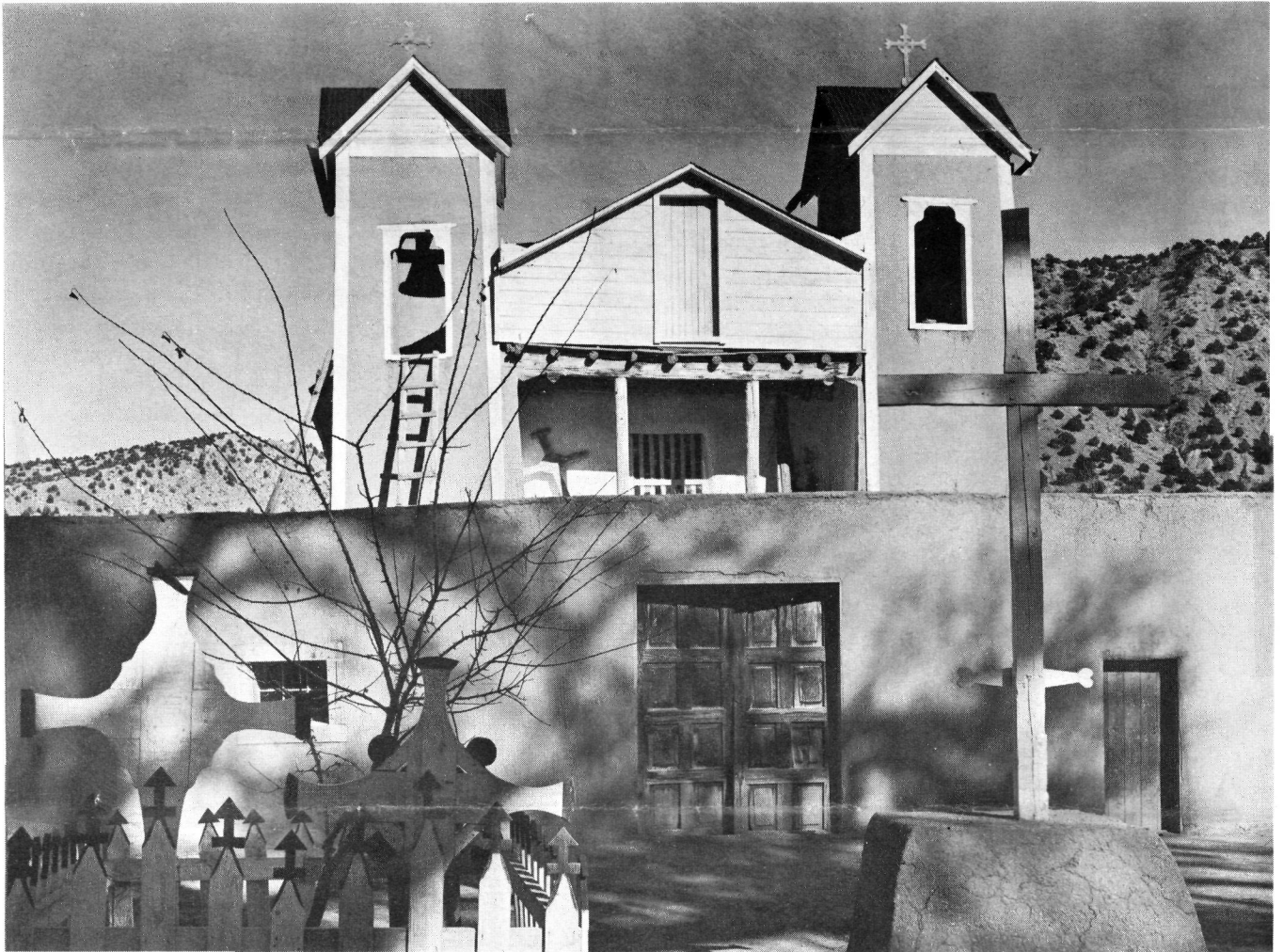


IMAGE

Journal of Photography of the George Eastman House

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NEW MEXICO, CHURCH, 1941

Edward Weston

EDWARD WESTON celebrated fifty years of photographing with a portfolio of 12 original photographs. A hundred such portfolios were made and offered for sale in 1952. While making the selections he often asked himself how he could represent a life's work in 12 pictures. The problem was a real one because the scope of his work is very wide, both geographically and subjectwise. He has made portraits, documented the objects that people use, explored the forms of vegetables, explored the vast miles of deserts, mountains, hills, plains of the West, in Mexico, and twice toured the United States. His major creative work has been at Lobos State Park in California, near which he lives, and where the "sea meets the land more intimately than anywhere else on earth." He is one of the few Americans that Europeans recognize as an artist who uses photography as his medium.

