

## BREESE, EDWARD (1835-1881), antiquary

**Name:** Edward Breese  
**Date of birth:** 1835  
**Date of death:** 1881  
**Spouse:** Margaret Jane Breese (née Williams)  
**Child:** Charles Edward Breese  
**Parent:** Margaret Breese (née Williams)  
**Parent:** John Breese  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** antiquary  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Scholarship and Languages  
**Author:** John Edward Lloyd

Born at Carmarthen 13 April 1835, son of **John Breese**, Congregational minister, and Margaret, daughter of David Williams of Saethon in Llŷn. His father's death in 1842 threw him upon the care of his mother's kindred, who were influential in south Caernarvonshire. In particular, his uncle, **David Williams** of Bron Eryri already far advanced in a prosperous career as lawyer and politician, was able to give him substantial help; the nephew was received into the Portmadoc office and qualified as a solicitor in 1857. In 1859 Breese succeeded his uncle as clerk of the peace for the county of Merioneth and other local offices, including the management of the Madocks estate, the heir to which was a minor. He had thus an important part in the planning and development of the new town of Portmadoc and gained general confidence by his ability, integrity, and judicial temper. **David Lloyd George**, as a beginner in his office, owed much to his kindness. In politics he was a Liberal, in religion a Churchman. He married in 1863 Margaret Jane, daughter of Lewis Williams of Fron Wnion, Dolgelley, sheriff of his county in 1865.

From an early age, Breese developed a strong interest in local antiquities. Many years of research, backed by an excellent private library, led to the publication in 1873 of *Kalendars of Gwynedd*, a complete record of the high officers (sheriffs, Members of Parliament, etc.) of the counties of Anglesey, Caernarfonshire, and Merionethshire, which is still an authoritative work of reference. Breese died 10 March 1881, leaving six children, of whom three became solicitors. Through his mother he claimed descent from **Rhys ap Tewdwr** and Trahaearn Goch o Lŷn, and he adopted a shield on which were quartered the arms attributed to them.

### CHARLES EDWARD BREESE (1867 - 1932), solicitor and antiquarian

Of his sons followed him both in his profession and his antiquarian interests. Admitted a solicitor in 1889, he served on the Caernarvonshire county council, as major of Volunteers, as chairman of the executive committee of the Cambrian Archaeological Association and (in 1930) as one of its vice-presidents. He was Liberal M.P. for Caernarvonshire, 1918-22.

### Author

Sir **John Edward Lloyd**, (1861 - 1947)

### Sources

*Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1881, 171-2 and 1932, 422

*Y Gestiana*, 86-7

*Enwogion Sir Gaernarfon* (1922), 7-9

Thomas Nicholas, *Annals and Antiquities of the Counties and County Families of Wales*(London 1872), vol.I

Thomas Nicholas, *Annals and Antiquities of the Counties and County Families of Wales*(London 1872), vol.II

### Further reading

T. Morgan, *Enwogion Cymreig 1700-1900* (1907), p.31

NLW Archives: Etholiad Cyffredinol 1918. Etholiad Seneddol Sir Gaernarfon. Major Charles E Breese. The Liberal Coalition Candidate.

Wikipedia Article: [Charles Breese \(politician\)](#)

## Images

NLW: Edward Breese, the antiquary

## Additional Links

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