



HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHY FROM NEW ALBANY, IN
Kaitlyn Markert Tisdale, Archivist

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY: THE MARRIAGE OF ART AND SCIENCE



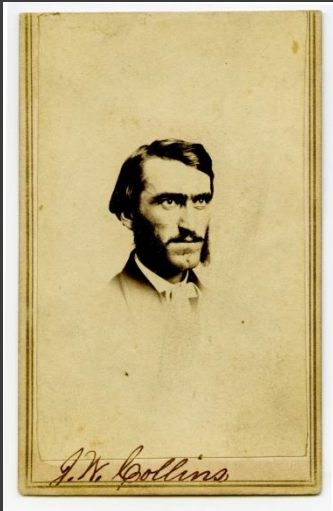
Daguerreotype



Ambrotype



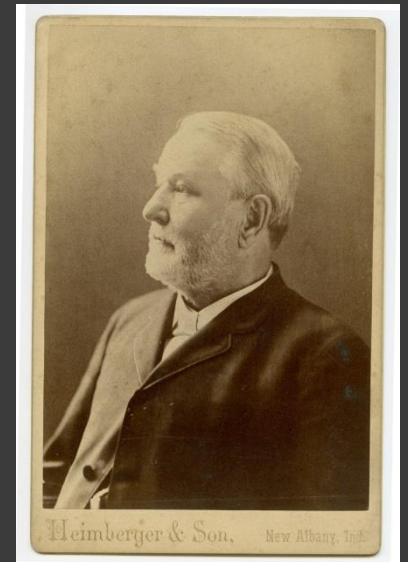
Tin Type



Cartes-de-Visite



Stereoscope Card



Cabinet Card

A Basic Timeline of Photographic Processes

1839- Daguerreotype

1841- Calotype

1850- Albumen Prints

1851- Ambrotype

1853- Tin Type

1854- Cartes-de-Visite (Visiting Card/Calling Card)

1859- Stereoscope/Stereograph Cards

1866- Cabinet Cards

1871- Gelatin Silver Prints

1888- Kodak Camera

1898- Pocket Kodak Camera



Today-iPhones and selfie sticks...

