

THE NEW DAGUERREIAN JOURNAL:

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



Daguerre



Daguerreotype by A.M. Allen, collection of Josephine Cobb.



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Daguerreotype ¼ plate, collection of Donald P. Kokuta.

MIRROR IMAGES OF CHILDHOOD

by Floyd and Marion Rinhart

Nothing is so delightful in the realm of nineteenth century Americana as to view the relaxed images of childhood reflected on the highly-buffed silvered surfaces of early daguerreotype photographs. The creators of these mirror-images were men of multiple talents—master psychologists, story tellers, artists, business men, and chemists—for as in a painting the daguerreotype depended largely for its beauty upon artistry, chemical knowledge, and experience. Each technique used by the daguerreian to produce his art—posing, lighting, sensitizing the plate, timing, mercury bath manipulation—left a touch of individual craftsmanship. Each daguerreotype was one of a kind as it had to be re-photographed for a copy to be made.

Photography had been born in an age of invention and men such as artist-inventor Samuel F. B. Morse were fascinated by the future potential of the art. When the Frenchman Daguerre's photography process arrived in America in the fall of 1839, experiments began at once to improve the basic process so that portraits from life could be taken.

With improved chemical techniques and better photographic apparatus, portraiture became a reality. Samuel Morse, for one, began teaching the art of the daguerreotype and also began taking daguerreotype portraits in 1840 at his studio in New York City. The summer of 1840 saw a number of Americans being photographed and by the mid-1840's well equipped daguerreian galleries, having skylights and other refinements, had been established not only in the cities but in many small towns across the country. Many daguerreotypists traveled about the country in make-shift wagons, bringing their cameras to isolated rural areas. Sometimes an itinerant daguerreotypist would spend a few days or even a month in a locality if business were brisk. It had become the fashion in America to have a portrait taken, and it seemed for a time that the pioneer daguerreians were intent upon photographing every man, woman, and child in the country!

Photographing adults had become routine but to photograph children was an art in itself—a difficult task for the photographer but one rewarding financially. In an age when death was a familiar visitor, especially to children, parents were painfully aware that it was important to preserve the fleeting image of childhood. Many pencilled notations in the rear inside of a daguerreotype case show this to be only too true.

Daguerreotypist advertised their special ability to take young children's portraits—the hours suggested were always between ten and two on a clear day. The primary reason for the regimented time and ideal weather was that the light was the strongest between those hours and an instantaneous impression could be taken. Also, it was possibly meant as a warning to those who did not wish to be in a waiting room with restless children! Mathew Brady, famous Broadway photographer and later famous for his Civil War views, had a room designed especially for taking portraits of children in his new and fabulous New York gallery which opened in 1853 at 359 Broadway. In referring to the children's room he advertised: "We have never seen anything finer than the tone of light..."

If a photographer doubted that the child would keep still, the little one was placed closer to the window and the screen was brought closer. By doing this and also by placing a white muslin cloth suspended above the child's head the time exposure required could be cut by one-third. If a child did move, or if the daguerreotype plate became exposed to the light, it was restored to its original sensitivity by placing over an accelerator (called the quick) for one or two seconds. Henry Hunt Snelling in his book, **The History and Practice of the Art of Photograph** (1849), advised that Chloride of Bromine was a very sensitive solution and "by means of it daguerreotype proofs are obtained in half a second, and thus very fugitive subjects are represented, making it the very best compound for taking children." Sometimes daguerreians advertised the exact time it took to photograph children. Plongeon's Daguerrean Rooms in San Francisco, advertised in 1855: "...good pictures of Infants which he succeeds in taking in good

style in two seconds." In Nashville, Tennessee, Daniel Adams, famous for taking a last picture of Andrew Jackson, advertised in 1859: "Pictures of children taken in one second."

Although speed and correct lighting were important in photographing a child, so was the matter of proportion. Children's heads being larger in proportion to the rest of the body posed a problem when photographing at close range, especially if the camera looked down on the child. In some cases it produced a large head and dwarfed figure. The simple remedy was for the photographer to use a low stand for his camera or to elevate the child so that his lens could be at least parallel to the face.

