

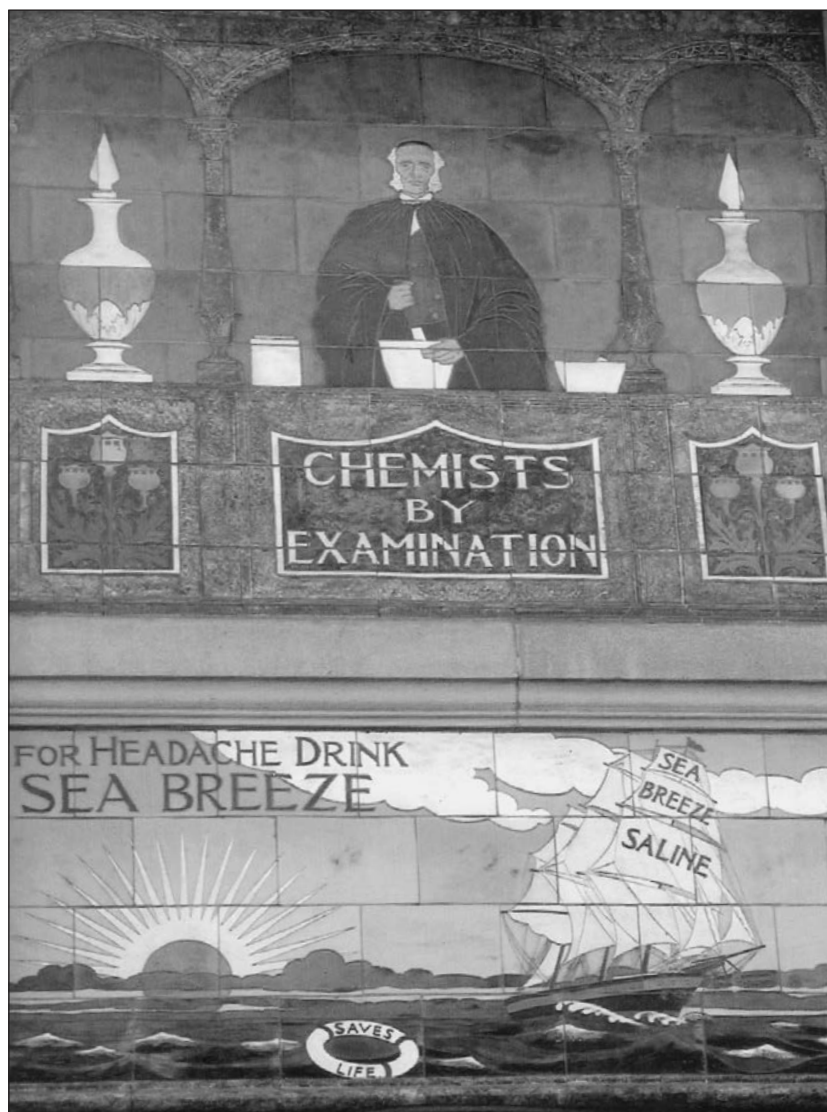
The Apothecary: the history of the oldest advertisement in High Street, Leicester

Edna Blake

As they pass by below, very few people probably look up to notice what must be the oldest advertisement in Leicester's High Street. Having been there since 1904 and placed above number 58, this highly decorative advertisement consists of two tiled panels. The upper panel depicts an apothecary in skullcap and gown with a pestle and mortar – he is flanked by storage vessels, with the assurance of 'Chemists by Examination' printed beneath. The lower panel comprises a ship in full sail riding the waves at sunrise, and has the words 'Sea Breeze Saline' prominently displayed on its sails.

The 'Saline' was a noted proprietary medicine, produced in Leicester at the end of the nineteenth and during the first

half of the twentieth centuries, initially by Thomas Edward Butler and his son James Arthur Butler, and later by Thomas's grandson Arthur Harry Butler. This article seeks to find out who these people were who must have enjoyed considerable success in order to afford to build what was so large a chemists shop on the newly-widened High Street in 1904. It looks at the development of this business against the background of the conditions which were likely to affect the health of the expanding population of Leicester, and of developments in pharmacy, spanning the period between 1840 when Thomas Edward Butler first established the business, and 1926 when his son James died, concluding with a brief look at the eventual demise of the business following the death of Arthur Harry in 1946.



