

Oxford DNB: July 2022

Welcome to the eighty-eighth update of the Oxford DNB, which adds seven new articles, comprising three reference lists, one reference group, two newly-written lives, and one newly-added life, as well as introductions (see below) to the dictionary's coverage of the Commonwealth and the city of Birmingham, where the Commonwealth Games will be held.

From July 2022, the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford DNB) offers biographies of 64,468 men and women who have shaped the British past, contained in 62,117 articles. 11,914 biographies include a portrait image of the subject – researched in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery, London.

Most public libraries across the UK subscribe to the Oxford DNB, which means that you can access the complete dictionary for free via your local library. Libraries offer 'remote access' that enables you to log in at any time at home (or anywhere you have internet access). Elsewhere, the Oxford DNB is available online in schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions worldwide. Full details of participating

British public libraries, and how to gain access to the complete dictionary, are available [here](#).

The Commonwealth in the Oxford DNB

As Birmingham prepares to host the XXII Commonwealth Games (successor to the British Empire Games, first held in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1930), we take a look at the Commonwealth and how it is represented in the Oxford DNB.

The Commonwealth is a loose association of fifty-six independent countries. Most, but not all of them, are former colonies and other territories of the British empire: Mozambique and Rwanda, neither of which were part of the British empire, joined in 1995 and 2009 respectively, followed by Gabon and Togo in 2022.

The Commonwealth evolved gradually as a sub-set of the British empire, to accommodate the growing self-government of the 'settler' colonies in modern-day Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa (joined briefly, between 1922 and 1937, by the Irish Free State). Key milestones included the achievement of full internal self-government by Nova Scotia (followed by other parts of modern-day Canada) in 1848, the federation of Canada in 1867 and Australia in 1901, the creation of a new 'dominion' status in 1907, separate

representation in the League of Nations in 1920, and the recognition of an independent right to negotiate and sign treaties in 1923.

Lord Rosebery (Archibald Primrose, fifth earl of Rosebery (1847-1929)) first used the term 'Commonwealth' to describe the association of self-governing territories within the British empire in a speech in Australia in 1884, and the description was taken up and promulgated by **Lionel Curtis (1872-1955)** and the Round Table group (on whose origins see **Milner's Kindergarten (act. 1902-1910)**), who saw gradual self-government as the 'aim' of British rule. The term was first used officially in the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 and then the 'Balfour declaration' of 1926 (named after **Arthur Balfour, first earl of Balfour (1848-1930)**, lord president of the council, and given legislative effect by the Statute of Westminster in 1931), which recognised the self-governing countries and the UK as 'equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations'.

When India and Pakistan gained independence in 1947, followed by Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1948, they automatically

became members of the Commonwealth, but the modern Commonwealth is often dated from the London Declaration of 1949, which recognised India's right to remain in the Commonwealth despite intending to become a republic.

King George VI (1895-1952) became the 'head of the Commonwealth': not explicitly a hereditary position, but one which some swift diplomacy by **Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964)** ensured was also conferred on his daughter, Queen Elizabeth II. Republics now make up the majority of Commonwealth member states (though fourteen, known as 'Commonwealth realms', continue to share a monarch with the UK, and another five have their own monarchies).

Until 1965 the Commonwealth was run out of the UK's Cabinet Office, but that year saw the creation of an independent Commonwealth Secretariat, based at Marlborough House, London, with a secretary-general elected by all the heads of government; so far there have been six incumbents. Member states also fund the Commonwealth Foundation, to provide support for grassroots organizations, and the Commonwealth of Learning, which provides distance learning. In addition, there is a large Commonwealth civil society sector, with around eighty Commonwealth professional or interest-group organizations, including the Commonwealth Games Federation, which organizes the quadrennial Commonwealth Games.

Heads of government of Commonwealth member states usually meet every two years to decide on common programmes and actions, which cover a wide range of activities from election monitoring to climate finance for small island states. It is not a treaty-based organization and not all its members are democracies but it has strong expectations of member states on good governance, human rights, and the rule of law, now enshrined in a Commonwealth Charter (adopted in 2013), and monitored by a Ministerial Action Group with the power to recommend suspension or expulsion.

