



# Historic Camera

## Newsletter

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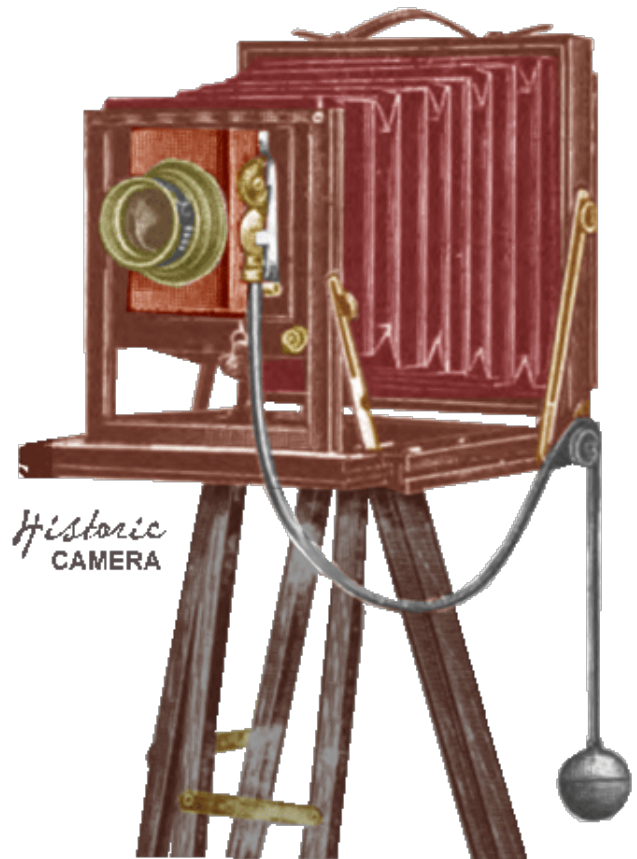
### Albion Albumenizing Co.



In 1862, a Scottish accountant named James Skinner was searching for a pastime that would become a welcome respite from his mundane job. He became enamored with the relatively new field of photography because it satisfied his scientific and artistic inclinations. Mr. Skinner studied all aspects of photography under the instruction of renowned St. Andrews photographer Thomas Rodger, which included collodion and albumen processes. He received further invaluable assistance from landscape photographer George Washington Wilson, and began conducting his own albumenising (or albumenizing) experiments. Like his colleagues, Mr. Skinner experienced difficulties with streaks in the albumen, but discovered this was due to utilizing the albumen too soon. The albumen needed to be fresh to produce paper that would remain white long after sensitization.

What was once solely a recreational activity turned into a permanent vocation when Mr. Skinner started the Scottish Albumenising Company. After quitting his job at Aberdeen's National Bank in 1864, he moved to Glasgow where he opened the Albion Albumenising

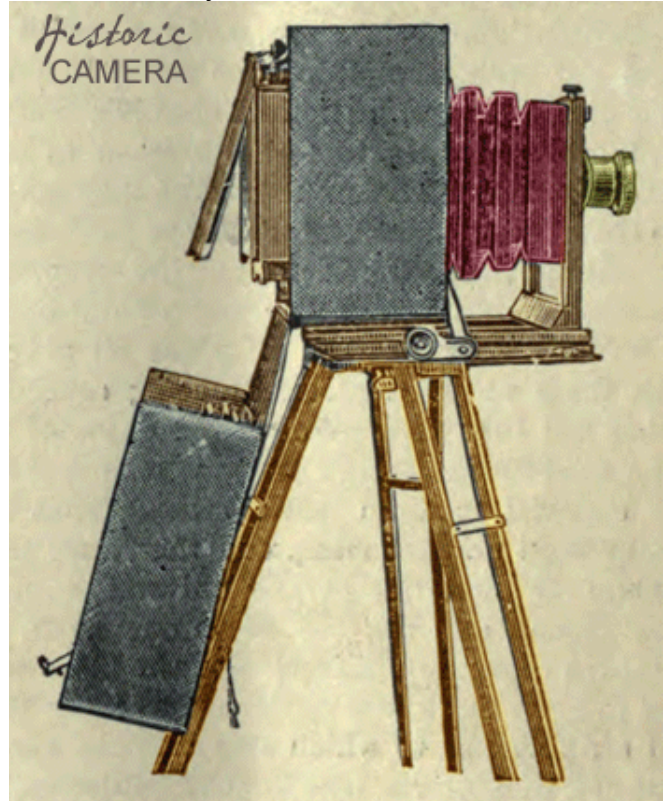
Company wholesale and importing sensitized paper business at 96 Bath Street. A paper works manufacturing plant would open on Maxwell Street before moving to Brackenbury Road in the Shepherd's Bush section of London during the 1870s. Mr. Skinner would later enter into a partnership with George Donaldson Finlayson and be joined by his son John Morison Skinner. Albion perfected the double albumenising technique, which is when sheets of paper treated with albumen are placed into a heating chamber where the steam softens the albumen surface. Next, the paper is prepared with salted albumen, which creates a glaze that produces superior prints.



