adequate description of *Pteridium* (bracken) during the fall or winter. The same metaphorical respecification procedure is paralleled in Icelandic by that language's production of terms for particular

[21] I am grateful to the Kungliga Gustav Adolfs Akademien for a generous travel grant that made it possible to visit Uppsala, Sweden, use its invaluable archives (SOFI*: Språk- och Folkminnes Institutet, Dialektavdelning*), and consult with dialectologists there during November, 1998. I was thereby able to define the *orm*(*a*)*lok*-isogloss and review literature otherwise unavailable. Thanks are particularly due to SOFI's Gunnar Nyström and Gerd Eklund.

types of heather: *lyng-ormr*, literally 'heather snake' and *lyng-áll*, literally 'heather eel'. Ethnobiological respecification cycles, particularly those involving color terms (see Section 7.3), are detailed below. In this present case, however, we note deletion of *från*, the color term.

7.2 Weeds and the new alliums

As pointed out above (Section 7.1), OIce *lok* is a cover term for weeds. Consider, further, Norwegian *luke* 'to weed', *lukehakke* 'weeding hook', *lukekone* 'weeder', literally 'a woman who weeds'; Danish *lug* 'weed, any invasive plant', *luge* 'to weed', *lugejern* 'hoe'; OE *lucan* 'to weed, to pull out' (including the third person singular preterite *leac* 'weeded' from **lauk* (and thus homonymous with *leac* 'leek')), the preterite plural *lucon*, and past participle *locen* (and compare Gothic (*us*)*lukan* 'to draw, pull out (a sword)'). Old English *lucan* 'to weed, to pull up weeds' persisted into Middle English (*luken*, *lowken*) and was even maintained in some modern British dialects as *louk* 'to weed', *louking* 'weeding', *louker* 'one who weeds' (OED, under *louk*(2)).

Uppsala's Adolf Noreen (1904: Article 170) related Old Swedish *luk* (*lok*, *luuk*), presumably a neuter, to Old Swedish *löker* (from **laukr*) 'bulb, onion, leek' as follows: an originally verbal zero grade (Old Swedish *luk*) confronted an originally nominal *o*-grade (OIce *laukr*).[22] Thus, in addition to the *o*-grade deverbative root noun **lauk-* 'leek' (from Indo-European **loug-*), Germanic had a zero-grade verb **luk-* (from Indo-European *lug-*) 'to pull out, break off, eradicate', the ultimate source of the Norse deverbative nouns *lok* (*luk*) 'weed, fern'.

At the outset, Germanic rigidly observed the apophonic arrays of the Indo-European parent language: verbal *luk-* and appellative *lauk-* beside *luk-* and *-lauk* in compounds. Norse compounds in *-lok* such as *orm*(*e*)*lok* are clearly secondary versus original compounds with *o*-grade *-lauk* giving Swedish *-lök* as in *vitlök* 'garlic', literally 'white leek'. Use of the *o*-grade for compounds is notably archaic; compare Latin simplex *terra* 'earth' with *-e-*, versus compound *ex-torris* 'exiled' with *-o-*.

Old Swedish *lok* resulted from dialectal lowering of short *u* (*luk*), though many modern Swedish dialects (Västergötland, Småland, Halland, Blekinge, northeastern Skåne) display lengthening of *u* before *k* (or *g* from *k* in Skåne). This lengthening is probably due to analogical influence from *luka* 'to pull up weeds' borrowed from MLG *lûken*. Compare Old Swedish *luuk* (if not a scribal error) with lengthening, a change that may have begun before 1300 (Wigforss 1913–18: 661–62).

[22] Aspects of this verbal-nominal apophonic relationship (zero-grade *u* : *o*-grade *ou* respectively), are discussed in more knowledgeable detail than was possible in Noreen's day by Kuryłowicz (1956: 76–82; 1968: 257–80). We may summarize as follows. The Indo-European *o*-grade (Indo-European *ou* to Germanic *au*) perfect tense of zero-grade aorist present-tense forms founded barytonal deverbative root nouns (for example, **lóug-* develops into Germanic **lauk-* 'leek'). Oxytonal zero-grade denominal adjectives (**lugó-*) were extracted from the weak case forms of such nouns, for example, strong accusative singular **lóug-m* with *-ou-* versus weak dative singular **lug-éi* with *-u-*. These zero-grade denominal adjectives (*lugó-*) were secondarily resubstantivized as oxytonal *o*-grades (*lougó-*) in compounds. Thus, the Germanic *o*-grade nominal **lauk-* 'leek' from Indo-European **loug-* 'that which is pulled out or broken off, debris, weeds' was founded on the Indo-European perfect (equivalent to the Germanic preterite) of a zero-grade verbal **luk-* from Indo-European **lug-* 'to pull out, break off, eradicate'. In turn, the zero-grade denominal adjective **lugó-* founded a Germanic neuter *a*-stem: **luka*(*n*) (nominative and accusative singular) and **luko* (nominative and accusative plural), the source of OIce *lok* (nominative and accusative singular and plural neuter) 'weed, fern', equivalent to Old Swedish *luk* (*lok*, *luuk*), meaning the same.

Persson (1910–12: 204) considered Old Swedish *lok* (or *luk* (*luuk*)) to have originally been a cover term for (invasive) weeds, particularly in pasture land, and particularly in the diction of medieval laws concerning land tenure and rights. Note the Norse adage 'to spread like weeds (*lok*) over fields' (*ganga sem lok yfir akra*; Jónsson 1914: 110; Fritzner 1954: 2.256; compare Kock 1899: 93). The Old Swedish alliterative legal formula *løf ok lok* (*luk*, *luuk*) 'leaves and weeds' was subjected to insightful analysis by Friesen (1940: 85), who convincingly concluded that, in this particular formula, *luk* meant 'cut brushwood as trash', specifically in reference to the right of a poor soul who owned less than an eighth part (one 'oxgang') of one eighth of a plowland (roughly a carucate in England), that is, approximately 1.89 acres, or a fenced portion of a town's common woodlot to cut and gather there and, in this way, make use of leaves and brushwood (for fuel). Such legal formulas, with their ossified semantics, provide precious evidence for both the historical linguist and the ethnobiologist reconstructing classifications. The suspicion is that Germanic *lauk-* may originally itself have been a grerb-term that passed through an ethnobotanical 'respecification cycle'.

Such cycles may well be a universal feature of ethnobiological diachrony, though they have been largely ignored in recent important work on ethnobiological classification.[23] These cycles generally unfold as follows:

Stage 1 (*X + *-lauk*) > **Stage 2** (*lauk-*) > **Stage 3** (Y + *-lauk*)

where, hypothetically, *X could have been **ker*(*e*)*m-*/**kr*^{e}*/om-* (the anterior form of English *ramson*) and where Y could be *geir-* as in OIce *geir-lauk-* 'garlic', literally 'spear leek'. Consider, as examples of Stage 3, the rich inventory of Old English *leac-* varietals: *crop-leac* 'garlic', *secg-leac* 'sedge-leek', *refnes leac* 'raven's leek', *hwit*(*e*)*-leac* 'white-leek' ('garlic'), *hus-leac* 'house-leek'; *por-leac* 'leek' (a tautology), *crawan leac* 'crow-leek', and *hol-leac* 'holleke (*Allium fistulosum* L.)' or 'scallion (shallot) (*Allium ascalonicum* auct. non L.)', Modern German *Hohllauch*.

In Stage 2, *lauk-* is considered polysemous and unmarked, denoting *X as primary referent and Y as secondary referent. In fact, Witkowski and Brown (1983) have amply demonstrated precisely this staging and its concomitant marking reversals in a compelling survey of terms for domesticates introduced to Native American cultures (deer : horse, bison : cattle, peccary : pig, opossum : pig, turkey : chicken) as examples of realignment whereby a native term covered a non-native introduction, for example, the native word for 'deer' was also used for 'horse' (a non-native introduction). As Witkowski and Brown point out (1983: 572): 'a common way of encoding an introduced low-salience item is by extending referential application of a native term to it, thereby producing a polysemous label'.

It seems as though Mediterranean *Allium*-types (onion, garlic, leek) were introduced to Germania at a point of transition or, in fact, actually precipitated a point of transition, exemplified by Stage 2; that is, a stage in which **lauk-* was deployed as a generic taxon in a respecification cycle. Obviously, Stage 2 is the stage that is least adept at assigning species-specific or varietal taxa to introductions. Alternatively, of course, the introduction of Mediterranean *Allium*-species, as was the case with the introduction of domesticated animals to Native American peoples, must have provoked re-analysis of the semantics of *luk-* versus those of *lauk-*, and (periodic) overt marking of either or both. In the example cases presented by Witkowski and Brown, in Stage 3 the unmarked native term denotes the introduction (for example, the unmarked native word for the peccary now signifies 'domestic pig'), and the

[23] See, however, Witkowski and Brown (1983), and the pertinent sections addressing diachrony in Berlin (1992:

native term plus overt marking denotes the native animal (the peccary) in a manifestation of marking-reversal.

With reference to the case of our *Allium*s, the unmarked native term *lauk-* designated the introduction, the leek (*Allium porrum*), while the native term plus overt marking (*geir-lauk-*) may have designated something considered akin to **krémHu-* (the native bear- or wild garlic, *Allium ursinum*), but which was, in fact, yet another introduction (*Allium sativum*). Meanwhile, of the apophonically bifurcated forms, *lauk-* versus *luk-*, the basic founding form (in Kuryłowicz's terms; see note 22) *luk-* (OIce *lok*) was retained as a grerb-term for (invasive) weeds or ferns. The findings of Witkowski and Brown, concerning the introduction of European domesticated animals to native North Americans, are thus reconfirmed by a scenario with a time-depth from Indo-European to Germanic that is approximately ten times as great as that for the example from Witkowski and Brown.

7.3 Berries, 'cabbage' and colours

A further illustration of such cycles is provided by a chapter from the history of Indo-European berry-names. Prefatory to this illustration, consider the following general, but hardly absolute, linguistic principles that pertain to the diachrony of ethnobiological classification.

Simplex names are considered unmarked, are typically generic taxa, and are usually demonstrably older than compound names, which consist of genus plus species. Compound names are typically formed with generics as a head noun, for example, *blueberry* consists of *blue* (the specifier) plus *berry* (the generic head noun). Simplex names are more likely to reveal substratal influence (loans or loan translations) than compound names: plant introductions tend to be initially classified as generics rather than species, subspecies, or varietals of an established genus. Finally, generic taxa tend to be more open to borrowing than varietal taxa. Recall, as documented above (in Section 6.2.2), rampant diffusion of Greek *prason* as a generic. Diachronically certainly, and sometimes even synchronically, simplex names (as generic taxa) tend to be etymologically opaque and/or morphologically aberrant in some fashion. For example, simplex Swedish berry-names suffixed in the diminutive *-on* (for example, *smultron*, *hjortron*, *odon*, *hallon*, *mjölon*) tend to be etymologically opaque, as, for example, in *od-on* (*Vaccinium uliginosum* L.), in which *od* is not transparent (but see Dahlstedt 1950-: 55–74).

The general rule that governs respecification cycles is that earlier specifiers (for example, *-lauk* in hypothetical Stage 1 as argued above) later become generics (as with *lauk-* in Stage 2 as argued above), which, in turn, may be respecified (for example, *geir-lauk-* in Stage 3 as argued above). This occurs typically with reference to an 'unmarked' generic specifier (as with *-lauk*), thereby setting up the process to be repeated all over again in a continual derivational chain. The output of one respecification cycle is thus the input of the next, and so on. Some cycles may be short-lived, others may not be. The dynamics of the cusps of such cycles merit further investigation.

The principles described above may be illustrated as follows. Many of the most archaic western European berry-names are (generic) simplex forms. They are not, unlike English *blueberry*, compounded with a varietal specifier. The majority of such generic names reflect (archaic) color terms (indicating RED, BLUE, BLACK, and shades and intensities of same). Now

260–90) and Brown (1984: 43–58).

consider the respecification cycle diagrammed below in which Stage 2 results from deletion of the head noun (*berry* in the Model, *X* in the Russian example) of Stage 1:[24]

Recognition of the systematics that underlie ethnobiological naming typologies as they interface with the dynamics of respecification cycles *per se* also permits clarification of some hitherto problematic Indo-European material. For example, given color as a classificatory matrix for generic berry-names, previously etymologically opaque Latin *fragum* 'strawberry' (French *fraise*) may now be correctly related to an underlying Indo-European **dherg-* 'red', as in Irish *derg* 'red'. The conclusion is that Latin *fragum* emerged from Stage 2 in a respecification cycle.

A further example can be given. Indo-European **ĝhel-/*ĝhol-* 'yellow, green, gray, blue', ultimately the source of German *gelb* 'yellow', is contained in the Latin neuter *s*-stem *holus*, (genitive singular *holeris*)[25] 'vegetables, greens, cabbage, colewort, turnips', and *holusculum* 'small cabbage'. Cato (1935; *De agri cultura* 156.1–7) classified cabbage (*brassica*) as the most significant member of the 'genus' *holus*: 'It is the cabbage that is superior to all greens' (*Brassica est quae omnibus holeribus antistat*). As pointed out above, in Lithuanian, Indo-European **ĝhel-/*ĝhol-* is reflected as *zole* (Latvian *zale*) 'grass, herb' (versus Lithuanian *zalias*, Latvian *zals*, both meaning 'green'), and in Slavic by *zelje* 'herb', a grerb-term as we have seen. In Czech and Bulgarian, however, *zeli* and *zele* respectively, can alone signify 'cabbage', as opposed to *kapusta* (or the like) for 'cabbage' elsewhere in Slavic. The culinary saliency attached to 'cabbage' in Slavic prompted (dialectal) merger of a generic taxon with a life-form term that was originally a 'generic' color term (at Stage 2) in the ethnobotany of the proto-language.

Model	Russian
Stage 1 = $dark_1$ + *berry*	**smorodina* + *X* 'blackberry'
Stage 2 = $dark_1$ 'berry'	*smorodina* 'currant (small edible berry)'
Stage 3 = (new colour term) + $dark_1$ 'berry'	*ch'ernaya* + *smorodina* 'black currant'

Table 2. An example of a respecification cycle in Russian.

8. 'Leeks' and ethnobotanical classification

Given the dynamics of ethnobotanical respecification cycles, particularly when confronted with plant introductions, one might suggest that **lauk-* may once have syntagmatically classified native *Allium*-like plants, perhaps varietals of *Allium ursinum*, such that there may once have been a Germanic **hramu-laukaz* from an Indo-European **kromu-lougos*. Subsequently, *-lauk-* could have been segmented off from such a binominal as a generic cover term (Stage 2 in the respecification cycle) for an introduced *Allium* crop package (onion+garlic+leek). However this may be, diffusion of the introduced package apparently occasioned progressive marginalization of Indo-European **krémHu-* in western Europe.

[24] Further to Slavic *smoro-* (signifying any dark blue or red color), compare: Rumanian *zmeura* 'raspberry'; French *mûre* both 'mulberry' and 'blackberry' (which requires *de ronce* for disambiguation); Latin *morum* 'blackberry'; Irish *smear* (older *mer*, equivalent to and alternating with *smer*) '(black)berry'; Finnish *marja* 'berry' (generic taxon), an early loan from Northwest Indo-European; and, again, compare the diffusion of Greek *prason* as a generic taxon (Section 6.2.2).

[25] The earlier form was *helus*, *helusa*, according to Paul the Deacon's epitome of Sextus Pompeius Festus' version

Moreover, any thesis that 'leek' may once have been considered a form of **hramus-* (*Allium ursinum*) is vitiated by the empirical fact that it was (and is) nowhere classified as such.

As demonstrated above (Section 6.2.3), the utility of Germanic **lauk-* as a generic taxon for *Allium*-type introductions was seized upon by Baltic, Slavic, and Balto-Finnic. Promotion of **lauk-* as a generic taxon must have been due to particularly compelling cultural associations (high saliency) centered around the introduction of *Allium porrum*. Recall, similarly (from Section 7.3), that culinary saliency orchestrated the special purpose applications that promoted implementation of a grerb-term as a generic taxon for cabbage in Czech and Bulgarian.

Bear in mind that the special purpose applications of leek, reiterated by Pliny for Rome as shown above (Section 4.6), were centered around appreciation of the leek's role as a fertility herb in Greek folk medicine. At the outset, this appreciation was necessarily an expressly Mediterranean mannerism: the leek was originally unknown in early northern Europe. Early Mediterranean association of the leek with fertility may have derived from observing it as a highly invasive (fertile) plant in the wild. Indeed, imitative magic and experiential logic are driving forces of folk medicine.

Germanic **luk-*/**lauk-* from Indo-European **lug-*/**loug-* originally covered the semantic fields WEED and HERB, but then secondarily denoted *Allium*-type 'herbs', though not 'grass'. Therefore, **luk-*/**lauk-* must have shared a significant portion of the semantics of prominent Germanic grerb-terms: **gras-* ('grass, herb, weed'), **wurt-* (*wort*) ('herb, weed'), **krud-* ('crowd grass, crowd weed').

Basing himself on a survey of data collected from 188 languages to ascertain uniformities in ethnobotanical encoding practices, Brown (1984: 118, synthesized from Brown 1977), demonstrated that, once languages have encoded both grerb and grass, then grerb 'tends to include only non-grass herbaceous plants'. This holds for Germanic **luk-*/**lauk-* which therefore appears to be a secondary, though pan-dialectal, grerb-term.

Drawing from genetically unrelated and geographically widely separated languages, Brown (1984: 62–5) showed that, in an overwhelming majority of instances, grerb-terms evolved from words that either synchronically or diachronically reference(d) rubbish, debris, trash, litter, garbage (often rotted), and then 'weeds'. Brown showed that the common semantic focus of progenitors of grerb-terms is (PEJORATIVE) VEGETATION.

Germanic **lauk-*, from Indo-European **loug-*, finds an exact correspondence in Lithuanian *láuž-as* 'rubbish, debris, heap of broken branches'.[26] Note, further: Latvian *láužni* 'broken trees'; Lithuanian *lúzenos* 'breakage, wreckage, debris' (equivalent to Latvian *lúžni* 'scraps, debris (usually of plants)'), both verbal adjectives in *-eno-* (equivalent to Germanic participial **-ina-*); Lithuanian *láuz-ti* 'to break' (transitive, equivalent to Latvian *láuz-t* 'to break'); Lithuanian *lúž-ti* 'to break' (intransitive, equivalent to Germanic **luk-* 'to pull or draw out, to weed, break off' in, as noted above in Section 7.2, Old English *lucan*).

With respect to the emergence of Germanic **lauk-* as a grerb-term, Baltic preserves the anterior semantics predicted by Brown (1984). Baltic *lúž-* is immediately comparable to Old Swedish *luk* (*lok*, *luuk*) with the ossified semantics 'brushwood' in legal contexts (see the discussion in Section 7.2 with reference to Friesen 1940: 85). The same semantic history, PLANT DEBRIS to GRERB, is recapitulated within the history of Greek: Classical Greek *phorbē* (φορβη) 'fodder (debris)' to Modern Greek *phorvē* (φορβη) 'herb, grass'.

of the *De significatu verborum* (Pieroni 2004).

[26] *Láuž-as* has an acute accent in compliance with Werner Winter's Law to account for Indo-European **g* becoming Baltic *ž*.

I conclude that **lauk*- was originally a generic grerb-term ('that which is pulled up, eradicated, broken off, debris, a weed') which came to denote 'grass, herb, weed'.[27] The term was subsequently deployed as a polytypic generic taxon to identify not only the contents of an introduced *Allium* crop package (onion+garlic+leek), but also a particular member, the leek. This package must have been introduced from the Mediterranean during the final phases of Common Germanic. The exclusive 'leek' meaning of Germanic **lauk*- is demonstrably secondary to its original use as a grerb-term. To reiterate for emphasis, **lauk*- was originally a grerb-term that secondarily came to designate what must have been considered the prototypical, unmarked member and focal mainstay of an introduced *Allium* crop package, the leek.

Diachronically, as Berlin (1992: 274–5) suspects from his ethnobiological evidence and, as the Indo-European evidence clearly shows, the development of life-form taxa (such as grerb) is followed by development of generic taxa. Diachronically, the hierarchy universally evolves as: generic to species to varietal.

In terms of this hierarchy, 'leek' should have been represented by a generic term and not by what was originally a life-form taxon. We hypothesize that generic status was arrogated by life-form status due to the leek's exalted cultural rank (high saliency), a direct result of its role as a fertility herb. Similarly, dialectal Slavic plugged in a grerb-term for 'cabbage'. It might also be argued that, as an imported plant, 'leek' lacked a native Germanic counterpart in a competition for generic status labeling.

As pointed out by Berlin (1992: 276), Whistler (1976) was apparently the first to contend that societies with hunting and gathering subsistence patterns tend to have a preponderance of monotypic taxa of generic rank and a general lack of subgeneric and varietal taxa. Berlin (1992: 288–90) then adduced the Seri (peoples along the Sonoran coast of Mexico and the islands of the Gulf of California) as a clear counter-example to Whistler's conclusions drawn from his Patwin data. The fact is that early peoples and contemporary native societies alike, irrespective of particular subsistence or cultural patterns, were and are ignorant of Linné (Linnaeus) and/or cladistics. Yet both conduct(ed) ethnobiological classification in terms of hierarchical sequencing. The only logical conclusion is that hierarchical classificatory sequencing results from some universal predisposition in human biology. In an enviably clear and widely circulated, but regrettably yet to be published, presentation of competing classificatory systematics (numerical versus phylogenetic), Zegura (1990: 14) closes with a reference to Ambros-Ingerson, Granger and Lynch (1990). These investigators demonstrated that 'a neural network model of the olfactory paleocortex connected to its primary input structure (the olfactory bulb) has striking correspondences in how it organizes input stimuli with two widely used statistical techniques: hierarchical clustering and principal components analysis'. How we identify odors and how we conduct biological classification are mechanically identical processes.

The universality of the classificatory sequence 'generic … to … varietal' confirms the operation of these pre-wired behavioral mechanisms. In making this connection, Zegura (1990) anticipated and substantiated by nearly a decade what Gould (1998: 77) still calls a 'something': 'something deep in the human psyche leads us to impose simple taxonomic schemes of distinct categories upon the world's truly complex continua'. To which, with a

[27] Further support for interpreting **lauk*- as a grerb-term is supplied by the incisive commutability of OE *leac* 'leek' and *wyrt* 'wort': OE *leactun* 'herb [not leek] garden' is equivalent to OE *wyrttun* 'herb garden'. Compare OIce *laukagarðr* versus *jurtagarðr* (archaic Swedish *örtegård*).

profound sense of yawning, we say amen.

How humans conduct ethnobiological classification versus what they classify, and how they rank what they classify are, of course, distinctly different issues. Finalization of relative rank assignment (monotypic generic, or polytypic generic, and so on) to what is classified is a subsidiary issue dependent upon intervening complexities posed by social structures, subsistence patterns and cultural attitudes, as well as differences in ethnobiological knowledge and environments.

9. Grerbs in literature

It is the definition of *lauk-* as 'grerb', as a life-form term, rather than a generic taxon, that ultimately opens the final hemistich of Stanza 4 of the Eddic *Vǫlospá* to a valid interpretation:

> *þá var grund gróin grœnom lauki*
> Then was the ground grown (healed) with green 'leek'

where *lauki* is contrapuntally appositive to *gras* as grerb in the final hemistich of the preceding stanza:

> *gap var ginnunga, enn gras hvergi*
> There was the Ginnungagap [primordial void], but still no grass anywhere,

such that both *gras* and *lauk* are appreciated as categorical mass nouns and synonymous grerb-terms. The intentionality is not 'there was no grass', but 'there was no grerb (prior to the earth's creation).' As Shakespeare worded it in his *Venus and Adonis*: 'No flower was nigh, no grass, herb, leaf, or weed'.

In line with this interpretation, Stanza 4 of the *Vǫlospá* informs us that grerb came after the earth's creation, but before Bur's sons (Odin, Vili, and Ve) 'lifted the bottoms, when they created mighty Midgard'. In some traditions, Bur (or Bor) is the grandfather. In either case, vertically (X – Bur – and then his three sons) or horizontally (Odin – Vili – Ve), three generations or three lives respectively are said to have elapsed with no grerb prior to the appearance of the gods and their creation of Midgard.

This is arrestingly reminiscent of a passage in the *Rig-Veda* (Aufrecht 1968: II; Bk 10.97.1–6) in which a doctor praises his medicinal herbs, calculates his possible fee, and then selects and blesses the particular herb prescribed for a patient. The motif is unique for the *Rig-Veda*. The pertinent line is: 'Now I will consider a hundred and seven kinds of brown (that is, ripe) ones, those grerbs which were born (came into being) first, three generations (three life-spans) before the gods' (*ya ósadhih purva jata devébhyas triyugám pura/manai nú babhrunam ahám satám dhamani saptá ca*), where GRERB is denoted by *ósadhi-* (compare Middle Indic *ausadha* 'grerb', and Punjabi *ouhur/auhur* 'grerb').

From the comparison above, one infers that the *Vǫlospá* tradition and its formulaic *lauk-*context are both highly archaic; employment of *lauk-* as a grerb is necessarily anterior to identification of *lauk-* as 'leek'. This demonstration seemingly renders *lauk-* in Stanza 8 of *Sigrdrífumál* ambiguous, meaning either 'grerb' or 'leek'. This equivocation is scrupulously avoided in the three remaining Eddic occurrences of *lauk-* (cited in full above, in Section 4.4) by disambiguating specification with *geir-* 'spear' to yield 'garlic', and by sub-classification as a 'genus' of *gras* (that is, a grerb) in *Guðrúnarqviða in fyrsta*, Stanza 18 (so too, by Snorri in *Óláfs saga Helga*, 223, cited above in Section 3). Disambiguation also occurs by specification with *ítr-* in *Helgaqviða Hundingsbana in fyrri*, Stanza 7, while *Guðrúnarqviða ǫnnor*, Stanza

2, parallels *Guðrúnarqviða in fyrsta*, Stanza 18, in which the only difference between the two is substitution of *grœnn* 'green' in the former for *geir-* 'spear' in the latter.

The point is that *lauki* in *Sigrdrífumál*, Stanza 8, is homeopathically disambiguated only by extra-Germanic reference to Classical sources such as Pliny (1942–83: VI; Bk 20.21), who, as we saw above in Section 4.6, prescribed the (garlic) leek as an antidote for poisons. In denoting *Allium* (*porrum*), rather than grerb, Germanic **lauk-* was initially dependent on Mediterranean dictionary entries for ultimate clarification of its homeopathic significance. But then, if not an independent development on the part of early Germanic peoples, how, when and where did they acquire their knowledge of the homeopathic values that Mediterranean peoples had assigned the leek?

10. The Germanic acquisition of medical-magical leek associations

As noted by Rivers (1924: 108), one of the first professional anthropologists to be concerned with such matters, it is very difficult to adduce a general thesis of transmission for medicinal-magical-religious practices. However, as Rivers himself demonstrated, it is comparatively easy to correctly theorize a specific transmission, particularly when that transmission pertains to specific practices associated with a specific item. Here the specific item is the leek as a correlative of a particular magical-medicinal-religious fertility practice or set of practices.

With this principle in mind, and informed by the etymological accounts detailed above, we proceed to glance at a particular ritualistic horizon in northeastern Italy that may have involved the leek, a horizon that was also a point of contact for early Germanic peoples and one of the probable sources of the runic alphabet. The particular horizon is that of the Venetii, an ancient Italic (Indo-European) group that gave their name to Venice and that thrived as a literate culture in the surrounding area (from Venice westward to Vicenza, from Adria in the south to Gailtal in southern Austria in the north) from about 550 BC until romanized about 90 BC.

It is Latin *Porrima* as an epithet for Carmentis that suggests association with the weakly attested Venetic *Pora* (= *porra*; only four examples), an epithet of the Venetic goddess Reitia, a protectress of fertility and childbirth and a healer of women's diseases; that is, seemingly a local version of Artemis-Orthia who was celebrated at the women's sanctuary of Baratella at Este (ancient Ateste). Reitia may be safely assigned to the Artemis-Hekate/Diana/Cybele/Luna range of early Mediterranean fertility goddesses that belonged to the moon cycle, divinities in whom the contrasting principles of virginity and motherhood were fused together. As Anna Marinetti of the University of Venice (personal communication) kindly informs me, no further *Pora*-inscriptions have come to light since the appearance of Lejeune's *Manuel* in 1974.[28] One example of a *Pora*-inscription will suffice; they are all very similar.

Es 45 is a 'talking text', in other words, the reader-beholder is addressed in the first person by the inscription on the votive object.[29] It is inscribed as four lines on the four sides of a rectangular bronze writing stylus with a finely molded top, a woman's luxury item (compare the Fløksand meat-knife with its formulaic *linalaukaʀf*), and it comes from the women's

[28] For philological discussion of these texts, see Pellegrini and Prosdocimi (1967: I.100, 105–7, 149–50, 164–5, and 174–5.

[29] Es 45 is the catalogue number assigned in Pellegrini and Prosdocimi (1967). This inscription is Lejeune's No. 26 (1974: 205), and Pauli's No. 61 (1885), with an illustration.

Baratella Sanctuary at Este (Es), from the phase dated to c.300–150 BC.

> SIDE ONE: *mego dona.s.to sa.i.*
> SIDE TWO: *nate.i. re.i.tiia.i. pora.i.*
> SIDE THREE: *.e.getora .r.i.mo.i. ke lo*
> SIDE FOUR: *.u.derobo.s.*
>
> (Literally: me gave (dedicated) to Sainati to Reitia to Pora, Egetora for Aimus and (their) children.)
>
> Egetora dedicated me to Sainati, to Reitia, to Pora, on behalf of her husband Aimus and their children.

This refers to the progeny (*louderobos*, equivalent to Latin *liberis*) of Egetora, the dedicant, and of her husband, Aimus (as perceptively emended by Lejeune). Whether or not the children are already born or yet to be born (hence unnamed), or both unborn and born, poses an interesting question. Presumably it is future progeny; hence inclusion of Pora as the pertinent epithet of Reitia in her particular function as the goddess of prospective childbirth and, thence, immediate comparability with Porrima. This interpretation is supported by a second *Pora*-votive (Es 23),[30] which reads: 'me gave (dedicated) *e-* (?) *b-* (?) Fabaitsa to Pora on the occasion of (in the season, or at the time of) births', in which *e…* and *b…* remain obscure abbreviations.

There is nothing linguistically that militates against assuming that an early Italic **porsa* developed into Venetic *pora* = [porra] or [pora]. Venetic lacks instances of geminate *-r-* and does not indicate vowel length.

Given archaeologically documented early Venetic/Rhetic-Germanic contact (c. 150 BC until romanization), also within the context of Reitia veneration throughout both the Venetic and Rhetic horizons (particularly at Magrè near Schio in the hills northwest of Palladio's Vicenza), Germanic could well have translated Venetic *pora* as *lauk-*, originally a grerb-term expropriated as a culturally significant generic taxon.

As demonstrated above (Section 6.2.2), the creation of Greek *prason* as 'leek' resulted from a uniquely Greek semantic event. The word's subsequent diffusion was rampant; from the Iberian Atlantic to the Caucasus and from the Mediterranean to the Baltic. The form *prason* (**parson*) gives Italic **pors-om*/**pors-os*/**pors-a* which denoted a culturally significant member of an *Allium* crop package that was originally unknown in Germania (as well as in the early western Mediterranean at some point in prehistory). The leek's associations with female fertility, if not originally Hellenic, were certainly deeply entrenched in Greek folk medicine at a very early date and were condoned by none other than the celebrated Hippocrates. These associations were presumably not Anatolian in origin. As Beckman (1983: 254–5) concludes: 'Hittite practitioners had no real practical acquaintance with the use of medicines in gynecology'. Whatever healing agents (*huišu waššī*) were brought to those on the Hittite birthing stool, they did not include the leek, though the garlic/onion (*šuppi-waššhar*) was a plant of ritual purification.

Greek herbalist practice apparently accompanied diffusion of the term and the plant. This was certainly the case in Italic as shown by Greek-derivative Roman herbalist folk medicine chronicled by Pliny. There was no *Allium porrum* and therefore, of course, none of its fertility associations, in early Germania (and there were never such associations in Celtic, Baltic, or Slavic), yet the usage grid and the fertility associations of *Allium porrum*

[30] Lejeune's No. 8 (1974: 197), and Pauli's No. 54 (1885), with an illustration.

in the early Mediterranean and later in Germania are strikingly similar. These features are: internal medicinal consumption, (female) fertility, identification as an *Ersatz*-penis (to dilate the womb) and/or as a *pars pro toto* emblem of an *Asvamedha* analog in the *Vǫlsa þáttr*, and a venom remedy in *Sigrdrífumál* (Stanza 8) and in Pliny's *Naturalis historia*. Given the rarity-of-agreement rule established by Rivers (1924: 108) and subsequently corroborated by hordes of cultural anthropologists, this identity may be appreciated as evidence of transmission rather than parallel independent development. And, to reiterate, Germania originally had no *Allium porrum* for a parallel, and no member of the *Allium* package is more phallic than *Allium porrum*.

The runic *laukaʀ* bracteates as amulets, and the inscription of *laukaʀ* on women's luxury items seemingly had the same significance as the Venetic *Pora* votives: a fertility and/or birthing charm. If so, then *laukaʀ/Pora* present an *ex voto* epigraphic practice that is unattested anywhere else in western Europe. Ovid died in 17 AD, but, by his day, Porrima was all but a distant memory, a hapax. There is no Roman *ex voto* tradition with an epigraphic *porrum*, *Porrima*, or *Porra* (*Pora*)/*Prorsa*. Venetic *Pora* is thereby uniquely isolated as a possible source for formulaic *laukaʀ*. A *laukaʀ* 'leek' equivalent to *Pora* 'leek' identification must have been contracted within the context of northern Italian Reitia veneration. It would stretch credulity to the extreme to assume mere coincidence. It was when he had eliminated all other possibilities that Sherlock Holmes identified his culprit.

Collocation of runic *laukaʀ* and *alu* on the Skrydstrup bracteate (Krause and Jankuhn 1966: no. 109) appears to continue a cross-cultural epigraphic practice and belief system, namely, Venetic *Pora* and Rhetic (North Etruscan) *alu*-, which may be roughly glossed as 'dedicated and therefore protected by the mysteries', just as the runes themselves must have originated in the cross-cultural epichoric epigraphies of early northern Italy. Furthermore, the 'framing abbreviation' of runic *laukaʀ* as *lʀ*, indicated at the outset, is an inherently Etruscan graphic convention that was carried over into Rhetic, for example, where *re* stands for [*r*[*iti*]*e*], a Rhetic equivalent of Venetic *Reitia*. Moreover, repetition of salient abbreviations, either 'framing' or 'content' (either *re* or *iti* respectively), for Reitia in the case of Rhetic, and *lʀ* for *laukaʀ* in the case of runic, points to a common origin.

I conclude that the runic *leek*-bracteates appear to evidence protracted continuation of belief in a particular brand of cult-assisted (female) ethnobotanical folk medicine that had a lengthy and well defined Hellenic and thence Mediterranean pedigree. And Indo-European medical practice is, after all, the central message of the runelore in the Poetic Edda's *Sigrdrífumál*. Hence, runic *laukaʀ* (*lʀ*) 'leek', like the immutable runic *alu*, a term borrowed from Rhetic (North Etruscan), a *hosanna*-word, became part of *langue* rather than *parole* (that is, part of innate language rather than just a loan-word).

The Venetic Reitia-Pora association must itself have been a product of cultural transfer, transfer to Venetia and thence Rhetic Italy of an Adriatic Doric Artemis-Orthia veneration centered around female fertility and the establishment of women's sanctuaries for the accomplishment of same. Doric Artemis-Orthia veneration was centered on the Orthian sanctuary at Sparta, which dates from the tenth century BC, where Orthia (Reitia) was primordial, and her association with Artemis entirely secondary (Rose 1929).

11. Late traces of the medicinal-magical leek

11.1 *Armenia*

As John A. C. Greppin has kindly pointed out (personal communication), Germanic reception of the leek from Classical ethnobotanical folk medicine is neatly paralleled in Armenian. The major differences between the two are that:

1. Armenian borrowed its major term for 'leek' directly from Greek (*pras* from *prason*), beside the later synonym *k'urat'*;

2. the genesis of Armenian folk medicine is well documented.

Armenian folk medicine was based on Dioscorides' (c.20–c.70 AD) *De materia medica*, and on Galen's (c.130–c.200 AD) works. In the Armenian fifth-century *Book which is Called Learned*, we find: 'we read of garlic, leek, and onion' (*handerj soxovn ew xstoriw ew praxiwn*). A millennium later, in Amirdovlat Amasiati's fifteenth-century *Angitats' anpet kam baranan bzshkakan niwt'tots* ('Worthless for the Ignorant: Or a Dictionary of Medical Substances'), which is based on Greek ideas via Arabic, there is an entry (No. 3634) that twice involves leek (denoted by *k'urat'*) and the womb. The first statement reads: 'and the (leek's) leaf heals the moistures of the womb' (*ew ir terewn awgte argandin gicut'ean*) where *gec* 'moisture' (more commonly *gej*) is a sexual moisture, a word that is also used for 'sperm' and 'onanism'. The second statement reads: 'when a woman sits in (leeks) that have been cooked in sea water, the vigor of her womb will be restored, and the pain there will diminish' (*ew t'e ep'en covu jrov … ew kanayk' i mijn nstin, awgte argandin c'awin, ew pndut'ean*). These pieces of wisdom apparently wandered out of Dioscorides' *De materia medica* (Bk 2.149), probably with the help of some Arabic redactor and/or epitomator such as Sulayman ibn Hassan ibn Juljul (born c.943) (Dietrich 1993).[31]

11.2 Spain

In far off Spain shortly after the good lady of Fløksand had been laid to rest in Norway with her *leek*-inscribed meat knife, Prudentius (348–c.409 AD) was inveighing against the pagan leek (Prudentius 1949–53: II.246–9; II.74–7). His *Peristephanon* (Hymn 10: *Passio Romani*, lines 256–65) says:

> *Venerem precaris, comprecare et simiam.*
> *placet sacratus aspis Aesculapii:*
> *crocodillus, ibis et canis cur displicent?*
> *adpone porris religiosas arulas,*
> *venerare acerbum caepe, mordax allium.*
> *Fuliginosi ture placantur lares,*
> *et respuuntur consecrata holuscula?*
> *aut unde maior esse maiestas focis*
> *quam nata in hortis sarculatis creditur?*
> *si numen ollis, numen et porris inest.*
>
> If you pray to Venus, then why not supplicate a monkey too?
> You accept the sacred asp of Aesculapius:

[31] For important, reference-rich surveys of Armenian folk medicine, see now Greppin (1990: 92–3; 1998).

> Then why not accept crocodile, ibis, and dog?
> Serve up your sacred mini-altars with leeks,
> Venerate the biting onion and stinging garlic.
> Are not your sooty household gods pleased by incense
> And yet consecrated vegetables spat back?
> Or whence is more grandeur thought to be in fireplaces
> Than that born in weeded gardens,
> If a divinity be in them, then why not in leeks?

And, in *Contra Symmachum* (Book II, lines 865–72), in opposition to the request by Symmachus, the senator, that the altar of Victory be restored to the senate house:

> *sunt qui quadriviis brevioribus ire parati*
> *vilia Niliacis venerantur holuscula in hortis,*
> *porrum et caepe deos imponere nubibus ausi,*
> *alliaque et senapin (serapin?) caeli super astra locare.*
> *Isis enim et Serapis et grandi simia cauda*
> *et crocodilus idem quod Iuno, Laverna, Priapus.*
> *hos tu, Nile, colis, illos tu, Thybris, adoras;*
> *una superstitio est, quamvis non concolor error.*
>
> Some are prepared to fare by shorter cross-roads,
> And venerate vile vegetables in gardens by the Nile,
> Daring to ensconce leek and onion in the clouds as gods,
> And place garlic and mustard (?) above heaven's stars.
> For Isis and Serapis and the big-tailed monkey,
> And Crocodile too are but the same as Juno, Laverna and Priapus:
> The former, O Nile, you worship; the latter you venerate, O Tiber;
> The superstition is the same, though the appearance but differ,

in which the oblique reference behind lines 263–64 in the *Peristephanon* and line 867 in the *Contra Symmachum* is sourced in lines 9–11 the *15th Satire* of Juvenal (died c. 140 AD), 'On Egyptian Outrages': 'but it's an impious offence to crunch leeks and onions with the teeth. What a sacred race to have such divinities born in its gardens!' (*porrum et caepe nefas violare et frangere morsu; o sanctas gentes quibus haec nascuntur in hortis numina*!) (Juvenal 1940).

11.3 Germany

Some six centuries after its composition, Prudentius's Hymn 10 would be glossed by a Saxon scribe (Hand C) at the North German cloister of Werden. The scribe inserted *hallóc* (equivalent to OE *holleac*) beside *caepe* and *clvflóc* beside *allium* at line 260 (Gallée 1894: 126–31). Latin *porrum* had presumably already entered his speech as *porro* (or the like) beside his native *lok*, for it was *porrum* that no longer required a gloss (compare German *Porree* and Dutch *prei*). In the temporal world outside that scribe's cloister, the runes had long ago fallen into disuse. Then too, the leek as a fertility fetish, though not as an important herb, was being displaced, ousted by the powers behind the very message the Saxon scribe so industriously glossed. Nevertheless, a further four centuries were to elapse before Chaucer's reeve could render the leek's pagan fertility associations innocuous in the eyes of a reigning religiosity by, as Northrop Frye might have said, displacing them from the precincts of the sacred to the provinces of the profane, from high seriousness to low comedy. In a Christian-resistant Norway contemporaneous with the reeve's ride to Canterbury, a Norwegian farmer's wife

could still be found passing her leek fetish around a harvest table in emulation of a long-forgotten Venetic Pora's ethnobotany. Such indeed is the endurance of folk medicine and ethnobotanical classification.

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Madness, Medication — and Self-Induced Hallucination? *Elleborus* (and Woody Nightshade) in Anglo-Saxon England, 700–900

Alaric Hall

1. Introduction

The usual practice in Anglo-Saxon Plant-Name Survey (ASPNS) word-studies is to analyse plant-names individually, predicating the search for new information about them on this sharp focus, although not ignoring translation evidence (for example, Biggam 2003). Many plant-names survive in glosses (or sometimes translations) which associate them with other words, both Latin and Old English so that, although Anglo-Saxon glossaries, with their complex histories of excerpting, compilation, augmentation and reduction, present scholars with formidable challenges, they also encourage us to widen the scope of our research to include groups of semantically overlapping names.

The present article, along with its companion study (Hall, in this volume, covering the later Anglo-Latin traditions, which are generally quite distinct from the early material considered here) is, in the first instance, a methodological experiment arising from the bilingual character of Anglo-Saxon literacy. Building on approaches I developed for studying words for supernatural beings in Old English (Hall 2007a: 85–7; compare Hall 2011: 9), it takes the Latin word *elleborus* (with variants like *helleborus* and *elleborum*) as a hub for investigating a range of Old English words which potentially overlap in meaning. It provides new insights into the semantics of *elleborus* in early medieval Anglo-Latin, and also into the various Old English equivalents adduced for *elleborus* by Anglo-Saxons. This method facilitates a sophisticated approach to determining the meanings of Old English plant-names. Moreover, it suggests one way of reconstructing Old English semantic fields on a rigorous basis of primary evidence, as an alternative to the methodology of the *Thesaurus of Old English* (TOE; compare also the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary*), which is predicated on using modern dictionary definitions to fit words into a structure inspired by Roget's *Thesaurus*, potentially distorting Old English semantic structures in so doing (see Hall 2007a: 9–11). The material studied here relates in the first instance to the earliest Anglo-Saxon scholarship arising from the monastic school at Canterbury: Old English glosses, and Aldhelm's *Enigmata* ('Riddles'). In this tradition, *elleborus* seems to have been interpreted as woody nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara* L., also known as 'bittersweet') — perhaps, as I

will argue below, through the misinterpretation of Dioscorides's *De materia medica*. To this interpretation belong the Old English plant-name glosses *wedeberge* and *þung* (and perhaps *ceasteræsc*).

It is also possible to elaborate on the evidence of glosses by adducing a word which does not gloss *elleborus*, but which does seem on other grounds to denote woody nightshade, namely *ælfþone*. This is a step which is not inherent in the methodology of taking a Latin hub and assessing all of its glosses and translations — and the present article may have passed over other Old English words for woody nightshade which have yet to be identified — but it is a natural extension of the method of exploring all the possible vernacular synonyms for a Latin word. (It was, indeed, a briefer study of *ælfþone* (Hall 2007a: 155) which made apparent the need for this article.) Taken together, the synonyms of *elleborus* afford a rich set of insights into learned Anglo-Saxon responses to Mediterranean texts; traditional medicine and beliefs; and even, perhaps, into the deliberate use of plants to induce altered states of mind.

The approach presented here is not without challenges. It is not always crystal clear what words are to be counted as glosses or translations of *elleborus*, as my brief discussion below of *wælwyrt* emphasises (in Section 4). Nor is the method practical (at least in an article-length analysis) for very well attested plant-names (such as *þung*, discussed in Section 3 below), though it might be used as one model for a second stage in ASPNS studies, whereby the completion of individual word-studies can be followed by a more extensive assessment of semantic interrelations. Likewise, for reasons of space, I have maintained ASPNS's traditional chronological cutoff point fairly firmly, although continual reference is nevertheless made here to relevant Middle English evidence (especially in Section 5). And although this study focuses on Anglo-Latin evidence, I have not gone so far as to consider all the Latin-Latin or Greek-Latin glosses known in Anglo-Saxon England which mention *elleborus*. This evidence has been neglected by editors, corpus-builders, and analysts (even more than vernacular glosses, which have themselves fared worse than most genres of Old English), meaning that to do it justice here would have required efforts disproportionate to its usefulness in elucidating the Old English semantics. But its omission here is nonetheless regrettable. Much the same can be said of our large corpus of Old High German glosses. Old High German glosses on *elleborus* use cognates of Old English words only rarely, but I have adverted to these where they seem relevant.[1] Even so, I am conscious that although German glosses demand the same rigorous study as the Old English material, and that this would again provide useful comparisons with the Old English data, they have not received it here.

In terms of ASPNS word-studies, the present article comprises comprehensive studies of the word *wedeberge*, which prominently glosses *elleborus*, and *ælfþone*, which seems on other grounds to be a synonym of *wedeberge*. *Ceasterwyrt* and *ceasteræsc* are assessed in some detail, but their attestations are too few and fleeting for much to be said either about them or from them. Standard ASPNS appendices are provided for these words. Others again are too common, and their relevance to explicating *elleborus* too slight, for comprehensive assessment: *þung* and *hamorwyrt*. It is to be hoped that the present article will prove useful in later ASPNS studies of these names, but it is also clear that such later work may demand reassessments of the interim conclusions here.

Building on past work, which has shown that by *elleborus* the early Anglo-Saxon poet

[1] See Björkman (1901–5: II): pages 263 (*alada*); 268 (*germara*); 269 (*hemera*); 290 (*kristwurz*); 294 (*arthistil*) 296 (*ieswurze*) 298 (*itterwurz*) and 303 (*iznizwurz*). Compare entries for these words in the *Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch*, where available.

Aldhelm understood 'woody nightshade', I argue below that this misidentification may arise from the description of the black hellebore (Gk *helleboros melas*, ἑλλέβορος μέλας) in Dioscorides' *De materia medica*, which seems to have been available in seventh-century Canterbury. I argue that the Old English word *wedeberge* ('madness-berry') was coined as a gloss-word for *helleboros melas*. Meanwhile, a thorough examination of the evidence for the semantics of *ceasteræsc*, which also glosses *elleborus*, regrettably proves inconclusive, with past suggestions shown to be problematic, but no clear alternative emerging. It is to be hoped, however, that this analysis might underpin future work on this difficult word.

The Old English evidence for the denotation of *ælfþone,* etymologically 'elf-vine', is limited, but West Germanic cognates suggest that the word meant 'woody nightshade', thus also being relevant to understanding Aldhelm's *elleborus.* The word is attested in Old English medical texts; understanding its role here involves quite detailed study of the medical terminology of the texts. There is some reason to think that woody nightshade tended to be prescribed for conditions associated with elves and/or demons, and that it might have been clinically effective to some degree against these conditions, which apparently involved some kind of skin condition or inflammation, and fevers. Combining this evidence with Aldhelm's riddle and the evidence from its intellectual milieu, I argue, albeit tentatively, that we can glimpse the use of woody nightshade in Anglo-Saxon England, not only to help cure altered mental states, but to cause them, in what may be our strongest case so far for the use of non-alcoholic intoxicants in Anglo-Saxon culture.

2. Aldhelm's *elleborus* and woody nightshade

In Classical Latin *elleborus* was, like its Greek etymon *helleboros* (ἑλλέβορος), conventionally divided into two varieties, *albus* (prototypically denoting *Veratrum album* L., white hellebore) and *niger* (prototypically *Helleborus orientalis* Lam., lenten-rose). (See the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (OLD), under *elleborum* and *uērātrum*; and André (1985), under *elleborus* and *uērātrum*.) But it is not self-evident that it was understood in this way by Anglo-Saxons. Fortunately, the ninety-eighth riddle of Aldhelm's *Enigmata*, itself entitled *Elleborus*, affords a detailed description which allows us to ascertain with confidence what Aldhelm understood by the word. The riddle was composed sometime before Aldhelm died in 709/10, and apparently towards the beginning of his poetic career, no earlier than around 670 (Lapidge 2007). It is in the nature of riddles that the correct sense of their constituent words is hard to determine (see, for this riddle, Cameron 1985: 131–2), and my translation aims to represent the full range of plausible possibilities, albeit at the expense of elegance:[2]

> *Ostriger en arvo vernabam frondibus hirtis*
> *Conquilio similis: sic cocci murice rubro*
> *Purpureus stillat sanguis de palmite guttis.*
> *Exuvias vitae mandenti tollere nolo*
> *Mitia nec penitus spoliabunt mente venena;*
> *Sed tamen insanum vexat dementia cordis*
> *Dum rotat in giro vecors vertigine membra.*
>
> Purple-bearing, lo!, I was growing in a field/the countryside, with shaggy/rough/hairy foliage/stalks/branches | similar to a shellfish/purple-fish/purple dye/purple cloth; thus with red murex/purple dye of my berry/red dye | purple blood drips/trickles from the

[2] Compare the more literary handling by Lapidge and Rosier in Aldhelm (1985: 93), or the fine translation by

> vine-shoots in drops. | I do not wish to take away from the chewer the trappings of life, | nor will my gentle juices/poisons/potions utterly rob him of his mind; | but nevertheless a madness of the heart shakes/agitates/torments him, mad, | while, deranged by giddiness, he whirls his limbs in a circle.

Some translators have rendered the title of the riddle as 'Hellebore' (Pitman, in Aldhelm 1925: 61; Stork 1990: 227), but Modern English *hellebore* denotes Linnaeus's *Helleborus* and *Veratrum*, neither of which has the kind of red fruits which Aldhelm must be describing here (compare Erhardt-Siebold 1936: 164; Cameron 1985: 131). Erhardt-Siebold posited that Aldhelm's *elleborus* should be instead identified as mezereon (*Daphne mezereum* L.), on the basis of the unique gloss *Eliforus wedeberge ł ceasteræsc* (Rusche 1996: E244): she argued that the etymon of *ceaster-* in *ceasteræsc* is the Greek plant-name *kestron* (κέστρον); that one of the genera denoted by *kestron* in Dioscorides's *De materia medica* is *Daphne* L.; that mezereon is a *Daphne* native to the British Isles and has red berries; and that mezereon is, therefore, the subject of Aldhelm's riddle. However, Cameron's reconsideration dispensed with this interpretation, principally because mezereon's berries do not hang like drops, and because it does not cause the kinds of symptoms which Aldhelm describes (Cameron 1985: 131–3; compare Cameron 1993: 110–12; see also below, Section 4). Cameron preferred a passing suggestion of Erhardt-Siebold's, of woody nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara* L.; Erhardt-Siebold 1936: 169, note 2). The possible effects of ingesting parts of woody nightshade plants are not fully understood; Cameron's conclusions were drawn primarily from only one account of poisoning by *Solanum dulcamara*. However, if we accept agitation for arm-whirling, the symptoms described by Aldhelm are among those observed of poisoning by all parts of the plant (for example, Cooper and Johnson 1984: 217–18; Ceha et al. 1997; Bruneton 1999: 479–83). It is clear both that Aldhelm did not mean the same thing by *elleborus* as his Mediterranean sources and that what he was probably thinking of was woody nightshade.

This provides a valuable starting point for understanding what Anglo-Saxons might have understood by *elleborus*, and therefore by its vernacular equivalents. But there is as yet no explanation for how *elleborus* came to mean 'woody nightshade' for Aldhelm, and this is something of a problem for Cameron's interpretation (as he himself emphasised: 1985: 133). So far, no substantial sources for Aldhelm's poem have been established, and his text must, as Cameron argued, reflect personal observation (or at least culturally inculcated knowledge). Howe, demonstrating that Aldhelm made extensive use of Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* in composing his *enigmata*, tentatively suggested that lines 6 to 7 of Aldhelm's *Elleborus* could be indebted to Isidore's entry for *elleborus* (Howe 1985: 40, note 11; Isidore of Seville 1911: XVII.ix.24):

> *Elleborum memorant in Graecia circa Elleborum quendam fluvium plurimum gigni, atque inde a Graecis appellari. Hunc Romani alio nomine veratrum dicunt pro eo quod sumptum motam mentem in sanitatem reducit. Duo sunt autem genera: album et nigrum.*
>
> They relate that much *elleborum* grows in Greece around the Elleborum, a certain river, and it is named after that by the Greeks. The Romans call this by the alternative name *veratrum*, because once consumed, it brings back the disturbed/shaken mind to sanity *[compare Latin* vera *'true']*. But there are two kinds: white and black.

Certainly Howe is not the first scholar to have brought Isidore's text to bear on Aldhelm's *Elleborus*: the late tenth-century scribe who copied the text of the *Enigmata* in the manuscript British Library, Royal 12.C.xxiii, added Isidore's entry on *elleborus* as a marginal gloss

Juster (Aldhelm, forthcoming).

to Aldhelm's riddle (Stork 1990: 227; compare Rusche 2005: 438–40).[3] But Isidore's text describes *elleborus* as a plant which remedies insanity, rather than, as is surely the case in Aldhelm's text, causing it. Some mis-reading of the text, involving *insanitatem* for *in sanitatem*, could be imagined, but I am aware of no version of the *Etymologiae* whose text would encourage this explanation.[4] However, some light may be shed on Aldhelm's identification of *elleborus* with woody nightshade by the earliest attested Old English gloss on *elleborus*: *wedeberge*.

3. *Wedeberge*

Wedeberge takes its first element from *wede-*, a transparent, if morphologically somewhat problematic, derivative of *wod* 'mad' also found in *wedehund* ('mad dog'); presumably in *wedeberge* it means 'madness-' (see Sauer 2003: 164–5). The second element, *-berige*, simply means 'berry'. Previous commentators have identified *wedeberge* with hellebores (Bosworth 1898; Clark Hall 1960) or *Veratrum album* L. (Bierbaumer 1975–9: II.125–6; III.250), but these are not berry-bearing. However, *elleborus: wedeberge* does recall Aldhelm's riddle, in imputing berries to *elleborus* (and, less distinctively, in associating it with madness). It can also be shown to derive from an intellectual milieu with which Aldhelm himself has connections. Its earliest attestation comes in the Erfurt Glossary entry *elleborus poedibergæ* (with scribal confusion between the letter wynn (*p*) and *p*; Pheifer 1974: 21, no. 388), and subsequently in the closely related Corpus Glossary, once as *Eleborus woedeberge*, with *þung* subsequently added interlinearly by a corrector, and once as *Helleborus woidiberge* (the duplication presumably reflecting the spelling variation in the lemma; Hessels 1890: 46, E120; 63, H 86). The additional gloss *þung* also appears in a closely related gloss in the First Cleopatra Glossary, compiled around the 930s (Rusche 1996: 2–6, 33–8): *Elleborus wedeberge þung* (Rusche 1996: E25; for the textual relationships see Kittlick 1998: 43, 212–15). These texts all derive ultimately from early scholarship at Canterbury.

Several possibilities for the origins of the lemma *elleborus* have been suggested.[5] These issues are clarified, however, by Rusche's examination (2008) of the wider textual tradition of Anglo-Saxon plant-name glossaries, which lasted into the twelfth century, and on which the following paragraphs are based. The two key texts are the Durham Plant-Name Glossary and the Laud Herbal Glossary. As its name suggests, the Durham Plant-Name Glossary (MS Durham, Cathedral Library, Hunter 100) was copied in Durham, in the early twelfth century. It includes the entry *Elleborus vedeberige uel* ['or'] *thung* '*elleborus*: *wedeberge* or *thung*' (Lindheim 1941: 13, no. 148) and drew almost all its material from two sources (compare Lindheim 1941: 5–6): a seventh-century Greek-Latin-Old English plant-name glossary whose lemmata come from Dioscorides's *De materia medica*, which also contributed

[3] Other sources can also be identified. The word *ostriger* in the first line of the riddle is unusual, being a compound of *ostrum* 'blood of the sea-snail, purple' and *-ger* '-bearing'; it appears in the Épinal-Erfurt glossary tradition, so was either coined by Aldhelm and then included in the glosses, or Aldhelms source (though no other anterior source for the gloss is yet known; Pheifer 1974: 38, no. 716; see also p. 107). *Rubri* and *cocci*, both in the second line of the riddle, occur in collocation in Sedulius's *Carmen Paschale*, Bk 5, line 165, and probably underlie Aldhelm's use of the same words, but the contexts are quite different (see the *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* project).

[4] The Anglo-Saxon epitome of the *Etymologiae*, edited by Lapidge (1988–9), which can be revealing for understanding the Anglo-Saxon transmission of Isidore (Hall 2007b: 302–6), omits the entry.

[5] Lindsay (1921: 115); Pheifer (1974: 85); and, for the theoretical possibility that Épinal-Erfurt could have derived the lemma from Aldhelm's riddles lv to lvii, see Lapidge (2007: 41–2).

lemmata and glosses to the Épinal-Erfurt glossaries; and those entries in the *Old English Herbarium* which include vernacular plant-names — which seem not to have been available to early Anglo-Saxon glossators. Meanwhile, the Laud Herbal Glossary (MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 587) is a twelfth-century copy of the single biggest compilation of plant-name glosses of its time in England, rooted in Anglo-Saxon sources. Its *wedeberge* entry, showing the Laud scribe's characteristic difficulty in handling the letter wynn (see Stracke 1974: 5), reads *Hellibor*um *.i. yediberge* (Stracke 1974: 44, no. 777). Although the Laud Herbal Glossary has many more sources for its Latin entries than Durham, its main sources for vernacular glosses are a list of plant-names in the Greek primer, the *Hermeneumata Pseudo-Dositheana*; the *Old English Herbarium*; and a text very like the Durham Plant-Name Glossary.

From these textual relationships (for further examples of which see Wotherspoon, this volume, Section 2), it follows that, since Durham and Laud have the *elleborus wedeberge* (*þung*) gloss which we find in Erfurt and Corpus, then we would expect the source of the gloss to be the Dioscorides-based glossary.[6] Admittedly, on internal evidence, the source of the Laud gloss seems more likely to have been the *Hermeneumata Pseudo-Dositheana* glossary: the entry *Hellibor*um *.i. yediberge* occurs near the beginning of the *h-* words (it is the fourth of thirty-five entries), which is where, according to Rusche's preliminary work, the *Hermeneumata* batch seems to occur in each alphabetic section of Laud. Admittedly too, neither *elleborus* or *wedeberge* occurs in the text which Rusche considered the best text of the Dioscorides glossary, the *Nomina herbarum Grece et Latine* in MS Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 1828–30, folios 94–5 (Rusche 1996: 554–66). So an origin in the *Hermeneumata* glossary should not, without more detailed research into the textual histories of the glossaries, be ruled out. But whether we are dealing with an origin in the Dioscorides glossary or the *Hermeneumata*, the gloss *elleborus: wedeberge (þung)* has its origin in seventh-century vernacular glossing at Canterbury. To put it another way, the gloss shows that a conception of *elleborus* broadly consonant with Aldhelm's but at odds with the Classical meaning existed in seventh-century Canterbury, a milieu which Aldhelm shared, but in a textual tradition whose origin is independent of Aldhelm's riddle.

Whether or not *elleborus: wedeberge* itself comes from the Canterbury Dioscorides glossary, that glossary raises the possibility that a copy of Dioscorides's *De materia medica* was available in seventh-century Canterbury (compare Lindheim 1941: 5–6; Rusche 2003: 191). The prospect that this putative manuscript of the *De materia medica* was written in Greek, along with the magnitude of the text and therefore the investment required to copy it, would explain its lack of influence in later Anglo-Saxon medicinal scholarship.

In seeking to understand the background to Aldhelm's *Elleborus*, and to the gloss *wedeberge*, a closer examination of the *De materia medica* may, then, be worthwhile. It contains entries (in Book 4, Chapters 148 and 162) on both *helleboros leukos* (ἑλλέβορος λευκός) 'white hellebore' and *helleboros melas* (ἑλλέβορος μέλας) 'black hellebore'. The former is described (Dioscorides 1906–14: II.290; translation by Beck in Dioscorides 2005: 304) as having:

> φύλλα μὲν ὅμοια ἔχει τοῖς τοῦ ἀρνογλώσσου ἢ τεύτλου ἀγρίου, βραχύτερα δὲ καὶ μελάντερα καὶ ἐρυθρά τὴν χρόαν; καυλὸν δὲ ἔχει παλαιστιαῖον, κοῖλον, περιφλοιζόμενον,

[6] A potential problem with this inference is that our manuscripts of the Old English *Herbarium* also include *wedeberge* as a synonym for *elleborum album*, in which case this could in theory have been the source for Durham-Laud (conceivably independent of Épinal-Erfurt). However, as I discuss elsewhere in this volume, Durham-Laud in fact show rather that the *Herbarium* probably borrowed the earlier gloss *elleborus wedeberge* rather than adding

> ὅταν ἄρξηται ξηραίνεσθαι. ῥίζαι δὲ ὕπεισι πολλαί, λεπταί, ἀπὸ κεφαλίου μικροῦ καὶ ἐπιμήκους ὡστερεὶ κρομύου, συμπεφυκυῖαι.
>
> leaves similar to the leaves of the plantain or of the wild beet but shorter, darker, and red in color; it has a stem that is a span tall and hollow and that loses its skin all around as it begins to dry up. The roots are below ground, many, delicate, and growing together from a small and longish head as from an onion.

Dioscorides does not, then, associate the white hellebore with anything that might be denoted either by *wede* or *berge*. The black hellebore, however, is described thus (Dioscorides 1906–14: II.306–7; translation by Beck in Dioscorides 2005: 312):

> ἑλλέβορος μέλας: οἱ δὲ Μελαμπόδιον, οἱ δὲ ἐκτομον, οἱ δὲ πολύρριζον καλοῦσι; Μελαμπόδιον δὲ, ἐπειδὴ δοκεῖ Μελάμπους τις αἰπόλος τὰς Προίτου θυγατέρας μανείσας αὐτῷ καθηραι καί θεραπεῦσαι. ἔχει δὲ τά φύλλα χλωρά, πλατάνῳ προσεμφερῆ, ἐλάττονα δὲ πρὸς τά τοῦ σφονδυλίου καί πολυσχιδέστερα καί μελάντερα καί ὑποτραχέα. καυλός βραχύς, ἄνθη δὲ λευκά, ἐμπόρφυρα, ἅ δὲ σχήματι βοτρυοειδη, καί ἐν αὐτῷ καρπὸς κνήκῳ παραπλήσιος … ῥίζαι δὲ μέλαιναι, λεπταί, οἱνεὶ ἀπό τινος κεφαλίου κρομυώδους ἠρτημεναι.
>
> The black hellebore: but some call it *Melampodion*, others *ectonon [*sic*]*, and others *polyrhizon*; and they call it *Melampodion* because it seems that a certain Melampus, a goatherd, purged and cured with it the daughters of Proteus who were stricken with madness. It has pale green leaves closely resembling those of the plane tree, but smaller by comparison to the leaves of cow parsnip, much more cloven, darker, and somewhat rough. The stem is short, the flowers white, inclining to purple, resembling grape clusters in configuration, and containing fruit nearly resembling safflower ... The roots are black and slender, seemingly hanging from an onion-like little head.

This hellebore — identified by Aufmesser (2000: 187) as *Helleborus orientalis* Lam. (Lenten-rose) or *Helleborus cyclophyllus* Boiss. (Greek hellebore) — is, amongst other things, 'good for epileptics, the atrabilious [melancholic or ill-tempered], the insane, arthritics, and paralytics' (ὠφελεῖ δὲ ἐπιλημπτικούς, μελαγχολικούς, μαινομένους, ἀρθριτικούς, παραλελυμένους; Dioscorides 1906–14, II.308; translation by Beck in Dioscorides 2005: 313). Like *wedeberge*, then, it is connected with madness. Some manuscripts of the *De materia medica* were illustrated, but when they were not, identifying plants from Dioscorides's verbal descriptions was tricky. Although the hellebores are in reality quite unlike woody nightshade, Dioscorides's description fits woody nightshade in several important respects, while woody nightshade does not appear elsewhere in his text. One of the distinctive features of woody nightshade is that its upper leaves, like those of plane trees, tend to be trifoliate, and unlike those of planes, they are often cloven almost to the petiole (leaf-stalk). They are not outstanding candidates for the description 'pale green', but they are both darker and smaller than the leaves of the cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum* Bartram) with which they are compared in the above quote from Dioscorides — and it is not, in any case, immediately clear how Greek *chlōra* (χλωρα) would have mapped onto the structuring of colours in the Old English lexicon, and what effects this might have had on its interpretation (compare Ruff 2003). Woody nightshade flowers can be white or purple (albeit usually the latter, as Aldhelm appears to emphasise), and hang in clusters. The pods of safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius* L.), also mentioned above, may or may not have been a useful point of comparison for Anglo-Saxons (it is not native to Britain), but woody nightshade berries certainly hang alongside the

it independently.

flowers in clusters like grapes. Admittedly, woody nightshade's stem is far from short — the plant is in fact a vine — but the flowers are on short peduncles (flower- or fruit-stalks), to which Dioscorides's text might have been taken to refer. Its roots are not black, but yellow (Millspaugh 1892: 482), but this may not have been obvious unless woody nightshade's roots were traditionally used by Anglo-Saxons.

I suggest, therefore, that underlying Aldhelm's identification of *elleborus* with woody nightshade is a misidentification of Dioscorides's black hellebore. This is a risky conclusion both because of our uncertainty as to whether Anglo-Saxons had access to the *De materia medica* and because Dioscorides's description is not a perfect fit. But it is one worth considering, not least because it provides an explanation for a nagging problem in interpreting Aldhelm's *Elleborus*. The most obvious way in which Aldhelm might have had personal access to the *De materia medica* is in the time which he spent studying under Archbishop Theodore at Canterbury; Dioscorides's description of *helleborum nigrum*, and possibly its misidentification, may, like much knowledge of Greek in Canterbury glosses, have been mediated through Theodore (see Lapidge 1986; 1988; compare Bischoff and Lapidge 1994: 249–55 on Theodore's medical learning). A variant on this argument (and not a mutually exclusive one) derives from the evidence for close contact between Aldhelm and the glossing tradition underlying Épinal-Erfurt. Aldhelm drew vocabulary from the glosses, and they from him (Pheifer 1974: lv–lvii; Lapidge 2007: 31–43), so there is a good chance that there is some relationship between the gloss *elleborus wedeberge* and Aldhelm's poem *Elleborus*. Conceivably, Aldhelm misinterpreted the gloss 'madness-berry', coined to mean 'berry curing madness', as 'berry causing madness'; but this could surely only be one ingredient in a more complex web of intellectual sources and/or contacts. All the same, if my interpretation is accepted, it both clears up a problem in the understanding of Aldhelm's riddle, and adds to the evidence for the availability in early Anglo-Saxon England of Dioscorides's *De materia medica*.

Later, it seems, in the textual tradition, the word *þung* also joined the gloss *wedeberge* (and its cognate is to my knowledge also the only word attested as a gloss on *elleborus* in Old Norse: Heizmann 1993: 160); but *þung* is too widely attested to be given full consideration here (hopefully, rather, the present study will help in due course to illuminate the semantic range of *þung*). *Þung* appears to have denoted a range of plants whose common feature is their toxicity (Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.136; III.239), suggesting that, in this tradition, *elleborus* was considered (potentially) poisonous — which is of course consistent with Aldhelm's poem. In the present state of knowledge, *þung* is not otherwise diagnostic of the kind of plant denoted by *elleborus*. Moreover, it is hard to be sure whether it was intended merely to supplement the information provided by *wedeberge*, or to denote another plant entirely.

Focusing more closely on the word *wedeberge* itself, then, does this word represent an early, common Old English word for woody nightshade — or is it, as D'Aronco assumed (1988: 30), a gloss-word, coined specially to denote *elleborus*? The attestations of *wedeberge* listed so far seem all to be textually related, which is generally a precondition for supposing a word to be a gloss-word (though see note 6). Likewise, the compound *wedeberge* has neither cognates in other Germanic languages nor later English reflexes.[7] Meanwhile, if *elleborus* (*niger*) was understood to denote a berry-bearing plant — as Dioscorides's text, if

[7] See the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED), under *wēde-berȝe*. The dictionary, under *wōde*, sense 4a, does include the fourteenth-century gloss 'Carica: wodeberie', but as *carica* denotes a fig-tree, this must, as the entry implies, be a 'wood-berry', quite independent of *wedeberge*.

available, may have suggested — then *wedeberge* would afford a sensible and illuminating rendering. Admittedly, Aldhelm's riddle is, as I discuss below, probably predicated on common knowledge about the characteristics of woody nightshade, which suggests that vernacular words for the plant must have been available. This being so, it does seem odd that an Anglo-Saxon glossator would invent a word for woody nightshade when other words were surely available, and this could militate in favour of taking *wedeberge* as a member of the common lexicon. However, another possibility is suggested by the probable existence of another early Anglo-Saxon word for woody nightshade, discussed below: *ælfþone* (etymologically 'elf-vine').

It may be that Canterbury's earliest, evangelical scholars, working at the forefront of the English Christianisation movement, may have thought the noun *ælf* ('elf') too redolent of pagan beliefs (or indeed of actual demons) for inclusion in the glossary, preferring instead to coin a new word — an explanation which might also help to explain why words like *gydig* ('possessed by a god') and *ylfig* (apparently etymologically 'possessed by elves' and later meaning 'in a prophetic state'), though apparently old words, do not occur in our texts until the eleventh century (see Section 6 below). As these examples emphasise, however, if this were the case, the scruples of Canterbury's early scholars were not shared by later writers. Yet another, simpler, explanation would be that a glossator coined *wedeberge* because he did not know what *elleborus* was, and simply created what he viewed as a descriptive compound — which later encouraged the consonant identification of *elleborus* with woody nightshade.

Wedeberge does, however, occur in one more Anglo-Saxon gloss, attested along with *Elleborus wedeberge, þung* in the First Cleopatra Glossary, in the entry *Eliforus wedeberge*, to which was later added the additional gloss *ceasteræsc* (Rusche 1996: E244). This occurs in a batch of glosses to Aldhelm's works, numbered S12 by Kittlick, and must originally have glossed Aldhelm's riddle *Elleborus*; Kittlick considered from its language that the batch originated in an Anglian-speaking region (Kittlick 1998: paragraph 14.4). Whether this Aldhelm glossary was composed entirely independently, or whether it used existing glosses has not to my knowledge been investigated. If it is independent, then it shows that the word *wedeberge* was in general circulation; assuming that the glossator correctly identified the plant which Aldhelm described (as Aldhelm presumably thought his readers would), it must have denoted woody nightshade. But contact with, for example, the Épinal-Erfurt tradition must be suspected. *Wedeberge* seems likely to have been coined as a gloss-word for a lemma most likely deriving from Dioscorides's *De materia medica*, or possibly from the *Hermeneumata Pseudo-Dositheana*.

4. *Ceasteræsc* (and *hamorwyrt*)

The addition of *ceasteræsc* (literally '(Roman) fortification/town-ash') to the First Cleopatra Glossary entry *eliforus wedeberge* provides a further equivalent for *elleborus*. However, this gloss seems to be unparalleled; indeed, *ceasteræsc* appears as a gloss only here. The word does occur in four medical texts in the collection known, since Cockayne's edition, as the *Lacnunga*. Three of these texts are remedies in a single sequence of drinks for *þeor* (apparently 'inflammation') — one of which, as Meaney (1984: 239) noted, also appears in Section 30 of *Leechbook III* (Wright 1955: folio 117r) — and the last a remedy 'If a sheep is afflicted' (*Gif*

sceap sy abrocen; Grattan and Singer 1952: 148, 150, 179, that is, remedies 73, 74, 77, 143).[8] Meanwhile, the unique term *ceasterwyrt* occurs in Section 39 of Bald's *Leechbook* I (Wright 1955: folio 39a), and has been assumed to share *ceasteræsc*'s denotation. The only information revealed by these texts which is useful for identifying the plants is that *ceasterwyrt* had seeds (which at least makes berry-bearing plants such as woody nightshade unlikely). Neither name seems to occur in cognate languages — unsurprisingly, as *ceaster* was an Old English loan-word from Latin — or in later varieties of English.

Earlier lexicographers based their interpretations of *ceasteræsc* on the lemma *eliforus*. Cockayne cited the lemma in his glossary entry for *ceasteræsc* (1864–6: II.368), giving the translation 'helleborus niger, black hellebore', adding that this 'has leaves like those of the ash', and his entry has probably been the basis for dictionary definitions in the following decades (Bosworth 1898, under *ceaster-æsc*, *ceaster-wyrt* and, in Toller's 1921 supplement, under *ceaster-æsc*; Clark Hall 1960, under *ceasteræsc*). To make reliable use of the *ceasteræsc* gloss, it is necessary to know whether it originated as a marginal gloss to a text of Aldhelm's riddle (in which case it might reflect his description of *elleborus* more than inherited wisdom about the meaning of the word), or whether it was added later in the gloss's textual tradition on the basis of someone's wider knowledge about *elleborus*, or transferred by the Cleopatra scribe from another instance of *elleborus* in his sources, whose lemma originally came from elsewhere. Unfortunately, we cannot readily decide between these, and it will be clear already that we cannot assume that Anglo-Saxons associated *elleborus* with our hellebores. Cockayne was wise to seek to explain why the generic element *-æsc* would appear in a word for *Elleborum nigrum*, but unfortunately, his claim that the black hellebore has leaves like an ash strikes me as unconvincing. Though their individual shape is not unlike the ash's, this is not a very distinctive similarity: similarity in arrangement would be more impressive, and this is lacking. One might compare the words *æscþrote* and the rarer *æscwyrt*, which seem prototypically to have denoted vervain (*Verbena officinalis* L.), and whose leaves' form therefore would recall sets of ash leaves rather than individual ash leaves.

Later commentators have been more cautious. Bierbaumer offered three identifications for *ceasteræsc*: *Helleborus niger* L.; *Veratrum album* L.; and *Daphne mezereum* L. (1975–9: I.27–8; compare II.19; III.45) — while the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE) similarly offered the circumspect definition 'a plant, perhaps a true hellebore, but more probably a pseudo-hellebore such as mezereon, woody nightshade, or dwarf elder' (under *ceaster-æsc*). Bierbaumer's entry, and, presumably, that of the DOE, are based on the arguments of Erhardt-Siebold; in particular, both she and the DOE associated *ceasteræsc* with the Greek plant-name *kestron*, presumably taking *ceaster-* as a folk-etymologisation (Erhardt-Siebold 1936: 164).

Dioscorides's *kestron* seems to have denoted *Stachys officinalis* (L.) Trevis. (Beck in Dioscordes 2005: 252) or *Stachys alopecuros* (L.) Benth. (Aufmesser 2000: 202), both commonly known as *betonica* in Latin, *betony* in English today and, apparently, in Old English variously as *betonice*, *bisceopwyrt* and *attorlaþe* (DOE). These are all very common words in Old English medical texts (and Middle English reflexes of *bisceopwyrt* are attested

[8] Since there is no up to date edition of Royal 12 D. xvii, facsimiles (Wright 1955; Doane 1994, no. 298) are readily available, and folio references will easily be found in Cockayne (1864–6), I cite from Wright's facsimile, taking the usual editorial liberties of expanding abbreviations, normalising spacing and ignoring lineation. Cockayne's edition, while impressive, is error-prone (see, e.g., Hall 2005: 197, n. 5). The Corpus of Old English handling of the manuscript is also problematic: it uses the Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records edition where available; next in order of preference is Storms 1948; and where these are not available, Cockayne. This produces electronic texts exhibiting very different editorial approaches for a manuscript text showing very consistent ones.

glossing *elleborus*: see the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS), under *helleborus*). Moreover, Erhardt-Siebold associated another well-attested plant-name with *kestron* too — *hamorwyrt* (literally 'hammer-plant'), taking it to be a translation of *kestron* following its other sense of 'stylus, chisel'. This could in turn connect *ceasteræsc* both with *hamorwyrt* and with *hamorwyrt*'s own partial synonyms (it glosses *perdicalis*; see Bosworth 1898, Toller's 1921 supplement, under *hamer-wyrt*, connecting it in turn with another *perdicalis* gloss, *dolhrune*, for which see the DOE, under *dolg-rūne*). Evidently, if the association of *ceasteræsc* with *kestron* is correct, then the name needs to be understood as part of a fuller study of several of the most common Old English plant-names.

