



L: Portrait by George Frederic Watts

R: Drawing by James Princep

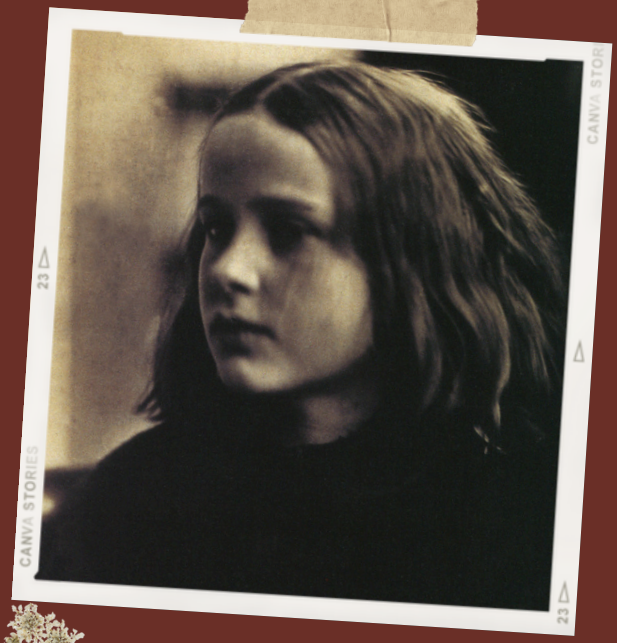
Julia Margaret Cameron



Julia Margaret Cameron (née Pattle) was born on 11 June 1815 in Kolkata, India (then known as Calcutta). Her father worked for the East India Company. She grew up in India, but it was in South Africa where she met Charles Hay Cameron, whom she married in 1838.

Between 1839 and 1852, the couple had six children. They moved to England in 1845, settling at Freshwater on the Isle of Wight in 1860, where, in 1863, one of Cameron's children gave her a camera for Christmas.

Over the next 12 years she took around 900 photographs. In 1875 Cameron and her husband moved to Sri Lanka (then British Ceylon), where she died on 26 January 1879.



Cameron called this January 1864 photograph of Annie Philpot "my first success".

Cameron photographed many young women, including Alice Liddell (left) and Ellen Terry (below). Her styling was unconventional and she often used soft focus, mirrors and allegorical concepts in her work.



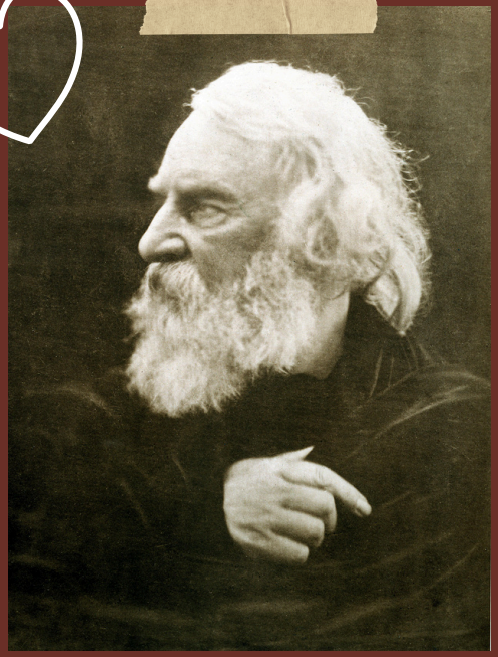


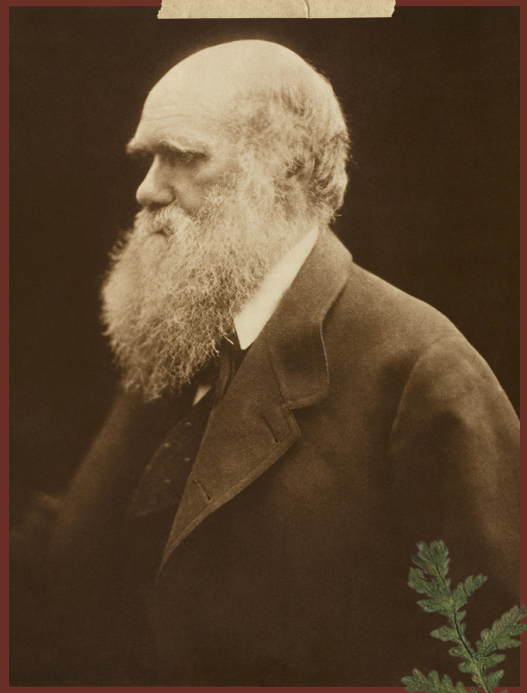
















Inspired by the artistic concept of “chiaroscuro”, Cameron captured vivid portraits of several distinguished men of the era.

