

Firth Hall Portraits

1) Professor Robert Francis Boucher RAEng, CBE (1940–2009)



ID: 1184

Professor Robert Boucher was a mechanical engineer who specialised in fluid mechanics. Boucher achieved a PhD from the University of Nottingham in Mechanical Engineering in 1966 and produced a technique that has been applied to many pieces of scientific equipment. He was also one of the first to employ a superconducting magnet as a research tool. Boucher later became a researcher and lecturer in Belfast and received honorary doctorates from the State University of New York and the University of Sheffield. Boucher was the Vice-Chancellor/Principal of the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) between 1995-2001, before becoming Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield between 2001-2007. Boucher had many roles outside of university life, including holding a Chairmanship of the Sheffield Museums and Galleries Trust and promoting UK universities on an international stage. Boucher was a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineers in 1994 and gained a CBE for his services to engineering, research, industry, and education.

Andrew Festing MBE (1941-present) painted Boucher's portrait in 2007, his last year as Vice-Chancellor. Festing was Head of the British Pictures Department between 1977-1981 and the President of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters between 2002-2008. He has painted famous sitters including Queen Elizabeth II and other members of the royal family and official portraits for the House of Commons and House of Lords. He has had portraits in the Royal Collections, National Portrait Gallery, and the Parliamentary Art Collection. He received an MBE in 2007 for his services to the arts.

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2) Sir James Irvine Orme Masson FRS, FRSE (1887–1962)



ID: 421

Sir James Masson was an Australian-born chemist. He gained a first-class honour in BSc Chemistry in 1908 before receiving a scholarship at the University College London in 1910. Masson was a Professor of Chemistry at the University of Durham and later became the Head of the Department of Pure Science. Masson specialised in the relationships between physical properties and chemical characteristics of liquids of the same chemical type. He was Vice-Chancellor at the University of Sheffield between 1938-1953, and also contributed towards explosives research at the Royal Arsenal for the First and Second World Wars. He received an honorary doctorate at the University of Edinburgh in 1925, was a Fellow of the Royal Society and Royal Society of Edinburgh and was knighted in 1950.

Sir William Oliphant Hutchinson RSA (1889–1970) was a traditionalist Scottish portrait and landscape painter that supported the avant-garde. Hutchinson painted Masson's portrait in 1952 and seated him in the three-quarter length Vice Chancellor's robes. He served on multiple boards such as the Royal Society Academy, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow Art Club, and more. He was a member of the Royal Society of Arts and exhibited in the Royal Academy, the Royal Society of Arts, and the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts. He also painted notable people such as Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh.

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3) Henry Clifton Sorby FRS (1862 – 1908)



ID: 434

Henry Clifton Sorby was an English microscopist and geologist who contributed to pioneering techniques to study iron and steel with microscopes, paving the way for the mass production of steel. As the ‘father of metallography’, he also studied the geography of former geological periods, and he was a pioneer in petrography that then developed the spectrum microscope.

Sorby left a great legacy at the university outside of academia. Throughout his lifetime, he held many titles and roles, including being a Fellow of the Royal Society from 1857, President of the Royal Microscopical Society (1875-77), President of the Mineralogical Society (1876-79), and President of the Geological Society of London (1877-80). He received many awards, including the Royal Medal in 1874. [The Sorby Natural History Society](#) was created in 1918 in his honour and is still active today with events and programmes about wildlife, geology, and natural history.

Mary Lemon Waller RP (1851-1931) was a British portraitist who painted this portrait in 1898 at the height of Sorby’s recognition. Waller’s painting of Sorby shows him seated in his Doctor of Laws robes which he received after being awarded the Honorary Degree by the University of Cambridge in 1879. Other works by Waller have been exhibited in many noteworthy locations, such as the Royal Academy 1877-1904, the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition, the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, and the Society of Women Artists, to name a few.

