

Rowhills Estate, Weybourne

The 1901 census showed that upon completing the Heath End district, the enumerator's next task was to visit Weybourne prior to Badshot Lea, Guildford Road and the Runfold Post Office. At the Weybourne crossroad, in one direction towards Farnham was Weybourne House belonging to the Knight family, who were large landowners and farmers.

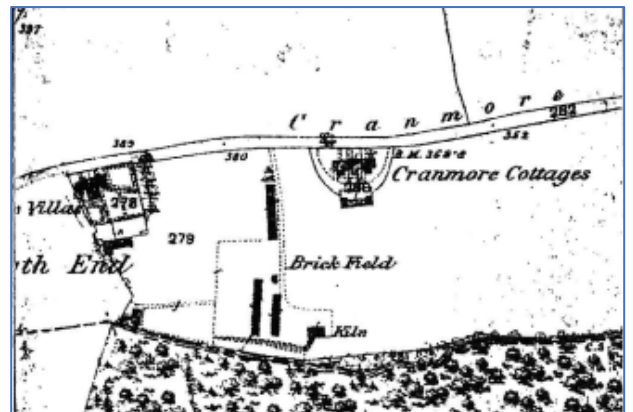
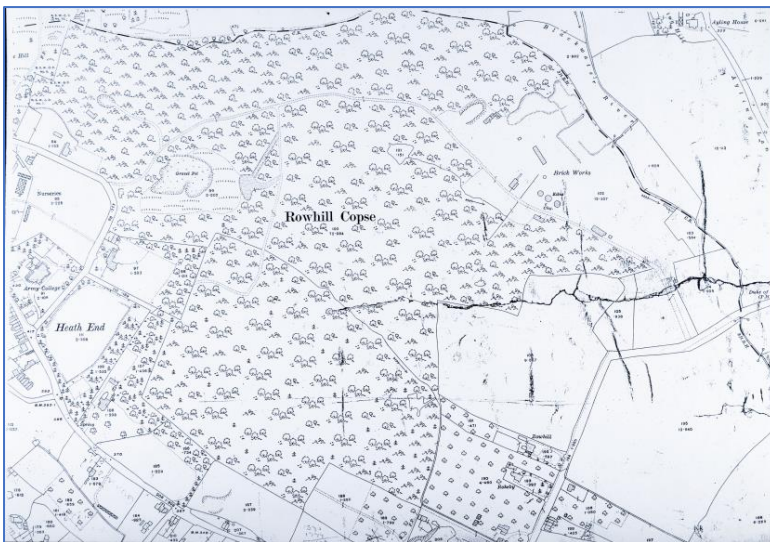
An 1888 sale of Rowhill Copse showed the title of some land as linked to a will dated 3rd March 1804 of Charles Knight, then of Great Surrey Street, Parish of Christ Church, in the County of Surrey. Another portion of the land for sale linked to Hannah Chowdery and the late James Knight (1804-1868). The remaining land for sale linked to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and John Knight.



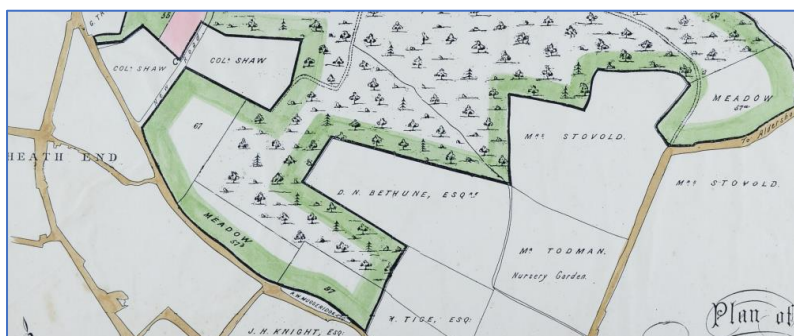
(When John Rocque was drawing his map of Weybourne, back in 1762, there were not many houses there for him to record. The one house surviving to this day is Weybourne House, built in 1724.)

In the opposite direction towards Aldershot close to the Running Stream public house, were properties in Rowhill Copse called Rowhills Estate.

Henry Wells had firstly rented, then in 1903 bought, over 70 acres of Rowhill Copse for the extraction of clay for his brick-building business. This copse extended from the Heath End/Aldershot border to Weybourne. In the Weybourne area lay a development of two grand houses called Rokeby and Rowhills, plus some small cottages within orchards.



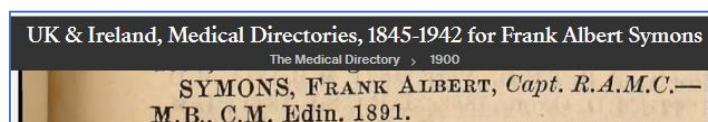
The Eggar's 1888 auction for 99 acres of Rowhills Estate showed the Weybourne side as land belonging to Mrs Stovold and Mr Todman. The properties called Rokeby and Rowhills were built in the land marked as Mr Todman, Nursery Garden.



