

THE NEW DAGUERREIAN JOURNAL:

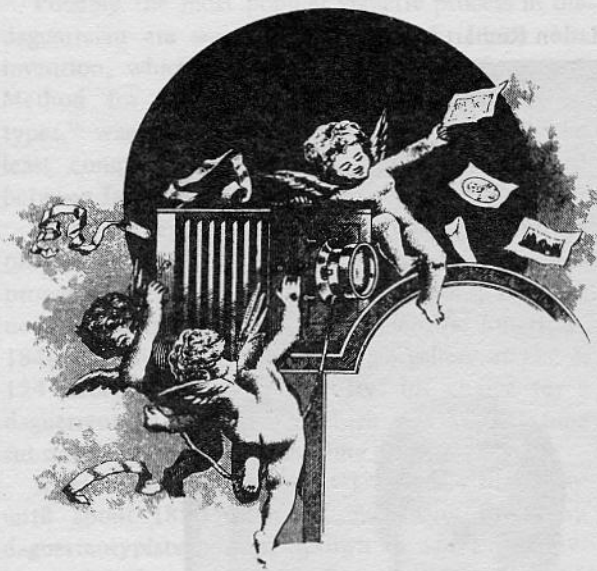
Devoted to the Daguerreian and Photogenic Art
Also embracing the Sciences, Arts, and Literature



Daguerre



THE DAGUERREOTYPIST.



The New Daguerreian Journal

April 1972

Vol. 1 No. 5

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THE NEW DAGUERREIAN JOURNAL

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THE ILLUMINATED DAGUERRETYPE PROCESS

By Floyd and Marion Rinhart



A half-size daguerreotype vignette of James and William Bowditch, c. 1853. This expressive work of art has the chemically induced tints described in the Insley patent for "Illuminated Daguerreotypes."

HENRY E. INSLEY, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

IMPROVEMENT IN DAGUERREOTYPE PICTURES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 8,633, dated January 6, 1852.

Possibly the most popular vignette process in the daguerreian era was that of Henry E. Insley. His invention, which he called a new and "Improved Method for Producing ... Illuminated Daguerreotypes," was patented January 6, 1852. It was the least complicated of the four processes patented between January, 1849 and December, 1852.

Henry Insley was a daguerreotypist as were the other inventors of vignette processes. He could properly be called a "Broadway operator." The first notation of Insley came in the *Scientific American*, 1846. He advertised his daguerreian gallery at 122 & 124 Broadway, New York City; his charge for a daguerreotype was \$1.00, which was at that time substantially below the prevailing price.

Insley's studio remained at 122 & 124 Broadway until about 1850 when he, like many Broadway daguerreotypists, moved uptown to 311 Broadway. He was listed at that address through 1854.

Apparently Insley filed his patent application for the vignette process in the summer of 1851. On August 29, he wrote the patent office: "Could you inform me about what time my application for a patent for Illuminated Daguerreotypes would be acted upon...P.S. The American Institute has just awarded me a silver medal for my Illuminated Daguerreotypes." Another letter, dated September 23, 1851, indicated that he probably had not sent the patent fee with his application: "...You will perceive that I paid over the money a few days since—but understanding there was a probability of being a Hillotype, I have deferred action. Hillotypes have been seen and now I proceed with my application..." Mr. Insley was referring in his letter to Levi L. Hill who had announced, in the fall of 1850, that he had discovered a photographic process to take the colors of nature on a daguerreotype plate. From the time of the announcement, and through 1851, the controversy over color photography had assumed national importance.

By December 10, 1851, Insley still had not been granted his patent, so he wrote another inquiry to the patent office on that date. Probably to gain attention for his patent application, he wrote: "I also send a plate with a picture and chemical on just as it comes from the bath."

Fig. 1.

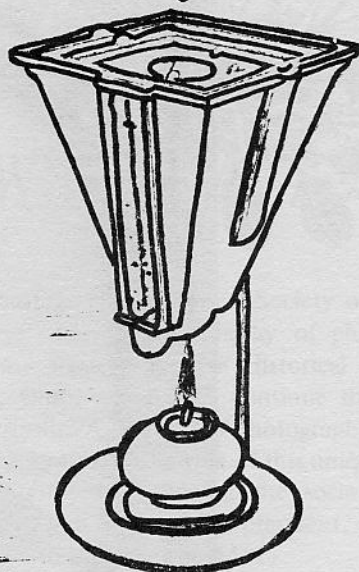


Fig. 2.

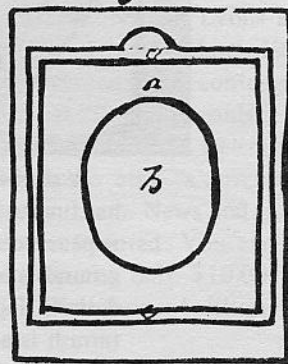
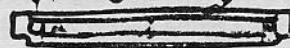
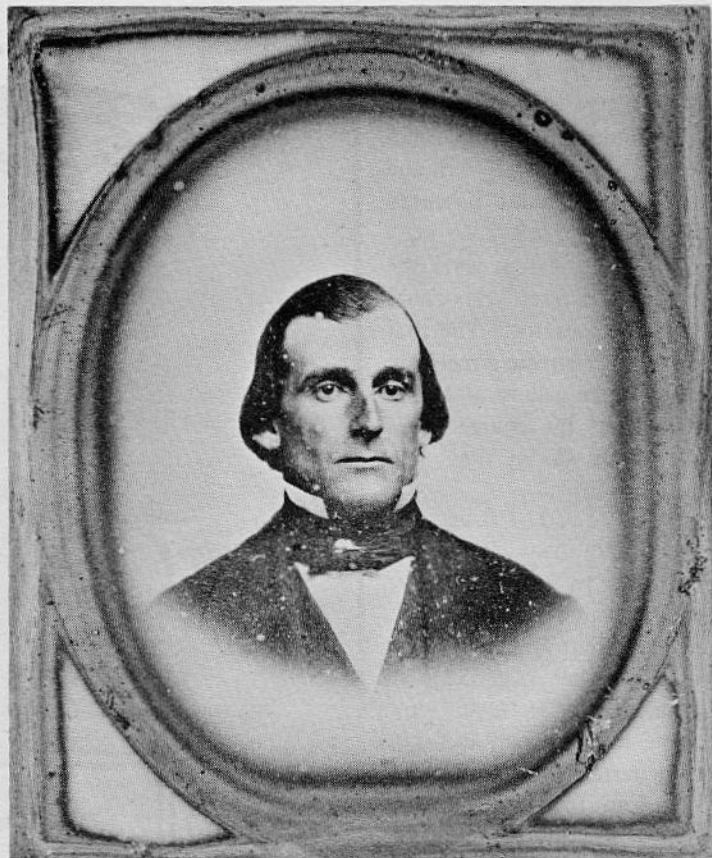


