

# Hidden People of Yorkshire: Artists, Authors, Actors & Musicians

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## Artists

Francis Nicholson  
(1753-1844)  
Pickering

Painter, early Lithographer. Known as the 'father of watercolour painting' Nicholson was primarily a landscape artist who, despite great success, spent much of his career in Yorkshire. He was a founding member of the Society of Painters in Watercolours.

John Flaxman R.A.  
(1755-1826)  
York

Sculptor, draftsman and engraver, leading figure in British & European Neoclassicism. His career also included working as a modeller for Josiah Wedgewood in his world famous pottery business.

Julius Caesar Ibbetson  
(1759-1817)  
Leeds

Painter. Ibbetson is most famous for his landscape and water colour paintings. He was well respected during his lifetime and his work was said to be incredibly delicate and confidently portrayed.

John Jackson R.A.  
(1778-1831)  
Lastingham

Painter. Although he began life as an apprentice tailor on the insistence of his father, Jackson was determined to succeed and his skill won him numerous sponsorships as an artist. He was a prolific portraitist in his day and his work is widely respected in the art world today. His work *Girl in Dutch Costume* can be found in Leeds Art Gallery.

Anthony Vandyke Copley Fielding  
(1787-1855)  
Sowerby

Painter. Renowned for his watercolour landscape paintings and for being President of the Royal Society of Watercolours, Copley Fielding was a contemporary of John Constable and highly regarded in his day. His works sell for large amounts of money and are held in many of the finest museums in the country.

Lord Frederic Leighton  
(1830-1896)  
Scarborough

Painter and sculptor. Leighton focused his works on historical, classical and biblical subjects for which he received wide acclaim. He is also known to have held the shortest peerage in history, when he was a Lord for just one day.

Phil May  
(1864-1903)  
Leeds

Illustrator. May was an important illustrator of his day and his body of work remains collectable. He found fame as a black and white artist and cartoonist working for *Punch* magazine and *The Graphic* who focused on political satire. He was also a founder member of the London Sketch Club.

Bertram Priestman R.A.  
(1868-1951)  
Bradford

Artist. Priestman's work earned him the reputation of one of the most eminent painters of his time. Despite the admiration of his peers and the sale of his works into many private collections throughout the world, today he is hardly known.

Sir William Rothenstein  
(1872-1945)  
Bradford

Artist and principal of the Royal College of Art, famous for fine portrait painting, he was well respected amongst his peers. Rothenstein was the son of a German-Jewish immigrant who despite the fears of his family, maintained his surname at the outbreak of World War One. He was chosen as an official war artist for the British government in both world wars.

Charles Sargeant Jagger  
(1885-1934)  
Rotherham

British sculptor, older brother of David (see below), Jagger served in World War One which had a significant influence on his work. His sculptures can be seen on many famous war memorials around the world, amongst his most famous is the Royal Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, London.

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Edward Alexander Wadsworth  
(1889-1949)  
Bradford

Born in Cleckheaton, Wadsworth was an artist most famous for his close association with Vorticism. During World War One he designed 'dazzle' camouflage for allied ships which confused attacking enemy U-boats. His experiences of war subsequently had a significant impact on his work.

David Jagger RP, ROI  
(1891-1958)  
Rotherham

Prolific portrait painter who depicted a number of famous people of the period including Robert Baden Powell, Winston Churchill and Queen Mary. Jagger exhibited many times at the Royal Academy.

Henry Marvell Carr  
(1894-1970)  
Leeds

Painter, former soldier in the Royal Field Artillery in France, also appointed official war artist during the World War Two. His work was much loved and he even went on to be commissioned to produce a portrait of USA President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Roland Vivian Pitchforth  
(1895-1982)  
Wakefield

Painter. Pitchforth is famous for his role as an official war artist during World War Two. His works depict the impact of the war at home and the day to day life of British citizens at the time. His style was accessible and he proved very popular.

Henry Moore  
(1898-1986)  
Castleford

Sculptor and artist. Moore made his name with his semi-abstract bronze sculptures. These were usually based on human figures, although some consider that the shapes in his work also reflect the landscape and hills of his home county. Despite his international success which made him very wealthy, Moore lived simply and put most of his earnings into a trust known as the Henry Moore Foundation which continues to support education and the arts to this day.

Richard Eurich OBE RA  
(1903-1992)  
Bradford

Painter. Eurich was the son of Friederich Wilhem Eurich a German Jewish scientist who settled in Bradford and became famous for his work into the disease anthrax. Richard was not a scientist but a landscape painter and official war artist. His work has been exhibited at the Imperial War Museum.

