

European and North American Television Cameras – No. 2

Brian Summers G8GQS

This is the second in the series and I have chosen one of my favourite cameras, the Pye Mk 3. These cameras were widely used by the independent TV companies in the middle and late 1950s and feature in many press release photos from that time.

A Pye was recently used as a prop in a programme about the 'Sunday Night At The London Palladium'. This was particularly apt because the camera used for the programme as a prop was I believe one of the cameras that televised the original programmes from the London Palladium.

Make: Pye

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Model:	Mk 3
Country of manufacture:	UK
Tube type:	Image Orthicon 3"
Tube quantity:	1
Electronics:	Valve
Lens type:	Pye special with iris gear
Lens Quantity:	4
Lens Mounting:	Pye 2-bolt flange
Camera Cable:	Mk 3
Camera Colour:	Blue (almost mauve) & light blue
Drives required:	MS. MB. LD. FD.
Line standard. O/Ps:	Mono, standard 405 lines

General description:

A clever design in pressed aluminium with fold-down sides and hinge-out chassis. Focus servo controls at top rear on both sides. Fan housing on top and handles; early models had gunsight handles. Taking lens is bottom right seen from rear.

Innovations:

Motor control of turret and servo control of Focus and Iris with remote control option. "f" indicator meter on camera and CCU. A very compact (for the period) camera and CCU/PSU, easy access for servicing. A nice feature was the pre-positioning of the focus servo position when the turret was turned. This was done by each lens having a resistor built into it, which made contact with some contacts on the centre part of the turret as the lens moved to the taking position. This changed the balance of the bridge controlling the focus servo moving the Image Orthicon to the new focus point.

Associated equipment:

CCU, PSU, Master waveform and picture monitors, SPG, remote focus and turret control box.

Dates:

Approx. 1953, well in use by 1955, continuing until early 1960s.

Used by: BBC & ITV with world wide sales. Some were sold in the USA under the branding GPL (General Precision Laboratories).

A good photo is to be found in 'TV Engineering' by Amos & Birkinshaw (Iliffe), page 201.

The TV camera database is now up to 154 cameras listed, but I still need data on obscure cameras. I would be pleased to borrow and photocopy the information and add it to the database. I am particularly looking for French (Thomson), German (Fernseh), and early Pye Photicon cameras (UK).

I hope to make this database available on disk or on paper and attach photographs where possible.

Photo 1. Pye Image Orthicon Camera

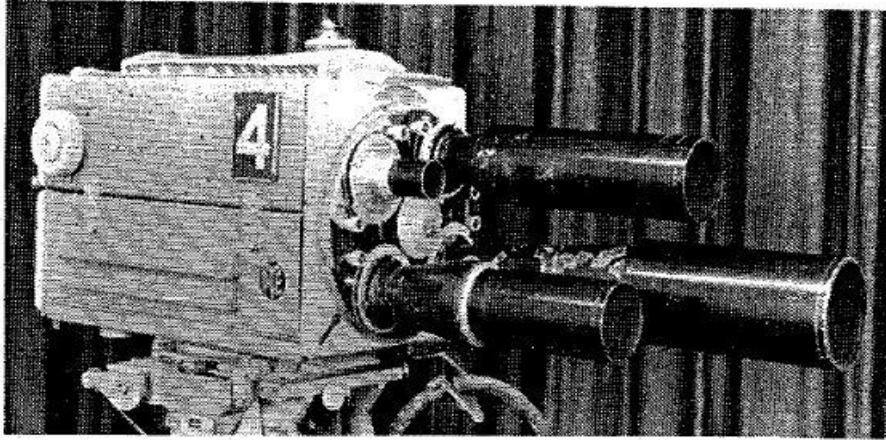


Photo 2. Camera with side covers down and viewfinder & servo amplifier hinged upwards for access.

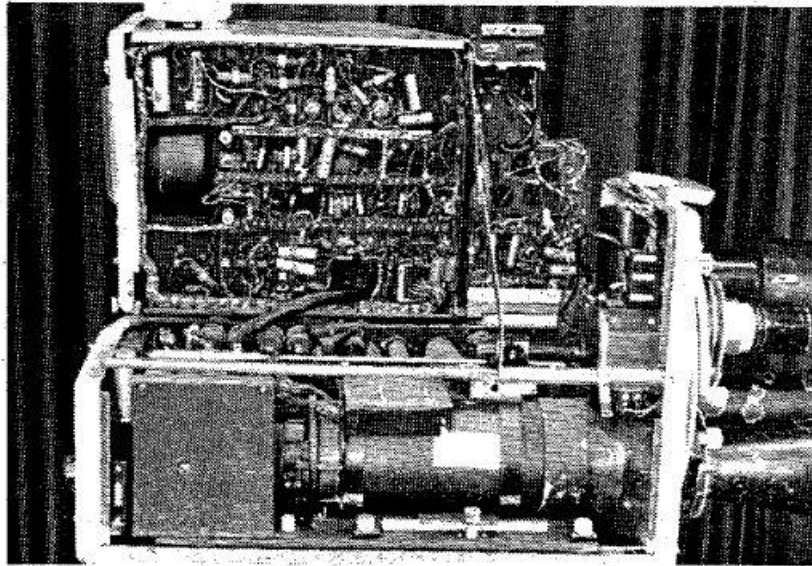
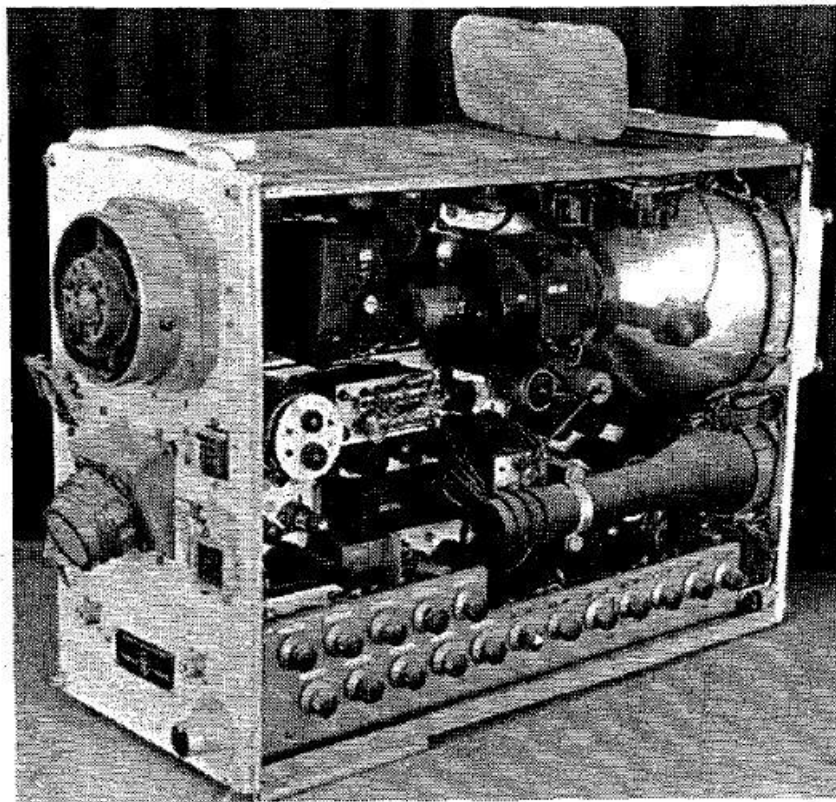


Photo 3. Three-quarters view of the combined CCU and Picture and Waveform monitor. Clearly visible on the rear is the BICC polypole camera cable connector used on both Pye and Marconi cameras.



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