

“Panorama of San Francisco and the Gold Diggings,” 1 July 1851

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PANORAMA OF SAN FRANCISCO AND THE GOLD DIGGINGS.

WE have received, through the agents of S. C. M’Intyre [McIntyre—ed.], a fine panoramic view of San Francisco. It consists of five half plates, representing the city as seen from the most favorable point.

The San Francisco *Journal of Commerce* in speaking of these views, bears testimony of their truthfulness in the following words:—“A perfect and most beautiful photographic picture of San Francisco, embracing the whole city, as seen from one of the back hills, from beyond Rincon Point to the hill surmounting the North Beach and the Golden Gate; unfolding the entire harbor with its complicated shipping, Contra Costa, Diabolo, Yerba Buena and Angel and Bird Islands, the upper bay and its coasts and headlands, and the mountains faintly seen beyond San Pablo—whilst a gush of rose tinted light give an indescribable beauty to the sky of the picture just over the red-wood summit of Contra Costa. It must have been a lucky hit—though our friend is sanguine that many such pictures, its equal, and some its superiors, will follow his renewed exertions.”

From the *Alta Californian*:—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.”

The Gold Diggings are beautifully illustrated on six half plates matched and contained in one frame. Picturing “all sorts”—men, with spade and tin pan in hand, eagerly looking after the *dust*; some examining a lump just found, others up to their knees in water, and, among the rest is, in a bent position, a man, pan in hand, looking up with a grin, exhibiting “something” in his pan which he no doubt would try to make us believe was the metal. This may all be, but with the HILLOTYPED there will be no use—can’t pass off stones for gold!

Our daguerreotypists will bear in mind that Mr. M’Intyre has met with a severe loss by the recent fire in San Francisco, and we would propose to all such as wish copies of these views, that we will furnish them at a reasonable rate, and give Mr. M’Intyre the *sole benefit, without any charge for our time in copying*. Such operators as wish, will furnish us such amount as they may deem these pictures worth, stating the size wished.

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The third paragraph of this text is cited from "Daguerreotype of San Francisco," *Daily Alta California* 2:40 (19 January 1851): n.p. (second page of issue).¹ In the original text, it is stated that McIntyre intended to exhibit the panorama at the "World's Industrial Convention" in London. No mention of the panorama appears in exhibition records. The same article states that copies of the panorama would be furnished for one hundred dollars.

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 six-plate panorama of the "Gold Diggings" described in the article is most interesting. The present editor has yet to locate a contemporary citation in the San Francisco press regarding the panorama. No similar panorama exists today, nor does the catalogue of California views by Robert Vance describe any multiple-plate panoramas of mining views with miners at work.²

The present editor has yet to locate any advertisements for McIntyre as a daguerreotypist while 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 short-lived, however, as the space was 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].)

This text states that McIntyre suffered loss in the "recent fire in San Francisco." The historian John Craig, however, states that McIntyre was advertising as a dentist in Nevada City by April 1851. McIntyre's presence in San Francisco during either the 4 May or 22 June 1851 fires is yet to be determined.

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].)

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

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/N8510027_MCINTYRE-PANO_DAC_1851-01-19.pdf

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

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