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Earthquake Stereos • 3-D Trilogy

A Mind Altering Viewer?

by Russell Carter

J. W. Cadwell invented, in 1874, a rotary viewer that held 100 stereos that could be viewed consecutively. See *Stereo World* Volume 4, No. 3 & No. 5, 1977.

The first record of J.W. Cadwell in North Reading, Mass., was May 16, 1871. As recorded in The Registry of Deeds, a house (85 Park St.) was sold to Margaret & J.W. Cadwell, Springfield, for \$1,000 and on 10¼ acres. The same property was sold on July 24, 1882 for \$1,000. It appears that Cadwell lived in North Reading for only 11 years.

The Register of Voters for 1887 showed Nelson A. Cadwell, inventor. It must be assumed that this was Cadwell's son as there was no other Cadwell in North Reading. Another assumption is that Cadwell was not a registered voter.

The *Reading Chronicle* was a weekly newspaper published in Reading, Mass., a separate municipality from North Reading. In that newspaper dated April 8, 1876 under the heading Business Notices was the following item:

J.W. Cadwell is the inventor of Cadwell's patent revolving stereoscope, one of the most valuable inventions of the age. There is hardly a family without stereoscopic views, and they are considered by all thinking minds as the very best means known for imparting valuable information. At a comparatively trifling expense every member of the family can, by the aid of a stereoscope, visit every prominent place on the globe. It is a pastime for the children, a pleasure for adults, a study for the philosopher. Through the stereoscope we

get correct ideas of the customs and conditions of the people of foreign lands, behold the wonders of mountain scenery, the rigours of polar winters, become acquainted with the plants and flowers of tropical climes, of the ocean in its fury, of stupendous cataracts, dreary wastes, smiling valleys, of cities and their grandest architectural beauties, with their crowded streets of hurrying, busy humanity. There is indeed no other way by which a general knowledge of the world can be gained so easily and pleasantly as this. The more a child learns of the wonders that exist the more eager that child becomes to know more, and the other studies, that were dreary and irksome before, are comprehended to be only as stepping stones that aid the mind in acquiring something worth living for. The greatest objection to a more universal use of stereoscopic views in the past has been the liability of their becoming soiled and ruined by constant handling. To obviate this difficulty a number of stereoscopes have been invented and patented, holding ninety to two hundred views each, but their cost has been too much for the common people. After months, even years of experimenting, Professor Cadwell has completed a stereoscope that holds one hundred views, each one of which can be seen without handling one of them, and they will keep clear and clean for a lifetime, and appear far nicer than when seen in any other stereoscope known. They are sold at only one-fifth of the price of any other stereoscope ever invented holding as many views, and they can be changed in a moment, so that they can be used for an unlimited number of views. Orders by mail to J.W. Cadwell, North Reading, Mass. or Chas. Polluck, 342 Washington Street, Boston, Mass. will meet with prompt at-



Cadwell Viewer assembled. Tilting the eyepiece permits viewing cards loaded facing both directions, doubling the number of views on the wheel.

tention. Usual discount to the trade.

Note—he called himself "Professor Cadwell." Our inventor had another side to his life completely unrelated to the photographic industry. He was considered a "Mesmerizer & Psychologist."

Reported in the *Woburn Advertiser* (a nearby city newspaper) dated May 12, 1871:

The entertainments given at Lyceum Hall, during the past few evenings by Prof. Cadwell have been of a highly interesting character, and were well patronized by our citizens, who were nightly amused by the wonderful manifestations of Psychological control. It is truly wonderful that one man can have such control over the mind of another, simply by mental force, as to cause him to lose his own memory, forget his own name, and to lose all recollection of the place where he is, and to perform things most supremely ridiculous, which in his sober senses he would no sooner think of doing than drowning himself. This was all done in Lyceum Hall during the Professor's stay. At one time during the Saturday evening's entertainment some four or five of our young men, imagining themselves in a velocipede rink, were riding around the platform on the backs of some chairs. At another time one of their number was drumming on an old table thinking himself at a piano, while an-

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Cadwell Viewer with top removed. Note views loaded facing both directions in holders. Collection of North Reading, MA Library.

