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HINDSIGHT

Newsletter of the
Optometric Historical Society
243 North Lindbergh Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63141, USA

Volume 31

January 2000

Number 1

2000 OHS Board members and officers:

Listed below are the year 2000 OHS Executive board members and officers, and the year of each member's term of expiration.

- President..... Walter Chase (2002)
- Vice President..... Theodore Grosvenor (2001)
- Secretary-Treasurer..... Bridget Kowalczyk (2000)
- Trustees..... Jack Bennett (2002)
Chuck Haine (2000)
Doug Penisten (2003)
Alfred Rosenbloom (2001)

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Call for nominations:

It is time for you to send in your nominations 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 Bridget Kowalczyk. The OHS members who receive at least three nominations and agree to serve on the Board will have their names placed on an election ballot to be mailed later this year with a copy of *Hindsight*. Please send nominations by June 15, 2000 to: David A. Goss, Hindsight Editor, School of Optometry, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405 USA.

OHS now has Website:

The Optometric Historical Society now has a page on the World Wide Web - <http://www.indiana.edu/hndsight/index.htm>. (In case you are wondering about the spelling, hndsight is correct. The first i was omitted from hindsight intentionally to limit it to eight characters.)

The Website contains the purposes of OHS as stated in the by-laws, information on how to join OHS, and a sample issue of *Hindsight*. Persons who might enjoy OHS membership can be referred to the Website. Web page design and coding was done by Terri Greene, Web administrator for the Indiana University School

of Optometry. We would encourage OHS members who have Web pages to add links to the OHS Web page. Comments and suggestions for improvement or additions to the Web page can be directed to the *Hindsight* editor David Goss.

D.A.G.

Hindsight now on acid-free paper:

It has sometimes been noted that history never gets out of date. For that reason, *Hindsight* is now being printed on acid-free paper. The increase in cost has been minimal.

Index for Volumes 21 to 30:

The index for volumes 21 to 30 of *Hindsight - Newsletter of the Optometric Historical Society* has been completed through the efforts of Henry Hofstetter. An index for volumes 1 to 10 and an index for volumes 11 to 20 were published previously.

Chronology of Charles Prentice's life:

At the approximately 24th annual meeting of the Optometric Historical Society held December 13, 1997, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Optometry in San Antonio, Texas, Jerry Christensen made a presentation on Charles Prentice. The chronology of Charles Prentice's life below is taken from the handout prepared by Jerry Christensen for that meeting.

June 24, 1854	Born in Brooklyn, New York -- raised as an only child; seven brothers and sisters didn't survive infancy; father, James Prentice; mother, Henrietta Marschütz
1859	Spent boyhood on Staten Island; attended Methfessel's Institute (a private German grammar school)
April, 1870	Sent to Germany for an education, entered Gymnasium at Lahr in Baden, his mother's birthplace
Fall, 1871	Entered the Royal Polytechnikum at Karlsruhe, also in Baden

June, 1874	Graduated from the Royal Polytechnikum (his mother died 20 days earlier)
Fall, 1874	Returned to America from Europe
1874	Worked as an engineer in shipyards
1875	Went to work for his father
1884	Developed a class model for demonstrating refraction and accommodation of the eye in its different states of refraction
1886	Prentice wrote and illustrated <i>Ophthalmic Lenses</i> published by James Prentice and Son, Opticians
1888	Father died, Charles assumed the optical business
1888	Prentice firm published <i>Dioptric Formulae for Combined superimposed Cylindrical Lenses</i>
1889	Prentice had the title "Opticist" registered as a Trade Mark by the U.S. Patent Office
1889	Published "A Metric System of Numbering and Measuring Prisms" in <i>Archives of Ophthalmology</i> (Prentice's Law of Decentration)
December, 1892	Noyes wrote Prentice about his charging a fee for the examination of the eyes
1895	Published "Why Strong Contragenetic Lenses of Equal Power Fail to Neutralize Each Other"
1895	Dr. Roosa asked the New York Medical Society to reject anyone who sent patients to Prentice and declared he would have the medical practice act amended as to prevent men of Prentice's "cult" from meddling with ophthalmology
February 8, 1896	New York Optical Society organized with Prentice elected president

