



## THE ART OF VICTORIAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), *Julia Prinsep Jackson*, 1867

Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), **Julia Prinsep Jackson** (1846-1895) later **Julia Stephen**, 1867

Cameron's niece and the mother of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell.

- **Is photography art?** This was a question that arose as soon as photography was invented and was fiercely debated during the Victorian era. I will start with the development of photography and show how this question was tackled in many different ways.
- But first, before photography there was no way to automatically record an image of the world. It depended on the skill of artists, so I will begin by looking at some techniques for mass producing images before photography.

### THE ART OF VICTORIAN PHOTOGRAPHY

- The invention and blossoming of photography coincided with the Victorian era and photography had an enormous influence on how Victorians saw the world. We will see how photography developed and how it raised issues concerning its role and purpose and questions about whether it was an art. The photographic revolution put portrait painters out of business and created a new form of portraiture. Many photographers tried various methods and techniques to show it was an art in its own right. It changed the way we see the world and brought the inaccessible, exotic and erotic into the home. It enabled historic events, famous people and exotic places to be seen for the first time and the century ended with the first moving images which ushered in a whole new form of entertainment.

- My aim is to take you on a journey from the beginning of photography to the end of the nineteenth century with a focus on the impact it had on the visual arts.
- I focus on England and English photographers and I take this title narrowly in the sense of photographs displayed as works of fine art and broadly as the skill of taking photographs using this new medium.
- In particular,
  - Pre-photographic reproduction (including drawing and painting)
  - The discovery of photography, the first person captured, Fox Talbot and *The Pencil of Light*
  - But was it an art, how photographers created 'artistic' photographs, 'artistic' scenes, blurring, the Pastoral
  - The Victorian debate, Lady Eastlake, Julie Margaret Cameron, Oscar Rejlander
  - Practical uses – portraiture (putting artists out of business), picturesque scenes and travel guides, carte de visite and famous people, recording historic events (Crimean War), from the exotic to the erotic, from education to titillation
  - The moving image ushered in a new way of seeing the world, everything from news to entertainment

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Woodcut: Jost Amman, wood block cutter at work, 1568

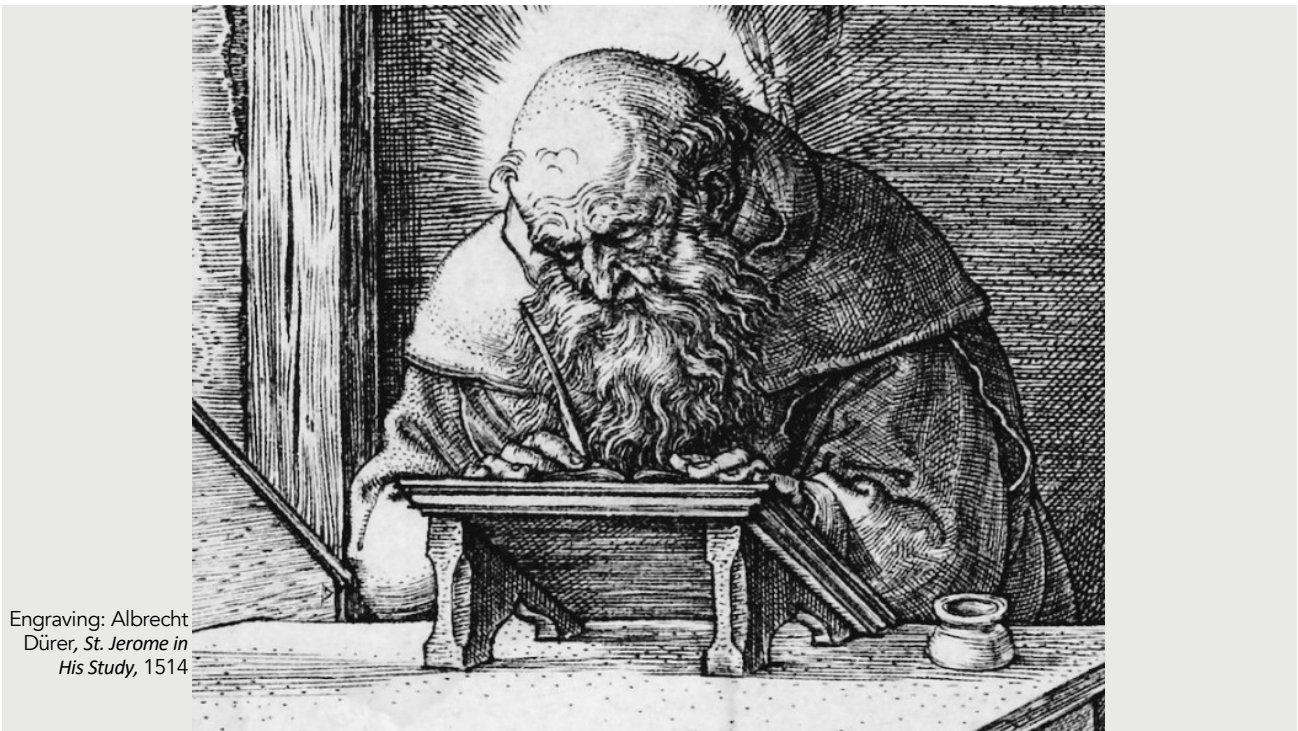


Woodcut: Jost Amman, wood block cutter at work

- We take image production for granted but before photography the only method of recording the world was to paint or draw it or inscribe it into a surface in some way. But that produced a single image.
- How could an image be produced that could be easily copied many times? The earliest method was to cut into a wooden block, roll ink onto the block and then press a piece of paper onto the block. The ink would only be on the raised original surface not in the areas and lines cut out so these would be the colour of the paper and the original inked surface would leave an ink residue on the paper. Typically, therefore, what you cut away would be white and the uncut areas would be black.
- This is a woodblock print of a person cutting a wood block. The black lines are the untouched areas, the wooden surface covered in ink, and the white areas are those that were cut away.

## NOTES

- Producing reproductions by cutting into wood was the oldest technique and was used by the **Chinese in 200BCE**. The first woodcut book illustration in the West was **1461**, a few years after the development of **movable type (1450, Johannes Gutenberg)**.



Engraving: Albrecht  
Dürer, *St. Jerome in  
His Study*, 1514

Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), *St. Jerome in His Study*, 1514, an engraving by a Northern Renaissance master

- The other method was engraving. This produced a finer image and was first used in Europe in the early 15th century. It is the opposite of woodcut in that the incised lines produce the black and the uncut areas remain white.
- The image consists of fine lines gouged into a metal plate, originally a copper plate. The ink is then squeezed onto the plate and wiped away from the surface so that it only remains inside the gouged grooves. This technique is called **intaglio** and the tool used to cut into the plate was called a **burin**. It is then necessary to use a high-pressure press to force the paper into the grooves to pick up the ink.
- So in this engraving, by Albrecht Dürer of St Jerome writing, the black lines are scratched into the metal plate using a burin and the white areas are untouched metal plate.
- Both methods, woodcut and engraving, were used to produce illustrations for books and to produce art works that could be cheaply reproduced. An engraving was often produced by a specialist engraver working from a painting produced by an artist.
- There was one other technique first used in Europe in 1516 and that was etching. A metal plate was covered in varnish of wax and the artist scratched lines through this layer. The plate was then put in an acid bath and the plate would be eaten away where the wax had been scratched away. The wax was

then removed with a solvent and the plated inked and processed like an engraving. The benefit of engraving is that it is easier to scratch through wax than to gouge a metal plate directly.

## NOTES

- The earliest known use of metal plates for printing was in China during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD). However, the first recorded use of metal plates for printing in Europe was in the early 15th century.
- Movable type had been invented by Johannes Gutenberg (1398-1468) in 1439 and the first book, of a German poem, was produced in 1450. The 42-line Bible or Gutenberg Bible was printed in 1455. Gutenberg had to borrow money and may have become bankrupt. He was largely forgotten but mentioned as the inventor of typography in 1504.
- "Of Dürer's three technically brilliant Meisterstiche (master engravings) of 1513 and 1514, the other two being *Melencolia I* (1514) and *Knight, Death and the Devil* (1513). This is the one whose interpretation seems the most straightforward. Saint Jerome, translator of the Bible into Latin (the Vulgate) and thus the exemplar of the Christian scholar, is seated in a typical study of Dürer's day. He works peacefully at a slanted writing table, and his lion and dog slumber equally peacefully in the foreground. The light of his halo and the sunlight pouring in through the windows are in perfect equilibrium, and recurrent horizontals in the composition add to the pervasive sense of repose and harmony." (Met Museum)
- "He is often depicted with a lion in reference to a legend in which he was befriended by a lion after extracting a thorn from it's paw." (V&A)
- Dogs are often used by Dürer to represent loyalty.
- 'Intaglio' is from the Italian to engrave or cut, from the Latin *taliare*, to cut.