In the 1901 census, male residents in Weybourne were typically brick workers, gardeners and agricultural workers therefore senior Army Officers stood out somewhat.

Commencing with the house named Rokeby, the 1901 residents were shown as:

Frank A Symons	Head	Mar	31		Captain Royal Army Medical Corps	Halifax, Nova Scotia
Dorothy Symons	Wife	Mar		22		Wiltshire
Edith E Bown	Servant	Sing		18	Housemaid - domestic	Wiltshire
Jane T Selmes	Servant	Sing		31	Cook - domestic	Sussex



Frank Albert Symons (1869-1917 RAMC, CMG, DSO) and his wife Dorothy Lewis Symons née Bennett (1878-1943) had four children born respectively in Aldershot, Salisbury, London and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), indicating their military family life. Frank had been Surgeon Lieutenant in 1893, Surgeon Captain in 1896, Major in Bengal in 1904 before becoming Lieutenant-Colonel in 1916. Tragically, he was killed in action in Arras, France in 1917 and is buried at Saint-Nicolas, Departement du Pas-de-Calais, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France.

What became of Jane Tritton Selmes, the cook? Tracking servants is not always easy. Servants often had just one or two forenames, names that were commonly used in the community. Their employers sometimes had three or four forenames (Algernon, Cornelius, Georgiana ...) and even double-barrelled surnames. Jane had a 'useful' middle name.

By 1911 Jane Selmes was working as a cook in Pinner, Harrow for the family of a hardwood merchant Hugh Saunders and even though Jane was retired in 1939, she stayed with this family when they moved to Hastings. A good cook and a loyal servant.

The Symons were not the first occupants at Rokeby. An advertisement appeared in 1887, placed by Major Pigott who may have been Major C B Pigott of the 18th Hussars.:

For Sale,
A FULL-SIZED TANDEM CART, in good condition. Maker, Holland & Holland.
Set of Black Brass-mounted TANDEM HARNESS, in good condition. Maker, Peat.
BLACK IRISH MARE, 16 hds. 1 in., 5 years old, believed perfectly sound; any veterinary examination allowed; perfectly quiet in all harness and to ride, and with troops.
 Can be seen and tried on applying to Major Pigott, Rokeby, Weybourne, Aldershot.

Aldershot Military Gazette
 Saturday 09 July 1887

Another transient in Rokeby was Stewart Harborough Pollard (1858-1900) who rented the property in 1899. However, this is not easy to understand because he had retired from a career as an Army officer and he had no family in the area. Stewart died the following year and the probate from his will makes reference to the Hon. Gawthorne Gawthorne-Hardy, Earl of Cranbrook. An indication of who your friends are?

The next occupant of Rokeby following the Symons family was Kenneth Davidson McKenzie.

Surrey, England, Electoral Registers, 1832-1962 for Kenneth McKenzie			
Guildford > 1905			
McKenzie, Kenneth Davidson	Rokeby, Weybourne	Dwelling house	Rokeby

Kenneth was born in 1873 in Bengal, India with his Australian father working either as owner or manager, at Hattigor Tea Estate, Mangaldai, Assam. Kenneth and his siblings were sent to England to stay with their uncle, the Vicar of Littleover, Cheshire, for their education. By the turn of the century, Kenneth's father had died and his younger brother Rupert, a Second Lieutenant had been killed in the Second Boer War at Edenburg, South Africa. Kenneth had a Kensington wedding in 1903, joined the Royal Army Service Corps and took up residence at Rokeby from 1905-1908 before serving in France and Egypt. He went on to become a Lieutenant Colonel. The property of Rokeby would have been in keeping with his background.

Next to Rokeby on Rowhills Estate was a grand property called Rowhills. This house also had a Coach House with a room over, which was unoccupied in the 1901 census. (We'll forget mention of the words Slaughter House on the census.) The occupants of Rowhills were shown to be:

Maurice Knox	Head	Mar	55	Lieut-Col Surgeon, Army Medical Staff	Ireland
Edith Mary Knox	Wife	Mar	43		India
Sarah Prior	Servant	Widow	54	Cook - domestic	Berkshire
Charlotte Simms	Servant	Sing	20	Housemaid - domestic	Aldershot

Maurice Knox had married Edith Mary Cave (1857-1951) in 1880 at Sabathu, Bengal, India and the following announcement was made in a Belfast newspaper:

KNOX—CAVE—September 27, at Sabathu, India. Maurice Knox, Surgeon-Major I.L.M.'s 70th Regt., son of the late Rev. George Knox, Rector of Donamon, County Galway, and nephew of J. A. Holmes, Esq., J.P., D.L., to Edith, second daughter of Major-General G. N. Cave, late Bengal Army.

