THE PANORAMA AND RELATED EXHIBITIONS IN LONDON

SCOTT BARNES WILCOX
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1976
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I would like to express my gratitude to the following institutions in London and Edinburgh. In London: the Print Room of the British Museum; the British Library and Newspaper Library; the Print Room and Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum; the Guildhall Library; the Minet Library, Brixton; the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art; and the Witt Library of the Courtauld Institute. In Edinburgh: the National Library of Scotland, the University of Edinburgh Library, the Edinburgh Public Library, and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

For their help and encouragement I would like to extend special thanks to my adviser, J. Duncan Macmillan; Alistair Rowan; Ralph Hyde; Michael Kitson; Richard Altick; and my wife, Carolyn.
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From its first appearance in London in 1789 to the end of the nineteenth century, the panorama, an exhibition consisting of a large-scale circular painting depicting a full three hundred and sixty degree view, presented London audiences with its own peculiar blend of art and popular entertainment. This phenomenon was roughly paralleled throughout Europe and America, for the panorama enjoyed world-wide popularity. Through the panorama and the related exhibitions which grew up around it, art was brought to a wider public, and contemporary artists' preoccupations with realism, atmospheric effects, exotic subject matter, and art as an instrument of instruction were mirrored on a popular level.

In 1793 Robert Barker, the inventor of panoramas, opened an establishment for their exhibition in Leicester Square. This establishment remained in continuous operation for seventy years, during which time it experienced considerable and varied competition. In the very first years of the nineteenth century, a number of rival panoramas appeared in London, including the well-known Eidometropolis of Thomas Girtin. Although the number of competing circular paintings decreased in the coming decades, a great many related optical entertainments arose, the most important of which were the moving panorama, which first appeared in London in 1810, and the diorama, which arrived from Paris in 1823. The original circular form, however,
was not forgotten, and at the end of the 1820s, the Colosseum opened, displaying the largest panorama yet seen in London.

At mid-century the moving panorama enjoyed a tremendous but rather short-lived burst of popularity. With its passing and with the close of the Leicester Square establishment, the panorama, in all its forms, entered a period of decline, although moving panoramas continued to be shown in London up to the end of the century. Interest in the circular panorama revived in the 1880s, but shortly thereafter the panorama was effectively displaced by the cinema.
CHAPTER I

THE PREHISTORY OF THE PANORAMA

I

On March 14, 1789, "MR. BARKER'S INTERESTING and NOVEL VIEW of the CITY and CASTLE of EDINBURGH, and the whole adjacent and surrounding country" opened in London. The novelty of the view was that it comprised a full three hundred and sixty degrees. Standing at the centre of a large cylinder, the spectator was surrounded by the view painted on the inside of the cylinder. Robert Barker, an Irish-born artist working in Edinburgh, had devised this form of painting several years earlier. The picture of the Scottish capital, his first large-scale attempt to put the idea into practice, had already achieved success in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The view of Edinburgh was the first of a prodigious series of such paintings, for which Barker two years later coined the name "panorama." In 1793 Barker opened a permanent establishment for the exhibition of his panoramas in London—an establishment that continued in operation for seventy years. Other pictorial entertainments, based either on Barker's principle or on other related schemes and appearing under either the name of panorama or some similar title, proliferated, to become in the coming century a considerable
attraction in the English capital. The popularity of the panoramas was restricted neither to London nor to Britain, but was a truly international phenomenon. Nonetheless it was in London that panorama exhibiting grew to importance, and through much of the nineteenth century London remained the centre—although not undisputed—of panorama exhibiting.

Barker’s panorama was, as the writer of the obituary of Barker’s son and successor, Henry Aston Barker, wrote, "a novel experiment on public taste," but it was not an experiment without forerunners. Indeed we can trace three routes to the development of the panorama: topographical painting, illusionistic decorative art, and theatrical scene-painting.

II

Seventeenth century Dutch landscape painters made frequent use of somewhat panoramic views, that is, views with a strong horizontal emphasis, a slightly elevated viewpoint, and an absence of the framing construction of the coulisse. In drawings by Hendrick Goltzius, we find the seminal works in the development of this form, which was further carried out by Hercules Seghers and brought to fruition in landscapes by Jan van Goyen, Philips Koninck, and Jacob van Ruisdael. In the works of the later three artists, the oblong format employed by Goltzius and Seghers was abandoned in favour of more nearly square pictures in which the sky occupied a large proportion of the canvas.

This emphasis on the sky brings out an important difference between these Dutch productions and the actual
panorama. Although the reality of the Dutch countryside was faithfully recorded and accurate views of Dutch towns were introduced, there was a concentration on expressive atmosphere rather than topographical detail. In the panorama attention centred primarily on the detail of landscape or townscape; the panorama's role was not so much to convey mood as to convey information. Although these Dutch panoramic views did at times contain distant towns, actual Dutch townscapes were rarely panoramic.

In spite of this difference, the Dutch views did point the way towards the panorama. By discarding the compositional device of the framing coulisse, they broke down a significant barrier to the lateral extension of a view. They developed a viewpoint high enough to provide an overview of the landscape while firmly establishing the viewer's relation to that landscape in a way that the bird's-eye views of Mannerist landscapists could not. This combination of the extensive view with the sense that the viewer was standing in the landscape, rather than hovering above it, was crucial to the panorama's effectiveness.

One particular figure in seventeenth century Dutch painting presents a different possibility of connection with the development of the panorama. Carel Fabritius was active in the areas of mural painting and the production of perspective boxes—a fascinating juxtaposition of interests, as the panorama was in a sense an offspring of the union of the two. It has been suggested convincingly that the Fabritius View in Delft in the National Gallery, London, was originally
mounted in a semicircular curve within a view box. While Fabritius's subject could scarcely be called panoramic, the employment of a curved painting, with a composition adjusted to compensate for distortion caused by the curvature, reproduces in miniature the technique of the panorama. John Evelyn saw a similar perspective box of a Dutch scene in London in 1656. He recorded that "all the Artists & painters in towne, came flocking to see & admire it." Perhaps such boxes or at least the memory of them—in distinction to the crude peep-shows which were popular—still existed in late eighteenth century England.

While the work of Dutch landscape painters like van Goyen was being purchased in Britain in the later seventeenth century, their style did not greatly influence the artists working there, who remained devoted to Italianate models. When in the mid-eighteenth century Dutch landscape painting of the previous century did begin to exert some influence on British painting, it was not to the more panoramic of the Dutch pictures that British artists were attracted.

An aspect of Dutch painting that was more successfully transplanted in Britain was marine painting, which arrived in England in 1674 with the Van de Veldes and was continued throughout the eighteenth century by a number of British imitators, like Scott and Brooking. From the number of naval battles and seascapes exhibited in the early years of the panorama, this tradition seems to have had a considerable influence on the new form of pictorial entertainment.
In the seventeenth century a topographical tradition was established in Britain by foreign artists like Wenceslaus Hollar, Hendrik Danckerts, and Jan Siberechts (the latter two being Dutch). In the "prospects" produced by these artists we often find the extended view and the oblong format which seem to look forward to the panorama. Indeed when we consider the panoramas of London by Barker and Thomas Girtin, we naturally think of the famous Visscher and Hollar views of the city in the seventeenth century as predecessors. The fact that over one hundred and ten different variants on these and a handful of other original extended views of London were produced between 1600 and 1666 testifies to an international popularity which anticipated the response to the panorama. These prints, however, generally retained the convention of the bird's-eye view, which in this instance proclaims their derivation from cartography.

This topographical tradition in Britain was extended into the eighteenth century by artists like Bernard Lens and the brothers, Samuel and Nathaniel Buck. Pictures with a pronounced horizontal emphasis continued to be produced. While this type of view became less frequent later in the century, examples like Robert Griffier's view of London from Montagu House, painted in 1748, did appear. Paul Sandby, perhaps the greatest British artist to work in topographical landscape, frequently produced long, horizontal compositions.

Of tremendous importance to the development of topographical art in Britain from about the middle of the
eighteenth century was the influence of the Italian vedutisti, particularly Canaletto. In some ways we draw closer to the panorama in the work of these vedutisti than in any of the other work we have considered. The major cities of Europe, with their characteristic buildings and famous monuments—which were to become such a mainstay of the panorama exhibitions—were portrayed with meticulous care. The city was not a component of a distant landscape but occupied centre stage. Instead of schematic aerial views, views from actual vantage points within the cities were produced. As in the panorama, an illusionistic fidelity to visual reality and a clarity of detail were prerequisite. In both the veduta and the panorama, the claims of art had to be balanced against the necessity of providing an accurate visual record.

On the other hand, the aspect of horizontal extension of the panorama was less fully anticipated by these earlier view painters. As in the Dutch townscapes of the previous century, wide-angle views were not particularly frequent in eighteenth century vedute. If oblong compositions were common in the output of one of the foremost practitioners, Bernardo Belloto, the vedutisti generally focused on a particular building or piazza or composed their views around the recessional device of a street or canal or river. The eye is drawn into the composition rather than allowed to stray to the sides. Likewise viewpoints are often low, so that the broad vistas over the rooftops of a city or over a great stretch of land, so characteristic of the panorama, are seldom found in veduta painting.
While few of Canaletto's works could be called panoramic in nature, one of his masterpieces, the Bacino di San Marco in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, does remarkably anticipate the visual sensation of the panorama. As the eye moves across the canvas from the Riva degli Schiavoni on the left to the Isola di San Giorgio on the right, the angle of vision presented in the painting rotates so that the facade of San Giorgio Maggiore is almost parallel to the picture plane; the shadows of the Doge Palace fall to the right while those of San Giorgio fall to the left. Of those other works which most closely approach the panorama, most were produced during his stay in England from 1746. His two companion paintings of the Thames from the terrace of Somerset House (The Royal Collection, Windsor) present a comprehensive view of the river not unlike that of a panorama, although not continuous. Engravings of these paintings were made which undoubtedly increased the British artists' awareness of the compositions and may have contributed to a realization of the possibility of presenting such a comprehensive view in a single curving work.13 Interestingly, following the invention of the panorama, we find one of Canaletto's paintings advertised in London as "CANNALETTI'S PANORAMA of VENICE."14

Another somewhat later Italian production which looked forward to the panorama was Giuseppe Vasi's Prospetto dell' alma Città di Roma dal Monte Gianicolo. Vasi, a Sicilian engraver and teacher of Piranesi, published this wide-angle engraved view, reaching from St. Peter's to the Via Appia,
in twelve plates in 1765. Through its popularity with Grand Tourists, the view was well-known in Britain.

III

The panorama represented the culmination of a long tradition of denying the reality of a wall by painting it with an illusionistic scene. Such schemes of decoration had been employed since antiquity. They had enhanced and seemingly expanded rooms or, in the case of Baroque churches, brought the congregation into contact with the celestial regions, but they remained decorative; illusionism was subservient to the room or hall or church. In the panorama the situation was reversed. The whole structure of the panorama building was designed to serve the illusion of the painting.

While the techniques for expanding a room beyond itself by means of illusionistic painting may well have been in Barker's mind when he created the panorama, tracing precedents back to the ancient world, though interesting, really tells us little about the panorama. However, in the years preceding Barker's invention, two decorative schemes were developed in England, of which it is conceivable that Barker was aware, and which would provide the link between the panorama and previous illusionist decorative art.

Which of these two schemes was the first to be carried out and, indeed, whether both were actually carried out is uncertain. About 1781 George Barret, an Irish-born artist like Robert Barker, painted a room at Norbury Park in Surrey with landscapes depicting idealized scenes based on the
CHAPTER I

scenery of the Lake District. The painting was done in collaboration with Giovanni Battista Cipriani, who contributed figures and statuary; Sawrey Gilpin, who contributed cattle; and Benedetto Pastorini, who added the sky. The effect was of an arbour in the evening light. Three walls were completely covered with painted landscape and the fourth was a window opening onto a real landscape. The ceiling presented the sky seen through a vine-covered trellis. William Gilpin visited the house and wrote a detailed description of the room, praising all its parts as being "equally excellent" and commenting on the unity in the subjects and the treatment of light.

It may have been in response to this illusionist tour de force that Sir George Beaumont undertook a similar scheme, which anticipated the cylindrical format of the panorama exhibition. According to an article in the Somerset House Gazette:

Sir George Beaumont, in listening to the encomiums of Mr. Barret’s paintings, as applicable to that complete representation of a real scene which should deceive the spectator, denied the premises, unless the picture was displayed on a circle, where, on looking round, the plane was interminable; in illustration of which, Sir George had a scene (we believe in Wales) painted on a limited scale upon the walls of a temporary building where the spectator, from a centre, looked around.

The artist, William Westall, however, recalled Beaumont’s scheme differently:

In the year 1774 a view of the whole circle of the Lake and Vale of Keswick, from Crow Park, was taken by the late able artist, Mr. [Thomas] Hearne, for Sir George Beaumont; that distinguished lover and proficient of the art intending to have the same painted round the walls of a circular room: had this intention been effected a panorama would have been produced.
From these conflicting accounts, we can at least be fairly certain that Beaumont was involved with some scheme which was a direct precursor of the panorama.

While it is with precursors that we are here concerned, it is worth mentioning that decorative schemes like the one at Norbury Park did continue and seem for a time to have gained an added impetus from the popularity of the panorama exhibition. Paul Sandby's room at Drakelow Hall (now partially reconstructed in the Victoria and Albert Museum), painted in 1793, shows a debt not to the exhibition but to Barret's room at Norbury Park; however, to a visitor to Drakelow Hall in 1794, it was the exhibition which Sandby's room brought to mind: "The perspective is so well preserved as to produce a landscape deception little inferior to the watery delusion of the celebrated 'panorama.'" A more clear-cut example of the panorama's influence was the "View of Rome upon the same principles of perspective as Parker's Panorama," on which Jacob More was at work in Rome just before his death in 1793. It was intended for Buckingham House in London, where a special room was in preparation to receive it.

IV

Something of the importance of the relationship between scene-painting and design and landscape painting in Britain in the eighteenth century can be gauged from those artists working in the theatre whose names would also figure in any account of British landscape painting of the century. William Hodges, George Lambert, Philip James de
Loutherbourg, Alexander Nasmyth, Michael Angelo Hooker, and Paul Sandby would all be in this category. 24

In the course of the eighteenth century the architectural fantasies of Baroque scene design were replaced to an ever greater extent by landscape motifs. The elaborate machinery and transformations characteristic of the Stuart theatre were replaced by no less elaborate but more naturalistic effects. 25 Landscape painting was thus brought before the general public. The landscape settings were not only ideal compositions but representations of actual places. As the century progressed the demand for topographical scenery, accurately presented, increased. 26 From a background to the action of a play or pantomime, landscape advanced sometime about mid-century to a position where the painting was appreciated on its own as an act drop. 27

Increasing appreciation of the illusionistic advances of scene design and a growing public taste in landscape led to a display of scenic effects independent of the theatre. The man responsible for this exhibition was the Alsatian artist, Philip James de Loutherbourg, who had also been responsible for many of the advances in the field of scenic effects in the theatre. De Loutherbourg had worked as scene designer at Drury Lane from 1773 to 1781, refining the techniques of illusionism in theatre, promoting a more romantic and picturesque standard of scenery, and elevating the status of the stage designer. 28

In his exhibition called the "Eidophusikon, or Various Imitations of Natural Phenomena, represented by Moving
Pictures," de Loutherbourg reproduced his achievements in the theatre on a miniature scale. If the Eidophusikon was not the very first pictorial entertainment to appear in London, it was the first to gain real popularity and acclaim. It provided a well-known precedent for the panorama, in bringing illusionistic landscape art before the public as a form of entertainment. While it was the panorama which provided the impetus for the burgeoning popularity of such entertainments in the nineteenth century, the Eidophusikon supplied the basis for many of the exhibitions which grew up around the panorama.

De Loutherbourg opened his Eidophusikon in a room in Lisle Street, Leicester Square, on February 26, 1781. The programme included five scenes interspersed with four transparencies (presumably to mask scene changes), and musical interludes provided by Michael Arne on the harpsichord. The five scenes were Dawn from Greenwich Park, Noon in Tangier, Sunset near Naples, Moonrise in the Mediterranean, and, to conclude the entertainment, a Storm at Sea with a Shipwreck. A scene depicting the bringing of French and Dutch prizes into Plymouth was later substituted for the Mediterranean moonlight scene. The exhibition closed in May but reopened on December 10 with music by Charles Burney. On the thirty-first of the following month all five scenes were replaced by new ones: Sunrise in Fog over an Italian Seaport, Niagara, Sunset over Dover, Moonrise with a Water Spout on the Coast of Japan, and a grand Miltonic finale of Satan and the Raising of Pandemonium. The earlier Storm
and Shipwreck was later incorporated into the programme, which continued to be shown until May 31, 1782.

In 1786 the Eidophusikon was revived in an apartment which had formerly housed the Patagonian Theatre, a musical puppet show by Charles Dibdin. A Mr. Bateman renovated the room to receive the Eidophusikon, which opened on January 30 with a programme including the Sunrise from Greenwich Park, the Mediterranean Moonrise, the Sea Storm and Shipwreck, and the Pandemonium. It closed on May 12 and was sold to a Mr. Chapman who toured the provinces with it.

A watercolour by Edward Francis Burney in the British Museum shows the Eidophusikon, presumably during its second season in Lisle Street (Pl. 1). Together with the account by W. H. Pyne, who visited the exhibition during its run over the Exeter Change, Burney's watercolour allows us to visualize this popular entertainment. The stage was approximately six feet wide, three feet high, and eight feet deep. The harpsichord which provided the music was placed in a pit between the stage and the audience.

Pyne was able to provide much information on the back-stage workings of the Eidophusikon: "Having been gratified, through peculiar favour, by a constant admittance behind the curtain, I can minutely describe every operation which set this rare exhibition in motion." The landscape masses of the scenes were pasteboard flats; the foregrounds were modelled from cork and mosses and lichens.

In those scenes in which the sea was represented, waves were carved in soft wood, highly varnished to reflect
the light. Motion was imparted by the revolution of these pieces of wood. Ships were represented by models which could move across the stage. Not only were the models of different sizes proportionate to their supposed distance from the audience, but they were differently coloured to preserve the aerial perspective. Lighting was by argand lamps (a recently invented form of oil lamp, brighter than candlelight and smokeless). Slips of coloured glass were placed before the lamps either singly or in combination to produce a variety of lighting effects.

According to Pyne:

The clouds in every scene had a natural motion, and they were painted in semi-transparent colours, so that they not only received light in front, but, by a greater intensity of Argand lamps, were susceptible of being illuminated from behind. The linen on which they were painted was stretched on frames of twenty times the surface of the stage, which rose diagonally by a winding machine.

The most elaborate manipulation of this device occurred in the moonlight scenes, in which the clouds now obscured and now disclosed the moon:

Where he had loaded the colour to opaqueness, the transparent light of the orb could not penetrate. The clouds in front received sufficient illumination from the lamps, which were subdued by a bluish grey glass, one of the slips before described. The moon was formed by a circular aperture of an inch in diameter, cut in a tin box, that contained a powerful Argand lamp, which being placed at various distances from the back of the scene, gave a brilliant or a subdued splendour to the passing cloud.

Pyne devoted considerable attention to de Loutherbourg's use of sound effects. He noted that "Loutherbourg's genius was as prolific in imitations of nature to astonish the ear, as to charm the sight. He introduced a new art--
the picturesque of sound." To reproduce the sound of
the firing of a signal gun, de Loutherbourg had a large
tambourine constructed to which was attached a sponge on
a whalebone spring. Thunder was represented by a sheet
of thin copper, suspended by a chain. An octagonal box
filled with small shells, peas, and light balls produced,
when rotated, the sound of waves. Two silk covered frames
rubbed together gave the illusion of the whistling of the
wind. Rain and hail were imitated by long tubes down which
small seed (for rain) and beads (for hail) fell.

According to Pyne the most impressive scene was the
finale representing Satan and Pandemonium—the scene which
was recorded by Edward Burney in his watercolour. De
Loutherbourg here surpassed even his greatest efforts in
the theatre, for, as Pyne noted, "he had not conceived the
power of light that might be thrown upon a scenic display,
until he made the experiment on his own circumscribed
stage." In terms of its relation to subsequent exhi-
bitions, however, this supernatural subject was of less
importance than the imitations of natural scenes which de
Loutherbourg presented. After the introduction of the pan-
orama, such excursions into the supernatural were extremely
infrequent in London's pictorial entertainments. The hor-
rific continued to exert its spell, but mostly in the form
of battle scenes or natural phenomena like volcanic eruptions
or earthquakes or storms at sea.

The Eidophusikon gained considerable acclaim, not
least among the artistic community. Pyne recalled that Sir
Joshua Reynolds attended frequently and that "Gainsborough was so wrapt in delight with the Eidophusikon, that for a time he thought of nothing else--he talked of nothing else--and passed his evenings at the exhibition in long succession." While the Eidophusikon enjoyed the patronage of the wealthier classes, it neither sought nor gained a mass audience. Its admission prices of five shillings at Lisle Street, and three and two shillings at Exeter Change make it clear that it was intended for a select audience (the standard entrance price for almost all such exhibitions in the coming century was only one shilling). The Eidophusikon demonstrated the potential of art as a form of entertainment. It remained for the panorama to make this type of art a truly popular entertainment.
CHAPTER II

THE INVENTION OF THE PANORAMA AND
ITS INTRODUCTION IN LONDON

I

The inventor of the panorama was a latecomer to the art world, having turned to it only after finding it impossible to survive in business. As the panorama owed its success to a peculiar combination of artistic and commercial elements, Robert Barker was, in a sense, well-suited to his role as the inventor and earliest promoter of this form of art-cum-entertainment.

Barker was an Irishman, born at Kells, County of Meath, in 1739. He married a daughter of a prominent physician of Dublin, and launched himself in business in that city. No more is recorded of his commercial venture than that it was unsuccessful. Barker was financially ruined, and may even have spent some time in debtor's prison. Apparently thinking that a change of profession and change of locale would improve his luck, he took up portraiture and emigrated to Scotland with his family—he now had a daughter and a son. The family was in Glasgow in 1774 when the younger son, Henry Aston, was born. It seems that shortly after this date he moved to Edinburgh, where he established himself as portrait painter and teacher; however, the Edinburgh directories do
not record his presence until 1786, at which time he resided in the Netherbow.  

Barker was a self-taught artist; there is no indication that he had much more talent for art than he did for business. Henry later implied that his father's abilities (at least in regard to the panorama) were decidedly limited. Nevertheless Robert Barker had an ingenious and inventive personality, which he applied to his new field of endeavour. He is said to have invented his own mechanical system of perspective which he taught in Edinburgh.

About the year 1786, as the result of a desire to render the view from the Calton Hill in its entirety, Barker hit upon the idea of a three hundred and sixty degree painting. The conception was undoubtedly an outgrowth of his study of perspective, and Barker again devised a simple mechanical device to enable him to carry out his plan. A movable frame was to be set up, which would allow the artist to concentrate on one section of the view at a time before moving on to the adjacent section. Thus a series of sketches of a conventional format could be obtained, which, when joined together, would comprise the entire horizon. Oddly enough, Barker delegated the actual taking of the view to his son Henry, then only twelve years old. Henry later recalled:

I was set to work to take outlines of the city only, from the top of the Observatory on the Calton Hill. I have no idea now what sort of drawing was made by me,—no doubt it was wretchedly bad,—but it answered my father's purpose; and from the outlines he made a drawing upon paper, pasted on linen, which gave a rather rude representation of "Auld Reekie."
In the hopes of attracting patronage and some public support for his new idea, Barker took the semicircular sketch to London. There he showed it to Sir Joshua Reynolds. According to H. A. Barker: "Whether the drawings were so bad, or Sir Joshua did not comprehend my father's idea, he, with great politeness, said the thing would never do, and therefore recommended him to give it up!" Barker was disappointed, but not to be dissuaded. Confident of the success of his idea, he took out a patent on June 19, 1787, which gave him exclusive rights to the invention for a period of fourteen years. He called his invention "la nature à coup d'oeil."

The specification of the patent was concerned with the display of circular views, rather than the problems of taking them. Nothing was said of the painting itself except that "the painter or drawer must fix his station, and delineate correctly and connectedly every object which presents itself to his view as he turns round, concluding his drawings by a connection with where he began," and that "he must observe the lights and shadows, how they fall, and perfect his piece to the best of his abilities." There was no mention of his movable framing device and nothing of the problems of presenting the perspective of a three hundred and sixty degree view—a particularly curious omission in view of Barker's acquaintance with the subject. There was, furthermore, no acknowledgment of the difficulties of presenting straight lines on a curved canvas. Perhaps Barker felt that there was nothing in the means of taking and executing circular views which he could claim as unique; consequently, there was no cause to elaborate on those points.
When he came to the exhibition of the paintings, Barker became much more specific—right down to the method of ventilation:

There must be a circular building or framing erected, on which this drawing or painting may be performed; or the same may be done on canvas, or other materials, and fixed or suspended on the same building or framing, to answer the purpose complete. It must be lighted entirely from the top, either by a glazed dome or otherwise, as the artist may think proper. There must be an inclosure within the said circular building or framing, which shall prevent an observer going too near the drawing or painting, so as it may, from all parts it can be viewed, have its proper effect. This inclosure may represent a room, or platform, or any other situation, and may be any form thought most convenient, but the circular form is particularly recommended. Of whatever extent this inside inclosure may be, there must be over it, (supported from the bottom, or suspended from the top,) a shade or roof; which, in all directions, should project so far beyond this inclosure, as to prevent an observer seeing above the drawing or painting, when looking up, and there must be without this inclosure another interception, to represent a wall, paling, or other interception, as the natural objects represented, or fancy, may direct, so as effectually to prevent the observer from seeing below the bottom of the drawing or painting, by means of which nothing can be seen on the outer circle, but the drawing or painting, intended to represent nature. The entrance to the inner inclosure must be from below, a proper building or framing being erected for that purpose, so that no door or other interruption may disturb the circle on which the view is to be represented. And there should be, below the painting or drawing, proper ventilators fixed, so as to render a current circulation of air through the whole; and the inner inclosure may be elevated, at the will of an artist, so as to make observers, on whatever situation he may wish they should imagine themselves, feel as if really on the very spot.13

Here in this patent, before any such exhibit had actually been set up, Barker outlined the panorama exhibition in its ultimate form. The "inclosure" or viewing platform would undergo further elaboration, as would the "interception" between the viewing platform and the painting itself. In any event Barker had left this matter to the
artist's discretion. Methods of lighting would be perfected. Buildings would be constructed containing several circular views in apartments stacked one above the other. Technology would provide new means of mounting to the viewing platforms. Nevertheless the arrangement, as Barker set it out in the patent, would remain unaltered. 14

With financial assistance from Lord Elcho, son of the Earl of Wemyss, Barker was able to transform his small semi-circular demonstration piece into a full-size, completely circular exhibition. Henry was once more responsible for the sketches.

I was sent again to the Observatory, and began to take outlines of the entire view; of course it was a long time before the painting would be commenced for I worked slowly. The circle on which my father painted the first view of Edinburgh was twenty-five feet in diameter; canvas with paper pasted on it, formed the surface, and the picture was painted in watercolours, in the Guard Room of the Palace of Holyrood. 15

In the process of translating his son's sketches into a painting, Barker was faced with the problem of adjusting them so as to offset any visual distortion that might arise from the curved surface. Horizontal lines, unless exactly at eye-level, would appear curved rather than straight. 16 Perhaps he had already overcome this difficulty in his earlier model; however, the smaller scale could have allowed him to conceal any defects which, in the full-scale exhibition, would be all too obvious and destructive of the illusion. Barker most probably employed a method similar to that given by Andrea Pozzo for transferring sketches to vaults without distortion. 17 As a teacher of perspective, Barker may well have been familiar with Pozzo's Rules and
Examples of Perspective Proper for Painters and Architects, Etc. Having set up the canvas in its circular frame, Barker could then divide the circle into sections, stretching across each section a network of string which corresponded to a grid drawn on the preliminary sketches. Placing a light in the centre of the circle at the eye-level of the spectator, Barker could then trace the grid on the canvas (or in this case on the paper) by means of the shadow cast by the light. Alternatively, Barker could run string from the centre through the string network to the canvas, and so plot the grid on the canvas point by point. There was a similar method for insuring that the straight lines of streets and buildings would appear straight on the curved surface; this is mentioned in a later account of panorama painting. The end points of the line would be marked on the canvas and a string would be stretched between them. Then by using either the light or the string extended from the centre, as above, one could mark the line on the canvas. Unfortunately as the composition could be correctly transferred to the canvas only when the canvas was erected in its circle, a large building was required for the painting of the picture. Barker's first effort, being only twenty-five feet in diameter, could be accommodated in a large room. In the coming years, as panoramas grew in size, accommodation would not be as simple. It was not economically feasible for exhibition rooms to remain closed during the lengthy process of preparing a new panorama and finding a separate workroom of sufficient size could be difficult.
The composition of the view of Edinburgh is known to us through the series of six engravings dated from the autumn of 1789 to the spring of 1790 (Pl. 2-7). The prints are marked "Robt. Barker Delt." and "John Wells Aquatinta." A watercolour drawing (in the Edinburgh University Library) shows the exact same composition even to details such as figures. Presumably it was the original from which the prints were made, although it is signed "R. Barker Delt. 1792." While both print and drawing are signed by the father, there is the testimony of the son that he (Henry Aston) was at least responsible for the initial studies. The execution is rather crude; if it is largely the father's work, it does not speak much for his ability. If, on the other hand, the drawing reflects a substantial participation by Henry, it may be accepted as a youthful work and as an indication of just how far he had progressed in his art by the time he made his drawings of Paris (Pl. 33-40) in 1802.

