



Duncan Norman (1889-1972)

Duncan Norman MC MA LLD JP

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The University of Liverpool enjoyed the support and guidance of Duncan Norman for over twenty years. He first joined The University Council in 1942, beginning a tenure that was to span twenty one years.

His intended career was as a solicitor, and he graduated from Emmanuel College with a degree in law. His plans were thwarted by the outbreak of war in 1914, which saw him gain the rank of Captain and the Military Cross whilst serving with the 55th Division in the Royal Engineers.

After demobilisation he joined his grandfather's chemical firm, McKechnie Brothers, selling sulphate of copper to vineyards in the Balkans. In 1924 however, he embarked upon a new direction in the retail business, joining the Board of Owen Owen. This fortuitous move spawned one of the greatest success stories of Liverpool's fine history of commerce.

With bold new strategies and inspiring leadership, he engineered a renaissance in the fortunes of the struggling company. The key to its commercial success followed from the close friendship he forged with T J Hughes, a highly successful local retailer, and which led to the amalgamation of the two firms in 1934 after T J's death.

Although best known for his commercial talents he possessed a genial and gregarious nature and was famously respected for extending the respect and courtesy of the Boardroom to the shop floor. His hard work and generosity benefited far more than the people in his employ as he worked tirelessly for the community interest including not least the University of Liverpool.

After just three years as a Council member he became its Vice President. He held this post until 1951 when he became Acting President. In 1954 the position of President was formalised and lasted until 1957 when he acted as Pro-Chancellor for six years.

As well as his hard work on the Council, he was an influential member of the Development Committee between 1946 and 1963. During this time he chaired the building sub-committee responsible for the successful construction of Dale Hall, which continues to provide a home to hundreds of our students today.

In recognition of his work the University awarded Mr. Duncan Norman an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws in 1964.

In continuance of his legacy the family of Mr. Norman have graciously established the Duncan Norman Research Scholarship Trust, which will support a prestigious postgraduate research scholarship in perpetuity.

The Duncan Norman
Research
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THE UNIVERSITY
of LIVERPOOL