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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

From “Bagging” Patients to Bagging Dr. Heidbrink, Maker of Anesthesia Machines



Alongside corporate literature, patents, and samples of his Heidbrink breathing bags, did Minnesota dentist–anesthetist Jay Albion Heidbrink (1875 to 1957) ever carry copies of his handwritten memoirs? We can only speculate. What we do know is that “Doctor Heidy” was the most successful American ever to design and mass-produce anesthesia machines. Eventually, decades of Heidbrink manufacturing history merged with that of the “Ohio” line to generate “Heidbrink-Ohio” machines. At some point after his passing, Heidbrink’s leather “doctor’s bag” (*above*) was deaccessioned from his estate. Was Dr. Heidbrink’s bag destined for the dustbin of history? No, fortunately a hand-tooled leather flap (*upper inset*) facilitated the bag’s rescue by the Wood Library-Museum and identified the bag as onetime property of “DR. J. A. HEIDBRINK. / MINNEAPOLIS.” (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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