

**A Bird's-Eye View of Modernity:
The Synoptic View in Nineteenth-Century Cityscapes**

by

Robert Evans

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

Doctor of Philosophy

in

**Cultural Mediations
Institute of Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture**

**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario**

© 2011, Robert Evans



Library and Archives
Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-87765-4

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-87765-4

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

Abstract

Title: A Bird's-Eye View of Modernity: The Synoptic View in
Nineteenth-Century Cityscapes
Author: Robert Evans
Degree: Ph.D.
Year: 2011
Institution: Carleton University
Supervisor: Mitchell B. Frank

This dissertation examines the role of the synoptic view in representing the city in late nineteenth-century America, using Boston, Massachusetts, as a case study. Lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs from the tops of buildings and other structures were popular images in the second half of the nineteenth century before the age of powered flight. These lithographs and photographs are usually discussed as records of urban development, but in my dissertation I break down the urban synoptic view into three components for analysis: the viewed object, the vantage point, and the viewing distance. The three components then, in turn, inform my proposal for a synoptic visual regime of modernity specific to urban centres in the late nineteenth century, a period of unprecedented urban development. Lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs usually exist in archives without contextualizing historical information. Indeed, their survival is incidental, making them visual ephemera of the late nineteenth century. My methodology, therefore, relies on interpretive strategies based on semiotics and placing the objects in a general history of urban development. This dissertation foregrounds a body of visual culture usually considered more as historical records, reflective and illustrative of their period, than constitutive of it. This dissertation thus gives consideration to the productive role of the synoptic view in both imaging and imagining the modern city of the late nineteenth century.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to many people, both personally and professionally, without whom this dissertation would not have been possible. I would like to thank first and foremost my supervisor Professor Mitchell Frank for his guidance, encouragement, patience, and, in particular, his extraordinary efforts in the final days to guide this project to its completion. I also wish to thank the members of the examination committee for their comments and suggestions on my manuscript: Professors Peter Coffman, Carol Payne, Stéphane Roy, and Jeffrey Cohen from the Growth and Structures of Cities Department, Bryn Mawr College, who acted as the external examiner.

Over the course of my research and writing, I have had the pleasure of benefitting from the expertise of many people. Thanks are due to Sally Pierce and Catharina Slautterback at the Boston Athenaeum; Aaron Schmidt, Ronald Grim, and Jane Winton of the Boston Public Library; and the staffs of the Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Library and Archives Canada, and the The Maps, Data, and Government Information Centre at the Carleton University Library. I have also benefitted from conversations at different points in the process with Professors Paul Keen and Chris Faulkner at Carleton University, Joan Schwartz at Queen's University, and Mark Dorrian at the University of Edinburgh. In addition, I am thankful for the financial support for I have received from the Social Sciences and

Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Ontario Graduate Scholarship, and Carleton University.

Personally, I would like to thank my friends and colleagues, at Carleton University and elsewhere, who have commiserated, sympathized, provoked, challenged, and, ultimately, supported me through this endeavour. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the support of Anna de Aguayo, Janne Cleveland, and, of course, my heartfelt thanks to Jessie Stewart for putting up with Rabbie. I also wish to thank my parents who have been a constant source of gentle and unwavering support over the last half dozen years, and it is to them that I dedicate this dissertation.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations.....	vii
Introduction: A Bird's-Eye View of Modernity	1
Lithographs and Photographs of Cities	8
Objects of Study and Methodology	9
Literature Review	15
Chapters.....	19
Chapter One: A Historical Overview: Cities and the View from Above	22
Cities	24
City as Representation.....	27
Representations of Cities	31
The Space Between Cities as Representation and Representations of Cities	36
Landscapes.....	37
History of Bird's-Eye Views and the Synoptic View	46
Chapter Two: Pastoral Cities and Prospects of Progress	67
Boston as Picture: An Introduction	69
Cities in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century	79
Cities and Capitalism in the Nineteenth Century	86
Boston as Picture and Rational Landscape	93
Chapter Three: The View from There.....	116
I Am There	118
North, South, East, West.....	120
Where Can I Stand?.....	134
Views from History	136
Views from Modernity	147
Double Modernity	158
Chapter Four: "Boston as the eagle and the wild goose see it, is a very different object...".....	161
A Distanced City.....	165
Boston at a Distance	170
One City, One Voice, One Legible Space	191

Conclusion: Bird's-Eye Views.....	202
Uneven Modernity	207
Synoptic View of Modernity	217
Appendices	222
Illustrations	230
Bibliography	279

List of Illustrations

Fig. 1. Albert Ruger and Notman Studio, *Halifax, N. S.*, c. 1880. [Albert Ruger, *Panoramic View of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia*, 1879; Notman Studio, *Halifax, N. S.*, c. 1880.] Black and white photographic reproduction of lithographic bird's-eye view and four black and prints pasted on board.

Fig. 2. Anonymous, [*View from Arlington Street Church*], 1910. Eleven black and white photographs.

Fig. 3. "Complete Panoramic View of Boston Taken from the Top of Arlington Street Church Spire, 200 Feet Above the Sidewalk," *Boston Globe* (July 3, 1910), 11.

Fig. 4. John Bachmann, *Bird's-Eye View of Boston*. Chromolithograph published by John Bachmann, New York, 1850.

Fig. 5. Louis Bretez, detail of *Paris* (Plan de Turgot), 1739. Commissioned by Michel Etienne Turgot, Prévôt des Marchands of Paris.

Fig. 6. William Burgis, *A South East View of ye Great Town of Boston in New England America*. Engraving published by William Price and Thomas Selby, Boston, 1725.

Fig. 7. Paul Revere, *A View of Part of the Town of Boston in New England and British Ships of War Landing Their Troops! 1768*. Hand coloured engraving published by Paul Revere, Boston, 1770.

Fig. 8. W. H. Bartlett, *Boston and Bunker Hill (from East End)*, engraving published in N. P. Willis and W. H. Bartlett, *American Scenery; Or, Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840).

Fig. 9. W. H. Bartlett, *Boston from the Dorchester Heights*, engraving published in N. P. Willis and W. H. Bartlett, *American Scenery; Or, Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840).

Fig. 10. Louis Le Breton, *Boston*. Lithograph published by Wild Editeur, Paris, 1850-early 1860s.

Fig. 11. Edwin Whitefield, *View of Boston in 1848 from East Boston*, 1848. Lithograph published by Whitefield and Smith, Boston.

Fig. 12. Richard P. Mallory, *Boston from Bunker Hill Monument*, engraving published in Samuel Gardner Drake, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Boston* (Boston, 1856). Larger version originally published in James Smillie and R. P. Mallory, *A Panoramic View from Bunker Hill Monument* (Boston: Redding & Co, 1848).

Fig. 13. Freeman Richardson, *Environs of Boston from Corey's Hill, Brookline, Mass.* Lithograph published by Freeman Richardson, Boston, 1864.

Fig. 14. Thomas Sulman, *Bird's-Eye View of Boston, United States*, engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* 61, no.1733 (Nov. 23,1872).

Fig. 15. John Bachmann, *Boston, Bird's-eye View from the North*. Chromolithograph published by L. Prang & Co., Boston, 1877.

Fig. 16. Thomas Sulman, *London from the south side of the Thames*, engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* (Feb. 9, 1861).

Fig. 17. Thomas Sulman, *New York, from Bergen Hill, Hoboken*, engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* (Aug. 16 1876).

Fig. 18. Map of Boston, published in Edward Stanwood, *Boston Illustrated* (Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co, 1875), 9.

Fig. 19. Albert F. Poole, *Twentieth-Century Boston*. Panogravure published by F.D. Nichols Co., Boston, 1905. Updated version published in "Bird's-Eye View of Twentieth Century Boston," *Boston Globe* (May 19, 1907).

Fig. 20. Anonymous, [*360-degree panorama from Lincoln Wharf Power Station in 11 sections, Nov. 28, 1900*], 1900. 11 black and white photographs.

Fig. 21. Charles Parsons and Lyman Wetmore Atwater, *The City of Boston*. Chromolithograph published by Currier & Ives, New York, 1873.

Fig. 22. F[eodor] Fuchs, *View of Boston, July 4th, 1870*. Lithograph published by John Weik, Philadelphia, 1871.

Fig. 23. [unknown] Favour, *Boston Highlands, Massachusetts, Wards 19, 20, 21, & 22 of Boston, Massachusetts*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1888.

Fig. 24. O. H. [Oakley Hoopes] Bailey, *View of East Boston, Mass.* Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1879.

Fig. 25. Cover of *Illustrated Boston: The Metropolis of New England* (New York: American Publishing and Engraving Co., 1889).

Fig. 26. Masthead for *Ballou's Pictorial* 13, no. 22 (Nov. 28, 1857), 1.

Fig. 27. Josiah Johnson Hawes, [Panorama of Boston from the State House], c. 1858. Ten black and white photographs.

Fig. 28. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Boston from the Dome of the State House, looking east*. 1898. Detail of larger four photograph panorama.

Fig. 29. "Panoramic Views from Bunker Hill Monument," *Boston Daily Globe* (July 28, 1907), 11.

Fig. 30. Anonymous, [View North from Custom House Tower], 1914. Black and white photograph.

Fig. 31. F. Kimball Rogers, *Balloon View - Boston Harbor*, 1879. Chromolithograph published by John H. Daniels, Boston.

Fig. 32. James Wallace Black and Samuel King, *Bird's-eye view of Boston, Oct. 13, 1860*, 1860. Black and white photograph.

Fig. 33. O. H. [Oakley Hoopes] Bailey and J. C. [James Compton] Hazen, *The City of Boston*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & J. C. Hazen, Boston, 1879.

Fig. 34. Albert E. Downs, *Boston*. Chromolithograph published by A. E. Downs, Boston, 1899.

Fig. 35. Benjamin Franklin Nutting, *Birds' Eye View of Boston*. Lithograph published by B.B. Russell & Co, Boston, 1868.

Fig. 36. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - North*, 1894. Black and white photograph.

Fig. 37. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - East*, 1894. Black and white photograph.

Fig. 38. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - South*, 1894. Black and white photograph.

Fig. 39. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - West*, 1894. Black and white photograph.

Fig. 40. Charles R. Parsons, *Bird's-eye view of Boston, showing the burned district*. Engraving published in *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 831 (30 Nov. 1872): 936.

Fig. 41. James Wallace Black, *67 Milk Street Opposite the Post Office – The Boston Button Company*, 1872. Black and white photograph.

Fig. 42. C. S. [Charles Stanley] Reinhart, *Boston – "Into the Jaws of Death."* Engraving published in *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 831 (30 Nov. 1872): n.p.

Fig. 43. Anonymous, *Birds-eye view of Boston and vicinity, showing the outlying towns and villages and railroad communications*. Engraving published in *Harper's Weekly* 15, no. 758 (8 July 1871): 638.

Fig. 44. Detail of figure 43.

Fig. 45. George Curtis, *The Model of the Metropolitan District of Boston – Bird's-Eye View from the East*. Photomechanical transfer published in G. C. Curtis, *A Description of the Topographical Model of Metropolitan Boston* ([Boston]: Board of Paris Exposition Managers of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1900).

Fig. 46. E. A. E., *City of St. John. 1882*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey Co., 1882.

Fig. 47. Anonymous, *Moncton, New Brunswick. 1881*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey Co., 1881.

Fig. 48. H. H. Rowley, *View of Boston, Massachusetts. 1880*. Lithograph published by H.H. Rowley & Co., 1880.

Introduction

A Bird's-Eye View of Modernity

The view from above is, today, quotidian. Google Earth allows anyone with a computer and an internet connection to travel vicariously around the world, looking at sites and cities from what would have been, in the nineteenth century, a novel perspective. The twenty-first century armchair traveller has resources at which his or her nineteenth-century descendants would marvel: aerial photographs on computer screens, the view from the observation decks of the tallest buildings and towers, or from the window of one of the thousands of commercial jet liners that criss-cross the skies every day. These images may still fascinate us at times, but they are commonplace and readily available.

This was not the case in the second half of the nineteenth century, a period when many of the urban, geographical, political, social, and cultural traditions and institutions we know today were established. States, provinces, and countries were created; many contemporary urban metropolises grew to prominence, especially on the eastern coast of North America; and occupations from librarians to firefighters and police officers were standardized and professionalized. It was in this ever changing synthesis of growth and control that bird's-eye view prints experienced a renaissance in the United States and Canada. In addition to lithographic bird's-eye views of cities from practically

unattainable heights in the sky, photographers scrambled to ever higher elevations to take panoramic photographs from the rooftops of new and higher structures.

The term "bird's-eye view" was used commonly in the mid and late nineteenth century to refer to much more than printed views from a bird's perspective. Newspaper articles in the United States engaged in "bird's-eye views" of everything from federal politics to the description of forthcoming music programmes. The *Boston Evening Transcript* advised its readers one evening that "Sir Julius Benedict is preparing for publication at his fiftieth annual concert a book which will give a bird's-eye view of music in England during the last fifty years."¹ The bird's-eye view, however, was not always a desired frame of mind. The opening paragraph of a review of the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876, written by the anonymous "Flaneur," takes a more negative stance: "A 'bird's-eye view,' as it is called, of anything on a great scale is apt to be unsatisfactory, and the 'bird' becomes a fitting subject for sympathy."² The author then compares the bird's-eye view to geographer Alexander von Humboldt's remark about "a certain tourist [who] had travelled more and seen less than any man he ever knew."³ In the phrase "bird's-eye view," there was clearly an

¹ "Music and Drama," *Boston Evening Transcript*, April 29, 1884, 6.

² Flaneur, "A Bird's-Eye View. The Best Way to See the Exhibition," *Boston Daily Globe*, June 13, 1876, 4.

³ Flaneur, "A Bird's-Eye View," 4.

expectation of comprehensiveness. But at the same time, this breadth of knowledge was associated with superficiality. Such an inverse relationship was also true of the visual bird's-eye view. The nineteenth-century French photographer Nadar noted the difference between the knowledge he could garner from a balloon view of Paris and what he knew to be the reality on the ground, observing "everything appears to us [from the balloon] with the exquisite impression of a marvellous, ravishing cleanliness! No squalor or blots on the landscape. There is nothing like distance to remove us from all ugliness."⁴

The overview, the omniscient view, the bird's-eye view, all of these variations on the "view from above," are iterations of the synoptic view, which contain within them the notion of a superior view. Indeed, the French adjective *supérieur* includes both the senses of being physically above something (higher, upper) and being better than ordinary (high class, the person in charge). In the late eighteenth century, the view from above, as John Barrell claims, was often associated with the "equal wide survey" of the aristocracy and the ruling classes,⁵ combining both senses of *supérieur*. The view from above is an all-encompassing, revelatory, and even powerful vantage point from which the viewer can see the many parts of the whole in relation to one another. Likewise,

⁴ English translation of this passage from Nadar's *Quand j'étais photographe* (1900) is taken from Michel Frizot, "Another Kind of Photography: New Points of View," in *The New History of Photography*, ed. Michel Frizot (Köln: Könemann, 1998), 391.

⁵ See John Barrell, "The Public Prospect and the Private View: The Politics of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain," in *Landscape, Natural Beauty, and the Arts*, ed. Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 81-102.

the elevated view of the city, from a real or imaginary vantage point, has been seen as important to understanding the character of the city, even to the degree where some writers have used the word "physiognomy" when discussing bird's-eye views.⁶ For example, traveller Thomas Coryat wrote in 1611 that a "true view of Venice" could be attained only from the bell tower of San Marco.⁷ Montaigne noted that when visiting Rome, the first thing he did was to go to the top of Janiculum Hill to get a complete and unified image of the city in his mind.⁸ And when Montesquieu went to Italy in 1728, he stated, "When I arrive in a city, I climb the highest steeple or tower to have a view of the whole before seeing the individual parts, and when I leave I do the same in order to fix my ideas."⁹

Aerial views were not new in the nineteenth century; in fact, there is a long history of representing cities and landscape in general from a "bird's-eye view." Typical Italian medieval images of cities and towns were highly stylized plans featuring the monumental and important buildings of a city drawn using intuitive perspective. The buildings on the abstract plan represented the city the same way as do a coat of arms or an allegorical figure. These medieval "cityscapes" were the embodiment of the city without being burdened by the responsibility of

⁶ See Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 50.

⁷ Quoted in Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*, 57.

⁸ Quoted in Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*, 76.

⁹ Quoted in Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*, 76.

mimetic representation. In the fifteenth century, bird's-eye views used the increasingly naturalistic visual vocabulary of painting and drawing of the period and, to our eyes, started to look like plausible aerial views of cities. However, they were often still idealized.¹⁰

Much later, in the nineteenth century, London, Paris, and other developing metropolises were often represented in novels and popular prints as dark, crowded places, especially in comparison to the more picturesque surrounding rural areas. Indeed, the appreciation of nature, especially nature imagery, was "a distinctive mode of urban consumption" in which the restorative qualities of the picturesque natural world were opposed to the corrupting influence of the city.¹¹ Parisian parks, managed intrusions of nature into the urban fabric of the metropolis, were places where urban dwellers "could immerse themselves in the goodness of air and light and restorative exercise"¹² to relieve themselves of the "cancerous" city that had developed from some "tumorous growth-process."¹³ Méryon's *Eaux-fortes sur Paris*, a gloomy print series of an urban picturesque that was disappearing under Haussmann's direction, and Victor Hugo's *Les*

¹⁰ Juergen Schulz, "Jacopo de' Barbari's View of Venice: Map Making, City Views, and Moralized Geography Before the Year 1500," *The Art Bulletin* 60, no. 3 (1978), 425-74.

¹¹ Nicholas Green, *The Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 71.

¹² Green, *The Spectacle of Nature*, 74.

¹³ H. G. Wells, *Tono-Bungay*, quoted in Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London: Odhams Books, 1963), 358. Wells' protagonist George Ponderevo notes that the "endless streets of undistinguished houses" that developed in London in the nineteenth century suggest to him "the unorganized, abundant substance of some tumorous growth-process."

Misérables describe Paris as a foreboding place where evil and danger lurk on every dark and cramped street. And as cultural geographer Mike Crang notes, Hugo's "novel often takes an aerial view [of Paris] but this view does not allow a perfect knowledge of the city; the city remains dark, ominous and labyrinthine."¹⁴ The same aesthetic abstraction of the experience of the city at street level was noted in the nineteenth century by an embittered Hugo who believed that Haussmann's new Paris would appear from a balloon to have a "hint of the grandiose in the simple and the unexpected in the beautiful, which characterizes a checkerboard."¹⁵ Here, morals and ethics have been replaced with a reductive aestheticization of the streets below. The simplification and geometricization that is the result of distance leads Hugo to lament the representational loss of life on the street.

Within the narrower context of cities and towns in North America in the second half of the nineteenth century, from the American Civil War to the beginning of World War I, lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs were popular means of representation. The form was not new, but the media and object of representation were. If, in the context of the profound changes in American cities in the late nineteenth century, "the task [of representation] was not merely one of describing a new world but also of finding

¹⁴ Mike Crang, *Cultural Geography* (London: Routledge, 1998), 50.

¹⁵ T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*, revised ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 32.

new words and ways in which to do so,"¹⁶ then how do we explain the popularity of the synoptic view, a form with a long history, almost as long as the history of the city? The synoptic view was attractive for at least two seemingly contradictory reasons. First, the aerial point of view offered viewers a sense of mastery over the streets below, a position that was eventually fulfilled in a very profound way in World War I.¹⁷ The cacophony of modern streets as outlined by Georg Simmel and later recovered by Walter Benjamin through Baudelaire is replaced with a static view of gridded order.¹⁸ Second, the overviews provided the opportunity for civic leaders to emphasize the industrial modernity of the city, the very thing that challenged the perceived solidity of traditional urban fabric. The aerial view showed both the order implied by the grid of the city—or in some cases, creating a grid where none was present—and the ceaseless activity of industrial modernity through the inclusion of modern transportation and factories.¹⁹

¹⁶ William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, "From 'Great Town' to 'Nonplace Urban Realm': Reading the Modern City," in *Visions of the Modern City: Essays in History, Art, and Literature*, ed. William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 12.

¹⁷ This point is particularly true of military applications of the aerial view. For example, in *La photographie aérienne par cerf-volant* (1890), Arthur Batut argues for the use of kite airborne cameras for surveillance, and the first Canadian aerial photographs were taken from a balloon by the army in Halifax in 1883.

¹⁸ Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1999), 14-26.

¹⁹ For an example of the creation of a grid where none existed, see F. Myrick's drawing *Rooftop View of the Business District, Boston*, c.1910-1915 (Boston Athenaeum, D B64B6 V.g. no.5). The sharp angles of the buildings give the city blocks regular patterns, something that is not present in real life. This is an older part of the city where streets intersect with each other at different angles, which creates an uneven pattern.

Lithographs and Photographs of Cities

In 1879, Albert Ruger published a lithographic bird's-eye view of Halifax,²⁰ after he and fellow bird's-eye view artist T. M. Fowler spent part of 1878 and 1879 travelling through eastern Canada drawing cities and towns along the way.²¹ At the same time, William Notman of Montreal had established photography studios throughout eastern Canada.²² Urban views were part of the standard inventory of commercial photographers, and Notman's studios were no exception. Notman Studio took a number of view photographs in Halifax from the late 1860s to the 1890s, including a multi-frame panorama from Citadel Hill in the centre of the city in the mid to late-1870s. Ruger's lithograph and Notman's photograph are both synoptic views of the city. They are very different views from different vantage points in different media, but they are similar enough that someone decided to paste them together on a piece of board that is now in the collection of Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (fig. 1).²³ The origin of this nineteenth-

²⁰ Albert Ruger, *Panoramic View of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia*. Published in 1879, probably by J. J. Stone of Madison, Wisconsin.

²¹ John W. Reys, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America: Lithographs of Towns and Cities in the United States and Canada, Notes of the Artists and Publishers, and a Union Catalog of Their Work, 1825-1925* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1984), 176, 202.

²² For more on Notman Studios, see Roger Hall et al., *The World of William Notman* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993); Stanley G. Triggs, *William Notman: The Stamp of a Studio* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario and Coach House Press, 1985).

²³ Ruger's bird's-eye view has been reproduced as a photograph and the scale greatly reduced to fit on to the board, which is approximately eight by ten inches. The original print is approximately nineteen by thirty-five inches.

century urban diptych is a mystery.²⁴ However, it does illustrate a fundamental argument of my dissertation: lithographic bird's-eye views and photographic panoramas played similar roles in late nineteenth-century visual culture.

Objects of Study and Methodology

This dissertation considers lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs as instances of the synoptic view in the context of urban modernity in Boston, Massachusetts, between the American Civil War and World War I, approximately 1865 to 1914. It is not a history of the urban aerial view, but it does satisfy some of the conditions outlined by architect Mark Dorrian for such a project. In particular, it charts "a history of high places and of the aerial imagination in relation to the city," and considers "how the 'prospect' has interacted with and informed discourses on the city."²⁵ But my work is much more modest than a history of the aerial view, instead examining two forms of synoptic view and their interactions with and productions of urban modernity in nineteenth-century Boston, one of the larger cities in the United States at the time.

In 1876, America's centennial year, Boston was described by one writer as "the metropolis of New England and the second commercial city of the

²⁴ The images may have been mounted on the board by Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM) staff, by the source of the collection, or by Notman Studio. There are no accession records for the object.

²⁵ Mark Dorrian, "The Aerial View: Notes for a Cultural History," *Strates* 13 (2007), <http://strates.revues.org/document5573.html> (accessed August 4, 2009).

Republic."²⁶ However, Boston's status as a "modern" city was ambiguous to some outside observers. According to notable American politician and Bostonian Henry Cabot Lodge,

to travellers from England, although Boston in its older part looks like many towns in their native land which have risen into importance in the last two hundred and fifty years, it seems nevertheless essentially modern. To inhabitants of the Western States, on the other hand, who have never been out of their country, Boston seems a very ancient place indeed.²⁷

Boston is, perhaps, an unusual choice with which to study urban modernity through representations of the city. Unlike the lower, older sections of New York, the prototypical American modern metropolis of the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century, Boston's elite stayed more or less in the heart of the city close to the central business district, and the residential areas around this district experienced very little commercial expansion and residential displacement.²⁸ It is Boston's difference from New York, the exemplar of urban modernity, that makes it an intriguing case study.

The lithographs and photographs that are the basis of this dissertation have been collected by institutions as views or illustrations of history. They are, however, visual ephemera from the nineteenth century, whose survival was not

²⁶ Jas [James] D. McCabe, *A Centennial View of Our Country and its Resources* (Philadelphia: Hubbard Brothers, 1876), 265. New York was the "first" commercial city of the republic.

²⁷ Henry Cabot Lodge, *Boston* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1891), 1-2.

²⁸ Mona Domosh, *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century New York and Boston* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 34.

planned, or even particularly desired. There were projects to photograph and record the buildings of "Old Boston" in a systematic manner at the end of the nineteenth century, reflecting a developing interest in preservation and heritage,²⁹ but the commercial photographs and lithographs I discuss here can be best considered artefacts of mass culture. They were purchased by consumers through subscription, at bookstores and other retail outlets, or directly from the publisher or photography studio.³⁰ The images were produced to be consumed, framed on the wall, pasted into an album, and then forgotten when they faded, tore, or were no longer relevant.

I have used similar textual sources to construct the historical context in which I interpret the images. Magazines, newspapers, and various tourist guidebooks, and other guidebooks masking as histories, were part of the textual ephemera of the day. Neither the bird's-eye views or guidebooks can be relied on to disclose some sort of "truth" of the city, but ultimately the gap between representation and reality is not the focus of my study. This is a study of representation. While the hyperbolic claims of guidebooks must not be repeated as statistical fact, they do provide a popular representation of the city.

Guidebooks were also part of the explosion in advertising in the second half of

²⁹ The "Old Boston" collection of nineteenth-century photographs at the Boston Public Library is believed to be an architectural photo-preservation project by the Boston Camera Club following methods used by the Society for Photographing Relics of Old London. For more on this collection, see Boston Public Library, "Old Boston Photograph Collection," http://www.flickr.com/photos/boston_public_library/sets/72157607471461913/comments/ (accessed September 14, 2010).

³⁰ John W. Reys, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 60-61.

the nineteenth century, which included bird's-eye views, lithographic street views, and photographic city albums.

In approaching my choice of materials, I have come upon a variety of methodological problems, such as the fact that there is a lack of manuscripts and texts directly related to bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs. Indeed, some of the prints and many of the photographs I consider in this project are by anonymous artists and photographers. A biographical approach would thus not have been possible.³¹ A strictly chronological approach would also have been unsatisfactory, since, with the exception of the final years of their production, there is no clear progression of stylistic changes.

Another obstacle is the fact that images of urban modernity are so overdetermined by a variety of discourses, issues, and concerns. In fact, it is necessary to mention some of the more obvious exclusions in this dissertation. The individual as subject does not figure prominently in this study despite, as Foucault reminds us, the subject being the ultimate site of power.³² I do, at times, discuss the possibility of understanding the synoptic view from the perspective of

³¹ A biographical approach would also be complicated by the nature of commercial production. The lithographs were products of commercial printing houses and the images went through many different iterations before the final print was published. Artists, sometimes more than one, engravers, printers, and the house style of the publisher, all affected the final image, negating discussions of the images as an expression of an individual artist. Similarly, photographs were often the product of a commercial studio in which the studio imprint or logo functioned as the name of the artist.

³² Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 202-3.

the Foucauldian panopticon, but there are surely more profound objects of study—for example, statistically driven reformist efforts in health, welfare, and environment—through which to discuss disciplining the subject in nineteenth-century cities. I do not, however, disavow the disciplinary rhetoric of bird's-eye views. As Richard Schein argues, they were "a visual reminder of a city's proper organization and future direction" by displaying such modern urban necessities as zoning, infrastructure, and order.³³

This dissertation also makes no claims to revising the standard narrative histories of Boston or the synoptic view. I have relied heavily on various histories of Boston to inform my analysis of the images studied herein, but I do not make any claims for adding to the social or political history of the city, except for occasionally recovering the original function of an image, for example, a panoramic photograph that appeared in a newspaper and is now part of the Boston Public Library Print Department's Boston Pictorial Archive (figs. 2 and 3).

Nor is this a history of aerial imagery or the role of a particular medium in aerial imagery, such as the lithographic bird's-eye view. Beaumont Newhall's slender volume *Airborne Camera* (1969) is typical of the approach to the history of aerial imagery.³⁴ He starts his discussion with Renaissance period bird's-eye view engravings and charts a path from them to contemporary satellite imagery.

³³ Richard H. Schein, "Representing Urban America: 19th-Century Views of Landscape, Space, and Power," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 11, no. 1 (1993), 18.

³⁴ Beaumont Newhall, *Airborne Camera: The World from the Air and Outer Space* (New York: Hastings House, 1969).

The teleological assumption in his book is that aerial imagery has progressed from imagined perspectival drawings to satellite imaging—the ultimate objective view of the earth's surface. The technology of flight and techniques of aerial photography are important to my discussion of aerial cityscapes, but I make no claims to breaking new ground in a technologically determined narrative of aerial imagery.

My method is thematic, socio-historical, and semiotic. I have approached the lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs as a single problem, with variations therein, defined by their pictorial properties. The lithographs and photographs existed in broad historical and cultural contexts in which they were more than a commentary on or reflections of external developments, such as a burgeoning urban modernity. They existed, rather, in systems of signs that were in, to use literary critic and early semiotician Jan Mukarovsky's words, "a constant dialectical relation to the development of the other domains of culture."³⁵ I thus approach these synoptic views as participants in and productive of the experience of modernity in late nineteenth-century Boston.

³⁵ Jan Mukarovsky, "Art as Semiological Fact," in *Calligram: Essays in New Art History from France*, ed. Norman Bryson, Cambridge New Art History and Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 6.

Literature Review

It is impossible to consider the literature on bird's-eye views in nineteenth-century America without starting with urban historian John Reps, who has published a number of books on the genre, including his seminal *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America* (1984).³⁶ Reps discusses the development of lithographic bird's-eye views in the United States, and to a lesser extent Canada, in the context of urban development and commercial aspects of their production. Reps' research into the methods of production and dissemination of the prints is invaluable to subsequent researchers, including myself. Reps' work is fundamentally empirical: he has created a union catalogue of bird's-eye view lithographs of North American cities and towns and gives biographical information on their makers. He believes that as visual historical records, bird's-eye views should be seen "as flattering, carefully posed, and retouched portraits rather than as completely candid records of reality."³⁷ Ultimately, for Reps, bird's-eye views are most useful for the study of urban development, especially a vertical study utilizing a number of views of the same place from different years. His empirical studies are an important contribution to the field, but he does not

³⁶ Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America* (1984). Other titles on bird's-eye views by Reps include *Cities on Stone: Nineteenth Century Lithograph Images of the Urban West* (Fort Worth, TX: Amon Carter Museum, 1976); *Panoramas of Promise: Pacific Northwest Cities and Towns on Nineteenth-Century Lithographs* (Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 1984); *Bird's Eye Views: Historic Lithographs of North American Cities* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998).

³⁷ Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 70.

address in depth the function of bird's-eye views beyond issues of civic pride and increasing nationalism in the context of centennial celebrations in the United States.

Other short articles and essays on bird's-eye views owe a debt to Reps' original research and expand on the substantial base he has provided; however, there are no comparable contributions to the field in terms of research and scope. For example, Gerald Danzer's "Bird's-Eye Views of Towns and Cities" (1990) repeats much of Reps' history of the commercial production and social history of the views, adding some details to a few case studies.³⁸ M. Elen Deming focuses her article, "The Country and the City" (2000), on views of Manhattan and Central Park by John Bachmann. She aligns the images with a burgeoning interest in utopian urban spaces in late nineteenth century and challenges some of Reps' arguments in the process.³⁹ Geographer Richard Schein writes about lithographic bird's-eye views of American cities in the nineteenth century as "constructed images of constructed spaces."⁴⁰ My dissertation owes much to Schein's short article on bird's-eye views, especially his argument that "these urban views embody changing 19th-century urban

³⁸ Gerald Danzer, "Bird's-Eye Views of Towns and Cities," in *From Sea Charts to Satellite Images: Interpreting North American History through Maps*, ed. David Buisseret (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 143-63.

³⁹ M. Elen Deming, "The Country and the City: John Bachmann's Views of Manhattan and Central Park," *Landscape Journal* 19, no. 1-2 (2000), 111-25.

⁴⁰ Schein, "Representing Urban America," 8.

ideals and attitudes and they contributed to the definition and direction of a modernizing, industrializing America."⁴¹ Schein sees cityscape lithographs as part of a disciplinary regime in which municipal citizens are both objects and subjects of the ideologically imbued urban lithographs.⁴² Schein also acknowledges his debt to Reys, but interprets the material far beyond the former's empirical study.

Bird's-eye views and aerial photographs have also been used extensively as illustrations in texts on urban history and planning. The images that are the object of study in my dissertation are used unproblematically as illustrations in books, such as Walter Whitehill's *Boston: A Topographical History* (2000) and Lawrence Kennedy's *Planning the City upon a Hill* (1992).⁴³ Both publications are liberally illustrated with bird's-eye views and aerial views offering readers comprehensive snapshots of the development of Boston. Prior to aerial photography becoming commonplace in the 1920s, lithographic bird's-eye views were often the only pictorial evidence available to chart large-scale urban development. (Maps are also used, but my concern is pictorial.) John Bachmann's *Bird's-Eye View of Boston* (1850) has been used this way since the early twentieth century (fig. 4). William Rossiter's *Days and Ways in Old Boston*

⁴¹ Schein, "Representing Urban America," 8.

⁴² Schein, "Representing Urban America," 19.

⁴³ Walter Muir Whitehill, and Lawrence W. Kennedy, *Boston: A Topographical History*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Lawrence W. Kennedy, *Planning the City upon a Hill: Boston since 1630* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992).

(1915) includes an uncredited reproduction of Bachmann's bird's-eye view as a generic illustration of "Old Boston," one that presumably readers would implicitly understand as illustrating the past with its harbour full of masted ships, the lack of skyscrapers in the downtown core, a barren Public Garden, and an empty watery space where Back Bay should have been. Lawrence Kennedy, who revised Whitehill's earlier topographical history of Boston, includes Bachmann's view to illustrate the state of the city in 1850. His description is matter of fact, orienting the viewer by identifying major landmarks and then noting how the view illustrates change: "This 1850 view shows the first stages of the fill of the Back Bay in the foreground. Beacon Street is to the left with numerous bridges over the Charles River to Cambridge and Charlestown where the newly built Bunker Hill Monument (1825-1843) looms over the Boston Navy Yard."⁴⁴

The literature on nineteenth-century aerial and synoptic photography is, not surprisingly, very thin.⁴⁵ Peter Bacon Hales' *Silver Cities* (1984), a history of nineteenth-century urban photography in the United States, is broad in scope, considering much more than synoptic photographic views. Hales studies the photography of American cities in the nineteenth century in as many aspects as possible, ranging from aerial views, or views taken from natural or manmade

⁴⁴ Kennedy, *Planning the City upon a Hill*, 57.

⁴⁵ There is some interesting work on aerial photography from the early twentieth century after the age of powered flight was well established. See Christina Lodder, "Malevich, Suprematism and Aerial Photography," *History of Photography* 28, no. 1 (2004), 25-40; Anthony Vidler, "Photourbanism: Planning the City from Above and from Below," in *A Companion to the City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 35-45.

elevations, to Jacob Riis' street level documentation of squalid tenements and claustrophobic back alleys. Hales' discussion of "grand-style" photography of the latter half of the nineteenth century examines some of the questions that interest me. He notes that panoramic and high-angle photography—true aerial photography being incredibly rare before World War I—brought a sense of enclosure and civilized order to urban areas, defining "the city as a place not of chaos, darkness, and danger, but of order, light, and intelligibility."⁴⁶ Hales sees the commercial practices of cityscape photography as being rooted in the same civic boosterism that was responsible for the production of lithographic bird's-eye views. The photographs, like the prints, confirmed "as accomplished fact the still unrealized dreams of America's urban elite that their cities were already stable, prosperous, grand, and, above all, civilized."⁴⁷

Chapters

This project is highly analytical and the divisions of subject matter represented by the chapters are artificial. For example, it is difficult to discuss a view of Back Bay from the dome of the State House as a view of the city from the seat of legislative power without also discussing the importance of Back Bay to the city. But these are the types of separations I make in this dissertation. The

⁴⁶ Peter B. Hales, *Silver Cities: The Photography of American Urbanization, 1839-1915* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 20.

⁴⁷ Hales, *Silver Cities*, 130.

organization of the linear narrative requires the creation of artificial distinctions between different modes of comprehending. By choosing to approach the subject of nineteenth-century synoptic views thematically, I have created some awkwardness in the organization of the dissertation. For example, an anonymous photographic panorama shot from the smokestack of the Lincoln Wharf Power Station in Boston in 1900 is discussed in three chapters, as an example of: a view that displays a modern city; the importance of vantage point as an expression of modernity; and the synoptic rendering of urban space.

The first chapter, "A Historical Overview: Cities and the View from Above," explores the history and genres of landscape art that contribute to an understanding of synoptic views, in particular, the prospect, the panorama, and the bird's-eye view. Chapters Two to Four approach the synoptic view from three different angles: what we can see, from where we see, and how we see. In Chapter Two, "Pastoral Cities and Prospects of Progress," I consider those characteristics, mostly visible, that make a city appear modern in the late nineteenth century and how bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs emphasize this appearance. The vantage point of the synoptic view is also a component in the production of modernity and meaning in the images. In the third chapter, "The View from There," I discuss the different vantage points that were used in synoptic views of Boston. Lithographic bird's-eye views had unrestricted and imagined vantage points from which the city was viewed, yet traditions and

orthodoxy developed and certain perspectives were favoured over others. Photography's vantage points, however, were restricted by the necessity of the physical presence of the photographer. Viewing platforms were chosen for the view they offered, but the structure from which the view was taken also influenced the meanings of the images. The final chapter, "'Boston as the eagle and the wild goose see it, is a very different object...'," considers how the distance between the implied viewer and the city influences a viewer's perception and knowledge of the urban space below.

This dissertation offers an alternative approach to discussing the synoptic view of the late nineteenth century, a view that is exemplified by lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs. As products of visual culture, they can have many different functions, but have been usually restricted to the marginal role of historical illustration. As Vanessa Schwartz and Jeannene Przyblyski note, "visual culture studies is constituted less by its topical repertoire and more to the degree that it produces a discursive space where questions and materials that have been traditionally marginalized within the established disciplines become central."⁴⁸ This dissertation, in part, recovers those "marginalized" views for a more serious audience.

⁴⁸ Vanessa R. Schwartz, and Jeannene M. Przyblyski, "Visual Culture's History: Twenty-First Century Interdisciplinarity and Its Nineteenth-Century Objects," in *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (New York: Routledge, 2004), 4.

Chapter One

A Historical Overview: Cities and the View from Above

The view of the city from above was particularly popular for picturing urban space in North America in the second half of the nineteenth century and the bird's-eye view, a genre that goes back to the fifteenth century, was a very popular genre for imaging cities at this time. In fact, bird's-eye views were the dominant form of city maps until the end of the seventeenth century when the ichnographic plan view—the view from an infinite multitude of points directly above the city, the standard cartographic view we still use today—became the preferred method of mapping. By the nineteenth century, bird's-eye views no longer had any serious cartographic function in representing the city but, in North America in particular, they provided images of the expansion and development of cities and were a visual component of civic boosterism after the American Civil War.¹ Today, bird's-eye views are still popular but they have been relegated primarily to the margins of cartography as specialty "maps" for tourists, special events, university campuses, and postcards. The bird's-eye view picture is now often a novelty, an image frequently populated with smiling cartoon people in a

¹ See John W. Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America: Lithographs of Towns and Cities in the United States and Canada, Notes of the Artists and Publishers, and a Union Catalog of Their Work, 1825-1925* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1984), 3-4.

city comprised of buildings with undulating facades drawn to various scales, as in Saul Steinberg's famous cartoon of New York City.²

In this chapter I will provide a basic typology of urban images and a history of the bird's-eye view in the visual arts from the Renaissance to the beginning of the twentieth century to develop a basic delineation of the urban views that comprise the scope of this study. This discussion of bird's-eye views draws almost exclusively on the history of hand drawn, painted, or engraved images. Many of the observations, however, are also relevant to discussions of urban photography, because photographers often re-inscribed existing iconography by repeating subject matter and vantage points established by earlier graphic artists. Before beginning a discussion of the view of cities from above, first let us turn our attention to the city itself with the questions, what is a city and how do we represent it?

² There are a few exceptions, of course, and some bird's-eye views are accurate maps. For example, Hermann Bollmann's 1962 axonometric map of Manhattan accurately represents the façade of every building in three dimensions as seen from the south of the island, yet because it is an axonometric projection without a vanishing point the scale does not deviate within the image. This means that distances can be measured accurately within the image as if it were a map.

Cities

Cities did not suddenly appear in the nineteenth century.³ There have been cities since antiquity and they have always represented a concentration of some type of power over the surrounding area, whether that be governmental, religious, or economic. The form of cities has changed since their first appearance in Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, where they were often extensions of the prince's palace or priest's precinct and urban development was related only to the immediate area. Cities developed and changed through Ancient Greece, the Roman Empire, and Medieval Europe, becoming important nodes of trade. The later adoption of mercantilism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a system of national economics expanded the sphere of influence of cities well beyond the immediate surrounding rural areas and they became the focus of many different levels of trade: regional, national, and international. This is not to argue that cities have been defined only by trade and commerce for the last 800 years—religious and government centres continued, and still continue, to be important mechanisms of urban concentration—but there

³ This very brief history of cities is from the following sources: Jane Jacobs, *The Economy of Cities* (New York: Random House, 1969); Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1938); Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961); John Rennie Short, "Three Urban Discourses," in *A Companion to the City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 18-25; Edward Soja, "Putting Cities First: Remapping the Origins of Urbanism," in *A Companion to the City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 26-34; James E. Vance, Jr., *This Scene of Man: The Role and Structure of the City in the Geography of Western Civilization* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

is a density of economic activity and capital that characterizes a modern urban area. The scope of cities expanded in the nineteenth century as mechanical industrialism created the conditions for the rapid explosion of the city in terms of population, geography, and societal importance.

What is a city? We all think we know what a city is; we inherently understand what is and is not a city. But what is the ontology of the city? What are its defining or necessary characteristics?

Despite the importance of the concentration of population and physical, economic, and political structures that occur in cities, they are not simply a conglomeration of buildings and people. The lived space of the city is created in the productive interplay between the population, visitors, and its various structures. A city is, as both geographers Edward Soja and David Harvey argue, a process as much as an outcome.⁴ It is, according to French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, "a place of encounter, assembly, simultaneity" that is also "a concrete abstraction, associated with practice."⁵ A city is more than the physical structure and therefore the relationship between social practices, structures, and the built environment is integral to understanding issues of the city and its representation.

The question of representation and cities can be approached from two directions: *the representation of the city* and *the city as representation*. The first

⁴ David Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), xvi-xvii; Soja, "Putting Cities First," 28.

⁵ Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, 118-19.

approach rests upon the presumption that there is an object called a "city" and that the work of analysis is to explore the relationship between reality and representation. The representational gap is the space in which power and knowledge relations can be made manifest through an examination of the choices made by the author of a representation. Simple omissions and additions to the city's image can indicate a desired social order of the city or can be the result of a less explicit ideological bias. Indeed, the very technique used to represent the space of the city—for example, a perspectival grid or an ichnographic plan—can itself be indicative of "ideology and knowledge within a (socio-spatial) practice."⁶ The form of the representation of city space carries additional meaning supplementary to the denotations of the image.

The second approach to discussing representation and the city is to ascribe to "city" the status "representation," that is, *the city as representation*. The city as we experience it, either intimately (on the street) or from afar (in a bird's-eye view), is already a collection of signs, and as James Donald reminds us, "the way we experience cities is profoundly shaped by the immaterial city of word, image, and myth."⁷ Urban space is a productive semiotic space bounded

⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 45.

⁷ James Donald, *Imagining the Modern City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 47. Donald's use of the term "immaterial city" comes from Ibad Hassan's "Cities of Mind and Urban Words," in *Literature and the Urban Experience*, ed. Michael C. Jaye and Ann Chalmers Watts (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1981).

by fabric, reality, and representation.⁸ In addition to the city being a collection of signs for us to read and interpret, it is also a collective space in which we interact with those signs and produce new signs for ourselves and for others. The questions "what is a city" and "how do we represent a city" are intricately intertwined, especially when discussing larger urban centres. It is impossible to know every square mile of a city and, for most of us, we know the larger part of the city in which we live primarily through representation. Most cities are, therefore, known largely through their representations by both residents and non-residents. The city is both its representation and more than its representation.

City as Representation

James Donald's notion of the "immaterial city," a collection of "word, image, and myth," is a powerful concept that shapes how we see and use cities by influencing our expectations and resulting experiences. It is an idea of a place as much as a physical place.⁹ For example, the eighteenth-century novel helped "to produce 'the city' as an experiential category for the reading public,"¹⁰ a statement that can be more than confirmed when considering, for example, the

⁸ Donald, *Imagining the Modern City*, 47.

⁹ James Donald, "The Immaterial City: Representation, Imagination, and Media Technologies," in *A Companion to the City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 48.

¹⁰ Donald, "The Immaterial City," 48.

importance of Charles Dickens on our perception and understanding of nineteenth-century London.

Cities as representations are imagined communities confined to a relatively small geographical location—though their sphere of influence extends far beyond the usually arbitrary "city limits." Cities as brick and mortar are particular geospatial arrangements of a variety of population densities and physical development. There is no reason to expect that one area of a brick and mortar city should be identical to another area and, indeed, the imaginary city often creates the illusion of a homogeneous place out of disparate parts. In the nineteenth century, Dr. William Channing, a Unitarian minister in Boston, was concerned about the "moral significance" of cities and their growth and observed that "in most large cities, there may be said to be two nations, understanding little of one another, having as little intercourse as in different lands."¹¹ Lewis Mumford, reaching back to the history of the earliest cities, writes that the people who settled in the first towns and villages came from very different parts of society and that new parts of society were created that were uniquely the product of the city:

from all these original types [hunter, peasant, shepherd, miner, woodman, fisherman, engineer, boatman, sailor...] still other groups develop, the soldier, the banker, the merchant, the priest. Out of this complexity the city created a higher unity.¹²

¹¹ Quoted in Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London: Odhams Books, 1963), 62.

¹² Mumford, *The City in History*, 29-30.

Mumford's claim, regardless of historical veracity, prompts the question, what is the symbolic binder of the city if it is not an organic and stable sense of community among the people? What narratives propel residents to urban "citizenship"? What are the civic symbols and icons to which residents embrace and attach themselves? Can there be one symbol, one icon, one narrative in which all citizens invest?

The city as *polis* is a political imaginary that comes to us from the ancient Greeks. More recently, the notion of "imaginary communities" has been coined by Benedict Anderson's important book *Imagined Communities* (1983) in which he offers a theory of simultaneity, common language of authority, and national symbols displacing geography, environment, and blood to explain nationalism and patriotism. His "imagined political community" is "both inherently limited and sovereign."¹³ The majority of urban dwellers experience cities in a way that they cannot experience a country. Cities are the environment in which many of us spend most of our lives. Our concerns in and about the cities in which we live tend to be more functional and practical than the abstract concerns that often dominate national discourse. We protest a local development, embrace a new park, agitate for smoother asphalt, better transit, and desire a well-equipped and responsive fire department. Our cities are known primarily through our daily routine and those places and activities that are outside our routine are rarely

¹³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 8.

encountered or acknowledged. Nations are different. We cannot experience a nation in the same everyday manner as a city. National formations do have real consequences on our lives, but we do not phone a federal government department to complain about the quality of snow removal in February. Cities are the level at which we experience everyday life.

The "imagined community" of a city is both easier and more difficult to understand than that of an entire nation. The symbols and concepts that provide coherence to a particular city are usually more quotidian than those of a nation, where governments issue symbolic documents, provide high level services, and are the subject of official histories. The federal government of Canada, for example, provides a number of common objects, symbols, and stories to the population of Canada that have higher symbolic and adherence value than the snow-clearing, garbage pick-up, and public transit, all functions provided by cities. However, this is not to say that cities are not or cannot be "imagined communities." Despite the differences between cities and the object of Anderson's study, the nation, his notion of "imagined communities" helps to explain the imaginings associated with both, but through different symbolic capital.

Representations of Cities

In his survey of the literary constructions of Boston, Shaun O'Connell admits that the view of the city from a hill on his daily commute provides him with the sight of a single city laid out in front of him despite his knowledge otherwise: "Though I know it is a 'city of neighbourhoods,' a community long sensitive to territorial distinctions, my Boston is one place: its boundaries blur into unity, its many stories weave into one narrative."¹⁴ Indeed, another way of stating O'Connell's characterization of Boston as a "city of neighborhoods" is to say that the city is a meeting place of different narratives. It is not a monologic or transparent, but rather is always a gathering of different objects, different spaces, different peoples, and different morphologies, resulting in unstable and ever changing spaces that are both the result of, and productive of, diverse narratives. Ultimately, pretensions to transparency or a single unifying narrative are always overcome by the complexity of urban space.¹⁵

The representation of the city is, among other things, the representation of space, and our representations and underlying perceptions of space are "central to our everyday conceptions of ourselves and of reality."¹⁶ The very framework through which we know the city and ourselves is at least partially spatial. Events

¹⁴ Shaun O'Connell, *Imagining Boston: A Literary Landscape* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), xi.

¹⁵ Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, 115-34.

¹⁶ Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity* (Routledge: London, 1991), 7.

in our lives unfold through time but it is rare that an event does not also unfold through space. Space is both the "medium" and the "product" of "social actions," and as such representations of space are both productive and representative of those same social actions.¹⁷

It might seem then that the representation of a city is an impossible task. Representations of cities are, therefore, selective in scope, detail, and emphasis. The famous views of Siena in the Palazzo Pubblico by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Allegories of The Effects of Good and Bad Government* (1338-39), suggest the value of good government in the affluence of the city and the surrounding countryside.¹⁸ It is doubtful that Siena was as peaceful as depicted but the narrative imposed on the city is clear: this can be a place of order and prosperity. Useful questions therefore to be asked of any representation or imagining of the city are: "what is at stake in the different discourses and interpretations of the city and whose interests do they serve?" and "what power/knowledge relations are in play in these representations?"¹⁹

Cities were surveyed in the nineteenth century in a variety of ways. Not only were they pictured using increasingly large scale and accurate mapping

¹⁷ Shields, *Places on the Margin*, 52.

¹⁸ For a discussion of these frescoes, their iconography, and historical context, see Diana Norman, "'Love justice, you who judge the earth': The Paintings of the Sala die Nove in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena," in *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400, Volume II: Case Studies*, ed. Diana Norman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 145-67.

¹⁹ Gary Bridge, and Sophie Watson, "City Imaginaries," in *A Companion to the City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 16.

projects, such as the British Ordnance Survey maps, but they were also subject to "census, surveys, maps, tax records, credit ratings, directories, and guidebooks," each for different markets or audiences. Some of these audiences, for example, scholars in the newly emergent social sciences, did not exist prior to the nineteenth century,²⁰ One audience was the numerous scholars in the newly emergent social sciences. With the growth of cities in the nineteenth century came also the growth of, or at least concentration of, poverty and its attendant issues. The new metropolises were sometimes compared to Babylon, centres of great wealth that were also characterized by arrogance, corruption, and decadence. The desire to reform cities was almost immediate. In the mid-nineteenth century reform discourse targeted individuals, often preaching a "social gospel," in an attempt to eradicate the problems of the city. In the later nineteenth century, the focus became more environmental and reformers argued that changing the living and working conditions of the poor would lead to a richer and more stable society. This was also the period in which classifying and surveying various parameters of the poor became established and important to reformers, resulting in tabulated results of numbers or coded maps displaying data in graphical form. Often, these social surveys were used for the identification of and differentiation between the "deserving" and "undeserving"

²⁰ Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity: Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 52.

poor.²¹ The nineteenth century marked the beginning of the social sciences and sociology and their penchant for surveys is connected to the representation of the city. However, as Richard Dennis observes,

none of this [surveying] was value-free: judgement informed observation as much as observation invited judgement. The third moment in the cycle is the consequence of judgement, regulation, which could be either 'supportive/fostering' (e.g. the introduction of compulsory education) or 'restrictive/coercive' (e.g. controls on immigration).²²

The social science representations of the city were, in some ways, a distanced form of engagement with the population of the city, but at the same time incorporated more complexity and more profound intentions than a distanced pictorial representation of the city, such as balloon rides over London:

They [balloon views] were very far removed from the meticulous social surveys of the city which appealed to the voluntary societies of the 1840s and the new social investigators of the 1880s and '90s. Climbing high above the streets, the travellers by balloon were concerned neither to find out 'the truth about cities' or to save time. They were seeking a new and more ordered vision.²³

The constant gridding, measuring, plotting, and mapping of poverty, health, and deviance in the city by the social sciences in the nineteenth century was a more profound form of disciplinary control than the bird's-eye view or pictorial overview of the city. The difference lies in the actions that can be realized from each form

²¹ Dennis, *Cities in Modernity*, 25. From the 1890s to the early twentieth century, political systems and business cultures were targeted by progressive reformers. This approach addressed the systems of capitalism to help alleviate poverty in cities.

²² Dennis, *Cities in Modernity*, 52.

²³ Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 53.

of representation. The balloon view tends to aestheticize and generalize the city, removing active pressure from the individual subject to be "normal" regardless of the panoptic power inherent in the vantage point.

