

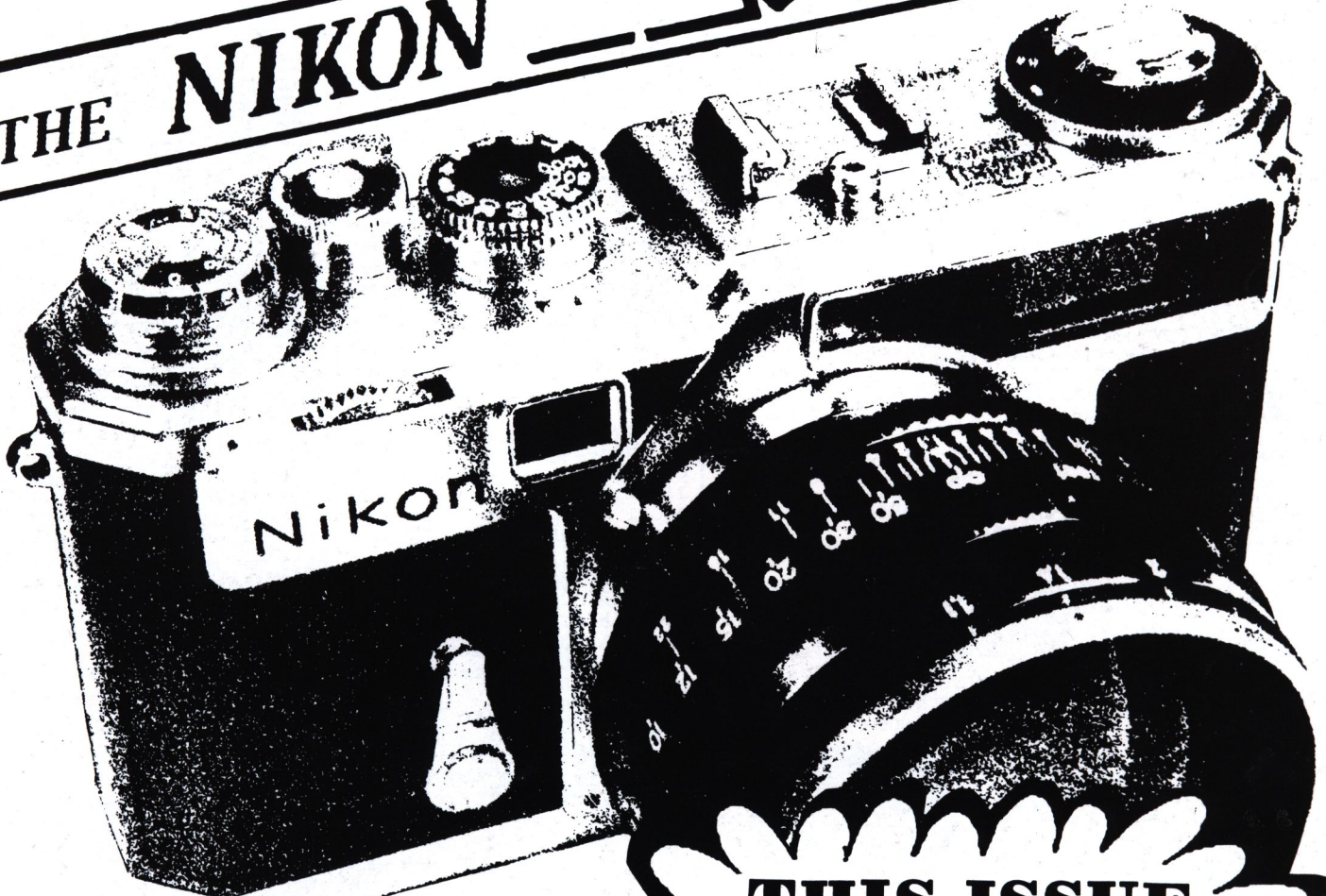
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31

THE NIKON  JOURNAL



THIS ISSUE..

PG. 2--VARIFOCAL "ZOOM" FINDER
PG. 8--EARLY NIKON BINOCULARS
PG. 16--DOWN "MEMORY LANE"

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

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EDITORIAL

Many times in the past I have had to "fill" our Journal with my articles because of a lack of contributions from the membership. I knew that this would be necessary in the beginning, but I always felt that, first, I did not want to monopolize the Journal (no matter how tempting it might be!) and, second, a true measure of success for our Society was the level of participation and feedback from the members. Getting many of you involved was of prime consideration, as it would widen and diversify the type of information showcased in the Journal. I am happy to say that this is exactly what has occurred. It took awhile and started off slowly, but now the volume of articles, information and ideas coming from you has turned, sometimes, into a flood! This is no more evident than in this issue, as for only the second or third time I literally ran out of space!! I have never had a problem filling the Journal, since over the years many of you have graciously supplied me with countless articles and ideas, but lately the tide seems to be on the rise! Keep it up! I had to hold back on two items this issue, but they will be in NHS-32, giving that issue a headstart. Great!

I did "squeeze" in an article I had planned on the Varifocal (Zoom) finder found on page two. In the past we have given much space to the older Variframe finder, as well as such exotic items as the Sportsfinder, Mini-35 and RF Illuminator, but have never addressed the Zoom finder. Well, now we have and I hope you enjoy it. Except for the individual finders this nearly completes our coverage of accessory finders for the RF system.

The largest contribution this issue comes from John Baird. You have all been following his series of columns on various aspects of the lore of Nikon entitled "Tales of Nippon Kogaku". Also you are aware that he produces his own collector newsletter as well as a series of very successful monographs each devoted to a single subject covered in depth. This time around John submitted an article too long to be just a column. As a matter of fact his "Tales of Nippon Kogaku" has grown, for this issue, to five pages! Based on a chapter in his latest monograph, "The Japanese Camera", John has given us an interesting article on the range of very early production Nikon binoculars. By early I mean 1913 and through the war years into the Occupation era! Some of these glasses are quite unusual and rare today, especially those made before 1946. Pre-war production did not come to the West and, for obvious reasons, most of those produced during the war have not survived. Binoculars make a fine sub-category for Nikon collectors, and are growing in popularity, with many showing up at camera shows at what are reasonable prices, especially as some are quite rare today.

Other contributions include an additional type of High Speed "F" with photos sent in by one of our European members. It illustrates another version of the 7FPS type and is the best form of feedback I know. See it on page 13. From Canadian member Rick Nordin comes a "tongue-in-cheek" review of some of those great magazine ads we all remember from the pre-Shutterbug era when even the big New York stores were literally giving away Nikon rangefinder equipment! Turn to page 16 and "read it and weep"!

Even more feedback from NHS-31 arrived for this issue, again from Europe. Tony Hurst sent a photo of a Dummy Nikon FM and another member sent shots of two rather unusual Dummy items. I have even more Dummies possibly available for NHS-32, so the flow of information and feedback is really on the rise. I like to see an article stimulate this kind of response.

Letters this issue were interesting. It seems that there is a real demand for the Nikon M brochure reprint sent out with NHS-29. Response has increased (kind of like a delayed reaction!) and it looks like Peter and I will have to do some talking. Also it is obvious that some of you have noticed the improvement in reproduction standards for the photos in the Journal. My printer is now doing us on a larger press, which handles halftones much better. It costs about 10% more, but I am glad to see it is appreciated, and it is worth it. Photos have always been a very important part of the Journal, and this new press can only make it better.

You might remember that when I raised rates I said that the post office would surely increase postage..well on February 3rd they did just that! In round figures my postage costs will increase 15%, but, not to worry. NHS rates will remain the same. I only hope we can maintain our current numbers and maybe increase them somewhat. We are currently holding at about 215 members with seven new people this issue.

Our "NHS Products" section has been quite successful. Demand for the calculators has been very strong and I am happy to announce that a new supply of NHS tie clasps/cuff links has arrived. New this issue is a reproduction of the repair manuals for all the motors made for the RF and Nikon F cameras, bound into one volume. This should be a popular item.

Peter Lownds sent an interesting letter that just might attract some attention. A third convention would normally occur one year from now in March 1992. Since July marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of Nippon Kogaku, Peter suggests that our convention be in Tokyo! An enticing idea for sure, since I would love to return there and see some old friends. The logistics would be imposing to say the least, but the thought of a group of us walking the Ginza in the spring sure sounds fascinating to me! If any of you have some thoughts on this proposal, please let Peter and I hear from you soon!

How many of you saw the article in the March issue of Popular Photography by Arthur Goldsmith entitled "HOW THE WEST WAS WON"? It tells the story of Duncan, Bristol, Miki, Deschin, et al, and how the "Nikon" was discovered (does all of this sound familiar?). I found it to be interesting reading, as he talks about many of the people that became involved with Nikon in the very early years. It is well written and it appears that Mr. Goldsmith either knows or was able to interview many of the principles. However, some of his dates and statements are a little off, "BUT" can you believe that once again, in the world press, is the line that the Nikon S was the first with a 24x36 format! WILL THEY EVER LEARN????!!!!@#%?!?

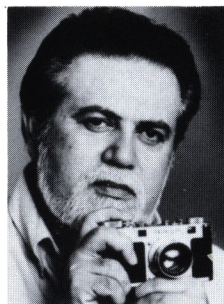


Photo: Tony Hurst

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE NIKON VARIFOCAL

by Robert J. Rotoloni

Many of the accessories made for the Nikon rangefinder system were, by design, short-lived items whose existence was determined by which camera model it was intended for, what lens or other accessory it complemented, or simply by advancing technology. Items specific to any particular camera enjoyed a production run more or less in line with the life of that model and examples are numerous. Many of the more esoteric items we search for today were limited production accessories made for only a portion of the rangefinder era. Examples include...for the SP/S3 we have the exposure meter & booster; motor drive and its attendant cords and packs; close-up devices and eyepiece correction lenses. The rangefinder illuminator is probably the most camera specific accessory in the system, as it works only with the Nikon SP! The mini-35 finder was promoted only during the S2 era and, although it could be physically mounted on later cameras, those listed in price sheets during the SP years were probably left over after the S2 was long gone. Each basic Nikon model had its own version of the close-up device, to say nothing of model specific leather cases. During the very early years the camera cases were even specific to which normal lens the body was sold with! Snub-nosed early MIOJ cases being delivered with Nikon I and M bodies sold with collapsible f3.5 and f2 lenses. Later, when rigid lenses were current, the cases were changed to accommodate them. Also cases for the camera and f1.1 lens were made with models for both the S2 and the SP/S3 types. Only a small handful of accessories were made throughout most of the RF era, and the one with probably the longest lifespan is featured in this article....it is the Nikon "Varifocal" or "Zoom" finder. Made from at least the tail end of the Occupation, it was available up to at least 1964 or later, and outlived most of the cameras.