Fig. 3



Apparently the letter and accompanying daguerreotype sent to the patent office produced the desired results for on January 6, 1852, patent No. 8, 633 was issued to Henry Insley. His "Illuminated Daguerreotypes," as he named them in his patent, claimed to produce "an image of greater boldness and relief, at the same time casting a halo of various tints around the image, blending in the dark or black outer edge."



A sixth-size vignette of a man, c. 1852. This plate has unusual characteristics—only the bust has the appearance of the usual daguerreotype. The background is a bright pink with a very dull surface. The darker rings and border are a definite blue; some tarnish is adjacent to the blue coloration. Probably a variation of the Henry Insley process.

Insley's method was to take a daguerreotype in the usual manner, using a white background. When ready to expose the plate to the vapors of mercury, a special frame was used (see figs. 2 & 3). The bottom part of the frame was a mat or "contractor" (see a), shaped to suit fancy — round, oval, rectangular, or other forms. A thin border (probably wood) acted as a spacer and held the daguerreotype plate (see d—three-sixteenths of an inch above the "contractor" (see c).

When the frame, holding the daguerreotype, was placed over the mercury bath (see fig. 1), it permitted

the vapors of mercury to pass freely upon the center of the plate, gradually diminishing toward the outer edges, thus producing various tints and giving strength and relief to the image.

Insley recommended in his December 10, letter to the patent office that his "Illuminated Daguerreotypes" be gilded because it brought out the colors more vividly and that he found "the effect is much better on the larger plate." He also wrote: "Daguerreotypists from almost every part of the country have seen them and pronounce them the prettiest portraits that have yet been got up."



An exhibit of 19th century photography selected from the collection of Walter Johnson is scheduled for July 1972 at the Huntington National Bank Trust Building, Broad and Front St., Columbus, Ohio. The exhibit of over 300 pieces will include all of the photographic process popular during the 19th century.

Mr. Peter C. Bunnell will head the new Princeton Photo Chair funded by an endowment of one million dollars by David Hunter McAlpin. "The student will concentrate on Photography within the context of the fine arts program", Mr. Bunnell said. The Princeton program is intended to establish the university as a major center for intensive photographic studies but Mr. Bunnell projects that it will take about five years to build.

Society member James Ambrecht has an excellent article written about his efforts in making modern Daguerreotypes by Shirley Althoff, in the April 2, 1972 issue of the **St. Louis Globe - Democrat - Sunday Magazine**.

Another article of importance has been written by John Maloney, in the **Gallery** — March-April, 1972, titled "Through An Antique Lens: Daguerreotypes". Mr. Maloney's article traces photographic history through the 19th century. It is very informative and well illustrated.

You can obtain a copy by writing **The Gallery** 3717 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, Calif. 94549.

The "Photographic Historical Society of the Western Reserve" has a large display of photographic items at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio, which will continue through the month of April. "A Century of Photographic History: 1840 to the 1940's" is the title of this unique display. Anyone interested in joining the society, should contact Mr. Donn Rothenberg, president, 4176 Hinsdale Rd., South Euclid, Ohio 44121.

"**Afterimage**" a publication of the Visual Studies Workshop, with Mr. Nathan Lyons as director, has just published Vol. 1 No. 1. March 1972. **Afterimage** is primarily concerned with contemporary photography with articles "Some Humanistic Considerations of Photography" by Jerry N. Uelsman, and a review of the photographic essay "Conversations with the Dead" by Danny Lyon. News and notices of gallery showings are also featured. You can join the Visual Studies Workshop for only \$10.00 at year. Write, Visual Studies Workshop, 4 Elton St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Be sure to attend the Antique and Classic Camera Workshop and Trade Fair, May 13 & 14, 1972, at the Southern Hotel, Columbus, Ohio, this will be the sixth photo-workshop and trade fair sponsored by the Ohio Camera Collectors Society, P.O. Box 4614, Columbus, Ohio 43212.

You can buy by mail **Daguerreotypes and other Photographica** from either the **Daguerreian Era** Tom & Elinor Burnside, Pawlet, Vt. 05761, or George R. Rinhart, Americana, Photographic Images, Rare Books, 200 9th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011.



The 20th Century

DAGUERREOTYPE

"Now look this way" directed Marvin Kriesman, "When I hold this dark slide up we start the exposure".

His hand went up and seventy-five people took a deep breath, and stood still for the five seconds. Thus, the above Daguerreotype was made, to add one more event to Photographic history.

The above Daguerreotype is a group photo of those persons attending the Midwest Photographic Historical Society, April 8 / 9, 1972, at the Downtowner Motor Inn, Columbia, Mo.. Marvin Kreisman and Jim Ambrecht used three 4 x 5 cameras to make as many "Dags" of the group. One image each for Marvin & Jim, the third image was to be auctioned off to the highest bidder later in the meeting. It was purchased



by John and Valory Craig for an unbelievable price of \$300.00, a historic event in itself.

The point of this article is that modern Daguerreotypes are being made, and by a number of people. In our third issue we asked, "have you successfully produced a Daguerreotype image in the 20th Century?" The response was not overwhelming, but all-in-all it was better than anticipated. We have received letters and photos from 11 modern Daguerreotypists, and as the information of this index becomes known many others will have tried their luck at Daguerrotyping.

Here then are some of the basic statistics of our growing group of modern Daguerreotype makers.

