

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF DENTAL DISPENSARIES

by

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MEDICAL DISPENSARIES for the poor date from 1697 when the Royal College of Physicians opened one in their premises in Warwick Lane, and others followed until in 1802 they served more than 50,000 poor patients and fifty square miles round the City. Cases of toothache must have been treated in them, but the remedy was probably always extraction of the tooth.

In the mid-nineteenth century, a few dental surgeons who were aware of the prevailing social conditions were inspired to establish dental centres to treat the poorest inhabitants of their towns, giving their services, while costs were met by the benevolence of the richer citizens. Usually the objective was the relief of pain, but different institutions varied in their treatment. As an editorial¹ of 1931 pointed out, it would be wrong to claim that the dental surgeons received no compensations from association with a voluntary hospital; prestige was conferred upon them, and as an incidental, patients might be gained; there was also the bonus of seeing unusual cases which might otherwise not have come their way. But the work could be hard and exacting, particularly if pupils had to be supervised, and time devoted to voluntary work was lost to remunerative practice. Through the dispensaries, many practitioners were able to provide training so that their pupils could complete their professional education. Later, when the dental teaching hospitals were founded, it was beneficial to the students to have patients with commonplace routine complaints to treat; and whereas in the late nineteenth century practitioners had feared a loss of livelihood if free treatment were available, in 1946 an editorial² noted the dilemma likely to befall the dental schools when everyone would be eligible for free treatment and only the unusual or difficult cases would be referred to hospitals, so that for lack of routine cases, students' training would be imperilled.

THE LONDON INSTITUTION FOR THE DISEASES OF THE TEETH**

In 1839 the London Institution for the Diseases of the Teeth³ was founded, the first dental dispensary for the poor, about which very little information is now available,

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¹ Editorial, 'Voluntary hospitals and the dental profession', *Br. dent. J.*, 1931, 52ii: 240–242.

² Editorial, 'Dental hospitals and a national dental service', *ibid.*, 1946, 80: 89–90.

** The dispensaries discussed in this article are summarized in Table I, p. 65–66.

³ Theodosius Purland, 'Dental memorandum', a scrapbook in the Library of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.

but which inspired the dispensary movement. It was situated at 10 Windmill Street near Tottenham Court Road, admitting both the poor for treatment and the student for instruction, and it is reputed to have been started by three noted dentists of the period, Edwin Saunders,^{4,5} James Snell,⁶ and William Anthony Harrison.^{7,8} Harrison and Saunders had a letter published in 1844⁹ in which they stated that pupils “have the opportunity of seeing the progress and treatment of the various diseases of the teeth, gums and adjacent parts; of performing the different operations required in the surgical department of dentistry . . . of taking models, adapting artificial work to the mouth, etc., etc.”

Edwin Saunders' concern may have stemmed both from his work at the Blenheim Street Infirmary and Free Dispensary since 1834 and from his investigation of the eruption times of teeth, which he studied by visiting schools in and near London. In 1840 he published *Teeth the test of age*, which led to the detection of under-age children employed in factories. His interest in civil engineering, a career he would have liked to adopt but abandoned for lack of opportunity, since the canal system was virtually complete and it was too early for the boom in railway building, may have drawn him into friendship with W. A. Harrison. Harrison had worked as a civil engineer on public works including Waterloo Bridge before deciding to take a medical qualification and then to turn to the practice of dentistry. It is a puzzle whether James Snell really assisted in founding the Institution. Obituary notices indicate that he received Harrison into partnership at 10 Keppel Street near Russell Square in 1837, and it was shortly after that that Harrison met Saunders and joined him in founding the Windmill Street Institution, but there is no record of any address for Snell between 1834 and 1841, and in 1842 he resumed service with the Royal Navy until he joined the East India Company in 1845, dying in the West Indies on 6 July 1850. His obituary⁶ says “he was a man of great and varied talents, energy of character and purpose, and of great zeal and probity in the faithful discharge of duty in whatsoever he undertook”, which sounds like a man who would have given full support to any project he engaged upon, yet his name is not to be found in the lists of donors and subscribers to the Institution or on the list of staff. James Snell wrote two books: *Observations on the history, use and construction of obturateurs, or artificial palates*, published in 1824 with a second edition in 1828; and *A practical guide to operations on the teeth to which is prefixed a historical sketch of the rise and progress of dental surgery*, published in 1831. In view of his interest in obturators, it may be significant that artificial palates were supplied free to the patients in the Institution who needed

⁴ E. Saunders, obituary, *J. Br. dent. Ass.*, 1901, 22: 200–203.

⁵ E. Saunders, in *Plarr's lives of the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of England*. London, Royal College of Surgeons of England, 1930, vol. 2, pp. 263–264.

(Sir) Edwin Saunders, F.R.C.S. (1814–1901) was dentist to Queen Victoria and other members of the royal family. He published *Advice on the care of the teeth* and *Teeth the test of age*, a small monograph on mineral teeth, and a number of articles. He was the sixth president of the British Dental Association, president of the Odontological Society and of the Dental Section of the International Medical Congress of 1881. In 1883 he became the first dental surgeon to receive a knighthood.

⁶ James Snell, Obituary, *Med. Directory*, 1851, p. 603.

⁷ W. A. Harrison, Obituary, *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1873, 16: 239–243.

⁸ W. A. Harrison, in *Plarr's lives*, op. cit., note 5 above, vol. 1, p. 509.

⁹ W. A. Harrison and E. Saunders, letter, *Forceps*, 1844, no. 15: 149.

them, the only mention I have found of such appliances being available in any dispensary except in Brighton some fifty years later.

Lord Teignmouth³ accepted the presidency of the Institution, supported by nineteen vice-presidents including a bishop, two baronets, men of science like Thomas Bell, and men of medicine. There were fourteen other committee members, a treasurer, and an honorary secretary. In a long list of contributors, Harrison and Saunders both gave donations of five guineas on two occasions, as well as an annual subscription of a guinea. The amount of the donation entitled them to the status of life-governors, and it is interesting that Claudius and George Ash were among those who contributed this amount and served on the committee, the firm Messrs. Ash & Sons having also given £21 in the original list of donations. Those who gave were “anxious that poor persons suffering from decayed teeth and the painful diseases arising therefrom, should be enabled to obtain gratuitous relief, under skilful and experienced Dentists, conjointly, when necessary, with the Medical and Surgical aid of a consulting physician and surgeon”.