The Varifocal was the most popular multi-purpose finder made for the RF system, and it effectively overshadowed the older Variframe type which, although it went back to the original Nikon I and was made into the S2 era, dropped out of favor and disappears from the price lists after 1955. The Varifocal (for simplicity lets call it the "Zoom") finder first appears during the production of the Nikon M. As to exactly when we are not sure at this time. I can find no listing for it in any Overseas Finance & Trading literature, but photos exist of Nikon M bodies sporting Zoom finders. Since the earliest examples are engraved MIOJ, production had to begin before September 1951, and could go back into late 1950. Whatever the case, production began during the Occupation and lasted beyond the production of the S3/S4 models, being listed as late as 1964!

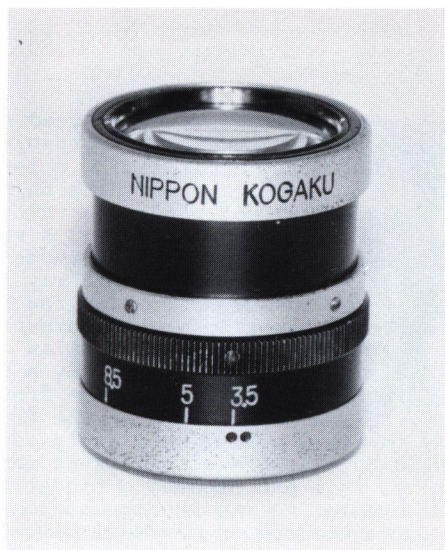
The Zoom finder covers focal lengths from 28mm (with an accessory lens) to 135mm and is a true zoom optic in that it maintains the same frame size but changes the magnification and coverage to correspond to a specific focal length chosen by the user. The image is very bright and sharp to the edges, and is far superior to the viewfinders of the I, M, S and S2. Not until the arrival of the SP was this very useful finder challenged, yet it has held up much better than the later cameras and to this day has a superior, if rangefinderless, image! In actual use it is much lighter and more compact than the Variframe type and better balanced when mounted in addition to being nearly the same dimensions as the 135mm black brite-line finder. All in all a very useful and practical accessory that enjoyed immense popularity throughout most of its life and appears to have continued to sell even after the arrival of the elaborate finder system of the SP and its siblings. Also produced for use with Leica-type cameras (sporting calibrations for 73, 90 & 120mm never made by Nikon), of which a fair number appear to have been made, these are interspersed amongst those for the Nikon. In addition a small number were made for the Contax-type shoe and were given a different serial number block.

Despite its long and large production run, the Zoom finder does not exist in nearly as many variations as does the Variframe. However, there are at least four distinct variations (three of which are illustrated here), as well as some minor ones. In addition its major accessory is quite elusive these days and itself exists in two known types.

The Zoom finder was never made in chrome but consists of a largely black barrel. The "4" known versions are....

- TYPE I... "Made in Occupied Japan"-Recorded serial numbers run from #323302 to #323339.
- TYPE Ib.. Similar but not identical to Type I with a longer barrel. Not "MIOJ". Recorded numbers run from #323470 to #342177.
- TYPE Ic.. As Type Ib but with modified Contax-type shoe with a "C" engraved on its base. Recorded numbers from #11049 to #11317.
- TYPE II.. Completely new barrel with revised parallax correction method. New mounting shoe and reworked framing control. Recorded numbers run from #350034 to #360160.

Although those made for the Contax were given unique numbers, the Leica versions were not so distinguished. Their serial numbers are scattered amongst the Nikon specific types. Therefore, I have not, for simplicity sake, allotted a "type" designation for them. Most buyers and sellers can differentiate them easily.



Left..Top to bottom..Type I "MIOJ" Vari-focal finder #323339 (at this time the latest so far recorded)...Type Ib non-MIOJ version #339464 and a Type II #350040. These are the three basic variations of the Nikon Vari-focal or "Zoom" finder known to us at this time.

Top photo...Although the early MIOJ finder could easily be mistaken for the much more common and readily available non-MIOJ type, a side-by-side comparison of these two versions clearly demonstrates that they differ in two very distinct ways. Note that the MIOJ finder on the left has a much shallower eyepiece. This in conjunction with the slightly shorter barrel of the earlier finder results in two very different looking specimens when viewed this way. However, except for the shorter barrel section just behind the chrome leading edge, all controls and cosmetics are identical. It is feasible that the most observant of collectors could miss this item on a show table since the Type Ib finders are a very common accessory.

Bottom photo...Even though Nikon produced a completely new design in the Type II finder, they made an effort to retain the basic looks of the previous model. Dimensionally they are nearly identical, and the chrome front rim was retained. Even though the protruding eyepiece was replaced with a more integrated design, the overall length is the same.

R. Rotoloni.



The MIOJ version is the most interesting because of its relative rarity and the fact that it is physically different from those that immediately followed. Actual quantities produced are not known, but it is known that the MIOJ engraving is gone by #323470. If production began at #323001 then a minimum of 338 were made (#323339 shown here is, to date the latest known example), but none under #323300 have been found. If their numbers actually began at a point beyond #323001 then even fewer were made. Until an example under #323300 is found there remains the possibility that less than 200 were ever made!

From the illustrations it is obvious that the MIOJ version is very similar to the Type Ia. Note that all controls are similarly placed and engravings and cosmetics are nearly identical. What is different is the length of the barrel and the configuration of the eyepiece. Note that the shoe is the same but that its mounting plate is, by necessity, shorter. The eyepiece on the MIOJ version is nearly flush with the rear surface while the later type protrudes nearly 1/4 of an inch. The overall effect is a finder considerably shorter than its successor. This structural difference may reflect internal optical redesign, although this author has not opened them to make that determination.

Those that immediately succeeded the MIOJ type (at least by unit #323470) are simply marked Made in Japan or just Japan. Recorded numbers suggest in the area of 19,000 Type Ia Zooms were made. Within this group there are two small sub-types. Those meant for Leica-type cameras have additional calibrations for lenses such as 73mm, 90mm and 120mm, otherwise they are identical. The Contax style finders all appear to belong within this barrel type (none having been documented in the following Type II version). They are unique in that their shoe is configured to correctly mount on a Contax and is marked with a "C" as well. As mentioned they have their own serial number block and recorded examples suggest about 400 may have been made. There is an additional variation within this type that crosses into both the Leica and Contax versions as well. Since the Zoom finder dates to at least 1951 or so, many were made before Nikon introduced their famous 105mm/f2.5 lens in late 1953. Up to this point Zoom finders, as well as the Variframes, were calibrated for those lenses that formed the standard Nikon line-up, that is 35, 50, 85 and 135mm. After the introduction of the 105 this calibration was added and is one way to date a Zoom finder. (Naturally earlier Leica types may have a 105 mark but they will also have the other unique Leica settings.)

Finally the venerable Zoom finder was nearly totally redesigned, although it has not been determined exactly when this occurred. The new Type II Zoom was a much easier to use and more integrated design resulting in a sleek and very elegant looking finder. The basic change was in the method of adjusting for parallax error. Gone was the bulky, complicated and cumbersome shoe-mounted lever that was litted right off the original Variframe design dating back to the Nikon I era! The new design reflected the very popular new series of black brite-line finders with their integrated parallax control dial near the rear edge of the finder (it is not known if the Type II Zoom spawned this design change onto the brite-lines, or vice-versa, but its probable they were contemporaries). The result was a much easier to use control no longer requiring the user to reach under the barrel to locate and move

a very tiny lever, let alone try to read the nearly microscopic scale! Now just grasping the rear edge of the barrel and rotating a large knurled ring with very readable white on black lettering was all that was needed. A vast improvement. But this one change caused a very big change in another control. Previous Zooms had their focal length control about mid way down the barrel with its calibrations towards the rear and its index marks on the rear most chrome rim. Now that this area was used for the parallax control the focal lengths were now keyed in by a ring three quarters of the way towards the front of the barrel with its index marks on the front most chrome rim. In other words, completely reversed! Quite a change! It is actually amazing that Nikon was able to do this and produce a finder that is still quite similar to its predecessor and whose lineage is quite evident. A new serial number black was used for the redesigned Zoom Type II beginning at #350001 (leaving a gap of about 8000 numbers between it and the last Type Is). Numbers have been recorded as high as #360160, which suggests that at least 10,000 were made. Not bad for an item produced during the era of the SP with all its built-in parallax corrected frame lines!

Leica calibrated examples are known but none in Contax so far. One other small variation does exist. Early finders (350040) lack a recessed set screw on the shoe found on later examples such as #359836. Besides this small structural difference no other variations are known to this author at this time.

Besides its leather case, only one accessory was made for the Zoom finder. However, as is often the case, the accessory is worth more than what it was made for! It is not known how early it was available, but the 28mm attachment for the Zoom finder was made until the very end. Selling in 1958 for only \$9.75 (dealer cost \$6.34!), it is today worth at least twice as much as the complete finder! It mounted to the front chrome rim of all types, including the MIOJ version, by simple friction, and was not serial numbered. At least two versions are known and are illustrated here. Note that it consists of simply the optics within a metal frame with a series of cut-outs allowing for it to flex when being mounted onto the finder. There was also a cut-out for the mounting plate for the shoe, which would then orientate the attachment with its 2.8 engraving on the top. Some are marked Nippon Kogaku Japan and some are not. Lastly, we have an accessory not made by Nikon but rather interesting. It came to me on a Type II and consists of an aluminum front cap that also fits by friction and even has the cut-out for the mounting plate. Too bad Nikon never made one for it works quite well!

