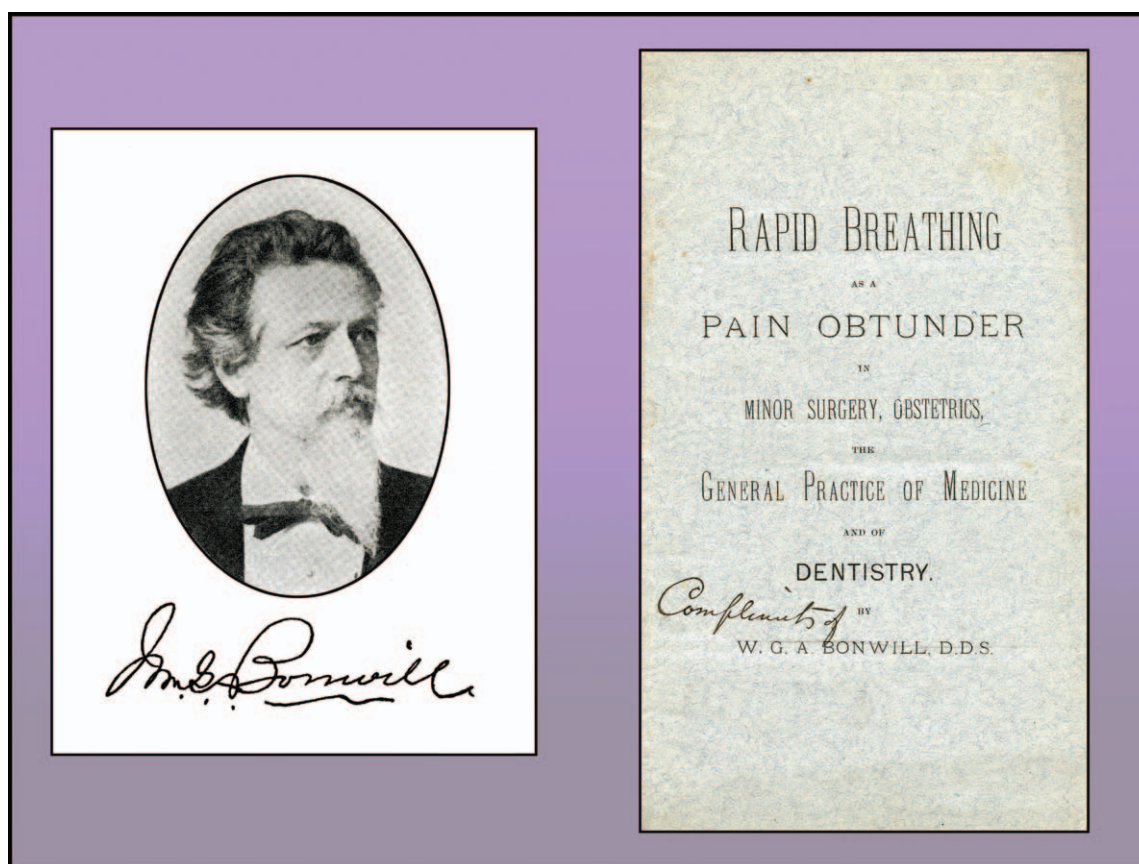


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Before the Lamaze Method: Bonwill “Rapid Breathing”



In 1875 a paper titled “The Air an Anaesthetic” was read at Philadelphia’s Franklin Institute. The author, William Gibson Arlington Bonwill, D.D.S., M.D. (1833 to 1899; *left*), had apprenticed in dentistry in New Jersey and Maryland before practicing dentistry in Delaware and then Pennsylvania. In 1880 Dr. Bonwill published (*right*) “Rapid Breathing as a Pain Obtunder in Minor Surgery, Obstetrics, the General Practice of Medicine and of Dentistry.” In 1894 Dr. Bonwill reported to other dentists and surgeons that “in an experience of twenty years [of dentistry] I have not used an anesthetic in my office.... My opinion is that if I could have introduced rapid breathing as a pain obtunder before nitrous oxide came out, you would all be using it.” Note that Dr. Bonwill demonstrated his “rapid breathing” techniques in Russia in 1897—54 years before Dr. Fernand Lamaze’s 1951 introduction in France of obstetrical breathing techniques that Lamaze had observed in Russia. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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