

Langenheim: "View of Niagara Falls," 1846

(keywords: Augustus de Vaudricourt, William Langenheim, Frederick Langenheim, Clifton House, Falls of Niagara, Niagara Falls, J. De Tivoli, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

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Published in:

De Tivoli, J., *A Guide to The Falls of Niagara, by L. De Tivoli, with a Splendid Lithographic View, by A. Vaudricourt, from a Daguerreotype of F. Langheneim* [Langenheim—edit.] (New-York: Burgess, Stringer and Co., 1846). The lithograph is attached to the volume prior to the title page and folds continuously into itself from left to right.

[selected text, page 5:]

In offering to the public the annexed lithographic view of the Falls of Niagara, we can only present a faint copy of the sublime scene, yet one as true to nature in the *tout ensemble*, and as accurate in its details as can possibly be. The body is there, but the soul has fled. For, although to render the work perfect the publishers have availed themselves of the admirable art of Daguerreotype, which, in the hands of a skilful operator cannot be surpassed in copying the beauties of nature, yet the animation which pervades the whole scene must necessarily be lost. We dare affirm, however, that all that could possibly be done has been done; and as a guide to the visitor, and to the memory of those who have once visited the falls, the annexed lithograph will prove invaluable.

[selected text, page 10:]

The Clifton House is a large and splendid Hotel with every convenience for the accommodation of strangers. It stands on the brow of the bank near the ferry, and commands a magnificent view of the glorious cataract.

From this place has been taken by Mr. Langheneim [Langenheim—edit.] the beautiful Daguerreotype view which we present to the public, lithographed by A. Vaudricourt.



[text below lithograph:]

On stone by A. Vaudricourt, 140 Nassau St. N.Y / From a daguerreotype by W. & F. Langenheim. / Printed by F. Michelin, 111 Nassau St.

[End of text.]

The graphic is also available in JPG format:

http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/graphics/B8460001_FALLS-NIAGARA_1846.html

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The lithograph artist is Augustus de Vaudricourt. Vaudricourt would later briefly serve in the Mexican Boundary Survey. The Boston Athenaeum possesses two other lithographs by Vaudricourt which are viewable (search term: "Vaudricourt") in their online catalogue, *Athena*.¹ Vaudricourt is mentioned in Frank H Severance, *Studies of the Niagara Frontier* (Buffalo Historical Society Publications Volume 15) (Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society, 1911): 132:

Of American artists whose Niagara studies were lithographed, may be mentioned A. Vaudricourt, whose interesting lithographic views of the cataract (1845-46) occur in various forms, sometimes small, but best about 30 by 14 inches. Vaudricourt is said to have utilized for his drawings the daguerreotypes of F. Langheim [Langenehim—edit.]. Is there any other instance of the employment of the daguerreotype in landscape work? Woodcuts made from Langheim's daguerreotypes of Niagara are to be found in Appleton's Guide.²

One, perhaps two, panoramic sets of Niagara by the Langenheim brothers are extant. One set of five sixth-plate daguerreotypes, framed with decorative mat, is in the collection of Metropolitan Museum (formerly Gilman Paper Collection.) The editor is informed that another set is in an institutional collection in Germany, but no reproduction of that set is readily available for comparison. For a reproduction of the set in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum, See Wood, John, *The Scenic Daguerreotype* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995):[unnumbered pages prior to the title page.]

The lithograph is also known as a separately-issued print with title and border, with additional sky area, issued 1845. The print is viewable on the Library of Congress web site, *Prints & Photographs Online Catalog*.³ The lithograph bears the title, "Panoramic View of Niagara Falls / Taken from the Clifton House, Canada side."

The Langenheim views of Niagara are discussed in Julius F. Sachse, "Philadelphia's Share in the Development of Photography," *Journal of the Franklin Institute* (Philadelphia) 135:4 (April 1893): 271–87.⁴ Sachse states that copies were sent to Daguerre, the President of the United States, the King of Saxony, Frederick of Prussia, the King of Wurtemberg, and Queen Victoria. Sachse provides transcripts of acknowledgements from both Daguerre and Victoria.

1. <http://www.bostonathenaeum.org/webvoy.htm>

2. See William Williams, *Appleton's New and Complete United States Guide Book for Travellers* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850): 210, 213. The small wood engraving illustrations, however, do not exhibit any specific visual indication of being based on a daguerreotype.

3. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pgs.02953>

4. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8930001_SACHSE_JFI_1893-04.pdf

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Graphic details:

lithograph, 71.4 x 19.0 cm.

sheet: 73.0 x 20.0 cm

A high-resolution TIF-format file may be available. Contact the Archive for details.

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