

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS

Report on the papers of  
SIR (ERIC) WILFRED FISH  
(1894-1974)

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Report on the papers of  
SIR (ERIC) WILFRED FISH  
(1894 - 1974)

Compiled by: Jeannine Alton  
Harriot Weiskittel

Deposited in the Library of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, London

1977

Description of the collection

The collection was received from Professor Bertram Cohen who assembled the material from Sir Wilfred's family and colleagues.

Sir Wilfred had carefully worked through his papers after retirement so that many items bear lengthy comments and evaluations. These often contain very interesting personal reminiscences of his career and colleagues and reflections on the state of dental health, science and education. Very little remains of Sir Wilfred's professional work - i.e. laboratory notebooks, working papers, research material, etc.

The General Dental Council retains in its files papers which document Sir Wilfred's work on the Council and on the Dental Board. Lady Fish retains a small amount of personal material.

One set of publications has been offered to the Royal Dental Hospital Library.

All items are manuscript unless indicated otherwise; titles in inverted commas are those which appear on the manuscripts.

The help of Professor B. Cohen and Professor H.M. Pickard is very gratefully acknowledged.

Summary of the career of Sir Wilfred Fish

b.1894	Chard, Somerset
1914	LDS Manchester University
1916	Ch.B. Manchester University
1924	M.D. Manchester University
1933	D.Sc. University College, London
1931-36	President, Scientific Commission, International Dental Federation
1932	Department of Parodontal Disease, Royal Dental Hospital, London
1939	Elected to the Dental Board
1944-56	Chairman, Dental Board, U.K.
1952	President, XIth International Dental Congress, London
1953	Appointed Vice-President of Honour, Fédération Dentaire Internationale
1954	Knighted
1955	Hon. Fellow, Royal Society of Medicine
1955-60	Hon. Director, Department of Dental Science, Royal College of Surgeons
1956-59	Dean, Faculty of Dental Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons
1956-64	President, General Dental Council
1959-64	Hon. Consulting Dental Surgeon to Army
1961	Fellow, Royal College of Surgeons

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A. Biographical and personal (A.1 - A.9)

A.1	Obituary notices, tributes, memorial service.	1974
A.2	'Retirement - and some other random thoughts': folder of misc. shorter writings, reminiscences, introspections. Includes short note written c.1930 on cancer research, annotated by Fish (1970) 'an odd relic'.	
A.3	Royal College of Surgeons. Sir Wilfred was Honorary Director of the Department of Dental Science and Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery: appeal for research unit (1955), correspondence on retirement and on award of Colyer Gold Medal, citations, material re opening of Dental Experimental Research Unit at Buckston Browne Farm, Kent, by Sir Wilfred in 1966.	1955-66
A.4	Honours and awards, letters of appointment, letters of thanks for service: British Dental Association, 1933 Royal Army Medical Corps, 1961 Dental Association of Malta, 1962 Honorary consultant in Dental Surgery to Army, 1964 General Dental Council, 1964, 1974 Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland, 1964 American Association of Endodontists, 1964 American Dental Society of London, 1965	1933-65
A.5	Press cuttings and offprints containing mention of Sir Wilfred's work and honours.	1937-70
A.6	Misc. personal souvenirs (invitation to 1953 Coronation, map, drawing).	
A.7-A.9	Trip to Australia, September-October 1935. Fish made the journey to Australia at the invitation of the Dental Board of Victoria. While there he gave lectures and demonstrations at the University of Melbourne, received an Hon.D.D.S. from that University, and attended meetings of the British Medical Association.	

- A.7 Notes, observations and journal of trip.
- A.8 Correspondence
- A.9 Misc. personal souvenirs (photographs, menus, programmes, tickets, telegrams, etc.).

B. Committees, societies, organisations (B.1 - B.9)

B.1-B.3 The British Society of Periodontology.

Sir Wilfred was instrumental in the establishment of the Society. He served as its first president in 1949-50 and returned for a second term of office in 1973-74, the Society's Jubilee year.

- B.1 Correspondence re Sir Wilfred's Presidential Address, 1973, and the anniversary meeting, 1974. 1973-74
- B.2 'Problems of Parodontal Disease': proof of Sir Wilfred's Presidential address of 1949 (with covering letter to Professor Pickard, 1973). 1949  
  
'The Clinical Importance of the Epithelial Attachment': annotated typescript of his Presidential address of 1973. 1973
- B.3 Committee papers, memoranda, menus, reports, programme for Jubilee meeting, September 1974. 1973-74

B.4-B.5 The Nuffield Foundation

Sir Wilfred was a member of the Dental Advisory Committee from its inception (serving as Chairman, 1966-67) and of the Dental Selection Committee for Fellowships and Scholarships.

