

Promotional landscapes: D.L. Mundy’s ‘Photographic experiences in New Zealand’

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ABSTRACT: In December 1874, the British journal the *Photographic News* published ‘Photographic experiences in New Zealand’ by Daniel Louis Mundy (1826/27–81). The article (which was read before the Photographic Society of Great Britain) described the time Mundy spent taking photographs in New Zealand during the 1860s. As an important account of early landscape photographic practice in New Zealand, the article enables a unique insight into Mundy’s method as a photographer and the rationale behind some of the photographs he took. The project, and subsequent exhibitions and publications, gained Mundy scientific honours but very little artistic or financial reward. This paper looks at the context the article gave Mundy’s photographs and the work he did to promote and publish them in London in 1874 and 1875.

KEYWORDS: Daniel Louis Mundy, colonial photography, Julius von Haast, Ferdinand von Hochstetter, James Hector, Colonial Museum, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Canterbury Museum, New Zealand.

Introduction

Daniel Mundy spent around nine years in New Zealand and made numerous expeditions into remote areas to photograph the landscape, as well as historical events, dignitaries and Māori people. Although very little has been written about him, Mundy was one of the earliest photographers to work in New Zealand, and his collection of photographs is large and varied.

Mundy was born in Wiltshire, England. However, up until his arrival in Australia, aged 31, it is not known what he did for a living, where he learned photography or how he gained an understanding of the potential of photography to serve science. He is recorded as operating a business in Melbourne in 1857, and he moved to New Zealand sometime before 1864, when he acquired Meluish’s photographic studio in Princes Street, Dunedin (Knight 1971: 38).

In 1864, the *Otago Witness* reported that Mundy, ‘photographer, of Princes street’ had taken a ‘series of views

including the site of the Exhibition Building, as it was prepared for the ceremony of laying the corner-stone’ (Anonymous 1864). The report added: ‘the views are decidedly interesting even to residents, and they would be more so to friends at home. The pictures are in two sizes – some for the stereoscope, and the others fitted for a portfolio or even for framing.’ Mundy then went to Canterbury and worked in partnership with Braham La Mert. They worked under the business name ‘Mundy & La Mert’, and in 1865 were recorded as being ‘in attendance with their photographic apparatus’ and taking a ‘view’ of the Canterbury Gold Escort as it left Christchurch to bring gold back from the West Coast (Anonymous 1865a). However, in December 1865 the *Lyttelton Times* published a ‘Notice of Dissolution of Partnership’ between Mundy and La Mert (Anonymous 1865b).

In 1867, Mundy won a commission to take a photographic portrait of Governor George Grey (Anonymous



Fig. 1 Daniel Louis Mundy: [*Man standing beside a moa skeleton on display at Canterbury Museum*] (c.1868). Albumen stereoscopic photograph, 83×70mm (Alexander Turnbull Library, E-207-q-043-1).

1867). He photographed moa bones at Canterbury Museum for Julius von Haast, and reproductions of these images were published in the *Illustrated London News* alongside descriptions of Haast's work (Anonymous 1868a) (Fig. 1). In 1868, a committee (consisting of Dr James Hector, W.T.L. Travers, Mr Wakefield and, as patron, His Excellency Sir George Bowen) formed to obtain financial subscriptions to enable Mundy to spend two months or more 'illustrating the province of Wellington by a series of Photographic Views similar to those of Canterbury now in the Wellington Museum' (Anonymous 1868b). The project required 'Sixty Subscribers at [5 pounds], for which each subscriber will be entitled to a choice of any twelve views from the eighty subjects, mounted in a cloth and morocco album, or enclosed in a portfolio of the same material' (Anonymous 1868b). Mundy was working in the Auckland area during 1870, and in June a newspaper reported that '[a]mongst Mr Mundy's subscribers are, with few exceptions, all the leading scientific men in the colony, and the men of wealth and influence in the South' (Anonymous 1870c). His work was advertised as available for inspection and sale at Mr Bonnington's Music Warehouse in Wellesley Street (Anonymous 1870a).

In April 1870, the Association for Promotion of Science and Industry announced that, based on a report by James

Hector, the Thames area required a more detailed search for gold and other mineral deposits (Anonymous 1870b). Mundy's photographs of gold-mining activities and settlements around Thames taken in June 1870 are among the first industrial photographs taken in New Zealand (Anonymous 1870c) (Figs 2, 7). It is possible Mundy took this series with Hector in mind, as he already had his support for the Wellington series of 1868, and the Colonial Museum, under Hector's directorship, had purchased 56 of Mundy's mounted photographs of New Zealand scenery in May 1869 (Anonymous 1868–69).¹ Hector was also the commissioner of the 1873 Vienna International Exhibition and the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, both of which included a large number of photographic prints by Mundy. Photographs played a major role in the displays at these events: 'Hector was not just interested in the aesthetic appeal of photographs but saw them as having the capacity to enhance the educational aspect of the exhibits' (Rice 2007: 10). In order to conduct his business as a photographer and support his family, Mundy gained many useful sales, commissions, exhibitions and contacts through his relationships with Hector at the Colonial Museum and Julius von Haast at the Canterbury Museum.

