

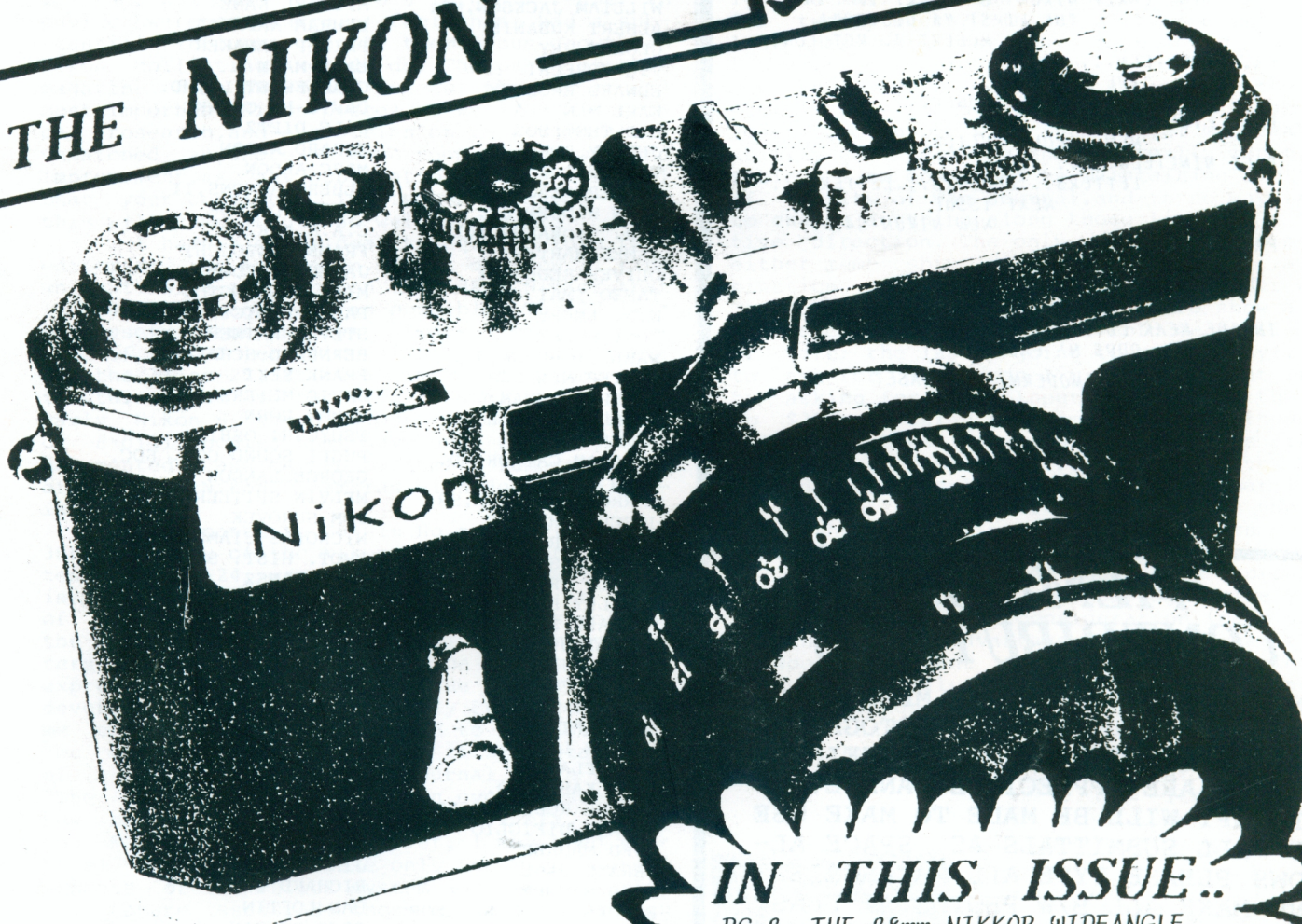
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NIKON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 30, 1989



25

SIXTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!!
THE NIKON  JOURNAL



IN THIS ISSUE..

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PG.10--THE FIRST NIKON 8-DIGITS!
PG.14--INTRODUCING "THE F-SPOT"!

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE NIKON Journal

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

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EDITOR/PUBLISHER

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MANUSCRIPTS AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHS
CONCERNING THE NIKON RANGEFINDER
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OF ALL SUBMITTALS AS SPACE AL-
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BACKGROUND IS PREFERRED AND TRY
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EDITORIAL

If someone would have asked me six years ago what I thought The Nikon Historical Society and The Journal would be like in 1989, I'd probably have given them a rather vague answer along the lines of "I really don't know but my hopes are that The Journal would still be published & we would have at least 100 members." Well, here it is anniversary time again and we have made it to No. 6 with a membership of 180 worldwide! The Journal has grown from its original 20 pages to 24 and, hopefully, is a much better and more sophisticated publication than it was in 1983, with better typography, layout and content. At least that's what your letters are telling me, which makes all this work very gratifying. We've had one Convention that was a real success, with the second in the planning stages (more later), and both the Society and its Journal have enjoyed a large increase in public awareness which, I feel, has had a substantial influence on the tremendous growth in Nikon collecting worldwide. The pages of this magazine have showcased some of the rarest and most important Nikon pieces as well as historical research, and our series on repair is still unmatched anywhere. We have room for growth and improvement, as any publication does, and I feel that your continued involvement insures that this will come about, so welcome to #25!!

I have a great deal to squeeze into this editorial, so here goes. First off you'll find an extensive article on the 28mm Nikkor that I hope is as complete as possible. The 28 is a very useful lens and was always a popular member of the RF lens line. Although not as exotic as the 21 or 25, it is an important lens. Also in this issue is the final installment on the early Nikon S, which covers in detail a batch of 8-digit bodies that have only recently been documented, and may be part of a rumored group of 20 or so Nikon S cameras with duplicate serial numbers.

The response to Calvin Ho's article on the 30th birthday of the Nikon F, & the entire content of NHS-24, was astounding! Our special F issue seems to have really hit home with a lot of you with interest in the reflex as well as the RF Nikons. This response, plus the many letters you have written over the last six years expressing the feeling that The Journal should devote some space to the early F, has convinced me that the time has arrived to do just that! You will find on page 14 the first installment of a new feature for The Journal which I call "The F-Spot". A few pages in every issue will now be devoted to the early reflex era, so all you F users rejoice! However, I may need your help! I want to showcase only the more unusual aspects of the reflex system and need material for future issues. So those of you who've been asking... (pleading, imploring, begging, demanding, coercing, etc...)... now's your chance! Let me hear from you!

On pages 17 and 18 is an announcement for the first in a series of Monographs published by "Historical Camera Publications", which is the work of member John Baird. The theme upon which this series is based is the "History of the Japanese Camera". I am pleased to announce that the initial offering was written by your editor and will be available by the time you receive this issue of The Journal. This first Monograph is a joint effort between Historical Camera Publications and the Nikon Historical Society, and will be made available to members at a special price. Please see pages 17 and 18 for details.

Some of you have written to ask how the Society is doing financially. One theme that seems to run through many of your letters is how can I produce The Journal four times yearly and mail it first class all over the world for twenty bucks? In actuality I can't! In the last six years there have been three postage & two printer increases, not to mention investment in computer equipment to improve the product, yet I am charging the same as I was five years ago. Anyone with fundamental mathematical ability can tell you that it really isn't possible. I am committed to maintaining the level of quality of The Journal, and in no way intend to change anything along those lines in a negative direction. The only roads open to me are either membership dues, or postage, or a combination of both. The corporation under which The Journal is published has yet to show a profit and my accountant has told me that sooner or later the IRS is going to wonder why! I hate to ask for money, so I'm going to put it off by asking for your input. By raising the dues to \$25 and using the same mailing methods I'd still not break even, since overseas airmail postage has become extremely expensive. There are different solutions open to us that I want to put on the table in the hope that you will take the time to write me and express your opinions on this matter.

How would you feel about a \$5 increase in dues? Would a three year package price of \$65 still be worth your consideration (many of you currently take advantage of the 3 year rate & I would not want to discourage this since it makes dues collection much easier) giving you a \$10 savings and protecting you from any increases during that period? First class postage in the US is no problem, but overseas airmail is getting out of hand. What would those

(Cont. pg.17)

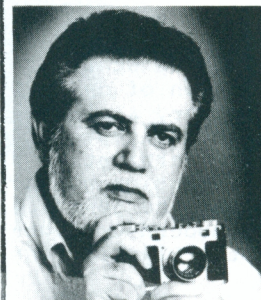


Photo: Tony Hurst

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE 28MM/F3.5 NIKKOR WIDEANGLE

by *ROBERT ROTOLONI*

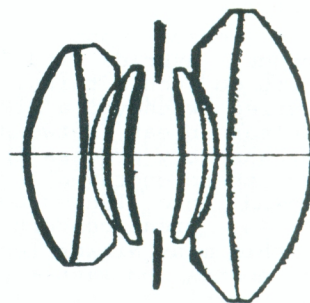
September 1952 saw the selection of wide angle lenses for the Nikon rangefinder system triple. Up until this point the only wide lens available to the Nikon user was the venerable, but pedestrian, 35mm/3.5 Nikkor, a lens whose design & development dated back to the pre-war years. But in this month two exceptional, and long-lived, additions were introduced that enhanced the Nikkor lens system immensely. They were the 35mm/f2.5 and the 28mm/f3.5 Nikkors. This article will concern itself with the 28mm Nikkor, which reigned as the widest lens in the system until the arrival of the 25mm/f4.0 over a year later.

As with most lenses from this period, the 28mm Nikkor started life in a very robust and heavy chrome plated brass mount. Recorded serial numbers seen as of this time begin at about #346300, with the earliest confirmed lens numbered 346329. It is a bit unusual in that Nippon Kogaku did not follow its customary procedure of numbering their lenses to reflect, in some way, the focal length and speed of the optic, or the date of design or production start up, with this lens. They chose what appears to be a random number, which they retained up to at least lens #349067, or approximately 2,800 lenses. This entire first series, save for two recorded exceptions, are chrome. Those two exceptions, one of which is in this author's collection and pictured here, are black finished lenses! Their numbers are 347128 and 347469. It is unknown why they should exist but lens number 347128 is illustrated in this article and appears to be correct save for its finish.

There are two distinct variations seen in this initial batch of 28s (disregarding the 2 unusual black lenses & the existence of those calibrated in meters). Somewhere between lens #347968 & #349067, the diaphragm mechanism was changed. The result was a shift from the more archaic non-linear, or non-equidistant, type of aperture scale, to a more modern equidistant style. This is amply illustrated here with lenses 347128, 347968 and 349067. This caused not only a new engraving of the aperture scale itself, but a rearranged progression of detents to correspond with the scale change, & a modified movement of the blades themselves. This was a deliberate move towards modernization & it caused a change in the construction of the lens. What is interesting is that the 50mm/1.4 was NEVER changed to this more modern configuration until the release of the Olympic lens in 1964!

