



MAGGIE SMITH

OLIVER M. NEHRING



DAME MARGARET NATALIE SMITH

was an award winning British actress with a career spanning more than 70 years. She starred in numerous roles, both on the stage and on the big screen, and is one of the most influential actresses of all time.

She was born on December 28, 1934 in Ilford, Essex, England to Nathaniel (Nat) and Margaret (Meg) Smith. Her identical twin brothers, Alistair and Ian, were 6 when she was born.



MANY OF MAGGIE'S PHYSICAL FEATURES SEEM TO HAVE BEEN INHERITED FROM HER FATHER, WHILE MUCH OF HER TYPICAL DEMIERSERS, INCLUDING HER GENERALLY SERIOUS NATURE, WERE LEARNED FROM HER MOTHER.

AS A CHILD, MAGGIE WAS QUITE OFTEN ALONE, AS HER PARENTS WORKED LONG HOURS TO MAKE ENDS MEET AND HER OLDER BROTHERS WEREN'T MUCH INTERESTED IN THEIR LITTLE SISTER.

HER PARENTS INSTILLED STRONG WORK ETHICS AND VALUES OF PRIVACY INTO THEIR 3 AMBITIOUS CHILDREN.

While Maggie is quoted to not "remember ever wanting to be anything other than an actress," her brothers both wanted to be architects from their early years.

Despite her loving parents, Maggie's cold and lonely childhood is often attributed to the withdrawn and pessimistic outlook she had on life.

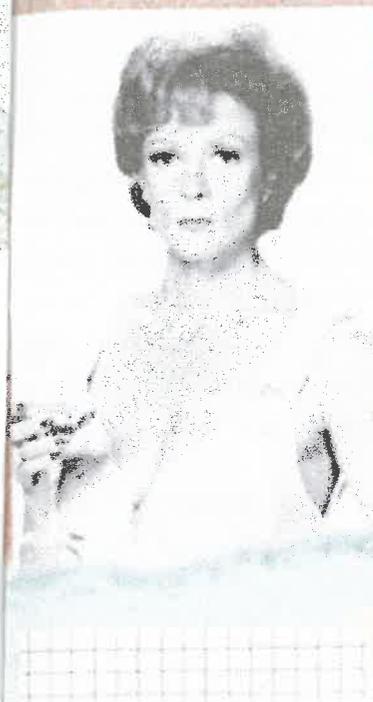
The Smith Families' move to Oxford in 1889 due to World War II was an important step in Dame Maggie Smith's path to acting success.

She attended Saint James' Church school and later the Oxford High School for Girls. Following secondary school, Maggie found a job at the Oxford Playhouse Drama School.

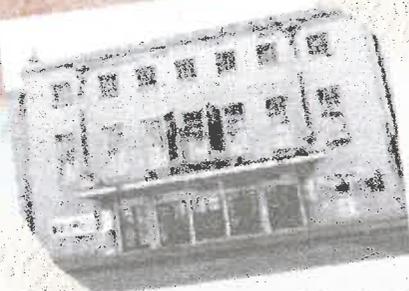
Though she lived in England for most of her life, Maggie Smith did reside in and visit the US at different points in her life and career. She was a frequenter of New York, and lived in San Francisco while filming "The Sister Act."



Outside of the UK and the US, she moved to Canada for a time, following her second marriage with Beverley Cross



THIS IMAGE SHOWS THE DAME AS DORIS CHARLESTON IN "MURDER BY DEATH" (1975).



She spent 2 years participating in various theatrical performances at the Oxford Playhouse Drama School before making her professional debut as Viola in "Twelfth Night" at 17.

Her London debut was in October of 1954 at the New Watergate Theatre Club, which led her to her Broadway debut

in 1956 at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre, where she performed in "New Faces."



MAGGIE STOLE THE SHOW SO OFTEN THAT THERE CAME A POINT WHERE IT WAS SAID THAT "YOU COULDN'T CALL YOUR PERFORMANCE A SUCCESS UNLESS IT HAD MAGGIE SMITH IN IT."

