

MEDICAL ALLUSIONS IN SOME INSCRIPTIONS OF ANDHRA PRADESH

By

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The non-medical literature and epigraphical and archaeological sources provide, though rarely, valuable information pertaining to history of medicine. Only limited efforts have been made either by the historians or by the scholar-physicians to study the non-medical literature, epigraphical and archaeological sources with a medico-historical view. The scholar-physicians of Ayurveda in India did not have special interest to study the historical background of the medical science in India apart from the medical texts.

The Institute has undertaken the study of inscriptions pertaining to Andhra Pradesh for collecting material useful for the history of medicine. Even the study of the published material is faced with difficulties, as many of the books have gone out of print and copies are not available in the libraries at Hyderabad. However, the work has been taken on hand and the information so far collected is presented in this article.

The most famous of the inscriptions is the one known as Malkapuram inscription. It was first published by Sri J. Ramayya Pantulu in historical and literary Telugu journals and later mentioned in Sridhanvantari, a Telugu Ayurvedic journal, by Dr. A. Lakshmi-pathi. Dr. D.V. Subba Reddy was the first to bring this to the notice of the medical historians in the course of an article under the name "Medical Relief in South India", based on epigraphical evidences in the Bulletin of History of Medicine.

Dr. V. Sankara Sastry has collected information from epigraphical sources for his book Andhra Vaidya Sampradayamu (medical tradition of Andhras). The information on the Kṣīrarāmeśvara and Nandalur inscriptions was kindly given by him from the manuscript of his book.

1. *Bapatla Inscriptions* : There are two inscriptions in the Bhāvanārāyaṇasvāmi temple in Bapatla in Guntur District, one on the south wall and another on the north wall. The two inscriptions register the gift of perpetual lamps to the God Bhāvanārāyaṇa of Prempalli by Anantabhaṭṭa* the son of Vaidya (physician) Sūryadevapaṇḍita. The text of the two inscriptions is same except the last portion in Telugu, dealing directly with the gift and the date. The first portion in both, describing the details of the family, is in Sanskrit verse. The first inscription is dated saka 1073, Kartika Purnami, Saturday and the second saka 1076, Srimukha, Pusya, first day of the bright fortnight, Monday.

The inscriptions mention that there was, in the village, called śāligrha (abode of paddy) brhadānkura, a great brāhmaṇa scholar, probably called Perumanambi, well versed in grammar. The village was surrounded by beautiful gardens in the Toṇḍamaṇḍala.

* Though both the gifts are by Anantabhaṭṭa, the donor is erroneously mentioned as Nāgadevakavi in the earlier (saka 1073) record in the book "Inscriptions of Andhradesa," Vol. II, Part I.

To him was born Sūrya, who was well versed in the Vaidya Vidya (science of medicine) and had a spotless career. He had four sons and the eldest was also a great scholar and poet, with the name Nāgadevakavi. His brother was Ananta, who wrote a commentary on Nārāyaṇīya. Sūryadeva had a spotless life like the Sun, was respected by the group of scholars and intellectuals and was liberal (in giving charities). His four sons are mentioned as impressive, versed in arts and great scholars in the śāstras (sciences) and agamas.

Sūryadeva is mentioned as well versed in Vaidya-Medicine. His father was a great grammarian and his sons are mentioned as poets and scholars in literature. In India, scholars generally never confined their studies to a single śāstra but they used to study two or three śāstras or purely Vedas. Since Sūryadeva is mentioned as a great scholar of Ayurveda, his father and sons also might be learned in medicine but might have specialised and had interest in other śāstras as mentioned.

The saka 1073 and 1076 correspond to the years 1151 and 1154 of Christian era. The gifts were made in the 6th and 9th regnal years of Rajaraja (Śrīmattribhuvanacakravarti). Rajaraja II of Chola ruled from 1146-1173 A.D. The inscriptions do not mention any details about the patronage or honours by the king or his officers to any of the members of the three generations. But giving gifts by the physician or by the son of physician for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp in the temple, definitely makes us believe that they were having a very high position in the society.

The name of the village, Bṛhadāṅkura appears to be the Sanskrit translation of a Telugu name, probably, Pedamolakalu. This village has not yet been traced. The name of the region Toṇḍamaṇḍala refers to the area between the Suvrṇamukhi and Pinakini rivers and the eastern ghats and the Bay of Bengal. It is now covered by the southern part of Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh, Chengalput district and a portion of north Arcot district of Tamilnadu. The place of donation, that is, Bapatla, is not in Toṇḍamaṇḍala. The donor might be a vaiṣṇava and might have gone to Bapatla on pilgrimage to pay his offerings to Bhāvanārāyaṇasvāmi.

