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Kodak

PHOTOGRAPHIC ART & HISTORY

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 = Preservation of the Photographic Records of New Zealand History = The Collection of Photographica

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COVER: Adamson & Hill: Two women of Newhaven, near Edinburgh, c.1845.
 An original calotype found in Dunedin. Story p.2.

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KAMI AND KITA

This newsletter is whatever WE want it to be. Not the Editorial "WE" the we who publish the newsletter, but the we of both you and us. The English language unfortunately does not distinguish between the we of us-but-not-you and the we of you-and-us-together. Other languages use different words for the two meanings of we. If this was being written say in Indonesia the we in the first sentence would not be "kami", the we of us-but-not-you, but the we-inclusive "kita", you-and-us together.

Yes, yes, this newsletter is about photography, not linguistics. But the excursion into linguistics was taken to emphasise the fact that the nature and future of the newsletter depend as much upon you, the reader, as us, the pretentiously-named Editorial Board. No club, association, society or firm supports the newsletter; just that inclusive we.

So the newsletter is your responsibility as well as ours. Which means, for a start, your money as well as ours. Without buyers and particularly subscribers, the newsletter simply will not survive. This is part of what is meant by your responsibility as well as ours. A dollar is little enough, as is the effort involved in sending it in. The Editors have faith in the newsletter, but their private pockets are much leaner now than they were before they financed the first and much of the second issue, and this one. Our advertisers have faith in the newsletter, but their continued faith depends on what circulation we can offer. So will everybody who hasn't yet subscribed please join the good friends who have already shown a dollars worth of faith in the newsletter.

But it's not just money we want. Your written and photographic contributions are needed to make the newsletter more than just a mouthpiece for the editors. Your articles, your photographs and your opinions are what will make the sore of newsletter you want....Correction: The sort of newsletter WE want.

JOHN B. TURNER
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ADAMSON and HILL

Scarcely two years after the dramatic proclamation in Paris which launched the daguerreotype, in Edinburgh the young Scottish engineer Robert Adamson (1821-1848) followed after another two years by the Scottish painter David Octavius Hill (1802-1870) turned their attention to photography and together produced calotypes which rank among the greatest photographic achievements of all time. In 1960 a scrap album turned up in Dunedin containing calotypes by Adamson and Hill. The link between Edinburgh and Dunedin is in fact a quite logical one, and a brief study will explain this.

Hill was born in Perth in 1802, the son of Thomas Hill, a publisher and bookseller. As a painter, Hill appears at first to have been exclusively interested in romantic and picturesque scenery. Among published works containing his illustrations are Sketches of Scenes in Perthshire (1821); The Ettrick Shepherd, published by Blackie, and The Land of Burns (1840). His exhibited works in the Royal Scottish Academy number nearly three hundred. In discussing Hill one has to be cautious of many erroneous and unconfirmed beliefs about him, many attributable to Dr Heinrich Schwarz of Vienna who wrote a monograph containing eighty reproductions of calotypes, published in 1930. A widely accepted story of Hill's introduction to photography is that he was given a commission to commemorate the founding of the Scottish Free Church in 1843 in a painting which was to contain 470 individual portraits, and that it was Sir David Brewster who recommended to him Fox Talbot's calotype process as an aid in obtaining the many likenesses. Hill was a landscape painter, he had little practice in portraiture and the idea of using photography must immediately have appealed to him for, with the collaboration of Adamson, he at once set about the task of photographing the people he had to portray in the painting. First the photographing, and then the painting occupied him for many years, the work not being completed until 1866. It may be of some significance that in this painting Hill himself appears with sketchbook and pencil, and Adamson is shown behind the camera. The background to the founding of the Free Church is that the Scottish Presbyterians, mainly under the guidance of Dr Chalmers - one of the most eloquent preachers - engaged in a contest with the state on the subject of ecclesiastical patronage. This movement led to disruption, many ministers giving up their livings, and the formation of the Free Church in 1843. An association was formed in 1845 of persons sympathising with the Free Church to found the Otago Settlement and in 1847 the John Wickliff and Philip Laing sailed with the first settlers. Among these early settlers there was a family who brought with them a scrap album of mementoes of their native Edinburgh and the surrounding district. These consist mostly of newspaper clippings and engravings, but also some calotypes taken in and around Edinburgh. Nothing was apparently added to the album after it was brought to Dunedin and a later generation parted with it to Dunedin's famous Newbolds Bookshop. The manager, the late Mr Richard White, had it amongst his stock for many years. The present writer came across the album ten years ago while searching through the vast amount of material which Newbolds had amassed on all the floors from basement to attic of their large premises. The search was made with a keen eye for early topographical photographs, and was most rewarding, discovering works by Francis Frith, Philip H. Delamotte, Francis Bedford and others of the 1850's as well as some early and outstanding photographs

of George Washington Wilson, as well as others, of the 1860's. An enlargement made from one of the calotypes in the old scrap album was displayed recently in Dawson's Gallery in Dunedin as part of a photographic exhibition Man in Early Photography. There were no captions or attributions given to the works shown, but the aesthetic quality of this photograph did not escape some attention which led to a more careful study of its content. The two fishwives portrayed in this calotype were identified as the same ladies, wearing the same dresses, as appeared in calotypes positively attributed to Adamson and Hill. The posing and positioning of the figures against the background was characteristic of Adamson and Hill, and the format was also that of a camera known to have been used by them on visits to New-haven. More can be said of the genre subjects: one of the fishwives, the one with the creel, is in her working rig, she wears her topcoat which was made of a navy blue worsted, and her white apron. The bank of the creel which is shown held in her hand, was worn around the forehead when the creel full of fish was carried. The two fishwives are posed in front of the smoke-house. The other fishwife is dressed for going out.