Having obtained a grant from the Royal Company of Archers to allow him to exhibit in Archers' Hall, Barker opened the painting to the public on January 31, 1788. Although he had now produced a large-scale painting of a full three hundred and sixty degree view, this first work could scarcely have represented the sort of exhibition envisioned in the patent. Most importantly it lacked the requisite size. The circle was so small that it could only be viewed by parties of six at a time. The distance between the viewers and the painting—an element crucial to the illusion—could not have much exceeded ten feet. As he
was exhibiting within an ordinary hall, Barker had to resort to lamps, rather than the glazed dome to light the painting from above, which he had suggested in the patent. This necessity, however, also brought with it one advantage: the exhibition could remain open after dusk.\(^{23}\)

Whatever its shortcomings, the exhibition did have the attraction of novelty, and it was novelty that Barker concentrated on in his advertisements: "Every description which can be given, is inadequate to impress a just idea of the performance, which, from the entire novelty of the thought, is not to be perfectly understood until seen."\(^{24}\) Barker saw himself not just as the inventor of an ingenious amusement, but as a radical artistic innovator, who had swept aside the conventions of landscape painting. He desired the public to see him as the emancipator of landscape art and his picture as an "IMPROVEMENT ON PAINTING, Which relieves that sublime Art from a Restraint it has ever laboured under."\(^{25}\) It was necessary to this exalted view of his invention that Barker should be well received by his fellow artists. Reynolds's reservations did not prevent Barker's proclaiming that he had with his previous sketch of Edinburgh gained the approbation of Sir Joshua as well as Benjamin West "and several of the most eminent artists."\(^{26}\)

In March, 1788, Barker moved his painting from the Archers' Hall to a lower apartment of the Assembly Rooms in George Street. The Assembly Rooms were a more convenient
location for the New Town gentry he was undoubtedly hoping to attract. At the same time he lowered the price of admission from the original three shillings to two.\(^27\) The move, coupled with the reduction in price, would suggest that Barker felt the need to bolster flagging attendance. At the very opening of the exhibition, Barker had announced his intention of taking it to London in the spring. Instead it remained open in Edinburgh until June 2, when it was removed to Glasgow. The extended run in Edinburgh was, Barker claimed, a result of the exhibition's popularity.\(^28\)

II

It was not until November, 1788, that Barker did go down to London, taking his son, Henry Aston, with him.\(^29\) Mrs. Barker remained behind in Edinburgh, where even as late as October of the following year she was advertising board and education for young ladies at their residence in Writers' Court.\(^30\) Either Barker had not yet considered exhibiting permanently in London, or the family was simply waiting to gauge the invention's reception in the English capital.

On March 14, 1789, the view of Edinburgh opened in a large room at No. 28, Haymarket.\(^31\) In his advertisements Barker again emphasized the novelty of his exhibition: "The idea of this view is perfectly original (for which a patent is taken out,) and the effect singular, instructive, and pleasing."\(^32\) It was further necessary in London, with its variety of entertainments, that the public should not confuse the exhibition with other less novel and less artistic
attractions. Barker complained that his exhibition was generally understood to be a model or transparent painting. He stated:

There is no deception of glasses, or any other whatever; the view being only a fair sketch, displaying at once a circle of a very extraordinary extent, the same as if on the spot; forming perhaps, one of the most picturesque views in Europe. The idea is entirely new, and the effect produced by fair perspective, a proper point of view and unlimiting the bounds of the Art of Painting.

Appealing now to a more sophisticated audience, Barker made more of his claims to artistic merit:

Mr. Barker begs to mention, that as his improvement is genuine and pointed, it may not be understood as an Exhibition merely for emolument, but being the result of a minute investigation of the principles of his art, it is intended chiefly for the criticism of artists, and admirers of painting in general.

He also felt the need to forestall the more severe critics by stating that the sketch was slight and "drawn with the idea of general effect" and by mentioning "the confined scale this piece is on." He also felt the need to forestall the more severe critics by stating that the sketch was slight and "drawn with the idea of general effect" and by mentioning "the confined scale this piece is on."

The exhibition roused the interest of a few; Quin stated that those who saw it were greatly impressed. However it was the potentiality rather than the actuality of this first view that attracted attention. A correspondent for The Diary, or Woodfall's Register echoed Barker's own claims that his painting was an epoch-making innovation.

A subsequent article in the same newspaper pointed out how useful such exhibitions should prove to the Royal Family, who rarely went abroad and would otherwise remain ignorant of the appearance of foreign lands. The potential of such an exhibition and its importance for the development of art
were not real drawing points for the general public. The exhibition was too small and not sufficiently striking to attract large crowds. 40

Realizing that to be successful the painting had to be larger, Barker set to work on a second view. This one covered, as Barker was to emphasize in his advertisements, a full 1,479 square feet. 41 Because of a lack of exhibition space, Barker, in order to gain the enlarged scale, had to restrict himself to a semicircular view. This second painting was a view of London, from sketches made again by Henry Aston, from the roof of the Albion Mills. Like the view of Edinburgh, it was painted in watercolour. 42 It was opened in June, 1791, in a rough building erected for its exhibition behind No. 28, Castle Street (now Charing Cross Road), where Barker had taken up residence. 43 Not only did this new view have the benefit of greater size, it also had a new name. "La nature à coup d'oeil" had neither caught the imagination nor characterized very well the nature of the exhibition. Friends of the proprietor provided him with a new title which was sufficiently striking to gain a permanent place in the English language, even when the exhibition it originally designated had been generally forgotten. "Panorama," derived from the Greek words meaning "all" and "view," had its first use in 1791 in the advertisements for the picture shown in Castle Street. 44 The exhibition was by daylight. In September, 1792, lamplight was introduced to extend the hours of opening into the evening, 45 but the effect was unsatisfactory, and the lamplight showings were discontinued in February of the following year. 46
In October, 1792, a series of six engravings of the view of London were published (Pl. 8-13). The sheets, each twenty-two inches by seventeen, are marked "Robt Barker Delint, Fredck Birnie Aquatinta"; however, Corner claimed that the drawings were etched by H. A. Barker. The level of ability shown by the London engravings is decidedly superior to that of the watercolour drawing of Edinburgh, which is dated the same year, but must represent work done at least three years earlier. Either the one is the work of the father and the other the work of the son, or the differences in quality are the result of a developing skill. If one accepts the second hypothesis, then it seems more likely that the artist was Henry, coming to maturity in these years, rather than his father, whose style would probably have been more settled; however, the Edinburgh and London panoramas seem more closely related to each other stylistically than to the engravings of the 1800 panorama of Constantinople (Pl. 18-25) or the 1802 drawings of Paris, which we know to have been the work of Henry Aston. This suggests that the earlier two works do show the hand of the father. The prints represent the full three hundred and sixty degree view from the Albion Mills. The original exhibition, said to be of "the cities of London and Westminster; comprehending the three bridges," would presumably have encompassed the middle three sheets (Pl. 10-12), with part of each of the adjacent sheets (Pl. 9, 13), so that all three bridges are included.

Although it represented only a part of the full three hundred and sixty degree view, the painting of London achieved
for Barker his first real success, remaining open in Castle Street for a period of almost three years, until early 1794, even after Barker had opened a much more elaborate place of exhibition in Leicester Square. Henry Aston Barker recalled:

This view was very successful. Even Sir Joshua Reynolds came to see it, and gratified my father much, when, taking him by the hand, he said, "I find I was in error in supposing your invention could never succeed, for the present exhibition proves it is capable of producing effects, and representing nature in a manner far superior to the limited scale of pictures in general."49

It was the success of the view of London that enabled Barker to establish a permanent exhibition rotunda and to execute finally a painting which completely fulfilled the specifications of his patent and did justice to his original conception. Barker leased a site on the north side of Leicester Square, set back from the square, but with access to Cranbourne Street. The site was on what had previously been the grounds of Leicester House. The house itself had been demolished about a year earlier. Following the failure of Richard O'Reilly's plan for an opera house to designs by Soane, the land had been acquired by Thomas Wright, a banker, from whom Barker obtained his lease.50

The square in which Barker was to open his establishment was essentially residential, the home of a number of wealthy county families and of numerous artists and craftsmen, many of them foreign. Hogarth and Reynolds had both been residents of the square.51 The artistic character of the square's inhabitants undoubtedly attracted Barker to the neighbourhood. Sir Ashton Lever had exhibited his museum in Leicester House.
from 1775 until his death in 1788; however, it was with the opening of the Panorama that the square began its gradual transformation into an amusement centre—a transformation that Barker's commercial side would have welcomed and his artistic side regretted. As the nineteenth century progressed, the residential aspect of the square declined. By the middle of the century, the square was almost entirely given over to popular entertainments and other commercial establishments.

Once again Lord Elcho assisted Barker, by taking a prominent part in a joint stock company formed to finance the construction of a building. Robert Mitchell, a Scottish architect living in London, was employed to design the structure. The drum-like exterior of the building was unimpressive. The rotunda was connected by a long corridor to a small street-front entrance, which can be seen in a watercolour in the British Museum (Pl. 14). The main exhibition area was ninety feet in diameter and fifty-seven feet in height. A central pillar supported a viewing platform with a diameter of thirty feet, so that the spectator was at a distance of thirty feet from the actual canvas (see Pl. 15). This exhibition area could accommodate a painting of about ten thousand square feet. The plan also included a second, smaller, exhibition space, although a painting was not opened in it until 1795. This compartment, supported by the central pillar, was placed above and within the larger compartment. The upper circle, as it was called, reproduced on a smaller scale the layout of the compartment below. The picture space
was fifty feet in diameter and covered about 2,700 square feet. In order not to obscure the painting of the large circle, Mitchell placed the stairwell to the upper circle on the outside of the drum. The viewer was obliged to climb above the lower painting, then descend below the upper painting so as not to obscure it, and then mount again to the upper viewing platform. Oddly, Mitchell, in the placing of the entrances onto the platforms, did not completely avoid obstructing the spectators’ view. A spiral staircase coming up in the middle of the platform surely would have been preferable.

Mitchell’s arrangement for lighting the two paintings was ingenious. The roof was like a cone cut in two, with the upper section then inverted into the lower. A skylight ring running around the lower section provided the light for the lower painting; a similar ring around the inverted cone provided light for the upper picture. Ingenious as the system may have been, it was not perfect. A newspaper advertisement in 1799 noted that “the Lights in the PANORAMA have been much improved, and now [provide] good light on a very dark day, and will preserve the same a full hour longer than usual every day.”

The painting was hung from a huge ring suspended from the crossbeams of the roof. The bottom of the canvas was attached to a similar ring, which was heavily weighted to keep the canvas taut. Unfortunately the stretched canvas would bulge inward towards the middle, casting a shadow over the lower part of the picture. A slight convexity could
enhance the illusion of the panorama, as it meant that the upper part of the canvas, representing the sky, would be brighter than the lower part, representing the landscape. However, if the curve of the canvas were too great, it could mean that the horizon, falling where the canvas bulged closest to the viewer, would be brighter and more distinct than the foreground. To minimize this bulge, the lower ring was made somewhat smaller than the upper ring. At a later date, the Barkers' successor, Robert Burford, also considered the possibility of illuminating the pictures from below by gaslight as well as from above by daylight, but abandoned the idea as impractical.

The first panorama in the new rotunda opened on May 25, 1793. The subject was the Grand Fleet at Spithead in 1791. Prior to its opening to the public, it had been visited by the Royal Family. H. A. Barker, who had acted as their host, recalled that they expressed considerable interest, the King in particular asking many questions and pointing out objects with his cane.

The painting which H. A. Barker showed to his royal visitors was the first to fulfill all the requirements for a successful illusion of reality. Standing on the platform, the spectator had the scene around him on all sides. The platform prevented him from approaching close enough to the painting to be aware of paint and canvas. The quality of the painting itself was improved; it was now done in oils on canvas. All terms of comparison by which the eye could judge the difference between painting and reality were excluded. The ceiling above the platform (the floor of the upper
compartment) concealed the upper edge of the painting; the lower edge of the painting was concealed, not by a wall or paling, as suggested in the patent, but by a cloth suspended from the edge of the platform to the bottom of the painting. The viewer’s eyes having become accustomed to the dimness of light in the purposely obscure corridor by which he entered, he would emerge into the light of the viewing area to find that, by contrast, it appeared as bright as the daylight outside. The ceiling above the platform both kept viewers from directly seeing actual daylight through the skylights above and prevented their figures from casting shadows across the painting; however, there must have been some difficulty with shadows cast by the upper compartment onto the lower painting. Covering the skylights with fine oil-impregnated cloth could soften but not eliminate such shadows.

The Fleet at Spithead remained open until April 19, 1794. It was succeeded by a view of Bath, which opened on July 7, 1794. On March 28, 1795, the upper circle opened for the first time, with a view of London. This was not, Barker was careful to inform the public, the same painting that had been exhibited in Castle Street. The view from the top of the Albion Mills remained the same, but was extended to encompass the complete horizon, reproducing in full the composition of the engravings of 1792. Whereas the earlier version had been in watercolours, the present painting, like all the others exhibited in the Leicester Square Rotunda, was in oils.
The nature of the view of London, with the mass of the roof and chimneys of the Albion Mills occupying one-quarter of the entire picture surface, is interesting and seemingly unique among panorama paintings. A single chimney rises in the foreground of the view of Edinburgh, but here in the panorama of London, the roof and chimneys are the major feature of half of the view. The prominence given to the chimney pots was undoubtedly calculated to increase the viewer's feeling that he was "really on the very spot." That such devices were not employed again was probably due, in part, to the difficulty of painting such nearby objects deceptively enough so as not to spoil the illusion. This explains on one level the unusual appearance of the view of London; nevertheless, one cannot help feeling, in looking at the engraved view, that it represents an attempt at realism in a broader sense. Having created a new form of painting "which relieves that sublime Art from a restraint it has ever laboured under," Barker may well have sought to match it with an equally liberating approach to subject matter. Of course a three hundred and sixty degree view is by its very nature unclassical; it is to the topographical tradition rather than to the tradition of Claude and Poussin that one looks for predecessors. Yet the broad expanses of roof and the prominent forms of chimney and skylight seem a radical departure even from the conventions of topographical painting. Indeed it was too radical a departure; although subsequent panoramas reproduced their subjects with scrupulous accuracy (so at least it was claimed), they were taken from viewpoints
carefully chosen to provide more conventionally picturesque compositions.

Barker continued to produce about two new views (one in the upper circle and one in the large circle) each year; however, the hope that he would provide views of foreign lands for the enlightenment of the untravelled Royal Family remained unfulfilled. In the first years of exhibiting, Barker confined his subjects to recent British naval achievements and to English scenes. By the time his exclusive right of exhibiting expired in 1801, the following had appeared in the large circle: Howe's Victory (the famous battle of the First of June, 1794), Lord Bridport's Victory (over the French fleet off Lorient in 1795), Plymouth, Windsor, and Lord Nelson's Victory (at the Battle of the Nile in 1798). In the upper circle the view of London had been succeeded by a representation of Admiral Cornwallis's skilful retreat in the face of a superior French fleet off Brest in 1795, and then views of Brighton, Margate, and Ramsgate. 76

Robert Barker had intended to erect panorama rotundas in other cities in Britain and on the Continent; however, after several years of operating the establishment in Leicester Square and keeping it supplied with new views, Barker gave up his plans for expansion. 77 In January, 1798, he advertised an "ADVANTAGEOUS PROPOSAL" in which he stated that he was "desirous to treat for the disposal of his paintings which have been exhibited, and which are now exhibiting in the Panorama, separate or together," and that "any person chusing to speculate will find a plan laid down which will prove without doubt desirably advantageous." 78 Someone did
choose to speculate and, indeed, must have speculated successfully, for the Leicester Square paintings were exhibited in other cities at home and abroad until they were literally worn out. S. Hausmann, in his article, "Die Erfindung der Panoramen," stated that there was a standard panorama route which brought them to Scotland and Ireland, then to France and finally, in a greatly deteriorated state, to Germany (see Appendix B). In most cases temporary wooden structures were thrown up to accommodate the panoramas. Although works from both the large and small circles did travel after their run in Leicester Square, proprietors must have preferred the views from the upper circle, which, though less spectacular, were easier to house and exhibit.

While Robert Barker has generally been accepted as the inventor of the panorama, occasional claims have been made for other artists. In most cases the claims are the result of ignorance of the existence of Robert Barker; these can be simply dismissed. The claim of a correspondent to Notes and Queries in 1860 that the first panorama was by Thomas Girtin was simply the result of a faulty memory. The attributions of the invention to Robert Fulton, the American who introduced it to France, and to Pierre Prévost, a leading Parisian practitioner, were the result of French chauvinism.

An artist whose claim to be considered as the originator of this mode of painting must be more seriously considered is the German decorative painter and art theorist, Johann Adam Breysig. In his Skizzen, published in 1799,
Breysig claimed that over ten years earlier he had developed the idea of such an exhibition. He described his idea in terms which are remarkably like those of Barker's patent, even down to noting the concealed openings for the ventilation of the exhibition building. If the claim of the artist himself, made six years after the opening of the Panorama in London, seems unconvincing proof, it is further called into question as Breysig, born in 1776, could only have been in his early teens at the time he claimed to have developed the scheme. In any case Breysig made no progress towards the execution of his plan until 1792, when he made a series of drawings in Rome for a panorama scene. He was not involved in an actual panorama exhibition until 1800.

There remains an enigmatic statement by Robert Barker himself that his view of Edinburgh, "if not the first, must rank among the most superior Views, on this extensive plan, any where to be found." Perhaps Barker was only referring to exhibitions like the Eidophusikon; perhaps he was aware, if only vaguely, of an earlier scheme along the same lines as his own. If so, that earlier scheme has left no trace.
CHAPTER III

PANORAMAS BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE DIORAMA

I

Within just a few years of the opening of the Panorama in Leicester Square, its receipts were large enough to allow Robert Barker to buy back all the shares in the joint stock company that had been formed to finance its establishment. Barker also established a permanent residence in West Square in 1799 and built a large, circular, wooden structure behind the square in which he could prepare forthcoming panoramas (Pl. 16). His son Henry was sent to the Royal Academy schools, where he was a fellow pupil and supposedly a close friend of the young J. M. W. Turner and Robert Ker Porter.

Robert Barker seemed to be doing well. His enterprise was not, however, an unqualified success. He was able to acquire complete ownership of his establishment and to elevate somewhat the life-style of his family, but the resources from his exhibition did not extend beyond that. Ramsay Richard Reinagle, who worked as an assistant in painting the panoramas, told Joseph Farington in 1799 that "Barker the proprietor of the Panorama has not yet saved money, he has lived in a very hospitable manner, and is on acct. of his exhibition and preparing two new pictures every year at
considerable expence viz: six or seven guineas a day. Barker's abandonment of plans to open panoramas in other cities may have resulted from the Leicester Square establishment not proving as profitable as he had hoped, as well as being more time-consuming.

Nevertheless the Panorama must have been fairly popular. Newspaper reviews, while short on critical analysis, were generous in their praises. Each new panorama was greeted as the "chef d'oeuvre of this work" and was said to exceed all Barker's previous efforts. The panorama of Lord Howe's naval victory roused one critic to a long attack on connoisseurs who judged painting by the criterion of manner rather than nature. As it was undeniable "that the end of painting, both at first and now, is to hold the mirror to nature," the panorama must therefore signify the Triumph of Art. Turning to the actual painting, the critic noted errors in the drawing of the figures and the representation of the line of battle, but concluded that "where there is so much excellence, to point out any little errors ... would be invidious." Certainly other artists and entrepreneurs thought that Barker had hit upon a good idea. In the years immediately following the expiration of Barker's exclusive licence, a host of rival panoramas appeared in London. They were, as John Constable put it, "all the rage."

The Barkers realized that, with their monopoly ended, they had to take further steps to insure that their patrons were not enticed away by newer exhibitions. Consequently they opened in April, 1801, their first view of a city
outside Britain. The subject was Constantinople, taken on the spot from the Tower of Galatea by Henry Aston Barker (Pl. 17). The view was published as a set of eight engravings in 1813 (Pl. 18-25). Not only was the choice of subject particularly exotic, but it also enabled the Barkers to claim that their picture was unique. H. A. Barker had, through the influence of Lord Elgin, obtained special permission to make drawings of the city—permission which the Barkers claimed had never been given before and might never be obtained again. A janissary was ordered to attend H. A. Barker while he was making his drawings.

H. A. took not one but two different views of the city and its environs. On November 23, 1801, the second view opened in the upper circle. While the first view, which was still exhibiting below, had concentrated on the city, the second view was taken from the Tower of Leander at the entrance of the Bosphorus (Pl. 26). A procession of barges of the Grand Signior was represented, "as he sailed from Constantinople to enjoy one of his palaces on the Bosphorus." Seeing the city from first one vantage point, then another, the visitor to Leicester Square undoubtedly left feeling that he had gained a fair knowledge of Byzantium. To add to this feeling, the Barkers instituted with these views of Constantinople the selling of descriptive booklets. For the earlier panoramas a crude outline print of the painting had been given gratis to each visitor. Objects of interest were numbered and identified in a key. The booklets, which sold for sixpence, contained not only
fuller descriptions of the numbered objects, but a general
historical background, facts on native manners and costumes,
and a wealth of interesting anecdotes. The introduction of
these booklets, which became a permanent feature, together
with the idea of showing complementary views, was indicative
of a growing concern for completeness and for educational
value. This concern was further demonstrated by the state­
ment of intent by Robert Barker in April, 1801, that he was
"determined to spare no expence or trouble to bring forward
scenes of useful information, as well as gratifying amuse­
ment; and the public may expect to have the most interesting
Views and the most noticed Cities in Europe, in due time,
laid before them." It is interesting and rather admirable
that the Barkers' response to competition should have taken
this form. Throughout the seventy years of its existence,
the Leicester Square Panorama never resorted to the flashy
novelties and gimmicks or the extra-pictorial diversions
by which so many similar exhibitions sought to attract the
public.

II

Rival panoramas had begun to appear in London, even
before Barker's licence had fully expired. As early as 1796,
an oil painting on 2,464 square feet of canvas by the marine
painter, R. Dodd, opened at the Great Room, Spring Gardens,
depicting the fleet at Spithead, with the burning of the
ship Boyne. The painting was at first advertised as
"CAMPUS NAUTICA, A GRAND NAVAL EXHIBITION," later tenta­
atively advancing its claim to be a panorama. On May 17,
about three months after its opening, the advertisement for the exhibition contained the following note:

It having been represented to the Artist, by several admirers of this performance, that his former advertisements have not been sufficiently descriptive, he is therefore advised to make known, that the peculiar manner in which it is exhibited, as well as the richness of the subject, is superior to whatever has hitherto been shewn under the title of PANORAMA (or great sight), as Spectators may suppose themselves looking through a window at real objects. The "peculiar manner" in which Dodd's painting was exhibited was never made clear, but when it was exhibited in Edinburgh at the end of 1796, it was called a "grand and improved panorama." Apparently exclusive rights were not as scrupulously observed outside London.

Robert Ker Porter's Storming of Seringapatam, the first of a series of historical pictures in a semicircular format (Pl. 27), also appeared before Barker's licence had expired. Seringapatam opened in the exhibition room of the Lyceum in the Strand on April 17, 1800. Although later pictures in the series, exhibited after 1801, were advertised as "Panoramic Representations," the Storming of Seringapatam was described simply but rather vaguely as a "Grand Historical Exhibition."

The paintings exhibited at the Lyceum represent an early episode in Robert Ker Porter's varied career as artist, writer, traveller, and diplomat. He spent his boyhood in Edinburgh in poverty. Having shown some artistic talent, Porter was in 1790 taken by his mother to Benjamin West, who, persuaded of the boy's potential, secured him a place as a student in the Royal Academy. From 1792
he was an exhibitor in the Royal Academy exhibitions, and beginning in 1793, he executed a number of religious paintings for various churches and chapels. In 1799 he joined other young artists, including Thomas Girtin and John Sell Cotman, to form a sketching society which occasionally met at Porter's residence, 16 Great Newport Street, Leicester Square. Even if as a boy Porter had not been able to afford the two shillings admission to see Barker's original exhibition in Edinburgh, he must have been constantly aware of the panorama during his years in London, first as a classmate of Henry Aston Barker and then living in the same neighbourhood as the Leicester Square establishment.

While Robert Barker had tapped the public's patriotic feelings with his panoramas of British naval victories, he had not yet attempted either a land engagement or a subject as far afield as India. Porter took advantage of the situation to treat the Siege of Seringapatam on the new grand scale. The two campaigns for the Mysorean capital of Seringapatam in 1792 and 1799 were popular subjects with artists; Arthur Devis, James Northcote, Philip James de Loutherbourg, Thomas Stothard, and David Wilkie all portrayed incidents from the campaigns. Porter's mammoth work represented the assault on the city by the British troops and their allies on May 4, 1799. The picture was painted on 2,550 square feet of canvas, about one hundred and twenty feet in length and about twenty-one feet in height, making it over six hundred square feet larger than Barker's semicircular view of London. Porter, noted
for his facility, was said at the time of the exhibition to have completed the entire work in nine weeks. His sister Jane claimed that it had taken him only six. A vastly reduced version of the picture, measuring twenty-three by one hundred and ten inches, is in the collection of the Earl of Stair at Lochinoch Castle (Pl. 28-30). The composition was also engraved by John Vendramini in three sections.

Seringapatam was declared to be "the leading novelty of the season." According to The Morning Chronicle:

Every body goes to see it and every visitor has the choice of his hour—men of business take their peep betimes in a morning; artists find that the effect comes out best by an evening light; and the mid-day and afternoon hours are chosen by military men and people of fashion, who form by far the most numerous class of loungers at the Lyceum Exhibition Room.

Among the artists who visited it was Farington, who noted the visit in his diary but did not record his impression. Among the military men were a number of veterans of the campaign, one of whom, a General Harris, "requested that the artist, Mr. Porter, might be informed of the high gratification his labours had afforded him."

After its close in January, 1801, Seringapatam was taken to Edinburgh where, on January 31, 1801, it opened in a temporary building on the north side of the New College. It was to be taken to Dublin by the middle of March, but in actuality remained open until April 18.

After the popular success of Porter's Battle of Agincourt, when it was exhibited in Edinburgh in 1808, Seringapatam was brought back for another season in 1811.

For the next five years, a new history painting by Porter appeared at the Lyceum each spring.
of Acre opened on April 6, 1801. Its subject was the successful defence of the city in 1799 by the British under Sir Sydney Smith, against the besieging French forces under Bonaparte. Advertised as being on a more extensive scale than Seringapatam, the painting had taken Porter four months instead of six or nine weeks to complete. In addition the spectators' space was enlarged and improved, and in June the skylight of the room was made translucent, getting rid of glare which had partially obscured the picture. In spite of these improvements, Acre does not seem to have enjoyed quite the popularity of its predecessor. Farington complained that it was not as striking as Seringapatam and criticized the representation of the action as being "highly improbable."

The subject the following year was the Battle of Alexandria (Pl. 31), representing the British victory in Egypt on March 21, 1801, in which the British commander, General Sir Ralph Abercromby, had lost his life. The death of Abercromby touched the very heart of British national feeling, and the subject was constantly before the public in a variety of forms. A large historical picture by Samuel James Arnold was on exhibition in the Great Room, Spring Gardens. Thomas Stothard also painted the scene, this painting being engraved by Francis Legat. The Royalty Theatre in Well's Street, the Royal Circus in St. George's Fields, Astley's Royal Amphitheatre and Sadler's Wells all produced theatrical spectacles based on the glorious victory and the general's tragic death.
Alexandria closed at the Lyceum in September, 1802, and was followed the next month by a view of the 1755 earthquake at Lisbon. It was painted by the Covent Garden scene-painter, Charles John Pugh, but the figures were the work of Porter. It closed in January of the following year, the next Porter battle piece being opened to the public on March 7. While his pictures of this year and the next continued to present contemporary battles, they were not instances of British military glory. That of 1803, the Battle of Lodi (Pl. 32), portrayed the French victory of 1796 by which Bonaparte had gained control of Lombardy. It was undoubtedly meant to appeal to the growing cult of Napoleon in Britain. The picture of the next year was the Defeat of the French and Passage of Mont St. Gothard by General Suwarrow (Suvorov). This work, celebrating a Russian military achievement, may well have been responsible for Porter's appointment as historical painter to the Russian czar. In the autumn of 1804 Porter left for Russia, taking the Passage of Mont St. Gothard with him.

Porter must have had another painting ready before he left Britain, for, on April 15, 1805, the last of his great battle pieces opened. In subject it was curiously different from all the others of the series; it returned to the theme of English military glory, but of the distant rather than the recent past, portraying the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. "The panorama picture of the Battle of Agincourt," painted "from the most correct information" and giving "an
accurate idea of the situation of the contending parties," stands as an example at the very beginning of the century of nineteenth century historicism. In terms of panoramas, however, the choice of subject was highly unusual. The panorama always remained closely tied to contemporary reality; ventures outside its "newsreel" or "travelogue" function were infrequent. A view might gain significance from its historical, literary, or religious associations, but it had to show its subject as it looked in the present. Historical reconstructions and imaginative recreations of literary and religious scenes were seldom accepted.

III

With the signing of the Peace of Amiens on October 1, 1801, Paris became accessible to English artists. They flocked to the French capital, and it was inevitable that, of these artists, a few would return with panoramas of the city. H. A. Barker visited the city in the summer of 1802 and was introduced to Napoleon, who was to show considerable interest in the propaganda potential of the new art form (see Chapter IX). Barker brought home drawings for two separate views of the city, which opened at Leicester Square on May 2 and August 15 of the following year. Thomas Girtin visited Paris and considered a panorama of the city, but abandoned the idea in the face of competition and declining health. A full year before Paris could be seen at the Leicester Square Rotunda, it could be viewed in a new panorama in the Haymarket. The artist was James De Maria and the view had been taken from the northwest tower of Notre Dame.
De Maria was a friend of J. M. W. Turner. It is said that he had been a fellow student of Turner (consequently of H. A. Barker and R. K. Porter as well) at the Royal Academy. He worked as a scene-painter for Drury Lane from 1793 until 1800 and for Covent Garden during the 1799-1800 season. He must have left London shortly after the painting of his panorama of Paris, becoming a scene-painter for the theatre in Birmingham. Girtin's letter from Paris indicates that, in the work on the panorama of Paris, De Maria had a collaborator in the person of John Samuel Hayward, a floorcloth manufacturer and amateur artist, who is said to have previously worked with Joshua Cristall on a panorama. Hayward was himself in Paris in 1801, where he enthusiastically recorded a visit to a panorama of Lyons on display there. Hayward's floorcloth manufactory in Newington Causeway most probably provided the working space for the painting of De Maria's panorama, as it may have served earlier for the painting of the panorama of London by Thomas Girtin, another artist with whom Hayward was acquainted.

