Myth: ***Hot weather will cause your developer to get to warm and chemically fog your images.***

Whoa, stop! Has this one ever gotten wickedly out of hand in recent times! Yes, the ideal temperature for your standard dilution Ferrous Sulfate developer is about 68 degrees F. But, being one who has shot in all sorts of severe weather conditions, including brutal heat waves, over the last almost 40 years of shooting wet-plate regularly in the field, I have never had chemical fog occur due to overly warm developer. Yes, I have had hot weather cause what we call "scum or veiling" issues, which is a superficial dust-like fall-out of silver precipitant on the image surface. This can be easily wiped away with a good mopping, using a water saturated cotton ball, tuff of bandage cotton, or soft cotton Handi-Wipe. Do this with the plate out of the rinse tray, **not in the tray**. But, to help mitigate or end the scum issue altogether, simply dilute the developer with water and add a little more Acetic Acid.

Scum and veiling is not chemical fogging, folks! Chemical fogging, which shows up as a severe case of smoky shadows and flat highlights, cannot be wiped away. That kind of fog is to the bone. There is a whole list of things that can cause fogging, but overly warm developer is not one of them. I have developed many a plate in 90 plus degree F weather with the developer temperature being well over 90 F, and have gotten totally fine images with as clean and rich blacks as one could ask for. By experience, I knew what to look for as the image developed, and when to stop development before the shadows smoked up. Development, indeed, happens quicker when the developer is extra warm, and so you work with that in mind, or you can dilute your developer and add a bit more acid to give you a wider developing time window. But, be warned. If you go too far with that, you will get darker highlights and less defined images. Exposure times increase, as well. The worst thing you can do, as some are recommending these days (not in the 19th century), is to put your developer on ice and use it too cold. Yes, the developer can be too cold! Below about 55 degrees F, development times will get extra long. That in itself is not so bad, if not even more manageable for a beginner to work with, but the problem is, you will always get darker in the highlights and flatter images as a result. For those who shoot aluminotypes, and only as a "starting point image," this is not a problem, as the image on the plate is scanned and thoroughly brought to life digitally. Then and only then is it put on social media for the usual "likes". But, for those of us who value our tintype and

ambrotype plates as an all for all art piece with as bright and defined an image as possible from the get go, that is not acceptable. The image on the plate and not the image on the computer screen is what truly matters.

The fact is, most beginners over expose and or over develop their Tintypes and Ambrotypes and this fogs up the shadows and makes for dull flat images.

Bottom line: Foggy flat images will not happen regardless of whether your developer or other chemicals are extra warm, if you have a good handle on exposure time and your developing technique. But, be for warned: Don't fall into the shortcut trap of dowsing your plate with developer and then immediately violently whipping the developer off and then just as quickly stopping all development with a quick running water rinse, as some are doing and teaching others now-a-days. Yepper, you can get a nice even image to come up that way, easy enough. But it will require a substantially longer camera exposure time and will yield a darker and flatter image than if development had been done properly.

The fact is, it is hard for many to admit to "operator error" in this new wet-plate age. Most want to blame their chemicals, the weather, or anything but their technique, equipment, or workflow when things don't go quite right. Never themselves!