



1850. His final paper was his most famous. In it he proposed that dentine is sensitive because it has structures containing fibres connected to the pulp. These became known as 'Tomes' fibrils'.

#### Technical inventions

Tomes was a practical man as well as an academic. His experience of extractions, along with his study of the shape and size of each tooth and their roots, spurred him to design new styles of forceps adapted for different teeth. Although it seems unlikely that Tomes was the first to develop this design, as Cyrus Fay had presented a similar design to the Society of Arts in 1824, he must be credited with popularising them. Crucially Tomes published his designs and collaborated with the instrument maker Jean Marie Evrard ensuring his forceps appeared in dental catalogues. Tomes' other major invention was the dentifactor. This was a mechanical way to carve ivory dentures. The dentifactor was quicker and produced a more accurate fit than carving by hand. Unfortunately for Tomes it was overshadowed by the introduction of new denture material – vulcanite.

#### Politics

Early in his career Tomes saw the need for official recognition of dentists as professionals but it was not until the mid-1850s that he could devote much attention to this matter. Numerous letters were written by leading dentists to the Royal College of Surgeons of England urging that a qualification for dentistry should be established. Tomes was encouraged to set up a proper body to negotiate with the College. The Odontological Society was formed and the

College finally agreed to establish a specialist department and create the award of a Licence in Dental Surgery (LDS).

The College had not organised any training, however. Therefore, Tomes and others founded the London School of Dental Surgery where he became the first lecturer in dental physiology and surgery. The first exams were set for March 1860. As the College wanted Tomes as an examiner it quickly made him a member and awarded him an LDS.

Tomes now turned his attention to ensuring that only qualified persons could practise and this required registration. He managed to obtain support for an Act of Parliament which was passed in 1878 restricting the use of the word dentist to suitably qualified persons. To enforce the act, Tomes and other leading dentists formed the British Dental Association in 1880 and he was the first BDA president.

#### Final years

In 1886 Tomes was knighted for eminent services rendered to his profession. Soon afterwards he resigned from the BDA, retiring to his home in Caterham, Surrey. The last honour bestowed on him was the creation in February 1894 of a triennial prize in his name by the Royal College of Surgeons.

The many objects used and made by Sir John Tomes are now on display in the BDA Museum including his dental chair, spittoon, and instrument stand as well as his scrapbook of sketches. The magnificent portrait of Tomes (pictured) and bronze bust by Gilbert Bayes are also on display in the foyer at Wimpole Street.

BRITISH DENTAL ASSOCIATION  
(THE 'COMPANY')  
(REGISTERED IN ENGLAND AND WALES  
WITH COMPANY NUMBER 14161)

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of the British Dental Association will be held at 9.30 am on Thursday 7 May 2015 in the Exchange Auditorium of the Manchester Central Convention Complex, Petersfield, M2 3GX, for transaction of the following business:

#### ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS

1. To receive and adopt the Company's financial statements for year ended 30 September 2014, including the directors' and auditors' reports, as included in the 13 March 2015 edition of the *British Dental Journal*
2. To reappoint BDO Stoy Hayward LLP ('BDO') as the Company's auditors to hold office until the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Directors to fix their remuneration
3. That Dr Stuart Johnston be elected President for 2016–2017
4. To decide the time and date of the next Annual General Meeting in 2016.

Dated 13 March 2015

BY ORDER OF THE PRINCIPAL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Registered Office:  
64 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 8YS

NOTE: A member entitled to attend, speak and vote at the Meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy who need not be a member to attend and exercise all or any of his rights at the meeting.

### DAVID ARKUSH

We are sad to announce the death of dentist David Arkush, who was 100 years old. Dr Arkush is survived by his widow Shirley and his son, Jonathan.

In the 8 August 2014 issue of the *BDJ* we reported a gathering of the Past and Present Directors and Colonels Commandant of the Royal Army Dental Corps to celebrate Dr Arkush's 100th birthday. He was thought to be the oldest surviving Ex-Far-East Prisoner-of-War from World War II.