1	THE	PATENT OFFICE			
2			Harmsworth House, 13-15 Bouverie Street,		
3			London EC4Y 8DP.		
4			Thursday, 10th May 2007		
5			Before:		
6					
7	MR. GEOFFREY HOBBS QC (Sitting as the Appointed Person)				
8					
9		In the Matter of:	The Trade Marks Act 1994		
10		and			
11		In the Matter of:	UK trade mark application No. 2334368 <b>VOGUE</b> in the name of The Condé Nast Publications		
12			Limited and opposition thereto by United Toiletries & Cosmetics Limited under No.		
13			92259		
14		and			
15		In the Matter of:	An appeal by The Condé Nast Publications		
16			Limited to the Appointed Person against the Hearing Officer's decision dated 19th October 2006.		
17					
18	,	_	ranscript of the Shorthand Notes of Limited, 6th Floor, 12-14 New Fetter Lane,		
19		London EC4A 1AG. 7	Tel: 020 7936 6000. Fax No: 020 7427 0093		
20	MD				
21	<ul> <li>MR. IAN BARTLETT (of Messrs. Beck Greener) appeared on behalf of The Condé Nast Publications Limited.</li> <li>MR. MICHAEL EDENBOROUGH (instructed by Messrs. Venner Shipley) appeared on behalf of United Toiletries &amp; Cosmetics Limited.</li> </ul>				
22					
23			DEGLETON		
		(As A	DECISION pproved by the Appointed Person)		
24					
25					

THE APPOINTED PERSON: United Kingdom trade mark application
No. 2334368 is a continuation at the national level of
Community trade mark application No. 398206 filed on
28th October 1996.

It covers the single word VOGUE for use as a trade mark in relation to the following goods in Class 3:

"Bleaching preparations, detergents, cleaning preparations, degreasing agents, soaps, perfumery, essential oils, cosmetics, hair lotions, dentifrices; but not including polishes for floor, furniture and shoes and leather dressings."

The application now stands in the name of The Condé Nast Publications Limited. On 23rd January 2004 it was opposed by United Toiletries & Cosmetics Limited. The Opponent objected to the inclusion of "soaps, perfumery, essential oils, cosmetics, hair lotions, dentifrices" in the specification of the opposed application. It objected under section 5(4)(a) of the Trade Marks Act 1994 on the basis that it was at the relevant date, i.e. 28th October 1996, entitled by virtue of the law of passing off to prevent the Opponent from using the designation VOGUE as a trade mark in the United Kingdom in relation to goods of the kind to which the opposition related. In support of that objection it relied on its own use of the designation VOGUE as a trade mark for fragrances sold and supplied in the United Kingdom over a period of approximately

12 years commencing in 1984.

The Applicant denied that the Opponent had acquired any protectable rights through use of the designation VOGUE.

There were two dimensions to that denial. First, it was disputed that the Opponent had actually used the designation in the United Kingdom to any extent sufficient to invest it with the right to claim protection under the law of passing off. Second, it was contended that the Opponent would have been trading in a misleading and deceptive manner and could accordingly have had no legitimate basis for claiming relief in an action for passing off if it had been using the designation VOGUE as a trade mark for fragrances as asserted in its grounds of opposition.

The latter point was pleaded in paragraph 4 of the Applicant's counter-statement in the following terms:

"If, contrary to the Applicant's submissions, it is found that damaging confusion of the kind implicitly alleged by the Opponent's claims in passing off were likely at the material date, namely the filing date of the Application, such confusion would have been as a result of the Opponent's wrongful use of the mark VOGUE in contravention of the Applicant's registered and common law rights to the mark under the Trade Marks Acts in force at the relevant time and under the laws of passing off. Accordingly the use of the mark VOGUE by the Applicant for any of the goods in the Application

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

was and never has been liable to be prevented by the Opponent under the law of passing off or any other law and again, therefore, the grant of the application would not offend against the provisions of Section 5(4)(a) of the Act or any other provision."

The Opponent filed a total of 14 witness statements in support of its opposition to the application for registration. Two of these were witness statements of Peter Jackson, the managing director of Milton-Lloyd Limited, which was identified as the company which had effectively managed and administered the business of the Opponent since 1982.

