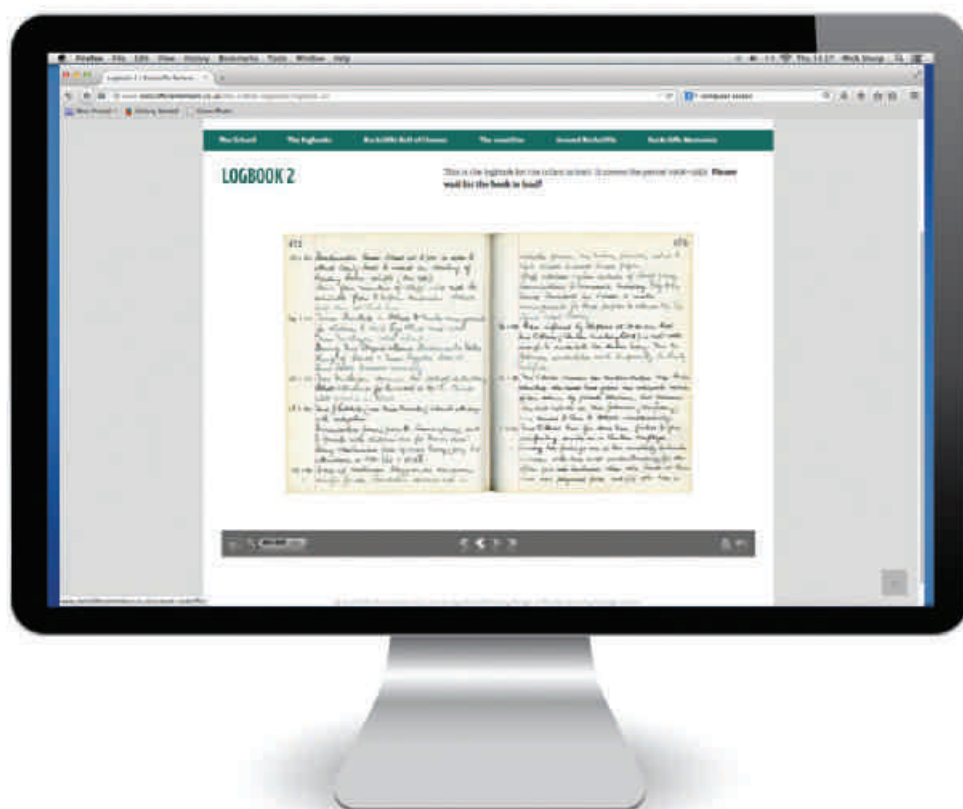


ROCKCLIFFE REMEMBERS

Issue Two



LOGBOOKS ONLINE!

We've scanned almost 1000 pages, and now the Rockcliffe First School logbooks can be viewed online. It even looks like the pages turn!

The initial aim of our HLF-funded project was to scan, digitally preserve, and publish our school logbooks on a website. We're very proud to tell you that this work has now been completed and you can now look at entries from our school history dating back to 1906, which is actually before the present school was built. Learn about the school opening, early teachers and pupils, illnesses and epidemics, visitors, school toilets, and the war years.

Go to www.rockclifferemembers.co.uk and click on the link that says 'The logbooks'. There are two to have a look at – the Infants schools (downstairs) and the Junior, or 'upper', school (upstairs).

www.rockclifferemembers.co.uk

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ROCKCLIFFE COLLEGES



Above: 'Yearsley' and 'Lyndhurst'. **Top right:** the College from Gordon Square. The 'glasshouses' are just visible on the left. (Photo: Mary Evans) **Bottom right:** Westminster Close, the site of the College in 2014. The old stone gateposts can still be seen.



Did you know that there used to be other educational establishments in the Rockcliffe area, as well as our school! The buildings which housed one of the colleges have completely disappeared, the other house is still there. Here's some information about Rockcliffe's colleges.

Two large semi detached Victorian villas on Delaval Road -, 'Yearsley' and 'Lyndhurst', were owned by the Spicer and Gregory families. The Spicer family were well-respected in Whitley Bay; Major William Spicer, a banker by profession, unveiled the St. Paul's Church WWI War Memorial in the town in 1923. Born in Yorkshire, Spicer lived most of his life in Delaval Road and died there in 1925, aged 81. There are two windows in St. Paul's Church dedicated to his memory.

