

# HISTORY OF OTOTOLOGY: A VISIT TO THE DENNIS G. PAPPAS SR., M.D COLLECTION

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## Introduction

Dennis G. Pappas, Sr., MD, is among the outstanding historians of otolaryngology. For half a century, Dr. Pappas has studied the history of otology. His biography includes dozens of historical essays tracing the development of the subspecialty of otology from crude trephination to modern neuro-otology. At 94 years old, he continues to build his collections and share stories. As part of his research, he has accumulated a vast collection of otolaryngology instruments and devices.

To better understand the motivation and methods of this senior otologist, the authors visited his private collection of otologic instruments and documents, and the Dennis G. Pappas Historical Collections Gallery at the University of Alabama.

## A Pioneering Otologist

Dr. Pappas was born September 23, 1931, in Birmingham, Alabama. He studied at the University of Tennessee School of Medicine, graduating in 1958. He initially pursued radiology but then switched into otolaryngology at New York University. He completed fellowship in Los Angeles under Dr. House before starting his own practice back home in Alabama, the Pappas Ear Clinic.

Some of his many accomplishments include:

- One of the first fellowship-trained neuro-otologists in the US
- Performed the first cochlear implant in Alabama
- Served as a member of the clinical faculty at the University of Alabama at Birmingham medical school
- Contributed scores of articles on medical history to otolaryngology journals over the course of three decades

## Conclusion

This poster illustrates the extent of Dr. Pappas’ work over 6 decades and highlights advances in the field during a career that saw the introduction of the operating microscope, development of tympanoplasty and mastoidectomy, and the invention of surgery to triumph over deafness.

## Early Instruments



Figure 1.

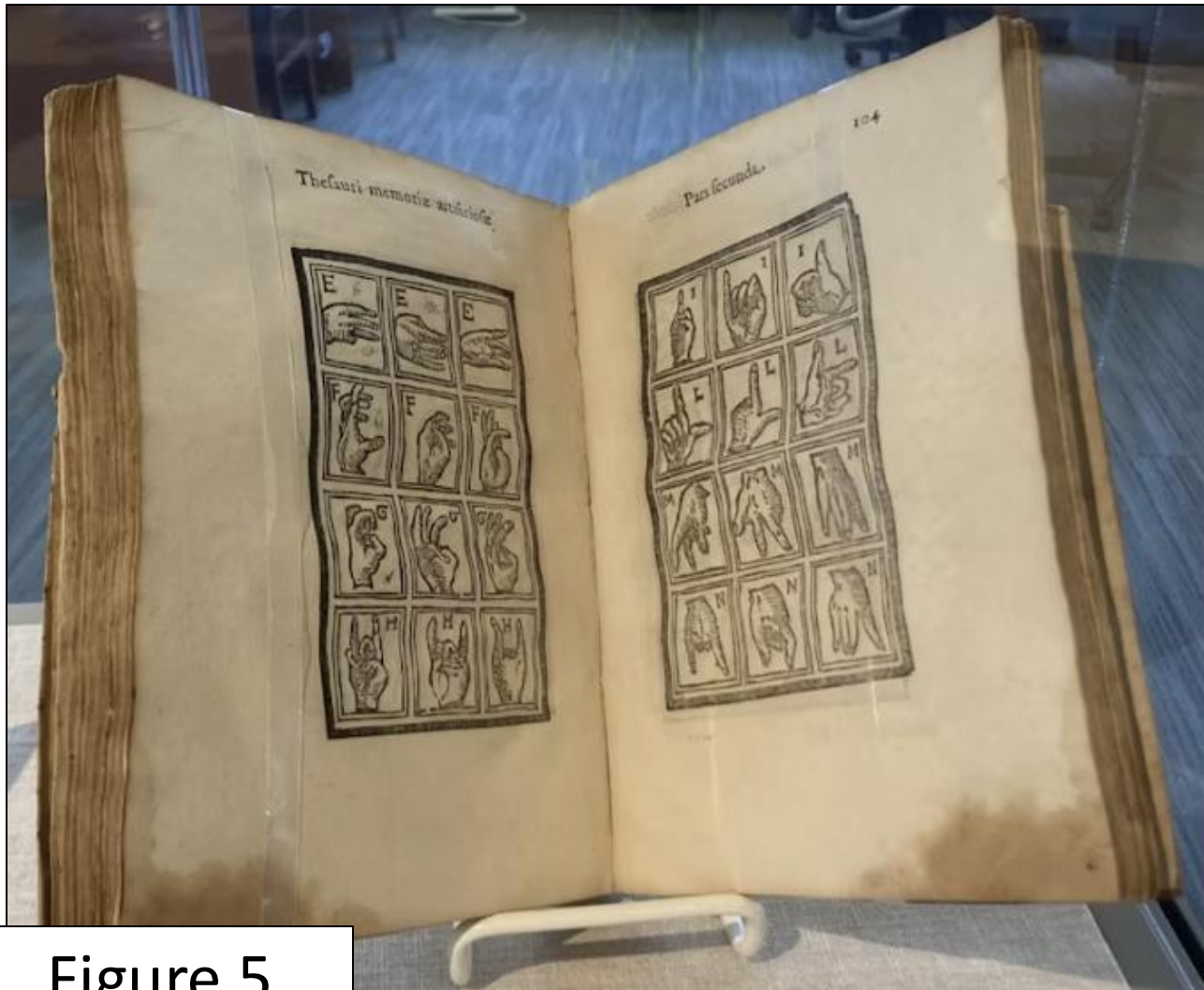


Figure 5.



Figure 9.



Figure 2.



Figure 6.



Figure 7.



Figure 3.



Figure 8.



Figure 4.

## Evolution of Hearing Aids



Combination Lorgnette:  
glasses and ear trumpet  
c. 1881



Class using “Currier Conico-cylindrical Conversation Tubes with Duplex Ear-Piece”  
1892



Beehive Ear Trumpet  
c. 1900



Celluloid Auricle  
19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century



Zenith Royal-T Hearing Aid  
c. 1953



Behind the Ear Hear Aid  
Late 20<sup>th</sup> century

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