



Leatherhead & District Local History Society

Potted Histories No: 13

Downside - Downs Lane, Leatherhead

The house was built in 1860 for William Lee, but it was Alfred Tate who lived there from about 1888 who improved and emphasised its Italian aspect. He was from the family of sugar merchants, Tate & Lyle. Tate was a gardening enthusiast and his rose gardens were described at the time as one of the finest in the district. Alfred Tate committed suicide during a bout of depression in 1913, shortly after a serious throat operation.

In 1919 it was bought by Sir Edward Hulton the British newspaper publisher and thoroughbred racehorse owner. He founded the Daily Sketch in 1909. He was the British flat racing Champion Owner in 1916. That year his wins included the filly Fifinella capturing the Epsom Oaks and the Epsom Derby, the last horse to ever accomplish that feat. In 1923 Leatherhead's Roman Catholic Church in Garlands Road was built, thanks to the generosity of Sir Edward. He died at Downside on the 23rd May 1925. The next day his body was brought to the gates of "his church", for a short service of blessing on its way to London. His son, also named Edward, was raised at Downside. He founded the Hulton Press in 1937. The Hulton Press went on to publish Leader Magazine, Eagle and Girl for children, Lilliput and the Picture Post. Hulton discontinued the Picture Post in 1957, and sold the Hulton Press to Odhams two years later.

In 1934 the house was sold to Major. E. Howard.

For information regarding Membership, Lectures and Museum opening hours contact:
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