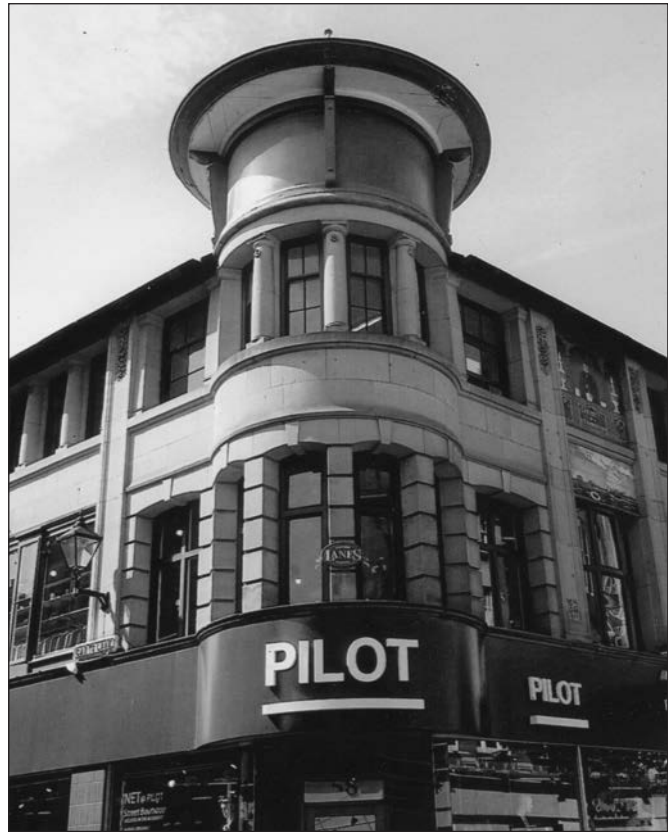
Decorative tiled panels which can be seen above 58 High Street, Leicester.

Thomas Edward Butler was born in Leicester c1820, the son of Thomas Butler Senior, who appears to have been a boot-and shoemaker, living in Cank Street in 1827. (1) In 1839, the year before he established his first chemist business, Thomas Edward was baptised at Harvey Lane Chapel, where his father had taken him as a child to hear Robert Hall preach. (2) Many years later, the Reverend J. Cornish, delivering the eulogy at Thomas' funeral in 1904, spoke of 'the Christian zeal which animated Thomas from the moment of his conversion up to the last'. (3) This 'zeal' perhaps helps to explain Thomas' wish to alleviate the suffering of the poor, whose living conditions in the town, gave rise to disease and early death.

Thomas opened his first chemist shop in new premises in Leicester's Sanvey Gate in 1840 (4), and like most chemists shops of the nineteenth century, it would probably have sold patent medicines and herbs alongside foodstuffs, toilet articles, oils and candles. The population of Leicester in 1841 was 49,934, having increased from 39,306 in 1831. By 1841, the medical needs of this growing population were met by twenty-seven chemists and druggists, two patent medicine vendors, five physicians and thirty-one surgeons. (5) The number of chemists and druggists reflects the considerable growth in self-styled chemists and druggists in the early part of the nineteenth century, when anyone could open a chemist shop and supply any remedy they chose, from harmless coloured water, to the most toxic substances without regulation. (6) In 1844, H. W. Rumsey, giving evidence to a Select Committee on Medical Poor Relief, described how, 'the ignorant and uninformed', in preference to a qualified physician, used the druggist's shop, where a diagnosis was arrived at by a mere glance of the shopman at the customer and treatment prescribed. 'The inevitable results to the community are fearful loss of life and destruction of health.' (7)

The area surrounding Thomas' Sanvey Gate chemist shop was poor, with many houses overcrowded as the town struggled to accommodate the growing population. New housing was being built, but was dense and with inadequate ventilation, having doors and windows on one side only which people were reluctant to leave open because, as George Bown reported to the Council in 1846, the accumulation of filth was 'highly prejudicial and dangerous to the inhabitants'. In the worst parts of the town, life expectancy was less than seventeen years. (8) Many of these people would have been too poor to afford chemists' medicines, and would have turned instead to itinerant quacks or 'wise women'. (9) Others tried alterative measures. Tom Barclay, a child in Leicester in the 1850s, described how his mother, a poor Irish immigrant, took her children, suffering from 'chin cough', later thought by him to probably be whooping cough, to church. There they knelt before the altar rails and, 'the kind priest gave us a drink out of the

sacramental chalice; I don't know was the liquor wine or water, or whether it cured us'. (10) There was much scope for the work of a young chemist in 1840s Leicester.



58 High Street and the corner of Carts Lane, Leicester today.

Information about Thomas Butler's knowledge of medicines in 1840 can only be speculative. He may have been apprenticed to one of the chemists in the town, perhaps to John Butler, possibly a relative who had a shop in Belgrave Gate in 1835, or he may have been influenced by self-styled Dr Coffin, who revived the use of more affordable herbs as medicines, particularly in the industrial towns of the north of England and the Midlands, where memory of traditional remedies was dying out. Thomas enjoyed success with his business in Sanvey Gate. He married Frances Hubbard of West Street, in 1842. By 1851, the family had grown to include four children – Thomas Edward, Sarah Ann, Frances and Emma. Other members of the household included Thomas's sister-in-law, one domestic servant, and two apprentices, one of whom was John Hallam who had his own chemist shop in Upper Brown Street by 1854.

