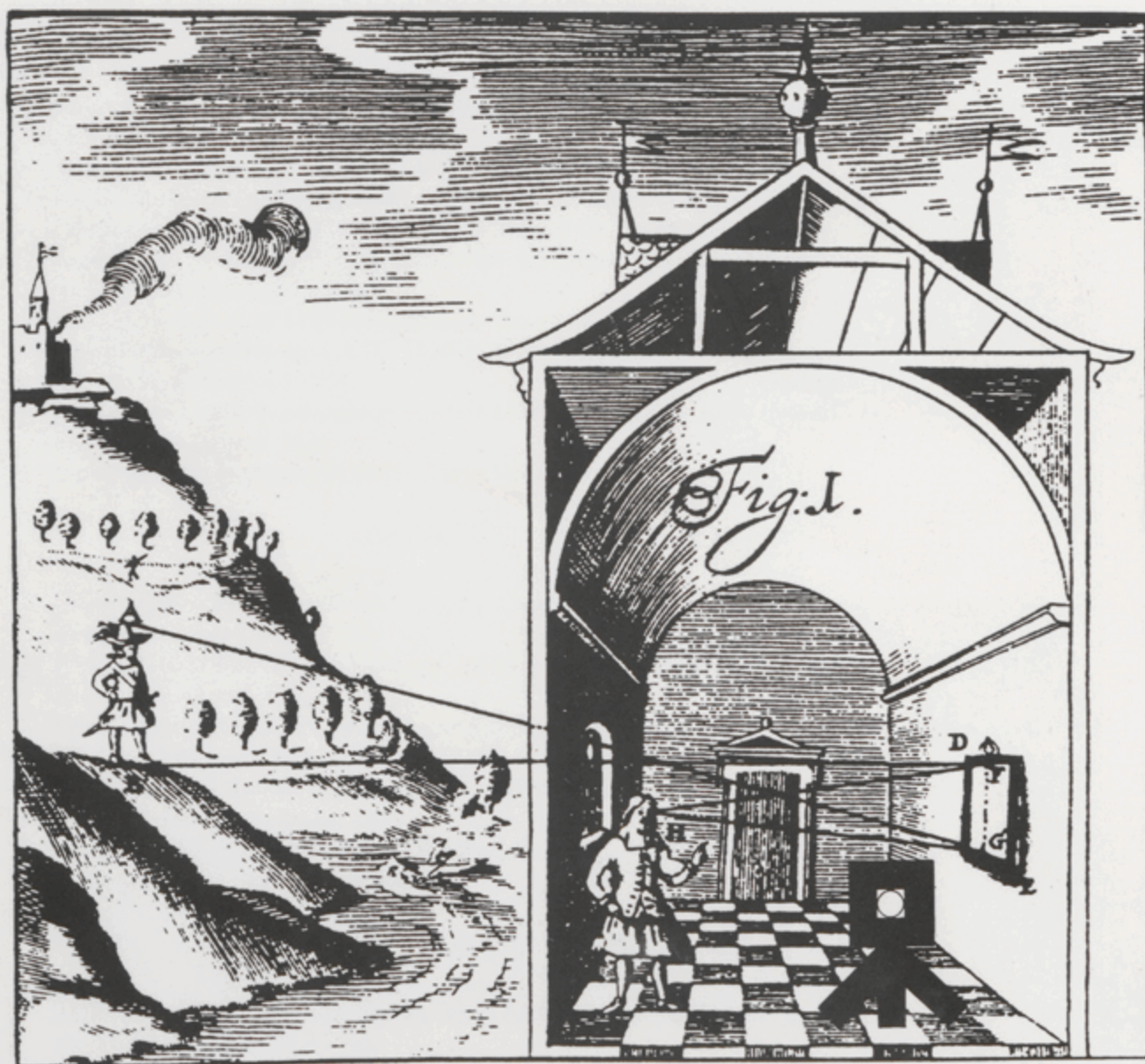


European Society for the History of Photography
ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE POUR L'HISTOIRE DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE
Europäische Gesellschaft für die Geschichte der Photographie

PHOTORESEARCHER

Issue Number 6 (1994/95/96)

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Photoresearcher is produced for the **European Society for the History of Photography** by The University of Wales, School of Art, Aberystwyth under the editorship of Professor Alistair Crawford.

Original Articles not published elsewhere, are requested on all aspects of the History of Photography, especially European (in its widest sense) from members and non-members throughout the world.

Photoresearcher will also include **book, catalogue and exhibition reviews**. All publishers and exhibition organisers should send items for possible inclusion to the Editor. All publications received will be cited.

Articles for consideration should be sent to the address below at any time and should accord with the following instructions:

1. Articles (*two copies*) should be typed in double spacing on one side only of A4 paper. The languages of the Society are English, French and German. A brief abstract of around 200 words outlining the content of the article is also requested, as is a brief note concerning the author. This should also be submitted in English.

2. Where possible articles should also be submitted on computer disc. Contributions should be submitted on a newly formatted 3.5 inch disc. The preferred systems are Microsoft Word and Word Perfect, although other systems may also be accommodated. (The Editor is using Microsoft Windows 95, Word Version 6.0). Each text should be saved both as a file in the word processing package as well as ASCII file. If an Apple Macintosh is to be used, the file should be saved in the word processing package in Rich Text Format and as an ASCII file. It is important to point out that ASCII files will not transfer endnotes or special characters outside the standard (keyboard) character set. Thus end notes must be typed directly into the text when the ASCII file is created and not created through the function in the word-processing package.

3. References

References should be separately numbered and placed at the end of the article. Each reference will correspond to the appropriate (numeral) in the text. References will not appear on text pages.

References should be as follows:

To a journal:

J Brown 'Early Portraiture in Somerset' *Photographic Journal* Vol. 130, No.5 (May 1990) pp.194-196.

To a book:

F Short and T Long *Historical Essays* Acorn Publications, London, 1989, p.10.

4. Proofs

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Black and white glossy photographs can also be submitted for possible inclusion as reproductions.

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Captions to illustrations should be supplied on a separate sheet. Captions should include, whenever possible and relevant, the title or description, the process and metric dimensions (vertical followed by horizontal), author's name and the location of the originals together with credit where appropriate.

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9. Authors receive 6 free copies of the issue in which their article appears and further copies may be ordered at a cost. Authors should indicate whether they are a member of the Society or not.

10. Authors will be informed as soon as possible whether the article submitted is accepted for publication and intended to be published in the next issue, or held over for a subsequent issue, in which case authors will then be informed, within the following six months whether the article is to be published or not.

11. **Photoresearcher** is a refereed journal which aims to meet the highest standards of scholarship. Articles sent for consideration may be submitted by the Editor for comment to the Advisory Board (Members of the Society who wish to assist should contact the Editor and list the languages they can cover).

12. **Photoresearcher** is the Journal of the European Society for the History of Photography and the Editor welcomes letters and comments from members (and non members) on all aspects of the Journal's activities.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

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Membership can either be **Individual** (current rates are £40 sterling remittance or visa/mastercard or for other currencies £46 equivalent) or **Association/Institution**. Contact Roy Green, ESHPh Administrator, Acorn House 74-94 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon CRO 6BA, UK Tel 0181 6818339 Fax 0181 6811880.
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EDITORIAL

Alistair Crawford

Firstly I must apologise to all our readers for the delay in the reappearance of *Photoresearcher*. No one more than me, however, can be more delighted to see this issue's final appearance. In case irate members seek to berate me, it is *all* a labour of absolute and costly love! When I agreed to do the necessary (foolish man), little did I know just how much my own life would somersault during the period of this issue's incredible gestation. One excuse I can give is that I bought a computer for the very first time. As someone said, 'it's a funny way to start to learn computing from scratch by trying to *edit* a journal of all things!'

So here we finally are, *phoenix like*, with what I hope you will all agree is a stimulating issue. I accept that the reason we have so little articles ready to go to print is your increasing disbelief that we would *ever* publish again. I trust that you are not only reassured but will now be keen to send in material for publication by return of post now that *Photoresearcher* is back on track.

You can see from the contents of this issue how we have been able to talk of photography from Australia, Canada, England, Egypt, France, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Norway, United States, Sardinia, Scotland, Turkey, Wales, with contributions from authors, equally diverse, from Canada, England, Norway, Sardinia, Turkey, Wales. It is fascinating to read Sardinia and England commenting on France, Turkey commenting on Europe while Wales comments on Europe commenting on Japan. Early histories, even more important, *forgotten* histories of photography from countries that the major publishing machines have long since forgotten exist, need to be published. All countries have an equal claim to be included in the history of photography. Moreover, their claims do not relate to the likely numbers of purchasers per country in a prescribed market, so we welcome, in particular, those contributions from Norway, Sardinia and Turkey.

This issue proves that we can be a *international* journal but we also need articles in the languages of the Society; in German and French, as well as English. I have included material on Europe in its widest sense; included a new *series* on *collections* of photography, in museums and archives. If you have similar access send articles following the same format as those from Birmingham Central Library and the Norwegian Polar Institute. I have also included, with modesty, an article of my own which, unlike the others, is more *theoretical*. Please send me your *debate*. I also included it as something I originally wrote in 1986 for a specific purpose but which never saw the light of day (the publisher proceeded to try and have me change *my* history into *his* history). Since then it has been used by many of my postgraduate students who have always asked why it has not been published before. Dig out your unfinished, your shelved material! Even 'notes made towards...' may be of value

as the relevance of what appeared tentative before often time endows and approves.

I have included book and catalogue *reviews* and indicated that important exhibitions should not go overlooked either. While reviews do appear in the Society's *Newsletter*, in this issue the reviews, in the main, are designed to integrate with the content of the articles. A good review can also be an article in its own right and contributors need not limit the discussion. I am grateful to the publishing houses who readily co-operated and I hope that we will be able to expand this section in subsequent issues. So there is indeed a pattern and thus I am particularly grateful to the authors I approached for contributions, as well as to those who had sent material previously.

Europe in its widest context, historical, archival, theoretical, pre-photographic even! We could also consider thematic, special projects, ongoing debates. I could also send it all down the *Internet*, for free, and maybe that is the future, not least for a journal with no proper funding. I learn fast-it is time we were on the Web! Yet some of us are bookish folk, lovers of the *document*. We need to know where you want the Journal to go and the Society needs to know what priority you wish to give to it. Send me your comments. It is your Journal!

And what of our future? Much depends on the ability of the Journal to attract quality articles and I hope that all would agree that the level presented here demonstrates that this can be done. Of serious concern, however, is our lack of funds. Free labour, facilities in kind, even small donations, all more than welcome, are not sufficient if we, as a Society, want to continue to produce a professional journal for scholarship. We need to seek sponsorship and if any readers have thoughts on this please get in touch. To survive *Photoresearcher* must be made available to as wide an audience as possible *outside* that of the membership. More readers means more possibility of sponsorship. At the same time *you* must also persuade more to join the Society, including libraries, galleries, museums, collectors. At the moment we are precariously balanced.

For this issue, the Society must especially thank Professor John Harvey, Head of the School of Art of the University of Wales, Aberystwyth for providing facilities and a supportive home for the Journal and also sponsorship. I have also to thank the reviewers, Robert Greetham and Joanna Hounscome, both art historians and practising photographers from the staff of the School of Art and Richard Sadler from Birmingham, who readily answered my requests. I must thank Vaughan Cummins and Trevor Sewell, also of the School of Art, for typing some of this material into my brand new computer as I struggled with frustration in what can only be described as a very steep and painful learning curve (I am happy to report that it has changed my life). For this I have to thank Adriano Vincentelli

from the University's innovative Language Laboratories for guiding me at high speed through the whole catastrophe. I have to thank Robert Meyrick, also of the staff of the School of Art, for helping me to design this issue as well as our printers *Gomer Press* for bringing it to fruition and being patient with me. I have to also acknowledge that *all* of the above and several of the contributors, are *not* members of the Society.

Society members will, therefore, note the amount of help and enthusiasm that went into this enterprise on their behalf. We still need members to assist with the Advisory Board, for example, to translate material into and from the three languages of the Society, for suggesting possible topics and authors and for fund raising. We need a list of members and their interests who can be called upon for reviews.

I pray that the authors (and readers) will forgive my quirky bibliographical skills as I attempted to force a house style throughout the text. No doubt my baptism on the computer has left a patina of typographical mistakes. *Photoresearcher's* Advisory Board is absolved, as it is still in the process of being set up, so I have to take all responsibility for all mistakes

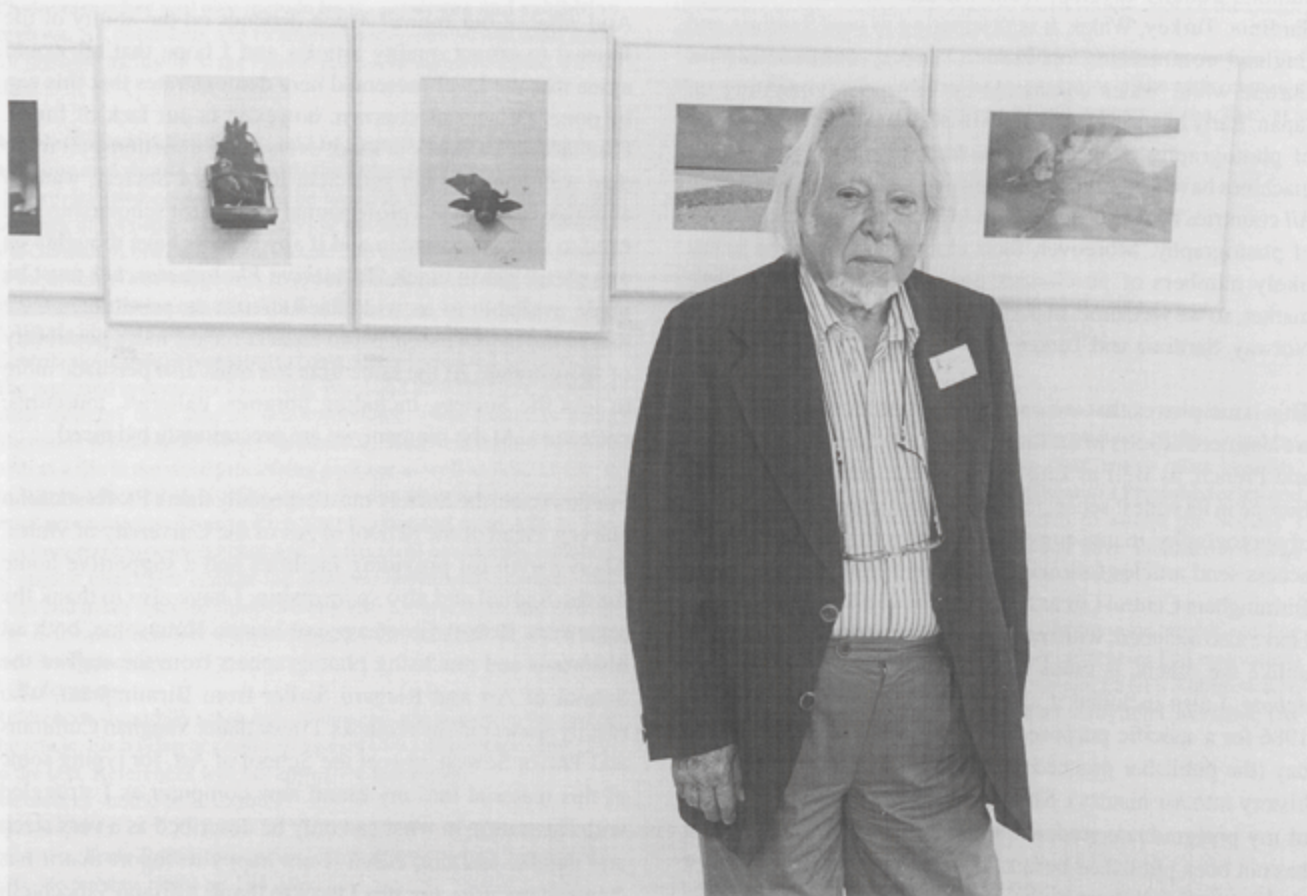
encountered. I am sure, however, that you would wish to join me in congratulating the authors on their exciting and informative contributions. For those who suggest that we have no need of a separate journal on the history of photography, I commend the enclosed.

Finally, and appropriately, I would like to thank the author of the first book I ever read which told me that there was a subject called the history of photography which, up until then, had been denied to me in my education. In those far off liberated Sixties, at the cutting edge of *avant garde* art, when cameras were still banned in the Glasgow School of Art, I had the unwitting distinction, I believe, of being the very first student ever to hang a framed photograph in the degree show. It was many years later that I hit upon a 'History of Photography'. No doubt, you too have a story of our great man. I think he would have found much here to his liking and also no doubt much to argue against, as it should be. I dedicate, in gratitude, this issue of *Photoresearcher* to someone whose example told me to keep going.

Helmut Gernsheim 1913-1995

First Honorary Member of the European Society for the History of Photography

Helmut Gernsheim at ESHPh Symposium, Vevey, Switzerland 1989.
Photograph: Marie Elena Grandio, Vevey



ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

1. Robert Murray of Edinburgh (1822-1893): the Discovery of Neglected Calotypes of Egypt

Colin Osman

The work of Robert Murray (1822-1893) has not been known or appreciated until now. He was a civil engineer and marine architect working in Egypt between 1852-1854 when he sent for a photographic kit and instruction book. His first calotypes were of Egypt, Nubia and Malta and were published by Hogarth in 1856 and highly praised in *The Athenaeum*. He joined the Amateur Photographic Association and between 1863 and 1870 exhibited prize winning photographs of England and Wales. He returned to his native Scotland and in 1882 presented a volume of *Scotch Views* to HM Queen Victoria which are at Windsor Castle.

2. Edouard Delessert 1828-1898

Mauro Rombi

One of the earliest examples of the arrival of photography on the island of Sardinia was the visit of the French photographer Edouard Delessert in 1854 who later published his photographs in Paris in monthly instalments as *Ile de Sardaigne*, followed by his travel diary in 1855, *Six Semaines Dans L'Ile de Sardaigne*. The nature of Delessert's calotypes and his contribution is discussed within the context of nineteenth century travel, of both the Grand Tour and Sardinia as a stepping stone to the more exotic journeys to North Africa and the Orient.

3. Staging the Mind in Photographic Portraiture

Alistair Crawford

In order for the photographic portrait to convey intended meaning by the photographer, this theoretical article indicates that it has to be fabricated and also follow a similar construction as the painted portrait. In using the paintings of Caravaggio as an example of the artist as psychological state, it further demonstrates how different meanings, especially personal, can be conveyed within a given and familiar subject matter. That photographic fiction, therefore, can be more revealing of life, than photographic fact. In recognising similar constructions in recent photography (the 'directorial mode'), it indicates that since its invention this has always been a characteristic of photographic practice, albeit often much maligned.

4. A Retrospective View of Photography in Turkey

Önder Erkarslan

The evolution of photography in Turkey is examined in two stages: the Ottoman Empire followed by the period of the Turkish Republic. The shift from documentary photography to the art of photography occurred in the second stage. It was

also the time when photography was in search of institutions under inadequate social and political circumstances. In this article, the history of photography in Turkey is examined with its keynames from the beginning to our time and examples from contemporary photography are indicated in order to present the current situation.

5. Photography: Scientific Fiction in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Century

Philippe Maurice

Two French writers, François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon (1651-1715) writing in the 1690s, and Charles-François Tiphaigne de la Roche (1722-1774) seventy years later, each seeking to educate and reform their respective times, also conjured up concepts which we often equate to *photography*...

6. Tintypes: Snippets of History

Philippe Maurice

A much despised process, yet at one time, from 1856 to the 1930s, it was one of the most popular forms of photography of all time, often sent through the mail to sweethearts and family. The *tintype* (that contained no tin), or *ferrotype*, was a collodion and later gelatine-based photographic image made on thin, blackened, metal sheet. Invented in 1856, it was one of the first photographic processes to arrive in Europe from the United States.

7. Daguerre and his Diorama in the 1830s: Some Financial Announcements

R Derek Wood

L J M Daguerre had been working towards a method of photography for around fifteen years before the daguerreotype was announced in January 1839. His actual occupation was painter and director of his own Diorama, since 1822 his only source of income, but the situation in the following decade was different. Daguerre was bankrupt for almost three years. New information from six legal announcements on Daguerre's finances in the 1830s adds fresh perspective to the events of 1839, after the Diorama was destroyed by fire. His work on the daguerreotype was only by chance rescued. By the time a pension of 6,000 francs had been secured from the French Government and details of his daguerreotype process released in August, uncertainty remained over his Diorama. Settlement of the building insurance (probably 140,000 francs) is not known. An original total valuation of 60,000 francs for three diorama tableaux led to insurance arbitration, but was not settled finally until 13 January 1840, when Daguerre was awarded 47,000 francs.

8. Coming into Light: Birmingham Central Library's Photographic Collections

Peter James

Birmingham Central Library holds a vast archive of photographs and related material which are acknowledged as being one of Britain's national collections of photography. This article sets out to describe the origins, content and future development of this major photo-historical resource, and its relation to the history of photography in Birmingham.

9. Expedition Photography in Polar Areas

Susan Barr

This article is concerned with photographic material (not film) which has resulted from various historical expeditions to the Arctic and Antarctic. The connection between landscape illustrations and painting from before the advent of photography

and photographs from polar areas is discussed, as well as the changing emphasis of the artists' views of Nature; from the dramatic-romantic to the scientific. The emphasis is on Norwegian expeditions and, in particular, the photography of Norway's most famous polar heroes Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930) and Roald Amundsen (1872-1928), together with the Norwegian Polar Institute's own photographic collection. Nansen, whose arctic expeditions took place between 1888 and 1896, is seen as representing the transition from drawing and painting to photography, and from romantic illustration to scientific, while Amundsen's photography, from his expeditions between 1903 and 1928, is clearly documentary. The Polar Institute's own collection, which includes hand-coloured lantern slides, represents the systematic photo-documentation of its areas of activity in the Arctic and Antarctic. The place of women is touched upon; the conclusion being that they were scarcely involved until recent times.

BIOGRAPHIES OF CONTRIBUTORS

Susan Barr / Norway

Susan Barr is a British citizen, but has lived permanently in Norway since 1973. BA. Hon. University College London (Scandinavian Studies) and a higher Norwegian degree (Mag. art.) in Ethnology from the University of Oslo. Cultural Heritage Officer for the Norwegian Arctic 1979-82, and since then has worked at the Norwegian Polar Institute. Currently polar historian and leader of the history and documentation section.

Alistair Crawford / Wales

Alistair Crawford was born in Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire in 1945 and studied at the Glasgow School of Art and Aberdeen College of Education. He taught Textile Design at the University of Leeds, Graphic Design at Coventry Polytechnic and since 1974 Graphic Art at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. In 1990 he became the first Professor of Art in the history of Wales and in 1993 Head of the new School of Art where he is now Research Professor. In 1995/96 he was Balsdon Senior Fellow at the British School at Rome. He exhibits regularly as a painter, printmaker and photographer and has held over 30 one man shows in Europe and the United States. As an art historian he has organised many travelling exhibitions and published in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, New Zealand and the United States on Art in Wales and on the history of printmaking and photography. His main research interest is the history of photography of Italy and he is currently completing two biographies on the Scottish photographers Robert Macpherson 1811/15-1872 and James Graham 1806-1869.

Önder Erkarşlan / Turkey

Önder Erkarşlan, born 1963 in Izmir, studied Latin Language and Literature at Ankara University for three years. Following this, he took a Bachelor of Art's degree from the Department of Visual Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts, Dokuz Eylül University in 1984, and obtained a Masters degree in 1990 and PhD in 1994. He also worked as a junior lecturer in the same institution. He is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Journalism and Broadcasting, European University of Lefke, in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Peter James / England

Peter James is Photography Development Officer at Birmingham Central Library. He graduated in 1989 with an MA in History of Art and Design from Birmingham Polytechnic, having completed a dissertation on *Sir Benjamin Stone, William Jerome Harrison and the Photographic Record and Survey Movement*. He has researched and curated a number of exhibitions including William Jerome Harrison: Pioneer Amateur Photographer (1989); From Negative Stereotype to Positive Image (1993); Darkrooms and Lightboxes: a Brief Survey of the Camera (1994); Sunlight and Shadow: The Photographs of Emma Barton (1995) and Rebuilding the Homefront: Photographs by Bill Brandt (1995). He was the first recipient of the Fuji/Association of Fine Art and Historical Photographers Bursary in 1995 and has published articles mostly concerned with Birmingham's photographic history.

Philippe Maurice / Canada

Photography historian, lecturer, author and preventive care of photographic materials specialist. As well as President of Philmsearch IV Inc. which carries out research projects for the museum and archival community, he is also a director of the Calgary Photographic Historical Society and its Curator of Collections and Archives and a member of the International Institute for Conservation, and of the Alberta Museums Association.

Colin Osman / England

After war service in the Royal Navy, Colin Osman Hon. RPS became a working journalist on a family specialist weekly and a working photographer. Spare time freelancing led to an increasing interest in personal non-commercial photography and he became the manager and later editor of *Creative Camera*. International acclaim did not, however, lead to financial security and after 21 years he retired in order to pursue a wide range of research projects. He is currently editor of the Royal Photographic Society Historical Group journal, *The PhotoHistorian*.

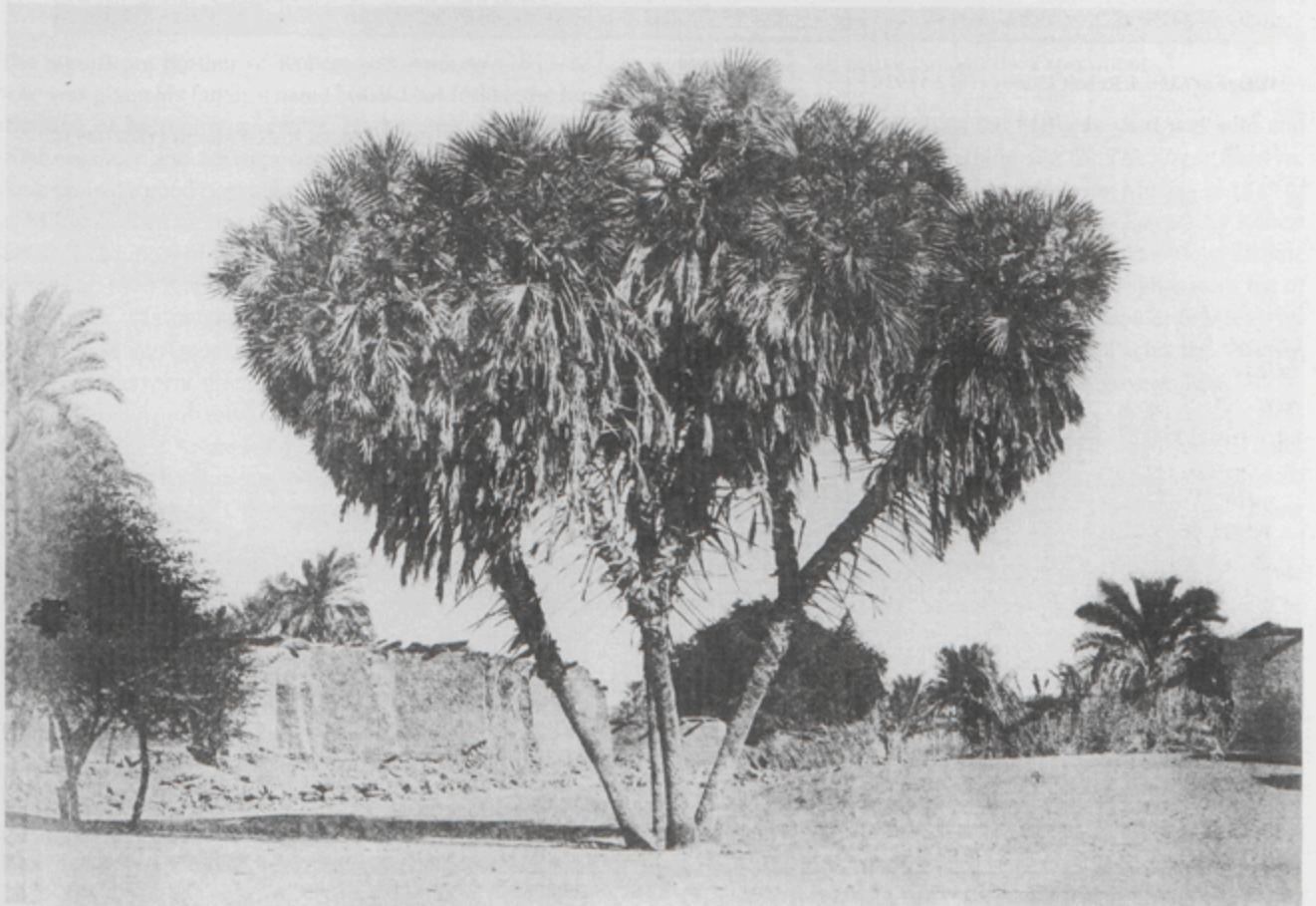
Mauro Rombi / Sardinia

Mauro Rombi, born Iglesias 1957, founded in 1980 and ran The Photo Gallery, Cagliari where he organised several exhibitions which included the work of Luca Patella, Luigi Ghirri, Michele Carone, Riccardo Lumaca, Iginio Turilli and Pietro Melecchi. As a photographer he has taken part in several collective exhibitions in Italy. He has designed and directed radio programmes for RAI. Recently he organised, in collaboration with the Juan Marc Foundation, the exhibition of Goya's graphic works and collaborated on the exhibition *Sardinna, Cymru, England*. He obtained his Honours Degree in Literature and Art from the University of Cagliari specialising in the history of photography of Sardinia. He has also attended La Sapienza University in Rome. He currently teaches Italian Literature in an Italian State School.

