

OPTOMETRIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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1991 OHS annual meeting:

The 1991 annual meeting of the Optometric Historical Society will be held in Anaheim, California, on Saturday, December 14, in the Cerritos Room, Sierra Tower, Disneyland Hotel from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. This annual event is held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Optometry and provides an opportunity for OHS members to meet, discuss matters of common interest, and hear an historical presentation. This year's speaker will be Dr. Hank Peters. He will give a talk entitled "Five Optometric Pioneers in the Establishment of the University of Alabama School of Optometry." Dr. Peter's talk is scheduled to begin at 7:00p.m.

OHS annual report:

The following 1990-91 annual report was written by the 1990 OHS Secretary, Bridget Kowlaczyk and was submitted for the 1991 AOA House of Delegates Handbook.

In 1990, the Optometric Historical Society held its annual meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Optometry at Nashville, Tennessee. At the meeting, Dr. Douglas K. Penisten spoke on the history of optometry in America. A short meeting was held by the officers and trustees to begin planning a fall retreat for the membership in 1992 in honor of the 700th anniversary of the invention of eyeglasses. Locations near St. Louis will be investigated as possible sites for the retreat.

During the past year the Society's main activity has been the quarterly publication of the Newsletter of the Optometric Historical Society. Current joint editors of the newsletter are Drs. Henry W Hofstetter (Bloomington, IN) and Douglas K. Penisten (Tahlequah, OK).

1990 Officers:

President:	Dr. T. David Williams (Waterloo, Ontario, Canada)
Vice-President:	Dr. Charles Haine (Danville, Illinois)
Secretary:	Dr. Bridget Kowalczyk (St. Louis, Missouri)
Treasurer:	Dr. Douglas K. Penisten (Tahlequah, Oklahoma)

Trustees:

Dr. David Goss (Tahlequah,  
Oklahoma)

Dr. Meredith W. Morgan (Walnut  
Creek, California)

Dr. Alfred Rosenbloom (Chicago,  
Illinois)

OHS membership is open to all with an interest in ophthalmic history. The primary purpose of the Society is to encourage the development, preservation and maintenance of historical ophthalmic collections, both public and private, and to encourage research, publication and education along historical lines through every possible medium. The Society will hold its next meeting at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Optometry in Anaheim, CA in December 1991.

#### 1990 OHS Board meeting:

Each year at the American Academy of Optometry meeting the Board of the OHS gathers for a breakfast conference. The 1990 OHS Secretary, Bridget Kowalczyk, was in attendance at last year's Board meeting and filed this report.

A meeting of the Board of The Optometric Historical Society was held on Sunday December 9, 1990 in Nashville, TN. Present at the meeting were Dr. Douglas Penisten, Dr. Charles Haine, Dr. David Goss, Dr. Meredith W. Morgan, Dr. Alfred Rosenbloom, Dr. Walter Chase and Ms. Bridget Kowalczyk. Not present at the meeting was Dr. T. David Williams.

The treasurer's report was given by Dr. Penisten. Dr. Penisten reported that the certificate of deposit was on a yearly, not a 90 day maturity. There are presently 234 OHS members, 191 are in the United States and 43 from other countries. Because of non-payment of dues 74 names will be dropped from the roster. That will leave 160 paying members. The January issue of the newsletter will have an updated membership list.

There was a general discussion on how to increase membership. It was agreed that more publicity was needed. It was suggested that news items be placed in VISIONLINK, The American Optometric Association News and the Academy newsletter.

Dr. Penisten lead the discussion on the possible 1992 Fall Retreat. It was decided that the retreat would not be an annual event. The 1992 retreat will be in honor of the 700th anniversary of the invention of eyeglasses. A successful turnout would be 20-25 people. The meeting should be held on a Saturday and Sunday in late October or early November. Locations near St. Louis will be investigated as possible sites for the retreat. Pere

Marquette State Park in Illinois is a possible site. Dr. Penisten will try to have concrete plans at the December 1991 board meeting.

