

Chapter One

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The Origin of the Academy of Prosthodontics

In 1859, twenty-six dentists met in Niagara Falls, New York, and formed the American Dental Association (ADA). In 1897, the ADA merged with the Southern Dental Association to form the National Dental Association (NDA). A significant change occurred in 1913 as demonstrated by the inaugural publication of the *Official Bulletin of the National Dental Association* along with the development of a Research Commission. Both events represented a new beginning in scientific research and dental journalism.^{1,2}

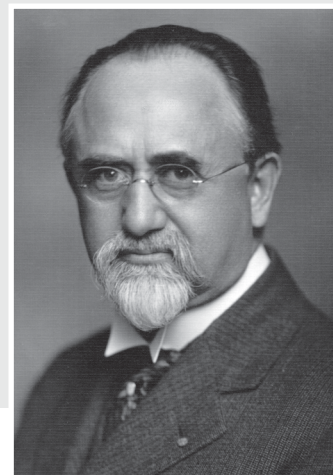
The first formal gatherings of dentists interested in the field of prosthodontics began in the early twentieth century. It had become common knowledge that the subject areas of prosthodontics and operative dentistry must undergo major changes academically if these two areas were to survive as scholarly contributions in dental education and not methodology taught in a trade school.³⁻⁵ In 1914, the Dental Clinic Club was established by dentists in Detroit, Michigan, with the stated purpose of advancing dental education and clinical practice. Dr. William A. Giffen was the first director of the Prosthodontic Section of the Detroit Dental Clinic Club (DDCC). This local development would later inspire dentists in other cities and serve as a stimulus for the creation of the first national prosthodontic organization.^{6,7}



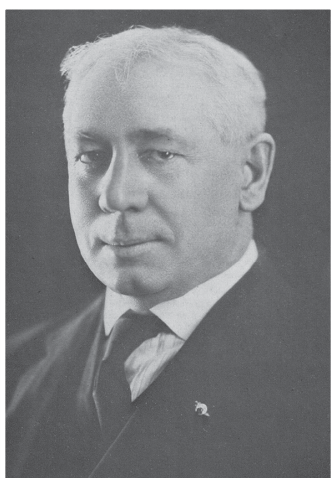
▲ Weston A. Price, National Dental Association (NDA) Director of Research Commission

The importance of research in prosthodontics was initiated by four men, in particular Dr. Weston A. Price, who was trained as a dental researcher at the University of Michigan and became the NDA Director of Research Commission located in Cleveland, Ohio. He was well aware of the situation in dental education and desired that developments in the field of prosthodontics received equal attention as with other branches of the profession. Comparable organizational activities were also commencing for oral surgery, orthodontics, and periodontics. Dr. Price brought Dr. George H. Wilson, from Cleveland,

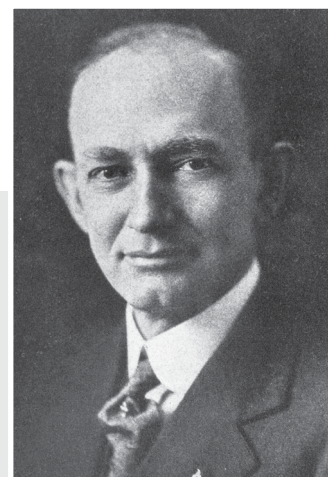
► George H. Wilson, first Honorary President (1855–1922). Before going to college, young Wilson entered into a two-year apprenticeship with his father who was a dentist, a common practice in that era. He graduated from the University of Michigan School of Dentistry in 1878 and continued working with his father until 1891. He then moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he opened his dental practice and quickly became recognized as an authority in prosthodontics. In 1892, he accepted the Chair of Clinical Prosthodontics and Metallurgy at the Western Reserve University Dental Department. At the age of fifty-nine, he became a professor emeritus (1914) and left Western Reserve University to devote himself to private practice in Cleveland, followed by teaching prosthodontics at the University of Southern California from 1917 until his death in 1922. Dr. Wilson was a contributor to the periodic literature and the author of the 1911 authoritative text *The Manual of Dental Prosthetics*, which had four editions, as well as a contributor to the textbook *The American Textbook of Prosthetic Dentistry*.