However, the associations of *ceasteræsc* with *kestron* and with *hamorwyrt* strike me as tenuous. Phonetically, *ceaster-* would be a plausible folk-etymologisation of *kestron* (or more likely its Latin equivalent *cestrum*), and *-wyrt* is a common suffix in plant-names based on foreign words; but *cestrum* is in our Latin texts a rare word in either of its senses — plant-name or word for chisel (see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, under *cestros*) — and is apparently unattested in early medieval Anglo-Latin (see the DMLBS, under *cestros*). It seems an unlikely source, then, for *ceaster-*, which is easily explicable as the common noun '(Roman) fortification'. That the 'stylus/chisel' sense of *kestron* inspired the name *hamorwyrt* is likewise implausible — besides the rarity of the word and the fact that Anglo-Saxons are unlikely to have confused hammers and chisels, the explanation has the added detraction that, as Cockayne pointed out, *hamorwyrt* seems to have partial cognates in *dyþhamor* and *hamorsecg*, and in the Old High German simplex *hemera*, suggesting that the plant-name originated before likely influence from Greek or Latin texts.[9]

We must examine *ceasteræsc* from scratch. As Cockayne was aware, any attempt to identify the denotation of *ceasteræsc* must accommodate its generic element *æsc*. Since *elleborus* is a herb, it seems unlikely that *ceasteræsc* could actually denote an ash (*Fraxinus* L.), but presumably *ceasteræsc* denoted something sufficiently similar to the ash to be named after it. It is worth noting that we may, in seeking plants which are similar to ashes, need to be sensitive to properties of the ash which may have been more important to Anglo-Saxons than to us. Thus although ash-trees' leaves are particularly distinctive in arrangement, the properties of ash wood led to its use in the manufacture of ships and weapons, uses enshrined in the extension of the semantic range of *æsc* to include certain kinds of ships and spears (see DOE), which may have had a bearing on the name *ceasteræsc*.

No kind of hellebore or veratrum stands forward as resembling an ash in the arrangement of its leaves (and certainly not in producing wood), meaning that we can probably dispense with the older dictionary interpretations of *ceasteræsc*. Erhardt-Siebold suggested that *ceasteræsc*'s most likely denotation is the mountain ash, also known as the rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia* L.) 'and its shrub-like varieties', thereafter arguing that this was in turn identified

[9] Cockayne (1864–6: III.330; compare pages 321–2, and 343–4); see now Björkman (1901–5: II.269); DOE, under *dȳþ-hamor* — suggesting the denotation 'cattail' ('bullrush' in British English), *Typha* L. While sealing the case against any connection of *hamorwyrt* with *cestrum*, Old High German *hemera* does open up another avenue of enquiry here, since it is itself prominently attested as a gloss for *elleborus*; on this evidence, Cockayne glossed *hamorwyrt* as 'black hellebore, helleborus niger' (1864–6: III.330), doubtless inspiring Bosworth's definition 'black hellebore' (1898, under *hamer-wyrt*). A fuller study of the Old English and Old High German evidence might bear this inference out, but it seems somewhat doubtful since other Old English and later English evidence points towards an identification of *hamorwyrt* with eastern pellitory-of-the-wall, *Parietaria officinalis* L. (see Bosworth 1898, Toller's 1921 supplement, under *hamer-wyrt*; compare Clark Hall 1960, under *hamorwyrt*; MED, under *hemer-wort*; OED, under *hammerwort*). I do not, then, pursue *hamorwyrt* further here.

with mezereon (*Daphne mezereum* L.). This reasoning strikes me as tenuous. The mountain ash certainly looks like an ash, but although mountain ashes are not tall trees (usually reaching no more than eighteen metres), the idea that shrubby examples might be connected with the herb *elleborus* is not one which I find compelling. That mountain ash and mezereon might be associated or confused seems even less likely: mezereon's leaves, for example, may individually be similar to the mountain ash's in shape (as Erhardt-Siebold emphasised), but they do not share ash leaves' distinctive arrangement. Mezereon's berries too are individually like the mountain ash's, but the mountain ash's hang in bunches where the mezereon's grow from the stem.

The DOE's suggestion of dwarf elder (*Sambucus ebulus* L.) for *ceasteræsc* is more promising, at least insofar as the leaves of the dwarf elder are like the ash's in shape and arrangement. Admittedly, Aldhelm's riddle *Ebulus* ('dwarf elder') associates the dwarf elder firmly with the *sambucus* ('elder') rather than with the ash (Aldhelm 1919: I.141; see further Cameron 1985: 129–30), but some ostensible evidence for a link with *elleborus* might be perceived in the entry '*helleborus* ualuyrt' in the *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* text of the Leiden Glossary (LdGl D41 [0123 (42.4)]). (The form *helleborus* is a reconstruction from the manuscript form *elleus*). *Wælwyrt* and its probable variants *wealhwyrt* and *weallwyrt* almost certainly denoted dwarf elder (amongst other things), as they have continued to do in English, and this citation would imply that dwarf elder was identified with *elleborus* elsewhere in Old English.[10] If so, then the methodology of this article would also demand the consideration of another gloss on *ebulus*, *ellenwyrt*. However, this interpretation is not viable. One problem is the fact that one of the *Lacnunga* entries attesting to *ceasteræsc* runs: 'For *theor*: Lupin, wallwort, 'woodwex', ashbark below ground, butchersbroom, wormwood the grey kind, radish, 'ceasteræsc', a little savine' (*Wið ðeore, ealhtre, wælwyrt, weoduweaxe, æscrind in eorþan, cneowholen, wermod se hara, rædic, ceasteræsc, lytel sauinan*: Grattan and Singer 1952: 151, no. LXXVII). This, then, seems to take *wælwyrt* and *ceasteræsc* to denote different plants — though this could be explained as semantic variation, or a mistake arising from the text's transmission.

More importantly, the manuscript form of the Leiden gloss is *Elleus ualuyrt* (Hessels 1906: 43, no. XLII.4), and the lemma here must be a corruption, not of *elleborus*, but of *ebulus*. Since most of the lemmata in this section of the Leiden Glossary come from Sulpicius Severus's *Dialogi*, Hessels suggested (1906: 102) that *Elleus* might be a corruption of a form of the word *helleborus* as found in another text by Sulpicius, his *Vita Sancti Martini* (Severus 1967–9: I.266). However, Hessels (1906: 266) also commented that 'it seems identical with *ebulo*, wælwyrt of Aldhelm's *Aenigm*[*ata*]'. This latter interpretation is surely the correct one: as Hessels noted, the gloss *ebulus wælwyrt* is attested in the late tenth- or early eleventh-century glosses on Aldhelm's *Enigmata* in MS British Library, Royal 12.C.xxiii (Stork 1990: 219, Riddle no. 94), and the same pair is attested in the Erfurt Glossary (Pheifer 1974: 22, no. 393), along with numerous related texts (compare Hall, in this volume, Section 3). This is surely the correct interpretation of the Leiden gloss, and the reading *elleborus ualuyrt* can be dispensed with.

While I am unconvinced by previous identifications of *ceasteræsc*, then, I am sceptical about the prospects of finding a reliable alternative. Perhaps a more likely candidate is the one-species genus *Dictamnus* L., also known as *Dictamnus fraxinella* ('ash-like') Pers., 'burning

[10] See Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.138–9 and II.123–4); the MED, under *wal-wort*; OED, under *wallwort*; *Dictionary*

bush', whose leaves are very like those of the ash in form and arrangement. It seems to be native only to more southerly regions of Europe, though perhaps one way of explaining why a plant might have been associated with old Roman fortifications would be to suggest that exotic plant species tended to find their way to these hubs of demographic and mercantile movement. Equally, we could probably do worse than to identify *ceasteræsc* with *æscþrote* and so with vervain. This is not, I hope, the last word on *ceasteræsc*. But it will be evident that further considerations here will not illuminate the significance of Anglo-Latin *helleborus*.

5. *Ælfþone*

The final lexeme in my unravelling of the riddle of Aldhelm's *elleborus* and its denotation of woody nightshade is not a gloss, but has been mentioned above as a possible reason why woody nightshade might have been denoted by a gloss-word *wedeberge* rather than an extant Old English word. This word is *ælfþone*, which is attested in Old English only in the medical texts of MS British Library, Royal 12 D.xvii, the mid tenth-century manuscript containing the texts known as Bald's *Leechbook* (in two books) and *Leechbook III*.

The medical texts themselves provide no evidence for which plant(s) *ælfþone* denoted, and without glosses to assist us, we must look to comparative linguistic evidence. *Ælfþone* seems to have been an old name: its second element is unique in Old English, but cognate with Old High German *thona*, 'vine, creeper' (*Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch*; Hoops 1889: 49; Thun 1969: 391–2), suggesting that *ælfþone* is archaic, and originally denoted some kind of vine. The first element, *ælf* (plural *ælfe*), is the etymon of Modern English *elf*, and like it, denoted supernatural beings (Hall 2007a; Shippey 2005; Gunnell 2007). Thun, developing the conclusions of Hoops (1889), observed that Continental West Germanic plant-names in cognates of *ælf-* most consistently denote woody nightshade, which fits with the meaning of *þone* (Thun 1969: 391–2). Bierbaumer reached the same conclusion (1975–79: I.9–10). This reasoning is complicated by Middle English evidence: the forms *elfrone* and *elfyone* were identified by Hunt in fifteenth-century plant-name *synonyma* as counterparts to *personacia*, which was apparently applied to 'large-leaved plants incl[uding] burdock, beet, water-lily, darnel' (Hunt 1989: 202). *Elfyone*, at least, seems certainly to be a (scribally corrupted) reflex of *ælfþone*, denoting something quite unlike woody nightshade.

Another relevant Middle English plant-name is *elf-thung*, compared with *ælfþone* by both the MED (under *elf-thung*) and the DOE (under *ælf-þone*). In this reading, presumably, *ælfþone*'s archaic and opaque second element came to be replaced with a productive generic meaning 'poisonous plant'. Moreover, both attestations associate *elf-thung* with *elleborus*. The earlier and most pertinent is an annotation made by the renowned 'Tremulous Worcester Scribe' to the eleventh-century copy of the Old English *Herbarium* in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 76 around the first half of the thirteenth century (see Franzen 1991: 66–9). The annotation, on folio 112r, appears to add *elueþunge tunsingwurt* (Crawford 1928: 21) as the title for the Old English entry 'This plant, which is called *elleborus albus*, and by another name *tunsingwyrt*, and [which] some people also call *wedeberge* grows on mountains, and it has leaves like an allium' (*Ðeos wyrt þe man elleborum album ⁊ oðrum naman tunsincgwyrt nemneð ⁊ eac sume men wedeberge hatað byð cenned on dunum, ⁊ heo hafað leaf leace gelice*;

of the Older Scottish Tongue (DOST), under *Walworte*; and compare the DOE, under *ellen-wyrt*.

De Vriend 1984: 180; see further Hall, in this volume).[11] However, despite the overlap of form between these Middle English words and *ælfþone*, rather little can be made of this later evidence. While there is no reason to doubt that *ælfþone*'s Middle English reflex *elf-thone* could denote plants entirely unlike woody nightshade, it is also clear that these plants do not fit with the etymological meaning of *-þone*. The denotation of *ælfþone* must have shifted from 'vine' to other kinds of plants during the medieval English period, and we cannot be sure when. The denotation of *elf-thung*, likewise, could be distant from *ælfþone*'s early meanings — a conclusion encouraged by the differing interpretations of *elleborus* attested in later Old English (see Hall, in this volume). Here, I develop the hypothesis that in our Old English medical texts, the meaning of *ælfþone* was conservative — and that, although we cannot be certain, it denoted woody nightshade.

Ælfþone appears as an ingredient in a bath in Section 47 of *Leechbook III*, as part of a long series of remedies *Wiþ lyftadle*, which appears to mean 'against paralysis' (Bosworth 1898, under *lyft-ádl*). However, our understanding of the connotations of *lyftadl* is poor — as perhaps were Anglo-Saxon understandings of the conditions which *lyftadl* denoted (compare Cameron 1993: 14, 95) — and the remedy exhibits too many components for much to be made of it. More revealingly, *ælfþone* is also prescribed in two baths (which may be distant textual relatives of one another) for the condition of *micel lic*. One occurs in Bald's *Leechbook* II, Section 32: 'Bath against the *micel lic*: elecampane, broom, ivy, mugwort, *ælfþone*, henbane, mallow, *efenlaste*; boil well in water, pour into a tub and sit in it' (*Bæþ wiþ þam miclan lice eolone brom . ifig . mucwyrt ælfþone . beolone . cottuc . efelastan wyl on wætere swiþe geot on bydene ⁊ sitte on*; Wright 1955: folio 29v). The other appears in *Leechbook III*, Section 26, a section devoted to remedies for *micel lic*. Erroneously giving *bið* for *bæð*, the remedy in question says 'Make a bath against the *micel lic*: elecampane, *ælfþone*, ?horehound, centaury, elder-twigs and oak-twigs; boil well in water and bathe the body in it, very hot' (*Wyrc bið wiþ þam miclan lice . elene . ælfþone . marubie . curmealle . ellentanas . ⁊ actanas wyl swiðe on wætre ⁊ beþe on swiðe hatum þæt lic*; Wright 1955: folio 116v). What *micel lic* could denote is unfortunately unclear. Literally, the term means 'large body', which might most obviously reflect large-scale inflammation; this reasoning, and a scatter of more specific evidence in our medical texts, suggests the identification of the ailment with elephantiasis, and, since elephantiasis was connected lexically and conceptually with leprosy in much medieval thought, perhaps also more generally with leprosy and ailments with similar symptoms such as psoriasis or scabies (Hille 1969; and compare Liberman 2002; Lee 2006: 69–70, 72–5). It may be significant in this connection, then, that there are some hints that Anglo-Saxon elves were thought to cause cutaneous ailments, which might fit with the possible wider associations of *micel lic* (Hall 2007a: 106–9).

In addition to the evidence adduced by Hille, it is perhaps also worth noting that *micel lic* is mentioned in the contents list of Bald's *Leechbook* II, in the entry for Section 61, whose corresponding main text is now lost: 'Remedy against jaundice and *micel lic*, and two wound-drinks, and the second will serve against a lung-wound also' (*Læcedom wiþ þære geolwanadle ⁊ wið þæm miclan lice . ⁊ dolhdrencas twegen ⁊ oþer mæg wiþ lungenwunde eac*; folio 64r). Here it appears that *micel lic* and *geolu adl*, which is assumed to be jaundice, are treated with the same remedy, suggesting some similarity — one paralleled, and perhaps inspired,

[11] De Vriend read not *elueþunge*, but *clucþunge*; I have not been able to consult the manuscript. *Clucþunge* is not a word, however, and though it could be an error for *clufþunge*, *elueþunge* seems likelier to underlie the readings of Crawford (1928) and De Vriend (1984).

by Isidore of Seville's juxtaposition of elephantiasis, leprosy and jaundice in his *Etymologiae* (Isidore of Seville 1911: I; Bk IV.viii.10–13). Although not much can be made of it, this may be significant because a detailed description of symptoms in the *Leechbook III* remedy 'If someone has an elf-*sogoða*' (*Gif him bið ælfsogoða*), where *sogoða* apparently denotes some sort of internal pain, seems clearly to describe jaundice, thus linking jaundice with elves (Wright 1955: folio 124v; Hall 2007a: 105–6; compare McGowan 2009, 118).

One possible conclusion from this consideration of *micel lic*, then, is that the use of *ælfþone* in remedies for *micel lic* may reflect the use of a plant with *ælf* in the name to heal illnesses which might be caused by elves. More certainly, however, components of woody nightshade have been shown to be effective as cyclo-oxygenase inhibitors, making them to at least some extent effective in limiting inflammation (Tunón, Olavsdotter and Bohlin 1995; Jäggi et al. 2004; and compare Birnesser, Klein and Weiser 2003). Conceivably, of course, they would have been more effective in combination with the other ingredients listed in the remedies (one might note in passing that all the Old English remedies mentioning *ælfþone* also contain *elene* 'elecampane' (*Inula helenium* L.)). Meanwhile, woody nightshade has clinically demonstrated potential to alleviate eczema and neurodermatitis (Niedner 1996), both of which might have been relevant to the cutaneous ailments with which *micel lic* is associated. The range of problems for using this kind of data in assessing the clinical effectiveness of Anglo-Saxon medicine is substantial. But the theoretical possibility that *ælfþone* might have contributed to reducing the symptoms of *micel lic* is clear.

Ælfþone also appears in another two remedies, which seem likely to be distant textual relatives, and which are also similar to a third remedy in *Leechbook III* to be considered shortly. The first appears in *Leechbook* II, Section 53: 'As a *leoht drenc*: *ælfþone*, ?cockle, betony, the cloved lesser celandine, ?carline thistle, *heahhioloþe*, ?lupin, two slices of elecampane, ?burdock, plantain, ?radish, ?wild garlic; to wet them let half be holy water, half clear ale' (*To leohtum drence ælfþonan gyþrifan . betonican þa clufyhtan wenwyrt . eoforþrotan . heahhioloþan . ealehtran eolonan twa snæda . clatan . wegbrædan . ontre . cropleac to wætan healf halig wæter . healf sie hluttor eala*; Wright 1955: folio 102v). The second is in *Leechbook III*, Section 68, identified in the contents list as 'A *leoht drenc* against a *wedenheort*' (*Wiþ wedenheorte leoht drenc*; Wright 1955: folio 111r), and running as follows (Wright 1955: folios 126v–127r):

> *Leoht drenc wiþ wedenheorte elehtre . bisceopwyrt ælfþone . elene . cropleac . hind hioloþe . ontre . clate . nim þas wyrta þonne dæg ⁊ niht scade . sing ærest on ciricean letania . ⁊ credan . ⁊ pater noster . gang mid þy sange to þam wyrtum ymbga hie þriwa ær þu hie nime . ⁊ ga eft to ciricean gesing . xii . mæssan ofer þam wyrtum þonne þu hie ofgoten hæbbe,*
>
> a *leoht drenc* against a *wedenheort*: ?lupin, betony, *ælfþone*, elecampane, ?wild garlic, *hind hioloþe*, ?radish, ?goose-grass. Take these plants when day and night separate; sing first over them the litany, creed and *pater noster* in a church; walk along with that song to those plants; walk round them three times before you take them; and walk back to the church; sing 12 masses over those plants when you have soaked them.

Counting *heahhioloþan* in the former text as a mere variant of *hind hioloþe* in the latter, all but one of the eight plant-names listed in the latter citation are included in the former; the remaining plant-name in the latter is *bisceopwyrt*, which seems to be a synonym of *betonice* in the former (both denoting betony, *Stachys officinalis* (L.) Trevis.; see DOE). A common origin for these remedies, then, seems likely.

The *Leechbook III* version of the remedy is designated as *Wiþ wedenheorte*. The meaning

of *wedenheort* is elucidated by its better attested derivative *wedenheortness*, defined by Bosworth and Toller as 'Madness, frenzy, fury' (Bosworth 1898, including the 1921 supplement by Toller; compare *wéden(d)-seóc*). More telling again, however, is another remedy *Wiþ wedenheorte*, in Bald's *Leechbook* I, Section 63, which must be another textual relation of *Wiþ wedenheorte leoht drenc* just quoted from *Leechbook III*: 'Against a *wedenheort*: betony, ?lupin, ?centaury, *eoforfearn*, ?cockle, *heah hioloþe* when day and night separate; then sing litanies in a church — that is the names of the saints and the *pater noster*' (*Wiþ wedenheorte bisceopwyrt . elehtre . banwyrt . eoforfearn . giþrife . heahhioloþe þonne dæg scade ⁊ niht þonne sing þu on ciricean letanias þæt is þara haligra naman ⁊* pater noster; Wright 1955: folio 52r). Here the remedy occurs as one of a group 'For a fiend-sick person: when the/a devil nourishes a man or controls him from within with illness' (*Wiþ feondseocum men . þonne deofol þone monnan fede oððe hine innan gewealde mid adle*; Wright 1955: folio 51v). In Bald's *Leechbook*, then, the person with a *wedenheort* is identified with the diabolically possessed. Although Anglo-Saxon elves are never associated with the term *wedenheort*, their capacity to inflict madness or similar symptoms is well attested (Hall 2007a: 119–56). It is also noteworthy, of course, that this symptom is linked lexically with *wedeberge*. If *wedeberge* is a synonym of *ælfþone*, it seems appropriate that it was linked with a state with whose treatment *ælfþone* is later associated.

Literally, *leoht drenc* could either mean one which is not heavy, or one which is bright or perhaps clear; but the term might connote something more specific. As Carole Biggam has pointed out to me, an originally substantive usage of the plural adjective *leohte* 'not heavy' had given rise by the early Middle English period to a noun meaning 'lung(s)' (OED under *lights*; MED under *lightes*). While it seems clear that *leoht* in the phrase *leoht drenc* is functioning as an adjective, it might nonetheless have a sense here like 'lung-related'. Unfortunately, it is hard to be sure. The entry in *Leechbook II*'s contents list for the section containing this *leoht drenc* reads 'Remedies and *leohte drencas* for the health/healing of people and ?vomit-prevention drinks against unwell insides, eight prescriptions' (*Læcedomas ⁊ leohte drencas mannum to hælo ⁊ unspiule drenceas wiþ untrumum innoþum eahta cræftas*; folio 63r). Of these eight remedies, four are specifically *leohte drencas*, and some sort of association with remedying digestive troubles seems clear, though it may not have been exclusive. The collocation *leoht drenc* occurs elsewhere in *Leechbook II*, but at no point is it much elucidated.

Notwithstanding their obscurity, however, these texts connect with a further remedy mentioning *ælfþone*. This occurs in Section 64 of *Leechbook III*, a few sections earlier than the *Leoht drenc wiþ weden heorte*. It runs 'A sweet/mild drink against the/a devil and for someone out of their mind: put *cassuc*, lupin, carrot, fennel, ?radish, betony, *hind heoloþe*, wild celery, rue, wormwood, cat's mint, elecampane, *ælfþone*, wild teasel in ale; sing 12 masses over that drink and drink it. He will soon be well' (*Wiþ deofle liþe drenc 7 ungemynde do on ealu cassuc . elehtran moran . finul ontre . betonice . hind heoloþe . merce rude . wermod . nefte . elene . ælfþone . wulfes comb . gesing . xii . mæssan ofer þam drence 7 drince him biþ sona sel*; Wright 1955: folio 125v). *Liðe* seems not to have any specific connotations in a medical context, but this may simply reflect our lack of evidence; if we are to take it as a (partial) synonym of *leoht drenc*, it would support a meaning of 'light, mild drink' for both terms. Either way, we once more find *ælfþone* used against the devil; the liturgical content of the remedy is reminiscent of *Wiþ wedenheorte leoht drenc*; and besides *ælfþone*, it shares *ontre*, *betonice(~bisceopwyrt)*, *hind(~heah) heoloþe* and *elene* with the two *leohte drencas*.

Ælfþone, then, is closely associated with remedying a *wedenheort*. It seems likely, once

more, that administered in correct doses, woody nightshade could have been clinically effective in this. Precisely what clinical symptoms *wedenheortness* might be associated with is not clear. Dendle has argued that epilepsy may be at least one of the conditions denoted by the term, positing that the *elehtre* ('lupin', *Lupinus albus* L.) prescribed in some of the relevant remedies could have helped this condition, particularly by rectifying manganese deficiencies (2001). Fever is another possible denotation, which could certainly be ascribed to elves by Anglo-Saxons (Hall 2007a: 121–9), and for which woody nightshade has been prescribed in Western traditional medicine (for example, Tunón, Olavsdotter and Bohlin 1995: 67). The known anti-inflammatory properties of woody nightshade encourage the inference that it should have been effective against fever to some degree. Whatever the case, some sort of agitation seems a likely symptom of a *wedenheort*, so although they have not to my knowledge been subjected to recent clinical tests, the mild narcotic properties which are widely attested for woody nightshade in modern herbals (for example, Millspaugh 1892: 484; Weiss and Fintelmann 2000: 249; Allen and Hatfield 2004: 198–9) may have been of use.

The remedies in *Leechbook III* just quoted, *Wiþ deofle liþe drenc* in Section 64 and *Leoht drenc wiþ weden heorte* in Section 68, form part of a larger sequence against what Jolly called 'mind-altering afflictions', running from Sections 54 to 68 (folios 122v–127r; Jolly 1996: 133; compare Hall 2007a: 119–30; Pell 2011). In this sequence too comes the last and most prominent of our remedies attesting to *ælfþone*. *Leechbook III*, Section 62 (Wright 1955: folios 123v–124r) runs:

> *Vvið ælfadle nim bisceopwyrt . finul . elehtre . ælfþonan nioþowearde. ⁊ gehalgodes cristes mæles ragu . ⁊ stor do ælcre handfulle . bebind ealle þa wyrta on claþe bedyp on fontwætre gehalgodum þriwa . Eft wiþ þon, lege under weofod þas wyrte læt gesingan ofer . viiii . mæssan . recels . halig sealt . iii . heafod cropleaces ælfþonan nioþewearde . elenan . nim on morgen scenc fulne meoluce dryp þriwa haliges wæteres on supe swa he hatost mæge . ete mid . iii . snæda ælfþonan ⁊ þonne he restan wille hæbbe gleda þær inne lege stor ⁊ ælfþonan on þa gleda . ⁊ rec hine mid þæt he swæte ⁊ þæt hus geond rec ⁊ georne þone man gesena . ⁊ þonne he on reste gange ete . iii . snæda eolenan . ⁊ . iii . cropleaces . ⁊ . iii . sealtes . ⁊ hæbbe him scenc fulne ealað ⁊ drype þriwa halig wæter on . besupe ælce snæd . gereste hine siþþan . do þis . viiii . morgenas . ⁊ viii . niht him biþ sona sel.*
>
> Against *ælfadl* take betony, fennel, ?lupin, *ælfþone* from low down, and lichen from the blessed sign of Christ; and add a handful of each incense. Bind all these plants in a cloth; dip it in font-water which has been blessed three times. Also against that, lay these plants under an altar and have 9 masses sung over them: incense, holy salt, 3 heads of ?wild garlic, *ælfþone* from low down, *elecampane*; take in the morning a cupful of milk; add three drops of holy water; [let him] sip it as hot as he can manage; eat with it 3 pieces/slices of *ælfþone*. And when he desires to rest, place hot embers in there; place incense and *ælfþone* on the embers, and fumigate him with it so that he sweats, and fumigate throughout the house, and make the sign of the cross over that person thoroughly. And when he goes to rest, eat 3 slices of *elecampane* and 3 of ?wild garlic and 3 of salt, and have for him a cup full of ale, and put three drops of holy water in it. Swallow each slice; let him rest afterwards. Do this for 9 mornings and 8 nights. He will soon be well.

Ælfadl seems likely to be a general term denoting any ailment caused by *ælfe* (Hall 2007a: 105), so it is hard to make judgements as to *ælfþone*'s clinical effectiveness here. This remedy apparently deploys it as a topical application, as a drink, to be eaten and to be burnt. All four methods could in theory harness various of the plant's chemical properties.

It seems clear that *ælfþone* in our texts tends to be prescribed for ailments which could be ascribed to elves, so the linguistic connection between *ælfþone* and elves more generally is

likely to be relevant here, as McGowan has recently emphasised (2009: 118). But precisely *how* is uncertain. Was *ælfþone* named because of its efficaciousness in healing ailments attributed to elves? Or was it used to heal them because of its name, on a principle of curing like with like? Or both? Either way, it seems likely that it had chemical properties which should have been clinically effective to at least some degree in treating the symptoms for which it was prescribed, while, as Pell has implied, the naming may also have facilitated placebo effects (2011).

6. Discussion: Aldhelm, elves and *elleborus*

Taken together, the evidence discussed above comprises a detailed dossier on woody nightshade in Anglo-Saxon culture from around 700 to 900 — more detailed than we have for most plant names, which serves to emphasise the usefulness of following all the leads established by vernacular glosses on a single Latin lemma. Aldhelm leaves us in no doubt that woody nightshade could cause symptoms which he called *dementia cordis* and which we might broadly term 'mind-altering', and this is broadly consistent with modern clinical observations concerning woody nightshade poisoning. It might be that Aldhelm observed the effects of woody nightshade in connection with accidental poisonings — most likely, if modern cases are anything to go by, of children eating the berries. However, for the riddle to be meaningful, Aldhelm must have expected his audience to recognise the symptoms which he described. So either accidental poisonings were sufficiently common in early Anglo-Saxon England for a general awareness of the symptoms to be maintained, or knowledge of the effects of woody nightshade was reasonably widespread because they had some other cultural importance, presumably related to deliberate consumption (or both).

It is noteworthy, in this connection, that Aldhelm ascribes *dementia cordis* to his *elleborus*, since some of the medical texts which I have discussed focus on curing people with a *wedenheort*, literally 'frenzied mind', apparently linked in our tenth-century manuscript with demonic possession. No Latin source is presented for *dementia cordis* in the *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* database, so one suspects that Aldhelm's Latin phrase here reflects or even alludes to the vernacular Old English term *wedenheort*. This link is consolidated by the early rendering of *elleborus* as *wedeberge*, which again links the Latin plant-name with a derivative of the word *wod*. Aldhelm may or may not have seen this gloss, but he certainly studied in the same school that produced it, at roughly the same time. These resonances between Aldhelm's poem and vernacular terminology consolidate the likelihood that Aldhelm's poem reflects traditional knowledge concerning woody nightshade. The detail may also be significant in that the word *wod* and its derivatives, though usually attested in Old English to denote undesirable states of mind, seem to have had a positive dimension at some point in the development of Anglo-Saxon traditions: the name of the god Woden derives from *wod*, and it seems unlikely, *a priori*, that the name of the god held no positive connotations. Moreover, *wod*'s cognates include the Latin *vates* 'prophet' and Old Irish *fáith* 'poet' (OED, under *wood*, sense a.). One wonders, then, whether having a *wedenheort* (or *dementia cordis*) was invariably viewed as a bad thing, as the medical texts imply.

The association between woody nightshade, *dementia cordis*, and *wedenheortnes* also deserves to be considered in conjunction with the fact that what seems to have been the common Old English word for woody nightshade, *ælfþone*, contains the word *ælf* 'elf'. That madness and other symptoms associated with mental disorders might be ascribed to

elves in Anglo-Saxon belief is clear, as I have mentioned above. *Ælfþone* might, then, have originally meant something along the lines of 'vine which causes the symptoms which elves cause'. Picking up on the duality of the meanings of *wod*, this reading could be extended to incorporate the possibility that these effects were not necessarily bad: as Aldhelm's familiarity with the symptoms of woody nightshade poisoning might imply, early Anglo-Saxons might deliberately have used woody nightshade to produce mind-altering effects. Such a duality would also be paralleled by the cultural construction of nympholepsy (seizure/possession by nymphs) and epilepsy (seizure) in the Classical Hellenic world, and of possession in some more recent cultures, in which possession can have both positive and negative connotations according to context, or indeed concurrently (Temkin 1971: 3–27; Connor 1988: especially 156–8, 165, 174–9).

The main Old English evidence for a positive side to elves' influence is a single word, *ylfig*, attested only in eleventh-century manuscripts. Four of the five occurrences are textually related glosses on the word *comitiales* 'epileptics' in Chapter 52 of Aldhelm's *Prosa de virginitate*, composed sometime before Aldhelm's death in 709 (Oliphant 1966: 85, C1211; Aldhelm 2001: II.696–7); a further one is added by the compiler of the Harley Glossary (MS British Library, Harley 3376 and its *disiecta membra* (scattered parts) MS Lawrence, University of Kansas, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, Pryce P2 A: 1 and MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. a. 3., folio 49), who not only included the Aldhelm gloss but also the entry *Fanaticus .i. minister templi* (*Fanaticus* i.e. the priest of a temple), above which he wrote *fut*ur*a p*rae*cinens ł ylfig*, 'one foretelling things to come, or *ylfig*' (Oliphant 1966: 178, F151; collated with MS folio 76r). Determining the provenance and implications of this material is tricky to say the least, but I have argued, I think reasonably securely, that *ylfig* was a member of the common Old English lexicon, coined centuries before its first attestation, meaning 'speaking prophetically (through the influence of elves)' (Hall 2006: 234–43). This being so, the *ælf* in *ælfþone* might refer to an association of the plant not (only) with illness, but with causing prophetic states of mind of the sort which were associated with elves.

A key question, of course, is how suitable woody nightshade actually is for producing altered states of mind which might promote 'prophetic' speech reasonably reliably and safely. The general possibility that it might be suitable is clear, but unfortunately we have no firm evidence either way. Hopefully future scientific research will elucidate the problem. But for now there appears to be a reasonable case that Aldhelm's description of woody nightshade poisoning relates to an association of the plant with elves in Old English, of elves with causing altered states of mind, and perhaps moreover with a custom in early Anglo-Saxon society of deliberately using the plant to achieve altered mental states. There has been some enthusiastic hunting for evidence of the use of narcotics and intoxicants other than alcohol in early medieval Europe (see, for example, Price 2002: 205–6); the evidence presented here, fragile though it is, is to my knowledge the strongest so far adduced for these in Anglo-Saxon culture.

This line of argument is at odds with the evidence of the Old English medical texts for a diametrically opposed use of woody nightshade. I have shown how in the Old English medical texts — principally *Leechbook III* — *ælfþone* is strongly associated with *healing* ailments potentially caused by elves, including altered states of mind. Most strikingly, one of the conditions for which *ælfþone* is used is a *wedenheort*, the cause of which Aldhelm arguably considered characteristic of woody nightshade. One response to this problem would be to argue for change over time: a plant whose name originally meant 'vine which causes

states like those caused by elves' came to be interpreted as 'vine (or, since in Old English the meaning of the word became opaque, *þone*) which acts against elves'. However, the paradox cannot easily be resolved in terms of diachronic variation, because it is apparent in Aldhelm's poem itself. Aldhelm describes *elleborus* as causing *dementia cordis*, even though he had surely read Isidore's claim that *elleborus* cures insanity, and was arguably in touch with Dioscorides's claims that *helleboros melas* cured it. It may be, then, that Aldhelm saw in woody nightshade a power both to cause and to cure madness, presumably depending on the circumstances and way in which the plant was used. This, in turn, is consistent with the known properties of woody nightshade. At the same time, paradoxical attitudes to and uses of plants should not surprise us; Meaney notes ambivalent attitudes to elder below (this volume, Section 8.1). A comparable paradox is apparent in current British cultural attitudes to alcohol: the physiological and clinically measurable effects of ingesting large quantities of alcohol prominently include slower reaction times and reduced co-ordination, muscle control, cognitive abilities, short-term memory, and perceptual field. Yet extreme drunkenness is currently culturally associated with — and therefore to some extent produces — the in some respects startlingly different outcomes of disinhibition, sexual promiscuity, and even violence (Fox 2008).

We should, then, envisage synchronic variation in the uses of woody nightshade, and possibly in the interpretation of its name, probably throughout the period covered by our texts. Whether this variation indeed reflected the different clinical effects which could be derived from the plant in different conditions — different parts of the plant, different stages of growth, different combinations with other plants, and so forth — or rather different cultural significances in different contexts is probably impossible to judge. But the evidence certainly provides striking new insights into the uses (and abuses) and wider cultural associations which plants might have in early Anglo-Saxon England.

Appendix A

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Glossary: Erfurt	ErfGl (Pheifer) 388	*poedibergae*
2	Glossary: Corpus 2	CorpGl 2 (Hessels) 5.120	*woedeberge*
3	Glossary: Corpus 2	CorpGl 2 (Hessels) 8.86	*woidiberge*
4	Glossary: Cleopatra 1	ClGl 1 (Stryker) 2019	*wedeberge*
5	Glossary: Cleopatra 1	ClGl 1 (Stryker) 2237	*wedeberge*
6	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 148	*vedeberige*
7	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 777	*yediberge*
8	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 140.0	*wedeberge*

Appendix A1: *Wedeberge* catalogue

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
1	2, 3, 4, ?5, 6, 7, ?8	Gloss on *elleborus*

Appendix A2: Related citations

Source	*Date*	*Location*
Glossary: Erfurt	c. 675 × 700	Canterbury
Glossary: Corpus 2	s. viii/ix	Canterbury
Glossary: Cleopatra 1	930s	Canterbury
Glossary: Durham	s. xii	Durham
Glossary: Laud	MS s. xii	Canterbury
Herbarium	?c. 900 (MSS later)	unknown

Appendix A3: Dates and locations

Appendix B

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Glossary: Cleopatra 1	ClGl 1 (Stryker) 2237	*ceasteræsc*
2	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 30.1.1	*ceasteræsces*
3	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 73.1	*ceasteræsc*
4	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 74.1	*ceasteraxsan*
5	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 77.1	*ceasteræsc*
6	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 143.1	*ceasteræsc*

Appendix B1: *Ceasteræsc* catalogue

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
2	4	Gloss on *elleborus*

Appendix B2: Related citations

Source	*Date*	*Location*
Glossary: Cleopatra 1	930s	Canterbury
Leechbook III	MS c.950	?Winchester
Lacnunga	MS c.1000 × 1010	Abingdon

Appendix B3: Dates and locations

Appendix C

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 39.5.4	*ceasterwyrte*

Appendix C1: *Ceasterwyrt* catalogue

Source	*Date*	*Location*
Bald: Leechbook	Mostly compiled c.900	?Winchester

Appendix C3: Dates and locations

Appendix D

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 32.4.7	*ælfþone*
2	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 26.1.3	*ælfþone*
3	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (2) 53.1.1	*ælfþonan*
4	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 47.1.5	*ælfþone*
5	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 68.1.1	*ælfþone*
6	Charm 19 [Leechbook III]	Charm 19 (Storms) 1	*ælfþonan*
7	Charm 19 [Leechbook III]	Charm 19 (Storms) 36	*ælfþonan*
8	Charm 19 [Leechbook III]	Charm 19 (Storms) 40	*ælfþonan*
9	Charm 19 [Leechbook III]	Charm 19 (Storms) 41	*ælfþonan*
10	Charm 21 [Leechbook III]	Charm 21 (Storms) 1	*ælfþone*

Appendix D1: *Ælfþone* catalogue

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
1	?2	Ingredient in a bath *wiþ þam miclan lice*
3	?5, ??10	Drinks against diabolical possession

Appendix D2: Related citations

Source	*Date*	*Location*
Bald: Leechbook	Mostly compiled c.900	?Winchester
Leechbook III	MS c.950	?Winchester

Appendix D3: Dates and locations

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Elleborus in Anglo-Saxon England, 900–1100: *Tunsingwyrt* and *Wodewistle*

Alaric Hall

1. Introduction

This article picks up from the one above, to consider our evidence for the meanings of the Anglo-Latin plant-name *elleborus* and its vernacular equivalents from around 900 to the end of the period covered by the Anglo-Saxon Plant-Name Survey (ASPNS), around the end of the eleventh century. In doing so, it completes the methodological experiment outlined in the companion piece of examining Old English plant-names by investigating the full range of vernacular glosses and translations associated with a particular Latin lemma, in this case *elleborus*. One result of this is that I provide the full ASPNS examination owing to the interesting and challenging Old English word *tunsingwyrt*, which this investigation identifies as a key term, as well as the rarer *wodewistle* and *wudeleac*. I offer the novel argument that *Tunsingwyrt*, far from denoting *Veratrum album* L. as has previously been thought, in fact denotes wild garlic. The later material considered here proves to be more heterogeneous than the early evidence addressed in the companion piece, giving a useful perspective on the semantic range of *elleborus*, but a less clear picture of plant-use in Anglo-Saxon culture. While continuing to show the usefulness of the method developed in my first article, then, this second study also explores its limits in the face of less focused data. Nonetheless, a range of useful insights emerge from taking this approach, to which I would not otherwise have been inspired. I make a new contribution to the textual history of the Old English *Herbarium*, finding evidence that our manuscripts imply a lost text closer to the Latin original of the *Herbarium* than any surviving text (Section 2, summarised in Table 1). I investigate carefully whether the glosses studied here were coined as gloss-words or whether they were members of the common lexicon — a difficult problem, which has not been addressed thoroughly enough in our studies of Old English vocabulary. In passing, the article also makes a contribution to Old English dialectology by suggesting that there is a complementary dialectal distribution of *leactun* (Anglian) and *wyrttun* (West Saxon), both meaning 'vegetable/herb garden' (Section 5, n. 12). Finally, as I discuss below, we can see the division in Anglo-Saxon approaches to the word *elleborus* as reflecting a shift in Anglo-Saxon scholarly practice and tradition somewhere around 900.

The division of my contributions on the subject of *elleborus* into two articles covering two periods reflects the fact that there seems to be almost no overlap between the early understandings of *elleborus*, attested mainly in material associated with Canterbury, and the understandings evidenced by texts composed later, and associated with the Anglo-Saxon monasticism of the later tenth and earlier eleventh centuries. This does not reflect an absolute hiatus in scribal and scholarly traditions: there are late manuscripts of the glosses discussed in my first article which bear witness to continuous copying of earlier material. However, an Old English translation, now known as the Old English *Herbarium*, was made, probably in the tenth century, of several Latin herbal texts. The Old English *Herbarium* seems to have drawn little on previous Anglo-Saxon plant-name scholarship, suggesting that whoever was behind it was, through necessity or design, making a clean break from earlier scholarly traditions. This came to be widely copied, and influential in later Anglo-Saxon medical writing. Thus my assessments of the understanding of *elleborus* in the later Anglo-Saxon period affords a contribution to our wider narrative of transition in Anglo-Saxon scholarly traditions around the ninth century. It is of course beyond my present scope to discuss in detail the dramatic, if gradual, changes in Anglo-Saxon scholarly life between the early heyday of Anglo-Saxon Christianity and the later tenth century, and whether these changes should be associated more with Vikings, changing patterns of aristocratic patronage, or the internal dynamics of the Anglo-Saxon Church (see generally Blair 2005: 121–34; 291–367). But the history even of so small a point as the vernacular glossing of a Latin plant-name does have a contribution to make to these wider narratives.

The shift in scholarly practice regarding *elleborus* from Aldhelm's time to the later Anglo-Saxon period is exemplified by Ælfric of Eynsham. Writing three centuries after Aldhelm's composition of the riddle *Elleborus*, Ælfric seems to have been the next Anglo-Saxon author to use the word *elleborus*, in the Old English account of the life of St Martin in his *Lives of Saints*, composed between 995 and 1002 (the attestation is omitted from the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS), under *helleborus*, perhaps because of the vernacular context). Early in his career, driven from his monastery by Arian heretics, Martin withdraws to the island of Gallinaria which lies off the Italian coast in the Ligurian Sea where, according to Ælfric's source, Chapter 6 of the *Vita sancti Martini* by Sulpicius Severus: 'he subsisted for a while on the roots of herbs; at which time he consumed in his food *helleborus*, which is, it is said, a poisonous grass' (*aliquamdiu radicibus vixit herbarum: quo tempore helleborum, uenenatum, ut ferunt, gramen, in cibum sumpsit*; Severus 1967–9: I.266). Fortunately, Martin is able to avert his death by prayer. In lines 196–200 of Ælfric's rendering (Ælfric of Eynsham 1881–1900: IV.232), this event appears as

> *Martinu*us *þa on þære tide on his mete þigde*
> *þa ættrian wyrt . þe elleboru*m *hatte .*
> *and þ*æt *attor sona hine swiðe þreade*
> *fornean to deaðe . ac he feng to his ge-bedum .*
> *and eall seo sarnys him sona fra*m *ge-wát .*
>
> Martin at that time consumed in his food
> the poisonous plant which is called *elleborum,*
> and that poison immediately afflicted him greatly,
> almost to death. But he turned to his prayers,
> and all the illness immediately left him.

The main point of interest for us here is that Ælfric considered it appropriate to leave *elleborum* in its Latin form, glossing it merely as an *ættrig wyrt* ('poisonous plant'): whereas we can infer

behind Aldhelm's use of *elleborus* a vigorous and assertive equation of this Mediterranean plant with Anglo-Saxon flora, Ælfric pointedly implies that *elleborus* is a foreign plant denoted by a foreign word.

Beyond 'the observation that the inclusion of Latin is a characteristic feature of Ælfric's later writings, a sign of a more educated target audience' (Brookes 2011: 17), there has been surprisingly little work on Ælfric's code-switching. Brookes has shown that Ælfric made careful and extensive use of antiphonal quotations in order to show his audience how his homilies and to a lesser extent his saints' lives elucidated the Latin liturgy, but, as Brookes has emphasised, this still does not explain other examples of code-switching, as here (and as it happens, Ælfric's *Life of St Martin* rather surprisingly lacks any liturgical quotation). Ælfric may not have kept *elleborus* in Latin simply for want of a translation: although his surviving works (most obviously the list of *nomina herbarum* in his class-glossary: Ælfric of Eynsham 1880: 310–11) contain no other references to *elleborus*, he surely had access to information or earlier vernacular glosses on the word. Indeed, earlier in Ælfric's *Life* of Martin (Ælfric of Eynsham 1881–1900: IV.228, lines 140–2), Bishop Hilarion

> *bead hi*m *þæt he wære*
> *gehadod to exorcista . þæt we hatað halsigend*
> *þe ðe bebyt deofl*um *. þæt hi of gedrehtum mannu*m *faran.*
> ordered him to be
> consecrated as an *exorcista* — which we call a *halsigend* (healer),
> one who commands devils that they should depart from afflicted people.

Here Ælfric was evidently not without a vernacular synonym for *exorcista*, since he glosses it, but he still chose to maintain the Latin word. Presumably he chose to keep *exorcista* in Latin as a technical, ecclesiastical term. Although in the present state of knowledge it is hard to be sure, it seems likely that *elleborus* for Ælfric, too, was a foreign word for a foreign denotee, and that his refusal to translate it indicates both his belief that it was not to be found in Britain, and his dissatisfaction with any existing glosses available to him. Though the tenth-century Benedictine reform movement in Anglo-Saxon England was immensely keen on Aldhelm's poetry, Ælfric seems to be marking a break here from earlier Anglo-Saxon scholarship. This article argues that the tenth-century handlings of *elleborus* generally represent a different culture of translation and representation of Mediterranean scientific culture in Anglo-Saxon England from the culture we see in earlier evidence.

The evidence at the centre of this article derives from the Old English *Herbarium*, which was probably composed in the tenth century, and translated *elleborum album* as *tunsingwyrt*. The analysis gives some insights into the early history of this translation: some of the plant-names it contains have probably been added by later redactors. Previously identified as *Veratrum album* L., *tunsingwyrt* emerges as likely to have denoted an allium, perhaps wild garlic (*Allium ursinum* L.), and therefore to have been a (partial) synonym of a number of other Old English words. Although *tunsingwyrt*'s etymology remains intractable, it is possible to chart the likely channels of folk-etymologisation which produced its attested variant forms. However, the texts of the period also bring several other names into the orbit of *elleborus*. These — *lungwyrt*, *hramsa*, *wudeleac* and *wodewistle* — are considered more briefly. *Hramsa* and *wudeleac* support the interpretation of *elleborus albus* as wild garlic, but *wodewistle* suggests an alternative tradition in which it was interpreted as a hollow-stemmed umbellifer, probably hemlock (*Conium maculatum* L.).

2. The text of the Old English *Herbarium*

For *elleborus*, as for many other plant-names in the later Anglo-Saxon period, the principal source of information — for us and for Anglo-Saxon readers — is the text known now as the Old English *Herbarium*. This is a translation of a compilation of Latin texts, made either by the translator himself or by some earlier scholar (see Hofstetter 1983; De Vriend 1984: lv–lxi; compare Van Arsdall 2002: 68–118). The date and place of its composition are not clear. De Vriend's suggestion of eighth-century Northumbria (1984: xlii) lacks evidence, and if it is correct, then the text seems neither to have had any influence on medical writing in the ensuing century or two, nor to retain any dialectal or archaic linguistic features. Van Arsdall advocated a date shortly after the creation of our main vernacular medical texts, Bald's *Leechbook* and *Leechbook III*, probably compiled in the late ninth century and surviving in a mid tenth-century manuscript (Ker 1957: 332–3, no. 264; Van Arsdall 2002: 103–4. For references to more recent work on the leechbooks see Hall 2007: 96–7). D'Aronco, meanwhile, has suggested the late tenth century, shortly before our oldest manuscript (London, British Library, Harley 585), with one of the Benedictine monasteries of Winchester being the likeliest place (D'Aronco 2007: 46; compare Meaney, this volume, Section 12.2). The Old English *Herbarium* is important to this article partly because it provides, in its translation of the material on *elleborum album*, our most detailed description of *tunsingwyrt*. It is also a key text, however, because it represents the fount of a textual tradition which also formed the basis for entries in the Durham Plant-Name Glossary and the Laud Herbal Glossary (on whose relationships with the Old English *Herbarium* see Rusche 2008; compare Meaney, this volume, Section 12.2), and which seems to have been a largely *de novo* exercise in translation from Latin, uninfluenced by earlier English traditions. The textual history of this passage is rather complex, so the purpose of this section is to elucidate it to facilitate the use of the *Herbarium*'s evidence in the subsequent sections of this article.

The key attestation of *tunsingwyrt* occurs in the Old English translation of the *Liber medicinae ex herbis femininis* which comprises part of the Old English *Herbarium* — there being Chapter 140 (De Vriend 1984: 180, 182). The contents list entry reads *Herba elleborus albus þæt is tunsingwyrt* (De Vriend 1984: 23), while the main text gives

> *CXL. Tunsingwyrt*
>
> *1. Ðeos wyrt þe man elleborum album & oðrum naman tunsincgwyrt nemneð & eac sume men wedeberge hataþ byð cenned on dunum, & heo hafaþ leaf leace gelice; þysse wyrte wyrttruman man sceal niman onbutan midne sumur & eac swa some þa wyrt ealle for ðy heo is to læcedomum wel gecweme; þæt ís to lufigenne on ðysse wyrte þæt heo hafaþ gehwædne wyrttruman & na swa rihtne þæt he be sumum dæle gebyrged ne sy; he byþ breaþ & tidre þonne he gedriged byð, & þonne he tobrocen byþ (h)e rycþ eal swylce he smic of him asende, & he byð hwonlice bitterre on byrgincge; þon(ne) beoð þa maran wyrttruman lange & hearde & swyþe bittere on byrgincge, & hy habbaþ to ðam swyþlice mihte & frecenfulle þæt hy foroft hrædlice þone man forþilmiaþ.*
>
> 140. *Tunsingwyrt*.
>
> 1. This plant, which is called *elleborum album*, and by another name *tunsingcwyrt* (and also some people call it *wedeberge*) is grown on hills/mountains, and it has leaves like a leek/allium; one must take this plant's roots around midsummer, and also some of the whole plant, because it is well suited to remedies. One should note about this plant that it has a small root, and that it is not so straight [i.e. running parallel to the ground?] that it may not be buried to some extent; it is brittle and crumbly when it has been dried, and

> when it is crushed it smells just as though it sends smoke from itself, and it is somewhat bitter to the taste. Then the larger roots are long and hard and very bitter to the taste, and they have the great and dangerous power that they very often choke the person swiftly.

The Latin source for this entry is something of an oddity. The bulk of the *Liber medicinae ex herbis femininis* was composed in the Late Antique period (Collins 2000: 154). However, the entry for *elleborum album* does not occur in the main and longest version, but rather in a divergent tradition preserved, in its earliest manuscript, in the northern Italian manuscript Lucca, Biblioteca Statale (*olim* Biblioteca Governativa) 296, apparently of the tenth century (Collins 2000: 158). The Old English text is generally a close translation of its source, except in the opening sentence, which introduces the passage differently and differs slightly in its details from the opening in Lucca: 'And the white [hellebore] bears a similarity to the onion, having narrower leaves; it grows in mountainous places; its roots should be collected around the summer solstice' (*Albumque est in similitudinem caepae, folia angustiora habet; nascitur in montuosis locis; radices eius colligi debent circa aestiva solstitia*; De Vriend 1984: 181, 183).

The textual status of the vernacular equivalents of *elleborum album* attested in this text of the Old English *Herbarium*, *tunsingwyrt* and *wedeberge*, also have their complexities. *Tunsingwyrt* occurs in no earlier glosses, and indeed occurs in this precise form in no text predating the Old English *Herbarium*, so for these reasons alone is likely to be original to the translation. But as I have discussed in the companion article to this one (Hall in this volume, Section 3), the use of *wedeberge* to gloss *elleborus* is widely attested in texts originating in a seventh-century Canterbury glossary, whose lemmata seem most likely to derive from Dioscorides's *De materia medica*. It is clear that the translation *wedeberge* in the Old English *Herbarium* could come from this textual tradition. On the other hand, although I am not aware that the point has been demonstrated in print, the Old English *Herbarium* seems generally to translate Latin plant-names independently of earlier glosses (compare Van Arsdall 2002: 103–4). So there is an *a priori* case that *wedeberge* was introduced, implicitly in this scenario from the common Old English lexicon, by the translator of the Old English *Herbarium*.

The textual history of the Old English *Herbarium* here is elucidated by the Durham-Laud glossary — which suggests that the translation *wedeberge* was not original to the Old English *Herbarium*. Durham's entries for *elleborus* run *Elleborus vedeberige* ue*l thung* and *Elleborus alb*us *tunsing-vyrt* (Lindheim 1941: 13, nos 148–9). These two entries seem likely to correspond respectively to Durham's two main sources: the aforementioned Canterbury plant-name glossary whose lemmata derive ultimately from Dioscorides's *De materia medica*, and the Old English *Herbarium*. The latter gloss must be from the *Herbarium*, sharing as it does both its Latin term and Old English equivalent. The form *elleborus* found in the glossary instead of the form *elleborum* in the main texts of our Old English *Herbarium* manuscripts and in Lucca is not a cause for concern: the Old English *Herbarium*'s contents list gives *elleborus albus*, and this could underlie the forms in the glossaries. The former gloss, then, is likely to derive directly from the Dioscorides glossary in which the gloss *elleborus wedeberge* first originated, because otherwise this major source would be left unrepresented. The Laud Herbal Glossary utilises more sources than Durham, mostly involving only Greek and/or Latin, and accordingly *elleborus* occurs there several times (Stracke 1974: 37–44):

> 543. Ellebor*us* alb*us* .i. tunsingwyrt. *ue*l suffunie. *ue*l wudeleac. *ue*l ramese
> 544. Ellebor*us* nig*er* .i. lungwvrt.
> 563. Eptapilon .i. elleboru*m*. *ue*l centauria minor.
> 585. Ellebor*um* .i. plumu*m*daria.
> 632. Elleboru*m* leucu*m*. *ue*l albu*m* .i. sudor de oue subtitilla. Erba pullit*r*ica .i. uelatrum

*con*fectio.
633. Elleboru*m* melinu*m* u*e*l nigru*m* .i. testalia.
777. Helliboru*m* .i. yediberige.

Establishing the origins and significance of all these various attestations is beyond the scope of the present paper (though for no. 633 see Rusche 2001: 78–80). However, the first of the glosses listed, with the distinctive lemma *elleborus albus* coupled with the distinctive gloss *tunsingwyrt*, must come from the *Herbarium*, albeit with much material not present in other manuscripts. As this entry emphasises, the Laud compiler did not hesitate to include multiple glosses for his lemmata, so if his copy of the *Herbarium* had given the gloss *wedeberge* as our surviving manuscripts do, he would surely have included it. Accordingly, the last gloss listed — Laud's version of the *elleborus wedeberge* gloss — is likely to be from a source other than the *Herbarium* (doubtless, ultimately, the Canterbury Dioscorides glossary). These glossaries, then, suggest that the early copy or copies of the Old English *Herbarium* which originally furnished lemmata to Durham-Laud translated *elleborum album* with *tunsingwyrt* — as do our surviving manuscripts — but not with *wedeberge*, since *wedeberge* is absent from those Durham-Laud entries which probably derive from the *Herbarium*.

The idea that the translation *wedeberge* was not original to the textual tradition of the Old English *Herbarium* is supported by internal evidence. It is worth noting that the *Herbarium* description of *elleborus albus* mentions neither madness nor berries, so *wedeberge* ('madness-berry') is not an obvious translation. More importantly, most entries in the *Herbarium* follow the formula found in, for example, Section 131: 'This plant, which is named *basilica* [for *basilisca*, as in MSS V and Ca] and by another name *nædderwyrt*, is grown…' (*Đeos wyrt þe man basilica & oðrum naman nædderwyrt nemneþ byð cenned* …; De Vriend 1984: 168). The tag used to introduce the extra name *wedeberge*, 'and also some people [name it] X' (*& eac sume men X*), occurs only about a dozen times. This tag may in some cases, then, reflect later additions. Although by no means all the extra names so tagged can be associated with the Canterbury plant-name glossary which seems to have given rise to the *elleborus wedeberge* tradition, there are parallels: thus the *Herbarium* mentions 'those plants which one calls *ebulum* and, by another name, *ellenwyrte*, and also some people call them *wealwyrt*' (*þas wyrte þe man* ebulum *& oðrum naman ellenwyrte nemneþ & eac sume men wealwyrt hatað*; De Vriend 1984: 136, Section 93), whose additional name is consistent with the Canterbury plant-name gloss *ebulum wealhwyrt* (compare the Corpus Glossary: Hessels 1890: 45, E 11; the Laud Glossary: Stracke 1974: 36, no. 522). Likewise, 'these plants which people call *cynoglossa* and by another name *ribbe*; and some people also name them *linguam canis*' (*ðas wyrte þe man* cynoglossam *& oðrum naman ribbe nemneþ & hy eac sume men* linguam canis *hateþ*) echoes not only Canterbury plant-name glosses like *cinoglossa ribbe* but also *canes lingua ribbe* (compare the Corpus Glossary: Hessels 1890: 32, 26, C 411, C 28; the Laud Glossary: Stracke 1974: 29, nos 280, 298). At some point between the inception of its textual history and our earliest manuscripts, which are of the eleventh century, a redactor of the Old English *Herbarium* observed, presumably reading other glossaries, that some people called *elleborus* 'wedeberge', and added a note to this effect.

Elleborum album occurs also in another chapter of the Old English *Herbarium*: Chapter 159. Although this does not include a vernacular gloss, an examination sheds light on the character of the earliest texts of the *Herbarium*. The manuscript which De Vriend took as his main text (the sumptuously illustrated London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii, referred to by De Vriend as MS V), along with its close counterpart, British Library, Harley 585, leave

spaces for the vernacular word in this section, giving only the Latin heading *elleborum album* (De Vriend 1984: 202, 204); gaps of this kind occur in a number of entries. However, the later manuscript, London, British Library, Harley 6258 B (De Vriend 1984: 203, 205) gives the following (round brackets indicate marginal titles and/or damaged letters):

> *CLIX. Ellebo(rum album) tunsig(wyrt).*
>
> *Wið liferseocnysse nim þas wyrt þe man elleborum album ⁊ oþrum naman tunsingwyrt nemneð ȝedriȝede to duste ȝecnucode, sile drincan on wyrme wætere, þas d(uste)s sýx cu(cule)res fulle, hit ȝelac/nad þa lifr(e), þat sylfe ys fangenlice* [*f(ramigendlic)* in MS V] *læcedom on wine ȝeþ(iȝ)ed aȝeon ealle attra.*
>
> 159. *Elleborum album: tunsigwyrt*.
>
> Take this plant, which is called *elleborum album*, and by another name *tunsingwyrt*, for a liver-illness. Give it, dried and pounded to powder, to drink in warm water — six spoonfuls of that powder. It heals the liver. That too is a dangerous ['beneficial' in MS V] remedy against all bad fluids when consumed in wine.

It is first necessary to establish the origin of the extra attestations of *tunsingwyrt* in MS Harley 6258 B. As De Vriend's edition implies, it is more likely that a copyist added these to the tradition of Harley 6258 B on the basis of Chapter 140 than that another removed them from the tradition of MS Cotton Vitellius C.iii to leave a gap. It seems likely then, that the plant described in Chapter 159 was originally without an Old English name. If so, however, it seems odd that a text should have two entries for *elleborum album*, one with an Old English translation and one without. This disjunction is explained by the Latin source for this passage, identified by Hofstetter (1983: 342–3): a Latin collection called the *Curae herbarum* (on which see Collins 2000: 156–8), one manuscript of which — Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Lat. 13955 — includes

> *Elleborum nigrum uel epipactinum Ad curam iectoris herba suprascripta si sicca tundatur et cribrata ad modum coclearis ex [*leg. *cocleari sex] aqua calida bibatur mire facit. Ex uivo herba aduersus omnia uenena medicamen erit.*
>
> *Elleborum nigrum* or *epipactinum*. For pain of the liver, the above mentioned herb, if, made dry, it is pounded; sieved to the measure of six spoons; and drunk with warm water, it works wonders. From the living herb there will be a remedy against all poisons.

This shows that Chapter 159 of the Old English *Herbarium* was not originally about *elleborum album,* but *elleborum nigrum*. The Old English *Herbarium* evidently originally had one entry for *elleborum album* (Chapter 140), while another (Chapter 159) dealt with *elleborum nigrum*; the two entries originated in different Latin texts but were brought together either by the scholar behind the Old English *Herbarium* or by an editor of the Latin text which he translated. While he had identified *elleborum album* as *tunsingwyrt*, the translator did not have a vernacular word for *elleborum nigrum*, so left a gap. Subsequently, *elleborum album* was written in Chapter 159 for *elleborum nigrum* (a stage represented by all the manuscripts of the Old English *Herbarium*), and then a later copyist again (represented by MS Harley 6258 B) added the translation *tunsingwyrt* on the basis of Chapter 140. In MS Vitellius C.iii, the illustration accompanying Chapter 159 'has some resemblance [to *Veratrum album*], but is *Scilla*' (Cockayne 1864–6: I.287, note a), the plant accordingly being identified with *Urginea maritima* (L.) Bak. (also known as *Scilla maritima* L.) by De Vriend (1984: 323) and, subsequently, also by Van Arsdall (2002: 219). The plant is not native to Britain, making the lack of an Old English translation unsurprising. Here, then, we see the same hesitation over finding English equivalents for *elleborus* as Ælfric of Eynsham exhibited in his homily on St Martin. *Elleborum nigrum* simply could not be translated.

It is not unlikely that the Laud Herbal Glossary entry *Ellebor*us *nig*er *.i. lungwvrt* (Stracke 1974: 37, nos 543–4) derives ultimately from a text of the Old English *Herbarium* in which the reading *elleborum nigrum* still remained in Chapter 159, to which the translation *lungwyrt* had been added. Unfortunately, although *lungwyrt* has an apparent Old High German cognate *lungwurz* (see Björkman 1901–5: II.294), and although this gloss is paralleled by a series of Middle English glosses on *elleborus*, *lungwyrt* is attested only here in Old English (compare Bierbaumer 1975–9: III.164–5), and its later English forms are applied to a wide range of plants (see MED under *long-wort*; OED under *lungwort*; Hunt 1989: index under *Lungwort*). It may bear some relation to the '*lungenwyrt* whose upper part is yellow' (*lungenwyrt seo biþ geolu ufeweard*) mentioned in Bald's *Leechbook* (Bk I, Section 38; Wright 1955: folio 35r), which seems to be golden lungwort, *Hieracium murorum* L. (Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.98); but it could equally be a calque on *pulmonaria* (*Pulmonaria* L.). Without more certainty about these variables, it is hard to adduce this gloss usefully in elucidating *elleborus*. I recap this argument schematically as table 1, marking each successive (putative) alteration to the text in **bold** type.

	Chapter 140	Chapter 159
Lost text used for Durham-Laud (c.900?)	Ðeos wyrt þe man elleborum album (elleborus albus) & oðrum naman tunsincgwyrt nemneð	nim þas wyrt þe man elleborum nigrum & oþrum naman [blank] nemneð
Text represented by MS Vitellius C. iii (MS from s.xi)	Ðeos wyrt þe man elleborum album & oðrum naman tunsincgwyrt nemneð **& eac sume men wedeberge hatað**	nim þas wyrt þe man elleborum album & oþrum naman [blank] nemneð
Text of MS Harley 6258 B (MS from s.xii)	(Þ)eos wyrt **þæt** man elleborum album & oþrum nama tunsingwyrt & sume men wedeberge h(atað)	nim þas wyrt þe man elleborum album & oþrum naman **tunsingwyrt** nemneð

Table 1: the transmission of the Old English *Herbarium*. Each successive (putative) alteration to the text is marked in **bold** type.

The only Old English translation of *elleborus* which was certainly originally included in the Old English *Herbarium* was *tungsingwyrt*, translating *elleborum album*. In one textual tradition, *elleborum nigrum* may have acquired the translation *lungwyrt*.

3. Glossing *elleborus* as *tunsingwyrt*

I have discussed already the indebtedness of the Durham-Laud glossaries to the Old English *Herbarium*, and their inclusion of a gloss *elleborus albus tunsingwyrt.* It is worth entertaining the possibility that other glosses of this kind are also textually related to the *Herbarium*. Two arise as glosses on the work of a pupil of Ælfric of Eynsham's, Ælfric Bata, who composed a series of Latin colloquies as teaching aids. At the end of his twenty-fifth colloquy, preserved only in MS Oxford, St. John's College 154, Ælfric Bata included a list of plant-names based

on that in Ælfric of Eynsham's *Glossary* (or perhaps, if we accept Lazzari's arguments (2003), on a common source). The dialogue (Ælfric Bata 1997: 156–7) runs

> *Fratres mei, dicite mihi nunc, habetis aliquod uiridiarium, aut habetis herbas aliquas in uiridario uestro?*
> *Etiam, domine, habemus.*
> *Quis exercet eas?*
> *Hortulanus monasterii et medicus senioris nostri, qui eas omni anno plantat ac circumfodit et rigat.*
>
> My brothers, tell me now, do you have a garden? Do you have any herbs in your garden?
> Yes, we do, sir.
> Who tends them?
> The gardener of the monastery, our abbot's doctor. He plants, cultivates, and waters them all year round.

Having established that the *hortulanus* is neither English nor Greek (presumably in an allusion to the Greek etymology of many plant-names; Ælfric Bata 1997: 157, note 304) but Frankish, and that he 'often makes good medicines and ointments' (*Bona sepe antidota et unguenta facit*) for all-comers, the text continues (Ælfric Bata 1997: 156–9):

> Cuius generis herbas habetis?
> Multae herbae ualde boni generis et mali ac diuersi semper crescunt in nostro uiridiario.
> Quales?
>
> [...]
>
> Ibi crescunt primitus illa holera, quae pene cotidie mandi possunt, si erunt cocta: caula uel magudaris, petrocilinum, malua, cerpillum, apium, algium, menta, anetum, saturagia. Crescit quoque ibi libestica, sandix, dilla, febrefugia, simphoniaca, rubia, rapa, auadonia, aprótamum, eliborum, senitia [...] et cetera multa holera, que tibi anglice non possum edicere.
>
> *What sort of plants do you have?*
> *Many plants, both good and bad, of different sorts are always growing in our garden.*
> *What sort?*
>
> [...]
>
> *First growing there are those vegetables that can be eaten just about every day, if they're cooked: cabbage, parsley, mallow, thyme, celery, garlic, mint, dill, and savory. Also growing there are lovage, woad, sorrel, feverfew, henbane, rubia, rape, mullein, wormwood, hemlock, groundsel* [...] *And there are a lot of other plants I can't name for you in English.*

Eliborum here is an addition to Ælfric of Eynsham's list (like *saturagia*, *rapa*, and *rubia*, translated by Gwara respectively as 'savory', 'rape', and 'rubia' though I am not aware of *rubia* as an English word: it is more usually translated 'madder'). If we are to take Ælfric Bata at his word we may conclude that *elleborus* grows in monastic gardens, and can be named in Old English. It is not apparently intended for eating, so in view of his prior discussion, a medicinal purpose seems likely. We cannot be sure, however, both since Ælfric Bata's garden contains *herbae ... boni generis et mali*, and since, at the end of the day, the list is primarily an exercise in vocabulary rather than a necessarily accurate description of a monastic garden.

Ælfric Bata's texts are not in themselves very informative, but they lead us down avenues of closely related vernacular glosses. Gwara translated *elleborum* as 'hemlock' on the basis of the Antwerp-London Glossary, which seems to have some connection with Ælfric Bata's circle, and I examine this evidence at the end of the present study (Section 7). However, the

manuscript of Ælfric Bata's text itself, MS Oxford, St John's College 154, has glosses for *elleborus* on both occasions when the word appears, reading in the first instance *tunsing* and in the second *tunsincwyrt* (Napier 1900: 229, no. 378; Ælfric Bata 1997: 158). As I discuss shortly, *tunsingwyrt* was clearly a common word rather than a scholarly coining, so Ælfric Bata's glossator could have simply adduced *tunsingwyrt* from his day-to-day knowledge of Old English. On the other hand, he could in theory have referred to a manuscript of the Old English *Herbarium* or a derived glossary and drawn the gloss from there; our glossed manuscript of the *Colloquy* was at Durham around the twelfth or thirteenth centuries (Ker 1957: 437, no. 362), and if it was produced there, then the antecedents of the Durham Plant-Names Glossary would probably have been available. Unfortunately, there seems to be no secure evidence as to whether or not Ælfric Bata's glossator did indeed use such a glossary. We can look to his handling of Ælfric Bata's other additions to Ælfric of Eynsham's list of plant-names: *saturagia* (not, unfortunately, glossed), *rubia* (glossed with *medewyrt*) and *rapa* (glossed with *næp*) (Ælfric Bata 1997: 158). Although *medewyrt* is well attested in Old English medical texts, *rubia medewyrt* is unique (the closest parallel seems to be the Antwerp-London Glossary, considered further below, giving *Rubia mæddre*; Kindschi 1955: 111). The gloss *rapa næp* is also paralleled by Antwerp-London (Kindschi 1955: 112; compare Björkman 1901–5: I.233, II.273 for Old High German examples), but Antwerp-London does not contain the word *tunsingwyrt*, instead glossing *elleborus* with *wodewistle*, as I discuss below. The Durham Plant-Name Glossary includes the lemma *rapa* with no gloss (Lindheim 1941: 17, no. 286), but where it came from is not immediately clear. It is possible, then, that *elleborus tunsingwyrt* in the Ælfric Bata glosses is related to the Old English *Herbarium*, but the gloss could equally well represent the glossator's personal translation.

A similar situation holds for a late tenth-century gloss on Aldhelm's riddle *Elleborus* (the poem at the centre of the companion piece to this one, see Hall in this volume), unparalleled in this context, included by the main scribe of MS London, British Library, Royal 12.C.xxiii. To the title of the riddle (in this manuscript 'De Elleboro') he added the gloss *tunsinwyrt* (Aldhelm 1990: 227, Riddle 99). The question of whether this gloss was inherited from a glossary or the Old English *Herbarium* is particularly important: if it was inherited, then the scribe may have added it mechanically to the riddle, whether or not *tunsingwyrt* actually denoted a plant which fitted Aldhelm's description (which is probably of woody nightshade). If he invented the gloss, however, then the match between gloss and riddle could provide important evidence for the meanings of *tunsingwyrt*. A reasonable case can be made for copying rather than invention here, though again it proves impossible to be very sure.

Although the main scribe's Old English glossing is not consistent in the manuscript (tellingly, a second glossator added another forty-four mainly marginal Old English glosses; see Aldhelm 1990: 48, 52–4), it is not haphazard. The scribe made only six vernacular glosses on riddles' titles, the others being 'millefolium wearwe'; 'trutina wegan'; 'solsequium goldwyrt'; 'De crebello quo furfurae a farina sequestrantur syfeda'; and 'De ebulo wælwyrt' (Aldhelm 1990: 162, 163, 164, 187, 219; Riddles 49, 50, 51, 67, 94; compare 52–4). Although glosses were not added to all those titles involving plants (contrast Riddles 45, *De urtica*; 76, *De melario vel malo*; and 77 *De ficulnea*), the scribe evidently took a disproportionate interest in glossing plant-names in the vernacular. 'Millefolium wearwe' is surely an error for *gearwe*, a gloss found in many manuscripts, English and German, including both the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary and the Old English *Herbarium* (Pheifer 1974: 33, 34, nos 623, 639; De Vriend 1984: 128, Chapter 90; compare Björkman 1901–5: I.226). The gloss

'De ebulo wælwyrt' enjoys a similar distribution (De Vriend 1984: 136, Chapter 93; see Hall in this volume, Section 4). More telling is the gloss 'solsequium goldwyrt': this seems to be paralleled in Old English (and later English) only in the *Nomina herbarum Grece et Latine* listed in MS Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 1828–30, in the form *Solsequia golde* (Rusche 1996: 554–66, no. 467). Both the Brussels manuscript and MS Royal 12.C.xxiii were written at Christ Church, Canterbury, so the distinctive similarity is unsurprising. Although the Brussels manuscript is probably later than the Royal, its plant-name glossary could represent a tradition from which the Royal gloss derives. We have a close Old High German parallel to the Brussels gloss, *Fleotropia* [i.e. *Heliotropia*] *Golde* (Steinmeyer and Sievers 1879–1922: III.522), and the plant-name *golde* is much better attested in the Old German dialects than in Old English (Björkman 1901–5: II.268; *Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch*, under *golda*). This hints that Brussels may show German influence — plausible in tenth- to eleventh-century Canterbury — with Royal 12.C.xxiii making an attempt to anglicize *golde* and to make its identity as a plant-name clear in a new glossarial context by adding *-wyrt*. However, although the Brussels text contains representatives of *ebulus wælwyrt*; *millefolium gearwe* and *solsequium goldwyrt*, it does not contain *elleborus tunsingwyrt* (or any other gloss on *elleborus*). We are left with a general probability that the scribe of Royal 12.C.xxiii used other glossaries, but no single text which survives. Other glosses show that he almost certainly had access to the older gloss *wedeberge*: some of the plant-name glosses probably come from the same textual tradition as *wedeberge*; moreover, our scribe glossed the word *conquilio* in the second line of the riddle with *weolcscille* (Aldhelm 1990: 227), a gloss belonging to the Épinal-Erfurt-Corpus tradition, where *wedeberge* is also found. But he chose not to use *wedeberge*, which tells us that the gloss *tunsingwyrt* was probably to at least some extent a preferred choice rather than simply a mark of desperation, and is generally consistent with the sense outlined at the beginning of this article that later Anglo-Saxon scholarship was defining itself as distinct from earlier Anglo-Saxon work. These points show clearly that the Royal scribe's use of *tunsingwyrt* may derive from a manuscript related somehow to the Old English *Herbarium*, but it is not possible to be sure of this.

4. *Tunsingwyrt* outside glosses

Although it is far from certain, the considerations above permit the suggestion that almost all our attestations of *tunsingwyrt* are textually closely related. Moreover, *tunsingwyrt* survived into Middle English only in the early Middle English textual descendants of Anglo-Saxon materials (MED, under *tunsing-wurt*), so we have no later correlates. Likewise, it has no cognates in other languages. These details would all point to the idea that *tunsingwyrt* is simply a gloss-word. However, we have two attestations of *tunsingwyrt* which can be reliably considered independent of this tradition. Both occur in Bald's *Leechbook* I. The first comes in Section 28 (Wright 1955: folio 26r):

> *Wiþ banece tuningwyrt . beolone . wealwyrt ealde grut & eced . heorotes smera oþþe gate . oþþe gose meng tosomne lege þonne on . Wiþ banece eft to drence elene . cneowholen . wealwyrt . hune . clufþung gecnuwa do on wæter þæt ofer yrne beþe to fyre swiðe þone ece þweah mid þy wætere do þæt þriwa on dæg . wyrc þonne sealfe of tuniigwyrte of eolonan . of þunge . of wermode do ealra emfela wylle swiðe .*
>
> Against bone-ache/thigh-pain: *tuningwyrt*, henbane, dwarf elder, old meal and vinegar; hart's fat or goat's, or goose's; mix together and then apply. Against bone-ache/thigh-pain also: elecampane, butcher's broom, dwarf elder, horehound, (celery-leaved) buttercup as

> a drink. Pound, put in water which runs over [it]; steam that ache well with that liquid; do so three times a day. Then make a salve from *tuniigwyrt*, from elecampane, from *þung* [denoting a range of toxic plants], from wormwood. Use the same amount of each; boil well.

Since the orthography of this manuscript does not make use of combinations like *ii*, the latter form here, *tuniigwyrt*, must be a scribal error, presumably for *tuningwyrt* by the omission of a minim. Both of the occurrences of *tunsingwyrt* here, then, have it as an ingredient for salves against 'bone-ache' (defined by the DOE, under *bān-ece*, as 'pain in the thigh (-bone), sciatica'). Although not much can be made of the point, this is not a symptom for which I have seen *elleborus* prescribed in ancient and medieval texts. The second attestation, in what must surely be a variant form of the same word, *tungilsinwyrt*, comes in Section 47, entitled *Læcedomas wið þeoradlum*, (apparently) 'remedies for inflammatory illnesses' (folio 44r), and listed in the contents as 'Remedies and drinks and salves against ?inflammatory illnesses, of many kinds' (*Læcedomas & drencas & sealfa wiþ þeoradlum moniges cynnes*; folio 4v). It is noteworthy for being one of only two remedies explicitly ascribed to named Anglo-Saxons — in this case an otherwise unknown Oxa — and seems likely to be independent in its origin from the remedy just quoted. At any rate, no Latin original seems to have been identified for it. The remedy in question runs (Wright 1955: folio 45v):

> *Oxa lærde þisne læcedom . genime wealwyrt & clufþung & cneowholen & efelastan & camecon & tungilsinwyrt . VIIII . brune bisceopwyrt . & attorlaþan & reade netlan . & reade hofan . & wermod & gearwan . & hunan & dolgrunan . & dweorgedwostlan do ealle þas wyrta on wylisc ealo & drince þonne nigon dagas & blod læte.*
>
> Oxa taught this remedy. Take dwarf elder and ?buttercup and butcher's broom and *efenlaste* and ?hog's fennel and *tungilsinwyrt*; 9 dark betonies and *attorlaðe* and purple deadnettle and purple ivy and wormwood and yarrow and horehound and pellitory-of-the-wall and pennyroyal; put all these plants in Welsh ale and drink it then for nine days and let blood.

Our attestations of *tunsingwyrt* in medical texts occur in lists of ingredients too long for much to be inferred about them from their medical applications. We might only note that the plant does not seem to have been prominent in Anglo-Saxon medicine, at least under this name. Still, the *Leechbook* evidence is important for establishing the broader (West-Saxon) currency of the word *tunsingwyrt*, and for showing variation in the form of this word which looks, in some cases, more like variation in spoken language than scribal corruption, again suggesting the broad currency of the term.