The Hofstetter Award was not presented this year. The award was not intended as an annual award. Ms. Kowalczyk will compile a list of recipients from the records held by ILAMO.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 a.m.

**1991 OHS Board members and officers:**

Listed below are the 1991 OHS Executive Board members and officers. Also listed is the year of each member's term expiration.

President	-	Meredith Morgan (1994)
Vice-President	-	Dave Goss (1993)
Secretary	-	Walt Chase (1994)
Treasurer	-	Chuck Haine (1992)
Trustees	-	Doug Penisten (1992)
		Al Rosenbloom (1993)
		Dave Williams (1991)

**Call for nominations:**

It is time for you to send in your nomination, or renomination, for the one position on the OHS Executive Board which will expire at the end of this year. The member whose term will expire is Dave Williams. By all means, do not hesitate to include yourself as a candidate if such responsibility interests you. The members who receive at least three nominations and agree to serve on the Board, will have their names placed on an election ballot which will be mailed with the next Newsletter. Please send your nominations to: Doug Penisten, College of Optometry, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, OK 74464-7098.

**1991 dues:**

For those OHS members which show 1991 OHS dues as outstanding, a dues statement has been enclosed with this issue of the Newsletter. Kindly send your check for the amount noted payable to the Optometric Historical Society with the lower portion of the dues statement. Your response to this invoice will be appreciated as only one dues statement is intended to be sent out. Thanks for your support!

**More on Armati's "Tombstone":**

The following letter was sent by OHS member Dr. Robert V. Sandor, Curator of the Museum of Optics and Eyewear in Stockholm, Sweden.

22/28

Dear Dr. Penisten,

As a member of the OHS, for more than one decade, I have been very impressed by the high level of knowledge and objectivity shown in the OHS Newsletters. Therefore I was surprised when I read about Jay Enoch's visit to the old church in Florence, Italy and the report about the Armati's "tombstone".

Actually, I missed any reproving, objective historical notes.

I hoped that such would come in some future issue, but to my astonishment I found nothing, not even in Vol. 21, No. 3 where Dr. Jerry Abrams "retraced" Jay Enoch's steps.

Still no historical comments from any of the readers.

So obviously I made the mistake in my supposition that everybody, who is interested in optical and optometrical history, knows that the Armati's tomb is a historical falsification! Therefore, please receive the following information and publish it, if you find it valuable.

In a guide-book about Florens, written by a certain Leopoldo del Migliores (Firenze citta nobilissima illustrata, 1684), in connection with the describing of the church S:a Maria Maggiore, the author stated:

Here was the place for a memorial, which has been demolished in connection with the restoration of the church, but which is carefully registered in our old funeral-list.

This will be still more cherished by us since we learn about the inventor of the spectacles.

It was the tomb of Mr. Salvino degli Armati, son of the Armatiens and of noble birth.

It was to see the sculpture of a man out-stretched lying on a stone-foundation in middle-class clothing with a paving-stone bearing the words:

Here is the resting place of Salvino d'Armato  
of the family of Armatiens from Florens, the  
inventor of spectacles.

God pardon his sins.

In the year of grace 1317.

So says the guide-book of the year of grace 1684.

...and please observe that there was actually no tomb left in the church in 1684.

Leopoldo del Migliores is talking about something which cannot be seen by his contemporary tourists!

So, what is more natural for a trained historian than looking after the mentioned "old funeral list" of the church?

...and there is no trace at all of such a list!

If Migliore's statement is true and there was such a list in the seventeenth century, the list would have been dated long before 1684, but as we know today, the church did not prepare such a funeral-list at that time at all. We cannot find a trace of the matter in Migliore's still preserved papers either. These documents are today in the library of Florens and there is no sign, trace, or evidence for the existence of the tomb in question! Consequently it seems, that we must search about the truth in the psychological state of Mr. Migliores himself.

To begin with, he was not a historian but an antique dealer and his reputation, depicted by contemporary authors, is not very good. It is written:

"He could allege everything without the truth and could transform a mosquito into an elephant."

Obviously, a very bad reference for a historian, even if it is only a guide-book we are dealing with...

