

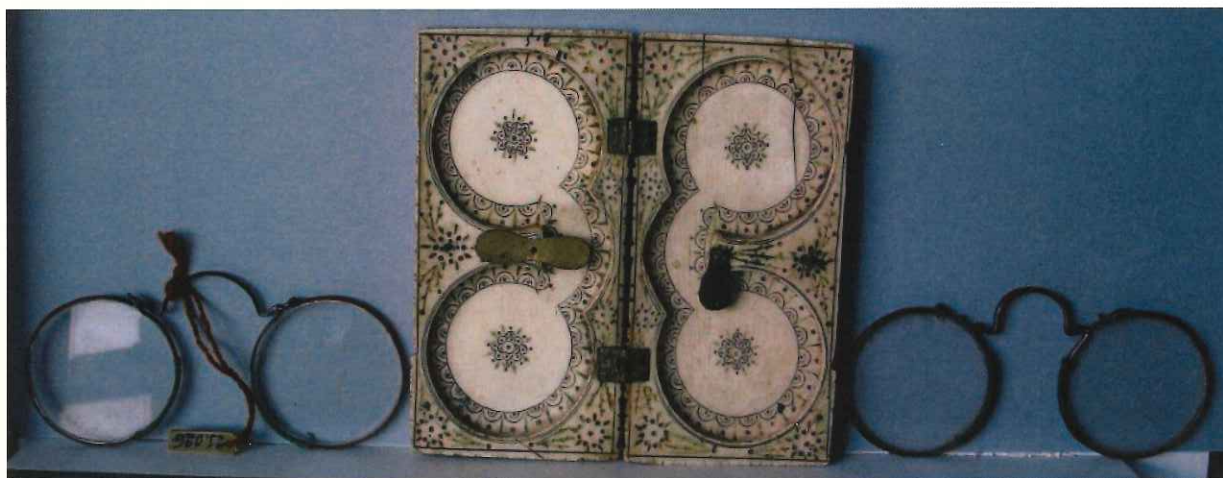
HINDSIGHT

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The Lawsuit of Optometrist Cyrus Bass versus the AMA: More Data and Reader Comments

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Several of our readers suggested that we provide more information on the lawsuit in behalf of optometry by Cyrus Bass, O.D. of Chicago, Illinois. There are many optometrists still living who knew Dr. Bass personally and observed first hand some happenings during the four or five years that the suit was pending. Here is an effort to provide more data on that interesting phase of optometric history.

It is most unfortunate that the professional optometric press, including the non-Association magazines that traditionally covered optometry and the optical field, actually published very little about the Bass lawsuit. It was not at all covered in the *Journal of the American Optometric Association*, the official publication of the AOA. Not even a mention.

Our research has revealed that Cyrus Bass practiced optometry in Chicago for his entire career. He had been trained initially as a psychologist, and after initiating his lawsuit against the American Medical Association (AMA) took legal courses. However, he was never admitted to the bar. According to his optometric associates he sought legal training so he could be more effective with his lawsuit. Bass graduated from Northern Illinois College of Optometry in 1939.

An "official" biography of Dr. Bass was included in the "Report to the Optometric Profession" that Bass distributed widely to practicing optometrists about the time the original lawsuit was filed. The purpose of the "Report" was to raise money for a National Trial Committee of Optometrists being formed to fund the trial.

The final paragraph in his biographical sketch in the "Report" is as follows:
*"Dr. Cyrus Bass is the author of four published works on social issues. He has written extensively and lectured widely. He has been a practicing clinical psychologist for over twenty years and was formerly the head of the department of clinical and abnormal psychology at Northern Illinois College of Optometry. He was the first to institute the C.Q. (Culture Quotient) tests, which tests he compiled and administered to the classes at N.I.C. in 1940. He has been a student of law and received a law degree in 1959, all this in addition to having been a practicing optometrist since 1939."*¹

Classé Reference

John Classé, formerly Assistant Professor at the School of Optometry at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, did give the Bass Lawsuit a brief mention in his book, *The Legal Aspects of Optometry*, as follows:

“..... in 1964, a Chicago optometrist, Cyrus Bass, filed a lawsuit against the AMA and nine Chicago ophthalmologists, alleging that the defendants had conspired to monopolize the examination of eyes and the production, marketing, and sale of ophthalmic eyewear and that they had conspired to restrain trade and commerce in the dispensing of eyeglasses. Amidst considerable publicity, Bass devised a plan whereby optometrists throughout the country would be allowed to participate in the legal fund to finance the lawsuit. The case drew the attention of practitioners and organizations, including the International Association of Boards of Optometry (IAB), and became a source of debate within the profession. Despite the interest generated by the lawsuit, Bass – who was not an AOA member – did not receive the financial support he had envisioned. But in 1966 – while the suit was still pending – the House of Delegates of the AMA voted to rescind the anti-optometry resolutions of 1955, declaring that:

“The full benefit of medical progress and existing opportunities for the prevention of blindness can be realized if there is no avoidable delay between the onset of abnormalities or their symptoms and the provision of medical care by qualified physicians. The improvement of educational standards of optometry is a laudable objective. Doctors of medicine may as teachers participate in the education of optometrists within the legitimate scope of optometric practice.”

“In April 1967, the Bass case was settled, with the judge noting that the AMA resolution was ‘a great step forward in enhancing continued improvements of relationships which the Court suggests should be fostered by both the medical profession and optometrists...’²

Classé added one dimension to the conclusion of the case when he continued in his book as follows: “Because of AOA’s complaint with the Justice Department, the Bass lawsuit, and conferences between organized optometry and medicine, the inflammatory AMA resolutions ended in 1966.”²

Complaint with the Justice Department

In reviewing his collection of papers during his term as president of the American Optometric Association, Dr. Melvin Wolfberg discovered confidential letters from then AOA Counsel Ellis Lyons including a 63-page memorandum filed with the United States Department of Justice in February 1966 setting forth the AOA’s complaint against organized medicine and its anti-trust implications.

An account of those events was published in the July, 2012, issue of *Hindsight*, co-authored by Dr. Wolfberg and Thomas E. Eichhorst, J.D.³ Mr. Eichhorst had been a member of the legal team of the AOA, starting when the Bass lawsuit was pending.

This article is no doubt factual but is far from being complete. There is much missing in the story. What the AOA didn't do in the Bass case years is as important, if not more important, than what it did do. During the era of the 1950s, the AMA reacted violently to the AOA's Seattle resolution with its own – not one but many – resolutions. The AOA at that time was controlled politically by a faction of optometrists who saw optometry as a profession whose practice was based on the 'functional' aspect of vision. In their minds a clear distinction could be made between the professions in that its scope practice was not the practice of medicine. The leadership at that time showed no interest in "medical" optometry.

Some believe that it was quite possible that had Cyrus Bass not filed his lawsuit (helped to a great extent by the intervening in that lawsuit by a number of individuals representing the International Association of Boards of Optometry's (IAB) leadership but not the organization itself) that any settlement – when and if made – between the AOA and the AMA would have amounted to a "capitulation" on the part of the optometric profession. Further, had it not been for the ignoring of AOA Policy Statements and the then AOA leadership by a number of the state optometric associations and their leadership, the changes in optometry that followed over the next decade that resulted in those states creating the "medical model" of optometry might never have happened.

The AOA was Publicly Silent on the Bass Case

In May 1967, the American Optometric Association issued a press release concerning the ending of the litigation in the Bass ant-trust lawsuit. It was one of the few, if not the only, official published acknowledgement of the Bass case. It referred to the "Memorandum of Opinion" of the Court that terminated the lawsuit. One of the sentences in that Memorandum stated that "The enactment of the Illinois Optometric Practice Act lent a helping hand, in part, by depriving the optometrists from the time-honored means of public contact through window display" and was so alleged in the lawsuit.

From the early 1960s through the mid-1970s, before the Bates vs. The Arizona Bar Supreme Court ruling allowing lawyers to advertise, optometry was reaching its peak in restricting advertising in the interest of "professionalism." At the time the Bates case was decided in 1977, along with the Berryhill case (Alabama) that forever changed the way state boards were appointed, "the corporate practice of optometry" was well on its way out and price advertising was on the verge of being eliminated thanks to the power given state boards of optometry by various state legislatures. These happenings may have caused Cyrus Bass to feel "put upon" by professional optometry as represented by AOA. Bass practiced in a store front office with eye glasses displayed in the window.

