



# THE JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

BALTIMORE, MD.

## SAMUEL THEOBALD (1846 - 1930)

In the passing of Samuel Theobald on December 20, 1930, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, ophthalmology, general medicine, and a large circle of friends sustained a great loss.

In 1867, Dr. Theobald graduated in Medicine at the University of Maryland. Later, he studied the eye under Alt and Jaeger in Vienna, and at the Royal Ophthalmic Hospital, London. He was also a pupil of Politzer in otology. From 1894 until 1912, he was clinical professor of ophthalmology and otology in The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine; from 1912 to 1925, clinical professor of ophthalmology; and from 1889 to 1925, ophthalmic surgeon to The Johns Hopkins Hospital. From 1925 until his death, he was professor emeritus of ophthalmology. He also had many other important positions, such as ophthalmic surgeon to the Baltimore Eye, Ear, and Throat Charity Hospital; and consulting ophthalmologist and aural surgeon to South Baltimore General Hospital. He was at one time President of the American Ophthalmological Society and the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland. He also held membership in a number of scientific societies - The American Medical Association and the American Otological Society, etc. Dr. Theobald contributed many articles to the leading text-books and journals; in 1906 he published his excellent text-book, "Prevalent Diseases of the Eye". The volume, of 551 pages, is full of helpful suggestions to the general practitioner, the student of ophthalmology, and the ophthalmologist. He did much to popularize boric acid, and his genius is memorialized in his method of treating closure of the tear ducts and in "Theobald's Lachrymal Probes". In his scientific work, he showed the genius of infinite pains; in his ethical relations to his colleagues, he set a high ideal; to his friends he showed a character full of charm. "A lovelier gentleman - the spacious world cannot again afford."

Minute on the Death of Dr. Samuel Theobald adopted by the Advisory Board of the Medical Faculty of the Johns Hopkins University at the meeting held on January 2nd, 1931.

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The Advisory Board of the Medical Faculty of the Johns Hopkins University desires by this minute to pay its tribute of respect to the memory of a colleague, Dr. Samuel Theobald, who died on December 20th, 1930, at the age of eighty-four years, and to record its appreciation of his long continued, devoted and valuable services to the Johns Hopkins Hospital and University in their departments of Ophthalmology and Otology.

Until his retirement as Professor Emeritus at the beginning of 1925, Dr. Theobald had served the Hospital from its opening in 1889 as Ophthalmic and Aural Surgeon, and the Medical School from its opening in 1893 as Lecturer for two years and then as Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology and Otology, having been thus actively identified with these institutions for three and one-half decades.

Born in Baltimore, November 12th, 1846, the son of Dr. Elisha Warfield Theobald, and the grandson of Dr. Nathan R. Smith, Samuel Theobald, after receiving the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the University of Maryland in 1867, studied Ophthalmology under Arlt and Jaeger in Vienna, and at the Royal Ophthalmic Hospital in London, and Otology under Pollitzer in Vienna, and on his return to Baltimore he entered upon a career of active, productive work in his specialty. Before his connection with the Johns Hopkins Hospital at its opening in 1889, Dr. Theobald had contributed not less than twenty-two papers to societies and journals, had been one of the founders of the Baltimore Eye, Ear and Throat Charity Hospital and had an established national reputation in his specialty.

The Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical School, unable, until recent years, to make adequate provision for a department of Ophthalmology, were indeed most fortunate to find a native Baltimorean so well qualified to take charge of their departments of Ophthalmology and Otology, which, during Dr. Theobald's incumbency, were of necessity mostly limited to practice and teaching in the Dispensary. Dr. Theobald entered fully into the life and spirit of the Hospital and School during those early germinative years. By his high character, his general personal qualities, his devotion to the duties of his position and his excellent professional work, he endeared himself alike to colleagues and to students and enjoyed their respect and companionship.

Such valuable and loyal services as Dr. Theobald rendered to our school and hospital during the long years before it was possible to provide adequate opportunities for the development of Ophthalmology, entitle him to an honorable position in the history of both institutions, and to the enduring appreciation and gratitude of his colleagues and his successors.

Composed by Dr. William H. Welch

The  
Baltimore Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital  
1214 Eutam Place

Baltimore. \_\_\_\_\_ 193

The Board of Managers and the Surgical Staff of the Baltimore Eye, Ear and Throat Charity Hospital at a meeting on Thursday, January 8, 1931, records with sadness the death of Doctor Samuel Theobald.

Doctor Theobald was the last surviving member of the small group of surgeons who founded our Hospital in 1882. None excelled him in devotion to its interest, none equalled him in length of service. It was he, more than others, who raised the institution from small beginnings to its present position. He felt a parent's affection for the Hospital and pride in its growth in size, in importance, and in reputation, which in great measure it owed to him.

Doctor Theobald occupied a high place in American ophthalmology because of his ability, his training, his careful work, his earnest studies, his many publications, his high professional standards - - - scientific and ethical. In his professional life he carried on the fine medical traditions of a family that for generations has distinguished itself in American medical history.

We who have been associated with him as colleagues and as friends shall always think of him with admiration as a genial, kind, lovable, true gentleman, and we feel that our institution will ever remain a monument to his memory

*James Downey M.D.*  
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