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John Passmore Edwards was born in Blackwater, Cornwall, in 1823 and went on to make a fortune publishing popular technical magazines like the *English Mechanic* and *Building News*. He used his fortune to establish hospitals, convalescent homes, institutes, art galleries and museums, as well as libraries in London and Cornwall. Edwards was also a champion of parliamentary reform, a supporter of the Chartist and Temperance movements and involved in campaigns against slavery; he was a notable opponent of Boer War. In the centenary year of the death Dean Evans has produced a comprehensive study of the Passmore Edwards' life, beliefs and legacy, with many illustrations of the buildings he funded.

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