Louis Jacque Mande Daguerre (1787-1851): The Inventor of the Daguerreotype

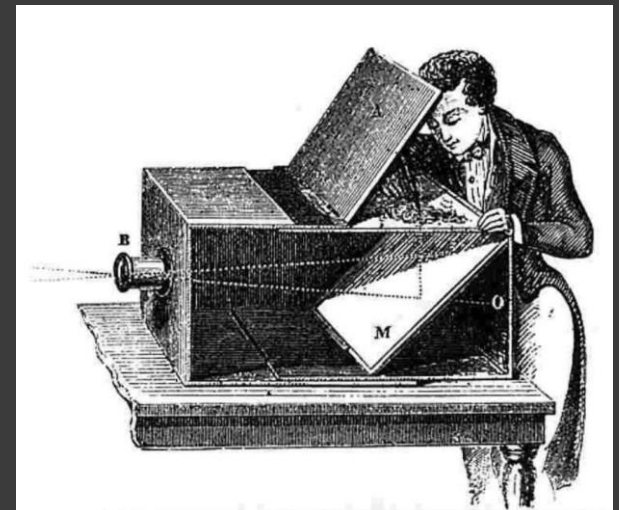
Date invented: 1839

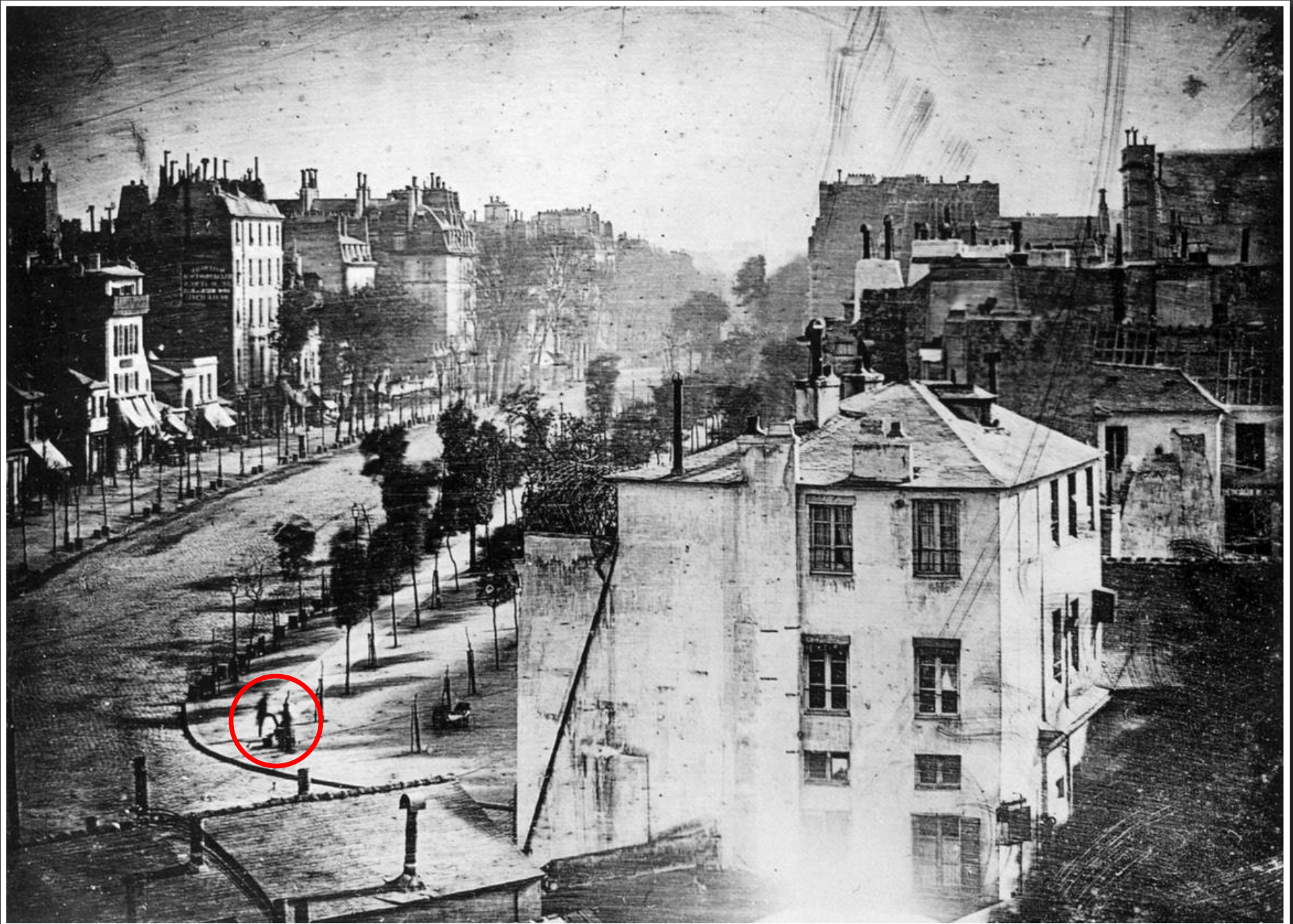


The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gilman Collection, Gift of The Howard
Gilman Foundation, 2005 (2005.100.611)

PROCESS:

1. Coat a copper plate with silver and polish.
2. Expose with iodine vapors.
3. Place this “sensitized” plate in a camera obscura and expose to light.
4. Heat over high temperature flame with mercury. When the mercury vapors have sufficiently brought out the image, remove the plate.
5. Wash plate in distilled water. Let dry.
6. Insert plate in glass and place in frame or union box.





