

PLACES OF INTEREST

The Home of Lord Tennyson



Lord Tennyson

Among the local places of interest in this part of England is one which has a double attraction — Blackdown, famed throughout the country for its beautiful view, but more properly so from the fact that it was there that Lord Alfred Tennyson, the greatest of Victorian poets, spent the last days of his life.

It was here that he gave to the world some of his best work and Haslemere points with pride to the long and gently rising road which leads to Tennyson's Lane and thence to Aldworth, the stately mansion that gave shelter to the greatest genius of English literature.

Leaving Haslemere by East Street, a finger post is reached in about half a mile, directing to Blackdown. Here care should be taken to avoid the road leading to Lythe Hill. If, instead, we turn sharply to the right on leaving the main road, a short, stiff climb will speedily bring us to the gate open-

ing into Tennyson's Lane. This delightful lane, which leads us by a very gentle ascent to the moorland, is overarched almost all the way with trees, until it opens out on Blackdown.

Making our way to the crest of the hill, where gorse, heath, fern and whortleberry scramble for predominance, a magnificent view is obtained over the Wealds of Surrey and Sussex, and the whole country between the North and South Downs lies stretched before the vision. Sometimes a sharp eye, even without the aid of a glass, can catch a glimpse of the Channel through a dip in the Downs. Gazing northward, Guildford Castle can be discerned. Eastward are the Hambledon Hills and the village of Chiddingfold, while further to the right are Hascombe Hill, with the remains of its windmill and Leith Hill, with its tower.

It was in June, 1867, that Tennyson became the owner of Aldworth and took up his residence there to avoid the prying eyes of the "lion hunters." Stories of his retiring nature are legion throughout the district and, if these stories be given credence, it is evident that few people were welcomed at Aldworth. The poet laureate was very seldom seen in public. About his only regular appearance was at the annual flower show at Lythe Hill, an event which he never missed when it was possible for him to attend. Except for these visits the village of Haslemere saw little of him, though his memory is held in reverence here as it is in

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Picture Post Cards of Tennyson's House, Tennyson's Hall, Tennyson's Memorial Window in Paris Church, Blackdown; hand colored & sepia.