From left to right: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Charles Darwin, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Henry Taylor

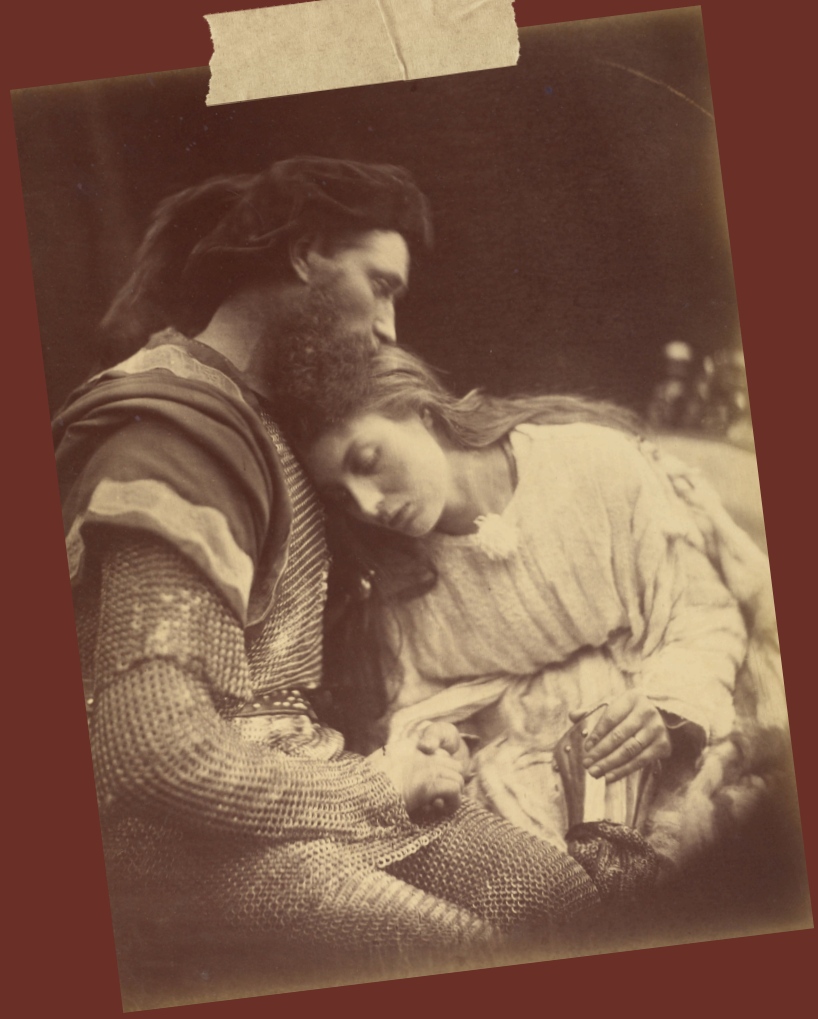
Cameron often took inspiration from literature, including plays and poetry.



L: King Lear allotting his kingdom to his three daughters

R: Parting of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere

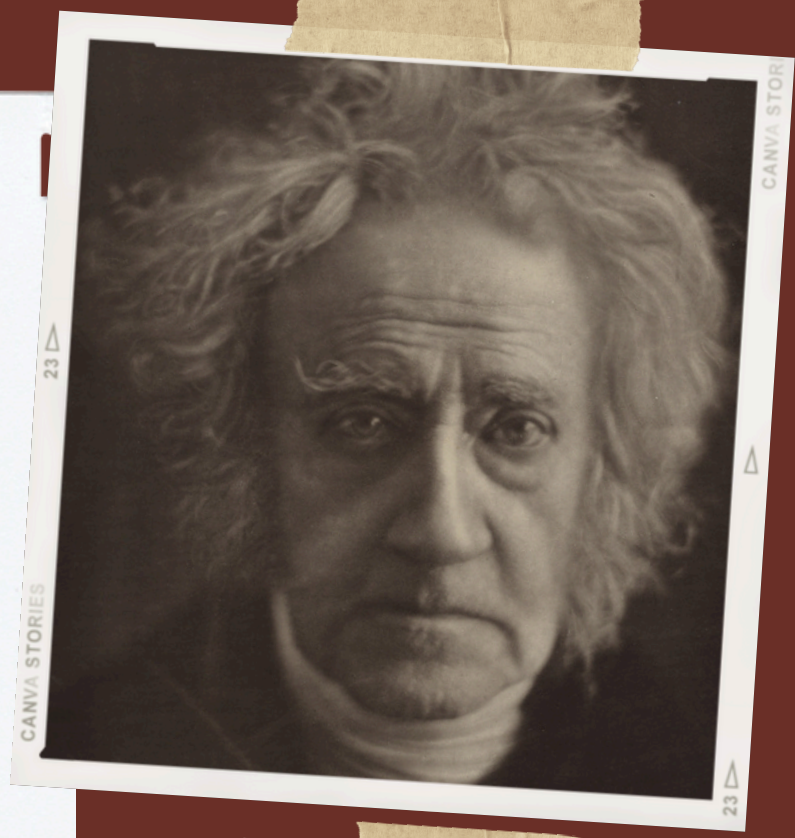




Julia Margaret Cameron was both praised and criticised during her lifetime.

The Photographic Journal commented in 1865 that “In these pictures, all that is good in photography has been neglected and the shortcomings of the art are prominently exhibited.”

However, the *Illustrated London News* wrote that the pictures were “the nearest approach to art, or rather the most bold and successful applications of the principles of fine-art to photography.”



Above: the astronomer Sir John Herschel