The several compilers of Bald's *Leechbook*

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The critical history of the Old English charms is replete with examples of scholars claiming that the charms are pagan remnants with a thread-bare Christian garment covering ancient pre-Christian rituals. Other scholars, more interested in combing the charms for magical elements, have viewed them as even more primitive than a pre-Christian religion and have instead treated them as Germanic magic. The first two of three texts found in London, British Library, Royal 12. D. XVII, more commonly known as Bald's *Leechbook*,[1] certainly do not fit this description. In this manuscript, we find medical reference-books produced by a team of compilers, perhaps as part of the intellectual renaissance sponsored by King Alfred. Evidence in the manuscript also suggests that the Anglo-Saxons had considerable access to Latin sources of medical learning and also had a well-developed native medical knowledge.

The above reference to the team of 'compilers' requires explanation of the creation and transmission of Bald's *Leechbook*. As this study will demonstrate, the creation of the *Leechbook* and its subsequent transmission to Royal 12. D. XVII is complex, requiring clear definition of terms. The first stage in the genesis of the text was of compilation. Here the term 'compiler' or 'compilers' will refer to those involved in collecting and organizing the remedies found in the *Leechbook*. The second stage of creation of the text was the copying out of the text. Presumably the compilation of the text involved keeping remedies from various sources on scraps of parchment. Someone had to take those organized scraps and copy them all out in the coherent chapter forms which we see in Bald's *Leechbook*. The person or persons involved in this part of creation are here called the 'writers'. In terms of stylistic features and issues of rhetoric, the voices of the writers are most prominent. The writers may or may not have been the same persons as the compilers, although presumably the two groups overlapped to some degree. The original text was designed to be in two transportable volumes which were intended as a unit. After this original text was created, the two books of Bald's *Leechbook* went through a period of transmission, during which they were separate volumes of a single text. At some

[1] In this study, 'Bald's *Leechbook*' will refer to the first two texts of Royal 12. D. XVII, '*Leechbook III*' will refer to the third book of Royal 12. D. XVII and '*Leechbook*' will refer to all three texts, when discussing them as a whole.

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point, the two texts became separated. To some degree their histories of transmission must be considered separately. As Books I and II were transmitted, alterations and corruptions crept into the texts. Some corruptions may have been accidental omissions through eye-skip and other scribal errors, but others were intentional additions of other remedies that had not been included in the original compilation. Other omissions may have been intentional, as the holder of the text discarded a particular remedy as not being efficacious. These people who made changes in the text during transmission, whether the changes were intentional or not, are referred to here as 'redactors'. Finally, the term 'scribe' will be used here to refer only to the person who actually put quill to parchment on the manuscript Royal 12. D. XVII, as well as other incidental hands found in the margins. Books I and II were reunited and *Leechbook* III was tacked on by the scribe of Royal 12. D. XVII.

While some students of the Old English charms have used the study of the material text as their primary approach, to a lesser or greater extent various scholars have described this manuscript in at least a passing manner. Royal 12. D. XVII is described in N. R. Ker's *Catalogue* (1957). While more detail has been uncovered since 1957, Ker's basic description still stands. Ker's description pertains to the entire manuscript, whereas we are only concerned here with Leechbooks I and II, occupying fols. 1–109 of the Royal 12. D. XVII manuscript. The remainder of the manuscript, *Leechbook III*, fols. 109–27, will be treated elsewhere. Ker identifies the manuscript as '[t]hree collections of medical recipes'.[2] He also uses the word 'Recipes' as the titular head of the entry, probably in deference to Oswald Cockayne, who used the word 'recipes' in his own edition. Most recent scholars have avoided that term because of the potential misunderstanding that these books might deal with matters of food preparation.

Ker identifies four hands in the text, three of which are marginal hands. The main text is written in a single hand, which he assigns to the middle of the tenth century (s. x^{med}), although as we shall see subsequent scholars have refined that date. He also dates *nota* signs and some Latin marginalia as having been added around the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries (s. xii/xiii), as well as an additional 'recipe' added in the eleventh century (s. xi) 'in a poor hand'.[3] The only other hand is a thirteenth-century hand (s. xiii) found on the binding entitling the manuscript 'Medicinale anglic'. Ker also notes that the primary hand of the manuscript is 'a decorative and practised Anglo-Saxon minuscule identical with that of the annals for 925–55 in the Parker Chronicle', and that both the Parker Chronicle and this manuscript were written at Winchester.[4] Ker points out that manuscripts called 'Medicinale

[2] N. R. Ker, *A Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*. (Oxford, 1957), p. 332.
[3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.* p. 333.

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anglicum' are found in the medieval catalogues of both Rochester and Glastonbury, but that no evidence demonstrates that this manuscript is the one referred to in either. As we will see, the evidence found in the *Leechbook* suggests that a wide body of Anglo-Saxon medical knowledge existed, proving Ker correct in being cautious in assuming that references to 'Medicinale anglicum' must refer to this particular manuscript.

In 1955 C. E. Wright produced a facsimile edition of all three *Leechbooks*.[5] The introduction to this edition contains his findings regarding the text. Wright comes to most of the same basic conclusions as Ker about the manuscript, but his exclusive focus allows him to be more detailed. Wright considers this manuscript, along with the *Lacnunga* manuscript (BL, Harley 585) to be 'the two central works for the study of Anglo-Saxon medicine and medico-magic'.[6] Wright assumes that Bald is 'the practitioner for whom the original text of Books I and II was written', because of the colophon and its placement, a view to which I will return.[7] Implicit in this assumption is the further assumption that Bald was a leech 'practitioner'. In trying to determine Cild's role in the creation of the text, Wright looks closely at the reference to him in the colophon on 109r:

> Bald habet hunc librum cild quem conscribere iussit;
> Hic precor assidue cunctis in nomine Xristi.
> Quo nullus tollat hunc librum perfidus a me.
> Nec ui nec furto nec quodam famine falso.
> Cur quia nulla mihi tam cara est optima gaza.
> Quam cari libri quos Xristi gratia comit.
>
> Bald is the owner of this book, which he ordered Cild to write (compile?);
> earnestly here I beg everyone in the name of Christ
> that no deceitful person should take this book from me,
> neither by force nor by stealth nor by any false statement.
> Why? Because no richest treasure is so dear to me
> As my dear books which the grace of Christ attends.[8]

Focusing on the word 'conscribere', Wright examines the ambiguity in the role of Cild. This word may indicate simply 'to write', or perhaps also 'to put together in writing, to draw up, to compose'. The difference between the two is apparently that between a compiler and a simple scribe. In the end, Wright concludes that Cild was probably only a scribe.[9]

[5] C. E. Wright, *Bald's Leechbook: British Museum Royal Manuscript 12.D.xvii*, EEMF 5 (Copenhagen, 1955). [6] *Ibid.* p. 12. [7] *Ibid.* p. 13.

[8] The translation is from Wright, *Bald's Leechbook*, p. 13.

[9] *Ibid.* p. 13. Here you will note ambiguity in the way Wright thinks of a scribe, compiler and writer.

