



## Portrait of Edward Martyn

### Date

c. 1899

### Primary Maker

Sarah Henrietta Purser

### Medium

Oil on canvas

### Dimensions

76 x 62 cm

### Description

Edward Martyn (1859-1923) came from a Catholic Unionist family background and lived at Tullyra Castle, County Galway. He attended Belvedere College in Dublin. With Yeats and Lady Gregory, he founded the Irish

Literary Theatre and wrote his play *The Heather Field* for it. He was one of the founders of *An Túr Gloine*, Sarah Purser's stained glass studio. He founded the Palestrina choir in 1903 and his generous philanthropy was also demonstrated by his bringing contemporary artists to work on the new Cathedral, St. Brendan's, in Loughrea, in the early years of the 20th century. Through his cousin, George Moore (1852-1933), Martyn was introduced to modern art and purchased work by Degas, Manet and Corot. Having read more about Irish history and having seen the struggles over the land question, Martyn became an Irish Nationalist. From 1905-1908 he was president of the organisation that became known as Sinn Féin. He was a close friend of Arthur Griffith and was also friendly with Thomas MacDonagh and Patrick Pearse.