Thomas Butler was concerned with more than the physical health of the people of Sanvey Gate and surrounding area. He was said to be a pioneer when he began a Sunday school class for infants in Sanvey Gate, as well as classes for the young men and women of the district. (11) He visited the sick and dying in the neighbourhood. Joseph Dare reported, in 1849, the resentment such perceived interference caused among the ordained clergy when he wrote of an aged mother and her dying son whom Thomas had visited. In the course

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of two visits by the clergy of a nearby church, the mother was ordered to keep Thomas Butler away from her son if she wished the clergy to visit him. On both occasions, the mother refused, saying that her family and others among the poor 'had often experienced the kindness of that gentleman in seasons of affliction and death'. (12) The Vicar 'seemed to be filled with astonishment that such a man dare exercise holy office and minister in things sacred' and again asked the woman to forbid Mr Butler to visit her son. The woman would not, and on being asked what Mr Butler did when he called, she replied, 'he reads and prays by them'. (13) For many years, Thomas Butler was a deacon of Harvey Lane Chapel and, with his friend Samuel Baines, was a lay-preacher who opened Sunday schools in Whetstone and Birstall, walking there and back, 'teaching and preaching and visiting every house in the village, getting strange and interesting experience'. (14)

The Pharmaceutical Society was formed in 1841 to improve the education of chemists by running courses and improving standards of training. By 1842, it had two thousand members and examinations were introduced in 1852 for those wishing to call themselves pharmaceutical chemists. Thomas Butler joined the Pharmaceutical Society on 1st June 1853 and registered as a pharmaceutical chemist on 31st December 1868. (15)

During the 1840s and 1850s, attempts were made to make Leicester a healthier place in which to live, with street cleaning introduced, and minimum distances between houses and pig sties stipulated, as well as improvements to the water supply. However, the latter continued to be polluted because of an inadequate sewerage system, which did not function properly until nearly the end of the century. Given this, the insanitary housing conditions of many, and the poverty, particularly at times of unemployment, it is unsurprising that, during the 1850s, the health of many remained poor.

Thomas and his family moved to 11 Grape Street, off East Bond Street, during the 1850s, although he kept his shop in Sanvey Gate. His wife, Frances and her baby, died in childbirth in November 1859. By 1861, Thomas' eldest son, Thomas, was apprenticed to his father, whilst his eldest daughter, Sarah, ran the household with the help of a servant.

The 1860s was a decade of expansion for Leicester with the growth of shoe manufacturing, the development of engineering to provide machinery for the industry and the increasing mechanisation of hosiery manufacture (16). The number of working mothers in this industry grew considerably, and their absence from home was blamed, in part, for the continuing high level of infant mortality in Leicester. (17) In 1871, the infant mortality rate reached 252.4 per 1,000 (18), a level which was ascribed to outbreaks of illness, the poor physical condition of many

babies at birth, inadequate hygiene and poisonous drugs given to soothe babies. (19) Some deaths could no doubt be attributed to these causes but by this time, the sewerage system had serious failings due to the rapidly increasing population, giving rise to disease and death, particularly among the most vulnerable. (20) Thomas' own daughter, Emma Jane, died aged sixteen in 1864. Two years later, Thomas re-married, his second wife being Sarah Thornton, aged forty-six, a stocking maker from Walton, near Lutterworth.

Following the Pharmacy Act, 1868 it was unlawful for any unqualified person to sell or dispense poisons or call themselves a chemist, druggist or pharmacist, and the Pharmaceutical Society's examinations became compulsory for those wishing to practise as chemists. The Leicester Chemists' Association was formed in February 1869 for 'the Educational Improvement of Chemists' Assistants and Apprentices'. (21) James Arthur Butler, aged seventeen, by this time apprenticed to his father, was one of the nineteen founder members, paying an annual subscription of five shillings. It was proposed that classes would be held in arithmetic, Latin, Materia Medica, botany and chemistry. The following extract from the programme for 1880 gives a flavour of the subjects covered in the weekly classes:

Jan. 19th, Circulation of the Blood, Mr. G.M. Winter
 March 31st, Mnemonics, Mr. Cowen
 June 9th, Flowers, their Structure and Arrangement, Mr. Lewitt
 June 16th, Water, its Forms and Properties, Mr. Plant
 June 30th, Arsenicum, Mr. Burford. (22)

Most of these classes were held in the evening, beginning at 8.30pm, but sometimes the apprentices were required to attend before their working day began. For example, on June 17th 1889, a class in practical botany, led by Mr S. F. Burford FCS, was held at the Abbey Park Botanic Garden at 6.30am. Perhaps to encourage participation, a prize was to be awarded at the end of the session. (23)

Thomas, his wife and four of his children were still living at 41 Sanvey Gate, in 1871. His wife Sarah was away on the night of the census, visiting Susannah Knight, in Narborough. His daughter Fanny, aged twenty four, was a dressmaker, James Arthur, aged nineteen, was still apprenticed to his father, Anne Selina, aged eighteen, helped with domestic duties, while his youngest son Henry Alfred, was apprenticed to a carpenter. Also present were his grandson John Thornton, aged six, Arthur Perteve, a curate at St. Margaret's Church and fifteen year old Agnes Burditt, a domestic servant. The family retained ownership of 41 Sanvey Gate for many years. In 1881, it was the home of daughter Fanny, her husband John Booth and their two children and ten years later, son James and his family were living there.

