

St Mark's Church
Highcliffe
Dorset

A Pictorial History



BASED ON A GUIDE BOOK OF ST MARK'S
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PREFACE

The text of this guidebook is based on the third edition of a booklet first published in 1984 as a history and guidebook for St Mark's Church, Highcliffe. Richard Scott, who advised on the content of the first edition and collaborated in the production of the second, died before work on this new edition began, but much of the credit for it belongs to him all the same. He was the church's advising architect for many years, and it was he who designed the major extension of 1991.

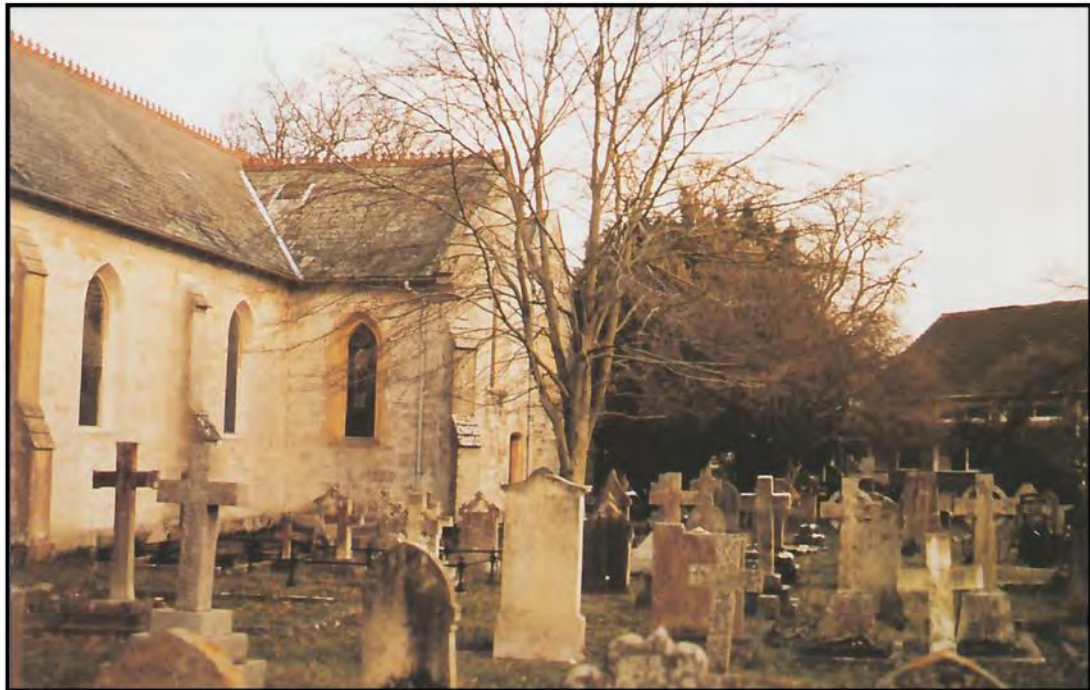
Important sources are the records of the parish and the diocese that are held at the Hampshire Record Office. Also useful are Louisa Waterford's *Recollections* and Violet Stuart Wortley's books of family history and reminiscence: *Highcliffe and the Stuarts*, *Life Without Theory*, *Magic in the Distance* and *Grow Old Along With Me*. For more about the Stuarts, there are Augustus Hare's *the Story of Two Noble Lives* and my own *Lord Stuart de Rothesay and The Stuarts of Highcliffe*.

I acknowledge gratefully the help and advice that I have received from the staff of the Hampshire Record Office, Lambeth Palace Library, the Red House Museum at Christchurch, and the Information Unit and Library of the Royal Institute of British Architects. My thanks go also to Michael Allen, Roy Bishop and Ian Stevenson. Finally, I much appreciate the interest shown in this project by The Friends of St Mark's Church and the help and support of their Chairman, David Cundy. The Friends exist to assist in the care of the church's property; the organisation welcomes support.

