

FINDINGS ON EBENEZER COBB MORLEY (1831-1924)



Ebenezer Cobb Morley was born in Hull in 1831 to Ebenezer Morley (1802-1862) – a minister – and Hannah Maria (1800-1880). He was the oldest child of 4, and the family relocated to the London area in the 1850s. Ebenezer Cobb Morley was not educated at a public school but he practiced as a solicitor, having chambers at 3 King's Bench Walk, Temple, London.

Ebenezer Cobb Morley was integral to the meetings held in 1863 that led to the foundation of the FA, representing the Barnes club, and he drafted the first laws of the FA at his home in Barnes. He was elected as the first Honorary Secretary from 1863-1866 and became the second president of the FA from 1867-1874.

Alongside his footballing career, Ebenezer Cobb Morley was the founder and secretary of Barnes and Mortlake Regatta and was an oarsman in London Rowing Club's eight for the Grand Challenge Cup, Henley, in 1864. He also built a gym for footballers and rowers in Barnes.

In later life, Ebenezer Cobb Morley represented Barnes on Surrey County Council from 1903-1919, and was a Justice of the Peace and Conservator of Barnes Common.

Ebenezer Cobb Morley died aged 93 on 20 November 1924 in Richmond, Surrey.

What others said...

“As a matter of fact, the Barnes Club has never had bare justice done to it for the splendid work it did for the Football Association in its early days. The earliest code of rules was formulated by Mr. E.C. Morley, the first honorary secretary, a gentleman learned in the law, who subsequently secured well-deserved promotion to the presidency of the Football Association, and is still – the gods be praised! – going strong, a fitting illustration of the benefits of the physical cult.”

Charles William Alcock (1906), ‘The Principal Amateur Clubs of the Past’ in The Book of Football: A Complete History and Record of the Association and Rugby Games