



### **An Odd Little Microscope**

Whenever I acquired a new microscope for my growing collection I looked not necessarily for value or age, but for features that did not yet exist among my instruments. For example, double or triple nosepiece or unusual focusing mechanism.

What attracted my attention to this little microscope was the unusual double objective. The instrument itself is not particularly valuable.

The maker's name is embossed on the back part of the hard-rubber stage:

F. W. Schieck Nachf. Berlin 0.27 Germany

The manufacturer's details are listed in Brian Bracegirdle's *Notes on Modern Microscope Manufacturers*, Quekett Microscopical Club 1996:

*Schiek (sic)\* F.W., 14 Halle'sche Strasse, Berlin, (1830 - c 1870). Friedrich Wilhelm Schieck supplied high-precision instruments and was in partnership with K.P.H. Pistor\*\* between 1830 and 1836. His instruments are described by Harting and his 1870 list is in Frey. His son F.W.H. Schieck (1843 - 1916) continued the firm after his father's death until 1900.*

\*As for the spelling of Schieck's name I would go by the engraving on his instruments and the firm's labels in the boxes. Timo Mappes *Museum Optischer Instrumente* ([www.musoptin.com](http://www.musoptin.com)), shows a label of the firm with the Schieck spelling, but in the text also slips to Schiek. It has to do with the unusual combination of German spelling of a ck versus a k (compare Bismarck, Mark Brandenburg or Deutsch Mark). Billings 2nd Edition 1974 also uses both spellings. Beyer *Handbuch der Mikroskopie* VEB Verlag Technik, Berlin, 1973, uses the correct spelling. By the way, Nachf. = Nachfolger means successor. This means that my microscope was made either by Schieck's son

when it ought to have been engraved F.W. H. Schieck, but most likely by the latter's successor.

\*\*Carl Philipp Heinrich Pistor (1778 - 1847), Berlin, as of 1818 offered simple physical instruments manufactured in his own workshop, as of 1813 also astronomical and geodetic instruments and microscopes of English design. F.W. Schieck supplied Pistor until 1824 when he became his partner: Pistor & Schieck, Pistor being the theoretician and Schieck the mechanical specialist. In 1836 Schieck parts from Pistor and works on his own. His son-in-law Martin continues the firm to build microscopes and scientific instruments. It seems that my particular model was made in the 1930s by the last successor before the company went out of business (Timo Mappes).

So much for the instrument's background. It stands about 23cm high and has a tiltable cast iron base with glossy lacquer. There is a single plane mirror. Incorporated in the stage is a revolving disk with 6 different openings (diaphragms) from 1 - 6mm. The top layer of the stage is made of hard rubber, carries the firm's name and features two stage clips. This layer is also warped upwards in the centre making the specimen to lie properly flat rather difficult. The focusing mechanism is a simple rack and pinion with only one knob and no way to adjust friction. The brass tube takes a standard diameter eyepiece and is of 135mm length. Presently there is a #4 eyepiece, probably not original.

The triple objective has an RMS thread with a locking ring, so that after attaching it, it can be oriented for the swing-out lenses to be conveniently positioned. The individual sections show no engraving as to magnification, so one has to assume that the basic lens has the lowest magnification, with the first swing-in lens the next higher one, and when the last lens is added, the highest magnification.