Ohio, together with Dr. William A. Giffen, from Detroit, Michigan, both of whom were well known and highly respected individuals in the profession of dentistry. Dr. Price added Dr. Milus M. House, an Indianapolis dentist with extensive knowledge in prosthodontics and restorative dentistry, as the final member of the group. It was recognized that there was little research and academic focus on prosthodontics in dental education.^{8,9} They sought to learn the extent of the differences in the techniques and concepts used in different parts of the country. Furthermore, it was believed that the anatomic, physiologic, and technical facets of prosthetics could and should be correlated, developed, and expanded.



▲ William A. Giffen, first President (1866–1927). Dr. Giffen was born in Peel County, Ontario, in 1866 and graduated from the Ontario Veterinary College in 1887. He later decided on a career in dentistry and in 1901 received his dental degree from the Detroit Dental College of Dentistry. He instituted a dental clinic in Detroit public schools and provided free dental care to the underprivileged, the beginning of “service” performed by an Academy member. In 1910, he limited his dental practice to exodontia and denture prosthetics. In 1911, he introduced a technique film demonstrating the Greene Impression Technique. He was one of the originators of the Prosthodontic Section of the Detroit Dental Clinic Club, chair of the Prosthodontic Section of the NDA, and served as president of the ADA (1923). He was a founding Charter member, an author, and the first president of the NSDP (1918–19) and was elected to Honorary membership in 1927.



▲ Milus M. House, Vice-President (1879–1959). Dr. House graduated from the Indiana Dental College in 1903. He was an instructor in prosthodontics at the University of Minnesota. He developed the House Articulator and Rotary Grinder. He was also one of the founders of the American College of Dentists. In 1927, he moved to California and settled his practice in Whittier, where he built his dental office and research laboratory. Later, he founded the House Prosthodontic Graduate School. The Education Committee of the Southern California State Dental Association sponsored a series of House post-graduate courses on prosthodontics. He was a founding Charter member, served as the second president of the NSDP (1920), and was elected to Honorary membership in 1931.

These three men working together, along with the guidance of Dr. Price, held many meetings and conferences between 1913 and 1918. It is generally accepted that the birth of the idea of a national prosthodontic organization occurred in these five years, resulting in the founding of what today is known as the Academy of Prosthodontics (AP). The outcome was a major change in the academic focus in dental schools in the years that followed. They also recognized that scholarship alone was not enough, requiring an organized process that supports the learning and transfer of the scholarly information to other dentists. The creation of a national organization was an opportunity to share clinical approaches, materials science, and advance the discipline of prosthodontics.¹⁰ They quickly recognized that a mission called “the fellowship” could be designed in a way that supports teaching, learning, and information transfer in a meaningful way to disseminate scientific information critical to the success of the new prosthodontic organization they were designing.

▼ The Chicago Congress Plaza Hotel was constructed in 1893, a time when cobbled streets, gaslights, and horse-drawn carriages were commonplace.



Dr. Giffen, a national figure, allowed his name to be used in calling a meeting of interested dentists to consider the forming of a national prosthodontic society. Using Dr. Giffen's letterhead, Dr. A. Alfred Nelson, who was associated with Dr. Giffen in private practice, wrote to the secretaries of state dental associations and to the heads of prosthodontic departments of the schools in the United States and Canada, asking them to name dentists with an interest in prosthodontics.¹¹ From the names gathered, these individuals were to be invited to meet in Detroit during April of 1918. However, Dr. Wilson suggested that it would be more convenient for most dentists to meet in Chicago at the Congress Hotel at the same time of the National Dental Association (NDA) meeting in August. Strategic planning would occur prior to this meeting.

On August 6, 1918, thirty-two dentists attended a preliminary meeting in Chicago, while an additional eighteen dentists (who were not present) were identified as having an interest in prosthodontics and were invited to join the new organization as charter members.¹²⁻¹⁵ At the next meeting on August 9, the society became organized. Dr. George H. Wilson led a discussion concerning the need for, the purpose of, and the usefulness of the proposed prosthodontic organization. Acting chair Dr. Dayton D. Campbell appointed a committee to suggest a name and draw up a constitution and bylaws for the new organization. The group met again on August 9 and the first officers were unanimously named. They were Drs. George H. Wilson, Honorary President; William A. Giffen, President; Milus M. House, 1st Vice-President; Alex H. Paterson, 2nd Vice-President; Dayton D. Campbell, Secretary; and Russell W. Tench, Treasurer.