And so a chain of links can be demonstrated connecting Edinburgh with Dunedin. The first is Adamson and Hill's portraiture in aid of Hill's painting The Signing of the Deed of Demission, which made him known to members of the Free Church; the next link an early admirer of Adamson and Hill's photographs of fishing boats, fisherfolk, old stone cottages, and bits of Edinburgh, who was among the Free Church members who came to settle in Otago, and eventually a late admirer of Adamson and Hill's masterpieces.

The precise nature of the relationship between Adamson and Hill, as photographers, will perhaps never be known. It is all too easy to drop Adamson's name when attributing photographs of the period of their partnership (1843-1848) but from the information we have this should never be done. There is, of course, a calotype of Hill taken by Adamson, and one of Adamson taken by Hill; there are photographs taken by Hill after Adamson's death and in association with A. Macglashon who apparently played a similar role to Adamson's; and there are calotypes taken by Adamson prior to the period of collaboration with Hill, but these facts do not get us any nearer to a solution.

In cinematography we are familiar with the team-work of the director and cameraman, such as that of Eisenstein and Tisse, and it does not take much knowledge of film art to understand how essential the one is to the other and vice versa. But in still photography, especially in portraiture, such teamwork is not common; most of the great photographers have been individual workers. It has to be assumed that the dispensable partner can only be the one who is not behind the camera. Hill exhibited their joint productions at the Royal Scottish Academy as "executed by R. Adamson under the artistic direction of D.O. Hill" and later Hill's joint work with Macglashon was "designed and arranged" by Hill and photographed by Macglashon. Adamson, it should be noted, had made a name for himself as a photographer before he was introduced to Hill. In 1841 his elder brother, Dr John Adamson of St Andrews University, had produced calotypes by the Fox Talbot process and during the same year or early in 1842 he taught Robert Adamson calotyping with a Davidson camera. Some of his work initialled "R.A." and dated 1842 is included in Dr John Adamson's album which is preserved in the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh.

Helmut Gernsheim attributes to Adamson some portrait groups among a collection of calotypes at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery on the grounds that the style is unmistakable. Sir David Brewster wrote in the Edinburgh Review of January 1843: "Several photographs (of Adamson's) have all the force and beauty of the sketches of Rembrandt, and some of them have been pronounced by Mr Talbot himself to be among the best he has seen. Mr Adamson is about to practise the art professionally in our northern metropolis." Gernsheim makes the interesting observation that since this reference to Adamson's professional activity appeared four months before the formation of the Free Church, Adamson may very probably have opened his studio at Rock House, Calton Stairs, Edinburgh, before the event that led to Hill taking up photography.

If Adamson had been practising for two years before he worked with Hill it seems unlikely that he would immediately have been dominated aesthetically by Hill - at least not to the extent of greatly influencing the essentially photographic qualities or the composition, for it is the arrangement of the chiaroscuro, the Rembrandtesque quality, that most characterises their photography, more than the posing. Hill could not possibly, at first, see these photographic effects, and his direction may rather be looked for in the poses and the details included. It is also unlikely that after the pattern of collaboration had been fixed during the period of taking the first portraits of the Free Churchmen, that it could be easily broken when the two went out on photographic excursions to such places as Greyfriars Churchyard, Roslyn Chapel, and Newhaven. So often on these trips the motif is the human group set against a deliberately chosen background the one with the other so integrated as to create spatial relationships and tensions within the highly organised picture space. Such Adamson and Hill photographs as the group showing the Rev. James Fairbairn with Newhaven fishwives; the combined portraits of the Rev. George Gilfillan and Dr. Samuel Brown, and the portrait of Lady Mary Ruthven (in which her face is not shown) lend themselves to analysis much in the same way as do the groups and portraits of Paul Cezanne of 50 years later - also a genius before his time.

It has quite naturally followed from Hill's self description as artistic director, designer and arranger, that it should be supposed it was the organisation of the composition that was his contribution. However, we know that their distinguished clients, such as the Marquis of Northampton, P.R.S., Lady Eastlake, Christopher North, and William Etty, R.A., came to Adamson's Rock House Studio. A photographer's studio is an extension of his camera. We might also look for similar use of figures in landscape linking the photographs with Hill's previous paintings, but the surviving examples show no marked parallels. Hill, of course, was a wellknown artist; Adamson was almost unknown as well as being some twenty years the younger, and we can be certain that it was Hill who was responsible for the distinguished clientele, which included royalty. There can also be no question but that Hill's collaboration with Adamson was mutual, that the two were stimulated by photography to achieve a remarkable accord in their creative effort.

When Hill dies (17 May 1870) no photographic journal mentioned his death and, like the scrap album, he was not rescued from near oblivion until after many years. In the 1890's J. Craig Annan reproduced many of

Adamson and Hill's calotypes. In 1929 Dr. Heinrich Schwarz took 180 works by Adamson and Hill and put on an exhibition in Vienna which established Hill's reputation on the Continent, but not Adamsons because Schwarz only regarded him as a technical assistant.

