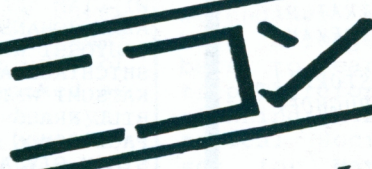


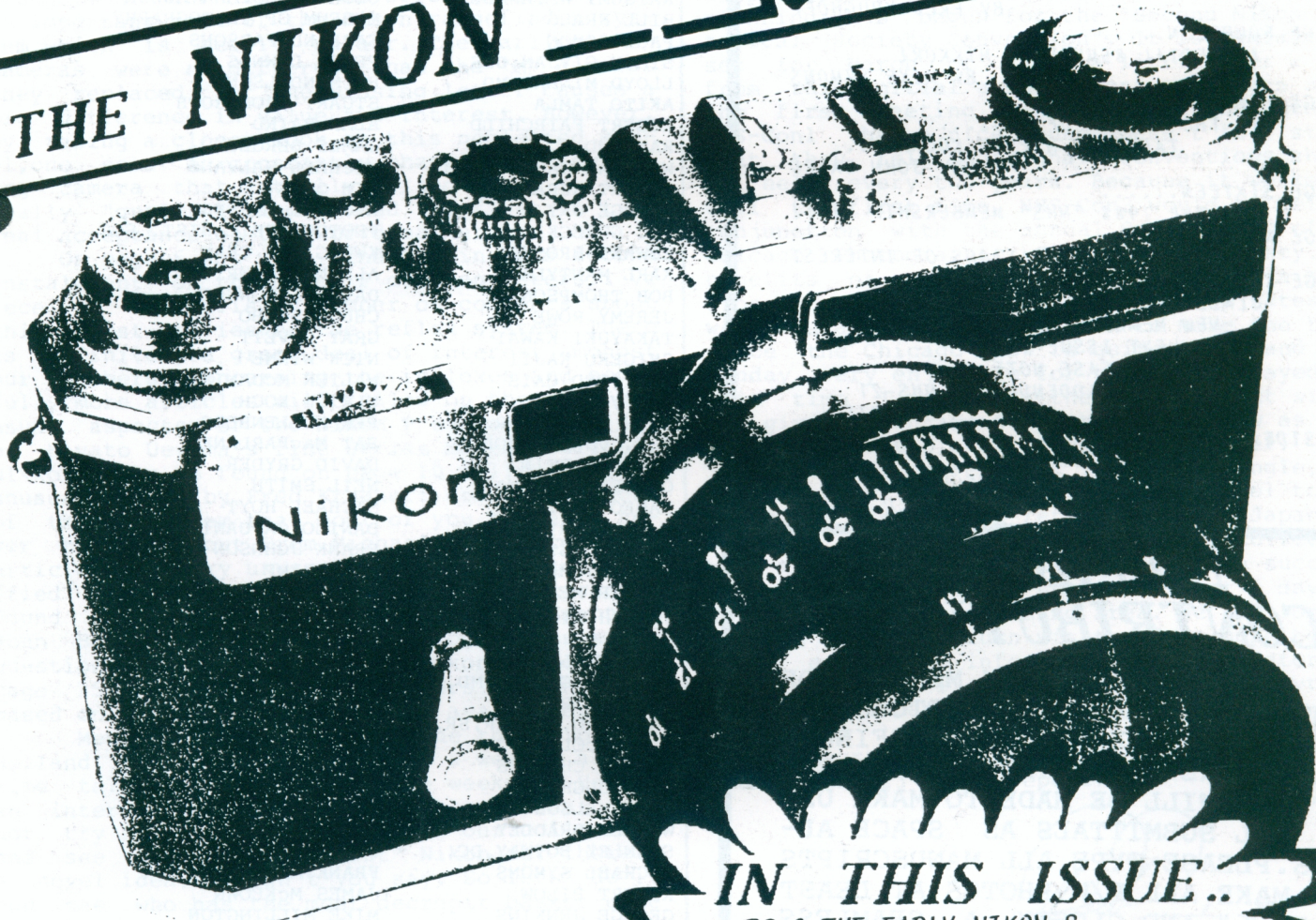
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DECEMBER 31, 1988



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THE NIKON  JOURNAL



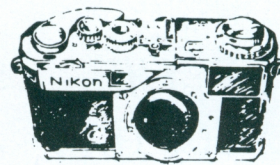
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ILLUSTRATED!!

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE NIKON Journal

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER



MEMBERS

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MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

ANY CONTRIBUTIONS BY MEMBERS OF
MANUSCRIPTS AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHS
CONCERNING THE NIKON RANGEFINDER
SERIES ARE APPRECIATED, AND EVERY
ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO MAKE USE
OF ALL SUBMITTALS AS SPACE AL-
LWS. PLEASE TYPE ALL MANUSCRIPTS
AND MAKE ALL B/W PHOTOS AT LEAST
"3 BY 5" AND GLOSSY. A SEAMLESS
BACKGROUND IS PREFERRED AND TRY
TO MAKE PHOTOS HIGH CONTRAST.
YOU WILL BE GIVEN A BY-LINE UN-
LESS ANONYMITY IS REQUESTED AND
ENCLOSE AN "SASE" IF RETURN OF
THE MATERIAL IS DESIRED.....
THANK YOU.

EDITORIAL

By the time you will be reading this the New Year will have begun. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a healthy and happy 1989.

With this or 22nd issue, the Nikon Historical Society is half way through its 5th. year and continues to grow. Witness the 12 new members on page 20. Since we have grown so much & our last membership list was published over 4 years ago, you will find in this issue, as promised, a complete membership directory. I hope that those of you who have not yet done so, will use this list to make contact with fellow members. Many friendships have resulted from such contacts, making collecting even more enjoyable, and I hope this continues.

Tsuyoshi Konno begins a series on the early Nikon "S" cameras made from the point where the "M" prefix was removed from the serial number up through approximately the first year of production. The Nikon S is often overlooked as an important part of the Nikon rangefinder system, which is really unfair. The earliest "S" cameras were no different than the "M" cameras they replaced, yet the missing letter causes a big difference in value and interest. However, by taking a closer look at this neglected model, one sees a constantly changing and evolving camera that actually marked Nikon's first really "quality" model, and the first to find real acceptance on the world market.

On page 6 you will find Calvin Ho's second installment on the Nikon F clip-on meters. I've received a surprising number on comments about this first series on the reflex system. There is definitely a great deal of interest amongst our members concerning the reflexes and hopefully more articles will follow on the more unusual aspects of the Nikon F system. Part two of Hayato Ueyama's fine series on the earliest Nikkors can be found on page 10 followed by an unusual piece by Fred Krughoff about an aspect of the RF system that most of you probably never thought about. From Michael Symons comes an article on a very unusual 85mm/f1.5 Nikkor modified possibly by the U.S. military. It can be found on page 14. This issue's installment of John Baird's "Tales of Nippon Kogaku" asks the question "where did all the Nikon Is go?" See page 15 for some possible answers and theories based on the latest information available.

Member Peter Lownds made the trip from Holland to Chicago in October & we had a fine time talking Nikons the entire weekend. He had an interesting suggestion for the Journal. Why not try a different approach to our collecting and see who has the "worst" Nikon out there!! A novel idea, wouldn't you say. So lets do it and see who has the most decrepit basket case amongst our members! If you think you have an item that qualifies for "worst of the year" honors just send me some photos. It can be a body, lens or accessory and either an RF or reflex item. It can be bruised, scarred, dented,

hammered, waterlogged or look like it was run over by a truck! If you feel that you have the worst share it with the rest of us. Anyone can have the best of something, but how many can say they have the "worst"?

