



Ruth Adam nee King

1907-1977

Writer

Ruth was born in Arnold to Rev King, vicar of St Mary's Church. She attended a school for clergy daughters near Matlock- St Elphin's Girls Boarding school and then became a primary school teacher. She taught for 5 years in the mining villages of north Nottinghamshire and her 1938 novel 'I'm Not Complaining' describes this in realistic detail giving a semi-autobiographical account of the life of an unmarried female teacher in the aftermath of WW1. Her account of the lives of 'spinster' teachers – is referenced in Virginia Nicholson's book *Singled Out*. In 1932 she married Kenneth Adam a journalist with the Manchester Guardian who became the home news editor at BBC television and the family (3 sons and 1 daughter) moved to London. Ruth embarked on a writing career publishing her first book *War on Saturday Week* in 1937. It dealt with the political extremism in Britain during the lead up to WWII. During WW2 she worked for The Ministry of Information and towards the end of the war she moved into a 33room country house in Harpenden to live collectively with a group of friends which led to 'A house in the Country'. From 1944 – 1976 she wrote the women's page in the Church of England newspaper and so met Rev Marcus Morris and they were both invited to write an article on 'Comics and Shockers' about the influence of American comics on young people. This collaboration led to the launch of the Eagle in 1950 and then Girl in 1951 with Ruth writing stories with female characters who were brave, clever, resourceful and fiercely independent – Ruth was determined to counteract the passiveness shown by many female heroines; best known was *Susan of St Brides* (1954 - 61), a comic strip about a student nurse known for her resourcefulness. Susan also featured in several of her novels. Ruth became a respected journalist and author of novels, comics and non-fiction feminist literature. In 1955 Ruth with others founded the Fisher Group and advised the Government on social policy. By the end of her career, Ruth had written twelve novels and various biographies including one on Beatrice Webb, essays, radio plays, and comic strips. In 1951 one of her stories 'The Quiet Woman' was made into a British crime film with Dora Bryan playing the wife of a criminal sent to prison and she attempts to build a new life without him only to be menaced by him when he escapes. Her 'Look Who's Talking' became a BBC television series in 1962 and she appeared on many panel shows. Her final work was 'A Woman's Place' giving an overview of the modern women's movement 1910-1975. She died in hospital in Marylebone.