

# HINDSIGHT

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OPTOMETRY LIBRARY

Newsletter of the  
Optometric Historical Society

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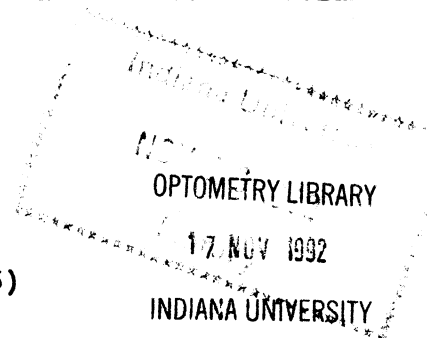
JULY 1992

Number 3

## 1992 OHS Board members and officers:

Listed below are the 1992 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	-	Walter Chase (1994)
Treasurer	-	Chuck Haine (1992)
Trustees	-	Doug Penisten (1992)
		Al Rosenbloom (1993)
		Patricia Carlson (1995)



## 1992 OHS annual meeting:

As is done every year, the OHS will have its annual gathering during the American Academy of Optometry meeting, but this year will be a little different. Instead of conflicting with the myriad of other events running on the Saturday evening, we have decided to try another time slot in the hopes of allowing more people to attend. This year the OHS meeting will be held on **Sunday December 13, 8:00 - 8:50 am, Cambridge Room, Buena Vista Palace Hotel, Orlando, Florida.** Ms. Amarilis Noriega, Library Director of the Inter American University School of Optometry, Puerto Rico, has accepted the invitation to address our group. She will discuss her work in the development of the optometry library and museum at Inter American.

## Hofstetter to be honored:

Colleagues, students, and friends of Henry W Hofstetter will present papers during a symposium named in his honor on Monday morning, December 14 at the American Academy of Optometry annual meeting in Orlando, Florida. This symposium was organized as a special tribute to Dr. Hofstetter with the particular intent of recognizing his many and diverse contributions to the profession of optometry. The following people will be speaking during this symposium: Meredith Morgan, Alden Haffner, David Goss, Theodore Grosvenor, Douglas Penisten, George Woo, William Baldwin, Irvin Borish, William Lyle, and Edwin Marshall.

To further honor this event, a reception will be held for Dr. Hofstetter during the Indiana University School of Optometry Alumni gathering on Saturday evening, December 12, 7:00 - 8:30. The room for this reception has not yet been designated, so be sure to check

the published event schedule upon your arrival in Orlando to confirm the time and place. See you all there.

D.K.P.

Call for nominations:

It is time for you to send in your nominations, or renominations, for the two positions on the OHS Executive Board which will expire at the end of this year. The members whose terms will expire are Chuck Haine and Doug Penisten. 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 the ballot which will be mailed with the next issue of Hindsight. Please send your nominations to: Henry W Hofstetter, 2615 Windermere Woods Drive, Bloomington, IN 47401.

1991 OHS annual meeting:

OHS Secretary Walter Chase submitted the following report describing the 1991 OHS annual meeting.

This is an account of the meeting of the Optometric Historical Society, held on December 14 during the 1991 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Optometry. The meeting took place in the Cerritos Room on the first floor of the Sierra Tower at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, California.

The meeting was called to order by President Meredith Morgan at about 7:00 p.m. Attendance at the meeting was disappointing (toes were not required for counting heads) apparently because of competition from scheduled Academy events and meetings. Attendance was also variable from minute to minute due to the Indiana University reception across the hall. We had water, but they had chips and flavored water of some kind (so I was told).

President Morgan determined that a quorum was apparently not going to be present at any time during the meeting, so no official business could be conducted.

There was some discussion about potential merits and disadvantages of merging the OHS with another historical society having nearly identical interests. There seemed to be a general agreement that this would be worth exploring with the membership.

The scheduled speaker was Dr. Henry B. Peters, Dean Emeritus, School of Optometry at the Medical Center, University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Peters handily delivered his address entitled "Five Optometric Pioneers in the Establishment of the University of California School of Optometry", to the OHS, after which he received a standing

ovation. It was suggested, with unanimous assent, to recommend to the editors of the society's newsletter that this address be published in the newsletter. The assemblage was then reminded of Dr. Douglas Penisten's excellent presentation at last year's Society meeting. It was suggested, again followed by unanimous assent, to recommend that this work also be published in the society's newsletter.