R Derek Wood / England

Although Derek Wood was, by profession, an expert in electron microscopy for biomedical research, based in London, he is better known to readers of the history of photography as an expert on the early history of photography, especially pre-Talbot and, more recently, on Daguerre, with publications in *The Photographic Journal*, *Annals of Science*, *British Journal of Photography*, *History of Photography*, and the *New Zealand Journal of the History of Photography*.

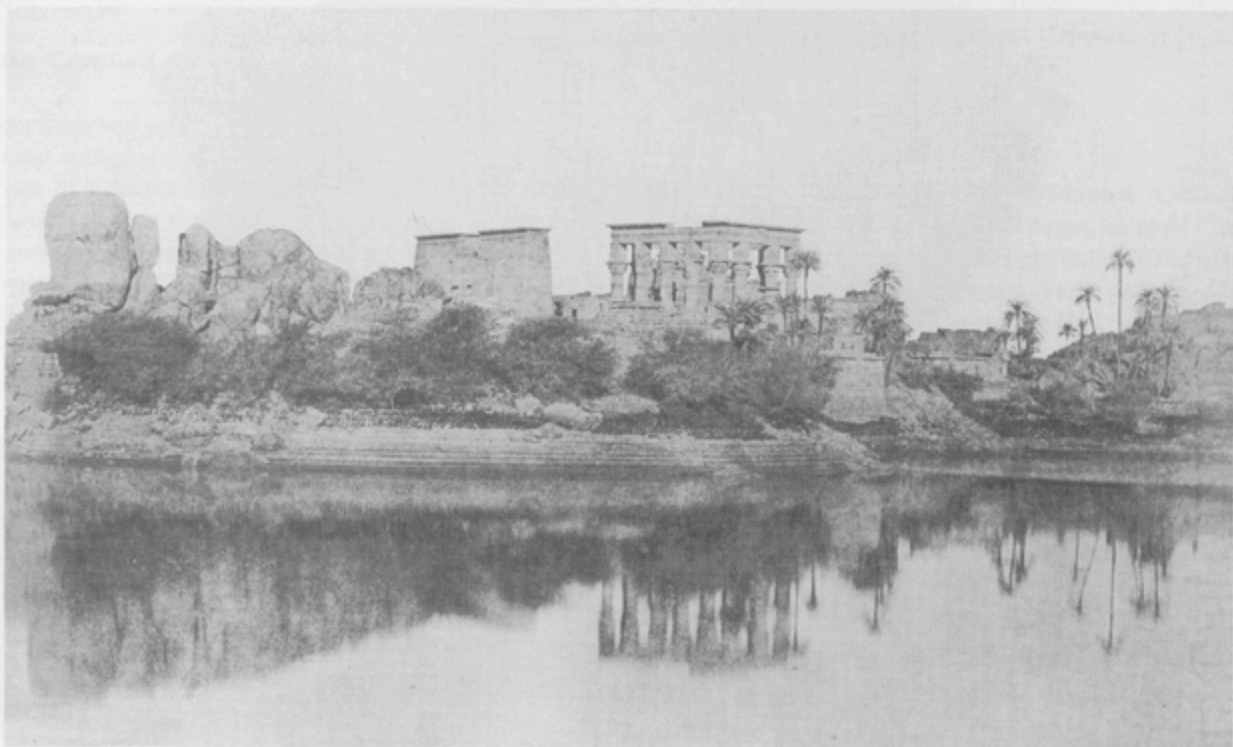
Doum Palm, near Derr Robert Murray (1822-1893).





Village of Ekhmin Robert Murray (1822-1893).

The Island of Philae Robert Murray (1822-1893).



ROBERT MURRAY OF EDINBURGH (1822-1893) THE DISCOVERY OF NEGLECTED CALOTYPES OF EGYPT

In my search for the author of some calotypes of Egypt in my possession the name of Robert Murray came up on Roger Taylor's database. I found that there were two Robert Murrays, not one. The elder was the Irish Robert Murray (1798-1857), born Athy, Ireland and partner in Murray and Heath, philosophical instrument makers of Piccadilly, London. The Robert Murray of this article was born in Edinburgh in 1822 and was one of the distinguished line of Murrays of Murrayshall, Perthshire. The first Scottish Murray of this line was a Fleming called Freskin who settled in Moray (that is, Murray) in 1130 but for our purposes the first notable one was Andrew Murray who built Murrayshall just outside Perth in 1664. His only child, a daughter, married Graham (Graeme) of Balgowan. The most illustrious member of this family was General Graham, the victor of Barossa in the Napoleonic wars for which he was created Lord Lynedoch. His estates eventually passed to a cousin, John Murray, the elder brother of Robert Murray who took the name Graham along with the estates. His successor was the son of Andrew, another of Robert's brothers, Colonel Henry Stewart Murray who also took the name Graham along with the estates. As well as the Murray Grahams there were confusingly the Graham Murrays headed by yet another brother, Thomas (1816-1891) the father of Andrew Graham Murray, the Privy Councillor who became Viscount Dunedin.

The significant brother of Robert was Andrew (1813-1872) who was given his father's name but did not follow the family tradition of becoming a lawyer. He became a distinguished civil engineer and an important influence on Robert's life. Andrew had a good career first as manager of Fairbairn's Yard at Millwall, then an important ship-building centre, and later as Chief Engineer of the Royal Dockyards, Portsmouth. Some time near 1840 Robert was apprenticed to Fairbairn's where his brother was manager. Between then and 1850 when he was elected an Associate Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers he spent three years in Malta 'and elsewhere' and visited Russia¹ probably in connection with the installation of marine engines. Andrew left Fairbairn's in 1843 to become Assistant Chief Engineer at Woolwich Royal Dockyard and in 1846 was promoted to Chief Engineer at Portsmouth. The dates of Andrew are about the only clues we have for his brother because in 1852 Robert Murray gives his address to the Institution of Civil Engineers as c/o Andrew at Portsmouth Dockyard. In May 1848 he gave a Greenwich address in writing to Thomas, son of William Fairbairn.

By 1852 Murray was probably in Malta again because his only child was born there. In 1856 the well-known Joseph Bonomi (1796-1878) wrote the text for Murray's first portfolio of pictures so the conclusion must be that between those years he was in Egypt and that his position was as stated in the booklet of Bonomi captions published by J. Hogarth 'Chief Engineer

to the Viceroy of Egypt'. The earliest possible date is established by the fact that Abbas Pacha, the Viceroy, did not return to Egypt until the end of November 1848. Unfortunately we do not know for certain what Murray was doing in Egypt but Abbas Pacha was known to be an enthusiastic supporter of Anglo-Indian plans to use Egypt as a communications route (this was 20 years before the Suez canal). The Viceroy had built an improved road from Cairo to Suez and even more importantly the railway, under construction in 1852, from Alexandria to Cairo.² The consulting engineer for the railway was Robert Stephenson³ who had recently gained fame with the construction of the Chester-Holyhead railway with its unique design of tubular bridges over the Conway and the Menai Straits, completed in 1850. To test Stephenson's proposed revolutionary tubular design, the directors of the railway company had voted in 1845 the huge sum of £10,000 to make a 75 foot scale model. The engineer entrusted with this task was William Fairbairn who modified Stephenson's circular cross section to a square box. The model was built at his Millwall Yard where Murray was working. In his speech on the completion of the Menai and Conway bridges Robert Stephenson started an 'unpleasant dispute' by denying Fairbairn's contribution to the design. In reply Fairbairn published the entire correspondence in which he refers to Murray as his assistant and includes the letter from Murray to Thomas Fairbairn mentioned above in which Murray states that he took 'an active part' in the experiments.⁴

Four years after these trials the Millway yard was sold and eventually became the launching site for *The Great Eastern*. Fairbairn returned to Manchester, allowing Murray in 1849 to have been free to accept any invitation to Egypt. As Robert Murray had taken Fairbairn's side in the acrimonious dispute it is not surprising he does not appear on Stephenson's list of resident engineers in the construction of tubular bridges over the Nile, but as Chief Engineer to Abbas Pacha, the Viceroy, he may have been advising the Egyptian government.

Although Robert Murray gives no clues about his actual dates in Egypt, he did indicate in 1880 that he taught himself photography 'entirely from a shilling guide book while residing on the banks of the Nile far from professional assistance'.⁵ The author of this guide book was William Henry Thornthwaite and between 1845 and 1860 it ran through 17 editions. The earliest editions were published by R R Pond. The fourth edition (1852) was published jointly by the well known publishers Simpkin Marshall and the photographic specialists Horne and Thornthwaite so it is probable that Robert was referring to the 1852 edition or a later one. The same company, as Horne, Thornthwaite and Wood, also supplied photographic kits and from Murray's brief remarks on equipment it is possible that he used the No. 2 Calotype Set (£7.17.6 d) for 9"x7" calotype negatives using the No. 6 Improved Folding Portable Camera

of Horne and Co with a single meniscus achromatic lens.

It seems reasonable to assume that the negatives were made in late 1852 and 1853, possibly continuing into 1854. It cannot be much later because the introduction by Joseph Bonomi⁶ is dated July 1856 and the prints must obviously have been ready for his consideration earlier. It would appear that most of his prints seem to have been albumen, probably machine coated, and therefore not earlier than 1853.⁷ Unfortunately, although he writes at length about negative development by the coffee process⁸ he does not write about his printmaking techniques.

As with any commercial portfolio it is difficult if not impossible to know if the prints were made by the photographer or by an assistant under some degree of supervision. J Hogarth of 5 Haymarket, London were, for a few years, publishers of substantial portfolios; Sebastapol 1856, 12 albumen prints by G Shaw Lefevre; Agra 1858, 30 salt prints by John Murray (no relation); Lucknow 1858, sketches by Major MacBean photographed by J Hogarth and Griffinage; An Indian Story of the Hon. Newman Strange with 21 reproductions by J Hogarth Jr. of sketches by TBH, RA. All of these pale into insignificance (even John Murray) with the 163 print portfolio of Robert Murray with the 45 page booklet of captions by Bonomi. This was the largest portfolio of photographs yet published predating the work of Frith, Bedford, etc. and perhaps paving the way for the others. The published catalogue costing 6d lists 163 photographed views of Malta, Alexandria, Cairo, Thebes, Upper Egypt and Nubia available for 4 shillings each.⁹ Bonomi dated his text 7 July 1856 so this can be regarded as the first edition. The second edition, without the Malta pictures being mentioned, appeared in time for review in *The Athenaeum* in June 1858¹⁰ and Malta was not mentioned in the advertisement in the same journal in December of the same year.¹¹ This may be only a coincidence because the number of prints remains the same.

The review starts with what must be music to the ears of any photographer,

All previous photographs of Egypt 'go down' before the large and finely wrought views published by Robert Murray . . . Few people have had such opportunities as Mr Murray; no one has, at least, made better use of them.

Today we are familiar with earlier photographers such as John Shaw Smith, John B Greene, Maxime du Camp, Gustave le Gray but it must be remembered that these were mostly amateurs seeking exhibition as well as publication. Murray was also an amateur but different from the others. His engineering background gives him a different approach to the choice of subjects. With no formal or informal artistic training and no previous contact with other photographers he came as a virgin to the art of image making. Of course he photographs the usual sites but there are others unusual for the time; a school, a raft of water jars, even houses in the heart of Cairo due to be

demolished. Another group is particularly interesting because it concentrates on specimens of trees. This interest in trees extends to many other photographs where the palms form an important part of the composition, even in modern villages. To my mind there are also a small group that are unique in their vision and in their depth of understanding. The convention, made even more popular by Francis Frith and Francis Bedford in later years was to plant figures, like poor Mrs Frith and innumerable Arab boys to animate a scene. Murray does not do this but in a group of pictures of the villages of Ekhmim there is no sense of emptiness and the long, lovely shadows give a feeling that the inhabitants are just indoors. The village is somewhere between Cairo and Thebes and seems to have no historical importance whatsoever which adds to its value as a social document.

At suitable points on a map of Cologne designed for the mighty trade fair Photokina are marked *photofuhrerpunkt* and even little arrows to tell you where to point the camera. The Nile is a bit like that. As indicated,¹² Murray's photograph of the temple at Koum Ombos is taken from exactly the same angle as John Shaw Smith and Dr. Wheelhouse and probably countless others. There is no reason to suppose that he was familiar with any earlier work; what is more likely is that this was a natural and unavoidable *photofuhrerpunkt*. Because of the rocks and the lie of the land this was probably one of the only views that could be taken. In the case of this temple the pictures by various photographers can only be separated by small differences of shadow. This is what makes the pictures, for example, of Ekhmim village so important, simply that there was no *photofuhrerpunkt*. They are magnificent as images as well as insights into real life on the Nile. As he wrote in 1880,

I would advise the amateur to select his views from the scenery rather out of the common beat of tourists, and therefore, not made hackneyed and familiar by the praiseworthy efforts of the professional.¹³

The review in *The Athenaeum* concentrates on the ancient remains and makes some very good points,

Every day some burn of sun or blast of arid wind knocks a fresh tooth out of an old jaw; and it is time we had record of these losses which are irreparable.

Murray photographed the houses on Esbequieh Square, 'now in the course of demolition'. There were more serious examples: The Temple from the time of the Ptolemies at Erment, on the walls of which, according to Bonomi, are represented Cleopatra and her son Caesarion, was demolished in the late nineteenth century and the stones used to make a sugar factory!

It is true that Fox Talbot had advocated photographic records earlier and Antonio Beato was actually to do it later, but conventional Egyptology still wanted hand-drawn records.

Fifty years after *The Athenaeum* review, the Director of the Cairo Museum, Gaston Maspero, was to acquire Antonio Beato's archive for this very purpose.¹⁴ Unfortunately neither Maspero's associates nor his successors seem to have shared his enthusiasm. The reviewer in *The Athenaeum* certainly did not lack enthusiasm or insight,

There is dignity and thought almost in those sharp, clear statuesque shadows that we know are perfect, and which are to be viewed without doubt or hesitation

This it must be remembered was written about calotypes, which even when waxed, differ in quality from the needle-sharp precision of the collodion process. When he became member No. 291 of the Amateur Photographic Association in 1862, the Secretary,

laid before the meeting some very fine Egyptian negatives by R Murray Esq., one of the newly elected members, which were much admired. The negatives are by the Calotype process, and almost rival in sharpness and half-tone the finest collodion plates.¹⁵

Those who have been to Egypt, particularly before the Aswan High Dam was built, have commented on the peculiar quality of light. As dawn comes up there is a magical quality but during the day the heat develops and the calotype process seems to catch this heat haze better than most modern processes. Murray was to use other processes later but for reasons of preparation, the plates could not beat the calotype process. Because of the remnants of watermarks down the edges of certain prints we know that he favoured the paper of R Turner of Chafford Mills, Kent.

Perhaps the reason why these wonderful pictures of Egypt and Nubia are so little known is because he was never in the following years to achieve such glories. On his return to Britain he became an Engineer Surveyor to the Board of Trade, serving in various parts of the country but finishing in the 1890's as Principal Officer for the Board of Trade for the South and South West Coast of England. He was 68 and living in Plymouth where his wife Emily died. Perhaps he no longer wanted to travel and just enjoyed domestic life.¹⁶ His only child Elizabeth perhaps inherited his early spirit for she emigrated to Australia settling in Sydney, as a hospital matron, married to a Captain in the P&O Shipping Co., confusingly also called Murray. Robert Murray died three years after his wife in Sidcup, Kent during the influenza epidemic and the death certificate¹⁷ hints that it was an unpleasant death. Colonel Henry Stewart Murray Graham, his brother's eldest son who was not only a colonel in the Royal Artillery but apparently followed the family tradition by being a lawyer as well, was in attendance.

The 40 years after Egypt were relatively uneventful. Edinburgh rather than Murrayshall, Perth¹⁸ was his base either as resident

or visitor. In 1856, 24 prints of Egypt, Nubia and Malta were exhibited at the Photographic Society of Scotland but in 1857 his address was what is nowadays Queensway, Bayswater, London. In the same year of 1857, a 'complete set' of his Egyptian views was exhibited at Birmingham Photographic Society as an Extra Entry.

The following year *The Athenaeum* reviewed the portfolio and in 1862 referred to a new portfolio of 9 prints of Normandy published by Hogarth.¹⁹ Probably his first exhibition with the Amateur Photographic Association was in 1863 where he appeared in Class 4²⁰ but he obviously improved because the George Eastman House Collection has prints awarded prizes in 1868 and 1870. Nearly all the work of this period is from South West England or Wales but so far only 15 prints have been traced, some in the RPS Collection. At the conclusion of his talk to the Edinburgh Photographic Society in 1880²¹ he handed 'round some specimens of my last summer's work' and asked them to make allowances for 'the very bad weather we had.' Four years later he exhibited to the same society, panoramas, prints and lantern slides but chiefly explained the coffee process. From the tone of his articles it is implicit that he had photographed year after year for 40 years and his work must have been known to the discerning few and yet his prints are extremely rare. There is an album of *Scotch Views* (sic) presented to Queen Victoria in 1882 and now in Windsor Castle, and his descendants have some prints but so far only two albums and a handful of prints have been located. Because Murray was not commercially interested in promoting his work after the early portfolios many prints are unsigned so there may be more waiting to be discovered.

Colin Osman, England, 1996.

References

1. The information comes from Robert Murray's application for Associateship of The Institution of Civil Engineers (1850).
2. *Illustrated London News* (27 March 1852).
3. Not to be confused with Robert Stevenson, the lighthouse engineer. Entry in *The Dictionary of National Biography* for Robert Stevenson and the obituary for Andrew Murray (the brother) in *The Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers* Vol. XXXVI (1872-3) Part 2, pp.270-273.
4. William Fairbairn *Tubular Bridges* John Weale, London, 1849, pp.290-291.
5. 'A few hints to amateur landscape photographers'. A communication to the Edinburgh Photographic Society by Robert Murray C E (Civil Engineer) *The Photographic Times* Vol.10, No.113 (May 1880) USA, pp.102-106 and *British Journal of Photography* (1880) p.77.
6. Joseph Bonomi (1796-1878) described himself as a sculptor but was much more. He was a member of the Royal Society of Literature and the lesser known Syro-Egyptian Society. Although not an academic Egyptologist he had a vast knowledge of Ancient Egypt. He is best remembered as the Curator of the Sir John Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields,

London, a post he received in 1862.

7. There is one unsigned print in Michael Wilson's collection that looks remarkably similar to the known Robert Murray pictures but it is a salt print and therefore earlier.
8. 'Transparancies, a communication to the Edinburgh Photographic Society by Robert Murray' *The Photographic Times and American Photographer* Vol.16, No.249 (25 June 1886) pp. 343-344 and *British Journal of Photography* (1886) p.258.
9. Copy presented by Robert Murray to the library of the Institution of Civil Engineers.
10. *The Athenaeum* (5 June 1858) p.727. See appendix for text.
11. *The Athenaeum* (18 December 1858) p.778.
12. Colin Osman 'The '1849' album of Egyptian Calotypes' *The PhotoHistorian* No.111 (March 1996) pp.22-23, 33-34.
13. op cit (5).
14. Colin Osman 'Antonio Beato, Photographer of the Nile' *History of Photography* Vol.14, No.2 (April-June 1990) pp. 101-111.
- 15 *The Photographic Journal* (15 October 1862) p.148.
16. On the death of his wife in 1890, Robert Murray drew up a new will leaving everything to his only child 'Lilla' or Elizabeth. On his death the administrator was Andrew's son Henry Stewart Murray Graham.
17. Robert Murray's death certificate, 23 May 1893, gives the cause of death as 'Epidemic Influenza, 5 days, Vomiting, Tymanitis (swelling of the abdomen), Exhaustion'.
18. From 1873-82 he was listed at 3 different Edinburgh addresses. His album to Queen Victoria was sent from 7 Hope Terrace, Edinburgh in 1882.
19. *The Athenaeum* (1862) p.182, 'Mr Hogarth has published nine photographic views, taken in Normandy, by Mr. Robert Murray, an artist well known by his Egyptian views. . . . If Mr. Murray's views in Normandy should appear to be less brilliant than his Nile series, the difference of atmosphere between France and Egypt must be considered.'
20. *Photographic Journal* (15 August 1863) p.328.
21. op cit (5).

APPENDIX

From *The Athenaeum*, No.1597, 5 June 1858, p.727.

All previous photographs of Egypt "go down" before the large and finely wrought views published by Robert Murray, late chief engineer to the Viceroy of Egypt (Hogarth), for whom that learned dweller among the tombs, Mr Bonomi, has written a Catalogue. These views consist of all the best ancient and Saracenic remains in the Valley of the Nile, from Alexandria, to where Osiris sleeps; and even beyond that, into the Nubia beyond the Cataracts. He has engraved them, by the aid of sunbeams, with all the fidelity that M. Horeau demands. The Dandor of Augustus and Luxor of Rameses are now our own - the Roman Ombos of Ptolemy and the Philae of the Caesars. Few people have had such opportunities as Mr Murray; no-one has, at least, made better use of them. The gold cloth and

dirt of Cairo - the musk and stench - the sandal wood and the dung-hills - the odalisks and the lepers, - have a strange riveting interest to all who care for Joseph and his story, or for the glittering days of "the Redheaded Caliph". Those stone mountains of temples astonish us with a deep sense of the builders' conviction in their dead creed, which, through the Gnostics and the Neo Platonists, tainted even Christianity. The stone lotus flowers, thousands of years old, delight us still with a sense of beauty. The clear, keen, thin air of the hot, bright land is favourable for the chemist-artist. Every year now rubs out some line of hieroglyphic, or cancels some old Pharaoh signature. This Vishnu of Art came in due time, and came to save and to record. He comes to do more accurately and beautifully for all of us, what Champollion and Denon did for kings and learned Societies. Here are obelisks, with every hawk's wing, locust, and winged genius, to be read as easily as a column of the 'Times', though this column of stereotype is old, very old, yet, being old, will not seem so. Every day some burn of sun or blast of arid wind knocks a fresh tooth out of the old jaw; and it is time we had a record of these losses, which are irreparable. The twenty seven miles of Thebes' ruins made us humble about London's dreary unsatisfying vastness and prolonged meanness. The solemn smiling sleep of the stone Rameses makes us less fanciful about imaginary simpers in the Venus. There is dignity and thought almost in those sharp, clear, statuesque shadows that we know are perfect, and which are to be viewed without doubt or hesitation. To point out their beauties, we will just glance through a few of Mr Murray's scenes. Here is Philae, with its square, roofless temple, its knotted granite-blocks, its fanning palms, its square fortress-walls reflected white in the Nile water, its tufted trees and its tumbling litter of building stones that fill the bank; - black as night are the loop holes - dark the lines under the cornices. Then comes the court of Shishak at Karnac, with its solitary pillar and its o'erlapping, belled capital rimmed with dark, its mile-stone blocks, its yawning walls, and its tiers of hieroglyphics persistently symbolic. Then we go off to the Nile-boat - the clouds long since burned up in the level, blank, hot sky - and watch the bare hills and clustering palm trees on the opposite shore from the long, grated cabin, or the open canopy, or from the clusters of ropes that hold the long, raking yard-arm aslant. Then, on in a quick dream, to the square Propylon of Ptolemy at Karnac. The eye without the microscope can distinguish the dark lines of the intaglio outlines and the white touches of erasure or decay: below the shadow lies like a dark, fordless stream - bottomless as Hell. Then Luxor, with the balconied and filigree-pierced minaret, the miniature play and fairy fretting of light and shade, the jumble of corn sacks, hieroglyphics, cartouches, broken walls, and peeling stucco, or, in other aspects choked up with buttress drifts of yellow sand, from which the fluted and banded pillars emerge, to bear upon their heads Atlas burdens of sacred stone. Then more rocks, pillars, and tress - head downwards in the water: and, lastly, most perfect and astonishing of all the vast sword shaped obelisk, towering above the prison like propylens, with their wedge shaped tops, every letter clear as if cut by a diamond.



The Temple of the Time of the Ptolemies Robert Murray (1822-1893) .

The View of the port of Porto Torres Edouard Delessert (1828-1898).



EDOUARD DELESSERT 1828-1898



Portrait of Edouard Delessert (1828-1898).

The western world's concept of travel seems to be becoming increasingly devoid of the possibilities of new understanding offered by fresh horizons and the confrontation with a reality different from our own. In fact, it is all too often easy to observe today in travellers' behaviour, signs of a confused nomadism, very similar to existential rootlessness, to the mass depersonalisation of package holiday tourism, in which there is no longer 'somewhere else' to be discovered: such places have by now been homologised by industrial civilisation.

From the realisation of the finiteness of the world and of the limits of its expanse in space, there grows the perception of a melancholy nostalgia for the last century, when people still trod the paths of exploration, as new and unexpected horizons opened up before their gaze. Such travel has by now become impossible, since, quite apart from having been profoundly changed, such places have lost that value of 'discovery', and exist in circumstances of devastation and overpopulation. One could deduce from this that any voyage today has by now become impossible. In the universe of television addicts, lobotomised by the mass-media, the only genuine aspect of travel would seem to be its images; the copying of the world through its various means of communication.

Travelling in the last century must have been an experience of a very different kind. The travel writing of the nineteenth century tends to be about passing beyond the limits of the

known world. Like so many Stanleys or Dr. Livingstones, writers, artists and photographers pushed forward boldly in search of the unexplored, the new, the exotic, the extraordinary. They returned from each journey loaded with exhibits of a previously unseen reality to display proudly for the world's astonished admiration. It was in this period that the archaeologist gained the status of hero, made amiably banal years later by Hollywood's 'Raiders Of The Lost Ark'.

This is the context into which we must place the figure of the young Edouard Delessert, a typical example of the modern Parisian financial bourgeoisie. The son of Gabriel Delessert, Prefect of police under Louis-Philippe, and of Valentine De Laborde, Edouard came from an important financial dynasty, creators of the French Saving Bank, and holders of considerable assets in the companies running both the Spanish and French railways. At a very young age, in 1850, he founded the prestigious magazine *L'Athenaeum Francais*, which was to have a profound influence in Parisian intellectual circles. Its collaborators included his friend the poet Prospero Merimée, the famous archaeologist Felicien De Saulcy, and the scientist Count Olympe Aguado. Contemporary to this enterprise, he undertook a series of adventurous journeys in the Middle East, the travel diaries of which were published, along with various articles. Of particular note is the book *Vingt Et Un Jours A La Mer Morte*¹, published in 1851, being his account of an expedition through the territories of Palestine in the company of Felicien de Soulczy. This was followed in 1853 by *Voyage Aux Villes Maudites*.² In 1854 he travelled to Sardinia, now armed with all the photographic equipment necessary to make a photographic journal of the island, which he published in Paris, in monthly instalments, under the title *Ile De Sardaigne*.³ The following year, the relevant travel diary also appeared, published by Librairie Nouvelle, entitled *Six Semaines Dans L'Ile De Sardaigne*.⁴

Edouard Delessert had been introduced to photography by Gustave Le Gray,⁵ an important pioneer of photography, and by his uncle, Benjamin Delessert, who was a founder of one of the world's first photographic societies, the Société Héliographique.⁶ The society was supported by several important protagonists of French art and culture, such as the painter Eugène Delacroix, the engraver Lemaitre, and various other pioneer photographers. Edouard Delessert became involved in several important aspects of the history of photography. Apart from his ground-breaking reportage in Sardinia, he invented, with Count Aguado, a system of making photographic calling-cards (*Carte-de-visite*), which was subsequently patented and made famous world-wide by Disderi. He also invented a method of making full-scale photographic enlargements. Presented for the first time at the Universal Exhibition of Paris in 1855, they had an astonishing success, subsequently repeated at the Universal Exhibition of

London in 1862.