'Photographic experiences in New Zealand'

In 1873, Mundy's wife, Louisa, gave birth to a daughter at Port Chalmers (Main 2006). At some point in the next year, Mundy, and possibly his family, travelled to the United Kingdom, where Mundy spent some time promoting, exhibiting and publishing his photographs. In 1874, he gave a talk describing his experiences of taking photographs in the colony of New Zealand at the Photographic Society of Great Britain. The talk was the basis for an article published in December that year in *Photographic News*, entitled 'Photographic experiences in New Zealand' (Figs 3, 4).² In a style similar to that of an earlier article by W.T.L. Travers published in the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* (Travers 1871),³ Mundy describes the geological features of the landscape and discusses his photographic method – his process, technique and subjects.

Aside from John Nicol Crombie's 15 October 1862 report in the *British Journal of Photography* on his work in New Zealand (Main & Turner 1993: 7, 87), articles by photographers describing their photographic expeditions as well as their methods began appearing in newspapers on a regular basis only from the 1880s, when Alfred Burton published accounts of his photographic trips. Mundy's article focuses on photography and heightens the difference, in terms of how photography was produced and perceived, between London and the colony, which did not have a photographic society in the 1870s. In addition to the presentation of his article at the Photographic Society of Great Britain, photographs and albums produced by Mundy were also exhibited in the society's annual exhibitions of 1874 and 1875 (see Appendix 1).

Mundy wrote the article in London to provide an audience of British photographers and enthusiasts with a narrative context for his photographs. This was an unusual audience for Mundy's talk, as most of his lectures were addressed to geological and geographical societies. For a photographic audience, Mundy provided points of difference to enable his work to be understood as distinct from other photographs on show in the society's 1874 exhibition, which consisted of views of the English countryside and life, portraits and copies of paintings (De Montfort University 2008). The other photographs on show were largely of a romanticised ideal that contrasted with the industrial reality of Britain in the nineteenth century. Mundy, however, presented his photographs as accurate illustrations of their subject.



Fig. 2 *Russell's Gold Battery, Tatarua Creek, Thames Gold Fields* (1870, printed c.1897). Albumen silver print, 210 × 146 mm, by Daniel Louis Mundy (Te Papa, O.020928).

American art historian Joel Snyder has argued that 'the establishment of a variety of photographic landscape practises in the period between the 1850s and the late 1870s occurred in parallel with the elaboration of a set of ideas about the character of photography itself' (Snyder 1994: 175). These practices tended to occur in colonial frontiers rather than in Europe. Further, Snyder explained that the:

photographer's practise was understood to be discontinuous with the practise of all other picture makers – its standards were accuracy to nature and 'lifelikeness'; to the extent that a viewer was moved to address a photograph in aesthetic terms, these were understood to have been derived from the physical qualities of a scene and the technical genius of the photographer (i.e. the ability to employ flawlessly the chemistry and physics of the process). (Snyder 1994: 182)

Mundy's article, and its discussion of his technical process in remote areas of New Zealand, could be seen to fit with Snyder's characterisation of landscape photography up to the

been communicated to the Society of Natural Sciences in the Canton of Vaud by M. Forel. He found that the chemical action of the sun's rays was felt in the summer time at a depth of between forty and fifty metres. We are not aware of the nature of the sensitive compound employed by Mr. Forel in these experiments, but we hope shortly to learn more of the details.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCES IN NEW ZEALAND.

BY D. L. MUNDT.*

THE album of fifty views and the eight framed pictures, illustrative of the geographical, floral, and economic features of New Zealand, which I had the pleasure of showing at the recent Exhibition, form part of a larger series of about 250 plates taken by the wet process under difficulties of travel and climate, and not without some personal risk. They represent the work of four years, directed by the experience of a much longer residence in the colony, which is necessary in order to know how to travel this wild and mountainous country, as it is only at certain periods of the year one can venture on such journeys—for instance, crossing the New-Zealand Alps from the east to the west coast in the South Island; and, to show the difficulties I had to meet, I may mention that I was ten days camping on the banks of the Otira river, during a heavy fall of snow, hail, and sleet, before I dare attempt to cross; it was so flooded with ice-cold water coming down from the Alps. I frequently had to ford one river many times, on one occasion no less than twenty-three times; sometimes we had to drive the horses into the rivers and swim them over, heading them to the most convenient landing, and then had to wade many miles wet to the skin before finding a convenient place for camping down for the night. At other times I had to depend on my gun for food; and on several occasions I was nearly eaten up by mosquitos and sand-flies. The views were mostly taken by camping out with one or, occasionally, two companions, and moving from place to place, occasionally by coasting-steamers or small cutters and schooners when visiting many of the out-of-the-way places on different parts of the coast; while my journeys inland were made with a couple of pack-horses to carry the baggage (photographic and otherwise), following beaten paths whenever I could find them, but at other times taking my way through Maori tracks, fords, and bush, crossing dangerous rivers and swamps, with native guides or mounted escort, when I was travelling into the interior of the North Island, furnished with credentials (written both in Maori and English) kindly given me by the Hon. Donald McLean, native Minister, as at that time, when at Lake Taupo, I was not safe from the rebel chief Ti Kooti, for whose head there was a reward of £5,000.