A UNIQUE PRINTING PROJECT COMPLETED

SELDOM HAS AN ARTIST been given the opportunity to look back upon his life's production, re-evaluate it, and then recreate the work which he considers his finest. Photography, of all the visual arts, lends itself to such a survey, for the original negatives can be reprinted by the artist himself, with no loss of esthetic quality. Until now no photographer has been able to afford such a rich experience. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor Edward Weston was given just such an unusual chance. Now, after two years work, eight sets of about a thousand negatives have been printed.

Mr. Weston, who has been physically handicapped in the past few years, was aided by his son and coworker, Brett Weston. The latter made the prints in his father's darkroom, a tiny room in which one can hear the surf of the Pacific Ocean. No negative was considered printed until Edward Weston had critically scrutinized and approved the prints. His son was the extension of his hands, but not his eyes.

Many other friends helped in the routine washing and drying of the well over 8,000 prints. Dody Warren, his daughter-in-law, undertook the monumental job of arranging one set of prints into a catalogue. The 8 x 10 inch contact prints fill 22 loose leaf binders, a photograph to a page behind the transparent plastic sleeve. The arrangement of the prints was calculated to enhance the effect of the pictures on each other, and the result is a heightening of the experience of looking from one magnificent picture to the next.

The plan is to send this catalogue from museum to museum, also to individuals, so that prints can be selected for purchase. It has recently come to George Eastman House and we are proud to announce that we have purchased 50 prints to add to our present collection of 30 Edward Weston photographs.

The donor who made this project possible not only gave Mr. Weston a wonderful opportunity to review his life's work, but also made it possible for the public to see and purchase some of the finest photographs in existence. The donor is to be congratulated for his foresight and generosity.

AUGUST P. BRASSART, AN ASSOCIATE OF DAGUERRE.

By Charles van Ravenswaay

Director, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Mo.

IN A COLLECTION of photographs recently acquired by the Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, was a portrait of August P. Brassart, labeled as the man "who made the first silver coated plate for Daguerre." This notation led to inquiries among Brassart's descendants, who supplied information about his life. Unfortunately none of Brassart's early daguerreotypes have been located.

Born in Paris, July 6, 1819, the son of a silversmith, young August entered the firm of M. Gaudais (or Gauday),

where his father was employed. There he soon became skilled in the art of beating gold and silver. L. J. M. Daguerre was then carrying out his experiments which led to the development of his photographic process. The silver plates which he used were either rolled or drawn and contained so many pores that the pictures fixed on them were unsatisfactory. One day, in 1838, he entered the Gaudais shop and asked the proprietor if it would be possible to get a completely smooth surface with a beaten plate. Mr. Gaudais assured him it could not be done. By some accident, Daguerre, "persistent . . . and a quick and nervous man," asked young Brassart the same question. To his employer's embarrassment, Brassart assured Daguerre he could beat the required plates, and proceeded to prove it. "On this plate the first flawless sunlight picture was taken." The success of this venture, and of the daguerreotype which soon followed, caused Brassart to give his attention to the working of plates. In 1839, however, he was obliged to enter the French army, where he remained seven years, four of which were spent in France, and three in Africa. Upon his return home in 1847 he again resumed the making of daguerreotype plates, and, being an ardent republican in political affairs, became more and more active in political affairs. The failure of the Revolution of 1848, and the political difficulties attending the rise to power of Napoleon III, left Brassart in constant danger of arrest.