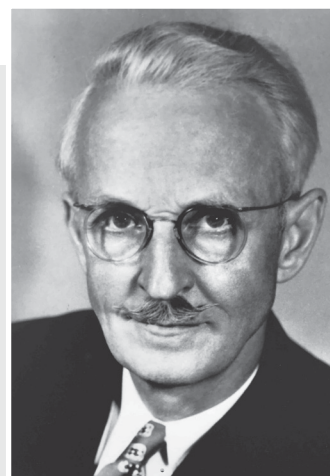
▲ A. Alfred Nelson, Charter Member (1893–1966). Dr. Nelson was a founding member, editor, and president of the American Equilibration Society from 1959 to 1960.



▲ Alex H. Paterson, 2nd Vice-President (1878–1941). Dr. Paterson, a professor of prosthodontics at the Baltimore College of Dentistry, reported on the leadership and contributions of the NSDP in the *Dental Cosmos*.

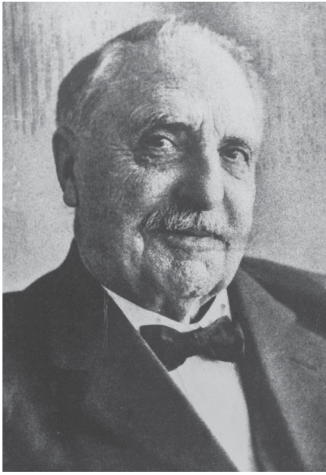


▲ Dayton D. Campbell, Secretary (1882–1959). Dr. Campbell, a professor of prosthodontics at the Kansas City Western Dental College, advanced the use of metal denture bases and served as president in 1926.



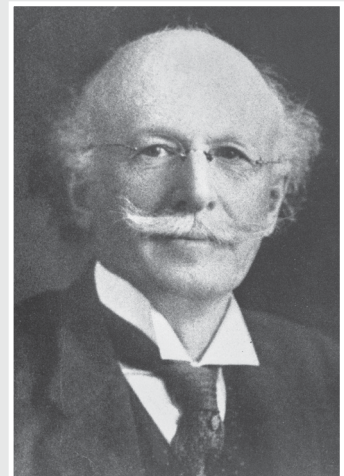
▲ Russell W. Tench, Treasurer (1886–1966). Dr. Tench authored the 1918 text *Professional Denture Service*. Dr. Tench was from New York City, New York, and served as president in 1927.

Drs. George B. Snow and J. Leon Williams were selected as Honorary members. The two-year Councilmen were Drs. Claude J. Stansbery and William E. Cummer. This group became the first Executive Council (EC), as noted in the Academy archives and in the *Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry* prepared by I. Lester Furnas.¹²



◀ George B. Snow, Honorary Member (1835–1923). Dr. Snow was well known for his articulator and facebow, which was issued a landmark patent. Dr. Snow's father was a dentist in Buffalo, New York, and he worked with his father and later graduated from the Pennsylvania College of Dental Surgery in 1859. He continued his research on Indian rubber in Albion, Michigan, and was an inventor, developing a dental vulcanizer and facebow. The Snow Facebow was the first device in 1899 that related the maxilla anatomically to the articulator's condylar elements. He also invented the Snow "New Century" Articulator in 1907, which led to the establishment of the Buffalo Dental Manufacturing Co. and the Snow Dental Co. He was appointed dean of the University of Buffalo from 1904 to 1913, after which he retired to Long Beach, California.

