

A Brief History of Herbalism

Lesson 1

The ancient Chinese, Indians, Egyptians, Babylonians, and Native Americans were all herbalists. The oldest known list of medicinal herbs is Shen Nung's Pen Ts'ao (c. 3000 B.C.), a Chinese herbal that is probably a compilation of an even older oral tradition.

The ancient Greeks and Romans were also renowned herbalists. Surgeons travelling with the Roman army spread their herbal expertise throughout the Roman Empire, in Spain, Germany, France, and England. Dioscorides (c. 40-c. 90) and Galen (131-200 A.D.), both Greek surgeons in the Roman army, compiled herbals that remained the definitive *materia medica* texts for 1500 years.

Through the Middle Ages, herbalism was preserved in the monasteries of Britain and mainland Europe. Before the establishment of universities in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, monasteries served as medical schools. Monks copied and translated many of the works of Hippocrates, Dioscorides, and Galen. Their "physick" gardens, well-stocked with the most common and useful medicinal herbs, served as basic training grounds for the next generation of physicians - monks and laymen alike.

Meanwhile, as a result of the Islamic conquest of North Africa in the seventh and eighth centuries, Arabic scholars acquired many Greek and Roman medical texts. Iranian physician Ibn Sina, also known as Avicenna (980-1037 A.D.), combined the herbal traditions of Dioscorides and Galen with the ancient practices of his own people in The Canon of Medicine (al-Qanun fi at-tibb). One of the most influential medical texts ever written, Avicenna's Canon spread through Europe during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

With the invention of the printing press in the mid-fifteenth century, the herbals of Dioscorides, Galen, and Avicenna were mass-produced and made accessible to people outside the palace, the monastery, and the university. Use of the herbals required no specialized skills: readers simply gathered the herbs and applied them in the prescribed manner and dosage.



Western Pasqueflower - *Pulsatilla occidentalis*



Paracelsus

Each physician-gardener who compiled a new herbal sought to revolutionize, or at least standardize, the use of medicinal plants. One such writer was Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, better known as Paracelsus (1493-1541). He emphasized the importance of experience with patients and railed against blind faith in the ancient physicians.

Despite his announced distrust of traditional herbalism, Paracelsus revived the first-century “doctrine of signatures.” According to the doctrine of signatures, every herb has its own “sign.” The appearance of the plant, and its colour, scent, or living environment indicated its medicinal use. Herbs used to cure jaundice, for instance, included marigold and dandelion and other plants with yellow flowers, while pansies, with their heart-shaped petals, were used for heart troubles.



Twelve signs of the Zodiac

A century later, Englishman Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654) revitalized another ancient facet of herbalism: astrology. Astrological herbalists connected herbs to different signs of the zodiac. They treated specific ailments by determining what sign and planet ruled over the part of the body that needed care and then prescribing an

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herb of the same astrological sign. According to Culpeper, “he that would know the reason of the operation of the Herbs, must look up as high as the stars.”



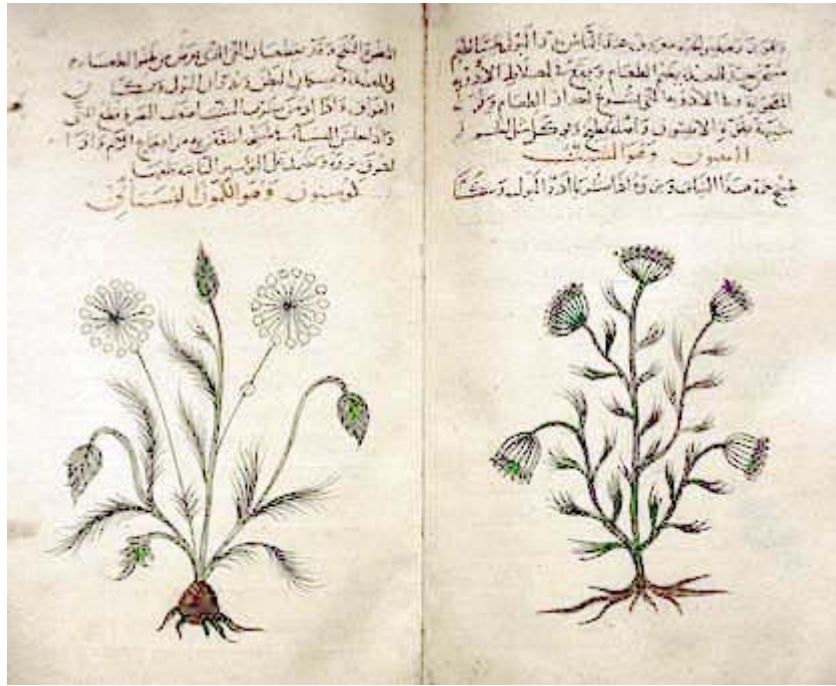
William Harvey

While Paracelsus and Culpeper promoted the doctrine of signatures and astrological herbalism, medical practice was changing. Men like Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and William Harvey (1578-1657) were transforming science from a speculative to an experimental process. The new emphasis on experimentation did not mix well with the revival of the doctrine of signatures and astrology: thus, biological and medical science began to separate from traditional herbalism. Herbalists who focused on classification and refused to acknowledge signatures and stars formed the science of botany. Physicians who found Harvey’s circulation of the blood more useful than Culpeper’s movements of the planets started what might be called scientific medicine.

Vienna Dioscorides from *De Materia Medica*, 512

Greek physician Pedanius Dioscorides (c. 40-c. 90) was from Anazarbus, a small town near Tarsus in what is now south central Turkey. As a surgeon with the Roman army of Emperor Nero, Dioscorides travelled through Italy, Gaul, Spain, and North Africa, recording the existence and medicinal value of hundreds of plants. He compiled an extensive listing of medicinal herbs and their virtues in about 70 A.D. Originally written in Greek, Dioscorides’s herbal was later translated into Latin as *De Materia Medica*. It remained the authority in medicinal plants for over 1500 years.

The oldest known manuscript of his work is the Juliana Anicia Codex (ca. 512 A.D.), housed in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. Listed as *Codex Vindobonensis Medicus Graecus 1*, it is better known as “Vienna Dioscorides,” the oldest and most valuable work in the history of botany and pharmacology.



Dioscorides' *Materia Medica*, c. 1334 copy in Arabic, describes medicinal features of cumin and dill.

Since an original copy of Dioscorides's herbal has never been found, we cannot be certain that it included illustrations. It is certain, however, that, in 512 A.D., a Byzantine artist illustrated Dioscorides's herbal for presentation to Juliana Anicia, the daughter of Emperor Anicius Olybrius. The artist seems to have based his work on illustrations from the *Rhizotomicon* of Crateuas of Pergamon (1st century B.C.).



Kentaureion to lepton

***Erythraea centaurium*: Centaury**

The genus of this herb was originally named *Chironia* after Chiron, a centaur of Greek mythology who was famous for his knowledge of medicinal plants. According to legend, Chiron healed himself with this plant after accidentally wounding himself with one of Hercules's poisoned arrows. Dioscorides alluded to the myth and

prescribed Centaury as a treatment for wounds. He also recommended the herb for lung disorders, namely “the old cough” and “blood spitting.”



Apsynthion Bathyprikon

***Artemisia absinthium*: Wormwood**

Next to Rue, Wormwood is the bitterest herb. Dioscorides recommended it as a stomachic, a vermifuge, a remedy for jaundice, and a flavoring for absinthe. According to Dioscorides, absinthe was a popular summertime drink in Propontis and Thracia, where they believed it maintained good health. Dioscorides also recommended the use of Wormwood in clothes drawers to repel moths and mice.



