

THE VOYAGE OF CAPTAIN LUCAS AND THE DAGUERREOTYPE TO SYDNEY *

by R. Derek Wood

All writings on the history of Photography in Australia agree that an episode in 1841 represents the first use there of the camera. Thus a recent account begins:

Taking of the first photograph in Australia seems to have been a rather casual affair. On 13 April 1841 the *Australasian Chronicle* announced the arrival of the daguerreotype in New South Wales: “The inhabitants of Sydney will now have the opportunity of witnessing the effects of this very singular invention, one of the instruments having been brought to the colony by Captain Lucas, late commander of the Naval School expedition”...¹.

But who was Captain Lucas; where did he come from and what was the “Naval School Expedition”? Such questions have remained entirely obscure. A recently published entry in the Dictionary of Australian Artists on ‘Lucas, Captain, amateur photographer (?), camera salesman and ship’s captain’, has attempted to bring together some possible identifications but was confused by the fact that two or even three Captains of that name seem to have been in Sydney in 1841: was he French or English? The present article offers a new approach to these problems. Even though Lucas does persist in offering a somewhat dual existence, it is apparent that the first use of the daguerreotype in Sydney can be considered as the farthest diffusion of the daguerreotype from France, comparable to the earlier and shorter stages to London and New York². Unlike those two places it is necessary to make the journey from Europe to Australia with at least one stop-over: our first attention therefore goes to a ship, *L’Oriental*, at a half-way point.

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¹ Gael Newton, *Shades of Light: Photography and Australia 1839–1988*, (Canberra: Australian National Gallery 1988), 5, 173n.

² R. D. Wood, “Ste Croix in London”, *History of Photography*, 17 (Spring 1993), 101–7; R. D. Wood, *The Arrival of the Daguerreotype in New York* (New York: American Photographic Historical Society, 1994), 20pp.

L'Oriental to South America

A Frenchman, Louis Comte, gave the first demonstrations of the daguerreotype south of the equator. They took place at the hotel Pharoux in Rio de Janeiro on 17 January 1840³ and on 29 February at the Uruguayan Palacio del Cabildo in Montevideo⁴. Comte had sailed to South America on an intended expedition round the world on a French frigate, *L'Oriental* that had left France at the end of September 1839⁵. Described in France as an “*école flottante*”, and in other countries as

³ Augusto da Silva Carvalho, “Subsidios para a história da intradução da fotografia em Portugal”, *Memórias da Academia de Lisboa, classe de Ciências*, tomo III (1941), 21–44, has a paragraph on p. 24 concerning Captain Lucas and Comte in Rio de Janeiro. Carvalho’s source was *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro), 20 Janeiro 1840 [a newspaper not seen by the present writer] : “convidou o imperador do Brasil e a sua familia a assistirem à exhibição do aparelho de Daguerre para tirar vistas, convite que foi aceite e ao paço da Boavista foi o capitão acompanhado pelo abade Comte, que era o técnico e duma janela do torreão com uma exposição de nove minutos...” This contemporary report of a daguerreotype being taken in Rio de Janeiro with an exposure of nine minutes is interesting. It is some confirmation of the length of time expected with Daguerre’s basic technique that would not have been able to record the soldiers and horses that Gilberto Ferrez writes about in his first chapter of *Photography in Brasil 1840–1900*, translated from Portuguese into English by Stella de Sá Rego (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990),.1. Ferrez rashly alleges three daguerreotypes illustrated in his figures 2–4 are by Comte (Ferrez, 6, 8, footnote No. 6 on pages 223–4). Not only are those three daguerreotypes far too sophisticated (ie, high speed instantaneous plates with oval images in fine matching leather cases) to be from 1839, but Ferrez does indeed really admit in his footnote No. 6 on page 223 of the 1990 English edition that one of those daguerreotypes could not be before 1841 because “the neo–Classical plat bands of the Paço” that appear in the daguerreotype were not constructed until the year of 1841 ! Weston Naef’s opinion, mentioned by Ferrez in his footnote No. 6, that these daguerreotypes were likely to have been the work of Augustus Morand of New York who was at the Hotel Pharoux in Rio de Janeiro in December 1842 (Ferrez, 6, 8) makes much more sense. It is unfortunate that Gilberto Ferrez did not transfer the logic of his footnote No.6 to the attribution of this daguerreotype of Paço da Cidade that he more prominently but incautiously made at the beginning of his first chapter.

