

THE APOTHECARY IN PROVINCIAL GILDS*

by

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WHILST the history of the London Apothecaries is well documented, very little has been written about those of the provinces. The Charter of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London (1617) gave them control over the 'Art and Mystery of the Apothecary within the City of London, the Liberties and Suburbs thereof and within seven miles of the same City' and it was not until the passing of the Apothecaries' Act of 1815 that the jurisdiction of the Society was extended throughout England and Wales.¹

There are numerous instances of provincial apothecaries having issued tokens bearing the arms of the London Society and in some cases it has been possible to confirm that the issuer was a member of that Society.

It is obvious that many apothecaries must have been members of local gilds, † for a decree of Edward III in 1363 ordered every craftsman to be enrolled in a gild² and a statute of Philip and Mary (1553–8) enacted 'that persons dwelling in the country shall not sell by retail within cities, boroughs or market towns, any cloth, haberdashery wares, grocery wares or mercery wares, except in fairs, unles they or any of them shalbee free of any of the Gilds and Liberties of any of the said Cities, Burroughes, Townes Corporate, or Market Townes'.³

The grants of the Gild Merchants of numerous cities and towns often included clauses prohibiting the sale of merchandise and the exercising of any craft or mystery, except in the case of persons belonging to the gild merchant. In later charters and town muniments the right to trade or occupy a craft was expressly reserved to freemen of the town or to members of the craft gild.⁴

Except in London and Dublin the apothecaries do not appear to have been sufficiently numerous to form separate gilds. Those of London separated from the grocers in 1617 and those of Dublin from the barber-surgeons and periwig-makers in 1745.⁵

In the provinces, as in London, the spicers appear to have been the forerunners of the apothecaries and there is evidence that spicers' gilds existed in several cities. Thus at York in 1415 there were fifty-seven crafts, the spicers, drapers, mercers and fifty-four others.⁶ In the seventh year of the reign of Edward IV (*c.* 1468) ordinances were made for the merchants of Bristol which included the following: 'the master and fellowship to have at their will the chapel and the draught chamber at Spicers' Hall to assemble in, paying 20s. per annum.'⁷

* A shortened version of this paper was read to the Section of the History of Medicine of the Royal Society of Medicine on 2 May 1962.

† The spelling *gild* is used throughout this paper as it appears to be the original, *guild* being a later version.

Stephen Spicer was Mayor of Bristol in 1337.⁸

Anthony à Wood⁹ made numerous references to Spycers' Hall in Oxford and said that it belonged, some time, to Robert de Wetwanges, apothecary (c. 1349).

Brand¹⁰ quoted the following oath of the spicers of Newcastle upon Tyne:

This here ye wardens of the craft of spicers, that I shall lely and trewly observe and kepe all goode rewles and actes made or shal be made by the said wardens, and by the most part of the felowship of spicers, and that I shall no maner of spice or spices occupy that belongs unto the craft of grossers and spicers but alonly myn own nor know no manner of men occupye no manere of spicere perteynyng to the craft of spicers, bot yffe he be als free as I to the said craft of spicers, etc. So helpe me God and holidom and all his hallowes and by this booke.

This oath dates from 1517 but it appears that the ordinances of the Company date from at least as early as 1436.¹¹

The Company had disappeared by 1600, probably by absorption into the Merchants' Guild. It was revived in 1831 as the Company of Grocers and Spicers¹² but has since disbanded.*

Districts known as the 'spicery' or 'apothecaria' or both existed in several towns such as Chester, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford and St. Albans.

There are several references to gilds containing apothecaries in the various general works on gilds. Kramer¹³ stated that, from the later fourteenth or early fifteenth century, consolidated mercers' and merchants' companies containing often grocers, haberdashers, ironmongers, apothecaries, goldsmiths and sometimes even drapers were growing up in the following 45 cities and towns: York, Shrewsbury, Newcastle upon Tyne, Dublin, Southampton, Coventry, Hull, Scarborough, Leominster, Lincoln, Northampton, Gloucester, Rye, Bath, Worcester, Hereford, Kendal, Lynn Regis, Guildford, Warwick, Winchester, Chester, Nottingham, Salisbury, Durham, Norwich, Sandwich, Derby, Lichfield, Morpeth, Doncaster, Carlisle, Alnwick, Preston, Wells, Banbury, Bridgnorth, Leeds, Uttoxeter, Youghal, Chichester, Richmond, Pontefract, Ripon and Evesham. In certain of the smaller towns there were general gilds including, not only merchants, but occasionally different handicrafts as well. Among these were Gateshead, Dorchester, Reading, Maidstone, Ipswich, St. Albans, Kingston upon Thames, Gravesend, Buckingham, Axbridge, Andover, Abingdon, Ludlow, Devizes, Wallingford and Faversham.

The obvious association of the apothecaries would seem to be the grocers, in London, or the barber-surgeons, and there were joint gilds of the apothecaries with either or both of these two occupations in several cities.

In Norman times the mercers dealt in drugs and spices and, indeed, in all things sold retail by little balance or small scales in contradistinction to things sold by the beam or in gross.¹⁴ There are numerous examples of apothecaries being members of mercers' gilds. Thus there is still at Chester a Company of Mercers, Ironmongers, Grocers and Apothecaries, several members of which appear to have been called mercer and apothecary indiscriminately, whilst

* Personal communication Mr. R. F. Walker, Newcastle.

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William Franceys, an apothecary, became registrar of the Derby Mercers' Gild in 1675.¹⁵ Richard Barber, of Gainsborough, Lincs, issued, in 1668, a token bearing the apothecaries' arms, but on which he is described as a mercer.¹⁶ The pharmacy now owned by Mr. Lewis-Smith of 3 High Street, Hereford, was founded in 1793 by W. Ravenhill, Mercer and Druggist.¹⁷

Trease has discovered the inventory of Clark of Grantham, who is described as a mercer, but the contents of the inventory suggest that the owner was an apothecary, Ralph Clarke, grandfather of William Clarke, the Grantham apothecary with whom Sir Isaac Newton lodged as a young man.*

Barrett's *History of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London* contains a reference which suggests that the apothecaries of Bristol and York were organized, for during the year 1726–7 the apothecaries of these two cities applied for copies of the Charter of the London Company, requests which were granted. In MacWalter's *History of the Dublin Apothecaries* there is a reference to the Limerick apothecaries presenting a petition to the House of Commons in the early nineteenth century.¹⁸ Following up these clues we can find a great deal of information about the organization of the York apothecaries, but surprisingly little about that of those of Bristol.

York

York appears to have had an early Gild Merchant but this was shortlived. It was granted by King John in 1200 but by 1272 it was not functioning, even as an agency for registering freemen.¹⁹

John Spicer, who was Mayor of York from 1273 to 1291, was sometimes called apothecary.²⁰ A spicer was among the 13 people who founded the Fraternity of the Blessed Mary in 1357 and this became incorporated as the Merchant Adventurers' Company by a charter of Queen Elizabeth in 1581.²¹

This Company included the mercers, grocers, apothecaries and ironmongers. The following is the oath of the searchers (1603):²²

You shall well, trulie and diligentlie use and exercise the office of the searchers for the companie or fellowship of merchants, mercers, grocers, apothecaries and ironmongers, within the Cittie of Yorke until ye shalbe discharged thereof, and dew search and presentment make of all such defalties, as from tyme to tyme you shall fynde, either in weights or other waires, not forbearing any person or persons, for any favour or affection, not presentinge any for malice or evill will, but all things indifferentlie do, and execute, belonging unto the same office to the uttermost of your power and knowledge. So helpe you God.

There was a separate gild of barber-surgeons in York, and Kramer²³ recorded that in 1486 it concerned itself to prevent itinerant vendors of drugs from disposing of their wares within the city limits.

The authorities of the Company were evidently not satisfied with their powers over the practice of pharmacy, for a secret meeting was held at Mr. Christopher Whitelock's house on 12 February 1723. At this were present the

* This inventory has now been published in 'Lincolnshire shopkeepers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' by L. B. and M. W. Barley (*Lincolnshire Historian*, 1962, 2, 7). Prof. G. E. Trease, personal communication.

