

Dentists

Introduction

Teeth were kept clean with cloths or twigs, until the first toothbrushes came along in the late 18th century. William Addis of London was producing them by the 1780s, the bristles taken from pigs. The brushes were expensive and of necessity shared between family members. Refined sugar was becoming more widely available from the early 1800s with a consequent impact on dental health. In early Victorian times, the less well-off of Malton likely went to chemists and apothecaries who would suggest, laudanum or oil of cloves, to ease toothache, but some also offered extractions.

Dentistry at that time consisted of extractions and false teeth. There was no formal dentistry

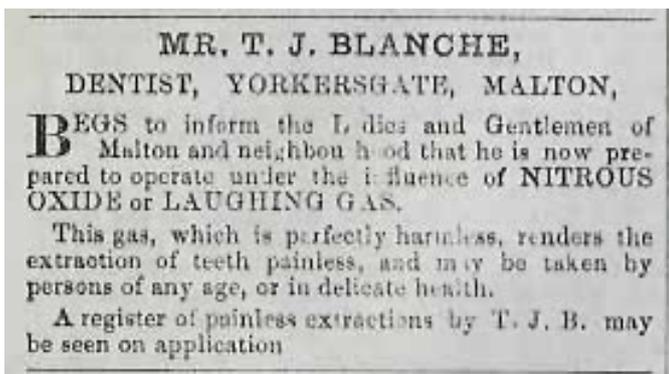
qualification and many barbers would provide tooth extraction as an additional service. False teeth were made by extracting teeth from bodies of the deceased. The bodies of the tens of thousands of men who died at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 were stripped not just of clothing and valuables, but of teeth, which were shipped back to Britain in barrels, to be used for making false sets and implants. The Battle of Waterloo revolutionised the market in that the price of teeth dropped dramatically; the middle classes could now afford new teeth as well, and "Waterloo teeth" became a common Victorian expression for teeth from the dead, whether at Waterloo or not.

Dentistry in Malton from the 1840s

It is likely that if somebody in Malton required dental work, then in the 1840s they would be reliant on a visiting dentist (if they could afford it) or self-help. In 1841, a Mr. Mosely described himself as a 'surgeon-dentist', and visited Malton in private apartments at the Talbot Inn, every other Friday and Saturday. He promoted 'Newly Invented Mineral Teeth' which were 'Fixed without Ligatures, or any other injurious attachment whatever, from One to a complete set on a Principle so certain that Mastication, External Appearance, and Articulation

are astonishingly restored and guaranteed to the patient' [1]. He claimed to be consultant dentist to HM King of Hanover. Mr. Mosely was still in business in 1845, visiting the Talbot Hotel every Saturday [2]. Mr. R. Parsons, also surgeon-dentist attended the Talbot Hotel on the last Saturday of every month [3]. A Mr Jones, describing himself as a 'surgical and mechanical dentist' visited Malton on market days and operated from Mr Anderson's, a gunsmith in the Market Place. Beverley Guardian, 11 October 1862 [4]

Resident Dentists

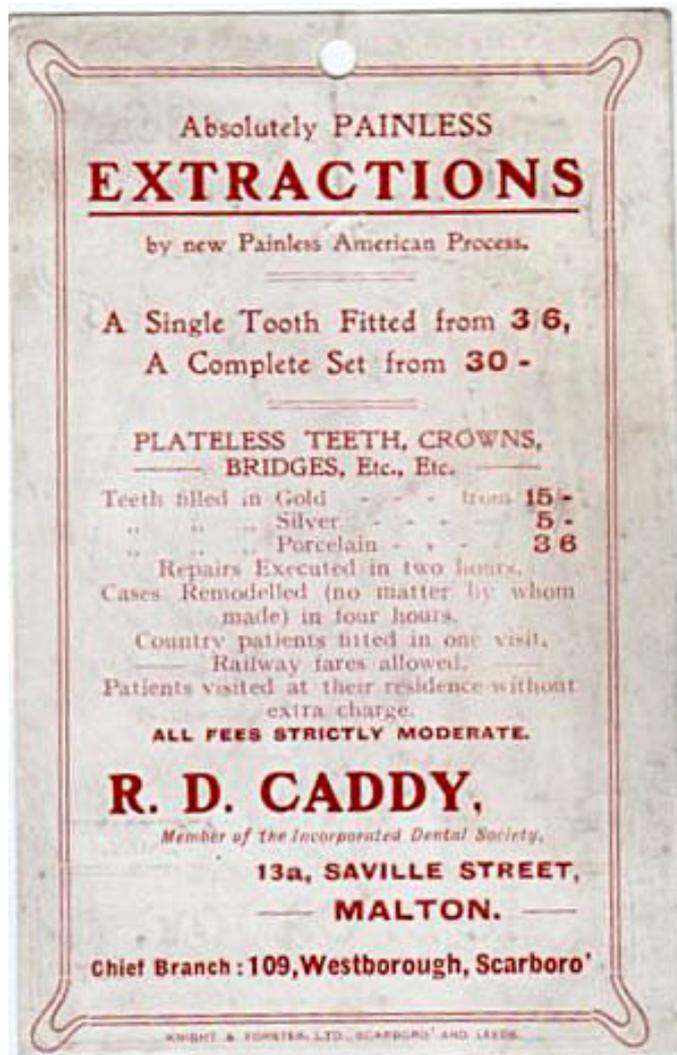


Possibly Thomas Blanche was the first dentist to base his business in Malton. The 1871 Census shows Thomas J. Blanche, dentist, living in Yorkersgate with his family. His advertisement, left, appeared in the Malton Messenger 17 September 1870, and announces he is prepared to operate under 'nitrous oxide or laughing gas' and has a register of painless extractions. At this time, drills would have been operated by a foot treadle. He is still there in the 1891 Census. In 1889, Ruth Richardson, servant to

Thomas Blanche, pleaded guilty to stealing linen and other articles from her employer and was sent to gaol for one month [5]. Mr. Blanche was clearly successful with his business as in August 1888 he was the successful bidder for shares in the Malton Gas Company and also the Gas Company in Scarborough [6]. Mr. Blanche also instigated a series of charity concerts, inviting the gentry of the area.

The first of these was in 1870 for the poor of Malton and repeated in 1871 for the poor of Norton - 'On Tuesday night one of the most aristocratic gatherings ever got together in Malton assembled at the Subscription Room. ... Somewhere about 850 ladies and gentlemen attended, and the receipts will be about £50' [7].

Dentists in the Early 20th Century



Mr. Caddy was based in Scarborough, but opened a branch in Malton above the Public Benefit Boot Company at 13a Saville Street [8]. Interesting to note his charges!

In the 1911 census, Francis Joseph Rhodes is shown as a dental surgeon at 1 Market place (St. Michaels House)

References

- [1] Yorkshire Gazette, 27 March 1841
- [2] Yorkshire Gazette, 17 May 1845
- [3] Yorkshire Gazette, 22 February 1845
- [4] Beverley Guardian, 11 October 1862
- [8] Yorkshire Gazette, 3 July 1909

- [5] Northern Echo, 13 May 1889
- [6] York Herald, 11 August 1888
- [7] York Herald, 18 February 1871