

M0011456: Wellcome Historical Medical Museum display: daguerreotype photomicrographs made by Leon Foucault

Publication/Creation

1950

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/ntbnxjvm>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution license.

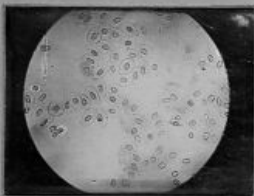
This licence permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

DAGUERREOTYPE PHOTOMICROGRAPHS BY LÉON FOUCAULT



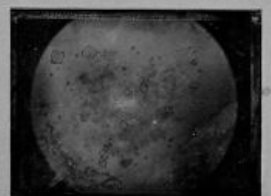
BLOOD CORPUSCLES OF THE FROG
8 1/186.



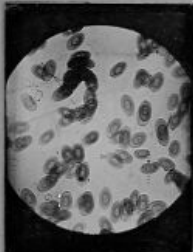
SPERMATAZOEA OF THE SEAHORSE
(Dumér's Atlas, fig. 45)
8 1/186.



SPERMATAZOEA OF THE FROG
(Dumér's Atlas, fig. 60)
8 1/186.



CRYSTALS OF URIC ACID
8 1/186.



BLOOD CORPUSCLES OF THE FROG
(Dumér's Atlas, fig. 8.)
8 1/186.

FIRST ATTEMPTS AT PHOTOMICROGRAPHY

In the year following the introduction of the first successful method of photography by Daguerre, Alfred Duméril described his first attempts at photomicrography. In 1840 he presented to the Académie des Sciences a "microscope-daguerriotype" with which he had photographed objects relating to Natural History and also sections of bone and teeth. Duméril, at the time, was Inspecteur Général of the University of Paris and delivered courses of lectures on microscopical anatomy. In 1844, he published his *Cours de microscopie complémentaire des études médicales* and in it referred to a forthcoming accompanying Atlas, the illustrations of which were being engraved from daguerriotype photomicrographs made by Léon Foucault. The Atlas appeared in 1845.

Léon Foucault (1819-1868), the distinguished physician, famous for his experiments on the velocity of light, for his pendulum and for other inventions that bear his name, first studied medicine, but then turned to the improvement of Daguerre's method of photography and was for three years assistant to Duméril in his courses of lectures. It was during this time that he made the photomicrographs, many of which appeared in Duméril's Atlas. Of the eight original photomicrographs taken and signed by Foucault that are shown here, five of them appeared in the Atlas. Foucault used magnifications of two and four hundred.

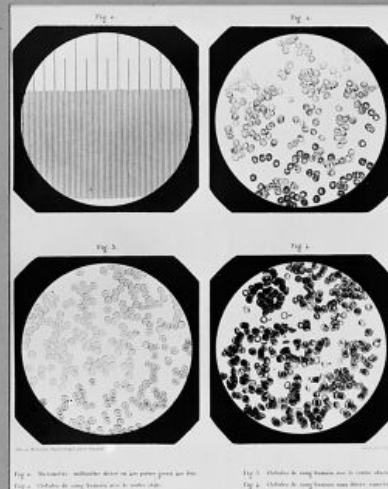


Fig. 1. Microscopie: section transversale d'un os (par le point p) au fort grossissement.
Fig. 2. Cristallin du sang (transverse) au fort grossissement.

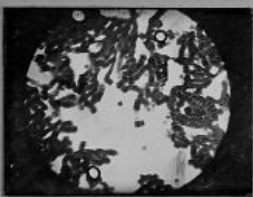
Fig. 3. Cristallin du sang (transverse) au fort grossissement.
Fig. 4. Cristallin du sang (transverse) au fort grossissement.

PLATE I OF DUMÉRIL'S ATLAS (1846)

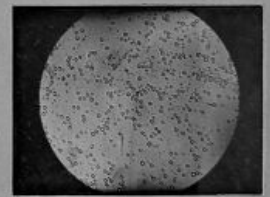
The engravings of this atlas that accompanied Duméril's *Cours de Microscopie* (1844) were made from micro-photographs taken by Léon Foucault.



CRYSTALS OF STRATIN OF UREA
(Dumér's Atlas, fig. 46)
8 1/186.



ROULEAUX OF BLOOD CORPUSCLES
8 1/186.



HUMAN MITES
(Dumér's Atlas, fig. 69)
8 1/186.