

Book Reviews

phytotherapist who wants to be informed about this peculiar herb. I am looking forward with interest to further monographs by Tschupp.

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Briony Hudson (ed.), *English delftware drug jars: the collection of the museum of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain*, London and Chicago, Pharmaceutical Press, 2006, pp. 271, 220 colour plates, £95.00 (hardback 0-85369-643-8).

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society holds one of the largest and finest collections of English delftware drug jars in Britain, second in size only to the holdings of the Thackray Museum in Leeds. Most of the jars in the collection are labelled seventeenth and eighteenth century wet or dry drug jars, in addition to which they hold several pill tiles, barbers bowls, and simpler pots and jars. The jars can be seen by visitors to the Society's museum at its headquarters in Lambeth, but before this publication there was no published guide to its holdings.

The catalogue provides a very detailed and excellently illustrated account of its contents. Each drug jar in the collection is illustrated in colour and the description goes beyond the normal limits in offering a translation of the drug jar's label and a contemporary description of its ingredients and applications (mostly from John Quincy's 1718 *Dispensatory*). It is also notable that the catalogue includes a sensible and concise summary of current knowledge about the production and design of drug jars by Bill Jackson, which will be particularly welcome given the relative rarity of the classic accounts of medical delftware by G E Howard and R E A Drey. By its nature, no catalogue can provide the answer to some of the unanswered questions that surround these jars—why they were made, who bought them, and how they relate to changes in medicine and pharmacy in this period—but this provides an important source for those interested in these problems, and the quality of the scholarship and high production values mean it should stand as an essential reference work for historians for a long time to come.

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