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# *THE APPENDIX*

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FEBRUARY 23, 2022  
STEPHANY RILEY HOFFELT

Dear Reader,

This appendix is the notes I have compiled for myself while researching for articles, working on transcriptions, and most importantly from knowledge I acquired from my own upbringing in a poverty stricken rural area.

I grew up on a farm helping to work a huge garden, so I know about plants. I know about preserving them for food and I know about using them for medicine. I don't need to have the vague directions in a receipt book explained to me because I learned a lot of those things by doing them myself as I grew up.

I had to bite my tongue while professors talked about folkways I still practice defined as having passed out of common use, such as using a still or cooking with wood heat. I grew up in a house heated with only a wood stove and we baked our bread in a small metal oven that sat on that wood stove. I know other families who did this also, even though a professor I once had insisted "people stopped using those in the 1800's" and that I must be mistaken.

I work on the transcription projects because I think it is important that people who have a respectful view of the women who wrote the books and their skills do that work. I am going to focus mainly on anglicized and English equivalents in this appendix because I think that's what most of you will be reading. If you are working with Gaelic let me know and I can help with that.

Warmly,  
Stephany Riley Hoffelt  
1 March 2022

## Abbreviations You Might See

&c - Et. cetera

D<sup>o</sup> - Ditto mark

ſ - long S

ß - Sharp s looks like “B” is actually a double ss and means “semi”

£ - Pound sign

Hour - °

Ana = an equal amount of each

Twice daily - *bie in die* b.i.d

Three times daily - *ter in die*, t.i.d

Rx, R<sub>x</sub>, RX, or R, - receipt

OE = Old English

ME – Middle English

Thorn (þ) is an archaic letter that made the “th” sound. It became so similar to a “y” that you really couldn’t tell the difference in handwritten documents. *Al þat* is “all that” and it seemed to be used like we use “until” today. *y<sup>e</sup> - the, y<sup>n</sup> - then*

Grain	G or gr. - 65 mg
Scruple	ʒ 20 grains (1.3 g)
Dram	ʒ or ʒ (3.9 g) one-half dram is ʒss (1.945 g)
Ounce	ʒ (31.2 g.) one- half ounce is ʒss (15.55 g.)
Pound	li, lb, £ A troy pound is 12 oz or 373 g
Pennyweight	d or dwt - 24 grains (1.56 g.)
Handfull.	M. <i>Manipului</i> -great handfull (dpr. ½ cup)
Small handfull	p. Pugillus
Fluid Ounce	flʒ or fʒ (33 mL)

Pints and Gallons varied regionally so I just use modern equivalents

Dry gallon was a unit of mass used to measure grains (around 8lbs)

## Old Scottish Measurements

4 gills	1 mutchkin – one-half cup
2 mutchkins	1 choppin – 1 cup
2 choppins	1 pint – 2 cups
2 pint	1 quart
4 quarts	1 gallon
8 gallons	1 barrel
1 lippie	1 peck
1 firлот	1 bushel

## A

Abarstick is an archaic word for insatiable. You sometimes see it used to describe hunger or desire that seems pathological.

Abdomen is the peritoneal cavity. Other words you might see used to describe this include abdomen, belly, and paunch.

Abortion a dictionary published in 1658 described abortion as the birth of a child before it's time.

Abrotonum is another name for Southernwood *Artemisia abrotanum*

Accesse was a word derived from Old French that meant an "an attack of fever."

*Aconitum napellus* is a plant used to make poisons to kill wolves, and known as aconite, wolfsbane, monkshood, friar's cap, or Sibbard's Bane. It was included in topical formulas for pain and other medicines.

Acrisy is the absence of a crisis or resolution to a disease.

Adder's-tongue a genus of ferns that is used to make an oil for wounds that have become "green" or infected.

Adjunct When I use adjunct I am speaking to a food or herbal preparation that is taken in the form of home preparations or nourishment. I am very intentional in the use of this word because I mean for it to be in addition to any medications prescribed by a professional. I do not recommend adjuncts that have known contraindications or that require the discernment of an herbal clinician.

Adl is an Old English noun that means sickness or disease and resulted in Middle English terms like addled which sometimes spoke to an illness of the mind.

Agaric is *Agaricus blazei* or *Agaricus campestris* which are both edible gilled mushrooms of the *Agaricaceae* family and shouldn't be confused with the *Amanita muscaria*, although people will sensationalize anything they can... \*bites tongue\* Agaric was also used as a term to describe a class of medicines that purge phlegm.

*Agnus castus*, monk's pepper, chaste tree, or Abraham's balm is *Vitex agnus castus* and was said to "preserve chastity" and given to reduce the libido to both men and women.

Ague is a term for a fever derived from the Latin *acuta*, meaning sharp fever that alternates with chills.

Alchemy is often simplified to the process of some mad hatter trying to turn lead into gold but there was a lot more to it than that. Alchemists were very much into searching for medicinal cures, particularly ones that could prolong the lifespan. They searched for a mineral they called the "philosopher's stone" to help them achieve immortality. The first known guild of alchemists was the Alexandria perfumer's guild. There is an extent manuscript written by Zosimus of Panapolis detailing their process.

Ale was typically served at meals. Until hops were incorporated into brewing, ale and beer were thought to be synonymous. Both are brewed by fermenting a barley mash. In the early modern period ale came in grades. Strong ale was the first brew from a mash. Ale was the second brew from a mash, and small ale was the third. Small ale was very bitter and less alcoholic. After 1400CE beer became a specific term for ale brewed with hops.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'Ale - Middle English Compendium'. Accessed 11 March 2021. [https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED1051/track?counter=1&search\\_id=5973770](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED1051/track?counter=1&search_id=5973770).

Alehoof, gill, or tunhoof is *Glechoma hederacea* which today we call ground-ivy or creeping Charlie, but in the 1600's some English physicians also called it coltsfoot, so you really have to read the context of the material to determine what plant the author is talking about. Culpeper writes of alehoof and coltsfoot as two different plants. The confusion might stem from the fact that it was called hōfe in Old English.

Alembic (see Limbeck)

Alestake is a pole attached to the front of someone's home to indicate that they sold ale. An alehouse was not a tavern in the modern sense. It the domicile of a brewster who sold their excess ale and possibly food and lodging, but they were less affluent than taverns. Most were not reputable places where coneyes (conmen) gambled and cavorted.

Alexander (alysaundre) is the common name for *Smyrniium olustratum* which is a plant remarkably similar to *Angelica archangelica*. They are so alike that sometimes it is incorrectly stated that *Smyrniium* is another common name given to Angelica.

Alhandal (*Citrullis colocythis*) was used as a laxative and diuretic meant to purge watery and serous humours.

Althæa or mallowe is generally speaking of the marshmallow plant, but it was not at all unusual to see *althæa* used as a word to lump hollyhocks and mallows lumped together "decoction of them with Mallowes and Hollyhock leaves" was a common topical for gout.

Aliment is an old word that refers to the food and drink taken to nourish the body.

Alkanet is *Alkanna tinctoria*. A red dye stock obtained from the root. Alternate names include orchanet, *anchusa* and Spanish bugloss.

All spice is the dried berry of the (*Pimenta dioica*) tree.

All-heal was used for many different plants but most frequently those of the *Stachys* spp. *Stachys palustris* was called clown's woundwort.

*Aloes succatrine* refers to a type of aloe vera that was obtained through trade with Africa.

Aloes wood or lign-aloes is the aromatic heartwood of the *Aquilaria malaccensis* tree. Interestingly the heart wood is not aromatic until it is infected by the mold *Phialophora parasitica*.

Alum is an astringent mineral used for crisping pickles, fixing dyes, and tanning hides.

Alysmus is a term that used to refer that the mental agitation that presents with depression or develops after one has experienced a long-term depressive state.

Amaritude is an adjective that describes a bitter or sharp taste.

Ambegris or ambergreece is a strongly scented, wax-like, solid substance produced in the bile duct of sperm whales. It is still found washed up on coastlines. It is used in the perfume industry and was once used as a food and burnt as incense.

Amber is a yellow resin that was used in medicine and perfumery.

Ambrose, hind heal, or wood sage refer to *Teucrium scorodonia*. This was commonly used as a strewing herb to ward off snakes and in topical preparations for sores and old wounds. *hind-heolope*

Ammoniacum or gum ammoniac is a resinous substance obtained from the stem of *Ferula ammoniacum*.

Amomom refers to a genus of plants now, but in early texts it often referred specifically to black cardamom (*Amomum subulatum*) which was also called greater cardamom.

Anacatharsis is to purge upwards, so it is a word is used mostly when discussing emetics or an agent that causing sneezing.

*Anastomosis* was a term that was used to describe the process of “opening of the mouths of the veins whereby blood issues” during venesection. It has evolved to refer to a different surgical term.

Anatomie is an archaic word for a cadaver used for scientific research.

Ancome refers to a swelling that becomes an open hole so probably another name for a boil.

Angelica is *Angelica archangelica* widely used in plant remedies, flavoring liquors, and for making a candied confection that aided digestion. You might also see it called archangelica or

Aniseed is the seed of the anise plant and is used for

Antidote is often interpreted as a cure for poisons, but the Greek word *antidotan* simply meant “given against” and was used to refer to many remedies. Galen made both specific antidotes such as his “Antidote for Back Pain” and compound panaceas such as “Antidote for Diverse Diseases.” Paulus Aeginita often recommended a tonic he called “Antidote of Seven Things” and recommended purging with the Mithridatic antidote for those suffering from ulcerous or malignant cancers.

In Old English the word for *ǣttorlāþe* literally translates to venom (poison) hater. The Middle English words *antidotum* means “a drug or medicine”<sup>2</sup> *Antidotharius* & *antidotharius* were used by apothecaries into the 17th century as names for books of remedies.

Antimony is an element, but the word was sometimes used to refer to the sulfide mineral stibnite comprised of antimony and sulphur. Flowers of antimony (arsenic trioxide) is a powder left after roasting orpiment or realgar. Antimony and arsenic have similar properties and were sometimes frequently confused with unfortunate results.

Aphthous stomatitis referred to canker sores and was also called a mouth ulcer.

Apoplexy was a word used for the type of paralysis that occurs due to stroke as signified by loss of sensation and movement.

Apothecarie or spicer-apothecaries. Members of the Pepperers’ Guild and Spicers’ Guilds incorporated as the Worshipful Company of Grocers in 1428 per a charter from Henry VI. Some of the spicers began to specialize in compounding of medicinal preparations and became known as spicer-apothecaries. They were trained through apprenticeship and compounded medicines using both herbs and alchemical preparations. The spicer - apothecaries were granted their own charter by James I in 1617 to be called the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries. Women who worked in their family apothecaries were allowed to apply for membership after they had put in sufficient time as an “apprentice.” There are widow apothecaries mentioned as owning and operating their shops after their spouses had passed.

Apozeme the Greeks used this term for medicinal preparation made of broth of several herbs and other ingredients. It reminds one a bit of the Ayurvedic oils that incorporate decoctions. In the early modern era it was used as another term for a decoction.

