

## ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS

### An “Olefiant Gas” Two-Dollar Receipt



According to this two-dollar receipt (left), one method for generating “The Olefiant Gas” was patented on the 15th of March in 1858. (The most successful anesthetic associated with this “oil-making” gas was ethylene, which would be popularized 70 yr later.) This printed note cautioned that the “holder of this binds himself under a penalty not to divulge the secret of this Receipt” for \$2. The “Directions” for “The Olefiant Gas” read: “2 Quarts of Alcohol. / 1 Pint of Camphene. / 2 Ounces of Alum. / 1 Teaspoonful of Curcuma Liquid. / Mix, let stand 12 hours, then Use.” Scrawled on the reverse of this receipt (right) is the secret key to actually using this prescription: “Put this Powder in one quart of alcohol or fluid then use one Teaspoonful to the other three Ingredients.” (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc. This image also appears in the *Anesthesiology Reflections* online collection available at [www.anesthesiology.org](http://www.anesthesiology.org).)

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