In addition to the surveyed city, the city as body was a common nineteenth-century metaphor with which to represent the city. Streets, roads, avenues, and boulevards were part of the "circulation system" (the term "arterial" to describe a main street or highway being an obvious use of this trope) taking commuters to and from the "heart" of the city; parks were often the "lungs" of urban areas; and cities were talked about in terms of "growth" and "decay," as if there were a biological entity.²⁴ On the regional or national scale, the city itself was often seen as a "cancer" in American urban discourse—an uncontrollable part of the body/nation that was growing aggressively, reproducing amok and threatening to destroy the larger entity. Thomas Jefferson was one of the first in the United States to use this metaphor of the city as cancer and it was taken up later by Henry William Herbert in *The Spider and the Fly, or Tricks, Traps and Pitfalls of City Life, by One Who Knows* (1873), and J. W. Buell in *Metropolitan Life Unveiled, or the Mysteries and Miseries of America's Great Cities* (1882), among others.²⁵ Works of nineteenth-century fiction also tended to oppose utopian rural life to the dystopian city. For example, the familiar story of pure rural

²⁴ Dennis, *Cities in Modernity*, 37-41.

²⁵ Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 75.

folk being tempted and even corrupted by city life is the premise for William Dean Howell's *A Modern Instance* (1882) in which a young couple from Equity, Maine, move to Boston where their marriage ends in ruin.

Newspapers also represented the city in the nineteenth century through fragmented and always changing representations. The stories of the day (or week) contributed to a multi-vocal imagining of the city (and the region and nation) without a single narrative or vantage point. Newspapers had editorial positions—often overtly political—which could provide a certain amount of thematic unity to their stories, but even with that unifying presence, the city, as James Donald argues, was represented through a collection of voices and stories rather than as the product of single narrator.²⁶

The Space Between Cities as Representation and Representations of Cities

While it may be obvious that representations of cities abound in works of fiction, it is also important to recognize that statistical reports, maps and diagrams from surveys, newspapers, and other cultural objects are forms of urban representation that contribute to the city imaginary. We may still have access to the historical "immaterial city of word, image, and myth,"²⁷ but the gap between the representations created by these forms and the experience of a city is impossible to bridge. The "real" experiential city has been lost and attempts to

²⁶ Donald, "The Immaterial City," 50.

²⁷ Donald, *Imagining the Modern City*, 47.

fully recover this city can only meet with partial success. However, as noted above, the city as representation and the representation of the city are inseparable, each informs the other and we must recognize this duality—indeed, it is more than a duality once experience is added to issues of representation—without reducing the discussion around pictorial representations of the city only to questions of accuracy and legibility, since the answers to those questions will always be tentative at best.

Landscapes

Bird's-eye views as a form of urban representation have a long history that extends far beyond the scope of this project. They have functioned within a large range of utility, from maps to parlour decoration, but within this continuum they have always been somewhat indexical and representative with respect to their subject. While the history related below, with the notable exception of the early twentieth century, is the history of a *form*, the bird's-eye view, what is of more concern to me is the history of the *mode of representation*, or, literally and figuratively, the history of views from above, or the synoptic view. But before starting the real work of this dissertation, it is worth considering different types of landscape imagery and the casualness with which we use the terms that identify them. Establishing the difference between cityscapes, views, prospects, and

panoramas and the connotations of each form will contribute to a working definition of the urban synoptic view.

There are many different visual forms in which cities and towns have been represented since the fifteenth century. Not all of the categories and types presented herein are mutually exclusive; that is, an urban representation can often be classified using more than one of the genres. For example, a "panorama" can be a "bird's-eye view" and also a "townscape." The following discussion, therefore, is not an attempt to provide definitive and stable definitions for various types of landscape images; it is, instead, an exploration of the ambiguity and porosity of the definitions of the most common landscape genres while contributing to our understanding of, and a provisional definition for, "bird's-eye view," or synoptic view, in visual art. Ontological and epistemological treatments of bird's-eye views and cognate terms will proceed from this definition in later chapters when consideration is given to the questions: what are the necessary characteristics of a "bird's-eye view" and what knowledge of the city does it construct in particular social and historical contexts?

Townscapes, especially bird's-eye view townscapes, were very popular in the Netherlands and Italy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but simultaneously, as is often the case with popular arts, they were very low in the

hierarchies of the academies.²⁸ A cityscape or townscape can be as broad in scope as Lorenzetti's frescoes *Allegories of The Effects of Good and Bad Government*, in which both the city of Siena and surrounding countryside are displayed through a moralizing lens, or it can be a much narrower view, such as Vermeer's *View of Delft* (c. 1662), in which a portion of the town along the river occupies a thin horizontal register of the canvas. A very basic definition, then, of cityscape or townscape would be that it is simply any image that represents a particular city or town. Ptolemy, whose *Geographica* (reissued during the Renaissance) contributed to the popularity of atlases and city books in the period, used the term chorographer to describe the maker of such cityscapes. According to Ptolemy, a geographer describes regions and nations in quantitative and mathematical terms, best accomplished through the tools of mapping and other forms of quantitative description. A chorographer, on the other hand, describes cities with qualitative and pictorial terms, because using "the figurative language of the artist [is] the most appropriate way to portray localities" or

²⁸ It is interesting to note that despite the popularity of the genre, the OED does not cite any usage of the terms "cityscape" or "townscape" before the second half of the nineteenth century by which time urban modernity had been firmly established in Britain. The earliest usage example for "cityscape" is 1856 and "townscape" dates from 1880. "Landscape" and "Townscape," *OED*, 2nd ed. (1989).

cities.²⁹ Cityscapes in the visual arts are, then, those representations of a city that portray and describe the city, or part of the city, in a pictorial or qualitative manner.

A cityscape or townscape is the broadest category of urban imagery treated in this section of definitions and is not limited to naturalistic bird's-eye views and Dutch townscapes. For example, fish-eye views—extreme wide-angled views usually encompassing three hundred sixty degrees—were popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century as "orientation guides" for panoramas.³⁰ They are also cityscapes in their own right. In a fish-eye view, the artist typically placed the vantage point in the centre and drew the image so that it stretched away from that centre to a circular horizon. The result is a concentric view of the city. Cityscapes as a genre, therefore, are identified by their fidelity to the place they represent—otherwise they are imaginative landscapes—but are not confined by formal properties. The broad expanse of Lorenzetti's frescoes of Siena, the partial view of Vermeer's Delft, and the more unnatural perspective of fish-eye views are all "cityscapes."

²⁹ "The aim of the chorographer is to represent only one part, as if one were to imitate or to paint only one ear, or an eye. But the aim of the geographer is to consider the universal whole in the guise of those who describe or paint the entire head." Quoted in Bronwen Wilson, "Venice, Print, and the Early Modern Icon," *Urban History* 33, no. 1 (2006), 46. Original source, Girolamo Ruscelli's translation of Ptolemy, *Geografia di Claudio Tolomeo Alessandrino* (Venice, 1598), 1. Ptolemy discussed chorography only to dismiss it as not part of his project of describing the world, a geographical project. Barbara Ann Naddeo, "Topographies of Difference: Cartography of the City of Naples, 1627-1775," *Imago Mundi* 56, no. 1 (2004), 26.

³⁰ Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 60-62.

"View," a word that appears in both compound terms "bird's-eye view" and "fish-eye view," can be both the act of looking and the result of looking. It is such a common term that defining it can be extremely limiting but it is worth considering the different connotations and meanings the word has accrued, especially in the context of visual art. A "view" in visual art is a drawing, print, painting, or some similar medium, of a landscape or place delimited by a frame. In addition, a view is human in scope in the sense that it suggests to the viewer the same scene that the artist saw—or plausibly saw—from the point from where he or she drew the picture. Views are not necessarily constrained by absolute mimetic accuracy to a particular place; however, even when some details in it are imaginary there is an implicit promise that if the viewer were able to occupy the same vantage point as the artist that the scene before him or her would be clearly recognizable from the drawn or painted view. The related Italian term *vedute* that usually refers to detailed and hyper-realistic drawings of cities, often associated with the Grand Tour and eighteenth-century Italian artists such as Canaletto in Venice and Panini in Rome. Piranesi, another artist of the period, executed *vedute* that were no doubt as detailed as Canaletto's though they were a more evocative response to the city, especially the decaying antiquities of Rome, and are usually referred to as *vedute ideate* or *capriccio*. However, *vedute* are usually associated with a topographical rather than an emotional or expressive approach to landscape art.

"Prospect" is somewhat synonymous with view, both refer to looking at a particular object, but prospect connotes a stronger concern with occupying a particular vantage point and the "commanding position" offered by it. This point of view is usually above the surveyed ground giving a sense of visual mastery, as from a "prospect tower" that might be erected in a garden to offer a view of an estate and surrounding area. Both view and prospect can also refer to metaphorical sight, that is, a particular vantage point from which some event, subject, or even the future is considered, observed, summarized, or argued.³¹ In contrast to my near conflation of the terms "view" and "prospect," John Barrell emphasizes their separate meanings as Joshua Reynolds used them in the eighteenth century. Panoramic *prospects* appealed to those who were concerned with abstract ideas and "confined views" were the purview of the private man who concerned himself with the minutiae of quotidian life.³² So while the terms view and prospect are closely related, prospect is often associated with the ideas of command, authority, and abstraction, whereas view connotes something directed, limited, and fragmentary (in the sense of a partial view of a scene).³³

³¹ Related to this usage, according to the *OED*, is the now obsolete sense of prospect as "a mental view, survey, or inspection; an account or description," which has similarities to the use of "bird's-eye view" to denote a comprehensive overview of a subject.

³² John Barrell, "The Public Prospect and the Private View: The Politics of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain," in *Landscape, Natural Beauty, and the Arts*, ed. Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 96.

³³ Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 50-51.

Topographical views are often associated with Dutch baroque painting in which the details of cities, towns, and the land were minutely recorded. This "unimaginative" and highly naturalistic work was often dismissed in the following centuries as being "mere topography" that did not demonstrate the imagination and ideals needed for painting to be "art"; however, in different discourses, the factual visual reporting of a particular place or town was considered an asset. For example, the emphasis placed on topographic drawing in British military officer training of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries satisfied the military's desire for accurate views to convey crucial information on the topography of the land, the nature of fortifications, and the width of roads for troop movement.³⁴

Regardless of the aesthetic value or non-value we place on this type of visual art, topographical drawings and paintings are representations of a particular place and are clear and legible. While the location of J. M. W. Turner's *Rain, Steam, Speed—The Great Western Railway* (1844), for example, may be identifiable as the Maidenhead railway bridge over the Thames River, its visible brushwork and emphasis on atmosphere and speed rather than the description of details exclude it from being considered a topographical view.³⁵

³⁴ For a discussion of this in the context of colonial Canada, see J. Russell Harper, "British Army Topographers in Eastern Canada," in *Painting in Canada: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 47-55.

³⁵ Indeed, "elevating" landscape art to embody the intellectual and emotional content of history painting was one of Turner's aims in creating such canvases. In other words, he was working directly against the notion of landscape art as topography. See John Gage, *J. M. W. Turner: 'A Wonderful Range of Mind'* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

The word "panorama" was invented as a technical term in the late eighteenth century to describe landscape paintings that offered spectators a three hundred sixty degree view of a place or event. This type of painting was invented around 1787 by several different European painters, though credit is usually given to the British artist Robert Barker, who, according to architectural historian Renzo Dubbini, took the vantage point of "military topography (view from a tower, from a hilltop)" and "nautical cartography (experience of the horizon)" together to satisfy "the desire to represent, by means of direct observation, real objects within a extremely broad field of view."³⁶ As a form of mass entertainment, the panorama was usually displayed in a large building with a central observation area from which viewers could enjoy the surrounding painting. Sometimes the view would be of a city, as was the case of Barker's first commercial panorama, but it could also be a view of a historical event, such as *The French Army Entering Switzerland (Bourbaki Panorama)* (1870-71).³⁷ By 1800 the word "panorama" had entered most European languages to identify this particular type of painting but it also quickly acquired two other meanings: an overview of landscape from an elevated vantage point, and a metaphorical sense in which the word denoted a survey or summary of a particular subject or body of

³⁶ Renzo Dubbini, "Views and Panoramas: Representations of Landscapes and Towns," *Lotus International* 52 (1986), 104.

³⁷ Barker's first panorama was a view of Edinburgh from Calton Hill. The scene from the Franco-Prussian war at the Bourbaki Panorama in Lucerne is the subject of contemporary artist Jeff Wall's *Restoration* (1993).

knowledge.³⁸ The panorama, in both its visual and metaphoric senses, indicates a very broad view of its subject of representation, perhaps the broadest of the landscape genres discussed here.

Thus far we can say that cityscapes and townscapes are defined by subject matter and not form, and while the term "view" can be a variety of things, as a genre of visual art it has the characteristic of being limited and confined in the scope of its angle or field of vision. The "prospect" is similar to the view in its specificity, that is, it is a view of something or someplace, but there is an authority and command implied in the term, in particular with respect to its position relative to the observed subject. (Indeed, what is Jeremy Bentham's disciplining panopticon if not a variety of prospect tower?) Topographical views, like ordinary views, are limited in scope but promise a high degree of accuracy and reliability, to the point where, according to august commentators on the visual arts in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, their utility overwhelms their aesthetic qualities. The panorama shares much with the prospect in that it is a view from a commanding position; however, unlike a prospect, it promises completeness without the authority of the prospect, despite the fact that it reveals all three hundred sixty degrees around the observer.

³⁸ Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, 6-7.

History of Bird's-Eye Views and the Synoptic View

There is however no absolute border between what is and what is not a bird's-eye view, instead there is a continuum of pictures from elevated vantage points that do the same work to a greater or lesser extent, that is, they are synoptic views. Some images are obvious bird's-eye views showing cities and towns as they would appear from one thousand feet in the air, which would certainly qualify as the realm of birds. But what about those views that are from an elevated but not aerial vantage point? What of a drawing of London as seen from the dome of St. Paul's or a photograph of Manhattan from a tower of the Brooklyn Bridge? (At the risk of being literal, both structures serve as perches for birds and could therefore be considered valid bird's-eye views.) In terms of historical genre and form, they are not bird's-eye views because they do not use the untethered vantage point of a bird and their angle of view down upon the city may be less vertical than is usual within the type; however, they do some of the same work as a bird's-eye view, offering the viewer a distanced image of some section of a city, a partial *imago urbis*, and, in the case of photographic views, confirming the pervasiveness of urban modernity in the city through their indexicality.

This study examines both "traditional" bird's-eye views and images that might be more correctly called panoramas, or panoramic urban views, as well as other views from elevated vantage points that include a section of the city within

their angle of view. It is my contention that all of these synoptic views can be interpreted within the context of nineteenth-century urban modernity through three important characteristics of their imagery: spectacle, vantage point, and distance. Synoptic views, then, are a loose category of landscape drawing, painting, and photography, manifested through the overlapping properties and characteristics of bird's-eye views, panoramas and prospects; in addition, all three historical genres, as they appear in the late nineteenth century, can be described as "prospects of progress."³⁹

Bird's-eye views have a long history, longer than prospects or panoramas, which predates linear perspective of the Renaissance. Rather than tracing the history of the three related forms—bird's-eye views, prospects, and panoramas—I have chosen to concentrate on this one genre, a form that was re-popularized in the late nineteenth century during urban and industrial expansion in the northeast United States. The history of bird's-eye views is just one history of the view of the city from above, but it is a long and important history for this study because it not only demonstrates the historical connections between mapping and views from above, but also points to issues that are applicable to these three forms of representation (bird's-eye views, prospects, and panoramas). The history of bird's-eye views starts with picture-maps of antiquity, but the narrative that

³⁹ This alliterative phrase, "prospects of progress," is a play on John W. Reps *Panoramas of Promise: Pacific Northwest Cities and Towns on Nineteenth-Century Lithographs* (1984), a published illustrated lecture on nineteenth-century bird's-eye views of developing cities and towns in the American northwest.

follows is a selective history beginning at the Renaissance through the European Enlightenment and concludes with a few comments on the view from above at the beginning of the era of powered flight in early twentieth century.⁴⁰ Bird's-eye views were used through these centuries to represent more than cities but it is their role in urban representation in which I am interested, and it is through this lens that I present the following abridged history.

Realistic views of cities and towns started to appear regularly in the 1400s as backgrounds for other pictorial works. They are usually discussed within the context of the history of landscape art, as the beginning of the genre. There are also strong connections between art and cartography in this period and it is difficult to separate the two, especially when considering bird's-eye views. As geographer Ronald Rees notes, maps and landscape art were not really distinguishable until the Renaissance and up to this time both used the same "prevailing notions of space and environment."⁴¹ This overlap did not necessarily end with the development of Renaissance mapping and, as Svetlana Alpers has demonstrated, there was still a strong relationship in terms of representational work between art and cartography in seventeenth-century Dutch painting that can be discussed in terms of *descriptio*. Alpers argues that both Dutch

⁴⁰ For a history of bird's-eye views and maps from antiquity to the Renaissance, see P. D. A. Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps: Symbols, Pictures, and Surveys* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), 9-103.

⁴¹ Ronald Rees, "Historical Links Between Cartography and Art," *Geographical Review* 70, no. 1 (1980), 65.

mapmakers and artists of the period described the world around them from a continuum of vantage points and multiple positions, in comparison to the single position of Albertian perspective and the Italian Renaissance.⁴² The concern for description of "space and environment" is a common theme for both early landscape art and maps.

Not everyone agrees, however, that maps and art can be connected through their descriptive functions. A more familiar argument is the insistence on differentiating between the two based on aesthetic merit and topographic information. These characteristics remove art to the world of fantasy and place maps in a realm of utility. Artworks can be cartographically accurate but, according to this position, sometimes the "aesthetic message can be almost overwhelming" in its persuasion, subsuming the accuracy and evidentiary value of the artwork.⁴³ Historically we have developed different expectations of maps and art, but this has not always been the case.

Another way to think about the narratives of the history of cartography and art history is to consider them through the three historical categories for topographic maps developed by medievalist P. D. A. Harvey. Each of the three types of maps comes with a different set of expectations regarding their relationship to reality and their utility: symbol-maps, picture-maps, and scale-

⁴² Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 122.

⁴³ Richard H. Schein, "The Place of Landscape: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting an American Scene," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 87, no. 4 (1997), 111-12.

maps. Harvey traces the evolution of topographic maps from a "primitive" state of using symbols to represent different features of the landscape, to pictorial forms of representation, to a final third phase, which we are in today, in which cartographic features are represented by standardized symbols and the entire surface of the map is drawn to a uniform scale.⁴⁴ He argues that the three are a progression—"from symbols to pictures and from pictures to surveys"⁴⁵—and that pictures as the primary form of mapping have a four thousand year history that ends more or less with the Italian Renaissance.⁴⁶ By the nineteenth century, "maps" were, by definition, scale-maps in which the entire surface was drawn to single scale and provided quantifiable and predictive information.⁴⁷ However, during the Renaissance, bird's-eye views and other picture maps dominated city maps and therefore the early history of urban bird's-eye views is also largely the early history of urban cartography.

From the beginning of the 13th century (and perhaps earlier) to the late 15th century, bird's-eye views were very popular forms for depicting Italian cities.

⁴⁴ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 14. Harvey's model is explicitly biological and teleological. He ties this progression to the increasing level of sophistication within a single culture or society and relies on research by Denis Wood to bolster his model. Wood asked subjects ranging from pre-schoolers to graduate students to draw a hill. The pre-schoolers drew symbols, the middle of the group drew pictures, and the graduate students and 30 year-olds (the end of the scale both in terms of education and age) drew the kind of cartographic symbols one finds on a relief map. The current state of mapping—symbolic and to scale—represents the goal or end of mapping. Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 26.

⁴⁵ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 26.

⁴⁶ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 48-49.

⁴⁷ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 170.

Thirteenth and fourteenth-century bird's-eye views are highly stylized and symbolic, showing monumental buildings usually encircled by city walls or some other framing device. Medieval picture-maps were conceived to show an entire city from above using awkwardly rendered vertical or oblique vantage points—potentially a "bird's-eye view"—yet they contained minimal detail, usually a few notable buildings not drawn to scale.⁴⁸ These medieval maps were more ideograms, symbolic representations of the idea of a city, rather than a picture of any particular place. Bird's-eye views appeared in their "mature" naturalistic form in the Italian Renaissance during the codification and popularization of linear perspective and a resurgent popularity in Ptolemaic cartography. Both linear perspective and gridded Ptolemaic cartography—Ptolemy described positions in the world using meridians of longitude and parallels of latitude—were attempts to represent a three-dimensional world in two-dimensions.

The early development of naturalistic bird's-eye views is associated with Florentine engraver Francesco Rosselli, and although none of his original work survives, there are copies of his views of Rome and Florence originally executed in the 1480s.⁴⁹ Later urban views, despite increasing naturalism, were, however,

⁴⁸ P. D. A. Harvey, "Local and Regional Cartography in Medieval Europe," in *The History of Cartography: Volume One: Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, ed. J. B. Harley and David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 464.

⁴⁹ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 75.

still medieval in content, even if the form looked "modern."⁵⁰ Details and scale were often changed by artists and the view of the city "still hovers between a mystical and rational view of the world."⁵¹ Bird's-eye views were at this point largely symbolic despite taking on the accountability and authority of naturalism.⁵²

One of the most famous early perspectival bird's-eye views is Jacopo de' Barbari's view *Venetie MD* (1500).⁵³ This massive multi-sheet woodblock print of Venice was created in the artist's studio over three years and, despite its naturalistic form and its convincing view of the city, canals, and port, the cityscape was a continuation of the medieval tradition of moralized, or connotative, maps and views.⁵⁴ Art historian Juergen Schulz calls the woodcut print a "moralized geography" and a visual symbol of Venice's stature as a seaport and centre of trade unconcerned with the descriptive and predictive functions we usually associate with maps. This bird's-eye view was not intended to help people find their way from one place to another in the canal city and it

⁵⁰ Harvey, "Local and Regional Cartography in Medieval Europe," 476-77.

⁵¹ Naomi Miller, *Mapping the City: The Language and Culture of Cartography in the Renaissance* (London: Continuum, 2003), 159.

⁵² This is the same period for which art historian Erwin Panofsky has identified "disguised symbolism" in paintings of Italy and Northern Europe in which ordinary objects carry symbolic Christian meaning. It is also, according to Michel Foucault, a period in which knowledge was based on the internal characteristics of objects, i.e. the Renaissance episteme. See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970).

⁵³ James Elliot, *The City in Maps: Urban Mapping to 1900* (London: The British Library, 1987), 21.

⁵⁴ The bird's-eye view fully assembled measures 1.3 x 2.8 metres.

was not a strict topographic record of the city's appearance, but rather the cityscape was a moralized symbol or icon of Venice emphasizing its wealth and power.⁵⁵

In general, Renaissance maps were not used by people to find their way around the city, though maps for different purposes, such as portolan charts, did exist.⁵⁶ There were smaller portable bird's-eye views of Venice that were published with legends or keys which would have been of little help to travellers or Venetians to navigate the city. The scale of the images was too small to show all of the bridges and streets in the city. Moreover, the keys were arranged in a manner such that a viewer could identify features found on the map, but could not use the map to find the physical location of places.⁵⁷ Bird's-eye views and picture maps, such as Jacopo's view of Venice, fall into a category of maps that were idealizing, didactic, iconic, and even encyclopaedic.⁵⁸ They were like the eclectic but organized cabinets of curiosity (*Wunderkabinette*). The appearance

⁵⁵ Juergen Schulz, "Jacopo de' Barbari's View of Venice: Map Making, City Views, and Moralized Geography Before the Year 1500," *The Art Bulletin* 60, no. 3 (1978), 458-68.

⁵⁶ The current *OED* definition for "map" notes that "physical or geographical features" are designated such that "each point in the representation corresponding to an actual geographical position according to a fixed scale or projection." Jacopo's view of Venice did not have a "fixed scale or projection." For more on this, see Schulz, "Jacopo de' Barbari's View of Venice," 425-74.

⁵⁷ Wilson, "Venice, Print, and the Early Modern Icon," 48-49. Wilson is looking at two smaller bird's-eye views from the sixteenth century published after de' Barbari's *Venetia MD*: Paolo Forlani's *Venetia* (1566) and *Venetia* from Georg Braun's, *Civitates orbis terrarum* (1572).

⁵⁸ Schulz, "Jacopo de' Barbari's View of Venice," 442.

of the city was laden with symbols and messages; recording topography and organizing the scene were secondary.

Comprehensive atlases appeared during the Renaissance and the first great collection of urban maps and views was the *Nuremberg Chronicle* from 1493. Meant to be encyclopaedic and not limited to cities, the *Nuremberg Chronicle* included more than 1,800 prints on over 600 pages. One hundred sixteen of the illustrations were labelled as views of places. Approximately a quarter of these resembled the city they depicted, while the remainder functioned more as symbols or ideograms of their respective cities.⁵⁹ (Not surprisingly, the view of Nuremberg is the largest and most detailed print in the book.) The remaining prints depicted notable people and scenes from the Bible making the *Nuremberg Chronicle* a valuable visual chronicle and encyclopaedia of the fifteenth-century world.⁶⁰

Civitates Orbis Terrarum, one of the earliest atlases devoted to cities, was published in several editions from the single volume first edition in 1572 to a six-volume edition in 1617. The total publication contained five hundred forty-six prospects, bird's-eye views, and map-views of cities from all corners of the world accompanied by text on the history, trade, and people of the places illustrated,

⁵⁹ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 69.

⁶⁰ Elliot, *The City in Maps*, 19; John Rennie Short, *The World Through Maps: A History of Cartography* (Toronto: Firefly Books, 2003), 108-09.

including figures in local dress to add authenticity to the views.⁶¹ Not all of the views were original and, like other atlases of the period, some were copied from other publications. Soon after the success of *Civitates*, "townbooks" became very fashionable and popular well into the eighteenth century, including publications that continued reproducing and publishing plates from *Civitates*.⁶²

Bird's-eye views were also used as villa decoration in the late fifteenth century. The frescoes executed by Pinturicchio in the 1480s for Pope Innocent VIII's Villa Belvedere featured bird's-eye views of the Italian city-states—Rome, Milan, Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Naples. According to Giorgio Vasari, they were "done in the manner of the Flemings," which suggests a certain amount of accuracy and similitude to them.⁶³ But it was not just the walls of villas that featured bird's-eye views. The view from the villa itself often afforded the occupants a commanding view of the countryside following Alberti's advice in *De*

⁶¹ Elliot, *The City in Maps*, 26-29; Short, *The World Through Maps*, 133. Georg Braun, the editor of *Civitates*, believed that the inclusion of figures would prevent the Turks from using the views to plan attacks on European cities because Islam prohibited them from looking at pictures of people.

⁶² For example, the *Theatrum Europaeum* (1640) and the *Theatrum exhibens illustriores principesque Germaniae Superioris civitates* (1649), which contained 363 plates from the *Civitates*. Elliot, *The City in Maps*, 28-30.

⁶³ Quoted in Miller, *The Language and Culture of Cartography in the Renaissance*, 158. Miller cites Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, vol. III, Florence, 1568 (G. Milanesi, Florence, 1906), 498.

re aedificatoria (1485) that architects situate villas on hilltops both to give them prominent positions and views.⁶⁴

The Renaissance marks the beginning of what seems to be accurate and naturalistic views of cities and the publication of city atlases such as *Civitates*. The views, however, were not necessarily accurate and were sometimes imaginary and moralizing landscapes creating notions of place that may seem truly foreign from our vantage point in the twenty-first century. Mapping changed greatly in the early sixteenth century with the introduction of sophisticated surveying instruments and techniques, such as triangulation, for recording distances accurately. Increasingly precise and rigorous data in combination with the magnetic compass contributed to "a new cartographic concept of the scale map,' wherein pictorial features are completely absent."⁶⁵ However, bird's-eye views continued to be an important mode of official urban representation until the eighteenth century.⁶⁶

Picture-maps continued to be the preferred method of representing cities and towns until the 1700s. The change from perspectival views of cities to

⁶⁴ Mentioned in Malcolm Andrews, *Landscape and Western Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 55. An example of a villa built on a height that actually predates Alberti's treatise is Michelozzo di Bartolomeo's *Villa Medici, Fiesole*, commissioned c. 1455.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Miller, *The Language and Culture of Cartography in the Renaissance*, 147. See also Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 147.

⁶⁶ The aerial or bird's-eye view also appears regularly in the sixteenth century in painting, especially when the scope of the subject of the painting is geographically large such as a battle scene. Albrecht Altdorfer's *Battle of Alexander at Issos* (1529) is an example from the period of the bird's-eye view used in painting. Interestingly, the landscape in the painting is derived from an illustration in the *Nuremberg Chronicle*.

vertical views, or plans, in the eighteenth century is usually explained through a discussion of Enlightenment principles in which the imprecise and non-objective view was supplanted by the accurate and objective plan view, reflecting and reinforcing the common view of the Enlightenment as an "age of reason" and rationality. However, the plan view was not new in the eighteenth century and had been used to represent cities in at least a limited capacity for the previous two hundred years.⁶⁷ It is believed that vertical plans of Venice existed in the late fifteenth century when Jacopo de' Barbari was creating his mammoth bird's-eye view of the city—the distortions in Jacopo's drawing make it unlikely that he used the plans for more than reference⁶⁸—and both Alberti and Leonardo drew ichnographic plans of cities in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁶⁹

Accompanying the change from picture to plan, there was a decline in the visible social content in urban maps previously found in naturalistic bird's-eye and pictorial views. But even so, Enlightenment city maps were still not meant to provide references for urban navigation, but, as geographer Denis Cosgrove explains, allowed the city to be read as text: "The earliest urban maps are

⁶⁷ The most famous antique map of Rome is the *Forma Urbis Romae*, a plan of ancient Rome incised in a wall of the Templum Pacis. The fifteenth century also saw the execution of large surveys in England and Spain and many of these town plans were later incorporated into Braun and Hogenberg's *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*.

⁶⁸ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 78.

⁶⁹ Alberti is believed to have created a co-ordinate map of Rome during the Renaissance, the first scale map of Rome since antiquity. There is no extant copy but it was re-created in the nineteenth century from Alberti's *Ludi matematici* (1443-48). Miller, *The Language and Culture of Cartography in the Renaissance*, 169-73.

overwhelmingly celebratory, intended to frame in a comprehensive image the city's complex social and spatial totality."⁷⁰ In addition, the form of the plan view itself, regardless of the city represented, sent a message of modernity to the viewer: this is a modern city because it is being shown using a modern form of representation.⁷¹

This may explain, in part, why the massive so-called *Plan de Turgot* (1739) by Louis Bretez was a commercial failure (fig. 5). The *Plan de Turgot*, commissioned by Etienne Turgot, Prévôt des Marchands of Paris, was one of the last great bird's-eye view "maps." It appears at the beginning of a period when city maps were increasingly based on accurate surveys that were used to construct a plan containing vacant streets, an idealization of an empty city.⁷² The *Plan de Turgot* was printed on twenty sheets that, when laid out in order, covered an area approximately twelve by eight feet and, unlike the convention of later maps, the "bottom" or foreground of the map was the eastern edge of the map instead of the south.⁷³

By the end of the 1700s, the bird's-eye view and the picture map had been largely abandoned as forms of official urban representation, except for older

⁷⁰ Denis Cosgrove, *Geography & Vision: Seeing, Imagining and Representing the World* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008), 175.

⁷¹ Naddeo, "Topographies of Difference," 38-41.

⁷² The eighteenth century also saw the development of fire insurance maps, probably the most accurate urban maps created to that time.

⁷³ Elliot, *The City in Maps*, 55-56; Short, *The World Through Maps*, 150. The view of the city from the west displayed the westworks of Parisian churches, in particular, Notre Dame.

"picturesque" communities.⁷⁴ Despite the change in function from "map" to "picture," the oblique view from above was still popular in the Enlightenment for some functions. For example, there was a new vogue for elevated viewing platforms and decorative prospect towers in gardens from which viewers could survey the surrounding area. Scholar Stephan Oettermann argues that during this period the fascination with the horizon afforded by such positions can be seen as a metaphor for individual potential and freedom in the late eighteenth century, especially among the emerging middle class.⁷⁵ By the end of the eighteenth century, viewers were no longer earthbound and the development of hot air ballooning created a platform from which artists drew the city and, later, photographers took views of the streets below.⁷⁶

While it is always dangerous to consider the Enlightenment as a monolith of rationality and reason, there are compelling connections between the overview of a place offered by an elevated vantage point and the stereotypic characteristics of the period. As I mentioned in the Introduction, the view from above in the eighteenth century, John Barrell argues, was often associated with the "equal wide survey" of the aristocracy and the ruling classes who believed

⁷⁴ Miller, *The Language and Culture of Cartography in the Renaissance*, 169-73.

⁷⁵ Oettermann argues that this preoccupation with the horizon as an uncontained view in late eighteenth-century Europe created favourable conditions for the development of the panorama as a form of mass entertainment. Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, 7-13.

⁷⁶ The hot-air balloon was invented by the Montgolfier Brothers in France. The first unmanned balloon flight was June 5, 1783. The first manned flight by Pilâtre de Rozier was four months later on October 15, 1783.

themselves interested in the general and abstract issues of society and were not distracted by the banal details of quotidian life.⁷⁷ The overview was also associated with the broad scope of Diderot's encyclopedia:

The encyclopedic arrangement of our knowledge . . . consists of . . . placing the philosopher at a vantage point, so to speak, high above this vast labyrinth [the sciences and arts], whence he can perceive the principle sciences and arts simultaneously. From there he can see at a glance the objects of their speculations and the operations which can be made on these objects.⁷⁸

Both Barrell's aristocrats and Diderot's philosophers are in a detached position "above" their objects of study, an all-encompassing position that promises to reveal the broader principles that connect multiple components. In addition, geographer Matthew Edney reminds us that there was a tangible connection between mapping and the encyclopedism of the Enlightenment. The graticule (or grid)⁷⁹ of plan views provided a coherent and uniform structure into which geographical knowledge could be framed and positioned relative to other points of data. He draws parallels between the construction of scale maps based on the graticule and Enlightenment theories of knowledge: the locations of known points

⁷⁷ Barrell, "The Public Prospect and the Private View," 81-102.

⁷⁸ Jean le Rond D'Alembert, quoted in Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 83.

⁷⁹ Edney prefers the term "graticule" over "grid" because "it avoids the incorrect presumption that 'projective' and finite cartographic space was, in the eighteenth century at least, infinite and somehow both Cartesian and Euclidean in nature." Matthew H. Edney, "Reconsidering Enlightenment Geography and Map Making: Reconnaissance, Mapping, Archive," in *Geography and Enlightenment*, ed. David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 193 n. 1.

are plotted; relationships between known places can then be established; and finally, those known relationships can be used to "interpolate new entities."⁸⁰

It was early during this period that we can say that maps, as we know them today, and bird's-eye views took on different functions and histories.⁸¹ Bird's-eye views contributed to the traditions of landscape art viewed from above the ground and maps developed using the constraints of uniform scale rather than perspective as the mode of representation.⁸² In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bird's-eye views were relieved of their serious "mapping" work but were still routinely used to show the extent of country mansions and estates, and were a particular favourite for artists representing historical military campaigns, often adorning royal palaces and public buildings.⁸³ The maps of the Enlightenment were eventually replaced by more accurate maps of the modern age. They did not look particularly different, maps had shed most of their artistic flourishes by the end of the 1700s—with the notable exception of the cartouche—but the maps produced in the final years of the eighteenth century were from derived precise measurements from triangulation rather than placing points into a graticule. In other words, Enlightenment maps were based on the application of correct reason in relating points through an abstract unifying grid; whereas early

⁸⁰ Edney, "Reconsidering Enlightenment Geography and Map Making," 86-87.

⁸¹ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 169.

⁸² Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 171-72.

⁸³ Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps*, 169-70.

modern maps were the aggregate product of local observations brought together into a single plan view.⁸⁴

Nineteenth-century bird's-eye views are the subject of much of the content of this dissertation and my treatment of them here will be very brief to provide continuity between historical periods. Whereas early modern maps manifest the Enlightenment map's interpolation of new knowledge with quantifiable local observation, pictures of landscape or cityscapes were often based on direct observation but made no promises regarding new knowledge or predictability. Bird's-eye views by the nineteenth century were no longer a serious cartographic mode of representation but were very popular in North America from the mid-1860s to the early twentieth century and were used as parlour decorations and collected in albums, functioning as visual entertainment, education, and advertising. They were also concretizations of civic pride and future ambitions, sometimes including proposed structures and urban developments in the picture as if they were already built.⁸⁵

It was not the novelty of the form that accounted for their popularity, because, as noted above, bird's-eye views as urban images had been used for hundreds of years. In this they differ from newer forms of representation from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as the panorama, the diorama,

⁸⁴ Edney, "Reconsidering Enlightenment Geography and Map Making," 191-92.

⁸⁵ For examples, see John W. Reps, *Bird's Eye Views: Historic Lithographs of North American Cities* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 7-11.

and the stereoscope, each of which involved some new enabling technology or environment that made them new and different. Even though the bird's-eye view was not a new form of urban representation in the nineteenth century, its aerial vantage point was for the first time in history inhabitable. The invention of the hot-air balloon in the late eighteenth century and the construction of historically very high viewing platforms, such as the Eiffel Tower at the end of the nineteenth century, bookend a century in which there was an increasing desire in the elevated view.

In the early twentieth century, lithographic bird's-eye views of cities declined in popularity, but at the same time true aerial views became invaluable documents of covert surveillance because of the strategic imperatives of World War I. Aerial photographs were attempted from kites, air balloons, and even pigeons,⁸⁶ but it was aerial photography from airplanes that proved most useful for tracking enemy trench positions. At this time, it also became possible to use photographs for more than qualitative illustrations in survey expeditions and

⁸⁶ George Lawrence created a "compound kite" capable of lifting mammoth photographic glass plates aloft and then triggering the electronically shutter from the ground. He was in San Francisco trying to sell his invention to the navy for surveillance when the earthquake of 1906 occurred. He turned his airborne camera to land, taking stunning photographic panoramas of the devastation. Simon Baker, "San Francisco in Ruins: The 1906 Aerial Photographs of George R. Lawrence," *Landscape* 30, no. 2 (1989), 9-14. Julius Neubroner of Germany patented a system in 1903 whereby small cameras were attached to the breasts of carrier pigeons and the shutter was triggered automatically by a tiny mechanical timer taking a series of photographs along the bird's more or less predetermined route. The invention resulted in the Bavarian Pigeon Corps. Beaumont Newhall, *Airborne Camera: The World from the Air and Outer Space* (New York: Hastings House, 1969), 30-33, 48.

photographic images became part of the arsenal of mapmaking tools of cartographers and surveyors.

Aerial and high-angle photography also provided modern abstract artists with a model from which to develop unusual imagery, something that would challenge "bourgeois naturalism."⁸⁷ In the early twentieth century "new vision" photographers started to point their smaller more mobile cameras, such as the Leica and Rolleiflex, upwards at the towering structures of the metropolises and downwards from those same towers. The radical angle, much steeper than the vantage point of lithographic bird's-eye views of the nineteenth century, flattened the forms of three dimensional objects on the ground, emphasizing tone, texture, and outline rather than social content. The list of artists who used aerial views before and after World War I is impressive and includes Le Corbusier, Rodchenko, and Malevich. In 1912, Alvin Langdon Coburn's series of photographs "New York from its Pinnacles" looked down on the streets of the American metropolis from its growing number of skyscrapers. Russian abstract artist Kasimir Malevich, who titled some of his non-objective paintings to invite comparisons between flight and his work—such as *Airplane in Flight* (1915) and

⁸⁷ Michel Frizot argues that the "Observation procedures set up during the First World War (aerial photography or photographs taken from any high vantage point such as a tower or steeple) had enormous repercussions on the manner in which images were viewed, on the mental link between what is seen and what really exists. Looking at the interweaving geometric forms, which are defined not in terms of criteria of beauty but of function, one could not help but question the legitimacy of traditional forms of representation and their chances of survival in a world that had discovered other rules, other forms of violence done both to the body and to the eyes." Michel Frizot, "Another Kind of Photography: New Points of View," in *The New History of Photography*, ed. Michel Frizot (Köln: Könemann, 1998), 393-94.

Sensation of Flight (1920)—used aerial photographs to explain the Suprematist view of the world and to educate viewers in a new way of seeing.⁸⁸ His 1927 publication *Die Gegenstandlose Welt* [*The Non-Objective World*] was illustrated with aerial views of towns and photographs of airplanes and other machinery. The use of unusual vantage points by artists in the early twentieth century is outside the history of the more quotidian and commercial urban representations with which I am concerned, but it is an important piece of the epilogue to my historical narrative, if for no other reason than to demonstrate the changing connotations of the aerial view. In the nineteenth century and before, the aerial view was a form of overview that promised comprehensive knowledge but in the early twentieth century a new meaning emerged that emphasized disorientation, fragmentation, and minimized social content.

In this selective, abridged history of bird's-eye views and examination of different types of landscape art, I have attempted to set the context for later discussions of the role of the synoptic view in visual regimes of modernity during the latter part of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century. Urban bird's-eye views and views from above were not unique to this period and the form can be traced back to the Italian Renaissance. Within this history are two tendencies: the view from above as art and the view from above as map. There is a long history of picture-maps as symbolic representations of the city despite their seeming

⁸⁸ Christina Lodder, "Malevich, Suprematism and Aerial Photography," *History of Photography* 28, no. 1 (2004), 25-40.

mimetic and cartographic potential. This is essential to interpretations of the view from above as a mode of urban representation, which is the subject of the next three chapters.

Chapter Two

Pastoral Cities and Prospects of Progress

The metropolitan city of the nineteenth century is known to many of us through Dickens', Poe's, and Baudelaire's literary descriptions of the crowded and chaotic streets of the European centres London and Paris. Dickens describes London as a labyrinth of incredibly complex relationships in a smoky, hazy atmosphere that obscures reality. Poe's crowded London streets contain types from all positions but it is "the man of the crowd" who seeks the companionship of the masses that interests the author.¹ Baudelaire's "botanizing" Parisian *flâneur* strolls leisurely along Haussmann's expansive boulevards—unlike the narrow streets of London—observing life on the street as if he were "an unwilling detective."² Continuing within this vein of modernity as defined by the experience and representation of the nineteenth-century European city, Georg Simmel sees the development of modern culture as being "characterized by the preponderance of what one may call the 'objective spirit' over the 'subjective spirit'"³ and the development of the "blasé attitude" due to

¹ Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man of the Crowd," in *Poetry and Tales* (New York: Literary Classics, 1984), 388-96.

² Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* (London: New Left Books, 1970), 40.

³ Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities*, ed. Richard Sennett (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 58.

overstimulation from the chaos of life in the metropolis.⁴ Karl Marx saw in the individual's encounter with modernity in the nineteenth century a time when the culture and values of an already lost authentic working class culture dissolved into air—the very space from which cities and towns would come to be represented. The nineteenth-century arcades and streets of Paris were the modern space in which Walter Benjamin found his definition of modernity based in the urban nineteenth century. In the city's night-time gas-lit streets he sees the exterior made interior through the obliteration of the natural night sky, hiding the stars to the point where "the moon and the stars are no longer worth mentioning."⁵

Cities changed during the second half of the nineteenth century: new forms were being built, new services were being implemented, and all of these developments were apparent to some extent in the drawings, prints, and photographs of cities. The picturing of modernity at this level is, or at least seems to be, obvious. Need more be said about a photograph that shows new street lighting, telegraph or telephone lines, power lines, or a train station, than it is an obvious record of modernity empirically acknowledging its existence? However, when the prints and photographs considered in this chapter are compared to earlier modes of urban representation, such as the picturesque, we can start to

⁴ Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," 51.

⁵ Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, 50.

see that representing the modern in the commercial images under consideration here symbolize a break from previous imaging and imaginings of the city.

This chapter will consider the early visual representations of Boston, Massachusetts, to demonstrate changes in both the content of images and the mode of pictorial representation from the early to late nineteenth century as urban modernity became more prevalent. The history of Boston is presented in two sections, pre- and post-Civil War, separated by a discussion of the relationship between capitalism and the growth of urban centres in the nineteenth century. In the readings of the cityscapes that follow this discussion, the city is considered as a site of accumulation of capital, a "rational landscape," that is best demonstrated from a synoptic vantage point.

Boston as Picture: An Introduction

Boston was originally a city of hills dominated by the Trimountain: Pemberton or Cotton Hill, Mount Vernon, and Sentry or Beacon Hill, the highest and central peak of the Trimountain and the only hill of any size remaining today.⁶ From the time of its settlement Boston was identified as the "City upon a Hill," though not necessarily because of its geology. Indeed, the founding Puritans did not even know they would eventually settle on the hilly peninsula that has become present-day Boston. "City upon a Hill" is taken from a speech by founder

⁶ Mount Vernon is shown on early maps of Boston as Mount Whoredom owing to the red light district on its north side, away from the town. It was later named Mount Vernon when the residential area of Boston expanded to encompass it.

John Winthrop who led a group of over one thousand Puritans in the spring of 1630 on eleven ships from England to America for the Massachusetts Bay Company. The group landed in present day Salem, settling first in Charlestown, and then moved across the river to the Shawmut Peninsula, which became Boston.⁷ Winthrop delivered a sermon to his fellow Puritan settlers while still aboard the ship *Arbella* before arriving at Massachusetts Bay emphasizing that the new community needed to come together in unity to succeed where many thought it would fail, "For we must consider that we shall be like a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us."⁸

The earliest colonial period views of Boston emphasize the importance of the sea. William Burgis' 1725 view *Ye Great Town of Boston* (fig. 6) shows Long Wharf jutting into a harbour full of ships with a hilly peninsula in the background. Paul Revere's Revolutionary era print of the city from 1770 (fig. 7) also stresses Boston's connection to the sea, but this time it is the route for disembarking British troops meant to quell a potentially troublesome colony. In both examples, the Long Wharf and church steeples provide identifiable landmarks, and the

⁷ This very brief history of the settlement of Boston ignores the earlier pre-English settlements of the Massachusetts people, who lived from a combination of hunting, fishing, agriculture, and trade with the neighbouring Wampanoag, Pequot, Nipmuck, and Abenaki peoples. They also traded with the Dutch and English when they arrived. The local aboriginal population was decimated by disease, war, and some were even sold as slaves by the European settlers to plantations in the West Indies.

⁸ Quoted in, among many other sources, Shaun O'Connell, *Imagining Boston: A Literary Landscape* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), 8. Winthrop's imagery was a biblical allusion to Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." The phrase has been part of American political discourse ever since, being invoked by such diverse politicians as John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan.

Burgis print, in particular, gives a good description of the local topography as seen from the harbour, making them similar to earlier "landfall" images that were produced as navigational aids and became popular in their own right as views in the eighteenth century.⁹

Boston's history in the middle to late eighteenth century is dominated by wars between England and France fought by proxy in North America and by its place in the creation of a new American state through revolution in opposition to the English colonial government. The period is interesting and complex and certainly cannot be done justice in this short history of Boston, but a partial list of the important events of the 1770s includes the Boston Massacre (1770), the Boston Tea Party (1773), the closure of the harbour and the suspension of the Commonwealth's government by the British (1774), various skirmishes and battles through 1775, and the departure of British troops in 1776, effectively marking the end of Massachusetts as a British colony.¹⁰ After the Revolution, the city prospered as a mercantilist centre well into the nineteenth century trading with ports around the world, notably China and southeast Asia beginning in the 1790s. It was during this time that some of the landmarks for which Boston is still known were constructed: the State House on Beacon Hill (1798), Faneuil Hall

⁹ For example, see the *Atlantic Neptune* prints by J. F. W. DesBarres, which includes a 1776 view of Boston from the sea.

¹⁰ For more on the history of Boston during the American Revolution, see Alfred Fabian Young, *Liberty Tree: Ordinary People and the American Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 2006); Gary Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

(renovated to present form in 1805), the Quincy Market (1826), and the Custom House (1847).

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Boston's economy shifted from mercantile trade to industry and it became an industrial centre for the northeastern United States with the establishment of textile mills in the surrounding communities of Waltham and Lowell, and later Lawrence and Fall River.¹¹ The city was the source of capital for a number of industrial endeavours in outlying towns, some of which were established by the industrialists who built the factories. Boot and shoe factories were built in Haverhill, Lynn, and Brockton; guns were manufactured in Springfield; metal works were established in Springfield and Worcester; and Waltham became a centre for watch manufacturing in addition to its mature textile industry.

Boston also became a common destination for many of the desperate Irish in the wake of the British repeal of the Corn Laws (1846) and famine in Ireland in the 1840s. The combination of factories, available capital, transportation, and cheap labour provided by the massive immigration of the 1840s created the perfect conditions for the next industrial revolution in the region. Wealth became concentrated in a small number of intermarried families, the so-called

¹¹ Waltham was the site of the first integrated cotton mill in the United States in 1813. It was powered by the flow of the Charles River and soon Boston industrialists looked to other rivers to supply power, especially the Merrimack River to the north. The list of Massachusetts communities with textile mills built by Boston financing in the first half of the nineteenth century includes Fall River, Haverhill, Lawrence, Lowell, Methuen, Waltham, and in New Hampshire, Manchester and Nashua.

"Brahmins," who dominated Boston economically and socially until the early twentieth century. The Brahmins were, however, financially very conservative and did not invest in risky and potentially more profitable ventures, preferring to place their money in established businesses and often getting a smaller return for the investment. Eventually New York City surpassed Boston as the centre for textile sales in the United States despite Boston's proximity to the textile mills of Massachusetts. Boston was not as economically vibrant as New York City owing in part to the financial conservatism of its business leaders; however the local elite did not dwell on this eclipse and instead eschewed economic dominance by emphasizing cultural pursuits as legitimating activities for their privileged position.¹²

Visual representations of Boston from the nineteenth century before the Civil War usually featured the harbour in the foreground, as in, for example, W. H. Bartlett's *Boston and Bunker Hill, from the East* (fig. 8), a view from the north of the peninsula, and his *Boston from the Dorchester Heights* (fig. 9), a view from the south. Both of these views appeared in N. P. Willis and W. H. Bartlett's illustrated travel volume *American Scenery* (1840).¹³ In the first of Bartlett's views,

¹² Mona Domosh, *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century New York and Boston* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 11-12.

¹³ N.P. Willis, and W.H. Bartlett, *American scenery; or, Land, lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840). There are five views of Boston in the two-volume publication. Volume I includes: *View of State Street, Boston; Boston, From Dorchester Heights; and View of Faneuil [sic] Hall, and Adjacent Buildings, Boston*. Volume II includes: *Boston, and Bunker Hill (From the East); Cemetery of Mount Auburn; and Faneuil Hall, from the Water*.

Boston and Bunker Hill, the State House is a one of several foci in the picture. The pastoral foreground is linked to the city proper by a bridge across the harbour leading the viewer from the ground upon which the artist presumably stood toward a dense urban texture in the middleground, surmounted by the gleaming white State House. A tree and the Bunker Hill Monument provide a frame on the right side of the image directing the viewer's eye toward the centre of the picture. This view proved to be very popular and was more or less reproduced in the 1850s by Louis Le Breton (fig. 10), minus the tree, and later as part of a centennial commemorative image in 1876. Willis' accompanying text emphasizes the picturesque quality of the harbour city from this vantage point and, predictably for an English publication, its pre-Revolutionary history.

Boston from the Dorchester Heights is a similar composition (fig. 9). Again the city is in the middleground; however, this time the State House shimmers brightly as if making manifest its location, "Beacon" Hill. The mid-sky sun reflects off the water silhouetting the ships in the harbour and illuminating the roofs of the warehouses of East Boston. The dominant position of the State House and the ships and warehouses leave no doubt that Boston is a city of government and trade. The foreground, Dorchester Heights, is less pastoral than *Boston and Bunker Hill*, instead emphasizing the city's revolutionary past with a prominent American flag in the upper left over the promontory from which General George Washington aimed his cannons at British troops occupying Boston in March

1776. Willis begins his description of the view with the history of the British immigration to the area and then turns his narrative to a lengthy description of Washington's military manoeuvres. His final paragraph summarizes the mood in the United States prior to the intense industrialization and urbanization of the later nineteenth century: "The calenture of speculation is just now at its height in America; and Dorchester, like other places, is laid out in lots, and busy with the builders of fancy cottages and hotels."¹⁴

Bartlett's long views of Boston foreground the rural-like area surrounding the urban core of the city. The tree in the pastoral foreground of *Boston and Bunker Hill* provides a vertical border that separates contemporary Boston from the historical Bunker Hill monument, which, ironically, is a future view, as the monument was not completed until 1843. The juxtaposition of traditional pastoral foreground and contemporary city create a disjunctive link between the fading agrarian republic of Thomas Jefferson and Jacksonian expansionism, and the soon to be urban republic. Similarly, the foreground-middleground relationship in *Boston from the Dorchester Heights* juxtaposes the historical with the contemporary while providing the viewer with a comfortable and familiar ground from which to view the changing world on the horizon.

American artist Edwin Whitefield redrew Burgis's 1725 view of Boston and issued it in 1848 with a new view of the city, *View of Boston from East Boston*

¹⁴ Willis and Bartlett, *American Scenery*, vol. 1, 57.

(fig. 11).¹⁵ Whitefield is approaching the imaginary vantage point of the bird's-eye views of the later nineteenth century, but it is believed that he drew his scene from the very earthbound eight-story Sugar House of the Boston Sugar Refinery in East Boston, creating an image that has more in common with later photographic cityscapes than lithographic bird's-eye views.¹⁶ Whitefield's harbour view emphasizes the importance of shipping and trade to the city as well as a railroad link to the north from a station appearing in the lower left. There are four naval ships in the foreground—the naval yard is just outside the right edge of the picture—but they are greatly outnumbered by commercial ships, including ocean going vessels, a steam paddle wheeler, and a ferry transporting passengers between peninsular Boston and the railroad station in East Boston. The wharves and warehouses in the foreground and opposite side of the harbour emphasize the importance of Boston as a trading city at the nexus of New England commerce and, in general, the image is densely packed with markers of an economy based on trade and manufacturing. The difference between this image of the modern city and later photographic or bird's-eye view images is small in terms of the objects represented. Ships, trains and the dense urban fabric of Boston would continue to be features in synoptic views of the city later in the century and viewing the downtown area from the water—though not necessarily

¹⁵ This print was part of Whitefield's *Original Views of American Cities* (1845-47), also known as *Original Views of North American Cities and Scenery*. Contents varied by edition.

