

Victorian Scientists and Inventors

Key vocabulary

scientist	someone who observes, measures and communicates what they have found
inventor	someone who comes up with an idea for something new
Victorian	Queen Victoria ruled the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland for more than 63 years. The period of her reign, from 1837 to 1901, became known as the Victorian Age

Name: Margaret E Knight

Most Famous Invention: Paper Bags



Margaret E Knight was born in Maine, USA, on 14th February 1838. Margaret's family was not wealthy. She endured many challenges and trials during her childhood and only received a basic education. When she was still a child, Margaret went to work in a cotton mill in order to help support her family.

At 12, Margaret witnessed an accident at the mill. She decided to invent a safety device for the mill machine, which is thought to have stopped it if something got caught in it.

In 1867, Margaret was employed by the Columbia Paper Bag Company. In 1868, she invented a machine that folded and glued paper to form flat-bottomed paper bags. Charles Annan stole her design but Margaret took him to court and won the right to call the design her own.

Margaret continued inventing useful objects, including a number of engines, for the rest of her life.

Name: William Henry Fox Talbot

Most Famous Invention: Light Sensitive Paper



William Henry Fox Talbot was born on 11th February 1800 in Melbury, Dorset. He went on to become a Member of Parliament (MP), scientist and inventor.

William received his early education at home, before going to Harrow School and then to Cambridge University in 1817.

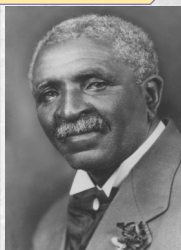
In 1832, William married Constance Mundy. He was elected as the MP for Chippenham in the same year. In 1833, he visited Lake Como in Italy. He wanted to record the beauty around him but his sketching skills were limited. He dreamed up a machine that would make the sketch for him.

William was interested in studying light and chemicals. He used this knowledge to invent his 'art of photogenic drawing', which used light-sensitive paper. He went on to further develop photography with the use of chemicals that 'fixed' the image onto the paper.



Name: George Washington Carver

Most Famous Invention: Peanut Products



George Washington Carver was an American teacher, scientist and inventor. He became known as 'the peanut man' due to his inventions that used peanuts to create many useful objects and materials.

George was born into enslavement in the early 1860s to an enslaved couple owned by Moses Carver. In 1865, enslavement ended but Moses and his wife, Susan, continued to look after George and his brother in their home; they also educated the boys. George was interested in science and the arts.

In 1896, George became a teacher at Tuskegee University where he taught for 47 years. During this time, he also worked on his inventions. He invented more than 300 products from peanuts, including plastics, paints, soap and wood stains. He even invented a plant-based petrol.

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was an English doctor. She was special because she was the first Englishwoman to qualify as a doctor in Britain.



She also founded the first hospital staffed by women and was the first female doctor of medicine in France.

Elizabeth started her career as a nurse. She wanted to study medicine at university, but she was not allowed. Instead, she studied science, the human body and medicine in the evenings with a tutor.

She qualified as a doctor in 1865.



Changing Zoos

George Mottershead was a shopkeeper living in Manchester when he heard about zoos in Germany where the animals did not live in cages. The animals there lived in larger enclosures.

Since he was a boy, George had dreamed of a zoo without bars. He designed and planned his own zoo near Chester. This was the first modern zoo without cages in England.

George's zoo is now called Chester Zoo, and has been voted the best zoo in the United Kingdom.

