

# HINDSIGHT

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## History of University of California Berkeley School of Optometry chronicled:

*Cal Optometry: The First 75 Years*, edited by Herbert Kallman, hardcover, 174 pages.

This is a history of the optometry program at the University of California Berkeley. The editor, Herbert Kallman, is a 1941 graduate of the program. The book consists of several chapters and reminiscences written by current and former faculty members, administrators, and staff and by alumni. The publisher and the publication date of the book are not stated, but presumably it was published in-house by the optometry school in 1998.

Between 1908 and 1918 the California Optometric Association (COA) drafted resolutions supporting the establishment of an optometry school at the University of California. Delegates from the COA met with University officials occasionally during this period of time. In 1920 a faculty committee chaired by M. W. Haskell recommended the formation of an optometry school. California optometrists raised over \$9,000 to help establish the school. An optometry curriculum was developed in the Department of Physics in the College of Letters and Science. Two students were enrolled in August of 1923.

Ralph S. Minor, a physics professor, served as director of the fledgling optometry school. Ralph Minor (1876-1961) graduated from Hamilton College in 1898, and received a Ph.D. Degree in physics from the University of Göttingen in Germany in 1902. He lectured to optometrists in California before the formation of the school and worked with them in convincing the University to initiate the optometry program. Minor had a printing press in his house, and used it to publish an annual directory of alumni until 1953, seven years after his retirement. He also printed a volume of poems written by his wife. Another of Minor's hobbies was growing olives. In 1970 the optometry building on the Berkeley campus was renamed Minor Hall in his honor.

George L. Schneider (1874-1928), an optometrist who had been president of the COA and the American Optometric Association and who had been on the COA committee promoting establishment of the school, was named a lecturer when the school began. Schneider had been active in the formation of the California State Association of Opticians (later the California Optometric Association) in 1897. He practiced in Stockton until about the turn of the century when he moved to Berkeley. Along with his active professional life,

Schneider was an amateur entomologist. Schneider continued as a faculty member until 1928.

Student enrollments were low in the first few years, with less than 50 graduates in the first ten years. Initially graduates completed an A.B. degree in physics and a certificate in optometry. In 1940 the Department of Optometry in the College of Letters and Science was formed, with graduates receiving a B.S. degree. In 1941 the optometry program became the School of Optometry. The first Dean was Ralph Minor who had been director of the program since its beginning.

In 1948 the optometry curriculum became five years long. Students received a B.S. degree at the end of the fourth year, and those meeting graduate division requirements received an M.Opt. Degree at the end of the fifth year. In 1966 the curriculum became four years with a minimum of two years pre-optometry university work. The first students to complete that curriculum graduated in 1970, and received the Doctor of Optometry degree. Soon after this the pre-optometry requirement became a minimum of three years.

In 1946 Dean Ralph Minor retired. Kenneth B. Stoddard (1904-1970) succeeded him as Dean. Stoddard received an A.B. degree in physics from UCLA in 1928, and M.A. from Stanford in 1930, and a Ph.D. in physics from Stanford in 1931. He completed optometry school at the University of California in 1937 and joined the faculty in 1938. He spent the Summers of 1939 and 1940 at the Dartmouth Eye Institute qualifying as an aniseikonia clinician. During World War II he worked as a physicist at Lawrence Radiation Laboratory. Stoddard retired due to illness in 1960. At that time Meredith Morgan became Dean, a position he would hold until 1973.

Frederick L. Mason (1887-1954), a Columbia optometry graduate, served on the faculty from 1924 to 1953. He was described as stern and precise. Jack Hobson, a practicing optometrist who also had an engineering degree, was added to the faculty in 1937 and taught until 1961. Gordon Walls, who had worked for Bausch & Lomb during World War II developing range finders for the Navy, joined the faculty in 1947. Walls was noted as a great synthesizer of knowledge and a productive writer. He died of a heart attack in 1962 while still serving on the faculty.

Some of the faculty added in 1950s were Elwin Marg, Morton Sarver, Merton Flom, and Kermit Kors. Additions from 1960 to 1973 included Gerald Westheimer, Robert Mandell, Horace Barlow, Lawrence Stark, Anthony Adams, Ralph Freeman, Theodore Cohn, David Grisham, Michael Harris, and Kenneth Polse. Before 1951 the Dean also acted as the Clinic Director. In 1951 Dean Kenneth Stoddard appointed Robert Harrigan as Clinic Director. Henry Peters became Clinic Director in 1961 when Harrington went into private practice. In 1969 Peters resigned to become Dean of the new optometry program at the University of Alabama Birmingham. Some of the clinic instructors in the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s were Roy Brandreth, James Crosby, Ferd Elvin, Allan Fried, Robert Harrington, Jack Hobson, Frank Johnson, Kenton Kerr, Kermit Kors, Robert Lester, Leonard Osias, and Morton Sarver.