- B.4 Folder of papers relative to a proposal that the Nuffield Foundation sponsor an enquiry into national policy re dental health: 'Coming Events Cast Their Shadow', paper written in 1943-44 by Sir Wilfred on this topic (not published); memos, notes, correspondence and draft proposals (1959). The file cover bears remarks added by Fish in 1971. 1943-44, 1959
- B.5 Folder of misc. material re the Foundation: correspondence, proceedings of conference on Assistance to Academic Dentistry, 1963 (which was sponsored by the Nuffield Foundation), memorandum on 'Research and Teacher Training in Dentistry' prepared by Fish on his retirement from the Dental Committee in 1967, list of dental scholars, appreciation of Lord Nuffield written by Fish for publication in British Dental Journal, memo on dental technologists. The file cover is annotated. 1961-67, 1974

- B.6-B.9     Attempt to establish a Centre for Clinical Dental Research in Bermondsey.     1960-62
- B.6     Ms. notes, drafts and typescripts of various proposals by Fish supporting the creation of such a Centre.
- B.7     Correspondence with colleagues, government officials, and other interested parties.     1960-62
- B.8     Printed matter: press cuttings, Hansard, offprint, etc.
- B.9     File folder and envelope which contained the above material. They are listed as a separate item because they bear extensive notes, explanations, descriptions and evaluations added by Fish, c.1970.

C. Correspondence (C.1 - C.10)

The correspondence is presented in date order, with the majority of the letters from 1932-38. It is mostly of a personal nature from professional colleagues, i.e. letters of congratulation, letters of thanks for publications received, requests for reprints, for the loan of equipment or for appointments. The correspondents are selectively indexed.

Occasionally the correspondence contains some discussion of professional or historical topics; these letters have been removed from the chronological sequence and listed separately as C.10.

- C.1     1929, 1932. Many of the letters are from Canadian colleagues following the International Dental Convention in Toronto in 1932 at which Fish delivered a lecture and held a clinic.
- C.2.     1933.
- C.3.     1934.
- C.4.     1935.
- C.5.     1936-38.
- C.6     1940-60. Many letters of thanks for reprints of 'The Englishman's Teeth'.
- C.7.     1961-62. Letters of thanks for reprints of 'Research in Clinical Science', correspondence with John Woodforde and David Hindley-Smith re Fish's dental treatment of Sir Winston Churchill.
- C.8.     Correspondence with Professor Bertram Cohen.     1960-74
- C.9.     Correspondence re YMCA appeal.     1957-58
- C.10.     Correspondence of a professional/historical nature.     1931-32,  
1956-58,  
1972

D. Publications, Lectures and Other Writings (D.1 - D.34)

- D.1 Catalogue compiled by Fish in 1971 of his published work. The first section groups the papers by subject: Research (in Prosthetics, Periodontology, Bone Pathology, General Pathology), Clinical, Educational, Administrative, Historical, Personal. Each paper within these sections is fully described by Fish, often including extensive autobiographical reminiscences and evaluations. The second section, entitled 'Looking Back on it All', contains 'some free comment on the papers and is to some extent repetitive'. The third section is a list of those documents handed to Professor H.M. Pickard which now form the bulk of the collection.
- D.2-D.5 Four folders of offprints and other published work, arranged in date order. The first three folders are indexed and many of the papers are annotated. In some cases, there was no published version, only a typescript, which has been removed and listed as a separate item in the chronological sequence below (D.6-D.32); in such cases a note has been made in the folder's index.
- D.2 Reprints from c.1924 to March 1934.
- D.3 Reprints from May 1934 to 1938.
- D.4 Reprints from August 1938 to July 1959.
- D.5 Reprints from June 1960 to 1971 (folder not indexed by Fish).
- D.6 'Cardio-Vascular Effects of Local Anaesthetic Injections': 1924  
typescript of M.D. thesis submitted at Manchester University,  
(and later published in the British Dental Journal).
- D.7 'The Mouth as a Focus of Infection'. Royal Dental Hospital 1925  
of London Annual Report, 1925: typescript with ms.  
annotations.
- D.8 'The Lymph Supply of the Dentine and Enamel': ms. draft and 1927  
legends for figures in published version.
- D.9-D.10 2 folders relative to An Experimental Investigation of Enamel,  
Dentine and the Dental Pulp (published in 1932) and  
Principles of Full Denture Prosthesis (first published 1933).
- D.9 reviews, press notices, one letter from Ernest Matthews 1932-34  
who edited the 6th edition of Full Denture Prosthesis. 1964
- D.10 correspondence re these two books (letters of thanks, of 1932-34  
congratulation).

