

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910807910203321
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Titolo	The mighty healer : Thomas Holloway's victorian patent medicine empire // Verity Holloway
Pubbl/distr/stampa	South Yorkshire, [England] : , : Pen & Sword History, , 2016 ©2016
ISBN	1-4738-5570-5 1-4738-5568-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (225 pages) : illustrations
Disciplina	361.74
Soggetti	Philanthropists - England United Kingdom England Great Britain
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Sommario/riassunto	"Verity Holloway's nineteenth-century cousin Thomas Holloway's patent medicine empire was so ubiquitous, Charles Dickens commented that if you'd murdered someone with the name Holloway, you'd think their spirit had come back to torment you. Advertising as far away as the pyramids in Giza, it was said Holloway's Ointment could cure lesions on a wooden leg. Bottling leftover cooking grease in the kitchen of his parents' Cornish pub, Thomas's dubious cure-alls made him one of the richest self-made men in England. Promising to save respectable Victorian invalids 'FROM THE POINT OF DEATH' (his capitals), the self-proclaimed 'Professor' Holloway used his millions to build the enormous Gothic Holloway College and Holloway Sanatorium for the insane. But Thomas was a man of contradictions. To his contemporaries, he was simultaneously 'the greatest benefactor to ever live' and no better than a general who led millions to their deaths. Aware of the uselessness of his own products, he believed the placebo effect was well worth the subterfuge and never ridiculed his customers. A ruthless businessman, he was deeply in love with his wife and cared

for the education of young women. The Mighty Healer charts Thomas's rise and the realization of his worst fear - that rival company Beechams would one day take him over - plus the very Victorian squabbling over his fortune by his respectable and not-so-respectable relations. It draws on primary and secondary sources to ground Thomas's life in the social issues of the day, including women's education, Victorian mental healthcare, contemporary accounts of debtors' gaols, and of course the patent medicine trade of the mid-Victorian period; the people who took the medicine, and those who fiercely opposed it."--
