

Ointment Pot Apothecary Poor Man's Friend Dr Roberts Bridport  
Beach & Barnicott

£1,350



REF: 11764

Height: 3.5 cm (1.4")

Diameter: 4.5 cm (1.8")

## Description

With a flared lip. Inscribed in bold, hollow lettering in blue. On one side ' Poor Man's Friend price 1/1/2 ' The other ' Prepared only by Beach & Barnicott successors to the late Dr Roberts, Bridport ' Some nibbling to the edges and discolouration Measures: diameter 4.5cm, 1 3/4" height 3.5cm, 1 1/4"

The 'Poor Man's Friend' ointment consists mainly of lard and fine English beeswax, plus calamel, sugar of lead, salts of mercury, oxide of zinc, oxide of bismuth, venetian red, oils of rose, bergamot and lavender. It would have been effective for the treatment of eczema and minor skin infections, mainly due to the zinc oxide.

The earliest pot state an inscription 'Prepared only by Dr. Roberts, Bridport'. Following these pots, Beach & Barnicott appears as successors to the late Dr. Roberts. A black print variation is produced after 1910 with a different print style. Two type of pot exist, one with a recessed rim, and the other the normal flared lip type. There are three prices for the pots. A very large size with a price of 4/6, a mid size pot with a price tag of 2/9 and the common pot with the price of 1/1½.

The pots carry a blue print and slight variations of print type are used, bold lettering, hollow lettering for example.

Dr. Giles Lawrence Roberts 1766-1834 Giles L. Roberts was born on 21st April 1766 at 'The Ship Inn' in West Bay, then known as Bridport Harbour. The Ship Inn was known locally as 'The Sloop', but in 1822 was renamed the 'Bridport Arms'. In his early years, Giles Roberts helped his parents run The Ship Inn. However, as his interest in medicine developed, Roberts set himself up as a chemist, opening a shop at West Street in 1788 and his trade and reputation grew. Although he had obtained a licence to draw blood, extract teeth and cauterise wounds, Roberts was criticised for his lack of formal medical qualifications. Giles Roberts was persuaded to enroll as a student at Guy's and St Thomas hospitals in London, where he obtained certificates to practice as a surgeon, physician and apothecary. Two years later in 1797, at 31 years of age, he was awarded an Honorary Medical Diploma (MD) from the Royal College and University of Aberdeen. In 1805, Doctor Giles Roberts opened his shop at 9 East Street, formally the Old George Inn where Charles II was almost captured by troops in 1651. Here he was able to set up a laboratory and give lectures. On a panel of the stone seat in Bucky Doo Square, there is reference to a pharmacist shop at 9 East Street. Roberts married Phoebe Brown from Shipton. They had one child, but died in infancy. In 1807, Dr Roberts was appointed Medical Attendant to the poor in Bridport, taking the opportunity to campaign for better hygiene and during a cholera epidemic, distributed at his own expense, a pamphlet on healthy living. He was known not to charge for giving medical advice. Dr Roberts was also a devout Methodist, actively preaching the gospel and opening chapels. He died in 1834 and was buried in St Mary's churchyard in Bridport, where a large obelisk marks his grave inscribed 'His Memory is Cherished Especially by the Poor with Grateful Feelings'. The pharmacy continued to manufacture his ointment under the names of Thomas Beach and John ...