

## *Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles*

Carroll's Yesteryears  
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Potions and tonics promised to cure all  
by Joe Getty

One of the rewarding aspects about working in the field of local history is that the average person can relate to many of the historical themes that we research at the Historical Society. Very few of us have actually been involved in issues of world and national history, but all of us have shared an experience of daily life in Carroll County that provides a personal perspective about our local heritage.

This was evident when we worked with Dr. Theodore Woodward, M.D. in preparation of his book "Carroll County Physicians of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries." Through various contacts in the community, we received many calls and letters from individuals with background and documentation about our local doctors. All of us have a personal history relating to our experiences with the medical profession. Many of us also have stories that have been handed down from generations about our ancestors' medical heritage.

On April 4, the Historical Society will be hosting a Medical Heritage of Carroll County dinner. Our speaker will be Woodward, who will be presenting the findings of his research and stories of his experience in preparing the manuscript for publication. A major theme in the research is the dramatic differences in the medical profession from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to today.

Doctors prepared their own medicines during this time period and the historical society collection includes a number of artifacts relating to the physician's medical cabinet. The book includes a two-page photographic essay on early medical instruments including equipment from Carroll County doctors Francis J. Crawford, Jacob J. Weaver Jr., M. Luther Bott, Jacob E. Rinehart and Lewis Klair Woodward.

Some doctors did not practice full-time in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and engaged in other pursuits. An example is Dr. John Rose of Westminster who ran the following advertisement in the January 12, 1838 edition of the *Westminster Carrolltonian*: "John Rose, Botanic Physician, now has office and dwelling at building attached to the frame Store House, at the Avenues, Westminster, where he practices medicine, midwifery and surgery. Also selling cloths, hats & caps, boots & shoes, &c. Has determined to quit the Crockery-ware business, he will dispose of present stock for cash...Having just received a supply of winter goods, [he] invites the public to pay him a call & examine his Stock. Selling dry goods, groceries & hardware, oils, paints & Thomsonian Patent Medicines."

Academically-trained physicians were only one option for medical treatment available to Carroll County citizens during this time period. Many of the oral traditions handed down in family history relate to home cures and herbal remedies for colds, flus and other illnesses. Midwifery

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was also widely practiced in our communities and during the course of our research, we interviewed Mrs. Walter Spurrier whose mother was a midwife for the Mt. Airy community during the turn-of-the-century.

Patent medicines were another major option for medical treatment. These medicines are recognized by historians today as being very addictive because they were high in alcohol and drug content. Thus they posed a community health problem instead of being a cure for diseases.

The Union Bridge newspaper *The Weekly Era* of April 2, 1885 provides advertisements for the following patent medicines:

XXXX Medicine for Man or Beast, Cures Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Sciatica, Lumbago, Headache, Backache, Toothache, Sore Throat, Swellings, Sprains, Bruises, Burns, Scalds, Frost bites and all Aches and pains.

Ayer's Ague Cure is warranted to cure all cases of malarial diseases such as Fever and Ague, Intermittent or Chill Fever, Remittent Fever, Dumb Ague, Billous Fever, and Liver Complaint.

The Pastille, Prof. Harris' Radical Cure for Epermatorrhoea and Impotazay or Organic Weakness in Men.

Tutt's pills. The Greatest Medical Triumph of the Age! For symptoms of a Torpid Liver, Loss of Appetite, Bowels costive, Pain in the head with a dull sensation in the back part, pain under the shoulder blades, Fullness after eating with a disinclination to exertion of the body or mind, Irritability of temper, Low spirits with a feeling of having neglected some duty, Weariness, Dizziness, Fluttering at the heart, Dots before the eyes, Headache over the right eye, Restlessness with fitful dreams, highly colored urine, and Constipation.

Brown's Iron Bitters, the Best Tonic, Cures Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Weakness, Impure Blood, Malaria, Chills and Fever and Neuralgia.

Hostetter's Celebrated Stomach Bitters. The finest tonic for the nervous people.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla for Rheumatism, Liver Disorders, Gout, the effects of high living, Sores, Eruptions, and all the various forms of blood disorders.

Ely's Cream Balm cures Catarrh, Hay Fever, Cleanses the Head, Allays Inflammation, Heals the sore, Restores the sense of taste, smell, hearing, A quick relief, a positive Cure.

Parker's Tonic. A Pure Family medicine That Never Intoxicates.

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The Historical Society Medical Heritage of Carroll County dinner will be held on April 4, at Martin's Westminster. The program will include recognition of the families of early medical doctors who practiced in Carroll County. For reservations and information, contact the Historical Society of Carroll County at 848-6494.

*Photo credit: Courtesy of Historical Society of Carroll County*

*Photo caption: The bronze mortar and pestle, brass scales and stencil were used by Dr. Francis J. Crawford, who practiced in Winfield.*