Delessert's photographs are calotypes on waxed paper, or rather prints obtained from a waxed negative. This was still a pioneering technique, having been perfected by Blanquart-Evrard⁷ and Gustave Le Gray in 1851. This was a markedly different technique compared to the process of the daguerreotype, until then generally favoured for its greater definition of detail; a distinctive feature which led to it being called 'the mirror of nature'.

The calotype, on the other hand, while not having the meticulous, faithful precision of the daguerreotype, used the soft, delicate effects of chiaroscuro, which gave the image a lack of definition, producing a magical aura of mystery, which favoured studies of form, and the elevation of juxtaposition of tonal masses. But, quite apart from being a precise, formal choice, the adoption of the wax-paper calotype was also due to its greater flexibility, together with relatively reduced weight and bulk. Moreover, another undeniable advantage for travellers was the possibility of preparing the photosensitive paper well in advance of use, and this without altering the results.

We do not know what inspired Delessert to leave his footprints on the distant and inhospitable Sardinian shores: we can only guess, and guesses, as we know, can have sufficient common sense to be credible.

What is certain is that, for nineteenth century travellers who came to Italy, there were two distinct alternatives. The first involved following the established classical itinerary of the eighteenth century Grand Tour, comprising visits to the most important Italian cities. It must have been very difficult for artists and writers of the period to avoid the irresistible temptation to complete an albeit rapid reconnaissance of the artistic capitals of the ancient Latin motherland. The other possibility involved venturing beyond Naples, along little-known routes in the South, leaving behind the reassuring cities to cross the threshold of regions and cultures until then overlooked by the more refined northern European culture. However, this culture, being on the crest of the wave of romantic Mythicism, tended to encourage the study of the marginal and peripheral realities of both Italy and other countries. Even as recently as 1920, D H Lawrence, for whom travelling was an unsuppressible spiritual necessity, undecided as to which direction to take, wrote,

Where then? Spain or Sardinia. Spain or Sardinia. Sardinia, which is like nowhere. Sardinia, which has no history, no date, no race, no offering. Let it be Sardinia... It lies outside; outside the circuit of civilisation.⁸

What is also certain is that, in the first half of the nineteenth century, several enterprising photographers, mostly French but also Italian and British, such as John B Greene,⁹ went in search

of the new, the unusual, and the extraordinary in the countries of the Far East. The port of Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia, offered shelter to boats for those on course for the Orient and North Africa. So Delessert, probably knowing the island from a previous voyage, came with all the necessities, including an assistant, to enable him to make a thorough photographic campaign.

Undoubtedly, Edouard Delessert's photographs profoundly reflect the influence of the aesthetic criteria of landscape paintings, as well as the rules of photographic documentation of monuments and works of art, by then a tried and tested genre, which had become genuinely stereotypical. For this reason the majority of the 40 photographs which make up his reportage on Sardinia seem to be principally in response to the requirements of a standardised and almost obligatory iconography, rather than to a dialectic relationship with reality.

Nevertheless, in some photographs a more personal style is detectable. In the photograph, which depicts the port of Porto Torres, for example, it is interesting to note that the total composition is actually divided into distinct areas: in the foreground, the reflection in the still water of the port; in the background, the neutrality of the sky. Even though the foreground does not contain anything of great relevance, it nonetheless serves an important function in the totality of the composition, in that it establishes the proportions of the rest of the image. It functions as an essential parameter to the understanding of the image. The presence of the road, visible in the foreground, creates an angled line disappearing out of shot, which breaks up the otherwise horizontal composition of the image. It thus provides the composition with the impression of an open window on the world. On the right is a fifteenth century Aragonese tower, built by the Spanish to defend the port against the attacks of North African Arabs; on the extreme left, by contrast, is the *Piemonte*, a steamboat which used to make a round trip every fifteen days between Genoa, Porto Torres, and Cagliari. We can interpret the tower as a symbol of the centuries-old, long-standing domination of the island by the Spanish; the boat, by contrast, is a metaphor of progress, of the new powers: no longer the towers and battlements of the old, privileged dynasties, rather the steamboat. With the reverberant chugging of its motors, and its smoking funnel, it celebrates modern techniques and the ever-increasing speed of communication.

The pictures of nature are also of particular interest, for example, one depicts olive trees near the city of Sassari. In the centre, a large olive tree dominates the foreground, and throws out a complicated tangle of branches, contorted by the wind, which blend into the foliage of the other trees behind. The trunks seem to be pierced by the light which paints small ellipses round their bases. This luminescent play of light is contrasted by the vast areas of shade cast by the foliage, creating an effect of chiaroscuro which emphasises the strength of the tonal masses. Delessert wrote about these trees in his travel diary,



View of Cagliari Edouard Delessert (1828-1898).

Centuries old olive trees near the city of Sassari
Edouard Delessert (1828-1898).



These olive trees, neglected by their owners, have been growing for centuries in land which they love; they spread out in every direction, their branches hanging lazily under the midday sun. They raise their strange, contorted arms in an attitude of total freedom; one senses that they are content, that they breathe an air made for them; they seem truly happy, and even when the wind (which in Sardinia is no laughing matter!) begins to blow, they hardly condescend to turn and look at it. Then they move only their highest, most delicate branches, so as not to seem less than other trees, but they do nothing more than this¹⁰

In these photographs, the forms become fused in a dreamlike, atmospheric aura, in that indistinct amalgamation of soft, suffuse tonality, etched with light, which represented one of the motifs differentiating French from English photography of this period. This was intelligently perceived by Philippe Burthi in 1861,

English photographers, similar to painters, seek precise rendition, sharp outlines in a way they penetrate the pores of the skin, the structure of the stone, the bark of a tree. In France, however, the photographers are much more nonchalant, less precise in reproducing reality. It is obvious that their greatest preoccupation is light.¹¹

Beyond these aesthetic considerations, the absolute value of these pictures must be stressed, being the fruit of the ability and initiative of one of the pioneers of photography. A body of work which even today offers a highly precious document of the history of photography, a very human, touching testimony to the great island in the centre of the Mediterranean that is Sardinia, and an emotional nostalgia for a way of travelling and perceiving reality in which the sense of wonder and discovery was still present.

Mauro Rombi, Sardinia, 1995

*Panorama of Cagliari,
capital of the island of Sardinia
Edouard Delessert (1828-1898).*

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9. John B Green (1833-1857) *Le Nil. Monuments. Paysages. Explorations Photographiques*, Loos-les-Lille, 1854.
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Edouard Delessert (1828-1898) and the Albumen of Sardinia

Album of Sardinia, 1854: 40 albumen prints from wax negatives.

Two complete examples are known to exist: one in the Biblioteca Reale in Turin; the other in the National Library in Paris.

Each photograph measures 19 x 24.5 cm., mounted on white card measuring 35 x 44 cm.

The book is composed of 5 collections, each containing 8 photographs, which correspond to the 5 monthly editions in which the work was published and sold.

A signed dedication on the frontispiece of the Turin edition reads: A Sa Majesté le Roi, hommage du plus profond respect. E. Delessert.



STAGING THE MIND IN PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAITURE

Photographic portraiture is part of the same tradition which stretches back in Western culture to the foundations of portrait painting: to the portraits of Petrarch (1304-1374) in the fresco attributed to Altichiero in Padua; to the drawings, by an unknown hand, in the manuscript written by Lombardo della Sita in Padua in 1379 or to the portrait of Dante by Giotto (?1276-1337), or one of his pupils, in Florence. Perhaps it was Giotto's portrait of the patron Enrico Scrovegni, painted in 1303 in the Arena Chapel in Padua, that marks the development of an interest in, and a desire for, the *likeness* of an individual rather than the portrait by virtue of status or birth, for portraiture, as we know it, was virtually unknown in the Middle Ages. We could argue that the fourteenth century city states of Italy provided the framework for the ascendancy to power by virtue of character and talent (even if the 'talent' was often for despotism). This led to an interest in the *individuality* of man, as distinct from feudalistic village life where a more rigid system of control was imposed from a remote power base. Portraiture was used to confirm authority and exercise power. The Italian city states, however, were also a continuation of antiquity and, in this sense, the history of portraiture, especially that of Roman sculpture, for example, preceded painting.

What we can witness is the steady spread of portraiture from Italy to the North until it became standard practice within the West. Even today it is a common belief that the painted portrait will somehow signify the abilities of the sitter; extol the virtues, explain the personality, and somehow encapsulate the duration of a life. The formal public portrait is also expected to provide evidence as to the inherent nature of the tribute being paid to the subject. More often than not, such pretensions signify nothing of the kind and merely evoke sensations of taste, or, when coded in past values, even tastelessness.

With the ascent of the individuality of man, there was also the growth of the portrait as legacy; as reminders of existence to friends and relatives, or even as snatches at immortality by the sitter. The older they become, the more fascination they hold. Not so much in the understanding of the individual depicted but simply in the fascination that the physiognomy of the people, from so long ago, can still look like us. The more startling this realisation, the more appreciative the audience. Such perception also provides even greater 'evidence' of the supremacy of the individual over the collective; that individual acts, therefore, provide history rather than economic, social or technological conditions. It is in this sense that the portraits of Sir Winston Churchill, for example, provide the audience with 'evidence' that he won the Second World War.

The introduction of the photograph in 1839 sprang from the same Renaissance tradition of humanist and scientific thought. As another process in the history of *printmaking*, geared to the representation of the external world in terms of how the

eye sees (that is tonal as distinct from linear) it marked a particular achievement in the development of those graphic processes, such as aquatint or mezzotint, which had also been invented for the same purpose. The major difference was that the external world, objects to be copied, could now be depicted without the intervention of manual dexterity, with its attendant requirements for an elaborate graphic hand-made syntax. Photography was to revolutionise the graphic arts and inevitably cause the disappearance of various hand-skills and printing trades. Its appearance threatened, and led to, unemployment. It also demolished the miniature portraitist for it could meet the aspirations of the client quicker and cheaper.

The great intellectual debates that surrounded the early years of photography, concerning its status as art or not art, seem rather incredulous to us now but not so remarkable. After all, printmaking was hardly described or accepted as an art and certainly not as an equal art to painting or sculpture. Both painter and critic regarded printmaking as a profitable, commercial method of reproduction and therefore of inferior status. Even the advent of James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) who, perhaps more than any other artist, succeeded in placing etching before the public as a legitimate art form, nevertheless, only permitted the acceptance of prints from *painters*; from Mantegna, Durer, Rembrandt and Goya. It did not seem to matter that the prints might contain a different language from the paintings. The notion that the printmaker *per se* could be an artist - or, even worse, an illustrator - is still a problem for some people today including fine artists. The acceptance of printmaking as an *art*, on the other hand, is largely due to the redundancy of the processes used in today's mass-market and the redundancy was caused, for the most part, by the rise of the photograph and the half tone reproduction.

Throughout history, as each new printmaking process was invented, we witness a reluctance to accept its possibilities as 'art'. The fascination and marvel of the photograph, however, was to attract the attention of the much wider and more influential section of the community, including painters, art critics, and scientists, who knew nothing of the history of the technologies used within the graphic arts. The result was that photography was seen as an *isolated* phenomenon that, like the photographs themselves, must simply have popped up from nowhere. In so doing photography threatened the existence of the Fine Arts. The result was a welter of theoretical rhetoric both for and against photography as art. Photography, without question, did pose a threat to all existing print processes, but by confusing process with statement, confusing its location in history, photography was seen to pose a threat to the nature of art itself.

Portraiture in photography was deemed to provide *facts*, just as the illusion of reality inherent in the painted portrait, no

matter how untrue the likeness depicted, provided the ready acceptance that what was shown were 'truths'. The photograph, untouched by human hand, more accurate in its representation of unsolicited detail, lent greater acceptance of the verisimilitude of photography when compared to the inevitable selectivity displayed in the painting. Photographic portraiture became preferred since it implied more accurate proof of what people looked like. More importantly, it provided proof of actual existence in a way that painting could never do.

As William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877), the inventor of the positive/negative process, discovered, photographs often delivered *unintended* information. In addition, our perception of what we see in the photograph and what it actually states are often quite different. This capacity in photography, for things suddenly cropping up, demonstrated the randomness of the external world. Nature's appearance in the photograph, often with a degree of incoherence, actually lent greater weight to photography's apparent capacity to depict reality objectively. In that the photograph depicts *photographic* reality is, for the most part, unobserved by the audience and perhaps this explains why Edgar Degas (1834-1917) was so successful in incorporating photographic language to form the new pictorialism in painting without the audience's knowledge. Our view of the Victorians, as derived from photographic portraiture, therefore, is, for the most part, more related to the *limitations* of the technology of photography than to any objective depiction of what they actually looked like.

The photograph, due to the autonomy inherent in the process, presents contradictions - even profound ones, but such is the nature of our preconceived perception that we cannot assume that such contradictions are in fact always perceived as such. We assume that the photograph purveys an absolute likeness of the sitter as distinct from a major reduction, and we assume, as we do in painting, that if the person looks 'real' then we can also recognise the personality and identify the *character* traits of the sitter. We forget, or are even unaware of, the many visual devices which had to be at work in the painting in order that we could *sense* this state, as distinct from know it. It is not surprising that the introduction of photography also brought with it a renewed interest in the 'science' of physiognomy. Photographic portraiture, however, like the painting which preceded it, also found the necessity for incorporating *indicators* in order to convey information, such as the use of an open book or antique to indicate scholarship and learning; heavy brocade, antique furniture and the ornate scroll to indicate wealth or status. Clearly, certain photographers were very much aware as to the *inadequacy* of the photograph as a conveyer of information and, as in painting, contrived aura often substitutes for the inadequacy of the medium, or the maker, to provide meaningful information.

Even in our basic desire for 'facts', what people really looked like, we are often startled when the image does not meet with either our preconception or our knowledge. Take away the use of visual, aesthetic devices; of controlled statement, and the

resultant descriptive photographs can often disarm the preconception or, paradoxically, if we do not really believe the information we already have, enforce it. Have you ever noticed just how badly dressed the affluent Victorians really were? How slovenly, dissolute, ill-tempered and disgruntled Ruskin, Burne-Jones, Rossetti *et al* appear! How unlike their status! We have to ask of the portrait photograph whether it confirms, adds, subtracts or replaces existing views of the subject since photography can only provide *partial* indicators, not truths. Just as we do not really know the personality, the character, the life, of the person sitting opposite us on the train, why then do we imbue the photograph with capacities for telling such stories?

The portrait of the known or unknown person in the painting tradition can register only insofar as the artist is capable of reconstructing reality and reinventing the experience by means of an elaborate, learnt, aesthetic language related to the process, to the activity, of painting. This must also be true within the context of the photograph. The photographic portrait of value will function within a similar control of the language of photography and what we read will be a reflection of the maker's capacity to manipulate and control the process. (We should not confuse this with any values we may place *upon* the image).

The majority of portrait photographs are descriptions and only of significance to the relatives and friends of the person depicted. After the death of the depicted, the values change to become memory. After the death of the immediate relatives and friends, they take on a different value again and become proofs of genetic history. They can even become *mysterious* since, for the most part, they convey remarkably little information; often far less than, for example, a letter from the person would. If we were to pluck from the millions of unknown descriptive portraits one of a rather ugly, certainly not attractive woman who displays little charm or grace, no hint of character other than a rather hard tenacity and suddenly declare it to be the portrait of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, we would immediately imbue the image with preconceived values, seek out confirmations, declare it as evidence but this could hardly compare, for example, with the information conveyed, that acute sense of actuality, of a painted portrait by Rembrandt.

The literature pertaining to the history of photography has been fraught with the inability to distinguish statement from process, description from art. We do not confuse the millions of descriptive *prints*, illustrative works, reproductions, with the aquatints of Goya or the woodcuts of Durer. To lump all photographs as if they were the same, however, seems to be a common practice even in the discussion of their value as conveyors of information or as art objects. The 'fiction' of the printed portrait is, in fact, the same 'fiction' as the 'art' photograph, no matter how differently or similarly it may be described, that is, if *meaning as an intention* is to be conveyed.

This is not to say that there are no differences The

instantaneousness of the photograph cannot produce the same result as the selectivity inherent in the plasticity of paint. (This is not the same as saying that photographs cannot have a sense of time or appear to be 'timeless'). Photographs, however, cannot encompass the intensity of selected scrutiny made over a period of time as in painting. It is in this respect that the portraiture of David Octavius Hill (1802-1870) and Robert Adamson (1821-1848) cannot contain the complexities of Rembrandt's observation no matter what homage may be paid in their photographs to Rembrandt's *stylistic devices*. Their intrinsic quality must lie elsewhere. Nor should we confuse the mimetic details of an albumen print with the surface values as expressed by Vermeer. This does not negate, however, the premise that the form in which we gain the most information from the portrait photograph is when it is treated as a similar construct as any other art, that is, within a particular aesthetic *contrivance*.

Within the tradition of Western figurative painting, artists have also been placing themselves in their paintings since the fourteenth century just as they were quite prepared to use historical and religious subject matter as 'excuses' in order to portray their contemporary society. Indeed we could go as far as to say that the values we place on these works are in the artists contemporary concerns and how they relate to our own society and not in the declared subject matter, nor as history. (Our regard for Giotto is not because we think he was the most successful painter to evoke religious belief, or feeling, or history).

Renaissance Italy preferred the history of Christianity to be a document of its own time and would have scorned any attempt to depict Christ and his Disciples, or the Virgin Mary as Jews set in a realistic Jewish environment. Similarly, if the artist could include the patron of the church in the Nativity scene, he could also slip in his own likeness. Indeed there was little concern with trying to define or depict the past and the fascination of such paintings today is precisely in the stare we receive as they proclaim their own existence and fragility; as they gaze out, through subsequent time, to us. We do not perceive their historical incongruity - perhaps past histories are eclipsed in time, but more importantly, *they* did not perceive any incongruity.

The search for revelations in portraiture can often be found in the use of the *self-portrait* within such a fabrication for the self-portrait delineates a particular *psychological* state made all the more clear when placed in relation to the subject matter and its mode of portrayal. We can see this as early as Andrea Mantegna's (c 1431-1506) self-portrait in the fresco *The Meeting of the Marquis Lodovico and Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga* (c 1472). Such is Mantegna's skill in the organisation of pictorial space that, by having himself depicted looking away from the main event of the presentation, even out of the picture, he upstages the performance, like some brilliant actor, merely by being on the stage. Thus he declares not only his 'separateness' but also his 'knowingness' of the pomp and

circumstance that surrounds him. By placing himself in the painting, within the context of contemporary society, with its debates and conflicts, values, hopes and fears, the artist, as self-portrait, is able to achieve more than mere likeness, more than unfounded notions of personality guessed at from some particular physiognomy. As any artist (or actor) would know who had studied the figure, the face is also a 'fiction' and what appears to indicate character is often merely the fantasy of the onlooker. The painter may seek to use particular characteristics to tell the story, to make the audience believe in an absolute relationship between facial features and personality, but that too is a visual device, not a truth.

The use of the self-portrait by artists has often provided a greater awareness in the depiction of character analysis. This can be seen in the revelations of self within such a context of contemporary preoccupations, masquerading as history painting or as religious painting, in the work of Caravaggio (1573-1610). Whatever the individual paintings purport to be, as declared by their titles, ancient antiquity or stories from the Bible painted to extol the virtues of the Church, our values, and one suspects the values of many of the people at the time, are to be found in Caravaggio's realism; in the contemporary truths of his depiction of homosexual, sado-masochistic, erotic images which in the end declare the fatality of man. By continually placing himself throughout his work he dislocates the subject, for example 'religious scene', as prime statement and exchanges it for an intense examination of self which, in turn, produces a universality of statement applicable to the human condition. From his self-portrait as the sexually provocative youth in *Boy with a Garland of Ivy* (1593/94) to his self-witness as instigator and voyeur of the carnage, murder, and sexual implicity in *The Martyrdom of St Matthew* (1599/1600) to his self-hate and debasement as *Medusa* (1598/1601) to his own beheading by *Judith and Holofernes* (1598/99), to the murderous revulsion of the idealised youth holding his portrait as Goliath in *David with the Head of Goliath* (1609/10) and, near the end of his life, to letting the blood pour from the neck in *The Beheading of St John the Baptist* (1708) and with it writing his own name (the only signed painting) as if his psychological, psychopathic, disintegration into violence was now complete.

The application of the figurative tradition of painting to photography was inevitable, yet, and until fairly recently, there have been many attempts, and many successful attempts, to deny photography its logical associations, notably in Straight photography. One of the arguments employed referred to the fact that photography depicts actual people which seemed to indicate a denial of the characteristics of the process if it is used as a contrivance, since often the people depicted do not appear to represent themselves. If said often enough, the audience might accept such a claim as logical. However, this merely indicates a misunderstanding of both art practice and photography; that the photograph *per se* is somehow a 'statement' and not a 'process'. In painting, as we have seen, it was never a prerequisite that the people depicted were who

they were supposed to be and in photography, even in its most realistic use, those advocates of Straight photography never laid any claims to disinterested objectivity. (To lay such claims also implies a denial of the theatre or the cinema as art forms.) Caravaggio's seventeenth century Roman audience did not have to believe, nor did it believe, that *Mary Magdalen* was anyone other than one of his models, or even one of the noted prostitutes. Seeing the youths and men of the streets re-enact the *Martyrdom of St Matthew* did not lessen their credulity, indeed it added to their ecstasy. Nor was Caravaggio painting murder, death or desire as abstract entities, rather he was taking his persona, through the practice of art, into the realm of possibilities. Similarly, neither to Shakespeare nor to Elizabeth the First was *Richard II* a casual tale from the comfortable past. Nor is it to us today.

In spite of the instantaneousness of the photograph, such psychological self-portraits as appeared within the figurative tradition in painting also appear from the very invention of the photograph, just as they appear in literature, poetry, opera. Why should they not occur, more importantly, why should they not be allowed to occur, in the photograph?

Louis-Adolphe Humbert de Molard (1800-1874) has depicted his assistant Louis Dodier in a daguerreotype of 1847¹ as a chained (rather well fed and well clothed) prisoner in a (supposedly) squalid prison cell. With a passing glance, it may well appear as a simple, even trite attempt to evoke sympathy that such a handsome youth should be condemned so young, or it could even be hinting that the youth is innocent, indicating some social injustice. However, the ambiguous fixed stare, the provocative pose, linked to the fictitious helplessness indicated by the chains actually declare the personal reality of the photographer supported by the structures of a fiction. Just as in Caravaggio, the premise of the subject, youth in jail, acts as a vehicle for other meaning. How much more, therefore, can be conveyed and can be gained by working this way than from those portraits which stare back at the camera in dignified pose, achieved by dignified theoretical technique, without the slightest give-away, the slightest hint of the subject's inner being. How much more can be conveyed and can be gained from those portraits which hide behind the sophistications of style, from those photographers who have forgotten that visual, aesthetic devices are the *means* of constructing statement, not substitutes for it. Indeed *without* such a vocabulary little meaning can take place.

As early as 1840 Hippolyte Bayard (1801-1887) wished to appear as a drowned man in an ironical statement against the French government's recognition of Daguerre. It is an evocative portrait which also works *outside* its apparent subject, made all the more so when we discover that, like Caravaggio, it is a self-portrait. We must learn, or re-learn to ask why Oscar Rejlander (1813-1875), Charles Negre (1820-1880) or Francis Frith (1822-1898) should *wish* to appear in Oriental costume? Why should Oscar Rejlander appear as Garibaldi? Why did Wilhelm Von Gloeden (1856-1931) wish to appear as Christ?

Why did F. Holland Day (1864-1933) wish to appear crucified or recumbent with pierced side and halo? We must ask why such use of *self* occurs and continues to recur within photography. We must try to decipher how such contexts explain the psychology of the photographer, for, *as in the painting*, what the photograph purports to be, more often than not, is not what it is.

Nor should we make the mistake of underestimating the intelligence or complexity of artists. Why should we assume that Holland Day did not *know* the result of his self-depiction as the martyred Christ? Must we assume that his intelligence was so poor that he actually believed that the result would fool anyone into thinking this was an actual photograph of Jesus? And why should we read his photographs with a separate set of values to that which we apply to, for example, Duane Michals (b. 1932) as he contemplates himself in 'Self portrait as if I were dead'. Is there not a connection between Caravaggio and the self portrait by William Mortenson (1897-1965) hanging from a torture device? Are they not the same?

Alistair Crawford, Wales, 1996

Reference

1. Some authorities claim that this is a self-portrait of Louis Dodier. A reproduction is to be found in Bruce Bernard, *Photodiscovery*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1980, pl. 6.

Portrait of a Dervish c.1870 Sebah & Joaillier.



A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN TURKEY

Some social classes were never able to develop their own visual ideologies or, in some cases, they did not experience one particular type of visual expression, such as paintings. This indicates that a particular type of ideology and social structure are required in order to produce certain types of image. It is not a coincidence that both the Christian and Muslim world discussed their inhibition of figurative painting for a long time. The literature on this issue, generally without question, expresses that Islam in its theology is against figurative images. Although it can be seen that artists and figuration were blamed in some of the words of the Prophet Mohammed, today, it is accepted that such figuration is not entirely banned in the Koran.

From the late nineteenth century, most of the research which justifies Islam on this issue emphasises that the figuration of living things was not an illegal endeavour in the Islamic religion. After the discovery of the wall paintings in North Amra, that show human figures, the discussion of the reasons for poor iconoclasm in Islamic thought were concentrated on either theological issues or political events. Although, in traditional Islamic culture, such creative events were not ignored officially, the seminal and aesthetic potential of the existing arts were not developed. In other words, it is possible to mention that traditional Islamic culture did not have a particular view on the visual arts which showed a preference, either for approval or disapproval, of such expression, rather the doctrines of early Islam and its life-style motivated the culture to give the direction to its artistic events in this way.

Figurative visual arts, including photography, neither become widespread nor were developed in Islamic culture. Although during the Ottoman Empire, when some types of ornamental arts and crafts reached a level of sophistication, there are no real examples of painting worthy of mention except a few marginal artists' works until the westernization period which began in the mid-eighteenth century. On the other hand, it is quite difficult to give an exact time for the recognition of photography in Turkey. The only accurate knowledge about the history of photography is the fact that it was introduced by visitors to Istanbul. It is fruitful to evaluate this long process in two different phases.

Photography during the Ottoman Empire

Maybe the first meeting of Turkish people with the invention of photography was with the help of the national newspaper *Takvim-i Vekayi* on 28 September 1839.¹ While some information about the inventors and the uses of photography were given in a short article. While photography was actually recognised in Turkey in the late 1850's, the first studio was founded by the German chemist, Rabach² who came to Turkey with the troops of Field Marshall Moltke (1800-1891).³ This studio became a school for young people, such as the Armenian



Sultan Abdulhamid II (1842-1918) Unknown.

Kevork and the Wichen brothers who worked for a long time in Rabach's studio and, after a short period of time, took it over in 1855. Their efforts and collaboration became very influential in Istanbul where photography was still not popular. While Kevork became an expert in the studio and darkroom, Wichen mostly dealt with posing and retouching. After they became Muslims, they became known as the Abdullah Frères (Viçen 1820-1902, Hovsep 1830-1908, Kevork 1839-1918).⁴ They were also given the honour of *Ressam-i Hazret-i Şehriyari* by Sultan Abdulaziz.⁵ Following this, they were appointed as photographers to the Sultan. They opened their first exhibition at the Universal Fair, Paris in 1866. With the help of this international exhibition they had the opportunity of taking photographs of many famous people including King Edward of Great Britain and the German Emperor Franz Joseph.

The photographs of Abdullah Brothers were exhibited in the Turkish pavilion in the International Paris Exhibition in 1867 as an expression of compromising approach of

Ottomans to the art of photography. This exhibition was one of the first international photography exhibitions that was welcomed in the Ottoman Empire. The photographs in the exhibition were reflecting natural and historical views from the capital city of the Empire as well as its interesting life style. The reflected images were not only concerned with the civic life. Some military themes such as the Ottoman Army were also among the subjects of that exhibition.⁶

The rapid progress of the Abdullah Frères allowed them to run branches, including a number of shops in Istanbul and also Cairo. They became well known for their portraits of ministers and the various royalty who visited Turkey. These photographs also made a large contribution to the collection of State Archives. When they were no longer able to keep up with the developing technology of photography, they had to leave the post in the Ottoman Palace. They sold their rich collection to the State Archives and abroad. This put an end to their brilliant career and reduced them to a third class photography studio in Beyoğlu.