Our first Convention proved successful beyond all my expectations. Those of you who made the trip to Chicago last March have expressed your satisfaction with the timing, location & content of our first meeting. Many of you have written asking when the second NHS Convention would occur. Not only have I heard from those who attended the first one, but also many of you who could not make it. It seems that the coverage in "The Journal" has sparked interest amongst those who could not attend. One point that has been brought to my attention is that attendance might have been higher if there had been a longer lead time to allow for more members to rearrange their schedules and make the trip. Therefore, I would like to announce that planning has begun for the "Second Nikon Historical Society Convention". It is tentatively set for March of 1990, a little over a year from this initial announcement & 2 years after the first meeting. Many of those who attended NHS-Con1 (has a nice sound doesn't it?) stated that they felt additional Conventions should be held every two years. Because it worked so well the first time, NHS-Con2 would be held in conjunction with the annual Spring show of the Chicago Photographic Collectors Society. The benefits of such timing are access to a hotel close to the airport at special room rates, as well as an additional reason to make the trip, since the Chicago show is quite large and made Sunday very enjoyable for those who stayed. At this time I am making the announcement simply to give enough advance notice to allow as many of you as possible to attend. More later.

Lastly, on February 17th, John Angle, John Baird and myself will once again travel to the "Land of Nikon" on a return visit to Japan. We hope to see all of our fellow Nikon collectors who helped make our first trip such a success. Plans call for us to spend at least 6 days in Tokyo and the surrounding area. We are looking forward to our return visit and we hope to uncover even more information on the history of Nikon. Although it is hard to imagine anything more significant than the prototypes we were shown the last time, we can only hope that we will return with some good stories to relate. Look to NHS-23 for a report.



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE EARLY NIKON "S"...

by *TSUYOSHI KONNO*

with *ROBERT ROTOLONI*

PART I

Starting in this issue, member Tsuyoshi Konno begins a series on the early Nikon S model. Many people assume that the "S" is an all too common, drab and uninteresting camera that doesn't excite the collector spirit in many of us. This might be true to the degree that the "S" is a relatively easy camera to obtain, and that, to the uninitiated, they all look alike. However, the truth of the matter is the "S" is not that easy to find in "collector" condition with the majority of available cameras in much less than excellent shape. True they are often seen at shows, but when was the last time you saw one that really sparkled? As for all of them looking alike, this is quite true for the vast majority made after a certain point, when it was produced with no real variations for quite some time. However, the same can be said for the S2, S3 and even the SP, all of which show less variations than the S! The unique aspect of the "S" is that the most interesting period is the early production spanning approximately the first 18 months. This period saw it evolve from being absolutely identical to the final version of the preceding Nikon M, to the point where it was improved and modified to such an extent that even the body casting had been changed as well as other less significant design changes. Also the fit, finish and overall quality of the Nikon S was improved almost constantly, resulting in a much more precise, quality instrument whose superiority over the preceding cameras can be instantly recognized by simply comparing them.

The most interesting period from a collector's point of view is that point at which the Nikon "M" actually became the Nikon S. The most logical answer would be when the letter "M" was deleted from the serial number, but it isn't that easy. Up to a few years ago most American and European collectors considered any Nikon with the "M" in the serial number a Nikon M, whether it possessed flash synch or not. However, the Japanese have always considered the true Nikon M to be those cameras without synch and those with it are referred to as the Nikon "MS"! This has to do with the fact that Nippon Kogaku began calling their camera the "S" at the point where synch was added, which is what the letter "S" denoted, even though the first 1600 or so synched bodies still had the "M" in their serial number! However, this was only for internal record keeping at the factory and the term "Nikon S" was never used in any advertis-

ing or literature. Depending on your point of view the Nikon S began either when flash synch was first added (around body M6092400), or when the "M" was deleted from the number (at about body 6094103). To date the highest Nikon M reported is body M6094102 while the earliest "S" seen at this time is camera 6094153! The Nikon MS cameras are food for another article and will not be used here. What will be discussed are those very early Nikon S cameras lacking the "M" prefix made from about June of 1951 up to about January 1952.

The following words and photographs are those of Tsuyoshi Konno, who possesses a large sampling of early Nikon S cameras. Those items not contributed by Konno-san are so noted.

According to Professor Arakawa's book, "BRIGHT DARK BOX", on page 156, Nippon Kogaku produced 250 cameras in November 1950, consisting of 26 Nikon "M" cameras and 224 of the new "S" type, so production of the synched Nikon M began in November of 1950. The sale of the "S" type began in Japan in January of 1951, and remained on that market until January of 1955. The famous Japanese camera magazine "Asahi Camera" of January 1951, page 128, describes the new type "S" Nikon as having been just born. On page 76 it is clearly stated that they will begin to sell the "S" type in Japan soon. This might be the first notice of the new "S" type in Japan. It was also said that the first 500 "S" type Nikons produced in November and December had already been sold to the U.S.A.! However these "S" type cameras were actually the Nikon MS model and not those without the "M" in the serial number.

It is not yet clearly known what was the number of the last Nikon M and the first Nikon S. It must surely be over M6094000 for camera number M6094102 has been discovered. The first Nikon S known is camera 6094153, which is very close.

I have included a chart listing my early Nikon S cameras for comparison. I have also included photos of most of my early Ss to show some of the changes that this model had. There are more variations in the early Nikon S than many people are aware of. Tsuyoshi Konno.



待望のシンクロ付S型近く国内發賣!