The panorama of Paris opened in May, 1802, and soon proved popular, not least with Parisian visitors to London. It was stated that "no fashionable lounge of the season appears to be better attended than the New Panorama of Paris, in the Haymarket." The True Briton compared De Maria's Paris with the paintings of Richard Wilson, stating that "in point of effect and touch," De Maria was closer to Wilson than any other artist of the day. Another account praised
the correctness of the representation and singled out for commendation the old gentleman who attended to describe the picture. 61

After closing in London, the De Maria panorama of Paris was taken to Edinburgh, where it opened in April, 1803. 62 In August the picture was to be sold by private contract. The notice stated that "as it has only been exhibited in this city and London, [the painting] is, no doubt, worthy of speculation." 63 In 1812 the painting reappeared in Edinburgh. 64

IV

Thomas Girtin's Eidometropolis or "Great Panorama of London" is today perhaps the best known of the early panoramas. The attractive series of watercolour studies in the British Museum, together with Girtin's high reputation as an artist, has attracted an attention to this particular panorama which has been denied the other panorama productions of these years. Girtin's panorama may, in fact, have been an exceptionally artistic endeavour in the field of panorama exhibition. The surviving sketches suggest a work of high quality and striking atmospheric effect. Reviews of the exhibition spoke of it as a "connoisseur's panorama" 65 and as being unrivalled in effect. 66 However in terms of size it was by no means spectacular. The Eidometropolis's 1,944 square feet, large as it may seem, was smaller than even the upper circle at Leicester Square. It would have been dwarfed by a painting from Barker's lower circle. The relative smallness may have been in part responsible for its
lack of popular success. Another reason may have been too great a similarity to Barker's earlier view of London. Girtin took his view from the roof of some terraced houses on the west side of Albion Place, just a few yards from where H. A. Barker had taken his sketches. One wonders if Girtin might not have chosen, like Barker, the roof of the Albion Mills, had it not been a fire-gutted ruin at the time. While it might seem from the subsequent history of panorama exhibitions that the London public possessed an inexhaustible appetite for new entertainments on the same subjects, the presentation of a familiar view must not have seemed very exciting in comparison to the exotic foreign views which were just beginning to come before the public.

Various aspects of the execution, exhibition, and subsequent history of the Eidometropolis have given rise to considerable debate. Although the painting opened to the public in August, 1802, the date of its execution is by no means certain. The biography in the Library of Fine Arts in 1832 stated that the painting was done in Girtin's twenty-third year, that is, in 1797-98. A number of subsequent writers have accepted this. It has further been stated that Girtin's declining health would have precluded such an undertaking at a later date. The subsequent delay in bringing the work before the public is explained by the supposition that J. S. Hayward, in addition to providing the necessary painting space, was also to provide financial support for the exhibition. For some reason Hayward abandoned
the Girtin project and became involved with the De Maria exhibition. Only in 1802 did Girtin's brother John, an engraver and printseller, realize the commercial potential of the Eidometropolis and arrange for exhibition. The explanation is attractive but rather elaborate for the actual evidence, which is only that Girtin was acquainted with Hayward. While the Hayward floorcloth manufactory seems a likely location for the painting of the panorama, the Girtin-Hayward collaboration and its subsequent collapse are not necessary to account for the 1802 opening. Because of Barker's exclusive rights to panorama exhibiting, the Eidometropolis could not have opened before 1801. For the same reason, it seems unlikely that Girtin would have painted the picture three to four years before it could have been exhibited. As Girtin was at the time of his visit to Paris considering exhibiting the Eidometropolis there, the painting must have been substantially complete by the time of his trip to the Continent. In all likelihood it was painted during the summer and autumn of 1801, when Girtin was in London. If the trip to Paris was undertaken in part for reasons of health, it may have been to recuperate from strain caused by work on the panorama. When Girtin returned to London in May, 1802, arrangements were made for the exhibition to follow Arnold's Battle of Alexandria at the Great Room, Spring Gardens.

There seems no reason to doubt the statement in the obituaries of the Gentleman's Magazine and the Morning Herald that the Eidometropolis was one of two works in oils
by Girtin. Although the related field of theatrical scene-painting, with which Girtin was to a limited extent involved, employed distemper, the Barkers had, since the opening of the Leicester Square Rotunda, consistently used oils.

Although the Eidometropolis was represented as semi-circular in the Louis Francia etching, published by Girtin’s brother in 1803 (Pl. 41), it is clear that the panorama was in fact a complete circle. Contemporary references to it as a “great circle” and “a great circular picture” are supported by the existing studies in the British Museum. These consist of five watercolours (Pl. 42-46) and one pen and wash working drawing (Pl. 47). Together these produce a view of well over three hundred degrees. Comparison of the watercolours with the Francia etching shows that Francia compressed the design, leaving out certain segments completely and distorting the scale of others.

The watercolours are striking works of art in themselves, yet one must wonder if Girtin, whose experience was largely of watercolour on a small scale, could have achieved the same atmospheric quality in oils on almost two thousand square feet of canvas. The lengthy account of the painting which appeared in the Monthly Magazine suggests that he did.

Both for the information it gives about the quality of Girtin’s painting (information sadly lacking in most panorama reviews) and for what it implies about panorama painting in general, it deserves to be quoted in full:

Mr Girtin’s Eidometropolis at Spring Gardens is very well attended, and considered in all its
points, may fairly be placed in the very first class among the productions in this new and extraordinary appropriation of perspective to painting. The artist, it seems, did not take the common way of measuring and reducing the objects, but trusted to his eye, and has by this means given a most picturesque display of the objects that he has thus brought into his great circle; and, added to this, he has generally paid particular attention to representing the objects of the hue with which they appear in nature, and by that means, greatly heightened the illusion. For example, the view towards the East appears through a sort of misty medium, arising from the fires of the forges, manufactories, &c., which gradually lessens as we survey the western extremity. Blackfriars Bridge is a prominent object; and St. Paul's rises with the most majestic dignity above all the surrounding buildings. Though the Temple-gardens, and some other parts, are of a much brighter tint than the general masses, the whole is in harmony and the eye is not hurt by spots. The water is pellucid, and, contrary to what we have generally seen in pictures of this description, varies in its colour; that near the shore very properly partaking of the hue of the earth beneath. The craft upon the river is boldly and forcibly relieved; the figures in Blackfriars-road, where there is a ring surrounding two pugilists, are correctly represented; and the horses, asses, &c., have great spirit. The apparent space which the objects seem to occupy, and their relative size, gives them the appearance of being much larger than they really are. The person who attends the visitors measured one of the figures, which proved to be only four inches high; and, to determine a dispute whether some earthen chimney pots that are on one of the houses, were three or four feet long, did the same by them, and they proved to be no more than six inches. The front of the Albion Mills would be better if it had been more kept down in colour. Westminsterbridge we suspect to be more circular than it is in nature. The two towers of Westminster Abbey appear in one mass, which destroys that lightness and air which constitute a leading beauty in the building.--From the point of view in which it is taken it is probably a true representation; but a license is allowed to painters as well as poets; and where a picturesque effect can be produced, a trifling deviation would, in a picture of this description, be overlooked, or forgiven. On the whole, we consider it as the connoisseur's panorama, and hope the young and very meritorious artist will obtain the approbation to which he is so justly entitled.
At Girtin's death on November 9, 1802, the Eidometropolis closed, reopening a few days later under the management of his brother John. The exhibition remained open in aid of Girtin's widow and child until about the end of March, 1803. It appears that the panorama was later sold to someone in Russia and taken to that country.

On November 22, 1804, a panorama of Boulogne opened in the Great Room, Spring Gardens. The painter was the unfortunate John Thomas Serres. Perennially in debt, he may well have looked to panorama painting as a lucrative commercial enterprise. It could not have proved especially profitable for him, as in 1808—the year in which his last panorama opened in London—he fled to Edinburgh to elude his creditors.

The panorama was painted on 3,804 square feet of canvas. The descriptive plan shows that the painting encompassed the complete circle; however, the viewing platform, which represented the deck of the Leopard, is shown not at the centre of the circle but to one side (Pl. 48). This arrangement seems unlikely and may simply be a convention of the plan.

Serres's panorama presented the harbour with its forts, batteries, encampments, and ships of the French fleet. It was a particularly appropriate subject for Serres, who was Marine Painter to the King. It was likewise a particularly appropriate subject to bring before the
public at this time. A French invasion was feared, and Boulogne was "the great central point from whence the long-meditated invasion of this country, whenever it is made, will be directed."\(^95\)

Boulogne enjoyed an unusually long run, staying open until April 25, 1808. At that time it was announced that it was to be disposed of.\(^96\) Under new management it later toured the provinces.\(^97\) During its long run, Boulogne was not the sole attraction at the Great Room, Spring Gardens. The proprietor, Charles Wigley, had a varied programme of entertainments, including such delights as an "invisible girl," serigraphic needlework, and Miss Harvey, "the Fair Albiness."\(^98\) It was perhaps not the most suitable company for a work of art; nevertheless, such amalgams of art and sideshow were to become increasingly common.

Wigley had become the proprietor of the Great Room in 1780.\(^99\) It had been under his management that both de Loutherbourg and Girtin had exhibited. Consequently he had some knowledge of panoramas and similar exhibitions and of the public response to them. Panoramas continued to form a major feature of his exhibitions throughout the first decade of the century.

Serres's panorama of Boulogne had been immediately preceded by a Panorama of Shipping in Leith Roads--View of Edinburgh and Surrounding Country.\(^100\) While Boulogne was still on exhibit, a picture of the Battle of Trafalgar by Serres joined the roster of Spring Gardens entertainments, although this does not appear to have been a panorama.\(^101\) On June 5, 1807, Wigley opened to the public a panoramic
view of St. Petersburg by Joshua Augustus Atkinson. 102

When Boulogne finally closed, it was succeeded by a panorama of Copenhagen during the bombardment, taken on the spot by a Mr. Barton. 103 In 1810 a panorama of Glasgow by John Knox was being shown. 104

The panorama of Leith Roads is most probably the same one which was exhibited in Edinburgh in 1801 and described as a "Panorama of Edinburgh, Leith, and the Frith of Forth . . . . the point of view is in the midst of the Shipping in Leith Roads." 105 It was painted on 2,600 square feet of canvas by George Sanders, a Scottish portraitist and painter of marine subjects. 106 On May 16 it was announced that in two weeks the panorama would close, "as it positively must go to London after that." 107 The panorama was shown in Edinburgh again in 1814. 108

Of the panorama of Copenhagen and its artist, we know nothing further. Something is known of the artists of the panoramas of St. Petersburg and Glasgow, and it is possible to gain some idea of what their paintings must have been like. Atkinson, a Londoner born in 1775, had gone to St. Petersburg with his uncle at the age of nine. It was there that he studied art, and is said to have gained imperial patronage. 109 He returned to England in 1801, capitalizing for a number of years on his knowledge of Russia in various art works and publications. His panorama of St. Petersburg was engraved in four sheets by Boydell.

Knox, born three years after Atkinson, was a Glasgow landscape painter and teacher of drawing. 110 His panorama of his home city was exhibited in Edinburgh in the year prior
Knox subsequently painted panoramas of Dublin and Gibraltar which were exhibited in Edinburgh (see Appendix A), but do not seem to have appeared in London. Knox's view of Glasgow was "taken from an elevated situation at the south end of the Old Bridge, and embraces the whole range of the city, with the Three Bridges, Nelson's Monument, &c. &c." The description fits perfectly the twelve inch by forty-seven inch oil painting of Old Glasgow Bridge in the Old Glasgow Museum (Pl. 49). This small replica must have been painted considerably later than the original, for it includes St. Andrew's Cathedral, which was not completed until 1819. The strange perspective of the painting, with the Clyde curving sharply away from the viewer, seems clearly the result of transferring the composition from a curved surface to a flat one. In his representation of the bridge, Knox seems indebted to the representation of Blackfriars Bridge in the Barker panorama of London.

Wigley also presented various other forms of scenic representation which were described as "panoramic." In 1806 six panoramic views of Oxford, Weymouth, Gibraltar, Genoa, London, and the West India Docks were on show. In 1807 Wigley advertised "a variety of optic views of foreign cities, upon a principle that forms complete panoramas." The exhibition was based on one that was exhibited at the Palais Royal in Paris in 1802. What constituted "a complete panorama" in the terms of the advertisement remains unclear; presumably these were views on the principle of the later
cosmorama, in which a moderately sized picture was viewed through a large convex glass (see Chapter IV). This exhibition proved popular enough for Wigley to open it on a larger scale in Princes Street, Leicester Square. His new premises were called the Athenaeum Rooms or the Saloon of Arts; the exhibition took the name of "Panorama of the World." 117

However willing Wigley may have been to promote panoramas and so-called panoramas, he was not about to put all his eggs into one panoramic basket. As we have seen, his programmes were varied. Together with the panoramas at Spring Gardens, he presented Maillardet's Automatical Exhibition. 118 To accompany his "Panorama of the World," he revived in 1809 Cartwright's Musical Glasses, 119 an entertainment which had appeared at the Lyceum in the Strand some years earlier. 120

Another panorama by John Thomas Serres appeared in 1808, the subject being St. Petersburg. 121 The fact that it was exhibited not at Wigley's Great Room, Spring Gardens, but at the Lyceum, Strand, together with the fact that it presented the same subject as Atkinson's panorama, suggests that there may have been some falling out between Wigley and Serres, perhaps over the painting of this subject. The drawings for Serres's panorama of St. Petersburg may well have been supplied by Robert Ker Porter, who was at this time in Russia and who had earlier been associated with the Lyceum. Porter definitely did supply the drawings for a T. E. Barker panorama of Moscow, which opened in 1813. 122

Other London panoramas of these years depicted the subjects of Trafalgar, Cader Idris in Wales, and the city
of Jerusalem. **Trafalgar** was opened by Messrs. R. and G. Falkner in their New Marine Panorama in the Haymarket on March 31, 1806. It was described as being on four thousand square feet of canvas and encompassing the entire circle. Trafalgar was naturally a popular subject and the competition was keen. In addition to the Serres picture at Spring Gardens, there was a panorama of the subject exhibited at Leicester Square, and J. M. W. Turner's great painting was on view in his gallery at No. 64, Harley Street, Cavendish Square.

Less shop-worn as a panorama subject was Cader Idris, although it had long been popular with artists and tourists. The panorama, painted by Majoribanks, Clark, and Elliott, "with the assistance of other artists of eminence," all under the direction of E. Donovan, opened in Catherine Street, Strand, on January 11, 1808, and remained open until June 30.

Eight years later Donovan brought out another panorama—this one of Jerusalem. Exhibited in Fleet Street, it was "a complete Panorama Circle, 128 feet in circumference, and 18 feet high." The painting was done from drawings taken on the spot in 1811-12 by Donovan's son and M. P. Jacques.

**VI**

Apart from the Barkers' productions, the early panoramas in London were for their artists isolated works. Although artists were attracted to this novel and seemingly profitable art form, few found it rewarding enough either commercially or personally to devote a major part of their energies to it for very long. Entrepreneurs seemed unwilling
to take the risk of opening establishments devoted exclusively to the exhibition of panoramas. The paintings were set up in exhibition halls temporarily fitted for the purpose. However in 1803 a permanent panorama establishment was opened to rival the one in Leicester Square. Significantly it was the joint enterprise of two artists who knew the Leicester Square establishment from the inside. The partners, Ramsay Richard Reinagle and Robert Barker's eldest son, Thomas Edward, had both worked as assistants in the production of the Leicester Square panoramas. A building was erected in the Strand under the direction of T. E. Barker, and on July 11, 1803, it opened with a view of Rome by Reinagle.

T. E. Barker meant to capitalize on the family name and his association with the Leicester Square Panorama. His advertisements announced that he was the "eldest son of Mr. Barker, of the Panorama, Leicester-square, whose long experience, since the first establishment of that concern, has, he trusts, enabled him to make considerable improvements." The most important of these improvements seems to have been in the "machinery of the skylight," which was "constructed on such a principle as to be able to admit a powerful addition of light in cloudy weather." The lack of light on overcast days was a constant problem for panorama exhibitions; we have already seen that the initial lighting arrangements at Leicester Square had not been fully satisfactory.

Clearly Robert Barker considered his son's establishment a threat to his own. He undertook in a series of notes
to his advertisements to disassociate himself from his son. Months before the Strand Panorama opened, the following appeared: "Mr. Barker (sen.), the inventor and proprietor of the Panorama, Leicester-sq., has no connection with the Panorama erecting in the Strand, or any other exhibition in London."\textsuperscript{132} Two days after the opening of the Strand establishment, Robert Barker printed a long notice in which he denied rumours that the Leicester Square Panorama was about to close and that he had changed his location to the Strand. He went on to praise the abilities of Henry Aston and closed with a parting shot at the "long experience" his eldest son had claimed: "Mr. Barker's son, Thomas Edward Barker, connected with the Panorama in the Strand, never made drawings for, nor ever had the superintendence of any painting exhibited in Leicester-square."\textsuperscript{133}

Following the example set at Leicester Square, Barker and Reinagle exhibited complementary views of the same subject. The opening distant view of Rome from the Villa Lodovisi on the Pincian Hill was succeeded in April, 1804, by a view of the interior of the city.\textsuperscript{134} The views were favourably received, The Morning Chronicle reporting that "there is no public exhibition in the Metropolis which has received such general approbation."\textsuperscript{135} Farington, who had visited the Leicester Square Panorama several times but had found nothing favourable to record, visited the second Strand view of Rome and "thought it extremely well executed."\textsuperscript{136} John Constable, in writing of the first view of Rome, expressed a rather favourable opinion, although he was not
without criticism of both this particular picture and panorama painting in general:

Panorama painting seems all the rage. There are four or five now exhibiting, and Mr. Reinagle is coming out with another, a view of Rome, which I have seen. I should think he has taken his view favourably, and it is executed with the greatest care and fidelity. This style of painting suits his ideas of the art itself, and his defects are not so apparent in it—that is, great principles are neither expected nor looked for in this mode of describing nature. He views Nature minutely and CUNNINGLY, but with no greatness or breadth. The defects of the picture at present are a profusion of high lights, and too great a number of abrupt patches of shadow, but it is not to be considered as a whole.137

Reinagle and Barker further followed the precedent of Robert Barker at Leicester Square in opening, on January 15, 1805, a second smaller circle. Home remained open in the original circle, while the new view represented Sir Sydney Smith's naval action off the coast at Ostend on May 16, 1804.138

The initial success was not sustained, and Reinagle pulled out. With the opening of the view of Oxford in May, 1807, Reinagle's name no longer appeared in the advertisements or on the descriptive plans. In August, 1807, Constable told Farington that "young Reinagle lost a great deal of money by his panorama speculation in the Strand."139 Nevertheless T. E. Barker continued to run the establishment until 1816, providing new pictures annually for both circles (see Appendix C).

With the death of Robert Barker on April 8, 1806, the Leicester Square establishment passed into E. A. Barker's hands.140 As he had been largely, if not completely,
responsible for the panoramas long before his father's death, the change of hands could have made little difference to the actual running of the business. On December 5, 1816, H. A. announced that, having entered into partnership with John Burford, an assistant at the Leicester Square Panorama, he had purchased the Strand Panorama from his brother. Until the closing of the Strand Panorama in 1831, the Leicester Square and Strand operations were run in conjunction. For the first year H. A. Barker and J. Burford re-exhibited old T. E. Barker panoramas of Waterloo, Ostend, Rome, and Dover. Their first new painting for the Strand was a view of Athens (Pl. 56), which opened in March, 1818.

VII

Popular entertainment must constantly seek a balance between familiarity and novelty. The public wants what it already knows it will like, yet it demands that it not be bored. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, panoramas had proved their popularity, but they also lay in danger of seeming passé to the London public. The early years of the second decade saw a burgeoning of exhibitions which introduced some novel component into scenic representation. As the original panorama had aimed at a complete spatial illusion of reality, the new exhibitions sought to expand the illusion by incorporating the motion and development in time which had characterized the earlier Eidophusikon. The attempt to transcend the static nature of the panorama resulted in a variety of entertainments, most of which were extremely short-lived.
The nature of the "novel and interesting principle" on which the "semi-panoramic" view of the Retreat of Massena was exhibited is unclear, as is the nature of the "animated panorama of the Siege of St. Sebastian." The Retreat of Massena (Messina) represented an episode of the campaign in Sicily, with "the Advance of the British Army in close pursuit of the French." It was exhibited in the spring of 1811 at the Gallery of Sporting and Animal Paintings, Landscapes, &c., No. 65, Pall Mall. The Siege of St. Sebastian, representing the taking of the Spanish city from the French by Anglo-Portuguese troops in 1813, was being shown in the summer of 1814 at the Mechanical Theatre, which Mr. Bologna of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, had opened in Catherine Street.

None of the attempts succeeded in adding movement and narrative interest without sacrificing the original panorama's effect of an all-encompassing reality; however, the peristrephic or moving panorama, while it had limited initial success in London, would by mid-century far surpass the original form of the panorama in popularity. Prior to either the Massena or St. Sebastian, there had opened at No. 13, Old Bond Street, "two grand moveable panoramas on an entirely novel plan," actually one panorama in two sections. With the John Knox panorama of Glasgow, which was being exhibited in London at the same time, it shared a Scottish subject. Like the Knox panorama, it had previously been shown in Edinburgh, where it had been announced as "a panorama by which any length of country may be shewn" (see Appendix A). The panorama, representing one hundred
miles of the banks of the Clyde, was "300 feet by a proportionate breadth." It was painted by Peter Marshall, an Edinburgh artist who was, by his own account, the inventor of this mode of painting.

Although its influence was considerable, the invention itself was hardly impressive. The mechanism was simple enough—a long canvas painted with a succession of scenes was passed before the audience by being wound from one vertical roller to another. A similar device had already been employed on a smaller scale by de Loutherbourg as just one of the effects of his Eidophusikon.

The subject of the banks of a river was eminently suited to this type of exhibition. Although it would take considerable telescoping to fit one hundred miles of countryside onto six hundred feet of canvas, the illusion of viewing the passing landscape from a boat travelling down the river could be preserved. Unfortunately this illusionism would restrict the presentation to one side of the river and one's viewpoint to waterlevel, which did not always yield the most rewarding vistas. Consequently such strict illusionism was rarely, if ever, adhered to, although panoramas following the course of a river were popular. A river, even if its potential for illusion was ignored, could still provide a unifying element in the series of views of the moving panorama. Marshall's first moving panorama may have attempted a continuous view. It was stated that in the panorama one viewed the Clyde "as if travelling along its banks." In his later panoramas Marshall forsook
illusionism for narrative, presenting a succession of independent scenes of an event at different stages in time.

After the exhibition of the Clyde panorama, Marshall disappeared from the London scene for over a decade. He appears to have joined with other members of his family to cultivate the provincial audiences. The simple apparatus of Marshall's moving panorama was perfectly suited to touring. It could be easily set up in any large hall, whereas Barker's circular panoramas often required special temporary structures in the provincial cities.154

In 1823 Marshall's Grand Historical Peristrephic Panorama of the Ceremony of the Coronation opened at the Great Room, Spring Gardens.155 Like Barker before him, he had found that, in order to be successful, one had to be big. The present picture was painted on ten thousand square feet of canvas and displayed nearly one hundred thousand figures.156 This was the first of a series of popular Marshall panoramas at the Great Room, Spring Gardens.

Later in the same year the Diorama opened in Regent's Park. This exhibition, imported from France, would not only be a major new contender for the attention of the London public; it would, together with the moving panorama, change the whole direction of panoramic exhibitions.
CHAPTER IV
THE DIORAMA AND OTHER RELATED EXHIBITIONS

I

Of the great variety of optical entertainments available to the London public in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth, the panorama was undoubtedly the most popular. It was not until the appearance of the cosmorama and diorama in the 1820s that any permanent establishment devoted to scenic representation other than a panorama was opened to the London public. Although London's optical entertainments by no means originated with the panorama, it must have been largely in response to the panorama's popularity that such a variety of entertainments grew up in these years. The very forms which gave rise to such exhibitions—theatrical scenery, exhibitions of conventional paintings, and architectural models—in turn adopted the techniques of these popular entertainments. The appearance of the diorama gave the world of such popular entertainments a new infusion of life, but also seriously challenged for the first time the supremacy of the panorama in this field.

The attraction of the panorama was twofold. On the one hand there was the accurate representation of a particular event or locality; this might be termed for convenience
the topographical aspect. On the other hand there was the deceptively real representation of nature, which might be termed the atmospheric aspect.

As regards the topographical aspect, the circular panorama could not be significantly improved upon in the depiction of a scene from a fixed viewpoint at a fixed point in time. The exhibitions which grew up around the panorama could only better it by breaking the limits of these fixed points. A variety of views—variety always being a much sought after quality in popular entertainments—could more than compensate for a less than complete illusion of reality. Alternatively an exhibition could follow the Eidophusikon in the creation of convincingly ephemeral atmospheric effects.

The various attempts at "animated" and "moving" panoramas have been mentioned in the previous chapter, but these were not the first exhibitions to look back to the Eidophusikon for an alternative approach to scenic representation. In response to the Barkers' success in Leicester Square, the Eidophusikon itself returned to London after seven years of touring the provinces. On February 21, 1793, it opened at the Great Room, Spring Gardens.¹ The same six views which had been shown in 1781 were presented in evening performances "illuminated with wax."² The keyboard and vocal accompaniment to the original London production was now expanded to include both an organ accompaniment of the scenes themselves and a variety of songs, comic readings, imitations, and magical deceptions to fill the intervals during the scene changes.³
In May the director of the Eidophusikon announced that two long lost scenes by de Loutherbourg which had last been shown in the Lisle Street exhibition had been rediscovered and would be put on show. The scenes presented the sun rising through fog and setting after rain. Their exhibition increased the demand for seats, and people were advised to send their servants early to reserve places.

By November the Eidophusikon was on tour again, opening in Edinburgh in that month.

In spite of the quality of its atmospheric effects, the original Eidophusikon must have seemed rather small and unimpressive after the mammoth size of the panorama. Consequently when this particular form of scenic representation was next reopened in London, it was on an enlarged scale.

The New Eidophusikon opened in Panton Street, Haymarket, in February, 1799. The proprietor, who appears to have been a Mr. Wilkinson, informed the public that by being in possession of the above elegant Spectacle [the original Eidophusikon] several years, he has been enabled to trace out their beauties; and by the aid of accumulated light and power of mechanism, to exhibit, upon a Scale infinitely superior in size, the most interesting Operations of Nature.

The new exhibition did not simply reproduce the original on a greater scale. Only four subjects were presented, two of which repeated original scenes—the Storm and Shipwreck and the Palace of Pandemonium. The other two scenes represented Sunrise and Sunset as in original scenes, but in different locations. Dawn was seen from the Island of
Allbolyne near Cork, and the setting sun was viewed from Dublin Bay. Later a view of the Eruption of Mount Etna was displayed, in direct competition with the view of the Eruption of Mount Vesuvius, shown at the exhibition called the Naumachia. For the diversion of the audience during scene changes, these entertainments included airs on the harmonic glasses, magical deceptions, and a learned dog.

On March 22, 1800, fire gutted the New Eidophusikon. Whether the destruction of the large copies of the de Loutherbourg scenes marked the final end of the Eidophusikon is uncertain. Perhaps the originals were still in existence at this time; however, if they were, they must have been in poor condition after two decades of exhibiting. In any case the Eidophusikon did not reappear in London after the fire in 1800.

Although the Eidophusikon vanished from the scene before the nineteenth century had fairly begun, it was to be more influential, in a way, than the panorama, with its long-term success. For it was from the Eidophusikon rather than the three hundred and sixty degree panorama that nearly all subsequent exhibitions derived.

The attraction of both variety and movement gave rise to a number of mechanical exhibitions, each playing its own particular variation on the theme of the Eidophusikon. One of these mechanical exhibitions which gained considerable popularity was the Naumachia. In fact there may have been as many as three different exhibitions in London which went under this name, borrowed from the mock naval battles which had entertained the ancient Romans.
The first Naumachia to appear in London opened on July 27, 1795. Little is known of this exhibition except that its subject was the naval victory of the First of June, 1794, "represented in alto, basso, and demi-relievo, &c." The exhibition remained open opposite the asylum in St. George's Fields throughout the summer, in direct competition with Barker's Leicester Square Panorama, which was presenting the same subject at this time. The Naumachia was to close on September 1, to be shipped to Dublin.

The second Naumachia, "a most curious and beautiful piece of mechanism," opened on June 3, 1799, on Silver Street, Fleet Street. It occupied a large building which had been erected "at considerable expense" and was "intended for the celebration of our Naval Victories." The first of these victories to be celebrated was the Battle of the Nile. Its advertisement made clear its superiority to panoramas or any other paintings in the representation of such subjects:

The impossibility of doing justice to the skill and valour displayed in this memorable Action, by Paintings of any description whatever, from their being able to represent but one scene of a conflict which lasted for so long a period, and but one position of the hostile fleets which underwent such frequent variations, induced the inventor to complete a moving representation of the whole action, upon a scale sufficiently large to enable the spectators to observe the particular manoeuvres of every ship; to distinguish the signals made by the Admiral, and the whole plan and conduct of the Action, from its commencement to its glorious termination.

The battle was presented in three scenes, with movement occurring within each scene. The whole engagement, "from its commencement to its glorious termination," lasted one and a half hours. The highlight was the moonlight
scene in which the French flagship, Orient, took fire and exploded, a sublime spectacle of destruction which was a particular favourite with London artists and audiences. The exhibition was on a scale of thirty by twelve feet. Apparently the mechanism consisted of transparencies representing the sea and the sky, between which models of the ships manoeuvred.