The institution opened at first on two mornings a week, Harrison being in attendance on Tuesdays, and Saunders on Fridays, both until 10 o'clock. The prospectus states that “notwithstanding the number and diversity of Charitable Institutions with which the Metropolis abounds, none was in existence which gave exclusive attention to these very prevalent and distressing maladies; and thus . . . no opportunity was afforded to the poor of obtaining the varied treatment required in such cases”. The formation of the Institution, it adds, had been approved by the Medical Officers of Health of most of the metropolitan hospitals and dispensaries.

The prospectus³ lists four objects:

I – The relief and cure of toothache in all its varieties – not by indiscriminate extraction, too commonly the lot of the poor – but, when the case admits of it, by the adoption of milder and preservative means; II – The detection and removal of those obscure sympathetic affections, simulating neuralgia, tic-douleureux, etc., to which diseased and carious teeth or roots often give rise; III – The removal of tartar, or extraneous matter, from the Teeth, (so common a cause of their premature loss) and the treatment of the various diseases of the Gums, etc., whether originating in this source, a carious condition of the teeth, mercurial salivation, or any other cause; IV – The relief, by the gratuitous supply of Artificial Aid, of those distressing cases of Defective Palate, (whether the effect of disease, accident, or original malformation) which unfit the individual for the ordinary commerce and duties of life.

A report of 1844³ states that in its first four years no fewer than 5,903 persons had obtained relief at the Institution. There are contrary reports of the length of life of the Institution, one giving five and another twelve years, but according to the obituary of Edwin Saunders¹⁰ in *Dental Cosmos*, it was “abandoned as too great a tax upon time and energy after six years” and this is probably correct, so that it ended in 1845.

THE LONDON DENTAL DISPENSARY

Believed to be the second of the dental dispensaries, the London Dental Dispensary was founded on 20 February 1855 by Charles James Fox, the subject of David Richards' Lindsay Club lecture in 1972.¹¹ A Quaker, son and grandson of doctors and

¹⁰ Edwin Saunders, Obituary. *Dent. Cosmos.*, 1901, **43**, 560–562.

¹¹ N. D. Richards, 'Dentistry a hundred years ago. Charles James Fox – the forgotten man', *Br. dent. J.*, 1972, **132**: 235–242.

with no less than eleven doctors in his own generation of the family, Charles James Fox followed an uncle and four cousins into dentistry and began to practise in London. He was only twenty-five when he founded the London Dental Dispensary at 44 Clarence Gardens, Regent's Park, which initially he ran at his own expense. Associated with him as dental officer was John Lee Statham, and John Tomes,* no less, was consulting dentist.

The dispensary was established¹² "to assist the poor in the preservation of their teeth, and to extend to them such advantages, resulting from timely dental aid, as have hitherto been almost exclusively enjoyed by the better classes of society; for although eminent dentists are attached to nearly all our hospitals, their attention is mainly confined to extraction of teeth, the important operations of stopping and scaling, and the regulation of children's teeth, being almost ignored to the poor". The dispensary was open between 9 and 10 a.m. on Mondays to Saturdays, and between 20 February 1855 and 31 December 1856, 1,085 patients were seen, 737 teeth extracted, 136 filled, and 75 patients' teeth were scaled. At the end of 1856 subscriptions were invited to enable the work to continue.

By 1859, 44 Clarence Gardens had become the North-West London Dental Dispensary.¹³ No longer was Charles James Fox associated with it, but the consulting dentist was Alfred Canton and the dentist was John Evans. The work had increased, 1,557 patients having been seen, and the proportion of fillings and scalings to extractions was about the same as in 1855–56.

In April 1858 a note in the *Quarterly Review of Dental Surgery*¹⁴ announced the removal of the London Dental Dispensary to 476 New Oxford Street. Tomes was still the consulting dentist, and Fox and Statham were still the dentists. No further reference to the London Dental Dispensary has been traced, but dispensaries continued to spring up all over the country, and doubtless the experience of men like Charles James Fox contributed to the more permanent existence of later-formed small hospitals or dispensaries.

BIRMINGHAM DENTAL DISPENSARY

It was Charles James Fox¹¹ who is supposed to have received Tomes's pupil, Samuel Adams Parker, at his London dispensary, and it was Parker who became the first dentist to the Birmingham Dental Dispensary,¹⁵ founded in 1858 at 13 Temple Street in Oddfellows Hall, with T. R. English as consulting dentist. The dispensary

* (Sir) John Tomes, F.R.S., F.R.C.S., L.D.S. (1815–1895), is regarded as "the father of British dentistry". He played a leading role in getting recognition for dentistry as a profession and in instituting an official dental qualification. The 1878 Dentists Act was largely due to his efforts. Tomes was a founder of the British Dental Association and its first president, a founder of the Odontological Society and twice its president, and he helped to establish the Dental Hospital of London (now the Royal Dental Hospital). He became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1850 and an honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1883. In 1886 he received a knighthood.

¹² *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1856–57, 1: 529–530.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1859–60, 3: 183.

¹⁴ *Quart. Rev. dent. Surg.*, 1858, 2: 124.

¹⁵ R. A. Cohen, *A history of the Birmingham Dental Hospital and Dental School, 1858–1958*, Birmingham, United Birmingham Hospitals, 1963.

was established to give “gratuitous advice and assistance to the poor in all cases of diseases of the teeth; such advice and assistance to include the operations of extracting, stopping and scaling, and the regulation of children’s teeth”. It was stated that the new dispensary was based upon Fox’s, and his 1855–56 statistics were quoted to demonstrate the benefits the poor had derived in London. The dispensary was open at first for one hour on the mornings of Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, and it was estimated that its annual cost would be between £60 and £70, which should be forthcoming from subscriptions. At a preliminary meeting, on 18 December 1857,¹⁶ a list of eleven rules and regulations was drawn up and passed, and the members of the committee were elected. In its first year 645 patients were seen and 755 operations performed: 479 extractions, 177 fillings, 50 scalings, and 49 miscellaneous treatments.

In 1859, the name of the establishment was extended to become the Birmingham and Midland Counties Dispensary for Diseases of the Teeth. In 1860, 1,638 patients had been treated, a large increase over the previous two years, which was attributed in part to the closing of the Dental Department of the General Dispensary. Parker was still the only dental surgeon.

After the publication of the fifth annual report there was a violent attack on the hospital by Scrutator of the *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, criticizing the committee for its expenditure of five-twelfths of the income on printing and advertising, and pointing out how little practical interest they were taking in their institution since half of them did not subscribe to it and not one was present at the annual meeting which was attended only by the chairman and four officers. It also commented that one dental officer was wholly inadequate to attend properly to the 2,632 cases treated during the year.

In 1863 the address of the dispensary was given in the annual report as 2 Upper Priory, larger premises shared with the Homoeopathic Hospital. In the next year, F. Sims joined the staff as an additional dental surgeon.