ニコン

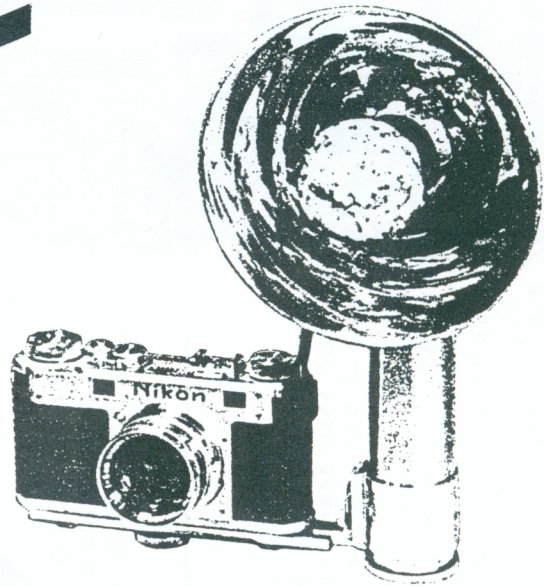
NIKKOR

S型 $f/1.4$ $f/2$

M型 $f/1.5$ $f/2$

13.5 cm $f/4$ 8.5 $f/2$

3.5 cm $f/3.5$



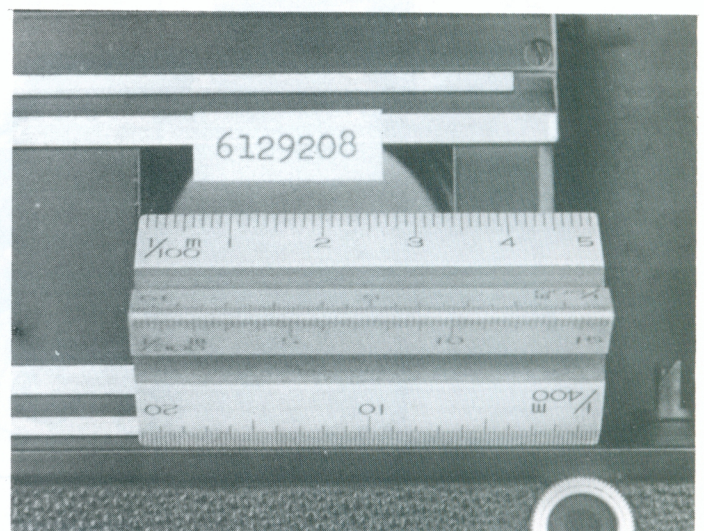
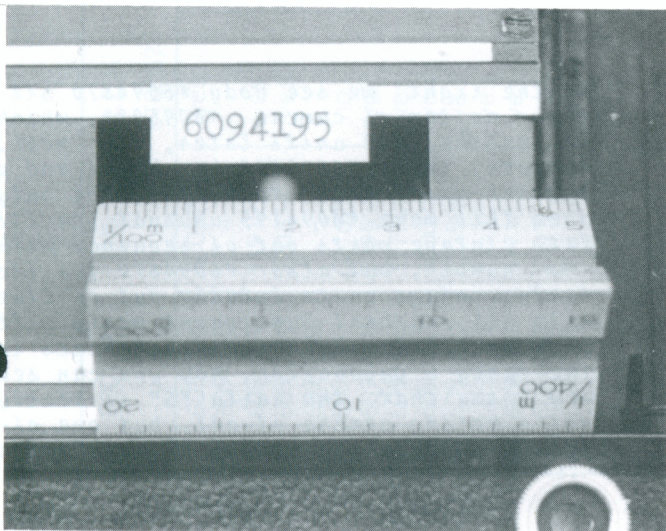
御注文は最寄りの写真機店へ

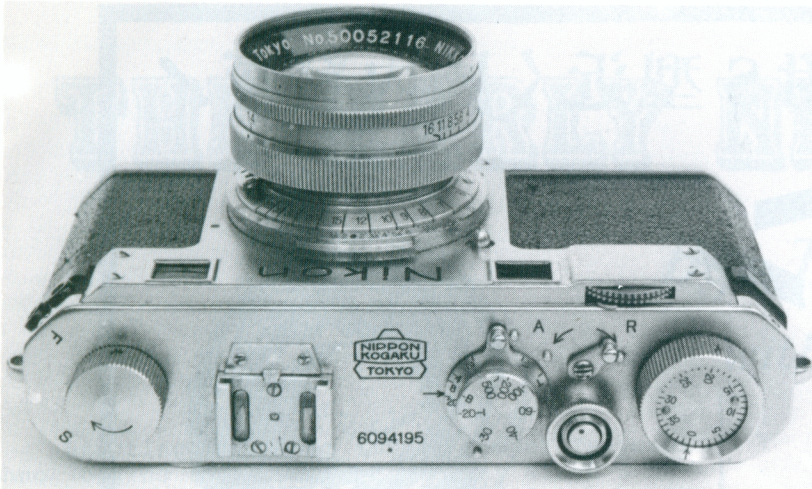
日本光学工業株式会社

(新カタログ準備中)

Reproduced above is the ad from page 76 of the January 1951 issue of "Asahi Camera" announcing the arrival of the new Nikon S with flash synch! This is the first time the modified "M" is referred to as the "S"! Note that the newer Nikon S is advertised with the new Nikkor $f/1.4$ while the Nikon M is still listed with the now discontinued Nikkor $f/1.5$! Although its' obvious that the "S" was advertised in Japan, I've yet to see any ads in the West before 1954 using

such nomenclature. Also keep in mind that this new model is actually what we now refer to as the Nikon MS, since the "M" was still present! Below is graphic proof that the Nikon S always had a 24x34 format, contrary to some published reports stating otherwise. Body #6094195 is an extremely early camera while #6129208 is very late, yet they are both 24x34, just like the Nikon M had been! So lets put to rest the statement that the S had a 24x36 format!

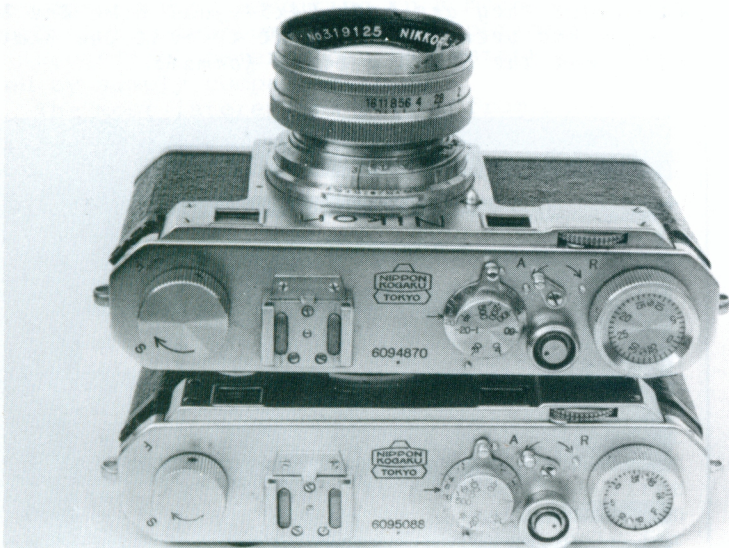




To start things off a few shots of some early Nikon "S" cameras from the Konno collection. The highest recorded "M" prefix camera known to date is M6094102 while the earliest collected Nikon S is #6094153. To the left is #6094195. As will be shown in future installments, this early camera has many "M" features yet its' not "M10J" and possesses some "S" parts. However, very little is consistent during this time period.



The camera at right is nearly 700 numbers later than that above yet it has more "M" features! Note the wider "M" type wind and rewind knobs as well as the smaller shutter release collar, all of which are "M" vintage. However, this camera is also not "M10J" despite the presence of "older" vintage parts. This points out how diverse the early Nikon S cameras can be.



At the right we see body #6094870 sitting on top of camera #6095088, which is another 200 units later, yet note, however, that #6095088 has knobs and a shutter guard like #6094195! Not only does this make #6094195 unusual for its late vintage parts out of sequence with its number, but also #6094870 for its early vintage parts totally out of line with its number! Subsequent parts will show many more such inconsistencies in the early S production. Now you can see why I say that the early "S" is really not a boring camera at all, but one offering many surprises for the collector.



BODY #	LENS #	CLICK		WIND	REWIND	FINGER	BACK		TRIPOD	RF ADJ.	REMARKS
		STOPS?	KNOB				KNOB	LUG?			
1	50052116	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	yes	Euro.*	no	Older M synch cord.		
2	6094677		24mm	20mm	-	yes	Euro.*	no	JAPAN in shoe. New body cast		
3	6094870	yes	24mm	20mm	12mm	yes	Euro.*	no			
4	6095010	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	yes	Euro.*	no			
5	6095088		22mm	17mm	14mm	yes	Euro.*	no			
6	6095311	no	22mm	17mm	14mm	yes	Euro.*	no			
7	6095503	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no!	Euro.*	no	No lug slot on body casting		
8	6095696	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	no			
9	6095741	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	no			
10	6095825	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	no			
11	6096098	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	Yes!***			
12	6096460	yes	22mm	17mm	?	no	U.S.**	yes***			
13	6096509	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	yes***			
14	6096535	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	yes***			
15.	6096714	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	yes***			
16	6129208	yes	22mm	17mm	14mm	no	U.S.**	yes***	Used for comparison.		

* Denotes an "M" type baseplate with a European tripod socket with a U.S. 1/4 inch adaptor.
 ** Denotes the new style "S" type baseplate with external screws and only a U.S. type socket.
 ***Denotes a small screw visible just forward of the accessory shoe which could be removed to allow for adjustment of the rangefinder.

This chart was provided by Tsuyoshi Konno to allow for easy comparison of the early Nikon S cameras in his collection. They are listed in numerical order along with the lenses they had mounted when collected. He has compared certain important "features" that can vary within such a sampling of early Ss. These include the configuration of the knobs & shutter release (finger) guard, back cover lug, baseplate and tripod types, the presence of the rangefinder adjusting screw on the top plate, plus remarks.

