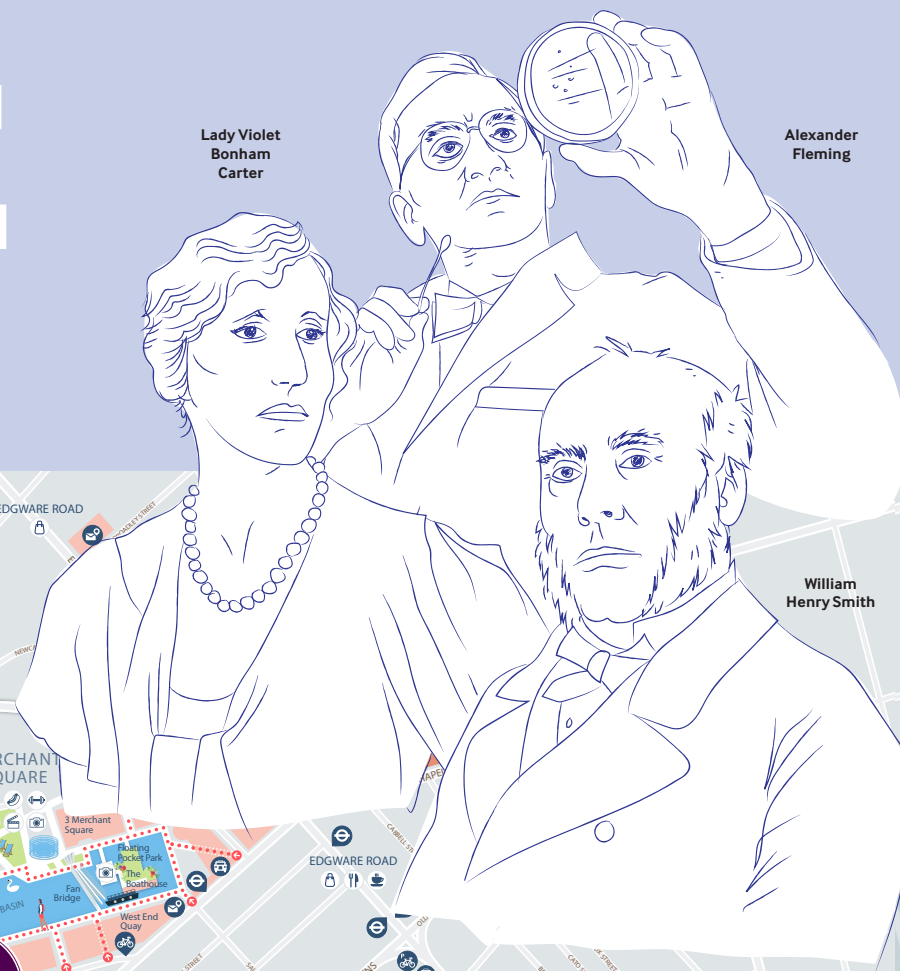


# HERITAGE HUNT



Who knew the inventor of the red telephone box lived in Paddington? Sir Giles Gilbert Scott is just one of 25 local legends whose former homes are marked by a plaque, says **Sarah Riches**. How many can you find?

History buffs have English Heritage to thank for the commemorative plaques that mark the homes of notable people from the past.