Kyklaminos

***Cyclamen europaeum*: Cyclamen, sowbread**

This herb gets its name (cyclamen means “circle”) from its bulblike, underground stem. Dioscorides suggested its use as a purgative, antitoxin, skin cleanser, and labor-inducer. When used as a purgative, juice from the tuberous root-stock was applied externally, either over the bowels and bladder region or on the anus. Dioscorides also mentioned its use as an aphrodisiac. Many English farmers called Cyclamen “stag-truffle” or “sowbread” since they often observed deer and swine digging up and eating the roots.



Panax Heraklios

***Ferula galbaniflua*: Galbanum**

The genus of this plant (panax means “universal remedy”) suggests its wide use among the ancient Greeks. Dioscorides prescribed the milky juice of Galbanum for ulcers, coughs, convulsions, ruptures, headaches, stomach pains, menstrual cramps, toothaches, snakebites, and labor pains. Rubbed on the eyes as an ointment, it improved eyesight. And taken with honey, Galbanum was a sure remedy for indigestion and flatulence.



Physallis

***Physalis alkekengi*: Physalis, or Winter-cherry**

The Physalis plant grows in many parts of the world: in Europe, China, South America, South Africa, and in the United States. Often called the Winter-cherry or “Chinese Lanterns,” physalis was used as a decorative and medicinal herb. Dioscorides prescribed its stem as a sedative and its berries as diuretics. Mixed with honey, Physalis was said to improve eyesight; with wine, it supposedly cured toothache.



Rhodon

***Rosa lutea*: Rose**

The beauty and fragrance of the rose secured its popularity in the ancient world. The Greeks associated the rose with Aphrodite, the Graces, and the Muses. Dioscorides recommended rose petal paste as an eye salve and suggested a decoction of rose petal dust in wine for headaches, earaches, and hemorrhoids. He also prescribed a rose hip decoction against hemoptysis.



Strychnos Megas Kepaios

***Solanum nigrum*: Black Nightshade**

A relative of the notorious *Atropa belladonna*, or Deadly Nightshade, the Black, or Garden, Nightshade is potentially harmful, but its poison is relatively mild. Dioscorides recommended its leaves for treating skin diseases. He also suggested a decoction of the plant's leaves for earaches, indigestion, and internal bleeding.



Drakontaia Mikre

Arum maculatum: Arum, or Cuckoo-Pint

Ancient physicians called this plant the *Drakontaia Mikre*, or “small dragon,” because the central stalk resembles a serpent. According to Dioscorides, its shape revealed its purpose as an antidote for snakebites. Rubbing one’s hands with Arum root was supposed to make one unbiteable. Dioscorides also recommended the Arum root as an expectorant. The leaves, “beaten small,” were to be used on fresh wounds.

Much of the early Greek medical knowledge came over from Egypt (8). In Dioscorides work, *De Materia Medica* (ca. 55 A.D.),

a number of the recipes are the same as listed in Papyrus Ebers and prescribed for the same ailments. Although Dioscorides was considered the absolute authority in materia medica for over 1600 years, it is important to note that knowledge of herbs and healing was handed down from one generation and culture to the next, and thus belongs to no one man, woman, or individual, but to humanity.

As is well-known, the Greeks were highly skilled in medicine and materia medica. The following sources come down to us from the ancient period of about 500 B.C. to 60 A.D.

1. Hippocrates: usually considered an entire school of "rational" or scientific" medicine, though the individual may also have lived. Hippocrates may also have been the first "nature doctor" in a more modern sense, for he utilized simple natural remedies such as vinegar, honey, herbs, and hydrotherapy in healing. He emphasized prevention and healthful living. Many works survive and have been translated from the original Greek. The work that is of the greatest interest to herbalists today is Dierbach's *The Medicine of Hippocrates* (in German). All of the 257 drugs mentioned in this work are listed and compared to modern Pharmacognosy texts by Riddle. Only 27 of these are not listed as medicinal plants today, some of which are now considered foods.
2. Theophrastus (340 B.C.) wrote on natural history and botany-his work *Inquiry into Plants* survives and is available in English translation. He writes of many kinds of plants and how they are used in medicine, how to grow them, and many other observations.

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3. Pliny's (60 A.D.) Natural History is the largest compilation on plants from the Greek period. Although Pliny was not very critical, he reports from the writings of many authors whose work does not survive, so is a valuable resource for the medicinal uses of plants in ancient medicine. Pliny lists more plants than Dioscorides or any of the other ancient writers.



4. Krates was a Greek herbalist who is considered the first person to produce an illustrated work on medicinal plants. Pliny speaks of his illustrated "herbal," which does not unfortunately, survive. His influence is thought to be felt in the De Materia Medica of Dioscorides, as well as other later works on medicinal plants.
5. Dioscorides is the greatest and most influential ancient Greek writer on materia medica. The influence on future generations, even until the 1700s, cannot be overestimated. His work was considered absolute and was copied, recopied, and commented on for 1600 years.

The earliest surviving manuscript is the Codex Vindobonensis from 512 A.D. This magnificent work was illustrated with about 400 full-page hand-colored plates and was made for the daughter of Flavius Anicius Olybrius, Emperor of the West in 472. An English translation of Dioscorides (by Goodyer) was published by Gunther, unfortunately now out of print, but available in libraries and occasionally seen second-hand.

Middle Ages

Throughout the history of humans, science, art, and consciousness has been kindled from time to time to an especially bright flame. During these times, knowledge and awareness of health and disease increased dramatically, at times influencing people for generations until the flame rekindled in another time and place. In the Middle Ages, taken here to mean the long period between Greek and Roman culture and the Renaissance, several "schools" of medicine which contributed substantially to the progression of herbalism can be noted. But it must be remembered that these times were built from the day to day practice of herbalism and investigation of the natural world.

As has been mentioned before, it is mostly men who wrote down and compiled the works we have to go by when considering the history of herbalism, but it was both men and women who practiced and developed herbalism - perhaps women more than men on a day to day basis.

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Payne, in his *English Medicine in the Anglo-Saxon Times*, supports this by saying that in medicine (especially among the Germanic Tribes) was largely practiced by women; and Tacitus relates that warriors wounded in battle brought their wounds to their mothers and wives to be attended to. The following outline details briefly the major sources of information during this period.

During the period from about 700 A.D. until 1300 A.D., the flowering of all branches of knowledge was magnificent. Many works were written about medicine, health and disease, pharmacy, and materia medica - most of which are extant, but in Persian. Two works on materia medica have been translated into English (*The Formulary of Al Kindi* and that of *Al-Samarqandi*) and are available. From them it can be seen that the practice of herbalism was brought to a high degree of skill.



**A patient taking barley water.
Theatrum sanitatis, 15th century**

Anglo-Saxon Leechcraft (512-1154)

Leech was the collective English word for medical practitioners - those who practiced all forms of healing.



Leechbook of Bald

Several works survive from Anglo-Saxon medicine - among them is the *Herbarium Apuleius* (480-1050), one of the most copied herbal manuscripts, available in modern English. This work contains recipes and uses of over 100 herbs. Another work available in modern English is the *Leechbook of Bald* (925), containing many formulas and herbal remedies in a fairly sophisticated system of therapeutics, but many superstitious notions about how to apply herbal treatments as well. Meanwhile, a number of generations of the family Myddvai practiced herbalism in a highly artful

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degree; their herbal therapies were written down in the work, *Physicians of Myddvai* (1250), which is available in modern English, though out of print.

