

'Chemistry - vacuum pan'

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CHEMISTRY - VACUUM PAN

1913

File under
Vacuum
Re Barry's vacuum pan ^{Chemical}

Mr C. J. S. Thompson
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In response to your telephone request 30th Oct 1913 I have made a search at the Patent Office for some particulars relating to the advent of the vacuum pan.

Herewith is a copy of the specification of the patent of John Thomas Barry of Plough Court, Lombard Street, London, Chemist and Druggist (described as a Quaker) No 4376 of 1819 and entitled "Apparatus for Distilling and Preparing Colours."

I have consulted the name index 1617/1852 and find no one named "Tritton" took out a patent within the scope of these years. Two patents were taken out by one whose name according to the index was "John Tretton" but whose real name upon reference to the specifications appears to have been "Fretton". I mention the numbers and the subject only to show that they cannot possibly be involved in this enquiry.

John Fretton of London No 3388, 8th October 1810
John Fretton of St. Andrews Hill, London, No 3278, 21st November 1809

The Inventor's description does not appear in either specification and both patents related to machinery for carding wool flax, silk and other substances.

I understood you on the telephone to give the name of "Brady" and not "Barry". I therefore searched for the name of "Brady" and found no patent was taken out by anyone bearing that name up to the year 1852 excepting No 14029 of 22nd March 1852 relating to helmets, cartridge boxes and other military accoutrements - John Drungolle Brady.

I have searched various dictionaries for information as to the origin of the apparatus :- The Century Dictionary, Standard Dictionary, Cassell's Encyclopaedic Dictionary, Hawkin's Medical Dictionary and Lockwoods Dictionary of Engineering Terms; without success.

The references in The Oxford Dictionary are of passing interest.

Under the word "Pan" references are made as follows-

1823 Ure Dictionary of Chemistry 436/1.

The evaporating pan or still is a hemispherical dish of cast iron furnished with an air-tight flat lid.

1839 Ure Dictionary of Art, page 1142.

The spent lyes which are not at all alkaline, are

run off by a spigot below, or pumped off above, by a pump set into a pan.

1839 Ure Dictionary of Arts, page 1149.

The apparatus employed for making these soaps is a copper pan heated by a water bath etc.,

No information is obtainable upon this subject from the Chronicles of Pharmacy - Wootten.

The work that put me into possession of the name "Barry" was entitled "Manual of Pharmacy" by W. T. Brande, F.R.S. published in London in the year 1825 and dedicated to the masters and wardens of the Society of Apothecaries of London.

On page 370 under the heading "Decoctions" it is stated :- "Common saucepansare generally used in preparing decoctions"; and on page 384 under the heading "Extracts" it is stated :-in some instances evaporation at very low temperatures in vessels exhausted of atmospheric air, and consequently under greatly diminished pressure, is resorted to; but the apparatus required for this purpose is too complicated for general use, and the benefit derived from it, in respect to the activity and efficiency of the products, by no means such as to warrant its general adoption. Mr Barry's contrivance for the purpose is one of the best that have been invented.

From the same authority I learnt that more particulars of Barry's contrivance may be obtained by reference to Vol. 1. of Medico Chirurgical Transactions, page 231.

A fuller title is given to Barry's specification in the body of the specification as you will doubtless notice - "An improved apparatus for Distillation, Evaporation and Exsiccation and for the Preparation of Colours".

Medico Chirurgical Transactions are not obtainable at the Patent Office Library but are probably to be seen at the Library of the College of Surgeons.

It seems clear that Barry is the acknowledged author of the apparatus. If it is true that Henry Fritten, Coppersmith of Battersea worked either independently or with Barry upon the subject in 1817, I cannot conceive where evidence would now be obtainable.

I have consulted the catalogue of ^{an} others and find no record of the name "Fritten" in that connection, nor of the name "Barry" associated with such a subject.

30th October 1913

Fritton

W. T. Brande