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4) Professor William Mitchinson Hicks (1850 – 1934)



ID: 405

Professor William Hicks was a British mathematician and physicist. He studied at St John's College, Cambridge, graduating in 1873. He later became a Professor of Physics and Mathematics at Sheffield between 1882-1917. He was the Principal of Firth College between 1892-1897 and contributed to the development of the University of Sheffield by promoting higher education for all. Hicks later became the first official Vice-Chancellor at the university's beginning in 1905. His legacy is visible in the Hicks Building which houses the Department of Mathematics and the Hicks equation. Hicks received many prizes in his lifetime, including the Royal Society's Royal Medal in 1912 for his research in mathematical physics, the Hopkins Prize, and the Adams Prize in 1921.

Sir Arthur Stockdale RP (1857–1940) was a portraitist. He painted Hicks in three quarter length Doctor of Science (DSc) robes at a desk with a piece of equipment he invented at his elbow. Some of this equipment is held in the University Heritage Collections. Stockdale was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Painters and was knighted in 1917. He had paintings exhibited in the Royal Academy and Royal Society of Portrait Painters between 1876 and 1935. He painted noteworthy people such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edward VII, George V, and Kaiser Wilhelm II.

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5) Dr George Franklin (1853-1916)



ID: 397

Dr George Franklin was a Professor of Medicine who contributed to medicine through his research such as 'Chronic Bronchitis, Emphysema and Cor Pulmonale'. He made considerable contributions to the City of Sheffield due to his positions on the City Council from 1881, a position as an Alderman from 1891, and as Lord Mayor of Sheffield between 1897-98. Before the University of Sheffield was formed, Franklin was the Treasurer of Firth College between 1899-1904, and then first Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield between 1905 to his death in 1916. A notable legacy by Franklin was his proposition of a Sheffield City Battalion (also known as the Sheffield Pals Battalion) to the War Office with the Duke of Norfolk.

Walter William Oules RA (1848–1933) was a British portraitist and later landscape painter, and one of the best-known portraitists of the latter 19th century. He painted Franklin's portrait in 1909, sitting him in a dark suit, and not robes. As a member of the Royal Academy, Oules exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1869, the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, and the 1900 Paris Exhibition. Oules painted famous figures such as Charles Darwin, Thomas Hardy, and Edward VII.

Firth Hall Portraits

6) Dr Kathryn Riddle OBE



ID: 1783

Dr Kathryn Riddle was the first woman to hold the Chair of the University Council and is noted for her dedicated public service to the University of Sheffield, the City of Sheffield, and the North of England. Riddle has a bachelor's degree in Sociology, a Bachelor's Law Degree, and an honorary doctorate. Outside of being a Law Lecturer, Riddle served as a magistrate on the Sheffield Bench for forty years. She was a High Sheriff of South Yorkshire and an Honorary Colonel with the University of Sheffield's Officer Training Corps. She is the Deputy Lt of South Yorkshire. Riddle was also the former Chair of the NHS for the North of England, supporting the health and wellbeing of millions. She is a patron of the Weston Park Cancer Hospital and St. Luke's Hospice, and provides multiple services on boards concerning charity, supporting patients and carers, and maternity and newborn care. She received an OBE in 2013 for her services to higher education and public health.

Keith Robinson (unknown) studied at Kingston University and the Royal Academy Schools. Robinson has exhibited at the Royal Society of Portrait Painters and the Annual Exhibition and has received the BP Portrait Award three times. He has painted notable sitters, including Mary Barnes OBE and Sir Hans Krebs. Robinson painted Riddle's portrait in 2017 and included important symbolism; Riddle is depicted in her ceremonial gown with the Arts Tower and part of the Weston Bank Library in the background. In the portrait, viewers can see her University squash racquet, Officers Training Corps Honorary Colonels Hat, a sword representing her appointment as High Sheriff, and her Pro-Chancellor cap that rests on her lap.