In 1871, the dispensary moved again, this time to 9 Broad Street, and its name became the Birmingham Dental Hospital. New appointments to the staff included Charles Sims as a dental officer and Lloyd Owen as chloroformist, and also a consulting physician and a consulting surgeon. The hospital could now open daily at 9 o’clock, and nitrous oxide gas was administered for painless extractions.

In 1873 Samuel Adams Parker became honorary consulting dental surgeon, while Charles Sims succeeded to his responsibilities. By 1874, the committee was considering seeking recognition by the Royal College of Surgeons as a teaching institution, and this was achieved in 1880 when three lectureships were established in dental surgery and pathology, dental anatomy and physiology, and dental mechanics. The first students probably entered in the autumn to begin their hospital practice, while lectures at Queen’s College started in May 1881. The first student qualified in 1883; this was Frederick W. Richards. Henceforward the story is one of dental school as well as of hospital, and this has been described in detail in R. A. Cohen’s *History of the Birmingham Dental Hospital and Dental School, 1858–1958*, published to mark the centenary, when Samuel Adams Parker was commemorated by a bronze tablet in

¹⁶ *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1858–59, 2: 57–59.

the hospital.

Samuel Adams Parker¹⁷ was the son of a prominent surgeon, S. W. Langston Parker. Having been John Tomes's pupil, which included experience in the out-patient department of the Middlesex Hospital, he returned to Birmingham in about 1856 and qualified L.D.S.R.C.S. in 1861, the year in which he became dental surgeon at Queen's Hospital. He was then about twenty-seven years of age. His father's prestige enabled him to attract influential physicians and surgeons to the committee of the new dental dispensary. In 1873 Parker resigned from the dental hospital, and in 1872 he had also resigned from Queen's Hospital. Since he was only about forty years old at that time, Cohen speculates that his resignations were caused by ill health consequent on the death of his father in 1871, to whom he had been greatly attached. He was a very withdrawn man, unmarried and with no close relatives, and he died tragically in 1896, aged sixty-two, of an overdose of laudanum and in straitened circumstances. He had maintained an interest in the hospital's work until his death, and that hospital is his lasting memorial.

Charles Sims,¹⁸ the son of a dentist, qualified L.D.S.R.C.S. in 1863 and became dental officer to the dispensary and later an honorary consulting dental surgeon; he was also dental surgeon at the Queen's Hospital. He became the first lecturer in dental mechanics at the new dental school, and as a founder of the school bore the heavy burden of the administrative work, aided by W. H. Breward Neale. He was one of the founders of the Central Counties Branch of the British Dental Association and its first president in 1884. In 1906 he died, with an untarnished reputation as a pioneer in dental education and reform.

PLYMOUTH DENTAL DISPENSARY

One of the early dispensaries was opened in Catherine Street, Plymouth, on 4 November 1861,¹⁹ having first been advertised with a prospectus dated 10 July 1861, signed by Arthur P. Balkwill of 65 Old Town Street, Plymouth. The staff comprised a physician, a surgeon, two consulting dentists (Charles Bath and Stratton Coles), and four dentists, F. A. Jewers, C. F. Tubbs (replaced by F. H. Balkwill in the second year), C. Spence Bate, and William Moore. The object of the dispensary was to supply "a deficiency in the curative charities of the neighbourhood" by treating the diseases of the teeth, which was done to good effect. According to its first annual report, 764 patients were seen, 740 extractions done, 114 fillings completed, and several patients had scaling or regulation of teeth. Evidently no expenditure was laid out in a building, since a subscription list was opened "to carry out these advantages by engaging suitable rooms etc. for which purpose only a small sum" was regarded as necessary.

In the second year, 1,212 patients were seen, 1,143 teeth extracted, 140 filled, 14 scalings were done, and 17 patients had teeth regulated, while 47 miscellaneous operations were carried out.

By 1870, the dispensary²⁰ was open on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and

¹⁷ S. A. Parker, obituary, *J. Br. dent. Ass.*, 1896, 17: 699.

¹⁸ C. Sims, obituary, *Br. dent. J.*, 1906, 27: 852–853.

¹⁹ *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1861, 4: 194.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1871, 14: 123–124.

Saturdays at 9 a.m. The Royal College of Surgeons of England recognized the certificates of attendance issued by the dispensary as qualifying for the L.D.S., and pupils of the dental surgeons attached to the dispensary or of any other licentiates or members of the Odontological Society were permitted to qualify L.D.S. from the Plymouth Dispensary. The first pupil to qualify did so in 1871. A payment of one guinea a year was asked for each pupil's attendance. The dispensary's statistical report for 1869–70 reveals that in these two years forty-five teeth were filled with gold and 438 with amalgam.

The annual reports, such as were published in the periodical literature, show a steady maintenance of service to the poor of Plymouth. By 1882, its name had become the Plymouth Dental Hospital, and according to the local street directories, it was situated in the Octagon until 1888,²¹ in Bank Street Chambers from 1890 to 1902, and at 55 Regent Street from 1906 to 1910. At the beginning of 1913,²² the hospital moved to the out-patient building of the South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital. This meant that treatment was available on only five days each week instead of six, with a consequent decrease in the number of patients, but in the improved conditions it was expected that better work could be done. There was a plea for increased financial support since lack of money was severely handicapping the work; fewer dentures could be supplied, and certain instruments could not be afforded. From this date separate reports ceased, since the dental hospital had become part of the South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital.

DENTAL HOSPITAL OF EXETER

In January 1880 a meeting was held at 6 Southernhay West, Exeter, the home of J. T. Browne Mason, to consider the advisability of starting a dental hospital. Sufficient support seemed to be forthcoming, and at a meeting²³ held in the Guildhall in Exeter and presided over by the Mayor on 14 March 1880, the rules and constitution of the Dental Hospital of Exeter were passed, and the president, committee of management, and medical staff were elected.

It was Charles Spence Bate²⁴ who, with experience of the Plymouth Dispensary, had suggested the formation of a dental dispensary in Exeter in his presidential address to the first meeting of the Western Counties Dental Association, held in Exeter on 4 August 1879. He advocated that the institution be made a provident one, so that patients felt they had a right to come and not that they were receiving charity; this would also increase the usefulness and resources of the dispensary and add to the range of treatment that could be offered. In this he failed, but the institution was established as a charity with the Mayor of Exeter as president, with two consulting

²¹ O. A. Bokes, personal communication.

²² *Br. dent. J.*, 1914, **35**: 290–291.

²³ *Month. Rev. dent. Surg.*, 1880, **1**: 192–195.

²⁴ C. S. Bate, 'President's address', *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1879, **22**: 517–530.

