

Russell W. Bunting
President of the IADR, 1932-33

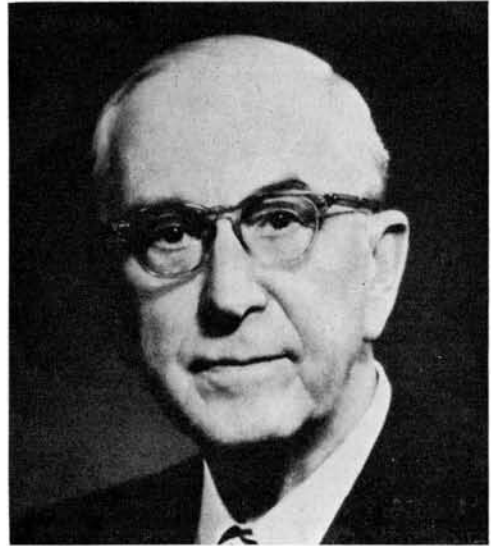
Russell Welford Bunting was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on June 2, 1881. After attending Ann Arbor elementary and high schools, he entered the University of Michigan School of Dentistry where he received his D.D.S. in 1902 and D.D.Sc. in 1908. In recognition of his many accomplishments and his particular interest in the organization of the School of Dentistry at the University of Detroit, the University granted him the honorary degree of doctor of science in 1957.

Dr. Bunting served continuously on the faculty of the University of Michigan from the time he was appointed instructor in 1903 until he retired as dean in 1950. As a young instructor, he had been selected to serve as research assistant under Willoughby D. Miller who had agreed to return to the United States from Germany and assume the deanship of the dental school. Owing to his untimely death, Dr. Miller never served in that capacity but his preliminary discussions with Dr. Bunting had left a lasting impression.

Dr. Bunting became interested in oral pathology and in the teaching of periodontics, but his greatest attention was devoted to dental caries research. His original and solitary investigations in this area prepared him to guide the dental caries research project, which was made possible by a substantial grant from the Children's Fund of Michigan. With this support, Dr. Bunting selected a group of nutritionists, biochemists, and bacteriologists with the eventual goal of determining some of the physiological differences that he knew must exist between highly susceptible and caries-free individuals.

In the early twenties, Dr. Bunting observed and reported the critical cariogenic potential of carbohydrates in experimental rat caries. Although he was quick to realize the hazards in attempting to equate findings in these animals with dental caries in man, he is perhaps best known for his observations concerning the role of lactobacilli and carbohydrates in human dental caries.

Through his contacts with Frederick McKay, Dr. Bunting became deeply interested in the observed inverse relationship between dental caries and mottled enamel. He was especially impressed by the fact that, aside from the low prevalence of



dental caries, the lesions themselves were quite different in character—being more discrete and involving less of the tooth surface. It was during one of Dr. Bunting's visits to a mottled-enamel area that he first met H. Trendley Dean. He immediately perceived Dr. Dean's brilliance. They became warm and mutually inspiring friends.

After retirement from the University, Dr. Bunting devoted his energy to some of the problems in United States Federal Civil Defense. Physical limitations finally forced him to curtail these activities.

During his long and productive career, Dr. Bunting received many awards and citations. He appreciated particularly the honorary memberships that had been bestowed upon him by fraternal and scientific societies, both at home and abroad. He is remembered by his close associates as a man of great strength, warmth, and grand humor. He died at the age of 81, on the morning of November 22, 1962, after a long and painful illness that did not seem to affect his acuity or spirit in the slightest.

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