HENRY FOGG (1707–1750) AND HIS PATIENTS: THE PRACTICE OF AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STAFFORDSHIRE APOTHECARY

by

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The early eighteenth century in England, before the first published Medical Register of 1779, is for historians a great mystery in many crucial aspects of medical practice. Who practised where is fairly difficult to discover, while a man's patients, fees, possessions, books and equipment are even further hidden after over two centuries. What a physician, surgeon or apothecary was worth at death, however, can be elicited from probate inventories, and these have long been a recognized, if under-exploited, source for medical history. Interesting though probate inventories can be, there was no standard format in compiling them and the untrained appraisers (valuers), often the deceased's neighbours, decided what to list, at what values and how detailed the inventory should be. Thus, while one will include the minutiae of daily life, another will tantalisingly note only "implements of household stuff" or "tools in the shop". Technical archival problems conspire further against the medical historian, for probate inventories, as church documents, are normally found today in diocesan record offices, not always coincident with county record repositories. Inventories are not only extremely numerous, but further frustrate the researcher by being stored chronologically, year by year, generally annotated with the deceased's name but hardly ever with an occupation or place. Thus, retrieving practitioners' inventories is far more complicated than might appear.

However, in 1991 a new Leverhulme research project was begun to examine the probate inventories in the Lichfield Diocesan Record Office for the period 1600–1858. The project has started by indexing the records of the Consistory Court, between 40–60,000 documents, to locate inventories deposited in cases of disputed probate. Over 500 such inventories have been traced in the periods 1739–99 and 1820–39, and it is proposed to continue the survey until probate jurisdiction ceased in 1858. This large ancient diocese covered parts of both Derbyshire and Shropshire, as well as north Warwickshire and the whole county of Staffordshire. The research has brought to light the inventory of Henry Fogg,¹ an apothecary who practised at Leek, in north Staffordshire, until the middle years of the eighteenth century. As a county, Staffordshire lacks many vital eighteenth-century medical history sources found in

¹ Lichfield Joint Record Office, B/C/5/1753/113 (hereafter LJRO).

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other localities; there are no surviving coroners' papers (in contrast to Wiltshire), only a dozen bishop's licences to practise (cf. Worcestershire), and the earliest poor law material in the Leek area is for Endon from 1748 (cf. Warwickshire).² To medical historians Fogg's inventory is of particular interest since, as well as the usual list of house contents, the appraisers also noted his 33 books (by title) and the equipment of his shop. Even more valuable, they also recorded the names of some 350 patients who owed him money, including bad debts, and where they lived, making possible a detailed assessment of his practice catchment area, his prosperity and the status of his clientèle, information that is rare for even the grandest practitioners with great patients, and virtually non-existent for such modest men as Henry Fogg, treating primarily traders, craftsmen and labourers. For the years 1730–50 there were 166 Leek inhabitants' cases in the Consistory Court, of whom some fifteen had been Fogg's patients.

Leek was a large parish of 34,370 acres, lying on the main road that runs from Derby to Macclesfield (13 miles away), and comprising nine small scattered moorland villages and the market town itself.³ Its economy was closely tied to the Cheshire silk industry, the Macclesfield merchants provided raw silk and bought the final products, buttons, braids and ribbons, from the workers of Leek. By the early years of the eighteenth century Leek had a grammar school and a Quaker chapel, as well as the usual inns and almshouses. It was close to the emerging Staffordshire pottery towns, such as Bilston, and its nearest large neighbour was Newcastle-under-Lyme. In this rather remote locality the number of gentry residents were few, although large houses such as Haregate Hall and Wall Grange provided patients for the apothecary alongside the town's inhabitants. Leek featured in dramatic national events in 1745, when the Young Pretender quartered his army there on 8 December *en route* to Derby, an event that Henry Fogg must have witnessed.