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Wright was also able to make some conclusions based upon the positioning of the colophon in the manuscript. The main text of Book II ends at the bottom of 108v. The colophon is entered at the top of 109r and is immediately followed on the same leaf by the beginning of Book III. The number of lines found on 108v is twenty-two, at variance with the twenty-one line leaves that are standard elsewhere in the book. This deviation is explained by the fact that the bottom line is not a complete line and simply contains the last three words of Book II in an ornamented bracket. Furthermore, fols. 108 and 109 are the conjoint middle leaves of the gathering and no change in handwriting occurs between Books II and III. From this evidence, Wright concluded that the scribe of our extant manuscript (not to be confused with Cild, who was the scribe of an exemplar) had separate copies of both texts. He endeavoured to finish the text of Book II at the bottom of a leaf through the artifice of the bracketed twenty-second line, copied the Book II colophon at the top of 109r, then switched to a new exemplar for Book III. Furthermore, Wright makes the point that the subject matter of Book III is in many ways redundant to Books I and II and therefore likely had a separate genesis.[10]

Manuscript evidence suggests that the compilers of Bald's *Leechbook*, whether among them were Bald and Cild or not, were working as a team of at least two persons. The cooperation of a team of people on a project of this scope implies institutional support of the type one might find King Alfred providing. Therefore, while it is not possible to prove conclusively that the compilers put together Bald's *Leechbook* as part of Alfred's educational and intellectual policies, the sum of the evidence very strongly suggests that Bald's *Leechbook* was produced in the intellectual climate of the Alfredian renaissance, perhaps at the instigation of King Alfred himself. Audrey Meaney has suggested that the original copies of Books I and II were compiled during the reign of Alfred. She went even further and suggested that the original fair copy was also produced during Alfred's reign, by Cild for Bald.[11]

In discussing the production of Bald's *Leechbook*, I have consistently referred to the 'compilers' in the plural, rather than to a singular 'compiler'. Scholars have generally worked under the assumption, arising perhaps from the post-medieval notion of authorship, that the text is the product of a single compiler, often identified as Bald or Cild. Another factor sustaining this assumption is one of the burden of proof; as the text exists, we know that it had to have at least one author, or in this case, compiler and writer. The existence of other compilers and writers is supposition in the absence of evidence.

[10] *Ibid.* p. 14.

[11] A. L. Meaney, 'Variant Versions of Old English Medical Remedies and the Compilation of Bald's *Leechbook*', *ASE* 13 (1984), 235–68, at 236.

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Two-fold evidence for other compilers is found in the books themselves. First, the project is one of a wide scope, involving the collecting, translating and organizing of hundreds of remedies from various sources. While such a project is certainly possible for a single man, the time and effort necessary to complete this project would have been immense. Unless we assume that this single compiler was Bald or Cild, we cannot assign a name to the text, despite the months of effort that a single individual would have to have put into it. This lack of a named 'author' is not especially strong evidence (since medieval notions of authorship were quite different from ours and we cannot absolutely rule out Bald or Cild as the compiler), but it is certainly suggestive.

The strongest evidence for a team of compilers and writers comes from an examination of the stylistic features of the person who wrote Book I against the style of the writer of Book II. Each of these texts was written principally by a different person, demonstrating that at least two people had to be involved in writing the remedies out after they had been compiled. Stylistic evidence demonstrates that at least two people, who may or may not have been involved in the compilation process, wrote out the remedies in a clear and organized fashion once they had been assembled. The content of individual charms was frequently composed by someone not involved in the compilation process, since many of these remedies have been copied or translated directly from other sources. The stylistic features of the source texts need not be a problem, however, given that the evidence for different stylistic features in writing comes not in the main text of the remedies, but in the transitional phrases at the beginnings and endings of groups of remedies. The second of the writers often tried to position himself within a broader community of leeches, whereas the first of the two appears uninterested in thus positioning himself.

Scholars have noted some differences between Books I and II, but have not taken those differences to be indicative of more than one mind working on the text. As was mentioned above, Wright noted several differences. The most obvious difference is one of content. Book I deals mostly with external medicine, though as Wright notes, its organization begins to break down after ch. XXX.[12] Book II, on the other hand, deals more with internal afflictions. Wright characterizes Book II as being more 'learned' because it includes 'the recognition of signs of disease and occasional attempts at diagnosis', and also because it contains remedies from Greek and Latin writers.[13] Wright correctly perceives differences between the books, but the attempts at diagnosis may have less to do with how learned the compilers were and more to do with the nature of

[12] Wright, *Bald's Leechbook*, p. 14.

[13] *Ibid.* p. 15. Very possibly the Greek writers came to the compilers in translated form, either through Latin or Old English.

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internal medicine versus external medicine. Very many of the afflictions mentioned in Book I have no need for mention of diagnosis, such as broken bones, animal bites, or open wounds. Book II does, however, have a slightly different orientation in this regard. While we cannot accept Wright's evaluation without the caveat that the diagnoses for external afflictions are often more obvious, his evaluation may have some merit. Perhaps the 'learned' quality of Book II reflects a greater understanding of diagnosis by the compilers, or if not a greater understanding, then at least a greater interest.

Other scholars have also noted some difference between the two books, beyond the difference in types of remedies found therein. Godfrid Storms, who was interested in finding magical elements in the charms, describes the beginning of Book I as having 'little in it connected with magic', but writes that 'from section XLV onwards we find directions against poisons, worms and fevers, three diseases that were supposedly caused by magic'.[14] Here we should note that Wright too found the end of Book I as being qualitatively different from the previous text, though he puts the demarcation line at ch. XXX. As for Book II, Storms notes (as did Wright) that a great part of this book is taken over from the work of Alexander of Tralles.[15] The last three chapters contain subjects other than internal medicine. The table of contents shows that these last three chapters were at one time preceded by six other chapters, now missing, which also dealt with non-internal medical topics.[16] While on the surface Book II appears to be more unified, we see that at one time many chapters were included by later redactors that did not fit the original paradigm of the book as constructed by the original compilers.

These few exceptions aside, most scholars have tended to treat Books I and II as a unit, with Book III as the outsider. This position is justifiable, as Book I and Book II are apparently the two halves of a single project to compile medical knowledge, whereas Book III is a later addition, as evidenced both by the placement of the colophon after the second book and by the repetition of content from Books I and II. Very little has been said about the differences between the first two books. Scholars have noted that one deals with external medicine and the other with internal. Wright, as noted above, has argued that Book II is more learned. Storms finds that Book II uses Alexander of Tralles as its major source, while Book I uses a wider variety of sources.[17] With these

[14] G. Storms, *Anglo-Saxon Magic* (The Hague, 1948), p. 15.

[15] For a greater discussion of the contributions of Alexander of Tralles, see J. F. Payne, *English Medicine in Anglo-Saxon Times* (Oxford, 1904), pp. 102–8.

[16] Perhaps most grievously missed is ch. LX, which dealt with women's complaints, particularly those connected with childbirth. According to the table of contents, this chapter contained forty-one remedies, which scholars interested in Anglo-Saxon women particularly covet.

[17] Storms, *Anglo-Saxon Magic*, pp. 14–16.

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three exceptions (Wright, Storms and the internal/external division), scholars have written little about the differences between the two books. Once we examine these two books, we find two primary writers. The first, whom we will call Writer A, wrote most of Book I and seems to have influenced Writer B, who wrote the greater part of Book II. Less significant writers doubtless contributed, but these writers are not assigned a designation because of the impossibility of differentiating among them.