The original list price for the Zoom finder ranged from \$41.00 in 1954 to a high of \$45.00(!) in 1964. Dealer cost in 1958 was only \$26.65! Today a clean Zoom Type I is worth at least twice its original price while a Type II can be as much as four times what it originally sold for. As for the MIOJ version...I have yet to find a listing during the years of the Occupation that would tell us what it originally sold for. However, based on rarity and desirability, its value would be at least five times that of the non-MIOJ types.

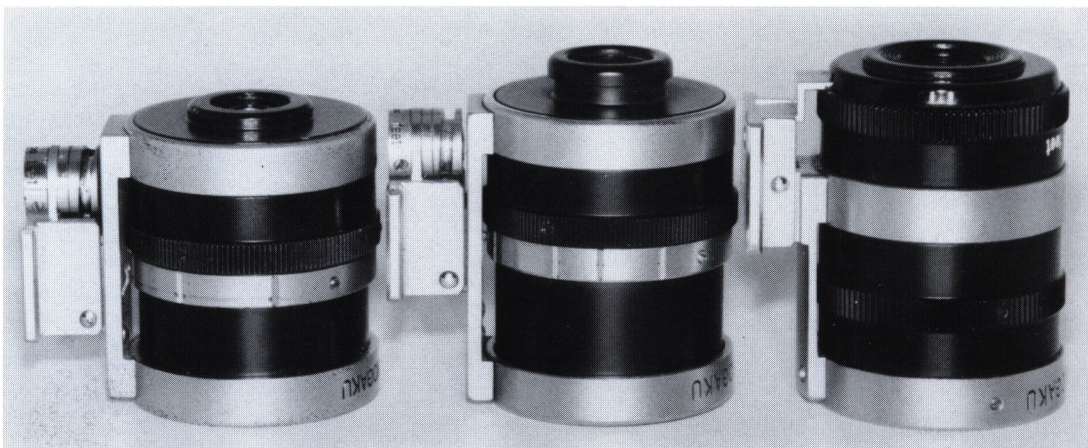
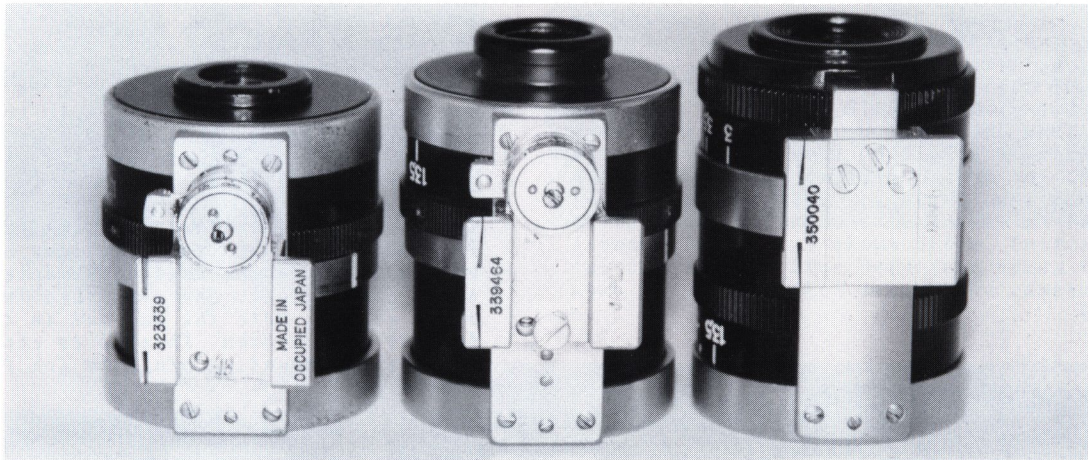
In today's market both the Type Ia and II finders are readily available in fine shape. Type I MIOJs are not often seen and can be considered rare. The 28mm attachment can be a real challenge to locate, but can be found. Happy hunting!



All three types lined up for inspection! These photos graphically illustrate the three basic versions of the Nikon Zoom finder that collectors are looking for. Note that except for the length of the supporting platform, the shoe/parallax control module of the Types I & Ib are identical, but that used on the newer Type II is a total redesign. The parallax dial with its tiny control lever is gone, replaced by the much easier to use black knurled ring that surrounds the eyepiece. The shoe now is just that and nothing more. From the side (bottom photo) the new shoe assembly is obviously more compact giving the Type II finder a lower center of gravity and a less precarious

look when mounted on the camera. Also note the thin bent metal tab protruding from the rear of the shoe and entering the finder just below the eyepiece. This is the coupler that transfers the parallax correction as you turn the dial. You may notice the oddly spaced grooves on the center chrome ring on the two earlier versions. What are they? Well, they are the click-stops for the focal length control ring and are engaged by a small metal ball trapped between the ring and the support platform for the shoe. The later Type II is more elegant with internal clicks, but there is something quaint about the earlier method.

R. Rotoloni..

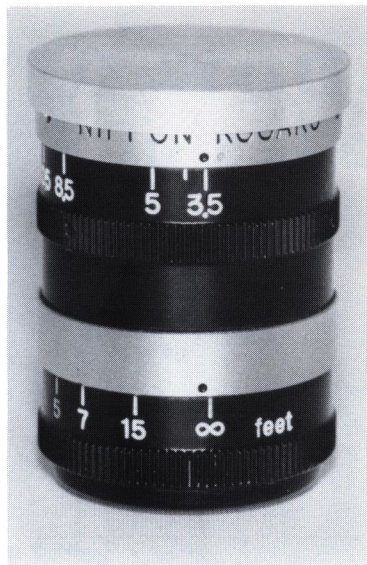




The only real accessory made by Nikon for the Zoom finder was the 2.8cm attachment. This consisted of the proper optical lens mounted in a metal frame designed to attach to the front of the finder. The minified view it produced gave the user the approximate coverage of the 28mm Nikkor and extended the usefulness of the Zoom finder. However, it had to be removed when using lenses longer than 28mm. For some reason Nikon designed this item to be a slip-on affair as opposed to a screw-in. It almost seems as if it was an after-thought, since a mounting screw thread could easily have been designed into the finder. The result would have been much better for this item was mounted simply by friction! You just slid it onto the front chrome rim, but carefully, as it was easy to mar the surface! Small grooves were cut into the mount to allow it to "flex", giving it a "universal fit". You think they would have at least redone this for the Type II, but no, it used the very same method! Two versions are known, neither numbered, and are shown at the left. One is marked "NKJ" while the other is not. Note the cut-out in the frame below the word Kogaku. This is to clear the leading edge of the mounting platform for the accessory shoe.

R. Rotoloni





The top three photos illustrate the unusual home-made front cap mentioned in the text. This came to me mounted on a Type II finder but will also fit the earlier versions. It is well made and fits perfectly for its "creator" even allowed for the mounting platform of the shoe with a small cut-out of the appropriate size. By the way, the finder will still fit in its leather case with this cap attached. The photo at left shows an early and late version of the Type Ib. How can you tell? One has a "105" setting and the other does not. This version was being made before the arrival of the famous 105/f2.5 Nikkor and the addition of this setting is one way to date these finders. Of course, Leicatype versions would have a 105 mark, but also others such as 73 and 90mm. A boxed Type II is shown below. Earlier versions can be found in blue velveteen boxes like those used for the earlier lenses and cameras.

R. Kotoloni



IN THE SHADOW OF FUJI...

Tales of Nippon Kogaku!

by John Baird

EARLY BINOCULARS

In the past 2 or 3 years, the interest in other "Nikon" products has increased substantially. This, I believe, is from Nikon RF fans hunting for other things "Nikon" and from those general collectors thinking the future lies in anything stamped "Nikon" that appears old. Anyway, for whatever reason, a market for Nikon military and sport binoculars is becoming keen.. so it's about time for a short primer on these very fascinating optics.

In all my ignorance, I don't profess to be an expert...but I have developed a small understanding of the general time frame and model types that N-K manufactured over the years. It seems that from the very on-set the production of binoculars was one of the first goals of N-K and its predecessor, Fujii Lens Factory. The first mention of binoculars was in 1913 with the introduction of the Nihon-go 6x24 & 8x24 prism models and some unknown Galileo-types. The evolution of these models during this time period is very poorly understood, but it appears that the "Victor" 12x prism binocular, also manufactured by Fujii, was very similar to the Nihon-go models. The time frame for these first "Nikon" binoculars was from 1913 to 1917 when the company was renamed Nippon Kogaku. As you will notice from the first photo, this pair of Victor 12x is very similar to the MIOJ "Orion" 6x24 and its war-time counterpart shown together in their own photo. As you will see, the Orion sports the familiar N-K "Nikko" logo (with the company name in Kanji) and bears a strong resemblance to the one that appeared on those made during the war. It is my guess (and only that), that the N-K logo varied somewhat in shape and form until it took its final look during the pre-war period in the late 30s'. With the discovery of the "Spica" & "Capella" models which we believe were made by N-K during the pre-war years, the company's logo was very similar to that used during the post-war period and, in fact into the 1970s' with the exception that the Nikko name was engraved just below the company's name spelled in Kanji. As you will notice from the accompanying photos, the logo stays the same from the 1930s' on the Capella & Spica models through the Occupation on the early Orion & Novar units. In every instance, the word "Tokyo" was engraved adjacent to the logo except on those military ordnance meant for the Japanese Army and Navy.

What does all this mean? These pieces give us clues to the approximate date and intended use for N-K made binoculars that most of us have passed up at camera shows over the years. First, as evidenced by collected units, one could assume that pre-occupation and wartime binoculars can be dated by looking for (1) the style of logo (Nikko w/Kanji plus Tokyo..most likely non-military made before, about and around 1947-48)..and (2) those bearing just the logo, Nikko and Kanji would mean military ordnance. Here's the exception...some pieces have been seen with small differences, giving us clues to variations and some idea of the age of some binoculars. In photo #3, the pair on the right has a logo which is nothing more than the outline of the prism and lens with the Japanese character for "light". Both units are identical with the exceptions found in the logo and the inclusion of a reticle in the military version. This particular logo on the military pair allows us to make a judgement about another pair recently discovered. As you can see in photo #4, this binocular has the same general shape as other pre-war N-K models (sans the difference in the eye-piece knurling), and shows an interesting logo very similar to that found on other N-K military types. First, this logo bears the general NK look, but there's a difference. The word "Nippon" has been included in the design! Does this mean that we can read "Nippon" or "Japan Optical" from this logo? This interpretation would place this pair in the N-K made list and possibly manufactured during the 1920s' or early 1930s' before the the name "Nikko" was first used. Although the verdict is not in on this pair, we need to use clues like these to date and verify those models made by N-K to have been actually made by them before camera fans turned binocular fans spawn a new wave of mis-information as happened with Nikon rangefinders before Bob and others released good and accurate information.