Worshipful Samuel Dawson, Governor, William Dobson, gentleman, and others. It was 'ordered that the Governor be desired to write to Sir William Milner and Mr. Thompson to procure a clause to be added to the bill for the viewing, searching and examining of all drugs, medicines [*sic*], etc. and to give this company the same power to search drugists [*sic*] and apothecary shops, as the physicians in London will have by the same bill.'²⁴ It was probably because of this desire that the York apothecaries wrote for a copy of the Charter of the London Company. William Dobson, an apothecary, had been admitted to the Merchant Adventurers' Company in 1704.*

The Merchant Adventurers controlled pharmacy in York until 1821 when they brought a case against a non-free druggist, John Harwood, for setting up a business in the city. They lost the case and thus, from then onwards, non-members of the Gild were able to practise in the city.²⁵ The Merchant Adventurers' Company of York is still in existence.

A Surgeon-Apothecaries' Association of York existed in the nineteenth century, for D'Arcy Power²⁶ mentioned it being consulted about the foundation of the British Medical Association.

Bristol

Although the apothecaries of Bristol appear to have been very influential, information about their organization is somewhat scanty. Parker stated in 1911:²⁷ 'I can trace no organization of them whatever in Bristol.' He also commented that many of the Bristol apothecaries were men of considerable standing and that in later days the wealthiest general practitioners were apothecaries. He mentioned one Edward Tucker being granted, in 1672, an episcopal licence to practise medicine, and also that an apothecary was on the staff of St. Peter's Hospital in 1696. Later Parker²⁸ appears to have found that the apothecaries were members of the Barber-Surgeons' Gild, for in 1922 he wrote:

The Company had a huge number of members, evidently teaching men for the rural districts as well as for the city, a fine examination hall and dissecting room, but every minute book and register has perished. The site of their hall and their armorial bearing were forgotten. It was impossible to get a list of their members until Mr. W. R. Pountney and I independently copied the burgers' books. This forms a most interesting list from about 1545 to 1743, when the practical breakdown and separation took place, giving the names of 500 admissions, many of whom are well known today. There were also some 250 apothecaries and about 36 physicians, but the burgers' books do not tell us how many of the 500 were passed as skilled in surgery or what lectures and examination they had.

After the disruption of the Company the house was let in 1745 to Andrew Hooke, the journalist, as a coffee house. It was mortgaged in 1750 by Isaac Page (Master) and others for £500 to Standfast Smith, apothecary, and Charity Smith, spinster. The Company had a silver tobacco box bearing the arms of the London Barber-Surgeons and inscribed: 'The gift of Mr. Standfast Smith, 1769.' The latter was a prominent apothecary in Corn Street who was elected to the freedom of the city in 1738 and was also elected apothecary to St. Peter's

* Personal communication, Mr. B. P. Johnson, York Merchant Adventurers' Company.

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Hospital. He lent the decadent Company £600 on mortgage. He died in or before 1775.

Harsant²⁹ recorded that in 1758 there were twenty-nine apothecaries, five physicians, nineteen surgeons and thirteen barber-surgeons in Bristol. By 1793 there were no more barber-surgeons, but the number of apothecaries had risen to thirty-five, whilst the number of physicians remained the same as before. He stated that by then most of the general practice of the city was done by the apothecaries, who were a most important body of men. There are many mentions of both hospital apothecaries and those in general practice in Smith's *History of Bristol Royal Infirmary*.³⁰ Among the former was John Bingham Borlase, who later went into practice in Penzance where Humphry Davy, later to become the famous chemist, was his apprentice.

Winchester

Surprisingly little information appears to have survived about the apothecaries of Winchester, the ancient capital of England. Although Kramer¹³ placed this city among her list of those where the apothecaries were included in the mercers' gilds, she admitted that 'the records of Winchester give no specific information concerning the mercers' society, so that we cannot tell how far it represented amalgamations of different species of trading crafts.' Toulmin Smith³¹ quoted the following spicers' assize from the Usages of Winchester:

Item, it is to be known, that the pound of pence, spices, confections, as of electuaries, consisteth in weight of twenty shillings. But the pound of all other things weigheth twenty-five shillings. But in electuaries the pound consisteth of twenty pence and the pound contains twelve ounces; but in other things the pound contains fifteen ounces, but the ounce in either case is in weight twenty pence.

Canterbury

The ancient City of Canterbury, seat of England's Primate, is of especial interest since the apothecaries are the first mentioned in the joint name of that city's gild. In 1601–2 orders and decrees were ratified by the Burghmoot (Borough Council) for the better regulating of the Fellowship of Apothecaries, Grocers, Chandlers and Fishmongers.³² There are numerous other interesting references to the apothecaries in the records of that city.

In 1593 an apothecary, Thomas Halke, bought necklaces from the loot of ships wrecked on the Goodwin Sands. Halke's shop was in the High Street next to what is now Dewhurst's, the butcher, which shop was occupied at one time by John Marlowe, the shoemaker father of the poet, Christopher.*

The apprentice of another apothecary had his indentures quashed owing to brutal usage by his master. One of the incidents was in connection with the use of a wrong mould when the boy was making a marchpane for an alderman's christening party (c. 1610). These references show that the Canterbury apothecaries sold fancy goods and confectionery as well as pharmaceutical supplies.

* Personal communication, Dr. Wm. Urry, Cathedral and City Archivist.

Chester

Perhaps the most interesting provincial city for apothecaries' guilds is Chester, for there a Company of Mercers, Ironmongers, Grocers and Apothecaries is still in existence.

Chester was granted a Gild Merchant in 1200 but by the middle of the thirteenth century the various crafts gradually formed their own guilds.³³ The mercers and spicers appear to have been associated as early as 1574, for there is a record of them performing the sacred play 'Three Kings of Collen' in that year.³⁴ The mercers and ironmongers were incorporated as one company in 1598 and in 1725 the apothecaries petitioned for incorporation by charter from the city as other incorporated companies 'having usually associated with the Company of Mercers and Ironmongers'.³⁵ The latter company was granted a charter in 1604. There is no mention of the apothecaries in this document or in the early minutes but Mr. E. Wynne-Jones, History of Pharmacy Branch Correspondent, and I have traced apothecaries among the earliest list of members of the joint gild.

The earliest mention of an apothecary we have been able to trace in the Chester records was Gerves Butler who was bound over to keep the peace in 1488 and on other dates.

The Company still possesses its charter, minute books (complete since 1606), apprentices' register, a seal, some livery hats and several old letters and documents. All these valuable relics are contained in an old chest dated 1731. The Grosvenor Museum of Chester has a tippet (a form of cape) formerly belonging to the Gild. In his description of the arms of the Company, the Chester historian, Simpson,³⁶ stated that the top left-hand quarter represents the crest of ironmongers, two scaly lizards, rampant, chained together, the top right-hand quarter the arms of the ironmongers, three swivels between three steel guides, the bottom right-hand quarter the rhinoceros of the apothecaries, the bottom left-hand quarter the crest of the grocers, a camel with a bale of goods.

I have not been able to establish the date of adoption of these arms but it seems incredible that the mercers, one of the original members, should not be represented and I think the first mentioned might represent the mercers. It has a crown similar to that of the London Mercers although the rest of the design does resemble that of the London Ironmongers.

The officers of this Gild are two aldermen and a steward instead of the master and wardens of the London Company. Early in the first minute books is a statement: 'To chose an apothecary alderman of this company may prejudice to the antient privilege (*sic*) thereof.' Despite this, Robert Blease, mercer and apothecary, and several other apothecaries became aldermen. In 1763 both aldermen were apothecaries.

In 1669 we find the following on 7 May: 'And at the same meeting it was agreed and confirmed that the apothecaries shall be assisted in all lawful things wherein they are inroached upon.'

It was not until 1721 that the word apothecary appeared in the title of the

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Gild. When John Tristram, apothecary, was steward the heading of a meeting read: 'The names of the Bretheren of the Worshipful Company of Mercers, Ironmongers and Apothecaries within the City of Chester.'