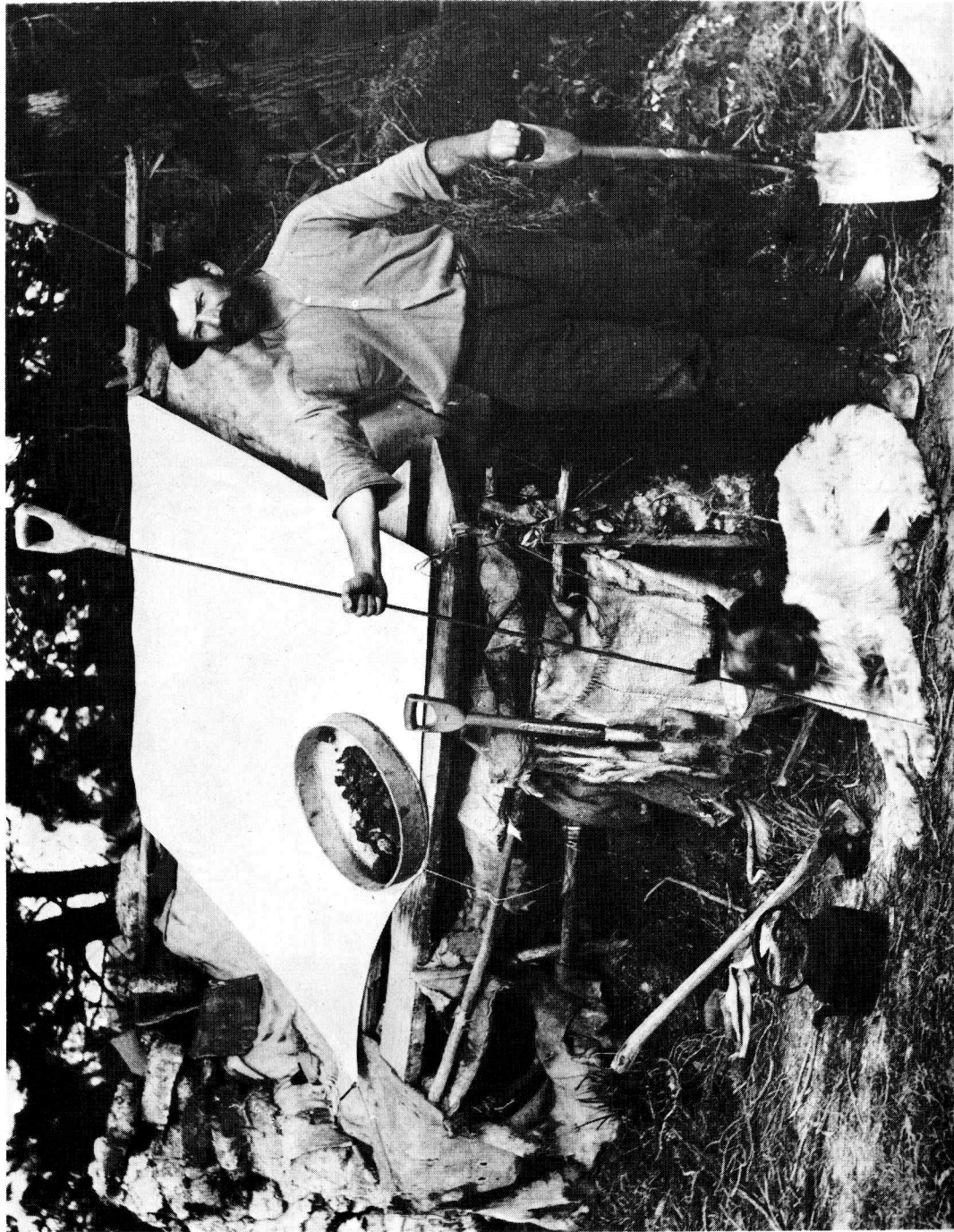
Adamson and Hill have been an inspiration to many photographers. It is possible to make close comparisons between the aesthetic quality of their work and that of Edward Steichen. Paul Strand has the same qualities and his wellknown photograph of the fence can be paralleled with a photograph of a fence taken by Adamson and Hill. That within so short a while of the advent of photography these photographers should have wondered at the photographic possibilities of a simple fence, a subject that would not have moved a romantic landscape painter, is sufficient evidence that the Adamson and Hill team saw with the eyes of photographers and is further justification for the high regard in which they are held. Wonder is the beginning of all photography.

Hardwicke Knight, F.I.M.P.,
Dunedin, August 1970.

Most of the major histories of photography give Adamson and Hill the prominence they deserve. This year, however, something new is available. The English magazine Creative Camera has published in its August 1970 issue, now available in New Zealand, eight of Hill and Adamson's photographs. They're being published to coincide with a major exhibition at present touring Britain to mark the centenary of the death of David Octavius Hill. Creative Camera is making them available as a set at 13 shillings for the eight reproductions measuring 5½in by 8in, which we are told have been printed in sepia and follow the style and quality of the original calotypes. They're obtainable from Creative Camera, Coo Press Limited, 19 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2PT, England.

