

## TILLEY, ALBERT (1896 - 1957), mace-bearer at Brecon cathedral and local historian

**Name:** Albert Tilley  
**Date of birth:** 1896  
**Date of death:** 1957  
**Spouse:** Doris Mary Tilley (née Davies)  
**Spouse:** Constance Mary Tilley (née Watkins)  
**Parent:** Caroline Tilley (née Hawkins)  
**Parent:** Edmund Valentine Tilley  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** mace-bearer at Brecon cathedral and local historian  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Religion  
**Author:** Evan David Jones

Born 8 September 1896 at Norton Arms, Widnes, Lancashire, one of the seven children of Edmund Valentine and Caroline (née Hawkins) Tilley. He was educated until he was aged fifteen at Simmer Cross school, Widnes. Then he moved to Liverpool and in 1914 joined the army. He was wounded on the Somme. He was sent to Brecon to recuperate where he met and subsequently married Constance Mary Watkins and settled there. They had one daughter. His wife died in 1940. In March 1923 he was appointed the first mace-bearer of the new cathedral in Brecon, an office which he held with dedication and remarkable dignity for thirty-three years until ill-health forced him to retire in October 1956. He steeped himself in the history, traditions and architecture of the church. With strong encouragement from [Gwenllian E.F. Morgan](#) and [Sir John Conway Lloyd](#) he specialised in the history of the town and of his adopted county. He devoted himself to collecting material on local history, copying inscriptions in churches and cemeteries and other sources. He possessed an artistic talent and interested himself in the heraldry of the county and in the pedigrees of its families. Amongst his leisure interests was the collecting of majolica. He had special knowledge of the cathedral and its treasures, and his readiness to share his store of knowledge and his winning personality charmed thousands of visitors to the church during the period of his service. With great labour and skill he arranged a Christmas crib and Easter garden in the west corner of the church which was the object of general admiration for a quarter of a century.

He married (2) 13 September 1950, Doris Mary Davies. He died 23 September 1957, and was buried in Brecon cemetery following a funeral service at the cathedral on 25 September His papers and MSS. were donated to the National Library by the Dean and Chapter of Brecon. It is a valuable collection of materials on the history, heraldry and geneology of Brecon and Brecknockshire.

### Author

**Evan David Jones**, (1903 - 1987)

### Sources

*Brecon & Radnor County Times*, September, October 1957

*Annual Report of the National Library of Wales*, 1964 and 1965

information from his widow

### Additional Links

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