Historic Camera

Collector Club Newsletter

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John L. Stoddard

Lecturer and author John Lawson Stoddard was born in 1850 in Brookline, Massachusetts. He was a proud direct descendent of New England theologian Solomon Stoddard. After graduating from Williams College in 1871, he attended the Yale Divinity School to study theology. From there, Mr. Stoddard became an instructor at the exclusive Boston Latin School, where he taught Latin and French.

In 1874, Mr. Stoddard was able to realize a lifelong dream to travel the world, and over the next two years visited Europe, Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt and the Palestine, absorbing whatever he could about the histories and cultures of each country. Afterwards, he studied briefly in Germany before returning to America to share with his students what he had seen, heard, and tasted along his global trek. He soon extended his lectures to adult groups, and his intellect, wit, and charisma transformed John L. Stoddard into an extremely popular speaker on the American lecture circuit. This launched a surprising new career that would prove to be far more lucrative than teaching at a private school. visuals emphasized his verbal descriptions.

Mr. Stoddard began supplementing his lectures with lantern slides of his travels. He lacked the technical prowess to produce these slides himself and had to rely on others. In addition, he employed a French company, J. Levy, to produce images and hand-tinted slide transparencies. Despite knowing little about photography - in fact, he never even took his own photographs, but instructed his personal photographer on all views, angles, and vantage points to use - Mr. Stoddard's lectures became truly unique visual experiences. For example, his lecture on Constantinople included a mixture of photographs, engravings, recreations of historical scenes, and reproductions of

drawings from noteworthy sites. Typically, contemporary slideshows offer no such media variety, which made Mr. Stoddard's lectures particularly rare for their time. Many of his photographs were not retouched in any way, while others were artistically enveloped in shadows or ornately framed. Mr. Stoddard would frequently display artistic reproductions alongside actual location photographs. His attitude was essentially, "Anything goes," as long as the visuals emphasized his verbal descriptions.

Although Mr. Stoddard did not regard the slides as anything more than complementary material, he clearly understood their importance to his lectures. He consulted with T. C. Hepworth, a noted lantern projection expert of the period, who advised that although the views were ultimately secondary to the lecture material, they must nevertheless be the finest lantern slides available and the images should easily fit the viewer's eye. Furthermore, the slides should be seamlessly to the lecture that they needed no introduction.

Mr. Stoddard later published several volumes of his lecture series, beginning with Red-Letter Days Abroad in 1884, which contained 100 engravings from actual photographs of buildings, scenes, and objects described in the text. Ten volumes and five supplements of John L. Stoddard's Lectures were published between 1897 and 1898, chronicling visits to cities and sites that included Scandinavia, Athens, the Far East, Egypt, Moscow, the Rhine, the United Kingdom, the Grand Canyon, and Yellowstone National Park. Mr. Stoddard devoted his later years to philanthropic efforts such as the establishment of a shelter for homeless children and the construction of a secondary school in his adopted hometown of Merano, Italy, which is where he died on June 5, 1931 at the age of 81.

Ref:

1883 The American Bookseller, Vol. XIV (New York: The American News Company), p. 824.
1899 Book Culture, Vol. I (Boston: E. B. Hall), p. 13.
2004 Silent Film Sound (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 56-58.
1901 Wilson's Photographic Magazine, Vol. XXXVIII (New York: Edward L. Wilson), pp. 174-175.

Frances Frith

Landscape photographer Francis Frith was born to Francis Sr. and Alice Frith on October 31, 1822 in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England. After receiving a Quaker education, Mr. Frith became a cutlery apprentice in Sheffield. However, he suffered a nervous collapse in 1843, which prevented him to from completing his apprenticeship. When he recovered, Mr. Frith spent two years traveling throughout Scotland and Wales before settling in the prosperous seaport of Liverpool, where he became a successful merchant. First, he and his partner started a successful transatlantic wholesale grocery business, and later, he opened his own printing

business, which is when Mr. Frith began pursuing his interest in photography.

In 1850, Mr. Frith opened a photographic studio in Liverpool and became one of the founders of the Liverpool Photographic Society. The studio became so successful that Mr. Frith sold his other companies to focus on his career in photography full time. With the funds he received from the sale of his grocery and printing businesses, thirty-four year old Francis Frith embarked on upon a dream travel adventure to the two places he regarded as the most fascinating in the world - Egypt and Palestine.

He made three trips between 1856 and 1860. On the first, he sailed up the Nile to the Second Cataract, recording the main historic monuments from the Egyptian cities of Cairo to Abu Simbel. The pictures he made of the temple at Soleb are considered among Mr. Frith's most impressive technical achievements. On his second trip, he traveled through Palestine to travel through and photograph landmarks associated with the life of Jesus Christ. On the last leg of his expedition, Mr. Frith traveled south down the Nile River.

