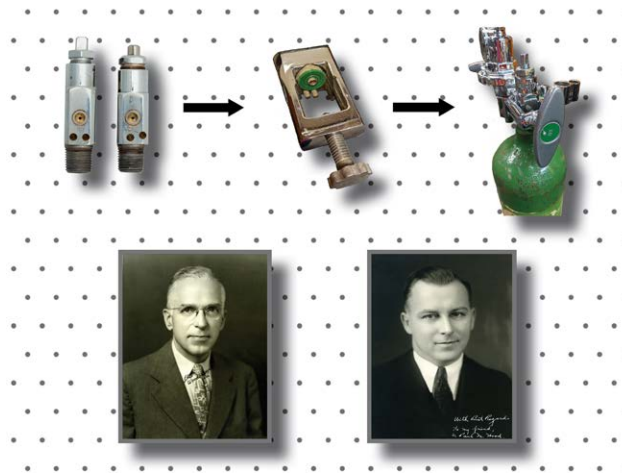


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Beyond Woodbridge and Tovell: Connecting the Dots to Anesthetic Safety!



From its very founding, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) has helped connect the dots between one person's idea and systemic change. An insightful engineer and anesthesiologist, Philip D. Woodbridge, M.D. (1895 to 1978, *lower left*), recognized the hypoxic risk posed by carelessly interchanging compressed gas cylinders on anesthesia machines. With elegant ingenuity, he designed a system of pinned yoke connectors (*upper middle*) to fit into geometrically arranged sockets on the gas cylinders (*upper left*). In 1939, Woodbridge unsuccessfully petitioned equipment manufacturers to incorporate this Pin Index Safety System (*upper right*), which prevented incorrect gas delivery from anesthesia machines. Fourteen years later, Ralph M. Tovell, M.D. (1901 to 1967, *lower right*), a past ASA president, initiated discussions between an ASA delegation and the Compressed Gas Association. The ASA's endorsement bolstered Tovell's negotiations, leading to the approval of the Pin Index Safety System—a milestone in safe anesthetic delivery. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library–Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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