Charles Spence Bate, F.R.S., L.D.S. (1818–1889), a Plymouth dental surgeon, was a founder of the Western Counties Dental Association (1879) which became the Western Counties Branch of the British Dental Association in 1881. He was the first provincial dentist to be elected president of the Odontological Society, and contributed many articles to the dental literature. He was the third president of the British Dental Association.

surgeons, a surgeon administrator of anaesthetics, and five dental surgeons: S. Bevan Fox, Augustus King, C. Norman King, Henry Browne Mason, and J. T. Browne Mason. There was some delay before suitable premises could be found, but a lease of 15A Bedford Circus was obtained and the new hospital was opened to patients on 14 June 1880. The premises comprised a large waiting room and two operating rooms, all on the ground floor. The chairs, instruments, and anaesthetic equipment used the greater part of the subscribed money. Treatment was available daily except on Sundays, between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Patients in pain were given immediate treatment, but other patients needed the recommendation of a governor or subscriber, life governors being entitled to make five recommendations a year for each donation of ten guineas, annual governors five for each guinea, and annual subscribers two for each half-guinea.

By 1889,²⁵ the hospital had moved to leased premises in Castle Street. In 1905, 4,344 operations had been performed during the year, a grand total of 122,820 cases since the hospital was first opened. Since annual subscriptions had never exceeded £120 and the committee hoped to obtain and equip a building of its own instead of leasing property, financial matters were urgent, for building could not begin until a reserve fund was to hand. In 1906,²⁶ a Mrs. Nosworthy presented 24 Southernhay West to the committee, but the building needed to be put in order, and between £400 and £500 was spent in instruments and other equipment. An appeal was made to subscribers not only to continue and even to increase their annual donations, but to contribute towards the expenses of setting up a new dental hospital and maintaining it in an efficient state. By now the dispensary had been named the Devon and Exeter Dental Hospital.

Mrs. Nosworthy appears again as a benefactor in the annual report for 1913²⁷ when she donated £500 to establish a fund granting assistance to deserving patients who required artificial teeth. A clinic had been set up for the treatment of the teeth of children in the city's elementary schools and this had reduced the number of young children attending the hospital, but 274 more patients had been seen there than in 1912, and nearly 700 more operations had been performed, mostly under anaesthetics.

By 1915,²⁸ 147,379 cases had been treated at the hospital and in 1914 alone 2,448 people had received dental care. As happened in other establishments, the hospital committee, aware that men were being rejected for military service because of their poor dental condition, made an offer to the commanding officer at Exeter that treatment would be provided gratis to any men who were acceptable for enlistment provided that their teeth were put in proper order. As a result, twenty men were provided with dentures free of cost, while a large number of others were treated. This service made the committee £12 out of pocket. Part of the hospital was temporarily made available for another form of wartime service, as offices where the Belgian Refugees' Local Committee could do their administrative work. The premises at

²⁵ *J. Br. dent. Ass.*, 1888, **9**: 383–387.

²⁶ *Br. dent. J.*, 1906, **27**: 615–616.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1914, **35**: 320–322.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1915, **36**: 309–310.

Southernhay West were disposed of by auction in 1936,²⁹ when the dental hospital amalgamated with the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital.

LIVERPOOL DISPENSARY FOR DISEASES OF THE TEETH³⁰

Twenty years before the Devon and Exeter Hospital was founded, William John Newman, who practised at 99 Bold Street in Liverpool, obtained statistics of extractions done, sometimes recklessly, in the various hospitals and dispensaries of Liverpool. He then sought the help of Samuel Adams Parker of Birmingham, who gave him copies of his case-books and cards of recommendation and offered all the information at his disposal. Newman then approached likely subscribers and arranged a meeting for 24 July 1860, at which he reported that 7,000 teeth were extracted annually at dispensaries and as many again at the Infirmary and other hospitals, to say nothing of those extracted by barbers and quacks. He believed that half these teeth might have been saved if proper dental treatment had been possible. He therefore urged the formation of a dental dispensary.

Premises were taken at 82 Russell Street, Brownlow Hill, where patients might attend without recommendation from 9 o'clock on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings. It was thought that an annual income of £60 would cover all costs. Subscriptions to a maximum of 10s 6d were invited, as also were a few donations towards the necessary fittings of the institution. The first list of donations and subscriptions totalled £37 19s 6d, and the dental dispensary opened on 20 September 1860.

In its first full year, 1861, 696 patients were seen, but the funds had proved too small to cover expenses, for which £70 to £80 a year were needed. In the second year, 1,037 patients received treatment, and during 1863 the name of the dispensary became the Liverpool Dental Hospital and it was opened daily. Newman was joined by two other dental surgeons, Robert E. Stewart and Thomas F. Austin, by a consulting physician Dr. Alexander Stookes, and a consulting surgeon Ellis Jones. During 1863,³¹ 1,406 patients were seen, 510 extractions were done in adults and 705 in children "for regulating and remedial purposes", 364 fillings were inserted, and 427 miscellaneous cases were attended to in which scaling and advice were included. In his Dental Officer's Report for 1863, W. J. Newman drew up a table showing the liability of children's teeth to decay, dividing the deciduous teeth into upper and lower central incisors, lateral incisors, canines, first molars, and second molars, and giving statistics of decay for the under-fours, then in two-year groups to the age of twelve, and then twelve to fifteen-year-olds. A second table gave the statistics of decay of permanent teeth in age groups up to sixty years for each upper and lower tooth. These must be very early epidemiological studies in the public health field.

It had early been the intention that provision should be made for dental teaching, and Newman gained the written support of men like Edwin Saunders, who agreed that the science and practice of dental surgery could be properly taught only in an institu-

²⁹ O. A. Bokes, personal communication.

³⁰ J. Hopper, *The history of the Liverpool Dental Hospital, 1860-1960*, Liverpool, United Liverpool Hospitals, 1960.

³¹ *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1864, 7: 318-320.

tion specially devoted to that branch of surgery. Accordingly, in 1864 it became possible to obtain instruction and practice in the hospital on payment of two guineas a year, pupils and apprentices of honorary staff receiving free tuition. An editorial comment felt the proposed fee was very small, and by 1870 it had been increased to ten guineas a year for hospital practice, while pupils of the honorary staff still had the privileges of free attendance. Four lecturers were appointed: Dr. D. M. Williams for dental anatomy and physiology, human and comparative; R. E. Stewart for dental surgery and pathology; W. J. Newman for dental mechanics; and T. F. Austin for metallurgy.