Mr. Frith traveled with three cameras - a regular studio camera that used 8x10" glass plates, a format camera that used 16x20" glass plates, and a third camera that had a dual lens that allowed him to make three-dimensional stereoscopic photographs. In addition, he insisted upon employing the more climate-challenging wet collodion process instead of using the paper-based calotype to produce superior landscape views. Mr. Frith's technical expertise and aesthetic perspectives elevated the artistic appeal of his Middle East photographs. Utilizing his printing experience and his marketing knowledge, Mr. Frith was able to exhibit his photographs, believed to be the first of their kind, to print dealers and journal subscribers. Furthermore, he published a series of breathtaking texts that featured his Middle East and Holy Land images, including Egypt and Palestine Photographed and Described by Francis Frith (1860) and a limited edition of The Queen's Bible (1862).

After his lengthy travels, Mr. Frith was ready to settle down, opening the Francis Frith & Co. photographic publishing business in Reigate, Surrey and marrying Mary Ann Rosling shortly thereafter. Mr. Frith then turned his lens to every town in the United Kingdom that had some type of historical significance. He established a postcard company to distribute these photographs, which evolved into one of the worldâ€™s largest photographic studios and led to a chain of more than 2,000 shops throughout the United Kingdom.

Mr. Frith spent his later years as a Quaker minister, turning over the business operations to his family. He died in Cannes, France on February 25, 1898, and the Frith family continued running the company he started until 1970. Six yearsâ€™ later, business executive John Buck resurrected The Francis Frith Collection to distribute Mr. Frith's amazing photographs internationally and can be viewed on the Internet at http://www.francisfrith.co.uk.

Ref:
2008 Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography, Vol. I (New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group LLC), pp. 558-562. 2001 Travellers in Egypt (London: Tauris Parke/I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.), pp. 168-178.

John Henry Brown

Inventor of the Iris Diaphragm

John Henry Brown was born at Woolwich on the 4th of September 1836. His Father was a dentist who practiced at Woolich and afterwards at Brighton. From Childhood he was fond of scientific pursuits, and while at school he made himself a photographic camera. He became a dentist and joined his father in practice in the old Steyn, Brighton. Later he moved to Hove.

In about 1867 while pursing his hobby of photography John Henry Brown invented the Iris Diaphragm. He took his home-made model to Smith and Beck, the predecessors of the well-known firm of opticians in Cornhill (R&J Beck). The model, although roughly constructed, lacked no important detail to the modern day iris diaphragm. He refused to patent the invention, preferring to publish it at once, for the free use of all. John Henry Brown received no reward for his ingenuity.

Mr. Brown possessed a small telescope, of which he made constant use. He became a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society of in 1888. Mr. Brown married in 1883 and raised two step children. He continued to practice his dentistry in his home town of Hove, until his retirement in approximately 1897.

On December 19th, 1903 John Henry Brown died at his residence at Brighton at age seventy-seven.

Ref:
1904, Feb - Monthly notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, p 272
1904 Nature - Volume 69 - Page 204

Enscraplopedia

Have you ever heard of an Enscraplopedia. What comes to mind? Someone asked me to describe what the Historic Camera web site is becoming. I got a little tongue-tied. I tried to explain that it is an information resource that has basic information to help document photography history, just like an **Encyclopedia**. But then goes farther with adding relevant information of various sorts, from various places, submitted from many members just like a **scrap book** would have. Historic Camera may be considered the first to be called an Enscraplopedia for Photography! It brings both the encyclopedia and scrapbook information together as one.

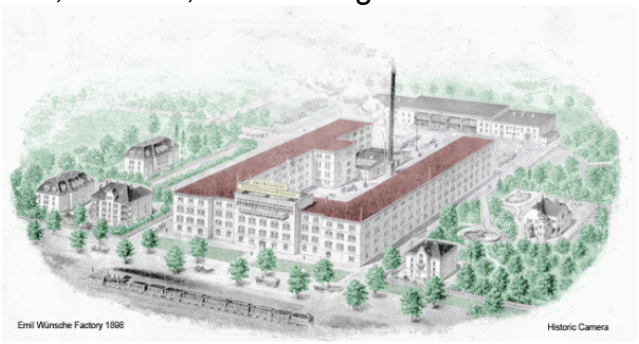
Emil Wunsche AG

Emil Wunsche, the founder of this internationally famous German photographic shop was born in a tiny village near Dresden in 1864. A merchant by trade, Mr. Wunsche eagerly observed the growing photographic industry, and as a natural businessman, understood the market potential of selling photographic plates and equipment.

In 1884 Emil Wunsche began business relationship and eventually acquired three small business operations on his journey to having his own business, they included Louis Lang for cameras and other assets for photography, Dienwiebel & Co., for packing and miscellaneous material and Paul Förster for the manufacturer of cameras.

