

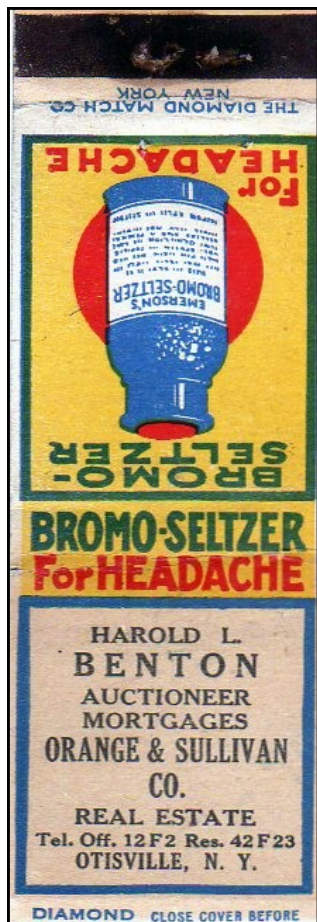
City Beat

There are eight million stories in my albums. This is one of them...

Bromo-Seltzer (acetaminophen, sodium bicarbonate, and citric acid), was a brand of antacid to relieve pain occurring together with heartburn, upset stomach, or acid indigestion. First produced by inventor Isaac E. Emerson's drug company of Baltimore, Maryland, in 1888, Bromo-Seltzer was sold in the United States in the form of effervescent granules which must be mixed with water before ingestion.

The product took its name from a component of the original formula, sodium bromide. Each dose contained 3.2 mEq/teaspoon of this active ingredient. Bromides are a class of tranquilizers that were withdrawn from the U.S. market in 1975 due to their toxicity. Their sedative effect probably accounted for Bromo-Seltzer's popularity as a remedy for hangovers. Early formulas also used, as the analgesic ingredient, acetanilide, now known as a poisonous substance.

Bromo-Seltzer's main offices and main factory were located in downtown Baltimore, Maryland, at the corner of West Lombard and South Eutaw Streets. The factory's most notable feature was the clock tower, built in 1911, which featured "BROMOSELTZER" in place of the numbers on all four clock faces. The tower was patterned on the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, Italy; it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The tower originally had a 51 ft Bromo-Seltzer bottle, glowing blue and rotating. The sign weighed 20 tons, included 314 incandescent light bulbs, and was topped with a crown. The sign was removed in 1936 because of structural concerns.



Bromo-Seltzer was discontinued in 1975 after the discovery that the sedative ingredient, bromide, was slightly psychoactive and a little bit toxic! There was even a name for it: chronic bromism. It was responsible for as many as 10% of admissions to psychiatric hospitals before bromide was taken out of Bromo-Seltzer in 1975 because it was just too toxic.

[I'm sure I took Bromo Seltzer when I was younger...maybe that's why I can't remember those years very clearly!]