Robert Franklin
August 2001



The Church from the north west as it was between 1867 and 1993 from an original photograph © Michael J Cage



The Church from the north west as it was between 1867 and 1993 from an original photograph © Michael J Cage

A HISTORY

Highcliffe owes its name to John Stuart, Earl of Bute, once George III's favourite, who built a house here in or about 1770 and called it 'High Cliffe'. That house was demolished, but was replaced in 1843, by Bute's grandson, Lord Stuart de Rothesay, with the house now called 'Highcliffe Castle'.

Lord Stuart de Rothesay was a diplomat, who began his career as plain Charles Stuart. He made a name for himself in Spain and Portugal during the Napoleonic Wars, and he was twice Ambassador at Paris in the era that followed Waterloo. Between his two terms of office at Paris, acting for Britain as mediator, he negotiated the treaty by which Brazil became independent of Portugal; for this and his other services he was given a peerage. He married as his ambassadress a woman 'to the manner born', Lady Elizabeth Yorke. They had two gifted daughters, Charlotte and Louisa. Charlotte was one of Queen Victoria's ladies-in-waiting, and she married Charles Canning, later Viscount and Earl Canning, Governor-General and first Viceroy of India. Louisa married a dashing Irish peer, the Marquis of Waterford. Both Charlotte and Louisa were devout members of the Church.



Lord Stuart de Rothesay's memorial on the east wall of the Chancel

Lady Louisa Waterford had more to do with Highcliffe than other members of the family, since she lived here as a young woman and returned as a still relatively young widow. She had a privileged position in society and was an accomplished artist. She regarded herself as holding all her advantages and gifts 'in trust', to be used to the glory of God and also saw herself as having some responsibility for the spiritual welfare of her community. She influenced her father in his decision to provide Highcliffe with a church and was involved in the decorating and furnishing of it. She became patron of the living in due course, which meant that it was she who nominated the vicars of the parish. She had a second home at Ford, in Northumberland, but spent each summer at Highcliffe and was regularly to be seen in her pew at St Mark's. She died in 1891 and was buried at Ford.

THE CHURCH BUILDINGS

Lord Stuart de Rothesay is described on the memorial to him in the chancel as the 'founder' of the church: he was the prime mover; he gave the land and contributed generously to the cost of the building. According to an article in the parish magazine for February 1968, the foundation stone was laid on 14 April 1842, by Lady Stuart de Rothesay; but the writer does not give his source, and Lady Waterford says in her Recollections that she 'laid the first stone'. Unfortunately, the stone itself, that might have settled the matter, cannot be found, perhaps because it was buried under one of the extensions to the church.

The builder was John Bemister, a well-known Christchurch figure. He described himself as both the builder and the architect, and although he was not a qualified architect, he would have been capable of producing the plans for the simple building that the church was originally. But it seems to be the case that one of the most distinguished of Victorian architects, Benjamin Ferrey, had a hand in the building of St Mark's. Roy Bishop, a Christchurch architect, drew attention to the obituary of Ferrey that was published in *The Builder* on 4 September 1880, listing the buildings on which he worked and including St Mark's under the heading 'Church Restoration and Addition'.

Ferrey, also, was a Christchurch man, and though he moved to London he did not forget Hampshire, as it then was. The extent of his involvement at St Mark's is uncertain, but since it was apparently restoration or addition and there has been no restoration, we must look for an addition. It has been suggested that the transepts are additions, because there is evidence that their foundations were not laid at the same time as those of the main body of the church; and differences between the transepts and the main body of the church in the style of their windows may suggest a change of architect or builder. But the records show that the church has always had transepts.



The early north porch

It may be that Ferrey added the transepts to the plan while the church was being built. Another possibility is that he was responsible for the first enlargement of the church, in 1867, about which little is known. A previous vicar, Theo Barnett, who had a particular interest in local history, writing in the magazine for January 1963, stated that he believed it consisted of a westward extension of twenty or thirty feet and a gallery. A comparison of early pictures of the church shows that there was such an extension; it appears also to show that the original entrance to the church was in the north transept and that, when the extension was built, this entrance was closed and another was opened in the new part of the north wall of the nave.