Following the Abdullah Frères, the next photographer of the Palace was Bogos Tarkulyan (known as Phebus Efendi, ?-1940) who became popular with the albums of famous people from the upper class. He organised photography courses in the Palace and he also obliged the first students of the new School of Museology to take a basic photography course. The use of photography for profit and trade was achieved by mostly the ethnic minorities living in the Empire, such as the Armenians, Jews and Greeks and the use of photography for different purposes in the Ottoman Empire was limited to these minorities. During the era of the Sultan Abdulhamid II, the number of photographers in the Palace were increased and the respect paid to them became higher since the Sultan preferred not to leave the Palace and to witness the world from photographs.

The tradition of photography in the Ottoman Empire, that first started as an official duty in the Palace and had its heyday in the era of the great pioneers, the Abdullah Frères, was continued by their successors. These were mostly trained in their studio and came from different minorities. One can mention the names of Phebus Efendi, Apollon (Aşil Samancı, 1870-1942), Nikolai Andreomenos (1850-1929), Pascal Sebah, Policarpe Joallier and Basile Kargopoulo among the most important ones.⁷ Andriomenos took over the duty from the Abdullah Frères and also started to work in his own studio. He became well-known for his photographs of the wealthy in Istanbul. He prepared the first photography album series that became a tradition of Abdulhamid II in 1880 and worked in the duty of Sultan Vahdettin as his private photographer for many years.

By the end of the nineteenth century, one of the pupils of Abdullah Frères, Aşil Samancı carried on the work of Phebus

Efendi. Then he started to run his own studio, called Apollon, at the beginning of the twentieth century. He was the first artist who used photography in order to inform the public about the social and political events in the country and became the first magazine photographer when his work was published in newspapers and periodicals between 1908-1909. It was during this period that photography became a part of publicity. They reproduced images of religious holidays, official ceremonies and meetings, as well as portraits of commanders from the highest ranks. The works of one of the most popular photographers at that time, Phebus Efendi, were also among those published works in the press.

What made the Studio of Apollon remarkable was its shift from the depiction of the uninhabited gardens of the Palace, glorious saloons and the neutral impression of historical buildings, towards life itself, in which the social and political events were pictured in the trips of the Sultan with a more vivid expression. This approach was very important for the first cycle of Turkish photography, not only because of the skill demonstrated, but also because of its conscious understanding of photojournalism.

One expert of photography was Jacques Iskender, known as Sebah Joallier with his studio Foto Sebah which continued to be run after the Turkish Republic. Phebus, Apollon and Sebah Joallier with their efforts for photojournalism were very remarkable in the history of Turkish photography, since they became seminal examples for the coming generations. A number of professionals are also worthy of mention with their albums as well as their studio work, such as Kargopoulo, Nicoloides, Michailidis and Vafiadis. The reason behind the success of those from the minorities was of course their close contacts with Europe and knowledge of different languages. Apart from those who pioneered photography in Turkey, Muslim Turks started to have an interest after the era of Sultan Abdulhamid II, who hid himself in the Palace because of necrophobia and preferred to obtain information from photographs instead of from life itself. Photography was also his hobby.

The Military Engineering School, established in 1795, gave the opportunity for training Muslim photographers since the students in their perspective drawing course were obliged to use, the *camera obscura*, brought from the United Kingdom in 1805. Some students from the department of painting dealt with photography after their graduation. Captain Hilmi was one of those and was known for his book, *Risale-i Fotoğrafya*, as well as Captain Ahmet Emin who took photographs of Bursa, Bozöyük, Eskişehir and İzmit at the request of Sultan Abdulhamid.

In 1888 Captain Mehmet Hüsni from the Military School was also among the well-known military photographers. In addition Hasan Rıza represented the construction of military buildings during that period. Commander Kenan was appointed to photograph the damage after the Turkish-Greek war of 1897.

One of the most well-known names in this era was marine Captain Ali Sami Bey who was appointed to the duty of private photographer of the Palace just after his graduation in 1886. He took pictures of the German Emperor Wilhelm II, when he visited the Ottoman Empire in 1889 and travelled with him until his arrival in Jerusalem.

Referring to the historical records, Rahmizade Bahaeddin Bediz (1875-1951),⁸ was the first Muslim Turkish photographer who started his career in a small studio in Crete in 1905. In between the years of 1910-1936 he continued his work and started to run his own studio called *Resna*, which had two branches in Izmir and Istanbul.

The most important works of the career of Rahmizade Bahattin including the years of 1896-1909 in Crit (Crete) and Kandia were obviously the postcards collection in two hundred pieces all of those were representing the social life and natural beauties of Crit. Those panoramic works some of which were coloured with analin were in 18x72 cm format had a soft contrast and aesthetic perfection.⁹

The monopoly ethnic minorities in Turkish photography ended with the *Studio Resna* in which many young photographers were trained and courses for amateurs were held until 1924 when Rahmizade Bahaeddin had to sell his studio due to the occupation of Istanbul by foreign armies. Turkish photography was recognised and developed by the westernization and renovation movement in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰ The photography studios, that previously were only in Istanbul until that period, spread to many other cities in Anatolia, during the following years.

The Development of Photography in the Era of the Turkish Republic

The shift from documentary photography to art photography was achieved after the Turkish Republic. Following the first photography exhibition in Izmir in 1929, the first photography competition was organised by the popular weekly magazine *Sabah*. This impulse was continued for three years after 1933 by the Public Clubs¹¹ and some other organisations that supported the development of photography in Turkey and organised competitions or provided funds.

During the transition, photography was firstly perceived as documentary evidence, as in the case of military photography which also continued during World War One and the War of Independence. Today, those photographs that reflect views of war are almost priceless. Following the War of Independence, in the first years of the Turkish Republic, photography continued to be perceived as primarily documentary due to the fact that all the photographic material and equipment had to be imported. This caused photography to be an expensive endeavour, limiting its use to commercial needs only. On the other hand, the obligation of using passport size photographs



Untitled Ilyas Göçmen, Turkey.

for identity cards, and other types of official papers, allowed people to become more familiar with photographs.

The impact of the Republic was not limited to the above. The Republic was a total revolution, aiming at social and cultural metamorphosis. The most important reflection of the cultural policy of the young Republic was undoubtedly the Public Clubs. Founded in 1932, these clubs provided a training centre for various courses for young amateurs in many subjects (such as handicraft, literature, music and photography). These were the institutions where the ideology of the revolution was distributed and young people were encouraged and challenged.

It is impossible not to mention the name of Orthmar Pferchy who revitalised the studio of Phebus Efendi in Beyoğlu in 1947. Some of his photographs were published in the periodical *La Turki Kemaliste* which was mainly aimed at representing the country abroad and for this reason it was published in French. Orthmar photographed views from Anatolian cities, historical monuments and the development of industry in Turkey which was represented in a new manner. Orthmar also made an important contribution to landscape photography which had a considerable influence on the next generation.

Şinasi Barutçu who started his career in *Studio Resna* in



Untitled Ara Güler, Turkey.

Bahçekapi as a darkroom assistant had the opportunity to work with German photographers in a graphic arts school in Germany while on a Turkish Government Scholarship. Following his return, he became a member of the Institute of Gazi Training Centre and started the first photography courses there. He was the winner of many photography competitions organised by public institutions and he also organised the first colour print exhibition.

Sinasi Barutçu, attempted to publish a periodical called *Foto*, with the help of Sadfer Sürel, but they only succeeded in printing two issues. His book, *Foto Konuşmaları* (Speeches on Photography) was a collection of essays published in different newspapers. His contributions to the development of contemporary Turkish photography are almost countless. He played a vital role in the establishment of the first photography club, TAFK (Turkish Amateur Photographers Club) which then became a member of FIAP (Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique) in 1956.

Another important photographer in the first years of the Turkish Republic was Baha Gelenbevi (1907-1944), who went on to direct nine films for the cinema after his first in 1944, *Deniz Kızı* (The Mermaid). In parallel to his work for the cinema, he was recognised as an important photographer with many

exhibitions and experimental works which concentrated on the use of light and for the first time in Turkey, the nude.

Turkish photography after the Second World War entered into a more stationary era because of the difficulties which occurred during that period. However, the 1950's brought a more fresh atmosphere with the contribution of young artists such as Ozan Sağdıç, Fikret Otyam, and Şemsi Güner who were followed by Gültekin Çizgen, Şakir Eczacıbaşı and Şahin Kaygun in the next decade.

Gültekin Çizgen first introduced the idea of a photography exhibition devoted to a theme, instead of various subjects, and his second exhibition in 1963, on the subject of loneliness, was a most remarkable contribution. His photographs were published in various international magazines such as *International Photo Almanac*, *Baven Vohnen* and *Camera* while his studio was also expert in industrial photography. His audio-visual and multivision work became very seminal for the next generation and made a huge impact.

Photography in the post war period also gave an opportunity to represent tourism with views from natural and historical places, ancient works of art and Turkish culture. The best examples were those of Sami Güner whose exhibitions were held in many countries: 1975: Algeria, Munich, Salzburg 1976: Tehran, Peking 1977: Mecca, Tokyo, Osaka and Seoul 1980 Peking, Canton 1983: New York. These exhibitions brought him the honourable prize of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Turkish Republic in 1989.

When one looks at the career of Şakir Eczacıbaşı, the impact of Ernst Haas (b. 1921) can be seen in his work including the use of themes such as streets, houses, windows, old bazaars and the mosques of traditional Turkish architecture. His calendars, issued every year since 1968, were among his most remarkable works. The exhibitions of Şakir Eczacıbaşı took place in the media with interviews and articles by Fikret Otyam which were published in a few magazines. The 1970's, however, were very difficult years for Turkish photography. There were neither regular journals nor systematic training programmes, except for the courses given in a few universities.

The social and political events of the 1970's were reflected in the photographs of the decade. The military government of 1980 put new obstacles in the way of young Turkish photographers, who had just started to evaluate social problems, by destroying free expression of thought and by putting pressure on intellectuals. During this period, most photographers preferred to send their work to international competitions and exhibitions rather than national ones because of the negative social circumstances in Turkey.

It is also of interest to look at the institutions that affected Turkish photography. The most unforgettable contribution was from the Public Clubs which started in 1932. As has already been mentioned, they were official organisations that had an



Turkish Woman 1910 Rahmizade Bahaeddin Bediz (1875-1951) (Studio Resna).

Taken on the opening day of Studio Resna, this is possibly the first photograph of a Turkish Muslim woman without a veil.

important role in education under the banner of the revolution. They were a transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic, which had now turned its face towards the West.

The conservative tendency of the Democratic Party, which came to power in 1950, preferred to close the Public Clubs with the excuse of economic problems. After this institutional decline, the idea of having an independent society of photography came on to the agenda again, and the first step was taken by Şinasi Barutçu in 1950. The first independent club was TAFK (Trabzon Amateur Photographers Club) which pioneered many other clubs and societies. Some of the first members of this society were Turgut Gökberg, Naim Gören, Nurettin Taymaz, and Mithat Yener. TAFK, also a member of FIAP, held eight international exhibitions until 1988. It was followed by IFSAK (Istanbul Amateur Photography and Cinema Artists' Club) that first started with the name, Erenköy Amateur Photographers' Club. It abolished itself in January 1962 in order to extend the scope for a more powerful organisation. FOTOS (Photography Artists Society), established in 1978 by Şahin Kaygun, Güler Artan, Suat Ataç, Halim Kulaksız, developed into an active organisation which concentrated on contemporary photography.

The history of Turkish photography, that started with the Abdullah Frères, could never escape from the economic consequences of always being dependent on imported photographic materials. However, despite all these difficulties, the situation after the 1980's seems to be more hopeful. The names of Cengiz Karliova, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Emine Ceylan, Adnan Ataç, Tahir Ün, İzzet Keribar, İlyas Göçmen, and Gökhan Yalta can be counted among the younger photography artists who are producing work of much interest in Turkey today.

Önder Erkarlan, Turkey, 1966

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1. *Takvim-i Vekayi* was the first official newspaper printed in Turkish in Istanbul. It was published weekly at the beginning then became irregular afterwards (1 November 1831 - 4. November 1922).
2. The German chemist Rabach opened a studio in Beyazit in 1855, engaging as his assistant Vichen Abdullah, who painted miniatures on ivory. Because he was accustomed to working with his hands, Vichen did outstanding work retouching photographs. He sold his studio to the Abdullah Frères in 1858.
3. German Field Marshall Helmut Von Moltke (1800-1891), while still a captain, was assigned to the Ottoman army as a topographer. He took part in the Battle of Nizip against an Egyptian force rebelling against the Sultan.
4. Abdullah Frères (Viçen 1820-1902, Hovsep 1830-1908, Kevork 1839-1918). Asdvadzur Hüzmüzyan, the forefather of the Abdullah brothers and member of the notable Aliksan family, had been chief purchasing agent in the Palace. He came from Kayseri and settled in Istanbul in 1810. Kevork's brother

Vichen had meanwhile been receiving considerable interest and commendation for his miniature paintings on ivory of Sultan Abdulmecid, Sultan Abdulaziz and several renowned generals. He was invited by Rabach to retouch photographs in his studio in Beyazit where the daguerreotype method was being used. Kevork and his brothers, Vichen and Hovsep, purchased Rabach's studio which they used until they sold it in 1867 to Andreomenos. The three brothers then opened a new studio under the name of Abdullah Frères.

5. When the German Empress Augusta requested a photograph of Sultan Abdulaziz in 1863, they were the photographers. This photograph was the Sultan's favourite and Augusta had it made into a medallion. In the same year Abdulaziz proclaimed the Abdullah Frères the official court photographers and published it as an official decree in the *Ressam-i Hazret-i Şehriyari*. Sultan Abdulhamid continued this designation, which was printed on the back of all their photographs. Indeed, on 4 July 1873, the Sultan issued another imperial decree published in the newspapers that prohibited any attempt to copy their photographs.

6. Perihan Kuturman 'Türk Fotografçılarınin Öncüleri' *Mimarlık Union of Turkish Architects Publications*, Vol.26, No.2, Istanbul (1968) p.16.

7. For more detailed information, see Engin Özendes *Photography in The Ottoman Empire (1839-1919)* İletisim Yayınları, Istanbul (1995).

8. Rahmizade Bahaeddin Bediz (1875-1951), Bahaeddin Bey, was born in 1875 and was the first Muslim who had his own photographic studio called Resna in Istanbul in 1910. Bahaeddin Bey headed the photographic department of the Turkish History Foundation in 1937. He died in Istanbul in 1951.

9. Seyit Ali Ak 'Rahmizade Bahattin' *Refo Fotoğraf Sanat Dergisi*, No.10, Refo Publications, Istanbul (1990) p.8.

10. A series of reforms realised between the years of 1839-1876 in order to arrange the political, military, social and economic structure of the Ottoman Empire in a Western manner. This era started with the imperial decree known as the Tanzimat Fermani and continued until the First Constitutional Government.

11. The original name of these institutions in Turkish is *Halkevi*.

For further information published in *English* see: Engin Çizgen, *Photography in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1919*, Haşet Kitaberi A S, Istanbul (1987).

PHOTOGRAPHY: SCIENTIFIC FICTION IN THE LATE SEVENTEENTH AND EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, FRANÇOIS DE SALIGNAC DE LA MOTHE-FÉNELON 1651-1715, CHARLES-FRANÇOIS TIPHAIGNE DE LA ROCHE 1722-1744¹



The Miraculous Mirror Anonymous 18th century engraving. Courtesy of International Museum of Photography, George Eastman House, Rochester, N. Y.

People in 1839 were astounded to hear that a Frenchman had discovered a way of fixing an image with the aid of the *camera obscura* 'whereby the light itself draws the picture.' Despite the modern fascination with scientific methods, newspapers of the day reflected on all the magic - 'the apparent miracle.'² If nineteenth century audiences were confounded by the arrival of photography, what then would readers almost 150 years earlier make of popular writers discussing 'capturing' and 'freezing' of a view?

Two French writers, François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon writing in the 1690s, and Charles-François Tiphaigne de la Roche seventy years later, each seeking to educate and reform their respective times, also conjured up concepts which we often equate to *photography*.

Archbishop, mystical theologian and man of letters, Fénelon was someone whose liberal views on politics and education caused 'concerted opposition'³ from church and state. Nevertheless his pedagogical concepts and literary works exerted a lasting influence on French culture. Tutor at age thirty-eight to Louis, duc de Bourgogne, grandson and heir to Louis XIV, Fénelon composed allegorical tales and dialogues for the Prince's education. Among his *Opuscules Divers françois* (sic) *et latins, composés pour l'éducation de monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne* is the curious short story *Voyage supposé en 1690*⁴ In it, the narrator reminisces about a trip to an obscure land where *he casually points out* there are 'no painters'⁵ but where a permanent souvenir 'as reliable as (seen) upon the best of mirrors'⁶ can be obtained. Fénelon briefly evokes fixing an image by the action of freezing the water within large 'gold

or silver' basins.⁷ This, and his other *Voyage* stories, certainly appealed to the public desire for travel and adventure in uncharted, mystical lands.

Charles-François Tiphaigne de la Roche, was orphaned at age three, and was raised by his godfather, a royal surgeon, in whose steps he would follow.⁸ Little is known about him other than he became an influential philosopher and writer, all the while maintaining a practice in medicine. The novella *Giphantie*, the title being an anagram of his own name, was published in 1760.⁹ Within the African desert the hero is swept away by winds of hurricane force and dropped onto the mysterious island of Giphantie. There he is guided by the Spirit called "the Prefect" through a strange land where inventions are 'harvested' from trees.¹⁰ On occasion the Spirit demonstrates a 'listening mirror' which monitors human activity in the world,¹¹ on another, the hero, surprised to see an ocean, rushes to a window, only to discover that it is in reality an image created by the 'elementary (sic, elemental) spirits... not able painters but physicians' (i.e., scientists).¹² The Prefect relates how a piece of canvas coated with a viscous matter is able to capture the image, and how it is then fixed when left for a short while in a dark place. It is not surprising we compare the latter fictional procedures with the daguerreotype or wet collodion techniques! In reality, *Giphantie* is a satire of Tiphaigne's France and of its morals and customs, as well as a harsh critique of Paris. Subtitled *Babylone*, the story, in no uncertain terms, judges the 'corruption city' which Tiphaigne considered both immoral and vain. Tiphaigne, through his many writings, created scientific curios; anticipation of the radio, television, synthetic foodstuffs and photography.

The Miraculous Mirror, an anonymous eighteenth century engraving¹³ has been linked to *Giphantie*, though there is no logical reason for such association. Its fantastical subject matter lends itself easily to the *capture* and *projection* of images. It may well be that the mirror held by the angel (or cherub) is based on historical fact. In 1502 the city of Vienna printed an exhibition catalogue that showed how relics were displayed to pilgrims outside the great shrine of Saint Stephen (considered the first Christian martyr). A row of priests, each bearing a reliquary, halted in unison from window to window in the treasure tower. At such displays pilgrims held out little convex mirrors to soak up the saintly emanations for use at home.¹⁴ Clearly, the idea of *capturing* the essence of the church, and of subsequently *projecting* it, was intended. (Earlier in 1438, Johannes Gensfleisch Gutenberg, of moveable type fame, had contracted to cast similar mirrors for pilgrims at Aix-la-Chapelle, France.) An even more striking similarity in concept is the secret Christians' magic mirror from Japan. In 1612 the Tokugawa Shogunate prohibited Christianity. As a means of identification among believers, specially polished mirrors were carried which would reflect an image of the Christian crucifix on any nearby surface. The image, unobservable on the mirrored surface, is the result of residual stress of the mirror surface created by the polishing technique.¹⁵ Here was an actual physical example of projection. By the mid - eighteenth century

well heeled amateur artists were aware of an optical device, popularly called the Claude glass.¹⁶ This was a small compact with a slightly convex mirror, backed with dark paint, rather than the usual silver. Here nature *projected itself* and was 'fixed' (copied only on paper) by the talent of the 'copyist'. While there is no link to Tiphaigne's work, it may also be a source for *The Miraculous Mirror*. In Jean Massiet du Biest's novel *La Fille de Diderot*, published in 1849 (after the invention of photography), it is interesting to note that one of the characters suggests a process similar to that described in *Giphantie*. A magical frame procured images of loved ones.¹⁷ The fantasy had lingered on after the reality of photography itself.

Neither Fénelon nor Tiphaigne had predicted photography as such or, in my view, consciously envisaged it.¹⁸ Both had simply composed a story in which certain actions resulted in the 'captured' formation of an image. Either writers may have been conscious of early experiments pertaining to light-sensitive materials. If Fénelon was aware of Da Vinci's *Codex Atlanticus*,¹⁹ he certainly did not obtain his ideas for 'capturing' an image from that text, as there is no similarity in methodology. It is more likely that he knew of the Latin poet Statius who, in a poem, refers to a 'splendid mirror of gold... Do you only fix your glance upon it and leave your features here.'²⁰ Tiphaigne, on the other hand, may have been familiar with Johan Heinrich Sculze's *Chemische Versuche*, published posthumously in 1745, which became widely known, not only in scientific circles, but also in many popular books of parlour tricks.²¹ The early *camera obscura*, often depicted as a large room with an image transfixed on a wall, was also probably well known to both authors.

Fénelon's social *Fables et Dialogues* were to educate the heir-apparent. Tiphaigne's *Giphantie* was clearly satirical, if not political, though this is now overshadowed by his intuitive penmanship. Joseph Eder has probably presented the best analysis of the latter's creativity,

We observe here basically the same fantastic ideas which we found expressed a thousand years earlier by the Roman poet Statius. We can place no more value upon these than on the modern imaginative novels of Jules Verne, based on the natural sciences.²²

While Romanticism would have us attribute the stirrings of photography to people such as Fénelon and Tiphaigne, the reality focuses on creative writers bent primarily on moralising about their society albeit in a most fascinating way.

Philippe Maurice, Canada, 1994

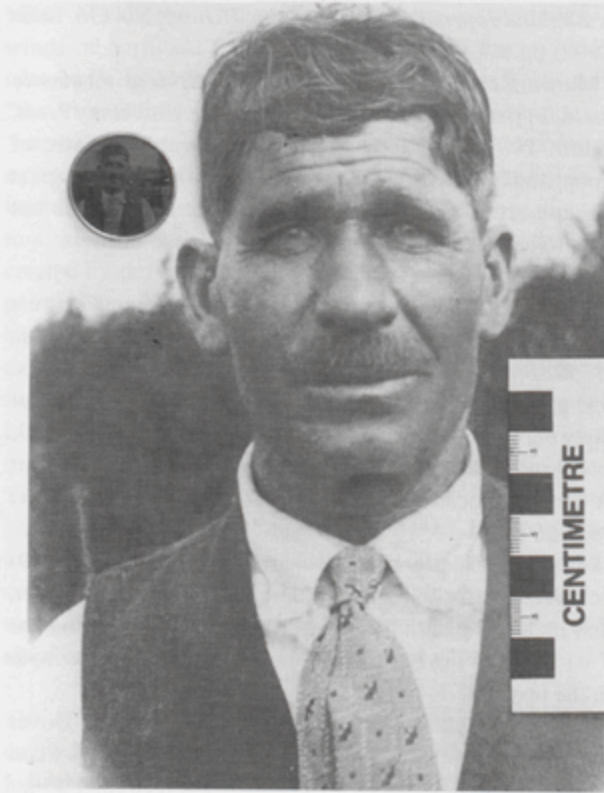
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3. Fénelon, François de Salignac de la Mothe, *Encyclopaedia Britannica, Micropaedia* Vol.IV (1978) pp.90-91.
4. James Herbert Davis, Jr. *Fenelon* Twayne Publishers, Boston, 1979, p.53 notes the story (published only after Fénelon's death) appeared as something of an addendum to the 1718 edition of the *Dialogues des morts*. Helmut Gernsheim *The Origins of Photography* Thames & Hudson, London, 1982, Chapter, 'The prehistory of photography' footnote 80, suggests that it appeared in the original edition of *Les Aventures de Télémaque, fils d'Ulysse* 1699, during Fénelon's lifetime but there is no clear evidence.
5. *Oeuvres De Fénelon, Archeveque-Duc de Cambrai* Nouvelle Édition, Revue et Corrigée avec Soin. Tome Dixieme. L Tenre, Libraire, 1822, p.403, 'Il n'y avoit aucun peintre dans tout le pays: mais quand on vouloit avoir le portrait d'un ami, un beau paysage, ou un tableau qui representat quelque autre objet, on mettoit de l'eau dans de grands bassins d'or ou d'argent; puis on opposoit cette eau à l'objet qu'on vouloit peindre. Bientôt l'eau, se congelant, devenoit comme une glace de miroir, ou l'image de cet objet demouroit ineffaçable. On l'emportoit ou l'on vouloit, et c'étoit un tableau aussi fidele que les plus polies glaces de miroir.'
6. *ibid*
7. *ibid*
8. Jacques Marx *Tiphaigne De La Roche - Modèles de l'imaginaire au XVIIIe siècle* Editions de l'université de Bruxelles, 1981, pp.13,15.
9. *Giphantie, par Tiphaigne. Première Partie. A Babylone. M.DCC.LX.* 1760 (microfiche version of original copy, University of Calgary). For unknown reasons the French Table of Contents lists CH. XVIII. La Tempête but the actual chapter is entitled La Tempeste. An English copy lists Chapter X The Storm. (The George Eastman House catalogue Vol.1 A-K, p.531 mentions a copy entitled *Voyages à Giphantie*, nd. This may be a later, abridged, or shortened version.) A full English title is *Giphantia; or, A View of What Has Passed, What Is Now Passing, And, During The Present Century, What Will Pass In The World. Translated from the original French. With explanatory notes*. The story was also printed under the German title *Die Geisterinsel. Eine Dichtung über Menschheit und Menschenschicksal* (The Spirit Island. A Poem about Mankind and Human Fate), Steinacker, Leipzig, nd.
10. *Giphantie. Deuxieme Partie. A Babylone. M.DCC.LX.* 1760 microfiche version of original copy, University of Calgary, pp.81-82, 'C'est de cet arbre précieux que tirent leur origine les inventions, des découvertes, les arts, les sciences; & cela par une mécanique qui va t'étonner.' The leaves' essence, once airborne enters mankind's pores, then travels to the brain whereupon the conscience conceives of the idea or invention.
11. *op cit* (9) *Giphantie*, pp.78-86,118-127.
12. *ibid* p.131, 'Les esprits élémentaires pourfuivit le préfet, ne font pas fi habiles peintres qu'adroits physiciens', p.132, 'Les esprits élémentaires on cherchés à fixer ces images paffageres; ils on composé une matiere très-fubtile, très-vifquefe & très-prompte à se feffecher & a se durcir... en un clin d'œil.'
13. Correspondence, Joseph R. Struble, Assistant Archivist, George Eastman House (13.2.1991). The print bears no identifying information other than a plate mark.
14. Alpheus Hyatt Mayor, *Prints & People; a social history of printed pictures*, Metropolitan Museum of Art / N.Y. Graphic Society, New York, 1971, unpagged, section entitled *Art Exhibitions*.
15. Jack Naylor, The Secret Christian's Magic Mirror, *The New England Journal of Photographic History*, No.136, Issue 3 (1992) pp.6-7.
16. Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art: Optical themes in Western art from Brunelleschi to Seurat*, Yale University Press, London, 1990, p.199. It was the achievable artistic or harmonising effects that earned the Glass the name of the great landscape artist, Claude Lorrain, although the glass is not known to have a direct association with Claude himself.
17. *op cit* (8), Jacques Marx, p.86, footnote 200.
18. This idea has persisted as early as Georges Vicaire's *Tiphaigne de la Roche et la première idée de la photographie en 1760*, *Bulletin du bibliophile et du bibliothecaire*, Paris, 1895, pp.295-299, to the more recent English version of Chapter 10 of *Giphantie* in ed. Beaumont Newhall, *Photography: Essays & Images*, Metropolitan Museum of Art / NY Graphic Society, New York, 1980, entitled *Photography Predicted*, pp.13-14.
19. In the *Codex Atlanticus* Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) gave directions for making an impression of a leaf on paper, which included painting the paper with candle soot and the leaf with 'white lead in oil.' He included a printed example with the text.
20. Josef Eder *History of Photography* trans. Epstean, Dover Publications, New York, 1972, p.66, Silvae (iii 4, Capili Flavi Earini).
21. Philippe Maurice, *Silhouettes - Pre-photographic Likeness, Calgary Photographic Historical Society* Vol.1, No.3 (1988) p.7. Schulze coated silver salts onto skin, wood and bone and exposed these to light whereupon they turned black. He clearly deduced that light, not heat, was the reason for the change. As the results were not chemically fixed, the image faded away once the stencil was removed. The principal was later revived in various forms of parlour trickery and mysticism.
22. *op cit* (20) Eder, Chapter XII From *Giphantie* (1761) to Scheele (1777) p.89. Ironically, Verne's attitude towards photography is condescending or noncommittal at best, possibly in the final analysis because it already existed. See Philippe Maurice, Jules Verne. Missed Opportunities From A Visionary, *Calgary Photographic Historical Society*, Vol.4, No.1 (1991) p.12.