Although the UK remains the largest single funder of Commonwealth activities, it no longer has any automatic leadership role in the organization. Indeed, at times Commonwealth membership has been an uncomfortable experience for British prime ministers, as **Harold Wilson (1916-1995)** found when accused of weakness in response to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by the white settler regime in Southern Rhodesia, or as **Margaret Thatcher (1925-1913)** found when accused of shoring up the apartheid regime in South Africa.

As well as the lives of those British soldiers, settlers, administrators, traders, and missionaries who left their mark for good or ill on the countries of the modern Commonwealth (and of those migrants from Commonwealth countries who in turn helped shape modern Britain), the Oxford DNB includes many of the key figures from the early Commonwealth, such as **Robert Borden (1854-1937)** of Canada, **Jan Smuts (1870-1950)** of South Africa, and **Eamon De Valera (1882-1975)** of Ireland. In line with its policy of including notable political and other leaders active under British rule, it also includes the generation of post-independence leaders who helped shape the modern Commonwealth, such as **Kwame Nkrumah (1909?-1972)** of Ghana, **Makarios III (1913-1977)** of Cyprus, and **Tunku Abdul Rahman (1902-1990)** of Malaysia. Full lists of **colonial administrators and post-independence leaders** for each country can be found in the reference section.

The Oxford DNB's coverage of Commonwealth countries generally ends with the transition to independence (albeit this is difficult to date in the cases of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, since the transition was gradual). Nevertheless the continuing significance of the Commonwealth connection is evident in many entries, such as those on **Sir Humphrey Maud (1934-2013)**, a British diplomat who

joined the Commonwealth Secretariat, **Sir Kenneth Stuart (1920-2017)**, who spearheaded many of its medical programmes, and **Derek Ingram (1926-2018)**, a journalist who set up a Commonwealth information service.

Birmingham in the Oxford DNB

The Alexander Stadium, where the opening ceremony and many of the events at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games will be staged, takes its name from the athletics administrator **William Whiteway Alexander (1852-1933)**, who moved to Birmingham in his mid-twenties to work for the Post Office. A cross-country runner, he joined the Birchfield Harriers, and in 1882 became the long-serving secretary of what became the leading athletics club in the Midlands. He died in Birmingham and was buried at Aston.

Alexander is among about 700 lives in the Oxford DNB of figures known to have lived in Birmingham, ranging chronologically from three sixteenth-century lives to five who died in 2018. The former comprise: the printer **Henry Pepwell [Pepwall] (d. 1539/40)**, who was born in Birmingham; the biblical editor and martyr, **John Rogers (c. 1500-1555)**, who was born near Birmingham; and the lawyer and politician, **Sir Richard Shelton (1578-1647)**, born in Birmingham the son of a mercer. Those who died most recently are: the veterinary scientist and sports scientist

(Norman Churchill) Craig Sharp (1933–2018), who moved to the University of Birmingham in 1971, then the only institution in Britain that offered a degree in sports science, and where he co-founded the first Human Motor Performance Laboratory; the geriatrician, **Sir John Grimley Evans (1936–2018)**, who was born in Harborne and educated at King Edward's School, Birmingham; the sociologist, **Michael Parker Banton (1926–2018)**, who was born in Moseley and was also a pupil at King Edward's School; the political scientist and university administrator, **Sir Maurice Shock (1926–2018)**, who was born in Birmingham, and was also a pupil at St Edward's; and finally the poet, **Jenny Joseph (1932-2018)**, born in Edgbaston, who was most widely known for her poem which began, 'When I am an old woman I shall wear purple'.

Distinctive trends in Birmingham's history can be identified in lives from the intervening centuries. The mathematician, astronomer, and master gunner **Nathaniel Nye (bap. 1624)**, baptized at St Martin's, Birmingham, compiled two almanacs for Birmingham in the 1640s, but developed an interest in gunnery during the civil war, which drew on one of Birmingham's noted metalworking industries. **John Wyatt (1700–1766)**, inventor of machinery, devised a machine to spin cotton, but his greatest contribution as an inventor was in the field of weighing machines. In 1759 the button maker, **John Taylor (1710/11–**

1775) gave evidence to a House of Commons committee on the growth of the metalworking trade in Birmingham, and the importance to its success of machinery invented by the people of Birmingham. In 1765 Taylor was in partnership with the Birmingham-born iron manufacturer and banker, **Sampson Lloyd (1699–1779)**, in founding a bank in Birmingham, which was origin of Lloyd's bank.