Evidently, we must conclude that there is no evidence at all that the mentioned tomb with the remains of Mr. Armati ever existed!

What is more into the bargain (and which is implied also in the editorial comments in OHS Newsletter vol. 21 No. 3) is that already before 1684 are listed couples of books in which the authors are dealing with the inventors and invention of spectacle. (...and nobody mentioned the name Armati!)

So it appears to be probable to state that neither the mentioned tomb or Mr. Armati have ever existed!

But Migliores statement has had unfortunate consequences for the posterity interested in optical and optometrical history. Around 1730, a new guide book was issued about Florens, partly based on Migliores book, and the author of the new guide-book repeated Migliores statement about the Armati tomb.

The same happened in 1841, when a congress was arranged in Florens and the "fathers of the city" felt the need not only to repeat the false statement of Migliores (which gave status to the city) but also to add substance to this information of prestige. They gave order for the building of a tomb with a portraitbust (not a lying figure as Migliores describes). The false tomb was furnished also with a stone-plate with the inscription mentioned by Jay Enoch and Jerry Abrams. Of course the "tomb" contains no remains.

It was during the first years, after 1841, that this falsification was localized in the convent of S:a Maria and later, when this building was demolished in 1891, that the "tomb" was moved to its present place in the church of the convent, where our informants have discovered it.

The "tomb" design changed when it was moved from the convent to the church which can be seen in the enclosed illustrations. [These illustrations will be included in the next Newsletter.-Ed.] In order not to break from the start defect frame around the

Migliores/Armati history, the "tomb" was decorated not with the "portrait bust of Armati" as it is stated in the guide book of 1841, but with a bust which apparently is an earth-find from the late Roman times.

So dear Dr. Penisten, here are the facts and the true story of Armati "the inventor of spectacles". His "tombstone" in Florens is actually a memorial over an historical fake, he never existed outside of the fantasy of a certain Leopoldo del Migliores, an imaginative antique dealer of the 17th century, who was eager to give his contemporary tourists not only excitements but also a reputation of this city Florens.

...and obviously, he succeeded very much with this also in 1990's...

### About antiques:

The January 1991 issue of the Ophthalmic Antiques International Collectors Club Newsletter, no. 34, edited by Ronald J.S. MacGregor, 47 Chapelwell St., Saltcoats, Ayr., U.K., KA21 5EB, again provides some informative, and entertaining, tidbits about visual aids. Described is the auction at Sotheby's in London on October 10, 1990, which included a pair of "late 17th Century leather spectacles in their original wooden dug-out case" selling at £5575 (ca. \$11,000). Also, a slightly damaged Dollond telescope used by Admiral Lord Nelson in 1797 realized £8920 (ca. \$17,000). A bit wistfully MacGregor adds that "the prices realized do place them beyond the reach of the ordinary collector."

In the higher priced class are Napoleon's solid gold oval turnpin spectacles being offered in the U.S.A. by Nieman-Marcus at \$90,000, according to correspondent Dr. Charles Letocha.

Also mentioned is the availability of a new German publication, "Von Helmholtz: Augenspiegel zur Funduskamera" by Alfred Schett at about \$25.00 from Verlag Sauerlander, Laurenzenvorstadt 89, CH-5001, Aarau, Switzerland. The book is based on the models held in the Medical History Museum in Zürich.

A touching feature is a several paragraph account by Colin B. Fryer of a 12th day of Christmas mealtime gathering of three reminiscing passengers at the Airport on the Isle of Man over "glasses of Bort raspberry liqueur and Green Chartreuse," one of French, another of English, and the third of Russian origin. Among their assorted tales was the Russian's recollection of a student of Tsarist history who showed him his old photographs of St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) (and now St. Petersburg again). In one of the photographs was an optical shop with a window displaying "spectacles, microscopes, telescopes, zoetropes, magic lanterns and slides, and cameras and photographic apparatus." The history buff explained that these items were for the wealthy people while "ordinary people went to smaller opticians who sold besides spectacles, clocks, hats, umbrellas, and so on." He

documented his explanations with cuttings from a daily Russian newspaper, opticians' advertisements.