Collodion Emulsions (Wet Plate Processes)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gyf8fQOdvDs>



Gun cotton/
nitrocellulose

- The collodion emulsion process was developed by Frederick Scott Archer between 1848 and 1851.
- Collodion was a mixture of gun cotton aka. nitrocellulose (the result of combining purified cotton with nitric and sulfuric acid), ether, and alcohol and mixed with potassium iodide and poured evenly over the surface of the plate.
- Then the plate (glass, iron, etc.) was soaked in a silver nitrate solution, placed in a holder, and exposed in the camera all while still wet.
- Hence the name “Wet Plate Process”

Frederick Scott Archer (1813-1857): The Inventor of the Ambrotype

Date invented: 1851

PROCESS:

1. Coat a glass plate with silver.
2. Polish finely and coat with collodion emulsion.
3. Sensitize plate with iodine vapors.
4. Place this “sensitized” plate in a camera obscura and expose to light.
5. Wash the plate. Let dry.
6. Coat the back of the plate with black paint and place in union case or frame.

Often, ambrotypes would be “edited” after the image was complete by adding color by hand to the lips and cheeks or to make jewelry more prominent.



Portrait of Frederick Scott Archer, c.1855 The Royal Photographic Society Collection at the National Media Museum



Hamilton L. Smith (1819-1903)

The Inventor of Ferrotypes

(aka Tin Types):



Tin Types were a much easier way to photograph than the previous methods. All the photographer had to do was sensitize one plate, make one exposure, and put the plate through one development process and one fixing operation.

They were also much cheaper at costs as low as 25 cents per photo.

Date invented: 1853

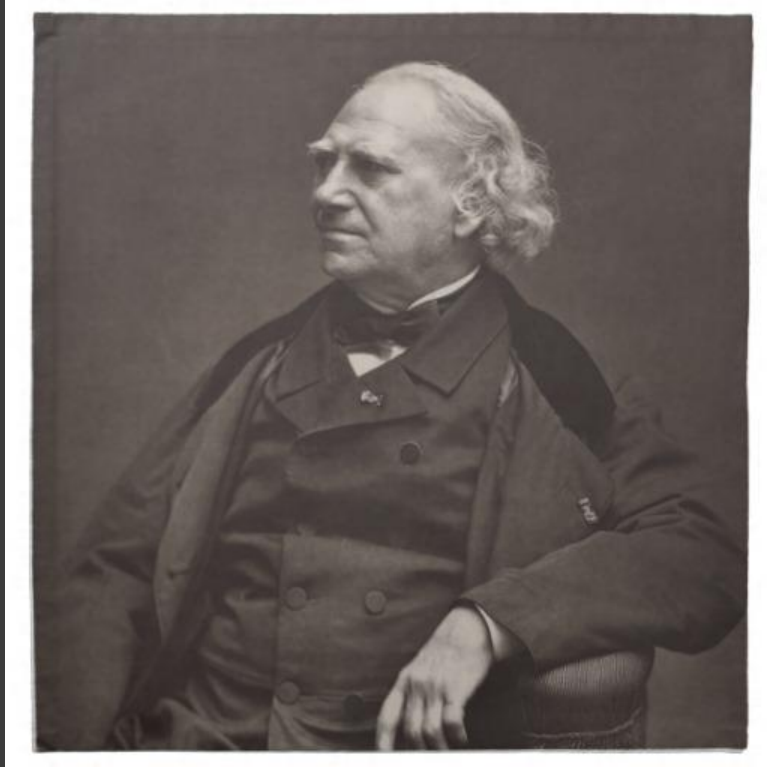
WET PROCESS:

1. Coat a iron plate with silver.
2. Polish finely and coat with collodion emulsion,
3. Coat wet plate with silver halide.
4. Sensitize plate with iodine vapors.
5. Place this “sensitized” plate in a camera and expose.
6. Wash Plate

Tin Types were most often left without frames or cases of any kind. At most they would have a paper sleeve they would go in with an opening for viewing.

Albumen Prints

Louis Desire Blanquart-Evrard:
Inventor of the Albumen Print Process



When a print was first produced they would be very contrasted but it faded over time due to the use of the albumen, or egg whites.

