THE ‘SLOANE GROUP’: RELATED SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY IN THE SLOANE COLLECTION

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In his entry on Sir Hans Sloane in the Dictionary of National Biography, Norman Moore observed that the Sloane Manuscripts ‘must always be one of the main sources of medical history in England from the time of Charles II to that of George II’. While the validity of that observation is not in dispute, it is equally important to acknowledge that the Sloane Collection in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library is likewise the richest source of scientific and medical writings from medieval England. The Sloane Collection (Sloane MSS. 1–4100) and Sloane manuscripts with Additional MS. numbers (Add. MSS. 5018–5027, 5214–5308) comprise some 4205 catalogue entries (4100 and 105 respectively). Admittedly, this numbering includes Oriental manuscripts, annotated printed books and maps, no longer in the Department, while in some instances two numbers have been assigned to a single manuscript, so the collection in fact probably contains fewer than 4000 codices. Nevertheless, the Sloane Collection is a remarkable assembly of manuscripts. As Moore’s observation implies, the majority of manuscripts in the Collection are medical codices from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but earlier periods are by no means neglected. By my reckoning I have seen in the Sloane Collection more than 500 manuscripts that either can be dated before 1500, most of them from fifteenth-century England, or, if post-medieval, that contain sixteenth- or seventeenth-century transcriptions of medieval texts. As one would expect, given Sloane’s interests, most of these medieval texts are scientific or medical.

A systematic examination of the medieval medical and scientific texts in the Sloane Collection reveals several groups of related manuscripts. Some groups reflect a situation where present numbering refers to parts of codices, now treated as discrete, that derive from a single manuscript. In the case of one group, however, the Sloane Collection contains five ‘quarto-size’ paper manuscripts or booklets, all *circa* 210 x 145 mm., that may well witness to as many independent mid-fifteenth-century English manuscripts. To this Group must be added one codex from the Additional Manuscripts in the British Library, while eight further manuscripts found in the British Library and six other libraries also display textual and codicological relationships to the five Sloane codices, and must be discussed with them. However, because five of the six most closely related manuscripts, what one might call siblings as opposed to the more distant relatives in other collections, are found in the Sloane Collection, it seems appropriate to refer to
these manuscripts as the Sloane Group. These manuscripts deserve serious study, for they suggest a uniformity and co-ordination in late medieval English book production that has not hitherto been noted.

The six siblings in the Sloane Group, quarto-size paper or mixed paper and parchment books sharing common patterns of watermarks, size, *mise en page*, and recurring hands are Sloane MSS. 2320, dated 1454; 1118 (ff. 15–147a); 1313 (ff. 135–42), dated 1458; 2567 (ff. 4–10); 2948 (ff. 34–51 and 53–59), dated 1462; and Add. MS. 19674 (ff. 1–72c)⁷ (see Tables I and II and figs. 1–8). Three manuscripts, one in the Sloane Collection and two from other collections, may be described as half-sisters, or at least cousins (see Table III). Sloane MS. 3566 is a smaller parchment codex containing the core of texts and illustrations in Sloane MS. 2320 and hands similar to some found in the Group (see figs. 9–10). Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.1.77, dated 1460, and Harvard Medical School, Countway Library of Medicine MS. 19, both contain the core of texts and illustrations found in Sloane MSS. 2320 and 3566 and some of the watermarks from the Group.⁸ These three manuscripts are smaller than the five group codices, however, and the hands show more variation than do those in Group manuscripts.

Two other manuscripts might be described as the second generation of a family that had grown prosperous. The twin manuscripts Tokyo, Takamiya 33, and Cambridge, Gonville and Caius 336/725, ff. 104–57, contain much of the same core of medical and astrological texts and illustrations found in four of the manuscripts already identified⁹ (see Table IV). They are, however, larger parchment codices displaying painted and gilt initials and borders and written in related decorative hands that may be as late as the 1480s or 1490s.¹⁰ Finally, three witnesses to quarto paper manuscripts bear some family resemblance to the Sloane Group. One is a medical compendium, London, Wellcome Historical Medical Library MS. 784, which shares one plague tract with the recurring core of texts, and is similar in size, format, and two watermarks to the paper quarto codices in the Group.¹¹ The Anglicana hand, however, is not closely related to Group hands. A second codex, British Library, Add. MS. 5467, resembles the Group codices in the section written by the final hand on ff. 195–204. This part of the codex, containing portions of two ‘mirrors of princes’ translated into English by John Shirley, displays size, layout, and scripts similar to the Group manuscripts, although the watermark is not to be found in the other manuscripts under consideration. A third manuscript, a sixteenth-century compilation containing leaves from four earlier medical manuscripts, is Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Rawlinson C. 815. This codex contains two relevant leaves, ff. 30 and 31, of gynaecological and laxative recipes and charms, which are also similar in size, layout and hands¹² (see Table III).

Although there is no duplication of texts in the core Group of manuscripts, there is a commonality of subject matter – five contain medical treatises; four, texts on magic; two, alchemical texts; and two contain astrological material (see Table II). This common subject matter is shared by the less closely related manuscripts, and indeed specific texts in Group codices are found in the less closely related manuscripts as well
What most clearly distinguishes Group manuscripts from the less closely related codices is not a question of common texts, however. It is rather the striking physical similarity — material (paper with common watermarks), size, mise en page, and hands — among Sloane Group manuscripts. Because this physical similarity identifies the Group and sets it off from the less closely related manuscripts, any discussion of the Group and related manuscripts should begin with the physical characteristics of the codices.

I. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Even though dimensions, layout, and quiring are best presented in tabular form (see Tables I and III), and hands, decoration, and illustration in photographs (see figs. 1–10), some of the physical features of the Sloane Group and its relatives merit a more discursive analysis. Unfortunately, none of the core Group survives in an early binding, so no inferences can be drawn from present bindings.

An analysis of watermarks, however, reveals repeated use of paper from the same mills in Group manuscripts and, to a lesser degree, in some of the related codices. Unfortunately, because the quarto format of the Sloane Group means that watermarks appear only in gutters, it is sometimes difficult to reconstruct them accurately, but they can be recovered in many instances. All the common watermarks are treated by Heawood, so his English-language nomenclature will be used, although Piccard and Briquet numbers will be given when they are relevant.

The bull's head with St. Andrew's Cross above, resembling Heawood's fig. 18, appears most frequently in Sloane MSS. 2320, 1118, and 1313 from the Group, and in the related Trinity MS. O.1.77. This French watermark was common in fifteenth-century England; it can be found in Paston letters from 1444 and was used for five Caxton books from 1477 to 1486. A bull's head is also to be found in Add. MS. 19674, but in that instance it appears with a crescent (cusps downward) between the horns. In Wellcome MS. 784 the bull's head watermark contains a crown between the horns.

A second watermark can also be found in four codices, the so-called 'Arms of Valencia', two vertical bands on a crowned, lozenge-shaped shield. It occurs in Sloane MSS. 1118, 2567, and 2948 from the Group, and in Countway MS. 19. Heawood identifies this watermark with Paston letters dated before 1459 and 1470, and Caxton books of 1477 and 1483 (but in the latter case with fesses rather than pales), but the Sloane Group appearances of this watermark do not resemble the Heawood drawing, fig. 8, so much as Briquet 2064 and 2067.