By 1865, the number of patients had reached 2,914 and treatments given were 1,229 extractions in adults and 1,384 in children, 724 fillings, and 222 miscellaneous cases and advice. The sixth annual report of 1866 showed an increase of 467 in the number of patients and of 820 in the operations performed. It was felt that not only was such an institution useful in treating dental disease, but it had also proved how much more could be accomplished for the relief of the poor than could be done in the dental department of a general hospital. Even so, the limited resources of the hospital restricted its services to the mere relief of pain, though the dental officers had been in the habit of supplying their own materials for filling teeth and sometimes of supplying their own instruments. There was need for better premises, and by doubling the number of subscriptions these could be acquired, so the public was encouraged to increase its generosity. A more commodious house was provided within a year at 29 Russell Street, and this was fitted up and equipped at the expense of the committee.

A letter was published in the *British Journal of Dental Science* in 1868, in conjunction with the hospital's seventh annual report,³² from Oswald Borland, the commander of the reformatory ship *Akbar* which was moored at Rock Ferry, expressing his deep gratitude for the "kind and skilful attention at all times shown" to the boys, since there was no other place where they could be sent, and five or six needed dental treatment each week.

The first evidence of library provision in these institutions, a fore-runner of libraries in postgraduate centres and hospitals perhaps, occurred when in 1870³³ the governors at Liverpool authorized the ordering of the *British Journal of Dental Science* and *Dental Cosmos* for the use of pupils and staff.

At the tenth annual meeting³⁴ held in 1871, it was announced that nitrous oxide gas has been introduced as an anaesthetic, with perfect success in all cases where it was employed. The hospital had been presented also with the gift by James B. Lloyd, one of the honorary dental surgeons, of the complete apparatus for preparing nitrous oxide, but the limited space in the hospital prevented its use for the time being.

In 1876, upon the Royal College of Surgeons of England³⁵ recognizing the hospital as a school, it was determined to secure permanent premises for a new hospital, at a cost of about £3,000.³⁶ These new premises, at 50 Mount Pleasant, were formally

³² *Ibid.*, 1868, 11: 14–17.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1870, 13: 540.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1871, 14: 122–123.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1876, 19: 164.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1876, 19: 250.

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opened on 15 April 1880,³⁷ with a mortgage of £900. Patients were admitted between 7.30 and 10 a.m. and from 6 to 7 p.m. There were four operating chairs, one an antiquated armchair which was the first property of the hospital. Seven pupils entered the course. The Mayor, Alderman Bernard Hall, who formally declared the building open, was so strong in his approval and sympathy that he forthwith subscribed twenty guineas to purchase an additional chair.

Five years later, discord arose³⁸ when the recommendations of the Medical Committee to fill a vacancy on the staff were ignored and another candidate, considered by the Medical Committee not to practise in accordance with modern ethics, was appointed by the Managing Committee. At this the Medical Committee resigned in a body and some of the students, unwilling to cast their lot with an entirely new staff, demanded that their fees be returned to them. I have been unable to discover how the matter was resolved.

The University College of Liverpool had first been incorporated by royal charter on 18 October 1881, and in 1884 was admitted as a constituent college of the Victoria University. In this year the Royal Infirmary Medical School was founded, and the Faculty of Medicine originated from it. The dental school was at first affiliated to the Faculty of Medicine. In 1909, the university established its own qualifying examination in dental surgery. From this time the history of the dental hospital virtually becomes the history of the dental school and moves out of the realm of dispensary dental treatment.

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND PRESTON DENTAL HOSPITAL

The founding of a dental dispensary at Brighton was evidently a matter of controversy. It was twice postponed, on the first occasion in 1861, and again six or seven years before it was finally established in 1886. Even then, it had no smooth passage towards its foundation. There had evidently been an experiment in providing dental treatment at the general dispensary in the town, since in a journal of 1863³⁹ there is an account of an annual meeting in Brighton held on 15 January, when it was learned that six members of the Medical Council were unanimous in their support of a proposal to appoint a paid dentist at not less than £25 a year who would attend at least twice a week. Some preference for an honorary appointment was voiced at the meeting, provided that the honorary dentist shared the status of the honorary medical officers, which was not at that time the case. Unfortunately, two of the honorary dentists already appointed had not attended as required and the work was not being done as it should. Finally, the meeting agreed to refer the matter to the committee of management which would frame the rules and regulations to be observed. An editorial comment⁴⁰ at the time regarded the proposed honorarium as a pitiful sum and an insult to the dental practitioners of Brighton, "for no man of any standing would become a paid servant at such a premium, and hence the occupant of the lucrative post

³⁷ *Month. Rev. dent. Surg.*, 1880, 1: 304–306.

³⁸ *J. Br. dent. Ass.*, 1885, 6: 317–318.

³⁹ *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1863, 6: 93–95.

⁴⁰ Editorial, *ibid.*, 1863, 6: 109–111.

would probably be unworthy of the name of dentist in any true sense, and would reflect honour neither upon the institution which he served nor upon the profession he insulted". It seems that the honorary appointments did continue at the hospital.

On 23 March 1886,⁴¹ six members of the dental profession in Brighton called a meeting of the local dental licentiates at the Town Hall to consider setting up a dental hospital. Twenty-one or twenty-two dentists attended, of whom a few had not been invited since they had no formal qualifications. Some opposed the idea, and for these J. Dennant was spokesman: there was some personal objection to some of the promoters of the plan; it was felt that it was unwise to impose a new charity on the town at a time of great depression when existing medical institutions were in great need of funds; it was feared that practitioners dependent on small fees might be harmed; and some believed that the needs of the poor would be better met by extending the dental department of existing institutions. Rather than resorting to a direct veto, since those present were comparative strangers, professionally speaking, Dennant eventually suggested an adjournment of the discussion for twelve months, during which they might seek to know more of one another, possibly by forming a Southern Counties Branch of the British Dental Association. Only five voted against Dennant's proposal, all of them from among the six original promoters of the scheme. It was further agreed that a meeting be held to form a Southern Counties Branch, and this took place in Brighton on 12 May 1886⁴² with attenders from Hampshire, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. Dennant spoke cogently of the professional advantages of closer contact, the branch was formed and the officers elected, Dennant being appointed honorary secretary. John Dennant⁴³ had been a member of the Dental Reform Committee, and an ardent supporter of the founding of the British Dental Association and of achieving the status of a profession for dentists. He was the first secretary and the sixth president of the Southern Counties Branch. He had been a founder member of the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children in Brighton, and was on the consulting staff.

