Photographic Treasures
19th Century Rare Book & Photograph Shop

Curated by Jacob Loewentheil
## Catalogue 179

**Important Books, Manuscripts, and Photographs**

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I am pleased to present my first photographic catalogue, produced under the auspices of the 19th Century Rare Book & Photograph Shop. In these pages you will find a variety of masterful photographic works, representing a wide range of subjects.

The items in this catalogue were selected with utmost care as to quality and historical import. They include three important Mathew Brady pieces; a rare signed and inscribed portrait of General Grant, a full-plate daguerreotype of John C. Calhoun, and Brady's camera used during the period of his iconic portrait photography. Other notable works include an early American calotype by the Langenheim brothers and original glass interpostives from the production of Edward Curtis's seminal publication, The North American Indian.

A significant non-photographic item is the hand-painted silk map of Beijing, one of only four known examples. The map was produced in the early 1800s for the purpose of identifying, among many things, key households, fortifications, the inner and outer cities' landmarks, and other details for the administration of government. Of particular importance on the map are the households of the Eight Banner garrisons, hereditary posts that held special significance in the organization and defense of the Qing Empire.

I am proud to include listings of two estate prints from photographer Marcel Sternberger. The prints were produced from his original negatives and help to showcase his remarkable career.

It is my hope that within these pages you will find something that delights you, as all the items have delighted me in the process of producing this catalogue.

Jacob Loewentheil
info@19thshop.com
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Early 19th Century Silk Map of Beijing..................................................................................................................40
Watkins, Carleton.  
40 Mammoth Plate Photographs of the American West.  
c. 1863-74.

Forty albumen prints (approx. 16 x 20 in.), original mounts, each with a fine calligraphic manuscript title and photographer credit, likely in the hand of master calligrapher Fulgenzio Seregni or his followers, whom Watkins employed starting around 1863. These are all “Old Series” prints produced by Watkins before 1875. This is a rare assemblage of Watkins’s mammoth plates selected by the master himself for exhibition.

Carleton Watkins is the greatest of the first generation of photographers of the American West. His early photographs of Yosemite and Utah have never been surpassed. When his work was exhibited back East, the New York Times declared, “As specimens of the photographic art they are unequalled. The views are ... indescribably unique and beautiful. Nothing in the way of landscapes can be more impressive.”

The scale of Watkins’s monumental subjects was matched by his ambition and drive, which dwarfed that of his competitors. The photographer commissioned a San Francisco cabinetmaker to create a camera capable of accommodating glass plates as large as 18 by 22 in. In a series of grueling expeditions over several decades, he then went into the wilderness with a wagon and a train of mules carrying nearly two thousand pounds of bulky equipment and heavy glass plates. The amazingly detailed photographs made with the unique mammoth plate camera brought Watkins international renown.

For more than 150 years Watkins has retained his place as one of America’s greatest photographic artists. In 1999 Douglas R. Nickel, writing with the benefit of almost 135 years of photographic perspective, called Watkins’s photographs “the finest landscape photographs produced by an American in the nineteenth century, and some of the most sophisticated and arresting images ever produced with a camera.”

These forty photographs were produced by Watkins in the 1860s and early 1870s. The majority of the Yosemite images date to the photographer’s trip to Yosemite in 1865-1866. The collection also includes many stunning images of Utah and the San Francisco Bay. The rarest of these images are the remarkable photographs taken in Utah in 1873-1874, some of which exist in only two other known prints. These excellent Utah examples represented in the Centennial Collection include Pulpit Rock and The Sentinel, both from Echo Canyon.

Watkins evidently exhibited these very photographs at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, the first World’s Fair in America. Approximately one-half of the space was reserved for American exhibitors.
At the exhibition Watkins revealed to the world the wonders of the American West, especially the natural beauty of Yosemite. Ten million visitors attended the event.

Carleton Watkins: Complete Mammoth Photographs identifies twenty-seven of the photographs exhibited by Watkins at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. Those twenty-seven are represented here, excepting Three Brothers (Naef 169) which is instead present as the nearly identical Naef 170, issued with the same title. The thirteen additional prints present in this collection help to complete our understanding of Watkins’s vision for his part in the great fair in Philadelphia in 1876.

The photographs Watkins exhibited at The Centennial Exposition remained intact with a Philadelphia family from the late nineteenth century until The 19th Century Shop’s acquisition of them by private treaty. Family lore identifies them as the long-lost Centennial Collection, exhibited at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, and Weston Naef concurs.

