

# DAME BARBARA HEPWORTH 1903–1975

Barbara Hepworth was a British sculptor, who was born in Wakefield, Yorkshire on 10 January 1903. Hepworth was the eldest child of Gertrude and Herbert Hepworth, a civil engineer. She would frequently accompany her father on car trips round the Yorkshire countryside, and the family spent summer holidays at Robin Hood's Bay. This early connection with rural settings influenced much of her future work. After attending Wakefield Girls' High School, she won a scholarship to study at Leeds School of Art in 1920 where she studied alongside fellow Yorkshire-born artist Henry Moore, and on a county scholarship, at the Royal College of Art (1921–4). She became a leading figure in the international art scene throughout a career spanning five decades.

*"The whole of my Yorkshire background means more to me as the years have passed. I draw on these early experiences not only visually in texture and contour, but humanly. The importance of man in landscape was stressed by the seeming contradiction of the industrial town springing out of the inner beauty of the country."*

When on holiday in Robin Hood's Bay, Hepworth found herself among the community of practising artists. She looked upon this time as a perfect opportunity to paint, sketching the house and the surrounding cliffs and caves in a variety of lights.



Barbara Hepworth on holiday at Robin Hood's Bay, 1925  
Photo: BROWNES, HEPWORTH ESTATE

*"At high tide the waves thumped on the house and spray fell all around us . . . I was always in a state of great excitement," she said. "I crept out at dawn to collect stones and seaweeds, and paint and draw by myself before somebody organised me."*



"Robin Hood's Bay, 1920"