Ladies and Gentlemen:

Over the memories of most men oblivion soon scattereth her poppy, but occasionally there arises one whose name not only is remembered but whose name increases in significance, in fame, and in reputation as the years pass on. Such a one is the man of whom Dr. Loder has just spoken and in whose memory we have come here to dedicate this tablet.

I am glad that Dr. Loder has given me some possible excuse for being here. I have cast about in my own mind, wondering how it was that I should have been chosen to come to Dartmouth to participate in this ceremony and I vaguely thought of two excuses. One of these excuses is due to the fact that once upon a time the good ship "Diligent", clearing from Ipswich in England, brought to these shores some passengers, non-conformists, who landed at Hingham, called Hingham for the town which they left.

Among the one hundred and thirty-three passengers that disembarked was a man named Matthew Cushing, who was the progenitor of all the Cushings, so far as I know, in this country. Another passenger on this same ship, the "Diligent", was a Mr. Henry Smith, who was likewise the progenitor of all the Smiths. But Mr. Henry Smith had an extraordinarily good start over Matthew Cushing because he brought with him five ready-made and English-bred children and this, I suppose, explains why, when you consult the telephone directory or when the biometrician studies the question which interests him, there is such a great preponderance of Smiths in the country.

Now, there is another reason, too, and that is because one of the descendants of Henry Smith ere long moved to Rehoboth and about the same time
one of the Matthew Cushings moved to Rehoboth, Mass., and apparently being of a roving and migratory kind, soon the parents of a certain David Cushing, who was the first doctor in my direct line, left Rehoboth and went to Cheshire, in the Berkshires, and the parents of Nathan Smith, who was his contemporary, left Rehoboth to come here to the upper reaches of the Connecticut.

So you see, these were my two small excuses and I am glad to offer them because I have not the gifts nor the eloquence of the person that was mentioned by Dr. Loder as his excuse for my attendance here.

So we may perhaps get a perspective as to time and place and a link with the past, because, as has been stated, this is just a hundred years since Nathan Smith died, is just one hundred thirty years since somewhere in a dwelling house in our immediate neighborhood he held his first classes, is just about one hundred sixty years since the first of those Wheelocks with too many e's in his name — I won't venture to pronounce it — founded this college, and that takes us more than half way back to the landing of the Pilgrim fathers. So, you see, we are very young, truly, and if we are very young as a country, we are very young in medicine, and one hundred thirty years ago, when in this dwelling house I have mentioned the first group of students came together to be taught in this school, was in the very youth of the field of medicine, in view of the directions in which medicine has gone and the great growth that medicine has shown.

You know, of course, how it happened that Nathan Smith came to become interested in medicine. It is an old story but a story on this occasion that perhaps deserves re-telling; how Josiah Goodhue, who was the doctor of this countryside for many miles around, was summoned to Chester, Vermont, because some farmer had had an injury to his leg and it had to be amputated, or he thought that it ought to be amputated; how he called for
a volunteer to help him and how a young school teacher came forward and volunteered to hold the leg. This he did without flinching and he was interested, as doctors must be, in something other than the fact that they were necessarily inflicting discomforts and pains. He became interested in the ultimate welfare of this person and in what Josiah Goodhue really was accomplishing and he went to him subsequently and asked if this might not be a profession that he might well enter.

Dr. Goodhue told him that if he would prepare himself sufficiently to enter college as a freshman he would take him on as his apprentice, and so he did, and in that way men went into medicine a century or more ago until classes came to be founded where they could get a somewhat more systematic education. But in the process of getting this systematic education, they lost very much of what they did get in those days of elbow to elbow teaching and of close contact between teacher and apprentice.

It is fitting that this tablet should be erected here and it is timely that this tablet should be erected here because many places claim Nathan Smith — almost as many places as claim Homer. He got his degree at Harvard — his first medical degree. He went to Yale to revivify a school which had promptly gotten into the doldrums. He had an idea that there should be a school in each of the states and so a school came to be founded in Burlington and another in Brunswick.

I think that of all the Smiths, of the many Smiths, Nathan Smith perhaps to us as a doctor stands out most prominently. His son Ryno, who was N. R. Smith, subsequently founded Jefferson, as you know, and in this task he was helped out by his father.