Some of the plates have historical value, as:—Poverty Bay, the first point seen by, and first landing place of, Captain Cook in 1769; Mercury Bay, where he observed the transit of Mercury, first found fresh water, unfurled the British colours, and claimed New Zealand in the name of King George the Third; Bishop Selwyn's first settlement (Waimate), Bay of Islands; Akaroa and Banks' peninsula on the east coast, where the British flag was first planted; in the Middle Island, Maori relics of various kinds; the scenes of the wars; and the festivities connected with the visit of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, in 1869. Other illustrations portray the machinery and huts of the gold diggers, the making of flax-rope, hauling kauri timber out of the bush, and shipping the same, road-making, and other industrial operations.

Natural history is represented by the *Apteryx* (or Kiwi of the natives, the wingless bird of New Zealand) and the *Dinornis* or Great Moa skeletons in the Canterbury Museum, by rock sections, &c.; and Plate 58 represents an immense boulder of conglomerate, 41 feet in circumference and per-

fectly spherical, which is now lying on the beach at Hokianga, near the residence of Judge Maning (the author of "Old New Zealand, and the Pakeha Maori"), with whom I spent several very pleasant weeks. This remarkable geological phenomenon, if of glacial origin as is surmised, occurs now in the hottest part of the islands, namely the upper extremity of the North Island. Such boulders are to be found of every size, from the ounce bullet upwards; the small ones were used by the natives in their tribal wars for loading their guns. The tropical plants, Neka palms, great fern trees, black and white pines, *Phormium tenax* (New Zealand flax), and the flora generally are shown in a variety of scenes and combined with every variety of landscape, their forms being accurately delineated, whilst one feels the more regret in being obliged to add that the magnificent colouring of the valleys and mountains cannot yet be reproduced by the help of photography.

A few native groups and Maori settlements, with figures and costumes, come within the branch of ethnology, the grand geographical and geological features of the country being dealt with in a special series of photographs, twenty-four in number, representing the boiling geyser system of Roto Mahana and Lake Taupo, which extends for about 160 miles inland, near the centre of the North Island. Another series of 60 plates shows the fine range of mountains forming the backbone of the South Island, and known as the New-Zealand Alps. Mount Cook, the highest point in this chain, has an altitude of 13,200 feet (nearly as high as Mont Blanc). Arthur's Pass 5,000, and the Rolleston glacier being about 8,000 feet above the sea. When I crossed these mountains in February, 1858, I travelled a distance of nearly 200 miles from Christchurch, in Canterbury, on the east coast, to Hokitika, in Westland, on the west coast, and the same on my return journey; the snow-capped peaks and the gorgeous foliage of the virgin forests, showing the beautiful rata trees in their intense foliage one mass of crimson, growing up close to the very ice, are admitted by all travellers to be of surpassing beauty; these were seen to the greatest possible advantage, this being about the height of the New Zealand or antipodean summer.

My usual plan of proceeding was to erect an ordinary digger's tent, supported upon a couple of forked poles and well fastened down with guy-ropes; then from the ridge of the structure, suspending a square photographic tent made of mackintosh material, with black calico skirts resting on the ground and kept securely fixed with stones. In fine weather this supplementary operating tent was erected outside the ordinary dwelling; but at other times better protection was afforded by suspending it within the larger tent. A square window of yellow oiled silk, measuring about 18 inches in both dimensions, admitted enough light to work by, and was of course proof against fracture during my journeys. A pack-horse carried a couple of strong leather trunks slung from the saddle, in one of which the chemicals were packed, while the apparatus was placed in the other. The camera-legs, folded tent, and stereo-camera were carried aloft on the back of the animal, between the panniers, and the second horse had enough to carry in the shape of the ordinary impedimenta of a traveller. When disposed for work the two boxes were placed within the tent unpacked, and the dipping bath filled from the contents of two or three Holland's bottles holding the silver solution, secured until now by corks protected with india-rubber finger stalls. The top of each bottle was carefully tied over with a piece of cloth. I have never used stoppered bottles, preferring to carry collodion and solutions packed in this manner. I learnt this from a sad mishap I once had, when I lost nearly everything through using stoppered bottles. One of the empty trunks was used to support the dipping-bath and screen it from the light and dust whilst sensitizing, and the other formed a convenient table with a primitive stool in front, consisting of a wooden board 12 inches long by 4 inches wide supported upon a single leg. My developing dish was a square tin tray 6 inches deep, and measuring about 20 by 16 inches.