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<sup>2</sup> ‘Antidot and Antidotum - Middle English Compendium’. Accessed 25 February 2022.

Apposition is the archaic word for joining two end or putting something next to another thing. It was often used the way anastomosis is used modernly.

*Aqua vite* is Latin for “water of the vine” was also called “spirit of wine” or “rectified wine.” According to the European who literally wrote the book on distillation he made *aqua vite* by distilling wine made from grapes and extolled its medicinal values at length.<sup>3</sup> In other works, you may find references to “small spirit of wine” which has a lower alcohol content. Wine was believed to contain some amount of natural “phlegm” that could be “rectified” by further distillation. This would then be called a spirit or alcohol.<sup>4</sup>

Arse-smart or arsmart referred to water pepper (*Persicaria hydropiper*.)

*Artemisia* or moder-wort refers to mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) and is not interchangeable with other herbs of that species. It’s one of the herbs the Anglo Saxons used to make amulets thought to ward off evil, pestilence and weariness and was included in several topical preparations for aches and pains.

*Arteria aspera* is an archaic term for the trachea.

Arthritick is a term used to describe any sort of pain or inflammation due to gout-like conditions rather than osteoarthritis.

Articular pain is that which originates from the joint or the structures around the joint (synovium and joint capsule) and they used to call them articulations.

Arum might refer to wild arum (*Arum maculatum*) or dragon arum (*Dracunculus vulgaris*.)

Asabaracca is a medicinal member of the ginger family (*Asarum europaeum*) sometimes used as a remedy for too much drink.

Asafoetida or devil’s dung is the resinous gum of the *Ferula asafoetida*.

Ascites refers to the abnormal accumulation of a transudate or modified transudate fluid in the peritoneal

Asperity is a word that referred to rough textures and seem to be a common diagnostic term.

Ash trees (*Fraxinus* spp, OE *æsc*) have seed called keys that have been used in formulas.

Atrabiliary was used to describe conditions with a root cause of black choler.

Atrophy was described as a “want of nourishment when the body pines away” in early modern texts which is slightly different than the modern context, so bears mentioning.

*Aurum potabile* is a medicinal preparation made by liquifying gold.

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3. Brunshwig, Hieronymus. Liber de Arte Distillandi; English. Translated by Andrewe, Laurens. [Imprynted at London: In the flete strete by me Laurens Andrewe, in the sygne of the golden Crosse, In the yere of our lorde. M.ccccc.xxvii. the xviii daye of Apryll. [1527], 1527.

4 Glaser, Christophe. The Compleat Chymist, or, A New Treatise of Chymistry Teaching by a Short and Easy Method All Its Most Necessary Preparations / Written in French by Christopher Glaser ... ; Now Faithfully Englished by a Fellow of the Royal Society. Orignally published as *Traité de la chymie* in 1663. London, England: Printed for John Starkey ..., 1677.

Avens or herb bennet is the plant *Geum urbanum*. The root was used as deep green dye stock. Blessed herb *Herba benedicta* contracted to bennet.

Aysell also spelled eysell is another name for apple cider vinegar, which was not used commonly. White wine vinegar which was the standard type of vinegar during antiquity and the medieval and early modern times.

## B

Balme/baulm/bawm refers to lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*). You might also see it called bee wort. The OE name was *bēo-wyrt*. This causes some confusion on the part of North Americans who are unaware that the *Monarda* species is not native to Europe. It was written about by Monardes in 1574 but as far as the documentation we have states, it was not introduced to Europe until the seeds were sent to England by American botanist John Bartram in 1774.

Balsam or balm in the context of preparations refer to topical preparations usually for relieving pain. Mother of balm (lat. *mater balsami*) was a distilled medicinal used for this purpose.

Barberry is *Berberis vulgaris* a plant whose bright yellow roots contain large amounts of the constituent berberine and produces a bright red berry.

Barilla is a crude form of sodium carbonate extracted from soapwort or bouncing bet (*Saponaria officinalis*).

Barm is the frothy, yeasty substance that accumulates at the top of the wort during primary ferment. It was a common leavening for bread in medieval times.

Barrow's grease is lard from a male pig that has been castrated.

Bastard lovage is *Laserpitium latifolium* and one of the many plants referred to as hart-wort.

Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) is the plant that produces the small waxy blue-gray berries which are processed to make candles.

Bay salt or bai salt was a coarse sea salt that was originally sourced in the *Baie de Bourgneuf*.

Bdellium is a gum resin extract that's very similar to myrrh *Commiphora wightii* and *Commiphora Africana*.

Beans are mostly native to the Americas so if you see beans mentioned in older European works, it might be fava beans (*Vicia faba*), Chickpeas (*Cicer arietinum*), or lentils (*Lens culinaris*).

Bechical is a quality assigned to a cough, but later became the name for a confection made by apothecaries that promoted expectoration.

Benzoin is a gum obtained from *Styrax benzoin* and *Styrax tonkinensis* trees which is used in a lot of topicals for wound care. Some people incorrectly call this storax.

Bertram is a plant also known as pellitory of Spain (*Anacyclus pyrethrum*) the root was masticated to relieve the pain of toothaches.

Betony is *Betonica officinalis* formerly *Stachys officinalis*. You will see many spellings of this name including betoce (OE), betayne, betoyne, vetonica, and betonica.

Bever-stone or castoreum is a gummy substance obtained by expressing the anal gland of a beaver. It contains a mixture of secretions from the castor gland and the anal gland.

Bezoar (bezar) is a mass of organic matter arranging itself in layers around a foreign object (usually hair) found in the digestive tract of the bezoar goat.

Bglue or beeglue referred to propolis.

Bilberry or common whortleberry is *Vaccinium myrtillus*.

Bilious, having to do with choler or yellow bile. The term choleric is seen as synonymous.

Bindweed or berewinde (with-wind) is likely *Convolvulus arvensis*.

Birthwort (*Aristolochia clematitis*) was introduced as a medicinal herb by monks in the 12th century.

Bishops-wort (see Betony)

Bistort or oisterloit is the native European snakeweed (*Bistort officinalis*.)

Bitore, bitour and bittern refer to a kind of fish used in medieval cookery. Really what I wanted to pull out here is that we didn't really use the word bitters in medicinal preparation until the late 18th century.

Bitumen is a mineral substance used by the Egyptians for embalming and is also the Greek *pissasphaltos*.

Blayne, bleyne, or blain is a thin-walled sac like a blister, pimple or pustule that fills with the "humour that is between the skinne and the flesh."<sup>5</sup> An elf-bleyne was thought to be caused by elfshot. Buboos caused by the Plague were sometimes called pestilence bleynes. blaster and blastris are also words you might see used

Black choler or bile is the cold and dry humour in the body associated with the spleen, the element of earth and the planet Saturn and the season of winter.

Blackthorn or sloe is the *Prunus spinosa* bush known for producing the berries (sloe) that flavor sloe gin.

Blast I've puzzled over this term a lot. I think it means wind burn or very dry irritated eyes. They speak of eyes that are not swollen but don't water or drop or wind in the visage (face). It's attributed to an evyle wyndes (evil winds), flying venoms, &c.

Bloud is an older spelling of blood. Blood is considered to be the hot and moist humour in the body. It is associated with the heart, the element air, the planet Jupiter, and the season of Spring. This is why many physicians felt blood building was a springtime endeavor.

Blood-wort is not yarrow. I don't know where that got started but people with PhD's need to learn about plants if they are going to write about them.

Bole armoniack or bolus armenus is Armenian bole. It is a red earth clay usually used as a topical astringent.

Boulting (bolting) is the process of sifting grains and the cloth used to do it was a boulting cloth.

*Boulimia* is a word used historically to mean an insatiable hunger. It was not associated with emesis or vomiting

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<sup>5</sup> Bartholomaeus, Anglicus. *De Proprietatibus Rerum*. London, England: Imprinted by Thomas East, dwelling by Paules wharfe, 1583. p 112.

Box is the box-tree (*Buxus sempervirens*). Box was often brought into the homes during the Candlemas quarter.

Bramble is the word European blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* which comes from the OE brēmel. It is sometimes identified as including other berry plants of the *Rubus* genus, such as the red raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) and even the dog rose (*Rosa canina*.) *R. idaeus* is more accurately hind-berrie.

Brank Ursin also called bearesfoot, beares claw, or bear's breech refers to the genus *Acanthus*. *Acanthus* are native to the Mediterranean region and have lobed spiny leaves somewhat like thistles. They were considered by some to be one of the five herbs most valuable as an emollient.

Bray means to pound or grind a substance.

*Brennynge* or *brenninge* is burning therefore *herte-brenninge* means heartburn but could also be anger/bitterness.

*Brē* is the Old English word for briar.

Brione referred to *Bryonia dioica* which was harvested for medicinal roots. It is also called tetterberry, English mandrake and wylde nept.

Brine vinegar was used by Dioscorides for medicine and so very occasionally you will see the term pop up. It is the mixture of salt, vinegar and water that was used to cure olives. Dioscorides recommended infusing Creten thyme, rue, pennyroyal, and barley grains in brine vinegar and using it as a medicine to drive out black bile.

Brīw referred to a mash made from grain that was used in a medicaly

Brom, broom, or brume refer to *Cytisus scoparius*. Derived from the Old English *brōm*

Bronchorele refers to swelling in the windpipe.

Brooklime is identified by Culpeper as *Veronica anagallis-aquatica* or water speedwell. In other modern works it has been identified as *Veronica beccabunga. hleomoc*

Bruise is a cooking term that means to crush something just enough to release the flavor. It is usually done in a mortar and pestle, with a muddler, or just by crushing something with the flat side of a heavy knife.

Bruisewort is the common daisy *Bellis perennis*.

Bryony usually refers to *Bryonia dioica*. The roots were used as a very strong purgative.

Bubo referred to the part of the groin from the bending of the thigh to the scrotum and so they called boils and growths in this area buboes.

Bubonoccele is an inguinal hernia or the rupture of the intestines downward into the bubo.

Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*) was sometimes called middle comfrey.

Buglosse or buglass is *Anchusa officinalis* and some people think it is the Nepenthe of Pliny. It's said to alleviate sadness when taken with wine.

Burnt alum was used as an astringent. It is alum powder that has been heated to dehydrate it and keep it from crystallizing.

Burrage is another word for *Borago officinalis* or borage a hairy leafed plant that produces small blue star-like flowers.

Burre is another word for *Arctium lappa* or greater burdock.

Burst, bursten, and burstennes are archaic words for a rupture or hernia and consequently burstwort was a term used to refer to herbs that were used to treat ruptures. You might also see it written *breste*.

Bushel is a unit of volume equal to four pecks.

## C

Cabbage was a term used originally for the leftover fabric a professional clothing maker kept after making a garment for a customer, as opposed to the cuttings the kept of their own fabric.<sup>6</sup> Dictionaries of the era, say it originated from the French verb *cabbaser* which means to put in a basket. So you might see something that says to take a piece of cabbage and use it in a way that seems out-of-context.