Paul Sandby (1731-1809), *Roslin Castle, Midlothian*, c. 1780, 45.8 x 63.5 cm, Yale Centre for British Art

Paul Sandby (1731-1809), *Roslin Castle, Midlothian*, c. 1780, 45.8 x 63.5 cm, Yale Centre for British Art

- This is a watercolour painting of a woman using a camera obscura to sketch. These devices were first described by the Chinese in the 4th century BCE and then revived by Leonardo da Vinci. They became popular in the eighteenth century as they made it easier for amateurs to sketch a scene.
- This painting shows **Lady Frances Scott, an amateur artist of some repute** (she was known to Horace Walpole) with a **camera obscura** making her own mechanically assisted version of the scene. The picturesque viewpoint overlooks Roslin Castle, 8 miles from Edinburgh. Many artists including Paul Sandby used a camera obscura to keep a visual journal of their travels. Her friend Lady Elliot is seated beside her **adding a picturesque element to the scene**. Amateur artists appeared first in the eighteenth century and they were most often female water-colourists painting landscapes.
- The camera obscura is a box with a lens in front that projects the scene onto a ground-glass plate that is shielded from the sun by a cover. The artist places a thin piece of paper on the glass plate and hopefully can see enough of the image to draw an outline on the paper.
- The camera obscura inspired **Thomas Wedgwood, Joseph Nicéphore Niépce** (pronounced 'nee-say-four nee-eps') and **Henry Fox Talbot** to try to find ways to automatically record the image displayed. They all used light sensitive materials but found it difficult to find a sensitive enough material and fix the

image.

## **NOTES**

- The artist, **Paul Sandby** (1731-1809), was an English map maker turned landscape artist in watercolours. He was a founding member of the Royal Academy with his older brother **Thomas Sandby**.
- **Leonardo da Vinci** (1452–1519), wrote the **earliest known clear description of a camera obscura in 1502**. There are many earlier references to optical devices and it has been suggested that naturally occurring small holes into a dark cave could have thrown an image onto a wall and inspired cave painting.
- Roslin Castle is about eight miles southwest of Edinburgh and was built in the fourteenth century. The ruins overlook the River Esk and the scene was often the subject of poetry and paintings. The wild and sublime view also attracted visitors and this painting reflects the growing trend for picturesque touring.
- 'Picturesque' beauty was created and promoted by the **Reverend William Gilpin** whose 'Observations on the River Wye' appeared in print in **1782**. He was a **pioneer of the 'Picturesque'** and he saw the landscape as 'expressive of that peculiar beauty which is agreeable in a picture.' His writings influenced the remarkable popularity of English landscape painting during the last decade of the 18th Century, and inspired the Romantic poets. Gilpin's book was arguably the first tour guide to be published in Britain, it was one of a series of illustrated guidebooks to help travellers locate and enjoy the most 'Picturesque' aspects of the countryside.
- The design of the **camera obscura** was simple, light coming through a small opening in front of the box would hit a mirror placed at an angle and this projected the image onto a glass surface on which was laid a sheet, allowing its user to draw the outlines. The camera obscura was extremely popular with amateur artists and travellers who wished to keep a visual record of their search for the picturesque. They were used by amateurs, as shown here, but also by professional artists, such as Paul Sandby, Canaletto (1697-1768) and Joshua Reynolds.
- It should be noted that **Aristotle and Euclid** mentioned a type of **camera obscura**.

## **References**

- <https://collections.britishart.yale.edu/catalog/tms:13045>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera\\_obscura](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera_obscura)





Théodore Géricault (1791-1824), *Boxers*, 1818, lithograph, image 35.4 × 41.9 cm, The Met

Théodore Géricault (1791-1824), *Boxers*, 1818, lithograph, image 35.4 × 41.9 cm, The Met

- The final method I would like to mention is lithography. This was invented in 1796 by German actor and playwright Alois Senefelder (pronounced 'al-louis zena-felder').
- You get a limestone slab and draw on it with wax (oil or fat). Then etch the stone with acid and gum arabic to make the bare stone more water attracting. Clean the stone and the wax areas will repel water and the bare stone will attract water. Then apply an oil-based ink and it will be attracted to the areas drawn with wax and repelled by the water. A blank sheet of paper is then pressed onto the stone with a printing press.
- Multi-colour printing or chromolithography was not invented until 1837 by Godefroy Engelmann and it required a stone to be used for each colour.
- By 1852 lithography had replaced all the other techniques for mass market production of images as it was cheap and easy to use.
- Offset-lithography is still used today with metal or plastic plates for most high-speed printing of books and newspapers. It is called offset because the image is first transferred to a rubber blanket before being transferred to the paper as the image becomes clearer and sharper..

## NOTES

- "Géricault began to practice lithography—a medium associated with French Romanticism—in 1817, quickly mastering the technique. This image represents the popular English sport of boxing: two muscular combatants, in strikingly similar poses, confront one another. The black-and-white medium is used here to accentuate racial difference through stylised symmetries. In a dynamic and

dramatic image, Gericault presents rivalry as a conflict between two male "opposites," with a highly charged space between them." [1]

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[1] <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/357998>



Nicéphore Niépce's *View from the Window at Le Gras* (1826 or 1827), the earliest surviving photograph of a real-world scene, made using a camera obscura at Saint-Loup-de-Varennes, France, 16.2 x 20.2 cm

Enhanced version of Niépce's *View from the Window at Le Gras* (1826 or 1827), the earliest surviving photograph of a real-world scene, made using a camera obscura at Saint-Loup-de-Varennes, France, 16.2 x 20.2 cm, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center in Austin, Texas.

- We have now reached the period when many inventors were experimenting with trying to capture an image permanently. With mixed success. For example, the first recorded image was made by **Thomas Wedgwood in 1800 on bitumen** but it could not be fixed, was very faint and no longer exists.
- This is the first surviving **permanent image** was taken by **Joseph Nicéphore Niépce** (1765-1833, 'nee-say-four nee-eps') in **1826 or 1827** but the image took **several days** to record and could only be seen by holding the metal plate at an angle.
- You can see it is a large house. **Niépce came from a wealthy family** so they had to flee the French Revolution but he later worked as a staff officer in the army under Napoleon. In 1801 he returned to his family's estates to continue his scientific research. Everyone knew that silver chloride darkens when exposed to light so could capture an image but no one knew how to fix it permanently. In 1816, **Niépce** captured small negative images using silver chloride and tried many chemicals to fix it but without success. Instead, he used thinned bitumen painted on a plate. Sunlight would harden the bitumen which would resist being eaten away by acid and acted as an acid resist, **a form of automatic engraving**. It was used in 1822 to create the world's first permanent photographic image. It was later accidentally destroyed trying to

make a print so the **earliest surviving image of the world is this one from 1826 or 27**. In 1829, he went into partnership with Louis **Daguerre**.

Following his death four years later Daguerre concentrated on the use of silver salts and the process he invented was called the daguerreotype. It was Daguerre who became known as the father of photography although the process was discovered by Niépce and refined by Daguerre.

- On seeing his first image Daguerre said, '**I have seized the light – I have arrested its flight!**' He became known as one of the fathers of photography. In 1839 the **French Government agreed to pay him a pension for life of 6,000 francs** (and 4,000 francs to the family of Niépce) in exchange for the invention which they then **offered "free to the world" in France and its territories**.
- He used a copper sheet plated with silver iodide and fixed the image using salt water and later 'hypo' (hyposulphite of soda, now called sodium thiosulphate) a chemical that dissolves silver halides, a discovery made by John Herschel who informed Daguerre and Fox Talbot in 1839.

## NOTES

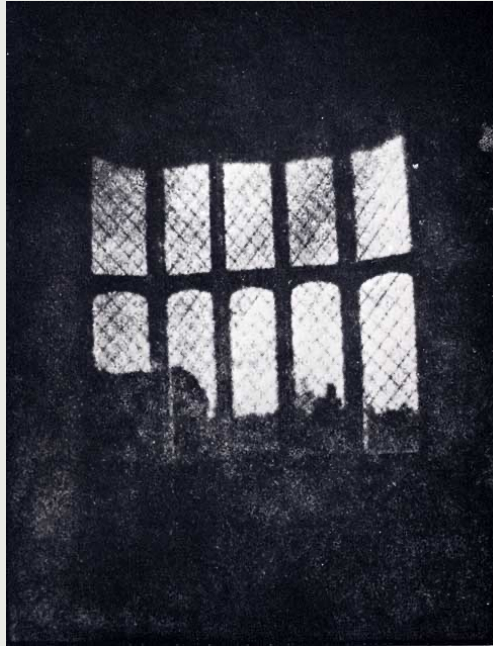
- **Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre** (1787–1851) was a French artist and photographer, recognised for his invention of the daguerreotype process of photography. Before he went into partnership with Niépce he was a **successful artist and theatre designer** who had invented the diorama. Following the death of Niépce in 1833 Daguerre concentrated on the use of silver salts and the process **he invented**, known as the **daguerreotype**.
- He held a silver-plated copper sheet above iodine vapour to create silver iodide. He then exposed it in a camera and by holding the plate above mercury vapours he dramatically reduced the exposure time.
- He discovered he could fix the image by removing the unexposed silver iodide using salt water. He later used 'hypo' (hyposulphite of soda, now known as sodium thiosulphate).
- The image was reversed and the plate had to be held at a certain angle to see the image. The image was also very sensitive to scratching and so was sealed under glass.
- Daguerre was a celebrated theatre designer and painter of panoramas who **invented the diorama in 1822**.
- **Joseph Nicéphore Niépce invented and built the world's first internal**

combustion engine in 1807.