More is known about the next major piece of work to be carried out at the church, in 1888, since there are records of the roof having been completely rebuilt; and the magazine for August 1963 considers that the walls were raised as part of the same scheme. From the inside, the roof has been described as a ...simple, king-post, tie-beam, truss structure, with purlins, rafters and diagonal boarding'. In order to place a continuous series of rafters from one end of the church to the other, it was necessary first to place a supporting arch across each transept; pseudo-four-centered timber arches were chosen, themselves supported on corbelled padstones.

An ambitious project was begun in 1932 and completed, in a modified form, in 1933. The chancel was extended by about fifteen feet, making room for choir benches; but, during the work, the glass in the east window was broken in pieces, a particularly sad accident since the window had been designed and painted by Lady Waterford herself. The organ chamber was built and the organ brought down from its previous home in the gallery. The choir had been 'making do' with an outside vestry and in this project the clergy vestry, part of the original building, was enlarged to accommodate it. Plans for a north aisle were abandoned for lack of funds, but a north porch was built over the main entrance. The architects were the Bournemouth firm of Reynolds and Tomlins.

The most extensive alterations to the church were made in 1990 and 1991 and they owed much to a partnership between the vicar, John Seaford, and the church's advising architect, Richard Scott. The west end was redesigned to create extra adaptable space; the gallery, that was little more than an organ loft —although room had been found for the choir at one time — was replaced. As a new entrance was created at the west end, the north porch and doorway were removed to make way for the stair-tower. The library, the cloister and the separate choir vestry were built and other smaller rooms, the office, flower-arrangers' room and lavatory, were provided.

The glass doors in the new porch were intended to give an uninterrupted view along the length of the church to the altar, from both outside and inside; and the cloister, between the church and the hall, was intended to be both a physical and a symbolic link. The lych-gate, that had stood on Church Avenue, opposite the west end of the church, was moved to its present position on Lymington Road, partly because it would otherwise have been too close to the new porch, but also because lych-gates traditionally mark the boundary of the church property. Church Avenue became church property in 1948, when it was sold to the Church Commissioners for five pounds by the then owner of the Castle, the Earl of Abingdon.

EAST WINDOW

The pair of windows in the north wall of the nave represent (on the left) the Risen Christ and (on the right) Mary Magdalene, with versicles from the Te Deum (in Latin). They were designed and made by the distinguished firm of Clayton and Bell, and are a memorial to Sir John Hardy Thursby, who died in 1901.

The window in the north wall of the north transept is in poor condition. Its main features are clear. In the lower panel of the left light is one of the scenes in the garden after the resurrection, described in St Matthew's Gospel, (ch.28:2) 'And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men'. Next to it, in the lower panel of the right-hand light, are the Risen Christ and Mary Magdalene. Spread across the upper panels of both lights is a group of disciples and followers gazing upwards. Above, in the quatrefoil, is Christ ascending into heaven. Between and below these panels runs the text from St John's Gospel, (ch. I 1:25) 'I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live'. It is a memorial to Edward Pardoe, who died in 1870.

In the east wall of the north transept is a window depicting the Archangel Gabriel, with his attribute, a lily, and the Archangel Michael, with a spear in his left hand and a shapeless object in his right; this object may represent a soul, since Michael is supposed to weigh the souls of the dead for their merit. A late nineteenth-century portraitist, H.T. Bosdet, was the artist, but the maker is not recorded. The window was added to the transept in 1910 in memory of Albert Llewellyn Nugent, 3rd Baron Nugent in the Austrian peerage, Elizabeth, his wife, and George Frederick, his son.

At the east end of the church, above the altar, is a group of three lancet windows, the design of which was explained in the magazine for September 1958:

In the centre is Our Lord in glory, dressed in priestly robes, crowned, and with rays of glory surrounding Him. His feet rest on the clouds. Below, at the bottom of the window are the "waves of this troublesome world" out of which rises a rock, typifying Mount Zion (The Revelation ch.14:1) From the base of the rock flow living waters, on the top grow corn and healing herbs, and there stands an altar crowned by the Lamb. Hanging over the altar are the Seven Seals of The Revelation, typifying those who have been redeemed by the Lamb. On the left of the central figure is St Mark, the patron saint of the Church, with pen and book, showing that he was an evangelist, and on the right, St Peter, bearing the key and a fish. According to a very early tradition St Peter supplied St Mark with the materials for his gospel.