* Read before the Photographic Society of London

DECEMBER 18, 1874.]

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Besides the stereoscopic I carried a 12 by 10 Kinnear bellows camera. The optical instruments consisted of Ross's triplet for distant views (some of my Alpine views were taken by this lens; No. 167 shows the Alps forty miles away up the river beds), while I used Dallmeyer's wide-angle rectilinear lens for closer studies. Some idea of the range and performance of the last-named instrument can be judged from Plates 117 and 133, where a palm tree 30 or, at most, 40 feet from the camera is seen with satisfactory definition, the distant ranges, four miles away, being likewise sharply focused. With a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch stop eight seconds was the ordinary exposure, and I never, as a rule, exceeded twelve seconds.

I may mention that it was found necessary in a dry climate to pass a moistened sponge once round the inside of the camera, and then to wash out the dark slide, so as to guard against the too rapid drying of the plate, and that thirty-five minutes was the longest interval that was allowed to elapse between the preparation and development of the negative. Three or four folds of moistened red blotting-paper applied to the back of the sensitized plate likewise assisted in preserving a moist film; to keep out light and dust the carrier was always enveloped in a black velvet bag. I should mention also that a very convenient dipper was made for me in the colony out of a flattened ribbon of pure silver, made in the usual form of the wire dippers, but with strengthening bands placed at intervals to give greater rigidity. Out of seventy plates exposed during one of my tours, it was only necessary in four instances to repeat the operation on account of misjudging the time, and the same number of negatives (four) were lost by fracture during transit. For developer I commonly used a 30-grain solution of the double sulphate of iron and ammonium, containing in addition half its weight of sugar, and intensified, when necessary, with pyrogallic acid and silver. All the plates were fixed with a dilute solution of cyanide of potassium, and then washed with water from a tin kettle holding about a gallon, which served me besides for making the tea and other culinary purposes. The collodion and varnishes were supplied to me by a well-known maker, and I had never any trouble with them. The glass baths furnished in my original outfit unfortunately got broken; and this mishap occasioned a delay of three months whilst another dipping-bath, made of porcelain, was being forwarded from Sydney. This I found far preferable; there was less danger of breakage, and I could always have a clean bath by changing the bottles holding the bath solutions.

Under favourable circumstances my kit was unpacked, mounted for use, and the 12 by 10 plates, besides the stereo-negatives, taken in the space of three-quarters of an hour. This was when not camping down to stay. I had simply to choose a sheltered place from the wind and sun, make my tent fast under the limb of a tree, and commence operations. All the boxes were fitted with divisions, so that everything could be replaced for resuming the journey in the shortest possible interval.

The supply of water was at times one of my greatest difficulties; for when near the boiling springs I found everything so charged with sulphur and mineral matters that it frequently became necessary to send a distance of two miles or more to obtain a sample sufficiently pure. The natives generally knew where to find it, but it was so thick from being ladled up with a calabash, that I had to allow it to settle before using it; the springs also were often far away from my scene of operations, and fetching the water was sometimes a very vexatious undertaking, much more so than the cooking of food, which in this district was almost an automatic proceeding. During my stay of eight days at Roto Mahana all our food (consisting of hams, fowls, eggs, potatoes, &c.) was cooked either in the boiling holes or by making a hole in the ground in places, when steam would immediately rush forth; by placing our food in a Maori kit or basket over the hole and covering it with fern, it was very soon cooked; in fact, all through the country, up to

the head of Lake Taupo, for over a hundred miles, the natives cook their food in this way. In the foreground of Plate 86 will be seen the hole which served me instead of a kitchen fire, and close by are some native women watching their own cooking operations. On the hill-side, to the right of the picture, was H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh's camping-ground when visiting the hot lakes. Plates 79 and 80 will help to explain the active nature of the geysers, from one of which the boiling water rises in a six-foot column to the height of about forty feet, at intervals, which I counted when on the spot as recurring every eleven seconds. I was informed that sometimes it reaches to the height of 100 feet or more. The depth of the principal crater is unfathomed; and I am told that the bottom has never been sounded. All the food for several hundred troops was cooked in this geyser, when they were fighting Ti Kooti in the neighbourhood. It is very dangerous to go too near it. This boiling-geyser system at Tokanu is at the head of lake Taupo, the lake to which I am now referring; it is 1,250 feet above the sea level, and overflows into the Waikato river. At Roto Mahana, or Hot Lake, is a series of chalcedony terraces, of marvellous pink and white colour; the water running over these terraces continually overflows from the crater. At the top the temperature is 212° F.; it fills the different basins, and forms the convenient hot baths in which the natives frequently indulge, and in which they sit in groups for hours together, smoking their pipes. I have bathed in most of these throughout the whole country, and, like the natives, never felt inclined to leave my bath, they are so truly luxurious; the different salts in the water make the skin peculiarly soft; they are a sure cure for rheumatism, but are very relaxing if you stay in too long. Throughout the whole district, from Lake Taupo, going north, to the coast on the banks of the rivers, the temperature can be so mollified, by diverting the flow of hot water (by stopping up with a clod of peat), that a bath can be had of any desired temperature. Plates 86 and 94 show some natives enjoying a natural tepid bath. This fact, taken in connection with the magnificent climate of New Zealand, may some day be extensively utilized for curative purposes. At present there is no difficulty in the way, inasmuch as the hostile chief Ti Kooti is no longer a terror, he being safe in his hiding-place in the Waikato country. Good roads have since been formed, and a coach is now running from Auckland through the hot-lake country to Lake Taupo and Napier on the east coast. Military roads are also being opened up all over the country, and redoubts being built at intervals by the armed constabulary for the protection of the settlers and travellers.