The school of Salerno or Salernum (11th to the 12th century) in Italy was a famous and influential medical and health center, epitomized by the work of the Christian physician, Constantine the African, who is generally credited with the introduction of Arabian medicine into Europe. Two works (in English) are notable, *Experiments of Cohpon* (1080) and the famous poem of health, *Regimen Sanitatis Salerni*.



Uses of Herbs in Medical History

Egyptian Medicine

Papyrus Ebers - 1550 B.C

Greek Medicine

Hippocrates – 450 BC

Theophrastus – 340 BC

Pliny – 60 AD

Dioscorides – 160 AD

Middles Ages

Arabians

Al-Kindi – 850 AD

Al-Samargandi – 1210 AD

Saxon Leechcraft

Herbarium Apuleius – 480 – 1050 AD

Hildegard of Bingen – 1099 – 1179 AD

Physician of Myddvai – 1250 AD

Experiments of Cohpon – 1080 AD

Renaissance

Age of Herbalism

Paracelsus – 1493 – 1541 AD

Banks – 1525

Brunfels – 1542

Dodoens – 1554

Gerard – 1597

Parkinson – 1640

American Medicine

Colonial Medicine

Bartram – 1751

19th Century Medicine

Barton – 1818

Bigelow – 1822

Eberle – 1822

King/Felter/Lloyd – 1898

Badianus Manuscript: An Aztec Herbal, 1552

The people of North and South America also used medicinal herbs. Over thousands of years, the people of North and South Americans accumulated a vast store of botanical and medical knowledge, a fact that surprised many European explorers when they began their conquest of the Americas in the sixteenth century.

The Aztecs, for example, were expert herbalists. In 1552, during the early years of Spanish rule in Mexico, two Native American students at the College of Santa Cruz in Tlatilulco, Martinus de la Cruz and Juannes Badianus, compiled a list of herbs that had been used as medicines for centuries by the Aztecs. Martinus wrote, and probably illustrated, the original Aztec text, and Badianus translated the work into Latin. Today their work is called The Badianus Manuscript. Housed in the Vatican Library, The Badianus Manuscript is the oldest known American herbal.



For Nose Bleeds: *Atzitzicatzli*

***Urtica chichicatzli* (Water nettle)**

“The juice of nettles, ground with salt in urine and milk, poured into the nostrils stops the flow of blood from the nose.”

The Mayans also used the juice of nettles to treat nosebleeds. References to the use of nettles are found in the earliest pharmacopoeias of Europe. The water nettle, sometimes called *chichicaste*, grows throughout Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, and tropical South America.



For Injured Body

Cortez and other Spanish explorers referred to the skill of Aztec doctors in treating cuts and bruises. The following is a rather complex, multi-herb recipe for the treatment of the “injured and roughly-handled body:”

The injured and roughly-handled body is to be anointed with a plaster made of *tlahcoteocacatl* [“Goddess of carnal pleasure grass”], *centzonxochitl* [“400 flowers”], *xiuhtontli* [“little plant”], *axocotl* [“water sour fruit”], *tlayapaloni xiuhtontli* [“little black paint plant”], the moss of any tree, cones of the cypress, seed of nettles, and the *ayauhquahuitl* tree [“mist tree”—a variety of pine]. One who has been roughly handled and beaten is to drink juice well prepared from the stalk of *cohuanenepilli* [“serpent tongue”], *tlanexiaxihuitl* [“bright tree”], *chicomacatl* [“gum cord”], flower of *axocotl*, and *yzquixochitl* [“popcorn flower”], *tetlahuitl* [red ochre stone], *eztetl* [bloodstone--a variety of jasper], *teamoxtli* [“stone plant”], liver of the aquatic bird *huexocanauhtli* and a few leaves of *tlahtlanquaye* [“joined stem--a kind of pepper], which are to be ground in acid water.



For Lightning Stroke

One who is touched by heaven or struck by lightning is to drink a well-mixed potion made from the leaves of trees, namely, *ayauhquahuitl* [“mist tree”—a variety of pine] and *tepapaquiltiquahuitl* [“painted tree”], an unusually green cypress, the shrub *yztauhyatl* [“salty water plant”], the herb *quauhyauhtli* [“wild or wood incense”] and *teamoxtli* [“stone plant”]. Whenever the potion is to be given, it should be heated over the fire.

Then the body should be rubbed with a plaster made of the herbs *papaloquitl* [“butterfly eatable plant”], *tlalhecapahitl* [“earth/lowland wind medicine”], *quauhyauhtli*, *tlatlanquaye*, *huitzitzilxochitl* [“humming bird flower”] and *yztacocoxochitl* [“white pine flower”], finally, containing all those herbs above

which the lightning struck. . . . Besides, you shall instill a medicine into the nostrils, composed of white pearl, the root of *tlahtlahcotic* ["having many branches"--a purgative] and of all small herbs growing in a pleasure garden which has at some time been burned. He shall be suffumigated with the good odor of white incense, of the wax which is called *xochiocotzotl* ["flower pine resin"] and of the herb *quauhyauhtli* thrown onto embers.



For Cough: *Tlacoxiloxochitl*

Calliandra anomala (stalky cornsilk flower)

One troubled with a cough is to drink frequently the juice of the root of *tlacoxiloxochitl* peeled and ground in water, with part of which, mixed with honey, the throat is to be smeared. But if he spits blood, he is also to take this same drink before the midday meal. And it would be somewhat useful if he would merely nibble the same root in honey and chew it.

Ground and added to water, the flowers of this plant were said to improve eyesight and heal ulcers. Aztec physicians prescribed a decoction of the root against diarrhea and dysentery, and to relieve indigestion.



For Rumbling of the Abdomen

For one whose bowels are murmuring because of diarrhea, make a potion, let him take it with an ear clyster, of the leaves of the herb *tlatlanquaye* ["jointed stem"--a kind of pepper], the bark of *quetzalaylin* ["green water tree"], the leaves of *yztacocoxochitl* ["white pine flower"] and these herbs *tlanextixiuhtontli* ["gaudy little plant"], *elocacatl* [grain or maize], the tree *tlanextia quahuitl* ["bright tree"] ground in bitter tasting water with ashes, a little honey, salt, pepper, and (stone) alectorium, and finally *picietl* ["little fragrant tobacco"].

Tlatlanquaye was also used to drive away “chill of the intestines,” and *elocacatl* for tubercules of the breast.



For Injury of the Feet

It is not surprising that people who travelled everywhere by foot invented numerous remedies for foot problems. Aztec and Mayan medical texts outlined treatments for cracks in the soles of the feet, eruptions, swellings, and even for foot parasites like the *chigoe* (jigger flea).

For injured feet grind together these herbs: *talhecapahltli* [“earth wind medicine”], *coyoxiuitl* [“rose colored bell plant”], *yztauhyatl* [“salty water plant”], *tepechian* [“mountain chia”], *achilli* [flexible, reddish water plant], *xiuehcapahltli* [“plant wind medicine”], *quauhyauhtli* [“wild incense”], *quetzalxoxouhcaphtli* [“precious blue medicine”], *tzotzotlani* [“glistening plant”], the flowers of *cacauaxochitl* [cacao flower], and also *piltzintecouhxochitl* [“noble lord flower”], and foliage of *hecapahltli* [“wind medicine”] and *ytzcuinpahtli* [“dog medicine”], the stone *tlahcalhuatzin* [bezoar stone of huatzin, a native bird], *eztetl* [“bloodstone”—a type of jasper] and *tetlahuitl* [red ochre stone], pale-colored earth...