During World War II there were only seven optometry students. By 1946 enrollments increased again and reached the previous typical class size of about 50. In the late 1950s and early 1960s enrollment dropped again. In 1960, the entire school enrollment was 78 optometry students and three physiological optics graduate students. In 1970-71, there were 193 optometry students and 10 physiological optics graduate students.

In 1946 the establishment of a physiological optics graduate program leading to M.S. and Ph.D. degrees was approved by the Graduate Council of the University. Elwin Marg was the first graduate of the program, receiving his Ph.D. in 1950. The next Ph.D. was awarded in 1953 to Darrell Carter, who held an optometry degree from Southern California College of Optometry and a psychology degree from UCLA. Other graduate students in the 1950s who went on long careers in academic optometry included Frederick Hebbard, Merton Flom, Gordon Heath, Niles Roth, and Richard Hill. The total number of M.S. and Ph.D. degrees granted at the time of the writing of this book was 133.

Meredith Morgan (1912-1999) was Dean of the School from 1960 to 1973. He was a 1934 University of California optometry graduate. He had joined the faculty as an Instructor in 1942 after completing his Ph.D. in physiology in 1941. He was made a full Professor in 1954. During Morgan's years as Dean both the student enrollment and the number of full-time equivalent faculty more than doubled. State financial support of the program also more than doubled. Morgan continued to serve the University in a variety of capacities, such as chairing committees, for more than 20 years after his retirement. Morgan was recognized by many awards, including the American Optometric Association Apollo award and four honorary degrees. The school's optometry clinic was renamed the Meredith W. Morgan University Eye Center in 1998. In his remarks at the dedication ceremony, the Chancellor of the University noted how beloved and respected Morgan was, and stated that, "...he has been dedicated to the School of Optometry, his profession, and the UCB campus for 65 years! He appears to have no detractors, and he is still cited as a model of academic optometry by many young career academics in optometry."

Starting in the 1960s, space became a problem for the school. A temporary solution was the installation of two large trailers behind the optometry building. In later decades additions to the building were completed.

Monroe Hirsch became Dean in 1973, and served in that capacity until 1977. He lectured at the school on a part-time basis starting in 1955 and joined the faculty full-time in 1970 after many years in private practice. In 1970 Hirsch was appointed Director of Clinics and emphasized operating the clinics more like a private practice. As Dean Hirsch presided over the planning for a much needed addition to the optometry building and the hiring of optometry faculty such as Ian Bailey, Richard Van Sluyters, Sheldon Miller, and Clifton Schor. The school was led by Acting Deans from 1977 to 1980: Robert Mandell in 1977-78, Irving Fatt in 1978-79, and Mandell again in 1979-80.

University of California School of Optometry started an affiliation residency program in 1978. Its first on-site residency started in 1983. From 1983 to 1998, 32 optometrists have completed on-site residencies.

Jay Enoch served as Dean from 1980 to 1992. Some of the faculty recruited during this time were Martin Banks, Gunilla Haegerstrom-Portnoy, Russell DeValois, Karen DeValois, Stanley Klein, Joseph Bonanno, and Thomas Wiley. In the 1980s, the proportion of female students increased from about 25% to about 60%, the out-of-state students increased to about 25%, and the number of Asian students increased to become the school's largest group. During Enoch's time as Dean, two new floors were added to Minor Hall. The Deanship of Anthony Adams followed that of Jay Enoch.

The 1990s have been marked by clinical education improvements, significant research accomplishment, facility upgrades, curriculum revision, and several outreach efforts. Endowed chairs have been established for alumni Solon Braff and Morton Sarver. "Fests" have been held for Lawrence Stark, Jay Enoch, and Robert Mandell.

The book also contains a variety of other information, including a list of the M.S. and Ph.D. graduates, the 1946 retirement speech of Ralph Minor, a listing of administrative officers and faculty in a few selected years, a listing of alumni association presidents and award winners, a listing of residents, and class pictures of almost all optometry classes from 1931 to 2001. The book is well illustrated with black-and-white photographs. There are no reference citations and no index.

D.A.G.

### Best Idea of the Millenium?

For their April 18, 1999 issue, The New York Times Magazine had a number of notable authors express their thoughts on the best of the millenium. Novelist Richard Powers proposed that Abu Ali al-Hasan Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen) had the best idea of the millenium. Alhazen was born in about 965 in Basra, located in what is now Iraq.

