

# The Diorama in Great Britain in the 1820s

by R. Derek Wood

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Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre (1787-1851), originally a stage designer and scene painter [\(1\)](#), in April 1821 formed a partnership with Charles Bouton (1781-1853) to develop a 'Diorama' in Paris. As Helmut and Alison Gernsheim have said in their account of the Diorama in *L. J. M. Daguerre: The history of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype*, it was 'an ideal collaboration, each gaining much from the other's experience'. Bouton was the more experienced and distinguished painter, Daguerre the greater expert in lighting and scenic effects. [\(2\)](#)

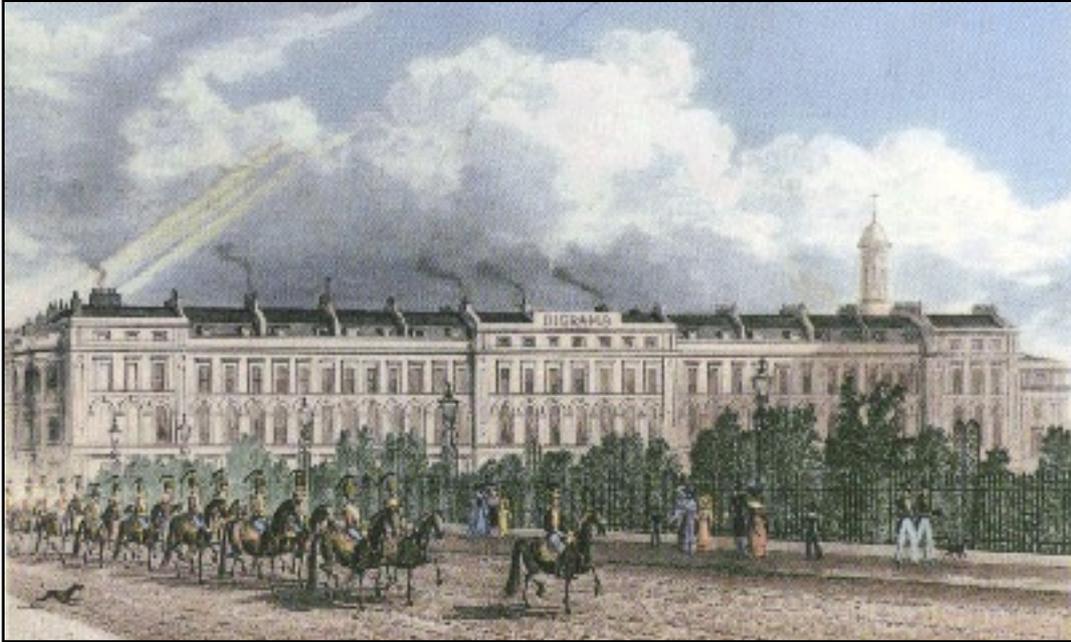
Daguerre's aim was to produce naturalistic illusion for the public. Huge pictures, 70 x 45 feet in size, were painted on translucent material with a painting on each side. By elaborate lighting - the front picture could be seen by direct reflected light, while varied amounts and colours of light transmitted from the back revealed parts of the rear painting - the picture could 'imitate aspects of nature as presented to our sight with all the changes brought by time, wind, light, atmosphere'. [\(3\)](#)

By light manipulation on and through a flat surface the spectators could be convinced they were seeing a life-size three dimensional scene changing with time - in part a painter's 3-D cinema. To display such dioramas with the various contrivances required to control the direction and colour of the light from many high windows and sky-lights, as well as a rotating amphitheatre holding up to 360 people, a large specialist building was required.

The Diorama opened in Paris in July 1822. The show consisted of two paintings, one by Daguerre and one by Bouton. This was the pattern throughout the 1820s with one of the dioramas showing an interior, the other a landscape. One picture of the pair was changed after about seven months. During the first four years twelve pictures were exhibited in Paris. They included 'Valley of Sarnen', 'Harbour of Brest', 'Holyroodhouse Chapel', and 'Roslin Chapel' by Daguerre; 'Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral', 'Chartres Cathedral', 'City of Rouen', and 'Environs of Paris' by Bouton (see chart of early dioramas on following page); the sole example of a work by the two men in collaboration ('View of Ste Marie in Spain showing a meeting of the Royal family') was displayed only in Paris. [\(4\)](#)

Plans for a Diorama in London were set in motion at the beginning of 1823. Taking only four months to finish the building in the centre of John Nash's facade along the east side of Park Square at the south-east corner of Regent's Park, it was opened in September 1823. [\(5\)](#)

## Contemporary Illustrations and texts



**Thomas Shepherd's Coloured plate of East side of Park Square,  
and Diorama, Regent's Park, London**

A black and white engraving of the above appeared in *Metropolitan Improvements or London in the Nineteenth Century... From Original Drawings by Thomas H. Shepherd with Historical, Topographical & Critical Illustrations by James Elmes*, London: published April 11, 1829, by Jones & Co;.

On pp. 80-81 of *Metropolitan Improvements*, Elmes provides his own account of the Diorama building in Park Square, Regent's Park, London. The full text is available as a separate PDF file



[Above] **Diorama, Regent's Park, London, 1823**

Showing the Diorama building from the south at an early stage before the Nash facade was constructed along the frontage.

Pencil and wash drawing by Dr William Crotch (1775-1847)

By courtesy of the Guildhall Library, London.

Many years later John Timbs wrote, for the benefit of visitors to London in 1855, an item on the 'Diorama and Cosmorama':

The Diorama, on the eastern side of Park-square, Regent's-park, was exhibited in Paris long before it was brought to London, by its originators, MM. Bouton and Daguerre; the latter, the inventor of the Daguerreotype, died 1851. The exhibition-house, with the theatre in the rear; was designed by Morgan and Pugin: the spectatory had a circular ceiling, with transparent medallion portraits; the whole was built in four months, and cost £10,000. The Diorama consisted of two pictures, eighty feet in length and forty feet in height, painted in solid and in transparency, arranged so as to exhibit changes of light and shade, and a variety of natural phenomena; the spectators being kept in comparative darkness, while the picture received a concentrated light from a ground-glass roof.

Extract from John Timbs, 'Diorama and Cosmorama', in *Curiosities of London*, London: David Bogue 1855, pp.252-3. The full article is available as another PDF file

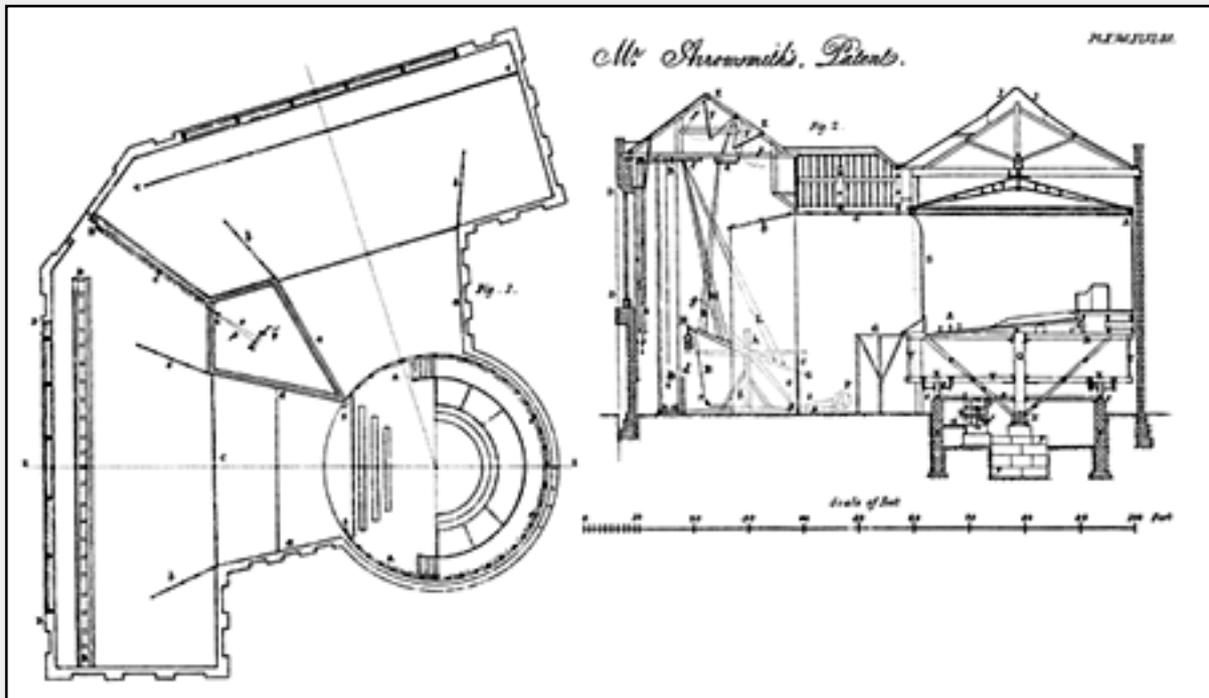
Daguerre's wife, Louise-Georgina, was of an English family who at some time were Smith but, in these years when the Diorama began, were known as Arrowsmith. The history of the Diorama would be considerably advanced if more reliable information about that family could be found. (6) One of Madame Daguerre's brothers assisted Daguerre during the first months of the Diorama in Paris and the evidence is confused as to whether it was **Charles** (7) or **John** Arrowsmith who early in 1823 was in London to help organise the Diorama. An Arrowsmith met John Constable at this time and buying some of Constable's paintings made them well known in Paris. (8)

Charles Bouton also went to London on a least one occasion when the first program was replaced in August 1824, (9) but the management situation during the first seven years of the London Diorama was very different to the later period when Bouton moved permanently to England: so it was probably the Arrowsmith brothers who were most closely involved in transporting and setting up the dioramas for the English proprietors in the first few years, as a patent for the Diorama was obtained in England under the name of John Arrowsmith. (10)

## The Patent Specification: Illustrations and texts

John Arrowsmith's Diorama Patent, British Patent No. 4899, February 10, 1824

'An improved mode of publicly exhibiting pictures on painted scenery of every description, and of distributing or directing the daylight upon or through them so as to produce many effects of light and shade, which I denominate a "Diorama".'



### Earliest publication of John Arrowsmith's Diorama Patent, British Patent No. 4899

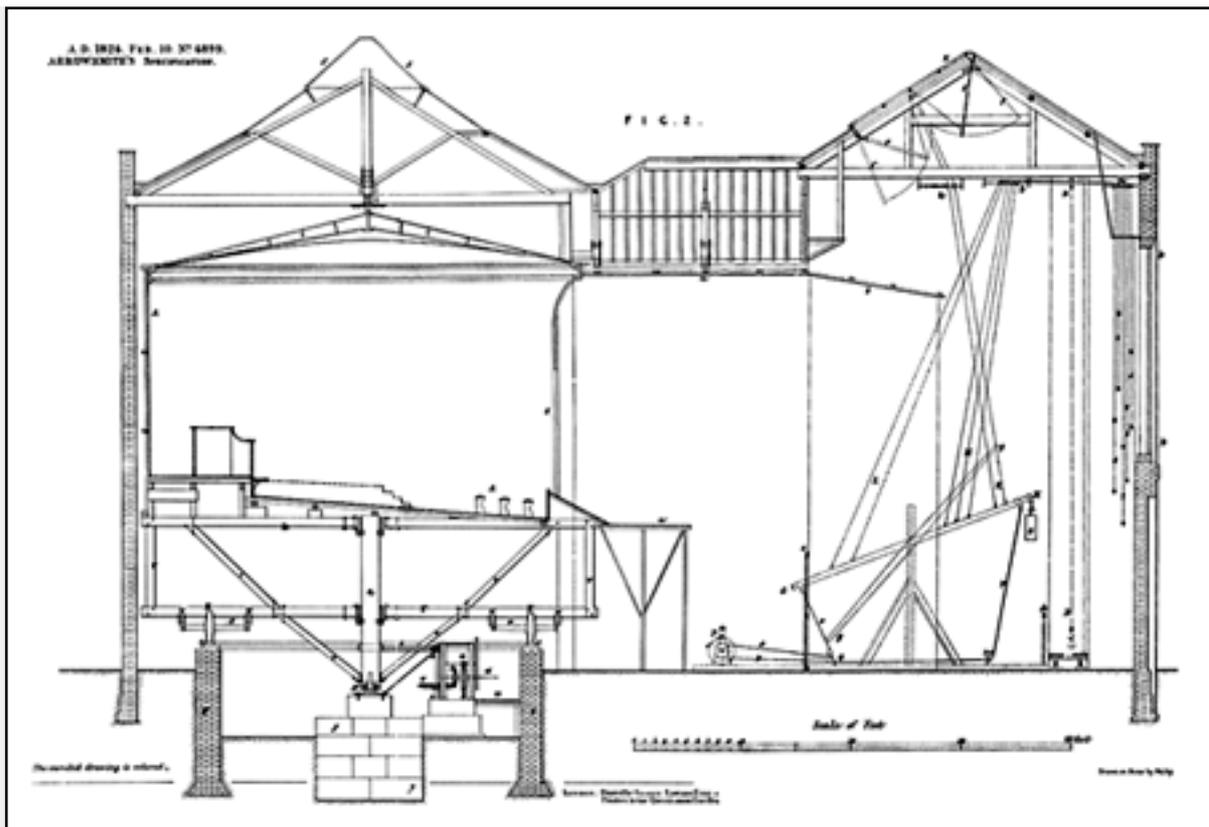
Plate X in *The Repertory of Arts, Manufactures and Agriculture*  
(London), April 1825, 2nd series, Vol. XLVI (No. CCLXXV).

The text of the Specification appears on pp.257-265 of this periodical.

