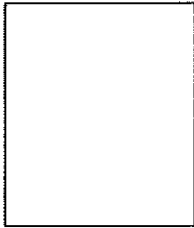


Historical Perspective



Maynard K. Hine
President, 1947-48

I am pleased and a little flattered to be given the opportunity to make a few comments about the status of root canal therapy a few generations ago. When I attended the University of Illinois College of Dentistry (1928-1930), root canal therapy was a part of the therapeutics department, which included periodontics, oral pathology materia medica, a little preventive dentistry, etc. The chairman of the department was Dr. J. Roy Blayney, who was an astute scholarly gentleman with a keen interest in academic affairs in general, and root canal therapy in particular.

In the early 1940's a small group of dentists interested in root canal therapy met in Chicago during the Midwinter Dental Meeting, and since I was a junior member of the therapeutics department, Dr. Blayney asked me and a colleague, Dr. Robert Kesel, to attend the meeting. It was held in the Conrad Hilton Hotel in one of their small private dining rooms and about 20 dentists attended including, I remember, Drs. W. Clyde Davis, Frank Hospers, Louis Grossman, and Ralph Sommer. The agenda included a discussion of the desirability of organizing an association to promote root canal therapy, what to call such an organization, dues, committees needed, etc.

After the meeting, Dr. Kesel and I debated whether or not such an organization was needed, how successful it might be and whether or not we should cooperate. We finally decided to support the organization, and so agreed to accept committee assignments, etc. As a matter of fact, we both later became president of the

American Association of Endodontists. However, if someone had suggested it would develop into the large influential organization that exists today, we would doubtless have suggested that a psychiatrist be consulted.

When I was appointed Dean of the Indiana University School of Dentistry in 1945, I found root therapy was included in the operative dentistry department, so I quietly created an endodontics department. I selected one of the operative department faculty members, Dr. Harry Healy, to concentrate on this developing field, and it was a good choice. Dr. Healy became enthusiastic about the subject, was the first editor of the Association's Endodontic Newsletter, started a reprint file of articles on endodontics and finally became president of the Association. Dr. Healy worked actively with the American Dental Association's House of Delegates to obtain approval of endodontics as a recognized dental specialty.

Dr. Samuel Patterson followed Dr. Healy as chairman of the endodontic department of the Indiana University School of Dentistry and also supported the Association in many ways, including serving as president in 1968-69. He also developed a comprehensive reprint file on endodontics which he made available to interested graduate students and practitioners. The widespread use of copying machines makes it unnecessary to circulate the reprints, but they serve as a good source of early scientific articles for faculty members and graduate students.

During the 1950's and 1960's I was also supporting the specialty of endodontics. As a member of the ADA's Council on Education and Council of Dental Research, I was able to help establish endodontics as a specialty. I was in the ADA Board of Trustees from 1958 to 1964 during the time the AAE was working for approval, and was president of the ADA in 1964 when the ADA House of Delegates approved the American Board of Endodontics as the national examining board for endodontics. The specialty of endodontics finally joined the other recognized dental specialties due to the dedicated, effective and persistent activities of the members of the American Association of Endodontists.

Although I have been retired for more than 20 years, I do recall with much pleasure my involvement with the American Association of Endodontists. My memory is quite selective; I remember the pleasant, positive aspects of the growth and development of this specialty but the negative frustrating events have faded. Suffice it to state that the results of the efforts of the American Association of Endodontists proved to be successful; the AAE can be proud of its role in the establishment of endodontics as a valuable dental specialty.

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