

HINDSIGHT

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Recently discovered memorial to Ernest A. Hutchinson:

OHS member Richard Hopping submitted the following memorial tribute to Ernest A. Hutchinson, written by Arthur E. Hoare in 1960. It was sent to Dr. Hopping in 1996 by a retired optometrist.

Ernest Albert Hutchinson—a Tribute, by a close friend and co-worker—and on behalf of the countless admiring and devoted friends in optometry—throughout the United States of America—and in England.

Born in Peterborough, England in 1875 to Joseph and Sabina Hutchinson—the eldest child of a family of eleven children. He is survived by five sisters and one brother. In 1902 he arrived in California, having left his native England on the advice of his doctor that he seek a more temperate climate, he being then 27 years of age. In 1904 he married Jessie Lowe and of this union two sons were born, John and Charles, and of these sons who survive him he was blessed with seven grandchildren.

In 1912 he began his studies in optometry, by reason of the recommendation of his friend E.H. Noe who at that time was conducting the optometric department in what was then Hamburgers Department Store (now May Co.). His association with Marshall and William Ketchum, and with other leaders in the young profession, led to his association with the Los Angeles School of Optometry in which association he maintained an active role for 39 years. Immediately upon graduation and registration by the State Board of Optometry he was invited to join Dr. M.B. Ketchum and W.S. Cherington as a member of the teaching staff. In some autobiographical notes it is recorded that at this beginning of what is now the Los Angeles College of Optometry, there was no formal curriculum, no examinations, practice in retinoscopy with nonluminous retinoscopes on schematic eye, practically no clinical patients for evening students, and practice in frame bending on roman alloy frames, tuition \$10.00 a month and students admitted at any time. World War I brought many students and under the leadership of William M. Ketchum, Ernest Hutchinson, and Harry L. Fuog, the school developed. Through the difficult years of the depression, the exciting but brief affiliation with the Department of Physics at the University of Southern California, and on through the expansion due again to the influx of GI students following World War II, Ernest Hutchinson as Dean, President and President Emeritus, together with the loyal and capable support of staff and faculty, the College was built to be a monument to the administrative skill, the courage, and dogged determination of this truly great optometrist. At the time of his retirement as President in 1951, the staff and faculty had grown to 34 and the student body to 235.

The past eight months in the life of this gallant soldier, with the physical forces slowly but surely ebbing away, leaving the disciplined mind to evaluate the current scene, from a retrospect of over four score years, clearly and fearlessly and withal quite objectively he became a free man, free of the practical limitations of expediency and policy. During these last months, it was my very great privilege to share with him a review of the journey of the past 40 years of mutual respect and action on behalf of optometry.

On one occasion I reminded my friend Ernest of his theme of the early '20s summed up in the title of one of his perceptive and forceful articles, "Optometry—a Full, Free, and Independent

Profession." I told him of the powerful effect this declaration had had upon me in my early optometric experience. It was very sobering to me to have him say as recently as July of this year that many of the dreams and hopes of optometry's founding fathers had been sadly disturbed and had proven to be far from firmly established. Instead of the problems of the ever growing profession having been solved, the very future of optometry as a full, free, and independent profession he thought to be seriously threatened, and this, not by reason of any fallacy in the basic tenets and practices on which our original franchise was established, but by reason of the rapid and drastic changes in the socio-economic structure of our American society. On the positive side, and in answer to a question regarding the effect upon optometry in England, by reason of the introduction ten years ago of Nationalization of the health services, it was his stated opinion that their prestige and estate had been enhanced. The inference was clear that for his "independence" for optometry in America, this man saw the emergence of the law of interdependence as applying to all the health services—in including optometry.

But regardless of this rather rueful retrospect, optometry has had few leaders whose testimony and work entitles them to a place in our legend higher or more illustrious than that of Ernest Albert Hutchinson.

