

## FOX, Sir CYRIL FRED (1882 - 1967), Director of the National Museum of Wales, 1926-48;

**Name:** Cyril Fred Fox  
**Date of birth:** 1882  
**Date of death:** 1967  
**Spouse:** Aileen Mary Fox (née Scott-Henderson)  
**Spouse:** Olive Fox (née Congreve-Pridgeon)  
**Parent:** C. Fred Fox  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Director of the National Museum of Wales  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Public and Social Service, Civil Administration  
**Author:** Iorwerth Cyfeiliog Peate

Born 1882 son of C. Fred Fox, F.S.A., Bursledon, Hampshire, and his wife. He was educated at Christ's Hospital, Horsham. After leaving school at 16 he was trained as a vegetable gardener, eventually moving to Worthing, Sussex, where he met Louis Cobett, a pathologist on the staff of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis, who persuaded him to become a clerk on the staff of the Commission at Stanstead, Essex. When the commission finished its work, about 1912, some of its members set up a research station at Cambridge and Fox was appointed to take care of its administration until the Ministry of Agriculture took control of it. He was now without work and some of his friends at Cambridge arranged for him to register for a degree course at Magdalene College, Cambridge, but at the end of his first year, 'in a most unusual and skilful academic move' he did not complete his degree scheme but was transferred under the title 'pre-fellow' to carry out research work in the same college and to assist in the university museum of archaeology and anthropology. He gained his Ph.D. with work published as *The archaeology of the Cambridge region* (Cambridge, 1922).

In 1922 when R.E. Mortimer Wheeler, Keeper of the department of archaeology of the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, was made Director of the museum, his former post became vacant. Although there was pressure to appoint an archaeologist with a Welsh background, Wheeler recommended Fox for the post and he was appointed. When Wheeler left in 1926 to take up a post in London, Fox was appointed in his place as Director of the National Museum of Wales.

During his time as Director, Fox continued to work in the field of archaeology and the Museum published several of his works, amongst them *The personality of Britain* (1932), *A find of the early Iron Age, Anglesey* (1946) and (with Lord Raglan) *Monmouthshire houses* (1951-54). He also surveyed Offa's Dyke, the results of which were published in issues of *Arch. Camb.* After his retirement the Museum published his *Pattern and purpose: a study of early Celtic art in Britain* (1958). He received many honours; amongst them, knighthood (1935), F.B.A. (1940), G.T. Clarke award (1946), president (1944-49) of the Society of Antiquarians of London and its gold medal (1952), honorary D.Litt. University of Wales (1947), president of the Museums Association (1933-34), president of the Cambrian Archaeological Society (1933), honorary fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge (1953).

He married twice: (1) Olive Congreve-Pridgeon (died 1932), they had two daughters; (2) Aileen Mary Scott-Henderson, they had three sons. After retiring, he lived in Exeter and died there 16 January 1967.

### Author

Iorwerth Cyfeiliog Peate, (1901 - 1982)

### Sources

Personal acquaintance

article by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, 'Homage to Sir Cyril Fox', 1-6 and a full bibliography, 502-12, in the Festschrift, *Culture and environment. Essays in honour of Sir Cyril Fox* (London 1963) (1963)

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Cyril Fox](#)

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