5. The etymology of *tunsingwyrt*

Thus we have three main forms of the word *tunsingwyrt*. All three are similar enough to one another, and different enough from other Old English plant-names, that they must surely be seen as variant forms of the same word. But their differences are noteworthy. The Old Engish *Herbarium* tradition and its possible relatives show forms focusing on *tunsingwyrt*. The spelling variation in the *-ing-* element in this tradition, with the forms *-in-* and *-inc(g)-*, is common enough, reflecting scribal and phonetic variation (relevant comparisons are provided by Smith 1956, under *-ing* Section 2; Campbell 1959: Section 450, compare Section 474.5; and De Vriend 1984: lxx). Meanwhile, the first remedy in Bald's *Leechbook* has the form *tuningwyrt*; and Oxa's remedy — whose association with a named individual affords the tantalising if unprovable possibility of detecting an idiolectal form of the word — gives *tungilsinwyrt*. Of

these three forms, *tunsingwyrt* is ostensibly much the better attested, and it is no surprise that it has become the standard dictionary headword form (compare Kitson 1988: 109). But the prospect that all the attestations of this form are textually related raises the possibility that they are no more valuable as witnesses to common Anglo-Saxon usage than each of the forms from Bald's *Leechbook*. The *tunsingwyrt* form could have survived substantially unchanged in the textual tradition not because it corresponded to the precise variants used by the scribes in day-to-day life (assuming that they ever did use it), but because the written variant with which they were presented was accorded more prestige.

The element *-ing*(-) occurs in a wide range of Old English word-forms, from a range of etymological sources and with various meanings (see, for example, Smith 1956, under *-ing*; Kastovsky 1992: 386, 388) and, as Sauer has emphasised, the element poses problems in all three plant-names containing it (the others being *æðelferðingwyrt* and *smeringwyrt*; Sauer 2003: 165; see also Kitson 1988: 107–11). Deciding which of these etyma might have been present in *tunsingwyrt* when it was first coined is probably impossible. All the same, it is worth discussing possible interpretations and etymologizations of the word because even if they are not correct, they may indicate the bases for folk-etymologies which encouraged the attested range of variants.

Of our attested forms, *tuning-* is much the easier to etymologize (whether or not the etymology is actually correct). *Tun* and *Tuna* are attested as monothematic Old English personal names (PASE), so a personal name like ***Tuning*, deriving originally from a monothematic personal name coupled with the patronymic suffix *-ing* (for which see Smith 1956: under *-ing3*, especially Section 2), is possible. Another viable interpretation is some formation on *tun-* 'settlement, estate, enclosure'. In itself, *tun-* is not uncommon in plant-names, occurring in *tuncærse*, *tunhofe*, *tunmelde*, *tunminte* and *tunnæp* (Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.133–4, II.117–18, III.233–4; compare MED, under *toun-cresse*; *tun-hōve*), where it presumably carries *tun*'s old sense of 'enclosure' — as in the common compounds *leactun* and *wyrttun* 'vegetable garden'.[1] One viable etymon of *tuningwyrt* may therefore be the noun *tyning*, etymologically meaning 'enclosure' if from *tun*, or 'the act of enclosing' if from the verb *tynan* 'enclose, close' (Smith 1956, under *tūning*; compare *-ing*[1] Sections iii, iv respectively; MED, under *tīning*).[2] If *tyning* is from *tun*, then the *i*-mutation variant *tuning* (caused by either the failure of *i*-mutation or its later cancelling by analogy with *tun*) is not unlikely. This would either imply that *tuningwyrt* was a plant with which one made enclosures (compare *haguþorn* 'hawthorn, whitethorn', etymologically 'enclosure thorn'), or perhaps one which, like *tuncærse*, grew within an enclosure. Another option, with similar implications, is to assume that we have *tun* followed by the connective element *-ing-* (on which see Smith 1956, under *-ing*[4]). The origins and precise significance of this element are rather vexed; it is common only

[1] Bosworth 1898, under *leac-tun*, *wyrt-tun*; compare Markey, this volume: 32 n. 27; Banham 2003: 125–6; MED, under *leigh-toun*. It seems not to have been noted before that *leactun* appears in Anglian texts and *wyrttun* in West Saxon: they may, then, be distinctively dialectal terms existing in a complementary distribution.

[2] I dispense with the word *tunincel~*tynincel* 'small *tun*' (from *tun* + *incgel*). This is reasonably securely attested (Bosworth 1898, under *túnincel*; Smith 1956, under *tūnincel*), but to assume that it was reduced such as to produce *tuningwyrt* is dubious. Likewise, the use of the suffix *-ingas* (broadly 'people, dwellers') often appears in place-names in *-tun* — as for example *Glædtuninga weg*, literally the 'road of the people of Glædtun' (Watts 2004, under *Glatton*), and a certain lexical status for a word *-tuningas* is implied by Bosworth's use of that form as a headword (1898). But this seems an unlikely source for *tuningwyrt*, both because it is initial there, and because although *-ingas*-type names frequently produced singular forms in the Scandinavian languages (for example, Icelandic *Íslendingur*, 'an Icelander'), this is much rarer in Old English (Smith 1956, under *-ingas*, Sections 4, 7d).

in place-names, but this does not rule it out, either as a genuine etymon of *tuningwyrt* or as a component in folk-etymology inspired by place-names. In this case, *tuningwyrt* can be understood effectively as ***tunwyrt* 'enclosure-plant'.

Tungilsinwyrt is the next easiest form to interpret. Erhardt-Siebold (1936: 169) assumed this to contain the element *tungol*, 'star', presumably in a putative reference to star-like flowers, translating it 'star in herb'. But this does not explain the *s* of *tungils-*, while the *-i-* there would also be anomalous, and the preposition *in* ought to cause the element *wyrt* to appear in the dative (as *wyrte*). The only viable interpretation seems to me to take the first element as a personal name — of which **Tungils* would be an unattested but theoretically possible example — almost certainly followed by a phonetic variant of the connective particle *-ing-*. A plant name beginning in an Old English personal name would be paralleled by *witmæres wyrt*, which, in the form that we have it, can hardly contain anything else, while in the minds of at least some Old English-speakers, *æðelferðingwyrt* and probably the rarer forms *simæringwyrt* (more usually *smeringwyrt*) and *siwardes wyrt* also contained personal names (see Kitson 1988: 109–11). It is not impossible that *Tungilsinwyrt* was the earlier form of *tunsingwyrt*, of which the other forms are reductions. But it seems more probable that the analogy went the other way, an obscure or rare first element being reinterpreted as a similar-sounding personal name. Much the commonest context for *-ing-* as a connective particle in Old English is in place-names, and of these most take a personal name as their first element (for example, *Cyneburgingctun*, now Kemerton in Gloucestershire; Smith 1956, under *-ing-*[4] at Sections 1, 4b), which would have produced a fertile set of analogues (albeit toponymic) for reinterpreting *tuningwyrt* or *tunsingwyrt* as *tungilsin(g)wyrt*. Kitson (1988: 109) considered it 'almost certainly a scribal error for *tunsingwyrt*', and since we can hardly be dealing here with a slip of the pen, he was presumably imagining a scribe accidentally writing a personal name in a lapse of concentration. But it is at least as likely that we are dealing with a spoken variant.

Turning to *tunsingwyrt*, it is the *-s-* here which is problematic. It cannot belong to the *-ing-* element (contrast variants such as *-ling(-)*), while although *-s-* makes appearances in Old English derivational morphology, no stem in *tuns-* is attested. If we can assume that all our attestations are textually related, it would be possible to suggest that the *-s-* originated merely as a scribal error in some early text of the Old English *Herbarium* — though its uncorrected transmission in so many later manuscripts would in that case be surprising. Cockayne (1864–6: II.409) saw the word as a contraction of *tungilsinwyrt*; this is plausible insofar as plant-names are more liable than most lexical classes to irregular phonological changes, but is not particularly inviting — and it is at least as easy, as I have suggested, to argue for the reverse process. Bosworth (1898, under *tunsing-wyrt*) pointed to the unique Somerset place-name *Tunsing* attested in charter S626 (as listed in Kelly 1999). Conceivably, then, *tunsingwyrt* either takes its name from this place (or another of the same name), or was folk-etymologized to seem as if it did. We might imagine that the translator of the Old English *Herbarium* had connections with a speech-community which knew a place called Tunsing where *tunsingwyrt* grew (or was grown) in large quantities. While this is merely speculative, no more convincing etymon is forthcoming.

One is tempted to borrow the text-critical principle of *fortior lectio difficilior* here. Since it is relatively easy to explain *tuningwyrt* and *tungilsinwyrt* as folk etymologies, the most likely form to be original is the obscure *tunsingwyrt*. But this is far from certain. *Tunsingwyrt* affords an intriguing glimpse into a world of linguistic variation which resists neophilological etymologizations and suggests a complexity and diversity of plant-naming in Anglo-Saxon

culture more like that uncovered by modern dialectologists than attested by our limited Anglo-Saxon texts (compare Biggam, this volume, Section 1).

6. What was *tunsingwyrt?*

Tunsingwyrt has hitherto been considered an accurate rendering of *elleborum album*'s Classical meaning, being identified therefore as *Veratrum album* L.[3] However, as the companion article to this one emphasises (Hall, in this volume), this meaning for *elleborum* cannot readily be assumed *a priori* for Anglo-Latin. One or two hints as to the denotation of *tunsingwyrt* can be gleaned from the Old English *Herbarium*. Whereas our Latin text says *Albumque est in similitudinem caepae, folia angustiora habet*, 'and the white [hellebore] has the appearance of an onion; it has narrower leaves', the Old English text reads *Ðeos wyrt þe man elleborum album 7 oðrum naman tunsincgwyrt nemneð ... hafað leaf leace gelice*, 'this plant, which is called *elleborum album*, and by another name *tunsincgwyrt*, has leaves like an allium'. Although our Latin manuscripts are too few for the direction of change to be certain, it seems likely that the Old English text shows the alteration of the Latin text, from saying that the plant is like an onion, but with narrower leaves, to saying that the plant's leaves are like those of an allium (for this meaning of *leac* see Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.93, II.76–7, III.157–8; Markey, in this volume). This broadens the range of plants which might fit the description of *elleborum album*, and this broadening may reflect efforts to attempt to identify it with a plant or plants of the British Isles. The implication of *hafað leaf leace gelice* may be that, although the leaves are like an allium's, the plant is in fact not an allium; but it is hard to be sure of this. The similarity envisaged may have been of shape, or may have been a reference to leaks' distinctively squishy leaves. At any rate, the only allium in the Old English *Herbarium* seems to be the onion (*Allium cepa* L.), *bulbus* in the Latin, with no Old English translation given (De Vriend 1984: 230, 232, Chapter 184), so a translator with an Anglo-Saxon cultural background, in which alliums were prominent, might have been tempted to adduce one to fill the gap. A further factor may have been the illustration of *elleborum album* which the translator of the Old English *Herbarium* doubtless had before him, discussed below.

Further perspectives on this evidence are afforded by the long Laud Herbal Glossary entry *Elleboru*s *alb*us *.i. tunsingwvrt.* ue*l suffunie. uel wudeleac.* ue*l ramese* (Stracke 1974: 37, no 543). Although the glossary is late — mid-twelfth-century — parts probably derive from, or at least reflect, late Anglo-Saxon plant-naming, and the unique list of vernacular glosses given here is valuable. It is problematic: the extra glosses could have been added because they were synonyms of *tunsingwyrt*, or conversely because they denoted something within the semantic field of *elleborus albus* which was not covered by *tunsingwyrt*. Moreover, *suffunie* is unfortunately mysterious. It must be related to number of counterparts for *elleborus (niger)*, to at least some extent textually interrelated, identified by Hunt (1989: 106) in later medieval manuscripts, with forms such as *gallice syfonye*; *suffonie*, *cloftunge*; and *gallice suffonie*. I have not succeeded in tracing this word in Old French or Anglo-Norman dictionaries, but these texts, at any rate, invite us to add *suffunie* to the list of French words in the Laud Herbal Glossary given by Stracke (1974: 208). *Wudeleac* (ostensibly from **wuduleac*) and *ramese* (from *hramsa*) are more illuminating.

[3] Cockayne (1864–6: II.409); Bosworth (1898, under *tunsing-wyrt*); Clark Hall (1960, under *tunsingwyrt*); Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.133–4, II.118, III.234); compare Van Arsdall (2002: 210).

The reflexes of *hramsa* seem prototypically to denote wild garlic (*Allium ursinum* L.), as do most of its Indo-European cognates (OED, under *rams*, *ramson*; MED, under *ramse*; compare Markey, in this volume, Section 6.2.1). In Old English, *hramsa* is most prominently attested in textually-related glosses on a group of three lemmata which seem to be derivatives of the Latin *acidula* 'bitter, sour', and which are not very revealing (for example, Björkman 1901–5: I.225; Pheifer 1974: 6, nos 59, 60; see also 63). But it seems likely that *hramsa* denoted wild garlic (compare Bierbaumer 1975–9: III.142–3); and if medieval Ireland is anything to go by, it was an important wild food-plant (Carey 1988: 72; Kelly 2000: 308). It is worth noting that one of the plants most often prescribed in the Old English medical texts against what Dendle called 'mental or behavioral disturbance of a clearly malefic or demonic character' is *cropleac* (Dendle 2001: 91, note 1), as this may also denote wild garlic (DOE, *crop-lēac* 1 'crow garlic'), and there may be some synonymy. If so, there may be some connection between the association of *hramsa* and *elleborum* on the one hand, and *elleborus* and the curing of madness in Classical tradition (for which see Hall in this volume, Section 3).

The glossing of *elleborum album* with *hramsa* correlates broadly with the evidence of *wudeleac*. *Wudeleac* appears to be a unique form (compare MED, under *wōde* 4a; Hunt 1989: index under *Wild Garlic*). The first element is ostensibly Old English *wudu*, which means 'wood, timber', but as the first element of compounds often means 'wild-' (compare perhaps ME *wilde garlek*, MED, under *wīlde* 6a); either meaning would describe the habitat of wild garlic perfectly well. Unique as it is, the word could be a coining by a glossator, who simply wished to identify the *elleborus albus* as a 'wood-/wild-allium'. Whether a gloss-word or not, it is also possible that earlier in the textual tradition, the first element was not *wude-* but *wode-* (the scribal alteration of *wode-* to *wude-* is attested, for example, in the Durham Plant-Name Glossary entry *Cicuta heomlic uel vude vistle*; Lindheim 1941: 12, no. 116; see further Section 7 below). This interpretation resonates tantalisingly with the *elleborus wedeberge* glosses; if it is right, the glossator may have wished to convey that *elleborum album* was an allium which healed or caused madness. But this interpretation is less economical than assuming that we are indeed dealing with a 'wood-/wild-allium'. Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.267), taking *wudeleac* as a synonym of *ramese*, interpreted it too as *allium ursinum*. This is not unlikely; it is at any rate clear that both denoted alliums.

It is evident that someone in the textual tradition underlying the Laud Herbal Glossary associated *elleborum album* with alliums, and specifically probably with wild garlic. It would be interesting to know whether these additional glosses entered the tradition as additions to a text of the Old English *Herbarium* itself or as additions to a glossary excerpted from it; the latter suggestion is perhaps more likely, but it is hard to be certain. The evidence is, at any rate, broadly consistent with the association in the Old English *Herbarium* of the leaves of *elleborum album* with those of a *leac*. This evidence is also consistent, moreover, with the illustration of *elleborum album* in our one illustrated text of the *Herbarium*, the eleventh-century MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii (D'Aronco and Cameron 1998, folio 60v). The illustration is damaged in its middle section, but enough survives for it to be clear that although the illustration can plausibly be understood to have originated in a depiction of *Veratrum album* L., it looks considerably more like wild garlic. The illustration clearly depicts a bulb or cluster of bulbs, which is not consistent with *Veratrum album*, and the flowers could readily be taken for those of wild garlic (or similar alliums). Admittedly, it shows several flowering stalks arising from a single bulb, which would be unusual for wild garlic and its relatives, but this is a point which is far from evident when the plant is seen growing

in the dense patches which it is liable to form. Without an investigation of the manuscript history of this illustration, it is hard to be sure whether the gloss *tunsingwyrt* reflects an illustration appearing to depict wild garlic, or whether the illustration reflects the work of a copyist influenced by the translation *tunsingwyrt*, 'wild garlic'. Either scenario, however, militates in favour of identifying *tunsingwyrt* as a synonym for wild garlic. If this is correct, then *tunsingwyrt* demands to be understood as part of a wider study of the Old English lexicon of alliums, and the evidence for their use in medicine.

7. *Wodewistle*

There remains one Old English gloss on *elleborum*, and it brings us back to Ælfric Bata's scholarship. This occurs in another list of herbs, written by the second of the two scribes who, in the earlier part of the eleventh century, compiled the texts now known as the Antwerp-London Glossary (as marginalia in MS Antwerp, Plantin-Moretus Museum, M 16.2 and its *disiectum membrum* MS London, British Library, Additional 32,246). Basing his work — like Ælfric Bata — either on Ælfric of Eynsham's class-glossary or on some shared source, the scribe composed a large Latin-English class glossary which Porter labelled 'article 6' and Ker called 'd' (see Ker 1957: 1–3, no. 2; Porter 1999: especially 181–8; Lazzari 2003). In the section devoted to plant-names, he included the entry *Elleborum wodewistle* [ue]*l Uoratrum* (Kindschi 1955: 112).[4] This list of plant-names shares with Ælfric Bata's several words not found in Ælfric of Eynsham's class-glossary, *elleborum* among them. The Antwerp-London Glossary and Ælfric Bata's *Colloquy* also share some other obscure items of vocabulary, while two glosses 'give unique, idiosyncratic meanings matching the context of Bata's *Colloquies*' (in Ælfric Bata 1997: 60–64, at 64; compare 66–7). These points led Porter to conclude — with due circumspection — that there is 'sufficient connection to suspect Bata's participation in the extensive glossarial activity to which the Antwerp-London manuscript is evidence' (in Ælfric Bata 1997: 64). There is a possibility, then, that Antwerp-London provides an interpretation of *elleborus* with which Ælfric Bata would have been familiar — perhaps more familiar, indeed, than with the *tunsingwyrt* gloss provided to his own texts.

It appears that the Antwerp-London glossator, faced with the prospect of glossing *elleborum* (which was not already covered by Ælfric of Eynsham's glosses), turned first to Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, where he found the equivalent *veratrum* (on his use of Isidore, see Porter 1999: 183–6). For the vernacular gloss *wodewistle*, however, he turned to the old Canterbury glossing tradition, first attested in the Épinal-Erfurt Glossaries, which includes (to quote Épinal) *cicuta uuodaeuistlae* (Pheifer 1974: 12, no. 185); like *elleborus wedeberge*, the gloss must go back to a seventh-century glossary, probably the Dioscorides glossary. That the Antwerp-London glossator was using this tradition is fairly clearly demonstrated by the gloss which immediately follows the *elleborum* gloss: *Cicuta hemlic* (Kindschi 1955: 112). This is

[4] In view of the fact that confusion between the letters *wynn* (*[1BF?]*) and *þorn* (*þ*) is not uncommon in the transmission of Old English texts, it is tempting to connect attestations of *wodewistle* with attestations of *wodeþistle* (occurring principally in Chapter 111 of the Old English *Herbarium* as an equivalent of *carduum silvaticum*, apparently *Sonchus oleraceus* L.; Lindheim 1941: 11, no. 102; De Vriend 1984: 154; compare Stracke 1974: 30, no. 320). Indeed, Wright's edition of the Antwerp-London Glossary gave *Elleborum uel ueratrum wodeþistle* (1884, column 135, no. 42), while the MED affords good evidence for later confusion of *wodeþistle* with *wodewistle* (under *wōde-thistel* c). That there were originally two different words, however, seems beyond doubt, and I make no attempts here to emend current readings of our manuscripts.

attested in most manuscripts alongside *cicuta wodewistle*, as in Épinal's entry *cicuta hymblicae* (Pheifer 1974: 14, no. 248; compare Wotherspoon on *hymlic* in this volume, Section 5.2). It appears that the Antwerp-London glossator received this tradition and saw an opportunity both to reduce duplication in the vernacular glossing of *cicuta* and to add a vernacular gloss to *elleborum*.

The gloss *cicuta hemlic* is apparently unproblematic. *Cicuta* usually denotes hemlock, *Conium maculatum* L., though Kitson has shown that its semantic range extended beyond this to other umbellifers (1988: 104–6); *hemlic* and its reflexes seem likewise to have denoted hemlock throughout the history of English, along with other umbelliferous plants of similar appearance (see Wotherspoon, in this volume). The use of *wodewistle* as a gloss for *cicuta* likewise seems straightforward. *Wodewistle* is attested in Middle English (admittedly partly in textual traditions deriving from Anglo-Saxon ones) denoting 'any of several hollow-stemmed plants, esp[ecially] hemlock (Conium maculatum) and cowbane (Cicuta virosa)' (MED, under *whistle* e; Hunt 1989: index under *Wode-Thistle*, *Wode-Whistle*; compare *Wode-Wort*). This makes sense etymologically: *wodewistle* is not precisely paralleled in other Germanic languages, but the only Old High German plant-name beginning in a cognate of *wod* appears to be *wotich*, which also glosses only *cicuta* (Björkman 1901–5: II.279); likewise, Holthausen adverted to the Low German *woden-dung*, which also denoted hemlock (1934, under *ðung*). This fits in turn with the dramatic effects of ingesting hemlock (see Wotherspoon on *hymlic* in this volume, Section 6.2). For its part, the element *-wistle* seems to derive from a Germanic root **hwis-*, which, unparalleled elsewhere in Indo-European languages, has been taken as an onomatapoeic formation denoting sounds in the field of whispering (*whisper* being another reflex of the root), hissing and whistling (OED, under *whistle* v.; De Vries 1964, under *hvísl*, *hvíska*). The primary sense of the simplex *hwistle*, etymologically and throughout attested English, seems accordingly to be a musical pipe, so its use in the plant-name presumably represents the extension of this denotation to plants with pipe-like stems, or stems from which one might make pipes.[5] As it happens, the opposite process is attested for *cicuta* in Classical Latin, whose denotation was extended from hemlock to other kinds of tubes, including musical pipes. As Wotherspoon has pointed out, there may be some connection between this polysemy and the use of *-hwistle* in Old English glosses for *cicuta* (Wotherspoon, in this volume, Section 5), but this is not a necessary inference, and we could as easily be dealing with semantic changes taking place independently of influence from Latin. Either way, there are good reasons for understanding *wodewistle* normally to have denoted hemlock and plants like it.

The *Dictionary of Old English Plant-Names* suggests that the use of *wodewistle* to gloss *elleborus* 'has to be a confusion with *wēdeberie*'. The glossator very likely had access to the gloss *elleborus wedeberge*. But I am not convinced of the confusion: despite having cognate first elements, the two words are very different, nor are they adjacent in surviving glossaries in a way that might have encouraged eye-skip. Conceivably the glossator noticed the gloss, chose not to repeat it (presumably because *wedeberge* was an unfamiliar gloss-word, and/or because it evidently did not denote the plant which he had in mind), but was encouraged by it to insert *wodewistle*, whose first element shares its root with the *wede-* of *wedeberge*. Alternatively, he perhaps simply thought of *elleborus* as meaning 'poisonous plant, plant causing madness'

[5] Bosworth (1898, under *hwistle*; also Toller 1921, under *hwistle*); OED under *whistle*; MED under *whistle*; DOST under *Quhissil(l)*.

— in interpretation not so far from Ælfric's in his account of St Martin — and identified it on these grounds with hemlock or umbellifers like it (as Wotherspoon has discussed, *wodewistle* could be taken as another umbellifer, cowbane (*Cicuta virosa* L.)). Lexicographical expertise does not necessarily come hand in hand with botanical expertise; the Antwerp-London glossator's alteration to his received textual tradition was doubtless partly a matter of editorial convenience; and it seems plausible that to him *elleborum* denoted hemlock or something very like it. Whether the Antwerp-London glossator considered *wodewistle* to denote something distinct from *hemlic*, and more appropriate to *elleborus*, is not clear. He liked to conflate his sources to provide multiple glosses for each lemma (Porter 1999: 185), so his decision not to include both *wodewistle* and *hemlic* as glosses for *cicuta* may be significant, encouraging the idea that they had slightly different denotations.

8. Conclusions

The understandings of *elleborus* in later Anglo-Saxon England prove to have varied, from Ælfric's implicit assertion around 1000 that *elleborus* had no vernacular Old English counterpart, to the association by the translator of the Old English *Herbarium*, perhaps around 900, of *elleborus albus* with *tunsingwyrt*, which seems to have denoted an allium such as wild garlic, to the use of the gloss *wodewistle*, denoting hemlock or some similar plant, by the Antwerp-London glossator in the earlier eleventh century. The first conclusion to this piece, then, was that the term *elleborus* produced diverse responses, and although there is plenty of evidence — albeit often inconclusive — that glossators had access to others' work in this period, it is clear that different scholars nonetheless arrived at different interpretations, hinting at a rather lively intellectual milieu. Meanwhile, the early scholarly tradition mapped in the companion article to this one was, in this particular instance, largely discarded, being perpetuated only in glossaries, and even then only in the most inclusive ones.

In the course of my analyses I have contributed minor insights into matters which deserve fuller study. I have probed Ælfric's use of Latin words in his Old English texts. I have shown the possibility — while also finding no strong evidence to prove it — that the Old English *Herbarium* was the origin of all of our *elleborus tunsingwyrt*-type glosses. This points to the Old English *Herbarium* as a watershed in Anglo-Saxon scholarship on plants and plant-names, and this would be consonant with our evidence for renewed vigour in learning in Wessex and Mercia extending from around the reign of Alfred the Great through the tenth century. I have also shown more certainly that with careful use of glossaries derived from the *Herbarium* we can discern a lost early version of this text which is subtly different from our surviving manuscripts, and closer to its Latin original.

However, the main focus of this article has been the problematic word *tunsingwyrt*. I have analysed the textual relationships of our attestations of this word in detail, finding that of its three forms *tuningwyrt*, *tungilsinwyrt* and *tunsingwyrt*, all of our attestations of the latter may be textually related, leaving no form with a strong claim to being a more popular variant than the others. However, although the word is not attested outside Old English (except in textually-related Middle English material), there is at least enough evidence to show that this word was a member of the common lexicon rather than a mere gloss-word. Working out its denotation is difficult: I have at least shown that it is unlikely to denote *Veratrum album* L. The most likely interpretation suggested by the evidence is that *tunsingwyrt* denoted an allium — and if so, probably wild garlic. *Tunsingwyrt* might now be incorporated into a fuller study of

Anglo-Saxon alliums, which, if undertaken, will provide new insights both into the use of that plant, and into the meanings of *helleborus* for a good number of later Anglo-Saxon scholars.

Appendix A: *Tunsingwyrt* catalogue

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Herbarium	Lch I (HerbHead) 140.0	*tunsingwyrt*
2	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 140.0	*Tunsingwyrt, tunsincgwyrt*
3	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 159.0	*tunsig(wyrt)*
4	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 159.1	*tunsingwyrt*
5	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 149	*tunsing-vyrt*
6	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 543	*tunsingwyrt*
7	Ælfric Bata: Colloquies (G)	OccGl 28 (Nap) 42	*tunsing*
8	Ælfric Bata: Colloquies (G)	OccGl 28 (Nap) 378	*tunsincwyrt*
9	Aldhelm: Riddle 99 (G)	AldÆ 2 (Nap) 63	*tunsinwyrt*
10	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 28.1.1	*tuningwyrt*
11	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 28.1.5	*tuniigwyrte*
12	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 47.3.1	*tungilsinwyrt*

Appendix A1: *Tunsingwyrt* catalogue

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, ?7, ?8, ?9	Translation of *elleborus (albus)*

Appendix A2: Related citations

Source	*Date*	*Location*
Herbarium	?c.900 (MSS and some attestations later)	unknown
Glossary: Durham	MS s. xii	Durham
Glossary: Laud	MS s. xii	Canterbury
Ælfric Bata: Colloquies (G)	glosses s. xi	?Durham
Aldhelm: Riddle 99 (G)	gloss s. x ex.	Canterbury
Bald: Leechbook	Mostly compiled c.900; MS c.950	?Winchester

Appendix A3: Dates and locations

Appendix B: *Wudeleac* catalogue

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 543	*wudeleac*

Appendix B1: *Wudeleac* catalogue

Source	*Date*	*Location*
Glossary: Laud	MS s. xii	Canterbury

Appendix B3: Dates and locations

Appendix C: *Wodewistle* catalogue

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Glossary: Épinal	EpGl (Pheifer) 255	*uuodaeuistlae*
2	Glossary: Erfurt	ErfGl (Pheifer) 248	*uuodeuuislae*
3	Glossary: Corpus 2	CorpGl 2 (Hessels) 3.397	*wodewistle*
4	Glossary: Antwerp	AntGl 4 (Kindschi) 31	*wodewistle*
5	Glossary: Brussels 1	BrGl 1 (Wright-Wülcker) 8.53	*wodewistle*
6	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 116	*vudevistle*

Appendix C1: *Wodewistle* catalogue

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
1	2, 3, ?4, ?5, 6	Gloss on *cicuta* or, in 4, *elleborum*

Appendix C2: Related citations

Source	*Date*	*Location*
Glossary: Épinal	c.675 × 700	Canterbury
Glossary: Erfurt	c.675 × 700	Canterbury
Glossary: Corpus 2	MS s. viii/ix	Canterbury
Glossary: Antwerp	s. xi[1]	Abingdon
Glossary: Brussels 1	s. xi[1]	Christ Church, Canterbury
Glossary: Durham	MS s. xii	Durham

Appendix C3: Dates and locations

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Old English *Hymlic*: Is it Hemlock?

Irené Wotherspoon

1. Introduction

This word-study appears to be more straightforward than that of *hymele* (Wotherspoon, in this volume) in that Old English (OE) *hymlic* (found in various spellings, including *hemlic*) has an apparent Modern English descendant.[1] It is usually taken for granted that *hymlic* means 'hemlock' (*Conium maculatum* L.). However, re-examining even such an apparently well-established case by bringing together the evidence can give new perspectives on this and associated plant-names.

2. Citations

The catalogue for *hymlic* (Appendix A1) consists of twenty entries, after the rejection of one example of *hymelyc* as being a misspelling of another plant-name (see Appendix B). In addition, certain catalogue entries are classed as 'related citations' (Appendix A2), meaning that, in their extant form, they cannot be shown to have an origin which is independent of other similar citations. In the case of glossary entries, 'origin' is interpreted here as the point at which a particular Latin term became associated with a particular Old English term or terms in an act of translation and/or explanation. It may be possible to trace that act back to a particular Latin text, or to an earlier glossary involving Latin and/or Greek with no Old English element, but it may also be impossible to uncover that ultimate origin. It would be extremely useful to ascertain that a single Latin to Old English translation had been made quite independently by two or more early medieval scholars, but such precision as to date and location is most often beyond us. The relations between glossing traditions are beginning to be untangled by scholars. For example, the relationship between Catalogue Numbers (CNos) 10 and 11 (both in the Brussels Glossary), 12 (the Durham Glossary), 13 and 14 (the First Cleopatra Glossary) and 15 (the Laud Glossary) is described by Rusche as involving descent from a common archetype (original) (Rusche 2003: 181), while a more distant relationship between these and CNos 17 and 19 (the two manuscripts of the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary) is demonstrable: Rusche argues convincingly for the common archetype to which these glosses are variously related being a text of Dioscorides' *De materia medica* available in England by

[1] The spellings which actually occur in the sources can be seen in Appendix A1 below.

the late seventh century (compare Hall, this volume: Section 3; see also Pheifer (1974) for the relationship and chronology of the glossaries). In spite of such welcome elucidations, however, we cannot, as yet, identify separate original acts of translation, as opposed to copyings, so it is safer to regard identical glossary entries as having descended from a single parent, that is, as 'related citations'.

As regards the independent results (excluding related citations) from Appendices A1 and A2 in this article, there is a total of twelve *hymlic* occurrences of which nine are in medical works, two in glossaries, and one in land records (charter bounds).

3. Descriptors

'Descriptors' are words or phrases in the source texts which qualify a plant-name, thus offering some information on its appearance, characteristics or other qualities which were noticed in Anglo-Saxon times. There are no descriptors extant for *hymlic*, not even estimations of its efficacy as a medical remedy which are commonly found elsewhere.

4. Collocations

'Collocations' are words or phrases which occur in the source texts with, in this case, *hymlic*, but do not directly describe the plant's appearance or characteristics. The three collocations with *hymlic* will now be discussed.

4.1 *Niðeweard*

The collocation *niðeweard* features in the phrase *nyoðeweardne hymlic,* 'the lower part of *hymlic*', and it occurs in the medical text now named *Lacnunga*, in a salve to get rid of lice (CNo. 8; Grattan and Singer 1952: 172–3, Section 130). The phrase presumably indicates the lower part of the stem, or the root. *Niðeweard* is frequently used with the names of plants in Anglo-Saxon medical works, for example, with *wyrmwyrt*, *medowyrt*, *eoforþrote* and others, and it also occurs in charms.

4.2 *Lēah*

Lēah is the most likely interpretation of *lege*, occurring in a phrase including *hymlic* in the form *hemlec lege* (CNo. 20). The text is a charter which grants land at Bathampton, Somerset to a certain Hehelm. The grant was issued in the year 956 by King Eadwig (see Kelly 1999). *Hemlec lege*, a phrase occurring in the description of the boundary of the land grant, is interpreted as '*lēah* covered in *hymlic*'. Gelling and Cole (2000: 237) have considered the meaning of *lēah*, and find that, up to the mid tenth century, it denoted 'forest, wood, glade, clearing' but, after this date, it developed a meaning of 'pasture, meadow'. Although Eadwig's charter dates to the period of semantic change, the place-name itself is most likely to be considerably older, so probably enshrines the earlier meaning.

4.3 *Dæl*

Unfortunately, it is difficult to find evidence for *hymlic* collocations in place-names, as opposed to place-descriptions such as that in Section 4.2. A major difficulty is the separation of the plant-name *hymlic*, with its various spellings, from the various spellings of words such as OE *hol* 'hollow' (dative plural: *holum*) and Old Norse (ON) *holmr* 'small island, water-meadow'. However, the example of Holmedale Farm, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, appears to be a safe example of *hymlic* in a place-name. The name is extant as *Humbelochedaile* in the twelfth century, and as *Humbelokedale* in the thirteenth century. This name is accepted as indicating 'Hemlock Valley' by Smith, and features what he describes as 'the obscure Sc[ottish] and NCy [North Country] form *humilok*', combined with *dæl* 'valley', from Old Scandinavian *dalr* (Smith 1937: 163; 321).[2] Nonetheless, there is no pre-Conquest evidence for this name, and, even if there were, the only information offered by this single example is a botanical habitat which is likely to be appropriate for many native species.

5. Translations

Hymlic, in the surviving Latin-to-Old English glossaries, translates Latin *cicuta* and the transliterated Greek word *leptefilos*.

5.1 *Leptefilos*

There are two loci where *hymlic* glosses *leptefilos*, namely the Brussels Glossary (CNo. 10) and the First Cleopatra Glossary (CNo. 14).[3] The Cleopatra manuscript (which contains three Latin-to-Old English glossaries) was written in Canterbury in the early tenth century (Ker 1957, no. 143; Rusche 1996), and the plant-name entries included in it were taken from an earlier plant-name glossary. The Brussels manuscript, written in Canterbury in the early eleventh century (Ker 1957, no. 9), contains a glossary which can be traced back to earlier Latin-to-Latin and Greek-to-Latin glossaries which were subject-classified rather than alphabetically arranged. The plant-name entries in Cleopatra and the section entitled *Nomina herbarum Grece et Latine*, 'Names of Plants in Greek and Latin', in the Brussels Glossary derive from the same source.

Leptefilos originates in the Greek plant-name *leptophyllos* (λεπτόφυλλος), meaning literally 'thin-leaved', which appears to provide evidence for the plant's appearance. However, the glossary name *leptefilos* requires explanation. Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.152; see also DOEPN, under *hemlic*) raises the possibility that there may have been manuscript confusion with Greek *chairephyllon* 'cow parsley' (*Anthriscus sylvestris* (L.) Hoffm.), especially as this plant was also called *cicutaria* (see Section 5.2 on *cicuta*), and shares several other names with hemlock.

Bierbaumer also suggests another possibility. The preceding gloss to [*l*]*eptefilos hymelic* in the Brussels Glossary is *cinoglossa ribbe* (Wright 1884: 295, lines 27–8). In the earlier glossary

[2] For the Modern Scots usage, see *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (DSL) under *humlok* n[oun].

[3] In the Brussels Glossary (MS Brussels, Royal Library, 1828–30), *leptefilos* appears erroneously as *Ieptefilos* (with initial upper-case *i*) (Rusche 2003: 183). Wright's reading error of *septefilos* (Wright 1884: 295, line 28) was corrected by Logeman (1890: 318).

now known as the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary,[4] the equivalent entry for Brussels' *cinoglossa ribbe* appears with a more accurate Latin lemma (headword) as *canis lingua ribbae* (Pheifer 1974: 12, line 184), and the entry which immediately follows (which must be the equivalent of Brussels' [*l*]*eptefilos hymelic*) is *cicuta hymblicae* (that is, *hymlic*). This suggests that *cicuta*, as a result of a slip of the eye when the text was copied, had, by the time the Brussels and Cleopatra manuscripts were written, been replaced by *leptefilos* which had been drawn in from a different entry. Mistakes and confusion are not rare in the Old English glossaries, apparently caused by, among more general factors, various re-arrangements of the source materials, and then the glossaries themselves, into semantic groupings or alphabetical order, as shown by Lendinara (1999).

Rusche (2003: 182–5) also believes that *leptefilos* once belonged to a different gloss, suggesting that it has been taken out of context from Dioscorides' *De materia medica*, a first-century medical work written in Greek and later translated into Latin. It includes three types of *artemisia*, namely: *artemisia, artemisia leptofilos* and *artemisia tagantes* (Howald and Sigerist 1927: 42–5). Rusche (2003: 191) is able to make a convincing case that a Greek-to-Latin plant-name glossary based on the *De materia medica* was available in Canterbury in the late seventh century, and, possibly, even a full Greek text of this medical work. He also presents evidence that *leptefilos*, as a lemma for *hymlic*, resulted from a copying error by which *leptefilos* was detached from Dioscorides' *artemisia leptofilos*. Furthermore, since *leptefilos* is an adjectival form, rather than a noun, it is unlikely to have originated as an independent plant-name without having a noun to qualify.

Rusche (2003: 188) shows that the correct Old English gloss to *leptefilos* (taken as a type of *artemisia*) can be found in the Durham Glossary where it is glossed *mugvyrt*, that is, OE *mucgwyrt* 'mugwort', in modern designation, a member of the *Artemisia* genus (Lindheim 1941: 15, line 217).[5] The correct interpretation also appears in the Old English *Herbarium*, a translation from the southern European Latin medical compilation usually referred to as the *Herbarium of Pseudo-Apuleius*. The Old English entry for *mugwyrt* begins: 'This third plant that we call *artemisia leptefilos* and, by another name, *mucgwyrt*' (*Đeos þridde wyrt þe we artemesiam leptefilos & oðrum naman mucgwyrt nemdon*; De Vriend 1984: 58). Thus, it can be seen that the *leptefilos hymlic* gloss is an error which, therefore, offers no evidence for the interpretation of OE *hymlic*.

5.2 *Cicuta*

There are eight loci in the glossaries where *hymlic* glosses Latin *cicuta* (also occurring as *cicata*).[6] Classical Latin *cicuta* denoted 'hemlock, *Conium maculatum*', as well as the juice of hemlock, and the stem of the same plant when used as a pipe (OLD). However, Kitson (1988: 107) makes an argument based on, among other things, the diverse qualities of *cicuta* as being both poisonous and healing, for Classical Latin *cicuta* having variously indicated hemlock, ground-elder (*Aegopodium podagraria* L.), masterwort (*Peucedanum ostruthium* (L.) W. D. J. Koch) and wild angelica (*Angelica sylvestris* L.) (but see also Section 10 below).

[4] The Épinal-Erfurt Glossary survives in two manuscripts: Épinal, Bibliothèque Municipale 72, and the first glossary in Erfurt, Stadtbücherei, Amplonianus F.42. Some entries are Latin-to-Latin but many are Latin-to-Old English, and both manuscripts are copies of a lost original which was compiled in late seventh-century Canterbury.

[5] The Durham Glossary survives in a twelfth-century manuscript (Durham, Cathedral Library, Hunter 100), but its glosses originate in the same Canterbury archetype as those of the Brussels and Cleopatra glossaries.

[6] CNos 11–13 and 15–19. *Cicata* occurs in CNo. 12.

Kitson (1988: 105–6) makes a further point that, although Pliny has distinct names for nearly forty umbellifers, he has none for ground-elder, masterwort and wild angelica, which have clear visual similarities. Moreover, the traditional cures assigned to these plants correspond reasonably well with some of the uses for *cicuta* recommended by Pliny. Kitson, therefore, considers the name *cicuta* to denote these three plants as well as hemlock. As regards the British medieval Latin of the Anglo-Saxon glossaries, the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS) defines *cicuta* as 'hemlock (*Conium*), conf[usion] w[ith] *conyza* and other plants' (see Section 6.2 below). Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) is given in the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED) as the only English equivalent of Latin *cicuta* (MED, under *cicūta*).

It is evident from the above that there is some element of doubt that *cicuta always* meant *Conium maculatum* in English texts, though it appears to be the *principal* sense of *cicuta* from Classical Latin through to the later Middle Ages.

6. Associations

This section is concerned with words which are presented in the source texts as having a relationship with, in this case, *hymlic*, but which cannot be safely taken to represent a direct translation. In a glossary entry, for example, an associated term may be in third position after the lemma and its presumed translation.[7]

6.1 *Wōdewistle*

Hymlic is associated with *wōdewistle* in an entry in the Durham Glossary (CNo. 12) which reads: *cicata heomlic uel vude-vistle*. In an entry such as this, it is provisionally assumed that *hymlic* was provided as the Old English translation of Latin *cicuta*, and that *vude-vistle* was added, probably later. It may be intended as a synonym of *hymlic*, as a more generic or a more specific term, or there may be various other reasons for its presence. It is, therefore, safer to describe such a term with the somewhat neutral word 'association', pending new evidence.

Lindheim (1941: 42, no. 116) regards *vudevistle* in the Durham Glossary as indicating *wōdewistle*, arguing that the glossator has understandably mistaken the first element for *wudu-* 'wood' since it is very common in Old English plant-names. The correct first element, however, judging from other occurrences of the name, is *wōd* 'mad'.

Although *wōdewistle* is in third position in the Durham Glossary entry, elsewhere it glosses Latin *cicuta* directly, for example, an entry in the Brussels Glossary reads: *cicuta wodewistle* (Wright 1884: 297, line 8).[8] Since *cicuta* is glossed directly by both *hymlic* and *wodewistle*, it might be assumed that all three names refer to the same plant, but it should be remembered that *cicuta*, at least, may have more than one meaning (see Section 5.2).

The literal meaning of *wōdewistle* may offer some clues. The second element *-hwistle* indicates a reed or pipe, that is, a hollow stem which can be used to make sounds, as with a whistle. At a later date, in Middle English (ME), *wode-whistle* is defined as: 'any of several hollow-stemmed plants, esp[ecially] hemlock (Conium maculatum) and cowbane (Cicuta virosa)' (MED, under *whistle*). The hollow stems of *Conium maculatum* are known to have

[7] For a more detailed explanation of associations see Biggam, in this volume, Section 6.

[8] This entry (but with various spellings) also appears in the Corpus Glossary (MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 144; Hessels 1890: 31, line C397) and in the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary (Pheifer 1974: 14, line 248).

been used as whistles by children, sometimes with fatal results (Lopez 1999: 852).[9] Cowbane also has hollow stems. The 'reed, pipe' or 'hollow-stemmed' meanings are borne out by the Anglo-Saxon Harley Glossary[10] entry: *cicuta musa fistula*, in which Latin *musa* indicates 'cornemuse, hornpipe, bagpipe' (DMLBS, under *Musa*, sense 3), that is, musical instruments involving a reed or pipe; and *fistula* (in the pre-Conquest period) indicates the pipes of musical instruments, tubes or ducts in the human body, and the spice cinnamon which can be acquired in the form of sticks which are usually hollow (see DMLBS, under *fistula*, senses 2, 4a and 6a).

The *wōd-* element of *wōdewistle*, meaning 'mad' has two possible explanations. In a text which was known in Anglo-Saxon England, namely, Virgil's *Eclogues*, there is found a close association of *cicuta* and *fistula* in *est mihi disparibus septem compacta cicutis fistula*, 'I have a pipe formed of seven uneven hemlock stalks' (Eclogue 2, lines 37–8; Virgil 1934–5: I.12–13). This refers to the musical instrument known as Pan pipes, as the same eclogue makes clear: 'Pan it was who first taught man to make many reeds one with wax' (*Pan primum calamos cera coniungere pluris instituit*; Eclogue 2, lines 32–3). Connection with the pipes of Pan may account for *wōd-*, as Pan was reputed to cause 'sudden and groundless terror' (OED, under *Pan*). Bierbaumer, however, suggests that *wōd-* might refer to the effects of poisoning with cowbane as this often involves convulsions, screaming and gnashing of teeth (*Krämpfe mit Toben, Schreien, Zähneknirschen*; Bierbaumer 1975–9: III.259).

The Antwerp Glossary[11] equates *wōdewistle* with the Latin plant-names *helleborus* (in first position after the lemma) and *veratrum*. The Latin names most often indicate the white hellebore (*Veratrum album* L.) and/or the black hellebore (*Helleborus niger* L.), but DOEPN suggests the gloss to *helleborus* 'has to be a confusion with *wēdeberie*' (which more usually glosses this name; see Hall's first paper in this volume, Section 3) especially since the hellebore stem cannot be made into a whistle or hollow tube. For this reason, DOEPN interprets *wōdewistle* as cowbane (*Cicuta virosa* L.) which *does* have a hollow stem.

6.2 *Conyza*

Another association with *hymlic* occurs in the Laud herbal glossary, in an entry which reads: *Cicuta .i. humeloch [ue]l coniza*, 'Cicuta, that is *hymlic* or *coniza*' (CNo. 15; Stracke 1974: 29, line 297). This represents an originally Greek plant-name, *konyza* (κόνυζα), which was adopted into Latin as *conyza*. In Classical Latin, this name denoted '*Inula viscosa* and related species' (OLD), referring to the woody fleabane, now classified as *Dittrichia viscosa* (L.) Greuter, and its relatives. In other words, the definition of Classical Latin *conyza* cannot be more specific than 'the fleabanes (the *Inula* and *Dittrichia* genera)'. In British medieval Latin, the DMLBS interprets *conyza* generally as '*Inula sp*[*ecies*] (conf[usion] w[ith] other herbs)'. Since the publication of the fascicule for 'C' (1981) of the DMLBS, the *Inula* genus has been re-classified by botanists into *Inula* and *Dittrichia* genera, so the definitions of the Classical Latin and British medieval Latin name *conyza* are essentially the same, with two exceptions: apparent connections with hemlock and with lovage in the latter (DMLBS, senses b and c; for lovage, see note 12 below).

[9] I am grateful to Alaric Hall for drawing my attention to this paper. See also Hall's second paper on *elleborus* in this volume, Section 7.

[10] MS London, British Library, Harley 3376.

[11] MSS Antwerp, Plantin-Moretus Museum 47 [and] London, British Library, Addit. 32246.

The sense of 'hemlock' ascribed to *conyza* results from the Laud herbal glossary entry cited above (CNo. 15) in which *conyza* appears to be offered as an alternative Latin name for *cicuta*. It is clear that this association of *conyza* and *cicuta* continued into a later period, as can be seen in an entry in the Alphita Glossary, dated to before 1400, in which the lemma *cicuta* is 'interpreted' by several Latin and English words, including the phrase *coniza uel conium*, and the English words *hemelok uel hornwistel* (MED under *horn* 7c). The pairing of *conyza* and *conium* in this definition suggests an explanation as to how the fleabane name *conyza* was drawn into a *hymlic* association.

It is often the case that the later glossaries with lengthy interpretations represent a gathering together of various definitions from the past, both correct and mistaken, so they need to be analyzed rather than taken on trust. For example, Mowat suggests that the first interpretation following *cicuta*, namely, *celena*, is 'Apparently a name for *cucurbita* [gourd] which has slipped out of its place from the similarity of σίκυος [*sikuos* 'cucumber, gourd'] to cicuta' (in Mirfeld 1882: 39, note 20). The pairing of *coniza* with *conium* in the Alphita Glossary hints at a further confusion of two names, and one which probably originated at an earlier period. Latin *conium*, from the Greek *kōneion* (κώνειον), like *cicuta*, is defined as 'hemlock' (DMLBS), and the two names occur together in the Laud herbal glossary, only eight lines away from the entry mentioned at the beginning of this section (CNo. 15). Stracke (1974: 85, no. 297) suggests that confusion may have arisen between *conyza* and *conium* so that the former, instead of the latter, was added to the *cicuta .i. humeloch* entry. This explanation is repeated in DOEPN (under *hymlic*) as a probability, and in the DMLBS (under *conyza*) without qualification. If the formal confusion of *conyza* with *conium* is accepted as the reason why the former name occurs with *cicuta* and OE *hymlic*, it clearly makes no contribution to understanding *hymlic*.[12]

7. Textual contrasts and comparisons

The purpose of this section is to consider cases in which *hymlic* occurs in close proximity to other plant-names, suggesting that *hymlic* is somehow contrasted or compared with those other names. Depending on the quality of the evidence and the identification of the other plant-names, this information can imply that *hymlic* indicates a different plant from its companions. This information can usually only be used in a corroborative fashion along with better quality evidence from the above sections, but it must, nonetheless, be taken into consideration.[13]

In the glossary entries (CNos. 10–19), the plant-names accompanying *hymlic* are considered as translations (Section 5 above) or associations (Section 6), but the medical texts offer evidence for potential lexical contrast in the lists of ingredients (usually plants) used in concocting the medical remedies. *Hymlic* appears in the company of over fifteen other plants, but the majority of them accompany *hymlic* only once. Single instances of textual contrast are treated with extreme caution since they could arise from errors in transmission, or from

[12] A further confusion occurs in this same area of the Laud herbal glossary, since *coniza* is glossed by *coriandru*[*m*] at line 302 (Stracke 1974: 29). This particular entry is thought to derive from confusion between *conium* and *corion* (Stracke 1974: 85, note 297). A single glossary entry equating *conyza* with *lubestica* occurs in an eleventh-century Latin-to-Old English and/or to-Latin glossary in MS Brussels, Bibiothèque Royale 1828–30 (Wright 1884: 297, line 11). This must also result from an error, since Latin *lubestica* indicates lovage (*Levisticum officinale* W.D.J. Koch) (DMLBS under *levisticus*), adopted into Old English as *lufestice*. Another entry in the same glossary correctly has *lubestica lufestice* (Wright 1884: 301, line 35).

[13] For further information about this approach, see Biggam (in this volume), Section 7.

individual error. However, *wermōd* 'wormwood' appears three times in apparent contrast with *hymlic* (CNos. 7, 8, 9), and *belene* 'henbane' appears twice (CNos. 6, 7).[14] This suggests that, whatever the identification of *hymlic* is found to be, it is unlikely to be wormwood or henbane.

8. Etymology

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) gives no etymology for *hymlic/hemlic*, and can find no cognates in other languages. It suggests that the form *hym-* is the original, and that *hem-* is a Kentish dialectal variant, although there seems to be little real evidence for this suggestion. Apart from one instance of *hymlic*, the occurrences of this plant-name in the Anglo-Saxon medical compilations now known as Bald's *Leechbook* and *Leechbook III* (CNos. 1–6) have *e*-spellings, whereas all occurrences in the *Lacnunga* (CNos. 7–9), have *y*-spellings. The Latin-to-Old English glossaries (CNos. 10–19) have *y*-, *u*-, and *e*-spellings. The dual forms *hem-/hum-* continue into Middle and Early Modern English (see quotations in the MED and OED). Liberman (2008: 105) opines that the chronology of the glosses, with *-y-* forms appearing in the earlier ones, and *-e-* forms from about the time that OE *y* became Kentish *e*, is responsible for the assumption that the *e*-spellings of this plant-name are Kentish rather than just later. Note also that the plant-name *wermōd* 'wormwood' appears as both *wermod* and *wyrmod* but the spelling does not always tally with the form of *hymlic/hemlic* in the same sentence, for example, in the *Lacnunga* (CNo. 7), the forms *hymlic* and *wermod* appear side by side. This casts doubt on a dialectal explanation.

Sauer (1992: 403) gives *hemlic* as a native simplex, that is, he does not regard it as consisting of *hem+lic* or *heml+ic.* However, the possibility of a stem+suffix formation is still worth consideration. Taking the possible suffix in *hym(b)+lic/hem+lic* first, *-lic* '-like' is a commonly occurring Old English suffix found in many adjectives; but there is no evidence that *hym(b)lic/hemlic* was originally an adjective, and, as pointed out by Liberman (2008: 108), both this adjectival suffix and an origin in OE *lēac* 'leek, onion, garlic, garden herb' are phonologically improbable. Liberman sees the *-lic* ending of *hym(b)lic/hemlic* and its Modern English descendant *-lock* as a parallel to that of OE *cyrlic/cerlic*, the ancestor of *charlock*. He hypothesises that *-lic* is cognate with OHG *-ling* and that *hemlic* goes back to a form *hem-l-ic* with double suffix, only otherwise recorded in *cyrlic*, 'but by the year 700 the suffix had become unproductive and dead'. The *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (ODEE) gives *-oc/-uc* as a diminutive suffix in Old English, the use of which was extended in Middle English. Liberman attributes the change from *-ic* to *-ock* as due to a folk etymological association with *-lock*, as in, for example, *wedlock*.

Turning to the stem of *hymlic/hemlic*, while still assuming for the moment that *-lic* is a suffix, searching for the source of a word for which there are no obvious cognates in other languages necessarily leads to the 'no stone unturned' approach adopted in this word-study. *Hem* 'a hem, border' (Bosworth 1898) is not a very common word in Old English, but Liberman (2008: 106) cites the suggestion in Webster (1828, under *hemlock*) that it might refer to a 'border plant, a plant growing in hedges' (see below). Bosworth (1898, under *hem*) also mentions the occurrence of *hemme* in the fifteeenth-century *Promptorium parvulorum* which is interpreted by Latin *fimbria* 'a fringe', again suggesting a peripheral feature, but this

[14] *Netel* 'nettle' also occurs twice in apparent contrast with *hymlic* (CNos. 1, 4), but one of these is named as 'red nettle' which may indicate a different plant from commonplace nettle.

sense is not attested in Old English. Liberman also mentions tentative suggestions from other nineteenth-century etymologists, including that of a hypothetical word meaning 'to heap up, to cover' or 'to hinder', and a connection with *healm* 'stubble'. None of them is convincing. Liberman (2008: 106–7), in conclusion, relates the *hem-* element in *hemlic* to Low German and Middle High German *hemer* 'hellebore' and its cognates in Balto-Slavic languages, all of which derive from a Proto-Indo-European (PIE) root **kem/*chem* meaning, for example, 'poison, misfortune, bitterness, sickness'.[15] He relates the *hym* of *hymlic* and *hummel* 'hornless (of cattle)' to a zero grade of the same root.

For the *hymblic* forms (with medial *-b-*), which are the earliest forms, Liberman rejects the idea that the /b/ is a parasitic sound caused by the preceding /m/, and proposes that these forms constitute an independent variant of the Old English plant-name. Certainly it is unlikely that the *b*-forms have anything to do with *umbella*, the Latin term from which *Umbelliferae*, the name of a botanical family (also known as *Apiaceae*) is derived.[16] As noted in the study of OE *hymele* (Wotherspoon, in this volume), the flowers of plants often seem to have held little interest for medieval people. However, the source of the Greek-derived Latin name *conium* (see Section 6.2) does, apparently, relate to the shape of the flower (an inverted cone), and this image persisted as late as the modern description 'umbellate', dating from the mid-seventeenth century (from Latin *umbella* 'sunshade, parasol'). Although the earliest examples of OE *hymlic* occur with a *-b-* (as in *hymblic(e)*), the name is unlikely to have any connection with *umbella* since this word is quite rare in Classical Latin, and, for British medieval Latin, Latham gives just one example, dated as late as c.1217. Furthermore, although initial *h-* is not stable in some Old English words, extant examples of *hymlic* always occur with *h-*.

It might be supposed from the form of the two words that *hymlic* has a connection with the Old English plant-name *humele/hymele* (see Wotherspoon, in this volume), and it seems that the two words could occasionally be confused (see Appendix B) but in terms of their forms rather than their semantics.

As mentioned above, Liberman derives OE *hym-* from a Proto-Indo-European word-root **kem-* (Pokorny's **kemero-*). Pokorny also has a root **ḱem-* which he defines as 'Stange, Stock, Horn' (stick, cane, horn), appearing in Köbler's partial revision of Pokorny as 'pole, stick' (*Indogermanisches Wörterbuch* (IW)). The semantic core of this root appears to indicate an artefact or natural object useful to humans because of its length and thinness. As the origin of a plant-name, this suggests a tall plant with a relatively straight stem and, preferably, with a traditional use or uses in rural societies.

9. Lexical comparisons

This section on the lexical comparative evidence[17] represents an attempt to ascertain the applications of the word *hemlock* (the direct descendant of OE *hymlic* and its variant forms) in the botanical folk taxonomy of England, to assess the concepts which the use of *hemlock* appears to involve and, in turn, to see whether the results relate in any way to the etymological findings in Section 8. Britten and Holland (1886: 254) find the name *hemlock*, without further description, usually denotes the plant called 'hemlock' today (*Conium maculatum* L.), but they

[15] This word-root appears as **kemero-* in Pokorny's (1959) dictionary of Proto-Indo-European.

[16] Hemlock belongs to the Umbelliferae family, but this is not to suggest that *hymlic* has yet been identified.

[17] Sections 9 to 12 have been written in collaboration with C. P. Biggam.

add 'it is frequently applied … to several of the large *Umbelliferae*'. They interpret reference to the 'large hemlock' as indicating wild angelica (*Angelica sylvestris* L.), and to the 'small hemlock' as possibly indicating cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris* (L.) Hoffm.). They also mention that William Withering, a late eighteenth-century botanical writer, refers to fool's parsley (*Aethusa cynapium* L.) as 'lesser hemlock'. Britten and Holland also identify three plants which have been called 'water hemlock': hemlock water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata* L.); fine-leaved water-dropwort (*Oenanthe aquatica* (L.) Poir., formerly known as *Oenanthe phellandrium* Lam.); and cowbane (*Cicuta virosa* L.)

Although the above list of species is relatively small, there are hints that *hemlock* was a name which, in certain times and places, could be applied to a larger number of plants. The *English Dialect Dictionary* (EDD) includes the following comment by William Patrick (1831: 137) about the name *hemlock* in Lanarkshire: 'By the common people nearly all the Umbellate plants are called hemlock'. In Middle English, there was an even broader use of the name, since, apart from *Conium maculatum*, the MED (under *hemlok(e)*) also defines it as 'any of various wild plants or weeds; fern, wild succory'. The apparently wide application of the name *hemlock* which is evidenced in post-Conquest times may simply result from the collection of localized uses but, as with all early plant-names, we should not assume it was used of only one or two species. If, for example, the name *hemlock* became synonymous with poison, another poisonous plant may well be named as a hemlock too, in spite of it having no other connection with the first-named plant. This form of naming is common in a folk taxonomy.

The next step in this part of the research is to consider the non-*hemlock* folk-names of the plants which have also been called *hemlock* in English folk taxonomies, because most British plants have several names. This provides a set of concepts representing the cognitive associations which have been made with these plants in various locations and at various times. This is useful because it is often the case that features of plants which seem obvious to modern people were not necessarily the significant ones to country-dwellers of the past. Only the concepts that were the most productive of names will be mentioned here. Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) has an abundance of names relating to lace, such as *Honiton lace*, *lady's lace* and *gipsy curtains*.[18] This must refer to the flower-heads of hemlock which look like small groupings of tiny white stars. There are also numerous variations of the name *kex*, such as *kakezie, kesh, kexies* and *koushe*. The OED identifies this as meaning 'The dry, usually hollow, stem of various herbaceous plants, *esp*[ecially] of large umbelliferous plants'. This name occurs across Britain in a huge variety of forms, suggesting the importance of this concept in connection with the plant. Other names perhaps hint at the hemlock's poisonous qualities, such as *bad man's oatmeal* (referring to the devil) and *devil's blossom*.

The names of wild angelica are dominated by variations of *kex*, including *kesk* and *kewsies* but this word is often qualified, as in *ghost-kex, smooth kesh* and *trumpet keck*. This suggests that wild angelica was not considered the *archetypal* source of hollow stems. Two names suggest this plant's liking for water, namely, *water kesh* and *water squirt*, and two other names, *ground ash* and *ground elder*, may suggest that its leaves resemble those of the named trees.

Cow parsley has a profusion of names which combine the word *parsley* with various animal-names, for example, *dog parsley, hare's parsley, sheep's parsley* and, of course, *cow parsley*. These names presumably allude, firstly, to the similarity of parsley (*Petroselinum*

[18] The plant-names mentioned in this section are taken from Grigson (1955).

species) leaves to those of cow parsley, and, secondly, they suggest that this plant is inferior to the parsley preferred by humans. Other names also suggest, literally or metaphorically, that cow parsley was eaten by animals, for example, *rabbit's food* and *adder's meat*. Cow parsley flowers, just like hemlock flowers (see above), can be described as white and lacy, and some names alluding to this feature are shared by hemlock and cow parsley, for example, *gipsy curtains* and *Honiton lace*. Other 'lacy' cow parsley names are: *my lady's lace, Queen Anne's lace* and *Queen Anne's lace handkerchief*. Some cow parsley names focus on the stem of this plant, as with other plants discussed here. It has a number of *kex*-related names such as *kesk* and *kewsies*, and also various forms of *eltrot* which the OED defines as 'A name for the stalk of several plants'. Like the hemlock, cow parsley also has a few 'devil' names, such as *bad man's oatmeal* (shared with hemlock), *devil's meat, devil's parsley* and *naughty man's oatmeal* (another euphemism for the devil). As cow parsley is not as toxic as the hemlock, these names may have been 'borrowed' from the hemlock because the two plants have considerable similarities of appearance.

Fool's parsley has much fewer names than the previously mentioned plants. It has several animal names combined with *parsley* or *dock*, such as *cow parsley* (shared with cow parsley), *dog poison* and *pig dock*. This is yet another umbellifer with white, lace-like flowers, and the name *lace curtains* probably refers to them. Another name, *devil's wand*, appears to combine a devil-name with a word which may refer to the long stem.

We now turn to three plants, mentioned above, which have been called 'water hemlock': hemlock water-dropwort; fine-leaved water-dropwort; and cowbane. Hemlock water-dropwort is extremely poisonous, possibly the most poisonous indigenous British plant, and the force of *hemlock* in two of this plant's names may well indicate toxicity. Particularly poisonous are the plant's roots which consist of five or more tubers looking like swollen fingers, and this explains its names *five-fingered root* and *dead man's fingers*. It is also known as *dead tongue* which the OED suggests results from the paralysis of the speech organs which can result from poisoning by this plant. Hemlock water-dropwort is also known as *bilders, belder-root* and *billers* which derives from a Celtic root *bior*, *bir* 'water, well, spring', giving rise to Irish *biorar/biolar* and Welsh *berwr* both meaning 'water-cress' (OED, under *bilders*; Breeze 2000 argues specifically for a Primitive Cornish etymon for the English word). *Bilders* is defined in the OED as 'A name given by the old herbalists to some water plant or plants, cruciferous or umbelliferous'; J. B. Smith argued that its original sense in English was 'watercress' but was later extended to various water-plants (2005). It is also called *eltrot* (discussed above) and *cowbane* (see below).

The fine-leaved water-dropwort is less poisonous than the hemlock water-dropwort but still dangerous, and its names of *water hemlock* and *horsebane* indicate this, as does the name *deathin*, used in parts of Scotland, where it is also used of cowbane (DSL, under *deathin*). Another name for this plant is *edgeweed* which, presumably, refers to its preferred habitat at the sides of streams or ponds.

Cowbane apparently has fewer names than the other plants considered here. It is also known by names considered above: *water hemlock* and *deathin* in Scotland, both presumably referring to its poisonous qualities, as does the name *cowbane* itself, meaning 'cow-killer'. It is also known as *brook-tongue*, referring to its watery habitat, and as *scoots* which may also refer to its habitat since Britten and Holland state that the name, in Ireland, refers to other Umbelliferae growing in wet places.

The latter part of this section is intended to show the concepts most usually connected with

the plants designated 'hemlock' in at least parts of Britain. These names were, for the most part, assigned by people living in a rural environment who were familiar with these plants, and in receipt of oral traditions about them. These salient associations are likely to have had a long history (see Biggam 2003: 206–7). It is clear that some concepts, such as lace-like flowers, cannot be attributed to early medieval times, but names which warn of poisonous qualities, for example, are likely to have a long history, and may help in the identification process. What conclusions can be drawn from the information presented in this section?

As regards the etymology of *hymlic*, there appear to be three possibilities for the word-stem, as discussed above. Firstly, OE *hem* 'a hem, border' led Webster (1828) to suggest a definition for *hymlic* of 'border plant, a plant growing in hedges'. If this is coupled with descriptions of the habitats of those plants which have been referred to as 'hemlock', we find considerable evidence for edges and linear features: hemlock (roadsides, ditches); wild angelica (by streams, ditches and ponds); cow parsley (hedgerows, ditches and ponds); hemlock water-dropwort (ditches, pondsides); fine-leaved water-dropwort (ditches, ponds, and the name *edgeweed*); and cowbane (ditches, pondsides). Only fool's parsley has no mention of edges or linear features in its habitat description (all habitats are taken from Stace 1997).

The second possible etymology of *hym-* was related by Liberman to a word-root which could mean 'poison, bitterness, sickness' and, of the 'hemlock' short-list, the majority of the plants are poisonous, and cow parsley is mildly toxic. Wild angelica is neither, and has long been eaten. The poisonous properties of the other plants are compatible with names referring to the devil, which occur for hemlock, cow parsley and fool's parsley. Fool's parsley, hemlock water-dropwort, fine-leaved water-dropwort and cowbane have names which suggest they can kill animals (at least).

Thirdly, it has been suggested that another Proto-Indo-European word-root meaning 'stick, cane, horn' could refer to the stems of the 'hemlock' plants which provided hollow tubes for various purposes. All the short-listed 'hemlock' plants in this section have hollow stems, and this is compatible with the large variety of *kex*-type names and *eltrot* names recorded for the hemlock, wild angelica, cow parsley and hemlock water-dropwort.

10. Consideration of the basic data

The purpose of this present section is to bring together all the information from the previous sections, to consider any contradictions, and to decide on the conclusion which is currently best supported by the evidence.

Perhaps the clearest evidence arises from the use of *hymlic* to translate Latin *cicuta* (Section 5.2). *Cicuta* in Classical Latin and in Middle English has been interpreted in authoritative dictionaries as meaning only 'hemlock', that is, *Conium maculatum*. In addition, the DMLBS gives 'hemlock' as the principal sense of *cicuta* in British medieval Latin, although mentioning that it has been confused with *conyza*. As discussed in Section 6.2, this confusion appears to result from the similarity in spelling between *conyza* 'fleabane' and *conium* 'hemlock' so it provides no evidence for an alternative plant identification.

Is there corroborative evidence to support a hemlock identification? The three concepts which are listed at the end of Section 9 emerge from various associations made in folk taxonomies with plants which have been called 'hemlock', and the suggested etymologies of the word *hemlock.* All three concepts are appropriate for hemlock: it grows in 'borders',

namely, roadsides and ditches; it is poisonous; and it has a long stem. The evidence of *wōdewistle* (Section 6.1) is interpreted as something like 'mad whistle', probably combining an element suggesting the symptoms of poisoning with an element indicating a hollow stem, and *wōdewistle* is both associated with *hymlic*, and also glosses Latin *cicuta*. *Cicuta* itself is linked with the concept of hollow stems in its Latin interpretations of *musa* and *fistula* which can both refer to the pipes of musical instruments (Section 6.1).

The apparently simple summary above is complicated by the fact that several of the umbellifers are very similar in appearance, and also grow in border or marginal areas, are poisonous and have hollow stems. Is it possible to eliminate some of the short-listed plants? Evidence for the habitat of *hymlic* is limited to the example (here spelled *hemlec*) in charter bounds relating to Bathampton in Somerset, and to the place-name Holmedale Farm in the East Riding of Yorkshire. All the short-listed plants are native species and occur all over England, so this does not eliminate any of them. However, cowbane has a very patchy distribution in modern times, and it does not have a strong presence in either Somerset or Yorkshire. It is not clear, however, whether this distribution pertained historically. The 'Species Account' for *Cicuta virosa* by A. J. Lockton on the website of the Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI, accessed 25 January 2012) states the following:

> The pattern of distribution of Cowbane is unusual, and none of the published accounts offers an explanation. Losses seem to have occurred mainly in populations isolated from its core range – was this the end point of a lengthy decline, or just transitory occupation of unsuitable habitat? Little is known about its lifecycle and ecology. It may be one of those plants that is associated with fluctuating water levels – a habitat type that has been largely overlooked by British ecologists and conservationists.

This suggests that cowbane may be the least likely identification for the Somerset and Yorkshire locations, but the lack of information on the historical situation means that there is no certainty on this point. Furthermore, specific micro-habitats at Bathampton and Holmedale Farm may have enabled this plant to thrive in small pockets. It would be unwise to eliminate cowbane on this fragile evidence.

As has been discussed above (Section 9), the sense of 'border' occurs in the habitats of all the short-listed plants, as described by Stace, with the single exception of fool's parsley, and the sense of 'poison' is appropriate for all the plants except wild angelica. While the above discussion may seem, at first, to weaken the cases of fool's parsley and wild angelica to be *hymlic*-candidates, it should be remembered that such arguments are based on the later folk-names of these plants, most of which cannot be traced back to Anglo-Saxon times.

Another observation from the later plant-names is of interest. While the name *hemlock* has been applied at some time to all the short-listed plants, several of the names involve qualifiers for the word *hemlock*. In particular, hemlock water-dropwort, fine-leaved water-dropwort and cowbane have all been named 'water hemlock', implying that the archetypal hemlock is less interested in water. In addition, the hemlock water-dropwort's name suggests that there is something about it which is more like hemlock than other water-dropworts. Turning back to the names listed above, as recorded by Britten and Holland, we can deduce that wild angelica ('large hemlock') must be larger than archetypal hemlock, and that cow parsley ('small hemlock') and fool's parsley ('lesser hemlock') must be smaller than the archetype. These names based on a watery habitat and the size of plants will now be considered in the context of seeking a 'hemlock' archetype.

Which 'hemlocks' are not likely to be called 'water hemlocks'? The hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) grows on damp ground (Stace 1997: 507) but Stace does not mention any

preference for watery features. Similarly, cow parsley is described as growing in grassy places, hedgerows and wood-margins (1997: 501), and fool's parsley as preferring cultivated and waste ground, with no mention of water (1997: 506). There is a clear contrast here with (apart from the named water hemlocks) wild angelica which grows in damp places, fens, marshes, and by streams, ditches and ponds (1997: 514). This survey suggests that the archetypal 'hemlock', if it definitely appears in the present short-list of plants, is more likely to be hemlock, cow parsley or fool's parsley.

As regards the size of the plants, hemlock grows up to 2.5 metres (Stace 1997: 507), which is the same maximum height given for wild angelica ('large hemlock') (1997: 514). The 'small hemlock' (cow parsley) grows up to 1.5 metres (1997: 501) and the 'lesser hemlock' (fool's parsley) grows up to one metre or, exceptionally, 1.5 metres (1997: 506). These sizes, given that they can only provide a rough guide (1997: xvii), are compatible with hemlock being the 'hemlock' archetype.

The use of *hemlock* to qualify a name for wild angelica means that it does not always imply the presence of poison. It seems likely that *hemlock* as a qualifier often indicates the similar appearance of many umbellifers with their erect stems bearing lacy, usually white, umbrella-shaped flowers. From this consideration of hemlock-qualifiers, it appears that hemlock itself (*Conium maculatum*) is a good candidate for the archetypal hemlock in recent centuries, although it must be stressed that this may not have been true in every region of Britain. Cockayne came to the same conclusion for Anglo-Saxon England. In his index (under *hemlic*) he agrees that hemlock is the archetype: 'hemlock, conium maculatum: Other plants may be sometimes called hemlock, for the umbellate herbs require educated eyes, but this is the starting point for English notions' (Cockayne 1864–6: II.391).

11 *Hymlic* in medicine

This section considers the roles that the plant named *hymlic* played in Anglo-Saxon society, insofar as the contemporary sources reveal them. In the case of *hymlic*, the only role recorded is medical. Although modern descriptions of the old medical uses of hemlock concentrate on the effects of it when taken by mouth (see OED; Cooper and Johnson 1984: 230), the evidence in Old English is mainly of topical use (direct application to the body). All instances from the Anglo-Saxon medical compilations, Bald's *Leechbook* and *Leechbook III*, involve mixing *hymlic* and other plants with some medium to make an ointment or salve.

The remedies occurring in Bald's *Leechbook* are numbered 1 to 5 in the Catalogue below. A remedy for headache (CNo. 1) involves making a paste for the head from a mixture of willow and oil to which is added pounded *hymlic* and two other plants.[19] Another remedy (CNo. 2) involves a salve for a sudden pain or soreness accompanied by swelling. *Hymlic* is to be ground up, mixed with wax, and, the resulting salve having been warmed, it is to be bound onto the affected place. Another recipe (CNo. 3) instructs that the bark of several trees as well as woad and *hymlic* should be boiled in urine, and then butter and honey should be added. Although it is not stated that this is a salve, the presence of the last two ingredients suggests it. It is intended to help *hrēofl*, an affliction which is often translated as 'leprosy' but which can also apply to any scabby or similar skin problem.

[19] The short text for each reference can be found by searching the *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* (DOEWC) for the spellings shown in the Catalogue below.

A remedy for a *wenn* (a growth or tumour) and/or a 'wen boil' (a boil, infected swelling, blister) (CNo. 4) involves making a salve from four plants, including *hymlic*, and boiling them in butter and sheep's grease. More of the four plants are then added, along with other plants, and tar and salt, and the whole concoction is then to be mixed, put onto a cloth, warmed at the fire, and smeared onto the swelling. Another mixture (CNo. 5) is intended to burst a swelling. *Hymlic* should be mixed with wax, warmed, the mixture beaten together, and then bound onto the swelling.

The only recipe in *Leechbook III* (CNo. 6) involves a remedy for a sore knee. Henbane and *hymlic* are to be pounded and the resulting mixture used to bathe the knee and to be laid on it.

In another Anglo-Saxon medical text, the *Lacnunga*, a further three remedies involving *hymlic* can be found. The first is a sleeping draught (CNo. 7) which involves four plants, including *hymlic*, which are to be pounded, put into ale, and left to stand for a night before being given to the patient to drink. Another recipe (CNo. 8) is to make a salve for dealing with lice. The lower part of *hymlic* is to be boiled in butter with another plant, and the resulting salve is to be smeared on the head ensuring that 'there will be fewer lice' (*þær bið þara lusa læs*). The third *Lacnunga* recipe is also for lice, but this time for a drink. *Hymlic* and two other plants are to be put in ale, and the patient is to drink a bowlful of the mixture, and eat nothing more for a night.

In summary, *hymlic* is used in salves for headache, for swellings of various kinds, for a sore knee, to reduce lice and, probably in the form of a salve, for a skin problem. It is also used in drinks to encourage sleep and to deal with lice. This collection of 'cures' suggests that it was the poisonous qualities of the plants which were valued. It is speculation, of course, but it would make sense in the medieval period to try to 'kill' the agents causing headache, infected swellings, boils and scabs, since many of these problems were considered to be caused by a 'worm' under the skin. Similarly, it is likely that a mixture with a poisonous ingredient could kill lice. The poisonous quality of *hymlic*, used in a mild dose, had also, it seems, been found to induce drowsiness (see this use of hemlock in Section 12).

It may be useful to consider the major traditional uses (as recorded in later sources) of the plants with 'hemlock'-names to see if there is compatibility with the Anglo-Saxon remedies. The hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) and the hemlock water-dropwort cures certainly seem to echo those of the early medieval period. Hemlock leaves were used for poulticing external cancers 'which was merely a version of the hemlock poultice in widespread use for sores and swelling' (Allen and Hatfield 2004: 188). Hemlock water-dropwort was used to poultice serious whitlows (abscesses near finger- and toe-nails) in parts of England, but the Manx and Irish uses are particularly close to the Anglo-Saxon remedies, involving treatments for skin cancers and tumours respectively. Depending on the precise identification of 'water hemlock' this plant has also been used in Ireland to treat scrofulous swellings on the neck (Allen and Hatfield: 185-6).

Somewhat less compatible with Anglo-Saxon practice is the use of wild angelica for rheumatism, corns, and as a spring tonic (Allen and Hatfield: 190), although corns could be considered a form of scabbiness. Cow parsley was historically used to cure kidney or bladder stones or gravel, and, assuming the plant-identification is correct, it was used among women in the Outer Hebrides as a sedative (Allen and Hatfield: 182–3). The last purpose is reminiscent of the Anglo-Saxon sleeping-draught. Fool's parsley, fine-leaved water-dropwort and cowbane are not mentioned in Allen and Hatfield (2004).

12. Discussion and conclusion

It would appear from the above sections that hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) is a prime candidate for the Anglo-Saxon plant named *hymlic*. As summarized in Section 10, *hymlic* frequently translates Latin *cicuta* which is interpreted as 'hemlock' in Classical Latin, British medieval Latin and Middle English. Theories about the etymology of *hymlic* suggest three possibilities: a marginal habitat; poisonous qualities; and a long, hollow stem, and these features are all possessed by hemlock. In addition, the traditional medical use for hemlock in the British Isles tallies with one of the major Anglo-Saxon uses for the plant. Although the identification of OE *hymlic* with *Conium maculatum* looks convincing, there are clear indications that this is not the only likely identification. Others have come to the same conclusion but not always for convincing reasons. Kitson (1988: 104), for example, contends that the *cicuta* used in medicinal recipes was a completely different plant from hemlock, as a poisonous plant would not have been used medicinally. However, Pliny the Elder (*Natural History*, Bk 25.95), in his description of the uses of *cicuta* mentions both its poisonous characteristics when taken by mouth, and its curative properties as a topical application. These two conflicting properties are found in other medicinal plants, such as the hellebore. With hemlock there are two distinct properties depending on dose. Quotations given in the OED (under *hemlock*) refer to the use of hemlock as a powerful sedative, and Lopez (1999: 853) comments, with reference to its effect on animals, that 'with non-toxic doses a sedative or depressive effect of the central nervous system, producing deep sleep, is noticed'. This clearly reminds us of the presence of *hymlic* in the Anglo-Saxon sleeping-draught (CNo. 7).

