

Samuel F. B. Morse to Jonas M. Edwards, "I am indeed gratified to learn that you are meeting with success," ca. late 1841 or early 1842

(keywords: Samuel F. B. Morse, Jonas M. Edwards, Mr. Young, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

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Manuscript letter by Samuel F. B. Morse to Jonas M. Edwards, ca. late 1841 or early 1842 (Date clipped from page. Original line breaks preserved.)

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 12th inst. I have received and I am indeed gratified to learn that you are meeting with success. — I have not even attempted to take an impression with the Daguerreotype since you left. My other affairs have required all my attention, and I have not had time for a thought on other subjects. — As to "secrets from Paris by special express" I know nothing of them and therefore can impart nothing. It is possible there may be some preparation recently discovered which will affect the results of which you tell me, but as I have not been in the way of knowing it I have not heard any thing. If I should learn any thing I will impart it to you with pleasure.

What you tell me in regard to the use of the zinc in mercurializing, was communicated to me by M. Young among the last things he did. I have not tried it and therefore cannot speak of it. My health is not good this winter. I wish you every success and believe me sincerely yr ["your"—edit.] friend & Servt. ["servant"—edit.]
To J. M. Edwards, Esqr. Sam. F. B. Morse

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Jonas M. Edwards was a young student of Samuel F. B. Morse. He began his brief career in late 1841 in Richmond, Virginia. By 1843, Edwards had joined with Edward Anthony, opening first in Washington, D.C. and then in New York City. The partners arranged to make daguerreotypes of prominent statesmen during the congressional sessions of 1842–43 and 1843–44. Edwards died in 1847 at age 23. Notice of his death ("of a complaint of the heart") is in *Daily Evening Transcript* (Boston) 18:5076 (12 February 1847) 2nd page. In the article, "The Daguerrean Art—Its Origin and Present State," *Photographic Art-Journal* 1:3 (March 1851): 136–37, Edwards is mentioned as having "rendered great

services to this cause [the daguerreian art], and in his intense application to the pursuit, may be said to have fallen a victim.”

A daguerreian locket portrait of Morse, by Edwards, is included in the 2008–2009 Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery exhibition, *Tokens of Affection and Regard: Photographic Jewelry and Its Makers*.¹

1. <http://www.npg.si.edu/exhibit/jewels/index.htm>

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