



Historic Camera Newsletter

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Bunny Yeager



Linnea Eleanor Yeager was born to Raymond and Linnea Sherlin Yeager on March 13, 1929 in Wilkensburg, Pennsylvania (a suburb of Pittsburgh). When she was 17, she moved with her family to Miami, where she underwent a startling transformation to

overcome her shyness. She began calling herself 'Bunny' after Lana Turner's character in the 1945 film *Week-End at the Waldorf*, and began entering beauty pageants, eventually becoming "Queen of Miami" and "Ms. Personality of Miami Beach." As a struggling model, she needed to keep expenses down, and so she became a photographer out of economic necessity so she could produce her own portfolio prints. However, in a later interview with *Rogue* magazine, Ms. Yeager claimed, "I took up photography because I'm a frustrated painter who was never good enough to be the best, and photography is the closest thing to being an artist." Her early influences were glamour photographer luminaries Andre de Dienes and Peter Gowland. Her self-portraits - the first of what is now referred to as 'the selfie' - were achieved with either a self-timer or strategically placed shutter cord and became an effective marketing tool.

After learning the fundamentals of photography in night school, Ms. Yeager sold her first photograph - of model Bettie Page posing with cheetahs - to the men's publication *Eye*. She then photographed a model as 'a suitless Santa' and sold the print to *Playboy* for \$100. Ever the pragmatist, Ms. Yeager cultivated an ongoing association with *Playboy*, for which she shot several centerfolds, because, as she explained, "They paid more than anybody else." Throughout the 1950s and '60s, Ms. Yeager became one of the foremost pin-up photographers, and her nudes have been credited for elevating erotic images into "high photographic art." She controlled every

aspect of her photo shoots, even often making the bikinis her pin-up models wore. During her long career, Ms. Yeager experimented with several types of cameras including a 4 X 5" Speed Graphic press camera and a Rolleiflex (fitted with the Zeiss Tessar 75 mm f/3.5 lens) , which she preferred for black-and-white photography. For her Playboy centerfolds, she used an 8 X 10" Burke & James camera. Ms. Yeager understood her male audience well, and she conveyed female sexuality through light, using a combination of both a flash and Miami sunshine to create luminous and provocative images. When erotic photography became more explicit in the early 1970s, Bunny Yeager and her pin-ups faded into obscurity.

Widowed twice and the mother of two daughters, Ms. Yeager enjoyed a twenty-first century resurgence with a 2010 exhibit of her of her self-portraits at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh. Her work was also featured at Fort Lauderdale's Museum of Art in a 2013 exhibit entitled, "Bunny Yeager: Both Sides of the Camera." Her books include *How I Photograph Myself* (1964), *Bunny Yeager's Flirts of the Fifties* (2007), *Bunny Yeager's Bouffant Beauties* (2009), and *Bunny Yeager's Beautiful Backsides* (2012). Linnea "Bunny" Yeager died in her beloved Miami on May 25, 2014 at the age of 85.

Ref:
1994 *American Photo* (New York: Hachette Filipacchi Media), p. 72.

2014 Bunny Yeager (URL:
<http://glamourphotographers.yolasite.com/bunny-yeager.php>).

2014 *The New York Times* (New York: The New York Times Company), p. A14.

2012 *The Official Bunny Yeager Webpage* (URL:
<http://www.bunnyyeager.net>).

2006 *Pin-Up Grrrls: Feminism, Sexuality, Popular Culture* by Maria Elena Buszek (Durham, NC: Duke University Press), p. 389.

Henry H. Pierce

Henry Havelock Pierce, who portrait photographer Pirie MacDonald described as a "prince of photographers", was born to James and Catherine Pierce in 1864 in Nova Scotia, Canada. Details of Mr. Pierce's childhood, family, and personal life remain scant. At



some point, he moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts where at the age of 17 he apprenticed at William Notman's local studio. He then honed his technical skills at Boston's McCormick & Heald gallery located at 22 Winter Street. At an early age, Mr. Pierce developed an affinity for portraiture, and his photographic vision was decidedly pictorial, which as the name implies, is an artistic focus on the overall picture rather than limited strictly to the portrait itself.

In September 1886, Mr. Pierce was named manager of the Heald studio in Providence, Rhode Island, and opened his own studio there a few years later. A 1900 article in *Photo Era* journal described Mr. Pierce's firm as "one of the best equipped working studios in New England." Top and side lights were installed in the operating room, and the printing and dark rooms featured hot and cold water as well as the latest electrical equipment. But for Mr. Pierce, photography was more than decor, chemicals, and technology. He believed photographic composition reflected the photographer's own personality in the positioning of the sitter, approach to developing, printing process, and lighting. He broke away from the portrait painter tradition of relying upon a side light at

a 45-degree angle, and instead preferred to disperse direct and soft lighting throughout his portraits with the use of various screens and reflectors. This provides an aesthetically appealing balance between light and shadow, and emphasizes subtle details rather than creating a central focal point for the viewer. When asked about his photographic theories, Mr. Pierce claimed he did not ascribe to a particular method to his composition process, rather approached each portrait from new and different perspectives. He would examine his subject from every conceivable angle to determine the way shadows fell naturally, and then would enhance them through diffused light, shading, and tinting. The quintessential perfectionist, Mr. Pierce would invariably query visitors to his studio with, "How is this?", "Isn't it fine?", or "Oh, I will do better yet!"



