

**322. Louvain (Leuven), Bibliothèque de l'Université,
Section des Manuscrits, Fragmenta H. Omont 3^{1a}**

Fragment with Medical Recipes
[Ker Supp. 417, Gneuss 523]

HISTORY: A single folio containing medical recipes. Ker dated the leaf to the beginning of the 10c. However, in their edition and description of the leaf, Schauman and Cameron (1977: 289–312) have shown on the basis of paleographical, codicological, and morphological evidence that it is much older; the scarcely visible half-uncials on the verso side indicate that the leaf itself dates from the 7c or 8c, perhaps from the continent, while the writing of the recipes dates from between 850 and 900, which puts the text among the earliest “non-documentary” records of the OE language, before Alfred’s translations. Schauman and Cameron’s examination of the evidence points to a scriptorium with Mercian characteristics for the recipes. In 1949–1950, the Louvain library acquired it as part of a collection of fragments which had belonged to Henri Omont (1857–1940), Conservateur of the Department of Manuscripts of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Nothing is known about the earlier history of the fragment. Schauman and Cameron (1977: 289) suggest that it may have been the last blank leaf of a quire which was then used to record recipes, not an unknown practice (Ker, *Cat.*, p. xxxv). The fragment came to their attention in the 1970s through Michael McCormick upon whose communication their physical description depends (Schauman and Cameron 1977: 289).

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: The membrane folio is a half-sheet measuring 207 × 155 mm., written space 186 × 129 mm. A part of the lower left corner has been cut away, taking a section of text. It was ruled in dry-point; 32 lines are still visible on the recto (hair) side, of which 27, ruled indirectly through several other sheets, have been used for the text, written slightly above the top-line. At the bottom of the page, five additional lines,

somewhat narrower, can be seen to be ruled directly on the hair side. The first two lines at the top continue into the margin to what must have been the other half of the conjugate pair. It is impossible to discern any lines at the bottom because of the damage. There are double vertical bounding lines. There are no prickings visible. There is an 'm' at the bottom of the recto which, Schauman and Cameron argue (pp. 300–1), might be a "folio mark," a type of mark elsewhere found only in Oxford, Bodleian Hatton 93 [383], of s. viii/ix.

CONTENTS:

1. recto (facs., ed. and trans. Schauman and Cameron 1977: 291–94):

- a. 1–13 Several remedies for swelling of the feet, shanks, knees: 'Wið yflum 7 miclum footsulun . . . ðu hine lecnige';
- b. 14–20 Several remedies for gout: 'Wið foet adle wyrç scoas of seles felle . . . ðis is god baeð wið ðeh æci';
- c. 21–27 Two remedies for paralysis: 'Wið aslepnum lic genim neoðo . . . cost ecid oele'.

[Note: The recipes are in a squarish insular hand, of which Schauman and Cameron (1977: 303) remark that it resembles an early Irish hand.]

2. verso, various pen trials: two scarcely visible lines, now illegible, over which another hand in half-uncials wrote (below the middle of the page) 'o quam metu'; three lines in clear black anglo-caroline minuscule of the early 11c (Ker, *Supp.* 128); the word 'miserere' (the beginning of Psalm 50); 'O quam metuendus est locus iste,' a variant version of the beginning of an antiphon sung during the consecration of a church (Schauman and Cameron 1977: 298); a line of OE 'wutum we gebidegol' (the beginning of a prayer); an alphabet 'a–k' written in an anglo-caroline hand of the 12c (pr. and described, with facsimile, Schauman and Cameron 1977: 297–98).

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Schauman, Bella, and Angus Cameron. "A Newly-found Leaf of Old English from Louvain." *Anglia* 95 (1977): 289–312.