Other Comments on the Bass Case

Most of those readers who commented to us on the Bass case really commented on the man who filed it rather than on the case itself.

OHS Member Al Rosenbloom, who was president of the Illinois Optometric Association (IOA) in 1968 when the case was going on, mentioned that he met with Cyrus Bass “and I had a long discussion with him.” Dr. Rosenbloom, who went on to become the President of the Illinois College of Optometry, reported that “my aim was to convince Bass that he might be more effective in airing his grievances as a member of the IOA and AOA. He did join the IOA for a brief year, but being the loner he was, he quickly got out.”

Rosenbloom’s thoughts on Bass, the person, are quite perceptive: “I don’t remember him ever attending an IOA function. He was an interesting guy. I believe I taped our conversation when we met and I was especially careful during our encounter. I found him to be highly intelligent but highly egocentric with perhaps a Messianic-like complex that he, and he alone, had the answers to optometry’s problems. I believe that he had a profound effect on AOA/AMA relations.

“When I was on the AOA Board (of Trustees), Ellis Lyons (counsel to the AOA) dismissed Bass’ impact.....I have always felt that differences in opinion should be welcomed and that dialogue leads to better answers.”

OHS Member David Goss, when he knew we were working on a follow-up piece on Cyrus Bass reported that he found a “Cyrus Bass reference” on the Internet website *ancestry.com* and “that he was born July 23, 1912 (in Poland), and died May 28, 2001, with his last residence in Chicago.” We think that that was Cyrus Bass the optometrist, but we are not absolutely sure.

OHS Member Floyd Mizener was IOA President during some of the time of the Bass lawsuit and recalls that “Dr. Bass had a warning reputation in the view of several highly respected optometrists in the AOA and in some state associations. He would not join the AOA or our IOA; I asked him a dozen times. He said he could do more good not being an AOA or an IOA member, and could remain as a radical, and use his legal training more effectively to challenge anything he wanted to.”

Mizener continued: “His first challenge I remember, one that got major attention, was when we in Illinois passed a law that no frames could be displayed in optometrists’ retail windows. This bothered Bass for some reason, even though he did for the most part practice professionally. What he did was put a portrait of the Mona Lisa wearing a pair of glasses in his window. Well this made the press and news, and everyone soon knew about Dr. Cyrus Bass.”

Dr. Mizener has always been a relentless fighter for private professional optometry and his memory of occurrences during his IOA leadership roles remains sharp. He recalls that Bass’ next challenge was when Lee Optical opened up about 50 Lee retail optical stores, in strategic locations around Chicago. Lee Optical purchased all of the Andre Candy locations in Chicago and hired 50 optometrists to work in them. The wholesale optical company behind the scene was Dal Tex Optical, a wholesale lab

located in Texas. The big deal was that Lee was violating two state laws and one federal law.

This reference to Lee Optical is germane because at that time, according to Mizener, “All of optometry went bonkers and started meeting to see what they could do (with this new competition). Dr. Cyrus Bass surfaced again and we started a Committee of a hundred ODs to raise money and we tried to fight in the courts!” This was the time that professional ODs started Metroptic, as a way to handle Rx work without sending the orders to Texas. Dr. Bass was a strong advocate in support of that venture.

One must have to ponder what Dr. Bass’ motives were in filing his lawsuit. **OHS Member John Robinson** commented to me: “There were several ‘un-named’ optometrists’ who were part of the law suit, making it a class action law suit on behalf of all optometrists in the United States. The ‘Illinois Optometry Act’ was alleged to be equally (?) responsible for the ‘restraint of trade’ and, therefore, implicated in the ‘anti-trust’ violations. Were Bass’ motives entirely ‘personal’ pocketbook issues? Were they an issue involving the health and well-being of citizens by depriving them of the services of optometrists whose training would be adversely affected by the actions of the AMA? And would the costs of eye care services be more expensive due to lack of competition among providers? Or, as many thought, was Dr. Bass on an ego trip?”

Robinson continued: “Other factors to be considered as to why Bass named the Illinois Optometry Practice Act as a ‘conspirator’. This was at a time when the ‘professionalization’ movement was reaching its peak in optometry and the state boards were slowly but effectively eliminating the corporate practice of optometry.

“Two US Supreme Court decisions that came down a few years later should be kept in mind: 1) Gibson v Berryhill (1971) forever placed restrictions on the naming of state board members by professional associations of those being regulated; and 2) Bates v Arizona Bar (1977) struck down prohibitions on advertising by attorneys and thereby by all professions including optometrists. At the time of the Bass law suit these laws were in full force and effect.

“There were very deep divisions between the AOA and the IAB over the Bass issue. One would need to go back to the AOA House of Delegates meeting in Seattle in 1954 and carefully review the AOA resolution passed at that meeting. It was interpreted by the American Medical Association as ‘optometry claiming visual care to be the sole realm of optometry (or words to that effect).’ The AMA resolutions quickly followed, as did the adoption of “Optometry’s Premise” which was thought by many to be an attempt to satisfy the AMA that the Seattle resolution had been misinterpreted. Other than the ‘press release’ and the statements made at the time that the AOA was working with the U.S. Justice Department behind the scenes, the IAB Proceedings of the Boston meeting 1966 place parameters around the story”.

There is one thing for sure and it is the ‘Bass law suit’ and the settlement agreement ending it along with the Court’s Summary of the dismissal deserve credit in

the history of the optometric profession for the AMA's rescinding their infamous resolutions of the 1950s demeaning and defaming the profession of optometry.

Involvement of International Association of Boards (IAB)⁴

The International Association of Boards was "involved" in the Bass case but not directly so as an organization. The IAB had the support of the vast majority of delegates attending its annual meetings, but it was never recognized (as an organization) as a party to the lawsuit by the court. Individual members – some were officers or became officers during the course of the lawsuit – were allowed to file 'amicus curiae' (friends of the court) briefs.

Actually, the IAB saw a need for the profession to be represented in a lawsuit, the outcome of which could, and would, affect every optometrist in the United States. It was a consensus at that time that the profession's national organization, the AOA, was 'sitting on its hands' doing absolutely nothing – leaving Cyrus Bass as the 'engineer' and 'conductor' on a train whose cargo was the 'future of the optometric profession'.

Richard Billups Esq. of Mississippi was the IAB attorney at the time of the Bass case and he had a reputation of being a very effective lawyer in the Southern states for 'clamping down' on the commercial practice of optometry. He made overtures to Bass to assist in the lawsuit but the synergy was missing and Billups only became involved peripherally.

The fact that the AOA was "working with the Justice Department behind the scenes" was not well known in the profession, but the involvement by the International Association of Boards (IAB) is well documented. In the 1960s there was not a strong AOA presence in Washington. The AOA Board of Trustees - likely with Executive Director Hal Bailey's support - was 'livid' that the IAB was getting involved in the Bass lawsuit. It was the AOA contention at the time that this was a matter of inter-professional relations, and, therefore, the sole domain of the AOA. *It was a feeling on the part of IAB, however, that the chief reason for IAB involvement was because the AOA was not going to get involved!*

Robinson remembers that "after the IAB got involved and the AOA saw there was fairly broad support for the lawsuit, the story surfaced that the AOA had been working with the Justice Department in the area of anti-trust and that the law suit by Cyrus Bass destroyed any opportunity to have the Justice Department bringing an anti-trust law suit against the AMA. Then, after the settlement and the withdrawal of the resolutions by the AMA, the story began to change that the AOA worked behind the scenes to get the suit dismissed forcing the AMA to give in."

In any event, the true story of involvement in the Bass case may be lost to history.

References

1. Bass C. Report to the Optometric Profession, self-published brochure, 1966.

2. Classé JG. Legal Aspects of Optometry. Boston: Butterworths, 1989:17-18.
3. Wolfberg MD, Eichhorst TE. American Optometric Association complaint to the U.S. Department of Justice regarding activities of organized medicine in the field of vision care which hinder and restrain the profession of optometry. Hindsight: J Optom Hist 2012;43:47-57.
4. Proceedings, 47th Annual Meeting. International Association of Board of Examiners in Optometry, June 20-22, 1966.

