

**PHANTOM LIMBS AS REPORTED BY S. WEIR MITCHELL**

*Morton Nathanson*

**Neurology 1988;38:504–505**

Descriptions of the phenomenon of phantom limbs by S. Weir Mitchell appeared in two lay periodicals before being published for the medical profession. S. Weir Mitchell (1829–1914), neurologist extraordinaire, one of the fathers of American neurology and respected popular literary figure of his time, is credited with the first careful clinical investigation and explanation of what he referred to as the “phantom limb.” Mitchell acknowledged that “the feelings and delusions of men who had lost members have often been the subjects of casual notice in surgical treatises from as far back as Ambrose Park’s time.”

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**Comment from Robert A. Gross, MD, PhD, FAAN, Editor-in-Chief:** *One of our earliest Historical Neurology contributions, this study detailed the contributions—in the lay press!—of one of this country’s early neurologists, practicing during the Civil War.*

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*Neurology* 2011;77;475

DOI 10.1212/01.wnl.0000403382.02598.f8

**This information is current as of August 1, 2011**

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