

Wall Face



Antiquarian Image Card #7: Robin George Collingwood by Walter Stoneman

Bromide print, October 1934, NPG x166674

Linked to Tullie House Museum (Cumbria)

Robin George Collingwood – 1889 to 1943

Attending his first Roman excavation at 3 weeks old, he went on to excavate Roman sites and study Roman objects from across Cumbria. He became the Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy at the University of Oxford and published books on the philosophy of history and of art, being described as "the best known neglected thinker of our time".

Key achievements

- Collingwood is most famous for his book *The Idea of History*, a major inspiration for philosophy of history in the English-speaking world.
- In *The Principles of Art* he held that works of art are essentially expressions of emotion, a necessary function of the human mind, and that art is a collaborative activity.

Links to Hadrian's Wall

- He catalogued and published Roman finds from the forts at Stanwix and Birdoswald, a forged inscription near Lanercost, and tracked down altars all around the county.
- He went on to be a champion of Roman archaeology. He published a standard work on the subject and was one of the original editors of *Roman Inscriptions in Britain*.
- He was one of the creators of the numerical indexing of the features of Hadrian's Wall.
- He published reports in the *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, mostly covering the Roman period.

Character insights

- Collingwood is buried in Coniston churchyard next to his parents and the art critic and philanthropist John Ruskin. This reflects both his father's position as Ruskin's secretary and his own fame and connections with the Lake District.
- He had lived at Coniston as a child and sailed with Arthur Ransome, author of *Swallows and Amazons*. He remained a life-long friend of the author, and the crew of The Swallow were based on his sister's children.

visithadrianswall.co.uk/learning



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

**National
Portrait
Gallery**





Robin George Collingwood by Walter Stoneman ©National Portrait Gallery, London



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

**National
Portrait
Gallery**