If there was one area of his native and cultivated talents that found the most effective scope—it was in the area of formal organization of the standards and content of our undergraduate optometric education, not merely in our own Los Angeles College, but in the American Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry. It was largely through his efforts that the first conference to establish syllabus and standards of the Association of Optometric Schools and Colleges was held in 1922, and of this influential body he became secretary and later president. Till his retirement as President of the Los Angeles College of Optometry in 1951, his perceptive counsel and gift for constitutional process served well the cause of organized optometry in its every phase. His great gifts were lavishly given to the young profession in the general area of its political and promotional activities. He was in continuing office in the California State Association of Optometry as secretary and president, and most recently as Chairman of the State Association Committee on History, a position in which his influence will be perpetuated through those of us who have benefitted by his example, counsel, and approval.

And so to the list of those other rare souls, F. Lee Fuller, George Schneider, William M. Kinney, Frederick A. Woll, is now added the name of Ernest Albert Hutchinson, these men of steadfast purpose and high resolve, whose sacrifices and vision form the framework of the legend which is optometry, of optometry as they saw it—a valid, valuable, and enduring scientific and social service on behalf of the visual care of our expanding society.

It was the cause of much sadness to Ernest that optometry would seem to have been so divided in pursuit of its goal of professionalism, by commercialism on one extreme—and by speculative psychophysiology masquerading as science, at the other extreme. It was his last commitment to me, less than a month ago, to keep up the fight to bring to fruition the high hopes and clear vision of such of our founding fathers as we each had known, and among whom none shall live in history as more deserving of remembrance than our friend Ernest.

It would be proper, if time did permit, to speak more fully of this man against the background of his home life and his religious and social participations. In all these areas he played a full and active role, a militant advocate of the thing he held to be right, a consistent nonconformist, as became his early family and Methodist indoctrination.

Nor would this tribute be adequate without some brief reference to Ernest Hutchinson—naturalist, poet, and lover of the great out-of-doors. Only three weeks ago he had eagerly looked forward to a trip to Idlewild as a guest of his friend Dan D'Arcy, but this was not to be, the memories of other trips to the desert and to the mountains must have sustained him greatly during these lonely and difficult last days—for he was truly a child of the mountain and the desert. During our frequent desert trips in

company with Fred Woll and Bill Kinney, Ernest would break out in singing parts of Jackson's *Te Deum* and some of Gilbert and Sullivan's well known favorites. This earned for him the affectionate nickname "the singing chauffeur of Pinto Basin."

One of my earliest memories of my undergraduate student days is associated with the weekend hikes led by Ernest, up to the Mount Wilson observatory, for the Friday night lecture, and on to Roberts Camp, to Opids and home via Strawberry Flats and Switzers.

For those personal enrichments made to my personal life—for the constant challenge of his restless pursuit of higher standards for the profession he loved, and of which he dreamed such lofty things—for these and many other benefactions, we are grateful and wish to do honor to the life, work, and memory of our friend and leader—Ernest Albert Hutchinson.

I think Rudyard Kipling rightly sums up any eulogy of this man, when he says in his immortal poem *If* . . .

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch—
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much:

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son.

Tribute delivered at Memorial Service—South Pasadena—August 10, 1960, by Arthur E. Hoare.

Stanhopes and erotica:

As mentioned in the October 1994 issue of *Hindsight*, vol. 25, p. 29, and again in the July 1995 issue, vol. 26, p. 20, Charles Stanhope (1753-1826) invented his famous lens, the "Stanhope," in the later part of the 18th century. Recently, Todd Smith, former art curator at the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, reported in an interview in the *Indiana Daily Student* of March 23, 1985, that "These small glass rods, called Stanhopes, were named after an optometrist and were developed in the 1860s, when there was an interest in micro photography." He added that "the technique was soon used for erotic photographs—people would often put the tiny rods in letter openers, rings, and the screws of scissors." The institute has several of the erotically furnished lenses among its possessions contributed some years ago.