Dame Barbara Hepworth  
(1903-1975)  
Wakefield

Sculptor. Barbara Hepworth is internationally acclaimed sculptor whose work is regarded as some of the finest in her field. Her work to develop modern art in Britain has left a lasting legacy. A £35 million gallery bearing her name has recently been opened in her home town of Wakefield to acknowledge her impact.

Derrick Greaves  
(1927 – to date)  
Sheffield

Painter. One of the most important British painters of the last 50 years. Greaves is recognised as a 'kitchen sink' painter for his portrayal of the everyday lives of working-class Britons.

David Hockney  
(1937 – to date)  
Bradford

Painter, draughtsman, print-maker, stage-designer and photographer. Hockney is one of Bradford's most famous sons, a global icon of the art world with an instantly recognisable style. His tireless ambition to explore new approaches, techniques and technology have made him a very popular artist. Now aged 76 he is still producing huge quantities of work and is considered one of the most important artists of the 20th Century.

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## Authors, Writers & Poets

Elizabeth Montagu  
(1718-1800)  
York

Author, social reformer, patron of the arts and literary critic. Her contributions to the arts include her leadership of the The Bluestocking Society. This group of 18th-century intellectual women did much to promote education and social reform for women society. She also hosted the Intellectual Society of London for 50 years. She continued her financial support for English and Scottish literature throughout her career.

Charlotte, Emily & Anne Brontë  
(1816-1855/1818-1848/1849)  
Thornton/Haworth

Authors. The Brontë sisters formed a remarkable literary legacy that has proved hard to match. All three sisters were highly acclaimed authors and poets and their works have since been accepted as masterpieces. Amongst the most famous of their works were Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*, Emily's *Wuthering Heights* and Anne's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

Humbert Wolfe CB CBE  
(1855-1940)  
Milan/Bradford

Poet. Although born in Milan, Wolfe grew up in Bradford and became one of the most popular poets of the 1920s. His poem *Requiem* about World War One was one of his most famous. During World War Two he worked with the British government to gather artists and writers who could serve as propagandists for the war effort.

George Gissing  
(1857-1903)  
Wakefield

Classical scholar and author. Gissing experienced a mixed reception to his works during his lifetime but his writing has become more respected in the last 50 years. In 1943 George Orwell acknowledged that he was 'perhaps the best novelist England has ever produced'.

Oliver Onions  
(1873-1961)  
Bradford

Novelist. Onions had a prolific writing career producing over 40 novels. Alongside detective and historical fiction, Onions wrote several collections of ghost stories. The best known is *Widdershins*, which included *The Beckoning Fair One* widely regarded as one of the best in the genre of horror fiction.

Dorothy Una Ratcliffe  
(1887-1967)  
Wensleydale

Poet. Ratcliffe remains to this day a very popular dialect poet. Her unique approach ensured she formed a niche of her own. During her career she was also elected President of the Yorkshire Dialect society.

Margaret Storm Jameson  
(1891-1986)  
Whitby

Journalist and author regarded as 'a master of the art' known best for her novels and critical reviews. Her own work was complimented by her role as President of the British branch of the International PEN association. This actively promoted freedom of expression and emphasised the role of literature to develop friendship, mutual understanding and intellectual co-operation among people everywhere. It has since grown to be an influential NGO working to overcome oppression and help refugee writers find their voice across the world. She was also a founding member of the Peace Pledge Union which sought to renounce war of any kind.

J.B. Priestley  
(1894-1984)  
Bradford

Author, playwright, literary critic and broadcaster. World War One veteran Priestley is one of Bradford's most popular writers. His most famous work *An Inspector Calls* is regarded as a literary classic. His love for the city was reflected in his work and legacy and he is honoured with a statue in the city. His ideas led to the formation of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) of which he was a founding member.

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Eric Knight  
(1897-1943)  
Menston

Author. Knight was well known in his day and much loved in Britain despite moving first to the USA and then to South America. He is most famous for being the creator of the world-famous collie character *Lassie*.

Winifred Holtby  
(1898-1935)  
Rudston

Novelist, journalist, feminist, socialist and pacifist. Holtby was a prolific writer and friend of fellow author Vera Brittain. Her best known work was the novel *South Riding* about a Yorkshire community struggling in the Depression of the 1930s. As a political reformer she was active in both the Independent Labour Party and feminist Six Point Group.

W.H. Auden  
(1907-1973)  
York

Poet, novelist, playwright. Auden is widely regarded as one of the greatest writers of the 20th Century. His work is recognised for its approach and engagement with moral and political issues of the day.

John Braine  
(1922-1986)  
Bingley

Best selling novelist, often associated with the prominent 'Angry Young Men' movement in the 1950's alongside Kingsley Amis. He wrote a number of well received works but is most well known for his first book published in 1957, *Room at the Top*.

