

YEATON, Marie M. (Johnson). March 1, 1898–March 19, 1978.

KNOX COLLEGE (BA 1920), UNIVERSITY OF IOWA (MS 1921), UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO (PhD 1928).

Marie Mathilda Johnson was born in Galesburg, Illinois, the younger of two children of Ellen (Olson), born in 1867, and Oscar William Johnson, born in 1866, both natives of Illinois. Her parents married in 1890, and her brother, Eugene R., was born in September 1892. Her father was proprietor of a grocery store. Marie Johnson attended grammar school and high school in Galesburg, where the family lived.

Johnson attended Knox College, also in Galesburg, where [Helen Calkins](#), BA Knox College 1916, was instructor of mathematics 1918–20, and [Sally Elizabeth Carlson](#), MA University of Minnesota 1918, was instructor of mathematics and physics 1919–20. Johnson received her BA in 1920 and eight years later became that school's first graduate to receive a PhD in mathematics (Calkins did not receive her Cornell PhD until 1932). Johnson studied with H. L. Rietz and E. W. Chittenden at the University of Iowa 1920–21 and received her master's degree in 1921 with a major in mathematics and a minor in education.

In 1921 Johnson became an instructor at Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, Illinois. During the summers of 1922 through 1926 she attended the University of Chicago. Her last year at Lake Forest, 1925–26, she was assistant professor and acting head of the department. After leaving Lake Forest she held a fellowship at the University of Chicago for the year 1926–27 before receiving her doctorate in 1928 having written a dissertation in the calculus of variations.

In 1927 Johnson accepted an instructorship at Pennsylvania State College but was released from that contract in order to go to Oberlin College in Ohio as an acting assistant professor replacing [Mary E. Sinclair](#) who was on leave at the University of Miami in Coral Gables. Johnson's position became permanent, and she was assistant professor 1928 until 1943, when she was promoted to associate professor. She had a leave of absence during the academic year 1937–38 and spent the year in residence at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

In the fall of 1935, shortly after the MAA formed its Committee on Tests with one woman member, [Clara E. Smith](#), professor emeritus at Wellesley, Johnson was added to the committee in order "to assist in the secretarial work of the committee and in the construction of tests" ("Report of the Committee on Tests" 1940, 290). The report of the committee specifically acknowledged Johnson's contributions in preparing the 1936 tests as well as in compiling questions for the tests for junior college mathematics and for trigonometry.

On October 27, 1943, Marie Johnson married Chester Henry Yeaton (1886–1970) who had come to Oberlin as an assistant professor of mathematics in 1921. Chester H. Yeaton was born in Maine and received his bachelor's degree at Bowdoin College in 1908. He received his master's degree at Harvard in 1909 and his PhD at Chicago in 1915 under the direction of E. J. Wilczynski. In 1923 Chester H. Yeaton had married Ethel May Kitch, who held a PhD from Chicago and was on the faculty of Oberlin's psychology and philosophy departments before she died in May 1941.

At the time of his marriage to Marie M. Johnson, Chester H. Yeaton was professor of mathematics. Marie Johnson Yeaton formally resigned from the Oberlin faculty effective March 1, 1944. In November 1944 she was appointed acting associate professor for the winter term. She held the position again in the second semester of 1951–52, after which Chester H. Yeaton retired. He died in Oberlin in 1970 at age eighty-three.

After her marriage Marie M. Yeaton continued her membership in the Oberlin Mathematics Club. She had previously served as faculty advisor to the club and in 1940 contributed bibliographies on "Nomographs" (with Dale Leipper) and "Constructions with

compasses alone” to a section on club topics in the *Monthly* (47:106–7). Yeaton was also a member of the Oberlin Social Science Club, and for two years she served as the president of the Beta Gamma chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, an education honorary society. In the mid-1940s she was treasurer of the Oberlin branch of the AAUW. In 1939 she reported that she was a Lutheran and a Republican and listed her favorite hobby as photography and her favorite recreation as swimming. In the 1960s she was a member of the Button Club of Wellington.