The Centennial Exposition Collection’s rarity, beauty, and provenance mark this collection as one of the greatest coherent bodies of Watkins mammoth plate photography in the world. Significant groups of large format Watkins photographs are increasingly rare. Another group of 40 prints were auctioned separately in August, 2004 in New York. That collection brought a total of over $2,000,000.

These photographs represent Watkins at the peak of his creative powers, during the “Old Series” years before bankruptcy cost him control of his negatives in late 1874 or early 1875. Watkins competitors would go on to make new prints from those negatives and Watkins in turn would return to the old sites to make the “New Series” photographs. This collection comprises original pre-1876 prints made by Watkins and his staff from his original negatives to his exacting specifications, presented with calligraphic titles for exhibition. Watkins has selected not only his iconic Yosemite images but also the greatest photographs resulting from his Utah expedition, the culminating effort of his Old Series period. The Watkins Utah expedition photographs are extremely rare. According to Weston Naef The Sentinel is known in only two examples, and Naef locates only two examples of Pulpit Rock.

This collection reflects Watkins’s own estimation of his greatest achievements in large-format photography during his epochal first fifteen years as a photographer.

A list of all 40 photographs is available upon request. The collection is available for interested collectors and institutions to view at our Brooklyn office.

“The most gifted and precocious landscape photographer America produced in the nineteenth century.”

— David A. Ross, SFMOMA, on Carleton Watkins
BRADY, MATHEW.
John Calhoun.

1849.

This very daguerreotype was the basis for the lithograph by Francis D’Avignon published in Brady’s Gallery of Illustrious Americans (1850) and for Henry F. Darby’s monumental oil painting, long displayed in Brady’s gallery and now owned by the United States Senate. Best remembered for his advocacy of states’ rights, Calhoun warned of the growing dominance of the North, “The day that the balance between two sections of the country – the slaveholding states and the non-slaveholding states – is destroyed, is a day that will not be far removed from political revolution, anarchy, civil war, and widespread disaster.”

By the time he made this portrait in 1849, Mathew Brady was already one of the leading American daguerreotypists, but he had an even more expansive vision for his art. He photographed the great men of the day, taking their portraits for reproduction in his Gallery of Illustrious Americans (1850) and for reproduction in paintings and later for sale in paper photographs. These portraits adorned the walls of his galleries, making them tourist destinations in their own right. Brady basked in the reflected celebrity and in turn established himself as one of the giants of nineteenth-century American history.

It was only natural that Brady sought out the aging Calhoun, whose fiery and determined personality he captures in this tremendous daguerreotype. The portrait was celebrated in its day. A contemporary account hailed its “depth, and earnestness, and intensity, and spiritualism, which so eminently distinguish [Calhoun] from almost all other men” (Photographic Art-Journal, January 1850). Mathew Brady declared, “Calhoun’s eye was startling, and almost hypnotized me” (Meredith, Mr. Lincoln’s Camera Man, p. 24).

An American Masterpiece

“Calhoun’s eye was startling, and almost hypnotized me.”
~ Mathew Brady

This very daguerreotype was the basis for the lithograph by Francis D’Avignon published in Brady’s Gallery of Illustrious Americans (1850) and for Henry F. Darby’s monumental oil painting, long displayed in Brady’s gallery and now owned by the United States Senate. Paper photographs, requested by members of Calhoun’s family, were widely available in the studios of Brady and others. The most famous of all Calhoun portraits, this is one of a handful of surviving daguerreotypes of the statesman. The only other whole plate daguerreotype, an example attributed to Brady, is at the Beinecke Library.

This spectacular daguerreotype, in which the foremost American photographer created the iconic image of the leading Southern statesman of the day, is one of the great American portraits in any medium.
A major relic of American photography, this camera was owned by Mathew Brady during his years as the leading figure in American photography.

Brady was the preeminent American portrait photographer of his day. He gained his greatest fame with his studio’s documentation of the events and figures of the Civil War. This camera’s association with Brady and his studio, which produced hundreds of iconic portraits and thousands of Civil War photographs, makes it an important historical artifact.

The camera’s Brady provenance is well-documented. It is accompanied by photocopies of original bankruptcy court records signed by Brady during his bankruptcy proceedings in 1873. The document lists this lens and its serial number in an inventory of Brady possessions.