Eventually, Thomas Butler acquired all the properties between numbers 41 and 51 Sanvey Gate. However, by 1881, following the death of his son, Henry Alfred, in October 1877, Thomas and Sarah moved to 'The Retreat' Narborough, where he became very involved in the local churches, in particular, that of Huncote.

James Arthur Butler joined his father as a partner in the business in 1878, having passed the minor examination of the Pharmaceutical Society and becoming registered in April 1875. (24) Thomas' eldest son, also named Thomas, who had been apprenticed to his father in 1861, had left pharmacy and by 1881, was a physician, living in Kingston-on-Thames with his wife Elizabeth and three young sons, all of whom were born in Somerset East, South Africa.

By the 1870s people in Leicester, as in other industrial towns, had greater security of employment and more money. Demand for patent medicines increased as many people preferred them to traditional remedies. They were available from not only chemists but also grocers, hairdressers and publicans. Amazing claims were made for them. For example, 'Dr. William's Pink Pills for Pale People' advertised that they would 'supply Good Rich Blood, building up the system against the ravages of deadly diseases and restoring lost strength'. In order to be cured of a range of ailments, from anaemia to paralysis, people were advised to ask for them by their full name, price 2s. 9d. per box. (25)

It was against this background that Thomas Butler and his son James developed their own patent medicine, 'Sea Breeze Saline' as featured later on the High Street advertisement. It was a headache cure and daily tonic, said to be especially beneficial for the liver. It may have contained ingredients similar to Eno's Fruit Salts, namely, equal quantities of bicarbonate of soda, tartaric acid, Rochelle salts, a half quantity of cream of tartar and a fourfold quantity of finely powdered sugar. The Butler business was also manufacturing citrate of magnesia, herb beer extract and other summer beverages (26), which they supplied to many grocers' shops in the town and surrounding area.

By 1883, Thomas and James had three additional chemist shops under the company name of T. E. Butler & Son - one at 34 Waterloo Street, in the rapidly developing area near the railway station, another at 67 Loughborough Road, in the village of Belgrave, and another at 124 Birstall Street, to

the east of the town centre. The company paid for a highlighted entry in the 1887 edition of Wright's Directory, describing themselves as 'druggists, wholesale grocers and drysaltery dealers'. They continued to find suitable shops and ceased trading from others, until in 1904, they were trading at 41-51 Sanvey Gate, 22 Loseby Lane, 3 Hinckley Road, 82-84 Belgrave Road, 109a King Richards Road, 232 Loughborough Road, 170b Belgrave Gate, 83 Upper Conduit Street, 163 Fosse Road North and 1 Oxendon Street. (27) The manufacturing and wholesale arm of the business was carried out at 2-10 Town Hall Lane. Of the forty chemists serving Leicester's population of 211,000, Thomas Butler's business was the largest. At the time of his death, Thomas Butler was described as being familiar with and giving trusted advice in the districts where he carried on business. (28)

During the 1890s, Thomas and James Butler had taken Thomas' grandson Horace Moore Thornton into the partnership. However, on May 10th 1898, the London Gazette announced the dissolution by mutual consent of the partnership from first day of January 1898.

Drink Sea Breeze.

The Best **SPRING MEDICINE** for **SICK HEAD-ACHE.** For **INDIGESTION.** For **CHILDREN.**
For **ADULTS.** For **BILIOUSNESS,** etc.

INVIGORATING. COOLING. HEALTH-GIVING.

No Household complete without **Sea Breeze!** Sold by every Shopkeeper in Town and County, in Air-tight, Enamelled Tins, $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb. 3d.; $\frac{1}{4}$ -lb. 6d.; 1-lb. 1s.; and Family Tins 2s. 6d. Protected and Registered.

Sea Breeze!

Sea Breeze!

Good for The Blues.



BUTLER'S
Sea * Breeze

HAS TROOPS OF ADMIRERS.

ANOTHER GOOD THING.

TAKE COUNSEL



See that you get -

BUTLER'S

Fevers and Colds are and will be very Prevalent. Don't Neglect! Procure our Powders at once!

BUTLER'S INFLUENZA POWDERS
FOR FEVERS.

BUTLER'S FEVER POWDERS
FOR COLDS.

BUTLER'S INFLUENZA POWDERS
FOR SORE THROATS.

Feverish Heats, Measles, etc., immediately subdued.
Suitable alike for Young and Old.
Perfectly Safe and Agreeable to take.

AN ADMIRABLE MEDICINE TO HAVE IN THE HOUSE. ALWAYS READY.

Sold in Packets 4d., 6d., and 1s. each. Fancy Box 2s. 6d., and by Agents 3 Powders for 2d.

£2 REWARD TO ANY PERSON PROVING A FRAUDULENT SALE.