In Alhazen's time the debate still raged whether light traveled from objects to the eye or whether the eye sent out a visual ray to sense the objects being viewed. Alhazen showed the former to be true by experimentation. One of his experiments would never be approved by today's human subjects committees: he found that the sun burned the eyes of subjects who stared at it. Ptolemy, Aristotle, and others used mathematics, reason, or argument to try to convince readers of the correctness of one or the other theory. Powers notes that Alhazen "...demolished a whole mountain of systematic theory with a single appeal to data." Powers argues that the introduction of experimentation by Alhazen was the best idea of the millenium: "...it lies beyond all reasonable doubt that no single idea has had a more profound or ubiquitous impact on what the human race has become, or what it has worked upon the face of the planet, than the vesting of authority in experiment."

Alhazen's work was translated into Latin in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, making it accessible to a wider audience. Francis Bacon was influenced by Alhazen and emphasized the importance of experimentation in his writings. For example, Bacon wrote in 1267, "Argument does not remove doubt, so that the mind may rest in the sure knowledge of the truth, unless it finds it by the method of experiment." Powers notes some of the advances in optics that followed Alhazen's studies, such as the development of the telescope and microscope and Kepler's work.

The article ends with a cautionary note: "The greatest idea of the last 1,000 years has granted us ascendance over matter by asking not how things ought to be but how things are. We have given ourselves to finding out not what we should do with the world, but what we can make the world do. The greatest idea of the next thousand years must make up the difference, returning subtlety and richness and morals and lightness of spirit to the long human experiment, if any part of it is to survive. Light falls into the eye, reflected from the object under observation. But something else, too, must go out from the eye to the thing we observe."

D.A.G.

#### Ophthalmic Antiques Newsletter:

The April, 1999 issue of *Ophthalmic Antiques - Newsletter of the Ophthalmic Antiques International Collectors Club* contains some articles of potential interest to O.H.S. members. Hugh Orr tells of "The Stormy Life of Thomas Mann (1660-1730)." James Mann started an apprenticeship to a spectacle and instrument maker in London in 1674. Mann opened his own shop in London in 1693. Mann had a stormy relationship with his colleagues in the Spectacle Makers' Company. He got into trouble for a variety of offences, including non-attendance at meetings, refusing to take up the Livery, using reviling words, selling bad wares, and not attending the corpse of a Liveryman to the grave. His son, James Mann II, also became a spectacle maker, and had two notable apprentices, James Ayscough who invented double-hinged folding spectacle-sides, and John Cuff who developed a kind of microscope.

"More About English Combination Nose-Spectacles and Another Matter," by R.J.S. MacGregor, is a follow-up to an earlier article. A particular pair of spectacles engraved "July 1735" is described.

In "Flynn of the North," Willem Banninga tells of Father Frank Flynn, an eye specialist, architect, and priest in the Northern Territory of Australia. Flynn spent many years treating trachoma. In 1964 Flynn developed a painful dry eye problem. He patented a device that attached to his spectacles and delivered lubricating solution into the corners of his eyes.

In an article entitled "Contact Lenses: The Evolution of New Concepts," Colin Fryer relates the history of contact lenses from the developed of scleral fenestrated lenses by

Dallos and Bier and the introduction of corneal lenses by Tuohy to the development of hydrophilic lenses.

R.J.S. MacGregor also writes about the inscriptions on antique Chinese spectacle cases. Many of the cases are inscribed with an archaic script not readable by many present-day Chinese. MacGregor concludes that the inscriptions made the spectacle cases suitable for gifts. Some of the inscriptions he reported are:

“The bright moon lights the woods.”

“With this handy gift comes a wish for peace and plenty.”

“Wealth, honors and prosperity always. Be safe and sound.”

D.A.G.

Only a few sets left:

I received a letter dated May 3, 1999, from Wayenborgh Publications saying that only six complete sets remain of the 15-volume German language *Handbuch zur Geschichte der Optik* (Treatise on the History of Optics) by E.-H. Schmitz. The cost for a complete set is DM 3950 (approximately US\$ 2200) plus postage. Single volumes are DM 295 (about US\$ 165). Postage is US\$ 23 per volume by surface mail. The publisher's address is Jean-Paul Wayenborgh, Postbus 196, B-8400 Ostend, Belgium. The email address is JP.Wayenborgh@asvalvas.be. Wayenborgh is the publisher of Hirschberg's *The History of Ophthalmology* and Poulet's *Spectacles*.

D.A.G.

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