Cachexy or cachexia is a prolonged imbalance of the humours that results in weakened vitality and wasting of tissues. So perhaps an older term for a consumption.

Cacochymy or cacochemical described a gradual accumulation of corrupted humours. Note the root word chyme. It was used to describe gouty conditions which are attributed to the accumulation of chyme derived from eating too much meat.

Calcination was the process of burning plant matter to ashes in a crucible.

Cake might be used to refer to the process of congealing or becoming solid at room temperature, or it might just be a cake.

Calamus or *Calamus aromaticus* refers to *Acorus calamus* and has come to include *Acorus americanus* which is the sweet flag native to North America.

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) was also referred to as marigolds or follow the sun

Calid and calidity were terms used to describe heat and/or burning sensations.

Callosity another word for callous or any hardness in the skin.

Calomel was a purgative made by combining mercurous chloride and metallic mercury. They would combine the two and simmer them in an iron pot with a lid and the scrapings from the inside of the lid were powdered.

Cambric(k) is a Flemish word referring to a lightweight closely woven fabric that is used in our receipts to strain solutions. It's just another word for a piece of fine (tightly woven) linen like butter muslin or a sieve made from it.

Cammock and ground furze are another name for *Ononis spinosa*

Camphire is an archaic spelling of camphor. On rare occasion you will see someone use it to describe cloves due to their camphor-like smell.

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<sup>6</sup> Rathvon, S. 'Technical Terms of Tailoring'. The American Tailor and Cutter June (1900): 110-11.

Cantharides a flying insect whose “venom” was used as a remedy but it’s most important role was probably pollinating olive trees.

Cardas/Carduus, or Cardus Benedictus refers to blessed thistle (*Centaurea benedicta*). It was a popular herb for making hydrosols. Carduus water was said to be of some use against the Plague and was applied externally to the buboes to draw them to a head.

Carbuncle was considered a type of a pustule that you might also see called antrax or anthrax, antrax is a felon or a whitflawe. “The Carbuncle or *the* prune or *the* wylde fyre or antrax, þe whiche Auicen taketh as it were for *the* same, is an evil phlegmatic pustule blistering and burning.”<sup>7</sup>

Caries originally referred to a foulness, rottenness, or corruption of any bone and was not limited to teeth.

Carminative refers to medicines that help one to expel gas or “break the wind.”

Carnosity was a diagnostic term used to denote fleshiness.

Carotides term used for common carotid arteries and possibly the carotid canal.

Cassia lignea, cassia, canelle, canel, kanel is the bark harvested from *Cinnamomum cassia*. It tends to have a laxative effect and was most often used in purgative preparations.

Cataplasme (cataplasm) is another word for a poultice made of warmed meal or perhaps a clay spread on cloth and applied externally.

Catarrhe (catarrh) is now understood to be mucus discharged from the mucous membrane in the back of the nose, the throat, or sinuses. Through the early modern period it was thought this was due to the evacuation of humours from the brain.

Catharsis is purgation by downward evacuation accomplished by administering agents that moved the bowels, consequently cathartic was once synonymous with purgative.

Catoche is a term you might see referring to fatigue, drowsiness, or general malaise.

Caustick was once a name used for medicines meant to “sear any part of the body”.

Centaury is a plant from the gentian family *Centaurium erythraea*.

Cephalick refers most often to a class of preparations (usually spirits) that influence the head. If you look at the list of substances considered cephalicks many of them are herbals thought to act across the blood-brain barrier.

Cerecloth or searchcloth are pieces of linen that have been soaked in a combination of oils, waxes and resins and allowed to harden. It was used for dressing wounds, and eventually for wrapping corpses. It was dipped in medicated wax so it would stick to an area like a modern bandage.

Chaps are fissures or cracks in the skin.

Chardoon or cardoon is a common name for globe artichoke (*Cynara cardunculus*) but not Jerusalem artichokes which is native to the Americas.

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<sup>7</sup> The Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac, ed. M. S. Ogden, Early English Text Society, Original Series 265 (1971)

China root is another name for ginseng (*Panax ginseng*).

Choler is a name for the hot and dry humour also known as yellow bile. Choler was associated with the gall bladder, Mars, the element fire, and the season summer.

Cholera is a common pathogenic disease caused by *Vibrio comma*. Symptoms included diarrhea, vomiting, and cramping of the abdominal muscles.

Chorion is a term for the outer membrane that wraps around an embryo during fetal development.

Christ's Eye and wild clary refer to *Inula oculus-christi*.

Chyle was thought to be a white juice that came out of meat as it was digested in the stomach.

Chyrurgion and chirurgeon are archaic versions of the word surgeon. Barber-surgeons arose as a branch of medicinal practice during the time when the monastery hospitals were providing healthcare. Barber-surgeons would perform operations clergy were unable to perform because there were religious restrictions on clergy shedding blood. The first medical guild for barber-surgeons in Britain and Ireland was established in Ireland in 1446 when Henry VI established the Guild of St. Mary Magdalene for the barber-surgeons of Dublin. The Worshipful Company of Barbers was incorporated in 1462. Hannah Woolley named herself as one of these practitioners.

Chymical doctor was probably first used to describe Paracelsus but don't make the mistake of thinking he was the first alchemist. The first group of practicing alchemists were Alexandria perfumers guild established in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE.

Cicatrizate means "to bring to a scar, or close up a wound", so it's basically an older spelling of cauterize.

Cinquefoile or five leafed grasse You might see older spelling such as fyflef and fiulefe. Parkinson wrote that they were so like Tormentil that they were often mistaken for one another.

Clammie or clammy was an adjective for something that was viscous or sticky derived from: the Old English *clæm* which was sticky clay or mud used for tuckpointing.

Clary or clear-eye is the plant clary sage (*Salvia sclarea*).

Cleuyng (cleaving) is the equivalent of sticking.

Clyster is an archaic word for an enema.

Cochineal or Scutchereale are small insects ground and used to obtain the pigment carmine or "natural red four."

Codling (codlin) was a name first used for apples those that were not yet ripe or by nature were hard and needed cooking to be edible, so crabapple might even be counted as a codling. Later a specific variety of apple was given the name codling.

Coddle was used to describe a cooking process in which one roasted something very slowly over a fire. It probably came about as it was the process often named for cooking codlings.

Colature was a device made for straining.

Colewort or colwort is an ancestor of modern cabbage. Collards, kale, broccoli, and cauliflower are all hybridized modern forms of *Brassica oleracea*. Colewort was probably closest in appearance to collard greens. Modern cabbages were developed in Holland and called savoy.

Collyrium was a wash or salve that was made for and applied to the eyes.

Colon including the rectum was called the *Intestinum rectum* or the straight gut.

Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*)

Comitial when used to describe disease referred to seizures which were generally referred to as the “falling sickness.”

Compress as a noun is a soft pad used in the treatment of injuries. An older term for a compress is a faldell, fardel, pledgett. A faldell made of stupes was made of tow which are the coarse fiber of flax or hemp.

Conduit water referred to water obtained from the system of aqueducts in England. The conduit was often a term for the cistern at the end of the one of the conduit systems and it was considered cleaner as it the conduit system was spring fed. If a receipt specified conduit water, it was probably to point out that river water was not appropriate in this situation but stilled water was not necessary.<sup>8</sup>

Connes is a French name for the quince tree (*Cydonia oblonga*). You might also see this spelled quynce or some other variation.

Consistence a stiffness of the body brought about by cold.

Consumption general wasting away, or decay of the muscular flesh attributed to several causes but generally presenting with a hectic fever.

Coperas is a name that was used frequently for various metallic sulphates. Green being iron sulphate, blue being copper sulfate and white being zinc sulfate.<sup>9</sup>

Cordiall meant that something was beneficial or soothing to the heart, often on an emotional level. There were even devotional books named *The Soul's Cordiall*. Therefore there is some general confusion about the term cordial. Modernly it mostly refers to non-alcoholic beverage syrups such as elderflower cordial.

Cordiall water was a spirit said to be good for the heart, many seemed to have ingredients meant to soothe the nervous system.

Corneatunica was a coat of the eye like horn, so a cataract.

Corn-rose and wild poppy refer to the common red poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*).

Costmary, or alecost is *Tanacetum balsamita*.

Courauns, courance, coravune are all older spellings of currants.

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<sup>8</sup> Hansen, Roger. 'WaterHistory.Org'. Accessed 18 January 2018. <http://www.waterhistory.org/histories/london/>.

<sup>9</sup> 'Coperose - Middle English Compendium'. Accessed 18 May 2017. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED9653>.

Cowslip or couslip are common names for *Primula veras* and should not be confused with *Primula vulgaris* (primrose). The issue here is that while primroses can be sugared and used as edible decorations, cowslip is a stimulating expectorant and mildly toxic.

Crabs' eyes were small "stones" found in the digestive tract of crayfish. They were mostly comprised of lime.

Cream of tartar is a white powder purified from tartaric acid (potassium hydrogen tartrate) which is a precipitate that occurs when making wine with grapes.

Crisis was used to describe the point at which a disease peaked. The climb toward the crisis was driven by the natural faculties or "Nature" which would resolve the illness either in death or healing. Galenists believed Nature, acted on morbid matter in the body by causing it to be evacuated in the urine/feces, or congeal at a fixed point (boil, abcess) and resolve.

Crodde, crudde means to curdle when used as a verb. Croddis and croddys are nouns that mean curds.

Cubebs or cababs is *Piper cubeba* a type of pepper with citrus tones.

Culpe means to cut thick slices.

Cunning woman is a title that has been sensationalized by a lot of researchers looking for a hook. In the book the *Country Housewife's Garden* (1617) Reverend William Lawson entreated with all women to grow cunning in their knowledge of medicinal plants and preparation.<sup>10</sup> It seems doubtful that our pious protestant was encouraging women towards witchcraft. Cunning was a commonly used adjective for wise back then and so our cunning woman is simply one who is especially knowledgeable about healing. Some women would use this knowledge to support themselves when they fell upon unfortunate circumstances. The Irish wise woman Biddy Early, had grown up in a reasonably well-off family but was orphaned and abandoned to her own resources and used a little bit of spin and the healing knowledge she had learned from her mother to survive.

## D

Daffadown dillie is daffodil, or narcissus.

Daisy or daisie (*Bellis perennis*) is sometimes called bruisewort or brysewort in older manuscripts. Wild daisy refers to ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*).

Damaske water is rose-water distilled from Damask roses.

Damson (*Prunus insititia*) is a native blue-black plum also called bulles or bullace.

Danewort (*Sambucus ebulus*) is the dwarf elderberry plant which you might also see called Dane's blood. In France it was called hieble after the mountain in Sicily where it was sourced.

Dartrous diathesis is a term used formerly used to refer to eczema.

Decoction is a solution obtained by simmering a substance in water. "The liquor wherein things are boiled."

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<sup>10</sup> Lawson, William. *The Country Housewife's Garden*. 1983 Reprint. London, England: Breslich & Foss, 1617.

Defecated originally meant to remove impurities from a substance by clarifying it and became synonymous with a bowel movement voiding excrement, so you must look to the context of the sentence.