The entertainment was designed, executed, and directed by a Mr. Turner. A landscape and coach painter, Turner exhibited twelve works at the Royal Academy from 1787 until 1816—eight topographical views and four portraits. In 1817 a William Turner, presumably the same artist, was exhibiting a Battle of Waterloo in Birmingham. It also seems likely that this was the William Turner de Lond, who exhibited a number of works at an art exhibition in Limerick in 1821 and who was in Edinburgh by 1822, where he painted views of the "Great Conflagration" in the city in 1824—a subject fully in keeping with the earlier work for the Naumachia.

Even at its rehearsals, while it was still in an unfinished state, the Naumachia was visited and praised by numerous naval officers and members of the nobility. Throughout its run the advertisements carried long lists of the nobility, foreign aristocracy and dignitaries who had visited the exhibition. The Morning Chronicle related that "among the various claims to public attention at the present moment, we believe no one has received more unbounded patronage from the nobility and gentry than Mr. Turner." What must have
been particularly gratifying to Turner was the patronage of those best suited to judge its verisimilitude: "The artist has, in this performance, received the unqualified approbation of many of the first naval characters, several of whom are frequently recognized in repeating their visits."  

Notably absent in the lists of distinguished visitors are artists. It is perhaps significant that the Naumachia was praised not for its artistic merit, but for its correctness and "singular display of Mechanical Powers." Whatever the quality of the art work may have been, it was hailed as "the acme of mechanical perfection."  

The Battle of the Nile remained on view until the close of the exhibition in June, 1800. By the autumn of 1799, however, other subjects were being produced to accompany it. On November 4 the Siege of Acre was presented for the first time. Later in the same month a Storm and Shipwreck appeared—an interesting choice of subject which indicates the indebtedness of this entertainment to the Eidophusikon. It also indicates a turn from historical subjects to the representation of sublime natural forces. This concern was continued in the Eruption of Vesuvius which was added to the program early in 1800. On April 15, a new system of music was introduced, not, as with the Eidophusikon, merely to beguile the spectators while scenery was being changed or to heighten the enjoyment of the scenes with some programmatic music, but to increase the illusion itself. The system, presumably some form of organ, was able to create sounds "from the most remote echo to the strongest
forte of a full band, instantaneously transferred from station to station, at the will of the projector." 36

The third Naumachia opened in London on November 15, 1811, in Princes Street, Leicester Square. 37 Although Turner's name was not associated with the exhibition in the advertisements, it seems likely that this entertainment was the same one which had been open near Fleet Street a decade earlier. It was described as obtaining its effects "by means of mechanical motion imparted to opaque and transparent bodies" 38 --a description very much like that of the previous Naumachia. It depicted the Battle of Trafalgar, but by March 24, 1812, the Battle of the Nile, in which the "Orient is seen burning till she explodes," had joined Trafalgar on the bill. 39 The exhibition closed on August 15, 1812. 40

The Naumachia was but one of a variety of mechanical exhibitions which had begun even before the Eidophusikon and continued late into the nineteenth century. Coinciding with the Naumachia of 1799, an exhibition called the Skiagraphie appeared in Panton Street, Haymarket. Advertised as "never offered to the public in this country before," it opened on June 13 with "a view of LEITH HARBOUR, PORT and TOWN (in Scotland), and a variety of subjects appertaining thereto." 41 Also included in the programme was the Omalephusikon, which followed de Loutherbourg's Eidophusikon not only in adopting a similar name but also in showing two scenes which had been successful in the Eidophusikon--Dawning Day and Moonlight Contrasted with Fire from a Lighthouse. 42
Cartwright's musical and philosophical exhibitions were being presented at the Lyceum in the Strand in 1801, concurrently with Porter's Siege of Acre. In addition to his musical glasses, Cartwright's entertainment included a Grand View of the Sound, Copenhagen, the British and Danish Fleets, &c. from plans drawn by an officer of rank, under Admiral Parker, which were given Mr. Cartwright, and executed in a new and peculiar style, by Artists of the first celebrity, so as to convey a just idea of the glorious action of the 2nd of April, from Sun rise 'till the Triumph of British Arms. 43

In 1803 Mr. Oogslagh's Technographia was showing scenes of nature with gradations of light and shadow and various other mechanical and picturesque effects at the Great Room, Hanover Square. 44

Some mechanical exhibitions of these years having little connection with scenic representation were nonetheless related to the panorama and Eidophusikon in their employment of light in the service of illusion and in their attempts to portray moving subjects. A long-running attraction of this nature was the exhibition of "magical moving pictures" presented by a showman with the appropriate name of Merlin at No. 11, Princes Street, Hanover Square. The exhibition seems to have been of a simple nature, showing a piece of still water with a boat and swan in motion and later a garden with a jet of water and a moving figure on horseback, achieved probably by moving one transparency across another. Another very popular type of exhibition was the Phantasmagoria, a form of magic lantern show in which the images of illustrious personages seemed to materialize out of the air. By increasing or decreasing the size of the image, they were
made to appear as either approaching or withdrawing from the audience. The Phantasmagoria was introduced into England from France in October, 1801, by the originator of the entertainment, M. de Philipsthal.\textsuperscript{46} Within a year a number of imitators had appeared, either calling their exhibitions Phantasmagorias or adopting new names such as Skiagraphemia, Fantascopla, Ergascopia, and Mesascopia.\textsuperscript{47}

Another form of exhibition on the very fringe of scenic representation was the large-scale orrery, a forerunner of the modern planetarium. There were several of these panoramas of the heavens which exhibited in London during this period. The two most popular (or at least longest-lived) were Lloyd's Dioastrodoxon or "grand transparent orrery" and Walker's Eidouranion or "large transparent orrery."\textsuperscript{48} Both opened about 1790, and there followed a heated debate over which of the two men had invented the large-scale orrery, with each denouncing the "feeble and piratical attempts" of the other.\textsuperscript{49} Lloyd's exhibition was stated to be "richly decorated with appropriate scenery, painted by Mr. Andrews, and other eminent artists."\textsuperscript{50}

Like the Phantasmagoria, many other mechanical exhibitions came from France. Wigley's Panorama of the World, it will be recalled, was based on a French prototype. In 1814 a Grand French Mechanical Exhibition was shown first in Old Bond Street, then in the Strand. It consisted of "three superb Pieces of MECHANISM, representing the magnificent Palace of Thuilleries, and the Fortress of Luxembourg, and the Palace of Charles IV, the Ex-King of Spain."\textsuperscript{51} The
structures were modelled in bone and it is difficult to imagine what mechanics were employed in the presentation of these static subjects. In the same year a Mon. Lambert opened an "EXHIBITION of PICTURESQUE VIEWS, with the objects in motion." Lambert had been an assistant to a Monsieur Pierre, who had enjoyed great success with his views in Paris and other continental cities. Lambert's exhibition was "exactly similar" to that of his former employer.52

Three years later another Frenchman, Monsieur Thiodon, opened a Mechanical and Picturesque Theatre in Charles Wigley's premises in Spring Gardens. His exhibition, with which he had gained great acclaim (so he stated) on the Continent, produced "the World in Miniature by adding to all his Panoramic Paintings, his Mechanical Movements." Four or five different scenes were produced, including the by now obligatory Storm at Sea.53

Thiodon closed his exhibition on March 13, 1818,54 but on April 20 the Spring Gardens rooms reopened as the Mechanical and Picturesque Theatre of Arts. "Animated Objects upon the principle of the inimitable Loutherbourg" were shown on a considerably enlarged scale.55 When later in the year the property was purchased from Wigley by a Mr. Miller, alterations and embellishments were made to the theatre and the representations were "considerably improved."56 Miller repeated that the exhibition was based on that of de Loutherbourg, who, he claimed, "originally produced his celebrated Eidophusikon in these premises."57 In January Miller was showing the Rising Sun in Malta, Coblentz, Marseilles, Geneva, Artificial Fire Works, and a Storm at Sea.
II

The panorama took its place amidst the popular entertainments and pantomime spectacles of the day, yet the panorama was, as Robert Barker insisted in his early advertisements, free from gimmickry or special mechanism. The panorama was simply a painting, different from a conventional picture only in its great size and its curved surface. Considered as a work of art, the panorama occupies an interesting position in the history of the relationship of art to the public.

While exhibitions of a single large-scale work of art were not unknown in London when Barker first opened the Leicester Square Panorama, such exhibitions were rare. Indeed public art exhibitions of any kind were a new and still rather tentative phenomenon. Annual exhibitions of the works of contemporary British artists had only begun in 1760 with the formation of the Society of Artists. Two other exhibiting bodies followed: the Free Society of Artists in 1761 and the Royal Academy in 1769; however, by the time the Leicester Square Rotunda opened, only one of these bodies, the Royal Academy, was still in existence. In the course of the nineteenth century, other annual exhibitions would grow up, and the number of one-man shows would increase significantly. Without doubt this trend would have occurred had the panorama never existed; nevertheless, the panorama must have played some part in attracting the public to art. Particularly in the exhibitions of single works of art, the influence of the panorama and related optical entertainments can clearly be seen.
Of course the influence was not entirely one-sided; exhibitions of more conventional paintings must have influenced the panorama. Surely one major influence was the series of contemporary history paintings by the American expatriate, John Singleton Copley, together with his method of bringing them before the public. Copley’s *Death of Chatham* was the first instance in England of a single painting being opened to a public which had to pay (and did) in order to see only it. The *Death of Chatham* was exhibited in 1781 at the Great Room, Spring Gardens, in direct competition with the Royal Academy exhibition. Copley’s exhibition gained much publicity, a considerable attendance, and the great displeasure of a number of the Royal Academicians. The success of the *Death of Chatham* encouraged Copley to exhibit further pictures of contemporary history. In 1784 the *Death of Major Peirson* was exhibited at No. 28, Haymarket. 1791 saw the exhibition of the *Siege of Gibraltar* in a "magnificent Oriental tent" in Green Park. In 1799 the *Victory of Duncan at Camperdown* was exhibited in a tent in the garden of Lord Suffield’s house in Albemarle Street. The Copley battle paintings looked backward to the earlier success of his fellow countryman Benjamin West’s *Death of General Wolfe* and looked forward to the battle panoramas of Robert Ker Porter. Both West’s and Copley’s contemporary history paintings were essentially figure compositions—West’s in a neoclassical and Copley’s in a more baroque mold. Such figure-dominated compositions did not particularly lend themselves to the extended panorama.
form, a defect which can be noted in the works of Robert Ker Porter (Pl. 27-32).

In general panoramas presented battles at a greater distance, which provided the spectator with an overview of the topography of the battlefield and a general impression of the movements of forces. Masses of troops or ships replaced individual figures as the protagonists in the painting; the drama of individual conflict was replaced by the superhuman forces of destruction unleashed by modern warfare—explosions and fire. It was a curious combination of a sublime and a documentary approach to the presentation of war, echoed in the contemporary history paintings of de Loutherbourg. In his paintings of naval battles, de Loutherbourg adapted the heightened drama of the paintings of Claude Joseph Vernet to the tradition of Anglo-Dutch sea battle pieces of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. 64

It was with the exhibition of his Battle of Valenciennes, a land battle, exhibited in Robert Bowyer's Historic Gallery in 1794, that de Loutherbourg established himself as a battle painter. 65 De Loutherbourg followed Valenciennes with exhibitions of paintings of Lord Howe's Victory, the Battle of the Nile, and the Battle of Camperdown—all subjects which were also presented at the Panorama and similar optical entertainments.

Neither de Loutherbourg nor Copley fared particularly well with the general public. Their exhibitions and the sale of engravings based on their works did provide some
financial remuneration and did make them known to a wider public than the one which attended Royal Academy exhibitions; nevertheless, in relying on the public for patronage, the artist ran a considerable risk. Returns from exhibitions were not always as great as expected. At the close of the exhibition, the artist might well have an unsold picture on his hands. An article in the *British Magazine* in 1800 discussed the pictures of de Loutherbourg and Copley and concluded:

The fortune attending the production of public pictures . . . of subjects the most interesting and important to the national glory, has at length opened the eyes of the artists, who have speculated on public patronage, to the infatuation that had cheated them of their time and their money, and left them a prey to chagrin and disappointment.66

The public could indeed be fickle. Panoramas and the various mechanical representations would, one feels, have drawn away the audiences, whose taste in art was limited, from the more conventional pictures. A critic might write of Copley's painting of *Lord Duncan's Victory* that we turn with pleasure from the transparencies and dazzling deceptions of the day to the contemplation of an interesting and classical work. Striking imitations of nature, however produced, will often convey a momentary pleasure, but without some mixture of taste and science the impression on a well informed mind will be neither deep nor lasting.67

Nevertheless the general public was undoubtedly less impressed by artistic quality than by spectacular effect.

This did not prevent exhibitions of single paintings from increasing during the early years of the nineteenth century; however, the exhibitions of these paintings remained very close to the panoramas in the nature of their subject
matter and their techniques of exhibiting and advertising. The "Exhibition of a Grand Illuminated Picture, representing the Victory of Camperdown, in which Admiral Lord Duncan so gloriously and decisively defeated the Dutch Fleet" by Mr. Hamilton, history painter, opened in the Great Room, Panton Street, Haymarket, on December 30, 1797. The advertisement for this painting is almost indistinguishable from those for panoramas of naval battles:

The Picture is painted on a scale of such magnitude, as to afford opportunity to the Artist, not only to produce a most astonishing general effect, but to give some of the principal ships in an aspect which almost realizes to the Spectator the Scene of Action.

De Loutherbourg's Battle of the Nile, exhibited at the Historic Gallery in 1799, was shown by firelight to increase the reality of its representation of the Orient exploding at night.

Size and realism were the criteria by which the advertisements insisted these paintings should be judged, whether or not they had been the prime considerations of the artist. These paintings, although not as strictly limited to reportage as the panorama, did most often present views of actual locations, personalities, and events which were currently in the news. Although religious and classical subjects might continue to be present in force at the Royal Academy exhibitions, topical interest prevailed in the individual paintings which sought to attract audiences on their own.

Benjamin Robert Haydon achieved some success with the earlier exhibitions of his large-scale religious pictures, but one commentator on his exhibition of the painting of the Raising of Lazarus in 1823 pointed out that Haydon's
current success was largely fortuitous and presented a dim view of the credulity and lack of taste in London audiences:

His success is a matter of speculation; a cow with two heads, or a giant without one are very likely to divide the attention of his patrons; and we will venture to say, if any man were this week to arrive from abroad with a bit of the North Pole, or the very stone with which David killed Goliath... Lazarus might soon glare unnoticed at the drugged and chairs... so far Mr. Haydon is safe. No wonder greater than his own has sprung up to divide the attention of the town; and in spite of the Wapeti below the stairs, and the serpents eating live rabbits above, the visitors give Lazarus the preference.

The exhibitions of John Martin's paintings of grandiose religious subjects, the first of which appeared two years before the opening of the Diorama, were enormously popular. Martin's treatment of his subjects seems to owe much to the panorama and the Eidophusikon: small figures set in broad vistas, cataclysmic effects painted on a grand scale, and lurid light effects.

Like the exhibitions of conventional paintings, the painting of theatrical scenery both contributed to and benefited from the development of the panorama and related entertainments. De Loutherbourg is the first of a considerable list of artists who were noted for their scenic work in both areas. De Loutherbourg is a seminal figure for the English theatre of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Working at Drury Lane from 1772 to 1781, he set a new standard of theatrical scenery, his contribution lying less in innovation than in refinement.
gradually overshadowed the players and the plays themselves. Audiences greeted drop scenes with greater applause than was given distinguished and popular actors. 

Magazine articles were written decrying the decline of drama and attributing the decline to the usurpation of humanity by stage machinery in theatrical productions.

Theatre managers were quick to adopt for their entertainments at least the names, if not the features, of the most popular forms of scenic representation. Panoramas and later dioramas became standard features in theatre advertisements. As early as January, 1801, the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, was presenting a pantomime called "Harlequin-Amulet, or The Magic of Mona," which was to conclude with a panorama of an unspecified subject. Later in the same year panoramas were introduced into pantomimes of two other theatres. Sadler's Wells offered a pantomime called "A Trip to Paddington," which included a panoramic view of the intended improvements at London Bridge. In an entertainment called "Puss in Boots; or Harlequin and the Ogre," Astley's Royal Amphitheatre presented a panorama of Paris.

The actual techniques of the moving panorama and the diorama were later adopted in the theatre and employed with great success in the stage designs of artists like Clarkson Stanfield and David Roberts. In the early years of the century, however, it is difficult to determine exactly what the term "panorama" in the theatre designated. Certainly a full three hundred and sixty degree view was unsuitable for stage presentation. The panorama of Paris at the Royal
Amphitheatre was said to occupy the entire extent of the stage, and exhibit upwards of 3,000 square feet of painting. The early "thespian panorama" was simply a variety show, totally unrelated to scenic representation.

Another exhibition to feel the influence of the panorama and related entertainments was that of models of foreign cities and architectural and geographical wonders. Exhibitions of models were not uncommon before the panorama, but these were largely architectural models of greater interest to the student and connoisseur than to the general public.

Under the influence of the grand scenic displays of the day, new dramatic elements were included in these formerly rather dry exhibitions. In 1803 M. du Bourg, the proprietor of one of London's longest-running exhibitions of models, added to his cork models of temples and ruins of Rome and Naples, a night view of Vesuvius with a torrent of lava where "the explosions and cascade of fire are seen in motion." As with the theatre it was often the popular names alone that were borrowed. In 1814 an exhibition in Princes Street, Leicester Square, included models from subjects of natural history displayed "in the manner of a panorama." What exactly this manner was remains uncertain.

On May 10, 1821, the following advertisement appeared in The Morning Chronicle:

**COSMORAMA.**—A SOCIETY formed for the ENCOURAGEMENT of ENGLISH and FOREIGN ARTISTS, respectfully announce to the public, that they intend to OPEN, in the course of a few days, a PANORAMIC EXHIBITION, entitled as above (containing Eight Views at a time),
to contain a constant succession of all the most interesting objects in the known world, whether created by art or nature. The interest an exhibition of this kind is calculated to excite (each object being seen as it actually exists), will be best merited by the accuracy [sic] of its execution, and the effects of an illusion as natural as art can make it.--Exhibition Room, 29, St. James's-street.

Within a week the Cosmorama opened with views of Rome, the Interior and Exterior of St. Peter's, Gibraltar from Both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, Paris, a Swiss Scene, and the London Docks.

In terms of variety, the cosmorama far surpassed the panoramas, but while the cosmorama enjoyed the advantage of presenting a variety of views, it also suffered under the disadvantage of being able to accommodate only a small number of viewers before each scene at one time. The views were pictures of only moderate size, placed beyond a window frame fitted with a large convex glass. The convex lens corrected the errors of appearance which the nearness of the picture to the spectator would have normally produced, allowing the spectator the illusion that he was looking through an ordinary window at a distant scene. A black frame placed between the glass and the picture prevented the edges of the picture from coming into the spectators' view. The pictures were at first illuminated artificially, a lamp being mounted on the top of the inner frame.

It was unkindly but not unjustly pointed out that the cosmorama was, in fact, nothing but an enlargement of the small peep-shows which were a popular attraction of the streets. It was in the quality of the pictures rather than
the nature of the apparatus that the cosmorama really differed from its more common counterpart: "In the common shows, coarsely-coloured prints are sufficiently good; in the cosmorama a moderately good oil-painting is employed." Yet the cosmorama also had its defenders, including Dr. Neil Arnott, the natural scientist, who, in writing on the optics involved in various exhibitions, wrote of the cosmorama:

Because this contrivance is cheap and simple, many persons affect to despise it; but they do not thereby shew their wisdom: for to have made so perfect a representation of objects, is one of the most sublime triumphs of art, whether we regard the pictures drawn in such true perspective and colouring, or the lenses which assist the eye in examining them.

In August, 1821, several of the views were replaced by new subjects; another change of views occurred in December. Starting in January of the following year, there was to be a change of views on the first Monday of every month. While the changes did not occur this frequently or regularly for very long, a number of new scenes were brought before the public every year.

Like the Panoramas in Leicester Square and the Strand, the Cosmorama was intended from the beginning as a permanent establishment, an intention which was fulfilled. Although the cosmorama never gained the popularity of the original panorama, the moving panorama, or the diorama, only the Leicester Square Panorama remained open for a greater number of years, as the last showing of the Cosmorama did not take place until 1861, by which time it had had a continuous run of forty years.
In April, 1823, the Cosmorama moved from St. James's Street to new quarters, constructed especially for its exhibition at 209, Regent Street. The new "extensive and commodious Galleries" allowed the number of scenes to be increased to fourteen and permitted their exhibition by daylight, "which considerably improves the illusion, and obviates the heat and obscurity produced by artificial light."

The views were equally divided between two galleries, one of which was devoted to views of Europe and America, the other to those of Asia and Africa. A third gallery was laid out as a promenade with "a parterre of the choicest flowers."

By 1827 the Cosmorama was paying tribute to both its more popular competitors by referring to itself as a "panoramic and dioramic exhibition." In fact certain dioramic effects, presumably changes of lighting and the use of transparent canvas, were introduced in some of the cosmorama views.

Like so many other popular scenic entertainments, the Cosmorama, as its novelty declined, augmented its original exhibition with a variety of sideshows. These sideshows came to seem so integral a part of the Cosmorama's entertainment that, when they were absent, as they were in 1852, The Times reviewer of Christmas holiday amusements complained that the old Cosmorama-rooms, which were once ready for anything, look a little dismal this year. There is still the Cosmorama itself—that sublime of peep-shows—but those who recollect former days, when there were many rooms, each with its distinct exhibition, will sigh to see the august edifice reduced to its most primitive exhibition with its garnish of paintings by the "old masters." Where is the genius that used to elicit the talent of the illustrious flea? Has obesity vanished from the human species, that no fat man or woman can be found in the venerable Regent-street establishment?
IV

Of all the optical entertainments imported from France, the one to have the greatest impact was the diorama. It was the creation of two young panorama painters, Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre and Charles Marie Bouton. In little over a year after its opening in Paris, the exhibition appeared in London with great éclat.

It is for his subsequent photographic discoveries rather than his successes in the field of scenic representation that Daguerre is remembered; the daguerreotype has overshadowed the diorama. In their reproduction of the transient appearances of nature, the two are related—the one providing a permanent image, the other ephemeral, like nature itself.

After an apprenticeship to a stage designer in Paris, Daguerre became an assistant to the major panoramist of the French capital, Pierre Prévost. His employment with Prévost lasted from about 1807 until 1816, after which he returned to the theatre. He enjoyed considerable successes with his décors for the Ambigu and the Opera.

Like the theatre in London, Parisian productions relied heavily on spectacular illusionistic scenic effects. In 1821 Daguerre began his collaboration with Bouton in creating an entertainment which consisted entirely of such effects. Bouton had been a student of Jacques Louis David and had, like Daguerre, worked as an assistant to Prévost. Their exhibition took a name modelled on the panorama and a format modelled on the Eidophusikon. By the summer of the
following year, the diorama was perfected and opened in a building constructed especially for its exhibition in the Rue Sanson (now Rue de la Douane) on July 11, 1822. The exhibition caused a sensation which did not go unnoticed in the English capital.

Early in 1823 Daguerre's brother-in-law, Charles Arrowsmith (or Smith), who worked as an assistant at the Diorama, visited London to determine the feasibility of opening an establishment there. He engaged the architect, Augustus Charles Pugin, to come to Paris to inspect the Diorama building with a view to erecting a similar structure in London. Ground was leased in the then developing area of Regent's Park, and Arrowsmith applied for a patent for the invention in England. On his return Pugin, with the assistance of James Morgan, a civil engineer, erected a building on Park Square East. The building was completed in only four months at the cost of between nine and ten thousand pounds. The rapid rise of the unusual building excited considerable curiosity on the part of Londoners. When completed the facade by John Nash, a part of his great scheme for Regent's Park, largely masked the more extraordinary features of the building (Pl. 65).

The Regent's Park Diorama opened on September 29, 1823. On show were the same two paintings with which the Paris Diorama had opened: the Valley of Sarnen in Switzerland, painted by Daguerre, and the Interior of Trinity Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral, by Bouton. During the course of its fifteen minute showing, each scene displayed certain
atmospheric changes. A storm passed over the Valley of Sarnen. As the spectators viewed the interior of Canterbury Cathedral, the sun, which while shining through the stained glass windows cast coloured shadows on the floor, would be obscured by clouds. The chapel would grow dark and then brighten again as the clouds passed. In later pictures the scenes would actually change from day to night or vice versa. A few even more ambitious changes were attempted. In Bouton’s *Village of Alagna in Piedmont*, shown in 1836, a moonlight view of the peaceful village gave way to a violent storm, and day dawned to find the village destroyed by an avalanche. Bouton’s 1837 view of the Basilica of St. Paul-without-the-Walls, Rome, presented the interior of the building before and after its destruction by fire in 1823.

These transformations were effected by using transparent canvas painted on both sides so that a given scene would have two different effects—one when the canvas was lit from the front, and another when it was lit from behind. The changes were not abrupt; careful manipulation of an elaborate system of lighting gave the transformations the appearance of gradual, natural processes.

The paintings were seventy-two feet by forty-two feet and were hung in two large picture rooms set at an angle to each other, each opening on the central, circular auditorium or salon (see Pl. 65, 66). The whole salon revolved on a pivot so that its opening, which resembled the proscenium of a theatre, could be aligned with each picture in turn. The
machinery for this remarkable arrangement was designed by Morgan and executed by an engineer named Topham. It was such that the whole circular structure, weighing about twenty tons, could be turned, so it was claimed, by a lad of twelve. In actual fact the revolution was accomplished by means of a twelve hundred weight ram-engine. The revolving auditorium was in itself a sensation, although not to everyone's taste. When another diorama exhibition opened in London in 1828, it advertised that

instead of the spectator being moved from picture to picture, as in the Diorama at the Regent's Park, he remains still—the aperture through which he looks at the picture is gradually closed, and the picture is then changed. If this method is somewhat injurious to the representation, it is far more pleasing to the spectator than the method of turning round the stage on which he stands.

The Diorama's viewing salon was divided into boxes (admission to which was an exceptionally high three shillings) and amphitheatre (admission: two shillings). The boxes lined the rear of the salon. In front of them were placed the benches of the amphitheatre, which was actually thought to be the better situation for viewing the pictures. The sides of the salon were painted and adorned with festooned draperies. Above the spectators a transparent ceiling, lit by a conical skylight, was divided into compartments containing portraits of celebrated artists. This provided a soft light in the viewing area against which the light of the picture appeared as bright as daylight, "without creating an objectionable gloom" in the salon.

Through the opening of the salon the spectator saw the picture set about forty-five feet from him. A tunnel
formed by dark screens kept the edges of the painting from view and heightened the illusion of the scene's great distance from the spectator.

The paintings themselves were on a finely-textured material, often calico or lawn. Care was taken to obtain the greatest widths of material so as to avoid seams which could not easily be concealed when the picture was backlit. The material, when stretched, was prepared with two coats of parchment size.123

The first effect was painted on the side of the canvas which was to face the audience. Although the painting was done in oils, the technique employed was that of watercolour, so as to preserve the transparency of the canvas.

On the back of the canvas, a transparent blue wash was laid, extreme care being taken to avoid brushmarks. Using a light shining through the canvas from the front, the artist could determine the transparent forms of the first effect and model them on the back of the canvas with gray tones of varying degrees of opacity. The areas of greatest opacity would appear darkest and the areas of greatest transparency would appear lightest, when the painting was lit from behind. When the lights and shadows of the second effect had been obtained by this method, additional colour was added by further application of light oil washes to the backside of the canvas.

The light for the first effect came from a skylight above the front of the canvas. The light for the second effect came from a bank of windows directly behind the picture and about seven to eight feet from it.
The subtle change from one effect to the other was achieved by a variety of screens interposed between the canvas and the light sources and operated by a system of pulleys. The screens, some opaque and some of coloured transparent silk or cotton, allowed a precise regulation of the amount, direction, and colour of the light.

To London critics the diorama appeared as a tremendous advance in the field of scenic representation. Its enthusiastic reception seemed to sound the death knell for the panorama. The Times declared that, in comparison with the diorama, the panorama seemed but a "coarse sketch." In the Repository of Arts, the diorama was described as "a French improvement upon panoramic views, possessing facilities far surpassing those paintings in style of general execution, as well as in the scientific application and distribution of the necessary light for their display." The Morning Chronicle compared the two exhibitions in terms of optical illusion:

The eye never sees distance, and if no other objects are there to remind us that the canvas is a flat surface, the properly disposed light and shade appear to the eye actually to come from objects placed at different distances. The great success of Panoramas and the imperfect delusion they create are accounted for on this principle. Almost every other object but the picture is in them excluded from view. The Diorama is an exhibition of pictures on this principle, but much more perfectly executed than even in Panoramas.

Accounts of the diorama were seldom more specific in their claims for the diorama's superiority, although the Repository of Arts did state that the great advantage of the diorama lay in its ability to present the transitory
nature of the atmosphere. Certain reviewers obviously felt uneasy in this vague realm of art and illusion and made confusing claims about the limitations of the one form and the success of the other:

Natural scenery and objects of art have frequently been represented with great beauty and fidelity in the Panorama, but in that exhibition we can see only detached portions. The distance of the picture from the eye of the spectator is not sufficiently great to impose upon the senses, and if the skill of the artist could produce a momentary illusion, the circular form of the Panorama is calculated to destroy it. In the diorama, everything contributes to favour the illusion.

Certainly insufficient distance and an inept handling of the distortion caused by the curved surface would ruin a panorama's effect; however, in terms of distance, the picture in the diorama was not significantly further from the spectator than in the large circle of the Leicester Square Rotunda. The meaning of the statement about being able to see only "detached portions" remains unfathomable. There was no recognition of the different nature of the two exhibitions. No one acknowledged that for the increase of one sort of illusion in the diorama, one forfeited another illusion which the panorama provided.