Opposite Page : Adamson and Hill, fishwife of Newhaven near Edinburgh
C.1845





Towards a Photo-historical Society

The man in the photograph on the opposite page is a gumdigger, one of the men who in the late 19th and early 20th centuries probed and dug through the land once covered with vast kauri forests in search of the lumps of resin then highly valued for varnish manufacture. The gumdiggers, many of whom came from what is now part of Yugoslavia, are a major part of the social history of Northland, and they also worked in other parts of the northern half of the North Island. But this photograph was found in Dunedin; it's one of a collection of old photographs being obtained from that centre by Wellington collector Bill Main. To most of us, Northland would have been the place to look for a photograph of a gumdigger.

This points up the need for a degree of coordination amongst the growing number of people and organisations who are collecting old photographs or preserving the photographic records of the history of their districts. Most collections of early photographs are broadly classified by the district they cover, or under the name of the photographer; with the latter the collections of photographs of a few (far too few) early photographers have been preserved in whole or in part. Burton Brothers of Dunedin, Dr Barker of Christchurch and Tyree of Nelson are perhaps the best-known of these. But there has been comparatively little effort so far to list the country's resources of historic photographs by subject. The Turnbull Library has a number of catalogue classifications by subject, but not even the Turnbull would claim they have, or would have the space to accommodate, a fully comprehensive collection of photographs under all possible subject headings.

As New Zealand becomes more aware of its past, more and more histories academic and popular, are being written. Yet how often are the same old photographs used to illustrate one book or article after another? In fact some writers find great difficulty in obtaining suitable photographs for illustration; for instance Christchurch writer Elsie Locke had trouble finding photographs to illustrate a book she completed recently on the depression of the 1930's.

And various societies are springing up to preserve various relics of the past. The vintage car clubs have been motoring along for years, but now the Railway Societies are chuffing away enthusiastically and an aviation historical society recently took off at Blenheim. I would be my 3A Autographic Kodak Special that many of the photographic collections around the country contain photographs which would be of great interest to these organisations if they knew about them.

The first step towards listing major collections of old photographs has been taken by the Art Galleries and Museums Association with its agreement to establish a National Register of Photographic Archives. Compilation of this is being undertaken by John Turner at the Dominion Museum, but there's a limit to what one man can do. Here a national photo-historical society could be of great value. Not only could it keep the register up-to-date with what collections are being preserved, but also it could progressively draw up lists of subjects illustrated in the various regional collections and in collections of individual photographers' work.

The leading advocate of such a society is Mr Bernard Teague, of Mahia Avenue, Wairoa. Mr Teague has been doing a great deal to preserve the photographic history of his district, and he is at present working on proposals for a society to link the people in various other regions who are doing likewise. It's hoped to publish his proposals in a future issue of the newsletter. Anyone else who is keen on this idea may wish to write to Mr Teague, although he is a very busy man at present so don't push him too insistently. Alternatively, correspondence on the subject would be welcomed by this newsletter.

ANS WESTRA — Concerned Photographer

Ans Westra became New Zealand's best-known photographer in 1965 when her book "Washday at the Pa" was removed from Education Department booklists after the Maori Women's Welfare League and other pressure groups attacked it as giving an unfair and unbalanced view of the Maori people. To some, the book gave a marvellous insight into the warmth, closeness and happiness of a Maori family in an East Coast rural Community. But others felt that the run-down old house gave the impression that the Maoris were a slum people living in a rural ghetto. No matter that the book was conceived as part of a series showing all aspects of Maori life in the 1960's; no matter that it did express Ans Westra's perception of the warmth, happiness and closeness which only now is the pakeha community beginning to realise is something it can learn from the Maori family and community; the Education Department, which commissioned the book, bowed before the pressure and Ans had to cart hundreds of copies of the book away from the Department's book stores.

But her name as a photographer was made, and New Zealand was ready to receive the book "Maori" when it was published in 1967 by A.H. & A.W.Reed, with Ans Westra's photographs supported by a text written by Professor J.M. Ritchie of Waikato University, who has spent many years studying the Maori Community.

