That Man Stone Photography:  
“Anything, Any time, Anywhere” 

By Phil Sutton* 

An early Oklahoma newspaper advertisement for That Man Stone Company offered photography services, “Anything, Any time, Anywhere.” The company delivered on its advertising slogan judging by the large number and variety of historical photographs credited to That Man Stone. The company was one of the most prolific photography studios before, and after, Oklahoma became a state.

Rachel Mosman, Oklahoma Historical Society photo and digital assets manager, is familiar with the studio’s legacy. “I find That Man Stone photos in more Oklahoma collections than any other photographer,” Mosman pointed out. “These prodigious iterations of work flowed out from this studio throughout early Oklahoma history and today you can tell how prominent the studio was by how many collections have been donated or purchased that include images by That Man Stone.”

Despite its longevity and wide-ranging activities, details about the company and its owners have been a bit of a mystery. “That man Stone. Who is he?” was a question in a 1917 Oklahoma City newspaper story about the firm. The article went on to say, “Such a question often is heard around the window at 317 North Robinson avenue.” Frederick L. Stone and his wife, Jennie, founded That Man Stone. This husband and wife team, and the company they created, made a significant contribution to documenting the history of present-day Oklahoma.

Fred Stone was born in 1874 in Akron, Ohio. Stone’s wife, Jane Rea Crawford, who went by Jennie, was born in 1874 in Kansas and raised in Iowa. Stone likely inherited his interest in photography from his father, Simon Stone. Simon earned a living as a photographer a few
years after being released from the Confederate army prison at Andersonville, Georgia, at the end of the Civil War.\textsuperscript{6}

Fred Stone held several jobs in his younger years. He worked for the Lake Erie and Western Railroad (LE&W) in 1892.\textsuperscript{7} He was a ticket broker in Youngstown, Ohio, in 1893.\textsuperscript{8} Fred headed west around 1896 to try prospecting for a few years, and wrote to his father that he and some companions found gold in the Black Hills of South Dakota.\textsuperscript{9} A headline in an 1898 Akron newspaper proclaimed, “Akron Man Strikes it Rich in the Black Hills.” Despite this feature in the news, the gold mining venture was not successful and by January 1900 Fred and a fellow named J. Meyer opened the Stone & Meyer photography studio in Philipsburg, Montana.\textsuperscript{10} “They will be prepared to execute first class, up-to-date work at reasonable prices,” according to a local newspaper story.\textsuperscript{11}

The Stone and Meyer partnership did not last long. Stone opened his own business in Philipsburg in March 1900 under the name Imperial Studio, then closed the Imperial Studio in May of 1900.\textsuperscript{12} Stone’s father died in late 1900 and Fred returned to his hometown and opened a photography business.\textsuperscript{13} Stone was on to another venture in 1901 when he and three associates announced plans to tour the western states taking photographs using the business name American View Company.\textsuperscript{14}

Traveling, itinerant, or view photographers brought photography to the masses in the 1800s and early 1900s. They went out into the countryside in search of customers, taking pictures of families in front of their farmhouses or a proprietor in front of a business.\textsuperscript{15} Traveling photographers were so numerous that the Guthrie City Council passed an occupation tax in 1901 on traveling photographers “for the protection of artists in this city who are in permanent business.”\textsuperscript{16}

Stone was a traveling photographer. He was in Texas in July 1905 “taking pictures of every house in San Angelo.”\textsuperscript{17} Later that same year, Stone, as “a traveling photographer,” was fined $5 by a judge in Shawnee, O. T., for not having a city business license.\textsuperscript{18} Stone climbed a tree in Arizona in August 1908 and “secured a remarkable panoramic view of the city of Flagstaff.”\textsuperscript{19} He and Jennie were back in Arizona in late 1908 and during the visit, the Flagstaff newspaper proclaimed, “Mr. Stone is one of the best scenic [sic] photographers that has ever visited this section of the country.”\textsuperscript{20}

The earliest confirmation of Fred and Jennie Stone in present-day Oklahoma is a September 1902 property deed indicating that Fred Stone purchased two property lots in Chickasha, I.T.\textsuperscript{21} That same year, Chickasha became an incorporated city with a population of more than
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Fred and Jennie Stone in front of That Man Stone studio, 317 North Robinson in Oklahoma City, c. 1914 (photograph courtesy of Robert Wilson).

six thousand. The town was well on its way to becoming Grady County’s largest shipping point for cattle and agriculture.22