Marie Yeaton died in Allen Memorial Hospital in Oberlin, Ohio, at age eighty, having been a resident at the Welcome Nursing Home for the previous five years. Her only survivor was Evelyn Yeaton, a sister-in-law living in Elyria, Ohio, about ten miles from Oberlin. Yeaton was buried in Westwood Cemetery in Oberlin.

Organizational affiliations: AMS, MAA, Sigma Xi, AAUW.

Thesis and dissertation:

1921 [Johnson, M. M.] The generalized mean value function. MS thesis, University of Iowa.

1928 [Johnson, M. M.] Tensors of the calculus of variations. PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, directed by Gilbert Ames Bliss. Typescript. Abstract: *University of Chicago. Abstracts of theses. Science series* 7:33-41. See also **1931**.

Publications:

1930 [Johnson, M. M.] Two discontinuous functions. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 37:497.

1931 [Johnson, M. M.] Tensors of the calculus of variations. *Amer. J. Math.* 53:103–16. Published version of PhD dissertation. Reviews: *JFM* 57.0599.02 (M. Pinl); *Zbl* 001.06903 (A. Duschek). Presented to the AMS, Cincinnati, OH, 1 Dec 1928; abstract: *Bull. Amer. Math. Soc.* 35:152–53 #8.

1937 [Johnson, M. M.] Review of *Functions of Real Variables*, by W. F. Osgood. *Natl. Math. Mag.* 12:153–54.

1940 [Johnson, M. M.] An extension of a covariant differentiation process. *Bull. Amer. Math. Soc.* 46:269–71. Reviews: *JFM* 66.1332.01 (K. H. Weise); *MR* 1,273e (N. Coburn); *Zbl* 024.35504 (St. Golab). Presented to the AMS, Chicago, 15 Apr 1939; abstract: *Bull. Amer. Math. Soc.* 45:365 #193.

1941 [Johnson, M. M.] Review of *Living Mathematics*, by R. S. Underwood and F. W. Sparks. *Natl. Math. Mag.* 15:263.

1942a [Johnson, M.] Review of *Maxima and Minima of Functions of Two or More Variables*, by D. R. Curtis, Mathematical Monographs, ed. D. R. Curtis. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 49:539–40.

1942b [Johnson, M.] Review of *Spectra of Quadratic Forms in Infinitely Many Variables*, by E. D. Hellinger, Mathematical Monographs, ed. D. R. Curtis. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 49:541–42.

1942c [Johnson, M.] Review of *The Statistics of Time Series*, by H. T. Davis, Mathematical Monographs, ed. D. R. Curtis. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 49:540.

1942d [Johnson, M.] Review of *Topics in Continued Fractions and Summability*, by H. L. Garabedian and H. S. Wall, Mathematical Monographs, ed. D. R. Curtis. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 49:540–41.

1943a [Johnson, M. M.] Review of *Analytical Geometry*, by C. H. Lehmann. *Natl. Math. Mag.* 17:280.

1943b [Johnson, M. M.] Review of *Plane and Spherical Trigonometry*, by P. R. Rider. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 50:194–95.

References to: AmMSc 5–8, 9P; AmWom 1935–40.

“Prof. Yeaton, Miss Johnson Are Married.” *Oberlin News-Tribune*, 4 Nov 1943.

“Mrs. Marie Johnson Yeaton Will Retire on March 1.” *Oberlin News-Tribune*, 17 Feb 1944.

“Mrs. Chester Yeaton.” (Obituary) *Oberlin News-Tribune*, 23 Mar 1978.

Other sources: PhD dissertation vita 1928; Owens questionnaire 1937; communications with Knox College Archives, Oberlin College Alumni Association, and University of Iowa Library; “Report of the Committee on Tests,” *Amer. Math. Monthly* 47 (1940): 290–301; US Census 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 IL.

Last modified: June 23, 2011.