

“Daguerreotype Panoramic Views in California,” 1 November 1851

(keywords: Robert H. Vance, lost daguerreotypes, three hundred daguerreotypes, John A. Sutter, Oliver M. Wozencraft, Adam Johnston (Adam Johnson), Coloma, Carson's Creek, Mokelame Hill, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

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DAGURREOTYPE
PANORAMIC VIEWS in CALIFORNIA

WE have enjoyed a very fine and extensive exhibition of Daguerreotype views. Mr. R. H. VANCE has recently returned from California with over *three hundred full plate views*, and has them open on exhibition in this city. Mr. V. has expended a large amount of money in collecting some of the principal cities and most conspicuous places in the land of gold; we must say the operator has the proof of untiring industry and liberal enterprise in making such a display of Daguerreotypes. When we consider the disadvantage of operating in a tent or the open air, and in a new country, we are much surprised at such success; as a collection, we have never seen its equal, many of the pictures will compare with any taken with all conveniences at hand.

We do not know of any mode of transferring upon the metallic plate the perfection of nature, to equal that of the Daguerreotype, here we have every line faithfully portrayed and possessing a degree of minuteness in detail not to be equalled by the hand of man. Unfortunately time prohibited our fully gratifying a desire for a long and studied examination of the highly interesting specimen of an art in which we feel a deep interest.

We must refer to only a few. A panoramic view of San Francisco before and after the fire, is full of interest. View of Captain Suter's saw mill and dam across the American river; this view with another of the rear, shows the spot where the gold was first discovered, in other words, the seed of the yellow fever. Indian Commissioners, Dr. Wozencraft, Col. Johnson, Indian Agent and Clerks, in treaty with the Indians, presenting a fair likeness of the natives and the above named gentlemen as they are in a field. Landscape and view of Indians in and about the wigwams.

There is a fine view of Captain Suter's residence, with the Captain, his daughter, and son-in-law, in a yard in front, all of whom can be recognized. Panoramic and other views of Stockton, Colomu, Carsin's Creek, Mokelaine hill, Nevada; Gold Run, Marysville, Sacramento; besides numerous other places. As a whole, they are a valuable and interesting collection and specimens worthy among the foremost in the art.

[End of text. Incorrect spelling of “dagurreotype“ (daguerreotype) in the article title line is per original text. See “additional keywords” for corrections of other misspelled location/personal names.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Other reviews of Vance's exhibition of California daguerreotypes are: "Mr. Vance's California Views," *Photographic Art-Journal* (New York) 2:4 (October 1851): 252–53;¹ *Literary World* (New York) 9:246 (18 October 1851): 311;² "Vance's California Views," *United States Magazine, and Democratic Review* (New York) 29:161 (November 1851): 480.³

The individuals named in this text are Captain John A. Sutter, Dr. Oliver M. Wozencraft, and Adam Johnston (Adam Johnson).

The exhibition was not well publicized. This author is aware of very limited runs of advertisements appearing in two newspapers: the *New-York Tribune*, and the *New-York Times*.⁴

A pamphlet catalogue accompanied the exhibition of views: Robert H. Vance, *Catalogue of Daguerreotype Panoramic Views in California* (New York: Baker, Goodwin & Company, 1851).⁵ The catalogue includes 131 entries; many entries are for multiple-plate views.

Additional information regarding Vance and his collection of California daguerreotypes is found in Delores Kilgo, "Vance's Views in St. Louis: An Update," *Daguerreian Annual 1994* (Pittsburgh: The Daguerreian Society, 1994): 210–12; Peter Palmquist, "The Sad but True Story of a Daguerreian Holy Grail," in Drew Heath Johnson and Marcia Eymann, ed., *Silver & Gold: Cased Images of the California Gold Rush* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998): 43–73; Peter E. Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn, *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: a Biographical Dictionary, 1840–1865* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000): 559–66.

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8510002_PHOTO_ARTJOURN_1851-10.pdf
2. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8510003_LIT_WORLD_1851-10-18.pdf
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