## FEATURES

**Albert R. Stone
Rochester, New York, Photographer**

By Ken Metcalf

Rochester, N.Y. --- The story of Albert Stone begins with a lead from <u>Quarterly</u> subscriber, Nick Graver, a retired Kodak employee, who sent us an article written by Jim Memmott of the Rochester <u>Democrat and Chronicle</u>. Mr. Memmott put us in touch with Librarian/Archivist Leatrice Kemp at the Rochester Museum & Science Center. Ms. Kemp has been invaluable in providing biographical information and images from the museum's extensive collection.

Mr. Stone ("Stoney" to his friends) was born in Deerfield (near Utica), New York, in 1866 of "English-Yankee" descent and passed away at age 68 in 1934. Tragically, his son, who also was a photographer at the <u>Democrat and Chronicle</u>, passed away two years after his father. Albert first worked as a blacksmith, a stove molder, and then a custom shoe maker. With work scarce in Utica, he moved to Rochester in 1890, where shoe making was still prospering. This profession also did not prove good for Mr. Stone. To quote from parts of Mr. Stone's obituary: "Amateur photography was just coming into its own, and 'Stoney' purchased a camera. With this under his arm, he visited the annual gathering about the lakeside and city parks, and by the sale of the finished photographs, managed to earn a living. It was at one of these outings that he came in contact with the late Harry Goodwin, then a reporter on the old <u>Rochester Herald</u>. When the editor of the <u>Herald</u> decided in 1903 to add a photographer to his news

staff, Mr. Goodwin recommended Mr. Stone. He became the first staff photographer of the <u>Democrat and Chronicle</u> when they merged with the <u>Herald</u>, where he remained until his death."
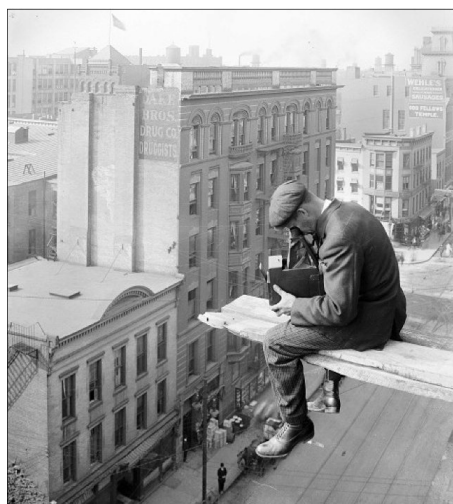
The rescue and preservation of his negatives are best told by Ms. Kemp. "There is a great story of how the negatives were saved. Albert Stone kept the negatives (mostly 5x7 glass plates) in his office, and when the <u>Democrat and Chronicle</u> bought the <u>Herald</u> in 1927, they asked him to get rid of those heavy glass negatives by throwing them in the Genesee River, as they could not be moved to a new office. Albert went home steaming. His seven-year-old granddaughter was there and heard him say 'Those negatives are my life's work, and I will not let them be destroyed.' He did move them all by himself. Helen remembered those words much later when she heard that her step-grandmother was going to get rid of the nega-

Mr. Stone and his newspapers were early and longtime user of Graflex cameras. In addition to those shown, the museum has a non-Graflex Cartridge Kodak, and in a newspaper article, he is shown with a "top-handle" Speed Graphic.

The photo at the top of the article shows Mr. Stone at his home ca. 1910, with what appears to be a 5x7 Auto Graflex, possibly with a lens in a shutter, rather than a barrel lens.

The photo in column two, on the preceding page, of Mr. Stone ca. 1907 on a plank 130 feet above a Rochester intersection is shown with an R.B. Auto Graflex that was made between 1905 and 1908.

The photo at top left shows Mr. Stone ca. 1917 atop a chimney in Rochester, holding what appears to be an Auto Graflex. He is not using the focusing hood, but a Speed Graphic collapsible optical finder. Also, a knob near the bottom was added, for an unknown purpose.

tives, probably to be used in greenhouse construction. She persuaded her step-grandmother to give them to her, and she and her brother moved all 13,000+ into a storage warehouse, by gathering eight or so boxes at a time, tied together with clothesline and lowered three stories, where her younger brother helped load them into a truck. In 1940, when Helen was about to be married, she decided not to continue the payments for storage and approached the Rochester Museum about placing them here. That is how they came to us --just 13,000+ glass plates, no prints.

