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AN ORTHODONTIC AND PROSTHETIC RESTORATION IN THE MOUTH OF THE LARGEST MAN IN THE WORLD

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THE dentist—whether he be orthodontist, prosthodontist or reconstructionist—is primarily interested in restoring a mouth to function and comfort. Often, a case presents with an unusual formation of the jaws, defeating the purpose for which the teeth were intended. To handle the case successfully and accomplish the desired results, one must resort to treatment out of the ordinary.

One such very outstanding example, Mr. Jack Earl, presented himself for treatment. He is the tallest man in the world, eight feet six and one-half inches in height, and weighs approximately 375 pounds. Fig. 1 shows Mr. Earl standing with Dr. Franks and Mr. Owens, who are approximately six feet tall.

The medical history is highly interesting. At the period of life when the growth of the average person is completed, Mr. Earl continued to grow. The cause of this phenomenon was a tumor of the pituitary gland, located at the base of the brain, and due to the inaccessibility of the afflicted part for surgery, nothing could be done. Physical growth thus continued to an extraordinary degree. In time the pressure of the growth on the surrounding structures began causing severe headaches and marked eye symptoms, causing partial loss of sight. In his 20's he was given x-ray treatments. This checked the growth, and the symptoms disappeared.

His mental capacity is very good, and he has more than average intelligence. He is interested in sports and is an ardent fisherman. His works in painting and photography have been shown in various art salons. For years he was an attraction in the circus, but of late he has a responsible position with a large corporation.

The hypersecretion from the pituitary gland caused an excessive growth of the long bones. The mandible grew out of all proportions to the other bones of the head and carried the mandibular teeth far external to those of the maxilla. The result was that he could not occlude his teeth through any position or excursion of the mandible, except the distobuccal cusp of the maxillary second molar on the mesiolingual cusp of the mandibular third molar. This was not accomplished without severe effort. The situation is shown in Fig. 2. Fig. 3 shows the bite demonstrating $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch overjet and severe overbite.

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It was deemed advisable and urgent to create a masticatory appliance for this patient. Although he was in fair health, his stomach was giving him a great deal of trouble and, in addition, his system demanded a lot of nourishment.

Study models were made; bites taken and mounted on an articulator. By trial and error with check bites the desired opening was established. This is shown in Fig. 4 and was three-quarters of an inch. To accomplish this opening, the construction of a removable appliance was decided upon.



Fig. 1.

Figs. 5 and 6 show the cast gold appliance to support the teeth and acrylic restoration as it was completed.

Fig. 7 shows the front view before the case was started, and Fig. 8, at the time the case was completed.

Figs. 9 and 10 show the profile views before and after treatment.

From the esthetic standpoint there is a marked improvement.

The functional requirements are satisfactory to mastication and phonetics. In fact, Mr. Earl was very excited when he discovered for the first time



Fig. 2.

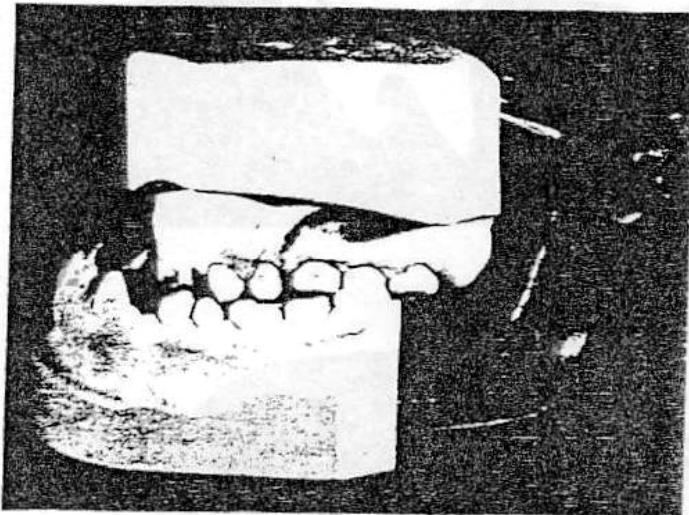


Fig. 3.

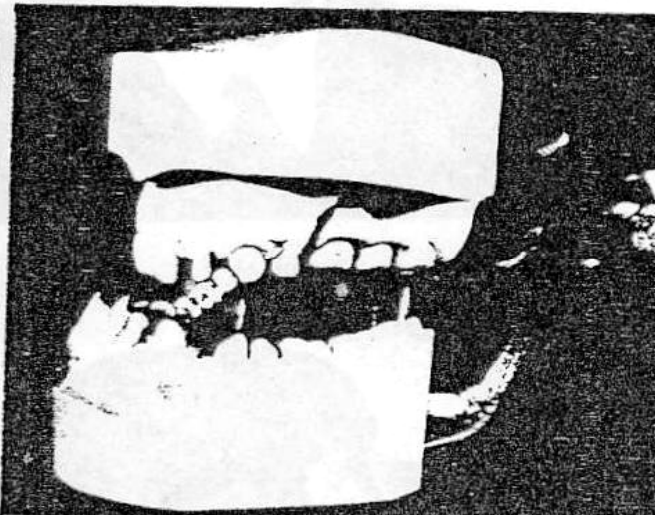


Fig. 4.

