

# A Century of Service

## The Development of Dental Education (Part Four of a Series)

The period following Confederation in 1867 and on into the 1870s was extremely important to the practice of dentistry. The *BNA Act* had established that health and education were provincial prerogatives, and by 1889 seven provinces, the Northwest Territories and the colony of Newfoundland had dental acts to ensure protection of the public. The next step was to develop a system of dental education in Canada to provide quality training for future dentists.

Eligibility for licensure varied from province to province but generally the qualified practitioners came through four portals of entry:

- “grandfathering” through a dental act
- medical combined with some dental training
- indentureship
- graduation from an American dental college.

The Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, founded in Maryland in 1840 mainly through the efforts of Drs. Horace Hayden and Chapin Harris, became the world's first school of dentistry.



*The Principles and Practice of Dentistry* by Dr. Chapin Harris was a classic dental textbook in the latter part of the 19th century.

(Dentistry Canada Museum)

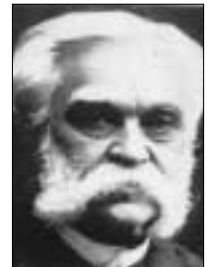
By 1870 there were a total of nine dental schools in the United States — all private — and many of their graduates found their way into Canada. The Harvard University Dental School, formed in 1867, was the first based at a university and the first to issue the Doctor of Dental Medicine degree.

The indenture (apprenticeship) training system, although in use for many years, was subject to misuse by the preceptor dentist.

### Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario

The 1868 *RCDSO Act* gave the Board “power and authority to establish and conduct a Dental College in Toronto” and two attempts were made to do so — one in 1868 and another in 1869 — but both were short lived. It wasn't until 1875 that the Royal College of Dental Surgeons (RCDS) was firmly founded in Toronto with a staff of two, Drs. J.B. Willmott and Luke Tesky. In the first year of enrolment 11 students were admitted who each paid a fee of \$100 for the four-month course.

Dr. James Branston Willmott (right) is often referred to as the Father of Dental Education in Canada for his commitment and leadership. He entered dentistry as an apprentice in 1858 and opened a practice in Milton, Ontario. In 1867 he was one of the first to join the Ontario Dental Association. He was elected secretary of the RCDSO in 1870, the same year he attended the Philadelphia College of Dental Surgery to earn his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree. He served as secretary and dean of the RCDSO until his death in 1915.



It was through Dr. Willmott's leadership and tireless efforts that the RCDS continued to grow in stature and influence. In 1888 the College affiliated with the University of Toronto, and in 1889 the Doctor of Dental Surgery degree was conferred on 25 candidates — the first time the DDS degree had been conferred outside the United States. In 1925 the College passed into history, becoming the

Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Toronto — at a time when enrolment had reached record levels of more than 300 students a year.

### The Dental College of the Province of Quebec



**First Dental School in Quebec, Phillips Square, Montreal, 1892**

The Dental College of the Province of Quebec opened for courses of instruction in the fall of 1892 at Number 2 Phillips Square in Montreal, with Dr. W. George Beers as dean. Instruction was in English and French, with medical subjects taken at McGill and Laval universities. The course was three years long — one year more than the Quebec indentureship program in force at the time.

The College affiliated with Bishop's University in 1896 so graduates would receive a DDS degree. When Bishop's Medical College joined the Medical College of McGill in 1905, the Dental College of the Province of Quebec was abolished and transferred all formal dental education to McGill and Laval universities (Laval had a Montreal branch at the time). At both universities the course of instruction was four years, the same as adopted by the RCDS in 1903.

At McGill the dental school became a department of the Faculty of Medicine, obtaining full faculty status in 1920. Also in 1920, Laval University in Montreal became the Université de Montréal and its dental school became a division of the university with Dr. Eudore Dubeau as dean, a position he held for 40 years.

### The Maritime Dental College

As early as 1899 the Nova Scotia Provincial Dental Board struck a committee to establish a dental school in Halifax. In 1905 the Nova Scotia Dental Association, led by Dr. Frank Woodbury, formed a Committee on Affiliation to establish a dental education institution that would serve all three Atlantic Provinces.