Three hills surmounted by a cross are called 'Mounts' by Heawood and occur in English manuscripts from the end of the fourteenth century. Heawood's fig. 67 shows the hills without a surrounding circle, although he cites English instances within a circle. Sloane MS. 2948 includes paper with both the encircled mounts and the mounts without the circle. Sloane MS. 1118 and Trinity MS. O.1.77 both contain paper marked by mounts within a circle.

Two watermarks — paschal lamb and scissors — appear in two codices under
consideration. The paschal lamb appears in Sloane MS. 1118, but it is difficult to
discern, and one cannot be certain that it appears with a nimbus. Heawood cites it with
a halo,\(^\text{21}\) and the halo is prominent in his fig. 56. The more distantly related Wellcome
MS. 784 clearly contains a watermark of the paschal lamb with nimbus. Scissors are to
be found in two Group manuscripts: Sloane MSS. 2320 and 1118. In 2320 they resemble
Heawood fig. 73,\(^\text{22}\) but the binding of 1118 is so tight that the scissors are difficult to
identify. Five other watermarks occur in single manuscripts in the core Group: letter M;
unicorn passant; flower, Heawood 43; grapes; and scales. Four occur in the related
manuscripts: hand; pot; monogram of Jesus; and unicorns’ heads, Heawood 87.

A resemblance among the six quarto manuscripts more obvious to the eye than
watermark evidence of paper source is uniformity of size and \textit{mise en page}. As Table I
makes clear, the six quarto manuscripts are nearly the same size (slight differences in
dimensions almost certainly resulted from cropping by binders), and, as figs. 1–8 show,
the most striking feature of these manuscripts is the contrast on each leaf between a
highly compressed script and generous margins; the lower margin is uncommonly wide.
All the quarto manuscripts are frame ruled, and the written space averages \(125 \times 80\) mm.
The number of lines varies according to the compression of the script. Of the related
manuscripts, Wellcome MS. 784, Add. MS. 5467, and MS. Rawlinson C. 815 display
the same \textit{mise en page}. In these three manuscripts, leaf size, proportionate written space,
and frame rule are all similar to the core Group.

There is no consistency in the number of leaves in quires in the Sloane Group,
although it is not uncommon to encounter rather large gatherings. Patterns of quiring in
the quarto Group vary from codex to codex and within a single manuscript (see Table I). It appears that quiring was accommodated to text length, particularly in the cases of
Sloane MSS. 2320 and 1118 and to a lesser degree in Add. MS. 19674, where texts begin
on the first leaves of quires and are followed by blank leaves where they do not occupy
an entire gathering. What look like quire marks in 1118 in fact correspond to texts, not
gatherings. Noticeable wear on the first and last leaves of the gatherings of Sloane MSS.
2320 and 1118 suggests that they saw service as exemplars or circulated as booklets. The
circulation of scientific and medical treatises in booklet form was a common practice in
late medieval England.\(^\text{23}\) Indeed, Sloane MSS. 1313 (one quire of eight), 2948 (three
quires of different lengths), and 2567 (seven separately mounted leaves) may represent
booklets or parts of booklets.

As figs. 1–8 reveal, several scribes appear to have participated in the writing of Sloane
Group manuscripts. The quarto manuscripts display a number of hands, but all scripts
are based on a compressed secretary hand.\(^\text{24}\) Scripts often change in a codex when the
language changes, as in fig. 1, English to French; fig. 4, English and mixed
English–Latin on f. 56v to Latin on f. 57; and fig. 6, where the contrast between hands
used for Latin and English texts is slight. The script evidenced on the lower portion of
fig. 1 and on fig. 3 is one that was apparently identified with French-language texts. There is little resemblance to these compressed secretary hands in most of the related
manuscripts. The smaller, parchment manuscript, Sloane MS. 3566, displays more

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Anglicana features than do the quarto manuscripts (figs. 9 and 10). The even smaller Trinity MS. O.1.77 is written in a pointed Anglicana, while Countway MS. 19, approximately the same size as Sloane MS. 3566, was written by William Ebesham in his secretary hand.\(^{25}\) Wellcome MS. 784, Gonville and Caius MS. 336/725, and Takamiya MS. 33 are all written in late Anglicana or mixed hands. However, Add. MS. 5467 and MS. Rawlinson C. 815 contain text and display hands similar to those found in the quarto Group.\(^{26}\)

One finds a bastard secretary display script in most Group manuscripts (see figs. 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8). In the Group, but not in the related manuscripts (except for Add. MS. 5467 and MS. Rawlinson C. 815), elaborate display script for rubrics substitutes for decoration. The use of red and blue initials in Group manuscripts is infrequent although they can be found in some sections of Sloane MSS. 2320 and 1118. In contrast to the decorative severity of the Sloane Group, all save two of the related manuscripts display more elaborate decoration (contrast figs. 10 and 6), and Gonville and Caius MS. 336/725 and Takamiya MS. 33 are lavishly decorated with painted initials and borders. The only related manuscripts with no decoration, Add. MS. 5467 and MS. Rawlinson C. 815, are the codices most similar in size, format, and palaeography to the Group manuscripts.

II. LANGUAGES AND TEXTS

Contrasting with the uniformity of appearance of Sloane Group manuscripts is the variety of languages found in them and – within the larger category of scientific, medical, and magical writing – the range of texts (see Tables II and III). There are no single-language manuscripts or booklets in the Sloane Group, and in the related codices only the leaves in Add. MS. 5467 and MS. Rawlinson C. 815 are single language (Middle English). Sloane MS. 1118 is trilingual – Latin, Middle English, and French (fig. 1). Sloane MS. 1313 (figs. 2 and 3) is Latin and French. Sloane MSS. 2320 (figs. 6–8), 2567 (fig. 5), 2948 (fig. 4) and Add. MS. 19674 are Latin and Middle English. For the mixture of languages in related codices, see Table III. The importance of the fifteenth century for the vernacularization of science and medicine in England cannot be emphasized too strongly, and the consistent juxtaposition of Middle English, and occasionally French, with Latin in these manuscripts witnesses to that period of transition.\(^{27}\) Although the English vernacular had, from the late fourteenth century, been used increasingly for medical and scientific texts, written witnesses to the language lack the uniformity of written Latin. Compare the differing scribal orthography for identical texts in Group codex Sloane MS. 2320, f. 16 (fig. 6) with related Sloane MS. 3566, ff. 87v–88 (fig. 10) and in Sloane MS. 2320, ff. 7v–8r (fig. 8) with Sloane MS. 3566, ff. 31v–32 (fig. 9).

