

Vincent Minville, M.D., Ph.D., University Hospital of Toulouse, Toulouse, France, collected data, provided and cared for study patients

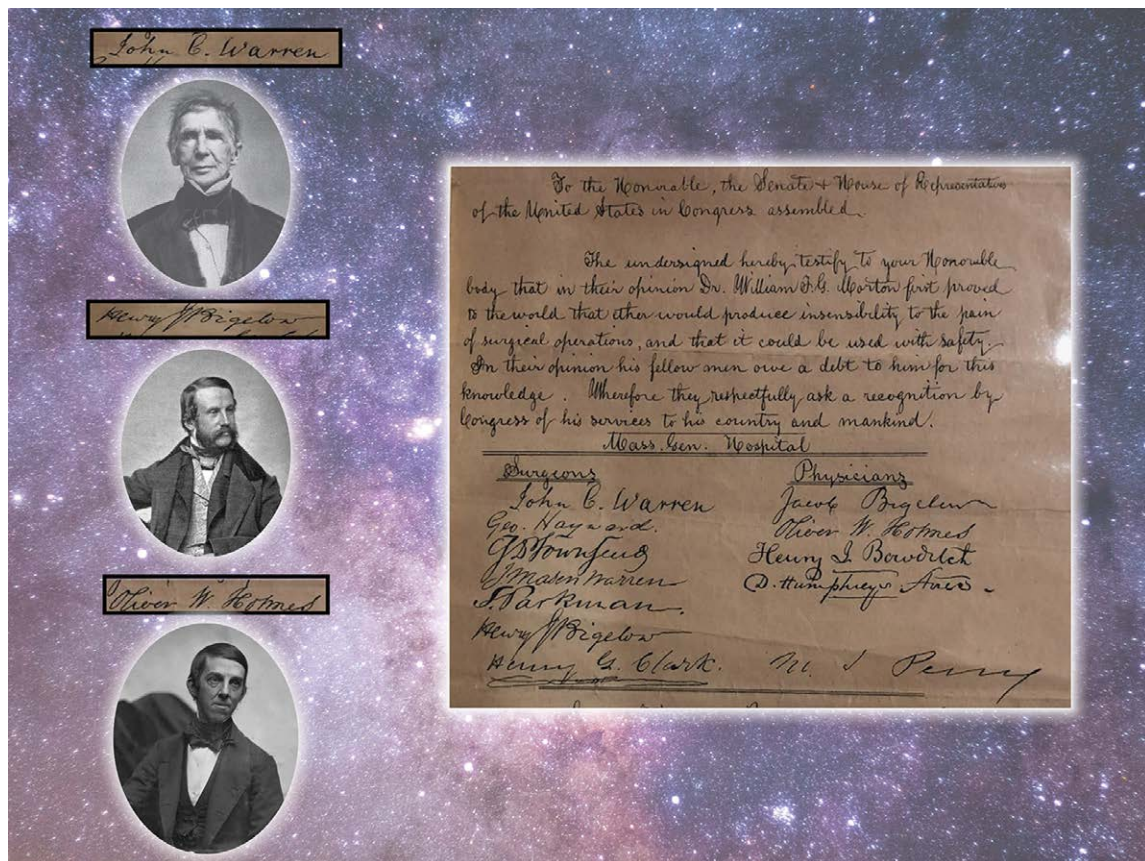
Antoine Guillon, M.D., University Hospital of Tours, Tours, France, collected data, provided and cared for study patients

Yannick Fedun, M.D., Bretagne Atlantique Hospital, Vannes, France, collected data, provided and cared for study patients

James T. Ross, M.D., University of California Davis, Sacramento, California, provided critical revisions of the manuscript

## ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

# The Stars Align in Support of Morton's "Anaesthesia"



“Never before...did such a brilliant galaxy of medical and surgical talent unite on any one measure.” Penned by the brightest stars of Massachusetts General Hospital in 1852, a petition to the United States Congress (right) shined a favorable light on Morton, who in a quest for recognition had ignited a national controversy over primacy for the discovery of surgical anesthesia. These medical luminaries declared “that, in their opinion, Dr. William T.G. Morton first proved to the world that ether would produce insensibility to the pain of surgical operations... [and asked for] recognition by [U.S.] Congress of his services to his country and mankind.” Among these leading lights were John C. Warren, M.D. (upper left), founding father of Massachusetts General Hospital and senior surgeon on Ether Day; Henry J. Bigelow, M.D. (middle left), surgeon and organizer of that celebrated day; and Oliver W. Holmes, M.D. (lower left), physician-poet who bestowed the name “anaesthesia” onto this new discovery. Whether this was a true endorsement of Morton or the medical discovery that elevated surgical practice may be lost among the stars. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology. [www.woodlibrarymuseum.org](http://www.woodlibrarymuseum.org))

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