Brief History of the Invention of Photography.

350 BC: The Greek philosopher Aristotle in his Problemata describes how he saw the crescent shape of the partially eclipsed sun projected on the ground through the holes of a strainer and the gaps between the leaves of a plane tree. He also noticed that the smaller the hole, the sharper the image. His description of this device is the earliest known written evidence of a camera obscura.

965-1039 AD: The first scientific description of the camera obscura was by the Arabian scientist, astronomer and mathematician, Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen). It may be assumed that knowledge of the camera obscura effect was widespread amongst Arab scholars, who preserved Aristotelian learning throughout the Dark ages in Europe.

1797: Leonardo da Vinci was interested in the camera obscura, and proof of his experiments appears in several of his notebooks published in 1797, almost three hundred years after his death. He spent a considerable amount of time trying to understand human eyesight, and regarded the camera obscura as an 'artificial eye'.

1798: The first fixed attempts to fix the image of the camera obscura by chemical means were made by French brothers, Joseph- Nicephore and Claude Niepce.

1802: Thomas Wedgwood's attempts at photography were published in the Journal of the Royal Institution. Although he failed to do so, Wedgwood's main objective was to fix the images of the camera obscura on silver nitrate. His experiments demonstrated the possibility of photography and were a crucial step forward towards its invention.

1826: The first successful photograph was taken by Nicephore Niepce on a pewter plate, using his professionally- made camera supplied by the Parisian optician Charles Chevalier. It shows the view from Niepce's workroom window.

1829: Niepce signed a partnership agreement with Louis-Jacques- Mande Daguerre, for the purpose of perfecting Heliography (a photographic process).

1837: After Niepce's death Daguerre continued to work alone and succeeded in creating the first practical photographic process. This was a way of fixing pictures with a solution of common salt, he called the process Daguerreotype.

1839: Seen as the official birthday of photography, Deputy Francois Arago (French Government) announced details of the first practical method of photography at a joint meeting of the Academies des Sciences and Beaux Arts at the Institut de France.

1839: First photographic camera went on sale to the public through a London based optician, Francis West, for Photogenic Drawing.

1841: British William Fox Talbot introduced his photographic process Calotype or Talbotype.

1859: The smallest nineteenth century camera was introduced by T.Morris of Birmingham. It measured only 1.5x1.5x2 inches, took 3/4 inch pictures suitable for locket portraits or for enlargement, and was called a miniature camera.

1860: The largest camera made during the nineteenth century was made for Glaswegian amateur photographer, John Kibble. It was so big that it had to mounted on wheels and drawn by a horse.

1869: Louis Ducos du Hauron made the greatest contribution to the evolution of colour photography in the nineteenth century, particularly with the publication of his book Les Coleurs en Photographie, Solution du Probleme.

1880 onwards: The amateur photography movement took off. Eastman Company in Rochester, N.Y., was the first of the great photographic manufacturing companies to cater to the needs and stimulate demand through advertising: 'A collection of these pictures may be made to furnish a pictorial history of life as it is lived by the owner, that will grow more valuable everyday that it passes'. This is still what the average user is interested in when pursuing photography.

1900: After many years of experimentation with fixing images on metal, paper, and glass, photography was introduced on film. By 1900, Kodak were producing 80% - 90% of the world's output.