

NEWSLETTER
OF THE
OPTOMETRIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Volume 1

January 1970 - Dec 1974

Number 1

Welcome:

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Here it is, the first issue, a modest beginning, but an exciting venture!

Our little three paragraph release to the optometric press, dated October 31, brought in 33 five dollar membership checks early enough to give us a solid beginning, and a \$100.00 contribution. Here are the 33 founding members, already paid up for 1970 membership:

- ABRAMS, J. J., O.D., 4516 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46241.
- ALEXANDER, E. B., O.D., Optometric Extension Program Foundation, Inc., Duncan, Oklahoma 73533.
- BENNETT, IRVING, O.D., 1316 Sixth Avenue, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010.
- BERMAN, MARVIN R., O.D., P.O. Box 15, Dover, Delaware 19901.
- BREWER, BRUCE J., O.D., Eigenmann Hall 1171, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.
- CAPLAN, LESTER, O.D., 6660 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21207.
- DABLEMONT, MARIA (Mrs.), 5535 Waterman Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63112.
- EWALT, H. WARD, O.D., 8002 Jenkins Arcade, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222.
- GATHERCOLE, F. H., O.D., 403 Main Street, Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420.
- HILLARD, J. R., O.D., 2613 Kings Highway, Louisville, Kentucky 40205.
- HOARE, ARTHUR E., O.D., P.O. Box 1055, Costa Mesa, California.
- HOEFERT, KARL O., O.D., 110 E. Florence Boulevard, Casa Grande, Arizona 85222.
- HOFSTETTER, H. W., Indiana University, Optometry Building, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.
- HUNT, EARL J., O.D., 226 Ohio Street, Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15902.
- KIEKENAPP, ERNEST H., O.D., 6800 Chapel Lane, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55424.
- KNOLL, HENRY A., Ph.D., c/o Bausch & Lomb, Inc., Rochester, New York 14602.
- LAMBORN, ROBERT S., O.D., 3920 E. Broadway, Tucson, Arizona 85711.
- LEEDS, JAMES P., O.D., 3454C Meadow Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46205.
- LEVENE, JOHN R., D.Phil., Indiana University, Division of Optometry, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.
- McMASTER, ROBERT W., 7 Columbus Avenue, Southbridge, Massachusetts 01550.
- MILLER, MAXWELL, O.D., 407 W. Market Street, Pottsville, Pennsylvania 17905.
- MYERS, RAYMOND, Evermann Apartments, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

OPPENHEIMER, S. M., 147 Stonewall Hill, Memphis, Tennessee 38104.
PAUL, ALBERT L., O.D., Laurel Shopping Center, Laurel, Maryland
20810.
ROSSER, H. H., O.D., 25 E. King Street, York, Pennsylvania 17401.
RYER, E. LEROY, O.D., 397 Fort Washington Avenue, Hawthorne,
New York 10532.
TANNEBAUM, SOL, O.D., 5 Plaza-Medical Arts Building, Park Forest,
Illinois 60466.
TORRENCE, M. D., O.D., 314 North Main, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501.
WATKINS, BERNARD, O.D., Culver Lake, Branchville, New Jersey 07826.
WEBER, J. M., O.D., 1420 Greenwood Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey
08609.
WEINER, GRACE (Mrs.), 1608 Alameda Avenue, Burbank, California
91506.
WEINSTEIN, MINERVA H., O.D., 1504 Sheridan Avenue, Bronx, New York
10457.
WELCH, LESTER D., O.D., 39201 State Street, Fremont, California
94538.

About the Newsletter:

Hopefully, I shall edit this and the April issue. As I plan to be out of the country from June to January, I shall have to prevail on someone else to take over for the subsequent two issues in 1970 and for at least the first issue in 1971. Any volunteers?

The contents of the Newsletter will reflect the correspondence received, plus any brief tidbits of historical interest that may be submitted, and occasional gems gleaned elsewhere. Our publication expectations are not ambitious. We do not plan to include articles of historical value which should appear more appropriately in established periodicals with wide general readership. In fact if we can stimulate more historical writing in other areas a major part of our mission will be accomplished.

It is hoped, too, that, cumulatively, the Newsletter will serve as a resource to persons interested in leads to items of historical interest.

By-laws of the Optometric Historical Society:

Article I. NAME

The name of this society shall be The Optometric Historical Society.

Article II. OBJECT

The purposes of this society are to encourage the collection and preservation of materials relating to the history of optometry, to assist in securing and documenting the recollections of those who have participated in the development of optometry, to encourage and

assist in the care of archives of optometric interest, to identify and mark sites, landmarks, monuments, and structures of significance in optometric development, and to shed honor and recognition on persons, groups, and agencies making notable contributions toward the goals of this society.