The meeting was then adjourned by President Morgan.

If anyone in attendance at the meeting has additions or corrections for this account, the secretary would appreciate a note to that affect.

#### Henry Peters presentation:

The following paper was presented by Dr. Henry Peters at the 1991 OHS annual meeting held on December 14 at the Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, California.

"Five Optometric Pioneers in the Establishment of the University of California School of Optometry"

I guess it's a sign of age, but as I approached retirement I found myself looking back.

I spent several days with Maria Dablemont and her staff at the International Library, Archives and Museum of Optometry at AOA in St. Louis. What fun, what a resource. I quickly found that there was so much information that I had to restrict my search. Since I was preparing this presentation for the Peters Memorial Lecture (1986) at the meeting of the Berkeley Alumni Association, I decided to confine myself to the individuals who were principally responsible for the beginnings of the School of Optometry of the University of California at Berkeley: Schneider, Minor, Mason, Stoddard and Tom Peters.

I know I will leave out some important persons in this, and I make no attempt to provide a detailed history of events, but I want to share with you my perceptions of these five men. Optometry was indeed fortunate that they were contemporaries, fervently shared their belief in the importance of education, and were so mutually supporting.

It was in 1907, five years after the enactment of the first optometry practice act in California that Charles H. Wood, an Oakland optometrist, spoke to the Alameda County Society of Optometrists on the importance of having a chair in optometry at the University of California. George Schneider was the secretary of the Society, organized just nine months before, and he was instructed to write all local societies to support his request. The state association endorsed this proposal in 1908.

George L. Schneider is the first giant I wish to present. He is the only one of the five I do not personally remember. But he is a man you should remember. He was a giant.

Some of us tend to imagine that our predecessors of the 18th and 19th Century were either itinerant spectacle peddlers or small shopkeepers. This image has been nurtured by the pictures Bausch and Lomb circulated among optometrists for years. Nothing could be further from the truth. The optician-optometrists were affluent, prominent members of their communities and politically powerful. George Schneider was all of these.

Born in 1874 he died in 1928 at the age of 54. My first reference to him is 1901, as "one of the prime movers in the organization of the California State Association of Opticians (1897); in fact it was due to his untiring efforts that that association was formed." He served as secretary until 1901. At that time he was with the firm of Charles Haas & Son in Stockton, California.

But he came to Berkeley around the turn of the century where he established a highly successful practice, and, as I said, was secretary of the local society. He was also an amateur entomologist and had many friends on the Berkeley Campus. It was natural that he should chair the committee that met several times with President Benjamin Ide Wheeler to request the establishment of a chair in optometry. "President Wheeler signified his willingness that a chair in optometry may be established. After further consideration of the subject...we bumped against the suggestion of Dr. Wheeler that he would consult his oculist friends and have one or two of them outline the studies. That was an immediate warning to us. It was fully evident that there was at least a possibility of losing control of the thing at the very beginning." It wasn't until 1915 that a program was established in the Extension System of the University - a program of evening lectures at a cost of \$5.00 for each course of 15 lectures, for practicing optometrists (33 attended the first course, 42 the second).

By 1910 the California group was dissatisfied with the control of the American Optical Association by the "eastern block" (principally New York and Pennsylvania) and in 1911 descended on the national convention in Salt Lake City. Here, with George Schneider as their leader, they completely rewrote the constitution, establishing the representative voting system that persists to this day, and elected George Schneider as president. He served 2 years as president, the first westerner, and perfected the reorganization of the association, and later changing its name to the American Optometric Association. Dues were then increased from 50 cents per year to 1 dollar per year.