Stone’s Chickasha studio was located at 314 Kansas Avenue.23 It is not clear when Stone started using the name That Man Stone, but it is likely that the name was first used in an informal way before becoming the official company name. The earliest documented use of the name was a brief 1909 advertisement in the Chickasha newspaper, “Have those quail and your hunting dogs’ pictures taken by That Man Stone.”24

Fred and Jennie maintained a studio in Chickasha for approximately ten years before Stone offered to sell or trade his Chickasha studio in July 1911.25 His newspaper sale advertisement explained, “This is a snap for some one—price $1,200 cash or will trade for real estate or an automobile. Reason for selling, have decided to put all my time in my Oklahoma City place.”26 He eventually sold the studio to John Theimes.27

Stone opened a studio in Oklahoma City in 1911 in the Post Office Building on the corner of Main and Hudson Streets.28 He had plenty of competition, as there were twenty-two photographers, including Stone, listed in the city phone directory.29 The Oklahoma City population was over 64,000 in 1911 and the state capital had been moved from Guthrie.
to Oklahoma City the previous year.\textsuperscript{30} Stone relocated to the Patterson Building, 320 West Main Street, in 1912.\textsuperscript{31} The studio was moved to 317 North Robinson in 1913.\textsuperscript{32} That Man Stone was a professional commercial photography studio however it sold Kodak retail film and supplies, and offered film developing and printing for amateur photographers.\textsuperscript{33}

Stone claimed to be the first Oklahoma photographer to use a unique camera called a Cirkut Panoramic Camera.\textsuperscript{34} The camera rotated on a tripod and the film also moved to synchronize with the rotation of the camera. The camera produced a single, large panoramic negative that could be up to twenty feet in length.\textsuperscript{35} The newspapers of the era struggled with what to call Stone’s new type of camera. One article labeled the camera “broad-gauge,” while another called it a “mammoth camera.”\textsuperscript{36} An example of Stone’s panoramic work is a 1909–10 photo of cowboys in a roping contest that is archived in the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.\textsuperscript{37}

In addition to his panoramic photographs, Stone gained a reputation photographing large groups at reunions, conventions, and meetings. The story reporting his death on the front page of the Chickasha newspaper pointed out, “So well known did his work become that a convention or public gathering of wide proportions felt that it had hardly been in official session unless it was photographed by ‘That Man Stone.’”\textsuperscript{38}

The company’s photos frequently appeared in the Oklahoma City newspapers. By 1920 That Man Stone was being promoted as the official photographer for the \textit{Daily Oklahoman} and the \textit{Oklahoma City Times} newspapers.\textsuperscript{39} Credits for Fred Stone’s photographs include Fred Stone, Fred L. Stone, F. L. Stone, and That Man Stone.\textsuperscript{40} There are references in the traditional media, online media, and photography auction items indicating Fred Stone (That Man Stone) took pictures before and during the land run that opened the Unassigned Lands in April 1889.\textsuperscript{41} It is unlikely that Stone was in Oklahoma as a photographer this early given he would have only been fourteen years old in April of 1889. He would have been sixteen years old at the time of the land run openings of the Sac and Fox, Potawatomi, Shawnee, and Iowa tribal lands in 1891.\textsuperscript{42}

Research for this article did not reveal any photo credits for Jennie Stone. Perhaps she hid her activities as a photographer because of the bias at the time toward married women participating in paid labor.\textsuperscript{43} When Jennie opened her own studio in Muskogee after Fred’s death, she continued to hide her gender by listing “J. C. Stone proprietor” in local newspaper advertisements.\textsuperscript{44}
Despite the lack of photo credits, Jennie Stone was a photographer and very active in the business. She would attend state photographer’s conventions without Fred. She would ultimately spend more years working in professional photography than Fred. An example of Jennie’s knowledge and experience is an interview published in a 1912 Muncie, Indiana, newspaper. She explained in detail the time-consuming challenges of running a portrait studio versus “the easiest sort of work” in commercial photography. Her comments would turn out to be ironic considering she earned her living as a portrait photographer later in life.

The article identified Jennie as “the only woman commercial photographer in Oklahoma.” She is quoted as saying, “A woman can do a man’s work as well as the man, and just a little better,” but the newspaper stipulates, “yet Mrs. Stone hides the effect of her demonstration by doing her work under the firm name of ‘That Man Stone.’” Her reputation as a photographer survives even today with anecdotal feedback from local Chickasha residents indicating Jennie was a better photographer than Fred.

Fred Stone began advertising for an investor in his Oklahoma City studio in August 1913. His newspaper sale advertisement claimed, “We are doing an average business of $800 per month. If I get a good partner and devote all my time operating on the outside, [I] can double the business.” George Rufus Buchanan, who preferred to go by Rufus, responded to the offer and purchased a half-interest in the business in February 1914. Later that year, Buchanan and his wife Alice became sole owners.