Besides their practical methods for photographing children, the daguerreians and later photographers must have been men of great charm and ingenuity to hold the attention of his young sitters. Children were often posed holding flowers or simple toys. But—how did the daguerreotypists inspire the rapt look on some of the children's faces—was he or an assistant holding something intriguing while taking the picture? It was recorded by a visitor in one country gallery that the proprietor had what was called a "singing bird" jumping jack for the amusement of children who responded with "wide open eyes and wide open mouths." Marcus Root in his book, *The Camera and the Pencil* (1864), wrote about the problems of photographing children and stressed the importance of having patience and he advised: "no effort should be spared for producing a pleasing picture of them...Therefore, I would advise the operant to indulge and play with them, and strive thus to win their confidence and good-will."

The daguerreian artist of mid-nineteenth century must have communicated with his young sitters because the charm and personality of the children viewed on the mirror surfaces of the daguerreotype reflect a vital and affluent era in American history, an age not yet torn asunder by a great Civil War.



Tintype 1/6 plate.

THE WIFE

BY ELIZABETH OKES SMITH,

All day, like a bright bird, content to sing
 In its small cage, she moveth to and fro,
 And ever and anon will upward spring
 To her sweet lips, fresh from the fount below,
 The murmured melody of pleasant thought,
 Unconscious uttered, gentle-toned and low.
 Light household duties, evermore enwrought

With placid fancies of one noble heart,
 That liveth in her smile, and hither turns
 From life's cold seeming, and the busy mart,
 With tenderness that homeward ever yearns
 To be refreshed where that pure altar burns,
 Shut our from hence the mockery of life,
 Thus liveth she content, the meek, fond, trusting Wife.

A PICTORIAL REVIEW OF

THE VICTORIAN CHILD



Daguerreotype, collection of Cathy and Allan Raymond.



Daguerreotype, collection of George Reinhart.

OUR DOG

Have you a dog—a frisky dog,
 A dog that runs and plays,
 With laughter in his roguish eyes,
 And lively, cunning ways?
 Cross dogs have never any friends,
 They snap and growl and fight,
 They frighten people all the day,
 And then bark all the night.

Our Rover wouldn't do such things,
 For that is not his way,
 He's good and kind, no matter what
 The pesky neighbors say.
 He jumps at children in the street,
 And makes them run and cry,
 But this he wouldn't do, you know,
 If they weren't going by.

He sprang at Mr. Jones one day,
 And bit him in the calf,
 But didn't take it all away,
 No, not so much as half,
 Now Rover—this we all declared—
 Just meant it for a bluff,
 And Jones got bitten, all because
 He wasn't spry enough.

But we are not to blame for that,
 And I would like to say
 'Tis not our fault if people can't
 Get out of Rover's way.
 The neighbors needn't make a fuss,
 And fling at us their slurs;
 I'm bound to tell them that *their* dogs
 Are horrid, low-bred curs.

Next door to us there is a yard
 With chickens all about;
 Our dog jumped in and killed a few,
 And put the rest to rout;
 The neighbor said that Rover was
 A vulgar, vicious pup—
 But if he want to keep his chicks,
 Why don't he shut them up?

Our Rover tore Miss Prim's silk dress,
 And, *she* says, threw her down;
 Well, why did she go sailing round
 In that bran-new silk gown;
 She might have walked down past our house
 In a much cheaper dress;
 Some people act like simpletons,
 I really must Confess,

Why, Rover — so we have been told—
 Has got a pedigree;
 I don't know what that is, but guess
 It's what you seldom see;
 Now, what a slander 'tis to say
 Our dog will snarl and bite—
 A dog that has a pedigree,
 Would surely be polite.

And then, our Rover is so cute—
 He never hears a word;
 When told to stop his boisterous noise,
 He thinks 'twould be absurd.
 So I would have you understand—
 And you may put it down—
 We've got the beau-ti-ful-est dog
 That you can find in town.

Henry Davenport



PEEFER
 Photographer.

228 & 232 S. HIGH St.,
 COLUMBUS, O.

Indica

Broadway
 Gallery.

Lancaster, O.



Tintype ½ plate.



Daguerreotype 1/6 plate by S. B. Barnaby, Dayton, Ohio.

THOU'RT LIKE THY MOTHER, CHILD

Thou'rt like thy mother, fair and gentle child;
Her beauty is revealed upon thy cheek:
Thine eye is hers; it is as soft and mild,
And at the touch of grief as sadly meek;
Ay, thou'rt like her, child.

