

## HAREWOOD HOUSE and DAMEROSEHAY



Harewood House - 1935

Just behind the Keyhaven War Memorial is Harewood Green which once was Harewood House, and also well known in fiction as Damerosehay.

In 1826 Harewood was advertised for sale as:

*'A vacant freehold gentleman's cottage and Land at Keyhaven, 3 miles westward of Lymington. The much admired cottage Residence of the late William Greer, Esq. at Keyhaven, with well-arranged gardens, and five acres of very excellent Pasture Land adjoining; commanding most delightful and extensive marine views, and situated opposite to a branch of the Solent, which affords the best anchorage for a gentleman's yacht.'*

Later it became the home of the Hon. Mildred Mary Coleridge the daughter of Sir John Coleridge, Lord Chief Justice, and great grand-niece of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Her private life caused a major legal issue when Mildred married Charles Adams a lawyer, publisher and anti-vivisectionist and was secretary of the anti-vivisection society. Mildred Coleridge was also a member of this society, and following the death of Charles' wife in 1880, she left home to live with him which led to major problems within her family.

Harewood House had been vacant for some years and, following the marriage of Mildred and Charles in 1885, they purchased it in 1896.

Mildred stayed in Harewood House until her death in 1929 and during her time in Keyhaven she was an active member of the community by donating to the Cottage

Hospital in Milford and also playing a major role in the erection of the Keyhaven War Memorial.

Following the death of her husband in 1903 Mildred stayed in the house; when she died in 1929 she left everything to Eva Adams, the wife of Charles's nephew who had died in 1920.

Following Mildred's death Eva Adams ran the house as a Private Hotel and the author Elizabeth Goudge stayed there on at least two occasions.

Elizabeth's father was professor of Divinity at Oxford. As her mother was unwell they looked for somewhere near the sea for her to rest. The most convenient train station from Oxford was New Milton, where they rented a bungalow at Barton which they eventually bought for £500.

It was when Elizabeth stayed in Barton that she started to write seriously. She later said that:

*"I owe more than I can say to Barton. Here I really discovered the Keyhaven saltmarshes that had caught hold of me in my schooldays, and it was from Barton that I first went to stay with Mrs. Adams at the house I have called Damerosehay."*

At some point after her first stay at Keyhaven, Elizabeth published the first of her trilogy of books known as the Eliots of Damerosehay: *The Bird in the Tree* 1940, *The Herb of Grace* 1948 and *The Heart of the Family* 1953.

She said, "One of the things about which I am most thankful is that someone or something prompted me to write three books about an imaginary family living at Damerosehay, and that those three seem to be my readers favourites."

Following the death of her mother in May 1951, Elizabeth stayed at Harewood House for the last time when she found it was beginning to look shabby and the garden overgrown. Soon after this Mrs. Adams sold Harewood House and it was run for a while as an ordinary hotel. This was unsuccessful and it was left empty and dilapidated, eventually being bulldozed with the current houses being built in the 1960's.

*For further information visit the MOSHRS website which is a core part of its Bringing History Home project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Milford-on-Sea Parish Council.*

website [www.milfordhistory.org.uk](http://www.milfordhistory.org.uk)