She moved to the Old Vic Theatre in 1959, where she later became a founding member of the National Theatre Company at the Old Vic in 1963 (at age 28), she performed there for 8 years.

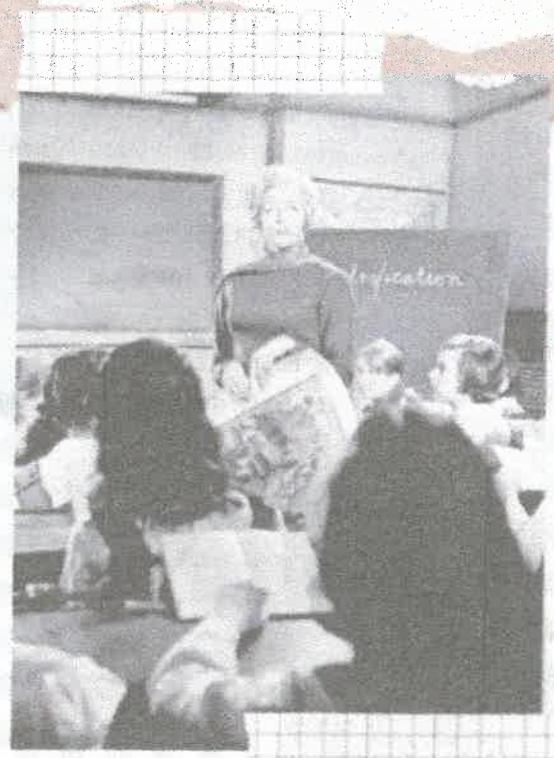
Her final stage performance was in 2019, but the early stages of her career were defined by the stage.



ORIGIN

Although Maggie Smith acted for a long time, she didn't become the household name she is today until much later into her acting journey. A large turning point in her career was actually one she lucked into. Her portrayal as Jean Brodie in "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" was the redefinition of her career, and the real beginning of her global fame, but originally the role was meant to go to Julie Andrews, who turned it down. She won an Academy Award for her performance as Jean Brodie in 1970.

"I HAVE DEDICATED, SACRIFICED MY LIFE TO THIS PROFESSION." - MAGGIE SMITH AS JEAN BRODIE, "THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE."



Despite "Harry Potter" and "Sister Act" being what many people will recognize the Dame from, "Downton Abbey" is credited to be what made her a household name. The popular TV series aired from September 2010 to December 2015 and featured Maggie Smith as Violet Crawley, the Dowager Countess of Grantham. Her performance won her 6 major awards, including 3 Emmy Awards, and earned her a large amount of newfound attention and international fame. She even said herself at one point, "I had a quite life before 'Downton Abbey,' now look at me."

"ONE IS NOT GIVEN MANY CHANCES IN LIFE, AND IF YOU MISS THEM, THEY MAY NOT NECESSARILY BE REPEATED." - MAGGIE SMITH AS VIOLET CRAWLEY, "DOWNTON ABBEY"



MAGGIE SMITH ONCE DESCRIBED HER ICONIC PERFORMANCE AS PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL IN 7 OF THE 8 "HARRY POTTER" FILMS AS "MISS JEAN BRODIE IN A WITCH'S HAT."

DURING THE FILMING PROCESS (2001-2011) OF THE MOVIES, THE ACTRESS FACED MANY CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSSES.





HAVING BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH BREAST CANCER IN 2007, MAGGIE SMITH WAS ACTUALLY UNDERGOING CHEMOTHERAPY DURING THE FILMING OF "HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE."

Although her performance in "Downton Abbey" solidified her fame and revere, her performance as Professor McGonagall was undoubtedly an inspiring and defining point in her career.

