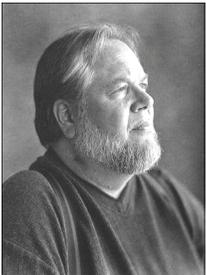


# snap shots

Volume 16 Number 3

November 2010

## Cased Images in 19th Century Photography November 7, 2010—Americal Center, Wakefield, MA



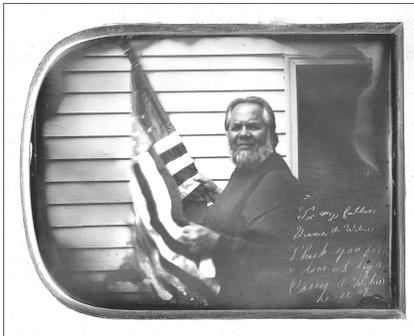
Dennis Waters

Dennis Waters, a New England image collector and dealer for over 25 years, will discuss the identification, preservation, and appreciation of daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and tintypes at the November meeting. **PHSNE members are invited to bring up to five of their favorite cased images for discussion.**

A professional photographer for 22 years, Dennis retired in 1996 to concentrate on his website, *finedags.com*, a premier source of information about daguerreotypes and other 19th century photographs, and a must-visit site for serious collectors. In his buying, selling, and collecting of photographic images, Dennis has concentrated on the history, beauty, and mysteries of daguerreotypes. Their importance as objects of art, recorders of events, and experimental wonders in the mid-19th century can not be overstated or ever fully understood today.

The daguerreotype's place in photo history has languished for many years and one of Waters' goals is to educate the public and promote the significance of these incredible "silver sunbeams."

When Waters began collecting in the summer of 1985 he was already "hooked". As he began seriously acquiring a collection he realized that the vast majority of the images he saw in the first couple years were almost universally unappreciated by antique dealers. Even the few photo dealers he met placed little value in portraits. They spoke of architectural scenes, occupationals, larger plates, maker marked, or oddities.



4x5 inch modern daguerreotype of Dennis Waters made by his son, Casey A. Waters. The brief exposure was done in front of his office, a renovated two-story horse barn adjacent to his home in Exeter NH.

For several years he accumulated every portrait he could find; but they had to meet very rigid criteria. Each plate had to display quality (the maker's technical ability), content (the image had to be interesting) and condition.

At the time, most dealers placed little emphasis on condition. They offered exciting plates that were distressed for the same price as if the piece had no problems, but the market absorbed every object.

In the fall of 1992, Dennis and a partner

published the premier issue of *The Daguerreian Forum*, a milestone in catalogue sales of daguerreotypes. Every piece was clearly reproduced and had an informative description. Waters ended publication of *The Forum* after September, 1999, to concentrate fully on his web site.

The philosophy for pricing daguerreotypes according to Waters is based on the quality, content and condition of the plate; with these additional factors: size of the piece, tinting, maker, subject and historical importance. Since the market for fine daguerreotypes has risen consistently for the past five years, Waters is eager to share his thoughts about buying plates. "If you love the daguerreotype and can afford to buy it, make the purchase!"



The scene was taken circa 1849-50 at Abel G. Quigg's Center House in Chester NH. Mr. Quigg was the postmaster in Chester on Jan. 1, 1851. The stage line serviced Manchester and Haverhill with towns in between. The large box in the center next to the shotgun was filled with "Fresh Ground Coffee (from) New York" I believe that the driver was handing a sheaf of mail and papers to Mr. Quigg himself. ~ Dennis Waters

Show and sale of 19<sup>th</sup>—21<sup>st</sup> Century Photographic Images, Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010, at the Hyatt Regency, Boston. Visit [usphotoshow.com](http://usphotoshow.com) for details.

## Thanks to Photographica Volunteers



John Dockery,  
Show Manager

Who knew it would be 86 degrees on September 25<sup>th</sup> in Boston? The weather was hot, and so were the sales at Photographica 74. The 450 attendees really wanted to spend money at the 66 tables set up in the hall. The announcement that "I just bought four gallons of ice cream and a sheet cake and no one can leave the building until it's gone!" was very well received; an ice cream event on a hot day makes a show more than just a place to buy old cameras and images.

The Dollar Table was almost stripped clean. Thanks to Nora Green, Bruce Midgely, Bud Midgely, Miriam Morales, Ed Shaw, and Pat Zacks who raised about \$650 — one dollar at a time — making a lot of people very happy in the process.



Photographica 74, view of the floor

Thanks also to the PHSNE Board of Directors, dealers, volunteers, and show staff for once again making this one of the best shows of its kind in America. Special thanks to Nora Green, Miriam Morales, Vivian Walworth, and Diane Wren who all volunteered for the first time at Photographica: their help made a huge difference.

Please look in your collections for old show photographs and badges to be displayed (and returned to you). I'm planning special events for Show 75 with the theme *The Way We Were*, as this a major milestone and an amazing achievement for PHSNE. Contact me at [john\\_dockery@hotmail.com](mailto:john_dockery@hotmail.com) or cell # 781-592-2553 if you can help with the show.