Screw mount lenses are intermixed throughout this first batch of 28mm Nikkors, as they are in the following series, for suddenly Nippon Kogaku decided to completely alter the serial number sequence for this lens! Out of nowhere enters a new batch of 28mm Nikkors beginning with the "712" prefix, with the earliest recorded example being #712043. Again there is no relationship with speed or focal length or a date, just a random number. The question is "why"? The first 800 or so lenses are almost all chrome, so it did not signify the switch to a lighter black mount, since they don't show up with any regularity until about #713850. It also doesn't appear to correspond with the new equidistant aperture system since, as has been seen, it already was being used in the previous batch. If the number change did correlate with the new aperture system, then those from the first batch could have been test lenses. It is possible that the number change could have signified a change in the optical formula, yet no mention of such a modification or improvement has been seen in the literature, and one would assume such an improvement would be announced. For whatever the reason, the 28mm Nikkor was given a new number type, which was used to the end of production. At this time the latest number seen is 719712, for a production of about 7,700 units in this series. Added to the previous 2,800 gives a total production in the area of 10,500 lenses. This corresponds with the figure of 10,000 used in my book, even though nearly twice the sampling is now known.

Once this new series began it progressed with no real variations except for the obvious chrome barrel giving way to a lightened black type around July of 1957. At first, however, it was still made in chrome with the change over to black a little confusing. Black lenses show up with some regularity beginning at #713421, but chrome barrels have been verified as late as #714763 (in the author's collection & shown here) and 714825, which is interesting because it is calibrated in meters! However, after lens #715000 no chrome barrels in Nikon mount have been verified, with all remaining lenses seen only in black. Another small variation is one that appears in nearly every lens Nikon made. That is the removal of the red "C" from the identification ring. In the case of the 28mm Nikkor this occurs around lens #716692, which is the latest lens verified to still possess the "C". By lens #716987 it is gone, from which point no other variations have been seen.

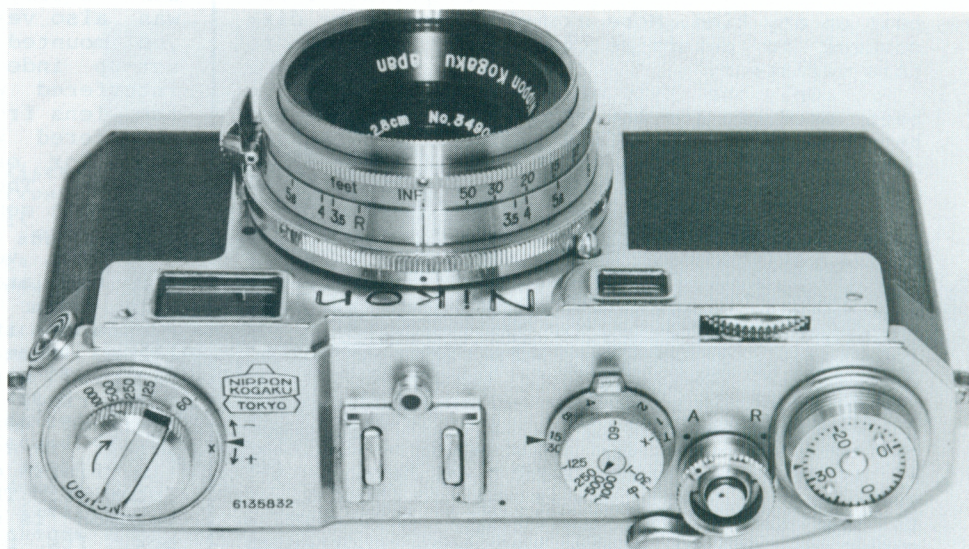


Upper right-Optical formula of the 28mm Nikkor. The rear group to the right was enlarged to reduce vignetting and improve the evenness of illumination in this otherwise almost symmetrical design.

Above & right-A classic early chrome version #349067 on an early Nikon S2 #6135832.

Below-The modernized black mounted 28 lens made commercially available around mid-1957 is shown here on a Nikon S4 #6307278. The black lens was lighter and its focusing scale easier to read.

R. Rotoloni



Lens #347128 deserves a few words at this point. Obviously the identification rings on these lenses could be easily interchanged to produce "hybrids" and "anomalies" if one wished to do such a thing. In essence this is what occurred whenever a Nikon optic didn't exhibit a clean break between two variations. During the assembly process the identification rings, with their engraved serial numbers, were often screwed into lenses coming off the line without any great concern about sequence. Because of this many Nikkor lens variations and breaking points between types are a bit hazy. This could explain lens #347128, whose number should be on a chrome lens. However, if this is a case of a simple switch in identification rings, it does not explain why this lens has the "older" non-equidistant aperture scale, which was gone before the arrival of the black lenses, & would mean that even more parts would have to be interchanged. However, on very close examination this lens shows no evidence of tampering or repair on any kind. More examples need to be discovered to determine if there is a pattern to this variation.

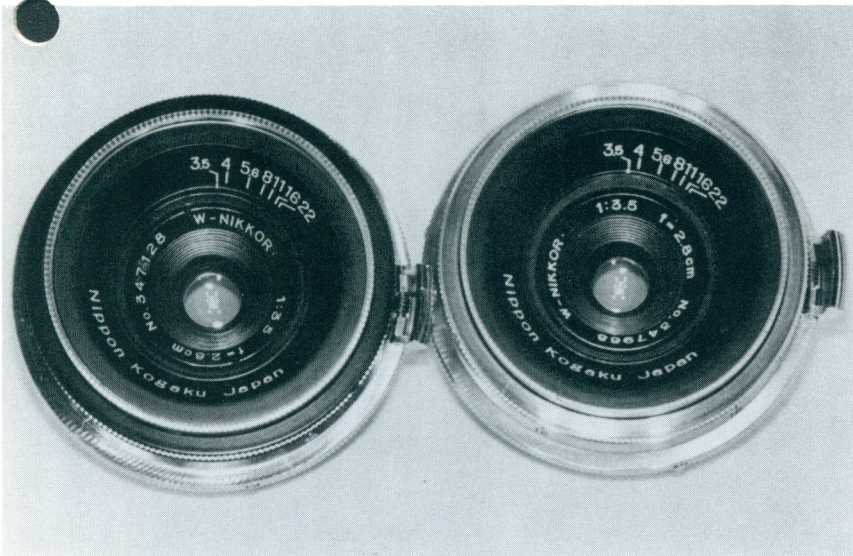
Only one style of finder appears to have been produced for the 28mm Nikkor. To date they have only been verified in chrome finish with no black examples known. This finder is of the optical type and not the bright-line construction seen on other Nikon finders. It has parallax correction adjustment around the eyepiece and a conical body, and is not overly large or heavy. However, the production of this finder undoubtedly dropped off after the arrival of the Nikon SP in late 1957, which had as one of its major selling points, a built-in optical finder for 28mm. Since the finder was sold as an accessory and not supplied as standard with the lens, the production quantity was less than that of the lenses, but could never be estimated because the 28mm finder was never serial numbered. At least that is what we thought! It is now known that a few 28mm finders were so numbered, and so far two have been reported to me. They are #s 408190 & 408501, which again is a number with no relation to the product type. The number is stamped on the rear of the shoe housing just below the finder eyepiece and is not painted in. One interesting point is that both known examples are calibrated in meters & not feet! This could mean that only those intended for the home and European markets were so numbered, since those sent to America would be in feet. Hopefully more examples will surface in the future.

Two types of front caps were produced for this lens. Early ones came with a black metal slip-on cap with the N-K logo stamped in while later lenses were supplied with black plastic snap-on caps. The first type of rear cap was also black metal and unmarked. Later on it was replaced with a black plastic cap with the N-K logo embossed and the letter "W" on its inside surface.

The most interesting accessory for the 28mm Nikkor was its shade. As with all Nikkor wideangles made for the rangefinder cameras, its proper shade is seldom seen! There are a few reasons for this situation. First of all, except for the 25mm/f4, the wideangle shades were not standard equipment, but sold as accessories. Even in the case of the 25mm lens, its "shade" was not really a shade but a combined filter holder/retaining ring. Secondly, except for the 21mm & the 35mm/f1.8, the Nikkor wides had such deep-set and small diameter front elements that flare was not a real problem. Add to this the fact that black paint was used for most of the surfaces near the front glass, and the need for a shade diminishes. Lastly, the design of both the lenses and their shades was such that the addition of the shade, in most cases, totally negated the compact nature of the "S" series, and RF cameras in general! The Nikkor wides were very compact lenses with the 25mm nearly invisible when mounted. The 28mm was also very compact and light. However, once you mounted the shade you had a very different set-up indeed. In most cases the wide shades interfered with the viewfinder window, made the lens front heavy and much larger, and even interfered with aperture adjustment! All of this for only a minimal improvement in flare control. Therefore, the proper shades are not the most common items in existence today & are collectors' items in their own right.