In 1732 it was called the Company of Mercers, Grocers and Ironmongers. The title varied considerably, but from about 1763 the grocers were usually included. Occasionally the title wholesale apothecaries was used. From about 1816 the word apothecaries was generally included in the title.

There are many interesting references in the minutes; for example, the carrying of standard weights from shop to shop for testing purposes; the payment of members, after fairs, to chase out the 'Londoners', as non-citizens of Chester were called; and the holding of meetings and feasts in Common Hall.

Admission to the Gild is now only by patrimony and until recently there were no members of any of the four occupations in the Company. In 1959 Dr. W. S. C. Copeman, then Master of the London Apothecaries, and I were made Honorary Members. To become a full member of a Chester Gild the candidate must first be admitted a Freeman of Chester, in contrast to the procedure in London where Freedom of the City is obtained after admission to a gild.

The present objects of the Gild are to provide pensions for elderly members and widows and orphans of members, grants for necessitous members and educational grants. There are several scholarships for the children of members at the King's and Queen's Schools. An annual meeting of the Company is still held. There is a wealth of information in the records and they are worthy of detailed study.

There is evidence of the apothecaries being members of mercers' gilds in Derby, Devizes, Gloucester, Kendal, Lichfield, Nottingham, Northampton, Reading, St. Albans and Worcester.

Derby

In 1674 the Derby executive body 'thought fitt to constitute, make and create the Mercers, Apothecaries, Grocers, Ironmongers, Upholsterers, and Milliners of this Burrough into a company' . . . finding by experience that the erecting of companies and societies for the inspection and regulating of trade and commerce was the best way to avoid 'frauds and deceits in the way of trade which tend much to the impoverishing and damage of honest dealers' and in order that thereafter there might be 'noe fraud or deceit used in any of the said trades to the dishonour of this Burrough', it was decreed that the Company's wardens 'as often as they shall see occasion should enter into the shoppes and warehouses if any person or persons use the said traders to attest, assay and try their weights and measures and their goods, wares and merchandizes whether the same be good merchantable and vendible.'³⁷

In 1676, out of 50 members of this Company there were 16 mercers, 8 apothecaries, 4 grocers, 12 ironmongers and single representatives of most other trades.³⁸

Devizes

The three companies organized at Devizes in 1614 were the mercers', drapers' and leathersellers'. In the Mercers' Guild were the grocers, linen drapers, haberdashers, vintners, innholders, bakers, brewers, apothecaries, barbers, surgeons, chandlers, painters, braziers and glaziers.³⁹

Gloucester

Bazely⁴⁰ quoted the following passage by Sir Robert Atkyns, the County historian, who wrote at the beginning of the seventeenth century: 'There are (in Gloucester) twelve companies associated for the better regulation of trade, the masters of which attend the Mayor on public occasions in their gowns with streamers and add a reputation to the city. 1. The Mercers, under whom are included the apothecaries, grocers and chandlers.' The barbers were eleventh. Thomas Yate, apothecary, was Mayor of Gloucester in 1665. According to Walford⁴¹ the individuality of the guilds was later merged into the corporation. Phillip, the spicer, of Gloucester was called *apothecarius* as early as 1248.

Kendal

Gross⁴² reported that an ordinance was made at Kendal on 24 March 1635, 'that the grocers shall sell grocery wares, apothecary wares, dyeing stuffs and whatsoever is sold by the hundredweight and gallon measure'.

Lichfield

The Lichfield Mercers' Guild apparently caused the city authorities some anxiety, for in the early part of the seventeenth century

after the bailiffs and their brethren had duly considered how mightilie decayed the estate of the mercers, grocers, Lynen drapers, woollen drapers, silkmen, hosiers, salters, apothecaries and haberdashers of small wares appeared to be, not only for want of good orders for the better governing of the traders, but also for that many strangers and young men which haue not served any apprenticeship within the said Cittie and manie others which haue shifted abroad in the Countrie and haue not orderlie served any apprenticeship in any one place haue hither repaired and sett upp all or some of the aforesaid traders.

They devised certain ordinances which should guide the tradesmen for the future in the sale of their commodities.

The Master and wardens of the Company were granted authority to enter from tyme to tyme with any house or houses, shop or shoppes of any of the offenders and to take and carrie away goodes or chattels of everie such offender and the same to detayne and keepe to the use of the said company untill the forfeiture and forfeitures for which they or any of them shalbe so taken shalbe trewlie paid.

They were also given power to supervise 'all weights and measures as are used by any of the said Company and the same to trie by the King's Standard'.⁴³

Nottingham

Matthews⁴⁴ stated that in 1395 the apothecaries of Nottingham were members of the Guild Merchant. At the Great Tourne in that year a complaint was

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made that they sold spices by unfaithful weights and not adhering to the standard, and that they mixed old spices with new. In 1612 there is a record of the admission of a Derby man to the 'Company of Mercers, Drapers and Grocers'.⁴⁵ Richard Hare, apothecary, was Sheriff in 1609–10 and Stephen Hill, apothecary, in 1610–11.

Northampton

Kramer⁴⁶ considered that the Northampton records give the clearest idea of the purpose which a mercers' company served in the community in the later Elizabethan period. The society then included the mercers, haberdashers, linen drapers, grocers, apothecaries, upholsterers and salters, besides 'tryers of honye and waxe'—in all nine different branches of trade. Regulations controlling these traders were made in 1574. Earlier, in 1565, an Inquisition was held at which the duties of the various traders had been laid down. The Assize of a spicer stipulated that he have no weights 'but that they be sysed and sealed and trewe beame'. He must not sell by guess of hand or deceive. His spices must be 'good and clene garbeled'. If he disregarded a second warning, the penalty was that he be 'jugged according to the forme of the Statute, etc.'.⁴⁷

Reading

At Reading, previous to the reign of Elizabeth I, the Gild Merchant was divided into five companies and, under a variety of grants and charters, had an exclusive right to trade within the borough. Gross⁴⁸ quoted a record of the reign of Edward VI, Mary or Elizabeth, entitled 'An account of the several companies belonging to the gild merchant of Reading with their fines of admission and the rules by which they were governed.' These companies were: 'the Mercers and Drapers, comprising the mercers, drapers, potuaries (i.e. potteries), haberdashers, chapmen, taylors and clothworkers; the Cutters and Bellfounders, including pewterers, smiths, pinner, barbers, etc.; the tanners and leathersellers; the Clothiers and Cloth workers; the Victuallers and Innholders.'

Walford⁴⁹ gave the meaning 'dealers in earthenware' for 'potuaries'. The word does not appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and I have not met it elsewhere. It seems most likely to be a corruption of apothecaries.

Walford⁴⁹ listed the amounts of fines for admission to the Company: for a mercer or draper £4; a potuary £3; for other traders £2.

Kramer⁵⁰ considered these records of Reading to provide the first evidence of the tendency to draw together the traders and crafts into large gild groups.

St. Albans

In St. Albans all the crafts and occupations in the borough were originally divided into four companies—the Mercers', the Innholders', the Victuallers' and the Shoemakers', each of which had a warden over it; but the number of the companies was subsequently reduced to two—the Mercers' and the Innholders'. The Mercers' Company consisted of mercers, drapers, vintners,

apothecaries, haberdashers, tailors, dyers, cloth-workers, weavers, coopers, shoemakers, glovers, barbers, cheesemongers, glaziers, plumbers, braziers, tinkers, bowyers, fletchers, cutters, carpenters, lath-renders, joiners, turners, painters, wheelwrights, sawyers, bricklayers and tilers.

The names of the craftsmen had to be entered in the books of their respective companies and the Mayor and Aldermen had to correct all offences committed by them. No persons, except freemen or their servants, were allowed to carry on any trade or handicraft and all indentures of apprenticeship had to be enrolled by the chamberlain and, except after a service of seven years, no apprentice was entitled to take the Freeman's Oath. There were four meetings held every year of the members of the trade guilds and freemen, called Warden's Court Days, one of which had to be held in Christmas week, when the new wardens were appointed. Every craftsman had to pay 1*d.* and all non-resident freemen 4*d.* each quarter. The meetings were summoned by the bealdes of the respective companies. Several types of searchers were appointed.⁵¹

Worcester

None of the records of the Worcester Gild of Apothecaries and Mercers appears to have survived* and the only reference I have found is that of Munk: 'Sir John Colbach was bred an apothecary and in that capacity practised for some time at Worcester, of the companies of apothecaries and mercers of which city he was a freeman.'⁵² Colbach lived from 1670 to 1728. He became a Licentiate of the College of Physicians in 1696 and was knighted by George I in 1716. He was a voluminous writer and his works were ridiculed in *Garth's Dispensary*.