Appendix: Timeline for Bass vs. AMA Lawsuit

1954 Resolution #4 was adopted unanimously by the House of Delegates, of the American Optometric Association in Seattle, Washington, declaring the “field of visual care is the field of optometry and should be exclusively the field of optometry.”

1955 Among a number of resolutions that were adopted by the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association that affected optometry and the relationship between the optometric and medical professions, the main one stated that “it is unethical for any doctor of medicine to teach in any school or college of optometry or to lecture to any optometric organization, or to contribute scientific material to the optometric literature, or in any way impart technical medical knowledge to nonmedical practitioners” was the most demeaning and destructive.

1955 At its annual meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the American Optometric Association adopted Resolution #5 that attempted to clear up what optometry “really meant” by its Seattle action of 1954. This resolution had three Whereases and seven Resolves essentially declaring that optometry *had no intention to eliminate the exemption granted to medicine to practice optometry.*

1964 Cyrus Bass, an optometrist practicing in Chicago, Illinois, filed a lawsuit against the American Medical Association and eight Chicago ophthalmologists charging violation of the Sherman Act.

1965 Defendants filed a motion to dismiss. (February 2)

1965 The Court denied the motion to dismiss and ordered the Plaintiff to file an amended complaint spelling out specifically who were to be included in “and all those similarly stipulated,” the Court stating that the description of the class in this class action was too vague. (June 11)

1965 Amended complaint filed by Dr. Bass and five practicing optometrists who joined in the action. (June 30)

1965 Defendants filed a motion to dismiss the class action. (September 3)

1966 Three officers of the International Association of Board of Examiners in Optometry, together with two Mississippi optometrists filed a petition as interveners on behalf of the Plaintiffs. On that date the Court denied the motion of the interveners to intervene “in the interests of judicial economy.” (February 15)

1966 The Court denied the Defendants’ motion to dismiss the class action provision of the complaint. (April 15)

1966 The American Medical Association, at its annual convention, held in Chicago, modified Resolution #77 by allowing medical doctors to teach in optometry schools. (June 28)

1967 The Court ruled that the Bass case be dismissed with prejudice.

A Historical List of Optometry Schools in the United States

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Until the late nineteenth century, the learning of optometry occurred by apprenticeship. Starting in the 1870s, optometry training programs seemed to have proliferated in the United States. One estimate suggests that there were about 60 optometry schools operating for various periods of time between 1872 and 1901 in the U.S., about 42 between 1901 and 1914, 36 from 1914 to 1922, 30 from 1922 to 1926, 10 in 1926 to 1936, and eight from 1936 to 1946.¹

The first schools were privately owned operations with training programs of a few weeks to a few months. Optometric curricula gradually increased in length and became more standardized, leading to today's four years of collegiate pre-optometry studies and four years of professional education. This paper represents an attempt to construct a list of optometry schools in the United States.

Schools Listed in *Blue Book of Optometrists*, 1912-1972

The *Blue Book of Optometrists* was first published in 1912 and was published every other year thereafter through most of its existence. The following is a listing of the schools and the years that they were included in the *Blue Book of Optometrists* through 1972. The year 1972 was an arbitrary stopping point. All of the schools operating in 1972 are still in existence.

This list does not indicate how active the schools were. Because the listings began in 1912 and were printed only every other year and the criteria for inclusion in the *Blue Book* are unclear, the years of inclusion may not accurately represent the starting and ending years of operation of the schools. The schools are listed below with the names given in the *Blue Book*. Some of the different listings may represent name changes in continuing schools.

American Institute of Optometry (New York City), 1916-1924
American Optical College (Detroit), 1912-1914
Appleton College of Optometry (Seattle), 1922
Atlantic University School of Optometry (Virginia Beach, Virginia), 1932
Aydelotte-McCormick College of Ophthalmology (Dixon, Illinois), 1934
Bradley Horological Institute (Peoria, Illinois), 1914-1916
Bradley Polytechnic Institute (Peoria, Illinois), 1918-1926
California College of Optics (San Francisco), 1918
California College of Optometry (San Francisco), 1920-1924
Chicago College of Optometry, 1948-1954
Chicago School of Refraction, 1916

Columbia Optical College (St. Paul, Minnesota), 1914, 1920-1926
Columbia University, 1912-1954
DeKeyser Institute of Optometry (Portland, Oregon), 1916-1926
DeMars School of Optics (Minneapolis), 1912-1922
Denver Optical College (Denver, Colorado), 1912
Donders School of Optometry (Los Angeles), 1918
Franklin Institute (Passaic, New Jersey), 1914-1918
Harden Optical College (Denver, Colorado), 1912, 1918
Harden Optical College (Cleveland, Ohio), 1920-1926
Illinois College of Optometry (Chicago), 1956-1972
Indiana University (Bloomington, Indiana), 1952-1972
Interstate Institute of Optometry (Litchfield, Illinois), 1912-1914
Kansas School of Optics (Saco, Maine), 1912-1918
Kansas School of Optics (Atascadero, California), 1920
Kentucky State College of Optometry (Mt. Sterling, Kentucky), 1940
Los Angeles College of Optometry, 1950-1972
Los Angeles Medical School of Ophthalmology and Optometry, 1912-1920
Los Angeles School of Optometry, 1922-1930, 1934-1948
James Maguire (St. Paul, Minnesota), 1912
Massachusetts College of Optometry (Boston), 1952-1972
Massachusetts School of Optometry (Boston), 1912-1950
Monroe College of Optometry (Chicago), 1940-1946
McCormick Medical College (Chicago), 1914-1918, 1924-1926
Milwaukee College of Optometry, 1920
Missouri College of Optometry (St. Louis), 1914-1926
Nebraska College of Optics (Lincoln), 1920
Needles Institute of Optometry (Kansas City, Missouri), 1912-1926
New Orleans Optical College, 1914-1926
Northern Illinois College of Ophthalmology and Otology (Chicago), 1912-1926
Northern Illinois College of Optometry (Chicago), 1928-1954
North Pacific College of Optometry (Portland, Oregon), 1928-1942
Northwest College of Optometry (Seattle), 1924
Ohio State University (Columbus), 1916-1972
Omaha Optical Institute, 1914-1922
Oregon College of Ocular Sciences (Portland, Oregon), 1922-1924
Pacific University (Forest Grove, Oregon), 1946-1972
Pennsylvania College of Optics and Ophthalmology, (Philadelphia), 1914-1920
Pennsylvania College of Optometrists (Philadelphia), 1918-1920
Pennsylvania College of Optometry (Philadelphia), 1966-1972
Pennsylvania State College of Optometry (Philadelphia), 1920-1964
Philadelphia Institute of Optometry, 1914-1916
Philadelphia Optical College, 1912-1940
Post Graduate Eye Institute (Chicago), 1932
Physicians and Surgeons Optical College (Denver, Colorado), 1912-1920
Reynolds Optical College (Portland, Oregon), 1912
Rochester School of Optometry, 1912-1926

School of Optometry of Monroe University (Chicago), 1938
South Bend College of Optics (South Bend, Indiana), 1912-1920
Southern California College of Optometry and Ophthalmology (Ruddy and Ring) (Los Angeles), 1912
Southern California Eye College, 1914
Southern College of Optometry (Memphis, Tennessee), 1934-1972
Southwestern Optical College (Kansas City, Missouri), 1912-1922
Spencer Optical Institute (New York), 1912-1914
State University of New York, 1970
Stone School of Optics (St. Paul, Minnesota), 1912-1922
Texas College of Optometry (Dallas), 1922-1924
University of Alabama Birmingham, 1970-1972
University of California (Berkeley), 1924-1972
University of Houston, 1954-1972
University of Illinois (Champaign), 1924
University of Massachusetts (Boston), 1922
University of Rochester, 1926-1932
University of Southern California, 1932
Washington School of Optometry (Spokane), 1914-1928
Western Ophthalmology Institute (San Francisco), 1914-1918

Additional Extinct Schools

The vast majority of the above schools are no longer in operation. A 1977 issue of the *Newsletter of the Optometric Historical Society* included a listing of extinct optometry schools compiled from the files of the International Library, Archives, and Museum of Optometry (ILAMO, now the Archives and Museum of the American Optometric Association).² While there is significant overlap in that list and the one above, there are some schools appearing in only one or the other. The schools appearing in the ILAMO list, but not the one based on the *Blue Book of Optometrists* are as follows:

Bates' School of Optometry, New York City
Chicago Ophthalmic College
Chicago Ophthalmic College and Hospital
Detroit Optical Institute
J.C. Eberhardt's Optometry Courses, New York City
Ferguson's School of Optometry, New York City
Hutchinson's School for Watchmakers, Engravers, and Opticians, LaPorte, Indiana
Indiana State College of Optics, South Bend, Indiana
Iowa College of Optometry, Des Moines
Johnston Optical Institute, Chicago
Johnston Optical Institute and College of Ophthalmology, Chicago
Kansas City Optical College
Kansas City School of Optometry
Kansas School of Optometry, Topeka
Kellam and Moore's College of Optics, Atlanta

King School of Optics, New York City
Klein Optical School, Boston
Knowles' School of Optometry, New York City
Leader Optical College, Topeka, Kansas
Lincoln Optical College, Lincoln, Nebraska
Los Angeles Optical College
Lowe's School of Optometry, McMinnville, Oregon
Manhattan School of Optics of the City of New York
Maryland Optical College, Baltimore
McCormick Neurological College, Chicago
McCormick Optical College, Chicago
New England Optical Institute, Boston
New York Institute of Optometry, New York City
The New York Preparatory School, New York City
New York School of Optometry, New York City
New York University, New York City
Pennsylvania College of Optometry, Pittsburgh
Rowley Ophthalmological College, St. Louis
St. Louis College of Optometry
St. Louis College of Physicians and Surgeons
Southern School of Optometry, Nashville, Tennessee
Southwestern College of Optometry, Kansas City, Missouri
Syracuse School of Optics, Syracuse, New York

Some Name Changes of Existing Schools

Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) can trace its origin to the Chicago College of Ophthalmology and Otology started in 1872. With a change in ownership in 1891 from Henry Olin to James McFatrigh, the name of the school changed to Northern Illinois College of Ophthalmology and Otology (NICOO). Another of the predecessor schools of ICO was the Needles Institute of Optometry started in 1907 in Kansas City. Needles purchased NICOO in 1922, and in 1926 he merged NICOO and the Needles Institute of Optometry to form the Northern Illinois College of Optometry. In 1936, physician Reuben Seid started another of ICO's predecessor schools, the Midwestern College of Optometry, which had name changes to Monroe College of Optometry in 1937 and to the Chicago College of Optometry in the late 1940s. Northern Illinois College of Optometry and the Chicago College of Optometry merged in 1955 to form ICO.³

The New England College of Optometry had its start as Klein School of Optics in 1894. It was started by physician August Andreas Klein. In 1901, the name of the school was changed to Massachusetts School of Optometry. In 1950, its name was changed to Massachusetts College of Optometry, and in 1976 to New England College of Optometry.⁴

The origin of the Southern California College of Optometry was in the Los Angeles School of Ophthalmology and Optometry founded by Marshall B. Ketchum in 1904. Another school, the Southern California Eye College was started in 1908 by

oculists T.J. Ruddy and M.M. Ring. In 1909, the name of Ketchum's school was changed to Los Angeles Optical College and Post Graduate School for Opticians. The Southern California Eye College merged with the Los Angeles Optical College to form the Southern California College of Optometry and Ophthalmology in 1909. In 1911, the name of the school changed to the Los Angeles Medical School of Ophthalmology and Optometry. In 1922, the name of the school became Los Angeles School of Optometry. In 1930, the school operated as part of the University of Southern California (USC) in the Department of Physics-Optics. In 1933, the school separated from USC and again assumed the name Los Angeles School of Optometry. Later name changes were to Los Angeles College of Optometry in 1949 and to Southern California College of Optometry in 1972.⁵

North Pacific College of Optometry had its origins in the 1920s. It operated in Portland, Oregon until its suspension during World War II. The charter and assets of the school were transferred to Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon, and the College of Optometry started there in 1945.^{6,7} One reference says that the DeKeyser Institute of Optometry was founded in 1910 and the Oregon College of Ocular Sciences was founded in 1919, with North Pacific College of Optometry being formed in 1921 from their merger.⁶

Pennsylvania College of Optometry began as Pennsylvania State College of Optometry in 1919. In 2008, Pennsylvania College of Optometry established Salus University. The following programs are offered by Salus University: Pennsylvania College of Optometry, College of Education and Rehabilitation, Osborne College of Audiology, College of Health Sciences, and Office of Graduate Studies in Biomedicine.⁸

Some Changes in Name and Location of Extinct Schools

The Kansas School of Optometry appears in the list of extinct schools above in Topeka and the Kansas School of Optics was listed in the *Blue Book* in Maine and California. This was the correspondence school operated by James Littlefield and the different locations represent the moves that he made during his lifetime.⁹

There was an entry in the 1912 *Blue Book* for a James Maguire school in St. Paul, Minnesota. In the 1914 through 1926 *Blue Books*, the Columbia Optical College is described as being in St. Paul with James Maguire as the president, so these are presumably the same school.

The teaching of optometry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was sometimes done in conjunction with the teaching of horology (watch and clock making). It has been suggested that the first school of horology was the Parsons Horological Institute, opened in 1886 in LaPorte, Indiana, by J.R. Parsons.¹⁰ Its department of optics was the start for some optometrists.¹¹ In 1892, Lydia Moss Bradley purchased the school and moved it to Peoria, Illinois. It may have been known as Parsons Polytechnic Institute for a period of time, because a history of the Indiana Association of Optometrists states that one of its charter members, I.M. Rowe, took a course in 1894 at Parsons Polytechnic Institute in Peoria, Illinois.¹² In 1897, Bradley Polytechnic

Institute was dedicated with the inclusion of a horology department. In 1946, Bradley Polytechnic Institute was renamed Bradley University.¹³

One of the schools listed in the *Blue Book* was the Kentucky State College of Optometry. It was founded in 1935 by William Dayton Walden (1911-1988) with the name Walden College of Optometry and Technology.¹⁴ The school was re-chartered with the name Kentucky State College of Optometry in 1937. It closed in 1945.

Other Extinct Schools

The above lists of schools no longer in existence are undoubtedly incomplete. By searching the indexes of the *Newsletter of the Optometric Historical Society* and of *Hindsight* and other resources, I have found a few more extinct schools. Gregg¹⁵ says that the Foster School of Optics was formed in 1888 in Boston. Cox¹⁶ also mentions the Foster School of Optics and said that it was run by Edwin S. Foster, M.D.

Some of the first “schools” were brief courses given by optical companies in order to have more persons to whom to sell their products. Gregg¹⁵ mentions that the King Optical Company in Cleveland, Ohio, offered such courses prior to 1890. It is unclear whether there was any connection of that course to the King School of Optics in New York City in the ILAMO list above.

Another extinct school appears to have been the Jacksonian Optical College in Jackson, Michigan. The James Leeds collection of books and documents contained three letters dated 1904 soliciting enrollment in its correspondence course.¹⁷ The fourth edition of a prospectus for the course was dated 1903. Its president was Lester J. Harris, M.D. If readers can provide information on any other schools not included in this list, please contact the author.

Alternative Names for Schools

It is possible that some schools may have at times been referred to by the name of the proprietor rather than the actual name of the school. For example, I have read of two optometrists who were said to have taken a six month night course at Benson’s College of Optometry in San Francisco.¹⁸ Optometrist Ernest A. Benson (1872-1960) was president of the California College of Optometry which opened in 1904 in San Francisco.¹⁹ So it appears that the California College of Optometry and Benson’s College of Optometry must have been the same school.

Present Day Optometry Schools

From the late 1940s to the early 1970s, the number of optometry schools remained fairly stable at 10 to 12. Although there were four schools that opened during those years, that number was offset by one closure (the optometry school at Columbia University in the 1950s) and one merger (Chicago College of Optometry with Northern Illinois College of Optometry to form Illinois College of Optometry in 1955). Three schools opened in the 1970s, and three in the 1980s. Then there were no more optometry schools opened until 2009, when three more started.

