

NEWSLETTER
OF THE
OPTOMETRIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Vertical File

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Preliminary and provisional:

Our Vice-President, John R. Levene, D.Phil. (and optometrist, too) has graciously volunteered to edit the next three issues of the Newsletter during my absence. These will be for July and October, 1970, and January 1971. With a doctorate in history of science, a major interest in the history of Physiological Optics, and a wide range of optometric experience, his performance may well threaten my resumption of this role when I return!

Another generous offer to edit these issues came from Dr. Jack Hale of Sunnyside, Washington. Jack's credentials and enthusiasm made my choice very difficult. I finally surrendered to convenience. Dr. Levene's office is in the same building as mine, we are served by the same secretarial staff, and we have the same mailing address.

Founding floundering:

Relying heavily on the authority of the American Heritage Dictionary, which says to found is, among other meanings, to establish, we identified all who enrolled before January 1, 1970, "founding" members. It was because they joined that we became established. Now then, the same authority says a charter member is an original member of an organization. Since our first official year of operation is 1970, those who come in during 1970 and want their dues applied to begin in this original year surely are eligible to be regarded "charter" members.

Since neither "founding" nor "charter" is capitalized in our usage, and neither is identified as a listed class of members in the O.H.S. By-laws, we are quite free to regard ourselves as we deem appropriate and consistent. On the strength of this very flimsy argument, and of faith in the tremendous compatibility of the Executive Board, I am proposing that we continue to favor all of those listed in the January 1970 issue of the Newsletter with the adjective "founding". Due to an error, not attributable to anyone in particular, a bit true of every historical incident, one additional member belongs in this proud category. He is

HALE, J. R., O.D., 515 6th Street, Sunnyside,
Washington 98944

Now we have more new 1970 members who, by similar argument, can claim "charter" membership. They are

BRISCOE, MRS. LAVERNE, 1220 North Bascom Avenue,
Apt. 4., San Jose, California 95128

DEGRAVE, MRS. LUE, Librarian, Bausch & Lomb, Inc.,
635 Paul Street, Rochester, New York 14602

FOSTER, LAWRENCE H., O.D., 1717 Main Street, Fortuna,
California 95540

FOSTER, MISS MARGARET VAIL, 840 B Tenth Street,
Fortuna, California 95540

GREGG, JAMES R., O.D., 5930 South Croft Avenue,
Los Angeles, California 90057

HOWARD, J. D., O.D., 18771 South Cicero Avenue,
Country Club Hills, Illinois 60477

ST. CLAIRE, H. L., O.D., 109 1/2 North Brand
Boulevard, Glendale, California 91203

SHANESON, ELIAS, O.D., 2016 Genesee Street,
Buffalo, New York 14211

SHEARER, C. WAYNE, O.D., 306 Ashland Terrace,
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37415

This brings our total membership to 42.

Better late than never:

One of the benefits of O.H.S. is its effect of highlighting historical gems. One such gem, pointed out to me by my colleague John Levene, in our own library across the hall, is OPTOMETRY IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, a history, by J. Wolff, O.D., for the Washington Optometric Association, and published by the W.O.A. in 1967. It is well edited, chock full of facts, statistics, and anecdotes, and, best of all of biographical accounts of dozens of optometrists and others of significance to optometry, including many photographs. A most commendable contribution!

In Dutch:

A Microfiche copy of the dissertation by Th. (Theodorus) H. (Henricus) Mac-Gillavry entitled ONDERZOEKINGEN OVER DE HOEGROOTHEID DER ACCOMMODATIE is now on file in the Indiana University Optometry Library. Dr. Mac-Gillavry submitted this thesis for the "Doctor in de Geneeskunde" degree at the Utrechtsche Hooge School in 1858. He did his research under the direction of Professor F. C. Donders, M.D.

Dr. Gordon Heath acquired the Microfiche from the University of Utrecht archives during his recent sabbatical leave in Holland.

Colorful observer

A former student of mine, G. Rex Courtney, O.D., sent me a copy of the article by John Dalton (1766-1844) entitled "Extraordinary Facts Relating to the Vision of Colours: with Observations" (Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, Memoirs, Vol. 5, Pt. 1, 1798 pp. 28-45). Dalton a chemist, became the namesake for Daltonism and wrote a fascinating account of his perplexing observations. Here are a few excerpts.

"I was always of opinion, though I might not often mention it, that several colours were injudiciously named." "I became pretty well acquainted with the theory of light and colours before I was apprized of any peculiarity in my vision. I had not, however, attended much to the practical discrimination of colours, owing, in some degree, to what I conceived to be a perplexity in their nomenclature." "I have often seriously asked a person whether a flower was blue or pink, but was generally considered to be in jest." "I found that persons in general distinguish six kinds of colour in the solar (prism) image; namely red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. To me it is quite otherwise:--I see only two or at most three distinctions. Those I should call yellow and blue; or yellow, blue, and purple." "I take my standard idea (of green) from grass. This appears to me to be very little different from red." "It is remarkable that, out of twenty-five pupils I once had, two were found to agree with me; and on another similar occasion, one." "It is remarkable that I have not heard of one female subject to this peculiarity."

