

# Alfred, Lord Tennyson

## The Charge Of The Light Brigade

Memorializing Events in the Battle of Balaclava, October 25, 1854  
Written 1854 - During the Crimean War

Half a league half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred:  
'Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Charge for the guns' he said:  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

'Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Was there a man dismay'd ?  
Not tho' the soldier knew  
Some one had blunder'd:  
Theirs not to make reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do & die,  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley'd & thunder'd;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
Flash'd as they turn'd in air  
Sabring the gunners there,  
Charging an army while  
All the world wonder'd:  
Plunged in the battery-smoke  
Right thro' the line they broke;  
Cossack & Russian  
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke,  
Shatter'd & sunder'd.  
Then they rode back, but not

Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon behind them  
Volley'd and thunder'd;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
While horse & hero fell,  
They that had fought so well  
Came thro' the jaws of Death,  
Back from the mouth of Hell,  
All that was left of them,  
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?  
O the wild charge they made!  
All the world wonder'd.  
Honour the charge they made!  
Honour the Light Brigade,  
Noble six hundred!



## Ulysses

It little profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink  
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoyed  
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those  
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when  
Through scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
Vexed the dim sea: I am become a name;  
For always roaming with a hungry heart  
Much have I seen and known; cities of men  
And manners, climates, councils, governments,  
Myself not least, but honoured of them all;  
And drunk delight of battle with my peers;  
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.  
I am a part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough  
Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades  
For ever and for ever when I move.  
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!  
As though to breathe were life. Life piled on life  
Were all too little, and of one to me  
Little remains: but every hour is saved  
From that eternal silence, something more,  
A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
And this grey spirit yearning in desire  
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle —  
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild  
A rugged people, and through soft degrees  
Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere  
Of common duties, decent not to fail  
In offices of tenderness, and pay  
Meet adoration to my household gods,

When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:  
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,  
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me —  
That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
Free hearts, free foreheads — you and I are old;  
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;  
Death closes all: but something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,  
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.  
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:  
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep  
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,  
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds  
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
Of all the western stars, until I die.  
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:  
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew

Tho' much is taken, much abides; and though  
We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.



# The Lady of Shalott

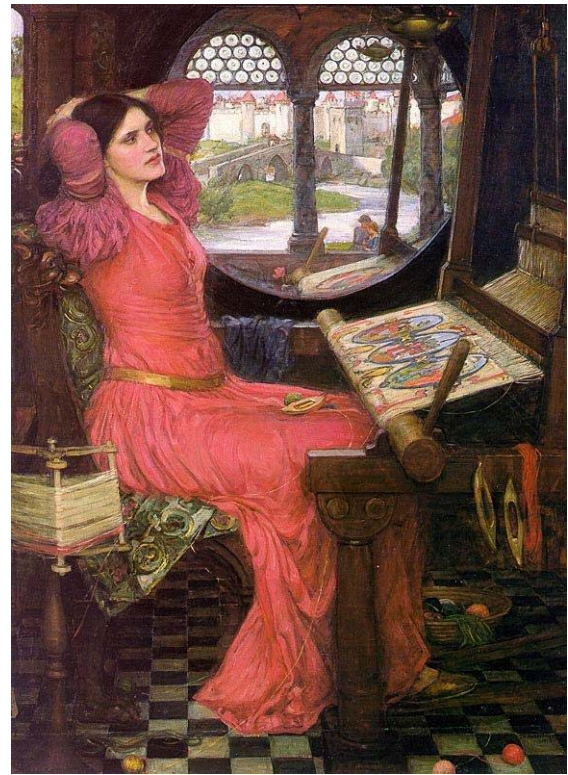
## Part I

On either side of the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And through the field the road runs by  
To many-towered Camelot;  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Through the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle imbowers  
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow veiled  
Slide the heavy barges trailed  
By slow horses; and unhailed  
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed  
Skimming down to Camelot:  
But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
Or at the casement seen her stand? 25  
Or is she known in all the land,  
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly,  
Down to towered Camelot:  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy  
Lady of Shalott."



## Part II

There she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colours gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot: 50  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the curly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market girls,  
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to towered Camelot;  
And sometimes through the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two and two:  
She hath no loyal knight and true,  
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often through the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights  
And music, went to Camelot:  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed;  
"I am half sick of shadows," said  
The Lady of Shalott.



### Part III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
The sun came dazling through the leaves, 75  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneeled  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see  
Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
The bridle bells rang merrily  
As he rode down to Camelot:  
And from his blazoned baldric slung  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as he rode his armour rung,  
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,  
The helmet and the helmet-feather  
Burned like one burning flame together,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
As often through the purple night,  
Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd; 100  
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;  
From underneath his helmet flowed  
His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
From the bank and from the river  
He flashed into the crystal mirror,  
"Tirra lira," by the river  
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
She made three paces through the room,  
She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She looked down to Camelot.  
Out flew the web and floated wide;  
The mirror cracked from side to side;  
"The curse is come upon me," cried  
The Lady of Shalott.

## Part IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over towered Camelot;  
Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote 125  
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance —  
With a glassy countenance  
Did she look to Camelot.  
And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right —  
The leaves upon her falling light —  
Through the noises of the night  
She floated down to Camelot:  
And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darkened wholly,  
Turned to towered Camelot.  
For ere she reached upon the tide 150  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,  
A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her name,  
The Lady of Shalott.



Who is this? and what is here?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer;  
And they crossed themselves for fear,  
All the knights at Camelot:  
But Lancelot mused a little space;  
He said, "She has a lovely face;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
The Lady of Shalott."

