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BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING QUALITY DAILY

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Stop giving antibiotics for coughs and colds, doctors told

By Rebecca Smith
 Medical Editor

DOCTORS will be told today to stop prescribing antibiotics for coughs, colds and sore throats because over-use of the drugs is fuelling the spread of killer hospital superbugs.

Alan Johnson, the Health Secretary, says it is time to end the unnecessary use of penicillin and other commonly-prescribed pills, which cost the NHS £1.7-billion a year.

Using antibiotics too liberally has

INSIDE
 Your questions answered p2

ONLINE
 Antibiotics explained: a doctor's view
PLUS: Should we give up antibiotics for milder ailments?
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Pharmaceutical companies are unwilling to invest the billions of

Beckham outside at No 10

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Mortgage lenders defying Brown

By Andrew Porter
 and Robert Winnett

GORDON BROWN and Alistair Darling warned mortgage lenders yesterday that they will be expected to pass on cuts in interest rates to hard-pressed home owners.

The Prime Minister said they had a "duty" to pass on interest rate cuts after it emerged that hundreds of thousands of borrowers are still paying over the odds following last month's base rate reduction.

This came as figures showed that the housing market suffered its worst three-month slump in more than a decade at the end of last year, further illustrating the extent of the slow-down.

The Bank of England will announce tomorrow whether rates will be cut again for the second consecutive month.

However, despite Mr Brown's warning, leading mortgage lenders told *The Daily Telegraph* that future reductions



"...but am I happy and fulfilled enough to be cooked by Jamie Oliver?"



STYLE
Stephen Bayley
 How day-glo ruled the world p28-29



Big Ben for your wrist

Maria Douulton meets the young entrepreneurs bringing traditional British clockmaking traditions into the 21st century

"AS FAR as watchmaking is concerned, Britain invented almost everything, really," ruefully comments Paul Maudsley, the head of the watch department at Bonhams auction house in London.

Britain might well have been at the forefront of watchmaking, yet today it is almost impossible to find a British wristwatch. And we're not just talking about one made in Britain – but one with a British pedigree. Why? Like many other great home-grown inventions, British watchmaking began to wane in the mid-19th century as watchmakers chose not to adopt more progressive methods of production. Skills were lost, the industry grew in Europe and another great local trade died.

There has been a mini-resurgence, however, with the rebirth this year of a very British

watch brand, Dent & Co, founded in 1814.

Although the watches are produced in Switzerland, the company's roots are as British as scones and clotted cream. For a start, Dent created Big Ben, in its time the most precise clock and the most innovative timepiece in the world.

Frank Spurrell, one of two British entrepreneurs who has given new life to the brand, explains why he was attracted to it. "I was looking through an 1881 edition of *Kelly's Handbook to the Titled, Landed and Official Classes* when I saw a beautiful old advertisement for Dent's watches. I was fascinated so I researched and discovered a startling history of invention and voyages of exploration. Dent created everything from ship's chronometers that accompanied Darwin on the *Beagle* to the GMT clock at Greenwich, the reference point for time around the world."

When Spurrell and his business partner Twysden Moore bought Dent & Co, production had dwindled to a few very refined clocks a year for collectors. But the revival promises to be dramatic, with the launch this autumn of wristwatches inspired by British iconography. Its first model, the large, square rose or white gold Parliament, modelled on Big Ben, will be priced at

£8,000, and its second model, Ministry, based on an 1848 ship's chronometer, will be £2,500. The firm is also producing, from its Derby-based clockmaking division, an 18ft timekeeper for the remodelled St Pancras Eurostar train station.

While Dent & Co is the most avidly anticipated British brand on the market, it is not the only one about. Newcomer Bremont, independently owned by the aptly named brothers Nick and Giles English, is this summer launching a rugged range of aviation watches (from £1,900 to £3,100) that would not look amiss in the cockpit of a Spitfire. Although they are made in Switzerland, the clean-faced action-chap aesthetics and robustness of the timepieces will almost definitely appeal to modern-day British adventurers (Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman, for instance, are testing Bremont chronographs on their upcoming African motorbike trip).

And several formerly British companies (now primarily Swiss-owned) are also producing wristwatches inspired by British masters. Graham offers "machines for the wrist" that fuse the glory of the 18th-century inventor of the chronograph, George Graham, with the allure of WWII fighter pilots and cost from £3,900.

The oversized and macho Chronofighter, with its bulging control lever protecting the crown, is becoming popular with modern British heroes such as David Beckham and Mike Tindall.

Arnold & Sons, inspired by the maker of the first-ever pocket watch chronometer and the principal supplier of marine timekeepers to the Royal Navy, has created a manly range whose prices range from £2,600 to £360,000.

J & T Windmills, the 18th-century London watchmaking company, has come up with a collection of silver, gold and platinum wristwatches resembling elegant English gentlemen's pocketwatches, from £395 to £2,995.

And Backes & Strauss, the London diamond company founded in 1789, has launched a range of gem-set pieces (from £7,500) inspired by the architecture of Regency London for today's high-rolling dandies.

For collectors who take the Britishness of their timepieces really seriously, there is only one watchmaker: octogenarian Sir George Daniels, inventor of the revolutionary co-axial escapement and a man widely considered to be the greatest living watchmaker. From his workshop on the Isle of Man, Daniels has made 36 pocket and wristwatches from scratch,

each taking a year or so to construct. Although Sotheby's sold a Daniels in New York in 2002 for £205,770, they are set to become even more expensive as the master watchmaker has since put down his tools.

His watchmaking skills have been passed on, though. Roger W. Smith, an apprentice of Daniels, also lives on the Isle of Man and aspires to create "true English-made watches".

Like Daniels' timepieces, all of Smith's 250-odd components (with the exception of the sapphire crystal over the dial and the springs and jewels) are made in his workshops. This year, with his team of four, he will produce 15 pieces, with prices starting from £37,050 – proof, if we needed it, that British watchmaking is far from dead.

Shipshape: Dent & Co's Ministry chronograph is based on an 1848 ship's chronometer

■ For more information, see www.arnoldandson.com www.backesandstrauss.com www.bremont.com www.dentwatches.com www.graham-london.com www.jandtwindmills.co.uk www.rwsmithwatches.com