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|------|--|--------------|
| D.11 | 'Immunity to the Organisms of Dental Caries' (with I.H. McLean):<br>ms. draft and 2 typescripts (the first with ms. annotations,<br>the second typescript incorporates these annotations).   | 1934         |
| D.12 | 'Dental Education', paper presented at the annual meeting of the<br>British Dental Association, June 1933, and subsequently<br>published in <u>B.D.J.</u> : short ms. précis, typescript with<br>ms. annotations, correspondence from E.V. Pollitt (Fish's<br>brother-in-law) <u>re</u> draft of paper.  | 1933         |
| D.13 | 'Dentistry and the White Paper (CMD.6502)': typescript with<br>later (1970) annotation on cover page.  | c.1939-40    |
| D.14 | Report of the Clinical Investigation Committee to the Dental<br>Board: typescript with ms. annotations.  | c.1943       |
| D.15 | Report to the Dental Board <u>re</u> financing of dental education:<br>ms. draft and 2 typescripts; the cover was annotated by<br>Fish in 1971.  | 1942         |
| D.16 | <u>Parodontal Disease</u> (published in 1944): press notices, review,<br>correspondence. The file includes notice and letter from<br>H. Hardwick <u>re</u> Parodontal Department, Royal Dental<br>Hospital, established in 1932.   | 1944<br>1936 |
| D.17 | 'A Draft Memorandum on Dental Services': annotated type-<br>script; later (1971) annotation on cover.  | c.1947       |
| D.18 | Almroth Wright Memorial Lecture, delivered at St. Mary's<br>Hospital at Sir Alexander Fleming's invitation: typescript<br>with ms. annotations. File also includes an obituary notice<br>of Wright as published in the <u>Journal of the Royal Army<br/>Medical Corps</u> (c.1947) and notes by Fish for an unidentified<br>lecture.   | 1954         |
| D.19 | 'An Enterprise in Dental Research', Second Webb-Johnson<br>Commemorative Lecture delivered at the Royal College of<br>Surgeons, November 1957, and published in May (1958):<br>annotated typescript, various notes and drafts made in<br>preparation for lecture, letter of thanks from Lady Webb-<br>Johnson. The file also contains notes described by Fish<br>as 'a précis of our thinking that led to the discovery of the<br>"Col" - and that discovery holds the answer to the question<br>"What causes Pyorrhoea Profunda?"'. | 1957         |
| D.20 | 'Research Problems in Parodontal Disease': article for souvenir<br>volume of Indian Council of Medical Research: typescript,<br>photographs and correspondence.  | 1957         |
| D.21 | Notes for T.V. interview with Lady Barnett on 23.4.1959<br>'The Fight Against Dental Disease'.   | 1959         |
| D.22 | 'Oral Sepsis': annotation typescript, with correspondence.   | 1959         |

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|------|--|------------------|
| D.23 | 'The Centenary of the First Dental Diploma in Britain', for Central Office of Information publication in India: typescript, correspondence.  | 1959             |
| D.24 | 'A Profession in the Making', published in the <u>British Dental Journal</u> , 1959, on the occasion of the centenary of the Licence in Dental Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons: notes, drafts and correspondence; annotated typescript; 2 offprints (one is annotated); heavily annotated typescript of a speech, delivered to (?) The Medical Society at Cambridge, which became the basis of the centenary article. | 1959             |
| D.25 | 'Research in Clinical Science', published in the <u>International Dental Journal</u> , 1960 (originally delivered as an address entitled 'Research in Clinical Practice' to the American Dental Society of London in 1959): notes, numerous early drafts of the speech and of the article, offprints.  | 1960             |
| D.26 | 'Etiology and Prevention of Periodontal Breakdown', published in <u>Dental Progress</u> , 1961 (originally titled by Sir Wilfred 'The Clinical Implications of Some Recent Advances in the Histo-Pathology of Periodontal Breakdown'): ms. and annotated typescript, drafts, final typescripts, figures, editorial correspondence, offprint.   | 1961             |
| D.27 | 'Liberalising Specialist Education', the Evelyn Sprawson Lecture given at the London Hospital Medical College, February 1963, and published in the <u>British Dental Journal</u> : extensive early notes and drafts, several annotated typescripts, offprint. Notes and drafts for 2 earlier lectures on dental education.   | 1963             |
| D.28 | 'A Proposal to Record the Discovery of Anaesthesia': ms. draft and typescript (unpublished), correspondence.   | 1960-61,<br>1970 |
| D.29 | Ms. draft of note on Majority Rule for Rhodesia (unpublished).   | 1965             |
| D.30 | Address to the General Dental Council, June 1971, on occasion of the 50th anniversary of the passing of the Dentists Act: notebook containing ms. notes and drafts, annotated typescript, lecture copy with some textual variations.   | 1971             |
| D.31 | 'Just about Time and Relativity': typescript, editorial correspondence. Volume was not published.  | 1973             |
| D.32 | 2 unidentified manuscripts on the subject of Periodontal Disease.  | n.d.             |
| D.33 | Extensively revised manuscript/typescript of <u>Surgical Pathology of the Mouth</u> .  | 1952             |
| D.34 | One box of photographs, figures, drawings for published work. Includes illustrative material for 'Lymph Supply of the Dentine', <u>Full Denture Prosthesis</u> , <u>Surgical Pathology of the Mouth</u> , <u>Parodontal Disease</u> .  |                  |

E. Index to the correspondents

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