Defensative was a medicinal agent given to divert humours from a place where they might be accumulating in an unhealthy manner.

Defluxion was used to describe what physicians perceived to be a downward flow of the humours.

Deglutition is the word that the English used to describe Galen's "animal faculty" that directed taking in aliment by swallowing food or drinking water.

Deliquium referred a loss of vitality that resulted in swooning or syncope (fainting).

Deliration is just an older term for delirium as evidenced by incoherent speech.

Desipience refers to feebleness of a person who has been chronically ill for some time.

Deterse a form of the word detergere which means to cleanse or scour.

Diabetes was indicated by excessive urinating and the subsequent excessive thirst. "man's water runneth from him without any stay."

Diacodion refers to preparations made with the opium poppy. It is not necessarily synonymous with morphine.

Diagridiates are preparations containing the strong purgative scammony (*Convolvulus scammonia*).

Diapedesis was defined as "bleeding through the pores of the veins in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Modernly, we have a better understanding of anatomy and know it results from the passage of blood through the walls of the capillaries often caused by inflammation of the blood vessels.

Diaphoretick which is synonymous with sudorifick is an agent that promotes perspiration. It was originally thought to force out humours and the heat they generated due to accumulation. "dispels humour by concoction (digestion) or transpiration (evaporation through skin)"

Diascordiam is a medicinal preparation of *Teucrium scordium* and opium combined with other herbs.

Diastole, the motion of the pulses caused by expansion of arteries.

Diathesis refers to the idea that a partie can be predisposed towards a particular illness due to their constitution.

Diathesis refers to the idea that a person can be predisposed towards a particular illness due to their constitution.

Digestion was referred to by many different terms including concoction (unconcocted meant undigested), pepsis, or even ripeness of aliment.

Dight a chicken means to dress it or prepare for cooking.

Dittany refers to *Lepidium latifolium* which was also called dittander or pepperwort. Its spicy root was used a bit like horseradish. it might also refer to *Dictamnus albus* but NOT the common dittany of the Americas which is *Cunila organoide*.

Diureticks an older spelling of diuretic which are medicines that provoke urine.

Dock refers most frequently to curley dock (*Rumex crispus*), but likely various docks were used interchangeably.

Dog rose or hundsrose is *Rosa canina*.

Dragon is *Dracunculus vulgaris* which is the species of the stink lily native to some parts of Europe and Asia. Culpeper wrote that simply smelling it could be dangerous to pregnant women. The roots were used in topical preparations for taking away flesh that was diseased, dead, or scurf (proud flesh).

Dragon's blood is a resin obtained from *Dracaena draco* which is an evergreen tree.

Dram, drachm is written  $\zeta$  or  $\zeta$  because it is three scruples so 3.9 g

Draught is a subjective term that is derived from the Old English term *dragan* which means to pull draw or drag. It boils down to meaning how much you take into your mouth and swallow in one drink. This seems inelegant but has the crude effect of administering a size dependent dose.

Dressyte means to serve a food.

Drill is a shallow furrow for planting.

Dropsie or dropsy referred to the edema that resulted due to congestive heart failure in the earliest works but later became associated with edema that occurred due to kidney disease, as well.

Dropwort is *Filipendula vulgaris* a native medicinal wort.

Drowed is sometimes used as an archaic form of dried.

Dyscracy refers to a condition that results from an imbalance of the humours. You may also see it referred to as morbid diathesis and it is similar to meaning of the word distemper.

Dysentaria is an infection of the intestines indicated by blood and mucus in the feces and was also called bloody flux.

Dyspnaea or dyspnea refers to shortness of breath or other breathing difficulty. z

## E

Egge (egg) might still be written eyren or eyron depending on how old a manuscript. I mention this because the culinary receipts from MS Beinecke 163, were published in a book called An Ordinance of Pottage in the late 80's and it still uses yolkes of eyron.

Elena Campana, horseheal and elfdock refer to elecampane (*Inula helenium*).

Ellebore refers to the *Helleborus* genus as a group while most typically referring to black hellebore (*Helleborus niger*) or white hellebore (*Veratrum album*).

Embrocation is the practice of applying medicinal liquors or spirits to a diseased part of the body.

Emplastick is a verb used to describe viscous sticky substances such as resins. To emplaster was to apply such a substance. Later this became a plaister. Modernly we think of it plaster bandages.

Emprosthotonus is a cramp or contraction of the flexor muscles which results in a curving of the spinal cord upwards with head depressed.

Empyema morbid matter that accumulates between the breast and lungs after pleurisy.

Emulsion in most early modern herbals this refers to decoctions that were made into thickened substances by vigorously stirring (stroking).

Eneorema are cloudy particulates in urine.

Energetically (enargetically) was a word that used to be used to mean effectively. An example of its use would be “Salt-water baths lower the temperature in febrile patients more energetically than sweet-water baths.”

Ephemeral historically this word was a fever classification referring to a fever that returned daily for three days.

Epiala is one classification of fever that would suddenly intensify daily that were thought to be caused by the accumulation of phlegm.

Epicrasis was a process by which a practitioner would slowly force the evacuation of “evil humours” by removing the cause and nourishing the body properly to restore balance. “tempering acrid humours.”

Epiploon or caul is the greater omentum. It is the larger of the two peritoneal folds that extends out over the stomach to the colon. It can accumulate adipose tissue and is where humans store stomach fat.

Epithymum also called dodder is *Cuscuta epithymum* which was often included in receipts to chase away melancholy or to provokes a thirst. It was frequently found growing with *Thymus capitatus*.

Epouloticks were a class of preparations that were believed to create scars over deep wounds – a process early modern physicians called skinning.

Epulenticke having the falling sickness or epilepsy.

Erisipelas or erysipelas refers to inflammation that spreads from the skin to the superficial lymph vessels causing redness, swelling and blistering. In modern terms think of a skin infection that goes deeper than cellulitis. In the 15th century it was attributed to “choleric blood.” It has been called St. Anthony's Fire as well.

Eucrasy refers to a pleasing mixture of humours that rest that result in a healthy physical disposition.

Exacerbation is an interesting term relating to an illness, that could almost be compared to flare. You see it modernly referring to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Exacerbation is an interesting term relating to an illness, that could almost be compared to flare. You see it modernly

Excoriation is a term used for flaying or stripping the skin.

Eyebright (*Euphrasia* spp)

## **F**

Fair(e) is a word that was used to mean clear and not cloudy when speaking of solutions.

Farinaceous is a word that refers to grains as in “farinaceous demulcents” which include barley and oats.

Felonwort is the bittersweet nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*).<sup>11</sup>

Feloun or felon is a sore that is producing pus often on the fingers or toes; a type of carbuncle which in turn is a type of postume.<sup>12</sup>

Fetherfew, feverfew, mothwort and are alternate names for *Tanacetum parthenium*. You might also see it called by its French name in the Middle Ages, *mince-feuille* or simply *mince*. Sometimes you might see it spoken about as *febrifuga* but I think that’s speaking more to it’s function.

*Filipendula ulmaria* is meadowsweet or Queen of the Meadow. It was a popular strewing herb known for its calming, sweet scent.

Fine generally refers to texture rather than quality although one could make the argument that it is the same thing. Something that is fine is not coarse or if they are speaking of fabric tightly woven. A fine piece of linen used as a sieve will produce a fine substance.

Fistula a long sinuous ulcer existing in the body. My A & P professor explained an anal fistula as an infected tunnel that usually starts near an anal gland and runs to the skin or possibly to an organ.

Fitch is one of many common names used for the various vetches of the *Vicia* genus.

Five emollient herbs were mallows/hollyhock, violets, brank-ursine, mercury and pellitory of the wall. Some sources list beets instead of brank-ursine.

Five capillary herbs were maidenhair and spleenworts particularly Ceterach which is *Asplenium trichomanes*.

Flax is fiber used to make linen. The flax tow refers to the fiber that has been removed from the plant before it is woven.

Flegme, pleghm, fleam are all various spellings of phlegm which is the cold and moist humour of the body. Phlegm is associated with the brain, the moon, water, and autumn.

Flying venoms or *onflyge* (onfliers) have been aptly explained as an “some kind of airbourne assault on the body’s defences”<sup>13</sup> so I generally think of them as unspecified pathogens.

*Flos unguentorum* means flower of ointments. Flos is an apothecary abbreviation for flower, but in this sense, it doesn’t have anything to do with blossoms. Flower is meant here in the sense of being the finest. Flour and flower actually had the same meaning until the late 1700’s. If you used flower of a ground meal, you were using the finest in both the sense of not being coarse and being the best quality.

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<sup>11</sup> Turner, Robert. *Botanologia the British Physician*. 1665. p 42 & Parkinson, John. *Theatrum Botanicum*. London, England: The Cotes, 1640. p 350

<sup>12</sup> ‘Feloun - Middle English Compendium’ Accessed 10 March 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Pollington, Stephen. *Leechcraft: Early English Charms, Plant Lore, and Healing*. Cambridgeshire, England: Anglo-Saxon Books, 2008. p 211.

Flour meant the finest (in the not coarse sense) of the ground meal. There's an idea that all the flour in the past was terribly coarse. The wheat grown in Europe was a soft wheat which was then ground in windmills and then bolted by sifting it through fabric.

Flower-deluce is the anglicized version of *fleur de lis* which means the flower of the lily which is kind of a misnomer because the heraldic device is probably *Iris germanica var Florentina* so a white iris.

Flos of sulphur is a light-yellow crystalline powder, made by distilling sulphur that is still on the market today. Another name for sulfur was brimstone. It used to be mixed with dark treacle and given to children as a purgative on a weekly basis.

Flowers of zinc is crude zinc oxide scraped from the inside of chimneys made of zinc.

Flux is a specific term for diarrhea and if it was bloody that like meant a severe condition like dysentery. Other discharges may be termed a flux, but they will usually have a qualifier like "a flux of blood" or a "flux of flowers" (menstruation).

Fomentation is the application of moist or dry heat externally.

Four greater cold seeds referred to the seeds of melons, citrul (watermelon), cucumbers, and gourd. Later in the Early modern age you might see pumpkins mentioned instead of gourds. This is because gourd (or pepon) was the name given to all sun ripened *Cucurbits* before pumpkins came to Europe around 1500 CE. Scholars seem to have settled on snake melon (*Cucumis melo subsp. Melo*) as the cucumber. Regardless in 1653 it was believed to be cucumber.

Four greater hot seed used mostly as carminatives were anise, fennel, caraway, and cumin.

Four humours in the Greek era these were written about as blood, yellow bile, phlegm, and black bile, but by the early modern period the four humours were sometimes referred to as blood, cholera, flegme, and melancholy.

Four lesser cold seeds included succory, endive, lettuce, and purslane.

Four lesser hot seeds were bishops-weed, amomum, smallage, and carrot.

Fryrure, fretourys, fruturs, are all ways to spell fritter. You will learn to appreciate standardization of spelling soon.

Fuliginous is a word that refers to something that consists of soot or had a dark, sooty appearance.