Business was quickly booming, and the partners opened another wholesale location at 90 West Regent Street, which existed until the early 1880s. Another works plant was opened at the same time in London's Cleveland House, Drayton Green. Photographers of all skill levels could find a wide assortment of albumenised papers, chemicals, and equipment. Albion also branched out into camera making, beginning with the compact long focus camera fitted with a reversing back to produce horizontal and vertical negatives. In addition, it developed its own line of short focus cameras that were lauded for their high quality craftsmanship and ease of use.

In May of 1887, Mr. Finlayson left the business, but Albion Albumenising Company continued flourishing under the Skinners. The following year, at the Glasgow Exhibition, the company introduced its new portable camera with double-swing focus in mahogany and teak, along with an impressive selection of lenses including the Beck that featured an iris diaphragm. By the early 1890s, an Albion works plant opened in Cathcart, Glasgow, and the Bath Street location (which now included both a warehouse and showroom) was overseen by W. A. Verel, Jr. In 1896, the Bath Street location was moved to 128 Sauchiehall Street, where the focus shifted to camera making. The lightweight Albion Tourist and Serviceable mahogany field cameras came in four varieties and their slim construction reflected the quality workmanship for which Albion was now famous. Other locations appeared at 13 West Nile Street in Glasgow (c. 1898) and Frederick Street in Edinburgh. A 1904 fire at the Sauchiehall Street facility caused extensive damage, but the resilient company reopened the next year at 118 Howard Street. A change in location also marked a change in corporate focus, with the Albion operations now being marketed as "œmount specialists." It is believed the Albion

Albumenising Company ceased operations in 1913 or shortly thereafter.



Ref: 2014 Albion Albumenizing Co. (URL: <http://www.earlyphotography.co.uk/site/companies.html>).

2013 Albion Albumenizing Co./ Tourist / Field Camera / 1896 / Half Plate (URL: <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/stories/70616-albion-albumenizing-co-tourist-field>).

1996 British Camera Makers: An A-Z Guide to Companies and Products by Norman Channing and Mike Dunn (Esher, UK: Parkland Designs), p. 16.

1874 The British Journal of Photography, Vol. XXI (London: Henry Greenwood & Co.), pp. 193-194.

1904 The British Journal of Photography, Vol. LI (London: Henry Greenwood & Co.), p. 736.

1891 Glasgow and Its Environs (London: Stratten & Stratten), p. 123.

1889 Industries: A Journal of Engineering, Electricity, & Chemistry for the Mechanical and Manufacturing Trades, Vol. V (London: W. C. Strand), p. 343.

1896 The Process Photogram, Vol. III (London: Dawbarn & Ward, Ltd.), p. 176.

1899 The Photographic Dealer, Vol. VI (London: Photographic Dealer Ltd.), p. 27.

## Dozer & McCain.



Dozer & McClain, - IN MAY-TIME. Bucyrus, O.

Leonard A. Dozer, one of four children born to Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Dozer, was born on June 24, 1871 in Zanesville, Ohio. His interest in photography began in 1889 as a student of C. A. Gribble, who operated a studio in Fostoria, Ohio. Specializing in operating and retouching, Mr. Dozer honed his skills throughout Ohio before settling in Bucyrus (population approximately 7,000) in 1892 (some sources report 1893) and opened his own successful studio on North Sandusky Avenue. Born in 1868, E. L. McClain, about whom very little biographical information exists, began studying photography at the age of 14 in Greensburg, Indiana, under the tutelage of Louis Moberly. He established his professional reputation by working with some of the most prominent photographers in Indiana and neighboring Ohio. When he relocated to Bucyrus in September 1894, Mr. McClain met and quickly formed a partnership with Mr. Dozer. On December 10, 1894, Dozer & McClain opened their new studio at a

location recently vacated by photographer W. N. Brenner.



L. A. DOZER.

E. L. MCCLAIN.

Dozer & McClain became popular with customers and industry professionals alike for their portraiture. Sitters felt immediately comfortable in their welcoming studio, where the photographers went to great lengths to achieve their customers' desired results. In 1895, the team exhibited their portraits to high praise at the Photographers Association Convention held in Columbus, Ohio. Their studio received similar accolades in an 1897 issue of Wilson's Photographic Magazine, which described its abundance of backgrounds, accessories, and instruments for contract portraiture. Mr. Dozer, who also served as President of the Ohio Photographers Association, married Anna Gertrude Keil in 1898. The couple had no children.

