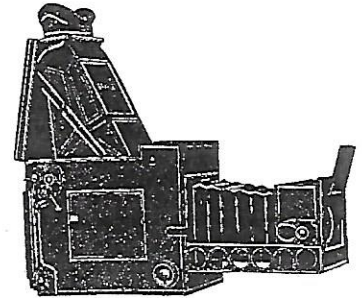


# GRAFLEX HISTORIC QUARTERLY



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 3

THIRD QUARTER 1997

## FEATURES

4x5 RB Speed Graphic....	1	<i>Metcalf</i>
Replacing Worn Handles..	2	<i>Barber</i>
Graflex Studio Camera...	3	
Letters.....	4	
American Competitors....	5	<i>Hartmann</i>
Kalart RF Adjusting ....	7	<i>Barber</i>
Classified .....	8	

DOES YOUR ADDRESS LABEL HAVE A RED

**R**

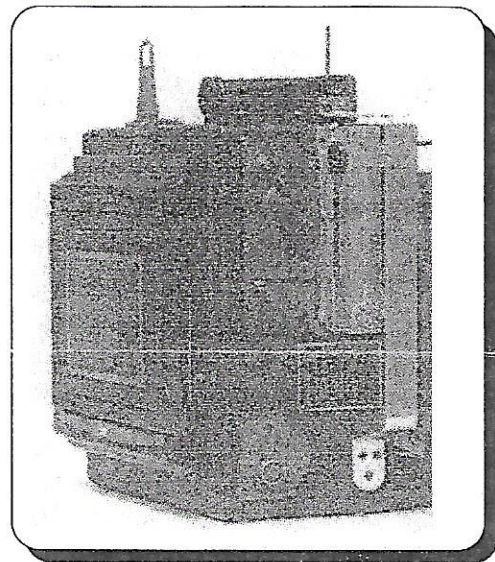
on it? If so, this is your LAST ISSUE unless you renew.  
Each year's subscription is 4 issues. If you think the  
notice is in error, please contact us. Address on back.  
*PLEASE RENEW NOW! This is your only reminder.*

*(Did you think, as had most of us, that revolving  
backs were mostly restricted to the SLR's? GHQ  
subscriber Ken has found an exception...)*

### 4x5 RB Speed Graphic by Ken Metcalf

I recently purchased the 4x5 "Pre-anniversary" Speed Graphic (SN 230205, circa 1936-1939) shown in the accompanying photographs. The camera is fitted with a 127mm Ektar in Flash Supermatic shutter manufactured in 1946, mounted on a metal lensboard with the name "H.G. REIP" stamped in an oval recess in the lensboard casting.

The camera has a 3-1/4x4-1/4 revolving Graphic-style back that appears to be factory or professionally done. The lens easily focuses to infinity even with the shorter focal length lens and added back depth.



4x5 RB showing position of chart

The most interesting part to me is the chart on the back of the camera. It appears professionally done, suggesting that more than one chart and/or camera was made or modified. But why? I cannot figure out the meaning of the chart. (see page 2)

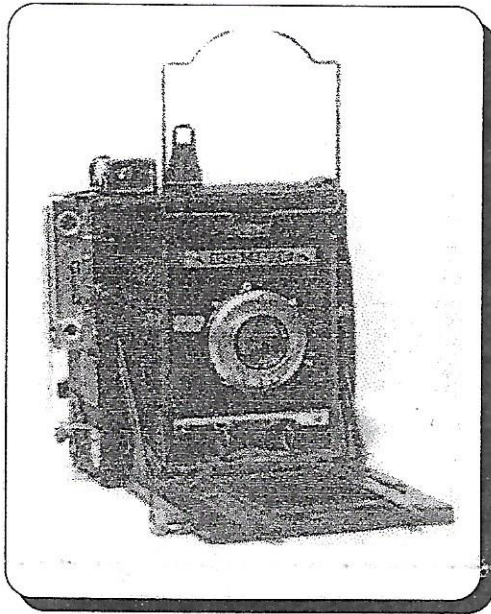
I would like to learn more about the camera. Does any subscriber have a similar one? How was the chart used, and does anyone have an idea of the type of photography this would have been used for or who the photographer was?