In 1918 he was the founding president of the Optometric Research Society to support research to further the advancement of the profession. Also in 1918, he resigned from the AOA Executive Council and Optometry Endowment Fund Commission (which supported

state activities to legalize optometry). His letter of resignation includes the following:

After declaring his dedication to the programs of the AOA he said:

"I, however, am in the condition of the fellow who had the bear by the tail - he couldn't let go without being bitten - only, in my case, I will have to stand for the "bite" because I am actually overwhelmed by demands for time. Besides AOA work, two municipal commissions, vice president of the Red Cross chapter and subcommittee head in local war work, I am suddenly favored with three new jobs. The University of California has asked my help in arranging "extension" lectures in optometry in chief cities of California; the State officers want my help in a membership drive; and thirdly, I am asked to help guide certain optometry legislation at Sacramento."

This gives you some idea of the magnitude of the contributions of this one man. In 1923, Berkeley suffered a great fire (shades of 1991). Schneider organized the local optometrists to provide free optometric services to the needy victims.

Together with Ralph Minor they established a program in optometry in the Extension System of the University in 1915. He hailed this as a great victory and the result of persistent effort. More about Minor's role in this later. But the program was well attended and its success encouraged both the optometrists and the University to further explore the possibility of a regular curriculum in optometry. George Schneider participated actively in all this and called on his friendship with University administrators to further the endeavor. James P. Southall of Columbia contributed to the Extension program in the summer of 1917 with a course in optics.

In 1922 the Regents tentatively approved a two-year curriculum in optometry for students who had completed a prescribed two-year lower division program. They approved an A.B. degree for the 4 years and assigned the program to the Physics Department. The optometrists contributed \$9,000 to cover the first-year costs and passed legislation to increase the license renewal fee from \$2 to \$10 with the \$8 to go to the University for support of the program. The Finance Committee of the regents thought this would "provide sufficient funds to carry on the courses in the future". Ralph Minor was asked to direct the new curriculum and George Schneider was appointed Lecturer in Optometry.

Two students were admitted (as Juniors) in September 1923 graduating in 1925. Dr. Fred Mason was recruited in 1924, and things were off and running. Reluctantly we leave George L. Schneider and turn our attention to our second giant, Ralph S. Minor. Thank you George.

I only add that at the Annual Convention of the California Optometric Association in 1949 the delegates established the George L. Schneider Memorial Scholarship Fund with a gift to the

University of \$4,287.77 gratefully acknowledged by President Robert Gordon Sproul.

Ralph S. Minor was born in 1876 in Deposit, New York, and died in 1961 at the age of 85. He attended Hamilton College where he was a Root Fellow in Science, graduating in 1898. He received his Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Gottingen in Germany in 1902. In 1903 he joined the faculty of the University of California at Berkeley where he was solely responsible for establishing the undergraduate program in physics. He took three years leave from Berkeley to establish the physics department at the University of Nevada.

Back in Berkeley, he became acquainted with optometry - but let him tell this part of the story in his own words:

Teaching is responsible for my acquaintance with optometry and optometrists. One evening forty years ago (about 1905), I had a visit from the Alameda County Association of Optometrists. In response to my question as to what I could possibly do for them, they asked me if I would deliver a lecture to their group on the radiometer. Did they want anything in the lecture about lenses? No, just the radiometer. Would they care for experiments? Oh yes, that would be fine. So they named the place and date.

The radiometer, as you know, is a little vertical axle carrying two cross arms and ending in small squares of mica, or isinglass, as we used to call it. One side of each little square had been blackened. The axle is inside a small bulb from which most of the air has been removed.... After the explanation (of why the vanes revolve), I took up my crude lens of ice and held it near the radiometer, and put the hot poker still further away. The poker did not glow. I asked to have the lights put out and then I noticed the men crowding up to the radiometer. I was conscious of a suppressed excitement. After a couple of minutes I took the poker away and called for the lights. There was a loud exclamation for the little vane was spinning its head off.

Then I was informed. The downstairs men...had an argument with the upstairs men. One group said the thing ran because of light. The other group said it ran because of heat...I had been asked to talk on the radiometer to settle the bet.

Dr. Minor was asked to return to talk on lenses and refraction and became convinced of the sincerity of the optometrists. It was he who arranged for the first lecture series through the Extension System and became convinced of the need for an optometry curriculum. Through his good efforts and reputation within the University, as well as the efforts of George Schneider and his association committee that the optometry program was approved by the Regents in 1922. Dr. Minor accepted the responsibility for directing this program within the Physics Department of the University, awarding an AB degree. He engineered the development

of this program from a physics major (physics - optometry) to separate Department of Optometry in 1940 and finally in 1941 established the School of Optometry. He became its first dean.