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- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis\\_Daguerre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Daguerre)

William Henry Fox  
Talbot (1800-1877),  
Latticed window at  
Lacock Abbey, 1835



William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877), Latticed window at Lacock Abbey, 1835

- Which brings me on to **William Henry Fox Talbot** (1800-1877).
- Work on capturing images was proceeding in parallel in the UK. I mentioned Wedgwood but the person who found a way to capture and fix a permanent image was Fox Talbot. This is one of the earliest photographs he took. It shows the leaded light windows of his home, **Lacock Abbey** (10 miles from Bath).
- He won a prize in classics at Trinity College, Cambridge and went on to mathematics and optics. He began experimenting with what became photography and his first photograph was taken in 1834 and his first successful photograph was this one the following year.
- When Louis Daguerre exhibited his pictures in 1839 Talbot showed his three and a half year old pictures at the Royal Institution the same year. He submitted his process (photogenic drawing) to the Royal Society in February, six months before Daguerre revealed the details of his process. Both Fox Talbot and Daguerre obtained patents for their processes in the UK.
- In **1841 Fox Talbot** announced the discovery of the **calotype or talbotype process** which used **paper coated with silver iodide**. The silver iodide paper was sensitised and developed using silver nitrate, acetic acid and gallic acid (from galls) and **fixed using potassium bromide or 'hypo'** and then thoroughly washed. Using this process exposure times were reduced **from hours to minutes**.
- Talbot has often been **criticised** for patenting his work and charging a **license**

**fee** of up to £300 a year as it was thought this held back the development of photography in Britain. However, the **daguerreotype** process was also patented in the UK and Daguerre restricted access to his process more than Fox Talbot and charged more.

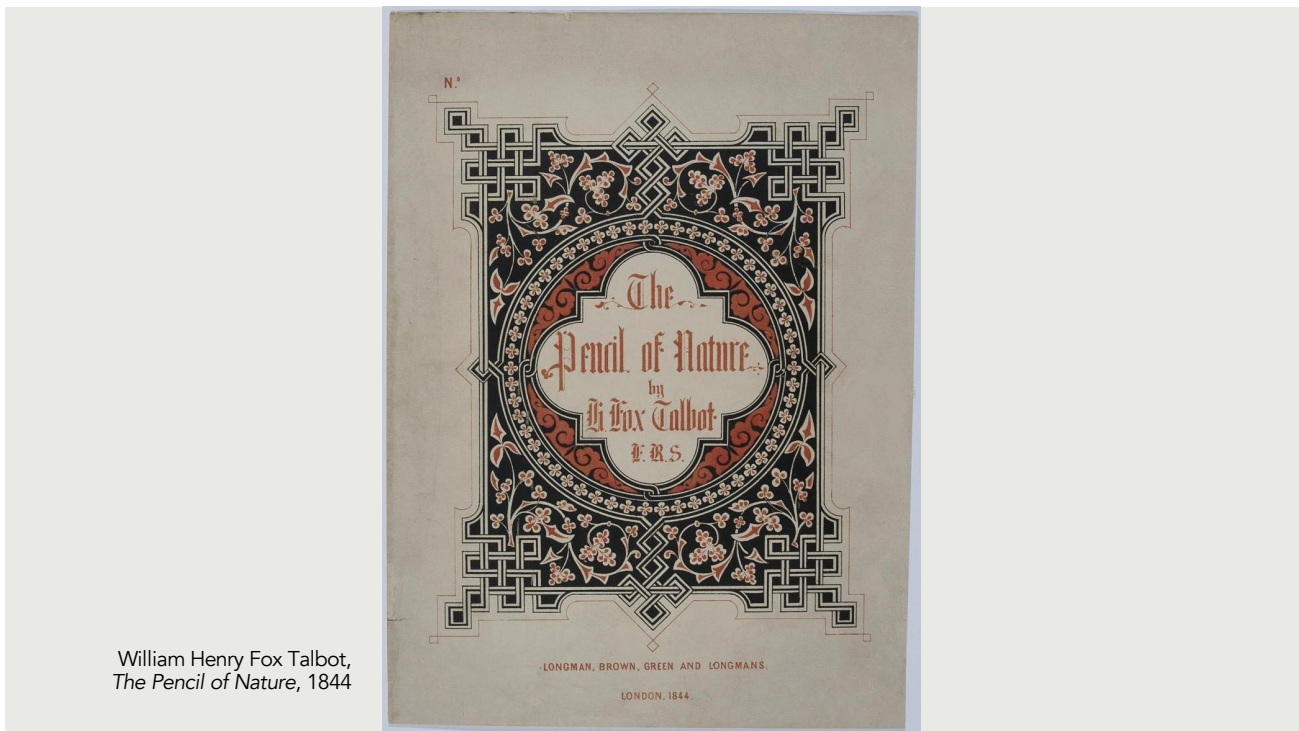
- Talbot's negative/positive process eventually **became the standard** in the nineteenth and twentieth century and by **1860 the use of daguerreotypes was rare**. Early calotypes were **fuzzy** and daguerreotypes were sharp but in 1851, the year of Daguerre's death, the **wet collodion process** enabled glass to be used as the support and the **level of detail** became as great as in **daguerreotypes**. Wet plates were still inconvenient and in the **1880s** the wet plates were replaced by **dry gelatine-coated plates**.

## **NOTES**

- Fox Talbot was the only son of William Davenport Talbot of Lacock Abbey and Lady Elizabeth Fox Strangways. He was educated at Harrow School and Trinity College, Cambridge and was awarded a prize in classics in 1820. He communicated with the Royal Society on mathematical subjects and optical researches and began experimenting with what became photography in 1834. His first successful photographs were taken in 1835 using paper sensitised with sodium chloride but exposure times were typically hours.
- The idea of photography came to him during his visit to Italy in 1823-24 when he was **recording the images from a camera obscura onto paper**. He realised at once the **importance of silver nitrate** which goes dark quickly when exposed to light. He **returned to England in 1834 and started experimenting immediately**. It took months of experimenting before he realised that a weak solution of salt produced a darker image with silver chloride than a stronger solution. He then had the problem of fixing the resulting image and first tried silver iodine. The announcement of the daguerreotype by M. Daguerre in 1839 caused him to announce his discovery.

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See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Henry\\_Fox\\_Talbot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Henry_Fox_Talbot)



William Henry Fox Talbot,  
*The Pencil of Nature*, 1844

William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, 1844

- **From the beginning the question everyone was asking was "is it art?"**, and from the beginning Fox Talbot was convinced that one of the purposes of photography would be to create works of art.
- Between 1844 and 1846, Fox Talbot published *The Pencil of Nature* in six instalments and it was described as the **'first photographically illustrated book to be commercially published'**. Talbot had two objectives, to explain various practical uses for photography and **to present photographic images as an art form**. His practical uses included recording large collections of, for example, china and glass, quickly, to record ancient works for posterity and to record buildings and scenes.
- The book was written by Talbot and published by Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans in London and it detailed his development of the calotype process and included **24 calotype prints**, each one pasted in by hand, illustrating some of the possible applications of the new technology. Since photography was still very much a novelty and many people remained unfamiliar with the concept, Talbot felt compelled to insert the following notice into his book:
  - ***The plates of the present work are impressed by the agency of Light alone, without any aid whatever from the artist's pencil. They are the sun-pictures themselves, and not, as some persons have imagined, engravings in imitation.***

## NOTES



- *The Pencil of Nature* was published and sold one section at a time, without any binding (as with many books of the time, purchasers were expected to have it bound themselves once all the instalments had been released). Talbot planned a large number of instalments; however, the book was **not a commercial success** and he was forced to terminate the project after completing only six.
- Each plate is accompanied by a short text which describes the scene and the photographic processes involved in obtaining it. Talbot emphasised the practical implications of his images (for instance, "The whole cabinet of a Virtuoso and collector of old China might be depicted on paper in little more time than it would take him to make a written inventory describing it in the usual way."), but he also recognised their artistic value.
- **Henry Fox Talbot was a polymath and was elected to the Royal Society in 1831** for his work on the integral calculus, and researched in optics, chemistry, electricity and other subjects such as etymology, the decipherment of cuneiform, and ancient history.
- Due to the novelty of the subject, Talbot needed to point out some things that seem obvious today; for instance, **'Groups of figures take no longer time to obtain than single figures would require, since the Camera depicts them all at once, however numerous they may be.'** He also speculated about such questions as (among others) whether photographs would stand up as **evidence in court** and whether a camera could be made to **record ultraviolet light**.
- At the beginning of the book, Talbot included an incomplete history of his development of the calotype, titled 'Brief Historical Sketch of the Invention of the Art.' The history ends rather abruptly, and though Talbot expressed his intention to complete it at a later date, he never did.

