

He was elected to Fellowship of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1920, to Membership of the British Astronomical Association on 1913 November 26, was a Member of the defunct Sociadad Astronomica de Barcelona throughout the life of that Society, and was for many years a Member of the Société Astronomique do France. He was an expert linguist with command of the French, Spanish and German languages, and kept in touch with amateur astronomers on the Continent.

William Porthouse owned the famous 13-inch 'Maderia' with reflector, by means of which at Maderia in 1877 the late Nathaniel Green made his classic drawings of the planet Mars which appear in "Memoirs of the R.A.S. XLIV".

During his active astronomical lifetime, William Porthouse delivered nearly one thousand illustrated lectures on astronomical and astrophysical subjects, and in the earliest days of broadcasting in England delivered twelve talks of a similar nature. He was, indeed, the first in the country to broadcast an astronomical address.

His first love in astronomy was the study of the lunar surface, which, he used to say, he knew far better than his own country, and much of his observational results were utilized by the late Walter Goodacre when compiling his comprehensive map of the Moon.