Put some in a little tub over embers or a fire to heat it in water; and when the liquid has become hot, put the feet into the tub. And some part of it is to be inspissated by fire, and is to be applied to the feet; and so that it will not run off, the feet are to be wrapped in a cloth. Next day our unguent *xochiocotzotl* [“flower pine resin”] and white incense are to be thrown on a fire so that the feet may become healthy from the odor and heat. Besides the seed of the herb called *xexihuitl* is to be ground, and when it has been pulverized in hot water it is to be put on the feet. Thirdly, apply the herb *tolohuaxiuitl* [datura plant] and briars ground in hot water.



For “Black Blood”

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Both the ground leaves and roots of the herbs *quauhtla huitzquilitl* ["wild spiney edible plant"] and *tlatlanquaye* ["jointed stem"--a kind of pepper] are to be cooked in water; to which are to be added a pearl, a wolf's liver and our wine. He is to take the juice thus prepared as a drink. Before the mid-day meal he shall drink another juice pressed from good-smelling flowers of different kinds. He shall walk in a shady place, refrain from venery, drink our wine moderately, in fact, he should not drink it except as medicine. He shall engage in the very cheerful pursuits, such as singing or playing music and beating the tympan which we use in public dancing.

The Aztecs considered melancholia not as a visitation of an evil spirit but as a definite physical disorder. In translating the Aztec term for melancholia, Badianus used the words "black blood," a common term in sixteenth-century Europe.

Herball, Generall Historie of Plants by John Gerard, 1597

Contact with the Native Americans and their strange, uniquely American plants prompted an expansion of European herbals. While the Spanish were the first to introduce American plants to Europe, explorers from other countries soon followed. In 1597, Englishman John Gerard (1545-1612) incorporated New World plants in his Herball, or Generall Historie of Plants.



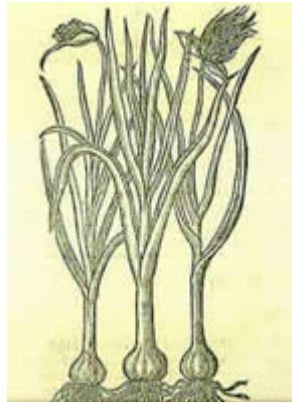
John Gerard

Gerard was superintendent of the gardens of William Cecil, advisor to Queen Elizabeth. Gerard was one of the most respected plant experts of his time, but, strangely, he was not the primary author of the famous herbal that bears his name. Except for the additions of several plants from his own garden and from North America, Gerard's herbal is simply an English translation of Dutch scholar Rembert Dodoen's highly popular herbal of 1554.

In 1633, a London apothecary named Thomas Johnson corrected and expanded Gerard's herbal. The following illustrations and descriptions were taken from the Johnson edition of 1633, housed in the Wilhelm Moll Rare Book and Medical History Room of The Claude Moore Health Sciences Library. You can read more about [The History of British Herbalism](#) to get a more detailed picture.

Allium sativum

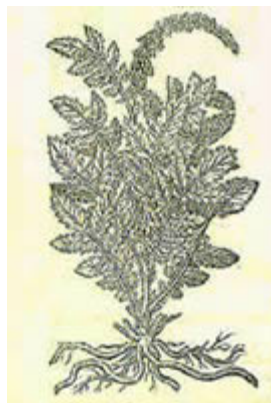
Although he claimed that garlic “yeeldeth to the body no nourishment at all,” Gerard prescribed garlic for a variety of ailments: sore throats, coughs, and flatulence, to name a few. He added that garlic “killeth wormes in the belly, and driveth them forth,” and “taketh away the morpew, tettars or ring-wormes, scabbed heads in children, dandraffe, and scurfe, tempered with honey, and the parts anointed therewith.”



Garlic

Agrimonia eupatoria

Agrimony has a long history among the Anglo-Saxons as a vulnerary, or wound-healing, herb, but Gerard mentioned nothing about its application to wounds. Rather, he suggested a decoction of the leaves “for them that have naughty livers, and for such as pisse blood, upon the diseases of the kidnies.” Boiled in wine, Agrimony was supposed to help “inveterate hepaticke fluxes in old people.”



Agrimony

Solanum tuberosum

Gerard’s contacts with explorers Walter Raleigh and Francis Drake led to the acquisition of a Virginian potato plant for his own garden. Gerard called the plant a “Virginian potato” to distinguish it from the sweet potato. His picture of the potato was the first that most English people had ever seen.

At first, the plant caused some confusion. According to legend, Sir Walter Raleigh ate the poisonous berries of the potato plant, not knowing that the edible part was underground (the potato is of the same genus as the Deadly Nightshade). Sick and disgruntled, Raleigh ordered his gardeners to dig up the plants and throw them away. While doing so, his gardeners supposedly tasted one of the large, underground tubers and thus discovered, very much by accident, the culinary value of the plant.

For many years, the potato was considered a delicacy to be enjoyed only by the rich. Not until the early 1700s did the potato finally become a staple in the European diet.

Carrying a potato in one's pocket was once believed to be a remedy for rheumatism.



Potato

Digitalis purpurea

Foxglove was originally called folksglove, or “glove of the fairy folk,” since its flowers resemble the fingers of tiny gloves. Gerard recommended foxglove as an expectorant:

Fox-glove boiled in water or wine, and drunken, doth cut and consume the thick toughnesse of grosse and slimie flegme and naughty humours; it openeth also the stopping of the liver, spleene, and milt, and of other inward parts.



Foxglove

Gentiana lutea

Gentian was named in honor of King Gentius of Illyria (180-167 B.C.), who, according to Dioscorides, discovered the medicinal virtues of the herb. Ancient and medieval physicians recommended Gentian primarily as an antidote to poison. Gerard noted its use as a counterpoison and as a remedy for “evill livers and bad stomackes.” He also recommended Gentian to “helpeth digestion, and dissolveth and scattereth congealed blood.”



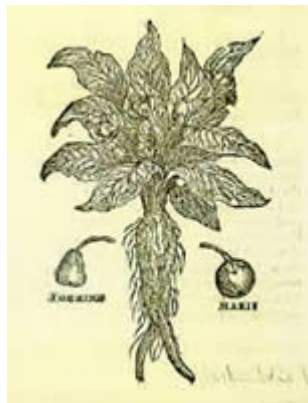
Gentian, or Felwoort

Atropa mandragora

Legend and superstition surround the mandrake. The root of the mandrake has a peculiar shape, sometimes resembling human legs or arms, or even a complete body. The strange shape of the mandrake's root contributed to its reputation as a magical, and dangerous, plant.

Many people believed that the mandrake root screamed as it was pulled from the ground. To dig up the mandrake and hear its cries meant certain death, so ancient herbalists instructed people to tie a dog to the mandrake and force the animal to pull it up, thereby killing the dog but saving themselves.

Having safely planted and replanted many mandrakes, Gerard condemned the fantastic tales. He recommended a decoction of the leaves against jaundice and internal bleeding. Gerard also claimed that the fruit, "being drunk in the weight of one dram, with three ounces of white wine for forty daies together, helpeth the spleen."



Mandrake

Aloe vera

Gerard highly recommended aloe juice as a purgative and vermifuge: "when all purging medicines are hurtfull to the stomacke, Aloes onely is comfortable." He added that aloe "is good against a stinking breath proceeding from the imperfection of the stomacke; it openeth the piles or hemorrhoides of the fundament; and being taken in a small quantity, it bringeth downe a monthly course." Gerard also suggested aloe as a cleanser for wounds and sores, and as a medicine for the eyes, "forasmuch as it clenseth and drieth without biting."



