

Newspaper-Cutting

Date

1929-1930

Medium

Paper, card, ink

Description

Ten newspaper cuttings mounted together on acidic paper. Seven are from The Evening News: 'All Begun by One Small Boy', 8/3/1929 - an article about Richard Cuming and the collection; 'Veterans', 20/3/1929 - an article about the block toy soldiers (C04666-95) on display at the Cuming Museum; 'Fun at Table', 22/3/29 - an article about the mediaeval wooden tableware on display at the Cuming Museum. It is related to a Mazer cup (C01861), a Livery Company beechwood cup (C01868), and a Trencher (C01865) donated by Lovett; 'April Fool Jug', 1/4 /1929 - an article about a Doulton puzzle jug (C13067); 'The Little People's Spell', 9/4/1929 - an article and picture of the flint 'elf-dart' from County Antrim used to cure cows, on display at the Cuming Museum; 'Magic and Spells' - an article about objects of superstition on display at the Cuming Museum, with a picture of one of the miniature broom charms (C05273-4, 1916.001.034); 'Oliver Twist's Copper', 25/4/1929 -an article about the Parish Pump (C12925) and Copper (C05140), both on display at the Cuming Museum. It has a picture of the copper surrounded by bricks. On the reverse: The Nursing Times, 'Some Quaint London Relics', 15/2/1930 - an article about objects on display at the Cuming Museum; [...] Post, 'Superstitious Londoners. Present Day Belief in Charms. Exhibition of "Cures"', 12/3/1930 - an article about the Lovett Collection of Superstitions at the Cuming Museum; [...] Post, 'Superstitions', 12/3/1930 - an article about the charms on display at the Cuming Museum.

SUPERSTITIOUS LONDONERS

M. Post ————— 12-3-30

PRESENT DAY BELIEF IN CHARMS

EXHIBITION OF "CURES"

By Our Special Representative

Does the world become less superstitious? Judging from the exhibits in the Cuming Museum attached to the Southwark Public Library, the answer is emphatically in the negative.

This answer is the only possible one after seeing the collection of "charms," lucky tokens, and cures for all maladies collected from modern Londoners, by Mr. E. Lovett, of the Folk Lore Society, and increased by the curators of the museum.

Here is to be found the mandrake as a panacea for all ills, the twisted root of the black bryony shaped more or less like a human figure. The gipsy from whom Mr. Lovett obtained it told him that it "screamed like a child" as he pulled it from the ground. Here, too, are love charms, obtained in 1916 in London; one, a gum known as dragon's blood, to be used at midnight, usually on Fridays, to influence a lover; another, the tormentil root, to recover one that has been lost.

There are many "remedies" against illness. For whooping cough, take a hair from the back of the suffering child, place it between two slices of bread and butter and give it to a passing dog. If the dog swallows it the complaint passes to the dog.

PASSING IT ON

A woman told Mr. Lovett in 1915 that she had cured her child by this means. The idea of passing on the complaint appears to be common. Thus, to cure warts it is necessary to take a small stone for each wart, touch the warts with them, tie the stones in a parcel, and leave it on the footpath. The finder gets the warts and the first sufferer is cured.

The acorn appears to ward off lightning. This is a prevalent superstition, to be seen every day in houses where the blind-cord attachments are made in this shape. From stables in Chelsea come two charms to protect the horses from being bewitched. One

prevent the horses being devoured. One
a bone hung up for many years, had pre-
vented illness among the horses. The other
charm is a collection of old keys in a ram's
horn.

It can hardly be said that we have yet rid
ourselves of superstition.