

**253. London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius C. iii**  
Macer glosses; Psuedo-Apuleius, "Herbarium"; Macrobius, etc.  
[Ker 218 and 219, Gneuss 402]

A large-format composite manuscript in four parts. Part 1 is 12c; Part 2, a deluxe copy of OE herbals, early 11c; Part 3, Macrobius, "Saturnalia," late 9c or early 10c, Frankish; Part 4, Cotton papers, 16c-17c. Parts 1 and 2 may have been joined at an early date. The Macrobius item (Part 3) was entered in the Cottonian table of contents (f. 4r) at another time than the first two items and f. 3 is the original flyleaf to Macrobius, suggesting that Parts 1 and 2 were joined to Part 3 by Cotton; 1-3 are mentioned together in the 1621 Cotton catalogue.

**HISTORY:** James (1903: xxv) identified Parts 1 and 2 as a Canterbury book, no. 308 in Prior Eastry's catalogue. Ker (*Cat.*, 285) rejects this on the grounds that the 12c writing is not of a Canterbury type. Flom (1941) and Voigts (1976: 44, n. 16) separately suggest a Rochester script, although the latter (56) says that the St. Bertin style of illustrations indicates connections with one of the fenland monasteries. The names of two 16c owners are inscribed in the manuscript: on f. 11r "Elysabet Colmore" and on f. 76r "Richerd Hollond." Listed in Cotton's catalogue of 1621 (British Library, Harley 6018, no. 168). Damaged in the 1731 fire. Leaves mounted in paper frames in 19c. Mounted leaves rebound in 1977.

**CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION:** [vi] + 2 + 137 [ff. (3-4) 5-141] + [iv]. Six modern unnumbered paper flyleaves; a transparent protection leaf; f. 1 is a modern paper flyleaf with Cotton's printed title/signature page pasted to it; ff. 3 and 4 are parchment flyleaves. The current foliation is written faintly in pencil on the rectos of the frames at top right, and are often not visible on the film. Flom (1941: 32) notices that the pencilled frame foliation corresponds to the early modern table of contents and guesses that they reproduce old numbers now missing on the folios proper. Ff. \*2 and \*142 were removed in 1912. An earlier foliation begins on f. 5 (numbered 1-78). Average dimension of folios throughout

the volume is 250/260 x 190 mm.: some shrinkage at tops of folios due to fire damage in 1731 but little text has been lost. Leaves were separately mounted in paper frames in the 19c. Further codicological commentary on the separate parts is incorporated in the contents section.

**COLLATION:** Separately remounted leaves cannot be collated. Some of the paper frames were bound in the wrong order, and the rebinding of 1977 has retained this order. The manuscript ("Herbarium") table of contents and hair/flesh arrangement suggest that the proper order is ff. 11–61, 64, 63, 74, 65–67, 62, 71, 70, 68, 72, 73, 69, 75–85. After f. 18 a leaf is probably missing (de Vriend 1984: xviii).

**CONTENTS (WITH CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTIONS):**

**Part 1, ff. 5–10:** This part is Ker 218. Writing area 250 x 170 mm. in two columns; column width 83 mm. Pricked and ruled for 64 long lines in reddish pencil, with subsidiary divisions depending on the material, which is both texts and charts. Ker supposes that these six leaves are from a copy of Macer, "De viribus herbarum." Item 1 was copied into these leaves in the 13c (Moore 1936: 103).

1. ff. 5r–10r Peter of Poitiers (d. 1205) "Compendium Historiae in Genealogia Christi" (see Moore 1936: 97–117).
2. f. 10v Numbered chapter headings from Macer Floridus's (Odo de Meung, fl. late 11c) "De viribus herbarum," giving 78 Latin plant names, numbers 1–11, 13–19, 22, and 37 being glossed in very late (12c) OE (with some Anglo-Norman alternatives) by another hand (ed. Gough 1974: 285–87; see also Bierbaumer 1979: 3:xxi).

**Part 2, ff. 11–85:** This part is Ker 219. Writing area about 220 x 160 mm. in two columns; column width 65/70 mm. Ruled (no prickings showing) for 31 lines per column (ff. 12–18, 30 lines), the rulings being confined to the writing space in each column. Double verticals bound the outer and inner margins; columns are separated by three verticals. F. 11r, an original blank (f. 11v illustrated), has some 12c writing around a hole and the name "Elysabet Colmore" in a 16c hand. Flom (1941: 31) notes "beteyne" on f. 16r in Colmore's hand. F. 76r/17a has entry "Richard Hollond thys boke" in (later?) 16c hand. Square Insular script. Ker calls it "a round hand, without character" and dates it s. xi<sup>1</sup> (see also Flom 1941). Ff. 84–85 are numbered "5, 6" on bottom of rectos, with a text (item 11) in a 13c hand (Beccaria 1956: 248).

3. ff. 12r–74v Pseudo-Apuleius, enlarged “Herbarium,” in OE version (ed. de Vriend 1984: 1–232, versos).

