

## Franklin County, Medical Daybook of Doctor Thomas Gifford, May–June 1847

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During the nineteenth century, medical training for doctors was limited. With formal medical schools few and far between, most aspiring doctors relied on apprenticeships for their entire medical education.<sup>1</sup> During these apprenticeships, students learned to combat the illnesses of the day (cholera, malaria, and various fevers) with an array of treatments.<sup>2</sup> While the practice of bleeding patients is a well-known treatment of early doctors, more common and less dramatic remedies were also used. Mostly made from everyday ingredients, these remedies were often referred to simply as “tonics” or “pills.” J. A. Newton, a mid-nineteenth century doctor in Indiana, refers to prescriptions given to patients this way in his daybook. But in the back of the book, he lists the recipes for these tonics and pills, which include molasses, vinegar, garlic roots, skunk cabbage, cloves, and “best whiskey.”<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Gifford was another nineteenth century Indiana doctor. Born in New York in 1816, Gifford moved to Indiana with his family the following year. After the death of his mother in 1820, he was sent to live with an uncle. He spent his youth working on his uncle’s farm and later at a tannery, while pursuing an education through various schools and tutors. In 1837 he apprenticed himself to a local doctor in Laurel, Indiana, before attending the Medical College of Ohio in 1840. Returning to Laurel, he began to practice medicine and remained there for the rest of his life.<sup>4</sup> Records detailing the patients he saw and the treatments he prescribed for them can be found in the Indiana Historical Society’s William Henry Smith Memorial Library.<sup>5</sup>

Below is a list of patients and treatments transcribed from Doctor Gifford’s daybook for May and June 1847. Part of the Thomas Gifford collection, this record book is labeled “Day Book A.” While it is evident that the place of practice was Laurel, Indiana, indication of who created the entries is missing. If not Gifford, this was perhaps the work of a close colleague or business partner. In this daybook the name of each patient is listed along with the cost for the visit and medicine. Although the reasons for the visits are mostly unlisted, the record book does provide a glimpse of the broad scope required of doctors at this time. For example, on June 18, 1847, the doctor extracts a tooth for one patient and prescribes cough lozenges for another.<sup>6</sup>

## Notes

1. L. G. Zerfas, “Medical Education in Indiana as Influenced by Early Indiana Graduates in Medicine from Transylvania University,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 30, no. 2 (1934): 139.
2. George B. Manhart, “The Indiana Central Medical College,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 61, no. 2 (1960): 106.
3. J. A. Newton medical account book, Dr. J. A. Newton Records, 1864–1881, BV 2106, Indiana Historical Society. See back of account book for recipes.
4. Thomas Gifford, 1850 U.S. Census, Laurel, Franklin County, Indiana; roll: M432\_146, page 214A, image 110, Ancestry.com; J. H. Beers and Co. and Laurel Kiwanis Club, *Atlas Franklin Co., Indiana* (1882; repr., Knightstown, IN: Bookmark, 1976), 111; *Medical College of Ohio Annual Catalogue, 1840–1841*, Donald C. Harrison Health Sciences Library, University of Cincinnati, 6. The census provides Gifford’s state of birth and approximate birth year. The atlas discusses Gifford’s early years. The annual catalog lists Gifford as a student.
5. Thomas Gifford Papers, 1845–1872, BV 2705–2707, Indiana Historical Society. See Day Book A (May 1847–June 1849), BV 2705.
6. *Ibid.*, 6.

## Entries in Doctor Thomas Gifford’s Daybook for May and June 1847

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### May 1847

7th: Stephen Lee to pills for wife	.50
8th: John Stafford to vis, and med for self	.50
9th: John Stafford to vis, and med for self	.50
10th: John Stafford to vis, and med for self	.50
10th: Isaac Stephens to vis, and med for child	1.00
11th: Harry Pierce to vis, and med for child	.75
11th: Isaac Stephens to vis, and med for child	1.00
13th: Nelson Patterson to vis, and med for wife	.50

13th: Arthur Gillum to vis for wife	.50
15th: Isaac Stephens to vis, and med for child	1.00
18th: Daniel Conners to vis, and med for self	1.50
18th: John Kirk pills for hired girl	.50
18th: Robert Sinks . . . pills	.50
19th: Benj. Maple . . . powders	.50
21st: James P Wilson to pills	.13
21st: [Snethen/Smithen] Vi[b/l]ott med for chills	.75
21st: Enos Lonsbury to vis med for self	.50

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21st: Enos Lonsbury to vis, and mef[d] for self	1.00
21st: Asbury Conwell pills for self	.75
21st: Jesse Cloud pills for self	.25
22nd: Dits Amos tonic pills for self	.25
23rd: James P. Wilson to vis and med for self	.50
24th: William Williams pills for daughter	.50
24th: John OCane to vis and med for self	1.25
24th: James P. Wilson: to vis and med for self	1.00
24th: John Parmer med for child	.12
25th: James P. Wilson to vis med for self	.50
25th: John OCane to vis and med for self and for son	1.50
25th: Enos Lonsbury to vis med for self	.50
26th: John OCane to vis med for self and med for son	1.50
26th: David Carr to vis and med for wife	.75
28th: John OCane to vis and med for self and med for son	1.50
28th: William Williams med for daughter	.12
28th: Henry Bedson for wife	.12

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29th: Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	1.00
29th: Dr. Thos. Gifford to account of T Stafford	1.50
29th: John OCane 1 pint of brandy	.50
29th: [Smithen/Snethen] Vi[l/b]ott medicine for self	.75
29th: <del>Henry Pierce brown mix</del>	<del>.12</del>
30th: William Clark pills for son William	.25
30th: Charles Morrow quinine by wife	.25
30th: John OCane to vis med for self and med for son	1.50
30th: Enos Lonsbury to vis, med for self	.75
31st: Thos S. White quinine for self	.50
31st: Dito Amos tonic pills for self	1.00
31st: Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	1.00