~John Dockery

## PHSNE Membership

PHSNE membership is \$15 for students, \$35 for individuals, \$40 for a family, and \$45 for foreign membership. Join/renew online at [phsne.org/paypal](http://phsne.org/paypal), or send a check in U.S. dollars, drawn on a U.S. bank, or dollar denominated international money order.

Members should check the expiration date on the *snap shots* mailing label before sending in dues.

Send payments, changes of address, and other contact information, to Joe Walters Jr, PHSNE Membership Chair, P.O. Box 650189, West Newton, MA 02465 (Call: 617-826-9294; email: [membership@phsne.org](mailto:membership@phsne.org); or use the Web form at [phsne.org/contacts](http://phsne.org/contacts)).

## From the Board:

### Report from the Membership Chair

#### Dues Payment Online

You can now join PHSNE online using a credit card or PayPal account. To join or renew, go to [phsne.org/paypal](http://phsne.org/paypal), select your membership category, and click on the *Pay Now* button. This will take you to a secure page at PayPal to make payment using a credit card or PayPal account.

Be sure to confirm your expiration date on the mailing label of a recent copy of *snap shots* to avoid duplicate payments.

This option makes paying dues convenient, especially for foreign members as PayPal will handle the currency conversion.

#### Membership Directory Update Available

There have been 28 new members, and 134 members have changed contact information since the May 2009 issue of the Membership Directory. You may obtain a listing of the changed directory entries by downloading them from the Members Only section of the Web site. This section requires a password to enter. The current password, which is changed quarterly, is printed in the inside margin of page 2 of *snap shots*.

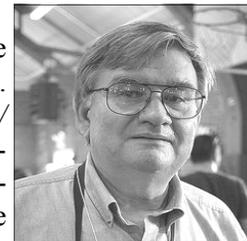
To obtain updates, go to [phsne.org/membersonly](http://phsne.org/membersonly), then enter the password. Click on the pdf file *PHSNE 2009 Membership Directory Update 2010-09-14*, in the format you desire, to download the printable update.

Members should endeavor to keep their directory profiles up-to-date, especially changes in postal and e-mail addresses and phone numbers. This will assure that you receive timely copies of publications and announcements. Also, it saves PHSNE money and the volunteers' time since we are charged by the Post Office for each piece of returned mail.

~ Joe Walters, PHSNE Membership Chair

*Editor's Note:* From time to time *snap shots* will print updates from various PHSNE Board members. The Society functions only due to the tireless efforts of Board members and volunteers at shows, auctions, and other activities.

*snap shots*, edited by Beverly Regelman, is published by the Photographic Historical Society of New England, Inc., P.O. Box 650189, West Newton, MA 02465-0189. Articles and exhibition/book reviews are always welcome. Send to [snapshots@phsne.org](mailto:snapshots@phsne.org). Authors retain copyright to their original articles; however upon written application to the *snap shots* editor, PHSNE may grant non-profit societies with similar aims and interests a one-time right to reproduce a *snap shots* article as long as the author and source are credited and a complimentary copy of the publication is sent to the PHSNE mailbox.



Joe Walters

## Show and Tell: Jack Billington Tells of Rare Find



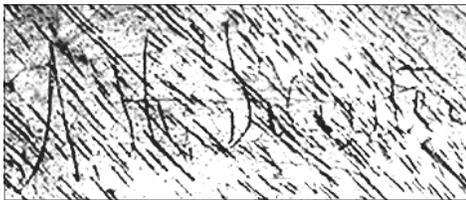
Jack Billington and  
Roberts type dag camera

Back in the 1960's people were going crazy engraving their name or social security number on items of value. Police departments had electric pencils that citizens could borrow. 35 mm cameras and their cases had social security numbers engraved all over them. This immediately destroyed their resale value and they became parts donors. My story concerns a rare Robert's type daguerreotype camera that had its historical value increased by engraving.

At a PHSNE trade show in the 1970's, one of the members acquired this beautiful 1/4 plate camera. He had a table of items for sale and in the center he placed the Roberts for display. Two weeks later he put the camera up for sale. The price was higher than I expected, though it was the fair and going rate for a camera like this. I decided to sell several cameras in my collection at the next photographic show in New York and, with a small bank loan, was able to buy this rare antique camera.

When I picked up the camera the owner said there was faint writing on the underside of the top lid. It was beautiful script and had to be held to the light a certain way to be able to read, "A. H. Silvester." I searched books for years to find a reference to this name and made a point of asking image dealers if they had anything by A. H. Silvester. I came up zero. But I was very happy with the good luck that the daguerreotypist signed my camera.

Then in the 1980's I bought *The American Daguerreotype* by Floyd & Marion Rinhart. On page 409 under Biographies there appears, "Silvester, Albert H. Dag'typist Gallery, Lowell Mass., 1853." This is from a city directory. I have found a couple of references for him but from this same source. It seems he may have been in business for just a year.