When the school was established it was authorized to award the B.S. degree in Optometry and there was a promise to expand the curriculum to five years and award an M Opt. degree. The war intervened and he had retired (1946) before this took place in 1948. The Doctor of Optometry degree, with further expansion of the curriculum, was not authorized until 1962.

There are so many accomplishments of this giant of a man that this whole talk could be usefully devoted to him. I will mention only three, and leave others to fill in the details. First, his close relations with Southall and Woll of Columbia encouraged him to recruit Frederick L. Mason as Lecturer in Optometry in 1924. Southall had been helpful to Minor in negotiations with the University.

More about Mason later.

The second item of importance was Minor's role in the development of the Optometry building, now named after him. He played a leading role in this and, with my father, Thomas H. Peters, developed the support of the California Optometric Association. I could not find a reference when this was first proposed, but I do know that it was the centerpiece of the administration of my father during his terms as President of the California Optometric Association in 1939 and 1940. There was great mutual respect and love between Ralph Minor and Tom Peters. More about Tom Peters later, but he, Ralph Minor and Herman Davis of Sacramento toured the state promoting the building fund. Optometrists were asked to pledge \$200 each, payable over five years, to this fund. This was unheard of in those days, but they raised \$85,000 in cash and pledges. In the meantime they negotiated with Dr. Robert Gordon Sproul and obtained his approval.

World War II intervened and when the war was over, building costs had escalated to the point that the funds available were woefully inadequate. The committee, this time headed by Tom Peters, went to the State Legislature. It is remarkable that the State had not funded a single capital construction project since 1941. In 1947 the legislature provided a grant of \$300,000 for the School of Optometry, the first and only such grant in that year. In 1948 the "new" optometry building was dedicated.

The personal effort of Dr. Minor throughout this eight-year effort was simply magnificent. The delays and disappointments would have discouraged a less dedicated soul.

The third item is of importance, too. Dr. Minor was an amateur typographer of note, operating his own press, setting his own type in the basement of his home. Every year, from 1933 through 1954 (8 years after his retirement) he printed and distributed the "Directory of the Optometry Alumni" all at his own

expense. He kept track of weddings, children and other important information, all carefully annotated in the directory.

An ardent scholar, he took up our fight and gave us leadership, always a kind and gentle mentor, Ralph Minor was a giant to whom we owe much. He deserves to be remembered.

Frederick L. Mason was recruited by Dr. Minor as the first full time Lecturer in Optometry in 1924. Dr. Mason, as he liked to be addressed, was born in 1887 in upstate New York and died in 1954 at the age of 67. He received a bachelors degree from Syracuse University, served as an officer in the Navy in World War I, and received a certificate in optometry from Columbia University and an MA degree from the University of California. Probably no single individual made more of an impression on a whole generation of optometry students (from 1924 to 1953). His original textbook "Principles of Optometry" was our bible. His stern demeanor and no-nonsense conduct in class and clinic scared the hell out of us, but his devotion to precise definitions and logical problem solving set a standard we came to greatly appreciate and admire.

My favorite story about Mason was told by Monroe Hirsch. Mason graded an examination blue book where Hirsch had misspelled accommodation consistently. On page one he marked it "-1, sp", on page three he marked it "-2, spelling", on page four he wrote "-5 I see you still haven't learned to spell accommodation" in big red letters, and on page seven he wrote "I give up - F".

What I have learned in my limited research is a whole other side to this complex man. He spent many hours lecturing optometrists all over the state on topics related to optics and optometry. There are so many references to his appearing on the programs of local societies that we have to wonder at his stamina and his dedication. He represented the optometry program at Berkeley in national meetings of the AOA and later at meetings of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry.

When the Alameda County Association recognized the severe need for vision care by needy children during the Great Depression, they organized a volunteer clinic in donated space in downtown Oakland. That was in 1932. Fred Mason assumed the role of Chief Clinician, donating his time. This clinic provided free services to needy children for nearly 5 years. Tom Peters was a dedicated participant in this volunteer service.