I guess a guy could preach on all the different types and models of N-K binoculars un-earthed to date...but studying the accompanying pictures and captions can best describe this better than what I can do here. So the next time you walk by a pair of binoculars on a seller's table...they might be or could be a pair of N-K military or sport optics you have been looking for.



Fig#1-Top...Compare the shape of the logo found on this pair of binoculars with those shown in the following photos, especially #4. Look at the similar outline of the logo and its contents... is it pre 1930 or not?

Fig#2-Bottom...A rare pair of "Fujii" Brothers (the predecessor to N-K) produced "Victor #4 12X" Binoculars. Made between 1913 and 1917, when the company was renamed Nippon Kogaku, these are very similar to the MIOJ "Orion" glasses shown in Fig#4, also made by N-K.
M. Awano.





Fig#3-Top...A pair of 10x70 military binoculars with the non-Tokyo "Nikko" logo mentioned in the text. Just visible to the side of the left eyepiece is a locking mechanism to hold adjustment. Both eyepieces have this lock.

Fig#4-Bottom...On the right are N-K made "Orion" 6x24 glasses from the Occupation era. Compare this to its military counterpart (left) made a few years earlier for the Japanese Army. Both are identical with the exception that the military "Nikko" shows a reticle in its field of view.

R. Rotoloni



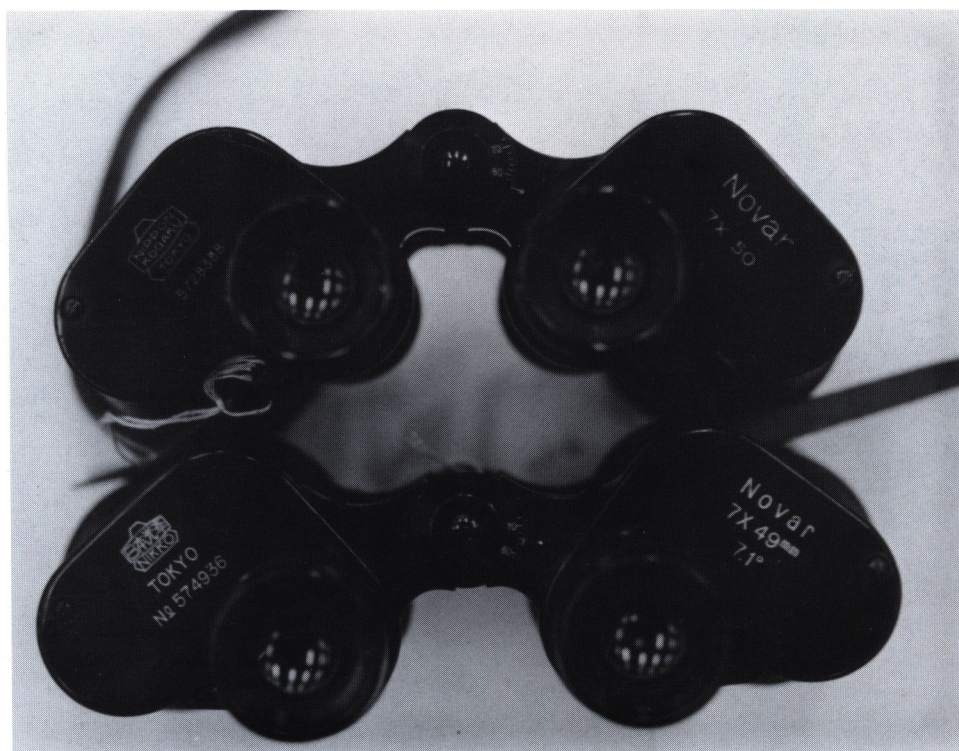


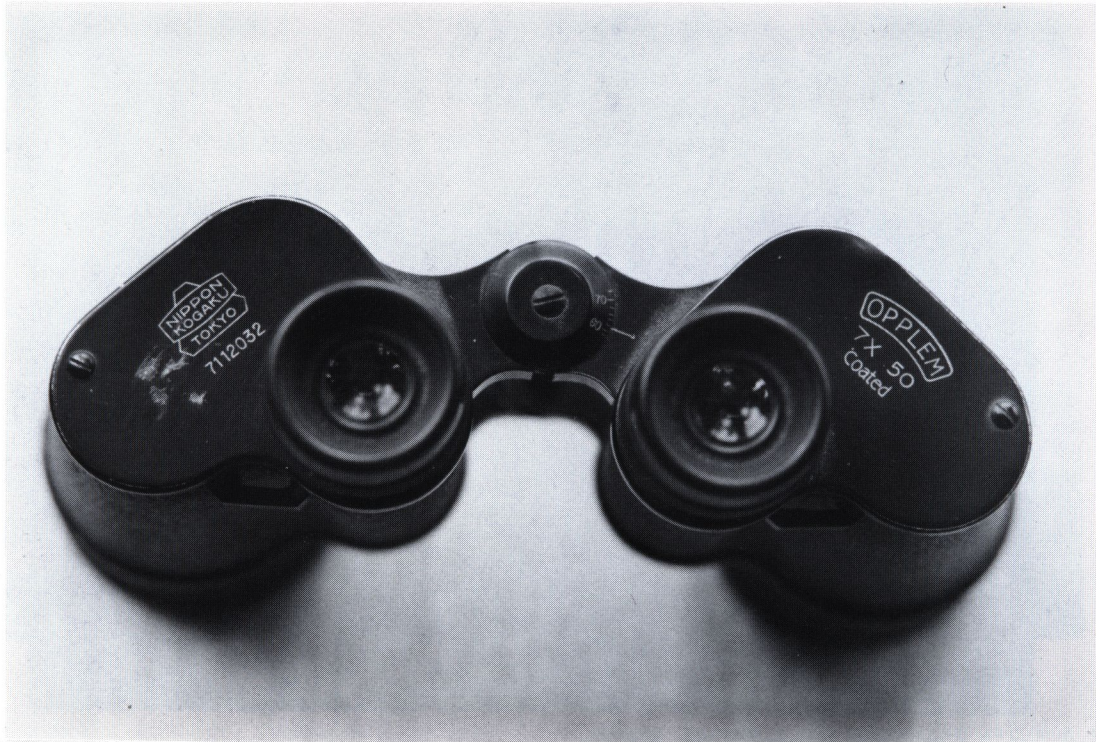
Fig#5-Top...A pair of pre-war "Capella" 2x opera glasses....its relative the "Spica" (not shown) was similarly designed with a power of 3.5x.

M. Symons

Fig#6-Bottom...Most of us are familiar with N-K's "Novar" glasses. Its interesting to see a "Nikko" pair next to a "Nippon Kogaku" logo'd pair. Close in serial numbers (57 was a prefix), both are

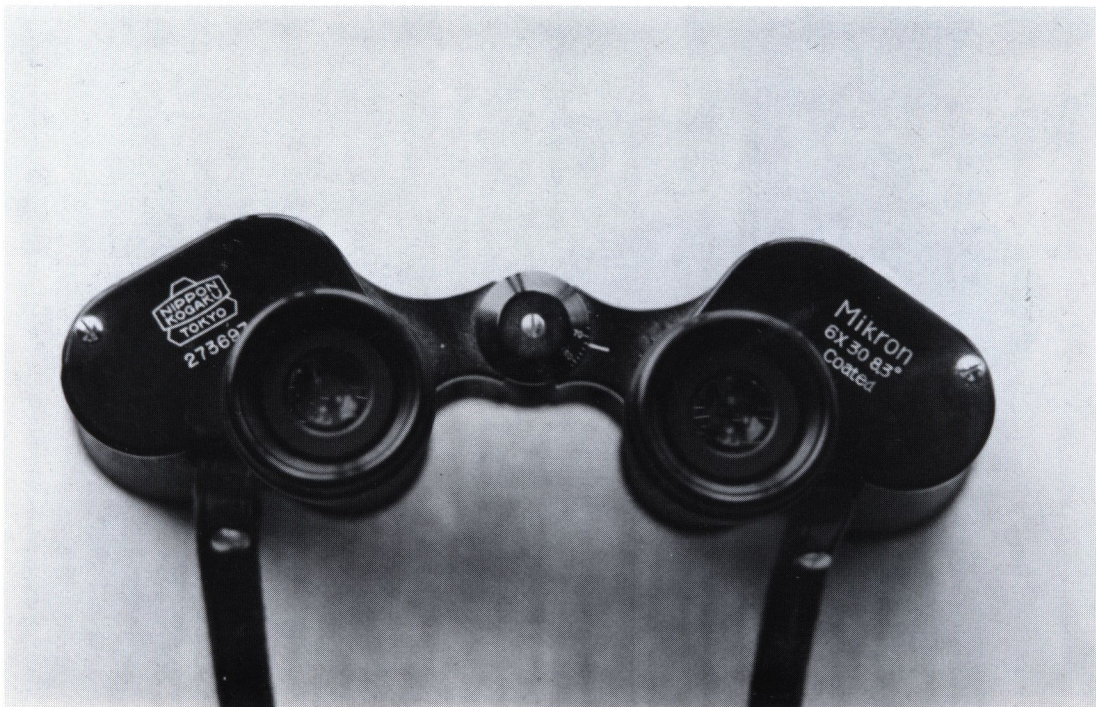
marked M10J but with several differences. The "Nikko" indicates 7x49mm with an interesting fake leather look & feel cast directly into the metal. This would indicate this pair was made early in the Occupation (1946-47) when materials were in short supply. The 7x49mm suggests that this pair was assembled from leftover military parts. In contrast, the top pair are the more commonly seen "7x50" M10J Novar with N-K markings.





