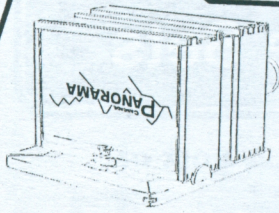


CASCADE PANORAMA



CASCADE PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Portland, Oregon • Founded 1974
Ralph London - Editor • Charlie Kamerman - Desktop Publisher

February 2003

February Meeting: Wednesday, February 26, Instrument Sales and Service,
33 NE 6th Avenue, 7:30 pm. Doors open at 7:00.

February 26th Program —

Jerry Robinson will talk about the Photographers of the Farm Service Administration.

CPHS Calendar

Meeting — March 26, Milan Zahorcak, Photography and the Photographer during the Civil War.

Meeting — April 23 (special date and place), Ben Ehrman, America's Camera Collection: Adventures at the Smithsonian.

PhotoHistory XII, September 19-21, 2003

Previous PhotoHistory symposiums have been enjoyed by essentially all who participated. Interesting speakers, opportunities to meet collectors and historians from around the world, and touring the Eastman House are just three of the reasons to attend this event which is held once every three years.

The 12th Triennial Symposium on the History of Photography, sponsored since 1970 by The Photographic Historical Society (TPHS) in cooperation with The International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, will be held in Rochester, New York, September 19-21, 2003. This is about a month earlier than in the past.

Highlights of the weekend activities are the evening reception on Friday, the full day of talks on Saturday, and Sunday's Photographic Trade Show. For additional information, visit the TPHS web site at <http://www.tphs.org> or email tphs@rochester.rr.com. The announcement concludes, "Start developing your plans for PhotoHistory XII now!"

**Deadline for material for March issue
— February 19**

Southern Exposure

Caveat Emptor

by Mike Kessler

It happened again. There I was, surfing the shoals and breakers of eBay when I spied a really neat stereoscope. It's one of those with a grained wood top and a velvet hood perched on a nickel plated pedestal, and which always shows up with the velvet in pretty ratty condition. This one was perfect and gorgeous.

It wasn't very high up on my "get" list, but the condition was so exceptional that I suffered over it for the next several days. Finally, as the auction was coming to an end, I decided to take the plunge, even though the price was getting pretty steep. As I gave the photos one last look before pressing the button, I felt something nagging at my overly eager brain. The color of the velvet was bright pinkish red. Hmmm ... pinkish red.... Oh jeez! It's one of *mine*!!! Just in time I recognized it as one of several restorations that I did many years ago on this style viewer. The velvet came from some absolutely authentic 1880s drapes that I bought at Brimfield, but the color was just a little off from the normal Burgundy hue of the original. Then came that hateful question again: should I do anything about my "epiphany?" I didn't.

Cascade Photographic Historical Society members receive the *Cascade Panorama* about 8 times per year. Our calendar year dues are \$15. Visitors and prospective members are welcome at our informal meetings. Society information day or evening: 503-692-9108, 503-654-7424 or 503-292-9714.

Other photographica societies and collecting groups may reprint material provided credit is given to the *Cascade Panorama* and any author. We'd appreciate a copy of the reprint. Reprinting by others requires specific permission.

This isn't the first time that I've seen old restorations of mine come on the market, touted as being "in absolutely original, *mint* condition." A year or so ago, a well known dealer in the Southeast was offering via eBay an extremely rare E.&H.T. Anthony Lilliput Detective Camera. It was offered as in original, mint condition, but I immediately recognized it as one of two Lilliput restorations of mine where I had to construct (laboriously hand stitch) the outer, satchel-like shell from scratch. The starting price would have been appropriate for a Lilliput in truly original condition, and I don't think it sold, but it was offered several times after that. I like to think no one was fooled.