This is an extremely rare, evidently integral Charles Harrison camera. Harrison, a prominent New York lens maker, received international acclaim for his lens designs at the World’s Fair in London. He began his work in photography as a daguerreotypist, but his success in making camera lenses soon led him to abandon photography to concentrate on the manufacture of lenses. This wood camera is fitted with a Petzval-type brass barrel lens signed “C.C. Harrison New York,” with the serial number 1195. According to Eric Taubman, the president and founder of the Penumbra Foundation, the lens dates to 1849 - 1850. The camera features a black fabric bellows, rack and pinion focusing, with wooden knob on rear of back section, and wide casement to accommodate side-loading plates. The camera is mounted on an 11 x 15 in. base rail. It is accompanied by a ground glass plate (glass replaced) for focusing, which allowed 10 ⅜ x 10 ⅛ in. exposures, as well as a dark slide.

The camera was featured in a September 23, 1957 *Life* article titled “In Image of the Master, the Famous Photographs of Mathew Brady Are Matched Today with Pioneer’s Own Camera.” *Life* photographer Ed Clark used the camera offered here to make modern equivalents of Brady portraits. On page 124, Clark is shown using this camera to photograph President Eisenhower in a pose similar to a familiar Lincoln image taken by Brady during the Civil War. An original copy of this issue of *Life* accompanies the camera.
This camera is also pictured on the inside back cover of Mathew Brady and His World, Produced by Time-Life Books from Pictures in the Meserve Collection. The picture is identified: “This camera was used by Brady in the 1860s. To make an exposure, a prepared collodion negative was placed in a light proof holder. The holder was placed in the camera and a panel removed to let the light in.” Frederick Hill Meserve started his celebrated collection of Lincolniana and photography in 1897. In 1902, he made a large purchase of Civil War era Brady negatives. It is believed this camera was a part of that purchase.

Virtually every significant public figure of the Civil War era passed through Mathew Brady’s studio; it is thrilling to imagine that many of his iconic photographs were taken with this very camera. This camera merits a place in a major museum collection.
Signed and Inscribed Brady Portrait of General Ulysses S. Grant

His Mathew Brady portrait of General Ulysses S. Grant (later President Grant), is notable for its extremely rare signature and inscription by the photographer. Brady was nearly blind during much of his photographic career as well as semi-illiterate throughout his life and very infrequently signed or inscribed photographs.

Brady was the preeminent photographer of his generation, particularly remembered for documentation of the American Civil War. Long before his fame from the war he made his mark in photographic history in portrait photography with his galleries of notable Americans in New York City and Washington, D.C. The galleries were widely acclaimed tourist attractions as well as social meeting places for all classes of citizens.

The photograph features Grant wearing his military uniform, before his election to the White House. At the time of this photograph he was a four-star general, the highest rank normally attainable in the United States.

Socalled 'signed' prints are occasionally offered in the trade or at auction; in almost all cases the photographs are in fact signed by assistants from Brady's studio. Brady's scrawl is unique and readily recognizable. The present example is a true treasure: an important subject, photographed by the Brady studio at the height of its prominence, and signed as well as inscribed.

The recipient, J.E. Kelly, was an American sculptor and illustrator who specialized in depictions of the peoples and events of the Civil War. This Brady inscription to Kelly makes this photograph a unique and notable association piece. The verso of the photograph bears a series of notations in what is apparently Kelly's hand.

A very rare and important survival linking two of the greatest Americans of the Civil War era.

“From the first, I regarded myself as under obligation to my country to preserve the faces of its historic men and mothers.”

– Mathew Brady
1849 American Calotype of Water Tower


This important survival of American photographic history is a very early calotype of a water tower in Philadelphia. Paper photography from this era is a rarity and the image was created by two of America’s great photographic pioneers, the Langenheim brothers. A calotype (or talbotype) is a negative-positive photographic process in which a paper negative is produced and then used to make a positive print using exposure to light. It was introduced by William Henry Fox Talbot, from whom the brothers had obtained the rights to the process, soon after Daguerre’s advancement in France.

The Langenheim brothers were some of the first entrepreneurs to utilize the calotype process in America. They began creating their own photographic images and revolutionizing the field of American photography soon after the process’s invention. "In 1842 they made the first advertising photograph in history, a picture of the restaurant in the Exchange Building in Philadelphia“ (Pennsylvania Arts and Sciences Society, 1940) and "In 1845 the brothers traveled to Niagara Falls where they made the first ever photographs of the natural wonder“ (The MET. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017). The pair were among the first to commercially produce stereoscopic images in America, helping introduce the American public to an immensely influential photographic media. The brothers were also responsible for the first photographs in America of a total Solar Eclipse.

