

“Daguerreotype of San Francisco,” 19 January 1851

(keywords: Sterling C. McIntyre, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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Daily Alta California 2:40 (19 January 1851): n.p. (second page of issue).

DAGUERRETYPE OF SAN FRANCISCO.—Decidedly the finest thing in the fine arts produced in this city, which we have seen, is a consecutive series of Daguerreian plates, five in number, arranged side by side so as to give a view of our entire city and harbor, the shipping, bay, coast and mounts opposite, islands, dwellings and hills—all embraced between Rincon Point on the right, to the mouth of our beautiful bay on the left, included between lines proceeding from the hills to the west of the city as the point of vision.

This picture, for such it may be termed, although the first attempt is nearly perfect. It is admirable in execution as well as design. It is intended for the “World’s Industrial Convention” in London. We venture the assertion that nothing there will create greater interest than this specimen of Art among us, exhibiting a perfect idea of the city which of all the world carries with its name abroad more of romance and wonder than any other. It is a picture, too, which cannot be disputed—it carries with it evidence which God himself gives through the unerring light of the world’s great luminary.

The people of Europe have never yet seen a picture of this, to them, most wonderful city. This will tell its own story, and with the sun to testify to its truth. We would suggest that a subscription be raised to put it into a frame equal to its merits, Californian in style and richness, inlaid with native specimens of gold and auriferous quartz. This would make it a perfect gem. The views were taken by Mr. McIntyre of this city. He proposes, if his efforts meet with sufficient encouragement, to finish and furnish duplicates of this excellent and artistical picture to the lovers of art, at one hundred dollars. It may be seen at this office.

[End of text.]

EDITOR’S NOTES:

The first paragraph of this text is cited in “Panorama of San Francisco and the Gold Diggings,” *Daguerreian Journal* (New York) 2:4 (1 July 1851): 115–16.¹

Additional mention of the panorama is provided the following day:

THE DAGUERREOTYPE OF SAN FRANCISCO.—A large number of gentlemen called at our counting room yesterday to examine Mr. McIntyre’s admirable Daguerreotypic panorama of San Francisco. They all expressed themselves highly pleased with it. It is certainly the only picture of any description ever produced giving anything like a correct idea of the extent of our city.

—*Daily Alta California* 2:44 (20 January 1851): n.p. (second page of issue).

This text states that McIntyre intended to exhibit the panorama at the “World’s Industrial Convention” in London. No mention of the panorama appears in exhibition records, however, and the (assumed) original panorama is sent to the New York office of the trade journal *Daguerreian Journal*.

A five-plate panorama of San Francisco in the collection of the George Eastman House is similar to the description of McIntyre’s panorama and is thought to possibly be the example described in this article.

McIntyre also produced a view of the Plaza (Portsmouth Square) which was noticed in, “View of the Plaza,” *Daily Alta California* 2:49 (28 January 1851): n.p. (second page of issue).

The present editor has yet to locate any advertisements for McIntyre as a daguerreotypist during his time in San Francisco. He did advertise as a dentist “in Dr. Rabe’s Building.” (*Daily Alta California* 2:7 [16 December 1850]: n.p. [third page of issue]). His occupancy at this location was apparently short-lived as the space was soon again advertised for rent: “Furnished room for rent—In Dr. Rabe’s building . . . It as been used as a Dentist office” (*Daily Alta California* 2:71 [19 February 1851]: n.p. [third page of issue].)

Unrelated to daguerreian activities, McIntyre also advertised for sale “one of Genin’s patent twenty-shooting Rifles.” (*Daily Alta California* 2:60 [8 February 1851]: n.p. [third page of issue].)

Additional information regarding McIntyre is found in Peter E. Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn, *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary, 1840-1865* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000): 393; Peter E. Palmquist, “Sterling C. McIntyre,” *Daguerreian Annual 1990* (Lake Charles: Daguerreian Society, 1990): 190–93.

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8510026_MCINTYRE-PANO_DJ_1851-07-01.pdf

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/F8510001_VANCE_CATALOGUE_DAG_VIEWS_1851.pdf

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