

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Squibb's Ferguson Inhaler for Open Drop Administration of Anesthesia



Before moving to the New York and New Jersey area, Robert H. Ferguson, M.D. (1857 to 1945), published from Boston about his double-chambered inhaler for ether, chloroform, or ethyl bromide, “but not for” ethyl chloride. Ferguson noted in 1905’s final issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that the wireframe (*high left*) of the Ferguson Inhaler could be “fitted accurately to the face of the patient by bending slightly the flexible face wire.” Ohio’s F. H. McMechan, M.D., observed that the wireframe “when covered with layers of gauze held in position by a wire spring [*high right*], formed the vaporizing chamber. This was surrounded and overtopped by a wire superstructure with a flannelette cover, perforated by the drop hole [*low right*] and forming a warming or rebreathing chamber.” The inventor’s employer, E. R. Squibb & Sons, mass produced the double-chambered device in a box (*low left*) labeled “Ferguson’s Inhaler for Ether, Chloroform or Ethyl Chloride Anesthesia.” (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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