Although Kitson's argument has not been found convincing, it is nonetheless highly likely that the plant-name *hymlic* was not used exclusively of hemlock by the Anglo-Saxons, especially since the name was not exclusive to *Conium maculatum* in its Middle English form nor in later folk taxonomies (see Section 9). Grattan and Singer (1952: 84) point out that several of the umbellifers are extremely difficult to distinguish visually, and the Anglo-Saxons may, therefore, not have been able to do so: 'there are some botanic groups, such as the Umbelliferae … in which the species are so numerous and so hard to distinguish, even for a modern botanist, that successful identification of them by the AS herbalist is intrinsically most improbable'. This opinion is considered overly pessimistic by other writers, however, for example: 'There is a popular impression that the Umbelliferae, with a few conspicuous exceptions … are almost indistinguishable from one another unless you have ripe fruit and a microscope. In fact with a little experience almost all British umbellifers can be identified when in flower, and often from the leaves alone' (Tutin 1980: 3). It seems highly likely that the Anglo-Saxon physicians, if not the majority of the population, spending their lives among the local flora, would be perfectly capable of noting crucial details. Nonetheless, the use of the word *hemlock* as a qualifier in later times, and the broad classifications of folk taxonomies, as opposed to scientific ones, suggest we should resist the conclusion that *hymlic* referred exclusively to *Conium maculatum*. This is because, quite apart from regional variations, folk taxonomies often classify plants according to their uses in particular communities. Thus, 'hemlocks' for those seeking a strong ingredient for a poultice would be likely to refer to several poisonous umbellifers; the 'hemlocks' being sought out for food would clearly refer to different umbellifers; and the 'hemlocks' needed by children for their whistles and pea-shooters would be those umbellifers with straight and hollow stems. Finally, those with little use at all for these plants would probably label all the similar-looking, white-flowered umbellifers as 'hemlocks'.

It is therefore suggested that OE *hymlic* (and its various forms) should be defined as 'hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), but may also be used more generally as a term for similar umbellifers'.

Appendix A: *Hymlic* catalogue

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 1.6.1	*hymlican*
2	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 31.6.3	*hemlic*
3	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 32.3.3	*hemlic*
4	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 58.1.1	*hemlice*
5	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 77.1.1	*hemlic*
6	Leechbook	Lch II (3) 50.1.1	*hemlic*
7	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 62.1	*hymlic*
8	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 130.1	*hymlic*
9	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 131.1	*hymlic*
10	Glossary: Brussels	BrGl 1(Wright-Wulcker) 8.8	*hymelic*
11	Glossary: Brussels	BrGl 1(Wright-Wulcker) 8.46	*hymelic*
12	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 116	*heomlic*
13	Glossary: Cleopatra 1	ClGl 1 (Stryker) 905	*hymlic*
14	Glossary: Cleopatra 1	ClGl 1 (Stryker) 3826	*hymlic*
15	Glossary: Laud	Coll Gl 26 (Stracke) 68	*humeloch*
16	Glossary: Corpus 2	CorpGl 2 (Hessels) 3.391	*hymlice*
17	Glossary: Épinal	EpGl (Pheifer) 192	*hymblicae*
18	Glossary: Antwerp	AntGl 4 (Kindschi) 32	*hemlic*
19	Glossary: Erfurt	ErfGl 1 (Pheifer) 185	*huymblicae*
20	Charter: S627	Ch 627 (Birch 973) 4	*hemlec*

Appendix A1: *Hymlic* catalogue

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
10	14	From same earlier glossary; same erroneous entry. 10: hymelic leptefilos 14: hymlic leptefilos
11	12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19	Probably from the same text originally. 11: hymelic cicuta 12: heomlic cicata 13: hymlic cicuta 15: humeloch cicuta (vel coniza) 16: hymlice cicuta 17: hymblicae cicuta 18: hemlic cicuta 19: huymblicae cicuta

Appendix A2: Related citations

Appendix B: Rejected items

Lexeme	*Reference*	*Reason for rejection*
hymelyc	DurGl (Lindheim) 66	The Durham Glossary *hymelyc bronia* is the only example of (apparently) *hymlic* glossing *bronia* (that is, *brionia*). Lindheim (1941: 33, no. 66) suggests it is an error for *hymele brionia*, stating that *brionia* cannot be said to mean only 'hop', as it occurs glossed by terms meaning a variety of creepers (including hop). None of the umbellifers resembles a creeping plant, so this case is taken to be a confusion of OE *hym(e)lic* with *hymele* (for the latter, see Wotherspoon in this volume).

Appendix B: Rejected items

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Old English *Hymele*: An Occasional Flavour of Hops

Irené Wotherspoon[1]

1. Introduction

When the opportunity of contributing to the proposed ASPNS collection of word-studies was offered to me, with the choice of which plant-name to investigate, I decided on *hym(e)lic* (also in this volume) and *hymele* because neither had a large number of citations, but beyond this, I had no idea what to expect. The two word-studies turned out be very different from each other in scope and emphasis, and, in spite of the similarity of the names *hymelic* and *hymele*, there is very little evidence of confusion or connection between them in the extant examples: one glossary entry in which OE *hymelyc* translates Latin *bronia* suggests it belongs with *hymele* (CNo. 16; see Appendix B to *hymlic*); and there is a likelihood that Latin *ynantes* should have been translated as *humelic* rather than *humele* (CNos 12 and 13; see Appendix A to this paper).[2] Both studies have been carried out, as far as possible, in accordance with the ASPNS guidelines and appear in the format suggested for contributions to the ASPNS project. The differences between the various manuscripts in which the terms are found are not described, except where relevant to the discussion of the terms themselves, as this information is available in detail in the editions and facsimiles referred to in the bibliography.

2. Citations

The catalogue for *hymele* consists of thirty-four entries (see Appendix A1). Entries from charter bounds marked with (2) in the catalogue indicate that *hymele* occurs twice in the same line with the same spelling, and these cases are treated as single entries since they must have occurred in the same vocabulary-choice event. Some other entries are regarded as related (see Appendix A2), and this includes cases in which two or more occurrences of *hymele* are considered to have originated in the same thought, such as a single translation decision or the close repetition of the name in the same text.[3] When the twelve related citations have been subtracted from the total citations, the resulting independent citations number twenty-

[1] Dr C. P. Biggam has collaborated on and contributed to several sections of this paper.

[2] The abbreviation 'CNo.' followed by a number, refers to the list of references in Appendix A1.

[3] For a further explanation of related citations, including the treatment of glossary entries, see Wotherspoon on *hymlic* (also in this volume), Section 2.

two. This total is made up of ten occurrences in land records, six in medical works, four in glossaries, one in a gloss, and one in folklore (a charm).

3. Descriptors

'Descriptors' are words or phrases in the extant Old English texts which offer descriptive information relating to the plant or plants bearing the name being investigated. In Chapter 52 of the Old English *Herbarium* (CNo. 4), in which OE *hymele* translates Latin *politricus*, the reader is informed that the *hymele* grows 'on old settlement sites and also in damp places' (*on ealdum husstedum 7 eac on fuhtum stowum*). The *Herbarium* is translated from Latin, and the corresponding phrase in one Latin manuscript (Montecassino, Archivio della Badia V.97) is *in parietinis et humorosis locis*, 'on walls and in wet (or moist) places' (De Vriend 1984: 96–7).

Chapter 52 of the Old English *Herbarium* has some further information about *hymele*. It is said of the plant that 'its twigs (or shoots) are like a pig's bristles' (*hyre twigu beoð swylce swinen byrst*), and this translates the Latin version which states that the plant has *ramulos quasi seta porcina*, 'twigs (or shoots) like a pig's bristles'.

Hymele also appears in Chapter 68 of the Old English *Herbarium*, translating a second Latin plant-name, *brionia*, where it is said that 'This plant is agreeable enough that one can mix it with what one customarily drinks' (*ðeos wyrt is to þam herigindlic þæt hy man wiþ gewune drenceas gemencgeað*; CNo. 6; translation in Van Arsdall 2002: 179). This is the passage that Cockayne (1864–6: I.172–3, note b) took to be an indication of the use of this plant for flavouring drinks, and, more specifically, he interpreted it as the use of hops for flavouring beer. The passage is omitted in the Latin manuscript with which he was comparing the Old English *Herbarium*, and he therefore thought it had been added only in the Old English version, thus, by his reasoning, confirming his interpretation.[4] However, the passage does appear in some Latin versions, for example, in Montecassino, Archivio della Badia V.97, a tenth- or eleventh-century manuscript unknown to Cockayne. It is probably true, although not specified, that ale or beer could be described as 'ordinary (or customary) drinks' (*gewune drenceas*), but there is evidence for several different herbs having been used to flavour beer and other drinks in medieval times, and nothing to relate this passage exclusively to beer and hops (see Section 12). The passage could simply mean that people commonly put this herb into their drinks, believing it to do them good.[5]

There are three words which form composite plant-names with *hymele*, and which can also be considered *hymele* descriptors: they are *hege-*, *heah-*, and *eowo-*. Although these composite names could suggest specific varieties of *hymele* with the descriptors only appropriate to those varieties rather than to *hymele* in general, they could perhaps simply apply to any *hymele* plants in particular situations. *Hegehymele* occurs in a list of ingredients for a herbal remedy (CNo. 7; see Section 10), and in the Brussels Glossary as equivalent to Latin *humblonis* from *humblo*

[4] Cockayne is known to have consulted the MSS London, British Library, Harley 5294 and Harley 4986, which contain Latin texts relevant to the Old English translation (Van Arsdall 2002: 102). The British Library dates the former to the late twelfth century, and the latter to the late eleventh to late twelfth century (see 'Digitised Manuscripts' at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/). Cockayne also mentions the illustration of *hymele* in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 130, which also has a Latin text, and which dates to the late eleventh century (Cockayne 1864–6: I.172–3, note a).

[5] This is not to suggest that the Anglo-Saxons did not use hops in their beer, but simply that this text does not prove the matter. Banham, for example, believes the use of hops in beer was very likely (Banham 2004: 26). See also Section 12 in this chapter.

'hop' (CNo. 10; see Sections 5.3 and 10). The prefix *hege-* also occurs in the plant-names *hegeclife* and *hegerife*, both of which are normally interpreted as 'cleavers' (*Galium aparine* L.), in which the *hege-* element usually means 'hedge'. Cleavers are climbing plants, attaching themselves by means of hooked hairs on their stems and leaves, and they commonly occur in hedgerows. This suggests that *hegehymele* is a variety of *hymele* which grows in hedges.

Heahhymele (CNo. 14 as *heahhumele*) occurs once in a Latin-to-Old English glossary in MS London, British Library, Royal 7.D.ii. Meritt (1945: 59, no. 69, note 13) thinks that *heahhymele* is equivalent to *hegehymele,* and that the interlinear glosses in this late twelfth-century manuscript, including *heahhumele*, were copied from an older glossary rather than having been added independently (Meritt 1945: xvii). However, while the Latin equivalent of *heahhumele* is *briona*, that of *hegehymele* is *humblonis*. The *prima facie* evidence, of course, is that *heahhymele* contains the element *hēah* 'high', indicating that this plant grows to a considerable height or, less likely, grows *at* a considerable height.

The prefix *eowo-* in *eowohumelan* (CNo. 9) has been held to indicate the female form of a dioecious plant (which has male and female reproductive organs on separate individual plants) through interpreting the first element of the plant-name as *ēowu-* 'ewe, female sheep'. This presupposes that the dioecious nature of some plants was known to the Anglo-Saxons, for which there seems to be no evidence. It is generally held by botanists that early botanical writers in both ancient and medieval times paid little attention to the nature of the flowers of a plant, except occasionally for the colour (see, for example, Greene 1983: I.39; Arber 1986: chapter 5). The earliest signs of recognition of the sexual function of parts of flowers appears to be in the late seventeenth century, when the English plant anatomist, Nehemiah Grew stated, in his *Anatomy of plants* (1682) that stamens are male organs, although he attributed this discovery to his contemporary, the English physician Sir Thomas Millington. It is not really possible to argue from the single apparent example of *eowohumele* that the dioecious nature of some plants was known to the Anglo-Saxons.[6] However, although the Anglo-Saxons may not have interpreted certain features of dioecious plants as being male or female, they would, no doubt, have noticed that differences occurred.[7]

This section provides a collection of clues concerning the identity of the plant named *hymele*. Certain information about its habitat, appearance and possible use by humans has been discussed, and compound names have suggested, at least, a hedgerow location and considerable height for, perhaps, certain varieties of the plant. This information will be considered, in combination with other clues, in Section 10.

4. Collocations

This section is concerned with words or phrases which occur with *hymele* but which do not directly describe it. The present cases all occur in place-names or place descriptions.

[6] The Old English words *wǣpnedmann* 'man' and *wīfmann* 'woman' can be found in some dictionaries with the translations 'male plant' and 'female plant' respectively, but this results from a mistranslation of an Anglo-Saxon medical remedy in which one type of mugwort is to be used for a male person and another type for a female. It is not the *plants* which are described as male and female (see Pettit 2001: I.120–1, Section 171; II.345–6).

[7] There are a few other plant-names, first recorded from the nineteenth century, which include the element *ewe-*. Examples include *ewe-bramble* 'bramble' (*Rubus fruticosus* L.) and *ewe-gowan* 'daisy' (*Bellis perennis* L.). Neither of these is dioecious.

4.1 *Brōc*

Hymelbroc features strongly in the catalogue (Appendix A1; CNos 20–28, 32–33). The usual definition of *brōc* is 'brook, stream' (DOE, under *brōc*[2]), but it has been found that words occurring as place-name elements can have specialized meanings. A discussion of *brōc* by Parsons and Styles (2000: 36–9) raises the possibility of meanings such as 'marsh', 'water-meadow', 'low marshy ground not necessarily containing running water or springs' and 'muddy stream', depending on various factors, including date and location.

Although the catalogue contains eleven entries for forms of the name *hymelbroc* (including related citations, see Appendix A2), they all refer to the same Worcestershire stream in the boundary clauses of several land grants ranging in date from the late ninth- to the late eleventh-century. The stream is now called the Bow Brook (named after Stonebow Bridge) but was known as the Himble Brook until the late sixteenth century (Mawer and Stenton 1927: 10; Hooke 1990: 133). It joins the River Avon at Defford, and has a reputation for flooding. This suggests a habitat for *hymele* which is near a stream but perhaps includes boggy ground nearby.

4.2 *Mōr*

Hymele also occurs twice with OE *mōr* as *hymelmor* (with spelling variations) in the bounds of a charter dated to AD 984. In this charter, Archbishop Oswald of York grants land at Lower Wolverton, Worcestershire, to his relative Eadwig and Eadwig's wife Wulfgifu. The bounds begin and end at the *hymelmor*.[8] Old English *mōr* can be interpreted as 'moor, morass, swamp, hill, mountain' (Clark Hall 1960), and in place-names, Smith gives 'moor' as the principal sense (Smith 1956: II.42). He writes: 'originally 'barren waste-land', which in the S[outh] C[ountr]y and Midl[ands] and the fenlands of the east came to mean 'marshland''. As Worcestershire is a Midland county, it would appear that the meaning of *mōr* in Oswald's charter is likely to indicate a marshy area. The location of the *hymelmor* is in the same area as the *hymelbroc*. Hooke suggests that it indicates an area of marshland alongside the *hymelbroc* (see Section 4.1; Hooke 1990: 230).

4.3 *Tūn*

The name *hymeltun* completes the collection of *hymele-* place-names in Worcestershire. It refers to the settlement of Himbleton in that county, which stands on the Bow Brook (see Section 4.1). *Tūn* has many meanings but they are all concerned either with a piece of enclosed land, such as a garden, field or yard, or habitations of some kind, including a house, village or estate (Clark Hall 1960). Smith (1956: II.188–98) explains the several semantic shifts that *tūn* underwent throughout the long period when it was an active place-name element. In Proto-Germanic, it appeared to denote 'fence, hedge' but this meaning is extremely rare in early medieval England with only two possible examples extant (Smith 1956: II.189). The meaning of *tūn* gradually shifted from the means of enclosure to the enclosure itself, with examples meaning 'church yard', 'burial ground' and others. Further shifts extended the meaning to 'an enclosure with a dwelling', 'a single dwelling', 'hamlet, village' and, finally, to the modern sense of 'town' indicating an urban area with many buildings. The steps in this semantic process

[8] The spelling *ymel* occurs for *hymele* in CNo. 34, but it is clearly intended to represent the same geographical feature as the *hymelmor* at the end of the boundary clause (CNo. 29; Hooke 1990: 230).

cannot be dated precisely but the earliest and latest meanings can be reasonably excluded in the case of Himbleton.

The earliest appearance of the name of *Himbleton* occurs in a grant of privileges for certain lands, including Himbleton, made by King Cenwulf of Mercia to Bishop Deneberht and his clergy at Worcester. The grant is dated to AD 816, and the form of the place-name is *Hymeltun*. Other ninth-century mentions of Himbleton use the same form (Mawer and Stenton 1927: 135).[9] It is not known, of course, how much earlier than the ninth century the name of Himbleton, and the brook and moor of the same name, were first identified in this way, and it is also unknown which was the first geographical feature to be associated with *hymele*. Hooke (1990: 133) believes that the settlement took its name from the brook, while Mawer and Stenton (1927: 135) state that 'It is … more likely that the *tun* and the *broc* were named independently than that the one took its name from the other', although it is not clear why they are of this opinion. If the plant named *hymele* were being grown as a crop, the meaning of *tūn* could be 'enclosure', since there are similar cases, such as *æppeltun* 'orchard' and *leactun* 'herb garden', but, at this stage in the investigation, it is safer to follow Smith's opinion that 'The majority of p[lace] n[ame]s in *tūn* probably had this meaning 'farmstead' when they were established' (Smith 1956: II.190).[10]

4.4 *Cyrre*

The place-name *Hymelcyrre* (spelt *Humelcyrre*) occurs in the will of Ælfflæd, the wife of Ealdorman Brihtnoth of Essex (CNo. 17; Whitelock 1930: 38–42; 141–6). The date of the will is c. 1002. Ælfflæd bequeaths her various land-holdings, including an estate at *Byliesdyne*, the name of which has been identified with that of Balsdon (Hall), near Lavenham, Suffolk (Whitelock 1930: 140). At the end of the will, the boundary of the *Byliesdyne* estate is described, beginning with 'from the stream at *Humelcyrre*; from *Humelcyrre…*' (*of ða burnan. æt Humelcyrre. fra[m] Humelcyr[re]…*; Whitelock 1930: 40–41). It is not absolutely certain that the element *humel-* represents OE *hymele*, since it may represent the Old Norse word **humul* 'a rounded hillock' which may have had an Old English cognate **humol* with the same meaning. However, it is included here with a mental question-mark, reflecting Parsons' printed question-mark (2004: 27).

Whitelock says of *Humelcyrre* and another place that 'These cannot be identified' (1930: 146) although the mention of Acton and Roydon clearly places *Humelcyrre* somewhere south-west of Lavenham. It is also clear from the boundary statement that *Humelcyrre* is on a stream, indicating a similarly damp environment to that suggested by the Worcestershire *hymele* names.

The element *-cyrre* is difficult but it appears to indicate 'turn, bend'. Although Whitelock (1930: 146) is pessimistic about establishing the landmarks of Ælfflæd's Balsdon estate, a Suffolk historian, Norman Scarfe, has a high degree of success in doing this, thanks to his local knowledge (Scarfe 1972: 131–4). He points out that William Parker in his *History of Long*

[9] The Birch (*Cartularium Saxonicum*) reference number in Mawer and Stenton is given as BCS 256, which is an error for BCS 356. For the text of this grant, with translation and commentary, see Hooke (1990: 107–12).

[10] Humbleton in the East Riding of Yorkshire may also represent *hymele* plus *tūn* but there are several other possibilities for the first element, such as a personal name (*Humli* or *Humla*) or Old Scandinavian **humul* or OE **humol* meaning 'something rounded' such as a hillock. Humbleton is located in an area of several low glacial mounds, so this may be the correct explanation in this case. The possibilities for the first element of this name are fully discussed in Smith (1937: 54–5).

Melford (1873) mentions 'Humblechar meadows' near a pronounced bend in a stream called the Chad Brook, which eventually runs into Long Melford.[11] It seems clear that *Humblechar* is descended from *Humelcyrre*. Scarfe locates the pronounced bend in the course of the Chad Brook to the east of Spelthorn Wood (at TL 886 478; see Scarfe 1972: 132, Fig. 10). The argument made by Scarfe, and others, is that the *-char* element is cognate with OE *cyrran*, a verb with multiple senses concerned with turning, returning and turning to God (religious conversion) (DOE under *cyrran, ge-cyrran*). Parsons agrees since he lists the noun *cerr* 'turn, bend' as a place-name element, and adds 'It seems to be found in the OE boundary *æt Humelcyrre*' (Parsons 2004: 27–8).

4.5 *Lēah*

It is suggested by Smith (1956: I.276) that *hymele* also occurs as an element in *Himley*, Staffordshire. This place-name first appears in 1086 as *Himelei*, and it is interpreted as meaning 'the wood or clearing where *hymele* grows', being a combination of *hymele* with *lēah* (Watts 2004: 305).[12]

4.6 Summary

Assuming that the plant-name *hymele* really does occur in the place-names discussed in this section, the habitat of the plant can be described as near streams and on marshy or damp ground. In individual cases, this may involve water-meadows, (boggy?) moors, (damp?) woods or clearings in woods, farmsteads near streams and, possibly, as a crop grown in fields or gardens (enclosures). Another possible *hymele* name is *Humble Carr*, near Gainsborough, Lincolnshire (Smith 1956: I.268).[13] *Carr* is descended from ON *kjarr* meaning 'brushwood', a word which developed into ME *ker* 'a bog, a marsh, esp[ecially] one overgrown with brushwood'. Smith points out that it occurs frequently with Old English elements, among others, and is often combined with plant-names. He includes Humble Carr in his list of plant-name examples (Smith 1956: II.4). Whatever the date of this place-name, it confirms the generally damp habitat suggested by more securely dated cases.

5. Translations

This section will consider the Latin plant-names which have been translated by OE *hymele* in Anglo-Saxon sources:

5.1 *Polytrichon*

The plant-name *polytrichon* is translated three times by OE *hymele* in the Old English *Herbarium*, occurring in the forms *politricus* and *politricum* (CNos. 1, 3 and 4). The *Herbarium* was translated into Old English from Latin, and the Latin text owed much to Dioscorides' *De materia medica*, originally written in Greek in the first century AD, and to Pliny the Elder's

[11] Long Melford is about four miles from Lavenham as the crow flies.

[12] See also Section 4.2 of Wotherspoon's article on *hymlic* in this volume.

[13] The English Place-Name Survey has not yet published this area of Lincolnshire, so the earliest date at which it occurs is unknown to the present author. It may not be of pre-Conquest origin.

Naturalis historia of a similar date, although other early medical texts were also involved in the English version. As with the folk-names of plants today, a single plant could have many names, and a single name could be used of several plants (see Biggam's introductory chapter, Section 1). From the earliest medical records, *polytrichon* was involved in at least two multi-name plant identifications.

The earliest extant text and illustrations to Dioscorides' work date to the very early sixth century, and are found in the Juliana Anicia Codex (MS Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Vindobonensis Med. Gr. 1).[14] The manuscript contains two plant entries relevant to this section: the first is headed *Adianton* (ΑΔΙΑΝΤΟΝ) and, in the list of alternative names for this plant are *polytrichon* (ΠΟΛΥΤΡΙΧΟΝ) and *trichomanes* (ΤΡΙΧΟΜΑΝΕΣ) (folio 42r). The second plant is named *Kallitrichon* (ΚΑΛΛΙΤΡΙΧΟΝ) and, included in its list of alternative names are *polytrichon, trichomanes* and *adianton* (folio 158v).[15] Although the text alone is a little confusing, the accompanying illustrations, which are of a high quality in this manuscript, make the sixth-century understanding of what Dioscorides had intended much clearer. The *Adianton* text is accompanied by an illustration of the maidenhair spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes* L.), and the *Kallitrichon* text has an illustration of the maidenhair fern (*Adiantum capillus-veneris* L.). These two plants do not look alike, and modern botanists classify them as belonging to different families, and yet they share several folk-names (including in Modern English) and were credited with effecting the same cures. From here on, they will be referred to as the spleenwort and the fern respectively.

Pliny the Elder's text of the *Naturalis historia* has survived in versions which have been much altered and augmented but it is clear that its accounts of the maidenhair fern and spleenwort retained a close relationship. Speaking of *adiantum*, Pliny not only provides some of its alternative names but gives his explanation for them. Greek *adianton* means 'unwetted' because the plant repels water so effectively that it always appears to be dry. Its other names include *kallitrichon* meaning 'lovely hair' and *polytrichon* meaning 'thick hair' (literally 'many hairs'). Pliny explains these names by the plant's uses: it is an ingredient in a hair dye, it makes the hair grow thick and curly, and it prevents it from falling out (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.336–7, translation by W. H. S. Jones). The extant texts of both Dioscorides' work and Pliny's make it very difficult to distinguish the two plants. Dioscorides wrote that both plants had similar habitats (shady spots, on humid walls and around fountains) and were used for similar remedies (including hair treatments) (Dioscorides 2005: 300). With their several shared names, it was inevitable that these plants would be confused, and this was the situation inherited by the Anglo-Saxons.

The Greek plant-name *polytrichon* was adopted into Classical Latin as *polythrix* (and other spellings) and was used to indicate both fern and spleenwort (see OLD under *polythrix*). The fern prefers limestone cliffs and rock crevices near the sea, and the stonework of walls and bridges but 'always in moist sheltered spots' (Stace 1997: 16). The spleenwort also grows in rocky places such as cliffs and walls.

With this history behind it, the account of this plant or plants arrived in England in a Latin text of the *Herbarium* and various additions, which is often referred to as the 'Pseudo-

[14] A facsimile edition by D'Aronco and Cameron (1998) is available.

[15] The text of these plant entries can be found in Beck's translation of Dioscorides under *adianton* (*kallitrichon* in the Juliana Anicia Codex; Dioscorides 2005: 299–300), and under *trichomanes* (*adianton* in the Juliana Anicia Codex; Dioscorides 2005: 300). The differences occur because Beck is translating a text which was an attempt by Wellmann to reconstruct the order of plants in Dioscorides' original work, before they were alphabetized.

Apuleius'. The Old English translator had no entries under the headings *adiantum, callitrichon* or *trichomanes*.[16] There was, however, an entry under the heading *Herba politricum* (De Vriend 1984: 97, 99). This plant was said to grow on walls and in damp places, and to have little twigs or shoots like the bristles of a pig. Its leaves were used in a drink to help abdominal pain, and the plant also nourished women's hair. This was translated into Old English with few alterations: OE *hymele* was added as an alternative plant-name, and the plant was said to help hair growth in both men and women (De Vriend 1984: 96, 98). It is possible that the addition of men in the Old English text as beneficiaries of the hair treatment indicates that the translator had access to another text, such as Pliny's *Naturalis historia*, since this does not specify the hair of women.

The translator also had a plant illustration to help with the identification. The illustration which appears in the Anglo-Saxon *Herbarium* manuscript (London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.III) is not a realistic depiction but it is clearly copied from earlier illustrations of the maidenhair fern (folio 37r). It is difficult to assess the evidence available to the translator into Old English. If s/he had access to other Latin herbal texts, s/he may have found two distinct plant descriptions, or a single description combining elements from the earlier accounts of the fern and the spleenwort. The features they had in common would have added to the difficulties. The illustration perhaps suggests that the fern was, at least, foremost in the translator's mind. Considering the possibility that the translator had an account of the spleenwort under the same Latin name, it is considered wise at this stage to include both fern and spleenwort as possible identifications, as has the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS under *polytrichon* 1).[17]

5.2 *Bryonia*

Hymele also translates Latin *bryonia* in the Old English *Herbarium* (CNos 2, 5, 6; spelt *brionia* in CNo. 5). Two of these references are headings, one in the *Herbarium*'s list of contents (CNo. 2; De Vriend 1984: 12), and the other at the head of the section on *hymele/bryonia* in the text (CNo. 5; De Vriend 1984: 110). The third reference (CNo. 6; De Vriend 1984: 110) occurs in the short account of the remedy attributed to this plant. It is to be used for pain in the spleen, and is to be mixed with food. The only other point of information in this section is that the plant tastes sufficiently agreeable to be put into one's normal drinks, leading some to suggest that it was used as a flavouring (see Section 3).

The plant-name *bryonia* (Greek βρυωνία) appears in two entries in certain manuscripts of Dioscorides' Greek text of the *De materia medica*. In Beck's translation of this work, she includes *bryonia* as an alternative name for *ampelos leukē* (ἄμπελος λευκη) which she identifies as *Bryonia dioica* Jacq., 'white bryony' (Dioscorides 2005: 324–5). Greek *bryonia* is also given as an alternative name for *ampelos melaina* (ἄμπελος μέλαινα), identified as *Tamus communis* L., 'black bryony' (Dioscorides 2005: 325–6). Over the centuries, there have been

[16] It seems likely that names such as *tricnos manicos* (various forms in different manuscripts) may originate in the word *trichomanes* but, in the Latin texts of the *Herbarium* which are closest to the Old English translation, this name had become attached to entries for the thorn-apple and/or nightshade (De Vriend 1984: 320, no. 144).

[17] The Old English *Herbarium* also includes the plant *gallitricus* which is probably from the Greek *kallitrichon* (a synonym of *polytrichon*), especially as one of its cures is for hair loss (De Vriend 1984: 94–5, Chapter 48). This duplication of entries results from shared alternative plant-names and repeated copying of manuscripts. The Old English name used for *gallitricus* is *wæterwyrt* 'water plant' which is not surprising given the stated damp habitat of both fern and spleenwort.

several conflicting identifications of the bryonies because the two colours in their names have been variously taken to refer to the berries, flowers or roots. The general consensus, however, now appears to be that Beck was mistaken (having followed earlier authors) and that the Dioscoridean plants are white bryony (*Bryonia dioica* Jacq.; *ampelos leuke*) and a completely different plant, also called 'white bryony' (*Bryonia alba* L.; *ampelos melaina*).[18] It has been pointed out that Dioscorides' description of a bryony with leaves similar to those of ivy, with tendrils and black fruits can only refer to *Bryonia alba*, not the so-called 'black bryony' (*Tamus communis* L.) which has differently shaped leaves, no tendrils and red fruits (Renner, Scarborough, Schaefer, Paris and Janick 2008: 277). Whatever the difficulties may be of identifying these plants to species level, the name *ampelon* narrows the field. Greek *ampelos* (ἄμπελος) means 'any climbing plant with tendrils' (Liddell and Scott 1940), and both *Bryonia alba and B. dioica* fulfill these requirements, as Dioscorides makes clear (Dioscorides 2005: 325–6).

It has been noted that the illustrations in the Juliana Anicia Codex appear to show *Bryonia alba* for *ampelos leuke* (folio 79r) and probably *Bryonia dioica* for *ampelos melaina* (folio 82r; that is, the wrong way round), but it should be remembered that Dioscorides' work did not originally have illustrations so they were added later, and this, or later copying, gave an opportunity for error (Janick, Paris and Parrish 2007: 1442). However, it was later suggested, very plausibly, that the supposed illustration of *Bryonia dioica* was, in fact, an illustration of the hop (*Humulus lupulus* L.) The plant's opposite and serrate leaves are wrong for *Bryonia dioica* (Renner et al. 2008: 276–8).[19] It seems likely that this illustration represents the introduction of a new element of confusion which would have been perpetuated by the centuries of manuscript copying which was to follow.

Pliny mentions the Greek name *ampelos leuke* as the equivalent of his Latin name *vitis alba*, literally 'white vine', and he then discusses the 'dark vine' 'which is properly called 'bryony' (*quam proprie byroniam vocant*; Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.428–33). It is clear that both entries owe a lot to Dioscorides' work, but more remedies have been added, especially in the case of the *vitis alba*.

Both in Dioscorides' and Pliny's works, each plant has a large number of uses, mostly medicinal, but the Latin source of the Old English *Herbarium* entry, headed *herba brionia*, mentions only a remedy for the spleen. It recommends putting the herb in food, and says that the problem will be dealt with by urination. Although both of Pliny's bryonies are recommended for treatment of the spleen and for promoting urine, it is his 'dark vine' which has the wording closest to the Latin Pseudo-Apuleius, the source of the Old English *Herbarium*. Pliny's 'white vine' includes the statement that the stalks, 'boiled and taken in food, are laxative and diuretic' and, then, several lines further on, mentions that doses 'taken in drink for thirty days eat up the spleen' (that is, reduce a swollen spleen) (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.429, 431). As for the dark vine, its shoots are recommended as 'a food for promoting urine and reducing the spleen' (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.433). This close association of food, urine and the spleen in the latter plant entry provides the best textual parallel for the remedy in the Pseudo-Apuleius. Its textual origin, therefore, is likely to have denoted *Bryonia alba*, although the accompanying illustration suggested the hop.

[18] To distinguish between the two white bryonies, they will, henceforth in this paper, be referred to by their botanical Latin names.

[19] The plant-names with which these illustrations are labelled, namely, *bryonia leuka* on folio 79r, and *bryonia melaina* on folio 82r are fifteenth-century additions.

The remaining examples of forms of *hymele* translating *bryonia* all occur in Latin-to-Old English glossaries or glosses (CNos. 14, 15, 16). All three cases are extant in twelfth-century manuscripts which were copied or compiled from pre-Conquest sources. The Durham Glossary (CNo. 16; Lindheim 1941: 10, line 66) entry reads *bronia hymelyc* and this is interpreted here as *brionia hymele*, rather than OE *hymlic* (see Wotherspoon on *hymlic* in this volume, Appendix B). The Laud Glossary (CNo. 15; Stracke 1974: 27, line 233) is related to the Durham Glossary so the entry reading *brionia i. humele* could well have originated in the same medical text (see Appendix A2). The third gloss, reading *heahhumele briona*, is discussed in Section 10.

5.3 *Humblo*

The Latin equivalent in the Brussels Glossary for *hegehymele* is *humblonis* (CNo. 10), which is interpreted in the DMLBS as *humulus* 'hop' (*Humulus lupulus* L.) Although the Latin term *humulus* is not otherwise recorded from pre-Conquest English sources, the term *(h)um(b)lo* 'hop' is found in Latin texts from continental Europe from the ninth century onwards (see Section 12).

5.4 *Oenanthe*

In CNos 12 and 13, *hymele* (spelt *humele* in both cases) interprets the Latin term *ynantes*. Both references occur in the same manuscript, and in close proximity. One occurs in the lower margin of folio 15v of MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole 1431, and the other on folio 16r, that is, on the following page. They are among a number of Old English glosses which have been added interlinearly and marginally in this manuscript (now dated c.1070 to 1100) containing the Latin *Herbal* of Pseudo-Apuleius.[20] The illustration of *oenanthe* in this manuscript shows a main stem with sinuous S-curves, clearly suggesting a climbing plant. In his edition of the Old English glosses, Gough translates *hymele* as 'hop plant' (Gough 1974: 276). He gives no reasons for his translation but he may have been influenced by this illustration of a climbing plant with serrated leaves.

In the Old English *Herbarium*, translated from a version of Pseudo-Apuleius, Chapter 55 is headed 'Oenantes' without any English name either here or in the list of contents (De Vriend 1984: 11, 100). The plant is said to encourage urination and improve bad coughs. This is the text which the DMLBS gives as an example of the meaning 'dropwort' (see further below in this section). The illustration which appears in MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.III is nothing like the climbing plant in Ashmole 1431. It has an upright main stem with branches to left and right which are diagonal to the stem. However, two trailing black lines are drawn from the root upwards which may suggest creeping shoots.

This plant-name is, of course, Greek in origin, in the form *oinanthe* (οἰνανθη), which means literally 'wine flower'. Non-literally, it means 'inflorescence [the complete flower-head] of the grape-vine', which can include that of the wild vine. In poetry, it can simply mean 'vine'. Greek *oinanthe* can also mean 'dropwort' because the flowers of this plant smell like wine. However, the identification of the plant-name *dropwort* in botanical terms is not easy. Liddell and Scott's Greek dictionary gives *Spiraea filipendula*, but the Spiraea genus has since

[20] Some pages of this manuscript can be seen online at the Bodleian website. See http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/ashmole/1431.htm.

been re-classified. The Greek name was adopted into Classical Latin as *oenanthe* with almost identical meanings: '1. The inflorescence or undeveloped fruit-cluster of the wild vine. b. a plant having the scent of forming grapes, perh[aps] the dropwort, *Filipendula hexapetala*' (OLD). This definition is repeated in the DMLBS (under *oenanthe*).[21] This botanical Latin name is now more usually given as *Filipendula vulgaris* Moench, and refers to the (common) dropwort. Plants in the Filipendula genus usually have a strong smell as, for example, the appropriately named meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria* (L.) Maxim.), but the dropwort has almost no scent at all so where is the smell of wine which the ancient name *oenanthe* surely demands? The answer is likely to be that oenanthe referred, not to the (common) dropwort, but to the water-dropworts, the genus which bears the modern scientific name of *Oenanthe*, and the flowers of which are said to smell like wine (Grieve 1973: 264). Several other writers have reached this same conclusion (for example, De Vriend 1984: 301).

5.5 *Volvola*

The last Latin term which is directly translated by *hymele* is *volvola* (appearing as *voluula*; CNo. 11) in the second Cleopatra Glossary.[22] This name also appears in Latin as *convolvulus* and is identified as 'bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*)' (OLD). *Calystegia sepium* (L.) R. Br. is hedge bindweed, which includes several sub-species. The bindweeds are also known in English as 'woodbines', and they are climbing plants. Entries appear in two of the earliest Anglo-Saxon glossaries, the Épinal and Erfurt glossaries, which read *uoluola uuidubindae herba similis hedere q[uae] uitib[us et] frugib[us] circumdari[i] sol[et]*, '*volvola wudubinde*, a plant like ivy of which the vines and fruits are usually wrapped around'.[23] Once again, a climbing plant is described. The plant-name comes from the Latin verb *convolvere* which conveys meanings such as 'roll up, coil, enfold' which clearly describe the action of climbing plants with tendrils, which they coil around, for example, other plants as they grow. The findings in this section will be further considered in Section 10.

6. Secondary associations

Plant-names which appear to have some kind of relationship with the name being researched, in this case *hymele*, but which are not clearly presented in the Anglo-Saxon sources as synonyms or translations, are referred to in ASPNS studies as 'associations'. These are most commonly encountered in glossary entries where, for example, an Old English name is given as a translation of a Latin name, but other Old English or Latin names have been added to the entry, perhaps at a later date. It is often unclear what the precise function of such an 'extra' word may be. There are no examples of associations for *hymele*, but there are cases of what is known as 'secondary associations'.

[21] *Oenanthe* appears in some greatly variant spellings. In the DMLBS, not only are the later medieval spellings of *yantum* and *yantis* listed, but the spelling *luantum* is recorded from the Anglo-Saxon Laud Glossary as a very likely misspelling of *inantum*, similar to *yantum*. It is explained in the Laud Glossary as 'the flower of wild grapes' (*flos de uuis agrestibus*; Stracke 1974: 47, line 903).

[22] It is given as *vollula* in Quinn's edition of this glossary (Quinn 1956: 60, line 7), with his note 7 on the same page adding 'Read *volvola*'. The manuscript reading is corrected to *voluula* by Voss (1989: 130).

[23] This is the reading in the Erfurt Glossary. The equivalent in the Épinal Glossary differs only in spellings (Pheifer 1974: 55, line 1059).

Secondary associations occur when a common translation of the name being researched has a different Old English translation in an Anglo-Saxon text, and the second Old English translation never appears in company with the first. In the case of *hymele*, the question is whether its common Latin translations, *polytrichon* and *bryonia*, occur elsewhere with different Old English translations. While no Old English equivalent of *polytrichon*, other than *hymele*, can be traced, there are secondary associations for *bryonia*.

Bryonia appears in the Antwerp Glossary, a compilation which is extant in two early eleventh-century manuscripts.[24] One entry reads *Brionia wild cyrfet [ue]l hwit wingeard* (Kindschi 1955: 119, line 12), and the second entry reads *Ampelos leuce [ue]l Brionia hwit wilde wingeard* (Kindschi 1955: 146, line 1). Old English *cyrfæt* means 'gourd' and the *wilde cyrfæt* is defined by the DOE as 'wild gourd, i.e., colocynth or bryony'. Modern English *gourd* refers to the large fruits of the Cucurbitaceae family, which consists of climbing or trailing plants including the *Bryonia* genus and the colocynth or bitter-apple (*Citrullus colocynthis* (L.) Schrad.). The fruits of some species can be hollowed out to provide containers.

Also translating *bryonia* is OE *hwit (wilde) wingeard*. Old English *wingeard* means, not only 'vineyard' but also 'vine', and ModE *vine* refers to any climbing or trailing plant related to the grape-vine. In modern botany, the grape-vine, which belongs to the *Vitis* genus, is in a different family from the gourd and bryony, but this scientific classification cannot be applied to the Anglo-Saxon folk taxonomy. It seems likely that *hwit wingeard* is a literal translation of *ampelos leuce* 'white climbing plant', since the Antwerp Glossary also contains an entry reading *Ampelos male blac wingeard* in which the OE *blac wingeard* translates literally *ampelos male* 'black (or dark) climbing plant' (Kindschi 1955: 146, line 2).[25]

7. Textual contrasts and comparisons

The purpose of this section is to consider cases in which *hymele* occurs with other plant-names, usually in a list of ingredients for a herbal remedy, and this suggests that *hymele* must be different from the other plants.[26] This section does not provide strong evidence, since plant-names were not always unique to a single plant, and it is not known whether earlier copiers of the manuscripts added their own local names for plants already listed. Nonetheless, the evidence is sometimes worthwhile in a corroborative function alongside better evidence.

Hymele appears in the company of over eighty plant-names in potentially contrastive contexts, but the vast majority of these occur only once in this situation. As a single example could easily be the result of an error, such cases will not be discussed. Of the remainder, none of the plant-names occur more than twice with *hymele* so it is not possible to establish any strong tendency. The following plant-names occur twice in lists of ingredients which include *hymele*, and so suggest that they are not the same plant as *hymele*:[27] *æscþrote* 'vervain or

[24] MS Antwerp, Plantin-Moretus Museum, 47 and MS London, British Library, Add. 32246.

[25] In one manuscript of the Old English *Herbarium* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 76), the chapter heading for Chapter 68 is *brionia wildemep* (De Vriend 1984: 110, note 13). This is an error for *wilde nep*, in which *nep* or *næp* derives from Latin *napus* 'turnip'. However, Cockayne notes that *wildemep* is in a later hand (Cockayne 1864–6: I.172, note 1), and the later medieval sources frequently equate Latin *bryonia* with English *wilde nep* (various spellings). Both these words, in post-Conquest sources, have been interpreted as white bryony (*Bryonia dioica* Jacq.) (Hunt 1989: 55–6).

[26] Plant-names considered to be associations, secondary associations or translations of *hymele* are not included in this section (see Sections 5 and 6 above).

[27] The following definitions are taken from the DOE where possible (it is in process of publication and, at the time of

alkanet' (CNos 8, 9); *belene* 'henbane' (CNos 8, 9); *betonice* 'betony' (CNos 7, 8); *bisceopwyrt* 'marsh-mallow or betony' (CNos 7, 9); *clate* 'cleavers or the common burdock' (CNos 7, 8); *cwice* 'couch-grass' (CNos 7, 8); *elehtre* 'lupin?' (CNos 8, 9); *finol* 'fennel' (CNos 7, 9); *hæsel* 'hazel' (CNos 7, 8); *hegeclife* 'hedge cleavers' (CNos 7, 8); *rude* 'rue' (CNos 7, 8); and *wermod* 'wormwood' (CNos 8, 9).

8. Etymology

The etymology of the Old English word *hymele* is a little difficult to clarify. Firstly, Sauer regards *hymele* as a 'native simplex', in other words, not composed of meaningful morphemes (Sauer 1992: 403). At first sight, this word would seem to be connected with Latin *humulus* 'hop', but the Old English word is recorded first, and *humulus* seems to be a Latinization of a Germanic word. This has naturally given rise to much speculation among etymologists and linguists about the origins of the Old English term.

De Vries summarizes the controversy surrounding the origins of *hymele* and its cognates (De Vries 1977: 266, under *humli*). It has been suggested that Old Norse *humli* derived from medieval Latin or that it was first introduced in the twelfth century by French monks. The possibility has also been suggested that the word derived from Slavic *chmeli* which had been borrowed earlier from the east, from the Finns. However, as Wilson points out, the view that the term entered the Scandinavian languages from Finnish at the time of the *Völkerwanderung* is based on an account of the discovery of hops in the Finnish epic, the *Kalevala*, but no part of this work was written down before the seventeenth century, and most of it not before the nineteenth century so the original date of the hop account is unknown (Wilson 1975: 640). The Finnish and/or Slavic theory is also disputed by Neuman (1924) on the grounds that borrowings from Finnish or Slavic into Germanic are very rare, though borrowing in the other direction is common. He contends that OE *hymele* and its Germanic cognates are from a root meaning 'to grope about' and are ultimately cognate with ModE *fumble*, as well as with many words of similar meaning in other Germanic languages. This origin is supported by Pokorny, who only found Indo-European cognates in Celtic and Germanic languages (Pokorny 1959: I.795, under PIE **pei-m(i)*). The development of a plant name from its habit of growth has many parallels, and the sense of 'grope about' appears to suggest a climbing or trailing plant, perhaps with tendrils seeking a hold on some supporting object. Indeed, the habit of the stem in particular is a normal feature of plant descriptions in early botanical works and herbals (see, for example, Arber 1986: chapter 5; Wotherspoon, on *hymlic* in this book, Section 6.1).

9. Lexical comparisons

This section is concerned with the descendants of Old English plant-names and the meanings they appear to have in the more extensive records of later periods. However, unlike *hymlic* (see Wotherspoon in this volume), *hymele* appears to have disappeared from the surviving records of the post-Conquest period. The word *humly*, recorded in 1876 in Roxburghshire, appears to be a good candidate for a descendant of OE *hymele*, but Britten and Holland (1886: 272) interpret it as *Conium maculatum* L., in other words, a descendant of *hymlic*, which is

writing, has reached the letter G) and, otherwise, from Clark Hall (1960). Where multiple definitions are listed, only the principal ones are given here.

phonologically acceptable. This word *humly* may suggest why *hymele* disappeared: it would seem likely that both *hymele* and *hymlic* evolved into a phonologically similar or identical word, creating ambiguity. Although considerable ambiguity is tolerated in plant-names, there may have been reasons why this particular clash was unacceptable.

10. Consideration of the basic data

In this section, the evidence which has been presented in the earlier sections will be considered together. Each section above was concerned only with a particular type of evidence or clues, but it is now time to see whether those findings corroborate or contradict each other.

Starting with the descriptors (Section 3), a plant called *hymele*, and also called *herba polytricus* is said to grow on old settlement sites (specifically, on walls in the Latin source) and in damp places, and is described as having *twigu* like a pig's bristles (CNo. 4). Old English *twig* can mean 'twig, branch, shoot, small tree' but, since the *twigu* in this case are growing on a plant, 'small tree' can be eliminated. Furthermore, the bristles of a pig suggest growths that are close together, a concept which makes twigs or shoots the most likely interpretation, and this fits well with the Latin equivalent, *ramulus* 'a little branch, twig' (OLD). Taking further clues from Section 5.1, it can now be noted that this plant has something resembling bristles (stiff hairs), one of its properties is the ability to nourish human hair, and its name means literally 'many hairs'. This collection of hair-clues may be significant.

Section 5.1 also shows that *two* plants were involved in Dioscorides' text, and that both of them could be called *polytrichon*, they both had similar habitats and they both effected the same cures. In the early sixth century, one of the illustrators of the Juliana Anicia Codex had believed these plants were very different in appearance but, as far as the extant evidence can suggest, only one of those illustrations was available in Anglo-Saxon England. That illustration shows the maidenhair fern. Judging from several surviving manuscripts of the Latin original of the Old English *Herbarium*, the two *polytrichon* plants of Dioscorides' text had already been merged into one plant entry, before it was translated into Old English (De Vriend 1984: 96–9). For the Anglo-Saxons, would the maidenhair fern be compatible with the minimal description provided by their Latin source?

The plant's habitat is given as walls and damp places, and this compares well with Stace's description of the maidenhair fern's habitat: 'limestone cliffs, grykes and rock crevices near the sea … and on walls and bridges, always in moist sheltered spots' (Stace 1997: 16). At first, the mention of pig's bristles is puzzling but consideration of the plant's anatomy offers an explanation. The thin, black stems (correctly, the rachides) of this plant grow from an underground rhizome so they are often found in close proximity, almost bunched, and they arch over at their ends. The rachides look similar to the long, curved and often dark bristles of the wild boar.[28] The maidenhair fern, which is the subject of the *Herbarium* illustration for *politricus*, so far does not contradict any clues extracted from the Anglo-Saxon sources.

The place-names in Section 4 certainly suggest a damp location, and the element *tun* (Section 4.3) sounds particularly appropriate for the maidenhair fern, which likes damp walls. Interpreting *tun* as 'farmstead', there are several possibilities for stone walls. Although the

[28] Modern domestic pigs result from selective breeding, often with non-European species, from the eighteenth century onwards. The wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) is the closest animal we now have to the early medieval wild or domestic variety.

main house is more likely to have been timber-built, it may have had stone footings, there were probably stone boundary walls on the farm land, and the 'enclosure' sense of *tun* may indicate smaller walled areas for certain purposes. The other locations discussed in Section 4, marshy land near a stream, a wood or woodland clearing, seem much less likely, although stone may have been present.

Returning to the descriptors (Section 3), we find that *hymele* is agreeable to the taste so can be added to one's usual drinks (CNo. 6). This clue appears in a plant entry in the *Herbarium* which is separate from that of *herba politricus*, the Latin name of which is *brionia*. This *hymele/bryonia* entry is a treatment for pain in the spleen which may or may not have a similar origin as the remedy for abdominal pain in the *hymele/polytrichon* entry (see Section 11), but which has no mention of associations with hair. The Latin source of the Old English *Herbarium* gives no further information on *bryonia*. Its illustration in the Old English translation does not depict maidenhair fern (nor maidenhair spleenwort) but a plant with four rigid stems growing in a fan-shape from the root, three of which branch near the top. At the end of each stem and its branches is a single elongated bud-like structure. The stems have leaves at intervals, each one consisting of a number of very small leaflets on each side, apparently about the size of yew needles. With the minimal information and the stylized illustration for *hymele/bryonia*, it looks as if the Anglo-Saxons would have had difficulty identifying this plant if they had no other information.

Further information about *bryonia* was available in Anglo-Saxon sources but was perhaps not known to the copy-artist of the illustrated *Herbarium* manuscript. In Section 6, it was found that *bryonia* was translated by further Old English plant-names in the Antwerp Glossary, an Anglo-Saxon compilation: *wilde cyrfæt* 'wild gourd' (a climbing plant) and the *hwit (wilde) wingeard* 'white (wild) climbing plant'. Dioscorides' *ampelos leuke* 'white climbing plant' appears in the company of *bryonia, wilde cyrfæt* and *hwit wilde wingeard*, all indicating climbing plants. Furthermore, access to Pliny's *Naturalis historia* would have confirmed that *bryonia* was a vine (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.432–3). In addition, it seems likely that an illustrative tradition of showing *bryonia* as a climbing plant may have existed in Anglo-Saxon England, since the manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole 1431, shows an obvious climber (folio 18v), as does another late eleventh century English manuscript (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 130; folio 17r). In conclusion, the scribe and artist of the illustrated Old English *Herbarium* may have been unclear as to the identity of *bryonia*, or they may have been mistaken in their identification, but it seems that at least some Anglo-Saxons would have rightly identified the plant as a climber.

Hymele twice translates yet another Latin plant-name, *oenanthe*, in a Latin manuscript (Ashmole 1431) of the Pseudo-Apuleius (see Section 5.4). In the Old English translation of this text (in MS Cotton Vitellius C.III) *oennantes* appears with no English name. The illustrations for *oenanthe* in the two manuscripts are very unlike. The Ashmole illustration shows a main stem in several strong S-curves, with serrated leaves at intervals and, at the very end of the stem, three pointed, elongated buds or fruits which appear to be covered in scales.[29] The Vitellius C.III *oenanthe* has a single, thick and straight main stem with long leaves consisting of sparse, deeply incised leaflets, and two dark wiry shoots extending upwards from the roots.

The use of *oenanthe* to mean 'water dropworts' raises some doubts. The dropworts are

[29] These buds or fruits may suggest hops, which are also scaly, but they do not hang down like hops in this illustration.

umbellifers, and quite unlike the cucurbitaceous plants or climbing plants apparently most commonly indicated by *hymele*. It is, therefore, a possibility that *humele* in CNos 12 and 13 is an error for *humelic*, a term which was definitely used for various umbellifers, probably including water dropwort (see Wotherspoon on *hymelic* in this book, Section 9). Against this view is the fact that some manuscript illustrations show a trailing or climbing plant quite unlike the water dropworts. However, it is clear from the previous paragraph that there has been some misunderstanding over the appearance of this plant (as with some others) so the evidence of the illustrations is not entirely reliable.

Hymele also translates Latin *volvola*, which denotes the bindweed (see Section 5.5), another climbing plant. If the etymology of *hymele* given in Section 8 is correct, this plant-name originated in a word denoting something like 'groping, climbing, trailing' suggesting that its earliest sense, either in Old English or in Common Germanic, indicated a climbing plant.

It seems, therefore, that a number of different *hymele*-naming traditions are extant in the Anglo-Saxon sources, and it is time to consider the compound names in which *hymele* is qualified by *hege-, heah-* and *eowo-*. *Hegehymele* means 'hedge-*hymele*' and, apart from being included in a long list of ingredients for a salve (CNo. 7; Pettit 2001: I.10–11, Section 15), the only other occurrence of *hegehymele* occurs in the Brussels Glossary, where it translates the Latin *humblonis* from *humblo* 'hop' (CNo. 10; Sections 3 and 5.3). The hop is native to Britain (Stace 1997: 116) and, as a climbing plant, it is often found in hedgerows. It was also cultivated as a crop, although there is some debate as to when this activity began in England (see Section 12). Even if hops were cultivated in Anglo-Saxon times, it seems unlikely that the *hege-* prefix was intended to distinguish the wild from the cultivated plant since, firstly, OE *hege* could mean 'fence' as well as 'hedge' so might be taken to indicate a frame for the cultivated plant to climb (although 'hedge' seems the more usual sense of the word), and, secondly, it is clear that *hymele* alone was not restricted to a single plant so was unlikely to specify the cultivated hop. Perhaps the most likely conclusion is that *hegehymele* specified the hop-plant for some Anglo-Saxons who interpreted *hymele* as a climbing or trailing plant in general. Other climbers, of course, can be found in hedges but the hop may have been the most common hedge-climber to those who used this compound name.

If the prefix *heah-* is taken at face value to mean 'high' (see Section 3) in *heahhymele*, the hop is certainly a candidate for this name. Modern hops, cultivated on a frame, can grow up to thirty feet high so it may be that, where they attached themselves to a tree, their height could have been considered remarkable in Anglo-Saxon England. *Byronia dioica* can also reach considerable heights, but *hymele* is less likely to have denoted *Bryonia alba* which is not a British native. It would be unwise to suggest that *heahhymele* denoted a specific plant since, in a folk taxonomy, it would most likely have been applicable to any climbing *hymele* which reached a remarkable height.

The prefix *eowo-* 'ewe' is unlikely to refer to the female of a dioecious plant, since the realization that some plants can be male or female probably post-dates the Anglo-Saxon period by several centuries (see Section 3). A number of plants have animals in their folk-names, but the significance of *ewe* in this context is not clear.

From the basic data discussed above it seems that *hymele* to the Anglo-Saxons could mean any twining, climbing or trailing plant, as its etymology suggests (Section 8). This would include the maidenhair fern since its shoots grow from what is known as a 'creeping rhizome', that is, a thickened stem which progresses under- or over-ground, even acting as a food store for the shoots when it grows across rock. The rhizome of the maidenhair spleenwort is short

and usually described as creeping only a little (Ferguson 1912: 24). It is debateable whether such slight progress would have been noted, and this adds to the impression that the fern is a better *hymele* candidate than the spleenwort. This sort of classification by a particular visible feature is typical of a folk taxonomy.[30] As a result of classifying by such a feature, the name *hymele* could be applied to species which the botanist would consider totally unrelated. It seems we have evidence (or clues) that the name *hymele* was used of the maidenhair fern, the wild gourd, white byrony (*Bryonia dioica*), the bindweed and the hop, which are all climbing and/or creeping plants.[31] If it is true that the definition 'water dropwort' arises from a confusion of *hymele* with *hymlic*, as discussed above in this section, then *hymele* would appear to be safely defined as 'climbing or creeping plant'.[32]

The fact that *hymele* was such a general term would naturally have led to the compound forms *hegehymele, heahhymele* and *eowohymele* as attempts to distinguish specific types where required, although these may not have replaced the use of the generic term for these types. The unspecific nature of the term *hymele* is also likely to be a reason for the later introduction of the term *hop*, to specify that plant when it began to become commercially important (see Section 12).

11. *Hymele* in medicine

In the *Herbarium* (Chapter 52) where OE *hymele* is equated with Latin *polytrichon*, the leaves of the plant are to be ground with nine peppercorns and nine coriander seeds and put in good wine to be drunk as a cure for abdominal pain, just before taking a bath. It is also said here to make the hair grow, but which part of the plant is to be used or how it is to be administered is not specified. In Chapter 68 of the same work where *hymele* is equated with *bryonia*, it is said to be a remedy for pain in the spleen. The part of the plant is not specified, but it is to be taken with food, and it can also be put in ordinary drinks.

In the *Lacnunga* (CNo. 8), *hymele* (part not specified) is to be pounded together with equal amounts of many other herbs in a mortar. The list of plants is largely in alliterative pairs, *hymelan* being paired with *hegeclife*. This plant is usually identified as cleavers (*Galium aparine* L.; DOEPN), another climbing plant. Many further ingredients are to be prepared and added, such as several tree-barks and animal fats, and the purpose is to make a *bansealf* 'bone-salve' that is good for headaches and for infirmities of all the limbs. This recipe contains 'magical' elements in contrast to the recipes of the *Herbarium*, and is extremely complex, involving much boiling and skimming, and finishing with the singing of psalms and a prayer. Also in *Lacnunga* (CNo. 7), is a recipe for a *grene sealf*, 'green salve' in which *hegehymele* (part not specified) is used with a great variety of other herbs. The method of preparation and uses of the salve are not specified.

In the Charm (CNo. 9), *eowohumele* is used with other herbs in a recipe for a salve to ward

[30] Jerome Bock (his latinized name was Hieronymus Tragus) proposed the name *Serpentariae* for climbing and trailing plants in the early sixteenth century (Greene 1983: I.348–9).

[31] Although southern European writers may well have included the 'other' white bryony (*Bryonia alba*) with *B. dioica*, it has been excluded here when considering the Anglo-Saxon context since it is not a British native plant. This is not to deny that it would have been available to some through importation or special cultivation in monastic gardens.

[32] The network of interpretations centred on *hymele* is complex and often confusing. Wilson (1975: 642) makes a valiant attempt to tabulate the network, but any use of this table should take into account later research.

off elves and nocturnal evil spirits and temptations. The recipe contains 'magical' elements, such as saying masses over the mixture. The salve is to be smeared on the face, the eyes, and anywhere the body might be painful.

The *hymele*s are one ingredient among many in most of the above recipes, and this makes it difficult to ascertain what was believed to be the function of these plants. However, in the *Herbarium* recipes, this research is easier. Firstly, maidenhair fern, along with the seeds of pepper and coriander, made a drink to help abdominal pain. Secondly, maidenhair fern (presumably by itself) encouraged hair growth. Thirdly, another climbing plant, possibly *Bryonia dioica*, given in food, relieved pain in the spleen. Fourthly, and perhaps with no medical function, a climbing plant, possibly *Bryonia dioica*, could be added to everyday drinks (see Section 12).

The first and second remedies in the Old English *Herbarium* are accompanied by some information about the plant and by an illustration which is recognisable as maidenhair fern. Is this impression misleading in the context of Anglo-Saxon England? In later centuries, *maidenhair* was used of both the fern and the maidenhair spleenwort, and they were sometimes distinguished by the terms 'true maidenhair' and 'common maidenhair' respectively. As is obvious from its name, the spleenwort rather than the fern was traditionally credited with dealing with problems of the spleen, and this may be because the fern was not plentiful in Britain. Step (1908: 22) describes it as a 'rare sight' in this country, and writes 'It has probably never been plentiful with us, as it is unable to survive our winter climate except in a few sheltered places near the sea on our south-west and western coasts'. The early modern herbalists, well versed in Greek and Latin sources, appear to have assigned the properties described in such sources as being common to the fern and the spleenwort, only to the spleenwort because it was by far the more plentiful plant in Britain.[33] Whether the Anglo-Saxons did the same is a difficult question. The small amount of evidence which has been considered in this paper suggests that the fern was the plant they had in mind, and this may be because the warmer climate (than today's) of Anglo-Saxon England enabled the fern to grow more plentifully, or because it was cultivated in monastic gardens. The abdominal pain (CNo. 4) and the pain in the spleen (CNo. 6), with different Latin plant-names, may not, of course, have been considered to have the same cause.[34]

12. *Hymele* in beer

The question about the role of *hymele* (as hops) which has always interested scholars is whether they were known as a flavouring for beer in Anglo-Saxon England. As discussed in Section 3 above, Cockayne argued that the statement in the Old English *Herbarium* that *hymele* was taken in everyday drinks (CNo. 6) was evidence for hopped beer but, as has been shown, the wording is not conclusive on this point.[35] The drinks beer, ale and mead generally seem to have been thought by the Anglo-Saxons to taste better sweetened (Nelson 2005: 109–10).

The earliest certain documentary evidence for the use of hops to flavour beer, discussed in detail by Nelson (2005) and by Wilson (1975), is from the statutes of Adalhard, Abott of the monastery of St Peter and St Stephen at Corbie in France, written in 822, following the

[33] The name *spleenwort* is not recorded before 1578 (OED).

[34] See Biggam on *safene* in this volume, Section 14.1, for a discussion as to how Anglo-Saxon physicians may have dealt with the spleen.

[35] Bonser disposes of other aspects of Cockayne's argument (Bonser 1963: 359–60).

precepts for monks established at the synods at Aachen in 816 and 817 (Wilson 1975: 644; Nelson 2005: 107). A tithe of each malting was to be given to the porter of the monastery who kept the malt he made himself and likewise hops (*humlo*) but, if this was insufficient, he could aquire as much as he needed for making beer. In an earlier passage in the same document, millers are excluded from the duty of gathering firewood and hops, perhaps suggesting that, at this time, hops were not cultivated. An earlier Continental document from 768, granting lands to the abbey of St Denis, also in northern France, mentions *Humlonarias*, which suggests a place known for its hops, but does not necessarily imply cultivation. However, documents mentioning hop-gardens in Bavaria exist from 859 (Wilson 1975: 644; Hornsey 1999: 58; Nelson 2005: 108).

Probably the main point of putting hops in beer was to act as a preservative, as noted by Hildegard of Bingen in the twelfth century (*Physica* I.61, III.27; Migne 1844–65: vol. 197), rather than for the flavour. However, the practice seems to have suddenly become popular in an area of what is now northern France, and it is perfectly conceivable that the practice could have spread across the Channel, although it is not documented in England in the early Middle Ages.

The best evidence for the use of hops in Anglo-Saxon England is not documentary but archaeological. In 1970, at Graveney Marshes in Kent, the remains of a boat were discovered during excavations for drainage works (Fenwick 1978). The boat was found to have contained a cargo of hop cones (Wilson 1975). Radiocarbon dating assigned the timbers of the boat to c.870–886, and the brushwood platform where the boat had been abandoned to c.970. The samples of the contents and surroundings of the boat taken by Wilson were fairly conclusive. The fruits of *Humulus lupulus* hugely outnumber any other macro-fossils identified from the samples, and hop remains were found on the brushwood platform and in the layer overlying the bottom of the boat, but not under the boat, and no hop pollen was found. These facts fairly certainly show that the hop fruits had been brought to the site, and that those outside the boat were not there through any natural agent. Either the cargo of hops had come to the Graveney site from elsewhere in England or from abroad and had been only partially unloaded, or a cargo of hops had been in process of being loaded at Graveney. Though there are several possible economic uses of the hop *plant* (Wilson 1975: 637–8), the only feasible uses for the inflorescences are medical and the flavouring and preserving of beer. The scale of the cargo evidenced by the remains of the Graveney boat suggests the latter use. This evidence, plus the documentary evidence from the Continent for hopped beer indicates that such a thing was probably known in England from the ninth century, although this is likely to have involved the use of wild, rather than cultivated hops.

13. Conclusion

The evidence and arguments presented above suggest that OE *hymele* had the principal sense of ‘a climbing or creeping plant’, that is, a plant which was seen to move from one location to another. There is good evidence that *hymele* could denote the maidenhair fern, white bryony (*Bryonia dioica*) and the hop plant, but glimpses of the wild gourd and bindweed suggest the word had a broad application. Attempts to reduce the possibilities by coining compound terms were probably effective at a local level where, for example, a particular species was the pre-eminent hedge-climbing plant, but such efforts probably remained dialectal.

Appendix A: *Hymele* catalogue

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Herbarium	Lch I (HerbHead) 52.0	*hymele*
2	Herbarium	Lch I (HerbHead) 68.0	*hymele*
3	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 52.0	*hymele*
4	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 52.0[36]	*hymele*
5	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 68.0	*hymele*
6	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 68.1	*hymele*
7	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 15.1	*hegehymele*
8	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 31.1	*hymelan*
9	Charm: 20	Charm 20 (Storms) 2	*eowohumelan*
10	Glossary: Brussels	BrGl 1 (Wright-Wülcker) 8.210	*hegehymele*
11	Glossary: Cleopatra 2	ClGl 2 (Quinn) 756	*hymele*
12	Herbarium (G)	OccGl 36 (Gough) 39	*humele*
13	Herbarium (G)	OccGl 36 (Gough) 40	*humele*
14	Glossary: Royal 7.D.II	CollGl 20 (Meritt) 13	*heahhumele*
15	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 233	*humele*
16	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 66	*hymelyc*
17	Charter: S1486	Ch 1486 (Whitelock 15) 53	*Humelcyrre* (2)
18	Charter: S1373	Ch 1373 (Rob 56) 1	*Hymeltune*
19	Charter: S1593	Ch 1593 (Hearne) 1	*hymeltune*
20	Charter: S219	Ch 219 (Birch 552) 9	*hymelbroc*
21	Charter: S633	Ch 633 (Birch 937) 2	*hymelbroc*
22	Charter: S786	Ch 786 (Birch 1282) 24	*hymelbroc* (2)
23	Charter: S1591	Ch 1591 (Birch 428) 2	*hymelbroc*
24	Charter: S1591	Ch 1591 (Birch 428) 3	*hymelbroce*
25	Charter: S1593	Ch 1593 (Hearne) 3	*hymelbroce*
26	Charter: S1593	Ch 1593 (Hearne) 11	*hymelbroc*
27	Charter: S1600	Ch 1600 (Hearne) 20	*hymelbroc*
28	Charter: S1600	Ch 1600 (Hearne) 20	*hymelbroces*
29	Charter: S1348	Ch 1348 (Kem 645) 9	*hymelmor*
30	Charter: S1373	Ch 1373 (Rob 56) 4	*Hymeltune*
31	Charter: S1373	Ch 1373 (Rob 56) 13	*Hymeltune*
32	Charter: S633	Ch 633 (Birch 937) 5	*hymelbroc*
33	Charter: S1593	Ch 1593 (Hearne) 5	*hymelbroce*
34	Charter: S1348	Ch 1348 (Kem 645) 3	*ymelmore*

Appendix A1: *Hymele* catalogue

[36] 52.0 in this short title (DOEWC) should be 52.1.

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
3	4	Closely located in same plant entry. 3+4: hymele
5	6	Closely located in same plant entry. 5+6: hymele
12	13	Probably from the same text originally. 12+13: humele ynantes
15	16	Probably from the same text originally. 15: humele brionia 16: hymelyc bronia
18	30, 31	The same place-name in the same charter. 18+30+31: Hymeltune
21	32	The same place-name in the same charter. 21+32: hymelbroc
23	24	The same place-name in the same charter. 23: hymelbroc 24: hymelbroce
25	26, 33	The same place-name in the same charter. 25+33: hymelbroce 26: hymelbroc
27	28	The same place-name in the same charter. 27: hymelbroc 28: hymelbroces
29	34	The same place-name in the same charter. 29: hymelmor 34: ymelmor

Appendix A2: Related citations

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Biting the *Bulut*: A Problematic Old English Plant-Name in the Light of Place-Name Evidence

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1. Introduction

This article arises from a tension between the meanings of the Old English (OE) plant-term *bulut* suggested in the older philological literature, and its appearance in a Lincolnshire place-name. Boultham is a historic parish just south-west of the city of Lincoln, and its situation seems to be hard to square ecologically with those suggested meanings. I shall briefly discuss the place-name to start with, then discuss the problems in establishing the meaning, origin and history of *bulut*, move towards a solution compatible with the geographical and linguistic situation of the place-name, and assess the usefulness of dialect vocabulary in making that solution plausible. The issue is ripe for discussion, since no consensus about the word's meaning exists, but the solution which emerges below will leave some philological questions unanswered.

2. The place-name *Boultham*

The place-name scholar Kenneth Cameron (1998: 18) was probably right to suggest that the parish-name *Boultham* contains *bulut*; no alternative has been put forward, and none has occurred to this writer.[2] The name first appears in *Domesday Book* as *Buletham*, a highly suggestive spelling repeated in two ostensibly twelfth-century documents. The evidence is sufficient to confirm that the first element is a two-syllable word of Old English. This interpretation is originally due to the Swedish toponymist Eilert Ekwall (1936: 106); thus also in his great place-name dictionary (1960: 55), and it is now generally accepted in this discipline both by scholars with a local focus and those with a national one (for example,

[1] Dr C. P. Biggam has collaborated on and contributed to several sections of this paper.

[2] The existence of an OE **bult* 'heap, hillock' has been suggested on the evidence of the hamlet-name *Bouts* in Inkberrow, Worcestershire (PN Wo 325), but there are difficult medieval spellings (two instances of *Bultus*), and no firm supporting evidence from elsewhere, so this remains highly conjectural. Note that the noun *bolt* is found in Worcestershire with meanings which include 'bundle of osiers' and 'stone-built drain' (Wright 1898–1905: I.332), and these might be relevant to *Boultham*. Another minor name (*Bulford*, Wiltshire, first recorded as *Bultisford* in 1178) is mentioned in the *Vocabulary of English Place-Names* (VEPN 2000: 67) and this might contain **bult*, but the editors note that it might contain *bulut* instead.

Perrott 1979: 248; Watts 2004: 73). Cameron takes the second element as OE *hām* 'major farming estate', but since the place is low-lying by the Witham (though not in a bend of the river) it could just as easily be *hamm* in the application 'river-meadow' (Gelling 1960: 147–9; Gelling and Cole 2000: 50–1), as Ekwall originally proposed. The ecological significance of this point will become apparent below. Watts is agnostic about the second element. We shall see that *bulut* probably appears in two other minor place-names with watery associations, in Wiltshire and Radnorshire. This might, but need not, tilt the argument in favour of *hamm* in *Boultham*.

3. The history and meaning of *bulut*

The focus of this piece, however, is on the word *bulut* itself. Its presence in *Boultham* encourages us to reassess all the previous accounts of its meaning, listing all the few known occurrences in Old English as we proceed. Its earliest appearance consists of the two mentions in *Bald's Leechbook*, in the mid-tenth century MS British Library, Royal 12 D.xvii, printed by Cockayne (1961: II.128, 340), as an ingredient in a salve for 'wens' (lumps, swellings, tumours) and a drink for piles, contexts that offer us no very helpful clues for its identification, except lumpiness. Cockayne does not suggest a meaning, and leaves the word untranslated in his Modern English version of the text. In his glossary (which is not in the 1961 re-issue of his work by Singer), he adds a speculative etymology of the word based on one of two superficial phonological resemblances, with enough safeguarding question-marks to make the reader wary:

> Bulot, L[eech]b[ook] I. lviii. 2; Bulut, L[eech]b[ook] III. xlviii.; *the root of lychnis flos cuculi?* See Plinius xxi.97 = 26. *Ballota*, Βαλλώτη [sic], *nigra?* Boletus? (Cockayne 1864–6: II.374)[3]

The word also occurs once in the Harley Latin-English glossary, dating from about 1000 (MS British Library, Harley 3376; see Wright 1884: 196; Oliphant 1966: 40, line B506; and the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE), under *bulut*, sense 2), where it glosses *bresion*, a word which Oliphant despairs of explaining. However, the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS) defines it as follows, partly in tune with Cockayne's mention of *boletus*, a type of fungus: '(?) toadstool or species of plant; *cf. britia*', but then defines *britia* not exactly consistently as 'cress or (?) fenugreek (bot[anical]); *cf. bresion*'. There are no other mentions in Old English, and the term seems to have disappeared as a living word by the Middle English (ME) period.[4]

It is clear that only guesswork and a desire to connect with the Classical scientific literature have got us this far. We may suspect that Cockayne adduces *ballota* and *boletus* mainly because of a passing resemblance between them and the consonants of *bulut*; though help may be at hand for a connection with *ballota* from a more careful consideration of the Harley Glossary, as we shall see. Holthausen (1934: 38) offers no formal etymology for *bulut*, but both Hoops and Marzell (cited by Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.25) take it to be a loan from *ballota*. There

[3] C. P. Biggam notes in correspondence (10 December 2002) that 'his Pliny reference is in error for book 21, para. 98, which is about *Lychnis* and, crucially, includes the sentence 'Its root is called *bolites* by the people of Asia' (*Radicem eius Asiani boliten vocant*).

[4] *Bultus* appears in the Laud herbal glossary (MS British Library, Laud Misc. 567), a twelfth-century manuscript containing features which clearly indicate that it is derived from an Old English original but, mysteriously, it appears as an otherwise unknown Latin lemma (headword) glossed with Latin *flores*. The entry reads *Bultus .i. flores*, '*Bultus*, that is, flowers', with no explanatory notes (Stracke 1974: 27, no. 217).

are candidates for cognacy (shared origin) in some European languages, especially German, notably in a gloss which reads *hulft vel bult marubium*, '*hulft* or *bult marubium*', cited by Diefenbach (1867: 350a). For more on *marrubium*, see below.[5]

In Bosworth (1898, under *bulot*), the plant is identified as '*Ragged robin* or *cuckoo-flower* (*Lychnis flos-cuculi* L.)'. These scholars (Bosworth and his later editor, Toller) evidently based their view on Cockayne's, but omitted his cautionary punctuation. This became the standard interpretation, as enshrined in the gloss in Holthausen's etymological dictionary (1934) (*Kuckucksblume*); in Ekwall's note (1936: 106–7); in Cameron's discussion of *Boultham* (1998); in *English Place-Name Elements* (EPNE I: 57); in VEPN (I: 67); and in Watts (2004). Ekwall (1936: 107), whilst accepting the connection with *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, also postulated a relationship with a Germanic root **būl-* meaning 'swell', which obliged him immediately to shift his gaze away from the distinctly slimline *Lychnis* to its relatives such as the *Silene* species, the various campions with their inflated calyxes (the outer protective layers of buds; the sepals). He could have considered (but apparently did not) whether the swelling in question might have been related to the plant's medicinal use rather than its appearance (see the issue of lumpiness mentioned above).

More recently, the editors of the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE) have composed the following more cautious entry for *bulut* (lightly edited here):

> Noun (? cf. Latin *ballote*)
> Att[ested] sp[ellings]: bulut, bulot
> 3 occ[urrences]
> 1. a plant, perhaps black or white horehound
> L[ee]ch[book] II (3) 48.1.1: [quotation]
> L[ee]ch[book] II (1) 58.2.1: [quotation]
> 2. glossing *bresion* (? for *prasion* 'white horehound')
> H[ar]l[ey]Gl[ossary line] B506: *bresion* [? for *prasion*] bulut
> 3. as a place-name element, e.g. *bulutham* and perhaps *bulutford*
> Lat[in] equiv[alent] in m[anu]s[cript]: prasion

Lychnis flos-cuculi has disappeared, and Cockayne's alternative and tentative suggestion of horehound has come to the fore. The DOE identifies the *bresion* of the Harley Glossary with Greek *prasion* (πράσιον), a derivative of *prason* (πράσον), 'leek, *Allium porrum*; a kind of sea-grass' (Frisk 1960–72: II.589; translation by R. Coates; compare Markey, this volume, Section 6.2.2). The word *prasion* itself is said by Frisk, basing his view on more than three primary sources, to denote *Andorn, Marrubium usw*., 'white horehound, *Marrubium* etc.', though he cites Andrews (1961: 76), who raises the spectre of an alternative identification with a species of marjoram (*Marjorana onites* (L.) Benth.). Linking *bresion* and *prasion* has the effect of suggesting a meaning for *bulut* that offers a chance of an etymology: a formal link with Latin *ballote*, which may denote one of the horehounds (*Ballota nigra* L.), though not certainly, as indicated by both the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (OLD) and Liddell and Scott (1897) for Greek. The OLD gives as its definition for *ballōtē*:

> A plant, perh[aps] black horehound.
> [1 reference:] [ballot]en alio nomine porrum nigrum Graeci uocant [The Greeks call ballote by another name: 'black leek'] PLIN[IUS]. *Nat*[*uralis historia*] 27.54.

Liddell and Scott, under πράσιον (*prasion*), say:

[5] These citations can be found in the online *Dictionary of Old English Plant Names* (DOEPN; under *bulut*). This online publication is a revised and augmented version of Bierbaumer (1975–9). The dictionary's plant interpretation for *bulut* is '? *Ballota nigra* L., black horehound'.