William Colbach, apothecary of Worcester, issued a trade token in 1667.

MERCHANTS' AND APOTHECARIES' COMPANIES

In several cities the name of the gild appears to have been that of Merchants, although in some places the titles Merchant and Mercer appear to have been interchangeable, e.g. at Nottingham and Pontefract.

Carlisle

Ferguson and Nanson⁵³ stated:

Carlisle possessed . . . eight trade or craft guilds (1) the weavers, (2) the smiths, including blacksmiths, whitesmiths, goldsmiths, silversmiths, or all that live by the hammering art, (3) the tailors, or merchant tailors, (4) the tanners, (5) the shoemakers or cordwainers, (6) the butchers, (7) the skinners and glovers, (8) the merchants of the Gild Mercatory, which became the town council, included the shopkeepers, some grocers and seedsmen, other drapers, haberdashers, apothecaries, etc.

Elsewhere they stated that the merchants included all traders in Carlisle who were not actual manual workers.

The regalia of the Merchants' Gild consisted of, in 1526, banners, standard

* E. H. Sargeant, County Archivist, personal communication.

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(yard wand of iron), and the keys of the box. To these articles another banner was afterwards added, and a tablecloth, at one time a blue one, later green. This gild was of all the eight the most independent politically, as shown by their refusal of presents of plate, and by their declining to admit strangers to brotherhood (Rule 7, book 2: 'An order that noe stranger or outman be admitted a brother of our trade . . .'). They furnished Carlisle with more mayors and aldermen than any other gild.

Dorchester

Gross⁵⁴ recorded that in 1630 the Company of Merchants included the mercers, grocers, haberdashers, linen drapers, apothecaries, booksellers, upholsterers, button-makers and barber-surgeons.

Ipswich

Matthews⁴⁴ states that in 1576 the physicians of Ipswich were in the Guild of Merchants, but Gross⁵⁵ stated that in the eighteenth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign (1551) the occupations or trades of Ipswich were newly drawn up into four companies—the Mercers', Drapers', Taylors' and Shoemakers'.

The Mercers' contained 'all maryners, shipwryghts, ffletchers, arrowhed-makers, phisitions, hatters, cappers, mercers, merchaunts' and several others. It was further ordered that 'all foreigners coming to the town should upon becoming members of the Gilds be distributed among the aforesaid companies at the discretion of the Bailiffs'. It seems probable that the apothecaries would be in the Mercers' Company with the physicians. The surgeons, however, were in the Drapers' Company and the barbers in the Taylors.'

Leicester

According to Gross,⁵⁶ Robert, Earl of Mellent, bestowed the gild on his town of Leicester between 1107 and 1118. In the thirteenth century the following oath had to be taken by those entering the 'Chapman' Gild.

This hear you, Mayor and ye Brethren of the Gilde, that I truly the customs of my Gilde shall lawfully hold, and my Gild in all things serve. I shall lote and scot with my brethren of the Gild, whether I dwell in the town frauncheses, or in the Bishop's Fee, or in any other place. Also I shall warne Mr. Mayor and the other good folks of the town if I know any men that merchandizeth with the fraunches of this town, that been able to enter into the Chapmans' Gild. And also I shall be obedient and ready at Mr. Mayor's commandment and sommons; and the good customs and fraunchisse of this town to my power I shall maintain as God me help and all Saynts.

At a Common Hall, held in 1467, it was ordered that every person opening a shop in Leicester 'should pay yearly 3s. 6d. till he sent the Chapman gild'.

It seems certain that apothecaries were members of this general gild. There are numerous references to the admission of spicers and apothecaries to the Freedom of the City. These include:

Ric. le Spicer 1237; Will Spic. 1242/3; Will le Spicer de Scheyle 1257; Alex le Specer de Cadington 1260; Math. Curtomer le Spicer 1264; Will. le Spicer de Cadington 1275; Rob.

Ipotecarius de Eboraco 1324/5; Will. fil Willelmi le Spicer 1328/9; Joh. le Spicer 1343/4; John Henryson, Apothecary 1549/50; Francis Harrison, Apothecary, 1st son of John, Apothecary 1571/8; William Kirke, Apothecary, prentice of John Potell, fezicon and appoticarie, 1593/4.

It is noteworthy that, in the case of William Kirke, his master, John Potell, though a practising apothecary, had never been officially made free of the town.*

Rob. Ipotecarius obviously came originally from York. Gross mentions Robertus le Pot in 1197/8. This person could have been either an apothecary or potter.

Limerick

Herbert⁵⁷ stated that the first specific mention of the right of Limerick citizens to form guilds was contained in the Charter of Edward I, dated 4 February 1291: 'that the citizens of Limerick should have all reasonable guilds, as the Burgesses of Bristol had'. In Henry V's Charter it was directed that no person should take or maintain any man or child of Irish blood or nation as an apprentice on pain of losing his franchise. Herbert considered this clause the main cause of the decay of the guilds in the nineteenth century. He made no mention of apothecaries but referred to a dispute between the grocers and other guilds in 1669.

Herbert further stated that the earliest record of the formation of a particular gild is contained in Lenihan's *History of Limerick*, which states that a charter was granted by Henry VI to the Barbers and Chirurgeons, or the Gild of St. Mary Magdalene, Limerick. Lenihan showed to the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, in 1874, a seal which he claimed to be that of the gild. It was, however, identical to that of the Dublin gild and Herbert thinks he was mistaken.

It seems likely that the Limerick apothecaries may have been associated with this gild, as at Dublin and Kinsale.

Lenihan's *History of Limerick* contains the following reference to apothecaries: 'An analysis of the various trades and professions, etc. in the city at this time (1767) is interesting. We classify them alphabetically: apothaceries [sic] . . . 7.' Many other trades and professions appear in the list. There are other references to the guilds throughout the book but this is the only mention of apothecaries.† Apothecaries are not included in the list of fifteen companies in the *History of Limerick* printed for John Farrow by Andrew Welsh in 1767.

Oxford

Oxford is another city of exceptionally great interest to historians of medicine, pharmacy and science. There are many references to the apothecaries of Oxford in the writings of Anthony à Wood and in Gunther's *Early Science in Oxford*.

* Personal communication, G. A. Chinnery, Keeper of Archives, Leicester.

† Personal communication, M. Lanigan, Librarian and Director, Limerick Public Library, Art Gallery and Museum.

The Apothecary in Provincial Gilds

Wood stated that there were several tradesmen's gilds at (if not before) or within a few years of the Norman conquest.⁵⁸ There are numerous early references to Oxford spicers and one to Thomas Apotecarius as early as 1280. There were definite areas of the market allotted to apothecaries and spicers from at least the thirteenth century.⁵⁹

Salter⁶⁰ stated that besides the trade gilds of the city, there were trade gilds of the University which were, however, not strong and certainly not wealthy.

In describing William Potter, Salter⁶¹ stated: 'William Potter belonged, as an apothecary, to a trade which came within the jurisdiction of the University, consequently his name does not appear among the city freemen.'

Certainly by 1526 the power of electing and admitting apothecaries appears to have become vested in the Chancellor of the University, who usually appointed a commissary to act on his behalf. Gunther⁵⁹ reported that in 1526 David Styles took the following oath:

I swear that I will always have in my shop all medicines, species of medicines and confections which concern the art and mystery of an apothecary, and are necessary for the health of man.

That I shall be contented once a year (at least) that certain physicians practising in the University shall visit my shop upon the account of good and bad medicines, in the month of November, or any other time if occasion shall require it, to be adjudged of by the Vice-Chancellor, one of the Proctors and the practising physicians here; and these searchers and tryers of medicines being of the Vice-Chancellor's and Proctor's appointment shall have power to destroy and throw away all bad and unprofitable medicines and drugs.

