

MIDDLE TEM♀LE

CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF WOMEN IN LAW

EXHIBITION GUIDE



Middle Temple has some of the world's most distinguished and brilliant women lawyers among its members. From the very first to be admitted to an Inn of Court (Helena Normanton, on 24 December 1919) to the women in practice today, we are proud to be able to exhibit the portraits of a small sample of our leading women barristers and judges in Hall and on our digital display, to mark the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919.

The selection of the barristers and judges shown in Hall gives a small flavour of their wide range of practice and experience at the Bar and

in public life. There are many 'firsts' here: Helena Normanton herself; Sybil Campbell, the first woman judge; Barbara Calvert QC, the first woman Head of Chambers and Dame Barbara Mills, the first woman Director of Public Prosecutions. Baroness Scotland was the first woman Attorney General. Professor Dawn Oliver QC was our first woman Treasurer.

Their areas of practice range from high-profile General Counsel roles to shipping, crime, family, sports, medicine, telecoms and international human rights. We celebrate them – and all those we couldn't feature here.



Sybil Campbell OBE

Called 1922

The first woman judge (a Metropolitan Stipendiary Magistrate), 1945. She sat at Tower Bridge. Many of the prosecutions brought before her were those of pilfering from the docks: especially, during a period of severe post-War rationing, theft of food. She faced public criticism, some of it fuelled by misogyny. She was an ardent supporter of higher education for women.

Portrait by Juliet Pannett, courtesy of the Pannett family



Monica Geikie Cobb MBE

Called 1922

The first woman to hold a brief (Birmingham Assizes, two weeks after her Call). She had a successful commercial law practice – no mean achievement at the time, in a profession where many men and most of the first women were unable to earn a living at the Bar, and where the expectation was that women would gravitate towards family law.

Photo © National Portrait Gallery, London



Helena Normanton QC

Called 1922, Silk 1949

The first woman to be admitted to an Inn of Court, Middle Temple, on Christmas Eve 1919. She was the first woman to obtain a divorce for a client, the first woman to lead the prosecution in a murder trial, and the first to appear in cases at both the High Court and the Old Bailey, one of the two first women, with Rose Heilbron, to take silk.

Photo © LSE Women's Library



Sheila Cameron CBE QC

Called 1957, Silk 1983

First woman Diocesan Chancellor (1969) and since 1983, Vicar-General of Canterbury. Dean of the Arches of Canterbury and Auditor of the Chancery Court of York 2001-09. Before specialising in ecclesiastical law, she was instructed largely in family law and planning. Her longest planning inquiry was that into Terminal 5 at Heathrow, which she attended for three years. Autumn Reader 2002.

Photo courtesy of the Ryan family



DAME Margaret Booth DBE

Called 1956, Silk 1976

High Court Judge (Family Division) 1979-94, only the third woman to be appointed, after Elizabeth Lane and Rose Heilbron, to the High Court Bench. First woman (after the Queen Mother) Bencher of Middle Temple. She was co-editor of leading legal textbooks: *Rayden on Divorce* and *Clarke Hall & Morrison on Children*.

Photo courtesy of DAME Margaret Booth DBE



Chrystal Macmillan

Called 1924

Scottish Liberal politician, barrister, feminist and pacifist. First woman graduate in Science and Mathematics from the University of Edinburgh. A successful criminal barrister, she appeared for both the defence and the prosecution on the Western Circuit and in London, and also worked to stem the traffic in women and girls used as sex slaves. A Middle Temple Scholarship is named in her honour.

Photo © LSE Women's Library



DAME **Barbara Mills** DBE QC

Called 1963, Silk 1986

Junior Treasury Counsel at the Old Bailey. The first woman appointed Director of the Serious Fraud Office (1990-92), and the first woman Director of Public Prosecutions (1992-98). A very successful criminal practitioner, her cases included the *Guinness Fraud* trials, *Winston Silcott* and the *Brighton Bombers*. She championed opportunities for women and chaired the Women's Library Council for six years.

Photo courtesy of the Mills family



Barbara Calvert QC

Called 1959, Silk 1975

First woman Head of Chambers, in 1974. The first woman QC to be Called in Northern Ireland, and the first to take a case to the European Court of Human Rights. The first woman Reader (2001), her Reading on the history of women at the Bar was entitled: *Sex: Does it Really Matter?* It concluded with the words: 'Yes in your private lives but no longer in your professional lives. There is no height a woman cannot scale'.

Photo courtesy of the Calvert family



PROFESSOR **Carol Harlow** QC FBA

Called 1957, Silk (*honoris causa*) 1996

Professor of Law at the London School of Economics, specialising in comparative and English administrative law. At the beginning of her career, she taught at Makerere University in Uganda and later in Lesotho, where she also undertook poor person's defences in murder cases. She is Joint Master of the Garden, an active Scholarship Interviewer and Lent Reader 2019.