Other Birmingham innovators of the period included the printer and typefounder **John Baskerville (1706-1775)**. The vitality of Birmingham in the mid-eighteenth century inspired the city's historian, the bookseller, **William Hutton (1723–1815)**, to produce 'a spirited portrait of a great commercial and industrial town in the most vigorous phase of its growth'. He moved in progressive dissenting circles, into which his daughter, the novelist and letter-writer, **Catherine Hutton (1756–1846)** was introduced. Perhaps the most notable of these circles formed the **Lunar Society of Birmingham (act. c. 1765–c. 1800)**, a small club of pioneering natural philosophers, doctors, and manufacturers, whose members included the manufacturer, **Matthew Boulton (1728-1809)** and the improver of steam engines, **James Watt (1736-1819)**, partners in the celebrated Soho Works, as well as **Joseph Priestley (1733-1804)**, minister of a leading dissenting congregation in Birmingham.

From the early nineteenth century Birmingham, which obtained separate representation in Parliament in 1832 and was incorporated a borough in 1838, was associated with a radical politician tradition. The banker **Thomas Attwood (1783-1856)** initiated the **Birmingham Political Union (act. 1829-1839)**, England's leading extra-parliamentary reform organization in the 1830s; the radical MP **John Bright (1811-1889)** represented the city; and the industrialist **Joseph [Joe] Chamberlain (1836-1914)**, continued the tradition, founding a dynasty which including a prime minister, **(Arthur) Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940)**, whose wife, **Annie Vere [Anne] Chamberlain (1882-1967)**, shared his political work. Three of the daughters of Joseph Chamberlain perpetuated the family's tradition of public service. The eldest **Beatrice Mary Chamberlain (1862-1918)** broke away from a domestic role to manage elementary schools in London, but she remained connected with the West Midlands heart of the Unionist party, and fought for separate women's organizations within it. Her half-sisters **(Florence) Ida Chamberlain (1870-1943)** and **(Caroline) Hilda Chamberlain (1872-1967)** were involved in public administration to address food shortages during the Great War, became active after the war in the Women's Institute movement and in local government. Joseph Chamberlain was associated with Birmingham's distinctive 'civic gospel' of active municipal government to

improve the living conditions of its citizens. It was promoted by the likes of the Congregational minister, **Robert William Dale (1829–1895)**, the Baptist minister, **George Dawson (1821–1876)**, and the educational reformer and politician, **George Dixon (1820–1898)**, who especially associated with the campaign for compulsory, non-sectarian elementary education. The American peace campaigner, **Elihu Burritt (1810-1879)**, appointed by Abraham Lincoln as United State consul in the town, found Birmingham's political culture and faith in moral progress congenial. Pride in its industrial achievement was evident in the survey of the region's metal-working industries organized by the hardware manufacturer **Samuel Timmins (1826-1902)**, who also established Birmingham's Shakespeare library (1868). Birmingham's inventors and inventions were indexed and published by the Patent Office official, **Richard Bissell Prosser (1838-1918)**, brn in Aston, who contributed to the original DNB (in 1895) the article on the Birmingham chemist and inventor, **Alexander Parkes (1813–1890)** who, as the inventor of the first man-made plastic ('Parkesine'), is recognized as a founder of the modern plastics industry.

Birmingham, which was given city status in 1889, was sometimes claimed to be 'the best governed city in the world'. Boundary extension in 1911 also made it, in terms of area and population, the second city in England. A number of Oxford DNB lives record those who designed Birmingham's

built environment. Among these are **Thomas Arche (1668/9-1743)**, the Warwickshire-born architect, who designed St Philip's church, now the Anglican cathedral; the Birmingham architect, **Henry Richard Yeoville Thomason (1826-1901)**, who designed the Council House; and more recently another Birmingham architect, **(William) John Hardcastle Dalton Madin (1924-2012)**, responsible for many modern buildings in the city, some of which though were demolished in his lifetime, and **Jan Kaplický (1937-2009)**, the Czech-born architect whose Selfridges department store in Birmingham, taking the shape of a free form blob studded with aluminium discs, became a landmark for the city.

