

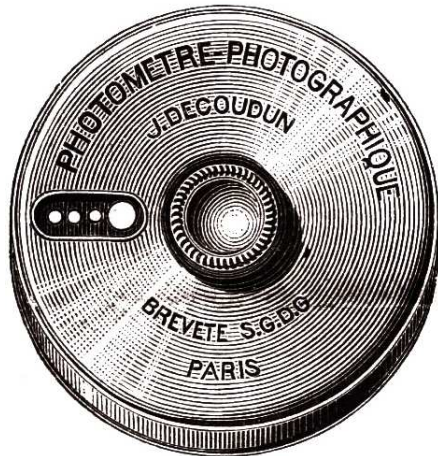
Brocantina offers you this translation of the original instruction sheet from a historically interesting exposure meter, the Decoudun meter, which was originally patented on 1 October 1887. It is the first visual meter to become popular. M. Rob Niederman, a collector of vintage wood and brass photographic apparatus, supplied the original sheet written in French. His website is:

www.antiquewoodcameras.com

Please note that the literal translation to English may not be accurate.

Working Instructions of the Photographic Light Meter from J. Decoudun, 1894.

The subjects to be reproduced first have to be focused using the whole opening of the objective: then you stop down.



In order to measure the exposure time, hold the light meter onto the frosted glass of the camera, wrapping carefully your head with the veil, so that no extraneous light will interfere with the instrument.

Looking at the little window placed on the left side of the photometer from a distance of about 30 centimeters, you can perceive three small holes and a larger one. By turning the button located at the center of the lightmeter, the small points will appear darker and

darker, and there will be a point they will be so obscure you will not be able to see them, this is the moment to stop turning, do not go further; the largest hole will remain illuminated, acting as a guide. It is important for accuracy that the three points can not be counted, but that they are barely discernable and on the verge of disappearing. Then look at the table on the back of the instrument read the exposure time corresponding to the letter that appears in the little round window.

These exposure times match commercial gelatin silver bromide emulsions with normal sensitivity for the following plates:

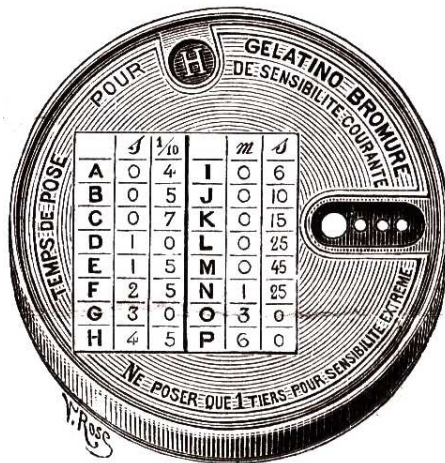
Lumière	Brand	Yellow labels
Graffe et Jouglà	—	As de trèfle (For landscapes)
Ilford	—	Yellow labels
Monckhoven	—	Orange labels
Dorval	—	La Française (Red labels)

Divide the exposure meter values by two when using the following plates:

Guilleminot	Brand	La Parfaite
Graffe et Jouglà	—	As de trèfle, red labels
Ilford	—	White labels
Marion	—	—
Perron	—	—
Dorval		La Française (Blue labels)

And divide by three the following plates:

Balagny	—	Papiers et plaques souples
Lumière	—	Blue labels
Etc.		



For plates with special sensitivities that do not correspond to the exposure meter's table, a simple test will reveal the modification that has to be done to one of the values of the table, others will be proportional to the other numbers of the table.

The exposure meter is not to be randomly placed on the ground glass, the window that illuminates the three points must be placed on the most interesting area of the image.

In a group where a given object is desired, apply the window onto the image of this object.

In a picture of several objects, apply the window onto the object with a medium light intensity; of course black objects, gray objects or white objects need different exposure times. Choose a medium object or the gray wall to measure the light.

Never use the exposure meter on the sky, if you are not interested in sacrificing the landscape in order to obtain clouds.

For the portraits place the instrument onto the image of the face.

For inside pictures, measure the average light on the frosted glass.

The exposure meter's table covers the exposure times for most of the usual needs. But you can get more values by using stops.

It is a known fact that most opticians fix their diaphragms in such a way that the exposure times are doubled from one value to the next one. So with the whole aperture or greatest stop you have to expose 1, with the second stop you have to expose 2, with the third one 4, with the fourth one 8 and with the fifth one 16 times more. Therefore, if in a dark interior the exposure meter indicates a 6 minute exposure time with the open stop, you should multiply your time by 16 using the smallest stop, which gives you 96 minutes.