



# Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

## Out of the Attic

### Leadbeater Drug Corporation was a family business

*Alexandria Times, October 11, 2018*

Image: John Leadbeater's Doctor of Pharmacy diploma. Office of Historic Alexandria.

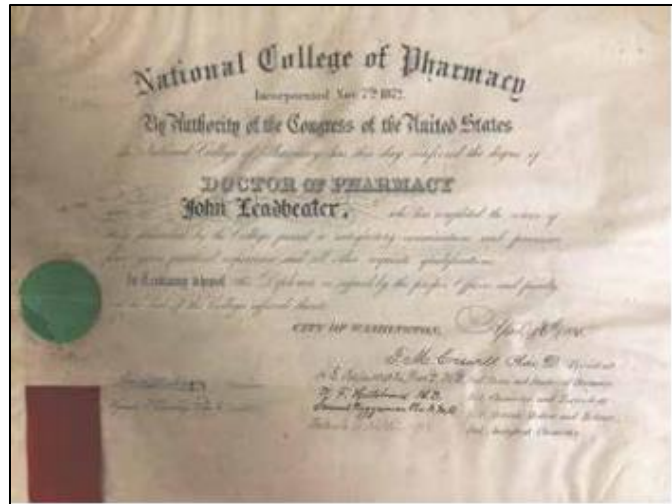
To celebrate National Pharmacists Month, a special document emerges from the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum archives. This Doctor of Pharmacy diploma was earned by John Leadbeater, one of the last proprietors to run the 141-year-old pharmacy business. Leadbeater, the great-grandson of the shop's founder Edward Stabler, was one of three brothers who ran the Leadbeater Drug Corporation, serving as the secretary and treasurer of the business.

Leadbeater's degree was granted by the National College of Pharmacy in Washington, D.C. in 1895. The college, founded in 1872 and later absorbed into The George Washington University, offered a formal course of instruction in pharmacy that went beyond the traditional apprenticeship method popular in the 18th- and early 19th-centuries.

The qualifications for the three-year degree required that the candidate be 21 years old, have four years of practical experience, complete three courses of instruction in chemistry, pharmacy, botany and toxicology and pass an exam of each subject of study. The fees for the course of study included a \$5 matriculation charge and \$60 per year for lectures and laboratory courses.

While most states did require that pharmacists be licensed, New York was the first state in 1905 to require a formal pharmacy degree as a requirement to apply for a pharmacy license. Other states, including Virginia, followed shortly thereafter. Surprisingly, Leadbeater was the first member of either the Stabler or Leadbeater families to receive a college degree in pharmacy. His father, grandfather and great-grandfathers had all served apprenticeships from four to six years.

In addition to his professional duties, Leadbeater served as a member of the Alexandria City Council and as the vice president of the Columbia Fire Company. Sadly, Leadbeater died of Bright's Disease at age 46 at his 504 Prince St. home in 1917. His brothers Clarence Leadbeater and Edward Stabler Leadbeater, Jr. continued the family business until it declared bankruptcy and closed in 1933.



*“Out of the Attic” is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as “Marking Time” and explored Alexandria’s history through collection items, historical*



## **Office of Historic Alexandria City of Alexandria, Virginia**

---

*images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into “Out of the Attic” and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.*

*These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by staff of the Office of Historic Alexandria.*