Emil Wunsche opened his own shop in Dresden in 1887, listed as a manufacturer of photographic equipment and supplies, and soon became the leading area photographic equipment supplier. Soon, he added Richard Huttig & Sohn cameras to his growing inventory, labeling then with his own name.

Mr. Wunsche's success allowed him to grow rapidly enough to compete with other Dresden camera suppliers like Huttig and Heinrich Ernemann, and so he decided to open camera factory in Reick, a small village near Dresden, in 1896. He moved his shop to this location shortly thereafter. The factory was considered a technological marvel for its time, with its machines powered by a 120-horsepower steam engine. In addition, the factory site included a small medical unit, canteen, and fire brigade.



By 1898, the Wunsche Company had 206 employees, and provided communal housing for 27 employee families. Sadly, however, a fire that same year caused severe structural damage. Undeterred, Mr. Wunsche rebuilt his factory, and his business was larger and seemingly more successful than ever. The Wunsche Company grew to employ 350 workers, and although it did not make its own lenses, they were purchased from the finest suppliers of the day â€“ Voigtlander, Zeiss, and Steinheil, among others. The Wunsche factory manufactured a vast selection of cameras, including Ada and Bosco mirror cameras, Afpi and Reicka folding cameras, and Mars Detective and 99 cameras.

In 1902, the Wunsche Company (also known as Emil Wunsche AG) was flourishing as Dresdenâ€™s second largest manufacturer of cameras. But shockingly, Emil Wunsche took his own life that year at his home in Reick. Rumors swirled that Mr. Wunsche committed suicide over personal problems and there was speculation that his business had grown too quickly and he overextended himself financially. Happily, however, for the photography medium, the Wunsche Company continued under the watchful eye of Mr. Wunsche's partner Louis Lang.

Under Mr. Lang's leadership, company production diversified to include plate cameras, darkroom equipment, magnifiers, viewfinders, flash units, and roll film for moving pictures. However, local competition remained fierce, and strikes by Dresden camera employee threatened corporate profitability. Therefore, Mr. Lang wisely agreed to a merger, and in 1909, the Wunsche Company became part of Dresden's International Camera Actiengesellschaft (ICA). In 1926, it became part of the Zeiss Ikon conglomerate, which prior to the Second World War, was the leading manufacturer of 8 mm movie cameras. Zeiss Ikon ceased its operations in 1972.

Ref:

-1902 The Photographic Dealer and D. & P. Trade Review, Vol. XIL, No. 68 (London: Photo Dealer Ltd.), p. 273.
-1907 The Amateur Photographer and Photographic News, Vol. XLVI (London: Hazel Watson & Viney Ltd.), p. 284.
-1908 The Amateur Photographer and Photographic News, Vol. XLVIII (London: Hazel Watson & Viney Ltd.), p. 88.
-2009 Emil Wunsche 1904 (Norderstedt, Germany: Books on Demand).

London Stereoscopic Co.

In 1854 The London Stereoscope Company was established at 54 Cheapside by George Swann Nottage as the founder and managing partner. Howard John Kennard may have started as partner or he became one during the early beginnings of the business. Howard Kennard was most likely a cousin, because it is recorded that George Nottage worked for his Uncle Mr. R. W. Kennard, MP in the iron business prior to establsihing the Stereoscopic company. The London Stereoscope Company was established to manufacture and sell the lenticular stereoscope viewer designed by Sir William Brewster in 1850 and a quickly growing archive of Stereoscopic images. The company advertised the slogan 'No home without a stereoscope'.

In 1856 the Company's name was changed slightly to the London Stereoscopic Co. in order to reflect the growing demand for their stereo photographs. In February 1856, an advertisement in the Photographic Journal stated, "The largest collection in Europe, upwards of 10,000" stereo views and the company sold a half a million stereoscopes. The company employed numerous photographers including, William England, Thomas Richard Williams, W. & D. Downey, James Elliott, Alfred Silvester, John Duncuft and many others. However photographer William England stands out because he was with the company from the beginning and for his extensive portfolio traveling to exotic places and capturing high quality photographic work. the company also resold noncommissioned photographs like the work of William Grundy. The company opened an office at 313 Oxford st.

By 1858, the company advertised a stock of 100,00 stereoscopic pictures of various subjects.

In 1859 William England traveled to the United states and captured a series of critically acclaimed imagery of the United States and Canada. By December of 1859, the firm of George M. Lawrence and Thomas Houseworth advertised that they were the sole agents in California for the sale of the London Stereoscopic co. Images. The name was once again changes to the London Stereoscopic and Photographic Company.

ALBUM PORTRAITS

In 1860 the company was based at 54 Cheapside, London, with the old office at 313 Oxford Street still active. In the same year the London Stereoscopic Company opened its own branch office in the United States at 594 Broadway, New York City.