Dr. Frederick L. Mason was a giant of a man who left an indelible impression on a generation of optometry students. He, too, deserves to be remembered.

Kenneth Berkeley Stoddard was born in Newport, Rhode Island in 1904 and died in 1970 at the age of 66. He attended school at Newport and Los Angeles, graduating from Los Angeles High School in 1923. He attended UCLA receiving his AB degree in 1928. He attended graduate school at Stanford University receiving his MA in 1930 and his Ph.D. in Physics in 1931.

Dr. Stoddard served as an Assistant in Physics at Stanford in 1928 and as an instructor in 1930 and 1931. He then became an Assistant Professor of Physics at Arizona State College 1931-32 when he returned to Stanford for three years.

In 1935 he became a student in optometry at the University of California at Berkeley, receiving the Certificate in Optometry in 1937. After a brief experience in private practice, Dr. Minor recruited Dr. Stoddard to join the faculty of the School of Optometry as a Lecturer in 1938 where he was promptly promoted to Assistant Professor (the first such promotion in a University School of Optometry). He was subsequently promoted to Associate Professor in 1943 and Professor in 1948. He spent the summers of 1939 and 1940 at Dartmouth Eye Institute where he qualified as an aniseikonia clinician, establishing a long-time interest in this subject.

During World War II he served as a physicist at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory, a service that was to have a marked effect on this life. He worked in a mass spectrograph separating U-238 for the first atom bombs. There was little personal protection and precious little perception of the need for such. Later, as some of his colleagues died of cancer and radiation poisoning, he lived in constant fear that he, too, would be affected by radiation damage.

He became Dean of the School of Optometry in 1946 on the retirement of Dr. Minor, a position he held until his retirement due to illness in 1961.

Dr. Stoddard had been an excellent gymnast in college and for a period toured the Orpheum Circuit as an acrobat to earn money to continue his education. His hobby was photography and he never lost his "down east" manner of speech, nor his love of the sea.

Dr. Stoddard implemented the five-year curriculum and the Master of Optometry degree and even more importantly initiated the graduate program in Physiological Optics, awarding the MS and Ph.D. degrees.

Dr. Stoddard was an Honorary Life Member of the American Academy of Optometry and served on the Executive Council. He was president for two years of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (1950-52).

He presided at Berkeley during a period of expansion: the new building was dedicated in 1948 but not completely occupied until 1950. There was an opportunity to add new faculty to serve the graduate program and the five-year curriculum. To his credit he chose that faculty extremely well setting the stage for academic leadership in optometry.

I don't know if he was the first to invent the now highly touted "Management by Walking Around" but he certainly practiced it. He seemed to be everywhere, all the time, and knew intimately

the research he fostered in his faculty as well as the details of the clinical program in which he participated.

Stoddard's influence is still on the halls of the School of Optometry. He was a giant.

Finally I bring you my beloved father, Thomas H. Peters, in whose honor this Memorial Lecture has been given for 30 years. I started with a practitioner, George Schneider; presented three academic giants, Ralph Minor, Frederick Mason and Kenneth Stoddard; so it seems fitting to conclude with a practitioner, Thomas Peters. He was not an alumnus, nor did he ever serve on the faculty, but a man more dedicated to the development of the School of Optometry is not to be found in its history. Born in Oakland of Irish immigrant parents he started his career as an apprentice manufacturing jeweler with Shreves in San Francisco. He told great tales of the earthquake and fire of 1906. He married my beloved mother, Eleanor, in 1909 and studied optometry at night at the California College of Optometry (successor to Benson's) in San Francisco. He graduated in 1916 and with a family now grown to include three children, he started practice in Oakland. He moved to San Jose for two years and returned permanently to Oakland in 1920.

In the early days things were tough. Tom and Eleanor had five children, one of whom died in the flu epidemic of 1917, but he always found time to participate in organized optometry. He was completely dedicated to the ideals of professional practice. Before the days of a paid executive secretary and staff, Tom served as Director of Legislative Affairs for the COA - for five years conducting much of the business of the COA out of an attic room in our home or on the Sacramento Shortline train to the State Capital. Many a night I have awakened to hear the tat-tat-tat of his typewriter in the wee small hours.

