

Classic Poetry Series

**Leslie Holdsworth Allen**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**  
2012

**Publisher:**  
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# Leslie Holdsworth Allen(21 June 1879 – 5 January 1964)

Leslie Holdsworth Allen was an Australian academic and poet. He was Professor of English at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, the senior lecturer of English and Latin at Canberra University College and chairman of the Literature Censorship Board.

## <b>Early life</b>

Allen was born in Maryborough, Victoria, the second son of William Allen, a Congregational minister and the older brother of Sir Carleton Allen. He was eleven when his family moved to Sydney where he attended Newington College (1894–1899). He later attended the University of Sydney and the University of Leipzig.

## <b>Academic career</b>

In 1911, Allen was appointed as a senior lecturer in classics and English at Sydney Teachers College. After his marriage in 1915 to Dora Bavin (sister of Sir Thomas Bavin, Lancelot Bavin and Major Cyril Bavin OBE) he became professor of English at the Royal Military College, Duntroon. During his tenure at Duntroon he produced plays for the Canberra Society of Arts and Literature and wrote poetry and children's verse. In 1931, he became the sole lecturer in English and classics at Canberra University College (now the Australian National University).

## <b>Censorship</b>

Allen was appointed in 1933 as a member of the Commonwealth Book Censorship Advisory Committee. From 1937 he was chairman the Literature Censorship Board from 1937.

## <b>Family life</b>

His wife Dora (sister of Thomas Bavin and Lancelot Bavin) was tubercular and she died in 1932 predeceased by their only son. On his death in Moruya, New South Wales, he was survived by his only daughter.

## <b>Honours</b>

The Haydon-Allen Lecture Theatre is in part a memorial to his work at the Australian National University.

# Memnon

When I was a burst of thunder  
Born on the Nubian cliffs,  
And the sands flashed white in wonder,  
And in Khem the curious glyphs  
Shone out from the cavern-tombs  
On the huddled bats in the glooms,  
'Mid the great stone kings I rumbled  
That sit by the river-brinks,  
And my sand-clouds eddied and tumbled  
Round the old stare of the Sphinx;  
Then with harsh-throated cries  
I burst on Memnon's eyes.  
The force of me made no quiver  
In that earth-ancient gaze;  
I felt my raging shiver  
And shrink to desert-haze,  
And heard in the dawning gold  
The stillness of music old.

Leslie Holdsworth Allen