⁴ J. M. Fernández Saldaña, ‘La Fotografía en el Rio de La Plata...’, *La Prensa* (Buenos Aires), 26 January 1936, sección tercera (unpaginated 2nd page), deals with l’Abbe “Compte” [sic] in La Plata and *L’ Oriental* in South America; also see Keith McElroy, “The daguerrean Era in Peru 1839–1859”, *History of Photography*, 3 (1979), 111.

⁵ Adrien Carré, ‘La singulière histoire de l’ Oriental–Hydrographe’, *Bulletin, Comite Nantais de Documentation Historique de la Marine*, No. 2, 1970, pp.17–35. An excellent study of the voyage of *L’ Oriental* (although it does not mention the daguerreotype) enabling several gaps to be filled in the author’s first version of this article as previously issued at a symposium of the European Society for the History of Photography in June 1993.

The Voyage of Captain Lucas

“Colegio hidrográfico” and “Naval School Expedition”, the voyage was expected to last from two to two and a half years. It had been organised throughout the first half of 1839 by Captain Augustin Lucas (1804–?1854). It is not entirely clear if his name was Augustin or Auguste, both forms were used. He was born in 1804 on Belle-Île, the island off the French west coast of Brittany, half-way between Lorient and St Nazaire. In 1832 he had married Elizabeth Bellais, who, with their two young children, went on the expedition with him. In the mid-1830s he was Captain of *Jeune Lise* of Bordeaux but a few weeks after returning to France on 4 June 1838 from Guadeloupe ⁶ he went to stay in Paris to pursue his ideas for leading this educational voyage round the world. During the following year he published a thirty-one page pamphlet on the organisation of maritime commerce⁷. Lucas approached various departments of state and was soon able to state that his project was “under the auspices of the Government”, although this was probably limited to letters of support written by Ministers of Marine and of Public Instruction amongst others. Various organisations, such as the Paris Academy of Sciences and the Society for Geography ⁸ in France, and in Belgium, were also approached for support and advice. Most significant was captain Augustin Lucas’s approach – as early as March 1839 – to an influential Paris organisation concerned with industry and commerce, la Société d’ Encouragement pour l’Industrie Nationale. They considered that his expedition was of interest to them, although the nature of the support which they gave by 31 July was not specified ⁹. When Lucas reached Montevideo in February 1840 he sent back to that Society, for publication in their monthly Bulletin, a report on the commercial relationships between France and Brazil. ¹⁰ No doubt daguerreotype apparatus would have been taken on the voyage anyway (its value to

⁶ *Lloyd’s List* (London), 9 June 1838, 4.

⁷ The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris holds his *Extrait d’un Mémoire sur quelques changements à apporter dans l’organisation de la marine... et la faiblesse de notre commerce maritime* (Paris, 1839), as well as *Le Candidat...pour tous les échelons de la carrière de la marine du commerce*, par A. Lucas (Vannes, 1850), and a twenty-six page pamphlet by “Lucas (Auguste) résidente français à Papeete”, *Memoir sur les colonies français des Iles de la Société* (Paris, 1848).

⁸ *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), vol.11 (seance 19 Avril 1839), p.255. *Comptes-rendus Académie des Sciences Paris*, vol. 9 (seance 5 Août 1839), p.223.

⁹ *Bulletin de la Société d’ Encouragement pour l’ Industrie Nationale* (Paris), vol.38 (1839), pp.136, 139, 323.

¹⁰ ‘Commerce: Note sur le voyage de circumnavigation entrepris par M. le capitaine Lucas...Montevideo, sous la date du 21 Février’, *Bulletin de la Société d’ Encouragement*, vol.39 (July 1840), pp. 261–3.

travellers was greatly emphasised in France in the earliest discussions of photography) for Daguerre's invention was causing great excitement in France especially during the two months before *L'Oriental* sailed. Indeed when Jean Jobard, editor of a Brussels newspaper *Le Courrier Belge*, visited "Daguerre's workshop" in the summer of 1839, it was "at the same time as Captain Lucas, who had just registered to take one of the instruments on his voyage round the world".¹¹ But Lucas's connection with the Société pour l'Industrie Nationale would have provided a particular encouragement to take a commercial interest in the daguerreotype. It is well known that Daguerre's secret was not divulged until François Arago presented a lecture on Daguerre's behalf at the Academy of Sciences on 19 August 1839, and that Daguerre gave the first of three public demonstrations at the palais d'Orsay on the left bank of the Seine in Paris on 7 September. At the end of that first week of September 1839 both apparatus and Daguerre's Manual on the technique at last became available to the public in Paris. Less well known is the fact that Daguerre gave a talk about his technique to the Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale at rue de Bac in Paris on Wednesday 4 September 1839. It is thus conceivable that Lucas or Comte could have been at the meeting of the Society to hear Daguerre speak. His discussion with the members of the society was reported in detail in two Paris newspapers¹². More significantly it resulted in a description of Daguerre's technique, with detailed drawings of the camera and processing equipment, being printed in the September 1839 issue of the society's *Bulletin*¹³, an issue that very likely could have gone on the voyage with Augustin Lucas.

