

Dore & Totley High School, Brook House, Grove Road

Front & back photo's of Brook House by Carolyn Howden 1966



Extract from Miss Dorothy A Trott's (School Principal) book

Road, we found 'Brook House', the ideal location, set in two and a half acres of lovely grounds, landscaped for the model railway which I had envied, so often, as a child.

In retrospect perhaps, I should have closed the school then and developed another career, but as there were ninety-five pupils in the course of their training, this venture had to succeed, so I decided to purchase, at one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds freehold.

The spacious house possessed several outbuildings, workshops and offices, which were easily adaptable as classrooms and the basements into cloakrooms; the railway tunnel was demolished and the lines removed, but the ornamental lake presented a real problem as a danger to small boys. Emptied during the day, it refilled each night and it needed the skill of Derwent Water Works' engineers to divert the underground springs into the river.

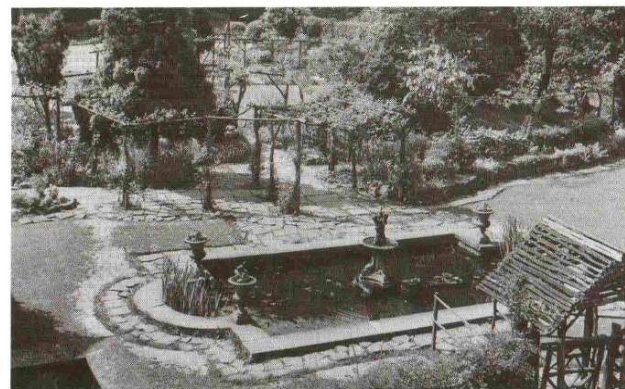


D.H.S. Brook House Grove Rd.

From the two windows of my bedroom at Brook House, I could see most of the grounds across to Woodleigh; it was a vantage point, useful at all times. Below me was the lily pond surrounded by grass and paving, approached by an archway of Alberic Barbier roses in a hedge of single yellow roses.

My rooms were situated in the original house, to which had been added the South and West wings, used for boarders' accommodation and classrooms.

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The lily pond at Brook House

As one walked down the garden past two small ponds, towards the station, a relic of the scenic railway for which the grounds were originally landscaped, there were more trellised arches of pink and red climbing roses surrounding the tennis court, formerly a lake.

The straight drive into the grounds of 'Woodleigh' was bordered with tall cypress trees to the lawns and tennis court beyond and behind both gardens, flowed the River Sheaf.

During the alterations at Brook House in 1933, the obsolete heating system had been replaced and the iron grating over the heating outlet on the floor of the hall had been re-constructed over a slab of thick glass.

In such a central position, it was an ideal punishment for miscreants, to stand on 'the grating' until I came along, whenever that might be, to deal with them. It became an important disciplinary asset, for the child had time to consider and repent of his misdemeanour and often it was sufficient punishment just to stand there alone, wait for an indefinite period and contemplate.

On one occasion, a parent who had just entered her child as a pupil was on the threshold, about to leave, when she suddenly remarked, 'Before I go, I have one question to ask you. Where is this torture device called 'the grating,' with which you chastise naughty children?'

'Madam,' I replied, 'you're standing on it now.'

She moved aside hastily and examined the floor at her feet. 'Is that all it is?' she laughed.

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Carolyn's old home on Grove Road - West Grove in 1966

