

NOV 18 1975

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

NEWSLETTER

OF THE

OPTOMETRIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(7000 Chippewa Street, Saint Louis, Missouri, U. S. A. 63119)

Volume 6

October 1975

Number 4

Ophthalmic landmarks for 1976:

Shortly to be celebrated: bicentenaries, tercentenaries, sesquicentenials and other anniversaries.

Andre A. Anagnostakis (1826-97) is particularly known for popularizing, in France, circa 1854, the clinical use of the newly invented ophthalmoscope.

Richard Banister (1570-1626) in 1622 was probably the first person to clearly recognise absolute glaucoma. Banister was an itinerant oculist. He was the author of a breviary appended to Jacques Guillemau's Maladies de L'Oeil.

Gottfried R. Treviranus (1776-1837) is primarily remembered for his rediscovery (earlier in 1722 by the Dutchman Leeuwenhoek) in 1834 of the existence of rods and cones.

Petrus Hispanus (1226-1277), oculist, was born in Lisbon and studied at Montpellier and Paris. He is remembered for his Liber de Oculis, the abbreviation for his Brevarium Magistri Petri Hispani de Egritudinibus Oculorum et Curis.

I shall be writing in more detail about each of these distinguished people during the coming months.

Historical papers of particular interest include the following:

F. Rintelen, "History of Keratoplasty" (in German) in Klin. Mbl. Augenheilk, 1974, 165 (2) 214-222. De Quengsy, in 1789, suggested replacement of the opaque cornea with glass, and Zirm in 1905 performed the first successful human keratoplasty.

H.J. Lauer (also in German) gives an account of Leber's classical experiments relative to the formation and outflow of the aqueous. For which, see "Theodore Leber's Fundamental Teaching on the Circulation of the Aqueous Celebrates its Century," in Klin. Mbl. Augenheilk, 1974, 164 (4), 570-571.

Who were Olga Mashkovtseba, Eugenia Dikanskaya and Julia Kuyatkorskaya? You're right on all three counts. They're Russian! 19th century ophthalmologists. You don't have to take my word for it, but can read an account, given by S.G. Magilnitsky, in the Oftal. Zh., 1974, 29, 73-76. The title of the article "The First Woman Ophthalmologists in the South of Russia in the 19th Century" (in Russian).

S.L. Knutson and M.L. Sears have written an intriguing account crediting Boerhaave with the first description of aqueous veins. "Herman Boerhaave and the History of Vessels Carrying Aqueous Humour from the Eye", Amer. J. Ophthal., Nov. 1973, 76, 648-654.

I might add that Boerhaave was the most famous physician in his day, famous enough that his address could be written merely as "Boerhaave, Europe" and there was no difficulty in his mail reaching him. How curious that letters, with complete and correct address, sent to me from fifty miles away fail to reach me!

An anonymously written article appears in the Irish Faculty of Ophthalmologists Yearbook 1973, 7, p. 29, relating to Sir William Wilde - a great Irish ophthalmologist and father of one of the greatest playwrights, Oscar Wilde.

In the American Journal of Ophthalmology, 76 October 1973, 494-499, D.M. Albert and W.H. Miller have given an account entitled "Jan Purkinje and the Ophthalmoscope", describing Purkinje's use of a concave lens and candle light in order to examine the fundus.

Currently on exhibit at the Indiana University Optometry School Museum is a recently acquired gift from Dr. Jack Beiman, of Indianapolis, a set of 3 very early soft contact lenses, made in Czechoslovakia, and appropriately called Wichterle lenses, after the inventor of the original geltakt soft contact lens. The term originates from 1963, when Wichterle, a Czechoslovakian Academician, first developed them. Readers may not perhaps know, that was early in 1827. John F.W. Herschel, when considering corneal astigmatism and corneal deformation generally, made the statement:

Should any very bad cases of irregular cornea be found, it is worthy of consideration whether at least a temporary distinct vision could not be procured, by applying in contact with the surface of the eye some transparent animal jelly contained in a spherical capsule of glass; or whether an actual mould of the cornea might not be taken, and impressed on some transparent medium. The operation would, of course, be delicate, but certainly less so than that of cutting open a living eye, and taking out its contents.

Herschel's comments lay dormant for almost 150 years, before their realization in 1963. The development of hard lenses, of course, made steady progress and were successfully fitted and worn as early as 1887.

Antiquaria Optometrica:

Augmenting the Indiana University Fall Optometry Meeting has been a book exhibit entitled "Antiquaria Optometrica". The books are from the private collections of Dr. Daniel Gerstman, of Indiana University, and myself. There is an interesting selection, ranging from

geometric optics, ocular surgery, and anatomy to spectacles. Included among the collection were works by Hulke (1851) (1st award winning Jacksonian prize on the newly invented ophthalmoscope); St. Yves (1722) (first description of the crystalline lens removed en masse); a work by Quengzy (1789). This is a profusely illustrated surgery book and includes the first illustrated account of a corneal transplant; Brewster (1858) on the history and use of the stereoscope.

Call for ideas:

I would be pleased to hear from members of the O.H.S. of ideas for the Society's celebration of the bicentennial. A meeting would seem appropriate. The question is where? So far, suggestions have been made for a meeting to be held in one of the two youngest states, Alaska or Hawaii. More convenient would be the annual AOA convention - which is to be held in Las Vegas in 1976. What I would personally like to see is a meeting in which one day could be devoted to papers of pertinent interest, with the papers being gathered, edited and produced as a commemorative issue. Instead of the usual Newsletter format, something glossy and professionally produced.

What a headache!

Readers may be interested in a paper that has just been published on Sir George Airy, F.R.S., and the symptomatology of migraine. I've been interested in both Airy and migraine for several years. I promised the late Sir Harold Hartley that I would be happy to give him an account. Sir Harold was editor of Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London, a journal primarily related to Fellows of the Royal Society. The years rolled by (12 in fact) before my paper materialized. Airy, who was an independent discoverer of ocular astigmatism, is known by historians for having used a cylindrical lens to correct his astigmatism. This was in 1825. Interestingly, the independent discovery was made in America by Chauncey Goodrich, at approximately the same time. Airy's lenses were constructed by Fuller, a lens maker from Ipswich, in England. We are not sure who made Goodrich's lenses, although incorrectly attributed to McAllister of Philadelphia. McAllister certainly supplied lenses, which were made in France. To return to Airy's account of migraine, I have essentially given him credit for the printed illustration of the Scintillating Zig-Zag Scotoma. Airy's description of migraine would be recognizable to the modern clinical practitioner, as a classic case. For further details readers are referred to Notes and Records of the Royal Society, Vol. 30, No. 1, 1 July, 1975.

J.R. Levene, editor