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Mankind decides to wear a paper on which is written a Lenten text (Job 34: 15) to defend him from what he calls 'charms'; but the so-called 'badge of his arms' itself comes into the category of a charm in that it is a text whose material existence is accorded apotropaic power. In order to distinguish this type of charm from writing designed to be incanted on the one hand, or the talisman on the other, such charms or 'writings worn on the body for protection' are more precisely referred to as 'written amulets'.<sup>20</sup> The Church was officially uneasy about involvement with the circulation of written amulets because of their affinity with practices associated with magic, but there is copious evidence that monks all across Western Europe and throughout the Middle Ages copied such texts into manuscripts, typically in margins or on flyleaves, for future reference and for further copying.<sup>21</sup> A number found their way into household books, commonplace books, and other compendia of miscellanies owned by the laity, such as *The Commonplace Book of Robert Reynes of Acle*.<sup>22</sup> Some of the charms in this book are clearly of the incantatory kind, punctuated by the crosses indicating the points during recitation at which the speaker should cross himself,<sup>23</sup> but others are the texts from written amulets, such as the charm against epilepsy headed 'ffor the Fallyng Euyll', *Benedicetur: sunt capta dum dicitur Ananizapta* ('Be blessed: they — i.e. bad things — are arrested when Ananizapta is said'), which Reynes' editor identifies as a very corrupt version of a charm that appears on a ring in the Waterton Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum and which reads:

*Est mala mors capta dum dicitur Ananizapta  
Ananizapta ferit illum qui laedere quaerit.*

'A bad death is arrested when *Ananizapta* is said;  
*Ananizapta* strikes that which seeks to harm.'

Further, it seems that *Ananizapta* is itself an acrostic for *antidotum Nazareni auferat necem intoxicationis santificent alimenta pocula trinitatis alme* ('remedy of the Nazarene to remove the death by poison from our cups by the Holy Trinity').<sup>24</sup> In some instances, the copy of the charm was accompanied by written instructions on how to transfer it on to a textual amulet. 'Brief scriptural quotations could release the sacred power of passages written out in full', thus, as Skemer observes, uniting the oral and written tradition through the triggering of verbal memory.<sup>25</sup> This is surely the precise type of textual amulet implied in Mankind's charm.

'For some medieval people, charms would count as magic. Others would be hard pressed to distinguish between them and purely religious