Valid? We may never know.

Another brief feature in the newsletter is an historical account of the Anglo American Optical Company, "one of the longest surviving optical companies in the U.K., more than a century old." It all started in the 1880's with Stanley Druiff who went to New York to establish a successful eyewear business and later returned to London to set up a prescription house and the London School of Optics to teach refraction.

The remainder of the account brings the story up to date and includes an invitation to visit the plant on a Sunday to see the extensive collection of optical antiques and enjoy a free buffet.

A final feature is Stuart Eadon-Allen's account of George Washington's telescope. There is no questioning the fact that the telescope was in fact Washington's, but it was clearly a forged copy of a Dollond instrument which the forger labeled with the misspelling "Dolland." Author Eadon-Allen guesses that the forgery could have been made during the period 1758-1772 when Dollond held the patent on the achromatic lens.

#### Aberrational pun:

A brief article by M.J. Abramowitz about image quality in microscopes in the February 15, 1991 issue of American Laboratory, vol. 23, no. 2, p. 146, is cleverly titled "Abberations"!

#### A century ago:

Issue number one of volume one of The Optician prompts the opportunity to recall events a hundred years ago. It was dated January 1891 and published and edited by Frederick Boger. The publication was loaned to me by Stan Herrin, editor of Chilton's Review of Optometry, the journal's present title.

The lead article is by Charles F. Prentice and is entitled, "A metric system of numbering and measuring prisms." In mathematical detail he describes the measurement and use of the prism dioptre, a term coined by him but which we now call prism diopter. He also coined the term prismometer to identify the instrument he designed to measure prismatic strength.

H.W H.

#### An early oculist's travelogue:

Flavel B. Tiffany, A.M., M.D., of Kansas City, Missouri, was perhaps the most extensively traveled ophthalmologist of the turn of the century. Perhaps, too, he was one of the most broadly cultured persons of his era. In 1917 he published a 365 page 15

x 20 cm. book entitled AROUND THE WORLD BY AN OCULIST with 82 photographs collected in a globe-circling itinerary of over seven months during 1912-13 with his bride of a few days. The total of 16 countries included Europe, the Far and Near East, Egypt, and the U.S.A., in each of which he contacted local ophthalmologists and quite incidentally gave many interesting accounts of their clinical activities and especially their surgical techniques and theories.

The essence of the book, however, is about their day to day and almost hourly travel experiences on trains and boats and on local sight-seeing tours and museum and institutional visits almost totally unrelated to ophthalmology except that he occasionally commented about the apparent prevalence of conspicuous ocular conditions in encountered populations. His style of writing is pleasingly anecdotal, much as one might describe travel experiences in a social setting. Further, he injects cultural references to poetry, art, music, architecture, the Bible, history, and the like to enhance or explain observations, artifacts, monuments, dress, customs, street scenes, behaviors, etc. Having myself visited many of the places some decades later I can vouch for the excellent descriptions of at least those aspects that had not changed in the interim.

The author had published numerous other earlier travel books and at least four editions of an excellent text entitled ANOMALIES OF REFRACTION AND OF THE MUSCLES OF THE EYE. The fourth edition of the latter in 1900 was comprehensively optometric in coverage, including basic optics, eye examining procedures, instrumentation, strabismus, spectacles, and dispensing. The words optometry and opticianry are virtually absent, however. In his preface to the first edition in 1894 he comments, "It is said that the inmates of insane asylums, homes for the feeble-minded, and prisons are, with few exceptions, either ametropic or heterophoric. It would seem then, that these anomalies may bear some intimate relation to man's moral nature."

Contrasting with his obvious sophistication in optometric knowledge and his above-quoted respect for the significance of ametropia and heterophoria is the fact that his global travel book makes hardly a single reference to spectacles, lenses, refraction, opticians, etc. as he must have observed in his travels. Perhaps an exception is his giving casual credit to a Dr. Poullain of Paris for invention of the "omnifocal" for seeing at any distance.

