HASSELMAN FAMILY
MATERIALS, CA. 1860–1958

Collection Information
Biographical Sketches
Scope and Content Note
Series Contents
Cataloging Information

Processed by
Robert W. Smith, Barry Slivka, and Dorothy A. Nicholson
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 manuscript boxes, 2 bound volumes, 2 oversize manuscript folders, 1 oversize architectural drawing

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1860–1958

PROVENANCE: Anna Hasselman, Indianapolis, Ind.: 1946, 1962

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RELATED HOLDINGS: Pioneer painters of Indiana collection (M0822) contains photos of Lewis (157) and Otto Hasselman (158) portraits

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1946.0017, 1962.1002

NOTES: The architectural drawing has been digitally scanned and reproductions are available to researchers. Contact Visual Reference Services for order number 9672.
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Lewis W. Hasselman, archetype of the Hasselman clan in Indiana and father of Otto and Watson, came to the Hoosier capital from Miamisburg, Ohio, where he had been elected as an Overseer of the Poor in 1833. Earlier he made substantial contributions to Germantown, a neighboring community.

He moved with his family to the Hoosier capital in 1850 and with Almus Vinton, founded the Washington Foundry which fabricated agricultural implements, steam engines, grist mills and sawmill equipment. In 1864 Hasselman and Vinton were drawn into a legal suit (of undetermined origin), Hasselman and Vinton vs. Herman Kortepeter, argued in Danville, Indiana. The two industrialists lost the jury case, the passion of which nearly led to bloodshed when their attorney Leander Campbell, confronted Kortepeter’s attorney, Albert Porter, and pulled out a club, prompting Campbell, to reach for his pistol. In the end no harm was done.

When Vinton retired from the business (1865), Hasselman reorganized and called it the Eagle Machine Works, located at the intersection of South Meridian and Louisiana streets. In time, it moved to the two hundred block of North Meridian. Later it merged with Sinker-Davis Machine Co., adding the manufacturing of threshing machines. Lewis also served as a trustee on the local School Board in the early 1860s.

In 1870 Lewis and his cousin William Fishback, an Ohio-born attorney who settled in the Hoosier capital in 1857 and later law partner of Benjamin Harrison, bought the Indianapolis Journal. Fishback became editor, a position he held for only a short while. Hasselman and Fishback moved on to the St. Louis Democrat. That tenure lasted but a couple of years.

Lewis built a handsome house located on the southwest corner of Meridian and Vermont streets. Designed by Francis Costigan, an early and respected Indiana architect, Hasselman largely looked to imported Italian workers to complete the internal work. Later the house was known as the Fahnley house, named for its last owner. The house was razed after 1921 for the construction of the Indianapolis Athletic Club.

Otto H. Hasselman, Lewis’ son, was born in 1847 in Miamisburg, Ohio. The family moved to Indianapolis where Otto, following a meager education, hired into his father’s foundry in the Hoosier capital. He served with the 132nd Indiana Regiment during the Civil War and, because of injuries, received a pension of $30 a month. Mustered out of the army and convinced that foundry life did not suit his tastes, he moved into journalism and politics. In time he owned a print shop, Hasselman Printing Company and at age 20 he owned one-sixth interest in the Journal Building on Monument Circle but sold that in his mid twenties. Meanwhile he moved to St. Louis where he occupied the office of business manager of the St. Louis Democrat, owned by his father and William Fishback. The paper’s demise brought Otto back to Indianapolis where a few years later he formed the
Journal Job Printing Company for commercial printing projects and stepped into the position of proprietor of the *Indianapolis Journal*. As a Republican, he did not hesitate to take positions in political matters of the city and state. This led to his designing of election booths for voting, for which in 1893 he was granted a patent. Olive, his wife, noted in her diary (December 31, 1880) that Otto was a hard worker and spent much time in his varied jobs. But her longer view prompted her to add, “yet many do not succeed even after putting forth every effort.”

Ataxia finally took its toll after a decade of suffering. On April 21, 1906, he died at his home on North Alabama St., in Indianapolis. He left two children Anna and Lewis, and a brother Watson. The funeral was conducted at the family home; burial in a private ceremony, followed in Crown Hill Cemetery. The City Editor of the *Indianapolis News* opined that Hasselman was one of six “brains” of the state Republican Party.

