

“Death of Professor F. F. Gouraud,” reported 10 July 1847

(keywords: François Gouraud, François Fauvel-Gouraud, Francois Gouraud, Francois Fauvel-Gouraud, Francis Fauvel Gouraud, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

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From the *Courier des Etats Unis*.

DEATH OF PROFESSOR F. F. GOURAUD.

It is with profound regret that we announce the death of our countryman Fauvel Gouraud, and this regret will be shared by all who knew him. The number of these mourners is great, for rarely has a foreigner gained in America a reputation and popularity equal to those enjoyed by Professor Gouraud. He arrived in the United States in December, 1839, bringing with him, as its introducer to this country, the magnificent discovery of Daguerre, whose pupil he had been. This discovery, which has since proved a mine of wealth to thousands of American operators, was unproductive to Mr. Gouraud, who was indeed familiar rather with its theory than its practice. At that time, moreover, the Daguerreotype was but in its infancy, and had not been developed in the practical sense which could only make it lucrative in the United States, its application to portraiture. Professor Gouraud was to win his fame in another career.

After studying the English language, which he enabled himself to read and write, in a few years, with the facility and elegance of one to whom it is native, he published his work on phreno-mnemotechny, some chapters of which have been compared, by the American press, to the most brilliant pages in English literature. He also developed his ingenious theory of artificial memory in oral lectures, which had a prodigious success. More than 15,000 pupils attended these lectures in New York and other cities, and the professor, become an American orator in a manner so facile and remarkable, gained \$20,000 in a single winter. But unsuccessful speculations and a long illness, which, moreover, deprived him of the power to continue his labors, entirely exhausted this little fortune, and our unfortunate countryman has died in a condition bordering on indigence.

His last days were surrounded by afflicting circumstances. His young wife, who, for more than a year, had been, like himself, confined to a bed of sickness, died, only a month ago, by his side, of pulmonary consumption, and the effect of her death upon the sorrowing Gouraud no doubt hastened his end, for until that event he seemed to be recovering. His remains will be deposited in the Greenwood Cemetery, beside those of his companion in suffering, which seem to have awaited this reunion, for her coffin was temporarily deposited in a vault until the widowed husband could select its last resting place, in compliance with her wish; and one of the dying man's most poignant regrets was that he could not fulfil this desire of her who has only gone before him to the tomb.

Professor Gouraud was a man of studious habits and pleasing manners. His knowledge was various and extensive. He leaves two young children and an unfinished work on which he had bestowed three years of labor and built the most exalted hopes. It is a universal grammar, in which he completes his system of mnemotechny, and applies a uniform arrangement to the orthography and pronunciation for the seven principal languages of the civilized world. This work, assimilated to that of the Benedictines by the patience and research which it exacted, will probably not be lost to science. Three fourths of it are printed, and we hope that this offspring of Gouraud's genius, this orphan of his thought and his toil, will no more be abandoned than the two orphans of his affections.

His funeral will take place this day, at 4 o'clock P.M., from his late residence, 282 Columbia street, Brooklyn, near the South ferry.

[We can add nothing, at present, to the obituary notice we have copied from the *Courrier*, except that a severe pecuniary disappointment, to himself and his children, was added to the long list of suffering attending Mr. Gouraud's protracted illness. More than a year ago he received advices that a considerable legacy had been provided for him, by the will of an aged relative in France, but with a condition that he should appear in person, by a specified time, to undertake the performance of certain trusts also designated in the will. The time expired, we believe, in March, when his wife was dying and he was himself unable to rise from his bed. In all our interviews with him he spoke of this with the deepest anxiety and chagrin, on account of his children, for whom the legacy would have made an adequate provision.]—*Commercial Advertiser*.

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

This text is copied from the *Commerical Advertiser*, which quotes another source, *Courrier des Etats Unis*, a French-language newspaper published in New York City.

The first two paragraphs presented here also form the obituary notice for Gouraud appearing in *Niles' National Register* (Baltimore) 12:19 (10 December 1847): 302.

See also the obituary for Gouraud in *New-York Daily Tribune* (17 June 1847): 3.¹

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/N8470001_GOURUAD_OBIT_NY-TRIBUNE_1847-06-17.pdf

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