In paragraphs 6 and 7 of his first witness statement dated 31st December 2004, Mr. Jackson gave evidence to the following effect:

"6. We first used the Trade Mark VOGUE on perfumes in 1982 but the first version did not prove popular. In mid 1984 we launched a new perfume under the Trade Mark VOGUE with a different design, get-up and logo for the packaging and marketing material. The product was and still is marketed as a 50ml spray and a 10ml roll-on. Sales made between 1984 and 1991 were steady but not spectacular. Unfortunately we do not now have available any records from that period but I understand that evidence from persons who had knowledge of such sales will be filed in this opposition in support of my statement and to provide proof of the date of first use of

VOGUE perfumes and their subsequent reputation. For the years 1984 to 1991 I estimate that an average of 2,000 units per year were sold in the UK from an approximate average total of 100,000 units per year sold internationally.

"7. We have records of UK sales of VOGUE perfumes from 1992 onwards, and the number of VOGUE 55ml Parfum de Toilette sprays sold worldwide during the same period.

## These were:

Nο	of Imita	sold in UK	No of	IInita	6 [0p	Worldwide
NO.	OL UILLS	SOLO LIL UN	INC) A COL	UHLLS	SOIG	WOL LOW LOE

1992:	1,044	57,000			
1993:	2,724	60,000			
1994:	7,622	89,000			
1995:	7,004	94,000			
1996:	12,580	147,000			
1997:	14,004	110,000			
1998:	21,540	193,000			
1999:	27,972	163,000			
2000:	25,392	146,000			
2001:	22,572	235,000			
2002:	29,532	268,000			
2003:	26,784	277,000			
2004:	17,136	488,064			
(to September 2004).					

(to September 2004).

"In volume terms, the sale of between 7,000-8,000 sprays in 1994/5 and 12,500 sprays in 1996 of VOGUE perfume make the

brand one of the most substantial selling fragrances in the UK. In addition, during the period 1994 to the present time Milton-Lloyd has sold additional other assorted VOGUE branded 10ml roll-on perfumes, 50ml deodorant roll-ons and 75 ml/150ml body sprays."

This was the nucleus of his evidence. In other paragraphs of his witness statement he referred to the Opponent's marketing of VOGUE fragrances in the United Kingdom in narrative terms. His exhibit 3 contained copies of a few catalogue pages; two of which depicting VOGUE products carried dates in 1998. His exhibit 4 consisted of an example of the current box for the Opponent's VOGUE perfume spray.

He specifically confirmed that the Opponent had a policy of not advertising its fragrances, preferring instead to build its business through trade fairs and by approaching wholesalers who specialised in perfumery.

The remaining witness statements filed on behalf of the Opponent provided support for the proposition that the Opponent had obtained and marketed fragrances produced and presented as VOGUE products. However, they did not, save in one case, provide evidence of marketing in the United Kingdom as opposed to any of the various overseas territories to which the Opponent undoubtedly supplied such products.

The one case was the witness statement of Thomas Daniel dated 6th January 2005. He had worked as a salesman selling

the Opponent's products to customers in the United Kingdom from about October 1984 to March 1986. In paragraph 3 of his witness statement he said:

"I regret that my recollection of experiences of 20 years ago, which are unrelated to my present experience is rather sketchy. However, I am sure that VOGUE was launched during my time at MLL. There is no doubt that a MLL/UTC UK perfumery sales base was successfully achieved, and that from 1984 and for the next two years I earned a living exclusively selling MLL/UTC perfumes, which I believe include VOGUE in the UK."

Before leaving the evidence given on behalf of the Opponent, I should refer to a particular matter which strikes me as significant in terms of the light that it sheds on the Applicant's position in the present opposition.

In paragraph 5 of his first witness statement
Mr. Jackson referred to the fact that in 1997 Condé Nast
Publications, which I take to be the Applicant in the present
proceedings, brought an action for passing off against
Milton-Lloyd Holdings plc, Milton-Lloyd Limited and the
Opponent. The action was evidently intended to prevent the
defendants from marketing VOGUE fragrances. Having been
commenced in the Chancery Division of the High Court under
reference CH 1997-C-No 6766, the action was effectively
abandoned for want of prosecution following representations on

behalf of the defendants as to the existence of their claim of right based on long-standing use of the designation VOGUE in relation to fragrances. It seems to me that against that background the Applicant could not realistically have expected to contest the present opposition without confronting the Opponent on the claim to which it, the Applicant, had apparently deferred in the High Court proceedings. The parties were in head-to-head conflict over that claim and paragraph 4 of the Applicant's counter-statement was symptomatic of that being the reality of the situation.

Two witness statements were filed in support of the application for registration. They contained the evidence of Pamela Raynor, the Applicant's Finance Director and Company Secretary. In her first witness statement dated 8th November 2005 she set out to establish that the Applicant had at all material times been entitled to the benefit of a substantial goodwill and public reputation built up and acquired in its capacity as publisher of the United Kingdom edition of the well-known fashion and beauty magazine called VOGUE.