Invented in 1850

1. Take normal paper and coat one side with a mixture of albumen (egg whites) and sodium nitrate to create “photo paper”.
2. Let dry.
3. Place negative on “photo paper”.
4. Place in the sun to expose.
5. Wash paper in distilled water.
6. Let dry.

Easiest and most common
photographic process of the 19th
century.

André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri
(1819-1889):
The Inventor of the Carte-de-Visite



Invented in: 1854

The standard 2 ½" by 4" format was patented by Parisian André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri in 1854.

He used a sliding plate holder and a camera with 4 lenses. With this 8 negatives could be taken by his method on a 8"x10" glass plate. This allowed 8 prints to be made every time a negative was printed.

Cartes-de-Visite were much cheaper to run, and are almost always done in the albumen print process mounted on thick card-stock.

These cards became immensely popular and eventually as people wanted bigger cards, the Cabinet Card came into fashion.

Cabinet Cards



Annette Clark. Stuart Barth Wrege Indiana Room. Historic Photograph Collection.

By 1866 the world was ready for a new style of portrait photograph. The exact inventor of the cabinet card is unknown.

Like the Carte-de-Visite the cabinet card was produced in the millions, and they would be floating around all over the world.

The cabinet card brought about a new appreciation for style and posing, as well as improved lighting and background objects.

Sir Charles Wheatstone (1802-1875): The Inventor of the Stereoscope



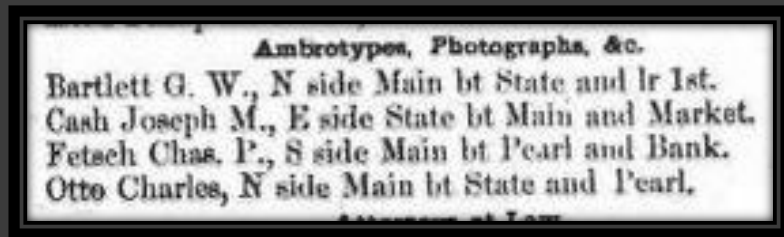
Sir Charles Wheatstone was an English scientist and inventor. His invention of the stereoscope, which was a device to view images three-dimensionally.



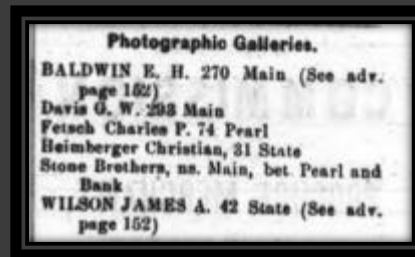
Stereographs became a major vehicle for popular education and entertainment in the later 19th century.

Stereograph:

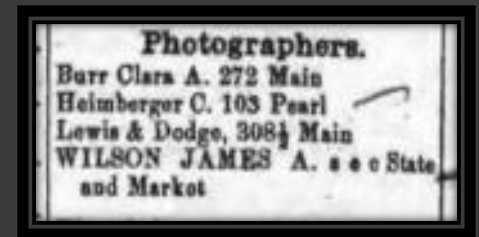




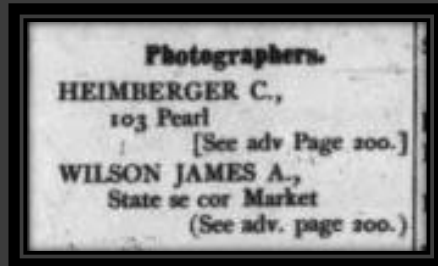
1859



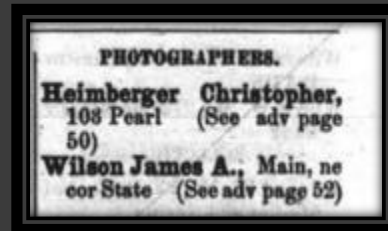
1865



1871



1874



1880



1886

EARLY NAMES IN NEW ALBANY PHOTOGRAPHY:

- G.W. Bartlett
- Charles P. Fetsch
- Christian Heimberger
- Heimberger & Son
- J.A. Wilson
- Wilson & Son
- J.O. Knoefel

G.W. Bartlett

“We yesterday paid a visit to the Daguerreotype Gallery being fitted up by Mr. G.W. Bartlett over Alexander’s Bookstore, State street, between Main and Market. We were astonished at the elegance with which he has fitted and it fitting up his rooms. In the second story is an elegant and comfortable room. Around the room are ranged a vast number of splendid specimens of the art, of all sizes and descriptions. The operating room is in the third story, where a splendid skylight gives the best opportunity for taking pictures. Nothing that can insure perfection will be omitted. It will be really a luxury to go to Mr. Bartlett’s Gallery to get a likeness taken”

New Albany Daily Ledger

November 10 1852

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Charles P. Fetsch (Pfetsch)

Charles P. Fetsch (also spelled Pfetsch) was a photographer in New Albany, IN and Louisville, KY from 1858-1865.

He was born in Germany in about 1817 and was active in New York City as a painter. After he moved to New Albany, IN he was a well known photographer until he left for Indianapolis (and most likely a larger client base).

In 1899 his death was reportedly caused by “brain trouble”. He was 80 years old.



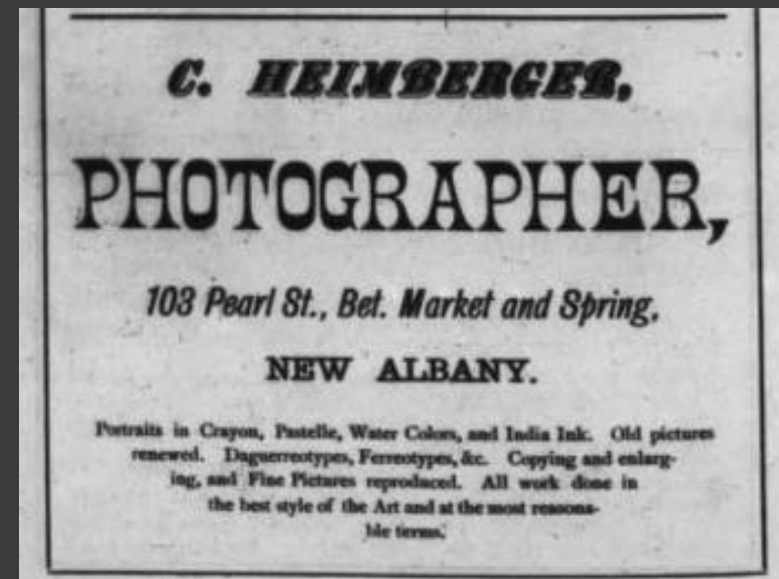
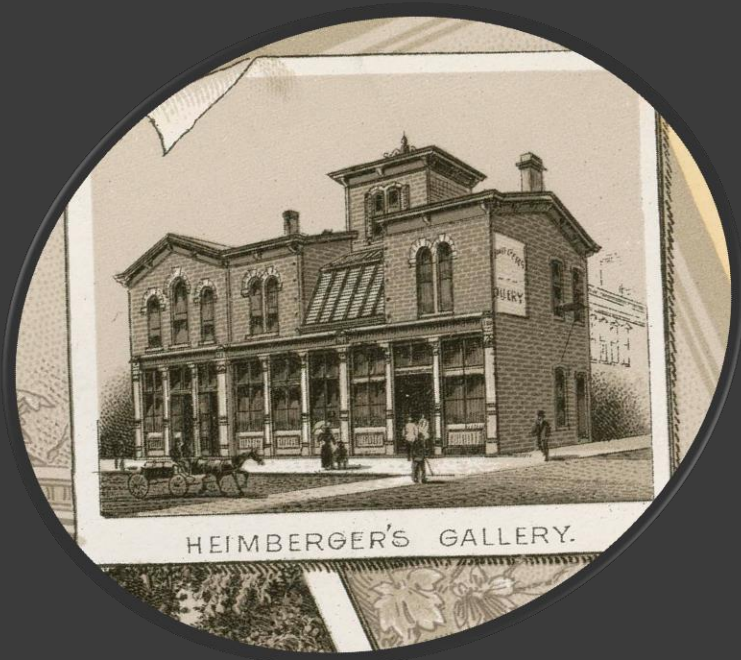
Carte-de-visite of James and Angelina Collins.