In February, 1997, the best restoration (in my humble opinion) that I ever did came up for auction at Christie's in London. Twenty one years earlier I had turned a pile of rotting wood and leather belonging to John Dobran into a mint example of a Brainerd & Levison Hand Camera. This particular B&L came in the form of a leather doctor's bag — the only such example known (I have a "normal" B&L in my own collection, a spectacular camera in its own right). Some time later John suffered a massive stroke which left him unable to care for himself, and his collection was split in many directions. The camera was "lost" for many years, but then it popped up at that auction. The catalogue listing was particularly satisfying. They actually gave me credit for doing the restoration in 1976.

OK, it was estimated at £10,000 to £15,000, but it went for just over £8,000 (including the 15% buyer's premium). Still pretty good for a camera where literally everything you see was made by yours truly. This isn't the end of the story however. A couple of years ago I saw it again, on eBay of all places, offered by a well known British camera dealer for £15,000. This time there was no mention of its restored status. Verrrry interesting.

When I first started doing restorations for several collectors and dealers many years ago, I always left a tiny mark, my initials and date, scratched in some out-of-the-way spot, as a guard against future confusion. When one particular dealer found one of my marks, he went postal, saying he didn't want me to do that anymore. I continued marking some pieces, but I figured that few collectors would really be fooled into thinking that a camera can last over a hundred years with virtually perfect leather.

I did get a measure of revenge on that dealer recently when I let him know that the item he was offering as completely original was really half-Kessler. When I also mentioned that I might contact the high bidder as well, he fell all over himself to do just that.

The moral to all this is just the old saw: "If it looks too good to be true, it probably is." *Caveat Emptor* (Let the buyer beware)!

As the Glue Sets

A Pain in the Brass, Part 2, sort of

by Milan Zahorcak

Last month, in the first part of this article, titled A Pain in the Brass, I related a story that found me puzzling over the fate of one of the great early American lens makers, Holmes, Booth & Haydens. The company was founded in 1853, but seemed to have simply disappeared from the scene sometime in the mid to late 1860s. Then an unusual and unlooked-for lead turned up, one thing led to another, and all of a sudden a lot of things made sense, and all was to be revealed in this installment. Sigh, but that was last month.

Oh, good grief. It seems that when I chose the name for this column, I didn't realize my powers of prophesy. This installment was supposed to answer the question, "What did happen to Holmes, Booth & Haydens?" and until about two weeks ago, I actually thought I knew. But, in the interim, some additional information has turned up, courtesy of my friend and CPHS member, Jerry Spiegel, and at this point, all I can honestly say is, "Damn, not quite what I thought." To quote from Alice, things have gotten "curiouser and curiouser." Oh, well, back to the drawing board. Sorry, folks, maybe next month.

The Image Seeker

Winter Fun on Wallowa Lake

by Norma Eid

Several factors attracted my interest in this stereo card. First, the photographer was a woman, Mrs. Percy H Smith. She is listed in Carl Mautz's book as a member of the Oregon Camera Club, active in Portland in 1900. A second listing reveals her as a stereographer in Joseph, Wallowa County, Oregon, in 1905. This information helped in dating the stereo card.

Also I was somewhat surprised that Wallowa Lake froze over to the point of attracting ice skaters. The lake ranks 49th in square miles among Oregon lakes and has an average depth of 161 feet with the deepest sounding being 291 feet. It would take a lot of days of freezing temperatures to prepare the surface of such a



deep lake to the point of safety for ice skaters, but there they are, more than a dozen hardy souls having a carefree afternoon on the lake. The dog in the foreground is worthy of comment as he easily could have been a blurred streak chasing across the lake but there he stands like a statue. It's an assumption that most of the skaters came from Joseph, named for Chief Joseph in 1880 when the small town established a post office.

The skating attire worn by this hardy group differs markedly from today's styles. The men are wearing suits and wide-brimmed hats, and the women are dressed in the style of the early 1900s with ankle-length skirts and large millinery creations decorated with artificial flowers and ribbons. No winter sport's attire for them.

Certainly, Mrs. Percy Smith must be given credit for this photographic effort. Just setting up her equipment, getting six skaters to pose as the central attraction, and convincing the other skaters to stay in the background while skating toward the camera must have been a taxing undertaking. As to the dog in the foreground, I can't imagine how that was accomplished. The Wallowa Mountains in the background give a lot of depth to this winter scene. Makes me wish I could have been there.