**Olive Eddy Hasselman**, wife of Otto, graduated in 1866 from Chicago’s Dearborn Seminary, a school for girls. She enjoyed writing and lecturing—one of her contemporaries, a newspaper writer, commenting on her writing style, called her a “graceful writer, deeply versed in belles-lettres”—she early on found her professional niche in art, its practice, its history, its criticism, and its preservation. A friend of Charles and Cornelia Fairbanks—he the U.S. senator and Vice President from Indiana—she was sought after by the local art community for her knowledge and her character. For years Olive faithfully kept a dairy noting family and personal goings and comings. This she continued when in 1885 she toured Western Europe: England, Scotland and France. In England, after seeing the York Cathedral she penned metaphorically, “I thank God that I [saw] this Cathedral, and I thank him that he inspired the builder to make it.”

The marriage of Otto and Olive seems to have been a solid one. After some months of illness from an undisclosed malady, part of which time she spent outside the home, Olive noted in her diary (May 16, 1880), “I never was so anxious to be with my husband and little girl as now.” Notwithstanding the journal entry, she was not a whiner.

Olive died in Washington D.C. on an undetermined date, though after her husband’s demise. Burial followed in Graceland Cemetery, in Evanston, Illinois, in a plot of the Eddy family. In Indianapolis, she was a member of the Woman’s Club, the Catherine Merrill Club, and of Meridian St. M.E. Church. She and Otto were listed repeatedly in various editions of the *Indianapolis Blue Book*, beginning at least as early as the 1873 edition.

Posterity has also left for us in this collection diaries of Olive Hasselman’s mother **Anna W. Eddy** (Mrs. Thomas M.) of Evanston, Illinois.

**Anna Hasselman**, daughter of Otto and Olive Hasselman, was born in Indianapolis on January 12, 1872. She studied at, graduated (1892) from, and later taught for several years at Mount Vernon Seminary, Washington D.C. Subsequently she moved to New York City to further her artistic career. There she enrolled at Columbia University, participated in the Art Students League, and in the Chase School of Art. Family support allowed her to spend valuable time with top drawer painters such as William Forsyth, William Merritt Chase.
and Charles Lasar. She also studied in New England with Charles W. Hawthorne and with Eliot O’Hara, followed by time in Egypt, France, Italy and Germany.

After her extensive studies both in the U.S. and abroad, she settled down in her hometown where she taught and served as curator of the John Herron Art Museum from 1921–1952. Her classes at John Herron dealt with still life, history of painting and sculpture, and lectures on architecture. Much in demand, she frequently lectured at local venues, both religious and secular. Prior to accepting an appointment to John Herron, a public notice announced (May 1903) that she would teach in a new classical K-12 prep school soon to open at Meridian and 16th streets and which would bear the name of Tudor Hall, antecedent to Park-Tudor now located at College and 71st streets. The never-married curator retired at age 81 from John Herron and later moved to the Methodist Home in Franklin, Indiana, where on April 16, 1966 she breathed her last. Her body was cremated.

Her watercolor “Church in Kennebunkport” (1930) and her “Street in Kennebunkport, Maine” (same year) are part of the Indiana State Museum collection. In Indianapolis she was a member of the Art Association and exhibited her work in the galleries of the Lieber Company. She was part of the elite social coteries of Indianapolis, and of art and musical productions. Her name occurs frequently in newspapers as artist, judge, exhibitor, bookplate designer, and curator of and teacher at John Herron Art Museum.

One newspaper reporter, after interviewing Anna, described her as a small, slender woman “abounding in energy and good spirits . . . with a flare for touches of vivid color,” an apt description of a woman who succumbed at age 95. She wielded a hammer, pounded nails, cut wire and brushed on paint with aplomb, and all for pure enjoyment, not in order to sell her works. Possessing no fear of public speaking and blessed with a trove of facts about art, artists and the larger world, she found her place on numerous lecture platforms. At age 90 she traveled to Europe alone and reportedly had a wonderful time. She held memberships in the Society of Indiana Pioneers, and Portfolio Club, and Meridian St. Methodist Church.