This is the Indiana Room's only known photograph done by Charles P. Fetsch.

Charles Pfetsch in an IRS Tax list in 1862 in New Albany, IN

[illegible]

Christoph Heimberger (& Son)



Christoph (sometimes called Christian) Heimberger was born on January 14, 1833 in Baiern, Germany and emigrated to the United States on a ship named “Patriot” that arrived on November 26 1853. He quickly became a one of the most renowned photographers in the region, winning multiple awards. After his death in 1911 he bequeathed his “Photographic Studio” on Pearl Street to his son Adam.



Just to give you an idea of what Pearl Street looked like....

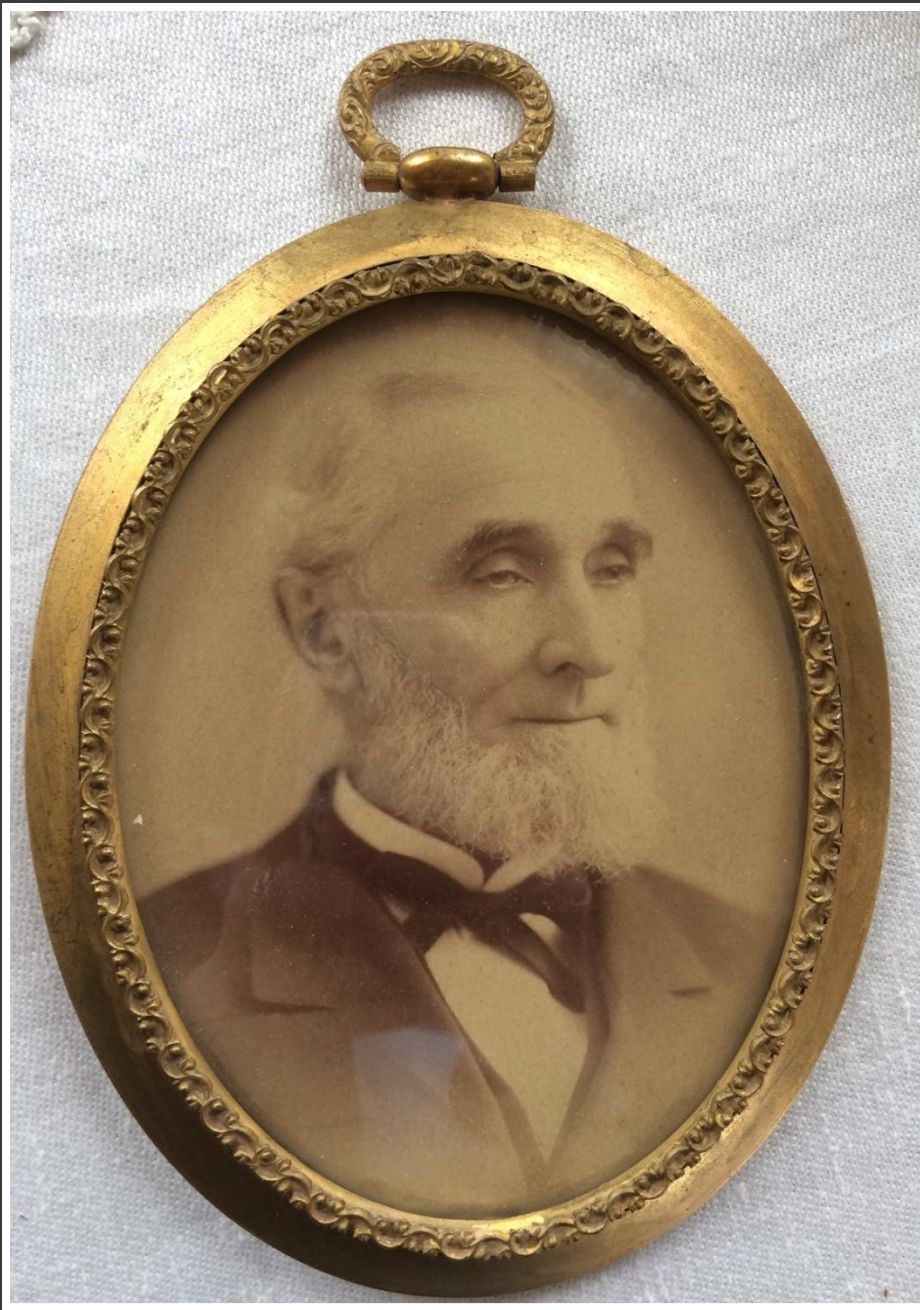


Pearl St. Looking North



SO, LET'S LOOK AT SOME CULBERTSON PHOTOGRAPHS

From the collection at the Culbertson Mansion



William Culbertson

- b. 4 February 1814 Pennsylvania
- d. 25 June 1892 New Albany
- William Culbertson was a well known wholesale dry goods merchant, and became very wealthy.
- This portrait was taken when he was around 70 years old.
- It was most likely done by Heimberger, with the estimated year it was taken.



Cornelia Minerva Nevins Warner
Eggleston Culbertson

- b. 27 August 1832, New York
- d. 18 October 1880 New Albany
- Second wife of William Culbertson (married 10 January 1867)
- Photo was taken in October of 1866 (prior to her marriage to Wm. Culbertson)
- This photo was taken for the explicit purpose of having her portrait made from it, which explains the poor composition of the photo.



Blanch Warner Culbertson

- b. 15 Sept 1870, New Albany
- d. 21 Nov 1924, New York
- Youngest child of William and Cornelia, and the only child born in the mansion
- Approx. 10-14 years old at the time of this photo
- This photo is an albumen print that was painted over.
- You can see the paint on her blue jacket is starting to crack and peel.

Wrapping up...

Think about the photographer's intentions...

- Could it have been to