Differences in vocabulary and phrasing occur in the two books because of the different stylistic features favoured by Writer A and Writer B. For example, in Book I, the preferred word to open a section is 'Wiþ', followed by the affliction, for example, 'Wiþ toþece' ('For tooth ache'),[18] or at times preceded by the word 'Læcedomas', as in 'Læcedomas wiþ eagna miste' ('Leechdoms for misty eyes').[19] The majority of chapters in Book I open this way. Of the eighty-eight chapters in Book I, fifty-nine begin with this formula (or a slight variation on it), and only twenty-nine do not. Although two-thirds is certainly a solid majority, the numbers become even more lopsided if we only include the first thirty chapters, which is the approximate demarcation line given by both Wright and Storms as the end of the head-to-toe organizational scheme and therefore likely the beginning of later additions. Of the first thirty chapters, only seven lack the 'Wiþ' opening and of those we find a second formula opening, 'Gif' ('If') followed by the symptoms or affliction, such as 'Gif mon blode hraece' ('If a man vomits blood').[20] Only two of the chapters do not open in this way, chapters I and XVIII. If we examine the entire book for these two opening phrases, only eleven lack the 'Wiþ' or 'Gif' opening, or some variation on the two, or only one-eighth. In the whole of Book I, seven-eighths of all chapters open with one of these two phrases and the vast majority of these chapters open with the 'Wiþ' phrase. Even taking into account the various sources from which these remedies may have been culled, this pattern is overwhelming enough to establish a particular writing and/or translation style for the writer of Book I, our Writer A, particularly of the first thirty chapters of the book.

In Book II, we still find these two formulae, but not to the same degree. Thirty-three of fifty-nine surviving chapters do not begin with either of these formulae. In other words, fewer than half of these chapters open in the way that seven-eighths of the previous book opened. Furthermore, we see in Book II the emergence of another formula that occurs only once in all of Book I, the 'Be' ('Of,' or 'About') formula. In this formula, the word 'Be' is followed by the subject pursued in that chapter, for example, 'Be wambe coþe' ('Of belly sickness', or 'About belly sickness').[21] The only occurrence of this formula in

[18] Royal 12. D. XVII, 113r.
[19] Royal 12. D. XVII, 9v.
[20] Royal 12. D. XVII, 19v.
[21] Royal 12. D. XVII, 66r.

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Book I happens in ch. XXXV,[22] in the group of chapters at the end that Wright and Storms both identify as later additions.[23] In Book II, however, it is much more common, occurring ten times at the opening of chapters, or in about one-sixth of extant chapters.

These three different chapter openings – the 'Wiþ' formula, the 'Gif' formula and the 'Be' formula – are significant because semantically they all function in the same way in the text, not just because they are all transitional phrases. In the context of the *Leechbook*, it makes little difference whether a writer writes 'Against an eye ache', 'If a man has an eye ache', or 'About eye aches', The use of any one phrase was simply a matter of stylistic choice. As the text of Bald's *Leechbook* went through the various stages of compilation and writing, at least two different people seem to have had a hand in writing it and both left a mark through their stylistic predilections.

In fact, probably more people than solely Writers A and B worked on the writing of the two books, but any third or fourth member of the team of writers did not have as strong an influence on the text as the two main writers. Furthermore, beyond the primary writers, it frequently becomes impossible to say if an individual writer worked on the text during the initial writing, or perhaps during one of the stages of redaction that Bald's *Leechbook* underwent during its later decades of transmission before becoming attached to Book III. For example, one of the writers of Bald's *Leechbook* had a very conversational presentation, preferring fuller sentences to sentence fragments. Ch. XXI of Book II opens with 'Her sint tacn aheardodre lifre' ('Here are symptoms of hardened liver').[24] Just a few chapters earlier, however, ch. XVIIII begins 'Tacn be aswollenre *and* gepundadre lifre læcedomas wiþ þon, *and* be þære lifre aheardunge', ('Symptoms of swollen and wounded liver, leechdoms against that, and of the hardening of the liver').[25] The writer of ch. XVIIII was more than willing to open the chapter with a sentence fragment, which is then modified by two other fragments.

In this context, then, the 'Her sint' ('Here are')[26] opening of ch. XXI is unnecessary and much more conversational than we usually see in the *Leechbook*. The full sentence that opens this sections is 'Her sint tacn aheardodre lifre ge on þam læppum and heolocum and filmenum' ('Here are the symptoms of a hardened liver, whether on the lobes or the cavities or the membrane'). This entire chapter has a similarly conversational presentation. While some of the chapter is drawn from Alexander of Tralles, other parts of

[22] Royal 12. D. XVII, 30v.
[23] Wright, *Bald's Leechbook*, p. 14; Storms, *Anglo-Saxon Magic*, pp. 14–15.
[24] Royal 12. D. XVII, 76r. [25] Royal 12. D. XVII, 75r. [26] Royal 12. D. XVII, 76r.

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it are not,[27] yet the presentation throughout the chapter, regardless of sources for individual passages, remains even, leading to the conclusion that the entire chapter was composed by a single person. Nevertheless, the use of Alexander of Tralles as a source here, as he is used in many other places throughout the book, suggests that the person who wrote this chapter was involved in the composition of the rest of the book as well.

Similarly conversational openings to chapters can be found in chs. XXIII, XXV, XXVIII, XXXII, XLVI and LI.[28] These chapters also tend to have more discussion of issues such as symptoms, prognosis, complications and characterization of the leechdom. My suspicion is that these and similar chapters are the ones that caused Wright to characterize Book II as more 'learned'. Indeed, the writers of Book II[29] often seem to be positioning themselves within a community of leeches, regardless of whether this community was a professional class or merely a part-time occupation for monks. References to leeches and their craft are relatively common in Book II, whereas while they occur in Book I, the writer(s) of Book I emphasize the community of leeches less. In fact, only two chapters in Book I have any mention of leeches other than the assumed practitioner of any charm. The first reference, which occurs twice in ch. XLVII, is to Oxa. The two references tell us nothing about Oxa, except 'Oxa lærde þisne læcedom' ('Oxa taught this leechdom'), a phrase which is repeated verbatim twice in the chapter, apparently in reference to two separate remedies.[30] The only other reference to other leeches and leechcraft is found in ch. LXXII, in a discussion of the times bloodletting is valuable and those times when bloodletting is harmful.

In ch. LXXII of *Leechbook* I, the writer goes to great lengths to validate his remedy through vague references to other leeches. For example, the writer claims that 'Læcas lærdon þa þe wisoste wæron *þæt* nan man on þam monþe ne drenc ne drunce no ahwær his lichoman wanige butan his nydþearf waere' ('The leeches that were wisest taught that in that month no man should drink a drink nor weaken his body anywhere unless he needs to').[31] The writer does not tell us exactly who these wisest leeches are, nor is it clear that he knows exactly who they are. The importance of the mention of the leeches in the chapter appears to be on using the authority of other leeches to lend confidence that the principles laid out are accurate. Two other times in this same

[27] T. O. Cockayne, *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Startcraft of Early England, Being a Collection of Documents, for the Most Part Never Before Printed, Illustrating the History of Science in this Country Before the Norman Conquest*. 3 vols. Rolls Series (repr., London, 1961), p. 204.

[28] Royal 12. D. XVII, 78v, 81r, 83v, 87r, 96v and 99r, respectively.

[29] By 'writers' I mean Writer B, along with other minor writers.

[30] Royal 12. D. XVII, 45v.

[31] Royal 12. D. XVII, 55r.

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chapter we again find the writer of the remedy appealing to other leeches for authority, writing, 'Eac secgeaþ læcas' ('Also leeches say. . .') and 'læcas læraþ eac' ('leeches teach also. . .').[32] Again, unlike the references to other leeches such as Oxa and Dun elsewhere, we do not get any sense that the writer is referring to a specific leech. Rather, he seems to be positioning himself within the community of leeches.

Both of these references to other leeches occur late in Book I, after the organizational format has broken down. Indeed, ch. LXXII is almost certainly a later addition, as whoever added it later also added the reference to it in the table of contents.[33] Therefore, we cannot be certain that these references to Oxa and Dun were added by the original team of compilers. Ch. LXXII was definitely not added by the original team. While we must note that these two references occur in Book I, we can see that they are the exception rather than the rule and were not likely part of the original compilation. Writer A of Book I did not resort to the rhetorical strategy of gaining legitimacy from other unnamed leeches, the strategy we see carried out here by the writers of these sections.