Similarly, he makes hardly a single reference to medicinal treatment of ocular problems. The possible exception is the credit given to two brothers, Drs. Pagenstecher of Wiesbaden, Germany, as "celebrated oculists, well known originators of the ointment or yellow salve now used in the treatment of eye trouble the world over."

In contrast, virtually every reference to clinical ophthalmological procedure relates to ophthalmic surgery,

including the last strangely irrelevant chapter of 18 pages describing in technical detail his own "tucking operation for strabismus" patterned after what he had seen performed in Calcutta by Dr. Maynard. In other words it is historically a bit puzzling that an ophthalmologist of his optometric talents and sophistication who could describe afternoon teas or a Chinaman's basket as well as ophthalmic surgery with utter fascination could have been so oblivious of the already well established spectacle industry worldwide and the rapidly expanding optometric delivery system. There is no hint of professional prejudice or bias. It merely suggests a trait of the medical culture of the era, namely, that the services of optometrists, then called opticians, were simply beyond the pale of the medical aristocracy. Dr. Tiffany's opening sentence in dedication to his three year old son Flavel III suggests his mental outlook, as follows, "I have often said that I have realized every ambition." --H.W H.

#### Another collection:

An April 1990 news release from the Vision Council of America/Better Vision Institute reported their receiving from Universal/Univis, Inc. the donation of handmade replicas of the eyeglass frames worn by President John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert to the Better Vision Institute collection of historical and antique eyewear.

According to W.J. Wilson, Director of Public Relations of VICA/BVI, when VICA accepted responsibility for financing and managing the BVI they also acquired the BVI historic eyeglass collection, but, as of August 28, a decision had not been made as to how best to display it.

#### Antiques bought and sold:

An unsolicited airmail envelope addressed correctly to me (H.W H.) at my home but without a return address contains an attractive folder advertising "Optische Antiquitäten, 1650-1950" from Gotz & Hannelore Remus, Affentorplatz 18, 6 Frankfurt 70 (West Germany), Tel. 069/617324. Categorically listed are spectacles, lorgnettes, opera glasses, telescopes, loupes, microscopes, ophthalmic instruments, trial lens sets, and other original pieces with optical motifs. The recipient is invited to call or write to consult on starting or expanding an optical collection. An attached sticker indicates a scheduled display at the Weltmesse der Augenoptik (optometric world fair) in Cologne on April 21-24, 1990. Also on the back of the folder is a very legibly inscribed note in English. "If you want to buy or to sell antique optical items, please inform me. Best regards. [Signature illegible.]"

Also included in the envelope is a self-addressed postcard on which one can express an interest in any of 21 categories of ophthalmic antiques merely by circling or checking the listed items.

**The APHA:**

The American Public Health Association is the world's largest interdisciplinary organization of researchers, health service providers, administrators, teachers, and other health workers. It has been influencing public policies in health matters since 1872.

It would probably be impossible to ascertain who was the first optometrist member and when he or she joined. I joined in 1964 upon the persuasion of optometrists Felix Keating and Alden N. Haffner, two of a very small number of optometrists active in calling attention to optometry's role in public health. The number was small enough to account for my not finding another optometrist at the first APHA convention I attended.

In 1971 during the APHA's 99th annual meeting, the American Optometric Association Committee on Public Health and Optometric Care in cooperation with the APHA planned the first optometric scientific session for the 1972 APHA meeting. The session was titled, "Visual Perception and Human Development."

In 1974 the American Optometric Association noted that "optometry was the only independent health profession without sectional status" in the APHA and, therefore, submitted a proposal to create an "Optometric Health Section." In 1975 the "Committee on Vision Care" was formed by the Medical Care Section in recognition of the hundreds of optometrist members already in that section. In 1976 two optometrists ran unsuccessfully on the slate of offices for the Medical Care Section, but in 1977 two optometrists, Bert Škuza and Sin Wong, were elected to the Section's Governing Council. The goal for separate Sectional status was set for 1978 but, for organizational staffing reasons, it was delayed a year by an APHA moratorium on all new sections. In 1979 the proposal was approved with a name change to Vision Care Section to make it more inviting to "all who are interested in vision/eye issues."