Five of the original advocates of the dental dispensary were joined by another dental practitioner in issuing a second circular, dated 30 April 1886, stating that upon reconsideration of the meeting in March they had decided to carry out their original project, calling a new meeting for 4 May, and meanwhile persuading some of their opponents to change their views and agree to accept positions on the staff. On 1 July 1886,⁴⁴ therefore, the Brighton, Hove and Preston Dental Hospital was officially opened in a converted house situated in Marlborough Place, Brighton. Ten or twelve persons could be accommodated in the waiting room, which opened out of a corridor. There was one surgery with a dental chair, the gift of O. A. Fox, and anaesthetic apparatus was near at hand. In the hope of moving to larger premises, it had been decided to do only the minimum in altering and renovating the building for its new function.

⁴¹ *J. Br. dent. Ass.*, 1886, 7: 507–509.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 1886, 7: 274–278.

⁴³ J. Dennant, obituary, *Br. dent. J.*, 1919, 40: 533–534.

⁴⁴ *Br. J. dent. Sci.*, 1886, 29: 664–672.

Notes on the history of dental dispensaries

The opening ceremony took place in the King's Apartments in the Royal Pavilion, presided over by Dr. Joseph Ewart. Among five vice-presidents present was S. Bevan Fox, one of the first dental surgeons associated with the Exeter Dental Hospital, who had given valuable assistance in setting up the hospital in Brighton. The honorary consulting dental surgeons were O. A. Fox and W. L. Poundall, and the dental surgeons were E. T. Ash, D. E. Caush, W. Harrison (also the honorary secretary of the hospital), S. P. Johnson, C. B. Stoner, John Wood (also the treasurer), and W. R. Wood, who was also dentist to the Homoeopathic Dispensary.

In his report read at the opening ceremony, Harrison was careful to refute the fourth argument against the foundation of the dental hospital, pointing out what very limited dental services were currently available at other dispensaries of the area, where only extractions were performed, and at the children's hospital, where he himself was the dental surgeon and knew how few fillings were done compared to the number of extractions. The staff of the new hospital comprised the dental surgeons of five dispensaries and hospitals in Brighton and Hove, who knew the needs of the suffering poor. John Wood, the honorary treasurer, in his report, dealt with the other opposing arguments: at this time of depression the poor were in greater need of assistance and he felt sure that no financial injury would befall dental practitioners largely dependent on small fees, since the hospital was intended for those unable to pay any fee at all. In addition, there would be facilities for students to be educated in dentistry and in due course to join the ranks of the profession.

The regulations in Brighton were similar to those in Exeter; the hospital was open daily, except on Sundays, between 8.30 and 10 a.m., immediate treatment being available to those in pain. Other patients needed a recommendation from a governor or subscriber, who were entitled to twice as many recommendations for their money as those of Exeter.

The work of the hospital was to be strictly conservative, according to Harrison. He said,

We wish to explode that antique idea that exists among the poorer classes that because a tooth has ached it must be extracted. We further desire to show them the usefulness of stopped teeth, the necessity of care and attention by regular and daily brushing. . . . Ordinary operations will include extraction of teeth that cannot be preserved and restored to usefulness by filling, and all minor operations. Special operations include treating and filling carious teeth, extraction of useless teeth under nitrous oxide gas, ether or chloroform, irregularities of the teeth, deformities of the jaws, fractures of the maxillae, artificial plates for the restoration of the hard structure and soft parts, where disease or want of development or accident have caused the lesion – and all other disease: embraced in the practice of dental surgery.

After twenty-four years,⁴⁵ it became necessary to obtain larger premises. In 1910, 3,890 cases had been treated and 1,132 children had been patients, yet the year's income amounted to only £336 8s 1d, which included £23 7s 5d in hand at the beginning of the year. The amount then in credit for the building fund was £208 6s 9d. There was also a Samaritan Fund, intended to supply free dentures and appliances to such abjectly poor patients as were quite unable to pay even the small sum charged.

Evidently sufficient money became available, since the hospital moved to 27

⁴⁵ *Dent. Surg.*, 1911, 7: 360.

Queen's Road⁴⁶ in the next year, 1911, where all the operating and waiting rooms were on one floor, a recovery room had been provided, and more up-to-date equipment installed. Apart from a slight increase in rent, expenditure was expected to continue as before, but funds were urgently needed to eradicate the deficit of £32 resulting from the treatment provided in 1911 when a large number of anaesthetics had been given for extractions. There had been 2,424 extractions without and 2,813 with anaesthetics, 115 fillings had been done, and 146 dentures provided. The state had not undertaken to give dental treatment to insured persons in Lloyd George's act of 1911, so there was no hope of a decline in the volume of work.

In 1921,⁴⁷ the name of the hospital was changed to the Brighton and Hove Provident Dental Hospital. In 1920, there had been an amalgamation with the public dental service, and now fees were charged to those who could pay, while the very poor had free treatment. During 1924,⁴⁸ there was a great increase in work, 4,802 patients having received treatment in contrast to 2,807 in 1923, and an additional qualified nurse had been employed. The hospital was listed for the last time in the 1947 Brighton street directory,⁴⁹ but then presumably became part of the National Health Service and lost its identity.

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE DENTAL HOSPITAL

In Newcastle upon Tyne, as in Brighton, there was more than one attempt to open a dental dispensary, but an early and rather scandalous attempt in 1881 by a G. F. Tate must await another occasion. It was not until 21 April 1895⁵⁰ that the Newcastle upon Tyne Dental Hospital was formally opened in Nelson Street by the Mayor, Alderman W. H. Stephenson. Before that date, the honorary dental surgeons attached to various medical charities in the city had treated dental patients; in 1894 more than 3,400 cases had received dental treatment, but this consisted chiefly of extractions. It being impossible for the existing medical charities to provide a dental institution, a meeting of all six licentiates in dental surgery practising in the city was called on 19 December 1894 by Robert Lacey Markham, the honorary dental surgeon to the Royal Infirmary and to the Newcastle upon Tyne Dispensary, who also practised in Eldon Square. A committee was formed, whose members pledged themselves to form a hospital and personally to guarantee its continuance for the least three years by paying an annual subscription. The hospital was to be open from 8.30 to 9.30 a.m. on Mondays to Saturdays, and 93 cases were satisfactorily dealt with in the first sixteen days of its existence. Markham was among the honorary dental surgeons, who also included J. W. Daniels, later lecturer and examiner in dental mechanics; J. T. Jameson, who was the second Dean and an honorary consulting dental surgeon after retirement; J. C. S. Harper and W. G. Routledge, later honorary dental surgeon and lecturer in dental materia medica respectively; with E. Fothergill as the honorary con-

⁴⁶ *Br. dent. J.*, 1912, **33**: 228–229.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1921, **42**: 325–326.

⁴⁸ *Dent. Surg.*, 1925, **22**: 161–162.