Book II, on the other hand, has many more such references. Interestingly, while these references do not appear frequently in the early chapters of the book, a small number can be found there and do not appear to be later additions as with Book I. The references found in Book II are not necessarily the rhetoric of reassurance as in Book I, though sometimes they may function this way. For example, ch. XV of Book II ends with the phrase, 'swa læcas cunnon' ('as leeches know').[34] This phrase may be to reassure the reader that the medical advice provided is not solely from the imagination of the compiler, but the presentation of it here sounds more as if it is intended to reaffirm that the writer is a leech, or at least is knowledgeable about them. In Chapter XXVIII, we read of a remedy that '*þæt* is suþerne læcedom' ('that is a southern leechdom'),[35] with the writer appearing to be simply giving the remedy a proper context.

We do see a value judgement in ch. XXXI, but instead of functioning as a way of borrowing legitimacy from other leeches as the writers do in the references in Book I, the rhetoric here is to put the writer among the ranks of leeches considered wise. In reference to a particular set of symptoms, the writer states that 'Wenaþ unwise læcas *þæt þæt* sie lenden adl oþþe milte wærc, ac hit ne biþ swa' ('Unwise leeches think that it is loin disease or spleen pain, but it is not so').[36] Besides showing a relatively sophisticated level of diagnosis (knowing where misdiagnosis is likely), the writer here appears to think of himself as a wise leech and also to know of other leeches who are less wise.

[32] Royal 12. D. XVII, 55r.
[33] Royal 12. D. XVII. See below, p. 65, for details.
[34] Royal 12. D. XVII, 72r.
[35] Royal 12. D. XVII, 84r.
[36] Royal 12. D. XVII, 86v–87r.

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Regardless of whether or not the writer of Book II is more learned as Wright suggested, he certainly thinks so of himself.

Of course, these references are not the only ones relating to the origins of remedies found in Book II. Both the remedies that were sent by Elias of Jerusalem to King Alfred and the remedies attributed to Dun are found in Book II. The rhetorical functions and positioning within the manuscript of these references are all important in demonstrating that the stylistic features and the presentation of the manuscript change from Book I and Book II and that the changes in style cannot be attributed only to different sources for the compilers, or to the input of later redactors who altered the original compilation.

At this point, it would be tempting to argue for a separate genesis of the two texts. After all, they are organized under separate tables of contents and, as I have demonstrated here, were primarily composed by at least two different writers. Perhaps we might argue that the texts were entirely separate until Bald ordered Cild to copy them into the same book. Under scrutiny, however, this scenario is untenable. First, as we have discussed above, the two books have exactly the same structure. Secondly, despite occasional overlap in sources, the two books keep within their respective boundaries of external and internal medicine through the great bulk of chapters (with the exception of later alterations), anticipating that the other subject would be covered in the other book. Thirdly, unlike Book III, no remedies appear in both books, which is a remarkable coincidence if we consider the breadth and scope of these two books and the frequency of repeated remedies in other extant manuscripts and marginalia. Finally, the tables of contents for both of the books are set out in the same way and also appear to be in the same essential style as each other, suggesting that the Writer A of Book I was also in part the writer of the table of contents for Book II.

The tables of contents for these books have undergone some minor alteration in the course of their transmissions, but if we ignore these minor alterations, we see the essential stylistic features of Writer A. Naturally, as with a modern table of contents, the style is very bare-bones. The entry for each chapter begins with the roman numeral for that chapter, then is followed by a short description of the contents of the chapter. These descriptions can be either brief or detailed and occasionally list the number of remedies to be found within the chapter. At the beginning of these descriptions, the initial is larger and bolder, though not very elaborately executed. The end of each chapter listed in the table is followed by a punctuation marking. Each chapter-listing, therefore, has three redundant cues separating it from the previous and subsequent chapter listings, namely the roman numeral, the large initial and the final punctuation. Some chapter-headings are missing one of these elements,

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usually the roman numeral or the final punctuation, but as these two elements both occur very close to the edge of the leaf, in most cases they simply appear to have been cropped off. Therefore, the lack of one of these elements is probably insignificant. We have enough evidence from the other two markers that we can be very certain of where each chapter-listing begins in the table of contents and where each ends.

As was mentioned above, a single scribal hand copied the text of all three books in the extant manuscript (with the exception of some marginalia). This hand also wrote out the initials as he wrote out the text, before proofreading, as is evidenced by errors that he made in enumeration. For chs. XIV and XV, for example, he accidentally left off the roman numeral, then continued the numbering at ch. XVI, which he mislabelled 'XIIII', off by two because of the two previous unnumbered chapters. He apparently continued with his error up to ch. XVIIII, then noticed his error. Ch. XIX was originally listed as 'XVII'. The error was noticed and corrected with 'II' written in superscript over the line in the same hand. These two minims could not be placed next to the first two because they were already too close to the initial letter, indicating that the initial had already been placed there.

The medieval practice of writing roman numerals was slightly different from the modern practice. This difference is what allows us to see the sequence of error and correction by the scribe. The primary difference comes in the modern practice of writing four 'IV' and nine 'IX'. The medieval practice was to write four as 'IIII' and nine as 'VIIII'. Therefore, when the scribe reached ch. XX, he wrote it as we would, by this time picking up his previous error and returning to the correct numbering. If seventeen or nineteen had been written in the modern way, XVII and XIX respectively, the scribe would have had to make a far more drastic correction, eliminating the V somehow, probably resorting to erasure.[37] Under the medieval system, however, the scribe had only to add two minims to the end, changing 'XVII' to 'XVIIII'. As it was, he only emended the listing for ch. XVIIII and left chs. XIIII and XV unmarked, while XVI–XVIII were left unchanged. Regardless of the reason for this lack of emendation, through omission the scribe has left evidence that he wrote out the initials and descriptions of the contents before he wrote in the roman numerals, rather than by leaving a space and filling in the initials later, as was a common practice for manuscripts with more elaborate initials.

The attentions of the scribe, however, do not demonstrate that the tables of

[37] Another possible error is for a lazy 'v' to be improperly connected at the bottom, thereby appearing to the scribe as two minims, or 'ii'. In this particular case, however, that error is not in evidence. If the scribe had made this error for 'xviiii', then the result would have been the nonsensical 'xiiiiii'. If the scribe had misread his own handwriting and read his previous entry of 'xiiii' as 'xvii', then then following entry should have read 'xviii', rather than 'xv', as it does.

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contents for the two books were actually composed in part by the same writer. They do demonstrate that the tables of contents were already established in the texts before our scribe ever took up pen. We do, however, see the signs of Writer A in the sparing and efficient descriptions of the contents. As with the main body of the text of Book I, the writer of the tables of contents prefers to open the description of the contents with the phrase 'Læcedomas wiþ' ('Leechdoms against') followed by the affliction. Again, occasionally the phrase 'Læcedomas gif' ('Leechdoms if') crops up. All of the contents listed in Book I contain one of these two formulae, or slight variations on them. Only four exceptions to this rule occur. All of these occur after the important ending of ch. XXX and so may have been emendations, though the differences are not so great as to make this conclusion very solid. Ch. LXXII, however, is certainly an emendation. As was discussed above, ch. LXXII is particularly odd and conversational. The entry for this chapter is no different, containing a long description that is so rambling that Cockayne felt compelled to give it two paragraphs in his edition, the only chapter in either Books I or II for which he did so. The table of contents for Book I also was written by the same person who wrote the main text of the book.

