

Daguerreotype:

- widest use was the portrait; as a miniature, unreproducible image, its primary audience was the unknown, ordinary person
- the daguerreotype fails for architecture; quality is too linear and sharp for the massing of buildings, unlike the calotype's emphasis on mass and shadow
- presentation was an important feature as they came in small, decorated cases, and the image itself was reflective or mirror-like and had to be viewed in correct lighting;
- the shiny metal plate gave it a dual quality of being tangible and real yet mysterious and reflective at the same time
- the unique quality – there could only be one – was part of the magic
- the wealth of detail in these images was part of their appeal characterized by sharp precision and reflective brilliance; not only did this provide a detailed and astonishing image, it involved the viewer in the act of looking

calotype:

- unlike the daguerreotype, the camera produced a negative which would then be used to produce a positive;
 - the possibility of producing numerous positives from the negative was then seen as an advantage to a 2-step system although the initial reaction was preference for the more magical ability of the daguerreotype camera to produce a single positive image
 - the early calotypes achieved their success less through detail and more through compositions of massing and bold lighting;
 - the calotype lent itself to modifications in tonal values and contrasts through the application of dyes or masks to the negative;
 - since it was a faster image to make, it could capture greater spontaneity and allowed the photographer greater flexibility in taking the picture, since some of the steps could be prepared ahead and the actual processing did not coincide with the moment of making the picture
 - the disadvantage of being made on paper, a fact which made the calotype similar in quality to etchings and lithographs, was an advantage at that point in time when the graphic arts were the model for the photograph and when familiarity allowed unfamiliar views to be less threatening
- because of the process of printing from a paper negative, there is a granular structure created by the light filtering through the negative; the print itself varied in tonality depending on the processing and toning; usually they range from a sienna brown to a purple brown
- improvements made to the calotype process, by people like Blanquart-Evrard, not only improved processing time and the quality of prints; they more clearly anticipated multiple reproduction processes necessary for books