Three volunteers worked for 20 years, 1976-1996, to devise a filing system for the prints, to check the newspaper to identify the prints (date published and caption). In 2000 we got a grant to partner with the public library to digitize 9,000 Stone images and place them on the public library's digital database, 'Rochester Images.' This involved adding background information to the information in the newspaper. In 2004 the Rochester Museum & Science Center received a grant to digitize the remaining images and catalog them with in-depth information. All these images are in our library catalog. "

An interesting story about Mr. Stone was published by the Democrat and Chronicle. "By his granddaughter's accounts, Stone wasn't impressed by position. Once he asked a visiting President Theodore Roosevelt to move his right arm so that it wasn't blocking the face of the man next to him.

The president said, 'You either take this picture like this or you don't take it at all.' My grandfather never said a word, rolled up the cloth, gathered up his camera and walked out, recalls his granddaughter.

A few hours later, Roosevelt's press secretary called the newsroom and told Stone he could come back to photograph the president any way he wanted."

Except for the Sunday rotogravure section (see insert), where he had more latitude, he was a news photographer, not a photojournalist; however, in my opinion, his photographs go beyond strict documentation, telling a story without the need for text.
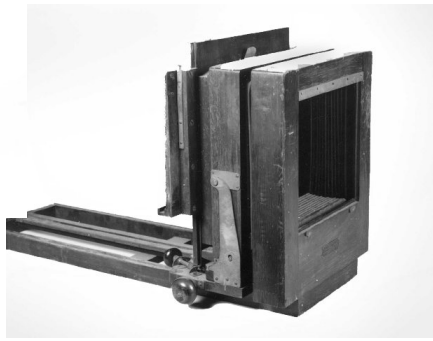

Above is a picture (ca. 1920) at Britton Field, showing William Folmer, third from left.

Albert Stone sits in rear of biplane (ca. 1919) holding an early version of the Graflex Aero Camera, Model A-1.

Photographs of Mr. Stone are provided by the Rochester Museum, and I highly recommend readers explore Mr. Stone's and other photographers' images on http://libcat.rmsc.org.

2

Old Projector

By Ronn Tuttle

"Old Projector" was what the tag proclaimed this dusty, ugly old thing to be. I thought, "Wow, a Graflex projector...that must be really rare!" So much for antiques mall information.

What I saw was an opportunity to restore another Graflex product to its former beauty. I've restored other studio cameras with sliding backs, but this Century 8x10 No. 4A Studio Camera (serial number 199,783, ca. 1937) fitted with a Folmer Multiple Back...it slides side-to-side and up and down, producing six 1¾ x 2¼ images on a 5x7 sheet of film, using the mask that was with it. There are two brass rods, with a series of holes that form stopping points for the back, which apparently can be repositioned to make a variety of sizes and stopping points.

To refinish the camera, I used Formby's Furniture Refinisher to remove whatever finish is left on the wooden parts of the cameras. I apply it with #0000 steel wool. I rub until the finish is dissolved and wipe off with a paper towel. This solution will remove old varnish, lacquer, and shellac. The steel wool also serves to smooth and polish the wood without changing the dimensions like using sandpaper would. Follow all safety instructions found on the can. Formby's solution does not bleach the color of the wood (usually not, anyway) like a stripper would. I find the wood used on Century cameras, made by Graflex, does not need to be stained using this technique. I apply a coat of Minwax Polyurethane with a foam brush...one coat is usually good enough for me. I tried using tung oil, rubbing it in with a soft cloth, but it required several applications to produce a finish I liked. I am not that industrious or patient.

I clean and polish the brass parts with Simichrome Polish Paste and a soft cloth. If the metal is really badly tarnished, I use a Dremel Mototool and wire brush, but this can leave marks if you aren't careful. It is almost necessary to use the brushes on small parts like knobs and screw heads. If you want to keep the brass from tarnishing again, spray it with clear lacquer. Removing the old finish can be a little messy, and polishing a lot of brass can produce sore fingers, but the results are well worth it.

