

ALLEN, JOHN ROMILLY (1847-1907), archaeologist

Name: John Romilly Allen
Date of birth: 1847
Date of death: 1907
Parent: George Baugh Allen
Gender: Male
Occupation: archaeologist
Area of activity: History and Culture
Author: John Edward Lloyd

Born in London 9 June 1847, he came of an old Pembrokeshire family, the Allens of Cresselly, and no doubt owed his middle name to the fact that his grandfather had married a niece of Sir Samuel Romilly. His father was George Baugh Allen, J.P., of Cilrhiw, near Lampeter Velfrey; his mother was a daughter of Roger Eaton of Parc Glas, near Crinow. Deserting his father's profession of barrister (of the Inner Temple), he chose, after education at Rugby and King's College, London, to become a civil engineer, in which capacity he was engaged as apprentice on Merseyside, as engineer for Baron de Reuter's Persian railway scheme, and as supervisor of dock construction at Leith, and Boston, Lincs.

But at an early age he was attracted to the study of archaeology; a contribution to *Archæologia Cambrensis* in 1873 on 'Some cairns on Barry Island' was followed by his joining the Cambrian Archaeological Association at Carmarthen in 1875. Thus was established a connection which was not broken until his death. He became co-editor of *Archæologia Cambrensis* in January 1888 and sole editor in October 1891. Archaeology now claimed him entirely; he was elected F.S.A., Scot., in 1883, Rhind lecturer in 1885, editor of *The Reliquary* in 1893, F.S.A. in 1896, and Yates lecturer in University College, London, in 1898. In addition to many articles in archaeological journals, he published the following: *Early Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Rhind lectures, 1887); *The Monumental History of the Early British Church* (S.P.C.K., 1889); *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1903); *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times*, 1904.

In his special field, Allen became a leading authority, and *Archæologia Cambrensis* benefited largely during his editorship from the study which he and [Sir John Rhys](#) bestowed upon the early inscribed stones of Wales. At the annual meetings he was a welcome commentator upon antiquities visited; a certain hastiness of temper was forgiven by those who knew his entire devotion to scientific archaeology. He died unmarried in London on 5 July 1907. A photograph forms the frontispiece to [Archæologia Cambrensis](#), 1908.

LANCELOT BAUGH ALLEN (1774 - 1845), lawyer

Allen's grandfather deserves mention as having been warden (1805-11), and then master (1811-20), of Dulwich College. He was the second son of John Bartlett Allen of Cresselly near Carew ([Fenton, Pemb.](#), 2nd ed., 150), and married Caroline Romilly - their second son was the antiquary's father. L. B. Allen was born 1 January 1774 and died 28 October 1845. His career is given in Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*

Author

Sir John Edward Lloyd, (1861 - 1947)

Sources

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Who was who?, 1897-1915

Burke's Landed Gentry, 1906

Further reading

Wikipedia Article: [John Romilly Allen](#)

Wikipedia Article: [Lancelot Baugh Allen](#)

Images

National Museum Wales: [John Romilly Allen](#)

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