Sources:

Materials in the collection

*Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men of the State of Indiana, II* (Cincinnati, 1880)


Clipping Files, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis

Dunn, Jacob, *Greater Indianapolis*, I (Chicago, 1910)


*Indianapolis Magazine of History*, lxii (1966), 175ff

*Indianapolis Star* and *Indianapolis News*, multiple issues.
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of a small amount of Otto Hasselman’s correspondence and legal papers; diaries of his wife, Olive Eddy Hasselman (1879–1880, 1891–1898); diaries of her mother, Anna Eddy of Evanston, Ill. (1897, 1900); and the school diary of Hasselman’s son, Lewis W. (1892). Correspondents include Albert J. Beveridge. There is one architectural rendering of the Hasselman home by the architect, Francis Costigan ca. 1860.

Series 1: Hasselman family papers and correspondence.

Series 2: Hasselman family diaries of Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H., Lewis W. Hasselman, and Anna W. Eddy (Mrs. Thomas M.).

Series 3: Anna Hasselman scrapbook: The scrapbook contains mostly newspaper articles pasted in. The pages are numbered and many topics are listed in the Contents section with the page numbers. Newspaper articles that were laid in were copied on acid free paper and are now in folders. Some laid in materials were left in the scrapbook.

Series 4: Anna Hasselman Programs and Ephemera are mostly theater programs and printed materials related to plays and social events.
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**Series 1: Hasselman Family papers and correspondence, ca. 1860–1927**

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<td>Dearborn female seminary, Chicago, diploma, Olive W. Eddy, 1866, June 28</td>
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<td>Beveridge, Albert J., Letter from U.S. Senate, to O. H. Hasselman, Indianapolis, saying bill granting him a pension passed the Senate, Apr. 3, 1902</td>
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Noble, Cyrus B.: Letter to whom it may concern, giving details of injury to Otto H. Hasselman while they were both serving in the 132nd Regiment, Nov. 23, 1905, TLS 2p.


Note from Imperial Japanese Embassy, Washington, TLS, 1 p.

**Series 2: Hasselman Family Diaries, 1879–1900**

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BV1024

Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H.), Indianapolis
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Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H.), Indianapolis
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Notation: Called at White House and visited Mrs. McKee, Feb. 10, 1892.
Box 1, Folder 2

Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H.), Indianapolis
Diary: 1893
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Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H.), Indianapolis
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Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H.), Indianapolis Diary: 1896

Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H.), Indianapolis Diary: 1897
Notation: Tea at home of Mrs. Theo. Steele, Jan. 7, 1897. Katherine Merrell Club meeting, Jan. 9, 1897.

Olive Eddy Hasselman (Mrs. Otto H.), Indianapolis Diary: 1898


Lewis W. Hasselman, Diary, 17 year old young man, attending school [at Butler?] 1892.

Anna W. Eddy (Mrs. Thomas M.) Diary, 1897, 1900 Resident of Evanston, Ill., visited her daughter, Mrs. Hasselman, in Indianapolis. Scattered entries.

Series 3: Anna Hasselman Scrapbook, 1888–1958

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Death of Francis H. Griggs: Davenport, Iowa. Mar. 10, 1918, p. 81

Spencer F. Eddy, diplomat: p. 86


Box 2, Folder 7
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Francis Costigan, architect of notable old Indiana buildings, April 9, 1921
Indianapolis Athletic Club leases Fahnley property, Meridian and Vermont Streets, April 23, 1921

Meridian St. Methodist Church fire, Nov. 18, 1904
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Acquaintances and relatives in the news: ca. 1890–1922

Obituaries:
Rev. Arthur M. Judy, Unitarian, Davenport, Iowa
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Series 4: Anna Hasselman Programs and Ephemera, 1892–1927

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Universalist Church, March 18, 1892. Chorus, etc. 1p
Universalist Church, March 31st, 1892, “The Hoosier Poet,” James Whitcomb Riley, assisted by the Franz Abt. Club. 4p
Girls’ Classical School, Shakespeare’s As You Like It, Class of 1893, Feb. 25, 1893
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Clippings: not dated, of plays in Indianapolis, some in Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Chicago and Evanston, Ill., and New York  
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Mt. Vernon Seminary class of 1892 graduation  
Art Association of Indianapolis Tenth Annual Exhibit  
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Girls Classical School: Commencement Bulletin Program. May 22–June 8 [1894]  
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Uliss Hasselman sketch with name
CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: http://opac.indianahistory.org/

2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.

3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.

4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M0135).

5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.