

**“Daguerreotype likeness of Poe,”(by William A. Pratt) April 1851**

(keywords: William A. Pratt, 145 Main, Edgar Allan Poe, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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

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A very excellent daguerreotype likeness of Poe, taken just before his death, may be seen at Pratt & Co's Gallery, 145 Main Street. It is a little remarkable that no accurate portrait of him was engraved for any edition of his works. That which appears in the recent collection, edited by Griswold, resembles him scarcely at all.

It may not be out of the way to say here that Pratt has recently fitted up his Gallery in a very sumptuous style, and added an immense window furnishing a skylight of great power. Some of his recent likenesses are admirable specimens of the art as it has been perfected of late years. A number of them have been sent to the World's Fair, and Pratt need not fear to submit them to the severe criticism of the visitors to this wonderful exhibition.

**[End of text.]**

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**EDITOR'S NOTES:**

A daguerreotype of Poe by Pratt is now in the collection of the Columbia University Library, and is viewable on their web site, *Jewels in Her Crown: Treasures of the Columbia University Libraries Special Collections*.<sup>1</sup> Additional information regarding daguerreotypes of Poe is found in Michael Deas, *The Portraits and Daguerreotypes of Edgar Allan Poe* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989). The daguerreotype is also illustrated in the article, "Landmarks of Poe in Richmond," *Century Illustrated Magazine* (New York) 67:6 (April 1904): 912.

The *Photographic Art-Journal* provides additional information regarding the daguerreotypes exhibited by Pratt at the London Crystal Palace:

W A. Pratt & Co., of Richmond, Va. sends a grand national gallery of pictures which will be much admired for the artistic taste displayed in their arrangement as well as for their excellence as Daguerreotypes. The centre picture is a full size portrait of the Governor of Virginia. This is surrounded by portraits of the most distinguished men of that State; the whole forming a *tout ensemble* of excellent arrangement and superior Daguerrean skill.<sup>2</sup>

1. <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/web/eresources/exhibitions/treasures/html/201.html>

2. *Photographic Art-Journal* (New York) 1:3 (March 1851): 189

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