

VERMONT HISTORY

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- ❖ Sermon in Stone. Rev. George S. Brown: Stone Wall Builder, Missionary to Liberia, and African American Methodist Pastor in Antebellum Vermont
Patricia J. Thompson
- ❖ The Lumière North American Company: Seeing Is Believing
Hugo Martínez Cazón

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About the Covers

A New Era in the History of Color Reproduction

In this issue of *Vermont History*, Hugo Martínez Cazón examines the careers of Antoine Lumière and his family of Lyon, France, in advancing the chemistry and technology for manufacturing and printing from color plates for photography at their factories in France and Burlington, Vermont. The “autochrome” process pioneered by Antoine Lumière and perfected by his sons Louis and Auguste in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, revolutionized still photography and the budding motion picture film. The factory they built on the former Fair Grounds in Burlington, which operated from 1902 to 1912 and still stands, supplied photographers throughout North America with plates for color images.

Louis and Auguste also stimulated and facilitated the use of color prints in magazines and other publications. One of the color photographs using the Lumière autochrome plates, “Italian Woman,” by J. H. Garo (front cover), was the first color photograph to appear in print in an American magazine. As the editor of *American Photography* proudly announced in the January 1908 issue,

Notwithstanding that the plates have been in use now for some six months, and have almost monopolized the columns of the photographic press of the world, no photographic journal has as yet shown to its readers a sample of the actual results of the process. This present month, however, inaugurates a new era in the history of color reproduction, and we may hope in the future to see real color photographs more and more used for illustrative purposes (p. 38).

The image was an immediate and overwhelming success. In the February 1908 issue, the editor wrote, that it “received a measure of commendation quite beyond our expectations.” Anticipating a high demand,



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the publisher had printed an extra large edition, all of which had sold out, plus 100 copies of the photograph loose and suitable for framing, which were for sale “at ten cents each, mailed flat.” The editor noted that “By general agreement among photographers and color printers, this is one of the most successful color reproductions ever made in America, and by far the best reproduction from a photograph from life” (p. 90).

MICHAEL SHERMAN
Editor, Vermont History

Front cover: “Italian Woman,” photograph by J. H. Garo, (ca. 1907). Garo Studio, Boston. American Photography 2 (January 1908): Frontispiece.

Back cover: Advertisement offering free samples of the photographic plates produced at Lumière factories in Lyon and Burlington. Camera and Darkroom (New York Society of Amateur Photographers) 8 (1904): 274.



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