The Time Machine: On the Selection of Lenses

Researched by Milan Zahorcak

We have occasionally run a feature entitled The Time Machine which is a reprint of some interesting article from the past. This article

appeared in the October, 1869, issue of the Philadelphia Photographer. My thanks to fellow member, Jerry Spiegel, for his generous loan of this journal which I am using to research a number of other projects as well.

We make the following extracts from *Lea's Manual of Photography*. We cannot commend this admirable textbook of photography too highly to our readers. The chapter, from which the following extracts are made, says one of our subscribers, "would have saved me \$800, had I been privileged to read it a year ago." The first thousand copies of Mr. Lea's *Manual* are already sold. A fresh lot is now ready, and will be mailed to any address, postpaid, for \$3. Every photographer in the world who can read English should have it in his studio.

Selection of Lenses. The color of a lens is always important. Place the lens on a perfectly white sheet of paper — any brownness of tint is a serious objection. In an old lens this may arise from the Canada balsam, with which the separate portions are cemented together, turning yellow. If this be thought to be the case, the lens should be taken to an optician to be separated, cleaned, and reattached. The photographer is not advised to attempt this himself.

Bubbles in the glass are objectionable, because they tend to throw rays in abnormal directions, and to impair the brilliancy of the image. One or two small ones are not important, nor a sufficient cause for rejecting an otherwise satisfactory lens. But it indicates carelessness in the makers as the bubbles are always visible in the disk from which the lens is made, and such disks should be rejected.

Striae, hair-like or thready transparent lines, are very objectionable, and at once a sufficient cause for rejection.

Scratches — Lenses will sometimes come from the maker with scratches, the result of careless handling of tools in setting or of bad packing. Such of course are returned.

Centering — To every lens there belongs an optical axis, a line perpendicular to the surface of the lens, and passing through its center of curvature. Every achromatized lens consists of at least two portions and it is necessary that these should be so arranged, when attached together by the balsam used for that purpose, that the optical axis of each should exactly correspond. When two lenses or more are united to form an objective, not only must the parts of each be properly disposed, but the front lens must have its axis coincident with that of the back lens. This will depend upon correct mounting.

The usual way in which opticians test the correctness of the centering, is by making the tube containing the lenses revolve in an upright position, that is, with the lenses horizontal. If, now a candle be placed at a little distance, and the eye be placed at a convenient position, the candle will be seen reflected from the surface as a bright point. Every surface of every piece of glass in the tube will send back a reflection.

Next the tube is caused to rotate. Each lens that is correctly centered will continue to send its reflection back perfectly fixed and immovable; but any surface that is out of center will cause its reflection to deviate more or less according to the amount of error. It is evidently not necessary that all the reflections should be at once, but they may be observed successively. This method of observing evidently renders it easy to fix which, if any, of the surfaces is erroneously placed, and in which direction is its error.

Another mode of observation is more convenient for the photographer, as not requiring the apparatus needed by the method described above. The observer places himself in a dark room with a single candle. Standing five or six feet from it, he looks at it through the objective inclining the latter a little until he sees a series of bright points which are the images of the candle, produced by successive reflections from the different surfaces of the lens.

When a lens has four pieces of glass in its construction, as in the case of the portrait, Globe, Orthoscopic, and some other lenses, the number of possible images is very considerable. These cannot generally be all found at once, but eight, ten, or more can be counted; a little practice, and altering the inclination of the lens, materially aids in increasing the number.

If now the centering is perfect, it will be found that, by carefully adjusting the position of the lens, all of these reflections can be made to range themselves in a straight line. But if any one or more of the component parts is out of center, this will be found impracticable. One or more of the bright points will remain obstinately out of line; and, when a little movement is made which brings them in, it will be found that some other image, previously in line, has slid out of it.