Participation in the Vision Care Section has included members from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and six continents. Disciplines include mostly optometrists but also a wide range of other professionals with allied interests. During the years of existence of the VCS of the APHA, eleven VCS-sponsored resolutions on vision care issues have been adopted by the APHA.

The above information is from a membership soliciting flier distributed by the Indiana Optometric Association to its members.

H.W H.

**Coins and medallions:**

A noteworthy collection of early coins and medallions featuring spectacles is that of the Zeiss museum in Jena,

Germany. Some of them date back to the 15th century, with the greatest number dated in the 16th and 17th centuries. The symbolism of the spectacles varies from portraying the wisdom of the owl to the transitoriness of the skull and hourglass, or even as a token of derision.

A brief column in the July/August 1990 issue of Augenoptik, Vol. 107, No. 4, p. 128, by H.Beez mentions several examples with historical details. Included is a photograph of a 1572 "Geusenpfennig" on display at the museum.

### COVD history:

The College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD) celebrated its 20th anniversary in November 1990. A description of its origins and evolution is provided in an article entitled "COVD: Twenty Years of Excellence" by Martin Kane and Robert Wold in the December 1990 issue of the Journal of Optometric Vision Development, pp. 3-9.

It was preceded by the National Society for Visual and Perception Training (NSVPT), which started in 1964 in Los Angeles. Early in 1969 two other similar organizations were independently created, the National Optometric Society for Developmental Vision Care (NOSDVC) in Minnesota, and the Southwest Developmental Vision Society (SWDVS) in Texas. Representatives of the three groups met in 1969 to negotiate a merger which was consummated on December 6, 1970 in San Antonio, Texas. The name change to COVD took place at the first annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, in October 1971.

The article further describes the establishment of membership categories and qualifications, a list of past presidents, interrelationship with other organizations, publication of a journal and newsletter, annual meetings, its award program and recipients list, and student involvement.

### Mike Drain Memorial:

In honor of the late C. Michael Drain, O.D., of St. Louis, who had been Chairman of the St. Louis Conference on Theoretical and Clinical Optometry, the Mid-America Vision Conference in 1981 established a memorial lectureship in his name in recognition of his role in the development and management of the prior conferences. The participants at each annual conference select by ballot the person or team making the "most stimulating presentation" to be the recipient of the award the following year. The first award was made posthumously to Dr. Drain in 1981.

### Early and late:

Charles Letocha calls our attention to two historical items. One is a 1990 book by Alfred Schett entitled "Vom Helmholtz -

"Augenspiegel zur Funduskamera" published by Verlag Sauerlander, Laurenzenvorstadt 89, CH-5001 Aarau, Switzerland.

In 82 pages it portrays the history of ophthalmoscopes as represented by the models at hand in the Medical History Museum in Zurich. Dr. Letocha knows the author to be "extremely conscientious and compulsive about details."

The other is an advertisement for Napoleon's spectacles in the Nieman-Marcus catalog. The catalog legend describes them as having "exquisitely wrought folding frames of 18-kt gold fitted with 2 1/2 sphere lenses of glass thought to be from Venice. The spectacles were made by the eminent firm of Joliot Freres, circa 1815."

Letocha learned that they were sold. \$90,000!

#### An editorial review:

Appearing as a guest editorial in the September 1990 issue of the Journal of the American Optometric Association, Vol. 61, no. 9, pp. 666-668, is an article by Sol Tannenbaum entitled, "The development of western optometry - a case for history." His citations are not referenced and the details are quite cursorily recited as he traces the development from the invention of spectacles with one object in mind, namely, to "emphasize the separate development of optometry in order to preserve the integrity, the history and dignity of our profession."

#### The evil eye in Greece:

Nicholas Gage (originally Ngagoyeanes) was brought to America in 1949 at the age of nine with four older sisters to live with their father, a Greek immigrant, after the death of their Greek mother under cruel circumstances. He wrote a biographical account of the family, including much of their background in rural Greece in his 1989 book entitled "A Place for Us".