He served as president of the COA two terms in 1938 and 1939. On top of all this he participated in the Extension classes in Optometry provided by Ralph Minor and George Schneider.

To those of you involved in physical fitness programs, he played tennis every morning at 6 AM when it wasn't raining - at Lakeside Park in Oakland.

Most important to the School of Optometry he negotiated with President Robert Gordon Sproul for the development of a building to house the optometry program. I've already told you how he made the building fund the centerpiece of his years as president of the COA and how he served to raise the funds for its construction.

At the time of his death in 1956 at the age of 70 the Journal of the California Optometric Association published a "Tribute to Thomas H. Peters" testifying to his many contributions to the profession and to the esteem with which he was held by his many friends and colleagues. Ken Stoddard concluded his comments with the quotation "He left this a better world for having lived in it".

I cannot leave this part of my talk without acknowledging my personal sense of gratitude for the man whom I was fortunate to have as my father. He practiced standards of integrity, of service and accomplishment that have been a challenge to me all my life, and he did it with a gentleness and humor I have never been able to achieve. He was a giant.

I end this now with the fervent prayer that some of you will be stimulated to study further the history of the giants whose leadership and dedication made our present achievements possible at your institution.

I know I have left out many, some living and some dead, who deserve to be appropriately chronicled. But we leave that to another day and perhaps other historians. I have had a wonderful time preparing this talk and I thank you for the opportunity.

#### Abrams on Abe:

OHS member Dr. Jerry Abrams truly has the historical "bug"! Like several other members of this organization, Jerry makes it a point to attend the annual meetings of both the Optometric Historical Society and the other OHS, the Ocular Heritage Society. (For a description of this organization see Hindsight, vol. 23, no. 2, April 1992, p.14.)

At the May 1992 meeting of the Ocular Heritage Society Jerry presented the paper "Abe's Eyes." He kindly sent us a copy to be published in Hindsight.

Five months before he received the Republican nomination for the Presidency, Abraham Lincoln wrote, at the request of a campaign worker, an autobiographical sketch. In a few hundred words, not one of them superfluous, he told of his birth and birthplace, of his parents, of the migrations of his family, and of his schooling. He ended the sketch with a description of himself: "I am, in height 6 feet, 4 inches, nearly lean in flesh, on an average 180 pounds, dark complexion with coarse dark hair, and grey eyes--no other marks or brands recollected."

Lincoln wrote of himself as he saw himself. He wrote of his eyes being grey. They were, but they were more than just another pair of grey eyes. They were, and he could not have been aware of it, one of the most outstanding "marks or brands" on his face--or so those who have made themselves authorities on Lincoln's physiognomy have concluded.

Some have reported that Lincoln may have had Marfan's Syndrome--a genetic disorder marked by tall stature, with long and large hands--usually marked by a subluxated lens--many argue that Lincoln did not suffer from this disorder.

On the anniversary of his birth in 1976, the Library of Congress opened a box of the President's belongings from the

night he was shot. Included in the personal effects were two pairs of eyeglasses which were examined and determined to be +1.75 and +2.00 power, respectively. These would be ordinary reading glasses for a man Lincoln's age, showing the absence of myopia and less likelihood of Marfan's Syndrome.

Here are some of the observations on Lincoln's eyes gleaned from the literature. Some of the observations have a ring of truth and some are certainly touched with fancy.

First, it has been recorded that Lincoln's eyes were small, grey and deeply set. Abe could see nothing to admire in flowers, so one authority took this to mean that Lincoln was color-blind. Another authority said that Lincoln's eye looked queer at times, that it would suddenly get "crossed" and turn upward. Lincoln's face was more or less accentuated by the peculiarity of the left eye, whose pupil had a tendency to turn or roll slightly toward the upper lid, while the right eye maintained a normal position. When Lincoln was engaged in the important Lincoln-Douglas debates, newspapermen wrote of his wildly rolling eye.

An eye doctor of the old school has expressed the view that Lincoln was the victim of hyperphoria or hypertropia, and this uncorrected condition was directly responsible for Lincoln's melancholy nature.