The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) currently lists 21 member schools and colleges.²⁰ The current names of those schools, as given at the ASCO website, and the years of their founding are as follows:

Illinois College of Optometry (Chicago), 1872
New England College of Optometry (Boston), 1894
Southern California College of Optometry (Fullerton, CA), 1904
The Ohio State University College of Optometry (Columbus), 1914
Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University (Philadelphia), 1919
University of California Berkeley School of Optometry, 1923
Southern College of Optometry (Memphis, TN), 1932
Pacific University College of Optometry (Forest Grove, OR), 1945 (a continuation of North Pacific College of Optometry, founded in 1921)
Indiana University School of Optometry (Bloomington), 1951 (preprofessional classes started in 1951; first professional courses in 1953)
University of Houston College of Optometry (Houston, TX), 1952
University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry, 1969
State University of New York State College of Optometry (New York), 1970
Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University (Big Rapids), 1975
Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry (Tahlequah), 1979
University of Missouri at St. Louis College of Optometry, 1980
Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry (Bayamon), 1981
Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), 1989
Midwestern University Arizona College of Optometry (Glendale), 2009
University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry (San Antonio, TX), 2009
Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry (Pomona, CA), 2009
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences School of Optometry (Worcester), 2012

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The Madame Heymann Optical Collection – Greatest in History, Disappeared in 1925, then Resurfaced Between 2006 and 2008

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Abstract

Beginning over one hundred years ago the finest collection of optical objects was assembled by Madame Alfred Heymann. Then in 1911, this Parisian woman authored the greatest book on the history of eyeglasses. Subsequently, in 1925, her entire collection totally disappeared from public view. The research effort behind www.antiquespectacles.com located this amazing collection between 2006 and 2008, all in museum storage. Nine institutions around Paris hold some of the best optical artifacts ever created and the majority of the missing collection has now been recovered. Considered the Holy Grail in the world of those who collect optical antiques, this pre-eminent collection included (especially) early fabulous hand-carved wooden eyeglass cases along with their associated original early glasses. The author traveled to Paris in 2010 to work with curators at all these prominent French museums. Additional items from the original renowned collection were successfully recovered.

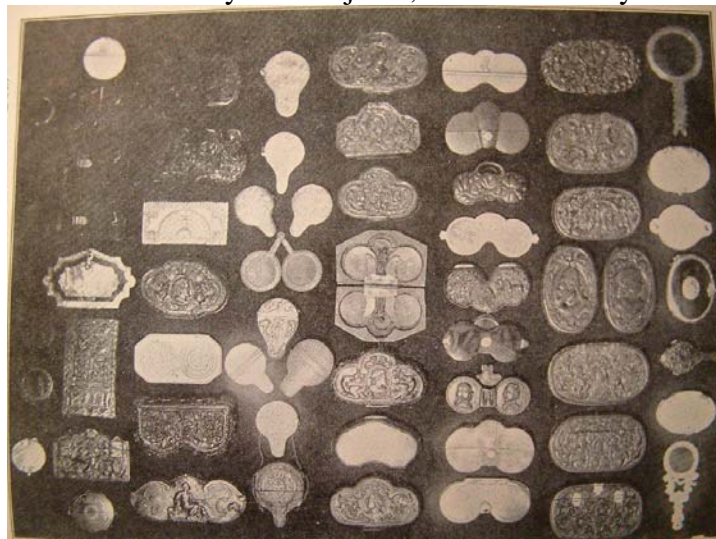
Introduction

Madame Heymann authored the greatest book on the history of eyeglasses in 1911 and she has become the only female recognized on the Honor Roll of Distinguished Persons which appears on the antiquespectacles.com online museum and encyclopedia. Born Alice Babette Schloss in August 1844, little else is known about Alice's very early life. After marrying Alfred Heymann in 1865 the couple rented a residence at 20 Avenue de L'Opera but they also owned a fine home in St Cloud just west of Paris. Both sides of the family had fairly substantial assets and Alice's husband Alfred (Abraham) became a fruit trader. Their friends around Paris, near the end of 19th - beginning of 20th c., were important aristocrats, famous musicians, and well-known writers.

After Alfred passed away in 1897, Alice devoted the vast majority of her time pursuing and collecting fine optical objects. Her searches extended far and wide. She travelled and studied extensively and thus became a truly passionate collector who organized a sizeable number of the most attractive relics she could acquire.



16th century French jeton, Musee de Cluny.



1915 American Encyclopedia of Ophthalmology, the photo that stimulated it all



Items all from the 16th century

She developed studious experience and was therefore able to sniff out at least several hundred uncommon and unusual optical treasures. Madame Heymann strongly believed that the artisan who first created eyeglasses around the year 1286 was just as important as Christopher Columbus!! In addition, she considered many of her best eyeglasses cases from the 16th to 18th century to be little masterpieces. Her collection also included a large group of ornate spyglasses, optical fans, tobacco containers, optical charms, scissors-glasses, monocles, perfume flasks, and all sorts of other assorted unusual objects. She even gathered some incredibly rare non-optical collectibles.

Heymann knew that viewing tubes without lenses had been used as early as the year 1000. Once high quality optical lenses were added to these tubes in the early 17th century in order to create the telescope, she looked upon that as an admirable invention. During her later years Heymann located some of the most fantastic spyglasses (little telescopes) in existence and some of these were later given to the Musée du Louvre and Musée des Arts Décoratifs following her death in 1925.

Around the turn of the 20th century some wonderful Heymann objects were exhibited associated at the Carnavalet Museum in Paris. Her nicest optical objects were in the exhibition of Les Lorgnettes, part of the much larger 1900 Universal and International Exhibition of Paris. Only four copies of the rare 1900 brochures are currently known to exist.

The Book – *Lunettes et Lorgnettes de Jadis*

Madame Alfred Heymann continued to hunt down and acquire relics and finally around 1911 a large group of wonderful objects became part of an exhibition again associated with the Carnavalet Museum while some of her best spyglass lorgnettes were exhibited at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. That same year she published *Lunettes et Lorgnettes de Jadis*, [Paris, J. Leroy]. This rare book was based mostly on her own collection. Her major goal was to please anyone who was attracted to historical objects of the past. Only 300 copies were printed and just over 50 examples have been located to date. Books with their original slipcover are especially scarce.

An exhibition was also held at the Musée de Cluny, officially known as Musée National du Moyen Âge. At the same time, Musée des arts Decoratifs had two windows filled with little collectibles, 18th and 19th century lorgnette spyglasses from the collection. These events all occurred together with the publishing of the book around 1911-12.

Copy #114 of the book deserves high respect. Its existence only became known in October 2010 during an appointment to meet Heymann's great grandson Roland Hesse. He possesses the only copy that was handed down in the family. With its original slipcover and in excellent condition, it was a great experience to hold this treasure.



Cut steel, largest known group, Carnavalet



Second earliest dated case known, dated 1580



Decorated with cherubs, gilded ornate, 18th century

The book is a well-written survey on the history of eyewear, though it is presented entirely in French. There are about 155 pages in all with 25 plates of which four are full-page color gravures. There are over 200 additional smaller illustrations. More than half of these illustrations are pictures of paintings and prints rather than actual optical aids. Most of these pictures are ascribed to a particular museum or other site. The photos were apparently well-selected because Madame Heymann wanted them to be instructive for anyone who handled the book.

In conclusion, Heymann's book made her collection famous while at the same time the collection now makes her book famous too. The review and evaluation of all the pages initiated leads to several other collections since not everything illustrated is from the Heymann Collection. Rare and unusual objects from other museums have also led to the discovery of artwork and objects which have been of interest to this research and the resulting educational antiquespectacles website.

One significant example can be presented. Near the top of page 29 Heymann, in French, describes what she believed to be the greatest optical object ever. Part of the Felix Doistau Collection, it was on loan to the Musée du Louvre. The two solid gold eyeglasses in a solid gold and enamel case may possibly be the example seen as part of the Rothschild Collection, currently in London at S.J. Phillips. No other solid gold glasses in a gold and enamel case are known to exist in any other collection from all this research, so far.