Maurice Knox held qualifications LRCPI, LRCSI (Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ireland) and had been Assistant Surgeon in 1868, Surgeon in 1873, Surgeon Major in 1880, Brigade Surgeon in 1894 and Colonel in 1902. He is likely to have undertaken various trips back to his home country of Ireland as the name Colonel M Knox was constantly reported in Irish newspapers. Maurice Knox and his wife moved to Littlehampton in Sussex for their retirement and they both died there.

Going back ten years to the 1891 census for Weybourne, one resident near the public house, the Running Stream differed from his neighbouring agricultural workers. This was Arthur Heywood Brooksbank, a Captain in the 19th Hussars. Since Arthur had a coachman/groom, the property he resided in was likely to be either Rokeby or Rowhills on Rowhills Estate.

(In 1891 these properties were just referred to as Stovolds Cottages, maybe linking to the Stovold family who owned a lot of farm land in the area.)

Arthur H Brooksbank	Head	Mar	34		Captain 19 th Hussars	Ireland
Dora Helen	Wife	Mar		29		Clapham
Rebecca Borden	Servant	Sing		52	Cook - domestic	Hackney
Ellen Bryan	Servant	Sing		28	Parlour maid	Guildford
William Pearson	Servant	Sing	29		Coachman, groom	Yorkshire

Arthur Brooksbank (1856-1917) had been born into a family, which in 1861 had six servants, including a footman and cook. He was sent to a school in Richmond, Yorkshire which had one master for pre-Oxford examinations and another master for pre-Cambridge examinations. In other words, he was used to a life of privilege. He had married Dora Baggallay, daughter of the Right Honourable Sir Richard Baggallay and she was equally used to a comfortable life.

Their coachman employed in Weybourne had been with the Brooksbank family for at least ten years, so was a loyal and trusted servant. In the 1881 Brooksbank household in Middleton-on-Wolds, Yorkshire, William Pearson, groom, had been one of eight servants.

In the 1901 census, in two cottages on Rowhills Estate, Weybourne was the Todman family, with both Daniel and Henry having their own account.

Daniel Todman	Head	Mar	78		Market Gardener	Greenwich
Lucy Todman	Wife	Mar		72		Foots Cray, Kent
Rosa Todman	Dau	Sing		37		Aldershot
Henry Todman	Head	Mar	50		Market Gardener	Suffolk
Mary T Todman	Wife	Mar		46		Berkshire
Nelson V Todman	Son		13			Weybourne
Roy T Todman	Son		12			Weybourne
Leslie N Todman	Son		8			Weybourne

Surrey, England, Electoral Registers, 1832-1962 for Daniel Todman

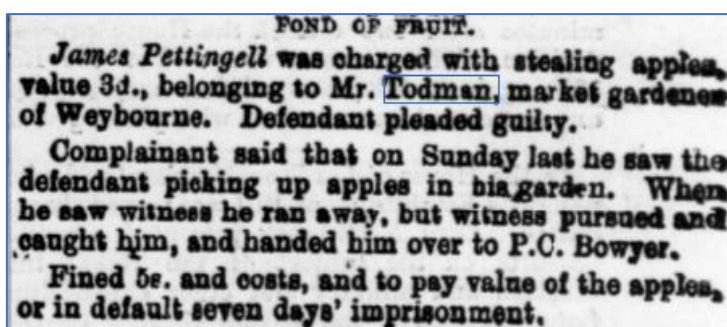
Guildford > 1893

Todman, Daniel	Weybourne, Farnham	Dwelling house	Weybourne
Todman, Henry	Weybourne, Farnham	Dwelling house	Wellington

Early voting information, such as the above in 1893 did not provide much detail but Daniel Todman and his son Henry continued to have voting rights throughout their adult life.

Daniel Todman (1823-1904) presented an example of working hard which then led to success. He became a Master Market Gardener, initially running just a stall in the Old Market in Aldershot then using land on Rowhills Estate as a market garden. He regularly advertised in the Aldershot Military Gazette and one advertisement in 1885 was for "1000 bushels of plums, both for table and preserving". Enough plums to feed an army? Maybe he did sell to the Army as well as to local people.