**HOLD THE PRESS:** Tim Holden has some comments about this camera:

- It was one of a batch of 750 made in the spring of 1938
- Tim was working for Graflex at the time, but does not recall a special run of this adaptation

	3.5		5.6		8		11	
9	8/9	5"	8/8	8"	8/6	11"	8/4	16"
12	11/7	9"	11/5	13"	11/3	19"	11/0	2/3
15	14/5	13"	14/2	21"	13/9	2/6	13/5	2/4
20	10/0	24"	18/6	3/2	18/0	4/5	17/4	6/0
25	23/6	3/0	22/9	5/0	22/0	7/0	20/10	14/8
30	28/0	4/6	26/10	7/2	25/7	10/0	24/4	14/8

*Chart from the back of the RB Speed Graphic*



*RB 4x5 Speed Graphic*

- He suspects that it was produced in Rochester, either as an experimental camera, or was modified in Graflex's Service Dept., "a situation that often occurred."
- The "depth of field plate" was not of Graflex origin

It occurs to me that the camera may have been manufactured in 1938, but not modified until 1946 - the date of the lens, and possibly the time, also, that the tubular finder was added. Is the chart in fact for depth-of-field?

*(As promised last issue, we are printing Bill's directions for fixing SLR handles)*

### **Replacing Worn Graflex Handles** by Bill Baker

Most of the older Graflex Cameras that are available on the market have a very common problem; they arrive or are found with broken handles and straps. The leather handles wear out and must be replaced. I have seen some very usual repairs which were only for expediency and not very pleasing to the eye.

The first thing necessary in replacing a worn or broken handle is to remove all the parts and hardware associated with the top cover. If you can remove the screws holding the cover to the body your job will be easier. This can be done easily sometimes because the leather covering has come unglued on the brass hinge. Once the cover is removed the rivets can be removed. Use an automatic center punch or any center punch and mark the centers of the four rivets. Drill carefully using a drill that is smaller than the rivet (about .088"). If you did it right you can push the old rivet out. Save all of the washers and what is left of the straps. Use the old straps to make help make new ones.

I clean the old washers and then drill them out to .096" with a #41 drill. I have a Shoe Repair Shop make the new handles to my specification. The man also furnishes me with some scrap leather to make the new straps. I dye the new handles and straps black.

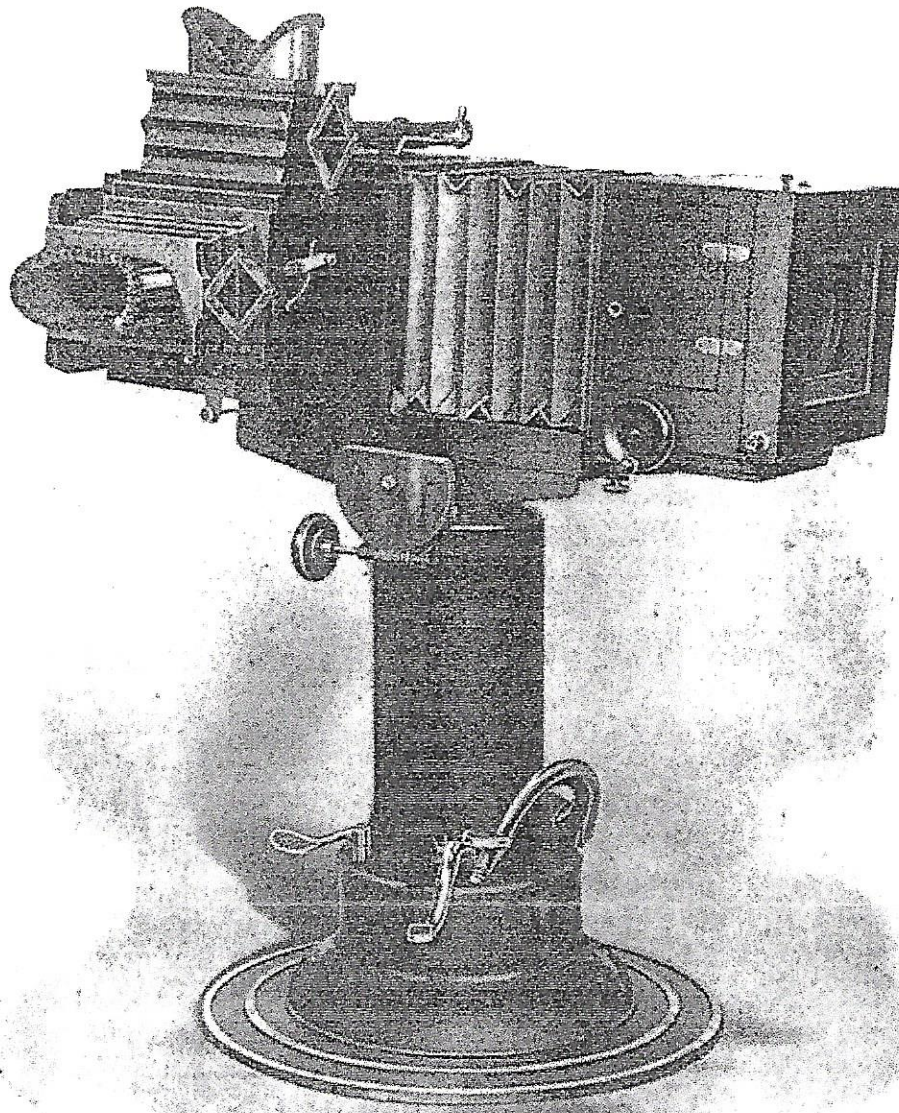
I tried using available materials for replacing worn Graflex handles, which included 2-56 machine screws, until I found some brass nails. I found the brass nails in, of all places, a Surplus Electronics Store. The nails are about 1" long and have a body diameter of .096.