A Prospectus for the expedition was issued¹⁴. A total of seventy-one persons, forty-two being French students and twelve from Belgium, went on the voyage. Most of the teachers were from Belgium where effective organising was done for Lucas by Professor L. A. Vendel-Heyl. The

¹¹ *Le Courrier Belge* (Bruxelles), 13 September 1839, p.3.

¹² *Le Constitutionnel*, 6 September 1839, pp.1-2. *Moniteur Universel*, 8 September 1839, pp.1738-9.

¹³ 'Description du procédé de M. Daguerre, et de la manière d'en faire usage', *Bulletin de la Société d'Encouragement*, vol.38, No. 423 (September 1839), pp. 342-9, and two fold-out plates (No.s 774, 775). More about Daguerre at the meeting appears on pp. 341-2, 364, 378. Also in the same September *Bulletin*, pp. 325-341, is Arago's lecture of 19 August on the Daguerreotype, reprinted from *Comptes-rendus Academie des Sciences*.

¹⁴ A page of the Prospectus is reproduced in A. Carré, and extracts were published in Brussels in *L'Indépendant*, 11 July 1839, p.1.

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education was to include general studies and languages, but training was specifically for commercial and marine careers with instruction in navigation by Lucas, and lectures from a Professor Moreau of the School of Commerce at Brussels. The cost for each young student was 5,000 francs (\$300). Lucas had at first hoped the Ministry of Marine would allow him to use a navy ship *L'Hydrographe*, and his plans could have collapsed when this support was not forthcoming. Luckily the expedition was still able to take place when he obtained the use of *L'Oriental*¹⁵, at 82,000 Francs from her owners Despacher and Bonnefin of Nantes. The departure was on October 1 or 2 with the first call of *L'Oriental* being at Lisbon from October 7 to 15, and at Madeira from 23 to 25 October. Then sailing via Teneriffe and Gorée [Dakar], Bahia was reached on December 7, 1839 after visiting Recife (“Fernambouc”) the most northern point encountered on the Brazilian coast. The exact position of L'abbe Louis Comte on the voyage is unclear as he was listed as one of three French passengers. Yet he is also recorded as Chapelain on the ship and to teach music. In South America the reports of him taking the first daguerreotypes there speak of “Compte” rather than Comte, but the latter name is likely to be correct. Apparently at that time he was aged thirty nine, born in Nantes, but having lived for many years on the other side of France at la Grande-Verrière, a small village near Autun¹⁶. With his daguerreotype equipment he stayed on in Uruguay where he had a studio for many years, but *L'Oriental* continued her voyage under the command of Captain Lucas. The intention was to go up the west coast of South America to California, across the Pacific to “La Nouvelle-Hollande” – ie. Australia. Parents of the pupils had been advised to send mail via England to Sydney. The Phillipines were to be visited, down to India, which appeared to feature largely in plans for the students. The last part of the expedition was via the Red sea, south to Bourbon and Madagascar, back across to South America, north to Boston and across the Atlantic back to France. But, after staying a few days at Valparaiso, *L'Oriental* was wrecked on the

¹⁵ *L' Oriental* was built in 1835. Before Lucas used the ship the previous two voyages from mid-1837 were both from Nantes to Bourbon and Mauritius and back, returning to the Loire on 16 June 1839. *Lloyd's List*, 10 April 1838, 3; 9 June 1838, 4; 4 March 1839, 3; 22 June 1839, 2. Financial arrangements for Lucas's voyage in *Gazette des Tribunaux* (Paris), 20 August 1840, p.1022.

¹⁶ A. Carré, 1970, p.25.

coast of Chile immediately after leaving that port on 23 June 1840¹⁷. Everything on the ship was recovered and the students were to sail back to France and Belgium on normal services.

