

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS

Gwathmey's "Expansible" Then "Expanding" Airway



Filed originally as an "Expansible Respiratory Airway" (*left*) on March 27, 1937, U.S. Patent No. 2,127,215 was granted on August 16, 1938, to James T. Gwathmey, M.D. (1862–1944), of New York. Renaming it an "Expanding Airway Tube" less than a year later, Gwathmey observed that after "insertion, the blades are opened as one would manipulate a vaginal speculum, by turning a small screw . . . making possible natural breathing (nasal and oral)." Photographed in mirror image (*right*) for direct comparison to Gwathmey's earlier depictions of his airway, the Wood Library Museum's prototype bore a tag from the donor explaining that "This was made by Dr. James T. Gwathmey and was given to me on the occasion of his visit here.—J. S. Lundy, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota." (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc. This image also appears in the *Anesthesiology Reflections* online collection available at www.anesthesiology.org.)

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