In 1853 Henry Hayden, of the firm of Holmes, Booth & Hayden of Waterbury, Connecticut, visited Paris in search of some qualified man who would be willing to come to Waterbury to make daguerreotype plates. Through a Mr. Johnson, a customer of Brassart's, Hayden learned of the latter's work, and offered him the position. Brassart's political difficulties were so urgent that he quickly accepted the offer and he and his wife landed in New York, February 24, 1854. In 1857 Holmes, Booth & Hayden failed, and Brassart, refusing to believe that the tintype had displaced the daguerreotype, set up a studio in Waterbury which promptly failed. After many difficulties he joined in establishing the photographic studio of Brassart, Johnson & Williams on the corner of Broadway and Twenty-third Street, New York, which prospered for a number of years. Brassart then withdrew from the firm, and began his own gallery on Eighth Avenue, which failed, "through the excesses of a young partner." Brassart again returned to Waterbury and worked for a time in the Grannie's Gallery there, until about 1876 when he opened his own studio at Naugatuck. This venture prospered for twenty years, when Brassart retired. A reporter who interviewed him at this time commented that "His keen gray eyes, rugged physiognomy [sic] and jovial personality, betoken a man in whom temperance has always been a predominating characteristic." In 1897 he and his wife moved to St. Louis where an only daughter and son-in-law, the Anton R. Dostals, lived. Madame Brassart died March 7, 1907, and Mons. Brassart on July 28, 1908. Both were buried in St. Matthew's cemetery, St. Louis.

ISAIAH WEST TABER, 1830—1912

TABER, PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTIST,—the mention of this name introduces a familiar subject to the lovers of high art the world over, for there is no one who has not admired the fine results of his artistic skill, either in the faces of noted people or representations of the finest scenery in the world.

“Mr. Taber is a native of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and came here in search of gold in February, 1850. For three years he prosecuted mining, and returned to New England in 1854. There he studied photography, and mastered all the minutiae of the profession. The atmosphere of New England lacks the purity of the heavens in California, and in 1864 Mr. Taber returned here, impressed with the belief that better results could be obtained than in any other climate. For several years he was the chief operator in the Bradley & Rulofson Photograph Gallery. In 1871 Mr. Taber established the “Taber Gallery” at No. 12 Montgomery Street, a location at once central and easily reached from any section of the city. From the opening of his gallery

until now his business has constantly increased and today requires fourteen large rooms to accommodate all departments of the magnificent business.

“Mr. Taber has been an indústrious collector of views. These embrace every subject of interest from Mexico to Alaska, and the bare negatives of the multitudes of scenes represent a fortune in value. There is no collection to compare with it in America, and the person who can obtain a fair number of these has a living illustration of most of the places of interest and persons of note on the Pacific slope.” From *The Bay of San Francisco—a History*, 1892, II, 93-94.

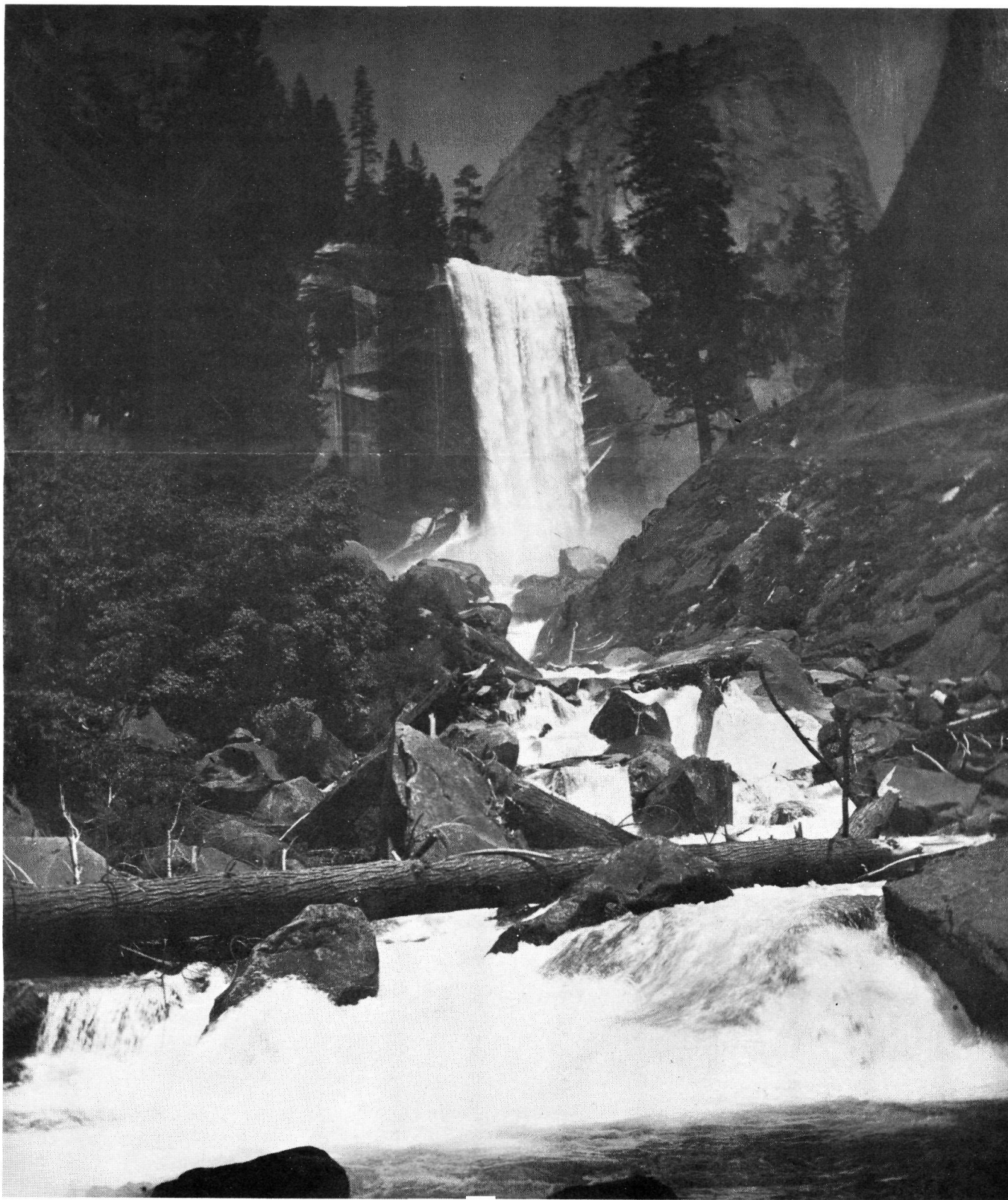
“In 1897 he [Taber] photographed the pageant at the Diamond Jubilee celebration of Queen Victoria in London, and was later called to Marlborough house to photograph the late King Edward VIII.