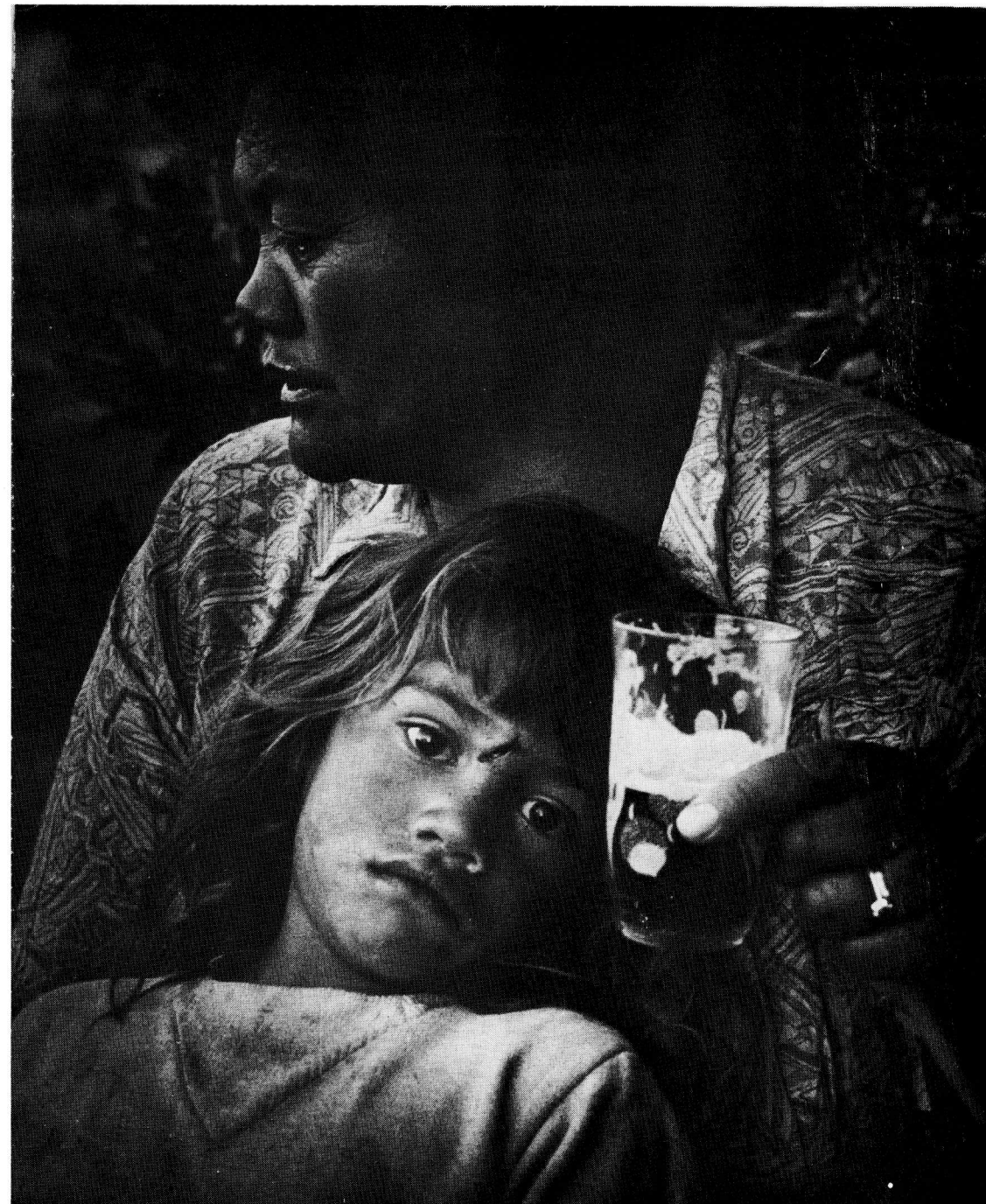
Maori was the culmination of many years of photography the origin of which went back many years to even before Ans arrived in New Zealand in 1957. About a year before her family emigrated from Holland, Ans, then a teenager moderately interested in photography, saw The Family of Man. Not the book, but the original exhibition prepared by Edward Steichen for New York's Museum of Modern Art and then on a world tour. Seeing this exhibition was the great watershed in Ans's life. From it sprang immediately her determination to be a photographer, a photographer committed to life and people. A year's saving every available penny, including busfares, and Ans had her first good camera, a Rollei. Then the family emigrated to New Zealand, and Ans discovered the Maori people, whose warmth and friendliness had never before been captured by a photographer.

Over the next few years Ans worked at innumerable jobs to support herself while she took photographs, till eventually she was able to work full time in photography, taking thousands of photographs on the way towards Maori, but with many of her photographs being published elsewhere: for instance, in Washday at the Pa.

After the publication of Maori Ans returned to Holland to try her luck and skill there, but after three years she returned to New Zealand late last year to continue as one of New Zealand's few successful free-lance photographers. Ironically, she's doing a lot of work now for Education Department publications, some of it photographs of objects for textbook illustration. But she's still committed as a photographer to the depiction of life and people.

The 35mm camera is usually cited as the proper tool for the "slice of life" photographer, but most of Ans's work in this field has been done with the twin lens reflex, her second Rollei which she got seven or eight years ago and which is still going strong in spite of thousands of photographs and the impact of a policeman's fist at a political demonstration earlier this year. And Ans Westra is a photographer very conscious of the importance of print quality. When we were discussing photographs for the newsletter, she pointed to one which looked pretty good to me and said: "you might like to use that one, but I'd have to make a better print; that one's not very good."

B.W.



Up the Wanganui River, 1960



At the Wellington Trade Fair, 1970



Students Arts Festival Display, Wellington 1970



Rotorua, 1964



Aden, 1966

REVIEW PAGES

Two Exhibitions

FACTS, FIGURES & FACES. Photographs by Mac Miller, at the Waikato Art Gallery, Hamilton, July 18-August 1. Reviewed by John Turner.

Mac Miller is a strong minded individual who only recently gave up the easy glory of the camera club "salon" syndrome to strike out on his own. This, his first one-man exhibition, showed work done over the last few years. His selection of 70 works made the most exciting show I've seen in several years, but only 20 of the photographs worked for me.

The best were intense and beautiful images; Miller's wife Babs in labour, a close-up portrait of a young couple, a statuesque pregnant woman in a shower. Others like the Coke bottle with its jaunty straw, a close-up of a Chinese boy, the elephant's silhouette behind a flimsy screen, and several other zoo pictures made fine humourful images. Miller's sophisticated zoo humour is not unlike that of American photographer Gary Winogrand whose book THE ANIMALS was recently published by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Surprisingly, Miller is not acquainted with Winogrand's zoo photographs.

Other fine images are worth mentioning: a "bullet riddled" Maori chief portrait, the wall where the dartboard was, and some handsome nude torsos in deserted houses.

