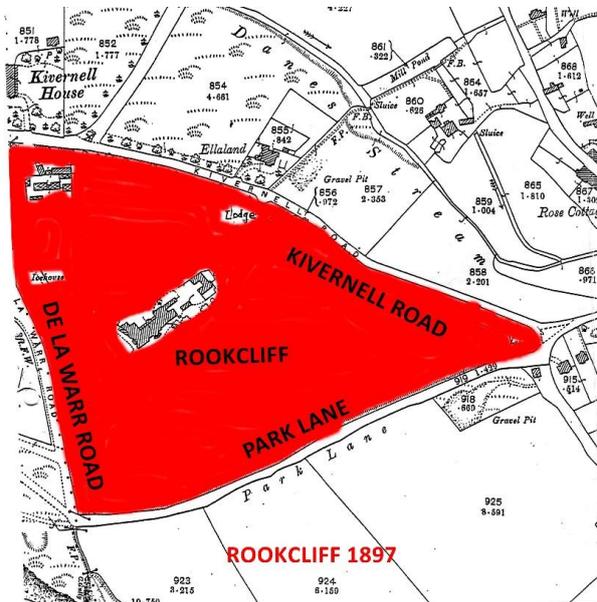


ROOKCLIFF

All that can be seen today as a reminder of the area that was the Rookcliff estate is a block of flats in Park Lane called Rookcliff and a road named Rookcliff Way. Originally Rookcliff was an estate containing a house that was built in 61 acres around 1725 and which existed until the 1960s.



The original house was built by Colonel Edward Rooke in about 1725 and it continued to be owned by the Rooke family until 1799.

An advert in 1790 describes Rookcliff as 'a commodious house, with stabling for 12 horses, farmhouse, ice house, garden and about 61 acres of arable and meadow land commanding a view of the sea and the Isle of Wight'.

There were several different owners until 1836 when Sir James Rivett Carnac, chairman of the East India Company, acquired it. Following his death at Rookcliff his son, John, inherited the estate and in 1860 he tried to sell it at auction but it only reached a bid of £6,280 and was withdrawn.

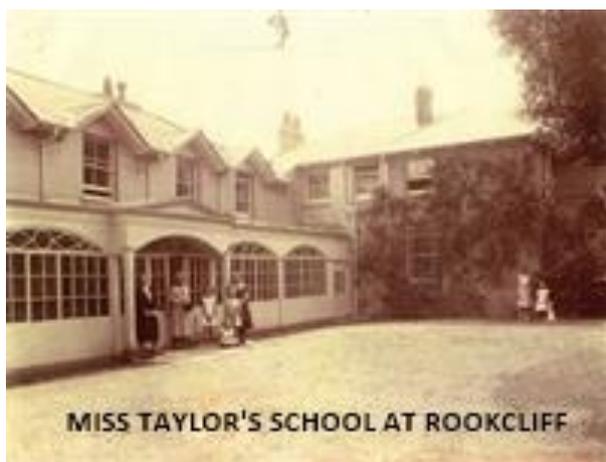
It was eventually sold in 1863 to Captain Smith Barry who came from southern Ireland and he had left to escape the troubles. He didn't stay long at Rookcliff because his tenants in Ireland are supposed to have said that if he didn't return to live on his estates they would come over and shoot him!

Rookcliff was bought in 1866 by Henry Kennard and following his death his niece, Elizabeth Robinson and her husband, Reverend Robinson bought it. Reverend Robinson died in 1897 and Elizabeth lived there until her death in 1930.

Her son Captain Robinson wanted to sell the estate and in 1932 plans were made to build 35 houses along Park Lane, Kivernell Road and De La Warr Road. They were to be detached houses and the price of the building plots ranged from £210 to £950.

The farmhouse and some land in the north-west corner of the Rookcliff Estate was sold in 1933 to Mr. Henry Cox, a retired detective inspector, who converted the land into a market garden. In 1935 he sold for £1450 to the Mogg family, who were fruiterers and greengrocers and they continued to run the business until 1973.

In 1965 the original farm building was divided into two, 41 and 43 Kivernell Road which were owned by the Mogg family.



The main house and three acres of land was purchased, in 1932, by Miss Margaret Taylor for £1,600 to become a girls' preparatory boarding and day school which continued until 1939.

In 1941 the house was used for evacuees and from 1942 until 1945 it was accommodation for American officers. Following the war Miss

Taylor converted the house into flats which were let for £2 per week.

In 1960 her nephew, Michael Buxton, managed the house on her behalf and permission was sought to demolish it and build a block of 22 flats and eventually approval was given for 12 flats.

Following the initial development of the estate in the 1930's there were 19 houses and 2 hotels along Park Lane between West Road and Kivernell Road and by the 1970's most of the houses had been replaced by apartments.

This summary of the Rookcliff Estate is mainly based on an article by Clare Church.