Birmingham was dubbed 'the city of a thousand trades', a reputation reflected in the number of its manufacturers whose lives are recorded in the Oxford DNB. They include: **Sir Edward Thomason (bap. 1769, d. 1849)**, manufacturer of buttons and jewellery and publisher of medals; the **Kenrick family (per. c. 1785-1926)**, hardware manufacturers; the pen-nib manufacturer and philanthropist, **Sir Josiah Mason (1795-1881)**; the steel pen maker, **Joseph Gillott (1799-1872)**; the scale manufacturer, **Thomas Avery (1813-1894)**; the electroplate manufacturer, **George Richards Elkington (1801-1865)**; the cocoa and chocolate manufacturer, **John Cadbury (1801-1889)**, who set up in business in Birmingham in 1824, and his son the confectionery

manufacturer and **George Cadbury (1839-1922)**, who by 1910 had turned the company into Britain's largest cocoa and chocolate manufacturer; **William Greener (1806-1869)**, the founder of a family gun-making dynasty who settled in Aston in 1844 to be near local suppliers of components; **Alfred Bird (bap. 1811, d. 1878)**, the chemist and food manufacturer who set up in business in Birmingham in 1837; the hardware trader, **John Dent Goodman (1816-1900)** who went on to lead the Birmingham gun trade at the time of the Crimea war and oversaw the foundation of the Birmingham Small Arms Company (BSA); the **Hardman family (per. c. 1820-1935)**, manufacturers of ecclesiastical furnishings; and the lamp manufacturer, **Joseph Lucas (1834-1902)**.

The parental occupations recorded in Oxford DNB articles show how many Birmingham people who have articles in the dictionary were the children of those engaged in the various metal trades. The Edgbaston-born heiress to a fortune made in the Birmingham wire-drawing industry, **Louisa Anne Ryland (1814-1889)** devoted her energies and much of her wealth to the town which had brought prosperity to her family. Her donations, mainly made anonymously as 'a friend of Birmingham', covered church building, public parks (notably Cannon Hill and Small Heath, later Victoria Park), hospitals, and educational institutions. Female members of Birmingham's industrial dynasties emerge as leaders in

educational and welfare movements in the city. **Julia Lloyd (1867-1955)**, born into the family of Quaker ironmasters, became interested in the Froebelian kindergarten movement and worked to make kindergartens available to the poor in Birmingham. **Dame Geraldine Southall Cadbury (1865-1941)** had married into the Cadbury family, and devoted her life to social reform, starting with services to poor mothers, open-air schools for inner-city children, and Sunday school teaching, before developing a specialist interest in the treatment of young offenders, on which she was recognized as a national authority. She was one of Birmingham's first two JPs and chaired the justices' panel in the children's court, Birmingham's being the first such in the country.

Catherine Courtauld Osler (1854-1924), who married into the Osler family of glass manufacturers, became secretary of the Birmingham Women's Suffrage Society, advocated women's involvement in local government, and took an especial interest in infant welfare.

Many of Birmingham's institutions are documented in the Oxford DNB lives. For example, the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, where the landscape painter, **David Cox (1783-1859)**, born at Deritend, on the industrial edge of Birmingham, exhibited from 1829. Other exhibitors included the painter, **Kate Elizabeth Bunce (1856-1927)**, the illustrator and jewellery designer, **Amy Morgan Price (1878-1922)**, and the artist and illustrator, **Edith**

Blackwell Holden (1871–1920), born into a Unitarian family in Moseley, who had studied at Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Her Warwickshire nature notes of 1906 were rediscovered and published as *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* in June 1977.

The west midlands landowner and educationist, **George William Lyttelton, fourth Baron Lyttelton (1817–1876)**, was the first president of the Birmingham and Midland Institute in 1853. Many of his successors as president of the institute have entries in the Oxford DNB. Among those who attended classes there was the poet and philosopher **Constance Caroline Woodhill Naden (1858-1889)**, born in Edgbaston.