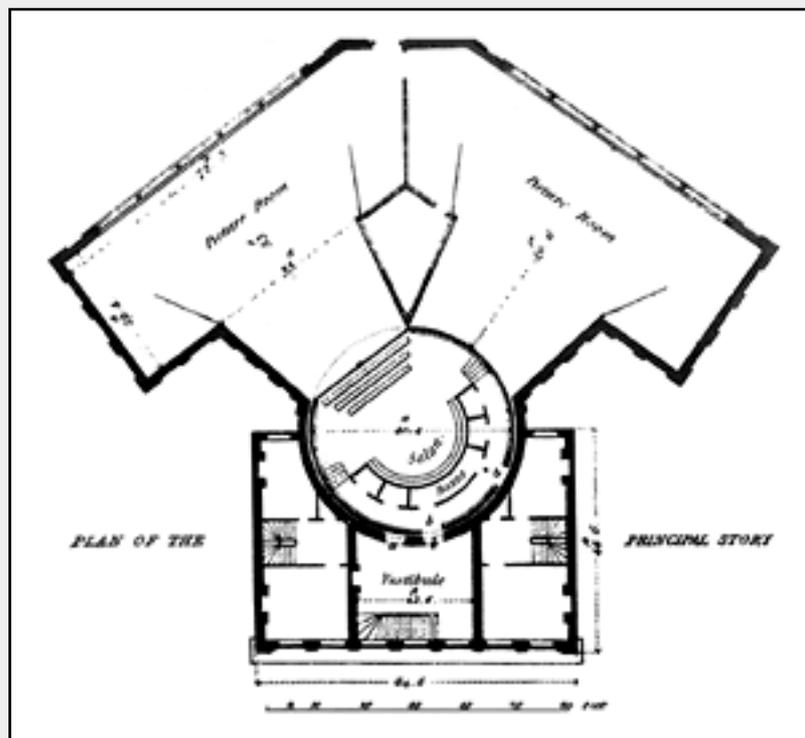
By courtesy of the British Library

*The Repertory of Arts, Manufactures and Agriculture* (which the following year was renamed *The Repertory of Patent Inventions*), was the semi-official place where many Patents were first published throughout the 1820s and 30s. The two figures in the above plate were reduced size reproductions taken by the publishers of *The Repertory of Arts* from the original manuscript patent specifications, which at that time were kept for examination in one of three legal patent Rolls offices in London, and are now held at the Public Record Office at Kew. So *The Repertory of Arts, Manufactures and Agriculture* can be counted as the first publication of the patent. However, the figures were of an octavo page size and are not in such detail as the official printing done many years later in 1857.

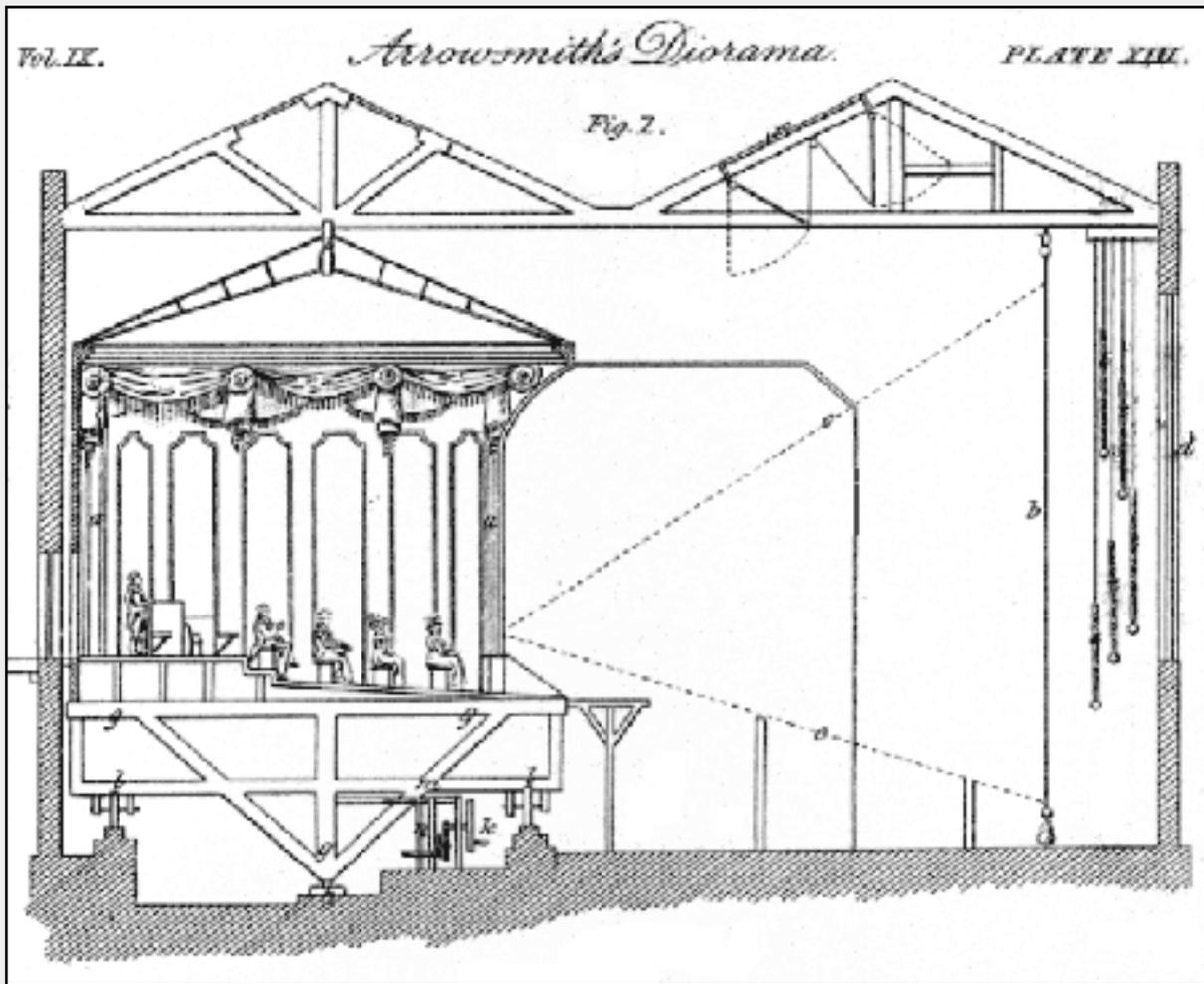
It is also interesting to note that the *The Repertory of Arts, Manufactures and Agriculture* plate is a reverse left - right hand version (with the spectators' amphitheatre appearing on the right) compared with the later official printing showing the diorama display area on the right:



**Transverse section of John Arrowsmith's Diorama in London** from large fold-out plate 2 (drawn by Malby & Sons) in the first official printing in 1857 of British Patent No. 4899 (1824). By courtesy of the British Library



(The adjacent entrance rooms:) **'Diorama, Park Square, Regents Park: Plan of the Principal Story' 1823.** Designed by A. [Auguste Charles] Pugin and built by J. Morgan John Britton and A. Pugin *Illustrations of the Public Buildings of London. With historical and descriptive accounts of each edifice,* vol. 1, plate opposite p.70, published by J. Taylor: London, 1825



**John Arrowsmith's Diorama, 1823** Plate XIII of *London Journal of Arts and Sciences* (edited by William Newton), [1824-]1825, Vol. IX, No. LIV. The text on Arrowsmith's Diorama Patent is on pp. 337-340.  
By courtesy of the British Library

The title of the patent was not sealed until 10 February 1824, four months after the opening of the London Diorama. The title was granted with a common proviso that a Specification be enrolled within six months. Normally patentees delayed the preparation of the specification for the full period as it gave them a chance to incorporate work done during that time, but with this patent Arrowsmith very unusually signed the specification only eight days later and it was enrolled on 16 March, only twenty-five days after the title. (11) The nature of the Diorama - combining skill in painting huge pictures with elaborate stage mechanisms and lighting - is not the type of enterprise that needs patent protection more relevant to single manufactured articles.

A patent Title provided immediate commercial protection, but sale of contracts would need to wait for a Specification. Why should a patent have been obtained at this time in this way: delayed, then seemingly unnecessarily hurried? The problems of either storage or transport of these huge pictures would have been severe even when rolled-up. But it obviously made sense to be able either to transfer the pictures from Paris onto another building in London, or to sell them, and the same reasoning can be applied to lengthening their life after a season in London. The main problem would be the very high cost of new purpose-built Dioramas. Such third stage activity in getting the dioramas before wider audiences is obviously not something in which Daguerre would choose to be closely involved.

At a time of widespread social deprivation the economic situation was very unsettled: a depressed market in the late 1820s, there was also, particularly in the few years before 1825, a glut of capital. What reason would there have been for a patent unless to be part of a commercial contract sought from men of capital to exploit the dioramas elsewhere after the end of a season in London? The promptness with which the Diorama specification was enrolled suggests that potential licencees were waiting to negotiate. As we will see later, the London Diorama seems to have had an independent English proprietor in the 1820s.

## **PART I : BRITISH RIVALS OF THE DIORAMA DURING 1825**

The prime intention of this present article is to demonstrate (in Part II) how the diorama Tableaux of Daguerre and Bouton were seen by the public not only in Paris and London but were then sent on to authentic Diorama buildings constructed in [Liverpool](#), [Manchester](#), [Dublin](#) and [Edinburgh](#). But requiring consideration first are two imitation 'Dioramas' or rival ventures in Edinburgh and Bristol in 1825 which not only lack adequate documentation but whose obscurities and confusions pose particular difficulties in understanding the history of the authentic Diorama in Great Britain. For when the renown of Daguerre's Diorama was at its height during the first two or three years after they opened in Paris and London it is not surprising that imitators (inspite of the difficulties due to the requirement of a large specialist building) would try to cash in on the situation.

### **Edinburgh, January 1825**

Later it will be seen that an authentic Diorama building was erected in Lothian Road, Edinburgh, at the end of 1827. But there had also been an event almost three years earlier regarding an exhibition of a 'diorama' painting in Edinburgh that was not part of that venture to bring Daguerre's work to Great Britain.

When pictures were hung for the annual Modern Art exhibition [\(12\)](#) of the Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland [\(13\)](#) ready for its opening day at the begining of March 1825 at 24 Waterloo Place in Edinburgh, they took the place of a 'diorama from London'. Its title was 'Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral' and had been on view for a month, until 19 February. [\(14\)](#) It was the same title as Bouton's diorama that had been at the London Diorama until the previous August and was the tableax for the opening show (note the exact date) at a new building in Liverpool on Monday 21 February 1825! [\(15\)](#)

It would be difficult, assuming we only had knowledge of these dates, to see how that picture exhibited in Edinburgh could be the same as Bouton's diorama opening in Liverpool two days later. Indeed there is evidence that the diorama in Edinburgh was not produced in France: "this picture is painted, in part, by a native of this city". It was certainly a large painting, but although it was exhibited in the largest of the rooms at the Waterloo Place galleries it is difficult to see how it could have approached the 80 by 50 feet of Bouton's diorama. It surely must have been exhibited simply as a painting without the various contrivances required to produce the dioramic lighting effects and illusions. A somewhat partisan reviewer in the *Caledonian Mercury* [\(16\)](#) provides a report requiring our attention:

We regret, as this picture is painted, in part, by a native of this city, that, from its extraordinary size, it cannot form part of the National Exhibition, as it would have shone conspicuously among the many brilliant efforts of native talent which we hope to see displayed... And we are glad to find although it has not to boast of the borrowed name of a French artist to procure it visitors, that its own merits and distinguished reputation have ensured its success; and we understand, such is the stimulus given to this young artist, that he is engaged in bringing out, shortly, a View of Holyrood Chapel by Moonlight, and the Interior of Rosslyn Chapel; for the exhibition of which an appropriate building will be erected.

So do we have a British 'young artist' who had not only already produced a work copying Bouton's, but was planning to paint another two that were Daguerre's and still at that time in Paris? Or when the reviewer reported that this 'young artist' was 'engaged in bringing out' Holyhood Chapel and Rosslyn Chapel had he perhaps misunderstood an intention not to paint but to organise the bringing over to England of those most recent dioramas? Several years later an authentic Diorama building was opened in Lothian Road, [Edinburgh](#). When at the end of August 1831 they exhibited there the diorama care was taken to state in their advertisements that it was 'never before exhibited in Edinburgh'. [\(17\)](#)

No evidence is available for the identity of the 'native of this city' who had painted, in part, the 'diorama' of January 1825 titled Trinity Chapel, and who seems to have been planning to later paint dioramas showing Holyhood Chapel and Rosslyn Chapel. However, after first considering an even more significant episode that took place later in 1825, it will be seen that the then scene painter David Roberts, born in Edinburgh in 1796, is a possible candidate. A second episode again concerns rivalry with the proprietors of the London Diorama. Although it is a source of some confusion, a resolution of its contradictions could ultimately lead to a re-orientation of knowledge about the relationship of the Diorama in England with Daguerre and Bouton in Paris.

### **Bristol Fair of September 1825**

Bristol was well known for an annual Fair of trade and entertainment held for about 2 weeks starting every 1 September. That month in 1825 a Diorama exhibition took place. Advertisements in two local Bristol newspapers [\(18\)](#), referred to the exhibition of a pair of dioramas 'for a short time in a spacious building purposely erected in St. James's Church Yards ... with a turning saloon as at the Regent's Park, London'. The two dioramas were 'Interior of Canterbury Cathedral' and 'Ruins of Holyhood'. However the artist of this 'Holyhood' was not Daguerre but clearly stated to have been Clarkson Stanfield. [\(19\)](#)

Indeed, Daguerre's diorama of Holyhood Chapel was still on exhibition in London in September 1825. After transfer to Liverpool and Manchester during the next two years, it was put up for auction in Manchester in December 1827 before then appearing at the Dioramas in Dublin and Edinburgh. Stanfield was in a position to have painted actually at Holyhood in Edinburgh, while there is no evidence that Daguerre ever [but once to London in April 1830: see note 9 of the author's later article on the Diorama in Paris] visited either Scotland or England. It can be a reasonable assumption (it was not precisely identified otherwise) that the other Bristol picture showing 'Canterbury Cathedral' was also by Stanfield. Bouton's diorama of 'Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral', was certainly on display in Liverpool during September 1825.