### CONTENTS OF THE *PENCIL OF NATURE*

Part 1

PLATE I. PART OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD. . .	15
PLATE II. VIEW OF THE BOULEVARDS AT PARIS. . .	17
PLATE III. ARTICLES OF CHINA. . . . .	19
PLATE IV. ARTICLES OF GLASS. . . . .	21
PLATE V. BUST OF PATROCLUS. . . . .	23

Part 2

PLATE VI. THE OPEN DOOR. . . . .	25
PLATE VII. LEAF OF A PLANT. . . . .	27
PLATE VIII. A SCENE IN A LIBRARY. . . . .	29
PLATE IX. FAC-SIMILE OF AN OLD PRINTED PAGE. . . . .	31
PLATE X. THE HAYSTACK. . . . .	33
PLATE XI. COPY OF A LITHOGRAPHIC PRINT. . . . .	35
PLATE XII. THE BRIDGE OF ORLEANS. . . . .	37

Part 3

PLATE XIII. QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD. . . . .	39
PLATE XIV. THE LADDER. . . . .	41
PLATE XV. LACOCK ABBEY IN WILTSHIRE. . . . .	43

Part 4

PLATE XVI. CLOISTERS OF LACOCK ABBEY. . . . .	45
PLATE XVII. BUST OF PATROCLUS. . . . .	47
PLATE XVIII. GATE OF CHRISTCHURCH. . . . .	49

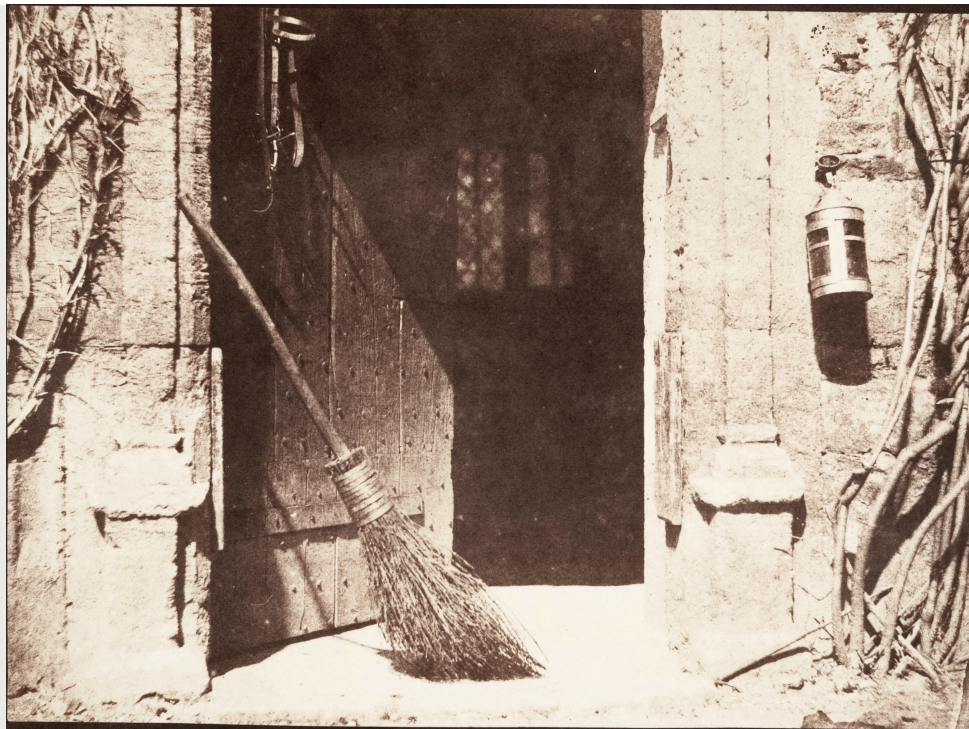
Part 5

PLATE XIX. THE TOWER OF LACOCK ABBEY . . . . .	51
PLATE XX. LACE . . . . .	55
PLATE XXI. THE MARTYRS' MONUMENT . . . . .	57

Part 6

PLATE XXII. WESTMINSTER ABBEY . . . . .	59
PLATE XXIII. HAGAR IN THE DESERT. . . . .	61
PLATE XXIV. A FRUIT PIECE. . . . .	63

Henry Fox Talbot, 'The Open Door', Plate VI, *The Pencil of Nature*, 1844



Henry Fox Talbot, 'The Open Door', Plate VI, *The Pencil of Nature*, 1844

- Fox Talbot wrote, "**The chief object of the present work is to place on record some of the early beginnings of a new art, before the period, which we trust is approaching, of its being brought to maturity by the aid of British talent.**"
- We see a well balanced still life. In terms of composition the broom balances the lamp and both frame the entrance with a diagonal shadow across the door running parallel to the broom handle. The dark interior contains some detail that draws our eye into the interior.
- With the bright sunshine outside and the dark interior the dynamic range is high and Fox Talbot has exposed the image for the exterior but the interior is lifted out of darkness by the window.
- The tackle hanging on the door is balanced by the lantern and the two plants frame the picture.

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Henry Fox Talbot, 'View of the Boulevards of Paris', Plate II,  
The Pencil of Nature, 1844

Fox Talbot, 'View of the Boulevards of Paris', Plate II, *The Pencil of Nature*, 1844

- This picture is the **second picture** from the **first volume** of Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature*. He included one portrait and one artistic image in the book and ten of the 24 images were of specific locations such as Westminster Abbey, Queen's College and Lacock Abbey.
- **Talbot presented photography as an art form from the beginning.** He also pointed out other uses for photography, such as recording collections of, for example, glassware or ceramics, recording detail instantly, making copies of important documents and works of art and recording architecture and scenes.
- Note that this Parisian boulevard shows no people or traffic because the **exposure times were so long that no one stayed still long enough for their image to be recorded.**

## NOTES

- From the beginning **Talbot** was motivated to automate the **artistic process** and to be able to reproduce the image mechanically. In 1841 he **licensed Henry Collen**, a **miniature painter** as the first professional calotypist.



A photograph of Algae, made by Anna Atkins as part of her 1843 book, Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions, the first book composed entirely of photographic images

A photograph of Algae, made by Anna Atkins as part of her 1843 book, Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions, the first book composed entirely of photographic images. At

<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/id?419608>

- In fact, the **first book of photographs** was published the year before by **Anna Atkins** (1799-1871) an English botanist and photographer <sup>2</sup>. Atkins was a pioneer in the use of cyanotype, a photographic printing process that produces a cyan-blue print <sup>2</sup>. She used this process to create a series of books called **Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions** <sup>2</sup>. The books contained cyanotype photographs of algae specimens, which Atkins collected and pressed herself <sup>2</sup>. Atkins book was groundbreaking and influential but the images were flattened impressions <sup>2</sup>.
- Notes
- The cyanotypes process was invented by John Herschel (1792-1871) and they became known as blueprints.

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Source: Conversation with Bing, 12/11/2023

(1) How Women Artists in Victorian England Pushed Photography Forward.

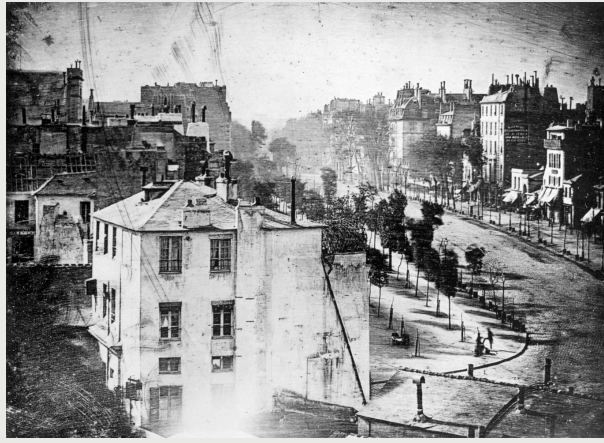
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Louis Daguerre, 'Boulevard du Temple', Paris, 3rd arrondissement, 1838

Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787-1851), 'Boulevard du Temple', Paris, 3rd arrondissement, **1838**.

- An important aspect of photography being recognised as an art form was **the recording of people**. Unfortunately it could take ten minutes exposure and so it was difficult to record anyone clearly. **The first ever person to be recorded was on a daguerreotype in 1838.**
- **A daguerreotype is a thin silver-plated copper sheet that has been exposed to the vapour of heated iodine crystals producing silver iodide.** Daguerre discovered how to 'develop' (strengthen) the image using mercury vapour and then 'fix' (make it insensitive) it by washing it in heated salt water. Later he used 'hypo' (sodium thiosulphate). The image was reversed and had to be examined at an angle and mounted under glass to protect it. **It had one major shortcoming, it could only be copied by taking another photograph.** Studios would use cameras with multiple lenses in order to produce copies.
- Note that, as with most daguerreotypes, the image is a **mirror image** so here I have reversed the image. Can you see the person?