The same soft, curly tresses shade thy brow,
And on thy lips rests the same merry smile;
As glad a laugh, as arch a glance hast thou,
A voice as musical to soothe or wile;
Thou'rt *very* like her, child.

The blush will steal as freely and as bright
 To thy fair cheek at coarse or hasty words
 And gentle tones will yield as sweet delight
 To her or thy heart as the songs of birds;
 Indeed, thou'rt like her, child.

But more in spirit than in looks, my child;
 Thou hast her gentleness, her deep, true love,
 Her tender sadness, mournful and yet milk,
 The very spirit of a turtle dove:
 I'm glad thou'rt like her, child.

Thou has the promise of her eloquence,
 Her ardent temper, gentle and yet warm,
 Her love of beauty, and exquisite sense
 Of hidden intellect in every form;
 Thou art *all* like her, child.



Ambrotype 1/6 plate



Daguerreotype 1/6 plate

When pain and wretchedness are met by thee,
 Thou art as eager to relieve and bless;
 And not a wounded floweret canst thou see,
 But thou wilt stoop to it with soft caress;
 In *this* thou'rt like her, child.

Thou hast my deep and never-faltering love,
 My sleepless and forever trembling care:
 I ask for thee rich blessings from above,
 And plead thy wants in many a fervent prayer:
 Here art thou like her, child.

And wilt thou ever be, as she has been,
 Faithful and tender to my trustful love?
 And wilt thou turn aside from pride and sin,
 And life thy spirit undefiled above?
 Be like her **HERE**, my child!



Daguerreotype 1/6 plate by W. R. Matthews.



Daguerreotype 1/6 plate, collection of Donald P. Lokuta.



Daguerreotype ¼ plate, collection of Donald P. Lokuta.

THE LITTLE ANGEL

Right into our house one day,
 A dear little angel came;
 I ran to him, and said softly,
 "Little angel, what is your name?"

He said not a word in answer,
 But smiles a beautiful smile,
 Then I said: "May I go home with you?
 Shall you go in a little while?"

But mamma said: "Dear little angel,
 Don't leave us! O, always stay!
 We will all of us love you dearly!
 Sweet angel! O, don't go away!"

So he stayed, and he stayed, and we loved him,
 As we could not have loved another
 Do you want to know what his name is?
 His name is—*my little brother!*



Tintype, Carte-de-Visite size.