1. Jim Ambrecht, St. Louis, Mo., 15 plus images; designed and built his own coating boxes and mercury pot, these will be featured in NDJ No. 6.

Left; a Daguerreotype of Trinket Kreisman (by Marvin of course) is the result of a 1 minute exposure under two blue photo flood lamps at F. 8. Marvin has also shot Alan Cotter's portrait, an image that could easily be compared to the qualities of original daguerreotypes of the 1850's.

Below, a 1/6 plate portrait by Charles Tremear photographed in Ford's Greenfield Village Tintype Gallery. Mr. Tremear would shoot a daguerreotype portrait by appointment and then only before 10 AM (the opening time of the Village), our subject is none other than Ray Phillips daguerreotyped in 1941.



Right, Harvey Zucker image, an old factory on Staten Island. The exposure was approximately 15 seconds, in fairly bright sun, but I don't remember for sure. The Daguerreotype is a 1/6th plate, and was made during the summer of 1971. Harvey has been producing Daguerrotypes for a year and a half now.



Above, Ray Phillips is checking his mercury fuming box in the trunk of his Ford convertible, the year is 1947 and he was taking Daguerreotypes in the California gold mining country. Ray started making "Dags" when he was 16 years old, (1936), sat for a self portrait in 1938, had his best results in 1947 with unused 1/2 plates from the Southworth & Hawes Boston Studio. Ray's closing remark was, "wish I hadn't been 30 years ahead of time in my daguerreotype collecting. It was too lonesome in those days!"



This Clifford Krainik 1/6 plate portrait shows excellent tone and contrast; his other subjects are buildings, automobiles, and stuffed toys.

2. Fred Birkhill, 2 camera images 4"x 5"
3. Walter Johnson, first experimented with the process in the fall of 1971, poor results, resumed again spring 1972 and now has 3 good images.
4. Clifford Krainik, over 25 camera images to his credit, reusing old plates of 1/6 and 1/4 sizes.
5. Marvin Kreisman, co-worker of Jim Ambrecht with good results, several fine portraits are among his 15 plus images.
6. Ray Phillips, started making "Dags" when he was 16 years old in 1936, could not give an exact number of plates.
7. Irv. Pobboravsky, most of his "Dags" were of the research type of gray scales, but has made 10-15 camera images of general interest.
8. O. Sherwood Poppe, used glass front surfaced with silver as a substitute to the conventional copper base plate. See NDJ No. 4 page 14.
9. Joe Synder, unknown number of images completed, his work is shown in the Life-Time photo-book series.
10. Charles Tremear, unknown number of "Dags" produced, worked for the Ford Dearborne Village Photo-gallery, more on Mr. Tremear in the next issue of NDJ.
11. Harvey Zucker, current pres. of the New York Photographic Historical Society and a long time Daguerreotype enthusiast. Start making his own images in the spring of 1971.

With each response there were questions, each person wanting to know what the other is doing. For example: do you use old or new plates? What are your "quick-stuffs"? What is your exposure times? Can you make "Dags" on over-cast days? Where can I get new plates? How much do your plates cost? How long do you keep the plates over the iodine - bromine - mercury, and do you gold tone?

The next issue of the Journal will begin to answer all these questions plus show more "Dags" by Ambrecht, Johnson, Birkhill, Pobboravsky, and others.

ON THE UNVEILING OF THE DAGUERRE MEMORIAL AT WASHINGTON, AUGUST 15, 1890

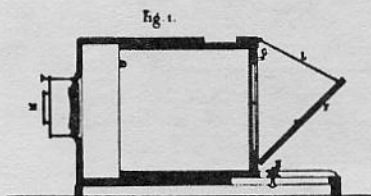
BY CLARENCE B. MOORE,
Philadelphia, Pa.

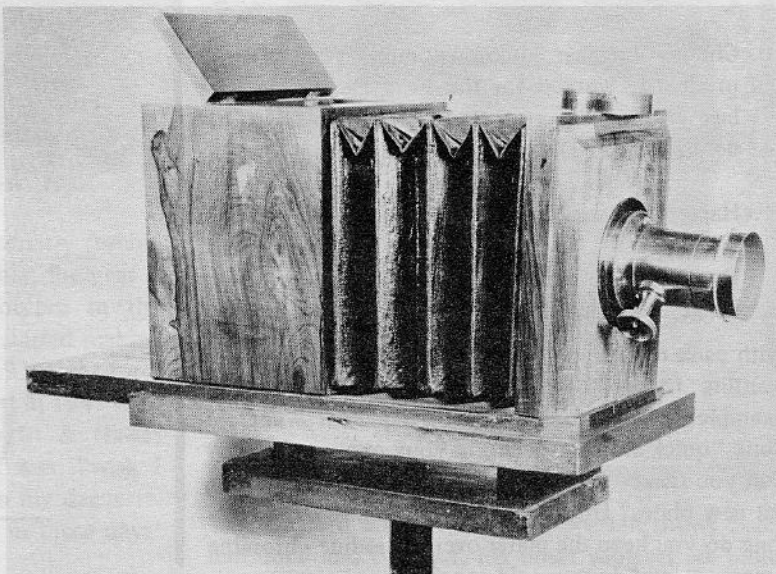
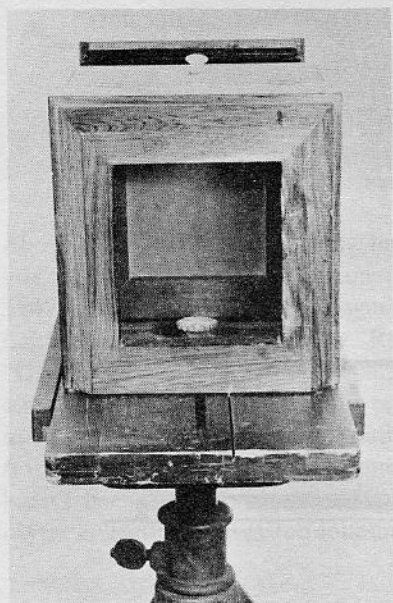
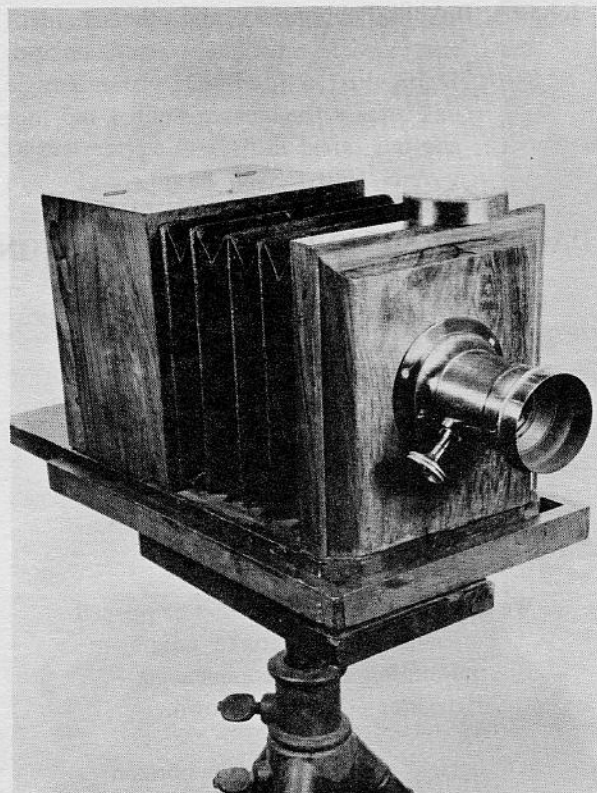
All hail to the name of that Frenchman
To whose fame we do honor to-day;
Who coaxed from the shy salts of silver
Their secrets deep hidden away.