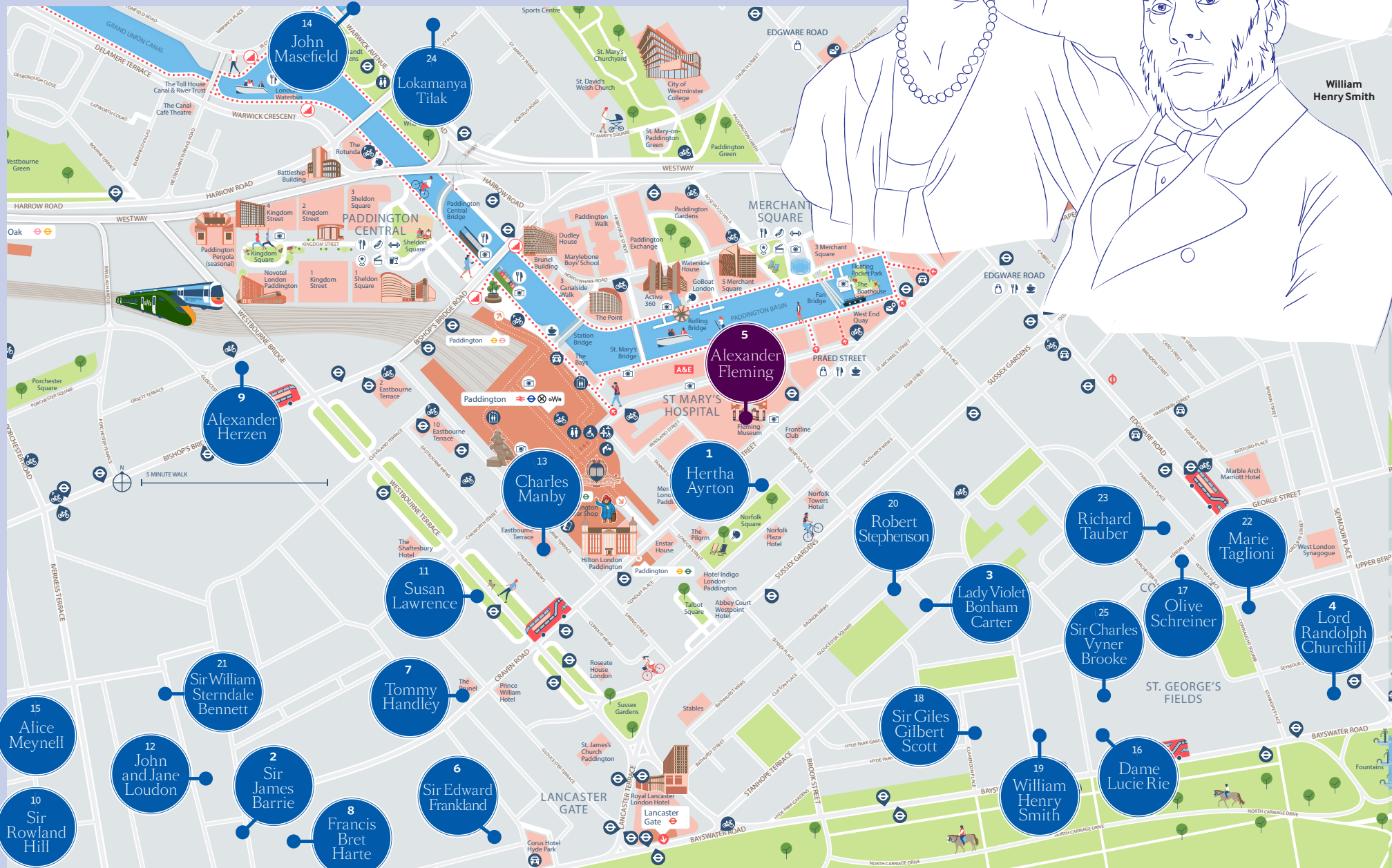
The Society of Arts set up the scheme in 1866 and London County Council took it over in the early 1900s, formalising the style in 1921 – the oldest plaques have patterned borders and are sometimes brown or purple, while today they're blue ceramic circles.

The Greater London Council took responsibility for the plaques in the 1960s, later creating a plate to mark the former hayloft where the Cato Street Conspiracy to assassinate the Prime Minister and his cabinet was foiled in 1820. Look out for it behind Grosvenor Casino The Victoria, London off Edgware Road.

English Heritage took over the scheme in 1986. Senior blue plaques historian, Howard Spencer, says: 'London's blue plaques scheme has been recognising the achievements of notable men and women of history for more than 150 years. More than 950 plaques look out from addresses across the capital, a testament to the vast numbers of remarkable individuals who have called London home for a time. The scheme celebrates the important links between people and place; when the public wander the capital's streets and look up at these plaques, they are walking in the footsteps of the extraordinary figures who lived and worked in these very spaces.'

W2's 25 plaques each tell tales of Paddington's past – but they cut a long story a little too short.

Turn over to find out more about them







WANT TO SEE MORE PLAQUES FOR WOMEN? Then nominate names on [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

**1 Hertha Ayrton (1854-1923)**

The physicist discovered that electric arc lights flickered because oxygen was mixing with carbon. Her work helped create the Ayrton fan, which was used to dispel poison in World War I trenches. 41 Norfolk Square Gardens, W2 1RX.

**2 Sir James Barrie (1860-1937)**

The novelist behind *Peter Pan*, which was first performed in 1904. Look out for a Peter Pan statue in Kensington Gardens nearby, where the story is set. 100 Bayswater Rd, W2 3HJ.

**3 Lady Violet Bonham Carter (1887-1969)**

The grandmother of actress Helena Bonham Carter and the daughter of a Prime Minister (HH Asquith), Bonham Carter was the first female president of the Liberal Party and was later active in the House of Lords. 43 Gloucester Square, W2 2TQ.

**4 Lord Randolph Churchill (1849-1895)**

Winston Churchill's father was a progressive Conservative politician who attracted working-class votes. He later became Secretary of State for India. 2 Connaught Place, W2 2ET.

