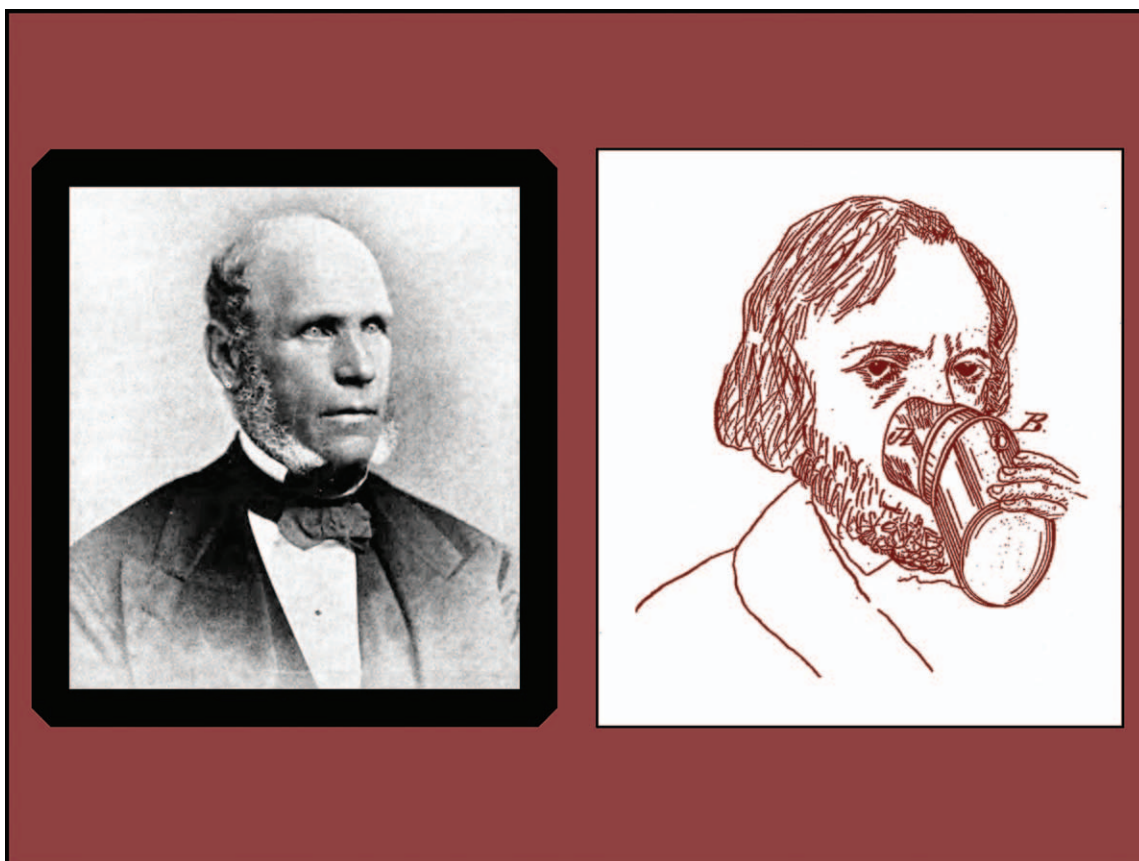


How the Fitting of Dentures Led to the Fitting of Anesthetic Facemasks in America



America's father of "continuous gum" dentures, New York dentist John Allen, M.D., D.D.S. (1810 to 1892, *left*), taught one of his dental preceptees, Lewis Roper, M.D. (c. 1806 to 1850), of Philadelphia, that aging facial contours could be rejuvenated aesthetically by properly fitted dental work. Allen's mentoring on facial contouring inspired Dr. Roper to patent an anesthetic inhaler (*right*) in October of 1848, which included a facemask fitted "directly over the nose and mouth" in order "to administer the vapor of ether through these two organs simultaneously." Following its inventor's death from cholera, the Roper Inhaler was mass produced, to the delight of ether pioneer Charles T. Jackson, M.D. In his 1861 *Manual of Etherization*, Dr. Jackson hailed the Roper Inhaler as "by far the best that has, thus far, been invented." Two years later, Roper's mentor, Dr. Allen, would share a Manhattan office with two other dentists and with nitrous oxide pioneer G. Q. Colton. The four had partnered to form the Colton Dental Association, which revived dental use of nitrous oxide anesthesia. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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