The acclaim which greeted the diorama was not complete. As with the panorama, Constable found the exhibition interesting but denied it the status of art. He wrote to a friend:

I was on Saturday at the private view of the "Diorama"--it is a transparency, the spectator in a dark chamber--it is very pleasing & has great illusion--it is without the pale of Art because its object is deception--Claude's never was--or any other great landscape painter's. The
style of the pictures is French, which is decidedly against them. Some real stones, as bits of brown paper & a bit of silver lace turned on a wheel glides through the stone—to help. The place was filled with foreigners—and I seemed to be in a cage of magpies.129

Londoners were aware that it was the scale and refinement of this exhibition, rather than the originality of its conception, that was responsible for its success. The Eidophusikon was often mentioned by English writers in connection with the diorama, not as a crude and primitive anticipation of the far superior present entertainment, but as a skilful and striking exhibition which suffered in comparison with the diorama only because of its smaller size.130

The Morning Chronicle, in describing the diorama, suggested that "the discovery of such a mode of exhibiting pictures demanded, we think, no great stretch of invention in any person acquainted with the principles of optics" and added, with some nationalistic chagrin, that "obvious facts, however, are not always the first discovered, and it remained for a Frenchman to realise the very beau idée of pictorial illusion."131

Two pictures appeared on view at the Regent's Park Diorama each year to the middle of the century, although some of the paintings were re-exhibited several times.132 Until 1832 the works were painted by Daguerre and Bouton and came to London after being shown at the Parisian establishment. In 1830 Bouton took over the management of the London Diorama and began painting all the pictures for it himself.133 After 1832 no new paintings by Daguerre appeared in London. With the Parisian establishment losing money, Daguerre also
considered trying his luck in England, but finally remained in Paris.\textsuperscript{134} Bouton was also drawn back to Paris; in 1840, the year after the destruction by fire of Daguerre's establishment, Bouton returned to the French capital to open a new Diorama of his own.\textsuperscript{135}

After Bouton's departure another French artist, Charles Caius Renoux, provided new pictures for the London Diorama.\textsuperscript{136} Following Renoux's death in 1846, new pictures were supplied by a pupil of Daguerre's named Diosse.\textsuperscript{137} In 1850, the year before the exhibition closed, one of the paintings was by Nicolas Meister of Cologne. It was the only work by a non-French artist exhibited at the London establishment.\textsuperscript{138}

Many of the Daguerre and Bouton dioramas were retained by the Regent's Park Diorama for subsequent reshowing, when the exhibition was being offered for sale in 1853, fifteen of the paintings by Bouton, Renoux, and Diosse were included.\textsuperscript{139} Paintings felt to have outlived their attraction in London were, however, passed to other establishments in Britain.

At the beginning of 1825, the \textbf{Interior of Trinity Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral}, by Bouton was exhibited in temporary rooms in Edinburgh.\textsuperscript{140} It was not until December, 1827, that a permanent Diorama building opened in the city. The Diorama, located in Lothian Road, was not on the scale of its London and Paris counterparts; only one picture could be exhibited at a time.\textsuperscript{141} As early as 1825, Liverpool had a permanent Diorama building in Bold Street. Like Edinburgh
it could exhibit only a single picture. Its opening attraction was the Trinity Chapel which had just previously been in Edinburgh.\(^{142}\) The exhibition sparked an exchange of correspondence in the pages of *The Liverpool Mercury* over whether the diorama was simply a painting on a flat surface or an elaborate piece of three-dimensional trickery.\(^{143}\) Other Diorama buildings for the exhibition of the pictures from the Regent's Park Diorama were opened in Manchester and Dublin,\(^{144}\) and some of the old Daguerre dioramas even made their way to America.\(^{145}\)
CHAPTER V

THE COLOSSEUM AND EXHIBITIONS OF THE 1820S

I

In the early 1820s London had witnessed the introduction of the cosmorama and diorama and the reintroduction of the peristrephic panorama. The remaining years of the decade saw several attempts to crossbreed these forms. The most significant hybrid, however, was not produced until 1841. In that year the Kineorama, a combination of the moving panorama and the diorama, appeared in London. Although the exhibition itself was short-lived, it was to become the prototype for many of the most popular exhibitions during the great upsurge of pictorial entertainments at mid-century. This process of crossbreeding renders futile any attempt to segregate panoramas from dioramas and the variety of other -oramas which proliferated in these years.

The name panorama generally came to represent a moving panorama; diorama could refer to an exhibition like the original in Regent's Park or to either a cosmorama or (most common about mid-century) a moving panorama with special changing light effects.

As for the original three hundred and sixty degree panorama, by 1820 the Barker and Burford panoramas in
Leicester Square and the Strand were the sole examples in the city. No imitators had appeared for over a half dozen years. But if in general the form was in eclipse, at least the original Leicester Square establishment was not in decline. H. A. Barker's panorama of Waterloo, exhibited in 1816 and then brought back in 1820 to satisfy popular demand, had been a great financial success. Throughout the decade a new establishment, the Colosseum, was slowly taking shape in Regent's Park. When it finally opened at the end of the decade, it presented the greatest example (in size if nothing else) of the original three hundred and sixty degree panorama which had yet been seen anywhere in the world.

The proceeds from the panorama of Waterloo enabled H. A. Barker to retire from the business early in 1824. Corner states simply that Barker retired to escape "the labours and anxieties ever attendant on exertions to please the public." However the proximity of Barker's retirement to the opening of the Diorama in London would suggest that Barker took seriously the claims in the press that the new exhibition from Paris had superceded the panorama. Barker may have thought it best to bow out gracefully after his success with Waterloo, rather than to fight a losing battle against the Diorama's popularity.

The Leicester Square Panorama was transferred to John Burford and his son Robert, who had both worked at the Panorama under Robert and H. A. Barker. The son had, in fact, been engaged at the Leicester Square establishment
since 1803, when he had been no more than eleven. Unlike
Robert Barker, who, although he had been a Royal Academy
student, never exhibited there, both the elder and younger
Burford contributed works to the Academy exhibitions. John
exhibited in 1812, 1813, and 1816, and another work was
shown posthumously in 1829. Robert exhibited in about the
same years—1812, 1816, and 1818. Presumably the increasing
demands of work at the Panoramas precluded any later contri-
butions.

John Burford had been H. A. Barker's partner in the
take-over of the Strand Panorama, which at H. A. Barker's
retirement also passed completely into the Burfords' hands.
John Burford's management was short-lived for he died in
1827. The management of both establishments then fell to
Robert Burford. This must have proved too taxing for him
alone, and in 1831 the Strand Panorama closed.

Buoyed up by their provincial successes, another
family of panorama exhibitors, the Marshalls, made a bid
for the London audience in the 1820s. From March 11, 1823,
until August 5, 1826, a number of their peristrephic pano-
ramas which had already been exhibited in other British
cities were displayed in the Great Room, Spring Gardens.
The fact that this was a second-hand entertainment, passed
on not from a foreign capital like Paris, but from provincial
cities like Manchester and Liverpool did not seem to bother
London audiences. The moving panoramas were popular, as is
indicated by a satirical print in the Guildhall Library
entitled "The Moving Panorama or Spring Garden Rout." It
shows a crowd of fashionably dressed people waiting outside No. 5, Spring Gardens, to see the panorama of the Clyde. In the comments of the figures, the artist poked fun at both the crowds of people who were flocking to the exhibition and those who repeated their visits time and again.9

Music played a major part in the Marshall presentations. The panoramas were regularly accompanied by a full military band; for certain subjects and on special occasions even larger musical forces were employed. For the panorama of the Coronation, the military band was augmented by "finger organ" and trumpets, for the performance of the Coronation music.10 On June 17 and 18, 1824, in honour of the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, an extra number of musicians accompanied the panorama of Ligny, Quatre Bras, and Waterloo.11

In both the Eidophusikon and the Naumachia music had played an integral role. Music had also been part of the entertainments of many mechanical theatres. What set the peristerephic panorama's use of music apart from most of these entertainments was that, as in the Naumachia, the music itself served the illusion. At least it was claimed that the band "produces a complete sensation of reality." Apart from military subjects and the Coronation, it is difficult to see how a band could have contributed much to the illusion of reality, but it certainly would have enhanced the emotional impact of the paintings. Whether the peristerephic panoramas employed other sound effects, like those introduced in the Eidophusikon, is not recorded. The Diorama does not seem to have made regular use of either music or other sound
effects, although they were employed at times with telling effect. During the showings of Bouteron's Interior of the Church of Santa Croce in Florence, the Kyrie from Haydn's First Mass was played on the organ. The sounds of storm, church bells, and crashing avalanche were an essential part of the diorama of Alagna in Piedmont.

The Marshall panoramas closed in 1826; the premises in Spring Gardens were to be pulled down. Messrs. Marshalls' peristrephic panoramas did not reappear in London, although they continued to be shown in the provinces for a number of years. As late as 1850 a Marshall establishment was in operation in Edinburgh.

In October, 1828, a peristrephic panorama depicting "the Memorable Struggle between the Greeks and Turks" in eleven views opened at "the Rotunda, over Blackfriar's-bridge." Nothing is known of the artist or proprietor. It was announced in November, 1829, that a panorama of the Thames from London to Richmond, having "long been in a state of preparation," would open in December. Neither artist, exhibitor, nor place of exhibition were identified. It seems never to have opened.

On February 15, 1826, the Poecilorama, a combination of the cosmorama and diorama, opened in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. The exhibition consisted of six views of the size of the cosmorama, but exhibited with painting and lighting techniques of the diorama. The views were by Clarkson Stanfield, who was gaining a considerable reputation for his stage scenery.
Stanfield, born at Sunderland in 1793, spent most of his early life in the Navy and Merchant Service. In 1818 he turned to scene-painting, working first at a sailors' theatre in London, and then at the Pantheon Theatre in Edinburgh. In 1822 he returned to London and occupied positions at the Coburg Theatre and Drury Lane. In addition to his work for the theatres and other scenic entertainments, he was also a frequent contributor to the Royal Academy exhibitions. In 1835 he was elected to full membership of that body. At about the same time he gave up scene-painting, although he continued to produce an occasional diorama for Drury Lane.

Among the Poecilorama views was included one of particular interest, as it reproduced not a contemporary scene but an historical reconstruction—"London in 1590." An additional view of Bath by the watercolourist and architectural draughtsman, Frederick Nash, was added in June. Although the critic in the Repository of Arts noted that the paintings were "adapted to the optical effect, and therefore in a great degree not susceptible of the minute and delicate touches which we look for and admire in finished productions," his overall impression was that "this exhibition is novel and striking, and does credit to the skill of the artists."

The exhibition was to close on November 18 but, because of continued interest, it stayed open a short while longer. In the following year it was offered for sale. "Never having been exhibited out of London," it was an attractive speculation.
Another form of cosmorama opened early in 1827 at 16, Old Bond Street. It was referred to as an "optic panorama" and was stated to be the invention of a Hamburg artist named Suhr. It was in fact the work of two brothers, Christoph and Cornelius Suhr, who had earlier had considerable success with a panorama of Hamburg. Cornelius exhibited the optic panorama throughout Europe. The exhibition consisted of various views of European cities with one representation of a recent event--"The Coronation of Charles X of France." In May another series of views was brought forward. A third change of views took place in July.

Towards the end of the decade, two establishments opened which combined the various popular forms of scenic representation with the attractions of an emporium. Almost simultaneously at the beginning of 1828 the Bazaar (sometimes called the Horse Bazaar) opened at King Street and Baker Street, Portman Square, and the Royal Bazaar (later called the Queen's Bazaar) opened in Oxford Street.

On January 3, 1828, the Bazaar opened with a panorama of the Battle of Navarino. The battle, in which the allied fleets of England, France, and Russia had nearly annihilated the fleets of Turkey and Egypt in the harbour of Navarino in Greece, had occurred on October 20 of the previous year. Burford brought out a panorama of the battle at Leicester Square later in January.

The Bazaar panorama was one hundred and forty-one feet in length and appears to have been of the original three hundred and sixty degree variety. It was painted by John
Wilson, a Scottish artist working in London as a scene-painter and noted for his seascapes, and Joseph Cartwright, a painter of sea battles and Mediterranean scenes and Marine Painter to the Lord High Admiral. The panorama was illuminated by gaslight.

On April 7 a diorama of the Interior of St. Peter's, Rome, painted by George Tytler, a painter and lithographer who also produced a lithographic panorama of Edinburgh, also opened at the Bazaar. The following month seven other "dioramas" were added to the view of St. Peter's, but these additional views were later referred to as cosmorama. New cosmorama views were added in July and August, 1828, and again in March, 1829. On April 20, 1829, the panorama of Navarino was replaced by one showing the Roman Carnival by moonlight. The painting was not favourably received. The critic in The Times commented that "everything has the chilly and uncomfortable appearance of a murky November evening in our own humid island" and wished that the artist "might have produced a more judiciously chosen and better executed representation of the 'Eternal City.'"

In the 1830s the pictorial entertainments of the Bazaar declined in popularity. Advertisements of such entertainments were infrequent. In 1834 a Padorama opened there. It was "a mechanical and pictorial display of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway" which commemorated the inauguration of the line on September 15, 1830. Painted on 10,000 square feet of canvas, it may well have taken the form of a stationary representation of a train behind which
the canvas unrolled, imparting the illusion of movement to
the train. 40

The rival bazaar in Oxford Street began with a less
varied but more prestigious programme. Called the British
Diorama, it was the London exhibition which most closely
resembled the Diorama in Regent’s Park. Its views were
considerably smaller than their counterparts in Regent’s
Park (each was twenty-seven by thirty-eight feet), but there
were four views instead of two. Illumination was by gas-
light rather than daylight, and the pictures rather than
the auditorium were movable. 41 The artists were the
extremely popular Clarkson Stanfield and David Roberts.

Roberts was a native of Edinburgh, three years
younger than his friend Stanfield, whom he had met while
both were painting scenery for the Edinburgh theatres. The
two artists had come to London together and gained almost
immediate acclaim for their scenery. Like Stanfield, he
was a frequent exhibitor at the Royal Academy and later
became an Academician. 42 The four views were painted in
the autumn of 1827 for Mr. Hamlet, a jeweller and the pro-
prietor of the Royal Bazaar. Stanfield and Roberts received
£800 for the pictures. 43

The first year of the British Diorama was a great
success, and Hamlet commissioned a second series of dio-
ramic views from Stanfield and Roberts to be shown the fol-
lowing year. The new views were opened in April, 1829, 44
and, according to Roberts, "promised to be as popular as
their predecessors." 45 However in little over a month's
time the exhibition suddenly and unexpectedly came to an end. In the exhibition of one of the views—the City of York with the Minster on Fire—the exhibitor would set on fire a chemical preparation behind the painting to achieve a properly realistic representation of the conflagration. During the evening performance on May 27, 1829, some of the burning preparation ignited the light, wooden framing and screens behind the picture. The resulting fire destroyed the Diorama and much of the rest of the Bazaar. The building was reported to have been worth £25,000 and to have been only partially insured, yet within a year's time the Royal Bazaar was rebuilt. It reopened in March, 1830, with a new British Diorama exhibiting four new pictures by Stanfield. In addition there was now a cosmoramic exhibition under the name Physiorama, which presented fourteen subjects in a two hundred foot long gallery.

In 1833 the Queen's Bazaar Diorama (as it was now known) exhibited two religious scenes. In January David Roberts's Departure of the Israelites out of Egypt was on display. In June a dioramic version of Martin's Belshazzar's Feast, painted by Hippolyte Sebron, a pupil of Daguerre, was open. The following year at the Queen's Bazaar the diorama subjects were two views of Captain Ross's arctic expedition. The artist was unidentified, although it was stated that the painting was done under Ross's own supervision and from his own sketches. In 1835 Stanfield was again responsible for a part of the exhibition, supplying three of the four dioramic views.
During the summer of 1821 the ball and cross surmounting the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral were being repaired. Thomas Hornor, a surveyor and landscape gardener, obtained permission to set up a small observatory on the scaffolding which had been erected for the removal of the ball and cross. Hornor's intention was to take a panoramic view of London; he had already devoted the previous summer to his project, working from the lantern below the ball. Taking advantage of the scaffolding, Hornor constructed a platform with a small shelter for the camera obscura device which he had developed to take his views. Hornor daily mounted to his platform at three o'clock in the morning so that he would be ready to begin work at the first light of dawn—the early morning, before the smoke of the city had obscured the view, being the only suitable time for his work. In all Hornor took three hundred detailed sketches, which he coordinated by means of a comprehensive key sketch indicating the precise relation of each particular segment to the general view.

Hornor's initial plan was simply to publish his view as a set of engravings. In 1823 he issued a prospectus describing the prints and giving a full account of the arduous and hazardous process of taking the views. The work was to be engraved in four forty by twenty-five inch sheets, each accompanied by a descriptive key sheet. Delivery of the engravings was expected to be in 1824.

In the meantime Hornor evolved a more grandiose plan for his panoramic sketches. In 1824 a builder named Peto
began construction of a huge rotunda in Regent's Park just above the Diorama.\textsuperscript{56} This rotunda, named the Colosseum,\textsuperscript{57} would house a panorama on an unprecedented scale, painted from Hornor's drawings. It was a mammoth undertaking, work on the Colosseum dragging on until the end of the decade. Either fearing that prior publication of the engravings would detract from the impact of the exhibition or simply too busy with his new plans to carry the engraving through to completion, Hornor dropped his original scheme; the set of prints never appeared.

The Colosseum was designed by the young architect, Decimus Burton. It was his first major work and led to a number of other commissions for important public works.\textsuperscript{58} Even before its opening, the building was considered a major sight of the city. Both James Elmes in his Metropolitan Improvements of 1827 and Britton and Pugin in their Illustrations of the Public Buildings of London in 1828 praised the architectural grandeur of the building, which was still largely concealed from public view by the palings which had surrounded the construction site.\textsuperscript{59} When the palings were removed on January 3, 1829, both The Morning Chronicle and The Times noted the event.\textsuperscript{60} The Times declared the Colosseum to be "the chief ornament of that delightful part of the metropolis,"\textsuperscript{61} indeed, its imposing magnitude did make it the focal point of the whole development around the park.

Modelled loosely on the Roman Pantheon but with Grecian Doric detail, the building was a sixteen-sided
polygon, one hundred and thirty feet across (see Pl. 67). The outer walls rose to a height of sixty-four feet; the interior walls were seventy-nine feet high. The lower part of the dome was cased with copper sheeting; the upper portion, seventy-five feet in diameter, was glazed.62

Available statements on the size of the tremendous painting within the rotunda are contradictory. In the descriptive booklet published by the proprietors of the Colosseum in 1829, it was stated that the painting measured over 40,000 square feet.63 This figure was repeated by most subsequent writers on the exhibition. However when the contents of the exhibition were being sold by auction in 1868,64 the catalogue claimed that the picture covered only 24,000 square feet. Even at 24,000 square feet, the picture was remarkable in magnitude—over twice the size of the panoramas in the large circle at Leicester Square.

The artist in charge of the painting was Edmund Thomas Parris, better known as a portraitist of fashionable beauties. Hornor had selected him on the basis of the ingenious scaffolding he had devised in 1824 for the proposed renovation of Thornhill’s paintings in the dome of St. Paul’s.65 The painting of such a vast surface as the Colosseum's panorama had to be accomplished in situ, demanding of the artist both ingenuity and a certain amount of intrepidity. Two prints of the interior of the Colosseum as it was nearing completion (Pl. 68, 69) show the system of suspended platforms employed by Parris and his assistants in executing the work.
In addition to the unprecedented scale of the painting, the Colosseum introduced a new standard in viewing facilities. After passing through a pilaster-lined imitation marble vestibule, the visitor entered a long, narrow corridor which led him to the centre of the rotunda. There he found himself in a large, circular apartment around the base of the viewing tower. The apartment was covered with draperies hung on an arched framework. The tent-like structure, which can be seen being erected in the print of the Colosseum's interior (Pl. 68), shut out the panorama from view. The apartment, called the Saloon of Arts, was fitted out as a promenade with a collection of paintings and sculpture on display.

The galleries for viewing the panorama were reached either by two spiral staircases winding up the viewing tower or by an ascending room at the centre of the tower which could raise a party of between ten and twenty persons up to the first gallery. Like the revolving auditorium of the Diorama, this hydraulic mechanism was itself a sensation. Passenger elevators would not come into use until the 1850s.

When he stepped out onto the lower viewing gallery, the visitor found himself in a replica of the galleries above the dome of St. Paul's. A portion of the dome was reproduced, just large enough to block the Saloon and the bottom edge of the painting from view. Every detail which could lend reality to the experience of the great view of London was employed. Glasses were provided for the viewers
in the gallery to allow them a more detailed inspection of the painting. 69

A staircase led to an upper gallery from which one had another view of the painting. From this gallery one could proceed past the original ball, which Hornor had obtained after its removal from St. Paul's, and a facsimile of the cross to yet another gallery at the summit of the Colosseum's dome. Here one could look upon the real London and compare it with its painted counterpart below. 70

In terms of clarity the painted view with its smokeless, early morning atmosphere was undoubtedly superior.

In spite of its unparalleled elaborateness, the Colosseum's panorama was not completely free from illusion destroying elements. An arrangement of lighting had not yet been perfected which would eliminate the shadow of the viewing tower falling across the painting on sunny days. 71

Another criticism levelled at the exhibition was that one viewed the picture from different levels, only one of which corresponded with the perspective of the painting; however, it seems unlikely that any but the severest critics would have been bothered by this point.

Jakob Ignatz Hittorf, a German architect working in Paris, who designed a rotunda at Carré Marigny in the Champs-Élysées for the panoramist, Jean-Charles Langlois, visited London to study the Colosseum. On his return to France, he published a complete report on his visit in which he concluded that the Colosseum's panorama was not the equal of the Parisian products of Prévost and Langlois. 72
The panorama of London was far from the sole attraction of the Colosseum. The Saloon of Arts has already been mentioned. Hornor, in addition, had exercised his landscape gardening expertise in creating a variety of attractions around the exterior of the rotunda. A three hundred foot long conservatory, with an elaborate fountain as its centrepiece, housed an extensive collection of exotic plants. From the rooms of a mock Swiss cottage designed by the architect, P. F. Robinson, the visitor could look out on a miniature Swiss landscape, complete with mountains, lake, and waterfall.

Towards the end of 1828, reports were circulating that the Colosseum would be completed in a few months time. Interest in the long-awaited establishment was high. Then in December the banking house of Remington, Stephenson, Remington, and Toulmin closed. It was stated that the house's difficulties were the result of disagreements among the partners over the loan to Mr. Hornor of a sum reported to be as much as £180,000. Hornor vigorously denied that any of the funds for the Colosseum had come from the house itself, but acknowledged that "a very comparative small aid had been afforded in the quarter alluded to." This small aid had come from one of the house's partners, Rowland Stephenson, who was a personal friend of Hornor's. Hornor went on to state that

my chief pecuniary resources have been derived from four wealthy personal friends, to enable me to carry on and complete the building, in the confident reliance that the result would prove an ample reward for many years of intense labour, which was considered by them to be deserving of such support.
Whether or not Hornor's financial dealings with Stephenson were strictly legitimate, Stephenson's dealings with the banking house were decidedly not. He absconded with a sum rumoured to be as high as £160,000 and sailed for America.  

Whatever Hornor's pecuniary resources may have been, they were unable to keep pace with his ambitious plans. The building cost £23,000 and over £100,000 had been expended on the exhibitions and interior decoration. In January, 1829, Hornor was forced to open the uncompleted building to the public, charging an exorbitant five shillings admission. Hornor claimed that this preview showing was simply to satisfy the overwhelming public curiosity. Although the real reason seems to have been that the project had run out of money, Hornor had not exaggerated the extent of the public's curiosity. Crowds flocked to the unfinished attraction, bringing in receipts averaging £100 a day. This pre-opening popularity was not sufficient to effect Hornor's financial rescue. On March 9, 1829, it was announced that the Colosseum had been transferred from Hornor to a committee of "highly respectable gentlemen" and that Mr. Hornor had gone abroad.

At a meeting of Hornor's creditors it was proposed that the Colosseum be carried through to completion. The exhibition remained open to the public, while work on the building continued. In December, 1829, the whole exhibition was completed. Although not on quite as lavish a scale as Hornor had envisaged, the exhibition was, in terms of magnitude, without rival.
Great numbers of the nobility came to view the Colosseum both before and after its completion. It was noted that the Colosseum was gaining yet another attraction in the multitude of splendid carriages adorned with coronets which deposited visitors under the portico. At the end of 1831 The Times claimed that "one half of London has already migrated to the Regent's Park to see it" and added that "we think that the other half cannot do better than follow so good an example."  

As the novelty of the Colosseum's attractions faded, the initial popularity waned. In spite of continued attempts to recapture the public attention, within a few short years of its opening, the establishment entered a decline which it would not pull out of for a decade. Under the joint ownership of John Braham, the most celebrated English tenor of his day, and Frederick Yates, an actor and theatrical speculator, additional improvements were carried out. Having bought the property for £40,000, Braham and Yates spent another £50,000 on the establishment; however, their alterations "did not elevate its character as a place of public amusement." One indignant citizen recalled the Colosseum during the period of their management as "a sink of vice." The speculation proved financially ruinous.  

Whether or not the appellation, "sink of vice," was justified, it is certain that the nature of the Colosseum's entertainments was changing. The picture of London and other original attractions remained. But in 1837, '38, and
'39 they disappeared from the advertisements, replaced by comic ballets, Walker's Eidouranion, French plays, and a menagerie.

On April 20, 1840, the Colosseum once again opened under a new management. The change of management was not accompanied by an improvement in quality. Not only were no novelties forthcoming, but the already established exhibitions were not properly maintained.

The property again changed hands on May 11, 1843, when it was purchased by a David Montague for only 23,000 guineas. In October Montague closed the Colosseum for extensive alterations. When it reopened two years later, the Colosseum had been completely revitalized. Montague had put William Bradwell, theatrical mechanist at Covent Garden, in charge of renovating the entire establishment. The Saloon of Arts became the Glyptotheca or Museum of Sculpture, with the tent-like draperies replaced by a glass dome springing from an entablature into which a reproduction of the Panathenaic frieze from the Parthenon was set. The gallery at the summit of the Colosseum's dome, from which one viewed the real London, was now equipped with a camera obscura. Outside the rotunda the conservatory was redone in a Moorish style and a promenade of picturesque classical ruins and a stalactite cavern were added.

The panorama of London had been both the seed from which the Colosseum had grown and its prize bloom; now after over a decade of exhibiting it was wilted. Bradwell employed the original artist, E. T. Parris, to renew his work. The
job entailed an almost complete repainting of the vast picture. Bradwell also designed a new and complementary exhibition—a panorama presenting the same view as the original but at night. The painting was in twenty-eight movable sections which could be erected into an 18,000 square foot shell inside the original panorama of daytime London. It was in effect a huge diorama painting. The light was transmitted through the canvas from the outside of the shell, creating a convincing appearance of city lights and moonlit atmosphere. The original panorama was exhibited during the day. After the close of the day's exhibition, the night view of London would quickly be erected for an evening showing.

The painting of London by Night was executed by Messrs. Telbin and Danson. William Telbin had just prior to this been given his first commission in the theatre—the scenery for Charles Macready's 1842 production of Shakespeare's King John at Covent Garden. He was to become one of the most popular scene-painters of the period and was to be further associated with panorama and diorama exhibitions during the height of their popularity at mid-century. Danson, together with his son, was to be responsible for almost all the subsequent pictorial effects at the Colosseum.

For a while the Colosseum enjoyed a renaissance of popularity. Victoria and Albert visited the establishment prior to its being opened to the public and bestowed the great benefit of Royal approval. Unlike the Colosseum
of earlier years, Montague's establishment was held by reviewers to be in "the strictest and most classical taste" and in no instance "violated by tawdriness of vulgar profusion."\textsuperscript{101}

In March, 1848, the panorama of London by Night was closed in preparation for the opening of another of these moonlight scenes.\textsuperscript{102} From May 6 Londoners had the unique opportunity of viewing night-time Paris from the top of their own St. Paul's. The panorama was painted by Danson from drawings he had taken for the purpose in 1846. The panorama presented the city as seen from a balloon suspended over the gardens of the Tuileries. Advertisements stated that it was an impossible 46,000 square feet in surface, that is 6,000 square feet larger than the claimed size of the original panorama of London by which it was enclosed.\textsuperscript{103} In actual fact the painting was the same size as the night view of London.\textsuperscript{104}

On December 26, 1848, a theatre (perhaps the one originally added by Braham or Turner) opened at the Colosseum under the name Cyclorama. The theatre was designed (or redesigned) by William Bradwell and the entertainment, which presented Lisbon before and after the earthquake of 1755, was painted by Danson and son.\textsuperscript{105} While it was called a moving panorama, it was unlike the other exhibitions which went under that name. It was in fact closer to the Eidosophusikon, consisting of various independently moving models and segments of canvas.\textsuperscript{106} Musical accompaniment was provided by a Mr. Pittman on the Grand Apollonicon and consisted of works by Beethoven, Mozart, Meyerbeer, and Mendelssohn.\textsuperscript{107}
The night view of Paris was replaced on December 26, 1850, by a *Grand Tempera Panorama of the Lake of Thun*. It must not have been successful, for on March 29, 1851, it closed. The Colosseum reopened on Easter Monday with the original panorama of London on show during the day and the night view of Paris in the evenings.

In the spring of 1852 a series of six tableaux of the Great Exhibition of 1851, painted by a John McNevin, was presented in the Cyclorama. In 1854 the Lisbon Earthquake was followed by another recreation of one of the great natural disasters of history—a *View of Naples with the Eruption of Vesuvius and the Destruction of Pompeii in A.D. 79*. Apart from smaller-scale pictorial entertainments such as dissolving views, the cyclorama of Naples was the last new work to open at the Colosseum. From 1854 until its close a decade later, the Colosseum's major exhibitions were reshowings of those old stand-bys—the panoramas of London and Paris and the cyclorama of Lisbon.

