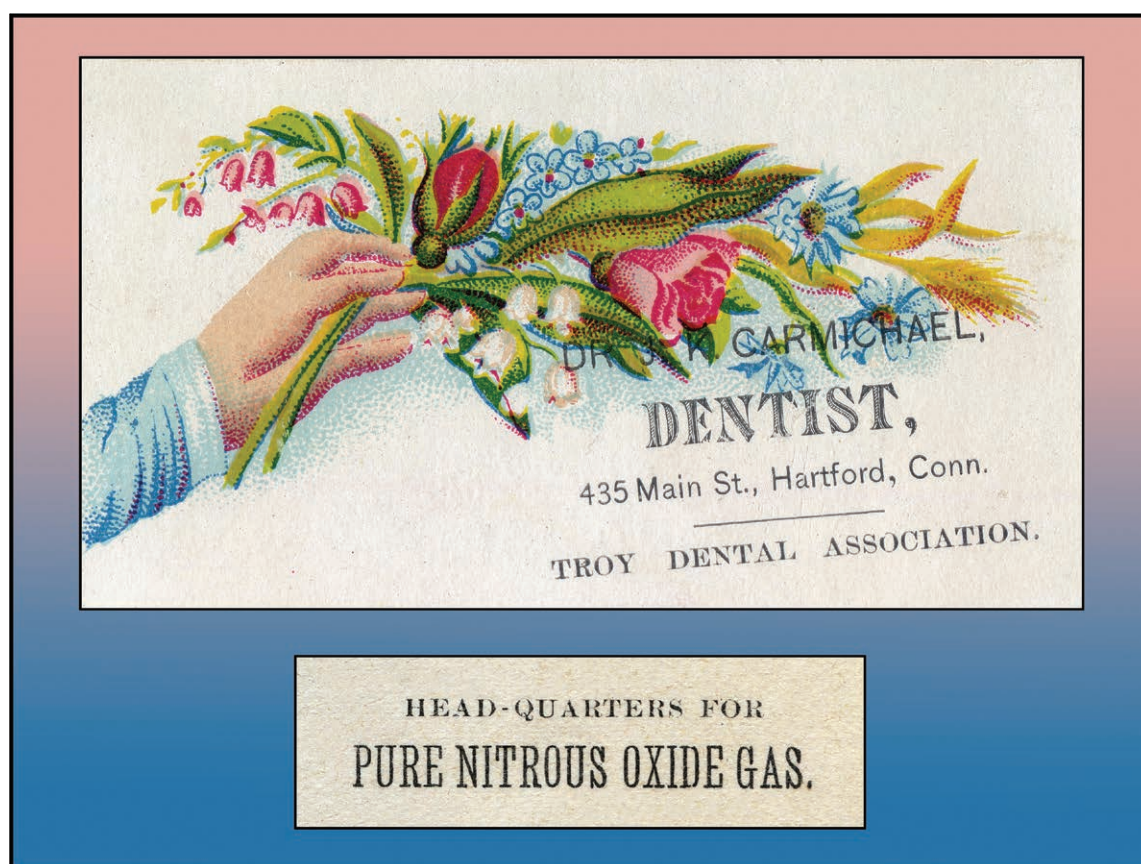


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Pure Nitrous Oxide and Possibly Phthisis from Dr. J. K. Carmichael



Brother of a horseman, James K. Carmichael (1864 to 1894) was raised in Rensselaer County, New York. After studying dentistry, he set up practice in Hartford, Connecticut. There he met the daughter of a harness maker, his future wife Jennie Pearl. Dr. Carmichael issued this trade card (*top*) from his Main Street “head-quarters for pure nitrous oxide gas” (*bottom*). A few years after his 1888 marriage, his pulmonary tuberculosis became so severe that a Dr. Pease had to cover the office. While battling “phthisis” at a health resort in Colebrook, New Hampshire, 29-yr-old Dr. Carmichael died. Back in the 1880s, many dentists gauged the quality of their laughing gas by breathing it from the mouthpiece or mask. We can only speculate whether patients may have contracted “consumption” from Dr. Carmichael. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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