[Fuming pots](#) that look a lot like modern wax warmers used lit charcoal to warm aromatic plants and diffuse their aromas. They were introduced to Britain and Ireland via Spain probably when Catherine of Aragon married into the line in 1501.

Fumitory was sometimes called *palomilla* which was its Spanish name.

Fundament or fondement anatomically speaking is that which gets a lot of pressure put on it when we sit on it so the lower part of the rectum and the anus.

Fungous is a word that refers to a spongy, mushroom-like texture.

Fustian is a cloth made from a blend of cotton and flax.

**G**

Galbanum is an aromatic resin harvested primarily from *Ferula gummosa*.

Galingale or galangal is *Alpinia officinarum* is a somewhat milder tasting member of the ginger family. It is one of the ubiquitous herbs of medieval cookery.

Galium species plant were often utilized as pest repellents due to their coumarin content. *Galium odorata* (Sweet Woodruff) was used as a strewing herb while *Galium verum* (Our Lady's Bedstraw) was used for stuffing mattresses.

Galled means to be plagued with painful swellings, but I have also seen galls used as a verb that for something irritates or maybe chafes.

Gallipots were small-glazed earthenware containers ranging in size from holding from ½ lb to 2 lbs. They were used in kitchens and still rooms for storage. They lacked the lids but would probably have been covered by a piece of linen that was either beeswaxed or tied with a string.

Génépi is black wormwood (*Artemisia genipi*) is a plant native to the Alps which is used by Carthusian monks to make a chartreuse type liqueur of the same name.

Gentian was also called felwort and the root was thought to clean the body of raw humours and in wound care.

Germander usually refers specifically to *Veronica chamaedrys* is a little shrub with small purplish flowers. I have read the common name English treacle.

Gibbosity usually refers to a humpbacked condition.

Gillyflower refers most often to *Dianthus caryophyllus* (carnations) which were also called pinks or july flowers. They were wildly popular Parkinson grew over 25 varieties.

Gladin and gladiole are older names used to refer to gladiolas.

Glasteous is an adjective that described of the colour of woad.

Glyster, glister, clyster are all words that mean enema.

Goat willow is *Salix caprea*.

Good King Henry (*Blitum bonus-henricus*) was a potherb you sometimes saw called all good or good Henry.

Goose grass is a less common name for cleavers (*Galium aparine*), sometimes written clivers.

Go-to-bed-at noon is *Tragopogon pratensis*.

Gracility is an adjective that meant slenderness.

Grain (gr., granum) is one of the more ubiquitous apothecary terms. A grain was a unit of mass the equivalent “a corne of barley taken in the midst of the ear” of 0.065 g or 65 mg. So now you know how much a grain of salt weighs.

Grains of Paradise are a hot, moist little seed from the plant *Aframomum melegueta*. If you see the word grains or graynes used in a receipt it is most likely this usage.

Gromwell or gromel is European stoneseed (*Lithospermum officinale*).

Gross means coarse or large.

Ground-pine is *Ajuga chamaepitys*.

Groundsel or groundswell refers to *Senecio vulgaris*.

Grumous referred to substances that were thick and full of clots or lumps, but also described a type of cataract that resulted due to a hemorrhage.

Guaiacum is the resin obtained from *Guaiacum officinale* also called roughbark lignum-vitae or guaiacwood.

Gum arabic or acacia is a gum exuded predominantly by the *Senegalia senegal* tree.

Gum-dragon is an alternate name for gum Tragacanth which is extracted from various plants of the *Astragalus* species.

Gypseous was a term that meant something had a milky white appearance and later specifically referred to cataracts that had a milky appearance.

## H

Haemoptysis is a term for spitting of blood that popped up in the late 19th century.

Haemorrhagia is a non-specific term for bleeding.

Haemorrhoides or piles are veins protruding from the anus which they used to use leeches to treat.

Handfull is abbreviated to M. in apothecary text. If you are recreating a receipt that uses this terminology, the most important thing to pay attention to is keeping the ratios the same. I use ½ cup for a handful, and ¼ cup for a small handfull.

Harmel was first described tentatively under the name πήγανον ἄγριον (péganon agrion) by Dioscorides, who mentions it is called μῶλυ (moly) in parts of Anatolia Later Dioscorides distinguishes the 'real' μῶλυ as another, bulbaceous plant. Galen later describes the plant under the name μῶλυ, following Dioscorides. moly or herba immolium Harmel per Dodoens.

Harts tongue is a medicinal fern, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*.

Hartshorn is the ground horn of a red male deer used in its crude form as a source of gelatin. In the past they would dry distill the ground horn to obtain oil of hartshorn which could then be processed into ammonium carbonate to be used as smelling salts.

Hartshorn (salt of) ammonium carbonate derived by dry distillation of oil of hartshorn.

Hartshorn (spirit of) aqueous solution of ammonia manufactured from hartshorn.

Hart-wort was the common name of many plants but probably most frequently referred to *Seseli tortuosum*. Also known as Seselie and French Hart-wort.

Hearb fluellin, fluellin, and speedwell all refer primarily to *Veronica spicata* but may be used to discuss other plants of the same genus.

Hearb perforata is another common name for St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*).

Herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*) had many common names including bloodwort, fox geranium, red robin and storksbill.

Herb-grace is an abbreviation of herb of grace which was the common name for Rue (*Ruta graveolens*) also called ruda and *ruda de huerta*.

Herb-heliotropium refers generally to sunflowers *Heliotropium* genus. They are noted in early literature for the way the flowers turn with the sun.

Heartsease is wild pansies (*Viola tricolor*). If you see any variation of the word pansy, it refers to heartsease. Larger ornamental pansies were not hybridized until the mid-19th century.

Henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) is a plant used as a narcotic both domestically and by physicians. It is highly toxic in large doses, but is still prescribed in the UK 100mg is the maximum legal dosage with a maximum legal daily dosage of 300 mg.<sup>14</sup>

Hepatitides may refer to hepatitis which is an inflammation of the liver as indicated by jaundice, liver enlargement, fever, and fatigue. Very occasionally it was used to refer to portal veins and other veins leaving the liver.

Hermodactill or meadow saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*) is a fall blooming crocus.

Holly is *Ilex aquifolium* or *holen* in Old English.

Holy okes was the common name for hollyhocks (*Alcea rosea L.*) You might also see them referred to as greater mallows.<sup>15</sup> Old English was *holi-hocce* and you all can fight me on that.

Homogeneous of the same nature or kind.

Humoral medicine is the practice of medicine that centered the actions of the four humours in the body as basis of disease.

Housleek, houseleek, or singreen refers to *Sempervivum tectorum* that were planted on roofs to serve as lightning rods.

Hydromel a mixture of honey and water.

Hypericon refers to *Hypericum perforata* or Saint John's wort. Remember that "J" was not always a thing and there was no such thing as a standard spelling, so you will see that written Saynte Iohn's.

Hypostasis refers to poor circulation when blood settles or is not circulating properly.

## I

Icamphered or camphorated means something has been soaked with camphor. Ex. "an icamphered cloth."

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<sup>14</sup> GOV.UK. '[Banned and Restricted Herbal Ingredients](#)'. Accessed 24 February 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Hill, Thomas. *The Gardener's Labyrinth*. Translated by Mabey, Richard. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1577. pp

Ichor is the word that they used to describe watery wound exudates which they sometimes called raw or unconcocted blood. I have seen it spoken about in a way that leads me to believe that they used the term for plasma, also.

Ictericall or icterus are terms for jaundice which used to be defined as the “overflowing of gall” and is indicated by a yellow tinge to the skin and the whites of the eyes. It was used far more broadly at one time and I tend to associate it with liver disease.

Iejunation is an older term for fasting and breaking the fast was called ienticulation.

Igneous or ignifluous were adjectives used to describe burning or extremely hot conditions.

Incontinency was a term for pursuing unlawful desires.

Incubus is a male spirit who takes human form and has sex with humans. The female is called Succubus.

Indian leaf or malabathrum is the leaf of *Cinnamomum tamala* a tree of the *Lauraceae* family.

Indian spikenard refers the aromatic root of *Nardostachys jatamansi* obtained through trade with India.

Infacundity was another term for barrenness or the inability to have a child.

Inflammation defined as *Notae vero inflammationis sunt quatuor, rubor et tumor, cum calore, et dolore.*" Now there are four diagnostic signs of inflammation, redness, and swelling, with heat and pain"<sup>16</sup>. *Functio laesa* which is disturbance of function was added to this Later you might see it being called rheum or rheumatism as well.

Infusions were made steeping of roots or leaves, or any kind of medicine, in some liquid substance until the desired constituents are drawn into the liquid. This solution was sometimes called liquor.

Invalidate sometimes meant to weaken in a physical sense.

Isop or ysop both refer to hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*).

## J

Jaundice referred was thought to be a symptom of too much yellow bile accumulating in the gall resulting in a yellow tinge to the skin and the sclera of the eye. It is a symptom of many hepatic disorders such as hepatitis, alcohol related liver disease, gallbladder problems, and even in some cases hepatic portal system dysfunction. It's best to think of it in the broader context of hepatic diseases.

Jet is a gemstone, a type of lignite) that was used medicinally and for making rosary beads.

## K

Keme is an old word that means to cool. Kemeling is the archaic term for the pot the brewer used to make a wort.

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<sup>16</sup> Celsus, A. Cornelius. Aur. Corn. Celsi De medicina ... Edited by Van Almeloveen, Jansson. Vol. I. III vols. apud Joannem Wolters, 1687. 139.

Kermes is a species of insect the females of which produce a pigmented egg used to make dye crimson which was used to produce the Scarlet color and as a medicinal. You will sometimes see the desiccated eggs called kermes grains.

Kibes are chilblains that have become open sores on the heel.

Knot grass or polygony is *Polygonum aviculare*.

Kykeon is Greek medicinal preparation made for ill people. It is a gruel made from a ground barley meal called *alphita*.

## L

Labdanum, or Ladanum were names for a gum obtained from *Cistus ledon*.

Lacteal describing something milky in appearance or made of milk.

Laevity an adjective describing smoothness.

Lambition is a word used to describe licking when used therapeutically. Animals were often employed for this practice.

*Lang de beefe* is the name given to a plant identified as *Hieracium echioides* by Gerard which is now called *Pilosella echioides*. It is a corruption of the French langue de boeuf, so you might also see it called ox-tongue. I have seen this one incorrectly identified frequently.

Lapis simply meant stone or mineral and there were several minerals that were ground and sold as powders by apothecaries' shops. The most common were lapis lazuli (blue pigment powder), lapis sanguinaris (red gemstone powder), lapis calminaris (crude calamine).

Laurel is more commonly known as the bay plant (*Laurus nobilis*) today. The leaves have been used to

Lawn, lawne, or laune are alternative spellings for a type of fabric made of fine linen.

Lawn sive is a sieve made by stretching lawne or silk across a wooden frame. Used when the mixture needed to be very well-strained. If you would like to approximate a lawne sive you could stretch butter muslin or a very fine sheer linen across a large wooden embroidery hoop. It's a good use of cabbage. (Bernadette Banner fans will know what I mean.)