Fig#7 & 8...In addition to the common Novars, the more unusual "Opplem" (top) and "Mikron" (bottom) are found with the MIOJ engraving. In fact, the line of Mikron binoculars were well described in the factory's Nikon S2 camera and lens price list. Some eight models were mentioned along with their prices.

(For even more information and photos about the early history of Nikon binoculars see John's latest monograph "The Japanese Camera" reviewed in NHS-30, which includes a chapter on these interesting optics.)



THE F--SPOT!!

The High Speed Fs featured in NHS-30 represented two of the probable three types that were actually available to the general public. This time around we have a chance to examine the third type, which more closely resembles the 7FPS type shown in the Nikon literature reproduced in NHS-30. In serial number this unit is obviously from the same batch. The one in NHS-30 is #7290281 with motor #152322 while this unit is #7290465 with motor #152347! Although close in number this unit is different in three distinct ways which actually makes it conform more closely to the unit in the Nikon literature. The first obvious difference is the battery pack which has the side mounted power outlet like that in the literature. Second, the oversized mirror lock-up dial, which is disengaged in the previous unit, is also present on this unit, but this time it has a real function. That is this camera DOES have a moving mirror and not a pellicle! Again this is more in line with the press release. The third difference is the prism. The press release shows a standard Nikon prism sporting an accessory shoe, but the manual that was originally supplied with the 7FPS units shows a prism and finder like that on this unit. Note the unique elongated shoe with its special support platform and its own nameplate that covers the regular plate of the standard prism, which lies intact under this accessory

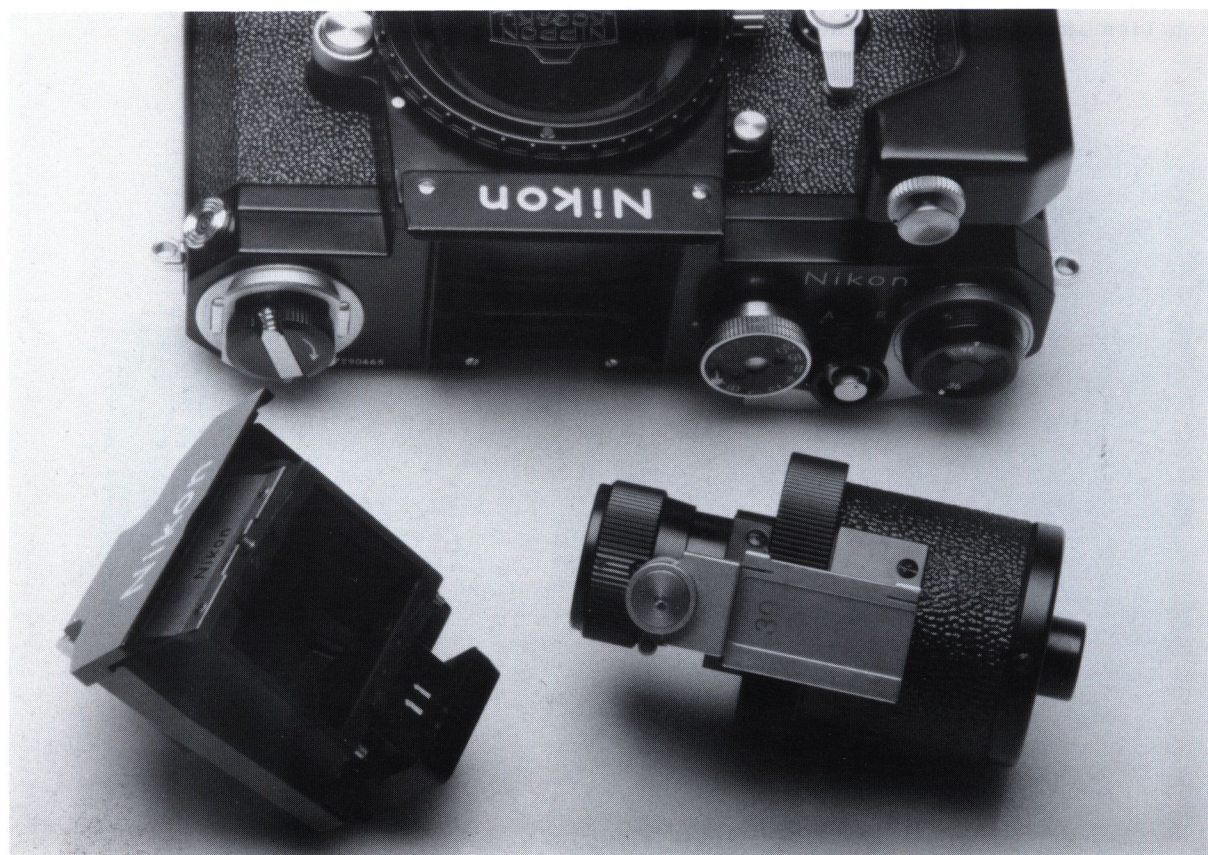
shoe-platform assembly. Also note the rear mounted parallax correction dial almost identical to that found on the Variframe and Varifocal finders made for the RF system! (Strange to see this mechanism revived at such a late date!)

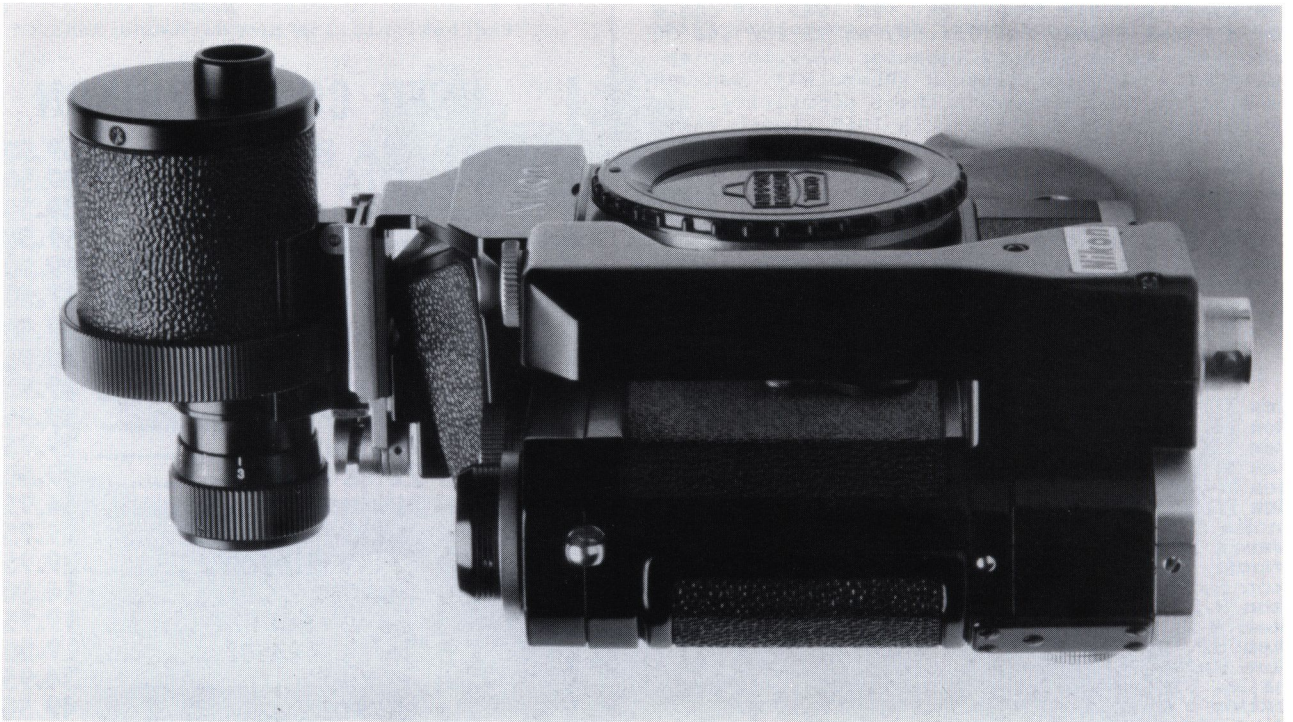
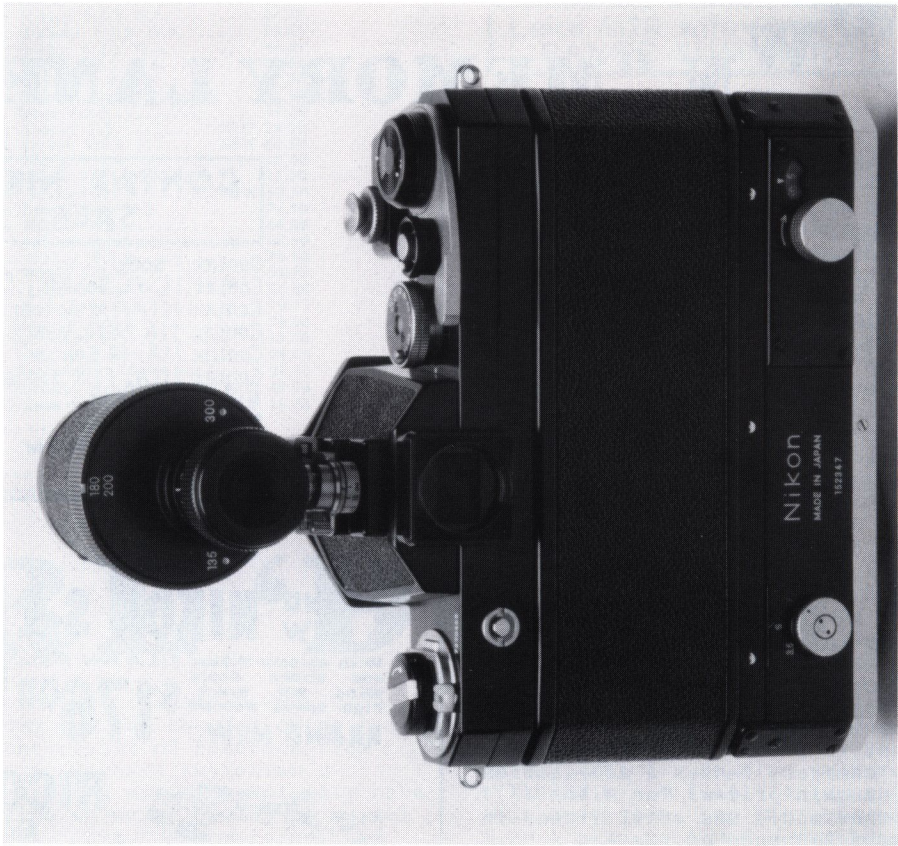
We now come to the rather unique finder supplied with this camera. Since the mirror would need to be locked up at 7FPS, Nikon supplied this optical finder as standard equipment. It features three frames corresponding to the 135mm, 180mm (200mm) and 300mm lenses, individually keyed by a rotating turret. It also has a magnification of 2X with parallax correction down to 1.5 meters. Diopter correction between +3 and -5 is built into the eyepiece. The entire viewing area is that of the 135mm lens, while the frames for the other lenses appear within this area.