This set of three windows was paid for with a legacy to the church from one of Lady Waterford's friends, Honoria Thompson, and made by the well known firm of James Powell and Sons, Whitefriars, London, in 1935. It replaced the original east window, the work of Lady Waterford that was damaged beyond repair when the chancel was extended in 1932. In the bottom left-hand corner of the, right-hand window is the diminutive figure of a friar, the maker's mark.

OTHER WINDOWS



Window in the south wall of the nave

The oldest window in the church and the least pleasing, is in the south transept. In the left-hand light is 'the angel of God' addressing Cornelius: 'Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God' (The Acts Ch.10:4). On the right is Christ chiding Martha: 'Thou art careful and troubled about many things: but only one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her' (Luke 10:41 and 42).

The south transept window is a Stuart family memorial. It commemorates Captain John Stuart, RN (Lord Stuart de Rothesay's younger brother) and his wife, Albinia. It was given in 1866, sometime after their deaths, by their son, General Charles Stuart. It also commemorates General Stuart's son, John, who died in infancy. This boy was General Stuart's only child and the sole, sad, representative of a fifth generation of the Stuart family of Highcliffe.

The windows in the south wall of the nave match the two in the north wall. On the left is depicted the parable of the lost sheep: 'And when he hath found it he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing' (Luke ch.15:5). It was given in memory of George Astell Pardoe, second son of Edward Pardoe, killed at the Battle of Ulundi, that brought the Zulu War to an end in 1879. On the right is Ruth 'amid the alien corn', with a paraphrase of part of a verse from the story: 'So she gleaned in the field until even' (Ruth ch.2:17). This was given in memory of Ellen Mary Lindon, wife of Thomas Angell Lindon, vicar of Highcliffe, who died in 1886.

As part of the re-ordering of the church in 1991, an unremarkable rose window at the west end was replaced with a striking new work by Henry Haig who believes the function of stained glass, in a Christian context, 'is to teach and illumine'. When he designed this window, he had in mind the journey of faith that is the Christian life; and also, the church-going of the faithful that is, in a sense, a journey through the church, week by week or day by day. The Greek letters alpha and omega, with a chalice that is less easily distinguishable, refer to Christ.



'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely'. (The Revelation ch.21:6)

Church-goers see the window as they enter and as they leave the building; it marks the beginning and the end of one sort of journey, and it is a reminder of another sort. In church, the faithful receive spiritual sustenance to continue this 'other sort' of journey.

The new porch encloses the new window, so that it is enclosed on both sides. This means that it depends for its best effects on artificial light.

THE ORGAN



The organ is a two manual tracker organ, made by the firm of Norman and Beard and given to the church in 1894. It stood in the gallery until 1933, when it was moved to its present position, in the specially built chamber. Painted pipes are a notable feature of the instrument, and they are considered to be a good example of the style of decoration of the period.

A brass plate on the casing of the organ is a reminder of the influence of Lady Waterford, who died in 1891:

To the Glory of God and in affectionate remembrance of Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford, this organ was erected by one who cherishes the memory of her friendship.

CARVING IN STONE AND WOOD

The stone arch above the door in the east wall of the north transept and most of the carved woodwork in the church is considerably older than the building. It is presumed to have come from a stock of materials collected in France by Lord Stuart de Rothesay for his new house (Highcliffe Castle). Lord Stuart's known sources were the grand house or château of Les Andelys, the abbey at Jumieges and the church of St Vigor, in the western quarter of Rouen, all on the Seine in Normandy. However, the carved panels of the bench fronts in the chancel are said to be Jacobean and were given to the church, with the benches, anonymously in 1934.

Richard Scott considered the stone arch to be fourteenth century, although the columns that support it are more recent. An unnamed expert from the Victoria and Albert Museum, quoted in the magazine for September 1974, confirmed that the carved woodwork is antique, and considered some pieces in the pulpit to be medieval. A story that the pulpit was in use, as such, at Jumieges is probably apocryphal, since the expert from the Victoria and Albert Museum made it clear that the various pieces of which it is constructed belong to different periods; even to the untutored eye it appears to be a patchwork. The credence table was made up of leftover fragments in 1932, according to the magazine for September of that year.