> [1.] horehound, Marrubium vulgare [3 references]; also Marrubium peregrinum [2 references]
> 2. τραγορίγανος λεπτόφυλλος [*tragoríganos leptophyllos*] D[io]sc[orides] 3.30 [rock savory, *Micromeria juliana* (L.) Benth.] [2 references].
> 3. βαλλωτή [*ballōtē*] Ps[eudo]-D[io]sc[orides] 3.103.
> II. a seaweed, Arist[otle] *H[istoria] A[nimalium]* 591a16.

For *prasion/-ium* in Latin, however, Lewis and Short had plumped for 'an herb, white horehound', resting on the texts of Celsus and Pliny, and their view has presumably informed the one in the DOE.

The editors of VEPN also suggest, following the DOE, that *bulut* may ('probably') derive from Latin *ballote* 'black horehound' (which gives modern botanical Latin *Ballota* (*nigra*)). The generic is acknowledged to be a borrowing from Greek βαλλωτή (*ballōtē*), of unknown ultimate origin but meaning 'black horehound' (on the authority of Renaissance interpreters of the first-century CE botanist Dioscorides Anazarbeus) (Frisk 1960–72: I.217). But linking Greek *ballōtē* with OE *bulut* raises serious phonological difficulties because of the first vowel ⟨u⟩ in the Old English word. There is no parallel for the Old English representation of Latin /a/ by ⟨u⟩, nor is there any known phonological process which could effect a relevant phonetic change.

In addition, if *bulut* were an oral borrowing from the time when other plant-names were being borrowed, one would expect final ⟨d⟩/[d] in Old English for Latin /t/.[6] A Latin medial, originally voiceless stop appears lenited (voiced) in the Old English borrowing of the word for 'fennel': OE *finugl(e)* from Latin *foeniculum* (showing voiceless ⟨c⟩ changing to voiced ⟨g⟩).[7] Latin *final* voiceless stops also become voiced in Old English, as has happened to the final sounds, shown as ⟨d⟩, in the following: OE *æced/eced* 'vinegar'; *abbod* 'abbot'; *morod* 'sweet wine'; and *tæpped* 'carpet' (Campbell 1959: 210).[8] A very early oral borrowing, which would allow the spelling ⟨t⟩ (that is, with Latin /t/ unaffected by voicing), seems unlikely in the case of a non-staple plant when words for other simples (herbs) were evidently being borrowed later, after voicing had already occurred. If, on the other hand, it were a *late* borrowing from a written form, which would allow the spelling ⟨t⟩ in Old English, one would expect greater fidelity to all details of the original form which the writer was transcribing, including the vowels. It is open to question, also, whether a plant-name borrowed from Latin would find its way into an Anglo-Saxon place-name. This could be perceived as a problem, but the present writer has made a case that *Poulner* in Hampshire contains OE *polleie* 'pennyroyal' from Latin *pulegium* (Coates 1989a: 134; 1989b: 9–10), and it is uncontroversial that OE *minte* 'mint', from Latin *mentha*, is found in such names as *Minstead* (Sussex and Hampshire; Sandred 1963: 171, 257, 270 and especially note 3 there).

[6] The brackets used here and elsewhere reflect certain linguistic conventions. Square brackets, as in [d], indicate a *phone*, that is, an exact sound, usually denoted by the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Slashes, as in /d/, represent a *phoneme*, that is, a sound or sounds considered to be a single significant sound in the language under discussion. Angled brackets, as in ⟨d⟩, indicate a *grapheme*, that is, the way in which a sound or sounds is represented in the written language.

[7] Also possibly in OE *sæþerige* 'savory' from Latin *satureia*, if ⟨þ⟩ truly represents a fricative consonant rather than an English reinterpretation of a scribal ⟨th⟩. A *stop* is a sound made by briefly blocking the flow of air in the mouth, and then releasing it 'explosively', as in the ⟨c⟩ of *cat*. A fricative is a sound which involves the noisy passage of air through a narrow gap between organs of speech, as in the ⟨f⟩ of *foot*.

[8] All from Latin words with stems ending in /t/: *acetum, abbatem, moratum* and *tapetum*. Borrowed Latin /p/ remains [p] since Old English had no single [b] in relevant environments.

The connection of both words, Latin *ballote* and OE *bulut*, with *Marrubium* (horehound) is therefore not watertight, though the gloss in Diefenbach supports it from outside English. The Harley Glossary form (*bresion*) relates to a lemma that *may* represent *prasion*, and *prasion may* mean 'white horehound'. Cockayne's early view, however, brings together OE *bulut* and *black* horehound, but *Ballota* (black) and *Marrubium* (white) *may* be equatable since they are, after all, assigned the same vernacular English name, though possibly on the basis of some learned tradition. However, it is evident that they are now taxonomically assigned to separate genera within the family Labiatae. The basis of any connection or confusion is unlikely to be visual (see the drawings in, for example, Ross-Craig 1967, or in any standard botany textbook). *Marrubium vulgare* L. has white flowers (of which the lower ones grow in whorls, that is, they encircle the stem at the same level), variably woolly stems and leaves, ovate leaves with slightly toothed margins and marked horizontal side-branches, and it is aromatic. In contrast, *Ballota nigra* L. has pale purple flowers (the lower ones of which are axillary, that is, growing in the angle between the main stem and the leaf stems), it is not tomentose (woolly), has ovate leaves with strongly toothed margins and side-branches which are more nearly upright, and it has an unpleasant smell. *Ballota* is also much taller than *Marrubium*. Furthermore, they have quite different traditional medicinal uses; *Marrubium* is even now a useful item in the pharmacopœia as a laxative and expectorant (Grigson 1975: 352) whilst stinking *Ballota* was used in accordance with the doctrine of sympathetic magic for stinking ulcers (and the bite of rabid dogs). There is little to link them except a passing similarity of leaf-shape and the shared English name, although both were used for afflictions of the respiratory system (Allen and Hatfield 2004: 214; 216).

Yet the suggestion of *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (Ragged-Robin) is also very implausible. It has an unusual petal-shape which makes it a striking though not flashy flower, but it is and has been of virtually no medicinal, culinary or other practical use (Grigson 1975: 93–4),[9] unlike either *Marrubium vulgare* or *Ballota nigra*. It is much more a favourite of post-eighteenth-century sensibility than that of the sixth or seventh century. Its one 'virtue' is early flowering, but this, if it were the only special feature, would make it a surprising candidate to appear in an old place-name.

4. Botanical and dialectal considerations

Since we are still some way from a convincing identification, let alone an explanation, of *bulut*, let us search for clues by returning to the Lincolnshire place-name. The traditional pronunciation of *Boultham* was, and indeed still is, /bu:təm/ (Forster 1981: 33); the alternative /bu:ðəm/ must be a later pronunciation deriving in part from the written form. In other words, the first syllable is pronounced like *boot*, a pronunciation which gives us the clue we need.

Several plant-names contain the names of footwear of various kinds, nearly always with an obvious motivation in the shape of the flower or some other part of the plant, as with *lady's-slipper* (*Cypripedium calceolus* L.), *shoes and stockings* (for example, *Lotus corniculatus* L.) and *cuckoo's* or *gowk's boots* (*Endymion nonscriptus* (L.) Garcke). The one clear exception is *Boots* and *Yellow boots*, found along with *Meadow bout* and *Marybout* as local names in

[9] Except for a single record of its use, in Cardiganshire, in an ointment for snakebite. This may, however, result from confusion with the Red Campion (*Silene dioica* (L.) Clairv.), also known as Ragged-Robin, which is associated with snakes in western Wales where it is known as *blodwyn neidr* 'snake flower' (Allen and Hatfield 2004: 93).

Shropshire, Cheshire and Lancashire for the marsh marigold, *Caltha palustris* L. (Wright 1898–1905: I.344; Grigson 1975: 32–5). This plant has nothing boot-like about it. It is much more eye-catching than *Lychnis flos-cuculi* by virtue of the fact, not only that it flowers early, but also that its flowers are very large and conspicuous. I suggest that *boot(s)* is a folk-etymologized reinterpretation of (-)*bout* /bu:t/, the lineal descendant of *bulut* via a form pronounced */bult/ which is not found separately in the record, but which is required in the etymology of *Bulford* (Wiltshire) and is attested in the record of that place-name (*Bultisford*, recorded from 1178; PN W 362), and mentioned in the DOE entry cited above (and see also note 1).[10] Note also that *ford* in the Wiltshire place-name guarantees the connection with water which the interpretation of 'marsh marigold' requires, and so does *brook* (following PN W), in the minor place-name *Boultibrooke* in Norton (Radnorshire), mentioned but not analysed by Charles (1938: 174).

The name *bulut* for *Caltha palustris* must originally have competed with the anciently-recorded *mearh-gealla* 'horse-gall' (seen in the name *Marlborough* (Wiltshire)) which could have been confused with *marigold* — hence the usual modern name (Grigson 1975: 34).[11] But both names have been replaced over much of the country by such names as *kingcup* (the usual one in Lincolnshire now), *horse-blob*, *X's buttons*, *May X*, *water X* or their variants, where each *X* covers a range of possibilities. Most significant of all, however, is the fact that *bolt(s)* is on record as a dialect plant-name, equated with *buttercups* in Parkinson's *Theatrum botanicum* (1640) and with *Trollius europaeus* L., the globeflower, in the appendix to Gerard's *Herball* (1597). Both are cited in Britten and Holland (1886: 57), though, curiously, this name is absent from the otherwise encyclopaedic Grigson (1975). These two plants are, like *Caltha palustris*, members of the family Ranunculaceae, and both of them share a wide range of vernacular names with *Caltha palustris*, including *marybuds*, *gowan* and *kingcup* (Grigson 1975: 32–7, 46–8); they have in common the fact that all have bright yellow flowers, if not of exactly the same hue. I suggest that *bolts* and **bults* are too phonologically close not to have a common origin. One can read off from Maps Ph41a (*colt*) and Ph56a (*coulter*) of the *Linguistic Atlas of England* (LAE) that the pronunciations deriving from ME /olt/ and /ult/ coincide in most of England south-east of the Severn-Trent line, in fact almost everywhere where ME /ul/ has not become simple [u:]. The village-name *Boultham* must enshrine the older, northern development of /ul/ seen in modern times north of the Humber (LAE Map Ph56a), whilst the modern form /ɔu/ seen in *coulter* in Lincolnshire today is no doubt simply the cognate southern form, creeping northwards like many a phonological feature since the Middle Ages.

The marsh marigold is therefore the likeliest denotation of the Old English word seen in *Boultham*; the globeflower is not a plant of the eastern counties. The original village centre of Boultham, where the church of St Helen stands, lay in low-lying flat land close to the floodplain of the Witham, and the ground in the vicinity was formerly waterlogged, as can still be seen from the existence of natural pools such as The Swan Pool close by, reduced in size in 1805 (National Grid Reference TE 957 706), and other pools in an even less natural

[10] A separate Old English word **bult* has been postulated with the sense 'hillock' (see Note 1 above), and for this there is a Low German cognate with the same form (see, for example, Watts 2004: 332, under *Inkberrow*). This may need to be considered for the Wiltshire name, but it is inappropriate for the situation of *Boultham.*

[11] Grigson scornfully, and surely correctly, dismisses the idea that OE *mear(h)-gealla* could have meant 'gentian', as Ekwall had claimed (1936: 110–1) following Bosworth (1898). Regrettably, Watts (2004: 399) continues to give credence to the older ideas.

state. The habitat would have been ideal for *Caltha palustris. Lychnis flos-cuculi* also likes damp habitats, but is not specialized to marshland in the way that *Caltha palustris* is. *Ballota nigra* has no such preference at all.

The root of *Caltha palustris* may, like the buttercup (*Ranunculus* spp.) of which it is a giant relative, have been used as a counter-irritant, which is at least not inconsistent with the claimed use of *bulut* against wens and piles. *C. palustris* itself was used against eruptive rashes (Cockayne 1961: II.100; Grigson 1975: 35).

I submit that the facts of the dialect vocabulary make a good circumstantial case that *bulut* is really 'marsh marigold', and that the situation of Boultham, whose name surely contains the word, gives some support for this identification, reinforced by the existence of similar dialect words for other Ranunculaceae. We can dismiss the other etymologies offered as speculations based on superficial resemblances to anciently-recorded words.[12]

5. Conclusion

That is as far as we can go with philology and ecology alone, but there is scope to wonder whether (but not to establish that) other regional names for *Caltha palustris* are in fact folk-etymological variants or reinterpretations of *bulut*. Given the existence of *Marybout*, it seems possible that *Marybuds*, found in Dorset and Warwickshire, belongs with it. In south-western counties, names of the form *bull X* are quite frequent for no obvious reason, and perhaps these too might be considered to be reinterpretations of *bulut*, though no doubt of ancient date because any such reinterpretation would rely on the historical [l] still being audible, that is, before this [l] became a semivowel when a consonant immediately followed it.

The one thing which is not advanced by this discussion is the question of the formal etymology of *bulut*, which appears almost isolated. It certainly cannot be casually equated with, or derived from, *ballote* and the like, most particularly because of the vowel in the first syllable.[13] But the strong consonantal similarity means that a connection cannot be dismissed out of hand. The existence of *bult* in an early German gloss (Diefenbach 1867: 350a) may represent evidence either for native Germanic status of the word, or for very early (oral) borrowing into both English and German, or for relatively late learned borrowing into both languages.

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[12] Possibly, in view of the Radnorshire name, we should seek a Celtic origin: compare Welsh *bulwg* 'poppy' (these days often 'corncockle'), whose structure appears to be *bu* 'cows, cow-' (from British Celtic **bow-*) plus an obscure element (hardly *llwg* 'scurvy'); if so, there may have been other such compounds. Early Brittonic */ow/ might give OE /u:/, as in the name of London (for the latest account of this name's history, see Coates 1998: 208, 215, 222). If the story is to approach completion, we need to assume that the first <u> in *bulut* is a long vowel, but that may be inconsistent with the appearance of ModE /u:/ in *boots* and the like, unless it was shortened before the /lt/ cluster in **bult*. This is all speculative and doubtful, and if there are Germanic cognates, as noted above, a Celtic origin is highly implausible or impossible.

[13] Single <l> for a Latin geminate (<ll>) in this metrical position, that is, before the syllable which bears the stress in Latin, is possible; compare OE *pylece* 'robe' for Latin *pellicia* (Campbell 1959: 202). Some Plinian glosses also have single <l> in *ballote* (TLL I.1703), but the recorded variants are many and sometimes problematic.

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What was *Lybcorn*?

Audrey Meaney[1]

1. Introduction

A few medical remedies in Old English (OE) — mostly herbal recipes for emetics and purgatives shared between the *Leechbook*s — include among their ingredients a number of occurrences of the word *lybcorn*. The interpretation of this word has proved difficult, partly because, unlike many Old English plant names, it is purely Germanic and not borrowed (or, apparently, translated) from Latin or Greek. The suffix *-corn*, however, would seem to indicate that it is some kind of seed or fruit.

The only other context in which *lybcorn* is found is in glossaries, in manuscripts dating from about 800 AD up to the twelfth century, but whose evidence is not easy to interpret. Hence, modern editors have translated *lybcorn* variously, and sometimes at variance with the contexts of the remedies in which they occur. It seems to me that the only way to get closer to establishing what *lybcorn* was is to examine and investigate the whole body of evidence about it.

Lyb is found in Old English as a simplex noun, and also as the first element of a number of compounds (sometimes, however, prefixed by the negative or pejorative *un-*). The meanings of these nouns usually fall within a semantic group and are not too difficult to deduce. It therefore seems best to work from the known (or easily deduced) to the unknown, so I discuss first the simplex noun and the other compounds, leaving *lybcorn* itself for later consideration.

2. The simplex *lyb*

The simplex *lyb* (sometimes spelt *lib*, and sometimes with *-bb-*), of neuter gender, is rare. In Bald's *Leechbook*, after a recipe for eye drops made from celandine juice and honey, the writer comments: 'That is a salutary remedy for dimness of eyes' (*Þæt bið anspilde lyb wiþ eagena dimnesse* (Cockayne 1864–6: II.30–1; MS 4).[2] Here, there is no need to assume that anything

[1] Dr C. P. Biggam has collaborated on and contributed to several sections of this paper. I would like to thank her for her work on my text, especially the complex footnotes.

[2] Manuscript numbers in the form 'MS 4' refer to the list in Appendix 3. References to texts containing *lybcorn* or *giþcorn* are numbered as in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively. Information on the Anglo-Saxon medical texts mentioned in this paper can be found in Section 7. This article contains a number of medical terms, for which see the 'Glossary of Medical Terms' in this volume.

more than contemporary medicine is involved.[3] In the *Lacnunga*, however, the writer sets out a diminishing charm reminiscent of the 'Ten Green Bottles', and then suggests its uses:

> *Wið cyrnel Neogone wæran noðþæs sweoster þa wurdon þa nygone to VIIII ⁊ þa VIII to VII ⁊ þa VII to VI ⁊ þa VI to V ⁊ þa V to IIII ⁊ þa IIII to III ⁊ þa III to II ⁊ þa II to I ⁊ þa I to nanum. þis þe lib be*[4] *cyrneles ⁊ scrofelles ⁊ weormes ⁊ æghylces yfele. sing benedicite nigon siþum* (Pettit 2001: I.106–7; II.298; MS 7).[5]
>
> For a swelling: Nine were *Noþþæs* sisters; then the nine became 8 & the 8 [became] 7 … & the 2 [became] 1, & the 1 [became] none. This may be for you *lib* against swelling & scrofula & worms & every kind of evil. Sing the *Benedicite* nine times.

Here the translation could as well be 'charm' as 'cure, medicine'. The intrusive-looking blessing would have enabled the charm to be used in Christian times.

The connection of *lyb* with magic becomes even clearer in the interrelated early Épinal[6] and Erfurt[7] glossaries, and in the derivative mid-tenth-century Cleopatra Glossary 1,[8] in all of which *lyb* glosses *obligamentum* (*oblicamentum*). The *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS), citing this gloss, defines *obligamentum* first as 'artefact bound to the body, charm, amulet', and secondarily as 'bond, commitment'. In the Corpus Glossary 2, the entries for *lyb* and the evidently synonymous *lyb(be)sn, lyfesn* and their lemmata read:

> *Obligamentum* lyb, lybsn[9]
> *Strenas* lybesne[10]

Lindsay (1921a: 123, O43) believed the source of the first to be a gloss to Orosius.[11] In Classical Latin, *strena* means 'sign, prognostic, omen' (Lewis and Short 1879), and in pre-Conquest British medieval Latin it means 'lucky token or gift' (DMLBS). There are other occurrences of the noun *lybesn, lyfesn* (in the plural, *lyfesna, -e*) glossing *filacteria*, in the Cleopatra glossaries 1 and 3.[12] In Classical Latin, a *phylacterium* is an 'amulet', and, in the form *fylacteria* (plural), it is used with this sense in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (Bk 4, Chapter

[3] A later remedy in the same chapter of Bald's *Leechbook*, Bk I, on eyes (Cockayne 1864–6: II.34–7), and another as the sole item in a chapter on nasal discharge (Cockayne 1864–6: II.54–5) both make use of *oxna lyb*, literally (I suppose) 'oxen's medicine' as an ingredient in a salve. It is evidently the name of a plant, but since the identification of the plant is disputed, it seems best not to discuss it here.

[4] This is the manuscript reading (MS 7, fol. 182r), which Cockayne (1864–6: III.62) keeps. Grattan and Singer (1952: 184) emend to *lib beo*. Pettit (2001: I.106, line 881) reads *libbe* and postulates that this is a weak feminine form of the (usually neuter) simplex noun found everywhere else. However, the prefixed *unlybbe* (feminine, see below) is found. The choice of reading affects neither the sense of the passage nor the argument here. Note that the symbol similar to a number seven is the so-called 'Tironian *et*' which is often used in Old English to denote OE *and*.

[5] Also: Cockayne (1864–6: III.62–3); Grendon (1909: 170–1); Storms (1948: 150–5); Grattan and Singer (1952: 184–5).

[6] MS Épinal, Bibliothèque Municipale 72, fols 94–107; Sweet (1885: 82, no. 711); Ker (1957: no. 114); Pheifer (1974: xxi–xxv; 38, no. 711); Gneuss (2001: no. 824, s.vii ex or vii/viii).

[7] MS 1; Sweet (1885: 82, no.711); Pheifer (1974: xxv–xxviii; 38, no. 711).

[8] MS 3; Wright (1884: I. column 459, no. 5): *Obligamentum* lyb, lyfesn. Also: Wright (1884: I. column 463, no. 19): *Obligamentum* lyb.

[9] MS 2; Wright (1884: I. column 35, no.10); Sweet (1885: 81, no. 1413); Hessels (1890: 84, O43).

[10] MS 2; Wright (1884: I. column 48, no. 35); Sweet (1885: 99, no. 1930); Hessels (1890: 111, S569); Lindsay (1921a: 168, ST569) (no source suggested).

[11] Orosius (1889: 121; 4.13.4): *obligamentum hoc magicum*, 'this magic [which was] *obligamentum*'. Irving Woodworth Raymond (Orosius 1936: 179) translates *obligamentum* as 'obligatory'; a more precise meaning in the context might be 'prophylactic'. For the Orosius glosses in Épinal-Erfurt see also Pheifer (1974: xlvi–xlviii), where it is claimed that they had been 'part of a running gloss on the text … probably [dated] before 700'. Unfortunately, there is no trace of *lyb, lyfesn* in the *Old English Orosius* (Bately 1980).

[12] MS 3; Wright (1884: I. column 405, no. 36): *Filacteria* lyfesna. Also: Wright (1884: I. column 482, no. 1):

27 (25); Bede 1969: 432),[13] rendered as *lyfesne* in the Alfredian translation thereof (Bede 1890–8: I,ii.362, line 16).[14] Also, in Cleopatra Glossary 3, is the form *lybsin*, for the lemma *lustramenta,* which appears to refer to ritual purifications.[15]

Therefore, it seems, *lyb* can mean anything from 'medicinal remedy' through 'charm remedy' to 'amulet' and even to 'ritual magic'. The use of *-lyb-*, either as a simplex or in a compound, appears to go out of use very early in the Middle English period, except in Scottish, where *lib* (also spelt *lib(b)(e), lebbe*) persisted into the seventeenth century, with the chief meaning 'a healing charm'. It is usually found in the plural and coupled with 'charms', for example, 'sorcerie, libbes and charmes', a citation dating to 1577 and recorded in the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (DOST).

3. Compounds with *lyb-*

There are two abstract nouns formed with *lyb: lybcræft* and *lyblac* (also *lib(b)lac*, often in the plural as *-as*). *Lyblac* appears quite frequently, in laws,[16] in confessionals and penitentials,[17]

Filacteria lyfesna (Wülcker's note in Wright: 'Read phylacteria, Matth.XXIII, 5'). See Weber (1975: II.1561).

[13] See also Bede (1896: I.269; II.266).

[14] The same translation is found in the glosses to Bede's *History* in MS London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius C.ii; Ker (1957: no. 198e); Gneuss (2001: no. 377, interlinear glosses, s.x, southern England, probably Canterbury, St Augustine's?); Meritt (1945: 12, line 265): *fylacteria* lyfesne.

[15] MS 3; Wright (1884: I. column 501, no. 20): *Lustramenta* lybsin. The DMLBS cites Late Latin *lustramentum* 'a rinsing', and gives the primary medieval meaning as 'purification, cleansing', and the secondary as 'what is cleared away, filth, excrement, foul stench'.

[16] Liebermann (1903–16: I.152–4; III.103); Attenborough (1922: 130–1); Whitelock, Brett and Brooke (1981: 50): II Æthelstan 6: '& we said about witchcrafts & *lyblacs* & deadly deeds, if anyone were killed' (*ꝛ we cwædon be þam wiccecræftum ꝛ be liblacum ꝛ be morðdædum, gif mon þær acweald wære*). Liebermann (1903–16: I.184–6; III.126); Robertson (1925: 6–7); Whitelock, Brett and Brooke (1981: 63): I Eadmund 1.6: 'Those who forswear & work *lyblac*: be they ever thrown out from God's share' (*Ða ðe mansweriað ꝛ liblac wyrcað: beon hi a from ælcum Godes dæle aworpene*). For discussion of these laws, see Meaney (2006: 135–9). In them, *lyblac* appears to be equivalent to 'If anyone casts a magic spell over another man or gives him a herbal potion to drink so that he dies' (*Si quis alteri maleficiis fecerit aut herbas dederit bibere ut moriatur*) in the *Pactus legis Salicae* 19.1 (Eckhardt 1955–7: I.66–7).

[17] MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 320, fols 117 and 170; Ker (1957: no. 58); Gneuss (2001: no. 90, s.x (2) or x ex., Canterbury, St Augustine's, at fol. 170 (102), line 4), as in the DOE transcript, edited from the manuscript: '& guard yourself zealously against *lyblacs* & poisonings & fornication & deceitful speech' (*ꝛ beorh ðe georne wið lyblacas ꝛ attorcræftas ꝛ dyrnegeliru ꝛ twysprǽcnysse*). Essentially the same text, with minor differences of spelling (e.g. *liblacas*) is found in several manuscripts, for example: London, British Library, Cotton Galba A.xiv; Ker (1957, no. 157); Gneuss (2001: no. 333, s.xi (2/4), Winchester?); DOE transcript, edited from the manuscript. Another example: Spindler (1934: 171, line 19), edited from MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 121; Ker (1957: no. 338); Gneuss (2001: no. 644, s.xi (3/4), Worcester). See also: Thorpe (1840: II.132); Raith (1933: XLII), mainly from MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190; Ker (1957: no. 45); Gneuss (2001: no. 59.5, s.xi (3/4), Exeter). These Penitential texts have been edited and published piecemeal, and it would be difficult to sort out the relationships between them without expending a great deal of time on what is not the primary point of the present investigation (discussion in Meaney 2006: 137–40, notes 50–63). See also: MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc 482; Ker (1957: no. 343); Gneuss (2001: no. 656, s.xi med or xi (2), Worcester); Raith (1933: 8b, p. 6): 'These are the vanities of this world: first is pride ... & fornication & *lyblac* & avarice & rapine & sorcery & manslaughter & many other [things] like these' (*Þis synt þa idelnessa þissa worlda, ærost is ofermetta … ꝛ dyrne geligro ꝛ lyblac ꝛ gytsung ꝛ reaflac ꝛ scincræft ꝛ manslihtas ꝛ feala oðra þissa gelican*). Also, from the same manuscript: 'Formulas and Directions for the Use of Confessors', as in the DOE transcript, edited from the manuscript: '& eating too early & drunkenness & adultery & vain boasting & strife & stealing & lying & false oaths & *lyblac* & all these vices: forbid them' (*ꝛ ærætas ꝛ oferdruncolnys ꝛ unrihthæmed ꝛ idel gylp ꝛ unsibbe ꝛ stala ꝛ leasunga ꝛ mæne aðas ꝛ lybblac ꝛ ealle þas uncysta forbeod him*).

and in homilies,[18] mostly in variant lists of the evil deeds which compromise true Christianity. It is also found once each in a charm (with a prayer for protection against all kinds of evil)[19] and in the *Marvels of the East*, in a comment on some of the wonders.[20] *Lyblac* does not appear in the glosses, and is not defined anywhere, but its use in context implies the meaning 'magic' or perhaps better (since magic cannot be used in the plural) 'sorcery'. The clearest context is perhaps in the Old English version of the *Visio Pauli,* in a list of men's transgressions which harmed the earth:

> *þæt is unrihthæmed, and morðdæda and stala and mane aðas and lyblac and wiccacræftas and untidætas, and oferdruncennesse, and tielnyssa, and ealle ða yfel ðe mæn gedoð.*[21]
> Those are adultery and murders and robberies and false oaths and *lyblac* and deeds of witchcraft and eating at improper times, and excessive drunkenness and calumnies and all the evil which men do.

Here *lyblac* renders Latin *magia*; the next item in the list, *wiccacræftas*, translates Latin *maleficia*.

A weak noun, *lyblaca* or *lyblæcca*, is used for the practitioner of *lyblac* in a Vercelli homily:

> *Þaþe her bioð þa mæstan dryicgan 7 scinlacan 7 gealdorcræftigan 7 lyblacan: ne cumaþ þa næfre of þæra wyrma seaðe 7 of þæs dracan ceolan, þe is Satan nemned.*[22]
> Those who are the greatest wizards & magicians of illusion & charmers & *lyblacan* will never come out of the snake pit, [nor] from the throat of the dragon who is named Satan.

This weak noun also occurs in the Corpus 2 and Cleopatra 1 glossaries: '*Caragios* lyblaecan';[23] '[*Caragios*] lyblæcan' (Wright 1884: I.xi, column 363, no. 12; MS 3). The DMLBS gives *Caragius* (accusative plural *-ios*) the meaning 'magician, sorcerer'. It appears in a shortened form in the lemma *carios* in the Harley Glossary glossed *lybbestran*, which probably represents the accusative plural of *lybbestre*, 'sorceress'.[24]

The abstract noun *lybcræft* appears only four times in the extant Old English sources, once in the prose *Life of Andrew*, in the dative singular,[25] and three times, in the plural, in the *Life*

[18] These in general do not add anything new. See: Wulfstan (1883: 135, line 3, no. XXIX; 253, line 11, no. XLIX; 290, line 29, no. LVI); Förster (1932: 103, line 346, no. 4); Scragg (1992: 103, line 313; 198, line 51).

[19] 'For Unfruitful Land': Grendon (1909: 174, no. A13); Dobbie (1942: 118); Storms (1948: 176, no. 8): 'Grant them, eternal Lord … that their produce be protected against every one of all their enemies and that it be guarded against each of all harms of the *lyblacs* seen throughout the land' (*Geunne him ece drihten … þæt his yrþ si gefriþod wið ealra feonda gehwæne, and heo si geborgen wið ealra bealwa gehwylc, þara lyblaca geond land sawen*).

[20] Rypins (1924: 52, line 13); Ker (1957: no. 216); Gneuss (2001: no. 399, s.x/xi): 'Those are unusual/ inconceivable *lyblac*s' (*Þæt syndon ungefræglicu liblac* [neuter plural noun]). The marvels here were red hens, living near the Red Sea, which would burn up all the body of anyone who touched them.

[21] Healey (1978: 63, lines 10–15), edited from MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 85–6 (5196–7): Ker (1957: no. 336, item 4, fols 3r–11v); Gneuss (2001: no. 642, s.xi med, SE England).

[22] Förster (1932: 77, lines 50–53, no. 4); Scragg (1992: 92, line 46). The reference to the dragon as Satan is taken from Revelation xii.9.

[23] MS 2; Hessels (1890: 29, no. C223); Lindsay (1921a: 34, CA.223). The suggested source is a pseudo-Augustinian sermon.

[24] MS 5; Oliphant (1966: 56, C414) wished to emend the lemma to *carisa* 'artful woman' and to explain *lybbestre* as 'woman who flatters, procuress'. I find this unconvincing. Schrabram (1968) has a list of faults in Oliphant's edition; all references in this paper have been checked against Schrabram's list and found to be correct. *Lybbestre* would appear to be equivalent to MHG *lüppærinne* 'sorceress' (Schade 1872–82: I.579).

[25] Bright (1971: 206, lines 6–9): 'And every foreign man who came into the city … they gave him poison to drink that was mixed with great *lybcræft*, and as soon as they drank the potion, swiftly their hearts were unhinged and their minds changed' (*And æghwylc man þe on þære ceastre com ælþeodisc … hie him sealdon attor drincan þæt mid myclen lybcræfte wæs geblanden; and mid þy þe hie þone drenc druncon, hraþe heora heorta wæs tolesed and heora mod onwended*).

of St Pantaleon,[26] the first of which makes the connection with sorcery very clear:

> *And þa mid þy þe se casere þis geseah þa … he cwæð to him, 'Hafast þu nu þurh þine lybcræftas gedon þæt ura tintregendra handa adeadadon?*[27]
>
> And when the emperor saw this, then … he said to him, 'Have you now brought it about through your *lybcræftas* [plural] that our torturing hands were deadened?'

Lybcræft then, would seem to mean 'skill in sorcery, magic arts'.

Another abstract noun, *unlibba*, uses the pejorative prefix *un-*. It appears to bear the meaning 'evil sorcery' in the *Benedictine Rule* (where it is associated with poison);[28] in a punning translation from Exodus (*Ne læt þu libban þa þe unlibban wyrcon*, 'Do not allow to live those who employ *unlibban*');[29] and in the list of 'deeds of the flesh' which Ælfric quotes in his homily 'On Auguries', from St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (v.19-20; Ælfric 1966: I.366, line 25). Here *unlybba* renders Latin *veneficia* (Weber 1975: II.1807), translated as 'witchcraft' in the King James version of the Bible, and is coupled with OE *hæðengild* 'idolatry'. Finally, *unlibba* is found in the *Confessional* (or *Scrift Boc*) in a revealing condemnation: *Gyf wif drycræft and galdorcræft and unlibban wyrce and swylce bega, fæste XII monað*, 'If a woman employs wizardry and magic charms and *unlibban* and thereby succeeds, she should fast for twelve months'.[30] Here *unlibba* has replaced *liblac*, which is more usual in this context.

More often, however, *unlybba* appears to mean simply 'poison', for example in the late *Handbook for the Use of a Confessor*: *Eal man sceal aspiwan sinna þurh gode lare mid andetnesse ealswa man unlibban deð ðurh godne drenc*, 'One shall altogether spew out sins by means of good teaching with confession, just as one does *unlibban* [accusative singular] by means of a good potion.'[31]

There is a great deal of evidence to show that Ælfric mostly used *unlybba* to mean 'poison'; a clear example is

> *Syððan se hæþengylda eac sealde þone attorbæran drenc þam apostole: and he … þane unlybban on godes naman halsode, and syððan mid gebyldum mode hine ealne gedranc.*[32]
>
> Afterwards the idolator also gave the poisonous potion to the apostle, and he … blessed the *unlybban* [accusative singular] in God's name, and afterwards, with an emboldened mind, drank it all.

Other examples of the use of *unlybba* are ambiguous in their meaning. For example, in the miscellaneous headings for Chapter 65 in the second book of Bald's *Leechbook*:

> *Læcedom gif hors sie ofscoten 7 wiþ utwærce 7 gif utgang forseten sie 7 wiþ lencten adle; eft, wiþ utwærce 7 wiþ unlybbum 7 wiþ þære geolwan adle 7 gif men sie færlice yfele 7 to*

[26] The references, in the form appearing in Healey and Venezky (1980), are: LS 30: 249, 290 and 292.

[27] Matthews (1965–6); minor corrections by Johannes Söderlind not consulted. There is a 'preliminary edition' by the late Phillip Pulsiano (2002: 61–103).

[28] Benedict (1964: 135, line 16): 'When their evil sins are not atoned by any man, then they altogether grow in evil, like the *unlibba* of poison in a man; the longer he hides the taking of the poison, so his illness is greater' (*Ðonne heora unðeawas fram nanum men gebette ne beoþ, eal hi weaxaþ on yfel, swa swa atres unlibba on men, swa he leng þæs attres þigene bedihlað, swa his untrumnes mare*).

[29] Exodus xxii.18, from MS London, British Library, Cotton Claudius B.iv; Ker (1957: no. 142); Crawford (1969: 268); Gneuss (2001: no. 315, s.xi (2/4), Canterbury, St Augustine's).

[30] Spindler (1934: 184, no. 19.e). See also (1934: 184, no. 19.f).

[31] Fowler (1965: 27, lines 325–7). See also (1965: 27–8, lines 330–2).

[32] Ælfric (1997: 214**,** line 224). In this passage *unlybba* translates *venen[us],* see Godden (2000: 36–7). See also the commentary in Godden (2000) on the other examples of Ælfric's usage listed here: Ælfric (1979: 94, line 73; 104, line 408; 290, line 88); Ælfric (1997: 214, line 221; 348, line 103; 350, line 154).

> *gehealdan lichoman hælo 7 wiþ gicþan 7 ælue 7 wiþ lond adle 7 gongelwæfran bite 7 wið utsihte 7 heafod sealfa* (Cockayne 1864–6: II.174–5; MS 4).
>
> Remedies if a horse be [elf]shot & for painful defaecation & if the evacuation be obstructed & for 'lent disease'; again, for painful defaecation & for *unlybbum* [dative plural), & for the yellow disease [jaundice?], & if a man is afflicted by sudden evils & to preserve the health of the body & for an itching rash & [against] an elf, & for 'land disease' & for the bite of a spider & for diarrhoea & head salves.

Here either or both meanings — 'evil sorcery' or 'poison' — would be appropriate. Indeed, the vocabulary of many of the afflictions in these headings is altogether difficult to interpret, and the remedies set out in the chapter itself are hardly more informative (Cockayne 1864-6: II.290-1; MS 4).

The agent noun *unlybwyrhta*, however, has a much clearer connection to sorcery, since it translates 'evil sorcerer, poisoner' in eleventh-century glossaries: '*maleficorum, uenenificorum* unlibwyrhta';[33] '*ueneficus* unlybwyrhta'.[34] It appears then that, to the minds of the early English glossators, evil sorcerers and poisoners were almost synonymous. In relevant passages from the homilies of Ælfric and his contemporaries, the connection with sorcery seems the stronger. For the sake of brevity, only the shortest of such passages, from an anonymous homily, is quoted in full here: *Antecrist hæfð mid him drymen and unlybwyrhtan and wigleras and þa ðe cunnan galder agalan*, 'AntiChrist has with him wizards and *unlybwyrhtan* and magicians and those who know how to chant charms'.[35]

It was, indeed, the relationship between *lybcorn* and the other compounds with *-lyb-* which first aroused my interest in this plant-name, but since the semantic range of *lyb* is so wide, it does not afford many pointers towards the identification of the seed (OE *corn*). A study of the plant-name *lybcorn* will now follow.

4. *Lybcorn*: citations

As can be seen from Appendix 1, there are thirty-seven extant occurrences of the word *lybcorn*, eighteen in medical remedies (Appendix 1A), and nineteen in glosses (Appendix 1B).[36] Appendix 1C indicates the probable related citations, eleven in all, and all glossary entries. Only eight of the glossary references are independent; therefore there are twenty-six independent references for *lybcorn* in total.

[33] Ker (1957: no. 8); Goossens (1974: 405, no. 3940); Gneuss (2001: no. 806, glosses s.xi.(1)). This entry is repeated exactly in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 146 (1747); Napier (1900: 107, no. 4054); Ker (1957: no. 320); Gneuss (2001: no. 613, most Old English glosses are s.xi med).

[34] 'Additional Glosses to the Glossary in Ælfric's Grammar' (DOE transcript), edited from MS London, British Library, Cotton Faustina A.x, fol. 101. MCOE reference: ÆGl 2.109. For the manuscript, see Ker (1957: no. 154A); Gneuss (2001: no. 331, s.xi (2) or xi (3/4)).

[35] Wulfstan (1883: 194, line 18, no. XLII). See also Wulfstan (1883: 298, line 19, no. LVII): *unlybwyrhtan* coming after *wyccan* and *wælcyrian*. Though these are not by Wulfstan, they may have been commissioned by him, or influenced by his use of language; see Wulfstan (1957: 42–3). Ælfric's lists of evil-doers containing *unlybwyrhta[n]*, both edited by Pope, are: Ælfric (1967–8: I.436, line 376): *wigleras*, *wiccan* and *unlybwyrhtan*; and Ælfric (1967–8: II.743, line 145).

[36] Throughout this paper, individual references may be identified by their catalogue numbers, for example, 1.A.10 or 1.B.9, or (for the plant-name *giþcorn*) 2.A.4, 2.B.6, and so on. See the appendices for details.

5. *Lybcorn*: etymology and lexical comparisons

As we have seen, the range of meanings demonstrated for *lyb* seems to involve medicine, sorcery and poison. Lindheim (1941: 40, note to no. 104) cites parallels in other Germanic languages: Old Saxon (OS) *lubbi* 'sap'; Old High German (OHG) *luppi* (or *lubbi*) 'strong juice of plants, poison, sorcery, *maleficium*'; Gothic *lubja-*, as first element of *lubja-leisei* 'sorcerers, those knowing drugs or poisons'; and Old Icelandic (OIce) *lyf* 'healing herb', especially with the notion of witchcraft or supernatural power. Old Icelandic *lyf* is sometimes associated with *lækning* 'the art of healing' and also with *galdr* 'charm'. Related verbs, with meanings varying from 'heal' to 'poison', are also found in the voluminous Old High German glosses, and, in Old Norse, there is *lyfja* 'to cure, especially by magic'. In Old High German, *lubbiwurz* glosses *aconitum* 'monk's-hood' (*Aconitum napellus* L.), a plant which is both extremely poisonous and a very useful drug (but unfortunately does not help in identifying *lybcorn*).[37]

There is also some interesting evidence in the *Leiden Leechbook*, a single manuscript bifolium which contains parts of a medical compilation of remedies (MS Leiden UB, Voss. Lat. F 96). The manuscript, variously dated to between the late eighth and the tenth century (Falileyev and Owen 2005: 4) includes Latin texts, and a multilingual text including words of Brittonic and Irish origin (2005: 1). In two of the neo-Brittonic remedies there are three names of herbs with *lub/lob* as the second elements: in Number 10 there are *tutlob* 'all-heal' and *ælilub* 'ointment plant', while in Number 12 are *tutlub* and *elilub* again, and *hoiarnlub* 'ironwort' (Falileyev and Owen 2005: 20). In these words, *lub* appears to mean 'herb' and corresponds to Old Irish *luib*, 'poison, magic' (2005: 50, 53–4, 59–60). It is interesting that, in these three names, *lub* is the second element, whereas OE *lyb* only appears as the first element in compound words.

The primary (literal) dictionary definitions of *corn* are '1. grain, cereal plants grown as crops; 2. seed, berry or fruit of a plant' (DOE, see also Bosworth 1972). As will become clear, the second meaning is relevant here. Since 'seed' is the most neutral and general term for a fruiting body, I have chosen to translate it thus throughout, without assumptions as to its form.

Etymologically speaking, therefore, *lybcorn* could mean 'medicinal or magic seed', with a clear indication from the usage that, if there was evil intent, it could be poisonous.

6. *Lybcorn*: consideration of the basic data

The collected references to *lybcorn* include no descriptors, that is, elements of description of the plant in the texts, other than that it has leaves (1.A.9 and 1.A.11). Other potentially valuable basic data normally presented in an ASPNS study are also lacking, for example collocations. As a result, this study has had to depend heavily on close analyses of the plant associations found with *lybcorn*, and the Latin terms which *lybcorn* translates, usually in glossaries.

7. Lybcorn *in medicinal recipes*

As already mentioned, the word *lybcorn* is found in two contexts only: glossaries and collections of medical remedies. The earliest extant occurrences of the word are in glossaries,

[37] Also consulted were: Steinmeyer and Sievers (1879–1922 at, for example, I.139, no. 39 and 235, no. 8); Cleasby

but the interpretation of the lemmata (headwords) poses such difficulties that it seems best to establish first how the seeds were used as ingredients in medicines and ointments, and with which herbs they were associated.

We are concerned with medical remedies in three texts:[38] the first being Bald's *Leechbook,* which is found in MS London, British Library, Royal 12.D.xvii (MS 4) of the mid-tenth century, copied almost certainly at Winchester, perhaps from an Alfredian original. It is the most scholarly and organised of the three texts. It is in two books, which appear to have had partly independent histories (Nokes 2004). The first book deals primarily with external ailments (working in general from the head downwards), and the second (which is more heavily dependent on late Classical works) with internal problems.

The second text is referred to as *Leechbook III* and it is found directly following Bald's *Leechbook* in MS 4, although it appears to have a different origin. It also appears to 'represent the oldest surviving strata of Anglo-Saxon medicine' (Cameron 1993: 35).

The third text is known as *Lacnunga* and it is found in MS London, British Library, Harley 585 (MS 7). It dates to about the year 1000 and somewhat later, and appears to be more of a commonplace book (in which ideas are jotted down when they occur or become available) rather than a standard recipe book (Cameron 1993: 46).

Most frequently (ten times altogether, and six times in Bald's *Leechbook* alone) *lybcorn* are listed in compound recipes for emetic potions, less often for purgatives, and occasionally in ointments for skin problems.[39] The mixtures were usually made in similar ways, by pounding or grinding the herbs and then steeping them in liquid, often ale, sometimes adding sweetening or other flavouring to potions, sometimes heating the mixtures, sometimes allowing them to stand overnight.[40] *Lybcorn* were sometimes named as the first ingredient, and sometimes added during the last of a series of operations. The plants associated with *lybcorn* are discussed here in Section 8 if they are found in more than one remedy, or in Section 9 if found in only one.

7.1 Emetic potions for 'devil-sickness'

The methods of preparation and problems of interpreting Old English plant-names are exemplified in two recipes using *lybcorn* for emetic potions, both of which are recommended as treatments for illness caused by the devil. One is from the first book of Bald's *Leechbook,* in the final section, where a number of miscellaneous remedies, lumped together somewhat haphazardly, appear to have been added to the original compilation (Nokes 2004: 66). Chapter 62 has to do with fevers (including malaria), and Chapter 64 with opposing a *leodrune*, probably 'sorceress'. The first remedy in Chapter 63 (1.A.2) begins, 'For a 'devil-sick' man' (*Wiþ feondseocum men*), and then identifies itself as an emetic (*spiwe drenc*). It is made from four plants, *eluhtre, bisceopwyrt, beolone* and *cropleac*, pounded together. Ale is then poured over them, and the mixture is left to stand overnight. Finally, fifty *lybcorn* and holy water are to be added. Nearly all the identifications proposed for the herbs in this recipe (lupin, marsh

and Vigfusson (1957: 400); Schade (1969: 579); Lehmann (1986: 237); and Starck and Wells (1990: 387). For aconite (monk's-hood), see Grieve (1976: 6–10).

38 The most recent overall discussion of these texts is by Cameron (1993: 30–1, 35–47).

39 See the 'Glossary of Medical Terms' for brief explanations. Regarding the plant-name, in a Modern English context, I use the form *lybcorn* throughout, as both singular and plural.

40 To judge from the chapters on 'Herbal Preparations' in Priest and Priest (1982: especially pp. 113–33), the same methods (no doubt much refined) are still employed today.

mallow, henbane and leek) appear to have been cultivated, or perhaps even imported (dried) items, rather than native species. The exception is marsh mallow (if that is how *bisceopwyrt* is to be interpreted). It is discussed below in Section 8.8, the others in Section 9**.**

Leechbook III has a recipe (1.A.12) for an emetic 'against the devil', presumably intended to ward off or cure 'devil-sickness'. Apart from *lybcorn*, it has entirely different ingredients (*secg* '?sedge', and *glædene* '?iris or squill') from those in 1.A.2.[41]

It is clear that there was a belief in Anglo-Saxon England that the devil could test mankind by afflicting it with illness. 'Devil-sickness' is defined in remedy 1.A.2 as 'when the devil sustains a man or controls him from within by means of illness' (*þonne deofol þone monnan fede oððe hine innan gewealde mid adle*). It can be roughly equated with the 'devil-possession' which turns up in hagiography and usually requires a miracle to cure it. It appears that dementia, homicidal schizophrenia, epilepsy and, possibly, convulsions could all be described as 'devil possession'. I have therefore defined 'devil-sickness' as an 'illness that turns the mind and affects the bodies of the sufferers, so that they lose control' (Meaney 1992: 17–18). Nigel Barley has set out the different ways in which the causes of disease could be envisaged, one of which is 'the invasion of the body by alien matter or force from without. Treatment then consists in removing it' (Barley 1972: 68). Perhaps 'devil-sickness' was envisaged as a kind of intrusive internal substance which could be expelled by a good emetic, reinforced by holy water representing the power of the Church**.**

7.2 Other emetic potions

In Chapter 52 of the second book of Bald's *Leechbook* there are altogether six recipes for emetic potions containing *lybcorn*, using very many similar ingredients. In the first remedy in the chapter (1.A.3), all the herbs associated with *lybcorn* are also found similarly associated elsewhere. They are: '6 seeds of aloe' (*VI alwan corn*); 'the lower part of autumn crocus' (*seo greate wyrt nioþowearde*); 'cucumber' (*hwerhwette*, emended from *hwerwe hatte*); 'a little pepper' (*hwon piperes*); and 'the lower part of elder bark' (*ellen rinde niþewearde*). (See Section 8 below).

The fifth recipe in this chapter is headed 'a weak potion' (*Wece drenc*), and seems to come to a conclusion; but then, without introduction, has another list of ingredients and instructions, beginning 'That is the lower part of *hofe*, scraped & pounded' (*Þæt is hofe niþeweard bescrepen ⁊ gecnuad*). I presume that this is a separate remedy (1.A.4), and that not only the introduction, for example, 'Again' (*Eft*), has fallen out, but also a synonym for *hofe*, as Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.85–6) supposes. This recipe is unusual in that all the ingredients with the exception of *lybcorn* are apparently native plants, though difficult to identify precisely: *hofe*, *gotwoþan* and *wenwyrt*. Moreover, the instructions on how to prepare them are more than usually detailed (see Sections 8 and 9 below).

The other recipes for emetics, including *lybcorn* in Chapter 52, do not pose any particular problems; some of them, however, include ingredients not encountered before. Catalogue number 1.A.5 uses, as well as the usual 'elder bark' (*ellenrinde*), 'houseleek' (*hamwyrt*) and 'fine flour of hazel or of alder' (*wah mela hæsles oþþe alres*). Catalogue number 1.A.6 adds mastic (*hwit cwudu*) to *lybcorn,* 'peppercorns' (*piporcorn*) and 'aloes' (*alwan*). Catalogue number 1.A.7 again uses aloes, but also 'alecost/costmary' (*cost*), along with a modest fifteen

[41] A purgative potion with sedge and iris but without *lybcorn* occurs in *Lacnunga*, Chapter 45: Cockayne (1864–6: III.20–1); Grattan and Singer (1952: no. XLV); Pettit (2001: I.26–7, no. XLV).

lybcorn. The final relevant emetic recipe in this chapter (1.A.8) requires only the frequently-used houseleek and elder bark, along with an unspecified number of *lybcorn*.

There are also two recipes for emetic potions in the medical 'commonplace book', the *Lacnunga*. Each has only one other herbal ingredient (both also found elsewhere in association with *lybcorn*): in 1.A.15 it is 'cucumber' (*hwerhwette*); and in 1.A.16, seventeen optional peppercorns.

Leechbook III has a recipe (1.A.10) for 'a vomiting, "outflowing" potion' (*spiwe drenc utyrnendne*), in other words, a potion which is purgative and/or diuretic as well as emetic.[42] Its language varies from that of those already discussed and it may therefore have had a different kind of origin. It also has one ingredient not encountered elsewhere: 'roots of mallow' (*hocces moran*), as well as parts of celandine (*celeþonian*), buttercup (*wenwyrt*), cucumber (*hwerhwette*), houseleek (*hamwyrt*) and forty *lybcorn*.

7.3 Purgative and diuretic preparations

The second most frequent use for *lybcorn* is indeed in purgatives/diuretics. There are no such recipes in the manuscript of Bald's *Leechbook* as it has come down to us, but there are a couple among the remedies which were copied by Nowell in the mid sixteenth century from MS British Library, Cotton Otho B.xi (MS 18). They almost certainly had been gathered (like most of the collection) for inclusion in Bald's *Leechbook,* and most probably formed two of the seventy-five remedies listed in the heading for Chapter 56 in Book II (see Footnote 42). The chapter itself is unfortunately missing (along with the rest of the gathering) from the manuscript (MS 4), but the two recipes must have had to do with intestinal troubles, here probably constipation (Meaney 1984: 246–50). The first (1.A.17), which requires an egg but no herbal ingredients other than *lybcorn* (and therefore need not delay us here), has been reconstructed from Nowell's text. The second (1.A.18), is more conventional in character, and has one ingredient not met before, *grundeswelgian* 'groundsel', as well as elder bark and thirty *lybcorn*.

There is also a recipe for a purgative (*swiðne drenc utyrnende*) in Chapter 41 of *Leechbook III* (1.A.9), part of an elaborate remedy (including a bath) for 'a man out of his wits' (*gewitseoc man*). Remarkably, it uses *lybcornes leaf* (implying that the whole plant was named from its seed), as well as the roots of other herbs already encountered: 'celandine roots' (*celeþonian moran*); '?iris roots' (*glædenan moran*); 'mallow roots' (*hocces moran*); and 'the bark of elder roots' (*ellenes wyrtruman rinde*). The first half of Chapter 41 consists of two remedies (one a potion, the other a salve, neither of which uses *lybcorn*) for 'the devil's trials' (*feondes costunga*), that is, tribulations to test faith (Meaney 1992: 17–18). Therefore, devil-possession may be envisaged both in this remedy (1.A.9) and in the following emetic in the manuscript

[42] The headings in Bald's *Leechbook* (Bk II, Chapter 56; Cockayne (1864–6: II.170)), do not seem to make a clear distinction between urinary and faecal discharge: 'Remedies if one has dysentry (?painful defaecation) & symptoms of diarrhoea, both in the upper part of the belly or the lower, & from where the illness comes, & how it shall be treated, & what one should eat [or drink] & again in case one passes blood alone & for great pain & distention of the intestines or if one has diarrhoea because of the weakness of the colon or if anyone suffers a bloody flux in the lower parts of his body or if anyone has blood in his urine or if it [the urine?] changes or if one has no evacuation &, again, a purging pottage. Seventy-five remedies' (*Læcedomas gif mon sie on utwærce 7 tacn be utsihte ge on þam uferran hrife ge on þam niþerran 7 hwanan sio adl cume 7 hu mon hie scyle lacnian 7 hwæt mon þicgean scyle 7 eft wiþ þon gif mon blode ane utyrne 7 wiþ miclum sare 7 ablaunesse þæs innoþes oþþe gif man for roppes untrumnesse utyrne oþþe gif hwa blodryne þrowige on þam niþerran dælum his lichoman oþþe gif hwam sie micge on blod gif hio gehwyrfþ oððe gif mon utgang næbbe 7 eft utyrnende briw fif 7 hund seofontig læcedomas*).

(1.A.10, discussed above), the last two in the chapter. In this, they may resemble the emetic from the first book of Bald's *Leechbook* (1.A.2: *Wiþ feondseocum men*), discussed in Section 7.1 above.

The only remedy in Chapter 42 of *Leechbook III* (1.A.11) also specifies the use of *lybcornes leaf*, and indeed is the only other remedy in the whole Old English corpus to do so. It begins: 'If a strong potion lodge within a man and will not come away' (*Gif swiðdrenc on man gesitte ⁊ he nelle ofgan*). Though not entirely clear, it seems to me most probable that what is described is persistent constipation which needs an even more drastic purgative than that already prescribed. Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.6), however, takes the potion to be an emetic. Its ingredients (apart from ale, butter, and salt) include the commonly associated 'lower part of celandine' (*niþewearde celeþonian*), and the text also suggests *arod*, perhaps 'arum', as an alternative to *lybcornes leaf* (see Section 9.17).

Other purgative potions using *lybcorn* are also found in the *Lacnunga*: catalogue number 1.A.13 associates eighty-five *lybcorn* and nine peppercorns with fifteen *sundcorn* and *wyrmelo*, the meanings of both being disputed. If the medicine is too weak, *merce* 'wild celery' should be boiled in water and given to drink; if it is too strong, *curmealle* (again, difficult to identify) should be used. Catalogue number 1.A.14 again includes four of the usual associates, and adds '?olive roots' (*heleleafes moran*).

7.4 An eye salve

Finally, the last remedy in Book I, Chapter 2 of Bald's *Leechbook* is to do with eyes, in which *lybcorn* is used as a salve for *þicce bræwas* (1.A.1).[43] In context, therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that the condition affected the eyesight, and I have therefore adapted Cockayne's translation 'thick eyelids' as 'swollen eyelids'. Not unexpectedly, it uses a different method of preparation and several herbs not so far encountered, as well as celandine and ?marsh mallow. The rest of the list runs: 'wood sorrel & fumitory & *springwyrt* & English roots & a little radish & ?crowfoot' (*geaces suran ⁊ attorlaþan ⁊ springwyrt ⁊ englisce moran ⁊ hwon rædices ⁊ hrefnes fot*).

8. Plants with multiple associations with *lybcorn*

There is a considerable consistency in these remedies using *lybcorn*, in that, with the exception of the eye-salve, the recipes are all designed to produce elimination. Moreover, *lybcorn* is usually associated with several other herbal ingredients, and it is therefore necessary here to attempt to identify these herbs and their qualities. This section concentrates on the herbal ingredients which are associated more than once with *lybcorn*, beginning with those occurring the most frequently.

Clearly, within the limits of a paper concerned with minutiae, it would be impossible to go into every suggested interpretation and every medicinal action and use of all the other

[43] Researchers at Wheaton College, Norton, Mass., USA, have recently attempted to test experimentally a salve for an eye stye from the same chapter of Bald's *Leechbook* (Cockayne 1864–6: II.34–5) which, though it uses different ingredients from 1.A.1, has certain elements in common with it. In particular, they tested the use of a copper-alloy pot in which the mixture has to stand for several nights. The researchers' conclusion was that the remedy for an eye stye would have been ineffective against microbial activity because of the method of preparation, and,

ingredients. However, the associated herbs vary from remedy to remedy, and it is difficult to summarize the evidence, which is therefore set out in some detail. There are many problems in interpreting the Old English plant-names in the medical texts, in spite of the efforts of Cockayne (1864–6) and Bierbaumer (1975–9), and (though in awe of their monumental achievements) I have not always agreed with them. I use Bierbaumer's identifications as a starting point, but critically, and refer to modern descriptions of the relevant medical qualities of these herbs. Variations in vocabulary (for example, 'the lower part of' as opposed to 'the roots of') may point to the use of different sources, but are not my concern here (see Nokes 2004: 55–61; 65–9). In particular, I have followed M. L. Cameron (see the bibliography to this paper) in assuming that the Anglo-Saxons who compiled and translated medical books were familiar with their *materia medica* and would have known of the virtues and the dangers of their herbal pharmacopoeia. In attempting to identify herbs, therefore, I have used not only the text and illustrations to the so-called 'Herbarium of Apuleius' but also modern herbals such as Grieve (1976). Nineteenth-century herbals, such as Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6), and Bentley and Trimen (1880) have proved most useful: they are still within the living medical tradition, and, moreover, are often accompanied by beautiful and accurate drawings and paintings with which the *Herbarium* illustrations can be compared.

8.1 *Ellen rinde*, elder (*Sambucus nigra* L.; Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.53)

Bald's *Leechbook* II (4 occurrences, plus 1 in Nowell's transcript: see Grant 1974); *Leechbook III* (1 occurrence); *Lacnunga* (1 occurrence), giving a total of seven associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.3: *To spiw drence: ellen rinde niþewearde*, 'For an emetic potion: the lower part of elder bark'.
> 1.A.4: [an emetic]: *ellen wyrttruman rinde*, 'the bark of elder roots'.
> 1.A.5: *Spiwe drenc. genim ellenrinde niþewearde*, 'An emetic: take the lower part of elder bark'.
> 1.A.8: *Spiwe drenc hamwyrte III snæda ⁊ ellen rinde berende gelice micel*, 'An emetic: 3 pieces of houseleek & as much peeled elder bark'.
> 1.A.9: *Gif þu wilt lacnian gewitseocne man … wyrc him þonne swiðne drenc utyrnendum … nim … ellenes wyrttruman rinde*, 'If you wish to treat a mentally ill man … make for him next a strong purgative potion … take the bark of elder roots'.
> 1.A.14: *Oþer utyrnende drænc: genim … ellen rinde neoðewearde*, 'Another purgative drink: take … the lower part of elder bark'.
> 1.A.18: *Genim … ellenrinde berynde utan*, 'Take … the outside part of peeled elder bark'.

Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: II. no. LXXIX), wrote:

> The Arabians … of the present day … use the inner green bark as an aperient and deobstruent … [It] is still a popular remedy with the poor, in some parts of our own country. Its action, however, both as an emetic and cathartic, is occasionally so violent, that … death has been the result'. Stuart (1979: 259) writes: 'Diaphoretic; laxatic; anti-spasmodic; diuretic; emollient … Also of value with other remedies in constipation, haemorrhoids, rheumatism, bronchitis and cystitis.[44]

indeed, that most medicine would have been ineffective before the discovery of antibiotics (Brennessel, Drout and Gravel 2005).

[44] See also Bentley and Trimen (1880: II. no. 137); Fernie (1914: 152–9); Grigson (1955: 351–4); Grieve (1976: 265–76); Priest and Priest (1982: 86–7); Phillips and Foy (1990: 60–1); and Hatfield (1999: 76–7).

The elder is a tree with a dubious reputation. It is sometimes regarded as a cure-all, but also has a persistent connection with witches and the devil.[45]

8.2 *Celiþonige*, greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus* L.; Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.29; Pollington 2000: 108).

Bald's *Leechbook* I (1 occurrence); *Leechbook III* (3); *Lacnunga* (1), giving a total of five associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.1: *Þam man þe habbað þicce bræwas genim … celeþonian*, 'For the man who has swollen eyelids … take celandine'.
> 1.A.9: *wyrc swiðne drenc utyrnendum … nim … celeþonian moran*, 'make a strong purgative potion … take … celandine roots'.
> 1.A.10: *Wyrc spiwe drenc utyrnendne nim … nioþowearde celeþonian*, 'To make a purgative emetic, take … the lower part of celandine'.
> 1.A.11: *Gif swið drenc on man gesitte … nim … niþewearde celeþonian*, 'If a strong potion lodges in a man … take … the lower part of celandine'.
> 1.A.14: *Oþer utyrnende drænc: genim … celþenian moran*, 'Another purgative potion: take … celandine roots'.

According to Phillips and Foy (1990: 99),

> It has a thick, fleshy tap-root that branches out in all directions … It was a popular drug plant of the Middle Ages, prescribed for plague, jaundice, blood disorders and blindness. However, Greater Celandine is poisonous and great care must be taken … The orange juice obtained from the leaves and stems … mixed with milk or water … is said to be an effective eye-lotion.[46]

Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 3), in their discussion of the root of *Coptis teeta,* 'a small herbaceous plant, indigenous to the Mishmi mountains, eastward of Assam' state that

[45] It is presumably because of this kind of reputation that, in his *Canons of Edgar*, Wulfstan prohibited ceremonies which took place at elders in midwinter (Wulfstan 1959: 184). For the earlier version, *siglum* D, edited from MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 201, pp. 97–101, see Ker (1957: no. 49B); and Gneuss (2001: no. 65.5, s.xi (1) or xi (med)). For both manuscripts, see Wulfstan (1972: 4–5). For the later version, *siglum* X, which has revisions by Wulfstan, and some later insertions, see Whitelock, Brett and Brooke (1981: 320), edited from MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 121 (5232), fols 25v–31v, recorded in Ker (1957: no. 338 art. 5); and Gneuss (2001: no. 644, s.xi (2) and s.xi ex., Worcester). Pollington (2000: 116, 400–1) has an entry under dwarf elder which appears to consider this perennial to be the plant used in medicine, and points to an elaborate ritual (carefully Christianized) for gathering *elenan* (accusative) in *Leechbook III*, Chapter 62, which is a complex remedy for *ælfadl* 'elf-sickness'. (Hall (2007: 105) considers this sickness term to be non-specific). Since the plant is to be dug up and laid under the church altar, it may well be that a herb rather than a shrubby tree is intended, but its identity is by no means established. See also comments on the elder tree (Pollington 2000: 502).

[46] See also: Wren (1915: 62–3); Grieve (1976: 178–9); Priest and Priest (1982: 100–1); and Pettit (2001: I.68–9; II.165). Stuart (1979: 170–1) writes: 'Colagogue; narcotic; purgative; antibiotic. Principally used in inflammations of biliary duct and gall bladder'. Cameron (in D'Aronco and Cameron 1998: 62), referring to the *Herbarium* (no. LXXV: Cyleþenie, *celidonia*), comments that it 'deals mostly with the traditional use of celandine to treat eye ailments' and that, therefore, 'it is hard to see any relation between medieval and modern uses'. This, however, only applies to the *Herbarium* entry, as can be seen from the uses listed above from the other Old English medical texts. The illustration for celandine in MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii, fol. 42r, has three stems, trifoliate leaves and multiple sprays of flowers or seeds springing from the top of each stem. In MS Cassino, Abbazia di Montecassino, Casin. 97 (hereafter 'Montecassino 97'), this is much stylised, and the leaves merely have three points. In the *editio princeps*, it is so simplified as to be quite unrecognisable (see Hunger 1935: 68–71). Gunther (1925: no. XL, fol. 20r, notes on p. 107) comments that, in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 130, 'The plant represented is a Labiate, possibly *Stachys*'.

> under the name of *Mahmira* [it was] used in Sind for inflammation of the eyes, a circumstance which enabled Pereira [in the 4th edition: 1854–7: II, ii, 699] to identify it with a substance bearing a nearly similar designation [*Mamiras* (Greek Μαμιράς)], mentioned by the early writers on medicine, and previously regarded as the root of *Chelidonium majus* L.

The confusion may have been caused by the fact that 'the rhizome of *Coptis* abounds' in a bright yellow colouring matter. It therefore seems possible that the celandine roots which turn up in so many medical recipes in association with *lybcorn* were, in early times, imported *Coptis* rhizomes. Pereira quoted an earlier account (by Wallich) which described *Coptis teeta* as 'in great estimation among [Mishmees, Lamas and Chinese], and in universal use as a powerful tonic and stomachic'.

Lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria* L.; Grieve 1976: 179–82), also known as *pilewort*, is unrelated to *Chelidonium majus* and is dissimilar, except in the colour of the flowers. It is an old (and apparently effective) remedy for haemorrhoids.

8.3 *Hamwyrt*, houseleek (*Sempervivum tectorum* L.; Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.75)

Bald's *Leechbook* II (2 occurrences); *Leechbook III* (1); *Lacnunga* (1), giving a total of four associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.5: *Spiwe drenc: genim … hamwyrte*, 'An emetic: take … houseleek'.
> 1.A.8: *Spiwe drenc: hamwyrte III snæda*, 'An emetic: 3 pieces of houseleek'.
> 1.A.10: *Wyrc spiwe drenc utyrnendne nim … hamwyrte moran medmicel*, 'To make a purgative emetic, take … medium-sized [or 'a moderate amount of'] roots of houseleek'.
> 1.A.14: *Oþer utyrnende drænc: genim medmicle moran glædenon … ⁊ swylc tu hamwyrte*, 'Another purgative: take medium roots of ?iris … & likewise two of houseleek'.

According to D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: 56), Cockayne, Bierbaumer and De Vriend agree that the *sinfulle* of *Herbarium*, Chapter CXXV) is also *Sempervivum tectorum*.[47] Grieve (1976: 422–3) writes that it is

> a native of the mountain ranges of Central and Southern Europe and of the Greek islands, but it was introduced into Great Britain many centuries ago and is now found abundantly … its large rosettes of fleshy leaves being a familiar sight on many an old cottage roof

and, of its medical properties: 'Refrigerant, astringent, diuretic … In large doses, Houseleek juice is emetic and purgative'. Charlemagne, in his list of herbs in the *Capitulare de villis* (Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90),[48] recommended that a gardener should have, over his house, *Jovis barba,* identified by Meyer (1854–7: III.405) as *Sempervivum tectorum*. Perhaps this was because it was thought to protect against lightning (Pollington 2000: 131, 133, 161–2).[49]

There is an apparent difficulty regarding the use of *hamwyrt* in the last of these recipes (1.A.14): houseleek roots are tiny, quite unlike iris rhizomes. (See also Section 8.7 below for a possible connection of ?iris and ?squill.)

[47] The illustration in MS 11 (fol. 55v) is mostly eaten away, and that in MS Montecassino 97, is strange and difficult to interpret (Hunger 1935: 112–13). However, those in the *editio princeps* (see Hunger 1935) and in MS 17 (Gunther 1925: fol. 8r; see also p. 102), and that printed by Howald and Sigerist (1927: 210, no. CXXIV) are reasonably accurate representations of houseleek.

[48] Harvey (1981: 28–32) discusses this list.

[49] See also Grigson (1955: 182–4) for superstitions connected with houseleek.

8.4 *Piper(corn)*, peppercorn (*Piper nigrum* L.; Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.113; Pollington 2000: 150)

Bald's *Leechbook* II (2 occurrences); *Lacnunga* (2), giving a total of four associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.3: *To spiw drence … hwon piperes*, 'For an emetic … a little pepper'.
> 1.A.6: *Wyrc spiwdrenc. genim … piporcorn*, 'To make an emetic potion, take … peppercorns'.
> 1.A.13: *Wyrc utyrnendne drænc genim … neogon piporcorn*, 'To make a purgative potion, take nine peppercorns'.
> 1.A.16: *Wyrc oðerne of beore ⁊ of feowertig lybcorna; ado seofontene pipercorn gif ðu wille*, 'Make another [purgative] from beer & from forty *lybcorn*; add seventeen peppercorns if you wish'.

Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. no. 245) write: 'The Black Pepper is a native of Southern India, especially the Malabar coast', but it was/is cultivated more widely. 'The black pepper of commerce is a small roundish fruit of about 1/3 of an inch in diameter … Black pepper is an aromatic carminative stimulant … It is likewise given in combination with aperients to facilitate their action and prevent griping'. Stuart (1979: 241) writes: 'Stimulates taste-buds and thus causes reflex stimulation of gastric secretions. Employed in atonic dyspepsia. Also stimulates mucous membranes and part of the nervous system'.[50] Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 576–82) give a brief outline of the importance of pepper from the fourth century BC onwards: 'it was for many ages the staple article of trade between Europe and India'. Ninth-century monks hoped to procure 120 pounds of it at Corbie (Riddle 1965: 194, referring to Guérard 1844: II.336).[51]

Cameron (1990: 8; 1992: 102–3) points out that pepper must have been common in England by the late seventh century, when Aldhelm wrote a riddle in Latin (no. XL) describing its use in cooking as a clue to its identity (Aldhelm 1985: 78; Stork 1990: Riddle 39). At his death, Bede had in his box 'some precious things: pepper, napkins and incense' which he distributed among the priests of his monastery at Jarrow (Cuthbert in Bede 1969: 584–5; Bede 1896: I.clxiii). There are more than thirty recipes using pepper in the first book of Bald's *Leechbook* alone. Æthelred's fourth law code, which sets out the tolls to be paid by merchants from the empire (*homines imperatoris*) overwintering at London in their ships, decrees that, among other things, ten pounds of pepper had to be paid at both Christmas and Easter.[52] This not only tells us that, even towards the end of the tenth century, pepper was familiar to the Anglo-Saxons, but it also shows one of the means by which they obtained it.

8.5 *Alwe*, aloe (*Aloe* genus; Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.3)

Bald's *Leechbook* II (3 occurrences), giving a total of three associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.3: *To spiw drence, VI corn alwan*, 'For an emetic, 6 seeds of aloe'.
> 1.A.6: *Wyrc spiwdrenc. genim … alwan*, 'Make an emetic: take … aloes'.

[50] For more details, see also Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: III. no. CLXXIV), and Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. no. 245). In Pereira (1874: 513–16), the dose of black pepper is from five to fifteen grains. Grieve (1976: 627–8) writes: '[It] is good for constipation … aids digestion'.

[51] A brief account of the importance of pepper to the early English is given by Hagen (1995: 182–3).

[52] IV Æthelred 2.10: *et dare toll' suum et in natali Domini … decem libras piperis … et totidem in pascha*. See Liebermann (1903–16: I.234–5; III.164); and Robertson (1925: 72–3; 324).

> 1.A.7: *Spiwe drenc wyrc of beore do cost to ⁊ alwan*, 'An emetic: make it from beer, add costmary & aloe'.

'Several species of *Aloe* furnish a bitter juice which when inspissated forms this drug. These plants are natives of arid, sunny places in Southern and Eastern Africa' (Flückiger and Hanbury 1879: 679). 'Aloes were known to the Greeks as a production of the island of Socotra,[53] were familiar to the Romans, and were recommended to Alfred by the Patriarch of Jerusalem[54] (1879: 680). Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 681) also comment: 'At this period … the drug was imported into Europe by way of the Red Sea and Alexandria'.[55] Cameron (1990: 9; 1993: 105) remarks:

> Of medicines from Arabia and Africa, aloes are mentioned in some dozen remedies and it is significant that almost all of these remedies can be traced to Latin sources. This means that aloes did not enter into the common repertory of drugs as did pepper. Aloes were a more or less Arab monopoly even in the Middle Ages … The name was never naturalized in Old English. The Arabic *alloeh* entered Greek as *aloē* (ἀλόη), to become Latin *aloe* and Old English *alwe*. It is a very old drug in European use and the English got it and its uses through the Greeks and the Romans.

Aloes are not mentioned in the *Herbarium,* however. Grieve (1976: 26–9) writes: 'The drug Aloes is one of the safest and best warm and stimulating purgatives'. The juice from the leaves is usually employed in medicine, but is rarely prescribed alone: aloes require the addition of carminatives to moderate the tendency to griping. Pereira (1874: 427–40, especially pp. 434–6) emphasises the slowness of the drug's effect (which might make it less useful in an emetic). The use of aloe *seeds* is not mentioned anywhere in these sources.

8.6 *Hwerhwette*, cucumber

Bald's *Leechbook* II (1 occurrence); *Leechbook III* (1); *Lacnunga* (1), giving a total of three associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.3: *To spiw drence … hwerwehatte* [for *hwerhwette*], 'For an emetic … cucumber'.
> 1.A.10: *Wyrc spiwe drenc utyrnendne nim … hwerhwette niþewearde an lytel*, 'Make a purgative emetic: take … a little of the lower part of cucumber'.
> 1.A.15: *Wyrc spiw drænc wyl hwerhwettan in wætere, læt weallan la[nc]ge asih þonne healfne bollan gegnid hundeahtatig libcorna in þone drænc*, 'Make an emetic drink: boil cucumber in water; let it boil down for a long time; then strain off half a bowl(ful). Grind up eighty *libcorns* into the drink'.

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.90; II.71), and also Pollington (2000: 114), suggest that this plant is *Cucumis sativus* L. Grieve (1976: 239–41) states that this native of the East Indies was known to the Greeks and was common in England in the fourteenth century, though not cultivated until about 1573.[56] Its diuretic seeds can be made into an emetic with water, to purge tapeworms.

[53] As early as the fourth century BC, according to a legend about Alexander recounted by Idrisi, an Arab living in Sicily, who compiled a geographical work in 1153 (Idrisi 1836–40: I.47–8).

[54] Cockayne (1864–6: II.174–5): 'aloes for infirmities' (*alwan wiþ untrymnessum*), is mentioned in the heading, but is not in the part of the chapter still preserved in the manuscript; Cockayne (1864–6: II.288–91). See also Meaney (1978: 65–6; 69).

[55] For more detailed accounts of aloes, see Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: II. nos CIX, CX); Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. nos. 282–4); and Stuart (1979: 149).

[56] *Cucumeres* appears in the list of 'herbs' recommended for the garden by Charlemagne (Boretius and Krause 1883–

Pettit (2001: I.238) suggests, as an alternative identification, the squirting or wild cucumber (*Ecballium elaterium* (L.) A. Rich.), called *Momordica elaterium* by Cockayne (1864–6: II.397).[57] Some details in *Herbarium*, Chapter CXV (*Hwerhwette; Cucumeris siluatica*) such as, for example, that it is dangerous to partake of the seeds when fasting, and the illustration in MS 11 (fol. 53v), suggest the wild cucumber.[58] Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 292–5) give a brief history of the plant. It is a hardy annual, originally from southern Europe, and was known to the Greeks. It was introduced into England by the mid sixteenth century. All parts of the plant are said to be purgative, including the roots, but 'the active properties reside chiefly … in the juice that surrounds the seeds'. The dried juice, according to Grieve (1976: 241) is 'a powerful hydragogue cathartic'. Phillips and Foy (1990: 171) write: 'In large doses it can cause nausea, vomiting, abortion … and even death'.[59]

8.7 *Glædene*, ?iris species, ?squill.

Leechbook III (2 occurrences); *Lacnunga* (1), giving a total of three associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.9: *Wyrc him þonne swiðne drenc utyrnendum … nim … glædenan moran*, 'Make for him then a strong purgative … take … ?iris roots'.
> 1.A.12: *Eft spiwe drenc wið deofle, nim micle hand fulle secges ⁊ glædenan*, 'Again, an emetic against the devil, take a big handful of sedge & iris'.
> 1.A.14: *Genim medmicle moran glædenon fædme longe ⁊ swa greata swa ðin þuma*, 'Take medium-sized roots of iris, a cubit long & as thick as your thumb'.

Theophrastus gives a list of plants used for perfumes: 'The most excellent and most fragrant all come from Asia and sunny regions. From Europe itself comes none of them except the Iris' (Theophrastus 1916: II.249–51; 9.7.3). Theophrastus probably meant *Iris germanica* L. or *Iris florentina* L. but, for the compilers of the Old English medical texts, *glædene* may have meant yellow flag (*Iris pseudacorus* L.)[60] (Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.69; II.53). Yellow flag is a naturally wild plant in England. The 'rhizome was formerly much employed as a medicine, acting as a very powerful cathartic, but from its extremely acrid nature is now seldom used. An infusion of it has been found to be effective in checking diarrhoea … The acrid properties are entirely dissipated by drying' (Grieve 1976: 438). See also *Herbarium*, Chapter LXXX (*Glædene, Gladiolus*).[61]

97: I.90), and is equated with *Cucumis sativus* by Meyer (1854–7: III.401; 404).

[57] See also the DMLBS, under *elaterium*, *-is*, in which it is explained that the Classical Latin was derived from Greek *elatērion* (ἐλατήριον), confused with *lathyris* (λαθυρίς) (spurge), and the British Medieval Latin (BML) definition is given as 'wild cucumber (*Ecballium elaterium*) or spurge (*Euphorbia lathyris*)'. Mirfeld (1882: 18) has '*Elacterium* is the juice of wild cucumber, *Elacteris* is wild cucumber' (*Elacterium est succus cucumeris asinini, Elacteris est cucumer agrestis*). The compilation by Mirfeld dates to c.1393.