¹⁶ Catharina Slautterback, unpublished manuscript, Prints and Photographs Collection, Boston Athenaeum.

from East Boston—would remain popular with artists at least to the end of the period of this study.

Published in the same year as Whitefield's view, Richard Mallory's drawing of Boston from the top of the Bunker Hill Monument (fig. 12), was first reproduced in 1848, almost six years after the completion of the memorial structure and the same year as Whitefield's views of the city. Mallory's drawing was engraved by James Smillie and published in various bound formats with an accompanying "Key to the Engraving."¹⁷ The introduction to the key stresses both the history of the communities that can be surveyed from the top of the monument and "the commerce and trade of Boston," which was "increasing with unparalleled rapidity."¹⁸ Mallory's view from the top of the 221-foot granite obelisk gave viewers "in one glance... all the railroads—seven in number—and every other avenue connecting Boston with the country."¹⁹ It is certainly a more distanced view than Whitefield's panorama from East Boston but, unlike Bartlett's earlier views, the foreground comprises urban structures that give way to the warehouses and docks on the Charles River with Boston proper on the far shore of the river. The State House dominates the skyline, but through its dark tones

¹⁷ James Smillie and R. P. Mallory, *A Panoramic View from Bunker Hill Monument* (Boston: Redding & Co., 1848). Part of Mallory's panoramic view from the Bunker Hill Monument also appears in Samuel Gardner Drake, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Boston* (Boston: L. Stevens, 1856).

¹⁸ Smillie and Mallory, *A Panoramic View from Bunker Hill Monument*. n.p.

¹⁹ Smillie and Mallory, *A Panoramic View from Bunker Hill Monument*. n.p.

rather than as a shining beacon on the hill. In both Whitefield's and Mallory's prints, the city is unequivocally urban from foreground to background and there is none of the pastoral "relief" afforded by Bartlett's pictures a few years earlier. One explanation for the difference may rest in the different projects in which each image was contextualized. Bartlett was producing a large portfolio of prints for publication to a diverse mass audience and *American Scenery*, in which his views of Boston appeared, was just one of the many "picturesque" publications in his long career of illustrated travel books.²⁰ Whitefield and Mallory, on the other hand, were producing prints for sale to a domestic market, one that demanded a flattering accuracy in the views they produced.

The production of views of Boston and other American cities did not suddenly change in the late 1840s from pastoral views to images full of brick buildings, bridges, smokestacks, streets, and railroads, as demonstrated above by Whitefield and Mallory. Indeed, Freeman Richardson's *Environs of Boston from Corey's Hill, Brookline, Mass.* (fig. 13), published in 1864, is more similar to Bartlett's representation of the city than either Whitefield's or Mallory's. The stratified scene takes the viewer from a park-like foreground populated with strollers, carriages, cattle, and wildlife, to a spacious suburban middleground full of grassy squares and detached homes. The urban city is relegated to the

²⁰ Bartlett produced two North American collections of views, *American Scenery* with N. P. Willis (London, 1840) and *Canadian Scenery* (London, 1842), as well as titles from other parts of the world.

background, which appears as a dense texture of buildings, streets, and smokestacks on the horizon. From this vantage point Boston is, a "distant prospect," to use a phrase of Louis Hawes, and "no more disruptive than a village and its church over the brow of the hill, or a cottage whose smoking chimney signals habitation and comfort" and "takes on a quality of fantasy."²¹ While Whitefield and Mallory provided viewers with an unflinching urban image of Boston, other more pastoral and traditional views continued to be produced in the context of the early suburbanization of the American metropolis.²²

Cities in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

The nineteenth century saw the rise of the city as the dominant form of dwelling in North America. In the United States between 1800 and 1900 the number of places considered to be "urban territory" increased from 33 to 1,737. The majority of these "urban" places had a population between 2,500 and 5,000.²³ However, the majority of urban residents in the United States lived in

²¹ Caroline Arscott et al., "The Partial View: The Visual Representation of the Early Nineteenth-Century City," in *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteen-Century Middle Class* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 218-19. The quote is from Arscott et al., but the authors take the term "distant prospect" from Louis Hawes' exhibition catalogue *Presences of Nature, British Landscape Painting 1780-1830* (New Haven: Yale Centre for British Art, 1982).

²² For more on suburbanization in the early nineteenth century, before the Civil War, see Henry C. Binford, *The First Suburbs: Residential Communities on the Boston Periphery, 1815-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

²³ William Lerner, ed. *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Commerce, 1975), Series A43-56. For example, in 1900 there were 832 urban places with a population under 2,500, 465 with a population of 2,500 to 4,999, and 280 with a population of 5,000 to 9,999. There were only 15 urban places with a population of more than 100,000 in 1900 and only three of them had more than a million people.

cities of a 50,000 people or more from 1860 to the turn of the century, and by 1890 more Americans lived in metropolises of 1,000,000 or more than cities of any other size.²⁴ Indeed, the development and growth of metropolitan cities was one of the characteristic features of post-Civil War America and is often considered synonymous with nineteenth-century urbanism.²⁵ Despite the dominance of the metropolis as the most populous urban form at the turn of the century, it should be remembered that the majority of Americans still did not live in urban areas until 1920.²⁶

Population is not, however, the sole indicator of the urbanization of North American society in the second half of the nineteenth century. From the very beginning of urban development, cities affected the daily life of people well beyond their boundaries, and concomitant with the increasing importance of cities as a place to live came a general urbanization of society. As French theorist Henri Lefebvre argues, the "urban" is a virtual object of study and the "city" is

²⁴ Lerner, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Series A57-72*. The population of cities are grouped as follows: 1,000,000 or more; 500,000 to 999,999; 250,000 to 499,999; 100,000 to 249,999; 50,000 to 99,999; 25,000 to 49,999; 10,000 to 24,999; 5,000 to 9,999; 2,500 to 4,999. In 1860 the population in centres greater than 50,000 people accounted for ten percent of the overall population of the United States and by 1900 it had increased to approximately twenty-two percent. Using the generous benchmark for an "urban" community of a population of 2,500, the urban population accounted for twenty percent of the American population in 1860 and forty percent in 1900.

²⁵ Raymond A. Mohl, *The New City: Urban America in the Industrial Age, 1860-1920* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1985), 3.

²⁶ Defining "urban" places as a community with a population greater than 2,500 residents. See n. 24.

simply the "urban centre."²⁷ That is, "'urban fabric' does not narrowly define the built world of cities but all manifestations of the dominance of the city over the country."²⁸ Emphasizing changes in society rather than population growth, American historian Samuel P. Hays notes that "the history of the past century or more is the history not of cities but of the evolution of urbanized society,"²⁹ positioning the ascendancy and increasing importance of cities in nineteenth-century America more as a symptom rather than a cause of urbanized society. In particular, he sees the late nineteenth century as the "period in which cities made their first mark on the nation's experience and consciousness as a whole, when city people, city ways, city problems, and city opportunities began to influence thought and action everywhere."³⁰ He examines broad areas of societal change in the nineteenth-century United States, such as politics, the economy, culture, values, and the environment, and notes that all of them became dominated by the urban viewpoint. It perhaps seems a bit tautological to argue that urban values come to dominate all parts of the nation as the population becomes increasingly urban, but the worth of Hays' argument is his challenge to the common city versus country binary and his recognition that despite the fact that

²⁷ Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 23, 28.

²⁸ Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, 3-4.

²⁹ Samuel P. Hays, "From the History of the City to the History of the Urbanized Society," *Journal of Urban History* 19, no. 4 (1993), 3.

³⁰ Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 65.

the majority of the population was still rural, cities were becoming the cultural and commercial focus of all aspects of life. In this context, the visual and textual representation of cities speaks to more than the narrow concerns of the local population, it was also of regional or national interest.

The area of cities increased with their booming populations. "Walking cities" developed in the early nineteenth century and before, but beginning in the 1830s there was a profound reordering of urban space as industry and population fought for the same parcels of land near transportation resources and work. More importantly, innovations in mass transportation changed the practical scope of the city. Horse drawn omnibuses were introduced in the 1830s and, while they were usually priced beyond the means of labourers, they allowed more affluent businessmen to move out of the centre of the city and commute to work from developing suburbs. The first commuter railroad in the United States was established in Boston in the 1830s and by the mid-1880s, twenty percent of Boston businessmen commuted ten to fifteen miles every day by railroad. Like the earlier omnibuses, the price of a railroad ticket limited access but allowed wealthier citizens to move even further from the city centre to newer and more remote suburbs. Modes of commuting also transformed the core of American cities with the introduction of horse-drawn street cars, cable cars, electric streetcars, elevated railways, and, at the end of the nineteenth century, subways.

Every change in mass transit increased the useable area of the city for some of its residents and at the same time contributed to the creation of discrete socio-economic and functional zones. New residential areas were established on the former outskirts of the city and daily commuting became common for those residents who could afford homes in the new suburbs and the cost of mass transit.³¹ As the population sprawled because of transportation developments, the diverse "walking city" changed and became a city segregated by income and land use. The mixed neighbourhoods of the older city gave way to specialization defined by function, income, and ethnicity.³² Urban space ceased to be relatively heterogeneous and the functions of the city and its residents became separated by larger distances. The city was fragmenting into specialized spaces where acceptable practices became well defined and eventually codified through zoning and bylaws in attempts to create urban utopias.³³ For example, in 1870s Boston, manufacturers expanded in the Roxbury area to be near railroads that came into the city from the south and west, and shippers became concentrated in the south of the city near water and rail transport. Taking zoning and the creation of single use spaces to an extreme, landscape gardener Robert Morris Copeland argued

³¹ The enlargement of the city by the automobile, the most profound catalyst for the changing morphology of the city, began in 1908 with the introduction of the Ford Model T. Muhl, *The New City*, 29-34.

³² Muhl, *The New City*, 37.

³³ See Christine M. Boyer, *Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American City Planning* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983).

in his book *The Most Beautiful City in America: Essay and Plan for the Improvement of the City of Boston* (1872) for a city plan that would anticipate growth instead of leaving the city to develop organically by identifying sites for future wharves, factories, utilities, and transportation corridors. City planning was unusual in the United States at the time, and Copeland was inspired by Baron Haussmann's redesign of Paris under Napoleon III, suggesting, among other projects, that six boulevards should radiate from a road around the State House to connect it with all parts of Boston.³⁴ However, he saw the city as more than a formal exercise in gardening and sight lines. Copeland also believed the city was a necessary outcome of capitalism, much like

a warehouse for the collection and distribution of the products which contribute to the luxuries or necessities of life... The town or city grows in numbers because many persons must be employed to buy and sell, collect and distribute the merchandise which rolls over the railroads, comes down the river, or is landed on its wharves.³⁵

He proposed that Boston become a rationalized landscape where the flat and coastal areas of the city would be used for industry and commercial interests, because transportation would be more efficient in those areas, and residential

³⁴ Lawrence W. Kennedy, *Planning the City upon a Hill: Boston since 1630* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 66. Urban historian John Reps refers to Copeland's plan for Boston as "a serious and clearly thought out proposal for the redevelopment of a great city," and "should be recognized as the first modern city planning study, a forerunner of the thousands to come later and the superior to most in literary quality and logic of presentation." John Reps, *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 290.

³⁵ Quoted in John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *American Space: The Centennial Years, 1865-1876* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1972), 132.

and recreational areas would occupy the uneven land upon which it was more costly to build.³⁶

In addition to expanding horizontally, cities started to grow vertically in the late nineteenth century with the development of the steel-framed skyscraper. The Chicago School of architects is often acknowledged as the earliest designers of skyscrapers in the United States, but Chicago's vertical boom was soon eclipsed by the building craze in New York where over three hundred skyscrapers were constructed by 1905.³⁷ In terms of height, Boston's first skyscraper is frequently acknowledged as the sixteen story Ames Building completed in December 1889.³⁸ The high price of land even in outlying areas saw the development of a more spacious form of vertical living compared to downtown tenements, in particular, for the middle and working classes. Residential "triple-deckers" were usually wood frame construction and contained one or sometimes two apartments per floor.³⁹ In Boston, about 16,000 "triple-deckers" were built between 1870 and 1920 in "streetcar suburbs" such as Jamaica Plain and Dorchester.

³⁶ Jackson, *American Space*, 133.

³⁷ Mona Domosh, "Imagining New York's first skyscrapers, 1875-1910," *Journal of Historical Geography* 13, no. 3 (1987), 235. Domosh defines skyscrapers during the period as "buildings over nine stories."

³⁸ The Ames Building is often regarded as Boston's first skyscraper; however, the first steel frame skyscraper in Boston was the Winthrop Building completed in 1893. Both buildings still stand today.

³⁹ Mohl, *The New City*, 48-49. The triple-decker was a popular residential architectural form throughout New England but is particularly associated with Boston.

Cities and Capitalism in the Nineteenth Century

Cities and the industrial revolution may seem at first glance to be synonymous. However, as Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg's painting *Coalbrookdale by Night* (1801) shows us, the coal that powered the revolution in Britain was not in downtown London, but in rural England near the required natural resources. The industrial revolution was fuelled by coal in England, which was later transported to cities such as Manchester, where factories were being established to take advantage of pre-existing populations (even before the migration from the country), after the development of canal and rail systems. The combination in England of large landowners and an essentially landless rural class created conditions in which the rural population flocked to cities to find work in new factories. In North America, however, many of the early factories were powered by water in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and new "factory cities" were established where the production facilities were built. The same migration of rural population thus took place in North America, but it was often to new communities that grew up around industry, such as Waltham, Massachusetts.⁴⁰ By the end of the Civil War, coal powered steam was starting to overtake water as the more important source of industrial power in the United States and factories were being located in larger port cities and trading centres,

⁴⁰ James E. Vance, Jr., *This Scene of Man: The Role and Structure of the City in the Geography of Western Civilization* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 30.

where transportation of coal, raw materials, and finished goods was more easily accommodated. In addition, the large-scale adoption of steam power in American industry coincided with the mass immigrations from Europe, which created a large and cheap labour pool for the factory owners.⁴¹ Cities thereby became the focus of the industrial economy in the United States through the concentration of labour, transportation, manufacturing, and capital.⁴²

Capitalism and urbanism were inextricably linked in the nineteenth century and observers, such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, explored the connections between capital and production and by extension—or rather explicitly in Engels' case—the working and living conditions of workers, who lived almost exclusively in towns and cities.⁴³ Marx's theories of capital, accumulation, and surplus are integral to the understanding of the built environment of the city. Geographer David Harvey has a long history of writing on the connections between

⁴¹ Vance, *This Scene of Man*, 342. Immigration peaked in the period 1881 to 1885 and remained very high until 1895. On average between 1881 and 1885 there were 595,137 immigrants per year. This is more than double the average for the previous four-year period. By 1900, 40 percent of the residents of the twelve largest cities in the United States were immigrants and a further 20 percent were the children of immigrants. Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 57-58.

⁴² Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 52-54. However, cities such as Washington, DC, or Ottawa, Ontario, did not experience their expansion in the nineteenth century due to industrialization. Both were the seats of government and this is but one of many different manners in which cities form and grow in size. Historically, different narratives have been the basis for urban development, reflecting and producing both secular and spiritual power through the urban structure. Dense urban populations can form for reasons other than the market or capitalism.

⁴³ See Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England: From Personal Observation and Authentic Sources* [1845] (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973).

urbanization and capitalism through the lens of Marx's writings, and argues that the object of study of urbanization is urbanization as a process of capitalism:

Capital, Marx insists, must be conceived of as a process and not reified as a thing. The study of urbanization is a study of that process as it unfolds through the production of physical and social landscapes and the production of consciousness.... [it] is concerned with processes of capital circulation; the shifting flows of labor power, commodities, and money capital; the spatial organization of production and the transformation of space relations; movements of information and geopolitical conflicts between territorially-based class alliances; and so on.⁴⁴

It can be extended that capital is directly related to urban morphology. Indeed, Harvey makes explicit the relationship between capitalism and geography in the commodity cycle: money purchases commodities; commodities are transformed into new commodities for purchase by "means of production" and "labour power"; profit is the difference between the original money input and the money realized by selling the transformed commodity; the cycle repeats. Physical distances between different steps of the cycle require money to overcome intervening geography, potentially decreasing profit. For example, if the site of production or transformation is in a city distant from the original location of the commodity then money must be spent to transport the commodity to the site of transformation, thereby decreasing profits. As Harvey notes, "the circulation of capital is a

⁴⁴ David Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), xvi-xvii. In addition to this title and numerous articles, Harvey has published the following books on the subject: *Consciousness and the Urban Experience: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); *The Urban Experience* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

geographical movement in time"⁴⁵ and the concentration of commodities, capital, and labour in the city overcomes the penalties of geography.

The expansion of the cities and towns of north-eastern North America in the second half of the nineteenth century was, in part, the result of a concentration of capital to overcome the cost of space. In fact, Harvey regards cities as an almost necessary outcome of capitalism:

Capital flow presupposes tight temporal and spatial coordinations in the midst of increasing separation and fragmentation. It is impossible to imagine such a material process without the production of some kind of urbanization as a 'rational landscape' within which the accumulation of capital can proceed. *Capital accumulation and the production of urbanization go hand in hand.*⁴⁶

This "rational landscape" is the built environment of capitalism in the physical landscape and, as such, both creates "use values to enhance the progressive accumulation of capital" and functions as a spectacle that "is the crowning glory of past capitalist development."⁴⁷ In particular, it is evidence of capital accumulation and past surpluses in the relationship between capitalists and labour. Harvey argues that this surplus can be taken up in two different "circuits of capital,"⁴⁸ each of which can contribute to the built environments for production and consumption, and social expenditures that aid in the reproduction of labour

⁴⁵ Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 19. Harvey's argument was published in 1985, before the extraordinary compression of space by the "virtual" Internet. This does not however negate the applicability of Harvey's argument to nineteenth-century urbanization.

⁴⁶ Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 22. Emphasis added.

⁴⁷ Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 83.

⁴⁸ See Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 63-66.

power: "Investment in the built environment therefore entails the creation of a whole physical landscape for purposes of production, circulation, exchange, and consumption."⁴⁹ This rational urban landscape is, however, always in flux. The built environment of the past inhibits the future because it is immobile. Buildings and structures are removed from the cityscape very slowly unless there is a sudden devaluation of their value. As Harvey notes,

Under capitalism there is, then, a perpetual struggle in which capital builds a physical landscape appropriate to its own condition at a particular moment in time, only to have to destroy it, usually in the course of a [economic] crisis, at a subsequent point in time.⁵⁰

However, lithographic bird's-eye views and photographs freeze the urban process denying its existence as a process, representing it rather as a product. The images contribute to the myth of a solely productive and reproductive capitalism in which capital accumulation always increases and the inherent contradiction of capitalism—creation *and* destruction as a means of reproduction—is marginalized.

At the risk of being simplistic, we can state that if the city is a rational landscape of capitalism, then representations of cities are also representations of capitalism. So how are the city and capitalism represented in mass visual arts of the nineteenth-century? Simmel, Poe, and Dickens have all powerfully described the experience of the city in text in their own manner and there have been many

⁴⁹ Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 64.

⁵⁰ Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 83.

volumes written on the topic of painting and the city in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially on the Impressionists and Paris.⁵¹ Bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs of the late nineteenth century do not have the same intimate engagement with the street as Poe's "man in the crowd" or Baudelaire's *flâneur* walking his turtle, but they do share a level of detachment present in Simmel's modern urban defined by "objective spirit" and "blasé attitude." In addition to the psychic distance the individual subject imposes between himself or herself and other city dwellers to provide relief from "the intensification of nervous stimulation" in the urban environment, Simmel sees the city, a concentration of money and intellect, as a place of profoundly objective relationships. Indeed, according to Simmel, both money and intellect objectify relations: "Money is concerned only with what is common to all: it asks for the exchange value," and relationships established through intellect are concerned only with "the objective measurable achievement."⁵² Harvey's urban rational landscape is also the product, in part, of the objectivity of money. He notes that money is rationalizing and traditional class distinctions (that is, pre-modern) cease to exist when money is the basis of social relationships, and that "a money

⁵¹ Two of the more influential texts on this topic are: Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*, Revised ed. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999).

⁵² Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," 49.

economy demands a certain kind of rationalism, based on exact, precise, and rigorous measurement of calculable magnitudes."⁵³

The quantification and objectification of time is another of Harvey's analytical components in capitalism's production of rational landscapes. The importance of quantified, measured, and standardized time grew tremendously during the nineteenth century. To maximize surplus value, capitalism had to minimize the costs associated with time and space. It was circulation, not production, that brought temporal discipline to the cities. The revolution in circulation was both physical (e.g. railroad) and non-physical (e.g. telegraph, telephone, radio, etc.). Harvey quotes Simmel's discussion of time and cities, noting that the "technique of metropolitan life ... is not conceivable without all of its activities and reciprocal relationships being organized and coordinated in the most punctual way into a firm, fixed framework of time which transcends all subjective elements."⁵⁴ The transportation of people and goods depended not only on being able to bridge the space from one point to another, but also on the rational logic of capitalism, which required that it be done predictably and repeatedly.

⁵³ Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 168-70.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Harvey, *The Urban Experience*, 173. For the full passage, see Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," 50. Note that Harvey's translation is slightly different.

Boston as Picture and Rational Landscape

We may not think of Boston when we think of present-day American metropolises, but it has been one of the most populous cities in the United States since its founding in the seventeenth century. It was part of the rapid urban growth in nineteenth-century America, in the northeast region of the country, whose population by end of World War I was seventy-five percent urban, compared to the remainder of the country at only only fifty-one percent.⁵⁵ As the population of Boston increased the representation of the city altered.⁵⁶ The next section considers some of the changes in visual representations of Boston in the context of increasing urban modernity and the city as "rational landscape."

After 1870 there was a substantial change in the industrial nature of Boston. The city grew from a relatively compact walking city in the mid-century to a metropolis over ten miles in radius, serviced by streetcars transporting daily commuters between the suburbs and downtown. By 1882, more than 140 miles of street-railway track had been laid by various companies and electric streetcars

⁵⁵ Mohl, *The New City*, 12; Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 47.

⁵⁶ The population of Boston has not increased steadily since its founding in 1630. The first notable dip in population occurred during the American Revolution when the only people left in the city were occupying British troops and Loyalists. The second decline came in the mid-twentieth century when people left the incorporated area of the city for other nearby cities and surrounding suburbs. As of the 1950 census, Boston was no longer one of the ten most populous cities in the United States, and is no longer considered one of the twenty largest cities.

started to replace horse-drawn omnibuses in the the late 1880s.⁵⁷ The extensive railroad network around and through the city and the common employment of coal-fired steam engines to power manufacturing led to a higher level of interconnectedness between the outlying factory towns and Boston, "the hub."⁵⁸ Traditional industries, such as textiles and leather, sugar refining, lumber, and fish processing were soon joined by oil refineries, foundries, glass factories, soap manufacturers, large slaughterhouses, and piano factories.⁵⁹ Boston also occupied an important place in shoe-manufacturing in the region, acting as a centre for outlying factories in Lynn, Haverhill, Marlborough, and Brockton. By the middle of the nineteenth century, an increasing amount of wealth was concentrated in Boston from the production of surrounding textile mills and the transportation trade that supported them. Trade and industry became less important as symbols of Boston, and indeed, the city as a trading centre declined

⁵⁷ The first electric street railway was opened experimentally on January 1, 1889. By 1891, one of the major transit providers, the West End Company, had 469 electric streetcars and 1,692 horse drawn cars. Richard Herndon, *Boston of Today: A Glance at its History and Characteristic with Biographical Sketches and Portraits of Many of its Professional and Business Men* (Boston: Post Publishing Co., 1892), 24.

⁵⁸ Boston is often referred to as "the hub." The term did not originate from the important place the city played as a transportation "hub" for local and international trade, but rather it is thought to have originated in a written passage by Boston physician and writer Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who recounted a story in *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (1858) in which a young acquaintance said to him: "Boston State-House is the hub of the solar system. You couldn't pry that out of a Boston man, if you had the tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar." Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1906), 120. The phrase eventually became corrupted to "Boston is the hub of the universe" and eventually shortened to "the hub."

⁵⁹ Sam Bass Warner, Jr., "Today's Boston: A History," *Massachusetts Historical Review*, <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/mhr/1/warner.html> (accessed November 11, 2008).

despite the concentration of wealth. Contemporaries blamed the drop in harbour traffic on the physical state of the Boston Harbor and argued that creating new land for the city through in-filling projects around the peninsula had reduced available wharf space and, as the theory of the day went, impeded the scouring action of the tides which kept shipping lanes open, thereby reducing the draught of the ships the port could accommodate. While it may be true that the harbour could not accommodate the ever-increasing size of modern ships, the decline in trade is more likely linked to a scarcity of exportable commodities and the lack of direct rail links between the north and south end of the city, making Boston a hub-less hub!⁶⁰ Regardless of the actual state of trade, the city was seen by its elite classes as a social and cultural centre, "a domestic space, a place to live and play, to attend the theatre and stroll through parks and gardens, and to make social calls, with some business meetings at offices along State Street."⁶¹

New developments and even new land in the city was often the result of residential projects for and by the elite class; however, trade did influence the physical development of the city. The construction of Atlantic Avenue from 1869 to 1872 across the wharves of the harbour created a much needed direct, and easy, transportation link between north and south. In addition to changing the shoreline, the new avenue was a tangible sign of some Bostonians' interest to

⁶⁰ Nancy S. Seasholes, "Gaining Ground: Boston's Topographical Development in Maps," in *Mapping Boston*, ed. Alex Krieger and David A. Cobb (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 127-29.

⁶¹ Domosh, *Invented Cities*, 33.

compete for trade with centres such as New York.⁶² Fort Hill on the south side of the peninsula was flattened to provide the infill between Atlantic Avenue and the existing shoreline. In the process, tenement dwellers were displaced, many of whom were immigrants, and were forced to relocate to other sections of the city.

Another major event in the city's morphology and appearance was the Boston Fire on November 9, 1872, when most of the city's business district and seven wharves, a total of sixty-five acres and seven hundred seventy-six buildings, burned to the ground within a day.⁶³ The district, despite being completely devastated, was quickly reconstructed along the original crooked streets, many of which dated to the seventeenth century. Modern buildings were built along the colonial street plan. The new buildings not only presented modern facades, but also modern construction, wooden frame buildings having been prohibited in the dense downtown district after the fire. More markers of modernity appeared in the Boston cityscape near the end of the century. The street railway was electrified and electric street lamps started to appear in 1882 and power and telephone lines became common (at least in affluent neighbourhoods) in the 1890s. The invisible power of electricity was now manifested physically in the streetscape.

⁶² For more on the changing geomorphology of Boston, see Nancy S. Seasholes, *Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003); Alex Krieger and David A. Cobb, eds. *Mapping Boston* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

⁶³ See chapter four for more on the visual representation of the Boston Fire.

Meanwhile, like the internal construction of new buildings, there were other "invisible" changes to the cityscape. In 1873 a major overhaul of the water and sewage system was initiated by city council and, to solve moving streetcars through congested downtown streets, the first subway in the United States opened in 1897.⁶⁴ Both these developments constituted underground markers of modernity barely visible to the viewer above ground.⁶⁵ Other items were expunged from the view of citizens and also, therefore, from representations of the city. The islands in Boston Harbour and further into Massachusetts Bay have a long history, intensified by industrial modernity, of receiving the unwanted (and preferably unseen) of the city. A quick inventory of institutions and industries established on the islands in the nineteenth century includes a school farm for indigent boys, a horse rendering plant, the House of Industry, House of Reformation, and Alms-House (all removed from South Boston in 1858), and, as

⁶⁴ Between 1873 and 1885 the length of sewer line running under Boston's streets almost doubled from 125 miles to 226 miles. Eliot C. Clarke, *Main Drainage Works of the City of Boston*, 2nd ed. (Boston: [City of Boston], 1885), 11. The Boston subway opened September 1, 1897. The original subway was a tunnel just under 3 kilometres long running from Haymarket to Boylston Street. It is still part of the subway system today. Alex Krieger, "Experiencing Boston: Encounters with the Places on the Maps," in *Mapping Boston*, ed. Alex Krieger, and David A. Cobb (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 214.

⁶⁵ Subways pose a problem of visual representation. As Lynda Nead notes, the London Underground was represented in the *Illustrated London News* through the use of cross sections and a map of the tunnels. Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets, and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 37-40. In the words of one writer for the *News*, as if "from a balloon or some commanding position" to reveal the symmetry or order of the transportation system still left some readers mystified (45-46). Indeed, maps are symbolic abstractions, but maps of unseeable structures are doubly abstract.

was the practice in most port cities, quarantine stations.⁶⁶ In addition, as part of the recommendations of the 1875 overhaul of the water and sewage systems, sewer outfalls were moved from various points near the residents and businesses around the shoreline of the old city to a more remote location on Moon Island, south of Boston.⁶⁷

In Moses King's *Handbook of Boston* (1881), the author reminds us that much of what makes a modern city is inside structures, and not directly visible from the street or from above. His list of modern amenities in Boston's best hotels include such conveniences as elevators, indoor plumbing—in particular, the modern luxury of basins in a separate closet—gas fixtures, and central heating and ventilation.⁶⁸ The newly renovated Merchants' Exchange contained all of the modern communication media and products needed to keep businessmen apprised of the world of trade far beyond Boston's shores. Telegraph and even telephone lines may have been visible in the street and part of the nineteenth-century cityscapes, but they alone only connote the importance placed on

⁶⁶ The islands were also used for military installations and fortifications, navigational aids such as lighthouses, and pasture for livestock, recreation sites, and summer homes.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Clarke, *Main Drainage Works of the City of Boston*, 152. Moving the sewage outakes was not motivated exclusively by public health concerns. As the engineer's report of 1877 noted, Moon Island to the south of Boston harbour was "remote from any considerable population, present or prospective; therefore neither the presence of the reservoir nor the discharge of sewage there can have any effect upon the value of real estate."

⁶⁸ Moses King, *King's Handbook of Boston: Profusely Illustrated*, 4th ed. (Cambridge, MA: Moses King, 1881), 53. King published a number of different handbooks of Boston with various titles through the late nineteenth century.

communication and instant data in the late nineteenth century.⁶⁹ The description in *King's Handbook* reveals an invisible interior:

Newspaper-racks are arranged along the hall's sides ... The bulletin-boards record market quotations, promptly received, from all parts of the world; the shipping-news is bulletined as received by telegraph; vessels arriving are immediately registered; sales of stocks and other securities are chronicled; every change of wind is noted on a dial with points of the compass and connected with a large weather-vane on the roof of the building...⁷⁰

Some of the communication technologies listed in the *Handbook* predate the nineteenth century, but the combination of telegraphs, bulletin boards, and wind vanes speaks to a desire for a quantifiable, systematic, and rationalized approach to business. David Harvey's "rational landscape" is evident here, both as streetscape and inside the city's buildings.

Richard Herndon notes in *Boston of Today* (1892), "the greatest and most marked changes that have taken place between old and new Boston have been effected within the memory of many persons now living."⁷¹ Indeed, there was a feeling that change was happening faster than it had before, and even in the 1870s it was common to lament that the "old" city was gone:

⁶⁹ Telegraph lines were common in Boston by 1872 and there was a system of police and fire-alarm telegraphs in some parts of the city to alert emergency services. However, as the *Illustrated London News* noted in the wake of the Great Fire, "How far this arrangement was carried out in the present instance it is impossible to say, but, judging by the result, it would not appear to have proved much of a service." "The Great Fire of Boston," *Illustrated London News* 61, no. 1733 (1872), 499.

⁷⁰ King, *King's Handbook of Boston: Profusely Illustrated*, 279.

⁷¹ Herndon, *Boston of Today*, 2.

the oldest parts of the town are fast losing, if they have not wholly lost, their charms for the sight-seer interested in famous localities. Vast changes have taken place in these districts within the last twenty or thirty years; hills have been leveled, new streets opened, old ones widened, and hundreds of revered landmarks swept away.... The oldest inhabitant has long since ceased to recognize the city of his birth.⁷²

And, of course, the changes were not always seen as being for the best. The author of the 1878 edition of *King's Handbook of Boston* opposes the "modern" utilitarian—Harvey's "rational landscape" of capitalism—to the "traditional" picturesque:

In appearance, in customs, and in manners, Boston has changed marvellously during the past half-century; and a great, far-reaching, imposing modern city has taken the place of the bustling, quaint, picturesque town of a hundred years ago. Few of the historic old landmarks remain, and these few are doomed to soon disappear before the onward march of the utilitarian.⁷³

American poet Walt Whitman observed in 1881 in his short essay "A Week's Visit to Boston" that there was "evidence of copious capital" in Boston, the same evidence he had seen in newer western cities (St. Louis, Chicago, Denver, and San Francisco) which he thought to be the future of the expanding nation in the nineteenth century. While short on details of what constitutes "evidence," Whitman notes that "no centre of the New World [is] ahead of it, (half the big railroads in the West are built with Yankees' money, and they take the

⁷² "About Boston," *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 808 (1872), 500.

⁷³ *King's Handbook of Boston* (Cambridge, MA: Moses King, 1878), 19-20.

dividends.)"⁷⁴ Perhaps one piece of "evidence" that could be used to support Whitman's claim is that by the end of the nineteenth century the iconic symbols of Boston had changed. The traditional view of Boston as a city dominated by the dome of the State House and church steeples, as illustrated by W. H. Bartlett in *American Scenery*, had given way, as Russell Sullivan noted in 1912, to "a distorted mass of towering warehouses, office-buildings, and reeking smoke-stacks," the new symbols of power dominating the skyline.⁷⁵ According to Sullivan, the Custom House had become one of those "office-buildings" by the addition of a four hundred ninety-six foot tower to the mid-century structure, which reduced the original building to a mere "foundation of a twentieth-century tower, soon to dominate sea and land."⁷⁶ Indeed, the pace of development in Boston had destroyed some of the places the author had known for years, causing him (probably unintentionally) to allude to Marx and Engel's famous statement on modernity,

Turning from Snow Hill Street into the old paths of intricacy ... one may proceed to rediscover crooked little Marshall Street and the Boston Stone. Beyond it, through expansion and advancement, *all seems suddenly to go up in air*. Brattle Street Church is non-

⁷⁴ Walt Whitman, "A Week's Visit to Boston," in *Complete Poetry and Collected Prose* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1982), 900-01.

⁷⁵ T. Russell Sullivan, *Boston, New and Old* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1912), 31. Sullivan is writing much later than Whitman but he is writing at the end of the changes that start during Whitman's observations.

⁷⁶ Sullivan, *Boston, New and Old*, 33. Sullivan continues asserting an aggressive nostalgia for older Boston: "The sidewalks of State Street, where the merchants met 'on 'Change,' are overshadowed by disproportionate strongholds, beyond which the old State House, though pathetically dwarfed, asserts itself in triumphant contrast."

existent and forgotten. Scollay's Buildings have been levelled; and around their site business blocks, huge, unrelated masses, darkening streets too narrow for them, cut into the sky.⁷⁷

John Bachmann's *Bird's-Eye View of Boston* (1850) does not resemble the city described by Sullivan at the beginning of the twentieth century (fig. 4). Boston was just beginning to take the shape it has today. Back Bay, in the foreground, is being filled in after years of it being the site of "a great cesspool ... [with] a greenish scum, many yards wide, stretch[ing] along the shore of the basin ... whilst the surface of the water ... bubb[les] like a cauldron with the noxious gases that are exploding from the corrupting mass below."⁷⁸ The deplorable condition of the tidal bay was the result of an attempt to dam it to create two ponds, one that would fill at high tide and a second to receive the water as the tide dropped thereby creating water current that could be used to power mills. This scheme to provide power for industry near Boston, and thereby reduce the distance between the manufacture of goods and access to export markets through the port, was an utter failure. In addition to the inadequate power supply provided by Back Bay, the Boston sewer system dumped its charge

⁷⁷ Sullivan, *Boston, New and Old*, 40. Emphasis added. Marx and Engels' statement in the *Communist Manifesto* reads in full: "All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind." Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Communist Manifesto," in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, ed. David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 224.

⁷⁸ From city report on Back Bay dated 1849, quoted in Seasholes, "Gaining Ground," 124.

into the receiving pond where it festered and became a fetid unsanitary mess.⁷⁹

The marshland in the foreground of Bachmann's bird's-eye view may appear to be a sliver of nature next to the city, but it was certainly less salubrious and restorative than the adjacent manicured Public Garden and Common.

Church steeples, the Bunker Hill Monument, and the State House still dominate the skyline in Bachmann's 1850s *Boston*, but modern transportation—Marx's annihilation of space by time—is heavily emphasized through the two railroad bridges along the left edge of the image connecting the Boston peninsula to the north side of the Charles River and the old Boston and Providence Railroad station in the lower right.⁸⁰ Dark plumes of smoke from steamships mingle with the masts of ocean-going vessels in the harbour presenting both the future and scope of transportation and trade, as do the oversized warehouses along the wharves. The colossal water fountains in the Common and Public Garden—taller than the buildings on Beacon Street, with the notable exception of the State House—make concrete in the city's centre the establishment of the new Cochituate Waterworks twenty miles away. It was only two years earlier that "the water from Cochituate Lake was turned into the Frog Pond on the Common,

⁷⁹ For a full history of the filling-in of Back Bay, see Walter Muir Whitehill and Lawrence W. Kennedy, *Boston: A Topographical History*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 141-73.

⁸⁰ A newer Boston and Providence Railroad station in the same location is discussed in chapter four. The station in Bachmann's view was demolished in the early 1870s and a new station opened in 1873.

rushing to the height of eighty feet amid the triumphant plaudits of the people."⁸¹ Indeed, it was an event of such civic pride that "an ode by the poet Lowell was written for the occasion."⁸² The city as display is beginning to contain the attributes of modernity and Bachmann's bird's-eye view provides a visual inventory. Systems for the transportation of goods and people—railroads and ships—and the development of a centralized water supply are prominently displayed in the image. But in addition to objects that can be itemized, the bird's-eye view shows the viewer a dense urban area within which there is continuous activity. The busy streets are occupied by pedestrians and carriages, and though presented as static entities we understand that they and the mechanics of commerce are in constant movement—not even the train at the Providence and Rhode Island station in the lower right is at rest.

Likewise, Thomas Sulman's 1872 *Bird's-Eye View of Boston, United States* (fig. 14) emphasizes transportation and the grid in the modern metropolis. The artist uses a vantage point due east of the city more or less over Fort Winthrop on Governors Island, which is just visible along the bottom left of the frame. Unlike Bachmann's view from above Back Bay, Sulman surveys not only

⁸¹ Arthur Gilman, *The Story of Boston: A Study of Independency* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889), 455.

⁸² Gilman, *The Story of Boston*, 455. In addition to the Cochituate Waterworks providing a water supply to the city of Boston, it also provided a distant view of the city from a standpipe erected in Roxbury in 1869. The eighty foot tall standpipe was built to provide sufficient water pressure to the taller buildings of Boston and a staircase allowed visitors to ascend to the top of the standpipe and take in the view from a height about 240 feet above sea level. Edward Stanwood, *Boston Illustrated* (Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co, 1875), 113.

the downtown peninsula but also surrounding connected communities such as the streetcar suburbs Roxbury, Brookline, and Chelsea. In the 1870s, Bostonians were beginning to commute longer distances to work in the core of the city, and by the end of the decade, the densely populated area of the city had increased to the point where horse drawn streetcar networks extended approximately four miles from City Hall.⁸³ And while horse drawn transit is not depicted in Sulman's view of Boston—the scale of his drawing does not allow for the delineation of horses or people—it does show the dense gridded western section of the city extending to the edge of Roxbury, a little less than four miles away from the city's centre. The major roadways and railroads that connect Boston to still farther outlying areas draw the viewer's attention, winding their way to the horizon and connecting the peninsula to the north side of the Charles River and the south side of Fort Point Channel, and even across South Bay. Sulman's view of Boston seems to confirm Lynda Nead's argument that "if the processes of modernisation can be said to have had a primary goal, it was movement.... The urban ideal was not irrational velocity or indiscriminate mobility, but ordered circulation through networks of streets, pipes and tunnels."⁸⁴ And, of course, railroads. Indeed, the curvilinear railroads and turnpikes that connect Boston to the surrounding

⁸³ Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press and M.I.T. Press, 1962), 22.

⁸⁴ Nead, *Victorian Babylon*, 13.

communities are highly legible until they converge into a dense labyrinth in the old city on the peninsula.

The morphology of the city in Sulman's print seems synonymous with transportation. A series of bridges, the most visible signs of railroads in the image, connect the peninsula in the north and south to Charlestown and South Boston, and the connection to East Boston in the foreground is not obvious but certainly implied through the web of bridges over the Charles and Mystic Rivers in the right half of the picture. Closer inspection of the print reveals trains running on almost every track and ships of varying size and purpose plying every navigable waterway. Transportation connections to the outside world are emphasized by the eastern vantage point from which the harbour and the city's multitudinous rail connections radiate to points beyond the horizon.

The synoptic view can also reveal modern transportation within the city. Take as an example John Bachmann's *Boston, Bird's-Eye View from the North* (fig. 15) of 1877, in which Atlantic Avenue is clearly visible offering the viewer a wide and easily navigable path from the bridges across the Charles in the foreground, around the eastern shore of the peninsula along the edge of the harbour, and finally to South Cove, where the viewer encounters more train bridges and wharves. Atlantic Avenue is the broadest roadway in the image, except for those whose width are exaggerated in the extreme foreground; it is a modern transportation route at the edge of a plan of streets often said to have

been laid out on cowpaths.⁸⁵ The shape and size of the streets, best displayed by the synoptic view, can act as a marker of modernity. Even without knowledge of the history of Atlantic Avenue and the transportation problem it was intended to solve, a viewer can easily trace a route from the north to the south of the image along its length, implying efficient transportation from one point to another in the real world.

Returning to Sulman's smaller view for the *Illustrated London News* (fig. 14), the gridded late nineteenth-century neighbourhoods in Back Bay and the old isthmus defined by Washington Street meet at a constant angle and contrast the disorderly and almost indefinable streets of the older originally peninsular city. As King notes in one of his ubiquitous city guides, "The streets of the business portion of Boston, which embraces almost all of old Boston, have long been pronounced a hopeless tangle by those unfamiliar with their tortuous courses," and while he argues from his position as a civic booster that "these crooked and twisting streets are one of the peculiar charms of Boston," he also concedes that "the new streets are spacious, direct, and straightforward enough to suit even the square-cut Philadelphian."⁸⁶ Whatever the reputation of Philadelphia was in the early 1880s, King's statement is referring to the pronounced street grid in

⁸⁵ For example, in the 1875 edition of Stanwood's *Boston Illustrated*, he notes, "the streets which were formerly so narrow and crooked as to give point to the joke that they were laid out upon the paths made by the cows in going to pasture, have been widened, straightened, and graded." Stanwood, *Boston Illustrated*, 10.

⁸⁶ King, *King's Handbook of Boston*, 24.

Philadelphia and the recognition of regularly gridded and wide streets as a sign of modernity. Indeed, comparison to Sulman's views of London (fig. 16) and New York (fig. 17) is particularly instructive for his view of Boston.⁸⁷ London fills the frame of the picture stretching from Westminster on the left to the barely noticeable Tower of London on the right, and St. Paul's Cathedral provides a focus on the far shore just to the left of centre. Broad roadways from the south lead the viewer past the small streets and dense buildings toward the Thames River. In contrast, New York is presented by Sulman as an entirely gridded city. A variety of different grid structures meet at various angles and are intersected by long streets, such as Broadway, but essentially the city is comprised of rectangular blocks in different orientations. London displays no grids. While it may be obvious to state the difference between the street layout of London and New York, the former a palimpsest of streets and the latter an urban centre substantially built by rationalizing capitalism in the nineteenth century, the fact remains that New York *appears* to be more modern than London based on the overwhelming preponderance of the grid, emblematic of modernity in the late nineteenth century. In Sulman's Boston we can see literally London *and* New York, an old *and* a new city. The peninsula (old Boston) is surrounded by grids angling into it from newer sections of the city in different directions. South

⁸⁷ Sulman's views of London and New York were also for the *Illustrated London News*: "London from the south side of the Thames," *Illustrated London News* (9 Feb. 1861); "New York, from Bergen Hill, Hoboken," *Illustrated London News* (19 Aug. 1876).

Boston, Back Bay, East Boston, East Cambridge, Cambridge, and Washington Street along the former neck of the Shawmut Peninsula, form a ring of modern grids around the older colonial core of the city. The grids have not been added by Sulman, they are not a creation of the artist—though liberty has been taken with some details. It is the synoptic view, especially the bird's-eye view, however, that best reveals them. Indeed, the grid in the synoptic and even plan view is a graphic shorthand for "city." The map of Boston in Edward Stanwood's 1875 guidebook *Illustrated Boston* (fig. 18) represents the highly urbanized areas of Boston and vicinity—with one notable exception—using simple grids, largely in the same orientation as the gridded streets. Old Boston is not gridded but is represented as a collection of irregular streets denoted by lines crossing each other haphazardly. In the semiotics of American Charles Peirce, the grid is an icon of the city without being indexical; it looks like the city from the air but the grids in the map are not based strictly on the pattern of streets on the ground.

A. F. Poole's view *Twentieth Century Boston* (fig. 19) from 1905 is one of the last bird's-eye view prints from the period of their production that started in the second half of the nineteenth century. The foregrounding of the steam powered ships in the harbour, from ocean-going vessels to tugboats and ferries, frames the commercial and financial district of the city. Atlantic Avenue still dominates the street layout in the older section of the city, running at a slight angle in the image from left to right along the edge of the peninsula. By 1905 it

was the site of an elevated railway, part of the ongoing battle in downtown Boston to relieve a frequent and unwelcome condition of modernity, traffic congestion in the downtown core. The railway passes busy wharves where ships are being loaded and unloaded by horse drawn carts moving goods to and from warehouses and waiting trains. The commercial and financial district is bathed in a southerly light, illuminating the buildings against a darker background of invisible streets. The State House, once a shining and dominant beacon on the hill in Bartlett's picturesque views, has been replaced by the modest skyscrapers of the early twentieth century. The State House is still visible and is found at the top vertex of the triangular composition that emphasizes the newer buildings in Boston, but despite this potentially dominant position, it is of marginal importance visually, the focus of the city's image having moved slightly south-east to the commercial district.

Here the capitalist city is in the ascendent; steam ships and trains billow smoke into the air and the city's morphology is becoming more vertical as property values increase. The skyscrapers reflect the sun's light but residential areas are darker and almost devoid of detail, as are many significant government and historic buildings. The distinctive French Second Empire city hall and the post office are dark shapes in an otherwise bright downtown district of clean vertical lines set on crooked streets. Newer buildings and activity are emphasized; colonial and revolutionary Boston are marginalized except for the

Bunker Hill Monument that towers over its neighbouring buildings in a residential area of Charlestown.

Revised and published in 1907 in the *Boston Globe* under the headline "Bird's-eye View of Twentieth Century," the accompanying text left no doubt that this was an image of a modern capitalist city: "Boston's commercial advantages and possibilities are brought out in a most striking manner, and in this respect alone the picture will be a most effective aid in helping to make Boston bigger, better and busier."⁸⁸ Indeed, the image was not only circulated to tens-of-thousands of Boston area homes through its reproduction in the *Globe*, but it was also meant to present the image of an important commercial centre to the rest of the United States: "Fifty thousand copies of the picture have been printed, and they will be distributed through various sources, including the Jamestown exposition, in connection with the publicity bureau's work of booming Boston."⁸⁹ The printed 1907 version of the image also included historical and statistical facts about the city promoting transit, utilities, recreational facilities, freight and passenger transport, manufacturing prowess and possibilities ("millions of square feet of vacant land, adjacent to water front or railroads, suitable for manufacturing purposes of all kinds"), and various valuations of the city and its financial industry. Boston had everything a city required to be successful, including,

⁸⁸ "Bird's-eye View of Twentieth Century." *Boston Globe*, May 19, 1907, 4.

⁸⁹ "Bird's-eye View of Twentieth Century," 4. The "Jamestown Exposition" was held during the summer and fall of 1907 near Norfolk, Virginia, to commemorate the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Jamestown in 1607.

according to the text surrounding Poole's view, "attractive suburbs, splendid rapid transit facilities (surface, elevated and tunnel lines), magnificent climate, fine water supply, excellent sewage system and low death rate." In short, the viewer was encouraged to see Boston as "a great manufacturing, commercial and financial center."⁹⁰ The 1907 edition of the print also looked to the near future with two engineering projects that were uncompleted at the time of its publication. The North Avenue bridge, which was only being proposed in 1907 (and which does not appear in the 1905 version of the print) and the Charles River Dam, which was not completed until 1910, both appear as fully functional parts of the modern city.⁹¹

In the middle right of Poole's view of modern Boston is the Lincoln Wharf Power Station, built to supply electricity to Boston's streetcars, and also the platform from which an anonymous photographer created a panoramic view of the city and harbour (fig. 20). The power station was under construction on November 28, 1900, when a photographer ascended the smoke stack, the only point on the building from which he could take a three hundred sixty degree panorama of the North End without including the stack itself. In addition to the panoramic view of the North End, East Boston, and the harbour, the photographer took a number of photographs of the structure itself while it was

⁹⁰ "Bird's-eye View of Twentieth Century," 4.

⁹¹ The North Avenue Bridge that was eventually constructed bears little resemblance, with the exception of the centre swing span, to the bridge imagined by Poole.

under construction, presumably to document the process. Perhaps the panoramic was an opportunistic image by the photographer who was acting for no obvious reason other than to record the view from above the city, as his professional colleagues had been doing for years.

The view from the top of the Lincoln Wharf Power Station is not as inclusive as the bird's-eye view prints discussed above, but, because of the shorter viewing distance, it is better at displaying the details of the modern city: a commercial harbour with steam and sailing ships, warehouses, factories, streetcars, and residential areas and associated domesticity, such as clotheslines. This is a modern industrial city where trade dominates; it is very different from the more common photographic views from the dome of the State House where the foreground was comprised of The Common and Beacon Hill.⁹² The historic city of the revolutionary Paul Revere and Federal era architect Charles Bullfinch is overwhelmed by the dense tenements of the North End. The Bunker Hill Monument and Bullfinch's State House cling to the edge of the image almost entirely obscured by urban haze, the present clouding the past. Hanover Street, "the Bowery of Boston," runs diagonally through a frame of the panorama.⁹³ The relatively low vantage point does not allow a clear and distinct

⁹² Photographic views of Boston from the dome of the State House will be discussed in more detail in chapter three.

⁹³ See frame number 1576, "Westerly from top of Lincoln Wharf Power Station chimney." "The Bowery of Boston" comes from Moses King, *How to See Boston: A Trustworthy Guide Book*, Knights Templars Edition ed. (Boston: Macullar, Parker and Co., 1895), 187.

delineation of the street itself, but this major thoroughfare in the North End was "traversed by many street-cars" and "broad, busy and active, with many low-priced retail stores, far from aristocracy's haunts."⁹⁴ Indeed, the North End was the home of immigrants and much of the working class labour force found on the peninsula. Their presence, and their potential labour, is alluded to by the hundreds of clotheslines drying laundry on the roofs of the tenements. The sheets, shirts, and other garments acting synecdochically for the men and women who lived there.

The latter part of the nineteenth century was, then, a period when the physical appearance and visual representation of Boston changed greatly. The expansion of the geographic area of the city took place in every direction, not just the cardinal points of the compass but also vertically, above and below ground. The old pastoral tropes with which Boston was represented before the Civil War did not disappear completely, but they were inadequate for representing the idea of the thriving and progressing modern city. As John Reps argues, bird's-eye views were inadequate to represent the late nineteenth-century metropolis in its entirety, in part, because cities had become too large to draw in detail.⁹⁵ However, the expansive view, even if it could not encompass the entire city in detail, provided at least a partial prospect unhindered by the pictorial conventions

⁹⁴ King, *How to See Boston: A Trustworthy Guide Book*, 187.

⁹⁵ John W. Reps, *Bird's Eye Views: Historic Lithographs of North American Cities* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 11.

of the pastoral. Panoramic photographs were even more limited in terms of representing the entire city, but despite the limitation of scope imposed by the necessities of the photographer to occupy a real rather than imagined position above the city, their indexical nature obliged the images to include the coal fire smogs and more prosaic details of the city, such as clotheslines. Both lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs displayed the markers of modernity in Boston's cityscape in quantities that could not be accomplished in either the pastoral or street-level view. If the capitalist city of the latter nineteenth century is a rational landscape created by "objective relationships"—Simmel's term for the city as a nexus of money and intellect—then the synoptic view was a prospect of progress in at least a couple of senses: the city was displayed in a variation of the traditional prospect landscape form; the size and scope of the metropolis were emphasized by the vertical vantage point, changing the city from the small town or village of a "distant prospect" to a modern expansive metropolis; and, for the capitalist, the city could be viewed as a rational landscape created by the accumulation of capital.

Chapter Three

The View from There

Since the Italian Renaissance and the codification of linear perspective, naturalistic images have assumed a single vantage point, a point in space where the viewer can place him or herself regardless of the physical possibility of that act. As I discussed in an earlier chapter, this potential embodiment of a singular position in space is one of the differences between bird's-eye views and modern maps, which are representations from an infinite number of vantage points above a mapped territory. Lithographic bird's-eye views and panoramic photographs from the late nineteenth century gave viewers a number of potential vantage points from which to view their cities. In the case of Boston, the city was viewed from imaginary heights over the harbour and suburbs, and from the brick and mortar pinnacles of historic and modern structures.