Book II is a little more complicated, for it contains strong evidence of Writer B in addition to Writer A. The earliest listings all show the very strong influence of Writer A, but eventually the stylistic features of Writer B begin to creep in. For example, the listing in the table of contents for ch. II begins, 'Læcedomas wiþ magan sare' ('Leechdomas against a sore stomach'),[38] which is the kind of listing we would expect from Writer A. The main text of the chapter opens with 'Wiþ sarum *and* aþundenu*m* magan' ('Against a sore and swollen stomach') and the contents of the chapter are sparse and efficiently laid out.[39] As the book progresses, however, we see this style established by Writer A fading out, replaced by these newer stylistic features. From the very beginning of the table of contents the influence of Writer A is strong, but not complete, as we find the 'Læcedomas be' construct occurring from the third chapter-listing in the table of contents for Book II, which while it is not a wide deviation from the stylistic features of Writer A, it is deviation.

The penchant of Writer B to use other, unnamed leeches as validation for his teachings begins to show in the entry for ch. XVIII. In the table of contents listing for this chapter, the entry is 'Læcas læraþ þisne læcedom wiþ lifre spyle *and* aþundenesse' ('Leeches teach this leechdom for the swelling and bloating of the liver').[40] This entry is especially significant because in the chapter itself no mention of other leeches occurs, demonstrating that while Writer A may have had a hand in compiling the table of contents for Book II,

[38] Royal 12. D. XVII, 58v. [39] Royal 12. D. XVII, 66v. [40] Royal 12. D. XVII, 59v.

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at least some of the listings were composed by Writer B. The listings for the following two chapters, XIX and XX, both are short, but both also contain references to other leeches that are not found in their respective chapters. These chapter listings read 'Læceas secgeaþ þas tacn be aswollenre *and* gewundadre lifre' ('Leeches tell these symptoms of a swollen and wounded liver') and 'Læcas læraþ þis wiþ þære lifre wunde . . .' ('Leeches teach this for the liver wound. . .').[41] Certainly this section of the table of contents was written by Writer B.

We can therefore begin to discern a picture of these two main writers by examining their rhetorical styles. Of the two, Writer A influenced Writer B far more than the reverse. It may be that Writer B was simply trying to copy the style of Book I, or it may be that Writer A was also involved, to a lesser degree, in the writing of Book II. Since the two books were part of the same project, perhaps both writers were also on the team of compilers. More than two writers may have contributed to this project, but evidence of a third of fourth writer is so faint as to be lost in the background noise of the later alterations. We cannot possibly know for certain if these two main writers were members of a larger team of compilers, or if they were the only two compilers working on this project. Given the scope of the project, I suspect a greater number than two compilers, though likely only two wrote the original books. The greater influence of Writer A on Writer B implies a power relationship, suggesting that Writer B was somehow subordinate to Writer A. This relationship meshes nicely with what we know of the relationship between Cild and Bald. The colophon at the end clearly marks out a relationship in which Bald is the superior and Cild is the subordinate. We plausibly could identify Writer A as Bald and Writer B as Cild. While it would be nice to wrap this issue up into a neat little package and state firmly that we can identify the original compilers and writers of the *Leechbook*, such confidence would be misplaced. Given the murky transmission of the *Leechbook* to the scribe of Royal 12. D. XVII, Bald's and Cild's involvement with the *Leechbook* might have begun decades after the original compilation.

Many decades of transmission of these texts, which were intended to be used as reference works and so presumably found themselves in use whenever anyone was sick or injured, allowed for emendation. The emendation of the text is evident in two ways. The first way, which we have already discussed to some degree, is the difference in stylistic features between the primary writers[42] and the redactors. The second category of evidence is errors that crept into the tables of contents when people added or removed remedies to the main text of the books, whether intentionally or accidentally, but failed to adjust the table of contents accordingly.

[41] Royal 12. D. XVII, 59v. [42] I.e., Writer A and Writer B.

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Determining which differences are emendations based upon rhetorical style can be a complicated undertaking, since rhetorical style is subjective and one does not wish to detract from the work of the original compilers and writers of the text. Beyond looking at the transitional phrases at the beginnings and ends of chapters, the identification of a later emendation relies upon the redactor having had very poor editorial skills, or having been uninterested in editing a remedy to make it fit into the book. As often as not, the contents of a remedy, whether from the original compilation of Bald's *Leechbook* or from a later addition, come from a known source, such as Alexander of Tralles. Much of the rhetorical style may stem from the source text, not from the person who later added it to the *Leechbook*. Furthermore, the attempt to determine whether particular remedies were part of the original composition is even more difficult than determining that the original texts had two main writers. In determining the primary writers of the text, we were able to look for broad trends in rhetorical style and confirm our judgments based upon the frequency of use of particular rhetorical structures. When looking for emendations, we are looking for obvious exceptions to the broad stylistic trends.

We must therefore be careful of the conclusions we draw about emendations based upon rhetorical style. Except in a few cases in which the entry is wildly different from anything else found in the book, or in cases in which internal and external medicines were put into the wrong book, we cannot prove that a particular remedy was not part of the original compilation. We can demonstrate, however, through a preponderance of evidence that emendation of the *Leechbook* did occur during its transmission, even if we are often uncertain about the origins of a specific remedy. As is so common in medieval manuscripts, we find most of the suspected emendations near the end of their respective books.

As was mentioned above, one chapter of Book I is so radically different from the other chapters as to leave little doubt that it was a later addition. Ch. LXXII, regarding the times of month beneficial for bleeding, must have been added later. In the table of contents, the listing is so long that in Cockayne's edition he felt obligated to divide it into two paragraphs, the only table of contents entry in either book that he treated this way. The scribe of Royal 12. D. XVII also felt this way, having begun a new line without finishing the previous one, thus approximating the modern paragraph. The surrounding listings take up no more than two or three manuscript lines, while this listing takes up fifteen manuscript lines, the most to be found in Book I.

While other remedies may be additions, ch. LXXII is the only one that certainly is. Nevertheless, several strong suspects emerge. Chs. XXXVIII and XXXIX both open in the conversational style eschewed by the writer of Book I. Ch. XXXVIII opens with the words 'Her sindon dolh sealfa to eallu*m*

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wundum *and* drencas *and* clænsunga on gehwilce wisan ge utan ge on þa*m* innoþum' ('Here are wound salves for all wounds and drinks and cleansings (purgatives?) of all kinds, whether outward or inward').[43] Besides the words 'Her sindon', ('Here are'), which are unnecessary, the subject matter of this chapter seems to be rather inexplicably broad. Other chapters focus on a specific part of the body and, of course, the book as a whole deals with external medicine, rather than internal. Part of the peculiarity of this chapter may be that by focussing on 'ge utan ge on þa*m* innoþum' ('either outward or inward')[44] problems, it cannot be properly placed into the larger design of the *Leechbook*. Ch. XXXIX, while also opening in this conversational way with the words 'Her sint læcedomas' ('Here are leechdoms'),[45] focuses on a particular ailment at least, with an emphasis on the leg, suggesting perhaps that chs. XXXVIII and XXXIX were added by the same person, but not from the same source. Both chapters are quite long, indicating perhaps that each once existed independently of any of the other remedies.