2. *Drākṣārāma Inscription I*: This is found in the temple of Bhīmeśvara in Drākṣārāmā. The inscription is damaged at some places.

There was a minister, called Sūraya, to the Velanati Goṅka, during the reign of Rajaraja II, the Chalukya Chola king. Sūraya was an important person of the village Kaṇṭapu. The minister Sūraya donated, it appears, a garden to the God Bhīmeśvara of Drākṣārāma.

The donor Sūraya mantri is mentioned as learned in medicine. There is another adjective "Parahitaparatantra" to him. In Andhra region the word, parahita was used to denote physicians who were dedicating themselves to do good to all living beings. It is

possible that this adjective here might have been used in this sense only. However, the epithet parahitaparatantra, besides the adjective, "learned physician" gives him special fame and reputation and makes him fit for the special meaning.

The date of the inscription is mentioned but in narrating the date, some letters are missing. The regnal year of Rajaraja II is given as tenth. With this, the date of the inscription is decided as saka 1077 *i.e.*, 1155 A.D.

The village Kaṅṭapu appears to be a place of great men, as it is mentioned in two other inscriptions of Drākṣā-āma. In saka 1065 (1143 A.D.) Rājādhyakṣa Sūraya Preggaḍa, who was the son of Viddana Preggaḍa, the minister of Kulottunga Choda Gonka also donated to the temple. Similarly the brother of Sūrayāmatya is also mentioned in another inscription of saka 1061 (1139 A.D.). It is possible that Sūrayāmatya of these two inscriptions may be the same as mentioned above.

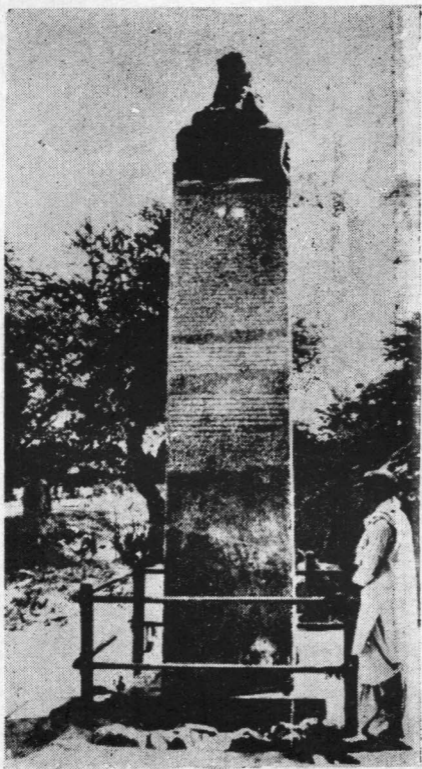
3. *Nandalur inscription* : This is a valuable record for medical history as it mentions the movement of population on account of the epidemic, plague.

It is found in the Sūmāyanāthasvāmi temple in Nandalur village in Cuddapah district. It belongs to the time of Virarajendra Choladeva of Chola dynasty.