Louis Daguerre, 'Boulevard du Temple', Paris, 3rd arrondissement, 1838

Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787-1851), 'Boulevard du Temple', Paris, 3rd arrondissement, **1838**.

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis\\_Daguerre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Daguerre)

- This is an enlargement of what is believed to be the **earliest photograph showing a living person**. It is a view of a busy street, but because the exposure time was **at least ten minutes** the moving traffic left no trace. Only the two men near the bottom left corner, one apparently having his boots polished by the other, stayed in one place long enough to be visible.



David Octavius Hill  
and Robert Adamson,  
*Willie Liston, Redding*  
(cleaning or preparing)  
*the line, Newhaven*  
*fisherman, 1844*



David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, *Willie Liston, Redding* (cleaning or preparing) *the line, Newhaven fisherman, 1844*

- However, **photography was moving rapidly**. Within a few years a wide range of people and professions were being photographed.
- As early as **1843**, painter David **Octavius Hill** (1802-1870) joined engineer Robert **Adamson** (1821-1848) to form **Scotland's first photographic studio**.
- Their partnership ended with Adamson's untimely death at the age of 27 but before he died they produced what has been described as '**the first substantial body of self-consciously artistic work using the newly invented medium of photography**.' (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography)
- Watercolourist John Harden, on first seeing Hill & Adamson's calotypes in November 1843, wrote, '**The pictures produced are as Rembrandt's but improved, so like his style & the oldest & finest masters that doubtless a great progress in Portrait painting & effect must be the consequence.**' It was four years later that the **Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood** was formed based on a new style of meticulous recording of nature.

David Octavius Hill  
and Robert Adamson,  
'Elizabeth Rigby, later  
Lady Eastlake', c1847



David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, 'Elizabeth Rigby, later Lady Eastlake', c1847

- This is a portrait by Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson of **Elizabeth Rigby** who was a British author, art critic and art historian and who married the **Keeper of the National Gallery** and later **President of the Royal Academy, President of the Photographic Society** and **the first Director of the National Gallery**.
- **Lady Eastlake** was the first person to argue in detail that **photography is not a fine art** as early as 1857. She appreciated the fact that photography provided **accurate reproduction and suggested this might eventually free painting from slavish imitation**.
  - **The artist, she argued, exercises the "free-will of the intelligent being" but the photographer merely obeys "the machine"**. She seems to be unaware of the many decisions the photography must make to capture a scene.
  - A second reason is that photography **serves practical ends** but art ought to be pursued **"mainly for its own sake"**. Fox Talbot identified many uses for photography including the practical as well as the artistic. It is like criticising painting because we paint out houses.
  - Finally, the artist creates a single work but the **photographer makes multiple prints** showing it is a **commodity not a fine art**. This would rule out Rembrandt's etchings as works of art.
- Those who championed photography as an art produced prints of unusual

artistic quality like Octavius Hill. Later I will talk about **Julia Margaret Cameron** is one of the best known of those who sought to 'ennoble' **photography** by using techniques such as **artistic costumes, lighting and intentional blurring to add mystery and romance.**

### DAVID OCTAVIUS HILL

- Photography quickly expanded in use to include portraits and landscapes. This portrait was taken by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson of Elizabeth Rigby, **later Lady Eastlake**, in c1847.

### LADY EASTLAKE

- Elizabeth Rigby was a British author, art critic and art historian who married **Sir Charles Lock Eastlake** in **1849**, Keeper of the **National Gallery** from 1843-47 (Note his nephew Charles Locke Eastlake was keeper of the National Gallery from 1878-1898). He became **President of the Royal Academy** and was **knighted in 1850** and **President of the Photographic Society in 1853** and first **Director of the National Gallery** in 1855. She was the first woman to write regularly for the *Quarterly Review*. When her widowed mother moved to Edinburgh she moved with her and her literary career meant she mixed in the intellectual circles that included David Octavius Hill. He produced a series of 20 calotypes assisted by Robert Adamson and in 1857 she published an **essay** on the relationship between **art and photography**. She married when she was 40 and toured Europe with her husband. She **wrote *Five Great Painters*** (1883) about Leonardo, Michelangelo, Titian, Raphael and Durer. She is now seen as a **pioneer of female journalism.**

### References

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Octavius\\_Hill](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Octavius_Hill)

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady\\_Eastlake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady_Eastlake)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth\\_Eastlake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Eastlake)



David Octavius Hill, *The First General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1843-66*

David Octavius Hill, *The First General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1866*

- This is the first work of art painted with the help of photographic images.
- Hill was a **Scottish** painter and **arts activist** and he formed a studio with **Robert Adamson** an engineer and photographer. An early collaboration between **art and science** with a business objective. They became very early innovators and in **1843 photographed** the **450 ministers** who founded the Free Church of Scotland (the Disruption Assembly) and then produced a painting of them all 4' 8" high and over **12' long** (took 23 years to complete in 1866).
- Photography was changing the way events were recorded, the way artists worked and the way we see the world.



Oscar Gustave Rejlander (1813–1875), *Two Ways of Life*, 1857 , 40.6 x 76.2 cm

Oscar Gustave Rejlander (1813–1875), *Two Ways of Life*, 1857, 40.6 x 76.2 cm

Oscar Gustave Rejlander (1813–1875), *Two Ways of Life*, individual photograph, 1857

- Many photographers thought that to produce a photograph that could be accepted as a work of art it was necessary to copy the **subject matter of fine art** and make the same **serious moral point as a history painting**. In this composite photograph Oscar Rejlander (1813-1875) has created a classical scene representing the two choices in life for a young man. Here two young men make different choices, On the **left** was see the **immoral life** and a **young man** being **enticed** towards it. On the **right** the **serious, religious, moral life** that is attracting the **other young man**.
- Rejlander was a pioneering Victorian art photographer and is today best known for taking the photographs used by Charles Darwin in his ***The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*** (1872).
- Rejlander seems to have **invented combination printing** which enabled **two or more photographs** to be combined. One of the earliest examples is this, called ***Two Ways of Life***, created in 1857 and first exhibited at the **Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition**. It is a made from **32 negatives** and took **six weeks to produce**.
- (CLICK) This is one of the photographs he used to create this photomontage, not the exact photograph used but one of the series.
- The **nude** was **barely acceptable** in Britain in the early part of Victoria's reign

and it only started to **become accepted in fine art painting during the 1860s**. This was therefore a very early example of the public exhibition of the nude and perhaps more surprisingly a copy of the print was purchased by **Queen Victoria for Prince Albert**. Queen Victoria's purchase of a number of paintings that included female nudes helped endorse the subject in Britain.

- **This image was the first publicly exhibited photograph of a nude in England, the first major art photograph and the first photo-montage** and the Met Museum wrote **"The Two Ways of Life was one of the most ambitious and controversial photographs of the nineteenth century."**

### **NOTES**

- "The technique of composite printing also **proved controversial**. Many felt that an **elaborately staged art composition was inappropriate** for the "mechanical" medium of photography. It was **picture making instead of picture taking**, a theory that Rejlander would eventually concede in his 12 Feb 1863 address to the South London Photographic Society, "An Apology for Art-Photography." [1] Of course, if the photographer is a picture maker not just a picture taker then this addresses one of the objections to photography as capable of being used to produce art.

### **REFERENCES**

- [1] <https://www.costumecocktail.com/2016/12/03/two-ways-of-life-1857/>  
See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar\\_Gustave\\_Rejlander](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Gustave_Rejlander)



Oscar Gustave Rejlander, 'Reclining female nude artists' study, dorsal', c.1857,  
The Royal Photographic Society Collection

Oscar Gustave Rejlander, 'Reclining female nude artists' study, dorsal', c.1857,  
The Royal Photographic Society Collection

- Oscar Rejlander also made many **studies of nude models that were used by artists.**
- Academic studies of nude models enabled artists to reduce the time and cost of using models.
- The photographic nude posed a problem as photography was seen as unable to transcend its subject. A distinction was made between the nude, a classicised or idealised figure in a painting and the naked, a **photograph of a man or woman without clothes.** The painting was seen as a purely aesthetic experience but the photograph was unacceptable except in very particular circumstances, such as an aid to drawing the nude. These images were regarded as **borderline erotic and they started to circulate more widely.**
- The ability to produce **cheap photographs** took off in 1851 with the development of the glass plate and the albumen print and this rapidly led to the widespread availability of erotic images and a significant part of the photographic business became selling such photographs. In **1857, the Obscene Publications Act** was passed in England although there was strong opposition based on the Act being used to censor works of art. The bill was passed when the Lord Chief Justice reassured the House that it "**...intended to apply exclusively to works written for the single purpose of corrupting the morals of youth and of a nature calculated to shock the common feelings of**

**decency in any well-regulated mind"**. The Act itself left it up to the courts to decide what 'obscene' meant. Within a few years the Act was used to successfully prosecute an anti-Catholic pamphlet.

