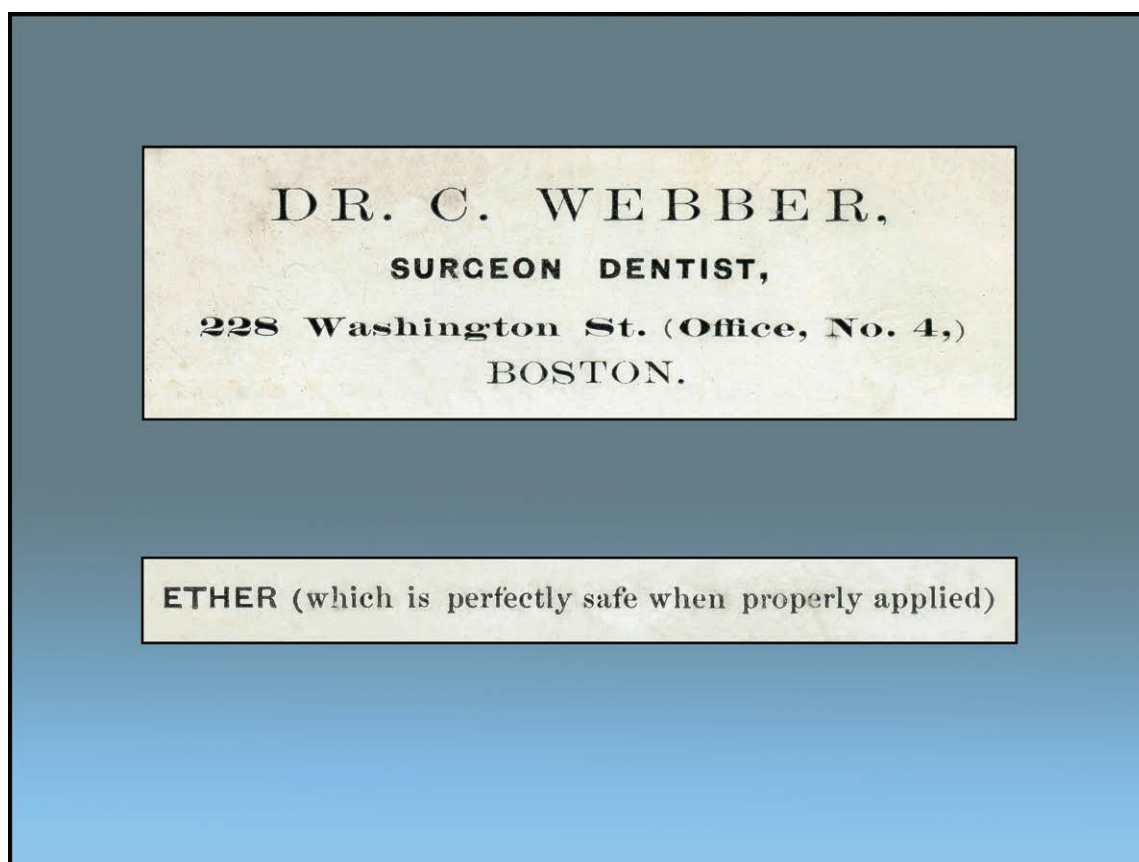


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Boston's Cushing Webber and the Late Doctor's Early Use of "Perfectly Safe" Ether



Born in Boothby, Maine, Dr. Cushing Webber began practicing dentistry in Massachusetts in 1844, the year that Dr. Horace Wells demonstrated dental anesthesia with nitrous anesthesia in neighboring Connecticut. After Boston dentist William T. G. Morton demonstrated surgical anesthesia with ether in 1846, Dr. Webber began administering ether anesthetics in his own practice. By 1868 he was advertising his Washington Street dental partnership, with Dr. Charles C. Twichell, in the Boston directory. A compulsive and cautious dentist-anesthetist, Dr. Webber advertised on his business card (*top*, from the Wood Library-Museum's Ben Z. Swanson Collection) how, in his hands, ether was "properly applied" and "perfectly safe" (*bottom*). Quite a taskmaster, he demanded that his patients "be punctual" and that his builders finish his vacation homes on schedule. Across both Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bays, his third summer cottage was completed in 1893, just 2 yr before Dr. Webber passed away from the gastric ulcer that his compulsiveness may have aggravated. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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