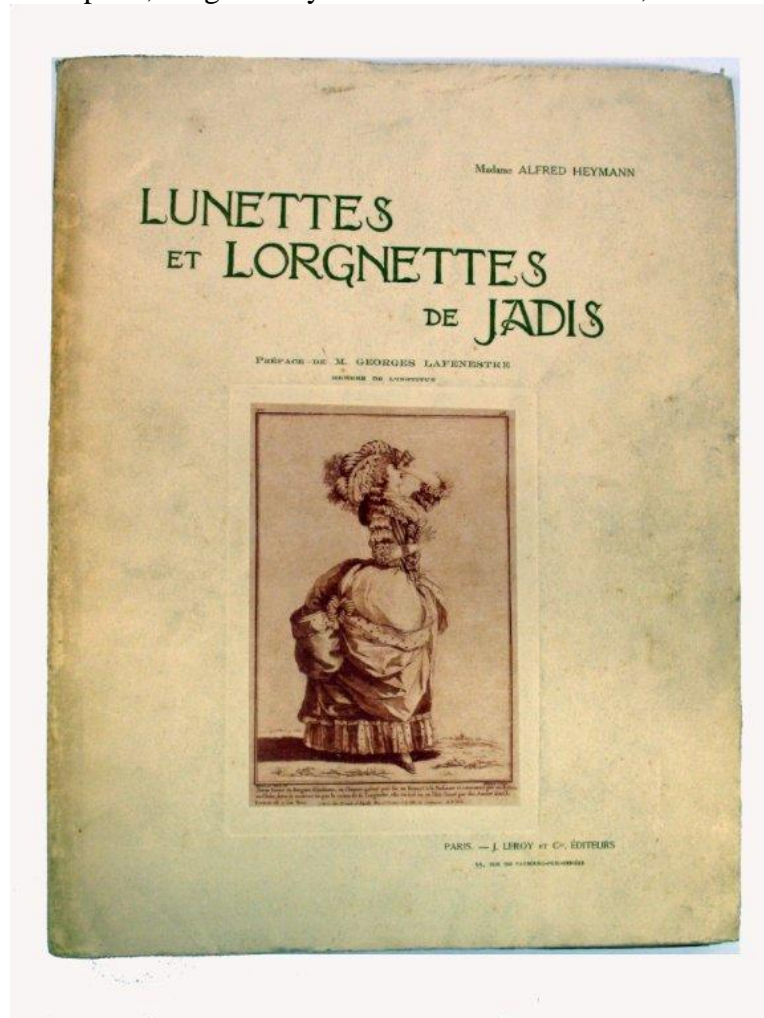
The Heymann book continues to serve as a valuable resource for www.antiquespectacles.com. Mrs. Heymann deserves our sincerest thanks and credit for providing images and information about other historic optical objects, thus helping to further expand everyone's general base of knowledge.



Exquisite carving, the story of Saint Hubert



For two pairs, Virgin Mary and Jesus on the reverse, 16th century



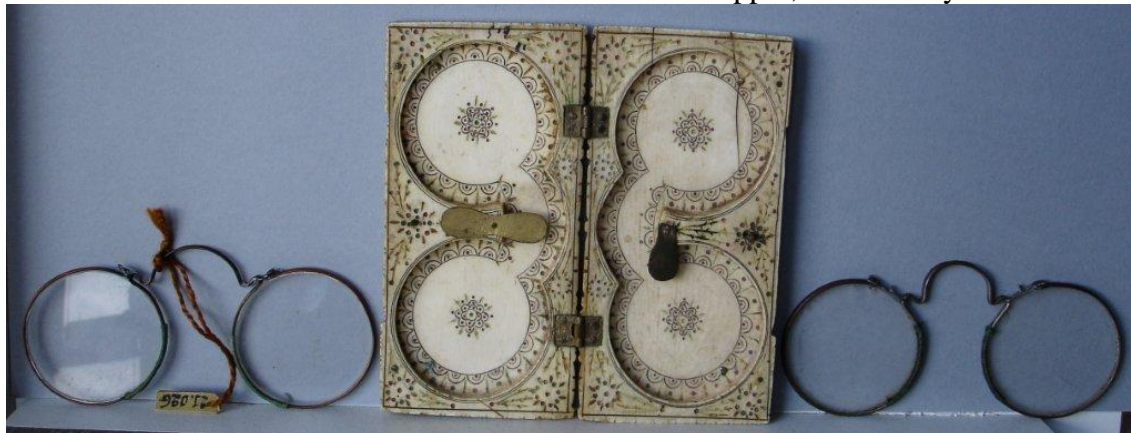
Madame Heymann's book



Imagine opening a drawer and finding these



Instruments of the Passion and the Last Supper, 19th century



Ivory, with book of sundials, one of two known

The Collection

Ophthalmologist Dr. Charles Letocha has studied optical history for several decades and he has helped with many areas of the website. His research found a 1960s German journal which listed countries with the locations of some significant optical collections. Charles shared that list with the author in 2006 and several new names appeared. Specifically for “Frankreich” (France) there were two leads to pursue with this research. So the Musée des Arts Décoratifs was contacted and soon afterwards the Musée Carnavalet. This eventually led to the location of the Madame Heymann’s 1924 will. The details of the story and the detective work are available on www.antiquespectacles.com. Over time objects have been found and now examined in storage at the following institutions:

- A. Chateau in Ecoen (Musée National de la Renaissance). About 150 of the finest eye boxes and their associated glasses, 16th – early 19th century. These used to reside in the Musée de Cluny so in inventory they started as Cl. 210xx but then became E. Cl. 210xx.
- B. Musée des Arts Décoratifs. About 75 objects, mostly ornate spyglasses.
- C. Musée Carnavalet. Over 60 objects including about thirty single lens relics.
- D. Musée de Cluny. Only one object is present, however, it is a world class 16th century jeton. This is where the major portion of the collection actually began its journey soon after Heymann’s death in 1925.
- E. Musée des arts asiatiques Guimet. Two wonderfully carved Chinese cases with their original eyeglasses.
- F. Château de Malmaison in Rueil-Malmaison. One spyglass and one optical fan, both associated with Napoleon.
- G. Musée de l’opéra. A fan, a pair of scissors-glasses and a spyglass, all with important provenance.
- H. Musée du Louvre. Eleven objects, all amazing spyglasses.
- I. Musée du Conservatoire de Musique - this museum has nothing optical but they received Heymann’s four Guimbards (Jew’s Harp) from the 17th century with their cases of sculpted wood, one of the cases is in iron.
- J. Museo dell’Occhiale in Pieve di Cadore, Italy. About ten very nice objects are now here.

The actual eyeglass cases themselves, each and every one, represent incredible works of craftsmanship. Some of the relics are truly spectacular. These objects are so rare and artistic they stand out and deserve everyone’s appreciation. Several of the best are religious in nature, both front and back. Madame Heymann believed these particular cases may have originally belonged to the high clergy because the cases depict scenes from the life of Christ.



MOP quizzing glass, Musee Carnavalet



Optical charms, Museo dell'Occhiale



Silver and MOP, about 1700

After the Discovery

News regarding the discovery of many of the missing Heymann objects has already started to spread. Advanced collectors worldwide amaze at the sight of these historic relics, known previously only in the underappreciated 1911 book. Many do not even appear in the book and were therefore totally unknown previously.

These antiques deserve to be considered amongst the most outstanding optical treasures in existence....the BEST of the BEST. Imagine what Madame Heymann must have felt as she held each one in her own hands perhaps 100 years ago.

Small portions of the Heymann Collection still appear to be missing. Some of the unusual spyglasses (lorgnettes) seen on the colored plates in her book have not yet been located. Hopefully these are in storage at one of the smaller museums in the vicinity of Paris. Where are the nearly **three dozen fans** that were mentioned in the 1900 exhibition catalogue? Two are located at Musée des Arts Décoratifs and one appears in storage at the Château de Malmaison, and one other with provenance is at the Musée de l'opéra. One surfaced by chance in the Vanlathem Collection. Where are the rest?

Where are all the nearly **dozen tobacco containers with optical devices**? The Musée Du Tabac D'Interet National (Tobacco Museum) in south in Bergerac, France has none of the missing tobacco containers. Where are the best magnifiers, the ones from her book and also several which appear in the photo from the 1915 Encyclopedia? One from the 17th century has a horn frame and also its original case, essentially unique as a combination. Heymann proudly owned about **fifty optical charms** and yet only a few have been seen in the Art Decoratifs storage area. Where are all the rest? There were **ten perfume flasks** and nearly all are missing. In addition, she describes **seven "primitive" binoculars** (given dates 1826 – 1838). What happened to them?

