

“J. Gurney, Photographer,” 24 September 1859

(keywords: Jeremiah Gurney, 707 Broadway, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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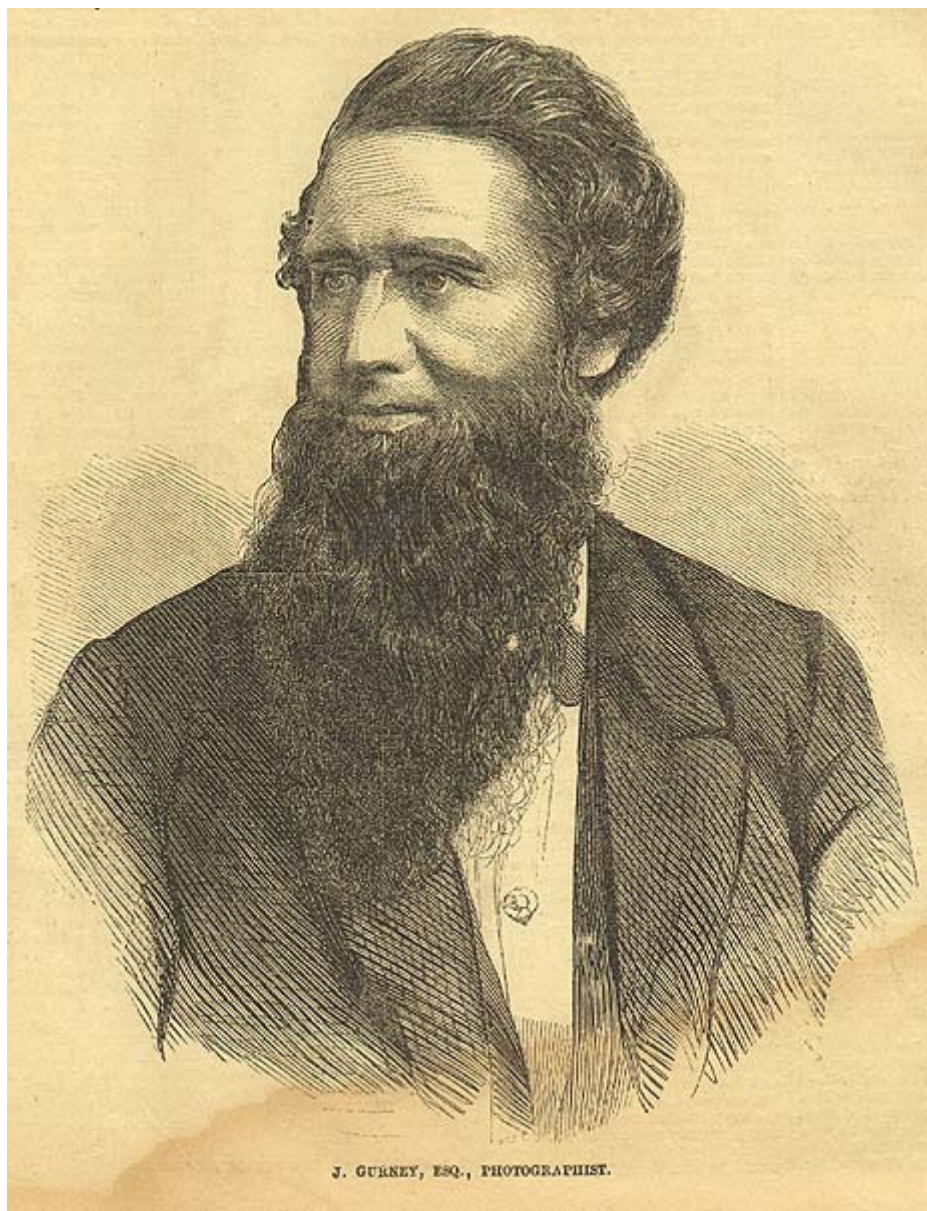
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Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (New York) 8:199 (24 September 1859): 266.

J. GURNEY, PHOTOGRAPHER.

THE progress of sun painting, or the art of photography, is one of the marvels of this age. Talbot and Daguerre made but a rudimentary discovery in comparison with the splendid productions of to-day. In its present perfection, photography combines art, mechanism, beauty and utility. We remember years since, the dim unsatisfactory pictures which even then challenged the admiration of the scientific student. We remember the astonishment which in Europe and this country greeted the first announcement of Daguerre. Nearly twenty years have elapsed since that time; careful study, unwearied labor and practical experimenting have brought this art to its now perfect state. To enumerate all the varieties of pictures which this crude discovery has produced, to explain the operation and various processes by which each picture is perfected, would require a volume. The Daguerreotype, the Talbotype, the Photograph, the Ambrotype, the Ivorytype, all these are based upon the one principle. Photography stands first. We owe a debt of gratitude to the art, and to the artist through whose means we are enabled to present the most beautiful scenes in nature before our readers. Lakes and mountain scenery, the wild forests, the deep valleys, the majestic rocks, the simplest flower; we can copy almost instantaneously and in exactitude of size and perfection of naturalness. The painter's easel is almost abolished, except as a handmaiden to photography. Great men, whose actions and deeds fill the world, are brought before the eye with their characteristic expression. Terrible battles, with all their dreadful scenes of carnage and slaughter, are transferred to paper upon the instant, and soon go hurrying over thousands of miles to be viewed by the humble peasant in his peaceful abode. But we must not dwell upon an art that has now become familiar as a household word. Yet, we must not fail giving credit to the minds and the hands that have thus brought photography to perfection. The portrait of Mr. J. Gurney, which heads this article, presents a woodcut from a photograph. It is the picture of one who has pursued this business for nineteen years; in fact, he was the first to practise the art of Daguerreotyping after it was introduced into this country by Professor Morse, and he has since labored as earnestly and successfully to advance photography as any artist in this country. From its infancy he has devoted his time and his means to its advancement, he has extended aid to other experimenters, and he has thus perfected the art, beautiful and useful as it is to-day. His magnificent gallery, at 707 Broadway, is adorned with specimens which delight and astonish the visitor. Careful attention to business has amassed him a large fortune. Yet time has left no wrinkles on his brow, he wears still the appearance of youth, and we have no doubt he will continue to crowd the land with home mementoes of those faces we love and hold dear to memory.



[caption:] J. GURNEY, ESQ., PHOTOGRAPHER.

[End of text.]

The graphic is also available in JPG format:

http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/graphics/P8590005_GURNEY_LESLIES_1859-09-24.html

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Three additional texts regarding Gurney, published in 1858–59, are “Sunlight Paintings,” *Democratic Age* (New York) 1:1 (October 1858): vi–vii;¹ “Progress of the Daguerrean and Photographic Art,” *Democratic Age* 1:4 (November 1858): xxxiii–xxxiv;² “A Festival of Art,” *Democratic Age* 1:3 (January 1859): 249.³

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8580004_GURNEY_DEMO-AGE_1858-10.pdf
2. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8580005_PROGRESS_DEMO-AGE_1858-11.pdf
3. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8590004_GURNEY_DEMO-AGE_1859-01.pdf

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