In 1862 the Company paid a fee to be able to photograph the Great International Exhibition of 1862. The imagery was a huge success.

In 1863 the company occupied 54 Cheapside and 108-110 and 118 Regent Street. William England left the company but continued to publish photographs through the company catalog under his own name.

The company sold a variety of photographic equipment from other manufacturers with the London Stereoscopic Company label. It should be noted that some of the photographic equipment was designed specifically for or by the London Stereoscope Co. It is not certain the point in which the company began to offer apparatus in addition to stereo views.

In 1875 George S. Nottag was elected alderman of the city of London by a majority of thirty votes over Sir John Bennett.

In 1877 George S. Nottag was elected sheriff.

On the 22nd March 1878 an exclusive Agreement was signed with Thomas Edison that expanded the business by commercially producing, as sole licensee, the Phonograph machine that was to be purchased by millions throughout the world.

In 1884 George Nottage was bestowed the prestigious title of The Lord Mayor of the City of London.

On the 11th April 1885, The Right Hon. George Swan Nottage died at his mansion house after a short illness at the age of 63, while he was still in office as Lord Mayor of the City of London. He left a wife Martha Christiana, a son Charles and daughter and was buried in a crypt in London's St. Paul's Cathedral.

On July 1st of 1885, Due to the death of George Nottage, The company was incorporated as the London Stereoscopic and Photographic Co. Ltd. with £90,000 in capital in 18,000 shares of £5 each. A contract was entered into by George Nottage's son, Charles George Nottage who became the managing director and Howard John Kennard who became the chairman, to make up one part of the contract and by Samuel Mark Clark as trustee of the company of the other part.

In approximately 1887 the company was advertising prints with an improved collotype process called the Photomezzotype. This was a photomechanical printing process similar to the callotype and was claimed to be unrivaled for high artistic quality. Howard J. Kennard was the chairman of the company and S. M. Clark secretary.

In 1893 Charles George Nottage completed his own book entitled "In search of a Climate", depicting thirty photomezzotype images of scenery in the sunny islands of the far pacific. In preparation fo this book he traveled to the sandwich islands and Hawaii.

In December 1884, Charles George Nottage died.

The company was dissolved in 1922.

In 2008 the company was reinvigorated and although small is currently selling a book, a unique "OWL" photographic stereoscope viewer, and a set of astronomical stereo cards.

Ref:
1875, British Journal of photography, p516
1885, July 10, English mechanic and world of science, page v
1897 - Modern English Biography, I-Q - Page 1867, by Frederic Boase
1994 A directory of London photographers 1841-1908, Pritchard, Michael. Watford: PhotoResearch. p.82
2008, encyclopedia of nineteenth-century photography, John Hannavy
2000, Pioneer photographers of the far west, Peter E. Palmquist, Thomas R. Kailbourn

Website Update

April was another productive month. We cataloged seven new biographies, six new company histories, and three manufacturer camera product lines data sheets. Links to all new content can accessed directly from our Librarium's photo history page. (http://www.historiccamera.com/photo_history.html) Here is a listing of the content excluding the ones published in this newsletter:

New Biographies:

Sir Joseph Wilson Swan

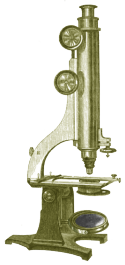
Charles Wheatstone

William Crooke

Antoine Lumière

Carl Zeiss

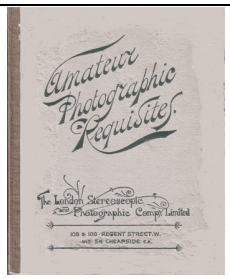
New Camera Company Histories:



R & J Beck Company History

New Camera Product line Listings:

Spartus Camera Corporation



London Stereoscopic & Photographic Co. Camera Listing

Candid Camera Corporation of America

Candid Camera Corporation of America Camera Listing

Emil Wunsche A.G. Camera Listing

Updated Home Page

We made a minor change to our Home page this month. It now focuses new members on our growing database of reference information. Comments welcome.

Show Casing & Sharing Your Photos and Information

We are slowly upgrading our camera datasheets with images from members and Flickr members. This is very time consuming. We have begun to select showcase images that provide a front angled view of the camera with good lighting, mainly from our friends at Flickr. To qualify to have your photo showcased on one of our datasheets, add it to our Historic Camera Flickr group or each member may add their photos to our datasheets as a reference page.

Historic Camera Needs Your Help!

You can help our community by sharing information. We are in search of instruction manuals, advertisements and all reference information for our history librarium.

Our new Frequently asked Questions page (http://historiccamera.com/faq.html) linked at our club page provides step by step instructions on how to add information to the database via the "Add Pict or PDF" button.

Send Comments & Questions to admin@historiccamera.com.