

HEMP, WILFRID JAMES (1882 - 1962), archaeologist

Name: Wilfrid James Hemp
Date of birth: 1882
Date of death: 1962
Spouse: Dulcia Hemp (née Assheton)
Parent: Alice Challoner Hemp (née Smith)
Parent: James Kynnerly Hemp
Gender: Male
Occupation: archaeologist
Area of activity: History and Culture
Author: Colin Alistair Gresham

Born 27 April 1882 in Richmond, Surrey, the only child of James Kynnerly Hemp and his wife, Alice Challoner (née Smith). Her sister had married J. Lloyd-Jones, rector of Cricieth 1883-1922, and this gave Hemp a connection with north Wales, where he spent his summer holidays in Caernarfonshire. He was educated at Highgate School, London, and his first appointment was at the Principal Probate Registry, Somerset House. His main interest lay in history and heraldry; he was elected F.S.A. in 1913, and the same year he was appointed Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Wales in the Ministry of Public Works and Secretary to the Board of Ancient Monuments. After a short period of service in World War I, he was responsible for the important repair work on the castles of north Wales — Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Harlech, Denbigh and Ewloe, and he also excavated and restored the megalithic chamber tombs of Neolithic date — Capel Garmon in Denbighshire; Bryn Celli Ddu and Bryn yr Hen Bobl, on Anglesey. Meanwhile he was writing reports and guidebooks for these and on many other subjects. In 1928 he was appointed by Royal Warrant as Secretary to the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire, and his Anglesey volume appeared in 1937. Work on the Caernarfonshire volume was halted by World War II, and Hemp retired in 1946. He joined the Cambrian Archaeological Association in 1911, and was its President 1955-56. He wrote many articles for *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (there is a list of over one hundred items under his name in the Index) and for other publications. He served on a number of committees in Wales. He was awarded an honorary M.A. degree by the University of Wales in 1932. He was an authority on Welsh heraldry and one of that small band of archaeologists who set the study of prehistory in Wales on a sound footing during the first half of the twentieth century. He married Dulcia, daughter of Richard Assheton, in 1934, and in 1939 settled in Cricieth, where he died 14 April 1962.

Author

Colin Alistair Gresham, (1913 - 1989)

Sources

Personal knowledge.

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Wilfrid James Hemp](#) 

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