



I was lucky to be taught by these four extraordinary tutors...

1) The charismatic Dorothy Bednarowska

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/dorothy-bednarowska-124626.html>

"Her pupils will best remember her silhouetted against the bay window of her college sitting-room, in feline repose reminiscent of her Siamese cat, a mentholated cigarette in hand, ready to spring into animated debate, or launch upon an illustrative anecdote: as a witty raconteur she had few rivals."

2) The urbane Graham Midgley

<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/obituary-the-rev-graham-midgley-1094682.html>

"Midgley's success as a tutor lay in the fact that he was seen to be more than a tutor. His warmth, approachability and gift for friendship enabled the exploration of literature to be a joint venture. His pupils found him refreshingly free from academic dogma, so that he encouraged their individual perceptions and at the same time fostered their appreciation of the social and cultural context of literary works."

3) The ebullient (but learned) Bruce Mitchell

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/bruce-mitchell-anglo-saxon-scholar-who-wrote-definitive-work-old-english-syntax-1931428.html>

The eminent Anglo-Saxonist Bruce Mitchell delighted in appearing to be a slightly old-fashioned scholar resistant to new developments, and defended his position rigorously and without apology, though always with humour. When he completed his monumental Old English Syntax in 1982, towards the end of his long career as a scholar of Anglo-Saxon, he introduced it with the words, "I have to state categorically my opinion that ... the techniques of the various forms of linguistics fashionable today have little to offer students of Old English syntax."

That stance went along with a kind of genial combativeness...

4) The eccentric Reggie Alton

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/reggie-alton-37680.html>

In St Edmund Hall, Alton was, with Graham Midgley and Bruce Mitchell, one of the troika of dons who taught English together for over a hundred years (collectively). Alton was a polymath in English. He taught everything from Old English to the latest literature with great vigour and enthusiasm; he once drew blood when he stabbed himself with a Biro while dramatically rehearsing a scene from an Old English poem. He had a great love for drama and for prose and poetry.