

Strober, “. . .destruction of rare photographic material,” May 1953

(keywords: Sidney R. Strober, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

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TO THE EDITORS

Sirs:

Perhaps you will eventually write an article on the tremendous destruction of rare photographic material by ignorant people. I offer the following as a classic example. Some time ago a collector of antiques told me that he had observed in a Connecticut second-hand store a daguerreotype of a building that resembled the Capitol at Washington. I decided to take the trip as Mr. Paul Vanderbilt of the Library of Congress had once informed me that he had never seen a daguerreotype of Washington.

At the shop I was shown an *empty* ornate daguerreotype case. The owner said he always throws away the metal photos! Yes, he recalled a picture of a building looking like the Capitol! As I started to leave, he tried to console me by saying the picture had been defective anyway. “What do you mean?” I asked. Then came the blow as he replied: “THE DOME WAS MISSING!”

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Sidney R. Strober

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

At the time of his letter, Sidney R. Strober was assembling a significant collection of early and rare photographic material. A landmark auction inclusive of the Strober collection achieved a then-remarkable total sale price of \$61,870.00. See Josephine Cobb, edit., *Rare Photographic Images, Apparatus and Literature: The Collection of Sidney Strober, New York City, and Other Owners : Public Auction: Febr. 7* (New York: Parke-Bernet Galleries, 1970).

Further information regarding the Strober sale is found in Jacob Deschin, “Photo Collection Auction Saturday,” *New York Times* 119:40,916 (1 February 1970): D24; Jacob Deschin, “Photo Auction Yields \$61,870” *New York Times* 119:49,930 (15 February 1970): D33. The latter article concludes with the comments: “The collector Sidney Strober himself seemed quite happy about the whole thing and remarked that the sale closed an episode of 30 years’ duration in his life since he has decided to discontinue collecting and return to a ‘normal existence.’”

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