

Mary Wortley Montagu Encyclopedia Article

Mary Wortley Montagu

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Mary Wortley Montagu

1689-1762

English writer who introduced smallpox inoculations to England. Born into nobility, Montagu grew up surrounded by influential people. She suffered smallpox, which scarred her face. Montagu later traveled with her husband Edward, an ambassador. While in Turkey, she became aware of local medical practices and arranged for her son to be inoculated against smallpox. Returning home, Montagu initiated smallpox inoculations in England and was praised for preventing thousands of deaths annually.