Puzzled by their identification by Smith as "rods" I visited the institute and found that the Stanhopes in their possession are, of course, little cylindrical glass segments about 2 mm in diameter, about 7 mm long, with one end, the viewing end, spherically convex and the other end flat, to which a transilluminated microphotograph of an erotically dressed, undressed, draped, or semi-draped woman is adhered.

The library has no documentation to confirm Smith's quoted assertions.

H.W H.

Notes from the Ocular Heritage Society:

The February 1996 issue of the Ocular Heritage Society newsletter includes a paper by W.H. Marshall, M.D., entitled "Reflecting on Refracting (1870s-1922)," pp. 2-4, and one by the late James Leeds, O.D., entitled "Eye Signs in Homing Pigeons," pp. 4-5. Marshall's article relates especially to publications, instrumentation, and training related to ocular refraction procedures. Leeds' articles relates to a 63-page book by George F. Twombly entitled "A Treatise on Eye Signs and a Study of the Eyes of Great Families of Homing Pigeons," copyrighted 1952 by *The Pigeon News*. A third paper, "The History of Orbital Implants," is by John W. Tull, M.D., pp. 5-10.

The December 1996 newsletter of the Ocular Heritage Society included a well researched account of "Professor" William Cotter Wilson and his Actina electric pocket battery by Andrew P. Ferry. Identified with Patent No. 341,712 granted on May 11, 1886, the Actina was advertised as a cure for most varieties of blindness. The review of various designs of coins and paper money to aid in their discrimination by the blind is made by Jay M. Galst. The variety of pince-nez designs and especially the bar spring eyeglasses that appeared with some popularity during the early decades of this century is described by J.M. Rosenthal.

Accompanying the mailing of the December newsletter were four papers given at previous O.H.S. meetings, as follows:

George Rossenwasser, "Bartisch—An Ophthalmic Renaissance," an outline of the contents of Bartisch's 16th century textbook of ophthalmology.

David J. Bene, "The History of Setons in Glaucoma Surgery," approximately a century of evolution.

E.J. Fisher, "A Projection Ophthalmoscope from 1864," a review of a paper in the March, 1864, issue of *The Canadian Journal*, New Series, No. 50, read by A.M. Rosebrugh, a physician with a major interest in the eye. The instrument was made by Charles Potter, an optician and instrument maker in Toronto.

Vincent Ilardi, "Through a Glass Clearly," a historical outline of the evolution of glass lenses.

The address of the Ocular Heritage Society is 457 West Market Street; York, PA 17404.

H.W H.

Optometry in the 'twenties:

Our very faithful *Hindsight* reader Irving Bennett sent us a letter and numerous enclosures that reveal some optometric issues, thinking, and concerns during early decades of this century. One of the enclosures is a four-page, 9-inch by 6-inch leaflet entitled *The Eye Glass*, subtitled "A Little Publication Worth Looking Through," dated July 1924, and imprinted "Published by Blanche Wilson, Oph.D., Optometrist, Wilson Bldg., Main St., Salem, West Va." Eight briefly captioned articles, six self-explanatory illustrations, and several space-filling paragraphs all relate to the benefits of good vision, properly prescribed glasses, or similar promotional themes.

Enclosed also were copies of five optometrically related poems by Charles C. Wilson, D.O.S., of Clarksburg, West Virginia, dated between 1919 and 1926 during which time he had his 30th birthday. The titles are *The Boy Who Couldn't Pass*, *A Big City Tragedy*, *Atmosphere: Correct Their Vision*, *The Ten Cent Store Specs*, and *The Struggle*.

Dr. Bennett had received all of the above from Edwin S. Wilson, O.D., "of social security age," who still practices in South Charleston, West Virginia. Charles was his father and Blanche was his aunt. All of the above-mentioned items will be forwarded to ILAMO as archival samples of optometric memorabilia of the first quarter of the 20th century. One of the poems is reproduced below to illustrate optometrists' preoccupation with professionalism at the time.