What else was in her collection that does not even appear in her book? We may never know the answer to this key question. But it is fun to wonder and speculate and hope. Leads should arise in the future and then further research may provide additional answers to all these questions.



Religious carvings, 17th century



Tobacco container with spyglass, Musee Carnavalet



Two baleen spectacles, from the Du Sommerard Collection

Summary

Madame Alfred Heymann was an advanced French collector from the late 19th and early 20th century who devoted much time to enriching her optical collection. She remained devoted to all the available scientific and historic knowledge of the time. Missing since 1925, much of her collection has now been uncovered in storage at a group of famous museums mostly around Paris. By far, this is the #1 optical collection in history.

To have been partially instrumental in the discovery of the Madame Heymann Optical Collection was one of the most exciting experiences of the author's life. Optical lens research remains fascinating and the author has received the kind assistance of a wonderful group of individuals (collectors/historians/curators) worldwide. This has been a team effort. Everyone's combined time and energy has been rewarded and hopefully it will lead to further discoveries and an ever-increasing recognition of this amazing Heymann collection (and perhaps others) in museums around Paris.

Perhaps an attractive coffee-table book will be created and published in the future in order to further spread the information and images of these incredibly historic specimens. Someone may eventually translate the original 1911 book from French into English so more people around the world can enjoy everything included in those wonderful pages. The book likely featured Heymann's best objects but one significant question remains. How large was her entire collection at its maximum?

Finally, these objects have the potential to be gathered together for a public display and exhibition. Will an interested public ever be granted the opportunity to see and appreciate all of these treasured objects? Will the prominent museums of Paris ever try to organize and assemble something for the public to see? I hope so.

The Heymann Collection could be featured along with great antique optical objects from other famous collections. Certainly optical collections are underappreciated and some of the most important objects seem lost to history. A great exhibition organized at a major French museum in or near Paris would be well-attended. These objects deserve the highest level of recognition and visitors from around the world would benefit from the sight and knowledge of the fabulous Madame Heymann Optical Collection.

Acknowledgments

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Jess Boyd Eskridge, Optometric Educator and Author

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Abstract

*Jess Boyd Eskridge (1928-2011) was a noted optometry faculty member from 1954 to 1990 at four different schools. He was co-editor of a popular 1991 book, *Clinical Procedures in Optometry*. That book and his other contributions to optometry are discussed.*

Key words: *optometric education, optometry books, optometry history.*

Jess Boyd Eskridge (1928-2011) was born and raised in Wyoming. After two years in the Army and brief periods of study at Ventura Junior College (California) and UCLA, he enrolled at University of California Berkeley. He completed B.S. and M.Opt. degrees in optometry there in 1953 and 1954. He joined the faculty of the University of Houston College of Optometry in 1954, when it was in its third year of existence.¹ While at Houston, he taught courses in low vision, advanced refraction methods, strabismus diagnosis and treatment, and glaucoma detection.² In 1958, he left Houston to enter the physiological optics graduate program at The Ohio State University.

Eskridge received the M.S. degree at Ohio State in 1959 with a thesis entitled "The Role of Saccades and Drifts in the Maintenance of Binocular Fixation" and the Ph.D. in 1964 with the thesis "Investigation of the Horopter and the Apparent Fronto-parallel Plane." He was a member of the Ohio State optometry faculty from 1961 to 1971.³ He spent the 1971-72 academic year on the faculty at Indiana University. In 1972, Eskridge went to the University of Alabama Birmingham School of Optometry, at the start of its fourth year of operation. He served there as Chairman of the Department of Optometry for over ten years.⁴ He retired in 1990.

Eskridge was a frequent contributor to *American Journal of Optometry and Physiological Optics*, *Journal of the American Optometric Association*, and *Optometry and Vision Science*. Most of his papers were on various aspects of binocular vision, such as strabismus, testing procedures, vertical imbalances, fixation disparity, prism prescribing, and accommodation, but he also published papers in other areas, such as refraction and tonometry. His research often addressed significant clinical issues and its results offered practical applications to patient care. Eskridge's ability to apply research results to clinical practice is illustrated by the statement made by Irvin Borish in 1971 that he considered Eskridge "among the top five or six clinicians in the educational area and a prime example of the type of instructor who can relate proven background in research method and theoretical knowledge with clinical application."⁵

An example of Eskridge's practical mind is his design of what many clinicians have come to call the "doggy paddle."⁶ It consists of small black on white figures printed on paper with an adhesive back and attached to a tongue depressor. The figures in its most recent design are a sunburst-like pattern, four lines of letters, and the profile of the head of a dog, the latter element giving it its popular name. It has been used as a nearpoint target for decades. Photographs of a doggy paddle can be found on pages 67 and 80 in *Clinical Procedures in Optometry* edited by Eskridge, John Amos, and Jimmy Bartlett.^{7,8} Some years ago when I made inquiries about its origin, Ted Grosvenor said that he recalled Eskridge making such an object in the 1950s at the University of Houston when they were on the faculty together there.⁹ When I wrote to Eskridge, he confirmed that he introduced a nearpoint target on a tongue depressor at Houston and then at each of the other schools where he taught – Ohio State, Indiana, and then Alabama, and he sent me a sheet of the stick-on targets, identical to those that were used at Indiana.¹⁰ Today similar nearpoint targets on PD rules or other handheld objects are commonly available commercially or as give-aways from optical companies.

An obituary notice recognized Eskridge as a mentor to many young faculty members, and observed that he possessed "great intellect, a positive attitude, and compassion to help people in their career development."⁴ Eskridge's long-time colleague at University of Alabama Birmingham School of Optometry (UABSO), John F. Amos, said that Eskridge "was infinitely patient, encouraging, and the greatest intellect I have met in optometry for his wide range of knowledge...[and] was deeply passionate about clinical optometry as well as research. He deserves significant credit for the development of the optometry program at UABSO. He was responsible for the recruitment of an outstanding group of young clinicians who brought stability and recognition to this young program."¹¹

Eskridge was a strong advocate of optometric continuing education, as evidenced by the fact that he gave over 400 continuing education courses and he was a member or chairman of the American Academy of Optometry Ellerbrock Continuing Education Committee for 24 years.⁴ He received the American Academy of Optometry's Eminent Service Award, the Award of Excellence from Heart of America Contact Lens and Primary Care, and the Distinguished Service Award from Southeastern University. University of Alabama Birmingham School of Optometry gives the Dr. Jess Boyd Eskridge Clinical Excellence Award annually to a primary care faculty member.

In 1991, Eskridge, along with his UABSO colleagues John Amos and Jimmy D. Bartlett, published a very significant 808 page book, *Clinical Procedures in Optometry*. In the preface, they described the main purpose of the book as providing "a clinical reference in the needed area of clinical procedures, and through its use to unify components of the optometric curriculum and thereby produce greater unity within the profession of optometry." (p. xi) Emphasis was on procedures that would likely be used by a primary care optometrist rather than on procedures that might be exclusively in the province of the specialty practitioner. Eighty-four chapters by 44 authors were organized into seven parts: (1) General Procedures, (2) Ocular Disease Procedures, (3) Contact Lens Procedures, (4) Pediatric Procedures, (5) Binocular Vision Procedures,

(6) Low Vision Procedures, and (7) Patient Care Decision Making and Reimbursement. The first two of the seven parts accounted for about three-fourths of the book's pages.

Each chapter covered one procedure, as for example, one chapter on visual acuity, one chapter on near point of convergence, one chapter on contrast sensitivity, etc. Chapters contained five general headings: (1) Introduction, which defined the particular procedure and described its general clinical use; (2) Instrumentation, which looked at the theoretical basis of the devices used in the procedure; (3) Commercially Available Instruments, which described their basic design, with the inclusion of photographs of the instruments described; (4) Clinical Procedure, which gave a step by step outline of how each procedure is performed; and (5) Clinical Implications, which covered the clinical significance and interpretation of each procedure.