The font is a typically Victorian piece of work. Lady Canning stated in a letter to her mother in March 1842, while the church was being built, that her husband was to give the font, but there is no further mention of it in the records. Its cover is not as old.

PICTURES

A print of 'The Light of the World', by William Holman Hunt, hangs behind the font. There is nothing remarkable about this, except that Lady Waterford and her sister Lady Canning saw the first version of the original painting in Hunt's studio one day in 1853, while the artist was working on it; they were deeply impressed. The print was given to the church in 1925 by a retired parson, Herbert Bloomfield.

In the north transept is an oil painting of 'The Virgin and Child' by an unknown artist. It is not considered a great work of art. It was given to the church in 1958 by John Dunning Harris, known as 'China' Harris, who, it is recorded in a letter by Theo Barnett, 'felt that it would, at least, "match" a picture already hanging here, if only in size and shape'.

The picture that 'China' Harris was referring to is the oil painting of 'The Crucifixion' that hangs above the pulpit. This was once, briefly, in 1959, taken to be the work of the seventeenth century Spanish master Murillo, but no proper attribution has ever been made. There are apparently contradictory records of its acquisition, but it is more or less reliably said to have been once the altarpiece of the Chapel of Brownsea Castle.

On the opposite wall of the chancel is one of Lady Waterford's rare oil paintings, a sombre representation of the disciples Peter, James and John, asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is known at St Mark's as 'Gethsemane', but a smaller water colour version in Tate Britain is called 'The Sleeping Disciples'. Lady Waterford's cousin, General Edward Stuart Wortley, who inherited the Castle from her, gave it to the church in 1932.

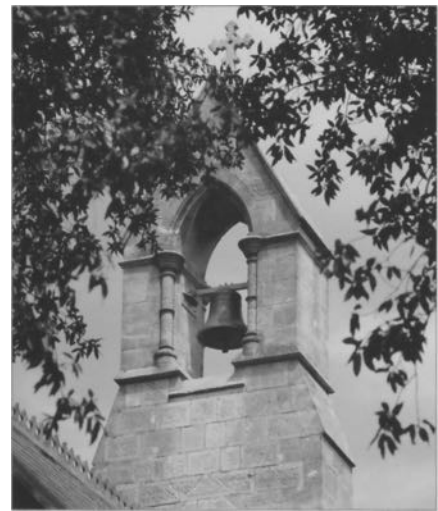
In the church office there is a picture, usually called 'Suffer the Little Children'. It was painted by Lady Waterford in her preferred medium of watercolour or body colour, and depicts Christ seated and surrounded by children. It is in the style of her greatest work, the decoration of the schoolroom at Ford. There are no records of when, or by whom, it was given to the church.

A third painting by Lady Waterford hangs in the clergy vestry. It is a copy of 'Christ with St John and the Virgin Mary' by Antonello da Messina, a fifteenth-century Italian artist. The original once hung in the Castle but is now in the National Gallery. Again, there are no records of its donation to the church. Lady Waterford is quoted by Augustus Hare as saying she had never seen the subject treated with so much feeling as it was by Antonello.

THE BELL

The bell was brought from Russia by my father and mother', writes Lady Waterford, in her Recollections, and it has (as all Russian bells have) some silver in it to improve the tone. However, for many years a bell bearing the date 1904 was in use, and the more prosaic origin of this was John Warner & Company's foundry at Spitalfields, in London. Its tone was often criticized. The old bell was replaced in 2000, when its fittings became unsafe.

Its successor came from the Whitechapel Bell Foundry and described as 'cast in copper and tin, measuring 2 feet in diameter, weighing 3 hundredweight and being accurately and harmonically tuned on the five tone principle to note F'.



NOTABLE EVENTS

St Mark's Church was consecrated on 27th January 1843 by the Bishop of Winchester, Charles Sumner. Lord and Lady Stuart de Rothesay were in Russia where Lord Stuart was serving as British Ambassador. Lady Waterford, recently married, was in Ireland with her husband, so that it fell to Lady Canning to represent the family. There is no doubt that the occasion was important to them all but Lady Canning, writing to her parents, poked gentle fun at the proceedings. (See the magazines for July 1933 and February 1968.) 'The service was very long indeed — more than three hours — you would have admired a very Papistical procession down the middle and up again... The Bishop preached indifferently, although, of course, no-one said so ...'.