The vantage point, the point in space from which the viewer, real or imagined, is situated, is as worthy of consideration as the view. For example, Michel Foucault's analysis of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon as a disciplinary gaze also considers the importance of the beholder and the power inherent in his or her position upon the viewed subject.¹ For the purposes of power relations, which is especially pertinent to Foucault's panopticonism, the relationship

¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 200-09.

between viewer and viewed is indivisible: it is impossible to discuss the view from the panoptic tower of Jeremy Bentham's prison as disciplinary without considering both the viewing subject and the viewed object. Is there, however, a significance to Bentham's tower as a structure? Separate from the effect of the view from the tower on the prisoners, what would it mean to take a view from the guard tower of something else? Would a view drawn from a guard tower and a church steeple of the same town be essentially the same drawing with the same meanings to a viewer, or does the viewing structure influence our reading of the image?

In this chapter, I will examine and analyze the implications of different points of view of Boston. After a very brief history of linear perspective and the vantage point, I will consider the cardinal directions from which bird's-eye view artists portrayed the city. Employing the analogy of urban portraiture for lithographic bird's-eye views, we can argue that the view from different directions provides viewers with different "faces" of the city. There is, I would argue, an expectation that synoptic urban views are similar to portraits of people and answer some of the same questions, such as: "What does the subject look like?"; "What is the subject like?" that is, what are the sitter's externally visible social characteristics and behaviour; and, "Who is the subject?" that is, what

designators and perceived essential characteristics are visible?² A viewer's perception of a city changes with the different faces that are presented.

The second half of the chapter is dedicated to panoramic photographic views from the buildings and structures of Boston, perspectives of the city that are internal and indexical both through the analogue qualities of photography and the vantage point. In this second section, my focus changes from the portrait of the city from different cardinal directions to the significance of the physical structures upon which photographers placed their cameras to capture the city below. It is here that the discussion of vantage point becomes more about the "vantage" and less about the "view." In other words, the questions considered in the latter paragraphs cluster around the importance of the building or structure, or even non-structure, from which the view was taken. Is the vantage point important? Does the point from which a view is imagined or taken influence the viewer's reading of the view? What, if anything, does it mean to take a photograph from the tower of the panopticon?

I Am There

It is generally agreed that linear perspective was invented in 1413 in Florence by Filippo Brunelleschi.³ Giotto was approaching a unified linear

² These expectations of portraiture are from Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 15.

³ Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art: Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 9.

perspective in the 1300s with his convincing but slightly awkward depictions of interior spaces, and certainly there were various systems and visual practices for representing objects in space prior to Brunelleschi. But it was his demonstration in the city of Florence using a painting of the Baptistry, a peephole, and a mirror, that led to the European convention that we still consider naturalistic pictorial space today.⁴ Brunelleschi's illusion worked only if the viewer were positioned in the same place from which the painting had been executed, privileging that position in front of the baptistry over all other possible points. In other words, from the very beginning of the western tradition of linear perspective, there has been an implied viewer who embodies a single point in space. Leon Battista Alberti codified linear perspective in *De Pictura* (1435) creating a geometrical framework, a pyramid, within the picture frame that created the illusion of space. Alberti's visual pyramid not only converged toward a vanishing point defining space in the picture, but there was a second visual pyramid defined by "extrinsic rays" that converged on the eye viewing the picture. The common base of the two pyramids was the famous "open window through which the object to be painted is seen."⁵ This arrangement, as John Berger notes, "centres everything on the eye of the beholder. It is like a beam from a lighthouse—only instead of

⁴ Brunelleschi drilled a small hole in a painting of the baptistry through which the viewer peered from the back of the painting. A mirror held in front reflected the painting back to the viewer looking through the peephole. Ideally, when the mirror was removed from the viewer's line of sight the real baptistry would appear to occupy the same space as the painting. Kemp, *The Science of Art*, 11-13.

⁵ Alberti quoted in Kemp, *The Science of Art*, 22.

light travelling outwards, appearances travel in... Perspective makes the single eye the centre of the visible world. Everything converges on to the eye as to the vanishing point of infinity.⁶ There has been, according to Martin Jay, in much of the discourse of the visual and perspective since the Renaissance a tendency to discuss the gaze and the eye, a point in space, at the expense of the body of the beholder, which exists in time and space.⁷ It is not my claim to correct this philosophical deficiency, but in my discussion of vantage point below, I assume the re-insertion of the artist's body, and by extension, the viewer's body, into Alberti's privileged point in space.

North, South, East, West

The positioned viewer may be real or imagined. Most lithographic bird's-eye views of the nineteenth century were constructions of an artist's imagination. The details of buildings, streets, and shorelines were often accurate, based on sketches at ground level, but their appearance was mediated through the perspectival grid—though not always strictly—from an imagined vantage point in the air.⁸ The artist usually did not occupy this space and claims for "balloon

⁶ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London and Middlesex: BBC and Penguin, 1987), 16.

⁷ Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 51-82.

⁸ The working method of bird's-eye view artists is summarized in John W. Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America: Lithographs of Towns and Cities in the United States and Canada, Notes of the Artists and Publishers, and a Union Catalog of Their Work, 1825-1925* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1984), 17-23

views," except as a cognate term for "bird's-eye view," should be viewed with suspicion, urban atmospheric haze would have rendered such an elevated vantage point useless for recording details. Nonetheless, even if the artist did not occupy the particular point in space from which his or her view is imagined, it is, if one could get there, the position of the viewer, and only certain details are available from that imagined vantage point. However, lithographic bird's-eye views were not, in the language of Charles Peirce's semiotics, indexical signs, a sign that something existed,⁹ as Roland Barthes famously said of photographs, "that-has-been."¹⁰ So while there is an implied contract between artist and viewer that the scene in the drawing would appear as it does if the viewer could occupy the same vantage point imagined by the artist, it did not necessarily have to be exactly as it would appear.

Charles Parsons and Lyman Wetmore Atwater's *The City of Boston* (1873) certainly satisfies this contract (fig. 21). The city, from a point slightly northeast of the peninsula, is rendered in detail. Like many nineteenth-century images of Boston, the State House and Bunker Hill Monument dominate the urban landscape. Both of the iconic landmarks are white and oversized, even within the uneven perspective scale used by the artists. The harbour traffic is chaotic, tall masted ocean going vessels share the harbour with numerous steam powered

⁹ Charles Peirce, "What is a Sign?," in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings, 1893-1913*, ed. Peirce Edition Project (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 5-9.

¹⁰ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 77.

coastal transports and ferries, and every wharf in the city is berthing a ship of some description. The Custom House, Faneuil Hall, and other buildings identified in the key along the bottom of the print are rendered in white to increase their visibility for the viewer. The State House, which was a yellow painted brick building with a leaden grey dome in 1873, is also rendered in white.¹¹ However, more profound than the inaccurate colour is the ninety-degree rotation of the building so that the front portico is facing east toward the viewer, rather than south towards the Common.

Parson and Atwater place their viewer to the east of Boston so that the image is filled with city and suburb. South Boston appears to the left, the older peninsular section of the city occupies the centre, and Charlestown frames the image on the right. The suburbs Cambridge, Brighton, Brookline, Roxbury, and Dorchester provide the background for the bustling metropolis. In general, easterly views gives the impression of Boston expanding to the horizon, but it also foregrounds, literally, the importance of trade and transportation to the city by the presence of the harbour in the distant foreground. The high vantage point also allows the artists to create an evocative view of a metropolis. The harbour and surrounding area are well defined, streets are legible, and some individual structures can be identified; however, once the viewer enters the space beyond

¹¹ The State House has been white, yellow, and natural stone and brick through its history. The dome was gilded with gold leaf in 1874 and has been covered in gold ever since. The copper sheathed dome had been painted yellow early in the nineteenth century, but by 1873 it had been painted grey.

the Common and the Public Garden on the peninsula, and even closer landmarks in South Boston and Charlestown, the city becomes more generalized, slowly disappearing into the hills west of Massachusetts Bay. The effect extends the city almost to the horizon with the occasional smokestack or church steeple in the distance denoting the continuation of the urban fabric.

John Bachmann's 1850 print *Bird's-Eye View of Boston* (fig. 4), discussed in chapter two, is a one hundred eighty degree reversal of Parsons and Atwater's later view.¹² Bird's-eye views from the west presented a much different Boston, most noticeably, in the fact that the city did not extend to the horizon, but rather ended at the harbour and Massachusetts Bay. Bachmann's imaginary viewer is positioned over the Receiving Basin, which would soon become the neighbourhood of Back Bay. There was likely a pragmatic reason for Bachmann's choice of this viewpoint. If he had positioned his viewer over the harbour, as Parson and Atwater did twenty-three years later, there would not have been very little to see in the middleground of the image other than a marshy tidal area flanked by railroads and a causeway. The infilling and residential development of Back Bay did not start until 1858.

Bachmann's view from the west foregrounds the relatively new and contentious Public Garden, which had been established in 1839 on a parcel of

¹² Bachmann's view was popular enough to have been copied by C. Matter, who published it under his own name through the publishers J. H. Locher, New York and J. U. Locher, St. Gall, Switzerland. This was the only known bird's-eye view by C. Matter, but there several views of other American cities by G. Matter also published by J. H. and J. U. Locher. "C. Matter" may be a typographic error on the Boston print, or C. Matter and G. Matter may have been related.

land previously used for ropewalks. The ground the Public Garden occupied was considered very valuable real estate as it was near both the city centre and a new residential development by the Mount Vernon Proprietors just west of the State House. The Garden was in jeopardy throughout its early existence and a city report in 1850, the same year as Bachmann's *Bird's-Eye View of Boston*, recommended selling the ground for residential development. The *Report of the Joint Committee on Public Lands in Relation to the Public Garden, July 1850*, estimated that the Garden and a small amount of land immediately to the west, if divided into two hundred thirty-six building lots, would be worth almost \$1.6 million at a time when the city was, coincidentally, carrying a debt of \$1.6 million. In addition, Boston was expected to incur more debt to deliver water and to construct new public buildings.¹³ The *Report* urged the municipality to hold a city-wide referendum on the sale of the Public Garden during the next municipal election; however, despite suggesting putting the fate of the Garden to a referendum, the joint committee was unequivocal in their ultimate recommendation: "from a careful examination and consideration of all the foregoing facts, and biased solely by their own convictions of right, [the joint

¹³ *Report of the Joint Committee on Public Lands in relation to the Public Garden, July, 1850* (Boston: City of Boston, 1850), 47-52.

committee] unhesitatingly express their opinion in favor of the expediency of a sale of this land."¹⁴

The *Report* noted that keeping the land as an ornamental garden would cost city taxpayers about \$120,000 per year and that "its retention" was not "of the slightest advantage," and that "the garden itself [was] no ornament to the City."¹⁵ The committee's proposal to develop the land as residential property would not only offer a "pecuniary advantage," the largest of the proposed new streets would also include a linear park—similar to the eventual design of Commonwealth Avenue—and the plan would "enhance [the city's] beauty."¹⁶ In addition to a financial rationale for developing the Garden, the committee noted that "those sections of the City which are densely populated, and where the streets are narrow and the air necessarily confined and impure" should be provided with new public squares and small parks. Not everyone, the report states, was lucky enough to live in the vicinity of, and benefit from, The Common, implying that there was already enough public park space in this part of the city. It was argued that the sale of the Public Garden would help to fund these progressive humane projects in less fortunate city sectors.

¹⁴ *Report of the Joint Committee*, 51. There was a constant debate over the fate of the Public Garden from its establishment in 1839 and through the 1840s and 1850s. There was more pressure to "divide" the Garden with a street in 1858 when the adjacent Back Bay region was being developed.

¹⁵ *Report of the Joint Committee*, 50.

¹⁶ *Report of the Joint Committee*, 50.

The Joint Committee also had reservations regarding the aesthetic qualities of the Public Garden:

In its present condition it is far from meriting the name it bears, is seldom resorted to by the public, and wholly unworthy to be considered one of the public grounds of the City. If pointed out to the stranger, it is always done with an apology for its uninviting aspect; and from its proximity to our noble Common, even despoils it of some of its grandeur and loveliness.¹⁷

The Public Garden presented in Bachmann's view from the west seems to be at odds with the observations of the city's committee. The Garden is full of strollers ambling along tree lined paths next to the adjacent Common and, with its more mature trees, the Common appears to be the older sibling of the young Public Garden. Indeed, the Garden does not appear to be, as the 1850 committee argued, "unworthy," or that much different from the "noble Common." It is impossible to gauge what impact the debate on the fate of the Public Garden had on Bachmann's decision to picture Boston from the west, and there is no record of the public's reaction to Bachmann's bird's-eye view which makes the disputed land its pictorial focus.¹⁸

In general, putting aside the ongoing debate over the Public Garden, the view from the west in 1850 was a view of the future. Western Avenue, in the bottom left of Bachmann's view, would soon become an extension of venerable

¹⁷ *Report of the Joint Committee*, 49.

¹⁸ The Public Garden survived numerous attempts by various committees and groups to sell the land for development. Today, its famous swan boats still ply man-made lakes, much to the delight of tourists.

Beacon Street, and the swampy water in the foreground would become a new residential area for the middle classes. Railroads, still booming and expanding in the northeast in the early 1850s, flank the composition of the image, crossing on the left from the north on bridges over the Charles River, and, on the right, there is a train leaving the Providence and Providence Railroad station. The harbour in the background is animated and busy, filled with both older ocean going tall masted ships and smaller steamships, which would one day end the age of sail.

Unlike Bachmann's and most bird's-eye views, F. Fuchs' *View of Boston* (fig. 22) published in 1871, drawn from a western vantage point, represents a specific day and event: Fourth of July celebrations, 1870.¹⁹ The air is filled with white smoke from cannons on the Common and points throughout Massachusetts Bay, while island fortifications around the harbour and naval vessels fly hyperbolized American flags in celebration of the Fourth of July. Troops are parading in the Common and couples perambulate in the Public Garden. Fuchs' bird's-eye view captures the future alluded to in Bachmann's print. In the foreground, the first blocks of Back Bay have been completed west of the Public Garden, and on the far side of the peninsula the construction of Atlantic Avenue across the harbour's wharves has begun, but the excavation of Fort Hill, the source of the fill for Atlantic Avenue, is not depicted.

¹⁹ F. Fuchs is most likely Feodor Fuchs, a German-American lithographer who was active between 1856 and 1876. Fuchs was best known for his lithograph *Custer's Last Charge* (1876) but no other bird's-eye views by him are known.

Fuchs has chosen a slightly different westerly vantage point from Bachmann's earlier cityscape, positioning the viewer slightly farther north over the Charles River. The Cambridge Bridge enters the image as an almost vertical element from the bottom of the frame, creating a graphically strong but unstable element in the foreground, but near to this pictorial instability are the neighbourhoods of the socially stable power base of Boston, Back Bay and Beacon Hill, the residential areas for the protestant elite in the city. Immigrant neighbourhoods in the North End and South End are marginalized from this western vantage point, the only unique details in either area being commercial structures, modern transportation, and factories. In fact, black smoke billows from the chimneys and smokestacks of factories, large buildings, and trains throughout the bird's-eye view, except for the interior of the old peninsula, where the only smoke is white from the military display on The Common. Black smoke marks industry, commerce, and modernity; white smoke marks sites of patriotism on the Fourth of July.

John Bachmann's slightly later bird's-eye view from an aerial point over Charlestown, *Boston: Bird's-Eye View from the North* (1877), supplies yet another face of the city (fig.15). Bachmann plunges Charlestown on the north side of the Charles River and the Bunker Hill Monument into darkness encouraging the viewer's eye to follow the bridges across the river to sunny Boston crowded with red brick buildings and a handful of white structures. Like

other bird's-eye views, the white buildings denote structures of interest but, in this case, there is no key along the bottom of the print. From an imaginary point in the air north of Boston, Bachmann's image offers viewers seven different bridges and various modes of transportation to cross the river into downtown Boston. The bridges across the Charles are visible from other points of the compass, but the view from the north emphasizes them, making Boston a focus for transportation.

The compass rose is a continuum of points and the four case studies presented above represent, more or less, three of the four major cardinal points. Parsons and Atwater's view *The City of Boston* (fig. 21) positions the viewer to the east of the city foregrounding the harbour, shipping facilities, and traffic. Bachmann's view from the west (fig. 4) foregrounded the middle and upper middle class residential and recreational areas of the city. The contrast between eastern and western bird's-eye views confirms William Cullen Bryant's observations in *Picturesque America* (1874), where he noted "On its harbor-side, Boston exhibits its trade and industry, its absorption in the businesses of life, the sights and scenes of engrossing occupation. Transferring the point of view from the eastern to the western side of the city, the results, instead of the processes, of wealth appear."²⁰ And finally, John Bachmann's view from the north (fig. 15) shows the city as a vibrant transportation hub. There are, however, no major bird's-eye views of Boston from the south.

²⁰ William Cullen Bryant, "Boston," in *Picturesque America, or, This Land We Live In*, vol. 2 (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1874), 233.

South Boston was a desirable residential address before the development of Back Bay. It was abandoned by prosperous residents who moved to Back Bay in the 1870s, leaving South Boston to be filled with tenement housing and to be populated by the lower levels of the middle class.²¹ It is tempting to speculate that foregrounding the southern neighbourhoods would have focussed viewers' attention on areas of the city that were not "the results ... of wealth," as much as the producers and managers of wealth, and that this is why no bird's-eye views were drawn from that vantage point. However, it may not have been tenement neighbourhoods that bird's-eye view artists were trying to avoid, it may have just been residential neighbourhoods in general. The views from the west predate the completion of Back Bay and Fuchs' view leads viewers to an area of institutional and small commercial buildings at the Boston end of the Cambridge Bridge. No major lithographic bird's-eye views of Boston from the west were produced after 1870, after the residential area Back Bay was substantially developed.²²

Pictorially, the South End may also have posed another problem. It would have been difficult for the artist to choose an imaginary vantage point that provided land or water that clearly framed downtown Boston. When Bachmann drew his view from the west, he was able to include the Public Garden and Common in the foreground, an urban pastoral setting that opened out onto the

²¹ Mona Domosh, *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century New York and Boston* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 30.

²² Fourteen major bird's-eye views and their variations were examined for this study. See Appendix Two for a list of bird's-eye views and the cardinal direction of their vantage points.

architectural city, a well established pictorial convention. Twenty years later, when he drew a view from the north, Bachmann used the Charles River to separate peninsular Boston from Charlestown in the foreground, which he also darkened with shadows presumably from cloud cover, making Boston the focus of the viewer's gaze. Likewise, from the east, the harbour fulfilled the same function, placing the area of interest into the middleground. Indeed, including a body of water in the foreground of a composition is common to the pictorial organization of bird's-eye views. Views of New York were usually from the south but also from New Jersey and Brooklyn, all three vantage points included water (New York Harbor, Hudson River, and East River) between the viewer and the city. Chicago views were invariably from points over Lake Michigan, and Philadelphia was usually represented from a point over New Jersey looking across the Delaware River. There were, of course, cities and towns for which this formula does not work.

Artist and publisher O. H. Bailey issued a number of bird's-eye views of Boston's land bound suburbs in the late 1880s and early 1890s. His views *Boston Highlands, Massachusetts, Wards 19, 20, 21, & 22 of Boston* of 1888 (fig. 23), *Hyde Park, Massachusetts* (1890), and *Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts, Ward 23, City of Boston* (1891), all feature suburban landscapes in geographically—and graphically—relatively featureless areas. Visually, they lack the progression of differentiated spaces and the absence of strong graphic

borders leaves the viewer's eye free to wander across the flat landscape. In contrast, Bailey's bird's-eye view *View of East Cambridge, Mass.* (1879) and his 1879 *View of East Boston, Mass.* (fig. 24) are of suburbs that are shaped in a large part by bodies of water. A quick examination of the form of American lithographic bird's-eye views in the second half of the nineteenth century shows that framing a city or town with a river or other body of water in the foreground was the preferred composition. In addition to providing a graphic frame for the city, placing the waterfront in the foreground usually advertised transportation facilities and, by extension, modernity. The notable exception to this pattern were the bird's-eye views produced of frontier cities on the plains and in the west, in which the railroad often replaced the river, lake, or ocean as the most important connection to the outside world.²³

Views from south and south-west of Boston would place uninterrupted land in the foreground minimizing the representation of water transportation—many railroads entered the city from the south—and obscuring the shape of the peninsula. In short, views from the south would have, in representational terms, not only minimized Boston's role as a port city, but also broken away from the developing iconography of the city. The eastern vantage point and variations slightly to the south of true east were the most popular spaces from which to

²³ For example, J.J. Stoner, *Cheyenne, Wyo., 1882* (1882); Henry Wellge, *Fort Worth, Tex., 1891* (1891); *Houston, Texas, (Looking South) 1891* (1891); Henry Wellge., *Lincoln, Neb., State Capital of Nebraska, 1889* (1889); and T.M. Fowler, *Oklahoma City, Indian Territory, 1890* (1890). See reproductions in John W. Reys, *Bird's Eye Views: Historic Lithographs of North American Cities* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 89, 92, 93, 94, 95.

imagine Boston from the air in the late nineteenth century. Earlier bird's-eye views, from the 1850s and 1860s, tended to be from the west of the city. This changed in the 1870s with the notable exception of John Bachmann's *Boston, Bird's-eye View from the North*. The reasons for the domination of the view from the east in bird's-eye views of Boston could be pragmatic or cultural. The argument outlined above regarding the depiction of the city as a site of commerce and transportation could explain the preference for an easterly view, especially in the context of heightened civic boosterism in America after the Civil War. However, there were other cultural forces at work.

The nineteenth century was a period that saw an explosion of visual media. The inexpensive yet relatively high quality and quantity of images that could be printed using lithography and other print processes was reflected in an increase of magazines and newspapers illustrated with images. In Boston, *Ballou's Pictorial* and its successor *Gleason's* were local manifestations of popular illustrated periodicals modelled on the *London Illustrated News*. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated News* and *Harper's Weekly* were other popular mid-century illustrated periodicals in the United States. In addition to illustrated publications, middle class Americans purchased prints to decorate their homes and offices. Many of those prints came from popular print publishers Currier & Ives—the firm referred to itself as "The Grand Central Depot for Cheap and Popular Prints"—whose inexpensive and colourful prints embraced many topics, including genre

scenes, portraits, topical events, and cities. Parson and Atwater's *The City of Boston*, published by Currier & Ives, was the first major lithographic bird's-eye view of the city from the east in the 1870s, and given the popularity and pervasiveness of Currier & Ives, their bird's-eye view must surely have had an effect on subsequent attempts to image the city. The pair of artists did a number of bird's-eye views for the ubiquitous publishers but this was their—and Currier & Ives—only view of Boston.²⁴

Where Can I Stand?

Lithographs and photographs were media of modernity in the nineteenth century. Both allowed for the mass reproduction of images, both relied on the independent actions of chemistry and mechanics, and both produced volumes of visual ephemera throughout the century. It is not surprising, then, that both media were used to image cities and, in some rare cases, the same city from more or less the same vantage point. Georgetown, Colorado, was one of those rare places where both artist and photographer were able to occupy approximately the same space. In his comparison of the photograph to the lithograph of the town,²⁵ Peter Bacon Hales notes that the artist of the lithograph is able to

²⁴ See Gale Research Company, *Currier & Ives: A Catalogue Raisonné*, 2 vols. (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Company, 1984). Parsons and Atwater also drew an iconic bird's-eye view of New York City, published in 1876, from the southern tip of Manhattan framed by the Hudson River and the East River. This view was updated and re-issued regularly throughout the nineteenth century. Their view of Boston was not.

²⁵ Peter B. Hales, *Silver Cities: The Photography of American Urbanization, 1839-1915* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 73-76.

manipulate the scene, exaggerating the relative size of the churches and factories, to emphasize the signs of settlement and progress, and is able to adjust his vantage point to give a more equitable emphasis to different parts of the town; whereas the photographer is limited by the fixed perspectival system of his camera and the vantage point that he can occupy. As a result, the photograph emphasizes a residential area in the foreground and the more developed town centre appears small in comparison.

The relationship between the vantage point and photographic synoptic views is much less complicated than the imagined points in space occupied by bird's-eye view artists: the photographer and camera (most likely) occupied the vantage point implied by the image. There were numerous ingenious solutions for unmanned aerial photography using kites and balloons in the nineteenth century, most of which were not commercially viable.²⁶ The notable exception is George R. Lawrence's mammoth plate photographs using a compound kite ("Captive Airship") to lift his camera two thousand feet into the air. The shutter was triggered by an electric current sent through the insulated core of the steel cable that tethered the kite.²⁷ Lawrence's kite photographs were very similar in scope to lithographic bird's-eye views; however, the same problems that affected the photographer of Georgetown, Colorado—the inability to control emphasis and

²⁶ See Beaumont Newhall, *Airborne Camera: The World from the Air and Outer Space* (New York: Hastings House, 1969), 34-48.

²⁷ Simon Baker, "San Francisco in Ruins: The 1906 Aerial Photographs of George R. Lawrence," *Landscape* 30, no. 2 (1989), 9-14.

unremitting adherence to the grid of linear perspective determined by the combination of lens focal length and negative size—also plagued Lawrence's airborne panoramas. However, notwithstanding Lawrence and a few other adventurous photographers, the perspective with which a photographer viewed a city was available to the viewers of his or her photographs to occupy, though perhaps not practically. There is, then, at least the possibility of concretely embodying the point from which the photographs were taken. Viewers could, if motivated enough or if they had access, climb to the top of a church steeple or some other tall structure in a city and take in the view; however, the vicarious experience of looking down on the city through a photographic print was probably good enough for the majority of viewers.

Views from History

When we think of Boston today we usually think of a historical city characterized by its important place in the American Revolution, an abundance of universities and colleges, and distinctive regional accent. Indeed, most guidebooks from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries foreground the city's revolutionary history regardless of the state of modernity emphasized by the text. For example, the impressively titled *Illustrated Boston: The Metropolis of New England* (1889) was, according to the publishers, "intended for the average American; for the manufacturer and merchant, who have neither time nor

disposition to plod through ten or twenty volumes of elaborate historical dissertations; for the practical man of the shop, the counter, and the plough."²⁸ It appeals to its audience by enumerating in some detail almost one thousand local businesses over two hundred pages; however, it also includes a sixty-page history and tour of the city generously illustrated with vignettes of important historical sites and larger photogravures of modern street scenes.

Both the cover and the first page of the text emphasize historical sites with views of the Bunker Hill Monument and a profile of the city crowned by the State House, continuing an iconography of the city based on history and continuity rather than the ephemerality of the modern. The cover of the book features the Bunker Hill Monument towering over Charlestown with a barely legible Boston in the background on the south shore of the Charles River (fig. 25). It is framed by a curvilinear line that separates the naturalistic scene from an illusionistic tear in the paper that allows the emblems of culture and art—classical sculpture, a planet, a torch, books, and an owl—to appear in the lower left of the page. Opening the book, we find that the illustrations on the first page of the main essay also make reference to the history of Boston. The Bunker Hill Monument anchors the page on the left and a view of Boston from the harbour topped with the dome of the State House spans the top of the page. The Bunker Hill Monument and the State House were part of an iconic view of Boston that mined

²⁸ *Illustrated Boston: The Metropolis of New England* (New York: American Publishing and Engraving Co., 1889), iii.

the city's history, a revolutionary history that represented to the publishers of *Illustrated Boston* the necessary conditions for the flourishing of commerce: "A nation's growth is centred in the freedom of its institutions, the multiplication and expansion of its workshops and factories, and the increase of its commercial establishments and facilities."²⁹ History, then, is put in the service of capitalism and urban modernity.

The State House was ubiquitous in the sight and imagination of Bostonians and the iconography of the city for decades. Early nineteenth-century prints presented Boston as the "city upon a hill" with the State House atop Beacon Hill, where the dome of the House echoed the dome of St. Paul's in London. Sally Pierce notes that this parallel was not lost on the publishers of *Ballou's Pictorial*, an illustrated news magazine published in Boston from 1855 to 1859. Indeed, the magazine's masthead replicated the *London Illustrated News* substituting the State House for St. Paul's (fig. 26).³⁰ The importance of the State House in the iconography of the city continued for decades, and was a visual and cultural symbol even in publications such as the guidebook *Illustrated Boston*, which was dedicated solely to the display of Boston's commercial success at the end of the nineteenth century:

Boston, from whatever point of the compass approached ...
presents one object—a golden one, flashing in the rays of the hot

²⁹ *Illustrated Boston*, iii.

³⁰ Sally Pierce, "Gleason's Pictorial: Elevating and Celebrating American Life," *The Ephemera Journal* 5 (1992), 12-24. *Gleason's* (1851-54) was continued by *Ballou's Pictorial* (1855-1859).

summer sun, or dully glimmering under the fleecy winter sky—that arrests the attention of the traveller. It is a gilded dome, towering above all the thousands of buildings that cluster around it. It is the pivot of industrial, cultured, and fashionable Boston; in the characteristic language of Dr. Oliver Wendell Homes, it is 'the hub of the solar system,'—whence Boston's sobriquet, 'The Hub.' While from every side of the city this gold-leaf cupola is seen to stand out prominently like a tall monarch overlooking ambitious minions compactly crowded on gentle slopes...³¹

King's Dictionary of Boston (1883) is less florid in its description of the situation of the State House, but leaves no doubt regarding its dominant position in the local cityscape: "The first object that strikes the eye of the stranger approaching Boston in any direction by land or sea is the gilded dome of the State House."³²

The State House was a mandatory site for all visitors to the city. Not only did it command the skyline and served as the seat of government for the Commonwealth, it was also an important "site of memory" (*lieu de mémoire*) in the story of Boston and Massachusetts, populated with commemorative sculptures, busts, and murals, all of which, in the words of historian Pierre Nora, "by dint of human will or the work of time [had] become a symbolic element of the

³¹ The text continues: "... its interior, which is open to visitors at certain seasons of the year, commands a view of unsurpassed grandeur. It is the vantage point from which the eye can encompass the outlay and form of the city; the deep blue sea, dotted with innumerable islands and sailing craft of every kind, and stretching out to the level eastern horizon, whence the sea meets the sky; the picturesque Blue Hills of Milton and rocky heights of Essex; the scores of white villages, towns, and hamlets, strewn, as it were, at random, and interlineated with tortuous rivers, like so many silvery belts; and the dark, wide-spreading forests which form the background of a beautiful landscape stretching to the westward sky line." *Illustrated Boston*, 33-34.

³² Edwin M. Bacon, *King's Dictionary of Boston* (Cambridge, MA: Moses King, 1883), 439.

memorial heritage of [the] community."³³ The Revolutionary history of Boston was actually more closely associated with the eighteenth-century "Old" State House (1713), where the Declaration of Independence was read from the balcony to an assembled crowd of Bostonians, than the "new" State House on Beacon Hill. Nonetheless, the new State House was, by the late nineteenth century, a reliquary for objects memorializing all periods of American history. Boston's Revolutionary history was acknowledged with a statue of George Washington and facsimiles of the tombstones of his British ancestors from Althorp, Northamptonshire. A marble bust of Revolutionary hero Samuel Adams, a drum from the Battle of Bunker Hill, and muskets that belonged to the Concord Minutemen connected the building to local events of the Revolution. The battle flags of Massachusetts regiments that fought in the Civil War and a bust of Abraham Lincoln connected the site to more recent history of the "War of Rebellion" (Civil War). In addition, different interior rooms and chambers featured paintings and busts of past senators, governors, and other state dignitaries.

Guidebooks of the period always implored tourists to visit the State House, not only to inspect the monuments and relics memorializing the state's and nation's past, but also to view the building itself as an important example of indigenous architecture by Charles Bulfinch, who, after a period abroad, wanted

³³ Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, trans. Lawrence D. Kritzman and Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), xvii. *Lieux de mémoire* are "places, sites, causes—in three senses: material, symbolic, and functional" that "are created by the interaction between memory and history, an interaction resulting in a mutual overdetermination" (14).

to rebuild Boston following the model of mid-Georgian England.³⁴ As a historian of the development of Boston notes, "One account of Bulfinch's work concluded that 'he put his imprint upon Federalist Boston as completely as Bernini did upon Rome.' When he began Boston was a town of wood; when he left thirty years later, it was a city of brick."³⁵ Construction on the State House started in 1795 and the laying of the cornerstone on July 4 was, as reported in the nineteenth century, an impressive event: "The corner-stone was drawn up the hill by 15 'milk-white' horses, representing the number of States of the Union at that time; and was laid with much ceremony by the Grand Lodge of Masons, Paul Revere master, in presence of Gov. Samuel Adams...."³⁶ The State House opened in January 1798 and provided the impetus for further development in the area. The Mount Vernon Proprietors syndicate purchased the land immediately west of the State House and started cutting streets into Mount Vernon in 1799.³⁷ Some of Boston's most desirable properties are still in that area today.

The significance of the State House was overdetermined for Bostonians. Functionally, it contained the working chambers for elected representatives of state government; symbolically, it housed significant historical objects in regional

³⁴ Lawrence W. Kennedy, *Planning the City upon a Hill: Boston since 1630* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 25.

³⁵ Kennedy, *Planning the City upon a Hill*, 25. Quoted section from Joseph L. Eldredge, ed., *Architecture Boston* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishing Co., 1976), 3.

³⁶ Bacon, *King's Dictionary of Boston*, 439.

³⁷ Walter Muir Whitehill and Lawrence W. Kennedy, *Boston: A Topographical History*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 60-64.

and national narratives; economically, it was the anchor for the new affluent Beacon Hill district; and visually, it was an icon for the city. It was, literally and figuratively, "the hub" of the city, the nexus of geography and culture.³⁸ In terms of visibility, in addition to its iconic status, it was also one of the preferred vantage points from which to survey Boston, offering viewers "one of the finest views of the city,"³⁹ from which:

The city, the country, and the ocean lie at the feet of the spectator, rolled out like a map; so that he turns bewildered from the green hills and winding rivers that attract his gaze on the one hand, to the blue sea, dotted with innumerable islands, that spreads far away before him on the other side. Nowhere can one get a clearer idea of the position of the city and suburbs that will be given here; and the visitor who proposes to extend his wanderings in the city or its neighbourhood should not fail to view the premises from this commanding point.⁴⁰

³⁸ For example, the *Map of Boston as it should be and the Country Adjacent with Proposed Harbor Improvements, Etc.* (1867) includes concentric rings indicating the distance in miles from the State House. *Map of Boston as it should be and the Country Adjacent with Proposed Harbor Improvements, Etc.* (Boston: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1867).

³⁹ *Authentic and Comprehensive Guide and History of Boston, Mechanic's Fair* ed. (Boston: Shepherd & Norwell, 1878), 34.

⁴⁰ Bacon, *King's Dictionary of Boston*, 440-41. The other preferred viewing platform in the nineteenth century was the Bunker Hill Monument. *Brown's New Guide-Book and Map for Boston* (1872) suggests climbing to the top of both structures to view the city but prefers the Bunker Hill Monument because it is higher. The view from the dome of the State House "is nearly a repetition of our first experience [from the Bunker Hill Monument], but, being from another point, presents to the eye new and fresh beauties." *Brown's New Guide-Book and Map for Boston* (Boston: H. A. Brown & Co., 1872), 61.

According to one guidebook, "nearly 50,000 persons [per year] ascend the long flights of stairs to obtain this view of Boston and its suburbs, an average of three hundred a day."⁴¹

Given that the view from the top of the State House was familiar to thousands of residents and visitors, photographs taken from the vantage point were already familiar views. The possible, and indeed frequent, embodiment of the vantage point by the general public offers to viewers the possibility of placing him or herself in the footprints of the photographer. Novelty was not a major factor in the appeal of the images, but despite this, a number of photographers lugged their equipment to the top of the State House to survey the city below. In 1858 Josiah Johnson Hawes, and possibly Albert Sands Southworth, made a series of overlapping photographs covering an almost three hundred sixty degree view of the city (fig. 27).⁴² The panorama is not as skilful as the best known multi-frame panoramic photograph of the nineteenth century, Eadweard Muybridge's

⁴¹ Edward Stanwood, *Boston Illustrated* (Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co, 1875), 24. According to several guidebooks, the cupola was open to visitors when the General Court was not in session, usually from June to December. This means if the total count of visitors reported in *Boston Illustrated* is correct the average number of visitors per day is closer to 200 than 300. Regardless, it was a very popular site despite the physical exertion involved in ascending to the top of the dome.

⁴² The panorama is usually attributed just to Hawes; however Southworth and Hawes worked together from 1843 to 1862 with only a short break between 1849 and 1851 when Hawes moved to California during the gold rush, making it quite likely that Southworth contributed to the execution of the panorama. Anna Lee Kamplain, *A Photographic Portrait of Boston, 1840-1865* (Boston: Boston University Art Gallery, 2006), 73, 75. An article from the *Boston Sunday Herald* (April 30, 1893), in which part of the panorama was reproduced as an engraving, credits the original photograph to Hawes and an "anonymous photographer."

mammoth plate panorama of San Francisco from Nob Hill,⁴³ but Hawes' panorama was constructed twenty years earlier in the first decade of commercial glass plate photography and a certain amount of technical incompetency must be forgiven.⁴⁴ Hawes' ten-frame panorama from the State House looks out on the city on a very clear afternoon. The Mount Vernon Proprietors' development to the west is populated with stately homes, the older North End is a dense collection of tenements and commercial structures, and the tree lined Common occupies almost a full third of the panorama, providing a visual respite from the roofs and chimneys of other frames. Except for the view to the west, toward Back Bay, the scene changed little in broad details until the end of the nineteenth century. In 1898, when Nathaniel Stebbins took his panoramic view, Back Bay had been completed adding an urban density to the view from the State House (fig. 28). More significant, perhaps, are the views down Park Street and toward the east, which show a city expanding vertically, punctuated in particular by the Ames Building on the near horizon.

The Massachusetts State House occupies a cultural position in Boston similar to the Eiffel Tower in Paris. French theorist Roland Barthes notes of the

⁴³ Muybridge's 1878 panorama of San Francisco from Nob Hill was shot on thirteen mammoth plates in a vertical format (20 x 24 inches) and when assembled the panorama is over 17 feet long.

⁴⁴ The photographic processes that Hawes used, wet collodion negatives and albumen prints, were invented in 1851 and 1850 respectively, only a few years before his panorama from the State House. Wet collodion photography dominated professional photography studios until the early 1880s.

more famous landmark that it is pervasive, it can be seen from almost everywhere in Paris, and as such it brings the people of the city together in an imaginary community: "It [the Tower] will be there, connecting me above Paris to each of my friends that I know are seeing it: with it we all comprise a shifting figure of which it is the steady center."⁴⁵ At the same time, the Tower "is the only blind point of the total optical system of which it is the center and Paris the circumference."⁴⁶ It is the only point in Paris from which you cannot participate in the simultaneous experience of viewing the tower. The State House, then, is both a unifying sight and a unique site in local visuality. To look at the State House confirms, especially to residents, their place—the State House being literally "the hub of the solar system"—and the view from the dome is an embodiment of that hub. It places residents and visitors alike in the centre "of the solar system."

Such analogies are, obviously, a hyperbole of the importance of the State House to Bostonians. However, the dual nature of a state structure as *site* and *sight* is explored by Wendy Bellion in her discussion of Charles Willson Peale's uncompleted circular panorama from the dome of the Maryland State House in Annapolis.⁴⁷ Peale climbed to the top of the state capital building's new dome on in 1788 and attempted several times, with mechanical drawing aids, to make a

⁴⁵ Roland Barthes, "The Eiffel Tower," in *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 3.

⁴⁶ Barthes, "The Eiffel Tower," 4.

⁴⁷ Wendy Bellion, "'Extend the Sphere!': Charles Willson Peale's Panorama of Annapolis," *The Art Bulletin* 86, no. 3 (2004), 529-49.

three hundred sixty degree view of the city. He also drew a more traditional view of the capital building itself that was later issued as a print. His intended project was, according to his diaries, a circular composition that would represent both *site* (the State House) and *sight* (the view from the new dome of the State House) in a single image.⁴⁸ Bellion reads Peale's intended project as a visual representation of new federal politics in post-revolutionary America, in which the circular panorama can be seen as analogous with "republican subjectivity" wherein citizens both participate in and are subject to "the state apparatus."⁴⁹

The panoramic photographs shot from the dome of the State House in Boston were not, to my knowledge, part of similar projects. Certainly, the commercial photographers who lugged their cameras and plates up the one hundred seventy steps to the dome probably also photographed the facade of the State House—there is no shortage of these photographs in the archives—for their saleable collections of views, but *site* and *sight* were separate projects. Nonetheless, Bellion's reading of Peale's drawings offers us an interpretive model in addition to the State House as the panoptic centre of a disciplinary visual regime, an obvious approach considering both the relative position of the State House—on the highest point of land in downtown Boston—and its function as the locus of state power. However, the view from the top of the State House in

⁴⁸ Bellion, "'Extend the Sphere'," 538-42.

⁴⁹ Bellion, "'Extend the Sphere'," 544.

Boston was not a privileged view, it was not reserved for agents of the state and was available to citizens and visitors—though there were restrictions, this was a limited democracy.⁵⁰ And if elected legislators were truly representative of the people—were *representations* of the people—as early discourses of American political thought suggested, then the view from the dome of the State House was shared by enfranchised citizens and elected officials, who were, ideally, analogous to the voters.⁵¹ The photographic panoramas from the dome, then, were not novel glimpses of a privileged view of the city, but rather a confirmation of the simultaneity of community, as Barthes suggests in his discussion of the Eiffel Tower. The view was not quotidian, it was not available to everyone, everyday, and in fact, there were residents of the city for whom the view from the dome was not accessible. But to the middle classes and above, the primary customers of commercial photographers, this was a known view; it was a vantage point they could occupy.

Views from Modernity

The State House was an iconic and traditional landmark by the end of the Civil War and almost one hundred years old by the end of the nineteenth century.

⁵⁰ Throughout American history there have been various limitations on suffrage, including gender, race, religion, property, taxation, and various tests of literacy and "character." The greatest step toward universal suffrage did not occur until the twentieth century with the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution granting the vote to women.

⁵¹ This argument is based on Bellion's essay on Peale's panoramic drawings. See Bellion, "'Extend the Sphere'," 544-47.

Photographic views from the dome had been produced for at least forty years by 1900 and had been disseminated by both photographic and print reproductions. Beginning in the late nineteenth century many new platforms from which to view the city began to appear as the vertical towers of early skyscrapers provided novel views of the city below. As Peter Bacon Hales observes, when new tall buildings were built in Chicago, photographers immediately took their cameras to the top to capture the city from yet another new all-encompassing vantage point. He notes, "The rush suggests that demand was strong even for these formulaic views, that Chicagoans were eager to see their city as a product for visual consumption."⁵² Indeed, visitors were keen to see the city from above as well. The German Prince Maximilian zu Wied searched in vain for a tall building from which to view Philadelphia in the 1830s, but had better luck in New York City.⁵³

It was not a new phenomenon for artists to travel to the top of tall buildings for the view. As discussed in the previous chapter, Edwin Whitefield and Richard Mallory both took their sketching materials to tall structures to record the view of the city. Mallory's trek to the top of the Bunker Hill Monument embraced the novelty implicit in most of the photographic views discussed below. The structure, and therefore the view, was (somewhat) new—the Bunker Hill Monument was completed in 1843—and Mallory's 1848 publication *A Panoramic View from*

⁵² Hales, *Silver Cities*, 76.

⁵³ Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 9.

Bunker Hill Monument (fig. 12) gave viewers a new comprehensive view of Boston and environs from the north. As new tall structures were added to Boston's skyline, artists and photographers took their tools to the top for the view, whether it be the Bunker Hill Monument or a new church steeple. The converse was also true. When the steeple of Somerset Church, near the corner of Somerset and Beacon Streets, was in the process of being demolished in 1882, photographers scaled to the top of the staging, prompting one reporter to suggest that "plenty of bird's-eye views of Boston, the harbor and surrounding country are likely to be soon in readiness."⁵⁴ The same newspaper article quotes "'Fred,' the janitor of the Boston University School of Liberal Arts" who tells the reporter that the summit of the spire was the highest point in Boston, higher than either the cupola of the State House or the very top of the Bunker Hill Monument. "Fred" advises that "if it would be pleasant for you to reflect in your declining years that you have been higher above the metropolis of New England than any dozen people within her limits, you had better improve the opportunity."⁵⁵ Regardless of "Fred's" knowledge of the relative height of structures of Boston, the Somerset Church spire is pronounced in early photographic panoramas from the State House obviously rivalling the height of the former.

⁵⁴ "The Somerset Spire," *Boston Globe*, May 27, 1882, 5.

⁵⁵ "The Somerset Spire," 5. The top of the church steeple was 231 feet high and 310 feet above sea level. By comparison, the apex of the Bunker Hill Monument is just under 300 feet above sea level. The lantern on the dome of the State House is lower than either of them.

Photographs from the summit of the steeple would record a rare experience, one that could never be repeated after the structure was demolished. Yet, there is scarce evidence in the archival record of the "plenty" of photographic views promised by the *Globe* reporter.⁵⁶ Panoramas and single frame views from the late nineteenth century exist from the roofs of the State House, City Hall, the Post Office, and the Ames Building, all of which were within sight of the Somerset Church. The church would have provided, from its location just downhill from the State House, a commanding vantage point from which to view the harbour and downtown Boston. Unlike the views from the other buildings in the area, however, the point in space the photographers occupied ceased to exist after they exposed their negatives; it was no longer possible for viewers to look at the steeple and imagine occupying that space.⁵⁷ It is impossible to know if this is connected to the current lack of views from the Somerset Church. Certainly, if the view were not popular, fewer copies would have been printed and, therefore, as nineteenth-century visual ephemera, we would expect fewer prints to have survived. Just as plausible is that the daredevil photographers who scaled the "rather frail-

⁵⁶ I did not look at every nineteenth-century photograph of Boston in every collection in the city, but many of the panoramic synoptic photographs I did consult have since turned up in other collections or in reproduction in newspapers and publications. The photographs from the Somerset Church spire, if they do exist, are not present in archival collections to the same extent as photographs from other vantage points in Boston, and if they are, then they are not as popular or as well known, that is, contemporary archivists and librarians also prefer the views from the other vantage points, which also supports my argument in the main text.

⁵⁷ The State House, City Hall, the Post Office, and the Ames Building are still standing. The Somerset Church lost its steeple in 1882 and was completely demolished by the turn of the century.

appearing staging" were not particularly competent at their craft and all of the photographs they produced deteriorated to the point where they were no longer legible or desirable as collected images of the city.⁵⁸ It is, however, compelling to surmise that a photograph taken from a relatively unimportant church, which was no longer extant, made the photographer's pious perch particularly uninteresting to the purchasing public.⁵⁹ While there were hundreds of churches in nineteenth-century Boston and many of them had storied histories, Somerset Church was not one of them. It was only twenty-four years old when the building was sold to Boston University and its only notable asset in the public sphere, the highest spire in the city, was torn down. The church lacked both a high profile in the public's imagination and a physical presence that allowed viewers of photographic panoramas shot from the top of the church in the spring of 1882 to engage vicariously with the images.

In the fall of 1907, the *Boston Globe* published a photograph that reproduced a portion of Mallory's panorama from the Bunker Hill Monument (fig. 29).⁶⁰ The "Globe artist's" panorama includes a number of points of interest that are identified in both the photograph and Mallory's original engraving. Deer

⁵⁸ "The Somerset Spire," 5.

⁵⁹ According to a guidebook from 1882, the year the Somerset Church steeple was demolished, there were just over two hundred houses of worship in Boston. The majority of the congregations were, in decreasing order, Congregational Unitarian, Congregational Trinitarian, Roman Catholic, Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, and Episcopal. James H. Stark, *Stranger's Illustrated Guide to Boston and its Suburbs; with Maps of Boston and the Harbor* (Boston: Photo-Electrotype Co., 1882), 71.

⁶⁰ "Panoramic Views Bunker Hill Monument," *Boston Globe*, July 28, 1907, 11.

Island, Governor's Island, the Old North Church, and the State House are named by the editors of the newspaper. There are, as expected, a number of new structures identified in the photograph that do not appear in the engraving, notably North Station, the Ames Building, and the Boston Elevated Power Station (also known as the Lincoln Wharf Power Station) in the North End.⁶¹ The power plant that towers above the mostly residential and warehouse district in 1907 was under construction seven years earlier when an anonymous photographer scaled the smokestack in late November 1900 to capture a three hundred sixty degree view of the city and harbour (fig. 20).⁶²

The view from the Power Station was novel; it was a new structure and this vantage point was completely unknown in the public's visual imagination. However, unlike the State House, the view from the smokestack of the Power Station was an almost completely inaccessible view. The State House was built to allow people—subject to the whims of the gatekeepers of the building—to view *their* city, but the power station was not. The two hundred fifty-one foot smokestack of the Lincoln Wharf Power Station was thirty feet higher than the Bunker Hill Monument and, as such, presented a slightly higher viewing platform for the photographer. Even in August of 1900, when the chimney was

⁶¹ The electric grid in Boston was not sufficient at the end of the nineteenth century to power the requirements of transportation companies so the companies built their own power stations to run the streetcars and elevated trains.

⁶² The three hundred sixty degree panorama is comprised of eleven frames, most of which are dated November 26, 1900, on the negatives; two frames are dated November 28, 1900.

still under construction and not quite one hundred feet high, the workers at the top of the incomplete structure could "overlook all the buildings in the vicinity, and can see far down the harbor."⁶³ The view from the top of the completed smokestack was even more expansive, encompassing not just the harbour and roof tops in the immediate area, but also offering a clear view to the horizon, especially to the north and Massachusetts Bay to the east.

As building restrictions were loosened in the early twentieth century, taller structures began to appear in downtown Boston. The Custom House was completed in 1847 and was a Boston landmark from the very beginning, its domed roof and doric columns near the waterfront are present in views from the mid-nineteenth century onward. Between 1913 and 1915 a four hundred ninety-six foot tower was added to the original building, making it the tallest structure in downtown Boston, almost twice the height of the Lincoln Wharf Power Station smokestack. Unlike the Power Station, the Custom House was situated near the commercial district of the city and afforded a centralized view of the city (fig. 30).

The view from such a great height, according to one reporter, resembled the Boston in lithographic bird's-eye views. Beacon Hill "appears to be no more than a slight rise in the ground," "city streets resemble ditches or furrows," and "elevated trains gliding over the bridge between Charlestown and the city proper

⁶³ "Built with a Million Bricks," *Evening Transcript*, Aug. 3, 1900, 5.

look like snakes."⁶⁴ A (perhaps) more lyrical description of the view from the new Custom House Tower was published just before Christmas 1915 as a long poem in the *Globe* newspaper. Maurice Ferber's "From the Custom House Tower" begins with his enthusiastic gushing, "Oh, what a view! It knocks me quite flat!"⁶⁵ However, despite Ferber's excitement over the view, he also acknowledges some problems: "This view gets me crazy, though the East's a bit hazy."⁶⁶ Indeed, the urban haze had the unfortunate effect of obscuring the points closest to the Tower, in the words of the more prosaic *Globe* reporter: "In looking directly downward at the city everything is slightly blurred by the haze of smoke which hangs over the buildings at a height considerably below that of the new tower. But in looking at objects beyond the city the smoke pall is not noticeable."⁶⁷ The poet Ferber also described this effect, noting,

Oh look! At last the genuine article!
 See it? Of doubt I haven't a particle.
 It's Mount Wachuset! That pretty curve!
 Beyond Fitchburg! From my balance I nearly swerve!
 Murder! And Watatic! And Monadnoc just past!

⁶⁴ "View is Magnificent: Great Territory Visible from 24th Story of New Tower of Customs House," *Boston Globe*, May 11, 1914, 5.

⁶⁵ Maurice Ferber, "From the Custom House Tower," *Boston Globe*, Dec. 24, 1915, 14.

⁶⁶ Ferber, "From the Custom House Tower," 14.

⁶⁷ "View is Magnificent," 5.

And South Pack! And North Pack! Sixty miles to the last!⁶⁸

The range of view being described by Ferber, as far as southern New Hampshire, is similar to the "balloon views" drawn by F. K. Rogers in the late 1870s of the coastline north and south of Boston.

The aerial view in the nineteenth century is almost an anachronism. It was not accessible to most people, with the exception of recreational tethered balloon rides at expositions, special events, and holiday celebrations.⁶⁹ The term "balloon view" was used by some artists and publishers to denote a view from a point in space even higher than a bird's-eye view. "Balloon view" also connoted a viewing platform that was more substantial and less imaginary than the popular bird's-eye view. It suggested that the artist was in the basket of the balloon sketching what he saw; whereas a "bird's-eye view" was a more explicitly imaginative act. The viewer no longer had to make the fanciful mental leap to hovering like a bird over Boston, but rather could be securely ensconced in the basket of a balloon, surveying the terrain below from a vantage point every bit as plausible as the dome of the State House, or even the smokestack of the Lincoln Wharf Power Station.

⁶⁸ Ferber, "From the Custom House Tower," 14.

⁶⁹ For example, at one event in late June 1872, the Boston *Daily Evening Transcript* reported "Over five hundred persons have availed themselves of the opportunity to have a bird's-eye view of Boston by making the ascension in the captive balloon on Dartmouth street." "The Gilmore Day of Jubilee," *Daily Evening Transcript*, July 1, 1872, 4.