After the studio was sold, Fred and Jennie moved to Nebraska. Fred Stone had accepted a position with the Akron Rubber Company distribution office in Omaha. Fred Stone died in Omaha of heart issues on December 12, 1914. He was just thirty-nine years old. He is buried in Akron, Ohio.

Following Fred’s death, Jennie returned to Oklahoma City and worked for That Man Stone for a short period. She opened her own studio in Muskogee, Oklahoma, in 1916. The Stone Studio was located at 409 ½ West Okmulgee Avenue. A 1916 newspaper advertisement for her studio offered “Portraits of Quality. We do general photographic business, Kodak finishing, panoramas, views, enlarging.” Jennie operated the studio for ten years, closing it in 1927. She then moved to New Jersey to live with Fred’s sister, Gertrude, and her husband, Harry Replogle.
Jennie later operated a photography studio in the Philadelphian Hotel and the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, both located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She died in October 1955 in Philadelphia. Jennie and Fred did not have any children so the Stone family photography legacy ended with Jennie’s death.

Once Rufus Buchanan took ownership of That Man Stone Company, he put fresh energy into the operation. Buchanan was an experienced photographer, having operated his own photography studios in Kinsley, Kiowa, and Stafford, Kansas. His daughter, Josephine, and son, Roy, worked in Rufus’ Kansas studios starting at a young age.

Rufus Buchanan offered a wide range of services at That Man Stone. The company letterhead listed services including copying, enlarging, Kodak finishing, picture framing, panoramic views, plus interior and exterior photographs. Buchanan continued the company tradition of producing panoramic photos and photographing the attendees of large conventions and meetings.
Buchanan also offered motion pictures. He was the official photographer for a traveling auto show in October 1917. The show stopped in Ponca City, Oklahoma, and a Daily Oklahoman story pointed out, “The cars were lined up between, the hog sheds and the ostrich feather emporium, where the official photographer, Buchanan, ‘That Man Stone,’ made a motion picture reel with cowboys as the color decorations.”

Buchanan’s daughter, Josephine, and her husband, George W. Carter, began working for the company when Rufus first purchased That Man Stone. Buchanan and Carter continued to expand the business in 1920. They formed the Bureau of Engraving and Electrotyping, Inc. The new company offered various engraving and printing services, and operated in the Robinson Avenue offices of That Man Stone. Rufus and the Carters continued to operate That Man Stone at 317 North Robinson until 1923 when it was relocated to 626 North Hudson.

Buchanan turned the company over to George and Josephine Carter in 1926. They continued to run the business at the North Hudson location until 1942. The Carters successfully kept the company operating during the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl in Oklahoma.
George Carter died in 1942 from complications following surgery. Just before his death, the Carters sold the company to an employee, Edward Schyette. A few months later, Schyette sold what remained of That Man Stone to Z. P. Meyers. Research for this article found no evidence that Meyers ever used the That Man Stone business name, so the purchase effectively ended the company’s four decades of photographing Oklahoma and its people, from 1902 to 1942.

After her husband’s death, Josephine Carter went to work for Meyers Photo Shop as the office manager. The owner, Z. P. Meyers, got his first job in professional photography in 1916 when Rufus Buchanan hired him as a darkroom technician. Meyers was one of many photographers who developed their photography skills at That Man Stone.

Josephine was a fixture at Meyers Photo Shop for twenty years, from 1942 to 1962. She later worked for another photography studio owned by Roger Myers (no relationship to Z. P. Meyers) and eventually retired in 1976 after sixty-two years in the photography profession in Oklahoma City. Including her childhood days in Kansas, she was engaged in the photography profession for seventy-eight years.

The body of work created by the different owners and employees of That Man Stone is scattered in many public and private collections. Perhaps many of the company images are lost. Fred Stone’s Imperial Studio negatives from Montana were part of the sale to the new own-
er in 1900. When Stone sold his Chickasha studio to John Theime, the sale included Stone’s negatives. When Theime sold the studio to George W. Norvelle in 1912, the negatives were included in the transaction. When Stone sold That Man Stone to Rufus Buchanan, Stone’s negatives were part of the sale. When the company stopped operating, the remaining original negatives created by Stone, Buchanan, Carter, and company employees were “destroyed,” according to Josephine Carter.

