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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Advertising Abbott's Pentothal from Antarctica to Toledo: A Bolus for Bowlus?



Following Army service as a 23rd Infantry combat medic in the Southern Pacific Theater of World War II, Thomas P. Bowlus (1923 to 2014) earned his A.B. at Michigan State Normal College in 1947, the same year that the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition (A.N.A.R.E.) launched. After earning his M.D. from the University of Michigan in 1951, Dr. Bowlus returned to his native northwest Ohio for internship and medical practice in Toledo (*upper left*). A decade later, Abbott, the makers of the Pentothal brand of sodium thiopental, began mass-mailing advertising postcards from exotic locations around the world. The postcard above (*bottom*) was postmarked (*upper right*) to Dr. Bowlus from an A.N.A.R.E. outpost in Wilkes Land in the Australian Antarctic Territory. For his minor surgical and office procedures, rather than bolus patients with intravenous Pentothal, Dr. Bowlus more likely resorted to the administration of local anesthetics or topical vapocoolants, or even to trichlorethylene by handheld inhaler. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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