Lavender Cotton is santolina (*Santolina chamaecyparissus*).

Lavender refers to *Lavandula angustifolia*, formerly *L. officinalis* a plant which was introduced to Western Europe during the Roman Britain period. Remember that English lavender can have white, pink, or purple flowers.

Lienous is an adjective meaning being related to the spleen which is *lien* in Latin. You might also see the spleen called the milt.

Lienteria specified a type of diarrhea in which food passes through the body without being digested.

Limbeck is a distillation apparatus more commonly called a still. In early modern times people used a variety of materials. The most used material for making medicinal preparations seems to have been glass followed by pewter. Limbeck seems to specifically refer to copper or pewter stills in the Persian fashion while authors will specify glass still.

Lime-water is a saturated aqueous solution of slaked lime. It has nothing to do with citrus or Linden flowers

Lions paw is probably *Leontopodium alpinum* as it is the only commonly grown species of that family.

Lipothymia is the act of fainting or swooning.

Lipyria is a term for cold extremities accompanying a hot fever. This was generally thought to be extremely dangerous and why so many remedies attempted to move heat from the core to the periphery.

Liquor has varying meanings. In the UK liqueur refers to a cordial (beverage syrup) which has alcohol added. Liquor used to be used to refer to a liquid obtained through some sort of process of extraction. The closest modern equivalent is probably solution. So, you have to look at the context of what you are reading.

Lithonripticks (lithonriptic) remedies meant to “break the stone” thought to dissolve kidney stones and gallstones by changing chemical composition of the urine.

Liverwort refers to plants belonging to the group of bryophytes collectively called Hepaticas.

Loins/loines, or lumbus, refer to the side of the human body below the rib cage to just above the pelvis and the lower part of the back.

Long pepper is the common name for *Piper longum*, you may also see it called grosse pepper.

Lovage is *Levisticum officinale* and was mostly used as a pot herb although it has some history of use as a diuretic.

Lungwort is *Pulmonaria officinalis* which was likely introduced to Western Europe during the Roman-Britain era.

Luxation was a term used for dislocation of joints.

## M

Macis and macys are common alternate spellings of mace which is the reddish seed covering (aril) of the nutmeg seed (*Myristica fragrans*) that has been dried. The aril used to be sold whole but modernly it is sold dried and powdered.

Madder (*Rubia tinctorum*) was a dye plant as well as a medicinal. The root was used to make a bright red die.

Mageþe, (mageþe) or maythe as we see in the Anglo-Saxon documents has been identifies as chamomile,

Magisterial was a name given to a preparation such as a plaster or pill prepared in the best way. It spoke to quality.

Maiden-hair fern also called adiantum, or *Capillus veneris* is a fern used to prepare capillaire syrup.

Mallowes and malves refers to common mallow (*Malva neglecta*) as well as marshmallow (*Althaea officinalis*) and *Malva sylvestris*. Hoc-lēaf was used to refer to the leaves of the Malvas in OE but they called marshmallow *mersc-mealwe*. I have seen mallow written *mealwe* in a couple of manuscripts.

Manchet was a small round loaf of bread meant to be the size that would fit in the hand.

Mandrake is *Mandragora officinarum* & was an ingredient in *oleum mandragoratum* and far too much is made out of that one silly herbal and witches where this ingredient is concerned. The plant and its leaves were commonly used in medicine.

Maniple a bundle of herbs that could be held in one hand. You might also see this called a faggot of sweet herbes or

Mastic (tears of Chios) is an aromatic resin exuded from the *Pistacia lentiscus* tree.

Masticatory medicinal agent that is meant to be chewed to reduce inflammation in the mouth.

Maudeline (maudlin per Culpeper) referred to a plant Parkinson called *Costus hortorum* minor (Lesser Costmary) which refers to the very obscure camphor plant. Sometimes you still see the seeds sold as *Tanacetum balsamita* var. *camphoratum*.

Mead is a solution of honey and water that has been fermented into an alcoholic beverage.

Melomel is a mead made with fruit added, while a metheglin is mead fermented with spices which was used medicinally especially by Welsh physicians.

Medewax is a Middle English term for beeswax. *Mede* was the word for meadow.

Melancholick and melancholie are terms associated with black choler (black bile) but also generally referring to the being troubled with sadness or pensiveness.

Melilote (*Melilotus officinalis*) also spelled Mellilote. These flowers were considered both emollient and aromatic in a way that “dispersed morbid matter.” The honey that bees made after feeding on these flowers was thought to be amazing.

Mercurie (plant) is *Mercurialis annua* which you might also see called garden mercury pr Dog’s mercury or dog’s cole (*Mercurialis perennis*) is another plant of this family. Dioscorides wrote of using a crude distillation apparatus to distill mercury from these plants.

Metheglin is a mead flavoured with herbs and spices. Also called a mulsum.

Milfoil and nosebleed are alternative names for yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) which was derived from the Old English *gearwe* although it is worth noting that *Achillea nobilis* was once the preferred medicinal yarrow and these older terms refer to the whole species.

Monkshood refers to *Aconitum napellus* which was also called wolf’s-bane because it was used to poison wolves to keep them away from livestock.

Morbid matter is any accumulation though to be disease causing. Morbid matter and evil humours are somewhat synonymous; however, it seems that it was used more commonly as humoural theory fell out of favor.

Morbisick is an archaic form of morbid which means disease producing.

Morwen spelled various ways meant early morning in Middle English.

Mumia was a bituminous mineral substance used in salves in Persian and Greek medicine. The name was derived from the Arabic *mūmiyā* which translated poorly in Latin and resulted in odd mistranslations about mummies, with some apothecaries going to very extreme lengths to acquire the powdered remains of mummies and grind them finely. There was even a counterfeit market. Gerard cleared up the Arabic mistranslation and assured his readers that mumia is “that which the Grecians call *Pissasphalton*.”

Musk is a substance secreted by a certain species of deer (*Moschus*) that to mark their scent that is used in the perfume industry.

Must is a word sometimes used to refer to the fresh solution being put to ferment to become wine and sometimes you will see it being used by someone making mead. It comes from the Latin phrase *vinum mustum* which means young wine.

Mustard cultivated and harvested before the 16th century was most likely *Brassica juncea* (brown mustard). *Sinapsis alba* also called senive was a native to the UK but not widely cultivated until the 16th century.

## N

Narcotique (narcotic) agents are those with a stupefying and numbing action.

Needleworker is an old-fashioned term for a person who sewed clothing for a living and I will probably stick to it on my blog so as to remain gender neutral.

Night-mare a disease thought to be caused by evil humours ascending into the brain during sleep and causing people to imagine terrible things. Hanging ward plants such as mistletoe or juniper in the room was said to keep the night-mare away.

Nuxe or *nux vomica* referred the seed of the fruit of the nux vomica tree (*Strychnos nux-vomica*). As the name implies they are a very strong emetic and were used for purging.

## O

Obturation, shutting, stopping.

Oleaginous is an adjective used to describe oil substances. For example, oleaginous demulcents included olive oil and butter.

Olibanum is a particularly fragrant type of frankincense obtained from *Boswellia carterii*. Culpeper spoke of frankincense and olibanum having similar properties. Olibanum seemed to be more popular in perfumery.

Opium a juice or syrup made of the latex obtained from the green (unripe) seedheads of the white and black poppy.

Popanax or bisabol refer to the perfumer's gum from the plant *Commiphora guidottii*.

Orage (*Atriplex hortensis*) was also called garden orache and was grown as a potherb.

Orpiment was a bright yellow mineral (arsenic sulfide) used as a dye and for paints. It is sometimes used in place of arsenic.

Orpine (*Sedum telephium*) is also called live-long, an older name for it is alf-wört.

Osseous was an adjective used to describe something that appeared bony.

Ounce is abbreviated  $\mathfrak{z}$  and is eight drams or 31.2 grams.

Our Lady's Thistle also called Carduus B. Alariae, Blessed Mary's Thistle, or Milk Thistle is *Silybum marianum*. One of the four pleuritical waters. Our Lady's Thistle was said to be the most temperate opening obstructions of the liver and relieving both jaundice and edema due to its diuretic properties.

Oxycratium is a solution of vinegar and water.

Oxydorticks agents applied to the eyes to improve the eyesight.

Oxyrohodine is rose infused vinegar.

Oxysaccharum is a syrup made of vinegar and sugar.

Oyl of Ben is a medicinal oil by pressing the seeds of *Moringa oleifera* seeds. It is still available commercially.

Oyntment is obviously an archaic spelling of ointment but I want to use it to point out that sometimes you might see a word oynt<sup>t</sup>. That superscripted “t” is an abbreviation of “ment” and is used often.

## P

Palsie is a term which refers to difficulty with muscle control stemming paralysis (dead palsy) to one of the degenerative diseases of the nervous system such as cerebral palsy or spinal muscular atrophy (wasting palsy), or Parkinson’s disease (shaking palsy).

Paroxysme spoke to fits (fyttes) or convulsions that occurred due some sort of illness.

Patience or pacience is monk’s rhubarb *Rumex alpinus* which is not a rhubarb but was used as a purgative in a manner like the rhubarbs.

Pellitory of Spain refers to *Anacyclus pyrethrum*.

Pellitory refers to *Parietaria judaica* (synonym P. diffusa) and *Parietaria officinalis* which sometimes is called pellitory-on-the-wall.

Penny wort or “the flower that grows on walls” is *Cymbalaria muralisor*.

Pennyroyal or pudding grass was used medicinally but was also a common potherb and used for flavoring haggis.

Peptic was a preparation that aided digestion. They are also sometimes called carminatives if they were thought to help one expel flatulence.

Percolation means to let something strain through and a type of medicine made by letting alcohol strain through plant material in a [percolation cone](#).

Philtre was a medicine made as a love potion.

Phlebotomie is the practice of bloodletting which was very popular amongst physicians who ascribed to humoral medicine.

Phlegmatic or phlegatick being characterized by an abundance of phleg (fleam) which is the cold and moist humour of the body.

Phlegon referred to a body that was swollen, hot, and red due to inflammation of the blood.

Phrenitis was a term that the Greeks used very vaguely which seemed to indicate an acute inflammation of the mind and body. By the Middle Ages, the word referred to a type of delirium. (below) It was eventually replaced by more accurate diagnoses such as meningitis or encephalitis.

Phrenetick is an adjective that referred to being in a “phrensie” which was thought to be a type of delirium or madness caused by an inflammation in the membranes of the brain.

Pica was used during this time to indicate increased sexual desire associated with pregnancy hormones.

Pippens are cooking apples of the time that have are yellow and red.

Phthisis is a word for a consumption as defined above. While consumption is often defined as tuberculosis today, it began as a term for general wasting away of the muscular flesh attributed to several causes but generally presenting with a hectic fever.

Physicians were professionals who practiced “the art of Physick.”

Physick or physic was the word commonly used to describe the practice of medicine.

Pimpernell is *Lysimachia arvensis* even if the author doesn't specify scarlet pimpernel.