[58] See De Vriend (1984: 156–7, 314) and D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: 56). For other representations, see facsimiles in Gunther (1925: 120, no. CIIII, fol.52v; MS 17), and in Hunger (1935: 104–5; MS Montecassino 97, and the *editio princeps*). These can be compared to the figure in Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: I. no. 34), who discuss the plant's medicinal properties and uses in great detail. See also Pereira (1874: 791–5) and Howald and Sigerist (1927: 199, no. CXIV).

[59] See also Stuart (1979: 184): 'Once administered to patients suffering from dropsy as a purgative, especially those with kidney complaints'. The most notable feature of this plant is that when the seeds are ripe, they suddenly explode through the aperture where the peduncle (a minor stem which bears a single flower or fruit) separates from the stalk. Is it possible then, that the name *springwort* could have also been applied to squirting cucumber?

[60] Dioscorides, Bk I, Chapters 1–2, describe both *I. germanica* or *florentina* (*iris*) and *I. pseudacorus* (*akoron*): see Dioscorides (1934: 5–7).

[61] De Vriend (1984: 120–1, 306); Phillips and Foy (1990: 109). The same gloss is in MS 3, Cleopatra Glossary 1:

Pettit (2001: II.55) suggests (as an alternative to yellow flag) stinking iris (*Iris foetidissima* L.), which is also native to England and was also used to induce vomiting and diarrhoea. Gunther (1925: 102) identifies the flowers of the figure in MS 17 (for no. XIII, fol. 7v: *Herbe Exifion*, *Gladiolus*) as those of *Iris foetidissima*; it is glossed *Gladen*. Hunt (1989: 58; 285, under *Gladden*) states that, in Middle English, it was also known as *bulbus vomitorius*. Stuart (1979: 206–7) gives *Gladdon* as its modern common name, and states that 'when purging was a popular form of medicinal treatment Stinking Gladdon was commonly used'. Wren (1915: 117) adds that it was 'said to relieve cramps, convulsions and pains, stomachic and rheumatic' (see also Fernie 1914: 185; Phillips and Foy 1990: 109). These qualities would fit the ailments for which *Herbarium*, Chapter LXXX is prescribed: bladder pain and inability to urinate, pain in the spleen, and of the guts and the breasts. The stinking iris has an inconspicuous purple-grey flower but attractive red seeds in the ripe flower capsule; nevertheless, it seems possible that the name *glædene* (*gladiolus*) was used for both the native irises.

However, *glædene* was also applied to *Bulbiscittica* in *Herbarium* Chapter XLIII, identified by De Vriend (1984: 298) and Bierbaumer (1975–9: II.53; see also Pollington 2000: 124) as squill (*Urginea maritima* (L.) Baker, or *Urginea scilla* Steinh.), a native of Mediterranean shores. In a passage in Bald's *Leechbook* II, translated from the *Physica Plinii*, *glædene* renders *scille*.[62] This identification is reinforced in glosses, from the early Épinal,[63] Erfurt,[64] and Corpus 2 glossaries,[65] to Cleopatra Glossary 2 and the Brussels Glossary,[66] the Laud and Durham glossaries,[67] and also by the gloss at the head of folio 5v of MS 17, no. IX: *Herba scilla i. gladene*. Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 690–3) write: 'Squill is one of the most ancient of medicines'; known to the Greeks and the Romans. 'For medicinal use, squill is mostly imported ready dried', cut into thin slices. Pereira (1874: 440–2) writes: 'The principal uses of squill are those of an emetic, diuretic, and expectorant'.[68] Early illustrations show large drooping or wavy leaves springing directly from a bulb.[69] Squill has a very large bulb, quite different from the rhizomes of the irises, though they seem to have had similar physiological

'*Gladiolum* glædene' (Wright 1884: column 416, no. 7). It is also in MS 9, Antwerp Glossary: *'Gladiolum* glaedene' (MCOE reference: AntGl3 (Kindschi) 51); and in MS 14, Durham Glossary: *'Gladiolum* gladene' (Lindheim 1941: 14, note on p. 52). For comparable illustrations, see: Gunther (1925: no. xlv, fol. 22v, notes on p.108); Howald and Sigerist (1927: 142, no. LXXIX); Hunger (1935: 74–5, no. LXXVIIII); and D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: fol. 43v). All but Gunther have obvious (but not naturalistic) similarities, and some attempt to depict the flower. Gunther suggests that the MS 17 figure represents the plant in fruit.

62 'Bamberg' version, 83.42–3 (MCOE reference: Lch II (2) 41.2.1): 'A preparation of sqillitic acid for the spleen: 3 pounds of crushed squill rind' (*Confectio aciti squilliticis ad splenem: squille cortices comminute pondo III*). In Old English: 'Vinegar mixed with gladden, prepare it thus: put three pounds of small pieces of gladden rind…' (*Eced wiþ glædenan gemenged wyrc þus glædenan rinde lytelra gedo þreo pund*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.252–3). See Adams and Deegan (1992: 92–3).

63 '*scilla* gladinae'. For the manuscript, see Footnote 6 above. See also Pheifer (1974: 48, note on p. 122).

64 MS 1: *'scilla* gledinae'. Pheifer (1974: 48, note on p. 122).

65 MS 2: *'Scilla* glaedine' (Wright 1884: column 45, no. 34).

66 MS 3: *'Scilla* glædene' (Wright 1884: column 271, no. 23). This gloss is repeated in the Brussels Glossary (MS 8; Wright 1884: column 300, no. 20), and it is repeated again with both lemmata in Wright (1884: column 301, no. 15): '*Scilla et gladiola* glædene'. Note also: '*Lappatium* docce i. gledene i. *carix*' (MCOE reference: BrGl 1 (Wright-Wuelcker) 8.70).

67 MS 15: '*Bulbis scillica* i. gledene' (Stracke 1974: 27, 82; no. 230). Also, somewhat distorted, in MS 14: '*Bulbi scillici* gledere' (Lindheim 1941: 10, note on p. 35). MS 15: '*Scilla* i. gledene' (Stracke 1974: 59; no. 1292). Also in MS 14 (Lindheim 1941: 18, note on p. 70).

68 See also Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: III. no. CLIII); and Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. no. 28).

69 See: Gunther (1925: no. ix, notes on p.101); Howald and Sigerist (1927: 90; no. XLII); Hunger (1935: 44–5, column 2 on each page); and D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: fol. 34v).

effects, squill being the more dangerous and still used as a constituent of rat poison. From the evidence of the glossaries, it appears that the Old English name *glædene* was used for squill long before it was used for an iris species. Since squill could probably only have been obtained in Anglo-Saxon England as a dried import,[70] the same name may have been later applied to the more easily obtained native irises as well.

8.8 *Bisceopwyrt*, bishopwort

Bald's *Leechbook* I (2 occurrences), giving two associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.1: *Þam men þe habbað þicce bræwas genim … bisceopwyrt*, 'For a man who has swollen eyelids, take … ?marsh mallow.
> 1.A.2: *Wiþ feondseocum men … Spiwe drenc … bisceopwyrt*, 'For a devil-sick man … An emetic … ?marsh mallow.

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.18–20) suggests marsh mallow (*Althea officinalis* L.) because *bisceopwyrt* frequently glosses Latin *hibiscum.* Grieve (1976: 508) comments: 'The great demulcent and emollient properties of Marsh Mallow make it useful in inflammation and irritation of the alimentary canal, and of the urinary and respiratory organs'.[71]

Bierbaumer (1975–9: II.14) dismisses as an error the equation in the heading in MS 11 of the first chapter of the *Herbarium* of Apuleius: 'The name betony, that is bishopwort' (*NOMEN herbe betonica þæt is biscopwyrt*; De Vriend 1984: 1)[72] since some lists of ingredients contain both names. For example, in the *Lacnunga*, both *betonica* and *bisceopwyrt* are named in the recipes for three salves.[73] Grieve (1976: 97–9), however, points out that betony (*Stachys officinalis* (L.) Trevis.)[74] was held in high regard in antiquity and the Middle Ages, and regarded as having power against evil spirits. It was cultivated in physic gardens, and used as a tonic for dyspepsia, so it would have been an appropriate ingredient in these remedies. Pettit (2001: II.65, note to line 237), citing Hunt, states that, in Middle English, *bishopswort* 'denotes a number of different plants, including possibly marsh mallow … but especially betony'. It

[70] It was, however, among the herbs which Charlemagne wished to be cultivated in gardens on the imperial estates (Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90). Friar Henry Daniel, writing in England about 1385, knew that squill did not set seed: 'It multiplieth only … in root as doth Saffron' (Harvey 1981: 118–9, 159); therefore, it must have been introduced before the end of the fourteenth century.

[71] See also Wren (1915: 182–3); Grigson (1955: 100–2); Stuart (1979: 150); Priest and Priest (1982: 88–9); and Phillips and Foy (1990: 152–3). See the last paragraph of Section 7.2 above for the possibility that *hocc* indicates mallow in general.

[72] None of the other *Herbarium* manuscripts (MSS 7 and 12, and London, British Library, Harley 6258 B) has the list of headings, and *bisceopwyrt* does not appear in the text in any manuscript. See also *Herbarium*, Chapter XXXIX: *Merscmealuwe hibiscus* (De Vriend 1984: 86–7, 297). The DOE, defining *bisceopwyrt*, gives 'marsh-mallow' as the first meaning, and 'betony' as the second. Meanings 3 to 5 have the defining adjectives *brune*, *brade* and *suþerne*, and meanings 6 to 8 have other plant-name lemmata. The early illustrations represent betony leaves with some accuracy, except for the *editio princeps* which also, like MS 11, shows the stem dividing into multiple flowering spikes. This is true for some of the related labiates, but not for betony (see, for example, Fitter and Blamey 1974: 202–3). Betony is not included in the nineteenth-century books on medicinal plants. MS 17 (no. lxvii, fol. 34r), however, has only one spike, and is naturalistic enough that it may even have been recognisable in the field (Gunther 1925). See also Gunther's Plates 5 (opposite p. 104) and 6 (opposite p. 112) and comments on p. 113. For a recent brief discussion of bishopwort, see Pollington (2000: 101, 103).

[73] MS 7; Cockayne (1864–6: III.6–7; no. 4); Grattan and Singer (1952: 100–3; no. XV); Pettit (2001: I.10–11, lines 47, 50; no. XV). The second salve, also in MS 7: Cockayne (1864–6: III.20–1; no.23); Grattan and Singer (1952: 118–19; no. L); Pettit (2001: I.26–7, line 204; no. L). The third salve, also in MS 7: Cockayne (1864–6: III.22–3; no. 29); Grattan and Singer (1952: 122–3; no. LXIII); Pettit (2001: I.30–1, lines 236–7; no. LXIII).

[74] Also known as *Betonica officinalis* L., and *Stachys betonica* Benth.

is, therefore, difficult to be sure what *bisceopwyrt* meant to the compilers of the Leechbooks and the *Lacnunga*, but perhaps it is probable that it originally denoted marsh mallow rather than betony, and that, in most of the Old English remedies, it meant the former.[75] Since it is not possible to be sure what *bisceopwyrt* meant at the time Bald's *Leechbook* was compiled, it would probably be best to leave it out of account in drawing any conclusions from the associations with *lybcorn*.

8.9 *Seo greate wyrt*, autumn crocus or meadow saffron (*Colchicum autumnale* L.; Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.71; II.54–5)

Bald's *Leechbook* II (2 occurrences), giving a total of two associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.3: *To spiw drence, þa greatan wyrt niþeweard*, 'For an emetic potion, the lower part of the big herb'.
> 1.A.4: [a weak emetic] *Wyrce swiðran gif he wille: adelfe þa greatan wyrt*, 'Let him make it stronger if he wishes: dig up the big herb'.

The identification is from *Herbarium*, Chapter XXII: *Greate wyrt*, *Hieribulbum* (De Vriend 1984: 68–71, 293). Relevant early illustrations all show a plant which could well be *Colchicum autumnale* in summer, with large leaves springing from a bulb, but no flowers.[76] Autumn crocus grows in meadows and pastures over the greater part of northern Africa, middle and southern Europe. It is a somewhat local plant in England (and was therefore probably introduced?). The parts of the *Colchicum* used medicinally are the corm, which can be used either fresh or dried (cut in thin slices), and the seeds. Their properties are similar, being antirheumatic, cathartic, and emetic. The reputation of *Colchicum* rests largely upon its value in acute gouty and rheumatic complaints, dropsy, and cutaneous maladies. Overdoses of the seeds can cause violent purging, and act as an irritant poison.[77]

8.10 *Wenwyrt*

Bald's *Leechbook* II (1 occurrence); *Leechbook III* (1), giving a total of two associations with *lybcorn*:

> 1.A.4: [an emetic] *wenwyrt sio weaxeþ on ealdum lande*, '*wenwyrt*, that which grows on old ground'.
> 1.A.10: [an emetic and a purgative/diuretic] *twa clufe þære clufehtan wenwyrte*, 'two cloves of the bulbous *wenwort*'.

The interpretation is difficult and authorities differ.[78] The bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus* L.) might seem to fit the description, but is not used in potions. Its juice raises blisters on the skin (Grigson 1955: 40; Grieve 1976: 149–50). The knotted figwort (*Scrophularia nodosa* L.), which has 'diuretic and anodyne properties' (Grieve 1976: 313–14), is described

[75] For betony, see also Fernie (1914: 47–50); Grigson (1955: 323–4); Priest and Priest (1982: 76–7); and Phillips and Foy (1990: 162). Howald and Sigerist (1927: 5; Tabula 1) give illustrations from several manuscripts.

[76] See Hunger (1935: 28–9, column 1 on both pages); and D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: fol. 29r, column 1). The description above summarizes the accounts by these authors: Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 699–703); Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. no. 288); Wren (1915: 76–7); and Grieve (1976: 698–700). For more details, see Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: II. no. CI); Pereira (1874: 417–20); Fernie (1914: 444–6); Stuart (1979: 177–8); and Phillips and Foy (1990: 168).

[77] Dioscorides drew attention to its poisonous properties, in his Bk IV, Chapter 84 (Dioscorides 1934: 481–2).

[78] For a brief account of the possibilities, see Pollington (2000: 165).

as 'gently stimulating and relaxing alterative with lower abdominal and pelvic emphasis', and as a diuretic which could be combined 'with hepatics and stimulating diuretics' (Priest and Priest 1982: 74–5; see also Stuart 1979: 261–2). Another possibility is the lesser celandine or pilewort (*Ranunculus ficaria* L.), the fibres of whose roots swell into the form of tubers, which hang in a bunch, looking like figs. A decoction was used to cure piles 'for which it is almost a specific'.[79] This may be the plant called *chamedafne,* and, in English, *hrœfnes fot*, that is, 'raven's foot', in *Herbarium*, Chapter XXVIII.[80]

All these possibilities for identification are native plants; none are weeds growing only on broken ground, so that the requirement that the plant selected should have grown on 'old ground' does not help with identification.

9. Plants with single associations with *lybcorn*

The rest of the plant associations only occur once each. Their Old English names are listed alphabetically under the catalogue number, working first through Bald's *Leechbook,* Books I and II, then *Leechbook III* and, finally, the *Lacnunga,* so that the contexts in which the herbs are used may be clear.

9.1 *Attorlaþan*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.1)

Fumitory (*Fumaria officinalis* L.), according to Cameron (1992: 29–34). Grieve (1976: 330) quotes an old recipe: it is 'an excellent thing against sores, inflamed, running and watery Eyes'.[81]

9.2 *Englisce moran*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.1)

Literally 'English roots'. Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.105; III.174), followed by Pollington (2000: 108), suggests perhaps wild carrot (*Daucus carota* L.). Grieve (1976: 162) writes: 'Old writers tell us that a poultice made of the roots has been found to mitigate the pain of cancerous ulcers, and that the leaves, applied with honey, cleanse running sores and ulcers'.[82]

Alternatively, according to Bierbaumer, *englisce moran* could have been wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa* L.). Grieve (1976: 616) refers to John Wesley's *Primitive Physic*, in which he says: 'Wild parsnips both leaves and stalks, bruised, seem to have been a favorite application'.[83]

9.3 *Geaces suran*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.1)

Literally, this is 'cuckoo's sour'. Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.66), followed by Pollington (2000: 113–14), identifies this plant as 'wood sorrel' (*Oxalis acetosella* L.). Stephenson and Churchill

[79] Wren (1915: 216); Grieve (1976: 179–82). See also Fernie (1914: 82–3); Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.139–40); Stuart (1979: 250), and the discussion at Section 8.2 above.

[80] See De Vriend (1984: 294–5), but also the discussion in Bierbaumer (1975–9: II.66–8). For illustrations, see Gunther (1925: no. LXXXVIII; fol. 45r; notes on p. 117); Hunger (1935: 32–3, no. XXVII); D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: 50; fol. 30v: 'A ranunculus, but not ficaria').

[81] Stuart (1979: 193) claims that it was 'Formerly chiefly employed in the treatment of various skin complaints'. See also Phillips and Foy (1990: 121). For a summary of earlier interpretations, see Pollington (2000: 98–9).

[82] Bentley and Trimen (1880: II. no. 135): 'The root of the cultivated plant when boiled and beaten … is sometimes applied as a poultice to foetid ill-conditioned sores to correct the discharge; and to allay the pain of phagadenic and carcinomatous ulcers'. See also Fernie (1914: 79–81).

[83] For root vegetables in Anglo-Saxon times, see Banham (2003: 125). *Pastenacas* are found in the list of plants

(1834–6: I. no. 63) write: 'Very generally found throughout Europe … the leaves in a recent state … have been employed with advantage as an external application to scrofulous ulcers'. Grieve (1976: 751–2) writes:

> It has diuretic, antiscorbutic and refrigerant action, and a decoction … is given in high fever. The juice of the leaves … is good to heal wounds and staunch bleeding. Sponges and linen cloths saturated with the juice and applied, were held to be effective in the reduction of swellings and inflammation.

9.4 *Hrefnes fot*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.1)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.87) suggests a 'Crowfoot or buttercup, perhaps Upright Meadow Crowfoot (*Ranunculus acris* L.), while De Vriend (1984: 294–5) suggests *Ranunculus ficaria*. Grieve (1976: 235–6) writes: 'The juice of the leaves takes away warts, and bruised together with the roots will act as a caustic'.[84]

9.5 *Rædices* (*hwon*), Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.1)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.116) interprets this as 'a little Radish' (*Raphanus sativus* L.), but Grieve (1976: 667–8) cites no example of external medicinal use. However, see Fernie (1914: 420–1) who writes that the juice is used to treat corns and carbuncles (severe abscesses and boils). Stuart (1979: 250–1) states that radish has antibiotic qualities. See also Pollington (2000: 152).

9.6 *Springwyrt*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.1)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.129), followed by Pollington (2000: 158), identifies this as 'caper spurge' (*Euphorbia lathyris* L.), named *springwyrt* because the ripe seeds spring out of their capsules. Bierbaumer cites German *Springwurz*, but this name, however, was not specifically applied to caper spurge.[85] Grieve (1976: 765) writes of caper spurge that the seeds and root are purgative and emetic; and the leaves are vesicant, producing ulcers. They also describe other species of spurge which have been applied to the skin in herbal medicine, for example: '*E. helioscopia* juice is commonly applied to warts, and sometimes, though improperly, used to cure sore eyelids, causing in many instances intolerable pain and inflammation' (Grieve 1976: 765).

Pettit (2001: II.45, note to line 126), in a note to *Lacnunga*, Chapter 31 (a good bone-salve), points out that 'In M[iddle] E[nglish] springwort is sometimes equated with various species of mint [*Mentha* L.], especially those found in damp habitats'. Grieve (1976: 532–46; 624–6) lists very few external applications for mints, but see Fernie (1914: 312–3, 315).

It is remarkable that *springwyrt* appears to be a vital ingredient in some recipes for potions,

recommended by Charlemagne for gardens on the imperial estates (Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90).

[84] See the discussions in Sections 8.2 and 8.10 above; see also Pollington (2000: 152).

[85] The only German dictionary I have been able to discover which lists *Springwurz*, as used for plants with explosive seeds, is the *Brockhaus Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch* (1983), which suggests that the term is applied to various plants. *Duden: das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache in zehn Bänden* (1999) has the following: *Springwurz, Springwurzel, Wurzel des Salomonsiegels, der Zauberkraft zugeschrieben wird*, '*Springwurz*, *Springwurzel*, root of Solomon's Seal, to which magic power is attributed'. However, OHG *Springwurz* glosses *laterida* (see, for example, Steinmeyer and Sievers 1879–1922: III.172, no. 47): '*Latarida uel Citocatia* .i. Springwrz'; and (in III.198, no. 54): 'sprincwurz'.

salves or poultices 'for a pustule or carbuncle' (*wiþ springe*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.80–1, no. xxxiii.1–2). Was it used in healing because of the magic of its name (which actually referred to seeds springing out of the capsule)? Or could it have received its name because it healed pustules?

It does not seem to me that the identity of OE *springwyrt* has been established.[86] The common identification of *lybcorn* with the seeds of *Euphorbia lathyris* will be discussed in Section 10 below.

9.7 *Beolone*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.2)

Henbane (*Hyoscyamus* species; Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.15–16; II.10–11, 58–9). De Vriend (1984: 48–51, 289) identifies this as *Hyoscyamus niger* L. Grieve (1976: 397–404) writes that it has been found wild throughout Britain 'having probably first escaped from the old herb gardens'. The seeds and leaves were used as narcotics, but are dangerously poisonous. 'Their effect was antispasmodic, hypnotic, mildly diuretic, and they were used to relieve the griping caused by drastic purgatives'. Cameron (in D'Aronco and Cameron 1998: 61–4) comments that *H. niger*'s analgesic and sedative properties could have given relief but not a cure for the various aches and pains specified in the *Herbarium,* except that it could not relieve lung disease. Wren (1915: 131) writes of this plant: 'Principally employed in irritable conditions and nervous affections'. Pollington (2000: 130) notes that a Viking woman buried at Fyrkat (Denmark) had hundreds of henbane seeds in a leather bag; they may have been intended as a flavouring for beer.[87]

Most of the relevant early illustrations are identifiably *Hyoscyamus niger*;[88] however, the illustration for *hennebelle* (also called *belone*) in Chapter V of the Old English *Herbarium* (MS 11)[89] was identified by Gunther (1925: 113) as '*Hyoscyamus reticulatus*, a Mediterranean species'. Voigts (1979: 266–8) pointed out that the text of Chapter V carefully distinguishes between two kinds of *belone* or *hennebelle*, and that it is the whiter of the two which was credited with medicinal powers. This distinction between the two kinds of henbane, 'black' and 'white', is already in the 'oldest extant Latin manuscript of the *Herbarium*'.[90] It is difficult

[86] Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.xvii, 215, 253) discusses the twelfth-century interlinear gloss to the copy of the Latin *Herbarium* in MS 13, *'sprincwert* id est wildewise', but without coming to any firm conclusion regarding *springwyrt*. See Gough (1974: 279–80; note 45), who comments: '*Sprincwert* must be for *springwyrt*, which is identified with the *wild caper* or *caper bush* (*euphorbia lathyris*).' In Old High German, *springwurz* glosses Latin *actureda* or *lactaridia* (see Graff 1834–46: I. column 1051, under *sprincuurc*). *Wildewise*, which is otherwise unrecorded in Old English, seems to be an Old English (?Middle English) gloss of the Old English form *sprincwert*. *Wise* is known as a noun meaning 'sprout' or 'stalk', and thus it would appear that the compound *wildewise* should mean 'wild stalk'. Could this possibly indicate the caper bush? Corrections by Bierbaumer (1977) do not affect Gough's reading here.

[87] See also Pereira (1874: 598–602); Bentley and Trimen (1880: III. no. 194); Grigson (1955: 291–2); Stuart (1979: 203–4) and Phillips and Foy (1990: 158).

[88] Compare, for example, Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: I. plate for Chapter IX) with facsimiles from the twelfth-century MS 17 from Bury St Edmunds in Gunther (1925: 113; plate 7; no. LXX); and from the *editio princeps*, printed in Rome in 1481, in Hunger (1935: 13). There is no corresponding illustration in MS Montecassino 97.

[89] MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii. There is a facsimile of this illustration in D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: fol. 23v). De Vriend (1984) based his edition of the Apuleius complex on this manuscript.

[90] MS Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Vossianus Latinus Q 9, of the sixth or seventh century. See De Vriend (1984: xlviii, 49): 'There is also another with a blackish colour, with squalid and poisonous leaves. Therefore, the whiter of these has these powers' (*Est et altera subnigro colore, sordidus et venenosis foliis. His ergo candidior has vires habet*).

to know, therefore, which species was intended in the references to *Hyoscyamus* from the late seventh century onwards.[91] Grieve (1976: 403–4) writes that in more modern times, the seeds of the white variety of henbane seem to have been preferred for internal use, the leaves of the black for external application. Chapter V recommends *belone* for both internal and external ailments. However, the properties of all the species of medicinal *Hyoscyamus* appear to have been similar, so that, for the medics and the patients alike, the exact variety may have been unimportant, and *Hyoscyamus niger* the most easily obtainable.

9.8 *Eluhtre*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.2)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.53), followed by Pollington (2000: 138), identifies this plant as 'lupin' (*Lupinus* species), and perhaps *Lupinus luteus* L. 'yellow lupin', since the Old English name appears to be from Latin *electrum* 'amber'.[92] Grieve (1976: 502–3) describes *L. luteus* as 'a native of Southern Europe and Western Asia', from which alkaloids could be derived. However, the species best known and most cultivated in early times was the white lupin (*Lupinus albus* L.), also a native of the eastern Mediterranean. Its seeds, when bruised, 'are said to be anthelmintic, diuretic and emmenagogue' (see Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.402–5; 22.74.154–7).

9.9 *Cropleac*, Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.2)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.40) identifies this as 'leek' (*Allium porrum* L.): probably the cultivated vegetable rather than the herb *garleac* 'garlic' (*Allium sativum* L.).[93]

9.10 *Gotwoþe*, Bald's *Leechbook* II (1.A.4)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.70–1) rejects Cockayne's suggestion of 'goutweed' (*Aegopodium podagraria* L.), but makes no alternative suggestion. Grieve (1976: 368–9) ascribes no

[91] See also Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 463–5): 'Hyoscyamus, under which name it is probable the nearly allied South European species *H. albus* L., was generally intended, was medicinal among the ancients, and particularly commended by Dioscorides' (Bk IV, Chapter 69). See also Dioscorides (1934: 464–5). Voigts (1979: 267–8) comments that 'after looking through scores of dried varieties of solanaceae one is struck by the verisimilitude of the illustration [in MS 11] to the Mediterranean and Turkish varieties of *Hyoscyamus*: *H. aureus* L., *H. pusillus* L., *H. reticulatus* L.' She says nothing about *H. albus*, and I have not found it possible to track down any illustration of it when dried. However, judging from the description by Oleg Polunin (1969: 370; Plate 117, no. 1177), it seems to resemble *H. aureus* in all but the paleness of its flowers, and might then be virtually indistinguishable from it when dried.

[92] *Herbarium*, Chapter CXII (De Vriend 1984: 154–7; D'Aronco and Cameron 1998: fol. 52v, Column 2). The leaves in the illustrations in the Old English *Herbarium* (MS 11), in MS Montecassino 97 (Hunger 1935: 102–3), and, indeed, in the idiosyncratic Bury St Edmunds MS (MS 17; see Gunther 1925: 120; no. CI), have nothing like the distinctive palmate leaves of lupins. Howald and Sigerist (1927) include black and white printed versions of manuscript illustrations, but it does not seem helpful to give detailed references to these very schematized figures. If one digit is subtracted from the chapter numbers in De Vriend (1984), they are easily found; for example, *Herba lupinum montanum* is CXI in Howald and Sigerist but CXII in De Vriend. Compare, for example, Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: I. plate for chapter IX) with facsimiles from the twelfth-century MS 17 from Bury St Edmunds in Gunther (1925, no. LXX, p. 113 and plate 7), and from the *editio princeps*, printed in Rome in 1481, in Hunger (1935: 103). See also comments by D'Aronco (2003: 137).

[93] In two remedies in the *Lacnunga*, both *cropleac* and *garleac* are named as ingredients: Cockayne (1864–6: III.20–1; no. 23); Grattan and Singer (1952: 118–19; nos. XLIX, L); and Pettit (2001: I.26–7, lines 201, 205; nos. XLIX, L). For the leek as '*the* Anglo-Saxon vegetable', see Pollington (2000: 136); Banham (2003: 125–6); and

purgative or emetic properties to goutweed, which is said to have been introduced into England and cultivated by monks as a herb of healing. It does not appear in any glosses, and, altogether, it seems best to leave *gotwoþe* out of account.

9.11 *Hofe*, Bald's *Leechbook* II (1.A.4)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.85–6; III.138) opts for 'ground ivy' (*Glechoma hederacea* L.), since most of the Middle and Modern English versions of *hofe* (for example, *hove*, *hayhove*, *alehoof*) refer to ground ivy.[94] Grieve (1976: 442–3) writes that the whole herb, gathered fresh in May, has diuretic, astringent, tonic and gently stimulant properties. Formerly, it was used to clarify beer.

In the Antwerp Glossary**,** however, *hofe* translates *uiola.*[95] Grieve (1976: 833–9) writes that both the dog violet (*Viola riviniana* Rchb.) and the sweet violet (*V. odorata* L.) are strongly emetic and purgative, particularly their rhizomes. Therefore, a species of violet may be intended here.

In the Laud Glossary, *houa* is equated both with *viola* and with *banewvrt* (Stracke 1974: 66, no. 1506; MS 15). In Middle English, *bonewort* was used for so many varied plants that the possibility of identification through these synonyms appears remote.[96] Since there is no certain identity for *hofe*, no conclusions can be drawn from its association with *lybcorn*.

9.12 *Alres* (*wah mela* 'fine flour'), Bald's *Leechbook* II (1.A.5)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.2–3) identifies this as alder (*Alnus glutinosa* (L.) Gaertn.). Grieve (1976: 17–18) describes alder as 'Tonic and astringent', as do Stuart (1979: 149) and Pollington (2000: 498–9). I am uncertain how a flour could have been made from alder, which does not have nuts, but it may have been made from bark, the source of flour for the famine food bark-bread.

9.13 *Hæsles* (*wah mela* 'fine flour'), Bald's *Leechbook* II (1.A.5)

This is 'fine flour of hazel' (*Coryllus avelana* L.).[97]

9.14 *Hwit cwudu*, Bald's *Leechbook* II (1.A.6)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.44–5) defines this as 'mastic', which is a white chewing stuff.[98] Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 161–5) give an outline history of mastic, which was known

Hall (2003: 103; Figure 13).

94 MED under *ale-hove*; *hei-hove* and *hove*.

95 MS 9; Wright (1884: I. column 134, no. 39); Förster (1917: 138, no. 227). Bierbaumer thinks this is an error, due to the similarity between the shapes of the leaves and the flowers in the two kinds of plants. Though ground ivy and, say, the common dog violet are alike in their straggling growth and the colour of their flowers, they are easily distinguished in the field.

96 See Cockayne (1864–6: II.371) under *banwyrt*; MED under *bonwort*: 'Any of a variety of medicinal herbs, such as the violet and esp[ecially] the daisy, used in healing broken bones and wounds'; and Hunt (1989: 272) under *bonewort*.

97 See the information in Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.78); and Pollington (2000: 503). There is nothing on this product in Grieve (1976).

98 The OED defines *mastic* as 'a gum or resin which exudes from the bark of *Pistacia lentiscus* [a Mediterranean shrub] and some other trees'.

from the fourth century BC as a product of the Mediterranean island of Scio. It was described by Dioscorides as a resin (Bk I, Chapters 89–90; Dioscorides 1934: 48–9). *Granomastice* was one of the items ninth-century monks of St-Germain-des-Prés hoped to buy at Corbie, if they had the money (Riddle 1965: 194; note 4 refers to Guérard 1844: II.336). Cameron (1990: 10; 1993: 105) remarks that mastic was quite frequently prescribed in Bald's *Leechbook* I, which 'may be presumed to show the usages most common to English medicine'. He attributes the popularity of mastic to the fact that, as it came from the Greek archipelago, it did not need to pass through Arab hands on its way to England. Since it was sufficiently common to have been given an English name, it must have been relatively inexpensive. Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: III. no. CXXX) describe the early nineteenth-century trade, and mastic's usages in medicine:

> [It] is brought to us in yellowish semi-transparent brittle grains or tears … It is almost tasteless; and when chewed it is soft and tough … It has long been introduced into medicine under the character of an astringent and diuretic in obstinate coughs, dysentery, fluor albus [leucorrhoea], gleets [discharges], haemoptysis, dyspeptic complaints, and internal ulcerations; but it probably possesses no powers of any kind but what may be ascribed to its moderately stimulant effect upon the organs of secretion.[99]

9.15 *Cost*, Bald's *Leechbook* II (1.A.7)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.38–9) defines *cost* as 'alecost, costmary' (*Tanacetum balsamita* L., also known as *Balsamita major* Desf.). However, Greppin (1999) has demonstrated that a plant name approximating *costus* was found in seven ancient languages and applied to three separate fragrant plants. Pollington (2000: 112) claims that the name 'was early transferred to this balsam-scented herb', that is, costmary. *Costum* (whatever it may have been) is in the list of 'herbs' recommended to gardeners on the imperial estates by Charlemagne (Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90), and was among those which ninth-century monks expected to buy in Corbie market (Riddle 1965: 194; note 4 refers to Guérard 1844: II.336). Phillips and Foy (1990: 146) write: 'an infusion was drunk to relieve upset stomachs, dysentry and ague. It was said to expel worms from children and be an excellent tonic.'

9.16 *Hocces moran*, *Leechbook III* (1.A.10)

This phrase means 'the roots of mallow', and Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.85) suggests common mallow (*Malva sylvestris* L.).[100] Stuart (1979: 218) writes that its dried flowers and leaves and, occasionally, roots, were used medicinally, and were 'demulcent, anti-inflammatory; laxative; slightly astringent … Large doses are gently purgative'. *Hocc*, however, may have been a general term for a mallow, including both common and marsh mallow, as it seems to have been in Middle English.[101]

[99] See also Pereira (1874: 880–1); Bentley and Trimen (1880: I. no. 68); Riddle (1965: 187–8); and Grieve (1976: 522). It is advertised nowadays, following research findings at Nottingham University, as a stomach ulcer and digestive support.

[100] Grieve (1976: 508–9) writes that 'the roots are not considered of much value', but Grigson (1955: 99–100) declares 'Like the Marsh Mallow and the Tree Mallow, the Common Mallow is soft and full of mucilage'. The identity of *hoc* is also briefly discussed by Pollington (2000: 131).

[101] See Hunt under *Malva* and *Malva agrestis* (1989: 168); and under *Hock*, *Hocks*, and *Small-* (1989: 289). For discussion of the relative virtues of the two mallows, see Fernie (1914: 298–301). See also Section 8.8 above on *bisceopwyrt* '?marsh mallow'. Cameron (in D'Aronco and Cameron 1998: 62) restricts his identification of *hoc* to

9.17 *Arod*, *Leechbook III* (1.A.11)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.6) identifies this as 'Arum' (*Arum maculatum* L.). Grieve (1976: 236–9) describes it as the sole species of the Arum family native to Britain, and adds:

> The Arum had formerly a great reputation as a drug, in common with all other plants containing acrid or poisonous principles … The dried root was recommended as a diuretic and stimulant … The juice of the fresh tuber is purgative, but too violently so to be safely administered.

Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: I no. XXII) tell horrific stories of the effects of eating the fresh plant, but claim that the dried root loses any medicinal virtues along with the acrid principle. They conclude: 'The difficulty of administering the Arum in a uniform manner prevents it from being often used'.[102]

Pollington (2000: 97–8) writes that 'the leaf of *libcorn* or *arod*' (*lybbcornes leaf oþþe arod*), would 'make more sense if the *arod* is an alternative part of the libcorn plant'. However, the word only appears in one other remedy, from the *Lacnunga,*[103] and identification is equally unsure there. It is probably best left out of account as an association with *lybcorn*.

9.18 *Secg*, *Leechbook III* (1.A.12)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.123–4) suggests a *Carex* (sedge) species, but Grieve (1976: 731) states that none of the sixty-nine British species of *Carex* has medicinal uses. Concerning sweet sedge (*Acorus calamus* L.), she writes, copying earlier writers, that it 'was formerly much esteemed as an aromatic and mild tonic … it also acts as a carminative … and is used to increase the appetite and benefit digestion' (Grieve 1976: 728). Its rhizomes were imported from the East long before it became cultivated (and naturalized). In the Old English *Herbarium*, Chapter VII, it is given the name *beowyrt* (literally 'bee herb').[104]

In both the mid-ninth century Omont Fragment (lines 26–33) and in Bald's *Leechbook* I, Chapter XXIII, the lower part of sedge (*neoðowardne seecg; nioþoweardne secg*) is found in a remedy for a paralysed body (Meaney 1984: 244; Pollington 2000: 75–6, 156).

9.19 *Curmealle*, *Lacnunga* (1.A.13)

The *Herbarium* offers two species of *curmealle*, the 'greater' and the 'lesser', and several synonyms: Chapter XXXV equates *centauria maior* with *curmelle seo mare* or *eorðgealla*;

Malva species. *Hoc leaf* renders *malua erratica* in *Herbarium* Chapter XLI and De Vriend (1984: 298) identifies this as *Malva sylvestris*. MS 11 (D'Aronco and Cameron 1998: fol. 34r, column 2) and MS Montecassino 97, no. xxxviiii (along with the 1481 edition, for which see Hunger 1935: 42–3) all illustrate a plant with five rounded but pointed leaves directly springing from the root, and a longer flower stalk with three terminals. It does not appear to me to resemble a mallow.

[102] See also Fernie (1914: 34–6).

[103] MS 7; Cockayne (1864–6: III.2–3, no. 2); Grattan and Singer (1952: 98–9, VII); and Pettit (2001: I.6–7, line 17; VII).

[104] D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: 49, note 40) comment: 'The illustration [from MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii, fol. 24v, column.1] shows the rhizome of the plant, the only part known in central Europe before 1574'. Compare this illustration with that drawn from a fresh plant with its rhizome (for example, no. 279 in Bentley and Trimen 1880: no. IV), who comment: 'It is also a useful adjunct to tonic or purgative medicines', and also with that, recognisably similar, in the *editio princeps* (Hunger 1935: 15, column 2). See also Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 676–8); Fernie (1914: 185–6); and Stuart (1979: 143). The Greeks called specialist medicinal drug suppliers, who wrote about their work, *rhizotomoi* (ῥιζοτόμοι), 'root-cutters' (see Riddle 1985: 5).

and Chapter XXXVI equates *centauria minor* with *curmelle seo læssæ* or *feferfuge* (De Vriend: 1984: 80–82). The possibilities for confusion in the identification of *curme(a)lle* are considerable. Pettit (2001: I.222), following Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.41–2; II.29–30) suggests a species of *Centaurea* L. 'knapweed', or *Blackstonia perfoliata* (L.) Hudson 'yellow-wort'; or *Centaurium erythraea* Rafn. 'common centaury'. However, common centaury and yellow-wort belong to the Gentianaceae and have small pink or yellow flowers with five to eight petals, whereas knapweed and its close relative, the cornflower, belong to the Compositae and have large bright blue flowers (Fitter and Blamey 1974: 180–1; 248–9). Even if we suppose the greater *curmelle* to be a *Centaurea,* and the lesser a *Centaurium* (Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.42 suggests *C. umbellatum* Gilib.), it is hard to see any connection between them, apart from the similarity of their modern scientific names.

According to Grieve (1976: 223–4), the flowers of the native cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus* L.) are 'used in modern herbal medicine and are considered to have tonic, stimulant and emmenagogue properties'. Some species of knapweed, including greater knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa* L.)*,* whose root and seeds are used, are 'diuretic, diaphoretic and tonic' (Grieve 1976: 456–7).

Common centaury (*Centaurium erythraea* Rafn. or *Erythraea centaurium* auct.) is a central European native; the dried flowering plant, according to Stuart (1979: 169) is 'aromatic; bitter; stomachic. Stimulates appetite … of benefit in weak digestion. Widely used as a tonic'. Any of these might therefore have been appropriate in the context of this remedy, and so it is impossible to choose between them.[105] I have been unable to track down any medicinal properties for yellow-wort.

9.20 *Merce*, *Lacnunga* (1.A.13)

Merce is usually identified as 'wild celery' (*Apium graveolens* L.) (Bierbaumer 1975–9: II.83; Pollington 2000: 166). Grieve (1976: 182) writes: 'Carminative, stimulant, diuretic, tonic, nervine, useful in hysteria, promoting restfulness and sleep'. *Herbarium*, Chapter CXX is about *Merce, Apium* which is recommended only as a poultice (with bread) for sore eyes (De Vriend 1984: 160–1).[106] Wild celery is not included in the nineteenth-century herbals I have consulted.

9.21 *Sundcorn*, *Lacnunga* (1.A.13)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: II.112–13; III.222–3), followed by Pollington (2000: 155), identifies *sundcorn* as the seeds of meadow saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata* L.), and cites the plant's reputation as a 'stonebreaker'. Pettit (2001: II.53, note to line 180) writes: 'Elsewhere in OE medical texts *sundcorn* denotes the plant *Saxifraga granulata* itself, not specifically its seed'. He is presumably referring principally to the *Herbarium*, Chapter XCIX, entitled *Sundcorn, Saxifragia*: 'This plant which is called saxifrage and by another name *sundcorn* (*Đeos wyrt ðe man saxifragam ⁊ oþrum naman sundcorn nemneð*). De Vriend (1984: 144–5; 311) comments: 'The illustrations in our texts are clearly of [meadow saxifrage] *Saxifraga*

[105] Pollington (2000: 108–9 (under *Centaury*), 116 (under *Earthgall*), and 118 (under *Felter*)) appears to agree that it is almost impossible to be sure of the identification.

[106] Illustrations, in MS 11 (a facsimile is published in D'Aronco and Cameron 1998: fol. 54v), in the MS Montecassino 97, and in the *editio princeps* (facsimiles are published in Hunger 1935: 108–9), would be of little use as field guides.

granulata'. That in MS 11 (fol. 49v) evidently makes an attempt to depict the (underground) roots, which have a number of disc-like objects dispersed about them.[107] The distinguishing feature of meadow saxifrage is the bulbils (small bulbs at the leaf-bases), and, presumably, the discs represent them. Could they be the cause of the species designation *granulata* 'with little grains/pellets', and for the name *sundcorn* for the plant itself? They are not, after all, seeds. In glosses, the lemmata for *sun(d)corn* are (with only two exceptions in eight occurrences, but sometimes distorted), *saxifraga*.[108] Neither the nineteenth-century herbals I have consulted nor Grieve (1976) ascribe any medicinal properties to any part of meadow saxifrage, including its seeds.

However, the identification is confused by the fact that the two exceptional lemmata for *sundcorn* are distortions of *lithospermum. Lithospermum officinale* L. is the modern scientific name for common gromwell, which is unrelated to, and does not resemble, a saxifrage. Gromwell does not appear to be credited by modern herbalists with any medicinal properties, but the fact that it is designated *officinale* must indicate that it was formerly included in the pharmacopoeia. In MS 11, Chapter CLXXX of the *Herbarium* begins: 'This plant which is called *litospermon*, and, by another name, *sund'corn'* (*Ðeos wyrt ðe man litospermon, ⁊ oðrum naman sund'corn' nemneð*). The *sund* appears squashed in, and *corn* has been written between the lines in a different hand.[109] None of the other manuscripts has this gloss.[110] However, the *Herbarium* translator him- or herself is not above giving the same English name to more than one plant.[111] The illustration for Chapter CLXXX in MS 11 could well be a genuine attempt to depict common gromwell, which indeed has remarkable seeds.[112] The *Herbarium* translation of Chapter CLXXX reads:

> *Ðeos wyrt … on ðære hehnysse … hafað stanas hwite ⁊ sinewealte swylce meregrotu on pysna micelnysse, ⁊ ða beoð on stanas heardnysse ⁊ eac swylce hy togædere geclifigen, ⁊ hy beoð innan hole ⁊ ðonne þæt sæd þæron innan.*[113]
> This herb … at the top … has white & round stones like pearls, of the size of peas, & these are of the hardness of stones, & also they adhere together, & they are hollow within

[107] The related images in the MS Montecassino 97 (no. xcviii) and in the *editio princeps* (see Hunger 1935: 92–3) are so schematic as to be unidentifiable. See the discussions in Blunt and Raphael (1979: 32–3) and in Blunt and Stearn (1994: 37–8, 56, 280; Figures 9, 13, 54). The illustration (no. lxii, fol. 31v), with the later glosses, *'Saxifrage i.* sundcorn', in MS 17 is unrelated, and Gunther (1925: 112, see also p. 99) comments: 'A very crude figure of a Saxifrage (if it be one)'. However, it could be taken as an attempt to depict common gromwell (*Lithospermum officinale* L.), with white flowers and lanceolate (spearhead-shaped) leaves and straight branching stems. Gunther also notes that the 1528 printed version of the Apuleius adds the following to the virtues of the plant: 'full of stones, a quick-acting amulet' (*calculosis amuletum praesentaneum*) — more probably referring to the stony seeds of the gromwell than any part of a saxifrage. Confusion between the two plants (see the discussion below in this section) may therefore have been rife and long-lasting.

[108] See entries under *sun(d)corn* in Bierbaumer (1975–9: II.112–13; III.222–3), and in the MCOE. For examples, see the Laud Glossary (MS 15; Stracke 1974: 59, no. 1301): *'Saxifraga .i.* suncorn', but also no. 897: *'Litosperimon .i.* suncorn', and the Brussels Glossary (MS 8; Meritt 1945: 58, no. 67.2): *'Lituspermon i.* sundcorn *.i. saxifraga*'.

[109] For the facsimile, see D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: fol. 73). Cockayne (1864–6: I, after p. cv, in 'Additions and Corrections') emended *sundcorn* to *sunnancorn*, 'that is, Milium Solis'. See also De Vriend (1984: 327).

[110] MS B (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 76) leaves a space after *oðrum naman*; MS H (British Library, Harley 585) omits *oðrum naman* and, therefore, the possibility of an alternative identification; and MS O (British Library, Harley 6258 B) omits this plant altogether. See De Vriend (1984: 226–7, 327).

[111] See Chapters XLIII (*bulbiscillittica)* and LXXX (*gladiolum),* both designated *glædene*. See Section 8.7 above.

[112] Cockayne (1864–6: I.314–5, note a, to Chapter CLXXX: *Litospermon*), identifies the figure as *L. officinale*, for which see D'Aronco and Cameron (1998). It shows a plant with a single erect stem and lanceolate leaves, with flowers in the angles. However, it lacks the branching of the common gromwell.

[113] This translates the Latin: *et in earum cacuminibus lapillos candore et rotunditate margaritarum, magnitudine ciceris, duritia vere lapidea, ipsi … adhaerant, cavernulas habent et intus semen*. See De Vriend (1984: 226–7).

& then the seed is there inside.

This description would seem to justify the Greek name *lithospermon* (λιθόσπερμον) 'stone seed'.

As with Chapter XCIX, *Saxifragia*, there is only one remedy allotted in the *Herbarium* to Chapter CLXXX, *Litospermon*, and the two recipes are virtually identical. Just as the saxifrage plant was strong enough to break rocks, and the gromwell produced its own hard white stones, both were prescribed, drunk in wine, to disperse bladder stones. The remedy using the stony seeds of *lithospermum* is found in Dioscorides (Bk III, Chapter 158).[114] It was copied by Pliny, who declared (almost ecstatically) that there was no other plant, the medicinal property of which could be recognised with greater confidence, and he gave it the names 'Juppiter's' or 'Hercules' corn' (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VII.448–51; 27.74.98–9). It would not be surprising then, in view of the similarity of the two remedies, if *sundcorn*, the appropriate name of *lithospermum,* were also sometimes used for saxifrage.

The *Herbarium* gives the provenance of common gromwell as Italy and Crete; a modern field-guide gives its distribution as 'Almost throughout Europe, woodland margins, scrub and hedges on lime' (Press, Tebbs and Turland 1993: 206–7). Is it possible that this plant too, owes its presence in Britain to early cultivation in herb gardens? If so, its name might have been transferred from the foreign gromwell to the native saxifrage which was credited with similar properties. The first element of *sundcorn* is something of a mystery in itself; it could be related to the adjective *gesund* 'sound, healthy', or to the neuter noun *sund*, which means 'swimming' in prose, but 'sea, ocean' in poetry. Perhaps it is to be explained by the comparison of the gromwell seed to a pearl (OE *meregrot*).[115]

9.22 *Wyrmelo*, *Lacnunga* (1.A.13)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: II.136) identifies this as 'wild marjoram' (*Origanum vulgare* L.). Grieve (1976: 520–1) writes: 'Marjoram has a very ancient medical reputation … [It] yields … a volatile oil [whose] properties are stimulant, carminative, diaphoretic and mildly tonic.[116] The *Herbarium*, Chapter CXXIV (*Organe*, *Origanum*) advises only that one should eat it for a cough, but its properties resemble those of other labiates used in conjunction with *lybcorn*.[117]

Pettit (2001: II.54, note to line 180) argues, in detail, that *wyrmelo* is for 'worm-meal', that is, 'powdered worms or other creeping, crawling creatures'. Pollington (2000: 139, 168) is undecided.

9.23 *Heleleafes moran*, *Lacnunga* (1.A.14)

This phrase may indicate 'roots of ?olive' (*Olea europaea* L.). (For *eleleaf*, see Bierbaumer 1975–9: II.37; Pollington 2000: 128). However, the inclusion of *moran* 'roots' may be a

[114] Dioscorides (1934: 384). The figure, from a Byzantine manuscript of AD 512 is, however, a spurge (identified by Gunther as *Lathyrus Aphaca*).

[115] See Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.222–3). One remedy in *Leechbook III* (MCOE reference: Lch II (3) 20.1.1), using *sundcorn* but not *lybcorn*, appears to be adapted from the *Herbarium* (either Chapter XCIX or CLXXX), adding parsley, and boiling in ale instead of wine; and another (MCOE reference: Lch (3) 56.1.1) appears to employ *sundcornes leaf* as an ingredient in a remedy for indigestion.

[116] See also Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: III. no. CXXXI); and Stuart (1979: 231).

[117] The illustrations for *Or(i)gane(-um)* in MS 11, MS Montecassino 97, and in the *editio princeps* (see Hunger 1935:

repetition error from another entry, as neither Grieve (1976: 598–9) nor Stuart (1979: 229–30), nor even Pereira (1874: 660–5), has anything to say about the roots of the olive tree, but all describe the leaves and bark as astringent and antiseptic. According to Bentley and Trimen (1880: III), followed by Grieve (1976: 599): 'A decoction [of olive leaves] … has been used in the Levant in obstinate fevers. Both leaves and bark have valuable febrifugal qualities'. In the *Lacnunga*, it is an ingredient in a purgative.

9.24 *Grundeswelgian*, ?Bald's *Leechbook* II (1.A.18)

Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.71–2) defines this as 'common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris* L.)'. This identification is found in the *Herbarium*, Chapter LXXVII: *Grundeswylige*, *Senecio.*[118] Grieve (1976: 377–9) writes:

> Diaphoretic, antiscorbutic, purgative, diuretic, anthelmintic … A weak infusion of the plant is now sometimes given as a simple and easy purgative, and a strong infusion as an emetic: it causes no irritation or pain, removes bilious trouble and is a great cooler.[119]

10. *Lybcorn*: consideration of the plant associations

The identity of many of the plants named alongside the *lybcorn* in the Old English remedies is, therefore, reasonably certain, if all the evidence is put together. If there is some continuity in the naming, and if they have an appropriate effect for inclusion in the Old English remedies, I am disposed to accept the proffered identifications, in spite of the somewhat circular chain of reasoning.

There remains considerable doubt about the identification of several of the Old English names. If two different plant names are used within one recipe (as happens with *betonice* and *bisceopwyrt*) it must surely indicate that (to the compiler and/or scribe) these denoted two different ingredients, usually two different plants. Even this assumption has its difficulties. For example, it has been suggested, concerning two of the ingredients of 1.A.1 (see Section 9.6 above) that *springwyrt* is the caper spurge plant (*Euphorbia lathyris*) and, as we shall see, that *lybcorn* is the *seed* of the caper spurge. Though this may be possible, is it probable? Almost certainly not, yet if the same names occur in different recipes, which may have come from different sources, they could well denote different plants. We must take into account too, that vernacular names may shift from one locality to another, and from one period to another (see Biggam's introduction to this volume, Section 1), and even from one remedy to another, if they are taken from different sources. Moreover, early medieval botanists are unlikely to have been so precise in their distinction of species as the scientific classifiers of the twentieth or twenty-first centuries. To trace these semantic shifts is unfortunately outside the scope of this enquiry, unless they bear directly on its main topic. It may be, too, that sometimes the answers to the questions of identity are not important to this investigation, if the herbal ingredients in any remedy are sufficiently alike in their properties for them to be confused.

112–13; and D'Aronco and Cameron 1998: fol. 55v), though of no use as field guides, could represent genuine attempts to depict *Origanum vulgare.*

[118] De Vriend (1984: 116–19); and D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: fol. 42v), unfortunately eaten away by a destructive pigment. For comparative illustrations, see Hunger (1935: 70–1) for the MS Montecassino 97, no. lxxvi, and the *editio princeps*; and Gunther (1925: 108; fol. 20v, no. xlii).

[119] See also Fernie (1914: 229–30); and Stuart (1979: 262–3). For a discussion of the Old English plant-name, see Pollington (2000: 126).

It seems that the herbs might have had three different origins: they could have been native wild flowers; they could have been plants native to more southerly regions, deliberately cultivated in English gardens (probably mostly monastic); or they could have been imported as dried specimens from places further afield, even from as far away as India. Belonging to the first category (excluding most of those whose identity is problematic) are, for example, mallow, groundsel, arum, wood sorrel, fumitory, wild celery, 'English roots', possibly *seo clufehte wenwyrt* (whatever they may have been; see Section 8.10), elder and celandine. Except for the last two, these are usually found only once each in association with *lybcorn*. None except mallow is included in the Old English *Herbarium.*

With reference to the non-native plants which could have been cultivated, in Charlemagne's *Capitulare de villis* (Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90) is a statement recommending the growing of certain herbs in gardens on the imperial estates. Several of these are found in the recipes which concern us in this paper. Most we could well imagine to have been garden plants in Anglo-Saxon England too, but originally brought northwards from more Mediterranean climes:

> *Volumus, quod in horto omnes herbas habeant, id est … costum … cucumeres … squillam, gladiolum … git*[120] *… malvas … pastenacas … radices … coriandrum … lacteridas … Et ille hortulanus habeat super domum suam Jovis barbam* (Meyer 1854–7: III.401–10; Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90).
> We wish, that all should have these herbs in a garden: costmary … cucumbers … squill, iris … fennel flower … mallows … parsnips … radishes … coriander … spurges … And that the gardener should have houseleek over his house.

Also among the garden herbs would have been leek and meadow saffron.

Those herbs and herbal products which must have been imported, if the English were to have them at all, are sedge, aloes, mastic and pepper. The last three of these turn up frequently in a 'typical antidotary of 9th century Europe', from a St Gall manuscript (Riddle 1965: 186–7). Moreover, Voigts has pointed out that the illustration to *beolone* or *hennebelle* in MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii is most probably of a dried Mediterranean species (Voigts 1979: 266–8). If a plant is found in the *Herbarium*, it can usually be assumed that it belonged to a Mediterranean flora, since the Latin corpus was established long before an Old English version was thought of. Whether the remedies using Mediterranean plants also had a Mediterranean Latin origin is doubtful because of lack of evidence. So far, I have been unable to find any Latin source for any of the recipes with *lybcorn*; however, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that more specialised research by someone with better knowledge of the early medieval medical corpus may turn something up.

In some instances it seems that a foreign import may have been in process of being displaced by, or was confused with, a local product. For example, the Old English plant-name *glædene* is, in the *Herbarium,* applied to two very different plants: in Chapter XLIII it is squill, and in Chapter LXXX, an iris. It might seem that the name should have belonged first to the iris, since it seems to be related to the Latin name *gladiolus* which refers to the sword-like shape of the iris leaves (from Latin *gladius* 'sword'), yet the earlier glossaries show that *glædene* meant squill before it meant iris. Iris rhizomes have very similar physiological effects to those of the large bulb of squill (imported in dried flakes), and that may be how the confusion first arose. The rhizome of an eastern plant, *Coptis teeta* Wall., used for eye complaints, was believed to be the root of greater celandine, probably because both plants had

[120] See a discussion of *git/giþ* in Section 18 below.

a bright yellowish juice. This may have contributed to the reasoning which caused celandine juice also to be used in eye salves. Plant names, particularly those in the vernacular, and even when they are derived from Latin, are shown to have variant meanings — the story of the names *bisceopwyrt* and *banwyrt*, which were used for many and varied plants, shows that conclusively. Even those in medieval Latin and Greek are not easily equated with modern post-Linnean scientific nomenclature.

11. *Lybcorn*: quantities used in medicinal remedies

Although there is obviously some doubt about some of the identifications proposed, the evidence discussed above (of the herbs used alongside *lybcorn* in recipes for emetics, purgatives and a salve for a swelling) cumulatively indicates that the properties of medicinal plants were, in effect, as well known to the compilers of the Anglo-Saxon medical works as to Grieve in 1931 (the first edition). Or, if not to the compilers, they must have been known to those who composed or translated the texts which the compilers gathered and put in order. It is, therefore, a fair assumption that the Anglo-Saxon physicians were using *lybcorn* appropriately, too.

However, there is one particular difficulty in the way of this assumption, and that is the quantities of *lybcorn* specified. A few of the recipes are unspecific about quantities of all ingredients, for example: from Bald's *Leechbook* I, the salve for swollen eyelids (1.A.1); from Book II, the emetic (1.A.6); and, from *Leechbook III*, the purgatives (1.A.9 and 1.A.11) with *lybcornes leaf*. Sometimes the number of *lybcorn* only are specified, and the quantity of the rest of the ingredients left vague; for example: in the emetics from Bald's *Leechbook* I (1.A.2) there are fifty *lybcorn*; from Book II (1.A.5) there are a hundred *lybcorn*; 1.A.7 has fifteen *lybcorn*;[121] 1.A.18 has thirty-six *lybcorn*; and, from the *Lacnunga*, 1.A.15 has eighty *lybcorn*.

Sometimes the quantity of at least some of the other herbs is specified; for example, in the emetics: in Bald's *Leechbook* II, 1.A.3 has six aloe seeds, and thirty *lybcorn*, while 1.A.8 has three pieces of houseleek, an equal amount of peeled elder bark, and twenty-five *lybcorn*; *Lacnunga*, 1.A.14 has medium-sized iris roots a cubit long and as broad as your thumb, likewise two of houseleek (other ingredients unspecified), and forty *lybcorn*. The same is true in the purgative emetics: in *Leechbook III*, 1.A.10 has forty *lybcorn* well husked (and the lower part of celandine and mallow roots, quantities unspecified), two cloves of the bulbous *wenwyrt*, a little of the lower part of cucumber, and a moderate amount of houseleek roots. As for the purgatives: in *Leechbook III*, 1.A.12 involves a big handful of sedge and iris, and twenty *lybcorn*; in the *Lacnunga*, 1.A.13 has eighty-five *lybcorn*, nine peppercorns, and fifteen *sundcorn*; also in the *Lacnunga*, 1.A.16 has forty *lybcorn* and seventeen optional peppercorns. In another recipe, in MS 18, 1.A.17 combines thirty *lybcorn* with parts of an egg, a good deal of white salt, and fine meal, for intestinal problems. Finally, in 1.A.4, fifty *lybcorn* are to be added to a complex 'weak drink' (presumably an emetic) to strengthen it. The inconsistencies are noticeable: there is no one medical text which is better or worse than the others at specifying quantities of ingredients.

What is remarkable in these recipes are the large numbers of *lybcorn* involved. Where there are specifications for other herbs, the quantities are usually small, for example, the

[121] This was probably intended for Bald's *Leechbook* II, Chapter 56, but is now only extant in MS 18. See Meaney (1984: 246, 248).

seventeen optional peppercorns, the three pieces of houseleek, the big handfuls of sedge and iris, and the six aloe seeds. But the *lybcorn* numbers vary from fifteeen to one hundred, the average being about forty-five. The numbers used in the purgatives appear to be somewhat fewer than those in the emetics, which need to be stronger in their effect, and faster working. The large numbers specified might lead us to suppose, first, that the *lybcorn* were readily available, and second, that they were relatively gentle in their action. Moreover, they do not appear to have been necessary ingredients of the emetics and purgatives: the other herbs named would surely have been effective enough by themselves, to judge from the modern herbals quoted. It is worth remembering, indeed, that not all ingredients of emetic or purgative potions need in themselves to have been nauseous or cathartic; some might be included in order to make the potion more palatable or digestible, or to moderate side-effects.

It is also notable that *lybcorn* is among a very select group of herbal ingredients which is not called by the name of the plant itself, but by its seed — others are *pipercorn*, *sundcorn* and *gyþcorn*. The first two of these have been discussed above (in Sections 8.4 and 9.21 respectively), and *gyþcorn* will be discussed in Sections 13 to 17. Peppercorns were the most popular of the imported ingredients, brought via a difficult overland route, and yet had no very definite medical value, as Pliny bemoaned (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: IV.20–23; 12.14.29). For pepper, at least, the seeds may be specified because that is all the writers knew of the plant. Could it be that the same applied to *lybcorn*? Could this seed, too, have been imported from afar, without the rest of the plant?[122]

12. *Lybcorn* in glossary translations

As already mentioned, *lybcorn* (with variant forms: *lib(b)corn*, *lypbcorn*), literally 'medicinal or magic seed' is found in the manuscripts (listed in Appendix 3) of many Anglo-Saxon glossaries. Though lost from the Épinal Glossary, it is found with the same (sometimes distorted) lemma *cartamo* in the ninth-century (c. 820) Erfurt Glossary (MS 1); twice in the slightly later (825-50) Corpus Glossary 2 (MS 2); once each in the Cleopatra glossaries 1 and 2 in a tenth-century manuscript (MS 3); in the tenth- to eleventh-century Otho Glossary (MS 6); in the early twelfth-century Durham Glossary (MS 14); in the twelfth-century Laud Glossary (MS 15); and in the twelfth- to thirteenth-century Bodley glosses (MS 16).

12.1 The early lemma *cartamo* with *lybcorn*

The lemma *cartamo* is glossed by *lybcorn* already in manuscripts which are among the very earliest (apart from charters) to have survived from the Anglo-Saxon period, and the persistence of the combination of lemma and Old English gloss shows the stability of the glossary tradition well past the Norman Conquest. Lindsay suggested that this gloss (*cartamo*) was part of a batch of the Hermeneuta type, taken from Graeco-Latin schoolbooks going back to about AD 200.[123] The earliest Anglo-Saxon glossaries may derive from documents brought to England by Theodore and Hadrian, who began the history of scholarship in England at their

[122] There is, nevertheless, a problem in the two remedies from *Leechbook III* (MS 4; 1.A.9 and 1.A.11) which specify the use of *lybcornes leaf*.

[123] Lindsay (1921b: 7–8). See also Lübke (1890) which discusses the relationships between glosses; and Pheifer (1974: xliv). Lindsay thought these glossaries might have come to England via Ireland, but recent research by Lapidge and others has associated them firmly with Theodore and Hadrian at Canterbury (see note 125 below). The surviving copies of the Hermeneuta are edited in Goetz (1888-1923: III).

school in Canterbury. A version of the Hermeneumata pseudo-Dositheana glossary appears to have been available there.[124] The botanical glosses were not present in the Leiden Glossary, and therefore appear to have been added to the original core, but before about 700 AD when the Épinal manuscript was written. The glosses in this tradition run thus:

1.B.1 (MS 1)	*cartamo*	lypbcorn
1.B.2 (MS 2)	*Cartamo*	lybcorn
1.B.3 (MS 2)	*Chartamo*	lybcorn
1.B.4 (MS 3)	*Cartomo*	lybcorn
1.B.6 (MS 3)	*Cartamo*	lybcorn
1.B.8 (MS 6)	*cartamus*	lybcorn
1.B.14 (MS 14)	*Chartamo*	lybbcorn
1.B.17 (MS 15)	*Cartamo*[125]	lybcorn
1.B.18 (MS 16)	*cirtamo*	libcorn

Unfortunately, the *lybcorn* lemma is not easy to identify. André (1956: 74) cites a Medico-botanica Hermeneuta glossary, referring *cartamo* to *cartamis*.[126] Other scholars, for example, Wülcker[127] and Lindheim[128] (without referring to the Hermeneuta entry) had earlier identified *cartamo* with safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius* L.), and Bierbaumer[129] and the DMLBS (under *cartamus*) are more or less in agreement. Safflower is not found in the nineteenth-century herbals I have consulted, but Grieve (1976: 698) writes: 'The Safflower plant … is extensively cultivated in … Asia, also in Egypt and Southern Europe; but its native country is unknown'. Its flowers are 'laxative and diaphoretic. In domestic practice these flowers are used in children's and infants' complaints — measles, fevers and eruptive skin complaints'. There is, however, one major problem in equating *lybcorn* with safflower: its *seeds* are not specified in medicinal remedies.

One tempting possibility is that safflower was confused with the unrelated meadow saffron or autumn crocus (*Colchicum autumnale* L.) The flowers of both are used in the same way (particularly in dyeing) and safflower was sometimes known as 'Fake-' or 'Bastard Saffron'. Meadow saffron seeds were used medicinally (as was its corm), and were 'anti-rheumatic,

[124] Dionisotti (1982: 140). See also Lapidge (1986: 55; listed as Chapter xlvii of the Leiden Glossary); Pheifer (1987); Bischoff and Lapidge (1994: 175); and Lapidge (1996: 154–5).

[125] The MCOE has this as *lybceorn*. However, the manuscript reading (fol. 68r) is clearly *lybcorn*, as in Stracke (1974: 29, no. 276) and Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.165).

[126] The ninth-century Codex Cassinensis 69 (Goetz 1888–1923: III.537, no. 70): *cartamis id est agrione*, 'carthamis, that is, the wild one', but he also has (III.537, no. 54): *cardamomu. id est nasturtio*.

[127] Wright (1884: I. column 201) and note 4 by Wülcker (commenting on the Harley Glossary's *Catarticum potus*): 'lybcorn means: wild saffron, *carthamus*'.

[128] Lindheim (1941: 46), commenting on MCOE reference DurGl 141, states 'By *chartamo* it appears that either safflower … or saffron is meant (*Mit* chartamo *scheint der 'Safflor'* (Carthamus tinctorius L) *oder 'Safran' gemeint zu sein*). He refers to Fischer-Benzon (1894: 84), but this publication is not available to me, so will in future be ignored.

[129] Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.165): 'The lemmata CARTAMO, CARTAMUS, CARTOMO are hardly likely to be identical with Greek κάρδαμον 'nasturtium', but with CARTAMUS … safflower. The glossing cannot have anything to do with a purging effect of the plant … but can simply be affected by confusion with CATHARTICUS' (*Die Lemmata CARTAMO, CARTAMUS, CARTOMO sind wohl kaum mit gr. κάρδαμον 'nasturtium'… identisch, sondern mit CARTAMUS, Carthamus tinctorius L., Saflor* [Marzell 1943–79: I.855; Bierbaumer's note 3: cf. A. zu Dur 141]. *Die Glossierung muß nichts mit einer purgierenden Wirkung der Pflanze (*cf. [Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.99]*) zu tun haben, sondern kann einfach auf Verwechslung mit CATHARTICUS o.ä. beruhen*). In the *Sinonoma Bartholomei* (Mirfeld 1882: 13, 26) are the glosses: Cartamum, *i.semen croci ortensis*, '*Cartamum*, that is, the seed of the garden *crocus*'; and Kartamus *est semen croci orientalis*, '*Kartamus* is the seed of the eastern *crocus*'.

cathartic and emetic' (Grieve 1976: 700). However, as already discussed (in Section 8.9), meadow saffron was known in Old English as *seo greate wyrt* 'the big herb' and is twice found in the same recipes in Bald's *Leechbook* II (Chapter 52) as *lybcorn*.[130]

Pheifer (1974: 78, note 279) also cites a Hermeneuta gloss, but refers *cartamo* to Goetz (1888–1923: III.581, number 34), from the second glossary in the Vatican Codex Queen Christina 1260, of the tenth century: '*cardamomus* or *cardamus*, that is *nasturcius* or garden *crissonus*' (*cardamomus uel cardamus id est nasturcius siue crissonus (h)ortensis*). Pheifer added: '*cartamo* = Gr. κάρδαμον 'nasturtium', the seed of which, Gr. καρδάμωμον, was used as a cathartic (OE *lybcorn*)'. In this comment, he seems to have been influenced by an entry in the first glossary in the same manuscript: '*cardamomum* the seed of *nasturcius*' (*cardamomum semen nasturcii*; Goetz 1888–1923: III.556, number 60).[131] This was all very confusing to nineteenth-century scholars. Sweet (1885: 49, 52) adds *cardamum* in brackets to his comments on *lypbcorn* in the Erfurt Glossary (no. 279; 1.B.1), and on both its occurrences in Corpus Glossary 2 (nos 435 and 460; 1.B.2 and 1.B.3). Lindsay (1921a: 35, footnote) declared that *cartamo* is 'Hardly for Cardamum "nasturtium" '.

However, in the Greek *Herbal* of Dioscorides (which may have been a source for the early botanical glosses, see Rusche 2003: 188–9; Hall's first article in this volume: Section 3) is an entry in Book II, under 'Sharp Herbs', headed 'Kardamon'. In John Goodyer's English of 1655 it begins:

> Cresses (Somme call it Cynocardamon, somme Iberis, others Cardamina or Cardamantica … the Latins Nasturtium) … The seed of any sort of it is warming, sharpe, bad for the stomach, troubling the belly, & expelling wormes, lessening the spleen … it is like of nature to mustard seed, & rocket seed (Dioscorides 1934: 194).

Gunther (in Dioscorides 1934) suggested that this is *Lepidium sativum* 'Garden Cress' (*Nasturcium ortolanum* in later English sources) whose seed, when boiled in water, drives out the poison from a bite or staunches the bloody flux (Henslow 1899: 19, 41, 82–3, 115–16, 227). According to Culpeper, the seed was 'little inferior to mustard seed' (Culpeper 1826: 39). There is here, then, a clear reference to the medicinal use of a seed with a name which could be related to *cartamo*, and which has a drastic effect on the stomach. It might, then, be our *lybcorn*.

There is, however, a possible alternative. André (1956: 71–2) claimed that there had inevitably been confusion between *cardamum* (cress) and *cardamomum* once cardamom seeds were no longer imported from the East.[132] Is it possible, then, that *lybcorn* were cardamom

[130] 1.A.3 and 1.A.4, see Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. no. 288); also Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: II. no. CI). According to Grieve (1976: 698–700), large doses of meadow saffron seeds 'cause violent purging … and [act] as an irritant poison'.

[131] Again in the same MS, Vatican, Queen Christina 1260 (that is, the Codex Vaticanus Reginae Christinae 1260), in the third glossary, there is (Goetz 1888–1923: III.588, no. 18): *cardamomus .i. nasturcium*; and in Codex Vaticanus 4417 (s. x/xi), there is (Goetz 1888–1923: III.620, no. 40) a mangled copy of the gloss on p. 556, note 60: *cardamomum id est semen mastrucii* (*cardamomum*, that is the seed of '*mastrucius*'). The garden nasturtium does not appear to be in question here, though its seeds 'serve as a substitute for capers in pickles' (Grieve 1976: 845). *Nasturtium officinale* W. T. Aiton, is watercress, which is useful as an antiscorbutic, but whose seeds do not appear to have been used medicinally.

[132] André (1956: 71–2), under *cardamomum*: 'borrowed from the Greek *kardamōmon*, constructed through haplology [the omission of one sound or syllable which should be repeated] of *kardamon* … + *amōmon*' (*empr. au gr. καρδάμωμον, composé avec haplologie de κάρδαμον (v.* cardamum) + *ἀμωμον*; see Dioscorides, Bk I, Chapter 6). André has (here translated from the French): 1. Cardamom, the fruit of *Elettaria cardamomum* (L.) Maton [with references]. 2. In glosses, it is equivalent to *nasturtium* or *nasturtii semen* ['nasturtium seed',

seeds? Any attempt to identify *lybcorn* with cardamom has its own peculiar difficulty, in that no-one is quite sure what the cardamom of Classical times was. Theophrastus includes *kardamōmon* (κάρδάμωμον) in his list of aromatic plants (Theophrastus 1916–26: II.248–9; 9.7.3). Dioscorides begins his account of it in Book I ('Aromatics'), Chapter 5, in Goodyer's translation: 'The best Cardamomum is that which is brought out of Comagene, & Armenia, & Bosphorus; it grows too in India, & Arabia'. Drunk with water, it was good for sciatica, 'paralysis' and ruptures, and, in other concoctions, for many other medical purposes, mostly eliminative. However, in Chapter 14, Dioscorides describes another aromatic called *Amomon,* a 'little shrub', the best examples of which were brought out of Armenia. It appears to have been used much as cardamom was (Dioscorides 1934: 8–9).

Pliny has added a great deal to Dioscorides' account of *amomum* and *cardamomum*, and has perhaps become confused (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: IV.34–7; 12.28–9.48–50). His description of 'the clustered *amomum*' (*amomi uva*) appears to be concerned with its leaves and roots rather than its seeds, though these may have formed part of the 'cluster like a bunch of grapes' which was stuck together with gum. It cost sixty denarii a pound. *Cardamomum*, however, had an oblong seed (*semine oblongo*), but the best sort cost only three denarii a pound. For Pliny, cardamom was used in aromatic oils rather than in medicine (1942–83: IV.102–3; 13.2.8 and IV.308–9; 15.7.30). Discussion of Pliny's account has been going on now for at least the last two hundred years. William Vincent (1807: II.698–9) expends two pages on discussing whether Amomum and Cardamomum were the same, the latter having 'the addition of kar [*car-*] from its resembling an heart, which it does'.[133] Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 644, 646, 648) give the best brief history of cardamoms which I have yet found:

> Cardamoms … may have been used in India from a remote period. It is not unlikely that in common with ginger and pepper they reached Europe in classical times, although it is not possible from the descriptions that have come down to determine exactly what was the Καρδάμομον of Theophrastus and Dioscorides or the Ἄμωμον of the last-named writer. The *Amomum, Amomis* and *Cardamomum* of Pliny are also doubtful, the description he gives of the last being unintelligible as applied to anything now known by that name. In the list of Indian spices liable to duty at Alexandria, *circa* AD 176–180 … *Amomum* as well as *Cardamomum* is mentioned. St Jerome names *Amomum* together with musk, as perfumes in use among the voluptuous ecclesiastics of the 4th century. Cardamoms are named by Edrisi as a production of Ceylon, and also as an article of trade from China to Aden;[134] and in the same century they are mentioned together with cinnamon and cloves as an import in Palestine by way of Acre …
>
> The fruit of the Malabar cardamom as found in commerce is an ovoid or oblong, three-sided, three-valved capsule, containing numerous seeds arranged in three cells … each of which encloses 5 to 7 dark brown, aromatic seeds, arranged in two rows …

Goetz 1888–1923: III.556, no. 60; MS Vatican, Queen Christina 1260: *cardamomum semen nasturcii*]; through confusion with the synonym *cardamum*, inevitable when cardamom no longer arrived from the East. Compare Old Italian *cardamomo* 'garden cress' (French: *cresson Alénois*). There may be an example of this confusion in the Laud Glossary, no. 390: *Cardamomum .i. nasturcium*; and no. 866: *Kardamum .i. cicer erraticum uel nasturcium* (*Cicer arietinum* L. is the chick pea — here perhaps a red herring).

[133] Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. no. 267, footnote) remark, cagily, '*Cardamomum,* καρδάμωμον, the name of some Indian spice in classical times'. In a fourteenth-century manuscript, edited by Hunt (1986–7: IV, no. 267), a glossator is even more noncommittal: 'Cardomomum is the fruit — or rather the seed — of a tree' (*Cardamomum: fructus est arboris vel pocius semen*).

[134] Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 644, note 3; bibliographical note to Edrisi (or Idrisi), p. 756), citing Jaubert (Idrisi 1836–40: I.73 and 51). Flückiger and Hanbury comment 'It is questionable whether *Elettaria* is intended at p.

> The fruits of several other plants of the order *Zingiberaceæ* have at various times been employed in pharmacy under the common name of *Cardamom* [from different parts of the Indian subcontinent, south-east Asia and east Africa].

Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: II. no. CVI) described the 'Lesser or Malabar Cardamomum', giving it the scientific name *Alpinia vel Matonia Cardamomum*, and having

> great pleasure in presenting to the public a correct representation of the plant which yields Cardamom seeds … A native of the mountainous parts of Malabar … The capsule is 3-celled, with three coriaceous [like leather] valves; when fresh it is fleshy, smooth, elliptic-oblong, or somewhat ovate, but becoming bluntly triangular, coriaceous and pale brown when dried. The seeds are numerous, roundish, somewhat angular, rough, each enveloped in a fine membranous evanescent tunic.

However, they go on to state that 'What the cardamom of the ancients was, it is now scarcely possible to determine', and mention, somewhat cryptically, 'the erroneous description and discordant references on the subject of cardamom in the works of Linneus; the latter illustrious author having confounded the Javanese cardamom, Amomum *compactum* of Solander, with that of Malabar'. If even Linnaeus could get it wrong, there is little hope that any of the rest of us can sort it out.

The name *cardamom* is now usually applied to *Elettaria cardamom*, which may be the same as Stephenson and Churchill's Malabar cardamom.[135] Even if it is doubtful that Pliny's cardamom was identical with the modern cardamom, Grieve's description, which is indebted to Bentley and Trimen**,** may give some idea of the general character of this spice, which seems to belong to the ginger family (Zingiberaceæ):

> The fruits are from 2/5 to 4/5 of an inch long, ovoid or oblong, bluntly triangular in section … They are three-celled, and contain in each cell two rows of small seeds … These should be kept in their pericarps and only separated when required for use … The seeds have a powerful aromatic odour, and an agreeable, pungent, aromatic taste, but the pericarps are odourless and tasteless … The Cardamom is a native of Southern India, and grows abundantly in forests 2,500 to 5,000 feet above sea level … The methods of cultivating and preparing vary in different districts … One hundred parts of the fruit yield on an average 74 parts of seeds and 26 of pericarp … [The use of the seeds] was known to the ancients. [They] contain volatile oil, fixed oil, salt of potassium, a colouring principle, starch, nitrogenous mucilage, ligneous fibre, an acrid resin, and ash.
>
> *Medicinal Action and Uses.* Carminative, stimulant, aromatic, but rarely used alone; chiefly used as an adjuvant or corrective. The seeds are helpful in indigestion and flatulence … they are said to be good for colic and disorders of the head.[136]

Stephenson and Churchill state more precisely:

> Cardamom seeds have been long employed in medicine as a valuable cordial, carminative, and stomachic. They afford a grateful warm aromatic, less heating and stimulant than many of the other species, and are, perhaps, on this account better adapted for general use. They enter into several of the officinal preparations and are frequently combined with bitters in dyspeptic cases, or with purgatives, to obviate flatulence and griping.

