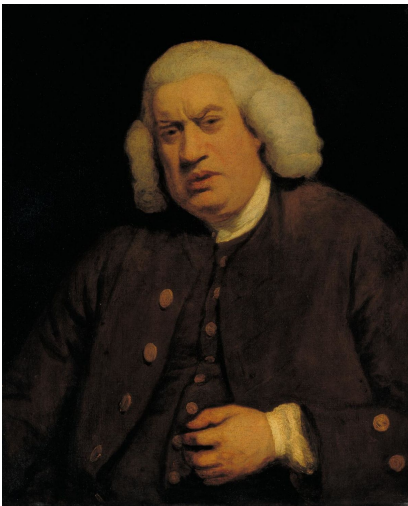




People

Samuel Johnson 1709–1784



"When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

Samuel Johnson, born in 1709, spent nine years working on *A Dictionary of the English Language*, which was published in 1755. It remained the definitive English dictionary until the *Oxford English Dictionary* was completed in 1928. Johnson is known as one of the world's greatest lexicographers. His dictionary was not the first, but those that preceded his were poor comparisons, often stiff and dry.

It took Johnson nine years to complete, although he had originally promised to complete it in three. Once finished it was as much of a work of art as one of reference, full of witty definitions. Here are some examples:

- Dull: Not exhilarating; not delightful; as, to make dictionaries is dull work.
- Lexicographer: A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the signification of words.
- Oats: A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland appears to support the people.
- Pension: An allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country.
- Stockjobber: a low wretch who gets money by buying and selling shares.

While Johnson is best known for his dictionary, he had an accomplished career even without it. He was a poet and spent years creating a collection of the works of Shakespeare. His life also made him the subject of the first modern biography, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* by James Boswell.

Source: telegraph.co.uk

Alfred Hitchcock

1899–1980



Famous films:

Psycho

Rear Window

Vertigo

The Man Who Knew Too Much

Rope

The Trouble With Harry

"I'm frightened of my own movies. I never go to see them. I don't know how people can bear to watch my movies."

Alfred Hitchcock was born in London on August 13, 1899. Over a 50-year career as a movie director, he revolutionized film style with taut, twist-filled classics like "Psycho," "Rear Window" and "Vertigo." His dapper fashion sense, rotund physique and trademark dark humor also established him as one of Hollywood's most beloved behind the camera celebrities. He is known as the big screen's "Master of Suspense."

He cared so deeply about protecting his art he spared no expense making sure they were viewed in the correct manner by their audiences, buying the rights to five of his most famous films (*The Man Who Knew Too Much*, *Rear Window*, *Rope*, *The Trouble with Harry* and *Vertigo*) so they could not be screened in movie theatres for after their initial run. Subsequently, they were not seen by a cinema audience for 30 years.

He made cameos in most of his films. Part of Hitchcock's fame was due to the self-referential and often humorous appearances he made in 39 of his movies. The director usually appeared in the background as a pedestrian or a public transportation passenger, and his walk-on parts

eventually became so beloved that he had to place them early in the film to avoid distracting his audience.

He worked with famous painters and literary figures. The director hired the likes of Dorothy Parker, Raymond Chandler, Thornton Wilder and John Steinbeck to punch up his scripts, and tried to get both Ernest Hemingway and Vladimir Nabokov to write for him. For 1945's *Spellbound*, Hitchcock even brought in surrealist artist Salvador Dali to help concoct the film's complex dream sequences.

He often battled with Hollywood censors. Hitchcock spent most of his career bristling at the restrictions of the Hays Code, the industry guidelines that regulated the content of Hollywood films, and he often devised clever techniques to circumvent the rules. While

making “Psycho,” he intentionally sent the Hays Office scenes with graphic violence and nudity to distract them from axing the more subtle shots he wanted to keep.

He never won an Oscar. Hitchcock was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1980 and received numerous honors for his work, yet the Academy Award for Best Director always eluded him. He was nominated for the prize five times—for “Rebecca,” “Lifeboat,” “Spellbound,” “Rear Window” and “Psycho” — but remained, in his own words, “always a bridesmaid, never a bride.” When Hitchcock finally received an honorary lifetime achievement Oscar, he gave one of the shortest acceptance speeches in the ceremony’s history, saying only, “Thank you...very much indeed.”

His wife was his closest collaborator.

He was a notorious practical joker.

*Sources: amp.history.com
telegraph.co.uk*

Alexander Fleming

1881–1955



“When I woke up just after dawn on September 28, 1928, I certainly didn’t plan to revolutionize all medicine by discovering the world’s first antibiotic, or bacteria killer. But I guess that was exactly what I did.”

Sir Alexander Fleming, Scottish bacteriologist best known for his discovery of penicillin. Fleming had a genius for technical ingenuity and original observation. His work on wound infection and lysozyme, an antibacterial enzyme found in tears and saliva, guaranteed him a place in the history of bacteriology. But it was his discovery of penicillin in 1928, which started the antibiotic revolution, that sealed his lasting reputation. Fleming was

recognized for that achievement in 1945, when he received the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine.

The discovery of penicillin, one of the world’s first antibiotics, marks a true turning point in human history — when doctors finally had a tool that could completely cure their patients of deadly infectious diseases.

Penicillin was discovered in London in September of 1928. As the story goes, Dr. Alexander Fleming returned from a summer vacation in Scotland to find a messy lab bench and a good deal more. Upon examining some colonies of *Staphylococcus aureus*, Dr. Fleming noted that a mold called *Penicillium notatum* had contaminated his Petri dishes. After carefully placing the dishes under his microscope, he was amazed to find that the mold prevented the normal growth of the staphylococci.

It took Fleming a few more weeks to grow enough of the persnickety mold so that he was able to confirm his findings. His conclusions turned out to be phenomenal: there was some factor in the *Penicillium* mold that not only inhibited the growth of the bacteria but, more important, might be harnessed to combat infectious diseases.

*Source: britannica.com
pbs.org*