

BENJAMIN WILLIAM FICKLING CBE (G1924-27)

The following is taken from Who's Who and an article in the Spring 1987 OF Magazine.

A glance through his entry reveals that he has had a distinguished career in the dental world – Honorary Consultant Dental Surgeon since 1974, Dental Surgeon to Royal Dental Hospital 1935-74, to St George's Hospital 1936-74 and to the Maxello-Facial Unit at Hill End Hospital 1941-53, when it became the Department of Jaw Surgery at Mount Vernon Hospital, Northwood, where he served until 1974.

"There is much good fortune allied to hard work in any career". Ben owes his Higher Certificate in Physics to Mr Beasley, who was only at Framlingham for the 3 years of Ben's stay at the College. Similarly, the outstanding teacher of Physiology, Professor Samson Wright, was only at King's College, London for one year (1929-30), during which time Ben passed the Primary FRCS Examination – something more usually taken after qualifying in medicine.

On the declaration of war, Ben joined Warwick Jones, also a surgeon who had treated jaw casualties at the end of WW1 and together they wrote a text book entitled "Injuries of Jaws and Face", published in 1940, when no comparable book was available in English. After the Blitz, spent at St George's Hospital, Ben joined the Maxello-Facial Unit in Hill End Hospital, run by the brilliant plastic surgeon Rainsford Mowlem. The rest of the war was occupied rebuilding faces and jaws.

Ben's list of appointments, examinerships, memberships, lectureships, publications and qualifications make a list longer than your arm and he is clearly a man of prodigious talent. For his posts as Senior Dental Surgeon, Civilian Dental Consultant to the Royal Navy 1954-76 and his other achievements, he was awarded the CBE in 1973. To list everything would require a tome, but a summary of the more representative achievements will go some way towards an appreciation.

He has been an Examiner for BDS and MDS at the University of London and for the FDS at the Royal College of Surgeons of England from 1959 to 1972 and for the MGDS (Member in General Dental Surgery) for the RCS in England from 1978 to 1982. In fact, he was delegated to plan and inaugurate this higher examination in general Dental Surgery, being the first Chairman of the Examining Board.

The Board of Faculty of Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons in England elected him a member in 1956, Vice Dean in 1965-66 and Dean from 1968 to 1971. Similarly, he was President of the Odontological Section of the Royal Society of Medicine from 1964 to 1965 and Member of the General Dental Council from 1971 to 1974. His interest in oral surgery saw him a Founder Member of the British and International Association of Oral Surgeons.

Aside from his substantial number of published books and articles, he gave the 1956 Charles Tomes Lecture, the 1971 Everett Magnus Oration in Melbourne and in 1978 the Webb-Johnson Lecture on "The Marches of Dentistry". Outside the strictly dental world, he has been a Director of the Medical Sickness Annuity and Life assurance Society (1967-86), the Permanent Insurance Co (1974-86) and the Medical Sickness Finance Corporation (1977-86).

This is a picture of an "Elevator Periosteal Fickling Short"



He was born on 14 July 1909 and died on 27 January 2007 at the age of 97. The following is an obituary we published at the time

With his father and uncle both Old Framlinghamians and dental surgeons Ben must have been destined from an early age to follow in their footsteps, with much assistance from the physics teaching of Mr. Beasley at Framlingham. He studied dentistry and medicine as a combined course at the Royal Dental and St George's Hospital where he later progressed to senior status. Initially he worked with his father at his surgery in Sloane Street but having passed a primary fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons before his 21st birthday he went on to a final fellowship in 1937 after studying for a time in Vienna.

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To list Ben's appointments, achievements and talents would be impossible in the space available but he has been an examiner in Dental Surgery at London University and the Royal College of Surgeons, Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons and President of the Odontological Section of the Royal College of Medicine. For his posts as Senior Dental Surgeon, Civilian Dental Consultant to the Royal Navy and his other achievements he was awarded the CBE in 1973. Above all else probably his greatest influence was as an educator and technical innovator and some of his instruments are still in use today. He was one of the first to use antibiotics for dentistry initially during the war when his only access to them was by draining the dregs used in other applications.

When he died in January 2007 he was the 2nd oldest living OF.

Listed below are just some of the articles/papers I have found written by him :-

1: [Fickling BW.](#)



Webb-Johnson lecture, 1978. The marches of dentistry.
Ann R Coll Surg Engl. 1978 May;60(3):182-91. No abstract available.
PMID: 348009 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

2: [Fickling BW, Boyes J.](#)



'No end to talk about'. Personal recollections of the late William Warwick James.
Br Dent J. 1975 Mar 4;138(5):181-7. No abstract available.
PMID: 123752 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

3: [Fickling BW.](#)



By dentistry out of surgery--the birth of a specialty.
Aust Dent J. 1972 Jun;17(3):178-87. No abstract available.
PMID: 4562979 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

4: [Hayward AF, Fickling BW, Lucas RB.](#)



An electron microscope study of a pigmented tumour of the jaw of infants.
Br J Cancer. 1969 Dec;23(4):702-8. No abstract available.
PMID: 5367330 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

- 5:** [Fickling BW.](#)
- Dental disease and the maxillary sinus.
Br Dent J. 1968 Jun 18;124(12):570-1. No abstract available.
PMID: 5239917 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
- 6:** [Fickling BW.](#)
- The present status of treatment for osteomyelitis.
Trans Int Conf Oral Surg. 1967;;250-4. No abstract available.
PMID: 5237069 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
- 7:** [Fickling BW.](#)
- Cysts of the jaw: a long-term survey of types and treatment.
Proc R Soc Med. 1965 Nov;58(11 Part 1):847-54. No abstract available.
PMID: 5851522 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
- 8:** [FICKLING BW.](#)
- SURGICAL EMERGENCIES IN DENTAL PRACTICE.
Br Dent J. 1965 Feb 2;118:111-22. No abstract available.
PMID: 14238643 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
- 9:** [FICKLING BW.](#)
- LONG-TERM TREATMENT FOR FACIAL INJURIES.
J Oral Surg Anesth Hosp Dent Serv. 1964 Mar;22:142-6. No abstract available.
PMID: 14130147 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
- 10:** [FICKLING BW.](#)
- Oral surgery involving the maxillary sinus.
Ann R Coll Surg Engl. 1957 Jan;20(1):13-35. No abstract available.
PMID: 13395273 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
- 11:** [FICKLING BW.](#)
- Haemorrhagic bone cyst.
Proc R Soc Med. 1955 Nov;48(11):988-9. No abstract available.
PMID: 13280707 [PubMed - OLDMEDLINE]
- 12:** [FICKLING BW.](#)
- Complex composite odontome of mandible.
Proc R Soc Med. 1953 Oct;46(10):870. No abstract available.
PMID: 13112211 [PubMed - OLDMEDLINE]
- 13:** [FICKLING BW, LUCAS RB.](#)
- Peripheral fibro-osteoma of mandible.
Proc R Soc Med. 1953 Oct;46(10):870. No abstract available.
PMID: 13112210 [PubMed - OLDMEDLINE]
- 14:** [MCWHIRTER R, FITZGIBBON GM, SHANKS W, FICKLING BW.](#)



Symposium on the treatment of adamantinoma.
Proc R Soc Med. 1952 Oct;45(10):701-7. No abstract available.
PMID: 13003976 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]



15: [FICKLING BW.](#)



Buccal sulcus supports for facial paralysis.
Br Dent J. 1951 Mar 6;90(5):115-7. No abstract available.
PMID: 14821174 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]