Every visit to shelf or screen has left me in a state of head-shaking amazement.

Stefan Collini, London Review of Books
What is the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography?

The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford DNB) is the story of Britain told through the lives of 55,000 men and women who have shaped the British Isles and beyond from the fourth century BC to the 21st century. It provides the answers, and is transforming research into every aspect of British past.

The finest scholarship on the greatest people...

Many leading biographers and scholars have contributed articles on the most influential figures in British history: for example, Paul Addison on Winston Churchill, Patrick Collinson on Elizabeth I, Lyndall Gordon on Virginia Woolf, Christopher Ricks on Alfred Tennyson, Frank Barlow on Thomas Becket, Fiona MacCarthy on William Morris, Roy Jenkins on Harold Wilson.

Not just the great and the good...

People from all walks of life have a place in the Oxford DNB. Here are just a few examples of leading artists, writers, politicians, explorers, and members of the royal family.

Lives from around the world...

The Oxford DNB includes people from around the world who left their mark on the British Isles or the British empire. Here are just a few examples.

Every story fascinates...

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Over 55,000 biographies • 10,000 illustrations • 10,000 contributors

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'The Oxford DNB is a major work of reference, but it also contains some of the best gossip in the world.'

John Gross, Sunday Telegraph

'The family snapshot album of the island race ... one of the biggest publishing ventures ever undertaken.'

Godfrey Smith, Sunday Times

'The Oxford DNB is a wonderful place to discover local associations throughout the British Isles: from births in Belfast, and marriages in Brechin, to burials in Bangor.'

'A fine genealogical research tool that allows you to explore family history, heredity, and even ethnic identity.'

Margaret Drabble, Prospect

'Explore the lives of over 55,000 people who have shaped the history of the British Isles and beyond.'

Matthew Parris, The Spectator
‘A paradigm of a reference work’
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The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography is one of the largest single works ever printed in English. This modern classic provides a permanent archive with production values to match the excellence of its contents.

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The award-winning online edition of the Oxford DNB contains the full text of the 60-volume print edition PLUS the full text of the original 33-volume DNB.

- The online edition provides an extensive range of search and browse options, making it easy to explore the indexed DNB with great speed and ease. Effective search results can be sorted and further refined.
- Excellent internal cross-referencing, and links to external websites such as the National Portrait Gallery and the National Register of Archives are seamlessly integrated.
- New biographies are added three times a year in online updates, with coverage extending into the 21st century.

A search for Churchill produces 30 results which you can re-order by birth or death date, or search again in many ways. Articles can be printed and emailed, and citation information is also available.

The invaluable references section includes a list of sources, plus details of where to find archive material relating to Churchill, including film and sound, and portraits. You can also find out his wealth at death!

A Quick Search box is available on every webpage. Direct links to external web sites such as the National Portrait Gallery, the National Register of Archives, and the Royal Historical Society bibliography open up further research possibilities.

Subheadings make it possible to browse the biographies with ease. Move to biographies of other people mentioned in the article. Compare the new article on Churchill with the entry in the original DNB. The Oxford DNB also contains an extensive range of articles on particular themes – and Winston Churchill is mentioned in several, including Chancellors of the exchequer.

Themes include feature articles, such as ‘Women’ in the context of Labour, and thematic introductions to areas such as ‘Religious Affiliation’. Articles on ‘People’ are integrated into the search results, and can be accessed directly.

Illustrated articles are easy to find – and you can choose to view illustrated articles only. New biographies are added three times a year, plus coverage extending into the 21st century. Advanced search options, including search by place and date of birth, occupation, residence, or death, are provided.

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Do a quick search for people by name, or for people, places, and phrases in the full text. Move to biographies of other people mentioned in the article. Compare the new article on Churchill with the entry in the original DNB. The Oxford DNB also contains an extensive range of articles on particular themes – and Winston Churchill is mentioned in several, including Chancellors of the exchequer.

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The Dictionary of National Biography (DNB) is a standard work of reference on notable figures from British history, published since 1885. The updated Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB) was published on 23 September 2004 in 60 volumes and online, with 50,113 biographical articles covering 54,922 lives. Hoping to emulate national biographical collections published elsewhere in Europe, such as the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie (1875), in 1882 the publisher George Smith (1824–1901), of Smith The Dictionary of National Biography can be searched (quick search or advanced) browsed, (similar to leafing through volumes) or consulted for themes (which include links to people associated by some common thread) There is a sand colored bar on every page with tabs for Search, Browse and Themes and an input box for Quick Search. Other Search Screens. The Oxford English Dictionary identifies many parts of each biography and makes them searchable, often in more than one place. For further explanation of the content of fields see help. References allows searching of the reference material that supports the biography such as Sources (citations), Archives, Likenesses, and Wealth at Death. Great Britain -- Biography -- Dictionaries. Publisher. Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press. Collection. inlibrary; printdisabled; internetarchivebooks; china. Digitizing sponsor. Internet Archive. Contributor. Internet Archive. Rev. ed. of: Dictionary of national biography. 1885-1901. Includes bibliographical references and indexes. v. 1. Aaron-Amory -- v. 2. Amos-Avory -- v. 3. Avranches-Barnewall -- v. 4. Barney-Bellasis -- v. 5. Belle-Blackman -- v. 6. Blackmore-Bowyer -- v. 7. Box-Browell -- v. 8. Brown-Burstow -- v. 9. Burt-Capon -- v. 10. Cappe-Chancellor -- v. 11. Chandler-Cleeve -- v. 12. Clegg-Const -- v. 13.