Maggie Smith's impact on everyone, from those watching her performances to her co-stars, is evident in every film, play, and story about the legendary actress. She was a role model and stepping stone for many actors and actresses, including Daniel Radcliffe, who owes his role as Harry Potter largely to the Dame.

The two actors first met in 1998 on the set of BBC's "David Copperfield," where 8-year-old Daniel made his acting debut as David. Maggie later recommended him for Harry Potter.



"SHE WAS A FIERCE INTELLECT A GLORIOUSLY SNAPPY TONGUE. COULD INTIMIDATE AND CREAM IN THE SAME INSTANT AND WAS, AS EVERYONE WILL TELL YOU, EXTREMELY FUNNY." - DANIEL RADCLIFFE

Following her performance in "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" in 1969, Maggie Smith reached what some consider to be the peak of her fame. In the 70s she not only found herself receiving her first Academy Award, but she also achieved the honor of Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, the first of 3 titles she would acquire in her lifetime, the others being Companion of Honour (2014) and Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (1998).

Maggie Smith found herself at the number one Billboard hit with "Jean," the theme song to "The Beaux' Stratagem," which she later won an Oscar for her performance in.

In 1979 the Dame won her second Academy Award and her first Golden Globe.

Over the course of her career, Maggie Smith won more than 58 awards, including 4 Emmy's, 1 Tony, 7 BAFTA's, 3 Golden Globes, and 2 Academy Awards.



MAGGIE SMITH IS A MASSIVE PART OF FILM AND STAGE HISTORY, AND ALWAYS WILL BE, AS ONE OF THE FEW ACTORS TO EVER EARN THE TRIPLE CROWN OF ACTING, ONE OF 6 BEST ACTRESS OSCAR WINNERS TO RECEIVE THE TITLE OF DAME, AND AS THE HOLDER OF THE TITLE OF HIGHEST GROSSING BEST ACTRESS OSCAR WINNER OF ALL TIME.



THERE WERE MANY INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE ON MAGGIE SMITH'S PATH TO FAME, AND MANY PEOPLE WHO DIDN'T SUPPORT HER- INCLUDING HER OWN MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER AT ONE TIME. BUT, IN THE END, MAGGIE SMITH BLAZED HER OWN TRAIL THROUGH HER HARD WORK, AMBITION, AND UNBROKEN PERSISTENCE. AS THE GUARDIAN STATED IN ARTICLE ON THE DAME, MAGGIE "CONSISTENTLY HAD THE COURAGE AND TALENT TO DO UNEXPECTED THINGS."



What some may find unexpected is that Maggie, at times, could be quite frightening and cold toward her castmates. It was often said that if she liked what you were doing with your acting choices, she'd support you, but if she didn't, she'd ignore you. This mentality earned her the nickname "Acid Queen." Her dedication to her craft was unmatched. She would study her script almost religiously, continually ask questions of the directors, and dedicate herself so fully to any role she might be playing, both physically and emotionally- this is a large part of what made her performances so compelling.



"IT'S TRUE I DON'T TOLERATE FOOLS, BUT THEN THEY DON'T TOLERATE ME, SO I AM SPICY."

- DAME MAGGIE SMITH

Despite remaining a certified Box Office star for over 80 years, she was an incredibly private person and rarely gave interviews, spoke on her life, or appeared at events like parties. She often described herself as fairly shy, and at times fearful of acting, but still continually delivered incredible performances.



Over the course of her career, Maggie Smith met many different, famous, and highly influential people. Some of which were her close friends and mentors.

The images above show her meeting Queen Elizabeth II for the first time in 1966 after a performance of "Othello"- which she appeared in as Desdemona. Behind them is Sir Laurence Olivier, possibly the closest you can get to acting royalty, and one of Maggie Smith's mentors. He also starred in "Othello." The second image shows the actress with Judi Dench, another prominent actor and friend.



