

FAMOUS YORK



YORK'S FAMOUS HISTORICAL CHARACTERS

Septimius Severus

African-born Roman emperor, who died in Eboracum in 211, Septimus Severus was an intimate of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus – both were recently portrayed in the global hit movie 'Gladiator'. Some say he may even have been implicated in Commodus' murder.

Guy Fawkes

The Gunpowder Plotter was baptised (a Protestant) at St Michael Le Belfrey church in 1570, but later converted to catholicism. The plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament was found out, but only after severe torture did Fawkes give up the names of his accomplices.

Margaret Clitherow

Wife of a Shambles butcher, she was crushed to death for harbouring Catholic priests in 1586. The brave Clitherow also organised schooling for the catholics of the city. Today the house is a shrine (located in the Shambles and open to visitors) and Margaret is revered as a martyr. Her hand, which was cut off after her death, is kept in the Bar Convent Museum.



Constantine the Great

First Christian Roman Emperor: he was baptised on his deathbed. Declared Emperor in York 306AD. Under Constantine, the powerbase of the Empire shifted east from Rome to Constantinople – named after him.

Dick Turpin

The dashing epitome of the dandy highwayman, complete with legendary mount Black Bess, or a brutal killer who was a good deal nastier than his romantic image suggests? Whichever the truth, one undisputed fact is that Turpin hanged at York Racecourse in 1739 – you can visit his condemned cell at the Castle Museum. A cool customer, it's reported that he chatted amiably with guards and executioner on the gallows for half an hour before nonchalantly indicating that he was ready for the hangman to do his work.



George Hudson – The Railway King

Born near York in 1800. When the draper of College Street invested a legacy of £30,000 in the North Midland Railway in 1828 it spelled the beginning of York's great Railway Age, and Hudson went on to become a Councillor, Alderman, Member of Parliament and Lord Mayor. He did indeed 'mak all t' railways come t'York', thereby making possible the city's highly profitable sweet trade (fruit from Scotland and cocoa from Liverpool), but questionable financial dealings were ultimately his downfall. Dickens said of the man; "I disavow any allegiance to the 'Railway King'...the Giant Humbug of this time, and not a pleasant illustration of our English Virtues."

Alcuin

Famed Anglo-Saxon scholar, who was educated at York's cathedral school around 750, he was a major figure of York's 'Dark Ages'. He features heavily in local history exhibitions at the Yorkshire Museum.

Eric Bloodaxe

So called because he killed seven of his eight half-brothers – they had been foolish enough to rebel against him. In 940 this deposed Viking King of Norway became King of York, only to be expelled in 954 and later murdered. One of the bloodiest figures in York's bloody history.

SCIENTISTS OF NOTE

- **Martin Lister**

Fellow of the Royal Society and Physician to Queen Anne, practiced in York from 1670 to 1683.

- **John Goodricke**

Astronomer of York, discovered the binary star Algol in 1782.

- **Sir George Cayley**

1773 to 1857, 'the father of aviation', was a member of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society'

- **Thomas Cooke**

Instrument maker for Scott's Antarctic expedition, established his business in York in 1837.

- **John Snow**

John Snow was born in York on 15th March 1813, the oldest of nine children. His family lived in North Street, where the Park Inn Hotel now stands, one of the poorer parts of the city and prone to flooding. His family subsequently moved to better drained areas of the city.

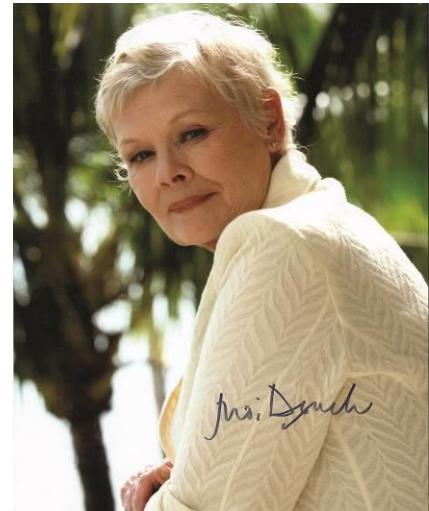
At the age of 14 he became a medical apprentice and went on to become a qualified surgeon and was thereafter admitted to the Royal College of Physicians in 1850. John Snow transformed the management of pain through his work on ether and chloroform – and personally administered chloroform to Queen Victoria during the birth of two of her children. He also transformed public health

through his work on cholera and the importance of non-contaminated water supplies to prevent the spread of infectious disease. He died after suffering a stroke aged 45 – leaving a legacy that has made him famous across the world.