THE PRACTICAL PRINTER IN AMERICA.

XVI.

FANCY PRINTING.

Fancy Medallion and Arch-top Printing.—This fancy printing is sometimes very beautiful when the designs for making them are neat and pretty. In selecting designs for this work, be guided by good taste, and do not strive after complicated and glaring designs when the simple and delicate ones are always the object of the tasteful printer.

There are very few designs for this fancy printing more beautiful than that of the fine parallel lines that we are so familiar with in the French writing-paper. Besides the parallel lines, a few others of a delicate design are used very appropriately. Always have the size of the intended prints and the fancy design in harmony with each other; i. e., the larger the size of the print the larger should the design be, and *vice versa*. It would be ridiculous to have large designs intended for an 8 by 10 size photograph used on the common card, as well as it would be to have small designs on large prints.

I have seen a few frame photographs printed in the fancy arch-top and medallion style that I liked very much,



Fig. 5 Daniel Louis Mundy: *Poverty Bay, New Zealand. The first land discovered by Captain Cook, 1769* (1870, printed 1875). Black and white photograph, carbon print, 570 × 720mm (Te Papa O.031053).

1880s. Mundy's article includes descriptions of the subject matter of the images as they fit within four categories; an explanation of technical photographic procedure and the adaptations that had to be made in the colonial environment; and descriptions of the content of the images, where he presents his photographs as recording what he saw and experienced. The article encourages the idea that the key to the high aesthetic value of his photographs is technical excellence and an accurate recording of the colony's features. This stance has been reiterated by writers of photographic history in New Zealand (e.g. Knight 1971; Main 1972; Graham-Stewart & Gow 2006), who have restated Mundy's views concerning technique and process as a way of profiling the photographer and his achievements.

The four subject areas in which Mundy categorised his images are: historical, natural history, ethnology, and geography and geology. The first category, historical, includes an image of Poverty Bay as the site of Captain Cook's first

anchorage in New Zealand in 1769 (Fig. 5) and the place where he 'first found fresh water, unfurled the British colours, and claimed New Zealand in the name of King George the Third' (Mundy 1874: 602). It was also the location where Cook witnessed a scientific phenomenon – the transit of Mercury. The list continues: the 'first settlement' in the Bay of Islands; Akaroa and Banks Peninsula, 'where the British flag was first planted'; the 1869 visit of the Duke of Edinburgh; and various industrial operations (Mundy 1874: 602). The second category, natural history, features kiwi and moa specimens at Canterbury Museum (Fig. 1), rock sections, boulders, and native plants such as *nīkau* palms, ferns and flax. The third category, ethnology, includes images of 'A few native groups and Maori settlements, with figures, and costumes' (Mundy 1874: 602). Lastly, the category encompassing 'the grand geographical and geological features of the country' includes Rotomahana, Lake Taupo, the Southern Alps, Aoraki/Mt Cook, Arthur's Pass, Carter's



Fig. 6 Daniel Louis Mundy: *Top of Carter's Pass, 3422 feet above the sea, the highest point on the West Coast Road* (1868). Albumen silver print, 190×240mm (Te Papa O.009621).

Pass (Fig. 6), Rolleston Glacier, virgin forests and rātā trees (Mundy 1874: 602).

D.L. Mundy in London

Mundy's photographic categories and the arrangement of subject matter within them are unsurprising. His 'historical' category is a checklist and short history lesson on British achievements in the colony up to 1870, while the other categories focus on the exotic and natural features of the country, its indigenous people and culture. Mundy's (1874) article positions his photographs so that when viewed as a sequence they appear to confirm the possibility of comfortable habitation of the landscape by presenting views of agreeable relationships between people and the environment. Many of Mundy's images invite the viewer, as a virtual traveller, into a scene and convey the photographer's ease within it. *Top of Carter's Pass, 3422 feet above the sea, the*

highest point on the West Coast Road (1868)⁴ depicts the relaxed atmosphere of a refreshment break on the road at the same time as documenting a geographical landmark (Fig. 6). The images portray a landscape where cultural and social rituals have their place even in the wilderness – people, nature and industry appear to exist in harmony.