TINTYPES, SNIPPETS OF A HISTORY.

A process first introduced in the mid 1850s, these collodion and later gelatine-based images on thin, blackened, metal sheets were customarily sent through the mail to sweethearts and family. Though popularly called 'tintypes' they were never made on tin.



Ukrainian Gentleman Western Canada c 1910 Enlargement photobutton gelatine tintype, debunking the notion that tintypes could not be sharp.

The tintype was immensely popular in North America from the late 1850s onwards. Europe, with its predilection for social classes showed no real interest until the end of the century. Light and practically indestructible, tintypes were casually sent through the mail (hence also the names: lettertypes, lettergraphs.) Many owners, in an effort to emulate daguerreotypes and ambrotypes, put these humble images into similar protective cases. Their popularity was such that American tintypes manufactured between 1864 and 1866 were subjected to additional government revenue taxes. In England William Gladstone considered a penny tax in 1864, and so did Benjamin Disraeli in 1868, when it was stated that a penny stamp on roughly five million photographs (the great majority, not tintypes) sold annually would help in defraying the cost of the Abyssinian war. The use of collodion chemistry to make tintypes gave way to gelatine emulsion dry metal plates by the early 1890s. This genre of photography survived because of its continued use by street photographers until the mid-twentieth century.

The tintype, like the ambrotype, was a particular application

of Frederick Scott Archer's wet collodion process.¹ A japanned (blackened) sheet of thin iron was substituted for the ambrotype's glass support. These metal plates were coated with collodion, sensitised, and immediately exposed in the conventional wet plate manner. A photographer or tintypist would prepare the plate, make the exposure, develop and fix it. Once dried he would often trim it with metal shears. A variety of formats, ranging from postage-stamp size 'gem' tintypes to large 'double whole' plate were produced. Between 1868 and 1875 'cameo' tintypes (finished pictures pressed with a convex die) were occasionally produced. A large number of tintypes were 'enhanced' with applied colours to their surface.

Tintypes have been produced in the studio, by the itinerant photographer, and by the general amateur. All provided on-the-spot delivery to customers or friends. Studio subjects, dressed in their Sunday best, some with glazed expressions or stiffening backs braced by assorted support clamps, could hardly wait for the magic emulsion to harden. Tintypes became the vacationers' keepsake, the Sunday strollers' memento. Ironically the tintype which so permeated the lower working class of society, rarely outlined the social and other problems this group struggled with. Rather the tintype image, largely through the use of studio props, created an ersatz lifestyle and does little to further our understanding of the working-class life. This suggests that it is wise to remember that photographs cannot stand alone as interpretative statements about the past, any more than can other primary sources.

In 1852 and 1853 Adolphe Alexandre Martin, a college professor in Paris, presented to the Société d'Encouragement and to the French Academie des Sciences two *Compte Rendus* in which he outlined processes to make direct positives on glass and on tinned plate or galvanised iron.² His reports made little impact on a nation probably still enamoured with the daguerreotype and certainly with the new albumenised paper processes. Only French tanneries showed a passing interest to the process.³ The publication of *The Collodion Process on Glass* in 1851 by Frederick Scott Archer had no bearing on Martin's work. Independently and unaware of Martin's work, Hamilton L Smith, Professor of Natural Science from Bambier, Ohio, was carrying out similar work together with a seminary student Peter Neff Jr., during 1853-54 and then independently in 1855. In 1856, under the advice of Neff, Smith applied for and subsequently obtained a US Patent to make ferrotypes.⁴

In the spring of 1856 Neff promoted the new process through a pamphlet entitled *The Melainotype Process, Complete*.⁵ Another young American innovator and soon-to-be competitor, Victor Moreau Griswold, criticised the popular name tintype, calling it meaningless, as no tin, in any shape whatsoever, was used in the making, preparing or sensitising of the plate; unless 'it be, perhaps, the tin which goes into the happy

operator's pocket after the successful completion of his work.¹⁶ By 1863, tintypes were purchased for as low as two cents each and still proved profitable! Continued American experimentation resulted in several technical improvements and assorted hues (blue, green, red and chocolate) to the japanned surface.¹⁷ Ironically, in a technologically-inclined nation, the *mental* conservatism of the photographers themselves doomed the effort to sell the assorted (non-black) hues nationally. There was even the reported manufacture of white enamelled plates to be used as a *negative*!¹⁸ 'Established' studios, looked upon the process either disparagingly or had no reluctance with operating in tintypes. Mathew Brady, along with many operators, would not permit his New York and Washington galleries to make tintypes, but William Notman, Photographer to the Queen, Montreal, Canada, promoted the process along with his albumen photographs.¹⁹ Others not content with ambrotypes, tintypes and *cartes-de-visite*, suggested novelty photographs on cloth, mica and leather.²⁰

From the mid 1850s to the early 1860s Neff and Griswold were the sole manufacturers of tintype plates to the North American continent.²¹ In an early effort to promote their greater use, samples were sent to nearly all of the dealers in photographic goods with excellent results. Edward M. Estabrook, a strong proponent of the tintype, pointed out the 'obvious' advantages over its predecessor the ambrotype. In the ultimate sales (and preventive care!) pitch Estabrook wrote:

How many a happy home there is, upon whose table may be found those tokens of friendship or love, and how much better would it be if those Ambrotypes could be transformed into the imperishable Ferrotypes, and placed in the elegant parlor picture album, thus placing them almost above the power of accident or the possibility of loss.²²

Whether through pettiness or excessive competitiveness both manufacturers, Neff and Griswold, threatened each other with lawsuits. Griswold cut his prices as he improved production of his plates. Due to patents the practice of making tintypes required a license which was only available at monopoly costs.²³ Neff countered by freely making available the necessary licenses to practice ferrotypy. At one point a merger was proposed between the two and eventually rejected.²⁴ Failing to recognise early their weaknesses in terms of geographical locations both men eventually saw the manufacture of japanned collodion plates switch from their Ohio bases to the increasingly industrialised cities of Newark, New Jersey and New York.²⁵ Towards the end of the Civil War other companies had joined the foray, among them Holmes, Booth & Hayden; Willard & Co.; and Anthony & Co., acting as distributing agents to several manufacturers including a variety of plates produced from high quality English 'charcoal-iron.'²⁶ Horace Hedden or his son H M Hedden, soon after the formation of the Ph(o)enix Plate Company, Newark, New Jersey, brought out the Chocolate plate after obtaining a patent in 1.3.1870.²⁷

This plate would temporarily renew the interest in ferrotypy. By August 1871 an English patent had been obtained.²⁸

While producing astounding results collodion photography, by its shortfalls; that is, the need to immediately prepare, sensitise and photograph, encouraged the search for a more convenient means of capturing an image. Popularised c1878, the gelatine process on glass or dry plate helped greatly to eliminate the collodion wet plate process. The photographer was no longer encumbered by all the paraphernalia previously required to formulate an image. Commercially prepared glass plates were ten times as fast *and* consistent. However it was not until the 1890s that commercially manufactured tintypes using gelatine-silver chemistry became available.

Richard Leach Maddox invented the first practical formula for a gelatine-silver halide emulsion. As early as 1847 others had experimented with sensitised gelatines with varying success. In 1871 Maddox published his work and by 1873 England marketed the prepared gelatine dry plates. The following year Richard Kennett introduced the high speed pellicle²⁹ and subsequently offered prepared dry plates. The introduction of dry ferrotype plates by Ladislav Nievsky in 1891 provided commercially-made tintypes suitable for all-weather conditions.³⁰ The basic emulsion was coated onto a continuously moving roll of the sheetmetal support and cut into standard sizes and packaged.³¹ This was followed by the

A gamekeeper? poacher? c 1880, Scotland (?)



development of the 'street' camera, with built-in processing facilities removing the need for a portable darktent. Both contributed to the third and final resurgence of the tintype, in North America, and the first true interest in the United Kingdom.

The commercially manufactured gelatine emulsion, called Photo-button tintypes, were in general use between 1890 to 1930. These were the earlier presensitised plates, now die-cut into circular coins and packaged. Some were rimmed with an aluminium or white metal jacket. Most were sold with the camera and a variety of promotional accessories. In Canada the Duz-it-all Photo Button Camera, distributed in 1911 by the Colonial Art Company, Toronto, was free to anyone who purchased 'Oleograph (multicolour prints) reproductions of famous paintings.'²²

The early cameras consisted of a front box with a lens fixed to a baseboard on which a slightly smaller rear box slid. It was not until 1851 that the principle of the bellows was incorporated into the camera body. Suffice to know that even by the 1860s photographic equipment was still in its infancy. With the introduction of the *carte de visite* craze, many studios owned several camera bodies that could be fitted with different lens systems called tubes.²³ The operator could take several simultaneous exposures and single or multiple exposures of one or more subjects, thanks to a sliding, repeating back. The most basic tubes were set two by two, two by three, and three by three. Even sixteen by sixteen tube systems are not uncommon. The ability to produce images in multiples of two or more so inexpensively by the mid 1860s created tremendous competition for large volumes of business. This became especially useful for tintypes and stereoviews.

Some photographers found that life on the road provided a good income. Owners sometimes closed their city businesses for the summer and travelled to resorts and small towns, setting up portable studios and darkrooms in the outskirts of towns. Some of them either hired a temporary assistant to cover their studio operation while they travelled, or else sent the employee on the road. In early years most itinerants used compact, very portable wagons, but citizens also witnessed elaborate horse-drawn wagons, wagon trains and winter sleighs.²⁴

The problems both photographer and subject faced are obvious:

When making a position, the artist should avoid touching the clothes or person of the subject as much as possible. The *ferrotypist* can scarcely keep his hands and person as neat and clean as the professional *positionist* [portraitist] in a first class gallery. In many instances his fingers leave a stain wherever they touch, no matter how clean they may look; besides the hands are almost always wet or damp ... best to give verbal direction or any desired change of position. The ferrotypist should learn to make positions quickly. The

assistant should have the plate sensitised while the position is being made.²⁵

Once inside his small darkroom the photographer removed the plate from its holder, then adroitly poured a developing solution over its black surface. Almost instantly a creamy white surface trailed the liquid. The image fully materialised the tintypist then dipped the plate into a fixing bath and finally into a wash. Minutes later he would return to the anxious patron.

The pictures were often crudely separated or cut by means of metal shears or snips and handed over to the patron either untouched, possibly varnished, or placed in a card mount or album. Prevalent among Eastern American boarding and higher education establishments was the school album with 'gems.' A full plate of gem tintypes was cut, and the images inserted into specially matted pages suitable only for the small pictures. Headmasters and teachers 'embellished' the front pages; students by class or subject, filled the remaining frames. The practice was in general use in North America between 1880 and the turn of the century. Tintypes, like other forms of photography, were often hidden or displayed in such jewellery as locket, cuff links, brooches, shirt studs and even suspender clips and tiepins.²⁶ In North America political figures such as Abraham Lincoln and war heroes like Garnet Joseph Wolsely and the 1870 Red River expedition were commemorated with tintype photobutons.²⁷ A more sombre application was the tombstone tintype.²⁸

With the introduction of the more rapid dry ferrotype processes c1890 the tintype camera showed considerable technical evolution and widespread use. The multiple lens camera gave way primarily to the single lens camera. By the turn of the century hand-held amateur cameras such as the Telephoto were marketed, while *operatorless* coin-operated Automatic Photograph machines (with built-in flashes!) could be found at fairs.²⁹ By 1900 most automats still produced mediocre results but hand-held cameras produced surprisingly good, though stoic, imagery. Catalogues offered amateurs and professionals a variety of complete outfits with everything necessary to make dry ferroplate medallions in 60 seconds, including novelties like garter buckles with photographs, photo belt buckles, and photo watch charms for only a few pounds.

However, by the 1920s the widespread use of the rollfilm camera by the amateur greatly reduced the need for street, country fair and beach vendors. Any amateur tintypist, with his (now rare) pocket-size amateur camera, and travelling studios with larger equipment were at opposite ends of the scale. The remaining tintypist had by now converted to the prevailing paper imagery. By the early 1940s the tintypist had more or less disappeared.

It is commonly repeated that there is little artistry or craftsmanship found among tintype images. Admittedly, the poses are usually stilted backdrops and props are crudely artificial, and many show garish retouching. In general, tintypes

Members of the North West Mounted Police with blood native. 1879 Fort Walsh, Western Canada.
Courtesy of Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta.



are not considered to have great value, with the obvious exception of unusual views, activities, and portraits of famous people. The bulk of tintypes are anonymous subjects. With few exceptions these are unremarkable in physical presence and visual sophistication. The practice of making tintypes is predominantly North American with the rest of the English-speaking world showing some interest only towards the 1900s. The history of tintypes is often overlooked and few authors have studied them with any accuracy.³⁰ However, as memorabilia of sweethearts and families, holidays and vacations, tintypes have nostalgic charm.

Philippe Maurice, Canada, 1994

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DAGUERRE AND HIS DIORAMA IN THE 1830s: SOME FINANCIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

On 25 April 1821 L J M Daguerre and Charles-Marie Bouton made an agreement¹ to establish 'un monument d'exposition d'effets de peinture (visible pendant le jour) sous la dénomination de Diorama.' By 3 January 1822 they were able to put their signatures, as partners, to a legal agreement with shareholders to exploit the Diorama. In the following months it was built in Paris behind Place du Château d'Eau (now Place de la République) in rue Samson at the corner with rue des Marais. Adjacent was Daguerre's studio. This part of Paris (Fauberg du Temple, 10th Arrondissement) was a little shabby. A mixture of army barracks and a scattering of theatres, by the mid-century, it was considerably redeveloped.² The Diorama opened on 11 July 1822 showing two tableaux, *La vallée de Sarnen* by Daguerre and *La Chapelle de la Trinité dans l'Église de Canterbury* by Bouton. During the first period of the Diorama in Paris from 1822 to 1830 there were shown ten tableaux by Daguerre and the same number by Bouton.³ The Diorama acquired a considerable popular reputation in Paris. The profits in certain years, it was once claimed, reached as much as 200,000 francs⁴ (£8,000). This would certainly be a remarkable profit as even a gross income of that amount would require 80,000 visitors at the entrance fee of 2.50 francs. If true, such years must have been well before 1830. By October that year Daguerre had become the sole director as Bouton withdrew from the partnership and went to London. A letter written by Daguerre on 1 July 1830 suggests, that 'Daguerre at that period was pressed for money even though he was considered well-to-do',⁵ and there is some other evidence⁶ that the Diorama in Paris did not prosper greatly throughout the 1830s. Only three months after the invention of the daguerreotype was announced at the beginning of 1839, at a time when Arago's plans to obtain a pension from the government for Daguerre had been unable to make any headway (the administration was in considerable political disarray) the Diorama burnt down.⁷ Three tableaux on exhibition at the time were covered by insurance. An investigation concerning the valuation of those dioramas was finalised at the Royal Court of Civil Justice on 13 January 1840. A report of those proceedings, published in the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, as well as a few legal announcements from earlier in the 1830s, provides some fresh insight into the financial affairs of the Diorama and of Daguerre himself, both during the time at the Diorama when he was developing the daguerreotype technique, as well as in 1839 when he was hoping to reap some financial recompense for the many years work on this spectacular way to 'capture the fleeting images of the camera obscura'.

The most significant fact that emerges from the first three legal announcements transcribed here, is that Daguerre was an official bankrupt for almost three years from 27 March 1832 to 20 February 1835. The progress of the Diorama in Paris was marked first by Daguerre's formation of a partnership with

Bouton on 25 April 1821, followed by an agreement with a company of shareholders, dated 3 January 1822, although the details of the latter contract remain unknown. Obviously capital from the shareholders enabled the Diorama to be built, but it would have been nice to know what share they received of the subsequent income during the first years. Twenty-one tableaux were painted and shown in the first eight years following the opening of the Diorama in Paris on 11 July 1822. The first few years were an undoubted success with the public and there is no substantial reason to suppose that those years were not also financially rewarding. However, certainly by April 1830, all was not well. The big gap in our knowledge of the Diorama at this period remains the relationship between Daguerre and Bouton. He may even have been the original instigator of the enterprise. The reasons for his departure to London in 1830 and his relationship afterwards with Daguerre are unknown, although the fact that no dioramas were exchanged between Daguerre in Paris and Bouton in London suggests the split was severe.

Out of the twenty-one tableaux painted and shown in Paris between 1822 and 1830, seventeen⁸ were sold at that time to the proprietor of the London Diorama. The first contract was to sell twelve tableaux for 15,000 francs each (£600). They were displayed in London between October 1823 and 1829. Later, because it was said the entrepreneurs in London were barely solvent, Daguerre had to reduce the price by half. Possibly that re-negotiation took place in 1829, but the most likely time was when Daguerre made a hasty short visit in April 1830⁹ to London (indeed the only documented occasion when he is known to have done so). Perhaps the proceeds of those sales went into the company accounts which in addition to the income from entrance fees paid by the public would thus provide dividends to the shareholders. But assuming such sales would be divided only within Daguerre and Bouton's own partnership, then the total from the sale to London of the dioramas over eight years provided a gross sum of around 230,000 francs. Thus it would provide for each man an additional gross amount of 14,000 francs per annum, a considerable sum in those days. No legal document has been found relating to the dissolution of the partnership between these two men.

Daguerre was declared bankrupt on 27 March 1832. This does not entirely point to a specific problem with the Diorama only, for that year was generally difficult for many types of business because of the devastating effects of a most severe cholera epidemic that gripped Paris. The bankruptcy was not lifted for almost three years. Difficult years, but not fatal. When his bankruptcy was declared, Daguerre provided a valuation of 7000 francs for each of the very few tableaux that he had in 1832. It can only have been a few months after his bankruptcy was annulled in 1835 that Daguerre took out insurance for the

current tableaux; 60,000 francs cover for an unspecified three while on display, but with no cover for any diorama demounted on rolls. These 'double-effect' dioramas, produced after 1834 by Daguerre and his co-painter Sebron, were more complicated than the earlier ones. They were said to take ten or eleven months of continuous work in contrast to those of the 1820s. Daguerre later alleged that three of the earlier 'simple-effect' dioramas could be done in one year, but this does not accord with the number actually produced by himself and Bouton. It was probably a convenient argument to bolster the insured value of the 'double-effect' dioramas.

By the summer of 1837 Daguerre obviously felt his work on the daguerreotype technique had advanced enough to make an agreement with Niepce's son to sell the process the following year. If a single purchaser could not be found at 200,000 francs, then one hundred subscribers would be sought. This idea proved unfruitful, so finally Niepce and Daguerre's work was made public through an announcement by the influential scientist and politician, François Arago, at the Paris Academy of Sciences on 7 January 1839. Arago stated that, provided he himself was entirely convinced by the technique after Daguerre had given a private demonstration, he would then approach an appropriate minister to arrange for the government to provide a just recompense to Daguerre in return for the public release of the secret. However, the first few weeks, indeed months, of 1839 were characterised as a period of interminable ministerial crisis. An election took place on 4 March 1839 but the result was not political stability. Even by the time the *Chambre des Députés* was due to open its first new session one month later, it had still not been possible to form a definite cabinet of ministers. Indeed armed riots had begun in the streets of Paris on 12 May before ministers were decisively appointed. In these circumstances it should not be surprising, even with the support of such an influential Deputy as Arago, that consideration of compensation for Niepce and Daguerre's many years work should remain in abeyance.

This general paralysis of the government is another good reason why it is unnecessary to take seriously what Pierre Harmant¹⁰ has rightly described as 'une perfide hypothèse' that Daguerre could have burnt down the Diorama to force the hand of the government. On 14 June 1839 Daguerre and Niepce signed a document with the Minister of the Interior, Duchatel, who had been appointed only 4 weeks earlier, agreeing that a bill be put forward to award them pensions. It was probably at this moment that Daguerre was told that an announcement would be immediately published that he was to be made an Officer of the Legion of Honour.¹¹ The next day this bill was first brought before the *Chambre des Députés* and was considered in that chamber and in the *Chambre des Pairs* in several sessions throughout July 1839.¹² Thus the passing of the Bill through parliament that Daguerre be granted a pension of 6000 francs (£250), as well as 4000 francs per annum for Isidore Niepce, 'in return for the cession made by them of the process to fix the images in a camera obscura', consequently became law on 7 August 1839.¹³ Arago, on behalf of Daguerre,

consequently released an account of the daguerreotype technique at a special lecture on 19 August 1839. It is unfortunate that this delay is one of the ways that the earliest days of photography got off on a wrong foot.

1839 must have been an exciting year for Daguerre. On 8 March, when fire broke out in the Diorama, Daguerre arrived back to find the fire brigade at work and persuaded them with urgency to stop the flames spreading to the fifth floor of the adjacent house which held his daguerreotype specimens, equipment and documents. Otherwise the situation would have been grave. The Diorama was an enterprise close to its natural end, so loss of the diorama tableaux, particularly as they were insured, was far from disastrous. The Diorama shareholders company was wound up on 5 July. This suggests that shareholders only received dividends from entrance fees, without claim on the unsettled insurance. Certainly Daguerre must have had many weeks of financial insecurity and unsettling anticipation. By September he was much occupied with public demonstrations and discussion of his technique. In October we even find him enquiring if it would be acceptable for him to offer a gift of a daguerreotype to the young Queen of Great Britain, only to find that she (or maybe her advisors with family connections with W H F Talbot?) were not particularly amused at the idea. In August and September, Daguerre had presented daguerreotypes to several members of European royalty. It was not only a useful publicity move but sometimes financially worthwhile. Emperor Ferdinand of Austria had sent Daguerre in return a gold medal and an initialled snuff box worth 1,200 florins.¹⁴

After the fire at the Diorama and adjacent studio, Daguerre lived a short distance away in Boulevard St. Martin. In January 1841, Daguerre, then aged fifty three, and his wife moved to Bry-sur-Marne, a village a few kilometres to the east of Paris. The fifth announcement reproduced below suggests that Daguerre may have already obtained up to 140,000 francs insurance compensation for the destruction of the building, but no other certain information on this matter is available to date. With regard to the insurance on the diorama tableaux some arbitration took place during 1839 at the Tribunal des Commerce, but payment was not settled until a final appeal held at the Royal Court of Civil Justice in Paris on 10 and 13 January 1840. Two experts on paintings, the artist Paul Delaroche and an estimator of the Royal Museums, had been consulted and produced a report, paying attention to the amount of work that needed to be put into producing these pictures and thus supporting Daguerre's valuation of 60,000 francs. The Salamandre Insurance Company offered half that amount. Arbitrators had considered that the sum payable on the loss of the three diorama tableaux should be reduced because the commercial value of each would have depreciated differing amounts in proportion to the length of time they had been displayed to the public. *Sermon in Santa Maria Nuova* had been open to the public for only 11 months and 14 days so could be valued at 20,000 francs while the other two were reduced to 15,000 and 12,000 (*Valley of Goldau* had been

displayed for almost three and a half years!) giving a total of 47,000 francs. The final decision of the Court President was to award the latter figure.

The destruction by fire of Daguerre's Diorama on 8 March 1839 was a truly fateful event. It has all the elements to stimulate the imagination; consider the course of history if such a fire had taken place only three months earlier, or if Daguerre's work on the daguerreotype had been destroyed. The permutations of chance make it a fascinating event. Such considerations, however, are irrelevant; what actually happened in 1839 is a story difficult to beat. Ernst Lacan in 1874 obviously grasped with delight the new view of the fire from the officer of the fire brigade that came into his hands.¹⁵ The Diorama had been Daguerre's sole source of income, although, as we have seen, that income was problematic. Although Daguerre in the Spring of 1839 must have suffered various inconveniences, and surely considerable stress due to the fire, that event was ultimately of benefit to him. The daguerreotype technique was not yet fast enough to take portraits, and during the previous two years he had obviously decided that the sale of the process made more sense than a personal commercial enterprise in taking views. Daguerre would have had legal fees to pay, but the money awarded under the insurance was good, for to whom and for how much would he have been able to sell the tableaux if the Diorama had been closed in a more everyday way? Once the final verdict at the Royal Court of Civil Justice was reached on 13 January 1840, Daguerre cannot have been too unhappy when he looked back over the past extraordinary year.

Six Legal Announcements

Announcement 1

(published 13 avril 1832¹⁶):

DÉCLARAT DE FAILLITES
du 27 mars 1832.

DAGUERRE, su nom et comme gérat de la société en commandite pour l'exploitation du DIORAMA, rue des Marais, faub. du Temple.- Juge-com., M. Ferron; agent, M. Martin, faub. Poissonnière, 18.

Announcement 2

(published 27 December 1834¹⁷):

ANNONCES LÉGALES.
ÉTUDE DE Me VENANT, AGRÉÉ
au Tribunal de commerce de la Seine,
rue des Jeûneurs, n.1 bis.

Par exploit de Cabit, huissier à Paris, opposition a été formée au jugement rendu en ce Tribunal le vingt-sept mars mil huit cent trente-deux, déclaratif

de la faillite de M. Louis-Jacques Meude DAGUERRE, demeurant à Paris, rue des Marais, n.5, au nom et comme gerant de la société du Diorama, avec demande en annulation dudit jugement.

Toute personne intéressée à contre dire est invitée à fournir débats dans la huitaine, soit vis-à-vis du syndic M. Martin, rue du Faubourg-Poissonnière, n.18, soit vis-à-vis de M. le juge commissaire.

Pour extrait:

Signé VENANT.

Announcement 3

(published 26 February 1835¹⁸):

ANNONCES LÉGALES.
ÉTUDE DE Me VENANT, AGRÉÉ
au Tribunal de commerce de la Seine,
rue des Jeûneurs, 1 bis,

D'un jugement rendu le 20 février 1835, au Tribunal de commerce de la Seine.

Appert,

Le précédent jugement rendu par ce Tribunal, le 27 mars 1832, déclaratif de la faillite de la faillite de M. Louis-Jacques-Mande DAGUERRE, artiste peintre, demeurant à Paris, rue des Marais, n. 5, au nom et comme gérant du Diorama, a été annulé et M. DAGUERRE rétabli a la tête de ses affaires.

Pour extrait:

Signé VENANT.

Announcement 4

(published 19 July 1839¹⁹):

ANNONCES LÉGALES.
ÉTUDE DE Me EUGENE LEFEBVRE
de Vieffville agréé au Tribunal de commerce
de la Seine, rue Montmartre, 154.

D'un acte enregistré fait sous seings privés, à Paris, le 5 juillet 1839, déposé chez Me Clairét, notaire à Paris;

Entre M. Louise-Jacques-Mandé DAGUERRE, officier de la Légion-d'Honneur, propriétaire, demeurant à Paris, boulevard Saint-Martin, 17, seul gérant au moyen de la retraite de M. Bouton de la société en commandite formée par acte passé devant Me Clairét et son collègue, notaires à Paris, le 3 janvier 1822, pour la création et l'exploitation du Diorama, d'une part;
Et les actionnaires de ladite compagnie, d'autre part.

Appert:

La société a été dissoute à compter du 5 juillet 1839.

M. Daguerre a été nommé liquidateur.

Pour extrait: Eugène Lefebvre, Agréé.

Announcement/report 5

(published 22 September 1839²⁰) :

Paris, 21 Septembre

Le nom de M. Daguerre retenait aujourd'hui à l'audience de la chambre des vacations du Tribunal... Le procès que M. Daguerre a à soutenir devant le Tribunal civil se rattache à l'incendie qui, au mois de mars dernier, consuma le Diorama. M. Sanson de Sansal propriétaire des terrains sur lesquels s'élevaient les constructions de M. Daguerre, demande à celui-ci, à défaut de ces constructions qui devaient lui appartenir à l'expiration du bail, 140,000 d'indemnités versées par trois compagnies d'assurances, et qui représentent la valeur des bâtimens incendiés. Nous rendrons compte de cette affaire.'

Announcement/report 6

(published 31 January 1840²¹) :

(This is a long report of more than 1800 words providing information already incorporated into the above article. Therefore only extracts are given here consisting mainly of the final presentation by Daguerre's advocate.)