The Misses Wiborg
Henry Havelock Pierce

Mr. Pierce was active in several photographic organizations, and was elected president of the Photographic Club of New England in 1900. He was the only American

photographer to receive a medal at the Royal Photographic Society's London exhibition in 1904. In later years, he became an avid follower of the Secessionist movement, and in particular greatly admired the works of Edward Steichen. Henry Havelock Pierce died in 1943 virtually unknown to the public aside from his stunning portraits, prompting art critic Sadakichi Hartmann to observe, "If you want to become better acquainted with him, study his prints."

Ref:

1906 The American Amateur Photographer, Vol. XVIII (New York: The American Publishing Co.), p. 256.

2014 Henry Havelock Pierce by Thomas G. Yanul (URL: <http://www.thomasyanul.com/pierce1index.html>).

1904 The New Photo-Miniature, Vol. VI (London: Dawbarn & Ward), p. 409.

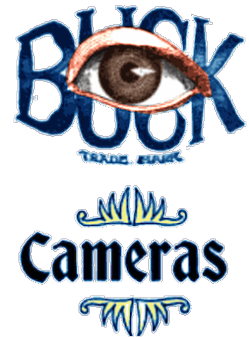
1900 Photo-Era, Vols. III-IV (Boston: The Photo Era Publishing Company), pp. 476-482.

1915 The Photographic Journal of America, Vol. LII (New York: Edward L. Wilson Company, Inc.), pp. 181-189.

1978 The Valiant Knights of Daguerre (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 210-214.

American Camera Mfg. Co.

In 1893 the Blair company experienced losses of important patent suits to Eastman, and arguments among the financiers of the company led to Blair's removal from management. Thomas Blair moved to London England and established the European Blair Camera Company, with offices in Holborn and manufacturing facilities in Foot's Cray, Kent.



Thomas Blair then went on to establish the American Camera Manufacturing company in 1895, located at Northborough, Massachusetts. He remained associated with the Blair Camera company in which he founded in 1881.

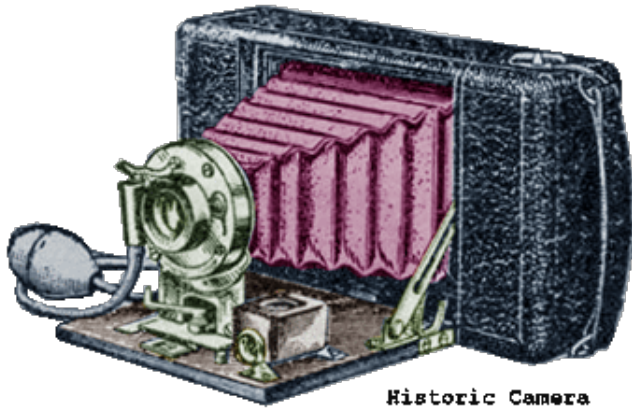
The company sold a small line of Buckeye labeled cameras, and resold specially labeled Rochester Camera Mfg. Co. Poco cameras.

By the beginning of 1897, George Eastman was the majority stock holder of the American Camera

Manufacturing Company and on March 4, 1898 a deal was established with Thomas Blair for the sale of the Company to Eastman.

in 1899 Eastman moved the company from Massachusetts to Rochester, New York and continued using the American Camera Manufacturing label.

In approximately 1904 the name was no longer used.



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Geo. W. Sittler

George W. Sittler was born to Jacob and Sidney Cummings Sittler in Shelby County, Illinois on August 25, 1847. After his public school education, he became an apprentice for photographer Dr. George H. Hannaman. After two years, Mr. Sittler purchased the studio from Dr. Hannaman. In 1870, he married Shelby County native Elizabeth "Lizzie" Middlesworth, and two years later entered into a photographic partnership with A. R. Launey. Sittler & Launey soon became known for their impressive stereoscopic images, ferrotypes, watercolors, and pastels. Mr. Sittler sold his interest in the business to his partner in August 1881, and briefly relocated to Fort Scott, Kansas.