SOLE MAKERS AND INVENTORS:

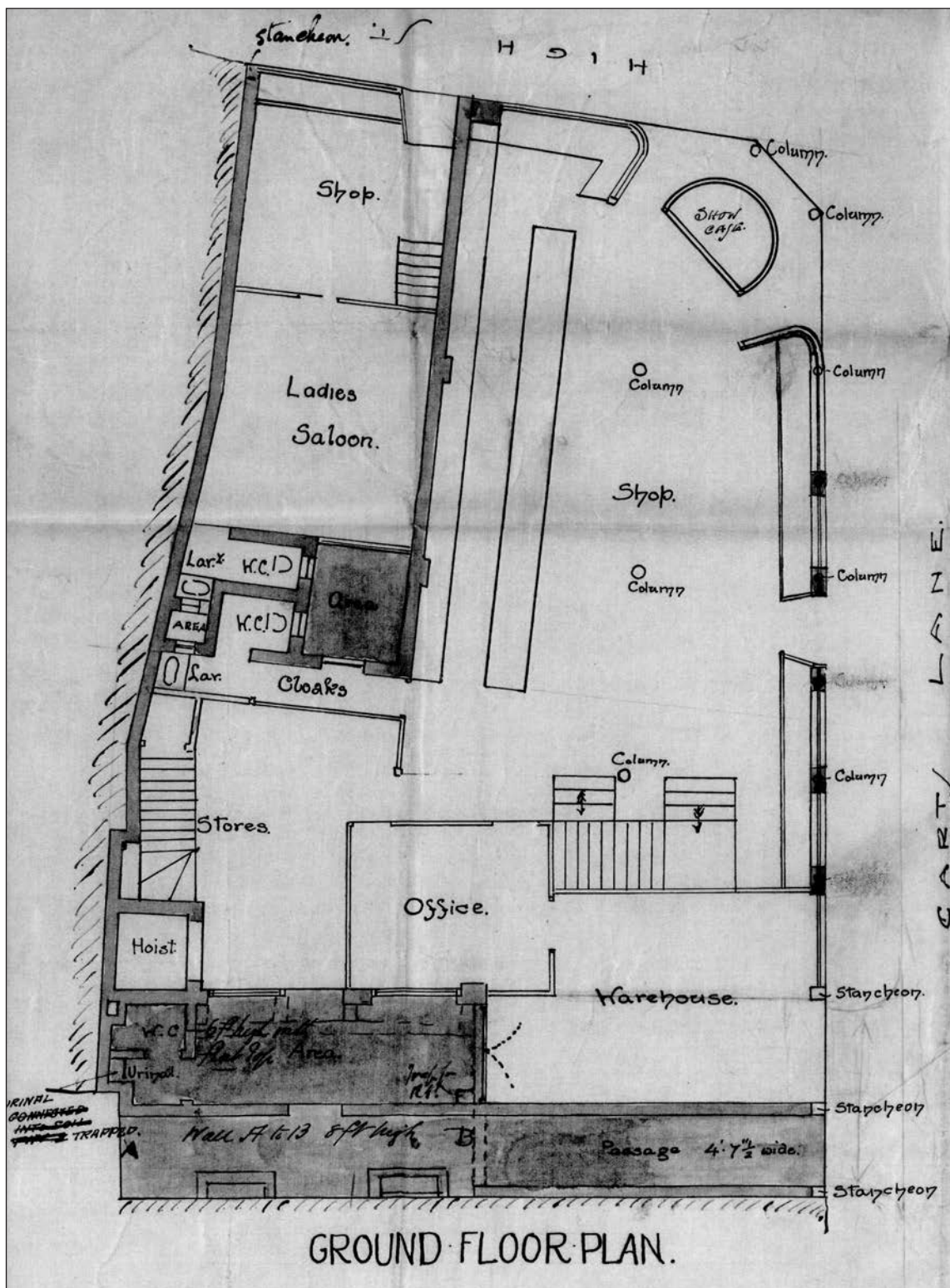
T. E. BUTLER, SON, & CO.,
Sea Breeze Factory,
TOWN HALL LANE AND BRANCHES, LEICESTER.

Advertisement for 'Sea Breeze Saline', Leicester Pioneer, 17th October 1903.

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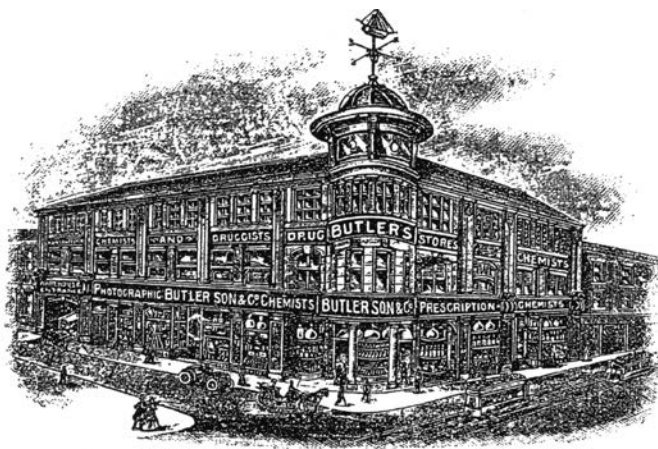
In 1903, Thomas Butler, Son & Co. had a change of direction. Perhaps from their Town Hall Lane premises, they had watched the widening of the High Street and realised that it would attract many more people to shop in that area. Thomas was in his eighties by this time and no doubt James had more input into the business. By this time, people had more money to spend on non-essential items. Photography was increasing in popularity as a hobby for the more affluent