Chs. LXII–LXV have very strong Christian mystical elements. The first half of ch. LXII is not unusual, but thereafter most of the remedies have Christian mystical symbols as components. The use of Latin becomes much more frequent here, as well as crosses and gibberish, perhaps the remains of some garbled Greek. Furthermore, two of the remedies found herein make reference to St Veronica, suggesting that the source materials had some sort of emphasis on St Veronica.[46] The content of this section tends to deal more with supernatural afflictions and remedies than in the rest of Book I. Ch. LXIII is for 'feond seocum men' ('fiend-sick men', that is, the demon-possessed)[47] and chapter LXIV is 'Læcedomas wiþ ælcre leodrunan *and* ælfsidenne' ('Leechdoms for any sorcery and elvish influence').[48] While the belief in such things is compatible with the rest of the *Leechbook* , their appearance here is singularly odd, as elsewhere in the text illness tends to be attributed to natural rather than supernatural influence. Most of the *Leechbook* does not enter into the supernatural causes of influence and works from the unstated assumption that the practitioner's role is to deal with the natural, leaving the supernatural to priests or monks. Even with the internal medicine of Book II such things are attributed to worms or imbalance in the humours.

Book II has no chapter that is so plainly an emendation as the bloodletting chapter in Book I. Nevertheless, certain remedies seem peculiarly placed and

[43] Royal 12. D. XVII, 34v. [44] Royal 12. D. XVII, 34v. [45] Royal 12. D. XVII, 37v.

[46] According to tradition, Veronica wiped the face of Jesus as he went to Calvary. The cloth that Veronica used is known as the 'Veil of Veronica', a relic that is still preserved in Rome. Although the Veil should be a unique item, it is possible that the use of Veronica's name was in part an attempt to create a personal relic. [47] Royal 12. D. XVII, 51v.

[48] Royal 12. D. XVII, 5r.

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are suspicious. For example, ch. LXVI begins a section on 'sidan sare' ('sore sides') that continues for several chapters, ending with ch. L. Cockayne attributes much of this section to Alexander of Tralles. These four chapters stretch from 96v–99r. While they are not especially long, neither are they single paragraphs. Ch. L, the last in this sequence before Book II turns to lung disorders, reads in full, 'Eft wiþ sidan sare betonican leaf geseoþ on ele *and* gebryte alege on þa sidan' ('Again for sore sides, soak betony leaves in oil and crush *them*, lay on the side').[49] This very short remedy does not seem to merit its own chapter, suggesting that it was a later addition.

We also see the return of charms in ch. LXV. The placement of this chapter is important, because it comes immediately following the chapter which includes the remedies sent by Patriach Elias to Alfred, which itself immediately follows the large, multi-chapter lacuna. We have some indication of the contents of the missing chapters from the table of contents and they do not appear to have been remarkable in any way. Each appears to cover one part of the body and ailment in the same way earlier chapters do. Beginning with ch. LXV, however, we once again see the focus return to supernatural causes, involving the writing of 'Benedicite om*ni*a opera d*omi*ni d*omin*um' on a knife.[50] As with the suspect section in Book I, this chapter appears out of sorts with the whole of Book II, as if it were added later. Later in this same chapter is our reference to Dun, the only reference to an Anglo-Saxon physician in this book. In the next section of this chapter is a remedy that calls for making crosses on the head of someone with a 'færlice yfele pyrce' ('sudden evil pain'),[51] along with a drink that works 'wiþ feondes costungum yflum' ('against the devil's evil temptations').[52] The next section of this chapter contains a drink 'to þon ilcan' ('for the same') which involves singing masses over ground frankincense and myrrh around Christmas (likely a reference to the gifts of the magi) as well as during the feasts of SS Stephen and John.[53] This remedy is a remarkable bit of preventative medicine, in that the writer claims that it will protect against all dangerous illnesses for twelve months. The final section of this chapter also contains a remedy against an elf.

Ch. LXV of Book II is in content very different from the rest of Bald's *Leechbook*, reading more like something out of the *Lacnunga*, or perhaps *Leechbook III*. After it, only two chapters remain in the book. Ch. LXVI is about the properties of the agate stone. While the ability of stones to affect cures is testified in several places throughout Book II, this chapter is the only place in which a stone is given its very own chapter. The eight virtues listed here for the stone are not strictly medical either. They also include the ability to prevent

[49] Royal 12. D. XVII, 99r. [50] Royal 12. D. XVII, 106r. [51] Royal 12. D. XVII, 107r.
[52] Royal 12. D. XVII, 107v. [53] Royal 12. D. XVII, 107v.

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being struck by lightning, to prevent fiends from entering your house, to reveal what is hidden and to prevent magical attacks. The final chapter of the book, ch. LXVII, is not about remedies or charms at all. It is essentially a conversion chart for weights and measures, which, while it may indirectly aid with assembling ingredients for cures, seems very out of place here.

Therefore, when we look at the evidence found in these final chapters of Book II, not one of them seems to fit here. In fact, the last chapter that seems to be in the proper place is the remainder of ch. LXIV – the remedies given to Alfred by Patriarch Elias. Most likely, then, the last chapter of the original composition was the Alfred the Great chapter and subsequent chapters were added later. The extant content of this Alfred the Great chapter appears to have much in common with the additional chapters, such as cures requiring putting crosses on the body and the use of stones to prevent lightning-strikes. When we examine the description in the table of contents, however, we see that the focus is on the medical remedies. Furthermore, the writer of the table of contents characterizes the use of the white stone[54] as being for 'eallu*m* uncuþu*m* brocu*m*' ('all strange afflictions'),[55] as if he too thought that what was contained in ch. LXIV was a little odd, but he felt compelled to include it nonetheless because of its provenance.

In addition to the rhetorical evidence for emendation, as well as the inclusion of odd remedies near the ends of both books, Book I and Book II each have remedies in them that belong to the other book. Occasionally internal afflictions appear in Book I and external afflictions in Book II. We must be careful, however, about what we consider as 'internal' and 'external' medicine. From the context of the *Leechbook* we find that anything with an externally visible symptom, such as vomiting, sometimes seems to have been considered the domain of external medicine. For example, Book I, ch. XIX, contains remedies against nausea, which is an obvious external symptom of what may perhaps be a less obvious internal ailment. Ch. X of Book II , however, also contains a remedy for nausea. At times the two categories seem to have been conflated.

Despite this confusion about what is internal and what is external, we do have a few cases in which the remedy is in the wrong book. Book I, ch. XLVIII, contains 'læcedomas wiþ þam wyrmu*m* þe innan eglaþ monnum, *and* wiþ pyrmum þe on cilda innoþe beoþ *and* wiþ cilda innoþ sare' ('leechdoms against the worms which inwardly trouble men, and against worms that are inwards in children, and against children's inner soreness').[56] The repetition of the words 'innan' and 'innoþe' drives home the point that these remedies are for internal

[54] Cockayne identifies the 'white stone' as *lapis Alabastrites*.
[55] Royal 12. D. XVII, 105v.
[56] Royal 12. D. XVII, 4v.

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ailments. In fact, this word is the same as that used at the opening of Book II, which reads 'þas læcedomas belimpaþ to eallum *innoþa* mettrymnessum' ('These leechdoms concern all internal infirmities') (emphasis mine).[57] Clearly the writer of this particular entry in the table of contents realized that the remedy pertained to internal rather than external medicine, but included it in Book I anyway. This unselfconscious inclusion suggests that the remedy may have been a later addition, made either by someone who did not understand the different topics of the two books, or by someone who only had access to Book I. In either case, the person who made the additions was not likely involved in the initial compilation.