In an introductory wall panel another Hamilton photographer, Roy Long, summed up Miller's work: "To describe Mac's kind of photography, the first word which comes to mind is 'searching'". Miller is involved with his subjects to various degrees, and it shows. But he is using photography to find out who he is and what life is all about, which is the best reason for using a camera that I know of.

On the debit side I can't quite work out why the show as a whole impressed me so much. From the way it was hung, it was obviously a first show. Most of the prints were about six by eight inches, mounted three in a row on large strips of black card. Surprisingly, that technique worked well, giving each image a chance to be seen. To break the monotony, I guess, a few were blown up to 20 by 24 inches. Unfortunately, only one of them in terms of image and scale deserved such prominence: a reclining nude which needed to be about three times as big to give the intended effect of a body-landscape, but it wasn't quite strong enough to do that with.

The prints were pathetically mounted: quite a few of them had pulled dangerously away from the black mount, and a few prints deserved more careful spotting. Miller's prints are good - impressive rather than expressive - they look like they were made on an unusually high-quality sausage machine. In short, few of them thoroughly conveyed the feeling of a subject. For instance, a picture of a dog having a fit in the middle of a street at high noon was printed hard and sharp, which killed the light-handed and delightful "mad dogs and Englishmen" feeling of the not-so-sharp image. But then, most New Zealand photographers haven't a clue what expressive print-making is. We desperately need to see more original prints by such greats as Cartier-Bresson, Gene Smith, Dave Heath, Bill Brandt, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange and Ansel Adams,

Now a reviewers' complaint: None of the photographs were numbered, dated or captioned in any form, so one couldn't tell when or where they were made, whether Miller is improving or backpedalling. My guess is that Miller is on a tough uphill climb.

Student Photography at the Universities Art Festival. Victoria University of Wellington, August 17-22 Reviewed by Bruce Weatherall.

The policy of the organisers of this exhibition was apparently to hang every photograph submitted from the participating Universities and the Wellington Polytechnic School of Design. Unfortunately this meant that the few good photographs amongst the 150-odd on display were swamped in a sea of mediocrity. One can see the organisers' reasoning; the Universities' Arts Festival is not organised on a competitive basis, and such a basis would not be justified for such a festival. Perhaps the exhibition would have been improved if the contributing students' associations had exercised some control over what was submitted. For instance, one Auckland photographer presented more than a dozen photographs of a broken doll in various situations, mainly in a cemetery. One or two of these might have added a bit of spice to the show, but the number shown destroyed whatever symbolism the subject might have had. Quite frankly, I've a sneaking suspicion the photographer decided that a broken doll in a cemetery is very symbolic of something, so lets photograph it lots of times and see what happens. Unfortunately, not much happened in this case.

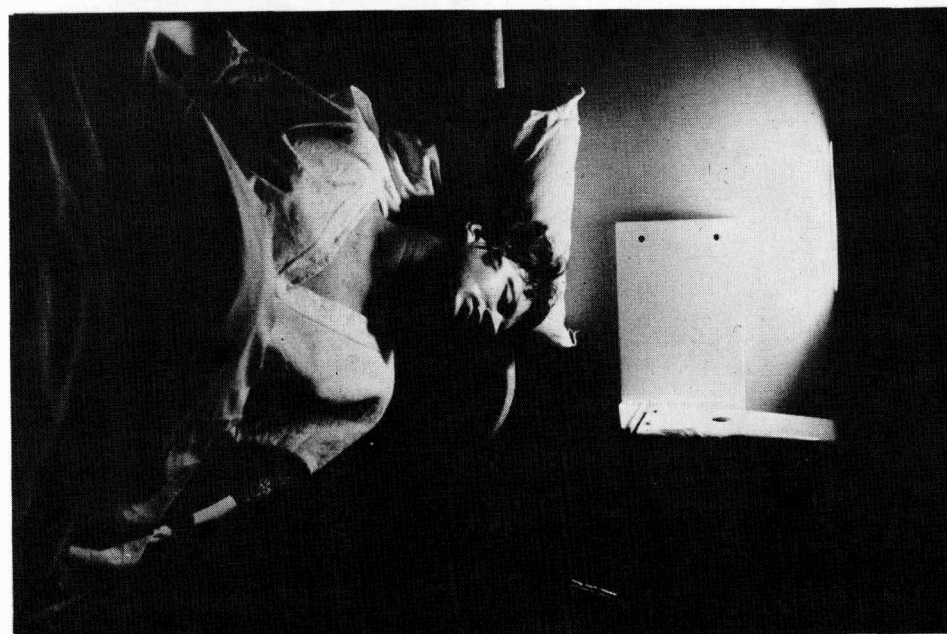
The "Easy Rider" influence was seen in a number of motorcycle pictures, one or two of them in grainy, high-key prints being quite effective. Similarly, there were one or two worthwhile photographs of old houses or details thereof, pointing up the visual interest of ordinary things isolated and seen clearly in a good photograph. A fair number of portraits were shown but these were mainly pictures of heads rather than photographs of people.

In a way the show was more noteworthy for photographs not seen. Students and protest go hand-in-hand these days, and in America anyway photography has been a major means of expressing social concern. Yet at this exhibition there were very few photographs of protest marches, demonstrations or aspects of society about which students have strong feelings.