Pereira (1874: 456–8) wrote:

51'. For Idrisi, see above, note 53.

[135] Though their illustration of 1835 does not agree in all details with Bentley and Trimen (1880: IV. no. 267).

[136] Grieve (1976: 159–60) also wrote 'Round or Siam Cardamums are probably those referred to by Dioscorides, and called *Amomi uva* by Pliny [see above]. They are the fruits of *A. cardamomum* and *A. globosum*, growing in Java, Siam and China etc., and are nearly the size of a cherry'.

> The effects of cardamoms are … devoid of all acridity … Cardamoms are employed partly on account of their flavour, and partly for their cordial and stimulant properties. They are rarely administered alone, but generally either as adjuvants or correctives of other medicines, especially of stimulants, tonics, and purgatives.

The *New Encyclopædia Britannica* (*Micropaedia* II. under *Cardamom*) adds the details that each capsule contains '15 to 20 … hard angular seeds'. The first-century Roman encyclopaedist Celsus includes cardamom in a frequently repeated list of imported diuretics, some others of which were still known to the Anglo-Saxons and later medieval people, such as iris, saffron and costmary (Celsus 1960–61: 316–7; 3.21.7).

It is difficult, however, to know what happened to the cardamom trade after the Roman period. Hodgett (1972: 46–7) summarizes the evidence for long-distance trade in general:

> Trade over the years from the beginning of the fourth century to the end of the ninth fluctuated. In the Mediterranean basin it declined in the fourth and early fifth centuries, revived in the sixth and early seventh, was reduced again at the end of the seventh and in the early eighth centuries and probably continued at a low level throughout the ninth century … Any idea of a more severe trade depression in Carolingian than in Merovingian times is not now accepted. But that overall trade exchanges between western Europe and eastern Europe and places further east declined over the whole period is undoubtedly a fact.

It seems quite possible that, whereas the popularity of pepper continued to make it profitable to transport across vast distances, cardamom may have dropped out of the market during one of the depressions, and perhaps been replaced with a slightly different substance when trade revived.

I submit, therefore, that *lybcorn* in the early glossaries (and in the glosses copied from them), and in most of the Old English medical remedies where their use is specified, very probably meant cardamom seeds (probably species of either *Cardamomum* or *Amomum* but not capable of being identified more precisely) imported like peppercorns from the east, and used not to make the emetics and purgatives stronger, but to help in their digestion and to improve their flavour. From some of the details in the recipes, we may deduce that the seeds were imported whole in their pericarps, and husked when needed, in order to preserve their aroma. The large quantities specified, which seemed to us so dangerous, are understandable if each pericarp held fifteen to twenty seeds. Yet if *lybcorn* originally meant 'cardamom seed', the glossaries seem to show that, by the tenth century, this was forgotten, and the glossators may have assumed that, since *lybcorn* were almost exclusively found in recipes for emetics or purgatives, they must themselves have had such properties.

12.2 The later lemmata with *lybcorn*

Already in the tenth-century Cleopatra Glossary 1, *lybcorn* is teamed with a new lemma:

1.B.5 (MS 3)	*Lattyride*	lybcorn

The Harley Glossary (MS 5) of about AD 1000, and the early eleventh-century Brussels Glossary (MS 8) never equate *lybcorn* with *cartamo* and therefore have not been mentioned before. Harley has another new lemma; while Brussels repeats both this and Cleopatra's gloss, and adds yet one more:

1.B.7 (MS 5)	*Catarticum potus*	lybcorn
1.B.9 (MS 8)	*catharticum*	libbcorn
1.B.10 (MS 8)	*lattyride*	libcorn
1.B.11 (MS 8)	*Tytymalosca*	libcorn

The twelfth-century Durham Glossary includes all the earlier pairings (including *cartamo* in 1.B.14, as already discussed), and adds other complicating factors:

1.B.12 (MS 14)	*Catharticum*	lybbcorn
1.B.13 (MS 14)	*citocatia*	libbcorn
1.B.15 (MS 14)	*lactirias uel lactirida*	gythcorn[137] *uel* libcorn
1.B.16 (MS 14)	*Titumalosca calatides, id est lacteridas*	libcorn

These lemmata are by no means as easy to identify as we would like, and the published comments are exceedingly complicated and confusing. It is necessary to summarize and simplify to some degree. To begin with the simplest and most general lemma, *catharticum* poses no problems in translation: 'a cathartic, a purgative'.[138] It is possible that this arose because of confusion of *catharticum* with *cartamo*, as Wülcker implied in his note to the Brussels gloss: 'Read *carthamus*'. *Citocatia* may also have had a general meaning. It is not firmly identified, but there is a reference in Isidore's *Etymologies:* 'called *citocatia* because it purges the stomach quickly' (*Citocatia vocata quod ventrem cito depurgat*; Isidore of Seville 1911: II. (no pagination); 17.9.65). Perhaps, like *catharticum,* it could be used for any purgative herb.[139]

The *lattyride* of the Brussels Glossary (1.B.10) is presumably for the accusative case of the Greek *lathyris*, and the reference appears to be to a plant with a lactic (milky) juice.[140] The connection with milkiness is maintained in the Durham Glossary (1.B.15–16) in *lactirias* and the related forms, which appear to be versions of the Latin equivalent to *lathyris*, somewhat influenced by Latin *lac* 'milk'.[141] Moreover, the *calatides* of 1.B.16 is usually taken to be a distortion of *galactites* 'milky'.[142] As for *tyty-/tytumalosca*, Lindheim (1941: 18, 73, no. 325) takes it to be a distortion of *tithymallus*, and there can be no doubt that he is right. He cites as a parallel the heading of *Herbarium* Chapter CX: '*Herba tytymallus calatites*, þæt ys lacterida', 'The herb *tytymallus calatites*, that is *lacterida*' (De Vriend 1984: 19).[143]

[137] I leave for discussion in Section 13 the equation of *lybcorn* with *gythcorn*. Note that 1.B.15 is the same as 2.B.4.

[138] Lindheim (1941: 40, note to no. 104) takes this gloss to refer to *Euphorbia lathyris* L. The DMLBS defines *catharticus* simply as 'cathartic, purgative'.

[139] André (1956), under *citocacia*, suggests various purgative plants. It is sometimes surmised that *citocatia* is a mistake for *colocasia* (see Cockayne 1864–6: III.301, note κολοκάσια). Lindheim (1941: 43, note to MCOE reference DurGl 122) does not agree, but refers to Cockayne (1864–6: II.397) where he suggests that *lybcorn* was used for a purgative such as *Cucumis colocinthis* L. (colocynth, bitter cucumber) or *Euphorbia lathyris* L. (caper spurge). Therefore, he seems to have taken *citocatia* as a distortion of Greek κολόκυνθα 'gourd, cucumber'. See also the DMLBS, under *citocatia*.

[140] André (1956: 181, translated from French), under *lathyris*: transliteration of Greek λαθυρίς (Dioscorides, Bk 4, Chapter 166). 1. Spurge (French *épurge*) (*Euphorbia lathyris* L.) (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VII.446–7; 27.71.95). 2. A name given by analogy to another purgative plant (Goetz 1888–1923: III.540, no. 34): *latridos* (gen), *id est cucumeris amari*, 'that is, of the bitter cucumber'. See also the DMLBS, under *lathyris*.

[141] André (1956, translated from the French), under *lacterida*, 'a latinised form created from the accusative case of Greek λαθυρίς with the popular influence of *lac*'. *Lacteridas* appears in the list of plants which Charlemagne wished to be grown in gardens on the imperial estates; see Boretius and Krause (1883–97: I.90), unfortunately without any kind of identification.

[142] André (1956: 145): under *galatita*, he cites the Hermeneumata Glossary (Goetz 1888–1923: III.577, no. 41; MS Vatican, Queen Christina 1260, s.x): *titimalos .i. galatita*; under *galatiti(s)*, f. (Goetz 1888–1923: III.564, no. 54; same manuscript): *galatiti i. titimalus*; also Greek γαλακτίς (*galaktis*) 'Euphorbia'.

[143] This is confirmed by the label to the illustration on fol. 52r of the MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii, which reads *lacterida titimallos calatites*, and the beginning of Chapter CX (De Vriend 1984: 152–3): 'This herb which is called *titymallos calatites* & by another name *lacterida*' (*Đeos wyrt þe man titymallos calatites ⁊ oþrum naman lacteridan nemneþ*).

D'Aronco (1995) has studied the effect of the *Herbarium* translation on the Anglo-Saxon glossaries.[144] Whereas in the three oldest glossaries (Épinal, Erfurt and Corpus) there were between thirty-one and thirty-six plant-names taken from pseudo-Apuleius and pseudo-Dioscorides, there were sixty to seventy in the mid tenth-century Cleopatra and Antwerp glossaries, eighty-four in the early eleventh-century Brussels manuscript glossaries, and about 120 in the twelfth-century Durham and Laud glossaries. D'Aronco argues that these last three glossaries 'depend to a very great degree on the translation of the Herbal', and concurs with Cockayne (1864–6: I.lxxxvii) that 'where they agree with it, [they] are not to be accounted as independent confirmations'. The forms in the related glosses 1.B.11 (Brussels, MS 8) and 1.B.16 (Durham, MS 14) appear to be distorted borrowings from Chapter CX of the *Herbarium*, though the *Herbarium* makes no mention of *lybcorn*. Likewise, 1.B.15 (Durham) appears to be indebted to the *Herbarium*, Chapter CXIII, discussed below.

Most editors of the Old English *Herbarium* text have taken as their basis the illustrated MS 11. However, the earliest extant manuscript of the complex is MS 7 (probably dating from about the year AD 1000) which itself was copied from 'an exemplar in which the leaves were disordered at two points' (D'Aronco). Scholars, including De Vriend (1984: xlii–xliii), believed that the translation found in these manuscripts[145] could have been made as early as the eighth century. However, D'Aronco has argued convincingly that the careful compilers of Bald's *Leechbook*, working no later than the mid tenth century, would have used the *Herbarium* translation if it had been available to them. Instead, wherever they reproduce the substance of a chapter of the *Herbarium*, it is always in an entirely different translation (compare, for example, remedies 2.A.5 and 2.A.11). However, the compiler of the *Lacnunga* (which is only found on folios 130–93 in MS 7, following the *Herbarium* translation on folios 1–129) borrows from it directly.

Scholars have usually assumed that the milky plant (*lacterida)* of the glossaries and the *Herbarium* was *Euphorbia lathyris*, the caper spurge (see Bierbaumer 1975–9: II.74; III.154), and have looked to the illustrations in MS 11 for confirmation. The one for the *Herbarium*, Chapter CX, is in the direct tradition.[146] It could be distantly related to the representation labelled 'titimallos' in the seventh-century Codex Neapolitanus (Pavord 2005: plate 23), and bears a clear relationship to that in the ninth- or tenth-century Montecassino Latin manuscript,[147] and that in the 1481 *editio princeps* of the *Herbarium Pseudo-Apuleius*.[148] To our eyes, the flowering heads might resemble those of an umbellifer rather than a spurge.[149] The opposed leaves in all illustrations are tiny, and unlike those of *Euphorbia lathyris*.[150]

[144] Professor D'Aronco was kind enough to give me an English translation of her important paper, the English title of which is 'The Old English Herbal: a proposed dating for the translation', from which I quote below. See also D'Aronco (2003: 145–6).

[145] Also in MS 12 (Hatton 76) and (alphabetized) in MS London, British Library, Harley 6258 B (probably of the later twelfth century). See De Vriend (1984: xi–xli).

[146] There is a facsimile in D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: folios 52r and 53r).

[147] MS Montecassino, Archivio della Badia, V.97, no. CVIIII.

[148] Both are reproduced in facsimile in Hunger (1935: 102–3).

[149] In the early twelfth-century MS 17, *Herbarium*, no. XCIX, fol. 50v (facsimile in Gunther 1925), the plant is perhaps even more stylised, but the flower heads are less even and umbellifer-like. Gunther (1925: 119) remarks that the illustration looks 'fairly like a Spurge. It shows a plant with opposite leaves, possibly *E. Helioscopia*'. Its English gloss is *Pintelvurt*.

[150] Lindheim (1941: 18, 73, note 325) however, identified *tithymallus* as *Euphorbia myrsinites* L. (myrtle spurge, creeping spurge), whose medicinal qualities I have been unable to discover.

As already indicated, another plant in the Old English *Herbarium* relevant to this enquiry is in Chapter CXIII. The illustrations for *Herbarium* Chapter CXIII (*Lactyrida*) vary from one manuscript to another rather more than those for Chapter CX (*Titymallos*), but MS 11, the Montecassino manuscript (number CXII) and the *editio princeps* illustration (Hunger 1935: 104–5) all have a straight stem with large, opposed, lanceolate leaves, with two symmetrically curved branches and the stem forming a trident at the top, with smaller opposed leaves. The large bottom leaves do bear some similarity to those of caper spurge, but the rest is unlike it. The labels against the illustration in the Vitellius C.iii manuscript (MS 11) read 'Gyðcorn [*giðcorn*] lactirida', the form of the name in the text and in the heading is *giðcorn*.[151] De Vriend (1984: 314) suggests that this is spurge laurel (*Daphne laureola* L.), but Lindheim (1941: 18, 73), distinguishing between *tithymallus* and *lactirida*, identified the latter as *Euphorbia lathyris* 'caper spurge'.[152] It appears then, that the Brussels glosses (MS 8), 1.B.10 and 1.B.11, and the Durham glosses (MS 14), 1.B.15 and 1.B.16, were influenced by the *Herbarium*, Chapters CX and CXIII rather than *vice versa*. This conclusion concords not only with the fact that the earliest manuscript of the *Herbarium* translation (MS 7) antedates those of the two glossaries, but also with the fact that the Durham Glossary alone has the equation *lactirida* = *gythcorn* = *lybcorn* (which will be discussed later).

The illustration in the manuscript from Bury St Edmunds (MS 17; Gunther 1925: fol. 52r, no. CII) retains the straight stem, but the leaves sprouting from it are much longer and thinner than those in the other sources and, instead of the two symmetrical, inwardly curved branches at the top, there are four drooping stems, all of which, along with the apex of the main stem, are tipped with almost diamond-shaped objects — leaves? Flowers? Seeds? Gunther (1925: 120) remarks tersely 'Figure hopeless'. The big surprise comes, however, in the English labels. One, 'lebcor' (?for *lebcorn*), is hardly visible in the facsimile; the other 'lebecorn', is clear enough. Instead of MS 11's *giðcorn*, therefore, we have the old-fashioned *lybcorn* in a Middle English guise. Gunther (1925: xv) remarks that the Bury monks must have made use of their herbal, because 'most of the plants therein described have had English plant-names added in handwritings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries'; he does not commit himself to a dating of the glosses on folio 52r. Did the later medieval scribe copy these from another *Herbarium* manuscript? None of the four still extant has this gloss, in any form. Did he know of a glossary equation of *lybcorn* or *giðcorn*, and replace the one with the other, updating its form? Or had the plant-name *lybcorn* somehow survived in the local dialect so late in the Middle Ages?

It is not surprising, then, as a result of these varied lemmata, that *lybcorn* has most frequently been identified with caper spurge (*Euphorbia lathyris*) (Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.99; II.78; III.165). Grieve (1976: 765) has, under 'Spurges':

> CAPER SPURGE, *E[uphorbia] lathyris*: Has a milky juice of an acrid nature. Its seeds yield an abundance of fine clear oil called oil of Euphorbia … it is … a very violent poison,

[151] There are facsimiles in D'Aronco and Cameron (1998: fols. 16r and 53r).

[152] Lindheim (1941: 18, no. 325, note 325; 73, no. 325): '*Titumalosca* belongs to tithymallus. The Brussels gloss offers a parallel, likewise the Herbarium CX: *herba titymallas calatites þæt ys lacterida*. Probably, however, one has to reckon with two different plants. Greek τιθύμαλλος καρυίτης is the 'nutforming wolf's milk' (Euphorbia Myrsinites L.) while *lacterida* is probably to be equated with … 'broad-leaved wolf's milk' (Euphorbia lathyris L.)' (Titumalosca *stellt sich zu* tithymallus … *Eine Parallele bietet die Brüsseler Gl. … sowie Herb[arium] CX … Wahrscheinlich hat man aber mit zwei verschiedenen Pflanzen zu rechnen. Gr. τιθύμαλλος καρυίτης ist die 'nussförmige Wolfsmilch' (Euphorbia Myrsinites L), während* lacterida *wohl mit gr. λαθυρίς, 'breitblättrige Wolfsmilch' (Euphorbia lathyris L) zusammenzubringen ist*).

> producing violent purgation … In doses of 5 drops it is said to be less acrid and irritating than croton oil; it must be recently extracted. The seeds to the number of twelve or fifteen are used by the country people in France as a purgative. The … leaves are vesicant and are used by beggars to produce ulcers by which to excite pity; the juice is depilatory; the seeds contain æsculetin in the free state.

The medicinal power of such seeds was certainly known to the Anglo-Saxons from an early period: some were found in a 'workbox' in a disturbed late seventh-century grave (presumably of a woman) at Castledyke South, Barton-on-Humber.[153] According to Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: III. no. CXLII), oil from the seeds acts as a very mild purgative, producing neither vomiting, cholic nor tenesmus. The adult dose is from four to eight drops.

Yet it is clear, from what Grieve writes, that if seeds of caper spurge had been used in the medical recipes cited in the numbers stated, then death must very often have resulted. Since the remedies themselves are witness that the properties and 'Medicinal Action' of the herbs specified were well known, I can only conclude that the remedies with the larger numbers of *lybcorn* were concocted, compiled or simply translated into Old English at a time when *lybcorn* did not mean anything so deadly as caper spurge. Cardamom seeds would fill the bill admirably. Soon after the compilation of the Leechbooks, the original use of the term *lybcorn* may have been forgotten, perhaps because the seeds (whether cardamom or not) had ceased to be imported from the East for some while. Since the *lybcorn* were always used in emetics and purgatives, however, it came to be believed that they themselves had purgative qualities. At the beginning of this essay, evidence was presented to show that the meaning of the word *lyb* itself varied between 'medical remedy' and 'magic charm'. As time went on, and magic gained a worse and worse reputation, perhaps a *lybcorn* came to be something of bad repute, and the word could be used for the poisonous seeds of caper spurge, the common garden weed, instead of the tasty and easily digested imported cardamoms.

13. The relationship between *lybcorn* and *giþcorn*

Finally, there is the problem of the equation of *lybcorn* with *giþcorn* in 1.B.14 from the Durham Glossary (MS 14), reinforced by the equation of both with *lactirida* (see Section 12.2 above). Unfortunately, the identity of *giþcorn* is as much of a mystery as *lybcorn* is, and to discuss it in as much detail would mean that this paper would be twice as long. I am therefore concentrating on merely establishing whether there are significant differences in *usage* between the two. I have catalogued all the occurrences of *giþcorn* in Appendix 2.

14. *Giþcorn* citations

As can be seen from Appendix 2, there are twenty-two extant ocurrences of *giþcorn*, fourteen in medical texts (A) and seven in glossaries (B). Appendix 2C shows the related citations (all from texts of the *Herbarium* in the complete translation); this leaves sixteen independent occurrences of *giþcorn*.

[153] Grave II (Drinkall and Foreman 1998: 95). See also Meaney (1981: 62–4, 184).

15. *Giþcorn* in the Old English *Herbarium*

To prove or disprove the identity of *lybcorn* and *giþcorn*, it is necessary to look, even if only briefly, at the ways in which *giþcorn* is used in other medical remedies, for *lybcorn* and *giþcorn* never appear together. Indeed, there are only six remedies altogether in Old English which use *giþcorn*. I will begin discussion of *giþcorn* with the already-cited relevant entries in the so-called *Herbarium of Apuleius.* As we have seen, Chapter CXIII, headed *Herba lactyrida, þæt is giþcorn* (Numbers 2.A.6–14 from MSS 7, 11 and 12) has only one prescription, which is a translation from Latin.[154] It is a remedy 'against hardness of the intestine', and, as is very common for *Herbarium* remedies, the plant (in this case, only its seed) is used as a simple (by itself); certainly a seed with purgative properties is indicated. *Lybcorn*, however, was most commonly prescribed in compound medicines.

Herbarium Chapter CX is also of interest here. Though it is not associated with the name *giþcorn*, it is also called *lacterida,* and its heading *Herba tytymallus calatites, þæt ys lacterida* (De Vriend 1984: 19, 152–5) may have provided the lemmata for the Durham gloss 1.B.16, *libcorn* (as discussed in Section 12.2 above). It has three remedies: a potion for 'pain of the intestines' (*innoða sare*), and two salves, one for warts, and one for skin disease. None of these uses the seed: the first two specify the juice of the plant, the last the sprouts. A spurge might well have been effective in these contexts, but dangerously so. None of the remedies specifying the inclusion of *lybcorn* bears any substantial resemblance to the three in the *Herbarium*, Chapter CX. The only other herbal ingredient included in any of them is in the salve for warts: juice of *clufþung*.[155]

16. *Giþcorn* in the Leechbooks

The substance of *Herbarium*, Chapter CXIII (2.A.11) is also found in *Leechbook III* (MS 4; 2.A.5), though in a different (simplified and almost certainly earlier) translation from the Latin. The *Leechbook III* translator, however, has made an elementary mistake: he has rendered Latin *aqua calida* as 'cold water', when it should be 'warm'. As mentioned in Section 12.2, D'Aronco (1995) has shown that other fragments of the earlier translation (or translations) of the *Herbarium* are found elsewhere in the *Leechbooks*.

Giþcorn is only found elsewhere in *Leechbook III* as one of the forty-three herbs used to make a salve (2.A.4) 'For a bite' (*Wiþ bite*) which Cockayne (1864–6: II.312–13) translates as 'cancer', but which, it seems to me, in context could also mean 'sting'. This complicated salve could well have been made in quantity to counteract frequently occurring irritations due to insect bites or nettle stings. Only a few of the other herbal ingredients in this remedy were used in the remedies employing *lybcorn*, even if they were for external application. They are listed under their Old English names in Appendix 2, but since their individual effect would have been minimal, I am not discussing or identifying them further.

[154] Compare MS Montecassino, Archivio della Badia, V.97, of the ninth or tenth century (see De Vriend 1984: 157): '*Herba laterida* 1. For hardness of the stomach. The seed of the *laterida*, which is a grain; give this same grain, cleansed, to be drunk in warm water. It will soon stimulate evacuation' (*Herba laterida* 1. *Ad duritiam ventris. Herbae latyridae semen quod est granum, dabis ipsum granum purgatum potui in aqua calida, mox alveum excitat*).

[155] Which translates the Latin *botrachi herbae suco*. Bierbaumer (1975–9: II.24) identifies *clufþung* as *Ranunculus sceleratus* L., the celery-leaved buttercup. Buttercup juice is notorious for inflaming and blistering the skin (see Grieve 1976: 149), and presumably would have combined with acrid spurge juice to burn away the warts.

Giþcorn is not found in the *Lacnunga*: there is only one occurrence in the first book of Bald's *Leechbook* (2.A.1; MS 4), in a recipe 'For worms' (*Wiþ wyrmum*). If intestinal worms are meant, this was presumably a kind of purgative. Five herbs, including *giþcorn*, are to be boiled in wine; they are *eoforþrote*, *merce*, *betonice* and *nefte*, none of which are associated with *lybcorn* under these names. They have tentatively been identified, respectively, as carline thistle,[156] (wild) celery,[157] betony,[158] and catmint.[159]

From Chapter 59 of Book II of Bald's *Leechbook*, which is only preserved in the later MS 10, there is a remedy (2.A.2) for the 'half-dead' illness, which may mean paralysis following a stroke. 'As many *giþcorn* as medics know should go in a herbal potion, and suitable herbs' should be used to make a purgative or diuretic, to be administered after bloodletting. The instructions for *lybcorn* are often very precise; these could hardly be vaguer.

Finally, there is a recipe in the same book (2.A.3; MS 4) for a potion 'If there be constipation' (*Gif utgang forseten sie*). Its ingredients are 'a good handful of *giþcorn* leaves, the lower part of the rough *wegbræde* (plantain),[160] & the Dock that floats'.[161] As with *lybcorn* and perhaps also with *sundcorn*, the name for the seed seems to have been used for the whole plant.

As can be seen, therefore, there are considerable differences in detail between the ways in which *lybcorn* and *giþcorn* appear in the Old English medical texts. *Lybcorn* are far more frequent, appearing in about twenty remedies, in all the *Leechbooks* and the *Lacnunga*, but not in the *Herbarium*. *Giþcorn* only appear five times, also in all the *Leechbooks*, in the *Herbarium*, but not in the *Lacnunga*. *Lybcorn* are sometimes specified to be used in very large numbers, whereas numbers of *giþcorn* are never specified — the only reference to quantity being either to hand the decision to the medic, or to use a 'good handful' of leaves. *Lybcorn* are specified to be used most often in emetics, less often in purgatives, and once in a salve; *giþcorn* appear to be mostly used in purgatives, but also once in a salve. The herbs associated with the *lybcorn* and *giþcorn* tend to be different; whereas those used with *lybcorn* usually have strongly emetic or purgative qualities, those with *giþcorn* are less specialized.

17. *Giþcorn* in the glossaries

One difference between the *lybcorn* and the *giþcorn* glosses is immediately apparent: *giþcorn* does not appear in any glossary manuscript earlier than the early eleventh-century Antwerp

[156] *Eoforþrote*. Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.54–5): 'carline thistle' (*Carlina vulgaris* L.); Grieve (1976: 800–801: 'In large doses [it] is purgative'. See also Fernie (1914: 511), and Stuart (1979: 167).

[157] *Merce*. Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.104; II.83; III.170): 'celery' (*Apium graveolens* L.); Grieve (1976: 182): 'Carminative, stimulant, diuretic, tonic'. See also Stuart (1979: 154).

[158] *Betonice*, 'betony'. See the discussion under 'Bisceopwyrt' at Section 8.8 above.

[159] *Nefte*. Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.109): 'catmint' (*Nepeta cataria* L.). It is in the list of 'herbs' recommended by Charlemagne (see Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90); Meyer (1854–7: III.401, 406). See also Wren (1915: 61); Grieve (1976: 173–5): 'Carminative, tonic, diaphoretic, refrigerant … specially antispasmodic, and mildly stimulating'. See also Bentley and Trimen (1880: III. no. 209); Stuart (1979: 228); and Priest and Priest (1982: 86–7).

[160] *Þa ruwan wegbrædan nioþowearde*; Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.139): *ruh* 'rough, hairy', therefore 'the lower part of Hoary Plantain' (*Plantago media* L.) Grieve (1976: 640–3) writes that the medicinal virtues of the plantains were highly esteemed, especially for bowel complaints.

[161] *Doccan, þa þe swimman wille*, literally 'the dock which floats', which Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.47) argues must be the water lily, probably the European yellow pond-lily (*Nuphar advena* (Aiton) W. T. Aiton), sometimes called *Spatterdock* or *Flatterdock*. Grieve (1976: 484) writes that it may be substituted for the white pond-lily, whose root is said to be astringent, demulcent and anodyne. It also seems possible that this could be one of the water docks, either the red dock (*Rumex aquaticus* L.), see Wren 1915: 295: 'Alterative, deobstruent, detergent'; Grieve 1976:

Glossary (MS 9). The other three manuscripts in which it occurs — Ashmole (MS 13), Durham (MS 14) and Laud (MS 15) — are from the twelfth century:

2.B.1 (MS 9)	*Herba munda*	giþcorn
2.B.2 (MS 9)	*Citicotia*	giþcorn
2.B.3 (MS 13)	*lacteridis*	giðcorn
2.B.4 (MS 14)	*Lactirias uel lactirida*	gythcorn *uel* libcorn
2.B.5 (MS 14)	*Magdalis*	gythcorn
2.B.6 (MS 15)	*citicotia .i. lacter. uel*	gutcorn.
2.B.7 (MS 15)	*Laterida .i.*	geþcorn

Only two of the lemmata listed have not been found glossed by *lybcorn*. The first, *herba munda* is not firmly identified; Förster (1917: 134, no. 213, note 2) suggests that *munda* is for *mundatoria,* 'cleansing, ?purging'. The second lemma is *magdalis*, which Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.112–13), referring to André (1956), argues to be a corruption of *amygdaloides*, a synonym of *titimallus*, a kind of spurge. The DMLBS (under *magdalis*) suggests wood spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides* L.), and Grieve (1976: 765–6) writes that the bark of its roots has a reputation as a febrifuge, and that its milky juice may remove warts but may hurt the surrounding skin.[162]

Again unlike *lybcorn*, whose last appearance is in the early twelfth-century Durham Glossary (except for a gloss written into a Bury St Edmunds manuscript: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 130), *giþcorn* continues to appear well into the Middle English period, though sometimes quite distorted, and often being reduced to the first element. Occurring in MS British Library, Harley 978, folio 24, apparently written in the mid thirteenth century, is *Spurgia i. spurge i. guweorn* (for *guþcorn*?).[163] In Hunt's invaluable lists of medieval English plant names from about 1280 until the later fifteenth century, *gitthorn, guth[c]orn* glosses *lacterides,*[164] and *git[h]* renders *cockle* (*cokel, kokkele* and other spellings).

18. *Giþrife* and *git*

In modern terms, the cereal crop weed corncockle is *Agrostemma githago* L., and scholars have usually equated this with the Old English plant name *giþrife* (with variants ranging to *gyðhrofan*), but dissociated it from *giþcorn* (Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.69, 73; II.52–3; III.112–13). *Giþrife* is a very common ingredient of medical remedies; it appears in twenty-two from the first book of Bald's *Leechbook*, three from the second book, six from *Leechbook III*, and five from the *Lacnunga*. The symptoms they were designed to alleviate vary from lung disease to heart ache, leg ache, sour milk, headache, wounds (both as a potion and as a salve), madness, diarrhoea, throat swelling, breast pain, inability to pass water, swellings, fever, jaundice, continual thirst, the devil's trials, 'devil sickness' and pox. Perhaps the most frequent use was as an ingredient in a wound salve (DOE under *giþrife*). The pattern of usage is therefore very different from that of *lybcorn*, which was virtually restricted to emetics and

259–60), or the great water dock (*Rumex Hydrolapathum* Huds.; see Stephenson and Churchill 1834–6: III. no. CXXXIII*)*. The docks, however, do not, literally, float. Their roots are astringent and were used as a stomach tonic.

[162] See also Howald and Sigerist (1927: 192, line 16 and notes, no. CIX): *Herba Titimallus.*

[163] Wright (1884: I.xiv, column 557, no. 7). See also Förster (1917: 134–5, note 2).

[164] Hunt (1989: 127, 153); also Hunt (1986–7: 111, no. 104): *Gith: agrimulatum, nigella idem, g. neel, a. cokel*; (1986–7: 122, no. 5): *Agrimilatum: .i. melanchium .i. gith*. The manuscript was copied in the early fourteenth century. See also Harvey (1981: 166).

purgatives. I conclude that *giþrife* has no connection with *lybcorn*, and can henceforth be ignored.

Git is mentioned by Pliny, who remarks that 'it is poisonous if taken in too large doses, a fact more remarkable because the seed actually makes a most pleasant seasoning for loaves of bread'. Its medical uses were many and varied (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.106–7; 20.71.182–4). It is also found in the list of 'herbs' recommended by Charlemagne (see Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90), and is identified by Meyer (1854–7: III.401, 405) with *Nigella sativa* L., a native of south Asia, variously called 'black seed', 'fennel flower' or 'Roman coriander' in English. Meyer rejects *Agrostemma githago* 'corn cockle', on the grounds that it is 'scarcely cultivated' (*schwerlich cultivirt*). André (1956: 149), citing mostly Classical sources, also equates *git* with *Nigella sativa*. According to Grieve (1976: 297–8) its aromatic seeds were used as a condiment and 'as a corrigent or adjuvant of purgative and tonic medicines'. It is tempting to postulate that when cardamom seeds (?*lybcorn*) became impossible to obtain, they might have been replaced by Roman coriander seeds (?*giþcorn*), but our lack of knowledge concerning these aspects of the spice trade in early medieval times does not allow us to draw any firm conclusions.

19. Other possible substitutes for *lybcorn*

Other seeds may have been used as substitutes for cardamoms; for example, those of coriander (*Coriandrum sativum* L.):

> a native of Italy and the East … The seeds when fresh have … a disagreeable odour, but by drying they become grateful; to the taste, they are moderately warm and pungent, and have a pleasant aromatic odour … The fruit is globular, obscurely striated, and divisible into two hemisperical mericarps … The seeds are … carminative and stomachic, and hence are frequently added to infusions of senna, and to other cathartics; to cover the unpleasant taste, and to obviate the irritating effects they are apt to produce on the stomach and the bowels.[165]

It was among the herbs whose culture Charlemagne enjoined in 812 (see Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90; and Section 10 above). It is Chapter CIV in the *Herbarium*, where the seeds are credited with magic power to speed up childbirth.[166]

Likewise, the seeds of fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare* Mill.) might also have served the same function. Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 308–10) relate that its aromatic fruits were used by the Romans, and that Charlemagne 'enjoined its cultivation on the imperial farms' (see Boretius and Krause 1883–97: I.90). It is Chapter CXXVI in the *Herbarium*, and the illustration on folio 55v in the British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii manuscript suggests an umbellifer. The two remedies for which it is suggested are for a cough, and for bladder pain; neither uses the seed. Fennel is now a well-known garden herb, but grows wild in most parts of Europe and is especially common in the Mediterranean region. When Bentley and Trimen (1880: II. no. 123) were writing, several varieties of fennel seeds were:

> known in commerce … Wild Fennel fruits are short, dark coloured … and have a less agreeable flavour and colour than those of sweet fennel [a variety of *Foeniculum*

[165] Stephenson and Churchill 1834–6: II. no. 94. See also Pereira (1874: 762–3); and Bentley and Trimen (1880: II. no. 133). Flückiger and Hanbury (1879: 329–31) relate that the ripe fruits were used as a spice by the Jews and the Romans, and in medicine, from a very early period.

[166] De Vriend (1984: 150–1, 312); the illustration on fol. 51r is unfortunately almost eaten away by a destructive

> *vulgare*]; they are not official … Fennel fruits … are aromatic, stimulant, and carminative, resembling in these particulars the fruits of anise, caraway and dill.[167]

20. General conclusion

As we have seen, the meaning of *lybcorn* seems to have changed over time, to judge from the lemmata associated with it in the glossaries. It seems that, because of its use as an adjuvant in prescriptions for emetics and purgatives, when it became unavailable it was believed to have been itself an emetic or purgative. Perhaps *giþcorn* first denoted a substitute for *lybcorn* — Roman coriander or umbellifer seeds for cardamom seeds. Whether this was so or not (and it seems almost impossible to establish this with confidence), it seems certain that in the late Anglo-Saxon period both the words *lybcorn* and *giþcorn* came to be used for seeds with a purgative effect, and in the mind of one twelfth-century glossator were regarded as synonymous. In particular, both names appear to have been used for the seeds of caper spurge (*Euphorbia lathyris*).[168] However, one can only hope that no medic was rash enough to include a hundred or even forty caper spurge seeds in his potions — if he had, his patients would not have survived.

pigment.

[167] See also Pereira (1874: 759–60).

[168] Stracke (1974: 83, note to entry 276) quotes Cockayne (1864–6: II.397) as identifying *lybcorn* as 'a grain of purgative effect, especially the seeds of various euforbias, probably also the seeds of some of the gourds, as momordica elaterium, cucumis colocynthis'. Cockayne (1864–6: II.388), Bierbaumer (1975–9: I.69; II.52; III.112–3) and De Vriend (1984: 314) suggest for *Herbarium*, Chapter CXIII, headed *Gyðcorn lactirida*, a Daphne, perhaps spurge laurel (*Daphne laureola* L.) De Vriend comments (1984: 313, note to no. CX): 'Cf. this chapter with CXIII. Both deal with plants that secrete a milky juice; there is no agreement as to which plant is described here and which in CXIII'. However, it appears from the descriptions of the Daphnes that it was their bark which was used in medicine, not their seeds, which are poisonous: see Stephenson and Churchill (1834–6: II. no. LXV); Pereira (1874: 565–8); and Bentley and Trimen (1880: III. nos. 225–7).

Appendix 1: *Lybcorn* catalogue

Citations are of two kinds: from medicinal recipes (A), and from glosses (B). Each category is listed separately, chronologically according to the date of the manuscript in which it occurs. Manuscripts, numbered chronologically, are listed with detailed references, in Appendix 3.

MS	*CNo.*	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
4	1.A.1	Bald: Leechbook I	Lch II (1) 2.23.9	*lybcorn*
4	1.A.2	Bald: Leechbook I	Lch II (1) 63.1.1	*lybcorna*
4	1.A.3	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (2) 52.1.1	*lybcorna*
4	1.A.4	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (2) 52.1.18	*lybcorna*
4	1.A.5	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (2) 52.1.22	*lybcorna*
4	1.A.6	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (2) 52.1.27	*lybcorn*
4	1.A.7	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (2) 52.2.1	*lybcorna*
4	1.A.8	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (2) 52.3.1	*lybcorna*
4	1.A.9	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 41.1.16	*lybcornes leaf*
4	1.A.10	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 41.1.19	*lybcorna*
4	1.A.11	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 42.1.1	*lybcornes leaf*
4	1.A.12	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 67.1.3	*lybcorna*
7	1.A.13	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 42.1	*lybcorna*
7	1.A.14	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 44.1	*lybcorna*
7	1.A.15	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 46.1	*lybcorna*
7	1.A.16	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 47.1	*lybcorna*
18	1.A.17	?Bald: Leechbook II	Med 2 (Torkar) 4.1	*lybcorna*
18	1.A.18	?Bald: Leechbook II	Med 2 (Torkar) 6.1	*lybcorna*

Appendix 1A: citations from medicinal recipes

MS	*CNo.*	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	1.B.1	Glossary: Erfurt	ErfGl 1 (Pheifer) 279	*lypbcorn*
2	1.B.2	Glossary: Corpus 2	CorpGl 2 (Hessels) 3.265	*lybcorn*
2	1.B.3	Glossary: Corpus 2	CorpGl 2 (Hessels) 3.371	*lybcorn*
3	1.B.4	Glossary: Cleopatra 1	ClGl 1 (Stryker) 887	*lybcorn*
3	1.B.5	Glossary: Cleopatra 1	ClGl 1 (Stryker) 3829	*lybcorn*
3	1.B.6	Glossary: Cleopatra 2	ClGl 2 (Quinn) 467	*lybcorn*
5	1.B.7	Glossary: Harley	HlGl (Oliphant) 1128	*lybcorn*
6	1.B.8	Glossary: Otho	(Junius transcript, p. 210)	*lybcorn*
8	1.B.9	Glossary: Brussels 1	BrGl 1 (Wright-Wülcker) 8.24	*libbcorn*
8	1.B.10	Glossary: Brussels 1	BrGl 1 (Wright-Wülcker) 8.89	*libcorn*
8	1.B.11	Glossary: Brussels 1	BrGl 1 (Wright-Wülcker) 8.154	*libcorn*
14	1.B.12	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 104	*lybbcorn*
14	1.B.13	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 122	*libbcorn*
14	1.B.14	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 141	*lybbcorn*
14	1.B.15	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 210	*libcorn*
14	1.B.16	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 325	*libcorn*
15	1.B.17	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 59	*lybcorn*
16	1.B.18	Glossary: Bodley 730	CollGl 25 209	*libcorn*
17	1.B.19	Glosses: Bodley 130	(Bodley 130, fol. 50v)	*lebcor, lebecorn*

Appendix 1B: citations from glosses

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
B.1	B.2–8, 14, 17–18	Glossary entries, all reading *cartamo lybcorn*, with orthographical variations.
B.9	B.12	Glossary entries, both reading *Catharticum lybcorn*, with orthographical variation.

Appendix 1C: related citations

Appendix 2: *Giþcorn* catalogue

See the explanatory note at the beginning of Appendix 1, which also applies here.

MS	*CNo.*	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
4	2.A.1	Bald: Leechbook I	Lch II (1) 48.2.7	*giþcorn*
4	2.A.2	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (Fragment) 3.2	*giðcorna*
4	2.A.3	Bald: Leechbook II	Lch II (2) 65.1.3	*giðcornes leafa*
4	2.A.4	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 8.1	*giþcorn*
4	2.A.5	Leechbook III	Lch II (3) 70.3.1	*giþcorn*
4	2.A.6	Herbarium	Lch I (HerbHead) 113.0	*giþcorn*
4	2.A.7	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 113.0 (label)	*giðcorn*
4	2.A.8	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 113.0 (text)	*giðcorn*
4	2.A.9	Herbarium	Lch I (HerbHead) 113.0	*giþcorn*
4	2.A.10	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 113.0 (label)	*gyðcorn*
4	2.A.11	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 113.1.1	*giþcorn*
4	2.A.12	Herbarium	Lch I (HerbHead) 113.0	*giþcorn*
7	2.A.13	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 113.0 (label)	*guþcorn*
7	2.A.14	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 113.0 (text)	*giðcorn*

Appendix 2A: citations from medicinal recipes

MS	*CNo.*	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	2.B.1	Glossary: Antwerp	AntGl 3 (Kindschi) 62	*giþcorn*
2	2.B.2	Glossary: Antwerp	AntGl 4 (Kindschi) 20	*giþcorn*
2	2.B.3	Herbarium (G)	OccGl 36 (Gough) 57	*giðcorn*
3	2.B.4	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 210	*gythcorn*
3	2.B.5	Glossary: Durham	DurGl (Lindheim) 231	*gythcorn*
3	2.B.6	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 366	*gutcorn*
5	2.B.7	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 165	*geþcorn*

Appendix 2B: citations from glosses

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
A.9	A.10–14	All refer to the plant of Herbarium, Chapter CXIII in the same or related manuscripts.
A.5	A.11	These are versions of the same remedy in Herbarium, Chapter CXIII, but in different translations from the Latin.

Appendix 2C: related citations

Appendix 3: Manuscripts containing *lybcorn* or *giþcorn*

MS 1:
Erfurt, Wissenschaftliche Allgemeinbibliothek, Amplonianus F.42 (Erfurt, Stadtbücherei, Amplonianus F.42). Ker (1957), Appendix no. 10, s.ix (1): 'Glossary identical with Épinal, and supplies parts of C and all of D and E now missing from Épinal'. Bischoff et al. (1988: 19), c.820 AD.

MS 2:
Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 144, folios 4–64v. Ker (1957), no. 36, s. viii/ix: 'The glossary may be regarded as a fuller version of those in the Épinal and Erfurt MSS, making greater use of glossary material and rearranging the material into an AB order'. Bischoff et al. (1988: 24–5), 2/4 ix. Gneuss (2001), no. 45, s.ix (1): probably originated in south-west England; its provenance after 1100 was Canterbury, St Augustine's.

MS 3:
London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra A iii, folios 5–75. Ker (1957), no. 143, s.x med. Gneuss (2001), no. 319, s.x (2/4) or x med, originated in St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury.

MS 4:
London, British Library, Royal 12.D.xvii. Ker (1957), no. 264. Gneuss (2001), no. 479, s.x med, originated in Winchester?

MS 5:
London, British Library, Harley 3376, + Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. a. 3, folio 49, + Lawrence, University of Kansas, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, Pryce P2A. Ker (1957), no. 240, s.x/xi. Gneuss (2001), no. 436, s.x/xi, originated in western England (at Worcester?); its provenance after 1100 was probably Worcester.

MS 6:
London, British Library, Cotton Otho E.i. Ker (1957), no. 184, s.x/xi: probably a copy of the Cleopatra Glossary 1, see Meritt (1961: 446), quoted in Bierbaumer (1975–9: III.xlvii–xlviii, note 33). The Otho manuscript now consists only of fragments left from the fire of 1731. It was copied by Junius into MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 77, but the copy is said to be incomplete and untrustworthy.

MS 7:
London British Library, Harley 585. Ker (1957), no. 231, folios 130–93; folios 130–179/10), s. x/xi. Folios from 179/11–193 are later, being xi (1). De Vriend (1984: xxiii–xxviii, MS H). Gneuss (2001), no. 421, s.x/xi and s.xi (1).

MS 8:
Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 1828–30 (185). Ker (1957, no. 9), s.xi in. Gneuss (2001), no. 807, s.xi.in: its provenance in s.xi/xii was the Abbey of Anvin, near Douai. Emendations by Logeman (1890) do not affect any of the quoted items.

MS 9:
Antwerp, Plantin-Moretus Museum, 47 (Salle, iii.68), + London, British Library, Add. 32246. Ker (1957), no. 2, s.xi in, xi (1). Gneuss (2001), no. 775: the glossaries are s.xi in.

MS 10:
London, British Library, Harley 55, folios 1–4. Ker (1957), no. 225, s.xi (1). Gneuss (2001), no. 412, s.xi (1): probably originated in York or Worcester? Its provenance after 1100 was Worcester. Apparently a copy of part or all of Bald's *Leechbook* II, chapter lix (now missing from MS 4).

MS 11:
London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii, folios 11–85. Ker (1957), no. 219, s.xi (1). De Vriend (1984: xi–xx, MS V). Gneuss (2001), no. 402, s.xi (1) or xi med., it originated in Christ Church monastery (?), Canterbury.

MS 12:
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 76 (4125), folios 68–130a. Ker (1957), no. 328, s xi med. De Vriend (1984: xx–xxiii, MS B). Gneuss (2001), no. 633, s.xi med., it originated in Worcester? Its provenance after 1100 was Worcester.

MS 13:
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole 1431. Ker (1957), no. 289, s.xii. Gneuss (2001), no. 527, s.xi med., it originated in St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury. Gough (1974: 273–4): 'This manuscript contains a number of glosses of the names of herbs and the diseases for which they are remedies added between the lines and in the margins of a copy of the herbal of Apuleius that once belonged to St Augustine's, Canterbury. From what Dodwell [1954: 26 and 122] has to say about the illumination it seems clear that we may assign the origin of the MS. to St Augustine's. He also dates the manuscript earlier than Ker, between 1070 and 1100'.

MS 14:
Durham Cathedral, Hunter 100. Ker (1957), no. 110, s.xii in: For the history of the manuscript, 'which was no doubt written at Durham shortly after 1100', Ker refers to Mynors (1939: 49–50, no. 57), which states: 'Ff. 82–84v have a glossary of plant-names in Latin and Anglo-Saxon … printed inaccurately in O. Cockayne's *Leechdoms* etc… [1864–6] iii, p.299'. The glossary is dated in this work to probably between 1100 and 1128.

MS 15:
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 567, folios 68–73. Ker (1957), no. 345, s.xii: 'Most of [the glosses] containing an OE interpretation occur also in the shorter glossary in Durham, Hunter 100 [MS 14]'. See also Stracke (1974).

MS 16:
Oxford Bodleian Library, Bodley 730, folios 144–6. Ker (1957), no. 317, s.xii/xiii: glosses closely related to those in MCOE reference ClGl 2, edited by Quinn (1956). Ker writes: 'The orthography of the English glosses is throughout extremely confused'.

MS 17:
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 130. Gunther (1925), s.xii: glosses added later.

MS 18:
London, British Library, Cotton Otho B.xi. Ker (1957), no. 180, s.xi (1), + London, British Library, Add. 43703 (Nowell's transcription of Otho B.xi). Gneuss (2001), no. 357, s.xi (1); all extant parts of the manuscript originated in Winchester; its provenance after 1100 was Southwick Priory, Hampshire. Nowell's transcript dates to the sixteenth century (see Grant 1974: 112, 117 and note 4), and the Otho manuscript was nearly totally destroyed in the 1731 fire. The two remedies found in it were probably incorporated into Chapter lvi of the second book of Bald's *Leechbook*.

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Old English *Safene*: Untangling Native and Exotic Junipers in Anglo-Saxon England

C. P. Biggam

1. Introduction

There is a remarkable degree of agreement on the meaning of Old English (OE) *safene* (various spellings, see Appendix A1). It is defined by Clark Hall (1960) as 'savine (a kind of juniper)', and by Bosworth (1898) as 'savine' (under *safine*).[1] Bierbaumer interprets *safene* with the botanical Latin name of *Juniperus sabina* L. (Bierbaumer 1975–9: II.100; III.198),[2] and the *Thesaurus of Old English* (TOE) lists *safene* under 'juniper', as one of the entries under the heading 'Particular trees/shrubs'. It may seem perverse to reconsider such a unanimously agreed definition, but questions still arise. Why is there, apparently, an established name in Old English for an exotic juniper (*Juniperus sabina*)? If the name refers to the native, rather than the exotic juniper, why is it adopted from Latin? Does *safene* refer to a plant or (since it features strongly as a medical ingredient) a plant-based medicine? If it refers exclusively to an exotic juniper, how was it obtained in Anglo-Saxon England?

The method of investigation pursued below is to present various types of information which can be retrieved from the extant texts (Sections 2 to 8), and then to consider the results together in Section 9. Later sections attempt to place this evidence in the context of Anglo-Saxon society, with particular consideration of trade, medicine, a place-name, and manuscript illustration. Finally, it is hoped that a more acceptable understanding of *safene* is presented in the conclusion.

[1] *Safene* does not appear in the 1921 *Supplement* to Bosworth and Toller, nor in the 1972 *Addenda and corrigenda*. Definitions of Old English words in this paper are taken from the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE) where possible. Publication is currently in progress, and, at the time of writing, has reached 'G'. For words not yet included, my source is Clark Hall (1960). Definitions are not necessarily cited in full in this paper. With reference to Modern English (ModE) *savin* or *savine*, it is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) as '1. A small bushy evergreen shrub, *Juniperus sabina* … 2. The dried tops of this shrub, used as a drug.'

[2] The contents of Bierbaumer (1975–9) form the basis of the *Dictionary of Old English Plant Names* (DOEPN), located at http://oldenglish-plantnames.org, where the plant entries have been revised under the direction of Peter Bierbaumer in Graz, Austria and Hans Sauer in Munich, Germany. See under *safine*.

2. Citations

The *safene* catalogue contains twenty-eight entries,[3] two of which are queried (?Safene 22 and ?Safene 23). Not all the entries, however, represent independent instances of the use of *safene* (see Appendix A2: Related Citations) so, when this has been taken into consideration, the catalogue contains twenty-two independently used and unqueried cases of *safene* surviving in Old English texts. Again excluding the two queried items and the four related citations, there are twenty references classified under the heading 'Medicine', one under 'Glosses', and one under 'Glossaries'.[4]

3. Descriptors

Descriptors in ASPNS word-studies are words or phrases which directly qualify a plant-name, thus providing information on some aspect of the plant so named. All the descriptors of *safene* are phrases concerned with its medicinal properties, so they are considered in the section on medicine below (Section 14).

4. Collocations

Safene occurs with OE *dūst* 'dust, powder' in Safene 4, which will be further discussed in Section 14.1, and it also occurs with OE *dūn* 'hill, mountain' in ?Safene 22 and ?Safene 23, which will be discussed in Section 13.

5. Translations

When functioning as the translation of a Latin lemma, OE *safene* interprets *sabina* (also spelt *savina* and *sauina*) or *herba sabina* (also *herba savina*).[5] The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (OLD), concerned with Classical Latin, defines *herba sabina* as 'the shrub savin, *Juniperus sabina*' (under *Sabinus*, sense 1b), and there appears to be no change in meaning in insular medieval Latin, as the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS) defines *herba sabina* as 'savin (*Juniperus sabina*)' (under *Sabinus*, sense 2).[6] It is clear, therefore, that there is no obvious conflict between definitions of the Latin and Old English versions of these cognate plant-names.

[3] See Appendix A1: Safene Catalogue, and Appendix A3: Rejected Items. The source of the information for Appendix A1 is the *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* (DOEWC). All references in this article which take the form 'Safene [number]', for example, 'Safene 10', refer to the item with that number in Appendix A1.

[4] Medicine: Safene 1–5, 7–19, 27–28; Glosses: Safene 20; Glossaries: Safene 21. (Of the related citations, Safene 24–6 consist of two glossary entries and a gloss, and the two queried items are classified as land records). For a fuller account of what constitutes a related citation in ASPNS research, see Wotherspoon on *hymlic*, Section 2, in this volume.

[5] *Sabina*: Safene 21 (24–6); *savina*: 12–13; *sauina*: 20; *herba sabina*: 7; *herba savina*: 27–8. Catalogue numbers in brackets indicate related citations (see Appendix A2).

[6] Where possible, the source used for British medieval Latin is the DMLBS, but this dictionary is in process of publication, having reached 'Syr' at the time of writing. For words which have not yet been published, my source is Latham (1965). Definitions are not necessarily cited in full in this paper.

6. Secondary associations

Associations of *safene* are defined as those plant-names which are not presented in the Anglo-Saxon texts as synonyms of *safene* (as, for example, may be the case in a translation relationship) but appear to have some relationship of equivalence, or possibly even an *uncertain* translation relationship. In practice, associations usually occur in glossary entries in which a Latin lemma (headword) is translated by an Old English interpretation, and a further word or words occur in an uncertain relationship with the lemma. These additional words may have been added at a later date, or be the result of erroneous copying, or they may be perfectly good alternative translations of the lemma. Their relationship to the first Old English interpretation is referred to as an 'association', in an effort to avoid assumptions about their role and origin. There are none extant for *safene*. There are, however, examples of *secondary* associations.

6.1 *Antirina*

The relationship referred to as a secondary association occurs when a common translation of *safene*, in this case Latin *sabina*, has a different Old English or Latin translation or association in an Anglo-Saxon text, but that such words never appear in the company of *safene* itself. Secondary associations are also most commonly found in glossary entries. In this consideration of *safene*, two secondary associations occur in the Laud herbal glossary (MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 567).[7] *Sabina* occurs four times in this glossary, in addition to the example occurring in Safene 21, and all five entries are listed below:[8]

Antirina .i. sauina	Stracke 1974: 23, entry 67
Antiria .i. sauina. brateos	Stracke 1974: 25, entry 143
Brates .i. sauina	Stracke 1974: 27, entry 212
Brateos .i. sauina	Stracke 1974: 27, entry 240
Sabina .i. sauine	Stracke 1974: 59, entry 1299 (Safene 21)

Clearly, the two secondary associations are *antirina* and similar forms, and *brateos* and similar forms.

Antirina seems to have an obvious connection with the form *antiria*, but neither of them is a recognized Latin plant-name. Stracke identifies these two names with *ateron* on the basis of glossary entries in which this word is also associated with *sabina* (Stracke 1974: 121). *Ateron* is another word which does not appear to be a recognized plant-name in either Latin or Greek.[9] Stracke directs the reader to glossary entries published in the *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum* (CGL), and when this source is consulted, it is clear that, like many others, this presumed plant-name is severely garbled in surviving manuscripts. Among the forms recorded in CGL which are interpreted by *sauina* or *sabina* are *artiron*, *atiron*, *asterion*, *antission* and *ametisto*.[10]

[7] The manuscript is dated to the twelfth century (Stracke 1974: 5), but it is clear from certain misunderstandings apparent in the text that the scribe was copying an earlier Anglo-Saxon document containing unfamiliar letters like *thorn* and *wyn* (*þ* and *p*).

[8] All the forms of *sabina* ending in *-a* have been taken to be Latin, since not every entry in the Laud Glossary has an Old English interpretation. It must be admitted, however, that the form *sauina* can be found in Old English prose, as in Safene 10 and 11. This may represent an early stage of naturalization, as Campbell writes that first-declension Latin nouns (ending in *-a*) normally become feminine weak nouns (ending in *-e*, as in *safene*) when adopted into Old English (Campbell 1962: 219).

[9] It is not in the OLD, Souter (1949), or the DMLBS, nor is it in Liddell and Scott (1996).

[10] *artiron* (CGL III.549); *atiron* (III.535); *asterion, antission, ametisto* (all three in III.552). *Atiron* occurs in MS

Whatever the origin and correct form or forms of these words may be (see also Section 12.1 below, concerning *asterion*), I suggest they do not have the same origin as *antirina*/*antiria*. My suspicion is that another gloss recorded in CGL on the same page as some of the above forms, indicates the true origin of the *antirina* forms. That gloss reads *anterinon .i. caput canis* (CGL III.552, line 26).

It is suggested that *antirina* and *antiria* in the Laud herbal glossary originated in the plant-name *antirrinon* (ἀντίρρινον) in Greek, adopted into Latin as *antirrinum*, both names indicating 'the antirrhinum or snapdragon' (OLD). What possible connection could there be between the snapdragon and a juniper? I suspect there is only one, and that is the proximity of the entries for these two plants in the *Herbarium* of Pseudo Apuleius. This herbal text is considered to be a Latin compilation of the fourth century, and it contains information from various earlier Greek and Latin medical works. Although some early copyists believed it to be the work of Apuleius Madaurensis, this attribution is not now accepted, and the unknown author is often designated 'Pseudo Apuleius'.[11] Whatever its origin, the *Herbarium* was known in Anglo-Saxon England, and was translated into Old English (De Vriend 1984).[12]

Entry no. 87 in the Old English *Herbarium* is headed *sauine* in Old English, and the immediately following entry (no. 88) is headed *hundes heafod*. In the text of the latter entry, the reader is told that the plant is also called *canis caput*, both names meaning literally 'dog's head'. *Canis caput* was a common synonym for *antirrinum*. The Old English text makes no mention of *antirrinum* in any form, but versions of the Latin source text clearly show that the name *antirrinum* occasionally migrated, in the copying process, to the neighbouring plant entry. The herbal tradition in the Mediterranean region often included lists of plant-name synonyms in several languages, and this gave ample scope for confusion, especially where a plant illustration separated two entries, and some copyists associated its caption with the wrong entry. It can be seen in Howald and Sigerist (1927: 155) that, in certain Latin manuscripts of Pseudo Apuleius, the form *antirinon*, as well as other possibly related forms, occur in the list of synonyms for *herba sabina* as well as in the list for the neighbouring *canis caput* entry. It seems likely that such a tradition was the ultimate source for the two *antirina*-type glosses found with *sauina* in the Laud herbal glossary. If this is correct, *antirrinum* is an erroneous translation of *sabina*, and the variety of forms in which it occurs, some far removed from the expected spelling, suggests that the Anglo-Saxons, and possibly even southern Europeans, were often quite unaware of this plant's true identity. For this reason, and because of the obvious phonological similarity between OE *safene* and Latin *sabina*, I doubt the often-obscured relationship with *antirrinum* would have misled Anglo-Saxon physicians.

6.2 *Brateos*

The second secondary association is *brateos* and related spellings. *Brateos* is found in the DMLBS as *brathy*, 'savin (*Juniperus sabina*)', a word adopted from the Greek *brathy*

Montecassino, Archivio della Badia 69 (s.ix), and the others occur in MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reginae Christinae 1260 (s.x).

[11] See Collins (2000: 166) for a concise discussion of the authorship of this text, and her reasons for preferring to use the name 'Apuleius Platonicus' for the unknown author. For more detail on the authorship of this work, see Voigts (1978).

[12] Modern English translations can be found in Pollington (2000: 248–377) and Van Arsdall (2002), and a facsimile edition is available of the only surviving *illustrated* Anglo-Saxon manuscript of this work (D'Aronco and Cameron 1998).

(βράθυ), 'savin, Juniperus Sabina' (Liddell and Scott 1996). Clearly this particular secondary association is perfectly compatible with the dictionary definition of *safene*.

7. Textual contrasts and comparisons

This section is concerned with cases in which *safene* appears in the company of other plant-names in a relationship which suggests contrast or comparison. Such relationships have the potential to suggest differences from or similarities to other plants, although the information is rarely unambiguous. In the case of *safene*, contextual contrasts occur in lists of ingredients involved in herbal remedies, and logic suggests that, whatever *safene* may be, it will not be the same as any of the other plants in the list. Unfortunately, however, logic is not a strong factor in plant-names, and various circumstances could, theoretically, result in the same plant being listed twice. Where there are two or more folk names for the same plant, for example, a scribe copying the remedy could have added a synonym to the list in an effort to be helpful. A further difficulty occurs where a single plant-name refers to more than one botanical species, and this may cause some semantic overlap between them (see Biggam's introduction, Section 1, in this volume). For these reasons, and others, it is necessary to treat evidence from contextual contrasts with caution.

Safene is in an apparently contrastive relationship with a large number of other plant-names: a rough count has produced a total of over 120. With such a large number involved, coupled with the fact that *safene* often appears in long lists of plant-names which could have been added to medical recipes at any time in the history of the text, only the most frequently occurring will be discussed in this section. The most commonly occurring plant-name contrast with *safene* is *salfie* 'sage', occurring six times.[13] The reason for this relatively high total, however, undoubtedly reflects the requirements of alliteration. In five of the six references in which these two names occur together, they are immediate neighbours, either in a list of single plant-names, or in a list of paired names, as in Safene 9: *Salfige ⁊ safine, bisceopwyrt ⁊ boðen, finul ⁊ fifleafe*, 'Sage and savine, marsh mallow and *boðen*, fennel and creeping cinquefoil' (Pettit 2001: I.30–1). In the sixth reference (Safene 17), *saluie* and *sauine* are separated by only one plant-name, *æðelferþincwyrt*, which raises the suspicion that this name may be a later insertion.

Five other plant-names occur five times each with *safene*, and they are *betonice*, 'betony'; *bisceopwyrt*, 'marsh-mallow' (also 'betony' and 'bishop's wort'); *fēferfūge*, 'any of several plants used as a febrifuge, especially the common centaury'; *rūde*, rue; and *wermōd*, 'wormwood'.[14] All these plants offer a clear contrast with savine, so do not challenge the interim definition for *safene*.

8. Etymology

The etymology of *safene* is straightforward. The word is an anglicization of Latin *sabina*, which refers to the Sabine region of Italy, to the north-east of Rome. The region was called *Sabinium* in Latin, being named after the Sabini, an early Italian tribe. The Sabine region is

[13] *Safene* apparently contrasts with *salfie* in Safene 5, 8, 9, 17–19.

[14] *Safene* apparently contrasts with *betonice* in Safene 8–10, 17, 18; with *bisceopwyrt* in 2, 8, 9, 17, 19; with *fēferfūge* in 2, 8, 9, 15, 19; with *rūde* in 2, 9, 17–19; and with *wermōd* in 1, 8–10, 14.

hilly, and provides an ideal habitat for the savine juniper. Thus the etymology of OE *safene* is not particularly revealing.

9. Consideration of the basic data

In most ASPNS plant-name studies this section is used to tackle contradictions in the categories of the basic data discussed above. Very often, the conclusion indicated by one category appears to contradict that indicated by another. In the case of *safene*, however, there are no incongruities at this stage at all, although final conclusions can only be reached after discussion of the queried placename in Section 13, and the medical references in Section 14. The interim conclusion, therefore, is that *safene* was savine, that is, *Juniperus sabina* L.

10. Obtaining *safene* in Anglo-Saxon England

As the evidence for the interpretation of *safene* all points to savine, it would seem that this particular plant-name study is a simple one. However, in the context of savine (*Juniperus sabina* L.) in Anglo-Saxon England, a serious problem immediately occurs, namely, that the plant is not native to England. Anyone in England requiring savine for whatever purpose would not be able to simply make their way to a suitable habitat and gather the plant. So, could they obtain it, and, if so, how? I propose, firstly, to investigate whether Anglo-Saxon physicians had access to *Juniperus sabina*, which I shall henceforth call 'savine', and/or its products. Secondly, I will investigate the possibility that OE *safene* also denoted a plant that was not savine.

As a first step to considering whether the Anglo-Saxons could have obtained savine, in any form, the citations have been scrutinized for information as to the nature of the exotic ingredient called *sabina*. The first consideration is whether the Anglo-Saxons knew it was a plant. In cases where an exotic plant product is imported, as an oil, for example, it is possible for the recipients to be unaware that it was obtained from a plant. This is not the case with *sabina*. First of all, Safene 16 (*Sauine*) consists of the caption to a plant illustration in the Old English *Herbarium*. As this is a text translated from Latin, and including copies of southern European illustrations, it does not prove that the plant was known in England, but it does show that, at least for those with access to an illustrated text, it would have been clear that *sabina* was a plant. This evidence is supported by the examples of *safene* being described as a *wyrt*, normally translated as 'plant',[15] but also appropriate to denote certain types or parts of plants, such as 'vegetable', 'spice' or 'root'.

If *sabina* was clearly a plant, certain remedies make it clear that, at least in those cases, plant-*parts* were involved rather than processed plant-products like powder or oil. Safene 9 lists a large number of plants, including savine, and then instructs 'shred up all the plants together very small' (*ða wyrta ealle gescearfa swiðe smale tosomne*) (Pettit 2001: I.32–3). A powder or oil can also be excluded in the case of Safene 11, a remedy for dizziness (*ad vertiginem*). The physician is instructed to boil some plants in wine, including savine, and then, after the liquid has been used to wash the patient's head, the warm plants, except the savine, are to be bound to his or her head all night (*nim siððon þa wyrtas wærma alla wiðutan sauina ⁊ bind to þam heafde alla niht*). Although the savine is excluded from the binding, it is clearly one of the 'warm plants' which have been boiled.

[15] Safene 1, 9–11, 13, 15, 18, 27–28.

The purpose of describing the above cases is to indicate that Anglo-Saxons had some part of the actual plant available to them,[16] as opposed to a processed product such as savine powder. It does not mean, however, that they did not make savine powder themselves, and there are several recipes which show that they did.[17] It is evident from these cases that, where a powder was required, Anglo-Saxon physicians had the basic raw material to hand, namely, the appropriate plant-parts. Safene 3, for example, instructs 'take savine, grind to powder' (*genim safinan, gnid to duste*) (Cockayne 1864–6: II.100–1), while Safene 5 informs the physician that a number of plants, including savine, should be 'together ground to powder in a mortar' (*ætsomne on mortere gegnide to duste*) (Cockayne 1864–6: II.294–5).

So far, the evidence from the Anglo-Saxon texts suggests that actual plant-parts of a plant called *safene* were the usual raw material for preparing a medicinal recipe requiring this herb. If the Anglo-Saxons were using savine, therefore, they must have been importing the crucial parts, or growing the exotic plant themselves. It seems clear that the part of the plant used in medicine was the leaves, and, through the ages, the tender spring growth of the leaves is often specified.[18] Maud Grieve, a well-known early twentieth-century herbalist, provided synonyms for her plant-name headings in *A Modern Herbal* but, for 'Savine', her only synonym is *Savine Tops*, in which the concept of a medicine seems to be dominant over that of the whole plant (Grieve 1974: 717). It should be noted that Grieve refers to 'fresh dried tops' of *Juniperus sabina* (see note 18), and, although 'fresh' sounds like the opposite of 'dried', I take it to mean that the herbalist should gather young spring leaves, and then dry them for use in other seasons, presumably without loss of efficacy. These would make suitably small and lightweight consignments for transporting to England from the Continent. Voigts gives several early medieval references to the exchange, delivery and purchase of herbs between various Continental monasteries. She concludes 'commercial trade in medicinal herbs and control thereof certainly occurred in the early Middle Ages alongside the more informal exchanges of churchmen and religious houses' (Voigts 1979: 260).

While parts of the savine could, in theory, have been imported into Anglo-Saxon England, by means of monastic or secular commerce, there is also a distinct possibility that the whole plant may have been cultivated there. At first sight, it appears we have evidence for this in the *Colloquies* of Ælfric Bata. Intended as a schoolbook to help boys learning Latin, this work takes the form of Latin conversations between a monastic schoolmaster and his pupils. One conversation concerns the orchard where the boys had picked apples, possibly without permission (there is a difference of opinion on this matter between the boys and the gardener). When the schoolmaster asks what trees grow in the orchard, the boys reply: 'These trees grow there: box [and] ash … fig, holly, birch, palm, savin, broom, cornel, thorn or buckthorn' (*Ibi crescent hae arbores: buxus et fraxinus … ficus, ulcia, populus, palma, sabina, genesta, cornus, sentes uel spinae*; Ælfric Bata 1997: 156–7; translated by David W. Porter). The presence of *sabina* in this list suggests, therefore, that it grew in certain monastic gardens in England

[16] Although this evidence for Anglo-Saxon practice could be considered of doubtful use where it occurs in translations from southern European texts, there are also cases of plant-part use from texts which are largely Germanic in origin, such as *Lacnunga* (Safene 2, 9) and Bald's *Leechbook* (Safene 3, 5). See note 66 for information on these two texts.

[17] Safene 2–3, 5–6, 12–13, 27–28.

[18] For example, the Latin translation of Alexander of Tralles specifies *sabinae viridis libra*, 'a pound of tender *sabina*' (as the plant is an evergreen, it makes no sense to translate *viridis* as 'green') (Alexander of Tralles 1556: 627; Bk XI). In 1931, Mrs Grieve recommended 'Fresh dried tops of Juniperas [*sic*] Sabina collected in spring' (Grieve 1974: 717), and Stuart specifies 'young green shoots' (Stuart 1979: 82).

but, apparently, so did the palm-tree, which indicates that this text is not always to be taken literally. Ælfric Bata had been a pupil of Ælfric, Abbot of Eynsham (c. 950–c. 1010) who had written several works to help in the teaching of Latin, and one of them was a classified glossary of Latin words which included a section entitled 'Nomina arborum', or 'The Names of Trees' (Zupitza 1880: 312–3). It is clear from the order of the tree-names in Ælfric Bata's educational work that he simply inserted his old master's tree-list into his colloquy to offer his pupils an extended vocabulary in the subject (Ælfric Bata 1997: 157, note 301).

The source or sources of Abbot Ælfric's tree-list, and his other lists too, are unknown in detail, but the encyclopaedic works of both Isidore of Seville (*Etymologiae sive originum*), and of Pliny the Elder (*Naturalis historia*) would have supplied all the specific tree-names in Ælfric's vocabularies.[19] Thomson makes the point that Ælfric clearly rejected a large number of the names included in Isidore's and Pliny's encyclopaedias, and he believes that the selection was made on the basis of what would have been useful for Ælfric's students to know in their everyday monastic life. He writes that 'it [Ælfric's *Glossary*] is therefore hardly likely to contain anything, leaving aside a few harmless pedantries … that was not in use at the time' (Thomson 1981: 158). When Thomson's suggestion is applied to the tree-list in Ælfric's *Glossary*, it is clear that it contains the names of trees that would have been familiar to English students, such as the oak and ash, but also more exotic species such as the fig and the palm. Some belonging to the latter category would have been needed by the students to understand biblical passages, so, as with the native species, they fulfil Thomson's criterion of usefulness in monastic life. *Sabina* is a particularly interesting case, since savine is not native to England, nor does the word *sabina* appear in the Latin Vulgate Bible.[20] It is suggested, therefore, that Ælfric included the *sabina* in his vocabulary for monastic schools because it was a familiar plant in certain English monastic gardens.

Anglo-Saxons did, of course, travel to southern Europe, for example, as pilgrims to Rome and even Jerusalem. It is most probable that some of them were monks or nuns with a special interest in, or responsibility for medical care in their monasteries in England. Some may well have travelled with an eagerness to find an explanation for some of the plant-names mentioned in the herbal manuscripts in their libraries. Nothing would be more natural for such individuals than to take cuttings and seeds, or even uproot young plants from the wild, or receive them as gifts from the monasteries in which they stayed en route, in order to cultivate them in their monastic gardens at home. Voigts discusses recorded cases of the exchange of herbs, spices and seeds between ecclesiastics and monasteries, although none appears to relate conclusively to young plants or cuttings for cultivation (Voigts 1979: 260). It is known, however, that savine can thrive in England, since Grieve confirms this (1974: 717).[21]

[19] Judging from the botanical index in the edition of Isidore by Oroz Reta and Casquero (1982–3), Ælfric could have obtained all but four of the tree-names from this source (the exceptions are *corilus* (*corylus*), *ulcia* (*ulex*), *sabina* and *genesta*). He could have obtained his entire list of tree-names from Pliny, but it would have been more difficult to collect them from various sections in the *Naturalis historia*. Some names may, of course, have been gathered from other Latin texts and from glossaries.

[20] I have checked two concordances to the Vulgate, under the spellings *sabina* and *savina*, and got no hits on either database (*ARTFL Project …; Nova Vulgata …*). Klotz considers that the savine was the intended plant in Jeremiah 17.6 and 48.6, where the Authorized Version reads 'heath' (Klotz 1990: 1714, under *juniper*). The word in the Latin text is, in both cases, *myrice* which has been translated with various shrub-names in different texts. My concern in this paper is, however, with the lexeme *sabina*.

[21] A sixteenth-century Scottish ballad suggests that savine was cultivated in monastic gardens at that later date. In one version of the 'Ballad of the Queen's Marie', the King, who has made pregnant one of his wife's (Mary Queen of Scots) ladies-in-waiting, seeks savine, a well-known abortifacient: 'The King is to the Abbey gane, to pu' the

Finally, Cameron's opinion on the ingredients which feature in the medical recipes of Bald's *Leechbook* is relevant here. He writes 'From works which were used the compiler made a careful selection of remedies for which ingredients were likely to be available to English practitioners' (Cameron 1993: 43). *Safene* is one of the ingredients which Bald selected (Safene 3–5, 8).

There is no reason to suppose that every physician in Anglo-Saxon England used the same methods to obtain savine, assuming they *did* obtain it. It is possible that there were areas in which savine shrubs did not thrive, even when cosseted, and physicians in such places may have had to import their savine tops from the Continent, if they could not obtain supplies from elsewhere in Britain. It would seem reasonable to suggest, however, that savine was obtainable in Anglo-Saxon England.

11. The manuscript illustration of *safene*

This is not the end of the story, however, since certain pieces of evidence give the impression that the Old English word *safene* was not *always* used for savine. That evidence consists of a manuscript illustration, later semantic evidence, and a place-name. It is not inherently unlikely that *safene* could indicate more than one plant, since folk plant-names rarely denote a single species in all regions, as do modern botanical Latin names. Folk names indicate a particular aspect or quality, such as broad leaves, or the ability to cure indigestion, and the name is then applied to any plant which fulfils the criterion (see Biggam's introduction, Section 1, in this volume). The intention now is to consider each of the three pieces of evidence listed at the beginning of this paragraph and attempt to ascertain whether they are incompatible with the identification 'savine'.

The first piece of apparently contrary evidence is the only illustration of *safene* which we know was available to the Anglo-Saxons, although, of course, there may have been others which are not extant. The depiction of *safene* occurs in the only surviving illustrated manuscript of the Old English *Herbarium* of Pseudo Apuleius (MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii, s.xi[1] or xi med.).[22] The painting is simple and clear, although partially damaged (Doane 1994: 1.4, fiche 2.44; folio 45r). It shows five stems growing out of the rootstock in fanned-out form. Each stem is bare of leaves for about a third of its length nearest the root, but they then produce leaf-growth which continues to the top of the stems. Four of the five stems remain single for their entire length, but one of the stems branches into two, with leaf-growth on each one. The leaf-growth is represented by many short lines on either side of the stems. These closely-packed lines are parallel to each other, and diagonal to the stems; in other words, they give the impression of growing upwards towards the light. They are best interpreted as acicular (needle-shaped) leaves.

The savine (*Juniperus sabina* L.) has scaly, overlapping leaves which are very unlike

Abbey tree, to scale the babe frae Marie's heart; but the thing it wadna be' (Quiller-Couch 1939: 440). Another version is slightly different: 'She's gane to the garden gay, to pu of the savin tree' (Hatfield 1999: 52). I am grateful to Maggie Scott, Scottish Language Dictionaries, and Ruth Tittensor, Countryside Management Consultancy, for discussing with me whether the phrase *abbey tree*, in the first version, might represent a form of (*s*)*abine*, but we found insufficient evidence to make such a suggestion.

[22] Pre-Conquest manuscript dates in this paper are taken from Gneuss (2001). See 'Abbreviations' for an explanation of the form of manuscript dates often appearing in this volume. See Section 6.1 for information on the background of the Old English *Herbarium*.

needles, and are similar to those of other members of the cypress family (Cupressaceae) (Godet 1993: 130–3), so does this illustration suggest that at least some Anglo-Saxons identified the word *safene* with a different plant? This is possible, but it does not rule out the savine because, in its *juvenile* state, the plant has spiky leaves which only turn scaly as they mature (Bean 1970–88: 8.493). Furthermore, since it is the young spring growth that is recommended as a medical ingredient (see note 18), a plant in its juvenile state may have been equally prized. The illustration cannot, therefore, be taken as evidence that this particular plant was not savine.

12. Later semantic evidence

12.1 *Asterion*

The second source of suspicion that the word *safene* could indicate a plant other than savine, comes from later manuscripts. The *Middle English Dictionary* (MED) interprets *savin*(*e*) as having three senses, the first being savine, the second indicating '? the plant Aster amellus', and the third indicating '? the dwarf elder or danewort'. Note that the second and third senses are both queried.

