

## Cinnabar

This cinnabar mineral is encased in an epoxy resin for your safety. The dark red crystals come from oxidized mercury, which occurs in granular crusts or veins associated with volcanic activity and hot springs. The ruddy hue of this natural mineral pigment embodies the hot and fiery conditions in which it forms. Cinnabar has been mined and used as a precious resource by many cultures around the globe since at least the 10th millennium B.C.

Cinnabar was used by artists to create vermillion paint. You can see the archives folder for a sample of the vermillion hue. The red crystals were also ground up into a powder and used as a medicine such as mercuric sulphide, which was used as an antiseptic in the 1700s.

Since then, it was discovered that mercury can be poisonous to ingest, and sometimes even to touch. Therefore it is very rarely used in medical practice today.



## Cinnabar

Date: 2020

Material: Cinnabar

Object origin: China

Reproduction: No

Preparation: Encased in epoxy



## **Leech: *Hirudo Medicinalis***

This leech, scientifically named *Hirudo Medicinalis* was another way of bloodletting in Scotland in the 1700s. Leeches were available for purchase at a dispensary or an apothecary. They were most often stored in jars filled with clean water until they were ready to be used on patients. A picture of a leech jar is available in the archives folder.

It was believed that bloodletting was a useful way to balance the “humours” of the body. Being ill meant having an imbalance of the four humours. Therefore treatment consisted of removing an amount of the excessive humour by various means. One way was to remove the blood of a patient through placing leeches onto several parts of the body and allow the leech to suck out the ailing blood of the patient. When the leech was full, it would unlatch itself and normally be returned to the physician, where they would use the leech again on other patients.

For hundreds of years, bloodletting was widely accepted as a medical therapeutic tool. But with continued research in the circulatory system, it was later discovered that bloodletting was not helpful and is not often practiced by physicians today.



**Leech: *Hirudo Medicinalis***

Date: 2020

Object origin: United States

Material: Leech

Reproduction: No

Preparation: Encased in epoxy



## Cupping Vessels

This glass item is from a Russian set of cupping therapy cups from 1908. This cup, along with roughly a dozen others would be placed in a fire or boiled until very hot. This cup would then be placed on the ailing portions of the patient's body and left to cool. While cooling, the air inside the cup would create a vacuum, which will suck the skin further into the cup. After roughly 15 minutes, the vacuum effect would release and the cup can be removed. The result is a welt on the patient's skin, very much like a large bruise.

Cupping therapy has been in use in many countries for many therapeutic reasons. It was a common practice in Europe during the time when humoral theory was widely accepted, although we do not know when the practice began it was largely phased out in the 1800s. Humoral theory is the belief that when a patient is unwell, it is because the fluids in their bodies are out of balance. Cupping would be a way to dislodge the "bad" fluid from the body. The origin of the practice is unclear, but the practice is not often found in physicians offices today. Instead, cupping is performed alongside other "alternative medicines."



## Cupping Vessels

Date: c.Mid 1800s

Material: Glass

Object origin: Russia

Reproduction: No

Preparation: None



## Bleeding Bowl

A brass bleeding bowl was important to physicians between the early 1700s and late 1800s. It was a tool used with the lancet. A patient would be cut by the lancet, usually in the arm, and the arm would be placed on top of this bowl, collecting the blood seeping out of the wound. The bowl would be emptied and cleaned between uses.

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## Bleeding Bowl

Date: 1822

Material: Brass

Object origin: United Kingdom

Reproduction: No

Preparation: Brass shaped on a mould



## Herbarium: “For Throat Inflammation”

The medical recipe for throat inflammation was originally recorded in the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh’s *Pharmacopoeia Dispensatory* in 1727.

The ingredients include milk, nettles, mallow roots and leaves, gooseberry juice and *vigra aurea* (commonly known as whisky). It also calls for oil from boiled frogs and the ashes of a burnt swallow. Fortunately, very fortunately, a patient was not meant to drink the substance. Rather, a patient was meant to soak a piece of cloth in the medicine and wrap the cloth around their throat. It was understood that the medicine would absorb into the skin and cure the ailment from outside in.



## Herbarium: “For Throat Inflammation”

Reproduction: Yes

Preparation: Ingredients encased in epoxy

Date: 2020

Object origin: Various sources.

Prepared in Scotland

Material: Animal and plant materials,

epoxy resin and plastic jar



## Herbarium: “Juice Against Scurvy”

The Juice Against Scurvy is a medical recipe recorded in the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh's *Pharmacopoeia Dispensatory* published in 1727. The ingredients of the recipe include watercress, oranges, and a plant called scurvy grass that grows on the coast of Scotland. The scurvy grass in this item came from the eastern coast of Scotland, near Portobello. A medical *juice* was created by boiling the ingredients in water for several days until all of the ingredients turn clear. Scurvy grass was a popular, and mildly effective, treatment for scurvy.