Blurred out:

In the Winter 1970 (Vol. 1, no. 2) issue of IMAGE, a publication of the University of Rochester Institute of Optics, Professor R. Kingslake gives out with some notes on the history of the Institute. The Institute, according to Dr. Kingslake, was established in 1929 just after the University had adopted the Rochester School of Optometry. The University's first class of optometry students was entering its senior year when Dr. Kingslake came on the scene. At first the Institute staff taught only optometry students, 42 of whom passed through their hands. Dr. Kingslake taught Geometrical Optics. "The optometry division was discontinued with the class of 1936, partly because Columbia University could easily handle this small number of additional students."

Appreciatively noted:

William N. Kemp, O.D., Chairman of the Historical Committee of the Texas Optometric Association, has called attention to the fact that one who played a key role in the passage of S.B. 50 in the 1921 Texas legislature was Representative Samuel Ealy Johnson, the house leader. His son, Lyndon Baines Johnson, was 13 years old at that time.

The American Optometric Association Congress will be in Houston in 1971, the fiftieth anniversary of the enactment of the Texas law regulating optometry.

Gute Freunde

The March 1970 issue of Atlas carried a translated review of a book published by Max Born just before he died. He died on January 6, 1970. The book consists of 117 letters he had exchanged with his close friend, Albert Einstein, for four decades, 1916-1955.

The title is ALBERT EINSTEIN-HEDWIG UND MAX BORN: BRIEFWECHSEL 1916-1955, published by Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, Munich.

More documentation

Winfield S. Brown, O.D., retired and promising to live to be 110, recently gave Melvin D. Wolfberg, O.D., President of the American Optometric Association, the first portion of his manuscript covering optometric developments in New England 1899 to 1916. Dr. Wolfberg has forwarded this to Mrs. Maria Dablemont for the A.O.A. library and archives.

Dr. Brown lives in the Masonic Home, 813 Beech Street, Manchester, New Hampshire, 03104.

"Editor's Last Inch":

Such was the caption of an editorial commentary in the last page of the October 1969 issue of the Journal of the Optical Society of America, a review of an article entitled "Philosophy, science, technology", by Professor Vasco Ronchi in Atti della Fondazione Giorgio Ronchi, Vol. 24, no. 2, March-April 1969, pp. 168-182. The article is described as "a fascinating, highly personal essay (in English) on the history of science, particularly the history of optics, which he relates to his experience in establishing the Istituto Nazionale di Ottica". Ronchi is quoted, "I have described the discovery of spectacle lenses, not only because it is typical but also because it was so completely buried by official science."

From the Optometric Weekly

"The Illinois College of Optometry museum has recently been enlarged by gifts of antique eye-wear, instruments and literature which were presented to the museum by Dr. Ben E. Margulies of Peoria, Illinois, and Major Mark R. Sutton, O.D., M.S.C., Washington, D.C.

"The Museum display, which is housed in the Carl F. Shepard Memorial Library, establishes a bond with the historical development of our profession and clearly illustrates our heritage.

"Dr. E. W. Strawn, president of ICO urges all alumni and others to contribute to the museum with any items of a historical or antique nature that they may have."

Memorial in redwood

Arthur Hoare has kept us well informed on the February 20 re-dedicatory ceremony at the Andrew Jay Cross Memorial Tree in Muir Woods. The details will be published elsewhere. The following comments from one of Dr. Hoare's fascinating accounts are particularly interesting:

"Today (Jan. 18, 1970) I arranged to have a floral tribute delivered to my good friend John Hoag, Keeper of the 'Boot Jack Trail' that leads to the Andrew Jay Cross tree. Did you know that Cross is the only 'commoner' to be so honored? There are but four trees so dedicated in Muir Woods: the first to Mr. Kent, the donor of the Woods to the State of California; to Governor Pinchot, Massachusetts, famous naturalist and friend of Mr. Kent; to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, by the United Nations, quite recently; and to Andrew Jay Cross. Charles Seger is delivering the Dedicatory Address, for which I am very pleased and proud.

"I will place a card on the OHS floral tribute, simply stating OPTOMETRIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 1970, WITH GRATEFUL PRIDE. I shall send it to you.

"It is a privilege for my Barbara and for me to do this very ceremonial act on behalf of the OHS and in memory of a great statesman and pioneer . . . "

From OHS member McMaster:

"My collection of old specs consists of about 150 items prior to 1920 of which the most interesting are those made by silversmiths and jewelers from 1790 to 1850 in the USA before companies were organized to manufacture spectacles.