In 1908, following years of negotiations, the long-sought affiliation with the Halifax Medical College and Dalhousie University was finally achieved and the Maritime Dental College, with Dr. Woodbury (right) as dean, opened its doors to an initial class of six students. Dr. Woodbury, who graduated from the Philadelphia



College of Dental Surgery in 1877, served as dean until his death in 1922. A founding member of the CDA in 1902, he served as president from 1918 to 1920. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Dominion Dental Council and was elected president of the Dental Faculties Association when it was formed in 1920.

Similar to the situation for the RCDS, the Maritime Dental College was owned and controlled by the Nova Scotia Dental Association. This affiliation and ownership relationship prevailed until 1912 when Dalhousie University accepted teaching responsibility for both medicine and dentistry, creating for the first time in Canada a fully integrated university faculty of dentistry.

### Dental Education in Alberta

The first step in academic dental training in Alberta occurred in May 1916 when the University of Alberta Senate in Edmonton agreed to *“undertake to give instruction in the two years in Dentistry in connection with the Medical Faculty; and affiliation be sought with McGill and such other Colleges of Dentistry.”* Because of World War I the process was delayed until 1918. That year, three candidates were admitted, who completed their first two years in Alberta and went on to Toronto for the final two years. The “two and two” formula continued until 1923 when, following the construction of a new medical building, it was decided to offer the full four-year course of dentistry in the Faculty of Medicine Dental Department.

In 1930 the Department became the School of Dentistry with Dr. Harry E. Bulyea appointed director. Early years of dental education in Alberta are synonymous with Dr. Bulyea (right), an 1897 graduate of the Harvard University Dental School, who first came to teach in Alberta in 1920. He piloted the course of dental education from its very birth, and at his retirement in 1942 his remarkable contribution was noted by his successor, Dr. Scott Hamilton: *“The responsibility of establishing and directing such an organization through its pioneer days with the additional handicaps of hard times, is a burden few could have borne.”*



In 1944 when the School of Dentistry was elevated to a separate faculty within the University of Alberta, Dr. Hamilton was appointed the first dean. In 1996, 78 years of dental education in the Province of Alberta came “full circle.” The Dental Faculty was reshaped as the Department of Oral Health Sciences and integrated into a new, expanded Faculty of Medicine.



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## Canada's First Female Dental Graduate



The RCDS School of Dentistry admitted its first class in 1875 but it was not until 1893 that it graduated its first female dentist, **C.L. Josephine Wells** (left). Dr. Wells had a distinguished 36-year career in Ontario and was the first dentist in Canada to entirely confine a practice to hospital dentistry. The 1962 Canadian census

showed that the profession was still very male dominated with 5,772 men and 96 women licensed to practice.

## The Gies Report, 1926

A 1920s survey conducted by the Carnegie Foundation on dental education in the United States and Canada had a lasting influence on the future of dentistry in both countries. Dr. William J. Gies of Columbia University prepared the report that laid the foundation for two years of pre-professional training and which recommended that all dental teaching have a proper relationship within a university. Gies also strongly advocated that “*dentistry is an independent division of health service which is attaining the full equivalence of an oral specialty of medicine.*”

## Faculty of Dentistry, University of Manitoba First New Dental College in Canada in 40 Years

By 1918 five university-based centres of dental education had been established in Canada but with two World Wars and the economic depression of the 1930s intervening, it was 40 years before another dental school opened.

As early as 1896 — and almost yearly thereafter — the Manitoba Dental Association had advocated that courses of dentistry be made available within the province. Specific action was not taken until 1956 when a report prepared for the provincial government by University of Toronto professor Dr. K.J. Paynter strongly recommended “*that a School of Dentistry be established in the Province of Manitoba as a Faculty of the University of Manitoba.*” When the first class of 15 students graduated in 1962 they were the first in Canada to receive a Doctor of Dental Medicine degree.

**Dr. John W. Neilson** (right) was appointed dean in 1957, and the new faculty admitted its first class in 1958. Dr. Neilson graduated from the University of Alberta in 1941 and immediately entered into the Canadian Dental Corps and served



overseas from 1942 to 1945. Following discharge he earned his Master's Degree in Periodontology at the University of Michigan.

