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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Presidential Perforations? James T. Gwathmey, M.D., Modifies Yankauer Masks



Better known today for his namesake suction wand, Sidney Yankauer, M.D. (1872 to 1932), practiced at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital as an otorhinolaryngologist and pioneer bronchoscopist. The invention that he popularized around 1904, his Yankauer mask (*left*), reigned as America's favorite open-drop ether mask for half a century. Roughly 8 yr after the introduction of Yankauer's mask, James T. Gwathmey, M.D. (1862 to 1944; president of the New York Society of Anesthetists, 1912), modified that mask (*right*) and featured it in his 1914 textbook *Anesthesia* as the "Yankauer-Gwathmey Drop and Vapor Mask." In characterizing the latter "vapor" capacity, he described "a close-fitting mask, the base of which is a hollow tube with perforations inside so that, as the vapor is pumped...or passed from an oxygen or air tank through the apparatus, the patient inhales a certain known percentage of the anesthetic and gets only this percentage, regardless of the depth or rate of respiration." (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., Honorary Curator and Laureate of the History of Anesthesia, Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Schaumburg, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. UJYC@aol.com.