After refinishing the wood, cleaning and polishing the brass, and replacing some missing parts, I mounted (at least temporarily) a Goerz 12" f/9 Apochromat Artar in a rim-set Compur shutter with the intention of trying out the camera by photographing my grandson Bret, but alas, an active five-year-old will not sit still
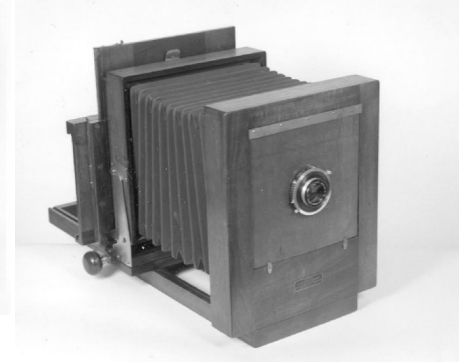
long enough for that to happen. I will have to admit to the impracticality of this design in today's world. The large physical size of the camera (18" W x 18" H x 35" L) to produce a 6x4.5 cm size negative is probably overkill. Today's modern roll film, or (Gasp!) digital cameras, are certainly much more convenient to use, but having tested the Century on a subject that didn't move, I can say its

performance was very smooth. The typical Graflex quality, even after eight decades, is a testament to the fine workmanship of the greatest American camera makers. I am very happy to have been able to salvage this Graflex product.

[Ed. Ronn and Thomas Evans are working on an article devoted to the Multiplying/Multiple Back for this and other cameras.]

3
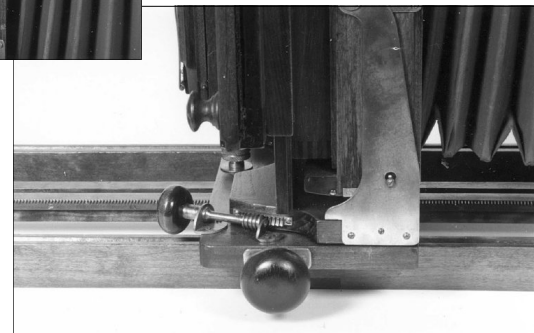
GRAFACTS ....

The 2¼ x 3¼ Century Graphic
1949-1971

Copyright William E. Inman, Sr.

Graflex introduced a new member to the Graphic camera line in August 1949, along with three important companion accessories, at that time and soon afterward. The camera was the 2¼ x 3¼ Century Graphic, a medium-format press-type camera specifically aimed at the amateur photographer. It was a quality, rugged, light-weight press camera at a budget price with almost all of the features of the Pacemaker Crown Graphic...double-extension bellows, fold-away infinity stops, rising, shifting and tilting front standard, Graflok back (although non-removable), four-sided metal folding focusing hood (self-erecting and removable), drop-bed for wide angle lenses, and ground-glass focusing. It had a black body covered with black imitation leather and black bellows. See ad on page 8 and picture below.

The body was of a newly-developed molded mahoganite material, a tough and extremely durable substance, resistant to shocks and blows. It had great stability to varying temperatures

and atmospheric conditions. This was a departure from the tight-grained mahogany bodies of the past Graphic and Graflex cameras. Graflex gave an unlimited guarantee on the body. N. L. Whitaker, President of Graflex, was somewhat doubtful of the durability of the proposed Century Graphic body. As the story goes, he dropped a camera from the second story of the Graflex plant. The camera passed the drop-test with flying colors. Some 37,000 Century Graphics were produced, and according to the Graflex Trade Notes of February 1953, "...only six were reported broken, and in every case it was due to the use of force with tools which were improperly used." The introduction price was $109.50, catalog number CY-70, with the Optical Viewfinder and a 103mm f/4.5 Trioptar lens in a specially designed Century shutter[1]. By September 1949, the Century camera could also be fitted with a 101mm Ektar, or a 101mm Optar, for $140.50 or $149.25, respectively. Also, while not part of the introductory package, a Kalart E-4 rangefinder could be added at the factory, or by local dealers, if properly set up for repairs.

