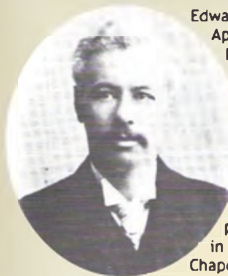


# Leatherhead & District Local History Society

Potted Histories No 60

## Edward Wilkins Waite RBA



Edward Wilkins Waite was born in Leatherhead on the 14th April 1854. He was the son of a Congregational minister, the Revd Edward Waite MA, and Cleopha Julia Waite. He was born into an artistic tradition; his grandfather, William Watkin Waite, was a miniaturist, and his father an amateur watercolour painter. He was also an amateur musician as a violinist and conductor. He conducted the Abinger Choir when it won the full chorus prize at the Leith Hill Festival in 1905 and is recorded in later years as conducting an orchestra at Woolhampton. The 1861 census for Leatherhead shows him living with his parents, and three brothers, Charles, Herbert and William in Bridge Street. His father was Leatherheads Independent Chapel (Congregational) Minister at the time. He was educated at the Mansion House Grammar School in Church Street, Leatherhead.

In 1874 he went to Canada; sailing from Liverpool to Quebec aboard the steamship Circassian in July. He worked as a lumberjack near Palermo in Ontario during his stay in Canada, which appears to have lasted for about two years; a sketch book from his journey survives. He seems to have taken up painting seriously on his return. In 1878 he exhibited two pictures at the Royal Academy in London; again two in 1880 and, thereafter, with only eight breaks, in every year until 1919; a total of forty six works altogether. The 1881 census for Leatherhead shows him living at Long Cottage, Church Street, although the family home was at Blackheath, where in 1875 his father had become headmaster of the School for the Sons of Missionaries, he visited Cornwall in the early 1880s and spent some three years sketching and painting there. On his return he spent much of his time in Brockham, near Dorking.

On the 22 January 1891 he married Barbara Isabella Tait, daughter of Sir Peter Tait. They spent the summer of that year at Street's Farm Peaslake before moving, in October, to The Cottage, Abinger Hammer. He became a member of the Royal Society of British Artists in 1893. In the summer of 1905 he became ill, the nature of his illness is not now known. He left Abinger Hammer in July 1906, later moving to Guildford. In 1910 he moved to the Woolhampton, Berkshire, followed by moves to Haslemere and finally to Fittleworth where he died on 19 February 1924

*Goff Powell -With acknowledgment to Various Websites*

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