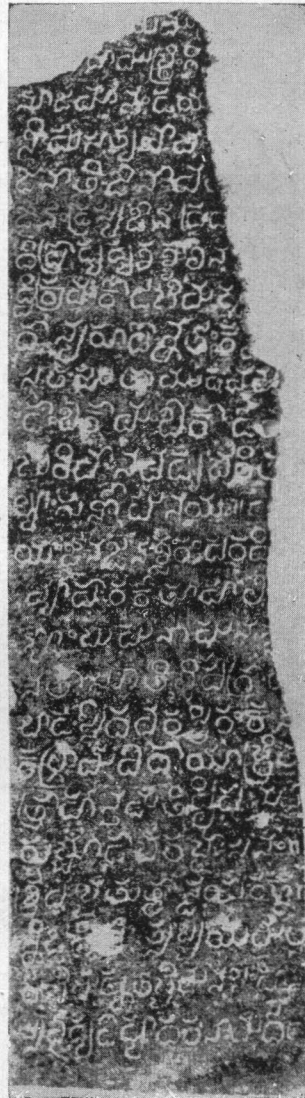
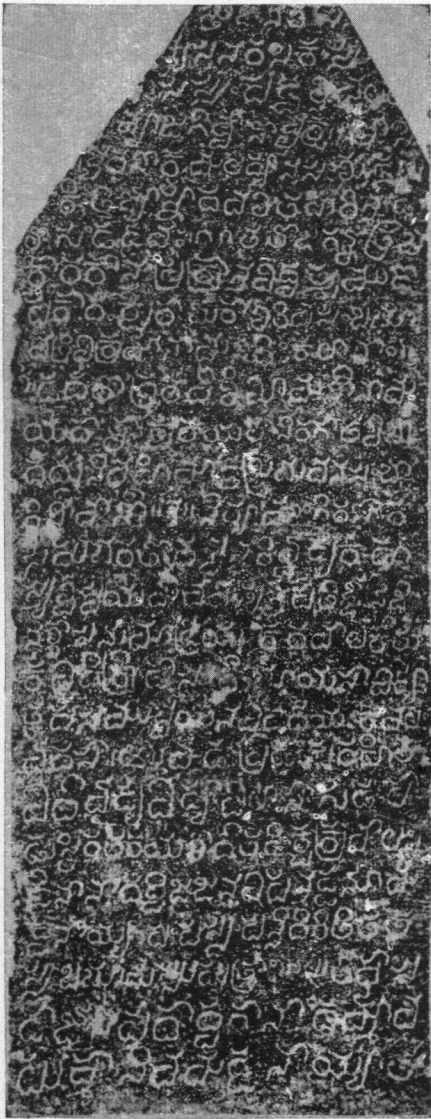
It records that the brāhmanas of Peruṅgaṅḍūra village had some lands from former times but they left the place due to famine. When they returned, they found their villages and lands were already occupied by the vellalas (agriculturists). It is said that the vellalas had deserted their own village due to the epidemic mārijvara (plague?) and came to occupy the lands of brāhmanas. The brāhmanas lost their lands and income. The feudatory chief Manumasiddhi, to whom the brāhmanas appealed, restored the lands to them for the merit of his father.

4. *Malkapuram inscription* : This inscription is on a pillar which is found in a field opposite to an old temple in Malkapuram village of Guntur taluka and district. The height of the pillar is 14' 7" and the sides are 2' 10" and 2' 8". The inscription is found on the three sides of the pillar; first side contains 90 lines second 79 and third 31 lines, bringing the total lines to 200. The text is in Sanskrit verse, except for the boundaries of the village etc., which are in Telugu.

The inscription refers itself to the grant of two villages called Mandaram and Velagapudi in Kaṅḍravāṭi of Velarāḍu viṣaya (region) on Friday, the eight day of the black fortnight of Chaitra month of Durmati year of saka 1183. This corresponds to the year 1261 A.D. The first village was donated by the Kakatiya king Ganapideva and the second by his daughter Rudradevi to Viśveṣvaraśivācārya of Golagi matha. Kakati Ganapideva ruled the Telugu country from 1199-1262 and his daughter, Rudradevi ruled from 1262-1296. Viśveṣvaraśiva was the dīkṣāguru of Ganapideva. Chola and Malwa kings were also his disciples. He performed a number of charitable deeds.



*Nandi Pillar containing the
Malkapuram Inscription.*



KB-Museum Inscription (Courtesy : Department of Archaeology & Museums, Govt. of A. P.)

Viśveśvaraśivācārya constituted the two villages, Mandaram and Velagapūḍi into a new village and named it Śri Viśveśvara Golagi*. There, he set up God Viśveśvara and established a maṭha and choultry. He gifted to each of the 60 Dravida brāhmaṇas, 2 puṭṭis of land from the gift. The remaining land was divided into three parts. One part was given to the God (temple). The second part was for the students and the Śuddhaśaiva maṭha. The third part was for the maintenance of the brāhmaṇa choultry and a maternity house and general hospital (prasūtyārogyaśale).

The inscription gives the details of the gifts given to teachers and other workers etc. The Vaidya (physician) and a kayastha were to get 2 puṭṭis each.