And so, being claimed by all of these places, you who perhaps have prior claim to him than any other school, need to make your claims known.
His old school at Yale is now passing through a period of florescence. A journal has been established and on the cover of this journal, which is the official journal of the school, appears a silhouette of Nathan Smith, symbolic of the fact, I assume, that they feel that his shadow, his protecting shadow, still hovers over them. And so here in Dartmouth, I think it is well for you to begin to bespeak your own claims.

Now, what did Nathan Smith have in mind when he went to President Wheelock — it was John, I believe — and prevailed upon him to take under the wing of this newly established college, which was then only some thirty years of age, a medical school? It was solely because he felt, as a busy practitioner in his region farther down the river that there was need of more doctors in the community and in the rapidly growing community, because the people were flocking up the river in larger numbers at that time than the few doctors could care for or than could be cared for by such men as they could individually take on and train as apprentices. And so the school was founded with the primary object, I assume, of supplying this district with her doctors. Now we have reverence for Nathan Smith and feel that emanations of Nathan Smith must come from this table, because he stood here himself and talked and the fact that it is still here and not replaced by some modern contraption shows that you have respect for historical objects and reverence for his memory.

For a school, for a nation indeed, for a state, for a church, to have some individual that they can in a way use before the world as a symbol of what they would like to have other people think them to be is the greatest good fortune. We have, of course, symbolized Lincoln into something which perhaps Lincoln hardly was but nevertheless we have made of him what we wish to have represent us before the world. And so I think, when a school
like your own has some person who has been a person of outstanding dis-
tinction, — to make use of that person for similar purposes as a means of
tyng together the sympathies and the interests historically and otherwise
of a group of people, which graduates represent, is something that always
should be sought for. And here we have the gift of this extraordinary
man, who stands out as among the greatest of the doctors who have taught
and practiced and worked in our country.

Were Nathan Smith to come to earth today; could he be re-incarnated
here and stand at his own desk strongly, as I stand here feebly and haltingly
addressing you, what would he say to us? I think that he would say that he
knows of the dynasties of medical people who since his day have gone through
this school — the Spaldings, Lyman having been his single assistant in those
early days when he otherwise, or apart from Lyman Spalding, constituted the
entire faculty, the Crosbys, of whom there have been many, and the Frosts and
the Giles, to mention only a few in your medical family — and he would say,
"What is the number of your graduates today and where do they go?" and you
would say, "We have no graduates." And I think Nathan Smith would be very
much hurt and surprised and I think he would go where I am sure he would find
very receptive ears; he would go to the President of the College and say,
"Mr. Hopkins, can't you in my memory, or can't you for the worth-whileness
of the act, revivify your medical school and have a full four years course
in your school, if for no other purpose than to do what President Wheelock
agreed ought to be done, — to supply New Hampshire with its doctors?"

"Because I learn," he says, "that the country doctor of the type that I knew
and that I hope I represent is being supplanted or not being reproduced,
is being supplanted by well-trained men — not supplanted because they
could not supplant them — by men of medical schools that do not have our
ideals in medicine."
Now this can be brought about is your problem, not mine. That
it ought to be brought about I feel very strongly; that there is an opportunity
for you to make a great lesson, to give a great lesson to the country, and
to make a great experiment in the teaching of medicine, is perfectly evident.
It is possible that Nathan Smith may already be re-incarnated in the person
of the Dean of the Medical School -- the existent Dean of the Medical School --
and if he is given an opportunity and with the admirable teachers which you
already have in this school, in its particular clinical features, it could
become, as it once was, a school which is not only starting men in the
preparation for medicine, half a school, but a whole school which is giving
the men medical courses.

Now, these, I think, are some of the things which Nathan Smith,
could he be here before you today, would say, and they are some of the things
which I would say, coming from another school which, as I see it, could not
conceivably take unto itself such a delightful task as training men briefly
and economically and by elbow to elbow methods, such as were utilized in the
old times of apprentices, training such men for the filling of the positions of
the worthy practitioners of your state who are now not being replaced. And with
these words and with expression from my school to the graduates of Dartmouth
of the utmost good will, I wish to thank you for listening to what I have had
to say.