The nails are hard drawn and must be annealed. I made a jig using a piece of 1/4" aluminum plate about 1 1/2" X 3/4". Drill four holes with the #41 drill and set in a metal pan of water (5/16" deep) so that you will not anneal the heads plus at least 7/16" of the shank. Use a propane torch and heat the tips red hot. Cut off to the correct length about 1/2" (put one of the nails into place using the new strap and the washers for the length measurement. File the end square and leave the new rivet just a little long, about 1/32".

Make a backup tool for the rivet head that can be secured in a vice. Use a drill the size of the head of the rivet and cut a very shallow hole in the end of an old bolt or piece of steel rod.

Now assemble one of the new straps and all of the washers and the rivet and with a small tack hammer peen the end of the rivet. Do this with another strap and washers on the other end leaving a loose end on each end of the cover. Now place the new handle under one of the straps and repeat the operation again and then on to the last rivet assembly. Now the cover can be replaced along with its hardware.





### Graflex Studio Camera

" . . . affords the studio artist the opportunity of procuring natural or life-like expressions and poses. . . " reads the advertisement featuring this, surely one of the most unusual of all Graflexes. Advertised in a c.1906-1908 Hyatt Supply catalog, the ad copy mentions a "light cone diaphragm" in front of the camera eliminates side reflections. A door allows access to it, and possibly diffusion attachments. A panel in the side of the camera, opposite the focusing hood, allows placement of a dummy lens for "the sake of deception. . . and thus obtain a more natural pose. . . "

It also featured a 12 plate magazine and revolving back. A focal plane shutter with pneumatic retarding device gave speeds from 1/200th to 5 seconds and "B" (ball). This 5x7 (only) camera was mounted on a hydraulically operated stand which used mineral oil. It could accommodate lenses from 14" to 17-1/2" focal length.



# LETTERS

Dear Editors,

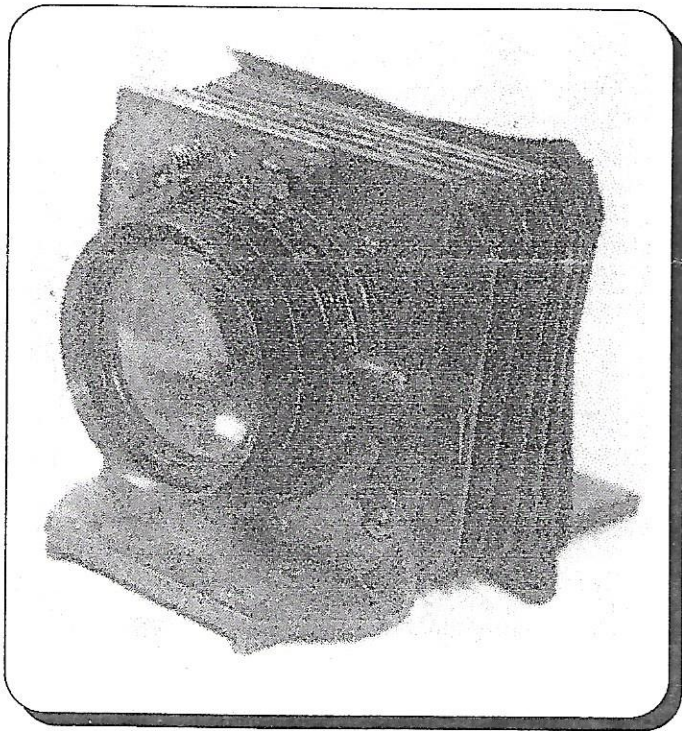
Much attention has been given recently to the Combat Graphic (articles by Bill Baker in GHQ vol. 1 issue 3, and by Jack Freymuller in "Camera Shopper," issue 72).