Please note that some of the features covered in this chart will be addressed in future Journals and may not fit in with what is talked about in Part One, but I felt it should be published here for reference. Future articles will describe, in finer detail, the many inconsistencies found in the early S Nikon S, the "red-eye synch" cameras & a new batch of "8 digit" Nikon S cameras totally removed from those first mentioned in my book! More next issue!

NIKON "F"

CLIP-ON METERS

BY CALVIN K. HO

PART II

As described in Part I of "The Nikon "F" Clip-on Exposure Meter", the first version of the clip-on meter, the Model 1, was introduced with the Nikon F in mid-1959, and replaced the following year with a more modularly styled, but otherwise identical meter, designated the Model 3. The question naturally arises....what happened to the Model 2?

It has not been possible to answer this question based on Nikon brochures alone, since there is no mention whatsoever of a Model 2 in any official literature! Never the less, a distinctly different clip-on meter for the Nikon "F" that lacks certain features of the Model 1 has been known to exist for some time. Only the instruction sheet and box furnished with this enigmatic meter identifies it as the Model 2!

It appears that the Model 2 was introduced sometime within about a year of the "F", as an instruction booklet supplied with the meter is dated September of 1960. Although the exact date is not known, it is unlikely that it premiered with the "F" in 1959, since the Model 1 was originally designated as the "Nikon F Photoelectric Exposure Meter" without reference to the model number, implying that it was the only model existing at the time. Although similar to the Model 1 in both shape and concept, the Model 2 is a simplified version lacking an automatic dual sensitivity shunt and provision for the booster. A comparison between the Models 1 & 2 reveals that the two meters share virtually none of the same external parts. Only the metal claws that clutch the camera's name plate, the secondary shutter speed dial, and the reticulated front meter window that covers the selenium panel are all that are really similar between the two. Even though this window is a bit larger, and covers nearly the entire face on the Model 2, the meter is actually no more sensitive than the unboosted Model 1.

In actuality, the Model 2 bears a striking resemblance to the Nikkorex "F" clip-on meter that was introduced with the Nikkorex in March 1962. In particular, the two meters share the same casing design, dials, and method of operation. Both lack dual sensitivity & booster provision. It appears that Nippon Kogaku borrowed upon the design of the Model 2 meter when designing the Nikkorex version.

The Model 2 engages and cross couples to the camera in the same manner as the Models 1 and 3. Operationally it is also similar, employing the matched needle principle. However, one advantage of the Model 2 is that, if desired, the exposure readings can be made without having to couple the meter to the lens. This is possible because, unlike the Models 1 & 3, the meter's ASA dial also has aperture numbers calibrated on it that allow the user to make readings with non-coupled lenses, such as the wide angle Nikkor-O 2.1cm/f4 or the preset Nikkor-T 10.5cm/f4, and then transfer the meter reading to the lens as with the procedure for the "RF" meter. In this case one simply slid the aperture coupling pin to the far right position designated by a red dot, and read the f-stop calibration opposite the needle on the meter. Perhaps in this additional feature lies the reason for the existence of this companion meter to the Model 1.

Serial numbers for the Model 2 appear to begin in the #77XXXX block with #773370 being the earliest recorded example. The meters were produced up to a recorded high of #830156, suggesting a total of at least 50,000 units! This figure is far higher than that of the Model 1 (9,000-10,000 units) and may also be much higher than the Model 3 production figure of about 11,000 units.

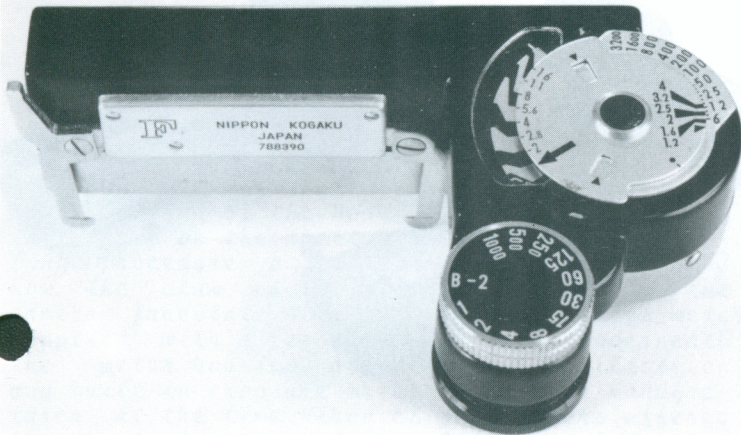
Experience has shown that the Model 2 is the most likely version to be found on dealer shelves and at photo shows, so it is possible that tens of thousands actually were produced and imported. Despite its astounding numbers, it is the least known of the three because so little literature mentioning the Model 2 has surfaced. Most likely, being a lesser and cheaper version of the Models 1 & 3, Ehrenreich may have decided not to include it in official literature. As to whether it was officially imported into the U.S., or was mainly produced for the Japanese market, is not known at present. Other unknowns include its price, and when production ceased. Why such a popular item (based on its production figures) would be so inconspicuously promoted remains, like so many other aspects of this meter, an enigma. Whatever the reason, it is now gaining attention as one of the more exotic classic "F" accessories.

The Nikon photoelectric clip-on meters offered the best of all metering possibilities: a sensitive, accurate, fully coupled meter that was integral with the camera, but could still be detached for hand-held metering or repairs, if ever necessary. They were the beginning of a cross coupled metering philosophy that would later mature into the more advanced Photomic systems, which allowed the Nikon "F" to endure virtually unchanged for 15 years as the classic single lens reflex design.

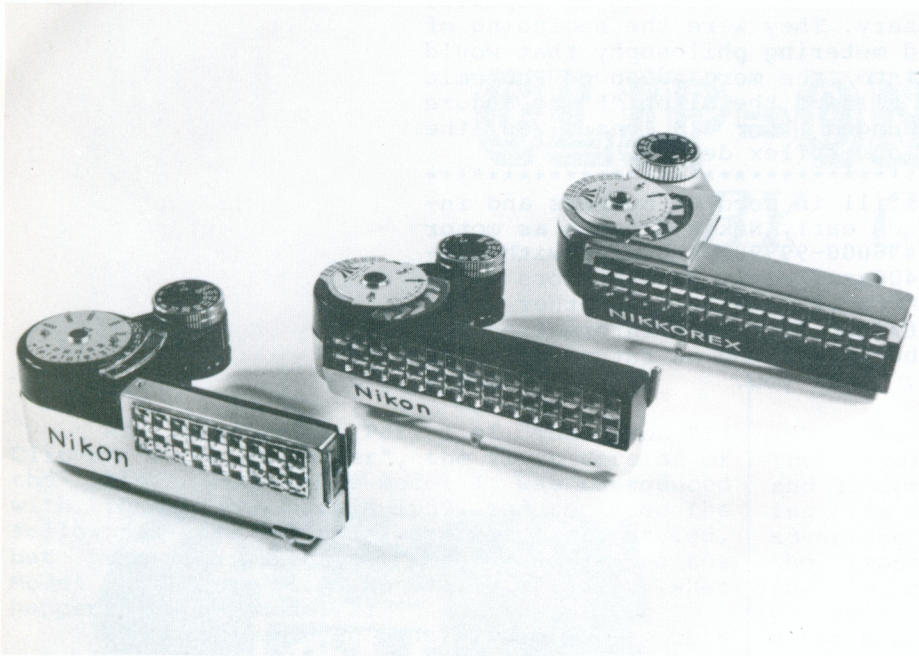
Calvin is still in need of numbers and information on such early Nikon F items as motor drives between #96000-99999, F bodies with numbers such as 6400xxx, early Auto-Nikkors calibrated in "cm" focal lengths, and other early accessories. If you have such information let him know, as he is working on future articles on the reflexes. Thank you. (RJR)



