

## PIONEER DRUGGIST

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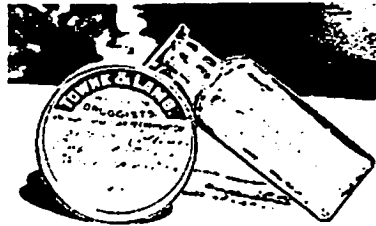


Photo No. 2



Photo No. 3

the time, had an "arrangement" with a printer at the San Bernardino Index. Mr. McGibbon would always wait until Mr. Towne had placed his ad. Then McGibbon would be able to place his ad with the previous knowledge of Towne's prices, thereby cutting him on every item. Occasionally the printer was only instructed to put "Me too McGibbon" below Towne's ads. This practice backfired on Mr. McGibbon when Mr. Towne became wise to the deal. On this occasion, Mr. Towne placed his usual ad with one additional sentence near the bottom -- "I buy all my drugs from Frank M. Towne." The printer, who was known to tip a few at work, apparently did not proof the copy closely, for as usual he added, "Me too McGibbon."

During 1895, Mr. Towne took another partner, John A. Lamb, and located the business at 406 - 3rd Street, near "D." This firm was known as Towne and Lamb. One item of interest from the Towne and Lamb years is a small round pill container with a complete paper label on the box top. The prescription was filled 6/30/02 and is extremely helpful in dating their approximate years of association. (See Photo No. 2)

In the early 1900's the firm of Towne, Seccombe & Allison was organized and was located at Frank Towne's old store which had been newly remodeled. This partnership lasted approximately 16 years and the business grew by leaps and bounds. A second store was established at 576 3rd Street in 1909, and in 1912 the Dragon Pharmacy was acquired. Mr. William C. Seccombe and Mr. Monte D. Allison, along with Frank M. Towne, incorporated their business in 1911. (See Photo No. 3)

In the spring of 1919 Mr. Beverly Towne and Mr. Charles Lindner, Jr., (son and son-in-law respectively) bought Seccombe's interest. The new business was then named the Towne-Allison Drug Co.

According to the San Bernardino directory for 1926 there were four stores operating that year. The first was at 406 - 3rd Street, the second at 576 - 3rd Street, the third at 494 - 3rd Street, with a main office located at 379 - 4th Street. The 1930 San Bernardino directory listed these stores as agents for Rexall, Elizabeth Arden, and Eastman Kodak supplies.

On December 20, 1919, Frank M. Towne died. He was just 60 years old and his association with the San Bernardino drug business spanned 40 years. The Towne-Allison Drug Co. continued for another 27 years before being phased out in 1946.

**(Editor's Note:** We wish to thank the San Bernardino Co. Historical Bottle & Collectible Club for permission to reprint the above article, which appeared in the August 1978 issue of their monthly publication, Bottle Nooz. Gary Crabtree, who co-authored the article with his wife Michele is also a member of our own historical society.

What old-time resident of San Bernardino does not remember the Towne-Allison stores, with their periodic Rexall products 1¢ sale? Buy a Rexall drug at the regular price and you could get another of the same for only 1¢ more. Those were the days!

**STILL AVAILABLE:** The City of San Bernardino Historical Society has a few remaining copies of its first three publications; Heritage Tales - 1978, Heritage Tales - 1979 AND Volume 1 of Odyssey. All are \$5.00 each, plus \$1.00 postage if mailed.