

Part 1

THE FIRST QUARTER CENTURY

1. The Beginning

Events in the history of our Society are so crowding themselves . . . that it seems timely to pause . . . and take note of these kaleidoscopic changes; to bestow a word of praise . . . upon the work hewn out by the pioneers who have blazed the way and upon the army of workers who have followed along these surveyed ways, developing, cultivating, elaborating, simplifying and perfecting. . . . We might bestow a great benefit upon the younger men and women in this work by constantly keeping before them the recital of the names and deeds of the history workers. . . .

OTTO J. STEIN

ACADEMY PRESIDENT, 1909

EARLY IN THE YEAR 1896, Dr Hal Foster of Kansas City sent out more than 500 invitations to southern and western men who were engaged in the practice of ophthalmology and otolaryngology, asking them to come to Kansas City for the purpose of organizing a medical society. Prior to issuing the invitations, Dr Foster had spent a year or more writing to men in the specialties in an attempt to determine the interest and enthusiasm for such an association.¹

Before coming to Kansas City, Dr Foster had taken his medical training as well as his specialty training in otorhinolaryngology in New York City. Having studied under, and worked with, the leading specialists in the East, he missed the close association and exchange of ideas with other men in his specialty. At this time in the United States, most medical teaching facilities and organizations were centered in the East, and men commonly traveled abroad to receive training in the specialties and to visit the clinics. The complexion of the

medical community in those days was described by W. L. Dayton in his 1917 Presidential Address:

. . . in the earlier days of this Academy the triumvirate of specialists in medicine and surgery represented by the Fellows of this society were few, confined largely . . . to medical centers and to the larger cities. The opportunity for study along these special lines was limited. There was a time . . . when it was quite impossible to obtain in this country clinical teaching in eye, ear, nose and throat diseases outside of two of our Eastern cities.^{2(p1)}

Hal Foster, seeing need of a medical fraternity and educational activities for western men in his specialty, embarked on the project of establishing a society. Years later he wrote that

a desire for more knowledge and consultation with doctors in Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat work prompted me to select from Polk's Medical Directory the names of men in various states throughout the country. I wrote these men, inviting them to come to Kansas City for a meeting of Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat men, and personally I selected the men for the program to be given at the Midland Hotel on April 9 and 10, 1896. Every man I asked to appear on the program came, and read his own paper.³

I paid about \$400.00 or more in a banquet, lunches, postage, printing and materials. . . . All the physicians that I invited thought it was a much needed organization.^{4(p32)}

No minutes of this original meeting exist, and it is difficult to establish precise details. In a letter of Dr Foster's dated Feb 22, 1935, he says "about 50 physicians assembled in Parlor S. Midland Hotel,"¹ and proceeds to list 27 states represented at this meeting. In another letter dated July 20, 1935, he relates that "about 35 attended that call meeting."⁵ And in still another communication in 1945, he remarks that 35 states were represented at this meeting.³ Nevertheless, we do know from his writings that a small number of men representing a fair portion of the middle western and southern states came together on April 9 and 10, 1896, to present papers and to organize what was to become the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology.

Although the impetus which prompted that meeting was regional in nature, it is evident from Dr Foster's address to the men assembled that his hopes for the association were expansive:

Fellow Physicians: I have called you here to organize an Ophthalmological, Otological, Laryngological Association. The little acorn I plant here today will never satisfy me until like an oak, it grows and spreads all over the United States, and our great sister, the Canadian nation on the north.³

Fortunately, two programs from this meeting have been preserved (Fig 1). One "PROGRAMME," evidently printed by Dr Foster in advance of the meeting, bears the title "Western Society of Eye, Ear, Throat and Nose Surgeons." The second "PROGRAMME,"

identical in all other respects, carries the title "Western Ophthalmological, Otological, Laryngological and Rhinological Association," the name with which these first members christened the society. Referring to the longiloquence of the designation, W. L. Dayton, who attended and read a paper at this meeting, said: "The weight of the name was enough to sink the Society into oblivion; mysterious to the laity, unpronounceable in a single breath, and too long. Its virtue was that the desires of the different 'ologists' present were fulfilled."^{2(p3)} In the interests of brevity, the society soon became popularly dubbed the "WOOL" society.

Although there is no record of the original constitution and bylaws, we know from minutes of subsequent meetings that these men did draw up and adopt a constitution and bylaws, elect officers, and select a site for a second annual meeting in 1897. Adolph Alt, of St. Louis, was elected president; W. C. Pipino,* of Des Moines, Iowa, vice-president; Dr Foster, secretary; and W. L. Dayton, of Lincoln, Neb, treasurer.

The members signed the roster, and this was recognized as the charter membership of the organization.¹ Remaining in Academy archives is a wrinkled clipping announcing birth of the society (Fig 2).

Twenty-nine papers were presented during the two-day session, with Carl Barck, of St. Louis, delivering the first paper.