Henry Fogg was baptised on 8 June 1707,⁴ the son of a Leek butcher, also named Henry, and was apprenticed on 7 August 1722 for seven years to Eli Robinson, a town apothecary; when Henry's term finished in 1729 his master took another apprentice in his place, John Edensor,⁵ who later practised in Walsall. Fogg was still his apprentice in 1728 when Eli Robinson (1693–1742) was called upon to make a deposition relating to a sudden death in Endon, some five miles from Leek.⁶ Henry Fogg brought his master a premium of £40.00 that was substantial for a butcher to afford, although not exceptional, for in 1716 a Stone (Staffordshire) butcher had paid an apothecary £33.00 as a premium with his son also for seven years.⁷ Such sums indicate fathers who were

² R. F. Hunniset (ed.), Wiltshire coroners' bills, 1752–1796, vol. 36, Devizes, Wiltshire Record Society, 1981; P. Morgan, 'The subscription books of the diocese of Worcester and class structure under the early Stuarts', MA thesis, Birmingham University, 1952; Joan Lane, 'The provincial practitioner and his services to the poor, 1750–1800', Soc. soc. Hist. Med. Bull., June 1981, 28: 10–14.

³ John Sleigh, A history of the ancient parish of Leek, London, R. Nall, 1883, pp. 10, 12.

⁴ LJRO, B/V/7/Leek, 1707.

⁵ P. J. Wallis and R. V. Wallis, *Eighteenth-century medics*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Project for Historical Biobibliography, 1988, pp. 204–5, 182.

⁶ LJRO, B/C/11, Thomas Joddrell (1728); we are most grateful to Nigel Tringham of the Staffordshire Victoria County History Unit for advice.

⁷ Wallis and Wallis, op. cit., note 5 above, pp. 508–9; Joan Lane, 'Provincial medical apprentices and masters in early modern England', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, November 1988, **12**, n.s., 3, pp. 12–27.

meat traders rather than small-scale village butchers. In Staffordshire in the period 1712–50 apothecaries' premiums ranged from £25.00 to £60.00, with £40.00 as average. It is reasonable to presume that Fogg gained an appropriate education, including Latin, at Leek grammar school; although we know nothing of his apprentice years, his training must have been similar to that of contemporaries bound to other undistinguished provincial practitioners. In 1728 he married a local girl, Eleanor Bradeley, by whom he had two sons, John, born in 1732, who lived only a week, and Samuel, who died at the age of six months in December 1733. Eleanor Fogg died in January 1745 and Henry Fogg himself in September 1750,⁸ survived by his father, who was the chief beneficiary of his will.

Henry Fogg began his professional life in a small town that was well provided with medical practitioners, all potential rivals to the newly qualified young man. As well as his former master, Eli Robinson, there were also in Leek two physicians, Robert Key (1708-61) and William Grosvenor (allegedly 101 at his death in 1765), and two surgeon-apothecaries, Eli Cope, senior, and Thomas Bowler, the latter of whom left Leek to practise in Stone just after Fogg set up in the town. Competition for Fogg also existed in Bilston, where there was one apothecary, and particularly in Newcastle-under-Lyme, with three physicians and five surgeon-apothecaries, all of whom also had apprentices,⁹ and at least one barber-surgeon, William Watson, was noted in Leek in 1730.¹⁰ Henry Fogg's advantages as a local boy, with a father in the town's trading network, however, were considerable. It would be tempting to think that medical services were entirely provided by the man on the spot, but evidence suggests that some patients were prepared to travel to a practitioner of their choice and that they equally expected all categories of medical attendants to do the same. From his diary we learn that James Clegg, a physician from Chapel-en-le-Frith,¹¹ fifteen miles away in Derbyshire, also saw patients in Leek, some of whom were on Fogg's list of debtors in 1750. We do not know if Fogg held institutional posts, which did exist even at this early date, since unfortunately the accounts of the overseers of the poor for Leek have not survived. However, one of his contemporaries in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Peter Spendelow, agreed in 1731 to "care for the poor in surgery and physic" for two bags of malt yearly,¹² while another, James Bent, was apothecary to the Etruria Friendly Society.¹³

Henry Fogg was buried on 6 September 1750, aged only 43, but a year earlier, on 9 June 1749, had made his will declaring himself "much indisposed but of a sound and disposing mind". By then a childless widower, he bequeathed all his house contents, personal effects, shop goods, ready money and book debts to his father, worth in all £148 0s $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. In addition, he had substantial bad debts ("desperate"), worth £59 16s 3d, due to him from 200 people and this sum was written off as irrecoverable by his appraisers.

⁸ LJRO, B/V/7/Leek, 1728, 1732, 1733, 1745, 1750.