F. Kimball Rogers' *Balloon View of Boston Harbor* (fig. 31) from 1879

takes the viewer high above the Mystic River and offers an almost plan view of Massachusetts Bay, from Nahant to Nantasket.⁷⁰ Coastal steamers literally trace routes through the waters of the bay, indicated by dashed lines, to Victorian tourist destinations, such as Hingham, Nantasket Beach, and Nahant. The utility of Rogers' balloon view would have been obvious to his contemporaries in Boston: it locates summer retreats for urban Bostonians, places, such as Hingham, that guidebooks encouraged them to visit for their restorative properties. As James Stark noted,

The scenery in this river is very beautiful, some portions of it bordered with grand cliffs, and some little distance up the river both shores are clothed with forests with scarcely a sign of human habitation. In fact, a person might imagine himself a hundred miles away from Boston, as far as any appearance of civilization is concerned; and yet it is less than an hour's sail.⁷¹

Indeed, what could be more convenient for the late nineteenth-century urbanite than an escape to the varied topography of nature, and from the dense horizontal and vertical lines of the city, as Rogers depicts it, a mere hour away?

It is doubtful that Rogers actually drew his balloon view of the Massachusetts coast line while ballooning, the atmospheric haze and unpredictability of the direction of the balloon would have made it very difficult.

⁷⁰ Rogers drew at least two balloon views that were published in 1879. The other, *Balloon View – Cape Ann to Boston*, encompasses the entire coastline of Massachusetts north of Boston.

⁷¹ James H. Stark, *Boston Harbor: Compiled From the Most Authentic Sources, Giving a Complete and Reliable History of Every Island and Headland in the Harbor, From the Earliest Date to the Present Time* (Boston: Photo-Electrotype Co., 1880), 54.

Both of these problems were encountered by Boston photographer James Wallace Black's experiments with aerial photography almost two decades earlier, during which he produced what are thought to be the first successful aerial photographs in the United States (fig. 32). An obscure New York photographer by the name of Kuhns is reputed to have made the first attempts at aerial photography the previous year, in 1859, but after a successful initial flight without the photographer, the balloon was grounded by weather for the next couple of days and, it seems, Kuhns aborted his attempt to photograph New York from the sky.⁷² Aerial photography was extremely rare in the nineteenth century, photographic views from balloons were usually compromised by the movement of the viewing platform, the basket of the balloon, and the limitations of photographic materials and equipment to take instantaneous and sharp legible photographs. The technical side of aerial photography was mastered during World War I when the combination of camera and airplane proved itself in the recording of the positions of enemy troops, but in 1860, when James W. Black and Samuel King took to the skies over New England, the technology was in its infancy. In addition to the shortcomings of materials, unfavourable atmospheric conditions proved to be difficult to avoid.⁷³

⁷² Newhall, *Airborne Camera*, 22.

⁷³ Black's aerial photographs of Boston are discussed in detail in chapter four.

Returning to the more grounded views from the Bunker Hill Monument by Mallory and the *Boston Globe* photographer, the 1907 article in the *Globe* notes that the accuracy of Mallory's view as a reliable cityscape "depend[s] upon the skill and the conscientiousness of the draftsman, who could take greater liberties with his subject than a camera can."⁷⁴ One of the "liberties" that Mallory was able to take was the elimination of smoke and atmospheric haze. Not only could the photographer not eliminate atmospheric disturbance, but there were other problems in making the view using a camera. Iron bars on the windows and the thick walls of the Monument constricted the vantage point for the photographer, preventing unrestricted movement and therefore field of view of the camera. And, most noticeably when looking at the two images together, the photographer was unable to avoid smog. The indexical photograph from the Bunker Hill Monument had a more semiotically motivated sense of embodied viewer, and its indexical appearance was certainly a more accurate trace of the city than Mallory's drawing, but ultimately, it is the drawing that provides a more satisfactory knowledge of the city.

Double Modernity

The view from the top of a new structure in the late nineteenth century may not have been substantially different than that from a church steeple, State

⁷⁴ "Panoramic Views Bunker Hill Monument," 11.

House, or the Bunker Hill Monument. The city below is the same city. One vantage point may incidentally reveal a more modern city than another point, but essentially there is no difference in the object of representation. Only the title or caption of the image points to differences, whether the structure is old or new and the view known or novel. So, how is taking a photograph from the top of tall structure different from drawing a bird's-eye view? The most obvious answer to the question, other than medium, is the embodiment of the vantage point by the photographer. Panoramic and synoptic photographs from new skyscrapers hold a different place in the public's imagination than a photograph from a better known site such as the Bunker Hill Monument. The *Boston Globe* photographer's panoramic view from the Bunker Hill Monument was a re-creation of Mallory's engraving and was more concerned with illustrating progress in the scene through comparison to the past. Indeed, the layout of the newspaper makes this explicit. The photographs from the Lincoln Wharf Power Station and the Custom House Tower, however, are without precedent. Not only do they display the modern city, as does the photograph from Bunker Hill, but they are from modern vantage points; points in space that did not—and in the case of the Custom House, could not—have existed earlier in the nineteenth century. There is, then, a doubling of modernity in the synoptic view. As I argued in the previous chapter, the wide view displays the markers of modernity in quantity. A catalogue of modernity was foregrounded in lithographic bird's-eye views depending on the

cardinal point from which the city was viewed. Boston could be a city of commerce or of middle class recreation depending on whether the city was viewed from the east or the west. Secondly, synoptic photographs from elevated perches were possible only because of modernity. The architectural and engineering technology required to build skyscrapers became commonplace only in the late nineteenth century. The existence of these photographs point to an embodied modernity; a different and distanced manner through which to "experience" the city. Indeed, as much as French theorist Michel de Certeau criticizes the view from above as an "optical artifact," a "'theoretical' (that is, visual) simulacrum, in short a picture, whose condition of possibility is an oblivion and a misunderstanding of practices,"⁷⁵ it is a view that was sought out—and purchased—and there was a desire to behold the city from that vantage point.

⁷⁵ Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 92-93.

Chapter Four

"Boston as the eagle and the wild goose see it, is a very different object..."

James Wallace Black's 1860 view of Boston from a tethered balloon was the first successful aerial photograph in the United States (fig. 32). Ballooning was well established by 1860, but photographic technology made aerial photography extremely difficult. The wet collodion process used by commercial photographers of the period required the photographer to coat, expose, and process photographic plates on site, in this case the basket of a balloon. Some photographers, such as Nadar in Paris, had balloon baskets specially constructed with a darkroom to facilitate the processing of negatives "on site."¹ Balloons were but one of the many difficult and challenging locations in which nineteenth-century photographers overcame the technical limitations of their immature medium. Bird's-eye view artists also worked within the restrictions of their materials, but did not have to contend with transporting their equipment, or even themselves, to precarious and even dangerous elevated vantage points. Their imaging of the city was usually an informed act of imagination, picturing the

¹ Nadar's first attempt at aerial photography was in 1857 and he commissioned the construction of a balloon, *Le Géant*, specifically for aerial photography in 1863. The basket of the balloon included a darkroom, could sleep twelve, and was reported to be the size of a two-story house. Despite being purpose built for aerial photography, there is no record of Nadar actually taking photographs from *Le Géant*. The balloon proved to be a financial disaster and he sold it in 1867. Beaumont Newhall, *Airborne Camera: The World from the Air and Outer Space* (New York: Hastings House, 1969), 31-32.

streets and buildings as they would appear from an imaginary vantage point hundreds or thousands of feet in the air.

Black's aerial photograph of Boston inspired local polymath Oliver Wendell Holmes to write of his native city, "Boston as the eagle and the wild goose see it, is a very different object from the same place as the solid citizen looks up at its eaves and chimneys."² The view, taken from the basket of the balloon *Queen of the Air* at approximately twelve hundred feet off the ground, was Black's second attempt at aerial photography that year. Both attempts were in collaboration with balloonist Samuel King and Providence, Rhode Island, dentist William H. Helme, who, after a balloon ascension from the Boston Common on July 4, 1860, was convinced that aerial photography could be used in the production of maps.³ Their first aerial photographic session in Providence ended in failure. Poor visibility hampered the aeronauts' view of the ground below and the collodion photographic emulsion on the glass plates cracked when it dried, resulting in a print that looked, according to Helme, "as if an earthquake was plunging the whole region round about into chaos."⁴ Black left the basket of the balloon with

² Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Doings of the Sunbeam," *The Atlantic Monthly* 12 (1863), 12. I am not the only writer to use Holmes' words when discussing the history of the photography. Beaumont Newhall, first director of the Museum of Modern Art's photography department, used more or less the same heading in *Airborne Camera*, 22.; and Robert Taft quotes Holmes for a chapter title in *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History* (New York: Dover, 1964), 186.

³ Helme was not alone in this belief. Nadar's pursuit of aerial photography was based on his interest in mapping.

⁴ William H. Helme, "Photographing from a Balloon," *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 3rd series, 1, no. 8 (1860), 234.

his photography equipment and King offered balloon ascensions to the public to help defray the costs of the gas required to lift the balloon. The second attempt in Boston was more successful. Black shot six negatives while the balloon was tethered over Boston Common, before King untethered the balloon and they floated freely to the south, for approximately thirty miles, taking more photographs. Unfortunately, none of the negatives from their free flight were useable for Helme's cartographic endeavours because of poor atmospheric conditions and the discolouration of the photographic emulsion in reaction to gas escaping from the balloon.⁵

The strong lighting in the successful image of Boston from over the Common clearly delineates the sides of the buildings, revealing the structural volumes in the city. However, despite this clarity, the perceived variance in the heights of the buildings is minimal, with the exception of church steeples. The scale of the scene is such that the relative differences in the heights of structures, though substantial when looking "up at its eaves and chimneys" from the streets of Boston, are almost indistinguishable from the air. The emphasis is, instead, on the layout of the streets and the almost two-dimensional visual texture of the scene from above. Individual buildings are clearly discernible but our first impression of the city is as a collection of structures and shapes. As Holmes observes, this unique view of Boston is comprised of "windows,

⁵ Sally Pierce, *Whipple and Black: Commercial Photographers in Boston* (Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1987), 28-29.

chimneys, and skylights ... exquisitely defined, bewildering in numbers."⁶

Helme's cartographic intentions might have been satisfied by this image, but as a picture of the city, the rooftops and streets create a representation that is more defined by texture, pattern, tone, line, and the repetition of graphic elements than the usual characteristics of place.

In this chapter, I will consider various synoptic views and texts of Boston and examine the characteristics of such views. Whereas the case studies in the previous chapters have investigated displays of modernity (what we can see) and vantage points (from where we see), this chapter is concerned with the formal language of the synoptic view and its relationships to the objects of representation. The synoptic view of a city emphasizes and minimizes different aspects of the urban landscape more than does the more quotidian street view. The view from above reveals our urban areas as a collection of formal elements that are the product of the social space of city streets, and in the absence of guides, keys, and other identifying texts, the visual formal qualities of the view dominate. Indeed, the view from above heavily privileges vision. The city becomes all sight, a site devoid of sounds and smells.⁷ The illusion of legibility is created: the paths of streets are obvious, the relative locations of sites easy to

⁶ Holmes, "Doings of the Sunbeam," 12.

⁷ "Timid" aerial photographer John G. Doughty noted on his first balloon ascension, "as the balloon rises gradually, the many sounds of earth, striking the ear at first with confusing variety and force, grow quickly faint and distant. Soon only the loudest sound reaches us, and at last we attain an altitude which no earthly sounds can reach." John Doughty, G., "Balloon Experiences of a Timid Photographer," *The Century* 32, no. 5 (1886), 681.

determine, and spaces are homogenous. This vantage point, however, hides the social reality of urban life. The disengagement from the city of the synoptic view removes the details, diversity, and heterogeneity, of everyday life leaving only the "legible" appearance of the city.

A Distanced City

Linear perspective assumes a vantage point from which the scene in front of a viewer is surveyed. The terms foreground, middleground, and background, identify different distances between the implied viewer and the objects enclosed by the frame of the picture. Each term denotes not only an imaginary relative distance from the viewer, or artist, to the object, but also a relative position within pictorial space expressed through a continuum of an inverse ratio of size to viewing distance. The pictorial space of an aerial view of a city, however, cannot be broken down into these convenient and orderly spaces. The foreground of an aerial view, the space usually reserved in pictures for framing devices, such as *repoussoirs*, to enclose and direct the viewer's glance into the scene, is almost always empty. Even in panoramic photographs taken from tall buildings, the illusion of hovering above the ground is preferred to the inclusion of architectural

details of the viewing platform.⁸ The middleground of an aerial view, usually the area of viewing interest and the stage upon which the characters in a picture engage, is quite removed from the viewer. Lithographic bird's-eye views of the late nineteenth century were reputed to be the view of the city from heights of one to three thousand feet, often from a very steep angle just short of a plan or vertical view. The background of these images is usually a broad sweep of featureless horizon, though occasionally the viewing angle is steep enough that no horizon is visible, thus creating an image that is essentially all middleground. In other words, accepted notions of pictorial space and composition did not necessarily apply to late nineteenth-century bird's-eye views, aerial views, and photographic panoramas taken from elevated vantage points.

Perceived distance is characteristic of western pictorial space as it was codified during the Italian Renaissance in central Italy and it enables and disables different knowledges of a scene within a re-created space. The perspectival grid, the medium, the size of the picture, and the style of drawing or photography are all factors in any pictorial representation and, like distance, play a determining role in the viewer's understanding of the objects represented in the

⁸ For example, Eadweard Muybridge shot two 360-degree photographic panoramas of San Francisco from the Hopkins House on Nob Hill in 1877 and 1878. In 1877 he used a small aperture to achieve a maximum depth of field to render both the distant hills in the background and the roof ornaments in the foreground in focus, resulting in very long exposures. When he returned to the site in 1878, he avoided including the roof ornaments allowing him to use a larger aperture and faster shutter speed. The second panorama from 1878 is widely regarded as the more successful of the two. For more on Muybridge's panoramas, see David Harris, *Eadweard Muybridge and the Photographic Panorama of San Francisco, 1850-1880* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1993).

image. Pictures, photographs and lithographs, I would argue, can be subject to the same "distance" heuristic proposed by historian Mark Phillips as a tool for understanding history. In fact, Phillips uses linear perspective as an analogy for historical perspective, noting that both are constructions that are "the outcome of specific traditions of representation" that have been naturalized.⁹ The study of distance in historical representation is not simply describing and analyzing the gap between representation and reality, it is the study of "a series of distances (or even distance-effects) that modify and reconstruct the temporality of historical accounts, thereby shaping every part of our engagement with the past."¹⁰ The "initial distance," the time between the present and the past, is mediated by "the elementary dimensions of historical representation... form, affect, ideology, and cognition."¹¹ The same "elementary dimensions" can be considered when discussing urban views and the viewer's "engagement or disengagement" with the city.¹² For example, one could productively ask, what are the differences in

⁹ Mark S. Phillips, "Distance and Historical Representation," *History Workshop Journal* 57 (2004), 125.

¹⁰ Phillips, "Distance and Historical Representation," 126.

¹¹ Phillips, "Distance and Historical Representation," 126.

¹² Mark S. Phillips, "Relocating Inwardness: Historical Distance and the Transition from Enlightenment to Romantic Historiography," *PMLA* 118, no. 3 (2003), 438.

form, affect, ideology, and cognition between street level and bird's-eye views of late nineteenth century cities?¹³

The difference is obvious when considering textual examples from Victorian London by social reformer Henry Mayhew. Mayhew's *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life* (1862) provides readers with a sense of metropolitan life on the street and the view of the city from above.¹⁴ His introductory chapters furnish a context for London's prisons and their inmates through his description of the people and streets of "The Great World of London" in a "general survey"—very much like a bird's-eye view—"wherein the antipodes of London life are brought under one view."¹⁵ Partly sociological, partly statistical study, and partly guidebook, Mayhew's text engages the reader most profoundly when he turns to detailed description and anecdote:

There are hundreds of stalls [in the market], and every stall has its one or two lights; either it is illuminated by the intense white light of the new self-generating gas lamp, or else it is brightened up by the red smoky flame of the old-fashioned grease lamp. One man shows off his yellow haddocks with a candle stuck in a bundle of firewood; his neighbours make a candlestick of a huge turnip, and the tallow gutters over its sides; whilst the boy shouting, "Eight a penny, stunning pears!" has surrounded his "dip" with a thick roll of brown paper that flares away in the wind. Some stalls are crimson, with

¹³ In addition to aerial and street level views, nineteenth-century cityscapes also include pastoral and picturesque views, which also result in differing levels of engagement and disengagement with the city.

¹⁴ The book was completed by John Binny and authorship is usually listed as Henry Mayhew and John Binny, but the section from which I am quoting is thought to have been written by Mayhew. Mayhew's more famous treatment of London is *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851).

¹⁵ Henry Mayhew, and John Binny *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life* (London: Griffin, Bohn and Co., 1862), 64.

the fire shining through the holes beneath the baked chestnut stove; others have handsome octahedral lamps; while a few have a candle shining through a sieve; these, with the sparkling ground-glass globes of the tea-dealers' shops, and the butchers' gas-lights streaming and fluttering in the wind like flags of flame, pour forth such a flood of light, that at a distance the atmosphere immediately above the spot is as lurid as if the street were on fire.¹⁶

Mayhew's description of the city from above is different, more distanced and philosophical:

Indeed, it was a most wonderful sight to behold that vast bricken mass of churches and hospitals, banks and prisons, palaces and workhouses, docks and refuges for the destitute, parks and squares, and courts and alleys, which make up London—all blent into one immense black spot—to look down upon the whole as the birds of the air look down upon it, and see it dwindled into a mere rubbish heap—to contemplate from afar that strange conglomeration of vice, avarice, and low cunning, of noble aspirations and humble heroism, and to grasp it in the eye, in all its incongruous integrity, at one single glance—to take, as it were, an angel's view of that huge town where, perhaps, there is more virtue and more iniquity, more wealth and more want, brought together into one dense focus than in any other part of the earth.¹⁷

From the basket of the balloon, Mayhew concurrently "viewed" the disappointments and achievements in the metropolis which, from that great height, are indistinguishable from each other, "all blent into one immense black spot." The diversity of the city did not cease to exist once Mayhew and company

¹⁶ Mayhew and Binny, *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life*, 61.

¹⁷ Mayhew and Binny, *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life*, 9. Following on the earlier discussion of distance as heuristic, Asa Briggs uses Mayhew's description of London from a balloon as analogy in the introduction to *Victorian Cities* (1963), noting that "an angel's view ... of the busy provincial cities" is "useful" to the historian "before losing himself in the complexities of particular cities" and "to seek some vantage point from which to gain an initial sense of unity and order." Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London: Odhams Books, 1963), 53-54.

were airborne, but from the distance where the city can be taken in "at one single glance," particular and individual narratives become subsumed to the meta-narrative of the city.

Boston at a Distance

The synoptic view from the balloon condenses Mayhew's London, in part, by emphasizing the two-dimensional patterns of the city. Indeed, Mayhew notes that the view of "great cities" from above displays "the various districts ... with their factories, their markets, their docks, or their mansions, all dovetailed, one into the other, as if they were the pieces of some puzzle map."¹⁸ They are flat, differentiated in appearance only, and all part of the same whole. O. H. Bailey and J. C. Hazen's bird's-eye view *The City of Boston* (1879) is such a "puzzle map" (fig. 33). The harsh highlights on the south side of the buildings cleave the city along major streets, the remainder appear as a continuous grey and grimy metropolis, the only relief from the monochrome monotony comes from the undeveloped Back Bay Park in the west. Even the Common, and to a lesser extent the Public Garden where the ponds provide some tonal relief, are rendered with the same shade of grey. Boston is crammed into the picture space, pushing against the frame, while the viewer floats almost directly over the city experiencing vertigo from the awkward perspectival rendering of the peninsula.

¹⁸ Mayhew and Binny, *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life*, 8.

The grey uniform shading—presumably added by the lithographer, for the surviving original drawing is a simple outline of the city and its structures—adds a grimy dirty feel to the city and unites most of the low buildings, making them appear less a collection of discrete structures and more like a solid urban texture.¹⁹ Bailey and Hazen's city is a densely packed urban world where we can never see, but only sense, movement in distant streets. The image is more an evocation of the city than a description; more icon than map; more texture than detail. By 1879, artists could no longer represent the North American (or European) metropolises with an "all-embracing glance"²⁰ as anything other than the idea of the city.

Albert E. Downs' *Boston* of 1899 (fig. 34) imagines the city from an almost identical vantage point as Bailey and Hazen's 1879 bird's-eye view. Unlike the earlier image, Downs' view of Boston includes only a handful of identified buildings—sixteen points of interest are included in the key compared to fifty-nine in Bailey and Hazen's bird's-eye view—and the northern side of the peninsula is rendered much more competently, though the radial pattern of bridges across the Charles seems to create a difficult problem in perspective for all bird's-eye view

¹⁹ This bird's-eye view offers a rare opportunity to compare the original drawing to the finished product, for the drawings for most lithographic bird's-eye views have not been preserved. In addition to the introduction of shading, the perspective around the gas works in the lower left and the position of many of the ships were changed for the final version. Boston Public Library Rare Map Collection 81.3.1879.3 and 81.3.1879.2.

²⁰ Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 6.

artists. Similar to Bailey and Hazen's image, the city on the peninsula is a dense collection of buildings with small black lines representing windows, punctuated by a few broad streets that run near parallel to the vertical axis of the image. The railroads, depicted as dark curvilinear elements passing under streets and over waterways, provide lines of negative relief from the positive texture of the city. More relief from the metropolitan texture comes from a park, the Boston Common, and a rail yard at the southwest corner of the Back Bay area. The surrounding horizon is punctuated by church steeples and, more so than Bailey and Hazen's cityscape, smokestacks. Visually, the most striking difference between Bailey and Hazen's and Downs' bird's-eye views has little to do with their content. It is the startling clarity with which Downs' later print is executed. The outlines of the buildings are much more pronounced and notwithstanding the fact that the oblique angle of view is lower, Downs' bird's-eye view reads more as a panoramic map than Bailey and Hazen's view, despite the latter being closer to a vertical or plan view. There is a promise of cartographic predictability in Downs' print because of the clarity of detail, the sharpness and decisiveness with which each element is reproduced, even if the overall effect is overwhelming. However, in terms of the iconography of the city, Boston is identifiable only by the broadest of criteria. The shape of the peninsula that contains the dense urban texture is the primary identifying feature. Boston's easily recognizable landmarks associated with the identity of the city that had dominated most of the pastoral

urban views from the early nineteenth century (the State House, City Hall, Custom House, Faneuil Hall, and Quincy Market) are all subsumed by the broader urban texture.

As compared to the prints of Bailey and Hazen or Downs, Benjamin Franklin Nutting's much earlier *Bird's-Eye View of Boston* (1868) uses a viewing greater distance of the city (fig. 35). Boston takes up barely a bottom third of the image, the harbour and islands occupy a generous middle third, and the sky the remainder. The city is reduced to a brick colour register anchoring a much broader view of the world with the pictorial emphasis on the horizon, the harbour, and the ocean, both heavily trafficked by ships tracing a navigable route through the prominent but almost interchangeable islands of Massachusetts Bay. For the most part, the city has been reduced to texture except for the Massachusetts General Hospital, the jail, and the Common, all in the oddly cropped foreground.²¹ The identifying characteristics are the altered geomorphology of the city and urban parkland in juxtaposition to the crowded blocks and irregular paths traced out by streets and railroads. If it were not for the distinctive shape of the peninsular city and the green spaces of the Common and Public Garden, the city would be, at first glance, a featureless brick band. The distance between a viewer and a viewed object (and size of the representation) determines the

²¹ One possible explanation for the fact that the foreground of this view is cut at the northeast shore along the Charles River is technical. By omitting this area, the artist avoided the difficult task of foreshortening the bridges between East Cambridge and Boston, which would have been more or less vertical lines in the drawing.

details that are discernible, especially when a scene is first or quickly encountered in a glance. Prolonged and studious attention to the images will always reveal more than the initial impression—for example, there are fifty-nine identified landmarks in the legend of Bailey and Hazen's bird's-eye view of Boston—but the strongest characteristic of aerial views is their evenness and their relative uniformity, creating a depiction of Boston as a rather extended but minutely detailed "black spot," or perhaps in the case of Nutting's bird's-eye view, a minutely detailed "brick spot."

Unlike panoramic urban photographs taken from elevated vantage points, the lithographic bird's-eye views considered above place the viewer at a more or less constant distance from the urban areas of interest. However, the surrounding communities of Newton, and even much closer Charlestown, recede into the background of the bird's-eye views quite suddenly. In both Bailey and Hazen's and Downs' views, there is a sudden diminution in relative size when crossing the Charles River along the northwestern shore of the peninsula, signalling that scale is not uniform throughout the image, and that peninsular Boston should be the focus of the viewer's attention. Photographs in the nineteenth century, unlike drawings or prints from drawings, were bound to use the rules of perspective consistently within a single image. Different focal length lenses produce different angles of coverage and perspectival grids, but the grid is consistent within the frame and diminution in photographs occurs according to a

constant inverse relationship of size to distance. Nonetheless, despite the mathematical rigidity and indexicality of nineteenth-century photography, photographic panoramas, like lithographic bird's-eye views, generalized the city. Nathaniel Stebbins multi-panel photographic panorama from the Ames Building, built in 1889 and sixteen stories tall, provides the viewer with easily identifiable landmarks in the foreground of each multi-frame image (figs. 36 to 39). Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market are prominent in the view to the east toward the harbour (fig. 37). The City Hall and the State Building, one of the few buildings to interrupt the horizon, are easily recognizable in the view to the west (fig. 39). Identifiable details such as these, however, soon disappear a couple of blocks from the photographer's perch—the notable exception being the State House. The middleground quickly becomes background; the foreground as experienced by the photographer, the Ames Building itself, is invisible; and the background, even in the indexical world of nineteenth-century photography, provides few details to the casual viewer as natural and artificial atmospheric haze shrouds the faintly rendered details of the city near the horizon. Here there is a different distance effect: haze, or in art historical terms, atmospheric perspective, that disengages us from the backgrounds of cityscape photographs. The difficulty in photographing distant objects was a problem of both environment and technology in nineteenth-century photography, and photographic journals devoted many column inches to the topic. In an article from the *British Journal of*

Photography in 1880, an anonymous author noted that "particles utterly invisible to the eye" interfered with recording distant objects, which were, as a result, "utterly unphotographable."²² This does not mean, however, that distanced objects were not representable in some fashion. In fact, the author notes that while such distant objects are impossible to photograph this is different from saying that "'effects' cannot be produced."²³ The photograph may not be entirely truthful—details are obscured, objects within the field of view are unrepresented—but it can still be a successful and effective photograph. The backgrounds of Stebbins' views from the Ames Building successfully convey the idea of a large metropolitan centre through haze and a dense pattern of overlaying buildings and structures, the very characteristics that make it a poor cartographic image. The urban fabric of the city disappears into the atmospheric haze possibly extending to the indistinct hills in the far background. This fog was recognized a few years later by a committee struck to suggest municipal improvements. Its report noted disapprovingly that Boston was always enveloped in a "cloud of soft coal smoke."²⁴ The harbour, the most visible means of transport and trade in the photograph, also continues to the horizon, opening eventually into the east to the Atlantic Ocean, enlarging the impact of the city to the horizons and beyond.

²² "Photographing Distance," *British Journal of Photography* 28, no. 1056 (1880), 363.

²³ "Photographing Distance," 363.

²⁴ *Report Made to the Boston Society of Architects by its Committee on Municipal Improvement* ([Boston]: 1907), 1.

The "puzzle map" quality of the synoptic view not only revealed markers of modernity, but was also by its very form indicative of the development of a modern city. Geographer Richard Schein notes in his study of nineteenth-century urban views, "the old pedestrian and undifferentiated order of primarily mercantile towns gave way to the increasing functional zonation of the industrial city,"²⁵ and this spatial differentiation—which resulted in interlocking "puzzle map" pieces—was reflected in images of the city. Lithographic bird's-eye view, in particular, allowed for the representation of industry in an orderly setting, even if the reality were different. As Schein notes, "the [lithographic] bird's-eye view was not so much art as a concretisation of urban order for its owners and creators,"²⁶ an order that was negotiated between business owners, municipal politicians, and the artist and publisher.²⁷ It is not surprising, then, that Schein argues for the hegemonic nature of nineteenth-century urban lithographs in that they "played an active role in shaping the culture of the city" by presenting "what the city was and should be."²⁸

²⁵ Richard H. Schein, "Representing Urban America: 19th-Century Views of Landscape, Space, and Power," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 11, no. 1 (1993), 16. However, standard modern zoning practices and city planning was not common and professionalized until the early 1900s in the United States, see Christine M. Boyer, *Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American City Planning* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 57-136.

²⁶ Schein, "Representing Urban America," 17.

²⁷ The "search for order" is a recurring theme in studies of nineteenth-century America, See Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Wang, 1967).

²⁸ Schein, "Representing Urban America," 18.

Schein does not consider the role of photographic panoramas in the construction of the modern industrial city, but urban photographs, despite their lower vantage point and atmospheric haze, do some of the same representational work as the prints, bringing the appearance of order to rapidly expanding cities. The eleven panel, three hundred and sixty degree photographic panorama shot from the steeple of the Arlington Street Church on the west side of the Public Garden in 1910 for the *Boston Globe* (figs. 2 and 3) shows both the grid and the urban texture of modernity.²⁹ The first four panels look west and north encompassing the relatively new Back Bay development with its broad straight streets set at right angles to each other. A grid in a circular panoramic representation, however, is more implied than revealed because of the multiple vanishing points that deform the grid as the viewer's eye sweeps from one edge of the image to the other. Both Boylston and Arlington Streets, which are perpendicular to each other, radiate from the photographer's vantage point more or less tracing parallel vertical lines in the image. Despite this deformation of the grid, which can be easily recognized and reconstructed by viewers who understand the circular nature of panoramic vision, the order of modernity is visible in the repetition and texture of the houses in Back Bay. The density of the

²⁹ "Complete Panoramic View of Boston Taken from the Top of Arlington Street Church Spire, 200 Feet Above the Sidewalk," *Boston Daily Globe*, 3 July 1910, 11. The full subtitle of the article explains the origin and intended use of the panorama: "The Steeple Was Being Repaired When a Globe Photographer Climbed the Scaffolding, Planted His Camera Beside the Weather Vane and Took the Pictures—By Cutting the Pictures Out of the Page and Pasting Them Together ... You Can Make A Marvelous Single View of the City Looking Toward Every Point of the Compass."

repeating facades and residential chimneys leave no doubt that this is a modern and "properly" zoned section of the city in which areas of specialization have been established separating residential, industrial, and commercial functions, especially for the middle classes and above.

The view from Arlington Street Church is an excellent illustration of the zoning of a modern city. Following the panorama from left to right (starting at west-southwest and panning through three hundred sixty degrees clockwise) the viewer encounters busy Boylston Street lined with large commercial and institutional buildings. The next three panels are almost exclusively residential (Back Bay) followed by three panels of park land (Public Garden and Common). Boylston Street reappears along the right edge of frame seven (east northeast) demarcating a boundary between the parks (on the left) and Boston's commercial district (on the right). The foreground of the remainder of the panorama (frames eight to eleven) is filled with the former site of the Boston and Providence Railroad station at Park Square, closed in September 1899 and recently demolished in the spring of 1909. The creative destruction of capitalism—the railroad station was only twenty-five years old when it was replaced by South Station—and the drive for modernity can be inferred from this broad empty

expanse of land in which we see the potential for the future at the expense of the recent modern past.³⁰

Boston was considered by its elite classes as a place of society and culture. Accordingly, the city, as Mona Domosh explains,

was seen not as a site of revenue producing—although the idea was never absent—but as a domestic space, a place to live and play, to attend the theatre and stroll through parks and gardens, and to make social calls, with some business meetings at offices along State Street.³¹

Indeed, from the steeple of Arlington Street Church one has to look to the horizon to see smoke stacks and even the Boston and Providence Railroad Station, which was on the edge of the Public Garden and next to Back Bay, has been demolished. The Public Garden and Common were not without problems of vagrancy and public nuisances in the late nineteenth century, but they were, nonetheless, places to see and be seen. The foreground of three of the eleven panels in the panorama are occupied by the large green space in the centre of the city, echoing a similar popular view from the Arlington Street Church steeple twenty-five years earlier in *Picturesque America* (1874):

³⁰ The future, however, would have to wait. There were numerous announcements through the early 1900s on future redevelopment of the property but it remained, according to one pamphleteer, an "extravagant waste" and a "desert in the heart of the city" for almost a decade. John Albee, *A Blight on Boston: How Shall it be Removed?* (Boston: Berkley Press, 1906), 16. The Boston Society of Architects' Committee on Municipal Improvement agreed, and in their report of 1907, they wrote, "this unoccupied land prevents the natural growth of the city, and, without criticizing the present owners, we cordially hope that the wasteful conditions may soon be terminated." *Report Made to the Boston Society of Architects by its Committee on Municipal Improvement*, 18.

³¹ Mona Domosh, *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century New York and Boston* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 33.

From the arch in the steeple of the Arlington-Street Church, you gaze upon one of the most striking and noble scenes which any America city presents—a scope of brightness, beauty, luxury, adorned by the elegances of horticultural, architectural, and sculptural art, enriched by the best effects of native taste, and gifted by Nature with fine contrasts of elevation, declivity, and outline—a scene which includes all that of which Boston is most proud in external aspect.³²

It may seem surprising, then, that these urban parks were hotly contested properties in the mid to late nineteenth century. There was pressure to widen Tremont Street along the southeast edge of the Common (barely visible in the photographic panorama from the Arlington Street Church, veering off the left side of Boylston Street) to accommodate increased traffic and retailers were anxious to expand into the area as well. However, the Garden and the Common were preserved by the Boston elite and this preservation had two important functions. Symbolically it emphasized the focus of the elite on "higher" issues such as the preservation of nature in the form of a park as a refuge from modern life, and practically, the Common and the Garden provided a physical buffer for Back Bay and parts of Beacon Hill, both affluent residential neighbourhoods, from the growing retail and commercial district around Washington Street, southeast of the Common.³³

³² William Cullen Bryant, *Picturesque America, or, This Land We Live In*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1874), 233.

³³ Domosh, *Invented Cities*, 143. The relatively new residential area Back Bay became popular because it was not near the encroaching commercial and lower class areas, as were parts of Beacon Hill, which were near the North End's large immigrant population and Fort Hill (33).

The background of the panorama from the Arlington Street Church disappears into the haze of the city. Buildings only a few blocks away on Boylston Street—for example, the Boston Public Library and the Old South Church at Copley Square—mark the limit of distinguishable architecture. Prominent buildings beyond this point are mere silhouettes, the massive Christian Science Church and, to the northeast, the State House are both recognizable only by their unique outlines and relative position in the city.³⁴ The low angle of view, when compared to bird's-eye views, and the incidental atmospheric perspective limit the range of the view. In particular, the view down Boylston and Newbury Streets become in themselves symbolic of the modern metropolis, stretching into an undistinguishable distance in which the city is represented by smudges and shapes, a textured horizon suggestive of the markers of modernity. The background of the view to the south (approximately frames nine to eleven, from the former site of the Boston Providence Railroad

³⁴ Both the Christian Science Church and the State House were identified in the original reproduction in the *Boston Daily Globe*. Continuing along Boylston Street, within the scope of the first two panels of the western section of the panorama, but just outside the resolving power of the photograph, there is the Museum of Natural History, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the former and current site of the Museum of Fine Arts (Copley Square and Huntington Avenue, respectively), Symphony Hall, the New England Conservatory of Music, and the Boston Opera House. The Fens and the area adjacent to Back Bay became the cultural capital of Boston, partly because of available land, but also because of the area's proximity to Back Bay.

Station to Berkeley Street in the foreground) functions similarly with the added interest of tall secular smokestacks in competition with church steeples.³⁵

The vertical punctuation of the horizon reminds the viewer of the essentially non-industrial nature of central Boston. It was a hub of commerce and finance, and one of the most conspicuous symbols of modernity, the industrial smokestack and its accompanying factory, was found primarily in the outskirts of the city. As Domosh reminds us, Boston was a place where the city's elite preferred to keep what they considered the less desirable aspects of urban modernity at a remove. Distancing is a strategy that can conceal disagreeable details by emphasizing the visual appearance of the whole rather than fully disclosing the sounds, smells, and detailed sights of an object.³⁶ The elegant curved spans of the "New Cambridge Bridge" do not reveal the noise and smells of traffic and South Street Station is simply another dark shape on the horizon of the panoramic view from the Arlington Street Church steeple.

³⁵ The key to the panorama in the *Boston Daily Globe* identifies buildings, structures, places, and streets. Almost one-third of all identified points in panorama are churches. The modern urban structures identified in the images are "New Cambridge Bridge," "Entrance to Subway (at the Common)," "South Station," and "Vacant Land left by the demolition of the railroad station at Park Square."

³⁶ In more practical applications, some Bostonians would have been alerted to distance as a means to safety in late 1886 by a newspaper article. In anticipation of an earthquake predicted by a local doomsayer for New Orleans for September 29, 1886, some people left the Louisiana city, while others took to the skies: "A local aeronaut will have a balloon ascension in this city on the 29th and offers places in his car to those who fear an earthquake for \$10 a head." "Wiggin's Earthquake: Many People in New Orleans Looking Forward to Wednesday with Dread," *Boston Evening Transcript*, Sept. 27, 1886, 9.

The large sweep of the synoptic view reveals not only the city's macro-structure, but can also illustrate geographical scope or range. Indeed, the aerial view has always been a popular pictorial mode for illustrating the extent of destruction, especially the aftermath of urban fires, a fact of life in the nineteenth century. Fire struck the heart of Boston's business district on November 9 and 10, 1872, and while this was not the only fire in nineteenth-century Boston, it was by far the most destructive, destroying buildings and businesses on over sixty acres of ground.³⁷ The extent of the fire was described through text in the *Boston Globe* newspaper—illustrated daily newspapers were not common until the early 1890s—and later summarized in a bird's-eye views in *Harper's Weekly*, an illustrated periodical of the period.³⁸ The first substantial report in the *Globe* the day after the fire had been extinguished takes the reader along a linear path of destruction:

The flames ran rapidly up Summer street, pausing on the south side at Chauncy street, but on the other side, gaining force with every moment, it soon cleared the block between Otis and Arch, down which the flames poured as in a wind-fanned tunnel, reaching Franklin square, some time before its course on Summer had swept to Hawley.³⁹

³⁷ Other large fires in Boston during the late nineteenth century occurred in 1862, 1873, 1879, 1889, 1894, and two fires in 1893.

³⁸ Harper's was not the only popular illustrated magazine to give extensive pictorial coverage to the fire. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* also included a special supplement on the Boston Fire, including at least one illustration based on a photograph by local photographer John Adams Whipple.

³⁹ "Devastation!" *Boston Daily Globe*, Nov. 11, 1872, 1.

After the fire "culminat[es] ... in the business blocks in and around the new post-office structure," the article changes its narrative from the progress and climax of the fire to the denouement, the appearance of the burnt district:

Summer street, beginning at Broad and extending towards Washington, presents a desolate appearance. On the entire north side there is but one house standing, that being at the corner of Washington ... The walls of Trinity Church still stand, looking bare and grim enough, but everything perishable is seen only in the form of ashes. On the south side, the progress of the flames was stopped at Chauncy street, and even below that point there are two or three buildings still remaining.⁴⁰

The engraving *Bird's-Eye View of Boston Showing the Burned District* (fig. 40), which appeared in *Harper's Weekly* in 1872 shortly after the *Globe's* article, maps the extent of the destruction but relies on other illustrations and text to convey details of the fire and its aftermath.⁴¹ The view, which displays the burnt district as it was prior to November 9, 1872, is based on preliminary work by Charles Parsons for a bird's-eye view to be published by Currier & Ives the following year (fig. 21).⁴² The *Harper's* version of the bird's-eye view is cropped to include just a bit more of the city than the burned district, with a dark overlay demarcating the

⁴⁰ "Devastation!", 1.

⁴¹ "Bird's-eye view of Boston, showing the burned district," *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 831 (1872), 936. In the same issue, the Union Publishing Company advertised a "full and graphic account" of recent fires in both Boston and Chicago. The distanced representation of the scene with bird's-eye views is the opposite of the promise of *Flame Swept Boston & Chicago* featuring "startling events; Blowing up of Buildings; People Fleeing in Terror; Sacrifices of Life; Wealthy Men made Penniless" (942).

⁴² "Bird's-eye view of Boston, showing the burned district," *Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library* (c. 2009), http://maps.bpl.org/details_10445. The Parsons (and Atwater) bird's-eye view is discussed in chapter three.

area of the fire, presenting the scope of destruction much like a map. It shows the viewer the extent of the damage but is mute on its nature, something conveyed much better by text and the street level illustrations in the article—as well as the hundreds of photographs taken by commercial photographers immediately after the fire (fig. 41).⁴³ The social drama of the fire is completely absent from the bird's-eye view and is better expressed by the cover illustration of firefighters working under an oppressive ceiling of dark smoke in front of the glow of the burning city, *Boston – "Into the Jaws of Death"* (fig. 42). The remainder of the illustrations are engaging street scenes, for example: *Merchants Defending Their Goods Against Thieves and Roughs, Military Forcing Back the Crowd in Liberty Street, and Resuming Business – On the Site of Franklin's Birth-Place*. The final illustration in the article transcends the specificity of the street views, and even the generalization of the bird's-eye view, presenting the fire in symbolic terms through the allegorical drawing *Columbia Lays Aside Her Laurels to Mourn at the Burning of Her Birth-Place*. Compared to the engagement

⁴³ B. W. Kilburn, a correspondent of *The Philadelphia Photographer* reported, "'There is a general rush of photographers here. I think I counted eight cameras right around me this morning. They seemed to love to work in the smoke. I think I shall do better by waiting until it settles; shall spend several days here yet.'" "The Boston Fire," *The Philadelphia Photographer* 9 (1872), 421. Sally Pierce notes that by November 25, there were advertisements promoting photographs of the burnt district for sale. John Whipple was selling "an enormous Panorama" for \$25 and James Black was producing smaller prints for \$3 and \$1.50 (see fig. 42). Pierce, *Whipple and Black*, 84. One of the difficulties with producing a photographic panorama of a burnt city is finding a structure from which to survey the charred ruins from above. Chicago based photographer George Lawrence found a novel solution to the problem with his "captive airship," a compound kite capable of lifting a mammoth plate camera about 2,000 feet above San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire. See Simon Baker, "San Francisco in Ruins: The 1906 Aerial Photographs of George R. Lawrence," *Landscape* 30, no. 2 (1989), 9-14.

readers may have felt viewing illustrations of mobs being restrained by the military, the haunting shell-like ruins of Trinity Church surrounded by charred rubble, and the highly patriotic allegory of Columbia, the view from above is merely indicative of scope, a distanced summary of the destruction wherein the details are supplied by supplemental text and the viewer's imagination.

Displaying geographical scope through the synoptic view is not limited to fires and other disasters. An earlier anonymous bird's-eye view of Boston printed in *Harper's Weekly* in 1871 displays the city as seen "swinging at ease in a balloon somewhere over the islands in the harbor" (fig. 43).⁴⁴ The city is rendered as an uneven texture of buildings with church steeples, the dome of the State House, and, across the river in Charlestown, the Bunker Hill Monument. The image displays the sprawl of the city through the small peaked roofs and dark shading covering areas labelled Boston, South Boston, East Boston, Charlestown, and Cambridge (fig. 44). The accompanying short single column article—itsself a textual bird's-eye view—gives a broad and superficial overview of the city in appearance (geomorphology and landmarks), culture, and history. A cropped version of the bird's-eye view appeared the following year with a more substantial article illustrated with images, both contemporary and historical, from the guidebook *Boston Illustrated*.⁴⁵ The later version of the bird's-eye view is

⁴⁴ "All Around Boston," *Harper's Weekly* 15, no. 758 (1871), 638.

⁴⁵ "About Boston," *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 808 (1872), 497, 500-03. The illustrations are from Edward Stanwood, *Boston Illustrated* (Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co, 1871).

cropped at Brighton and Winchester in the west and is supplemented in the article by a map that covers an almost identical area. The two representations of the city, bird's-eye view and map, are two very different images of Boston. The bird's-eye view, despite being removed from the realities and appearances of the street, is populated, for the most part, by generic buildings and structures that, despite the lack of detail, are more familiar and quotidian than the map's standard cartographic symbols and icons. Ultimately, however, the scale of both make them equally uninformative.

Unlike a map, a miniature is characterized by verisimilitude. George Curtis's *Model of Metropolitan Boston* (1900), created for the Paris Exposition of 1900, is a circular model with a nine and a half foot diameter that represents a radius of twelve-and-a-half miles from downtown Boston (fig. 45).⁴⁶ The model is to a uniform scale of one to fourteen thousand, and, therefore, like a map,

⁴⁶ The massive model was later displayed at the Pan-American Exhibition in Buffalo (1901), the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis (1904), and at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in Portland (1905). It was then housed at Harvard University before being moved in 1980 to the Boston Museum of Science. Karl Haglund, "Emerald Metropolis," *Arnoldia* 53, no. 4 (1993), 14-15. The model of metropolitan Boston was certainly not unique at the Paris Exposition. Models and maps, especially of engineering projects and railroads were used extensively by various exhibitors in the American pavilion. Other models included sail boats, Long Island Sound boats, ferry boats, floats for carrying trains, ice breakers, cable boats, naval vessels, a large model of the "Chicago drainage canal," models of coast work and harbours created for the "engineering department of the US government," models of skyscrapers, models of engineering projects and railroads in Massachusetts, a large relief map and models engineering projects of California, and the post office displayed models "of all the latest phases of railway mail service." "America at the Paris Show," *Boston Daily Globe*, Dec. 17, 1899, 37. The largest object to be miniaturized at the exposition was the earth, a model of which was located next to the Eiffel Tower and could be circumnavigated in just fifteen minutes on a revolving platform. In addition to the miniaturization inherent in model making, the exhibition included feats of engineering gigantism such as the world's largest music box, wine tun, and see-saw, the world's most powerful telescope, and a two-hundred ton clock. "Exposition Wonders," *Boston Daily Globe*, Mar. 11, 1900, 25.

distances are measurable.⁴⁷ Every aspect of the model is reduced, or miniaturized, by this factor. Bridges, roads, rivers, 157,000 houses, trees, all were recreated for the model at one-fourteenth-thousand of their original size from maps, plans, surveys, and photographs.⁴⁸ As evidence of the model's fidelity to reality, Curtis notes that "every road and house on the entire five hundred square miles had to be outlined, the roofs colored, the streams lined in and trees and fields painted."⁴⁹ However, the black and white photo-mechanical reproduction of the model included in Curtis' booklet, which summarizes the construction and extent of the model, does not reproduce the colour of roofs and fields. It does not reveal individual houses or any other street level details of metropolitan Boston. The author notes, rather optimistically, that "a magnifying glass will improve detail" when viewing the reproduction of the model, but such magnification reveals only major geomorphological features and the thousands of houses, bridges, and minor waterways are lost in the black dots of ink that comprise the screened photomechanical reproduction.

The published image of the model yields only the coarsest details; however, the model itself invites comparison with the real thing, and part of our

⁴⁷ A scale model at 1:14,000 means that one unit of measure (inches, centimetres, etc.) on the model represents 14,000 units of the same measure on the ground. Therefore, ten inches on the model represents a little over two miles and ten centimetres represents just under one-and-a-half kilometres.

⁴⁸ George Carroll Curtis, *A Description of the Topographical Model of Metropolitan Boston* ([Boston]: Board of Paris Exposition Managers of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1900), 4.

⁴⁹ Curtis, *Topographical Model of Boston*, 5.

fascination with the miniature is the fidelity of the representation. For example, Curtis emphasizes the accuracy with which his model of metropolitan Boston was constructed: it is based on over one hundred maps and several hundred photographs; the primary sculptor was a trained geologist; and the majority of his explanatory booklet summarizes the geological and cultural history of the represented area. Obviously, Curtis is concerned with comparisons to the real metropolitan Boston with respect to surface appearances. He is equally interested in the cultural and geological history that informs the model, as evidenced in his booklet.⁵⁰ However, as a visual object, without the historical and cultural context provided by the booklet, the model can do no more than give us an exterior view of the city, the surface, or the cover of urban life. The depth of experience, past and present, to which Curtis refers, is available only through the view from the street which is the interior and the exposed fabric of urban life.⁵¹ The miniaturization of the city, through both the photographic reproduction of the model and the model itself, emphasizes description at the expense of narrative, and correspondingly there is an increase in concern with space and a decrease concern with time.⁵² As Susan Stewart argues, the view of the city from above, which is possible, if not prescribed, when viewing a model,

⁵⁰ Curtis, *Topographical Model of Boston*, 6-37.

⁵¹ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 37.

⁵² Stewart, *On Longing*, 48.

remains radically outside the scene: one cannot enter into the life of the city without experiencing a corresponding change in perspective. Therefore, the view from above remains a view from an elsewhere, a view in which making the city other must correspondingly employ metaphors of otherness.⁵³

The synoptic view distances the viewer from the city, presenting it as something outside the deeper experience of time. The miniaturization of the entire city of Boston leads viewers to consider the exterior and the surface of urban life, which stresses appearances rather than interiority and depth. This emphasis is, perhaps, in line with a modernist emphasis of two-dimensional form, which is also evident in bird's-eye views.

One City, One Voice, One Legible Space

Urban views such as those discussed above had topographic and even limited cartographic functions, but they were also aesthetic objects. Lithographic bird's-eye views, in particular, participated in a larger nineteenth-century trade of lithographic art prints that hung in the parlours of middle-class homes by publishers such as Currier & Ives and Boston's Louis Prang.⁵⁴ It is my argument, however, that synoptic urban views were not only aesthetic objects that were admired as popular art, but they also aestheticized the city by abstracting everyday life through a novel perspective that could change the prosaic and

⁵³ Stewart, *On Longing*, 79.

⁵⁴ For an overview of the lithography business in Boston, see Sally Pierce, and Catharina Slautterback, *Boston Lithography, 1825-1880* (Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1991).

quodidian into something slightly removed from the ordinary.⁵⁵ The othering of the city through the aerial or elevated vantage point is only part of the argument. The flattening of the city into two-dimensions, either by the near plan view of lithographic bird's-eye views or the missing foreground of panoramic photographs from elevated vantage points, creates a cityscape that is analogous to the grid of modernist art as discussed by Rosalind Krauss. She argues that "the grid is the means of crowding out the dimensions of the real and replacing them with the lateral spread of a single surface."⁵⁶ It is a formal strategy of modernism to evacuate "the real" from representation. While the synoptic view of the late nineteenth century does not necessarily involve the grid, especially when looking down on the tangled streets of Boston, it does do some of the same work as the grid: it aestheticizes and replaces "the real" with "aesthetic decree." By definition, aestheticization privileges the form of an object over its function, though, as Jerome Stolnitz notes, aesthetic "attention is a matter of degree and it can be controlled simultaneously by different purposes."⁵⁷ However, when considering an object aesthetically, the use value of objects becomes defined primarily by its formal visual qualities and their associated values rather than narrative or textual

⁵⁵ The novelty of the vertical vantage point would be embraced in visual arts in the early twentieth century by the *avant garde*. For example, see Christina Lodder, "Malevich, Suprematism and Aerial Photography," *History of Photography* 28, no. 1 (2004), 25-40.

⁵⁶ Rosalind Krauss, "Grids," in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), 9.

⁵⁷ Jerome Stolnitz, *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism: A Critical Introduction* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), 45.

content. What, then, does it mean to state that the synoptic view aestheticizes the city?

The large scope of coverage and the reduction of detail in synoptic views encourages viewers to consider the city as a single entity. In Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1831), the narrator's view of Paris from Notre Dame Cathedral is of a unified whole: "A bird's eye view of these three towns, the City [Ile de la cité], the University, and the Ville, exhibited to the eye an inextricable knot of streets strangely jumbled together. It was apparent, however, at first sight that these three fragments of a city formed but a single body."⁵⁸ Similarly, in 1854 the *New York Times* suggested to residents of the city that they should occasionally climb to the top of Trinity Church where they "would learn, seeing how indistinguishable are the lines of Wards and Districts, to sink such differences at home and work more heartily for the whole City rather than for a Ward. They would see how large is the whole and how insignificant the little part in which they move."⁵⁹

We can find similar sentiments expressed about Boston as those quoted above about the larger and more famous metropolises of Paris and New York. By the end of the nineteenth century, Boston was often referred to as a metropolitan centre, referred to as "Greater Boston," or even "the metropolis of New

⁵⁸ Victor Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, trans. Frederic Shoberl (London: R. Bentley, 1833), 111.

⁵⁹ "From the Top of Trinity," *New York Daily Times*, Jun. 1, 1854, 2.

England."⁶⁰ Practically and politically, there were a number of regionally shared services and resources, such as the Metropolitan Sewerage District, the Metropolitan Water District, the Metropolitan Parks District, and the Metropolitan Postal District. The membership and scope of each was not necessarily identical and their organization was at various levels from the local municipalities, the state, and the federal governments. As Sylvester Baxter noted at the end of the century, these entities represented "a general and very extensive unification of utilities that is telling immensely in economizing the working capacity for collective and individual activities, as well as in accelerating the metropolitan growth of the community."⁶¹ In other words, the creation and unification of public and quasi-public utilities had been beneficial to efficiency, and therefore the growth of a unified metropolitan city.

As noted in Chapter One, Shaun O'Connell's distanced view of the city on his daily commute unifies the greater city for him: "Though I know it is a 'city of neighbourhoods,' a community long sensitive to territorial distinctions, my Boston is one place: its boundaries blur into unity, its many stories weave into one narrative."⁶² Some nineteenth-century commentators felt the difference was less congenial than a "city of neighbourhoods"; to them the differences were not

⁶⁰ For example, *Illustrated Boston: The Metropolis of New England* (New York: American Publishing and Engraving Co., 1889).

⁶¹ Sylvester Baxter, "Boston at the Century's End," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 99, no. 594 (1899), 826.

