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Louis Van Oeyen

Louis Van Oeyen was born to Scottish immigrants on January 17, 1865 in Dayton, Ohio. Little is known about his childhood or education. He married Edith C. MacDonald in 1886, and the couple would later have daughters Edith Lillian and Helen. After a varied career that included a brief stint as a sign writer in Detroit, Mr. Van Oeyen and his family returned to his home state of Ohio, where shortly after opening his own photographic studio, he joined the Cleveland Press as a staff photographer. His successful career began on a catastrophic note, photographing the Cleveland water tunnel disaster of 1901. He also photographed important local news events like the Cleveland railcar strike of 1908 and sight of the Graf Zeppelin hovering over Cleveland's Terminal Tower in August 1929.

At the time, sports photography was practically nonexistent, and the few attempts to photograph sporting events left much to be desired in terms of clarity and quality. Mr. Van Oeyen made it a professional crusade to change that by taking striking images of boxing and hockey matches, football games, and auto and horse races. During the years prior to the Great Depression, America was enjoying unprecedented growth and prosperity, and Americans became enthusiastic sports spectators. This is when baseball truly became "America's pastime," and players like Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Christy



Louis A. Van Oeyen

Mathewson, and Lou Gehrig were showered with public adoration. Mr. Van Oeyen's baseball images cemented his reputation as the premier sports photographer. He pioneered game action photography with the use of new 'stop action' lenses that did not require subject posing. He successfully captured infield plays or runners sliding into bases with great precision. One of his most famous photos was the classic "Close Play at the Plate" that provided the viewer with a virtual experience of the heart-stopping action, complete with a cloud of dust. He also benefited greatly from the use of an Optipod,

which enabled Mr. Van Oeyen to swing his camera to capture an action shot without having to move the tripod.



By the mid-1920s, Mr. Van Oeyen was unquestionably Cleveland's most celebrated sports photographer. In addition to his duties at the Cleveland Press, he also began taking taking photographs for the Newspaper Enterprise Association, a Scripps-owned nationally syndicated organization. He remained active until the late 1930s and closed out his career on a high note, photographing the coronation of Great Britain's King George VI for the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) in 1937. Eighty-one-year-old Louis Van Oeyen died in Cleveland, Ohio on December 12, 1946. While his name may not be remembered, his contributions to sports photography will never be forgotten.

Ref:
 1946 December 13, Cleveland Plain Dealer News paper
 1992 Baseball Memories: 1900-1909 (New York: Sterling Publishing Co.), p. 1906.
 1990 The Gamut, Issue XXIX (Cleveland: Cleveland State University), p. 44.
 2013 Meet the Sports Writers (URL: <http://www.baseball-fever.com/showthread.php?57538-Meet-The-Sports-Writers/page24>).
 1912 Pitching in a Pinch: Or, Baseball from the Inside (New York: Grosset & Dunlap), p. 226.
 1921 Photo-era Magazine, Vol. XLVI 46-47 (Wolfeboro, New Hampshire: A. H. Beardsley), p. 73.
 1992 Sports in Cleveland: An Illustrated History (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University), pp. 40-42.