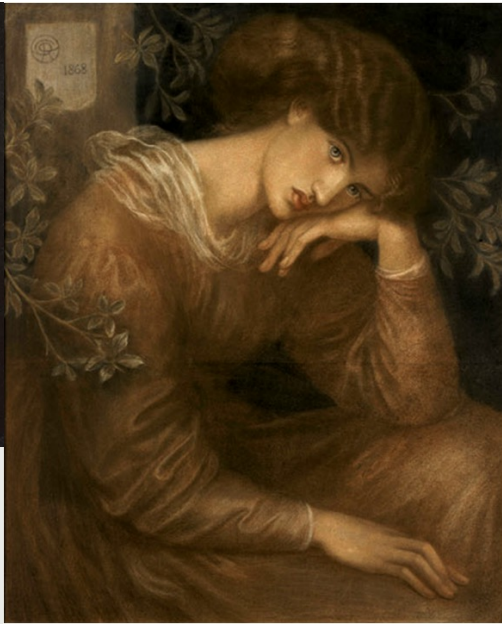
## NOTES

- The daguerreotype process did not allow copying but a calotype could be copied an indefinite number of times.
- Many erotic photographs were produced in France and they became known as '**French postcards**'. The centre for sales in London was **Holywell Street**, a street that was pulled down when Aldwych was developed.
- The original intention and wording of the Obscene Publications Act (1857, also known as Lord Campbell's Act) was to prosecute those intending to '**corrupt the morals of youth**' but ten years later a judge ruled that any publication was obscene if it had a "**tendency ... to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences**" regardless of its artistic or literary merit. This test became known as the **Hicklin test (1868)**. The case concerned a publication describing the questions Roman Catholics asked women during confession.





Album of Portraits of Mrs. William Morris (Jane Burden), photographer John R. Parsons and posed by Rossetti, 1865, Album assembled by Gordon Bottomly in 1933, now in the V&A



Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), *Reverie*, 1868, private collection, coloured chalks

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), *Reverie*, 1868, private collection, coloured chalks

Album of Portraits of Mrs. William Morris (Jane Burden), photographer John R. Parsons and posed by Rossetti, 1865 (aged 26), album assembled by Gordon Bottomly in 1933, now in the V&A

- The **photograph was a great aid to artists** as a fixed record of a scene, a building or a model. **John Ruskin** recognised their usefulness and **took a photographer with him** on trips to Europe. He wrote to his father as early as 1846 about **daguerreotypes as 'glorious things' 'very nearly the same thing as carrying off the palace itself' 'every chip of stone & stain is there'**. However, later in the century **his early enthusiasm waned as he felt photography threatened high art** as certain kinds of representation could now be produced mechanically. He saw it as symptomatic of **the soullessness of industrial society** and such 'grinding', as he called it, will lead to art which is no art and **artists who are no longer gentlemen**.
- Many artists used photography as an aid but they **did not all admit to the practice** as there was a long-held belief that copying is a mere skill and true art should be creative.
- **Rossetti was one of the first artists to realise and use photography** as a means for disseminating knowledge of his work. Rossetti rarely exhibited his work and so photography enabled many more people to see it and it established his reputation on the continent. The artist Val Prinsep took

photographs of Rossetti's work as well as Frederick Hollyer, a professional photographer.

- This is a painting by Dante Gabriel Rossetti called *Reverie*. The model is Mrs William Morris (**Jane Burden**) and this photograph was discovered later. The photograph is now in the V&A and it looks very likely that it was used by Rossetti to assist with the production of the painting.

## NOTES

- Jane Morris (née Jane Burden, 1839–1914) was an English artists' **model** who embodied the Pre-Raphaelite **ideal of beauty**. She was a model and muse to the artists **William Morris**, whom she **married**, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. She was born in Oxford, the daughter of a **stableman**, Robert Burden and his wife Ann Maizey, who was a laundress. Her mother Ann was illiterate and probably came to Oxford as a domestic servant. Little is known of Jane Burden's childhood, but it was **poor and deprived**. She and her sister Elizabeth ('Bessie') were noticed when they attended a play at the Drury Lane Theatre, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Edward Burne-Jones. She married William Morris in 1859 and they moved to the Red House in Bexley in 1860. She began an affair with Rossetti in the late 1860s which lasted until 1876. She had an affair with Wilfrid Scawen Blunt poet and political activist in 1887. She helped William Morris (1834-1896, aged 62) with his work and after his death in 1896 she helped her daughter May Morris assemble *The Collected Works of William Morris*.

## JOHN BERGER

In 1972, John Berger a painter, novelist, and historian wrote *Ways of Seeing* in which he argued that the invention of the camera changed the way people in general and artists in particular saw the world. The camera could cut off the scene in novel ways, a technique used by Edgar Degas, the long exposures created streaks of light, a technique used by Whistler in *Nocturne in Black and Gold, the Falling Rocket* and later stop action enabled events that took place in a fraction of a second to be frozen and analysed. This also enabled 'snapshots' to be taken of people going about their normal business whereas previously artists would pose people in carefully arranged scenes. Another way it changed the way we see the world is that it could capture detail that required days of work by an artist. Arnason and Klab in *History of Modern Art*, wrote that 'the scrupulous fidelity of the photographic image' was 'a good reason to work imaginatively or conceptually and thus liberated their art from

the requirement of pictorial verisimilitude'. The camera also provided the freedom to experiment which ultimately led to the abstraction of form. If the world can be captured by the click of a button then the artist is freed to explore areas of the imagination beyond mere visual reproduction.

## **REFERENCES**

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante\\_Gabriel\\_Rossetti](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_Gabriel_Rossetti)

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane\\_Burden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Burden)

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Berger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Berger)



Henry Peach Robinson, *Autumn*, 1860

Henry Peach Robinson (1830-1901), *Autumn*, 1860

- Returning to the topic of the ways in which Victorian photographers produced photographs that would be seen as art.
- **Henry Peach Robinson** was another pioneer of the use of multiple images and the creation of **set 'artistic' scenes**. He believed that art is the '**combination of certain forms and lights and shadows**' to create a harmonious result by the use of any means, such as drawing, painting or photography. He became the **vice-president** of the **Royal Photographic Society** and strongly argued for photography to be regarded as an **art form**.

### **HENRY PEACH ROBINSON (1830-1901)**

- Robinson was another **pioneer of the technique**. He was also an **artist** and would **first sketch the scene** he wanted and then create it from **multiple negatives**. He was a follower of the **Pre-Raphaelites** and was influenced by the aesthetic views of **John Ruskin**. In his Pre-Raphaelite phase he attempted to realise moments of timeless significance in a "**mediaeval**" **setting**, anticipating the work of Julia Margaret Cameron, Burne-Jones and the Symbolists. According to his letters, he was **influenced by** the paintings of J.M.W. **Turner**.
- Henry Peach Robinson, considered to be another one of the **pioneers of combination printing**, was not only an artist, but also an author, and wrote many journal articles on photography. He then published a book in 1869 entitled ***Pictorial Effect in Photography***. His writings about technique became fairly well known and he was held in **high esteem**, despite having critics who

accused him of misrepresenting the real world and the truth by using the combination printing method.

- In his book, Robinson attempts to add some reasoning to appease the critics, by comparing the photographic editing to other art forms and writing that, *'As music is only sound under governance of certain laws, so is pictorial effect only the combination of certain forms and lights and shadows in like manner harmoniously brought together.'*
- **Combination printing** was **technically difficult** as each image had to have the **same lighting** and be **scaled to fit** the others. Artists wished to create ideal images from natural scenes to portraits and in the same way photographers wished to perfect their images by combining and manipulating them. Another early proponent of combination printing was Queen Victoria. Robinson **suffered from ill health** because of working for **hours with the chemicals** in the darkroom and he switched to using a 'scissors and paste-pot' technique for creating combination prints.

## **REFERENCES**

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_Peach\\_Robinson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Peach_Robinson)



Henry Peach Robinson (1830-1901), *Fading Away*, 1858

Henry Peach Robinson (1830-1901), *Fading Away*, 1858

- This is **another example** created from **five negatives**. The photo shows the death of a young girl and her grieving family surrounding her. It creates the same sort of emotional scene that we have seen with genre painting but the use of photographs creates an immediacy and a different emotional impact. He was one of the most prominent art photographers of the day and was a follower of the Pre-Raphaelites and John Ruskin.
- This photograph caused **controversy** not because of the **death-bed scene** which was common but that he had **betrayed the accuracy** of photography by manipulating the image. **People felt photography had a responsibility to record accurately.**
- The Photographic Journal wrote that this photograph, '**impresses the beholder with the untruth of the whole thing**'. It '**carries its untruth and incongruity on the surface**' (from *Photographic Journal*, 1865)
- Controversy broke out in the photographic community about the use of **combination printing**. Photographs originally had been regarded as truth and that the **camera never lied**. **However**, with the newfound ability to manipulate the final product, the notion that photographs depicted 'truth' was **soon shattered**.
- On the other hand critics also complained that it is a picture of '**a young woman in the flesh**' and this is a **travesty** of the **ideal** rendering artist should or must give to **spiritual beings** on the **point of death**.