The thrust of her evidence appears from paragraphs 16 and 17 of her first witness statement in which she said:

"16. I believe that the strong presence of the VOGUE brand in relation to fashion and beauty has created a climate in which, if the VOGUE brand had been used for perfumes, members of the public would have assumed such products were

connected with Condé Nast's VOGUE magazine and brand. I think this situation would have existed in October 1996 and at the time when as I understand it, United Toiletries say they first marketed such products, namely in the mid-1980s.

"17. For this reason, I cannot accept what I have been informed is the contention inherent in United Toiletries & Cosmetics' case namely that they would have had the right in October 1996 to prevent my company from using the VOGUE mark for perfumes. Given the intimate link between VOGUE magazine and fashion and beauty the use of the VOGUE mark for perfumes would have meant my company, not United Toiletries & Cosmetics and would continue so to do."

It can be seen that her evidence was, in substance, directed to the case raised in paragraph 4 of her company's counter-statement.

In her second witness statement dated 24th August 2006 she responded to a number of points which had been raised on behalf of the Opponent by reference to the results of various trade mark and trade name searches. These included searches of the listings in specified editions of the Chemist & Druggist, The Cosmetic International Directory and Industry Guide, The Cosmetic Bench Reference (Cosmetics and Toiletries), The Perfume Handbook and The Gower Handbook of Cosmetic and Personal Care Additives.

The searches of the specified editions of those

24

25

publications had apparently revealed no listings for VOGUE fragrances marketed by the Opponent. It might reasonably have been thought that the absence of such listings was a point in favour of the Applicant and that the point was worth pursuing by way of a more comprehensive search of trade listings covering the period from 1984 to 1996. However, the Applicant's evidence in response made no reference to the Indeed, at the conclusion of the evidence, the position was that the Opponent's evidence relating to its use of the designation VOGUE in the United Kingdom since 1984 was not in any respect contradicted by anything said or shown in the evidence filed on behalf of the Applicant. Consistently with its diffident approach to the Opponent's evidence of use, the Applicant remained entirely silent on the subject of the abandoned action for passing off which had been commenced in the Chancery Division of the High Court in 1997.

The opposition proceeded to a hearing before Mr. George Salthouse acting on behalf of the Registrar of Trade Marks on 26th September 2006. There was no request for cross-examination of any of the witnesses who had provided statements on behalf of the Opponent and there had at no stage been any request for disclosure of the documentary records referred to in paragraph 7 of Mr. Jackson's first witness statement or any other documents that could have been expected to clarify the position with regard to the use upon which the

Opponent relied.

It is clear, and it was confirmed at the hearing before me, that the Applicant took the view that it was for the Opponent to prove its case without any assistance from the Applicant. Disclosure and cross-examination were seen as ways in which the Opponent might be provided with an opportunity to strengthen its case and were eschewed for that reason.

The Applicant fought the hearing on the basis that the evidence filed by the Opponent was not sufficient to establish a prima facie basis for objection under section 5(4)(a). The evidence was not said to be untrue. It was said to be expressed in terms which were simply too elliptical and imprecise to provide a sound basis for accepting that the Opponent could claim to have acquired a protectable goodwill through use of the designation VOGUE in relation to fragrances in the United Kingdom between 1984 and 1996.

The evidence was also said to be insufficient on any view to justify exclusion of "cosmetics, hair lotions, dentifrices" from the specification of the opposed application for registration. The Hearing Officer was not pressed to reject the opposition on the basis put forward in paragraph 4 of the Applicant's counter-statement.

In a written decision issued under Reference 0-298-06 on 19th October 2006 the Hearing Officer upheld the opposition in relation to all of the goods in contention. He held that the

evidence on file was sufficient to entitle the Opponent to succeed:

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

"32) The opponent claims to have been using its mark 'VOGUE' on perfume since the mid 1980s, with a false start in 1982 and a successful re-launch in 1984. The opponent has supplied sales figures for the UK which whilst relatively modest (averaging approximately 4,600 units per annum for the four years 1992-1995 inclusive) are still substantial enough The opponent also sold roll-on perfume, to provide goodwill. deodorant and body spray under the mark although sales figures are not provided for these items. The opponent has also provided witness statements from suppliers of the bottles and components, packaging, the actual perfume and the roll-on perfume. All state that they supplied goods for a product called VOGUE. The opponent has also provided statements from salespersons involved in selling the product, both in the UK and also world-wide. ....