An interesting point is that both the finder and prism are numbered. On the underside of the prism near the eyepiece is the number "11" in large white numerals. Along the same lines the number "39" appears on the underside of the finder's mounting shoe forward of the parallax correction dial.

The owner of this outfit wishes to remain anonymous, but I thank him for providing photos of this like new example to help us enhance our coverage of the rare and elusive "High Speed Nikon F".







DOWN "MEMORY LANE"!

by Rich Nordin

One of the obvious facts of collecting Nikon rangefinder cameras has been the rather recent incredible escalation in prices. An interesting, if not disturbing, exercise is to look back at the prices of 20 to 30 years ago. The beginning of publication of "Shutterbug" 20 years ago appears to have been an indicator of the real beginning of camera collecting. Before Shutterbug there were no collectors - just eccentrics. The point of this note is to look at prices in a pre-Shutterbug era between 1958 and 1970 as reflected in those tiny print ads of the big New York stores in Popular and/or Modern Photography.

This idea started out as a practical joke on NHS stalwart Mike Symons. I told Mike that I'd found an ad for a Nikon I that he would definitely be interested in. He immediately asked the price and I replied "6850". Mike's eyes immediately lit up and I could see him mentally reaching for his bank book and muttering something about 7000 dollars. I told him it wasn't \$6850.00 but \$68.50! His eyes immediately narrowed and he regarded me with an incredulous stare, so I showed him the ad from 1958! (Photo #1)

The prices in the 1960's and 1970's were "LOW"! The appeal of the SLR had relegated rangefinder equipment to the ranks of "used" and "obsolete" and many cameras, lenses & accessories were available for bargain prices. The Nikon I noted above (or another one!) was still listed in the Wall Street Camera Exchange ad two and a half years later (May 1960), the price now reduced by one dollar to \$67.50!!

Other ads indicative of the market value prices include a new Nikon S2 with f1.4 lens for \$176.00, significantly, after the introduction of the Nikon F in 1959 (Photo #2). In 1962 you could order a Nikon S body for \$24.50, an S2 for \$68.50 (Photo #3), an S3 with f2 lens for \$129.50 or an SP with f1.4 lens for \$164.50 (Photo #4). Lenses were also at the perige of their popularity, for example, an f1.1 for \$157.50 in 1965 (Photo #5). By 1970 (Photo #6), notable items were an SP with f1.4 lens and motor drive for \$269.50! Prices in general were static and low in this pre-Rotoloni era.

So what does this meander through the opportunities of yesterday achieve? Perhaps the obvious that you can never even hope to know what the future will bring. If I only knew then what I know now!

I wonder who finally did get that Nikon I for \$67.50??!!

Leica IIF, Rfdr. synch, F:2 lens	74.50
Leica IIIC, Rfdr. 1 sec. to 1/1000 body	39.50
Leica IIIF, Summitar F:2, Rfdr.	94.50
Leica M-2, Elmar F:3.5	168.50
Leica M-3, Summicron F:2	212.50
Leica IIIG, Summitar F:2, par. Rfdr.	148.00
Minolta SR, Reflex, F:1.8 autom.	98.50
Miranda D, Reflex, autom. F:1.9 ctd.	86.50
Miranda Automex F:1.9 latest	164.75
Nikon S, Rfdr. synch. body only	24.50
Nikon S-2, lever-wind, Nikkor F:1.4	119.50
Nikon S-3, Nikkor F:2	129.50
Nikon SP, latest, Nikkor F:1.4	164.50
Nikon Reflex F, Nikkor F:2	187.95
Praktica FX3, Auto-Tessar F:2.8, MX	49.50
Praktina FX, Tessar F:2.8 Autom., MX	54.50
Retina IIA, Xenon F:2., Rfdr.	46.50
Retina IIIC, Xenon F:2, MX, exp. mtr.	69.50

Fig#4-

CONTAX, NIKON SALE

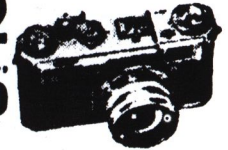
Contax I body	\$24.50
Contax II, f2 Sonnar	68.50
Contax III, f1.5 Sonnar	99.50
Contax IIA body, synch.	79.50
Contax IIA, f2 Sonnar	118.50
Contax IIIA, f1.5 Sonnar	159.60
Nikon I, f2 lens	69.50
Nikon S-1, f2 lens	89.50
Nikon S-2, f1.4 Nikkor	199.50
Nikon S-2 body	109.50

Fig#1-

BRAND NEW NIKON S-2

With chrome Nikkor F:1.4 lens Rfdr.,
one stroke Rapid
Wind MX synch.
high speed Rewind

\$176⁰⁰



BRAND NEW



reg. \$39.50

RICOH "16"

Subminiature

- F:3.5 interchangeable
- Rapid-wind lever
- Synchronized

\$14⁹⁵
BRAND NEW

Fig#2-

USED CONTAX/NIKON

Contax IIA Body	69.50
Contax IIIA Body	89.50
Nikon 'S' Body	39.50
Nikon S-2 Body	69.50
Nikon S-3 Body	99.50
Nikon S-P Body	137.50
21/4.0 Zeiss Biogon	129.50
25/4.0 Zeiss	79.95
25/4.0 Nikkor	89.95
28/3.5 Nikkor	59.95
35/3.5 Nikkor	39.95
35/2.8 Zeiss Opton	89.50
35/2.5 Nikkor	64.95
35/1.8 Nikkor	79.95
35/2.8 Zeiss Biogon	29.95
50/2.0 Sonnar	14.50
50/1.5 Zeiss Sonnar	19.95
50/2.8 Zeiss Tessar	19.50
50/2.0 Nikkor	34.95
50/1.4 Nikkor	49.50
50/1.1 Nikkor	139.50

Fig#3-

USED LENSES F. NIKON, CONTAX

21mm Biogon F:4.5 W.A. 90°	NEW 78.75
25mm Nikkor F:4 W.A.	96.50
28mm Nikkor F:3.5 W.A.	67.25
35mm Komura F:2.8 W.A.	23.50
35mm Nikkor F:3.5 W.A.	44.50
35mm Nikkor F2.5 W.A.	59.50
35mm Nikkor F:1.8 W.A.	89.50
35mm Zeiss Biogon F:2.8 W.A.	42.50
50mm Tessar F:3.5	19.50
50mm Sonnar F:2	NEW 28.50
50mm Sonnar F:1.5	NEW 49.50
50mm Nikkor F:1.4	68.50
50mm Nikkor F:1.1 high-speed	157.50
50mm Nokton F:1.5	NEW 49.50
85mm Zeiss Sonnar F:2	74.50
85mm Nikkor F:2	64.50
85mm Nikkor F:1.5	146.50
105mm Nikkor F:2.5	78.50
135mm Nikkor F:3.5	58.75
135mm Zeiss Sonnar F:4	57.50
Contax flash cable 1361	19.75
Nikon Close-Up Device	38.50
Motor for Nikon SP	115.50
Nikon Universal finder	24.50
Nikon Rangefinder Illuminator	27.50
Zeiss Universal Viewfinder	NEW 49.50
85/135 Zeiss Optical Viewfinder	NEW 15.75

Fig#5-

Leica M-3, Summicron F:2Used 197.50
 Leica M-4, Summicron F:2Used 274.50

Leica M2R with 50mm F:2 DUAL-RANGE SUMMICRONWRITE

Minolta Autopak 700Used 39.50
 Minolta Hi-matic 7, F:1.8, EE Used 49.25
 Nikon S-2, Nikkor F:1.4Used 94.50
 Nikon SP, Rfdr. M.X., F:1.4 Used 157.50
 Nikon SP w/Motor, F:1.4Used 269.50
 Nikonos Under-Water Camera Used 96.95

Olympus Quickmatic EES, F:3.5 with case and flashNEW 29.50

Olympus Quickmatic EEMNEW 38.95
 Robot Star, MX, Rewind, F2.8 Used 68.50
 Robot Star II BodyUsed 79.50