Along with the introduction of the camera in August 1949, the company introduced a "fully automatic" metal and plastic 120-roll holder. It was available for Graflok-equipped Century and 23 Pacemaker cameras in the 2¼ x 3¼ and 2¼ x 2¼ formats, and in those sizes for 2¼ x 3¼ Graflex back cameras. For the Century, the "22" roll holder was listed as catalog number 1249, and for the "23" roll holder, catalog number 1246. See GHQ, Volume 7, Issue 3 for more details. Roll holders started with a key wind in 1915, changed to a knob wind for this model, and later used a one-stroke lever wind.

Then in January 1950, the Century Graphic, catalog number CY-71, was priced at $99.50 less the Optical Viewfinder. See GHQ, Volume 15, Issue 4, for additional details. The Kalart rangefinder was an optional accessory for $38.75, installed. The lens remained the 103mm Trioptar f/4.5 three-element coated anastigmat in a Century XFM 1/200th shutter.

Due to owner and dealer confusion, a clarification was printed in the January 1950 Graflex Trade Notes about the Century shutter. The shutter had built-in synchronization at all speeds, with some restrictions as to the range of speeds used with various bulbs. Also, "The Century shutter is not intended for use with a solenoid, nor should high-speed repeating flash units be connected directly to the flash contacts, since this shutter was designed primarily for synchronizing standard flash lamps."

In addition to the $99.50 package, the camera could be purchased in three additional configurations of lenses, optical viewfinder and roll holders.

Also in 1950, the 2¼ x 3¼ Grafmatic film holder, for both the Graphic and Graflex cameras, was introduced. List price $14.85. Also, see GHQ, Volume 7, Issue 4.

The Century Graphic caught on quite well, and much to the surprise of Graflex, the sales of the "23" Pacemaker Graphic went up as well. The professional photographer, as well as the amateur photographer, started looking at these medium format cameras as a second camera.

In 1949 Kodak intro-duced their 1/800th high-speed non-reciprocating blade leaf shutter, with a Kodak Anastar lens, in their Tourist camera. In 1951 the Kodak 101mm Ektar with this 800 Synchro-Rapid shutter was made available to Graflex, who immedi-ately listed the lens and shutter, in their Price List of June 6, 1951. The Century Graphic fitted with a 101mm (4") Kodak f/4.5 Ektar (and one sheet-film holder), in the Synchro Rapid 800 shutter, catalog number CY-725, retailed for $169.40[2]. This was a plus for both amateur and professional photographers. Kodak dis-continued the shutter in 1960.
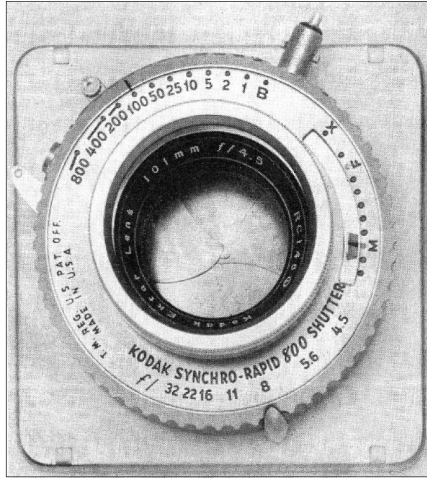
In 1954 Graflex decided to dress up the Century Graphic, so they gave it a gray body cover and red bellows, an eye-catching im-provement to be sure. See camera above.

For the darkroom enthusiast, Graflex com-bined the "23" Century Graphic with a Gra-flarger Back, a Graflarger Stand and Base-board, a "23" Grafmatic holder and Home Storage Case in a "Take 'em, Make 'em

Outfit," for $199.50. Also, see GHQ, Volume 15, Issue 1.

In 1960 the Graflex 103mm Trioptar f/4.5 lens in the Century 1/200th shutter was replaced by a German-made 101mm f/4.5 Graflex Graflar lens in a No. 0 Prontor SVS 1/300th shutter.

The Century Graphic became popular with wedding and police pho-tographers, but they wanted a faster lens and a shorter focal length for better depth-of-field, allowing for zone focusing when neces-sary.

The answer came in 1962 with the introduction of the 80mm Schneider Xenotar f/2.8 lens in a No. 1 Compur MX 1/400th shutter.