We have followed the path that he opened
To realms then unpictured, unknown;
But our journey is only commencing —
An ungathered harvest is sown.

We've a lens which takes in the horizon;
We have cannon-balls caught in mid-air;
We shall next take our pictures in colors.
Long life to the Art of Daguerre!

From: Edward L. Wilson's
Photographic Mosaics, 1891





DAQUERREAN EQUIPMENT GALLERY

From the Stanley Clark Collection
449 E. Henry St.
Meadville, Pa. 16335
Photographs by Stanley Clark

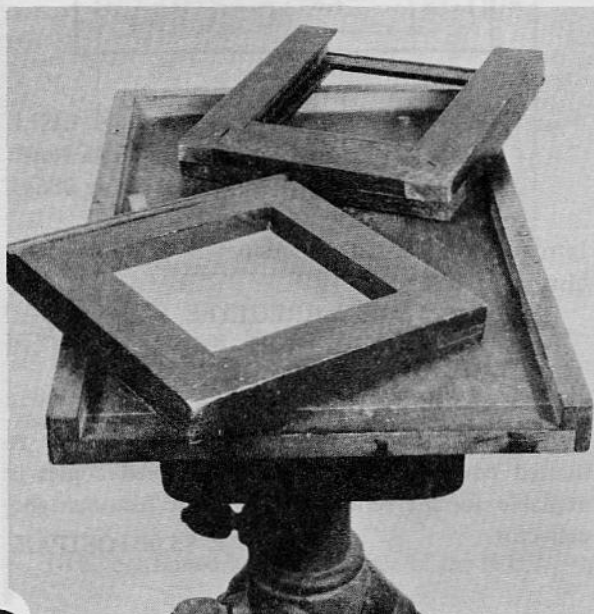
Our "Gallery" camera appears to be a W. & W.H. Lewis quarter plate camera manufactured in the mid 1850's in Daguerreville, New York. Looking at the camera in profile, it would measure 45 cm long, 20.2 cm wide, 23.6 cm high. Designed with square corner fold bellows for flexibility and greater handling speed. One unusual feature is the somewhat narrow face plate or lens support, only 3.8 cm wide, as compared to other similar bellows cameras from Daguerreville. The back panel, or focus box, with typical top hinged door exchange for the ground glass or plate holder is 17.3 cm wide. Inside the back panel is a cast iron knob to firmly fix the point of focus.

To quote Stan's words, "the camera finish is as I got it. I just wiped off the crud and dust and applied furniture polish to the wood, and Lexol to the bellows.

Stan Clark purchased his outfit from an antique shop in upper New York state, the outfit included the camera with ground glass frame and plate holder, wood tripod, a head-clamp without the base unit, and an 1857 edition of S. D. Humphrey's "A Practical Manual of the Collodion Process", giving in detail a method for producing positive and negative pictures on glass and paper." The name in the flyleaf indicates that the original owner to have lived in Le Boenff, Pa., which is now Waterford, Pa., at Lake LeBoeuff.

Our Photos: the lens is script engraved "C. C. Harrison, New York" within the lens there is not a diaphragm opening but one cardboard stop was stored inside the Lens cap. The camera is constructed of burl walnut with bellows of black leatherette (?) and the camera base is black painted poplar. Fitted with an ivory knob, brass hinges and cast iron focus knob. The camera stand has black walnut rails with poplar bed, cast iron center housing into which the maple legs are pitted.

We thank Stan Clark for sharing his "find" with our readers, and if you have an item you think that could be of the Daguerreian Era and are not sure, please send a photograph and whatever information you have and we'll try to put a date on it. Please measure all dimensions in metric scale.



AN INDEX OF FACSIMILE PHOTOGRAPHIC PUBLICATIONS



R. W. LISLE
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Introducing a facsimile reproduction of the rare and historic French

DAGUERRETYPE MANUAL OF 1839

which introduced photography to the world. A limited edition of individually numbered copies is available for the serious photographic historian and collector.

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LETTERS TO A PHOTOGRAPHIC FRIEND.
Approximately 70pp, with an appreciation by John S. Craig. 5½x8½ inches. A series of letters originally published in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF PHOTOGRAPHY in 1860, written by an amateur photographer touring the camera stores of Greater London. A rare and unique look at the apparatus of the time, illustrated with numerous line drawings. Offering wonderful insights to the state of photography in 1860. An unusual find.