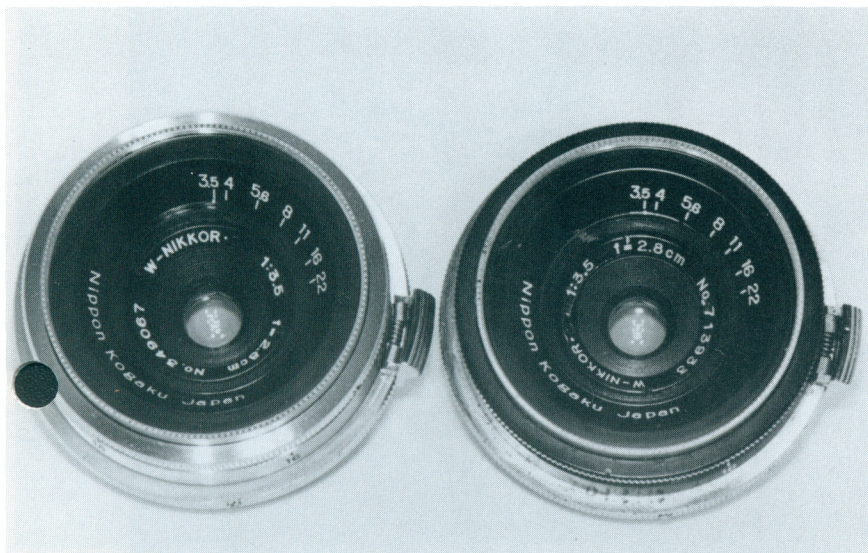
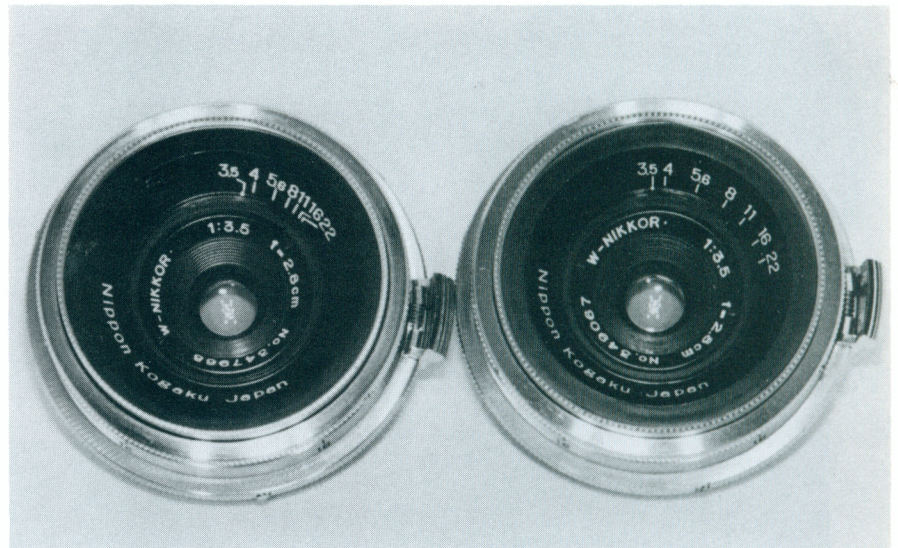
Two versions of the 28mm shade were made and both are illustrated here in new condition with their boxes. The first version is really a scarce item. A beautifully made 2 piece all chrome item, it is of the screw-in type. It is pictured here with its original blue box. The rear ring, with the "EP" marking, is a bright finished heavy chrome plated piece. The shade itself is a lighter metal with a beautiful satin finish chrome surface, and a well blackened interior. This shade is seldom seen. The later version is shown with its bright multi-colored box. Its bright chrome finished mounting ring is identical to the earlier version but it now mates with a black finished shade, which is a bit lighter than the chrome type. Unlike the earlier version, this shade is identified with the focal length & speed as well as the words "Nikon" and "Japan". Identical in design to the earlier type, it is simply more modern and, because of its lighter weight, more practical. However, its dimensions are the same and it still protrudes into the viewfinder window of the camera. Although a little easier to find than the chrome type, even this later shade is not all that common, especially new.

Although the 28mm Nikkor is not as exotic as its 21 or 25mm cousins, it is an important member of the wideangle Nikkor family. Faster than those contemporary offerings from Zeiss & Leitz, its was made for a long period of time, for its design proved to be a good one, and it performed well.

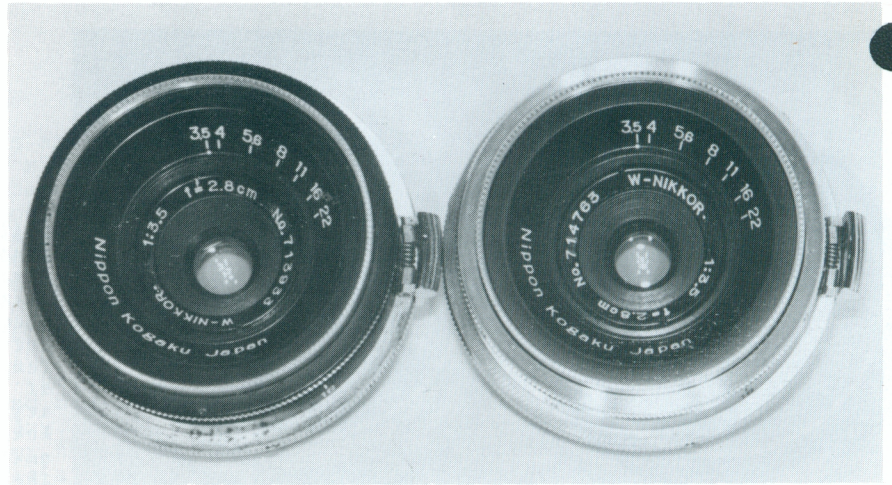


Left-In this photo are two early 28mm lenses including the unusual black lens mentioned in the text. The first thing to note is the diaphragm scale used on these lenses. The stops are unevenly spaced and get closer as the lens is stopped down, causing crowding at the smaller stops. This is what I refer to as the decreasing type scale. For lens #347128 to be black would require more than a simple switching of the identification ring, but also the diaphragm scale and the underlying click-stops. As mentioned this lens shows no evidence of having ever been tampered with. R. Rotoloni

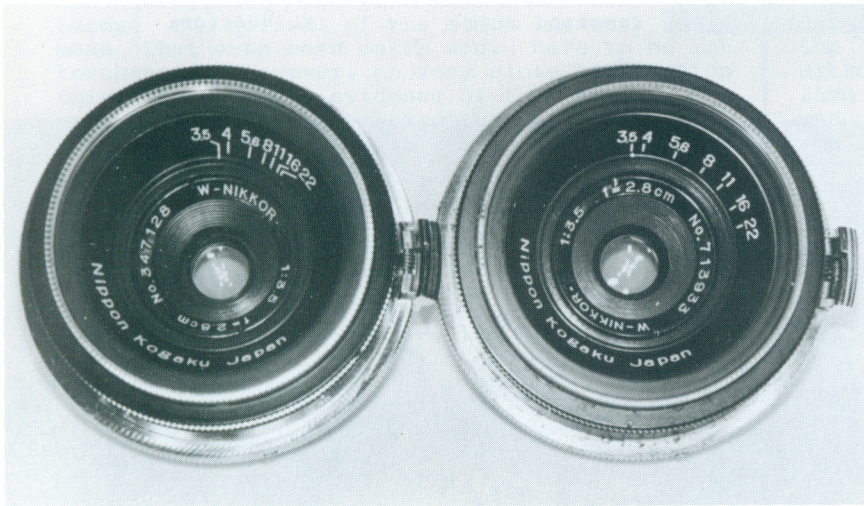
Right-This photo illustrates the different types of diaphragm scales mentioned in the text. The lens on the left is #347968 and the same one in the above photo. It is fitted with the earlier decreasing type scale. The right lens is #349067 and has the more modern & much easier to read equidistant type scale. Note how the f-stops are evenly spaced. This accomplishes two things. First, the user has an easier time adjusting the F-stops as the distance between each detent is the same and more predictable. Second, the scale is much easier to read since there is no crowding of the scale toward the smaller stops. This improvement first appeared towards the end of the chrome lenses. R. Rotoloni



Left-The basic chrome and black versions of the later 28mm lenses, both of which now have the newer diaphragm scale. Also note that the black lens in this photo has the new serial number type, in this case #713933. R. Rotoloni



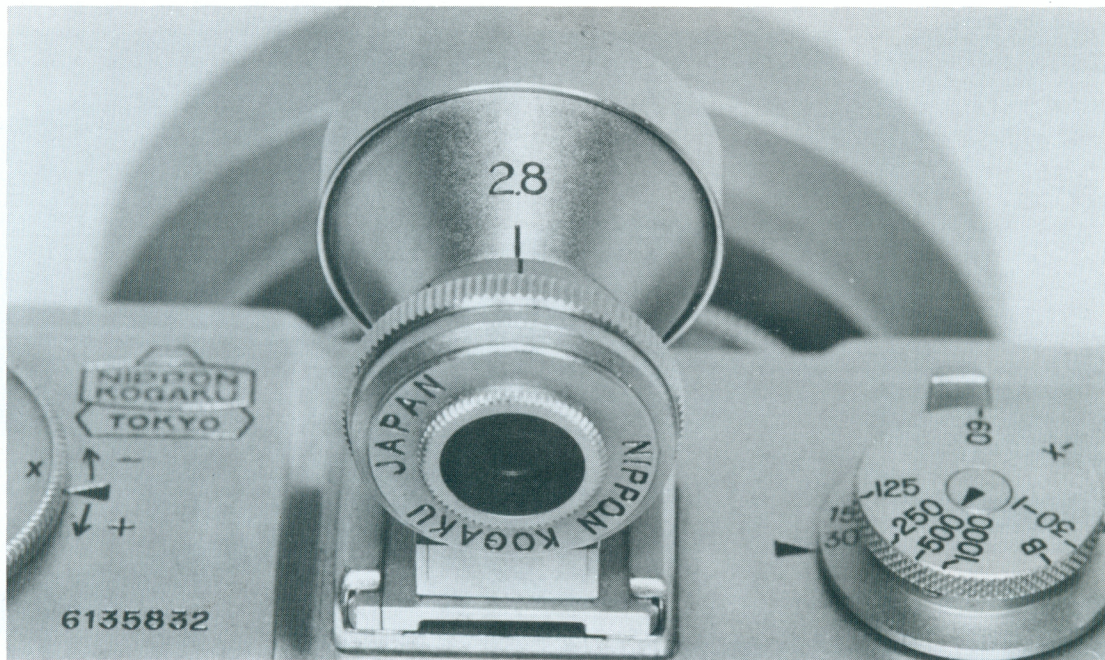
Right-Not all of the lenses with the new serial numbers were black. Some very late chrome lenses can be found with numbers over 712. Note that the chrome lens in this photo, #714763, has a later serial number than the black lens, #713933. As usual with Nikon, there is not a clean break between the chrome and black types, or the serial numbers. R. Rotoloni