The Long Optical Finder, catalog number 9132, was offered in place of the original Short Optical Finder, as the long finder extended over the back of the camera body and over the top of the roll holder. This added feature allowed the photographer easier viewing when the roll holder was attached to the camera.

A Cable Release Kit, catalog number 9458, was offered and fitted to the left back corner of the Century, above the hand strap, for a better way to trip the shutter.

Seven accessory lenses were available: a 47mm f/8 Super Angulon in a 00 Compur MX shutter, a 65mm f/8 Super Angulon in a 00 Compur MX shutter, a 127mm f/4.7 Optar in a No. 2 Graphex shut-ter, a 135mm f/4.7 Optar in a Graphex shutter, a 150mm Xenar in a No. 1 Compur shutter, a 202mm f/5.6 Tele-Optar in a No. 2 Gra-phex shutter, and an f/5.6 250mm Tele-Optar (with closest focus at seven feet).
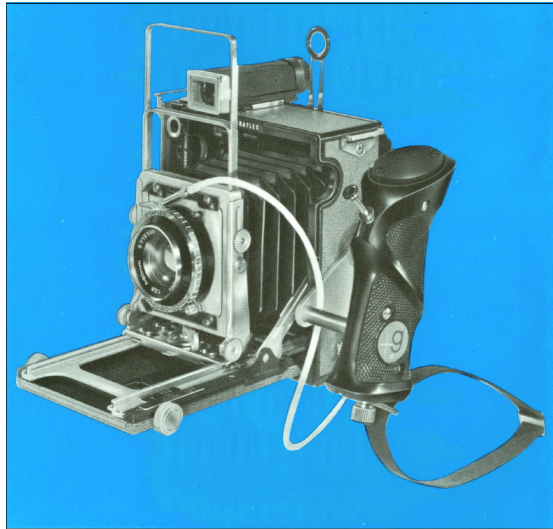
In 1963 the Century Graphic was reintroduced with a gray-covered body and black bellows, in keeping with a more professional look. Tim Holden wrote that the black bellows were spare parts from the first model. In 1967 (or possibly 1966), Graflex started advertising the camera as the "Century Professional."

In 1964 Graflex introduced redesigned roll film holders, now with a black Rapid Advance Lever in place of the knob advance, a long-awaited change requested by photographers. The back cover was gray with silver lettering. They were the RH-8, RH-I0 Ideal Format (2¼ x 2¾), and the RH-12. They were followed by the RH-20 220

Ideal Format Roll Film Holder in 1965, which had a yellow advance lever and a black rear cover without any lettering, more great accessories for the "23" Century Graphic and the "23" Pacemaker Graphic. Also, see GHQ, Volume 7, Issue 3.

In 1967 a Multi-Grip (on camera above) for the Century Graphic, catalog number 9127, was introduced. The grip was the same as used with the Graflex xl system, but with a different bracket using the tripod socket and the lower hand-strap bracket to hold it in place. 1967 also saw the introduction of the 80mm f/2.8 Rodenstock Heligon and the 100mm f/3.5 Zeiss Tessar lenses in an MXV-O Synchro-Compur shutter. These two lenses were also being offered with the Graflex xl camera system. Over its long life, the Century used Century, Graphex, Supermatic and Compur shutters.

1971 brought an end to the "23" Century Graphic after 22 years in production...a fine medium-format camera.

_____

[1]The shutter, made for Graflex by Wollensak, especially for the Century Graphic, was an inexpensive rim-set shutter which was self-setting or self-cocking, so that it had only one lever and was, therefore, easier to use. A simplified speed range of $1/10^{th}$ to $1/200^{th}$ was included.

[2]The shutter was also available for the "23" Speed and Crown Graphics. When this shutter became available, Graflex discontinued the 101 Ektar lens in the No. 1 Flash Supermatic shutter.

