

English pharmaceutical labels

Print Collection 52

Finding aid prepared by HJM.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2018 August 3

Table of Contents

Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	3
Scope and Contents.....	4
Administrative Information.....	5
Related Materials	5
Controlled Access Headings.....	6
Collection Inventory.....	7

Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Title	English pharmaceutical labels
Call number	Print Collection 52
Date	circa 1895-1930s
Extent	0.2 linear foot (1 box)
Language	English
Abstract	This collection contains pharmaceutical labels from four chemist shops, all of which occupied the premises of 32 High Street, Emsworth, England during the years of 1895 to probably the 1930s. The chemists included are A. Mumford, H. Densem, H.J. Carr and Co., and W.T. Slatter.

Cite as:

English pharmaceutical labels, circa 1895-1930s, Print Collection 52, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Before the 1868 Pharmacy Act, "almost anyone could earn the title of 'chemist or druggist' through a

period of apprenticeship in pharmacy with no examinations to pass," (Robinson) and the selling of medicines was a thriving business. After the 1868 Pharmacy Act was passed, professionals using the title "chemist" in Great Britain were required to pass a "minor examination, thus meeting the minimum requirement to register as a pharmacist," (Pharmaceutical Society of Australia). In the outskirts of London, "the town or village pharmacy of the year 1900 [was] almost a 'cottage industry,' with skilled chemists and druggists producing elegant medicines from basic ingredients," (Hunt). According to Ray Church, the number of chemists and druggists increased "from something over 10,000 to more than 40,000," from 1865 to 1905, as a result of a variety of factors including national advertising for patent or proprietary medicines, increased transportation, and "the growing number of wholesaler-manufacturers who, by expanding the supply and range of ingredients, facilitated retailers' ability to make up their own preparations," (Church, page 283).

32 High Street in the town of Emsworth, in south central England, was the home of several chemists over a thirty year period. In 1895, Mr. Alfred Mumford, pharmaceutical chemist, who had worked for thirty-two years with Messrs. Randall & Son, Southampton, purchased the business of Mr. Edwin Stubbs on High Street in Emsworth and remained in business until his retirement in 1904. H.J. Carr & Co., Chemists, purchased the business from Mumford and it operated as such until Harry J. Carr's death in 1924. The business was then taken over by W.T. Slatter, in 1925. Sources place H. Densem, Dispensing Chemist, in Emsworth in 1924 and 1925, with labels indicating that, at some point, H. Densem occupied 32 High Street. He appears to have been in business at 47 High Street in Exeter from at least 1924 until he sold the business to Hinton Lake & Son, Ltd. in 1932.

Works consulted and cited:

Church, Roy. "The British Market for Medicine in the late Nineteenth Century: The Innovative Impact of S M Burrows & Co.," *Medical History*. Volume 49, Pages 281-298, 2005.

Hunt, John A. "Recording 20th century pharmacy." *Pharmaceutical Journal*. Volume 265, Number 7128, pages 942-943, 2000.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia. " A History of Terms Used in the Pharmacy and Associated Professions," accessed 2018 August 3.

Robinson, Julia. "Looking back at 175 Years of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society." *Pharmaceutical Journal*. Volume 296, Number 7888, 2016 April.

Tansey, E.M. "Medicines and Men: Burroughs, Wellcome & Co., and the British drug industry before the Second World War," *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*. Volume 95, Pages 411-416, 2002.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains pharmaceutical labels from four chemist shops, all of which occupied the premises of 32 High Street, Emsworth, England during the years of 1895 to probably the 1930s. A. Mumford, Pharmaceutical Chemist, was in business from 1895 until 1904. The labels from his business are for Butter Antimony and Red Precipitate, both of which are poisons.

Mumford sold his business to H.J. Carr & Co., Chemists who remained at 32 High Street until the death of Harry J. Carr in 1924. The bulk of the labels in this collection document H.J. Carr & Co. and include medicines such as ammonia, syrup of buckthorn, precipitated chalk, chamomile flowers, camphor, pure charcoal, cream of tartar, dill water, peroxide of Hydrogen, hyposulphite of soda, citrate of iron and quinine, essence of lemon, compound liquorice powder, lime water, myrrh and borax, tincture of myrrh, naphthaline or carbon, bicarbonate of potash, best quinine, saffron, spirit of sal volatile, starch powder,

sulphate of zinc (poison), syrup of squills, milk of sulphur, best sweet oil, and white oils. There are also several round "poison" stickers as well as two copies of delivery labels.

Following Carr's death, 32 High Street was occupied by W.T. Slatter, Family and Dispensing Chemist. In addition to a blank label, there are labels for purified epsom salts and Dr. King's Pectoral Balsam, the latter of which was to treat the common cold and its symptoms. It is unclear how long W.T. Slatter remained in business, but at some point, H. Densem was located at the business.

H. Densem, M.P.S, Dispensing Chemist had a business at 47 High Street in Exeter, and labels from that business include Bay Rum, Parrish's Chemical Food, and Children's Soothing Mixture. The labels from Emsworth describe Densem as a chemist and perfumer and include labels for Devonia Hair Tonic and the finest olive oil.

The collection also contains one folder with pharmaceutical labels that do not identify with any single chemist. These labels are for the Ruby Cough Mixture, Benzine, Iodized Corn Cure, and a disinfectant and cleanser called Sanitary Fluid. In all cases, the labels for poison are in red, while the remainder are black and white.

Administrative Information

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2018 August 3

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Use Restrictions

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Source of Acquisition

Sold by Alastor Rare Books, Ltd., 2018.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

At Gloucestershire Archives:

Gloucester (W T Slatter) chemist's account book with the customer name at the top of each page; giving date, items bought, price and date paid, 1905-1934

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- A. Mumford.
- H. Densem.
- H.J. Carr & Co.
- W.T. Slatter.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Bottle labels (paper labels)

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Emsworth (England)

SUBJECT(S)

- Drugstores
- Medicine
- Medicine--Great Britain--History
- Pharmacy--History

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
A. Mumford, Pharmaceutical Chemist, Emsworth, undated.	1	1
H. Densem, M.P.S., Dispensing Chemist, 47 High Street, Exeter, undated.	1	2
H.J. Carr & Co., Chemists, Emsworth, undated.	1	3
W.T. Slatter, Family and Dispensing Chemist, Emsworth, undated.	1	4
Unidentified chemists (no names on labels), undated.	1	5