Perhaps it would be of some interest to note a probable prototype for this camera - the Ringside Camera, illustrated in the first edition of "Graflex Graphic Photography" (1940). Also an early but similar military adaptation was shown in a Navy photographic publication in 1942.

Although both these earlier cameras are different, nevertheless both are apparently built on a 4x5 Speed chassis without bellows. I also see a design kinship to the much later XL!

I'd like to point out that although I was a Photographer's Mate in the Navy from 1941 on, I never saw or heard of a Combat Graphic!

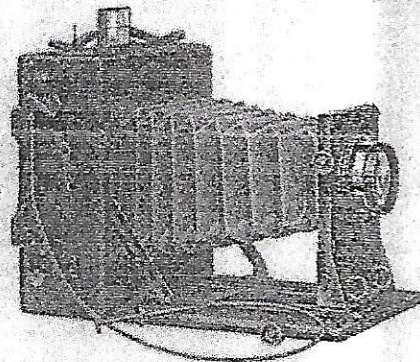
Richard Paine



An Early Auto-diaphragm Effort

(This adaptation of a 4x5 RBB lens was submitted by Cliff Scofield. It wasn't until the Super D models were introduced that factory created auto-diaphragms became available on Graflex SLR's)

## THE SPEED GRAPHIC



A high grade Focal Plane Shutter Camera, made in the Graflex Factory.

The Graflex Focal Plane Shutter, working at any speed from "time" to 1-1000 of a second, is built into the body of the Speed Graphic, and a big, generous front board permits the use of fast Anastigmat Lenses. The long, black leather bellows harmonizes perfectly with the oxidized metal and black ebonized woodwork.

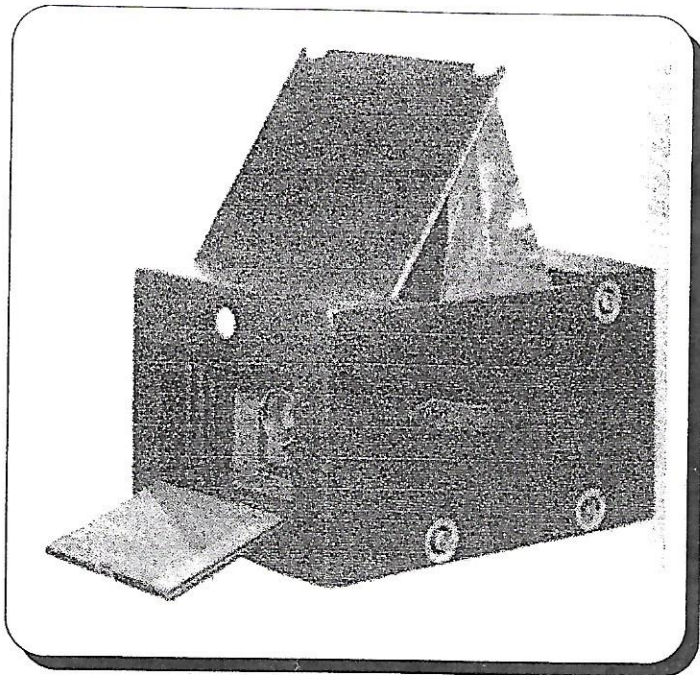
Full particulars are given in the Graflex Catalog—free on request.

FOLMER & SCHWING DIVISION

EASTMAN KODAK CO.

ROCHESTER, N. Y.



