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THE APOTHECARIES IN THE ARCHIVES OF STIČNA MONASTERY

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The Cistercian monastery in Stična is the oldest establishment of this religious order on the area of present Slovenia (1136). Although the general chapter in 1157 forbade the Cistercian monks to give medicines to laity and stay outside the religious establishment during the night for healing purposes, several monks in Stična were trained physicians and apothecaries. Among the first was brother Heinrich who lived in 13th century, whose name was mentioned in one of the earliest manuscripts. According to the sources the monastery had its own pharmacy from 15th century. One of the monks was responsible for cultivating medicinal herbs, preparing and dispensing drugs to other friars. Several prescriptions can still be found at the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia. Monastery was also famous for its collection of books with medicinal contents, unfortunately they were scattered after the dissolution of Stična Monastery in 1784. Neighbouring inhabitants were especially affected, since they were able to receive at least a simple advice and herbal drugs in the monastery pharmacy. The Cistercians returned in 1898 and reestablished the pharmacy which is still one of the most popular parts of the monastery for everyday visitors.