



*Figure 12.1* *Photographer Unknown, "Gardner's Gallery"* This undated photograph shows what the exterior of an urban photographer's gallery looked like. Notice the billboards advertising the different types of photographs and photographic services available, as well as the prominent advertisement for "Views of the War." Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

were far removed from the cities where photographers worked. The Civil War was different in two significant ways. First, the war's eastern theater of operations was close to urban centers such as Washington, D.C., that already had a commercial photography industry. Second, the consumer market for photographs in the United States had expanded exponentially during the 1850s because of technological improvements that made photographs affordable to just about everyone. Photographs had been a novelty of the well-to-do in the 1840s; by 1860, they were a part of American consumer culture, thanks in part to the relentless innovation and promotion of entrepreneurs such as Mathew Brady and Alexander Gardner.