In 1958, the two houses were converted and became part of North Tyneside Further Education College, known as the 'secretarial college'.

The land behind 'Yearsley' and 'Lyndhurst' ran all the way down to Rockcliffe Street and were the houses' gardens and 'glasshouses'. These were demolished in the 1990s, when the land was sold to a housing developer. 'Templegate' on Rockcliffe Street was the gardener's cottage. It now belongs to the gardener's son.

Below: Gordon College. **Right:** the building in 2014.



In the mid-1890s, Miss Eleanor Alice Rimmington moved her private school to Gordon Square. Gordon College had large, airy classrooms which were purpose-built to accommodate large numbers of children. The school's own literature stated

'The teachers are pleasant but very strict and teach a complete syllabus, ranging from Maths and English, to foreign languages, with the aid of overseas visiting mistresses.'

During WW2, the council requisitioned the school to house blitzed families. It was still occupied by homeless families in 1947. In 1979 it became Gordon House (Anchor) sheltered housing scheme.



SHIPWRECKS IN THE BAY



Brown's Bay, 2014. Photo by Jo Marr.

Brown's Bay has a small sandy beach and is popular with rockpoolers and dog-walkers. This area of coastline is also a magnet for divers, who explore the sunken ships near the Bay.

There are three shipwrecks off the coastline: the Zephyros, HMS Butetown, and the Astley. The most famous is the wreck of the Zephyros. Built at Connell's Yard, Glasgow, in 1911, it was originally called the Cherry Branch and operated from Wearside. Her name was later changed to Dunedin and finally Zephyros (the Greek God of the West Wind). Although she was owned by a British company, she was registered in Greece.



The wreck of the Zephyros, photographed in 1949. (www.britainfromabove.co.uk)

Sailor's Rest Home in North Shields. The Zephyros had broken her back on large flat rocks and the ship was in danger of breaking up. Ropes hanging down her side enabled the curious or looters to climb aboard at low tide. On Sunday 14 March, a young eighteen-year-old soldier, whilst climbing onto the ship for a look around, fell to his death in a flooded hold. Parts of the wreck can still be seen at low tide.

Two other accessible wrecks in the Bay are the Butetown (built in 1890, she ran aground on 4th December, 1917, having left Blyth for

On 26 February 1947, the Zephyros ran aground at Brown's Point, close to the Cullercoats Radio Station at Marconi Point. There were no fatalities; the 35 crew men were taken to the Radio Station for hot drinks and to dry out. The captain and five officers then went to the Bay Hotel, Cullercoats, and the remainder of the crew to the

Fredriksstad in Norway with a cargo of coal), and the Astley.

More information about the Butetown can be found at <http://ukdivesite.com/diveguides/diveguide.php?dgid=37>).



Diving at the wreck of the Butetown.



THE LAST POST
The sound of the centenary

rockcliffe
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

invite you to join our Last Post event at
The Triangle
Saturday 15 November 2014, 3-4pm.

We will be playing The Last Post to remember Henry Mills Ridley, formerly of 9 Windsor Terrace. Find out more about him and the impact the First World War had on our community.