The 'Diorama' at Bristol was not intended to be permanent, for several reports referred to the building as temporary. [\(20\)](#) The exhibition in Bristol was continued for a few weeks after the Fair closed, but without extending much into November. The venture must have been an imitation rival show cashing in on the reputation of the authentic Diorama in London and Paris. It would not be easy in a temporary building for only a short season to provide true dioramic lighting effects - what type of 'temporary' construction would be a 'spacious building, built expressly', requiring darkness for the audience but with complicated daylight lighting arrangements for two dioramas? One advertisement close to the end of the exhibition even said the opening hours in October included 'Evenings, from 7 till 9': difficult to reconcile with the lighting requirements for dioramas.

The administrators of the London Diorama at some time placed an objection to the show. No doubt they believed it was contrary to their Diorama patent and indeed the objection is very understandable when we recall that advertisements for the Bristol show were for pictures of the same title as Daguerre and Bouton's productions as well as specifying the use of 'a turning saloon, as at the Regent's Park, London'. A response in the *Bristol Mercury* to the objection is most revealing: [\(21\)](#)

The Foreign Artists who introduced the Diorama into this country seem to have entertained an erroneous idea of the nature of the protection which our laws would afford them...- the

credit of being the original inventors was not enough to gratify their cupidity, and their ambition; but they would restrain the talents of our native artists, under the ridiculous pretence of copying their pictures... The foreigners, who have reaped already so abundant an harvest from the curiosity of John Bull, have had the presumption to apply for an injunction against the proprietors of the Diorama now exhibiting in Bristol; that they failed must be a source of congratulation to the admirers and patrons of Bristol talents; but the proprietors of the Bristol Diorama have the greatest cause to triumph, as the very attempt was an unwilling homage to the very superior claims of their beautiful pictures... we understand it will close next week.

Thus the situation of this rival Diorama might seem reasonably clear. Yet, because the episode at the Bristol fair also has some contradictory aspects, a complete understanding of the event has not been reached. Not only is it difficult to reconcile the nature of a temporary building with the demands of complicated lighting and the use of a rotating amphitheatre, but there is one intriguing consideration to be made due to the appearance of an advertisement in the Bristol newspapers in August 1825 the week before the Diorama there was first advertised:

The Misses GIROUX, having returned from the Continent ... announce ... that their ACADEMIES in Bath, Bristol and Clifton, have now re-opened... Tuesdays, at Miss C. Giroux's, 43, Queen-square, Bristol; and Wednesdays and Saturdays, at Miss GIROUX's, 14, George-street, Bath, Schools and Private Families attended as usual. (22)

The Miss Giroux were teachers of 'dancing and calisthenic exercises' in Bristol and Bath. Although the earliest date that the Giroux had been in the area is not known, their dancing academy was definitely of five years standing by 1825 and the family were certainly established in Bristol as Cecilia Giroux lived in Queen Square for at least twenty five years. (23) But where in 1825 had they recently been 'on the Continent' and could it only be a coincidence that they arrived back in Bristol about the same time as the Diorama? Could they have come back from Paris where lived Alphonse Giroux, a relative of Daguerre's wife?

At the end of the following decade Alphonse Giroux had a contract with Daguerre for the production and sale of Daguerreotype cameras and processing equipment, so is it possible that episode (24) in the history of photography had a prior run for Giroux with regard to the Diorama in England? If Giroux and his family were involved in the venture in Bristol he could have been engaged - even with Daguerre's knowledge - in an attempt to side-step the English proprietor of the London Diorama. But on display was not Daguerre's work but original or copy dioramas painted by Stanfield!

Such a counterpart Diorama, organised directly from Paris in competition with the London Proprietors, might have proved successful if the apparent use of a rotating saloon had been forgone: for it is that feature which provides a significant part of the English Diorama Patent. Indeed, consideration of patent law might suggest another reason why a rotating saloon Diorama could have been temporarily in Bristol. The Diorama patent obtained in February 1824 was truly an English patent: ie. it did not apply to Scotland or Ireland. So, if Giroux was involved, then it is not inconceivable the port of Bristol could have been a stage on the way to (say) Dublin, with a temporary exhibition there due to family links with the area. Yet how can the use of Stanfield's pictures and the xenophobic remarks in the local newspaper be reconciled with a Giroux connection?

Perhaps some inconsistency of evidence about the Bristol Fair venture should not be taken too seriously because statements made then were merely showman's hyperbole. It will be observed that the consequence of supposing Alphonse Giroux was somehow involved makes the situation extremely confused - we must need to put aside the advertisement for the dancing Giroux of Bristol and pretend that Occam's Razor applies to historical studies. So, in the end, our present knowledge has to point to the Bristol venture as a rival to the London Diorama with the involvement of Clarkson Stanfield, and that it was organised in England.

## Diorama Management and scene painters

The Diorama was patented in England at the beginning of 1824. But compared with, say, the manufacture of a 'self acting watercloset', it is not the type of subject that forms a natural patent. The patentee's (25) description was 'an improved mode of publicly exhibiting pictures on painted scenery of every description, and of distributing or directing the daylight upon or through them so as to produce many effects of light and shade'. Unless an English branch of the Arrowsmith family kept active control (which is not very likely) then the managers of the authentic Dioramas in England must have either purchased the patent outright or one or several licences were obtained.

Just as the word diorama can apply to both a building and a picture, can it be clear to us now, and was it clear at first to the purchaser and to the non-purchasers then, as to the boundary of the rights provided by the patent? It must have been essentially concerned with design of the building, the use of a rotating salon, and the contrivances used to control direction and colour of the light. The scene painting aspect is not so clear. Maybe a contract to use Daguerre and Bouton's paintings would be a requirement from the patentee, or it would be cheaper and easier to use those well publicised dioramas from France rather than have new ones painted in Great Britain.

It is also necessary to remember that the situation was different in Dublin and Edinburgh as the patent obtained by John Arrowsmith in 1824 did not apply out of England. Certainly the existence of a patent would not be alien to managers in England as it might be to the temperament of the painters and indeed with regard to the production of the picture the patent was unclear. Scene painters were using similar techniques (if not so large or elaborate in control of lighting changes) at theatres in London. They were providing scenic illusion familiar to London audiences since earlier masters such as Louthembourg. No names of people involved in 1825 in the official or imitation dioramas of 1825 have been discovered, except 'Mr. Stanfield, whose distinguished talents stand unrivalled', as the painter of the diorama displayed at the Bristol venture in September 1825.

The Diorama was rather like a theatre without actors. So the people involved in the imitation dioramas in Edinburgh and Bristol would on the one hand have been Gallery or theatre managers, and on the other; scene painters. Although they both later went on to illustrious Fine Art careers, both Clarkson Stanfield (1793-1867) (26) and David Roberts (1796-1864) (27) in their early years, like Daguerre, were predominately theatre scene painters. Although there is some reason to bear in mind that Stanfield may not necessarily have been the only scene painter from London (28) involved in the preparation of both dioramas displayed at Bristol, even if he had not been named his other known activities would have made him a suspect.

1825 is the year of significance in the present part of this study and so it is unfortunate that this period in the lives of both Stanfield and Roberts particularly lacks documentation. (29) Only a few months after the Bristol Fair Stanfield was also presenting a Poecilorama exhibition in London (30) in which the picture 'although small like those of the Cosmorama' did have 'similar contrivances to those used at the Diorama'. The episode in Bristol in September is quite likely to have been an early stage of Stanfield's (and Roberts') work for the 'British Diorama' (31) set up in London in 1828 at the Queen's Bazaar, Oxford Street, in competition with the authentic one in Regent's Park. It is not known how it came about that the British Diorama had that particular name, but, apart from the usual general xenophobia, anti-French feeling was very prevalent at this period after the Napoleonic wars, and the Society of British Artists, (32) with whom Stanfield and Roberts also became involved had first opened its doors in Suffolk Street in 1824.

Clarkson Stanfield had a considerable experience, like Daguerre, in producing scenic effects in the theatre and no doubt would find it difficult to accept that Daguerre's Dioramic effects should be an exclusive right. What is surprising is that Stanfield did produce a diorama at Bristol apparently copying Bouton's diorama of

'Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral' and Daguerre's 'Holyrood Chapel', and that an Edinburgh artist (maybe Roberts) was also in January 1825 involved in painting dioramas of the same name as those done in Paris. Could it have been that Stanfield and Roberts had early on been officially commissioned to produce copies rather than bring the originals over from Paris?

But approaching the gap in our knowledge from the opposite direction, perhaps we should wonder how is it that three of Daguerre's dioramas featured Edinburgh scenes? When he was an émigré, the French King Charles X had lived at Holyroodhouse, and indeed had honoured Daguerre specifically for his easel painting of Holyrood Chapel. (33) Yet there is no evidence that Daguerre ever went to Scotland. He must have copied the Edinburgh scenes from the work of other artists or engravers: it would be interesting to find out if such work had ever been done by the lithographer J. Hall (later manager of the Edinburgh Diorama).

Few painters would consider producing an easel painting as a copy of such work by another artist, but theatre scenery would quite legitimately be produced from publicly available images of the world, which at that time consisted of paintings, drawings and engravings only. No place can be out of bounds to all other artists because one painted it first, but painting the same scene and copying another person's painting are different activities. Both Stanfield and Roberts painted from the actual Edinburgh landscape. They did paintings of Holyrood Chapel so why should they not feel they could not do dioramas of those subjects? Even so they could certainly be accused of taking advantage of the publicity obtained by Daguerre's dioramas. What else would it be but deceit to pretend their productions were supposed to be original diorama by another person. The fact that the dioramas shown in Edinburgh and in Bristol in 1825 had the same titles as Daguerre and Bouton's dioramas is certainly difficult to comprehend other than as deliberate copies with intent to cash in on the work from Paris. Daguerre did have a special obsession and a special talent not shared by Stanfield or Roberts to offer: a command of the ways of light.

Any reader of the above will no doubt be clear about just one thing: there are huge gaps in our understanding of the organisation of these rival Dioramas in Great Britain. But although the gaps and problems are dominant, it is now possible to have some ideas regarding the direction further work on the subject needs to take. Although evidence regarding the involvement of Clarkson Stanfield is extremely small, and regarding David Roberts non-existent!, and although it is an involvement in rivalry with the Daguerre's Diorama in Great Britain, this writer believes that for the purposes of research an exploration of Stanfield, and to a lesser extent Roberts, could prove rewarding.

The events in Edinburgh in the January and especially in the September of 1825 in Bristol, in spite of being rival events to the authentic Diorama, have many odd aspects. and to solve some of their problems could in an oblique way open up fuller understanding of the fresh information we shall now see about the way Daguerre and Bouton's authentic Diorama was brought to Great Britain. For Daguerre's skills with light - described later by a reviewer in *The Times* as 'more like the illusions of enchantment than the mere creations of art' (34) were experienced by a wider public outside Paris and London. Indeed Daguerre's dioramas were able to move on to Dublin and Edinburgh as well as to two places in England (35) where such moments of wonder would surely not have been in ample supply: to the fast-growing Manchester and Liverpool of the late 1820s.

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**PART II : DIORAMAS OF DAGUERRE AND BOUTON IN GREAT BRITAIN IN THE 1820s**

	Paris	London	Liverpool	Manchester	Dublin	Edinburgh
<b>Valley of Sarnen (Daguerre)</b>	11 July 1822 to 18 Feb 1823	29 Sept 1823 to August 1824	10 Apr 1827 to March 1828	5 Apr 1825 to 8 Oct 1825	March 1826 to Jan 1827	July 1828 to 30 May 1829; May 1831 to 6 Aug 1831
<b>Trinity Chapel Canterbury (Bouton)</b>	11 July 1822 to 27 July 1823	29 Sept 1823 to August 1824	21 Feb 1825 to 1 Oct 1825	24 Oct 1825 to 28 Oct 1826	January 1827 to July 1827	25 August 1831 to ~May? 1832
<b>Harbour of Brest (Daguerre)</b>	19 Feb 1823 to 19 Oct 1823	30 Aug 1824 to mid-march 1825 (& 1837)	14 Oct 1825 to 11 Mar 1826	18 Nov 1826 to 31 Mar 1827		4 August 1834 to 4 April 1835
<b>Chartres Cathedral (Bouton)</b>	27 July 1823 to 21 Feb 1824	30 Aug 1824 to Dec? 1825 (& 1837)	early-May 1830 to March 1831			12 December 1827 to 14 June 1828
<b>Holyrood Chapel (Daguerre)</b>	20 Oct 1823 to 23 Sept 1824	21 Mar 1825 to Dec? 1825	early-Apr 1826 to March 1827	16 Apr 1827 to Dec 1827	19 Apr 1828 to 20 Dec 1828	June 1829 to 29 May 1830
<b>Roslin Chapel (Daguerre)</b>	24 Sept 1824 to 14 Aug 1825	20 Feb 1826 to May 1827	26 Apr 1828 to end-May 1829		end-July 1827 to 8 Apr 1828	April 1835 to 31 Oct 1835
<b>City of Rouen (Bouton)</b>	20 Apr 1825 to 30 Nov 1825	20 Feb 1826 to May 1827	June 1829 to early-April 1830			June 1830 to April? 1831
<b>Ruins in a Fog (Daguerre)</b>	15 Aug 1825 to 4 May 1826	4 June 1827 to ~Mar? 1828				May 1832 to end-Jan 1833
<b>Environs of Paris, St.Cloud (Bouton)</b>	27 Nov 1825 to 23 Aug 1826	4 June 1827 to ~Mar? 1828	May 1831 to Jan 1832			November 1836 to December 1837
<b>Village of Unterseen (Daguerre)</b>	24 Aug 1826 to 21 Aug 1827	24 Mar 1828 to May 1829	30 Jan 1832 to Oct 1832			June 1833 to 19 July 1834; Jan 1838 to 21 Apr 1838
<b>Village of Thiers (Daguerre)</b>	11 Nov 1827 to 26 July 1828	May 1829 to ~Apr? 1830				May 1838 to 15 June 1839
<b>Mont St. Gothard (Daguerre)</b>	27 July 1828 to 3 Aug 1829	April 1830 to ~June? 1832				November 1835 to 5 Nov 1836

**Fig. 1**  
**The early dioramas by Daguerre and Charles M. Bouton**

compiled by R. Derek Wood, 1993

**Sources:**

**Paris** : from Georges Potonniée's 'Liste des Tableaux exposés au [Paris] Diorama de 1822 à 1839' in his *Daguerre, Peintre et Décorateur*, Paris 1935, 79-89.