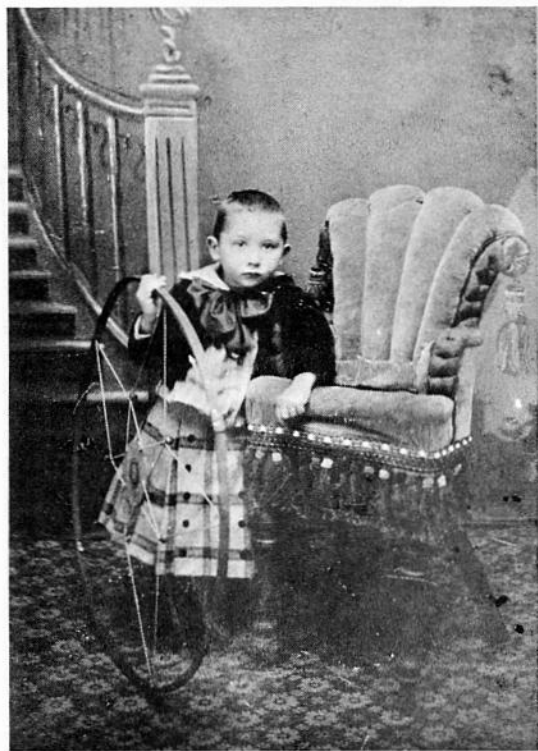


TOO BAD

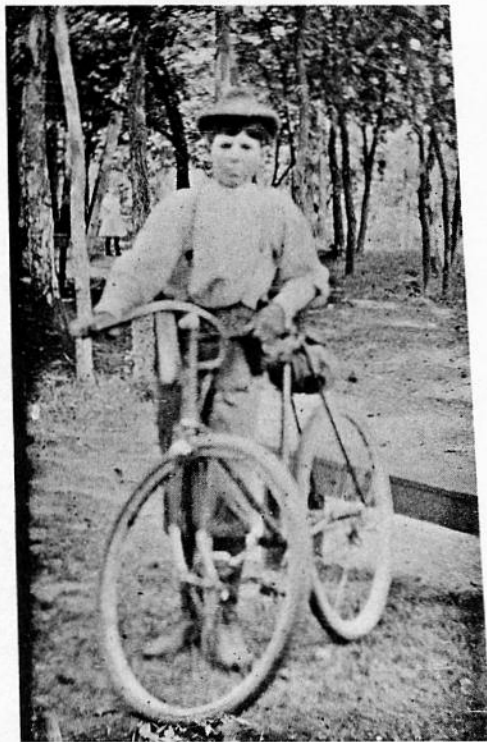
Nothing to do but work,
 Nothing to eat but food
 Nothing to wear but clothes
 To keep one from going nude.

Nothing to breathe but air;
 Quick as a flash 'tis gone;
 Nowhere to fall but off,
 Nowhere to stand but on.

Nothing to comb but hair,
 Nowhere to sleep but in bed,
 Nothing to weep but tears,
 Nothing to bury but dead.



Charles
 Carnahan



Tintype, gem size.

Nothing to sing but songs,
 Ah, well, alas! Alack!
 Nowhere to go but out,
 Nowhere to come but back.

Nothing to see but sights,
 Nothing to quench but thirst,
 Nothing to have but what we've got,
 Thus through life we are cursed.

Nothing to strike but a gait,
 Everything moves that goes,
 Nothing at all but common sense
 Can ever withstand these woes.



Breuner



Bucyrus, O.



W. S. BEEBE,

OWOSSO, MICH.





Daguerreotype 1/6 plate.

VICTORIAS' CHILDREN

*Frailful, flighty young heartbeats stifled
Into sternly magicless manhood or
Creped and satined vestal dolly-dom:
Birdy-perched on pedestals.*

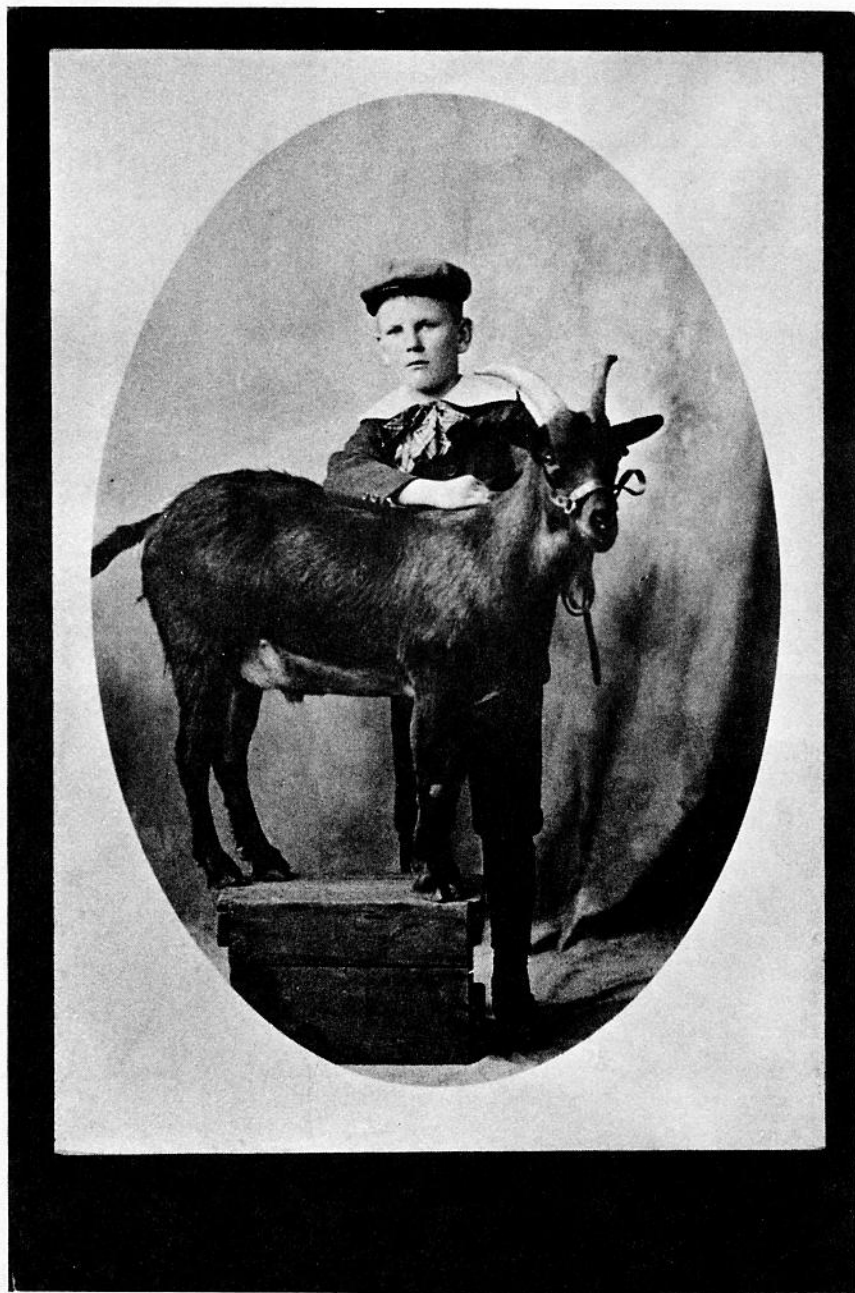
*Pornographically ashenlike faces of
Childhood unaged-
Stacked on the shelf in their youthfulness,
As is cheap Ripple wine.*