The Struggle

He struggled along for a decade or more—
A professional man with his office a store;
And he sold everything from a Waterman pen,
An Ingersoll watch to a rousing Big Ben.

His optical office consisted of this:
A sign on the window you never would miss,
Emblazoned in gold, "Eyes Examined Here Free,"
And a pair of gilt frames for the passer to see.
A corner fenced off in the back of his shop,
And an old fitting table all battered on top,
A testing case, dusty and shabby and worn;
An ancient eye chart that looked sad and forlorn.
There may have been other equipment around,
But that's all the casual visitor found.

His business was dull, and it never did grow;
At least, on the scale that he thought it would go.
He saw other merchants wax wealthy and great—
He saw his professional friends move in state;
And he sold a few goggles, a stick pin or two;
But his optical patients were mighty blame few.
And often he thought, in the course of the day,
That a good, steady job would mean good, steady pay.
Till finally things got to looking so black
He decided to start on a different tack.
He sold out his stock, and he closed up his store,
And he rented two rooms on the seventeenth floor
Of a new office building. His card on the door
Read "Optical Specialist, Hours 10 to 4."
He fitted it out with equipment complete;
Modern, attractive, efficient and neat.
He hired a young lady to answer the phone
And to add to his sanctum professional tone.
In a hundred new ways he contrived to allow
The idea that he was professional now.

Did it pay, do you ask? Well, he's driving a car,
 And he's now living out where the swellest folks are.
 All his friends call him "doctor"; his neighbors contend
 He makes enough money for seven to spend.
 He has a fine income; his home is a peach,
 And there's little he wants that is out of his reach.
 He has his profession—he has time for play.
 He ought to be happy, "existing" that way.

H.W H.

On medals and coins:

If you read German and collect medals and coins on which spectacles are illustrated, you will be delighted by an article by Dr. Helga Beez in the January 20, 1994, issue of *Deutsche Optiker Zeitung*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 24-30. Entitled "Die Brille auf Münden und Medaillen, Teil I" (Spectacles on Coins and Medals, Part I), its continuation is scheduled for the next issue of the journal. The author's address is Optisches Museum, Carl-Zeiss-Platz 12, 07743 Jena, Germany.

The author reminds us that especially in the 16th and 17th centuries, coins and medals were an important art form that reflected the most significant cultural interests of the times by the inclusion of familiar symbols, slogans, objects, and instruments. Ten examples, front and back, from the Jena museum are reproduced in color, together with commentary, interpretation, dates, and dimensions.

H.W H.

Interpreting history:

Among the many optometric developments in the 20th century the adoption of the designation "optometrist" itself may have been one of most memorable significance. It was officially recommended by the American Optical Association for use by refracting opticians in 1903. Not until 1918, however, did the A.O.A. accomplish its own name change to the American Optometric Association. In 1936 the university in which I enrolled still called its optometry curriculum Applied Optics. During the 'forties many practitioners used the phrase "optometrist and optician" with impunity to identify their calling. Beginning in about the 'fifties the campaign to identify ourselves with the single term optometry was intensified not only by public education tactics but also by person-to-person persuasion of optometric practitioners. Today, in this final decade of the 20th century, the employment of *Optometry* as our sole identity is virtually complete. Perhaps by way of exception here and there an optometry clinic is resistantly being labeled an "eye clinic."

Having experienced most of the agony of the above-described transition period I did a so-called double take when I recently read the following comment by Editor Stephanie K. Walter in the November 1994 issue of *Eyecare Business*, p. 8, "Like the fact that going back to the turn of the century, the precursor of the term 'optometrist' was none other than 'refracting optician' — a concept that today turns many O.D.s red with rage." Out of curiosity I wrote Ms. Walter to ask her if the "rage" she had observed had any historical implication, or that it was merely a reflection of some current hostility.

Perhaps a *Hindsight* reader will enlighten me.

H.W H.

