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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS

A “French” Charrière Ether Inhaler



When surgeons request 36-French (12 mm-diameter) chest tubes, the term “French” honors the originator of that sizing system, Joseph-Frédéric-Benoît Charrière, a Parisian manufacturer of surgical instruments. By 1847, Charrière’s firm had generated brass-and-glass inhalers for etherizing and later chloroforming patients. Sharing the glass-and-brass design flaws of the original 1846 Morton ether inhaler, Charrière inhalers’ volatile contents chilled progressively, leading to inefficient vaporizing and patients’ early emergence from anesthesia. Curatorial donations of travel costs and of the inhaler itself (see above) expedited hand-carrying this “French” Charrière Ether Inhaler aboard jets from Montpellier to Chicago *via* London. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc. This image appears in color in the *Anesthesiology Reflections* online collection available at www.anesthesiology.org.)

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