American paper photographs from the 1840s are rare in private hands. This is an opportunity to obtain an important example of American photographic history.
A wonderful album commemorating a journey to America in 1883. It is particularly fine for its inclusion of not only notable and well-photographed East Coast sites, but important early photographs of what would become the National Parks of the West Coast.

The West Coast images include twenty-three photographs of Yosemite and surrounding area by George Fiske, the first year-round resident photographer of Yosemite. Photographic subjects by Fiske include Mt. Watkins, Yosemite Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, El Capitan Cathedral Spires, several great Sequoias, and other important views.

The album also features three photographs of San Francisco, eight of Niagara Falls, one of the White House, and eight of sights around New York.

The first photograph in the album depicts the SS Servia as photographed by Francis Frith, likely the ship that carried the owner of this album to America.

A fine early American photographic album, documenting a traveler’s journey across the American continent.

“Fiske very deftly handled the problem of the complexity of the (Yosemite) landscape in two important ways: through an intuitive understanding and control of light and space, and through an ability to use photography as a suggestive tool.”

— Hickman and Pitts, 1980
Collection of Photographs Depicting The Oldest Military Installation in the Continental United States

Castillo San Marco and Adjacent Church.
St. Augustine, Florida, c. 1874.

Eleven albumen prints (6 x 8 in.), mounted and captioned in a contemporary hand on verso. Very good condition.

Thee well-preserved photographs provide early documentation of a central landmark of military history in the United States. Castillo San Marcos was built in 1672 and is the only extant 17th century military structure in the continental United States. The fort in later years was used infamously as a prison for Geronimo’s band of Apaches. The Catholic church near the fort is located in the oldest parish of the United States, founded in 1565, with the current church built in the 1790s. The present photographs are previously unknown and vitally important photographic survivals.

Castillo San Marcos protected St. Augustine, Florida (the oldest continuously occupied European settlement within the United States, near the site of Ponce de León’s first landing in 1513) and was built while the Spanish Empire controlled Florida. The masonry fort construction began in 1672 after a devastating raid on the city by the British privateer Robert Searles.

The Spanish Empire, Great Britain, the United States, and the Confederate States of America have each controlled the fort during its long history and the fort was utilized as a military prison several times over the centuries.

During the mid-1800s Geronimo’s famed band of Apaches led a resistance effort against both the American and Mexican governments. Members of Geronimo’s band, including women, children, and Geronimo’s wife, were imprisoned in the confines of the fort. One of the present photographs shows the jail that was used for their confinement while another shows dungeons that were presumably used for the same purpose.

Jailkeepers, in some form of sympathy with the prisoners, supplied them with paper and drawing materials. The prisoners began to create art inspired by Buffalo Hide painting from the Great Plains. The artwork became known as Ledger Art, after the materials which the paper came from; Ledger Art flourished and gave rise to its most celebrated artists at the fort.

“A monument not only of stone and mortar but of human determination and endurance...”
— National Parks Service, 2018

Castillo San Marco initially protected one of the first Spanish possessions in Florida. The fort was then used as a military prison and now has status as a historical monument, giving it continual significance for over 340 years, longer than the history of the United States.

Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine was built in 1565 and destroyed in 1586 by Sir Francis Drake. In 1566 Martín de Argüelles was born in the parish, the oldest recorded birth of a child of European ancestry in what is now the continental United States.

The photographs of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine allow these photographs to be dated. The presence of a side chapel built in 1873, the absence of the rectory built in 1875, and the presence of a stone wall destroyed in 1875 ascribe a likely date to the whole series of c. 1874.

A list of individual photographs available upon request.
A wonderful signed portrait of Albert Einstein and his close companion Alice Loewy by Trude Fleischmann. Signed on the mount by Fleischmann and inscribed on the mount by Einstein “Fur Hannerl A. Einstein. 51” (For Hannah A. Einstein. 51).

Alice Loewy was an intimate friend of Einstein during his years at Princeton’s Institute for Advanced Study. This photograph of modern science’s greatest mind, famous for his theory of general relativity, is of interest both for its historical significance and its personal ties to Einstein’s life. The photograph of Einstein and Alice Loewy was taken in the scientist’s garden in Princeton, New Jersey.