In six instances he referred to the evil eye. The first was in reference to a Greek girl who "died of the evil eye at the age of seventeen, according to my father, when a passing priest remarked on her beauty. Priests were well known for being unwitting carriers of the evil eye . . ." In a second instance involving a series of family catastrophes the author comments, "Most Greeks would have blamed the evil eye and called in the priest to perform an exorcism".

On a third occasion, a young Greek man was stricken with the mumps a week before his wedding. "Like a forest fire, the rumor spread through the village: it was the evil eye". At the wedding the bride's mother-in-law gave the bride a sharp pair of embroidery scissors to hide in her hand and tuck them in among her flowers, explaining "that scissors would cut the power of the

evil eye, which would certainly be drawn to Kanta (the bride) by the admiration and envy of all who beheld her".

In a fifth instance, the author's father blamed his accident onto his son for giving him the evil eye. In the sixth reference to the superstition the author tells about his own birth in 1939, the first male in a family of five, being celebrated in many ways, including the covering of the mirrors in the house "to keep out the evil eye".

#### Folsum and Tufft:

Laurence P. Folsum, an optometrist of considerable national standing, and J. Edward Tufft, a long-time editor of Optometric World, each engaged in hobby-like indulgences totally outside of optometry. The former, for example, authored a 160 page book entitled "On Being HAPPY, HEALTHY and WISE" in 1951, Exposition Press, New York. The latter, a contemporary, wrote dozens of "prose poems" under the titles "The Cheerful Plowman", "The Ballads of Buckwheat Jones", "The Rhyming Farmer", and "The Thriving Thresherman", many of which re-appeared posthumously in a 112 page volume entitled "THE CHEERFUL PLOWMAN" in 1962, Exposition Press, New York.

An autographed copy of Folsum's book was given to me by D.J. Hummel, and a copy of Tufft's book was inscribed and given to me by the author's widow Ruby L. Tufft. The texts of both books are completely devoid of any mention of optometry, optics, lenses, spectacles, vision, and the like. However, I happen to believe that the cultural, civic, political, and other extraneous involvements of persons primarily engaged in optometric careers give us added insight into the character of the profession itself. For that reason I am forwarding these to ILAMO for preservation.

H.W H

#### Frontier spectacles:

As suggested several times in this newsletter, much of the history of spectacles can be gleaned from the literary as well as pictorial art. The instance this time is a reading of Edward Eggleston's classic novel, The Hoosier School-Master, which relates the encounters of a young schoolteacher in the backwoods village of Flat Creek, Indiana, in the 1850's.

Among the local characters portrayed in melodramatic style is Squire Hawkins, the local magistrate whose bearing was occasionally enhanced by his misfitting swallow-tail coat and a pair of black gloves. The author described the Squire's demeanor with frequent reference to his **dirty, waxy-colored, wig** which tended to slip off his bald pate; a **semicircular row of black-dyed whiskers "hedging the edge of the jaw and chin"**; badly fitted and frequently bobbing **false teeth**; an off-color glass eye "purchased from a peddler" perpetually becoming misdirected in or

out; and "a pair of spectacles 'with tortoise-shell rim,' wont to slip off."

Sample sentences include, "Here the spectacles fell off.", "Then he wiped his spectacles and put them on.", "The squire's spectacles slipped off several times while he read it.", and, "After a few moments' consultation, during which Squire Hawkins held his wig in place with one hand and alternately adjusted his eye and his spectacles with the other, . . . "

Inasmuch as the author himself was a backwoods preacher of the same era who published this very popular novel at the age of 34 his references to spectacles attest to the contemporarily familiar spectacles being a necessary nuisance of aging, an intellectual status symbol, and an amusingly conspicuous accouterment even among frontier dwellers.

#### I O O L history:

Received in the mail is a 15 page 21 x 15 cm pamphlet from the International Optometric and Optical League entitled A SHORT HISTORY and dated January 1991 (for the period 1927-1986). The first nine pages, which cover the period 1924-1977, are by Peter A. Smith, who was Honorary Secretary of the I O O L in 1977 and made Emeritus Secretary in 1986. The remaining pages, covering the period 1977 to 1986, are the work of Professor L. David Pickwell.

