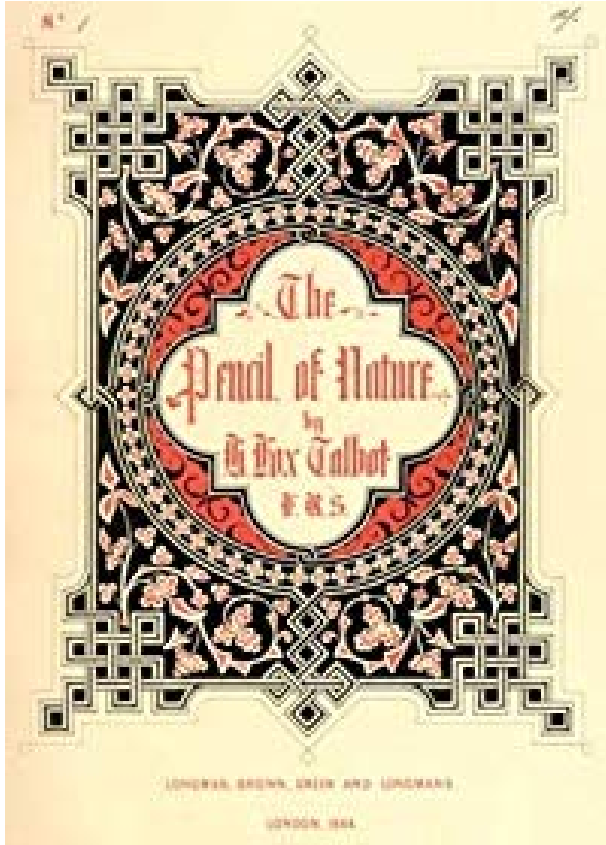


The Pencil Of Nature



Author:	William Henry Fox Talbot
Goodreads Rating:	4.22
ISBN13:	9780962109607
Genre:	Nonfiction
Language	English
Published:	1989 by Hans P. Kraus, Jr., Inc.
ISBN10:	0962109606

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Originally published as a serial between 1844 and 1846, *The Pencil of Nature* was the first book to be illustrated entirely with photographs. Early enthusiast William Henry Fox Talbot hoped to spur public interest in photography but was forced to cease publication after just six installments. In its time, the serial was not a commercial success; however, more than 165 years later, it is recognized as a major contribution to the history of photography. Indeed, it has been said that the importance of this book is comparable to that of the Gutenberg Bible in the history of printing. In 1840 Fox Talbot invented the Calotype process—the precursor to film cameras—transforming everyday subjects into works of art. His twenty-four resulting prints, which include architectural studies, local landscapes, still lifes, close-ups, and even a carefully executed portrait, remain strikingly modern and quietly beautiful. *The Pencil of Nature* has been published in several different incarnations, yet this edition is the first to have been reproduced from the original plates held in England’s National Media Museum, each page of the original work published here as Fox Talbot had intended. A 44-page illustrated introduction by Colin Harding gives shape to Fox Talbot’s life and times, how he became interested in the notion of a “photogenic drawing” process, how he invented the Calotype, and how he conceived of *The Pencil of Nature*—the means by which he could show the art of photography to the world for the first time in a book. This is an essential volume for historians, photographers, and anyone interested in the development of photography.