Daguerreotypist's signature

As a footnote, I have also been searching eBay for an image by him. But nothing yet.

The lens on the camera was made by Palmer and Longking of New York. It is designed to give a full size head and shoulders image at about five feet. This would be on a three and one quarter by four and one quarter inch plate (Quarter Plate). Most daguerreotypists had their studios in regular house-size rooms so they needed this close focus feature. The camera came with a ground glass and a plate holder.

Even though many Robert's type daguerreotype cameras were made in New England, very few exist today. ~ Story and photos by Jack Billington

**snap shots is looking for more stories about unusual items in your collections and will also feature some Show and Tell treasures shared at PHSNE meetings.**

### Web Tidbit:

## Kodak's 1922 Two Color Footage

A recent online discussion at the PhotoHistory group, [tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/PhotoHistory](http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/PhotoHistory), centered on Kodak's 1922 two-color movie process. The first full length three color feature movie, *Becky Sharp*, in Technicolor, did not appear until 1935. To read a discussion at Kodak and see the 1922 two-color Kodachrome footage from GEH go to [1000words.kodak.com/post/?ID=2982503](http://1000words.kodak.com/post/?ID=2982503).

The two color process does well producing "rosy" Caucasian flesh tones for the models in the footage, but three color systems were superior overall and became the standard. To view *Becky Sharp* and other old films in the public domain go to [archive.org/details/movies](http://archive.org/details/movies). ~ Joe Walters

### Auction Highlights

About \$4500 worth of cameras, images, and other photographic items, was sold at the September 25<sup>th</sup> PHSNE auction.

Dedicated volunteers made this auction possible. Many thanks to Cindy Berry, Jim Chasse, Walt Friesendorf, Neil Gordon, Adrian Levesque, Bruce Midgley, Ron Polito, Beverly Regelman, Henry Weisenberger, and Diane Wren for their help Friday and auction day.

For months prior to the auction, Dick Koolish, Bud Midgley, and Joe Walters helped to prepare, catalog, and cart items. Auctioneer Marty Jones kept things moving swiftly, completing the auction in under one hour.

~ Lew Regelman, Auction Manager

**Project Save Calendar  
Features Dance Photographs**

Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, founded by long-time PHSNE member and past president, Ruth Thomasian, is celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, but it's also 25 years since publishing its first photograph calendar. Historian-preservationist-executive director Ruth Thomasian, is always on a quest to collect and document the social/public history of the worldwide Armenian community.



Courtesy of Elizabeth Keljik,  
St. Paul, Minnesota

“Most of my knowledge of Armenian heritage comes directly from the hundreds of photo donors I’ve visited over these past 35 years,” she’s quick to admit. “Our donors have shared incredible stories that not only document their photographs, but often go beyond what the eye can see. Project SAVE’s mission is to share these stories and impart that knowledge, and the calendar is one way we do that.”

Project SAVE’s 2011 calendar is devoted to dance of all kinds, Armenian and otherwise—ballet, jitterbug, performance, social—showing the diversity of rhythm both in the homeland and Diaspora. Calendars will be ready for holiday giving just before Thanksgiving. To order a calendar, go to [projectsave.org](http://projectsave.org) or call Project SAVE’s office and speak with Suzanne Adams at 617-923-4542.

**PHSNE Meetings**

Meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of each month, September to June, at 1:30 p.m. at the Americal Center, 467 Main St., Wakefield, MA, 01880, preceded by a mini trade fair at 12:30 and an open meeting of the PHSNE board at 11:00 a.m.

**Upcoming meeting:**

**December 5** - Members’ program: Your Favorite Cameras

**Driving directions to Americal Center:**

I-95 to exit 39, North Ave. toward Reading/Wakefield (right turn on North from the south; left turn from the North). Drive approximately 1.5 miles, then turn left at Main St. Destination is on the left: 467 Main St., Wakefield, MA 01880.

Parking available next door at the school, behind the building, and on Main St.

**Public transportation:**

The Wakefield station of the Haverhill rail line is within 1/2 mile of the Center, and a bus line stops in front of the building. Details are available at [mbta.com](http://mbta.com).

**PHSNE Online**

PHSNE’s Web address is [phsne.org](http://phsne.org). George Champine is the Webmaster.

Join the PHSNE Forum online discussion moderated by Joe Walters; sign up and log in at [phsne.org/forum](http://phsne.org/forum). For an archive of back issues of *snap shots* and meeting presentations, visit [phsne.org/archive](http://phsne.org/archive).



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PHSNE  
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Photographic Historical Society of New England  
Next Meeting: November 7, 2010  
Cased Images in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Photography  
Americal Center, Wakefield, MA, 1:30 P.M.  
**ATTENTION!** Part II of the online auction of Eaton  
Lothrop Jr’s collection has started. See more details  
on PHSNE Forum at [tinyurl.com/2w7zwd9](http://tinyurl.com/2w7zwd9).

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