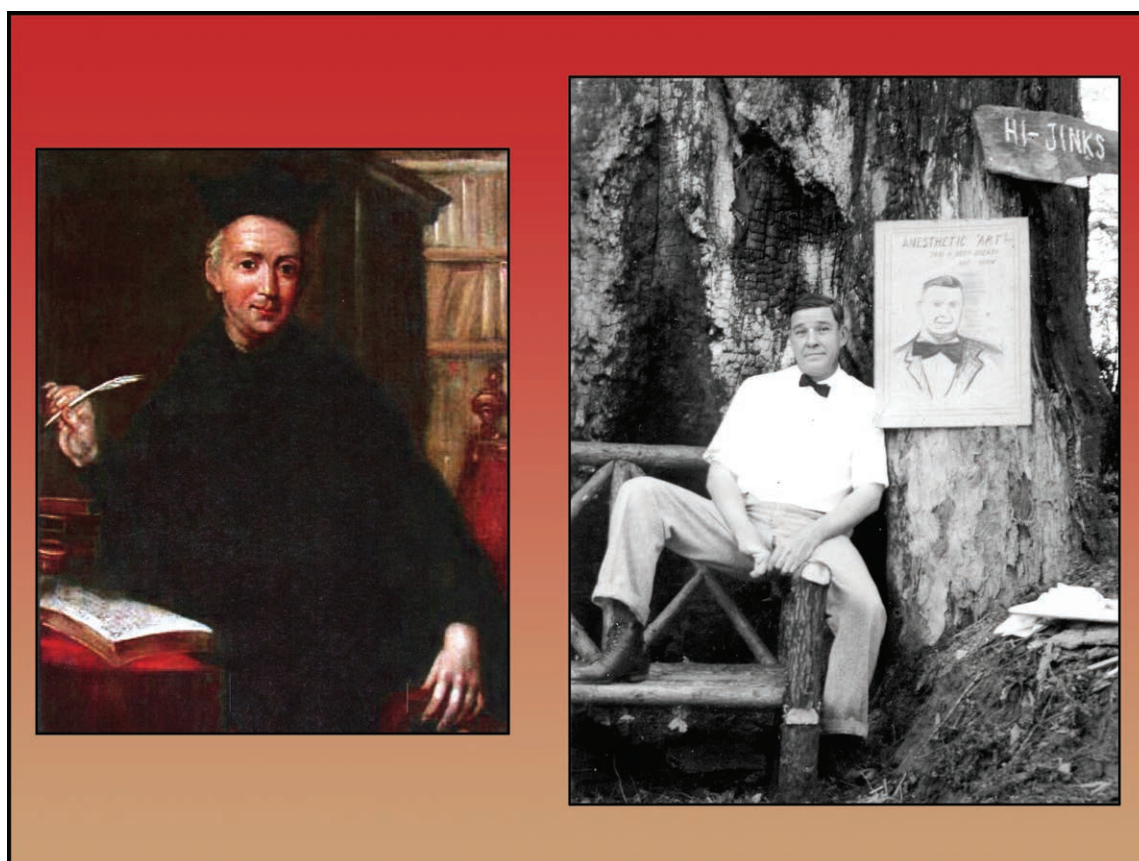


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## ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

### Art Guedel and *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*



*The Art of Worldly Wisdom: A Pocket Oracle* (1647), a wondrous text by Spanish priest Baltasar Gracián (1601 to 1658, left), graced the homes of several forefathers of American anesthesiology. Dr. Arthur “Art” Guedel (1883 to 1956, right), a Los Angeles-based devotee of *The Art*, was so taken by the little book that he shared it freely with friends in anesthesiology like Drs. Ralph Waters, Emery Rovenstine, Paul Wood, Henry Ruth, and Ralph Tovell. Gracián, a theologian who had examined the lives of aristocrats to glean secrets of success, had deftly crafted *The Art*—a collection of 300 witty aphorisms—in minimalistic prose. Art Guedel, a man of action and candor, marveled at *The Art*, a model of discernment and discretion. Although their styles differed, Art and *The Art* both prized virtue and friendship, which enhanced the book’s appeal. Guedel popularized Gracián’s *Art* as a guide for pioneering anesthesiologists, many of whom contended with external and internal rivalries to establish anesthesiology as an independent American specialty. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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