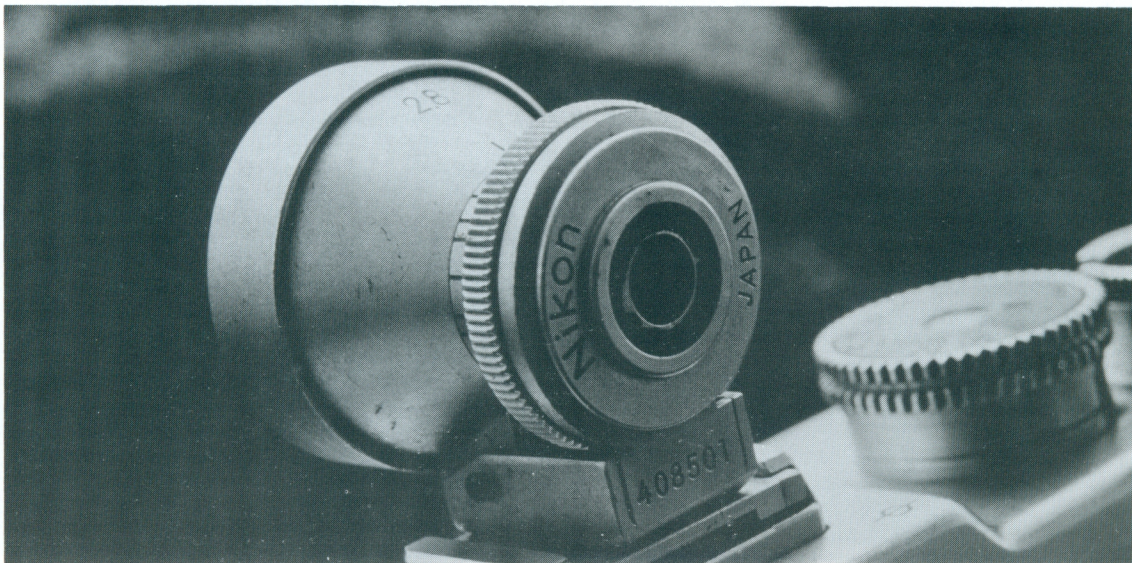
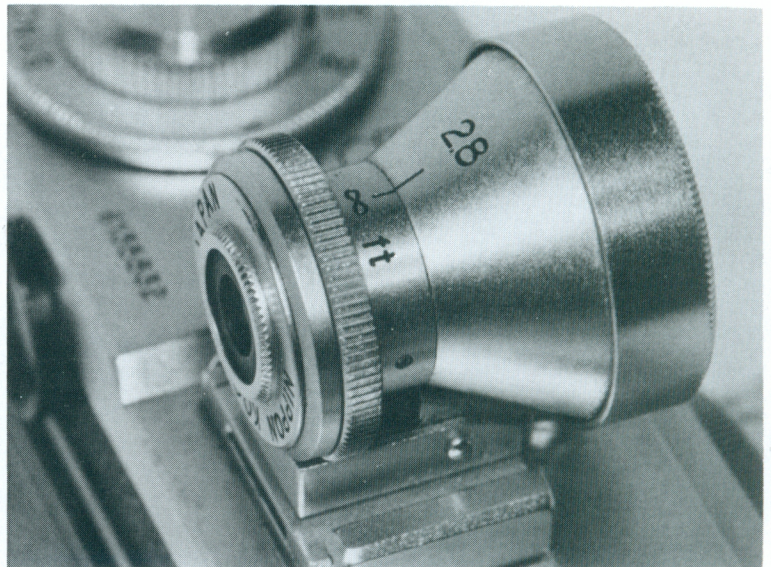
Left-To further illustrate the fact that the early black lens is really quite different from the regular black type is the photo to the left. Even though both are black, the different diaphragm mechanism is obvious. R. Rotoloni



Right-Black 28mm Nikkor #716692 with all of its original packing, save the warranty cards. The later black lenses often came in these gold boxes while earlier lenses were shipped in the blue velveteen type. Also later lenses sometimes came in plastic bubbles instead of leather cases. Note the inspection slip with the serial number, the JCI tag and the small folder with the depth of field scale. R. Rotoloni



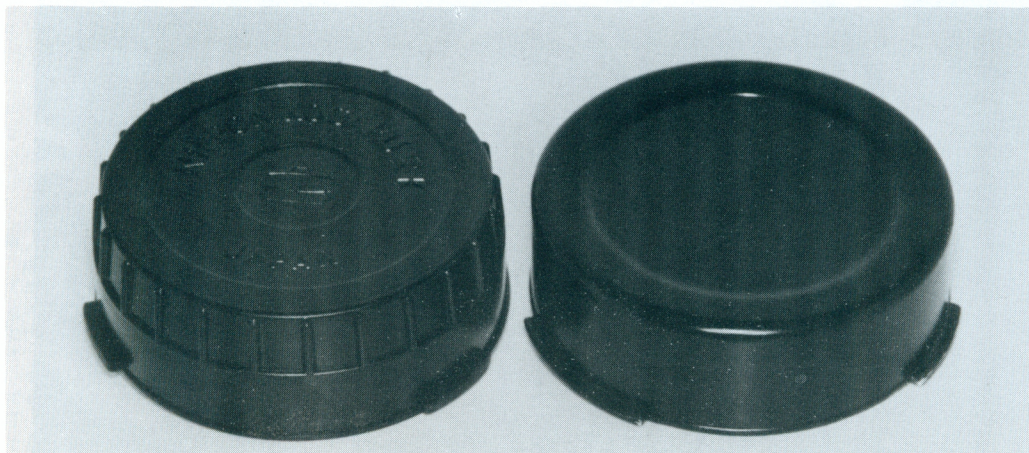
The two top photos illustrate the chrome 28mm finder that was available as an option. As far as is known this finder was never made in black. For a long time it was thought that this was the only version that existed. However, recently a few serial numbered specimens have been found. One such example was sent in by member Ulrich Koch of West Germany and is shown in the bottom photo. The serial number is 408501 and is stamped on the rear surface of the shoe below the eyepiece. Also note that this finder only has "Nikon Japan" around the eyepiece in stead of "Nippon Kogaku Japan". Generally this would denote an item of later production. R. Rotoloni/Ulrich Koch.





Shades for the wideangle Nikkors have always been difficult to find, and this is especially true in the case of the 28mm lens. Always an option, it appears that few owners elected to purchase it. Two versions were made. The first type being an all chrome two-piece item as shown in the top photo. The mounting ring was a high gloss chrome over brass while the shade itself consisted of a satin finish. It came in a blue linen finished box as pictured. The later type still used the same mounting ring but the shade was now a satin black and it came in a bright multicolored box. Two rear caps were made for the 28mm. Earlier lenses were shipped with the black metal type on the right while the later lenses came with the black plastic type on the left.

R. Rotoloni





Early lenses were supplied with a black metal slip-on front cap while the later lenses came with the more familiar plastic snap-on cap.

Right-The chrome 28mm lens outfit ready to go! Although the shade does add bulk and intrudes into the viewfinder, it is, by SLR standards, really not that large. However, it isn't your usual compact RF shooting outfit either. R. Rotoloni



THE EARLY NIKON "S"

by *ROBERT ROTOLONI*

PART 4

THE FIRST "8-DIGITS"!

In NHS-24 I discussed a new batch of unusual "8-digit" Nikon S cameras that, although known to exist, had not been documented, & are very different from what most collectors are familiar with. To date 5 of these cameras have been reported to me and appear to be part of a small run of consecutively numbered bodies all of which have had a "1" added to their original serial number. In this installment two of the five known examples are pictured for comparison, as well as one of the bracketing cameras. You will see that it makes for an interesting comparison, since all 3 of these early Nikon S cameras are really quite different.

The 5 recorded examples from this new batch are...60944991, 60945101, 60945161, 60945201 & 60945261. Illustrated in this article are the two "extremes" of the known batch, that is numbers 60944991 & 60945261. In addition to these two cameras is a third, 6094467, which is one of the bracketing cameras. Bodies 60945261 and 6094467 are in the author's collection. I wish to thank member John Angle for making 60944991 available for this article.

In NHS-24 I illustrated that removing the final "1" from the serial number resulted in a batch of very early Nikon S cameras, that they ran together with no known 7-digit bodies intermixed, and that the inside numbers are identical to those on the top plates. However, as is so often the case with Nikon in the earlier years, even the two examples here are not identical, nor is the bracketing camera. Variations abound even in this small sampling, but that is why the Nikon S can be much more interesting than most collectors are aware of.

First I'll try to answer the questions I raised in NHS-24. The significance of the "1" has not been determined with any real certainty, but what is definite is that it was added "after" the original serial number was stamped and "after" the camera was chromed! Also the effort was made to match the number inside the camera back, where the "1" was added in a most precarious way, but it is there! Adding a number in such a deliberate way "could" suggest that this batch of bodies needed to be differentiated for some reason that did not become apparent until after manufacture. One theory is that this may be the batch of 20 or so duplicate Nikon S bodies that are rumored to have been made. Leitz used an "*" to denote such an item. Could Nikon have used an extra "1"?!

No 7-digit bodies within this group have been reported to me as yet, and the nearest 7 digits that bracket are 6094467 (illustrated here) & 6094546. The two examples in this article are very different as is 6094467. Since NHS24 no other "8-digits" from this batch have been reported to me. Now lets see how these 2 cameras, and the bracketing body, compare.

I have listed nine points of comparison with the following results:

Nikon S #6094467 (bracketing camera)

1. Not MIOJ...Made in Japan on baseplate lock.
2. Black-eye synch with black F & S letters.
3. Larger shutter guard with higher button.
4. Earlier Nikon "M" type baseplate.
5. Earlier shiny pressure plate.
6. Earlier casting with synch wire cover.
7. Later type wind/rewind knobs.
8. Matching 7-digit number inside back.
9. "Not applicable."

Nikon S #60944991

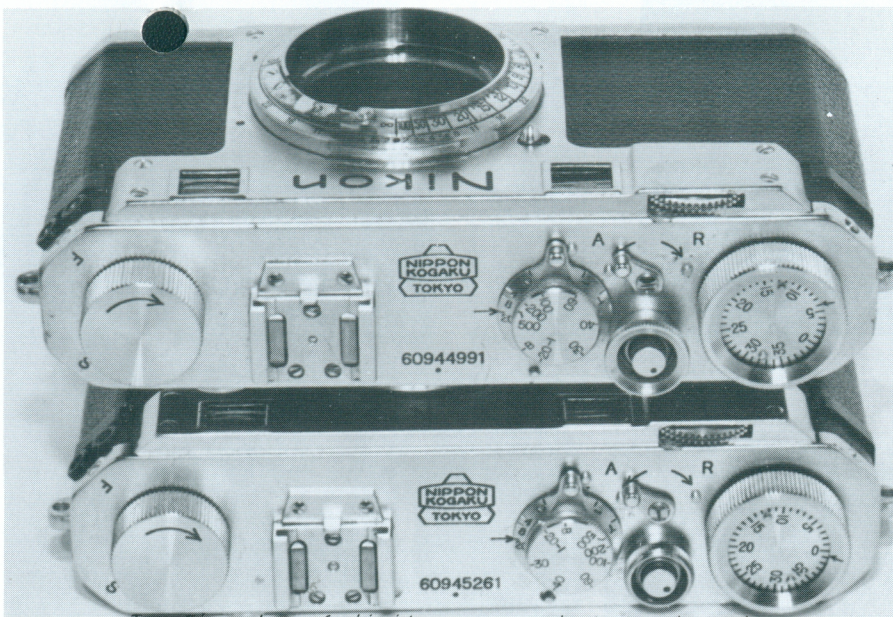
1. Not MIOJ!..Made in Japan on baseplate lock.
2. Black-eye synch BUT red F & S letters!!!!
3. Larger shutter guard with higher button.
4. Earlier Nikon "M" type baseplate.
5. Later style black pressure plate.
6. Later casting with synch wire tunnel!!
7. Intermediate type wind/rewind knobs.
8. Matching 8-digit number inside back!
9. The "1" is painted in!!!