Reviews of the book were very positive. Reviews for optometry journals said that it was "a valuable resource containing much practical information,"¹² and an "excellent textbook."¹³ A review in an ophthalmology journal called it "well-written, well-organized, and well-illustrated."¹⁴ Evidence for it being a valuable reference is the fact it was among the forty books nominated more than once for being one of the most important twentieth century optometry books.¹⁵ It was also the most frequently cited book in the second edition of *Borish's Clinical Refraction*.^{16,17}

I was fortunate enough to contribute three chapters to *Clinical Procedures in Optometry*, one of them co-authored with Eskridge.¹⁸ Through that process and through co-authoring a chapter in another book with Eskridge,¹⁹ I came to admire him for his professionalism, his intellect, his practicality, his empathy, and his confident demeanor.

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Biographical Notes on Lionel Laurance

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Abstract

*Lionel Laurance (1856-1936) was an optometric educator in Canada and England and an author of important optometry books, most notably *General and Practical Optics*, first published in 1908, and *Visual Optics and Sight Testing*, first published in 1912.*

Key words: *optometric education, optometry books, optometry history.*

Lionel Laurance was born in England in 1856. After the completion of his early education in London, he went to work for an older brother in Spain.¹ The older brother, like their father, was an antiques dealer. Soon after his brother in Spain died in 1886, Laurance went to Toronto, Canada, to work for another brother. This brother, Barney Laurance, was a dealer in “wholesale optical goods” and in the 1890s was president of Dominion Optical Company.¹

During his stay in Toronto, Lionel Laurance suffered a leg injury and was incapacitated for a period of time. He spent that time studying books on optics and refraction, including Donders’ major text. Laurance’s self-study in Toronto and some instruction from his brother largely constituted his education in optics.¹ He then opened a school named Optical Institute of Canada in Montreal and another named Dominion Optical College in Toronto. Fisher suggested that Laurance’s reasons for opening these schools included his “love for teaching,” his “quest” for optical knowledge, and a desire “to increase the number of prospective customers” for his brother’s wholesale optical businesses.¹ Fisher credits Lionel Laurance with being the first known optometric educator in Canada.²

In 1896, Laurance returned to London. Soon after his arrival, he started giving classes in “practical sight testing.”³ In 1898 and 1899, he taught at Northampton Polytechnic. Later instructional efforts included partnership with Henry Oscar Wood in the School of Optics Ltd. In 1898, the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers held their first examination and Laurance passed “with distinction.”³ In 1904, the Spectacle Makers Company held their first examination on sight-testing and Laurance passed that test as well. Laurance was active in efforts to advance optometry and protect its interests. In 1905, he founded an organization named the Institute of Ophthalmic Opticians devoted to those purposes.

Laurance was a frequent contributor to English optometric periodicals such as *The Optician* and was an associate editor for the American publication *Optometric*

Weekly. Many of his articles emphasized a systematic routine of subjective testing including the fogging method. In 1921, he delivered a lecture on subjective testing at the American Optometric Association meeting. In that lecture he stated that the majority of persons consulted him due to “asthenopic conditions” and that his subjective testing consisted of six stages: “The measurement of optical error of each eye. The test for equalization of the eyes. The muscle test. The near test. The decision as to the lenses needed. The fitting of, or measurement for, the frame.”⁴

Lionel Laurance published some widely used books. One of his first books was *The Eye: Its Elementary Anatomy, Physiology and Optical Constants*, published in 1908 (100 pages). In the preface to this little book, Laurance stated that it was “written for students in optics.” It contained a summary of ocular anatomy, sensory aspects of vision, visual acuity, color vision, and ocular optics.

The first edition of *General and Practical Optics* was also published in 1908. Laurance published second and third editions in 1914 and 1920, and a fourth edition appeared in 1932 with Laurance and H. Oscar Wood as co-authors. I examined a copy of the second edition (363 pages) and found it to be comprehensive with coverage of physical optics, photometry, reflection, refraction, thin lenses, magnification, cylinder lenses, transposition and neutralization of lenses, prisms, decentration, effectivity, thick lenses, color, aberrations, polarization, and other topics.

Laurance’s best known book, *Visual Optics and Sight Testing*, was first published in 1912. The first edition (396 pages) covered ocular anatomy, ocular optics, sensory aspects of vision, visual acuity, subjective testing procedures, nature and management of refractive errors, phorias, strabismus, presbyopia, color vision, optics of lenses, keratometry, retinoscopy, ophthalmoscopy, retinal imagery, and spectacle frames. In the preface, Laurance said: “I have endeavoured to cover here and in ‘General and Practical Optics,’ all that is essential for the sight-testing optician. That I shall not have succeeded will be but natural.” (p. vii) The same basic format was used with much additional material in second (1920, 420 pages) and third (1926, 502 pages) editions. A fourth edition with H. Oscar Wood as second author was published in 1936. *Visual Optics and Sight Testing* is one of forty books with multiple nominations for being among the most important twentieth century optometry books.⁵ The wide usage of this book is illustrated by the following statement from Irvin Borish: “Although many concepts, and even instrumentation, varied between England and the United States, this volume remained the basic text in the field until it was replaced by *Clinical Refraction* in 1949.”⁶

Laurance published *Simple Calculations for Students of Visual Optics* (72 pages) in 1919. It presented some basic mathematics, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, apparently prepared as a prerequisite for the study of optics. WorldCat online library catalog also lists a book entitled *Simple Mathematics for Students of Ophthalmic Optics* published in 1930 (57 pages) with Laurance and H. Oscar Wood as authors.⁷ According to WorldCat, the only library copy of *Simple Mathematics* is in the British

Library. One could guess that *Simple Mathematics* might be a later edition of Laurance's *Simple Calculations* book.

Laurance died in 1936 at the age of 80. A memorial notice in *Optometric Weekly* said that "his fame is secure on this side of the Atlantic. His textbooks 'General and Practical Optics' and 'Visual Optics and Sight Testing,' remain classics among American no less than among British optometrists, fundamental and sound; and those who were privileged to hear him lecture on the occasion of his visit to the United States just after the close of the Great War will not soon forget the broadness and soundness of this distinguished scholar's foundations."⁸

In 1958, *The Optician* had this to say about Laurance: "...his great aim from the time he returned to England until he died was to raise the status of the sight-testing optician. It should be realised that when he arrived in the eighteen-nineties the majority of spectacles were sold glazed, and people just tried them on until they found a pair that suited them. During his life time he helped to change this and bring about the high state of the profession as we know it today."³

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Book Review: Eyewear: A Visual History 1491-Today

Eyewear: A Visual History 1491-Today. Moss Lipow. Cologne, Germany: Taschen, 2011. 358 pages. ISBN: 978-3-8365-2565-7. Hardcover, \$38.00.

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The author of this visually attractive book is Moss Lipow, a spectacle frame designer and collector. The highlight of the book is the numerous well-produced color photographs of spectacles and sunglasses. Several eras are represented but there is somewhat more emphasis on the twentieth century. There are also some reproductions of advertisements for sunglasses and frames and some photographs of celebrities in eyewear. The brief text in the book is presented in English, German, and French, with a total of 20 pages of text in English. Photo captions are in English.

The brief text provides some explanation of the trends in spectacle frame design. Influences of culture, fashion, art, and spectacle frame materials on frame design are discussed. An example of the interesting facts presented by the author is that the shift of craftsmen in the ornamental comb industry into the eyewear industry was a significant factor in the boom of sunglasses after World War II. Influences of modernism and pop art and the adoption of licensed names in eyewear are also discussed.

One statement made by the author that would be disputed by scholars of spectacle history is his statement that: "It is generally agreed that glasses were invented in 1287, in Florence, Italy, by a monk named Salvino degli Armati." (p. 10) Most scholars see the story of Salvino as a hoax perpetrated by a Florentine patriot seeking to glorify his city.¹⁻⁴ It is now generally accepted that spectacles were invented by an unknown artisan at Pisa, Italy, in 1285 or 1286.

This book will be of particular interest to collectors of spectacles and sunglasses and to persons seeking a visual record of artistic aspects of spectacle frame design, particularly from about 1930 to about 1990.

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Hofstetter HW. *Optometry: Professional, Economic, and Legal Aspects*. St. Louis: Mosby, 1948:17-35.

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Penisten DK. Eyes and vision in North American Indian cultures: An historical perspective on traditional medicine and mythology. In: Goss DA, Edmondson LL, eds. *Eye and Vision Conditions in the American Indian*. Yukon, OK; Pueblo Publishing, 1990:186-190.

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