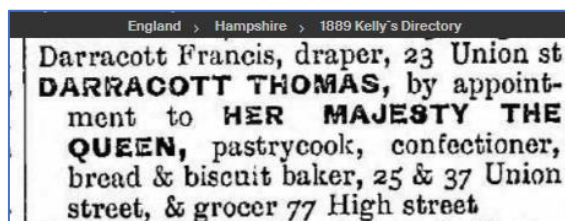
Just a word of warning for anyone thinking of 'scrumping' some dropped apples in an orchard. Steal threepence worth of apples and a fine of five shillings plus costs plus threepence could follow. *Aldershot Military Gazette: Saturday 10 August 1878*



FOND OF FRUIT.
James Pettingell was charged with stealing apples, value 3d., belonging to Mr. Todman, market gardener of Weybourne. Defendant pleaded guilty.
Complainant said that on Sunday last he saw the defendant picking up apples in his garden. When he saw witness he ran away, but witness pursued and caught him, and handed him over to P.C. Bowyer.
Fined 5s. and costs, and to pay value of the apples, or in default seven days' imprisonment.

Daniel's son Henry Joseph Todman (1852-1938) continued to keep the Todman market garden in Weybourne after his father's death.

The last family examined here are the Darracotts who originated in Cornwall, coming to Aldershot like so many others. Two brothers ran different types of business. One was Francis Darracott running drapers' shops Darracott & Sons in Union Street, Aldershot and Farnborough. The other was Thomas Darracott, a master baker and confectioner making biscuits and confectionery. Since his delicacies made their way to the Royal household, who stayed regularly at the Royal Pavilion in Aldershot, Thomas' company was granted a Royal warrant.



England > Hampshire > 1889 Kelly's Directory
Darracott Francis, draper, 23 Union st
DARRACOTT THOMAS, by appointment to **HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN**, pastrycook, confectioner, bread & biscuit baker, 25 & 37 Union street, & grocer 77 High street

Francis Darracott owned the large house in Weybourne called Rowhills between 1906 and 1909. This gave him voting rights in Surrey due to his owning a freehold house.



Surrey, England, Electoral Registers, 1832-1962 for Francis Darracott
Guildford > 1906
30 Darracott, Francis | Rowhills, Weybourne, Farnham | Freehold house | Rowhills

Thomas Darracott lived nearby in Holmeleigh, Cargate Avenue, Aldershot which consisted of some very large properties, even to this day. Thomas supplied flour and bakery materials to barracks in North Camp, Fleet, Camberley and Aldershot as well as owning shops.

In May 1918, Francis Darracott's son Francis Richard Darracott, then aged 38 found himself again before the Exemption Tribunal in Aldershot. Before the expiration of an exemption for serving the country at war, the candidate had to re-appeal before a Tribunal. If the candidate held an occupation that was deemed to be indispensable to the nation, then an exemption for 6 months was granted. Francis Richard Darracott was a draper. Indispensable?

Mr. E. Kempson supported the appeal of Francis R. Darracott, 38, Grade III, draper, and said this case had been before the Tribunal on several occasions, when he put the reasons for exemption before the members, and on each occasion exemption was granted.

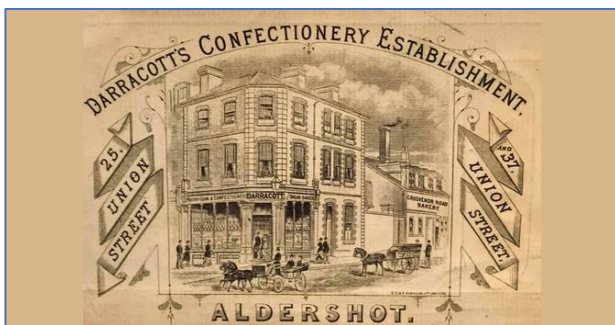
The Chairman: The circumstances to-day are different. You have to bring before us the national importance of this business before you can obtain any concessions of time.

Mr. Kempson: He is in Grade III and at the present time the authorities are not calling up Grade III men unless they have some special knowledge.

The Tribunal granted six months' exemption.

We may also note that Francis Richard's uncle, the esteemed Thomas Darracott, a major military supplier and County Councillor, was on the Tribunal Board that day.

In 1900 at 7 West Street, Farnham a shop was available due to the insolvency of the butcher's business. This became a restaurant called Darracott & Dunstun's with branches in Aldershot and Basingstoke. The Darracott Confectionery Establishment on the corner of Union Street and Grosvenor Road held a Royal Warrant proudly displayed above the entrance.



Further Darracott tea-rooms were opened in Union Street as well as Camberley, Farnham, Farnborough and Fleet. The Darracott restaurants were certainly running into the 1950s.

So, what is the story behind these grand houses built in Rowhills Copse? We have looked previously at The Warren built in 1887 in Heath End and Rokeby and Rowhills in Weybourne. We shall read in future chapters about Woodlands, Weywood and The Copse House.

The Army did not build houses but needed large residences for their Senior Officers who were used to living in prosperous surroundings. There is a strong possibility that these six houses were built by the well-known building company Martin, Wells and Co, to be either rented out for senior Army Officers or for the Wells family themselves.

Let us now make our way back from Weybourne, through the copse, avoiding the gravel pit, to Rowhills, Heath End to see if there are any changes.