

EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY

ROCHESTER 4, NEW YORK

GENERAL OFFICES
343 STATE STREET

TELEPHONE
LOCUST 2-6000

January 20, 1960

Mr. John Faber
10 Boulevard
Mountain Lakes, New Jersey

Dear John:

Re: Six-20 Super Kodak alias Super Clam Shell.

In claiming a "first" for this camera we should be very careful to say this is the first still picture camera with a built in photo electric cell coupled to the diaphragm. Zeiss rightfully claims that they had the first still picture camera with a built in exposure meter. This is the Contax III announced in 1936 and is the matching needle type meter with which you can determine the correct diaphragm opening or shutter time. The settings were then made manually. Likewise, there was a motion picture camera produced in Austria in the early 1930's with a built in photo cell coupled to the diaphragm.

There are a number of patents covering features of the camera. The basic patents covering the automatic diaphragm setting are the Ritzdorfer patents under which Kodak had licenses. Joseph Mihayli however is responsible for the design and many of the mechanical features are covered by Mihayli patents. Probably the one you would be most interested in would be Design Patent 100,961 Joseph Mihayli. If you are interested in the patents covering special features, such as range finder, double exposure prevention, movable comb construction, lever film wind, etc., I'll be glad to get the list for you.

The camera was announced in July 1938 and discontinued in April 1945. The original list price was \$225. The only accessories were the usual carrying case and a set of marks which fitted over the front of the photocell to adjust the response for films slower than Verichrome.

As to the quantity produced our favorite joke does not quite jibe with N.E.S.D. story: The favorite expression was that we shipped 500 the first year and repaired 600. The actual figures are that we produced and shipped 786.

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Just for your information and not part of the historical record, it is true that these cameras were very complicated and very difficult to keep in repair. Also they were not popular with the trade. In fact they were practically obsolete when they first came out because the speed of the black-and-white films had been increased. The meter could accommodate slower films but not faster. The setting was ideal for Kodacolor Film.

It is my understanding that toward the end we did take some of them back for credit but I don't know how many.

I certainly hope you will find the time to drop into the museum when you are here in March. We are in new quarters on the 7th floor of Building 13 in Camera Works but we are still a Kodak Office department.

Sincerely,



VJMoyes:CAH

Patent Dept. Museum