JUSTICE CIVILE. COUR ROYALE DE PARIS

(1re chambre).

(Présidence de M.Simonneau.)

Audiences des 10 et 13 janvier 1840.

Incendie du Diorama. Indemnité, pour les Tableaux Exposés,
La Vallée de Goldau, Le Temple de Salomon, Le Sermon.
M.DAGUERRE ET LA COMPAGNIE LA
SALAMANDRE.

M.Daguerre, aidé de M.Bouton, puis de M. Niepce, a conquis, d'abord par le Diorama, ensuite par le daguerreotype, une célébrité bien méritée. Toutefois, il rencontre aujourd'hui de grandes difficultés dans l'appréciation des produits de son art; la Compagnie d'assurances la Salamandre, qui sans doute est la première à regretter la perte de certains tableaux qui font l'objet de ces difficultés, lui dispute avec vivacité l'indemnité qui en résulte.

(Appointed arbitrators first presented a report obtained from two experts, Paul Delaroche and M. Georges, who concluded that Daguerre's valuation of 60,000 francs made in 1835 for three 'double-effect' dioramas was acceptable.)

Les arbitres, en reconnaissant que le rapport des experts contenait les bases d'une saine application, ont pensé toutefois qu'il fallait tenir compte du temps pendant lequel chacun des trois tableaux avait été exposé... En somme, 47,000 francs ont été alloués à M.Daguerre, savoir : 20,000 francs pour le Sermon; 15,000 francs pour le Temple; 12,000 francs pour la Vallée.

La Compagnie a interjeté appel principal; offrant 30,000 francs

seulement; M. Daguerre, appel incident, demandant 60,000 francs...

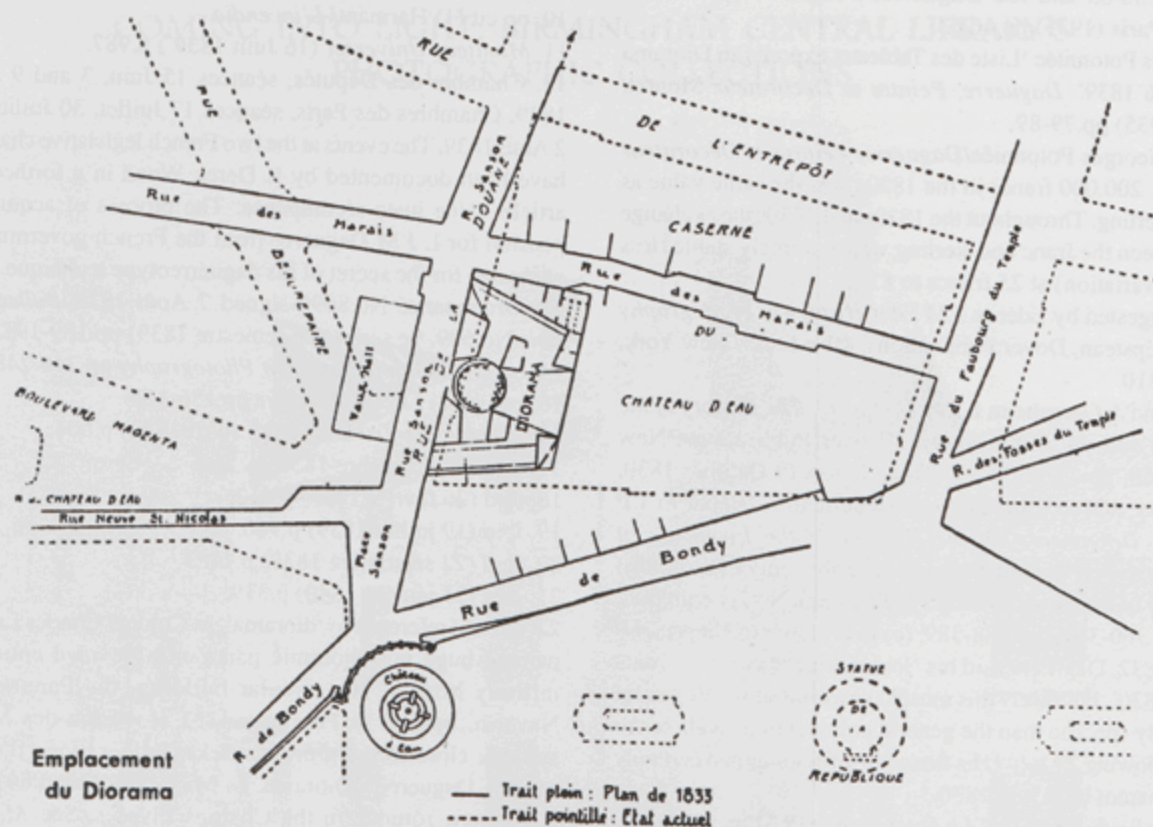
Mo Dupin, avocat de M.Daguerre, présente à l'appui de l'incrimination qu'il adresse à la Salamandre sur ses dispositions processives, un jugement du Tribunal de commerce de Paris, où on lit que cette compagnie a eu recours à des moyens dilatoires pour se soustraire à l'exécution de ses engagements. 'On représente, ajoute l'avocat, un journal qui, par la même de celui qui a obtenu le jugement, disculpe positivement la compagnie. Cela s'explique aisément par cette clause de l'assurance qui, pour n'être plus formellement écrit, n'en est pas moins restée dans les habitudes de ces sortes de compagnies, à savoir : que celui qui était indemnisé, était tenu de faire insérer dans deux journaux le fait du paiement avec apologie de la compagnie qui s'acquittait envers lui. Dans l'espèce jugée par le Tribunal de Commerce, l'assuré, ayant été payé, a donné toutes les lettres qu'on a voulu; il eût pu en donner davantage encore sans que cela prouvât rien.' Mo Dupin appuie sa discussion au fond des argumens divers admis par le experts, dont l'avis consciencieux a fixé à 60,000 francs le sinistre acceioné à M. Daguerre. 'On a choisi pour experts un peintre distiné, un habile estimateur des musées royaux; qui donc faillait-il prendre pour une telle expertise? Evidemment les artistes ont fait preuve en cela de justice et de goût. On cite néanmoins les appréciations moindres établies par M. Daguerre lui-même. D'abord elles sont motivées sur la différence des tableaux à effet simple et à effet double. Ceux de la première catégorie (car alors les autres n'existaient pas), ont seuls été indiqués comme étant de la valeur de 7,000 franc chaque. Et puis, il faut tout dire, la circonstance dans laquelle cette évaluation a été faite par M. Daguerre l'explique bien naturellement; il voyait avec douleur déchoir et périr un établissement fondé par lui; son intention était de le racheter. On comprend que ses préoccupations du moment aient déterminé les chiffres qu'il indiquait alors, et qui approchaient d'ailleurs à cette époque de la valeur réelle, en raison de la concurrence de tableaux du même genre exposés notamment au Diorama 22 de Langlois; mais il en est tout autrement des tableaux à effet double qui, comme l'ont dit les experts, coûtent beaucoup plus de temps que les tableaux à effet simple.'

Après délibération, la Cour, adoptant les motifs des premiers juges, a confirmé, leur décision sur les deux appels.

R Derek Wood, England, 1994

References

1. A dossier containing Daguerre and Bouton's Agreement of 1821, amongst documents relating to 'Projets de Sociétés' of the Conseil et du Bureau du Commerce surviving in the Archives Nationale in Paris, is described in Pierre G Harmant 'L'incendie du Diorama de Daguerre' *Le Photographe* Vol. 52, Paris (20 Mars 1962) pp.141-143.
2. Georges Potonniée 'Note sur l'emplacement du diorama' *Bulletin Société Française Photographie*, Vol.7, Series 3 (Avril



Emplacement du Diorama from George Potonniée
Daguerre, Peintre et Décorateur, Paul Montel, Paris (1935).

Daguerre's Diorama from Le Château d'Eau, Marché aux Fleurs (Vues de Paris) c.1830-35. Philippe Benoist (with figures by A Bayot)
 Coloured lithograph, showing the rear of the wings of Daguerre's Diorama. The windows along the rear wall provided the light transmitted through the tableaux. Courtesy of Gérard Lévy et François Lepage Collection, Paris.



1920) pp.80-85 and see *Daguerre, Peintre et Décorateur* Montel, Paris (1935) pp.46,63.

3. Georges Potonniée 'Liste des Tableaux exposés au Diorama de 1822 à 1839' *Daguerre, Peintre et Décorateur* Montel, Paris, (1935) pp.79-89.

4. *ibid*, Georges Potonniée/*Daguerre, Peintre et Décorateur* pp.67-68. 200,000 francs in the 1820s was the same value as £8,000 sterling. Throughout the 1820s and 1830s the exchange rate between the franc and sterling was extremely stable (less than 4% variation) at 25 francs to £1.

5. As suggested by Eder in J M Eder *History of Photography* trans. E Epstein, Dover Publications, 4th edition, New York, 1978, p.210.

6.(a) H and A Gernsheim *L J M Daguerre: The History of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype* Dover Publications, New York, 1968, pp.29,37-38. (b) Three letters (9 October 1830, 31 January, 8 March 1832) from Daguerre to N Niepce in T P Kravets, *Documents on the History of the Invention of Photography* (Dokumenti po Istorii Izobreteniya Fotografii) Academy of Sciences, Archives Publication, No 7, Leningrad, 1949, pp.360-361,380,388-389. (c) In his letter to Niepce of 8 March 1832, Daguerre said his 'losses were due to the events of July 1830', but surely this must have meant something more personally specific than the general political upheavals of the week following 27 July? His financial difficulties had certainly been apparent by 1 July 1830.

7. 'Incendie du Diorama' *La Quotidienne* (9 Mars 1839) p.3, *Gazette des Tribunaux* (9 Mars 1839) p.473, *Moniteur Universel* (9 Mars 1839) p.355 and (15 Mars 1839) p. 380, *Le Constitutionnel* (20 Mars 1839) p.1a. Daguerre's arrival at the fire, and consequent survival of items in his adjacent studio, were described by an officer of the fire brigade in an account (maybe later reminiscence rather than contemporary) that came into the hands of Ernest Lacan, editor of *Moniteur de la Photographie*, who in 1874 wrote about it in that journal (15 October 1874) pp.156-158, as well as providing a brief version in English for the *Photographic News* Vol.18, London (16 October 1874) p.500. See also op cit (1) Harmant/*Incendie*

8. At a final insurance hearing in January 1840 (op cit (21)) it was said that eighteen was the number of tableaux sold to London. However, documentation of the dioramas displayed in London provides only seventeen (9 by Daguerre and 8 by Bouton). Daguerre's *Edinburgh during the fire* certainly stayed in Paris and as his *Beginning of the Flood* was on display in Paris until 31 January 1831, the 18th diorama could only be the *View of Venice* by Bouton shown in Paris from October 1828 until 8 November 1829. There is no positive evidence from London sources that this 18th diorama was purchased. Even so, the possibility cannot be absolutely rejected, because no reviews or advertisements for the Regent's Park Diorama have been found in the press throughout 1832. For the subsequent history of the tableaux after arrival in London, see R Derek Wood 'The Diorama in Great Britain in the 1820s' *History of Photography* Vol.17 (Autumn 1993) pp.284-295.

9. op cit (6b) Kravets/*Documents* pp.343-347 (letters 105, 106). Letter dated 29 March 1830 from Daguerre in Paris to N Niepce, and another of 13 April 1830 at Diorama in London

to F Bauer.

10. op cit (1) Harmant/ *L'incendie*.

11. *Moniteur Universel* (16 Juin 1839) p.987.

12. Chambre des Députés, séances 15 Juin, 3 and 9 Juillet 1839; Chambres des Paris, séances 17 Juillet, 30 Juillet, and 2 Août 1839. The events at the two French legislative chambers have been documented by R Derek Wood in a forthcoming article, 'Une juste récompense: The process of acquiring a pension for L J M Daguerre from the French government in exchange for the secret of his daguerreotype technique.'

13. Ordonnance No.8099 signed 7 Août 1839 *Bulletin des Lois* No.699, 9e series (2e semestre 1839) pp.189-191.

14. op cit (5) Eder/*History of Photography* pp.246-248.

15. op cit (7) Lacan/*Moniteur* pp.156-158.

16. *Gazette des Tribunaux* (13 Avril 1832) p.604.

17. *ibid* (27 décembre 1834) p. 202.

18. *ibid* (26 février 1835) p.412.

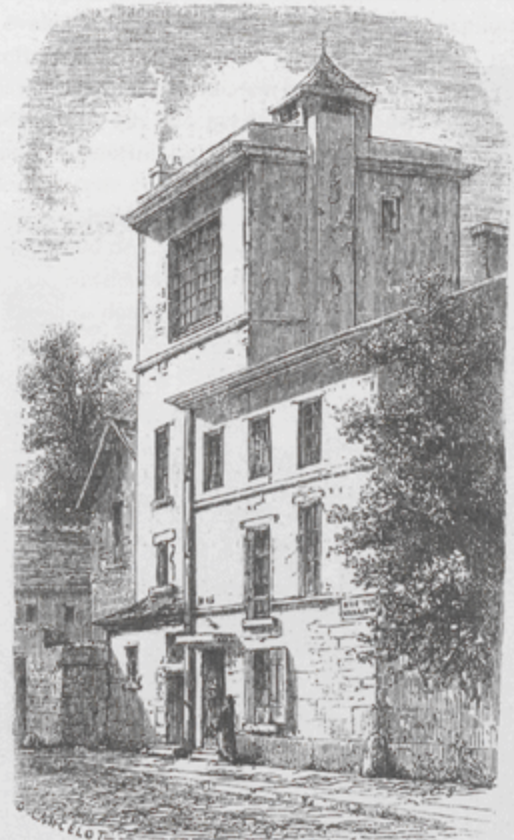
19. *ibid* (19 juillet 1839) p.960.

20. *ibid* (22 septembre 1839) p.1183.

21. *ibid* (31 janvier 1840) p.319.

22. An odd reference to 'diorama', as Colonel Charles Langlois painted huge non-dioramic panoramas devoted entirely to military history. His circular building, the Panorama de Navarin, opened in February 1831 at 40 rue des Marais, suitably close to the army barracks, further along the same road as Daguerre's Diorama. In May 1839 Langlois moved into a new rotunda in the Champs Elysées. See *Moniteur Universel* (28 Mai 1839) p.793.

Daguerre's house, rue des Marais, August 1868
wood engraving from *Magasin Pittoresque*.



COMING INTO LIGHT: BIRMINGHAM CENTRAL LIBRARY'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS



Hill Street, Birmingham 1880 Harold Baker. Courtesy of Birmingham Central Library.

Birmingham Central Library is one of Europe's largest and most important public reference libraries housing millions of books and periodicals, and a wealth of special collections. These are the product of acquisitions, donations and purchases made by Birmingham's Reference Libraries during the past 120 years. They include the Early and Fine Printing Collection, with 13,000 volumes, 8,200 of which were printed before 1701; the Shakespeare Library, with more than 43,000 accessions, including copies of the four earliest folio editions; an Archives Division holding the famous Boulton and Watt Collection and the James Watt Papers; and some 1.5 million photographic images and thousands of related items including books, periodicals, and trade catalogues which together comprise one of Britain's national photographic collections.¹

In contrast with some other institutions, recognition of the scale, content and photo-historical significance of Birmingham

Library's collections is a comparatively recent event. This article aims to provide readers with an introduction to the origins, contents and development of this important photo-historical resource, and seeks to place it within a wider tradition: that of Birmingham's 'long and honourable record' in photography.²

Birmingham's involvement with photography stretches back to the dawn of the photographic era. There is plenty of evidence, much of it held in the Library itself, which supports the idea that Birmingham played a more significant role in the history of photography than has generally been acknowledged. Birmingham's reputation for ingenuity and enterprise was ably demonstrated through its citizen's efforts to advance and exploit the commercial, industrial, scientific and artistic opportunities offered by the new medium. The following examples will give readers a brief impression of the scale, diversity and

significance of photographic activity in Birmingham during the early years of photography's history.

As early as August 1839 William Henry Fox Talbot showed at the General Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science held in Birmingham a series of,

ninety three specimens comprising of negative copies of botanical specimens, positive copies of engravings and solar microscope views together with positive prints and a negative view of Laycock made in the camera.³

This exhibition probably provided many people living outside London with their first sight of a photographic image. Two months later, the Frenchman Ste. Croix gave a series of public and private demonstrations of the daguerreotype in Birmingham⁴ and, according to one report published some years later, George Shaw, a patent agent and Professor of Chemistry at Queens College, Birmingham, produced a daguerreotype 'within two days of the publication of Daguerre's patent'.⁵

These pioneers paved the way for others and, in 1842, three years after the public announcement of the invention of photography, Joseph Henry Whitlock acquired a licence to operate the daguerreotype process and opened the first photographic studio at 120 New Street, Birmingham. Trade Directories suggest that within a year or two of this important event at least two local companies were specialising in the manufacture of daguerreotype plates.

This marked the beginnings of Birmingham's photographic manufacturing industry which, between 1842 and 1914, saw some 250 companies engaged in the production of all types of photographic materials and apparatus.⁶ Indeed, the roll-call of Birmingham's photographic manufacturers, including the names of Lancaster, Rendal, Pumphrey, Southall Brothers & Barclay, Barton, Coronet, and the Warwick Dry Plate Company, will be well known to most photographic collectors. Birmingham was also home to many other pioneers, including Dr. Richard Hill Norris, patentee of the first truly dry collodion plates (1856); Alexander Parkes, who invented Parkesine, or celluloid as we now know it; William Willis Jnr. who patented Platinotype paper in 1873; and Dr John Hall Edwards, a pioneer in the field of X-ray photography.⁷

Although the complexities and expense involved in operating early photographic processes initially prevented many from making their own images, the thirst for views and likenesses among Birmingham's growing middle-class was such that, between 1842 and 1914, over 750 photographic studios operated in the area.⁸ Some of these were staffed or run by well-known individuals like Martin Laroche, defendant in the famous Talbot/Laroche court case; Nicolaas Henneman, Talbot's assistant at his Reading establishment, and Napoleon Sarony, who went on to establish a reputation as one of the

great theatrical photographers of his day.

The rapid growth of professional, commercial and amateur photographic activity throughout the 1840s and early 1850s eventually led to the creation of a local photographic society. The Birmingham Photographic Society, founded in 1856, listed George Shaw, O G Rejlander, and H P Robinson among its members who exhibited alongside Hill and Adamson, Francis Bedford, and Gustave Le Gray in Birmingham's first photographic exhibition in 1857. Account of the Society's activities around this time also reveal that as early as the late 1850s, members were exploring the possibilities of creating a permanent site for the display of photographs (at Aston Hall), an ambition which, nearly one hundred and forty years later, the city has yet to realise.

Although much of its role in the early history of photography has yet to be properly researched, there seems little doubt that the history of the Library's photographic collections is closely linked to the history of photography in Birmingham, and to the history of its sister institution, the Museum and Art Gallery.⁹ Following the Corporation's adoption of the Public Libraries Act of 1850, Birmingham's first public reference library was opened in 1866. Established to 'assist in the culture and education of the people' of Birmingham, the original building plan for the Library included provision for a Gallery of Art or Museum, and when, in 1867, a room was made available and a small loan collection of paintings arranged, an Art Gallery within the Library was opened to the public. An Industrial Museum was commenced in 1870, and in 1872, a larger art exhibition was formed. Together these attracted 145,000 visitors in one year. In 1878 the art and industrial collections were removed to Aston Hall, situated some two and a half miles from the city centre, to allow for the extension of the Library. In 1879 the Library suffered a terrible tragedy when most of the building and its contents were destroyed by fire. Plans for a new library were soon approved, appeals for funds to buy books to re-stock its shelves were issued, and in 1882 the new Public Reference Library was opened. Three years later, in 1885, the new Museum and Art Gallery opened its doors to the public for the first time.

The two sister institutions worked in the common aim to educate the people of Birmingham; the Library working 'more particularly at the education of the mind', whereas it was 'to the education of the eye' and the 'cultivation of the powers of observation' through the 'study and contemplation of the best and finest specimens of the arts and industries of all ages', to which the Museum became devoted. In seeking to carry out their designated tasks, one institution, the Museum, was dependent on the other, the Library, which 'ministered to the Museum visitors that knowledge and information which the most comprehensive catalogues and labels in the world would fail to supply.'¹⁰

The creation of these two new 'temples of knowledge' provided the town (it did not become a city until 1899) with two

institutions ideally placed to collect and employ photography in fulfilling their declared aims and objectives. However, although Birmingham played a significant role in the early history of photography, the medium's status within the realm of fine arts was a subject of much dispute and it was not until comparatively recently that the Museum's position, that photography 'in general did not register as serious or prestigious enough to collect,'¹¹ changed for the better. The Museum did stage the occasional exhibition of photographs either side of the turn of the century, but these, like the photographs collected by its local history department, were almost exclusively record photographs. The important exhibitions of Pictorial and Art photography mounted by the second Birmingham Photographic Society, founded in 1884, were therefore staged in other spaces such as the rooms of the YMCA, and in the more prestigious rooms of the Royal Birmingham Society of Arts.

Towards the turn of the century, the Victorians' desire to collect, categorise and disseminate knowledge about the physical and social world, coupled with their desire to preserve records of sites and scenes from English life threatened by the pressures of burgeoning industrialisation and urbanisation, led to the increasing use of the camera as a means of collecting and preserving visual records and data. The Library's declared role, to inform current and future generations, led those engaged in pioneering record projects such as the Warwickshire Photographic Survey to view it as the ideal site for the collection and study of photographs of topographic and historical interest.¹² The Library's current collections were largely formed on the foundations of such work.

The Warwickshire Photographic Survey evolved as a result of developments within photography which occurred around the same time as the creation of the new public libraries and museums. In the late 1870s and early 1880 the introduction of new, comparatively inexpensive and easy-to-operate cameras and processes prompted a revolution in photography which made picture making accessible to a broad public for the first time in its history. In Birmingham the rapid growth in the numbers of those actively engaged in making photographs prompted two specific results: firstly, the establishment of the Birmingham Photographic Society, and secondly, the desire amongst some of its members that they should devote their energies to some purposeful goal. With this view in mind, one of the Society's founder members, William Jerome Harrison, proposed to involve other photographers in a scheme to secure a 'photographic record of everything of interest in the county for the benefit of posterity.'¹³ In Harrison's scheme photographers were allocated an area of a local map and charged with researching all the sites of historical interest it recorded, an activity which, Harrison suggested, should be undertaken in the Reference Library. The photographers were then to arrange excursions during which they would secure records of these buildings, sites, and scenes of interest. The Survey was formally established in 1890 with the assistance of another local photographer, Sir Benjamin Stone.¹⁴ In the

following year these surveyors deposited a selection of their best prints with the Library, with a view to providing future generations with a visual record of Warwickshire in the 1890s. The Survey continued operating until the 1950s by which time its members had deposited some 10,000 prints.

The Library added a variety of collections to this substantial core including a series of approximately 100 large albumen prints by James Burgoyne documenting the slums cleared in the Birmingham Improvement Scheme of 1875; photographs by Harold Baker taken for the Archaeology Section of the Birmingham and Midland Institute in the 1880s; 1,200 negatives by William Jerome Harrison, donated by his family in 1912; material from various Corporation Departments including Town Planning and Public Works; and numerous albums of photographs taken and collected by people such as the local historian Samuel Timmins.

During this early phase of collecting the Library sought to acquire only images which could serve a specific informational role within the institution, neither the Library nor the Museum collected photography for its own sake. It is interesting to note that whilst the Library acquired photographs taken by J Cruwys Richards documenting the Slum Improvement Scheme of c1905, it showed no interest in acquiring examples of the Pictorial work with which he and fellow members of the Birmingham Pictorial Group had won an international reputation.

The Library added little in the way of photographs, other than in the field of local history, until 1920 when the collection of the late Sir Benjamin Stone was donated. It comprised 22,000 prints, 17,000 negatives, 50 albums of collected photographs (largely *carte de visite* and cabinet prints), 50 volumes of press cuttings and various diaries and journals. Stone's well-known records of Parliament, customs and festivals, and the less well known records of his world-wide travels, were initially housed in the Birmingham Section of the Reference Library. Increasing recognition of photography's status amongst the visual arts, and of the importance of the history of photography as a field of study during the late 1960s and early 1970s, had a significantly impact within the Library.

Perhaps the most significant example of these changes came in 1970 when Bill Jay published an article about Sir Benjamin Stone in the first volume of his pioneering journal, *Album*. Overnight, Stone was transformed from prodigious local photographer known to few into a figure of national photo-historical significance known by many. His collection rapidly changed status from that of 'old photographs' to record and topographical photographs of photo-historical importance.

During the early 1970s staff in the Library became increasing aware that the existing building could no longer meet the demands of a modern library service. Plans for a new, larger library were put on the drawing board, and these were soon realised when, in 1975, a new Birmingham Central Library

arose in place of its predecessor. Before all the material from the old building was transferred across to the new, staff carried out surveys to identify items of particular importance to form an Early and Fine Printing Collection. During this work a rich array of photographic material came to light, including four volumes containing some 300 examples of Fenton's Crimean photographs, published by Thomas Agnew; four albums of Frith's series on Egypt and the Holy Land (c1855); and eleven volumes of Muybridge's famous work, *Animal Locomotion*.

With the opening of the new Reference Library, the Stone Collection was transferred to the History and Geography Department where its newly defined status was used to lay the foundation for the acquisition of collections of nineteenth century topographical photographs. In 1984 the Library purchased the Francis Bedford Collection; 2,000 negatives and 2,049 prints, and in the following year the Francis Frith Collection; 310,000 negatives; 63,000 pre 1940, 250,000 post 1940, and some original Frith prints. Together the Stone, Bedford and Frith Collections gave the Library a very significant holding of British nineteenth and twentieth century topographical photographs. Work by photographers including Beato, Samuel Bourne, and George Washington Wilson were subsequently added to this impressive body of images, along with albums of photographs collected by local people during trips abroad. These have revealed a treasure-trove of images including work by Soney & Co, Samuel Bourne, and hand-coloured prints by the noted Japanese photographer Kimbei.

The Library has also built up its photographic holdings through the acquisition of company records and other local archives. The Archives Division thus holds the Boulton and Watt Archive, which includes thirteen large albumen prints by Robert Howlett recording the construction of the *Great Eastern*, including a variant of the well-known portrait of Brunel standing by the ship's chains; the Bournville Village Trust Archive, which includes the recently exhibited series of negatives and prints by Bill Brandt; and the Metro-Cammell Archive, with hundreds of photographs documenting the interior and exterior of the famous coach makers' railway carriages. Elsewhere in the Library, the Barry Jackson Archive, which relates to the early history of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, contains photographs by Lisle Haas, Willoughby Gullachsen, and other theatrical photographers who recorded all the performances and many of the great actors appearing at this famous regional playhouse.

In addition to the vast array of images held within its walls, the Library is also home to a significant collection of photographic literature, historical and contemporary, providing the information essential to developing an understanding of the images themselves. These span the history of photography from Meme's translation of the *Daguerreotype Manual*, published in September 1839, to volumes on digital photography and the Internet. The Library holds complete runs of serials such as the *British Journal of Photography*, *The British Journal of Photography Almanac*, *Amateur*

Photographer, *The Photographic Journal*, *The History of Photography*, *Creative Camera*, *Aperture* and the Birmingham-based magazine *Ten 8*, and incomplete runs of periodicals such as *Photographic Times* and *American Photographer*, *Photographic Notes*, and the *Journal of the Camera Club*. There are also any number of important publications illustrated with original photographic prints or photomechanical reproductions including *Theatre World*, illustrated with woodburytypes, Barraud's *Men and Women of Mark*, and Alvin Langdon Coburn's *Men of Mark*.

In 1990 the Library initiated a programme of development projects which have begun to identify, conserve and curate its extant photographic resources. This has laid a solid foundation upon which others will build, making as yet uncatalogued collections available to the public. In addition to identifying existing resources the Library has also recognised the need to collect work being produced by photographers living and working in the city today. With the support of the regional arts board, West Midlands Arts, it has established a limited programme of new commissions for photographers including Vanley Burke, Phillip Lea, Claudette Holmes, Anna Maksymluk and Willoughby Gullachsen.