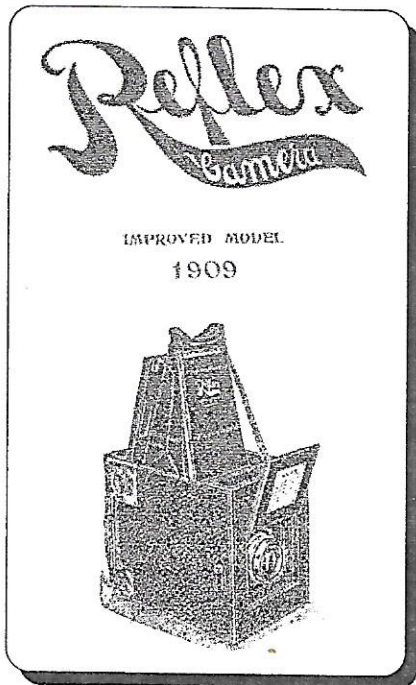


*Patent Reflex Hand Camera*

### AMERICAN COMPETITORS OF THE GRAFLEX

by Mike Hanemann

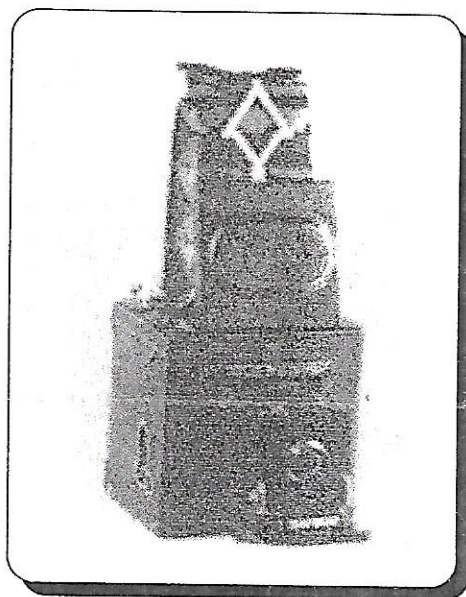
The best known of the big single lens reflex cameras is the Graflex. In one form or another the GRAFLEX was produced from 1902 to the 1960's. When we speak of the Graflex SLR we mean a single lens reflex camera of 2x3 or larger image size that had a focal plane shutter. Who were the predecessors and competition for the Graflex



and how long did they last? Have you ever heard of (or seen) an Anthony Visu? A Patent Hand Camera, a Junior Reflex or A reflex camera made by the Reflex Camera Company? A Rochester Optical Premo Reflecting Camera? A Hall Mirror Reflex or a Burke and James Ingento Reflecting Camera? Or even a Patent Monocular Reflex made by E.W. Smith? Did I miss any? I hope not, but I am sure someone will tell me if I did. Not all cameras we will talk about have focal plane shutters but do have a lot in common with the Graflex.

The single lens reflex Graflex camera was introduced right after the turn of the century in 1901-02, and in one form or another was in continuous production until the 4x5 Super D ceased in the early 1960's.

The earlier models, before 1901-02, preceded the Graflex and probably influenced its design; none however lasted anywhere as long as the Graflex camera.



*Rochester Optical Premo Reflecting*

Many of the reflex cameras listed here did look somewhat like the Graflex. They could well have been food for Fred Folmer's designs.

The chronology as best as I can figure was:

1894 - Patent monocular Reflex, no focal plane shutter

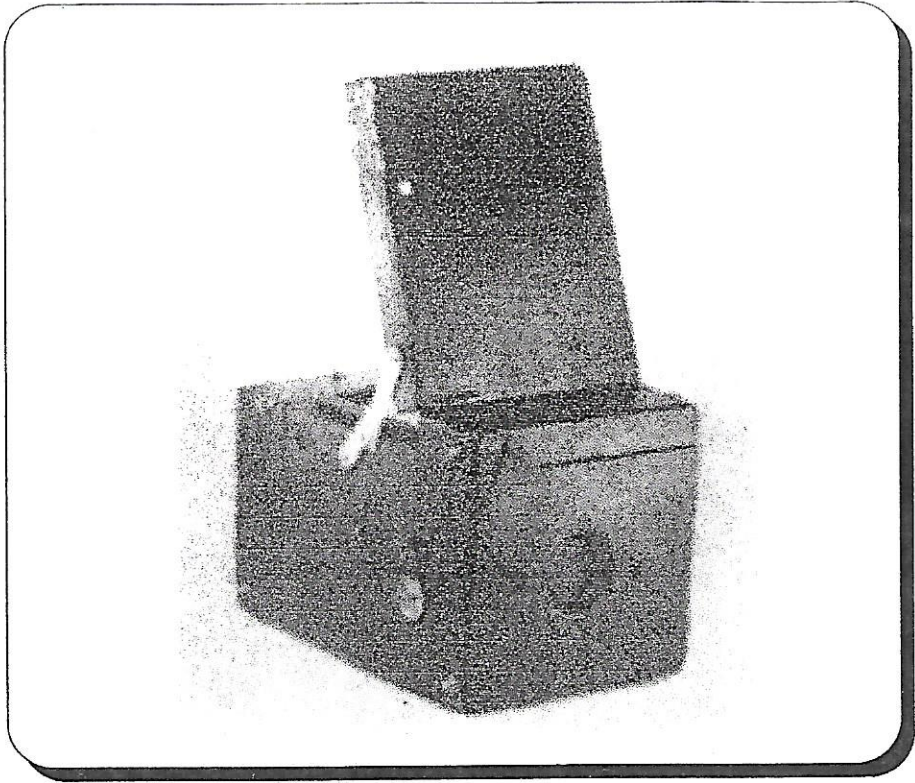
1897 - Anthony Visu

1900 - Patent Reflex Hand Camera  
- The Reflex Camera Co.

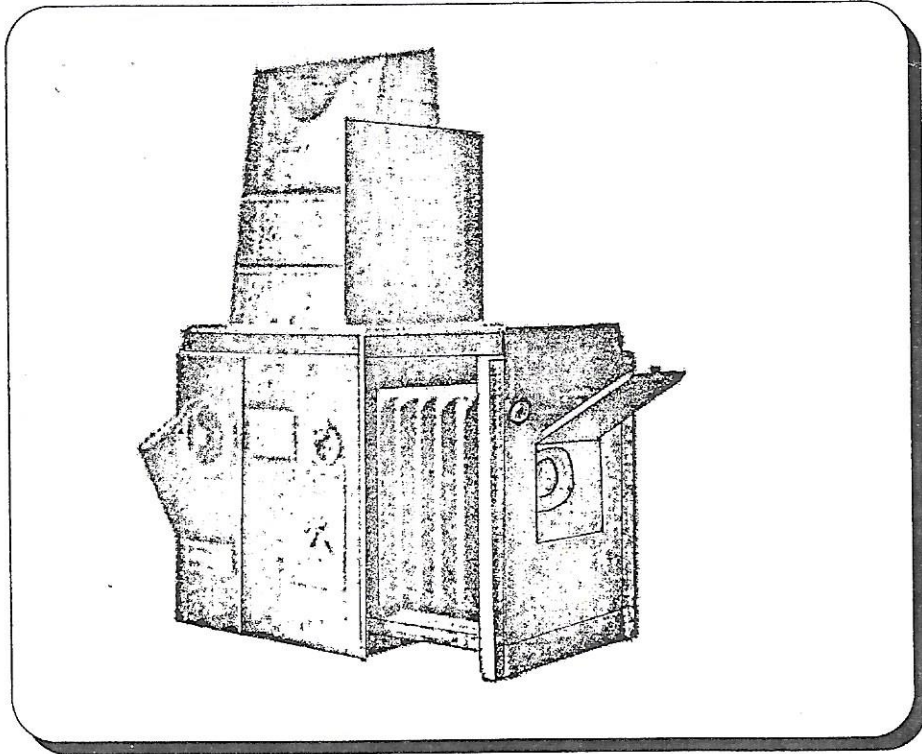
1903-06 - Rochester Premo Reflecting Camera