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7) Professor Gillian Gehring OBE (1941-present)



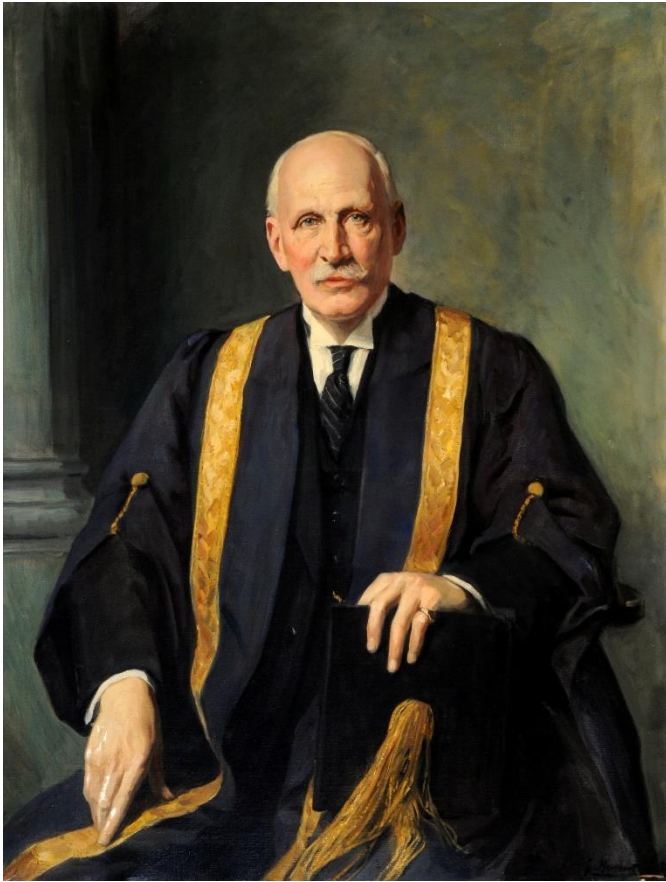
ID: 1696

Professor Gillian Gehring is the only female professor in the University of Sheffield Physics Department, and the second woman ever to hold a Professorship in a UK Physics Department. Gehring studied at the Victoria University of Manchester between 1959-1963 before becoming a physics professor, specialising in theoretical and experimental magnetism. Gehring is a Leverhulme Fellow at St. High's College, Oxford, and a NATO Fellow at the University of California at Berkeley. Gehring is very active in supporting women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). This is visible in her contributions to the administrative Board of the European Platform for Women in Science, the Institute of Physics' Women in Physics Group, and the Women's Group of the European Physical Society. Gehring also inspires younger generations to get excited about physics and astronomy and has supported gender equality in STEM subjects. For her efforts, Gehring is an honorary Fellow of the Institute of Physics, the European Physical Society, and the Institute of Physics. She has received the Nevill Mott Medal and Prize, and an OBE for her services to physics and equal opportunities.

Francis Bell ROI (1983-present) studied at Charles Cecil Studios in Florence between 2011-2004 and taught there between 2005-2011. Bell loves painting landscapes and wildlife, she painted Gehring's portrait in 2015. She is a member of the Society of Women Artists, the Royal Society of Marine Artists, and the Royal Institute of Oil Painters and Portrait Painters. She has exhibited at the British Institute in Florence, the Royal Society of Painters' Annual Exhibition, and the Royal Institute of Oil Painters' Annual Exhibition. Bell has received multiple awards, including the Barbara Tate Award, the Certificate of Excellence Portrait Society of America, and the Sheffield University Portrait of a Woman Award.

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8) Sir Arthur Wallace-Pickard Cambridge FBA (1873 – 1952)



Sir Arthur Cambridge was a British classicist. He was a fellow and tutor of Balliol College, Oxford between 1897 and 1929, and later a Professor of Greek at the University of Edinburgh between 1928-1930. Cambridge was considered to be one of the greatest authorities on ancient Greek theatre in the early twentieth century, and he wrote numerous turning point pieces on Demosthenes. Cambridge was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield between 1930 and 1938 and worked within – and beyond – the university as an advocate for freedom of thought in academia. Cambridge became a Fellow of the British Academy in 1934 and was later knighted in 1950 for services to education.