One important product of this developmental work has been a series of exhibitions curated by the Library. These draw upon historical and contemporary work from the collections, and include 'From Negative Stereotype to Positive Image', an exhibition exploring the representation of people of African-Caribbean origin through the work of three Birmingham photographers (1993),¹⁵ 'Darkrooms and Lightboxes: A Brief Survey of the Camera', undertaken with staff at Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry (1994), 'Sunlight and Shadow: the Photographs of Emma Barton 1872-1938' (1995),¹⁶ and most recently, 'Rebuilding the Homefront: Photographs by Bill Brandt c1943' (1995).¹⁷ Future projects include proposals for exhibitions about the history and content of the collections themselves, and a major exhibition on the life and work of Sir Benjamin Stone, both to be undertaken in partnership with staff at Birmingham's Museum and Art Gallery.

The Library has also sought to acquire material from important local photographers such as Richard Sadler and John Reardon, and collections relating to Birmingham's photographic heritage. Success in this latter endeavour has seen the addition of the Dyche Collection, the contents of a local photographic studio; the Smedley Aston Collection, portraits, seascapes and landscapes by one of the City's leading Pictorial photographers; and the Birmingham Photographic Society's Permanent Collection, covering a period from the 1850s to the present day. The ability to collect often outstretches the availability of the human and financial resources needed to catalogue and conserve, leaving many of these collections as dormant resources. Hopefully the Library will secure funding to develop their full potential in the not-too-distant future.

The Library is currently collaborating with staff at

Wolverhampton University in a research studentship exploring the application of digital imaging to the archive. This encompasses a practical and theoretical examination of the opportunities which CD-ROM and the Internet provide. It is hoped that a Web Site and digital catalogues for future exhibitions will result from this exciting project. There is still a great deal of basic curatorial work to be done on most collections before exploring their potential in the realms of cyberspace, however, work in this field, as in all others relating to this new emergent resource is undertaken in the firm belief, first stated back in 1857, that 'Birmingham is precisely one of those places where photography ought to be assiduously cultivated...studied and cherished.'¹⁸

Peter James, England, 1996

This article is dedicated to the memory of Robin Campbell Cooke, Department of Photography, Wolverhampton University.

References

1. Birmingham Central Library is one of eleven major national institutions represented on the Committee of National Photographic Collections. See: M. Haworth-Booth 'The Committee of National Photographic Collections' *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol.14, No.2 (1993) pp.193-195.
The majority of the Library's photographic collections are located in three service areas; Arts, Language and Literature, Local Studies and History, and Archives. The bulk of the major collections being held by the Local Studies and History Department. The majority of books and periodicals relating to photography can be found in the Arts, Language and Literature, and Science, Technology and Management service areas. Although it is possible for visitors to see some material without prior appointment, researchers should contact the Library with details of their enquiry and book an appointment with relevant staff.
The Library is open 9.00 am-8.00 pm Monday-Friday, and 9.00 am-5.00 pm Saturday.
For more information contact Peter James, Photography Development Officer, Birmingham Central Library, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham B3 3HQ, Tel: 0121 235 4439 Fax: 0121 233 4458.
2. Anon 'Birmingham and Photography: A Long and Honourable Record' *Photography and Focus* Vol.32, No.1, 118 (15 August 1911) pp.134-135.
3. H J P Arnold *William Henry Fox Talbot, Pioneer of Photography and Man of Science* Hutchinson Benham, London (1977) p.119.
4. P James 'Ste. Croix and the Daguerreotype in Birmingham' *History of Photography* Vol.17, No.1 (Spring 1993) pp.117-114.
5. op cit (2) p.134.
6. P James *Photographic Manufacturers and Retailers in Birmingham 1855-1914* supplement to *The PhotoHistorian*, The Royal Photographic Society Historical Group, Bath, 1997.

7. New research is constantly adding to the list of Birmingham's pioneers. John Hannavy has recently published research revealing that Birmingham was home to 'Britain's only known thermoplastic photographic case maker, John Smith' See: J Hannavy & D Firkins, 'John Smith Casemaker' *Photographica World* No.74 (September 1995) pp.22-26.

8. J Aston, M Hallett and J McKenna *A Directory of Photographic Studios in Birmingham 1841-1914* Royal Photographic Society Historical Group and Birmingham Polytechnic, Birmingham (1991).

9. For a more detailed history of the Library and on the Museum and Art Gallery see: A Capel Shaw 'The Birmingham Free Libraries' and Withworth Wallis 'The Museum and Art Gallery' *Birmingham Institutions, Lectures given at the University* Cornish Brothers, Birmingham (1911) pp.399-443 and 475-521.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery's Department of Prints and Drawings holds a collection of approximately 200 photographs including a body of nineteenth century images relating to the Pre-Raphaelite Collection and material purchased from various residencies by Vanley Burke, Iain Stewart and Helen Chadwick.

The Museum and Art Gallery's Social History department holds a collection of some 15,000 photographs of local historical interest, while Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry holds a collection of approximately 100 cameras ranging from an early Wolcott daguerreotype camera of the 1840s to a Kodak Disc Camera of the 1980s, and a good collection of optical magic lanterns, stereoscopes and optical toys.

10. Whitworth Wallis 'The Connection Between Free Libraries and Art Galleries and Museums' *The Library Chronicle: Journal of Librarianship and Bibliography*, Vol.V, No.47 (January 1888) p.9.

11. Tessa Sidey 'Emma Barton - Photography as Fine Art', (ed.) J. Taylor, *Sunlight and Shadow: The Photographs of Emma Barton 1872-1938*, Birmingham Libraries and Birmingham Museums, Birmingham (1995) p.66.

12. P James 'A Century of Survey Photography' *The Local Historian* Vol.20, No.4 (November 1990) pp.166-173.

13. Clarence M Miles 'Collections of Photographs in Public Libraries' *Photographic Times* 1896, p.246.
where he writes,

The photographers of this country, amateur and professional, are the possessors of an enormous and important collection of negatives of great historic, biographic, technical and artistic value. The great misfortune is, however, that they are scattered and lose much, in fact most of their value by not being associated and arranged in situations accessible to the public. With proper management they would form an invaluable record of the ever changing conditions of local scenery, public and historical buildings, public gatherings, historic events, and other matters of public interest.

14. P James 'The Photographic Record and Survey Movement' *History of Photography* Vol.X11, No.3 July-September 1988

pp.205-218

15. Alan Morris 'From Negative Stereotype to Positive Image'
Autograph (1994) pp.2-3.

16. op cit (11) Taylor

17. P James 'The Lost Brandts' *Amateur Photographer* (23
December 1993) pp.62-65

18. Anon *Photographic Notes* (15 October 1857) p.375.



The Blue Lagoon, Trinidad c.1894 Benjamin Stone.
Courtesy of Birmingham Central Library.

An Indoor Group, Amateur Photographer 19 May 1908
Emma Barton (1872-1938) Courtesy of Birmingham Central Library.



EXPEDITION PHOTOGRAPHY IN POLAR AREAS

The Norwegian Polar Institute in Oslo has Norway's largest collection of polar-historical photographs, the oldest of which date from 1872. Before photography in polar areas became a practical possibility, and before it became particularly widespread, images were made by drawing and painting. Many of these are sober representations of scenery and events within the terms of contemporary knowledge of the polar areas. Where the expedition itself could not, or did not, bring back its own drawn or painted images, artists, who themselves had remained safe and warm at home, could take on the task of rendering described scenery and narrated events. Many of this type of early renditions of the Arctic and Antarctic can be dramatic works of art, but are extremely unreliable as source material. The polar areas were relatively unknown and stirred the popular imagination with their frozen seas, horrific cold and darkness and the terrible sufferings that awaited those who ventured too far and too long into their depths. Perhaps artistic representations of attacking polar bears and walruses supplied some of the shuddering thrills that we may obtain from contemporary science fiction representations, while romantic tableaux of polar heroes and their crews, engaged in inhuman struggle against the elements, helped to support the myth of both the inhospitable polar nature and the brave and tough men who ventured there.

Even after the advent of photography, artists could still be taken along to make their personal impressions of the event. Some explorers, like Norway's greatest hero, Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930), could manage this task well enough themselves. Beside being a pioneer polar explorer who crossed the Greenland ice cap as the first in 1888 and led the drift of the polar ship *Fram* over the Arctic Ocean in 1893-96, he was also a gifted diplomat, humanitarian, scientist, author and, not least, artist. More often, however, the artist was not the expedition leader. Some expeditions, such as the Baldwin-Ziegler expedition to Franz Josef Land 1901-02 (with the North Pole as the intended, but never attempted goal) had three different positions on its payroll entitled photographer, artist and sketch artist.¹ Herbert Ponting on Robert F. Scott's Antarctic expedition has been said to have been the first specialized, professional photographer to accompany a polar expedition,² but this record should maybe go instead to the American Anthony Fiala who was the photographer on the Baldwin-Ziegler expedition. He had already embarked on his chosen career of 'illustrated journalism' when he was asked to be expedition photographer. Whilst in Franz Josef Land he also took what apparently were the first motion pictures of the Arctic regions.³

As photography became more widespread, expedition members with different backgrounds could contribute their efforts to the photographic record. Many of the best-known photographs from Roald Amundsen's (1872-1928) attainment of the South Pole in 1911-12 were taken by skier and dog-sled driver Olav

Bjaaland. Landscapes and ships in ice-filled waters were popular subjects for the photographers, as they had been for the artists, but also expedition life and detailed representations of flora and fauna, fossils and other interesting details were brought back for publication or private use.

Norwegian landscapes

Artists on polar expeditions were naturally enough influenced by the art traditions of their home milieu. Pictorial representation of polar areas was a new field, and there was no tailor-made framework to place it into. For Norwegian artists at least, the characteristics of the polar areas; the emptiness, barrenness, snow and ice could, however, be approached through the representation of the 'wilderness' areas of Norway itself; the mountains and fjords especially, but also the coasts and the moorlands with their sparse, windswept vegetation and lack of human edifices. A new school of Norwegian painting with this subject material was started by J C Dahl (1788-1857) in the first part of the nineteenth century. He was especially interested in how weather; light, clouds, fog, gave dramatic life to the landscape, and he became particularly well known for his paintings of the Norwegian forest and mountain scenery. Hans Gude (1825-1903) continued the school of Norwegian landscape painting, again with an emphasis on mountain scenery, although with a more romantic character than Dahl's.⁴

The inspiration Norwegian art and artists found in the landscape rubbed off on to another group of artists, the photographers. If Norway can be said to have contributed to international photography in any way, it is in landscape photography. From the last part of the nineteenth to the first part of the twentieth century, photographers such as Axel Lindahl, Knud Knudsen and Anders B Wilse travelled the length and breadth of Norway, documenting landscape and life in all its variations. The motivation for this belonged, in no small degree, to the fact that photographs of Norwegian landscapes, buildings and ways of life, fitted perfectly into the wave of national romanticism that manifested itself in Norway in the nineteenth century.⁵ Wilse's photographic expeditions even took him into the Arctic, to the Spitsbergen archipelago north of Norway.

Thus, from the early nineteenth century in Norway, there were already painters, and later photographers, who had established a rapport with the wild and desolate scenery of mountain and moorland Norway. Combined with the fact that the average native Norwegian was no stranger to the beauties and dangers of harsh winter weather, snow and ice, this can, in part, explain the fact that little emphasis was placed on the really dramatic representations of the strains and horrors of the polar areas. The romantic/dramatic renditions of such scenes as grueling man-hauling sledging expeditions, desperate fights with polar bears, tiny ships amongst giant icebergs, and man's suffering

and death, seldom appeared in Norwegian polar illustrations. Where such appear, they are in fact inclined to be in cartoon form. It may be said in this connection that many episodes from Fridtjof Nansen's arctic expeditions *could* have been presented in this genre; the unplanned drift in a small boat through the jumbled pack ice off the East Greenland coast, the sledge hauling both across Greenland and towards the North Pole; the meetings with polar bears. Both the drawings and photographic reconstructions of such scenes are however naturalistic and sober, more probably because of Nansen's own attitude to the Arctic nature than because photographs, by this time, were available as a correction. One drawing in Nansen's book of the crossing of Greenland's inland ice can be said to be of the dramatic type. It shows Nansen hanging precariously over a deep crevasse in the ice and is by the Norwegian artist Eivind Nielsen (1864-1939).⁶ Characteristically enough the title, however, is no more than the understatement, *An awkward predicament*.

During most of the nineteenth century, however, there was a tendency for both landscape painters and photographers in Norway and abroad to emphasize the romantic aspect of the wild, polar nature: the contrast between small, insignificant people and large and powerful nature, and between light and dark as portrayed by land and sea compared with snow and ice. The 27 French Atlas Pittoresque (*La Recherche*)⁷ prints from Svalbard (1838-39) illustrate this very clearly. Although the scenery appears recognizable and naturalistic, there is scarcely an image that does not show tiny people amongst the high, sheer mountains or deeply-crevassed glaciers, or even the ultimate symbols of man's misguided attempts to penetrate the Arctic wilderness, crosses and shipwrecks. Taken in the years around the turn of the century, famous ship-in-the-ice photographs from the 'heroic' expeditions also illustrate this point, either where the incredible ice masses are pressing round the frozen-in and frost-covered ship (*Fram* 1894, *Belgica* 1898, *Endurance* 1915) or where the ice is used as a massive frame for the tiny ship, as in Herbert Ponting's magnificent photograph of *Terra Nova* in the Antarctic in 1911.

Nansen's art and photography

When the wet negative plate was gradually replaced by prefabricated dry plates from the end of the 1860s, expedition photography became simplified. For example, it was no longer necessary to have a mobile darkroom at hand to develop the plates immediately and, by the time Fridtjof Nansen was ready to cross Greenland in 1888, he could carry one of George Eastman's Kodak cameras with roll film (*You press the button, we do the rest*). In many ways Nansen represents the double changeover, from 'manual' illustrations to photography, and from the romantic representation to the scientific. Many of the photographs of his *Fram* expedition across the Arctic Ocean in 1893-96 can be regarded equally as works of art as of documentation. Nansen's artistic talent developed hand in hand with his careful scientific documentation, and his drawings and water colours both supplement the photographs and interpret his lyrical, dreaming feelings about the arctic

landscape,

Wednesday, March 14th 1894:

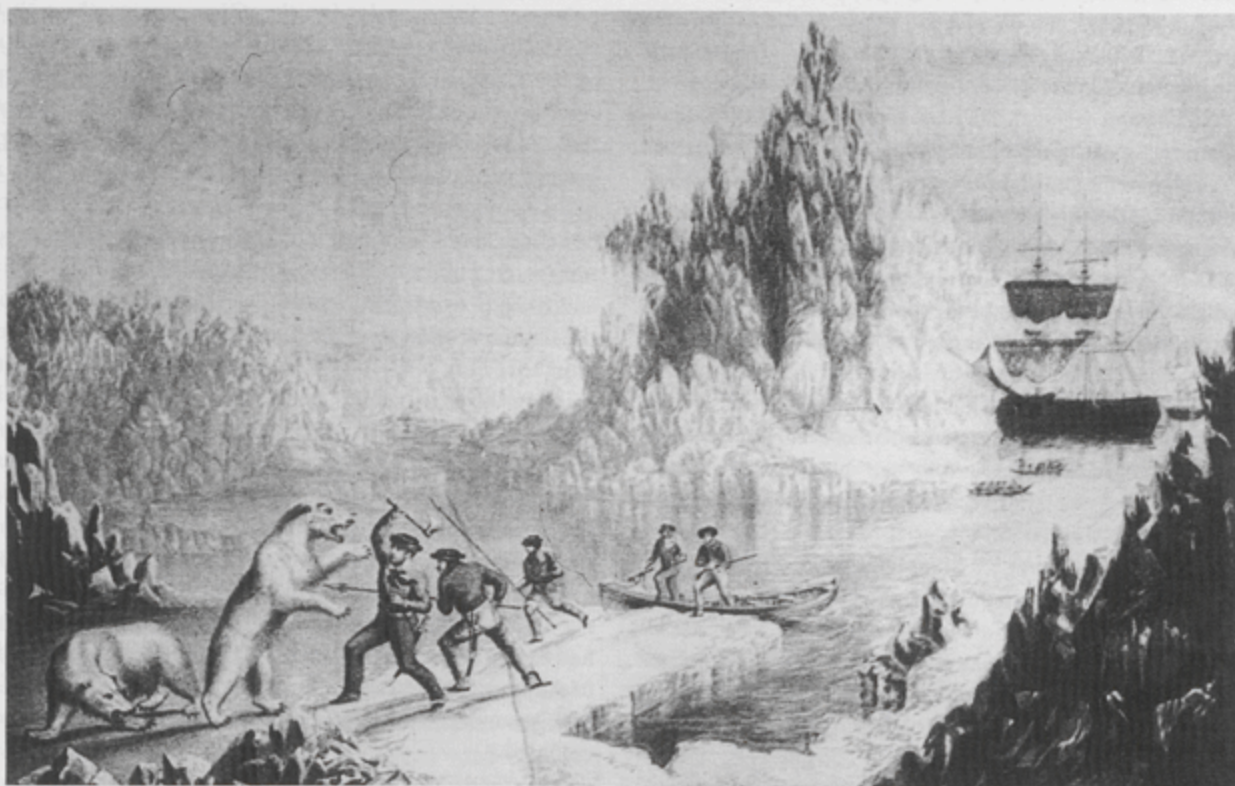
Lovely weather, almost calm, sparkingly bright, and moonshine: in the north the faint flush of evening, and the aurora over the southern sky, now like a row of flaming spears, then changing into a silvery veil, undulating in wavy folds with the wind, every here and there interspersed with red sprays. These wonderful night effects are ever new, and never fail to captivate the soul.⁸

It is interesting to note that Nansen took drawing and water-colour lessons from the Norwegian landscape painter Franz Wilhelm Schiertz (1813-87). Schiertz had, in turn, been a prominent pupil of J C Dahl. In addition, and not least, Schiertz had personally travelled in the Arctic, most probably as the first Norwegian artist on a polar expedition, the *Norwegian North Atlantic Expedition* of 1876-78, when he painted landscapes of Iceland, Bjørnøya, Spitsbergen and Jan Mayen. (For the record, it should be mentioned that the geologist Baltazar Mathias Keilhau, the first Norwegian scientist to work in Svalbard in 1827, made excellent drawings, but these were a 'sideline' to his main scientific purpose.)

In Nansen's book of his expedition over Greenland, photographs and sketches were used intermixed as a basis for the drawn illustrations.⁹ In the books of the *Fram* expedition, photographs have taken the upper hand, but drawings and water colours are now used more specifically.¹⁰ Most of the drawings were done by professional artists, but a few water colours by Nansen are presented as artistic works in their own right. The two volumes of Nansen's account of the expedition were published in 1897, the year after his return, not only in Norway, but also in Sweden, Britain and the Netherlands, and the following year, 1898, in Germany. All the editions have a similar total number of illustrations (217-232), but the English edition has by far the largest number of colour plates (16),¹¹ the majority being Nansen's impressions of atmospheric phenomena such as the Aurora Borealis and of moonlight. These are subjects which are difficult to capture in a photograph at any time, and which were particularly in accordance with Nansen's feelings as quoted above.

As with most other actions Nansen took, he had a clear aim with his photographic record. This was to document as many sides of the expedition as possible, not least, we can infer, in order to be able to illustrate richly the ensuing books about the expedition. After the wintering with Hjalmar Johansen in Franz Josef Land, after the two had left the *Fram* to strike towards the North Pole before turning south and arriving on the archipelago, Nansen used his saviour, Frederick Jackson, to take photographs of the Norwegian pair in many of the different situations they had been through on their lonely trek.¹² These reconstructions were intended for use in Nansen's book.

In addition we know that Nansen illustrated many of his



An imaginative painting by George Baxter showing the search for Franklin in the 1850s. Illustration in Ralph K Andrist, *Heroes of Polar Exploration* Cassell, London, 1962.

View from Svalbard (Spitsbergen) 1907 Adolf Hoel.
Courtesy of Adolf Hoel/Norsk Polarinstitutt.



lectures with lantern slides of photographs. Some of the slides were hand coloured, but these were few in comparison with Amundsen's collection. The University Library in Oslo, which perhaps has the largest collection of Nansen's photographs, only has a total of 18 hand-coloured slides from his two polar expeditions. Seven of these are artistic reproductions of the Aurora and other atmospheric phenomena. Of the other slides (c. 180), the collection from Greenland consists of a majority of Eskimo studies. There would undoubtedly have been better opportunity to photograph during the wintering on the west coast than during the struggle over the ice cap, in addition to which the Eskimo motifs perhaps dominated in lectures afterwards more than the expedition photographs. Twelve more hand-coloured slides from Nansen's *Fram* expedition are in the Polar Institute Collection, and of these all but one are coloured photographs.

A photograph of Nansen in Paris after his second expedition, with the *Fram*, shows him with his lecture slides and notes.¹³ Various series of slides from this exhibition were also circulated under the copyright name *Farthest North*, which was the title of the English edition of Nansen's book. (One such series recently turned up in the belongings of Australia's first commercial photographic studio operator, Francia (*sic*) Bartlett.¹⁴)

Road Amundsen's expedition photography

Road Amundsen was also most careful to create as complete a photographic record of his expeditions as possible. But now the step from 'manual' to photographic illustration was taken fully, and the romantic aura that we find in Nansen's work is absent. Although photographs from Amundsen's life and expeditions can be found in many relevant collections around Norway, the most comprehensive collection is to be found at the Norwegian Polar Institute. We can see from this collection that the majority of the photographs from Amundsen's expeditions, which were taken both by him and by other expedition members, are *situation* photographs. Only the portraits of the Norwegians and of the natives they met in the Northwest and Northeast Passages, seem particularly posed. Otherwise we see the men at work and relaxation, or during the sledging expeditions, without the careful compositional elements that characterise many of Nansen's photographs. Perhaps the only one which we can really attribute such elements to, is the strongly symbolic photograph of the South Pole tent. Characteristically enough, it is this one photograph which, more than any other, is used in a seemingly endless variety of connections to represent Norway's polar traditions. It is easy to see why. The four men (the fifth member of the Pole party, Bjaaland, is taking the photograph), bareheaded in the Antarctic wastes, lined up to the left of the picture, gazing at their country's flag, waving as the first at the ultimate goal of the polar explorer. In fact a masterpiece of simple, striking composition.

We know that lectures were an important part of Amundsen's efforts to secure money for his polar expeditions, although he

himself found them a great bind. When he started on his first polar expedition as leader, the *Gjøa* voyage through the Northwest Passage 1903-06, the expedition had to sneak out of the Kristianiafjord (= Oslo fjord) at midnight to avoid creditors. At the end of the expedition a series of lecture tours in the United States (together with a grant from the Norwegian government), secured his finances for a while, but not permanently as polar expeditions were expensive. Production of lantern slides for the lectures required some effort. Special transparent copies had to be made from the original negatives and fixed between glass plates. As Kodachrome diapositive, the first professional colour film, did not come on the market until 1936, any colouring of the slides had to be done by hand painting the transparency before the second protective plate was fixed in place. The slides measured 8 x 8 cm. and were relatively heavy, so they were stored and transported in special cases. Amundsen had several duplicates of his lecture slides made, most probably because of the fragile nature of the finished product. A collection of over 200 was discovered in 1986 in a Horlick's Malted Milk case that had belonged to Amundsen.¹⁵ A larger collection, with many similar images, had been given to the Norwegian Polar Institute by the widow of Amundsen's nephew a few years before. About half of the 500 Amundsen slides owned by the Polar Institute are hand coloured.

In a book entitled *The Teacher of Photograph Painting*, published in Chicago in 1928, the case for hand colouring is summed up in the words:

Aside from all artistic value on the application of colors on photographs it must be said that there is a good call for them and that the public likes them. There are few professional photographers that have not tried it, some with good success, and some with mediocre result. It depends a good deal from the methods they have followed, from the amount of interest and attention given in carrying out the work and from the quality of the photograph to be painted. Do not try to paint a poor photo with the purpose of making it pretty as you can't draw blood out of a stone.¹⁶

We are further told that, 'You should not forget that photographs should not be totally covered, but only veiled over. The photograph furnishes the drawing, the lines, and such must be left prominent. Therefore, use well thinned colors'.¹⁷ Other professional 'tricks' were to wet the emulsion before applying the colours to avoid sharp borders between two different colours, for example, different shades in a landscape, and to brown-tone the glass plates with sulphur before colouring to give a more natural skin colour to portraits.¹⁸ Hand colouring of the slides was an important part of Amundsen's effort to give an attractive visual impression of the expeditions to the audiences. Roland Huntford quotes Scott's widow Kathleen as describing the slides from the South Pole expedition in the words, 'many of them [were] faked - painted',¹⁹ reflecting most

probably her opinion of Amundsen and his expedition equally as much as of the coloured slides. A school girl who saw the same lecture as Kathleen Scott wrote in her diary, 'Hardly contain myself all day. Amundsen had a simply killing Norwegian accent. And we had to concentrate [sic] for all we were worth to be able to understand what he said. His lantern slides were mostly coloured and simply lovely.'²⁰

Regarding Amundsen's 'killing' Norwegian accent, various sources tell of the problems this caused the audiences, especially in the United States.²¹ The slides from such exotic places could to a large extent compensate and help the audience through.

Hand colouring of glass slides was still in use (at least in Norway) as recently as the end of the 1960s in connection with cinema advertisements. It was still easier at that time to paint certain information on to photographic slides, than to add it by a photographic procedure.²²

A final word on lantern slides

The Norwegian Polar Institute has other collections of lantern slides, but none as extensive as the Amundsen Collection. Carsten Borchgrevink, who led the first expedition to winter on land in Antarctica, (1898-1900), is represented with 224 slides in two large wooden boxes. These were a gift from Borchgrevink to the Institute. Apart from very illustrative slides of landscape, wildlife and expedition life in various situations, there are a number of slides of zoological specimens. The expedition zoologist, Nicolai Hanson, died during the wintering and was buried near the base camp. Otto Sverdrup, who was second in command on both of Nansen's polar expeditions, and who led his own *Fram* expedition to western Greenland and the islands off northern Canada in the years 1898-1902, has parts of his glass slide collection at the Polar Institute and at the *Fram* Museum in Oslo. Antarctic whaling magnate Lars Christensen is also represented at the Institute with a large number of such slides.

In addition to these gifts to the collection, the Polar Institute has made its own collections of lantern slides according to various themes which, in their time (up to the mid-1940s), were singled out as illustrations for lectures and other presentations. The subject groups include, for example, *coal mining*, *geology*, *trappers' cabins* (Svalbard and Northeast Greenland), *wildlife*, and *claim signs* (for mining in Svalbard). They are representative of the type of photograph which was taken for the purpose of scientific documentation, and which is characteristic for the bulk of the Polar Institute's own photographs.

Scientific documentation

The last half of the nineteenth century showed a blossoming of scientific exploration in the polar areas. Not least the First International Polar Year in 1882-83 stressed the idea of steady, organized science being more useful than sporadic geographic discoveries. The increasing stream of expedition reports from

Arctic, and gradually also Antarctic areas, emphasized the need for a scientific approach also to the visual aspect. Photographs should be a part of the careful, detailed mapping of the environment that science was now unfolding. This was in accordance with a change of attitude generally in the European world. Photography from the turn of the century became a medium for presenting the world as it is; a documentary style that should show scenes and situations in a direct fashion. Nature should no longer be presented as big and wild, in contrast to small and insignificant man and his creations. The romantic image gave way to the scientific; wilderness could be tamed, or at least used and enjoyed, by man.

The Norwegian Polar Institute's own collection of photographs from its annual polar expeditions represents this genre quite clearly. Landscapes form a large part of the collection. They are not, however, landscape portrayals with artistic pretensions, but scientific documentations of relatively unknown areas for the purpose of mapping and analysis. Artistic and even 'touristic' photographs do occur; large and small icebergs, shaped by waves and weather into the most amazing variety of shapes, are examples of the former. The latter can be explained as part of the new relationship between man and nature. By taking, and showing, the 'We were here' photographs, the scientists could underline the fact that Science was taking control over Nature. Man could venture into the far corners of the globe and master every situation. Photographs from 1910 of naked expedition members jumping from the boat deck, or bathing in the snow, must be the ultimate expression of nonchalance in confrontation with the Arctic.

The comparison between this new look on polar nature and the earlier dramatic and romantic genres, further illustrates that perception of polar nature is not in the eye of the beholder of the photographs so much as in the mind of the photographer. Where one person may find the idea or even the experience of wintering in the Antarctic to be horrifying, another could write in an Antarctic expedition report in 1949, 'Wintering at an isolated base in the Antarctic is mostly a question of routine.'²³ If the photographer, or artist, wishes to tell the audience back home that the polar areas are only tough and exotic, then the photographs will reflect this, either through choice of image, through camera angle, or by other perfectly legitimate means. In the same way the *actual* toughness of the polar areas can be done a disservice by a tendency to concentrate on the good-weather photograph.