MODERN FAMOUS

Dame Judi Dench

Cleopatra...Queen Victoria... Queen Elizabeth. Dame Judi Dench is one of the finest, best-known and best-loved English actresses, excelling on stage, screen and television alike. This remarkable actress is equally believable as James Bond's M, or in the popular television comedy *A Fine Romance*, in which she starred with her late husband Michael Williams and for which she has received more than one BAFTA. In 1999 she won an Oscar for her eight minutes of screen time as Queen Elizabeth I in *Shakespeare in Love* – and as anyone who has seen the film will testify, they are an unforgettable eight minutes! In 2002, Dame Judi Dench played the leading part of Iris Murdoch, in the film *Iris*, starring alongside Kate Winslet. This film describes the last years of her marriage and Murdoch's decline into Alzheimer's disease.



Judith Olivia Dench was born in York in 1934, Dame Judi attended the city's Mount School. She was voted as York Personality of the Millennium, voted for by readers of the city's Evening Press newspaper. In December 2002 Dame Judi received a **BAFTA Academy Fellowship**, recognising her outstanding contribution to film and television. The accolade is the highest bestowed by BAFTA.

David Bradley

Cast as Argus Filch, the cadaverous caretaker in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. David is from York but now lives in Stratford. From the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, David then joined the Sheffield Playhouse before being snapped up by Granada TV for its long-running series, *Family at War*. David has also had a glittering theatre career and played God in the 1976 *York Mystery Plays*.

Mark Addy

Remember Dave in *The Full Monty*, the lovable, insecure security guard who wraps himself in cling film in a desperate slimming attempt before the boys' big night? That's Mark Addy, born and bred in York, he still lives in the city despite a growing Hollywood career. Mark appeared as Fred Flintstone in 'Flintstones in Las Vegas', and British audiences remember him for appearances in such popular television series as 'The Thin Blue Line' and 'Band of Gold'. So attached to home ground is Mark that he even tried to persuade the producers of the Flintstone movie to let Fred speak with a Yorkshire accent: "Nobody really knows what accent people had back then, do they? I tried to blind them with science. I argued that with the shift in tectonic plates and the like, Yorkshire could well have been the centre of civilisation at the time, and Fred could have sounded like he lived in York – like me!"

Ian Kelsey

Fans of the popular English soap television programme *Emmerdale* know Ian Kelsey as Dave Glover, whereas *Casualty* watchers will recognise him as nasty Dr Patrick Spiller, whose bedside manner left a lot to be desired. Born in York in 1972, Ian worked as a stunt cowboy in the United States in order to get his Equity card, and a stint on the London West End in *Grease* added to his already considerable fan following.

Hunter from "Gladiators" (James Crossley)

Gladiators is a well-known English television programme, where grown-up men fight gladiator-style battles. The youngest and, for many, the best of the UK Gladiators hails from York (which quite possibly played host to a few gladiators for real in its Eboracum days). A former Teenage Mr York and Mr England, fitness freak and body-builder extraordinaire James excelled on the show, particularly on *The Wall*. Since the programme ended he has appeared on various television programmes, and has also presented the TV show Peak Performance.

Kate Atkinson

York-born author Kate Atkinson won the prestigious Whitbread Book of the Year prize in 1995 with her extraordinary family saga *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* – set in York. The book was an international sensation. A stage version was premiered at York's Theatre Royal.

Janet McTeer

Yet another outstanding York actor, McTeer may be best known to British audiences as the no-nonsense Helen Hewitt in the TV prison drama *The Governess*. In 1999 she made the move to the big screen in style, with an Oscar nomination for her work in the Southern family drama *Tumbleweeds*. In 1997 she won a Tony for her performance in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, on Broadway.

John Barry – Composer

York-born music maestro John Barry composed 12 of the soundtracks for the Bond films, including *Zulu*, *Born Free*, *Midnight Cowboy* and the famous theme piece to *Dr. No*. He is also known for scores of other much loved themes such as the theme music for the films *Born Free* and *Dances with Wolves*. In May 2001 John Barry was honoured with admission to the Ivor Novello Fellowship. This was only the second fellowship ever to be given out by the prestigious Musical Academy, the first being that given to ex-Beatle Sir Paul McCartney. John Barry received an honorary Doctorate from the University of York in July 2001.

W H Auden

Auden is not immediately associated with York, but he was in fact born here in 1907, although the family moved to Birmingham shortly afterwards. A hero of the left during the Great Depression, the

poet wrote much of his work in conjunction with Christopher Isherwood. In 1939 he settled in the United States, and eventually became a US citizen, but Yorkshire continued to be an important source of inspiration. The use of the Auden poem *Funeral Blues* in the smash hit film *Four Weddings and a Funeral* ('Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone...') gave the poet's work a new lease of life.

Margaret Drabble

The famous author Margaret Drabble attended the Mount School in York, after which she was awarded a major scholarship to Newnham College, Cambridge, where she read English. After graduating from Cambridge University, she joined the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford during which time she understudied for Vanessa Redgrave. Her novel *The Millstone* won the John Llewelyn Rhys Prize and she was also the recipient of a Society of Author's Travelling Fellowship in the mid-1960's. She was also awarded the James Tait Black, the E.M. Forster awards and the CBE in 1980.

