

"We offer our thanks to Mr. Johnson," 1 September 1850

(keywords: George Howard Johnson, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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Published in:

Illustrated California News (San Francisco) 1:1 (1 September 1850): 5, 6.

The illustration on page 5 accompanies the article, "@@@@@@." The text on page 6 appears immediately following the article.

Illustration on page 5:



[caption:] THE RIOT AT SACRAMENTO CITY.



[Detail]

Text on page 6:

We offer our thanks to Mr. Johnson, the clever Daguerrean artist, for his courtesy in volunteering to further the purpose of our visit to Sacramento city, by furnishing our engraver with views of the locality where the battle scene was enacted, which he took unweariedly, one after another, from different places of observation, in order that the most advantageous points of view might be decided on by actual comparison.

We cast a curious eye upon Mr. Johnson's finished performances, having known this delicate art from its infancy, in the Old world as well as in the New; and having followed its progress from the first imperfect efforts of Daguerre and Talbot, down to the latest refinements in its practice, can venture to affirm that these may challenge comparison, for clearness and graceful disposition of the figures, with any that we have seen.

We have much pleasure in bearing testimony in the merits of a very deserving artist, which he may rest assured would never have been rendered, had it not been in perfect consonance with our own unbiased judgment in the matter.,

[End of text.]

The graphic is also available in JPG format:

http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/graphics/P8500005_JOHNSON_ICN_1850-09-01.html

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The periodical, "a new and semi-monthly Journal of much moderation and intelligence,"¹ ceased after its sixth number dated 1 December 1850. A favorable notice of this initial issue—mentioning this particular article and illustration—is found in "Illustrated California News," *Daily Transcript* (Sacramento City) 1:107 (4 September 1850): n.p. (second page

of issue). See also the advertisement, "Johnson's Daguerrean Gallery," *Illustrated California News* (San Francisco) 1:2 (15 September 1850): 16.²

Although unsigned, the wood engraver may be Thomas Armstrong who arrived in San Francisco in early 1849 and remained active in California as an illustrator until his death in 1861.³

George H. Johnson arrived in San Francisco in 1849. Additional information regarding Johnson 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): 327–30; Peter E. Palmquist, "The Daguerreotype in San Francisco," *History of Photography* 4:3 (July 1980): 207–38; Drew Heath Johnson and Marcia Eymann, ed., *Silver & Gold: Cased Images of the California Gold Rush* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998).

At the time of this writing, four daguerreotypes by Johnson are viewable on the web site of The Daguerreian Society. (NEA Image/Research Database; artist search term: "George H. Johnson.")⁴

1. *Southern Cross and New Zealand Guardian* (Auckland) 5:354 (19 November 1850): 3, col. 1.
1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/advert/P8500004_JOHNSON-AD_ICN_1850-09-15.pdf
3. Barbara Lekisch, *Embracing Scenes about Lakes Tahoe & Donner: Painters, Illustrators & Sketch Artists 1855-1915* (Lafayette: Great West Books, 2003): 3; Peter E. Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn, *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: a Biographical Dictionary, 1840–1865* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000): 87–89.
4. <http://www.daguerre.org/>

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