"Except for item #1, I have the following specs.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Approx Date</u>	<u>How Marked</u>
MacAllister	Philadelphia	C 1780	Full name on temple
J. Anthony	"	C 1790	<u>J.A.</u> on temple
E. Ackley	Alexandria, Va	C 1800	Full name on temple
Hall & Hewson	Albany NY	C 1840	H & H. Alvany on temple
Ammi Down	Southbridge Mass	C 1840	Full name on "
H. Adams	New York NY	C 1830	" " " "
Scheidia	?	?	" " " "
P. Fau	?	?	" " " "

"All of these have sliding or "turn pin" temples. The 1st 6 are silver and the last two are brass.

"Any clues to the date and location of the last two items would be greatly appreciated. Can any of our members add to this list?"

First round-up:

Member Grace Weiner has written all of her colleagues in the Association of Visual Science Librarians urging them to join the Optometric Historical Society. Said she to them, "I joined the Society when I read about it and received Volume 1, Number 1, of the Newsletter. I found it fascinating and think some of you who are history-minded may also."

Rucky Glace:

Believe it or not, Mrs. Weiner has acquired a copy of "The History of Eyeglasses in Japan" by Dr. Hiroo Nagaoka. I spotted it on the shelf while visiting there recently. She now is trying to get a second copy for the University of Alabama optometry library, and a third copy for our library at Indiana University.

Irving Bennett suggests:

"May I make a suggestion for a future issue. Persons interested in developing a collection of old glasses for museums or for themselves would be wise if they combined this selfish desire with some community service.

"By heading a drive for the local optometric society in conjunction with the Association for the Blind, for instance, they will be able to solicit large quantities of old eye glasses. These glasses can be sent to New Eyes for The Needy for use in mission work throughout the world. Some of the glasses that will be collected will be real relics and these can be the reward for the effort.

"Our local did this several years ago using pharmacies as the collection agencies. You would be surprised what turned up!"

H. H. Rosser, O.D., writes:

"52 years in practice. Secretary of Pennsylvania Association for six years. Can give you a lot of early history,--in fact A.O.A. has a lot I sent them years ago."

James P. Leeds, O.D., writes:

"Naturally, as you know, my great interest is optometric books, in fact all books relative to optometry. I've collected some 1,500 of them, many very common, some very unusual--not necessarily valuable, just unusual. For example, EYE TRAINING FOR HEALTH, BEAUTY AND POWER by R. Natal, 1927, says that eyes set far apart indicate an artistic and poetic temperament and that eyes set close together indicate a deceitful person. I have a 69 PD. My wife has a 56 PD. Need I say more? I value an 1863 book from England entitled ARCUS SENILIS, and an Italian book from the 1890's on Ectropion. My latest real prize is a 2-volume well-preserved set of Thomas Young's NATURAL PHILOSOPHY from 1845, which I showed you in Bloomington last fall.

"Some other odds and ends of interest have come my way, and these I wonder about more than books, which fit neatly on a shelf. For example, a pass to the Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia in 1887. I have a sales guide for the salesmen of the True-Fit Optical Co., Chicago, a depression era gem of how to sell spectacles door-to-door for \$3.98 each. I have a Barrett "Eye Normalizer" of 1930 vintage which is wonderful for massaging eye balls. One of the causes of blindness given in the Eighth Annual Report of the Ophthalmic and Aural Institute, New York City, 1877 was "Amblyopia ex Masturbatione", for which I have yet to figure the proper comment, so I make none.

"I could go on and on about a few other things. Books I can categorize easily. A big question in mind is what to do about such ephemera as I have noted above. The real value is almost nil, yet much is irreplaceable. I'd like to pick some brains as to what might or should be done with these items.

"One book that just came to mind is DOCTOR BRYSON by Frank H. Spearman, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1906, which is a novel on the love-life of an ophthalmologist. It fooled me. I thought they were fighters and not lovers. It's an incredibly bad book, yet it has an uncertain value I'm sure.

"Thanks again for the bulletin, and I'll be happy to get future issues. It did stimulate me to make these comments, which I guess are ego-satisfying. You may count upon me to do what I can within my specific sphere (cylinder?) of interest. My personal congratulations for taking the ball and getting this organization off the ground."

From Earl J. Hunt, O.D.:

"Enclosed is a pamphlet which gives a fine detailed explanation of why the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia in particular, lays claim to the birthplace of American Optometry. You might be able to use this material in one of your Newsletters.

"The optometric exhibit which is located in the William Penn Memorial Museum, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, was made possible by a grant of \$5,000.00 by the Pennsylvania Optometric Association. It was dedicated in April 1968 at an event planned by the Vision Conservation Institute of Pennsylvania."

Colorful history:

"History of the Munsell Color System", an article by Dorothy Nickerson in Color Engineering, Vol. 7, No. 5, Sept.-Oct. 1969, pp. 43-51, is an account of perhaps the most famous name in the color field, and of the development of the Munsell Foundation. It is also the story of many other color pioneers and their contributions to color technology and color communications.

H. W. Hofstetter, Editor

HWH:D.Bolton

P.S. Don't forget that Dr. John R. Levene is our editor for the next three issues. His address is:

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H. W. H.