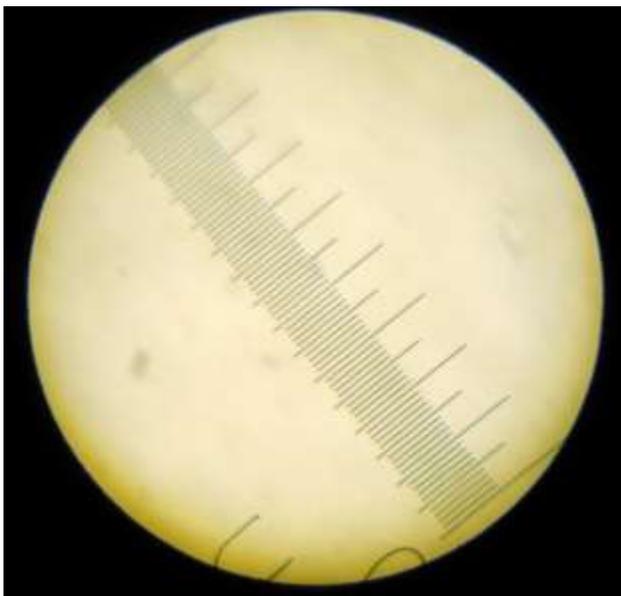
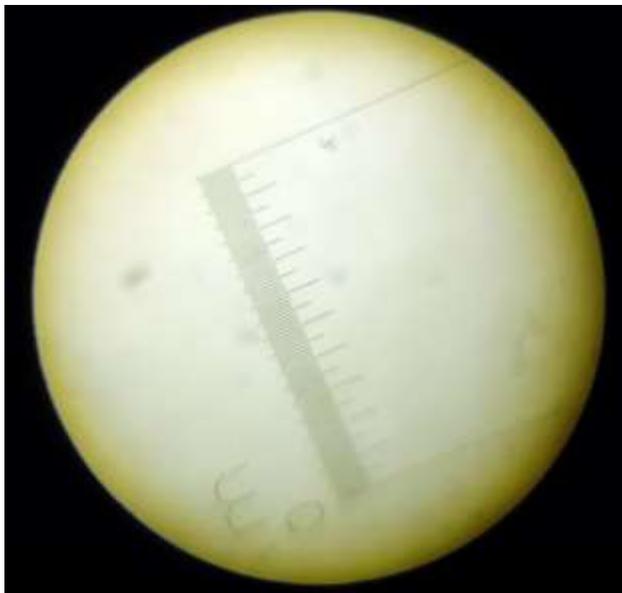
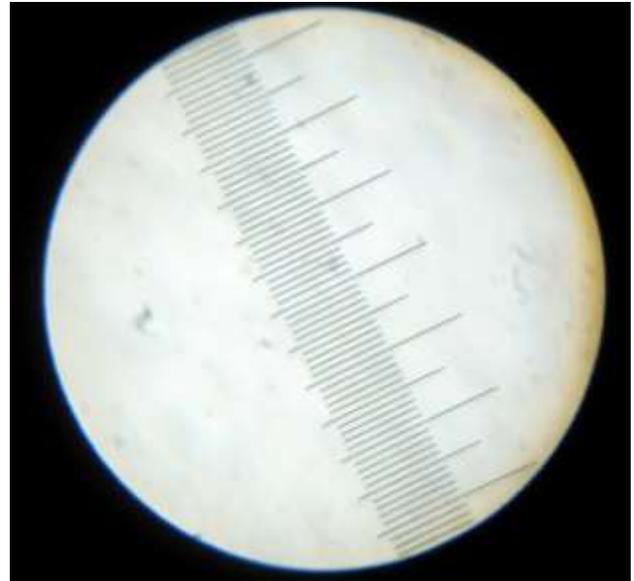
The triple objective