Just as Sloane Group manuscripts and related codices contain a variety of languages, so too they contain a variety of texts, although all (save Add. MS. 5467) are medical and scientific; magic, of course, was an aspect of science before the seventeenth century.\(^{28}\) This is not the place to catalogue all the texts in the manuscripts under discussion. Singer lists, for example, for Sloane MS. 1118 alone more than fifty alchemical texts.\(^{29}\)
Nonetheless, it may be helpful to illustrate with a number of plates the range of texts as well as to analyse the common core of texts found in one Group manuscript and six related codices (see Table IV). Figure 1, Sloane MS. 1118, f. 15, illustrates English and French medical, cosmetic, and alchemical recipes. Figure 2, Sloane MS. 1313, f. 135, shows Chapter 18, on haemorrhoids, from an acephalous Latin regimen of health, and fig. 3, also from Sloane MS. 1313, f. 137v, is a French treatise on oil of balsam. Figure 4, Sloane MS. 2948, ff. 56v–57, displays a number of texts: the end of a Middle English account of a magic potion that will enable one to travel in a moment from one land to another without harm; a list of plants associated with each planet that mixes English (herbe John) and Latin (bursa pastorum) nomenclature; and two sets of number correlations, one for letters of the alphabet and the second for days of the week, used for prognostication by means of such devices as the sphere of life or death. The right leaf of the opening, f. 57, contains the beginning of a Latin recipe for Aqua perfectissima not cited in Thorndike–Kibre.31

Figure 5, Sloane MS. 2567, f. 8, is a short Middle English text on the alchemical process of fermentation followed by an alchemical recipe without rubric beginning ‘Take a quantite of unselek yme…’. Figures 6 and 10, from Group codex Sloane MSS. 2320, f. 16, and 3566, ff. 87v–88, show texts which will be discussed as part of the core; these two treatises, one Latin, one Middle English, are from a series of plague treatises attributed to a John identified with Burgundy, Bordeaux (Burdegalia), and Liège, or called John de Barba. Figure 7, also from Sloane MS. 2320 (f. 63v) displays the beginning of Chapter 2 of Roger Bacon’s ‘De retardatione accidentium senectutis’. In figs. 8 and 9, again from Sloane MS. 2320 (ff. 7v–8) and the related Sloane MS. 3566 (ff. 31v–32) are texts from the core, which will be discussed later. These leaves contain identical passages (save for orthography) and illustrations from a Middle English uroscopy text.

A core of Latin and English medical and astrological texts that concludes with planetary tables links one of the Sloane Group manuscripts, 2320, to all but two of the related manuscripts (see Table IV and figs. 6, 8–10). In the following list, texts are identified by title (titles vary slightly from manuscript to manuscript), language, incipit, Thorndike–Kibre number if Latin, Singer–Anderson number, and Sloane 2320 citations.

1. Manipulus medicinae de digestivis et laxativis; Lat.; Omne enim corpus humanum…; TK 982F; 2320, ff. 1–3v.
2. Practica urinarum; ME; Hit is to undirstond whoso…; 2320, ff. 4–9v; ed. Harley (see figs. 8 and 9).
3. Expositiones colorum urinarum; Lat.; Color rubeus est quasi flamma…; TK 235B; 2320, f. 10.
4. Aqua mirabilis; Lat.; Recipe galanga gariof…; TK 1325B; 2320, f. 10rv; a short group of recipes.
5. Tractatus nobilis de regimine sanitatis; Lat.; Aristotiles autem scribens Alexandro…; TK 135M; 2320, ff. 100–13.
6. Tractatus de mirabilibus aquae; Lat.; Ab origine mundi universa…; TK 7K; 2320, f. 13rv.
7. Tractatus Magistri Johannis de Burgundia de epidemia; Lat.;
(prologue) Ego Johannes de Burgundia...; (text) In primo vite
unus quisque...; TK 488P; SA 18; 2320, ff. 13v–15v; ed.
Sudhoff34 (see figs. 6 and 10).
8. Tractatus Johannis de Barba alias dicti Johannis de Burdegalia;
ME; (prologue) Her begynyth a noble tretice...; (text) Therfor
wher this pestylence...; SA 17; 2320, ff. 16–17v; 3566, ed.
Sudhoff and Harley (see figs. 6 and 10).
9. Exhortatio bona contra morbum pestilencialem; Lat.;
(prologue) Dilectissime frater ut intellexi...; (text) In primis
caveas...; TK 431K; SA 16; 2320, ff. 17v–18; ed. Sudhoff.
10. De condicionibus septem planetarum; ME; Sol whoso is
borne...; 2320, f. 19; ed. Harley.
11. De signis sumptis per lunam in quo signo zodiaci sit; Lat.;
Alia enim bona et...; TK 80Q; 2320, f. 20v.
12. Tabula ad inveniendum planetam; astrological tables which
vary from manuscript to manuscript; 2320, ff. 21–4.

Sloane MS. 2320 contains in addition to this core ten additional Latin texts. Three of
these, including ‘De retardatione accidentium senectutis’ (ff. 56–64v; see fig. 7), are by
or attributed to Roger Bacon, and one is the ‘De vinis’ attributed to Arnald of Villanova
(TK 310C). In addition to short texts of medical recipes, the codex also contains a
magical treatise, ‘De portulana’ (ff. 65–8).35

Of the six related manuscripts containing texts from the core in Sloane MS. 2320, the
three small manuscripts, Sloane MS. 3566, Trinity MS. O.1.77, and Cou.tway MS. 19,
display the closest fidelity to the core as seen in Sloane MS. 2320 (see Table IV). Sloane
MS. 3566 contains all twelve texts in the same order and three additional Latin texts after
the core: the so-called ‘Anatomia porci’ of Copho, wrongly attributed to Galen (ff.
127–38; TK 1282J); ‘Tractatus de complexione pueri in matris’ (ff. 139–42v; no TK
listing); and ‘De natura duodecim signorum’ (ff. 142v–3; no TK listing). Countway
MS. 19 contains all twelve texts and tables in the order seen in Sloane MSS. 2320 and
3566 and no additional texts.

Trinity MS. O.1.77 also contains all twelve texts and tables, but it varies the order of
texts slightly. In that codex, Text 4, the group of recipes beginning with ‘Aqua
mirabilis’, follows Text 6, ‘Tractatus de mirabilis aquae’. Like Sloane MS. 3566,
Trinity MS. O.1.77 differs from Countway MS. 19 in that it contains additional texts. On
f. 101v, an astrological text, ‘De distinctione temporum’ (incipit: Notandum quod
diverse sunt distinctiones temporum...; TK 950F), begins in Latin. The language
changes to Middle English on f. 122, and the text concludes in English on f. 136v. This
text is followed on ff. 137–71 with ‘De vinis’ attributed to Arnald of Villanova, but the
incipit (Quoniam vinum album...; TK 1310G) differs from the incipit for the text (Cum
instat tempus...; TK 310C) as it appears in Sloane MS. 2320, ff. 32–54. ‘De vinis’ in

The twin manuscripts of a later generation, Takamiya MS. 33 and Gonville and Caius MS. 336/725, ff. 104–57, contain the first nine texts from the core of twelve; the texts are found on ff. 30–50v of the Takamiya codex and on ff. 132v–54 of the Caius MS. In both cases, the core is preceded by six other medical and astrological texts (four Latin, two Middle English), beginning with a Middle English verse translation of Aristotle’s advice to Alexander on physiognomy (related to the ‘Secretum Secretorum’ tradition). No texts follow the nine core texts in the Caius codex, but the core is followed in Takamiya 33 by Middle English and Latin medical recipes and by an atelous Latin treatise on the interpretation of dreams. Another related manuscript, Wellcome 784, a fragmentary codex of thirty-two leaves, contains of the core texts only no. 9, the Latin John of Burgundy plague tract beginning ‘Dilectissime frater...’. The prologue is found on f. 1 of Wellcome 784, but the text itself is on ff. 7v–9v. Between the prologue and text is a Middle English uroscopy treatise, and following the plague text are three other Middle English texts: a regimen beginning with unlucky days; eleven remedies; and a second uroscopy treatise. The two leaves in MS. Rawlinson C. 815 contain recipes and charms.

