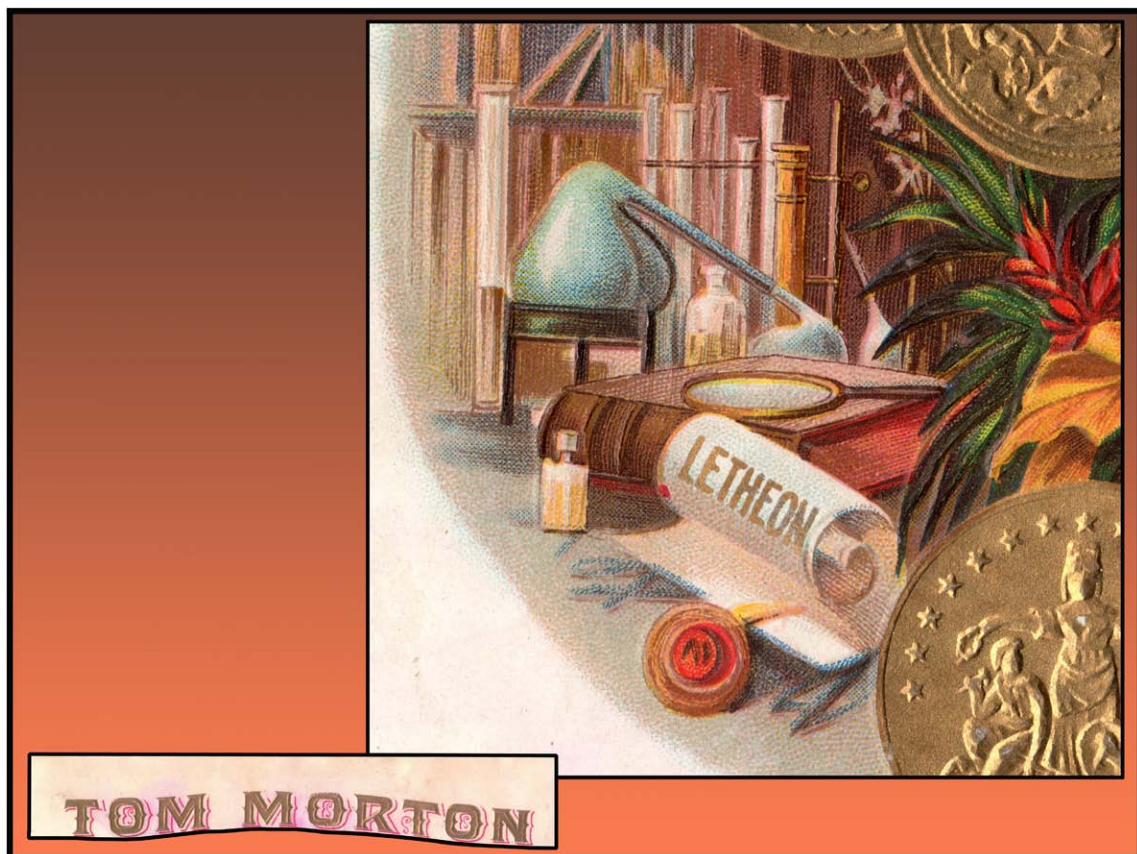


ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

From Greek to Arabic: “Tom Morton” Cigar Box Label, Part I



The left side of the “Tom Morton” cigar box label includes items related to Greek mythology and Arabic alchemy. Derived from Lethe, the Greeks’ name for their mythological river of forgetfulness, “LETHEON” is inscribed across what appears to be a scrolled up patent or paper (*above*), presumably penned by ether pioneer William Thomas Green Morton (WTGM). Synthesis of sulfuric ether originally involved alchemical glassware, the name of which changed from the ancient Greek word “ambyx” to the Arabic “al-anbīq” to the English “alembic.” But what about WTGM’s name? Was he ever nicknamed “Tom Morton”? (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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