Aloe

Ocimum basilium

Gerard claimed that basil juice, “drunke in wine of Chios or strong Sacke,” cures headaches. Mixed with barley meal, rose oil, and vinegar, basil juice was also used as an anti-inflammatory and as an antidote for snakebites. According to Gerard, “the seed drunke is a remedy for melancholy people; for those that are short-winded, and them that can hardly make water.”



Basil

English Physician by Nicholas Culpeper, 1652

One of the most influential writers in the history of herbalism was Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654). Culpeper popularized astrological herbalism, or what he called “astrologo-physical discourse of the vulgar herbs.” In his most famous work, The English Physician (1652), Culpeper’s descriptions of herbs and their uses are tightly intertwined with readings of the stars and planets.



Nicholas Culpeper

Herbal Medicine Diploma Course

Culpeper was a Puritan and Parliamentarian at a time when most of the College of Surgeons were Anglican Royalists. This in part accounts for his rejection by the College, and it might also explain his tremendous popularity with New England Puritans. Over forty editions of Culpeper's *English Physician* have been printed since its original publication.

The illustrations are from E. Sibly's 1810 edition of Culpeper's herbal. Sibly's work, along with a first edition of Culpeper's unillustrated herbal of 1652, are housed in the Wilhelm Moll Rare Book and Medical History Room of The Claude Moore Health Sciences Library.

Rosmarinus officinalis

Like the ancient herbalists before him, Culpeper believed that rosemary improved the memory: "It helpeth a weak Memory, and quickeneth the senses." Its connection with remembrance made it a symbol of friendship, especially of marriage. Bridal wreaths were decorated with rosemary, and the herb often served as a wedding or New Year's gift. Culpeper also recommended rosemary against indigestion, flatulence, and jaundice. Smoked in a pipe, dried rosemary was supposed to "helpeth those that have any Cough, or Phtisick, or Consumption."



Rosemary

Achillea millefolium

For centuries, yarrow was used by army surgeons as a vulnerary, or wound-healing, herb. The plant's genus, *Achillea*, derives its name from the legend that Achilles treated his wounded soldiers with yarrow. The ancients called yarrow *herba militaria*, "the military herb."



Yarrow

Besides recommending yarrow for wounds, Culpeper suggested that the plant be used for toothache and to stop “the bloody flux.” He also prescribed yarrow as an ointment for the scalp, “to stay the shedding off of hair.”

Salvia officinalis

The Latin expression, “*Cur moriatur homo cui salvia crescit in horto?*” (Why should a man die whilst sage grows in his garden?), is a cogent summary of sage’s reputation among ancient and medieval herbalists. Culpeper associated sage with Jupiter, the almighty god of Roman mythology, and credited the herb with a wide variety of healing powers.

Sage was believed to promote conception and prevent miscarriage. It cured all manner of chest diseases, and was supposed to stop internal bleeding. In addition, Culpeper recommended sage as a diuretic, stomachic, and vermifuge. He added that “the juyce of Sage drunk with Vineger hath been of good use in the time of Plague at all times.”



Sage

Lavandula vera

Culpeper believed that, “Mercury owns the herb, and it carries its effects very potently.” A mere two or three drops of lavender oil could cure “either inward or outward griefs.” Culpeper recommended lavender oil, as a drink or applied to the temples or nostrils, against “the griefs and pains of the head and brains that proceed

of a cold cause, as the Apoplexy, Falling-sickness, the drowsie or sluggish malady, Cramps, Convulsions, Palsies, and often faintings.”



Lavender

Foeniculum vulgare

Culpeper recommended fennel for the expulsion of kidney stones. He also suggested its use as a diuretic, as an anti-flatulent, and as an antidote against poisonous snakes, herbs, and mushrooms. Like the ancient Greeks, who called the plant marathron (from *maraino*, “to grow thin”), Culpeper believed that fennel boiled in broth helped large people lose weight.



Fennel

Calendula officinalis

Culpeper associated the marigold with the lion, an animal legendary for its courage and “heart.” Hence, he prescribed marigolds for heart disorders: “It is an herb of the Sun, and under Leo, they strengthen the heart exceedingly.” He added:

A plaister made with the dry flowers in powder, Hogs grease, Turpentine and Rozin, and applied to the breast, strengthens and succours the heart infinitely in Feavers, whether pestilential, or not pestilential.



Marigold

Papaver somniferum

Culpeper recommended the white poppy as a cure for menstrual cramps, toothache, and gout. He also prescribed the herb as a sedative:

The Garden Poppy heads with seeds made into a Syrup, is frequently and to good effect used to procure rest and sleep in the sick and weak.

Culpeper was apparently frustrated by how difficult it could be to acquire the poppy:

The Herb is Lunar, and of the juyce of it is made Opium, onely for lucre of money they [druggists and opium suppliers] cheat you, and tell you it is a kinde of Tear, or some such like thing that drops from Poppies when they weep, and that is some where beyond the Sea, I know not where, beyond the Moon.



White, or Opium, Poppy

Marrubium vulgare

Used by the ancient Hebrews, Egyptians, and Romans, horehound has a long history as a medicinal herb. Culpeper wrote:

There is a Syrup made of Horehound to be had at the Apothecaries, very good for old Coughs, to rid the tough Flegm, as also to avoid cold Rheum from the Lungs of old folks, and for those that are Astmatick, or short-winded.



White Horehound

Pharmacies and Pharmacopoeias

The oldest school of Pharmacy in the United States, founded in 1822, the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy published *The American Journal of Pharmacy* every month for over a century. Edited by Maisch during the 1880s and then Trimble in the following decade, it was a major publication by a major school during the Golden Age of American Pharmacy, from after the Civil War to WWI.

A brief perusal of some of the test material for third-year students in the April 1887 issue will give you a bit of an idea of what was expected of a well-trained pharmacy student of that era...botany, chemistry, compounding, manufacturing and dispensing, all the way from the crude plant drug or chemicals to safe patient prescriptions, with a knowledge of wine-making, perfumes and essential oils, and a handle on how best to fabricate soda-fountain syrups from scratch thrown in.

Like John Uri Lloyd before them, who at that time was president of the American Pharmaceutic Association, most students in this era entered the better schools only after a five year apprenticeship with a sponsoring pharmacist. Pharmacy was NOT an academic discipline trained for in a university department or school, but a separate profession one trained for within the remnants of the tradition of the Trade Guilds.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century there was particular emphasis given in American pharmacy to the manipulation of the media for administering plant and chemical drugs...constant discussion on the preferable methods of compounding and preparing drugs for ideal availability, storage and avoidance of unwanted side effects resulting from HOW the medicine was assembled and dispensed, rather than WHAT was in it. A well-trained pharmacist, with his or her apprentices and assistants, had to be constantly aware of the physical nature of the materials and how they inter-reacted, skills quite similar to those of a first-rate pastry chef.



The better-trained and more skilled pharmacists preferred, sometimes out of professional pride, NOT to purchase and dispense commercially pre-packaged medicine, considering it inferior to the same medicine made "from scratch". The truth is, there were not many drug manufacturers around, and many made poor products. Most of the present-day American drug companies were founded by pharmacists trained in that era (and usually graduates from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy).

It is also not surprising that many pharmacists, with their expertise in every aspect of chemistry, botany and compounding, were constantly introducing, analyzing and evaluating new drugs, new plants and new wrinkles to compounding. Many of the articles in these issues were written by ordinary pharmacists, throwing out their two cents' worth, not bound by the later divisions between pharmacy, pharmacology, pharmacognosy and such - a raw, rich and perhaps unspoiled time of egalitarian hurdy-gurdy, more akin in spirit to the Eclectics than the already rigid and ritualized mainstream medicine of the American east.

