

Two Short Bios

By William A. Andersen, M.D.

Some of you, being familiar with Baltimore Historical Flasks, have heard of two flasks bearing the name, "Chapman." They are listed in the Baltimore Bottle Book in Group XIII, numbers 10 and 11.

John Lee Chapman was born at Fell's Point, Baltimore, in 1812. He began business as a



druggist in 1834 at the southwest corner of Baltimore and South Streets, moving in 1841 to the opposite side of South Street. About 1846, with his brother Jonathan Chapman, he took

over the glass-manufacturing firm formerly conducted by his uncle George Chapman. This lasted until the outbreak of the Civil War.

Chapman was elected mayor of Baltimore in 1862, 1864 and 1866. In 1869 he was appointed naval officer of the Port of Baltimore by President Grant and later became superintendent of the U. S. bonded warehouse there. He died Nov. 18, 1880.¹

Another bottle is well known to Baltimore bottle collectors, "Houck's Patent Panacea," which is number 373 on page 59 of the *Baltimore Bottle Book*.

Dr. Jacob Houck was born in Frederick, Md., where he became a leading merchant.

He came to Baltimore in 1828 and had a dry goods business at 121 West Baltimore St. In 1834 Houck placed on the market his "Botanic Panacea," which sold for \$1.50 a bottle.... Houck's laboratory in 1840 was at 10 So. Charles St., then moved to 16 Hanover Street, then 15 So. Liberty St. and in 1850 he was at 357 West Baltimore St. In 1851 Henry Houck had become proprietor at 8 So. Eutaw St.

Houck's Panacea was "prepared solely from vegetable matter" by Jacob Houck, 16 Hanover St., and according to his full page advertisement in Matchett's Baltimore Directory in 1842, "it may be taken with perfect safety by all ages and in all diseases...."

In later years Jacob Houck may have permitted others to prepare his popular panacea for sale under some licensing arrangement. Recently we have encountered this advertisement in the 1855 city directory of Nashville, Tenn.:

"Houck's Panacea, Dr. A. G. Goodlet, mfr. & proprietor of Houck's Improved Panacea and Goodlet's Vegetable Lineament. 29 1/2 No. Cherry St., Nashville, Tenn.

"These remedies have popular favor in the South and North. And should be in use by every family."

Some medicine bottles of the 1850's read: "Houck's / Vegetable Panacea / Nashville, Tenn. " and "Houck's / Vegetable Panacea / Goodlettsville, Tenn." ²



¹ Standard Catalogue of U.S. Tokens 1700 - 1900. R. Rulan. 2nd Edition 1997.

² Ibid.