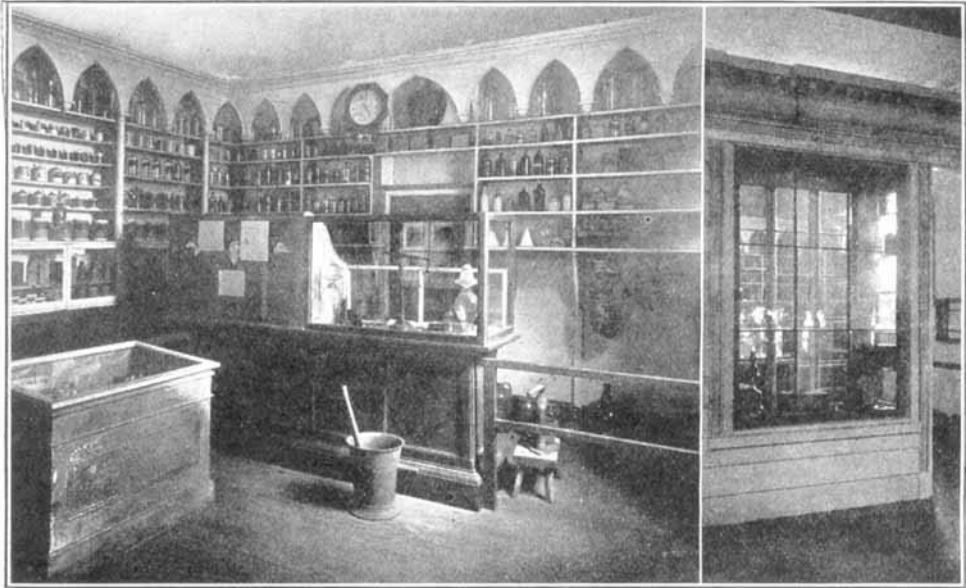


APOTHECARIES' HALL.
THE OLDEST DRUG STORE IN AMERICA.
1780-1920.

"An old shop whose business survived plagues, wars, great fires and earthquakes for one hundred and forty years. Its history, including some remarks upon the status of pharmacy and medicine in Charleston, S. C., at the close of the 18th Century. A unique exhibit at the Charleston Museum."—JOHN BENNETT, Honorary Curator of South Carolina Culture Collections, Charleston Museum.



APOTHECARIES' HALL.

The interior fittings of Apothecaries' Hall in Charleston Museum. Originally the shop was a square front room, 17 X 17 feet, the corner room of a private house, without shop-door; its entry was through the house-hall. The interior of the shop is shown in the reproduction, also the show window and a small part of the house-hall.

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APOTHECARIES' HALL.

The paper from which this article is abstracted was prepared by Honorary Curator John Bennctt of the South Carolina Culture Collections, Charleston Museum, and presented by Prof. W. H. Zeigler to the Section on Historical Pharmacy at the Cleveland Meeting, A. Ph. A. A general description of Apothecaries' Hall is given on the back of the frontispiece; reference is made to the old drug store described under the illustration re-produced from a photograph by Charles Jacobs and presented by the author.

The name of the founder of Apothecaries' Hall is not known, but during the British occupation, in 1781, he was succeeded by Dr. Andrew Turnbull, a dispensing physician. Most of the valued possessions—interior fittings, shelf-ware and equipment, and a portion of the exterior trim—are owned by and exhibited in the Charleston Museum. Three generations have known the shop as "Schwettmann's Drug Store," prior to that period as Dr. Trott's "Deutsche Apotheke," De la Motta's drug store and, throughout this time, as "Apothecaries' Hall—at the sign of the "Big Gilt Mortar"—and to the sable island contingent as "de big yalluh bucket."

The author refers to the interior fittings of an old apothecary shop, aged ninety years, in the Museum of Essex Institute at Salem, Mass., and the famous old drug store (Bond's) at Fredericksburg, Va., established by Elisha Hall in 1791. Very interesting local, state and national historical data are given of the period during which this old apothecary shop served the public. The author is quoted in the following remarks relating to the time when Apothecaries' Hall was founded:

"The grocers imported drugs at wholesale, vended at retail, often prescribed; they imported tea, coffee, spices, sugar, cocoa, wine, rum, brandy, dried fruits, compounded medicines and drugs of every sort, and were wont to dispense them by the dose, until it was enacted by law that no grocer should run an apothecary shop and that a surgeon should not sell medicines, but must confine himself strictly to lancet and cup."

"In Charleston, Basil Pourrie handled dry goods, cake, blacking, saddles, paint, glue, ironmongery, glassware and medicine. Samuel Carnes sold spices, articles of grocery, and most kinds of drugs and medicines. McKenzie & Watson sold violins, flutes, china, glassware, haberdashery, stationery, cutlery, silverware, books, prints, tea, coffee, . . . , and standard drugs. McMurray sold liquors, soaps, candles, and medicines. Even the printer took a shy at the drug business, and disposed of several thousand pounds of sassafras, 'reasonable for cash.'"

Reference is made to Dr. John Morgan* and the author cites that Dr. Abraham Chauvert, of Philadelphia, wrote the first American prescription for an apothecary to compound; "there

* See THIS JOURNAL for June, p. 477.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The drug store opened by George Glenworth in 1812, and for ninety-two years conducted by his descendants, without making any material alterations, is on exhibition in the Museum of Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science.]

was no American pharmacopœia¹ nor dispensatory." The Edinburgh Dispensary was in greatest demand for its progressiveness, and was included, under the heading of Pharmacy, in the first American edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, in 1798.

THE OWNERS OF THE APOTHECARY SHOP.

In preparing these brief sketches the article presented by Mr. Bennett is drawn upon.