**5 Alexander Fleming (1881-1955)**

If you've ever needed penicillin then you have this bacteriologist to thank. While Fleming's blue plaque is in Chelsea, a purple plaque is dedicated to where it was discovered in St Mary's Hospital. Praed St, W2 1NY.

**6 Sir Edward Frankland (1825-1899)**

A student of Robert Bunsen – the chemist who invented the Bunsen burner – Frankland lectured in chemistry at St Bartholomew's Hospital. In later life he studied river pollution and water purification, and was one of three chemists to discover helium. 14 Lancaster Gate, W2 3LH.

**7 Tommy Handley (1892-1949)**

A scriptwriter and comedian for the 1940s BBC radio programme *It's That Man Again*. 34 Craven Rd, W2 3QA.

**8 Francis Bret Harte (1836-1902)**

A journalist, playwright and poet, American Harte is best known for writing about the Californian gold rush. 74 Lancaster Gate, W2 3NH.

**9 Alexander Herzen (1812-1870)**

As a Russian exile, Herzen established the Free Russian Press. Its liberal publications criticised the Russian government in an attempt to improve the rights of its serfs (slave-like farmers). 1 Orsett Terrace, W2 6AH.

**10 Sir Rowland Hill (1795-1879)**

Hill introduced affordable pre-paid adhesive stamps, making the postal service quicker and accessible to the masses. His reforms also meant senders paid for post, rather than recipients. 1 Orme Square, W2 4RS.

**11 Susan Lawrence (1871-1947)**

Once a Conservative, Lawrence was influenced by trade unionists and later became one of the first three female Labour MPs. She also helped to improve the lives of female factory workers. 44 Westbourne Terrace, W2 3UH.

**12 John (1783-1843) and Jane Loudon (1807-1858)**

Jane wrote gardening books in an accessible style, which she illustrated herself. Through her work she met her husband John, a well-known botanist and horticultural publisher. 3 Porchester Terrace, W2 3TH.

**13 Charles Manby (1804-1884)**

As a civil engineer, Manby engineered the first iron steamer to cross the English Channel and

advised on the construction of the Suez Canal in Egypt. 60 Westbourne Terrace, W2 3UJ.

**14 John Masefield (1873-1967)**

While Masefield wrote children's novels such as *The Midnight Folk* and *The Box of Delights*, he is most remembered for being Poet Laureate from 1930 until his death. 30 Maids Ave, W2 5BB.

**15 Alice Meynell (1847-1922)**

Meynell was a poet. She also wrote for *The Spectator* about topics such as feminism, Catholicism and European imperialism. 47 Palace Court, W2 4LS.

**16 Dame Lucie Rie (1902-1995)**

The potter made ceramic buttons, jewellery, bowls and bottles which are displayed in a reconstruction of her former Albion Mews studio in the Victoria and Albert Museum. 18 Albion Mews, W2 2BA.

**17 Olive Schreiner (1855-1920)**

A South African author who made a name for herself with *The Story of an African Farm* and *From Man to Man or Perhaps Only*. 16 Portsea Place, W2 2BL.

**18 Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960)**

The architect behind Battersea Power Station, the House of Commons, Cambridge University Library, Liverpool Cathedral and the UK's beloved red telephone boxes. He also designed his home in Paddington. Chester House, Clarendon Place, W2 2NP.

**19 William Henry Smith (1825-1891)**

William who? The name WH Smith might be more familiar to you

– Smith expanded his family-run newsagents by selling newspapers at railway stations, before becoming an MP. 12 Hyde Park St, W2 2JN.

**20 Robert Stephenson (1803-1859)**

Engineer Stephenson helped construct a third of the UK's railway system, and later became an MP. 35 Gloucester Square, W2 2DT.

**21 Sir William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875)**

A teacher at the Royal Academy of Music, Bennett was a pianist and composer. He directed the Philharmonic Society for a decade then became a respected music professor at the University of Cambridge. 38 Queensborough Terrace, W2 3SH.

**22 Marie Taglioni (1809-1884)**

The Swedish ballet dancer performed at the Paris Opera and with the Imperial Ballet in St Petersburg. 14 Connaught Square, W2 2HG.

**23 Richard Tauber (1891-1948)**

An Austrian tenor who performed in operas such as Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Puccini's tragedy, *La Bohème*. Park West, Edgware Rd, W2 1QN.

**24 Lokamanya Tilak (1856-1920)**

A contemporary of Gandhi, Tilak was an Indian philosopher who campaigned for Indian independence. 10 Howley Place, W2 1XA.

**25 Sir Charles Vyner Brooke (1874-1963)**

Vyner Brooke was the last rajah, or monarch, of Sarawak in Borneo, (now Malaysia). 13 Albion St, W2 2AS.