

Phoebe Kim
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Dr. Amy Flavin
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In the world of automata and sophisticated machinery, Charles Babbage (1791-1871) is known to be the father of computing. He was ahead of his time. Babbage was always fascinated with clocks and how they worked when he was younger. He was highly intelligent for his age and wanted to develop a calculating engine. According to Schulz, he formulated basic principles that drive modern computers today. Babbage developed a calculator that imitated human mental actions, such as mathematics and memory, and one that could also play chess, checkers, and other games. Babbage's calculator gave way to the development of today's computers. According to Schulz, Babbage's machine represented a breakthrough in the attempt to stimulate human thought, better known as Artificial Intelligence technology.

Ada Lovelace (1815-1852) was a loyal follower of Charles Babbage. She was a math prodigy and Babbage referred to her as his "Enchantress of Numbers." She referred to herself as the "Bride of Science." Her enthusiasm for learning was unmatched amongst others and she was often punished for being "wild." However, she recognized the brilliance of Babbage's machine and published a thorough explanation of how his machine worked and the potential implications. According to Schulz, she recognized that his machine had its limits of creating anything new and only functioned to do what it was programmed to do.

*** Dear Dr. Flavin: Pictured below was an excerpt from one of the letters Ada Lovelace wrote to Charles Babbage in 1843. I found this on the internet, and I thought it was amusing to read. She asks (or rather begs) Babbage to not correct or change her math. I enjoyed this dynamic between them and I hope you do too. - Phoebe ***

I do not ... (and have been) such a
Poet as I shall be an Analyst; (& Metaphysician); for with me the two go
together indissolubly. — Yours

A.L.

¹John Herschel, the Royal Astronomer, was one of Babbage's oldest and closest friends.

23. To Charles Babbage

Tuesday Afternoon [1 August 1843]

Ockham

I am half beside myself with hurry & work. I could not get anything done in time to send by coach this morning; & now I am obliged still to retain one sheet; which however I hope to send you by an occasion tomorrow afternoon.

Note B has plagued me to death; altho' I have made but little alteration in it. Such alterations as there are however, happen to have been very tiresome & to have demanded minute consideration & very nice adjustments.

It is a very excellent Note.

I wish you were as accurate, & as much to be relied on, as I am myself.

You might often save me much trouble, if you were; whereas you in reality add to my trouble not infrequently; and there is at any rate always the anxiety of doubting if you will not get me into a scrape; even when you don't.

By the way, I hope you do not take upon yourself to alter any of my corrections.

I must beg you not. They all have some very sufficient reason. And you have made a pretty mess & confusion in one or two places (which I will show you sometime), where you have ventured in my M.S.'s, to insert or alter a phrase or word; & have utterly muddled the sense.

I could not conceive at first in one or two places what had happened to my sentences; tho' I soon saw they were patch-work & not my own; and