

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Poet Laureate

Resident at Farringford House, Freshwater

Tennyson was born in Lincolnshire in 1809 and attended Trinity College, Cambridge in 1827 where he received The Chancellor's Gold Medal (a prestigious award given for poetry) in 1829.

His first solo collection of poems were published soon after. Poetry writing was important to Victorians as there was no recorded music at this time.

When Tennyson's poem 'Maud' (written in 1854-55) became a firm favourite with British Society, Alfred Lord Tennyson was able to buy Farringford House (now a hotel), on the Isle of Wight, which he initially rented with his wife from 1853.

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Before you visit...

1. Find out about Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group. Woolf wrote a satirical comedy play in 3 acts called 'Freshwater'. It was the only play she wrote and was written for her friends' enjoyment.
2. Look at some of Tennyson's poetry. Tennyson lived on the Island in Farringford House until forced to move away as his fame led to intrusive public curiosity.



On-site activities you might enjoy:

- » Using the sea as a subject, try writing verse with a strong rhythm and rhyme.
 - » Walk up to the Tennyson Monument.
 - » Use Freshwater Bay as inspiration for free written work, poetry or prose.
 - » Visit Dimbola Lodge (charge applies), the former home of the 19th century pioneer photographer Julia Margaret Cameron. Make notes for a subjective review of her work, and write this up on return to school/college.
- » Write a one act play which satirises the meeting up of a group of unlikely friends, this could link to going on a trip.
 - » Make a study of prominent women in the 19th century. Compare their difficulties with those of women today.



Julia Margaret Cameron

Dimbola Lodge

Near to Farringford is Dimbola Lodge which was the residence of the Victorian photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron. She hosted many famous people here, including Tennyson, Lewis Carroll and Charles Darwin.



After being given a camera as a present by her daughter, she became interested in photography and she was known for making her subjects sit for hours whilst she photographed them. Indeed Tennyson would often refer to her subjects as her 'victims' due to the length of time that they would have to pose. Dimbola Lodge is now a museum which has a permanent exhibition of Cameron's work, alongside exhibitions from global artists. You may wish to visit the museum (charge applies) to discover more about Cameron and her pioneering work.

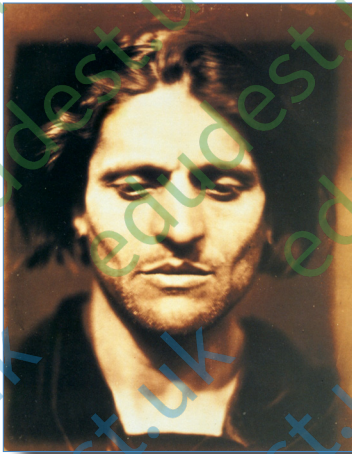
You can:

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► Experiment with different methods of photography www.edudest.uk taken.

► Use the photographs in a package of promotional material that makes links with the heritage of Freshwater Bay.



Photography: Applying Cameron's Style

Back at school or college...

Often, Cameron would try to capture innocence, virtue or wisdom which made her subjects examples of religious or literary figures.

Look at the photographs 'I Wait' (she often depicted children as angels) and 'Iago' (a Shakespearean character from Othello).



You could:

- Choose a character from a religious story, or from one of your favourite novels. Stage a photograph to try to capture the traits of the character.
- Make a collage of a variety of Cameron's photographs. See if you can recreate some of her examples.