That I will sell all things appertaining to my trade at a low and reasonable price and as sold in other places in England.

That I will not make up any compound medicine without the presence and advice of some physician admitted to practise, who shall judge these samples fit to be made up into compositions.

That I will observe all these things without fraud or deceit.

In 1534 the Oxford Town Council made the following rule:

Also it ys enacted and agreed by the same Mair, aldermen, Bailyffs, and comynalte of the said Toun that no person ne persons shall use any maner of marchaundyse, or marchaundy-syng, nor use and exercyse any vytelyng, bying or sellyng or any handcraft or ocupacon wythyn the seyd Toun or subbarbs of the same, except he or they be free of the guyld of the seid Mair and Comminaltie wythyn the seyd toun and subbarbs of the same.⁶²

Thus it appears that there was a general gild of which the apothecaries would be members.

The Oxford apothecaries were obviously influential men who played a prominent part in the development of medicine, pharmacy and science in that city. Gunther⁶³ believed that the close proximity of the apothecaries' shops to University College influenced many of its members in the direction of medicine. He considered that 'John Crosse's shop, which served as a depot of scientific material and provided the means of its manipulation, ought to be the most celebrated in Europe, for there worked Boyle, the Father of Chemistry, and Hooke, maker of the pneumatic engine, the most historic of all air pumps.'

Some of the group of scientists who, with others in London, eventually

founded the Royal Society, first used to meet in the house of the apothecary John Clerk, where Dr. Petty lodged. Dr. John Wallis, one of this group, wrote that they met 'first at Dr. Petty's lodgings (in an apothecaries house), because of the convenience of inspecting drugs and the like, as there was occasion, and later at the lodgings of the Honourable Mr. Robert Boyle, then resident for Divers years in Oxford.'⁶⁴ It seems certain that Petty lodged with Clerk, for Wood recorded '1649-1659 The Royall Societie at Oxon. and of Chemistry— They did in Clerk's House, an apothecary, in St. Maries Parish, exercise themselves in some chemical extracts . . . etc.'⁶⁵ This house is still in existence, being now a general dealer's at 106 The High. The rear of the building appears to have changed little since the seventeenth century. It was once known as Buckley or Bulkey Hall.

Wood continued: 'But the one man that did publickly teach it (chemistry) was one Peter Sthael . . . brought to Oxon. by that eminent scholar Mr. Robert Boyle . . . and by him settled in that house (owned by an apothecary) sometimes known by the name of Deep Hall.' This was the house of John Crosse, for Gunther⁶⁶ wrote: 'By June he (Boyle) was settled in Crosse's rooms in the High Street on the west side of University College, and there fitted up the laboratories in which he worked until 1668, Crosse's House, formerly Deep Hall, was where the Shelley Memorial now stands.'

After the departure of Dr. Wilkins, the Oxford experimentalists and their friends gravitated to Boyle's lodgings and then to Arthur Tillyard's house, next door but one to Crosse's. Tillyard, described as 'apothecary and great royalist',⁶⁶ was one of the first to sell coffee in Oxford. He appears to have kept a coffee house which acted as a club⁶⁷ and also, possibly, a nursing home, for Wood recorded in 1660 the death of Lord Downe⁶⁸ and in 1685 that of T. Yeldard Powell,⁶⁹ both at Arthur Tillyard's house. There are also records of deaths occurring at the houses of other Oxford apothecaries, those of Sacvyl of Bybery in Gloucestershire at the house of Martin Lypiat,⁷⁰ and of William Chetwind at the house of William Potter in 1672.⁶¹ Nearly one hundred years later, in 1757, a course of anatomy lessons was held at the house of Mr. Powell, an apothecary.⁷¹

William Baley, although described as a mercer, issued a token bearing a mortar and pestle and had a shop with that sign.⁶¹

Pontefract

Kramer⁷² recorded that:

as late as 1700, the mayor and burgesses of Pontefract unanimously agreed that the Merchants, Grocers, Ironmongers, Chirurgeons, Apothecaries, Tallow Chandlers, habberdashers of hats and small wares, and linen drapers, inhabiting and residing within the Burrough might be made one company. Their wardens too were to search and try all weights and measures in the shoppes, warehouses and sellers of any of the said company. Any one of the company who should refuse or deny to be searched or doe interrupt the searcyers in the discharge of their duties was to forfeit for every default the sume of five pounds.

Walford⁷³ called this gild the Mercers' or Merchant Grocers' Company.

The Apothecary in Provincial Gilds

BARBER-SURGEONS' AND APOTHECARIES' COMPANIES

In several cities the apothecaries were members of the barber-surgeons' gilds:

Coventry

The first mention of Coventry apothecaries as members of the Barber-Surgeons' Company appears in an order of leet of 8 April 1673, which reads: 'That the apothecaries and Barber-Chirurgions were to be an incorporate company *as formerly*, they were to chose their masters and wardens yearly and to make ordinances.'⁷⁴ It is obvious from this that the apothecaries had become associated with the barber-surgeons at an earlier time. The rules of the Company of Barbers were confirmed by R. Bruytoft, Mayor in 1445, and these contained no reference to surgery,⁷⁵ but in 1495 we find both surgeons and 'leches' mentioned in the following passage:

Also at this same lete at the request of the ffeliship and craft of Barbour's that all leches and soiourn inhabityng within ye Cite of Couentre or suberbes thereof should be contributing and pay yerely to the charges of the seid Craft of Barbour's, as others of the seid Craft doth etc. Uppon peyn of hym that refuseth so to do to lese at every defalt vjs, viijd.⁷⁶

A few years earlier, in 1474, among the rules made for measure was the following spicer's assize:⁷⁷

A spicer's assize is that his weyghts be sized and sealed and true beme, and that he sell by no hernes nor by ayme of hand, nor by no maner of subtilte to the disseyte of the Comons; and that his spyces be good and clene garbeled (or $\frac{1}{4}$ d. fine every time, and after two warnings the third time to be judged to the pillory).

There are mentions of Juliana, Thomas and Richard Spicer (sometimes spelled Spycer, Speycer and Spysen) and John Multon (spicer) in the first part of the fifteenth century.⁷⁸ An apothecary was admitted to the freedom of the city on 22 June 1588, and another on 29 May 1594.⁷⁹

Thomas Pidgeon, apothecary, was Mayor of Coventry in 1661. He lived on the west side of Broadgate and issued an undated trade token.⁸⁰

Abel Brokesby was given notice on 9 August 1671, that he was to be next Mayor of Coventry, but on 30 August a letter was received from the King that Brokesby was not to be appointed to any office which would impede him in his medical services. The Council thought this would set a bad precedent and asked the Recorder to make inquiries. A statement was made to the Recorder that Brokesby had been apprentice in Coventry for nine years and had then become a journeyman. He had gone with the Warwickshire and Coventry Regiment to Worcester to help the rebels and had been employed by the Coventry Committee of Safety during the Civil War in helping the Round-heads. The statement went on to say that he was trying to get out of the Mayoralty by telling the King that all this had been done at his own expense and that he still gave his services to the poorer sort. The King then revoked his letter. Abel Brokesby became Mayor on 8 November 1671.⁸¹

On 23 November 1719, however, the Council Minutes refer to a statute exempting apothecaries from holding office in the city.⁸²

There are many more references to apothecaries in the Second Leet Book, an unpublished document in the City Archives. The Leet Books are manuscripts containing the Council Minutes. One has been printed by the Early English Text Society but others are unpublished.

Kinsale

In the Irish town of Kinsale the peruke makers seem to have taken the initiative in founding a society, for, in 1746, they asked the borough to be made into a company by charter and 'that the surgeons and apothecaries to be included with them if they desire it'.⁸³ Another reference states that the barber-surgeons incorporated the apothecaries.⁸⁴ Listed among the contents of the Corporation Chest is '1746 Charter of Incorporation to Peruke Makers' but a recent search did not reveal it.*

Norwich

Matthews⁸⁵ reported that this city in the fourteenth century had its guilds organized by trade or craft and each had its own situation in the market place, e.g. the spicers in Spicer's Row, the apothecaries in the *Forum Unguentaria sive Apothecaria*, the herb-sellers in the Herbaria or herb market, etc.

all of which we find mentioned before the reign of Richard II for about the latter end of the reign began to be intermingled and many of these original names were lost. In 1413 a charter was granted to the St. George's Guild or Company. These Norwich guilds were organised on the basis of similar guilds in London and they had the right of searching and viewing, and had to use the standard weights and measures sealed by the city.

