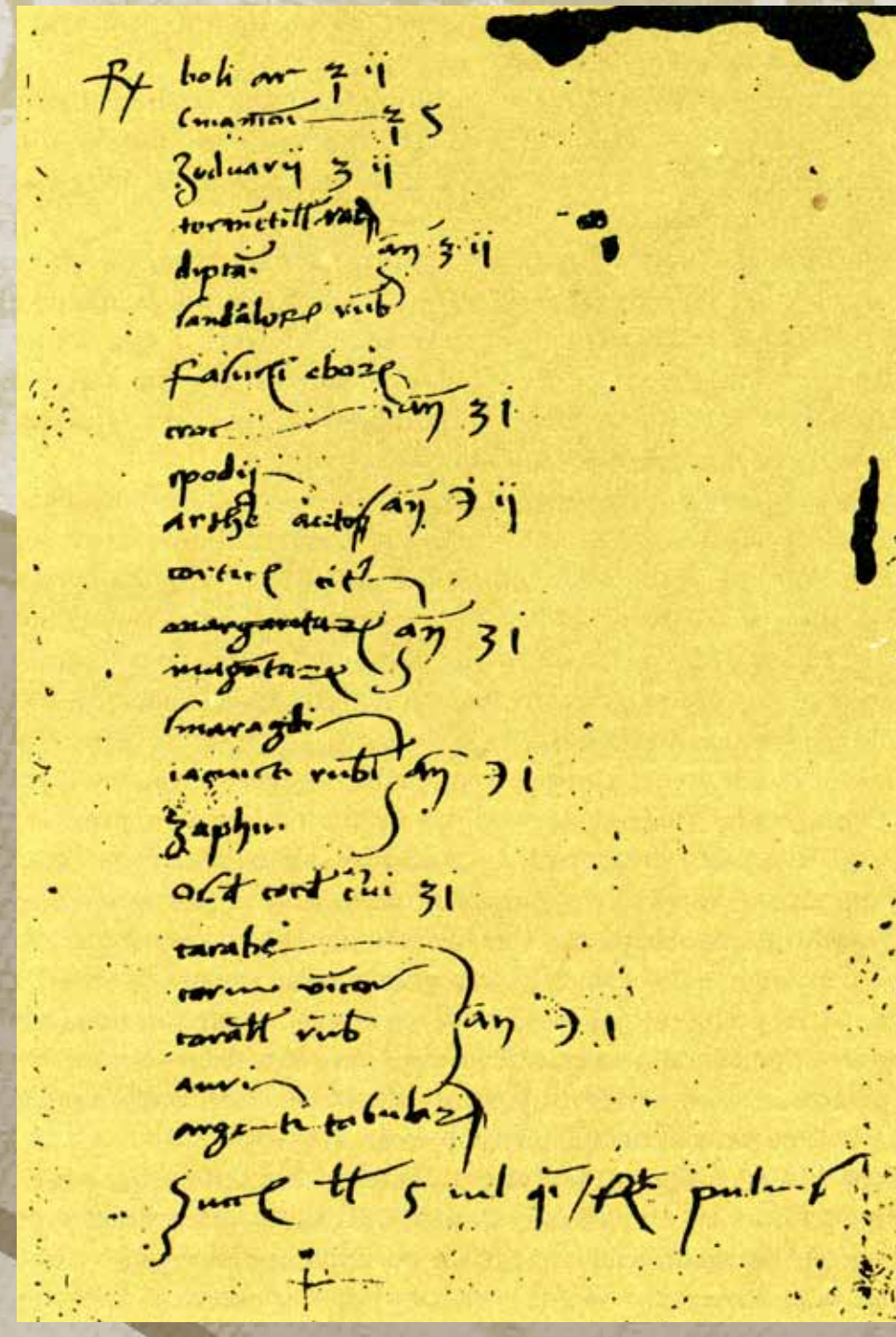




Mauritianus Ferber, bishop of Warmia, Copernicus' patient for many years



Prescription written by Nicolaus Copernicus



Tobias Stimmer, *Portrait of Nicolaus Copernicus*, 1587; the oldest graphic image of Nicolaus Copernicus; it is suspected it might have been created on the basis of Copernicus' self-portrait published in the work of Nicolaus Reusner *Icones sive imagines virorum literis illustrium*

# PHYSICIAN AND SOLDIER

In 1507 Nicolaus Copernicus was nominated by the chapter of Warmia for the position of a secretary and physician of his uncle Lucas Watzenrode, the bishop of Warmia. Since then Warmia was his place of residence. He practiced medicine until his death and was famous for it not only in Warmia, but also in Królewiec (Königsberg), Chełmno (Kulm) and beyond.

Copernicus was most interested in anatomy, thus he received a doctorate in this field of medicine. There are proofs that he gave free medical attendance to the poor, and even prepared his own medicines for them. Also, Copernicus travelled to consult other bishops' health. Some of his treatment descriptions and prescriptions to some ailments survived until today.