Loewy ultimately married Erich Kahler, a member of Einstein’s inner circle and a noted Jewish Czech philosopher-historian. Alice, Erich, and their daughter Hannah were part of a tight-knit German/Austrian exile group at Princeton and in New York City including Thomas Mann, the photographer Trude Fleischmann, and other religious and political exiles from Europe. The photograph is inscribed to Alice and Erich’s daughter, Hannah.

Fleischmann was a noted Austrian-born photographer; she gained international fame in 1925 when the Berlin police confiscated her nude photographs of a celebrated dancer from the theatre where they were being displayed. Fleischmann fled Austria after the Anschluss, going first to Paris, and later London, before settling in New York. She opened a studio next to Carnegie Hall and went on to photograph numerous notable personalities.

Inscribed photographs from Einstein to his intimate friends are scarce. This fine portrait of Einstein with a close friend, made by a master Jewish émigré photographer, is a fine association.
Marcel Sternberger (1899-1956) was a master portraitist of the mid-twentieth century. He emphasized a psychological approach to portraiture: he sought to capture the inner-beings of his subjects in the “relatively short time allotted.” He began his career when the mayor of Antwerp, Camille Huysman, challenged him to become a professional portraitist; Sternberger retorted he would only do so if “your king requested a sitting.”

The following week Sternberger was invited to photograph the king and soon after named Private Photographer to the Belgian Royal Family. Due to the circumstances surrounding World War II, Sternberger was forced to move about the world, using his art as entrée to each successive country. During his relatively brief life he created a remarkable portfolio of what he called his “famous contemporaries,” including Albert Einstein, Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, Sigmund Freud, George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi.

Sternberger’s images were featured widely, including in newspapers, on the covers of books such as Freud’s Moses and Monotheism, and as the basis for Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s bust on the American dime.

These estate prints are a limited opportunity to own photographs produced from the original negatives of a photographic giant. For the image of Frida Kahlo please refer to the back cover of this catalogue.

“[Sternberger’s] portrait approach...was a unique blend of psychological and photographic techniques.”

— NY Times Lens Blog, 2016
This is a splendid panorama of Coney Island taken in 1907. Large format panoramas of Coney Island with such rich detail and in this condition are a rarity in the market.

Beginning in 1824 Coney Island began to transition from carriage roads and steamship transport, with a relative lack of urban development, to a more vibrant touristic landscape. Due to its proximity to Manhattan, the island attracted a large number of visitors as early as the 1830s and 1840s. Between 1880 and WWII, Coney Island was the largest amusement area in the United States drawing millions of visitors a year.

Dreamland dominates this tremendous panoramic view, which was taken from the Shoot-the-Chutes feature. Built in 1904, Dreamland was intended to surpass Luna Park and Steeplechase Park. To the left of Dreamland Tower, Luna Park’s central tower is visible in the distance. Dreamland was illuminated by one million lights and had a railway through a Swiss Alpine landscape, Venetian canals with gondolas, a recreation of the fall of Pompeii, a simulated submarine ride, the Fighting the Flames fire fighting exhibition carried out on a 250 ft. long, 6-story building, and countless other attractions and rides.

Considered one of the two or three greatest amusement parks ever built, Dreamland was destroyed by a fire in 1911. The fire started, surprisingly, at a water attraction which was perhaps appropriately named Hell’s Gate. Dreamland’s role in amusement park history and impact on the American notion of what a park should be is notable considering its brief existence. This panorama was taken at the zenith of that period.

This is a rare opportunity to own a large format panorama of Coney Island during the peak of its reign over the American concept of amusement parks.
First Men on the Moon

(apollo 11.)
Armstrong, Neil.
Buzz Aldrin on the Moon, signed by the Apollo 11 crew.


Photograph of Buzz Aldrin standing on the moon with the American flag and the lunar module, signed on the mount by all three crew members: Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins and additionally inscribed “For Peggy and Bill Burden with Best Wishes from Apollo Eleven.” Chromogenic print (approx. 20 x 16 in.), original mount. Signatures slightly faded but quite legible. Very good condition.

Provenance: William and Peggy Burden. Financier, philanthropist, and diplomat, Burden made his fortune in aviation finance and advised several presidents on aviation matters. As a member of the Smithsonian’s Board of Regents, he was instrumental in the creation of the National Air & Space Museum.