⁴⁹ E. Watkins, personal communication.

⁵⁰ *J. Br. dent. Ass.*, 1895, **16**: 286–288.

sulting dental surgeon, and three honorary anaesthetists.

The first premises⁵¹ were leased at the corner of Nelson and Clayton Streets at an annual rental of £35, and the hospital opened its doors on 25 March 1895. The building was in a deplorable state of repair and needed considerable expenditure to get it in order, but dental supply firms and others responded to the appeal and some fittings and furniture were presented to the institution. It is interesting to note that from the first the intention was not only to provide dental treatment for the needy, but to do so with the hope of offering the necessary clinical training to lead to a dental qualification and in course of time, to the establishment of a recognized dental school. Almost immediately, the school was recognized by the Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow as a training establishment, and R. L. Markham became the first Dean. During its first nine months, 1,107 patients received dental treatment. In September 1895, the Duke of Northumberland became patron of the hospital, Sir Matthew White Ridley the president, and the Mayor of Newcastle the vice-president.

On 2 October 1895 the first pupil, T. R. Haggerty, was admitted and Newcastle's dental school was in action, quickly to be recognized by the Royal Colleges of England, Ireland, and Edinburgh. Newcastle is different, therefore, from, for instance, Exeter and Brighton in that its clinical treatment early became part of a dental school's activities, and its statistics reveal much larger numbers of patients than in the smaller hospitals.

THE BRITISH DENTISTS' HOSPITAL

A late arrival on the scene and one rather different from its predecessors in aim and policy, was the British Dentists' Hospital,⁵² founded in 1911 and renamed the British Dental Hospital in 1924. The prime mover was George Thomson,⁵³ born in 1859 and educated in Melbourne, Australia, who qualified L.D.S. at the Royal Dental Hospital in 1883 and then became honorary dental surgeon to the dental hospital in Melbourne before settling in this country in 1890, when public health became his great passion. For many years he was a member of the School Dentists' Society, president in 1924–25 and honorary treasurer in 1937. He was a strong supporter of Sim Wallace, and spoke forcefully at meetings all over the country about the incidence of and fight against dental caries.

In 1911, George Thomson⁵⁴ wrote, "the only plan really to bring the public to understand our 'way' is to establish dental hospitals all over the country. In every town holding six dentists, members of the British Dental Association, it would not be asking too much that each should give one morning a week. If there are twelve dentists they could fill the week and so on. . . . In the present crisis every dentist ought to make it possible for him to give one morning, at least, to the poor in an organised manner". His letter pleads eloquently, giving a perhaps rosy picture of the co-operation he expects where dentists provide their own instruments, doctors volunteer to act as

⁵¹ Newcastle upon Tyne, Dental School, Prospectus, 1978.

⁵² J. Rhys-Herbert and W. P. Lansbury, 'The British Dental Hospital', unpublished typescript, 1948.

⁵³ G. Thomson, obituary, *Br. dent. J.*, 1945, 79: 27.

⁵⁴ G. Thomson, 'A hospital dental service', *ibid.*, 1911, 32: 104.

anaesthetists, and the public, discovering the kind of treatment they could receive, when they seek the relief of pain, "would be only too glad to save and pay up like gentlemen next time".

Vision in this case did become fact, supported by a grant of £250 from the Women's Imperial Health Association, help enlisted because the first task undertaken by the hospital was to put in order the teeth of girls emigrating to Australia. Any patient who could afford to pay in full for dental treatment but who came to the hospital was referred to a local dental practitioner, but there was a class of patient in need of treatment and desiring to contribute towards the cost but unable to pay the full fees, and for these the hospital catered. Two local doctors were appointed anaesthetists, the local school care committee began to send children for dental care, and local dentists sent patients unable to afford their fees. By 1913, the hospital was open morning, afternoon, and evening, and although many patients attended too late for any treatment except extraction, teeth were being saved by conservative treatment and patients were being taught about hygiene and diet.

In 1912, the British Dentists' Hospital moved to 31 Camden Road from its original temporary premises in Hampstead Road, and a branch dental clinic was opened in connexion with the St. Pancras School for Mothers where George Thomson, already elected the first chairman of the hospital, became honorary dental surgeon. This was the first dental clinic for expectant and nursing mothers to be established in Britain. Substantial financial support came at this time from the Sunday opening of certain cinemas, but from the first, patients paid according to their means and the fees just covered expenses and made the service self-supporting.

In the following year, additional centres were opened in Queen's Road, Battersea, and in Lewisham High Street, the latter moving to Rushey Green where in 1914 a school dental treatment centre was also set up. The Battersea clinic later moved to 23 South Side, Clapham Common. The First World War brought financial and manpower problems, but increased co-operation with the local health authorities meant that mothers with young children attending maternity and child welfare centres in St. Pancras, Lewisham, and Wandsworth were able to receive dental treatment at the hospital's clinics in those areas, and later this service was extended to Greenwich, Holborn, Fulham, Hampstead, and Southwark. This arrangement with the local authorities was based on the local council's providing the premises and an annual grant while the hospital provided the equipment, maintained it, and appointed the dental surgeons. Special facilities for treatment were also made available at local tuberculosis dispensaries. In 1914 the Camden Road Clinic was able to offer free dental treatment to men joining the Forces, claiming to be the first to do so.

In 1921 Queen Alexandra became patron of the hospital, and on her death was succeeded by the Duchess of York, now H.M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

In 1925 a Samaritan Fund was set up to assist genuine cases of hardship among the patients who needed dentures. In the next fifteen years 1,333 applications for aid were considered and in most cases approved.

The National Health Insurance Scheme in 1921 provided a stimulus to dental treatment for the public, using the accumulated surpluses in the hands of the Approved Societies. Some societies provided dental benefit free, but most at fifty per cent of the

cost. However, only a limited use was made of this benefit, never in any year by more than seven per cent of those entitled to it, and only a fraction of the work done under the scheme was conservative; the bulk of it was extraction and the provision of dentures. Dentists were reluctant to work for the scheme since the fees were considerably less than those approved by the Representative Board of the British Dental Association.

The National Health Insurance Acts had failed to provide for adolescents aged between sixteen and twenty-one to receive dental treatment under the scheme, and the British Dental Hospital met their need by offering treatment at reduced rates. Others were treated, mainly by conservative work, by agreement with a firm which made such provision for its employees.

By 1929,⁵⁵ the hospital had five main centres, eight maternity and child welfare clinics, eight tuberculosis clinics, one insurance society clinic, one full-time London County Council school clinic, and one special clinic for pre-school children in Battersea. There was a staff of thirty-nine dental surgeons, twelve anaesthetists, and two doctors. In 1929, in order to place the hospital on a proper constitutional basis, it was decided to apply for incorporation under the Companies Act 1929 as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital, without the addition of the word "Limited" to its name.