Article III. MEMBERS

Section 1. Membership in the society shall be open to any person interested in the purposes of the society.

Section 2. Fellowship in the society shall be open to any member who, upon majority election by the Executive Board, has made significant contribution toward the goals of the society by means of publication, collection, administration, gifts, or equivalent actions.

Section 3. Honorary Membership, requiring no payment of dues, shall be open to any person who, upon majority, and annually reconsidered, election by the Executive Board, deserves special recognition or consideration.

Section 4. The dues in this society shall be \$5.00 per calendar year, payable annually in advance.

Section 5. Members and Fellows whose dues are paid for the current year, and Honorary Members, have full membership voting privileges in the election of members of the Executive Board, and on such issues and items of business as shall be submitted to them by the Executive Board or by petition of at least five Members or Fellows. The majority of those voting on any issue or ballot shall prevail as the governing decision except that the Executive Board may act in the role of governing body on all matters not otherwise provided for herein and not in a manner contrary to duly processed decisions of the membership.

Section 6. Membership and Fellowship shall be canceled automatically for nonpayment of dues.

Section 7. Election to the Executive Board shall automatically qualify the Member for Fellowship.

Article IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall consist of five members, each to be elected by the membership for a five year term. Vacancies of unexpired terms shall be filled by the election of a replacement by a majority of the remaining members of the Executive Board. Membership on the Board shall be terminated automatically with delinquency in society membership dues.

Section 2. Election to membership on the Executive Board shall be preceded by the nomination of each candidate by at least three

members and the willingness of each nominee to have his name placed on the ballot. Election shall be by mail ballot, and, when more than two nominees are on the ballot, the voting members should rank their choices so that the winner may be determined by the Hare system in terms of the majority of members voting.

Section 3. The election shall be held early in November of each year and the ballots counted early in December.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall elect from among themselves a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary-Treasurer, and the remaining members of the Executive Board shall be designated Trustees.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall adopt regulatory procedures suitable for the conduct of its business.

Article V. MEETINGS

Meetings of the society shall be at the discretion of the Executive Board or upon vote of the membership as provided for in Article III, section 5, by mail ballot unless otherwise provided for by prior action.

Article VI. COMMITTEES

The creation and appointment of committees shall be by action of the Executive Board unless otherwise provided for by voting actions of the membership.

Article VII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules and guidelines contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the society in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the by-laws or the special rules of order of this society.

Article VIII. AMENDMENTS

The by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of members responding in a mail ballot as provided for in Article III, section 5.

Article IX. FISCAL MATTERS

The society may engage in whatever business activities it deems to be appropriate to its purposes and in compliance with federal and state laws relating to not-for-profit organization eligible for tax exemptions and for the receiving of contributions and gifts which the donors may declare as deductible for income tax purposes.

Article X.

These by-laws are hereby adopted by the undersigned who will assume mutually approved initial membership on the Executive Board for the periods indicated:

For term expiring

December 31, 1970, - - - Maria Dablemont
December 31, 1971, - - - Arthur E. Hoare
December 31, 1972, - - - Sol Tannebaum
December 31, 1973, - - - John R. Levene
December 31, 1974, - - - Henry W. Hofstetter

1970 officers:

In November the new Board elected the following officers for 1970:

President: H. W. Hofstetter
Vice-President: J. R. Levene
Secretary-Treasurer: Mrs. Maria Dablemont

Extracted from O.H.S. correspondence:

Bernard Watkins, O.D.: "I have several items to contribute."
"World War I (combat). Columbia '24. Retired from Staff,
Veterans Administration Hospital, Albany, New York. One of the
first, if not the first, optometrists appointed full time with
Veterans Administration."

F. H. Gathercole, O.D.: "It was my privilege to become associated
with the practice of optometry in 1906 in the State of New
Hampshire. I am still in active daily practice."

Stephen M. Oppenheimer: "I have been quite interested in the
collecting and preservation of materials relating to the history
of optometry. I have been trying to generate interest here in
Memphis at S.C.O., where I am a senior student, in establishing
a museum in our new building. My frame collection dates back
to 1780."

Robert W. McMaster: "As a collector of antique spectacles I
have become greatly interested in gathering information about
their history. I am a lens process engineer with the American
Optical Corporation and I know much of the past history in this
area covering the A.O. and the many other firms which have
existed here from time to time since 1833."

Albert L. Paul, O.D.: "My graduate degree is in history. My
graduate thesis was in Medical History. I would be happy to
participate in any projects you undertake."

Minerva H. Weinstein, O.D.: "The first woman registered by
examination."