Fig#6-

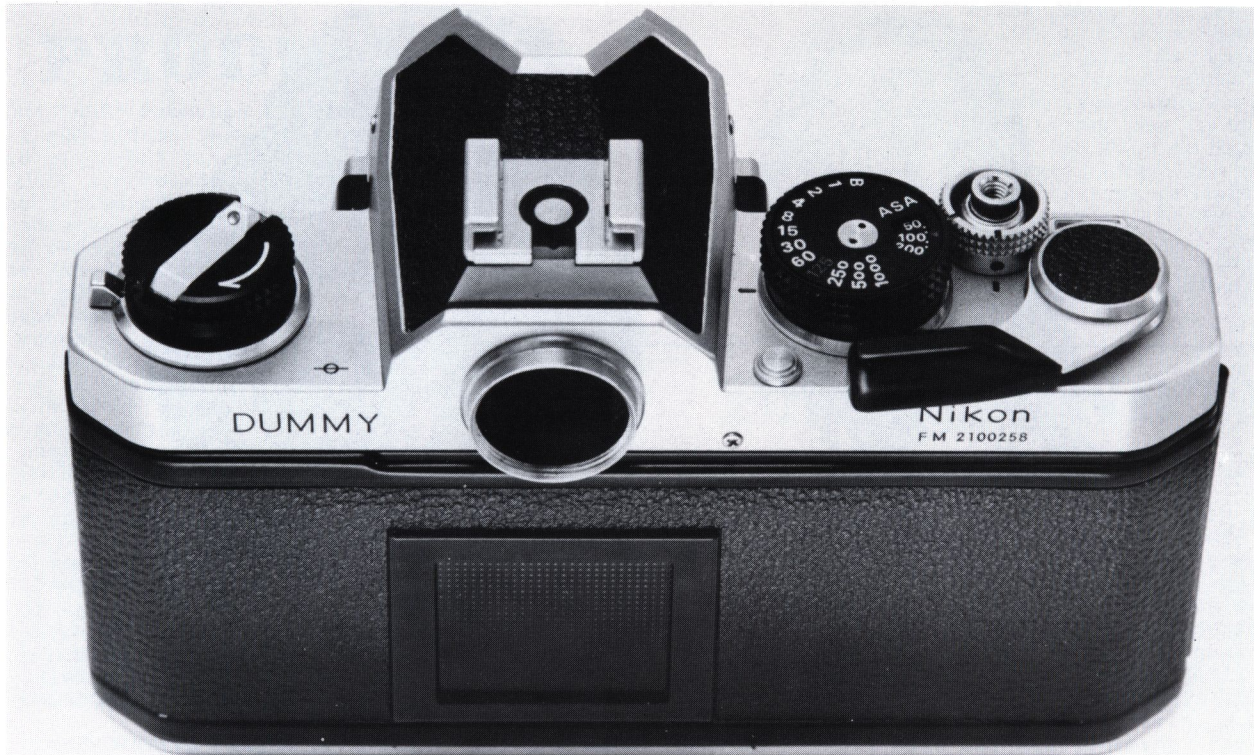
MORE 'DUMMIES'

As a follow up to the article in NHS-30 on Nikon "Dummies" I can now add the following examples. This is the result of feedback from members in response to Richard Keyishian's obviously very interesting article. Not only have members taken the time to write giving me serial numbers of additional "Dummy" Nikon items, but some have also sent photos. This is exactly the type of response such an article should produce, and I am happy to see it.

Please add the following serial numbers to those presented in NHS-30. From Tony Hurst comes notice of Nikon F Dummy #6435452, which is very close to that shown in the article (#6435497...

could this be a batch?). And from England Gray Levett tells me of Nikon F Dummy #7084636 w/1.4 #765266, which is fairly close to #7080533 shown in the article. He also writes of Dummy Nikon F2 #7110380 w/1.4 #1141524 in original box! Thank you, gentlemen, for the information!

I also received some photos of additional Dummy items for this issue (for NHS-32 there may be a series of photos of a very unique Dummy item that is virtually unknown!). Again, thanks to Tony Hurst we have a photo of a Dummy Nikon FM body #2100258, which is the only Dummy FM that I have recorded, and shows that Nikon presumably is still producing such items for display purposes.





Also from Europe are some photos of two very unusual Dummy items. It is one thing to produce Dummy bodies with normal lenses, since there is a real use for such items, while it is another to use exotic or expensive low production pieces, yet it has been done. Here are photos of two such items....a 50-300 f4.5 Auto-Zoom-Nikkor and a 1000/f11 Reflex-Nikkor! The owner tells me that the Zoom has only 3-4 pieces of glass and that none of the control rings can be moved. As for the 1000mm, the focusing ring is frozen at the infinity setting, yet photos can be taken with it if the subject is at 8 meters! Note that both lenses are engraved "Dummy" on the rear surface of their mounts just like the 35mm/f1.4 shown in NHS-30. One cant help but wonder what else Nikon made available as a Dummy. Maybe a Fish-eye?!!



LETTERS..

From George Jenkins...

Sorry if I seem like a deadbeat for not responding to your request for contributions for offsetting the cost of the lovely Nikon brochure reprint. I'd like to see you continue this type of thing. But I cant help but understand the problems of foreign members. It costs me \$10 for an international money order, and this really runs up the cost of small orders. Some type of subscription would be helpful, and this would also help people like me who procrastinate on small items! So I am sending you something to start the thing. Out of it please send me John Baird's essay on the Japanese Camera and retain the balance for future things you may or may not decide to print. If you print several more brochures I will not feel guilty, but will send more funds when a gut feeling tells me its' time. Keep up the good work.

From Alan Blake...

I was very disappointed to read in your editorial in NHS-30 that you had had such a poor response to the Nikon M brochure. I was delighted to receive mine not only because of the evident high quality of reproduction but particularly because it is unlikely that I will ever get to see an original let alone have one to own!

Perhaps the general lack of response is due not to disinterest but to the natural reluctance (=laziness) to do anything after an event rather than needing to do something positive to make the event happen. My vote is strongly in favor of continuing with the concept. However, I agree with the letter in NHS-30 from David Miller that payment of small amounts overseas can be very difficult. Please find enclosed my willing and grateful contribution. Following your latest editorial I do hope that you are inundated with mail in support.

From Peter Lownds...

Having had the opportunity to attend both NHS Conventions, I can attest to the fact that a great weekend was had by all. Both events were well planned within a workable schedule allowing for both serious discussions and presentations as well as time for more light-hearted fellowship amongst a diverse group of people who share a passion for Nikons. Understandably, both Conventions were held near O'Hare Airport just outside of Chicago, since this is where Bob lives. Not only is it a central location for those members from the U.S., but is also an international travel hub for those of us who have to come a little further. Needless to say, since you more or less set up the entire weekend, from obtaining meeting space, arranging for speakers, running the auction and show & tell sessions, and all the little things that such an undertaking requires, it made sense that NHS-Con1 & 2 were held in the Chicago area. Now that we are in the off year between conventions it might be time to start discussing possibilities and particulars for NHS-Con3, which is tentatively set for one year from now. I have a suggestion to make to which I would be very interested in hearing the membership's response. Next year will mark the 75th birthday of Nippon Kogaku (1917), and would it not be fascinating to have our meeting in Tokyo?! It could be a joint venture between the Nikon Historical Society and the Nikon Club Tokyo (many of whom you have met on previous trips to Japan). Possibly a visit to the factory could be arranged and it could be timed for the annual Matsuya camera show normally held in February. Many times you have told me about the one you attended and I know we all would find it quite interesting. Maybe a group charter flight could be arranged or, at the least, some sort of package deal on room rates. Anyway, lets here from the members! How about it? Can you imagine 10 or 20 of us on a sojourn to Tokyo!

From Behram Kapadia...

As my profession is designing and producing elegant and well printed illustrated books, I realize and understand the problems you must get involved in designing and producing the Journal with a limited number of typefaces on your existing word processor. A prime example of its limitations is the use of italic typefaces for the captions. The print quality of the photographs has now reached such a high level of excellence that in order to improve the typography to the same standard I would like to propose to the members the setting up of a NHS fund to finance the purchase of a laser printer which can be used with great design advantage to further lift the quality of the Journal to become a really professional looking magazine. Perhaps if we were to all contribute \$10 each along with our subscriptions...? I wonder what other members think of the idea?

"NHS" PRODUCTS

Our "NHS" Products list continues to expand with an additional item this issue. Through the efforts of member Peter Lownds we have been able to produce a compendium of repair manual reprints for the series of Nikon motors that most interest this society. Printed and bound as one portfolio are the repair manuals for the S36 & S72 motors for the rangefinder series, and both the early and late manuals for the F36 motor as well as the F250 back made for the Nikon F! All five manuals bound together as one and available for \$17.00 in the US and \$20.00 overseas, postpaid! You can't go wrong on this one, and it makes for a great companion piece to the SP repair manual!

Also I am happy to announce that more Tie clasp/cuff link sets have arrived and are now in stock. Also, there is a possibility that more calculators will be available (I still have a small supply). A complete listing follows.

TIE CLASP/CUFF LINK SETS...\$15 US....\$18 OVERSEAS
"NHS" LAPEL PIN.....\$5 US.....\$6 OVERSEAS
NIKON SP REPAIR MANUAL.....\$10 US....\$12 OVERSEAS
NIKON MOTOR REPAIR MANUAL..\$17 US....\$20 OVERSEAS
NIKON MONOGRAPH (SIGNED)...\$10 US....\$12 OVERSEAS
NHS T-SHIRTS (MED ONLY)....\$11 US....\$13 OVERSEAS
NIKON CALCULATORS.....\$5 US.....\$6 OVERSEAS

NIKON COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE (Oriental version with metal frame) Boxed.....\$155 us...\$175 OVERSEAS

PLEASE NOTE

Over 1000 classic Photographicas will make Cologne the center of the international collector's scene on April 13,1991. Early rarities and treasures will be up for sale. Items ranging from an 1856 Chevalier sliding box camera and an 1800 Camera Obscura Tent, to a vast selection of more modern pieces from the wet plate era to the classic 35mm rangefinders. In addition a large selection of brass lenses, accessories and over 300 light-meters will be offered. A fully illustrated catalog is available for US \$30. Write to Auction Team Koln, P.O. Box 501168, D-5000, Koln 50, West Germany. Fax 0221/374878.

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE.....20cm-60cm f9.5 Auto-Nikkor-Zoom #170675 with supplementary close-up lens, shade, caps, filter adapter, manual and wooden case! \$795 or trade for Orion Camera Co. Miranda T with Ofunar or Zunow lens. Tom Surovek, P.O. Box 2001, Hammond, IN 46323...(219) 844-2462 evenings.

WANTED...Clean Nikon rangefinder. I'll pay 25% more than McKeown's Price Guide. Write or phone. Peter Lownds, W. de Zwijgerstaat 24, Rotterdam 3043 VD Holland. Tel...(010) 415-9136.

WANTED...Collector seeks rangefinder items: Nikon bodies, lenses and accessories. Nikkors in screw mount. Canon bodies and lenses in particular the 19mm, 25mm, 50mm/f0.95, 200mm and Mirror Box. All types of Leica copies. Nikkors for F...Fisheye, OP, 55mm UV, PS 55mm Micro 1:1,400-600-800-1200mm lens heads & mount. Per Kullenberg, Ollingvej 11, 6933 Kibaek, Denmark. Tel..+97191393.