Spring, 1896	Bill empowered the Optical Society to regulate the practice of opticians introduced; at the bill's hearing, Prentice read his paper "Defense of the Optician"; bill was not reported out of committee
June, 1896	First annual meeting of the Optical Society in Syracuse; Prentice presiding
Fall, 1896	Prentice drafted first optometry bill; subsequently amended by the Society
January, 1897	Bill was introduced in the legislature and later failed to pass by three votes
March, 1897	Prentice wrote a letter of appeal to the medical societies
June, 1897	Society to meet in Rochester; Prentice absent due to illness
October, 1897	Cross elected president of the New York Optical Society
1900	Prentice formed the American Opticist Company and offered to grant licenses for the commercial use of the title to acceptably qualified individuals
1908	New York obtains an optometry law; 13 th state to do so
1908	Prentice was the first president of the New York State Board of Optometry
1909	Moved practice to the second floor of the Singer Building at 149 Broadway
1910	Optometry Department established at Columbia University (course was in the Extension Teaching Department and offered only a certificate of attendance)

1912	Controversy over Prentice's proposal that all future optometrists should be graduate physicians
1912-1920	Prentice contributed to the American Encyclopedia of Ophthalmology
1913	Resigned from the New York Optical Society
1918	Resigned from the New York State Board of Examiners in Optometry
1921	Retired and sold his practice to his assistant, Perry Hanauer
1926	His autobiographical book, <i>Legalized Optometry and the Memoirs of Its Founder</i> , was published. In the Author's Preface, his address is listed as Nelson, B.C., Canada
1946	Prentice died July 2, at St. Mary's Hospital in West Palm Beach, Florida after a long illness. He had just celebrated his 93 rd birthday

Sutton's Heritage Corner:

Dr. Albert A. Sutton has a regular column entitled "Heritage Corner" in Midwest News, Midwest Region Newsletter of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development. The following is from one of his recent columns.

As a craft, optometry is as old as the invention of spectacles, an event which occurred over 700 years ago. The development of optometric science was a world-wide occurrence, though the development as a craft was primarily a European phenomenon. However, the development of optometry as a legalized profession was, mainly, an American contribution. During the phenomenal growth and development of the optometric profession, the course of study increased from two weeks in the late 1890s to one year, then two years and so on to the present. This rapid development and growth was created by the needs of the people.

There were no laws or organizations regulating those activities. J.C. Bloom recorded that Colorado was the first state to introduce legislation (1889) and the first to form an association (1892). The American Optical Association was formed October 10, 1898, in New York. It represented 31 states and Canada and it included refracting and dispensing opticians,

manufacturers and anyone who carried optical goods. The first optometric law was passed in 1901. In 1914, The Bureau of Medical Licensure of Pennsylvania proposed to amend the medical code to include the practice of refraction. The Medical Bureau collected fees from optometrists for registration. These actions were fought in the courts. The battle cry was: "A LENS IS NOT A PILL." The Pennsylvania battles were led by Albert Fitch. The Pennsylvania optometry law was passed in 1917.

The American Optical Association adopted resolutions of which the following is only one of many: "The arbitrary legal classification of optometry as a branch of medicine demanded by the Bureau of Medical Licensure in Pennsylvania is in apparent antagonism to the legal recognition and state regulation of it as a non-medical, distinct, physical science in 33 other states." These resolutions were used in the courts and did much to help optometry's cause. The decision rendered by the lower court, and later upheld by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, stated clearly that optometrists do not practice medicine or use drugs for the diagnosis or treatment of disease. The result was that the Medical Bureau of Licensure had no authority over optometry. Thus, optometry was established as an independent, non-medical profession in the United States.

