

PICTON-TURBERVILL, EDITH (1872 - 1960), worker for women's causes and author

Name: Edith Picton-turbervill

Date of birth: 1872

Date of death: 1960

Parent: Eleanor Turbervill (née Temple)

Parent: John Picton

Gender: Female

Occupation: worker for women's causes and author

Area of activity: Anti Establishment; Literature and Writing; Politics, Government and Political Movements

Author: Mary Auronwy James

Born in 1872 in the registration district of Hereford, a twin daughter and one of the large family of John Picton Warlow, later (1891) John Picton Turbervill of Ewenny Priory, Glamorganshire, and Eleanor (née Temple) his second wife. Soon after leaving the Royal School, Bath, she had her first experience of social service when she endeavoured to improve the conditions of the navvies working on the Vale of Glamorgan railway. She then made a study of the poor by living for a while as they did in Shoreditch, London. After six years' social work in India she returned home and became foreign secretary of the Y.W.C.A. Later, as vice-president of the movement for ten years, she travelled widely, and demonstrated her special capacity to organize and lead by raising a quarter of a million pounds for the wartime needs of the movement and arranging the opening of many of the Y.W.C.A. hostels. Soon after World War I she was invited to preach a sermon in a church in North Somercotes, Lincolnshire, being the first woman to be allowed to do so in a regular service. She never ceased to advocate the entry of women into the full orders of the Church of England. She joined the Labour Party and was an unsuccessful candidate at the 1922 and 1924 general elections but was elected Member of Parliament for The Wrekin division, Salop, in 1929, and became the first woman to sit on the ecclesiastical committee of parliament. During her short stay of two years in parliament she introduced as a private member the Sentence of Death (Expectant Mothers) Bill which became law and enacted that no pregnant woman should be executed. She was one of a commission sent in 1936 to report on female child labour in Malaya and Hong Kong. Her minority report, advocating far more stringent ordinances than her colleagues proposed, was published in 1937 and the governments of Malaya and Hong Kong agreed to adopt her plans in principle.

Other published work includes: *The musings of a lay woman*, *Christ and woman's power*, *Christ and international life*, (with others) *Myself when young* (1938), *In the land of my fathers* (1946), and *Should women be priests and ministers?* (1953). She spoke and wrote with charm and force and made a wide circle of friends but she never married. In later years she lived near Cheltenham, having spent most of her life in Ewenny Priory and London. She died 31 August 1960 aged 88.

Author

Dr Mary Auronwy James

Sources

Edith Picton-Turbervill, *Life is good an autobiography* (1939)(1939)

Who was who?

The Times, 3 September 1960

Office of Population and Census Studies Indexes, born July-September 1872

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Edith Picton-Turbervill](#)

Additional Links

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