In 1914, two ophthalmologists examined a portrait of Lincoln and then made the following statements: That Lincoln had a heterophoria and it was obvious when any good full-face photograph of him was studied; that it was amazing to discover that a real effort was necessary to look at Honest Abe "straight in the eye". Lincoln's gaze was returned by the right eye of the photograph only, while the left eye was directed upward 8 to 10 degrees. Closer examination showed that his left eye was actually set higher than his right eye. Also, that his left eyebrow was usually more elevated than the right. This tendency of the left eye to turn upward left uncovered more of the white surface of the sclera below the iris and gave a slightly staring effect on that side in strange disharmony with the appearance of the right eye.

Support substantiating this anomaly comes from the story that when Lincoln was ten years old, he was kicked in the head by a horse, knocked unconscious for many hours, and was thought for a time to be dead. Lincoln recovered without medical assistance and seemed to have no apparent serious after effects. Modern-day doctors, however, say that this traumatic blow to the eye can readily cause damage to the superior oblique eye muscle and could easily have been a cause for Lincoln's left eye hypertropia.

From many of these observations the following conclusion has been drawn by some: Lincoln's right eye was dominant and was always used for general vision and no doubt entirely for

reading. The tendency of the left eye to turn upward and outward produced more or less of an overlapping of visual images. The upward deviation of the left eye was certainly great enough to produce lack of fusion of its image with that of the right eye. Lincoln seems to have followed the pattern set by most with a similar condition, he reacted attentively to the image of the right eye and suppressed or ignored that of the left eye.

Lincoln himself reports his own awareness of his troublesome eyes, that in 1860 just having been elected, was well tired out and went home to rest, throwing himself upon a lounge in his room. Opposite to where he lay was a bureau with a swinging glass upon it; and looking into the glass, he saw himself reflected nearly at full length, but his face he noticed had two separate and distinct images, the top of the eye of one being about three inches from the tip of the other. He was a little bothered and got up and looked into the glass, but the illusion vanished. On lying down again, he saw it a second time. This time he noticed that one of the faces was a little paler than the other. He got up and the thing melted away.

The above-mentioned phenomenon, of course, can readily be explained today but at that time there was no one around to define this double imagery. This episode would spring up from time to time but apparently did not worry Lincoln too much.

Today's modern eye men could have given Lincoln a rational explanation of these episodes of diplopia, and Lincoln being an intelligent man, would have accepted the explanation. But in 1860 there were no eye doctors in Springfield. Therefore, it was necessary for Lincoln to provide his own explanation.

Being a self-educated man, as in so many self-educated, there were wide areas of knowledge of which he was ignorant. One of these areas was that of the physiology of vision. Being sensitive, patient, compassionate, simple of heart, and humble, he sought for and found support he needed from his wife, Mary. He took the simple episodes of double vision he had experienced and turned them into a sign of divine approval of the course he knew it was his lot to take.

Although he was a deeply religious man, Lincoln never affiliated himself with an established faith. He and his wife believed that Lincoln had destiny, blessed by the divine and that this destiny would lead him to the Presidency.

The hour of the successful election came and God gave to Abraham a sign. Lincoln saw his face and then he saw his face again, paler the second time. As with the prophets of old, God had clearly blessed Lincoln and had shown him the path he must follow. Lincoln was to serve one term as President; then he was elected for a second term, but his divinely approved task was to be finished before the end of that second term.

Death would then come. So it was that Abraham and Mary Lincoln explained Abe's illusion, his ghost, his episodes of diplopia.

Yes, a visit to an eye doctor would have given Abe the correct scientific explanation of his illusion. But his own explanation, derived from his own peculiar, simple genius, allowed him to round out the framework of his personality with those elements of faith in himself that he so sorely needed. His "vision" needed no further correction.

#### Silver Celebration at Waterloo:

The School of Optometry, University of Waterloo, Canada, is celebrating during 1992 the 25th anniversary of its establishment. To mark the event a celebration including a reception and a continuing education program will be held on November 13 and 14. A glossy flyer describing this event and also containing pictures of the first optometry clinic and faculty was sent to us by the organizing chairman and OHS member George Woo.

