



Reminiscences

Henry Ernest Gray 1908 - 2002



Henry Gray beside a photograph of his year (1933) in the boardroom in 1985.

The record of Henry Gray as a faithful alumnus of Glasgow Dental Hospital and School can surely seldom have been surpassed. From early days in Dalhousie Street (home of the Dental School from 1906 to 1932) he began training in company with others such as Professor T. C. White and Professor J. C. MacDougall and maintained an active interest in the affairs of his alma mater until his death earlier this year.

His achievements as a student were impressive with class medals and first-class certificates in most subjects culminating in class prizes in orthodontia and operative dental surgery plus the Ash Prize for the best record of work in one year in the Dental Hospital by a junior student, the Glasgow Odontological Society Prize for conservative work in gold, and the Glasgow Dental Hospital Board of Governors' Medal – the highest award to the best student throughout the whole curriculum. His student career straddled the final years of the Dental Hospital in Dalhousie Street and the earliest years in the purpose-built building at 211 Renfrew Street.

There was intense pride of achievement in 1931 when the magnificent new dental school opened at 211 Renfrew Street, funded largely by private donation in which the Glasgow Dental Students' Society had played a prominent role. There was a desire to have a blazer badge and tie befitting the dignity and splendour of the new institution and an ad hoc committee was formed to design the badge. This committee comprised the honorary visiting surgeon Mr T. G. Scott as adviser and four senior students: William Dykes and George G. Thomson of Motherwell, James S. Prentice of Clackmannanshire, and Henry E. Gray of Glasgow.

The final design which was adopted has been described as follows:

A painted shield, divided by a white chevron edged with black, the upper field red and the lower green. On the upper field, in gold, are the coat of arms of the City of Glasgow and

two lions combatant supporting a rod of Aesculapius from the coat of arms of the British Dental Association. On the lower field, also in gold, is a representation of the figure of St Apollonia, the patron saint of sufferers from toothache, bearing a branch of palm. Beneath the scroll, the motto 'Labore et Scientia' freely translated as 'By work and knowledge'

The commission for production was given to R. W. Forsyth, the well-known Glasgow outfitters, who sold a black blazer and tie of navy blue with the badge mounted on the breast pocket and a reproduction in miniature on the tie with stripes of red, white and green.

He qualified LDS RFPS in 1933 then spent a year in private practice and a year as a house surgeon at Glasgow Dental Hospital. In 1935 he embarked on a career as a school dental officer, moving to Leeds where he remained until 1947 when he moved to Derby and he school dental service for Derbyshire. Henry Gray attended an Alumnus Association meeting in August 1985 in his seventy-seventh year and was photographed in the hospital board room beside the framed photograph of his year of 1933.

The secretary of the Alumnus Association was informed that he had died on February 7, 2002 at the age of 93 years.