**June 1847**

1 <sup>st</sup> : Cassia Anthony to attendance on self in confinement	5.00
1 <sup>st</sup> : John OCane to vis and med for self	1.37
1 <sup>st</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med. for self	.50
2 <sup>nd</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
2 <sup>nd</sup> : John OCane to cough for son	.25

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3 <sup>rd</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
4 <sup>th</sup> : John OCane to vis and med for self	1.25
4 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	1.00
5 <sup>th</sup> : William Williams to fifty pills for self	.50
5 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	1.00
6 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
7 <sup>th</sup> : H. Wever to vis and med for child	.50
7 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50

8 <sup>th</sup> : Peter Perine to vis and med for wife	.50
8 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
9 <sup>th</sup> : Peter Perine to vis and med for wife	.50
9 <sup>th</sup> : John OCane to vis and med for self	.50
9 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
9 <sup>th</sup> : A. Wever to vis and med for child	1.00
10 <sup>th</sup> : Harben Springer to med for child	.12
10 <sup>th</sup> : Isaac Stephans to med for child	.50
10 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50

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10 <sup>th</sup> : A. Wever to vis and med for child	1.00
11 <sup>th</sup> : John Patterson to vis and med for child	1.00
11 <sup>th</sup> : Jesse Cloud to med for self and wife	.50
11 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
11 <sup>th</sup> : Benj. D. Maple to extracting tooth for self	.25
11 <sup>th</sup> : James Murphy to quinine for child	.25
12 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
12 <sup>th</sup> : John Patterson to vis and med for child	.50
12 <sup>th</sup> : Anderson Warr[---] To vis and med for child	1.00
12 <sup>th</sup> : William Miller to call vis and med for child	.50
13: Enos Lonsbury to vis and med for self	.50
15 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to pill for self	.25
15 <sup>th</sup> : Thos. Maddox to pills for self	.25
16 <sup>th</sup> : Wm Clark to pills for son William	.10
16 <sup>th</sup> : John Lewey to reducing fractured leg for self	3.00
17 <sup>th</sup> : Anderson Johnson to vis and med for self	1.00
17 <sup>th</sup> : John Lewey to vis and med for self	1.00

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17 <sup>th</sup> : [Separ Bergoin?] to pills for self	.10
18 <sup>th</sup> : John Lewey to vis and med for self	1.00
18 <sup>th</sup> : William Patterson to extracting tooth for self	.25
18 <sup>th</sup> : Joseph OCane to cough lozenges for self	.25
19 <sup>th</sup> : John White to vis and med for wife	1.00
19 <sup>th</sup> : Calab Schofield to vis and med for wife, and boy	.50
20 <sup>th</sup> : Calab Schofield to vis and med for wife	.50
20 <sup>th</sup> : John Lewey to vis and med for self	1.00
20 <sup>th</sup> : Ia. Schofield to med for self	.12 ½
21 <sup>st</sup> : Shepard to med for self	.12 ½
21 <sup>st</sup> : Dr. T. Gifford to Warner's account	1.00
21 <sup>st</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	.50
21 <sup>st</sup> : Peter Perine to pills for wife	.12
21 <sup>st</sup> : James Maple to med for child	.25
21 <sup>st</sup> : William Clark to tonic pills for wife	.30
21 <sup>st</sup> : Calab Schofield to med for wife	.50
21 <sup>st</sup> : Miss M. Williams to tonic pills	.25

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22 <sup>nd</sup> : Benj. D. Maple to vis and med for child	1.00
22 <sup>nd</sup> : James P. Wilson to tonic pills for self	.25
22 <sup>nd</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	1.00
22 <sup>nd</sup> : Calab Schofield to vis and med for wife	1.00
23 <sup>rd</sup> : John Lewey to vis and med for self	1.00
23 <sup>rd</sup> : James Matthews to vis and med for wife	1.50
23 <sup>rd</sup> : Patrick Lively to med and prescription for child	.25
23 <sup>rd</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	1.00
23 <sup>rd</sup> : Benj. D. Maple to quinine for child	.12 ½
24 <sup>th</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	1.00

24 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to pills for self	.25
24 <sup>th</sup> : Calab Schofield to med for wife	.50
25 <sup>th</sup> : John Lewey to vis and med for self	1.00
25 <sup>th</sup> : Creekmore to vis and med for self	1.75
25 <sup>th</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	.50
26 <sup>th</sup> : Creekmore to vis and med for self	1.50
26 <sup>th</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	.50

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26 <sup>th</sup> : Pater Perine to pills for self	.25
26 <sup>th</sup> : Hugh Sparks for med for wife	.25
26 <sup>th</sup> : James Sparks to pills for self	.25
26 <sup>th</sup> : Enos Lonsbury to tonic and [Catherine?] pills	1.62
27 <sup>th</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	1.00
28 <sup>th</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	1.00
29 <sup>th</sup> : Hugh Sparks to med for child	.12
29 <sup>th</sup> : Charles Clark to pills for self	.25
29 <sup>th</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	1.00
29 <sup>th</sup> : William Miller to vis for son	.50
30 <sup>th</sup> : Hugh Sparks to vis and med for child	1.25
30 <sup>th</sup> : William Miller to [---]	.12
30 <sup>th</sup> : James Maple to vis and med for child	.50
30 <sup>th</sup> : L. Person to powder for self	.25
30 <sup>th</sup> : John Lewey to vis and med for self	1.00
30 <sup>th</sup> : Sarah Thompson to vis and med for son	1.00