**London** : (opened 29 September 1823): compiled from *The Times*, 27 September 1823, 1; 4 October 1823, 3; 30 August 1824, pp. 1, 2; 21 March 1825, 2; 21 February 1826, 4; 5 June 1827, 2; 24 March 1828, 6; 28 May 1829, 3; 22 April 1830, 2; 16 July 1832, 3; (NB. Chartres Cathedral opened in London 30 August 1824 with Harbour of Brest (*The Times*, 30 August 1824, 2), but Brest was moved in March 1825 so the pairing continued (*The Times*, 21 March 1825, 2) with Holyrood Chapel until December 1825 or January 1826. Many years later both Chartres Cathedral and Harbour of Brest were (according to Gernsheim) exhibited again in London in 1837).

**Liverpool** : compiled from The *Liverpool Mercury* from 1825 to 1832. (the Bold Street Diorama opened 21 February 1825, apparently closed October 1832);

**Manchester** : from advertisements in The *Manchester Courier*, 2 April 1825 to 22 December 1827. (the Diorama opened in Cooper Street 5 April 1825, closed December 1827);

**Dublin** : Diorama in Great Brunswick Street [Pearse St], opened March 1826, closed 20 December 1828, compiled from. *The Freeman's Journal* (Dublin), 21 March 1826, 2; 8 April 1828, 1; 19 Apr.1828, pp.1, 3, and *Dublin Evening Post*, 21 March 1826, 3; 19 Oct.1826, 2; 23 Decemeber 1826, 2; 7 March 1827, 3; 26 July 1827; 16 December 1828, 2;

**Edinburgh** : (opened in Lothian Road on 12 December 1827, and closed 15 June 1839): Showings compiled from the *Caledonian Mercury*, 13 December 1827, pp. 1, 3; 14 June 1828, 1; 12 July 1828, 1; 30 May 1829, 1; 15 June 1829, pp. 1, 3; 22 May 1830, 1; 12 June 1830, pp. 1, 3; 19 May 1831, 1; 8 August 1831, 1; 27 August 1831, pp. 1, 3; 24 May 1832, 1; 29 December 1832, 1; 22 June 1833, pp. 1, 3; 14 July 1834, 1; 4 August 1834, pp. 1, 3; 28 March 1835, 1; 18 April 1835, 1; 24 October 1835, 1; 14 November 1835, pp. 1, 3; 29 October 1836, 1; 19 November 1836, pp. 1, 3; 4 December 1837, 1; 11 January 1838, 1; 7 April 1838, 1; 26 May 1838, 1; (comment relating to Paris, 30 March 1839, p3); 3 June 1839, 1.

## Manchester

### MANCHESTER DIORAMA

**The public are respectfully informed that the DIORAMA in COOPER-STREET, (from the Regent's Park, London,) will OPEN on TUESDAY the 5th instant, with a VIEW of the VALLEY of SARNEN, in SWITZERLAND - Admission, 2s. - Children, under twelve years of age 1s. Perpetual tickets during the exhibition of the present picture (not transferable) 7s.6d.**

**- Open from ten till dusk**

Thus was announced the opening on Tuesday 5 April of a Diorama in Cooper street, Manchester by an advertisement in a local weekly newspaper The *Manchester Courier* of Saturday 2 April 1825. [\(36\)](#)

The diorama seen on the opening in Cooper street was the first one done by Daguerre. 'The Valley of Sarnen' had been on display in Paris three years before and then in London for almost a year from 29 September 1823 until August 1824. The Dioramas in those two places had been designed to have two dioramas at each performance. Each pair of dioramas were presented in sequence to Paris and London audiences who were seated on a rotating 'salon' presumably because this device allowed darkness and an

unobtrusive audience not interfering with the required visual illusion of perspective. One double program had a fixed length of about thirty minutes.

However in Manchester, and Liverpool, the buildings could display only one painting. Price of admission to the Cooper street Diorama in Manchester was two shillings or half price for children under twelve. In London seats also cost two shillings - although there were a small number of more expensive seats in boxes at three shillings - . and as they saw two pictures it would seem that the same price for the people of Manchester was very high. However, this was relieved somewhat within two months of opening because it became possible to see the show from a smaller number of cheaper seats at the back for one shilling.

By comparison the price of a newspaper, at that period an extremely high priced luxury item, was commonly seven pennies. The sequence of changes undergone by the single diorama on display must have lasted about fifteen minutes, but as it was a fixed auditorium it is conceivable that customers at the provincial Dioramas may have been able to see the changes undergone by a diorama more than once in an almost continuous program.



**T**HE Public are respectfully informed, that the **DIORAMA** IN COOPER-STREET IS NOW OPEN, with the VIEW of the VALLEY of SARNEN, in SWITZERLAND.

This splendid Picture, originally exhibited in Paris, and afterwards in the Regent's Park, London, is one of a Series now executing by Messrs. BOUTON and DAGUERRE; and which after being presented to public view in those two capitals, will be exhibited successively in this town.

These two artists have recently been made Knights of the Legion of Honor by the King of France, in testimony of his Majesty's admiration of their extraordinary talents: but their great claim to a high and lasting reputation rests on the surpassing merit of these performances, which they have entitled the **DIORAMA**, and of which they are the Inventors.

The Picture to which the attention of the Manchester Public is now invited is one of their first attempts in this new line of painting; but it has been pronounced by the best judges both in France and England, to be as unrivalled in its execution as a work of art, as it is unprecedented in its character of an ingenious invention.

Admission:—Front Seats, 2s.—Children under twelve years of age, half price.—Back Seats, 1s.—Perpetual Tickets during the Exhibition of this Picture (not transferable) 7s. 6d.—Open from ten till dusk.

**Advertisement for the Diorama in Cooper Street, Manchester  
*Manchester Courier*, July 23, 1825.**

It was possible to buy 'perpetual' tickets lasting for a complete season of display of one picture. Costing at first seven shillings and six pence (but in later years five shillings) it may seem to us of the late twentieth century - well supplied with visual stimulation and opportunity to travel - an expensive way to get bored by

one exhibit over a period of six or more months. Comment in the press about the dioramas often had a tone barely distinguishable from advertisements and probably often relied heavily on the Diorama's own literature. Even so, a few days after the Cooper street Diorama opened, a reporter of the *Manchester Gazette* did speak with a more individual voice about the response to the opening show of the 'Valley of Sarnen'.

'... it requires an effort to keep in mind that that which seems so verdant and so beautiful, so vast and so sublime, is confined within the walls of a brick building in a smoky town. A little girl of four or five years of age who did not trouble herself to inquire how so a scene could extend from the bottom of Cooper-street, said in our hearing "Why papa, you said it was a picture, and these are real things." and real things they seemed to be ... Such an exhibition is a positive increase to the stock of enjoyment of any town, and more particularly in a town like this, which has as yet so little beauty to boast of, and a lounge in the Diorama to him who toils amidst smoke and dust is as refreshing as water to the thirsty.' (37)

The first program at the Manchester Diorama lasted for six months and, with a closure of two weeks for the change-over, was replaced on Monday 24 October 1825 with Bouton's interior view of the Trinity Chapel of Canterbury Cathedral. (38) The first exhibit had been transferred to Manchester directly from the London Diorama but Trinity Chapel and the subsequent dioramas had previously been in Liverpool. Trinity Chapel was exhibited for one complete year in Manchester, but was followed by Daguerre's 'Harbour of Brest' which had little more than four months: and indeed, being from November 1826 to March 1827, those winter months could hardly have displayed Brest to its best advantage as the Diorama displays depended on available daylight. The fourth picture had a more suitable season from April of almost nine months. It was another of Daguerre's: 'Holyrood Chapel, Edinburgh'.

All of these four dioramas were extremely well advertised in the *Manchester Courier*. (39) Except for the two or three weeks closed for change-over, advertisements had appeared almost every week, and generally in a prominent front page position - almost an excessive amount of advertising in a provincial town unlikely to have had a great deal of passing visitor trade. In London the Regent's Park Diorama advertised extremely rarely in newspapers, presumably depending more frugally on hand bills and street-placard displays. For the Diorama in Manchester the total cost of press advertisements over two and a half years must have been considerable. An advertisement for the exhibition of Holyrood Chapel appeared almost weekly from 14 April to 1 December 1827, but on Saturday 8 December it did not appear: instead the following...

## **DIORAMA, COOPER-STREET TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION**

**by THOMAS NABB, (exempt from Auction Duty), on Saturday the  
22nd day of December instant, precisely at twelve o'clock on the  
premises**

**THE celebrated PICTURE OF HOLYROOD CHAPEL, by  
Moonlight. Painted by Messrs Boulton [sic] and Daguerre [sic]  
French Artists, together with the MACHINERY used in exhibiting  
the same.**

**This valuable Work of Art has been exhibited in London, Liverpool,  
and Manchester, with the most decided success and will form a most  
desirable investment for any person desirous of employing his time  
and capital in an exhibition of this nature. The picture may be  
viewed any day previous to the sale, by applying to the Auctioneer,  
No. 7 Ridgefield. (40)**

We would have had information of real significance if this sale advertisement had revealed the owner of the diorama of Holyrood Chapel, but Thomas Nabb was not that man, merely an "auctioneer, appraiser and agent" at 7 Ridgfield, Manchester. (41) The result of the auction is not recorded, but, within four months, this diorama of 'Holyrood Chapel' reappeared at another Diorama building in Dublin and then in the summer of 1829 in Edinburgh. The 'machinery used in exhibiting' the diorama would be uniquely associated with the particular changes undergone during a performance. No further activity at Cooper Street is apparent. That Daguerre's diorama pictures did not remain in the ownership of only one person in England is the most interesting fact revealed through this research on the Manchester Diorama.

As will be seen later, there is evidence that Daguerre's dioramas were purchased in Paris by unknown Englishmen for display in London. Organisation of a timetable of display of these dioramas in more than one place would presuppose a single ownership, although it does not exclude independent management or ownership of the buildings outside London. However, putting 'Holyrood Chapel' up for auction in December 1827 could have been an isolated example. For it does appear that two dioramas ('Harbour of Brest' and 'Chartres Cathedral') were exhibited in London for a second time in 1837, with them presumably remaining in the control of the original management at Regent's Park Diorama when they were exhibited out of London in the intervening years.

No architectural documents or engravings of the Diorama building in Manchester are known, except for its shape and position recorded on a contemporary map. Without the newspaper advertisements there would have been no evidence that Daguerre and Bouton's dioramas had ever been exhibited to the people of Manchester.

## Liverpool

We have seen that three out of the four dioramas exhibited in Manchester had been transferred there after display in Liverpool. Indeed the Diorama in Manchester did not exhibit its first diorama until several weeks after the building in Liverpool had opened its doors on Monday 21 February 1825 (42):

### **DIORAMA BOLD-STREET**

**THE Public are respectfully informed, that the DIORAMA will open on Monday next, the 21st instant, with a view of TRINITY CHAPEL, in Canterbury Cathedral, originally exhibited in Paris, and subsequently in the Regent's Park, London. - Admittance, 2s. Children under Twelve half price - Perpetual admission Tickets during the exhibition of this Picture (not transferable) 7s 6d. - Open from Ten till five every day.**

The new building and the announcement of its opening exhibition had an effusive welcome in the local *Liverpool Mercury*.

A good countenance is said to be the best letter of introduction. On this principle of judging a prima facie, we must conclude that the exhibition about to be opened in Bold-street will prove far superior to anything of the kind hitherto offered to public view. The building, indeed, is worthy of being ranked among our public edifices, and does credit to the spirit of the proprietors, and the taste of the architect. It remains for the public to decide whether the

merit of the interior be in keeping with the promise held out by so imposing a structure, Those who have seen the Diorama in London or Paris, will, we think, have no doubt on this head. The unqualified applause excited by it in those two capitals, has stamped its claim to universal admiration. Never, perhaps, were the effects of perspective exhibited in such colossal dimension, and illustrated by such power of design, and skill of execution. The combination of all these is such as to produce an effect almost magical on the spectator, while it entitles these pictures to the highest praise as works of art, independently of their surpassing merit when viewed merely as specimens of the deception which painting can practise on the senses.

When Bouton's diorama of 'Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral' had been shown for the first few days the same reporter was confirming that...