- So photographs such as this were criticised for being **untrue** while at the same time being **too true**.



Julia Margaret Cameron, 'Annie, my first success', 29 January 1864.

- That brings us to the revolutionary work of Julia Margaret Cameron. She pushed the artistic boundaries of photography before that had even been established and although she left no mark on photography at the time she was **rediscovered in 1948**.
- The American photographer Imogen Cunningham (1883-1976) commented '*I'd like to see portrait photography go right back to Julia Margaret Cameron. I don't think there's anyone better.*' And Getty Images commented recently '*Cameron's photographic portraits are considered among the finest in the early history of photography.*'

### **JULIA MARGARET CAMERON (1815-1879, AGED 63)**

- In **1863**, when she was 48, her daughter gave Cameron her **first camera** and this is the **first print** with which she was **satisfied**. It is of Annie Philpot (1857-1936) the daughter of a local resident. Cameron wrote , "**I was in transport of delight. I ran all over the house to search for gifts for the child. I felt as if she entirely had made the picture. I printed, toned, fixed and framed it, and presented it to her father that same day.**"
- It already exhibits some of her **trademark** artistic effects. **Strong side lighting**, a slightly **out-of-focus** face (intentional), a background that places the **dark side** of the face in contrast with a **light background** and the **light side** of the face against a **dark background** (a technique commonly used by portrait artists).



- Cameron may have already learned the basics of camera operation and chemistry from **Oscar Gustave Rejlander**, with whom she shared many mutual friends, most importantly Alfred Tennyson, her neighbor on the Isle of Wight.
- The technique of **soft-focus** 'fancy portraits' was **taught** her by **David Wilkie Wynfield** (1837-1887) a **British painter and photographer**. Wynfield used the technique of soft focus, close-up, large-format prints of famous people in historical costumes.

## **REFERENCES**

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia\\_Margaret\\_Cameron](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_Margaret_Cameron)

<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/104G0D>

<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O81145/annie-photograph-cameron-julia-margaret/>



Julia Margaret Cameron, *Sadness*, Ellen Terry, 1864

- Within a month of producing the previous photograph she had created an album for her friend the artist George Frederic Watts. About this time she took this photograph of the Shakespearean actress Ellen Terry, a study of *Sadness*.
- She was introduced to Watts and they married when she was just sixteen and he was 46. They separated within a year and she went on to become the **leading Shakespearean and comic actress in Britain**.
- This portrait photograph was probably taken on their honeymoon at Cameron's home near Freshwater Bay on the Isle of Wight. We can speculate that the sadness was not just posed but reflected the problems that were already evident in their marriage. Watts was very demanding and insisted she pose for him for hours at a time without speaking.

### ELLEN TERRY

- **Dame Ellen Terry** (1847–1928) was an English **stage actress** who became the leading **Shakespearean actress** in Britain. She was born into a family of actors, Terry began acting as a child in Shakespeare plays and continued as a teen, in London and on tour.
- At **16** she **married** the 46 year-old artist **George Frederic Watts** (1817-1904), but they **separated within a year**. She was soon acting again but began a relationship with the architect **Edward William Godwin** and retired from the stage for six years. She returned to acting in 1874 and was immediately acclaimed for her portrayal of roles in Shakespeare and other classics.

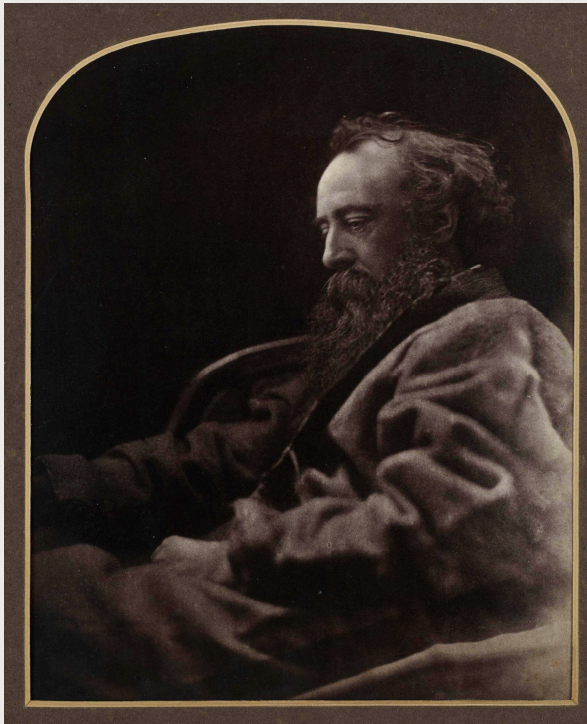
- In 1878 she joined Henry Irving's company as his leading lady, and for more than the next two decades she was considered the **leading Shakespearean and comic actress in Britain**. Two of her most famous roles were Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*. She and Irving also toured with great success in America and Britain.

## **REFERENCES**

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen\\_Terry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_Terry)

<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/104G0A>

Julia Margaret Cameron,  
*George Frederick Watts*,  
1864, The Met



Julia Margaret Cameron, *George Frederick Watts*, 1864, The Met

- "In May 1865 Cameron used her sister's London home, **Little Holland House**, as her photographic headquarters. **Her sister Sara Prinsep** (1816-1887, née Pattle), together with her husband Henry Thoby Prinsep (1793-1878), had established a cultural salon there centred around the artist George Frederic Watts, who lived with them. ... Cameron considered G. F. Watts, to be her chief artistic advisor. She wrote of this period, '**Mr. Watts gave me such encouragement that I felt as if I had wings to fly with.**' "

## NOTES

- James and Adeline Pattle had eight children including Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), Sara (1816-1887) and Maria (1818-1892), the mother of Julia Prinsep Stephen (1846-1895) who was the mother of Vanessa Bell (1879-1961) and Virginia Woolf (1882-1941). Sara married Henry Thoby Prinsep (1792-1878) and George Frederic Watts helped them obtain a lease on Little Holland House and stayed there with them for the next 21 years.
- **Freshwater, Isle of Wight** was the birthplace of the physicist **Robert Hooke** (his father was curate of Freshwater's Church of All Saints), a stopping place for the artist **George Morland** (the Cabin, a public-house at Freshwater Gate), and a home for Poet Laureate **Alfred Lord Tennyson** (Farrinford House), **Julia Margaret Cameron** (Dimbola Lodge) and **George Frederic Watts** (The Briary from 1873 to the 1880s). Comedian Ken Dodd had a holiday home there as did Lewis Carroll, Winston Churchill, Charles Darwin, John Keats, Charles Kingsley,

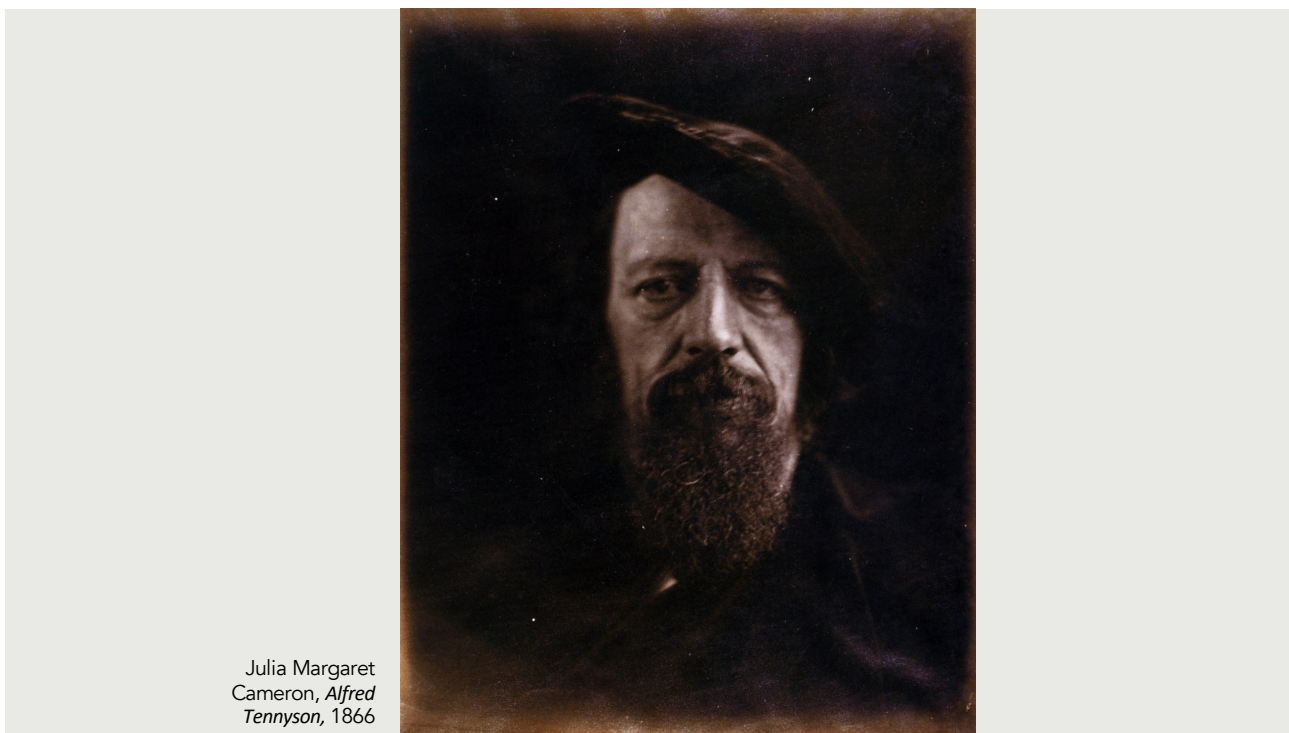
Henry Longfellow, Guglielmo Marconi, Karl Marx, David Niven, Isaac Pitman, Barnes Wallis, J.B. Priestley, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Queen Victoria and Margaret Thatcher.