In fact this sums up the most disappointing aspect of the exhibition. Given that the organisers should have accepted all photographs offering, in spite of the danger of a dominance of mediocrity; given that not too much should have been expected anyway, because the general standard of photography in New Zealand is pretty low; the fact remains that one would have expected an exhibition of photographs by students to have reflected something of the students themselves, the way they see the world, the things that concern them. But it was very seldom that anything like this came through; the overall feeling was that most of the photographs had been made by young people playing about with photography, rather than by intelligent people doing and saying things with photography.

There was one effort to bring political protest into the exhibition. One panel included eight photographs by David Douglas Duncan, Robert Capa and one or two other great names in photography. Unfortunately someone had tried to "improve" on the originals, Capa's famous Spanish Civil War photograph: "Death of a Republican Soldier" was copied, cropped and reprinted in a very high key to destroy most of the impact of the original. The same photographer's "Normandy Landing, 1944" was also cropped to make the soldier's head above the water the dominant feature, instead of a human punctuation of the harsh desolation of the invasion beach. One would have preferred the students to leave these masterpieces of protest alone and to have produced some protest photography of their own.

Opposite Page: Two photographs from Mac Miller's show.





Red deer fawn (Photo. Y. Cave).

Book Review

PHOTOGRAPHING NATURE By G.J.H.Moon. A.H. and A.W.Reed, Wellington, 1970. 144 pp. 45 colour plates, 111 monochrome. \$5.50. Reviewed by Bruce Weatherall

Geoffrey Moon has published two books on bird photography (Focus on New Zealand Birds and Refocus on New Zealand Birds) and this latest volume covers a wider field of nature photography.

It's a very uneven book and judgement on it must depend largely on the reader's particular interests. The colour plates are superb, but the black and white reproduction is very poor. Many of the bird photographs also appeared in Refocus on New Zealand Birds where the reproduction was far better. In the new book tones have darkened down considerably, leaving practically no clean whites and destroying fine tonal differences. There also appears to be a loss of sharpness in many cases, so the overall impression is of muddiness and fuzziness, doubly unfortunate when many of the subjects are dark in tone against dark backgrounds.

It's a great pity the monochrome plates make up more than two thirds of the total, as the fine colour reproduction does full justice to Geoffrey Moon's skill as a colour photographer. He's a master of the use of high-speed electronic flash to "freeze" night-flying birds, and his use of back-lighting makes his beautifully simple leaf photographs much more than mere illustrations.

The text goes well beyond photographic technicalities, which is just as well as his technical sections are no more than adequate and are occasionally misleading or even quite wrong. For instance, extra depth of field (which he calls depth of focus) can not be gained by increasing the camera to subject distance then enlarging the negative to get the image size back to where it was wanted originally: at close-up distances image size is determined solely by lens aperture and final image size. And he's perhaps a bit pessimistic about the quality of high-speed films, though he admits their value in poor light and to stop movement.

But the text really shines when it gets on to the actual business of getting a photograph. Just how do you go about photographing a bird or insect in natural surroundings, looking natural? Geoffrey Moon tells how, covering everything from the construction of a hiding place to ways of focussing on subjects impossible to focus on. The book is worth having for these parts alone, if this is what you're interested in.

A couple of chapters could well have been dropped, preferably in favour of more colour plates. The one on landscapes is mercifully brief, as it adds nothing to the book or to knowledge of the subject. And the chapter on cinematography is well out of date: it mentions super 8 as "recently introduced" and deals mainly with 16mm.

The people who would get most value from this book are those who already have a fair grasp of the technicalities involved in nature photography and now want to get to grips, photographically, with the birds, bees and other aspects of nature. The colour plates are good, but there are not enough of them to justify buying the book for them alone, and poor reproduction has spoiled whatever pictorial merit most of the monochrome pictures may have had.

Opposite: Y.Cave contributed some of the few good monochrome plates in Photographing Nature; this one is from the dust cover, where good printing did prevail.

Book Notes

The best way to improve one's appreciation of photography - and thereby, perhaps, improve one's own photography - is to look at lots of good photographs. In this country, about the only place one can see good photographs is in books; and generally speaking these are not books about photographs as such. They are the often sneered-at "coffee-table" books, "pictorial" books, on a tremendous variety of subjects. Some of these books happen to have been illustrated by some very good photographers; occasionally by very famous ones. And there are a few - a very few - books published for their content of work by great photographers and which are also available in New Zealand.

The rarity of this latter category of book in New Zealand shops is because the booksellers see no demand for such books. It is up to those of us who are interested in fine photography to create the demand. Granted, it'll be a long, slow, and uncertain process; but, if every time we see reviewed in an overseas magazine a book of fine photography, especially if it's by one of photography's greats, we ask a few local bookshops if it's available, then the message will eventually get through.

In the meantime, a few books of first-class photography have appeared in local shops from time to time. Here's a brief run-down on some which have been seen in Wellington over the past few months: keep an eye out for them.

ISRAEL - THE REALITY is a selection of photographs from an exhibition organised by the Fund for Concerned Photography and which opened in the Jewish Museum in New York late last year. The book, edited by Cornell Capa, is widely available in New Zealand bookshops at \$11.95. The exhibition was reviewed in Modern Photography, January 1970 and elsewhere. It includes some tremendously powerful photographs, many by famous names in photography.

LIVING EGYPT by Paul Strand was reviewed in Creative Camera, September 1969, Popular Photography December 1969, and Modern Photography April 1970. Paul Strand is one of the very great photographers of the 20th century: his 1917 photograph "White Fence" is widely credited with marking the start of a whole new movement in the art of photography. The book is one of a series of travel books being published by the Horizon Press.