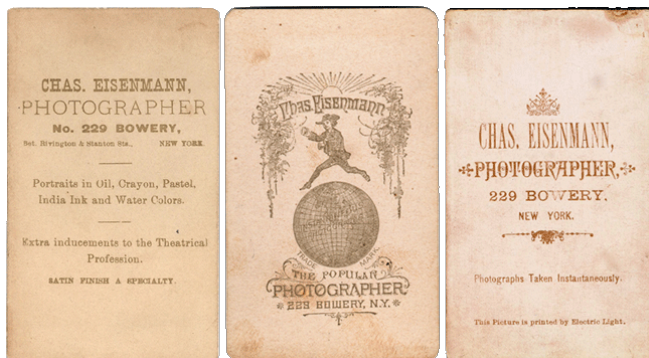
Charles Eisenmann



Charles Eisenmann is believed to have been born in Baden-Wuttemberg, Germany on October 8, 1850 (although some historians list his year of birth as 1855). Like many immigrants, many details of his childhood were sadly lost along the way, although it is believed the original spelling of his surname was 'Eisenman.' He settled in New York City around 1870, and officially opened his first photography studio six years later. He relocated to a two-story building at 229 Bowery in 1879, which forever changed his portrait subjects. The Bowery was a lower-class East Side enclave that catered to nickel-and-dime entertainment curiosities. Mr. Eisenmann, his wife (who was also his assistant), and their young daughter settled into the tiny living quarters upstairs while

stocking the first-floor gallery with the latest equipment. He began specializing in theatrical and show business portraits, developed a "quick as a wink" instant photo process.

Through his Bowery studio, Mr. Eisenmann became acquainted with legendary showman and circus impresario P. T. Barnum, whose human oddities or 'freaks' were a popular exhibit at his American Museum. The two businessmen worked out a business agreement where Mr. Eisenmann would photograph the anatomically unique performers so they could hand out or sell small photographic cards of themselves to promoters or the public. Mr. Eisenmann photographed these individuals respectfully, in the same tasteful portrait settings he used for his more elite clientele. Mr. Eisenmann employed the aesthetic painting techniques of the Dutch Masters in his portraiture, manipulating lighting and depth to accentuate the pose and attire of the sitter. Mr. Eisenmann found a lucrative market with his portraits of such popular Barnum performers as Myrtle Corbin ('The Four-Legged Woman') and Annie Jones ('The Bearded Lady').



By 1884, Mr. Eisenmann's business became so successful that he was able to open a studio on the more respectable 14th Street in Manhattan and able to move his family into a comfortable suburban home. He was by now the most prolific of all 'freak' photographers, and even scored a professional coup by having P.T. Barnum himself sit for him in 1885. Like all crazes, the public's fascination

with freak shows began to wane, and by 1890, Mr. Eisenmann moved his family and business to Plainfield, New Jersey. Frank Wendt became his business partner and later his son-in-law. When the warm tones of albumen printing began being replaced by the cooler silver gelatin process, it was, for the photographer, an end of an era.

Seventy-seven year-old Charles Eisenmann died on December 8, 1927. Not surprisingly, Frank Wendt became his successor, but he lacked his father-in-law's keen artistic eye and technical precision. Therefore, subsequent portraits lacked the quality and attention to visual detail that characterized earlier works bearing the Eisenmann name.

Ref:
2013 Art of the Beautiful-Grotesque (URL: <http://beautiful-grotesque.blogspot.com/2013/01/of-gilded-age-art-of-charles-eisenmann.html>).

1988 Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp. 286-287.

2013 Gotham Patterns: Original Images (URL://<http://gothampatternsphotos.wordpress.com/tag/circassian-beauty/>).

2002 Monsters: Human Freaks in America's Gilded Age : The Photographs of Chas. Eisenmann (Toronto, Canada: ECW Press), p. 17).

2013 Monstrosity: The Human Monster in Visual Culture (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.), pp. 93-94.

1885 New York's Great Industries (New York: Historical Publishing Company), p. 214.

2006 The Ronald G. Becker Collection of Charles Eisenmann Photographs (URL: <http://library.syr.edu/find/scrc/collections/diglib/eisenman.php>).

Rectaflex

The Rectaflex company was established in 1947 by inventor Telemaco Corsi in Rome, Italy. The rectaflex was the world's first single lens reflex camera to use a penta prism. Several variations to the same design were manufactured over the years. The company lasted only a short time and ceased operations in 1955.

The Rectaflex Liechtenstein Camera was manufactured in 1955 after the Rectaflex

company was sold to the Prince of Liechtenstein who moved the manufacturing to Lichtenstein, Germany. It was basically the same camera design carrying serial numbers 40000 and up. It featured a reshaped pentaprism cover, and carried the Liechtenstein blason or coat of arms on the front. The Rectaflex Liechtenstein Camera was produced until 1958.