In January 1882, Mr. Sittler moved to Springfield, Missouri, where he would live out the rest of his life. He bought Captain S. W. Johnson's gallery, which was strategically located on the busy St. Louis Street. Mr. Sittler employed three assistants, including Robert M. Root, who enlarged photographs

and produced crayon sketches and watercolors. The large gallery also became a major retailer of photographic equipment, chemicals, and frames. An astute businessman, Mr. Sittler's gallery became one of the largest photographic wholesalers in the region. He was also engaged in Springfield civic affairs and an active member of the Photographic Association of America. A dry-plate aficionado, he freely shared his expertise with several industry publications. His oxalate formula was: 4 ounces of salts of tartar (also known as carbonate of potash) dissolved into 16 ounces of soft water. Next, 4 ounces of oxalic acid was added, the mixture was stirred until the bubbles are dissolved, and then filtered. To the filtered solution, a drop of sulfuric acid was added. Mr. Sittler advocated full-time exposure developing, and recommended adding iron to intensify shadowing. For his plates, he preferred the largest stop in a 3-B Dallmeyer lens and used Morgan's albumen paper to achieve the toning effects he sought in producing vibrant prints.

Mr. and Mrs. Sittler frequently ventured outside the studio to photograph the many local caves. Unfortunately, tragedy struck on one such expedition in September 1887. While jumping from one area to another to secure a better view of his subject, Mr. Sittler's head struck the point of a stalactite. After

returning home, he became delirious before losing consciousness. After being comatose for several days, 40-year-old George W. Sittler died at his Springfield home on September 22, 1887. His widow Lizzie, an accomplished photographer in her own right, operated her late husband's gallery for



several years after his untimely passing.

Ref:

1887 Anthony's Photographic Bulletin, Vol. XVIII (New York: E. & H. T. Anthony & Co.), p. 604.

1881 Combined Histories of Shelby and Moultrie Counties, Illinois (Philadelphia: Brink, McDonough & Co.), p. 174.

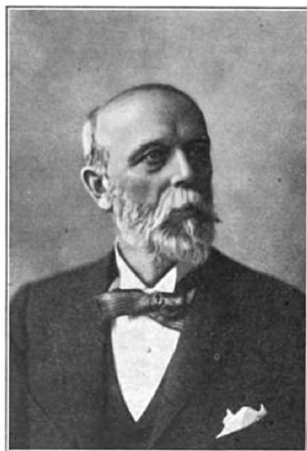
2011 George W. Sittler, Springfield, Missouri by John Craig (URL: http://www.craigcamera.com/pho_sittler.htm).

1883 History of Greene County, Missouri (St. Louis, MO: Western Historical Company), p. 830.

1883 Photographic Mosaics (Philadelphia: Benerman and Wilson), pp. 123-124.

2014 William Fletcher Lowe (URL: <http://jrm.phys.ksu.edu/genealogy/needham/d0003/1370.html>).

George R. Angell



GEO. R. ANGELL.

George R. Angell, son of Israel and Angeline Decker Angell, was born in Rochester, New York on November 28, 1836. At age 14, he became his father's machine shop apprentice, and within three years had achieved journeyman status that allowed him to

earn a daily salary of \$1. Mr. Angell moved to Detroit shortly thereafter, and spent the next two years as a machinist before returning to Rochester to become his father's business partner.

However, a severe economic depression forced Mr. Angell to reevaluate his career prospects, which were likely dictated more by family loyalty than by choice. He joined the staff of a local newspaper and became a police reporter. When the newspaper ceased operations, Mr. Angell again started at the bottom, earning \$3 a week as an errand boy for a photographic supplies merchant. He finally seemed to find his true calling, and two years later, in 1863, he moved back to Detroit

intent on establishing his own photographic supplies business. He and business partner Erastus C. Howard opened Howard & Angell and enjoyed immediate success. After buying out Mr. Howard, Mr. Angell continued operating the business as George R. Angell Co., Ltd. Located at 216 Woodward Avenue, it contained the largest fine arts inventory in the state of Michigan at the time, selling ambrotypes, carbon reproductions, etchings, pictures, frames, chemicals, dry plates, films, card mounts, self-toning paper, and cameras (including Adlakes, Cyclones, several types of Eastman-Kodaks, Premos, and Vives). Mr. Angell married Sarah M. Hall on June 4, 1866, with whom he would have five children, only two of whom - George Hall and Mabel - would survive to adulthood.

As Mr. Angell became more prosperous, his civic participation increased. He was named Vice-President of City Savings Bank, and assumed the bank presidency after the retirement of William H. Brace. He also served as President of the Michigan Bankers Association. Mr. Angell's effective banking leadership was attributed to the combination of business acumen, managerial skills, and uncompromising integrity that fueled his own successful business, which was left in the capable hands of George Hall Angell. On April 18, 1900, 63-year-old George R. Angell died suddenly of heart failure at his Detroit home. His son continued operating the business - one of the oldest in the city - until 1912, when it was purchased by the Detroit Photographic Company.

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