DOWN THE COLORADO with text by J.W.Powell, photographs by Eliot Porter, Allen & Unwin, price \$16.40. Eliot Porter is possibly the world's best colour photographer of nature and landscapes. Like Ansel Adams, he's associated with the Sierra Club, a California conservationist group dedicated to publicising and preserving the beauty of the American West. It's a cause which couldn't have a better advocate, as the photography in this book demonstrates.

Finally, a mention of a book which contains not a single photograph. PHOTOGRAPHERS ON PHOTOGRAPHY, edited by Nathan Lyons is the first of Prentice-Hall's Foundations of Modern Photography series. It's a collection of writings by 23 great names in photography from the 1890's to the present day: from H.P.Robinson, P.H.Emerson and Alfred Steiglitz to Strand, Steichen, Cartier-Bresson, Weston, Eugene Smith and others. It's an expensive paperback at \$5.70, but if your thoughts about photography need clarifying, or at least shaking up (and they probably do) then the essays in this book are what you need.

B.W.

Learn from these top-ranking photographs of today's world!

GREAT PICTURES OF THE YEAR (Daily Express/Photonews)

Drama, immediacy, humour and contrast - noted Daily Express photographers (plus Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and Bizz Aldrin) demonstrate these are the factors that make good news pix. \$5.35

ISRAEL: THE REALITY

Really superb photographs from a multitude of photographers show Israel's history. Edited by Cornell Capa from an exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York. A great book. \$11.95

AVAILABLE FROM WHITCOMBE & TOMBS, all branches

We hope to have the next issue of the newsletter out before Christmas. If we don't manage it, please forgive us, and remember that a subscription will ensure you get the next issue when it is published.

Bruce Weatherall
29 Wyndrum Avenue
Lower Hutt

Please send me the next six issues of the "Photographic Art & History" newsletter. I enclose \$1 (one dollar) cheque/postal note. (For airmailed overseas subscriptions, \$NZ2 (two dollars). Surface mail, New Zealand rates apply.

(name) _____

(address) _____

Collectors' Notes

Another three camera collectors have emerged from under their focussing cloths to get in touch with us and bring to double figures the number of known collectors in New Zealand.

Alan Webster, of Cambridge in the Waikato has about 40 cameras, the oldest dating from 1890 or thereabouts. He has also collected various odds and ends of photographic equipment including a Sashalite flashbulb in its original box; this bulb was part of the first shipment of flashbulbs ever to reach New Zealand around 1930.

Dick Billington, of 104 Main South Road, Green Island, near Dunedin, started his collection of about 60 old cameras after the Dunedin Photographic Society of which he is Print Secretary declined to take up his suggestion of a camera collection within the club. One of his more unusual finds has been a miniature Japanese single lens reflex plate camera more than 40 years old.

Steve Locker-Lampson, of 36 Akatea Road, Koro Koro, Petone, is a cameraman with Pacific Films Ltd. His first love is of course vintage movie equipment, but this is very rare, so he's extended his collection to cover all sorts of still equipment, ranging down to a Vest Pocket Kodak with a sky-blue bellows!

Anyone else who collects old cameras, equipment, photographs or anything else to do with photography is invited, nay urged, to write and tell us something about their collection. And all collectors are invited to advertise their buy, sell or swaps through this newsletter at the modest classified advertising rate of two cents a word.

Some American collectors' newsletters are being sent to the editor of this newsletter on an exchange basis, and although I'd prefer not to entrust them to the mails anyone visiting Wellington is welcome to get in touch with me to have a look at said publications. Incidentally, they don't deal just with the equipment of the past; they carry some good stories on early photography in general, illustrated by early photographs.

"THE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTORS' NEWSLETTER" is published quarterly by Eaton S. Lothrop Jr., 1416 Brooklyn Ave., New York 11210. It's fairly well-established, and the subscription rate is \$4 for four issues, the first I received contained, amongst other material, an article on early American glamour photographers and a detailed chronology of the Number 4 Bullseye Kodaks.

THE GRAPHIC ANTIQUARIAN is published by Don Blake at 3851 Esquire Place, Indianapolis, Indiana 46226. The first issue was published a few months ago, and is of a very high standard, including an excellent story on the original Kodak of 1888 and the first of a series on the history of the Graflex. Overseas subs are \$6 a year.

The Ohio Camera Collectors' Society publishes its MEMBERS MEMO ten times a year, subscription \$5. It's a more modest effort than the first two publications, but it's packed with information of interest to collectors.

Reliable information on old cameras is tremendously difficult to find, as any collector will agree; these American publications are the first real step toward accumulating such information in a readily available form.

Bruce Weatherall



APOLOGY

John Daley is furious at what we did to this photograph of his in our last issue. We cropped it, destroying most of what he wanted to convey by the photograph. We didn't crop much: just a narrow strip along the top. But this cut off the head of the man on the poster, destroying the feeling of the dominant male on the poster bearing down on the young girl on the bench.

The fault was ours, for letting the cropped photograph be published. And we apologise. Respect for fine photography is one of the things this newsletter is trying to promote and this respect means reproducing photographs as closely to the original as possible. Only the photographer has any right to decide what should or should not be included in his prints; no editor or publisher claiming to speak for fine photography has any such right. So, we apologise, and carry the photograph again, to show how it should be seen.

Bruce Weatherall