

FRANK TOWNE-PIONEER DRUGGIST

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PETALUMA and San Bernardino. Separated by 460 miles but closely connected by a father and son. Both were pioneer California druggists and each a public-spirited man in his own home town. The two men, Smith Darius Towne, and son, Frank Mundy Towne, have left their names forever embossed in history. Together the father-son druggists span almost 65 years of dedication to the pharmaceutical business.

Smith D. Towne was one of Sonoma County's leading citizens. He was County Assessor early in his career and compiled agricultural statistics for the Sonoma County Journal and later established a pioneer drugstore business in 1855.

Frank M. Towne was born on October 4, 1859 in Petaluma and spent his early years working in his father's business. He was educated in local public schools and later attended and graduated from the Pharmacy School of the University of California. After graduation, he decided to move to southern California and located in San Bernardino in 1879. Mr. Towne's first employer was James Waldrip, an established pharmacist in town. This partnership lasted only a short time, approximately 5 or 6 years when George S. Nickerson bought out Waldrip's interest and the new firm was known as Towne and Nickerson.



FRANK MUNDY TOWNE

After a few years, Mr. Towne became sole proprietor of the firm and it was changed to Frank M. Towne, Pharmacist. (See Photo No. 1) Like the other leading druggists of the day, Mr. Towne carried all the necessities of a city drugstore. Along with remedies and cures, he also carried his own line of products, one of which was Towne's Carnation Cream. This cure for chapped cuticle was introduced in 1886. Later in 1888 he trademarked the name.

In the Daily Courier in 1893 appeared one of Towne's ads, extolling the virtues of Carnation Cream. It read:

"CARNATION CREAM CURES CHAPPED CUTICLES. No matter how badly the skin is chapped, Carnation Cream will give instant relief. Being entirely free from oil or grease, it can be used without soiling the clothes -- in fact kid gloves can be worn immediately after using. It is the most certain and reliable article of its kind in the market. Look out for worthless imitations."

There were two sizes available: 25 cents and 50 cents.



Photo No. 1

Some of his other products were Towne's Family Lintment, Office Gargle, Night Sweat Caps, Hair Wash, and an Arabian Corn Cure that had a cannabis base.

During the business years of the Nineties, there was fierce competition between druggists for customers. The local newspaper would be filled with ads for remedies and cures of every description, all available for a better price at one of the competitor's store.

One advertising incident is remembered by William T. Hunter, one of Towne's former employees, as told him by one of Towne's sons. It seems that Ernest E. McGibbon, another popular San Bernardino druggist of

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