⁹ Wallis and Wallis, op. cit., note 4 above, pp. 342, 249, 134, 68, 377, 17, 48, 581, 157, 290, 503, 562, 566. ¹⁰ Sleigh, op. cit., note 3 above, p. 8.

¹¹ V. S. Doe (ed.), *The diary of James Clegg of Chapel en le Frith*, 1708–1755, 3 vols, Wingerworth, Derbyshire Record Society, 1981.

¹² John Briggs, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1173-1973, Newcastle-under-Lyme, n.p., 1973, p. 39.

¹³ E. Posner, 'Eighteenth-century health and social service in the pottery industry of north Staffordshire', *Med. Hist.*, 1974, **18**: 139.

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Assets	Value	% of total 27.4	
House goods	£40 12s 8d		
Shop contents	£51 10s 0d	34.8	
Horse etc.	£10 13s 6d	7.2	
Books	£ 2 2s 0d	1.4	
Debts owing	£43 2s 2½d	29.2	

Table 1: Henry Fogg's inventory: value of goods

Henry Fogg's household was comfortably furnished and many items were auctioned and listed; he had such luxury possessions as a looking-glass, swing mirror, a dressing-table, corner cupboard, close stool, five pictures and a desk, apart from the usual beds, chests and chairs. He also owned Delft plates and a coffee pot, but his domestic silver consisted of only six teaspoons and one large spoon. However, as personal jewellery he had a silver watch, as well as a stock buckle, buttons and pair of studs all of silver. For travelling, he owned a gelding, which, with its saddle and hay, fetched a good price of £10 13s 6d, and he also had a pillion (presumably for his wife), as well as saddlery items (girth, surcingle, bridle, stirrups) and four maps. Apothecary equipment (flint glass bottles, corks and pewter measures) was also sold; his "case of lances" was acquired for 7s 0d by William Hilditch, a Sandbach (Cheshire) apothecary, ¹⁴ his two pairs of scales and weights by unnamed buyers. His stocks of honey, sugar, red wine and cider suggest professional rather than domestic consumption.

The contents of the shop were sold for £51 10s 0d to Hugh Wishaw, who also bought Henry Fogg's medical books for two guineas. These purchases were very good value indeed for a young man newly qualified, for Wishaw, a cleric's son, had been indentured in 1743 for seven years as one of the five apprentices taken by George Davison, a Newcastle-under-Lyme apothecary.¹⁵ Thus, when the auction took place, Wishaw was just ready to set up in business for himself. The shop goods consisted of:

Drugs simples spirits vials Bottles Gallipots counter drawers shelves weights & scales brass & copper pans mortars and pestles pewter measures bleeding cups pair of Screws & all the Shop utensils.

The 33 books (Appendix 1) that Wishaw purchased were by no means all old-fashioned and out of date, while ownership of Adam Littleton's *Dictionary* (London, 1735) confirms an ability to read Latin.¹⁶ Fogg had some very antique titles on his shelves, nine published before 1700, but including some widely read medical authors such as Salmon, Wiseman, Willis and Cheselden whose works went into several editions. A further group of textbooks were presumably bought when he finished his apprenticeship (Allen, Shaw, Lower and *Edinburgh pharmacopoeia*). During his 14 years of practice he acquired such titles as those by Le Dran, Boerhaave, Hillary and

¹⁴ Wallis and Wallis, op. cit., note 5 above, p. 287.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁶ We are greatly indebted to Ms Kaye Bagshaw of the Wellcome Library for her efforts in tracing these 33 titles.

Sharp, while John Swan's new edition of Thomas Sydenham's *Works* had been advertised in the midland press shortly before Henry Fogg's death.¹⁷ Although apothecary premises were quite regularly advertised as vacant in the provincial press in the mid-eighteenth century (Appendix 2), there is no evidence that Fogg's shop and contents were thus publicized and the dispersal was presumably arranged by word of mouth.