III. NAMES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SLOANE GROUP: R. B. AND JOHN KIRKEBY

Three manuscripts related to the Group contain, in rubrics at the ends of texts in the core, the phrase ‘Quod R.B.’ and, less frequently, ‘Quod B.R.’ These references appear four times as ‘R.B.’ and twice as ‘B.R.’ in Countway 19, which contains only the core texts, in texts 1–5 and 7, and in the same positions in the later twin codices Gonville and Caius 336/725 and Takamiya 33. It is also possible that Sloane MS. 3566 originally contained some of the rubric references to ‘R.B./B.R.’; note that on f. 88 (fig. 10), something has been scratched out. Although the reference to ‘R.B.’ occurs between the ‘Amen’ and the rubric beginning ‘Explicit nobilis tractatus...’ in Countway 19, it would not be surprising to find it at the end of the same rubric where writing has been expunged.

Harley briefly discussed the appearances of these initials in the Countway and Caius manuscripts but offered no suggestion as to their significance. The key to these initials may well lie in the Group codex containing the core texts, Sloane MS. 2320. As has already been discussed, Sloane 2320 contains, among the texts following the core, three attributed to Roger Bacon, ff. 27–9v, 56–64v (see fig. 7), and 73–93. In addition, one can find on f. 25v a contents list (‘Contenta in hoc volumini sunt ista’) which cites six texts ascribed to Bacon, three of which are in fact in the codex, along with other texts not identified with Bacon. Because many later medieval treatises were attributed anachronistically to Roger Bacon and because other ‘Bacon’ texts can be found in the
Sloane Group it seems likely that the use of the initials ‘R.B.’ is related to the eminent thirteenth-century Oxford Franciscan.

A more vexing problem of identification is one that may refer to a figure contemporary to the Group manuscripts; it is the name John Kirkeby that occurs in two manuscripts, Sloane MSS. 1118 and 2948. In Sloane MS. 1118, a long miscellany of mostly alchemical texts, there are two marginal references in a tiny, faint hand, but a hand that is almost certainly that of the text scribe. An example of this sort of notation can be seen in Sloane MS. 1313, f. 135 (fig. 2), another Group manuscript, where we find in the lower right margin ‘die quarto Ianuarii’ and ‘4° Januarey 1458’. In Sloane MS. 1118 the scribe appears to have made notes to himself; for example on f. 44 there are marginal references to texts that were never supplied. It is on f. 36, however, at the end of twelve alchemical recipes, of which four are Middle English, that we find the marginal phrase ‘Secundum Johannem Kirkeby in artibus magistrum canonice’. The second marginal reference occurs on f. 128, accompanying the ‘Hortulanus’ of John of Garland. The notations there are ‘Secundum [?] Kyrkeby’ and ‘nones [?] marci’ (on ff. 129 and 130 one finds ‘die tercio marci’).

In the medical and magical sections of Sloane MS. 2948 that belong to the Sloane Group (f. 34–51 and 53–9; see fig. 4) is a Latin text on herbal medicine containing, on f. 51, the line ‘london perscripsi illud die veneris nona die mensis July 1462 et [?] Edwardi 4ti anno secundo’. Earlier in the text, on f. 46, in a section on laxatives and clysters, is written ‘Et ego magister Johannes Kirkeby magister [sic] qui hanc litteram [?] scripsi ex copia libri eiusdem quam scripsit idem cirurgicus manu propria de me ipso scio quod dicitur esse certum.’ The reference to Kirkeby as ‘magister’ in both manuscripts suggests that the references are to the same person.

Which of the mid-fifteenth-century John Kirkebys that person may have been proves to be a very difficult question, as does his relation to the Sloane Group of manuscripts. The name Kirkeby is a common one, although the orthography varies considerably. It is spelled with i or y in the first syllable, with or without the medial vowel that makes it three syllables, and with or without a final e. It is related to the common Danelaw place-name Kirkby, identical with Kirby, found with particular frequency in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. Records survive testifying to a number of fifteenth-century John Kirkebys. Although the fifteenth-century references to various John Kirkebys may not lend themselves to a clear differentiation of individuals, some records suggest less likely candidates than do others. The less promising references are those that bear no evidence of the M.A. degree linked with the name in Sloane MS. 1118 and the ‘magister’ designation in Sloane MS. 2948 and that display no obvious connection to the alchemical, medical, and magical subject matter of those two manuscripts. One of the less likely candidates is the ‘Johannes Kyrkeby’ active in the first half of the fifteenth century in the Exchequer. He is designated in British Library, Add. MS. 37664, f. 23, as ‘Marescallus de Scaccario’, a member of the Fraternity of the Holy Trinity and SS Fabian and Sebastian in the Parish of St Botolph without Aldersgate in 1414–15. This Exchequer official may be the ‘Kirkeby’ whose name appears at the bottom of the Royal
Licence for the Founding of the Almshouse of SS John, Sherborne, by Letters Patent of Henry VI, 11 July 1437. He could also be the ‘Kirkeby’ whose name appears on a Grant by Henry VI to the Provost and Scholars of King’s College, Cambridge, of the Priory of St Michael’s Mount in 1442, if that name is not to be associated with the ‘John Kirkeby’ who was one of the original scholars of King’s College.

The name, spelled variously, can also be found in fifteenth-century inscriptions, written in various hands and suggesting no obvious link to the figure named in Group manuscripts. The fifteenth-century signature of ‘M. Kyrkebye’ is found on f. 1v of Bodleian Laud Misc. 637, a volume of French romances and chronicle material. ‘Kirkeby’ and ‘Kyrkeby’ appear in British Library, Royal MS. 20 D. II, ff. 1v, 112v, 113, 315 and 315v, another French manuscript romance; the name in the final inscription may be ‘E[li]z[a]b[e]th Kyrkeby’. The name ‘John Kirkebye’ is likewise inscribed on the last of two parchment flyleaves in Sloane MS. 306, a codex containing the ‘Optica’ of Al Hazan.

Academic records would seem to be a more promising source of information on a John Kirkeby, Master of Arts ‘canonice’, and indeed there are records at both Oxford and Cambridge, but it is difficult to distinguish individuals among the references. Emden gives no Cambridge documents after the first decade of the fifteenth century for John ‘Kirkeby’ or ‘Kyrkeby’, but the Venns identified ‘John Kirkeby’ as one of the original scholars of King’s College in 1441. Another possible connection to King’s College, already mentioned, is the appearance of the name ‘Kirkeby’ on a grant of Henry VI to the College in 1442. Particularly significant regarding King’s College, however, is that another of the original scholars there was William Hatclyffe or Hatteclyffe (d. 1480), who subsequently became physician and secretary to Edward IV. Hatchlyffe is also named as one of twelve petitioners, along with ‘John Kyrkeby’, in a 1456 petition for permission to practice alchemy; that petition will be discussed in more detail subsequently.