Edward James 'Ted' Hughes  
(1930-1998)  
Mytholmroyd

Poet Laureate and Children's author. Hughes is thought of as one of the best poets of his generation. His work never lost its Yorkshire roots but he explored many aspects of the myth, beauty and violence of the natural world. He was famously married to fellow poet Sylvia Plath. Hughes is commemorated in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey and an annual award for new emerging poets bears his name.

Alan Bennett  
(1934 – to date)  
Leeds

Playwright, author, screenwriter and actor. After an early career performing with Dudley Moore and Peter Cooke amongst others, Bennett settled into the career he is most famous for, writing. He has been one of the most prolific writers to come out of Yorkshire and certainly one of the most loved. His distinctive voice, sharp humour and semi-autobiographical style have won him fans and countless awards and accolades.

Andrea Dunbar  
(1961-1990)  
Bradford

Dunbar wrote her first play *The Arbor* aged 15, drawing from her experiences of living in the Brafferton Arbor on the Buttershaw council estate in Bradford. Although originally written as part of a school project; it was later staged to acclaim in London and New York. A BAFTA nominated film about her life, *The Arbor*, was released in 2010. Dunbar is best known for her play *Rita, Sue and Bob Too*, an autobiographical drama about teenage girls living in a run-down area of Bradford.

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## Actors & Entertainers

Harry & Matthew Corbett  
(1918-1989/1948 – to date)

Puppeteers. Harry and Matthew Corbett were the father and son team responsible for creating much loved puppet 'Sooty', a long-running television show since the 1950s. Harry was the son of a coal miner and the soot he used to create his first puppet also gave him it's name.

Mollie Sugden  
(1922-2009)  
Keighley

Actress. Mollie Sugden was a comedy actress who brought many characters to life in the early days of television. She is most well remembered however, for her role of Mrs. Slocombe in the series *Are You Being Served?*

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**Kay Kendall**  
(1927-1959)  
Withernsea

Award winning Actress. Kendall began her career in 1946 in the musical *London Town*. She went on to have a career that lasted 15 years during which she won a Golden Globe for Best Actress in comedy *Les Girls* (1957). Critics have since come to admire her skill and range which was sadly not tested to the full during her career.

**Sir Timothy West**  
(1934 – to date)  
Bradford

Actor. A talented actor, West has had a long career on both stage and screen. He is well respected in his field and serves as president of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art as well as President of the Society for Theatre Research. He is also an Ambassador of SOS Children's Villages, an international orphan charity for abandoned children.

**Judi Dench**  
(1934 – to date)  
York

Multi-award winning and much loved actress. Although beginning her career as a classically trained Shakespearian actress, Dench is well known for her film and TV work in the UK and around the world. She has made many films and won numerous awards; as a result she is regarded as one of the country's greatest living actresses.

**Brian Blessed**  
(1936 – to date)  
Mexborough

Actor. Brian Blessed is seen as an acting tour-de-force. His instantly recognisable voice and larger than life portrayals have been enjoyed and acknowledged by audiences for over 50 years. Film and TV roles both at home and in Hollywood as well as a number of theatre performances have cemented his reputation. His charity work and expeditions only serve to make him more interesting. He has climbed Mount Everest three times and holds the world record for being the oldest man to trek to the North Pole on foot.

**Patrick Stewart OBE**  
(1940 – to date)  
Mirfield

Actor. Patrick Stewart, son of a weaver, has had a truly remarkable career that has seen him taking lead roles in films like *Star-Trek* and *X-Men*. His award-winning career has also included countless stage performances and he is particularly renowned for his performances with the Royal Shakespeare Company.

**Michael Palin**  
(1943 – to date)  
Sheffield

Actor, Writer, Comedian and television presenter. Palin is something of a national treasure known to some as a key member of Monty Python and to others for his many documentaries. His contribution to the entertainment industry was recognised in 2013 when he was made a BAFTA fellow, the highest honour that can be given by the organisation.

**Alan Titchmarsh MBE**  
(1949 – to date)  
Ilkley

Gardener, Broadcaster and novelist. Titchmarsh has been a regular fixture on British television since 1983. He has done much to promote gardening and care of the natural world to his viewers.

**Sean Bean**  
(1959 - to date)  
Sheffield

Actor. Sean Bean's career has performed leading roles in film and television, including *Sharpe*, *Lord of the Rings* and *Game of Thrones*. He was very nearly a professional footballer but a childhood leg injury meant he instead pursued a career in entertainment.

**Jeremy Clarkson**  
(1960 – to date)  
Doncaster

Journalist and TV Presenter. Clarkson's work on BBC programme *Top Gear* has made him a household name and his opinionated and humorous presenting style has won him many fans. When Clarkson investigated his family for *Who Do You Think You Are* he was surprised to discover that he was related to John Kilner, inventor of the Kilner Jar.