Maggie Smith had her first son, Chris Larkin, in 1967, and her second son, Toby Stephens, in 1969- both with her first husband Robert Stephens. Chris and Toby both went on to become actors like their parents, though Chris chose to use the surname "Larkin" to avoid the connection to his father in order to "make his career his own."

CHRIS LARKIN

TOBY STEPHENS



THIS IMAGE DEPICTS THE DAME WITH HER SECOND HUSBAND, THE PLAYWRIGHT BEVERLY CROSS. HE AND MAGGIE FIRST MET IN THE 50S WHILE SHE WAS A STUDENT AND GOT MARRIED IN 1975, FOLLOWING MAGGIE'S DIVORCE FROM ROBERT STEPHENS. THE TWO STAYED MARRIED UNTIL CROSS'S DEATH IN 1992 (AGE 56). MAGGIE SMITH NEVER REMARRIED.

"I'm remarkably fortunate. When you meet again someone you should have married in the first place, it's like a script. That kind of luck is too good to be true."



Her first husband, Robert Stephens, was an actor, and met Maggie Smith while costarring various productions with her. They married in 1967 and divorced in 1975. Their marriage ended because of Stephens' mental health and multiple affairs, but Maggie was still grateful for the family they had built.

"I HAVE TWO WONDERFUL SONS AND HE IS THE REASON FOR THAT."



Maggie Smith completed her final film in 2023 with "The Miracle Club" and passed away on September 27th, 2024 in London England. She is survived by her 2 sons, the actors Toby Stephens and Chris Larkin, as well as her 5 grandchildren, but she is also survived by the inspiration and joy she brought to so many people over the course of her career.

"I ALWAYS THOUGHT SHE'D LIVE FOREVER." - JK ROWLING

"MY DEAR, SAVE YOUR TEARS FOR SOMETHING SAD. THERE'S NOTHING SAD HERE. I HAVE LIVED A PRIVILEGED AND AN INTERESTING LIFE AND NOW... IT'S TIME TO GO." - MAGGIE SMITH AS VIOLET CRAWLEY "DOWNTON ABBEY"



DAME MAGGIE SMITH IN A PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE FASHION BRAND LOEWE. THIS IS ONE OF THE FEWER PICTURES OF THE ACTRESS BEFORE HER DEATH.



SMITH STARRING IN "THE WREST
A LOVELY WAR" (1958)



"TRAVELS WITH MY DAD" (1972)
THIS PERFORMANCE EARNED HER ANOTHER
OSCAR NOMINATION



"CALIFORNIA SUITE" (1978) EARNED
HER AN ACADEMY AWARD



"GOSFORD PARK" EARNED HER
GOLDEN GLOBE AND ACADEMY
AWARD NOMINATIONS IN 2001



6-10 JAMES NEWMAN
MAGGIE SMITH TYNE DUBY
ROBERT MURCI (1990)



MAGGIE SMITH AS CONSTANCE
TRENTHAM IN "GOSFORD PARK" (2001)
SHE EARNED HER SIXTH OSCAR
NOMINATION FOR HER PERFORMANCE

"SHE'S ONE OF THE MOST CHERISHED ACTORS
IN THE WORLD. SHE HAS THE QUIETEST,
SHARPEST MIND YOU COULD EVER HOPE TO
WORK WITH. ACIDLY FUNNY, BUT WITH AN
ENORMOUS GOODWILL UNDERNEATH."

- HUGH BONNEVILLE

"I WRITE A LINE THAT I THINK IS QUITE FUNNY,
THEN SHE SAYS IT AND IT'S HILARIOUS."