Matthews also stated that the Company of Physicians and Barber-Surgeons admitted apothecaries to membership. Williams⁸⁶ stated that, from 1431 to 1550, the name of the guild was Barber-Surgeons, but from then onwards it was Barbour-Surgeons and Pheicians. He quoted the following petition to the city authorities: 'This day there is exhibited a byll to the Mayor, Shreves, Aldermen and Common Councell of the City of Norwich for certain Orders and Rules to be kepte among the company of Physicians and Berber-Surgeons within the City of Norwich.'⁸⁷

Williams considered the occurrence of the word physician in the petition to be very singular for, in Rye's *Calendar of the Freemen of Norwich* (1888) which contains 6,250 names of admission to the Freedom of the City, the word physician does not occur, only those of 'leche', barber, apothecary and surgeon. MacNee,⁸⁸ in his Vicary lecture, stated that the guild was in existence before 1388 and also included the wax and tallow chandlers.

Ripon

Kramer⁸⁹ claimed that in 1662 the drapers headed a company which included the dyers, apothecaries and barber-surgeons and that in 1668 the Ripon authorities granted a set of ordinances to the company of drapers, dyers, apothecaries and barber-surgeons 'to the intent that the said company . . .

* Group Captain P. G. Bullen, personal communication.

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as they have, heretofore of ancient time been, shall be henceforth altogether one company and brotherhood'.⁹⁰ Unfortunately, there is no copy of these Ordinances now in existence, but manuscript Ordinances of the various local gilds, dated 1607, are still in the City Archives and these contain no reference to the apothecaries.*

The title must therefore have been altered to include apothecaries some time between 1608 and 1668.

When a certain Mr. Thompson was made a Freeman of Ripon 'it was moved and voted whether the Company of Apothecaries should have ten pounds, or part of his fine or not'. The motion, however, was 'carried in the negative'.⁹¹

In 1668, when a certain John Wood refused to pay the £100 which the Company demanded for leave to set up as an apothecary, the sum was reduced to £50. Upon his refusal to pay this sum, it was further reduced to £25; of this he seems to have paid £10 and given security for the balance.⁹²

In 1732 the Company was authorized to bring a suit in the name of the Borough against a non-freeman who presumed to use an occupation within the jurisdiction of the Company. In this instance, while the Company was obliged first to give security to the Corporation, the interloper had the alternative of taking up his freedom or leaving the Borough.⁹³

Shrewsbury

According to Hibbert,⁹⁴ apothecaries and spicers appear in the list of trades comprised in the members of the Shrewsbury Merchant Gild which was the forerunner of the separate gilds and existed in the twelfth century.

Kramer⁹⁵ reported that:

as early as 1480 the Mercers' Company of Shrewsbury, under the charter of Edward IV, offered a spectacle of as varied and heterogeneous a combination of crafts as we find anywhere a century later. Besides the mercers themselves, the Company included ironmongers, goldsmiths, brass and iron founders, pewterers, cappers or hatters, cardmakers, haberdashers, grocers, comfet and junket makers and finally apothecaries and physicians. Later, in 1560, we find the Shrewsbury mercers were admitting members 'to exercize the onle science of Poticarye and Grocerye'.⁹⁶

By 1662, however, the apothecaries became united with the barber-surgeons as the following extract from a grant of that year shows.

To all Xtian people to whom this present writeing shall come or it shall see read or understand The Maior Aldermen and Assistants of the Towne of Shrewsbury in the Countie of Sallop senden greeteing in our Lord God everlasting. Whereas it manifestly appeareth unto us by viewe and sight of ancient records and diverse and sundry compositions constitutions and ordinances in writeing heretofore had made and granted by our p'decessors Bailiffes of the said Towne under their seale of office to the Brotherhood and fellowship of Barbor Surgions Waxchandlers and tallowchandlers within the Towne ffranchess and liberties aforesaid that they have bin united remainyng continewyng abideing and agreeing in one fellowship and company within the Towne ffranchess and liberties aforesaid for the time whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary. And that by reason of which composic'ons constitutios and ordinances greate quiettness and tranquillitie amongst the Combrethren of the said fellowship and

* Personal communication, Mr. J. A. Berry, Town Clerk, Ripon.

company and to us and our pr'decessors hath continued touching the Government of themselves. And whereas now the said Brotherhood and fellowship have agreed with Thomas Felton John Hoggins, Edward Browne now beinge and exercisinge the trade or misterie of Apothecaries within the said Towne and that they and all such others as hereafter shallbe and serve out their Apprenticeships and which shalbe made free within the said Towne to exercise that trade or misterie shall from henceforth and forever be taken into and united to the said brotherhood and fellowship of Barbor Surgions, wax and tallow chandlers have now elected and admitted into their said fellowship the said Apothecaries which we the said Maior Aldermen and Assistants doe by these pr'sents approve ratifie and confirme.⁹⁷

According to Walford,⁹⁸ the Barber-Chirurgeons' Guild was incorporated by Edward I in 1304 as its 'composition' or statutes testify; but it was united with the Wax and Tallow Chandlers by James II in 1686.

The Company was granted a Charter of Incorporation by Henry VI in 1431/2 but this did not mention the apothecaries.*

The Company appears to have been zealous in protecting its privileges since in 1737 they expended considerable sums in prosecuting an intruder,⁹⁹ and in 1747 ordered 'Mr. Bold Oliver's opinion to be taken as to compelling apothecaries to become freemen'.¹⁰⁰ Again, in 1788, the Company took action against a certain Mr. Hulme for opening two shops.¹⁰¹

GROCCERS' AND APOTHECARIES' COMPANIES

Cities and towns where the grocers appeared as the principal name in the gild included Abingdon, Pontefract and Salisbury. That of Pontefract, which was known as the Mercers' or Merchant-Grocers', has been mentioned under mercers' gilds.

Abingdon

At Abingdon the grocers and not the mercers, drapers or haberdashers gave their name to the gild, which included all the ordinary merchant traders as well as such of the handicrafts as the local officials agreed should be 'sorted and severall to make upp the Company of Grocers' and be called 'the Company of Grocers and their Fellowes'.

The mayor, bailiffs and the rest of the Common Council were led to take this step in 1669, as they said 'for the better service to be had of all the Freemen of the said Burough and for the better, exact and more civill government of the same, and the commonalty thereof'. The Company, one of three then organized, comprised grocers, mercers, woolen drapers, linen drapers, haberdashers of hats, feltmakers, dyers, hosiers, apothecaries, 'maultres', ironmongers, spurriers, 'scholemasters', scriveners, barbers, upholsterers, clothworkers and 'shearmen'.

The traders of the town had earlier, in 1559, been grouped into several companies, but details are not available.¹⁰²

Salisbury

In Salisbury the apothecaries were apparently first members of the Merchants' Company and this later became the Grocers' Company, as Hesketh¹⁰³

* Personal communication, Mr. J. L. Hobbs, Borough Librarian and Curator, Shrewsbury.

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stated: '1612. The Merchants' Company now appears as the Grocers' Company, including the grocers, mercers, apothecaries, goldsmiths, linen drapers, milliners, vintners, upholsterers and embroiderers.' Kramer¹⁰⁴ reported that one of the orders promulgated by the Salisbury Traders' Association (comprising the trades listed above) authorized the wardens, with the assistance of one or two of the 'antient and most discreet of every trade' of the Company, to 'view, see and search the wares, merchandise, weights and measures of every brother and sister of the company' and to fine those whom they should find using unlawful wares, weights and measures.

