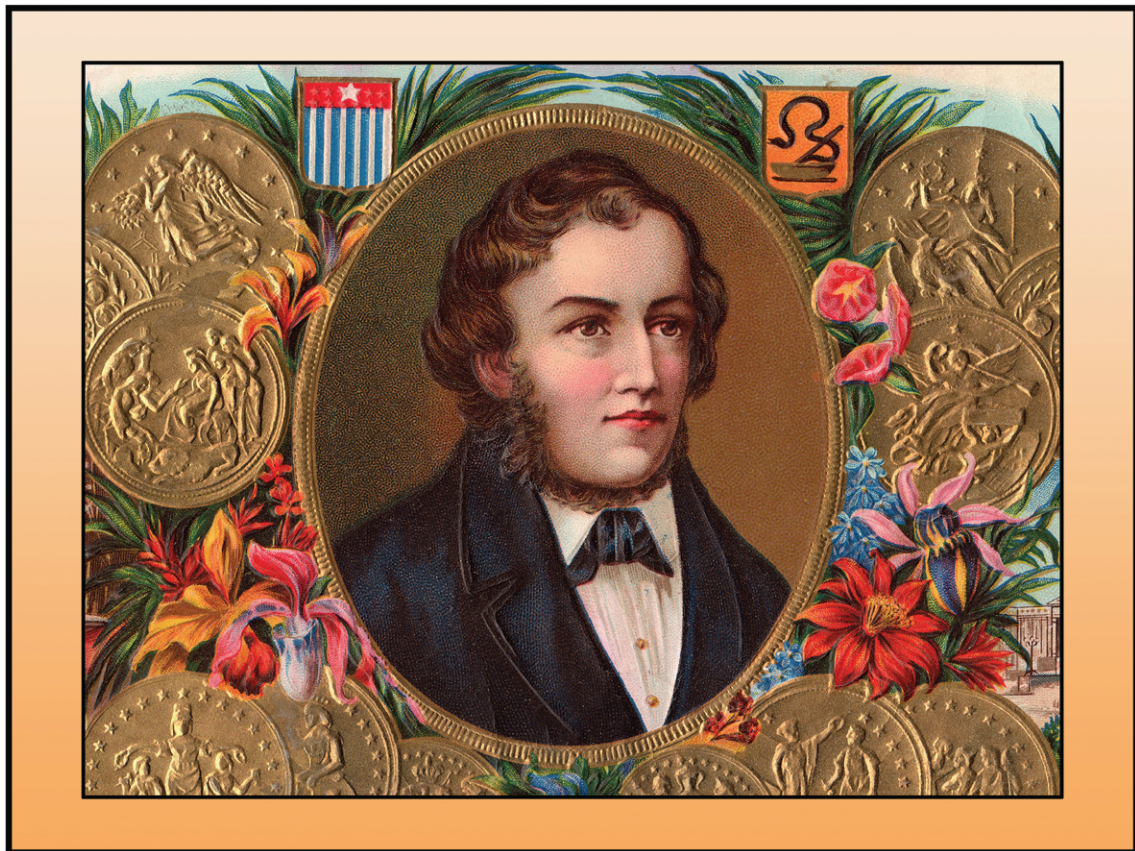


Identity Theft? “Tom Morton” Cigar Box Label, Part III



To the chagrin of today's anesthesiologists, from the 1880s to the 1910s, a certain "Tom Morton" was much better known to the American public than was ether pioneer "William T. G. Morton." Tom Morton was a prolific English playwright whose wildly popular plays were featured on stages on both sides of the Atlantic. As one journalist noted, after a new cigar was branded "Tom Morton," a "cigar manufacturer with the mind of a caterpillar and the morals of a Dick Turpin" [an English highwayman and horse thief] arbitrarily advertised the cigar not with the face of playwright Tom, but with the conveniently available visage of etherist William ... who was never known as "Tom Morton." At least one portrait of playwright Tom depicts him as unbearded, unlike WTGM's bearded image (*above*), which is centered on the "Tom Morton" cigar box label. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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