*Attempted premature pervision into adultery
Endowment by funless nannies and mothers
In the name of the Queen or
Their own speical style neuroses.*

*But ah, with impli ke eyes still peering
Precociously through the guilt-laiden past
That now, even they know is over,
These were Victorias' children...*

*...the fathers and mothers
Of a new time.*

*-Michael Sanders
1-14-75*



Cabinet card by Triplett, Bluffton, Ohio.

RUNNING A RACE

A LITTLE tear and a little smile set out to run a race;
We watched them closely all the while; their
course was baby's face.

The little tear he got the start; we really feared he'd
win;
He ran so fast and made a dart straight for the
dimpled chin.

But somehow—it was very queer; we watched them
all the while
The little shining, fretful tear, got beaten by the
smile.

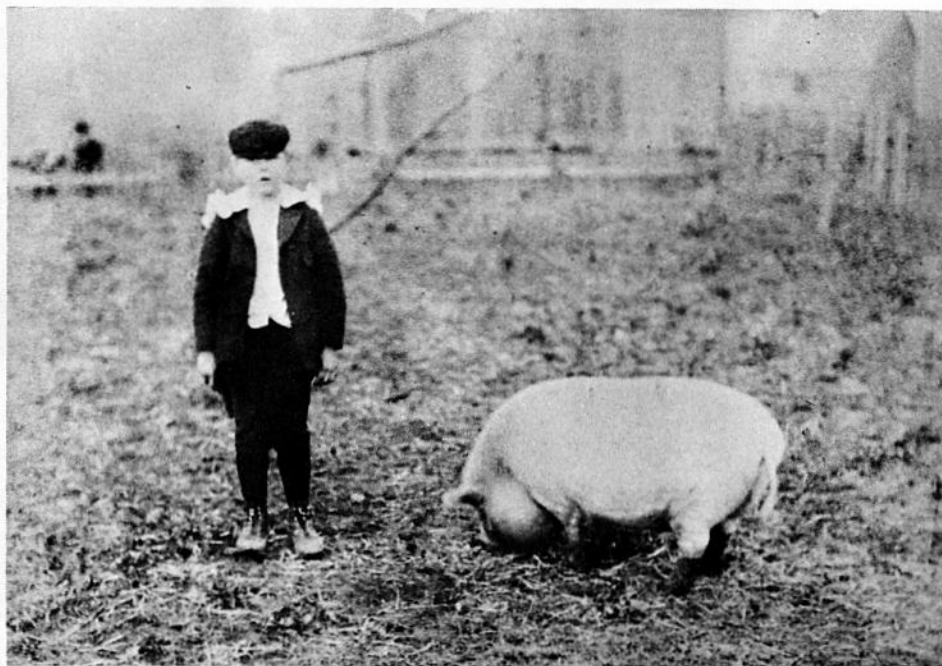


Tintype, carte-de-viste size.

Sargent,



186 EAST MAIN ST.
CHILLICOTHE, O.





Carte-de-Visite by O.C. Simmons, Butler, Indiana.

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"Sowing Wild Oats"



Carte-de-Visite by L. W. Roberts, Urbana, Ohio

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