"PHÄNOMEN LEICA" REVIEW PART TWO

by Ed SCHWARTZREICH

This will be a review of Helmut Lagler Volumes 3 and 4, from his ongoing series ""Phänomen Leica".

We will start with a translation of what Hr. Lagler has said about himself, as background, with some idea of why he started this huge project.

((There have been thousands of books and articles about the Leica in the past. Hundreds of authors have tried their hand at the topic with more or less success. So why my activity?

Someone like me, who was able to learn as a precision mechanic apprentice at Leitz in Wetzlar during the heyday of the Leica boom from 1958 to 1961, experienced the "factory" and the "Leitzianers" first hand. Most publications on the "Leica phenomenon"

forget the people behind it: the actual workers, the workers' teams, the Leitz Works itself, and the marketing environment.

I was born in Hungary in 1941. After the end of the war, from 1945, I grew up with my parents in a rural area as a displaced person. After school in Marburg/Lahn, I applied to the Leitz company in Wetzlar in 1958 as a precision mechanic apprentice. After a demanding selection process, I shared the training workshop, which was in the new administration building at the time, with around 50 other apprentices, master trainers and training assistants. Leitz's own vocational school was located in a barracks that had been converted for this purpose in today's Avignon facility. I myself lived without a company meal plan on "Schil-





barracks. My dinner was with Wehrmacht dinnerware.

In the first year of my apprenticeship, I learned how to laboriously create a workpiece that was correct to size and angle with a saw and file from a piece of round iron, how to make my own tools, and how to keep the training workshop tidy. In the second and third year of my apprenticeship, now in the training workshop in the Hausertorwerk, I was made familiar with drilling, turning and milling work for production. In individual departments of the main plant, we were prepared for teamwork.

I already had intensive contact with the Leica in the first year of my apprenticeship. All Leitzianers, including the apprentices, could use a so-called "Leih-Kamera" if available. I've made plenty of use of it. On the weekends, I set off to the surrounding villages with a bicycle assembled from various pieces of scrap metal and photographed the activities of the "cottage builders" with a Leica IIIf. You have to know that at that time most of the houses were built with the help of neighbors. I developed the negatives in the darkroom of "FotoFreunde Wetzlar". I collected the 18x24 cm pictures I made into a folder and sold them to the homeowners the following year with great success. During my membership in the Wetzlar Rowing Society and in the dance club, I was also able to act as a "photographer".

In my later professional career as a technician at IBM, my professional activity in the field of real estate, and in connection with software development, I was only involved with photography because of those industries. Founding my own software company in 1984, as a pioneer of IBM PC software, brought me back to photography and image processing. Now digital, of course. It wasn't until 2008, when I was about to retire, that I became aware of Leitz and Leica again when my former Leitz apprentice colleagues invited me to the 50th apprenticeship anniversary. From that moment on I became a Leica collector. I studied and researched Leica literature and brochures. I also became a member of Leica HISTORICA e.V. and the Wetzlar Historical Society.

With Volumes 3 and 4 we arrive at what for most of us would be the main feature, if this was a movie: a cornucopia of history, images, and photos of the early Leica and its SM offspring. In both books this panoply is organized by year. In Volume 3 we start with the prehistory of what became E. Leitz, Wetzlar and go forward, year by year. Volume 3 covers 1848 to 1929, and Volume 4 covers 1930 to 1953. There is so much material, it is difficult to describe in words, and much easier to appreciate leafing through, then concentrating on a particular page or two. For example, in Volume 3 there are over 45 brief and not-so-brief biographies of important personages, mostly of course Leitz-related. There are many dozen images of microscopes, arranged chronologically to go with the text. There are images of workers inside the Leitz works, important images taken with the UR-Leica, diagrams of the expansion of the factory over the years, images of Haus Friedwart, etc., etc.

Volume 3 starts with reprints of three articles. First, we have Dr. Paul Wolff's contribution to the festivities surrounding Ernst Leitz II's 70th birthday, published as 'The Story of a Small Camera' (translation can be found in Viewfinder 47/4 and 48/1), then images of some early photographic apparatuses. Secondly, there is an article on the inter-relationships of the various optical and fine-mechanical companies in Wetzlar and how they developed, and finally a reprint of an article that appeared in the Leitz house journal Objektif in 1968 on the Leitz Company's Development.

After that, we are into the various "years". Towards the end of Volume 3 we have each of the early Leica camera models presented photographically in large, beautiful images, a list of who each of the O-Serie camera was sent to, if known, and a presentation of their lenses and projectors. Then a list of references for the images used in the volume.

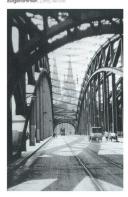
Once again, it is impossible to do this volume justice with words, so I photographed few double-truck pages, randomly chosen, with my Reprovit IIa.