"36) In order to succeed under this head of opposition, the opponent must show that as at the date of the application, 28 October 1996, it could have prevented use of the applicant's trade mark under the law of passing off. In my opinion the opponent has shown that at the relevant date it enjoyed goodwill and reputation in its mark 'VOGUE' in relation to perfumes. ....

"38) Clearly, the opponent's reputation is for perfumes

which are identical goods to 'perfumery' whilst being similar with respect to 'essential oils, soaps, cosmetics, hair lotions and dentifrices'. Mr. Bartlett sought to distinguish between the products, referring to the fact that perfumes are sometimes held behind the counter in chemists as they are of high value, a point I accept although I have seen cheaper varieties on normal shelves in chemists shops. He also sought to contend that the perfume market is 'quite apart' from the colour cosmetics market, the toothpaste market and the hair and body lotion market. Again, I accept that there are differences but overall the goods must be considered similar.

in a plain font in capital letters. The opponent has shown how it has used the mark, and the use has been consistent. The mark as used by the opponent begins with a large letter 'v' and the whole mark is slightly stylised. However, it is unquestionably the word VOGUE and would not be mistaken for anything else. The applicant has not challenged the contention by the opponent that the mark used is the word VOGUE. The two marks are extremely similar, the slight stylisation does not affect the way that the average consumer would view the mark.

"40) In my opinion, the similarities between the marks and the goods are such that members of the relevant public would believe that the goods offered by the applicant are

goods of the opponent or that the businesses are connected."

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

Having referred to the judgment of the Court of Appeal in Draper v Trist and Trisbestos Brake Linings Ltd (1939) 56

RPC 429 in relation to the likelihood of damage, he went on to find that all requirements for liability in passing off could be taken to have been established in the present case. He ordered the Applicant to pay £2,000 to the Opponent as a contribution towards its costs of the Registry proceedings.

In the course of dealing with the Applicant's submissions as to the inadequacies of the Opponent's evidence the Hearing Officer said this:

"34) The applicant also questioned whether the comments of trade suppliers should be accepted as they were in a contractual relationship with the opponent and had no knowledge of whether the end product was being sold in the UK and under what mark it was being sold. I accept that the statements by the suppliers do not, by themselves, amount to evidence of sales of the product in the UK. But they do add to the overall story, and can be viewed as evidence that within the Fragrance industry in the UK the opponent had a reputation for perfumes under the VOGUE mark. Even if all of the output were sold overseas, which Mr. Jackson states was and is not the case, then the opponent would have a protectable goodwill in the UK. In Macy's Trade Mark [1989] RPC 546 it was held that '(2) the effect of Section 31 is that

the marking of goods for export is qualifying use for Section 11 of the 1938 Act.' I accept that this is an 'old Act' case. However, I believe that the underlying principles remain applicable."

I understand that these observations relating to the effect of section 31 of the Trade Marks Act 1938 and the decision in Macy's Trade Mark were made by the Hearing Officer on his own initiative and not on the basis of any submissions addressed to him on behalf of the parties. I have considerable doubts as to the correctness of the way in which the distinction between foreign and domestic use was treated as immaterial in this paragraph of the decision.

However, the point has not been pursued in argument before me and the Hearing Officer's observations upon it were obiter being in terms addressed to a hypothesis "which Mr. Jackson states was and is not the case". I therefore propose to say nothing further about it.

The Applicant now appeals under section 76 of the 1994

Act, contending in substance that the Hearing Officer's

decision should be set aside because it was not open to him on
the basis of the evidence on file to conclude that the

Opponent had a sustainable objection under section 5(4)(a).

This contention was developed in argument at the hearing before me. However, I remain unpersuaded that the Hearing

Officer reached a conclusion which was not open to him. The

evidence that was before him was, as I have already indicated, in all material respects uncontradicted. It was not challenged by cross-examination or put to the test of an order for production of documents. In the circumstances the Hearing Officer had no alternative but to accept the evidence and assess it for what it was worth, bearing in mind the criticisms which the Applicant had made of it. That is what he did.

As I pointed out in the WILD CHILD case, the Registrar is often required to act upon evidence that might be regarded as less than perfect when judged by the standard applied in High Court proceedings. That is also on a daily basis the position in civil tribunals up and down the country. It does not follow that assertions without any real substantiation must be accepted as sufficient to support the contentions of those who put them forward. It is none the less necessary to assess the evidence that has been presented and decide whether it is or is not sufficient to enable the decision-taker to reach a conclusion on the civil standard as to what the outcome should be.