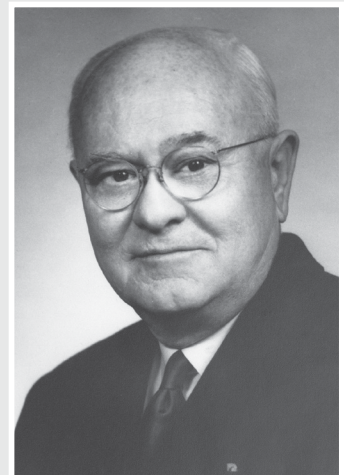
▶ J. Leon Williams, Honorary Member (1852–1932). Dr. Williams endeavored to make information on crown and bridge techniques available to all dentists by publishing articles in the *Dental Cosmos*. In 1885, he began to design artificial teeth based on the examination of 300 skulls that better matched the overall facial dimensions of the patient. This resulted in a facial typal form of square, tapering, and ovoid, as opposed to the illogical "temperament" methodology of personality traits and physiognomy consisting of nervous, sanguine, bilious, and lymphatic used in the 1800s. The *Dental Digest* was acquired by the Dentist's Supply Company in 1909. Dr. Williams, who was serving as the DSC director of research, then became the editor of the *Dental Digest*. Through the efforts of George Wood Clapp, he began to collaborate with Professor Alfred E. Gysi, resulting in the introduction of the Trubyte Artificial Tooth System that combined Dr. Williams's anterior typal forms with Professor Gysi's posterior tooth forms and the technique for the articulation of artificial teeth.



▲ Claude J. Stansbery, two-year Councilman (1878–1956). Dr. Stansbery was a professor at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington. Dr. Stansbery served as president in 1922.



▲ William E. Cummer, two-year Councilman (1879–1942). Dr. Cummer was an editor for the *Journal of Oral Health*, Toronto, Canada. Professor Cummer became dean of the University of Detroit Dental College.



▲ I. Lester Furnas, Historian (1888–1978). Dr. Furnas was a professor of prosthodontics at the Indiana and Case Western Universities. Dr. Furnas served as a secretary-treasurer and as president in 1936.

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE ACADEMY OF DENTURE PROSTHETICS

I. LESTER FURNAS

La Jolla, Calif.

NO worth-while organization is organized spontaneously. The usual modus operandi is for a small group of farsighted individuals with common interests to meet on some occasion and talk, plan, and wish for a formal organized group where kindred souls may meet and discuss matters of mutual concern. Such indeed was the organization plan of The Academy of Denture Prosthetics. Just who was the first man to supply the necessary spark is not too definite, but it seems quite likely that this honor should go to either Dr. George Henry Wilson or Dr. Weston A. Price, both of Cleveland, Ohio.

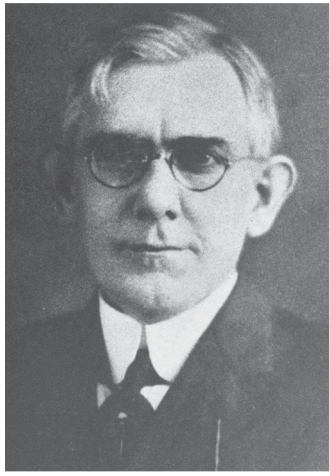
The subject of Prosthetic Dentistry for many years might almost be described as dormant because very little was done to develop its scientific aspects until about the turn of the century. Physiologic and anatomic problems then began to arise, leading to confusion in what had been accepted as functional facts, and men interested in the subject began to question and investigate vigorously.

Prosthetic dentistry was not the only branch of the profession that was undergoing a radical revamping. Operative dentistry was having its troubles as well, and it was only natural that the two should combine and from their united efforts produce at least an aid to their dilemma. This was the organization of the National Dental Association Research Institute in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1913 under the direction of the National Dental Association Research Commission with Dr. Weston A. Price of Cleveland presiding.

Dr. Price was keenly aware of the situation and lost no time in seeing that developments in the field of prosthetics received equal attention with other branches of the profession. In this he was most ably assisted by Dr. George H. Wilson of Cleveland and Dr. William A. Giffin of Detroit, Mich. These men held many conferences and it is generally conceded that the birth of the idea of a prosthetic organization was one of the many profitable results.

It was about this time, and largely through the efforts of Dr. Wilson, that another man prominent in the prosthetic field became interested in the forming of a prosthetic research organization; this, of course, was Dr. Milus M. House of Indianapolis, Ind. Dr. Wilson made many trips to Indianapolis to discuss the matter with Dr. House, and in turn Dr. House spent all available time with Dr. Wilson in Cleveland. Talking and planning continued at every possible opportunity, and at each visit more was accomplished; thus, a basic pattern came into being.