## Faculty of Dentistry, University of British Columbia

The opening of a new dental school in Manitoba in 1958 — following a hiatus of 40 years — was just the first of five new schools that would open their doors to dental education in Canada within a dozen years.

In British Columbia in the early 1950s several committees had studied the need for a dental faculty at the University of British Columbia. But it was the extensive surveys on dental education and the public aspects of dentistry by Dr. John B. MacDonald in 1956 and 1961 that urged the establishment of a faculty without further delay. Agreement was obtained from the government that it would provide financial support and Dr. S. Wah Leung was appointed dean in July 1962 to begin detailed planning of the new school.

Canada's seventh dental school, at UBC, admitted 12 students into its first class in September 1964. **Dean S. Wah Leung** (right) was the gold medal graduate in dentistry from McGill in 1943. After he earned his PhD from Rochester in 1950 he associated with the University of Pittsburgh, where he was director of graduate education and research.



## University of Western Ontario

As early as 1947 the Board of Governors of the University of Western Ontario, the Canadian Dental Association and the RCDS advocated a second dental school in the province. The need for more dentists in Ontario was acute. In 1920 the dentist-to-population ratio was 1:1,901 and by 1964 it had declined to 1:2,462. In October 1964 Premier Robarts gave the province's approval to a new faculty at the University of Western Ontario in London. A month later Dr. Wesley J. Dunn was appointed dean.

Upon accepting his new responsibility, **Dr. Wesley Dunn** (right), continued his outstanding service to the profession. A 1947 graduate of the University of Toronto, he was editor of the journals of both the Canadian and Ontario Dental Associations and of *Oral Health*. He was registrar of



the RCDS from 1956 to 1964 and was its president in 1990.

The first class of eight students enrolled in the faculty in September 1966 and a new Dental Sciences Building with full dental facilities was opened in October 1968.

On July 1, 1997 — as with the University of Alberta the year before — the separate faculties of medicine and dentistry at the University of Western Ontario were merged into a combined faculty of medicine and dentistry.

### The University of Saskatchewan

The 1960s and 1970s were certainly the years for dental school expansion across Canada. In 1968, the same year that the University of Saskatchewan announced Dr. K.J. Paynter as dean of the new Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Saskatchewan, five other Canadian faculties announced increased expansion of facilities.

The first 10 students enrolled at the University of Saskatchewan in 1968 entered into a six-year course: one year pre-dental, two years pre-clinical, two years clinical and one year of internship.

Dr. K.J. Paynter (right) graduated from the University of Toronto in 1944 and received his PhD from Columbia University in 1953. On staff at the



University of Toronto, he was a member of a number of prestigious research committees and councils. Amply equipped for his post as dean, he had prepared the report that led to the founding of the Faculty of Dentistry in Manitoba.

### Université Laval, Quebec City

The 10th dental school in Canada opened its doors in September 1971, admitting 14 men and two women. The creation of the school was the principal recommendation in a report prepared in 1967 for the Association of Quebec University Presidents and Principals. Occupying temporary quarters, the school began its new term with 12 full-time teachers under the direction of Dr. Gustave Ratté (right). Dr. Ratté, a 1929 DDS graduate of the Université de Montréal, was CDA president in 1953. In 1967 he received both the City of Paris Silver Medal for outstanding service and the Canadian Centennial Medal.



In 1993 the Laval Dental School was granted full faculty status within the Université Laval. Ms. Diane Lachapelle, a dental hygienist, was nominated dean of the Faculty in 1995. She was the first dental hygienist in North America to become dean of a dental faculty.

**The Canadian Dental Association: 1902-2002 — A Century of Service** is a Centenary project of the Canadian Dental Association in collaboration with the Dentistry Canada Fund, the charitable foundation for the dental profession in Canada. The 11-part series is written by Dr. Ralph Crawford, Historian and Past President of CDA, with sincere appreciation to the pioneers and innovators who have contributed so much to the dental profession.



*(All statements of opinion or supposed fact are published on the authority of the author and do not necessarily express the views of the CDA or the DCF.)*



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