George Harcourt RA (1868–1947) was a Scottish portrait and figurative painter that was inspired by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood which influenced naturalism and photo realistic portraiture. Harcourt painted Cambridge's portrait in 1938, seating him in his three-quarter length Vice Chancellor's robes. Harcourt has painted other famous figures, including former Prime Minister Clement Atlee. Harcourt received many accolades during his lifetime, including a gold medal at the International Exhibition in Amsterdam and another at the exhibition at the Salon de Paris in 1923, becoming a full member of the Royal Academy in 1926, and President of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters in 1945.

Firth Hall Portraits

9) Dr John Macnaghten Whittaker FRS, FRSE (1905–1984)



ID: 444

Dr John Whittaker was a British mathematician who studied Maths and Physics at the University of Edinburgh. He also studied at Trinity College Cambridge, later becoming Assistant Lecturer in Mathematics at Edinburgh in 1929, Professor of Pure Maths at Liverpool in 1933, and Dean at Liverpool in 1953. He was the Vice-Chancellor at the University of Sheffield between 1953-1965, and this was a period when the university expanded from 2500 to 7000 students and was visited by Queen Elizabeth II. Whittaker specialised in quantum theory and complex analysis, making contributions to Nevanlinna theory. Whittaker served during the Second World War, serving in the Royal Artillery and rising to Lieutenant Colonel and scientific advisor to the Army Council. He played a huge role in the City of Sheffield by improving relations between the city and university and serving on multiple boards such as the Cathedral Council and Sheffield Museum Society. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, Royal Society of Edinburgh, and Pembroke College.

Grace Wheatley (1888–1970) was an artist and sculptor who specialised in painting figures, flowers, birds, and animals. She painted Whittaker in 1965, depicting him in his three-quarter Vice-Chancellor robes. She was commissioned to depict paintings on the Second World War's impact on the steel industry that were portrayed at the Royal Academy in 1945 and 1946. She exhibited paintings in the Walker Art Gallery, Tate Collection, and British Museum, and served on the Royal Miniature Society, New English Art Club, and Royal Watercolour Society.

Firth Hall Portraits

10) Sir Gareth Gwyn Roberts (RA, RAEng) (1940–2007)



ID: 431

Sir Gareth Roberts was a Welsh physicist known for his work on semiconductors and molecular electronics. He studied physics to PhD level at the University College of North Wales, in Bangor, in 1964. He was a Professor of Applied Physics at the University of Durham before becoming the President of the Institute of Physics in 1997 and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield between 1991-2000. Roberts made great contributions outside of the university: he contributed to the Prime Minister's Advisory Council on Science and Technology, he was a member of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, a Chairman to the Engineering and Technology Board, founding the Journal of Molecular Electronics, and encouraged the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) interests in young people. Following his achievements, Roberts gained many accolades, including becoming a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering and being knighted in 1997. Many of his papers of his personal life and professional career now reside with the Special Collections at the University of Sheffield.

June Mendoza OBE, RP, ROI (1924-present) is an Australian portrait painter that has produced magazine illustrations, portraits, and more before painting the portrait of Roberts in 1996. Mendoza has painted Roberts in his three-quarter length Vice-Chancellor robes. Mendoza received the Order of Australia, an OBE, and is a member of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters and the Institute of Oil Painters. She has painted many famous sitters including Queen Elizabeth II and the Queen Mother, Princess Diana, Margaret Thatcher, and John Major. Mendoza has had works in the Britannia Royal Navy College, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Parliamentary Art Collections.