"The first suggestion of an international optical league appears to have originated in Paris in 1924 as a result of the adverse decision in the Courts in what became the historical 'Odin' case. In that case a French optician was accused under French medical law of using a medical instrument whilst practicing retinoscopy to measure the refractive condition of a client's eye. Odin lost the case. The effect of this action was to be long lasting."

In 1925 at an optical conference in Leipzig the need for an international league was further suggested and discussed but no formal proposal was made until 1927 at the British Optical Association International Congress at Oxford. These proposals were in a paper read by Herr W. Lohmann of Berlin which led to immediate expressions of support and the formulation of objectives and some of the regulations to be incorporated into bylaws. The official founding and adoption of a constitution took place at a meeting in Cologne in 1928. The first participating countries were France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Switzerland, and the U.S.A., with Sweden joining soon after. The organization was named the International Optical League.

Mr. J.H. Sutcliffe, the then Secretary of the British Optical Association, was appointed the first President and Herr Lohmann the first Secretary. The members of the first Executive Committee were Professor F.A. Woll (U.S.A.), Mr. C. Schmidt

(France), Mr. W. Ecker (Switzerland), Mr. W.J. De Bruyne (Netherlands), and Mr. J.H. Sutcliffe (England).

The general objectives of the I.O.L. were the improvement of the opticians' status internationally and the defense and encouragement of the practice of refraction by opticians. The expansion and implementation of these objectives academically, legislatively, and organizationally as well as the broadening of membership and international participation during the subsequent decades are clearly described in the subsequent pages. The name change to International Optometric and Optical League was made in 1969. In subsequent years the membership expanded to include representation from every continent and numerous island nations.

The address of the IOOL is 10 Knaresborough Place, London SWS OTG, England, telephone 071-370 4765, telefax 071-373 1143.

### Jacksonian Optical College:

Another turn-of-the-century mailing in OHS member James Leeds' collection is a series of three letters from Jacksonian Optical College to Mr. J.W. Golden of Dunbar, Pennsylvania, dated April 21, June 21 and October 17, 1904, soliciting his enrollment in a correspondence course. Included with the first letter is a return envelope addressed simply "Jacksonian Optical College, Jackson, Michigan," an Enrollment Blank to accompany the \$10.00 tuition for the course, a part-payment order form which provided for paying the \$7.50 balance of the tuition fee after paying \$2.50 in advance and receiving the complete course, a large spread sheet captioned, "What Prominent Physicians and Others have to say regarding our Correspondence Course in Optics", and a 20-page 17 x 12 cm prospectus explaining the offering.

The first of the three letters is a strong sales pitch pointing out the simplicity of learning optics and the rewarding career opportunities. The second one started, "We have been considerably disappointed . . .". The third started, "We have been decidedly disappointed..."

The prospectus (fourth edition, 1903) identifies the college as "authorized and chartered under the laws of the State of Michigan." The President is Lester J. Harris, M.D. The course leads to the O.G. (Graduate of Optics) degree. A handsome 22" x 18" diploma is available for a \$2.50 fee. The curriculum consists of seven lessons, Anatomy and Physiology of the Eye, Light, Lenses, Errors of Refraction, Astigmatism, Best Methods for Testing, and How to Test the Eyes. The prospectus itself gives a brief discourse on the anatomy of the eye. It is suggested that an optical career should attract not only young men and women but also "preachers, physicians, druggists, jewelers, business men, and aged and infirm persons."

Most fascinating is a photograph on the back of the prospectus entitled, "Correspondence and Sales Department."

Shown are about 25 office employees busily working at typing tables in several rows in a large room.

Another optometrist memorialized:

The Dr. George N. Jessen Award has been established by the National Eye Research Foundation to recognize "worldwide clinicians who give tirelessly in their efforts to bring all the precious bits of knowledge and technique adding to the sum total of professional practice and progress."

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