

## Angela Brazil 1869-1947

### Children's Author

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Angela Brazil was born into middle-class comfort in Preston, the youngest child and the second daughter of four children. She spent most of her childhood in Northern England. All the children were intelligent and artistic and were privately educated.

After leaving school Angela joined her sister to study art in London. Academic life did not appeal to her and earning her own living was neither necessary nor desirable. Her first novel was published in 1904 and her boarding school stories for girls followed. She wrote over 50 books for girls, averaging about two per year.

She moved to Coventry in 1911 when her brother, a doctor, bought a practice at No. 1, The Quadrant and Angela became his housekeeper. They were joined in 1915 by their sister, Amy. The Quadrant was to be their home for the rest of their lives.

They soon threw themselves into the social life of the city. They arranged a pew at St Michael's church and joined the newly formed Natural History and Scientific Society, with both Angela and her brother being elected on to the committee. She was a woman of boundless energy; a strong-willed individual who liked to be the centre of attention and to get her own way. She became the first woman President of the society.

In 1914, the City Guild was formed with Angela as its honourable secretary. By 1918 the Guild had acquired the crypt of St. Mary's Hall for their museum, and it was to become the forerunner of the Herbert Museum.

Angela Brazil was something of an enigma; whilst still in her forties she appeared old-fashioned, especially in her dress, but in other ways she was years ahead of her time: she was an environmentalist and passionately aware of the need for conservation. She bequeathed 38 acres of land she had bought in Cornwall to the National Trust.

Her novels, not readily available today, are still in print, and although they seem old-fashioned with their archaic expressions and use of language, they transported their young readers to, what was to them, a fantasy world of life at boarding school and the excitement and adventure there.

Today a plaque on the wall of No. 1 The Quadrant records that Angela Brazil, children's author, lived and wrote there from 1911 until 1947.

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