“Taber’s large collection was destroyed in the fire of 1906, 80 tons of portrait negatives and 20 tons of view negatives being spoiled. It included photographs of various presidents of the United States, distinguished foreign visitors, army officers and pioneer residents of the state.” From *San Francisco Call*, Feb. 23, 1912.



CHINATOWN, San Francisco

Taber



THE VERNAL FALLS, YOSEMITE VALLEY, 1887

Taber

THE PACIFIC COAST was the scene of most of I. W. Taber's photographic activity. His views and documents were such an important factor in attracting tourists and residents to California that he was appointed a Yosemite Valley commissioner in 1888 in recognition of his services. His enormous collection of negatives that formed an important record of San Francisco and the West of his time was lost in the 1906 Earthquake and Fire.

THE HEYDAY OF THE MAGIC LANTERN

THE VICTORIAN ERA, which produced so many artistic fantasies and cultural excrescences, was also the heyday of the magic lantern. Until then, it had been a relatively simple device—though with a long history: a single light source, a single lens, and a means of interposing a transparent slide between. Travel scenes or story telling slides had been projected, sometimes with comment or an accompanying narrative. The Victorians compounded equipment, whole batteries of magic lanterns were used together, devices multiplied and splendid spectacles became a specialty.

If double lanterns, "biunial" as they were called, were good because they enabled the lanternist to blend two slides at the same time; triple lanterns (three lights and lenses stacked vertically) were wonderful because they allowed him to dissolve one scene into another.

"The Mosque of Omar" was apparently a favorite subject for dissolves. Chadwick's *Magic Lantern Manual* of 1885 states that nearly every lanternist was acquainted with it and gives instructions. "This usually consists of three slides; No. 1, the Mosque by daylight; No. 2, the Mosque by night; and No. 3, the effect to be used in conjunction with the No. 2 for illuminating the stained glass windows from within, and often in this slide the moon is made to appear."