⁶² Shaun O'Connell, *Imagining Boston: A Literary Landscape* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), xi.

necessarily defined by geography but moreover by financial ability and franchise. In the early nineteenth century, William Channing, a Unitarian minister from Boston, was concerned with the "moral significance" of the growth of American metropolises, and wrote that "in most large cities, there may be said to be two nations, understanding little of one another, having as little intercourse as in different lands."⁶³ Reformist journalist B. O. O'Flower confirmed Channing's fears with a "pilgrimage" through peninsular Boston starting from the Boston Public Library at Copley Square, passing by "the palaces of Beacon Hill," and finally concluding his trek in the North End, where he encountered "poverty so terrible."⁶⁴ His walk around the city took him through "two commonwealths within the borders of Boston."⁶⁵

In addition to zones of economic disparity within the city, immigrants and their American-born children made up an ever increasing proportion of the population, and by 1910 they accounted for more than seventy percent of the residents of Boston.⁶⁶ Starting in the 1840s and 1850s, the North End became home to many immigrants, mostly Irish, and the elite of the city began to move to other, often newer, neighbourhoods in response to what they perceived as the

⁶³ Quoted in Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 62.

⁶⁴ B. O. O'Flower, *Civilization's Inferno; or, Studies in the Social Cellar* (Boston: Arena Publishing Co., 1893), 209.

⁶⁵ O'Flower, *Civilization's Inferno*, 193.

⁶⁶ Raymond A. Mohl, *The New City: Urban America in the Industrial Age, 1860-1920* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1985), 20.

immigrant threat.⁶⁷ The streets and back lanes of the North End were home for many of the immigrants that came to Boston, and as T. Russell Sullivan notes in his "diorama" of Boston, "One searches vainly, at first, for any trace of colonial settlement in its Babel of nationalities. Foreign shops and signs make all lines unfamiliar, and the chatter of strange dialects is heard everywhere."⁶⁸ However, Channing's "nations," O'Flower's "commonwealths," and Sullivan's "Babel" are not reflected in synoptic views of Boston. The lack of representation of poverty and ethnic diversity in lithography bird's-eye views, in particular, was a function of distance. Through the emphasis on the entire city, the darker side of modern urbanism remained unrepresented. The scale of detail that resulted from such a distanced vantage point reduced the markers of poverty to the realm of the unseen. The difference between a multi-unit brick residence in Back Bay and a tenement slum in the North End becomes more and more difficult to discern the greater the distance between viewer and structure. The heterogeneity and diversity of various neighbourhoods and districts is subsumed by the single meta-narrative "the city," and specifically, the modern capitalist city with its large institutional buildings, tall smokestacks, open waterways, pervasive railroads, all variety of communication and transportation, and the more or less interchangeable houses of labour and consumers.

⁶⁷ Domosh, *Invented Cities*, 33.

⁶⁸ T. Russell Sullivan, *Boston, New and Old* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1912), 36. Sullivan used the nineteenth-century mass entertainment the diorama, or more accurately, the moving panorama, as a framing device for his collection of observations about Boston.

French theorist Henri Lefebvre's writings on cities acknowledge the diversity observed in O'Flower's and Sullivan's texts. The city, according to Lefebvre, is a nexus of a variety of narratives, a gathering of different objects, people, and morphologies, all resulting in unstable and ever changing spaces.⁶⁹ The pretension to legibility and fixed meaning of urban space is always overcome by the morphological and sociological complexities of the city. However, despite its commanding vantage point, complexity is not revealed but rather "consolidated" by the synoptic view. Reiterating Mayhew's "black spot" in more theoretical language, Lefebvre states:

If the city is always a spectacle for itself, viewed from high on a terrace, a tower, a hilltop, a vantage point (a high point that is the elsewhere where the urban reveals itself), it is not because the spectator perceives a picture that is outside reality, but because her glance is consolidating. It is the very form of the urban, revealed. Everything that occurs within the urban reality does so as if everything that constituted that reality could be compared, and always increasingly so. In this way – in confusion – the urban is conceived, perceived, and revealed.⁷⁰

Lefebvre's three moments of the urban—conception, perception, and revelation—correspond to our mental, physical, and social urban practices, each of which contributes to the creation and re-creation of urban space. The view from above, however, abstracts and aestheticizes the streets of the city replacing Lefebvre's

⁶⁹ Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 115-34.

⁷⁰ Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, 116-17.

socially constructed spaces with a single meta-narrative for the city, in this case, the narrative of Boston as a modern metropolis.

Standing on the one hundred and tenth floor of one of the towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, French theorist Michel de Certeau made what is perhaps the most famous statement in cultural theory of the urban view from above:

His [the viewer's] elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god.⁷¹

The social space of the city becomes an "immense texturology," "an optical artifact," and, most profoundly, "a 'theoretical' (that is, visual) simulacrum."⁷² As an optical artefact, the image of the city ceases to be a collection of discrete parts and becomes a collection of regular and irregular visual textures, which can be reproduced without reference to the city itself. For example, nineteenth-century American poet Walt Whitman observed that to reproduce the appearance of the "zigzag streets and multitudinous angles" of "the New England metropolis," simply "crush up a sheet of letter-paper in your hand, throw it down, stamp it flat,

⁷¹ Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 92.

⁷² De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 92-93.

and that is a map of old Boston."⁷³ Such a map, suggestive but not representative of the city's streets, would be of little use to navigate from one point to another, as were most bird's-eye views and photographic panoramas. However, like de Certeau's description of the view from above, Whitman's map is an urban text that promises legibility. In her study of views of modernity in nineteenth-century London, Lynda Nead notes that de Certeau's description of the aerial view "turns the heterogeneous world of the city into a text; it renders complexity legible and comprehensible."⁷⁴ In contrast, "the everyday spaces of the streets resist the rational, geometric organisation of the aerial, planner's viewpoint. At street level, space is disorganised and improvised."⁷⁵ Modern urban vantage points such as the World Trade Centre towers, the Eiffel Tower, and even the relatively unknown Ames Building in Boston address the desire for legibility and control, but never quite deliver it.

This spectatorial relationship with experiential life creates a false sense of knowledge and legibility. Geographer Denis Cosgrove notes that when we fly

⁷³ Walt Whitman, "A Week's Visit to Boston," in *Complete Poetry and Collected Prose* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1982), 901. The layout of the streets of Boston were notoriously difficult to navigate, especially in a nation where the grid dominated city planning. For example, an article in *Harper's Weekly* quoted an anonymous editor from Chicago, a city laid out in a grid, that "a man who has spent his whole time laboriously in solving Chinese puzzles can, by the time he reaches middle age, be set down in the streets of Boston with a reasonable expectation that he may be able to walk three blocks without growing crazy or dying of despair." "About Boston," 500.

⁷⁴ Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets, and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 75.

⁷⁵ Nead, *Victorian Babylon*, 75.

over a large city, one that has been shaped primarily in the twentieth century by the imperatives of car travel, we often perceive it as legible. "Yet," he continues, "on the ground, such cities are among the least 'legible' places on earth."⁷⁶

Macro-relationships between the different zones of the city and its urban infrastructure are revealed by the synoptic view—Mayhew's "puzzle maps"—which gives the city "an air of knowability to the vast expanse that allows the viewer to feel he or she has grasped it as an organic whole."⁷⁷ The synoptic view imaginatively reconstructs the city into a legible place. This is different from Kevin Lynch's notion of urban cognitive maps—individual "way-finding" mental texts—that help people navigate and understand the city at street level. The view of the metropolis from above conveys little concrete knowledge on how to get from one place to another and, unlike Lynch's mental maps, does not rely on the individual subject for legibility. It is legibility based on the simplification of the city to a picture symbol or icon.

The synoptic view of modernity exemplifies the gap between desire and fulfillment. Photographic panoramas of New York City in the 1850s illustrate the problem of representing the "great" cities of North America from an aerial and elevated vantage point. Peter Bacon Hales observes that Joshua H. Beal's view *Panoramic View of New York in 1856 from the Brooklyn Bridge Tower* (1856)

⁷⁶ Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity: Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 171.

⁷⁷ Alison Byerly, "A Prodigious Map Beneath His Feet': Virtual Travel and The Panoramic Perspective," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 29, no. 2 (2007), 161.

cannot, even at the substantial size of fifteen inches high by seven and a half feet wide, "transform New York into an orderly, intelligible realm" because "the haze of smog that perpetually cloaked New York obscured the details of the city. In addition, even the relatively impressive height of the Brooklyn Bridge tower was insufficient to reveal a street pattern or grid-plan."⁷⁸ In other words, New York was "too urban to be molded by the panorama."⁷⁹ Boston too, by the end of the nineteenth century, was too urban for the all-encompassing aerial view to enclose and bring order to the entire city; however, even if bird's-eye views were generalized pictures, like Whitman's map of crumpled paper, ultimately delivering few useful details, they nevertheless did serve to convert the city from "from an unwieldy reality into a transferable, transportable commodity."⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Peter B. Hales, *Silver Cities: The Photography of American Urbanization, 1839-1915* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 83.

⁷⁹ Hales, *Silver Cities*, 83.

⁸⁰ Hales, *Silver Cities*, 87. The full sentence reads, "They [panoramic photographs] enclosed, ordered, and beautified the city; equally important, they converted it from an unwieldy reality into a transferable, transportable commodity."

Conclusion

Bird's-Eye Views

The popularity of the synoptic urban view in the late nineteenth century is undeniable. John Reps traces a developmental history of American cityscapes from the pastoral views of the early nineteenth century to popular bird's-eye views in post-Civil War United States.¹ Lithographic bird's-eye views may have been the most noticeable product that expressed the interest in the synoptic view in the period—indeed, a whole industry of artists and publishers dedicated to producing the views existed for seventy years from 1850 to 1920—but photographs were also being taken and sold, capitalizing on the increasing number of tall structures in cities. The view from above was not unique to the nineteenth century, and was not a new genre or form of visual art or culture created in reaction to increasing urban modernity, but there was obviously a resonance with the public for the views to have been perpetuated for so long. And, indeed, the synoptic view is even more common now at the beginning of the twenty-first century on the internet, through programs such as Google Earth, and the bird's-eye view, in particular, has undergone its own renaissance on Microsoft's Bing Maps and on the screens of the now ubiquitous global positioning system devices.

¹ John W. Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America: Lithographs of Towns and Cities in the United States and Canada, Notes of the Artists and Publishers, and a Union Catalog of Their Work, 1825-1925* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1984).

The synoptic view's popularity in the late nineteenth century can be explained by a number of factors, many of which have been investigated by Reps in his studies of the popular cityscapes.² They appeared in the historical context of reconstruction and expansion after the Civil War and participated in discourses of civic boosterism. The lithographic views were also part of a middle-class trend to decorate the walls of their homes with large and often colourful prints, contributing to the fortunes of firms such as Currier & Ives in New York City. Photographic views, in general, were also popular among consumers, and participated in the explosion of visual media consumed in the nineteenth century. *Cartes-de-visite*, stereographs, and views were among the most popular of photographs, and synoptic views were often part of a commercial photographer's inventory.

What, then, is important about the lithographic bird's-eye views and synoptic photographic views that I have been describing and analyzing through the last three chapters? The genre—if we can call synoptic urban views a "genre"—had existed in the visual arts for centuries, and continues, in different media, to exist today. A single form, however, may have different meanings within different historical contexts. What is unique about this particular combination of historical context and visual image? What makes the late nineteenth-century synoptic view unique in visual culture? What work did the synoptic view do in the

² In particular, see Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 39-66.

context of the expansion of urban America in the late nineteenth century that it did not do previously?

The first of the three characteristics of the nineteenth-century synoptic view investigated in this dissertation was its ability to display urban modernity in quantity and scale. Lithographic bird's-eye views of Boston captured a mix of the old and the new, highlighting, often indicated in a lighter shade, historically and culturally significant buildings, while including other buildings and structures that contributed to the creation of a modern urban space. In later bird's-eye views from the turn of the century, such as Downs' 1899 *Boston* (fig. 34) and Poole's 1905 *Twentieth-Century Boston* (fig. 19), the visual differentiation between historical and modern, and even the identification of specific landmarks, was omitted; however, in both examples, the attentive viewer is rewarded by almost overwhelming detail. Indeed, the views needed to be somewhat accurate representations of the city, unlike the "maps" in townbooks of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Not only did they need to look like the city, but, as Gerald Danzer notes, they also needed to be "flattering urban portraits" styled to appeal to their subscription base, often the citizens of the depicted town.³

Synoptic photographs were not necessarily "flattering urban portraits." The indexical nature of nineteenth-century photography limited the ability to create

³ Gerald Danzer, "Bird's-Eye Views of Towns and Cities," in *From Sea Charts to Satellite Images: Interpreting North American History through Maps*, ed. David Buisseret (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 144.

such "flattering" views by the selection of the vantage point and by what was visible from that point in space, that is, framing. However, even with the most conservative framing and cropping, the modern city and its markers, good and bad, were usually impossible to avoid because of the indexical qualities of photography. If coal smog, streetcars, and drying laundry existed in front of the camera's lens, then it was recorded on the photographic emulsion. The high vantage point afforded by some buildings in Boston, such as the State House and the early skyscraper, the Ames Building, provided both familiar and novel views of the city below, mimicking to a lesser extent, the ability of lithographic bird's-eye views to be a visual encyclopedia of modernity.

Photographs were more defined and confined by their vantage point than lithographic bird's-eye views, but the vantage point from which either type was portrayed is a significant characteristic of the view. The vantage point of lithographic bird's-eye views is closely connected to the sights of modernity—what is seen from an imagined point in space high above the city—whereas the vantage point of synoptic photography involved consideration of both the sights seen and the site from which they are seen. The construction of new buildings and new types of structures had implications on the photographic views that were available. Viewing the area between the State House and the Ames Building in downtown Boston from one or the other building is more than a difference of sights (figs. 28 and 39). As Brunelleschi's demonstration of linear perspective

implied, viewing required an embodied and privileged vantage point. In photographs, more so than in bird's-eye view lithographs, the vicarious embodiment of a modern site, or vantage point, is one more discourse in the overdetermination of the image.

In combination with the elevated vantage point, the characteristic of the synoptic view that differentiates it from other views is the distance between the implied viewer and the viewed object. There are other views within the genre of landscape art that also engage with their object from a great distance—here I am thinking, in particular, of coastal and landfall views—but without the elevated vantage point, they do not give the viewer the same wide *and* deep survey of the land. In the nineteenth century, the city was a place of both intimate and distanced views, and often there was a conflation of the two. We see this in nineteenth-century texts, such as Poe's "The Man of the Crowd," in which his protagonist, despite being jostled by the crowd, is alone. Simmel sees the residents of metropolitan Berlin withdrawing from the city while being very much in the middle of it. Their blasé and distanced attitude results from the overstimulation of life in the city. And, perhaps most profoundly, the nineteenth century saw the rise of institutions and professions that, as John Tagg argues, sought to exercise their power and discipline over the individual by "representing its incursions into an objectified space and populace as disinterested, technical

and benign."⁴ Power in an urban setting, then, was often exercised not only at a distance, but through distance, on individuals. I make no claim in this dissertation for the disciplinary power of the synoptic view; however, it is not hard to conceive how such an argument could be developed with the vantage points I have discussed along the lines of Foucault's panopticon, in particular when that point is the site of some institutional power, such as the State House. My interests have been more ontological and epistemological. I have chosen to emphasize the vicarious and inclusionary experience of an embodied vantage point, which propels viewers to gaze upon the city from the top of smokestacks, from the dome of the State House, and hovering at great heights over Boston Harbor.

Uneven Modernity

What happens if the implied embodied viewer of the late nineteenth-century synoptic view were not on the twenty-fourth floor of the Custom House Tower or in imaginary flight so far above the metropolis that individual streets and houses were hard to discern? What happens when the synoptic view is used to represent smaller urban centres? Are the observations and arguments I made in the previous chapters still valid?

The nineteenth-century process of modernization affected most of Europe and North America similarly, but within the "macro-rhythm" of capitalism there

⁴ John Tagg, "The Discontinuous City: Picturing and the Discursive Field," in *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations*, ed. Norman Bryson et al. (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 88.

were local differences and, as geographer Edward Soja reminds us, "modernization is, like all social processes, unevenly developed across time and space."⁵ Yet, larger cities, like Boston and New York, and smaller towns, like Saint John and Moncton, New Brunswick, were similarly pictured in bird's-eye views. New York had over one million inhabitants by 1880, and Boston, a smaller metropolitan centre, had a population of just over three hundred thousand. In comparison, Saint John, then the fourth largest city in Canada, had just over forty one thousand people, and Moncton's population was just over five thousand.⁶ In fact, in 1881, the entire population of the province of New Brunswick was less than that of the area of metropolitan Boston. (And, to stress the exceptional position of New York in nineteenth-century North America, the combined population of the three Maritime Provinces *and* Boston was only slightly more than the population of New York City.)⁷ The small cities of Maritime Canada were

⁵ Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 27.

⁶ *Census of Canada. 1880-81*, vol. 1. (Ottawa: Department of Agriculture, Government of Canada, 1881), Table VI.

⁷ According to the 1880 United States Census, the population of Boston was 362,839, and New York City was 1,206,299. The 1881 Canadian Census lists the following populations for the Maritime Provinces: New Brunswick 321,233; Nova Scotia 440,572; and Prince Edward Island 108,891. The combined population for the Maritime Provinces plus Boston was 1,236,535. K. G. Basavarajappa, and Bali Ram, "Section A: Population and Migration," in *Historical Statistics of Canada*, ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, 1983), Series A2-14; Campbell Gibson, "Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790 to 1990," Population Division Working Paper No. 27, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027.html> (accessed 27 April, 2006), Table 11.

very different "modern" cities than the large metropolitan centres found in the northeastern United States.

It may seem unreasonable to compare cities that were so divergent in size, but there were a number of commercial, cultural, and social connections between the Maritime Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) and New England, due to a traffic in goods, people, and, presumably, ideas. Both areas along the eastern shore of North America share a common history through the eighteenth century and remained connected in the nineteenth.⁸ As Betsy Beatty notes of the long standing connections between the regions, "Cross-border travel, trade, and migration between the regions predated European settlement and continued despite wars, embargoes, and political efforts to reorient economic activity to within national boundaries."⁹ The strongest of those connections was the subsequent emigration of Maritimers to New

⁸ New England was colonized by the British in the seventeenth century and the Maritime provinces were ceded to the British by the original French colonizers through the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The most important historical event that connected the regions occurred after the American Revolution, when shiploads of Loyalists made their way from the United States to the east coast of Canada, settling in Nova Scotia and the soon to be established colony of New Brunswick. After an initial period of revolutionary fervour, cultural, commercial, and personal connections were strongly re-established between New England and the Maritimes. New Brunswick was a creation of Loyalist immigration. It was originally part of Nova Scotia but the Loyalists who settled in the region north of the Bay of Fundy petitioned the Crown for the creation of a separate colony. New Brunswick was created as a political entity in 1784. In the late eighteenth century, ninety per cent of the colony's European population were newly arrived Loyalists from the United States. See W. S. MacNutt, *The Atlantic Provinces: The Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965).

⁹ Betsy Beattie, "The 'Boston States': Region, Gender, and Maritime Out-Migration, 1870-1930," in *New England and the Maritime Provinces: Connections and Comparisons*, ed. Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 253.

England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in search of work and a better life. Boston, and its immediately surrounding communities, received the largest number of Maritime immigrants in the United States, contributing to the perception in the Maritimes that New England was "the Boston States."¹⁰

Of all the urban centres in the Maritimes, the history of exchange between Saint John, New Brunswick, and Boston is one of the longest and most substantial. The extent of commercial and cultural exchange is hinted at in the traffic of lithographic views between Boston and the Maritime city.¹¹ In 1835, Pendleton's Lithography of Boston engraved Saint John artist Mary G. Hall's *The City of St. John—New Brunswick*, a distant pastoral view of the city that was part of her subscription series, "Views of British America." Thomas Moore, an employee of Pendleton's, purchased the firm in 1836 and, two years later, issued the topical print *View of the Great Conflagration* (1838), recording the fire January 14, 1837, that destroyed a large portion of Saint John's commercial

¹⁰ Beattie, "The 'Boston States'," 253-54. In 1880, Massachusetts had 44,926 Maritime born residents, more than twice as many as any other state. Five years later, 23,724 residents of Boston claimed to be born in the Maritimes, meaning that Boston had about fifty percent of the Maritime population in the state of Massachusetts.

¹¹ Lithographic views demonstrate the cultural connections between the regions better than commercial photographs, the other concern of this dissertation. Photographers tended to be proprietors and purchased their supplies from a variety of sources. The notable exception were the Notman Studios in Saint John, New Brunswick, and Halifax, Nova Scotia, which were owned by William Notman of Montreal.

district.¹² In 1848, Boston lithographer J. H. Bufford printed George N. Smith's *Saint John, New Brunswick*, another distant pastoral view populated by grazing livestock and staffage, not dissimilar to Hall's picture. Boston was not the only east coast American city to supply images of Saint John to itself and abroad. The New York lithographer and photographer Napoleon Sarony and the firm Currier & Ives also printed views of the city.¹³ The only known bird's-eye view of the port city is O. H. Bailey's view from 1882, *The City of St. John. New Brunswick* (fig. 46),¹⁴ yet another Boston connection.

The commercial traffic between the regions was strong. Maritimers operated businesses in New England and vice versa; however, the business of

¹² The full title of the print is, *View of the Great Conflagration that took place on the night of Saturday, the 14th day of January 1837*. The lithograph was engraved by American luminist painter Fitz Hugh Lane after a drawing "by Wm. H. Wentworth from an Original Sketch taken by Thos. H. Wentworth who was a witness of the scene."

¹³ J. W. Hill, *View of Saint John, N. B. 1851*, engraved by Napoleon Sarony, printed by Sarony & Major, New York, published by Francis Smith & Co., New York, 1851; *The Great Fire at St. John, N. B. June 20th 1877*, published by Currier & Ives, New York, 1877.

¹⁴ Reys notes that there are "illegible initials in lower right of principal view." Reys, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 384. However, they appear to be "E. A. E." printed backwards.

lithographic bird's-eye views was largely an American endeavour.¹⁵ For example, in the 1880s, Boston based publisher O. H. Bailey published a number of bird's-eye views of Maritime towns and cities, at least seven views of cities and towns in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Bailey's involvement with Maritime bird's-eye views was multifaceted. In some of the views, such as *View of Chatham, New Brunswick* (1881), O. H. Bailey and Co. was the publisher, and presumably also arranged or performed the printing, though this is uncredited. In other prints, such as *City of Fredericton, N. B.* (1882), Bailey was the printer, but the publisher was Canadian. Of the twelve known bird's-eye views of New Brunswick from the late 1870s and 1880s, five of them credit "O. H. Bailey Co., Boston" in some capacity on the print, and two more probably also involved the firm.

Moncton, New Brunswick. 1881, published by O. H. Bailey, is representative of bird's-eye views of the smaller centres in the Maritimes (fig.

¹⁵ Bird's-eye views appeared in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in 1878, one year before New Brunswick. They were brought to the Maritime Provinces by the publisher J. J. Stone of Madison, Wisconsin, and drawn by the artists Albert Ruger and T. M. Fowler. Their views were published over two years, 1878 and 1879. They published one view of New Brunswick, eight views of Nova Scotia and two views of Prince Edward Island, the only two known views. The Boston bird's-eye view connection comes shortly thereafter to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, O. H. Bailey being credited in some form on most of the bird's-eye views produced in both provinces from 1881 to 1890. Bailey's name does not appear on all of the bird's-eye views of the period, but the names Alexander M. Hubly, D. D. Currie, and W. L. McAnn are all associated with Bailey on at least one bird's-eye view, making it likely that they used Bailey for either drawing on the lithographic stones or printing from the stones, even if Bailey was uncredited. If we assume this, then Bailey contributed to sixteen bird's-eye views in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, while the Wisconsin group created eleven views in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. For a checklist of bird's-eye views of the Maritime Provinces, see Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 383-385, 440-443, 493. Note that Reps lists many views that are not strictly bird's-eye views. In total, Reps reports three hundred seventy-four views by O. H. Bailey. His brother, bird's-eye view artist H. H. Bailey, is credited with seventy-two views. Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 161-65.

47).¹⁶ Similar to the views of Boston, the artist positions the viewer over the waterfront of the city, but unlike contemporary views of the "metropolis of New England," the streets and even minor structures of the city are recorded in identifiable detail. Insets around the edge of the cityscape proper include churches, industry, other sites of commerce, and the houses of prominent people, who, presumably, like the businesses, paid for the honour of inclusion in the insets.¹⁷ The view of Moncton is typical and it is very similar in appearance to the large number of views of small-town Massachusetts published by Bailey.¹⁸

Like similar views of Boston, Bailey's *Moncton* represents its subject as the modern city, even if the inventory of modernity is not as plentiful. Like Boston, gas works, railroad tracks, stations, and yards, factories, mills, shipyards, and even recreation facilities are all present. Transportation is foregrounded by using

¹⁶ Reps does not identify an artist for *Moncton, New Brunswick, 1881*, but there are initials in the lower right of the principal image that appear to be "A. M. H." If this is the case, then the artist is Alexander M. Hubly, who is credited as the agent for the image and who used O. H. Bailey Co. as a printer for his 1882 view of Fredericton. A second bird's-eye view of Moncton from the same vantage point was published in 1888: *Moncton, New Brunswick, 1888*, published by D. D. Currie in 1881. Currie also had professional connections with O. H. Bailey of Boston.

¹⁷ There are at least two versions of this bird's-eye view, both dated 1881. The version at the Boston Public Library shows the city with a number of insets and keyed places in the main picture. A second version, at Library and Archives Canada, includes text in the otherwise almost cloudless sky: "Presented by Moncton Sugar Refining Company." Two of the insets along the top of the frame in both images, which are identical other than the text, are the homes of the brothers who owned the Moncton Sugar Refining Company, John L. Harris and Christopher Harris. As Reps notes in his extensive history of the production and circulation of bird's-eye views, companies often purchased the prints and distributed them to publicize their firm. Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 55.

¹⁸ Bailey was involved in the production of one hundred thirty seven bird's-eye views of communities in Massachusetts. Only one was of the older downtown section of Boston. Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*, 164, 326-29.

a vantage point over the river, a common trope in bird's-eye views of Boston (and in bird's-eye views in general), to showcase wharves and railroad connections. In addition, the artist has placed an inset of the Petitcodiac Bridge in the lower left. The bridge was outside the frame of the principal view, but its inclusion provides a connection to the unseen southern shore of the river. Bridges and roads thus connect Moncton to the outside world in every direction, making Moncton, like Boston, a "hub."¹⁹

Curiously, there appears to be an inverse relationship between the number of items listed in the key of a bird's-eye view and the size of the city. Moncton includes eighty-eight identified points of interest in the legend along the bottom of the print. Almost everything is identified, from railroads, public buildings, banks, major industries, and churches, to doctor's and lawyer's offices, photographers, barbers, and even most intriguingly the firm of "T. N. Getchell, Musical Instruments & Sewing Machines." In comparison, H. H. Rowley's view of Boston from a year earlier (fig. 48) has a mere twenty-seven points of interest identified in the print: historic buildings, government buildings, universities and colleges, hospitals, and railroad depots. The bird's-eye view in New Brunswick is a form of business advertising, and in the process, by the inclusion of such a

¹⁹ The origin of the term "hub" as a nickname for Boston has nothing to do with its railroad connections, see p. 93 n. 58. It has, however, been appropriated to describe that function. Sam Bass Warner, Jr., "Today's Boston: A History," *Massachusetts Historical Review* 1 (1999), <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/mhr/1/warner.html> (accessed Nov. 11, 2008). In fact, Moncton is known as the "Hub City." Its location just north of the Chignecto Isthmus made it a geographically natural point for the convergence of ground transportation, especially railroads, from Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

range and quantity of businesses, the city was being represented as a modern, thriving, capitalist urban area. Bird's-eye views of Boston, on the other hand, could not fulfil the function of local advertiser given the size of the city.²⁰

Guidebooks and other, smaller scale views, were much better at performing this function, especially for local businesses.

While the same forms that were used to represent the larger urban areas in the United States were also used for the smaller centres on the east coast of Canada—as well as hundreds of other small communities throughout the United States and Canada—the results were quite different. A real or imaginary aerial view of Boston, Philadelphia, or New York City, is less informative on a street-by-street level than the same type of image of Moncton. The bird's-eye view of a metropolis works more like an icon of the city, a standard and easily recognizable image that is understood more as a portrait of the city—an *imago urbis*, an idealized view, much like the Jacopo de' Barbari's sixteenth-century view of Venice—in which particulars are often sacrificed to create a better sense of the whole.²¹ A view of Moncton, on the other hand, is like a maquette of the city in two dimensions, a view that gives us a general impression of the morphology of the city, like a view of the larger American cities, but, because of the minute level

²⁰ The population of Boston has been noted on Rowley's print: "Population within a circle of Six Miles from City Hall 570,000."

²¹ Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 50-57.

of legible detail, the view also promises specific and predictive knowledge, like a map.

What does this mean with respect to the synoptic view and modernity? Throughout this dissertation I have been arguing that the synoptic view is, in the late nineteenth century, a distinct visual regime of modernity that has necessary characteristics that I have pursued through the sight, site, and distance effects. Sight and site are still relevant in the Moncton example above. The bird's-eye view reveals the markers of modernity in the small city, and the vantage point over the Petitcodiac River foregrounds industry and transportation. The distance, however, between the viewer and the city, is much shorter than comparable views of Boston. The "distance effects" are different for different size cities; the larger the city, the greater distance. Adopting a greater distance for viewing Moncton, that is, mimicking the metropolitan's view distance (and distance effects) for a smaller city would not make it appear to be a metropolis. The distance effects of the synoptic view are, then, variable. We can see, therefore, that this form of urban representation must be more than a reflection for some specific urban condition, because Boston and Moncton shared little in their manifestations of modernity beyond their capitalist base. It is my argument that bird's-eye views and synoptic photographs were markers and makers of modernity—or, perhaps more modestly, signals of the participation in modernity—

but did not mark some specific material condition. They re-iterate modernity, regardless of how large or small the formation.

Synoptic View of Modernity

Some of the most profound work done by the synoptic view in the late nineteenth century was its quieting of the streets of the city. The aerial view aestheticizes the city, offering to viewers a picture formed by mostly illegible details removed from the social reality of quotidian life in the streets. The overview emphasizes surface and scope at the expense of depth; it emphasizes the appearance of the city while minimizing the uniqueness of experience at street level. What is hidden by the synoptic view is made evident in B. O. O'Flower's *Civilization's Inferno* (1893),²² a view of Boston's underworld, which invites a consideration of the city using a depth model. The subtitle, *Studies in the Social Cellar*, emphasizes that poverty is for the most part unseen, out of sight in the "cellar" of the city. From the high vantage point of bird's-eye views and photographic panoramas from tall buildings and monuments, the contents of the cellar are doubly obscured. In the chapter, "The Democracy of Darkness," O'Flower takes his readers "below the social cellar, where uninvited poverty

²² B. O. O'Flower, *Civilization's Inferno; or, Studies in the Social Cellar* (Boston: Arena Publishing Co., 1893). O'Flower's text is not sociological or prescriptive, but rather an affective "series of informal essays on life in the social cellar, written to arrest the attention and, if possible, to turn the mind of the reader to the many noble and exhaustive works dealing with social problems which have appeared in recent years" (4). O'Flower founded the *American Spectator* in 1886 and then reincorporated it as *Arena* in 1889. Under O'Flower's editorship, *Arena* pursued a progressivist agenda of social reform.

holds a sway, [to] a darker zone: a subterranean, ray-less vault—the commonwealth of the double night. In the upper stratum we find gloom; here perpetual darkness.²³ Depth may be the primary trope with which O'Flower discusses poverty, but, as he reveals during a tour of one of the poorer neighbourhoods on the peninsula, poverty was also hidden at street level:

The worst features of the North End slums are unsuspected by our people who have not passed up the scores of alley-ways, through the narrow corridors, or down through the cellar-like passages which line the streets, into the courtyards of the democracy of night. Those who have thus penetrated into the real heart of the slums are appalled. Frequently the buildings are brick, facing the street; but passing through the alley-way we find great, dilapidated wooden houses in the rear, which swarm with human beings. If the passers-by could see what the brick walls which front Hanover and other streets of the North End hide from view, I believe a sense of self-respect, if no higher motive, would be voiced in an agitation so determined as to lead to radical changes.²⁴

Lithographic bird's-eye views, such as Downs' 1899 *Boston* (fig. 34), do not illuminate the living conditions in the North End, which O'Flower describes in such detail. The panoramic photograph from the top of the Lincoln Wharf power station (fig. 20) does, however, allude to social conditions in the North End by capturing the hundreds of clotheslines on top of and between buildings in the district. But again, distance removes the viewer from more specific knowledge. Drying laundry on clotheslines appears as irregularly shaped light tones against the dark and light geometry of the built city.

²³ O'Flower, *Civilization's Inferno*, 99-100.

²⁴ O'Flower, *Civilization's Inferno*, 209-10.

The view from above strengthens our sense that Boston is a modern metropolis. The city is cropped by the frame of the image or disappears in the urban haze. It is more or less uniform, especially in the bird's-eye views where the great height from which the artist imagines his view flattens buildings and reduces distracting details. It is this reduction of detail that is the compromise for legibility, and there are moral consequences to this representational condensation. The homogeneity of the synoptic view excludes the diversity of the city. Modern metropolises were comprised of immigrants representing diverse ethnicities. Urban modernity, however, embraced geographic segregation and specialization while at the same time represented space as uniform and transparent.²⁵ Different ethnic groups or classes were often in their own "unequal" spaces and deviation from the norms embraced by the city's leaders were more easily tolerated if they were segregated or hidden from the majority.²⁶

The synoptic view was not unique to nineteenth-century American cities. As we have seen, it had a long history before the rise of lithographic bird's-eye views of cities and towns in post-Civil War United States. The view, in the form of drawn, printed, and painted bird's-eye views, was part landscape and part map.

²⁵ For more on this idea, see Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991). French philosopher Henri Lefebvre argues that space is not simply a "passive locus of social relations." It is active in the production of knowledge and action (11). Therefore, "(Social) space is a (social) product" (26), and as such, the history of the production of space is inscribed in space. The product (present space) and production (past social processes) are inseparable aspects of the space (37).

²⁶ Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity: Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 25.

The characteristics of the synoptic view that I have outlined here (the viewed object, the vantage point, and the viewing distance) were present in synoptic views from the Renaissance onward, but they did different work in the nineteenth century. Architectural historian Renzo Dubbini argues, "from the mid-nineteenth century on, only a plurality of fragmented views could satisfactorily describe the urban scene... What was lacking was unifying viewpoints from which to grasp the distinctive character of the urban area as a whole."²⁷ Echoing the observations of Henry Mayhew's observation of London from a balloon as "one immense black spot,"²⁸ Dubbini notes that the view from the air or from the top of the tallest building or hill was necessary to overcome the representational fragmentation and chaos of life on the street: "The city, viewed from ground level, where its functions and forces are concentrated, is a city of fractured, autonomous, and localized views."²⁹ The nineteenth century was, as Karl Marx famously said and Marshall Berman used for the title of his book, a time when "all that is solid melts into air." Berman notes that in response to the fracturing and fissuring, "the ruling classes of the reactionary 1850s tell the world that all is solid again; but it is not

²⁷ Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*, 186.

²⁸ Henry Mayhew, and John Binny, *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life* (London: Griffin, Bohn and Co., 1862), 9.

²⁹ Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*, 189.

clear if even they themselves believe it."³⁰ Berman also provides us with a description of modernity that speaks more directly to landscape:

If we move forward a hundred years or so [after Rousseau] and try to identify the distinctive rhythms and timbres of nineteenth-century modernity, the first thing we will notice is the highly developed, differentiated and dynamic new landscape in which modern experience takes place. This is a landscape of steam engines, automatic factories, railroads, vast new industrial zones; of teeming cities that have grown overnight, often with dreadful human consequences; of daily newspapers, telegraphs, telephones and other mass media, communicating on an ever wider scale . . . of an ever expanding world market embracing all, capable of the most spectacular growth, capable of appalling waste and devastation, capable of everything except solidity and stability.³¹

The aerial vantage point in the nineteenth century provided the assurance that all was solid and stable, restoring a wholeness to society, which nineteenth-century social theorists, such as Ferdinand Tönnies and Emile Durkheim, thought was lost in the contemporary world.³²

³⁰ Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin, 1988), 19.

³¹ Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air*, 18-19.

³² Tönnies believed that modernity was based on changes in social organization, moving from community (*Gemeinschaft*; customary and traditional relations, and common ownership) to society (*Gesellschaft*; status, legal contract, and private property). Durkheim saw the shift in terms of a change from organic (common beliefs) to mechanical solidarity in society (legal rules and a division of labour).

Appendices

Appendix One

List of Works Consulted

Lithographs and Engravings

- Anonymous. *Boston and Environs*. Chromolithograph published by Geo. H. Walker & Co., Boston, 1905.
- — —. *Boston After the Great Fire*. Published in *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 833 (Dec. 14 1872): 986-89.
- — —. *Bird's-Eye View of Boston and its Environs*. Engraving published in "About Boston," *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 808 (June 22, 1872): 497, 500-503.
- — —. *Birds-eye view of Boston and vicinity, showing the outlying towns and villages and railroad communications*. Engraving published in *Harper's Weekly* 15, no. 758 (July 8, 1871): 638.
- Bachmann, John. *Boston, Bird's-eye View from the North*. Chromolithograph published by L. Prang & Co., Boston, 1877.
- — —. *Bird's-Eye View of Boston*. Chromolithograph published by John Bachmann, New York, 1850.
- Bailey, O. H. [Oakley Hoopes]. *Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, Ward 23, City of Boston*. Lithograph published by O.H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1891.
- — —. *Hyde Park, Massachusetts*. Lithograph published by O.H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1890.
- — —. *The City of Boston*. Lithograph published by O.H. Bailey and J.C. Hazen, Boston, 1879.
- — —. *View of East Boston, Mass.*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1879.

- Bailey, O. H. [Oakley Hoopes] and J. C. [James Compton] Hazen. *View of East Cambridge, Mass.* Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & J.C. Hazen, Boston, 1879.
- Bartlett, W. H. [William Henry]. *Boston and Bunker Hill (from East End)*. Engraving published in N. P. Willis and W. H. Bartlett, *American Scenery; Or, Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840).
- — —. *Boston from the Dorchester Heights*. Engraving published in N. P. Willis and W. H. Bartlett, *American Scenery; Or, Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840).
- Brotherhead, W. *City of Boston*. Lithograph published by H. J. Tondy & Co. Steam Lith., Philadelphia, 1876.
- Burgis, William. *A South East View of ye Great Town of Boston in New England America*. Engraving published by William Price and Thomas Selby, Boston, 1725.
- Cole, Joseph Foxcroft *South Boston*. Lithograph published by J. F. A. Cole, Boston, 1859.
- Downs, Albert E. *Boston*. Chromolithograph published by A. E. Downs, Boston, 1899.
- — —. *South Boston*. Lithograph published by A. E. Downs & T. M. Fowler, Boston, 1893.
- Favour, [Unknown]. *Boston Highlands, Massachusetts, Wards 19, 20, 21, & 22 of Boston, Massachusetts*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1888.
- Fuchs, F[eodor]. *View of Boston, July 4th, 1870*. Lithograph published by John Weik, Philadelphia, 1871.
- Havell, Robert. *View of the City of Boston, from Dorchester Heights*. Lithograph published by W. A. Coleman, Sing Sing, NY, 1841.
- Le Breton, Louis. *Boston*. Lithograph published by Wild Editeur, Paris, 1850-early 1860s.
- Mallory, Richard P. *Boston from Bunker Hill Monument*. Engraving published in Samuel Gardner Drake, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Boston*

(Boston, 1856). Larger version originally published in James Smillie and R. P. Mallory, *A Panoramic View from Bunker Hill Monument* (Boston: Redding & Co, 1848).

Matter, C. *Bird's-Eye View of Boston*. Chromolithograph published by J. H. Locher, New York; J. U. Locher, St. Gall, Switzerland, after 1850.

Nutting, Benjamin Franklin. *Birds' Eye View of Boston*. Lithograph published by B. B. Russell & Co., Boston, 1868.

Parsons, Charles R. *Bird's-Eye view of Boston, Showing the Burned District*. Published in *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 831 (Nov. 30, 1872): 936.

Parsons, Charles R. and Lyman Wetmore Atwater, *The City of Boston*. Chromolithograph published by Currier & Ives, New York, 1873.

Poole, Albert F. *Twentieth-Century Boston*. Published as "Bird's-Eye View of Twentieth Century Boston," *Boston Globe* (May 19, 1907), 4.

— — —. *Twentieth-Century Boston*. Panogravure published by F. D. Nichols Co., Boston, 1905.

Revere, Paul. *A View of Part of the Town of Boston in New England and British Ships of War Landing Their Troops! 1768*. Hand coloured engraving published by Paul Revere, Boston, 1770.

Richardson, Freeman. *Environs of Boston from Corey's Hill, Brookline, Mass.*. Lithograph published by Freeman Richardson, Boston, 1864.

Rogers, F. Kimball. *Balloon View — Boston Harbor*. Chromolithograph published by John H. Daniels, Boston, 1879.

— — —. *Balloon View — Cape Ann to Boston*. Chromolithograph published by John H. Daniels, Boston, 1879.

Rowley, H. H. *View of Boston, Massachusetts*. Lithograph published by H. H. Rowley & Co., Hartford, Conn, 1880.

Sulman, Thomas. *Bird's-Eye View of Boston, United States*. Engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* 61, no.1733 (Nov. 23, 1872).

Whitefield, Edwin. *A Southeast View of Ye Great Town of Boston in New England in America*. Lithograph copy of William Burgis 1743 engraving. Published by A. Tompkins, Boston, 1848.

Whitefield, Edwin. *View of Boston in 1848 from East Boston*. Lithograph published by Whitefield and Smith, Boston, 1848.

Photographs

All photographs are black and white photographs unless noted otherwise. Some are albumen prints and others are silver gelatin prints from either original negatives or copy negatives.

Anonymous. [*View North from Custom House Tower*]. 1914.

— — —. [*View from Arlington Street Church*]. 1910. Eleven black and white photographs. Published in "Complete Panoramic View of Boston Taken from the Top of Arlington St. Church Spire, 200 Feet Above the Sidewalk," *Boston Daily Globe* (July 3, 1910), 11.

— — —. [*Bird's-eye view of Boston, looking from Scollay Square toward the waterfront*]. 1905. Two black and white photographs.

— — —. [*Boston, Massachusetts. View from Post Office Square*]. 1904. Four black and white photographs.

— — —. [*360-degree panorama from Lincoln Wharf Power Station in 11 sections, Nov. 28, 1900*]. 1900. Eleven black and white photographs.

— — —. [*Views from the State House*]. 1880-88.

— — —. [*Photographic panorama of the waterfront of Boston, from East Boston*], 1877. Five black and white photographs.

— — —. [*View from State House looking South (Back Bay)*]. c. 1869.

— — —. [*Beacon Hill Reservoir*]. c. 1860.

Black, James Wallace and Samuel King. *Bird's-eye view of Boston, Oct. 13, 1860*. 1860.

Detroit Publishing Co. *Back Bay and Charles River, Boston, Mass.* c. 1906. Three black and white photographs.

— — —. *General view looking south, Boston, Mass.* c. 1906. Three black and white photographs.

— — —. *Panorama of Boston, Mass.* c. 1906. Five black and white photographs.

Hawes, Josiah Johnson. [*Panorama of Boston from the State House*]. c. 1858. Ten black and white photographs.

Newcomb & Robinson. *View of Boston Harbor from roof of North East Telegraph & Telephone Co.'s Building.* c. 1912. Panoramic black and white photograph.

Stebbins, Nathaniel L. *Panorama from Ames Building* [views north, east, south and west]. 1894. Four black and white photograph.

— — —. *Boston from the Dome of the State House.* 1898. Four black and white photographs.

Whipple, John Adams. *View from corner Washington & Bromfield Sts. by Whipple.* 1872. Three black and white photographs.

Other Views and Illustrations

Curtis, George. *The Model of the Metropolitan District of Boston – Bird's-Eye View from the East.* Photomechanical transfer published in G. C. Curtis, *A Description of the Topographical Model of Metropolitan Boston* ([Boston]: Board of Paris Exposition Managers of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1900).

Myrick, Frank. *Rooftop View of the Business District, Boston, Mass.* c. 1910. Ink and wash drawing on paper.

Ruger, Albert and Notman Studio. *Halifax, N. S.*, c. 1880. [Albert Ruger, *Panoramic View of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia*, 1879; Notman Studio, *Halifax, N. S.*, c. 1880.] Black and white photographic reproduction of lithographic bird's-eye view and four black and prints pasted on board.

Appendix Two

Bird's-Eye Views of Boston Arranged by Date

Date	Viewed From	Bird's-Eye View
1850	west	John Bachmann, <i>Bird's-Eye View of Boston</i> , 1850. Chromolithograph published by John Bachmann, New York.
1850	west	Matter, <i>Bird's-Eye View of Boston</i> , after 1850. Chromolithograph published by J. H. Locher, New York; J. U. Locher, St. Gall, Switzerland. Matter's bird's-eye view was copied from Bachmann's 1850 view.
1868	west	Benjamin Franklin Nutting, <i>Birds' Eye View of Boston</i> , 1868. Lithograph published by B.B. Russell & Co, Boston.
1870	west	F. Fuchs, <i>View of Boston, July 4th, 1870</i> , 1870. Lithograph published by John Weik, Philadelphia.
1871	east	<p>Anonymous, <i>Birds-eye view of Boston and vicinity, showing the outlying towns and villages and railroad communications</i>, 1871. Engraving published in <i>Harper's Weekly</i> 15, no. 758 (8 July 1871): 638.</p> <p>A cropped version of this view accompanied "About Boston," <i>Harper's Weekly</i> 16, no. 808 (22 June 1872): 497, 500-503.</p>
1872	east	Thomas Sulman, <i>Bird's-Eye View of Boston, United States</i> , engraving published in <i>The Illustrated London News</i> 61, no.1733 (23 Nov. 1872).

Date	Viewed From	Bird's-Eye View
1873	east	<p>Charles Parsons and Lyman Wetmore Atwater, <i>The City of Boston</i>, 1873. Chromolithograph published by Currier & Ives, New York.</p> <p>An earlier cropped version was included with pictorial coverage of the Boston Fire in <i>Harper's Weekly</i> (30 Nov. 1872).</p>
1877	north	John Bachmann, <i>Boston, Bird's-eye View from the North</i> , 1877. Chromolithograph published by L. Prang & Co., Boston.
1877	north	F. Kimball Rogers, <i>Balloon View - Boston Harbor</i> , 1879. Chromolithograph published by John H. Daniels, Boston.
1879	east	O.H. Bailey, <i>The City of Boston</i> , 1879. Lithograph published by O.H. Bailey and J.C. Hazen, Boston.
1880	east	H.H. Rowley, <i>View of Boston, Massachusetts</i> , 1880. Lithograph published by H.H. Rowley & Co., Hartford, Conn.
1889	east	Albert E. Downs, <i>Boston</i> , 1899. Chromolithograph published by A.E. Downs, Boston.
1905	east	Anonymous, <i>Boston and Environs</i> , 1905. Chromolithograph published by Geo. H. Walker & Co., Boston.
1905	east	<p>Albert F. Poole, <i>Twentieth-Century Boston</i>, 1905. Panogravure published by F.D. Nichols Co., Boston.</p> <p>Updated version published in "Bird's-Eye View of Twentieth Century Boston," <i>Boston Globe</i> (19 May 1907), SM4.</p>

Figures

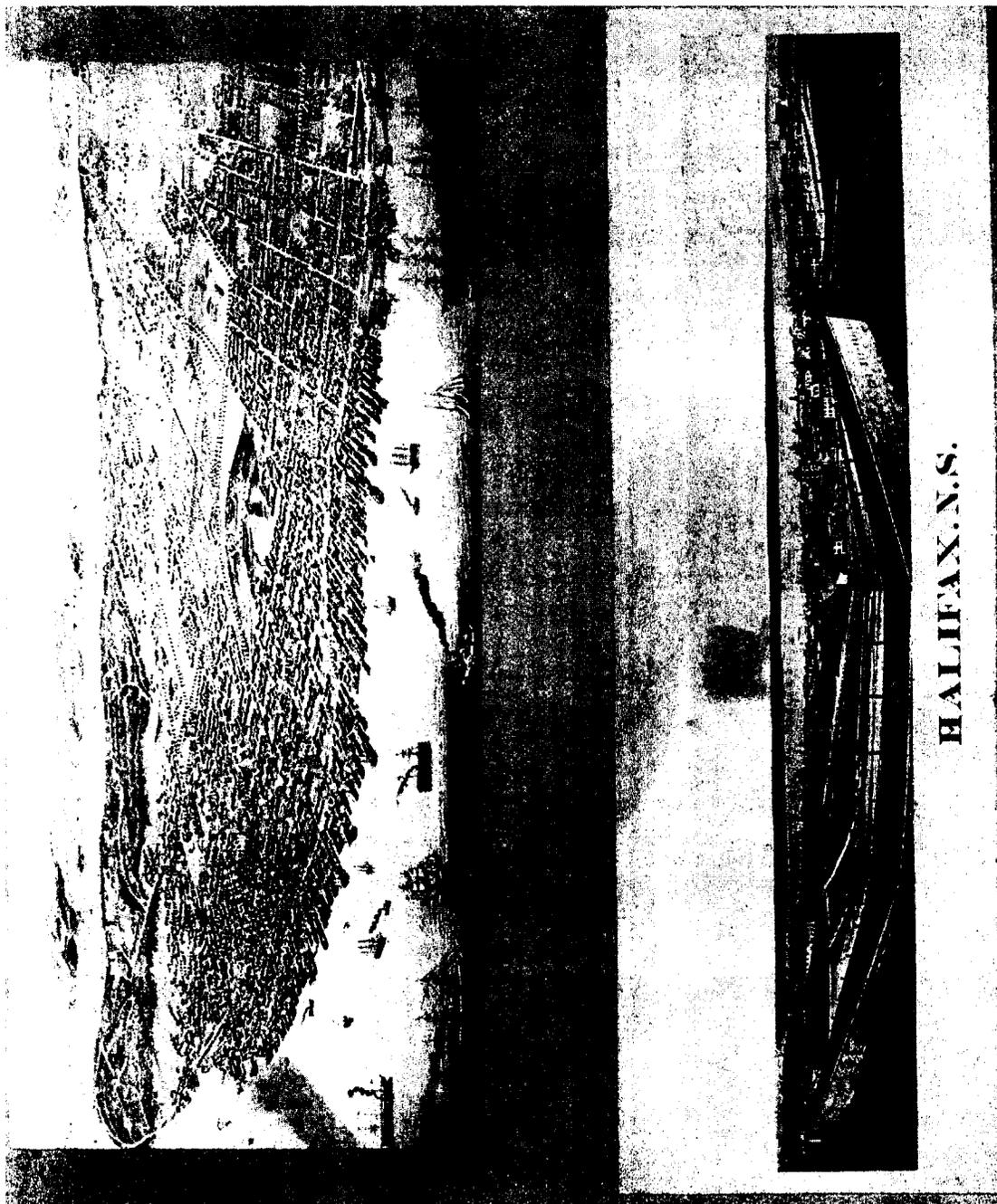
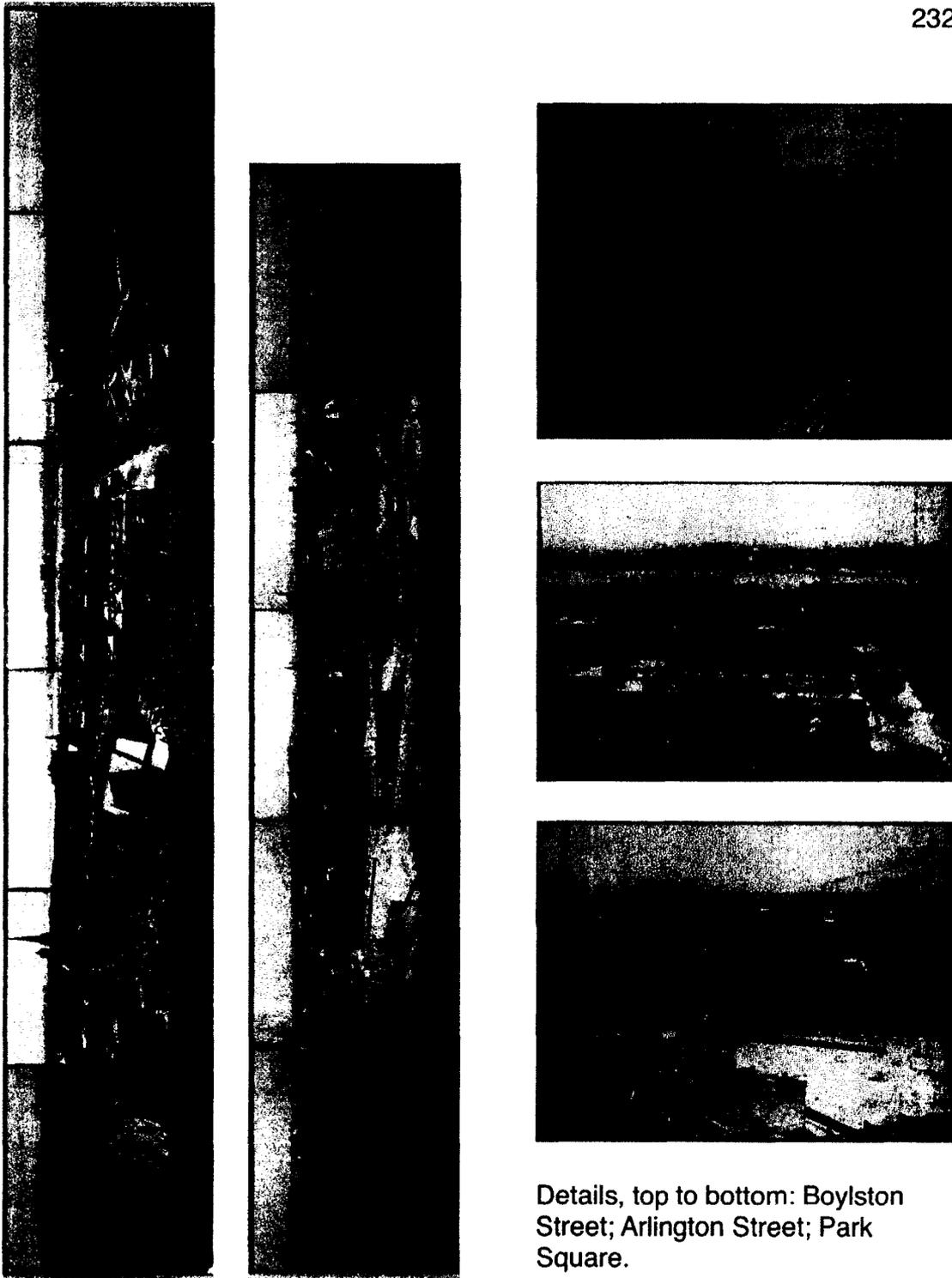


Fig. 1. Albert Ruger and Notman Studio, *Halifax, N. S.*, c. 1880. [Albert Ruger, *Panoramic View of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia*, 1879; Notman Studio, *Halifax, N. S.*, c. 1880.] Black and white photographic reproduction of lithographic bird's-eye view and four black and prints pasted on board. Courtesy of Nova Scotia Records and Archives Management.