The Justine and Australia

Yet *L'Oriental* must have left France with more than one Daguerreotype outfit. For it surely cannot be only a coincidence that another French ship, *Justine*, arrived in Sydney from Valparaiso on 29 March 1841 and it was her Captain Lucas, described in the *Australian Chronicle* of 13 April 1841 as “late commander of the Naval School expedition”, who offered Daguerreotype apparatus for sale in April 1841. The place of sale was in Macquarie Place at the offices of Joubert and Murphy¹⁸, food and wine merchants, who were general agents for French ships. The purchaser was to be “fully instructed in the method of taking views”. A daguerreotype view of Bridge Street from Macquarie Place (the first photographic image obtained in Australia, although it does not appear to have survived) was certainly taken by some “gentlemen” on 13 May. Presumably Lucas was involved in this demonstration, not only Joubert and Murphy. Further demonstrations were offered at their premises. It seems unlikely that the camera was sold at that time, but remained in Joubert’s hands: when he decided to return to Europe almost two years later, “a very superior daguerreotype [camera], complete, with all the apparatus, and a great number of plates” was amongst his furniture and books placed on auction at his residence in Macquarie Place¹⁹.

¹⁷ The voyage of *L' Oriental* under Captain Lucas from Nantes on 2 October 1839 to being wrecked at Valparaiso on 23 June 1840. is recorded in newspaper shipping reports: *L' Indépendant* (Bruxelles), 11 July 1839, 1; 24 Octobre 1839, p.2; *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 8 Outubro 1839, 16 Outubro 1839; *Lloyd's List*, 11 November 1839, column 10; 29 January 1840, 4; 18 February, 7; 29 August, 7; 10 September, 11; 29 September 1840, 14. ‘Naufrage de l' Oriental–Hydrographe’, *L' Indépendant*, 3 Octobre 1840, p.1; 4 Octobre 1840, p.2.

¹⁸ Joubert and Murphy acted as agents for French ships: Jack Cato, *The Story of the Camera in Australia*, Melbourne: Georgian House 1955, pp. 1–2. See also entry on ‘D. N. Joubert’ in J. Kerr (editor), *Dictionary of Australian Artists*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1992.

¹⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 March 1843, 3. Advertisement for auction of D. N. Joubert’s property to be held at his residence in Macquarie Place on 23 March 1843. Sandy Barrie of Sydney drew attention to this auction, in his ‘Historical retrospective, George Barron Goodman (Australia’s first professional photographer)’, privately published, Sydney 1992, 9, 31. See also his article on Goodman beginning on page 172 of this [*Daguerreian*] *Annual* 1995.

The Voyage of Captain Lucas

The *Justine* had sailed for New Zealand and Australia from Valparaiso on 6 November 1840²⁰ so that the opportunity to take over goods from *L'Oriental* is evident. It would seem almost certain that the Captain Lucas who brought the daguerreotype to Australia, was the leader of the marine school expedition of *L'Oriental* that left France at the beginning of October 1839. Thus the taking of the first photographic image in Australia is in direct line with the first daguerreotype taken in South America. Yet this article cannot simply stop here. Because it cannot be entirely indisputable that the man in Sydney was exactly the same man as the Captain Lucas who had sailed from France !

When Augustin Lucas sailed from the French Brittany ports on *L'Oriental* at the end of September 1839, he was accompanied by his wife and two young children. On Belle-Île in January 1839 his sister Louise-Augustine had married J. F. Briel described as a simple fisherman and coastal sailor. He served for Lucas as third lieutenant on *L'Oriental* accompanied by his wife. It was thus quite a family voyage, completed by the youngest member of the crew being the sixteen years old brother of Lucas's wife. Indeed family relationship is the connecting link in the arrival of the *Justine* at Sydney. For Augustin Lucas had not only a sister but a younger brother. Born on 11 February 1808 on Belle-Île, François-Marie Lucas also became a Captain about the same time as his brother. Indeed he was captain of the *Justine*!

In 1837 the *Justine* had left Le Havre captained by the younger François Lucas under a scheme to take 240 emigrants to Sydney²¹. Also on the voyage was J. Bernard, owner of the *Justine* and organiser of the enterprise. After arriving at Rio Janeiro in November, the emigrants were persuaded by government agents that Brazil could be a substitute for Australia. First taking on a cargo of sugar the *Justine* after being damaged a little at Montevideo in January 1838²², continued round to the Pacific coast of South America. Hereafter in 1838 and 1839 shipping news sometimes reported the progress of the ship as captained by Lucas, sometimes as Bernard. The *Justine* left Valparaiso with horses on 1

²⁰ *Lloyd's List*, 16 February 1841, 10.