References:
Graflex catalogs and price lists: 1949 though 1971.
Kodak Synchro-Rapid 800 Shutter and Ektar lens data: 1953 and
        1955.
Schneider lens data: 1957.
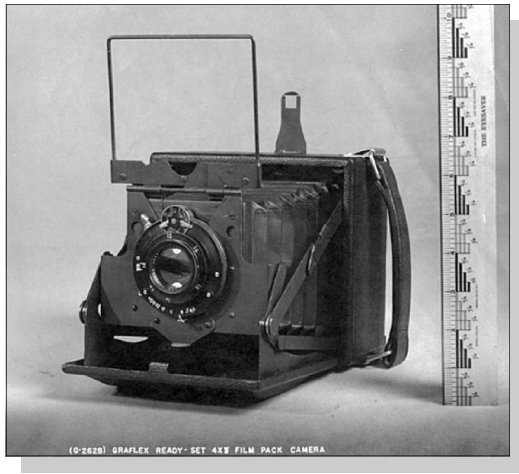Century camera photos, courtesy Jim Hurtel.
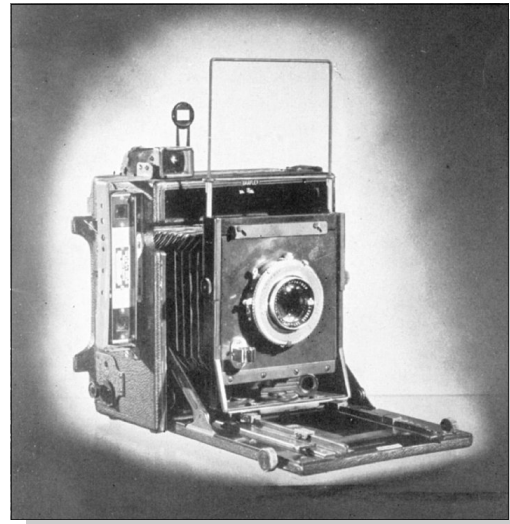
"This historically important Speed Graphic camera made the first Normandy invasion picture, radioed to America. The camera was subsequently radio-auctioned during the 5th War Loan Drive. It alone accounted for bond sales in excess of 12 million dollars. Great Moments of the War 1946.


1943 magazine ad.

**The Mystery of the Graflex 4x5
"Ready-Set" Film Pack Camera**

By Ken Metcalf

The story starts with a picture in the Michael Cleveland collection (above) of what looks like a folding plate camera with Graflex lineage. However, this camera is different; specifically because it has an intriguing self-erecting front standard. The story begins with an email from Mr. Cleveland:

"The photo came from a photo archive from Wright-Patterson AFB that was rescued from destruction by someone who eventually got it to Lowry AFB. The archive consisted of a large truckload of cardboard boxes containing thousands of envelopes with mostly 8x10 negatives and file prints. I spent a significant amount of time trying to catalog what was there, but barely scratched the surface (all done manually, as there were no computers). I also managed to print a few interesting images, but would give my eyeteeth to have been able to get through the whole set and print more of what I did see. A lot of it was of little interest, but it included photographs of most of the equipment evaluated by the test center at Wright-Patterson from WWI through WWII.

There were images of aircraft, photographic equipment, and more, dating back to WWI. It included the earliest mobile photographic processing units I've seen--images of equipment that have never seen print. It was a treasure trove and is probably still buried in the basement at the AF Museum, perhaps never to see the light of day again. It was all moved back to Wright-Patterson when the original Lowry Heritage Museum was moved to its present quarters and identity as 'Wings over the Rockies'. I wish I could get in there now with a good digital scanner."
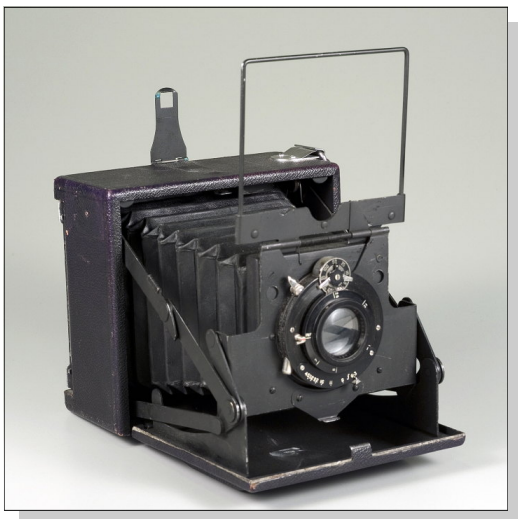
The story was advanced when I sent the print to the George Eastman House's Todd Gustavson. What he sent back were photographs (bottom of previous page and below) of a camera given to the Eastman House in 1974, by Graflex, Inc.