- JULIAN FELLOWS





DESPIITE HAVING NEVER ATTENDED
UNIVERSITY, THE DAME RECEIVED 4
HONORARY DOCTORATES
(1971, 1985, 1994, 2017)



MAGGIE SMITH AS GRANNY WERTY
IN SPIELBERG'S "HOOK" (1991)



SMITH WON AN OSCAR FOR HER
PERFORMANCE IN "CALIFORNIA
SUITE" AS DIANA BARRIE, MAKING
HER ONE OF THE ONLY ACTRESSES
TO WIN AN OSCAR FOR PLAYING AN
OSCAR NOMINEE



MAGGIE SMITH AS VIOLET
CRAWLEY OF "DOWNTON ABBEY"
SEASON 3 (2012)



MAGGIE SMITH IN A VOGUE PHOTOSHOOT (1963)
SHE APPEARED FREQUENTLY IN THE MAGAZINE
DURING THE 60s



"THE VIP" (1963) WAS MAGGIE
SMITH'S THIRD FILM

MAGGIE SMITH IN "THE PRIME OF
MISS JEAN BRODIE" (1969)



DURING HER TIME FILMING "DOWNTON ABBEY," SHE
UNDERWENT CHEMOTHERAPY AND RADIOTHERAPY
TO TREAT BREAST CANCER, WHICH SHE GOT
DIAGNOSED WITH IN 2017 WHILE FILMING "HENRY
POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE."

MAGGIE SMITH AT THE EE BRITISH
ACADEMY FILM AWARDS AT THE ROYAL
OPERA HOUSE IN LONDON, ENGLAND (2015)



1993 BAFTA AWARD

MAGGIE SMITH WON 5 BAFTAS DURING HER
CAREER, 4 OF WHICH FOR BEST ACTRESS.

A PHOTO TAKEN BY ROBERT
DEUTSCH FOR USA TODAY (2001)



YOUNG MAGGIE SMITH WITH HER MOTHER
MARGARET (MAM) HUTTON SMITH, AND
HER OLDER BROTHERS ELASTOR AND IAN

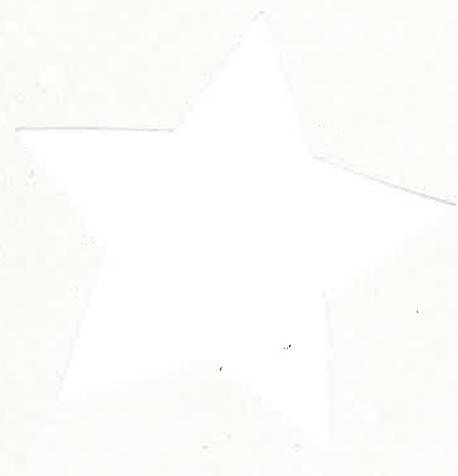
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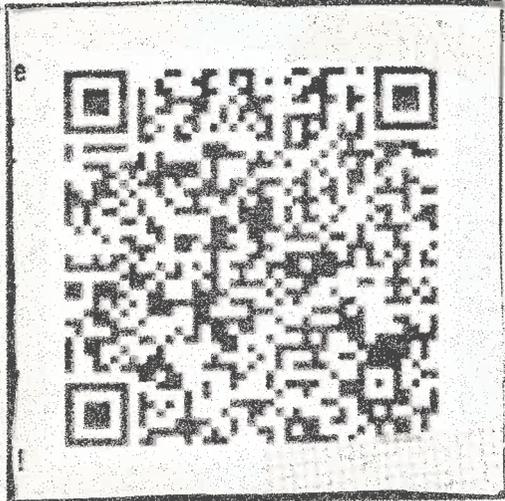
I chose to research Dame Maggie Smith for this Zine because she, and her Films, were a large part of my childhood, and still are today. I thought it would be interesting to learn more about her and how her career began.

I hope that when people read my Zine, they might feel the same respect and, honestly, awe that I have for Dame Maggie Smith.



Don't forget to check out my sources!





DAME MARGARET NATALIE SMITH

was an incredibly influential British actress that many of us will recognize from "Harry Potter," "Downton Abbey," "Sister Act," and many other shows, movies, and stage productions. Even if you don't recognize the name, the odds are that she's starred in a good few of your favorite films. Hopefully this Zine will teach you a bit more about Maggie Smith and her very long and inspiring career!