The firm continued enjoying commercial and critical success well into the twentieth century. In 1911, Mr. Dozer, who was by now the most recognizable photographer in the area due in large part to his civic activism (as a member of the Bucyrus Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce), participation in several state and local photographic societies, and involvement in the Photographers Association of America (serving at various times as Treasurer, Secretary, and President), erected what was quickly dubbed "Dozer block" at 330-332 South Sandusky Avenue, complete with a two-story structure that featured a fully



equipped studio. It is unknown whether or not Mr. McClain was still an active partner in the studio that continued to bear his name. Sadly, Leonard A. Dozer was stricken with a sudden illness that claimed his life on February 14, 1921 at the age of 39. Dozer & McClain portraits and cabinet cards remain highly sought-after collectables.

Ref:  
1921 Bulletin of Photography, Vol. XXVIII (Philadelphia: Frank V. Chambers), pp. 309-310.

1895 Connersville Daily Examiner (Connersville, IN), August 1, 1895, p. 4.

1898 Items of Interest, Vol. XX (New York: Consolidated Dental Manufacturing Company), p. 130.

1898 Photographic Mosaics (New York: C. P. Goerz), p. 173.

1897 Wilson's Photographic Magazine, Vol. XXXIV (New York: Edward L. Wilson), pp. 25-28.

1898 Wilson's Photographic Magazine, Vol. XXXV (New York: Edward L. Wilson), p. 47.

## E. G. Platt, Mfg.



The firm of E. G. Platt was established in 1867 as a wholesale manufacturer of magic lanterns and bellows. Believed to be located at 38 Alvington Crescent, Dalston. In approximately 1891, the firm began manufacturing the Birkbeck hand cameras supposed named after there street address. At this time the company was advertised to be at Birkbeck road, High Street, Kingsland. N. London. In 1893 D.S. White joined the company and the business name was changed to Platt & White for a brief time. In 1894/95 White left the firm and the name was changed back to E. G. Platt. The Birkbeck cameras are distinguishable by the push button shutter mechanism on the side of the camera.

## R.T. Adams, Mfg

### R. T. ADAMS & CO.,

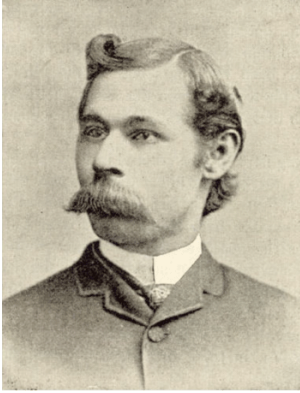


*Largest Makers of Camera Cases.*

The firm of R.T Adams and Company was originally a wholesale manufacture of camera cases. The company was listed as early 1892, located at 90 Hattan garden. In the following year the company moved to St. Ann's road Stamford Hill, N. Then in 1898 the firm announced that all future business communicated be directed to the works at 573, 575, 577 Seven Sisters Rd., London. However that the companies telephone address "Byview", London would remain the same.

In 1898 R.T Adams and Co. began advertising cameras for sale to the trade only. They continued with the business of manufacturing camera boxes and bags and describing themselves as the "largest makers of camera cases". Not many cameras have been documented with the R.T. Adams & Co. maker label on it and so a complete camera listing is in question. The two cameras identified as being manufactured by the company is the "Byview" half-plate camera, supposedly named after there address and a falling plate box camera simply referred to as a hand camera.

## James C. Farley



James Conway Farley was born to slave parents in Prince Edward County, Virginia on August 10, 1854. After his father's death in 1861, he and his mother moved to Richmond where she found work as a storeroom keeper at the Columbia Hotel. By

day, he helped his mother by making candles and by night, one of the hotel cooks taught him how to read and write. He managed to receive three years of public school education before apprenticing as a baker and candle maker. Frustrated with the long hours and low pay as a baker, 18-year-old J. C. Farley entered into a photographic apprenticeship with Charles R. Rees and Company. He learned quickly, and soon became a photographer at the successful G. W. Davis Photographic Gallery located at 827 Broad Street in Richmond. Mr. Davis was so impressed with his young employee that he promoted him to operator and allowed him the freedom to complete his own chemical processes. The firm's four other operators were purportedly resentful of his preferential treatment and demanded his immediate termination. However, because Mr. Farley was the gallery's lone black employee, it is believed that racism was at the root of the internal discord. Mr. Farley offered his resignation, but Mr. Davis did not want to lose his most talented employee, and so he fired the white operators instead.