During the warm evening of Aug. 3, 1918, Dr. House and I were attending the annual meeting of the National Dental Association in Chicago, Ill. At the time



▲ Samuel H. McAfee, Constitution and Bylaws Committee (1873–1947). Professor McAfee was the chair of the Department of Operative Dentistry, Dental Pathology and Therapeutics at Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana. Dr. McAfee reported on the essentials for avoiding trauma to clasped teeth from removable partial dentures. Dr. McAfee served as president in 1921.



▲ Edwin H. Mauk, Constitution and Bylaws Committee (1874–1956). Professor Mauk developed a system for teaching prosthodontics at the University of California, San Francisco, California, which was presented before the American Institute of Dental Teachers. Also, Dr. Mauk reported on the classification of partial edentulism.

The chair was then directed to appoint a committee to select a name for the organization and to draw up a constitution and bylaws. Those on this committee were Drs. George H. Wilson (member ex-officio), William A. Giffen, Milus M. House, Samuel H. McAfee, Edwin H. Mauk, and Russell W. Tench. A second committee was proposed to determine how the society could become a formal Prosthodontic Section associated with the NDA. Appointed were Drs. George H. Wilson (chair), Abram Hoffman, and William M. Randall.

At the 1918 organizational meeting, it was decided to hold the first scientific session preceding the NDA meeting in New Orleans, October 20–24, 1919. A name for the society was suggested by Dr. William A. Giffen and was followed by the announcement in the August 1919 issue of the *Journal of the NDA* noting that “The International Society of Prosthetists” will hold its annual meeting in New Orleans October 17–18, 1919, submitted by Dr. Dayton D. Campbell, Secretary, Kansas City, Missouri.¹⁶

At the 1919 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, Dr. George H. Wilson suggested revising the tentative name for the society. Dr. Samuel H. McAfee motioned that the name be “The National Society of Denture Prosthetists (Society/NSDP)”, which better aligned the organization as an Official Section of the NDA, and that motion was adopted.

CHARTER MEMBERS

The first three years of the new Society were in a formative phase of development. Dentists who were interested in prosthodontics were identified and then invited to attend the 1918 meeting. The 1919 meeting was organizational, whereby the mission and goals were articulated, specific committees were assigned with charges, and the first presentations by the Charter members were documented. The 1920 meeting confirmed the organization’s existence by the first full-length annual scientific session. At that time, the Constitution and Bylaws were ratified and the membership base was established. After cross-referencing the Minutes, annual programs, and attendance records, the number of Honorary and Active Charter members documented during the formative years of 1918 to 1920 totaled sixty-one names, which are listed in Table 1-1. Subsequently, the August 19, 1920, Minutes revealed that the Active membership was constitutionally limited to fifty members. The Honorary, Associate, and subsequent Life members were excluded from the numerical Active member limit.

**TABLE 1-1. CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE
NATIONAL SOCIETY OF DENTURE PROSTHETISTS (1918–1920)**

Elpha E. Bailey	Abram Hoffman	Virgil P. Perisho
Raymond R. Blanchard	Harry E. Holaday	Ernest K. Peters
Cecil O. Booth	W. J. Holroyd	William C. Puhl
George P. Brenner	John J. Hopping	W. M. Randall
Dayton D. Campbell	Harry J. Horner	John S. Reece
John R. Caughron	Milus M. House	Jasper P. Ruyl
George W. Clapp	Francis M. James	Victor H. Sears
Kent K. Cross	Arthur A. Jennings	E. U. Scharff
William E. Cummer	John B. LaDue	V. Clyde Smedley
J. Atchison Dale	Charles A. Lane	George B. Snow
Leslie A. Eaton	Percival C. Lowery	Claude J. Stansbery
Carl B. Engstrom	Edwin H. Mauk	Russell W. Tench
Norman S. Essig	Samuel H. McAfee	Benjamin F. Theilen
Fredrick W. Frahm	H. F. McGrane	William H. Tuttle
I. Lester Furnas	George S. Monson	Frank M. Wadsworth
William A. Giffen	A. Alfred Nelson	Frederick H. Waters
Robert R. Gillis	Ira J. Nichols	J. Leon Williams
James A. Graham	Elbert B. Owen	George H. Wilson
Rupert E. Hall	Forrest H. Orton	Sheldon H. Wolf
James F. Hardin	Addison K. Parks	
Harry S. Haslett	Alex H. Paterson	

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