Nikon S #60945261

1. MIOJ in leather on camera back!!!!!!
2. Red-eye synch with red F & S letters!
3. Smaller shutter guard with lower button!
4. Earlier Nikon "M" type baseplate.
5. Earlier shiny pressure plate.
6. Earlier casting with synch wire cover!
7. Intermediate type wind/rewind knobs.
8. Matching 8-digit number inside back!
9. The "1" is NOT painted in!!!

One additional point about 60944991. On the inside of the front chrome plate, written in by hand, are the numbers "44991"!!! Camera 60945261 does not have this. Interesting!

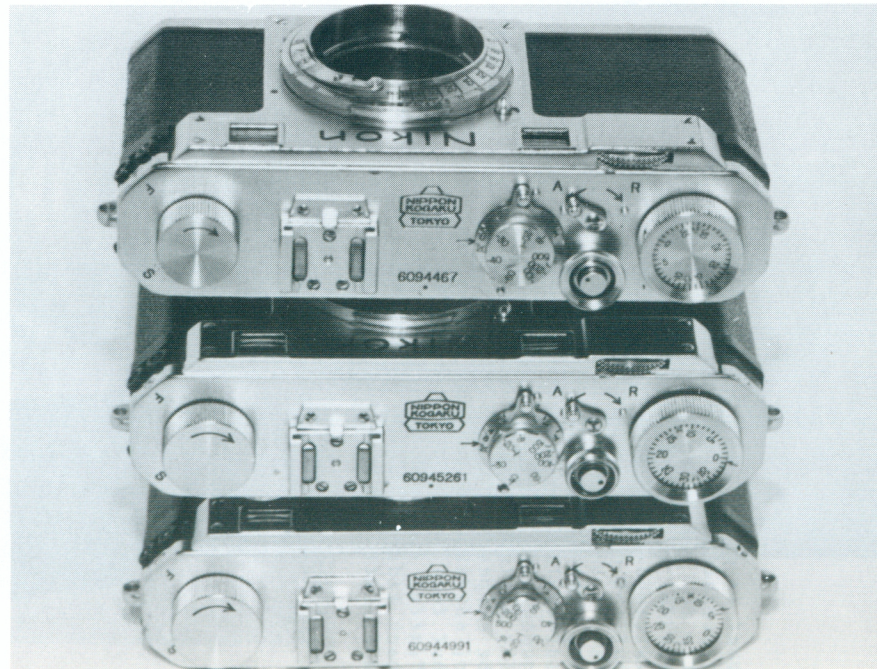
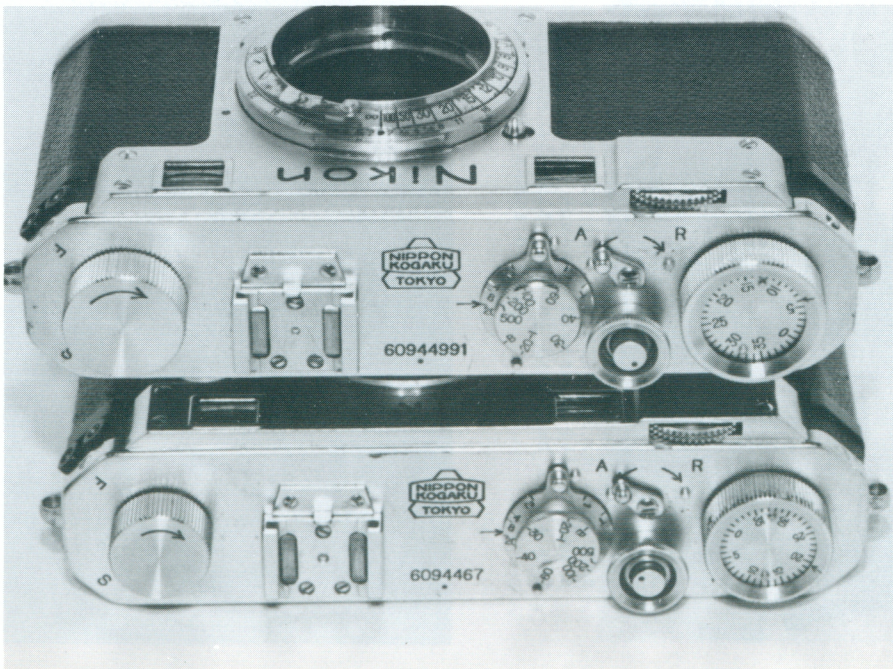
Obviously these two 8-digits are very different cameras. They vary much more than their rather close serial numbers would suggest, and, based on their castings, should not have been made at the same time! I love a mystery!!



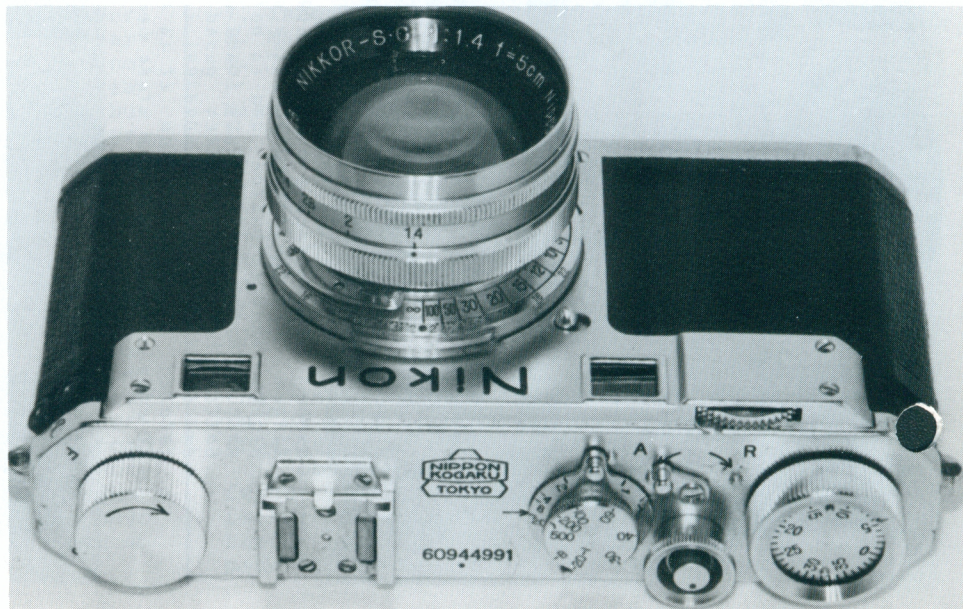
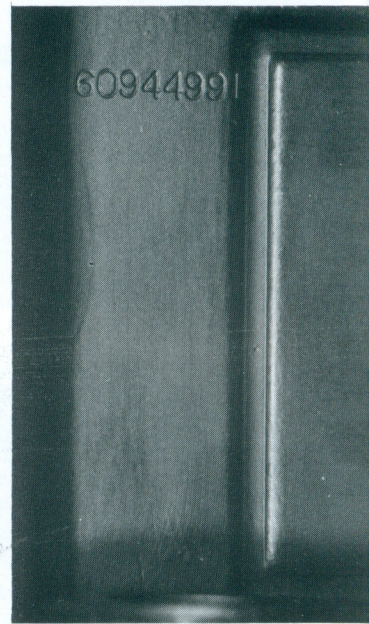
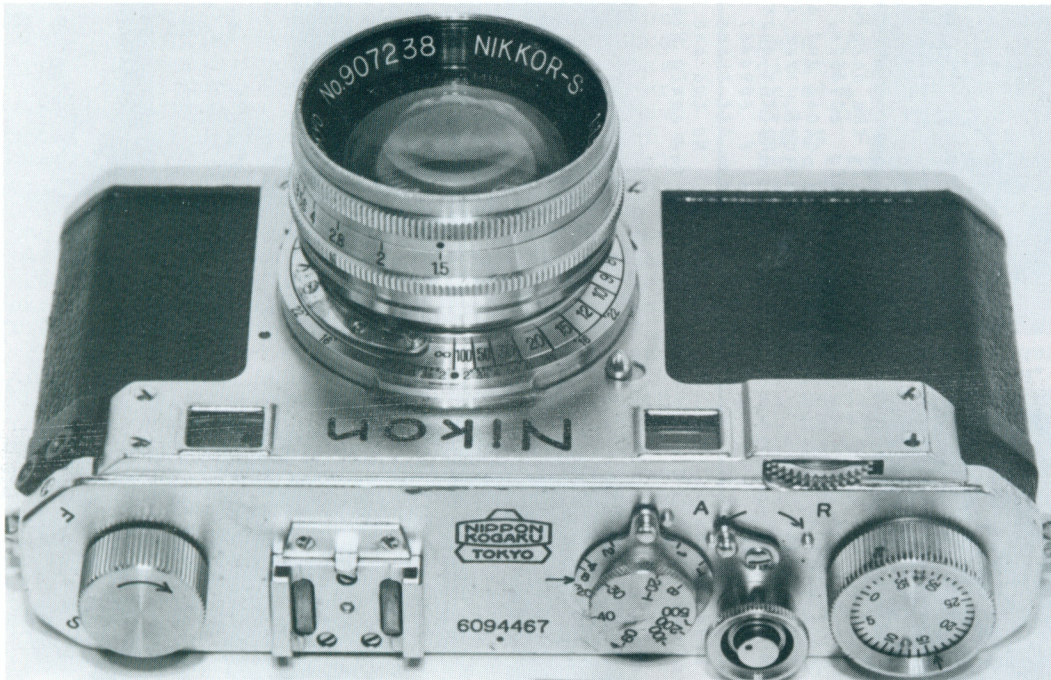
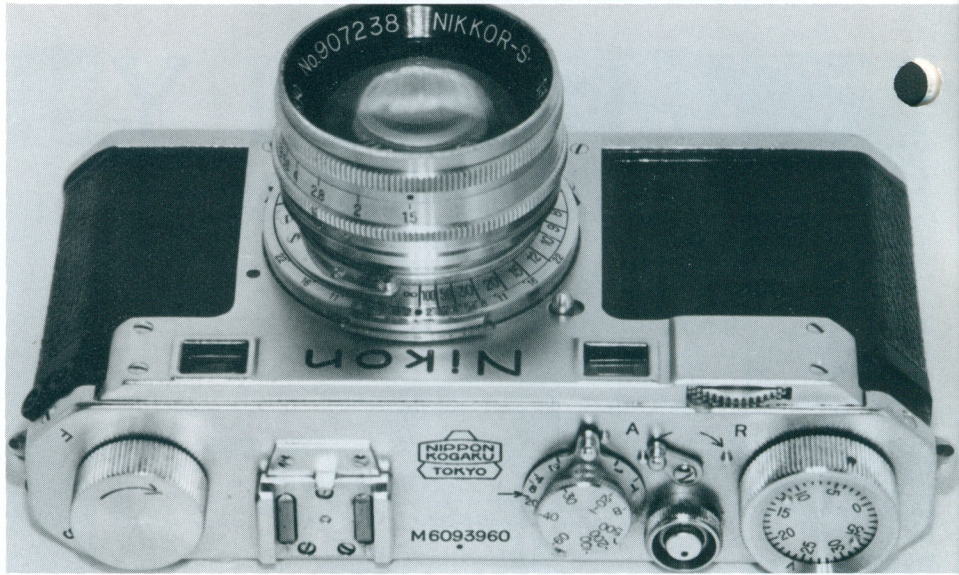
Top-The two 8-digits compared. Note that the knobs are identical but that 60944991 has the larger shutter guard which necessitates a higher shutter button and is not interchangeable with the smaller type found on 60945261. Bottom-The larger shutter guard is also found on 6094467. Actually 60944991 is more closely related to 6094467 than it is to 60945261 as it also shares the later style body casting!