Whether the signatory to royal grants and the founding scholar of King’s College, Cambridge, are overlapping categories and whether they represent any of the John Kirkebys identified with Oxford University and/or the study and practice of alchemy in the mid-fifteenth century may be impossible to ascertain, but the likelihood of coincidence should be borne in mind in a consideration of the evidence for John Kirkebys at Oxford and the evidence for John Kirkeby as alchemist. One ‘John Kirkeby’ at Oxford was a Dominican at the Oxford Convent from 1440 until at least 1449. His degrees were B.Th., dispensed 1449, and D.Th., 1451, but Emden does not associate the M.A. degree with him. He was Prior of the York Convent in 1474.

A second Oxford candidate is ‘John Kyrkby’, from the diocese of York, Principal of St Frideswide Hall. He was admitted in 1434, took the M.A., and was still at Oxford in 1444. Emden identifies him as Senior Proctor of the University, 1437–8, and one of the people responsible for conveying to Oxford in 1441 seven books, given by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, to the University. If a single man held all the benefices listed in Emden’s entry for this Oxford ‘John Kyrkby’, he was a pluralist of remarkable proportions. Notable among the appointments listed for him in Emden’s entry are
several linked to the royal court, including appointments as Canon and Prebendary of St George’s Chapel, Windsor, 1445–57; Canon and Prebendary of St Stephen’s Chapel, Westminster, 1455–6; and Chaplain to the King from 1455, still serving in that position in 1457. Emden’s entry indicates that this ‘John Kyrkby’ had died by June 1459, but the entry in the volume shelved in the Department of Western Manuscripts at the Bodleian has been glossed with the notation that it includes material on at least two John Kyrkbys, of whom one died in 1459 and the other in 1461. The basis for the assumption of a 1461 death is that the John Kyrkby who was Canon of Lincoln and Prebendary of North Kelsey from June 1456 vacated that holding in 1461. We cannot be certain, of course, that vacating the holding means he died at that time. The problem is further complicated by inscriptions in a manuscript of texts of St Augustine, British Library, Royal MS. 5 B. IV, f. 182v, pledging that volume in the Guildford Chest at Oxford in 1468 and 1469. In the 1468 inscription the notation is ‘Canone magister Johannes Kyrkby’ and, in the 1469 entry, ‘Canon Kyrkeby’. Sorting out the Oxford ‘John Kirkebys’ may be an intractable problem.

Another group of facts about a mid-fifteenth-century John Kyrkeby brings us closer to the alchemical subject matter of many texts in Sloane Group manuscripts, including the predominantly alchemical Sloane MS. 1118, where the name appears twice in margins. ‘John Kyrkby’ was licensed by Henry VI in May 1456 to practice alchemy. An unusual document, petitioning for exemption from the 1403–5 statute forbidding the practice of alchemy, with a memorandum that the King gave the petition to the Lord Chancellor to be executed, survives in the Oxford Museum of the History of Science. Of the twelve petitioners, nine, including Kyrkeby, were described in the petition as ‘in sciencijs naturalibus eruditissimorum’, but only three were granted the requested licence: John Kyrkeby, John Fauceby, and John Rayny. John Fauceby or Faceby attended Henry VI as physician in 1454. Two petitioners whose request was not approved were Gilbert Kymer, physician to Duke Humphrey and Chancellor of Oxford 1431–3 and 1447–53 (d. 1463), and William Hatclyff, already mentioned (along with ‘John Kirkby’) as one of the original scholars at King’s College, Cambridge. Hatclyff served both Henry VI and Edward IV, and was physician and secretary to the latter.

Other kinds of evidence also witness to a mid-fifteenth-century John Kirkeby as a student of alchemy. In one of the English manuscripts of the Latin ‘Testamentum’ attributed to Ramón Lull, Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS. 244, there is a colophon on f. 81 with several similarities of phrasing to the editorial comment on f. 46 of Sloane MS. 2948:

Translatum fuit presens testamentum de lingua cathalonica in latinam anno grate 1443 sexto iunii per lambertum [space] apud London in prioratu sancti Bartholomei et quoniam praedicta translacio mihi iohannem Kirkeby in multis non placuit conscripsi manu mea propria capitulatim testamentum in utraque lingua ad maiorem lucem veritatis percipiendum & finivi anno grate 1455 secundum computationem romane ecclesiae mensis marci die vii in completo hora quasi undecima ante meridiem.
Other copies of this text with colophon lacking the Kirkeby information can be found, but at least one other copy with a colophon giving the Kirkeby information is also found in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 112, where the colophon appears on p. 358. It seems probable that the John Kirkeby who in 1455 improved upon a translation of a major alchemical work attributed to Ramón Lull is the John Kirkeby referred to in the context of alchemical recipes in Sloane MS. 1118 and perhaps the John Kirkeby who is named in Sloane MS. 2948 as having copied out a medical text.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The Sloane Group is made up of complete manuscripts Sloane MSS. 2320 and 1118 and Add. MS. 19674, and of booklets found in Sloane MSS. 1313, 2567, and 2948, all apparently written in the 1450s and early 1460s, and closely linked to one another by common paper sources, mise en page, text and display hands, and, in two cases, by references to John Kyrkeby. The connections between Group manuscripts and the related codices, some later, include physical correspondences, common paper sources, and ‘R.B./B.R.’ references that may refer to the Bacon texts in Sloane MS. 2320. A striking link between Group manuscripts and several of the related manuscripts, moreover, is the repeated use of the core of texts and programme of medical illustrations found in Sloane MS. 2320.

Although important recent studies suggest that it may be inappropriate to think in terms of workshop production of fifteenth-century English manuscripts, it seems reasonable to think in terms of a ‘publisher’. In the case of the Sloane Group, it appears that an individual or a group co-ordinated and exercised control over the subject matter and presentation of these books. Such a publisher, who seems to have specialized in scientific and medical books in the 1450s and early 1460s, must have been responsible for the uniformity of the Sloane Group. Nothing in the Group codices themselves identifies a location, but the John Shirley connection of the related Add. MS. 5467 and the William Ebescham connection of the related Countway MS. 19 suggest London or Westminster. In fine, it appears that there must have been in London or Westminster in the mid-fifteenth century one or more individuals responsible for the production of a specific kind of manuscript, uniform in appearance and scientific and medical in subject matter. Although the basic locus for the study of this Group of mid-fifteenth-century scientific and medical books will remain these manuscripts in the collection assembled by Sir Hans Sloane, it is to be hoped that further study will locate other codices identifiable with the Group and will resolve some of the puzzles posed by it.
Take great cogniz., and have it, and make of powder. Also take the comestible part, anise, osmanthus, and what other herbs, all pow'd and put to him, half an ounce of each powder of the herb and of salt noted. Put them in a pot on the fire, and make the pot red hot, and then put them out on a meadow floor, and let them cool to dry. And then are good to keep, that is kept as gold, and for to make them softer and take the weeds and burn it in the oven, as before. 