With his position as chief operator now secure, Mr. Farley married Rebecca P. Robinson in 1876. The family would expand to include seven daughters, and the family worshiped at the First Baptist Church, where Mr. Farley served as deacon, a responsibility he embraced with the same fervor he expressed

in his photography. By 1879, the Davis Gallery was one of the most commercially successful studios in the American South, largely due to Mr. Farley's technical prowess and award-winning photography. He won first prize at Richmond's Colored Industrial Fair in 1884, and received critical acclaim for his exhibits at the World Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans the following year.

Finally, in August 1895, Mr. Farley ventured out on his own, entering into a partnership with George O. Brown, to open the upscale Jefferson Art Gallery (also known as the Jefferson Fine Arts Gallery) at 523 East Broad Street. By 1899, the gallery was a solo operation, and boasted both black and white clientele. Mr. Farley is believed to be the first successful African-American photographer and business entrepreneur. J. C. Farley died in 1910, and his few remaining portraits are on display at Richmond's Valentine Museum, located at 1015 East Clay Street.

Ref:

1978 Baltimore Afro-American, No. LXXVI (Baltimore: Afro-American Co.), p. 18.

2006 Encyclopedia of African American Business, Vol. I (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press), pp. 287-288.

1902 Evidences of Progress among Colored People by G. F. Richings (Philadelphia: George S. Ferguson Co.), p. 495.

2007 Farley, James Conway (<http://www.blackpast.org/aah/farley-james-conway-1854-1910>).

1887 Men of Mark by William J. Simmons (Cleveland: Geo. M. Rewell & Co.), pp. 801-804.

## Stereocrafters Inc.



There was a resurgence of interest for stereo or 3D imagery in 1950. The first American company to capitalize on this growing need was the David White company with the stereo realist and the second was Stereocrafters, Inc. and the videon camera which was priced considerably below that of the Stereo Realist. Stereocrafters Inc. was located at 2430 S. 28th St. Milwaukee, Wisconsin and enjoyed successful operations into the 1960s.

## Wilby & Co., Mfgr.

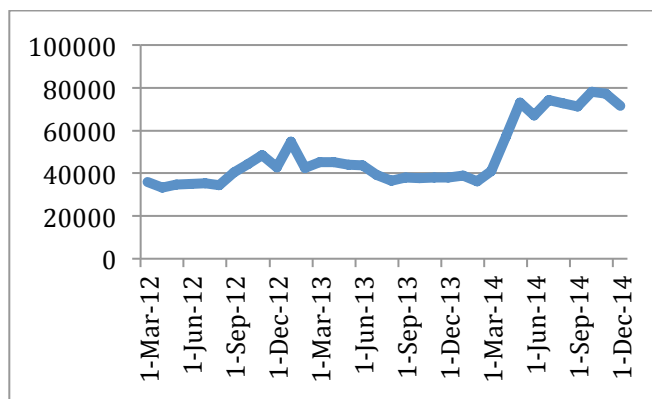


## Wilby & Co.

The firm of Tattersall & Wilby was established at Thornton Grove Works, Armley near Leeds by William Leck Tattersall and Joseph Arthur Wilby in the early 1890s. The two men previously worked for Watkinson & Co. of Leeds, a camera manufacturer, before venturing out on their own. The firm was believed to be mainly wholesale manufacturing. In 1899 Mr. Gregson joined the firm to run the day to day business after leaving the same firm the founders left, Watkinson & Co. In September of 1900 Mr. Tattersall died and the firm continued under the name of Wilby & Co. In 1901 The firm sold their own branded "Wilco" cameras. Wilby & Co. ceased operations in approximately 1914.

## 2014 Stats

Historic Camera enters its 13th year for 2105. In 2014 we experienced a significant increase in visits compared to the past two years. With our latest number being just over 750,000 visits for the year from both new and returning members. This compares to 2013 where we were booked just over a half million visits. The second half of the year is typically seasonally stronger. For the entire year we served up almost 16 million pages, which is reflected in a significant increase in pages per visit.



Our two club extensions using Flickr and FaceBook groups have continued to flourish. On Flickr we now have 248 members a 28% increase and 8223 images which double last years count. HC Facebook group has grown more significantly with 3900 members, a 200% growth.

Thank you all who have supported historic camera over these past 13 years and shared your information, enthusiasm and passion for photography. We will do our best to maintain an interesting and informative open website.

Send Comments & Suggestions to  
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