1909 - the Reflex Camera

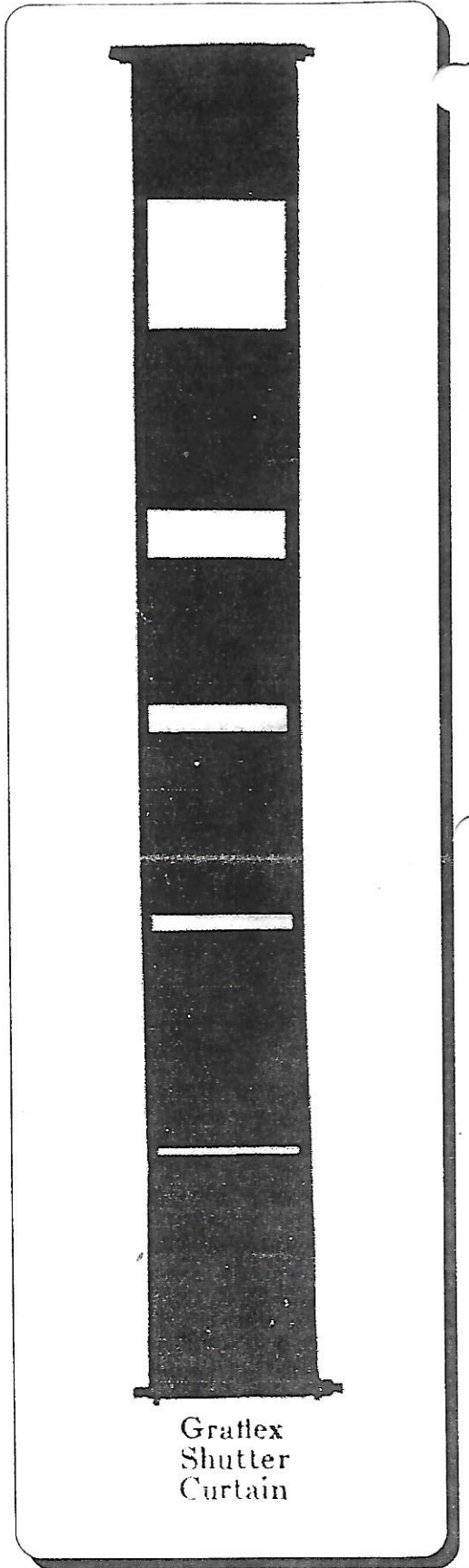
1911 - Hall Mirror Reflex and The Ingento Reflecting Camera