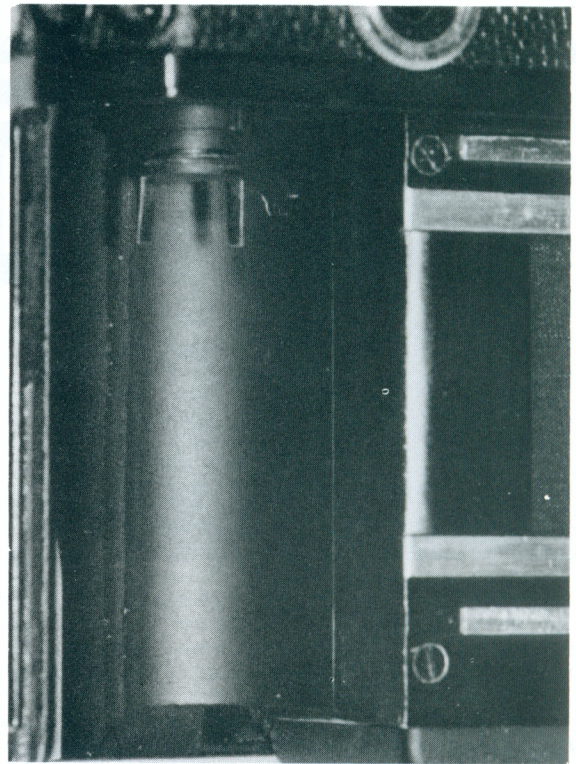
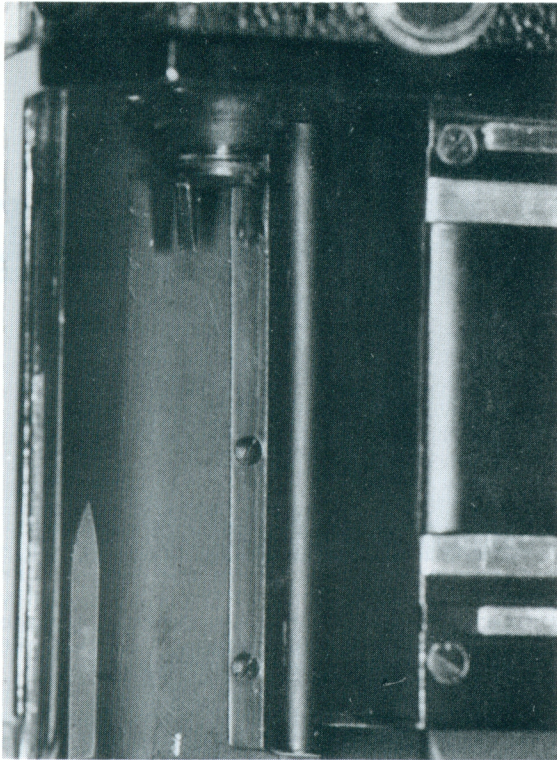


Top-If the original number for 60945261 was actually 6094526, then 6094467 would seem to be very close and should be quite similar if not identical. Yet it is very different!! Besides the shutter guards, they have different castings & 6094467 also has the later type knobs. Bottom-All three cameras lined up for comparison. No two are identical, which is one reason why the early Nikon S can be so interesting.

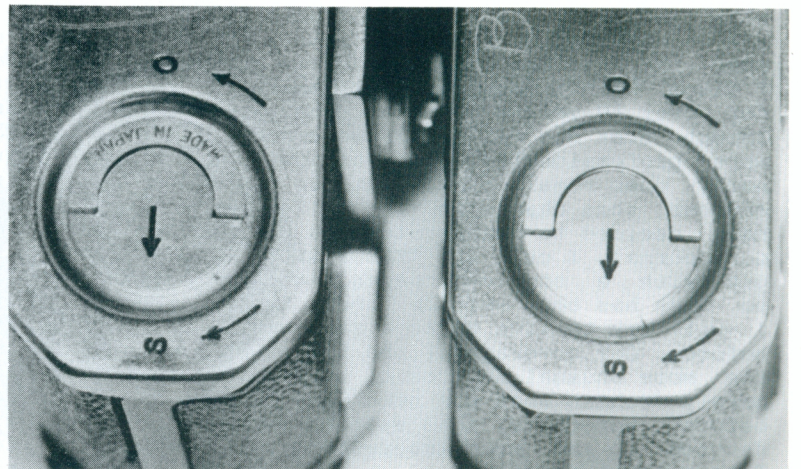
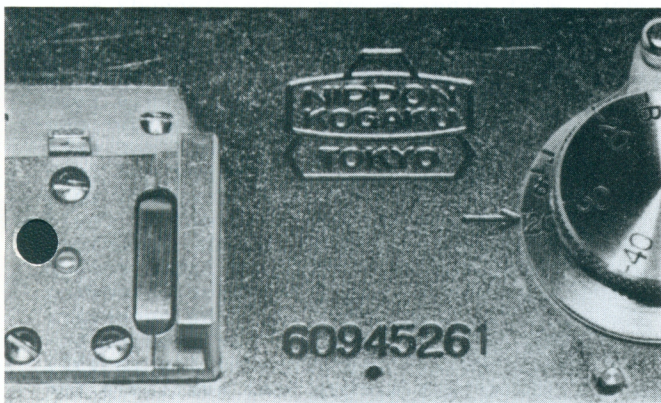


What is pictured here is typical of Nikon especially during the early years. From top to bottom we have cameras M6093960 6094467 and 60944991. Body M6093960 has intermediate type knobs as does 60944991, but the camera with the middle serial number has the later style knobs! M6093960 may share the same type of knobs as body 60944991, but it has the smaller shutter guard. The possibilities seem endless! The inside serial number of 60944991 can be compared with a similar shot in NHS-24 of 60945261. Note that the "1" is present but that it is so far over that it nearly "falls" into the depression formed by the back ridge. It must have been just a bit difficult to stamp that extra digit.





The upper two photos illustrate the different casting types found in the early Nikon S. Left is the casting of 60945261, which is earlier. The 3 screws visible in the film chamber are used to secure a cover plate for the synchro wires that would otherwise be exposed. On the left is 60944991 which has the later type casting. Note that the cover plate is gone. Where are the wires? They are now hidden within a tunnel by the new casting, which is much more elegant. The bottom photo shows the "Made in Japan" on the locking ring of 60944991 (left), which is absent on 60945261 since it is marked "MIOJ" in the back leather. Close-ups of the serial numbers show that the "1" in 60944991 is slightly larger and is painted in like the remainder of the number. Camera 60945261 has a "1" that is slightly out of line, and it is not painted in but shows brass!



THE

F

-SPOT!!

Due to the member response to the coverage of the 30th birthday of the Nikon F in NHS-24, as well as the many letters I have received from as far back as NHS-2, it appears that the time has arrived for the Nikon Historical Society to devote some time & space to the reflex segment of the collecting scene. Notice that I am using the term "collecting" when talking about reflex Nikons! Over five years ago when the debate began over adding the reflex Nikons to our sphere of interest, very little if anything belonging to the Nikon reflex system was considered collectible. However, things have changed. A great deal has happened to camera collecting in general, and Nikon collecting in particular, since the launching of the Society 6 years ago this month. Both the buyers & the sellers are more sophisticated & their numbers have increased dramatically with the resultant shift in the "supply & demand" equation that has caused a sharp increase in prices, making Nikon RF collecting much more difficult and expensive than it once was. However, on the other side of the coin, increasing prices and more collectors tend to "flush out" equipment that might have remained buried in closets for many years. In addition to these changes, the Nikon F has now reached 30 years old, which is older than many of the rangefinders were when we first started to collect them years ago! Just its age has helped it become a collectible but there is more to it. With the increased prices of the RFs, and the difficulty of finding certain pieces in today's market, some collectors have shifted their sights to the early Nikon F era, and why not! Isn't the "F" really just an SP with a mirror? Was it not made concurrently with the SP/S3 and did it not precede the S4 & the S3M? Nikon doesn't make cameras the way it made the RFs, but the same holds true for the F. Nikon hasn't made a reflex camera like the F for over 10 years, & probably never will. Even though over one million Fs were made, how many were professionally used and how many of the early ones remain in collectible condition? To address this change in the collecting world I have decided to inaugurate this new section in our Journal. I call it "THE F-SPOT" & will begin with a couple of pages each issue. Since so much has been written about the F already, I will try to live up to a statement I've made before. Our coverage of the F must be aimed at the more unusual aspects of the system and not merely rehash what has been done so many times before. Hopefully, this section will always be devoted to the more interesting reflex items. I hope you enjoy it.

To get "THE F-SPOT" off to a good start I thought I would use this first installment to expand on the unusual lens that was featured in the "Odds n' Ends" section in NHS-24. From the member feedback it is obvious that only a few of you were aware of this rather strange & practically unknown item. Some of you requested more information and photos, so here we go!

Member Ulrich Koch sent me copies of two German pamphlets produced by Nikon that show this very same lens. Or is it? The photograph used in both sheets is the same so I have only reproduced one in these pages. At first glance it appears identical to my former lens except that the serial number, 604018, is a bit later. However, a second closer look reveals that the later lens has the letters "ED" engraved on its identification ring. I have included a shot of the same ring on my lens and you will note that it is NOT marked with the "ED"! All else appears the same. It is possible that the first batch of this lens, which included the one in the Cooper/Abbott book and mine, & were numbers 603001 & 603060 lacked the "ED" marking but a second batch beginning at 604001 and including the German lens, 604018, were so marked. If so then two versions of this lens exist making it even more interesting.