John Feake, apothecary of Salisbury, was admitted to the London Apothecaries' Society in 1736.⁸⁰

SOME UNUSUAL ASSOCIATIONS

There were several unusual associations. For example, in Andover, the apothecaries were in the Company of Leathermen, whilst the grocers, barbers and surgeons were in the Haberdashers' Company. In Newcastle upon Tyne some apothecaries were in the Merchant Adventurers', and others in the Plumbers', Glaziers' and Pewterers' with Painters', a gild which is still in existence. In Exeter they may have been in the Company of Tailors.

Andover

Gross¹⁰⁵ reported that in 1625 in Andover:

It is agreed by the Common Council there that the style and orders for the government of the three Companies of this Toune shalbe perused and made according to our nowe charter, whereby the penalties, fynes and amerciaments therin set may be levied for the better order and government of the said companies. . . . The Particular trades fine by the Old Orders to every of ye three Companies:—To the leathermen:—all tanners, sadlers, glovers, white drawers, pewterers, braziers, shoemakers, curryers, collarmakers, butchers, chandlers, dyers and upholsterers to be added:—apothecarys, malsters, mealmen, corn chandlers, gardeners, stone cutters and bodys-makers.

Newcastle upon Tyne

The existence of the mediaeval and nineteenth-century companies of Spicers and Grocers has already been mentioned. The former appears to have been a constituent company of the Newcastle Merchant Gild, which dates from at least 1215, although it was not mentioned in the Charter of Edward III (1341–2) in which the other constituent companies of the Merchant Gild were separately mentioned amongst the companies known as misteries. Boyle and Dendy¹¹ refer to the Grocers' Ordinary being dated 20 January 1436–7, but this, like the Ordinaries of other Newcastle companies, was probably a renewal.

In 1515 there was a dispute between the

Mercers, Drapers, Boothmen and Spicers, Burgesses and Merchants of the Town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne on the one part and the craftsmen, artificers and Burgesses of the said town on the other part whether any burghess should occupy the 'feate' of buying and selling, but only for their family and household and not to be sold again, other than the said merchants, and

whether any burghess would occupy any other craft than that he was of, and as to the manner of election of the Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriff, Chamberlain and other officers of the town.

The dispute was referred to the Star Chamber, which decreed in 1516 that none of the twenty-six 'fellowships or crafts' enumerated should

occupy or use the craft, mystery or occupation of Mercers, Drapers, Boothmen or Spicers or any of them, or any other craft in the said town, but only their own proper crafts, unless they would change and renounce their crafts in which case they would be admitted to the craft or occupation that they desired to occupy upon making certain payments [mentioned in the decree].¹⁰⁶

The Spicers' Company was not mentioned again after this date, probably because its functions were merged in the Merchant Adventurers chartered by Edward VI on 1 September 1547.¹⁰⁷ This would seem to be confirmed by the fact that in the eighteenth century all members of the Merchant Adventurers' Company seem to have regarded themselves as free to trade in merchandise of any kind, including groceries and spices, so that the separate existence of companies specializing in these commodities had by then become unnecessary. The lists of admissions of Freemen of Newcastle commencing about 1600 contain no reference to admissions of spicers or grocers, from which it can be assumed that the Company as a separate entity had become extinct by then.*

The earliest mention of an apothecary in the Newcastle records so far traced was in 1291, when Alice, daughter of Hugh de Carliol, Mayor of Newcastle, married 'James the Apothecary', to whom Hugh gave a 'messuage under the moat' in Newcastle.¹⁰⁸

Brand gave the following reference to apothecaries:

Glaziers, with Plumbers, Pewterers and Painters. The ordinary of this society, anciently consisting of goldsmiths, plumbers, glaziers, pewterers, and painters, and dated September 1st, 1536, enjoined them to go together on the feast of Corpus Christi, and maintain their play of 'the three Kings of Coleyn'; to have four wardens, one goldsmith, one plumber, one glazier and one pewterer or painter; to be sworn on admission; not to interfere with each others' occupation: that no Scotsman born should be taken apprentice, or suffered to work in Newcastle, on pain of forfeiting three shillings and fourpence; one half of which to go to the upholding of Tyne-Bridge and the other to the Society. The names of some apothecaries are added, I know not on what account, to this ordinary.¹⁰⁹

This document is now in the possession of Mr. R. F. Walker, Senior Steward and Secretary of the Plumbers', Glaziers' and Pewterers' with Painters' Company of Newcastle. (The Goldsmiths were incorporated in the Company in 1536 and separated from it in 1717.)¹¹⁰

The writing on the document is now very faded but, with the aid of Mr. Michael Cook, Newcastle City Archivist, Mr. Walker has been able to identify the following: 'James Fenne, Potekare, and Lowis (H) ed (y), potegarye.' Lowis may be Lewis. Of the surname only 'ed' is clear. It may or may not be Hedley. Raine has given details of the will of James Fennye of Newcastle, Grocer and Potticarie. The name is spelled Fenne in several places in the will. The date is

* Personal communication, Mr. R. F. Walker.

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probably about 1560 and from it Fenne appears to have been a man of considerable substance. Among his bequests was one to his 'prentice Robart Eden'.¹¹¹

Mr. Walker has suggested the following explanation for the admission of apothecaries to the Company: The Company consisted of workers in gold, silver, and lead (glazing and painting being, of course, closely connected with the lead industry). All these must have had some acquaintance with elementary chemistry, such as it was in those days, and for that reason their company would seem the most appropriate place for the apothecaries. The only other ancient company which would have been at all appropriate would have been the Spicers', but this had become a part of the Merchant Adventurers' Company which would probably not have been prepared to admit apothecaries as merchants.

It is of especial interest that the sacred play 'three Kings of Coleyn' is the same as that performed by the Mercers and Spicers of Chester in 1574. Mr. Walker reports that, among the earliest records of the Company, there is a list of stage 'props' for the play, commencing with three false beards for the kings.

John Lomax, a Newcastle apothecary, had an unusual career. His date of birth is unknown but he entered Emmanuel College in 1650, graduating B.A. in 1653 and M.A. in 1657. He became Vicar of Wooler in 1658 but was ejected in 1660. He returned to Newcastle and shortly afterwards went to North Shields where he 'practised physic and opened an apothecary's shop there being none at the time'. He became also noted as a dissenting preacher and some time after 1688 founded the first Presbyterian church at South Shields. He died on 25 May 1693.¹¹²

There are several references to apothecaries in the List of Enrolments of Apprentices and Admissions of Freemen.¹¹³ The first was Robert Eden, 'apoticarie', whose son John was bound to Jas. Car, mercer, in 1589. Others were Richard March, 1659, Thomas Reed of Durham, 1755, and Kent Rudman of London, 1770.

From an entry of 1735 it appears that there were only three apothecaries in Newcastle in that year, for John Halliday, apprentice of Thomas Partis, 'petitioned for leave to go to London to serve out his time, Thomas Partis being dead and the two Newcastle Apothecaries having no occasion for his services. Petition granted October 9th, 1735'.¹¹⁴

Partis (sometimes spelled Partys) is described in this indenture as Boothman and elsewhere as Gentleman, but he was obviously an apothecary.

It is often difficult to find the real occupation of some of these gild members. For example, Bulmer Ile (see below) is mentioned in the Enrolment Rolls as a merchant and merchant adventurer and only by a casual mention in a discussion about the admission of another apothecary do we find that Ile was, in fact, an apothecary.¹¹⁵ Later Laurence Westgarth, apprentice of Robert Jennison, was 'set over' to Bulmer Ile on the death of his master. Although Jennison is described as a Boothman, he is stated to have been called Doctor and appears likely to have been an apothecary.¹¹⁶

Elsewhere we find in a letter from the Company to the London Merchant Adventurers: 'We formerly moved that Dr. Jenyson's arrears with Mr. Robert Ellyson's attendance in the year 1641 might be allowed them, and now againe prayers you consider thereof.'¹¹⁷

It is interesting to speculate whether Robert Ellison was an apothecary who was in attendance with Dr. Jenyson. Furthermore, two of Bulmer Ile's sons were apprenticed to him.

