



Study for Portrait Drawing of Sir Horace Plunkett

Primary Maker

William Rothenstein

Medium

Crayon on paper

Dimensions

24.2 x 16.5 cm

Description

Sir Horace Plunkett (1854-1932) was a promoter of agricultural cooperation known more commonly as the Co-operative Movement. Born in Co. Meath, the son of a landowner Plunkett studied at Eton and Oxford, before moving to North America to work on ranches. He returned to Ireland and in 1889 he began a campaign advising farmers to form themselves into co-operatives. He

proposed that farmers should process and sell their produce together and jointly buy their supplies in bulk. In this way farmers could cut out the middle man allowing for greater profit. However, introducing these ideas was not easy and Plunkett met with much resistance. As a landlord, Plunkett was distrusted by some people, and as a Protestant he was distrusted by the Catholic Church. However these fears were overcome, and in 1894 the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society Ltd., later renamed the Irish Co-operative Organisation Society Limited (ICOS), was formed by Plunkett and other like-minded people including George Russell.