Fig. 1. Sloane MS. 1118, f. 15; 205 × 140 (125 × 75) mm
Fig. 2. Sloane MS. 1313, f. 135; 215 × 148 (122 × 75) mm
Fig. 3. Sloane MS. 1313, f. 137v; 215 × 148 (123 × 75) mm
fermes.

A portion of fine tylke that is closed with a find
and made lunsh of it that they may prostrate
Wylh the figures as found purpoue. And doe the
founded portion of Cytus in a stone tynple that is made
and luced. Take then 12 pounds of sye.There is stowed
West white saltes and syre. And weyng them they through
they fillde him a hole. And doe the all once to the
proposed oyle. And frome all the water to gyue till
the oile is made. Wherein Unte the signe. Then let the
proposed oyle. There is stowed and measured. Upon a

cadle. And then them sayd in the space is
spread to milne. By the side of the fine tylke po
Cypus liai the dome of the fine and made all the
with a stone tynple that is made and calde. And gey
to foundry out of the oyle. And when we take then
frome lude it rounded and attched with. Cyrle the

The preparation
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\[ \frac{1}{3} \quad \frac{2}{3} \]

The preparation
Fig. 6. Sloane MS. 2320, f. 16; 215 × 137 (125 × 75) mm
Fig. 7. Sloane MS. 2320, f. 63v; 215 × 137 (125 × 75) mm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Folios (booklet or entire)</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Watermarks</th>
<th>Page dimensions (and written space) in mm.</th>
<th>Ruling and lines per page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 2320 (figs. 6, 7, 8)</td>
<td>93 ff. (entire) unnumbered blanks at ends of texts</td>
<td>1454</td>
<td>parchment paper</td>
<td>bull’s head, letter M, scissors, unicorn, passant</td>
<td>215 x 137 (122/130 x 72/95)</td>
<td>frame ruled 28-50 ll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 1118 (fig. 1)</td>
<td>ff. 15-147a (quires 1, 18 not relevant) unnumbered blanks at ends of texts</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>arms, Valencia, bull’s head, flower (tulip), grapes, lamb, paschal mounts</td>
<td>205 x 140 (120/125 x 72/80)</td>
<td>frame ruled 34-35 ll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 1313 (figs. 2, 3)</td>
<td>ff. 135-42 (one quire)</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>bull’s head</td>
<td>215 x 148 (125/130 x 75/78)</td>
<td>frame ruled 40-42; 22-27 ll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 2567 (fig. 5)</td>
<td>ff. 4-10 (one booklet)</td>
<td>parchment paper</td>
<td>arms, Valencia</td>
<td>205 x 137/145 (120 x 82)</td>
<td>frame ruled 37-40 ll.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 2948 (fig. 4)</td>
<td>ff. 34-51 (A) 53-59 (B) (two booklets)</td>
<td>1462</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>arms, Valencia mounts</td>
<td>223 x 154 (A) 220 x 150 (B) (143 x 93) (A) (122/150 x 79/82) (B)</td>
<td>frame ruled 34-37 (A) 37-40 (B) 27 ll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add. 19674</td>
<td>ff. 1-third unnumbered leaf after f. 72 [f. 72c]</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>bull’s head with crescent</td>
<td>210 x 140 (125 x 73)</td>
<td>frame ruled 38-44 ll.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