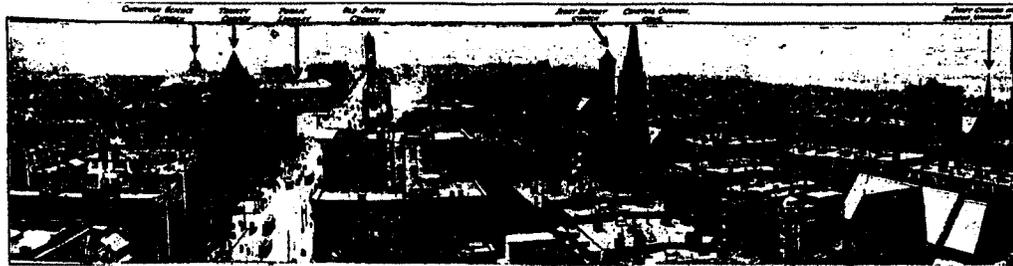


Details, top to bottom: Boylston Street; Arlington Street; Park Square.

Fig. 2. Anonymous, [*View from Arlington Street Church*], 1910. Eleven black and white photographs. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

COMPLETE PANORAMIC VIEW OF BOSTON TAKEN FROM THE TOP OF ARLINGTON ST CHURCH SPIRE, 200 FEET ABOVE THE SIDEWALK

The People Was Being Repaired When a Globe Photographer Climbed the Scaffolding, Planted His Camera Beside the Weather Vane and Took the Pictures—By Cutting the Pictures Out of the Page and Pasting Them Together, the North is the Right of the West, the East to the Right of the North, and the South to the Right of the East. You Can Make A Marvellous Single View of the City Looking Toward Every Point of the Compass.



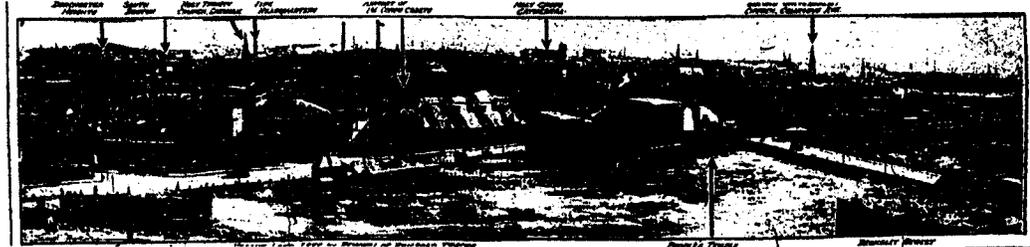
LOOKING WEST



LOOKING NORTH



LOOKING EAST



LOOKING SOUTH

Fig. 3. "Complete Panoramic View of Boston Taken from the Top of Arlington Street Church Spire, 200 Feet Above the Sidewalk," *Boston Globe* (July 3, 1910), 11.



Fig. 4. John Bachmann, *Bird's-Eye View of Boston*. Chromolithograph published by John Bachmann, New York, 1850. Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.



Fig. 5. Louis Bretez, detail of *Paris* (Plan de Turgot), 1739. Commissioned by Michel Etienne Turgot, Prévôt des Marchands of Paris.

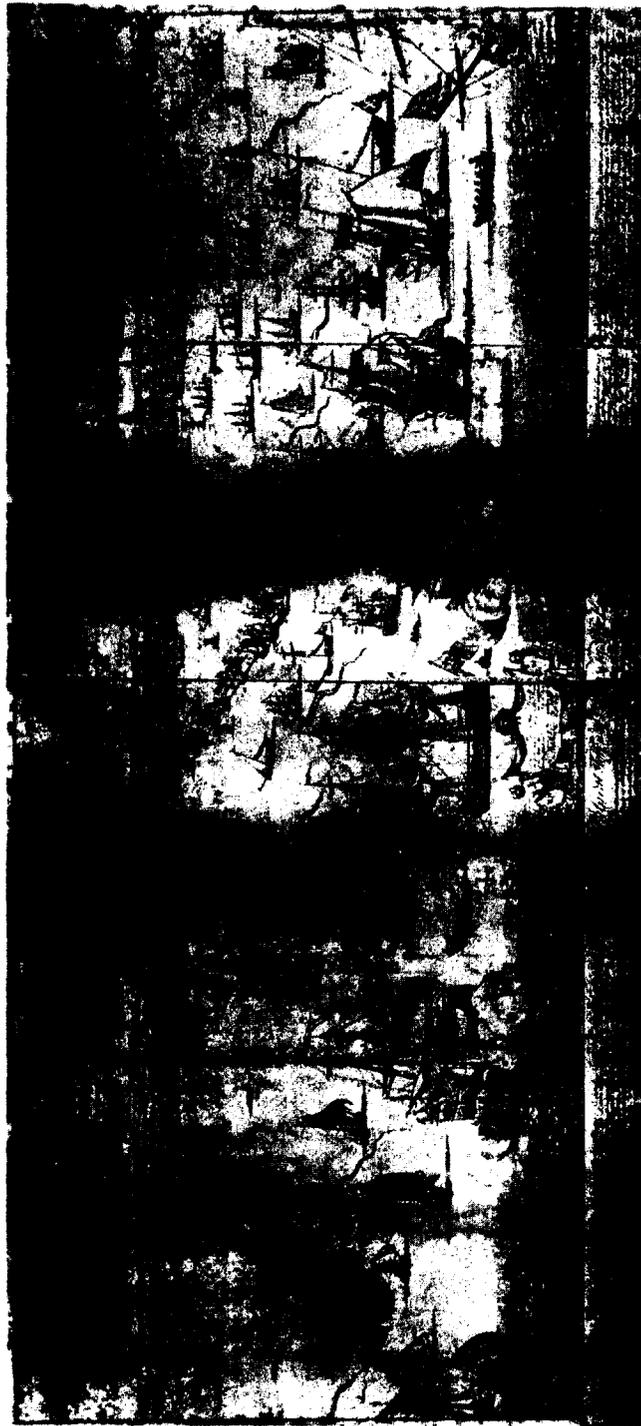


Fig. 6. William Burgis, *A South East View of ye Great Town of Boston in New England America*. Engraving published by William Price and Thomas Selby, Boston, 1725.



Fig. 7. Paul Revere, *A View of Part of the Town of Boston in New England and British Ships of War Landing Their Troops! 1768*. Hand coloured engraving published by Paul Revere, Boston, 1770. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.



Fig. 8. W. H. Bartlett, *Boston and Bunker Hill (from East End)*, engraving published in N. P. Willis and W. H. Bartlett, *American Scenery; Or, Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840). Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

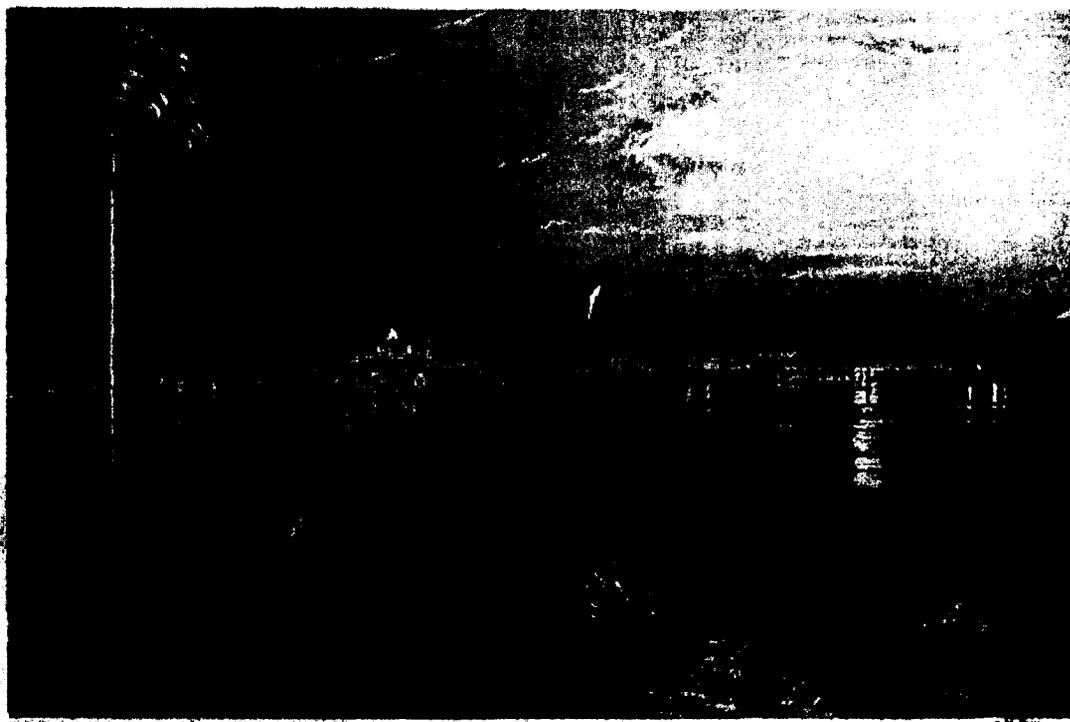


Fig. 9. W. H. Bartlett, *Boston from the Dorchester Heights*, engraving published in N. P. Willis and W. H. Bartlett, *American Scenery; Or, Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840). Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.



Fig. 10. Louis Le Breton, *Boston*. Lithograph published by Wild Editeur, Paris, 1850-early 1860s. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.



Fig. 11. Edwin Whitefield, *View of Boston in 1848 from East Boston*, 1848. Lithograph published by Whitefield and Smith, Boston. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.



Fig. 12. Richard P. Mallory, *Boston from Bunker Hill Monument*, engraving published in Samuel G. Drake, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Boston* (Boston, 1856). Originally published in James Smillie and R. P. Mallory, *A Panoramic View from Bunker Hill Monument* (Boston: Redding & Co, 1848). Courtesy of the Boston Athenaeum.

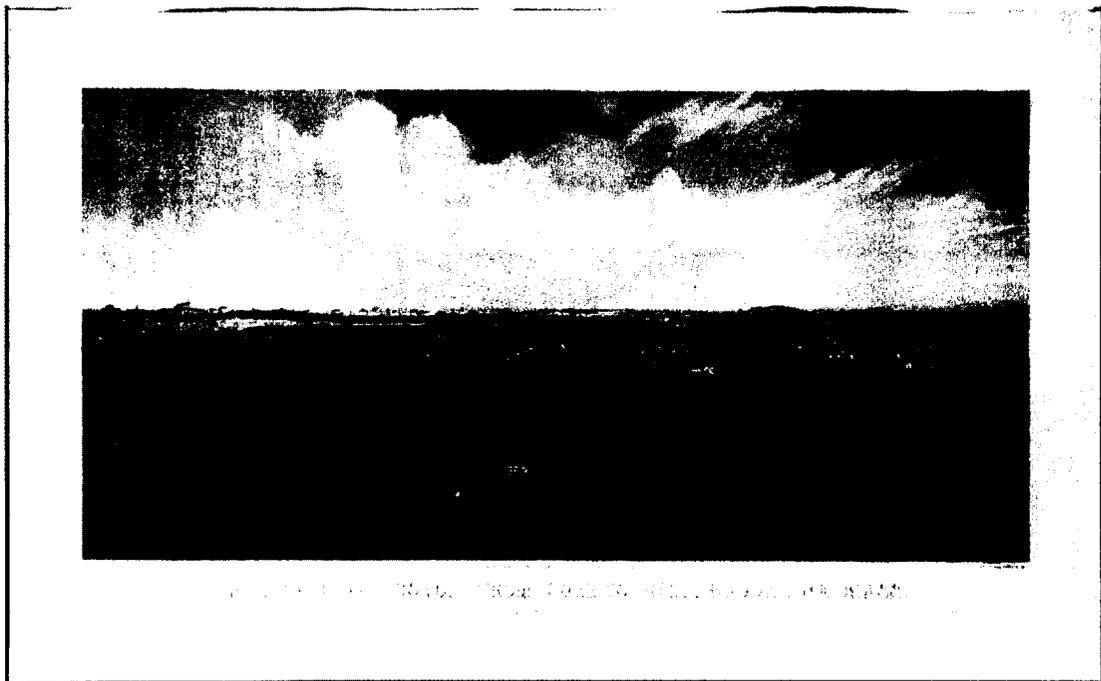


Fig. 13. Freeman Richardson, *Environs of Boston from Corey's Hill, Brookline, Mass.* Lithograph published by Freeman Richardson, Boston, 1864.

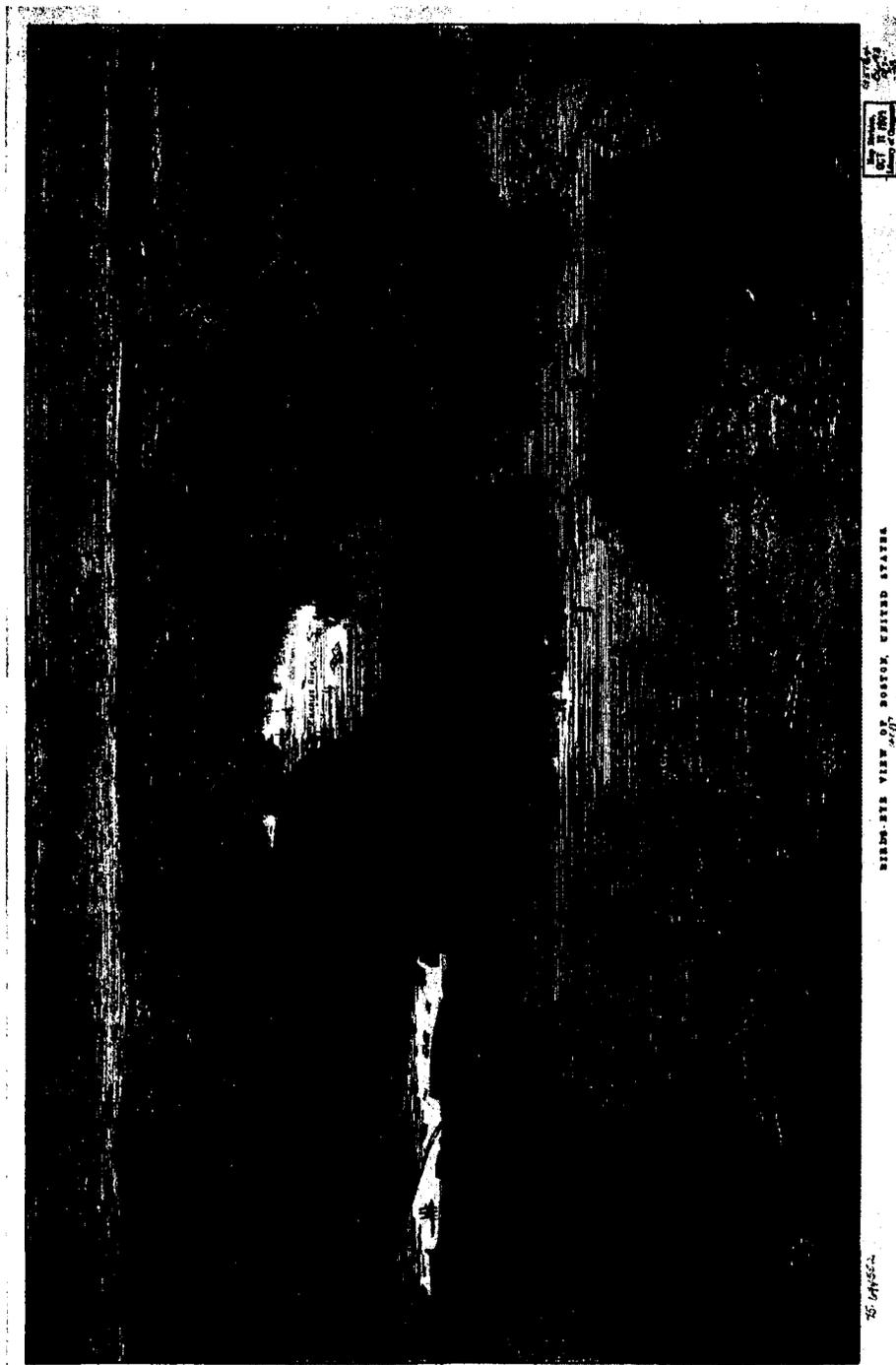


Fig. 14. Thomas Sulman, *Bird's-Eye View of Boston, United States*, engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* 61, no.1733 (Nov. 23,1872). Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library

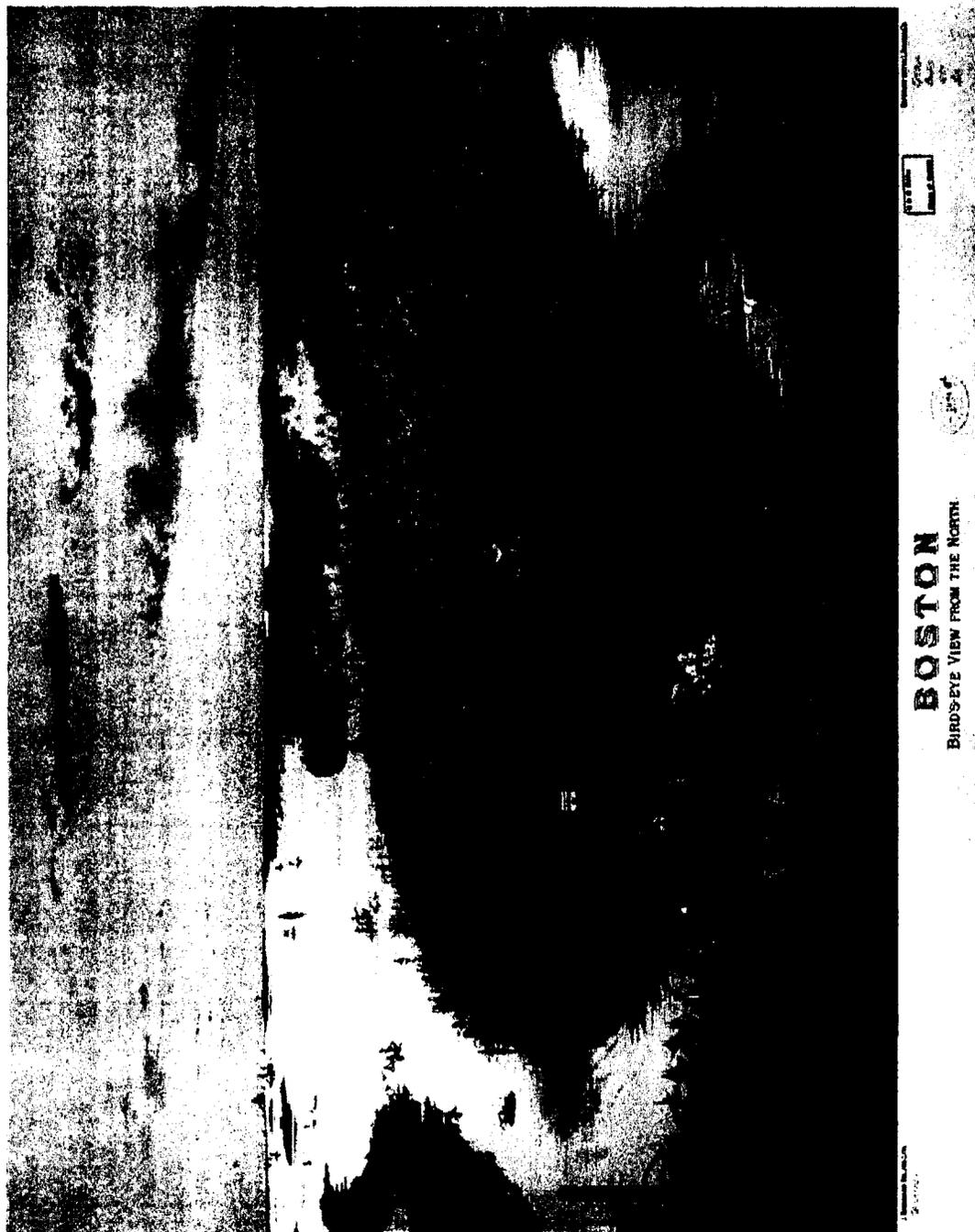
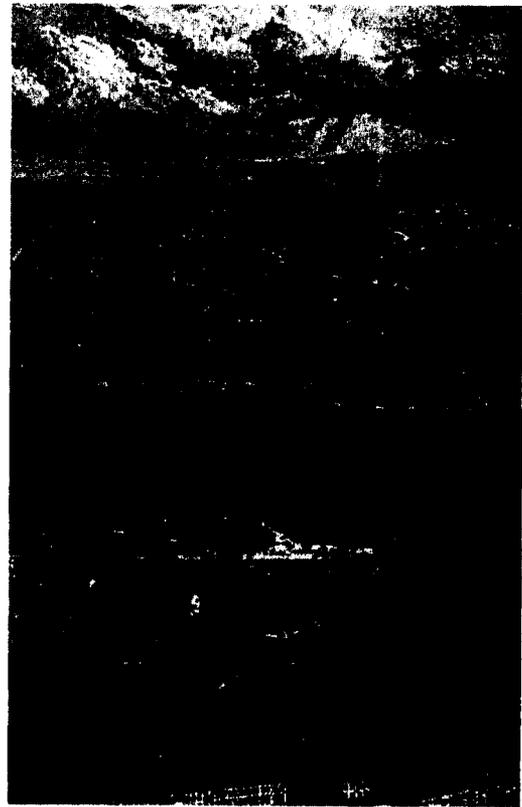


Fig. 15. John Bachmann, *Boston, Bird's-eye View from the North*. Chromolithograph published by L. Prang & Co., Boston, 1877. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.



Detail.

Fig. 16. Thomas Sulman, *London from the south side of the Thames*, engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* (Feb. 9, 1861). Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.



NEW YORK
FROM BERGEN HILL, HOBOKEN.



Detail.

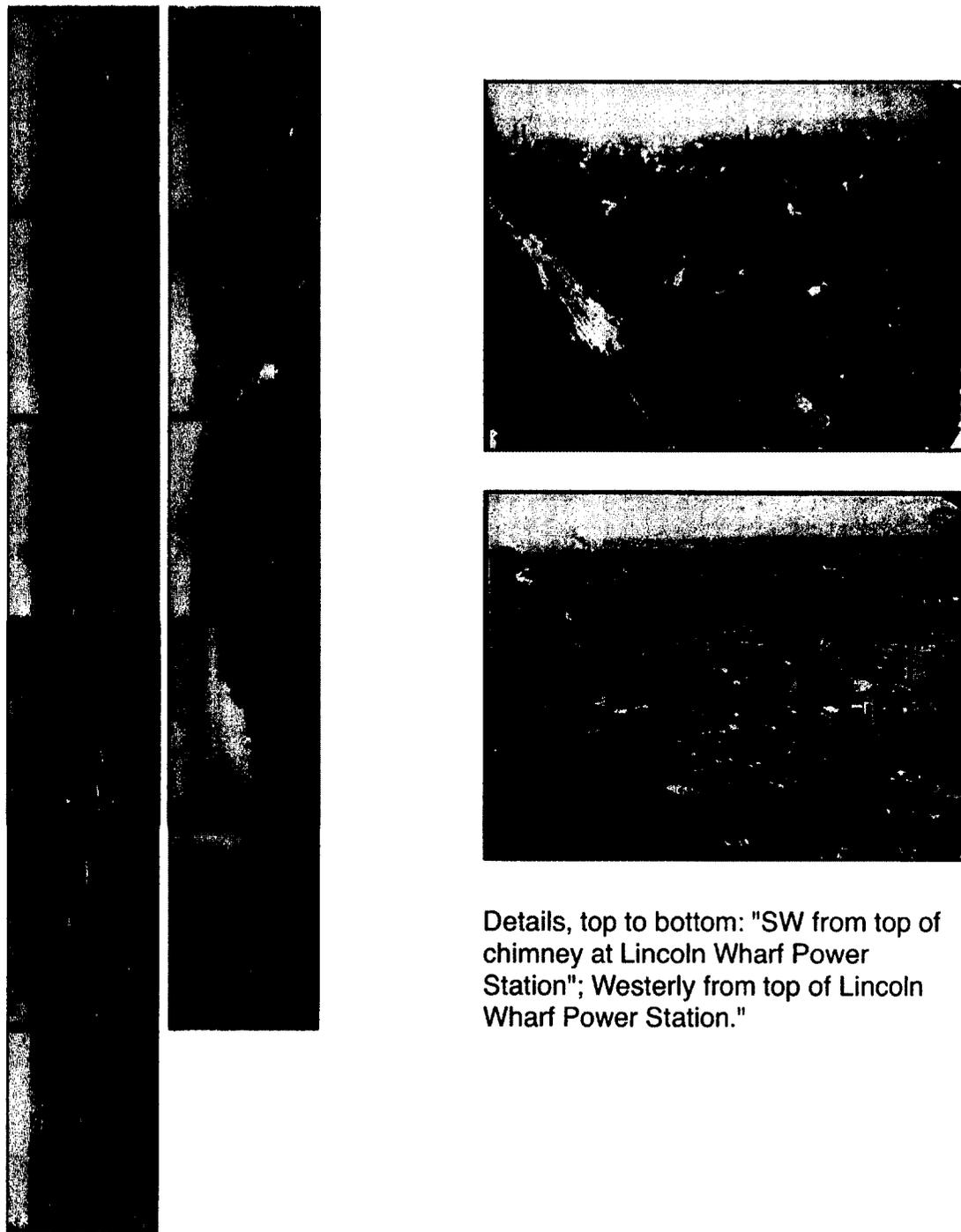
Fig. 17. Thomas Sulman, *New York, from Bergen Hill, Hoboken*, engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* (Aug. 16 1876). Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.



Fig. 18. Map of Boston, published in Edward Stanwood, *Boston Illustrated* (Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co, 1875), 9.



Fig. 19. Albert F. Poole, *Twentieth-Century Boston*. Panogravure published by F.D. Nichols Co., Boston, 1905. Updated version published in "Bird's-Eye View of Twentieth Century Boston," *Boston Globe* (May 19, 1907). Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.



Details, top to bottom: "SW from top of chimney at Lincoln Wharf Power Station"; Westerly from top of Lincoln Wharf Power Station."

Fig. 20. Anonymous, [360-degree panorama from Lincoln Wharf Power Station in 11 sections, Nov. 28, 1900], 1900. 11 black and white photographs. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

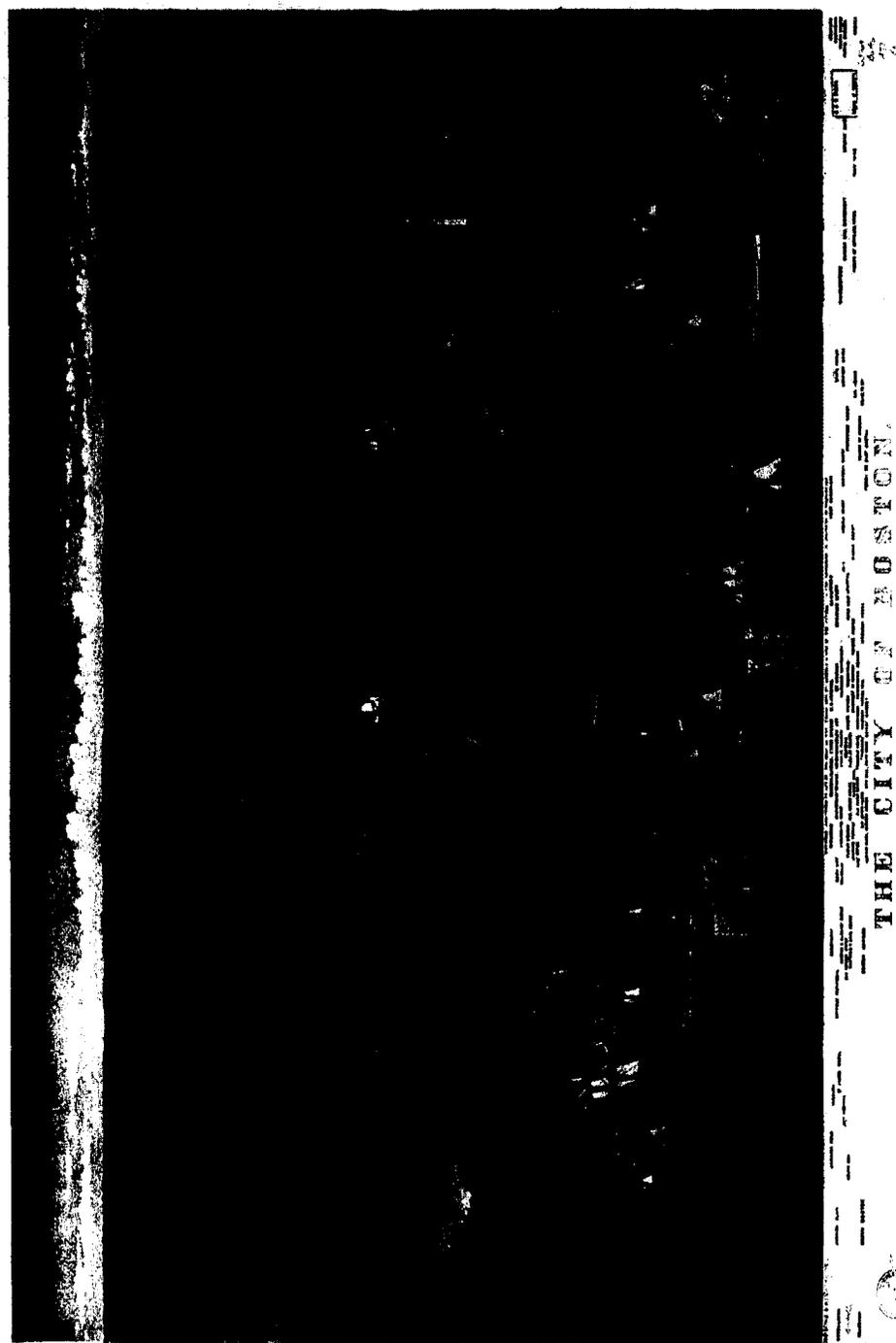


Fig. 21. Charles Parsons and Lyman Wetmore Atwater, *The City of Boston*. Chromolithograph published by Currier & Ives, New York, 1873. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

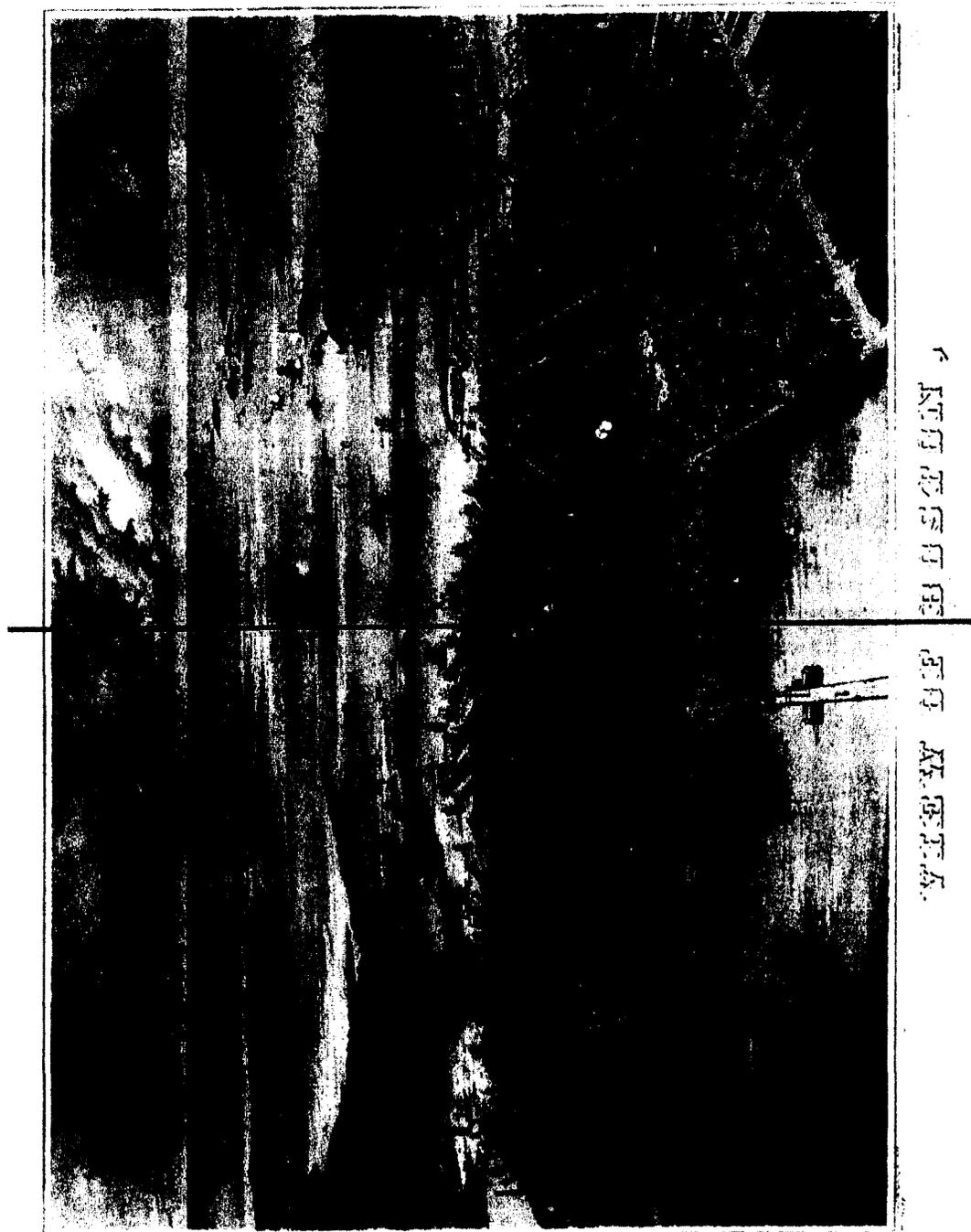


Fig. 22. F[eodor] Fuchs, *View of Boston, July 4th, 1870*. Lithograph published by John Weik, Philadelphia, 1871. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.



Fig. 23. [unknown] Favour, *Boston Highlands, Massachusetts, Wards 19, 20, 21, & 22 of Boston, Massachusetts*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1888. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

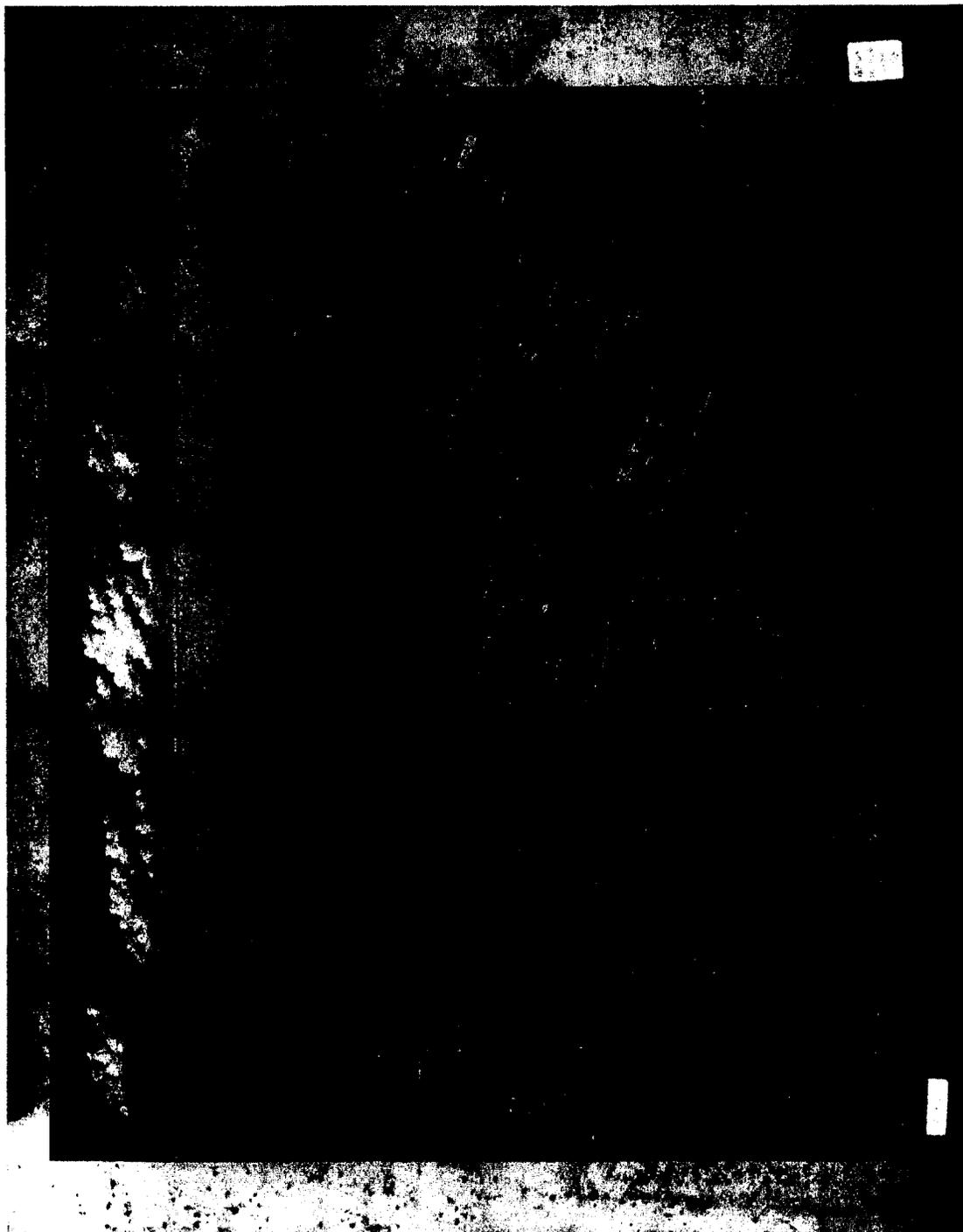


Fig. 24. O. H. [Oakley Hoopes] Bailey, *View of East Boston, Mass.* Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & Co., Boston, 1879. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.



Fig. 25. Cover of *Illustrated Boston: The Metropolis of New England* (New York: American Publishing and Engraving Co., 1889).

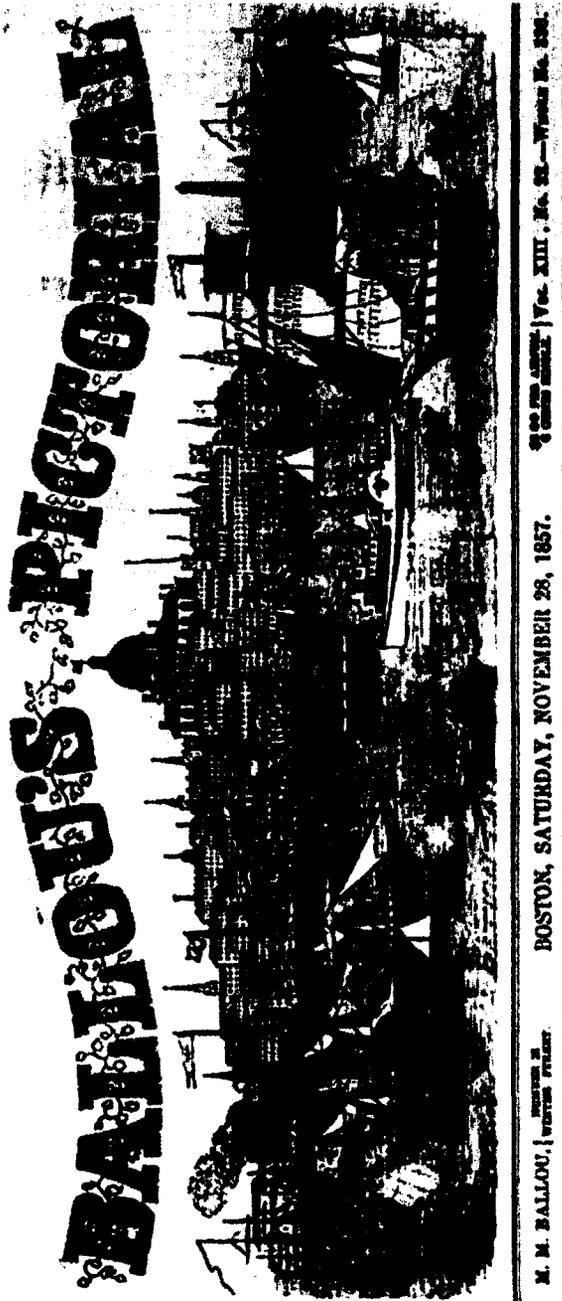
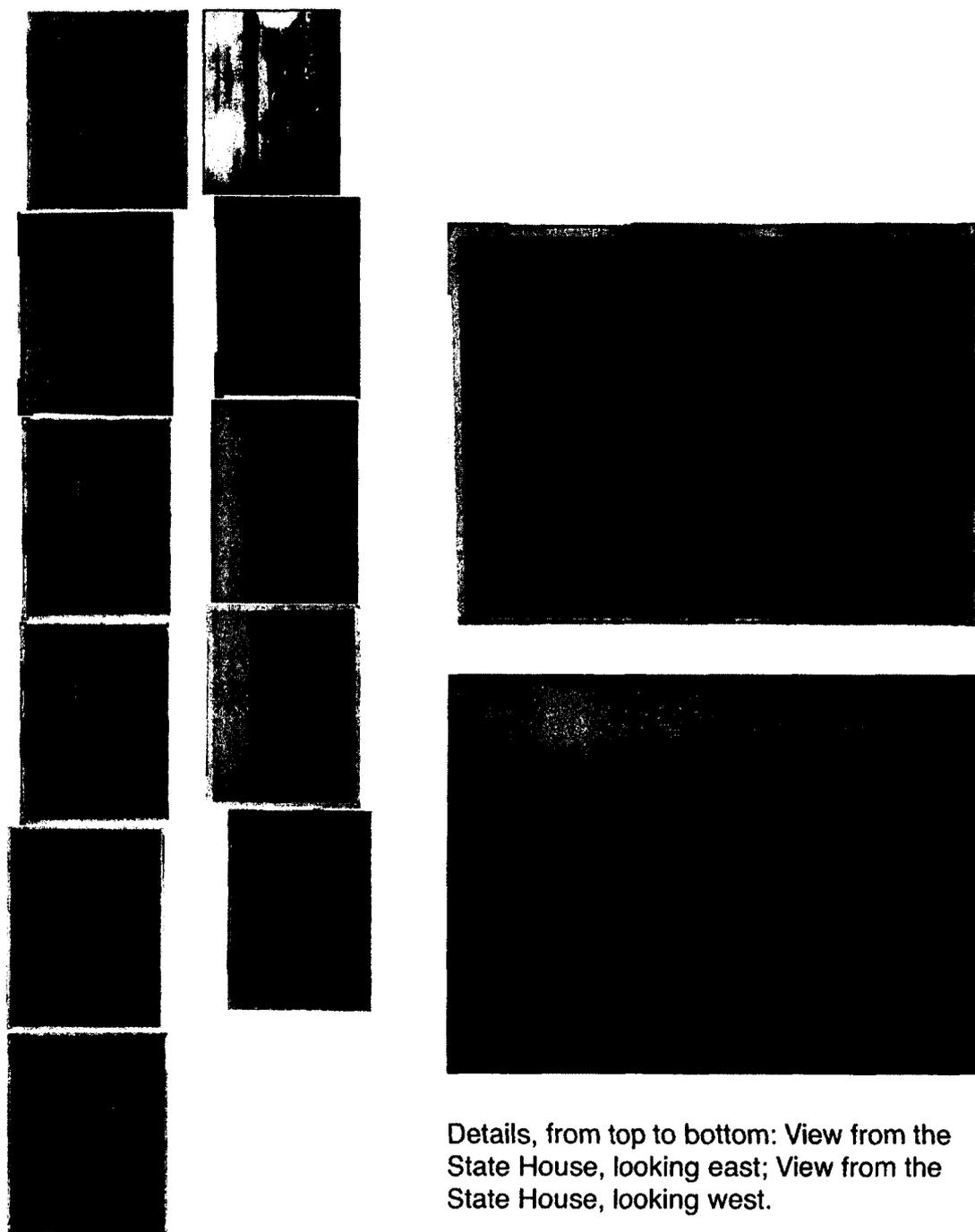


Fig. 26. Masthead for *Ballou's Pictorial* 13, no. 22 (Nov. 28, 1857), 1.



Details, from top to bottom: View from the State House, looking east; View from the State House, looking west.

Fig. 27. Josiah Johnson Hawes, [Panorama of Boston from the State House], c. 1858. Ten black and white photographs. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

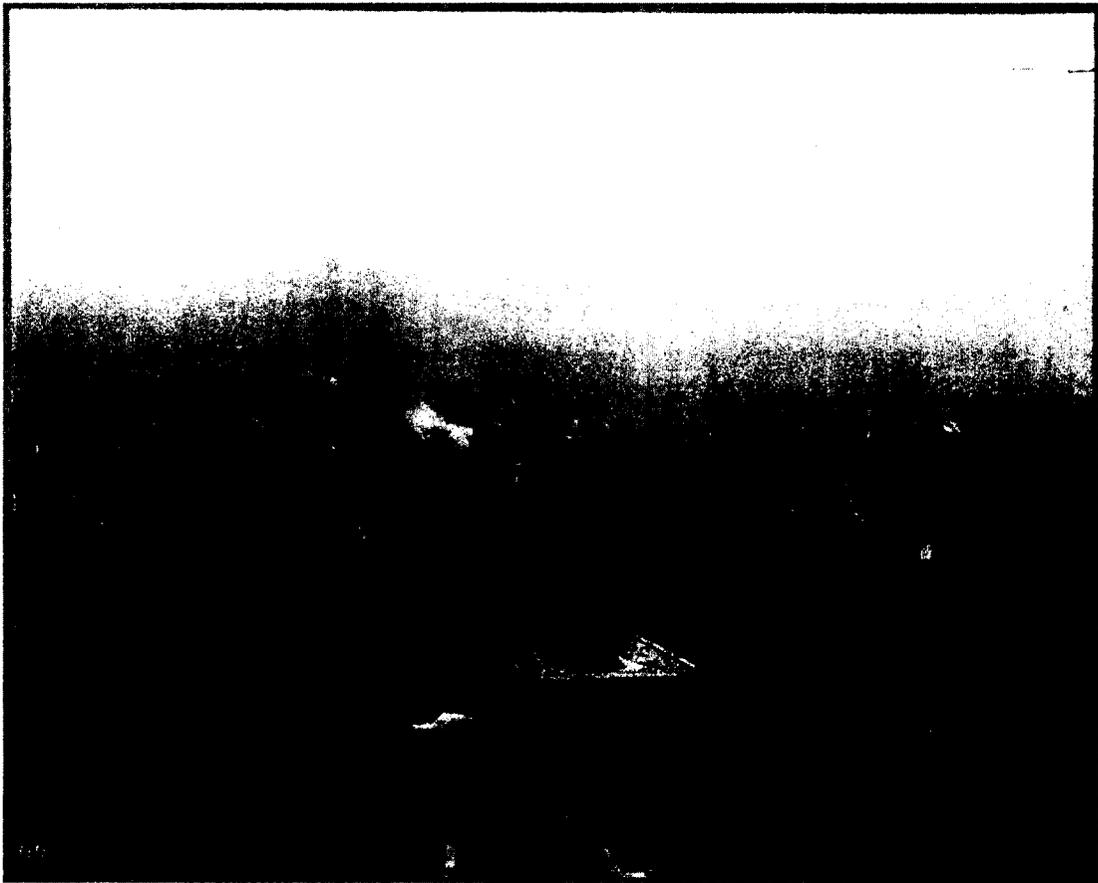


Fig. 28. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Boston from the Dome of the State House, looking east*. 1898. Detail of larger four photograph panorama. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

PANORAMIC VIEWS FROM BUNKER HILL MONUMENT.

Upper Picture Was Drawn by E. F. Mahony and Engraved by James Sullivan in 1866—Lower Picture Was Photographed in 1907 by a Globe Artist, Who Placed His Camera at the Top of the Lefty Granite Shaft—Changes in the Scenery During Three-Decade Years—Stately Homes That Now Hang Over Bigger and Better Boston.

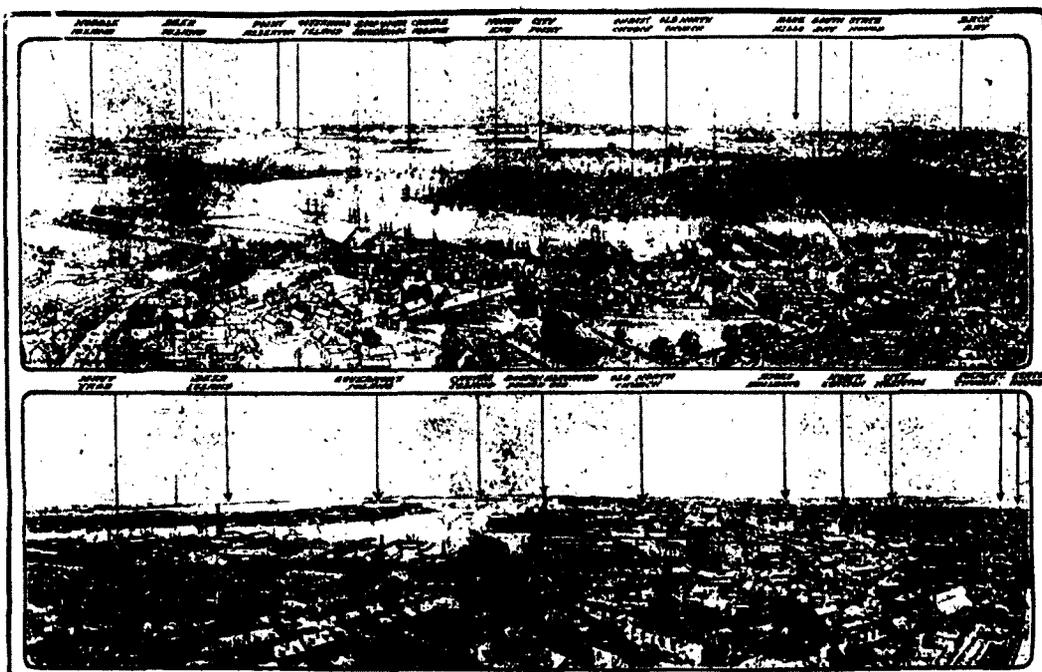


Fig. 29. "Panoramic Views from Bunker Hill Monument," *Boston Daily Globe* (July 28, 1907), 11.