An unusual aspect of the design of this lens has to do with its mount. Not only does it allow for the body to be rotated 90 degrees, which is a good feature for such a heavy lens with a fixed tripod socket, but it is also removable! By means of a strong & simple method, the rear 3 inches of the barrel can be removed from this lens. By unscrewing a heavy chromed locking ring the familiar Nikon bayonet mount can be lifted off to reveal the rather large rear element group of this lens. A great idea! But why? What other mounts were planned? What other cameras would Nikon even want their lenses used on? Were any other mounts ever made? Why isn't this feature mentioned in the literature that announced it? Why design in this feature and not use it? We may never know but one possibility exists. Although Nikon did not make lenses in other mounts for 35s as they had during the RF era (Leica, Exakta, Contax), they did make lenses for the Zenza Bronica! Could this lens have been intended for the Bronica? The diameter of the rear mount is large enough and the rear element amply recessed, allowing for the shorter mount that would be necessary because of the greater depth of the Bronica body. Would it not have been interesting in 1971 to have a 300mm/f2.8 Nikkor lens available for your medium format SLR? It would have been a very unique outfit, to say the least!



Upper left-The rear mount of the 300mm/f2.8 Nikon intact as it would be used to mount to a Nikon F. Since this is a manual lens there is no need for the meter coupling prong we've all come to love.

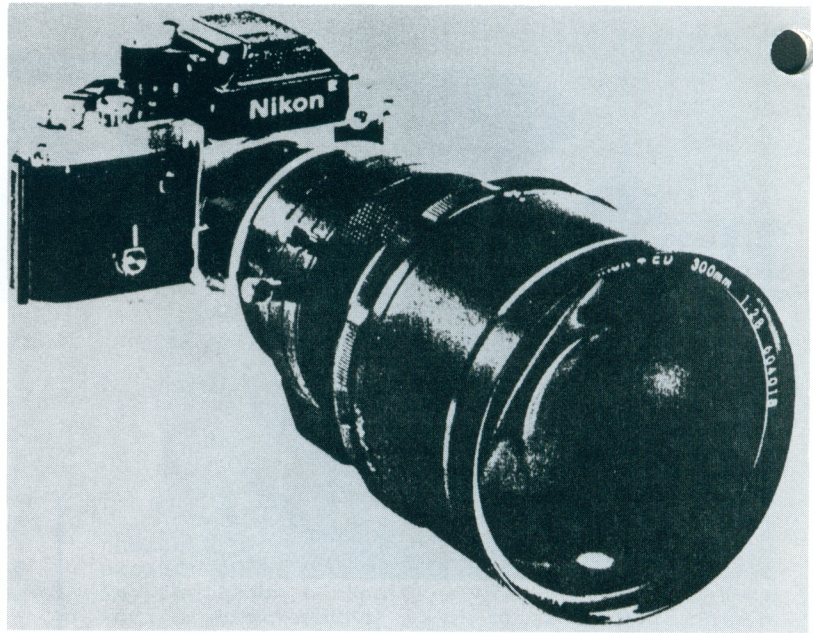
Upper right-The chrome locking ring has been removed. It's thread is visible as well as the small locking stud affixed to the rear mount & seated in the small cut-out in the thread. This method assures that the rear mount is attached with the proper orientation to the body.

Left-The rear mount removed exposing the rear element group to full view. What other mounts were planned?

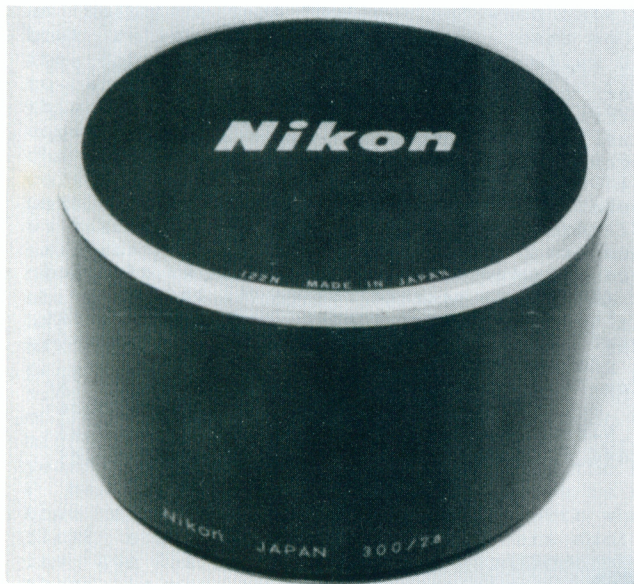
Bottom-The manual 300mm/f2.8 Nikon with the rear mount removed. One cant help but wonder why Nikon would engineer such a mounting system and not make use of it.

R. Rotoloni





Kompakt ED-Nikkor 1.2/8/300 mm – eines der lichtstärksten Tele-Objektive der Welt.



Upper left-Front view showing that this lens is NOT marked "ED"!

Upper right-Ulrich Koch submitted a German brochure that contains this photo. It shows lens #604018 mounted on an F2. Note that the caption refers to it as the ED-Nikkor. A close look at the photo shows that the letters "ED" can just be seen near the 300mm engraving on the front ring, so this later lens was an "ED" type!

Left-The proper shade for the manual 300. Note that it is so identified.

Bottom-The manual 300mm/f2.8 Nikkor with shade and cap. It is really a very impressive lens & I truly wish I still owned it! R. Rotoloni



EDITORIAL..Cont. from pg. 1

In Europe and the South Pacific think about a dual method of mailing? Would an increase to the same \$25 a year but surface mail delivery be acceptable? As an alternative would a rate of \$35 a year with air mail delivery be of interest (I would still offer the 3 year package based on which type of mailing you chose)? I need your opinions on this since I don't want to arbitrarily raise the dues without first having a feeling for your position on this. Likewise I don't want to lose members for \$5, which granted is not a lot of money these days, but it could happen! The bottom line is that after six years we are going strong with new members every issue, a second Convention in the works, and a magazine I hope we are all proud of. We must continue to grow and improve and I am dedicated to that no matter what. I want the "NHS" to prosper and I'm already thinking about what can be done for our 10th Anniversary! So please!!! Let me know your thoughts and feelings on this matter, and I know we can come up with a solution that will be fair to everyone and insure the survival of our Society and The Journal.

And now on a happier note I would like to announce that NHS-Con2 is scheduled for March 31, 1990 here in Chicago. I have just found out that the Spring show of the Chicago Photographic Collectors Society is set for Sunday April 1, 1990 at the Westin O'Hare. Those who attended NHS-Con1 will remember that this is the same hotel we used then and that our convention is tied in with this very large show for various reasons. First, it gives you another reason to make the trip. You can spend Saturday supporting this Society and meeting fellow members, & Sunday visiting one of the largest camera shows in the United States. Second, we are able to obtain favorable room rates at a rather luxurious hotel (the most recent show was Sept. 10th where we only paid \$72 a night) by saying your coming for the Chicago Show. It is very conveniently located within a few minutes of the airport, and the restaurants & facilities are such that there is no need to leave the building the entire weekend. Those of you wishing to attend now have a date & can make traveling plans. Please let me know if you intend on coming so I can begin to get an idea of the numbers involved. I will begin to put things together on this end and will also inform you of any changes, but for now all is set for March 31st. See you then!!

BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL!

PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING SERIAL NUMBERS TO OUR LISTS OF BLACK NIKON RANGEFINDER BODIES!

6170967 6296413 6212190 6218944

A WARNING!!

A WORD OF WARNING TO ALL MY MEMBERS!!

In an effort to prevent what happened to me happening to any of you, please heed this warning. If any of you plan to have dealings with "Harvey Glick", formerly of Ohio but now living in Florida, make sure, for your own protection, that you make it "COD" only! Please do not trust him to live up to his agreements. I feel that this warning is necessary to protect my friends, and is given in that spirit.

NEW NIKON PUBLICATION, & MORE!

Member John Baird has launched a series of Monographs under the banner of his Historical Camera Publications, which also publishes his quarterly magazine on collecting photography. Many of you will remember that John's initial offering for his quarterly was concerned with the early history of the Japanese optical industry with emphasis on Nippon Kogaku & was presented as a paper at NHS-Con1 in 1988. This new Monograph series is an addition to the quarterly, & focuses on the History of the Japanese Camera. I was honored when John asked me to do a Monograph for his series, which is completed and should be in print by the time you read this. As a subject I chose to expand & rewrite the early history of Nippon Kogaku using new information learned since publication of my book six years ago. Much in the way of new facts have come to light since then and an entire re-write of that section was needed. John has published it as the first in the series and it runs about 40 pages with nearly 30 new illustrations. This is a joint venture of the "NHS" and Historical Camera, and John has offered it to my members at a special rate and as an effort to raise some money for the Society as well. The normal cover price is \$11.95, but I can offer them to the members for \$10 postpaid in US, & \$12 postpaid by airmail overseas. I think you will find the new information very interesting and up to date & you'll be helping the Society as well.

Peter Dechert has written two Monographs due out very shortly. One is on the Olympus Pen system detailing model identification, adapting various optics and maintenance. A second one by Peter will be on the Contax, tracing it from Canon thru Yashica to the present models. They should be ready in November & can be purchased directly from Historical Camera Publications at P.O. Box 90, Glead Station, Yakima, WA 98904. There price will be \$11.95 + postage. Please support this endeavor for John has put a great deal of time & money into this in an effort to expand our knowledge as collectors & increase the availability of factual information on Japanese cameras, which I know is a very difficult task.

NEW "N.H.S." PRODUCTS!

For those of you who have not ordered your "NHS" shirts or patches, the supply is getting low. I only have a dozen patches left and in the shirts only sizes Medium and Large remain. If you have been putting it off please don't wait much longer, as once this supply is gone I will not reorder. Let me know as soon as possible. Thanks.

I have had suggestions from members for other products we might produce. Items mentioned include...lapel pins, lighters, tie clips, ash trays, drinking mugs & key chains. If anyone has other ideas please let me know & I can check out the feasibility of each item.

THE
HISTORY OF THE
JAPANESE CAMERA
MONOGRAPH COLLECTION

NIPPON KOGAKU
AND
THE NIKON CAMERA

— ROBERT —
ROTOLONI

— HCP —

HISTORICAL CAMERA PUBLICATIONS

LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS...

From Michael Hoyt...