Armstrong’s classic space photograph is signed by the crew of Apollo 11, the first manned mission to the Moon: Neil Armstrong (commander), Buzz Aldrin (lunar module pilot), and Michael Collins (command module pilot) and further inscribed to William A. M. and Peggy Burden. This famous Armstrong photograph of Aldrin, standing on the moon’s surface with the United States flag, is NASA AS11-40-5875.

A splendid association: the photograph bears a handwritten note to Vanderbilt heir William A. M. Burden and his wife Peggy. Burden “made his own fortune in aviation securities” (Smithsonian). A major figure in the history of American aviation finance, Burden was a key adviser to the American government on the development of aviation.

As a member of the Smithsonian’s Board of Regents, Burden was instrumental in the creation of the National Air and Space Museum. When the project’s funding was threatened, he secured the support of his friend Richard M. Nixon. Burden’s personal collection “formed the core of the National Air and Space Museum historical aviation research collection” (Scott, Aeronautics and Space Flight Collections, p. 192). A leading collector of modern art, Burden oversaw the dramatic expansion of the Museum of Modern Art in the 1950s and 1960s as its President.

This enormous 20 x 16 in. photograph is the largest contemporary print of this iconic photograph that we have seen. Smaller prints often have a golden hue. This splendid example conveys the cold white colors of the moon.

“We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win.”

— John F. Kennedy
splendid half-plate daguerreotype of Herman Melville’s advisor and agent John Romeyn Brodhead (1814-1873). Brodhead was a historian and a member of the American diplomatic corps. Best remembered for his services as Herman Melville’s agent in London, Brodhead had known Melville and his siblings since their youth.

Gansevoort Melville, secretary of the American legation in London, served as his brother’s literary agent for the publication of *Typee*. When Gansevoort died in May 1846, his boyhood friend John Brodhead was appointed to succeed him. Brodhead’s literary relationship with the young author began with Melville’s letter of December 30, 1846, in which he pleaded for Brodhead to help him, noting that “your declining to do so will not only place me in a very unpleasant predicament, but will occasion me no small pecuniary loss.”

Brodhead accepted and soon he was caught in the middle of convoluted negotiations with Melville’s English publishers and with English Customs. In February 1847, proof sheets of the as-yet-unpublished second book *Omoo* were sent to London for the preparation of an English edition. English Customs seized the sheets, thinking them to be a piracy of an English edition. It was left to Brodhead to extricate Melville from the situation. Melville’s English publisher, John Murray, corresponded with Brodhead, discussing financial, copyright, and publication issues. The following year Brodhead provided the same vital services to Melville to secure the English publication of *Mardi* by Richard Bentley.

John Jabez Edwin Mayall, born in England in 1813, emigrated to Philadelphia in 1842 and learned the art of making daguerreotypes and established a studio; in 1847 he opened his American Daguerreotype Institution. Mayall helped to pioneer the CDV, and in the 1850s he developed the first Ivorytype process.

This is a splendid, well-documented half-plate daguerreotype of an important figure in Melville’s life and career produced by a significant figure in the development of photography.
Enormous Panoramic Photograph of Cairo

(EGYPT.)
Panoramic Photograph of Cairo.
c. 1870s.

Albumen print on paper, comprising multiple joined panels, overall image size (7 x 74 in.). Mounted on linen. Old folds, some wear, but generally in very good condition. Archivally framed.

A splendid and unusually large panoramic photograph of Cairo that combines elements of antiquity, the medieval period, and the modern world. In the distance the pyramids at Giza are visible, in the center of the photograph the Cairo Citadel (a UNESCO heritage site) is prominent, while a train races along the Nile River between Cairo and the pyramids.

The photograph is dominated by the Citadel and by the Muhammad Ali mosque inside of its walls. The Citadel is a medieval fortification in Cairo with grand views of the city. It was fortified by Saladin in the 1170s and 1180s A.D. to protect the city from Christian Crusaders who posed a constant threat. Muhammad Ali, the energetic governor of Cairo, razed most palaces and buildings in the 14th-century Mamluk citadel for his grand reconstruction, begun in 1830 and completed in 1857. It was in part an effort to solidify his regime and erase the previous rulers’ historical legacy.

The mosque inside of the citadel, prominently visible here, famously has two soaring minarets. It was built to honor Muhammad Ali’s deceased son in the style of the Ottoman empire.