The arrival of photography in New Zealand closely followed the arrival of colonisation. Mundy's promotion of his photographs in Europe represents a specific nineteenth-century mode where his need to support himself and make a profit became entwined with the opportunity to promote the new colony and its industrial possibilities to potential emigrants and investors. In *Burning with desire*, Geoffrey Batchen (1997) discussed the idea of the photographic object hiding behind its subject – of photography being invisible in, and of, itself. During his time in London, Mundy presented his photographs as inseparable from the idea and knowledge of the place they depicted – the prints did not stand alone as



Fig. 7 Daniel Louis Mundy: *Grahamstown* (1870, printed 1875). Black and white photograph, carbon print, 570x720mm (Te Papa O.031055).

aesthetic landscape views. He marketed his photographs by emphasising relationships to geographical locations and features. In presenting his work, Mundy used a combination of text and image to convey strong evocations of places where the representation and the actual subject can be seen as interchangeable with one another. Text combines with image to make the photographic object even more invisible and subservient to its subject.

During 1874 and 1875, Mundy was actively promoting his work in London. Financial return, from both Europe and the colony, was important to sustain his photographic enterprise and he appears to have focused his energy in two distinct directions. The first was an attempt to generate sales of his photographs to the colonial and provincial governments, while the second involved aligning his work with scientific discovery and exploration.

Mundy was eager to recover costs from the time he spent in New Zealand. From London, he wrote the Director of Canterbury Museum, Julius von Haast:

I was also elected a fellow of the Royal Geographic Society at their last meeting, this will show the Gen. Government of New Zealand that my services are recognised and valued here when I hope they will reconsider my case and make me some [illegible word] for the time and money I spent to make the country known here ... Mr Gilles of Auckland presented a petition on my behalf but unfortunately for me a day or so after the Govt. were upset by the Vogel Ministry – who when appealed too [*sic*] on the matter – the beautiful ignorant committee of which Bobby Rhodes was one could not see the use of photographs. (Mundy to Haast, 27 July 1875)

Later, in the same letter, Mundy mentions that he is enclosing a copy of one of his talks, together with some posters advertising his speaking engagements, for Haast to distribute: ‘so that your provincial Govt and others may see I am not idle as far as showing off New Zealand is concerned’.

Mundy wanted the colonial and provincial governments to reimburse him for his photographic work in the colony, and he might also have been seeking to become the colony’s



Fig. 8 Unknown photographer: *Interior of the Colonial Museum, Thorndon, Wellington (c.1895)*. Albumen print, 142x187mm (Alexander Turnbull Library PAColl-3114-2).

first official landscape photographer. In 1872, he presented his case to the colonial government and was publicly criticised for seeking compensation for: 'combining business with pleasure and travelling, in the most interesting and beautiful parts of this island ... paid pleasant visits to settlers and tribes, travelled wherever he liked and when he fancied, has had special facilities put his way by Government for the prosecution of his business' (Anonymous, 1872a: 2). The same source claimed that if Mundy's bid for a grant was successful it would be 'a mis-application of the public fund'.

A few days later the media triumphantly reported:

The committee reported in the case of D.L. Mundy, that they had examined the petitioner and had inspected his large collection of views, and were of the opinion that, although the views were excellent from an artistic point of view, they were not of a character likely to force the colony into greater notice, or to induce any great increase in the emigration from the United Kingdom. (Anonymous, 1872b: 3)

In 1875, Mundy used a new process for printing from his negatives. He had a London firm turn a selection of his negatives into carbon prints – a process touted at the time as permanent – which measured 24x20 in (61x51 cm) each (Figs 5, 7). The arrival of this new process, and the excitement it stirred up among photographers, is reflected in the number of enlargements exhibited alongside Mundy's work in the annual exhibitions of the Photographic Society of Great Britain in 1874 and 1875 (De Montfort University 2008). Mundy visited New Zealand Premier Julius Vogel, ill with gout in London, to show him his work and to attempt to sell him a set. Mundy reported to Haast that Vogel was enthusiastic: 'he thinks of having a selection from my catalogue done in the same way to be used here as an Exhibition, try to convince your government to do the same, they would be of great value in your Museum, and some light return to my labours in Canterbury' (Mundy to Haast, 5 May 1875).

Mundy claims to have sent Haast a sample print of *Maxwell's Sheep Station* via Wellington (Mundy to Haast,



Fig.9 Daniel Louis Mundy: *Pink Terrace* (c.1870, printed c.1897). Albumen silver print, 148x203mm (Te Papa O.020918).