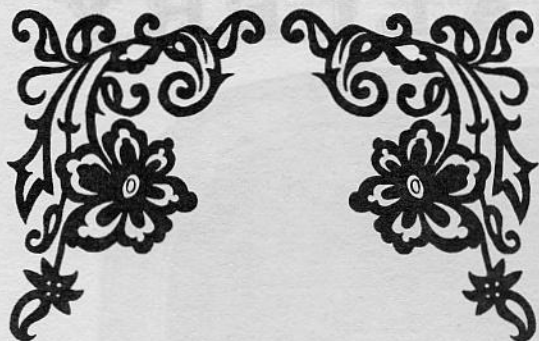
PRICE: \$4.00

PLOUGHSHARE PAPERS
P. O. Box 123
Sea Bright, N. J. 07760

DOUBLE EXPOSURE
Early Stereographic Views
of Historic Monmouth County, New Jersey
and Their Relationship to Pioneer Photography
by
George H. Moss Jr.
Foreword by Carlin Gasteyer

DOUBLE EXPOSURE, a book about photography and Monmouth County history is designed for the layman as well as the professional historian. The once popular but long neglected stereography (three-dimensional photograph) is the primary subject of this unique study.

Limited Edition 9 x 12 format 176 Pages
Book is printed in sepia on 80 pound matte finish offset stock. The type style is Clarendon. Full cloth cover and dust jacket. List Price \$12.95.



A Treatise on
HELIOCHROMY

by L. L. Hill



THE CARNATION PRESS
P. O. Box 101
State College, Pa. 16801

Now available: beautiful facsimile edition of
A TREATISE ON HELIOCHROMY
by L. L. Hill

The original (1856), was the first book ever produced on color photography. It also contains autobiographic material and information on contemporary photographic practice.

175 + viii + 10 pages, hard bound, with diestampings similar to those on the original. Frontispiece: portrait of Hill, taken from the *Daguerreian Journal*. INSB 0-87601-005-2, Library of Congress No. 71-173025. Price \$8.50 plus 25¢ postage and handling.

One other photographic reprint is in preparation for Fall 1972: it is Cuthbert Bede's **Photographic Pleasures** (London, 1855).

Price to be announced.

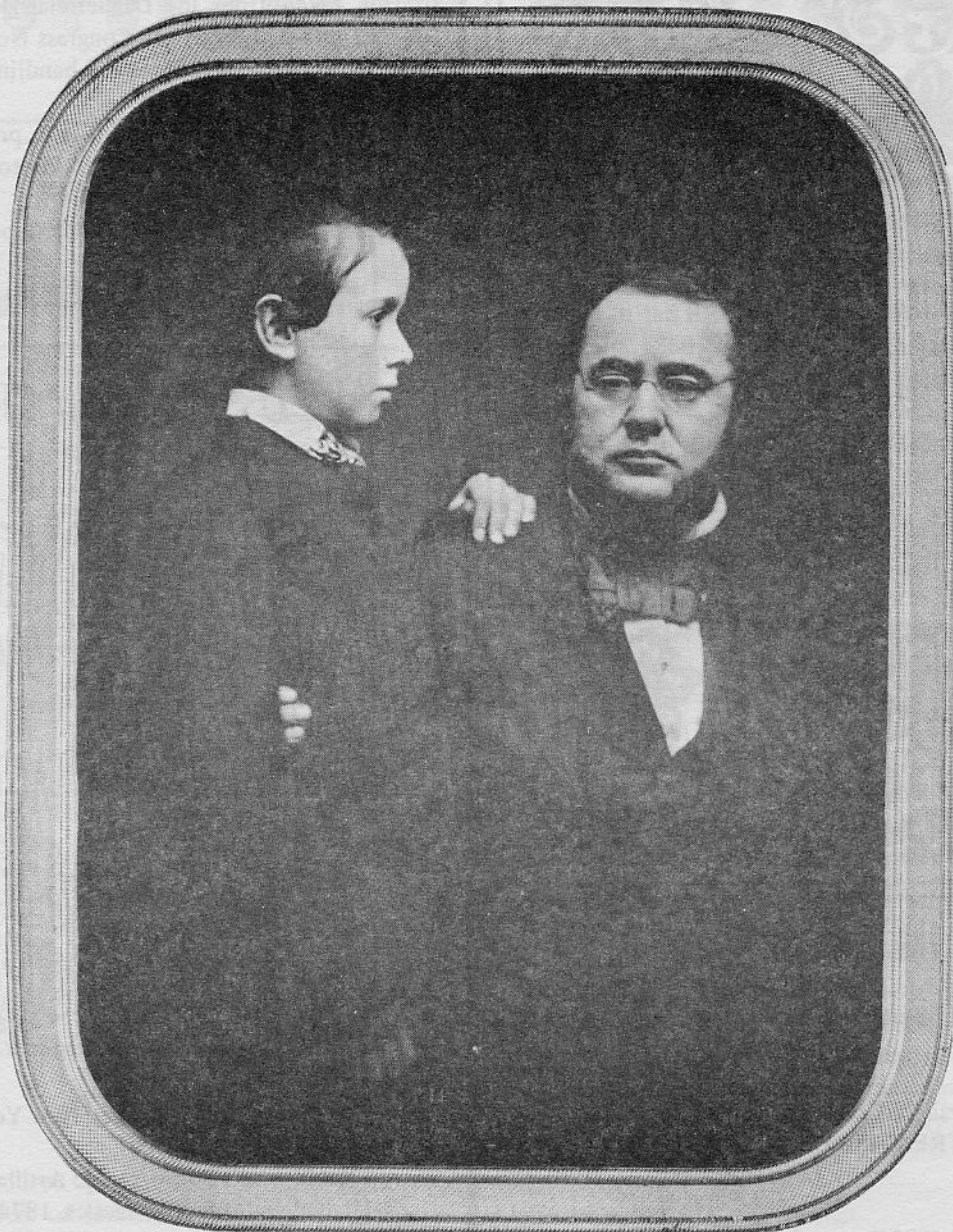


Harvey S. Zucker, 224 5th Ave., New York, N. Y.

Roekwood's Photographic Artillery
Manual and Infantry Tactics, 1874-75
by George G. Rockwood, Price \$1.50

To be continued in the next issue of the N.D.J.