Henry Fogg's outstanding debts may, of course, have been exacerbated by his own illness, so that perhaps he was unable to collect these amounts or his patients were unwilling to pay. However, his recoverable book debts, totalling £43 2s $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, were owed by 152 persons, and ranged from as little as 3d each to £2 8s 4d. Of these debts, the average sum was 5s 6d, although 9 patients owed more than $\pounds 1$ 0s 0d each; the largest group (32) were in the category between 2s 0d and 5s 0d. Only 12 debts were due from women, two of whom were widows; eight of the 152 names were noted as deceased. His patients, although 67 lived in Leek, came from 48 communities within a ten-mile radius, reaching over the Derbyshire and Cheshire boundaries. Only rarely did the appraisers note the debtors' occupations, but some names had status implied when listed simply as Mr Debank or Mr Toft and confirmed by their addresses. A chairmaker, slater, miller and cleric were recorded, but Fogg also attended button merchants, inn-holders, farmers, craftsmen and shopkeepers. In addition, he had as patients a good range of the local gentry, much easier in research terms to identify, including William Armett, who was later to be Sheriff of Staffordshire. Although Fogg was an Anglican, his patients included two Quaker ministers and a prominent local Psalmsinger.

Fortunately, James Clegg attended some of the patients on Fogg's list, visiting William Mills, an attorney, in his last months, as well as Mrs Mills and their daughters; Mr Mills owed Fogg 14s 9d. The wealthy Debank family of Wall Grange, who owed Fogg 4s 0d, also sent for Clegg, in 1733 and 1735.¹⁸ To remind us after two centuries of the routine difficulties of Georgian medical practice, Clegg noted in his diary on his fifty-sixth birthday, 20 October 1735, how he rode to Leek, "the road was in many places exceedingly bad but I came thither in safety about 2 hours past noon. Visited Mr Daybanks Sons, found one in an hopeful way the other past recovery". The seven-year-old died two days later.¹⁹ The wide scatter of Fogg's patients, many in remote moorland hamlets and isolated farmsteads, must have meant that he visited at least some of them, although the bulk of his work would have been advising and dispensing across his shop counter. In an increasingly consumerist society, provincial apothecaries such as Fogg benefited from patients having uncommitted income to spend on their health.²⁰

A widespread problem for professional men and traders in the eighteenth century was the long credit that all patients, clients and customers expected. For a well-established man slow settlement of debts in a non-inflationary age could be endured. Fogg, however, was owed more than seems advisable by 200 debtors, 24 of

¹⁷ Aris's Birmingham Gazette, 25 December 1749.

¹⁸ Clegg diary, op. cit., note 11 above, vol. 1, pp. 172, 238.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 240.

²⁰ Lorna Weatherill, Consumer behaviour and material culture, 1660–1750, London, Routledge, 1988.

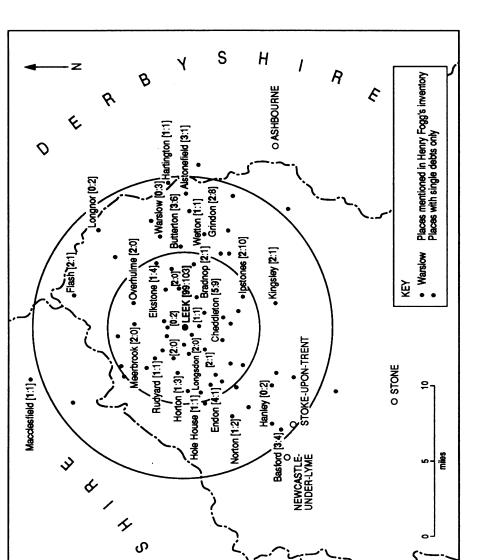


Figure: Henry Fogg's practice area.

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whom were deceased. Women, including a mantua maker, had incurred 39 of these irrecoverable debts. However, Fogg was also owed for attending 7 patients for whom he would never be paid, 2 farm servants and 5 unnamed vagrants, recorded only as "a woman at Blew Hills", "a Man at the Hole House" for example, presumably because they were ill in the locality. The bad debts ranged from 6d to £2 17s 4d, with an average of 5s 9d, including those for a small group of people who had left the area (for London, Manchester and as soldiers or tramping artisans). Also listed were the names of 10 men, presumably traders, to whom Fogg was said to owe money as a contra account, including a tailor. Among the entries was Mrs Brindley, owing 1s 2d, the widowed mother of James, the engineer. Not surprisingly, an absconding debtor for 8s 10d was Samuel Naden, who had left Leek for Sandiway in Cheshire, for in 1731 the family became notorious when John Naden had murdered his master, a grazier, tempted with the "sweet allurements... wanton dalliances and fair promises" of his mistress.²¹ John Naden was not only hung but gibbetted, with the Reverend James Clegg, MD, among the large crowd that gathered to watch.²²