'The Diorama, now exhibiting in Bold-street, is, with out exception, the most complete specimen of pictorial illusion we ever yet had the pleasure of seeing'. (43)

Such glowing reports about the Diorama were quickly followed by the appearance of a letter to the editor dated 24 February and signed only by the initials 'W. I. D.': (44)

SIR, -- When an article in praise of any public exhibition, whatever its claims on public patronage may be, appears in a newspaper, it is generally put down as a "puff;" but to talk of "puffing," when the Bold-street Diorama is in question, would be nothing less than down-right nonsense.

Indeed, his letter goes on to provide a long enthusiastic comment about the diorama which seems to this reader at least to have some similarity to a 'puff'. And it ends with what would no doubt be considered in those years to be gallantry towards the fashionable ladies of Liverpool:

I must confess, the oftener I visited it the more I found myself deceived. Being, however, a great admirer of beauty and fashion, my chagrin is always lost in the pleasure I enjoy in beholding them shine there, 'in foul and fair weather,' in the fullest zenith of their glory; for to the credit of the ladies of this town be it told, that they are constant visitors, which is, in my opinion, the best proof that can be given of their extraordinary taste for the fine arts.

Four months later a wider public was sought by increasing the seating area in the Bold Street building. This back gallery, with seats at one shilling - half the standard price - became available in June 1825. (45) During that month the Diorama in Bold Street became well established with the public as it received a considerable amount of local press coverage. A letter, signed with the nom de plume of 'Dubitans' to the Mercury's sister publication, a miscellaneous cultural periodical, *The Kaleidoscope*, made enthusiastic comments about the diorama by raising the most common point that always seemed to come up:

Is this diorama really, as the proprietors assert, a flat surface...or is it as I suspect, painted on the principle of the horizontorium, deriving all its effects from an optical or perspective deception?. (46)

The editor promised to answer the query 'unreservedly' the following week, and indeed in both of his publications he was able to describe how...

we have, by special favour, had a peep behind the curtain, and we hereby pledge our word and character, that this wonderful picture is really painted upon one flat surface and that it hangs perpendicularly like the drop scene of a theatre.

Indeed, he was of the opinion that...

it would remunerate the proprietor, as it would assuredly gratify the spectators, if the public were admitted to a close inspection of this matchless picture... we doubt not that the spectators would cheerfully consent to pay an extra sum to have their doubts removed by a personal and close inspection. (47)

There quickly followed a letter from 'an Artist' extolling the spectacle presented by the painter's skill of the diorama. (48) Much of what was written about the Diorama sounds suspiciously like a successful advertising campaign, but if it was not, then it does indicate a considerable success of the opening months of the Diorama in Bold Street. The managers must have spent a considerable amount of money regularly advertising their programs, quite often with a detailed description of the diorama consisting of 200 or more words (49) They often also had a 'last-chance-to-see' type of advertisement placed for several months before the actual end of season.

The first diorama in Liverpool, Bouton's 'Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral' stayed throughout the summer of 1825 until the announcement 'will close *positively* on Saturday the 1st of October ... to give place to another picture of equal celebrity by the same Artists'. Trinity Chapel was transferred to Manchester where it opened only three weeks later. The new program in Liverpool reopened after an interval of two weeks with Daguerre's 'Harbour of Brest'. This was the pattern for the future with the dioramas transferred directly from London and, after a season of between six months to a year, moved onto Manchester until that Diorama closed in December 1827.

Altogether nine dioramas by Daguerre or Bouton came to Liverpool over the next several years, as can be seen from the Table (Figure 1) within this article. (50) In many ways the early dioramas of the 1820s seen at Liverpool were the best and did not suffer from the increasing excesses of effects and novelties such as a real goat placed by Daguerre into the dioramic displays in Paris in the 1830s. (51) A more restrained type of lighting effects could be seen during the season of late 1829 in Liverpool with the 'View of the City of Rouen':

'Various beautiful *changes of light* - from Sunshine to Storm, are exhibited, during which a *splendid Rainbow* appears, and again fades as the storm clears away ... strikingly grand and magnificent'. (52)

By this time the entrance price had been reduced to one shilling, but the following season in 1830 brought a more significant change.

When 'Chartres Cathedral' opened in May 1830 the visitors to Bold Street also had for their entertainment three 'Cosmorama' pictures - such as 'St. George's Chapel where the funeral of his late Majesty was performed'. (53) Cosmoramas (54) were glorified peep-shows, small pictures in a cabinet viewed through a magnifying window a few inches in size. Then towards the end of that year the ultimate change seemed likely, for it was announced that it was the last of the dioramas that would be exhibited in Liverpool because 'the building at the top of Bold Street being about to be appropriated to other purposes'. (55)

So began what was a period of considerable uncertainty: yet it was a long period in which another two dioramas were exhibited over another two years! The end came abruptly without any definite notification. There was no advertising after 5 October 1832, the same day as a change came in the business affairs of the owner and editor of the *Liverpool Mercury*, Egerton Smith, specifically with regard to his partner and friend (not a relative), John Smith. Nowhere has there been found any reference to the Diorama as part of Egerton Smith or John Smith's business interests but as the Diorama did end at the same time as the

Smiths partnership facts about them do need attention.

Egerton Smith (56) founded the *Liverpool Mercury* in 1811 as well as in the 1820s his pleasant periodical called *The Kaleidoscope*, where enthusiastic reports about the Diorama also appeared. At the time of his death in 1841 a friend wrote that 'as regards the Town of Liverpool, we doubt whether any man was ever more thoroughly identified with it than Mr. Egerton Smith'. Even so little has survived about him, except that he had strong feelings against the slave trade (not an easy stand to make in such a port in his early days), he had founded a 'night asylum' for the homeless with more than one hundred beds, and the Mechanics Institute and 'Apprentices Library', he was a journalist, poet and even a minor inventor (although his friends seemed to consider these last as 'innocent foibles').

John Smith is even more shadowy, but he was certainly a lecturer in education (57) and maybe the same man as 'Mr Smith, scientific teacher of the Writing Academy of George Street, Edinburgh'. On 5 October 1832 he withdrew his interest in the *Liverpool Mercury*, so as to concentrate on lecturing throughout the midlands on 'Smith and Dolier's system of education' (58) and to sell their recently patented 'writing tablet and delible ink' (59) and other aids for education.

The Diorama in Bold Street seems to have ended in the first week of October 1832 and so tentatively its end may not have been entirely unconnected with the following notice (60) dated 1 October.

...the partnership heretofore subsisting between the undersigned John Smith, William Dolier, and Egerton Smith, as Patentees and publishers, is also this day by mutual consent, dissolved, so far as regards the said Egerton Smith, who retires from the concern, which will be continued by the said John Smith and William Dolier, in conjunction with James Wood, at the office of the *Liverpool Mercury*, under the firm of "Smith and Dolier" as heretofore.

Two weeks before a 'British Diorama' had opened in Dale Street, Liverpool, showing three views by "an eminent British Artist", G. Tyler, but nothing is known about this undertaking. (61)

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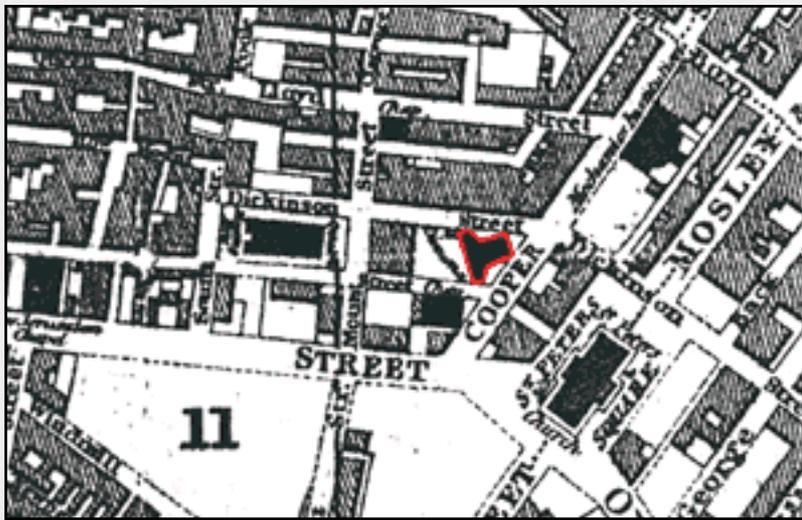
## **PART II : DIORAMAS OF DAGUERRE AND BOUTON IN GREAT BRITAIN IN THE 1820s**

### **Origin of the Enterprise**

At the time of writing (1992) the facade of the Diorama in London exists at 18 Park Square East, Regent's Park, with the word DIORAMA prominently displayed high along the frieze. It is an Arts Centre having survived planning proposals in the 1970s and 1980s. In contrast nothing is known about the Diorama building in Manchester, although in a maps of 1824 [-1825] and 1829, its bell shape is clearly displayed on the west side of Cooper Street at the corner with Dickinson Street (62) and it may have had an entrance at 10 Dickinson Street.



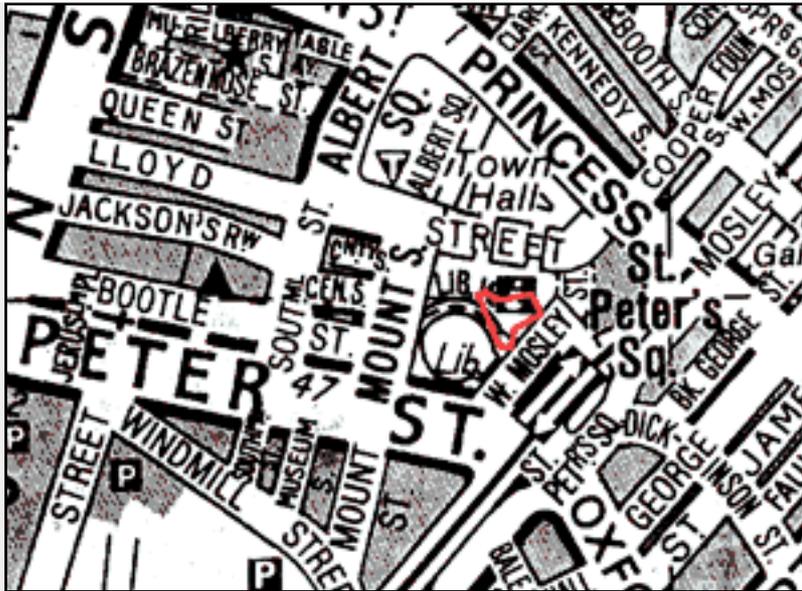
**Map of Central Manchester (detail), 1824 [-1825]** William Swire, *Manchester and its Environs*, 1824 [-1825]  
 Courtesy of Local History Unit, Manchester Central Library



**Map of Central Manchester (detail), 1829**  
 Pigot's *General Directory of Manchester, Salford, &c., for 1829*  
 Courtesy of Local History Unit, Manchester Central Library

By comparing this map with the one above it can be seen that the area was being considerably rebuilt in the mid and late 1820s and several new buildings had appeared close by the Diorama in the intervening 4 years.

As can be seen from the following map and photograph of the 1990s, the southern end of Cooper Street disappeared in the 1920s and the site is now occupied by the Local History Unit of the Central Library and Library Walk between the Library and the Town Hall extension along side of St Peter's Square.



**Map of Central Manchester (detail), 1990**

This map of the area as it is today shows the Central Library with 'Library Walk' (the word 'Walk' being masked on the map by the symbol **i**, designating an Information Centre at the Town Hall extension on the north side) where the Diorama building had stood in the late 1820s. Bootle Street and Lloyd Street exist now as in the 1820s, but the south end of Cooper Street has gone, although the north part still exists, and only the south-east end of Dickenson street remains on the other side of what is now St. Peter's Square.



**Central Manchester today, 1998**

View across St Peter's Square, showing Library Walk and the north side of the Central Library, Manchester.

Photograph: R. Derek Wood, 1998

Information about the building in Liverpool is just as limited. It has been possible to glean only that in Liverpool the building was considered when it opened as 'worthy of being ranked among our public edifices and does credit to the ... taste of the architect ... so imposing a structure'. (63) A contemporary guidebook to Liverpool spoke of the exhibition being at the upper, ie.south, end of Bold-street, and indeed a city map of 1829 shows the building about one-quarter of the way down the east side of that street. (64) In the following

year it was 'about to be appropriated to other purposes', (65) but it did continue as a Diorama certainly to the end of 1832.

On at least two occasions in Liverpool when the final weeks of a program approached ('Roslin Chapel' in March 1829 and 'Environs of Paris' in January 1832), a fortnight was set aside 'for the benefit of the Superintendants'. (66) This may suggest that the owners lived elsewhere having local managers. Yet why is it that the two Dioramas built outside of London were both in Lancashire within forty miles of each other? They certainly had greater populations than, say Birmingham or Leeds, yet as those last two towns would also have offered considerable audiences, maybe the English Diorama proprietors were of Lancashire.