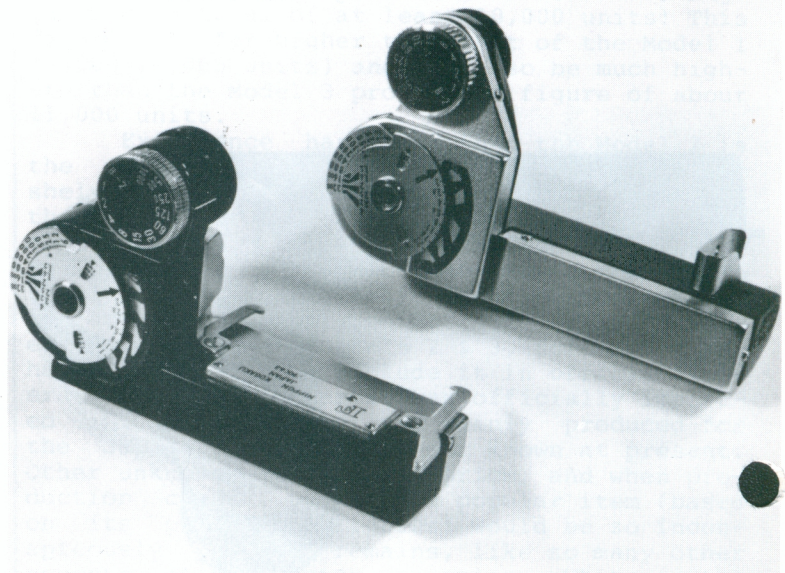
Model 2 clip-on meter & original box! Model 2 meters were furnished in velvet-lined gold "F" boxes similar to those for the Models 1 and 3. The box and supplied instruction sheet are the only items that positively identify this meter as the Model 2, for no other mention of this meter in price sheets or advertisements has surfaced to date. (Photo by Bill Fraker)



Rear view of the Model 2 showing the same pair of metal claws found on the Models 1 and 3 are also used on this meter to secure it to the camera. Unlike the Models 1 & 3, the Model 2 had separate markings for aperture settings on the ASA dial, and thus could also be used with non-coupling Nikkor lenses. (Photo by Bill Fraker)



This group photo shows the similarities of the Model Two (center) to the Model One (front left) and Nikkorex "F" meter (rear right). The Model 2 appears to be a hybrid of its two neighboring meters, sharing some features in common with the Model 1 and the Nikkorex "F" version. The meter for the Nikkorex "F" was introduced two years after the Model 2, and thus is a derivative design. Both the Model 2 and Nikkorex meters lack the clip for the accessory meter booster. (Nikkorex meter was supplied courtesy of Wall Street Camera Exchange, New York.)



A comparison of Model 2 and Nikkorex F meters. Many of the same features of the Model 2 were later incorporated into the Nikkorex F design, such as the dials and needle housing. Note that the Nikkorex meter is missing the pair of pin-cers, and instead is equipped with an accessory shoe (hidden from view beneath the needle housing) and a single clip used to mount the meter onto the Nikkorex "F".



Motorized Nikon F fitted with the Model 2 and the 2.1cm/f4 Nikkor-O and accessory finder. Although the Model 2 was designed to attach to Auto-Nikkors via an aperture coupling pin, metering was also possible when using non-auto lenses. In this case one slid the coupling pin to the position marked by the dot and manually transferred the aperture reading from the meter to the lens.



Nikon Model 2 clip-on meter fitted on a proper vintage motorized Nikon F with the 5cm/f2 Nikkor-S. Notice how the meter cell covers the entire face, yet the Model 2 is actually no more sensitive than the smaller celled Model 1.

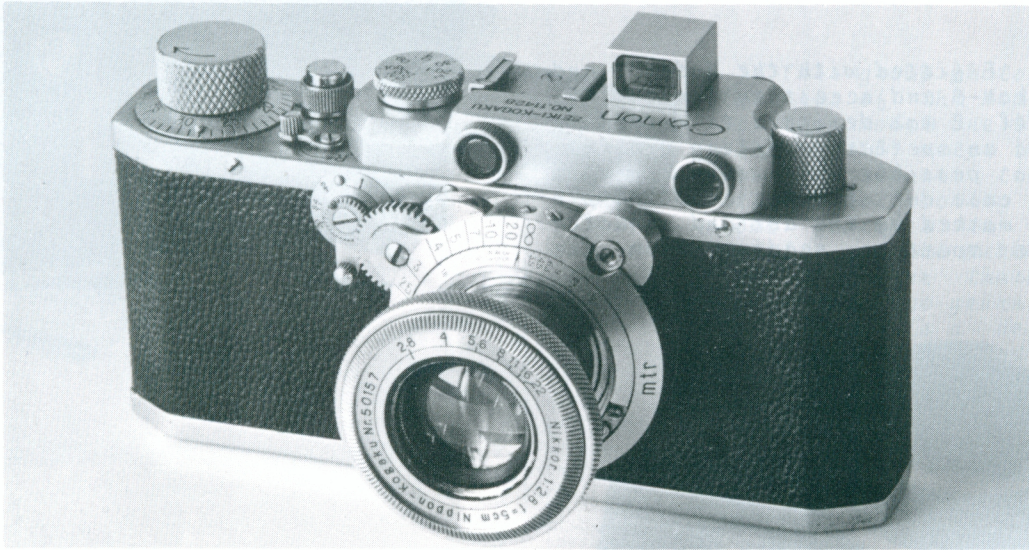
Close-up view of aperture coupling. Unlike the Models 1 and 3, the Model 2 lacked any sort of thumb grip on the aperture pin, making the coupling procedure a bit more inconvenient. Note how the claw of the meter securely grips the camera faceplate. All Nikon clip-on meters were applied with a zeroing screw found underneath the meter housing, a detail not available on any built-in exposure meter by another manufacturer at the time. Nikon clip-on meters offered the best of both worlds: a fully coupled meter integral with the camera, but could be detached for separate hand-held use, or repairs.



THE EARLIEST NIKKORS... ILLUSTRATED!!