*Patent Monocular Reflex*



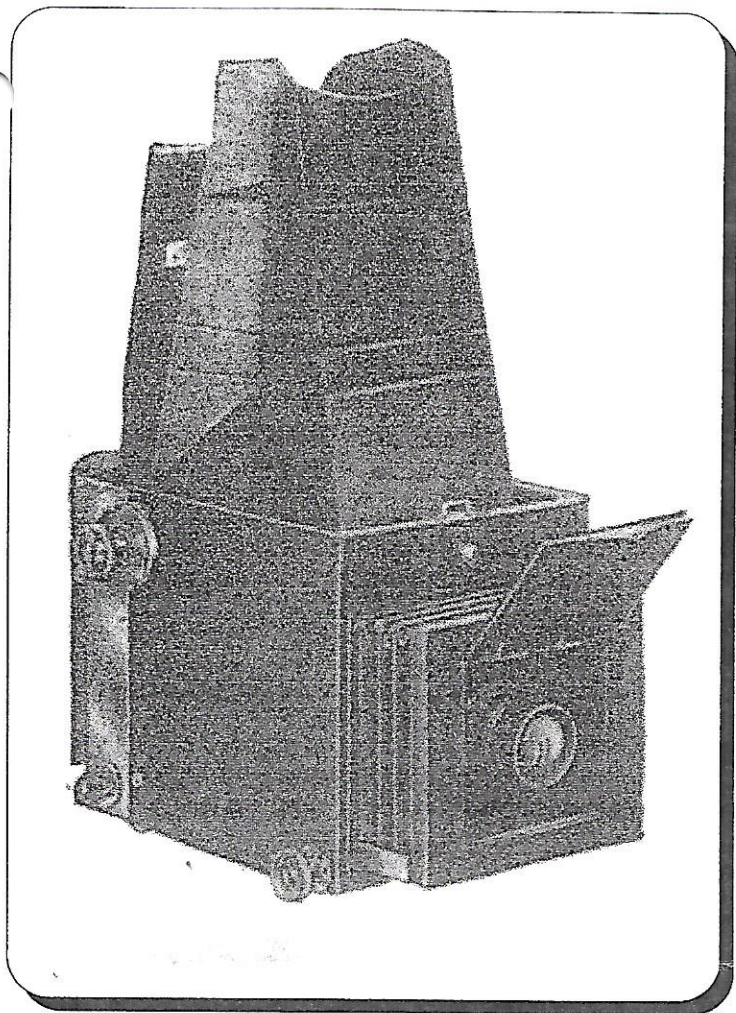
*Burke & James Ingento Reflecting*



Graflex  
Shutter  
Curtain



Kalart Rangefinder Adjustment Problems  
by Bill Baker



*Hall Mirror Reflex*

Why did Graflex continue for 60 years while all the others were gone in less than 10 years after their introduction? One reason might be the special focal plane shutter (see previous page) and the general ruggedness and reliability of the Graflex. Most focal plane shutters of the era (and later) were of two-piece design, rather than the continuous one-piece curtain of Graflex. I have handled only one of the cameras noted above, the Hall Mirror Reflex. It was quite a bit heavier than the Graflex, and appeared more crudely made.

Perhaps the other reflex cameras appeared too early and the Graflex came at just the right time. Do any of our readers have insights that would enlarge this study?

Note. The dates are from catalogues and ads and are not necessarily the first date any camera appeared. For example the Ingento Reflecting Camera was first located in a 1911-12 Burke and James catalog. I could not find an earlier version.

I received a Speed Graphic 4 X 5 camera via Mail Order... I immediately discovered there was a problem with the RANGEFINDER; as there is not much one can do about this except return the camera, I decided to keep it and attempt the repair. The KALART installation and synchronization instructions were consulted with the following results.

The INSTRUCTION MANUAL assumes this is a new installation and you have received the RANGEFINDER new in a box with all the goodies. You will have to read and reread all the instructions to get all the instructions in proper sequence for the REPAIR.

There is a screw marked "b" that is located on the front of the RANGEFINDER. This screw is removed during the installation and does no longer exist. (You can find a replacement screw from a Model Railroad Hobby Shop. Get a 1 x 72 screw about 1/2" long and screw it all the way in to hold the mechanism in place for infinity adj.) If you have to reset the ARM or the screw has been loosened for some reason or the other this adjustment must be made again to restore the INFINITY setting. This is the most important adjustment you have to make as all the others depend on it. Use a screw that fits, if you can find one, or maybe you can as I thought of doing is to drill and tap for a 2-56 machine screw. I made this adjustment rather crudely by inserting a small shanked screw driver in the hole and forcing the arm inside the body back while tightening the screw on the arm. This forces the spring loaded shaft that has the ARM attached to be forced to the rear. Once this is done check the INFINITY adjustment and adjust the eccentric mounted on the track to get an exact adjustment. Be sure that you have already checked or set the LONG and SHORT adjustments on the front and rear of the main body. I got lucky and things fell into place. I had previously attempted several times to make the adjustment without doing the above sequence and believe me, it didn't work. It became rather frustrating. There is also another screw called LAST RESORT INFINITY adjustment located below the right angle prism. Make this adjustment only if nothing else succeeds. My rangefinder was completely out of adjustment including this screw. I used another rangefinder to check the distance of the prism to the mounting. Again I got lucky!

The above information assumes that you have set or checked the INFINITY stops on the track and adjusted the vernier scale to infinity before starting work on the rangefinder. Follow the factory instructions for the most part to be successful in synchronizing the rangefinder. These comments are meant to be helpful in making repairs.

I obtained the Kalart Rangefinder, Installation and Synchronization Sheet from:

Allen M. Carnow  
848 Inverrary Lane  
Deerfield, Il 60015

-- Cost was \$10.00

**WANT AD POLICY:**

*Any subscribers wishing to place a want ad selling or seeking Graflex-related items may send them to the GHQ for inclusion at no charge (at this time). The editors reserve final publication decisions.*

WANTED: Model G Mendelsohn Speed Gun, 3x4 and 5x7 "Top Handle" Graphics, 6-1/2" B&L Zeiss Tessar Ser 1c f4.5, front hinge RB Auto, 3x4 Auto Jr.; other unusual items. Ken Metcalf, 1 1731 Klier Dr., Concord CA 94518, 510-687-7110, email 104122,3117@compuserve.com

My surplus Graphic camera and parts camera list for SASE. Ed Romney, Box 487, Drayton, SC 29333

3x4 Crown Graphic RARE - has no rangefinder and never did! very clean \$150. J.C. Welch 541-689-8834 or see email at right.

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