and chemists were ideally suited to supply much of their equipment. For whatever reason, the Butlers decided to build a shop, much larger than anything they had previously owned. The Council agreed early in 1903 to sell surplus land on the corner of the High Street and Carts Lane to T.E. Butler, Son & Co. The Butlers bought three hundred and sixty one and a quarter square yards of land for £6,750 with immediate plans to start building. (29)



Ground floor plan of 58 and 60 High Street Leicester. (Reproduced by permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland).

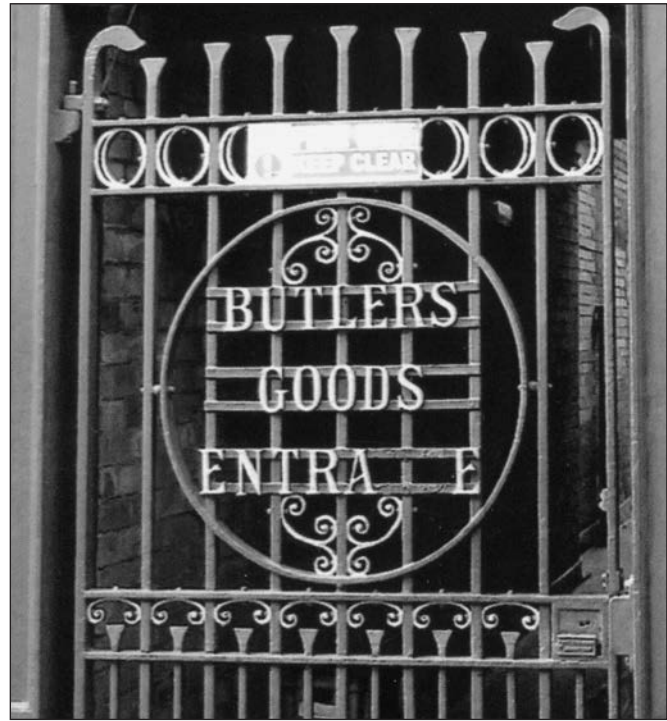
The architect was Arthur E. Sawday, whose plans for a large shop, with a basement, and two floors above the shop, incorporating a smaller ground floor shop next door, facing the High Street, were approved in September 1903. When the building was completed at the end of 1904, it was described as 'one of the best bits of street architecture in the town' (30), and 'probably the finest retail pharmacy in the country', the outside having pilasters of 'artistic designs in Doulton ware, highly glazed and coloured'. (31) The ship, Thomas Butler's trademark, was part of the weather vane, surmounting the dome of the building, but this is no longer in place. Sadly, Thomas Butler did not live to see the opening of the shop, having been ill for some time, he died on December 4th 1904. However, his image remains since the apothecary, in the decorative panel of glazed terracotta tiles, made by the Istock company, Hathernware, is described as 'a striking reproduction of the late Mr. T. E. Butler. (32) We are also reminded, when we look at the panel, of how usual it was to use opiates in pharmacy given what look like poppy seed heads on either side of the words, 'Chemists by Examination'. Corner sites in Leicester often feature architecturally striking buildings and Arthur Sawday's design at 58 High Street is no exception with its nautical theme, corner tower and dome reminiscent of a lighthouse. The round windows beneath the dome, some of which have the image of a pestle and mortar and 'est. 1840' moulded into them, were lit at night by two large red-globed electric lamps. (33)



Drawing of the new Butler Pharmacy, 58 and 60 High Street, Leicester, as depicted in the Chemist and Druggist 18th February, 1905.

Both the exterior and the interior of the shop were designed to impress. The large semi-circular display case, immediately inside the corner entrance, was one of many display cases. Messrs. Parnall and Sons Ltd. of Bristol made all the fittings of polished, solid mahogany and the whole shop was lit by 'a profusion of electric lights', which like the electric lift, was powered by a generator in the basement. It was James Butler's wish to make it 'the finest genuine chemist's business in the country'. (34) Was this a reference to the fast-expanding country-wide empire of his

contemporary and near neighbour, Jesse Boot of Nottingham, who had never passed any of the Pharmaceutical Society's examinations, and some of whose shops included libraries and cafes? (35)



Decorative ironwork which can still be seen at the entrance to 10 Carts Lane, Leicester.