When the observer, after a very careful trial, finds that it is positively impossible to make all the images range, he will be justified in concluding that there is a fault in the centering. Whilst this test is so easy that any intelligent observer can apply it at once, there is no doubt that it is a very severe one.

A lens may perform quite fairly, and yet such an examination as this may reveal a defect. But there is no doubt that first-rate excellence is incompatible with such defectiveness. It is also evident that the fewer the pieces of which a lens is composed, the less difficulty the optician will find in getting them all in correct line.

Quickness. — When lenses are tested with equal stops (in proportion to their focal length), their comparative quickness will depend upon the whiteness of the glass, the fewer number of surfaces that enter into their formulation, and on the curves given by the optician: careful testing and this alone can settle the point.

(Milan's note: You read that correctly, it just isn't worded very well. He's simply saying that it is difficult to determine or compare the maximum f/stop of a lens or lenses. For example, to verify a claim that a lens is a "quick acting" model versus one of "normal rapidity.")

Chemical Focus. — The correction for chromatic aberration is now greatly better made than formerly. To test whether a lens is properly corrected, select a newspaper printed with sharp-cut type and paste a piece a foot or fifteen inches square upon a smooth piece of board. Set this up before the camera, with the columns vertical, but inclined in a slanting direction, so that one side, the right, for example, shall be a couple of inches nearer the camera than the left, keeping the board, however, exactly upright. Focus carefully along the central upright line, and copy it full size, or thereabouts.

Next examine the hair-strokes of the letters on the negative with a microscope. If the lens is properly corrected, the central line should be in the sharpest focus. If, however, it be found that a portion to the right or left of the central line is in better focus than the center, then the correction has evidently been faulty.

If the sharpest image is of a part nearer to the lens than the center, the lens is under-corrected; if of a part further from the center, the lens is over-corrected. In

either case, it is said to have a chemical focus, that is, its chemical and visual focus does not correspond, a fault of the first magnitude, and sufficient cause for rejecting the lens entirely. (Milan's note: At the time of this article, some lenses were still not completely corrected for color and could be thought of as having two focal points: the chemical or actinic focus, and the visual focus. The collodion emulsion was essentially sensitive only to blue, while the photographer's eyes see and focus primarily with the yellow. Consequently, with an uncorrected lens, the scene may appear to be sharply focused on the ground glass (the visual focus being determined by the yellow light), but the resulting image will be out of focus. The chemical, or actinic rays which would form the image, being in the blue range, would come into focus slightly "in front" of the plate, a tiny bit closer to the lens, and those "rays" will be out of focus.

(Prior to about 1850, most lenses were poorly corrected at best. Almost every daguerreotype that you have ever seen was refocused, first on the ground glass, and then the photographer would have corrected for the chemical focus by adjusting "in" the plate holder by a predetermined, and carefully measured amount. Typically, it was turned in by 1/40th of the measured focus distance.

(So with a 6" lens focused at 10 feet and with a back focus of 4-1/2", you'd turn in just a bit less than 1/8" — whew! And now you know why all those old wet-plate cameras had that little fine focus knob. On most cameras, a full turn of the fine focus wheel would be pretty close. Try it on your old John Stock gear. But the correction varies by focal length and subject distance, so you'd have to do tests for each lens, and you'd quickly pick one or two subject distances and then nail down everything: camera stand, camera position, sitter's chair, etc., and move them as little as possible, and then always to "known" and carefully measured positions. Fun, eh?)

Matchmatics in the Movies

by Paul Garrett

Paul Garrett is a long time collector of many kinds of cameras. Now living in Tucson, he is one of the founders and leaders of the Arizona Photographic Collectors club. While many collectors enjoy identifying cameras that appear in a movie, Paul's story answers the additional question, "How did the movie people get that equipment?" Reprinted with kind permission from the newsletter of the Arizona Photographic Collectors, January 2003. — Ed.

On a Tuesday well over a year ago, I was called by History for Hire, a Los Angeles prop house, to locate two cameras for a movie that was being shot in the UK. The specifications were for two near mint Argus Matchmatic cameras with flashes, meters and a bunch of flash bulbs. The information was that one of the cameras would appear in the movie on numerous

occasions and one would be somehow destroyed during the movie. The bad part was that they had to have them on the way to England (with the caller) on the coming Saturday.