Many of these articles offer a unique view into a past era when things were less rigid - with new plant medicines always just over the horizon and offering interesting views of cultivation and the exploitation of the colonial era; many offer bonehead examinations of constituent minutiae; here and there are seen the thoughtless biases of Victorian and Edwardian educated white men...even early warnings of potential ecological disasters...intriguing stuff.

These are the plant-specific excerpts from each issue of [The American Journal of Pharmacy, from 1881 through to 1884](#).

Some of the earliest pharmacopoeia books were written by [Arabian and Persian physicians](#). These included [The Canon of Medicine of Avicenna](#) in 1025, and other pharmacopoeia books by [Abu-Rayhan Biruni](#) in the 11th century, [Ibn Zuhr](#) (Avenzoar) in the 12th century (and printed in 1491), and [Ibn Baytar](#) in the 14th century.



The first work of the kind published under government authority appears to have been that of Nuremberg in 1542; a passing student named [Valerius Cordus](#) showed a collection of medical receipts, which he had selected from the writings of the most eminent medical authorities, to the physicians of the town, who urged him to print it for the benefit of the apothecaries, and obtained for his work the sanction of the [senatus](#).

An earlier work, known as the Antidotarium Florentinum, had been published under the authority of the college of medicine of Florence.

The term pharmacopoeia first appears as a distinct title in a work published at Basel in 1561 by Dr A. Foes, but does not appear to have come into general use until the beginning of the 17th century.

Before 1542 the works principally used by apothecaries were the treatises on simples by [Avicenna](#) and [Serapion](#); the De synonymis and Quid pro quo of Simon Januensis; the Liber servitoris of Bulchasim Ben Aberazerim, which described the preparations made from plants, animals and minerals, and was the type of the chemical portion of modern pharmacopoeias; and the Antidotarium of Nicolaus de Salerno, containing Galenical compounds arranged alphabetically. Of this, last work there were two editions in use — Nicolaus magnus and Nicolaus parvus: in the later several of the compounds described in the large edition were omitted and the formulae given on a smaller scale.

Until 1617 such drugs and medicines as were in common use were sold in England by the apothecaries and grocers. In that year the apothecaries obtained a separate charter and it was enacted that no grocer should keep an apothecary's shop. The preparation of physicians' prescriptions was thus confined to the apothecaries, upon whom pressure was brought to bear to make them dispense accurately, by the issue of a pharmacopoeia in May 1618 by the College of Physicians, and by the power which the wardens of the apothecaries received in common with the censors of the College of Physicians of examining the shops of apothecaries within 7 m. of London and destroying all the compounds which they found unfaithfully prepared.



Wild Onion - *Allium cernuum*

This, the first authorized London Pharmacopoeia, was selected chiefly from the works of Mezuze and Nicolaus de Salerno, but it was found to be so full of errors that the whole edition was cancelled, and a fresh edition was published in the following December. At this period the compounds employed in medicine were often heterogeneous mixtures, some of which contained from 20 to 70, or more, ingredients, while a large number of simples were used in consequence of the same substance being supposed to possess different qualities according to the source from which it was derived.

Thus crabs' eyes (i.e., gastroliths), pearls, oyster-shells and coral were supposed to have different properties. Among other ingredients entering into some of these formulae were the excrements of human beings, dogs, mice, geese and other animals, calculi, human skull and moss growing on it, blind puppies, earthworms, etc. Although other editions of the London Pharmacopoeia were issued in 1621, 1632, 1639 and 1677, it was not until the edition of 1721, published under the auspices of Sir Hans Sloane, that any important alterations were made. In this issue many of the ridiculous remedies previously in use were omitted, although a good number were still retained, such as dogs' excrement, earthworms, and moss from the human skull; the botanical names of herbal remedies were for the first time added to the official ones; the simple distilled waters were ordered of a uniform strength; sweetened spirits, cordials and ratifias were omitted as well as several compounds no longer used in London, although still in vogue elsewhere.

A great improvement was effected in the edition published in 1746, in which only those preparations were retained which had received the approval of the majority of the pharmacopoeia committee; to these was added a list of those drugs only which were supposed to be the most efficacious. An attempt was made to simplify further the older formulae by the rejection of superfluous ingredients. In the edition published in 1788 the tendency to simplify was carried out to a much greater extent, and the extremely compound medicines which had formed the principal remedies of physicians for 2000 years were discarded, while a few powerful drugs which had been considered too dangerous to be included in the Pharmacopoeia of 1765 were restored to their previous position. In 1809 the French chemical nomenclature was adopted, and in 1815 a corrected impression of the same was issued. Subsequent editions were published in 1824, 1836 and 1851.



COMMON AMARANTH
Amaranthus hybridus L.

The first Edinburgh Pharmacopoeia was published in 1699 and the last in 1841; the first Dublin Pharmacopoeia in 1807 and the last in 1850.

National Pharmacopoeia

The preparations contained in these three pharmacopoeias were not all uniform in strength, a source of much inconvenience and danger to the public, when powerful preparations such as dilute hydrocyanic acid were ordered in the one country and dispensed according to the national pharmacopoeia in another. As a result, the Medical Act of 1858 ordained that the General Medical Council should publish a book containing a list of medicines and compounds, to be called the British Pharmacopoeia, which would be a substitute throughout Great Britain and Ireland for the separate pharmacopoeias. Hitherto these had been published in Latin.

The first British Pharmacopoeia was published in the English language in 1864, but gave such general dissatisfaction both to the medical profession and to chemists and druggists that the General Medical Council brought out a new and amended edition in 1867. This dissatisfaction probably owed partly to the fact that the majority of the compilers of the work were not engaged in the practice of pharmacy, and therefore competent rather to decide upon the kind of preparations required than upon the method of their manufacture. The necessity for this element in the construction of a pharmacopoeia is now fully recognized in other countries, in most of which pharmaceutical chemists are represented on the committee for the preparation of the legally recognized manuals.

There are national and international pharmacopoeias, like the EU and the US pharmacopoeias. All the pharmacopoeias were issued under the authority of government, and their instructions have the force of law in their respective territories, except that of the United States, which was prepared by commissioners appointed by medical and pharmaceutical societies, and has no other authority, although generally accepted as the national textbook.



Early Overlating - Anaphalis margaritacea

Preparations

The rapid increase in medical and pharmaceutical knowledge renders necessary frequent new editions of the national pharmacopoeias, the office of which is to furnish definite formulae for preparations that have already come into extensive use in medical practice, so as to ensure uniformity of strength, and to give the characters and tests by which their purity and potency may be determined. But each new edition requires several years to carry out numerous experiments for devising suitable formulae, so that the current Pharmacopoeia can never be quite up to date.

This difficulty has hitherto been met by the publication of such nonofficial formularies as Squire's Companion to the Pharmacopoeia and Martindale: The complete drug reference (formerly Martindale's : The Extra Pharmacopoeia), in which all new remedies and their preparations, uses and doses are recorded, and in the former the varying strengths of the same preparations in the different pharmacopoeias are also compared (Squire's was incorporated into Martindale in 1952).

The need of such works to supplement the Pharmacopoeia is shown by the fact that they are even more largely used than the Pharmacopoeia itself, the first issued in 18 editions and the second in 13 editions at comparatively short intervals. In the UK, the task of elaborating a new Pharmacopoeia is entrusted to a body of a purely medical character, and legally the pharmacist has not, contrary to the practice in other countries, a voice in the matter, notwithstanding the fact that, although the medical practitioner is naturally the best judge of the drug or preparations that will afford the best therapeutic result, he is not so competent as the pharmacist to say how that preparation can be produced in the most effective and satisfactory manner, nor how the purity of drugs can be tested.