The income from the lands given for the maintenance of a maternity and general hospital and a choultry must be good enough. The donor Viśveśvaraśiva was a staunch śaiva and dikśāguru of the ruling king of the area and also of the adjacent regions. The maṭha established by him must have been fullfledged with all amenities and comforts. The amount of income, set apart for the maternity and general hospital and the brāhmaṇa choultry makes us believe that the maternity and general hospital were well managed and fully equipped. Buddhists and Jains established several hospitals both for human beings and animals in furtherance of their principle of non-violence. The śaiva followers also might have adopted the establishment of hospitals and choultries for the promotion of their faith. Further historical research may yield some more additional information on these medical charities of Viśveśvaraśivācārya and of other similar heads of religious institutions.

5. *K.B. Museum inscription* : There is a damaged inscription in the K.B. Museum of Government of Andhra Pradesh at Golconda fort near Hyderabad. This inscription is valuable for medical history but unfortunately it is damaged and the full purport including the date of it, if mentioned, is missing. Apart from this, the place from where it was collected is also not recorded. It is published in the Corpus of Telangana inscriptions, Part-IV. The script of the inscription is Telugu and the language is Sanskrit. It contains 65 short lines, out of which 28 to 51 are partly damaged making the sense of the remaining letters difficult. In the first four lines also some letters are missing.

According to the note of the editor on the inscription, it refers itself to the gift of 3 khaṇḍrikas of wet land and some marturs of dry land and one flower garden to Bhīma called as vaidyavidyādhara (one possessing the knowledge of or embodiment of medical science). The name of the donor is lost along with other details.

Though the full purport of the record is not available, it is clear that it mentions the family of well known physicians. The earliest members mentioned are Guṇḍadeva and

* Though the two villages were made into one village and renamed as Śrivisvesvragolagi, it appears that the new name did not come into usage as the name of the village Mandaram appears in the records of the later years. An inscription in Mandaram dated 1279 A.D. records the gift of 25 cows by Amarisetti to the Ramisvaramahadeva in Mandaram on the banks of Krishna in Doddi Kandravati. Another inscription on the same Nandi pillar in Māḷkapuram also mentions Mandaram, though dated saka 1204 i.e., 21 years after the change of the name of the village by Visvesvarasivacarya.

Trivikrama. Trivikrama is praised as Bharata in rasa (alaṅkāraśāstra), Dhanvantari in vaidya (Ayurveda), king Vatsa in hastyaśva (veterinary science of horses and elephants) and Mādrea in sword-fighting. It shows that Trivikrama was not only a scholar but was a warrior also. It is possible that in those days doctors of veterinary science, specially of horses and elephants were soldiers, since their presence was required in the battle field and they had to accompany the army in expeditions. Trivikrama had four sons—Meḍa, Guṇḍa, Marḍdanārya and Pampa*. Meḍa is described as well versed in medicine, specially parahiṭavidhi. This may mean that he was engaged in benefactions to others and learned in the science of medicine and was devoted to do good to human beings as well as animals. Marḍdanārya removed sufferings of the distressed, orphans and the brāhmaṇas. All these were the followers of Jina.

The date of the record is not available. On the basis of the Telugu characters of the record, it can be placed in 12-13th centuries A.D. The Kaluvacheru inscription of 1423 A.D. mentions that the word, parahita was awarded as an epithet to a physician of parahita family, for removing the suffering of a snake by his treatment. The mention of the word, parahita, in this record as well as in earlier inscriptions to refer to the humanitarian aspect of medicine shows that it was used even before to denote this special tradition in medicine. It had gained currency earlier and later became a sort of title to be conferred by the kings on some families or physicians. It requires further search to know whether this word parahita** was used in other parts of the country also.

A name Vikrama Koṭa Bhīma appears in the 35th line. This may be the name of a descendant of the family.

The editor of the inscription mentions that the gift was to Bhīma by a donor whose name is lost. A perusal of the record creates doubt on this statement. The line 51 has a name Sabbayamalla. The purport of 53rd line is "having got, (he) gifted to him." From all these it appears that Bhīma(na) (he may be the same or another than Koṭa Bhīma mentioned in 35th line) got probably the village Sauthavaram and another with a name ending with kal. from Sabbayamalla, who might have been an officer or a feudatory king and from those villages donated 3 khaṇḍrikas and some marturs of land and flower garden, probably to the God Jina, who was established by him in the second village.

The statement of the editor that Bhīma was probably an expert in treating maternity cases also appears to be incorrect. This may be based on the letters 'sūtirbhiṣagrāma. . . .' in 44th line. Sūtir is definitely the last word of a compound with the previous words and cannot be joined with the next word 'bhiṣagrā.', meaning physician. The use of the word, s. ti in place of prasuti, to mean delivery is also not common.