IMAGE GALLERY



Mr. Edwin Stanton with his son Eddie,
published here for the first time
from the Isadore Duncan collection.

Family Daguerreotypes, found every where.



Grand Pa.



Grand Ma.



Pa and Ma before Marriage.



Pa and Ma after Marriage.



The Baby !!



Little Tommy and Sis !



Brother John.



Sister Mary Ann, who writes Poetry.

DAGUERREIAN ARTISTS IN TENNESSEE

By Ellen Beasley

The following list of daguerreotypists working in Tennessee is based upon the 1850 general census for the state, the 1857 **Nashville Business Directory**, compiled by The Rev. John P. Campbell, and miscellaneous newspaper advertisements.

The 1850 census contains the most useful information. Of the nineteen daguerreian artists working in Tennessee in that year, only five had been born in the state. The average age was about 28. Twelve men were listed under other families or households, many of these being either inns or boarding houses and suggesting that the majority were itinerant artists. The 1850 census frequently referred to the county, rather than the town, in which a man lived.

Adams, D., Nashville, 1850-1857, engraver and daguerreotypist. Born in Ireland, aged 40 in 1850.

Adams, Thaddeus, McNairy County, 1850. Born in Tennessee, aged 21.

Adams, William G., Memphis, 1850, Born in Ireland, aged 36.

Bailey, T.I., Columbia, 1857.

Bobo, H. F., Robertson County, 1850. Born in Tennessee, aged 26.

Bumpass, Green L., Henry County, 1850. Born in Kentucky, aged 38.

Byington, A.S., Nashville, 1857, firm of Giers and Byington.

Carr, Y.A., Memphis, 1850-1857. Born in Alabama, aged 30.

Clark, F. H., Memphis, 1857. Appeared as early as the 1840's as a silversmith and jeweler.

Clemerson, Daniel, McMinn County, 1850. Born in Georgetown, D.C., aged 23.

Crawford, William, Trenton, 1850. Born in Tennessee, aged 28.

Dale, Thomas, Robertson County, 1850. Born in Tennessee, aged 37.

David, Amos, Fayette County, 1850. Born in Virginia, aged 56.

Deshong, W.H., Memphis, 1857.

Duke, M., Clarksville, 1857.

Ganaway, B.Z., Shelbyville, 1857.

Giers, C.C., Nashville, 1857, firm of Giers and Byington.

Gray, J.C., Murfreesboro, 1857, ambrotype gallery.

Guthrie, Jno. T., Hamilton County, 1850. Born in New York, aged 32.

Hughes brothers, C.C. and F.N., Nashville, 1857.

Keen, L.W., Sullivan County, 1850. Born in Tennessee, aged 26.

Larcombe, A., Nashville, 1857, ambrotypist.

Lawrence, William, Blount County, 1850. Born in Ohio, aged 22.

McCormac, W.J., Clarksville, 1857.

McCowat, P.C., Jackson, 1845-1850. Born in Virginia, aged 31

Advertised in **West Tennessee Whig**, June 13, 1845: "Daguerreotype Likenesses. The Subscriber is prepared, by means of the best description of apparatus hitherto constructed, and late improvements in operating, to take **Daguerreotype Likenesses**, which for elegance of finish and accuracy of delineation, cannot be surpassed—excelling in the latter most important particular the **CREF D'OEOVRE** of the most celebrated artists."

McIver, first name unknown, Jonesboro, 1846. Advertised in Jonesboro newspaper, **Old Hickory**, June 6, 1846: "MESSRS' [STEARN] & McIVER ... In addition to the old plan of taking Daguerreotype pictures, ...have acquired the art of **GILDING AND COLORING**, which imparts to their work that permanency, which all former work of the kind did not possess."

Mason, James H., Maury County, 1850. Born in Rhode Island, aged 23.

Moore, first name unknown, Nashville, 1841. According to W.W. Clayton's **History of Davidson County, Tennessee** (Philadelphia, 1880), "the first daguerreotype likenesses taken in the city were by an artist named Moore, who stopped at the Union Hall Hotel, in 1841, and had quite a run of custom."

Morrison, William H., Bedford County, 1850. Born in Alabama, aged 18.

Moss, James, Sumner County, 1850, listed as "photographer." Born in England, aged 25.

Park, first name unknown, Memphis, 1857, firm of Park and Peplow.

Patterson, L.G., White County, 1850. Born in New York, aged 31.

Peplow, first name unknown, Memphis, 1857, firm of Park and Peplow.

Smiley, T.H., Knoxville, 1857.

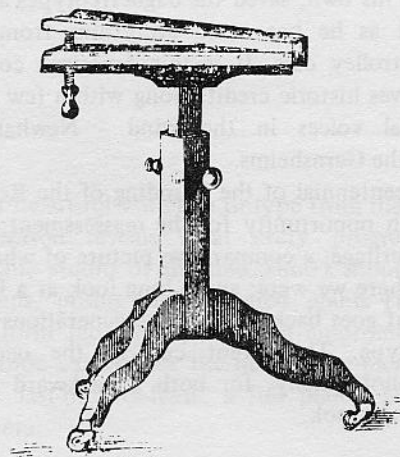
[Stern], first name unknown, Jonesboro, 1846. See McIver.

Stewart, Alvin, Greeneville, 1850. Born in Virginia, aged 26.

Thomas, William H., Columbia, 1848-1950. Born in North Carolina, aged 40. Several advertisements appeared in the **Columbia Recorder**, including the following, August 24, 1849: "THE splendid German camera has come to hand!!! and also a splendid lot of plates and cases. The very liberal patronage I have received has induced me to locate permanently. I therefore warrant all pictures to be taken with the best materials; that will not tarnish, change or spot on the likeness. All are invited to call and examine specimens. My likenesses shall not be surpassed."

Vanstavoran, J.H., Columbia, 1857.

Weeks, Dr. G. H., Greeneville, 1851. Advertised in **The Greeneville Spy**, September 18, 1851: "...He has fitted up A SKY LIGHT GALLERY for taking LIKENESSES in a proper manner. All are invited to call and view his pictures. — Those having light eyes can have a good likeness. Locketts and pins on hand."