 - Capture life?
 - Create art?
 - Document history?
 - Or simply just to make a buck?
- If their intention was to document history, then why manipulate your subjects?
 - Head stands
 - No smile...
 - Suggesting attire
- Could intention change with changes in photographic methods?

What would it be like to get my picture taken in the 19th century?

Important Points:

- It had to be an important occasion, photographs weren't cheap...
- You would dress your best, comb your hair, wear your best jewelry, etc.
- The photographer had to make you comfortable, and arranged you in a proper pose. (It was a collaborative effort).
- Deciding what type of photograph to have taken and how many copies was very crucial. (It also decided your cost).
- You had to hold your pose from 3-8 seconds depending on what type of photo and what decade. Also, DON'T BLINK! Just kidding. You can blink because the exposure is longer than one second...but it might change the facial expression a bit.
- A lot of the time people would reject their portrait...thinking "that doesn't look like me!" Although, much of the time, it just not how they want themselves to look.

How do I preserve these if I have them in my family collection?

- So, if you have any of these types of photographs in your own private collection, feel free to ask me questions on how to preserve them! But here are a few general tips:
 - Do NOT remove from the case if it is a cased image
 - Do NOT put the image in direct sunlight as it will bleach the image
 - DO keep it in a place with constant temperature and humidity.
 - No attics or bathrooms or basements
 - Keep in a secure archival photo box or archival sleeve (these can be found at several different locations).
- If you would like to donate any of your family photographs to the Indiana Room, feel free to call me at the New Albany-Floyd County Public Library at (812)949-4401 and we can schedule an appointment to talk!

THANK YOU!