"Milestones in the Development of the School of Dentistry"

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June 9, 1988

The School of Dentistry is delighted to join the other professional schools of the University in this program celebrating the 175th anniversary of the founding of the basic creation of what is now appropriately named the Health Sciences Library of the U.M.A.B. The School of Dentistry will be celebrating its Sesquicentennial in 1990.

The Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, the world's first dental college, was chartered by the General Assembly of Maryland on March 6, 1840. The College opened on November 3, 1840 with five students. At the first commencement, on March 9, 1841, Robert Arthur and R. Covington Mackall, both of Maryland, received their diplomas granting the D.D.S. degree. As the first dental college, the B.C.D.S. had to create a degree, represented in abbreviation not by the initials C.D.D. of the Latin words but by the initials D.D.S. of the words Doctor of Dental Surgery of the English translation. Following this precedent many American dental schools chose to award the D.D.S. degree. Harvard University created the D.M.D. degree in 1869.

In 1840 there were about 1200 professing dentists in the United States. The majority had received their training from preceptors, most of whom were antagonists of the dental college. However, in the large cities of the East there had developed a cadre of dentists who gave dedicated support not only to the College but also to the creation of the American Journal of Dental Science (1839), the world's first dental periodical , and the organization of the American Society of Dental Surgeons (1840), the world's first national dental society.

The primary purpose of the B.C.D.S. was to provide adequate facilities for instructing the dental student in the art and science of practice. For many years this pioneer school served as a pattern for other dental schools .

The original faculty consisted of two dental and two medical practitioners: Horace H. Hayden, Professor of Dental Physiology; H. Willis Baxley, Professor of Anatomy and Physiology; Chapin A. Harris, Professor of Practical Dentistry; and Thomas Bond, Jr., Professor of Special Pathology and Therapeutics. The distinguished

reputations of the four faculty members gained immediate support for the College from leading dentists and also from influential physicians.

In 1873 the Maryland Dental College began its short life under the direction of Dr. Richard B. Winder. A typical result was a merger with the B.C.D.S. effected in 1878. The University of Maryland established a Department of Dentistry in 1882, the first dean being the capable and versatile Dr. Ferdinand J. S. Gorgas, who had served as dean of the B.C.D.S. from 1865 to 1882. The Baltimore Medical College organized a Dental Department in 1895, which was maintained until 1913, when the B.M.C. merged with the U. of M. From 1882 the competition between the two leading dental schools in Baltimore resulted in continuing flagrant rivalry for students and faculty members. There was also a very troublesome spirit of opposition and jealousy between the two alumni groups in Maryland that affected negatively every type of dental activity in the state.

The financial resources of the Baltimore proprietary dental schools were based on the income from student fees and the clinical receipts, supplemented by gratuitous teaching that was

provided by dental practitioners in the community. These part-time faculty members did receive some measure of reward by the recognition they gained from their fellow dentists and the informed segment of the public.

However, the increasing difficulties experienced by the Baltimore schools resulting from the steadily enlarging aurhoritative demands for expansion of the curricula and improvements in clinical and laboratory facilities were important influences in the 1923 climax to the despairing effort of the B.C.D.S. to survive. Another vital influence in the gradual approach to the closing of the B.C.D.S. and other proprietary schools came within their own sphere by the rise in the exemplary power of the university schools in motivating the extension of dental education in bacteriology, pathology, physiology and other science subjects. Also of slow but mandatory significance were the development of legislative influence through the state boards of dental examiners and the increasing success of local, state and national organizations in overcoming the opposition of the

informally trained dentists, who for decades had been bitterly active in their attempts to asperse formal dental education, protective dental legislation and dental organization through propaganda that sought to convince the public that those three elements of a dental tripod were antagonistic to the public interest.

Buildings, of course, have been a primary factor in the progress of dental education in Baltimore. From meagerly furnished rooms and what we now would regard as extremely crude plants, have come larger and more special buildings, culminating in the School's present fully modernized home on West Baltimore Street.

The contemporary University of Maryland was chartered by the General Assembly of Maryland on April 9, 1920. It was formed by combining under a single administrative authority the old University at Baltimore with the Maryland Agricultural College at College Park. An important condition of the legislative action was the assurance that continuing annual State appropriations would be made to the dental school's budget in amounts that would be required to maintain

a quality dental education program. A second promise was that the construction of a suitable dental school building be given first priority in the building program then in the planning stage for the Baltimore campus. The new building was occupied in January, 1930.

Having been unsuccessful in their efforts to secure financial support from private philanthropy, the trustees of the B.C.D.S. turned to the regents of the U.of M. with the proposal that they would transfer to the University the right to the College's charter, the Museum and the art collection, and all the laboratory and clinic equipment belonging to the College — on one condition: that the B.C.D.S. be made the dental school of the University. A new title was officially approved: The Baltimore Collge of Dental Surgery, Dental School, University of Maryland, thus assuring the perpetuation of the School's identity as the world's first dental college.

In 1924 Dr. J. Ben Robinson was called to the very challenging deanship of the year-old merger of the two Baltimore

dental schools. Dr. Robinson served from 1924 till his retirement in 1953. His building of a disturbed and poorly equipped combination of schools into a highly competent institution that merited wide recognition for the excellent quality of training it provided its students is generally regarded as an outstanding accomplishment in the history of the American dental education.

In March of 1940 the Maryland State Dental Association sponsored a Centenary meeting of international significance in honor of the world's first dental college. At that century point in its history the B.C.D.S. had reached a high level of achievement. Standards of admission had been improved to ensure sound scholarship; the curriculum had continually been adjusted to include the progress made in dental research and dental practice; the teaching staff had been enlarged and strengthened in quality; the equipment had been completely modernized; and the physical facilities had been greatly expanded.

In 1845 the so-called library of the B.C.D.S. belonged

to Chapin A. Harris, Professor of Practical Dentistry. It was described then as "the most choice and extensive dental library in this country." When I joined the faculty in 1928 the library was housed in a small room of a converted box factory on Greene Street. In 1930 it was relocated in the new building in a greatly enlarged area with a spacious reading room and a separate section of stacks. With the creation of the Health Sciences Library the dental library was transferred to that notably serviceable institution. The School of Dentistry is proud to acknowledge the present Library's solid contribution to the spirit and the welfare of the U.M.A.B.

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