DAME **Florence Baron** DBE

Called 1976, Silk 1995

High Court Judge (Family Division) 2004-13. Specialist in matrimonial finance. She acted for the Prince of Wales in his divorce from the Princess of Wales and was the first woman Head of Chambers at Queen Elizabeth Building. Noted for her great intellect, appetite for work and mischievous sense of humour.

Photo courtesy of John Tonna



Adrienne Page QC

Called 1974, Silk 1999

Specialist practitioner in defamation. Joint Head of Chambers at 5RB, 2003-11. She became the first woman Queen's Counsel in defamation, privacy and related areas of law upon her appointment to Silk in 1999. One of her many high-profile cases was a libel trial lasting six months, involving two nursery workers falsely accused of serial child sex abuse.

Photo © 5RB, Phil Sayer



PROFESSOR **Dawn Oliver** QC FBA

Called 1965, Silk (*honoris causa*) 2012

First woman and the first academic to be elected Treasurer of Middle Temple, 2011. Professor of Law, University College London, and Dean of the Faculty from 1993-98 and again in 2007. Her research and teaching have been mainly in constitutional and administrative law and the relationship between law and politics.

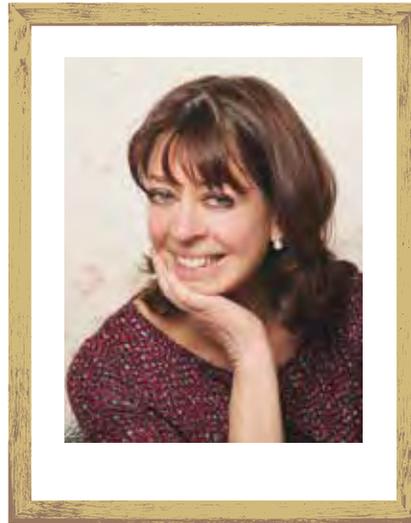


PROFESSOR **Nicola Padfield** QC

Called 1978, Silk (*honoris causa*) 2018

Professor of Criminal and Penal Justice and Director of the Cambridge Centre for Criminal Justice. The first woman Master of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. She has a broad research lens, engaged in both 'hard' law and in socio-legal-criminological research. She is a leading European expert on sentencing law, including the law and practice of release from (and recall to) prison.

Photo © Jet Photographic



DAME **Frances Patterson** DBE

Called 1977, Silk 1998

High Court Judge (Queen's Bench Division) 2013-16. Commissioner for Public Law 2010-13, responsible for: the scrutiny, modernisation and simplification of electoral law; a review of the regulatory framework governing health and social care professionals; and an examination of the law relating to wildlife management. In 2011, she reported to the government on the reform of adult social care law.

Photo courtesy of the Nicholson family



HER EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE BARONESS **Scotland** OF ASTHAL QC PC

Called 1977, Silk 1991

The first BAME person appointed as Attorney General (2007-10) and the first woman to hold the office since its foundation in 1315. First Black woman and the youngest woman, at 35, to be appointed Queen's Counsel. At the 2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, she was elected the Sixth Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, and took office in April 2016. She is the first woman to hold the post.

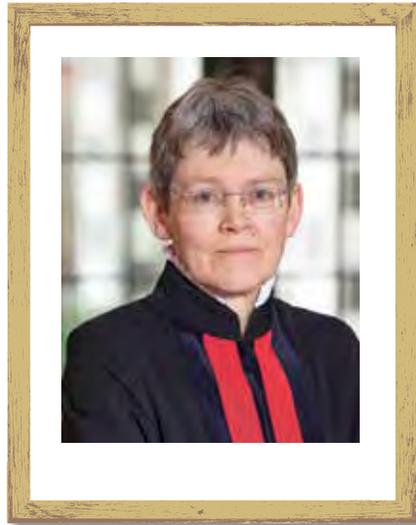


Eleanor Sharpston QC

Called 1980, Silk 1999

First woman appointed by the UK as Advocate General at the European Court of Justice (2006). She has combined practice in EU law with teaching at University College London and Cambridge, where she is a Fellow of King's College. As a former Bristow Scholar, she now hosts young scholars at her ECJ chambers. She is also a karate black belt, rides a motorbike and is a square-rigger sailor.

Photo © Court of Justice of the European Union



DAME Elisabeth Laing DBE

Called 1980, Silk 2008

Appointed a Recorder in 2000, a Deputy High Court Judge in 2010, and has been a High Court Judge (Queen's Bench Division) since 2014. She was the first member of her chambers to appear at the European Court of Justice, and is a Nominated Judge for the Judicial Conduct and Investigations Office. She considers one of her greatest achievements to be finishing the London Marathon in under five hours.