(cont. overleaf)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MS.</th>
<th>Collation</th>
<th>Marginal notes and medieval foliation</th>
<th>Text hands and display hands</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 2320</td>
<td>1–2&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;, 3&lt;sup&gt;6–1&lt;/sup&gt;, 4&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;, 5–6&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;, 7&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;, 9&lt;sup&gt;10–1&lt;/sup&gt;, 9&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;, 10&lt;sup&gt;6–1&lt;/sup&gt;, 11&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;, 12&lt;sup&gt;12–1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>quires worn on first leaves</td>
<td>secretary hand in four sizes bastard secretary display hand textura semi-quad-rata with illustrations</td>
<td>ff. 1–23: red initials 1–4 ll. high; red capitula</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks zodiac man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 1118</td>
<td>much variety in quiring: 5 in 8; 3 in 14; 2 each in 10, 18, 20; 1 each in 4, 12</td>
<td>marginal refs. to Kirkeby; some medieval foliation; 'quire marks' refer to texts</td>
<td>secretary hand in four sizes different hand for French bastard secretary display hand with some humanist features</td>
<td>3–5 ll. red and blue painted initials</td>
<td>alchemical furnaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 1313</td>
<td>1 quire of 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>secretary hand 'French' hand bastard secretary display hand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 2567</td>
<td>leaves now mounted separately</td>
<td>medieval foliation, pagination</td>
<td>compressed secretary hand bastard secretary display hand Anglicana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloane 2984</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;, 2&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;, 3&lt;sup&gt;8+1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>medieval foliation</td>
<td>secretary hand in two sizes (compressed and widely spaced)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add. 19674</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;12–3&lt;/sup&gt;, 2–4&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt;, 5&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;, 6&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt;, 7&lt;sup&gt;8–1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>secretary hand in two sizes bastard secretary display hand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manuscript</td>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>Texts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sloane 2320</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medicine, Astrology, and Magic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>ff. 1–24: core texts (see Table IV)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>f. 25v: contents list (does not correspond to texts in codex)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ff. 26–93: ten Latin texts on magic and medicine, including three texts attributed to Roger Bacon and one text attributed to Arnald of Villanova</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sloane 1118</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Alchemy, Medicine, and Magic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>mostly short alchemical processes, medical recipes, texts on divination (more than 50)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French</td>
<td>texts attributed to Roger Bacon, Arnald of Villanova, Eberhart of Béthune, Geber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sloane 1313</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French</td>
<td>ff. 135–137: last chapter (18) of Latin regimen of health</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ff. 137v–140v: French and Latin text on balsam</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ff. 141–142: French charm of St William against gout</td>
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<td>Sloane 2567</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Alchemy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>four Latin and four English alchemical processes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sloane 2948</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medicine and Magic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>f. 34rv: Latin haematoscopy; ff. 34v–35: Latin urine text; ff. 35–41: Latin herbal remedies; f. 41rv: Latin on measures and vessels; ff. 41v–51: Latin medical notes; ff. 53–56v: acephalous English herbal; f. 56v: divinatory material; ff. 57–59v: Latin recipes for waters</td>
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<td>Add. 19674</td>
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<td>Medicine, Astrology, and Magic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>ff. 2–50v: Latin and English recipe and herbal compendia; f. 51: English zodiacal influence; ff. 51–52v: short English texts (regimen of health, and lucky and unlucky days)</td>
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<td>Manuscript</td>
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<td>Material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sloane 3566</td>
<td>143 ff. (entire)</td>
<td></td>
<td>parchment</td>
<td></td>
<td>90 × 60 (57 × 36)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(figs. 9, 10)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Countway 19</td>
<td>64 ff. (entire)</td>
<td>bef. 1468</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>arms, Valencia</td>
<td>140 × 100 (90 × 65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity O.1.77</td>
<td>202 ff. (entire)</td>
<td>1460</td>
<td>parchment</td>
<td>bull's head mounts unicorns' heads</td>
<td>105 × 70 (70 × 50)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gonville and Caius 330/725</td>
<td>ff. 104–157</td>
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<td>parchment</td>
<td></td>
<td>241 × 175 (168 × 102)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takamiya 33</td>
<td>63 ff. (entire)</td>
<td></td>
<td>parchment</td>
<td></td>
<td>240 × 160 (c. 165 × 102)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wellcome 784</td>
<td>32 ff. (entire)</td>
<td></td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>bull's head hand lamb, paschal pot</td>
<td>200/205 × 125/130 (130 × 73/80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawlinson C. 815</td>
<td>ff. 30–31</td>
<td></td>
<td>paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>205 × 143 (135/140 × 75/80)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## SLOANE GROUP – PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collation</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Texts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 quires of 8, 2 quires of 8 (slight variation)</td>
<td>secretary hand with Anglicana features bastard secretary display hand</td>
<td>1, 2, 6 ll. red, blue initials, some flourished; red, blue capitula</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Latin, Astrology, Medicine, and Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;sup&gt;, 3&lt;sup&gt;, 4&lt;sup&gt;, 5&lt;sup&gt;8-3</td>
<td>secretary hand of William Ebesham</td>
<td>4 ll. red flourished initial; 2 ll. blue initials</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medicine and Astrology core texts (see Table IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quires in 8s</td>
<td>pointed Anglicana</td>
<td>2 ll. red, blue flourished initial; 2 ll. blue flourished initials; red capitula</td>
<td>zodiac man</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quires in 8s</td>
<td>mixed Anglicana and secretary hand bastard secretary display hand</td>
<td>painted and gilt initials; borders and sprays; painted minor initials</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medicine and Astrology, Astronomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quires signed</td>
<td>mixed Anglicana and secretary hand</td>
<td>painted and gilt initials; borders</td>
<td>zodiac man</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part 2 of quires each of 12, ff. 186-97, 198-209</td>
<td>secretary bastard secretary display hand</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks</td>
<td>zodiac man</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medicine and Astrology, Astronomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19&lt;sup&gt;, 2-4&lt;sup&gt;8-3</td>
<td>late Anglicana no secretary forms</td>
<td>2-4 ll. blue initials with red flourishing</td>
<td>bloodletting man lunar volvelle</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Portion of John Shirley's translation of 'Le Livre de bonnes mœurs', ff. 97-211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaves mounted separately</td>
<td>secretary bastard secretary display hand</td>
<td>painted and gilt initials; borders</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Medicine and Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>zodiac man</td>
<td>bloodletting man lunar volvelle</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>ff. 1-7v-9v: plague text from core (see Table IV)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>painted and gilt initials; borders</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>two uroscopy texts; text on lucky and unlucky days; recipe for dropy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>zodiac man</td>
<td>bloodletting man lunar volvelle</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Medicine and Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>painted and gilt initials; borders</td>
<td>uroscopy flasks</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>ff. 30-31: gynaecological and obstetrical recipes and charms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>zodiac man</td>
<td>bloodletting man lunar volvelle</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>f. 31v: laxative recipes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The table provides a detailed description of the physical characteristics of the SLOANE GROUP, including typographical details, decoration features, and the languages used in the texts. The texts are divided into various sections, each with specific details on the content and language used.
# TABLE IV. CORE OF MEDICAL AND ASTROLOGICAL TEXTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sloane 2320</th>
<th>Sloane 3566</th>
<th>Trinity O.1.77</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Manipulus medicinae</td>
<td>ff. 1–3v</td>
<td>ff. 1–24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Practica urinarum (illustrated)</td>
<td>ff. 4–9v (fig. 8)</td>
<td>ff. 24–33v (fig. 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Expositiones colorum urinarum</td>
<td>f. 10</td>
<td>ff. 34–35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Aqua mirabilis</td>
<td>f. 10rv</td>
<td>ff. 35–38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tractatus nobilis de regimine sanitatis.</td>
<td>ff. 10v–13</td>
<td>ff. 38v–59v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Tractatus de mirabilibus aquae</td>
<td>f. 13rv</td>
<td>ff. 60–63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tractatus Johannis de Barba</td>
<td>ff. 16–17v</td>
<td>ff. 88–101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. De signis sumptis per lunam in quo signo zodiaci sit</td>
<td>f. 20rv</td>
<td>ff. 116–120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Tabula ad inveniendum planetam</td>
<td>ff. 21–24</td>
<td>ff. 120v–126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I owe particular thanks for unstinting guidance and assistance in this study to A. L. Doyle and Peter Jones. I am also very grateful for the generous help and advice afforded me by the staff of the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library, especially Pamela Porter, Andrew Prescott, and Arthur Searle, and for the assistance of Susan Case, Paul Christianson, Faye Getz, Timothy Hobbs, R. J. Lyall, Heather Owen, M. B. Parkes, Michael Stansfield, Toshiyuki Takamiya, and Alison Wilson. I bear sole responsibility for any errors of fact or judgement in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countway</th>
<th>Takamiya</th>
<th>Gonville &amp; Caius</th>
<th>Wellcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ff. 1-13v</td>
<td>ff. 30-34</td>
<td>ff. 132v-136</td>
<td>ff. 136v-139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 14-19v</td>
<td>ff. 34v-37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 19v-20</td>
<td>f. 37v (atelous)</td>
<td>f. 139v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 20-22 (aqua mirabilis; alia aqua; pulvis diureticus)</td>
<td>f. 38 (acephalous)</td>
<td>ff. 139v-140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 22-31v</td>
<td>ff. 38-42</td>
<td>ff. 140-143v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 32-33 (+ pulvis contra cardiacam)</td>
<td>f. 42rv</td>
<td>ff. 143v-144v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 33v-43</td>
<td>ff. 42v-44v</td>
<td>ff. 144v-148</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 43-49</td>
<td>ff. 44v-47</td>
<td>ff. 148-150v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 49-54</td>
<td>ff. 47-49</td>
<td>ff. 150v-152v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 54v-55v (f. 56 blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td>f. 1 (prol.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 56v-59</td>
<td></td>
<td>ff. 7v-9v (text)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff. 59v-63v</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 I am grateful for a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities which enabled me to work in British libraries, Sept. 1986–Aug. 1987, on the preparation of a Catalogue of Scientific and Medical Writings in Old and Middle English. During that time I examined in the Sloane Collection all manuscripts dated 1500 or earlier, all sixteenth-century scientific and medical codices, and those seventeenth- and eighteenth-century manuscripts that I had reason to believe might contain medieval texts. Although I cannot claim to have seen all the later witnesses to medieval texts in the collection, I recorded information on more than 1500 Middle
English scientific and medical texts from Sloane Manuscripts.
4 See the Spring 1988 issue of the British Library Journal (vol. xiv), devoted to Sloane and his collections.
5 Examples of post-medieval groups of related manuscripts in the Collection include a number of sixteenth-century alchemical manuscripts in the same hand, for example, MSS. 1092, 1093, and 1095, and the group of manuscripts in the hand of Sir Theodore Turquet de Mayerne (1573–1655); see D.N.B. under 'Mayerne' for a partial listing.
6 For example, MSS. 3529, 3530, 3531, and 3532 (in modern bindings of three different types) almost certainly derive from the same fifteenth-century Latin and French medical compendium.
10 A. I. Doyle in a letter to the author of 17 Oct. 1983 observed that the first half of Gonville and Caius 336/725 (ff. 1–103) is earlier than the rest of the codex, even though the artist or artists responsible for decorating the second half had supplied painted decoration over the original penwork flourishing of the first half to meld the two sections. The second half (ff. 104–57) is in the same mixed hand as Takamiya 33 and could be as late as the 1480s or 1490s.
13 Of the manuscripts under discussion, only Countway 19 survives in a parchment binding that may be medieval. The Group codices are to be found in a number of modern British Museum/British Library bindings: Sloane 1118 and 1313 are both in undated bindings, one-quarter leather and leather cloth; 2567 is in an undated binding, one-quarter leather and marbled paper; 2320 is in a one-quarter leather and cloth binding, dated 1981; and 2948 is in a one-quarter leather and cloth binding, dated 1971 and containing in the back board a portion of an earlier leather blindstamped binding. Add. MS. 16774 is in a sixteenth-century leather British Museum binding. Save Countway 19, with its early binding, and Takamiya 33, which was unbound at the time of the Christie's sale, all the related manuscripts survive in modern bindings; of these, the only dated binding (1984) is the leather binding of Sloane 3566.
14 Watermarks are even more difficult to ascertain in the two smaller related manuscripts which are paper: Trinity O.1.77 and Countway 19 (see Table III). In those two cases, cropping has reduced what were the halves of watermarks at the tops of leaves.
1966). The volume of the incomplete Wasserzeichen of Gerhard Piccard relevant to this study is the three-fascicle vol. ii, Ochsenkopf (Stuttgart, 1966).

