

Oxford DNB: February 2021

Welcome to the seventy-first update of the *Oxford DNB*, which comprises ten new articles adding ten lives, accompanied by three portrait likenesses. The new articles have a special focus on lives of national significance linked to particular regions of the British Isles.

From February 2021, the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (*Oxford DNB*) offers biographies of 64,081 men and women who have shaped the British past, contained in 61,755 articles. 11,873 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 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](#).

February 2021: summary of newly-added lives

While employed as a clerk in the East India Company, **James Broughton (1793-1864)** undertook literary work 'for amusement', publishing editions of Christopher Marlowe's plays. He later settled at Shenstone, Staffordshire, where he wrote on the county's history, politics, and curiosities. His collections are now in the William Salt Library, Stafford. Rural organizer **Mary Helen [Pollie] Simpson (1871-1947)** spent most of her life in Northamptonshire, where she was keen sports player – notably, hockey – and active in country pursuits. As an organizer for Land Army during the First World War, she was drawn into a number of public roles in Northamptonshire, especially as voluntary country organizer for the Women's Institute from 1920 to 1945, promoting training of women not only in domestic food production but more widely in agriculture. The Yorkshire Quaker **Thomas Edmund [Ted] Harvey (1875-1955)** was intent on a career in social reform, but was drawn into politics when a vacancy arose in one of the parliamentary seats in his native Leeds, for which he was elected as a Liberal in 1910. As an MP during the First World War he spoke and lobbied for conscientious objectors, and achieved official recognition for alternatives to military service. The last phase of his political career was as an MP for the Combined Universities (including Leeds) from 1937 to 1945. The daughter of an enthusiastic amateur geologist, **Eileen Mary Lind Hendriks (1887-1978)** studied geology at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and went to undertake doctoral work at Imperial College, London, mapping the geology of south Cornwall. Her reassessment of the stratigraphy caused the Geological Survey to revise its Lizard Memoir, though she

was unsuccessful when she applied for a position on the survey. Largely on her own, and self-funded, she continued her mapping work in Cornwall and Devon in the face of financial difficulties. After a childhood mainly spent in Somerset, **Ruth Lyndall Tongue (1898-1981)** taught English and drama at a school in Harrow, Middlesex. In retirement, in Somerset, her talks to the Women's Institute launched a second career as a storyteller and compiler of folk-tales, much of which she did in collaboration with Katharine Briggs. The formative experience for the London-born and trained educationist **Frederick Dalby [Fred] Flower (1915-2001)** was service in the Second World War with the Army Education Corps, where he observed the talents of adults who had recently left school. His career was subsequently spent in post-school education where, as principal of Kingsway Day College in central London from 1960 to 1978 he was at the forefront of important developments in English further education. He later worked to counteract the academic bias of the education system through his involvement in the Education for Capability movement, to promote practical and co-operative skills. Born in Southall, the constituency he went on to represent as a Labour MP, **Sydney James [Syd] Bidwell (1917-1997)** was encouraged by his trade unionist father to pursue his post-school education through the National Council of Labour Colleges. He followed his father into employment on the railways, until in 1966 he was elected for Southall, where there had been an influx of workers from the Indian subcontinent. In parliament he specialized in race relations, and campaigned for racial equality, but he was replaced as Labour candidate for the

constituency in 1992 by the president of the Indian Workers' Association. The art historian and museum curator, **(Andrew) Michael Jaffé (1923-1997)**, an authority on Rubens spent most of his career in Cambridge, where he was a university lecturer in fine art, making Cambridge one of the first British universities outside London to treat art history as an independent subject. A fellow of King's College, he was from 1973 to 1990 curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum, which he transformed. He belonged to the generation of art historians who believed that 'attribution and close attention to the style of a work of art lie at the heart of the task of an art historian'. Of Welsh-parentage, the Liverpool-born actor and playwright **Alun Davies Owen (1925-1994)** moved between theatre, radio, and television. As a playwright he recognized the new opportunities presented by television, and went on to script eighty television plays, from 1959 many for the independent TV series *Armchair Theatre*, a format well-suited to his kitchen-sink dramas, often in Liverpool settings and celebrating the local dialects, whether Liverpool, Irish, or Welsh. His best-known work was his screenplay for the Beatles' film, *A Hard Day's Night* (1964). The geologist and environmental scientist, **Brian Michael Funnell (1933-2000)** researched the geology of Norfolk, his native county and where he spent much of his career at the newly-created University of East Anglia. There he headed the largest environmental sciences institution in Europe. His work on the micropalaeontology of deep-sea sediments was in a field which unlocked much of what has become known about the Earth's climate-ocean-atmosphere system.