The wrought iron gate of the goods entrance in Carts Lane remains in place. All supplies would have been brought through here. Many of the bulkier items would have been stored in the large basement area, while on the first floor, rooms accommodated James Butler's private office, patent medicines, foods, sundries, surgical instruments, photographic equipment and the preparation of 'Sea Breeze'. The top floor was used as a drying, bottling and storage room. The cost of the whole enterprise was estimated by James Butler to be £12,000. (36) Today, the ground floor frontage of the Pilot clothes shop has modernised windows and cladding covers the exterior walls. However, the small shop next door, 'Anabis', 60, High Street, still retains the curved glass windows and iron work that was once a feature of the larger shop. In 1905, the smaller shop was let to William T. Callard, a baker, who remained there for a number of years.

The opening of James Butler's grand chemist shop on High Street took place on Thursday, 9th February 1905, when more than a hundred guests were invited to inspect the premises. Many of the 'great and good' of Leicester were present, including the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress Alderman and Mrs Sawday, Alderman Windley, Canon Sanders, Alderman Collins, Colonel Harvey, the Borough Coroner Dr Williams, Dr Hancock, Dr Coleman, the Reverend Cornish, Mr A. F. Holland, Chairman of the Board

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of Guardians, and other professional people and their wives. The Merrall Brothers' Orchestra, with singers Miss Wilby and Miss Chamberlain, provided the musical accompaniment to the afternoon tea and it was the Merrall Brothers' band, with Miss Maud Clark, Miss Chamberlain and Mr H. Warner, who played the music at the evening celebrations when an even greater number of guests were invited to a whist drive on the first floor, and a dance and concert on the second floor. (37) The shop opened to the public on the following day.

The displays, sometimes lit by electric light, would have been designed to attract the eyes of customers by arranging many items of the same product together for maximum impact. The shop assistants, responsible for the presentation and maintenance of the displays, would have been carefully chosen, and by the beginning of the twentieth century, female assistants were required in order to avoid embarrassment to women customers as pharmacists and their apprentices were invariably male. It is probable that many of T. E. Butler, Son & Co. shop assistants were recruited from the congregation at Harvey Lane Chapel from girls of families that they knew, for it would have been important for them to know that members of staff were discreet, clean and presentable.

By 1896, Thomas Edward Butler and his wife Sarah had moved back to Leicester, making their home first at 25 Evington Road, and by 1898, at 47 St Albans Road. It was here that Thomas died, aged eighty-four on 4th December 1904. The funeral of 'the Grand Old Man' of Harvey Lane Chapel (38), was conducted by the Reverend J. Cornish, and attended by a large congregation, including fellow chemists, some of his employees, members of the church at Huncote and about thirty members of Thomas' Old People's Bible class, in addition to family members and civic dignitaries. The Reverend Cornish spoke of Thomas' work for the chapel since 1839, his generosity, 'his delight in the Scriptures and his prayerfulness'. (39) It was said that his concern for the moral and spiritual welfare of his fellow men would live long in the memories of those who had come into contact with him. (40) He is buried at Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester.

In his will, Thomas left almost all of his estate in trust to his wife, with James Arthur Butler inheriting the total business after her death. His library, he asked to be divided between those of his children living in England at the time of his death. Was this an indication that his son Thomas and his family had returned to South Africa? There was no mention of them being present at the funeral, and apart from son Thomas' wife Elizabeth receiving a legacy of £50, which was to go to their son Archibald if she predeceased her father-in-law, they were not beneficiaries of Thomas' will. His other children or, if they had died, then their spouses,

were all recipients of pecuniary bequests, which were to be paid after the death of Sarah, his wife, and the residue of his £5,531 9s. 10d. estate was to be paid to Harvey Lane Chapel for the continuation of their mission work, also at this time. Sarah Butler died in February 1906, leaving legacies to her niece, Anne Hallam, and Anne's husband William, to her friend, Rose Conway, to Helen Butler, wife of James Arthur, with the residue to be divided between the children of her late nephew, John Moore Thornton, the husband of Sarah, eldest daughter of Thomas Edward Butler.



Butler's 'Sea Breeze' tonic. (Photograph by Philip R. French, reproduced by permission of Leicester City Arts & Museum Service.)

After Thomas Butler's death, several of the smaller shops were closed with only the High Street shop, 51 Sanvey Gate, 109a King Richards Road and 163 Fosse Road North, as well as the manufacturing base in Town Hall Lane, being retained by 1906. (41) The business was further consolidated by 1914, with manufacturing transferred to 10 Carts Lane, the goods entrance giving access to the rear of the High Street premises where the basement and upper floors were used for the production of 'Sea Breeze Saline', fever powders and other popular remedies, as well as the bottling and packaging of commodities, bought in bulk, like glycerine and liquid paraffin. The company supplied many village shops with these and with grocery items. The High Street shop was under the management of George Trant, and the Sanvey Gate shop, which was also an opticians, was managed by William Allwood. (42) By 1922, both of these shops were rented out, 58 High Street to Needham Ltd., while William Allwood rented 51 Sanvey Gate. The wholesale and manufacturing business continued to be run by James Butler and his son Arthur from 10 Carts Lane. (43)