Moreover, as confirmed by the Court of Appeal in Stephens v Cannon [2005] EWCA Civ 222 (14th March 2005), a decision-taker should not resort to the burden of proof for the purpose of determining the rights of the parties in civil proceedings unless he or she cannot reasonably make a finding

in relation to the disputed issue or issues on the basis of the available evidence, notwithstanding that he or she has striven to do so.

I accept that the evidence filed on behalf of the Opponent is in varying degrees open to the criticisms to which it was subjected before the Hearing Officer and before me on appeal. Nevertheless, on applying the principles I have outlined above, I cannot say that the Hearing Officer was not entitled to find that the evidence was sufficient to support an objection under section 5(4)(a).

With regard to the scope of that objection, I think that the Applicant is on much stronger ground. The evidence and findings did not in my view entitle the Opponent to a broad scope of protection. It appears to me that the decision below entered the realms of conjecture when it upheld the Opponent's objection in relation to the inclusion of "cosmetics, hair lotions and dentifrices" in the opposed application. I am therefore prepared to allow the appeal to that extent.

However, in relation to the main issue the appeal will be rejected for the reasons which I have given. That is my decision on this appeal.

Would you like to address me on costs?

MR. BARTLETT: I do not know whether it is for me to speak first on the issue of costs, sir.

THE APPOINTED PERSON: You would be asking for a discount.

MR. BARTLETT: I certainly would, sir.

THE APPOINTED PERSON: And some allowance on this appeal.

MR. BARTLETT: I would think it equitable that the costs of the entire action, both below and here, be split between the parties; in other words, no order should be made as to costs.

THE APPOINTED PERSON: What do you say, Mr. Edenborough?

MR. EDENBOROUGH: Given that the Applicant has tried to sue the Opponent in particular for its use upon perfumes, it knew or at least thought it knew that the Opponent had used in regard to perfumes. It also presumably had done some work before it issued the proceedings in 1997 to ascertain the scope of the use by the Opponent, also, coupled with the fact that this opposition was very focused in the sense that, first, only one ground was relied upon (it was not a kitchen sink type pleading), and, secondly and in particular, the opposition was against only a certain sub-set of the goods for which the Applicant sought registration.

In my submission, what the Applicant should have done is to assess the situation realistically and come back in essence at an earlier stage with respect to a sensible offer. Now, it did not do that. Rather, it went hell for leather and basically tried to get the whole thing, and it has maintained that position in essence throughout.

The argument with respect to the scope of the specification both here and below has occupied a very much

smaller part of a number of things: first, the skeleton argument, and actually the oral submissions, and the decision -- both your decision and below. So, therefore, if there were a discount, then that discount actually ought to be quite small so as to reflect the much smaller scope and ambit and time and effort that has been taken up in considering that part of the case.

My first submission is that there should not be any discount because, in essence, if the Applicant had acted in a sensible manner, it would have come back with a proper counter-offer when it saw the focused opposition in the first place.

THE APPOINTED PERSON: Would you like to come back on that?

MR. BARTLETT: By the same token the Opponent levelled its opposition against all of the personal products listed in the application. The fact that it did not level its opposition at bleaching and cleaning preparations -- those kinds of domestic products -- is neither here nor there. The main focus of its attack was on all of the products that were really at stake in this application and it has failed to make its opposition good by the imperfect quality (to which you yourself alluded) of its evidence. In those circumstances I think it would be, in my submission, punitive to the Applicant in these proceedings to have to suffer the consequences of that failure.

THE APPOINTED PERSON: The Hearing Officer ordered the Applicant

to pay the Opponent £2,000 as a contribution towards its costs on the basis that the Opponent had been 100% successful in its opposition. In the light of the decision I have just given, it is correct, I think, to recognize that the Opponent was to a lesser extent than 100% successful. That should, I think, lead to a proportionate reduction in the costs award below. I think the right order is to reduce the award of £2,000 made by the Hearing Officer to a sum of £1,500.

Applying a similar discounted approach in relation to the costs of this appeal before me, I think that the right thing to do is to order the Applicant to pay the Opponent the sum of £1,100 in respect of its costs of the appeal. Both of those sums should be paid within a period of, I will say, 21 days from today's date. Does that conclude it? I think it does.

MR. EDENBOROUGH: Yes.

THE APPOINTED PERSON: Thank you both very much indeed and thank you for coming back at four o'clock. It was very helpful to me that you did.

MR. EDENBOROUGH: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. BARTLETT: Thank you very much.

-----