The cause of Henry Fogg's death, after a year-long illness, is not known, but the 1740s suffered from a variety of potentially fatal epidemics, often unnamed but striking in their local death-rates. Considerable evidence exists for the "violent pleuritic fever" in north Devon in the spring of 1747,²³ the 10 to 12 burials a day from smallpox and fevers at Kendal in 1750,²⁴ and the "ulcerated sore throats" of Worcester and Kidderminster noted by John Wall in 1751.²⁵ Clegg recorded smallpox and fevers, but in Leek the only evidence is the rising burial rate. In the period 1745–53, with an average of 84 burials annually, 1747 and 1752 show substantial mortality figures; infants are prominent in some years, although in Leek, as nationally, they usually formed about a quarter of all deaths.

Even if we cannot be sure what caused so many deaths in these years, it is apparent that status and prosperity were no protection, nor professional skill, for just as Fogg died, so too did Robert and Richard Kay, practitioners in Bury, where miliary fever

Year	Males	Females	Total	Infants		Infants as
				Male	Female	% of total
1745	29	33	62	7	8	24.2
1746	24	34	58	8	6	24.1
1747	62	62	124	30	20	40.3
1748	45	33	78	5	8	16.6
1749	36	24	60	10	4	23.3
1750	37	34	71	9	7	22.5
1751	51	50	101	20	17	36.6
1752	55	56	111	26	22	43.2
1753	49	46	95	53	18	74.7

Table 2: Burials in Leek, Staffordshire, 1745–53.

²¹ Sleigh, op. cit., note 3 above, pp. 200-1.

²² Clegg Diary, op. cit., note 11 above, vol. 1, pp. 127-8.

²³ Charles Creighton, A history of epidemics in Britain, vol. 2, London, F. Cass, 1965, ch. 1.

²⁴ Aris, 3 December 1950.

²⁵ Creighton, op. cit., note 23 above, pp. 701-2.

was widespread, with four of their family dying.²⁶ Indeed, the contemporary press for the middle years of the century indicates a remarkable death rate among practitioners, to judge not from obituary notices but from practice premises advertised as available (Appendix 2), including those of John Edensor, who had replaced Fogg as Eli Robinson's apprentice.

The small world of the provincial apothecary, his bills modest yet providing him with an adequate living, his network of patients, the catchment area he served, the very style of his daily life, have recently become of increasing interest to medical historians, in spite of difficult sources. Henry Fogg, from the evidence of his probate inventory, may well have been an unremarkable but typical example of these practitioners.

APPENDIX 1

Henry Fogg's Books

Titles in Inventory Lytes Herball A Treatise of Surgery—imperfect Lyttleton's Dictionary

Allen's Practice of Physic Treatise of the Diseases of the Bones Salmon's Compendium of Physick Gibson's Anatomy Le Drans's Observations on Physick Fullers Pharmacopeia Hillary on the Small Pox Shaw's Practice of Physick—2 vols Boorhave's Aphorisms Swains Sydenham Reformation of the London Pharmacopeia Bellost's Hospital Surgeon—2 vols

Blancard's Dictionary Edinburgh Pharmacopeia Cheselden's Anatomy

Pharmacopeia Bateana

Identification Henry Lyte, trans. from French, 1595. not identified. Adam Littleton, Linguæ Latinæ, London, 1735. Synopsis medicinæ, trans., London, 1730. ?Jean Louis Petit, 1726. William Salmon, London, 1671. Thomas Gibson, London, 1682. Henri le Dran, London, 1740 (2nd ed.). Thomas Fuller, London, 1701. William Hillary, London, 1740 (2nd ed.). Peter Shaw, London, 1728. Hermann Boerhaave, London, 1742. John Swan, trans. London, 1742. [William Lewis], London, 1744.

Augustin Belloste, London, 1706 (2nd ed.).
S. Blanckaert, London, 1702.
London, 1727.
William Cheselden, London, 1713 (1st ed.).
London, 1700 (2nd ed.).

²⁶ W. Brockbank and F. Kenworthy (eds), *The diary of Richard Kay, 1716–51, of Baldingstone, near Bury,* Manchester, published for the Chetham Society by Manchester University Press, 1968.