16 Heawood, pp. 288-9 and fig. 18.

17 The bull’s head with crescent in Add. MS. 19674, often mangled, has no equivalent in Piccard. The only match in Briquet is no. 14394 (Lucq, 1454). The bull’s head with crown in Wellcome MS. 784 corresponds to Piccard, Ochsenkopf, Abt. xv, no. 49.

18 Heawood, p. 287.

19 Briquet 2064 comes from a Perpignan book of 1464, and 2067 from a Venice book of 1478; Briquet questions, vol. i, p. 151, whether it is appropriate to identify Valencia as the location of the paper mill on the basis of the arms.

20 Heawood, p. 297, cites Paston letter, temp. Edward IV, for Mounts, three, in circle, cross above.

21 P. 295, with citations of 1483 and 1485.

22 P. 298, Scissors, Type 2; Heawood’s English citations date from 1426 to 1485.

23 For a discussion of fifteenth-century English scientific and medical books, see Voigts, ‘Scientific and medical books’.

24 The nomenclature used here is based on M. B. Parkes, English Cursive Book Hands 1250–1500 (Oxford, 1969). I am very grateful to A. I. Doyle for his willingness, over a number of years, to answer palaeographical questions regarding Group manuscripts.


26 See Manzalaoui, pl. VIII.

27 Of the 178 late-medieval English scientific and medical manuscripts and books surveyed for ‘Scientific and medical books’, eighty-six contained two or three languages.


30 On the textual traditions of treatises on the sphere of life and death, see Voigts, ‘The Latin verse’, and ‘The Golden Table’.

31 Lynn Thorndike and Pearl Kibre, Catalogue of Incipits of Mediaeval Scientific Writings in Latin, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1963); hereafter cited as TK, with letters of the alphabet added to column numbers (‘O’ omitted) so that citations are to specific incipits.


36 Takamiya 33, ff. 1–9v; see plate of f. 6, in Christie’s Catalogue, 8 Nov. 1978, p. 65. On the various Middle English versions of the
38 I have not been able to recover the scraped-out writing with ultraviolet light.
39 Harley, p. 175, noted four instances of 'R.B.' and one of 'B.R.' in Caius, and four instances of 'R.B.' but none of 'B.R.' in Countway. However, Countway also includes 'B.R.' on ff. 13v and 16v. See the plate in 'Handlist' cited above.
41 Sloane 1118 contains a number of alchemical texts attributed to Roger Bacon. Bodleian Library, MS. e musaeo 155, a Latin compendium of treatises by or attributed to Roger Bacon, may have relevance for a study of the Sloane Group. Written, at least in part, by a John Cokys of Oxford, it displays similarities of size, mise en page, and script, to Sloane Group codices. It contains, pp. 591–637, Bacon's 'De retardatione accidentium senectutis' found in Sloane MS. 2320 (see fig. 7), and among the short texts following that treatise is one, pp. 642–5, bearing the colophon 'Antidotarius quem fecit Magister R B'. I am grateful to M. B. Parkes for bringing this manuscript to my attention.
42 Singer identifies the text on ff. 34–6 as the 'Summa aurea' ascribed to Eberhart de Bethune, but that text, in fact, ends on f. 34v.
43 I am grateful for the advice of A. I. Doyle and Peter Jones regarding these inscriptions.
46 A. B. Gourlay, The Almshouse of SS. John, Sherborne (Sherborne, 1967), [p. 1], deals briefly with the Licence but does not mention the name 'Kirkeby' in the lower right margin of the document.
47 The Grant is King's College Muniments KC/134. Michael Stansfield and Peter Jones suggest that the name on this document may be that of a Chancery scribe and need not be identified with the founding scholar of the College.
49 See George F. Warner and Julius P. Gilson, Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections (London, 1921), vol. ii, p. 378. I am grateful to Peter Jones for references to this Royal MS. and to Royal 5.B.4, discussed below.
50 Scott, Index to the Sloane Manuscripts, p. 291.
51 A. B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500 (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 338, 345.
52 John and J. A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses. Part I to 1751, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1922–7), vol. iii, p. 24. Information given in this entry in addition to the King's College foundation is assigned to the Oxford 'John Kyrkyby' by Emden.
53 See n. 47 above.
54 Venn, vol. ii, p. 330, and D.N.B. under 'Hatclyffe, William'.
57 Warner and Gilson, vol. i, p. 102.
60 On Hatchclyf, see n. 54 above. As Geoghegan points out, p. 12, in Thomas Norton's 'Ordinal', Kymer is identified as a better physician than alchemist; see John Riedy (ed.), Thomas Norton's Ordinal of Alchemy, E.E.T.S., no 272 (Oxford, 1975), p. 50, lines 1550–62. Lest it be thought that this nexus of alchemists, court figures, and university men was exceptional in the fifteenth century, it should be mentioned that it was


62 Pereira cites Bodleian, Ashmole 1483, f. 260, and I have seen the colophon to the ‘Testamentum’ without the Kirkeby information in Sloane 419 and Yale Beinecke Mellon 12, f. 160.

63 This manuscript was certainly written in England. The hands are Anglicana; a Middle English poem is found on p. 127; and Middle English glosses are found throughout the manuscript; see, e.g. pp. 109, 175, 265, 421 and 427.


65 On the material in the hand of John Shirley in Add. MS. 5467, see Manzalaoui, Secretum, p. xxxvii; on Ebesham, see Doyle, ‘The work’, pp. 298–325. Perhaps it should be noted that, teste Emden, Oxford, ‘John Kirkeby’ was appointed Canon and Prebendary of St Stephen’s Chapel, Westminster, in 1455.