Piony and pyonie are alternate names for *Paeonia mascula*. This "wild" peony was introduced as a monastic medicinal and then cultivated for showier flowers because of its ornamental appeal.

Pipkin is a stoneware cooking pot with a handle and three little legs for setting over embers or a chafing dish. They were often glazed on the inside but left raw on the outside.

Pith is marrow usually derived from a backbone or the core of a root.

Pituitous was an adjective used to describe substances that appeared phlegmy or mucous. It is somewhat synonymous with phlegmatic.

Plethora originally referred to an unusual increase in blood volume thought to be caused by too many humours.

Pleura the thin skin lining the inside of the ribs.

Pleurisie (pleurisy) This was thought to be due to accumulation of humours. “Humours that be cold, gross, and viscous in the body which oftentimes do place themselves in the void place of the breast or in the lung itself and as they accumulate they stretch out the upper skin. The pleurisy which is an inflammation of the upper skin caused by an abundance of hot blood flowing unnaturally to the area.”<sup>17</sup> Modernly we call this a pleural effusion.

Pneumatical belonging to wind or spirits.

Podagrical adjective describing gouty conditions.

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<sup>17</sup> Barrough, Philip. *The Methode of Phisicke Conteyning the Causes, Signes, and Cures of Inward Diseases in Mans Body from the Head to the Foote*, 1583.

Polypody (Polipody) of the Oak is *Polypodium vulgare*.<sup>18</sup>

Pome-citron is an archaic term for citron (*Citrus medica*). It appears in medicinal receipt books more than any other citrus.

Pommade is a type of ointment usually sweet.

Porraceous is an adjective describing a green the shade of leeks.

Posnet is a small cup that could be set over embers because it had a handle and three legs. It is like a pipkin only smaller.<sup>19</sup>

Posset cups were unique due to the spout that led out of the side of the cup. I have seen it said that the spout was for drinking the alcoholic beverage, but I question that. Posset cups are very reminiscent of the invalid feeder cups used in nursing through the 1930's and possets were a drink commonly served to the ill and convalescing.

Postume also written apostume or impostume is the accumulation of evil humours in one place, so it could be a boil or other fluid filled cyst that "maketh rotting and swellyng"<sup>20</sup>

Potentilla or wild tansey (*Potentilla reptans*) according to Parkinson was called silverweed and *Argentina a foliorum argenteo splendore*.<sup>21</sup>

Potherb simply refers to any plant grown for culinary use including purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), fat hen/lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium album*), chickweed (*Stellaria media*) and ribwort (*Plantago lanceolata*).

Pottle. a pot or container holding a measure for liquids equal to a half gallon.

Privation was a term often used in reference to fasting. It indicated "taking away."

Privities is an archaic word for the genitals.

Probe was a medical instrument used by a *chiurgion* to determine the depth of a wound.

Procatartick is the equivalent to saying the root cause of something or at least a cause that triggers another cause and its indications.

Prunella was mistakenly given as the name of barberries in some early works, but it is definitely refers to self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*). [Culpeper 1649]

Ptisane (πιττισάβ) a healthful drink made of barley. Barley water.

Purulent means to be full of morbid matter and corruption.

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18. Lexico Dictionaries | English. '[Polypody of the Oak](#)'. Accessed 15 June 2017.

19 Lexico Dictionaries | English. 'Posnet | Definition of Posnet by Oxford Dictionary on Lexico.Com Also Meaning of Posnet'. Accessed 15 January 2017. <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/posnet>.

20 Bartholomaeus, Anglicus. *De Proprietatibus Rerum*. Edited by Batman, Stephen. 1582.

21 Parkinson, John. *Theatrum Botanicum...* London, England: Printed by Tho: Cotes, 1640. 593.

Pusley or purslarye are *Portulaca oleracea* (purslane) and not parsley.

Pustulous skin was full of various types of pustules such as blisters, chilblains or wheales.

Pyrotick an agent that burns the skin and was used to create a pathway of elimination of purulent matter.

## Q

Quicksilver is an archaic term for the element mercury.

## R

Race (rase) mean root and usually seems to be associated with ginger.<sup>22</sup>

Ragwort is *Jacobaea vulgaris*, formerly *Senecio jacobaea*. Common names include stinking willie and benweed.

Ramses or ramsons are common names of wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*) which we call ramps. It's likely OE equivalent is brāde-lēac which means "broad leek."

Rankling is an adjective that indicates that a wound is infected or festering.

Red sage which is also called garden sage is *Salvia officinalis*.

Red precipitate is mercuric oxide, a red crystalline powder derived from heating mercury.

Restharrow might also be called cammock and refers to the *Ononis* species, most likely *Ononis spinosa*.

Revulsion refers to the practice of cutting a vein to evacuate morbid blood from the place where it is thought to be accumulating or to keep it from getting somewhere in the body.

Rheum may be used to refer to inflammation, but also refers to root of rhubarb used medicinally which was generally harvested from *Rheum officinale* although sometimes garden or "chosen rhubarb" (*Rheum × hybridum*) was used.

Ribwort refers to *Plantago lanceolata* which was used as a potherb and medicinal. Ribwort frequently was used when preparing topical preparations for woundcare.

Rocket is *Eruca vesicaria* L (formerly *E. sativa*) and is also called arugula.

Roman wormwood is *Artemisia ponticaor*.

Roset is another name for red rosewater which is the distillate of rose water that has been steeped in red roses to color it.

Rosin or colophony is a byproduct of the distillation of volatile components of pine resin.

Rotting wound means one that is oozing exudate. So basically an infected wound.

Rusty or reasty is are words that mean discolored and rancid.

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<sup>22</sup> 'Race - Middle English Compendium'. Accessed 17 November 2017. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED35721>.

Rx, Rx, RX, or R, are all abbreviations for the word receipt which was modernized to recipe.

Rys is a very old way of spelling rice. I can only think of having seen it in transcriptions of the *Forme of Cury* written in 1390 in which they talk of using flour of Rys for an apple pudding receipt.

## S

Saccharo album which was sometimes abbreviated to *sacchar alb.* is white sugar.

Sal Ammoniac is a naturally occurring mineral composed of ammonium chloride. Spirit of sal ammoniac is the more modern form of smelling salts and is still on the market today.

Sal Gris (Sel gris) or gray salt is a type of sea salt

Sal Prunella a form of saltpetre. It's potassium nitrate purified with potassium sulfate and formed into small balls that dissolve more slowly.

Sal Tartari is potassium carbonate

Salandine or saladine is another name for the plant greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus*).

Salsuginous is an adjective referring to a salty taste.

Salubrity general term for healthiness.

Sanguine, sanguin, or sanguineous are terms associated with the humour blood including being used as an adjective to describe a ruddy expression.

Sanickle used medicinally is great sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*) and also called *padelion* or *pes leonis*.

Sarcoticks were generally believed to encourage the growth of flesh, such as comfrey-root.

Saunders was a red dye stock made from red sandalwood (*Pterocarpus santalinus*) that was also used culinary herb and a medicinal agent.

Savine is *Juniperus sabina* and named for the Sabine area where it was native.

Savoys is the word used for modern cabbages.

Saucerful refers to a unit of volume equal to one-half cup.

Saxifrage is generally referring to white meadow saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*).

Scabious refers to the pincushion flower most often the white or the red varieties as made popular in Basilius Beslers hand colored engraving in *Hortus Eystettensis* published 1613.

Scirrhus was a word for a hard swelling that was not painful.

Screde or shred are cookery terms that mean to fragment or to chop into pieces.

Scrofula is a term for lymphadenitis in the cervical lymph nodes caused by either tuberculosis or another mycobacterium. Also the King's Evil and it was believed that royalty was able to touch people and heal them from the disease.

Scruple -A unit of mass equal to 20 grains (1.296 g) and indicated by the apothecary symbol ℥.

Scurvy-grasse is “technically” *Cochlearia officinalis* but in truth might refer to any of the genus including *Cochlearia danica* or *Cochlearia groenlandica*. Interestingly horseradish and wasabi were also part of the genus at this time and used as antiscorbutic as mentioned by John Woodall in *The Surgeon’s Mate* (1617).

*Seamróg* - Irish Gaelic for shamrock which is *Trifolium repens* (common meadow clover) or *Trifolium dubium* (lesser trefoil) depending on who you talk to there.

*Seamsóg*- Irish Gaelic for wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*).

Searced means something is strained through a sarce which is an older word than sive for strainer.

Seeth or sethe means to simmer or boil. You might see seething written as Seþin but remember that thorn may look like a y, so you might see seyin.

Self-heal, carpenters-herb, or sickle wort, and *Consolida minor* are all names used for *Prunella vulgaris*.

Semeiotick is an archaic spelling of symptomatic.

Senna or senie is the leaf of *Cassia angustifolia*. It is used as a purgative that moves move the bowels and was thought to help the body evacuate black bile and choler.

Serum, wheyish humour affording matter of urine.

Setwal usually refers to the root of the valerian plant.<sup>23</sup>

Settlement can mean residue depending on the context of the sentence and you might see it abbreviated settle<sup>t</sup>. If you wanted to bring that down, it would look like *settlement*.

Sive or sefe are alternate spellings for sieve. You often see the term fine sive or lawne sive. Less frequently you might see the term serge used for the verb sift.

Skirret and crummock both refer to *Sium sisarum*. It was mostly a culinary plant, but Culpeper did write about the plant improving the appetite and as an aphrodisiac.

Smallage was the name given to the wild celery (*Apium graveolens*) plant.

Smuggled is a word that kind of means infused. You will see it most in Scottish sources when they talk about herbs being smuggled in whiskey or in broth.

Soda ash is sodium carbonate obtained from several types of saltwort that grow on seashores.

Sodden means to cook down by boiling, so it’s an older term used the way cooks use reduce now. <sup>24</sup>

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23 Culpeper, Nicholas. [Pharmacopoeia Londinensis: A Physicall Directory, or, A Translation of the London Dispensatory](#), 1649. 15.

24 ‘[Sethen](#) - Middle English Compendium’. Accessed 10 March 2021.

Sorbet was a drink of Egyptian origin made of sugar, lemon juice, rosewater, and ambergris.<sup>25</sup> Jean de Thévenot wrote about it in 1663 and it was not frozen although they did have ice cream at this time in some places.

Sorrel is the common name of the potherb *Rumex acetosa*.

Southernwood, southrenwode, garderober, or wardrop refer to *Artemisia abrotanum* which has a native range that runs the south of Europe, from Spain to Italy. wælic

Sow thistle Culpeper said sow thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*) was good for phrensies and increasing human milk supply and cooling hot swellings particularly of the fundament and genitals.<sup>26</sup>

Spagyrics was first a term for chymical (alchemical) physicians because of the nature of the medicines, and then later when they adopted a particular way of making tinctures, it applied to that preparation.

Spasmus a word for cramp, convulsion, or spasm.

Sperage is an older term for asparagus.

Spermaceti is a waxy medicinal substance. It can be derived from the oil of any cetacean, but at the time the type created inside an organ in the sperm whale's head was most common.