Henry Fogg (1707-1750) and his patients

British Dispensatory Le Dran's Operations in Surgery Sharp's Surgery Sharp's Enquiry into the State of Surgery Horster's Surgery Wiseman's Surgery

Bates Dispensatory Salmon's Dispensatory & Supplement Lower Nat: de Corde Carr Ord Dissertatio Willis's Cereb: Anat: Clerici Physica Remarks on Cheyney's Essay Goodman on Phlebotomy London, 1618. Thomas Gataker, trans. London, 1749. Samuel Sharp, London, 1739. London, 1750.

?Lorenz Heister, 1718.
Richard Wiseman, London, 1705 (4th ed.).
perhaps a duplicate copy?
William Salmon, London, 1682–3.
Richard Lower, London, 1728 (6th ed.).
not identified.
Thomas Willis, 1664.
Jean le Clerc, 1696.
London, 1724.
not identified.

APPENDIX 2

Examples of apothecaries' premises advertised in Aris's Birmingham Gazette

10 October 1748

An Apothecary's Shop to be Sold, and enter'd upon directly, at Newcastle under Line, in Staffordshire, situated near the Market Place, completely fitted up, and all the Utensils belonging to it almost as good as new. Enquire of Edmund Pierce*, Surgeon, at Newcastle aforesaid, in whose Possession the said Shop now is.

20 February 1749

To be Sold at Cannock, in the County of Stafford, the Form of an Apothecary's Shop, furnished with the best Drugs, and all Galenical and Chymical Preparations; most Sorts of Books in Physick, Surgery, Anatomy, Chymistry, and Pharmacy, and several Instruments for Surgery. Enquire of Mr Stubbs*, in Cannock aforesaid.

N.B. As the said Mr Stubbs, to whom the Shop belongs, (and which he hath kept 30 Years and upwards) hath got a competent Fortune, the said Shop and two or three Rooms adjoining to it, will be Lett, if requir'd.

17 September 1750

This is to give Notice that there is an Apothecary's Shop, with fresh Drugs, late belonging to Mr John Hubbold*, of Shiffnall, Shropshire, deceased, and also Instruments of Surgery, to be sold to the first Purchaser. Enquire of Mr Jeremiah Addenbrooke, Apothecary in Kingswinford in Staffordshire.

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12 November 1750

To be Sold, and enter'd into immediately, the Owner just deceas'd, at Wellington under the Wrekin, in the County of Salop, a Well-accustom'd Surgeon's and Apothecary's Shop, situated near the Market Place, with all Manner of fresh Drugs, and Sets of Chirurgical Instruments.

For Particulars, enquire of Mr Turner, Tanner, in Wellington aforesaid; or of Mr Le Clerc*, Surgeon, in Newport.

8 July 1751

To be Lett, A well-accustom'd Apothecary's Shop, with a very good Dwelling House, Laboratory, Cold-Bath, and divers other Rooms, convenient for a Person of that, or any other considerable Trade or Profession, situate in Wolverhampton, late in the Possession of Dr Altree*, deceas'd, with a good Stable, Chaise House, Garden, a Pew or Pews in the Church, a Piece of Land, and many other Conveniences thereto belonging.

23 March 1752

To be Sold at Newcastle under Line, in Staffordshire. An Apothecary's Shop, with the Counters, Drawers, Mortars, Still, and all other Things thereunto belonging. For further Particulars, enquire of Mr William Sutton, Attorney, at Newcastle aforesaid.

26 March 1753

To be Lett, immediately, A Good old-accustom'd Apothecary's Shop, of Richard Spencer, Surgeon and Apothecary, of Stone in Staffordshire, lately deceased; the Shop is neatly fitted up with Utensils of all Sorts, and fresh Drugs to be sold. Enquire of Mrs Spencer, Widow, at Stone.

N.B. He has been in Trade not above one Year, and had acquired great Business in the Surgery and Apothecary Practice.

The House to be lett with it, if required.

25 December 1753

To be Lett and enter'd on immediately. A Well-accustom'd Apothecary's Shop, at Brewood: Also a Quantity of fresh Drugs, and Instruments proper for Surgery and Midwifry, to be sold. A good Tenant will meet with Encouragement. For Particulars, enquire of Thomas Rock, in Brewood [Staffs].

* listed in Wallis and Wallis, op. cit., note 4 above.