Jack M. Weber, O.D.: "This is a most worthwhile idea. Count
me in!"

J. J. Abrams, O.D.: "Very proud to be a founding member. I think its purposes are very necessary and worthwhile."

Maria Dablemont: "As the creation of A.O.A. was a turning point to organized optometry, I have no doubts whatsoever that the creation of the Optometric Historical Society will be equally important to the profession."

Ernest H. Kiekenapp, O.D.: "Much of our early history has already been lost."

Sol Tannebaum, O.D.: "You have embarked on a noble and much needed venture."

Maxwell Miller, O.D.: "I am preparing a detailed documented paper on the McAllisters' contribution to optometry in this country."

James R. Gregg, O.D.: "Sounds like an interesting idea. Count me in."

E. LeRoy Ryer, O.D. (retired): "I am enclosing a list of subjects I am trying to cover,--a big enough assignment for this old handicapped guy in his 90th year."

Earl J. Hunt, O.D.: "The idea of how the heritage of our great profession could be preserved has been running through my mind ever since I visited the headquarters of the American Optometric Association last July 25 and viewed the optometric items of the past that were displayed on the second floor. I am enclosing a check for \$100.00 as a contribution in memory of my mother, Mrs. Idella Mae Hunt, who also was proud of the profession of optometry. (The check was dated on his mother's birthday, December 8, and, perhaps not fortuitously, it was serially numbered 1776, and written in Pennsylvania, the state (or, rather, commonwealth) that has staked its claim as the birthplace of optometry.)"

Arthur E. Hoare, O.D. (retired): "This morning something happened in my life, the like of which has not happened before,--at least in my safari in Optometry. The Optometric Historical Society documents you sent to me gave me a feeling of finally having arrived - in the 'legend of optometry'." (Dr. Hoare sent his congratulations by telegram!)

Where are our archives?

There are two major types of repositories for items of historical value. One is the institutional type such as is nurtured and maintained by organizations for various reasons ranging from the organization's ad hoc dedication to prestige acquisition, or even as an outright investment. Such repositories are usually called museums and may include community museums, the museums of professional organizations,

the special collections of industrial firms, the museums of schools, colleges, and universities, and various specially endowed museums. The other major type of repository is what I would identify as the individual collection. It is conceivable that the greatest share of preservation of historical items is accomplished by the thousands of individuals who save the things which are dear to them. Such items receive tender care during the life of the individual owner, even better care than in the typical museum storage rooms. Unfortunately they are less accessible to historians, and, more unfortunately, they are likely to be disposed of as trash upon the owner's demise.

So, it is probable that the large share of items of optometric historical interest are in the files, cabinets, and bookshelves of individuals, and are being well preserved. The OHS will be making a valuable contribution if it can bring these collections to light and prevail on the owners to take immediate steps to insure the transfer of their collections to appropriate repositories at the time of the owner's death or retirement. It is not sufficient merely to write the request in one's will. The collections should be clearly labeled and marked well in advance for their desired posthumous disposition.

In future issues of the Newsletter we hope to list archives, museums, and collections of optometric historical interest. Readers and OHS members are asked to call our attention to museums, archives, and collections which should be so listed.

Why belong to OHS?

My good friend Jim Leeds read the OHS news release and wrote me, asking, "Henry, do you recommend that I join this, too?" I answered, "Jim, you probably have the most complete collection of old and rare optometry books in the country, if not in the world. You are contributing to the goals of OHS whether you join or not. I can think of no reason why I should make a recommendation to you."

He joined.

OHS gives its first blessing.

A letter has been directed to the California Optometric Association taking cognizance of the fact that the C.O.A. will sponsor another dedicatory ceremony at the Andrew Jay Cross Memorial Tree in Muir Woods in February. The first dedicatory pilgrimage was held in 1926. Details will be reported in the California Optometrist.

We are proud of Maria

On August 22 our Secretary-Treasurer Maria Dablemont received a University of Denver certificate of successful completion of the requirements for the ANNUAL INSTITUTE OF ARCHIVAL ADMINISTRATION. Replete with ribbon and seals of the University of Denver and the State of Colorado, the certificates also bears the signatures of the State

Archivist and the Governor of Colorado and of the Chancellor and the heads of the Department of History and the School of Librarianship of the University of Denver.