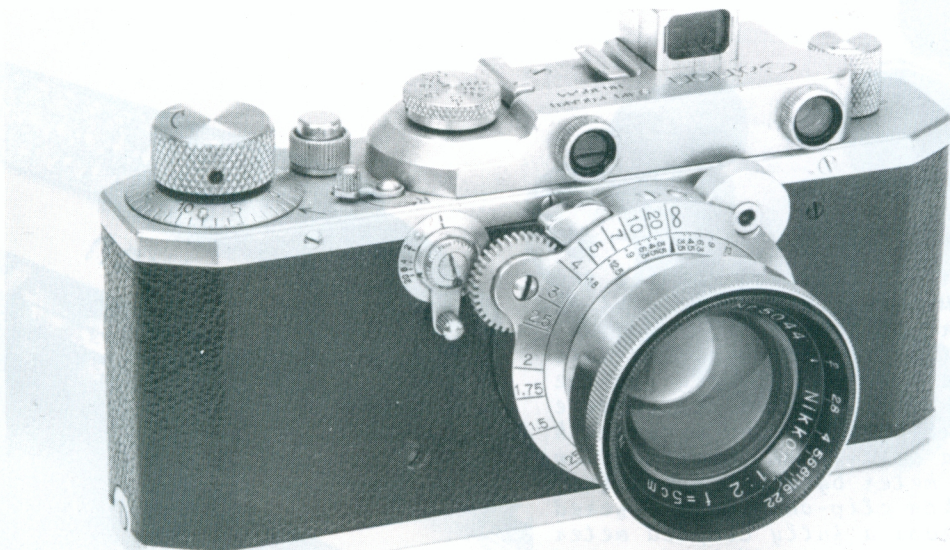
PART II

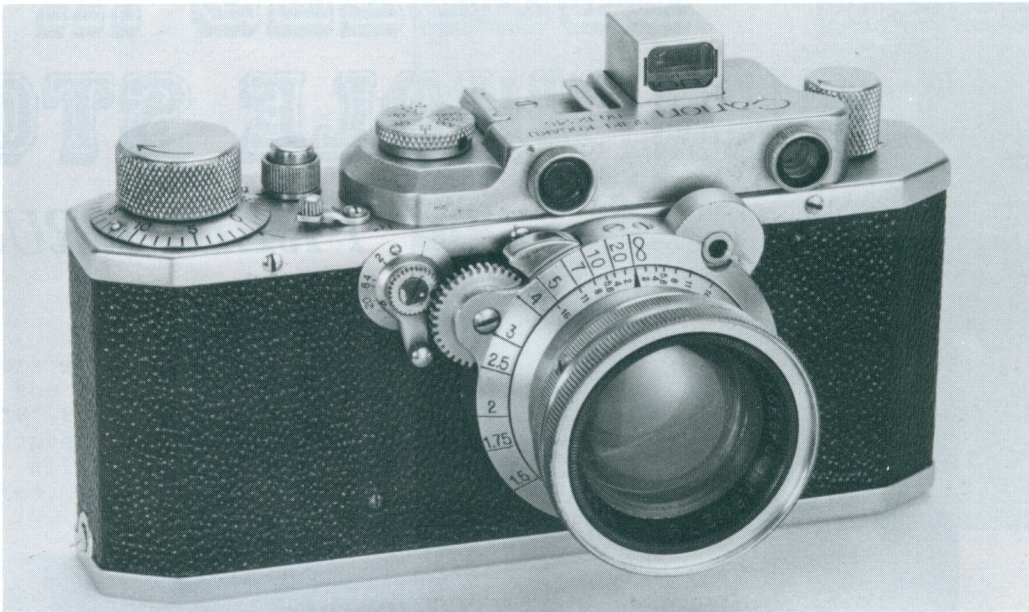
BY HAYATO UEYAMA



In NHS-21 member Hayato Ueyama provided us with a series of photos of some of the rarest, and earliest, Nikkor lenses made for photographic use. This issue we continue where we left off with another example of the very uncommon f2.8 Nikkor #50157, mounted on Canon S #11428. This set appears to be in nearly like new condition, which is remarkable for any camera of this vintage. Unlike the example pictured in NHS-21, this lens has its name spelled properly as "NIKKOR" and not "NIKKO"!

The 50mm/F2 Nikkor was probably the least commonly used lens on these early Canons save for the practically mythical F1.5. Here we see a very early example, #5044, mounted on a very early Canon S body #10544. Note that the aperture is adjusted on this lens using a recessed front mounted ring adjacent to the identification ring. The user had to look into his lens to determine the aperture setting. This design was later changed to a more conventional type, but surfaced years later on the 25mm Nikkor!





Illustrated in the upper photo is the latter type 50mm/F2 Nikkor. Note that the second front ring for the apertures is gone & replaced by a chrome front rim. The stops are now set in the second knurled ring on the outer barrel in the more conventional manner. This lens is #50279 and, therefore, of later vintage than the preceding example. It is shown mounted on an early Canon S with the very amusing serial number of #12345!! Now that is what I would call one hell of a number!

Our final example this issue is another F2 Nikkor lens. By now I am sure you all can appreciate its importance & rarity. What is of real interest in this particular photo is the camera on which it is mounted. It is one of the extremely rare Imperial Navy Canon S cameras made about 1942. Note the special markings on the top cover. The one shown in Peter Dechert's book is #111. This example is #121. I would again like to thank Hayato Ueyama for sharing these fine photos with us. More next time!



NIKON "BUBBLES"...

THE WHOLE STORY!

by FRED KRUGHOFF

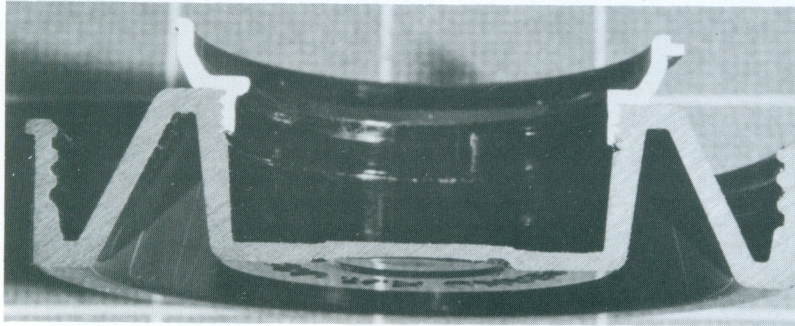


Fig. 1

Most photographers have seen the plastic bubbles that Nikon "F" lenses were packed in. Late Nikon "S" lenses began to come packed the same way, as Nikon phased out the formally supplied leather cases. The 35mm/f1.8 shown came in a box marked "without leather case". Two primary bases were used for the bubbles, a smaller one in Leica thread, and a larger type in "F" mount. The part that made it possible to use these bases with "S" lenses is shown cut away in Fig. 1., "the Nikon "S" to Leica adapter" (the "S" adapter is painted white in the photo).



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

The bubble base in Fig. 2 is in Leica screw, the basic small unit. This base was made for the "El-Nikkor". Nikon may have sold screw mount lenses in this case, but I have yet to find any. The screw mounts were probably off the market before the plastic cases were introduced.

Fig. 3 shows the 35/f1.8 in a base which was made by screwing the "S" adapter into the base in Fig. 2. (Figure 3 is actually the same as the one shown as a cut away in Fig. 1).

The Nikkors shown in Fig.4 & 5 are more massive so the larger base using the standard Nikon "F" type was used. In Fig.4 a Leica screw adapter was used to modify the "F" base to allow the 135mm/f4 short mount to be fitted.



Fig.4

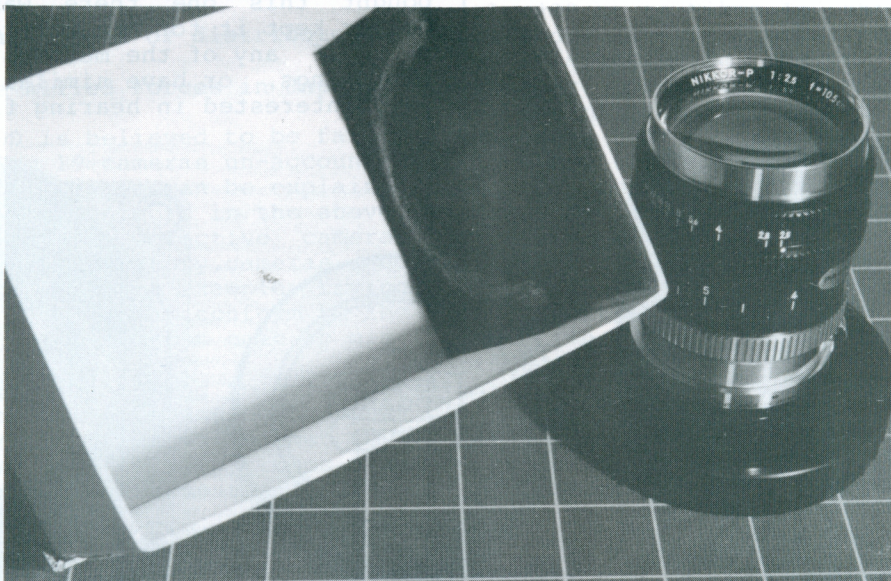


Fig.5

Fig.5 shows the "S" adapter screwed into the Leica adapter used in Fig.4 which was then fitted into the "F" base. The 105 uses two adapters to mount the lens. These adapters are glued in so you have to look closely to see how the base is made.