Fortunately many That Man Stone images have survived and can be found in archived public collections and in private collections.
Endnotes

*Phil Sutton holds a journalism degree from Oklahoma State University. His goal is to document the contributions of early Oklahoma photographers to the historical record of the state. Three generations of Sutton’s family owned professional photography studios in Oklahoma and represent more than one hundred years of photography in the state. Sutton would like to thank Calvin Clark, Marcia Iversion, Cheryl Wilson, Bernadine Wilson, and Robert Wilson for their assistance in preparing this article and for sharing their Buchanan and Carter family photographs.

2 Rachel Mosman, email message to the author, May 9, 2019.
10 “Photograph Gallery Opens,” *Philipsburg (MT) Mail*, January 12, 1900, 8.
11 “Photograph Gallery for Philipsburg,” *Philipsburg Mail*, January 12, 1900, 1.
12 “Imperial Studio, Philipsburg, Now Open,” *Philipsburg Mail*, March 30, 1900; “The Photograph Gallery Will Be Closed,” *Philipsburg Mail*, May 18, 1900, 8.
16 “City Council Meeting,” *Guthrie (OK) Daily Leader*, September 13, 1901, 8.
17 “Have a Photo Taken of Your House,” *San Angelo (TX) Press*, June 15, 1905, 3.
19 “Fred Stone, the scenic photographer,” *Coconino (AZ) Sun*, August 28, 1908, 5.
20 “Photographer Fred Stone,” *Coconino Sun*, October 9, 1908, 5.
21 Sharon Shoemake, email message to the author, December 1, 2017. This email included Thomas P. Lindsay—Fred L. Stone, general warranty deed, September 10, 1902.
25 Lindsay—Stone deed; Classified advertisement, *Daily Oklahoman*, July 9, 1911, 20.
27 “Send to the Folks Back Home” advertisement, *Chickasha Daily Express*, November 27, 1911, 4.
29 Ibid., 760.
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40 “F. L. Stone the Photographer,” Anaconda (MT) Standard, May 1, 1900, 15; Fred Stone, No. 101. View of Stockyards, photograph, 20538.53, Mary Ticer Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK; Fred L. Stone, Opera House, Tulsa, I.T., c. 1906, photograph, The Gateway to Oklahoma History, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK, www.gateway.okhistory.org/ark:/67531/metadc1477078; That Man Stone, Oklahoma City Post Office Employees, January 15, 1912, photograph, 11041, Maize Richardson Lollar Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK.
47 “Modern Studios Full of Fixin’s,” Muncie (IN) Morning Star, August 31, 1912, 6.
48 Pat Cunningham, email message to the author, November 20, 2017. Pat Cunningham is the volunteer director and curator of the Grady County Historical Society Museum in Chickasha, Oklahoma.
49 “Business Opportunities in City,” Daily Oklahoman, August 29, 1913, 11.
55 Ibid.
NOTES AND DOCUMENTS


60 Letter on That Man Stone letterhead, January 31, 1918, privately held by the Knuppel family, Yukon, OK.


68 Marcia Iverson, email message to the author, April 7, 2019. In the email, Iverson told the author about a telephone communication between herself and Iona Wilson that took place the same day. Wilson is the daughter of George and Josephine Carter. Iverson is the Carters’ granddaughter.

69 Bill of sale document, February 12, 1942, privately held by Phil Sutton, Silverton, OR.


71 Recommendation letter on That Man Stone letterhead signed by R. Buchanan, January 31, 1918, privately held by the Knuppel family, Yukon, OK.


73 “City Photographer Retires After 62 Years, Maybe,” Daily Oklahoman, July 17, 1976, 17; Carter began working in her father’s Kansas studios starting at age five (1898–1914). Carter was employed at That Man Stone, Meyers Photo Shop, and Roger Myers Photography from 1914 to 1976, for a total of seventy-eight years in photography.

74 Rachel Mosman, email message to the author, May 9, 2019.

75 “Notice,” Philipsburg Mail, June, 22, 1900, 8.

76 “Send to the Folks Back Home” advertisement, Chickasha Daily Express, November 27, 1911, 4.

77 “Personal Mention,” Chickasha Daily Express, January 6, 1912, 5.


79 “City Photographer Retires After 62 Years, Maybe,” Daily Oklahoman, July 17, 1976, 17; Marcia Iverson, email message to the author, April 7, 2019. Iverson reported a telephone conversation on April 7, 2019, with Bernadine Wilson confirming the loss of the negatives; Calvin Clark, telephone conversation with the author, March 12, 2019; Robert Wilson, telephone conversation with the author, March 19, 2019. These two conversations confirmed the loss of the negatives. Clark and Wilson are grandsons of George and Josephine Carter.