James Arthur Butler died in November 1926, aged seventy-five, leaving an estate valued at £19,990 14s. 3d. At the time of his death, he was highly esteemed, in public and private life, alike. Like his father, he, too, had been involved with the work of Harvey Lane Chapel, having given twenty-five years continuous work to the Sunday school. He had been elected to the Leicester Board of Guardians in 1882 and was the chairman from 1905-1907, after which he retired from Poor Law work. (43) In 1875, he had married Ellen Jackson, and they had three children – Millicent, Arthur Harry, and Ethel. They lived in turn in King Richards Road, Sanvey Gate and Fosse Road North, all roads in which the Butlers had shops, but James and his family did not live above the shop at any of these addresses. By 1914, having appointed managers to his shops, the family moved to 'The Gables', New Birstall, and by 1922, they had moved further out to 'South View', Quorn. At the time of his death, he was living at 'Woodside', Park Road, Birstall with his second wife, Annie. In his will, he left his business, which he stipulated should continue under the name of T. E. Butler, Son & Co., including the trade name of 'Sea Breeze', to his son, Arthur Harry, with the express desire that he employ his sisters, giving them 'adequate salaries' as long as they wished to be employed. Arthur was also to pay his stepmother £2 per week on a Saturday. After leaving legacies of £50 to Frederick Hinton Pick, and £25 to Beatrice Margaret Pallett, both of whom were long-serving employees, a legacy of £25 to his daughter-in-law, Lillian Butler, and insurance money to his wife, the rest of his estate was to be divided equally between his three children.

The High Street shop continued to be known as Butler's Pharmacy and Chemists, although it was rented to William

Allwood in 1926, Squire & Co. of Birmingham in 1929, and Taylors Cash Chemists in 1932. Henry Wigfall & Son, cycle and radio dealers, changed the nature of the shop in 1936, while Butler's wholesale business continued at 10 Carts Lane, using the basement and upper floors of the High Street building. The electric hoist facilitated the movement of goods between floors.

After his father's death, Arthur Harry managed the business until his death in 1946, aged sixty-one. There being no family successor to assume responsibility for the business, a manager, Mr Stimpson was appointed. With the introduction of the National Health Service in 1948 which provided free prescriptions, and with better advertising from their competitors for products such as Andrews Liver Salts and Carr's Fever Powders, demand for the Butler products was reduced, and manufacture of them ceased in the 1950s. The wholesale business continued to supply patent medicines, cleaning materials and groceries to village shops, and to the grocers' shops serving the new council estates as they were built around Leicester. However, with increased competition, retaining this business was difficult, and company profits declined. Mr Stimpson had ideas to revitalise the business by introducing new lines such as haberdashery and pet food, but he died suddenly in 1959 before he had had time to bring about the necessary change. After the death of Lillian Butler in 1960, aged eighty, death duties had to be paid. The company was wound up in 1962 after the sale of all its assets, including the High Street building where many of the original fixtures and fittings had been stored in the basement since the shop's change of use in 1936.



Women filling bottles, thought to be at Carts Lane, early decades of the twentieth century. (Reproduced by permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.)

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Surprisingly, Thomas Edward Butler has a legacy in South Africa. His son, Thomas Edward, the physician, and his family, did return to Cape Province, where Thomas practised as a doctor. The founder of the company's great- great grandson, Frank S. Butler, informs me that Archibald Thornton Butler trained as a chemist and, early in his career, was given the formula for his grandfather's headache powder, naming it 'Grandpa's Headache Powder'. Frank Butler writes that the powder, still known by this name, remains a commercial success in South Africa. Archibald's son, Reginald Edward Thornton Butler, established a pharmacy in Grahamstown, South Africa, and the business there still retains the name R. E. T. Butler.

This research, which began with an old and beautiful advertisement on a building in High Street Leicester, has followed the development of a company, which began with a small chemist's shop, serving the needs of people in a poor area of Leicester, and ended with a wholesale business run from a prestigious building in one of the main streets of the town, and a legacy in South Africa. During its growth, the business was affected firstly by increased regulation brought about by the formation of the Pharmaceutical Society in the nineteenth century, and secondly, by the growing prosperity of the people of Leicester. T. E. Butler, Son & Co. responded to the increasing demand for proprietary medicines by making one of their own, which continued in production for half a century. The business tried to adapt to changing circumstances during the twentieth century, but the death of Mr Stimpson before he could implement changes to modernise and expand the company, followed by the death of Lilian Butler and the payment of taxes, caused its eventual closure. The discovery of the life of a man, now forgotten, who cared about the welfare of the poor in his town, and through his life and work, tried to relieve some of their misery, was unexpected. The fine building that he and his son commissioned has been altered to suit the needs of twenty-first century retailers, but it is most satisfying to know that the building and the advertisement are listed, and that the 'apothecary' has a name. Thomas Edward Butler deserves no less.

Acknowledgements:

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