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<https://farringford.co.uk/news-events/tennyson-poems-blog/g-f-watts-the-pattle-sisters-and-freshwater>



Julia Margaret Cameron, *Alfred Tennyson*, 1866

- Watts as one of the first artists who decided which people he wished to represent rather than wait for a commission and Cameron was another. She was very well connected in high society and used to select among the rich and famous those she wished to portray. This is the poet Alfred Tennyson, Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland during much of Queen Victoria's reign and remains one of the most popular British poets.

### **ALFRED TENNYSON**

- Alfred Tennyson, 1st Baron Tennyson, FRS (6 August 1809 – 6 October 1892) was Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland during much of Queen Victoria's reign and remains one of the most popular British poets.
- Tennyson excelled at penning short lyrics, such as "Break, Break, Break", "The Charge of the Light Brigade", "Tears, Idle Tears" and "Crossing the Bar". Much of his verse was based on classical mythological themes, such as Ulysses, although *In Memoriam A.H.H.* was written to commemorate his best friend Arthur Hallam, a fellow poet and fellow student at Trinity College, Cambridge, who was engaged to Tennyson's sister, but died from a brain haemorrhage before they could marry. Tennyson also wrote some notable blank verse including *Idylls of the King*, "Ulysses", and "Tithonus". During his career, Tennyson attempted drama, but his plays enjoyed little success.
- A number of phrases from Tennyson's work have become commonplaces of the English language, including

- Nature, red in tooth and claw
- Tis better to have loved and lost / Than never to have loved at all
- Theirs not to reason why, / Theirs but to do and die
- To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield
- My strength is as the strength of ten, / Because my heart is pure
- Knowledge comes, but Wisdom lingers
- The old order changeth, yielding place to new

## **REFERENCES**

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred\\_Tennyson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Tennyson)

Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), *Julia Prinsep Jackson* later Julia Stephen, 1867



Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), **Julia Prinsep Jackson** (1846-1895) later **Julia Stephen**, 1867

Cameron's niece and the mother of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell.

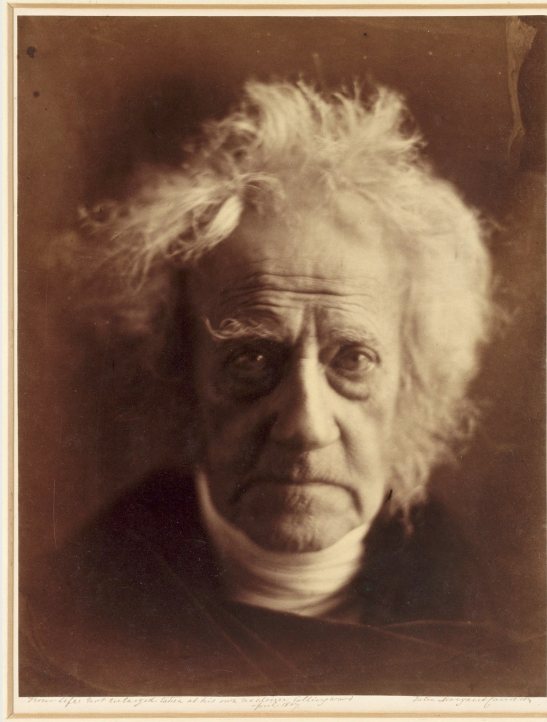
- **Julia Prinsep Jackson** (1846-1895) later **Julia Stephen**, Cameron's niece and the **mother of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell**, was renowned for her extraordinary beauty. She is portrayed as herself, rather than a religious or literary character. Cameron generally reserved this approach for her male sitters. She became Cameron's favourite model and made more than 50 portraits of her.
- Julia Cameron was the sister of Julia Stephen's mother Maria Pattle and Julia Stephen later wrote Julia Cameron's biography.
- Virginia Woolf and Roger Fry edited a collection of Cameron's photographs published in 1926.
- In late 1865 Julia Margaret Cameron began using a larger camera, which held a 15 x 12-inch glass negative.

## REFERENCES

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia\\_Woolf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_Woolf)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia\\_Stephen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_Stephen)



Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), *Sir John Herschel*, April 1867, albumen silver print from glass negative, 35.9 x 27.9 cm, The Met



Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), *Sir John Herschel* (1792-1871), April 1867, albumen silver print from glass negative, 35.9 x 27.9 cm, Metropolitan Museum

- Met Museum website: **'No commercial portrait photographer of the period would have portrayed Herschel as Cameron did here, devoid of classical columns, weighty tomes, scientific attributes, and academic poses—the standard vehicles for conveying the high stature and classical learning that one's sitter possessed (or pretended to possess). To Cameron, Herschel was more than a renowned scientist; he was 'as a Teacher and High Priest,' an 'illustrious and revered as well as beloved friend' whom she had known for thirty years. Naturally, her image of him would not be a stiff, formal effigy. Instead, she had him wash and tousle his hair to catch the light, draped him in black, brought her camera close to his face, and photographed him emerging from the darkness like a vision of an Old Testament prophet.'**
- **Herschel is a relevant person on which to end my talk as he invented the word 'photography'**, a term which he used in a paper entitled 'Note on the Art of Photography, or The Application of the Chemical Rays of Light to the Purpose of Pictorial Representation,' presented to the Royal Society on 14 March 1839. He also coined the terms 'negative' and 'positive' in this context, and also the 'snap-shot' (in 1860). It was John Herschel that discovered that 'hypo' (sodium hyposulphite) could be used to dissolve silver salts and so fix photographic images.
- John Herschel was an astronomer and **the son of the distinguished astronomer William Herschel** (1738-1822). William Herschel discovered

Uranus, was made Court Astronomer, discovered infrared radiation, and catalogued over 5,000 nebulae (distant star clusters). As well as photography John Herschel named seven moons of Saturn, four moons of Uranus and investigated colour blindness.

## **REFERENCES**

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Herschel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Herschel)



## THE ART OF VICTORIAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), *Julia Prinsep Jackson* (1846-1895) later **Julia Stephen**, 1867

Cameron's niece and the mother of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell.

- I raised the question at the beginning about **whether photography is an art form**. As you have seen the Victorians struggled with the question and tackled it many ways. What came out of all the trials and tribulations and experiments was that there are **many different uses for photography some of which are now classified as art** and we are still experimenting with all the various ways in which photography can be used as an art form.
- In this talk we have reached the 1870s when photography was becoming much more practical. Talbot's negative/positive process had **become the standard** and by **1860 the use of daguerreotypes was rare**. In 1851, the **wet collodion process** enabled glass to be used as the support and the **level of detail** became as great as in **daguerreotypes**. In the 1880s inconvenient wet plates were replaced by **dry gelatine-coated plates** and In **1884 George Eastman** invented **dry gel on film** and in **1888** he launched the **Kodak camera** with the slogan '**You press the button, we do the rest**'. Within a few years millions of people were taking photographs.
- In my next talk on Victorian photography I talk about the sudden craze for the carte de visite, armchair tourism, recording important events including war photography and I end with **Pictorialism**, an international photographic style that **dominated art photography in the late nineteenth century and early**

**twentieth century** (roughly 1885 to 1915).

- Thank you.

### **NOTES**

- In **1884 George Eastman** invented **dry gel on film** and in **1888** he launched the **Kodak camera** with the slogan '**You press the button, we do the rest**'. The first widely used **colour photography** process was not discovered until **1907** although coloured images could be projected using three black-and-white photographs and coloured filters. **Kodachrome film** and therefore simple colour photography was not introduced until **1935**. In his final two years, Eastman was in intense pain caused by a disorder affecting his spine. On March 14, 1932, Eastman shot himself in the heart, leaving a note which read, "To my friends: my work is done. Why wait?"