

“Spring of ’50 . . . Mr. Bradley’s production,” published 1873

(keywords: Henry William Bradley, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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Selected text published in:

T. A. Barry and B. A. Patten, *Men and Memories of San Francisco, in the “Spring of ’50”* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1873): 143–44.

Mr. Bradley (now of Bradley & Rulofson), the daguerrean—there were no photographers in those days—practised his art on the west side of Montgomery, between Washington and Jackson. His prices were from eight dollars upwards, according to the size and style of the portrait and frame. The courteous artist was hardly allowed time to breathe, much less to eat, or take a moment’s rest for a day or two before the departure of a steamer. Californians were so anxious that their friends in civilized countries should see just how they looked in their mining dress, with their terrible revolver, the handle protruding menacingly from the holster, somehow, twisted in front, when sitting for a daguerreotype to send “to the States.” They were proud of their curling moustaches and flowing beards; their bandit-looking *sombreros*; and our old friend Bradley accumulated much *oro en polvo*, and many yellow coins from the private mints of Wass, Molitor & Co., Moffatt & Co., Dubosque, and Baldwin & Co. Mr. Bradley appears just the same to-day (at Bradley & Rulofson’s) as he did twenty-three years ago; wears the same conventional silk hat, so seldom seen in those days—so universally worn now; the same quiet black suit; and his hair and beard were almost as silvery then as now. Neither has he altered in the urbanity and unvarying courtesy which made him so popular and filled his purse twenty-three years ago. Many of the old daguerreotypes and ambrotypes are preserved by those to whom they were sent; and many a middle-aged husband and father has had them carelessly handed to him by his wife or the big boys and girls, in the secret, who were much amused at his questions, and failure in recognizing Mr. Bradley’s production, of which he was so proud so many years ago.

[End of selected text. All content related to Bradley herein provided.]

EDITOR’S NOTES:

This text places Bradley’s gallery on Montgomery between Washington and Jackson. By mid-July 1850, Bradley was located over the Pacific Baths on Montgomery between Clay and Washington.¹

Bradley is also mentioned in “Photography in California,” *Photographic and Fine Arts Journal* (New York) 10:4 (April 1857): 112–13.² Penned by William Shew, the article also describes the effect “steamer day” had upon the daguerreotype business.

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/N8500008_BRADLEY_DAC_1850-07-19.pdf

2. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8570003_PHOTOG-CA_PFAJ_1857-04.pdf

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