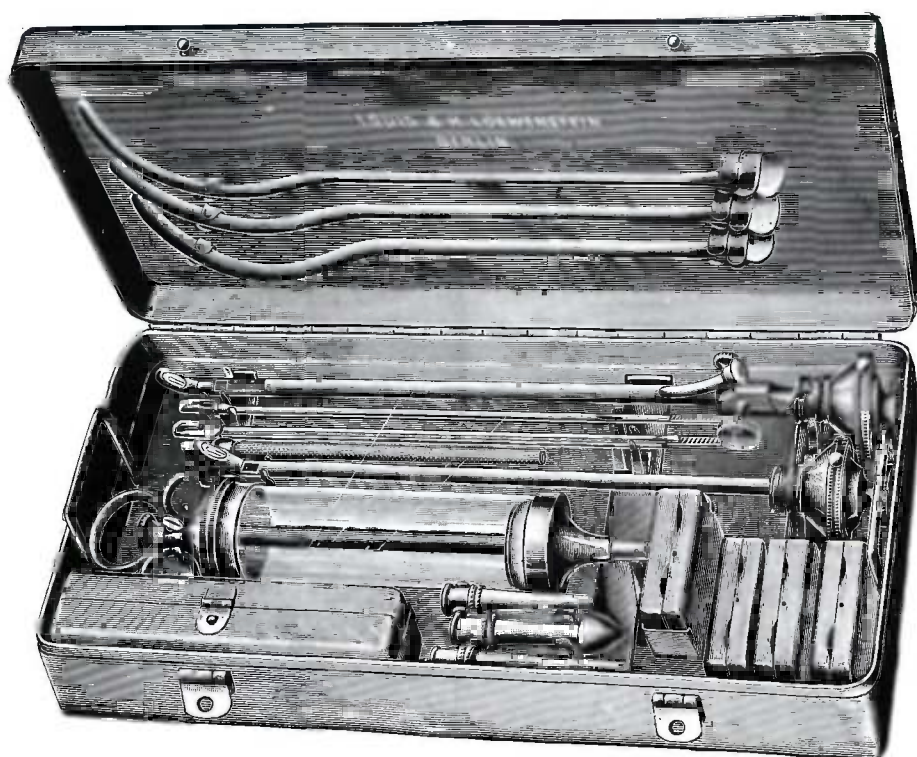


Medical Instrument Catalogues

A microfiche collection of sales catalogues of medical instrument makers who have been advertising in printed matter since the 18th century

Catalogues from Museum Boerhaave, Leiden and the Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds.



Advisor: Drs K.S. Grooss, Museum Boerhaave, Leiden

Medical Instrument Catalogues

From trade card to sales catalogue, an illustrated history of medical instruments which gives a good idea of the range of instruments employed in medical procedures. The microfiche collection offered here is an indispensable source of information for any researcher dealing with the history of medicine.

Ever since the 18th century, medical instrument makers have been using printed matter to advertise their products. This was initially done using business cards, also referred to as 'trade cards'. An instrument maker's 'trade card' bore not only his name and the name of his workshop but also depictions of the instruments which could be purchased from him. Each of these instruments was furnished with the instrument maker's mark, a symbol stamped into the metal by the instrument maker himself. In many cases, the symbol pertained either to the instrument maker's name or to that of his workshop.

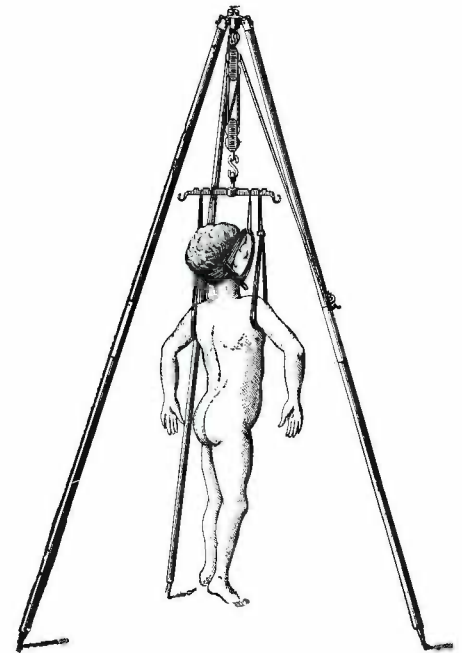
In the 19th century, partly due to the discovery of anaesthesia, the number of types of operations which could be carried out increased sharply. At the same time, the range of instruments which were used in such operations became more extensive. From that time on, it was no longer possible for instrument makers to display all of the instruments which they manufactured on a single 'trade card'. Thus pamphlets were introduced, later to be followed by small catalogues, in which the

instrument makers presented their wares. Although the first sales catalogues were not exactly richly illustrated, they underwent a marked change in this respect during the second half of the 19th century. The highly illustrated sales catalogues dating from the end of the last century and the beginning of this century, provide a good idea of the range of instruments employed in medical procedures.

Thus, as regards deriving greater insights into the medical procedures of the period, medical sales catalogues are an indispensable source of information. In many instances it is only possible to identify given instruments by consulting several different sales catalogues. It is often the case that the examination of such catalogues, in addition to yielding information about the unknown instrument itself, at the same time results in a great deal being learned about instruments used in combination with this instrument. It is sometimes possible, by this means, to reconstruct the course of an operation.

