



**Royalston
Historical
Society**

Thank you for the recent contributions to the Society in honor of Peter Kraniak:

**Jim and Brenda Putney
Ken and Marty Bouchard**

The Royalston Historical Society is still collecting dues for the fiscal year, 2025-6. Dues are \$25 per person annually. Your dues and donations make a big difference to our operating budget. Please send to : Royalston Historical Society/ P.O. Box 23/ Royalston MA 01368

The Society is already coordinating another "North Quabbin History Tour", where local historical societies all open on the same day so their stories can augment each other. Save the date for September 20 from 10 am - 4 pm 2026.

Historical Societies support one another and when an eastern Massachusetts society found a farrier's notebook with references to Royalston, they reached out to see if we would like it. We did, and when it arrived, tucked inside were several "testimonials" to the efficacies of patent medicines, including this one, where Royalston residents gush:

Mr. Tandy: "Chronic diarrroea of long standing, and never received any benefit until I commenced taking Dr. Fletcher's medicine."

Mrs. Geo. Bemis, female weakness of several years' standing: I have received no benefit until taking Dr. Fletcher's medicine, which I have confidence is going to cure me.

Mrs. Frank B. Smith, a bad cough with spitting blood; cured in less than 2 weeks. Miss Chapin, female weakness. Miss Miller of Athol, dropsy and rheumatism. Mr. S Whitney -pneumonia; hard case cured....

I, Francis B Smith, have attended these patients with Dr. H.N. Fletcher, and attest this to be a fact.

F. B. Smith West Royalston

In the 19th Century patent over-the-counter medicines were not regulated and there is not evidence that there was an actual doctor involved in the formation of the medicine. It likely contained a high concentration of alcohol, herbal extract like licorice or wild cherry bark, and opiates like codeine, opium or morphine. It may have even contained heroin, which was popular in the late 1800s. These products did indeed suppress coughing, but they also risked addiction or overdose, especially in children. In 1906, the Pure Food and Drug Act was passed, which required manufacturers to disclose narcotic ingredients. Many companies folded or changed the contents.

Dr H. N. Fletcher,

Seventh Son of a Seventh Son,

And Proprietor of the Celebrated

COUGH SYRUP.

The following are samples of some of the remarkable testimonials recently received by Dr. Fletcher :

Mount Hermon, Mass., Feb. 20, 1892.

Dr. Fletcher, Dear Sir:—Please come to my place as soon as you can after receiving this letter. My daughter has improved very much after taking the medicine you left her. I am almost ashamed in what I said in regard to the medicine, for so many travelling Drs. have deceived me. Your medicine is the only thing that ever helped my daughter.

With best respects,

D. D. STREETER.

I have been afflicted with fits from childhood, and have tried everything, and have received no benefit until using Dr. Fletcher's medicine.

ANNIE WEBSTER, Warwick, Mass.

We can say we are happy to our house once more. My mother fell down stairs last July, and broke two ribs, and hurt her all over. Her limbs swelled, and she could not work until since she began taking Mr. Fletcher's medicine. The swelling has all gone down, and she can work now. No other medicine ever done her any good.

HERBERT RYTHUR, Bernardston, Mass.

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Mrs. Frank B. Smith, a bad cough with spitting of blood; cured in less than two weeks. Miss Chapin, female weakness. Miss Miller, Athol, Mass., dropsy and rheumatism. Mr. S. Whitney, pneumonia; hard case, cured. Mr. Albee, chronic diarrhoea of long standing. Mr. C. N. Turner, gravel. Mr. Alford Atwood, Warwick, Mass., la grippe and lung complaint.

I, Francis B. Smith, have attended these patients with Dr. H. N. Fletcher, and attest this to be a fact.

F. B. SMITH, West Royalston, Mass.