But who could they, or he, have been? There is no firm evidence. Because of their names, it is difficult to entirely avoid considering that Egerton Smith and his partner John Smith in Liverpool might have some link with the Diorama patentee. It will be recalled that Daguerre's wife and brother-in-laws were an Anglo-French family called at various times Smith or Arrowsmith. But then Smith is the most common surname in England so it would be foolish to merely assume that there might be some connection not only between the ending of a business relationship in Liverpool with the final days of the Diorama in Bold Street but to then extend such a flimsy idea to the Mr. Smith (67) who was the proprietor of the London Diorama when it first opened: equally such a potential connection cannot be entirely ignored in future research of this area filled with uncertainties. The only further contribution this writer is able to make to such a debate is that Egerton Smith may indeed have had some connections with France as in 1831 he was co-author of a book on the French language. (68)

[ see Jacob Smith (footnote 67bis) ]

The most interesting and tantalizing information about the way in which Daguerre's Diorama came to England comes from unique surviving copies of the programmes sold for three pence at the doors of the Liverpool (69) and the Manchester (70) Diorama during first week they opened in 1825. In these booklets of fifteen pages a description of the opening exhibit was given first, followed by a general account of the development of the Diorama enterprise since the Paris Diorama had open three years earlier with the double program of 'Valley of Sarnen' and

**... Struck with their uncommon merit, some English gentlemen, then in the French capital, resolved to secure so valuable an acquisition for their own country, and contracted with Messrs. Bouton and Daguerre for the purchase of these two paintings, as well as of any which they might subsequently execute for the Diorama. Those who have seen the building erected about eighteen months ago, in the Regent's Park, in London, need not be told at what a vast expense this exhibition was established in this country. Not less than £15,000 were expended before the two pictures above mentioned were displayed. ... The unbounded success of the undertaking in London being a guarantee for its meeting a similar reception in a few of the leading towns in England, as well as in Dublin and Edinburgh, arrangements were entered into with the proprietor, for the purpose of carrying this plan into effect. The vast expense and inconvenience of erecting buildings of such immense size for this exhibition, must preclude its extension beyond a very few places in England. Liverpool and Manchester have been selected as the proper starting posts for the introduction of the provincial Diorama.**

This information from the Diorama's booklet was used to form a report in the *Manchester Courier* about the opening show. Indeed the Manchester booklet had been printed at the Courier office and the paper's reporter, obviously with a close relationship with the people at the Cooper Street Diorama, was able to comment that one of the Englishmen who had purchased Daguerre's dioramas 'has distinguished himself as the author of one of the most popular works of the day'. (71) Well ! Author of work of literature or art? The

search for him must continue. He or the other 'English gentlemen' must have been men of considerable capital as they had been planning Dioramas not only in Liverpool and Manchester, but also in Dublin and Edinburgh. Their venture did indeed extend to Ireland and Scotland, although the situation there was not identical to that in England as the patent obtained by John Arrowsmith in 1824 applied to England only.

The fact that a diorama was put up for auction in Manchester in December 1827 is a puzzling event, for the need to have a well organised distribution network for the dioramas would be better served if they remained the property of a single proprietor. Local managers in Dublin and Edinburgh could have greater independence because there was no patent to restrain them. Indeed either Daguerre or Bouton would be able to operate themselves in Scotland or Ireland even if Diorama rights had been purchased by English proprietors.

The commercial situation is complex. First, because of the wide nature of the patent (building/rotating saloon/lighting-control mechanisms/diorama painting); secondly it was a patent taken out only in England so the relationship between France, England, Scotland with Ireland, has many varied aspects; thirdly, because of the requirements for a distribution network and need for technical support. Whether or not Daguerre's dioramas were rented from London or purchased, even in Scotland and Ireland the services of someone, even from Paris, would be needed to erect the dioramas with their individual lighting control mechanism. Maybe one day a researcher will find a diorama Contract: if not, further speculation can bear little fruit. At the very beginning of the 1830s, Charles Bouton moved to Britain, and there is little doubt that the situation in this later period was markedly different to that during the 1820s.

## Scotland and Ireland

We have seen that Liverpool Public Library have what is probably the only surviving copy of a pamphlet published by the Diorama in Bold Street, Liverpool in 1825, which provides the following statement regarding the Diorama in Great Britain.

'The unbounded success of the undertaking in London, being a guarantee for its meeting a similar reception in a few of the leading towns in England, as well as in Dublin and Edinburgh, arrangements were entered into with the proprietor, for the purpose of carrying this plan into effect.'

In work on Panoramas and related shows, other authors have indeed already found that Dioramas were built in Gt. Brunswick Street, Dublin (72) and in Lothian Road, Edinburgh. (73) The Diorama in these two places each deserves a detailed study of their own, no doubt best done by local historians, to develop the exploratory findings presented here.

## Dublin

Information about the Diorama in Dublin is somewhat limited, and advertisements for the shows were only rarely placed in the Dublin press. (74) It opened in March 1826, showing Daguerre's 'Valley of Sarnen'. Only three more tableaux appeared: Bouton's, followed by Daguerre's 'Roslin Chapel' and then 'Holyrood Chapel' with which the Diorama finally closed within only three years on 20 December 1828. A short review in *The Freeman's Journal of Dublin* provides a glimpse of the 'magical illusion' offered by the 'Ruins of Holyrood Chapel': (75)

'The twinkling of the stars, and the agitated flame of a lamp before a female at her devotions before a ruined altar while her figure, and the objects surrounding, brighten as the flame expends itself in the breeze.'

The building probably had a similar arrangement to the one in Liverpool with identical prices of two shillings in a front gallery, and one shilling for the back gallery.

An advertisement placed in the *Dublin Evening Post* at Christmas 1826 provides some unique information and so is here given in full: [\(76\)](#)

**THE PROPRIETOR of the DUBLIN DIORAMA situate Great Brunswick-street, near Trinity College, begs leave to announce, that the splendid Original Painting of CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, which is to replace the Valley of Sarnen is arrived, and will be ready for inspection, so soon as the Artist engaged by the company shall have completed the putting up of a Picture in England, by which he is now detained. Those Persons who have not as yet seen the beautiful and interesting representation of the Valley of Sarnen, are respectfully informed, that a fortnight, in all probability, will find the Picture on its way to America, a contract having been completed for its transmission.**

Three points in the above advertisement merit our attention. First that the building was in Great Brunswick Street, near Trinity College. There is no street of that name now in Dublin but the information about Trinity College does show that this street should not be confused with Brunswick Street (North) which existed in the 1820s and still today, north of the Liffey, not to the south like Trinity College. 'Great Brunswick Street' ran east from Trinity College to Grand Canal Docks and in the 1920s was renamed to the present day Pearse Street. [\(77\)](#) The building has not been identified on contemporary maps or found in Local Directories which before 1834 were listed by merchant and traders names not by Streets.

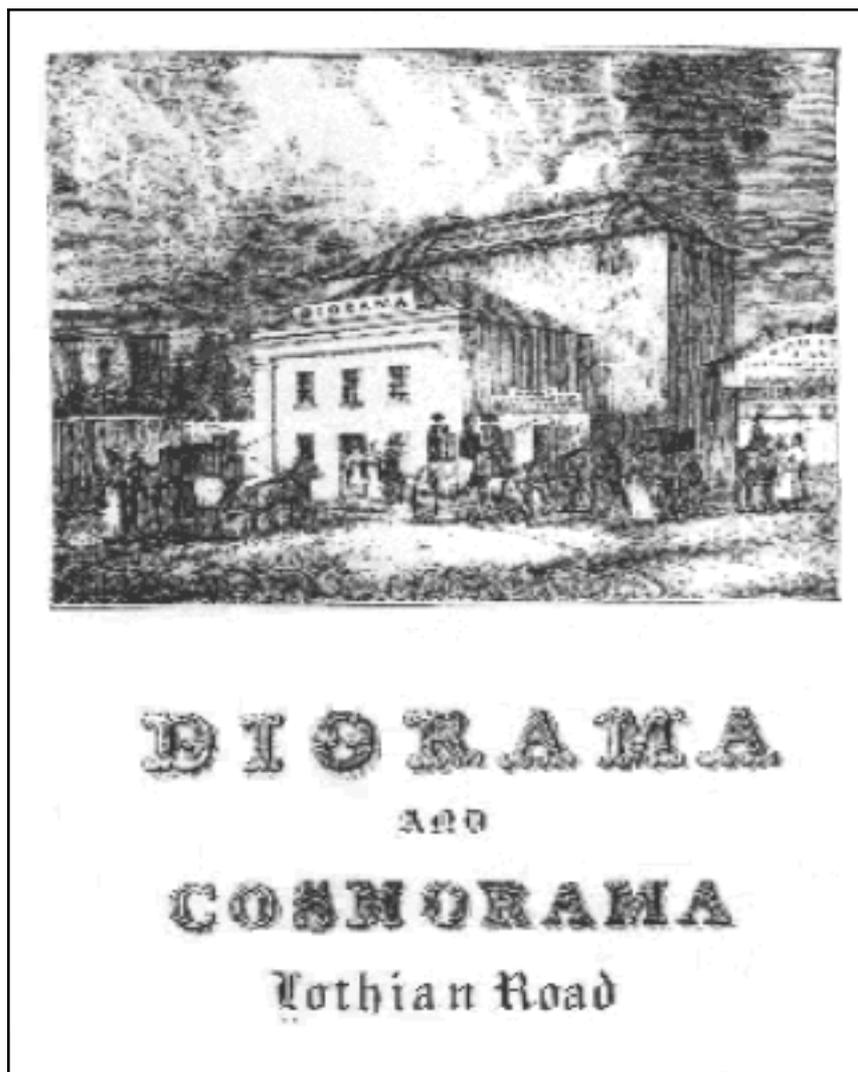
Who could have been the 'Artist engaged by the company' to put up the diorama? If any significance can be placed on the fact that John Arrowsmith married the daughter of a Steward of a Viceroy of Ireland [\(78\)](#), then there is a small chance that this man could have been an Arrowsmith (see the introduction to this article). But there is obviously also a chance that it was Charles Bouton. He certainly had occasional trips from Paris across the channel at this period and indeed in the next decade lived in England.

In the above advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Post* a seemingly firm statement was made that the diorama 'Valley of Sarnen' was very shortly to be sent to America, 'a contract having been completed'. Yet this diorama appeared in Liverpool only four months later, [\(79\)](#) and to Edinburgh in July 1828. [\(80\)](#) It was again in Edinburgh in the summer of 1831 'for a short time, before its final removal from this country'. Even so the final fate of this 'Valley of Sarnen' is uncertain for in the first week of August 1831 it was damaged by an accident at the Edinburgh Diorama just before it was due to be moved. [\(81\)](#) Whether or not this contract to send Daguerre's dioramas to America in 1827 was ever realised, it offers an intriguing line of enquiry for future investigation.

## Edinburgh

More facts can be established about the dioramas exhibited in Edinburgh. A Diorama building opened there in Lothian Road, just to the west of the castle, on 12 December 1827. [\(82\)](#) Like the other three Dioramas built after the renowned ones in Paris and London, the building was designed for programs showing only

one tableaux. The opening program was 'Interior of Chartres Cathedral'. It was advertised as 'lately exhibited in Regent's Park, London ...and all the accessories are by the same proprietors'. The Lothian Road Diorama was managed by a Mr J. Hall. (83) Not only has a picture survived of this Diorama which was engraved by the manager, but, as can be seen from the reproduction here, (84) his other business – 'Hall's Lithographic Establishment' – was integrated with the building in Lothian Road.



**Diorama, Lothian Road, Edinburgh**

*Edinburgh and Leith Post Office Directory for 1835-36*

By courtesy of Edinburgh City Libraries.

The Diorama opened in Edinburgh at least two years after those of Lancashire and Dublin. With the exception of the opening program of December 1827 the tableaux went north after visiting those other places. But a fuller range of twelve dioramas (85) was seen (two had two separate seasons), for the Edinburgh Diorama survived for many more years. During the twelve years there was the opportunity to see three dioramas (all by Daguerre) that had not reached Liverpool.

The success of the Diorama in Edinburgh is a little surprising. The changing effects undergone by the tableaux depended so much on the control of daylight. In the summers there would be no problems but a northern city with very short winter days hardly provides optimum conditions. Not only had the Lothian Road Diorama opened for the first time in a December, it consistently remain open during the winters (and pains were taken to reassure their visitors that the building was 'warmed by patent stoves'), although during 'the

short days' it closed at 3.30p.m. Summer opening times were usually from 9.00a.m. to 7.00p.m.

Adequate light was definitely a problem in Edinburgh. On the day of the opening press preview the weather 'was very gloomy' and so the first response of the representative of the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal* was a little subdued on that account. (86) Between 1830 and 1832 considerable attention was paid to improving the light available. Obviously the windows providing the main transmitted light through the diorama were at the back of the building, while the engraving features the front entrance with only skylights visible.

For the first two years the Diorama had provided two galleries, so the cost of entrance was either one or two shillings. In the summer of 1829 not only had the two classes been abandoned, but for a standard charge of one shilling four cosmorama pictures could also be seen while waiting for the main attraction. (87) This extra feature was provided for a good reason. The visitors would conveniently 'beguile that time', looking through the lenses of the small cosmorama peepshows, while they were of necessity kept for a time in very subdued light before being brought, suitably dark-adapted, to the diorama. Within a short while, the exhibition was renamed the 'Diorama and Cosmorama, Lothian Road'.

### **1839 : an End (and a Beginning)**

Ten years later at Lothian Road the diorama being exhibited was Daguerre's 'Village of Thiers', It was the beginning of 1839, the year that his name leaped to fame on the announcement in Paris of the discovery of the Daguerreotype, the event generally considered to mark the birth of Photography.

As well as in Edinburgh, the well known Dioramas in London and Paris were still in business. But at 11.30am on Friday, 8 March 1839, a fire swept through the original building at rue des Marais in Paris. This news reached Edinburgh within a few days and the *Caledonian Mercury* had a translation of a short report on the event from a Paris newspaper . By the end of the month the consequences of that fire on the future of the Diorama in Edinburgh were under consideration in the Edinburgh paper: (88)

The disastrous event which recently destroyed the Diorama in Paris, with two views then exhibiting and one in a state of preparation, has reduced the number of Dioramas to two, one in London the other in Edinburgh. We know not what stock of pictures the respective proprietors of these two establishments have on hand, but as it must be a considerable length of time ere the one in Paris can be rebuilt and new pictures executed - for it was there where originated those wonderful works of art, which have so pleased and astonished all who have seen them -, it is to be hoped there are enough on hand in this country to serve till a new supply can be produced.

