



THE REV CANON ROBERT ALLWOOD – FORMER VICE-CHANCELLOR (1869–83)

Elected by Senate to fill a casual vacancy, the Rev Canon Robert Allwood was Fellow of Senate from 1855 to 1886, during which he served as Vice-Chancellor (elected by and from the Fellows) between the years 1869 and 1883. He was the first Anglican cleric to be a Fellow of Senate.

PROFILE

(1803 - 1891)

BA *Camb*

**Fellow of Senate 1855 - 1886, including election by Senate as
– Vice-Chancellor 1869 - 1883**

The Rev Canon Robert Allwood, Church of England clergyman, was born on 24 September 1803 at Kingston, Jamaica.

He went to Eton and matriculated at Cambridge in 1821. He became a foundation scholar (BA, 1825) and was ordained deacon by the bishop of Bath and Wells on 5 November 1826, and appointed to a minor canonry of Bristol. The bishop of Bristol priested him on 12 January 1828, and next year he became curate of Dowry Square chapel, Clifton; in 1834-35 he served as chaplain to the mayor of Bristol.

In June 1839 Allwood was accepted as graduate clergyman for the new diocese of Australia, sailing in the *Kinnear* in July 1839 and reaching Sydney in December.

In January 1840 Allwood was appointed to the incumbency of St James's Church, King Street, where he remained until he retired in 1884. St James's was already the principal church in Sydney and served as the pro-cathedral until 1843. He was an incisive and thoughtful preacher, and his pulpit became a powerful influence on churchmen of his time.

Allwood maintained a vigorous ministry to the convict and immigrants' barracks, the hospitals and other institutions in his district; trained a succession of able curates; achieved a great amount of pastoral work; and played a major part in the affairs of the diocese. In 1876 he became chancellor of the diocese and held office for eight years, during which much was done in the ordering of synod procedure and the administration of church property.

Allwood's main interest was education. His parish school, one of the largest in the colony, became the model school for the training of Anglican denominational teachers, and Allwood acted as an examiner. He was in close touch with St James's Grammar School (1838-57), a diocesan foundation but conducted within the parish.

In 1845 St James's College was set up, primarily to train candidates for the ministry. Allwood was appointed principal and conducted much of the teaching, first at his church and, from 1847, at Lyndhurst, Glebe. He was an able and devoted principal, but charges of Tractarian influence made the college unpopular with some of the clergy and laity and it closed in 1849, the year before the University of Sydney was founded.

Allwood's attitude to the University of Sydney was less hostile than that of the bishops. He made a moderate defence of it in 1852 and supported the compromise proposal for affiliated colleges. In 1855 he was elected a fellow of St Paul's College, whose classes were held initially at his church. In the same year he became the first Anglican cleric to be a member of the university senate and served as vice-chancellor in 1869-82.

In the early 1880s the parish, in difficulties through the loss of its resident population, had to adjust to a new role as a city church. The school had been closed and the church needed repair, but was threatened with resumption. Allwood was too old to lead a revival and resigned his cure in 1884 after a ministry of forty-four years.

The Reverend Canon Allwood died at Edgecliff, Sydney, on 27 October 1891.

Information taken from the Australian Dictionary of Biography