27 July 1875). However, it is unclear whether Haast purchased any of the large carbon prints for Canterbury Museum or even if the sample print arrived in Christchurch. Someone in Wellington did acquire a set of Mundy's carbon prints, as they can be seen hanging from the railings of the mezzanine floor in the exhibition hall in photographs of the interior of the Colonial Museum in the final years of the nineteenth century (Fig. 8). What remains of that set is now held in the photography collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

The two years Mundy spent in London were a busy time for him. Besides lobbying Haast and the colonial government, he gave talks to Royal Societies in the hope of generating sales of his work. Reproductions of his work appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, and his photographs were shown in several exhibitions. His work also gained the attention of Queen Victoria and her second son, Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, whose response to Mundy's work and its portrayal of the colony reportedly differed markedly from the opinion of the colonial government:

The Duke of Edinburgh does not seem to have lost his interest in New Zealand. He entertained a number of guests, including the Prince and Princess Christian, at Eastwell Park the other day, and among other things treated them to a sight of Mr D.L. Mundy's dissolving views of New Zealand scenery, and especially of the Rotomahana boiling springs, &c. These natural wonders have certainly been well advertised for a year past, and some of the wealthy lovers with which this country abounds should be finding their way out to inspect a district regarding which so much has been done to whet the curiosity. (Anonymous 1876: 8)

In 1875, while Mundy was still in London, *Rotomahana and the boiling springs of New Zealand* was published (Mundy & Hochstetter 1875). The book contained 16 autotype prints from Mundy's negatives of the thermal region and a text by Ferdinand von Hochstetter describing the geological phenomena. This was not the first book to include reproductions of photographs by Mundy. John Ernest Tinne's *The wonderland of the Antipodes*, published two years earlier by the same publisher, included a generous selection of images but



Fig.9 Daniel Louis Mundy: *Pink Terrace* (c.1870, printed c.1897). Albumen silver print, 148x203mm (Te Papa O.020918).

27 July 1875). However, it is unclear whether Haast purchased any of the large carbon prints for Canterbury Museum or even if the sample print arrived in Christchurch. Someone in Wellington did acquire a set of Mundy's carbon prints, as they can be seen hanging from the railings of the mezzanine floor in the exhibition hall in photographs of the interior of the Colonial Museum in the final years of the nineteenth century (Fig. 8). What remains of that set is now held in the photography collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

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Fig. 10 Daniel Louis Mundy: *Sir George Grey's Residence, Kawau* (c.1870, printed c.1897). Albumen silver print, 147×201mm (Te Papa O.020922).

did not credit Mundy as the photographer (Tinne 1873). Tinne's book featured images of locations around the North Island, including Governor Grey's residence and the Pink and White terraces, which were included in Mundy and Hochstetter's book (Figs 9, 10).

In 1853, Hochstetter was based in Vienna as a geologist and later, in 1876, he became the first superintendent of the city's Imperial Natural History Museum. In 1857, he joined the scientific expedition of the Austrian naval frigate SMS *Novara* as its geologist. In December 1858, the ship arrived in New Zealand, where Hochstetter met Haast, who accompanied him on his travels around the colony (Fleming 2007). Hochstetter probably saw Mundy's photographs when they were included by the New Zealand government in the 1873 Vienna International Exhibition, but it was most likely that the collaboration between the two men came about through their mutual friendship with Haast. By the time their book was published in 1875, Mundy and Hochstetter still had not met – only corresponded – and, in a letter to Haast, Mundy expressed his hope that he would finally meet Hochstetter

in Paris at the 1875 International Congress of Geographical Sciences (Mundy to Haast, 27 July 1875).

Mundy took his photographs independently from an official scientific expedition, and so he may have sought collaboration with Hochstetter to align his work with that undertaken during the *Novara* expedition. Their partnership was a success, and Hochstetter praised Mundy both professionally and personally. In a letter to Mundy, he described the *Rotomahana* book as 'beautiful', and the excellence of the publication as 'deserving of the highest approval and cannot fail to obtain it' (Hochstetter to Mundy, 25 April 1875). Hochstetter went on to inform Mundy that his work had given him the double pleasure of standing as a memorial to 'some of the most glorious scenes I saw in my travels'. Hochstetter was a tutor of the Austrian Crown Prince Rudolf and presented him with a copy of the book in Mundy's name, and it was probably on Hochstetter's recommendation that Mundy was awarded a gold medal for art and science by Austria's Emperor Franz Joseph in 1875.



Fig. 11 Daniel Louis Mundy: *View on Arthurs Pass, looking east towards the Bealey River* (1868). Albumen silver print, 190 x 240mm (Te Papa O.009622).

Rotomahana and the boiling springs of New Zealand was Mundy's most successful photographic enterprise. The combination of Mundy's images and Hochstetter's authoritative text gained the book much attention. However, Mundy wrote: 'I am only publishing 250 copies at present. Neither do I think there will be another edition [as] the work will not pay me much, but will I trust beat any other collection into notice' (Mundy to Haast, 5 May 1875).

