

BEAUMONT, Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. RALPH EDWARD BLACKETT (1901-1977), Member of Parliament and public figure

Name: Ralph Edward Blackett Beaumont

Date of birth: 1901

Date of death: 1977

Spouse: Helena Mary Christine Beaumont (née Wray)

Parent: Alexandrina Louisa Maud Beaumont (née Vane-Tempest)

Parent: Wentworth Canning Blackett Beaumont

Gender: Male

Occupation: Member of Parliament and public figure

Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements; Public and Social Service, Civil Administration

Author: David Lewis Jones

Born at 33 Belgrave Square, London, on 12 February 1901, the fifth child and second son of Wentworth Canning Blackett Beaumont, from 1907 2nd Baron Allendale and from 1911 1st Viscount Allendale, and Lady Alexandrina Louisa Maud Vane-Tempest, daughter of the 5th Marquess of Londonderry. His maternal grandmother, the 5th Marchioness of Londonderry, was the daughter of [Sir John Edwards](#) of Greenfields, Machynlleth, now Plas Machynlleth.

Beaumont was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford where he took his B.A. in 1923, and proceeded to M.A. in 1953. A man of independent means, he pursued a political career, but as an Unionist, not a Liberal like his father. In 1929 he stood for the Cannock division of Staffordshire and came second in the poll. He was more successful in 1931 when he was the Unionist candidate for Portsmouth Central. Despite their strength in Portsmouth, the Liberals decided not to contest the election but gave platform support to Beaumont, which enabled him to win the seat from the Labour member. Ralph Beaumont was popular in the constituency because of his careful attention to the welfare of service men and dockyard workers. For a time, he lived in a poor part of the constituency. At the 1935 general election a candidate from the Samuelite wing of the Liberal Party stood for Portsmouth Central but many prominent Liberals held to their support of Beaumont and he was re-elected with a slightly increased majority. Beaumont did not achieve high political office; he was Parliamentary Private Secretary to the assistant Postmaster-General 1932-35, to the Postmaster-General 1935-40, and to the Secretary of State for War 1942-45. He was defeated by the Labour candidate at the 1945 general election.

Beaumont had served with the Territorial Army since his appointment as 2nd Lieutenant, Royal Engineers Infantry on 26 July 1931. While still a Member of Parliament, Beaumont had passed the staff college examinations and achieved the rank of major. After the end of the Second World War, Beaumont played a leading role in re-building the Territorial Army and reached the rank of a lieutenant-colonel. Beaumont's regiment in the Territorial Army descended from the Montgomeryshire Militia and was based at Newtown, not far from his home at Plas Llwyngwern, Pantperthog, near Machynlleth. Since 1929 Beaumont had been Master of the Plas Machynlleth foxhounds. After the end of his parliamentary career, he took a more active part in the public life of Montgomeryshire. He was President of the Montgomeryshire Conservative Association and found himself in the unusual role of defusing a revolt within the Association over the Executive's decision not to field a candidate against [Clement Davies](#) at the 1951 general election. He was appointed High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire in 1957, Deputy Lieutenant of the county on 17 March 1961 and Vice-Lieutenant on 10 April 1962. He also served the county as Chairman of the Montgomeryshire County Agricultural Executive Committee from 1948 to 1969. In his own neighbourhood, Beaumont was a member of Machynlleth Urban District Council and chairman from 1964 to 1966. He gave a generous gift of land for community purposes to the Council in 1967.

A prominent Conservative in Wales and a man with a great interest in rural affairs, Beaumont was nominated to the membership of public bodies. From 19 August 1952 until 1969, he was a Commissioner on the Development Commission, and from 1968 until 1977 he was a member of the Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas; both bodies were precursors of the Rural Development Commission. He was also a member, from 1958 to 1977, of the Council on Tribunals. Within Wales, Beaumont served on the Welsh Economic Council from 1965 to 1968 and on the Welsh Council from 1968 to 1971. On 1 January 1967, he was appointed C.B.E. for public services in Wales.

Ralph Beaumont married, at St. George's Hanover Square on 22 March 1926, Helena Mary Christine Wray, the younger daughter of Brigadier-General Cecil Wray; they had two sons and a daughter. Christine Beaumont died on 26 August 1962. Around 1972, Ralph Beaumont moved from Plas Llwyngwern to Bron-y-Wennol, also in Pantperthog. He died on 18 September 1977 and his funeral was held at St. Peter's Church, Machynlleth, on 23 September 1977. He left an estate of £225,314.

Author

David Lewis Jones

Sources

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Kelly's Handbook to the titled, landed and official classes, 96th ed.

Who was who?, 1971-80

The Times, 14 February 1901; 27 February 1926; 23 March 1926 (wedding photograph); 31 March 1951; 23 & 29 September 1977 (obituary)

The London Gazette for dates of public appointments

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Ralph Beaumont](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q7287229](#)

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