The "S" adapter in Fig.1 is also used in one other usually unnoticed place. The "21" back cap is made of 2 pieces! I first realized it when I noticed that the 50mm. lenses could be mounted in the "21" cap. The "S" adapter is screwed into the back cap which is actually in Leica thread! This of course brings up the possibility that Nikon may have intended to market the "21" in Leica screw mount, since they made the proper back cap!

All the lenses from 28mm-135mm can be found packed in plastic bubbles. The 105mm shown in Fig.6 shows a plain grey box made expressly to hold the bubble in position.



SPECIAL 85/F1.5 NIKKOR!

by *MIKE SYMONS*

Presented here are photos of a very unusual and interesting version of the 8.5cm/f1.5 Nikkor-S which has been either factory modified or custom designed & manufactured in America. The history of this lens seems to indicate it came from the military complex at Los Alamos, New Mexico, which was where the first atomic bomb was designed & exploded in 1945.

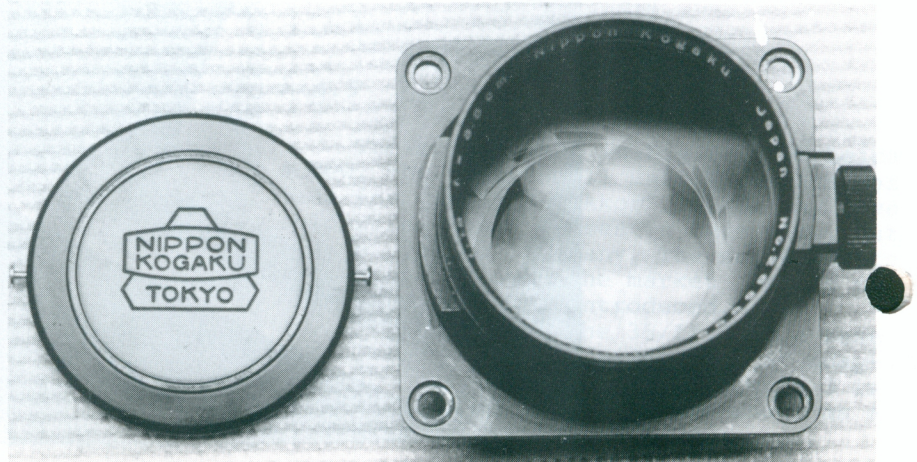
As the photos indicate, the front portion is a normal production 85mm/f1.5 #265668. From that point back the modifications begin. The focusing ring has been replaced by a substantial square metal plate with 4 mounting holes, one in each corner. This square plate was probably



mounted on a scientific recording device. The 4 holes are counter-sunk for a flush fit. This modification shortened the focal length producing a lens which I would classify as a "short mount" variety (shorter than 85mm). Attached to this plate is a large knob which controls the focusing action. The normal distance scale has been replaced by "notch" marks on the modified plate arrangement. There are 11 focus notches inscribed into the metal plate.....5 lines to both the left & right of a center mark. By the looks of this arrangement this lens could have been used for a fixed-focus application, with the inscribed marks for critical focus. Aperture selection is also indicated by 2 inscribed marks...top & bottom...on the modified ring rather than the normal method used on the production version. The rear of the lens still has the rangefinder cam sleeve, but this would have been rendered useless due to the modifications mentioned. Strange that it still remains. The front cap is also a variant in that it is a metal snap-on version, as opposed to the more usual screw-in type that is normally found on this lens. This is also the first metal snap-on cap I have seen, the usual being plastic. On the underside is inscribed "60", indicating a 60mm size, and the usual Nippon Kogaku logo is also present.

As can be seen from the photos the modifications have been professionally done. Notice the attachment of the focus locking knob, where 4 flush mount Alan screws are used to mount it to the plate. The focusing movement is smooth as silk, again indicating a professional job. One might speculate that in the early 50s' the U.S. military contracted with Nippon Kogaku to produce a number of these lenses for specific applications. How many were produced is anyone's guess. My source indicated that at the time he bought this one there was another, but the dealer kept it for his own collection.

If any of the members have heard of such happenings, or have similar pieces, I would be very interested in hearing from them.



IN THE SHADOW OF FUJI...

TALES OF NIPPON KOGAKU!!

BY JOHN BAIRD

Where-oh-where did all the Nikon I cameras go? Good question....perhaps we can cast a little light on this subject. As we all know from Robert's book, not all of the 738 "production" Nikon Is' were sold per-se. Some were given as samples, some converted into Nikon Ms', & some were never delivered to the sales department at Nippon Kogaku at all! So, in the end, after all...how many Is' are out there? An important question for those collectors still trying to find one of these cameras at the next yard or garage sale.

OK....here we go. If we assume that Nippon Kogaku began production of the Nikon I at body #60922 (the first 21 cameras were prototypes), and ended at camera #609759, some 738 production Nikon Is' (759 - 21 = 738) were actually manufactured. According to the company's surviving records, 90 pieces were never delivered to the sales department at Nippon Kogaku, these cameras coming from the serial number batch between bodies #60922 and #609320. What happened to these cameras...were they defective models, given as gifts, or used in advertising..no one knows for sure. In addition to these 90 pieces another 229 cameras, beginning in August 1948, were left in stock, eventually to become the "Modified" Nikon cameras known as the Nikon M! We'll get back to this point in a moment. So to recap..738 - 90 - 229 = 419 Nikon Is' were possibly sold. From the balance of 419 cameras the story is as follows:

310 cameras sold to the Public Trading Corp*
40 cameras exported as samples by N-K.
50 cameras sold directly by N-K.

400 cameras eventually sold or distributed.

* Export sales to the Allied Forces in Japan.

This figure of 400 is believed to be fairly accurate, thus leaving 19 cameras un-accounted for. These "missing" 19 pieces can be explained either through "rounding" errors in the above, serial numbers attached to defective cameras that were scrapped at the factory, cameras used in developmental projects (for example, trying to make the Nikon I's format conform to the standard 24x36 size), or they just came up missing altogether.

Now the job is to give meaning to all this. There is no problem in understanding the possible destination of the 310 cameras that were sold essentially to Allied military troops stationed in Japan during the "Occupation". Since

the majority were from the United States, it is certain that some of these cameras made it to the States. The 40 cameras used as samples by Nippon Kogaku could have been sent to almost any country in the West in an attempt to develop a market for its product overseas.

Now for those 229 cameras modified into Nikon Ms'. If we go back in history to the late 1940s', we find that Chiyoda Kogaku (Minolta) & Tokyo Kogaku (makers of the Minion 35 at that time), along with Nippon Kogaku were forced by the International Trade Agency to manufacture their 35mm models with the 24x36 format acceptable in non-Japanese markets. This was fairly important, since the GHQ ordered that camera production be allowed only if the cameras were exported to gain foreign currency. So the conversion of 229 Nikon Is' into Ms' meant that some model I serial numbers were scrapped and replaced with new "M" numbers. From a recent translation, it is possible that most of the early Ms' came from Is' produced after #609320 (1/49), although some Ms' may have come from cameras left in stock in 8/48 (around 60973-74) about the time Japanese camera makers became aware of their unacceptable 24x32 format. Lastly those 50 Nikon Is' sold by N-K directly....it has been suggested that they were marketed in Hong Kong where the 24x32 format was not a hot issue, thereby saving N-K from additional conversions of Nikon Is' into Ms'.