Fig. 30. Anonymous, [*View North from Custom House Tower*], 1914. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

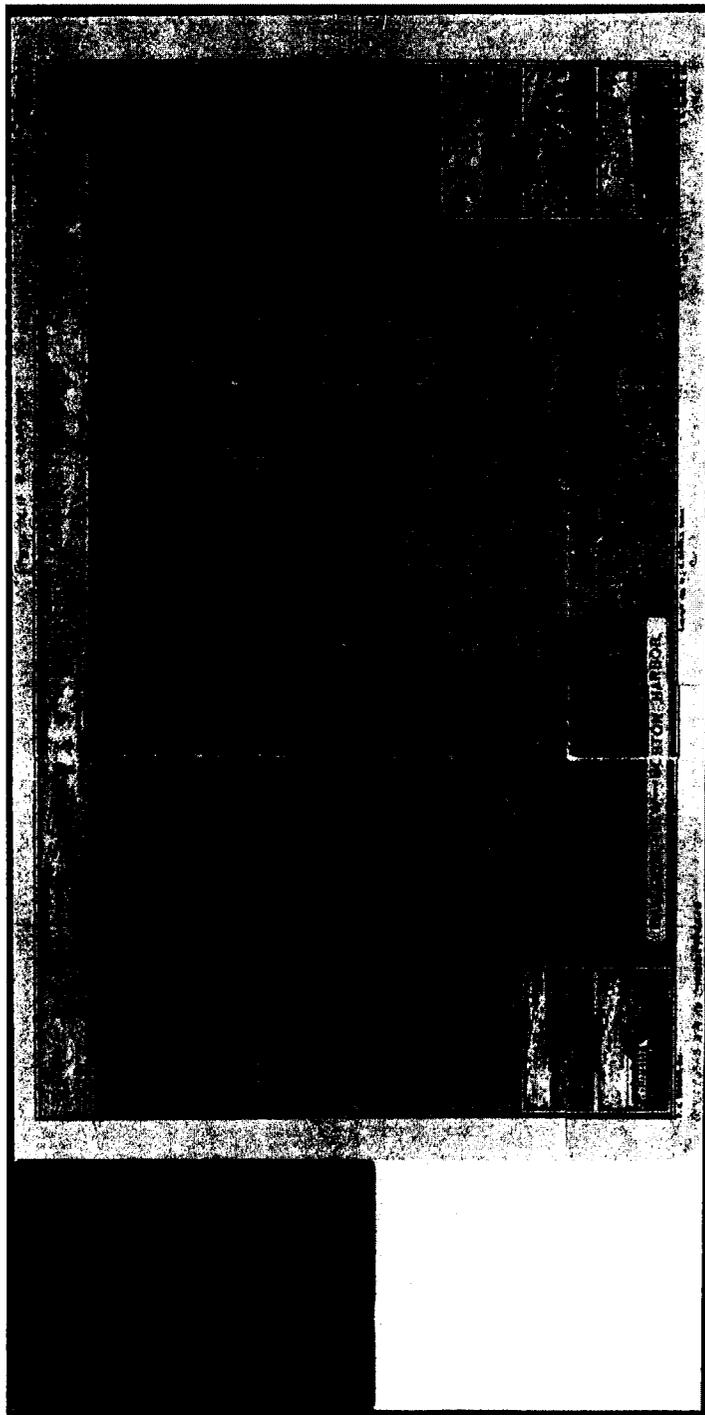


Fig. 31. F. Kimball Rogers, *Balloon View - Boston Harbor*, 1879. Chromolithograph published by John H. Daniels, Boston. Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.

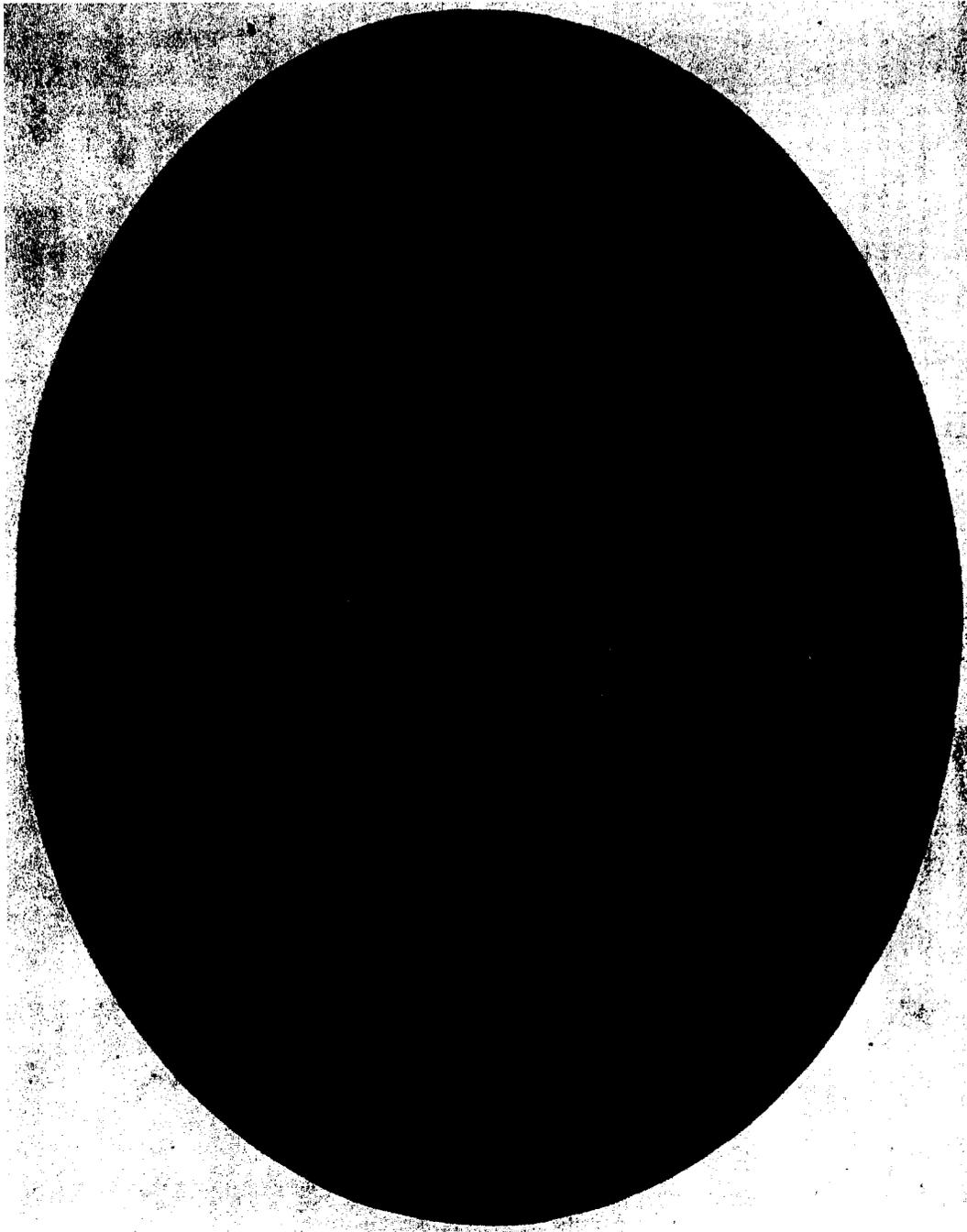


Fig. 32. James Wallace Black and Samuel King, *Bird's-eye view of Boston, Oct. 13, 1860*, 1860. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

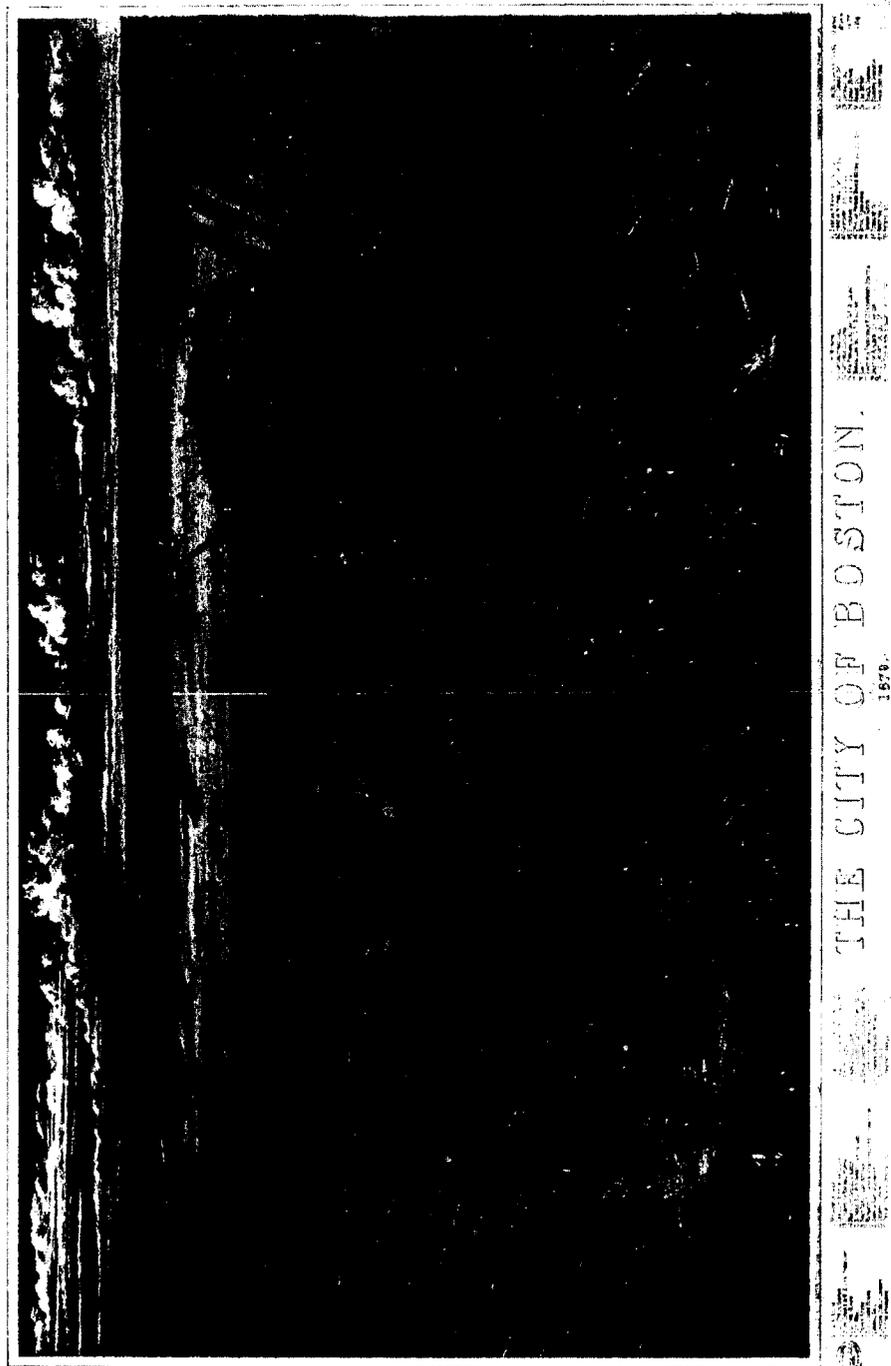


Fig. 33. O. H. [Oakley Hoopes] Bailey and J. C. [James Compton] Hazen, *The City of Boston*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey & J. C. Hazen, Boston, 1879. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

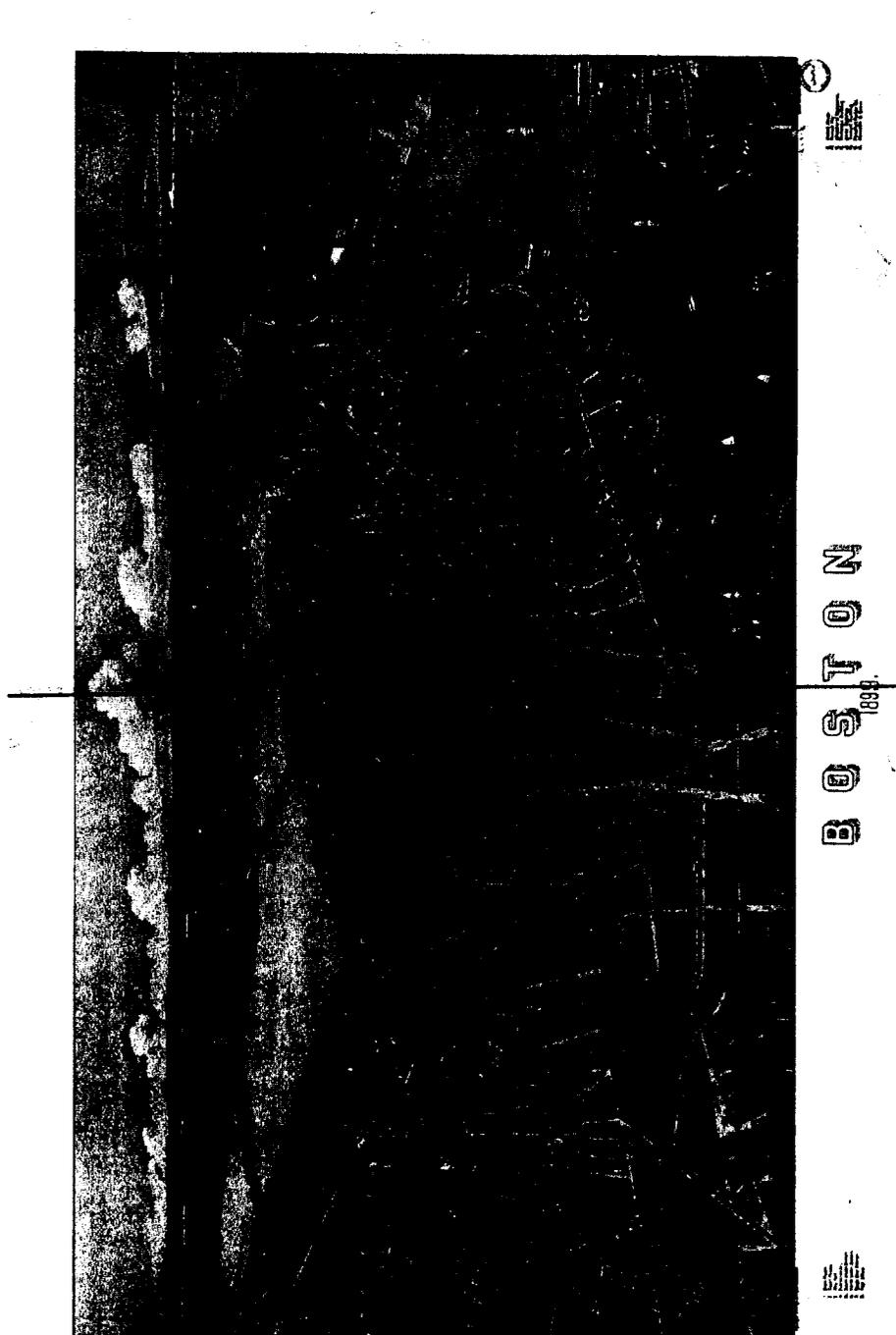


Fig. 34. Albert E. Downs, *Boston*. Chromolithograph published by A.E. Downs, Boston, 1899. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.



Fig. 35. Benjamin Franklin Nutting, *Birds' Eye View of Boston*. Lithograph published by B.B. Russell & Co, Boston, 1868. Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.



Fig. 36. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - North*, 1894. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

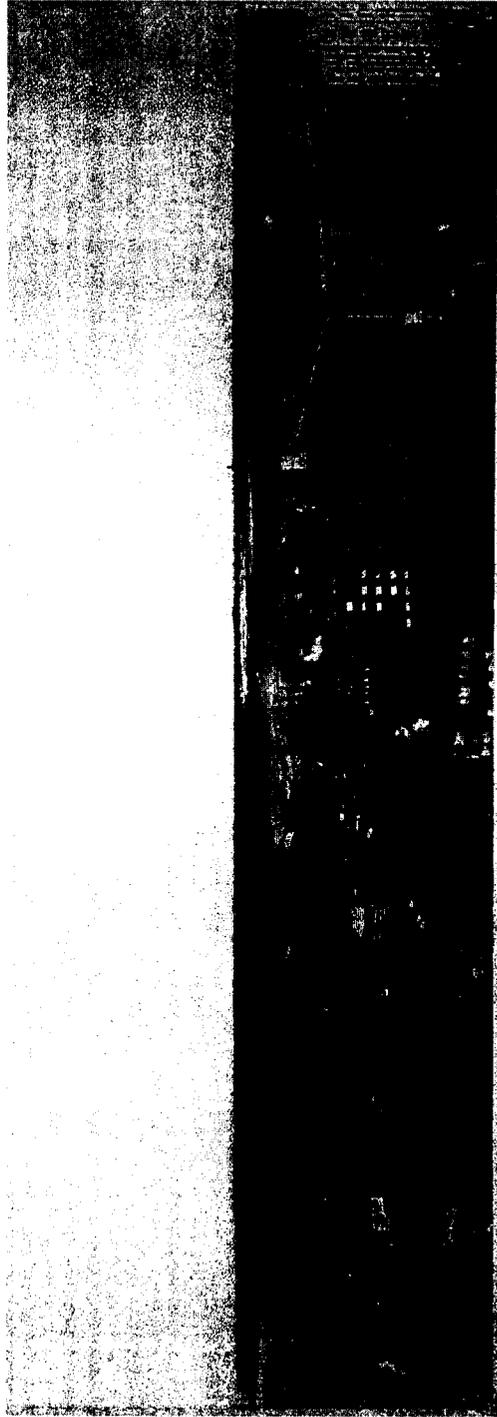


Fig. 37. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - East*, 1894. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

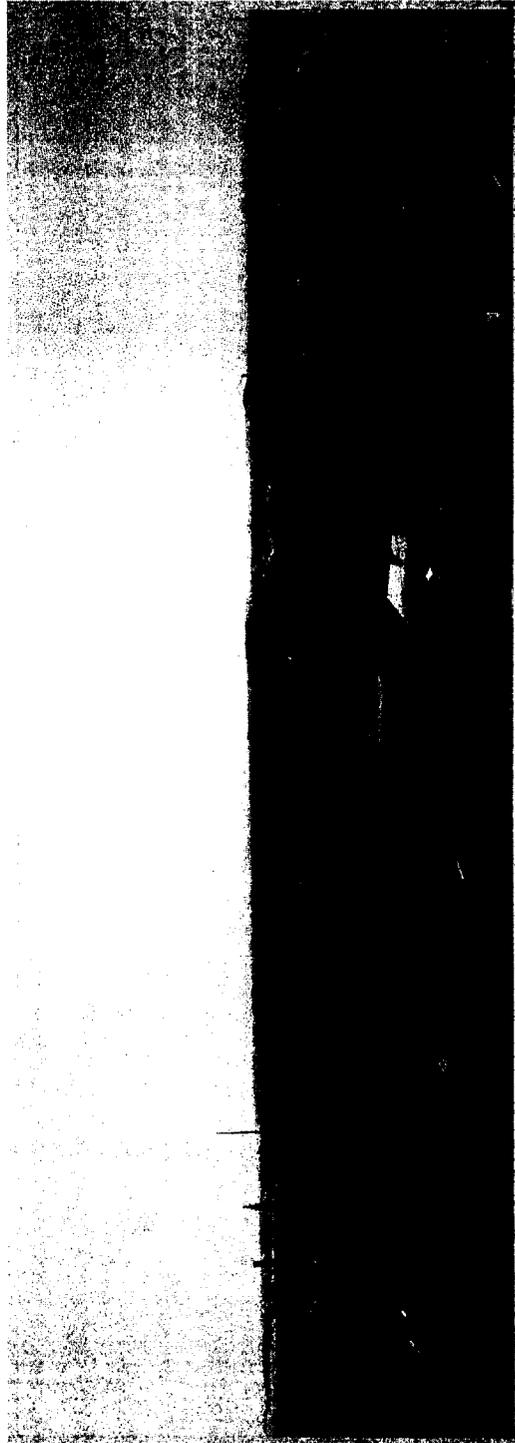


Fig. 38. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - South*, 1894. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

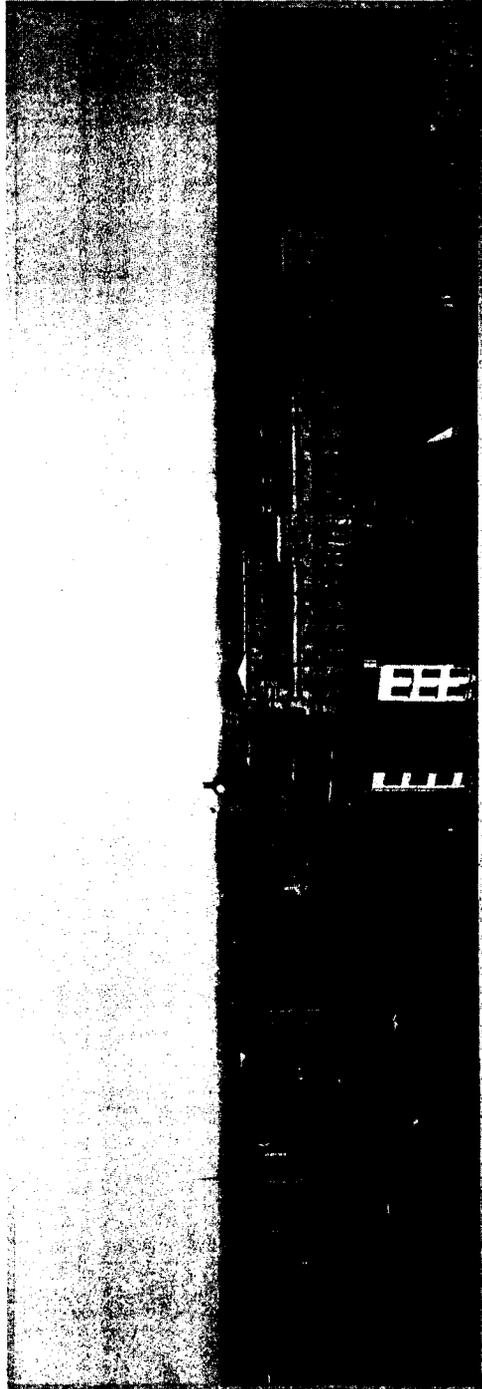


Fig. 39. Nathaniel L. Stebbins, *Panorama from Ames Building - West*, 1894. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

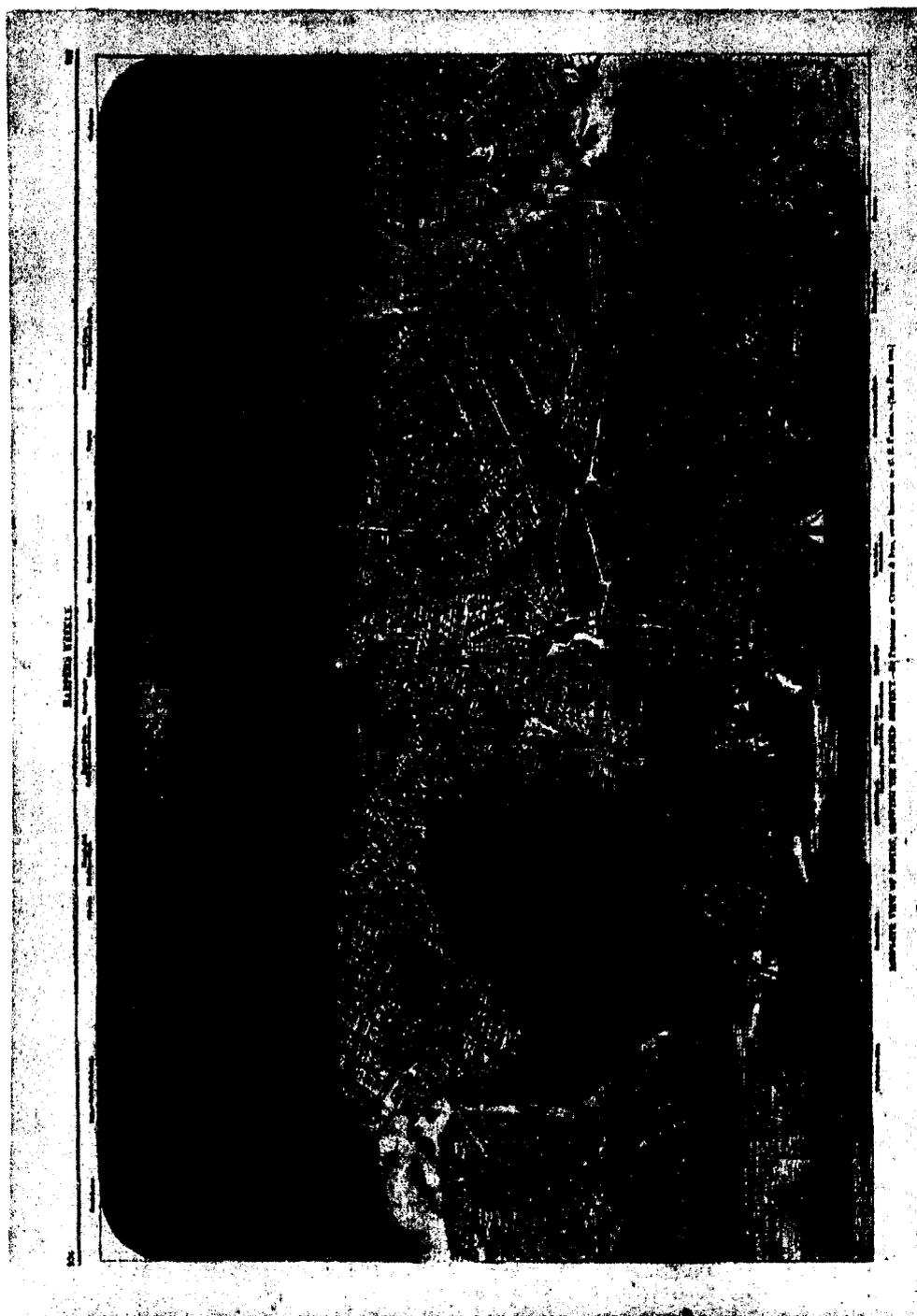


Fig. 40. Charles R. Parsons, *Bird's-eye view of Boston, showing the burned district*. Engraving published in *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 831 (30 Nov. 1872): 936. Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.



Fig. 41. James Wallace Black, *67 Milk Street Opposite the Post Office – The Boston Button Company*, 1872. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of The Boston Public Library, Print Department.

HARPER'S WEEKLY.

JOURNAL OF CIVILIZATION.

Vol. XVI—No. 811.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1872.

["WEEKLY"]



Fig. 42. C. S. [Charles Stanley] Reinhart, *Boston* — "Into the Jaws of Death." Engraving published in *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 831 (30 Nov. 1872): n.p.



Fig. 43. Anonymous, *Birds-eye view of Boston and vicinity, showing the outlying towns and villages and railroad communications*. Engraving published in *Harper's Weekly* 15, no. 758 (8 July 1871): 638. Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.

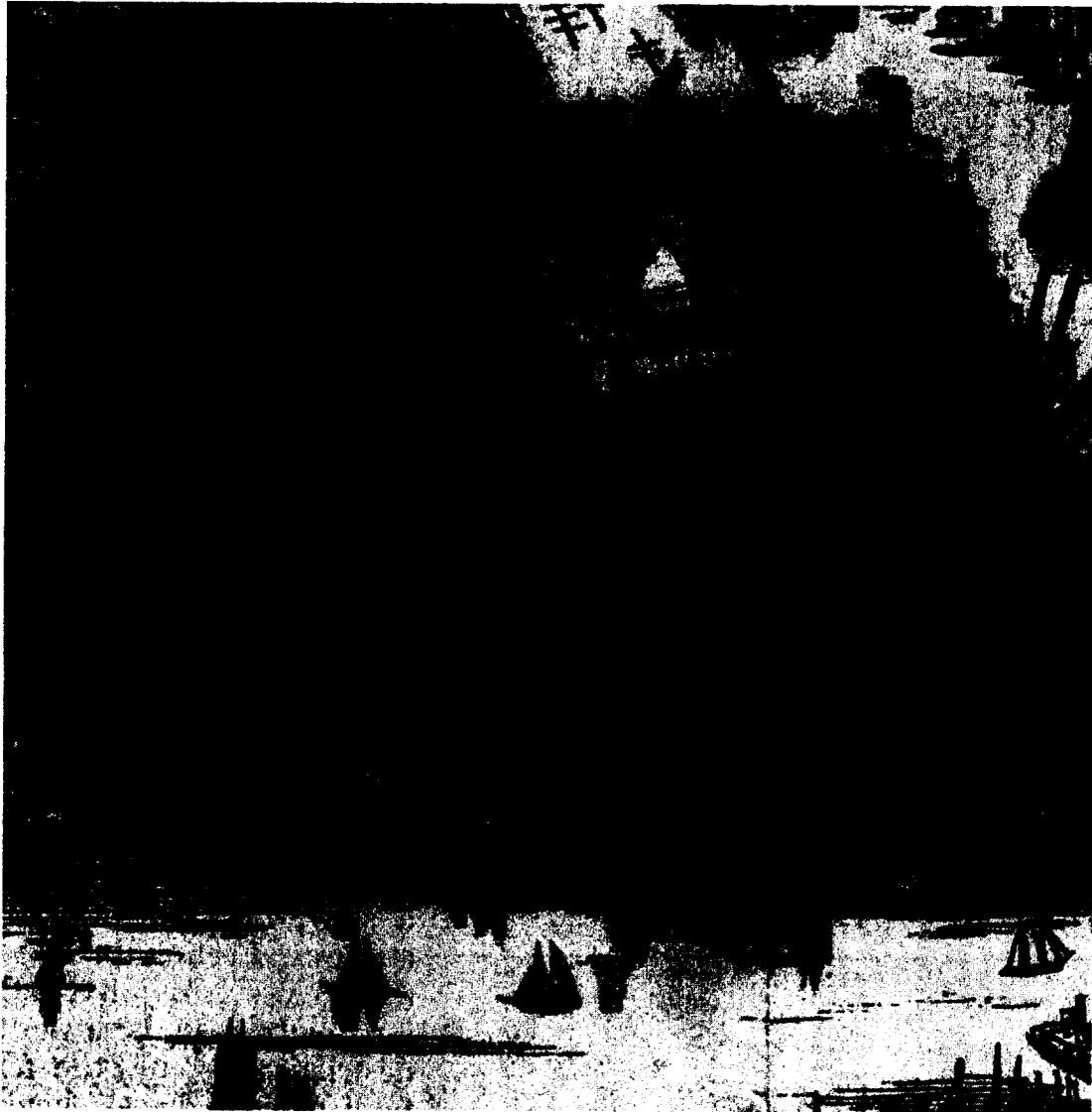
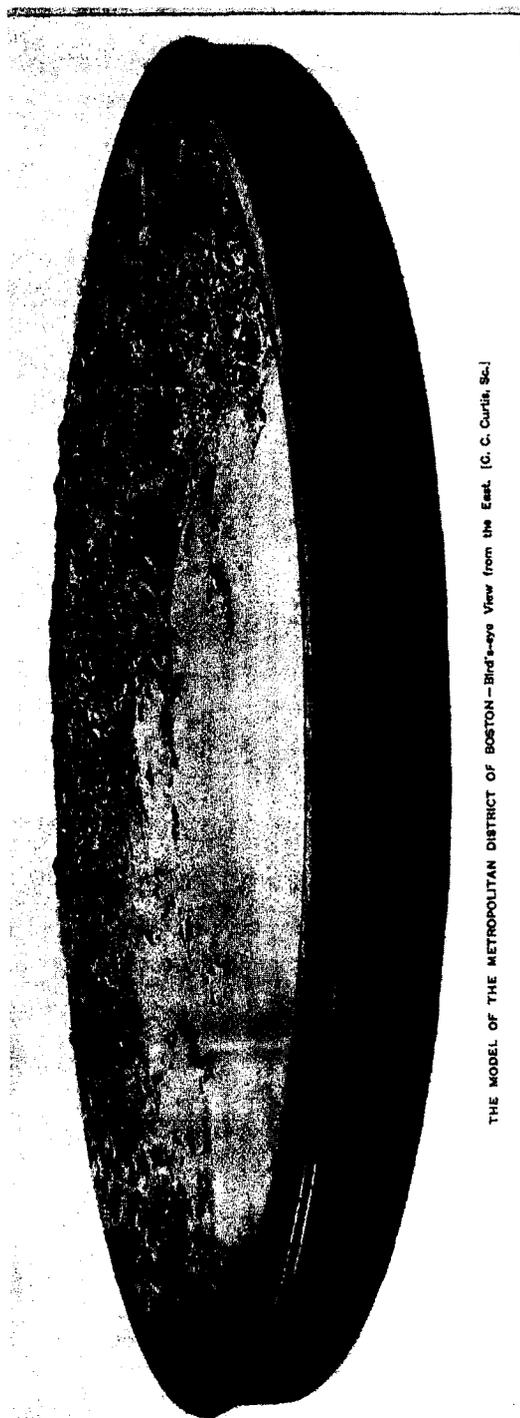


Fig. 44. Detail of figure 43.



THE MODEL OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF BOSTON—Bird's-eye View from the East. [G. C. Curtis, Sc.]

Fig. 45. George Curtis, *The Model of the Metropolitan District of Boston—Bird's-Eye View from the East*. Photomechanical transfer published in G. C. Curtis, *A Description of the Topographical Model of Metropolitan Boston* ([Boston]: Board of Paris Exposition Managers of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1900).



Fig. 46. E. A. E., *City of St. John. 1882*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey Co., 1882. Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.

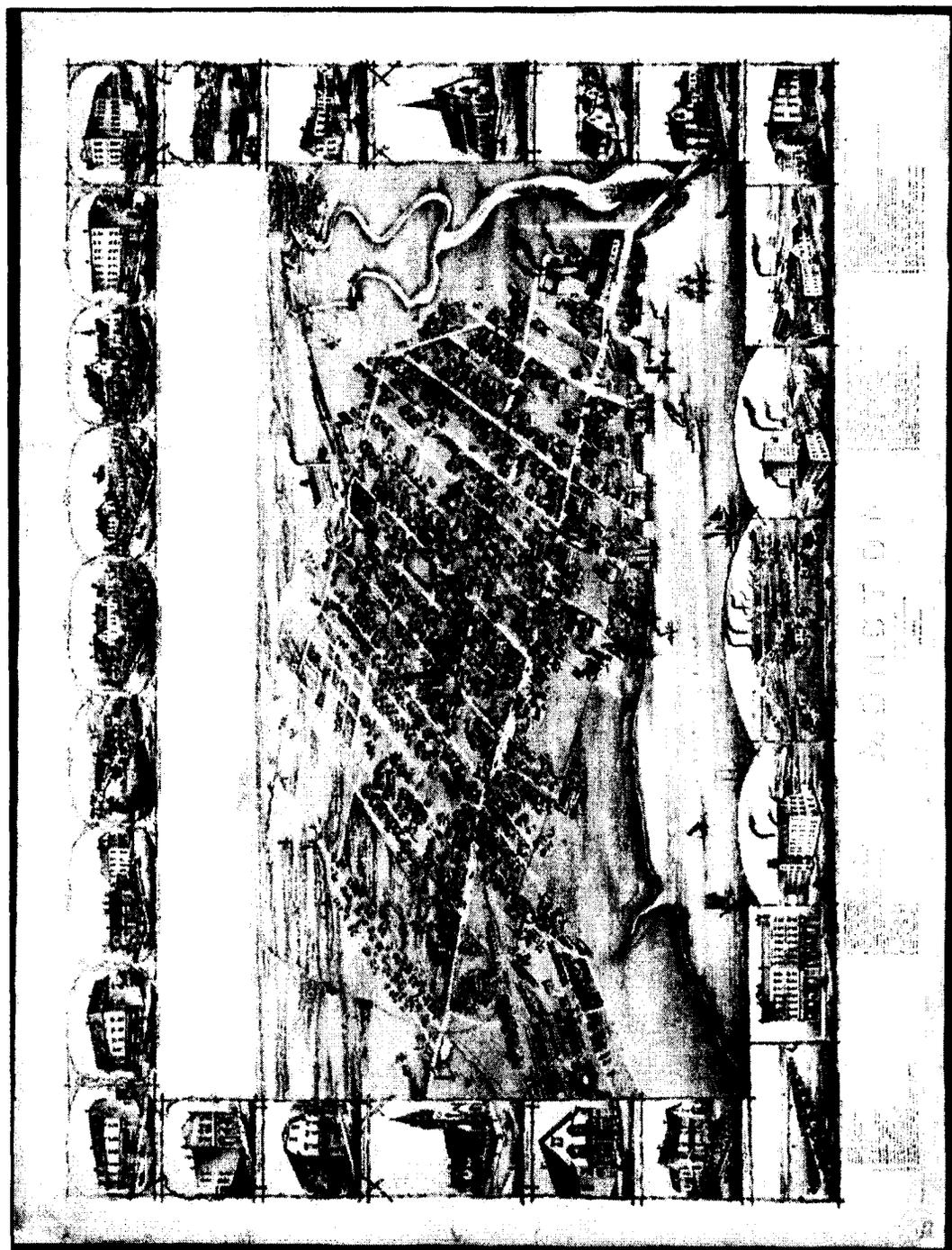


Fig. 47. Anonymous, *Moncton, New Brunswick. 1881*. Lithograph published by O. H. Bailey Co., 1881. Courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Newspapers

Boston Daily Globe

Boston Evening Times Transcript

New York Times

Other Sources

"About Boston." *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 808 (1872): 500-03.

Albree, John. *A Blight on Boston: How Shall it be Removed?* Boston: Berkley Press, 1906.

"All Around Boston." *Harper's Weekly* 15, no. 758 (1871): 638.

Authentic and Comprehensive Guide and History of Boston. Mechanic's Fair ed. Boston: Shepherd & Norwell, 1878.

Bacon, Edwin M. *King's Dictionary of Boston*. Cambridge, MA: Moses King, 1883.

Baxter, Sylvester. "Boston at the Century's End." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 99, no. 594 (1899): 823-46.

"Bird's-eye view of Boston, showing the burned district." *Harper's Weekly* 16, no. 831 (1872): 936.

"The Boston Fire." *The Philadelphia Photographer* 9, no. (1872): 421.

Brown's New Guide-Book and Map for Boston. Boston: H. A. Brown & Co., 1872.

Bryant, William Cullen, (ed.) *Picturesque America, or, This Land We Live In*. 2 vols. New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1874.

Clarke, Eliot C. *Main Drainage Works of the City of Boston*. 2nd ed. Boston: [City of Boston], 1885.

- Curtis, George Carroll. *A Description of the Topographical Model of Metropolitan Boston*. [Boston]: Board of Paris Exposition Managers of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1900.
- Doughty, John, G. "Balloon Experiences of a Timid Photographer." *The Century* 32, no. 5 (1886): 679-94.
- Drake, Samuel Gardner. *The History and Antiquities of the City of Boston*. Boston: L. Stevens, 1856.
- Engels, Friedrich. *The Condition of the Working Class in England: From Personal Observation and Authentic Sources*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973.
- Gilman, Arthur. *The Story of Boston: A Study of Independency*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889.
- "The Great Fire of Boston." *Illustrated London News* 61, no. 1733 (1872): 498-99.
- Helme, William H. "Photographing from a Balloon." *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 3rd series, 1, no. 8 (1860): 234-35.
- Herndon, Richard. *Boston of Today: A Glance at its History and Characteristic with Biographical Sketches and Portraits of Many of its Professional and Business Men*. Boston: Post Publishing Co., 1892.
- Holmes, Oliver Wendell. "Doings of the Sunbeam." *The Atlantic Monthly* 12, no. 69 (1863): 1-15.
- — —. *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*. London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1906.
- Hugo, Victor. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Translated by Frederic Shoberl. London: R. Bentley, 1833.
- Illustrated Boston: The Metropolis of New England*. New York: American Publishing and Engraving Co., 1889.
- King, Moses. *King's Handbook of Boston*. Cambridge, MA: Moses King, 1878.
- — —. *King's Handbook of Boston: Profusely Illustrated*. 4th ed. Cambridge, MA: Moses King, 1881.
- — —. *How to See Boston: A Trustworthy Guide Book*. Knights Templars Edition ed. Boston: Macullar, Parker and Co., 1895.

- Lodge, Henry Cabot. *Boston*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1891.
- Mayhew, Henry, and John Binny. *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life*. London: Griffin, Bohn and Co., 1862.
- McCabe, Jas [James] D. *A Centennial View of Our Country and its Resources*. Philadelphia: Hubbard Brothers, 1876.
- O'Flower, B. O. *Civilization's Inferno; or, Studies in the Social Cellar*. Boston: Arena Publishing Co., 1893.
- "Photographing Distance." *British Journal of Photography* 28, no. 1056 (1880): 363.
- Report of the Joint Committee on Public Lands in relation to the Public Garden, July, 1850*. Boston: City of Boston, 1850.
- Report Made to the Boston Society of Architects by its Committee on Municipal Improvement*. [Boston]: 1907.
- Smillie, James, and R. P. Mallory. *A Panoramic View from Bunker Hill Monument*. Boston: Redding & Co., 1848.
- Stanwood, Edward. *Boston Illustrated*. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co, 1871.
- — —. *Boston Illustrated*. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co, 1875.
- Stark, James H. *Boston Harbor: Compiled From the Most Authentic Sources, Giving a Complete and Reliable History of Every Island and Headland in the Harbor, From the Earliest Date to the Present Time*. Boston: Photo-Electrotype Co., 1880.
- — —. *Stranger's Illustrated Guide to Boston and its Suburbs; with Maps of Boston and the Harbor*. Boston: Photo-Electrotype Co., 1882.
- Sullivan, T. Russell. *Boston, New and Old*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1912.
- Whitman, Walt. "A Week's Visit to Boston." In *Complete Poetry and Collected Prose*, 900-01. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1982.
- Willis, N. P. and W. H. Bartlett. *American scenery; or, Land, lake, and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature*. 2 vols. London: George Virtue, 1840.

Secondary Sources

- Alpers, Svetlana. *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised ed. London: Verso, 1991.
- Andrews, Malcolm. *Landscape and Western Art*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999.
- Arscott, Caroline, Griselda Pollock, and Janet Wolff. "The Partial View: The Visual Representation of the Early Nineteenth-Century City." In *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteen-Century Middle Class*, 191-233. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988.
- Baker, Simon. "San Francisco in Ruins: The 1906 Aerial Photographs of George R. Lawrence." *Landscape* 30, no. 2 (1989): 9-14.
- Barrell, John. "The Public Prospect and the Private View: The Politics of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain." In *Landscape, Natural Beauty, and the Arts*, edited by Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell, 81-102. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Barthes, Roland. "The Eiffel Tower." In *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*, 3-18. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.
- — —. *Camera Lucida*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.
- Basavarajappa, K. G., and Bali Ram. "Section A: Population and Migration." In *Historical Statistics of Canada*, edited by F. H. Leacy, [series A1-A416]. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, 1983.
- Beattie, Betsy. "The 'Boston States': Region, Gender, and Maritime Out-Migration, 1870-1930." In *New England and the Maritime Provinces: Connections and Comparisons*, edited by Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid, 252-63. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.
- Bellion, Wendy. "'Extend the Sphere': Charles Willson Peale's Panorama of Annapolis." *The Art Bulletin* 86, no. 3 (2004): 529-49.
- Benjamin, Walter. *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*. London: New Left Books, 1970.

- . "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century." In *The Arcades Project*, 14-26. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1999.
- Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London and Middlesex: BBC and Penguin, 1987.
- Berman, Marshall. *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. New York: Penguin, 1988.
- Binford, Henry C. *The First Suburbs: Residential Communities on the Boston Periphery, 1815-1860*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Boston Public Library. "Old Boston Photograph Collection." [2009]. http://www.flickr.com/photos/boston_public_library/sets/72157607471461913/comments/ (accessed September 14, 2010).
- Boyer, Christine M. *Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American City Planning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983.
- Bridge, Gary, and Sophie Watson. "City Imaginaries." In *A Companion to the City*, edited by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, 7-17. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.
- Briggs, Asa. *Victorian Cities*. London: Odhams Books, 1963.
- Brilliant, Richard. *Portraiture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991.
- Byerly, Alison. "'A Prodigious Map Beneath His Feet': Virtual Travel and The Panoramic Perspective." *Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 29, no. 2 (2007): 151-68.
- Census of Canada. 1880-81. Vol. 1*. Ottawa: Department of Agriculture, Government of Canada, 1881.
- Clark, T. J. *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*. Revised ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Cosgrove, Denis. *Geography & Vision: Seeing, Imagining and Representing the World*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2008.
- Crang, Mike. *Cultural Geography*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Danzer, Gerald. "Bird's-Eye Views of Towns and Cities." In *From Sea Charts to Satellite Images: Interpreting North American History through Maps*, edited by David Buisseret, 143-63. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

- De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translated by Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
- Deming, M. Elen. "The Country and the City: John Bachmann's Views of Manhattan and Central Park." *Landscape Journal* 19, no. 1-2 (2000): 111-25.
- Dennis, Richard. *Cities in Modernity: Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Domosh, Mona. "Imagining New York's first skyscrapers, 1875-1910." *Journal of Historical Geography* 13, no. 3 (1987): 233-48.
- . *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century New York and Boston*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Donald, James. *Imagining the Modern City*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
- . "The Immaterial City: Representation, Imagination, and Media Technologies." In *A Companion to the City*, edited by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, 46-54. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.
- Dorrian, Mark. "The Aerial View: Notes for a Cultural History." *Strates* 13 (2007), <http://strates.revues.org/document5573.html> (accessed July 9, 2009).
- Dubbini, Renzo. "Views and Panoramas: Representations of Landscapes and Towns." *Lotus International*, no. 52 (1986): 99-111.
- . *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*. Translated by Lydia G. Cochrane. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Edney, Matthew H. "Reconsidering Enlightenment Geography and Map Making: Reconnaissance, Mapping, Archive." In *Geography and Enlightenment*, edited by David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers, 165-98. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Elliot, James. *The City in Maps: Urban Mapping to 1900*. London: The British Library, 1987.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books, 1970.
- . *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

- Frizot, Michel. "Another Kind of Photography: New Points of View." In *The New History of Photography*, edited by Michel Frizot, 386-97. Köln: Könemann, 1998.
- Gage, John. *J. M. W. Turner: 'A Wonderful Range of Mind'*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987.
- Gale Research Company. *Currier & Ives: A Catalogue Raisonné*. Detroit, MI: Gale Research Company, 1984.
- Gibson, Campbell. "Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790 to 1990." U. S. Census Bureau, 1998. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027.html> (accessed 27 April, 2006).
- Green, Nicholas. *The Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-Century France*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992.
- Haglund, Karl. "Emerald Metropolis." *Arnoldia* 53, no. 4 (1993): 2-17.
- Hales, Peter B. *Silver Cities: The Photography of American Urbanization, 1839-1915*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984.
- Hall, Roger, Gordon Dodds, and Stanley G. Triggs. *The World of William Notman*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993.
- Harper, J. Russell. "British Army Topographers in Eastern Canada." In *Painting in Canada: A History*, 47-55. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977.
- Harris, David. *Eadweard Muybridge and the Photographic Panorama of San Francisco, 1850-1880*. Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1993.
- Harvey, David. *Consciousness and the Urban Experience: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.
- . *The Urbanization of Capital: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.
- . *The Urban Experience*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
- . *Paris, Capital of Modernity*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Harvey, P. D. A. *The History of Topographical Maps: Symbols, Pictures, and Surveys*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1980.

- . "Local and Regional Cartography in Medieval Europe." In *The History of Cartography: Volume One: Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, edited by J. B. Harley and David Woodward, 464-501. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Hays, Samuel P. "From the History of the City to the History of the Urbanized Society." *Journal of Urban History* 19, no. 4 (1993): 3-25.
- . *The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Ivins, William M., Jr. *Prints and Visual Communication*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969.
- Jackson, John Brinckerhoff. *American Space: The Centennial Years, 1865-1876*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1972.
- Jacobs, Jane. *The Economy of Cities*. New York: Random House, 1969.
- Jay, Martin. *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Kamplain, Anna Lee. *A Photographic Portrait of Boston, 1840-1865*. Boston: Boston University Art Gallery, 2006.
- Kemp, Martin. *The Science of Art: Optical Themes in Western art from Brunelleschi to Seurat*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Kennedy, Lawrence W. *Planning the City upon a Hill: Boston since 1630*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.
- Krauss, Rosalind. "Grids." In *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, 9-22. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985.
- Krieger, Alex. "Experiencing Boston: Encounters with the Places on the Maps." In *Mapping Boston*, edited by Alex Krieger and David A. Cobb, 146-72. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999.
- Leacy, F. H., (ed.) *Historical Statistics of Canada*. 2nd ed. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, 1983.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.

- — —. *The Urban Revolution*. Translated by Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- Lerner, William, (ed.) *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*. Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Commerce, 1975.
- Lodder, Christina. "Malevich, Suprematism and Aerial Photography." *History of Photography* 28, no. 1 (2004): 25-40.
- MacNutt, W. S. *The Atlantic Provinces: The Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965.
- Miller, Naomi. *Mapping the City: The Language and Culture of Cartography in the Renaissance*. London: Continuum, 2003.
- Mohl, Raymond A. *The New City: Urban America in the Industrial Age, 1860-1920*. Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1985.
- Mukarovsky, Jan. "Art as Semiological Fact." In *Calligram: Essays in New Art History from France*, edited by Norman Bryson, 1-7. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Mumford, Lewis. *The Culture of Cities*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1938.
- — —. *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961.
- Naddeo, Barbara Ann. "Topographies of Difference: Cartography of the City of Naples, 1627-1775." *Imago Mundi* 56, no. 1 (2004): 23-47.
- Nash, Gary. *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Nead, Lynda. *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets, and Images in Nineteenth-Century London*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Newhall, Beaumont. *Airborne Camera: The World from the Air and Outer Space*. New York: Hastings House, 1969.
- Nora, Pierre. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*. Translated by Lawrence D. Kritzman, and Arthur Goldhammer. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

- Norman, Diana. "'Love justice, you who judge the earth': The Paintings of the Sala die Nove in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena." In *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400, Volume II: Case Studies*, edited by Diana Norman, 145-67. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, "Bird's-eye view of Boston, showing the burned district." Boston Public Library. [2009]. http://maps.bpl.org/details_10445 (accessed August 10, 2009).
- O'Connell, Shaun. *Imagining Boston: A Literary Landscape*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990.
- O'Flower, B. O. *Civilization's Inferno; or, Studies in the Social Cellar*. Boston: Arena Publishing Co., 1893.
- Oettermann, Stephan. *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*. Translated by Deborah Lucas Schneider. New York: Zone Books, 1997.
- Peirce, Charles. "What is a Sign?" In *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings, 1893-1913*, edited by Peirce Edition Project, 4-10. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- Phillips, Mark S. "Relocating Inwardness: Historical Distance and the Transition from Enlightenment to Romantic Historiography." *PMLA* 118, no. 3 (2003): 436-49.
- . "Distance and Historical Representation." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 57 (2004): 123-41.
- Pierce, Sally. *Whipple and Black: Commercial Photographers in Boston*. Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1987.
- . "Gleason's Pictorial: Elevating and Celebrating American Life." *The Ephemera Journal* 5, no. (1992): 12-24.
- Pierce, Sally, and Catharina Slautterback. *Boston Lithography, 1825-1880*. Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1991.
- Poe, Edgar Allen. "The Man of the Crowd." In *Poetry and Tales*, 388-96. New York: Literary Classics, 1984.
- Rees, Ronald. "Historical Links Between Cartography and Art." *Geographical Review* 70, no. 1 (1980): 60-78.

- Reps, John W. *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965.
- . *Cities on Stone: Nineteenth Century Lithograph Images of the Urban West*. Fort Worth, TX: Amon Carter Museum, 1976.
- . *Panoramas of Promise: Pacific Northwest Cities and Towns on Nineteenth-Century Lithographs*. Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 1984.
- . *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America: Lithographs of Towns and Cities in the United States and Canada, Notes of the Artists and Publishers, and a Union Catalog of Their Work, 1825-1925*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1984.
- . *Bird's Eye Views: Historic Lithographs of North American Cities*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998.
- Schein, Richard H. "Representing Urban America: 19th-Century Views of Landscape, Space, and Power." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 11, no. 1 (1993): 7-22.
- . "The Place of Landscape: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting an American Scene." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 87, no. 4 (1997): 660-80.
- Schulz, Juergen. "Jacopo de' Barbari's View of Venice: Map Making, City Views, and Moralized Geography Before the Year 1500." *The Art Bulletin* 60, no. 3 (1978): 425-74.
- Schwartz, Vanessa R., and Jeannene M. Przyblyski. "Visual Culture's History: Twenty-First Century Interdisciplinarity and Its Nineteenth-Century Objects." In *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader*, edited by Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski, 3-14. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Seasholes, Nancy S. "Gaining Ground: Boston's Topographical Development in Maps." In *Mapping Boston*, edited by Alex Krieger and David A. Cobb, 118-45. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999.
- . *Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003.
- Sharpe, William, and Leonard Wallock. "From "Great Town" to "Nonplace Urban Realm": Reading the Modern City." In *Visions of the Modern City: Essays in*

- History, Art, and Literature*, edited by William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, 1-50. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- Shields, Rob. *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity*. Routledge: London, 1991.
- Short, John Rennie. "Three Urban Discourses." In *A Companion to the City*, edited by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, 18-25. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.
- — —. *The World Through Maps: A History of Cartography*. Toronto: Firefly Books, 2003.
- Simmel, Georg. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." In *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities*, edited by Richard Sennett, 47-60. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1969.
- Slautterback, Catharina. Unpublished manuscript. Boston Athenaeum, Prints and Photographs Collection.
- Soja, Edward. *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso, 1989.
- — —. "Putting Cities First: Remapping the Origins of Urbanism." In *A Companion to the City*, edited by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, 26-34. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.
- Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Stolnitz, Jerome. *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism: A Critical Introduction*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960.
- Taft, Robert. *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History*. New York: Dover, 1964.
- Tagg, John. "The Discontinuous City: Picturing and the Discursive Field." In *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations*, edited by Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey, 83-103. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1994.
- Triggs, Stanley G. *William Notman: The Stamp of a Studio*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario and Coach House Press, 1985.
- Vance, James E., Jr. *This Scene of Man: The Role and Structure of the City in the Geography of Western Civilization*. New York: Harper and Row, 1977.

- Vidler, Anthony. "Photourbanism: Planning the City from Above and from Below." In *A Companion to the City*, edited by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, 35-45. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.
- Warner, Sam Bass, Jr. *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press and M.I.T. Press, 1962.
- . "Today's Boston: A History." *The Massachusetts Historical Review* 1 (1999) <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/mhr/1/warner.html> (accessed Nov. 11, 2008).
- Whitehill, Walter Muir, and Lawrence W. Kennedy. *Boston: A Topographical History*. 3rd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Wiebe, Robert H. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*. New York: Wang, 1967.
- Wilson, Bronwen. "Venice, Print, and the Early Modern Icon." *Urban History* 33, no. 1 (2006): 39-64.
- Young, Alfred Fabian. *Liberty Tree: Ordinary People and the American Revolution*. New York: New York University Press, 2006.