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Pach Brothers



Morris Pach (1837-1914), Gustavus W. Pach (1845-1904), and Gotthelf Pach (1852-1925) were born in Berlin, Germany. Their family moved to New York when they were quite young, and it is believed that their shared

interest in photography began during their boyhood. By the 1860s, the trio were capturing images of their neighbors. At the age of 17, Gustavus was working as an apprentice at one of New York's most illustrious photographic studios, Turner & Company. He and Morris received individual listings in the New York City directory of 1866-1867, both working at 260 Bowery. At this time, photography was still very much in its infancy, using wet plate collodion processes such as ambrotype and tintype. Gustavus developed a potentially fatal respiratory condition - a common malady of early photographers because of inhaling the harsh processing chemicals - and moved to Toms River, New Jersey, to regain his health.

In 1868, the Pach brothers made a fateful visit to the summer resort town of Long Branch, New Jersey, where they met the wealthy Philadelphia publishing duo, George William Childs and Anthony J. Drexel. The men, close friends of General Ulysses S. Grant, were impressed with the brothers' photographs, and brought them to the attention of soon-to-be President Grant. With financial assistance from Messrs. Childs, Drexel, and Grant, the brothers opened a Long Branch studio on the property of the United States Hotel. The sign over the studio's front door, 'Stereographs,' was a reference to the popular trend at the time of seeing double images in 3-D when wearing glasses with specially designed lenses. Tiring of the photographic trade, Morris Pach retired to become a cigar maker. Meanwhile, Gustavus returned to New York where he opened a studio at 858 Broadway.



G. W. PACH

OSCAR PACH

GOTTHELF PACH

By the 1870s, Pach Brothers studios had established themselves as school and college portrait photographers. They would operate studios seasonally in college towns to take group portraits or sporting events at Yale, Harvard, Princeton, and Vassar, to name a few. In addition, upon the recommendation of President Grant, they became the official military photographers at West Point, with Gotthelf Pach overseeing those operations. Pach Brothers were also contracted to document the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Another Pach brother, Oscar (1850-1903), joined the firm after moving to the United States. The Pach Brothers participated in several important global exhibitions, including Philadelphia's Centennial Exposition in 1876, New Orleans' Cotton Centennial Exposition in 1884, and Chicago's World Columbian Exposition in 1893. On February 16, 1895, a fire broke out on the top floor of the Pach Brothers' buildings located at 935 and 937 Broadway. Fortunately, there was no loss of life, but all of their negatives were destroyed. Nevertheless, the brothers rebuilt and remained at that location for another decade.

As the twentieth century approached, a second generation of Pach brothers joined the family business with the addition of Morris's son Alexander L. Pach (1863-1938). Gotthelf's son Alfred (1884-1965) also worked there, later serving as president of the company. Another of Gotthelf's son's, Walter Pach (1883-1958), who later became a noted art critic, once worked as a colorist at the studio. Gustavus W. Pach, the guiding force of the Pach Brothers photographic empire, died suddenly following an operation on October 10, 1904 at the age of 59. Pach Brothers remained in business for more than a century, finally closing the doors of its Fifth Avenue location in 1994.

Ref:
2011 Guide to the Pach Brothers Portrait Photograph Collection (URL: http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/pach_content.html).

1904 Gustavus W. Pach Dead; Founder of Photographic House Dies After an Operation (URL: <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=F60813F7395414728DDDA80994D8415B848CF1D3>).

1918 A History of Cleveland and Its Environs, Vol. III (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company), pp. 32-33.

2008 Jersey Shore: Vintage Images of Bygone Days (Guilford, CT: Globe Pequot Press), p. 61.

1897 Wilson's Photographic Magazine, Vol. XXXIV (New York: Edward L. Wilson), pp. 305-310.



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[A. R. Dresser, Photographer](#)

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American Advertising & Research Group



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