

Photographing Fairies

Making and faking photos a century after Cottingley

100 years ago, photographs appeared in a London magazine claiming to prove the existence of fairies. They had been taken by Elsie Wright and Frances Griffiths in Cottingley, Yorkshire.

In the dark aftermath of the First World War, the fairies seemed to offer light, and hope that there might be life beyond everyday perceptions.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the bestselling creator of Sherlock Holmes, believed they were real. The Cottingley Fairy Photographs sparked a huge debate — were they genuine, or had two girls fooled the great author?

We collaborated with young people living in Edinburgh to reflect on image-making and image-faking today. Visit our online exhibition to discover the story of the Cottingley Fairy Photographs and how they continue to inspire artists and photographers.



Stills.org/fairies

19 February — 19 August 2021

Fairy Offering Posy
to Elsie, 1920



Spread some hope and gladness with your own fairy photos:

- ♦ Colour in, collage and cut out the fairy on the other side of this postcard, or draw your own creature.
- ♦ Find a magical spot and position your fairy (Elsie used a hat pin in the picture above. Try hairpins or blu tack).
- ♦ Take a selfie. Experiment with black + white filters, if you like.
- ♦ Share your fairy photographs with us on
 - Instagram @StillsEdinburgh
 - Facebook @StillsGallery
 - Twitter @StillsEdinburgh
 - Email emma.black@stills.org

Add **#photographingfairies** and we'll share your magical encounters.



Illustration by Theresa Thomson Malaney