²¹ *Justine* rapport 1842: S.[sic] M. Lucas ("demeurant à Belle-Isle"), "Extrait du rapport adressé au ministre de la marine par le capitaine Lucas, commandant le navire *la Justine*, de Bordeaux, sur les circonstances de son voyage dans l'Océanie, en 1837 [-] 1841," *Annales Maritimes et Coloniales* (Paris), Partie 2 (non officielle), 1842 vol. 2, 496-503.

²² *Lloyd's List*, 1 February 1838, 2; 24 February 1838, 2; 30 May 1838, 3.

November 1838, touching in at Tahiti and New Zealand before reaching Sydney on 25 April 1839.²³ Three months later the *Justine* sailed from Sydney, not to recross the Pacific but going west without a cargo to Mauritius and Bourbon (ie Réunion). Returning with a cargo of sugar, they were back to Sydney in February 1840.²⁴ Within a few weeks, on 7 April the barque left Sydney, sailing via New Zealand to Chile: the Captain was recorded as Lucas at Sydney and on arrival at Valparaiso.²⁵ So in April 1840 both *L'Oriental* and the *Justine* were heading for Valparaiso from opposite directions: both ships under the command of "Captain Lucas". At no time in shipping news were forenames mentioned but it is an established fact that Augustin was on the first, and the younger François was on the second ship. So there is no doubt that not long after *L'Oriental* was wrecked on the coast of South America at Valparaiso, the *Justine* arrived there on 23 September 1840. When the captain of the *Justine* later wrote an account of his voyage he merely said that "I returned to Valparaiso to reload with a cargo similar to the first [ie horses], augmented with some other articles"²⁶. There was no official requirement for him to write any report but he wished to present his thoughts to the French authorities about potential for French colonisation in the Pacific. Therefore it is not surprising that he made no mention of meeting up with his older brother. The *Justine* departed again on 6 November from Valparaiso touching in at Tahiti and at New Zealand to return to Sydney on 29 March 1841:²⁷

Sydney Gazette, 30 March 1841:

Shipping Intelligence. Arrivals. From Valparaiso, via the Bay of Islands (New Zealand,) yesterday [29 March 1841], having left the former port on 6th November, and the latter 17th instant, the barque *Justine*, Captain Lucas, with flour, wines, &c. Passengers Captain Bernard, Captain Elliot, William Eastcott, Esq. Messieurs Dessuth and Guion, Mademoiselle Lucus [sic], and three in the steerage .

²³ *Lloyd's List*, 12 February 1839, 3; 22 June 1839, 2; 29 June 1839, 3; 3 September 1839, 3; 4 October 1839, 7.

²⁴ *Sydney Herald*, 8 July 1839, p.2; *Lloyd's List*, 12 December 1839, 6; 20 May 1840, 7; *Sydney Herald*, 17 February 1840, p.2a,c, 24 February 1840, Suppl.,p.2.

²⁵ *Sydney Herald*, 8 April 1840, p.2. *Lloyd's List*, 12 January 1841, 8.

²⁶ *Justine rapport* 1842, p. 498.

²⁷ *Lloyd's List*, 16 February 1841, 10; *Sydney Gazette*, 30 March 1841, p.2; *Sydney Herald*, 30 March 1841, p.2; 6 April 1841, p.2.

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Sydney Herald, 6 April 1841:

Sydney General Trade List, under the authority of the Customs. Imports. Reports, April 2 [1841] – Justine, barge 265 tons, Lucas, master, from the Bay of Islands [NZ]; 85 barrels of flour, 80 barrels of beef, 2 cases jardines, 50 cases pickles, 1 case raisins, 3 cases almonds, 2 cases ink, 10 barrels shot, 50 boxes walnuts, 20 bags beans, 150 boxes soap, 4 boxes candles, 75 bags wheat, 12 bags lucerne seed, 20 bags barley, 15 tons shells, 1000 coconuts, 1 barrel lime juice, Captain Bernard.

