

Thomas H. Prescott, "M. Daguerre," 1856

(keywords: Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre, Diorama, Charles R. Meade, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

THE DAGUERRETYPE: AN ARCHIVE OF SOURCE TEXTS, GRAPHICS, AND EPHEMERA

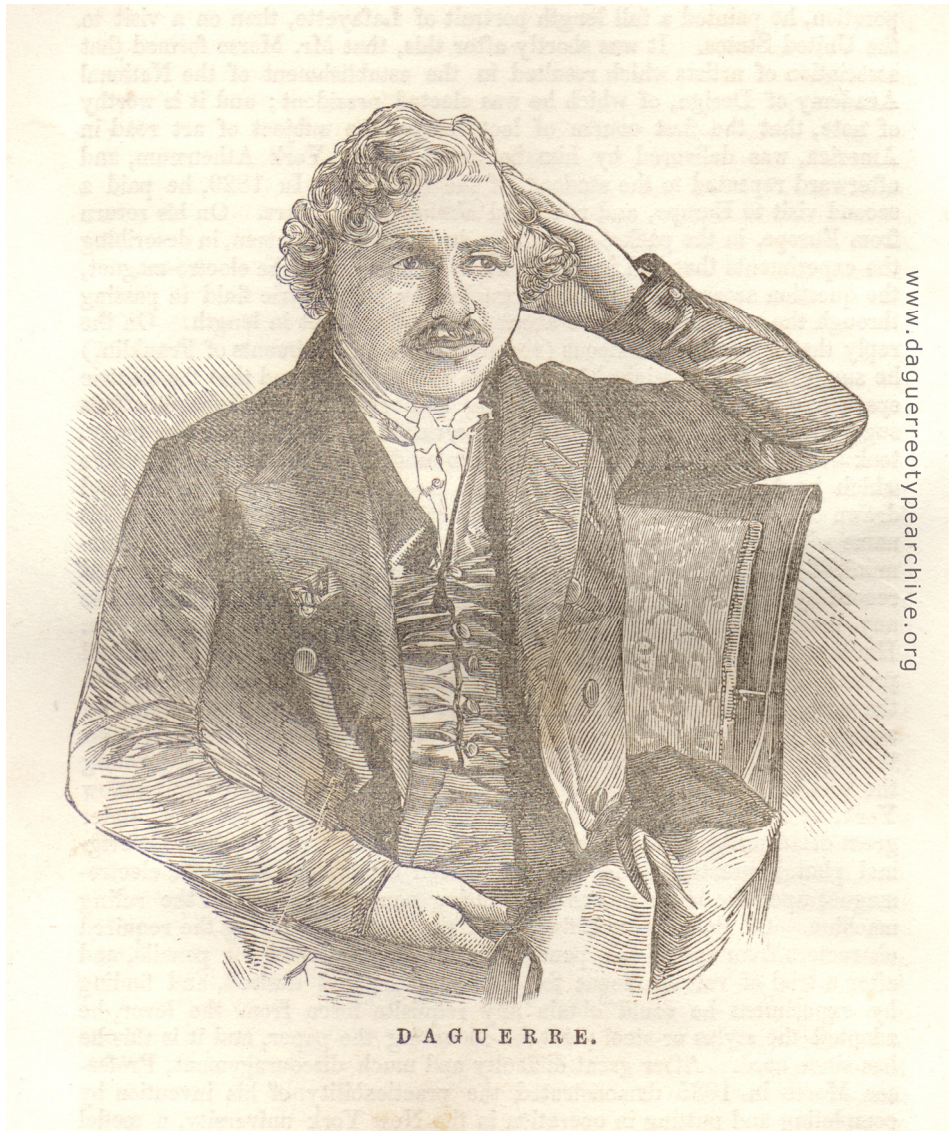
The research archive of Gary W. Ewer regarding the history of the daguerreotype

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Selected text published in:

Thomas H. Prescott, *The American Encyclopedia of History, Biography and Travel*
(Columbus: J. & H. Miller, 1856): 747-49.



DAGUERRE.

M. DAGUERRE.

THIS far-famed Frenchman, who has given his name to the art which he first discovered, the Daguerreotype, died not long since, at his residence, near Paris. The likeness which we present herewith, is from an original, taken after his own style and invention, and is necessarily correct. It would be superfluous for us to enlarge upon the merits of an art so familiar to all. Daguerre was an artist, a painter, and also possessed considerable chemical talent and taste; and it was while experimenting for other purposes, that he discovered the art which now bears his name. It was destined, however, to be wonderfully improved by other hands, and it is said that the Americans have produced by far the most perfect and beautiful specimens of the art that have ever yet been exhibited. Daguerre was favorable known to the world before the announcement of his discovery of the Daguerreotype. His attempts to improve panoramic paintings, and the production of dioramic effects, were crowned with the most eminent success. His pictures attracted much attention at the time of their exhibition. In them the alternate effects of night and day—of storm and sunshine—were beautifully produced. To these effects of light were added others, arising from the decomposition of form, by means of which, for example, in the ‘Midnight Mass,’ figures appeared where the spectators had just beheld seats, altars, etc.; or, again, as in ‘The Valley of Goldau,’ in which rocks tumbling from the mountains replaced the prospect of a smiling valley. He was in the 62d year of his age at the time of his death, and is represented to have been an extremely modest and worthy man, and one devoted to his profession of the fine arts.

[End of text.]

The graphic is also available in JPG format:

http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/graphics/B8560001_LJMD_AMER-ENCYCLO_1856.html

EDITOR'S NOTES:

An earlier appearance of this portrait illustration is in “M. Daguerre,” *Illustrated London News* 19:504 (26 July 1851): 117-18.¹ In that publication, however, the attribution of the original daguerreotype to Claudet is incorrect. The wood engraving is based on a daguerreotype made by Charles R. Meade. For a salt print from another of the Meade daguerreotypes of Daguerre, see Melissa Banta, *A Curious & Ingenious Art: Reflections on Daguerreotypes at Harvard* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000): opposite page 1.

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8510007_DAGUERRE_ILN_1851-07-26.pdf

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Graphic details:

Title: DAGUERRE

wood engraving: 12.0 x 10.8 cm

sheet: 24.7 x 16.0 cm

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

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