Volume 4 is a continuation of Volume 3 in terms of content organization. It too is jam packed with data and stories about equipment and personnel, but since it covers the Nazi period and WWII there are events and equipment described which pertain to the political and military situations. Not only are there many photographs of new specialized equipment (a great number from Wilhelm Albert's documentation through the years), but by 1945 there are brief but almost daily descriptions of the Allied bombing raids, and a section listing the many Leitz-related war dead. It is a relief when there is the homecoming of so many Leitzianers back to Leitz to work, and many are mentioned. Somewhat lighter moments also are a lengthy description of Ernst Leitz II's 70th birthday, the 1953 Leitz Company Rhine cruise with 5000 attending, the pictures of many Leitz personnel on their 40th or 50th anniversaries with the company, and material on the establishment of Leitz Canada.

Neuentwicklung - Oskar Barnack · (.10.1912) Oktober 1912, Eintrag in Barnacks Werkstattbuch: "Be-trachtungsokular für Kinoaufnahmen." [285]

Neuentwicklung - Oskar Barnack - (.11.1912) November 1912, Eintrag in Barnacks Werkstattbuch: "Projektionsapparat für Panoramafilm." [285]

Neuentwicklung - Oskar Barnack · (.12.1912) Dezember 1912, Eintrag in Barnacks Werkstattbuch: "Kompaß für Panoramakamera." [285]



Produkteinführung · Verkauf-Mikro · (01.01.1912) Moderner Fuß und klassisches Oberteil kennzeichr das Polarisations-Mikroskop I ab 1912. [31] BBS 5415



Produkteinführung · Verkauf-Mikro · (01.01.1912) Hier ist das Binokulare Corneal-Mikroskop mit ver barer Kopf- und Kinnstütze sowie Beleuchtungsein tung zu sehen. [31] filid 1430



das monokulare Corneal-Mikroskop mit Bildaufrichtung, welches an einem Kreuzstativ befestigt war. [31] Bild 1431



PHÄNOMEN LEICA - Vorgeschichte und Enstproduktion



PHÄNOMEN LEICA - Ära Ernst Leitz I - Ernst Leitz II

Familie · Umfeld Der Juniorchef Ernst Leitz II mit seinen Kindern Ernst, Ludwig und Elsie. Die Aufnahme entstand 1912. [9] mad 2007

Produkteinführung · Verkauf-Mikro · (01.01.1912)
Die optische Ausrüstung des einfachen Binokularen
Corneal-Mikroskops bildete der Doppettubus des Steroromikroskops nach Greenough sowie ein Kreuzstativ,

Familie · U
Der Junior



Bildung

Schule · Wilhelm Albert · (..1912) Abschlusszeugnis von Mitarbeiter Wilhelm Albert Volksschule 1912. [64] Bad 2402

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Promotion · Dr. Paul Wolff · (.1912)
Paul Wolff enwirbt den Doktorhut und betätigte sich als
Arzt. [2118]

Fazit

Produktion Im Jahr 1912 werden 11.600 Mikroskope gefertigt [2179]

Ausbildung · Wilhelm Albert · Fremdausbildung

्राञ्चः) 1912 beginnt Wilhelm Albert seine Ausbildung zum Fein-mechaniker. [64]

HITCHEA D LEITZIANER PHÂNOMEN LEICA - Vorgeschichte und Erstproduktio

1912

PHÄNOMEN LEICA - Ära Ernst Leitz I - Ernst Leitz II

1913

250

Gebäude - Techn. Betriebsanlagen · (.1913)
Ebenso wie andere Werksanlagen wird das Maschinenhaus weiter ausgehaut [181] nie zwei.
Hölzernes Filmmagazin, konstruiert von Barnack. [69]



Beförderung · Heinrich Bommersheim · Fernoptik-Abteilung · (.1913) Heinrich Bommersheim wird Werkmeister der Fernohr-abteilung und hat sich in den zweil Weltkriegen als Leiter der Justienbätkung Fernorbe in der Fertigung von Pris-mengläsern verdient gemacht. [2179]

Entwicklung

Neuentwicklung - Mikro-Konstruktion - (.1913) Im Jahr 1913 wird ein Immersionsobjektiv A 1,48 mit Zu-satzkondensor zur Konoskopie an Kristallen entwickelt.

Neuentwicklung · Dr. Max Berek · Wissenschaftliche Abteilung · (.1913) Im Jahr 1913 wird ein Kalkspar-Drehkompensator nach Berek entwickelt. [2179]

Neuentwicklung · Ernst Leitz III · Schule · (..1913) Schon als Schüler verfolgt Ernst Leitz III die Entwicklung der Leica, deren ersten funktionsfähigen Prototyp Oskar Barnack 1913 konstruiert. [2179]



Neuentwicklung · Oskar Barnack · (.1913) Oskar Barnack entwickeit die Ur-Leica mit einfachem Schlitzverschluss. [2179] видэмэ



Neuentwicklung - Dr. Max Berek - Wissenschaftliche Abteilung - ("1913) Im Jahr 1913 wird eine neue Serie von Polarisationemik-Im Jahr 1913 wird eine neue Serie von Polarisationsmik-roskopen nach Berek, Stative Typ BM, CM und KM ent-wickeit. [2179]

Neuentwicklung · Ernst Leitz II · Mikro-Konstruktion Im Jahr 1913 wird das weltweit erste voll funktionsfähige Binokularmikroskop nach Ernst Leitz II entwickelt. [2179]