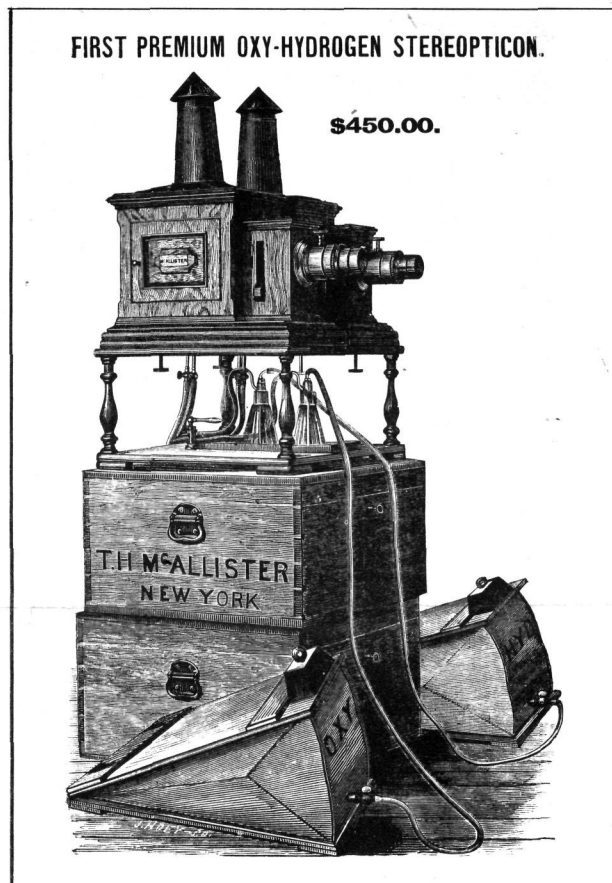
By raising or lowering the intensity of the light behind each separate slide the effect of time passing—from daylight to night and then to a moon appearing in the sky—could be forcefully suggested.

In some instances, according to Chadwick, "more than three lanterns are required, and at the Royal Polytechnic Institution as many as six lanterns have been in use at one time for the production of effects, such as the Siege of Delhi, in which the fire of artillery, the bursting of shells, etc. are portrayed.

"The optical effects were assisted by various sounds in imitation of war's alarms, for the production of which more *volunteers* than were absolutely required would occasionally trespass behind the scenes, and produce those terrific sounds that some persons of a nervous temperament said were really *stunning*."

Crank and lever operated slides were devised to give still more reality of movement on the screen—an elephant raising his trunk, fireworks, illuminated cascades, whirling and blending colors were imitated by such slides.

The source of illumination was at first the well known and hazardous "Lime Light" which had been widely used since 1820. This was produced by a "jet of oxygen blown through a flame of hydrogen onto a piece of lime, which latter is rendered so extremely incandescent, that a light is obtained superior in importance to any, the electric excepted." Electricity as a light source won out. Chadwick mentioned in 1885 that "within the last few years, the Electric Light has been applied to the lantern in a variety of



A page from the T. H. McAllister catalogue of *Stereopticons, dissolving-view apparatus, magic lanterns, and artistically-colored photographic views on glass*. New York, 1890.

forms, with more or less success." By 1894 electricity had been widely accepted and one advertiser in Hepworth's *Book of the Lantern* listed 24 leading universities and scientific societies in America and the United Kingdom that used their "Electric Science Lanterns."

As one can see from the above not all projection was for amusement. An advertisement published in 1890 illustrated a number of ways the magic lantern could be used for outdoor advertising at night. Other catalogues listed slides for use by secret societies to initiate their members into the rites of the group. Some of the artist-photographers of the period considered the lantern slide their ultimate medium. Alfred Stieglitz for example, during that time, made slides directly from his negatives and made no prints at all, or, if so, only much later. Reproduction of photographs so dominates present day picture presentation that we have lost sight of the special and superior qualities of the lantern slide. They have, upon projection, impressive size. They have a much longer tonal scale than paper prints, and consequently are more brilliant. And because they must be shown in a darkened room the projectionist is assured of a captive audience.

DEAN FREIDAY

CARRIAGES, CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK, by Alfred Stieglitz taken about 1893. Stieglitz as well as some of the other artist-photographers of the 1890 period considered the lantern slide as the end product of the photographic medium, and did not make prints, but slides.



LANTERN SLIDE SHOWS were popular at the turn of the century. Color, sound, and readings accompanied the projected images. Illustration from the *Manuel Mazo de Projections* edited by E. Mazo of Paris probably about 1910.

THE ELECTRONIC BUGGY WHIP

By Vincent S. Jones, Director, News and Editorial Office,
The Gannett Newspapers.

Excerpts from a talk given at the Associated Press Managing
Editors Convention, Boston, Mass., November 1952.

TELEVISION OF THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC
conventions made national politics into local history.
Millions of us were there—or felt that we were there.

