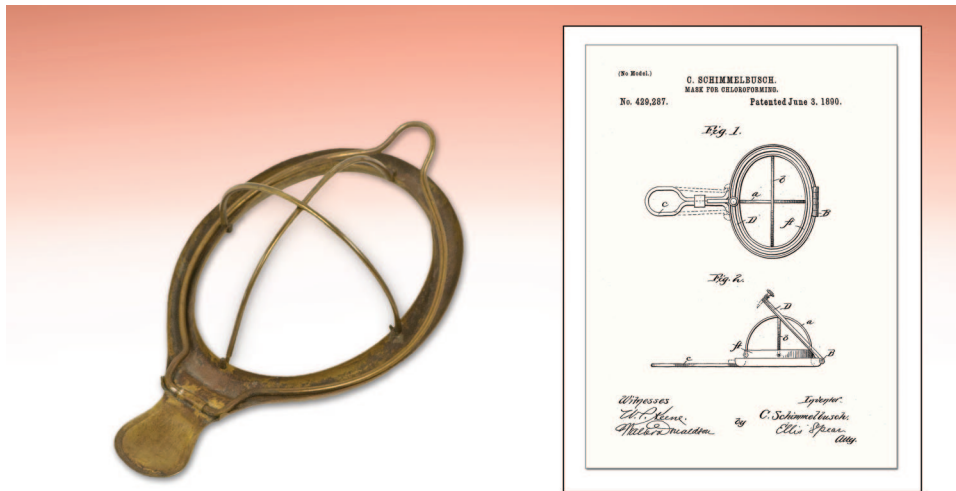


ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS

An American Patent for the Schimmelbusch Mask



Curt T. Schimmelbusch (1860–1895) was a German pathologist and surgical innovator who had finished his medical doctorate at Halle in 1886. After working there and then Cologne, he would file for his U.S. patent (*right*) from Berlin in 1889. Titled a “Mask for Chloroforming,” Schimmelbusch’s invention promoted hygienic and economic use of “any material pervious to the air.” After clamping the “air-pervious” gauze or other material between the lower “wire frame-work” and upper “overlapping loop,” a physician-anesthetist could scissor away “superfluous material.” When Schimmelbusch died in Berlin in 1895, his brass (*left*)—or more commonly nickel-plated brass—mask would not perish with him. Rather, “the Schimmelbusch” would see not only limited military action during both World Wars but even civilian anesthetic use for dropping chloroform or ether in parts of the Third World today. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc. This image also appears in the *Anesthesiology Reflections* online collection available at www.anesthesiology.org.)

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., Honorary Curator, ASA’s Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Park Ridge, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. UJYC@aol.com.