As a major attraction of the city, the Colosseum had had an uneven history. In the 1850s and '60s it entered its final decline. By mid-century its major exhibits had lost all claims to novelty. As in the late 1830s the panorama receded into the background of the establishment's advertisements, its place usurped by a variety of dissolving views, magic acts, minstrel shows, and pantomimes. Ultimately the competition of that other great attraction, the Crystal Palace, re-erected as a giant pleasure ground at Sydenham in 1852-54, must have proved fatal.
In 1855 the Colosseum was sold by a Mr. Winstanley. It reopened late in the following year under the management of a Dr. Bachhoffner. Under Bachhoffner the establishment continued at greatly reduced prices until February, 1863. In May it was reopened under new management for a final season. The acting manager was a Mr. A. Nimmo. Advertisements stopped in February, 1864, and we must assume that about this time the Colosseum closed its doors for the last time. The auctioning of the contents of the Colosseum did not occur until 1868. Plans for converting the building into a hotel having come to nothing, it was demolished in 1875.
CHAPTER VI
BOOM AND DECLINE: 1830 TO 1865

I

After the opening of the two bazaars and the Colosseum at the end of the 1820s, the level of activity in scenic entertainments seemed to stabilize. Apart from the more permanent establishments, only a handful of panoramas, dioramas, and cosmoramas appeared during the next two decades. A diorama opened at the Pantechnicon in Belgrave Square in 1832 with two views of the Falls of Niagara. Each painting was thirty-two by forty feet, executed by Eugene Sintzenick from his own sketches made on the spot. On January 20, 1841, an exhibition of Grand Dioramic Views of the Procession at the Interment of Napoleon, painted by French artists, opened at the St. James's Bazaar. An exhibition of sixteen cosmoramic landscape views, entitled the Magic Cave, was open at the Lowther Bazaar in the Strand in 1839.

William Daniell, a member of the Royal Academy noted for his views of India, presented three Indian subjects which were advertised as panoramas. The first, which was painted in collaboration with E. T. Parris, depicted the City of Madras and was exhibited in the New Road in 1831. The latter two depicted the Hunting of Wild Elephants and the City and Palace of Lucknow and were
exhibited in Pall Mall in 1835 and 1836. It was stated of the so-called Panorama of Hunting Wild Elephants that "the painting is too large for a gallery picture, and too small for a panorama." The other new panorama exhibitions of these years seem not to have been considered worthy of much notice. A panorama of San Sebastian, apparently a single, static view (perhaps even one of three hundred and sixty degrees), opened in Maddox Street, Hanover Square, in 1838. A panorama of Canton by a Chinese artist was exhibited at the Royal Polytechnic Institution in Regent Street in 1841.

Various -oramas did continue to appear quite regularly. In addition to the Padorama in 1833, there was a Historama in 1836, a Typorama in 1838, a Kineorema and a Kalorama in 1841, an Akolouthorama in 1844, and an Alethorama in 1845. The Historama was simply a large painting; the Typorama was a model. The Kalorama consisted of "pictures in the new art of ectemnography which unites the characteristics of painting and sculpture." The Akolouthorama presented a series of views of the French expedition against Morocco, painted by G. D. Gibbs, probably on the principle of the moving panorama. The Alethorama was the descendant of the mechanical exhibitions of earlier in the century, showing scenes which combined "highest art with mechanical inventions of an astonishing nature."

Certainly the most interesting of these exhibitions was Charles Marshall's Kineorama. For Marshall, a scene-painter for Drury Lane and Covent Garden, this was his first
foray into purely pictorial entertainments, which he followed a year later with a representation of *The Burning of Hamburg* for Vauxhall Gardens. His Kineorama added dioramic effects to the format of the moving panorama. Painted on a surface of 10,000 square feet, it presented a tour of the Middle East, commencing at Constantinople and terminating at Cairo. The Kineorama opened at No. 121, Pall Mall, on March 15, 1841. At the late afternoon performance on July 20, a fire broke out at the exhibition. The views were illuminated by one hundred and fifty gas jets. One of the coloured silk screens used to regulate the lighting, coming into contact with the jets, took fire, and the blaze spread through the gallery. Although the gallery was entirely destroyed, none of the audience or employees were injured. Miraculously the pictures also remained unharmed, but they never reappeared in London.

During the summer months the Londoner could always find specimens of the latest modes of scenic representation among the pleasant recreations of Vauxhall Gardens. In 1815 the Gardens had presented a Grand Mechanical Naumachia; in 1822, cosmoramas; and in 1827, dioramic as well as cosmoramic views. Throughout the 1830s a Mr. Cocks, said to be "second only to Stanfield in execution," provided the Gardens with a variety of dioramic and panoramic entertainments. The quality of the works was undoubtedly not very high; like so much else in the Gardens, these pictorial entertainments, seen out of their context and in the broad light of day, would have appeared quite shoddy. But the
night-time crowds continued to enjoy the magical illusions of such entertainments right up to the close of the Gardens in 1859.\textsuperscript{17}

II

In 1848 the period of stability came to an end; London entered what could be termed the great panorama boom. During the next few years the city experienced an unequalled proliferation of scenic entertainments. This sudden activity was almost entirely restricted to only one of the many forms of scenic representation. It was the heyday of the moving panorama or diorama (the names now virtually interchangeable) which might or might not include, like Marshall's Kineorama, actual dioramic effects. The Times reported of these entertainments that "the taste for them appears to have been steadily on the increase for some time, and if it is carried much further, we shall not have a disposable room of any size for other purposes in the metropolis."\textsuperscript{18}

Undoubtedly the Great Exhibition of 1851 was in part responsible for the extent of the panorama boom. The influx of visitors to the city occasioned by the Exhibition provided a greater audience for London entertainments than ever before. The international focus of the exhibition likewise would have generated an interest in foreign lands which could be further indulged in panoramas and dioramas. Nonetheless while the Great Exhibition fueled the panorama boom, it could not have created it, for the upsurge of panoramic exhibitions was in full swing well over a year before the Crystal Palace was opened. Indeed The Illustrated
London News, several weeks after the opening of the Great Exhibition, claimed that it was unpopular with the city's showmen:

The theatres do not fill; panoramas—of which the name is legion, and which succeed each other more rapidly than memory can keep pace with—are losing speculations; and people are so busy with the one Great Exhibition, that they cannot encourage any minor ones, or find time for them if they would.

The article ended with the assurance, however, that "business cannot be 'killed' when so much money is spent and spending." 19

To state, as was sometimes stated at the time, that the proliferation of pictorial entertainments was the result of the increasing appetite of the British public for visual information 20 does not explain the phenomenon, but simply describes it. What is needed is an examination of the roots of that appetite—an examination which must wait upon a better understanding of the relationship of art and the general public in the nineteenth century. It can be said that the appetite for visual information in the form of panoramic exhibitions seems to have been fuelled rather than dampened by the availability of such information through such media as The Illustrated London News, whose advent in 1842 was itself a result of an outlook which earlier panoramas had fostered.

It is worth noting that in its assurances that the Great Exhibition would not prove harmful to London business, The Illustrated London News added that "as for public amusements, we believe that there is a chance even for the
Already in 1851 it seems the effects of the glut of panoramas were being felt. If in 1853 it still seemed that every hall in London might be given over to the exhibition of panoramas, by late 1855 the Leicester Square Panorama, the Colosseum, and the Cosmorama (the Regent's Park Diorama was by then defunct) had only the Gallery of Illustration's War with Russia and Edward's Solvorama as active competitors.

Although it is difficult to satisfactorily account for the sudden upsurge of panorama exhibiting, there is no doubt as to what triggered this flurry of activity. It was the arrival in London of several panoramas by American artists—works which had nothing to offer but vastness of scale and the claims of accuracy, but which nevertheless captured the English imagination as that other American product, P. T. Barnum's Tom Thumb, had just a few years earlier.

The first of these mammoth American imports was John Banvard's Celebrated Moving Painting of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, which opened at the Egyptian Hall on December 4, 1848. Although the advertisements made no claims as to its actual size, they stated that it was "extensively known as the three-mile picture." It was supposed to exhibit over 3,000 miles of America's heartland.

Banvard was a New Yorker who had gone west as a youth and made his living for a time travelling along the Mississippi exhibiting from a flatboat crude panoramas in
the small river towns. After an attempt to establish a
more stationary exhibition in St. Louis, Missouri, he spent
a year sketching the great river and then set to work in a
Louisville, Kentucky, studio on a panorama of the subject.
It opened in Louisville in 1846. Exhibitions in New Orleans,
Boston, New York, and Washington, D. C., followed before he
left for Europe with his painting in the autumn of 1848. 24

Banvard's panorama arrived in London trailing a string
of testimonials from American politicians, literary figures,
and Mississippi steamboat captains and pilots. 25 The crudity
of the paintings must have offended some English sensi­
bilities. The Times commented that "much of it is very
crude, and as work of art, it will not bear comparison with
the dioramas and panoramas of this country." 26 Banvard,
however, disclaimed any pretensions to art. The descriptive
booklet to his panorama noted:

Mr. Banvard does not exhibit this painting as a
work of art, but as a correct representation of
the country it portrays, and its high reputation
at home is based upon its remarkable accuracy, and
truthfulness to nature. 27

The Royal Family was interested, and in April, 1849, Banvard
gave a command performance at Windsor. 28

In December, 1849, the Ohio River was added to the
Mississippi and the Missouri, but strangely the total coun­
tryside represented remained 3,000 miles. 29 After sixteen
months at the Egyptian Hall, Banvard left London in April,
1850. 30 By this time he had made a copy of his panorama,
and the two versions travelled throughout Britain and to
selected Continental cities. Between the close of the
panorama in London and Banvard's return to the United States in the spring of the following year, Glasgow, Bristol, Bath, Brighton, Cheltenham, Leeds, Halifax, Warwick, Leamington, Nottingham, Bradford, Hull, Lincoln, Birmingham, and Liverpool saw one or the other of his panoramas.

These cities might also have seen a different panorama of the same subject by another American artist. John Rowson Smith, a scene-painter for several New Orleans and New York theatres, had entered into a partnership with an acrobat and showman called Professor Risley to bring his own moving panorama of the Mississippi to Europe in 1849. The picture opened at the Grand American Hall (formerly Linwood's Gallery) in Leicester Square on March 26, 1849, and remained there until September, when it left for a tour of the provinces.

Smith claimed to be the originator of the moving panorama in America; he had exhibited his first panorama of the Mississippi at Boston in 1839, but this had been destroyed by fire. New drawings of the river had been taken for the panorama exhibiting in London to bring the delineation of the river up to date. According to Risley and Smith, their panorama was four miles long, or a full mile of canvas longer than Banvard's. It took two and a half hours for its full length to unwind before the audience; Banvard's had taken only one hour and a half.

Like Banvard, Risley and Smith gave a command performance before the Royal Family. Also like Banvard, they came well-equipped with testimonials including one from as
noted an American artist as Thomas Sully. Smith's work may indeed have had greater claims to being considered art, but it was still its accuracy and size which were its chief claims to attention. "If the picture have no other merit, it has at least the qualification of magnitude to class it with the sublime, and nothing of littleness to detract from its claims upon the beautiful."  

On the appearance of the Risley and Smith panorama in England, Banvard began to place announcements in the newspapers concerning surreptitious copies of his painting and gross impositions by unprincipled persons. Risley in turn attacked the quality and accuracy of Banvard's work. In the end both were losers. The Boston correspondent to a St. Louis newspaper received a letter from London which contained the following:

Banvard and Risley have both lost money by their Mississippi panoramas, and yet each has got out a duplicate for the provinces. Banvard made money at first, and might have made more instead of losing it, if he had not made it a point to attack Risley and Smith, and their Panorama, and they in turn proved that B.'s was not correct, &c. The result was, that the public became tired and sick of both, and were exceedingly doubtful whether either were faithful representations of the river.

The damage done by their altercation was not as severe as the correspondent would have it. For Banvard, at least, the European tour was a success. He returned to the United States with profits totalling over $200,000. Smith took advantage of being in Europe to work up material for a new panorama on an even greater scale than that of the Mississippi. In October, 1853, Smith's Grand Tour of
Europe and Ascent of Mont Blanc opened at a hall in Leicester Square, where it remained on show until July 29 of the following year.

American subjects continued to be popular for a number of years. The California Gold Rush of 1849 inspired several panoramas of the American Far West. Van Huren's Revolving Panorama of California opened on April 23, 1849, at the Harewood Rooms in Oxford Street, making use of the irresistible ploy of a present of gold dust to fifty ladies in the audience. This was perhaps the same panorama of California which was advertised for sale in February, 1850.

On April 29, 1850, Fremont's Overland Route to Oregon, Texas and California, across the Rocky Mountains opened at the Egyptian Hall, portraying one of John Charles Fremont's numerous surveying expeditions, presumably the one which arrived in California just after the discovery of gold. It closed on December 6, 1851.

Programmes of the natural wonders of America were frequently presented, with Niagara Falls as one of the primary attractions. On May 7, 1851, the Grand Moving Mirror of American Scenery opened at the Baker Street Bazaar with a variety of views including Niagara Falls, the Natural Bridge in Virginia, and the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky.

On April 4, 1854, a Grand Moving Diorama of Canada and the United States opened in Regent Street. The painting was by a Mr. Washington Friend from his own sketches of the St. Lawrence and Niagara Rivers. The exhibition of the paintings was accompanied by choruses of Canadian boatmen.
Another panorama of American scenery presenting the same sights as the earlier Grand Moving Mirror was shown by a George Brewer at the Royal Gallery of Illustration in Regent Street in 1859.

In 1863 Londoners could review the progress of the conflict in America in Church's Panorama of the American Civil War at the St. James's Hall. It had been painted by a corps of American and European artists specifically for exhibition in London. Like Banvard's panorama, Church's merited attention not as a work of art (it was stated that it could not stand comparison with the creations of Telbin), but as an illustration of current events.

Reviewing the entertainment situation at the Easter holiday in 1850, The Illustrated London News commented on the sudden increase of moving panorama entertainments and the American productions which had inspired it:

The success of the long Moving Panoramic pictures from New York, has excited what would almost appear to be an insatiate taste for that class of artistic productions in our own metropolis. Strange it is that we should have received such a hint from a nation by no means distinguished for its school of painting; and we suspect the explanation will be traceable to certain broad effects which alike characterize Transatlantic scenery and manners. How far this species of attraction will be realized in the success of the English Moving Panoramas and Dioramas which have just burst upon the town for its holiday novelties, we will not venture to predict. As regards composition, drawing, colour, and other means of art, our own pictures are, unquestionably, of the highest class; whilst they are as remarkable for their freedom from exaggeration, and adherence to nature, as their American prototypes were characterized by those equivocal recommendations.

The English productions were successful enough that for several years the flood of panoramas continued unchecked.
On view in London during 1850 were moving panoramas and
dioramas of the Nile, Constantinople, the Polar Regions,
New Zealand, Rome, Ireland, Australia, the English Country­
side, India, and the Slave Trade. During the following
year, similar exhibitions of Europe, Napoleon's Funeral,
the Cape and Natal, the Arctic Regions, Nineveh, Hindustan,
and the Holy Land opened.

The popularity of American subjects was matched by a
taste for representations of the Middle East, of India and
the Colonies, and of the British Isles themselves. The
nationalistic feeling which had, in the early years of the
century, given rise to entertainments celebrating the mili­
tary and naval victories of the Napoleonic period was now
reflected in panoramas designed to bring the far-flung
shores of the Empire before the populace of the city at its
centre. The outbreak of war in the Crimea in 1854 provided
the panoramists with a near-perfect conjunction of news­
worthy events, exotic locales, and patriotic appeal. It
was with a flourish of exhibitions of the war that the pano­
rama boom was ushered out.

From the very beginning of the century, the Middle
East, rich in exoticism as well as historical, archaeological,
and religious associations, had been a fertile source of
panoramic subjects. One of the first English productions
to follow in the wake of the mammoth American panoramas
turned to the Middle East once again. The Moving Panorama
of the Nile, painted by Henry Warren, James Fahey, and
Joseph Eonomi, opened at the Egyptian Hall in the autumn of
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1849. Bonomi, a sculptor and draughtsman who had spent a total of ten years in Egypt, produced the drawings on which the panorama was based. Fahey was a popular water-colourist; Warren had gained a reputation for his paintings of the Egyptian desert. The panorama of the Nile remained open until March 20, 1852, after which it was to be taken to the Continent.

A panorama of the Dardanelles, Constantinople, and the Bosphorus opened at the Polyorama, No. 309 Regent Street, in July, 1850. It was painted by Thomas Allom, an architect but also a frequent contributor of picturesque views to "Annuals." Before it closed in late 1851, the exhibition was twice visited by the Turkish ambassador, who authorized "the public expression of his high approval of its fidelity and beauty." It reopened at the Egyptian Hall in 1854 with the addition of a concluding tableau by the noted Covent Garden scene-painter, William Beverley.

Recent archaeological excavations created interest in another Mideastern location—the site of the ancient city of Nineveh. On May 22, 1851, Frederick Charles Cooper, an artist who had accompanied the archaeologist, Austen Henry Layard, in his notable excavations at the site in 1849, brought out a moving diorama of Layard's discoveries.

In March, 1851, the same artists who had painted the Nile opened a moving diorama of the Holy Land at the Gallery of the New Watercolour Society, of which both Fahey and Warren were prominent members. The diorama was soon moved to the Egyptian Hall, where it was shown in conjunction with the
Nile until the Nile’s removal to the Gallery of the New Watercolour Society; it continued by itself until June 11, 1853.62

Just over a month after the opening of the Holy Land by Warren, Fahey, and Eonomi, another diorama of the same subject appeared at the St. George’s Gallery near Hyde Park Corner. The second Holy Land diorama was painted under the direction of William Beverley from sketches by William Henry Bartlett, the topographical draughtsman and author of Walks about Jerusalem, who also provided the accompanying lecture.63

Competition between the two Holy Lands was intense and to a certain extent typical of the situation in a city where so many similar exhibitions were competing for attention. The Egyptian Hall version began to appear in advertisements as "the original and most comprehensive diorama" of the subject.64 Bartlett countered by advertising his own exhibition as "the largest sacred diorama ever exhibited."65 The Egyptian Hall diorama, in turn, stressed its accuracy, making the claim that it was painted from daguerreotypes—-one of the first instances of the appropriation of photography to panoramic representation.66 Bartlett bettered his rival by employing a choir to perform selections of sacred music, including a chorale written expressly for the diorama.67 The Egyptian Hall exhibitors responded with the inclusion of music played on the piano, harmonium, and "orgue à percussion."68 When this proved not enough they engaged a troupe of performing artists from Syria and Palestine to
illustrate the manners and customs of the region. A clever touch of realism at the Egyptian Hall exhibition was achieved with a patent apparatus which warmed the exhibition room, "so that the temperature of the room accords with the climate of the scenery"—a nicety which was undoubtedly appreciated by winter audiences and which appeared in advertisements under the striking heading: "THE HOLY LAND is WARMED." Bartlett's Holy Land closed on April 9, 1853; the Egyptian Hall Holy Land remained open only two months longer.

While much of the appeal of the dioramas of the Holy Land was the result of the sacred nature of the subject, dioramas and panoramas illustrating Biblical episodes remained rare. A series of Biblical Dioramas were shown at the King William Street Rooms off the Strand for a few months in late 1854, and in the summer of the following year, an ambitious panorama by T. Atkin on the subject of the Creation was shown first at St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, and then at the Linwood Gallery. Neither attracted much attention. A few other exhibitions with religious associations appeared in the 1850s, but these were concerned with the present rather than the Biblical past. A panorama depicting the American slave trade was being presented with a lecture by an American abolitionist minister at the Royal Victoria Hall in Leicester Square and then at the Cosmorama Rooms in Regent Street in 1850. In 1853 a Diorama of Christian Missions was exhibiting at the Gallery of Arts in Sloane Street.
Of the great number of panoramas and dioramas in London in the early 1850s, The Moving Diorama of the Route of the Overland Mail to India had the strongest claim to being both the most popular and the most artistically accomplished. The Times singled it out for its "successful attempt to elevate the moving panorama from a mere source of instruction to a work of art." It was cited as "a remarkable example of the popularity to which a well-executed diorama may attain, and the length of time during which that popularity may be preserved." The diorama was the work of a group of artists including three of the foremost names in the field of scenic representation: David Roberts, William Telbin, and Thomas Grieve. The Overland Mail opened at the Gallery of Illustration in Regent Street on April 1, 1850, presenting a succession of views of the places of interest along the route from Southampton to Calcutta. The format of a world-wide journey starting (and sometimes ending) in England was widely adopted by subsequent moving panoramas and dioramas, including Hamilton's Excursions and Poole's Myrioramas, which between them virtually monopolized the panorama industry throughout Britain for much of the rest of the century (see Chapter VII). The Overland Mail closed in February, 1852, and was taken to Dublin where it was exhibiting in October.

Other moving dioramas of India included Calcutta and Ceylon by S. C. Brees, a former engineer for the East Indian railway; The Ganges by Thomas Colmon Dibdin, a popular landscape painter; and Hindustan by Philip Phillips, scenic
artist to the Lyceum, Haymarket, and Adelphi theatres, with figures and animals by Louis Haghe and shipping by an artist named Knell.81 Brees's Calcutta opened in the Strand on October 21, 1850.82 According to Brees it was "not a mere painting but a pictorial diagram, representing the face of nature as it really exists."83 Dibdin's Ganges was showing from December, 1850, to March, 1851, at the Portland Gallery in Regent Street.84 It then reopened at the Linwood Gallery, being shown alternately with a panorama of Paris.85 In 1853–54 The Ganges was at the new Albion Hall.86 Phillips's Hindustan opened at the Baker Street Bazaar on December 9, 1851.87 On September 9, 1853, it was announced that the diorama was for sale.88 In January of the next year it was still exhibiting and still for sale.89

Two of the longer-running exhibitions of the boom years utilized the voyage format to present the colonies of New Zealand and Australia. S. C. Brees, who in addition to his work for the East Indian Railway, had also been the chief engineer and surveyor for the New Zealand Company, first presented his Trip from Leicester Square to New Zealand and Back in One Hour and a Half on December 24, 1849.90 Brees claimed that his work was "three times the size of the three mile panoramas."91 After a year's exhibiting at Nos. 6 and 5, Leicester Square, Brees combined New Zealand with his panorama of Calcutta in the Strand.92

John Skinner Prout, an English watercolourist who had spent eight years in Australia, showed his diorama of
Australia in the theatre of the Western Literary Institution in Leicester Square from March, 1850, to January, 1851.\textsuperscript{93} As a result of the discovery of gold in Australia in 1851, the diorama was reopened a year later.\textsuperscript{94} It was to be brought back two more times: in August, 1852, at 309, Regent Street, and in 1855, back in Leicester Square.\textsuperscript{95} These exhibitions were largely aimed at prospective emigrants or those who daydreamed about emigration or making their fortune in the gold fields. Brees accompanied his panorama of New Zealand with a lecture detailing the emigrant's progress to wealth and happiness.\textsuperscript{96} He may have fallen prey to his own propaganda, for by the summer of 1851, his two panoramas were up for immediate sale in consequence of his return to the Colonies.\textsuperscript{97}

A much shorter-lived panorama on a colonial subject was the New Colonial Panorama of the Cape and Natal which appeared at the Western Literary Institution in March, 1851.\textsuperscript{98} In spite of the addition of new views showing the Kaffir War, it did not remain open beyond May.\textsuperscript{99}

Although the London taste in panoramas in these years generally ran to subjects more remote than Western Europe, the Continent did provide subject matter for some productions. Charles Marshall's moving diorama of the Grand Routes of Tour through Europe ran from February 17 to April 12, 1851, at the Tourists' Gallery, Haymarket, and again from April 17 to October 9 at the Linwood Gallery.\textsuperscript{100} J. R. Smith's Grand Tour of Europe was exhibiting in 1853-54. Exhibitions with less ambitiously comprehensive programmes included a Grand
Dioramic View of Rome, showing at the Linwood Gallery in 1850; Cambon's Grand Moving Panorama of Paris and Versailles and the Diorama of Captain Hill's Tour in Spain, appearing at the same gallery in 1851 and 1853; and Reichardt's Cyclorama of the Tyrol, Switzerland, and Italy, at the Baker Street Bazaar in 1854.

Exposure to the far-off, the exotic, and the inaccessible was a primary function of much panoramic entertainment, yet the popular sense of national identity also demanded that it find itself reflected in panoramas celebrating England's "green and pleasant land." With titles like Our Native Land and The Land We Live In, they appealed to nostalgia and national sentiment; their programmes were intended to be more emotive than educational. Between their Overland Mail and their Ocean Mail, Grieve and Telbin and their collaborators turned their attention to home and produced Our Native Land, a moving diorama surveying rural life in England a century earlier. It opened at the Gallery of Illustration in January, 1851, being shown in addition to the Overland Mail. While Grieve and Telbin looked back to a vanishing rural past, an artist named J. Allen found subject matter in the monuments of the technological present. By April 19, 1850, "a new panoramic movement" had been adopted in his series of railway views presenting the route from London to the Britannia Tubular Bridge, exhibiting at No. 309, Regent Street.

Dioramas of the British Isles did run the risk of being too familiar. The pleasure of recognition could
easily turn into boredom. Consequently the panoramists ranged over the whole of the British Isles for views which the Londoner would find novel. The Land We Live In, a diorama "with vocal illustrations," showing scenes from England, Ireland, and Scotland, opened in the newly remodelled Cabinet Theatre in Liverpool Street in February, 1852.\(^{106}\) Ireland was given several dioramic or panoramic treatments. In addition to *Hibernia*, a "musical and panoramic entertainment,"\(^{107}\) there was also Philip Phillips's moving diorama of Victoria's Visit to Ireland which exhibited from March to August, 1850, at the Chinese Gallery, Hyde Park Corner.\(^{108}\)

Phillips's diorama of Ireland was, in addition to being a pictorial description of the Irish landscape, also a record of a recent newsworthy event—the Royal Visit of 1849. Other news items—the Taking of Rome by the French in 1849, the California Gold Rush of 1849, the Australian Gold Rush of 1851, and the Kaffir War—unrolled before London audiences. The search begun in 1848 for Sir John Franklin, the polar explorer, whose expedition to find the Northwest Passage had disappeared, inspired several panoramas. Hamilton's *Moving Panorama of the Polar Regions* opened on December 26, 1849, at the Haymarket Rooms (the late Minerva Hall).\(^{109}\) Gompertz's panorama, *Voyage through the Arctic Regions*, opened at the Partheneum Assembly Room, St. Martin's Lane, on May 12, 1851.\(^{110}\) On December 26, 1851, *A Grand Moving Panorama of the Search for Sir John Franklin* opened at the Linwood Gallery.\(^{111}\)
The great subject of panoramic reportage during the mid-century boom years was the Crimean War. In 1854 the Overland Mail was once again showing at the Gallery of Illustration. Gradually scenes of the British troops on the way to the East were added, and finally on May 6, the Overland Mail was completely replaced by the Route of the British Army. By December it had become War with Russia. Throughout the campaign fresh views were added to keep the representation up-to-date with the news from the front. A moving diorama and lecture called Constantine and the War was presented at the Egyptian Hall in the spring of 1854. A moving diorama of the war, with thirty pictures, opened at the Royal Marionette Theatre, Lowther Arcade, in the Strand in the spring of 1855. At the Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, dioramic war views were shown, and at the Royal Polytechnic, dissolving views of Crimean battles "with graphic dioramic effects" were on display. In October, 1855, Edward's Moving Solvorea of the War in the Crimea, making use of "machinery on a new principle with the most startling effects," opened at the Hanover Square Rooms.

Besides the actual moving dioramas, a great number of other pictorial treatments of the war were exhibited. The most novel and most significant were the exhibitions of photographs. Roger Fenton and James Robertson each had a London exhibition of their war photographs. As an instrument of conveying information on current events, the moving panorama could not compete with the photograph in
terms of accuracy and realism. Much of the panorama's appeal was thus undercut, leaving the panorama to fall back on its size and the effect size imparted.

While the action in the Crimea provided an occasion for the celebration of British military exploits, the 1850s were not the right time and the Crimean was not the right war to produce the sort of heroic figures which had arisen during the Napoleonic period and peopled the panoramas of that time. Advertisements for the panoramas and dioramas of the Crimean War were remarkably sober and free from the rhetoric of patriotism. The larger than life military heroes of the Napoleonic period, however, continued to exert a special appeal. About the time of Wellington's death several dioramas of these heroes appeared in London. Oddly several of these exhibitions preceded the Duke's demise in September, 1852.

On February 17, 1851, a diorama presenting a Pictorial Biography of Napoleon Buonaparte opened at the Apollonicon Rooms, St. Martin's Lane. It was painted by French and English artists under the direction of a Monsieur de Condé. 119 On April 26, 1852, Grieve and Telbin opened another diorama at the Gallery of Illustration. It illustrated the Wellington campaigns in India, Portugal, and Spain and concluded with the Battle of Waterloo; it had been well over a year in preparation. 120 In the autumn of 1852 Charles Marshall opened a moving diorama illustrating the principal events in the careers of Napoleon, Nelson, and Wellington. 121 A diorama of Wellington's funeral
procession opened at St. George's Gallery near Hyde Park Corner at the beginning of 1854. 122

Artists like Telbin, Grieve, Marshall, and Beverley enjoyed great popularity, through dioramas and panoramas, theatre scenery, book illustrations, and paintings in the annual exhibitions of the Royal Academy and other bodies. The work of these painters was constantly before the widest possible audience. Yet in the panoramic exhibitions of the 1850s these artists often had to share the limelight with a new class of celebrity—the lecturer.