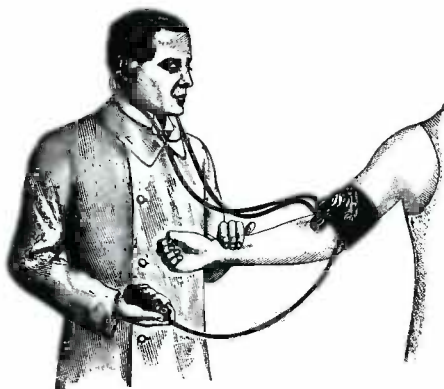
The microfiche edition

It can be concluded, from the above, that sales catalogues are indispensable, both for the managers of medical collections and for historians concerned with the practical aspects of the history of medicine. Most catalogues are, unfortunately, exceptionally rare. This has made them so extraordinarily expensive that the majority of libraries and private collectors have been unable to build up representative collections. The collection which is presented here, in microfiche form, therefore offers a unique opportunity to purchase valuable material at a relatively low price.



Suspension apparatus. Drapier & Fils. Instruments de Chirurgie. 1937.

Another problem is that the great majority of medical sales catalogues were printed on very poor quality paper. This can crack and fragment whilst the catalogue is being examined. It is therefore a good thing that this important source of information is being preserved, and opened up, by means of microfiche. This allows frequent use without our having to be afraid that this important source of information will eventually be lost to us for ever.



Sphygmomanometer. Drapier & Fils. Instruments de Chirurgie. 1937.

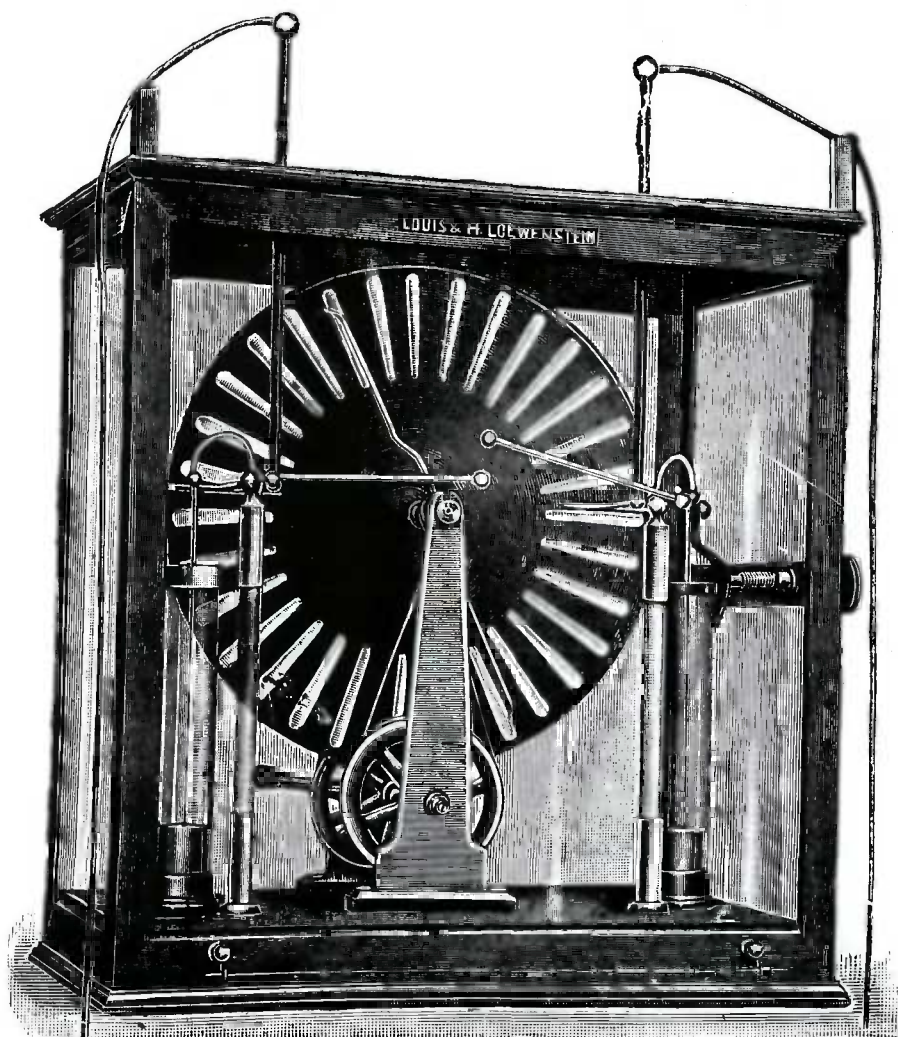
The collection

The collection contains 322 selected catalogues from the richly endowed library of Museum Boerhaave, at Leiden, and 372 catalogues from the Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds.

The printed guide

Two printed guides listing the sales catalogues arranged by country and company give access to the microfiche collection. Special indexes are composed by subject (c. 100 subjects) and company.

Scope	694 sales catalogues
Number of fiche	2,146
Size of fiche	105 x 148 mm
Film type	Positive silver halide
Reduction ratio	Varies according to the size of the original
Internal finding aids	Eye-legible headers with catalogue numbers on each fiche
External finding aids	Two printed guides with indexes by subject and company
Storage	The microfiches are supplied in 11 sturdy plastic binders with dust cover
Order number	MI-1/1



Induction machine. Louis & H. Loewenstein. Elektromedizinische Instrumente und Apparate. 1909.