Obviously the owner Captain Bernard, not a Lucas, registered the cargo with Customs and was agent for the goods in Sydney. It will be noticed that no daguerreotype apparatus was listed amongst the goods being imported. Two Captain Lucases are not listed, but we do have the presence of “Mademoiselle Lucas”. A French writer who has earlier studied well the history of Augustin Lucas’s expedition on *L’Oriental* commented that “after the shipwreck Lucas disappeared for a while in 1841, reappearing in Tahiti”²⁸. The period of this “disappearance” is exactly that of the arrival of the camera in Australia. The Australian newspaper description in April 1841 of the man who arrived with the daguerreotype “Captain Lucas, late of the Naval School Expedition” is one that exactly fits Augustin, captain of the wrecked *L’Oriental*, rather than his younger brother François. There can be little doubt that the apparatus was late of the voyage of *L’Oriental*, but it is indeed also likely that both brothers did arrive on the *Justine*. Obviously the Captain of the *Justine* would already have known Joubert in Sydney but the fact that a few months later Augustin was writing to Joubert on September 15 from Tahiti²⁹ indicates that he also had already become acquainted.

When François Lucas had set out from France the whole world was still without photography and the Daguerreotype. But 1839 brought a profound change. So when Augustin Lucas arrived at the east edge of the Pacific in 1840 he had seen how a world could be preserved and reflected in Daguerre’s “Magic Mirrors”. He brought the apparatus to the Pacific. But the first two or three years of the daguerreotype from 1839 to 1841 also cover a critical time in the political affairs of the Pacific. François arrived on the *Justine* in February 1839 to New Zealand: “the geographic position of this beautiful land, the fine ports, delightful climate, immense

²⁸ A. Carré, 1970, p.32.

²⁹ Letter dated 15 Sept. 1841 from “Auguste” Lucas in Tahiti to Joubert in Sydney, in Léonce Jore, *Un Belge au service de la France dans l’Océan Pacifique: Notice Historique et Biographique concernant J.A. Moerenhout* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1944), 107–9. Jore cites his source of this letter as “Archives du Ministre des Affaires étrangères, Nouvelle-Zélande Pièces diverses vol. 4.”

forests,... its proximity to the new colony of Nouvelle-Hollande [Australia], I considered that these islands would play an important role in the future of the Pacific”.³⁰ By December 1839 it had become known in his old home of Belle-Île that he was purchasing seven square miles of land in New Zealand.³¹ However his enthusiasm came to nought “not foreseeing that before one year the English would come to threaten my property, as happened after the arrival of Captain Hobson, appointed governor of New Zealand.” Thus Hobson’s Proclamation of 30 January 1840 (“does not deem it expedient to recognise as valid any titles to Land in New Zealand which are not derived from or confirmed by Her Majesty”³²) and the Treaty of Waitangi concluded the following week by the British with the Maori chiefs, undoubtedly influenced not only failure of French settlement in New Zealand,³³ but also the locality of the arrival of photography in the Pacific.

Only a brief account by François remains of his voyage from Valparaiso on which the daguerreotype apparatus was carried: “I touched again at Tahiti, and when I had sold all at the Bay of Islands [NZ] and wound up the operation, I left for Sydney in order to reline and careen my ship before going back to Chile and subsequent return to Bordeaux”. Thus after the Daguerreotype apparatus was placed on sale in Sydney the *Justine* sailed from Sydney on 4 June to recross the Pacific to Valparaiso yet again³⁴. The *Justine* left there on 28 October 1841 for Bordeaux, arriving back to France at the end of February 1842³⁵. François Lucas abandoned both his hopes in New Zealand and a seafaring life. He set up a Sardine factory on Belle-Île, but not only did the enterprise soon fail, but

³⁰ *Justine rapport* 1842, p.499.

³¹ A. Carré, 1970, p.32.

³² United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Papers (Commons)*, 1841 Vol.17, Paper 311 ‘Correspondence relative to Colonization of New Zealand’, pp.7–9.

³³ T. Lindsay Buick, *The French at Akaroa* (Wellington: New Zealand Book Depot, 1928). Deals well with the inopportune Nanto-Bordelaise Company whose group of emigrants left France on 8 March preceded by the Naval supporting ship of *L’Aube* on 19 February 1840 both unaware that British Sovereignty had just been proclaimed in New Zealand.

³⁴ *Sydney Herald*, 4 June 1841,p.2: “For Bourbon [sic] [!], yesterday, the French ship, *Justine*, Captain Lucas”. *Lloyd’s List*, 4 November 1841, 8: “Valparaiso, July 24, *Justine*, Lucas, arrived from Sydney”.