In a list of the Company's payments in 1564, the following items appear: 'Paid to Mr. Caverlaye, Mr. Salvinge and Mr. Horslye ffor ther counsell anent the pottegarye . . . iiiij li' and 'Paid more to Mr. Cawerlaye, lawyer, the 19 of Janewarye abowt the pottegarye ij li'.¹¹⁸

In 1671 Richard Baites (sometimes spelled Bates), apothecary [*sic*], petitioned for admission to the Merchant Adventurers but was rejected.¹¹⁹ He was, however, admitted the following year to personal freedom on payment of £100.¹¹⁵ During these proceedings reference was made to the previous admission of another apothecary, Bulmer Ile.

There must have been several apothecaries in the Company in 1718, for on 16 March 1718–19, the following minute appeared:

Mr. Thos. Warwick, merchant, did petition this Company for relief against the Surgeons of this town who have sued him att law for giving medecines and plaisters to sick and hurt people, and complains further that the said surgeons do inroach upon the Merchant Apothicarys of this town by selling divers goods and merchandizes belonging to them (Committee appointed to consider the matter).¹²⁰

Thomas Warwick had been apprenticed to Joseph Partis, son of Thomas Partis, the apothecary previously mentioned. Warwick had been in trouble earlier, for on 6 June 1711 there was a complaint that Thomas Warwick, 'apprentice to Mr. Joseph Partis has yet near two years of his tearm of apprenticeship unexpired, has maryed a wife upwards of one yeare, has kept open shop ever since his maryage'.¹²¹

On 15 September 1730 the Company prosecuted Anthony Dunne, surgeon, for selling 'sugar, peper and other grossery goods'.¹²²

In 1759 Thomas Fothergill, having served seven years with Richard Kipling, an apothecary of Newcastle upon Tyne, was made free of the Society of Apothecaries of London by redemption with a fine of £11 4s.⁸⁰

There was evidently an apothecaries' area in mediaeval Newcastle, for a description of land belonging to the Merchant Adventurers' Company, in a lease indenture of 1681, included the following: 'six ridges of Gavin Hairopps, sixteen ridges adjoyning to two ridges of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, seven ridges betwixt the Spittle Close and the Apothecaries' Close lying North and South, adjoyning to eleven ridges of Lyoneth Blaidgons, nyne ridges adjoyning towards Gallowgate'.¹²³

The proximity of the Apothecaries' Close to the Spittle Close is interesting, and by a remarkable coincidence, this area is very near to that now occupied by the Royal Victoria Infirmary and the Medical School. There was also a

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Spicer's Lane. It was one of the narrow chares of the Quay at Pandon. It is marked on Bourne's map of the town published in 1736.*

Exeter

Exeter had a powerful Gild of Merchant Adventurers in Elizabethan times and this is said to have overshadowed the local government and dictated laws to the community.¹²⁴

Whether the apothecaries were members is uncertain, for among the rules were 'No one is to ship merchandise to France or import any wares from the latter except members of the Company' and 'a handicraftsman must abandon his occupation or mystery on being admitted to the Society'.¹²⁵ If the apothecaries were regarded as merchants or traders they may have been admitted, but if as craftsmen, they were probably not.

Roberts suggests that they may have been members of the Taylors' Company. He gives many interesting references to Exeter apothecaries.¹²⁶

Capener¹²⁷ reported that, after the landing of William of Orange at Torbay in 1668, he incurred expenses of £354 4s. 2½d. for the treatment of casualties by the surgeons and apothecaries and Widow Westcott (presumably a nurse), of Exeter, and as the bill was not paid a petition for payment was presented to Queen Anne in 1706.

Exeter had a gild of surgeons and some ancient hospitals. A medical school was founded by John Sheldon, F.R.S., son of a London surgeon-apothecary.¹²⁷

Thompson¹²⁸ quoted a record of 1455 about a grant for life to the King's Serjeant, Wm. Godfrey, who combined the office of Yeoman of the Chamber with that of Apothecary to the King's person and Porter of Exeter Castle. Later Godfrey became 'garbler of all spices and drugs and all merchandise which ought to be garbled in London, Southampton and Sandwich.'

The Rev. W. H. Carr, F.R.S., an art connoisseur, born in 1758, was the son of Edward Holwell Carr, an apothecary.¹²⁹ Abraham Girod, of Emsworth, Hants, admitted to the Yeomanry of the London Apothecaries in 1779, was recorded in the Yeomanry List of 1792 as of Exeter.⁸⁰

A GENERAL MEDICAL GILD

Glasgow

The medical gild at Glasgow was possibly the most advanced in the country for, from as early as 1599, it included physicians, surgeons and apothecaries.

In that year James VI of Scotland (who later as James I of England separated the London Apothecaries from the Grocers) granted a charter to Peter Lowe: 'our Chirurgiane and Chief Chirurgiane to oure dearest son the Prince', founding a gild which eventually became the Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow.¹³⁰ The charter was recognized by the town council in the following year and its first meeting was held in 1602. For the first thirty years of its existence the gild was known as the 'Brethren' or 'Craft' of 'chirurgie'. In 1629 the name 'facultie' appeared in the Minutes for the first time and in 1654

* Personal communication, Mr. R. F. Walker.

it was usually known as the *Facultie of Chyrurgeons and Physicians*. By 1700 the name had become the *Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow*. The right to use the title 'Royal' was granted by Edward VII in 1910.

The charter contained the following clauses referring to the practice of pharmacy:¹³¹

That na manir of personis sell onie droggis within the Citie of Glasgow except the sam be sichtit be the saidis visitouris, and be William Spang, apothecar, under the pane of confiscatioune of the droggis.

That nane sell, retoun poison, asenick, or sublemate, under the pane of ane hundred merkis, excep onlie the apothecaries quha sall be bund to take cautioun of the byaris, for coist, skaith and damage.

This gild controlled the practice of medicine, surgery and pharmacy in the West of Scotland, its powers covering an area roughly equivalent to that of the present Western Regional Hospital Board.¹³⁰

The barbers were added to the gild in 1602 as 'a pendecle of Chirurgerie' and remained members until 1708.

The gild had teaching, examining and registering powers and gave free advice to the sick poor. Visitors were appointed to inspect drugs and pharmacies and to lecture on 'Medicine, Chirurgeri or Apothecarie, the nature of herbs, droges and such lyk'. Written examinations and clinical instruction were instituted as early as 1671.

Apothecaries appeared to be full members of the gild although their name did not appear in the original name. William Spang, for example, was Visitor in 1606.

In 1654 Mr. Arch. Gordon was licensed to practise 'pharmacie' and medicine but was forbidden to practise any point of chirurgery. In 1656 the Faculty obtained from the Town Council a letter of Deaconry or seal of cause which was made out only to the chyrurgeons and barbers, but, when this was ratified by the Scottish Parliament in 1672, it was drawn in favour of the surgeons, apothecaries and barbers.¹³¹

Gilmour¹³² referred to the Faculty having powers to examine and register 'farmatians' (the Scottish phonetic equivalent of the French 'pharmacien') and of inspecting pharmacies, and states that these powers are still possessed by the Faculty which tactfully neglects them. Presumably, with the formation of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain in 1841 the Faculty ceased to concern itself with pharmacy, as occurred elsewhere in Scotland. For example, the Society of Druggist-Apothecaries of Edinburgh (which had a Royal charter) became merged into the North British (now Scottish) Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society and the Aberdeen Society of Apothecaries, Chemists and Druggists (founded 1839) became the Aberdeen Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society.

SUMMARY

This paper cannot give more than a brief survey of the position of the apothecary in provincial gilds. In some instances, such as Canterbury, Chester,

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Oxford and York, sufficient material exists for several papers, whereas in other cities and towns information is extremely scanty.

A surprising feature is the lack of information about the apothecaries in such cities as Hull and Preston which had powerful and influential gilds. Gross¹³³ reported that spicers were members of the Preston Gild Merchant in 1397, and it seems likely that apothecaries would also be members of this gild.

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Since this paper was written the Glasgow Faculty has changed its name to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. (Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow Order Confirmation Bill, 1962, H.M.S.O., London, quoted by *Brit. med. J.*, 1962, 2, 1526.) The change was thought to be necessary because the continued use of the name Faculty tended to lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

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