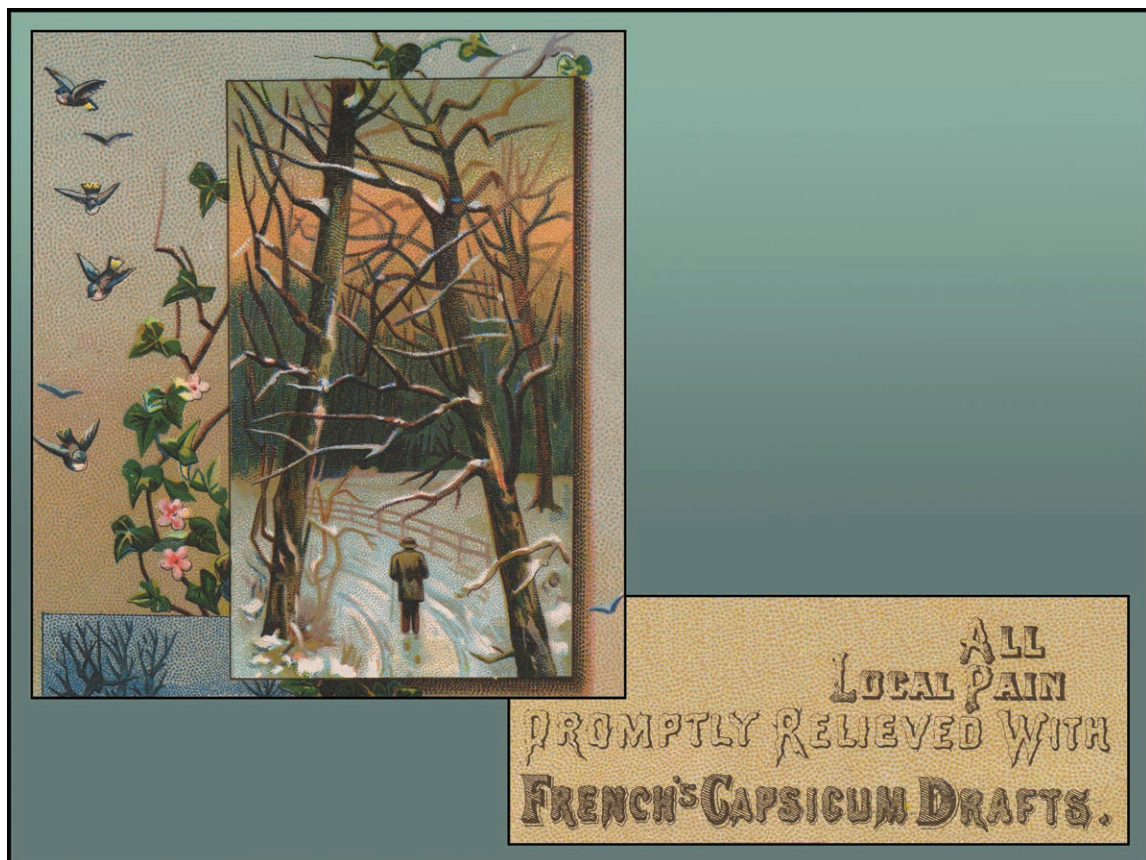


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Capsicum Drafts Could Not Relieve Ricksecker's Pain of Bankruptcy



Born and raised in Ohio, Theodore Ricksecker (1846 to 1919) moved to Manhattan and began working in 1863 as a drugstore clerk before partnering with a seasoned druggist. Moving on as a solo businessman in 1876 to William Street, Ricksecker confined his wares to perfumes, toiletries, and Capsicum Drafts that he began advertising as “French’s” (*above*) and rapidly renamed as “Ricksecker’s.” The Capsicum Drafts were dry pads impregnated with chili pepper extract (capsaicin) that chemically warmed up once sprinkled with water. By applying this counterirritant near a painful site, the Drafts became a “warm friend in time of need.” Unfortunately, Ricksecker overexpanded his business and even Capsicum Drafts could not rescue him in 1896 from the pain of bankruptcy. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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