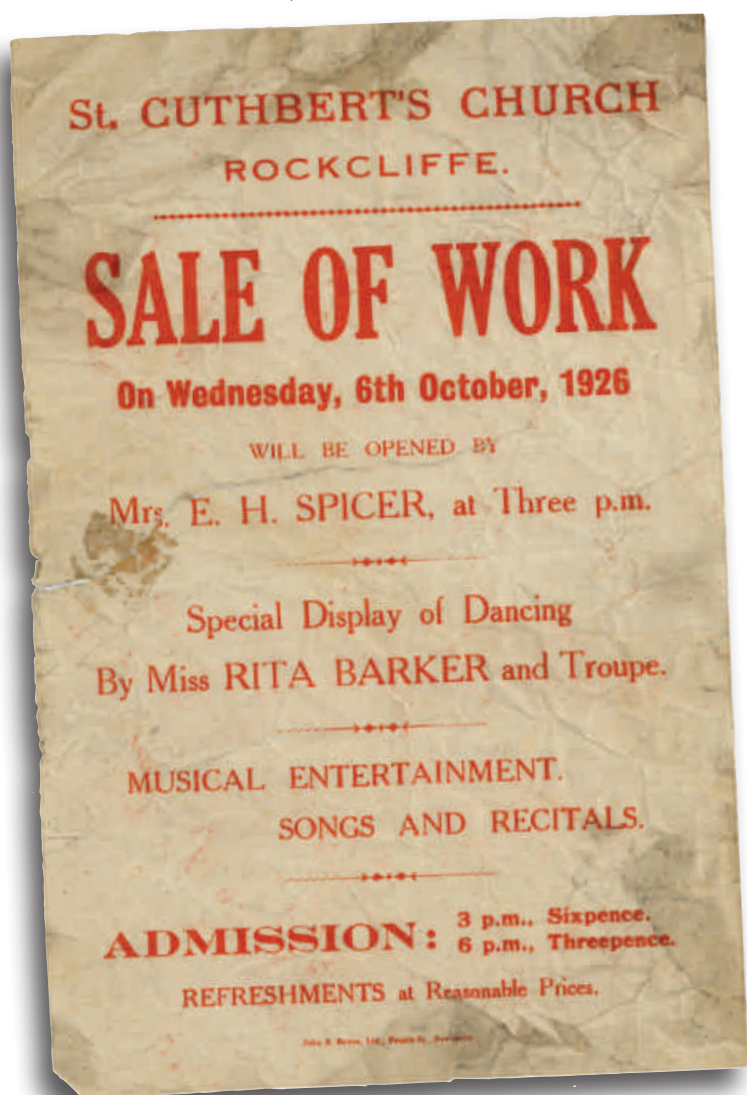
www.thelastpostproject.org.uk

@superactuk #thelastpost

FROM UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS!

At our World War 1 community event last summer, Mr Wilkinson, of Naters Street, asked if we'd be interested in seeing an item of historical interest he'd found under the floorboards of his flat. Dating from 1926, this flyer advertises a 'SALE OF WORK' in St. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH ROCKCLIFFE. The event was opened by Mrs E. H. Spicer, a member of the family who lived in Lyndhurst (see our article about Rockcliffe Colleges).

What is most interesting to us is that the event was held in St Cuthbert's Church, which was based in the hut now occupied by the First Seventh /Rainbows Nursery building (the 'Scout Hut'). The map opposite shows the location of the church in the 1910s, before Rockcliffe Street was built.



Designed in the shape of cross, the church was used as a mortuary during World War II.

We'd love to find out more about St Cuthbert's Church. If you, or anybody you know, has any recollections or photos about it – or Miss Rita Barker and her troupe! – please get in touch.



Above: detail from a 1910 Ordnance Survey map of the Rockcliffe area, showing St. Cuthbert's Mission Church. Rockcliffe Avenue is not yet built, Rockcliffe Street may still have been a track, and a post-World War I drill hall stood on the site of the old school canteen, where Guardian Court now is. Rockcliffe Park is not yet in existence!

Left: the flyer for 'SALE OF WORK' in St Cuthbert's Church, Rockcliffe, on 6 October 1926.



Did you know we have a Facebook page?

Apart from posting latest news items there, you can also post your memories and photos. Go to Facebook and search for 'Rockcliffe Remembers'.

You might also be interested in a page that's been set up by former Rockcliffe pupil Steve Wright, who used to live in what was Gordon College (see page 2). It's called **Rockcliffe First School** and is another great place to post your stories, reminiscences, and photos about the School.

Go to Facebook and type 'Rockcliffe First School' in the search window, or type this url into your browser:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/26415102886/>

The **ROCKCLIFFE REMEMBERS** website is always being updated with new stories, memories, and photographs about the School and area. If you've got anything you'd like to contribute to the site, please contact us through the website: www.rockclifferemembers.co.uk.