A S Byatt

The award-winning author A S Byatt is Margaret Drabble's older sister. Antonia Susan Byatt was also educated at York and at Newnham College, Cambridge. Byatt taught at University College London before becoming a full time writer. She has written six novels and three short story collections, and won the Booker Prize in 1990 for *Possession*. Her critical works include two collections of essays: *Unruly Time*, on the *Romantics*, and *Passions of the Mind*. She is also the author of *Degrees of Freedom*, on Iris Murdoch.

Mark Herman

Wrote and directed the films *Brassed Off* and *Little Voice*. He also adapted *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* for the screen and directed it. He lives in York.

OTHER FAMOUS YORKIES OR PEOPLE WITH STRONG CONNECTIONS TO YORK

Jung Chang

The author of the award-winning book *Wild Swans* studied at York University.

Graham Swift

Grahams Swift is a British novelist and writer of short stories. He attended York University from 1970-73 and established his career as an author with the novel *Waterland*.

Greg Dyke

The former Director General of the BBC, graduated with a degree in politics from the University of York in 1974 and a degree of Doctor of the University was conferred on him by the University's

Chancellor Dame Janet Baker at a graduation ceremony in Central Hall in July 1999. He was then himself Chancellor of the University of York from 2004 – 2015.

Harry Enfield

English comedian Harry Enfield is also amongst the famous alumni at York University.

James Callis

The actor James Callis appeared as the gay friend of Bridget Jones in the film *Bridget Jones' Diary*. In 1993, James graduated from York University and received a BA degree in English and Related Literature at the University of York. After graduating from York in 1993, James gained a place at the renowned London Academy of Music & Dramatic Arts and started his career as an actor.

Shed 7

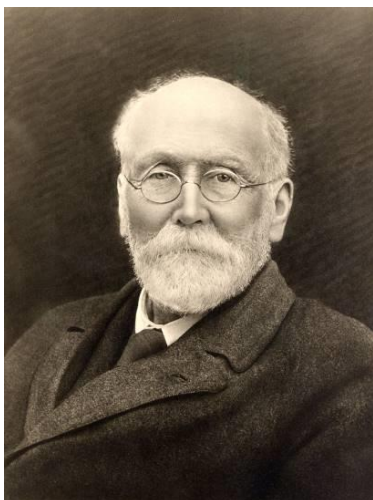
Indie pop band from York. Their music is comparable to the other Yorkshire Indie band 'Embrace'.

Andrew Dunn

'Tony' from *Dinnerladies*. The actor Andrew Dunn plays the part of Tony, the man who is in charge of the five dinner ladies in the British comedy *Dinnerladies*. Andrew is from York originally and came back for a visit to the Viking festival in 2001.

Joseph Hansom (1803 - 1882)

The architect and inventor J. A. Hansom was born in York, and was apprenticed first in this city and then in Halifax. Hansom went on to lead a varied career, partnering a string of different architects, inventing the famous Hansom Cab, and founding the eminent architectural magazine *The Builder*. Apart from the Birmingham Town Hall, Hansom was responsible for various churches, mainly Roman Catholic, of which London St Mary's Priory on Fulham Rd (1876) is an example. The museum building in Leicester – formerly a Baptist church – is another Classical Hansom building.



Joseph Rowntree

Joseph Rowntree was the son of a Quaker grocer and was born in York on 24th May 1834. Rowntree returned to work for his father but in 1869 he left to join his brother, Henry Rowntree, who owned the Cocoa, Chocolate and Chicory Works in York. The company only employed thirty workers at the time, but under Joseph's influence the company grew rapidly and by the end of the century it was an enormous international concern with over 4,000 employees. One important development was the decision to produce Fruit Pastilles in 1881. Other new products included Chocolate Drops, Fruit Gums and Jelly Babies. On the death of Henry in 1883, Joseph became the owner of the company. Joseph also devoted a significant part of his life to public work. He served on the committee responsible for two

Quakers schools in York and taught in an Adult School on Sunday. Rowntree also played a leading role in the establishment of the York Public Library.

Joseph Terry

Joseph Terry was born in 1793. When he married into the Bayldon family he began to develop the confectionery business in the city of York. He created many new confectionary products that became popular throughout the whole of Britain. The business was taken over by his sons after his death and created the famous Terry's "Chocolate Orange".

George Hudson

Lord Mayor of York (three times) and known as the Railway King.

William Etty (1787-1849)

The painter William Etty was born in York, and became an apprentice in a printing works, where he remained for seven years. Then he became a student at the Royal Academy Schools in 1807, and worked for Thomas Lawrence for a year. The paintings by Etty at the Tate Gallery include the "Pandora Crowned by the Seasons", the well-known "Youth on the Prow and Pleasure at the Helm" and "The Bather at the doubtful breeze alarmed". A statue of Etty stands outside the city's Art Gallery.



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