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Lee Francis  
(1973 – to date)  
Leeds

Comedian. Best known first for his television show *Bo'Selecta!* and more recently as character Keith Lemon. Francis has become a household name in Britain, responsible for a host of popular catchphrases.

Rachel Leskovac  
(1976 – to date)  
Bradford

Actress. Leskovac is an Olivier nominated British actress known for her portrayal of serial killer nurse Kelly Yorke in *Holby City* and Natasha Blakeman in *Coronation Street*. She is of Croatian descent.

Steven 'Dynamo' Frayne  
(1982 – to date)  
Bradford

Magician. Dynamo is a world famous magician with a large following. He grew up in Holme Wood, Bradford and learned his first illusions from his grandfather. He is known for a highly impressive range of tricks and his TV programme has won multiple awards.

Jennifer Metcalfe  
(1983 – to date)  
Bradford

Actress. Metcalfe, from Holme Wood, is a well known soap star and her portrayal of Mercedes McQueen in Channel 4 series *Hollyoaks* has made her one of the stars of the show. She attended the Scala Kids drama school in Bradford.

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## Musicians

Sir William Sterndale Bennett  
(1816-1875)  
Sheffield

Composer, Pianist, Conductor and Teacher. Bennett was a child prodigy of the piano and admitted to the Royal Academy of Music aged just 10. He grew to be a major influence on musicians of his time. He ended his career as Professor of Music at Cambridge and Principal of the Royal Academy of Music and did much to pass on his knowledge and experience.

Sir Walter Parratt  
(1841-1924)  
Huddersfield

Organist and Composer, Master of the Queen's Music and Professor of Music at Oxford.

Frederick Delius  
(1862-1934)  
Bradford

Composer. Delius was the son of a wealthy mercantile family who had moved to Bradford to work in the textile trade. His parents intended him to follow in the family business but he repeatedly refused. He travelled and worked in America, France and Germany where he found great success. Despite this he never lost his Yorkshire accent or forgot his Bradfordian roots.

John Barry  
(1933-2011)  
York

Composer. John Barry's death marked the end of an era in the world of film. The highly respected, multi-award winning composer had been responsible for creating some of Hollywood's most famous scores including *Midnight Cowboy*, *Out of Africa* and *Dances With Wolves* and the signature themes of the *James Bond* film series.

Joe Cocker  
(1944 – to date)  
Sheffield

Singer. Cocker remains to this day a rock and blues singer despite his career high coming in the 1960s playing in legendary festivals like Woodstock. He found great success, particularly in America where he now lives.

Pauline Matthews 'Kiki Dee'  
(1947 – to date)  
Bradford

Singer. Kiki Dee is best known for her 1976 duet with Elton John *Don't Go Breaking My Heart* which went to number one in both the UK and USA. In the United States she became the first white British artist to be signed by Motown, releasing her first Motown single in 1970. Her career continues to this day and she has released over 13 studio albums.

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Robert Palmer  
(1949-2003)  
Batley

Singer. Palmer was a singer known not only for his distinctive voice but also the eclectic range of musical styles he explored in his work. He combined soul, jazz, rock, pop, reggae and blues. His career spanned 40 years and he found great success both at home and overseas.

Jarvis Cocker  
(1963 – to date)  
Sheffield

Musician, DJ, Actor. Jarvis Cocker is a multi-instrumentalist but is best known for being the lead singer of the band *Pulp*. Formed in the 1980s they had a career that lasted over 20 years and were leading figures in the Britpop movement of the 1990s. Cocker has since had a successful solo career and works as a DJ for the BBC.

Melanie Brown 'Mel B'  
(1975 – to date)  
Leeds

Singer. 'Scary Spice' Mel B is an artist who has explored many different routes in her career. However she is most well remembered as one of the *Spice Girls*, a global supergroup who sold millions of records world-wide.

Ricky Wilson  
(1978 – to date)  
Keighley

Singer. Ricky *I predict a riot* Wilson is best known for being the lead singer in Leeds band the Kaiser Chiefs. The band have had a successful career and continue to this day.

Kimberley Walsh  
(1981 – to date)  
Bradford

Singer, model, actress. Kimberley Walsh is best known for her role as one of *Girls Aloud*. The group were winners of TV singing contest *Popstars: The Rivals* and have since went on to achieve massive success (20 consecutive top 10 singles and 6 platinum albums).

Zain Javadd 'Zayn' Malik  
(1993 – to date)  
Bradford

Singer. Zayn grew up in East Bowling and has since reflected on a somewhat difficult upbringing. His career however has had no such difficulty. As one fifth of global pop sensation *One Direction* Zayn's career has made him a superstar in the music industry and known to fans around the world.