Catherine Newman QC

Called 1979, Silk 1995

A leading Silk at the commercial chancery Bar. Deputy High Court Judge (Queen's Bench and Chancery Divisions) Recorder of the Crown Court. Among many notable cases, she was instructed in a Privy Council case brought by the liquidators of a Madoff feeder fund, and acted for Hammersmith & Fulham in the 'swaps' litigation. She was the first woman Chair of Hall Committee and ran the Scholarship Fund Appeal Committee.

Photo © Colin Thomas



THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
DAME **Kate Thirlwall** DBE

Called 1982, Silk 1999

High Court Judge (Queen's Bench Division) 2010-17. Presiding Judge of the Midland Circuit 2011-15 and Lady Justice of Appeal since 2017 – the first woman from Middle Temple to be appointed to the Court of Appeal. She is currently Deputy Senior Presiding Judge for England and Wales. She is Joint Master of Moots.



Helen Mahy CBE

Called 1982

Chairman of The Renewables Infrastructure Group and an Equality and Human Rights Commissioner. Formerly Group Company Secretary and General Counsel at the National Grid (2003-13). She has been Chair of the General Counsel 100 Group and a member of the Advisory Board of Opportunity Now. She says that being a barrister can open many exciting doors outside the confines of the Bar.

Photo © The Renewables Infrastructure Group Limited



DAME **Maura McGowan** DBE

Called 1980, Silk 2001

High Court Judge (Queen's Bench Division) since 2014. Chairman of the Bar in 2013, the first woman to hold that post since 1998. As a criminal barrister, she took on organised 'gangland' crime cases, terrorism and fraud. She appeared in public inquiries including the Climbié Inquiry, and was Leading Counsel to the Hallett Review into the 'on the run' letters issued to escaped Republican prisoners in Northern Ireland.



DAME **Philippa Whipple** DBE

Called 1994, Silk 2010

Originally a solicitor. High Court Judge (Queen's Bench Division) since 2015 and a member of the Judicial Appointments Commission since 2016. She specialised in medical law (including professional discipline and medical negligence); public law (including human rights); and tax. She was Lead Counsel to the Gibson Detainee Inquiry investigating allegations of ill-treatment of detainees by British intelligence officials in the aftermath of 9/11.

Photo © Jonathan Knowles



Blondel Thompson

Called 1987

An international criminal and sports barrister based at St Philips Chambers in Birmingham. Specialising in sports law, crime and regulatory work. A former British and Commonwealth record-holder in the 100m hurdles, a judge in the Court of Arbitration for Sport, in Lausanne, Switzerland. She has also been appointed to the Special Tribunals of Lebanon and has been instructed by the prosecutors office at the International Criminal Court.



Vasanti Selvaratnam QC

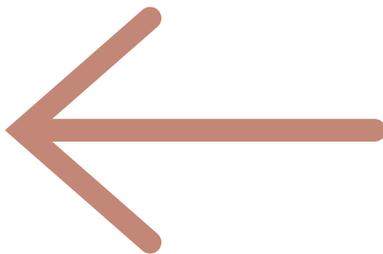
Called 1983, Silk 2001

Specialist in commercial and shipping law and Joint Head of 36 Stone. Throughout her career she has appeared in many important shipping cases, several of which have reached the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. She was appointed a Recorder on the Western Circuit at the age of 39 and in 2001 was one of the youngest women from an Asian background to take Silk in the Commercial field.



Exhibition continues...

In the corridor to your left, *A Century of Women in Law* continues with a rolling presentation featuring a further 40+ members of Middle Temple who represent a wide-range of practice areas at the Bar, in both private and public fields.



THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE BARONESS **Chakrabarti** CBE PC

Called 1994

Director of Liberty 2003-16. Shadow Attorney General and Labour peer. Author of *On Liberty* and *Of Women*, detailing the continued impact of global gender injustice in the 21st century. In 2011 she was appointed a member of the Panel of the Leveson Inquiry, the judicial inquiry into UK press standards. She is Honorary Professor of Law at the Universities of Bristol and Manchester.

Photo © 39 Essex Chambers



Middle Temple has always been at the forefront of promoting women in the law. It was the first Inn of Court to admit a woman and the first to set up a Women's Forum for women barristers.

Many Middle Temple women have achieved 'firsts' in the profession, though female representation at the top of the profession is still disappointingly sparse. The Bar struggles to retain women in self-employed practice, particularly those with all important family commitments.

Those who stay the course find their persistence rewarded; the women we celebrate in this

exhibition demonstrate that sheer ability, hard work and talent pay off. In every field of practice at the Bar, women are succeeding. And, at the last count, there were 218 women pupil barristers, as against 204 men. Women will soon outnumber men at the junior Bar and inevitably will do so at senior levels too.

Our exhibition, which gives just a snapshot of some of our distinguished and brilliant members, past, present and just starting their careers, gives us great hope for things to come.

For more information about The Honourable Society of Middle Temple and how to join, see www.middletemple.org.uk



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