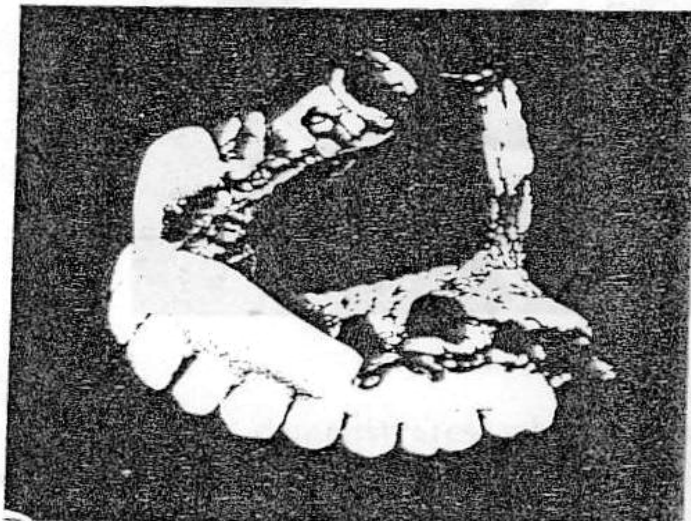


Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

the taste of certain foods—in his own words: “The peppery taste of watercress, and the enjoyment of masticating a juicy steak.”

The patient was instructed as to the hygiene and the importance of keeping the appliance clean. When he returned some time later, it was noted that he had performed his duties efficiently. He remarked at this time, that it was painful to attempt the overclosure that he originally had.

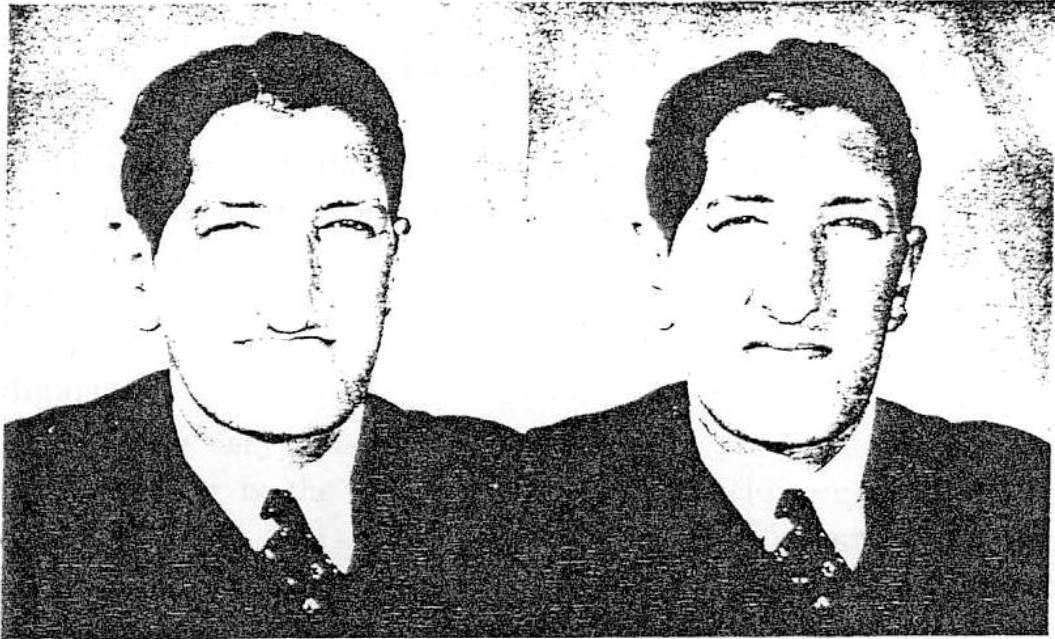


Fig. 7.

Fig. 8.

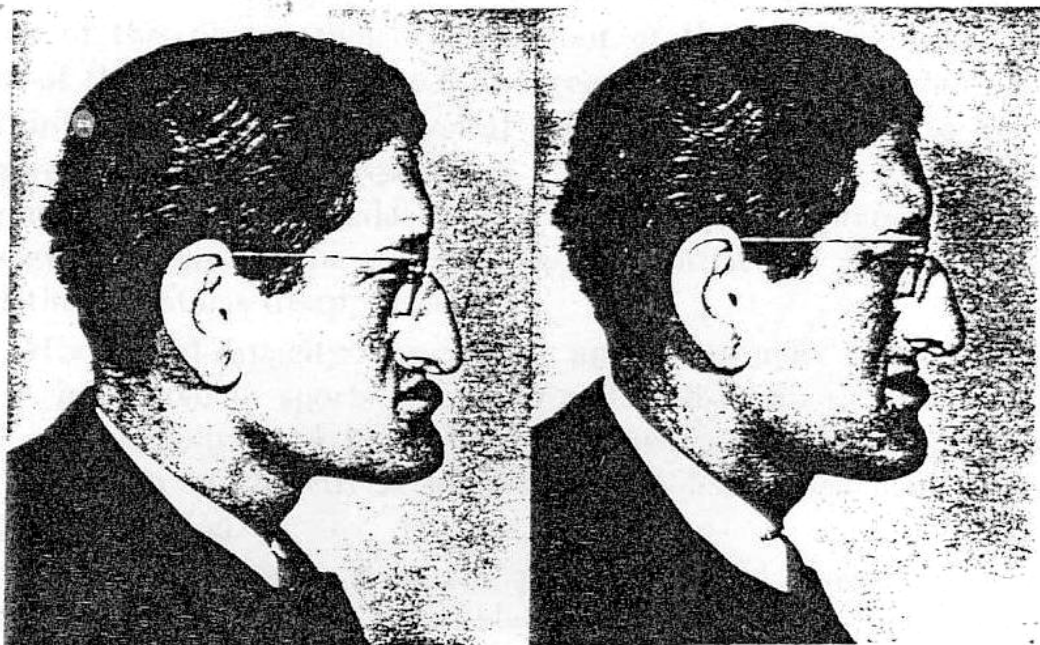


Fig. 9.

Fig. 10.

This case demonstrates what dentistry can do for many otherwise unfortunate dental mechanisms. In doing so function and esthetics are restored, and human beings are made healthier and happier.