Earlier panorama exhibitions had often employed attendants to describe the paintings and pick out the points of interest in the scenes, but these attendants had always had a subsidiary role. Now this role had grown from attendant to lecturer, rivalling and at times supplanting the artist's importance. A diorama became "a lecture with dioramic illustration." Some artists like Brees and Prout provided their own commentary. In other cases professional speakers like Charles Kenny or J. H. Stocqueler would supply a number of panoramas and dioramas with their services. The talk accompanying the exhibition had earlier been a means of supplementing the educational value of the entertainment. As the lecturer came into his own, concern shifted from the information he imparted to the personality he projected. Songs, dances, and comedy routines found their way into the lectures, recalling the earlier entertainments like those of Charles Wigley, in which panoramas had shared the bill with magic acts and "the Fair
Albiness." The most popular of these lecturer-singer-comedians was Albert Smith, who, for almost ten years until his death in 1860, entertained London with his *Journey from Suez to Boulogne* and his *Ascent of Mont Blanc*—the scenes in each case by William Beverley.\(^{123}\)

While all of London seemed panorama mad, only the Colosseum and Burford's Leicester Square Panorama presented examples of the original three hundred and sixty degree variety. Burford had no intention of letting the public forget the distinction. To his newspaper advertisements and his descriptive booklets he appended a note stating that his was

The ORIGINAL Panorama which was first opened about SIXTY YEARS AGO, and since that time has been increasing in public favour and attraction until it has reached its present high popularity. With the exception of one, it is the ONLY PANORAMA IN LONDON, though various other exhibitions, consisting merely of moving pictures, make use of the term panorama.\(^{124}\)

Considered in the context of the number of rivals—many in Leicester Square itself—exhibiting what was evidently a more popular form of scenic entertainment, Burford's claim of "present high popularity" might seem suspect. Yet its popularity was, if not high, at least moderate. Reviews of holiday amusements were always well-disposed to Burford's establishment and recorded, even at the height of moving panorama mania, that it was well attended. The Leicester Square Panorama had what many of the moving panoramas seem to have lacked—quality. One reviewer spoke of "Mr. Burford's Cerberus of Panoramas" (there were now three panoramas on view in the Leicester
Square establishment. A third circle had opened in 1841.) as "decidedly the highest works of their class." In another note to his descriptive booklets, Burford stressed the quality of the materials he used, including what was undoubtedly a jibe at the techniques of scene-painters-cum­panoramists responsible for so many rival exhibitions:

Mr. Burford feels it his duty to state, as an erroneous impression is entertained by some portion of the Public that the Panoramic Views are a species of scene-painting, coloured in distemper, or other inferior manner, that such is not the case—they being all painted in the finest oil colour and varnish that can be procured, and in the same manner as a gallery picture.

Burford's panoramas reflected, as they always had, the current interests of the public and the significant events of the day. Consequently most of the subjects which the moving panoramas and dioramas presented also appeared at the Leicester Square Rotunda. Because of Burford's insistence that his panoramas be painted "in the same manner as a gallery picture," the subjects took longer to appear at the Leicester Square Panorama, generally following in the wake of moving panoramas of the subjects which had opened months before.

In 1850 Burford brought out a panorama of the Arctic Regions which was novel in that the viewing platform was divided in two by a partition and the circle divided into two semicircular views of the Arctic summer and the Arctic winter. At the same time that the rival moving dioramas of the Holy Land were battling for supremacy and The Grand Moving Mirror of American Scenery was unfolding the natural
wonders of the New World, Burford repeated the divided circle he had used with the Arctic Regions to present semicircular views of Jerusalem and Niagara Falls.\textsuperscript{129}

A half year after Cooper's diorama of Nineveh, Burford brought out a three hundred and sixty degree view of the site.\textsuperscript{130} To commemorate Wellington's death and participate in the resurgence of interest in the Napoleonic period, Burford opened in November, 1852, a panorama of Waterloo, which he had painted from Barker's sketches for the original panorama of the battle.\textsuperscript{131} Allom's success with his Constantinople encouraged Burford to present in 1853 the fourth panorama of that city to have appeared at the Leicester Square Rotunda.\textsuperscript{132}

From late 1854 until early 1857 three different panoramas of the Crimean War opened at the Rotunda--The Battle of Alma, The Siege of Sebastopol, and The Fall of Sebastopol. Interest in the war also gave rise to a general interest in Russia; Burford brought out panoramas of St. Petersburg and Moscow, at the same time that a cosmorama of St. Petersburg was added at the Royal Panopticon\textsuperscript{133} and Charles Marshall painted a forty tableaux moving diorama of Russia: Its Palaces and Peoples for Wyld's Great Globe.\textsuperscript{134}

The establishment at which Marshall's Russian diorama was shown had opened in the centre of Leicester Square in 1851, riding the crest of popular interest in panoramas and dioramas.\textsuperscript{135} Although at first it exhibited neither, what it did exhibit was a mammoth model of the earth, turned inside out so that visitors could view it from a series of
galleries within the globe. The projector and proprietor of the Great Globe was James Wyld, a geographer, politician, and P. T. Barnum-like showman. By the middle of the decade Wyld's Globe was exhibiting a series of smaller models and dioramas, in addition to the great model of the earth. As the number of dioramas and panoramas in London decreased, the popularity of these exhibitions at Wyld's Globe increased. Indeed the galleries for viewing the globe itself were relegated to the status of a promenade for those visitors awaiting admission to the diorama.\footnote{136}

III

In the spring of 1856 a moving diorama of A Trip across the Atlantic and Visit to the Great Cities of America was showing at the Linwood Gallery, accompanied by a black minstrel band.\footnote{137} A diorama of Whittington and Puss in Boots, narrated by Leicester Buckingham, was at the Royal Panopticon.\footnote{138} A Dioramic Tour from Blackwall to Balaclava was at Wyld's Globe.\footnote{139} Gordon Cumming's diorama of the Interior of South Africa was at 232, Piccadilly.\footnote{140} Two Crimean panoramas and the Bernese Alps were open at Burford's Leicester Square Rotunda.

A considerable falling off had occurred from the dozen or more panoramas and dioramas which would have been competing for London audiences just a few years before. The names of Telbin, Grieve, and Marshall were absent, although Marshall's Russian diorama would open at the end of the year. The Trip across the Atlantic, originally called "Sam Slick at Home and Abroad," and Whittington and Puss
in Boots could scarcely have been in the same league as productions like the Overland Mail or the Nile.

The Indian Mutiny in 1857 promised subjects comparable in appeal to those of the Crimean War, but the taste for dioramic and panoramic entertainment was waning. Charles Marshall exhibited a panoramic view of Delhi and the surrounding country; Wyld's Globe brought out a diorama of Lucknow and Delhi; and panoramas of those two cities appeared at the Leicester Square Panorama. Gompertz's Grand Historical Diorama of the Indian Mutiny exhibited for a fortnight in the spring of 1858. That was all.

Through the rest of the 1850s and into the 1860s, two or three new moving panoramas or dioramas would appear each year. None gained particular acclaim and none had particularly extended runs. In 1858 a diorama of the Canton River by Philip Phillips exhibited at the Great Globe, and a diorama called A Continental Trip by Charles Marshall exhibited at the Royal Polytechnic Institution. Brewer's panorama of American wonders, a dioramic Tour up the Rhine at the Great Globe, and Segesser's Panorama of Switzerland in the Haymarket were exhibited in 1859. In the summer of 1860 a Stereorama by Grieve, Telbin, and others opened in the Royal Cremorne Gardens. That autumn Hamilton's Excursion to the Continent and Back in Two Hours, painted on 30,000 square feet of canvas, opened at the Egyptian Hall. Another of these voyage panoramas, P. F. X. Sole's Pictorial Moving Panorama from
London to Jerusalem, opened the following year at the Portland Bazaar Fine Art Gallery. 150

Two panoramas of particular interest opened in 1862. One presented that panoramic rarity, an illustration of a literary masterpiece; the other presented a country which had never been seen in any of the many dioramas and panoramas which had brought most of the world to London's doorstep.

On January 23, 1862, Dante's Gallery opened at the St. James's Hall, Piccadilly. It was a "Grand Moving Panorama of 27 colossal Pictures," illustrating scenes from the Divina Commedia. The work of Italian artists, it had been previously exhibited at home and at the Italian Exhibition at Florence. It was accompanied by pianoforte music composed expressly for the panorama and by readings from the poem (in English on weekdays, and in Italian on Saturday mornings). 151

On May 22 Wilson's Grand Panorama of Japan opened at the Royal Polytechnic Institution. It was painted in oil on 9,000 feet of canvas by native Japanese artists who, it was claimed, worked secretly, for they would "if discovered, have incurred the penalty of death." 152

William Telbin returned to the painting of dioramas in 1863. His new moving diorama of the Holy Land, showing the tour of the Prince of Wales through Egypt, Syria, and Turkey, opened on September 14 at the Egyptian Hall. 153

On December 12, 1863, Burford's Leicester Square Panorama closed. 154 The Regent's Park Diorama and the
Regent Street Cosmorama were no longer operating. Wyld's Great Globe had not proved popular enough to survive the expiration of the lease in 1861. The Colosseum was open, but would continue to be so only a few months longer. The only other panoramas on exhibit in the city were Telbin's Holy Land and Church's Panorama of the American Civil War.

After the death of Robert Burford on January 30, 1861, it had soon become evident that the Leicester Square Panorama could not long survive him. In his thirty-three years as sole proprietor of the Panorama, Burford had come to be too closely associated with the establishment in the public mind. With interest in panoramas generally waning, it was probably only Burford's well-established reputation for quality that had continued to draw the public to the aged Panorama.

The possibility of keeping the Panorama open seems to have been considered at first. At Burford's death the establishment passed into the hands of his only son, Robert William Burford, who was of the medical profession. Temporarily forsaking his chosen profession, the younger Burford took over the proprietorship of the Panorama. The elder Burford's last panorama, Messina, had opened in the large circle only a month before his death. A view of Switzerland was exhibiting in the upper circle and a view of Rome from the Capitol occupied the third circle. Rome closed in July and was replaced in September by the first panorama by the elder Burford's long-time assistant, Henry Courtney Selous. Selous had been working for Burford as
early as 1829, when he had supplied the drawings for *Pandemonium*. Selous came to occupy a position of importance at the establishment, for while Burford took an active part in all of his productions, Selous was consistently credited with having assisted, a distinction he shared with no others. Selous's succession must have seemed reasonable, and his panorama of Naples which opened on September 5, 1861, may have been intended as the first of a series. Whatever the intentions no such series materialized. Perhaps Selous had other plans of his own which he considered more profitable. He was at this time exhibiting in London his large painting of the *Crucifixion*, which would shortly go on tour. Perhaps the response of the public to *Naples* discouraged further attempts at panorama painting on his own. The *Art Journal* commented that "as a work of Art, it certainly appears somewhat inferior to those that have preceded it; the painting is hard, though brilliant in colour, and the light and shade is not effectively managed, and there is, therefore, an absence of power throughout." Within its narrow confines Burford's high reputation was hard to follow.

In an attempt to attract the public, artificial lighting was introduced for the first time in the establishment's long history. In September, 1861, the panoramas were shown by gaslight, which made possible evening exhibitions, "thus enabling many to view this interesting exhibition who till now have been precluded." The price of admission was also reduced to one shilling for the viewing of all three
panoramas. From its earliest days, the Leicester Square Panorama had always charged a shilling for each panorama. 163

These measures failed to produce the desired public response; early in 1863 it was announced that the Leicester Square Panorama was entering upon its last season. 164 During the year the younger Burford brought back some of his father's "old masterpieces." Rome, which had just been on show at the time of Burford's death, opened the series, which included in the course of the year: Athens, which had originally appeared from 1845 to 1848; Mexico City, which had been exhibited in 1853; and Pompeii, which had been on show from 1848 to 1850.

In June, 1864, seven of the panoramas were for sale. Naples, Constantinople, and Switzerland could be viewed at Burford's painting room in Reed's Place, Kentish Town, and Pompeii and Messina at the Leicester Square Rotunda. 165 In March, 1865, the lease of the Panorama building was acquired by Père Charles Fauré, and the structure was converted into a French Catholic church. 166
CHAPTER VII

THE LATER YEARS

I

With the passing of the mid-century panorama boom and the closing of the Burford establishment, London lost its significance as a centre of panorama exhibiting. Apart from their continued use in the theatre, panoramas made only infrequent appearances in London. Those that did appear were exhibited by companies based on a nationwide touring circuit. London had become just another city on the circuit. Although it remained good policy to advertise in provincial towns that one's panorama had enjoyed several months of popularity in the capital, London in actual fact seems to have been somewhat avoided by these touring companies who perhaps felt that London audiences had become jaded.

The panoramas which these companies brought to London were of the large-scale moving variety which had been so popular during the boom and which were so well adapted to touring. When in the 1880s there was a revival of interest in the original three hundred and sixty degree form, the exhibitions which appeared were almost entirely the work of foreign artists and had been imported from abroad. By the end of the century the panorama in either form had virtually disappeared from the capital.

154
From the close of Burford's Panorama in 1863 to the end of that decade, there was an almost complete absence of panorama exhibiting in London. In 1867 Gompertz followed his Arctic Expedition and Indian Mutiny panoramas with an entertainment called the Spectroscope,\(^1\) and in 1869 a diorama of St. Peter's was showing at the Crystal Palace;\(^2\) there was nothing else. That is not to say that newspapers were free of panorama advertisements, for a brisk business in the buying and selling of panoramas had grown up. Notices of panoramas and dioramas for sale had become frequent during the boom, which leads us to wonder whether the number of exhibitions being sold was the natural by-product of a thriving panorama industry or an indication of a glutted market. The business did not all flow in one direction—there were notices of lecturers and exhibitors in search of panoramas as well as notices of those with panoramas on their hands who were in search of buyers. Advertisements continued throughout the fifties and sixties, pointing to considerable panorama activity in the provinces. Since these panoramas did not appear in London, we must assume that, if they were sold and again exhibited, it must have been either in the provinces or overseas.

While individual exhibitions provided some of the provincial activity, it was the touring companies, following the precedent established by the Marshalls, that dominated British panorama exhibiting for the rest of the century. Like the Marshalls, the largest of these companies were family concerns.
One such company was that of the Hamilton Brothers. Although later in the century the Hamilton advertising set the establishment of the firm variously in 1851 and 1852, a Hamilton panorama of the Polar Regions had appeared in London at the end of 1849. The eldest of the four brothers, Joseph was the originator of their moving panorama entertainments, to which they gave the name "Excursions." By the 1870s Alfred Hamilton had taken over the responsibility of painting the panoramas, and the dioramic effects were managed by Harry and William. Three "Excursions" were toured simultaneously in the seventies: Joseph exhibited an Excursion from Charing Cross to Calcutta; Harry toured with an Excursion from Liverpool to New York; and William showed an Excursion called simply Home and Abroad, to which could be added scenes of places and events in the news. Joseph was still exhibiting his Charing Cross to Calcutta in the 1880s, even making a Continental tour through France, Italy, and Switzerland. He enjoyed a ten month success in Paris, where the exhibition was visited by a host of notables, including the president of the republic; the novelist, Victor Hugo; the architect of the Opera, Charles Garnier; the sculptor of the Statue of Liberty, Frederic Auguste Bartholdi; and the engineer of the Suez Canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps. Already in the 1870s, however, Hamilton Excursions had begun to be less focused, the theme of the journey from England to India or America being replaced by a general travelogue into which scenes of current interest were slotted—an outgrowth of their Home and Abroad entertainment.
The Excursions, it was claimed, were painted on 40,000 square feet of canvas, lit by five hundred gas jets. In each Excursion there were approximately fifty different scenes, some of which included dioramic effects. The whole was produced at a cost of nearly five thousand pounds. Accompanying the panorama was "a specially selected company of star artistes," in a programme lasting two hours.

The Hamiltons advertised themselves as "a grand, firm-founded public institution" and "the largest and most complete organization of its kind in the world." There was, however, one contender for the title of largest panorama organization within Britain itself. The rival was that other great family enterprise, the Poole Brothers.

If there is some confusion surrounding the inaugural date of the Hamilton company, the situation as regards the founding of the Poole dynasty of showmen is even more obscure. It seems to have begun with the hiring by Gompertz of two brothers, George W. and Charles Poole, as musicians for his panorama. These brothers eventually became Gompertz's partners and ultimately his successors. In 1887, Queen Victoria's Jubilee Year, the Pooles celebrated their own jubilee, claiming that they had been in operation since 1837. The Poole Brothers could scarcely have succeeded Gompertz at this date as Gompertz continued exhibiting on his own until at least the mid-1870s. Indeed we have no indication that Gompertz was exhibiting as early as the thirties. An exhibition under the name of Poole did not appear in London until 1870, when Poole and Young's panorama
of the Franco-Prussian War opened at the Egyptian Hall. 12 In the advertisements for this panorama it was stated that Poole and Young had been exhibitors of the "principal panoramas" for twenty-seven years. 13

Although the time scale remains unclear, we do know that Charles and George W. were succeeded by five nephews. It was one of these nephews, Charles W. Poole, who coined the name Myriorama for their moving panorama. 14 Like the later Hamilton Excursions, the Poole Myrioramas abandoned one specific theme like the Franco-Prussian War or the Overland Route to India to adopt the format of the trip around the world.

At first the Poole shows employed a lecturer and a three-piece band to accompany the panoramas, but the paintings gradually lost prominence as singers, comedians, and ventriloquists were added to the shows. By the 1880s the companies consisted of from forty to fifty people, including a staff of about fifteen, an orchestra of ten, and assorted artistes. Special trains carried the companies from town to town. 15

In 1900 the Poole Brothers had seven shows touring Great Britain. All of Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Islands were divided into routes and sections which were systematically covered by the seven shows, each tour taking forty-two weeks and being followed by a short period of repainting and renovation. The programmes at this time consisted of Myriorama scenes, vaudeville sketches, and cinema shorts. As the cinema gained ground, the shorts replaced more and more of the Myriorama scenes until the
panorama completely disappeared from the entertainment. The organization had meanwhile begun acquiring a string of theatres throughout Britain, which were run as vaudeville houses and later as cinemas.

The Excursions and Myrioramas were the work of a variety of artists; indeed, the lists of artists given in the advertisements of the Hamiltons, Gompertz, and the Pooles read like a Who's Who of mid-century panorama painters. Telbin, Grieve, Marshall, Phillips, Beverley, Haghe, Knell, Fahey, Warren, and Bonomi all appear. It was only natural that these artists should have continued the work in panoramas, yet it is unclear to what extent new work was actually being produced. Certainly events in the news had to be depicted in new scenes, yet these new scenes seem often to have been grafted onto already existing panoramas, some of which were over twenty years old. Reproductions of scenes from the popular panoramas of the 1850s, either by the original artists or by others, as well as the original scenes themselves, were combined with new material. In 1870 Poole and Young were advertising themselves as proprietors of "the famous 'Overland Route' by Telbin and Grieve and Albert Smith's Egyptian Hall panoramas." Joseph Hamilton's Charing Cross to Calcutta was also a version of Telbin's Overland Route. In 1878 an exhibitor in Edinburgh felt it necessary to announce that his diorama was entirely new rather than "an old one patched up."

A flurry of panorama activity in London was occasioned in the early 1870s by the Franco-Prussian War, which provided
a source of absorbing subjects for panoramic representation, as the Crimean War had in the 1850s. Panoramas on the war by William Hamilton and Poole and Young appeared in the autumn of 1870, as did Montague’s Grand Diorama of the War and Wallis’s Grand Moving Diorama of the Franco-German War. The following summer a Pantoscope of the Siege of Paris by the American artist, Edward May, executed in Paris with the assistance of French artists, opened at the Egyptian Hall, accompanied by a lecturer, a vocalist, an orchestra, and a museum of war relics. The subject continued to attract panorama artists, particularly the French, long after it had ceased to be news. In 1874 an exhibition of Paris Before, During, and After the Siege opened in the Haymarket, and two of the circular panoramas of the 1880s--Philippoteaux’s Siege of Paris and Detaille and Neuville’s Battle of Rezonville—looked back to the events of the war.

The other subjects which appeared in London from 1870 to the 1880s showed a continuation of certain preferences which had been established during the mid-century boom. American and British (more particularly Scottish and Irish) subjects accounted for almost all the panoramas exhibited. The Hamilton Excursion which most frequently appeared in London was Harry Hamilton’s Liverpool to New York, which in fact did not end at New York but went on to show scenes from all parts of the United States. Washington Friend returned to London in 1876, after an absence of twenty-two years, with another panorama of American scenes. New to London was Hardy Gillard, known as the "great American
lecturer," who in 1873 brought the panorama, *From New York to California*, over the Pacific Railway, in thirty-six views. Like his American predecessors, Banvard and J. R. Smith, Gillard stressed the documentary aspect of his entertainment:

The principle kept in view in painting the pictures, and which is never lost sight of in the explanatory lecture, is that the panorama should be really useful in an educational point of view. From beginning to end there is not one sensational effect, nor is recourse had to those adventitious appliances which are sometimes brought in to help out the poverty of such entertainments.

In 1877 a Mrs. Horsley's panorama at the Crystal Palace recreated the battles of the American Civil War. Ten years later the American exhibition at Earl's Court included a Bartholdi diorama of New York Harbour to commemorate the erection of the Statue of Liberty. It is uncertain whether the sculptor was actually involved in the production of the diorama, which would have been a self-advertisement, or whether his name was simply attached to the exhibition to draw attention to that feature of the scene which was its major claim to a new representation.

In addition to the Franco-Prussian War exhibitions of 1870, there was in London in that year Dr. Corry's Grand National Entertainment, showing 40,000 square feet worth of Irish scenery. The portion of the British Isles to enjoy real popularity in the period was, however, not Ireland but Scotland—a national preference founded undoubtedly on Queen Victoria's love of that country and her frequent presence there. The year 1873 saw the appearance of two exhibitions on the beauties of Scotland—Birrell's Great Diorama of Scotland and Royal Caledonian Minstrels, and
Lamb's Royal Diorama of Scotland, with the Original Scottish Minstrels. Both had come from Edinburgh, where Birrell's had been rather poorly received. The complaint was made that some of the scenes showed "too much of haste and glare of colour and little accuracy" and that the descriptive lecture was "laboured, without liveliness." In 1885 Adams's Grand New Diorama of Scotland in fifty pictures, accompanied by a "star company of Scottish vocalists, comedians, sword dancers, etc.," opened at the Alexandra Palace.

Apart from the few Hamilton and Poole and Young subjects and the treatments of the Franco-Prussian War, America, Scotland, and Ireland, only one other panorama exhibition appeared in London until the 1880s. This happened to be an exhibition of a rather special nature. Music had been used to accompany such exhibitions since de Loutherbourg's Eidophusikon; in this instance the panorama was used to accompany the music. On February 26, 1877, and succeeding evenings Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony was performed at the Royal Aquarium, illustrated by scenic effects. According to the advertisements:

In presenting this novel Entertainment to the Public an endeavour is made to realise the scenes suggested by the movements of this wondrously beautiful symphony... and to interpret the varied changes of the music by means of actual scenery, which shall pass in sight of the spectator simultaneously with the progress of the symphony... The panorama has been painted by Mr. Julian Hicks, and it has been the aim of the artist to follow the composer's intentions as literally and faithfully as possible, so that the great musician's conception of pastoral landscapes, woodland glades, murmuring rivulets, the passing storm, and grateful sun-lit meads and vales... may be placed before the physical eye of the spectator as the scenes were presented to the mental vision of the great composer.
In its attempt to provide visual equivalents for the aural images of music, the Pastoral Symphony panorama was related to the more abstract schemes of people like A. Wallace Rimington, whose Colour Organ was demonstrated in London in 1895; nonetheless no further attempts were made to utilize the panorama in this context.

While this particular use of the panorama proved a dead-end, a change in the subject matter of panoramas generally was taking place. The demand for contemporaneity seems to have lessened and, with the panoramas of the 1880s, subjects were more often taken from the past than the present. At times this was only the relatively recent past of the Franco-Prussian War, but London audiences were also taken back to the period of the Crimean conflict or further still to the Napoleonic period, or, with a gigantic leap, to the days of Christ.

II

London in the 1880s witnessed a return to the circular form of the panorama, not seen in London since the close of the Leicester Square Panorama. That these panoramas of the eighties were the work of foreign artists indicates, as The Illustrated London News noted at the time, that the circular form had not suffered the same eclipse of popularity abroad that it had in Britain. In 1881 three huge rotundas were established in London for the exhibition of panoramas. Two of these continued showing vast circular paintings for over a decade and a half; however, the earliest of the three was not as
successful. On March 28 the Royal London Panorama opened on the north side of Leicester Square, just across Leicester Place from the old Leicester Square Panorama. Both the architect who designed the building and the artists who painted the panorama were French, as were the backers who financed the venture. The opening exhibition was a 1,500 square yard oil painting of the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, illuminated, as were many other of the panoramas of the eighties, by electric light. The painting was the work of Theophile Poilpot, a student of Gerome and Boulanger, and Jacob Stephen, a student of Bonnat. As well as being the first painting at the Royal London Panorama, the Charge of the Light Brigade proved to be the last. Although the panorama was advertised as "the greatest artistic and financial success in London," by the summer of the following year, work had begun on the conversion of the building into a theatre.

Considerably more successful was the panorama rotunda which was erected on the grounds of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. On June 3 it opened with a panorama of the Siege of Paris by the French battle painter, Henri Felix Philippoteaux, who had painted a celebrated panorama of the Bombardment of Fort d'Issy, which was in its eighth year of exhibiting in the Champs-Élysées. The Siege of Paris was painted on 22,000 square feet of canvas. Although it was more than double the size of the panoramas in the large circle of the old Leicester Square Panorama, the standard size of the circular panoramas of the 1860s was approximately 20,000 square feet. With the Siege of Paris
Philippoteaux was said to have raised panorama painting "from theatrical use and merely scenic device into the region of pure art." Alma Tadema visited the work and commented that "as you view it, the grandeur of the event it so powerfully delineates enthralls the imagination." As in all good panoramas, it was the event or the location depicted rather than the nature of the painting that impressed itself on the imagination.

The series of panoramas at the Crystal Palace continued with another work by the same artist. Philippoteaux's *Battle of Tel-el-Kebir* appeared in 1884, depicting the suppression of the Egyptian nationalist revolt by a British expeditionary force two years earlier. This work was followed in 1887 by a panorama of Garibaldi defending Rome by another French artist, Leon Philippet. In 1890 the *Battle of Rézonville* was brought over from Paris, where it had won the Grand prix d'honneur at the Exposition universelle of the previous year. Rézonville had been painted by the battle painters, Edouard Detaille and Alphonse de Neuville, who, according to their contemporary, Germain Bapst, had brought the panorama to perfection. They had not simply raised such works into the region of art; they had created "des oeuvres d'art de l'ordre le plus élevé." Through the nineties the Panorama continued at the Crystal Palace but ceased to be advertised with any regularity. Philippoteaux's *Siege of Paris* was brought back in 1893 and again in 1896.
Just three days after the opening of the Crystal Palace Panorama in June, 1881, the Westminster Panorama, York Street, Queen’s Gate, was inaugurated with a version of the ever-popular subject of the Battle of Waterloo. This particular version had been painted on over 20,000 square feet of canvas by the Belgian-born Charles Jules Castellani. Its appeal was vouched for by the over half a million visitors who had seen it during its prior exhibition at Brussels.

The Westminster Panorama was intended as a showcase for a whole series of Continental panoramas. Waterloo was to be followed by the Battle of Ulundi, which was in Brussels at the time of Waterloo’s opening in London; the Battle of Tetuan, exhibiting in Madrid; the Last Days of the Commune, exhibiting at Vienna; and the Last Days of Pompeii, being shown at Naples. Castellani himself was at work on a panorama of Trafalgar which was to be exhibited at Liverpool. None of these paintings actually did reach London, and Castellani’s Waterloo was in fact succeeded in 1883 by the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir by Olivier Pichat, yet another French history painter.

By 1886 the Westminster Panorama was unoccupied. In that year John Hollingshead, a theatre manager and author, acquired the building on behalf of an American syndicate which sought a place in London to exhibit their panorama of the Falls of Niagara. Of all the circular panoramas of the 1880s, the one which had the greatest impact on London was Niagara, which opened on March 12, 1888. It was the
work of Paul Dominique Philippoteaux, the son of Henri Felix, who had emigrated to the United States and there carried on the panorama painting he had learned under his father. His vast canvases, which he called Cycloramas— not from any relation to the entertainment at the London Colosseum forty years earlier but simply to emphasize their circular nature—were exhibited in a number of American cities. Niagara had been painted in the artist's studio at Harlem, New York, on a canvas fifty feet high and four hundred feet in length, which was then shipped to Britain at considerable trouble and expense. In the exhibition particularly effective use was made of the combination of painted surface and three dimensional objects, a device often employed in the panoramas of this period. Actual trees, shrubs, and telegraph poles were placed between the viewing platform and the painting and spectators found it impossible to tell where the picture terminated and the accessories began. By April Niagara was being visited daily by two thousand persons, and by May the number had increased to four thousand. When the Cyclorama closed after two years and eight months, it had been seen by 1,200,000 visitors. The York Street on which the Panorama was located became known as "Niagara" Street or "New York" Street, and the establishment permanently adopted the name Niagara Hall.

Hollingshead, who was acting as a director for the Niagara Cyclorama, opened a duplicate of the Cyclorama, painted by the original artist, in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne in Paris in 1889, but the exhibition was not
successful. Hollingshead blamed the failure on competition from the Exposition universelle. When in November, 1890, the London Niagara was closed in order to be shipped to Chicago, the American syndicate replaced it with a Cyclorama of Jerusalem on the Day of the Crucifixion, which had been painted and bought in America. Unknown to the syndicate, it was a copy of a Munich panorama, and its exhibition brought them to court under the new copyright laws of the Berne Convention. After losing their case, they sold the building and the picture to the man who had brought the action against them, and the exhibition continued. Jerusalem on the Day of the Crucifixion was a more topical subject than might be assumed, for in 1883 General Gordon had claimed that he had discovered the true site of Golgotha. This panorama, the work (or at least a copy of the work) of the Munich painter, Karl Frosch, depicted the event in accordance with Gordon's theory.

Jerusalem was followed a year later by a Cyclorama of Cairo by another Munich painter, Edward Berringer. In 1893 Niagara returned to the Niagara Hall—not the original Philippoteaux Cyclorama, but a representation of the Falls in Winter by an unnamed artist. The next year the Niagara Hall was transformed into an ice skating rink, perhaps with the wintry view of Niagara still in place as an appropriate background to the skating. Panorama exhibiting briefly returned to the hall three years later when it housed the Electrorama, a device invented by Thomas Walter Barber, which
finally wed the actual photographic image with the full-scale panorama. A ring of ten lanterns set on a raised platform at the centre of the hall projected tinted photographic slides onto a forty by four hundred foot circular screen. The desire for complete photographic accuracy in the panorama was finally fulfilled, yet strangely the exhibition enjoyed little success. The development had come too late, and public attention was now absorbed by the moving pictures of the early cinema. Although one hundred and fifty sets of slides were prepared for presentation, the Electrorama remained open for only a short time in 1897 and 1898.