Book II also has a few questionable entries. One example is ch. LVII. This chapter contains 'Læcedomas wiþ þearmes utgange *and* gif men bilyhte sie ymb þone þearm *and* wiþ [bæc] þearmes utgange nigon wisan' ('Leechdoms against the guts going out and if boils are on a man around the guts, and against the guts going back. Nine methods').[58] Exactly what this disorder is supposed to be is unclear. The word 'þearm' can mean either 'guts' or 'entrails', not a very specific word. As this chapter is one of those lost in the lacuna, we must rely solely upon the description in the table of contents for information. Although we may not be certain exactly what affliction is in question, the evidence that it should have been considered an external ailment is strong. First, we have the repetition of the word 'utgange' ('outgoing') here, which certainly appears to refer to an external symptom. Secondly, we have the occurrence of boils or carbuncles around the guts. Again, boils or carbuncles are mainly external symptoms and should probably be included in Book I, along with other such ailments found in Book I as cysts.

These few entries are not the only ones that seem to have been placed incorrectly and may be the result of later additions, but they are representative of a larger group. This situation causes problems in trying to assess the transmission of these documents. Both books are certainly part of the same project. Moreover, we find the rhetorical fingerprints of the same men in both books. If we have a hypothetical team that compiled these books and we assume that the entire team understood the basic format of the project, then presumably all of the charms added by that team were placed in their proper context, whether they were part of the original compilation or not. Therefore, all these odds and ends uncharacteristic of the *Leechbook* would be found near the end of the book. Book I, however, seems to be more affected by later emendations than Book II (with the exception of the large lacuna missing from Book II). If the two books were originally compiled as part of the same codex, later additions would have to appear near the end of Book II, not Book I. These two

[57] Royal 12. D. XVII, 58v. [58] Royal 12. D. XVII, 63v.

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books, while being part of the same project and originally produced by the same team, apparently have a different history of transmission down to their eventual conflation in Bald. At some point the two books were separated. People either without knowledge or access to the other book made changes, explaining why remedies seem improperly placed. Book I appears to have had a much more active life than Book II, given the number of uncharacteristic remedies found in the last chapters.

The likely reason for keeping the two books in separate codices is implied in the very organization of the project. Why separate external and internal afflictions, instead of simply organizing one comprehensive text in the top-down, outward–inward fashion? The *Leechbook* is intended to be a working reference book and might often have to be taken out to where a sick or injured person lay. Therefore, the book would have had to be portable. To make a larger codex, with one table of contents and the collected and conflated text of Books I and II, would have created an unwieldy codex. The manuscript Royal 12. D. XVII, which contains both books of Bald's *Leechbook* as well as *Leechbook III*, is quite large and would have been difficult to carry around. The manuscript that comes down to us today does not seem to have been intended to travel frequently. The original compilation, on the other hand, was intended to be portable. To this end, it was purposefully divided into two shorter books at the time of composition.

Even though we know that the *Leechbook* underwent emendation, we cannot simply search the end of each book for uncharacteristic remedies. Some of the emendations in the *Leechbook* were carefully intertwined with the original text, making them virtually impossible to extract. The redactor apparently saw that a new remedy could fit into an existing chapter, then tried to place it there. The most likely method for inclusion of new remedies would have been simply to write them in the margins of the leaf, then seamlessly include them in the main text when transcribing it later. In fact, we have an example of such marginalia on the upper-right hand side of 49r, where a later hand has included a remedy 'Wiþ þa blacan blegene' ('Against the black boils') at the end of ch. LVIII, Book I, which contains remedies for 'wen' ('tumors'), not an unreasonable place to include this remedy. Presumably, if a later scribe copied Royal 12. D. XVII, the subsequent version could have included this marginal remedy as part of the main text. In fact, in Cockayne's edition we have a modern example of this phenomenon, as Cockayne has added the remedy to the end of his chapter as if it were part of the main text of the original. On the Old English side of his parallel edition he puts the remedy between brackets and adds in a footnote "In the margin, in a different and later hand', while on the modern English side he leaves the brackets unexplained. In fact, Cockayne goes so far as to number the remedy '4', as if it were the fourth in a sequence in the section. If this treat-

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ment is what Cockayne, a modern scholar producing a diplomatic edition, provides, then we can imagine that no notation would have occurred in any manuscript copy produced by a medieval scribe.

Our evidence for these nearly seamless additions goes beyond simple supposition surrounding a single marginal entry in the extant manuscript. The evidence lies in errors found in the numbers of remedies listed both in the tables of contents and in the body of the chapters themselves. In some cases the errors are small and might be deemed simply the result of a less-than-perfect arithmetic prowess. In a few other cases, however, arguing for mathematical error stretches the numbers past plausibility. Some chapters have a discrepancy of as many as ten remedies different from the number listed in the table of contents and the actual number. Rather than suggesting that our team of compilers was composed of men with wildly poor skills in counting, the evidence points to alteration to the text after the table of contents had been completed. Later redactors were less careful about making certain that the number of remedies listed coincided with the new number after a marginal remedy was added, or one had been left out, either by accident or because it had been found useless.

The list of numbers of remedies given in the table of contents, numbers listed in the various chapters and actual numbers occurring can be found in Tables 1 and 2 (below), Table 1 covering Book I of the *Leechbook* and Table 2 covering Book 2. Many chapters have no number listed in either the table of contents or the opening of the chapter itself and therefore these chapters have been omitted for the sake of simplicity. Also omitted are chapters in which the number of remedies is implied by the use of the singular in the table of contents, because the compilers often appear to use the singular to describe a particular remedy in the chapter, rather than to give an accounting of the actual number of remedies. For example, the table of contents listing for Book I, ch. VII, reads, 'Læcedom gif mon blod hræce' ('Leechdom if a man vomits blood').[59] In fact ch. VII contains only one remedy. Ch. XII, however, demonstrates the unreliability of the singular as an indicator of actual number, in that it reads, 'Læcedom wiþ w[ouu]m muþ *and* wiþ ceolan swyle. Þry læcedomas' ('Leechdom against irritated mouth and against swollen throat. Three leechdoms').[60] This entry appears contradictory, in that the singular implies that only one remedy is to be found in this chapter, but then it clearly states that three remedies do in fact appear. When we examine the actual occurrence of remedies in the chapter, we find that three remedies do occur. The first is a single remedy for an irritated mouth and the second two are for a swollen throat. The implication of the table of contents is that the singular only applies to the one

[59] Royal 12. D. XVII, 1v. [60] Royal 12. D. XVII, 1v–2r.

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remedy for an irritated mouth and does not imply a particular number for remedies for a swollen throat. The text is ambiguous, however, in that it could be read as meaning that only one remedy occurs and that this remedy cures both irritated mouth and swollen throat. Therefore, in order to avoid erring by assuming the count of one remedy when the singular is meant to be categorical rather than exhaustive, I have only included numbers in Table 1 and Table 2 for chapters that have an explicit statement of the number of remedies found therein.

Furthermore, the standards for counting remedies can be rather subjective. For example, at times a drink might be followed by a salve. Sometimes the writer is vague about whether the drink and salve are two different stages of the same cure, or are supposed to be completely independent of one another. While textual clues can exist, unambiguous textual clues are usually absent. I have therefore adopted a standard for counting remedies that assumes a very faithful and careful transmission of the text. Wherever it is possible to arrive at a figure in agreement with that found in either the table of contents or the beginning of the chapter, I have counted in a fashion to try to arrive as close to that figure as possible. In many cases this approach may be too conservative, but as a general principle we should assume the competence of the compilers. Other scholars counting remedies in the same chapters may come up with figures differing from mine. Nevertheless, despite this very conservative approach, enough evidence presents itself that we can safely conclude that the books, particularly Book I, underwent alterations during transmission which are impossible to distinguish from the original.