FOR SALE...Chrome SP w/F1.4 and 105mm lenses, in about EX condition, documented as formerly owned by Sammy Davis Jr.! Asking \$3000.00 which will be refunded if buyer not satisfied with equipment or documentation. "Cy" Meyer, 516 Essex Dr., Sierra Vista, AZ 85635. Tel...(602)458-5152.

FOR TRADE...Boxed bubble level, EX+; SP and S3 instructions, new; 3.5 & 10.5cm "F" shades w/logo, both mint-. 10.5 shade has engraving error.. "1:" is missing from "1:2.5". WANTED...Meter retainer, SP/early F literature; 2.1/2.8cm "F" shades/logo; mint 5cm/1.4 RF shade; orig. Nikon leather strap w/locking rings; off-set bracket w/logo, FB4 case. Calvin Ho, Caltech 147-75, Pasadena, CA 91125.

WANTED...Nikon compartment cases, especially the flat "Bensor" type for the M/S. Will buy/trade all types including top-zippered for the S, S2 & SP/S3 (motor compartments). Also seeking early camera cases for the M, S, S2, Variframe finder & others. Have RF trade items. Mike H. Symons, 3844 Merriman Dr., Victoria, B.C. Canada V8P 2S9 Tel..(604)477-1867.

The following is a press release that I recently received from member Peter Walnes. I felt that it would be of interest to the members and have reproduced it in its entirety.

UK DEALER BUYS HUGE SURPLUS NIKON STOCK

Peter Walnes Ltd. have just purchased a vast shipment of surplus Nikon items from a middle east wholesaler. The consignment is worth, at today's prices, over \$300,000 US, and comprises 12 huge boxes of Nikon reflex items including tubes, bellows, filters, adapter rings, hoods, screens, flash cords, eyesight correction lenses, cases and many other accessories.

The vast majority of the merchandise is now either discontinued or extremely hard to get, yet most of the stock is being sold at a fraction of today's list price. A very large proportion of Peter Walnes's business is export by mail order so they are well accustomed to the correct packing procedures and export paperwork. Moreover, they accept all major credit cards, which greatly facilitates the otherwise complicated issue of transferring funds overseas.

You can contact Peter Walnes Ltd. by phone on 011-44-425-617176 or send them a Fax on 011-44-425-610934. Alternately you can write to them at Williams Industrial Park, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 6SH, England.

NEW MEMBERS

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NEW YORK, NY 10031

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GARY BLOCKLEY PHOTOGRAPHY
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DALLAS, TX 75207

IRA BOURSTEIN
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WHITESTONE, NY 11357

JOHN D. MURRAY
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RIVER BARN, LONGPARISH,
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6200045	6206463	6209523
6221534	6321119	6322386
	6600064	

NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the next issue of The Nikon Journal will be June 1, 1991. For those of you with articles, ads, letters or photos for NHS-32 please get all contributions to me by that date. Thank you!

odds 'n ends

THIS "ODDS N' ENDS" PAGE WILL BE RESERVED IN ALL FUTURE ISSUES OF "THE NIKON JOURNAL" AS A SHOWCASE FOR THE RARE, THE UNUSUAL & OFFBEAT, OR JUST THE OUT OF THE ORDINARY! IF YOU FEEL

THAT YOU POSSESS AN ITEM THAT FULFILLS THESE CRITERIA, PLEASE SEND ME AT LEAST TWO OR MORE VARIED VIEWS OF YOUR ODDITY ALONG WITH ANY INFORMATION THAT WOULD BE OF INTEREST. THANKS!

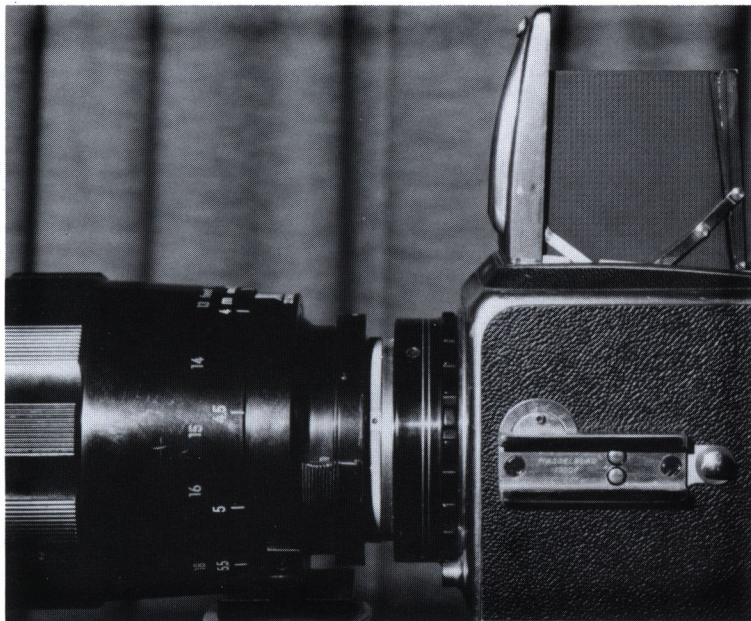
THE 'NIKKOR-BLAD'?

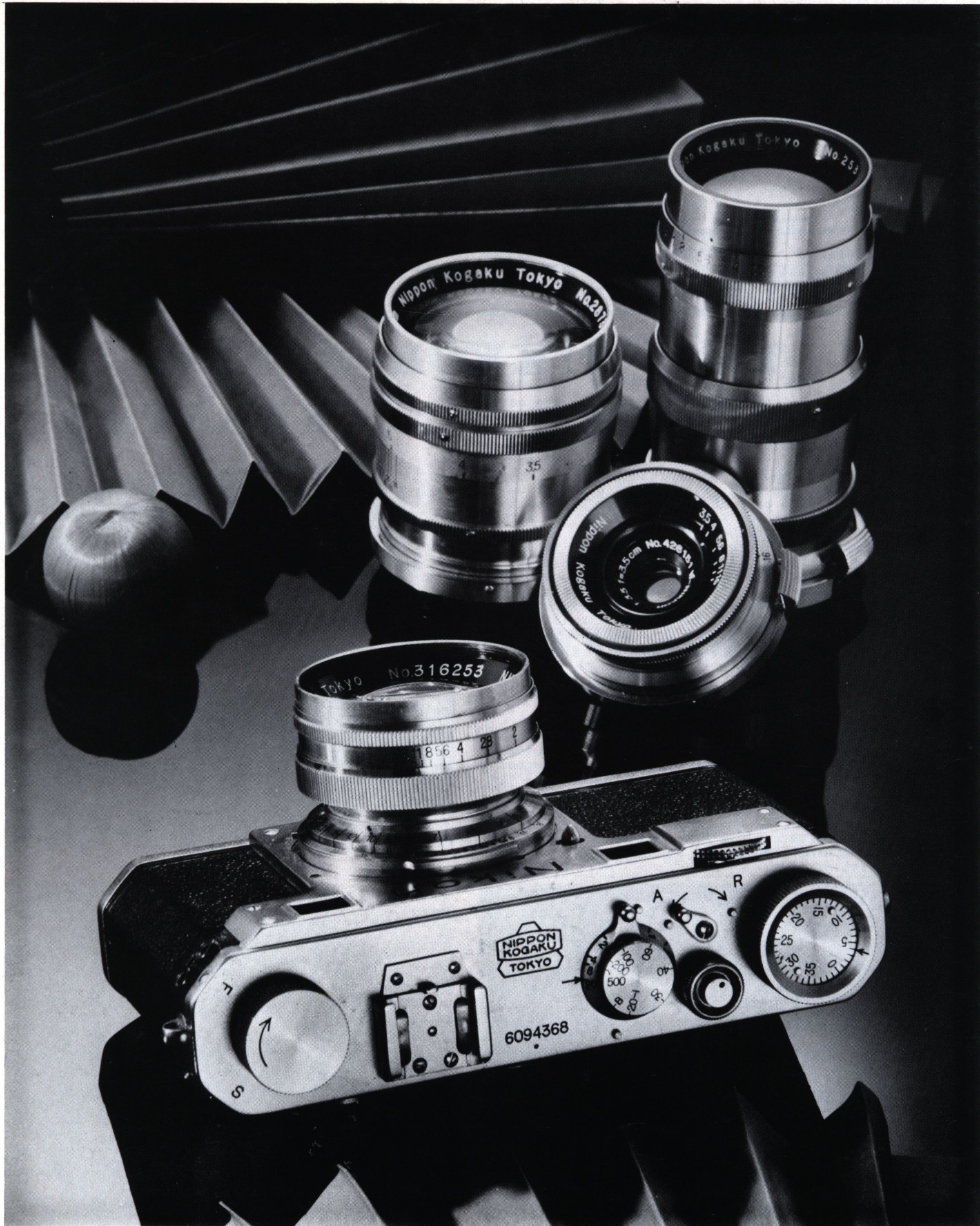
This adapter must have been made in the early to mid 1950s to couple short mount Nikkor lenses to the Hasselblad 1600F/1000F series. I mention "short mount" since lenses shorter than the 180mm F2.5 Nikkor will not focus to infinity. As can be seen from the photos, this piece must have been produced by some enterprising machinist (or company) hoping to cash in on the Hasselblad market, using already proven Nikkor optics, to the still then relatively new Hasselblads. It has been very well machined, with both the 'Blad rear lens mount adapter (actually the proper Zeiss lens mount) and the Nikon "S" external lens mounting flange seated in a very solid looking barrel. Four countersunk screws join the two sections. Two red mounting "dots" facilitate the lining up of both the lens-to-adapter and adapter-to-body. Notice the knurling on the rear 'Blad lens ring, typical of early Zeiss lenses produced for the focal plane Hasselblads. A California dealer informed me that it came attached to a 350/f4.5 Nikkor, which he sold separately.

There has long been a marriage of sorts between Nikon and Hasselblad, which continues to this day. Included in my 'Blad case is a modern "mirror image" version of this piece..a current adapter which allows me to use my Hasselblad "C" and "CF" lenses on Nikon reflex bodies! Could this early coupler have been the beginning of this alliance? Was this a "one-off", or was it marketed commercially? Although the answer might be difficult to ascertain at this time, it is an interesting item.

Mike H. Symons

ADAPTER





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