With time Copernicus' responsibilities connected with the chapter were growing. In 1516 he assumed the position of administrator of the chapter's estates, and took up residence in the castle of Olsztyn (Allenstein). His governance came to a time of conflict with the Teutonic Order that attempted to conquer Warmia (Teutonic wars 1519–1521). Copernicus intended to stop the Order not only with the help of law, treaties and agreements it had signed with the Kingdom of Poland but demonstrating also force and readiness to defend the besieged

Polish castles. In particular, he built additional fortifications at the castle in Olsztyn, as a result of which the Teutonic troops decided to retreat.

In 1520, already as the commissioner of Warmia, he was delegated by the chapter to negotiate with Albrecht Hohenzollern, Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. In his letter to king Sigismund I the Old he wrote that he "would act as befitted noble and honourable citizens faithful to the king, and was even prepared to die for the cause".



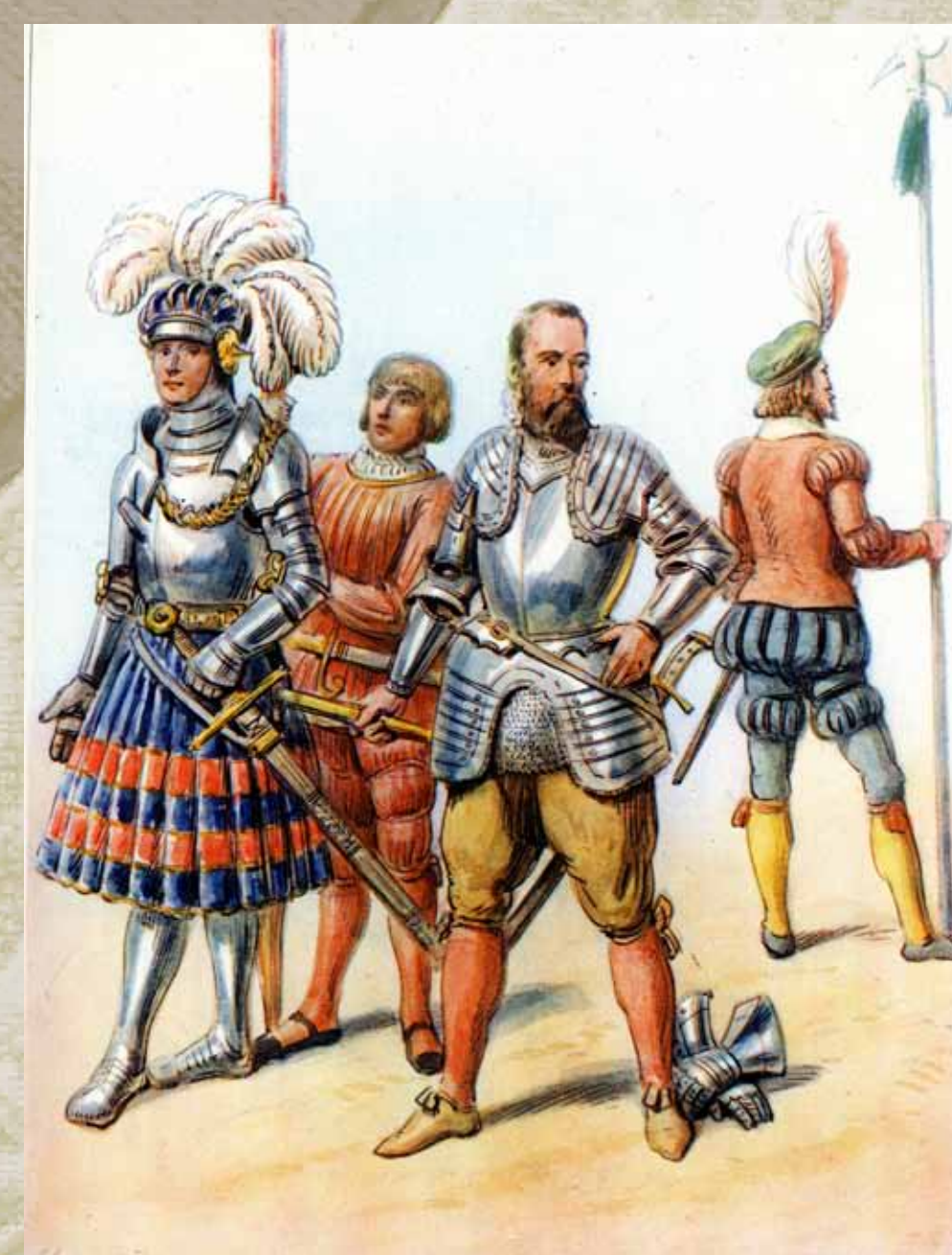
Teutonic Knights' castle in Kaliningrad; Nicolaus Copernicus conducted negotiations here with Albrecht Hohenzollern, Grand Master of the Teutonic Order; Copernicus was the leading figure in the war against the Teutonic Knights in western Prussia



Polish knights, 1350–1500



Paulina Kopestyńska, *Nicolaus Copernicus in Warmia*, replica, 2012



Polish knights, 16th century



Polish knights, 15th–16th century