Taking the 'Aster amellus' sense first, the citation given in the MED is actually in late *Old* English, although appearing in a manuscript of the late twelfth century (MS London, British Library, Harley 6258B).[23] The text is, once again, the *Herbarium* of Pseudo Apuleius, and the plant-entry producing this queried sense of Middle English (ME) *savin* is *asterion*. Old English translations of the *Herbarium* often provide more than one name for a plant.[24] In such cases, they may specify the Greek and Latin names, for example, 'the Greeks call [this plant] *cotiledon* and the Romans [call it] *umbilicum ueneris*' (*ðe Grecas cotiledon ⁊ Romane umbilicum ueneris nemnað*; De Vriend 1984: 90, entry XLIV). Alternatively, they may offer the Latin followed by the English name, the latter usually introduced by the phrase 'and by another name', as in 'which is called *radiolum* and by another name *eforfearn*' (*þe man radiolum ⁊ oðrum naman eforfearn nemneð*; De Vriend 1984: 124, entry LXXXV). The entry for *asterion* in three of the four extant manuscripts of the Old English *Herbarium* belongs to a group of entries in which the text prepares the reader for an English name, but does not supply one. The *asterion* entry begins 'This plant which is called *asterion* and by another name [X]' (*Ðeos wyrt þe man asterion ⁊ oðrum naman* [X] *nemneð*; De Vriend 1984: 104, entry LXI). The 'X' indicates the position of an intended English name which was never provided. In the fourth surviving manuscript of the Old English *Herbarium* (MS London, British Library, Harley 6258B), however, that name *was* supplied, so that the first line reads 'This plant which is called *asterion* and by another name *sauine*' (*Ðeos wurt þe mam aste(ri)on ⁊ oþru*[*m*] *naman sauine nemneð*; De Vriend 1984: 105; Doane 1994: 1.7, fiche 1.18; folio 2r).[25]

[23] See De Vriend for the argument that the language of this manuscript is Old English, rather than Middle English (De Vriend 1984: xxxi). For descriptions of the manuscript, see De Vriend (1984: xxviii–xliv) and Doane (1994: 44–51). Middle English is the phase of English usually dated to between c. 1100 and c. 1500.

[24] This is a much abbreviated version of the tradition seen in early Greek and Latin herbals in which a list of synonyms is given for each plant. The synonyms are from various ancient languages, and they tended to be confused and distorted by later copyists to whom many of the words were unfamiliar.

[25] I read the initial letter of this phrase as *Ð*, whereas De Vriend reads it as *Þ* (De Vriend 1984: 105). The manuscript has *mam* as an error for *man*, and abbreviates *ōþrum*. The first plant-name was written as *asteon* but *ri* was added above by the same, or another contemporary scribe (De Vriend 1984: 105, with explanation on p. lxxxvi).

Asterion is Greek for 'little star', and, without its diminutive suffix, the name is *astēr* (ἀστήρ). The word was adopted into Classical Latin as *aster*, and the OLD definition for it is 'A plant, prob[ably] *Aster amellus*', so this may be the source of the MED definition. The common name of the *Aster amellus* L. is 'Italian aster' or 'Italian starwort', a plant which, like many of the daisy family (Asteraceae) to which it belongs, has a star-shaped flower-head. The plant is not native to Britain.[26] Would this version of the *Herbarium* text cause an Anglo-Saxon physician to apply the name *safene* to the Italian aster? This seems most unlikely for the reasons that follow.

In what appears to us to be the 'normal' version of the Old English *Herbarium*, that is, in three of the four manuscripts, a gap was left where an English plant-name should have been supplied. Clearly, no English name was known by the translator, not surprisingly, for this foreign plant. In one manuscript tradition of the *Herbarium*, however, a scribe was able, no doubt triumphantly, to fill in the gap, and a later copy of his/her work is still extant. Where was this English name found? A distinct possibility is that *asterion* was found in a synonymous relationship with Latin *sabina*, in a Latin-Latin glossary. Examples of such glossary entries can be found in Continental works such as the entry *asterion i. sauina* in the manuscript Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reginae Christinae 1260, dated to the tenth century (CGL III.552, line 24), and the slightly less recognisable entry *atiron idest sabina* in the ninth- or tenth-century manuscript Montecassino, Archivio della Badia 69 (CGL III.535, line 51). It is, of course, possible that the source of the *Herbarium* copyist's information had already been translated into a Latin-Old English glossary entry reading (hypothetically) *asterion i. safene*.

From the scribe's point of view, his or her insertion of *safene* into the *asterion* entry was 'authorized' by a glossary, and s/he must have believed that these words were synonyms for the same plant. If the scribe was aware that an independent entry for *safene* appeared elsewhere in the *Herbarium* text, the most obvious assumption would be that an earlier scribe had mistakenly divided the original account and provided *asterion* with a separate entry.[27] From a physician's point of view, all that was required to correct this error (if it was indeed an error) would be to add *asterion*'s single remedy to the three attributed to *safene*, and there is some indication that this is exactly what was done. *Asterion* is claimed to cure the 'falling sickness' (Latin *caducus*; OE *fyllesēocnysse*), usually interpreted as epilepsy. It can be seen in Section 14.2 below that three *safene* citations (from two texts) concern a remedy *ad vertiginem* (*capitis*), 'for dizziness (of the head)' (Safene 10–12). If this term is accepted as another way of describing 'falling sickness', it had clearly been added to the repertoire of *safene* at some earlier stage.

There is almost nothing in the plant description of *asterion* that would preclude an interpretation of savine. The plant is said to grow between stones, and in rough places, and it produces berries.[28] More awkward to accept would be the statement that the flowers shine at night like the stars in the heavens. This originates, of course, in an attempt to explain the *asterion*'s Greek name, but, since no-one would know of any plant that really did this, it is unlikely to have suggested an alternative identification. Those Anglo-Saxon physicians who

[26] I am grateful to Allan Hall of the University of York for information on *Aster amellus*. It is listed in Clement and Foster (1994: 327) as an alien.

[27] It would be easy to persuade oneself that this was the case since the *asterion* entry in the Harley 6258B manuscript has a synonym and plant-description but only one remedy, while the *safene* entry has no synonym or description, but three remedies.

[28] The extant manuscripts differ on whether the plant's habitat should be *smēðe* 'soft, smooth' or *unsmēðe* 'rough' (De Vriend 1984: 104–5). The correct translation is 'rough' since the Latin original has *aspera* 'rough'.

had access to an illustrated version of the *Herbarium* would, of course, find that the depictions of *asterion* and *sabina* were very different, suggesting they were different plants, but, as far as we know from surviving manuscripts, the illustrated tradition did not include the word *safene* in the *asterion* entry.[29]

It seems most likely, therefore, that *asterion* was simply regarded as a synonym of *safene*, and the phonological similarity of Latin *sabina* and OE *safene* would, no doubt, ensure that *asterion* had a minor role. There seems little chance that any Anglo-Saxon physician would have used the word *safene* to refer to Italian aster.

12.2 *Ebel*

While the identification of the word *asterion* with *safene* appears to date back to the pre-Conquest period, the remaining associations with ME *savin* are later than the Anglo-Saxon period. The next association with *savin*, as recorded in the MED, is *ebel*, and this makes its first recorded appearance in the so-called *Synonyma Bartholomei*, a list of glosses appended to the *Breviarium Bartholomei*, written by John Mirfeld who died in 1407 (Hunt 1989: xliv). *Ebel* occurs in the glossary entry *ebel, i. savin* (Mirfeld 1882: 18). As can be seen from the three MED definitions of *savin* given above, the dictionary identifies *ebel* with Latin *ebulus*, '? the dwarf elder or danewort'. The DMLBS, however, identifies *ebel* as a different word (sometimes appearing as *hebel*), deriving from the Arabic *abhul*, meaning 'Savin, dried tops of the shrub *Juniperus sabina*' (Latham 1972: 48).[30] In the introduction to the first fascicule of the DMLBS, it is made clear that the dictionary benefits from the specialized knowledge of J. D. Latham, who has frequently carried out original research on the Arabic vocabulary which was adopted into medieval Latin (DMLBS, I.xii). On the basis of this information, it would seem that the association of the word *ebel* with *savin* does not involve a plant other than savine.

12.3 *Buterbesome*

Another association with ME *savin* occurs in a fifteenth-century manuscript of plant-name synonyms which includes the medical uses of each plant (MS London, British Library, Sloane 282, folios 206v–210r; Hunt 1989: xxxv–vi). The appropriate line reads 'the Romans call this *savyne*, the English *buterbesome*' (*romani vocant eam savyne, anglici buterbesome*; Hunt 1989: 230). Hunt points out that the plant-name *buterbesome* is one of the many which has been overlooked by major English dictionaries,[31] so a satisfactory identification is currently elusive. I have been unable to find any other mention of this name, which I presume to be 'butter besom'. *Besom* is defined in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (COD) as 'a broom made of twigs tied round a stick' (like a witch's broom). It is possible, therefore, that *buterbesome* represents a version, including a minor spelling error in the first element, of the English plant-name *butcher's-broom* (*Ruscus aculeatus* L.). This native plant is an evergreen prickly shrub with

[29] More puzzling, but not likely to introduce another plant into the equation is an entry in the Laud herbal glossary in which *asterion* is defined as *sal lucidu*[*m*] (Stracke 1974: 25, line 156). This is probably a synonym for *nitrum* (Schneider 1962) which refers to alkaline substances such as soda and potash.

[30] A gloss in the *Synonyma Bartholomei* reads *hebel, i. savina vel juniperus* (Mirfeld 1882: 23).

[31] In 1989, Hunt mentioned that there was no corpus of Middle English plant-names at that date, and he presented a list of nearly five hundred names which had been omitted from the OED (Hunt 1989: xlvi–viii). The list includes *buter besome*. This plant-name is not in the MED either.

edible young shoots that have a bitter taste, and these are qualities shared with the juvenile savine, so this may have led to confusion.

To conclude this section, there seems to be no compelling reason so far, on the evidence from the manuscript illustration, or from later medieval records, for believing that any plant other than the savine was denoted by the words *safene* or *savin* in early or late medieval times.[32]

13. The place-name *Safandun*

13.1 The charter evidence

The third and final piece of evidence which might suggest that the word *safene* was not always used of the savine is a single place-name in Dorset. The name consists of a first element, which is the supposed plant-name, combined with a second element which is *dūn* 'hill, mountain'. ?Safene 22 occurs in the Old English bounds of a Latin charter of King Eadred, dated to 948 (Sawyer 534), in which the king makes a grant of land in Purbeck, a coastal region of Dorset, to Ælfthryth, a 'religious woman'. The charter survives in the Shaftesbury Cartulary, compiled in the early fifteenth century (MS London, British Library, Harley 61, 3v–4v), but the text 'appears to be authentic' (Kelly 1996: 68).[33]

The second section of the survey in the charter, detailing the western boundary of the grant, begins at the sea (*sa*), proceeds to a stone *tor* 'rock, crag', and then passes up the cliff (*clif*) to a ditch or embankment (*dich*). After this, the text reads *þanen north anlang safandune on þene richte herepath* (Kelly 1996: 67), meaning 'then northwards along Safan-hill to the straight highway'. The meaning of this hill-name has always been problematic. Grundy (1935: 121) translates it as 'Juniper Down', and Mills (1977: 32) records that 'Professor Löfvenberg suggests that the first el[ement] may possibly be OE *safene*, *safine* 'savine' (a kind of juniper)'.[34] The latest editors of this charter are Hinton and Kelly. Hinton translates *safandun* as '?Juniper Down' (1995: 12), and Kelly writes 'the first element is possibly *safene*, 'safine', a kind of juniper' (1996: 70), but both editors refer to Mills (1977: 32) for this translation, who, in turn, refers to Löfvenberg's opinion. Whether Löfvenberg knew of Grundy's translation is not clear.

The second example of this place-name, listed here as ?Safene 23, occurs in the Old English bounds of a Latin charter of King Eadwig, dated to 956 (Sawyer 632), in which

[32] In more recent times, ModE *savin*(*e*) was, apparently, used of other plants, including other juniper species. The OED notes that, apart from American and West Indian species, *savine* was also used of the sea wormwood (*Seriphidium maritimum* (L.) Polj.) and the dwarf juniper (*Juniperus communis* ssp. *nana* (Hook.) Syme). Allen and Hatfield state that the common juniper (*Juniperus communis* L.) was 'widely known as savin' (Allen and Hatfield 2004: 65), and I am most grateful to David Allen for sending me information about the dates of such references. The earliest example dates to 1670, in which John Ray records that the 'low mountain-juniper' (the dwarf juniper) is found on Mount Snowdon and the Westmorland hills, and in both places is called *savine* (Ray 1670: 182). Ray makes no mention of the name *savine* being appropriate for the more widespread common juniper. A few other references found by Allen occur in nineteenth-century sources. It seems unlikely this tradition dated back to Anglo-Saxon times, and, indeed, any early medieval herbalist reading Pliny, for example, would find that his entries for *herba sabina* (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VII.74; Bk XXIV.102) and for *iunipirus* (1942–83: VII.44; Bk XXIV.54–5) were quite distinct; the first being listed among herbs, and the second among trees. Elsewhere, Pliny expresses doubt as to the correct classification of *sabina* although he still keeps it separate from *iunipirus* (1942–83: IV.438; Bk XVI.79).

[33] It is number 16 in Kelly's edition (1996: 66–70).

[34] Löfvenberg's comment was probably a personal communication to the editor, since he had read Mills' book in typescript (Mills 1977: viii).

the king makes a grant of land to Wihtsige, his *minister*. The land is at Corfe Castle and Blashenwell, both in Dorset. As with ?Safene 22, the text survives in the Shaftesbury Cartulary (MS London, British Library, Harley 61, 16v–17v), and Kelly regards this text also as authentic (1996: 78).[35] Part of the eastern boundary of this grant is coterminous with the western boundary of the previously discussed charter, but here, the bounds are described from north to south, the reverse direction to that in the previous charter's description. In Eadwig's charter, the bounds leave the highway (*herepaþ*), heading southwards along the Sa[?]en-hill (*sa[?]endune*) to a ditch or embankment (*dich*), and, from there, to the cliff (*clif*) and then out to the sea (*se*).[36]

The first problem is the spelling of the hill-name. The early fifteenth-century cartulary is the only extant source for these charters, and Kelly explains that they appear to have been copied from an earlier cartulary or cartularies, not from the original charters (Kelly 1996: xvi) so there would have been plenty of scope for faulty copying. Indeed, Kelly writes 'The charter-texts are in a generally poor state, consistent with repeated copying' (1996: xix). In addition, the Anglo-Saxon letter-forms have caused confusion on the part of the copyists.

The form of the hill-name in Eadred's charter is relatively clear.[37] I agree with Kelly that the reading should be *safandune* (Kelly 1996: 67). The only letter in doubt is the second *a*, which Birch (1885–93: File 4.P868) reads as *u*, and this is repeated by Grundy (1935: 121) and Mills (1977: 32). The letter is slightly rubbed, and I suggest this has caused the loss of the thin central horizontal line dividing the two lobes of an insular minuscule *a*. If the letter is taken to be a *u*, the clear horizontal stroke at the top is hard to explain.

The form of the same hill-name in Eadwig's charter is more problematic. It is clearly written, and easily transcribed as *sa[?]endune*. The letter marked here with a question-mark is also clear, but its significance is not. It appears to be a letter *wyn* (*ƿ*) which was used in Anglo-Saxon times to indicate the sound later represented by *w*. At some point or points in the transmission of this charter text, most of the *wyn*s were replaced with *w*'s, but not all of them. To make matters worse, the Anglo-Saxon letter *thorn* (*þ*), representing a *th* sound in modern orthography, is also indicated by the same *wyn*-like symbol. Kelly writes 'The scribe of BL Harley 61 does not distinguish between *wyn* (*ƿ*) and *thorn* (*þ*), and uses the same modified letter for each; she may not have recognised that there was a difference' (Kelly 1996: xix). Since the boundary clauses are full of basic English vocabulary beginning with the *th* sound, such as the ancestors of *the*, *then*, *this* and others, which must have been recognized by any scribe, it seems that the *wyn*-symbol would have been understood as indicating this sound. This suggests that the scribe of the Shaftesbury Cartulary would have read the hill-name as *sathendune*,[38] but the original Anglo-Saxon spelling of the hill-name may have included either *wyn* or *thorn*. The cartulary scribe had, presumably, not noticed that the same hill was spelt with *f* in another charter in the same cartulary. It may be argued that the *f*-spelling favours a *wyn*-spelling in Eadwig's orginal charter since both sounds involve a labial element.[39]

If the first element of the hill-name were *safene*, an anglicized form of Latin *sabina*, the variant spellings are explained by Campbell in his discussion of later Latin loan-words into

[35] It is number 19 in Kelly's edition (1996: 77–80). Hinton doubts the validity of this charter (1995: 16).

[36] *of þanne herepaþ suth anlang sapendune on anne dich, onlang dich oþe clif, þanen ut on se* (Kelly 1996: 77).

[37] I am very grateful to Susan Kelly for sending me facsimiles of the relevant pages in the two charters, and for discussing the letter-forms with me.

[38] Mills has this reading (1977: 32).

[39] The intervocalic *f* in Old English was voiced, a sound represented in modern orthography by *v*.

Old English. He explains that the Classical Latin intervocalic stops of later loan-words are usually unchanged in the Old English written records, but Latin *b* produces variant spellings in adopted words. It would appear that *b* had a spirantal pronunciation which resulted in a spelling of *f* or *u* in the adopted form (Campbell 1962: 215–6).[40] But does the first element really represent OE *safene*?

13.2 *Safene* and common juniper

As shown above, *safandun* has been tentatively interpreted as 'Juniper Down' by the editors of the charters, and by place-name scholars. It appears, however, that they differ as to precisely which plant they envisage on the downs. Löfvenberg, in an opinion reported by Mills (1977: 32) and also Kelly (1996: 70), interprets the first element of the place-name as, possibly, savine, which Mills and Kelly both describe as 'a kind of juniper'. It seems clear that they are referring to *Juniperus sabina* L. since it is unlikely they would describe the most commonly-occurring juniper in this way. Both Grundy (1935: 121) and Hinton (1995: 12), however, avoid the Modern English name *savine*, and simply interpret the plant, again with trepidation, as juniper. Grundy was certainly thinking of the common juniper (*Juniperus communis* L.) since he has a footnote reading 'I do not know whether juniper still grows on the down here indicated; but that plant is of course a common feature of the downs of S[outh] England' (Grundy 1935: 121, note C). Since the savine is not native to Britain, and the plant is, in this case, growing on coastal downs rather than in monastic gardens, it is far more likely that he is referring to the common juniper.[41] In other words, the possible existence of OE *safene* in an English place-name raises the question of whether the word could denote the common juniper, as well as savine. To investigate this possibility, the first question is whether the geographical location would have been suitable to support common juniper growth, but first, that location must be ascertained.

It is possible to pinpoint *safandun* with some degree of accuracy. Grundy says 'The Down is evidently the high down a long ½m. W[est] and N[orth]W[est] of Encombe' (1935: 121). Hinton, taking the parish boundary as a guide, interprets the location of the down as being the flatter land at the top of the slope up from the sea, on the coastal side of the Kingston to Kimmeridge road (Hinton 1995: 13), while Kelly suggests that *safandun* 'may be the spur now occupied by Westhill Farm (SY 952782)' (Kelly 1996: 70). This means that Grundy and Hinton prefer the hill to the north-west of Encombe, while Kelly prefers the hill to the east.

Whichever hill is the correct one, the surface geology of both is limestone (Portland stone)[42] and, after plotting both present and historical distributions of the common juniper in southern England, Ward notes that, in that area, the plant favours calcareous soils (chalk and limestones), and tolerates exposed places (Ward 1973: 169, 171, Fig. 3). Her map shows

[40] The use of *u* for Latin *b* can be seen, for example, in Safene 17 which has the form *sauine* for the adopted *sabina*. The use of *wyn* to represent this medial consonant would be reasonable.

[41] In the context of southern England, I always refer to the sub-species *Juniperus communis* ssp. *communis* L. There is some doubt as to whether there are two or three other native British sub-species. A definite example is the dwarf variety (*Juniperus communis* ssp. *nana* (Hook.) Syme) which is now mostly confined to mountainous and coastal regions of the north and west of Britain. Some botanists recognize a third sub-species, *Juniperus communis* ssp. *hemisphaerica* (J. & C. Presl) Nyman, which occurs on low sea-cliffs in western Cornwall and Pembrokeshire (Stace 1997: 50).

[42] Thanks are due to Ian West of the National Oceanography Centre at Southampton University for discussing the geology of these hills with me. Dr West's website, 'Geology of the Wessex Coast, Southern England' is highly recommended. It can be found at http://www.soton.ac.uk/~imw/index.htm.

a record of juniper, dating to the period 1871–1920, in eastern Purbeck, no more than four miles from the further west of the two hills involved in this discussion. Clearly, either hill could have supported common juniper growth in the past, so the suggested identification of *safan-* with the common juniper is *botanically* possible.[43]

It appears, therefore, that the place-name *safandun* suggests that OE *safene* could be used of the *common* juniper. While this possibility cannot be denied, the quality of evidence supporting it is very poor. Firstly, as far as can be ascertained, there is no other location in England which was named with the word *safene* in pre-Conquest times[44] so, if it *could* also have denoted the common juniper, which was much more widespread in England in the early medieval period than now, why was it not used, at least occasionally, elsewhere? Secondly, all other extant examples of *safene* refer to a medical ingredient, and are, apparently, never used of an entire plant (although see Section 13.4 below). Thirdly, the written evidence for the place-name is late, and the text has been shown to incorporate errors suggesting a lack of understanding of Old English. Finally, the available timescale from foreign word to naturalized English is rather short. *Safene* is a late borrowing into Old English, and, although dating cannot be precise, Campbell regards such words as having been derived from monastic Latin, rather than Vulgar (spoken) Latin (Campbell 1959: 200). This means that time must be allowed from the late adoption of this word for the savine, for its adoption by ordinary English speakers, then for its meaning to have been adapted by them to indicate a native plant, and then for it to have become so familiar and fully naturalized in English that it was used as a place-name element, and all this had to happen in time for it to be recorded in a mid tenth-century charter. While none of these objections disproves a connection with common juniper, taken together, they do, nevertheless, make the identification look somewhat dubious. Could there be another explanation for the first element of this place-name?

13.3 A Brittonic origin?

A tentative suggestion will now be made that the element *safan-* originated in the Brittonic language, in the word pronounced [savn], the ancestor of Modern Welsh *safn* 'mouth'.[45] The cognate form in Late Cornish is *sawn* 'cleft, gully, geo', an element which is present in several place-names recorded from the sixteenth century on, in forms such as *Saven-*, first recorded from 1597, *Savan* from 1580, and *Savyn*, also from 1580 (Padel 1985: 205, 304). Although a coastal feature such as a gully sounds very appropriate for the Purbeck case, Oliver Padel has pointed out that this meaning cannot be attested before the late sixteenth century. Furthermore, this sense is not shared with Welsh or Breton, indicating that it does not date back to the common ancestor of the three languages (Padel, personal communication, 13.11.2006). If the Purbeck example really is Brittonic, it is best regarded as an independent case of a metaphorical sense of *Primitive* Cornish **savn* 'mouth'. It is suggested that this topographical name was adopted by Old English speakers, who perhaps

[43] Ward shows that many former common juniper habitats are now devoid of the plant. She suggests that the main reasons could be the more intensive land-usage of modern times, and the lack of grazing by domestic animals which formerly kept other plant-growth under control, allowing the common juniper, which cannot tolerate shade, to flourish (Ward 1973: 178).

[44] There is no entry for *safene* in Smith (1956).

[45] The entire section on the Brittonic theory has benefitted immensely from the help of Oliver Padel who, nonetheless, should not be blamed for any of my own errors of judgement.

did not understand the meaning, and was compounded with OE *dūn* 'hill'.[46] This suggestion needs further consideration, and the first question which needs to be addressed is why the Brittonic name of the hill should be 'mouth' at all.

It was mentioned above that some scholars locate *safandun* to the north-west of Encombe, and others to the east. Although I have referred to the two possible locations of this point on the charter boundary as if they were separate hills, they are, in fact, the two ends of a single semi-circular ridge which is bisected by a steep-sided valley called 'North Gwyle' (Hyland 1978: 206). This runs north-eastwards to a valley-head situated only a short distance from the village of Kingston. At the other, southwestern end of the valley it broadens out into a natural basin known as 'The Golden Bowl'.[47] Encombe House stands in this position with a lake before it. A stream runs in a southerly direction from the lake, past Encombe Farm, and over the cliffs into the sea at a point which is called Freshwater Steps. At one time there was access to the beach from this point, but cliff erosion has now made that impossible.[48] The valley of the stream is called 'South Gwyle' on the 1889 Ordnance Survey map.[49] *Gwyle* is defined by Wright as 'a wooded glen near the mouth of a streamlet or winter torrent' (*English Dialect Dictionary* (EDD)), but Smith defines it as 'a ditch, a stream, a channel' and, having considered several cognate terms, he concludes 'In general, the meaning appears to be some kind of watercourse' (Smith 1956: I.206, under *goule*).

On the basis of the above geographical description, it is suggested that a mouth-like topographical feature of this valley was once metaphorically called a *savn*. The 'mouth' feature could have referred to the entry to the North Gwyle from the Golden Bowl, or to the mouth of the stream reaching the sea at Freshwater Steps. The extension of the name *savn* to the surrounding downland was, presumably, an Anglo-Saxon usage, meaning 'hill at a place called *Savn*'.

Some may wonder how this Brittonic element could have survived for so long, and, perhaps, have inspired a hill-name. An answer can be found in the great importance of the routeway through the Gwyles. Encombe not only once gave easy access to the beach on a coast where such a facility is rare but, at the other end, the valley-head is only about half a mile from Kingston, and from there, a direct route takes the traveller through the gap in the Purbeck Hills at Corfe Castle and on to Wareham which was once a major port on Poole Harbour. This route would have been of great importance to the shale industry which flourished, in particular, in Iron Age and Roman times.

Shale is a sedimentary rock composed of compacted mud and clays and, although it occurs elsewhere in Britain, archaeological evidence suggests that Purbeck shale was exploited above all others. It is easily worked and, when polished with beeswax, takes on a shiny black appearance very much like jet. A wide variety of manufactures is recorded from the Roman period, including armlets, rings, turned dishes and bowls, furniture and much more (Denford 2000; Calkin 1953). Judging from the archaeological records of numerous shale-working sites across Purbeck, the material was widely distributed after it had been quarried from the coastal region on either side of Kimmeridge Bay. At least one major quarry site, at Rope Lake Hole,

[46] Padel has pointed out that the Brittonic development *savn* > *savan, savyn* (epenthesis) is not dated to any earlier than the ninth century, but it could have been a development within English after *savn* had been borrowed at an earlier date.

[47] A description of this area can be found in Hyland (1978: 205–10).

[48] There was an easy descent in 1905 when Charles Harper, apparently with no problems, took his bicycle down Encombe valley and onto the beach, finding there a boat and bathing-machine (Harper 1905: 119–20).

[49] The map can be accessed online at http://www.old-maps.co.uk (search on 'Encombe').

was nearer to Encombe than to Kimmeridge (Woodward 1986), and some of the shale may well have been removed to the more distant working sites via the Encombe valley. Another reason for transporting the shale is that it is oil-shale which can be burnt as a fuel. It has long been known as 'Kimmeridge coal' and, in spite of giving off an unpleasant smell when burning, it has been used in domestic and industrial contexts, the latter extending into the early twentieth century (Denford 2000).

There may well have been even greater use of the Encombe valley than the preceding paragraph suggests. Allen, Fulford and Todd (2007) discuss the several industries of the Poole-Purbeck area in Roman times, and refer to them as a 'complex-agglomerative enterprise', in other words, an area of several interdependent industries. The products include Kimmeridge Clay Formation cementstone, which can be sawn to make decorative wall veneer and tesserae for mosaics (Allen, Fulford and Todd 2007: 175–8), burnt Kimmeridge Clay Formation shales, which are bright yellow, or dark red to orange in colour (2007: 178), Purbeck marble, which can be used for veneer, tiles and table-tops (2007: 178–9), a type of Romano-British black-burnished pottery (2007: 179–82), and salt, which could have been packed in the locally-made pottery (2007: 183). Poole-Purbeck has the densest distribution of Romano-British sites in Dorset, and the various industries would have required a considerable workforce.

In view of this history, the Encombe valley no doubt had an important role in the early economy of Purbeck. It seems not unlikely that Brittonic-speakers referred to the *savn* as giving access to an important routeway, and that English settlers, hearing this word, named the downland overlooking this feature as '*Savan* hill'.

The suggestion that *safan-* represents an anglicized form of a Brittonic word implies the presence of Brittonic speakers in Purbeck contemporary with English speakers, and this situation can be reasonably suggested by means of archaeological, epigraphical and linguistic evidence consisting of a church and memorial stones. Five stones with inscriptions are today located in the present Lady St Mary Church, Wareham, either built into the fabric or on display in the church as loose stones (Cramp 2006: 118–24; plates 128–41; Wareham 5–9 inclusive, entries written by John Higgitt). Wareham is situated a short distance to the north-west of the Purbeck Hills. The inscriptions were found when the previous Anglo-Saxon church was demolished in 1840–41, and at least one of them had been built into the fabric of that church, so clearly pre-dating its construction.[50] So when had the church been built?

Unfortunately and inevitably, there are considerable dating problems, because the only evidence consists of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century descriptions and illustrations of what appears to have been an important Anglo-Saxon church. Taylor and Taylor consider that evidence and date the building 'possibly' to their Period C, which runs from 950 to 1100 (Taylor and Taylor 1965–78: II.634).[51] Claims were later made that the demolished church had dated from the time of Aldhelm, who was Bishop of Sherborne from 705 until his death in 709 or 710 (RCHM(E) 1970: II.xliii–iv, 304–12) but, reviewing the situation in 1978, H. M. Taylor wrote 'On the evidence which is available I would not wish to amend our assessment of date as given in Vol. II: 634 but I would again stress its tentative nature' (Taylor and Taylor

[50] The circumstances of the discovery of four of the five inscribed stones, and their precise locations, were not recorded at the time (Cramp 2006: 118). The stone about which some details of finding were recorded is Cramp's Wareham 7 (with the *Catgug* inscription) which was found in the south arcade of the demolished church (Cramp 2006: 120).

[51] For an explanation of their dating scheme see Taylor and Taylor (1965–78: I.xxv).

1965–78: III.1085). In 1992, however, Richard Gem dated the church to 'somewhere around 800' (Gem 1992: 41). This date is partly based on his belief that a painting of the Anglo-Saxon church interior shows architectural features that are similar to, but typologically later than those at Brixworth, Northamptonshire, a church which he estimates to be mid to late eighth century in date.[52] Gem does not address Taylor and Taylor's dating. On the evidence of pre-demolition descriptions and illustrations, and considering the opinions of the three specialists in this subject, the church can only be safely dated to the period between pre-800 and 1100. This broad range is not surprising, considering the lack of a standing building, so can the evidence of the inscriptions narrow down the possibilities?

The inscriptions are Latin memorials to people with, as far as they can be identified, Brittonic and biblical names, such as Catgug and Gideon, inscribed in letter-forms closely related to those used in other Celtic inscriptions. Radford and Jackson write that they 'form a group which must be compared both epigraphically and prosopographically with the early Christian monuments of Wales and the south-west' (Radford and Jackson 1970: II.310). An alternative explanation was put forward by McClure (1907), who suggested that the memorials commemorate Breton refugees from Scandinavian attacks on Brittany in the 910s. This suggestion has proved controversial. Radford (1978: 140) rejected it, but Dumville, in discussing the not inconsiderable Breton influences on Wessex, opines that Radford's rejection of the Breton hypothesis is unconvincing (Dumville 1992: 157, note 104). John Higgitt has reviewed the arguments, and finds the late date required for the refugee theory difficult to accept (Cramp 2006: 122). Radford and Jackson dated the inscriptions to the period of the seventh century to c. 800 'or later' (Radford and Jackson 1970: II.310). The stone that was certainly built into the Anglo-Saxon church fabric is the Catgug stone (Cramp 2006: 120–1; Wareham 7), which Cramp dates to the seventh to the early ninth century (?). This is based on the seventh- or eighth-century lettering, and on Sims-Williams' assessment of the linguistic evidence as being appropriate for the period c. 800 to c. 960 or later.[53] The four other inscriptions, which may or may not have been built into the Anglo-Saxon church when found, are dated by Cramp to: the seventh century (Wareham 5: the Vidcu- stone); the seventh to eighth centuries (Wareham 6: the Iudn- stone); the seventh to early ninth centuries (?) (Wareham 8: the Deniel stone); and the ninth century (?) (Wareham 9: the Gongorie stone). The suggestion that the inscriptions referred to Bretons displaced by the Scandinavian attacks of the 910s on Brittany, would appear to sit uneasily with the evidence of the memorial stones. What does Wareham contribute to the consideration of the place-name *safandun*?

The Wareham evidence suggests that people with Brittonic names were buried there perhaps as early as the seventh century, but it must be remembered that the inscriptions are not necessarily evidence for living Brittonic speech since one does not always speak the language responsible for one's name. Nonetheless, the earliest datings of the inscriptions are compatible with Probert's study of language change from Brittonic to Old English in south-west England. His conclusions are that Brittonic survived in east Dorset into the mid sixth century, and perhaps after the mid seventh century. A few placenames in Dorset possibly indicate borrowings from Brittonic as late as the late seventh or eighth centuries. He writes:

[52] Gem also uses the inscriptions as dating evidence, but I am here attempting to assess the architectural and epigraphic evidence separately.

[53] Sims-Williams suggests twenty-eight periods of early medieval Brittonic language development as evidenced on inscriptions (2003: 290–2). The Catgug inscription is placed in phases 21 to 28 (2003: 366, no. 1061/Dor.iii), the earliest date for Period 21 being c.800, and Period 28 being established by c. 960.

'Overall, these data are consistent with a local transition from British to English control during the seventh century. Yet they can also be used to argue either for the presence of some Old English speakers by the late sixth century or for the patchy survival of Brittonic into the early eighth century; indeed, it may be that these are not mutually exclusive interpretations' (Probert 2007: 243). The situation presented by Probert would certainly allow for the adoption of a Brittonic topographical name by English speakers, and their incorporation of it into the hill-name *safandun* at some point between the late sixth century and the early eighth century. This name was to survive into the tenth century at least.

13.4 *Safene* and savine

It is, of course, possible that, if the first element of *safandun* were actually OE *safene*, it indicated an association of the hill with genuine savine trees rather than common junipers, and archaeological evidence suggests a possible context.[54] The hill to the north-west of Encombe is marked by a modern obelisk, and records show that a Romano-British building was excavated there in 1954.[55] It was built of limestone blocks, and some surviving flagstones show it had a solid floor. The site produced occupation debris (food refuse and pottery), and waste material from the manufacture of shale armlets (Brown 1954: 80–1). Surface rubble suggests that the building may have stood in a compound (RCHM(E) 1970: II.599).

As for the other candidate hill, to the east of Encombe, traces of a building identified as Romano-British were found in Westhill Wood, as a result of fieldwalking in 1958.[56] Fragments of clay roof-tiles were found, along with evidence of occupation in the form of both samian (fine ware) and coarse pottery dating from the first or second century through to the fourth century. Also recorded is a coin of Carausius (c.293), and more shale waste (RCHM(E) 1970: II.600). This location is on the same hill-spur as Westhill Farm, mentioned by Kelly, but lies further south, towards Hounstout Cliff. It is possible that the owners of one or other of these buildings planted savines to remind them of their Continental homeland (if they were not Britons), to provide a romanized 'fashion accessory' for their property, or to provide an immediate source of medicine required by one or more of the occupants. The protection of a building or high wall might have been sufficient for the savines to flourish. Under these circumstances, a Roman place- or house-name based on Latin *sabina* may have survived long enough to be heard by Anglo-Saxon settlers.

14. *Safene* and medicine

It was pointed out in Section 2 that twenty items in the Safene catalogue are classified as being from medical texts and, in addition, there is an item which is a gloss, and another which is a glossary entry which both have their origins in medical texts.[57] The gloss, Safene 20, occurs in the same manuscript as the Old English *Herbarium* but is not part of that text. Six leaves of a later manuscript (MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii, folios 5–10 (s.xii)) have been bound in with the herbal, and one of these pages (fol. 10v) consists of a list of the

[54] An excellent source for such information is the Archaeology Data Service at http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk.
[55] Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ID EHNMR-650449 and NMRMIC-1544.
[56] ADS ID NMRMIC-1553. The building is described as a villa.
[57] This section has been read and commented on by G. H. E. Craig, SRN, SCM. I am grateful for her considerable help with the symptoms of certain medical problems.

chapter titles of the *De viribus herbarum* of 'Macer' (Ker 1957: 283–4). This work is a herbal text in Latin, written in poetic form, and first mentioned between 1120 and 1130, although it could have been written much earlier. The apparent attribution to Aemilius Macer, who died in 15 BC, is spurious, and the real author may have been Odo of Meung (Odo Magdunensis) who lived in the early eleventh century (Gough 1974: 285).

Just as the gloss has its origins in a medical text, so does the glossary item, Safene 21, which is found in the Laud herbal glossary (Stracke 1974: 59, entry 1299). In other words, leaving aside the two queried items relating to the place-name, all the extant examples of OE *safene* occur in medical contexts, provided plant-lists are considered to be, at least partly, medical in nature.[58]

The next consideration is to ascertain what the Anglo-Saxons believed to be the healing properties of *safene*. This information is difficult to retrieve since many of the remedies involve long lists of plant ingredients of which *safene* is just one. It is easier to guess at the plant's supposed properties from the cures in which *safene* is the only plant, or one of two or three ingredients.[59]

The first remedy discussed here appears in the Old English *Herbarium*, and requires the patient to be given *safene* to drink, mixed with honey, or pounded and mixed with wine.[60] The Old English *Herbarium* text was translated from a Latin, southern European source,[61] in which *sabina* was said to cure *morbus regius*, 'king's disease'. This was translated literally into Old English as *cynelic adl*, with the same meaning (Safene 13).[62] 'King's evil' was the name of a disease which, for centuries, was supposedly cured by the touch of a king, or contact with something he had touched but, unfortunately, it is evident that this was said of different diseases at different periods of history (De Vriend 1984: 308, with references). The Old English *Herbarium* clearly translates a Latin textual tradition which is close to that surviving in the manuscript Montecassino, Archivio della Badia, 97, which reads: 'For king's disease which is *aurigo*' (*Ad morbum regium quod est auriginem*; De Vriend 1984: 127). *Aurigo* is assumed to be an error for *aurugo* 'jaundice', a word which is cognate with *aurum* 'gold', referring to the yellowish skin of someone suffering from this disease. Elsewhere in the manuscript, however, as De Vriend points out, the same word is clearly used of the feet. The phrase 'For painful or "jaundiced" feet' (*Ad pedum dolorem vel auriginosos*) is translated, in its entirety, into Old English as *Wið fotadle*, 'For foot disease' (De Vriend 1984: 307; 160–1). Whatever the author of the Latin text had in mind when he wrote *auriginosos*, it is clear that he thought he was referring to a foot problem, and that is also how the Anglo-Saxons understood him.[63]

The English translator of the *Herbarium* proceeded to explain '*aurigo*' to his English readers: 'that is, in our language, a spasm of the sinews and a swelling of the feet' (*þæt ys on ure geþeode þæra syna getoh ⁊ fota geswel*).[64] This is, presumably, how at least some of

[58] An argument could be made that Ælfric, for example, compiled lists of plants for the purposes of teaching Latin, not medicine, but the purpose was to teach the vocabulary that the students would need in their future monastic lives, and the plant-lists demonstrate the importance of herbal medicine in the role of the monasteries.

[59] Citations which come into this category are: Safene 3 (6), 4, 7, 10–13, 16, 27, 28. (Items in brackets are related citations.)

[60] The plant is probably also to be pounded if mixed with honey, but this is not absolutely clear.

[61] See Section 6.1 for a brief description of this text.

[62] Safene 7 occurs in the contents list of the *Herbarium*, so lists the same remedies on which Safene 13 expands. Safene 16 is the caption to the illustration in the same text.

[63] The 'jaundiced feet' may relate to the skin problems which *safene* was believed to cure. (See below.)

[64] A slightly different wording appears in the contents list of the *Herbarium*: 'For spasm of the sinews and for swelling

the Anglo-Saxons interpreted 'king's disease' but they clearly, and perhaps rightly, made no connection with jaundice. *Aurigo* is also translated as a spasm of the sinews (*sina togung*) elsewhere in the same manuscript (De Vriend 1984: 82–3). It, therefore, seems reasonable to interpret the Anglo-Saxon understanding of 'king's disease', involving swelling of the feet, as probably gout (De Vriend 1984: 308), and what sounds like cramp (spasm of the sinews), although not a symptom of gout, may have been associated with the tensing of muscles with the sudden pain in the foot.[65]

The Old English *Herbarium* also recommends *safene* as a cure for headache (*wiþ heafodece*; Latin: *ad capitis dolorem*; De Vriend 1984: 126–7; Safene 28). The plant is to be carefully pounded with vinegar and mixed with oil, and the resulting mixture is to be smeared on the head and temples.

The final *safene* cure in the *Herbarium* concerns *deadspringas* (Latin: *ad carbunculum*; De Vriend 1984: 126–7; Safene 27). The DOE defines *dēadspring* as 'necrotic sore, ulcer, carbuncle', and a carbuncle is an abscess (COD). The advice is to pound up *safene* in honey, and smear the mixture on the sore.

Two other Old English medical texts, Bald's *Leechbook* and the *Lacnunga*, both offer a cure for skin problems which clearly derives from the same source.[66] The *Leechbook* remedy (Safene 3) occurs in a section containing twenty-eight cures 'for every kind of skin eruption and swelling and pernicious disease' (*wiþ ælces cynnes omum ⁊ onfeallum ⁊ bancoþum*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.98–9). Although the *Lacnunga* cure (Safene 6) has the same introduction to its section, claiming twenty-eight cures (Pettit 2001: I.74–5, entry 87), it actually contains only thirteen (Cameron 1993: 46), so a scribe would appear to have copied this section from Bald's work.

The *Leechbook* cure containing *safene* begins 'For the same [problem]', (*Wiþ þon ilcan*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.100–1), and in *Lacnunga*, it begins 'Again' (*Eft*; Pettit 2001: I.76–7). To find what the problem is, the previous remedy must be consulted and, in both texts, it begins in the same way as for the *safene* cure. It must be assumed, therefore, that 'the same problem' and 'again' refer to *two* remedies before the *safene* cure, and this reads *Wiþ omena geberste* in both texts.[67] Cockayne translates this as 'Against bursting of erysipelatous inflammations' (Cockayne 1864–6: II.101), implying that the treatment is to prevent the bursting, but Pettit takes a more neutral view, translating 'for erysipelatous swelling' (Pettit 2001: I.77). The definition of *geberst* in the DOE makes the ambiguity of this phrase clear: 'of skin eruptions: bursting, breaking (or perh[aps] ref[erring] to the eruption itself of erysipelas, shingles, etc.)'.

of the feet' (*Wiþ togunga þæra sina ⁊ wiþ fota geswell*; De Vriend 1984: 15; Safene 7).

65 As regards the possible connection of spasm of the sinews with cramp, it is worth noting that a panacea occurring in the *Lacnunga*, contains a list of the cures it is said to effect, and they are presented in head to foot order, as is common in medieval medical texts. The 'contraction of the sinews' (*sina getoge*), occurs between difficulty of urination and pain in the knee, which suggests the sinews concerned are in the thigh (Pettit 2001: I.118). While this may suggest the possibility of sciatica rather than cramp, it certainly appears to locate the problem in the leg. Symptoms of diseases in this paper have been checked in Macpherson (1995).

66 Bald's *Leechbook*, composed in Old English in two parts, is a classified compilation of cures from various Mediterranean sources and, presumably, traditional Germanic medicine, although the latter influence is difficult to determine. For a description of this text, see Cameron (1993: 42–5), and for the edited text, see Cockayne (1864–6: II.2–298). *Lacnunga*, also written in Old English, is less well-organized, and less accurate than Bald's work. It is a commonplace book, in which cures were recorded as they were encountered, and it is valuable to modern medical historians as demonstrating the more superstitious side of Anglo-Saxon medicine. For a description, see Cameron (1993: 45–7), and for the edited text and Modern English translation, see Pettit (2001).

67 *Wiþ* is spelt *wið* in *Lacnunga* (Pettit 2001: I.76).

In other words, the treatment may be for the eruption *before* the swellings have burst, or after. *Ōman* is defined by Clark Hall (1960) as 'eruptions of the skin, erysipelas', and *erysipelas* is defined in the COD as 'a skin disease caused by a streptococcus and characterized by large raised red patches on the face and legs'. Without further evidence, *ōman*, in this remedy, cannot be translated by the disease-specific term 'erysipelas', since the exact causes of diseases were not usually understood in the early medieval period.[68] The generic term 'skin eruptions' has been preferred in this paper.

It does, in fact, seem unlikely that true erysipelas was involved in the *safene* cure. Erysipelas was popularly known as 'St Anthony's Fire', and it is often caused by eating bread made from fungally-affected rye. The resulting sore, red patch is slightly raised in relation to the healthy skin, and can cover a large area, so it does not consist of individual swellings. Such swellings are, however, involved in the remedy which occurs two entries before the *safene* cure, and which introduces a number of cures relating to the same medical problem. This interpretation results from the instruction to make four cuts around and outside the eruption, and then let it run (*læt yrnan* in both texts). This seems highly suggestive of a treatment for an abscess, or other individual swelling, rather than a swollen patch. The *safene* cure in both the *Leechbook* and *Lacnunga* instructs the physician to grind the savine to a powder, mix it with honey, and smear it on (Cockayne 1864–6: II.100; Pettit 2001: I.76).

These are the only cures in which *safene* is the single plant ingredient, so it is evident that it was considered a remedy for spasm of the sinews (cramp? or sciatica?), swelling of the feet (gout?), headache, ulcers, abscesses, and skin eruptions in general. Would these remedies have worked? The treatment of skin problems with savine is accepted today, as Stuart writes: 'Now only used externally, with care, as a stimulant dressing for blisters, wounds, ulcers, and to remove warts' (Stuart 1979: 82). In the early twentieth century, Mrs Grieve wrote that 'it is useful as an ointment and as a dressing to blisters in order to promote discharge; also applied externally to syphilitic warts, and other skin trouble' (Grieve 1931: 718).

14.1 *Safene* with *eorþgealla*

Next to be considered are remedies in which *safene* is used along with one or two other plants only. In Bald's *Leechbook* can be found some remedies for problems of the spleen, including hardness of that organ (*Wiþ heardnesse miltes*) (Cockayne 1864–6: II.250–3). *Safene* is an ingredient in a drink which is part of the treatment (Safene 4). The physician is to boil ivy leaves in vinegar, and then boil some bran in the same vinegar. The resulting substance is to be put into a bladder and the bladder tied to the sore or painful place. Then a drink is to be prepared for the patient by pounding or grinding 'earth-galls' to powder so as to make three or more spoon measures. To this should be added three spoon measures of *safene* powder (*dūst*), and three spoon measures of 'boiling pitch', and the whole mixture should be sieved. The patient should be given a spoon-full of the mixture in wine after a night's fast. If s/he has a fever, however, s/he is to receive the mixture in cooled-down hot water, to prevent the pitch remaining (combining?) with the other powders.

The ingredients of the drink include *eorþgealla*, defined by the DOE as 'common centaury' (*Centaurium erythraea* Rafn.) or, in other cases, 'yellow-wort' (*Blackstonia perfoliata* (L.)

[68] This is not to say that Cockayne and Pettit translate wrongly, since the adjective *erysipelatous* can mean either 'pertaining to' or 'of the nature of' erysipelas (OED). Indeed, in his glossary, Pettit adds 'or similar affliction' to Clark Hall's definition of *ōman* (Pettit 2001: I.249).

Huds.) or 'yellow centaury' (*Cicendia filiformis* (L.) Delarbre).[69] All three plants are members of the Gentian family (Gentianaceae) and are native to Britain.[70] The rather alarming 'boiling pitch' (*weallende pic*) is explained by Cockayne as an error resulting from a misunderstanding of Latin phrases such as *ex picato mero*, 'from pure pitch-flavoured wine' which occurs, for example, in a spleen remedy recorded by Marcellus of Bordeaux (Marcellus Empiricus), in his late fourth-century compilation entitled *De medicamentis liber* (Marcellus of Bordeaux 1889: 238; Section 23.41), a text known to the Anglo-Saxons (Cameron 1993: 68). It is also distinctly possible that the translator has misunderstood a reference to what is often called 'Cade Oil'. This is a dark reddish-brown, sometimes almost black, oily substance with a smoky aroma which is obtained from the wood of (mostly) *Juniperus oxycedrus* L., a juniper native to the Mediterranean region. Fernie describes the oil as 'resembling liquid pitch', mentions that it is also called 'Juniper tar', and explains that it is used for skin problems (Fernie 1914: 273). This ingredient, however, since it is not a plant, will not be considered further in this paper. As regards the plants, why were they considered appropriate to cure hardness of the spleen? Did they complement each other in some way?

'Hardness' of an internal organ is most usually associated with cirrhosis of the liver, but the remedy involving *safene* and *eorþgealla* specifies the spleen. This organ is located behind the stomach, in a high position in the abdomen on the left side (from the patient's point of view) and, in its normal state, is usually not palpable (possible for the physician to feel). Several medical problems, however, can cause the spleen to become enlarged (the condition of 'splenomegaly') sufficiently for the physician to detect, and there is a tendency for it to become firmer to the touch the longer the condition lasts.

The name *eorþgealla* is a compound term consisting of *eorðe* 'earth' and *gealla* 'gall, bile', but it appears to be a literal translation of the Latin plant-name *fel terrae* 'gall of the earth' (centaury). Since the liver produces bile, some of which is stored in the neighbouring gall-bladder, it is no surprise that *eorþgealla* is involved in treating the liver. Bile passes through the bile ducts into the intestine, where it aids in the digestion and absorption of food. Should this passage of bile into the intestine be hindered or obstructed for any reason, bile is then absorbed by the blood and lymph, and deposited in various body tissues, resulting in the distinctive yellowish skin of the sufferer from jaundice. That jaundice indicated a liver problem seems to have been understood by the Anglo-Saxons, since one of their terms for jaundice, *gealādl* 'bile disease' indicates this.[71] It is logical, from the medieval point of view, therefore, that *eorþgealla* is included in remedies for the following: hardness of the liver ('for the palpable hardness of the liver', *wiþ þære gefelan heardnesse þære lifre*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.206–7);[72] for a burst liver-abscess ('for the liver-ulcer when the pus-filled swelling bursts', *wiþ þære lifre wunde þonne se swile gewyrsmed tobyrst*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.202); for liver disease (*wið liferadle*; De Vriend 1984: 80); in a drink which is almost a panacea, and which is a remedy, among many other things, for pain in the liver (*wið liferwerce*); for flowing gall (*wið seondum*

[69] Bierbaumer defines *eorþgealla* as common centaury only (Bierbaumer 1975–9: I.56), with a cross-reference to *centauria*. The DOEPN (Bierbaumer revised) defines *eorþgealla* as common centaury, yellow-wort or 'knapweed, a species of' (*Centaurea* L.).

[70] English flower-names used in this paper are from Dony, Jury and Perring (1986), with any differences from the DOE stated, and botanical Latin names are from Stace (1997).

[71] As Pettit points out (2001: II.344), *Leechbook III* contains a statement that jaundice is caused by flowing bile: 'For the yellow disease which comes from flowing bile' (*Við þære geolwan adle sio cymð of seondum geallan*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.314).

[72] Cockayne translates *gefelan*, not as 'palpable' but as 'sensitive'.

geallan); and for the yellow disease (*wið … þære geolwan adle*) (Pettit 2001: I.118). There is certainly also a spleen remedy ('For a spleen-sick man', *Wiþ milte seocum men*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.248), but the *eorþgealla*, true to its name, is primarily a remedy for liver problems. Why is it occasionally involved in treatments for the spleen?

It must have been very difficult for ancient and medieval physicians to understand internal medical problems, and it is reasonable to ask how they would be able to attribute certain symptoms to problems in the liver or the spleen.[73] It seems most likely that what modern physicians refer to as 'palpation' is the key to this question. It has already been mentioned that hardness/enlargement of the liver or spleen can be detected by feeling the abdomen, and the Old English phrase mentioned above, which can be translated as 'the palpable hardness of the liver' (*wiþ þære gefelan heardnesse þære lifre*) may suggest that this form of examination was known. I suggest it is significant for the understanding of early liver and spleen treatments that some patients have problems with both organs at the same time, and that this can be detected by physical examination. Splenomegaly can be caused by several diseases,[74] and one of them is hepatitis (liver disease). Such a patient can suffer from the enlargement of *both* organs (a condition known as 'hepatosplenomegaly'), and this may well have created problems for early physicians in attempting to distinguish between them. Taking these points into consideration, it is not surprising that the symptoms attributed to a diseased liver and a diseased spleen became, to a considerable extent, conflated. For this reason, it is suggested that, although *eorþgealla* is clearly a remedy for liver problems, medieval physicians may have regarded a physically detectable enlarged spleen as a related problem.[75]

14.2 *Safene* with *aprotane*

Another plant which occurs with *safene* is *aprotane*, defined by the DOE as 'the plant southernwood'. This plant-name was adopted from Latin *habrotonum* 'southernwood' (DMLBS) and is the *Artemisia abrotanum* L., which is not native to Britain (Stace 1997: 731). It occurs with *safene* in the *Peri Didaxeon* (Safene 12), a late twelfth-century text which is either in Old English, or a form of English transitional towards Middle English (scholars differ on this matter), but is normally at least mentioned in works on Anglo-Saxon medicine (Cameron 1993: 64). The remedy is a drink *ad vertiginem capitis*, which is usually translated as 'dizziness in the head'. The drink is made from savine, southernwood, pepper, honey and wine.[76]

[73] I am here assuming that much ancient and medieval medicine is based on observation and experience, a view which is increasingly accepted. It is true, of course, that superstitious and/or ineffectual elements exist in the extant treatments, but such elements are usually obvious, involving, for example, chants, particular numbers or colours, and so on (Bonser 1963: parts 3, 5 and 6).

[74] Cirrhosis of the liver, for example, involves a build-up of fibrous tissue which eventually impedes the blood flow in the portal vein, the vessel which carries the blood supply to this organ. This causes portal hypertension (high pressure) which, in turn, causes splenomegaly (see The Hepatitis C Trust at http://www.hepcuk.info, under 'Portal hypertension'). Cameron suspects malarial infection to be the cause of enlargement and hardening of the spleen (Cameron 1983: 176).

[75] It may be relevant that the EDD records the term *milt-hole* in dialectal English, meaning 'the space between the ribs and the pelvis'. In other words, the abdomen as a whole was popularly referred to by a term for the spleen (*milt*), which indicates, even at a much later date, a certain vagueness in connection with this area of the body.

[76] Also dealing with *vertigo* are Safene 10 and 11 which both occur in a recipe '*ad vertiginem*' inserted into the same manuscript as the illustrated Old English *Herbarium* (MS London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C.iii). Savine is accompanied in this recipe by three other plants: *betonica*, *wermod* and *merc* (Cockayne 1864-6: I.378). See Section 10 for details of the Safene 11 remedy, and see Section 12.1 for a suggestion that 'dizziness' may refer to epilepsy ('the falling sickness').

Aprotane appears in several other diverse Anglo-Saxon remedies: for hardness of the liver ('for the palpable hardness of the liver', *wiþ þære gefelan heardnesse þære lifre*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.206); for an inward stitch (*Wiþ instice*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.274);[77] for dimness of the eyes (*Wið eagna miste*; Cockayne 1864–6: I.28); for chest pain (*Wiþ breost wærce*; Cockayne 1864–6: I.58); for 'hiccough' (*wiþ geohsan*; Cockayne 1864–6: I.62);[78] for ulcers (*Wiþ springe*; Cockayne 1864–6: I.80); and for the following from the *Herbarium*: hardness of breathing (*Wyð nyrwyt*); sciatica (*wið banece*); difficult urination (*wið þæt man earfoðlice gemigan mæge*); pain in the side (*Wið sidan sare*); poisons (*Wið attru*); snakebite (*wið nædrena slite*); 'cool fever' (*wið þone colan fefor*); bites of venomous spiders (misunderstood as a type of snake) and scorpions (*Wið … spalangiones ⁊ scorpiones*); and sore eyes (*Wið eagena sare*; De Vriend 1984: 176).

While it is hard to detect any particular pattern in these cures, there seems to be a distinct connection with poisons: poisons in general, snakebite, venomous spiders, and scorpions. Other symptoms may also be connected with poisoning. The 'cool fever' occurs in one of the sections on poisons in the *Herbarium*, situated between snakebite and *spalangiones* (thought by the Anglo-Saxons to be snakes). Pliny writes, under *habrotonum*: 'very effective against those creatures whose venom causes shivering and chills' (*efficacissimum contra ea quorum veneno tremores et frigus accidunt*; Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VI.274–5; Bk XXI.162),[79] clearly linking these symptoms with poisoning. The words *frigus* and *tremores* seem to have been interpreted as 'cool fevers' by the Anglo-Saxons, and a glance at a medical dictionary under 'Fever' explains why: 'The onset of a fever is usually marked by a rigor or shivering' (Macpherson 1995: 189).

Less marked is a connection with the chest: chest pain, hardness of breathing, and 'hiccough', and another connection with sharp internal pain: 'inward' stitch and sciatica, perhaps also including 'difficult urination' (the pain of cystitis?) and 'hardness of the liver'. With regard to the liver, 'Large numbers [of Hepatitis C sufferers] get sharp pains over the liver … Occasionally the pains in the upper part of the abdomen spread to the rest of the abdomen. This can cause generalised abdominal pains that can result in quite severe discomfort'.[80]

14.3 *Safene* with multiple plant ingredients

In all the remaining *safene* citations, the plant-name occurs in a list of ingredients of at least three other plants, but sometimes including many more, for example, over thirty-six plants in Safene 17. Such lists do not offer a chance of identifying what Anglo-Saxon physicians considered to be the properties of savine. There is a much better chance of achieving this by considering the cures in which savine has few companions or none at all. Nonetheless, the descriptors of *safene* (the medical problems) in the remaining references will now be briefly considered.

[77] The *Leechbook* contrasts this 'inward stitch' with a stitch which is not inwards (*stice butan innoðe*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.274–7). For this reason, Cockayne's translation with 'inwards' seems better than 'internal' (Clark Hall 1960), since all stitch is an internal pain, but the 'stitch' which southernwood is supposed to cure must be deep inside the body.

[78] This is clearly something more serious than the annoying, short-lived hiccough with which we are all familiar.

[79] Translated by W. H. S. Jones.

[80] Quoted from The Hepatitis C Trust website at http://www.hepcuk.info. See 'Symptoms of chronic infection with Hepatitis C' by Graham Foster.

Firstly, there are some generalized remedies which only provide limited information. Safene 5 is a cure in Bald's *Leechbook* which involves *safene* and two other plants: *salfie* 'sage' and *wurma* 'a plant used for dyeing', along with the plant-products myrrh and white incense or frankincense. The 'remedy' (a drink) they are intended to effect is a general preventative which, therefore, gives us little information about the individual plants. The recipe is 'for the same' (*to þon ilcan*) which must refer to the purpose of the previous remedy which is 'to keep the body in health' (*To gehealdanne lichoman hælo*; Cockayne 1864–6: II.294). Safene 9 occurs in the *Lacnunga* in an extremely elaborate remedy involving a large number of plants, incantations and prayers: 'For a holy salve' (*To haligre sealfe*; Pettit 2001: I.30–7, entry 63). Safene 17, also in *Lacnunga*, occurs in a long plant list, described as 'the green salve' (*seo grene sealf*), but lacking instructions or further description (Pettit 2001: I.10, entry 15).

The remaining multiple plant cures are a little more helpful. Safene 1, in *Leechbook III*, concerns an ointment 'for *bite*' (*wiþ bite*), and this noun can refer to the bite or sting of any animal, a cut from an edged weapon, or ulcerous sores[81] (Cockayne 1864–6: II.312). As with Safene 17, *safene* occurs in a long list of plants without instructions as to how to prepare the remedy, and with no further information. Safene 2, in the *Lacnunga*, involves a drink 'for the ears' (*wið earon*; Pettit 2001: 80, entry 106), but it is not specified what the ear problem is. Safene 8, 14 and 19 present remedies for *þeor* (*ðeor*).[82] The medical problem named *þēor* or *þēorādl* in the Anglo-Saxon medical texts is not fully understood, but Cameron suggests that it refers to a dry roughness of the skin, probably the result of a vitamin deficiency or allergy, and, by extension, to a sensation of roughness internally, for example, in the eyes or the respiratory system (Cameron 1988: 129; 1993: 96).[83] None of the three *þēor* recipes with *safene* clarify the specific problem. Safene 15 is an ointment recipe in the *Lacnunga*, *wið micclum lice ⁊ bringcadle*, which Pettit translates as 'for swollen body and (?)chest-disease' (Pettit 2001: I.70–1, entry 80).[84] Safene 18 occurs in a recipe in the *Lacnunga* for a *lungensealf*, 'lung ointment' (Pettit 2001: I.20, entry 34) and, finally, Safene 10 and 11, in an individual recipe added to the illustrated *Herbarium* manuscript, refer to a wash for the head 'for dizziness' (*ad vertiginem*; Cockayne 1864–6: I.378).

14.4 The medical role of *safene*

The *safene* cures discussed in the above parts of Section 14 can now be tabulated, showing their catalogue numbers, and omitting any that do not mention a specific disease or part of the body. Remedies in which *safene* is the sole plant ingredient:[85]

[81] This is based on the DOE definition, but Cockayne translates as 'cancer' (Cockayne 1864–6: II.313).

[82] Safene 8 is a drink in Bald's *Leechbook* (Cockayne 1864–6: II.120); Safene 14, occurring in *Lacnunga*, does not specify the form of the remedy but it is one of a group of seven cures for *þeor*, five of which are drinks (Pettit 2001: I.58, entry 74); and Safene 19, also in *Lacnunga*, does not specify the form of the remedy (Pettit 2001: I.100, entry 144).

[83] See also Biggam (2003: 218–20) for the use of *æspe* bark in the treatment of this problem.

[84] The word which Pettit reads as *bringcadle* is problematic. It has also been interpreted as *hringcadle* and *[c]ringcadle*, with definitions such as epilepsy, ringworm, shingles, back-disease (?), and chest-disease. Pettit explains and discusses the various efforts to understand this word (Pettit 2001: II.167–8). I have adopted Pettit's suggestion of chest-disease, but with a question-mark.

[85] Numbers in brackets indicate related citations (see Appendix A2).

3, (6)	skin eruptions	Bald: *Leechbook*; *Lacnunga*
13	spasm of sinews	*Herbarium*
13	swelling of feet	*Herbarium*
27	ulcer/abscess	*Herbarium*
28	headache	*Herbarium*

Remedies which include *safene* and one or two other plant ingredients:

4	hardness of spleen	Bald: *Leechbook*	*+eorþgealla*
12	dizziness	*Peri Didaxeon*	*+aprotane*

Remedies which include *safene* and more than two other plant ingredients:

1	bite, sting, cut, ulcer	*Leechbook III*
2	ears	*Lacnunga*
8	dry roughness of skin, sensation of internal roughness	Bald: *Leechbook*
10, 11	dizziness	Recipe 5.8
14, 19	[as for 8 above]	*Lacnunga*
15	swollen body, ?chest disease	*Lacnunga*
18	lungs	*Lacnunga*

It has been shown above that modern herbalists accept the value of savine for the treatment of skin problems such as blisters, wounds, ulcers and warts. Grieve specifically referred to its use as a dressing 'to blisters in order to promote discharge' (Grieve 1931: 718). Several contexts in which savine appears suggest that its main property was believed to be the ability to expel things from the body. In many cases, this is a scientifically supported belief. Stuart describes savine as a 'powerful uterine stimulant', emmenagogue and irritant (Stuart 1979: 82). It has been known for centuries that the plant could act on the uterus. Dioscorides mentions this in the first century AD: 'they [savine leaves] expel embryos/fetuses' (Dioscorides 2005: 59; Bk I.76), while Pliny points out that 'it brings away the dead foetus' (Pliny the Elder 1942–83: VII.75; Bk 24.61).[86] In the following centuries, the considerable use of Dioscorides' and Pliny's texts ensured that this aspect of savine, along with others, remained well-known, for example, in William Turner's *A new herball* of 1562, the author writes 'they [savine leaves]… dryve furth also the byrth' (Turner 1995: II.270). John Gerard in 1633 bluntly lists the plant's capabilities in this area, saying it can 'draw away the after-birth, expell the dead childe, and kill the quicke [living]' (Gerard 1975: 1378). The Old English medical texts make no mention of this aspect of *safene*, and this may have been due to the sensitivities of monkish scribes. As Stuart mentions, the plant is also an emmenagogue, that is, it encourages menstruation (similarly not mentioned in Anglo-Saxon sources). These properties, however, along with the driving out of pus from ulcers, reinforce the impression of a tradition that this plant drives things out of the body.

If *safene* were considered an 'expeller' by the Anglo-Saxons, then its inclusion with centaury in the liver/spleen remedy makes sense. If the complete cure in which Safene 4 is involved is considered again (it is described in Section 14.1 above), then it is interesting that a bladder (presumably from an animal) is to be filled with a substance composed principally of vinegar and bran and tied to the painful area caused by a spleen problem. It is not too imaginative to suggest that Anglo-Saxon physicians interpreted an enlarged and hardened spleen as being full of some unwanted substance. The bladder represents the superstitious or sympathetic element of the remedy (presumably representing the swollen internal organ),

[86] Translated by W. H. S. Jones.

and the drink of centaury and savine can be interpreted as a combination of a liver-/spleen-curing plant (centaury) with an 'expelling' plant (savine) to get rid of the substance in the spleen. This seems entirely logical, whether or not it was effective.[87] Speculating further, the purpose of *safene* in the recipe 'to keep the body in health' (Safene 5; see Section 14.3) may also be to expel anything harmful to the body before it causes a problem.

Consulting the table of remedies at the beginning of this section, and armed with a clue as to the medieval view of *safene*, there appears to be an overall logic in most cases. The proven efficacy of savine as an irritant which draws out pus from skin diseases and infections must be the reason for its presence in the remedies for ulcer/abscess (Safene 27), skin eruptions (3 (6)), and bite, sting, cut, ulcer (1). Although *þēor* has been defined as a *dry* roughness of the skin, implying there is no pus to be drawn out, it may be that *safene* had become known as a skin treatment in general, perhaps explaining its presence in catalogue numbers 8, 14 and 19, and also, possibly, for the ears (2). It is clear that the dry roughness indicated by *þēor* was extended to a sensation of internal roughness, and this may be the explanation for the lung treatment (18), and the chest disease (15), although the latter is a problematic word.

While the connection of *safene* with skin diseases and infections is ancient and efficacious, it would appear that, over the centuries during which these remedies were copied, described verbally, classified and reclassified, a normal process of semantic shift and extension took place, just as it tends to do with other vocabulary. In some cases, *safene* became associated with skin problems in general, and then even with internal problems which felt like the roughness seen on unhealthy skin. It appears that, in other cases, bearing in mind the ability of *safene* to drive out pus and other material from wound infections, stings, blisters and so on, it was assumed it could also drive out the unknown substances involved in other swellings. Thus it was used to treat swelling of the feet (13), a swollen body (15), and, probably, hardness of the spleen (4).

The remaining remedies are for spasm of the sinews (13), headache (28) and dizziness (10, 11 and 12). There will always be inexplicable elements in medieval cures, partly as a result of error, and also as a result of beliefs we do not currently understand, such as elements of superstition. It is possible, although sheer speculation, that the two head-problems listed here may relate to a belief that the heads of sufferers were filled with some unwanted substance or demon causing obstruction or mischief, and this should also be considered for the ear-treatment (tinnitus?). This sense of obstruction, pressure or mischievous presence is the usual explanation for cases of ancient trepanation (perforation of the skull) which is a well-known archaeological phenomenon. It is assumed that a hole was made in the skull to let out a substance or evil spirit causing problems for the patient. It may be that *safene*, identified as an 'expeller', was also believed to deal with problems contained within the skull.

15. Conclusion

It has been argued above that *safene* indicates *Juniperus sabina* L., that is, savine. As this is not a native plant in Britain, Anglo-Saxons may have imported dried savine tops for medical purposes, and some monasteries may have cultivated the plant in their gardens. The name

[87] It probably *was* effective for several abdominal problems, as Wren writes that 'Centaury [common centaury] is widely used in disorders of the upper digestive tract, in dyspepsia, for liver and gall-bladder complaints and to stimulate the appetite.' It is also said to have 'some antipyretic activity' (reduction of fever) (Wren 1988: 69–70).

safene is clearly an anglicization of the Latin name, *sabina*, although its late arrival in English is indicated by the appearance of some Latin forms in Old English texts. A naturalized form such as *safene* indicates a certain amount of familiarity among English speakers, but its extreme rarity in place-names (perhaps even its total non-existence in this arena) suggests that any familiarity with this word occurred among specialists, namely, physicians. Although *safene* was probably the correct name for any savine plant growing in England, it is suggested that the word was principally a medicine-name, equivalent to ModE *savin tops*.

It is difficult to determine whether the semantics of *safene* ever extended to include the native juniper, *Juniperus communis* L., but it is suggested that this is unlikely. The place-name, *Safandun*, presents the best evidence for this, but it is unconvincing. Among the exclusively medical cases in the rest of the *safene* catalogue, the place-name is a monstrous sore thumb. When this impression is combined with the otherwise total absence of *safene* in Anglo-Saxon place-names, and the further difficulties listed in Section 13.2, I have to favour the scenario that *safene* did not denote the common juniper. Old English vocabulary which is often defined as 'juniper', such as *gorst* and *fyrs* will be the subject of future investigations by this author, since it currently appears that the common juniper was denoted, along with other appropriate plants, by various words simply meaning 'prickly shrub'. This confirms the impression that the adopted term, *safene*, was required for something more specific, exotic and of medical significance. An appropriate definition of *safene* would be '1. Savine-tops (a medicine consisting of, or made from the young leaves of *Juniperus sabina* L.). 2. The savine tree or bush'.

Appendix A

CNo.	*Source*	*Short Title & Reference*	*Spelling*
1	Leechbook	Lch II (3) 8.1.1	*safenan*
2	Lacnunga[88]	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 113.1	*safenan*
3	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 39.3.2	*safinan*
4	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (2) 41.1.7	*safinan*
5	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (2) 65.4.1	*safinan*
6	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 100.1	*safinan*
7	Herbarium	Lch I (HerbHead) 87.0	*safinæ*
8	Bald: Leechbook	Lch II (1) 47.3.5	*safine*
9	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 63.1	*safine*
10	Recipes: Vitellius C3	Med 5.8 (Cockayne) 10.1	*sauina*
11	Recipes: Vitellius C3	Med 5.8 (Cockayne) 10.5	*sauina*
12	Peri Didaxeon PeriD	15.11.2	*sauinam*
13	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 87.1.2	*sauinam*
14	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 77.1	*sauinan*
15	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 86.1	*sauinan*
16	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 87.0.1	*sauine*
17	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 15.1	*sauine*
18	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 33.1	*sauine*
19	Lacnunga	Med 3 (Grattan-Singer) 153.1	*sauine*
20	Macer: De viribus	OccGl 84 (Gough) 18	*sauine*
21	Glossary: Laud	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 1299	*sauine*
?22	Charter: S534	Ch 534 11	*safandune*
?23	Charter: S632	Ch 632 2	*sawendune*
24	Ælfric: Glossary	ÆGl 312.9	*sauene*
25	Ælfric Bata: Colloquies (G)	OccGl 28 (Nap) 367	*sauene*
26	Glossary: Barlow	CollGl 22 (Liebermann-Ker) 59	*sauene*
27	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 87.3.1	*sabinam*
28	Herbarium	Lch I (Herb) 87.2.1	*sabinam*

Appendix A1: *Sæfene* catalogue

CNo.	*Related*	*Context*
3	6	Same word, same text. 3: … safinan, gnid to duste ⁊ meng wiþ hunig … 6: … safinan, gegnid to duste ⁊ mængc wið hunige …
21	24, 25, 26	Probably from the same text originally. They have been taken as such for this research. 21: Sabina i sauine 24, 26: sabina sauene 25: Sabina sauene

Appendix A2: Related citations

Lexeme	*Reference*	*Reason for rejection*
sæffan	Ch 860 1	Latin *sabina* appears to have had a voiced spirant as the medial consonant, and this was also the case in the Old English loanword (Campbell 1962: 216, para 546). Medial -ff- is assumed to be unvoiced.
sæffan	Ch 860 14	See above.
sauina	CollGl 26 (Stracke) 67	Included in the Microfiche Concordance to Old English (MCOE) (1980) as CollGl 26 16. It has been excluded from the DOEWC (2005 release), presumably because it is now considered to be a Latin form.

Appendix A3: Rejected items

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Glossary of Medical Terms (Historical and Modern)

abortifacient	a substance which causes abortion
acrid	bitter to the taste; irritating or corrosive to the skin
adjuvant	a substance which assists the action of the main ingredient
ague	a high fever; a disease characterized by a fever, such as malaria
alterative	a medicine which alters body processes
analgesic	a drug that relieves pain without affecting other sensations
anodyne	a drug that relieves pain by removing the cause of pain
anthelmintic	a medicine which causes the death or expulsion of parasitic worms
anti-scorbutic	a medicine to relieve or cure scurvy
anti-spasmodic	a medicine to relieve spasms
aperient	a medicine to encourage natural bowel movement
aromatic	a substance or plant emitting a fragrant odour
astringent	a remedy to draw together the soft tissues
atonic	lacking tone and vigour in muscles and other organs
carbuncle	an infected skin lesion; more specifically, several interconnected boils
carcinomatous	relating to a carcinoma
carminative	a medicine to relieve flatulence
cathartic	a medicine to cause an evacuation of the bowels
caustic	a substance which burns and destroys living tissue
c(h)olagogue	a medicine that removes bile
c(h)olic	usually refers to severe spasmodic pains in the abdomen
corrigent	a corrective ingredient in a medicine
cutaneous	relating to the skin
demulcent	a medicine that soothes irritation
deobstruent	a substance that removes obstructions by clearing the natural openings of the body
depilatory	a substance that removes hair
detergent	a cleansing agent
diaphoretic	a medicine to promote sweating
diuretic	a substance that promotes the excretion of urine
dropsy	a condition in which water accumulates in certain body tissues
dysentery	infection of the intestines resulting in severe diarrhoea
dyspepsia	indigestion
eczema	an inflammation of the skin also involving itching and discharge of fluid

elephantiasis	various cutaneous diseases which cause the skin to resemble an elephant's hide
eliminative	capable of eliminating substances from the body
emetic	a medicine that causes vomiting
emmenagogue	a medicine that encourages menstruation
emollient	a substance that has a softening and soothing effect on living tissues
expectorant	a medicine that promotes the removal of phlegm from the chest by coughing
febrifuge	a medicine to reduce fever
haemoptysis	the spitting up of blood from the lower air passages
hepatic	relating to the liver
hydragogue	a medicine to remove accumulations of water or serum
inspissation	the thickening of fluids
laxative	a medicine which encourages the evacuation of the bowels
leprosy	a disease which eats away the body, forming white scales on the skin; often used loosely of various skin problems
leucorrhoea	a white vaginal discharge
nervine	a medicine which acts on the nerves
neurodermatitis	a skin disease attributed to neurological or psychological causes
phaged(a)enic	a medicine to treat spreading ulcers
psoriasis	a name for various scaly or scabby diseases of the skin
purgative	a medicine that causes evacuation of the bowels
pustule	a small raised lesion of the skin that contains pus
refrigerant	a medicine to reduce the temperature of the body or a part of the body
rheumatic	suffering from a surfeit of rheum, that is, an abnormal level of secretions from the eyes, nose and mouth; (later) a general term for pain in the joints
scabies	a name for various scaly or scabby skin diseases
scrofula	(usually) a disease which involves the swelling of glands in the neck
stimulant	a medicine to encourage increased action in a vital process or organ of the body
stomachic	a medicine for the stomach
tenesmus	a continual feeling that the bowels should be evacuated, but often with little result
vesicant	a blistering agent

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Old English geographical and botanical terms

(Definitions given here are brief, and may be expanded and/or contradicted elsewhere)

æppeltun, 'fruit garden, orchard' 118
beri(g)e, 'berry' 47
broc, 'brook' 117–118, 133–134
**bult*, 'heap, hillock' 137, 142
burna, 'brook, spring' 118
cerr see *cyrre*
clif, 'cliff, rock, promontory, steep slope' 218–219
clufu, 'clove, bulb, tuber' 165
corn, 'grain, seed, berry' 146, 151–152, 154, 160, 173–174
cyrre, 'turn, bend' 118–119, 133
dæl, 'dale, valley, gorge' 96
dic, 'dike, ditch' 218–219
dun, 'moor, hill, mountain' 207, 218–220, 222,

236
eorþe, ‘ground, soil, mould, land’ 229
ford, ‘ford’ 139, 142
ham, ‘village, estate, dwelling’ 138–139
hamm, ‘pasture–land, enclosure, dwelling’ 138
healm, ‘stalk, straw, stubble’ 102
hege, ‘hedge, fence’ 115–116, 129
hem, ‘edge, border’ 101, 105
herepað, ‘military road, highway’ 218–219
hol, ‘hollow, cave, hole’ 96
husstede, ‘site of a house’ 115
leac, ‘weeded’ (from *lucan*) 27
leactun, ‘kitchen–garden, garden of herbs’ 32, 70, 82, 118
leaf, ‘leaf, shoot’ 84, 155–156, 172, 175, 178–179, 194, 196
leah, ‘piece of ground, meadow’ 95, 119
lucan, ‘to pluck out, pull up, weed’ 27, 31
mor, ‘moor, swamp, hill’ 117, 133–134
more, ‘root’ 155–156, 158–159, 162, 171, 175
rind, ‘bark’ 154–155, 157, 163
sae, ‘sea, lake, pool’ 218–219
sæd, ‘fruit, seed’ 174
stow, ‘site, locality, position’ 115
torr, ‘rock, crag’ 218
tun, ‘enclosure, garden, dwelling’ 82, 117–118, 127–128, 133–134
tunincel, ‘small property, small farm’ 82
tuning, tyning, ‘enclosure’ 82
twig, ‘twig, branch, shoot, small tree’ 115, 127
wise, ‘sprout, stalk’ 168
wos, ‘sap, juice’ 15, 20
wudu, ‘wood, forest, grove, tree, timber’ 85, 98
wyrt, ‘herb, vegetable, plant, spice, crop, root’ 13, 15, 20, 32, 53, 57, 59, 71, 73, 75–77, 80–81, 83–84, 97, 115, 154, 174, 185, 211, 215
wyrtrum, ‘root’ 15, 155, 157
wyrttun, ‘garden’ 32, 70, 82

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