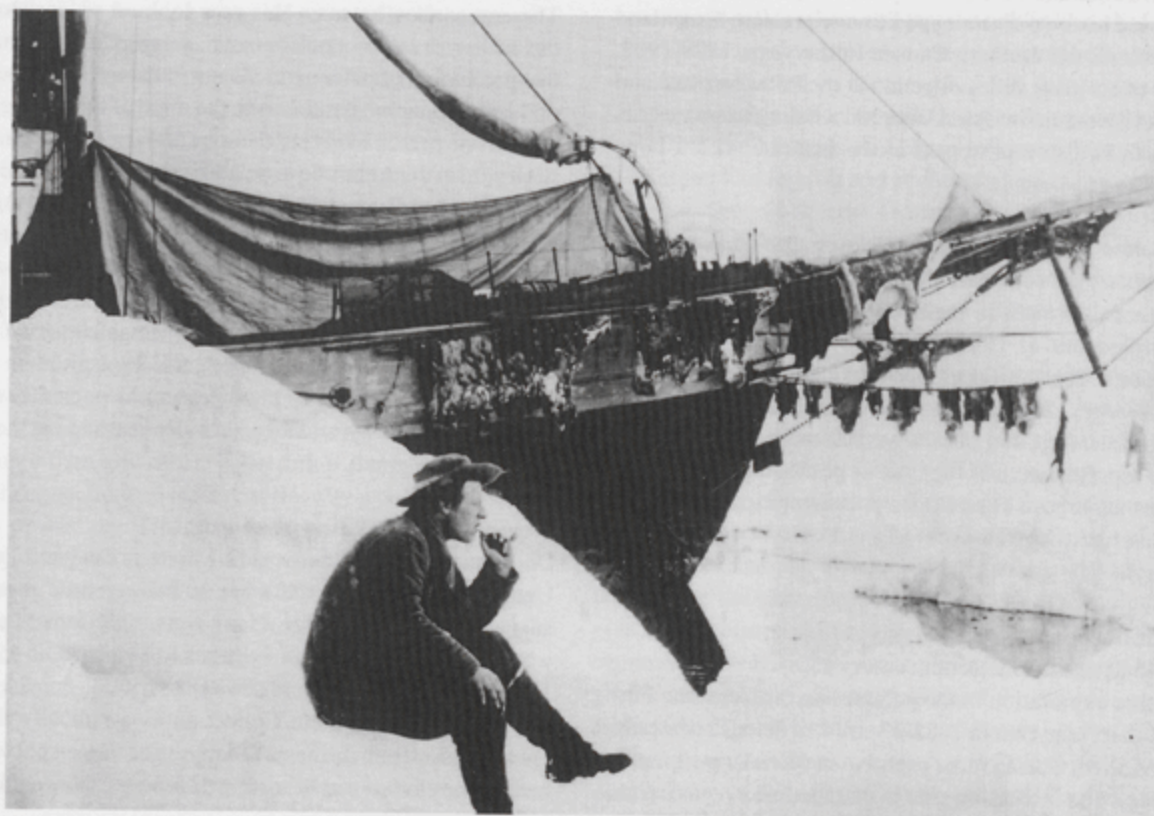
Women and expedition photography

Do women fit into this world of male polar photography? Until the present time there has been very little material to analyse. The first and, for a long time, only female scientist who organized her own expeditions to Svalbard, in 1907 and 1908, Hanna Resvoll-Holmsen (1873-1943), does not stand out in the Polar Institute Collection as a radically different photographer from the men. Where she occurs on photographs her female clothes and bearing are obvious amongst the males



*Amundsen and his men paying their respects to the Norwegian flag, flying as the first at the South Pole.
Courtesy of Norsk Polarinstitut Collection.*

Homesickness 16 June, 1894 Nansen beside Fram during the 3-year drift over the Arctic Ocean. Courtesy of Norsk Polarinstitut Collection.





A snow bath during the Norwegian Spitsbergen expedition in 1910 Isachsen. Courtesy of Isachsen/Norsk Polarinstitut.

A summer scene 21 July 1894 Collecting algæ beside Fram in the meltwater. Courtesy of Norsk Polarinstitut Collection.



of course, and perhaps we can see a certain softness brought into the group photographs. This may, however, be a product of the fact that she met and married one of the geologists who participated in the expeditions. Photographs of the wives of the whaling-ship owner Lars Christensen and of Captain Klarius Mikkelsen in Antarctica in the 1930s, show fashion-conscious ladies in long, fur-lined coats and cloche hats, but then their participation was as tourists, not expedition members. In spite of that handicap, Caroline Mikkelsen became, in 1935, the first woman to set foot on the Antarctic continent !

Photography and sponsoring

One aspect of expedition photography which is most important to bear in mind since it can direct both the choice and accentuation of the image, and hence also the viewer's impression and appreciation of the subject, is the role of advertising and sponsors. Sponsoring is easily assumed to be a modern phenomenon, but it has in fact played a large role in all the more-spectacular Norwegian polar expeditions. In the earlier expeditions it dictated which effects should appear as casually as possible on certain photographs, whether they were tins of biscuits or pipes of tobacco. Tobacco producers have traditionally stayed high on the list of sponsors of polar expeditions, as the image of manly toughness and the sporting outdoor life has suited the promoted associations to smoking.

Both Nansen, Amundsen and Otto Sverdrup, as well as modern-day Norwegian adventurers such as Ragnar Thorseth, have been sponsored by the Tiedemans tobacco company, and have produced photographs to prove the point. Likewise with the breweries. The Ringnes brewery in Oslo was a generous sponsor of the Nansen, Sverdrup and Amundsen expeditions. The expeditions themselves had, however, a restrictive profile with regard to alcohol consumption, and bottles only appear to any degree on photographs of Christmas tables, or other important festive occasions. On the other hand the Ringnes and Heiberg names from the brewery have been immortalized by being given to geographical features in various parts of the Arctic and Antarctic.

Compared with expedition photographs today, however, such photographs for advertising and sponsor purposes can at least be said to have been discrete. On modern (non-governmental) polar expedition photographs it is only the pure landscape photographs which escape the message of sponsors, as all clothes and equipment are plastered with the various logos. Expedition photography has surrendered to commercialism !

Susan Barr, Norway, 1996

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REVIEWS

Hugh Cortazzi and Terry Bennett *Japan* Garnet, Reading, UK, 1995, 159 pp. h/b, ISBN 1 873938 55. £25. Text in English. Part of the series *Caught in Time: Great Photographic Archives*.

Japan in the 1860's was a country undergoing a remarkable transition in its history. For nearly 250 years during the Edo period (1603-1868) contact with the West had been restricted as a deliberate policy by the ruling Tokugawa Shogunate. Although peaceful, this hierarchical society was therefore isolated from many of the agricultural, industrial and scientific advances being made elsewhere in the world. The end of the Edo period was to start the process of Japan's transition from a feudal society to a modern industrial nation state. As stated in the preface, this period '... coincided with the advent of photography in Japan, and the photographs of the time recorded a way of life that was fast being altered, almost beyond recognition, by the changes taking place'.

The photographs published in *Japan* are all drawn from the archives of the Russian Geographical Society in St. Petersburg. Collected by the Russian botanist Alexander Vasilyevich Grigoryev during 1879-80, this is the first book to publish the collection in any depth. Although undated, most of the photographs were taken in the 1870's and represent the work of Felice Beato, Baron Von Stillfried, Shusaburo Usui and many other photographers where attribution is uncertain or unknown. Hand-colouring of monochrome photographs was widely practised in Japan, much more so than in Europe, and the 121 plates convey the delicacy and subtlety of this process. Hugh Cortazzi's essay describes the complex social and political changes that took place in Japan in the middle of the nineteenth century, while Terry Bennett traces the early development of photography in Japan.

As Bennett makes clear, the early history of photography in Japan was complicated by the long period of isolation during the Edo period. The first camera to arrive in Japan was in 1848, nine years after Daguerre's and Fox Talbot's momentous discoveries. Moreover '... the earliest surviving photograph by a Japanese was a daguerreotype portrait of Shimazu taken in 1857 by one Shiro Ichiki'. Although many photographs were taken by visitors after 1859, when Japan was officially opened up to foreigners, the most significant work was undertaken by Felice Beato, William Burger, Michael Moser, Baron von Stillfried und Ratenitz and Adolpho Farsari, all of whom lived in Japan for various periods of time and set up studios there. The first professional Japanese photographers, Hikomo Ueno and Renjo Shimooka set up studios in 1862 and by 1890 Japanese photographers had established a monopoly on the photographic trade. There was a large degree of interaction between the Western and Japanese photographers whether through the provision of instruction and apprenticeships or on

more commercial terms. Until the establishment of an indigenous market, the majority of work undertaken by both sets of photographers was the supply of work for foreign clientele and tourists.

Aside from the more topographic views of the Treaty Ports and Shinto Temples, the majority of photographs in this collection depict the Japanese themselves; whether working, bathing, taking part in religious ceremonies, or simply posing for the camera itself. Some photographs, possibly by Suzuki, depict labourers in the paddy fields, but the overwhelming impression conveyed is something altogether more intimate and confined. When Beato photographs street peddlers, porters, or travellers he depicts them in their entirety, almost as embodiments of representative 'types'. Similarly his depiction of a woman wearing geta (wooden clogs) and carrying a child on her back perfectly describes these two aspects of Japanese life. Von Stillfried was equally preoccupied by depicting Japanese society, and indeed bought Beato's negatives in 1877 which he made further prints from for sale. Bennett argues that '... (Beato's and von Stillfried's) styles were indeed different, but von Stillfried, with his formal artistic training, was able often to produce more visually appealing work ... his photographs also demonstrate his ability to draw out of his subjects their characters and personalities'. Von Stillfried also achieved a greater degree of intimacy by the simple device of framing his sitters more closely, and in this sense they are closer to being portraits of particular individuals.

In terms of authorship a more intriguing puzzle is found in the numerous photographs which Bennett is inclined to attribute to the Japanese photographer Shinichi Suzuki. Referred to as the *shajo* group after the raised platform or verandah on which they were taken, they provide a different viewpoint to that of Beato and Von Stillfried. The composition and format of this series is remarkably consistent even though they are 'cluttered and busy'. The subjects of the photographs are always depicted against a background which runs parallel to the picture plane obliterating any sense of perspective or depth. Whether it is a family taking a meal on a verandah, women threshing grain, or a group of people making umbrellas or paper lanterns, the format is essentially the same. Activity is shown as a shared, co-operative undertaking, but one that is restricted to a few square feet in front of a backdrop. Like actors on a none-too wide stage the protagonists appear absorbed in their own particular activity. Owing to the length of exposure times it would probably seem likely that the subjects would have had to hold their poses, even if only for a short time. Although appearing natural the photographs exhibit that peculiar tension between the depiction of movement and suspended time.

It sometimes occurs that photographs of distant periods and distant cultures have an 'otherness' that is difficult to overcome.

However, the selection of images in this publication and the accompanying essays illuminate a unique period in Japan's history and provide a valuable insight into that era.

Robert Greetham, Wales, 1996

Fouad Debbas BEIRUT Our Memory. An Illustrated tour in the Old City from 1880 to 1930. Folios, Beirut, Lebanon 1986 (Second Revised Edition) 256 pp., h/b, ISBN 1 85964 048 6. £45. Text in English. Distributed by Garnet Publishing Ltd, Reading, UK.

The photographs in this lavishly illustrated publication are all drawn from the collection of Fouad C Debbas, who in the last 20 years has built up the world's largest private collection of postcards and old photographs of the Lebanon. As Debbas states in his introduction, history '... has not been kind to (Beirut); it was bombarded by foreigners, dismembered by the Ottomans in 1915. Then, in our time, it has been devastated by ruthless street fighting since 1976, before receiving the *coup de grâce*, administered by bulldozers. ... In the centuries prior to the blind, unlooked for violence of the last two decades, the changes undergone by the old town of Beirut were always carried with proper reverence for the equilibrium of the political and economic past. If this album of postcards from happier times can bring to the reader a continuity of soul and spirit, then I shall be more than satisfied'.

For anyone who can remember the grim television images of Beirut tearing itself apart in the 1970's and 80's; of the shell craters and burning apartment blocks, then this book does indeed provide a vivid reminder of what has been lost during the civil strife. Encompassing topographical views of the old town, sites of architectural and historical interest and street scenes, the book aims to 'provide a composite image of a city that has been annihilated by time and history'. It is to be hoped that in the reconstruction of Beirut these reminders of The Jewel of the Levant will play a significant part in the city's sense of its history and its future.

Robert Greetham, Wales, 1996

Edited by Peter James, Tessa Sidey and John Taylor **Sunlight and Shadow: The Photographs of Emma Barton 1872-1938.**

Birmingham Libraries & Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery, UK, 1995 (Catalogue) 101 pp, p/b. ISBN 0 7093 0207 X. Text in English.

For many years now there has been a reassessment and renewal of interest in Pictorialism and art photography at the turn of this century. Alison and Helmut Gernsheim's view that 'however attractive, art photography was neither art nor true photography, but a hybrid arising from a misconception of its



Untitled, Vernon Cottage, Isle of Wight c.1938 Emma Barton (1872-1938) Courtesy of Birmingham Central Library.

functions ...' has been challenged by numerous historians and writers. For example, The Arts Council of Great Britain's exhibition and publication *Pictorial Photography in Britain 1900-1920* (1978) was an important and timely reappraisal of British fine art photography in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Along side the critical reassessment, developments in contemporary photographic practice over the last few decades have paralleled many of the concerns of the Pictorialists themselves: the use of 'directed' photography, the exploration of process and technique; the use of fiction and fabrication to portray the imaginative and personal world of the artist; the introduction of themes and symbols from traditional art history, whether literary, religious or mythical. In this context, *Sunlight and Shadow* provides a fascinating account of the life and work of one of this country's most highly regarded Pictorialist photographers. In her day Emma Barton (1872-1938) achieved international renown, although until the publication of this catalogue and the accompanying exhibition at Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery in 1995, her work has been largely neglected in histories of photography.

Sunlight and Shadow contains three informative essays examining Barton's work and the context in which it was made: 'Art Photography at the Turn of the Century' by John Taylor, 'Emma Barton 1872-1938: A Portrait' by Peter James and 'Emma Barton - Photography as Fine Art' by Tessa Sidey. There

is also a glossary of printmaking processes, chronology, selected bibliography, extensive footnotes and comprehensive catalogue entries. With their different emphases, the essays provide a valuable account of the cultural, social and economic circumstances which influenced the direction of Barton's work and career.

Emma Barton was born in Birmingham in 1872 and was to live there most of her life until she and her family moved to the Isle of Wight in the 1930's. Born into a working-class family she started work in a photographic studio in 1891 where she was to learn the fundamental techniques of photography from lighting through to processing and printing. It seems she started taking her own photographs in the mid 1890's after marrying the solicitor George Barton. As Peter James points out, '... through a combination of self-education, self-improvement and financial support from her husband, Emma Barton moved from her working-class background to a position amongst the professional middle-classes, and from a portrait studio in Deritend to a position at the forefront of international Pictorial photography in less than twenty-five years'. She experimented with different processes including carbon printing and autochromes and, by the outbreak of World War One, Barton had secured a considerable reputation. She was elected a member of the Royal Photographic Society in 1908, exhibited widely in all the major salons including The Birmingham Photographic Society, The Photo Club of Paris and Berlin and the American Salon. The recipient of numerous awards and prizes, her work was featured frequently in the photographic press as well as mass circulation publications such as *Country Life* and *The London Illustrated News*.

The detailed examination of Barton's life and work provided in *Sunlight and Shadow* inevitably throws light on much wider areas of culture and history at the turn of the century. The growing prosperity of Birmingham and the rise of the middle-classes, for example, was to make Birmingham an important contributor to the Arts and Crafts Movement. Those who championed photography as art were to embrace many of the same ideals. 'In a period when Arts and Crafts were set against mass produced goods, serious amateurs insisted that photographs were both handmade and aesthetically pleasing'. (John Taylor) Moreover, the establishment of the various photographic salons and societies were to provide a support structure and outlet for those ambitious for photography as art; a structure and indeed market, which was absent in the traditional fine art sector.

Most art photographers in this period were 'serious amateurs' who were able to pursue their interests and ideals unrestricted by commercial considerations. Inevitably, World War One and the advent of Modernism were to have profound and far reaching consequences for the Pictorialists. As Taylor points out, the art photography establishment was essentially conservative in its attitude to Modernism. Thus, Coburn's and Arbuthnot's attempts to embrace Modernism within the framework of their own art was met with ridicule. While many Pictorialists continued to practice well after World War One,

the codes and conventions of their art had been formed largely prior to 1910. 'By 1914 photographic Pictorialism no longer had the same level of acceptability or urgency of the late nineteenth century. Emma Barton's response was not to move towards Modernism, but rather to forge a link with the emerging commercialism of the 1920s and 1930s'. (Tessa Sidey)

Perhaps what emerges most forcibly from Barton's work is the central role provided by her friends and family, her daughters particularly, in the production of her photographs. They provided the touchstone of her art, acting out roles, reinvented according to the dictates of the chosen themes and subject-matter. It is an art circumscribed by idyll, romance, myth, and contemplation. The recreation of the personal world of the artist is as much a reflection of the time in which it is made as anything more obviously 'objective'. Although rooted in the aesthetics and conventions of the turn of the century these sumptuous images reflect preoccupations not so dissimilar from many contemporary artists.

Robert Greetham, Wales, 1996

Carol Shloss *In Visible Light: Photography and the American Writer 1840 - 1940*,

Oxford University Press, New York, 1987, 320 pp, h/b.
ISBN 0 19 503893 2 £22.50. Text in English.

'This is a book about how artists negotiate approaches to their subject'.

It is, however, more particularly about the methodology and ideology of the American writer and their relationship to the 'use', or approach of the camera, than to photographic 'seeing', or to the photographer.

By comparing the responses of American artists from Nathaniel Hawthorne through to Theodore Dreiser, Alfred Steiglitz, Jacob Riis, Walker Evans, John Steinbeck and Dorothea Lange, Shloss reveals this influence of photography and how it enabled writers to come to terms with their anxieties in terms of position and approach to the subject.

In stating also that '... to expropriate the world through vision, to be drawn into what one sees, to unite vision with fulfilment, is rarely satisfied ...', Shloss notes that *In Visible Light* is about loss; about the guilt, disparity and isolation that American writers and photographers came to experience through their approaches to creativity and to subject. In doing so, she provides an invaluable and stimulating insight into the issues of 'seer' and 'seen', 'self' and 'other'

The text centres upon issues of *vision* and the damaging implications that this can have for both subject and viewer. Those such as Hawthorne and Henry James believed that they could make a connection to their subject by observing

'objectively', from outside the experiences of their subject. Shloss aligns this approach with the use of the camera and more particularly the daguerreotype and contemporary acclaim for its properties of imparting 'truthful', 'impartial', 'objective' information. Their characters reveal a preoccupation with 'watching' in a bid to 'gather' information, and the sense of alienation that they experienced as a result. They were, Shloss concludes, *voyeurs*; attempting to assimilate personal experience through others.

But this book is not simply about the relationship between 'self' and 'other', for Shloss extends this issue to reveal how these relationships (which were often private) can reflect the social, political and hierarchical structure of American society. In this respect it is not always what is 'seen' that is problematic but what remains 'unseen'. Shloss discerns that it is this element of disclosure which finally turned Dreiser away from the so called 'dangers' of advocating Steiglitz and prompted him to 'reveal' the 'truth' beyond aestheticized surface appearances. Through Norman Mailer, we are led to realise that this issue is also related to distance, both literal and psychological, as he fails to find a satisfactory perspective of war. As an aerial photographic interpreter he discusses the 'hidden' truths which cannot be seen, whilst those at ground level in combat fail to recognise the military structure beyond the frames of their own, isolated, experience.

The text, then, is also about *knowledge*; knowledge that can be acquired through observation. For some this became an issue of authority and *power*. Jacob Riis, Shloss notes, gained access to the images he sought only in relation to his subjects perceived knowledge of his authority, just as Dreiser struggled with his own position as a writer having experienced, and thus gained knowledge of, the lives of his subject. Indeed some of the artists studied attempt to resolve their dilemmas of approach by entering the experiences of their subjects; Robert Capa enlightened his viewers to the grim realities of ground combat by 'shooting' alongside soldiers; by placing himself in the 'line of fire'. Shloss points out that only in the face of death did the 'self' and 'other' become unified.

Carol Shloss also discusses how some realised that having such knowledge, gaining access to the lives of the 'other,' did not necessarily provide a solution to the problem of approach. After studying the photographs of Dorothea Lange, Steinbeck literally decided to follow the route she had taken and entered a migrant camp, but in disguise. It was through this deception, however, that Shloss notes he (unintentionally) destroyed what the camps had set out to do. In effect he had gained his knowledge through secret means which required intrusion and violation of trust.

On the other hand, Lange, and also Walker Evans, are categorised by Shloss alongside Henri-Cartier-Bresson. These artists she believes, made a reciprocal connection between 'self' and 'other', and revealed a '... mutual regard ...' and a '... looking back and forth ...'; the 'decisive moment'. This was

achieved by Lange, the author maintains, in part, through trust, by openly using her official position with a government agency to legitimise her scrutiny and presence among the migrant workers. Similarly Evans reveals this reciprocity by allowing his subject to 'speak'; to reveal itself to the viewer.

Carol Shloss's comparisons are as diverse as they are comprehensive, enlightening the reader to the many approaches that artists took in response to their dilemmas of 'seeing' and creativity and the implications that these came to have for both the artist and subject. She not only considers the influence of specific individuals but also more general cases such as the use of the daguerreotype or Soviet Cinema. The relationships between the artists chosen are, equally, diverse; those such as Dreiser and Riis, Steinbeck and Lange, were never involved directly with one another, whilst others such as James and Coburn, Agee and Evans, worked collaboratively.

As a result, the text is not simply a chronological study of the influence of photography upon American writers from 1840 - 1940, but implicit in it is a study of the relationship between the use and perception of the camera which evolved alongside, and as a result of, technological developments; in particular how the private and personal crisis of vision for one generation had social and political implications for those such as Capa, Evans and Lange with the Depression of the 30s and World War Two.

The book is largely aimed at an 'informed' literary audience for the breadth of Shloss's discussion prevents her from elaborating issues beyond specific details and a specific context. For an uninformed reader this would inevitably question the validity of research which relies on the comparison of one or two texts and a handful of images. She does not, also, at any stage, make reference to decisions that the artist may, or may not, make after the image, or text, has been construed. Although she notes that, for the photographer, decisions of approach are made at the time of exposure and, for the writer, during the process of gathering information, there is no consideration of the implications that 'manipulation' of the photographic image through printing in the darkroom may have on the perceived approach of the artist.

On the other hand Shloss acknowledges that the book is a case study. It proffers no questions and does not claim to deliver any answers. Read within the context provided it is a stimulating recognition of the way in which artists work, create, and approach their subject in relation to people's lives and situations. It is also an invaluable insight into the relationship of 'self' and 'other', of the camera as a metaphor for vision, and a thought provoking analysis of the way in which the values embedded, or problems encountered, in one medium can be analogous to those of another.

Joanna Hounscome, Wales, 1996

Alan Davies and Peter Banbury (assisted by Con Tanre) **The Mechanical Eye in Australia: Photography 1841-1900**

Oxford University Press, Melbourne, Australia, 1986, pp.228, h/b, ISBN 0 19 554604 0. £19.50 Text in English.

Six years of further research has resulted in a revised edition of **The Mechanical Eye** which now includes additional and updated lists of photographers and studios active between 1841-1900.

This extremely thorough and comprehensive book charts the early development of photography in Australia in terms of process and its early practitioners. There is no continuous text, instead information is given through 54 images, each accompanied by a short writing which is heavily supported by reference to, and extracts from, contemporary journals, directories, annual publications, newspapers and letters. Statistical information is extensive and includes reproductions of advertisements from contemporary press, and a compiled list of over 3400 professional/amateur photographers and their studios.

The book is dedicated, on the whole, to the commercial concerns of photography. It provides an insight into the workings of photographic studios and the procedures involved as technological developments occurred. Advertisements announce the arrivals of new processes; who introduced them and their subsequent popularity, or otherwise. This, in turn, reveals the demand for the daguerreotype, for portrait studios in particular, the dominance of the *carte-de-visite* and the arrival in 1895 of the pocket Kodak.

It is possible, therefore, to gauge the position attributed to photography in Australian society in terms of trade, commercial viability and public reception. There is also some attempt to position the development of Australian photography within an international context but the book does not, on the whole, relate its subject to the wider context of the history of photography. The accompanying text is often restricted to the image itself, and occasionally local history; there is little material regarding the photographer or consideration for the images in artistic terms.

But its benefit to researchers in the field is notable. The information contained in this volume is wide-ranging and serves as a valuable reference for any study into the early history of photography in Australia.

Joanna Hounscome, Wales, 1996

REBUILDING THE HOMEFRONT. PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL BRANDT IN BIRMINGHAM c1939-1943

Exhibition, Birmingham Central Library, February-March 1996

The centre piece of this remarkable exhibition is a total of sixty six images printed from the recently discovered original negatives taken by Bill Brandt of housing conditions in London and Birmingham from 1939 to 1943. Through its attempts to identify this hitherto unknown and unaccredited body of work on social conditions by Bill Brandt and its place in the aesthetic of his work, it also draws attention to the use of the photograph as visual evidence in the social history of our times.

The exhibition starts with a chronology of housing in the nineteenth century and that of Birmingham in particular. We are reminded of what that meant in terms of a healthy nation. Interwoven with this chronology is the fact that Bill Brandt had also suffered from ill health during his teenage years and had spent six years in a sanatorium recovering from tuberculosis. As we look at his work on bad housing in *Picture Post* and at the prints on show, we begin to see how this underpins his 'day in the life of' the various families photographed. Among the prints on show we see examples of open windows to provide fresh air, the use of sterilised milk, the organisation of cooking, eating and washing areas, the lack of children's play spaces and the need for open air play areas. The sequences show us the good and the bad. While these are not Brandt's finest works they give us an insight to the strength of his vision and the reason why the Bourneville Trust commissioned him.

Peter James, the curator, has brought together a powerful social document of the period. He shows us the forces at work, both politically and socially and the professionalism of Bill Brandt in presenting a body of work, the implications of which he was well aware of. Around the six individual sequences of Brandt's work, relevant material of the time was presented in display cabinets. This material on rebuilding the homefront after the World War Two, is in the form of books, copies of *Picture Post* and notably the publications of the Bourneville Village Trust. While Peter James has brought together evidence to show how housing issues and the nation's health had been the concern of many, he has not neglected to identify further unknown Brandts which address these themes. He also shows how Brandt has selected, reprinted and published this material to illustrate his own career and present a body of work by which he wanted to be known.

The discovery of Brandt's work also prompted the Bourneville Village Trust to commission photographer Max Jones to produce a new series of images documenting housing in Birmingham today. These were also on show in the library. Interesting comparisons can be made in the social differences of the times and the artefacts with which we surround ourselves, then and now.

Since the opening of the exhibition many of those photographed

as children have come forward, and their views of the time and the occasion when they were photographed is currently being recorded. This indeed was an exhibition for all, and points the way to future photographic shows, which examine all the issues surrounding the images on view, rather than just the artist's life without reference to the surrounding social history and those portrayed at the time.

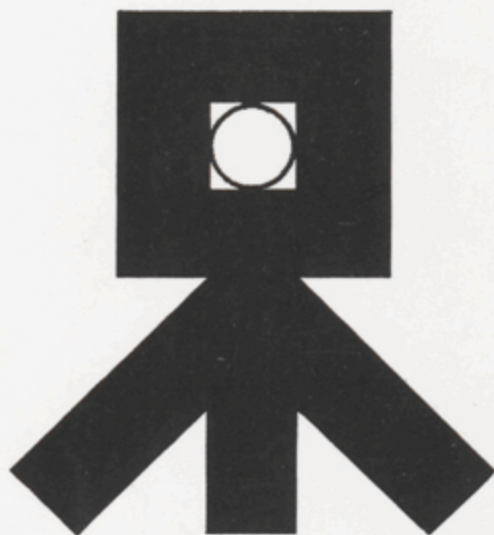
Richard Sadler, England, 1995.

Children playing in the street, Hockley, Birmingham c.1943
Bill Brandt (1904-1983) Courtesy of Bournville Village Trust.



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*Front cover: A camera obscura from Gasper Schott *Magia Universalis*
1657 Photography: Scientific Fiction in late Seventeenth and Early
Eighteenth Century Philippe Maurice*