³⁵ *Lloyd’s List*, 8 December 1841, 11; 3 February 1842, 6; 7 March 1842, 10; 9 March 1842, 5.

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apparently he shortly died ³⁶. The interwoven characters of the two brothers is further illustrated by the fact that it was not François, but Augustin who continued in the Pacific. Augustin Lucas lived in Tahiti from about September 1841 until 1848 when he returned to France. According to Le Gallen's *histoire de Belle-Île*, he shortly emigrated to the United States where he is said to have died in 1854. One year after he went to Tahiti an official French expedition of the *Reine Blanche* commanded by the forceful Admiral Dupetit-Thouars arrived in August 1842 soon insisting on French control of Tahiti, as well as bringing a Daguerreotype camera officially purchased before they left Paris ³⁷. There are glimpses of Lucas embroiled in missionary disputes, instigator of intrigue against the French Consul, and dealing in alcohol, that mirror the disturbed situation of Tahiti at that time ³⁸. The same is true of Elisabeth Lucas. A description of her merely in terms of being her husband's wife is certainly very inadequate. When she, with the two children and another Captain, not Augustin, visited the Gambier Islands in 1843, she was ostensibly an angel devoted to missionaries. Yet those French Catholic missionaries soon characterised her as a free-thinker trading in Mother of Pearl in disreputable company.³⁹ Glimpses we have of these trading-adventurers in the Pacific in the 1840s surpasses the plots of many novels – as Herman Melville, at Tahiti the same time as Augustin Lucas, was aware. The arrival of the daguerreotype is part of that extraordinary true story.

³⁶ A. Carré, 1970, p.32. Léandre Le Gallen, *Belle-Île, histoire politique, religieuse et militaire, moeurs, usages, marine, pêche, agriculture, biographies bellilloises* (Vannes: Lafolye frères, 1906), pp. 624-5.

³⁷ Patrick O'Reilly, *Les Photographes à Tahiti et leurs œuvres 1842–1962*, (Paris: Société des Océanistes, Musée de l'Homme, 1969), 11.

³⁸ Léonce Jore, *L'océan Pacifique au temps de la Restauration et de la Monarchie de Juillet 1815–1848* (2 vols, Paris: Bessons et Chantemerle, 1959), tome 2, 257–8, 266–270, 296–7. L. Jore, *Un Belge au service de la France...* (1944), 104–116. P. O'Reilly, *Tahitiens, Supplément*, Publications de la Société des Océanistes No. 17 (Paris: Musée de l'Homme, 1966), 585–6. A. Lucas, *Memoir...*, (Paris 1848).

³⁹ *Honoré Laval: Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de Mangareva, ère chrétienne 1834–1871*, edited by C. W. Newbury and P. O'Reilly, Publications de la Société des Océanistes No. 15 (Paris: Musée de l'Homme, 1968), 234–8.

The Voyage of Captain Lucas

Conclusion.

The most recent opinion amongst photographic historians in Australia has been that the Captain Lucas who brought the daguerreotype to Australia was an English Captain. But it is possible now to have a different and fuller picture of the event. It has been necessary to present complicated evidence regarding the relationship between two French ships, so a summary of the principal course of events is offered:

Summary

L'Oriental left France at the end of September 1839. Organised by Captain Augustin Lucas (1804–?1854), it was intended as an expedition around the world lasting about two years to provide an education in maritime commerce. Daguerreotypes were taken by Louis Comte in Rio de Janeiro on 17 January and at Montevideo on 29 February 1840. The ship was wrecked at Valparaiso on 23 June 1840. The *Justine*, sometime under the Captaincy of François Lucas, younger brother of Augustin, arrived from across the Pacific to Valparaiso on 23 September. This ship left in November 1840, to arrive back to Sydney on 29 March 1841. On 13 April the *Australasian Chronicle* announced that the “inhabitants of Sydney will now have the opportunity of witnessing the effects of this very singular invention [of the Daguerreotype], one of the instruments having been brought to the colony by Captain Lucas, late commander of the Naval School expedition...Captain Lucas intends to dispose of the instrument at prime cost...”. The description of the captain exactly fits that of Augustin Lucas from *L'Oriental* rather than his younger brother François. In this way the first photographic images were obtained in Australia, the earliest documented daguerreotype being taken in association with a French firm Joubert and Murphy at Macquarie Place, Sydney, on 13 May 1841.