Things like this do not happen to me with any regularity, but it certainly seemed to be possible except that I did not want to part with the new one I had in my collection (new in box with instruction book, etc.). After a few phone calls I managed to come up with a couple of very nice specimens (but not totally complete with proper flash & meters) from fellow APC member Bob Faucher. After some digging in my garage I had the order filled, including a fairly nice instruction book and several dozen M3 bulbs packed and ready to take to FedEx.

Well, the movie is out and you may have seen it. It's *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, and the camera takes a sort of star role in the production. The second camera didn't seem to have been destroyed, but it did go up in a cloud of smoke. My grandson was very impressed about the whole thing, and upon seeing the movie, he seems to be more tolerant of my collecting bent.

Peter Palmquist, Photohistorian and Author

I rarely look at the obituaries in the *Los Angeles Times*, but when I do, I sort of look out of the corner of one eye with trepidation, for fear of seeing the name of someone I know. Sure enough in one of my sideways glances a few weeks ago, I was devastated to see that Peter Palmquist, noted photographic historian and author, had died. I've known Peter for many years, and although we weren't close friends, I always looked forward to his visiting my table at the various camera and image shows that were frequent in the San Francisco Bay area. The relevant shows are down to one now, the MPM image show held twice a year in Emeryville, but Peter continued to make the rounds, and we always chatted up a storm.

A prolific author, Peter was probably best known for his Women in Photography Archive which includes about 8000 works by women who had their own photo studios around the turn of the century. In 1983 he published his book, *Carleton E. Watkins, Photographer of the American West*, which resulted in a traveling exhibition that was shown in museums in Fort Worth, St. Louis and Boston. Many of you will also remember that he was the editor for a number of years of the Daguerreian Society's *Daguerreian Journal*.

When I was the editor of the Western Photographic Collector's Association's publication, *the Photographer*, Peter would give me a review copy of nearly every book and pamphlet he wrote. Every one was a gem, and I don't remember ever being critical of a single word.

Others who knew Peter more intimately will cover his life much better than I. If you would like an excellent account of his life and works, I recommend you access his obituary by Mary Rourke in the January 20 edition of the *L.A. Times*.

Finally, the way he died was both a tragedy and for me something of a mystery. He lived and worked way north of San Francisco in Arcata, but he was struck and killed by a hit and run driver while he was walking his dog in Emeryville. It may be just a coincidence, but it is a little strange that he died far from home, in the very place where the last image shows take place. — Mike Kessler

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February 1902 ad from the Mike Hanemann Collection

Future Northwest Shows

Saturday, March 1 — 3rd Annual Portland Metro (Almost) Spring Camera Swap Meet, Washington County Fairgrounds, opposite Hillsboro Airport west of Portland. Contact Dwight Bash, P.O. Box 1166, Oregon City, OR 97045, 503-380-3375, Deebash@aol.com.

Sunday, March 30 — Vancouver, B.C. Camera Show & Swap Meet, Cameron Recreation Centre, 9523 Cameron at Lougheed Mall, Burnaby. Contact Siggy Rohde 604-941-0300 (phone or fax) or Western Canada Photographic Historical Association, P.O. Box 78082, 2606 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, B. C. V5N 5W1 Canada.

Saturday, April 26 — Puget Sound Photographic Collectors Society 23rd Annual Camera and Photographica Sale, Swap & Show, Western Washington Fairgrounds Pavilion, Puyallup, Wash. Contact Darrel Womack, 1014 S.W. 119th Street, Seattle, WA 98146-2727, 206-244-6831.

For information on shows outside the Northwest, visit CPHS member Rob Niederman's new webpage

www.antiquewoodcameras.com/shows.htm

It is dedicated to local and international shows, auctions and conventions.



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Jerry Robinson talks on Photographers
of the Farm Service Administration**