## Herbarium: “Juice Against Scurvy”

Reproduction: Yes

Preparation: Ingredients encased in epoxy

Date: 2020

Object origin: Various sources

Prepared in Scotland

Material: Animal and plant materials,

epoxy and plastic jar



## Herbarium: For Spots and Freckles

The Elixir of Health is a medical recipe recorded in the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh's *Pharmacopoeia Dispensatory* published in 1727. The ingredients of the recipe include senna, liquorice, anise, and coriander. This medicine was created by combining the ingredients into a large pot and boiling them in spirits or water for hours at a time. Afterwards, the mixture would be strained and sugar would be added to improve the taste. This process creates a type of medicine known as a *tincture*. It is unknown what ailment this elixir would heal.



## Herbarium: For Spots and Freckles

Reproduction: Yes

Preparation: Ingredients encased in epoxy

Date: 2020

Object origin: Various sources

Prepared in Scotland

Material: Animal and plant materials,

epoxy and plastic jar



## Herbarium: A Salve for Speedy Healing of Wounds

The recipe titled "A Salve for Speedy Healing of Wounds" was a medical recipe recorded in *Ready Doctor*, a popular book of medical remedies published in 1785. The recipe includes "dockin root" which is now known as rhubarb, wax, rosin, and turpentine. It was considered to be a healing balm for cuts and sores. The author of this recipe indicates that this recipe, if cooked correctly, could last for 20 years.



## Herbarium: A Salve for Speedy Healing of Wounds

Reproduction: Yes

Preparation: Ingredients encased in epoxy

Date: 2020

Object origin: Various sources

Prepared in Scotland

Material: Animal and plant materials,

epoxy and plastic jar



## Lancet

This three-bladed lancet was a common medical tool used in England in the 1830s. A lancet was used to cut the patient's skin and allow the patient to freely bleed into a bleeding bowl. This was called *bloodletting*. This lancet has three separate blades that fold together into a brass casing. The three blades were used for different parts of the body, and are as sharp today as they were in the 1830s.

It was believed that bloodletting was a useful way to balance the "humours" of the body. Being ill meant having an imbalance of the four humours. Therefore treatment consisted of removing an amount of the excessive humour by various means. One way was to remove the blood of a patient through cutting the body, usually in the arm.

From the 1700s to the late 1800s, bloodletting was widely accepted as a medical therapeutic tool. But with continued research in the circulatory system, it was later discovered that bloodletting was not helpful and is not often practiced by physicians today.



## Lancet

Reproduction: No

Preparation: Encased in epoxy

Date: 1830

Object origin: United Kingdom

Material: Brass and metal



## Antimony Balls

Constipated soldiers at the Jacobite uprising in Culloden fields would be given a ball of antimony to swallow. It would pass through the system and be recovered from the human waste. It would be cleaned and reused. Because of this they were called "everlasting pills." It was believed this metallic ore would react to the body's humours and the metal would dislodge impacted waste. This treatment was usually coupled with drinking wine that had been sitting in a cup made of antimony, which would induce vomiting.

These antimony balls are slightly larger than those used at Culloden moor, nevertheless the "effectiveness" would have been the same. It would take another 200 years before physicians would observe that the long term use of antimony in medicine would lead to antimony poisoning. After that discovery, physicians abandoned the practice of treating patients with antimony altogether.



## Antimony Balls

Date: 2019

Material: Antimony and lead  
formed in a mould

Object origin: Unknown

Reproduction: No

Preparation: None



## Old and New Catgut Sutures

In the 1850s the surgeon Joseph Lister experimented with a radical new theory about how diseases spread. He hypothesized that some bacteria is transferred from one person to another. His practice became the foundation upon which preventative medicine would be constructed. He used carbolic acid to clean the patient's wounds and coated sutures with acid before stitching up an open cut. This was controversial. At the time, carbolic acid was used to clean foul smelling sewers. But after using carbolic acid as a preventative treatment over a series of months, the death rate in the accident clinic fell from 45% to 15%. An undeniable success. Carbolic sutures are still used (with a few adjustments) today. The carbolic suture on the right is evidence of Lister's contribution to medical innovation.



## Old and New Catgut Sutures

Reproduction: No

Preparation: glass vial and exposed needle  
encased in epoxy

Date: Old Catgut (left) - c. 1890 century

New Catgut (right) - 2020

Object origin: United Kingdom

Material: catgut, chromic acid, glass, thread, needle



## Phrenology Bust

In 1808, the German anatomist Franz Gall unveiled a brand new theory on how brains function. He believed that the shape of a person's head is directly linked with the person's behavior. Gall observed his patient's behaviour, and mapped the features (like lobes and ridges) of their skull, attempting to find correlation between prominent parts of their head and prominent aspects of their behavior.

Gall believed that the brain was made up of many parts which served as the intellectual *and moral* center of a person. That meant certain parts of the brain were bigger or smaller, depending on how much the person developed them. For instance, if one of his patients was particularly funny, he would look for a bump on his patients top left forehead by the hairline, to see if that part of the patient's brain stuck out.

Gall called this theory *craniology* but over time it was eventually known as *phrenology*. This ceramic bust is a replica of the one used by Gall to map the moral and academic intelligence of his patients. *Phrenology* maps were also drawn on wooden sculptures of the skull, and in other cases, it was written on actual human skulls. You can see pictures of more *phrenology* maps in the archive folder.



## Phrenology Bust

Reproduction: Yes

Preparation: None

Date: 1890

Object origin: United Kingdom

Material: Ceramic with clear glaze