Information wanted:

I am the owner of several old Optometric instruments and desire information about them. The pieces include:

1. 1917 Patent Genothalamic Refractor
2. 1909 Patent De Zeng Phoroceptor
3. 1910 Patent Ski-Optometer (Woolf Instrument Corp.)
4. A hand held Retinoscopy Aid with a control lens set for 26" distance. It has two banks of lenses with additional space for cylinder. The instrument has no markings except for lens powers.
5. A slide with a +7.25 Diopter lens mounted as an ocular (stationary) and a movable flat metal "target" with the inscription: "count the dots". There are ten "dots" which become progressively smaller below the inscription. The Rod upon which the paddle shaped target is mounted is 12" long. It is calibrated concave and convex from 3 to 100, then a line, then 100, 60, 54, etc. down to 7. It was suggested that this is a Prinz Rule, however, we are not sure.

Any information about these pieces in the way of descriptions, photocopies of articles, or original documents would be greatly appreciated. I am also interested in information on early opticians and frames manufactured by them.

Steve Oppenheimer, Senior Student
Southern College of Optometry
P.O. Box 4205
Memphis, Tennessee 38104

Noted elsewhere:

From Optical Journal and Review of Optometry, December 15, and Rare Foci, November 25: James F. Dickson, Jr., O.D., Box 928, Lindsay, California 93247 wishes to contact other collectors of optometric antiques. He has over 1,000 antique items, some of which are shown in Gregg's STORY OF OPTOMETRY. Presently he is seeking wooden mailing boxes used by optical laboratories in the early 1900's.

From the Tri-State Trader, Knightstown, Indiana, October 11: A feature write-up of the early spectacle and spectacle case collection of J. J. Abrams, O.D., with illustrations. The article mentions that his collection "will eventually go to Indiana University".

From The Optician, July 26, 1963, the following, taken from The Chemist-Optician, 1908:

"By any other name . . ."

In 1903 the British Optical Association sent out inquiries through their Nomenclature Committee for suggestions for a title that could be designated men of the profession.

They announced that judging would be on the six following factors:

- (1) That the word could be pronounced at first sight by the man in the street.
- (2) That it was easily spelt from its first sound.
- (3) That it was not humorous or lacking in dignity.
- (4) That it had no double meaning.
- (5) That it emphasised sight-testing, and not medical or manufacturing connections.
- (6) That it did not savour of quackery.

The following was the list submitted:

Consulting Optician	Optician Specialist
Dioptrician	Opticist
Dioprist	Opticmatrician
Doctor of Refraction	Optist
Eidometrician	Optologist
Expert in Optics	Optometrician
Eye Refracter	Optometrist
Eye Refractionist	Qual-optist
Eyeist	Refractician
Eyesight and Spectacle Specialist	Refracting Optician
Eyesight Specialist	Refractionist
Graduate in Optics	Sight Refracter
Lensman	Sight Refractionist
Lenticulist	Sight Specialist
Licentiate in Optics	Sight Tester
Oculist Optician	Sight Testing Optician
Oculists' Optician	Spectacle Expert
Ophthalmic Optician	Spectacle Frame Specialist
Ophthalmic Surgeon	Spectacle Optician
Ophthalmist	Spectacle Specialist
Optical Expert	Surgeon's Optician
Optical Specialist	Visometrician
Optical Technist	Viso Metric Optician
Opticalist	Visual Optician
Optician	

The Committee recommended, on June 11, 1903, that "optology", "optological", and "optologist" were the most suitable.

From The Ophthalmic Optician, September 1964: In a fascinating article entitled "The Florentine Legend", Walter Casson argues that the name of the actual inventor of spectacles is still unknown. He variously labels the Salvino d'Armati claim as a "fraud", a "hoax", and "spurious".

In 1856, Sir David Brewster (1781-1868) wrote a very comprehensive paper entitled "The Sight, and how to See" in The North British Review, Vol. 26, Edinburgh, November 1856, pp. 145-184 (American Edition, Vol. 21, New York, 1857, pp. 78-99) and concluded with the following prescient passage: "In the ordinary diseases to which the eye, like other parts of the body is subject, we may safely confide in the skill of the experienced physician; but in the diseases to which it is liable as an optical instrument, where optical science can alone direct us, we regret that professional assistance is difficult to be found. Guided by practice, the skilful oculist may dexterously extract the crystalline lens, or make an artificial pupil; but all the refinements of optical science are requisite in the practitioner to whom we commit the care of our sight; and we trust the time is not distant when men will be expressly educated for this branch of the healing art, and will exhaust in their practice the rich resources with which science can supply them."

The same passage was quoted in the preface of Entoptics, With Its Uses in Physiology and Medicine, by James Jago, M.D., John Churchill & Sons, London, 1864, with the introductory comment, "A writer in Physiological Optics, who is not of the medical profession, says of us:"

H. W. Hofstetter, Editor

P.S. With the compliments of the Indiana University Division of Optometry we are enclosing a copy of the catalog of items in the I.U. Optometry Museum.

H. W. H.