Neuentwicklung - Carl Metz - Wissenschaftliche Ab-teilung - Binokular-Mikroskop (,1013) Im Jahre 1913 erscheint das erste Binokularmikroskop aus dem Hause Leitz Die Aufgabe von Carl Metz ist es, die erzodrafichen Voraussetzungen für die Produktion des Mikroskops zu schaffen (,[2176])

Neuentwicklung - Dr. Max Berek - Mikro-Recherbürd - (-1913)

Dr. Max Berek entwicket den Drehkondensor sowie den Zweibendern-Heldickfondensor, die in den Polarisationermikroskopen BM, CM und KM zur Wirkung kommen. [53]

Neuentwicklung - (.1913)
Auf Drängen der entstehenden bayerischen Filmindustrie hatte auch die Münchner Firma Perutz 1913 die Produktion des 35 mm Knroffins aufgenommen. Auf dessen Grundlege entwickstell deise Firma beld danch den sehr kontrastreich arbeitenden "Filiegerfilm" für Luttbildurfahrenn (.2177)

Neuentwicklung - Oskar Barnack (01.01.1913)
Da Emil Mechau für seinen Projektor während der Entwicklungshatee Filmer brauchte, orhervöcklungshatee Filmer brauchte, orhervöckler über ansack 1913 für interne Zwecke eine Krinausfnahmekamena (Film-Kamera), de im November 1913 erste gelungene Aufnahmen bringt. [2179]

entwicklung · Ernst Leitz II · Geschäftsführung · .01.1913)

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Neuentwicklung · Oskar Barnack · (.06.1913) Barnacks Werkstattbuch Juni 1913: "Photoka

PHÄNOMEN LEICA - Ära Ernst Leitz I - Ernst Leitz II

1913

Neuentwicklung - Oskar Barnack - (10.1913) Barnacks Werkstattbuch Okt. 1913: "Kopien rungsapparatur für Panoramafilm Eig C." [285]

Neuentwicklung - Oskar Barnack - (11.1913) Barnacks Werkstattbuch Nov. 1913: "Die erster men mit Aufnahmekino gut ausgefallen. Wieders in Arbeit. EigC." [285]

Neuentwicklung · Oskar Barnack · (12.1913) Im Dezember 1913, einen Monat nachdem Barnack sei-ne Kinckamera erfolgreich ausprobiert hat, notiert Bar-nack "Mikrokinoeinrichtung fertig für Aufnahmen". [285]

Krieg

Krieg · Emil Mechau · Fernoptik-Konstruktion · (08.1913)
Bereits 1913 muss Emil Mechau neben seiner Haupttätigkeit ein Unterstands-Fernrohr-Periskop für militärische Zweoke konstruieren, wovon 150 Exemplare nach Österreich verkauft werden. [67] sesszert



ASIS DEITZIANER PHÁNONEN LEICA - Vorgeschichte und Erstproduktion

PHÄNOMEN LEICA - Vorgeschichte und Erstproduktion DIETZIANER

The SM cameras themselves are described in depth, including the various military models, as one would expect. The photographs of them here are quite good.

I will not be displaying typical pages from Volume 4, as they look similar to those in Volume 3 pictorially.

Some physical attributes of Lagler's series should be mentioned. Each book is A4 size, has around 400 pages, give or take, and each weighs slightly over 4 pounds. The books do not have a dust jacket, but the covers feel quite durable and easy to clean. Since the intent is to provide a usable, hardy, multi-volume encyclopedia, this set-up seems ideal for such use.

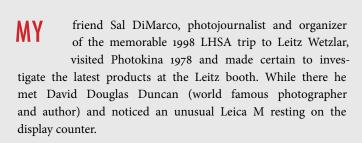
What more can one say about Lagler's ambitious, clearly arduous, but ultimately dazzling efforts. These books, with more to come, are a luxury for the Leica scholar it is true, yet really they represent a personal message from Helmut Lagler to the others

in the world who love and are fascinated by the history of one of the few truly iconic inventions of the last 100 years. Those in the audience for these books are likely fascinated too by the many persons whose input was needed for development and production, and moved by the overall humanistic and human spirit of the Leitz family and their company. Helmut Lagler himself falls into this august grouping, both by his personal history with Leitz, but also by the labor of love which he has expended on these books, sharing his knowledge and his huge database of material with the world.

The books are available from the Museum Store at Leitz Park, and also from H. Lindemanns Foto-Buchhandlung in Stuttgart, and online at www.lindemanns.de. Price is around \$100 per volume.

AT THE LEITZ STAND PHOTOKINA 1978

by JIM LAGER



Sal had promised me he would be on alert for anything Leica. He knew I was actively gathering research data. The Leica on the



counter was engraved M₃D-4. Leitz Wetzlar had custom built four special M₃ Leicas for Duncan in 1955 all engraved M₃D followed by the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4. Sal asked may I photograph the camera? Duncan said yes. Sal gave me the negatives after his trip. Leica M₃D-4 is shown in my 1979 and 1993 books. Have I ever personally seen and handled a Duncan M₃D? No. Through Sal's efforts I came close.