*Dr Pipino died shortly after his election, and B. E. Fryer and J. H. Martindale replaced him as acting vice-presidents.

PROGRAMME.

KANSAS CITY, MO.,

APRIL 9-10, 1896.

PARLOR S, MIDLAND HOTEL,

WESTERN SOCIETY OF

Eye, Ear, Throat and Nose Surgeons.

April 9, 10 A. M.

Called to order by Dr. J. H. Thompson,
President Kansas City Academy of Medi-
cine.

Address of Welcome by Dr. C. Lester Hall
President Missouri State Medical Society.

Response by Dr. R. S. Black, President
Kansas State Medical Society.

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PROGRAMME

1. Two cases of opening of the lateral sinus for the removal of infectious thrombus. Recovery in one case. Dr. C. Barck, St. Louis, Mo. Discussion opened by Dr. Wm. Scheppegrell, New Orleans, La.
2. "The Ocular Manifestations of Hereditary Syphilis." Dr. T. C. Evans, Louisville, Ky. Discussion opened by Dr. LeRoy Dibble, Kansas City, Mo.
3. Diabetic Retinitis. Dr. Adolf Alt, St. Louis, Mo. Discussion opened by Dr. F. D. Green, Pueblo, Col.
4. A paper. Dr. A. B. Farnham, Milwaukee, Wis.

Afternoon Session, 2 P. M.

5. "When Should the Cautery Be Used?" Dr. Wm. C. Pipino, Des Moines, Ia. Discussion opened by Dr. W. L. Dayton, Lincoln, Neb.
6. "Empyema of the Frontal Sinus With Report of Cases. Autopsy." Dr. C. P. Ambler, Ashville, N. C. Discussion opened by Dr. F. B. Tiffany, Kansas City, Mo.
7. The Use of Peroxide of Hydrogen in Diseases of the Throat, Nose and Ear. Dr. Wm. Scheppegrell, New Orleans, La. Discussion opened by Dr. J. W. Gaines, Kansas City, Mo.
8. A Case of Asthma, Due to Nasal Obstruction and Adenoids of Pharyngeal Vault, Dr. W. W. Bulette, Pueblo, Col. Discussion opened by Dr. J. E. Logan, Kansas City, Mo.
9. Paper. Dr. Wm. Porter, St. Louis, Mo.

10. Tinnitus Aurium. Dr. J. W. May, Kansas City, Kan. Discussion opened by Dr. Adolf Alt, St. Louis, Mo.
11. Paper. Dr. Robert Leavy, Denver, Col.

Evening Session.

12. Panophthalmitis Caused by Leucoma Adherens (Anterior Synechia) and the Treatment of Anterior Synechia. Dr. L. A. Lebeau, St. Louis, Mo. Discussion opened by Dr. J. E. Minney, Topeka, Kan.
13. Tubercular Laryngitis at High Altitudes. Dr. B. P. Anderson, Colorado Springs, Col. Discussion opened by Dr. D. Milton Green, Grand Rapids, Mich.
14. Why Deafness Afflicts Some and Not All Who Suffer from Diseases of the Upper Air Passages. Dr. W. F. Strangways, Flint, Mich. Discussion opened by Dr. G. A. Wall, Topeka, Kan.
15. Purulent Brain Infection from Otitis Media. Dr. B. E. Fryer, Kansas City, Mo. Discussion opened by Dr. C. Barck, St. Louis, Mo.

Morning Session.

16. Subjective Sensations. Dr. W. E. McVey, Topeka, Kan. Discussion opened by Dr. John C. Smith, St. Louis, Mo.
17. Which Operation for Senile Cataract Should the Beginner Select? Dr. J. H. Thompson, Kansas City. Discussion opened by Dr. T. C. Evans, Louisville, Ky.
18. The Clinical Examination of Deaf Mutes. S. T. Walker, Jacksonville, Ill., Superintendent of Illinois State Institution of the Deaf and Dumb. Discussion opened by H. C. Hammond, Superintendent of Kansas State Institute for Deaf and Dumb, Olathe, Kan.

Fig 1.—Original 1896 programs. Top left, Printed prior to meeting. Top right, Printed after meeting and adoption of official name. Bottom, Partial listing of papers and authors.

A NEW SOCIETY.

The Western Association of Ophthalmologists, Otologists and Laryngologists was organized at the Midland Hotel, Kansas City, Mo., April 9 and 10, with a large and enthusiastic attendance of representative Western specialists.

The papers read were of a high order of merit, and the discussions following were profitable to those present.

Parke, Davis & Company, through their genial representative, Mr. Reymond, served a luncheon for the Society members, during which instrumental and vocal music were rendered by the young ladies in the office.

The society starts its first year under the most favorable auspices, and much credit is due to the Secretary, Dr. Hal Foster, for its success.

Fig 2.—Portion of clipping introducing society to medical world.