* According to the editor, Gunda, Marḍdanarya and Pampa were the three sons of Meḍa. It appears to me that these four were the sons of Trivikrama.

** Dr. Subba Reddy draws my attention to the use of the word, lokopakara in Kannada in the early mediæval ages to denote the beneficent aspect of medicine.

6. *Ksīraramesvara inscription* : This inscription is found in the temple of Kṣīrārāmeśvara Āñjaneyasvāmi in Palakol village of Narasapur taluk and Krishna district.

This records the gift of a perpetual lamp to God Kṣīraramesvara by Vāsudeva for the merit of his parents. Vāsudeva is mentioned as aśvāyurvedavetta, meaning proficient in the science of treatment of horses. He is also described as a man of many good qualities etc. He belonged to Atreya gotra and was the son of Anantapaṇḍita, who was also an aśvavaidya. The inscription belongs to the year 1300 A.D.

It shows that there were also physicians for treatment of animals and even specialists for horses, elephants, cattle etc.

7. *The Kraku grant of Harihara II* : This grant in 5 copper plates was discovered in Brāhmaṇakrāku village near Kavali in Nellore district. The language is Sanskrit in Nagari script. There are 112 verses written in 216 lines.

The grant was made in the saka year 1298 and the cyclic year Anala, first day of the black fortnight in the Phalguna month. The year corresponds to 1376 A.D. On this day, Harihara granted the village Krāku to the brāhmaṇas for the final release of bondage of his father (salvation). The village is said to have been situated in Pākanāḍu viṣaya (region) and was near the sea and to the south of Jaladaṅki. The village was renamed as Bukkarāyapura and was given as an agrahāra to the brāhmaṇas with all the eight bhogas.

The king divided the village into 64 aṃśas (parts) and distributed them among several brāhmaṇas. The names of the brahmaṇas, their gotras and their subjects of study are given. Many of the donees were learned in Vedas. The 31st in the list is mentioned as proficient in Ayurveda and Yajurveda. The verse describing the physician called Śṛṅgiri is given below:

“Śṛṅgiri was the son of Śrivallabha of Śrivatsa gotra and was the foremost among the scholars of Ayurveda and Yajurveda”.

Krāku is still existing by the name Brāhmaṇakrāku showing that the name Bukkarāyapura did not get into usage. Jaladaṅki is also existing nearby.

8. *Draksarama inscription II* : In saka 1352, Annaya Paṇḍita donated some land to God Bhīmeśvara of Drākṣārāma. Annayapaṇḍita is mentioned as vaidyendra (king of physicians). He was the son of Keśavācārya of Gautamagotra. The year corresponds to 1430 A.D.

This inscription is found at the entrance of the inner prakāra of the Bhīmeśvara temple of Drākṣārāma. It is a small inscription in 7 short lines consisting one verse in Sanskrit and a small sentence in Telugu.

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It is hoped to publish another article on the information in some more inscriptions of Andhra region, specially relating to the parahita family of physicians.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SUMMARY

The article deals with the following 8 inscriptions having some medico-historical value :

1. *Bapatla inscriptions* : These are two inscriptions of the years 1151 and 1154 A.D. These refer to the grant of perpetual lamps to the God Bhāvanārāyaṇa by Anantabhaṭṭa. The donor was the son of vaidya Sūryadevaṇḍita of Toṇḍamaṇḍala.

2. *Draksarama inscription I* : This refers itself to the grant of a garden in 1155 to the God by Sūraya who was a minister to the Velan̄ti Goṅka. Sūrayamantri is mentioned as learned in medicine and was an important person in the village Kaṅṭapu. He was also mentioned as parahitapratanta.

3. *Nandalur inscription* : This record of the time of Kulottunga Chola refers to the movement of some vellalas (agriculturists) due to mārijvara (plague?).

4. *Malkapuram inscription* : This refers itself to the donation of 2 villages by Ganapideva and his daughter Rudradevi to their guru Viśveśvaraśiva in 1261 A.D. Viśveśvaraśiva donated a part of the income from the villages for the maintenance of a maternity hospital and general hospital. There was a vaidya and kāyastha, who got 2 puṭṭis each.

5. *K.B. Museum inscription* : This is a damaged inscription, probably of 12-13th centuries. It refers to the gift of some land by one Bhīma who was an embodiment of the medical science. His ancestors are also described as well versed in medicine and specially in the field of parahita.