Long-time Graflex employee and Graflex historian, Tim Holden, prepared a description for the Eastman House catalog, calling it a "4x5 English model Ready-set-style* camera." His description may have added unneeded confusion.
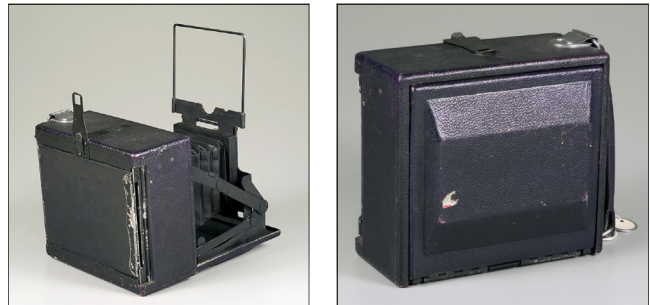
Left, back with film pack adapter, and right, front in closed position.

PURPOSE

To me it is clearly a Graflex one-off engineering model built to demonstrate an idea. I believe the main goals were to minimize the size of cameras and make them easier to handle and use. In size it is 5¾" high, 6" wide and 3½" thick (and 8" deep when open, compared to the Anniversary Speed Graphic at 7½" high, 7½" wide (with rangefinder), and 4¼" thick. The front wire finder folds down and is held by a clip. The camera has a built-in film pack adapter which will not accept film or roll holders.

The camera is not serial-numbered, but does have Graflex-style hardware, handle, and fold-flat rear peepsight. Even more convincing is the fact that it says "Graflex" on the print, and Graflex gave the camera to the Eastman House. Due to the plated handle hardware, early peepsight and early film pack, it may have been produced between 1939 and 1940.

LENS

The lens is a non-interchangeable 6½" Ilex Paragon f/6.3 with front-element focusing in an Acme shutter, manufactured by Ilex Optical Company of Rochester, N.Y. It does not have flash synchronization. According to military photo historian Bruce Thomas, a Paragon lens was used in the World War II Signal Corps PH-47-F camera, made by Graflex.

SELF-ERECTING FEATURE

According to Todd Gustavson, "From a historical perspective, at least one Rochester company produced an auto-extending cycle camera (Richenbach Morey & Will, the Alta Automatic, ca. 1897), so it wasn't a new idea, and given the small town nature of the Rochester camera business, I assume they were aware of it. Also, Houghton, in England, had a number of auto-extending cameras in the late 1930s through the 1950s, such as the Ensign Autorange, Clubman, and Commando. The Germans, not to be outdone, had the Agfa Isolette, Ica Atom and Welta Perle, and, of course, the Zeiss Ikonta series." Rob Niederman, a collector of early cameras, noted that Eastman Kodak also made numerous cameras with this feature, notably on their Six-20 Kodak B of 1937-

Continued......................

1940, as well as Ansco, with their auto-extending model ca. 1950, called the Regent & Speedex.

What may be unique is that there was no press camera with this feature.

*Rob added that it is unclear how the name "Ready Set" came to be associated with the camera. Given that the term does not appear in Graflex literature, it could be a collector name to describe the feature. He also points out that Ansco sold a named "Readyset" camera from 1925 through 1940 (although the camera is not an auto-open camera), or that it could have been a generic name for a style of self-erecting class of cameras.

Sources:

Michael Cleveland is a camera collector and historian, and the former curator of the Lowry Heritage Museum at Lowry Air Force Base, Denver, Colorado.

Todd Gustavson is the Technology Curator at the George Eastman House.

Rob Niederman is a collector and historian of early cameras, many shown on his web site http://www.antiquewoodcameras.com. A picture of the Alta Automatic can be seen at: http://www.antiquewoodcameras.com/alta1.html.

This piece expands on material from a <u>GHQ</u> article written by Mike Hanemann in 1998.

Above is one of the more intriguing photos taken by Mr. Stone ca. 1932. "Toughy" stands on a kitchen table looking into a Series D R.B. Graflex. Two other chimpanzees, Sister and Jimmy, sit on the table facing the camera.

1949 ad for the new Century Graphic and roll film holder.