25 Cent Daguerreotypes,
AT THE
PLUMBE NATIONAL
DAGUERRIAN GALLERY,
No. 75 COURT STREET,
The Oldest Establishment of the kind in
New England.
FOUNDED 1840.
W. B. Eastman & Co. Proprietors.
Copying and all that pertains to the Art. done
at Low PRICES

THE DAGUERRETYPE

A curious application of the Daguerreotype, is to be made at the opening of the railroad to Courtrai, Belgium, if the weather be favourable. The camera obscura is to be placed on an eminence commanding the royal pavilion, the locomotive engine, the train of wagons, and the major part of the *cortege*, and is to be brought into action exactly at the time of the delivery of the inauguration speech. A discharge of cannon is to be the signal for a general immobility, which is to last the seven minutes necessary for obtaining a good immobility, which is to last the seven minutes necessary for obtaining a good representation of all the personages present. The plate is afterwards to be enclosed in lead and deposited under the first stone of the foundation of the station at Courtrai.

Mining Jour.

From: the Journal of the Franklin
Institute of the State of Pa. and
Mechanics Register
April 1840



The Daguerreotype and the American Dream

by

Robert W. Wagner

As we approach the 200th anniversary of the American Dream, one may anticipate a time of national "nostalgia," a word stemming from the Greek "nostos" - meaning to return home. The photograph, and especially the daguerreotype, it may be reliably predicted, will finally be recognized as indispensable in the burgeoning field of American Studies, and as a tremendously significant but little known chapter in the American heritage. The result will be an energetic dusting off of the Family Album.

More than two-thirds of the history of this nation has been photographed, including portraits of every President beginning with John Quincy Adams, with the exception of William Henry Harrison who died during his first month in office and whose only claim to fame as Chief Executive might well turn out to be that he was **not** photographed by Brady.

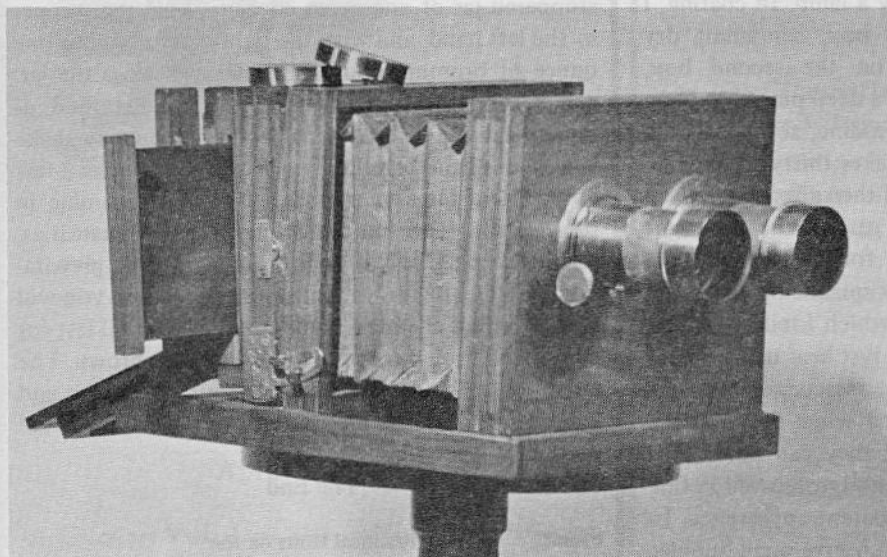
For some twenty years the daguerreotype, "the mirror with a memory" as Oliver Wendell Holmes described it, established a unique link with our

national past; a concrete image of what was to be called "the American Dream;" a reflection of an age of innocence and early pride in simple dignity and self (often embellished with plaster props and painted bookshelves, but also rich in details of front porches and streets and portraits of a people on the move, even though immobilized for an instant by "the Professor" with a camera).

Little of this early photographic heritage, however, would exist today had the task been left solely to the historian, the academician, or even to the photographer himself. It was "the collector" who, for reasons of his own, saved the daguerreotypes and the equipment as he has saved everything from shoe-horns to trolley cars. It is this American collector who deserves historic credit, along with a few strong professional voices in the wind - Newhall, the Rinharts, the Gernsheims.

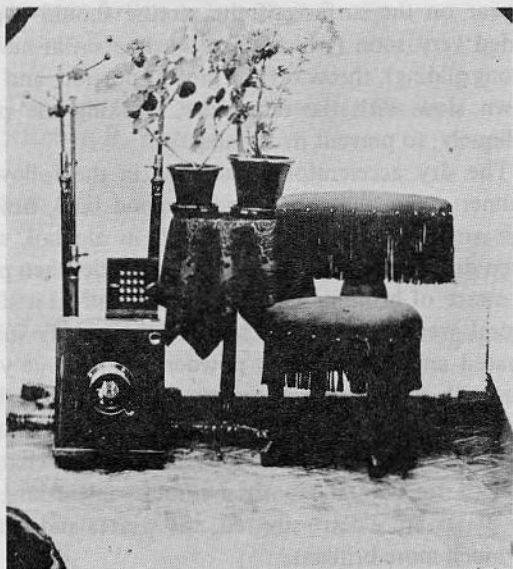
The Bicentennial of the founding of the Republic provides an opportunity for the reassessment of our national heritage; a comparative picture of where we are and where we were; and a long look at a Family Album that goes back at least five generations to the daguerreotype. This event can be the occasion, through photography, for **both** a backward glance and a forward look.

SHOW & TELL



From the Robert Lisle collection: A wholeplate stereo camera without the usual manufacturer's plate but equipped with lenses by Famin of Paris. It would seem that it is a late Daguerreotype or an early wet plate design of the mid 1850's.

This beautiful 9th plate tintype from the Alan Weiner collection reveals what every progressive photographic studio of the mid 1860's should own. Head clamps, posing chair, potted plants (for decor), a platform table complete with embroidered cover, a 16 tube camera for the new penny-picture tintypes, and last-but-not-least a full plate Daguerreotype camera.