Anyway, except for those converted into Ms', used for samples, or whatever, there leaves only 400 or so Nikon Is' that ever hit the camera shops. One last note, remember those 90 pieces missing from the pre-609320 batch? It is entirely possible that some of them were sold on the black market in Japan in 1948. It was in this year that GHQ almost banned camera production due to this activity. Since it was allowed only to gain foreign currency, domestic purchases were discouraged by means of a high excise tax. Eventually it was agreed that cameras in stock could be marketed in Japan without restriction until 9/48 when at least 80% had to be exported. Strange how this coincides with the time when N-K was examining the idea of producing its camera with roughly a 24x36 format (8/48), since really the only place they could sell the Nikon I (24x32) without being modified was on the Japanese market....a post-war market without much extra cash that could only constitute 20% of total sales!

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OF INTEREST!

The following is a list of publications that should be of interest to many of you. You may have heard of some of them and may want to subscribe. A few are for the general collector & others are primarily concerned with Nikons including the reflex cameras. If you wish more information please contact those mentioned under each publication.

"The Historical Camera" is a new general magazine published three times a year & edited by member John Baird. The first issue was published in September with issue #2 due the first of the year. The premier issue contained an extensive article on the Nicca series by Peter Decbert as well as articles on the Contax and Futura cameras. A series of monographs are also planned for 1989. For more information write.. Historical Camera Publications, PO Box 90, Glead Station, Yakima, Washington 98937.

"The Photographic Trader" is an Australian publication that reminds me of what "Shutterbug" used to be. It is full of ads for used equipment and articles for the collector. It is the work of member Neil Smith who does everything from typesetting to mailing (sounds familiar!) and does it well. It is published 6 times yearly & the rates are \$13.20A for N. America and \$14.40A to Europe. Ads are FREE to subscribers! For more information write...The Photographic Trader, PO Box 95, Carina, Qld.4152, Australia.

"NHI" stands for "Nikon Hobby Information" and is a German publication issued monthly and consists of short reports on the latest gear from Nikon, tips on general photography and an extensive classified section for Buy/Sell/Trade ads from individuals. Also a larger NHI Journal will be published three times a year. For more information write...Ralf Jannke, Brahmstr.13, D 5300, Bonn 1, West Germany.

Another German group is called The Nikkor Club and it also has its own publication primarily aimed at the Nikon user with reports on both vintage and new equipment. It also has a classified section offering all types of Nikon related items. Because of a close relationship with the German importer it also has photos & info on the very latest items to be marketed. For more info write...Nikkor Club Deutschland, Beckerathstrabe 6, 4390 Gladbeck, W. Germany.

Classified

FOR SALE/TRADE...Model 2 clip-on meter for Nikon F, truly mint & working, \$45; another one mint- & working, \$40; WANTED...for my future article commemorating the "F": F36 motor drive #96-98000, grey motor battery pack; early Nikkors-2.8cm/f3.5 #32-33xxxx; 3.5cm/f2.8 #92xxxx/18xxxx; 13.5cm/f3.5 #722500 or earlier. Also I need 52mm caps with NKT triangle logo, matching shades with script F & triangle logo. Send description & serial # to: Calvin Ho, Caltech 147-75, Pasadena, CA 91125.-(818)-356-3797..days.

WANTED...Eyepiece and chain for the Variframe finder; 105/4.0 Nikkor outfit; black shade for "all black" original 135/f3.5 Nikkor; original early RF literature; small accessories & boxes for any Nikon RF items. Have some "RF" trading stock, including boxed lenses, accessories and literature. Mike H. Symons, 3844 Merriman Dr., Victoria, B.C., Canada, V8P 2S9. Tel. (604) 477-1867 (after 6PM PST)

WANTED...Any good clean Nikon RF item wanted. Top prices paid! Please send photo along with price to; Peter Lownds, W.de Zwijgerstraat 24, 3043 VD Rotterdam, Holland.

PLEASE NOTE...

I noticed in NHS-21 that Masato Imanishi wrote inquiring about the NHS caps and shirts featured at the Convention last March. As the cap vendor, I am pleased to advise that another limited production run of NHS baseball caps will be available soon and this time they will be serialized! Numbers will start with #881201 and orders will be filled on a first come-first served basis. They will be in a dark blue with white letters and one size fits all. For U.S & Canadian members the price is \$10.00 US which includes shipping (allow 2-3 weeks), & for overseas members, \$15.00 US including shipping (allow 3-4 weeks). Orders and payment should be sent to the address below. When we have our second NHS Convention then EVERYONE can come appropriately attired!

Bill Adams, 23255-27th South, Des Moines, WA 98198..(206) 824-0183.

Those of you who have been thinking about purchasing Peter Braczko's "NIKON FASZINATION" & have been putting it off please note that only 12 copies remain. There will not be another order so if you feel you want one please let me know as soon as possible.

"NEXT ISSUE"

The deadline for the next issue of "THE NIKON JOURNAL" will be March 1, 1989. Hopefully some photos and information from my return trip to Japan will be included, time permitting. Also Part II of Tsuyoshi Konno's Nikon S series may run plus whatever else I receive from the members. If you wish to contribute to NHS-23 you must get it to me by March 1st. Thank you.

NEW MEMBERS

Albert Ammons, II
P.O.Box 3400
Vallejo, CA 94590

Gerard & Marc Abdon
6 Boulevard Beaumarchais
75011, Paris, France

Camera Doctor
3211 Edloe
Houston, Texas 77027

C.A.M.E.R.A.
Camera & Memorabilia Enthusiasts
Regional Association
P.O. Box 11172
Loudonville, NY 12211

Frank Mazzocchi
5 Tudor City Place
New York, NY 10017

James McKeown
Centennial Photo Service
Route 3 Box 1125
Grantsburg, WI 54840

Mike Millington
1500 S.W. Park Ave. #307
Portland, OR 97201

Sgt. Paulo Pasicznyk
62 Seville Dr.
Rochester, NY 14617

Steven Ratner
114 Framingham Road
Southborough, MA 01772

Bernhard Schaerer
Pelikanstr. 8
CH-8001 Zurich,
Switzerland

Frank Seki
3313 Makina St.
Honolulu, HI 96815

BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL!

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

6202628

6210549

ADDENDUM TO NHS-21

Addendum to NHS-21...1000mm. f6.3 Nikkor.. As a point of information, another example of the Type 3 lenses has surfaced since publication of Fred Krughoff's article. It is serial number 100678, which is significant in that it is exactly 30 units higher than the previous upper limit of 100648. This could mean that at least 30 more lenses were made in rangefinder mount "IF" all the lenses between #100648-678 are in RF mount and all the numbers were used. Time will tell, but for now the new high lens recorded to date is #100678.

RJR

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 "COOKIKKOR"!

From member Bill Fraker we have some photos of the very unusual, almost mythical, practically unknown, never before published, world famous (or soon to be) "COOKIKKOR"!! A what? From the photos it is obviously a 50mm./F2 Cooke Amotal fitted into what appears to be an original Nikon made rear mount identical to that found on the 50mm/F1.4 Nikkor! Bill feels that it is an original rear Nikon barrel but doesn't know if it was done by Cooke or is an example of a repairman's handiwork. It came to him mounted on a black dial Nikon S2. Has anyone seen another example of the "COOKIKKOR"? If so please inform either Bill or the NHS.





*A "VINTAGE" AD FOR THE NIKON M
AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN!!
CREATED BY TONY HURST*