

The best results are obtained by using freshly filed alloy, and almost any of the alloys on the market is good enough, provided it does not contain too much tin. In all deep cavities where some of the partially decalcified dentine is left, it is best to varnish before using the cement.

In all cases where a contour is necessary, if practicable I use the rubber dam, and always a matrix.

Let us assume for illustration a large cavity in the approximal surface, involving the grinding surface of a molar and having the posterior cusps somewhat undermined and side walls frail. The method which I employ is as follows:

First prepare so much of the cavity as conveniently may be, for the removal of filthy deposits, and the easy application of the rubber dam. Adjust the dam on so many of the teeth as will permit easy access to the cavity, and dry the cavity thoroughly. Break down all the cervical wall removable with a flat stout instrument, using the adjacent tooth as a fulcrum. Often a cavity will extend one-eighth of an inch or more nearer to the alveolar process than at first suspected. Break away all frail edges, file and if necessary sandpaper. The only use I make of the engine in very extensive cavities, is in following out sulci, and smoothing the cavity edges with sandpaper discs, after trimming. After the margins are prepared, remove the remainder of the carious structure, and varnish dentine. Fashion a piece of thin sheet steel, such as may now be procured at the dental depots, to a contour of the lost portion of the tooth, with pliers, allowing it to extend a little higher than the tooth, and lay it aside.

Mix a little amalgam to a quite plastic lump and flatten somewhat. Mix cement to a thick creamy consistency and apply quickly, smearing it all over the cavity. Introduce the amalgam and quickly work it with ball burnishers and flat instruments till the cavity presents only a metallic lining. It makes very little difference how much cement remains under the amalgam, provided there is the merest film around the edges. With a sharp instrument thoroughly clear away the edges and fit in the matrix. Warm and pack a little gutta-percha around the matrix at the gum line to hold it firmly against the cervical margin. Mix fresh amalgam, and squeeze out all the mercury possible. Cut it up and pack with ball burnishers, using as much pressure as possible. Mercury will soon be worked to the surface. Remove this as often as it appears, and add fresh amalgam. As the filling progresses it will be found necessary to brace the ends of the matrix to keep them in place. Nothing will hold the ends quite so satisfactorily as the thumb and finger of the left hand. As pressure is made by the packing instrument, the natural resistance of the opposing fingers makes a perfect brace.