



**PHOTOGRAPHER:** **HUGH S. ANDERSON** (born between 1820 and 1828, Scotland; active in Petaluma 1874 or 1875 -1876)

**SITTERS:** "Pensive Couple"

**DATE:** between 1874 and 1876

**PHOTOGRAPHIC FORMAT:** enlarged reprint of original carte de visite

**IMPRINT:** "H. Anderson, Sunbeam Gallery, Petaluma"

**PRIVATE COLLECTION**

The poise and demeanor of this couple are unusual and make it difficult to identify their relationship. The sitters may be a newlyweds, but most wedding portraits from this time are more formal. It is possible that they are brother and sister. Both direct an almost confrontational gaze at the viewer, and this creates a disturbing although intriguing composition.

The gentleman sits with complete confidence, dressed in a fashionable jacket with contrasting collar and a double breasted vest festooned with a large, elaborate watch chain.

The young lady strikes a fashionably pensive pose with her index finger resting on the side of her face. She wears as a crown an elaborate braided hair piece decorated with white flowers. Her large-link, heavy, black necklace that is often identified as mourning jewelry adds an additional perplexing element to this double portrait.

Paula Freund, 2017