A few weeks later the current show at the Lothian Road Diorama was billed as closing positively on 1 June, but on that day a notice was issued extending the program for another two weeks, and so this Diorama closed on Saturday 15 June 1839. (89)

All of the dioramas that had been seen in Edinburgh throughout its twelve-year existence had been produced and exhibited in Paris in the 1820s before being brought over to Great Britain. By 1830 the excitement and profit had gone out of the enterprise. Bouton withdrew from the partnership with Daguerre in Paris and he settled permanently in London. Although Daguerre was declared bankrupt on 27 March 1832, and remained so for almost three years, he continued to produce dioramic pictures in Paris (soon with a new co-painter, Hippolyte Sébron) for the Paris Diorama only. Daguerre's dioramas were not sold across the channel in the 1830s. (90) Presumably the ownership of the London Diorama remained in the hands of the unidentified English proprietors, with Bouton employed as manager and painter.

The division between Daguerre in Paris and Bouton in London was obviously severe. At a small rival dioramic exhibition, the 'British Diorama' in London at the Queen's Bazaar, Oxford Street, there could be seen in the early 1830s several contributions by Daguerre's brother-in-law Charles Arrowsmith, and by

Sébron, his diorama co-painter. [\(91\)](#) After 1832 the dioramas shown at the Regent's Park Diorama were new ones painted in London by Bouton. None of them were sent out of London.

After the fire in Paris in 1839 Daguerre wound-up the affairs of his Diorama. Bouton soon moved back to Paris and opened another Diorama there in 1843. [\(92\)](#)



**Interior of Charles Bouton's new Diorama building in Paris in 1843,**  
showing his tableaux of the Church of St Paul, Rome, after a fire  
*L'illustration*, 30 Septembre 1843  
By permission of the British Library.

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## Footnotes

1. Georges Potonniée's *Daguerre, Peintre et Décorateur*, Paris: Paul Montel 1935, is an indispensable, but unfortunately rare, monograph: the Royal Photographic Society have the only copy in England known to this writer. In more recent years research in Paris archives by Barry V. Daniels on Daguerre's work in the Theatre has been published in *Theatre Survey*, 19 (November 1978), 174-6; 22 (May 1981), 69-90; 24 (1983), 134-8.

2. H. and A. Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre: The History of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype*, London 1956 and New York: Dover Publications 1968, chapters 1 and 2.

3. Quoted by Beaumont Newhall in his Introduction to facsimile reproduction of *An historical and descriptive account of the daguerreotype and the diorama by Daguerre*, New York: Winter House 1971, 10, citing *Notice explicative des tableaux exposés au Diorama*, Paris (1822).

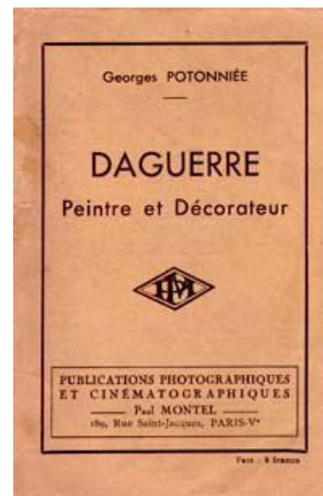
4. Dates of showings at the Paris Diorama are in Georges Potonniée's 'Liste des Tableaux exposés au [Paris] Diorama de 1822 - 1839' in his *Daguerre, Peintre et Décorateur*, 79-89.

5. Showings of the early dioramas at the London Diorama were reported in *The Times*: 27 September 1823, 1; 4 October 1823, 3; 30 August 1824, pp.1,2; 21 March 1825, 2; 21 February 1826, 4; 5 June 1827, 2; 24 March 1828, 6; 28 May 1829, 3; 22 April 1830, 2; 16 July 1832, 3.

6. The writer is grateful to Pierre Harmant and his daughter Claude-Alice for a transcript, made in 1976, of a letter in the Mentienne Collection, Archives Ville de Paris, dated 6 October 1903 to A. Mentienne (fils) from Mme Hugon-Roydor (daughter of John Arrowsmith, brother of Mme Daguerre). This valuable letter about the family states that Madame Daguerre's father married twice, having seventeen children of which four (Madame Daguerre, her sister Hélène, Charles and John) were of the second marriage. Most difficult to understand is that John's daughter states that her uncle Charles (never married but having a young daughter, Félicité, adopted by Daguerre), died young, presumably about 1822! See also A. Mentienne, *La Découverte de la Photographie en 1839*, Paris, 105.

7. Charles Arrowsmith (born 1798): C. Gabet, *Dictionnaire des Artistes*, Paris (1831), 13. E. Bènezit, *Dictionnaire des Peinteurs*, Paris (1976), Vol.1, p.279. H. and A. Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre: The History of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype* (1968), pp.8, 22. The daguerreotype portrait reproduced by the Gernsheims (Fig 61) as "possibly Charles Arrowsmith" shows a painter obviously born at a later date. A more fitting identification is Pierre Harmant's observation to the present writer that it is Daguerre's portrait of [F. J.] Collignon, first husband of Charles Arrowsmith's daughter Félicité (see note 6).

8. Some sources (see note 7) speak of Charles, while according to documents and writings relating to Constable it was John: *John Constable's Correspondence IV*, edited by R. B. Beckett, Ipswich: Suffolk Records Society 1966, Vol.10, 177-211, contains letters (the autograph MSS now lost) to Constable signed "Jno Arrowsmith" in June 1824 at 1 rue Grange aux belles, Paris, in October 1824 at 13 (bis) rue des Vinaigriers (and his name appears, according to Beckett, at that address in *Annuaire du Commerce de Paris* for 1827), and from 1827 to 1828 at Diorama, rue



des Marais.

9. Bouton went to Constable's house from the Regent's Park Diorama on 12 August 1824 having just arrived from Paris, *John Constable's Correspondence IV*, 188-9

10. In the Diorama patent of February 1824, the patentee John Arrowsmith's address was given as Air Street, Piccadilly. Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre: The History of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype* (1968), 7, identifies the Diorama patentee and Mme Daguerre's brother as the cartographer (1790-1873) described in *Dictionary of National Biography*, London: Smith & Elder 1885, Vol.2, 125, but decisive evidence is lacking.

11. John Arrowsmith, **Patent No. 4899**, 10 February 1824:

'An improved mode of publicly exhibiting pictures on painted scenery of every description, and of distributing or directing the daylight upon or through them so as to produce many effects of light and shade, which I denominate a "Diorama".'

12. Exhibition of Modern Pictures: *Caledonian Mercury*, 19 February 1825, 1; 7 March 1825, 3.

13. Robert Brydall, *History of Art in Scotland, London and Edinburgh*: Blackwood 1889, 329-39.

14. The picture was exhibited from 11 January to 19 February 1825. *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 10 January, 3, and 17 February 1825, 3; *Caledonian Mercury*, 17 January, pp.1,3, and 12 February 1825, 3.

15. *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 February 1825, p.265, p.270; 25 February 1825, 278. *The Kaleidoscope* (Liverpool), 22 February 1825, Vol.5, 290, 292.

16. *Caledonian Mercury*, 12 February 1825, 3.

17. *Caledonian Mercury*, 27 August 1831, 1.

18. *Bristol Mercury*, 29 August 1825, 3; 19 September 1825, 3; *Bristol Gazette*, 1 and 8 September 1825, p.3.

19. According to a reviewer in *The Bristol Mirror*, 10 September 1825, 3d, Stanfield's diorama in Bristol of 'Ruins of Holyrood Chapel' had a "figure meditating among the ruins, with a lamp burning before her." Such a figure also appeared in Daguerre's diorama (*The Times* (London), 21 March 1825, 2) but not in his oil painting now in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (considered in *Walker Art Gallery, Foreign Catalogue*, (1977), 50).

20. *Bristol Mirror*, 17 September 1825, 3c.

21. *Bristol Mercury*, 7 November 1825, 3.

22. *Bristol Mercury*, 22 August 1825, 3, as well as *Bristol Mirror*, 20 August and *Bristol Gazette*, 25 August 1825.

23. I am grateful to Miss D. Dyer of the Central Library Bristol for information from the Bristol Directories for the years from 1820 to 1855. Also Directories of Bath show a Miss Giroux's

residence and dancing academy at 14 George Street, Bath, from at least 1824 to 1837.

[Research by the author after the publication of this article in 1993 found that Cecilia Gertrude Giroux was born in London c.1800 and remaining unmarried died in Bristol in 1856. Presumably a George Gabriel Giroux who died in Bath in 1841 (General Register Office, index of Deaths, Bath Jan-Mar 1841, Vol 11, p. 5) was a relative. It is most likely that Cecilia was born into a family of dancers and actors in London headed by a Gabriel Giroux. He is said to have originally been ballet master at the Paris Opera, and danced at the Haymarket and some minor London theatres from 1786. Some information on this Giroux family at the Sans Pareil theatre in London (it was renamed the Adelphi in 1819) during the period 1807 to 1813 written by John Brokaw and Frank McHugh as part of the 'Adelphi Calendar Project 1806-1900' is provided online at [www.emich.edu/public/english/adelphi\\_calendar/hst1807.htm](http://www.emich.edu/public/english/adelphi_calendar/hst1807.htm) as well as other pages concerning the Sans Pareil/Adelphi theatre in the seasons of 1807-8, 1812, 1818 and 1823. Brokaw and McHugh also say that Gabriel and his children appeared regularly at the Royal Circus in London for several seasons before going to the Sans Pareil in 1807. Five of Gabriel's daughters danced and acted at this new theatre in 1807 and in a five-week season in November and December 1812, their names being Miss C.; Miss Caroline; Miss F.; Miss Jane; and Miss Louisa]

24. For Alphonse Giroux's daguerreotype contract in 1839 with Daguerre see H and A Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre: The History of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype*, London 1958, 189-191 and R. Derek Wood, 'Ste Croix in London', *History of Photography*, 17:1 (Spring 1993), 101-7. Because of the English Daguerreotype patent, the situation in England regarding Giroux's rights to sell Daguerreotype cameras is complicated. Article 2 of the contract stated Giroux et Cie were the only persons authorized to sell or manufacture in France and abroad and Daguerre undertook (at the time when the contract was signed, before the patent was obtained) "not to deliver abroad, with the exception of England". Even so Giroux did supply orders from England in 1839.

25. John Arrowsmith, **Patent No. 4899**, 10 February 1824.

"I consider the claim of invention to consist in the employment of coloured transparent moveable blinds or curtains which are adapted to distribute or direct the daylight upon or through pictures or painted scenery...; at the same time I wish it to be observed, that the claim of invention is not considered to extend to the use of the revolving saloon generally, but only when the same is used in combination with the aforesaid".

26. Pieter van der Merwe and Roger Tooke, *The Spectacular Career of Clarkson Stanfield 1793-1867* (Exhibition catalogue), Sunderland: Tyne and Wear Council Museums 1979.

27. James Ballantine, *The Life of David Roberts, R.A.*, Edinburgh 1866. Katherine Sim, *David Roberts R.A., 1796-1864: A Biography*, London: Quartet Books 1984.

28. According to Sybil Rosenfeld, *Georgian Scene Painters and Scene Painting*, Cambridge: CUP 1981, 157-161, the Royalty theatre in Whitechapel close to London Dock, had taken up the fashion for "dioramas" with the display of two scenes: and Valley of Sarren [sic] (same titles as Daguerre and Bouton's tableaux that opened the Regent's Park Diorama in September 1823) painted by P. Phillips and T. Pitt. There is no exact dating but probably 1825 as this theatre burnt down on 11 April 1826. These two scene and panorama painters worked at same theatres as Stanfield. The Royalty was a "Sailors theatre", so conceivably could have easy contact with Bristol.

29. Mss of David Roberts exists at the National Library of Scotland, but his second journal covering the period of interest has not survived. Robert's 'diary and Record of Pictures 1829 [1824] to 1864' compiled by him in later life, a photocopy of which is held at the Guildhall Library, London, also lacks information about 1825.

30. *The Times*, 16 February, 1826, 1a; 17 February 1826, 3e. *Poecilorama, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly*, Catalogue, 1826, London, 1826 (Pamphlet 17272 at Guildhall Library, London). Stanfield's pictures were 'Holy Island or Lindisfarne', two of 'Castle of Chillon', 'City of Rouen', 'Netley Abbey' and 'Turin'.

31. Unlike Stanfield's earlier 'Poecilarama', the British Diorama pictures were large - 38 x 27 feet, but still one-third the area of Daguerre's dioramas. Four views by Stanfield and four by Roberts were done, all destroyed by fire on 27 May 1829. see Ballantine, *The Life of David Roberts*, 28, 33; *The Times*, 28 May 1829, 3b; Ralph Hyde and Pieter van der Merwe, 'The Queen's Bazaar', *Theatrephile*, No. 8, Autumn 1985 [published 1987], 10-15.

32. *The Times*, 18 October 1823, 3; 1 April 1824, 2; 14 April 1824, 3. Roberts exhibited 'View of Notre Dame, Rouen' at the second exhibition reported in *The Times*, 28 March 1825, 5.

33. H and A Gernsheim, *L. J. M. Daguerre: The History of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype*, 27-8. The King also took an interest in the Diorama in Paris. Mme Daguerre's Arrowsmith family were also not unfamiliar with the French Royal family: According to a letter dated 6 October 1903 from the daughter of John Arrowsmith (Mme Hugon-Roydor) to A. Mentienne (fils) in the Mentienne Archive (transcript see note 6) her grandfather (ie. Mme Daguerre's father) had been a steward to a brother of Louis-Philippe.

