

# Loving Old Photographs

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**Definition:** the making of pictures by means of a camera that directs the image of an object onto a surface that is sensitive to light. From Greek “photo” or light and “graph” to draw. Literally photo-graph = light-drawing

Invented in 1839 by the Frenchman, Louis Daguerre and the Englishman, William Henry Fox Talbot working independently.

## Three eras of photography;

19th Century— Plate Era —primarily professional photographers

20th Century—Film Era — rise of the snap shooter and hobbyist — Eastman Kodak Company

21st Century—Digital Era—ubiquitous photography, cameras are everywhere with the development of camera-phones

PROCESS	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Daguerreotypes	Unique images—silver plated copper	1839-1860
Calotypes (Talbotypes)	Paper negative-positive	1841-1860
Albumen prints	Thin paper, usually mounted to board, yellow brown or purplish brown	1850-1895
Tintypes (Ferrotypes)	Unique images on dark lacquered metal	1856-1930
Platinum prints	Matte surface, usually gray brown	1873-1930
Carbon prints	Can be large, never fade, appear to have slight relief	1860-1940
Stereoviews	Two views of the same subject photographed in such a way as to appear three-dimensional when viewed through a special viewer	1850-1935
Gelatin silver prints	Permanent black and white	1890-present
Chromogenic prints	Color prints from color negatives, not permanent (fades easily)	1950-present
Ink jet (Giclee)	Can be permanent (B&W or color)	1995-present

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## Landmark dates in photography

1839—Photography introduced in France and England as a process for preserving realistic images

1888—The first Kodak camera and the beginning of the photofinishing industry which made photography available to everybody.

1936—Kodak introduced the first successful color film—Kodachrome.

1990—Introduction of Adobe Photoshop which ushered in the digital photography era.

### Suggested Reading:

There are many good books on the photography and the history of photography. Here are just a few of my favorites.

“Unlocking the Secrets in Old Photographs,” by Karen Frisch-Ripley

“The History of Photography,” by Beaumont Newhall

“Stereo Views, An Illustrated History,” by John Waldsmith

“Fox Talbot and the Invention of Photography,” by Gail Buckland

“The Story of Kodak, by Douglas Collins

“Photography in America, The Formative Years 1839-1900,” by William Welling

“Conservation of Photographs,” Eastman Kodak Publication

“Photographs of the Past, Process and Preservation,” by Bertrand Lavedrine

### Suggested Web sites:

Eastman.org - George Eastman Museum

foxtalbot.co.uk - Fox Talbot Museum in England

daguerre.org - Daguerre Society

universityproducts.com - Archival supplies