Three years later, when the offices and headquarters were moved to 56 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1., George Thomson retired as chairman of the Executive Committee but continued as a member of the committee until his death in 1945 at the age of eighty-seven. The new chairman was E. E. Turner, since 1916 the honorary treasurer, and he continued to hold both offices until his death in 1947, aged seventy-three.

The jubilee of the hospital was celebrated by a dinner on 19 March 1937, presided over by Sir Norman Bennett and attended by representatives of the dental and medical professions and by members of Holborn Borough Council.

To name, or indeed trace, all those associated with the hospital would be impossible. First to be associated with George Thomson in the work was W. Sidney Rose, a Holloway practitioner and a member of both Public Dental Service Association and the British Dental Association, who became the hospital's first secretary in addition to giving treatment. Rose was succeeded by Cecil O. Gray in 1919, and then by L. D. Ridout, J. Rhys-Herbert, and P. R. Asplet. The first president was appointed in 1917 when Sir Francis Farmer took office, to be followed in 1923 by Sir Harry Baldwin, who had been a contemporary of Thomson's as a student at the Royal Dental Hospital; Sir Norman Bennett was his successor. Finally, R. G. Heegaard Warner became president in 1948 and J. Rhys-Herbert was elected chairman.

The outbreak of the Second World War caused a virtual cessation of work in the centres and clinics, though these gradually reopened during the daytime on a full- or part-time basis. Many of the dental and medical staff had been called into the forces but the remaining practitioners did their best to make good the deficiency. Bombing demolished the Battersea clinic and closed the Camden premises, while the clinic at Lewisham was severely damaged and had to remain closed for a long period.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 1930, 51: 46–47.

The National Health Service Act 1946 necessitated the transfer of the British Dental Hospital to the new health service, and after thirty-five years of service it lost its separate identity. It amply fulfilled its principal aims and objects of providing dental clinics for treatment by qualified and registered dental and medical practitioners of persons of limited means, including free treatment and the provision of dentures for the necessitous poor, and the instruction of the public in dental hygiene by all available means of information.

In presenting this tentative exploration of the dispensaries I am conscious that only the surface has been skimmed and that what is needed is further study of local newspapers and other records to find the full story and to apportion the praise so richly deserved by those dentists of generous spirit and social concern who quietly helped their poorer brethren, aided by the benefactions of their wealthier contemporaries. Many a town and city had a dispensary which has gone unsung on this occasion for lack of documentary evidence, or because only the best-documented have been studied, but I could have mentioned Banbury, Bury, Edinburgh, Leicester, Manchester, Norwich, Nottingham, Peterborough, Reading, Sheffield, Southampton, Worcester, and many another.

SUMMARY

Although teeth had doubtless been extracted in the general medical dispensaries that had existed since 1697, there had been no attempt to preserve the teeth until in 1839 the first of many dental dispensaries was established, the London Institution for the Diseases of the Teeth. This paved the way for other dispensaries in providing dental treatment by qualified dental practitioners, some of them eminent in the profession, for those too poor to pay. In some dispensaries recognized by the educational authorities, practical instruction in dentistry was available; certain of these developed into the present dental schools. A number of dispensaries continued their services into the twentieth century, and one, the British Dentists' Hospital, was founded as late as 1911. Of these, some ultimately became the dental departments of general hospitals while others were transferred to the National Health Service; most, however, whether free or provident, ceased to exist during the nineteenth century. The stories of those in London, Birmingham, Plymouth, Exeter, Liverpool, Brighton, and Newcastle upon Tyne are explored as representative of dozens of others throughout Britain. This is the first time that any general study of dental dispensaries has been attempted.

TABLE I
ULTIMATE FATE

NAME	DATES	SCOPE	PERSONNEL	ULTIMATE FATE
London Institution for the Diseases of the Teeth, 10 Windmill St.	1839–1845(?)	2 mornings a week. Teaching of pupils. 5,903 treated in 4 years	Founders: (Sir) Edwin Saunders, W. A. Harrison	Closed
London Dental Dispensary, 44 Clarence Gdns. Regent's Park, 476 New Oxford St. from April 1858	20 Feb. 1855–?	Daily for 1 hr. 1,085 patients in 22 months	Founder: Charles James Fox Cons. Dentist: (Sir) John Tomes Dental Officer: John Lee Statham	Unknown
North West Dental Dispensary, 44 Clarence Gate	1859(?)–?		Cons. Dentist: Alfred Canton Dentist: John Evans	Unknown
Birmingham Dental Dispensary, various addresses	1858–	Initially 1 hr, 3 mornings a week, 645 patients in 1st year. Recognized as teaching institution in 1880	Founder: Samuel Adams Parker	Became Birmingham Dental Hospital (1871) and School (1880)
Plymouth Dental Dispensary, various titles and addresses	4 Nov. 1861–1913	Open 4 days a week, 764 patients in 1st year, 1,212 in 2nd. R.C.S. recognized certificates of attendance for L.D.S. 1870	Local dental surgeons	Became part of South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital
Dental Hospital of Exeter, various addresses	14 June 1880–1936	Open daily for 2 hrs	Local dental surgeons	Amalgamated with Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital
Liverpool Dispensary for Diseases of the Teeth, various addresses and titles	20 Sept. 1860–	Initially 3 mornings a week. 696 patients in 1st year, 1,037 in 2nd. 1864: teaching and hospital practice given to pupils	Founder: W. J. Newman Local dental surgeons	Became Liverpool Dental Hospital and School in 1876, gaining R.C.S. recognition
Brighton, Hove and Preston Dental Hospital, various addresses	1 July 1886–1947	Open daily, 8.30–10 a.m.	Local dental surgeons	Became part of NHS
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Dental Hospital, various addresses	25 Mar. 1895–	Open daily for 1 hr. Almost at once recognized as teaching institution. 1,107 patients in first 9 months	Founder: R. L. Markham, aided by 5 other local practitioners	Became Newcastle-upon-Tyne Dental Hospital and School in 1895

TABLE I (continued)

<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATES</i>	<i>SCOPE</i>	<i>PERSONNEL</i>	<i>ULTIMATE FATE</i>
British Dentists* Hospital *(Dental from 1924), various addresses in London	1911–1946	At first open in mornings; by 1913 also afternoons and evenings. Patients paid part of cost. Many branch clinics; 1st dental clinic for expectant mothers, 1912	Founder: George Thomson Local dental surgeons	Transferred to NHS