I enjoy your Journal very much. Something I would like to see is a future issue comparing the Nikon rangefinders with the Leicas, both from a technical point of view (shutter technology, etc) and from a user point of view. I'd guess the Contax should also be included. Were the Nikon lenses better than Leica, about the same, or not as good? I'd like to see reprints from old photo magazines which discuss this. Of course the lenses can still be tested today. I took identical slides with 35mm lenses on my SP and an old Leica 111f. When projected there appeared to be no difference! I think that Nikon fans would like some supportive comparative information. Also to what extent did the Japanese borrow from the Germans and to what did they innovate in the fifties? I think that it would be an interesting issue.

From Javier de Lazaro...

I am proud to become your first Spanish member and I enclose \$50 for 3 years. It is not strange that you have had no Spanish members, because the first Nikon camera sold in Spain was the F, and not even the earlier models. Before that time no Japanese cameras were marketed in Spain, so that rangefinder Nikons, Canons and Minoltas et al are scarce today. I myself got my few rangefinder Nikons from abroad. However, one can find in Spain almost any German camera from the thirties to the seventies. But in any case, this is not a land of camera collectors. Most of my friends prefer Leicas or Zeiss. Few of them look for vintage Japanese cameras. I expect to learn more about Nikons from your Society than I already have learned through your splendid book, and I hope to find through your members the Nikon items I cannot find over here in Spain.

From Jeremy Rowe...

Please find enclosed my check for \$50 for a 3 year subscription to the Journal. Thanks for the great work that you have done as the moving force behind the Nikon Historical Society. I enjoyed the inclusion of the Nikon F article in #24 and hope that you continue to encourage articles on the early reflex cameras as well as the rangefinders.

From Behram Kapadia...

Issue 24 was a pleasure to read as I also collect the Nikon Fs and I am sure this issue will become a collector's item in itself. You asked if members have any ideas about products which could sell and, therefore, bolster the Society's funds. I would like to suggest that we arrange for the reprinting of all, or any, of the Nikon rangefinder camera instruction books. These must be high quality glossy replicas of the original books...not photocopies. Hove Fotobooks have done complete instructions for Leicas as paperback books but in groups of 2-3 cameras, eg. for the Leica M1, M2, M3 & M4 all together in one book. This is not what I'm suggesting as recently I saw ads for an original instruction book for the SP in VG condition for \$30 and one for an S2 for \$25. These are crazy prices and if one were to offer facsimile instruction books for a realistic price (say \$10), many collectors would jump at the chance of buying these.

And now for a special letter.....

From Karen Fraker...

I'm writing you this letter on behalf of my husband. I thought you would like to know that Bill recently received a great and prestigious honor. He was inducted into the American Society of Cinematographers. This is an elite group of the worlds greatest cinematographers. Part of the reason that Bill received this honor is because of the articles he has done for the Nikon Historical Society Journal as stated in the enclosed letter. Bill's father has been a cinematographer and a member of the "ASC" for a long time. He served as its president for three terms and was extremely proud that Bill was unanimously voted their first special member.

(The following is an excerpt from the letter.)

Dear Mr. Fraker,

"After careful consideration and with the unanimous vote of the Board of Governors we have chosen you to be the first recipient of a Special Membership in the American Society of Cinematographers.

Your outstanding performance as an assistant cameraman, your historical research into the works of our prominent past cinematographers, analysis of current light metric technology, articles on cameras, and consuming hunger for more knowledge in cinematography have placed you at the forefront of all that we as directors of photography strive for in perfecting the art of cinematography."

Congratulations Bill! I was very pleased and proud to learn that the great series of articles you have done for The Nikon Journal played a part in your receiving this honor. The ASC is a very prestigious organization whose members have produced some of the most enduring images that have touched all our lives. I am sure that you are very proud of this honor, and deservedly so!.....Robert J. Rotoloni

"NEXT ISSUE"

The deadline for the next issue of "THE NIKON JOURNAL" will be December 1, 1989. By then I'll have a definite schedule for our upcoming Convention and be able to answer all of your questions pertaining to this event. Those who wish to submit articles, photos and ideas for NHS26 please get them to me by this date! Thank you.

NEW NIKON S4??

The following advertisement appeared in the September 3rd Sunday edition of the Chicago Tribune. Naturally I couldn't pass up a Nikon S4, so I called to order six of them. Sadly I was told they were out of stock! Ah shucks!???

Nikon S-4

We have them in stock. Nikon authorized NAS dealer. \$1800 delivered (907) 262-4279 .

CLASSIFIED

WANTED...As a starting Nikon rangefinder system collector, any lists of available items for sale from members would be welcome. Write to..Javier de Lazaro, Principe de Vergara, 210, 28002 Madrid, Spain.

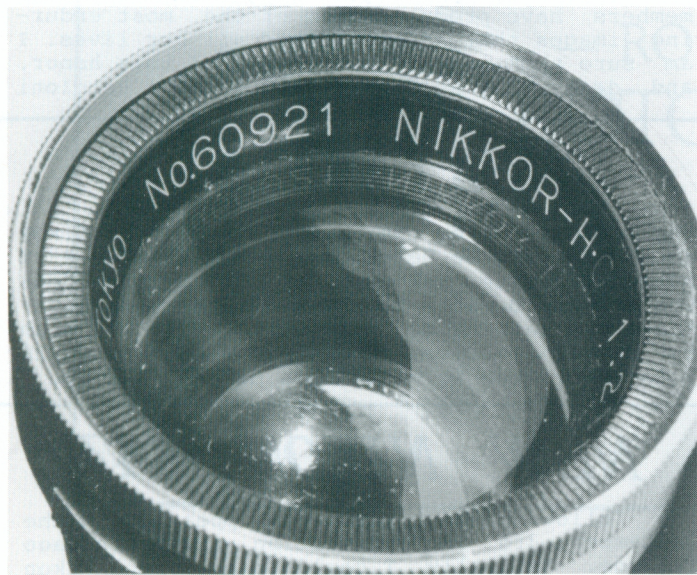
WANTED...Grey topped meter in cs; 350/f4.5 Nikkor; metal shade for f1.1, in cs; black vari-frame finders-types 7 & 9; push-on shade for "old series" 35/f3.5 (MIOJ); original Nikon RF literature, especially the early period. Will buy and/or trade. Have some surplus Nikon RF & SLR items. Mike Symons, 3844 Merriman Drive, Victoria, B.C. Canada, V8P 2S9. Tel after 6PM PST, (604) 477-1867.

WANTED...Boxed S; mint S2 chrome w/50mmf2.0; shade & caps for 35/f3.5; rear cap for 50/1.4; diaphragm blades for 50/1.4; early Nikon F. I'll pay your UPS shipping costs. Send me your lists. Fred Jansz, PO Box 252, 3700 AG, Holland Tel 3404-61431

FOR SALE...Have Nikon rangefinder and Nikon F items available for sale. Write for list. John Williams, 522 Colina Terrace, Monterey Park, CA 91754. Tel (213) 262-6287

WANTED...Clean Nikon Rangefinder. I'll pay 25% more than McKeown's Price Book. Write or phone Peter Lownds, W. de Zwijgerstraat 24, Rotterdam 3043 VD, Holland. Tel 010-4159136

FOR SALE...Historic Nikon Lens.....Collapsible 50mm/f2 Nikkor #60921. This is the 21st example of the first true Nikon lens, the second earliest surviving specimen, and the matching lens to body #60921. See R. Rotoloni, pages 7, 56, 58 & 94 for historic context. Serious inquiries only to...Ira Bourstein, 16201 Powells Cove, Beechhurst, NY 11357. Tel (718) 767-4519



WANTED...Looking for 21 & 50/1.1 shades, MIOJ lenses, motordrive, all black 50/2 or 1.4, 500 lens, black bodies. Have to trade 180/2.5 Nikon mt & 50/2 collapsible in SM, plus misc goodies. Would also greatly appreciate anyone with Navy Fs & lenses contacting me with serial numbers. Have much xerox info for beginning collectors! Stephen Gandy, 1591 Stoddard Ave., Thousand Oaks, CA 91360. 805-495-3362.

NEW MEMBERS

Richard Leon
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Nashville, TN 37211

Rick Nordin
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Sidney, B.C. Canada V8L 3X9

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Cardiff CF5 5XH
South Wales, United Kingdom

Javier de Lazaro
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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 VARIOUS VIEWS OF YOUR ODDITY ALONG WITH ANY INFORMATION THAT WOULD BE OF INTEREST. THANKS!

MODERN "RF" CASE!?

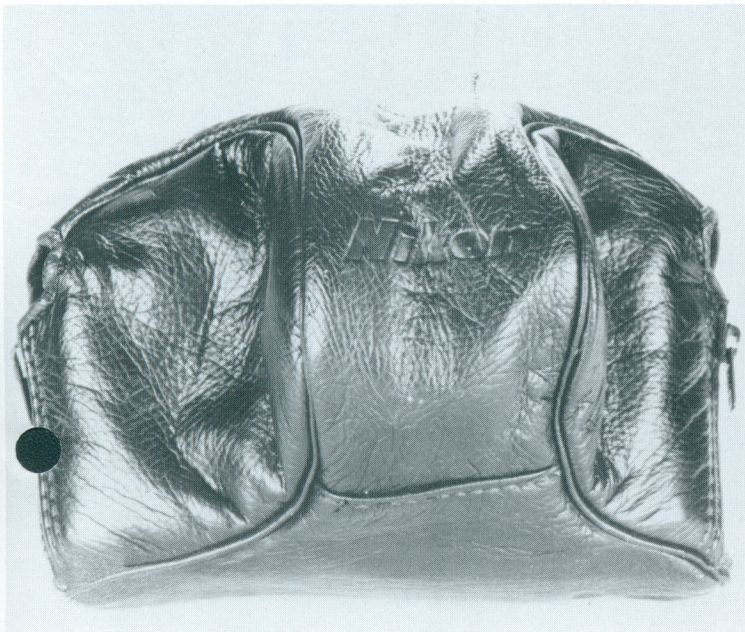


Here are three photographs of an unusual soft zippered case for the Nikon "RFs". It is designated "CS-51" and, as you can see from the box, it is obviously from the F or F2 era. It is made of very soft black leather lined with maroon velvet, and it closes with a single snap. Having a zipper on each side it will hold a Nikon SP with a 50mm/f1.4 quite snugly. It has the modern slanted Nikon logo on the nose and no provision for a strap. I would assume that this case was made at a late date at the request of those still using the RF Nikons.

Bill Fraker

I remember Bill Kraus mentioning this very same case to me at least 8 years ago. He had seen one in a Tokyo camera store & brought one home with him. We also felt that it was intended for the RFs. It looks very interesting and I'd like a dozen, please!

R. Rotoloni





CREATED FOR THE "NHS" by TONY HURST