#### American Indians and eyes:

My co-editor Doug Penisten has authored a chapter on the "Eye and Vision in North American Indian Cultures: Historical Perspective on Traditional Medicine" in a 1990 book, pp. 186-190, entitled "Eye and Vision Conditions in the American Indian". The book is edited by David A. Goss and Linda L. Edmondson and published by Pueblo Publishing Press, Yukon, OK, U.S.A. The chapter cites 19 references on such topics as visual aids, smoke as an environmental eye hazard, medicinal treatments, the nature of Indian legends and myths, and the Indian concept of an "evil eye". Penisten gives special credit to his wife Alphie for directing him to much of the source material. She is collecting Indian lore material for a book to be published in Afrikaans.

H.W H.

#### Instrumental art forms:

Gracing the front cover of the Fall 1991 issue of American Heritage of Inventions & Technology, Vol. 7, No. 2, is a close-up view of a portion of a 1910 keratometer manufactured by the F.A. Hardy Company of Chicago. Featured in an article by Thomas H. Garver entitled "The Engineer's Art" on pages 20-26 is a one-and-a-half page profile view of the same instrument in brassy color-tone.

The theme of the article is the historically aesthetic attribute of "art" inherent in many instruments, devices, and machines "not only in their craftsmanship but also in their broader quality of judgment and rightness, balance, and completeness." As a historian of art and a collector of scientific and technological devices the author explains, "This is art insofar as it is about obsession, about building an instrument in the best possible manner, with integrity and respect for its use." Other early

instruments and machines beautifully illustrated in the article include a 1950 locomotive, a 1900 generator, 2 early photometers, a 1911 electric meter, a 1940 barograph, a 1911 potentiometer, and a 1930 analytical balance.

A point that may come to the mind of the reader is that this may be a disappearing art form, for such craftsmanship is not only being de-emphasized by automation but also being hidden under plastic housings with only dials, buttons, and digitals exposed.

#### ASCO's 50th:

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of its first official meeting the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry has published a historical review in the form of an attractive 16 page brochure. The first page, a citation from Albert Fitch's book, reminds us that representatives of the optometry schools and colleges in the U.S. and Canada actually met annually for over 20 years earlier but did not organize formally until June 2, 1941.

Most of the information is derived from the ASCO minutes and from interviews with three "old-timers", Drs. Irvin Borish, E.J. Fisher, and Henry Hofstetter. Photographs of all the presidents, present and past, are included.

The text was written by Jerry L. Christensen during his term as ASCO President, 1989-1991, with editorial and technical assistance from several associates. The printing was done at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, but distribution presumably is by the Association.

#### A happy message:

Again, the holiday greeting card of the year arriving in my mailbox is the one from OHS member Charles Letocha, M.D. This time it is a front view photograph of a pair of 17th-18th century leather spectacles, the rarest in his collection, contrasted on a dark blue background and focussed to show even the scratches in the lenses.

H.W H.

#### A rare gift:

Early in 1992 we received a copy of a 14 page progress report to the Curator of the Division of Medical Sciences of the National Museum of American History, the Smithsonian Institution, from Dr. Eric P. Muth, the Curator's Optician Consultant.

The first 11 pages summarized his activities under what he called Phase I, which seems to have had its beginning circa 1982 and mileposted at the end of 1990. This period encompassed ten objectives which included photographing the collection of vision aids; sorting out unwanted items; raising funds for cataloguing and computerizing details; soliciting and acquiring additional items; enlisting help of international experts for identification

of unknowns; gathering related historical documents and patents; compiling information on other collections; developing a curator's reference manual of related materials; listing of persons and institutions undertaking like collections; and assembling a biographical roster of theme-related persons and their life spans for historical association purposes.

Phase II, which of course began in January 1, 1991, is essentially the preparation of a comprehensive document of an anticipated 1,000 pages entitled "Vision Aids in History", the completion of which involves continuing data gathering and collating along the lines of Phase I. He has already placed preliminary copies of this document in several archival institutions for reference use and intends to make available a Phase II update in 1996.

It should be mentioned that, except for one or two extremely nominal grants for travel expenses, this undertaking has been totally the contribution of Dr. Muth, truly a labor of love, an expensive one, and one which elicits rare applause. Thank you, Eric, thank you, thank you!

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