



## Glasgow women dental students of 1922

Margaret Campbell BDS (Glasgow, 1965) describes her dentist mother's experiences



**MEN AND WOMEN OF TO-DAY**  
Woman Dentist for Fife.



Miss Stewart, L.D.S., Helensburgh, Glasgow, who was appointed a school dentist under Fife's Education Authority at a salary of £350 per annum, is a very attractive looking young lady. Miss Stewart made a fine appearance when she faced the ordeal of stating her qualifications for the post before the members of the Authority. Another lady, Miss Grassison, L.D.S., Edinburgh, was close in the running, but the two male members who were also on the list could only manage one vote between them.

**STATE'S STEPS FOR CHILD WELFARE**  
PLYMOUTH LECTURER ON CARE OF TEETH

"Only when disease was seen to be a threat to the future of the race were active measures for child welfare seriously considered by the State," said Miss A. M. Stewart, in an address to members of the Plymouth Scrupulists Club, last night, on "School Dentistry."

Although said Miss Stewart, the preservation of a vigorous child life as a preparation for a healthy maturity was one of the first animal instincts, it was curious that the importance of overcoming a tendency to disease in its earliest stages received very little practical recognition until late in the era of civilization.

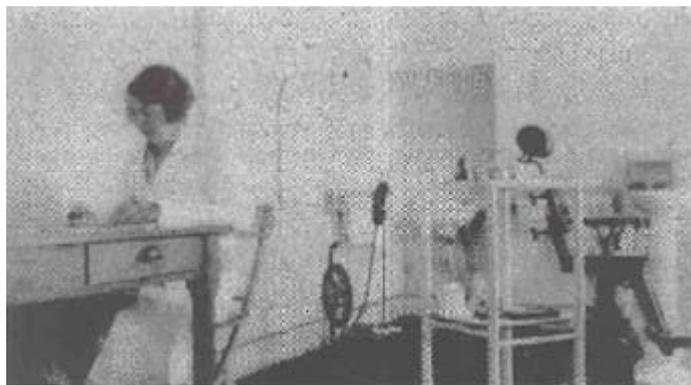
Great Britain was amongst the first to realize the need, but even here the evil had to assume alarming proportions before properly organized attempts were made to remedy it. Until a generation ago the repeated warnings respecting the deplorable condition of children's teeth and its effect upon the succeeding adult population were almost unheeded. Investigations were made into the state of school children's teeth, with the resultant initiation of the school dental service.

Looking through some old photos recently, I came across one of four ladies in hats. The photo was small and faint but on closer inspection I thought I saw the tower of Glasgow University. Thanks to the computer, I was able to enlarge the photo and there, revealed, were four lady dental students standing in front of the University. The date would be 1922 or 1923. I remembered that when I started my dental studies, Mother told me that when she was a dental student, the girls always wore hats. They attended lectures at the Anderson College of Medicine farther west along Dumbarton Road from the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, in whose grounds the photo was taken. Not having any money, the girls used to go into the tearoom at Kelvingrove and get a cup of hot water to sustain them between lectures!

My Mother, Marjorie Stewart is sitting on the right in the second picture. She and her friend Dorothy Kaye, sitting second from the left, were pupils in the basement workshop of Dr A. G. Wilson in nearby Sandyford Place. Marjorie was awarded the Anderson medal and also one for Dental Materia Medica.

After qualifying LDS in 1926 she joined the Dental Department of Fife Education Authority where she lugged her very heavy dental equipment around the schools in Kirkcaldy and the small Fife mining villages. Fillings and extractions were carried out in dark, ill-equipped rooms, often in the school cloakroom.

Two years later, Marjorie moved to Plymouth and worked in the very busy Hartford school dental clinic. The photograph shows the dental surgery, with the anaesthetic equipment and the foot-operated drill. As was usual then, the dental assistants were medically-trained nurses.



Miss Stewart in her school dental surgery at Plymouth.  
Note the uncushioned dental chair, the simple nitrous oxide gas machine and the foot treadle dental drill of the late 1930's.

When war broke out in 1939 Plymouth suffered severe damage and destruction in the blitz. The work of the dental clinics went on despite all the difficulties and at night Marjorie collected her stirrup-pump and dustbin lid and did duty watching for and putting out incendiaries. For safety she slept on a mattress in the cupboard under the stairs.

In 1941, Marjorie left Plymouth and moved back to Glasgow where she married John Campbell who had been a House Surgeon in the Dental Hospital at Dalhousie Street when she was a student.

What changes have taken place in the 100 years since these girls were born, not least in the fashions. Some of their hats look quite up-to-date though perhaps for weddings and not for the lecture theatre!

### **"Dental Ladies" 1922-1926**

Marjorie Stewart (Marjorie Campbell)

Dorothy Kaye (maybe year above) (Dorothy MacDairmid)

Nan Smith (Nana McMeekin)

Violet Wilson (? Related to Dr A. G. Wilson LDS, Glasgow)

A.L. C. Allison

Anna Findlater