We heard AND saw General MacArthur loose an hour-
long clutch of thunderbolts which blasted him right into
obscurity. We heard AND saw Governor Dewey crack the
whip over the New York delegation but otherwise preserve
the optical illusion of being just plain Joe Delegate. We saw
the great drama of the roll calls, and then watched its per-
version into a camera mugging, publicity hound's delight.

If we are sincere in welcoming TV to the communications
field because of its power to interest people in new faces and
places we must consider how well we, the newsmen, are
doing in our job of helping people to understand what they
saw and heard. This is essentially no change from the re-
porting of any event which unfolds before a large audience
—baseball, football, concerts, speeches. We failed to exploit
the Puerto Rican fuss; did not realize till too late that the
routine Credentials Committee fights were the keys to both
sessions; passed up the irony of the dozens of politicians
(many of them knifewielders) who posed for TV with the
Vicepresident after his fire eating speech.

TV took the shine off several politicians at Chicago. It
may be more than coincidental that Governor Dever, Sena-
tors Moody and Kem were casualties at the polls. Conversely
Governor Stevenson sprang to fame through TV as the
finest political orator of our times. At Chicago, Barkley
exalted that TV and Radio would enable people to get "the
truth" about the candidates and the issues. I wonder how he
feels about that now?

As John Crosby noted, millions of dollars worth of equip-
ment and land armies of technicians could not rise above
their material, and much of it was dull. TV brought "every-
thing"—in sight—but it lacked the courage or the skill to
do the editing job which is the hallmark of every good re-
porter or editor.

In their approach to this fearsome new competitor many
newspapermen have been neither objective nor realistic.
They raise a list of TV liabilities that will have evaporated by
1956, and forget that, unlike the newspaper industry, our
rivals advance technically with frightening speed. Already
the quality of big screen reproduction matches the way our
pictures look when we get through with them. Radio has de-
veloped good reporters and you may be sure that TV will
have them, too. Whether they develop editorial skill and
courage is another matter, but in a fiercely competitive field
good reporters will prove to be as valuable as they are in
ours.

The election was won by a whole new class of voters—
possibly 10 million. Right now they are hared up with the

excitement of a great campaign. If we are smart we can hold
them as steady customers for words and pictures about
government and politics. But to do that we need at least an
electronic buggy whip for the old nag.



CHICAGO, 25 July 1952—BACKSTAGE POLITICAL WAIT
—Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver was a somber man as he sat
on rear of Democratic convention platform tonight. Jake Arvey
is at extreme left. Talking with Kefauver is Senator Paul
Douglas of Illinois, and at right is Jack Bell, Associated Press
political writer. (Associated Press Wirephoto).

BOOK REVIEW

35mm PHOTOGRAPHY, by Jacob Deschin, San Fran-
cisco, Camera Craft Publishing Co. 1953. 192 pages. 115
illustrations. \$5.00.

THE APPROACH which this author introduced in his
Rollei Photography a year ago (*Image*, May, 1953, p.
31) is continued and bettered in the present volume. This
plan is to keep constantly before the reader the idea that the
camera is made for making pictures. Such an objective
would seem obvious, yet most manuals overlook the point.
Consequently this book contains superb work from such well
known photographers as Cartier-Bresson and such unknown
ones as Zoe Lowenthal. To keep picture making in the fore-
ground these illustrations are placed throughout the text.

In *Rollei Photography*, Mr. Deschin published statements
made by photographers about their own work. In *35mm
Photography*, the author has written all the captions and
comments. This perhaps is more satisfactory, because pho-
tographers are not always able to express themselves clearly
in words. It gives the book a tighter sense of unity, but I
miss the flavor.

The various types of 35mm cameras are sufficiently de-
scribed; more important the rationales or types of tech-
niques are explained for the use of this camera size—tech-
niques that apply to the entire group of cameras rather than
the slight modifications which each kind of camera suggests.
As a whole there is presented one of the best balances
between equipment, technique and use of both to make
pictures yet seen in a book.

In Chapter 14, "The Furtive Lens," the case for the
35mm photographer of today is stated with more than
ordinary clarity. To offset the implication given in the title
that a fugitive aspect of the human being is sought, the illu-
strations prove that human dignity is the ultimate aim.