Centennial Celebration of the KOA:

The Kansas Optometric Association has announced their centennial celebration to be held April 26-29, 2000 in Topeka. A post card announcing the meeting has on its picture side a composite of photographs of men who, based on the appearances of the photographs, seem to have been early presidents of the Kansas Optometric Association. Names are shown below five of the six photographs. A banner above the photographs reads: "Past Presidents of the Kansas Association of Optometrists." The names by the individual pictures are: Thos. Cowenlock, Clay Center, KS; F. W. Hunt, Burlingame, KS; H. S. Zinn, Hutchinson, KS; J. C. Haupt, Peabody, KS; and W. J. Lewis, Topeka, KS.

D.A.G.

The 2nd Lord Charnwood:

In the July-September issue (Volume 7, Number 3, Page 91) of British Journal of Optometry & Dispensing, there is a historical note entitled "The 2nd Lord Charnwood (1901-55), a distinguished optometrist." That article is reproduced here in its entirety with the permission of Rishi Agarwal, author of the article and editor-in-chief of that journal.

The Rt. Hon. John Roby Benson, the second Baron Charnwood of Castle Donington in the County of Leicester was born in Sussex in 1901. Educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, he was commissioned in the Bedfordshire Yeomanry in 1929 and served in the Royal Artillery in 1939-45. He served the coast and Anti-Artillery Experimental Establishment, becoming second in command and reaching the rank of Major.

Lord Charnwood was already an accomplished mechanical engineer, reaching the rank of chief engineer at Bamford and Martin, the makers of Aston Martin motor cars. A member of the Veteran Car Club he participated in many of its rallies. He also studied music. Having travelled widely he established himself as a journalist writing about the different countries he had visited, and for a period of time also covering the field of music.

A keen sailor, he attempted to sail round the world and starting from Falmouth had reached Peru, when he was recalled because of the war and had to abandon his mission.

It was during the second world war at Dunkirk that he became interested in stereopsis and binocular vision. His search for literature on the subject led him to find "A Manual of Practical Orthoptics" (Hatton Press, 1938) written by George Giles who was an accomplished optometrist, researcher and educator of the period. Lord Charnwood met George Giles and at his suggestion attended Northampton Polytechnic, the predecessor of the present day City University, and qualified as an optometrist.

He published many papers on binocular vision and aniseikonia; he was known as an inventor, inter alia, of a set of stereograms. He was a recipient of the BOA research medal and the SMC master's prize for his thesis on binocular vision.

He was active both as a clinician and in the management of the former London Refraction Hospital, now the Institute of Optometry. On many occasions he spoke for the optometric profession in the House of Lords.

A member of several scientific and learned societies he was a fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society and also an honorary fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine.

Almost half a century ago the British Chapter of the American Academy of Optometry received its charter, which was brought to the UK by the second Baron the RT. Hon. John R. Benson (the last Lord Charnwood) together with the late optometrist Eric Bateman.

Interestingly, John Benson's father, the First Lord Charnwood, was an accomplished author, also with an American link since his writings had included biographies of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

Following the formation of the British Chapter, the second Lord Charnwood was elected as its first president. He died in 1955, leaving the Barony extinct because there were no children from his marriage.

As a tribute to the second Lord Charnwood, the British Chapter founded the prestigious Lord Charnwood memorial lecture which is now delivered every 2-3 years. These lectures are recognized by the College of Optometrists, incorporated by a Royal Charter, as part of the continuing education and training in optometry.

The past lecturers have all been distinguished academics and clinicians, both British and American, from ophthalmology, optometry, and related fields. Continuing with this tradition the next Lord Charnwood memorial lecture is to be delivered in September 1999 at the British Chapter's international clinical conference at Oxford by Professor Jerome Sherman, the distinguished teaching professor from the College of Optometry, State University of New York.

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