Firth Hall Portraits

11) Professor Geoffrey Donald Sims OBE (1926–2017)



ID: 433

Professor Geoffrey Sims studied Physics at Imperial College in 1947, and then Mathematics in 1948, eventually receiving a Masters in Maths in 1950 and a PhD in Physics in 1954. He joined the Department of Electronics at the University of Southampton, later becoming a professor and Head of that department in 1963. Sims was the Vice-Chancellor at the University of Sheffield between 1974-1991, and built many buildings in his tenure, including the Octagon Centre. He made huge contributions to industry, including the General Electric Company and Atomic Energy Authority. Sims made important contributions to several institutions, including Electrical Engineers, the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and the British Library. He received an OBE in 1971 and became a Fellow of the Royal Academy in 1980.

Trevor Stubley (1932–2010) was a Yorkshire portrait and landscape painter, and illustrator of over 400 children's books. He painted landscape watercolours in 18 countries and had over 500 portraits commissioned. He painted Sims in 1985, seating him in his three-quarter length Vice-Chancellor robes. He exhibited in the National Portrait Gallery, Windsor Castle, Palace of Westminster, and the British Library. He painted noteworthy people such as Queen Elizabeth II, Dame Judi Dench, and Alan Ayckbourn. He received awards from the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, the Royal Society of British Artists, the Royal Watercolour Society, and more.

Firth Hall Portraits

12) Sir Hugh Norwood Robson MRCPE (1917–1977)



ID: 432

Sir Hugh Robson studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, achieving a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery in 1941. He later became a lecturer at Edinburgh in 1947, a Senior Lecturer at the University of Aberdeen, and a Professor of Medicine at Adelaide. He was the second person in all of Australia to receive a full-time professorship in medicine, rising to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in 1959, the Chairman of the Professional Board in 1961, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield in 1966, and the Principal of the University of Edinburgh in 1974. He served during the Second World War, joining the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve and becoming a lieutenant surgeon in Singapore. His contributions to medicine are widespread across the UK, Australia and more, and this is visible in his honorary doctorates from the University of Sheffield and the University of Pennsylvania, before finally being knighted in 1974.

Henry Raeburn Dobson RP, RBA, RWS (1901–1985) was a Scottish portrait and landscape artist. He specialised in oil portraits and watercolour landscape, and influenced other artists to use more colour, decoration, and expression in their work. Dobson was a member of many societies, including the Royal Portrait Painters Society. He painted Robson in 1985, seating him in three quarter length Vice-Chancellor robes. He exhibited in the Royal Scottish Academy and McLellan Galleries in Glasgow. Dobson painted figures such as Earl Atlee and Harold Wilson.

Firth Hall Portraits

TBC - Sir Keith Burnett OBE (1953-present)



ID: 1774

Sir Keith Burnett is a physicist that specialised in Bose-Einstein condensates. He received his BA and DPhil at the University of Oxford and has held academic positions in Physics at the University of Colorado, Imperial College, and the University of Oxford. He was the Chairman of Physics and the Head of the Division of Mathematical, Physical, and Life Sciences. Alongside acting as Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield, Burnett was the Chair of the Board of Universities and Colleges Employers Association between 2009-2001. Outside of academia, Burnett contributed to the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority and was appointed to the Advisory Council of Infrastructure UK in 2012. For his efforts, Burnett has received many accolades, including a CBE for his services to physics, the Young Medal and Prize, and he was knighted in 2013 for his services to science and higher education. Similarly, Burnett is a Fellow of the Royal Society, the American Physiological Society, the Optical Society, and the Institute of Physics.

Andrew Hunt (1976-present) is a figurative painter who studied illustration at Bath Academy of Arts. Hunt has exhibited in the Sheffield Museum's Trust Millennium Galleries, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Manchester Academy of Fine Arts. He painted Burnett in 2019 in a three-quarter seated portrait, placing Burnett in his Vice-Chancellor robes in the Vice Chancellor's office in Firth Court. In the background, the viewer can see Weston Park and the bust of Rt. HON H.A.L Fisher, a previous Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield University. The book in the portrait is by HG (Heine) Kuhn, who Burnett claimed is his 'scientific Grandfather' for his contributions to atomic physics.