M. W.

"THE FAMILY OF MAN" EXHIBITION

The Family of Man show is one of the most ambitious photography undertakings attempted by any art museum. It will open in January 1955 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Assembling the material may prove the most extensive of picture hunts to date. Edward Steichen, a Trustee of the George Eastman House, as director of the photography department of the Museum of Modern Art has already searched this country and Europe for two years and is now asking photographers all over the world, amateur and professional alike, to get prints on his desk. He wants contact prints (except 35mm) or proof enlargements not larger than 8 by 10 inches, unmounted, name and address on back of each print and the closing date is April 10, 1954. Address: THE FAMILY OF MAN exhibition, Museum of Modern Art, P.O. Box No. 368, Radio City Post Office, New York 19, N. Y., U.S.A. These "work" prints can not be returned. When the selection has been made, the photographers will be asked for the necessary exhibition prints, or the loan of their negatives, when large mural size prints are required.

The theme "The Family of Man" is a tremendous one and perhaps a few quotes from Mr. Steichen's recent published statement will indicate the direction and at the same time indicate the inherent boundaries. "...Photography portraying the universal elements and emotions and the oneness of human beings throughout the world. ... The gamut of life from birth to death with emphasis on the everyday relationships of man to himself, to his family, to the community and to the world we live in."

Steichen adds, "We are concerned with the religious rather than religions." He is equally interested in the spirit that activates human activities in all other fields as well. He is searching for the pictures that get at the essences as we can see them and communicate them through their particulars. He feels that photography, as an art, is particularly qualified to explain "man to man across the world, his dreams and aspirations, mirroring the flaming creative forces of love and truth and the corrosive evil inherent in the lie."

He knows the mood and spirit that he wants yet refuses to have specific kinds of pictures in mind. As he says, "Details of the exhibition cannot be planned until all available photographs from different parts of the world have been collected, as the scope of the exhibition will depend on how penetrating and revealing the qualities presented by the photographers are, and how incisively they meet the challenge of the theme."

To the Editor:

In your article "The First Flash Bulb" (*Image*, Sept., 1953), you credit Johannes Ostermeier with the invention of the electric flash bulb. This is erroneous: the inventor is Dr. Paul Vierkötter.

On August 16, 1925, he received German patent No. 446,514, "Flashlight lamp with electric ignition." This patent describes an inflammable flashlight mixture put inside a glass bulb from which the air has been evacuated. On December 18, 1926, a supplementary patent (No. 451,207) was issued, which specified filling the bulb with gas.

The first scientific publication in which Vierkötter is named as inventor is the 1927 article by Paul Schrott: "A New Flash Lamp" (*Photographische Korrespondenz*, LXIII, 195). Schrott states that "the brilliance of the lamp with reflector is, for blue-sensitive plates, sensitometrically equivalent to 16,000 candle-seconds." In conclusion Schrott states that speed camera trials show that the entire duration of the combustion of the mixture is 0.05 seconds, and that the effective peak of illumination is less than 0.0083 seconds. This result, achieved in the year 1927, should not be forgotten.

On March 1, 1929, Johannes Ostermeier was granted German patent No. 492,801 for the use of combustible metal foil, in contrast to the threads, ribbons, spirals, tubes, or other suitable shapes which Vierkötter specified. Foil-stuffed bulbs were much easier to construct, but at the cost of brilliance. They became practical, however, because in the meantime great advances had been made in the light-sensitivity of film.

The General Electric Company in America also acknowledged the pioneer work of Vierkötter and bought his flashlamp patents.

An article, "Twenty-five Years of Vacublitz" (*Der Photo Händler*, IV (October, 1953), 752), by W. Lang of the Osram Company, makers of the Vacublitz flashlamp, states: "When Dr. Vierkötter thought of putting a combustible radiating mixture in an evacuated or gas-filled globe similar to an ordinary electric-light bulb, and of firing it electrically, a great step forward was taken, which marked the birth of the photographic flashlamp. Dr. Vierkötter's two patents contain all the basic principles that make flashlamps what they are today."

In the interest of historical truth about the priority of the invention of the flashlamp, I am sending this clarification, and suggest that a correction be made.

ERICH STENGER

IMAGE, Journal of Photography of the George Eastman House, 900 East Avenue, Rochester 7, New York. Editors: Oscar N. Solbert, Beaumont Newhall, James G. Card, Minor White. Associate Editor: Marion N. Gleason. Editorial Assistants: Dean Freiday, George Pratt, Warren C. Stevens, Howard Keith Stott, Erwin J. Ward. Printed in U. S. A.