From anecdotes to zylonites:

In 1986 the Ophthalmic Antiques International Collectors' Club produced a booklet of extracts of articles that had appeared in its quarterly newsletter since its founding in 1982. Now, ten years later, Editor MacGregor has produced the second and more comprehensive edition of "Extracts 1986-1996" covering the subsequent years. It consists of a glossy paper 30 x 21 cm, 52-page booklet covering 26 articles contributed by almost as many different authors, and with numerous photographic illustrations. Alphabetically the topics range from "Antique Collector's Dream" to "Whalebone Spectacles."

Information on its availability may be obtained from Mrs. V. Mellor, 3 Moor Park Road, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 2D1, U.K.

H.W H.

Early low vision aids:

"Telescopic Spectacles and Magnifiers as Aids to Poor Vision" is the title of a very comprehensive 36-page article by Drs. Harry S. Gradle and Jules Stein, two very prominent Chicago ophthalmologists, in the 1924 issue of the *Transactions of Section on Ophthalmology of the American Medical Association*. The first page alone is a succinct review of the prior attempts dating from a hand telescope modeled by Kircher in 1646 followed by the designs of numerous others in the 18th and 19th centuries and into the early 20th century, the period of this publication.

The various aids then available are well described, illustrated, and clinically evaluated. Practically every optical item is of German origin, as is every cited reference. Such limitation of resources is further illustrated by the authors' comment, ". . . it has been our desire, wherever possible, to order spherical corrections only, these being procurable in this country; cylindrical corrections, for the time being, must be secured from abroad."

H.W H.

Who was Skeffington?:

Who was Dr. Skeffington (1890-1976) and what did he teach?

Five optometrists were invited to write their personal recollections and impressions of the man and his role in the history of optometry for the January/February 1997 issue of the *Journal of Behavioral Optometry*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 2-14. They represented a diverse range of authors, Dr. Jim Cox, a past president of the Optometric Extension Program (O.E.P.); Dr. Nathan Flax, former Chief of the Vision Therapy Service at the State University of New York, State College of Optometry; Dr. Henry Hofstetter, Rudy Professor Emeritus of Optometry at Indiana University; Dr. Greg Kitchener, a member of the O.E.P. Board of Directors; and Dr. Irwin B. Suchoff, Editor-in-Chief of the aforementioned journal. Their comments give considerable insight into the role played by Dr. Skeffington in the professionalization of optometry during the first half of the twentieth century.

H.W. H.

Another brief history:

In his 1993 book, *A Student's Introduction to Visual Science and Optometry*, D.K. Turnbull includes "A short history of optometry" as a final chapter, no. 15, pp. 210-228, plus a one-page autobiographical postscript describing his own entry into the field. The chapter includes some early history of optometry in Natal and South Africa. Probably unique in optometric history publications is a 14-question multiple choice test on the chapter (with answers in the appendix!).

This book, a paperback, is published by the University of Durban-Westville, Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000, South Africa, where Turnbull, now retired, served as Professor and Head of the Department of Optometry, and for five years as Dean of the Faculty.

H.W H.

Recent dispensing opticians history:

The Opticians Association of America was founded in 1926 and now has 7,500 members, according to Cliff Coady in an editorial "And Never the Twain Shall Meet?" in the 10th anniversary issue of *Eyecare Business*, March 1996, pp. 18 and 20. Another organization, the National Academy of Opticianry, was established in 1963 and now has 5,025 members. Whether or not these membership numbers overlap is not stated, but "the two groups spent years representing the same profession with different agenda, often with an acrimony that most said defied logic."

Coady describes some of the efforts that have been made to merge the two groups and the nature of the delays.

H.W H.

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Managing Editor and
Contributing Editor:

David A. Goss
School of Optometry
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN 47405
U.S.A.

Contributing Editors:

Henry W Hofstetter
1050 Sassafras Circle
Bloomington, IN 47408
U.S.A.

Douglas K. Penisten
College of Optometry
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, OK 74464
U.S.A.