

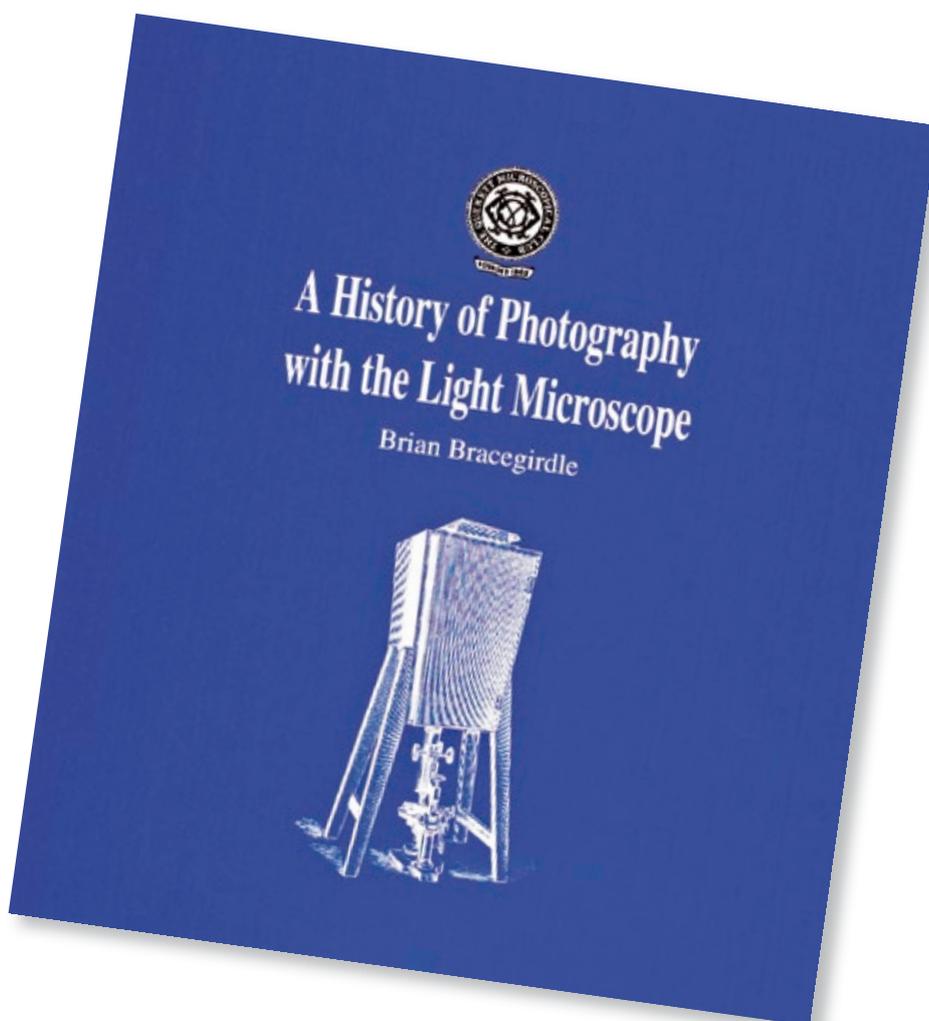
# A History of Photography with the Light Microscope

Book Review from Jeremy Sanderson, Oxford, UK

We are a curious and visual species, and it is natural that recording images produced by the microscope arose with the first development of the instrument. *A History of Photography with the Light Microscope* tells the story of mechanical recording of the image from 1840 in a very complete and detailed fashion.

There are 11 chapters in the book, all with comprehensive notes and references. A concise Introduction (Chapter 1) of four pages gives an overview of image recording with the microscope, and is supplemented with nearly two pages of references and further sources. Chapter 2 follows on means of illumination, and a further one (Chapter 3) on advances of optical components of the microscope. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 through to Chapter 7 narrate the progress and development in photomicrography from 1839 until 1980. These four chapters are extensively illustrated with over 240, largely monochrome, figures (although there are colour ones also) and form the bulk of this book – 137 pages. One of the best colour illustrations is that by Delves showing a photomicrograph from the earliest days of photomicrography produced by the wet-collodion process, and never before published until *A History of Photography with the Light Microscope*. Cost had precluded its earlier publication 160 years before.

Following on from the chapters on development and progress is a stand-alone, yet comprehensive, chapter (No. 8) on the history of the Photomicrographic Society. The next chapter (No. 9) is also a single entity, and is the most complete written to date about microphotography – the production of extremely small images requiring a microscope to view them. Chapter 10 covers the history of photomicrography, the method using just one lens to form an image. This chapter is extensively illustrated with pretty much every piece of equipment produced for serious photomicrography. There is also a table at the end of the chapter comparing macro lenses produced by the major manufacturers.



The last chapter (No. 11) covers developments from 1980 until the present day. This is by no means a dry historical account; the informal style of the first person is used at times throughout the book. These personal accounts, from someone who clearly knows and practices his subject, together with quotations from others and fulsome explanatory notes accompanying the historical references makes this book an interesting and valuable resource.

This book is beautifully produced as a hardcover edition by Hobbs, the printers. It measures 250 mm (10") square, and is 18 mm (¾") thick, with 221 pages, including an index. It is produced on high-quality

paper and is well bound. At £24.50 it is very good value for money indeed and has been published by the Quekett Microscopical Club on a not-for-profit basis, in accordance with its charitable remit. I thoroughly recommend this book as a definitive, comprehensive and readable history of the subject.

## Reference

Bracegirdle, Brian: *A History of Photography with the Light Microscope*  
The Quekett Microscopical Club, Savona Books  
2010, 221 p., £24.50  
ISBN = 978-0-9564591-1-4  
<http://www.savonabooks.free-online.co.uk>