6. *Ksiramesvara inscription* : This also refers to a grant by Vāsudeva. He is mentioned as aśvāyurvedavetta (meaning proficient in treating horses). Vāsudeva belonged to Ātreya gotra and was the son of Anantapaṇḍita, who was also an aśvavaidya.

7. *Kraku grant of Harihara II* : Harihara II donated the village Krāku to several brāhmaṇas in 1376, amongst whom one was a physician by the name Śrīgiri. Śrīgiri was the son of Śrīvallabha of Śrīvatsagotra and was the foremost among the scholars of Ayurveda and Yajurveda.

8. *Draksarama inscription II* : This record refers itself to the grant of some land to the God by Annaya Paṇḍita, who is mentioned as vaidyendra (king of physicians). The year of donation is 1430 A.D.

सारांश

आन्ध्रप्रदेश के कुछ शिलालेखों में वैद्यसम्बन्धी विषय

—वि. रामाराव

प्रस्तुत लेखमें निम्नलिखित आठ शिलालेखों के वर्णन है, जिनका कुछ वैद्यक-ऐतिहासिक महत्व है।

१. बापट्टला शिलालेख :- ये दो शिलालेख सन् ११५१ और ११५४ ई. के हैं। इनमें श्री अनन्तभट्ट के द्वारा भगवान् भावनारायण को अखण्डदीपदान दिये जाने का प्रमाण है। दाता तोण्डमण्डल के वैद्य सूर्यदेव पण्डित का पुत्र था।

२. द्राक्षाराम शिलालेख :- इसमें सन् ११५५ ई में वेलनाटि गोंका के मन्त्री श्री सूरय द्वारा भगवान् का एक उद्यान प्रदान करने का प्रमाण है। सूरयमन्त्री एक निष्णात वैद्य थे तथा कण्टपु नामक ग्राम के प्रमुख व्यक्ति थे। उनको परहित परतंत्र नामसे अभिहित किया गया है।

३. नन्दलूरु शिलालेख :- यह श्री कुलोत्तंगचोल के समय का है, जो कृषकों के मारीज्वर (प्लेग ?) के कारण अन्यतः गमन को सूचित करता है।

४. मलकापुरं शिलालेख :- इसमें गणपतिदेव तथा उनकी पुत्री रुद्रदेवी द्वारा अपने गुरु श्री विश्वेश्वरशिवाचार्य को सन् १२६१ ई. में दो ग्रामदान करने का उल्लेख है। विश्वेश्वरशिव ग्रामार्जित आय का एक अंश एक प्रसूतशाला और सार्वजनिक चिकित्सालय की व्यवस्था हेतु प्रदान किये थे। एक वैद्य और एक कायस्थ को प्रत्येक दो पुट्टी दिया जाता था।

५. के. बी. म्यजियम् शिलालेख :- यह प्रायः १२-१३ वीं शती का विनष्टप्राय शिलालेख है। इसमें मामनामक किसी वैद्य विद्याधर द्वारा कुछ भूमिदान का प्रमाण है। उसके पूर्वज भी वैद्यविद्या में कुशल बताये गये हैं; विशेषतः परहित क्षेत्र में।

६. क्षीरारामेश्वर शिलालेख :- इसमें श्रीवासुदेवद्वारा एक दान देने का प्रमाण है। उन्हें अश्वायुर्वेदवत्ता कहा गया है। वासुदेव आत्रेयगोत्रीय थे और अनन्तपण्डित के पुत्र थे जो स्वयं भी एक अश्ववैद्य थे।

७. हरिहर II का काकू ग्रांट :- हरिहर (द्वितीय) ने काकू ग्राम को कई ब्राह्मणों के नाम से सन् १३७६ ई. में दान कर दिया जिनमें एक श्रीगिरि नामक वैद्य था। श्रीगिरि, श्रीवल्लभ का पुत्र तथा आत्रेय गोत्रीय था और वह आयुर्वेद का श्रेष्ठ विद्वान् था।

८. द्राक्षाराम-शिलालेख II :- यह लेखप्रमाण श्री अनन्तपण्डित द्वारा भगवान् को कुछ भूमिदान दिये जाने सम्बन्धित है, जिन्हें वैद्येंद्र कहा गया है। दान ई. सन् १४३० में दिया गया था।