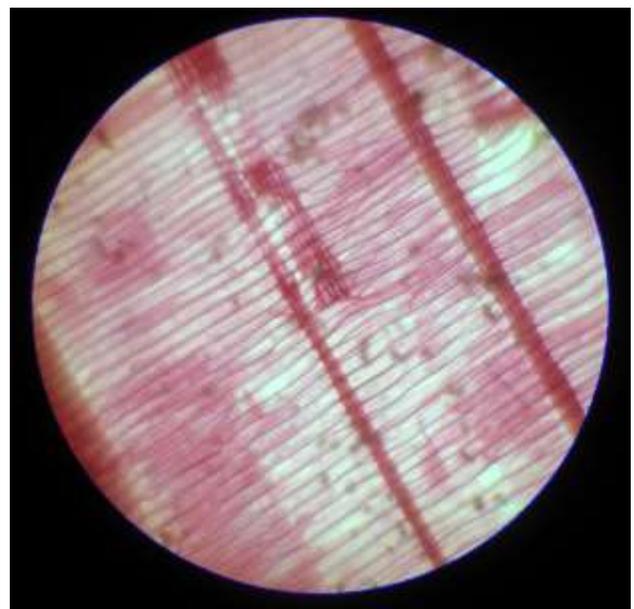
The stage showing the firms's name

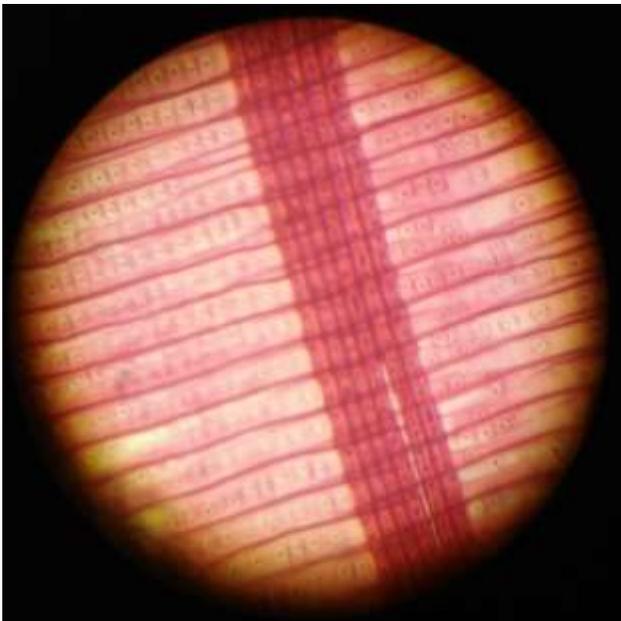
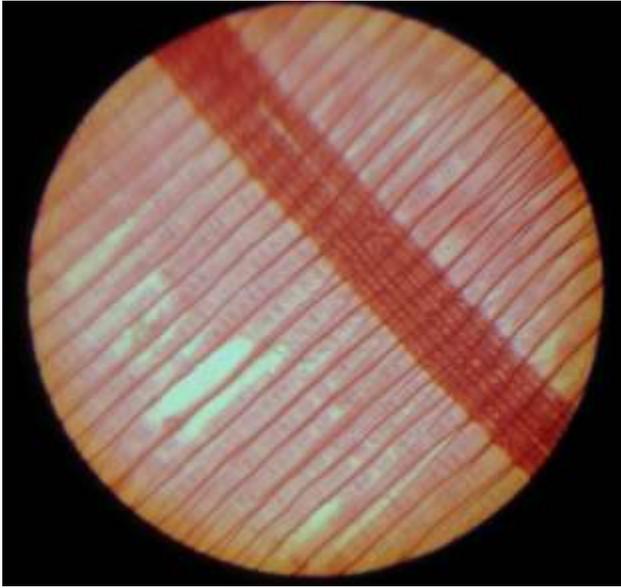
The following pictures were taken with a Sony Cybershot 7.2MP arranged closely over the #4 eyepiece. I focused on the specimen beforehand as the monitor of the camera was too coarse to allow even to check the focus. It was a bit of a trial and error process

The first picture was always taken with the basic objective lens, the second with the middle lens switched in and the third picture with all two objective lenses switched in.



The coloured section is *cedar, tracheids*, showing the vascular system.





The light source was a Zeiss fluorescent microscope illuminator, but a bit of correction was used when processing the pictures on the computer.

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PS: After I had written this article I did what I ought to have done before: I checked my records and found a picture of the manufacturer's label in the box, the model is designated "Perfekt" and the serial number is 53616. The magnifications are listed as

75x, 150x and 225x.

You can read up more on Schieck at

[www.kambeck.com](http://www.kambeck.com) and

[www.microscopehistory.com/schieck](http://www.microscopehistory.com/schieck)

Published in the July 2019 issue of  
*Micscape* Magazine.

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