The book reviewer for the science journal *Nature* described the 'autotype illustrations' as 'triumphs of the photographic art' (Anonymous 1875: 532). But the most celebrated aspect of Mundy's photographs in Europe seems to have been their illustrative value for geology and natural science: 'While as a collection of well-executed views of great interest the work deserves a wide circulation, to the student of geology it is of great value, as affording a far more satisfactory idea of an important feature of the physical geography of New Zealand than any mere description can convey' (Anonymous 1875: 532).

'Photographic experiences in New Zealand' (Mundy 1874) also hints at the debt Mundy's photographs of the thermal regions, and ultimately his and Hochstetter's book, owe to the Māori people he met and their knowledge of the area. Mundy relates how local Māori assisted him by showing him where to find scarce supplies of fresh water (which were essential for producing wet collodion negatives in the field), and shared their method for cooking food in the local thermal manner. In the context of Mundy's article, written in England at a time of intensive colonisation of New Zealand, it is possible to view his portrayal of the cooperative Māori in a cynical manner. However, through a contemporary reading it can be seen as an example of mutual collaboration between Māori and photographer.

Though he returned briefly to New Zealand in 1878, Mundy failed to gain the position or endorsement he wanted from the colonial government in order to settle here permanently. In February and March of 1878, the *Evening Post* reported:

Mr Mundy's entertainment 'A Royal tour through Wonderland', exhibited for the first time in Wellington at the Athenaeum Hall last night, was but poorly attended. No other diorama travelling through the colony can be compared with this one. The views are something more than mere photographs – they are real works of art – and the pictures of the famous Rotomahana scenery are life-like in their fidelity of detail and clearness.

The diorama is accompanied by a descriptive lecture by Mr C.K. Jeffs. (Anonymous 1878a: 2)

However, the show closed early owing to continued poor attendance (Anonymous 1878b: 2). Mundy spent the last years of his life operating a portrait business in Australia and died there in 1881, aged 55 – five years before the Tarawera eruption that destroyed Rotomahana and the Pink and White terraces.

Conclusion

Mundy's article adds context to a style of photography that can be hard to understand today in terms of artistic value and aesthetics, and perhaps was never meant to be understood within those terms. When considered within the context of the time Mundy spent in London, it is possible to begin to understand the type of success and authority he achieved through the many combinations he made of photographs and text. Mundy had high aspirations for his work as a landscape photographer in New Zealand. Despite his efforts and achievements, however, he struggled for recognition as a photographer in an era that did not value photography as a practice in, and of, itself. His achievements came through the co-option of his work to scientific aims, by successfully combining image and text to gain authority and recognition for his photographic work.

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Notes

- 1 Hector also acquired photographs of mining and other industrial enterprises in the United States taken during the 1860s and 1870s by William Henry Jackson, Carleton Watkins and other, as yet unidentified photographers, which are held in Te Papa's photography collection.
- 2 The article was also published on 25 December 1874 in the *British Journal of Photography* 764 (XXI):618–20.
- 3 From 1933, the New Zealand Institute became known as the Royal Society of New Zealand.
- 4 The title for the image in Te Papa's collection is taken from the inscription written on the rear of the mount of the print. However, this title has been disputed on two counts: that the highest point on the West Coast Road is Porters Pass (not Carter's Pass); and that another copy of the print, held in the Auckland Museum Collection, has the title *Summit of Porter's Pass* (call number: album 86, page 83).

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Appendix 1:

Titles of Mundy photographs exhibited at the Photographic Society of Great Britain (listed as in the catalogue) (De Montfort University 2008)

1874: 19th Annual Exhibition of the Photographic Society of Great Britain

- Exhibit no. 220: Rota Mahana [*sic*], New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 221: Poverty Bay, New Zealand [Fig. 5]
- Exhibit no. 222: Thames Gold-Field, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 231: Mercury Bay, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 232: Lake Taupo, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 246: Lake Taupo, New Zealand. Boiling Geysers.
- Exhibit no. 379: Bealey River, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 380: Kawau Island, New Zealand, Residence of Sir G. Grey [Fig. 10]
- Exhibit no. [467]: Album of New-Zealand Views

1875: 20th Annual Exhibition of the Photographic Society of Great Britain

- Exhibit no. 165: New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 166: New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 184: Wellington, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 193: New-Zealand Alps
- Exhibit no. 202: Hokianga, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 204: Port Chalmers, Otago
- Exhibit no. 226: Geological Study
- Exhibit no. 237: Fern Trees, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 244: Devauchelles Bay, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 278: Sheep Station, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 292: New Zealand
- Exhibit no. 364: The Alfred Falls, New Zealand
- Exhibit no. [430]: Book with Illustrations, Ratomahana [*sic*], New Zealand