Cairo panoramic views of this size and scope are very scarce. An excellent survival.
Unique Glass Interpositives from Edward Curtis’s
The North American Indian

CURTIS, EDWARD S.
Dog Woman - Cheyenne (plate no. 668, Vol. 19).
c. 1930.

A Cree Girl (plate no. 622, Vol. 18).
c. 1928.

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tunning glass photographs, entitled A Cree Girl (plate no. 622) and Dog Woman - Cheyenne (plate no. 668), were prepared for the printing of Curtis’s The North American Indian. The glass interpositives are rare survivals used for publication of the last century’s seminal visual work on Native Americans of the North American continent. It was this work that gave Curtis his place in photographic history.

Edward Curtis was one of the greatest American artists of the nineteenth century and the most celebrated photographer of North American Native Americans. Over the course of thirty-five years, Curtis took tens of thousands of photographs of Native Americans from more than eighty tribes. "Never before have we seen Indians of North America so close to the origins of their humanity, their sense of themselves in the world, their innate dignity and self-possession" (N. Scott Momaday). Curtis’s photographs are "an absolutely unmatched masterpiece of visual anthropology, and one of the most thorough, extensive and profound photograph works of all time" (A.D. Coleman).

The North American Indian was hailed as "the most gigantic undertaking in the making of books since the King James Bible" (New York Herald). It contained a wealth of sociological information on North American Native Americans as well as stunningly executed photogravures.

Photogravure is a photo-mechanical printing process wherein a photographic image is transferred to a light-sensitive copper plate using a positive transparency of the image. The plate is then inked and printed using a relief press. The interpositives were a delicate and intermediate part of the printing process; the glass images being offered here are some of the few surviving interpositives used during the process of creating the photogravures in The North American Indian. The images contain a wealth of detail and when shown in the accompanying lightboxes are a dazzling photographic masterpiece.

Excellent condition.
Curtis’s lifelong project was inspired by his reflection that “The passing of every old man or woman means the passage of some tradition, some knowledge of sacred rite possessed by no other; consequently, the information that is to be gathered, for the benefit of future generations, respecting the modes of life of one of the greatest races of mankind, must be collected at once or the opportunity will be lost for all time.”

This is an exceptional opportunity to acquire a stirring original glass interpositive used in the production of one of the greatest monuments of photography.

“Take a good look. We’re not going to see this kind of thing much longer. It already belongs to the past.”

– George Bird Grinnell to Edward Curtis, 1900
This splendid, enormous hand-painted map of Beijing shows and names the main streets, official residences of imperial family members, important buildings, temples, geographical features, fortifications and garrisons of the Forbidden, Imperial, and Inner Cities.

Only three other examples of this remarkable form of map painted on silk are known, and this is the only example in private hands. Professor K. Tanaka (Sugiura) of Kyoto University, the leading authority on these maps, has located only four examples on silk: National Library of China, Royal Geographical Society, Royal Ontario Museum, and the present example (three copies on paper are known).

The map appears to have been drawn primarily to identify and locate the hundreds of Eight Banner garrisons. The Eight Banners system, comprising an elite hereditary class of families with special military obligations, privileges, and responsibilities, was central to the defense and organization of the Qing Empire. The painstaking identification of these garrisons on the present map, the National Library of China map (with many garrison differences from our map), and the later paper map in Kyoto, suggests that these rare maps had a military or governmental purpose.

“In Beijing the ranks of the eight banners were arranged around the imperial city...The palace lies at the heart of the imperial city...the locations of [eight] banner troops are indicated by circles (Manchu) triangles (Mongolian) and squares (Chinese)...” (Woolley, Celestial Empire: Life in China, 1644-1911, p. 1).

Beijing, built along a north-south axis, was divided by walls into four city sections: the Forbidden City, the Imperial City, the Inner City, and the Outer City. This map shows the first three, with the Forbidden City at the center, surrounded by a massive wall with four gates and four corner towers. The Imperial City, incorporating three lakes to the west, is surrounded by a fortified wall with six gates. Beyond it is the Inner City, also called Jingcheng (“capital city”) or Dacheng (“big city”). The entirety is surrounded by another massive wall, which was 15 miles long, 50 ft. high and 65 ft. thick at its base. This extremely rare silk map of Beijing, the only example known in private hands, is of enormous historical and sociological significance and is a magnificent display piece.