A few other panoramas opened in London in the early 1890s. A Grand Panorama of the Battle of Waterloo, painted by the Munich artist, Philipp Fleischer, appeared in Ashley Place, Westminster, in 1890. That it had a foreground of actual objects arranged by Fleischer suggests that it was of the stationary circular form, but other evidence is lacking. Fleischer had produced a panorama of the Battle of Bannockburn, exhibited in Glasgow two years earlier, and the following year a panorama of Trafalgar by him was included in the Royal Naval Exhibition at Chelsea. In 1892 a Grand Panorama at the Hour of the Crucifixion opened in Ashley Gardens, Victoria Street. Some relation with the Frosch panorama of the subject would seem to be indicated; however, no artist was named and the advertisement for the panorama read: "First time of exhibition of this great work in England."
The incorporation of actual objects within the panorama, as in Philippoteaux's *Niagara* or Fleischer's *Waterloo*, was echoed in the highly popular Grand Spectacles staged at the Alexandra Palace, the Canterbury Hall, and the Olympia. These spectacles consisted of tableaux, often on a quite massive scale, employing large panoramic backdrops and great numbers of people and animals. Perhaps the most elaborate were those staged at the Olympia by Imre Kiralfy. His *Panoramic and Historical Spectacle of Nero*, or the *Destruction of Rome* was presented in 1889 with over twelve hundred Roman characters and wild beasts.76

In 1895 the brothers, Louis Jean and Auguste Marie Louis Lumière, invented the Cinématographe. With this invention the cinema was born, and the panorama was at last completely displaced as a form of popular entertainment. Within a year the Cinématographe had gained world-wide popularity. All manner of bioramas, "living pictures," and "animated photographs" were brought before the public, pushing aside all interest in the panoramas. The moving panoramas lingered on in the entertainments of the Hamiltons and Pooles, but even here, as we have seen, they were gradually replaced by the cinema. A few attempts were made to revolutionize the panorama, like Barber's Electrorama, but none were successful. A John Anderson invented an Analyticon in which a stereoscopic image was projected by two slide lanterns. Each member of the audience wore special glasses, as in the later attempts at a 3-D cinema.77

As a reviewer noted:

From the point of view of optical science the exhibition was exceedingly interesting but for the
purposes of popular entertainment the Analyticon is not very exciting—not nearly so diverting as the animated pictures.\textsuperscript{78}

An attempt to unite the cinema with the form of the circular panorama was made in France by Raoul Grimoin-Sanson, who patented his system, which he called Cinécosmorama (later Cinéorama), in 1897. It was to have been exhibited at the Exposition universelle of 1900, but technical problems prevented its being shown,\textsuperscript{79} and the idea of three hundred and sixty degree cinema lay dormant until the 1950s.\textsuperscript{80}
CHAPTER VIII

REFLECTIONS ON THE NATURE OF THE PANORAMA

I

Present knowledge of the nature of panorama paintings must inevitably remain vague—the outcome of an ephemeral visual art which has left us scanty visual material. The absence of any surviving British examples throws us back upon sketches, engravings, and contemporary descriptions and criticism, in an attempt to reconstruct what these exhibitions must have been like. The keyed outline prints which accompanied the exhibitions, many of which do survive, provide an invaluable record of the compositions but tell us nothing of quality or technique. The sets of engravings issued after a few of the panoramas give us a clearer picture of the paintings they record, but still convey little of the experience of the full-scale originals and leave us wondering about the colour, the handling of paint, and the treatment of distances through aerial perspective.\(^1\) Sketches, whether H. A. Barker's careful, precise rendering of Paris (Pl. 33-40) or Girtin's more vital and visually exciting watercolours of London (Pl. 42-46), provide important insights into the artistic personalities of the men who created them, but tell us less about the huge paintings which grew out of them.

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For further elucidation of quality and technique, we must resort to the problematic area of verbal information. Panorama-goers viewed these exhibitions with nineteenth century eyes and wrote about them accordingly. To twentieth century eyes, surrounded with photographic images, both still and in motion, such pictorial illusions might appear quite differently. Reliance on criticism in the absence of the objects of criticism is always a dangerous venture, particularly so in the case of the panorama. Considered as a popular entertainment, the panorama was often not judged on the same level as "high art," nor considered in the same terms, consequently depriving us of the possibility of evaluating panorama criticism by a comparison with the contemporary criticism of works of art that have survived.

To these perhaps obvious but necessary caveats, another must be added. The variety of artists involved, of exhibition forms created, and of media employed precludes any easy generalizations about the subject. When we consider that panorama painting began in the days of de Loutherbourg and enjoyed its final florescence at the time of the founding of the New English Art Club, it is easy to appreciate that panorama art did not exist as a single stylistic entity.

Nevertheless something of the panorama as a work of art can be pieced together from the extant materials. Through the long and varied history of such exhibitions, some general characteristics of the goals and achievements
of the panoramists can be discerned. The matter is con-
sidered under the two headings of education and illusion,
two concerns which, broadly defined, constituted the basis
of panorama art. These headings are not so much the sub-
jects as the avenues of approach of the following reflections.

II

Almost from its inception the panorama was considered
as an instrument of instruction. Grouped on the one hand
with the more frivolous forms of popular entertainment, it
took its place, on the other hand, in the venerable tradition
of art as edification. Certainly the panorama's educational
objectives were more pedestrian than the objectives of
spiritual or moral uplift which had long been associated
with "high art," yet in conveying information about the
material facts of the world, the panorama served a purpose
which Ruskinian thought was to sanctify. It was a role which
the Barkers adopted very early, as we have seen (Chapter III),
in their intention of bringing before the London public all
places of interest, in their descriptive booklets, and in
their presentation of complementary views of important
locations.

The value of the panorama as an educational experience
will be further considered in the following chapter. What
is important here is that, as an instrument for conveying
visual information about the real world, the panorama had to
be accurate. With Robert Barker's very first three hundred
and sixty degree view, the concern with total accuracy was
already evident. Barker informed the London public that his view of Edinburgh had been exhibited in the Scottish capital prior to its exhibition in London "to gain it an indisputable character for correctness." On learning of criticisms that he had deviated from nature to produce a more attractive view, Barker applied to Thomas Elder, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who supplied Barker with a statement which Barker then had printed in the London papers. Elder stated:

In my opinion, and that of all with whom I have conversed on the subject, after seeing it, it is a most correct and just representation of the city and its environs to the fullest extent of the horizon in every direction, and highly worthy of the attention and encouragement of the publick.

It was the first of many such testimonials to the fidelity of panorama views by persons intimately acquainted with the locations represented.

The information that the panorama was painted from sketches taken on the spot became a necessary feature of panorama advertisements. That the painter himself had visited the depicted spot and made the preliminary drawings was of course to be preferred, and H. A. Barker and Robert Burford both travelled widely, taking views for the Leicester Square and Strand panoramas. For views of battles and of the most inaccessible and exotic locales, the painters often had to rely on the sketches of others. The traveller or military or naval officer with a pencil and some proficiency in drawing could, on his return to England, make money or gain public recognition by selling or loaning his sketches
to a panorama painter. If he had greater reserves of talent and enterprise he could produce a panorama himself.

The insurance of topographical accuracy was often gained through the use of the camera obscura and similar optical devices. It is not clear whether the Barkers and Burfords made use of such devices. In the production of those early panoramas for which we have more complete accounts of the process of view-taking, it is evident that no such device was employed. Several French accounts of panoramas in the early years of the nineteenth century, however, describe the use of a pivoting camera obscura ("chambre noire") as the standard procedure. With the advent of photography, an even greater degree of topographical certainty could be achieved by the substitution of photographs for preliminary sketches. Although panoramic photographs had some popularity on their own, full-scale panoramas of projected photographs were not attempted until almost the end of the century and then enjoyed little success (Chapter VII).

While evidence of artistic taste was expected, artistic licence, if it could be detected, was not to be tolerated. Even the title "artist" could at times seem suspect; Brees stated that his panorama of New Zealand was "not the work of a mere artist, but of a surveyor, whose business it was to explore and set down with topographical accuracy the natural features of the Colony." Education demanded accuracy, but
accuracy was independent of and at times opposed to the demands of art. The comment of the reviewer of Girtin's *Eidometropolis* that "a license is allowed to painters as well as poets; and where a picturesque effect can be produced, a trifling deviation would, in a picture of this description, be overlooked, or forgiven" was rarely echoed in panorama criticism. If a view was artistically unsatisfactory, the critic generally suggested that a better viewpoint or indeed a better subject might have been chosen.

The requirements of topographical accuracy and, in the circular panorama, the nature of the painting's format restricted the artistic prerogatives of the panoramist almost completely to a matter of selection of subjects, viewpoints, times of day, and foreground incident. Even these decisions must have been subject to other than aesthetic considerations. Choice of subject matter was dictated by topicality and newsworthiness. Viewpoints had to be characteristic, that is, a view of a city had to exhibit the familiar monuments with which the city was associated. The omission of any such features would render the presentation of the city incomplete. Completeness, like accuracy, was essential to the exhibition's educational value. Furthermore as a compendium of visual information about a given location, a panorama view would have been judged on the amount, variety, and interest of its detail. This emphasis would likewise have affected the artist's decisions.

For the painter of circular panoramas, the problems of composition were doubly difficult. The need for
factuality rendered pure invention out of the question, and the three hundred and sixty degree format ruled out the conventional framing which could isolate interesting compositions. Judicious selection, so often commended by the reviewers of panoramas, must certainly have been a more complex process than simply planting one's view-taking apparatus on the highest point of ground and setting to work. 14

The unselective nature of the three hundred and sixty degree view invited either monotony or chaos. The amount and variety of detail often present in the interests of topography worked against monotony but could threaten the visual unity of the painting. The panoramist's art was a delicate balancing act between the interest of individual passages of the painting and a sense of cohesion throughout the full revolution of the view. Through the keyed outline prints of the panoramas shown at the Leicester Square and Strand rotundas, we can see something of the nature of this balancing act.

One method of balancing the demands of variety and unity was the employment of a basic contrast within the view, as between city and countryside. Viewpoints were chosen on the outskirts of cities so that the spectator would be surrounded by landscape on one side and cityscape on the other. Many of the Leicester Square panoramas were arranged on this plan, including Bern of 1821, Calcutta of 1830, and Granada of 1852. The earliest Barker production, the panorama of Edinburgh from the Calton Hill, as well as
the later versions of the view in 1805 (Pl. 53), 1825 (Pl. 59), and 1843 (Pl. 63), rely on this contrast between the city and its rural environs.

The opposition of architectural forms to natural forms, of urban bustle to pastoral repose, and of closed, confined space to broad, unrestricted vistas, served to heighten the appreciation of each element and kept the spectator referring back and forth from one portion of the view to the other; however, such a dichotomy could prove a double-edged pictorial device. If all the aspects of the scene were not carefully integrated, the contrast could as easily split the panorama into two distinct pictures as bind it together into a unified whole.

In some panoramas cities were made to recede further into the distance, particularly if, as in the case of Quebec, the city itself possessed no famous monuments which the public would require to be conspicuous in the painting or if, as in the case of Athens (Pl. 56), the famous monuments (i.e., the Acropolis) remained clearly distinguishable. Here the interest of a detailed treatment of a city's interior had to be weighed against its overall sameness and the interest of the city against the variety and attractiveness of its environs. The problem is noted in a review of Burford's Vienna:

Some would perhaps have preferred a point of view within the city itself—say from the Cathedral—as likely to reveal more of the "Mystères de Vienne," but, as the form of Vienna proper is that of a cobweb, with the fibres radiating from the site of the Cathedral, a monotony of view would thus have been produced which it is one great object of panorama painting to avoid.
Viewpoints which placed the spectator in the center of a city were by no means uncommon. Sometimes these views do indeed suffer from a monotonous repetition of the lines of roofs and walls and streets, yet repetition could be used with great effectiveness in a way not anticipated by earlier architectural painting in its treatment of the city. Traditional means of conveying spatial recession, such as the use of orthogonals, were replaced by the build-up of the geometric forms of roofs and walls from foreground to horizon, creating space through the accumulation of simple forms—evident in parts of Barker's view of Paris or Girtin's view of London. It must be remembered, however, that this mode of seeing was no more than coincidental to the panoramist's transcription of the urban scene. It should also be remembered that the modernity of this vision is perhaps more evident in the sketches and key plates than it would have been in the actual panoramas, where greater detail and the aerial perspective so often noted in reviews would have been mitigating factors.

The panorama's treatment of urban views was largely a continuation of eighteenth century veduta painting. Where the panorama and its precursors were different, the difference was not so much a self-conscious act as an accidental outcome of the panoramic format. The nature of the three hundred and sixty degree view made a non-picturesque presentation of the city inevitable. While this seems to have been fully accepted by the Barkers in their early view of London (see Chapter II), they later retreated from such uncompromising
realism. Indeed it is surprising how close the panoramists generally remain to the forms of the vedutisti.

Although it is possible to isolate segments of panoramas which seem to echo the compositions of veduta painting, it is impossible to speak of such compositions extended to three hundred and sixty degrees; they become something quite different. Almost in spite of themselves the panoramists developed a new approach to the city. The city became not just a setting for picturesque incident, but an all-encompassing environment—not a series of eye-catching views, but a totality. Although the audience would undoubtedly still pick out the famous sights and appreciate the veduta-like portions, these were there in the context of the whole and one could not avoid seeing them in relation to the whole. The panorama introduced new possibilities of seeing the city, consequently fostering a new awareness of the urban environment.16

However great may have been the risk of monotony in cityscapes, the city remained at the centre of panorama painting. While at times the panoramist might retreat from the regularity of the city into a more varied landscape, he resorted to pure landscapes much less frequently. The panorama, by virtue of its size alone, was well suited to the presentation of the more grandiose aspects of landscape; furthermore in landscape subjects the panoramist could more successfully sidestep the problems of arrested movement inherent in any representation of the bustling activity of a city (see below). It was, however, this very activity
which was often felt to be lacking in pure landscape. Certainly there was a demand for views of famous natural wonders, yet, however beautiful or sublime a landscape might be, it was commonly felt to be less informative than an urban scene. The public found human activity and the products of human activity more worthy of prolonged inspection than details of flora or fauna. Burford was consequently criticized when he exhibited his panorama of Mont Blanc in 1837. The reviewer noted:

A range of vast mountains is undoubtedly a magnificent spectacle in nature; and as an accessory to effect is often of great service to the artist, but it cannot, with much chance of success, be made the principal and almost sole object in a painting. We consequently do not think that Mr. Burford has been happy in the choice of the subject for his new panorama.

It was noted, however, that Burford had partially redeemed himself with a judicious choice of time, having the setting sun impart to the scenery "a more rich and varied hue than at other times it is found to possess." Certainly in the keyed outline plates, which are without benefit of "the rich and varied hues" of the painting, Burford's Alpine views seem his least interesting.

Panorama landscapes either remained adjuncts of city views or were highlighted by the inclusion of seascape and cityscape elements. Such a panorama subject was the Bay of Naples, presented at the Strand in 1805 (Pl. 54) and 1820 (Pl. 58). The presence of the distant city and of the bay, with its numerous vessels, provided interest and variety.

Surely it is not coincidental that a large proportion of panorama views, like the view of Naples, either were taken
from points on the water or have considerable expanses of water in the foreground. The nearer the objects represented in the painting approached the viewpoint, the more difficult it became to maintain the illusion. The sharp angle at which the spectators looked down upon the lower part of the painting made the problems of distortion most acute in the representation of the foreground. Panoramas like the one of Venice, where the spectator is enclosed within the regular lines of the Piazza, were rarely attempted. Although the distortion evident in the keyed print (Pl. 57) is largely the result of the transference of the composition to a flat surface, it does suggest that the original painting may not have been fully satisfactory.

What appears to us as a more interesting composition, a view of Rome taken from within the Colosseum, was criticized for placing the arches of the ruin "too near to the eye for the illusion of pictorial effect."

A sheet of water occupying the foreground, such as we find in Constantinople (Pl. 26) and Gibraltar (Pl. 52), removed the treatment of perspective to a more readily manageable distance and largely eliminated the more ambiguous relationships between the spectator and objects represented in the painting as being near him. Throughout the almost three-quarters of a century of panoramas by the Barkers and Burfords, watery foregrounds continued to be frequently used; however, as the panorama developed, reticence in dealing with foregrounds seems to have been largely overcome. The prominence of foreground incident as well as
the size of foreground figures increased, as can be seen by a comparison of the early panoramas of Edinburgh, Constantinople, and London with the later views of Athens, Jerusalem, and Coblentz. Although it is impossible to tell how effective these more prominent foregrounds actually were, their increase would suggest an advance in the abilities of the panorama painter.

The increase must also be related to the fact that as panoramas continued to be exhibited the subjects became more and more exotic. Foreground groups not only served compositional purposes but also displayed native dress and customs. The view of Jerusalem (Pl. 62) is typical in this respect. In fact the group of dancing figures dressed in colourful national costumes became almost de rigueur in the later Leicester Square panoramas. Such a group is evident in the foreground of the view of Athens (Pl. 56). Considering the prevalence of watery foregrounds, it is not surprising that in the views of contemporary battles which so often occupied the panoramists, there is an early preponderance of naval engagements. That after the great naval battles of the Napoleonic period more land battles were exhibited may also point to an increased assurance in the handling of the foreground, although it may simply reflect the nature of later nineteenth century warfare.

The early battle panoramas of Robert Ker Porter were extensions around half a circle of the Copley type of battle piece. These panoramas were structured around a succession of dramatic foreground incidents which could give a rather composite quality to the whole. Such at least is the
impression given by the keyed prints of Seringapatam (Pl. 27), Alexandria (Pl. 31), and Lodí (Pl. 32). The small, painted version of Seringapatam (Pl. 28-30) gives us a better idea of what the actual panoramas were like and suggests that they may have appeared better integrated; still, the composition shows a tendency to fall apart into its constituent parts. The Barkers and Burfords in their battle scenes generally withdrew further from the action, concentrating on an overview of the engagement which, if it lacked the excitement of Porter's views, did provide visual unity and--particularly important for an audience craving information--a better sense of the battle as a whole. The Siege of Antwerp exhibited at Leicester Square in 1833 (Pl. 61) is representative. Foreground groups did not disappear from Barker's and Burford's battle scenes; they continued to provide highlights and to display the details of uniforms and armaments. Of course the prominent officers were generally situated where the spectator would have no trouble in identifying them.

Just as the form of the circular panorama influenced the nature of the subjects presented, the diorama, that is, in the original form given it by Daguerre and Bouton, evolved its own types of subjects. Cityscapes, a mainstay of the panorama, were virtually absent from diorama exhibitions. On the other hand, Alpine scenery, generally unsuccessful in the panorama, was a source of many diorama views. The type of view in which the diorama excelled was the architectural interior--a subject which was of course
totally unsuited to panoramic representation. Although the landscape scenes might win high praise, it was in these representations of interiors, generally ecclesiastical, that the diorama was felt to have achieved its most perfect illusion of reality.

Illusionism was, more exclusively than in the panorama, the raison d'être of this form of exhibition. Topography was much less important than the creation of atmosphere. The completeness of the panorama's presentation of a subject had been exchanged for a more limited but, within those limits, more convincing illusion of the reality of that subject. The diorama remained more an aesthetic than an educational experience, until the form combined with the moving panorama and adopted its newsreel function.

III

While the diorama may have sacrificed instruction for illusion and the moving panorama sacrificed illusion for instruction, the original three hundred and sixty degree form of the panorama had struck and continued to strike a balance between the two ends. Indeed the educational value of the panorama was predicated on its illusion-creating power. It was its efficacy in persuading the viewer that he was actually in the midst of the scene being represented that gave the panorama the advantage over maps, models, and books of views and which allowed it to maintain for a number of years a certain popularity in the face of the claims of photography. From ancient times there has been a fascination with the idea that man can be deceived by art into mistaking
art for reality; however, the artist's aim, even if his avowed intention is to reproduce nature with complete fidelity, has seldom been to deceive his audience into believing that they are looking upon nature itself when they view his work. Rather it has been to elicit a response to the truth of the artist's vision or the skilfulness of his hand. There is, of course, the exception of trompe l'oeil painting, but even in trompe l'oeil the deception is only momentary—a joke on the spectator perpetrated to draw attention to the artist's skill.

In the panorama the deception was supposed to be complete and sustained. It would, of course, reflect on the skill of the artist, but only afterward. For the illusion to be successful, it was necessary that during the experience of viewing the panorama, the presence of the artist should not be felt at all. All trace of the artist had to be expunged for purely practical reasons rather than for the philosophical reasons for which certain easel painters advocated a similar effacement.

The viewing of a painting isolated within a picture frame, even if it was painted in a meticulously realistic style and judged by a criterion of fidelity to some conception of visual reality, was qualitatively a different experience from submitting to the illusion of a panorama or diorama. Here we must cautiously venture into the territory of the psychology of art and assume that the panorama-goer of the nineteenth century brought a different set of expectations to the panorama than he would have to a
conventional exhibition of art. In considering the response to either the panorama or the conventionally framed painting we must distinguish two levels of mental activity: the unconscious mechanism of projection and the act of imagination. Given sufficient evidence, the mind will supply whatever is needed in order to "see" the object represented in a work of art. The amount of evidence necessary for this projection to take place varies with the visual experience of a culture, but provided that this projection does occur, one then proceeds beyond it to the level here referred to as imagination, in which the viewer appreciates the achievement of the artist and to a certain extent enters into the creative act with the artist. On this level the experience of a panorama is much more passive, but the process of projection plays a greater role. If the panorama provides sufficient evidence that it is not just a representation of reality but reality itself, the mind will accept this and automatically supply certain deficiencies in the representation. However there will be other evidence, such as the absence of sound or movement, that the panorama is not reality. In the imaginative act of looking at a conventional painting such considerations are irrelevant; in experiencing a panorama, they could be disturbing and ultimately illusion-destroying.

Unfortunately many of the devices employed by the panoramists for the purpose of increasing the interest and information in their works aggravated the problem of the absence of motion. As soon as one introduced figures or
animals, one created an expectation of movement, and as foreground groups grew in prominence, the arrested motion of these groups could only become more obvious. French observers seemed to have been bothered by this from the very beginning. The report of the commission on panoramas set up by the Institut de France in 1800, while it was enthusiastic about the panorama both as an exhibition in itself and as a springboard for other advances in the arts, acknowledged that

A. L. Millin, in his *Dictionnaire des beaux-arts* of 1806, recommended that the panoramist avoid such figures completely, suggesting that a vast landscape was preferable to a city or battle as a panoramic subject for that very reason. After dwelling at considerable length on the absurdity and disagreeableness of presenting a town full of people transfixed in the process of going about their everyday business, he concluded:

> Le spectateur qui se voit entouré de pareilles représentations, pouvait se croire transplanté dans un monde magique, où par la baguette d’une fée tout aurait été subitement plongé dans un profonde léthargie, où par l’ordre d’un magicien tout serait pétrifié.  

While these reactions to the unnatural stillness of the panorama largely centred on the most obvious examples of arrested movement, a similar response to the static atmospheric conditions represented in a panorama must have
led to the French invention of the diorama. Undoubtedly similar feelings lay behind the enthusiastic English reception of the diorama, but in Britain the limits of the panorama's illusionism were never clearly articulated. In 1830 a reviewer in The Morning Chronicle would comment on the new pictures by Daguerre and Bouton that "the artists have shown their good taste in not introducing human figures into their views—nothing can be more difficult to paint; if in repose they add nothing to the effect—and if in action they are preposterous, and destroy the delusion." 24

A Times critic, after praising the verisimilitude of Burford's 1837 panorama of the Bay of Dublin, noted this reservation: "In so great an extent of water the spectator feels that there is something wanting; that, however, is what painting could not give to such a mass—the appearance of some actual motion, some flux and reflux, however slight." 25

In an attempt to bridge the remaining gap between their art and a complete illusion, artists incorporated painting, lighting, music, sound effects, mechanical devices, and actual three-dimensional objects in their exhibitions. Outside the theatre, such a combination of effects toward a single artistic end would not be matched until the twentieth century. In its concern with the total experience of the audience, the closest nineteenth century parallel is with Wagner’s concept of Gesamtkunstwerk.

The introduction of these special effects, particularly the mechanical devices, was often considered unsatisfactory. When Bouton attempted in his diorama of Brest to further
the illusion by introducing, in addition to the changing atmospheric effects, several instances of motion, critics deplored the innovation. The Morning Chronicle judged it "rather a pantomime trick to astonish and be pointed at by children, than to deceive or give pleasure to an artist."26

The Repository of Arts stated that

this mixture of principles is in bad taste. The diorama ought to stand upon its own ground—to afford a more irresistible deception to the eye, and through the eye to the understanding, than any other arrangement in the art of painting; but beyond this it should not attempt to go."27

It is difficult to know when the objections to the introduction of mechanical devices were valid and when they were simply the result of a conservative attitude which could respond to such exhibitions only in terms of conventional painting. The Barkers and Burfords certainly were in the contradictory position of having created and developed an exhibition based on the concealment of the fact that a painting was on view, yet having to assert that their exhibition was, in fact, nothing more nor less than a painting.

Whether the attempts to add sound and motion resulted in heightened illusion or in the distractions of unconvincing gimmickry, the success of these exhibitions did remain primarily dependent on the quality of the painting, and of this we can know very little. From the points of criticism and praise reiterated in the reviews of various panoramas and dioramas, we can, however, construct a list of those qualities which were expected of these exhibitions. One of these qualities was evenness of tone. We may recall the statement about Girtin's Eidometropolis: "Though the Temple-
gardens, and some other parts, are of a much brighter tint than the general masses, the whole is in harmony and the eye is not hurt by spots," and the suggestion that "the front of the Albion Mills would be better if it had been more kept down in colour." The frequent comments on the brilliancy of panoramas' colouring suggest that a rather high tonality was the rule. The tone of Eurford's Constantinople of 1829 was criticized as being "too uniformly gaudeous."

Related to problems of tone was the handling of aerial perspective, one of the most frequently noted aspects of the panoramas in the reviews. These comments seldom tell us more than whether or not in a particular painting the distance was well managed; however, several reviews on the diorama would suggest that the treatment of aerial perspective was a perennial problem. If this was the case with the diorama, which was noted for its greater atmospheric illusion, is it not likely that the panoramas often shared this shortcoming? In 1824 The Morning Chronicle stated:

We are inclined to suspect that architecture, and more especially internal architecture, is better adapted to this species of painting than mere productions of nature, whether in the sublime or beautiful; whatever is seen through a large intermediate space of air, obtains a softness of appearance that either is not compatible, or not yet arrived at in these exhibitions . . . . There is a hardness and un-airiness that tells the eye immediately that it is not nature.

Four years later the Repository of Arts was noting that the public have had sufficient experience of these dioramatic exhibitions, to feel that the delusion of light and shade, which it is their chief object to develop, is better adapted to cloistered and architectural subjects than to landscape representation,
where the eye in vain seeks that chastened and tinted expanse of atmospheric hues, to which its everyday experience familiarizes the spectator who indulges in the contemplation of natural scenery.\textsuperscript{31}

A factor which worked against an effective handling of aerial perspective was the demand for complete clarity. As a source of information about a particular location, the panorama had to present a view that was detailed and perfectly clear. The statement, applied to Burford's Jerusalem of 1841, that "the distances are well made out, without being hard or edgy"\textsuperscript{32} was high praise indeed.

Another difficulty in creating an effective illusion resulted from the changeableness of the light conditions which were so important to the pictorial effect in the panoramas and dioramas which employed natural light. Critics were at times uncertain whether to blame the artist or bad weather for an unsatisfactory view. A review of a diorama complained that "there appeared to be a sort of haziness which did not improve its effect" but acknowledged that "this, however, may have been occasioned by the dullness of the atmosphere on Saturday, and these paintings, like all others, when they are good ones, are seen to best advantage in a clear light."\textsuperscript{33} Just as an overcast day could spoil a painter's effect, a clear day could make a painting appear better than it actually was.

We learn of Burford's Edinburgh of 1825 that when the day is dull, the smokiness and dingy stone of the Old Town produce a hardness of effect, unrelieved, as it must be in nature, by the medium of aerial distance; but the sun-gleams bring out the distant parts; and then even the accidents of this mode of painting, where the colours have in one or two places sunk into the canvas, become picturesque, and the black spottiness so caused assumes
The appearance of smoke, from some object hidden from view, and assists in perfecting the agreeable delusion.

The problem of clarity leads us to a final consideration. Were the panoramas as a rule broadly painted or minutely finished? By analogy with their closest counterpart, theatrical scene-painting, we would assume that the treatment was fairly broad. It seems unlikely that an inordinate amount of care should have been taken with these vast canvases which were destined to be painted out or worn out after a round of exhibiting. This view is supported by certain statements about pictures being "boldly painted and well adapted for this kind of entertainment" or comments that "works of this kind, painted for effect, exclude minute examination; fidelity rather than finish of execution, is the artist's aim."

On the other hand, the requirements of clarity, detail, completeness, and faithfulness to material facts would seem to demand a more finished production. That some panoramas were accorded a more finished treatment is borne out by an article in Chambers's Journal discussing Robert Burford's panoramas:

It might be supposed that these pictures, placed as they are for exhibition at a distance of thirty or forty feet from the spectator, have been somewhat roughly and coarsely painted. The fact, however, is just the reverse of this. The canvas used for the purpose is of the very finest description that is manufactured. The broad brushes with which the sky is painted are of the finest French hair; and even with these delicate implements, the direction, horizontal or perpendicular, in which the brush might be used would be distinctly visible, owing to the fineness of the canvas and the strength of the light, were it not softened down with the utmost elaboration. Indeed, the escape of a single hair from the brush, if it were suffered to remain on the surface, would be a distinctly perceptible