For example, Book I, ch. III, has no number listed in its entry in the table of contents, but the text of the chapter itself opens, 'Læcedomas wiþ eallu*m* earena sare *and* ece *and* wiþ earena adeafunge, *and* gif wyrmas on earan synd oþþe earwicga, *and* gif earan dynien, *and* earsealfa fiftyne cræftas' ('Leechdoms against all ear soreness and ache and against deafness of the ears, and if worms are earwigs are in the ears, and if the ears ring, and ear salves. Fifteen methods').[61] In this case, we do not have Writer A including the number in the table of contents, although in other instances the number occurs in both the table of contents and the openings of chapters.[62] When we count the actual number of remedies given in this particular chapter, however, the number is no smaller than twenty-five. At one time this chapter had at least ten fewer remedies in it than exist in our extant manuscript. We have no textual evidence to show from where these extra entries came. The most likely answer is that

[61] Royal 12. D. XVII, 14v.

[62] This marks another notable stylistic trait of Writer A. Book II has no references to the numbers of remedies in the body of a chapter itself. While Book I has some such references, they are mostly confined to the first thirty chapters and so are likely the product of Writer A.

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the additional ten remedies were added later, after the initial composition of the chapter. The redactors were not careful to correct the number found at the beginning of the chapter. One other plausible answer is that in an earlier version of the text, the number was actually recorded as twenty-five, but one of the roman numeral tens was not copied and 'XXV' became 'XV'. This plausible solution is unlikely, however, for three reasons. First, the number twenty-five is the closest I could make the number of remedies match the number listed. I suspect the actual number was closer to twenty-eight. Second, in the extant manuscript, the number is written out as 'fiftyne' rather than in roman numerals, indicating that it was more likely written out in the exemplar of the manuscript as well. Finally, this gap between the number listed and the number actually occurring is part of a recurrent pattern, suggesting that whatever caused it, it was not a single incident of scribal error. From the evidence found here we can justifiably assume that the chapter has nearly doubled in length from its original form.

Book II also has similar errors likely resulting from later additions to the book, but two chapters in particular stand out. In these chapters, a number of remedies is listed in the table of contents, but in the actual chapter no remedies occur whatsoever. Chs. XXXI and XXXVI are both peculiar in this way. At the end of the entry in the table of contents for each is a statement of how many 'wisa' ('directions') and 'cræftas' ('methods'[63]), asserting that the chapters contain four and eight respectively.[64] In both cases, however, while the subject matter of the chapters is listed correctly, neither has any remedies found within. Rather, each deals with the symptoms and diagnosis of its designated ailment. The focus on symptoms is common in Book II and would not occasion remark if not for the mysterious phrases 'feower wisa' and 'eahta cræftas'. While possibly both chapters lost their endings during transmission, I think this scenario unlikely, since each chapter appears complete in its current state. More likely the original compilers decided to count methods of diagnosis in these chapters, but the way they used to discern one method from the next is unclear. Unlike the other chapters in which a discrepancy occurs, in these two chapters the reason is probably not error from transmission.

As the above discussion demonstrates, reconstructing what the original team of compilers did, in what context they did it, is not easy. Decades of transmission and redaction make it even more difficult. We can, however, discern some details through the murk. First, the contents of Bald's *Leechbook* are unusually authoritative. Rather than being the object of popular folklore, perhaps tacitly permitted by the church, these two books are the product of official efforts in

[63] This translation is mostly from context. Cræftas is a very general type of word, with a variety of meanings, such as talent, ability, might, courage, or trade.

[64] Royal 12. D. XVII, 60v–61r.

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both church and state. The court of King Alfred the Great was involved either directly or indirectly in the compilation of the original text. Furthermore, some of the remedies in the end of Book I were transmitted to Wessex from the patriarch of Jerusalem. In a sense they have international approval. More than any other surviving charm text, Bald's *Leechbook* is an authorized, official text.

From the text we also see emerging a portrait of a body of professional leeches. While we only have two names for certain, Oxa and Dun, with one name in question, that of Bald, this text assures us that such people existed. If the contents of Bald's *Leechbook* are any indication, they were given to systematically cataloguing their knowledge for future use. These leeches were interested in the practical, in what works. Even in the more theoretical Book II we find mostly discussions of symptoms and how to vary treatments according to symptoms. Regardless of whether or not modern science deems these cures efficacious, the Anglo-Saxon leech believed that they were and organized them accordingly. The leeches gleaned their cures from any source that they could find, classical or contemporary. Rather than being secretive practitioners of hedge magic or herbal lore, trying to stay out of view of the church, these Anglo-Saxon leeches operated openly and with the collusion of the church. Very likely, some leeches may have been monks themselves. Bald's *Leechbook* is itself a practical book, each volume compact enough to be portable, with leeches feeling free to add and omit remedies as they saw fit throughout the transmission of the text.

In the broad scheme of 'charms', then, nothing comes as close to the modern usage of 'remedy' as the contents of Bald's *Leechbook* . The conclusions drawn by some scholars from sources such as marginal charms and the contents of the *Lacnunga* cannot be applied with validity to Bald's *Leechbook*. The remedies found within are organized and authorized. As we will see from the contents of Book III, also in Royal 12. D. XVII, not every extant text of Anglo-Saxon charms can make this same claim.

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Chapter	Table of Contents	Body of Text	Actual Number
III	no listing	15	25
IV	no listing	14	18
V	3	no listing	3
VIII	4	no listing	5
IX	10	no listing	7
XII	3	no listing	3
XV	11	no listing	10
XVI	4	no listing	4
XVII	5	no listing	5
XIX	2	no listing	2
XX	3	no listing	3
XXI	6	no listing	6
XXII	4	no listing	4
XXIII	3	no listing	3
XXV	4	no listing	4
XXVI	4	no listing	4
XXVII	6	no listing	6
XXVIII	3	no listing	3
XXIX	3	no listing	3
XXXI	28	no listing	28
XXXII	15	15	15
XXXIII	8	no listing	8
XXXVII	14	no listing	15
XXXVIII	34	no listing	34
XXXIX	28	28	31
XL	6	no listing	6
XLI	3	no listing	5
XLIV	4	no listing	4
XLV	20	no listing	19
XLVI	5	no listing	6
XLVII	12	no listing	12
XLVIII	12	no listing	13
L	6	no listing	6
LII	2	no listing	2
LIII	2	no listing	2
LIX	3	no listing	3
LX	8	no listing	8
LXI	14	no listing	14
LXII	10	no listing	10
LXIII	6	no listing	4
LXIV	7	no listing	6
LXV	5	no listing	3
LXVII	3	no listing	3
LXVIII	6	no listing	6
LXIX	7	no listing	7

Fig. 1 Deviation in numbers of remedies listed in Book I

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Chapter	Table of Contents	Body of Text	Actual Number
II	10	no listing	10
VI	4	no listing	4
VII	6	no listing	5
VIII	4	no listing	4
XXIV	13	no listing	14
XXX	16	no listing	22
XXXI	4	no listing	symptoms
XXXII	12	no listing	12
XXXIII	13	no listing	12
XXXIV	9	no listing	9
XXXVI	8	no listing	symptoms
XXXIX	10	no listing	10
XLI	3	no listing	5
LI	21	no listing	21
LII	20	no listing	17
LIII	8	no listing	7
LVI	75	lacuna	lacuna
LVII	9	lacuna	lacuna
LVIII	20	lacuna	lacuna
LIX	21	lacuna	lacuna
LX	41	lacuna	lacuna
LXI	3	lacuna	lacuna

Fig. 2 Deviation in numbers of remedies in Book II

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