Birmingham University, which received its royal charter in 1900, is the most cited of the city's institutions in Oxford DNB articles covering the modern period. It is referred to in some 200 entries, including the lives of benefactors, teachers and researchers, and students. Among the students was the gynaecologist and obstetrician, **Dame Hilda Nora Lloyd (1891–1982)**, who was born at Balsall Heath, and was educated at King Edward VI High School for Girls, Birmingham, before pursuing her medical studies at the university.

Three lives offer differing perspectives on Birmingham's twentieth-century past. In her recollections, written late in life and published at the end of the twentieth century, **Kate**

Dayus (1903-2003) described her poverty-stricken upbringing in back-to-back housing in Hockley, on the edge of the Jewellery Quarter, but also how she successfully set up in business on her own account as an enameller. After medical training in Bombay and London, **Dhani Ram Prem (1904-1979)** settled in Birmingham as a general practitioner on the eve of the Second World War, and in 1945 was elected the city's first Asian councillor. He established an important link between the growing Indian population and local government. Prem organized the Commonwealth Welfare Council in the West Midlands and in the 1960s took a leading part in combating racial discrimination. **Henry Charles Gunter (1920-2007)**, born in Jamaica, joined friends in Birmingham in 1948, where he was employed in the metal-working and tool-making industries, and became the first black member of his union branch and the first black delegate to the Birmingham Trades Council. He campaigned in the early 1950s against the colour bar and racial discrimination in the workplace.

Continuity is represented by some of the city's enduring dynasties. Born at Bournville, the businessman, **Sir (George) Adrian Hayhurst Cadbury (1929-2015)**, was a member of the fourth generation of the family of confectionery manufacturers and a direct descendant of the founder, John Cadbury. After retiring as chairman of Cadbury Schweppes in

1989, he went on to chair a committee on corporate governance in Britain, whose report (1992) transformed the way British company boards of directors were run.

Meanwhile a continuous territorial link with the city is traceable through the **Calthorpe family (per. 1717-1910)**, who were associated with the Edgbaston estate to the west of the city, which they purchased in 1717 and whose urban estate survives into the twenty-first century. Over 50 people whose lives are included in the Oxford DNB were born in Edgbaston, and some 150 are recorded as having lived there.

Nearly 3,500 articles in the Oxford DNB have references to Birmingham, including people born there, or educated there, or working or resident there at some point in their lives; or in other ways shaping or shaped by the city; as well as events which took place there, or references to collections held in the city's cultural institutions. Among these are the 22,000 photographs, 600 stereographs, 2500 lantern slides, 17,000 glass negatives, 50 albums of collected prints, and 50 volumes of press cuttings assembled by the Birmingham photographer and politician, **Sir (John) Benjamin Stone (1838-1914)**, the son of a glassmaker (and like many other Birmingham figures in the dictionary, educated at King Edward's School) and now housed in the Library of Birmingham.

July 2022: summary of newly-added articles

This month's update adds to the 370 Reference Group articles in the Oxford DNB, a survey of the **Sealers of the Declaration of Arbroath (act. 1320)**, which traces the thirty-nine identifiable earls and barons for whom a letter—subsequently named by historians the Declaration of Arbroath—was written in the name of the political community of the realm of Scotland to Pope John XXII, dated 6 April 1320 at Arbroath Abbey. The References Lists now number nearly 200, with the addition of a list of **The forty English and Welsh martyrs (fl. 1470s–1670s)**, a disparate group of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Roman Catholic martyrs—largely executed in the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I—who were later canonized together by Pope Paul VI on 25 October 1970; and also lists of **Leaders of the Scottish National Party (1934-2017)** and **Leaders of Plaid Cymru (1925-2017)**. All the reference articles provide links to those people who have articles in the Oxford DNB. One new life is added in this month's update, **Sir William Brog (c.1563–1636)**, a Scottish army officer in the Dutch service. There are also two newly-written articles in the light of new research, the naturalist, **Mark Catesby (1683–1749)** and the philologist, **Hensleigh Wedgwood (1803–1891)**.