34. *The Times*, 22 April 1830, 2e: review of Bouton's Cathedral of Rheims and Daguerre's Mount St.Gothard at the London Diorama.

35. Trevor Fawcett, *The Rise of English Provincial Art...1800-1830*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1974, 156-8.

36. *Manchester Courier*, 2 April 1825, p.2.

37. *Manchester Gazette*, Saturday, 9 April 1825, 3

38. *Manchester Courier*, Saturday, 22 October, 1825, advertisement on p.2, and review p.3.

39. Dates of the showings of four dioramas in Manchester (see Figure 1) are compiled from *The Manchester Courier*, 2 April 1825, 2; 8 October 1825,; 22 October 1825, 2; 28 October 1826, 1; 18 November 1826, 1; 31 March 1827, 2; 14 April 1827, 1; 1 December 1827.

40. *Manchester Courier*, 8 December 1827, 1

41. *Manchester and Salford Directory for 1828*.

42. *Liverpool Mercury*, Friday, 18 February 1825, advertisement on p.265 with an editorial comment p.270.

43. *Liverpool Mercury*, Friday, 25 February 1825, 278.

44. *The Kaleidoscope*, Tuesday, 1 March 1825, Vol.5, 300
45. *Liverpool Mercury*, Friday, 17 June 1825, 401; and similar advertisement in *The Kaleidoscope*, Tuesday, 21 June 1825, Vol.5, page B428.
46. *The Kaleidoscope*, 14 June 1825, Vol.5, 420.
47. *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 June 1825, 408; *The Kaleidoscope*, 21 June 1825, Vol.5, 432
48. Letter dated 23 June 1825, *Liverpool Mercury*, 24 June 1825, 416 and *The Kaleidoscope*, 28 June 1825, Vol. 5, 440
49. For example a long description in the advertisements of ‘Village of Unterseen’, the last diorama shown in Liverpool during 1832: *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 February 1832, 49.
50. Dates of the showings of dioramas in Liverpool (see Figure 1) are compiled from the *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 February 1825, pp.265,270; 30 September 1825, 97; 14 October 1825, 112; 10 March 1826, 279; 24 March 1826, pp.297, 304; 14 April 1826, 326; 9 March 1827, 73; 6 April 1827, 105; 7 March 1828, 77; 25 April 1828, 129; 29 May 1829, 169; 26 June 1829, 201; 26 March 1830, 97; 14 May 1830, 153; 11 March 1831, 73; 27 May 1831, 161; 6 January 1832, 1; 27 January 1832, 29; 5 October 1832, 317.
51. A good example of such excess is found in a description by the German man of the theatre, August Lewald, of Daguerre’s exhibition in Paris throughout 1832 and 1833 of ‘Valley of Chamonix’: J. M. Eder, *History of Photography*, 4th edition translated into English by E. Epstein, New York: Dover Publications 1978, 211-14, and see also H and A Gernsheim, L. J. M. Daguerre., 30-3.
52. Advertisement in *Liverpool Mercury*, 26 June 1829, 201. A review of ‘Rouen’ while in London appeared in *The Times*, 21 February 1826, 4f
53. Other Cosmoramas shown at Liverpool include the South Front of Rouen Cathedral, Rouen’s Palace of Justice , and Christchurch, Oxford.
54. See Figure 64 of Richard D. Altick’s *The Shows of London*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P. 1978, 210-13.
55. *Liverpool Mercury*, 8 October 1830, 321.
56. Obituary of Egerton Smith (1774-1841), *Liverpool Mercury*, 26 November 1841, 396. Co-patentee for tuning musical instrument - Patent No.2512 (1801) and Improvements to ships binnacles -Patent No.3265 (1809); and in the 1820s a ‘musical time-beater’ and a cork neck collar for swimmers.
57. John Smith may have been co-editor of the *Liverpool Mercury* with Egerton Smith. He was author of *A key to Reading* (1830), *Anatomy of Numbers*, (1838), *A guide to Bangor, Beaumaris, and Snowdonia* (1833).
58. *Liverpool Mercury*, 5 October 1832, 313; 12 October 1832, 328

59. William Dolier and John Smith, Patent No.6182 (1831).

60. *Liverpool Mercury*, 5 October 1832, 313.

61. *Liverpool Chronicle*, 15 September 1832, p.1, p5; 6 October 1832, 1. The views were St.Valentine's Chapel, Milan; Baths of Lucca, Italy; and Plymouth. G. Tyler is unknown.

62. Map of Manchester in Pigot's *General Directory of Manchester, Salford, &c., for 1829*. In an earlier map of 1824/5 this small area on the west of St.Peters is undeveloped, and the next map available in the Directory for 1836 shows the relevant street block (bounded by Cooper Street/Bootle Street/Mount Street/and Dickinson Street) without the Diorama building. Diorama is not listed as a name entry in the Directories of 1824/5, 1828, but the 1829 Directory has an appendix 'Street Directory' showing three entries at 10 Dickinson Street: a stone mason, Diorama, and a calico printer and manufacture. [The site is now in the 1990s occupied by the Central Library]

63. *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 February 1825, 270c.

64. T. Kaye, *The Stranger in Liverpool*, Liverpool: 1825, 8th edition , 189. The same text also appears in the ninth edition of 1829: the author would like to thank Miss E. Organ of the Liverpool Record Office for pointing out the inclusion of the Diorama on the map in the ninth edition. Although a short six-line entry referring to the Diorama building appears in the 1834 (10th) edition, no information is given about any exhibition as in the previous two issues of the guidebook.

65. Advertisement in many issues of the *Liverpool Mercury* between 8 October 1830, Vol.20, 321 and 11 March 1831, Vol.21, 73

66. *Liverpool Mercury*, advertisements, 6 March 1829, 73 and 6 January 1832, 1

67bis. Regarding **Jacob** Smith :

(a) Parliamentary Papers 1780-1849, Vol. 14 (1826): *Fifth triennial Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Woods, Forests and Land Revenues*. Dated 6th May 1826. Session [from] 2 February to 31 May 1826, In a Table of Leases of the 'Marylebone Park Estate' on pp. 72-73, a lease of 99 years from 5 July 1823 is granted to Jacob Smith on "Three Plots of Ground to the East side of Park-square, with three Messuages and other Buildings thereon" [i.e. the Diorama building].

(b) Notices in the *London Gazette* on bankruptcy from July 1828 of "Jacob Smith, now or late of the Diorama, Regent's-Park, in the County of Middlesex, and of the City of Paris, in the Kingdom of France, Printer, Dealer and Chapman": *London Gazette*, [Issue] Nr. 18489, Tuesday 22 July 1828, p.1428; 5 Aug 1828, Nr.18493, p.1502 ; 29 Aug 1828, Nr.18500, pp.1641 and 1642 ; 28 Nov 1828, Nr.18527, p.2218 ; Friday 6 March 1829, Nr.18556, p. 433.

[This footnote 67bis was not in the original published article of 1993 but added after later research to this online version only]

67. The opening of the London Diorama was reviewed in Ackermann's *Repository of Arts, Literature, Fashions*, 1 November 1823, Vol. 2 (third series), 302-5, with a comment 'We trust that Mr Smith, the proprietor, will reap the profit to which so heavy a speculation and so great an improvement entitle him'. With regard to the people involved in building the Diorama in London, an article by J. B. Papworth in John Britton and Augustus Pugin's *Illustrations of the Public*

*Buildings of London*, London:1825, Vol.1, 66-70 (published in parts during 1823 and 1824), was quoted in *Somerset House Gazette*, 20 December, 1823: The Diorama “having been exhibited with success at Paris, Mr. Smith, an English resident there, undertook to establish a similar exhibition in London, and Mr. [Augustus] Pugin was employed by him to visit France, and inspect the building”.

68. Dominique Albert and Egerton Smith, *Homonymous Française; or the French homonymous words arranged in sentences*, London: Whitaker 1831.

69. DIORAMA, BOLD STREET, LIVERPOOL. A View, 80 FEET BY 50, OF TRINITY CHAPEL IN Canterbury Cathedral. LIVERPOOL. 1825. Rushton and Melling, Printers, Liverpool. pp.16, Octavo. Only known copy in Liverpool Record Office:Ref.069.422 DIO. A copy in the British Museum, shelf-mark at 7856aaa40, was destroyed by bombing in World War II.

70. DIORAMA, COOPER-STREET, MANCHESTER. A VIEW, EIGHTY FEET BY FIFTY, OF THE VALLEY OF SARNEN IN SWITZERLAND. Manchester: Printed by T. Sowler, Courier Office. nd [March or April 1825] pp.15, Octavo. Pages 4 to 7 and a schematic key gives a topographical description of the Valley of Sarnen, pp.7-10 provides a background to the Diorama enterprise, and pp.11-15 appends extracts from newspaper reviews when the London Diorama opened eighteen months earlier. Only known copy at Local Studies Collection, Central Library, Manchester: Tracts S+A 285/6. This writer is grateful to Margaret De Motte (Librarian, Local Studies Unit, Manchester Central Library) for help in finding this brochure.

71. *Manchester Courier*, 9 April 1825, 3: “some English gentlemen, then in the French capital, (one of whom has distinguished himself as the author of one of the most popular works of the day), contracted for their purchase”.

72. Ralph Hyde, *Panoromania*, Exhibition Catalogue, London: Barbican Art Gallery 1988, 113.

73. Scott B. Wilcox, *The Panorama and Related Exhibitions in London*, unpublished M. Litt. thesis, Edinburgh University, 1976, 97-8

74. *The Freeman's Journal* (Dublin), 21 March 1826, 2; 8 April 1828; 1; 19 April 1828, pp.1,3. *Dublin Evening Post*, 21 March 1826, 3; 19 October 1826, 2; 23 December 1826, 2; 7 March 1827, 3; 26 July 1827; 16 December 1828, 2.

75. *The Freeman's Journal*, (Dublin), 19 April 1828, 3.

76. *Dublin Evening Post*, Saturday, 23 December 1826, 2b

77. The author thanks Maire Kennedy, Librarian, Dublin and Irish Collections, The Gilbert Library, Pearse Street, Dublin, for information and copies of maps on Great Brunswick/Pearse Street and for her attention and interest in identifying the site of the Dublin Diorama.

78. Letter (transcript, see note 6) in the Archives of the Ville de Paris dated 6 Oct., 1903 to A. Mentienne (fils) in which Mme Hugon-Roydor (daughter of John Arrowsmith, brother of Mme Daguerre) says 'Le père de ma mère y était intendant du vice-roi d'Irlande, quoique français'.

79. *Liverpool Mercury*, 6 April 1827, Vol.17, 105.

80. *Caledonian Mercury*, 12 July 1828, 1.

81. *Caledonian Mercury*, 19 May 1831, 1; 30 July 1831, 1; 8 August 1831, 1.

82. *Caledonian Mercury*, 13 December 1827, pp.1, 3; *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, 12 December 1827, 398.

83. *Caledonian Mercury*, 15 June 1829, 3.

84. The writer would like to thank the staff of Information Services, Central Library, Edinburgh, for providing a copy of the engraving of the Lothian Road Diorama from Edinburgh and Leith Post Office Directory for 1835-36, reproduced here by courtesy of Edinburgh City Libraries.

85. Dates of the showings of dioramas in Edinburgh (see Figure 1) are compiled from *Caledonian Mercury*, 13 December 1827, pp. 1, 3; 14 June 1828, 1; 12 July 1828, 1; 30 May 1829, 1; 15 June 1829, pp. 1,3; 22 May 1830, 1; 12 June 1830, pp. 1,3; 19 May 1831, 1; 8 August 1831, 1; 27 August 1831, pp. 1,3; 24 May 1832, 1; 29 December 1832, 1; 22 June 1833, pp.1,3; 14 July 1834, 1; 4 August 1834, pp.1,3; 28 March 1835, 1; 18 April 1835, 1; 24 October 1835, 1; 14 November 1835, pp.1, 3; 29 October 1836, 1; 19 November 1836, pp. 1,3; 4 Dec.1837, 1; 11 January 1838, 1; 7 April 1838, 1; 26 May 1838, 1; 30 March 1839, 1; 3 June 1839, 1. No advertisements in 1840. The advertisements were less descriptive than those placed very regularly in Manchester and Liverpool newspapers.

86. *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, 12 December 1827, Vol.30, 398

87. *Caledonian Mercury*, 15 June 1829, 3.

88. *Caledonian Mercury*, 14 March 1839, 2; 30 March 1839, 3. This report obviously depends on a briefing from the Diorama management, and it concludes with a little advertising plug: 'In the mean time, the public, no doubt will avail themselves of the opportunity yet afforded in Edinburgh of seeing such of these admirable specimens of pictorial and mechanical skill as remains for exhibition '.

89. *Caledonian Mercury*, 30 March, 1; 25 May, 1; 3 June 1839, 1.

90. R. Derek Wood, **Daguerre and his Diorama in the 1830s: some financial announcements**, in *Photoresearcher* (Journal of the European Society for the History of Photography), No.5 (1993), in press. [However, in the event, the publication of this journal was delayed until 1997 ! - Issue No. 6, pp. 35-40]

91. Ralph Hyde and Pieter van der Merwe, 'The Queen's Bazaar' [British Diorama], *Theatrephile*, Issue No.8 (Autumn 1985, published 1987), 10-15. *Description of the Views of the British Diorama and Physiorama exhibition at the Queen's Bazaar*, London: Nichols 1832, the only known copy is Pamphlet 5555 at Guildhall Library, City of London.

92. *L'Illustration, Journal Universel*, 2 (30 Septembre 1843), 72.