Sperstone is gypsum. This is a corrupted spelling of the Middle English sparre-stōne or spærston. It is also corrupted to perstone.

Spike lavender or *Lavandula latifolia* is a variety of lavender native to Spain, France and Italy.

Spikenard, (spiknard, spykenard) The spikenard being cultivated in medieval gardens was a variety of valerian. Parkinson wrote about several varieties including *Valeriana celtica* saying "the whole plant is sweet and aromanticall, more than the Indian Spiknard."<sup>27</sup> Pliny's saliunca, which Parkinson calls Italian spiknard, was *Valeriana saliunca* which was used to scent Roman baths.

Spinalis medulla referred to the marrow of the backbone.

Spumous is an adjective that meant frothy.

Squill or sea onion are *Urginea maritima*.

Staechados/staecados refers to the ornamental shrub, *Lavandula stoechas* which is also called French lavender.

Sternutatory is a word for an agent that is meant to produce sneezing and was later associated with snuff.

Stiptical is an agent that is binding in a way that stops exudates. It's an archaic form of styptic which is an agent that stops bleeding.

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<sup>25</sup> Thévenot, Jean de. The Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot into the Levant in Three Parts... 1687. 34.

<sup>26</sup> Culpeper, Nicholas. [Pharmacopoeia Londinensis: A Physicall Directory, or, A Translation of the London Dispensatory](#), 1649.

Storax is the name for a natural resin harvested from the Turkish sweetgum (*Liquidambar orientalis*). When the N. American sweetgum *L. styraciflua* was discovered, they gave the resin extracted from it the same name and used it similarly. This is one of the times when I am a snob and will pay extra for the Turkish variety

Strike is an obsolete measure of volume that could mean anywhere from one-half bushel to four bushels depending on where you lived. Modernly we seem to have settled on one half bushel or two pecks.

Struma can mean a couple of things. It can mean a swelling in the neck due to an enlarged thyroid or a skin disease known as scrofula.

Succory another name for chicory (*Cichorium intybus*).

Sudoriferous refers to being sweaty or substances that provoke sweat.

Suffumigation allowing medicinal smoke to surround and enter the body from under portable toilets known as close-stools.

Superficies refer to the surface of the extremities as opposed to peripheral.

Suppuration is the moment when morbid matter has built in an apostume to the point that it resolves.

Surfeit as an illness caused by too much of anything too much food, overexertion, too much heat. We often see it reduced to the idea of indigestion but as I mention frequently in my classes, that kind of reductionism is modern thinking.

Sweet flag is another name for *Acorus calamus* which Parkinson called "The Sweet Smelling Flagge."

Sweet wormwood is *Artemisia annua* which you might see called Sweet Annie.

Syderation is often misinterpreted as blasting with heat but in early modern medicine it was used to describe corruption of tissues that went all the way to the bone.

Symptome, an evil disposition of body which depends upon and accompanies a disease.

Synamoun or sinnamond refer to *Cinnamomum verum* formerly *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*.

Syncope is synonymous with fainting, but an older meaning is a disease that causes a very sudden decay of the spirit.

## T

Tamarisk is the same tree that manna was collected from, but the root, bark and flower galls were also used in medicine as an astringent due to their high tannin content.

Tansey is an egg dish such as a pudding or omelette seasoned with tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*).

Temper just means to mix.

Tent was a roll of linen or other absorbent material placed in a wound to pack it and absorb discharge.

Terebene was a clear liquid that was the result of mixing sulphuric acid and oil of turpentine. It was a cough remedy often mixed into cod liver oil because English people liked to torture their children. See also treacle and brimstone.

Terra sigillata a type of clay used for medicinal preparations that originated in the Isle of Lemnos.

Tetter refers to skin diseases that reddish raised eruptions like ringworm, impetigo, eczema, or psoriasis.

The five-leaf plant is cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*). You might see older spelling such as fyfle and fiulefe.

Thion hudor was deep orange-red liquid that was made from boiling flowers of sulphur with slaked lime.

Thorn (þ) is an archaic letter that made the th sound. It became so similar to a “y” that you really couldn’t tell the difference. Al þat is “all that” and it seemed to be used like we use “until” today. y<sup>e</sup> -the, y<sup>n</sup> -then  
brēmel-þorn refers to the thorn of the blackberry.

Thyme or tyme usually refers to *Thymus vulgaris* while wild thyme refers to wild thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*) there is also Creten thyme which is *Thymus longicaulis*

Tormentil (tormentell) also called setfoil is *Potentilla erecta* a member of the *Rosaceae* family.

Touchpaper is lightweight paper that has been soaked in a potassium nitrate solution and then dried. It is easily ignited.

Treacle and triacle are terms for compound medicines derived from the Greek word *thēriakē*. *Triacle* was Old French and treacle was the Middle English spelling. London treacle and Venetian treacle were common ingredients in early modern receipts.<sup>28</sup>

Tun is base unit and largest unit of the English wine cask system and were usually around 950-960 liters. It refers the wooden vessel used in winemaking, so you might see it said to put your must into a tun. Other units in this system included the Butt (1/2 tun), Puncheon/Tertian (1/3 tun), Hogshead (1/4 tun), Tierce (1/6 tun), Barrel (1/8 tun) and Rundlet (1/14 tun).

Turbit is a purgative made from the morning glory species *Operculina turpethum* which was also called tripoly or blue chamomile.

Turbith is a red mineral ground to a powder and used in medicinal preparation.

Turnsall or turnsole is *Crozophora tinctoria* formerly *Tournesol tinctoria* (L.) Baill. which was used to produce a blue-purple ink that is a pH indicator so like litmus. This is one that is often incorrectly identified as heliotrope.

Tutie, tutty, or tutia is a crude zinc oxide. It eroded off brass and it was powdered and baked into cakes to be sold by apothecaries. There is an interesting accounting of the process of preparing it in chapter 21 of the first book of Marco Polo’s travels.

Tutson or tutsan is *Hypericum androsaemum*.<sup>29</sup>

## U

*Uisce beatha* or whiskey is a strong liquor distilled by the Irish from a fermented barley mash. The first known Irish documentation of *aqua vitea* is in the *Annála Chluain Mhic Nóis* which states that in 1405 a

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<sup>28</sup> The connection between this and modern usage of treacle (light treacle-golden syrup while dark treacle is like molasses) may be that beginning in the late 1600’s these syrups were used as a delivery mechanism for these remedies to hide their taste.

<sup>29</sup> Gerard, John. *The Herball Or Generall Historie of Plantes*. London, England: Norton, John, 1597.435.

noted Irish chieftain drank too much *aqua vitea* on Christmas and died. It is not stated that this drink was distilled from barley.

The first documentation that confirms the use of barley malt to brew whiskey is in the Exchequer Rolls of 1494, King James IV of Scotland awarded one Friar John Cor a large amount of malt for making aqua vite.<sup>30</sup>

Uisce Beatha is pronounced roughly "ish-ke-ba'ha" which is anglicized to Usquebaugh in a lot of handwritten manuscripts. The Scottish Gaelic is *uisge beatha*. It's meaning "water of life" is often said to be Irish word assigned to the Latin aqua vite, but as is noted above they are not identical terms.

## V

Vapour as applied to cooking a substance seems to mean to make a reduction of or to evaporate off liquid.

Vellication refers to a twitch or spasm of the muscle tissue.

Venice turpentine is a green viscous liquid collected from the larch tree (*Larix decidua*). The larch though native to central Europe, is naturalized throughout the Scandinavian region due to its use in commerce. It was sometimes allowed to congeal into a log form, so you will often see receipts that suggest slicing it. The turpentine the ancient Greeks used was sourced from the Mediterranean terabinth tree (*Pistacia terebinthus*).

Verdigris or *aeruginis* is the green rust from copper which was powdered and added to topical preparations.

Verjuice is the juice squeezed from green grapes or crabapples. It has a sour acidic flavor.

Vervilago (vlophone) is *Cardopatum corymbosum* also referred to as the black Chamaeleon thistle.

Venetian treacle refers to a preparation known as *theriac andromachus* or *theriac venetian*.

Vitriol with no further qualification usually means sulfuric acid.

Vulnerary is a word pertains to wounds, but as you will see there were far more terms surrounding woundcare.

## W

Wall germander is *Teucrium chamaedrys*.

Wall rue is a small fern that grows mostly on limestone called *Asplenium ruta-muraria*.

Walme is a Middle English word that meant to bring a mixture to a good rolling boil. The number of walmes speaks to the number of instances a liquid was brought to a boil.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Great Britain. Public Record Office, John Stuart, George Burnett, and Scotland. Court of Exchequer. *Rotuli scaccarii regum Scotorum = The Exchequer rolls of Scotland*. Edinburgh : H.M. General Register House, 1878. <http://archive.org/details/rotuliscaccarii10grea>. pp 487

<sup>31</sup> 'Walm and Walme - Middle English Compendium'. Accessed 26 Nov 2017. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED51598>.

Walnut (*Juglans regia*) is native through Europe and central Asia.

Walworte is a common name for the *Erysimum* genus also called wallflowers.

Water mint or sinsiburium is *Mentha aquatica*.

Wen seems to mean a protrusion whether it is a swelling or cyst on the skin of the head or the face or some sort of hernia. You might see something mentioning a waxing (in the rising sense) wen.

Wheal is a term for an area of the skin that becomes raised, red, and usually itchy. It seems to be used similarly to hives but it is sometimes used for the mark left by a slap.

White lily/lilie or as named in the London Dispensatory *Lillij Albi* is *Nymphaea alba*.

White thorn is an alternate name for *Crataegus monogyna* (hawthorn) seen sometimes in Irish and Scottish sources. The haws are the red berries.

Whitlow, whitflawe or felon are postumes caused by bacterial or viral infection of the fingers or toes.

Wild-fire pr wylde fyre is a name for erysipelas and inflamed conditions of the skin that spread rapidly.

Wild sage which is also called eupatory or woodland germander is *teucrium scorodonia*.

Wild teasel is *Dipsacus sylvestris* also called labrum veneris.

Woad is *Isatis tinctoria*, was a plant grown to produce a blue dye.

Woodbine is *Lonicera periclymenum* which is the native European honeysuckle.

Wormwood is *Artemisia absinthium*.

Wort is an Old English term used to refer to herbs, but it had long gone out of use outside of being incorporated into the common names of some medicinal plants. In the Middle Ages wort refers to the infusion of ground malt or other grain made to be fermented into ale.

Woundwort, bishops-wort, and vettonica (per Pliny) were name for *Betonica officinalis* formerly *Stachys officinalis*. OE *bisceop-wyrt*.

**Wyrt-gælstre** is the Old English name for a service magician who worked with plants.

Wyse is an old Middle English term for stem. I doubt you will come across it used that way unless you start poking around in the 1400's, but it's worth noting.

## Y

Yeast referred to the frothy foam skimmed from ale barme. Older terms you might see are Ale zest, gyst

Youthwort refers to species of the sundew plant (*Drosera*) also sometimes called *ros solis*.