"At the old shop on the corner of King and Broad Streets, now so fortunately reconstructed in the Charleston Museum, Dr. Andrew Turnbull—in accord with the practice of his time—imported, prescribed and dispensed his own remedies as pharmacist and physician. He was born and educated in Scotland, as a young man he settled in Asia Minor and established a successful medical practice. He married a Greek merchant's daughter and, with others, undertook to colonize Greeks and Minorcans on the eastern coast of Florida, to cultivate fruits on a grant of 20,000 acres from the British Crown." At the outbreak of the American Revolution an insurrection caused complete financial loss for Dr. Turnbull, who came from St. Augustine to Charleston in 1781, where he successfully practiced his profession until his demise in 1792. He was one of the charter members of the Medical Society of South Carolina and took part in its first proposal to reform the apothecary business in Charleston. He is buried in St. Philips graveyard of the latter city.

Dr. Joseph Chouder succeeded Dr. Turnbull as "Physician and Apothecary." He advertised his wares and "that orders would be attended with utmost dispatch." William Burgoyne was successor to Dr. Chouder, as Apothecary, until 1816, when the business was acquired by Dr. Jacob De la Motta, a medical practitioner and scientist. He was active in medical, state and municipal affairs and held in high esteem. With him was associated, as chemist, Felix Louis L'Herminier, M.D., a brilliant but unfortunate Frenchman, a scientist, chemist and physician. He had spent twenty years in scientific research in Guadaloupe and was compelled to leave there owing to political disturbances. He brought with him to Carolina a valuable and extensive collection; among the specimens, that of the "Fossil Man of Guadaloupe." His collection was purchased by coöperation of various interests and placed in the Museum of which he became superintendent. Here he did excellent work and created a great interest in natural sciences. An unsuccessful venture to establish an extensive chemical and pharmaceutical laboratory brought him into business association with Dr. De la Motta. Some years afterward he accepted an invitation to return to France where he resided during the remaining years of his eventful life. John H. Niebuhr was the next pharmacist in the establishment until early in the 40's when Dr. William H. Trott was engaged as pharmacist and apothecary.

The latter, after the death of Dr. De la Motta, in 1845, took over the business and enlarged and improved the drug store and installed fixtures for gas. During the war between the States the store was moved to a point up town beyond the reach of Gilmore's batteries at the south-east corner of King and John Streets. In 1865 the old building was repaired—the fallen door bell was re-hung, the front doors remounted, the great brazen counter-scale was mended and a new lot of labels printed. An incident in the latter connection is of interest. The "Hippo" label was replaced by a Syrup of Ipecac label, but it was soon found that the label was not understood by the old patronage. A colored boy came back with a bottle of the Syrup and said "Dat ain't wut Misses want," and "what does she want" asked Dr. Trott? "She says she want 'Hippo' suh, and she say dat ain't it." A new supply of labels was printed.

Another incident about this period (1867), during a year when there were long continued rains, a rumor gained ground among the negroes that Dr. Trott had a mermaid in captivity which caused the downpour, but as no mermaid was found when search was made in the store the rioters dispersed.

In 1870 Dr. Trott sold out the business to his former associate Dr. Christian Frederick Schwettmann who had entered the business with his predecessor, served as apothecary in the Confederate Army, and engaged in business in various localities until he returned to the store of his apprenticeship. He was one of the organizers and a life long member of the South Carolina Pharmaceutical Association, its treasurer in 1877, a vice-president in 1886 and President from 1888 to 1890. During his ownership the store was enlarged and improvements made. His son,

¹ A Pharmacopœia "for the use of the Hospital belonging to the Army of the United States," was published in 1778.

Dr. F. W. Schwettmann, was taken into partnership and, later, succeeded to the business. During a period of nearly three generations the members of the firm served the public faithfully and with credit and honor to themselves. It was through the latter that Mr. Bennett became interested in the history of the store.

After the death of Dr. F. W. Schwettmann (1915) the business was taken over by Dr. John F. Huchting. He removed the old business to 125 King Street where "the big yalluh bucket," Jacob De la Motta's famous sign of the "Golden Mortar," was hung above the door. The old shop was completely remodeled in 1921 by the Poulnot Drug Company under the management of Dr. Frederick S. Poulnot, grandson of Dr. C. F. Schwettmann. In refitting the new shop the old appurtenances now attaining unique historical value, Dr. Huchting proposed to the Charleston Museum to present all such material as remained for preservation as a perpetual memorial of honor and affectionate regard for his former employer and friend Dr. F. W. Schwettmann. The Museum accepted the offer of this memorial which includes many other items besides those mentioned in the forepart of this abstract, and has made possible the interesting contribution by Curator John Bennett, to whom credit is due for the data here presented. E. G. E.

MT. MITCHELL.

On Saturday, September 8th, the delegates attending the Asheville meeting of the American Pharmaceutical Association will travel by automobile over a 35-mile scenic highway to the top of Mt. Mitchell, where they will spend the day. This peak is 6,711 feet in altitude, and is the highest point east of the Rocky Mountains. It is surrounded by hundreds of peaks more than 5,000 feet high and by twenty-two that reach to greater heights than Mt. Washington. The road to Mitchell is pavement for the first sixteen miles; then the ascent begins. The trail up the mountain winds tortuously between chasm and cliff, but the going is safe because all travel is in the same direction. The views are constantly changing their nature and the panorama offers surprises even to those who have often traveled the trail before. Delegates will be given appetising box lunches as they leave the hotel and will be served coffee, tea, etc. on the summit. They will be urged to abandon dignity, enter into the picnic spirit of the trip, play games, sing songs, hunt wild flowers and medicinal herbs, and forget the world 'way off below.



Mt. Mitchell, the Roof of Eastern America.