Western Pasquiflorae - Palustilla occidentalis

The change occurred with the fourth edition of the British Pharmacopoeia in 1898. A committee of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain was appointed at the request of the General Medical Council to advise on pharmaceutical matters. A census of prescriptions was taken to ascertain the relative frequency with which different preparations and drugs were used in prescriptions, and suggestions and criticisms were sought from various medical and pharmaceutical bodies across the British Empire. As regards the purely pharmaceutical part of the work a committee of reference in pharmacy, nominated by the pharmaceutical societies of Great Britain and Ireland (as they were then), was appointed to report to the Pharmacopoeia Committee of the Medical Council.

Some difficulty has arisen since the passing of the Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act concerning the use of the Pharmacopoeia as a legal standard for the drugs and preparations contained in it. The Pharmacopoeia is defined in the preface as only "intended to afford to the members of the medical profession and those engaged in the preparation of medicines throughout the British Empire one uniform standard and guide whereby the nature and composition of, substances to be used in medicine may be ascertained and determined." It is obvious that it cannot be an encyclopaedia of substances used in medicine, and can only be used as a standard for the substances and preparations contained in it, and for no others. It has been held in the Divisional Courts (*Dickins v. Randerson*) that the Pharmacopoeia is a standard for official preparations asked for under their pharmacopoeial name.

American Herbalists

JOHN URI LLOYD

John Uri Lloyd (1849-1936) founded Lloyd Brothers Pharmacy in Cincinnati, and was responsible for the formulation of a body of plant extracts called Specific Medicines (following the recommendations of Scudder). The pharmacy closed in the early 1960's, but his legacy is still present as the Lloyd Library, (the largest library of medical plant books in the world), the Lloyd Extractor, his pioneering work in colloidal chemistry, and several bestselling works of fiction, including "Stringtown on the Pike and the mystical "Etidorhpa".



Although perhaps the most famous figure in pharmacy in his day (he was the de facto editor of the first National Formulary and twice the president of the American Pharmaceutical Association), he refused to abandon his love for plant medicine, the Eclectic Movement, and Alchemy. Without formal training, and serving 10 years in self-imposed apprenticeship, he clashed his whole life with the pharmaceutical manufacturers and the "regulars" who ran American pharmacy...those with degrees from Harvard and Yale...and who, he felt, helped diminish the traditional role of the pharmacist from one who PREPARED medicines (and was partner with the physician) to its present status: the pharmacist as simply the legal dispenser of products made by pharmaceutical manufacturers. His enemies prevailed, and his name appears in virtually no histories of American Pharmacy. He was right, of course.

Let's review some of the original Lloyd Brothers plant drug pamphlets (1897 to 1915) below:

- [Aloe succotrina](#) - **Aloes Species** J.U. Lloyd, 1898
- [Atropa belladonna](#) - **Belladonna** J.S. Niederkorn, M.D., J.U.Lloyd, 1905
- [Cephaelis ipecacuanha](#) - **Ipecac** J.U.Lloyd, 1897
- [Chionanthus Virginica](#) - **Fringetree** J.U. Lloyd, 1904
- [Citrullus colocynthis](#) - **Colocynth, Bitter Cucumber** J.U.Lloyd, 1898
- [Copaifera officinalis](#) - **Copaiba** J.U.Lloyd, 1898
- [Croton tiglium](#) - **Croton Oil** - J.U.Lloyd, 1898
- [Dicentra canadensis](#) - **Turkey Corn** J.U. Lloyd, 1915
- [Dioscorea villosa](#) - **Wild Yam** Fyfe and Lloyd, 1905
- [Gelsemium sempervirens](#) - **Yellow Jessamine** J.U.Lloyd. 1904
- [Hydrastis canadensis](#) - **Golden Seal** J.U.Lloyd. 1898 (?)
- [Jateorhiza calumba](#) - **Columbo** J.U.Lloyd. 1898 **(11/02)**
- [Medicago sativa](#) - **Alfalfa** A. L. Blackwood, M. D. 1915
- [Nux vomica](#) - Howes and Lloyd, 1904
- [Physostigma venenosum](#) - **Calabar or Ordeal Bean** - J.U.Lloyd, 1897
- [Punica granatum](#) - **Pomegranate** J.U.Lloyd, 1897
- [Selenicereus](#) - **Night-Blooming Cereus** J.U.Lloyd, 1908
- [Strophanthus](#) - J.U.Lloyd, 1897
- [Turnera](#) - **Damiana**. J.U.Lloyd, 1904



Marsh Marigold, Cowslip - Caltha palustris

Samuel Thomson

Lloyd recounts the story of Samuel Thomson, the [Thomsonian Materia Medica](#), and the many trials and tribulations of the Patriarch and the Thomsonian Movement. This 1909 publication of the Lloyd Library offers the complete autobiography of Thomson, critical excerpts on his "Course of Medication", the transcripts of the trial of Dr. Frost (a N.Y. Thomsonian), and some insights into the Anti-Masonic and Federalist politics of Thomson's persecution. Thomson's own description of his legal problems is given in flat, understated New England dryness and couched in seeming venal paranoia...resembling a garrulous old fart with a vendetta against a neighbour's fence and boundary lines.

After finishing the later material, offering 3rd party perspective, you realize that Thomson's movement had effected a million or more Americans, started a medical reformation that would not peak for another 50 years, and the brightest medical minds of the time were split vehemently both against and for Thomson's right to practice...bitterly divided between Federalists and Republican politics...Populists and Elitists...rural and urban. The tribulations of this former pig farmer rocked the young republic for over a decade and were headlines everywhere. Because of the success of Thomson and his followers, states began, for the first time, regulating medical practice along party and class lines.

Benjamin Colby

Colby was probably the most popular and readable of all the followers of Samuel Thomson (1769-1843). Thomson himself made a living as a practitioner ("Root Doctor" was his preferred term), and by selling, for \$50, the "Patent" to practice as he did...this included books and some training. A true populist, he refused to sell "patents" to trained physicians. After his death, his followers wrote books for popular and home use and, as if early Franciscan herbalists, vowed to make Every Man and Woman Their Own Doctor.

When George Washington lay dying, the country's best physicians, from Harvard and Yale, proceeded to kill him by draining 3 QUARTS of blood, giving him several doses of Calomel (mercury sub-chloride) and covering his body with blisters. Into this milieu came Thomson, who believed that all health derived from life energy, and nearly all diseases derived from congenital, environmental and life-style compromises to that life energy. Although both he and his early followers were persecuted in a number of

highly publicized trials, the Thomsonians flourished everywhere...a sane and radical answer to Medicine Gone Mad. Colby delineated the basic practices and philosophy of Thomsonian Medicine in this widely sold (and pirated) book – [A Guide to Health \(1848\)](#) – you can now download this extraordinary book and read it with fascination!



Pink Mountain Heather - Phyllodoce empetrifera

Fred J. Petersen, M.D.

This enigmatic Eclectic physician wrote a few papers for the Los Angeles Eclectic Journal and later the California Eclectic and the Eclectic Journal (all between 1904 and 1908)...and this one textbook. It is a peculiar and rather exciting approach to Eclecticism, gleefully mixing botanicals, electricity and low-potency homeopathics. He took the approach that most herbs were best employed for their "secondary actions", that is, not for their toxic or heroic effects, but the subtler constitutional and multi-systemic effects that were crucial to the Eclectic Medical model. He then used low-potency homeopathics, for their usual echoes of toxicity, their "primary actions".