AMERICAN DAGUERRETYPE PROCESS

In cleaning plates, I have invariably found cotton flannel, or cotton, finely prepared rotten-stone, and water, the best. I believe water impregnated with acids of any kind to be injurious to the plate, and adds greatly in giving that filmy appearance so often observed. I attribute my success almost entirely to the use of simple water. For buffing, I use prepared buckskin and rouge. Be careful and keep them dry; for which purpose, in damp weather, I use a sheet-iron oven, kept warm by a lamp. In coating, I tinge the plate over the first box, containing dry iodine, to a deep orange; on the second box, containing a dry accelerator, to a deep purple or plum colour; then repass it over the iodine, about half the time; for instance, suppose it takes thirty seconds on the iodine in the first coating, I then give it about ten to fifteen the last time. Be careful that no light attacks it; it is then ready for the camera. In mercurializing I always keep my spirit lamp under the bath kept at a moderate heat, which I tell by placing my hand on the pan which will just bear it. There is a decided advantage in keeping the mercury at the same temperature; many heat up, and when they put the plate on, take away the lamp; they can never thus obtain that peculiar texture or body observed in fine pictures, but have a thin transparent appearance. In gilding, I heat gradually until I observe small bubbles appear on the surface; if the picture should appear gilded very soon (which will often happen in new or strong gilding), throw off the greater portion, and gild down slow with the remainder, working the plate obliquely, to prevent its staining.

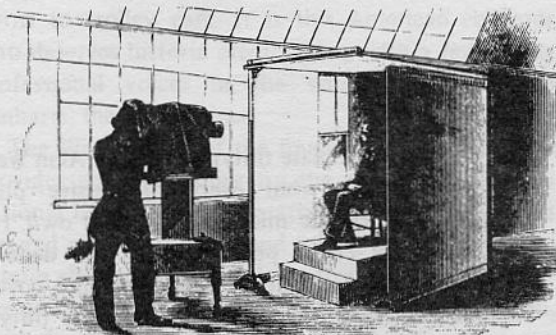
The dry accelerator is prepared in the following manner: take about a pound of good lime, broken into small pieces, saturate it well in alcohol, and, when dry, put it in a glass-stoppered bottle; then pour an ounce of bromine on it, seal it up, and let it stand several weeks, until they become thoroughly incorporated and reduced to a powder; then charge your plan with a third or half the quantity. The advantage of this preparation is its uniformity and lasting quality compared to Quickstuffs; a plan well charged will last for several months without replenishing. If the plates are electro-silvered, the whites and blacks are much more brilliant.

I also append my method of preparing the lime, which enables me to use it a few days after preparation instead of a few weeks: Take half a pound of fresh unslaked lime, dip it in water, and let it imbibe one minute, then place it on a plate, and cover it with a basin; it will soon fall into a fine powder; Dry this hydrate, and sprinkle it with alcohol, stirring it until it is quite moist; permit it once more to dry, and then put it into a glass-stoppered jar of one quart capacity, hold the stopper in the left hand, and with the right carefully pour one ounce of bromine upon the lime, well close the jar, and permit it to remain a short time undisturbed, as much heat will be evolved; when cool, you may shake it well until the combination is perfect. If after a few hours there remains any free vapour of bromine in the jar, add more prepared lime in small quantities, shaking it until this vapour disappears. This preparation may be used on the following day, when you will have a perfect chemical compound, which will last for many months; its colour will be a reddish brown. The operation should be performed out of doors, and great caution should be used not to inhale any of the vapour, as it is highly poisonous.

The End

From:

Practical Hints on the
Daguerreotype
by J. H. Croucher





ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Just received the latest copy of the NDJ and am greatly impressed on how the quality has gone up.

Just a quick question. Where did you get your information that Gurney took a photograph of Lincoln alive? I know of no such record.

Bruce Duncan
Duncan Galleries
144 S. Happ Rd., Northfield, Illinois 60093

I must take exception to some of the statements printed in your recent article on Jeremiah Gurney. As a Lincoln student who specializes in photographica, I found several significant errors in that piece.

First, Lincoln was **not** the subject of a multitude of Daguerrotypists, as suggested by the anonymous author of the Gurney article. Neither Nessler nor Brady ever took a known daguerreotype of Abraham Lincoln. Both men, of course, **photographed** Mr. Lincoln, but not with a daguerrian camera. Only Nicholas Shepherd, in 1846, and Polycarp von Schneidau, in 1858, took daguerreotypes of Lincoln that have been accepted as valid by the Lincoln scholars.

Second, Gurney was **not** the last man to photograph Abraham Lincoln alive. That honor fell to Alexander Gardner, whose studio Lincoln visited April 9, 1965. He died six days later.

And third, the famous daguerrotypist Jeremiah Gurney was **not** the man who took the celebrated photo of Lincoln in his coffin in New York City in 1865. That distinction belonged to the firm of Gurney & Sons, and is generally attributed to Jeremiah Gurney, Jr. (see Lorant's **Lincoln: A Picture Story of His Life**, Third Edition, Page 274.

Those of us in New York who have become familiar enough with the Gurney technique to appreciate his genius respect and admire this pioneer photographer, and feel his true work represents him well enough to make it unnecessary to grant him false accomplishments in order to build his stature.

Harold Holzer
372 Central Park West
New York, New York 10025

Mr. Duncan and Mr. Holzer are correct in that Alex Gardner and not Jeremiah Gurney was the last to photograph President Lincoln alive. The editor will here after double check his notes no matter how pushed to meet deadlines. Thank you gentlemen for your constructive criticism.

Walter Johnson

Thank you for sending me a copy of issue No. 4 of your Journal, which I think is a very intriguing idea and should have wide circulation among collectors. I am not really a collector, but I enjoy good ideas, hence please find enclosed a check for \$10 to cover a year's subscription. But I **would** like to have it start with the first issue (your fourth is the first I've seen) and I would appreciate your sending the issues unfolded (flat) as becomes a collecting item. Right?

Incidentally, I'm enclosing a copy of the current issue of my PHOTO REPORTER newsletter in case you don't see it.

With all good wishes for the success of your fine venture.

Yours sincerely,
Jacob Deschin
Editor, The Photo Reporter
Director, Discovery Galleries



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