

his horses The Rejected IV won the National Hunt Chase at Cheltenham in 1912 (regarded as Cheltenham's premier steeplechase until the Gold Cup was founded in 1924) and Irish Mail finished second in the wartime substitute Grand National, run at Garwick, in 1916. In 1914 he had been elected a member of the National Hunt Committee. His colours were black and blue vertical stripes with black cap. During the first world war he was attached to the Imperial Yeomanry and, as a Remount Officer, sought horses for the army over the wide area from Holyhead to Wolverhampton from his base at Shrewsbury. He attained the rank of major and came to be known, locally, as Major Platt for the rest of his life.

When Eric Platt came into the Gorddingog Estate he continued to have it run along the lines his father had instituted. At Madryn Farm, he continued the keen interest in the herd of Welsh Black cattle and the flock of native Welsh sheep. Specimen animals, from both, won innumerable prizes at shows, all over England and Wales, on the strength of which a satisfactory export trade, in sheep especially, was developed to those countries where the breeds had been found to thrive. Of course, there had to be natural evolutionary changes which, in fact, had even begun in his father's day when early models of Daimler motor cars were introduced as an alternative to the horses and carriages. Soon, Rolls Royce motor cars came to replace the horses and carriages completely and lesser cars – some with dickey seats for the servants – and other motor vehicles superseded traps and floats. Tractors were introduced at Madryn to supplant some of the heavy draught horses, although two teams, at least, of these were always retained. A motor mower was substituted, for the (four legged!) mule drawn mowing machine, for cutting the large expanse of lawn in the Grounds of the House. When, in 1937, the Llanfairfechan Council ran a power line to its western boundary, Eric Platt had electricity installed in all those properties on the Llanfairfechan part of the estate which were in reach of the line. An extension of the line was run to the House, itself – even though it was across the boundary in Abergwyngregyn – to enable modern vacuum cleaners and other electrical appliances to be used, although the lighting continued to be run off the supply from the DC generator which had been installed in Henry Platt's day.

Certain original additions were made at Gorddingog arising from Eric Platt's personal interests. His equine leaning coupled with the possession of the hill lands allowed him to become a breeder and active supporter of the Welsh Mountain Pony and some of the ponies, too, were shipped overseas with satisfactory returns. At Madryn Farm he built a miniature racing stable to which his racehorses were brought in the summer months (the National Hunt closed season). The horses were

accompanied by an acting head lad and other lads from his trainers' stables who, together with some local men recruited for the season, exercised the horses in certain of the large fields and on the sands of the estate's foreshore. The nearest approach to a park at Gorddingog was the large field, 'Cae Front' which stretched between the Main and Pony drives. In this field, which was secured to prevent them jumping out, the horses were put to graze, when exercise and grooming were over for the day, so that Eric Platt, and many local people and holiday makers as well, could regard them at leisure. Fishing was high in the order of Eric Platt's other leisure activities and for a part of most summers, between the wars, he would repair to Norway to fish the salmon. Shoots were much enjoyed at Gorddingog since these were always conducted with the greatest of care, mindful ever of the tragedy which had befallen James Platt, Eric Platt's great uncle, on Saddleworth moor.

In addition to the revenue earning elements of the estate: home farm, the tenanted farms (the farm in Anglesey had been changed to this status) and poultry farm, Eric Platt held wide business interests. He had followed his father as a partner, in the Bangor based, Williams & Company Old Bank, and was one of the partners when that bank amalgamated with Lloyds Bank. He was a director of two newspaper companies – the North Wales Chronicle Company Limited and The Welsh Coast Pioneer Limited. Other interests included the Liverpool & North Wales Steamship Company which, in the summer season, operated daily cruises from Liverpool to Llandudno and Menai Bridge and round trips from Llandudno to the Isle of Man. Above all, he had retained a very important shareholding in Platt Brothers & Company. He was, also, a member of the Hartford Trust, a fund, the idea of Samuel Radcliffe Platt, to enable managerial employees of Platt Brothers to gain shares in the Company. These two hereditary interests took him annually to Oldham to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Company and the Meeting of the Trust.

After he had taken up residence at Gorddingog, Eric Platt was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Caernarfonshire, an office he was to hold for the rest of his life and during which time he was to graduate to be the senior magistrate on the Bangor Bench. He was made Deputy Lieutenant of Caernarfonshire and in the years of the second world war, when the Lord Lieutenant (Brigadier Wynne Finch) was absent from the County on active service, he discharged the duties of Lord Lieutenant. He maintained the family connection with Christ Church, Llanfairfechan and was, for many years, the Rector's Warden. He or Florence Platt were patrons and supporters of many organisations, locally and in the County, and the grounds and the ballroom at Gorddingog were frequently loaned as the venue for events to raise funds for charities.