And then he mixed them all up, along with baths, faradic, and even light therapy. He presumed, as a sensible rural physician (the typical Eclectic), that such a doctor should be able to make most of his or her supplies, medicines and even diagnostic tools. This book is as close to a basic workbook for low-tech physicianing and it contains many rather unique observations. A peculiar and refreshing mixture of different schools that in many ways is more "Eclectic" than many better known works.

Although all alternative physicians were united against the "Regular School", Homeopaths aligned together in glinty fanaticism, digging and delving into their version of pharmaceutical alchemy, the Physiomedicalists were Cleansing the Body of vitiating influences, and the sturdy Eclectics were practicing medicine (using drugs but especially botanicals) and surgery in a vitalist make-over of Standard Practice. Homeopaths and Eclectics generally traveled in alternative universes, with a common foe but little or no mingling, and the Physiomedicalists or Neo-Thomsonians, a rather anarchic bunch, were in a rather reduced state, consisting largely of semi-professional practitioners, ageing and grumpy. Thus it was at the beginning of the 20th century.



Long-leaved Pine - Pinus palustris

Bear in mind, of course, that these medical divisions were most staunchly upheld by the various schools, national and local organizations, publishers, allied pharmaceutical manufacturers and periodicals...Medical Politics. At the turn of the 20th century, a licensed physician...trained in whatever sect...often, in the course of a practice of a few decades, began using methods and remedies from other medical sects. A rural country doc might, in time, end up using botanicals from Cincinnati, drugs from New York, homeopathics from Philadelphia, and some osteopathy picked up at a Still symposium. THESE docs didn't write books, however...except for Dr. Petersen – [Materia Medica and Clinical Therapeutics](#) – its truly fascinating book of over 350 pages and well worth downloading and reading – these are priceless, classic texts that students should not miss out on!

Petersen, born in 1864, graduated in 1900 from the California Eclectic Medical College in Los Angeles, was in practice in Los Olivos, California (NW of Santa Barbara), later moved to Lompoc, California, and finally ended up further north in Camp Meeker, a small village in the rolling hills south of the Russian River and Guerneville. There, in 1913, age 50, suffering from ill health, he took his own life with a gun. His death was noted in the Journal of the American Medical Association, but apparently ignored by the California Eclectic Medical Association.

Illustrated Phytotherapy by Thomas Deschauer, D.Sc, N.D., D.C.

An enigma, Deschauer wrote a number of self-published books, maintained a practice and ran an herb and vitamin businesses in Maywood, Illinois up until the late 1940s. It would seem, from his exhaustive knowledge of rural German plant names, that he was one of the German nature-cure charismatics that immigrated to the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. Others include Benedict Lust, Arnold Ehret and Otto Mauselet.



Going by the appearance of Dr. Deschauer in his photograph in volume one, he was already an aged man, and perhaps he died before finishing the planned third volume of this series. These books were probably published on a small press and bound by hand, with staples and binding tape. The illustrations appear to have been carefully cut out of existing books, photographed and burned into metal plates for in-house printing. The first volume has been reprinted a few times over the years by others and that his several other books are generally unknown. Nonetheless, except for some peculiar latin names (retained) and several (noted) misidentifications of American plants (understandable if one were of German training), there is a sure and experienced hand at work in these two books and they deserve to be available.

[Volume one \(1945\)](#); 113 pages, 147 illustrations of about 150 distinct plants, bookmarked Acrobat (.pdf) file, 2.4 MB

[Volume two \(1945\)](#); 116 pages, 155 illustrations of about 160 distinct plants, bookmarked Acrobat (.pdf) file, 2.7 MB

Ellingwood was a hard-working Chicago physician with many years experience, and an acknowledged expert in ob/gyn medicine. What we would now call "a Networker", he was a vocal advocate of women physicians, and edited *Ellingwood's Therapeutist* for many years. His brand of Eclectic Medicine, like a Chicago-Style pizza, differed a bit from the Cincinnati style ("smothered, covered and chopped" - a regional joke) as mentored by Scudder, Lloyd, Fyfe and Felter.

This is a serious medical text from the early 20th century, it was intended for practicing physicians and surgeons, and can be hair-raising at times. These files are organized in the same manner as in Ellingwood's original text. Below are the most pertinent chapters of his book relating to herbal medicine which again can be downloaded and studied to get a flavour of the type of herbal medicine practiced in 1919.



[Group I - Agents Acting on the Nervous System](#) - 205 pages - 432K

- 1-1-Antipyretics.pdf
- 1-2-Analgesics.pdf
- 1-3-Sedatives.pdf
- 1-5-Minor nerve tonics.pdf
- 1-7-Reproductive Sedatives.pdf
- 2-1-Nerve Stimulants.pdf
- 2-2-Alcohol-antimalarials.pdf
- 2-3-Circulatory Stimulants.pdf
- 3-1-Tonic Stimulants.pdf
- 3-2-Sedative Stimulants.pdf

[Antipyretics chart.pdf](#) - 20k

[Group II - Agents Acting Upon the Heart](#) - 40 pages - 92K

- 1-Heart Agents.pdf
- 2-Heart Agents.pdf

[Heart Remedy Chart.pdf](#)

[Group III - Agents Acting Upon the Respiratory Tract](#) - 53 pages - 120K

- 1-Nauseating Expectorants.pdf
- 2-Mucosa Stimulants.pdf
- 3-Mucosa Stimulants.pdf
- 4-Sedatives and Tonics.pdf
- 5-Sedatives and Tonics.pdf

[Group IV - Agents Acting upon the Stomach](#) - 57 pages - 128K

- 1-Stomachics.pdf
- 2-Minor Stomach Tonics.pdf
- 3-GI Sedatives.pdf
- 4-Anti-emetics.pdf
- 5-Emetics.pdf
- 7-Digestives.pdf



Evening Primrose - *Oenothera biennis*

[Group V - Agents Acting upon the Intestinal Glandular Organs and the Canal](#) - 84 pages - 188K

- 1-Laxatives-Cathartics.pdf
- 2-Liver Stimulants.pdf
- 3-Mild Liver Stimulants.pdf
- 4-Hydragogue Cathartics.pdf
- 6-Intestinal Astringents.pdf
- 7-Astringent Tonics.pdf
- 8-Hemostatic Astringents.pdf

[Liver Herb Chart.pdf](#)

[Group VI - Agents Influencing the Character of the Blood](#) - 90 pages - 204K

- 1-Antiseptic Alteratives.pdf
- 2-Glandular Alteratives.pdf
- 3-Special Glandulars.pdf
- 4-Antiseptic Alteratives.pdf
- 5-Special Alteratives.pdf
- 6-Antirheumatic Alteratives.pdf

[Group VII - Agents Acting Upon the Genitourinary Organs](#) - 62 pages - 140K

- 1-Renal Stimulants.pdf
- 2-Renal Stimulants.pdf
- 3-Stimulant-Sedatives.pdf
- 4-Sedatives-Correctives.pdf
- 5-Renal Correctives.pdf
- 6-Renal Correctives.pdf
- 7-Special remedies.pdf

[Group VIII - Agents Used for Their Influence Upon the Skin](#) - 19 pages - 56K

[Group IX - Agents Acting upon the Female Reproductive Organs](#) - 22 pages - 60K

[Reproductive Herb Chart.pdf](#)

[Group X - Agents Acting upon Intestinal Parasites-Anthelmintics](#) - 10 pages - 32K

[Ellingwood's Materia Medica](#) - 470 pages - 1M

The complete PLANT or plant derivative monographs, in alphabetical order (no drugs or chemicals)



Santal's Rue - *Tephrosia virginiana*

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