In 185 originally unnumbered chapters, with three full-page colored illustrations (dedication page f. 11v, author page f. 19r, title f. 19v; discussed by Voigts 1976: 42–55; see also Temple 1976) and colored illustrations of the plants being discussed at the head of each section. Table of contents, by symptoms (ff. 12r–18v/1a). Text, arranged by plant, ff. 20r–74v. Title on f. 19v: [H]ERBARIVM | APVL[EI] [P]LAT[ONICI] | QVOD AC[CE]PIT AB E|SCOLA[P]IO ET [A] CH[I]RONE CENTAVRO: MAGISRO | ACHILLIS:- The chapters in the text are not numbered, but another hand, probably the same one that incorrectly numbered the chapters in the table of contents, has added chapter numbers intermittantly at the tops of pages. Yet another hand, of mid-11c, probably the illustrator himself, has added plant names in lieu of titles beside each chapter (Voigts 1976: 41). Here and there the Latin plant name has been added beside the illustration in a 15c hand (cf. f. 21v). Capitals in table of contents and in text are in alternating red and blue, which has been called a “color-key” reference system (Voigts 1979: 256). A green pigment used in the illustrations and colored capitals has eaten completely through the parchment in many places. This process must have been completed relatively early, because a late 12c hand has written a recipe using “senecion” around one such hole on f. 11r (see Voigts 1979: 258). These holes (to be distinguished from the fire damage by their precise outlines within the outlines of drawing-elements and letters) have been poorly repaired with tissue paper. An OE gloss occurs on f. 17v/8a. The plant illustrations (and the animal illustrations in item 5) derive ultimately from Mediterranean sources (see de Vriend 1979: xvi); Voigts (1979) argues that they are intelligently adapted to reflect English conditions.

[Note: The “enlarged ‘Herbarium’” is a combination of three originally distinct texts: (1) Antonius Musa “De herba vettonica liber” (here = ff. 20r/1a–21v/4a); (2) Apuleius Platonicus “Herbarium” (here = ff. 21v/14a–58r/11b); (3) Dioscorides “Liber medicinae ex herbis femininis” (here = ff. 58/26b–74v/31b).]

4. f. 18v Two OE recipes in a different, later, hand added to the originally almost blank f. 18v: (a) f. 18v/21–16a *Ad uertiginem* ‘Num betonica ⁊ wæll swyðe on win | oppbe on ald ealað’. (b) *Ad pectoris dolorem* ‘Num horsellens ⁊ eft gewænen bare’. A 16c gloss added to first five lines (barely visible) (OE ed. Cockayne 1864–1866: 1.378).

5. ff. 75r–92v/20b “Medicina de quadrupedibus,” in OE version: ‘SA-

GAD ÐÆT ÆGYF|ta cyning idpartus wæs haten'. Follows same format as the "Herbarium"; colored animal illustrations (ed. de Vriend 1984: 234–72, versos).

[Note: A combination of three originally distinct texts: (1) "De taxone liber" (here = f. 75r/15a–75v/14b); (2) a treatise on the mulberry (here = ff. 75v/15b–76r/8b); (3) Sextus Placitus "Liber medicinae ex animalibus" (here = ff. 76r/17b–82v/20b).]

6. ff. 82v/22b–83r/19a OE recipes, written by the same hand as item 4:
  - (a) 'Dis is seo seleste eah salf' (f. 82v/22b–83r/11a);
  - (b) 'Dis mæg to eah salfe' (f. 83r/12a–19a) (ed. Cockayne 1864–1866: 1.374).
7. f. 83r/20a–31a OE recipe by another hand: **Wið lungen adle** (ed. Cockayne 1864–1866: 1.374).
8. f. 83r/1b–15b An OE recipe written by yet another hand: **Wið fot adle** (ed. Cockayne 1864–1866: 1.376).
9. f. 83r/16b–83v/15 Seven Latin recipes and two charms, written in Anglo-Caroline minuscule; titles in red rubrics. An OE gloss, *wret* (= *wrætt*), on f. 83r/27b (first four [on f. 83r] ed. Cockayne 1864–1866: 1.376).
10. f. 83v/16a–18b Two Latin recipes in another Anglo-Caroline hand:
  - (a) **Contra Febres** 'In nomine patris & filii & spiritus sancti Amen';
  - (b) **Carmen contra sanguinis fluxum siue de maribus siue de plaga**.
11. ff. 84r–85r Part of a Latin essay on urines, written in double columns; perhaps imperfect at beginning: '[c]um multis . 7 diu(er)sis mod(is) cognosci val& te(m)p(er)antia | humana'; [explicit:] 'ad nebula(m) augm(en)tu(m) feb(ri)s significat'. F. 85v blank.

**Part 3**, ff. 86–138: writing area 240 x 150 mm.; pricked and ruled for 36 long lines, 31 from f. 133.

12. ff. 86r–138v Macrobius, "Saturnalia," Books 1–3: 'Multas variasque res in hac vita | nobis eustachi fili natura conciliauit' (ed. Willis 1963: 1–216; he does not include this MS in his stemma). Written in Caroline minuscule of 9–10c with chapter titles in rustic capitals and extensive passages of Greek in large uncials (e.g., ff. 102, 126). Hand changes at f. 133r. At end of Book 2 (f. 126v) is a colophon: **MA-CROBII. THEODOSII. V(IRI) C(LARISSIMI) . ET IN(LUS-TRIS) CONVIVIORU(M) . PRIMI DIEI SATVRNALIORV(M) . EXPLICIT**. Several added glosses are in a distinct West Frankish style (e.g., f. 100r bottom, f. 106r right margin).



Part 4, ff. 139–141: unruled; presumably sheets added in Cotton's time.  
 13. ff. 139r–141v According to Wanley (1705: 217), a daybook of prescriptions and remedies kept by Sir Robert Cotton, which includes prescriptions by Sir William Paddy (1554–1634) and a prescription in the hand of Sir William Harvey (1579–1657) (f. 141v).

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