

## SIMON, JOHN ALLSEBROOK, 1st VISCOUNT SIMON of Stackpole Elidor (1873 - 1954), judge and politician

**Name:** John Allsebrook Simon

**Date of birth:** 1873

**Date of death:** 1954

**Spouse:** Kathleen Rochard Simon (née Harvey)

**Spouse:** Ethel Mary Simon (née Venables)

**Parent:** Fanny Simon (née Allsebrook)

**Parent:** Edwin Simon

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** judge and politician

**Area of activity:** Law; Politics, Government and Political Movements

**Author:** Mary Auronwy James

Born 28 February 1873 at Manchester, son of Edwin Simon, Congl. minister from Stackpole, Pembrokeshire, and Fanny (née Allsebrook) his wife. He was educated at Fettes College, Edinburgh and Wadham College, Oxford. After graduating in the classics in 1896 he was elected Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. In 1898 he won the Barstow Law Scholarship and was called to the Bar by the Inner Temple the following year. He was appointed a judge on the Western Circuit as early as 1908. His mind was ordered, his memory extraordinary and his power of presentation seldom surpassed, but his ambition was chiefly political. In 1906 he had been elected M.P. (Lib.) for Walthamstow, Essex, and he soon became a member of the cabinet and was Secretary of State for Home Affairs (1915-16) when he resigned because he was opposed to the introduction of conscription. He returned as M.P. for Spen Valley, 1922-40. A speech he made in the House of Commons contributed markedly to the collapse of the miners' strike in 1926. In 1931 he entered the least satisfactory stage of his career when he became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but was better placed as Secretary of State for Home Affairs, 1935-37, his second term in that office. This was followed by a period as Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1937-40. He served on several government commissions, and was chairman of the Indian Statutory Commission, 1927-30, which produced an historic report on the working of the 1919 act concerning the government of India. In 1940 he was elevated to the peerage and became Lord Chancellor, in which post he was pre-eminent. Many of his ensuing judgements are models of lucid and comprehensive expositions of the law. He married (1), 1899, Ethel Mary Venables (died 1902) and they had one son and two daughters; (2), 1917, Kathleen Manning (née Harvey); he died 11 January 1954. His publications include his memoirs, *Retrospect* (1952), and *Income Tax* (5 vols.; 1950).

### Author

Dr Mary Auronwy James

### Sources

*Who was who?*

*Y Cymro*, 13 June 1952

*The Times*, 12 January 1954

*Western Mail*, 12 January 1954

*The Biographical Index of W. W. Price, Aberdŵr*

### Further Reading

NLW Archives: [General Election 1906 Wales and Monmouthshire. A Souvenir containing photographs, biographical sketches etc., of all the Welsh MPs: John Allsebrook Simon](#)

NLW Archives: [Gair at Ryddfrydwyr gan y Gwir Anrhydeddus Syr John Simon A.S.](#)

Wikipedia Article: [John Simon, 1st Viscount Simon](#)

### Additional Links

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