Exactly one hundred and fifty years after the laying of the mysteriously disappeared foundation stone, on 14th April 1991 while work was in progress on the extensions and alterations of that year, a service of commemoration was held in the church hall. The preacher on this occasion was Charles Sumner's distant successor as Bishop of Winchester, Cohn James. When the programme of extensions and alterations had been completed, on 11th August 1991 the church was re-dedicated. The service was conducted by the Bishop of Southampton, John Perry, and attended by many of those who had been involved in the project.

Mr Gladstone came to church with Lady Waterford in 1889 and he recorded the occasion, succinctly, in his diary: 'Ch. morning and evening: the whole party: now a rare sight'. One of Queen Victoria's younger sons, Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, came in 1892 and the Prince of Wales followed in 1900, the year before he succeeded to the throne as Edward VII. But more notable in some respects than the visits of the Grand Old Man and the heir to the throne was that of Kaiser Wilhelm II, of unhappy memory, who attended matins, or morning prayer, while staying at Highcliffe Castle in 1907. The Kaiser's visit to Highcliffe had unlooked for and unpleasant consequences.

By this time, the Castle belonged to Edward Stuart Wortley, then a colonel and later a general in the British Army. The Kaiser chose to discuss with him the steps that might be taken to improve Anglo-German relations. There followed a visit to Germany by Stuart Wortley, as the Kaiser's guest, during which discussions continued and it was agreed that Stuart Wortley should give the British press an account of the Kaiser's apparently Anglophile views. Such an account duly appeared in a national newspaper; but it only exacerbated the ill-feeling that already existed, especially among those English who did not believe it, and those Germans who did.

Nellie Melba, the prima donna, whose career spanned the years 1888 to 1926, was often the guest of Edward Stuart Wortley and his wife. Perhaps she always came to church when she was with them, but she is remembered for one particular Sunday evening, when she stood and sang from the gallery Gounod's Ave Maria.

To mark the millennium, the west porch was refurnished at the beginning of the year 2001. The new furniture was paid for by individual donations and a grant from The Friends of St Mark's Church.

LIST OF CLERGY

Ecclesiastical District of Highcliffe

Parish of Highcliffe

Vicars

Priest in Charge 1843-1862 John Dobson
1862-1871 Albert Aitkens
1871-1879 Robert Pinckne . M.A
1879-1887 Thomas Angell Lindon . M.A
1887-1889 Samuel Edward Valpy Filleul. M.A
1889-1895 Algernon Charles Dudley Ryder. M.A
1895-1908 Edward Stanley Carpenter. M.A
1908-1919 Frederick Steele Gray. M.A
1919-1925 Frederick Pasley Evans. B.A
1925-1943 Charles Hamerton Gould. M.A
1943-1952 Henry Malby Brownlow. B.A, B.Sc
1952-1978 Robert Theodore Barnett. M.A
1978-1993 John Nicholas Seaford. B.A, Dip. Theol.
1994-2003 John Richard Williams. B.A, B.D, A.K.C
2004-2015 Gary Kenneth Taylor. B.Mus, B.Th
2016-2019 Gillian Mary Nobes. M.A
2020 - Veronica Mary Brown M.A

PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARK

St Marks Church (Grade II)

Overview

Listed Buildings

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1153661

Date first listed: 12-Feb-1976

Statutory Address: PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARK, HINTON WOOD AVENUE

District: Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

Details

748/13/415 12-FEB-76 II

DATES OF MAIN PHASES, NAME OF ARCHITECT: 1843-4 (by John Bemister, probably as builder-architect). Enlarged 1867 possibly by Benjamin Ferrey, again in 1932 by Reynolds & Tomlin, and in 1990-1 by Richard Scott.

MATERIALS: Limestone with blue slate roofs.

PLAN: Cruciform plan, much extended to east and west, and somewhat confused by a big west narthex, with toilets, a staircase and storage spaces along the north side. North-east vestries, south-east organ chamber. A corridor of 1990-1 links the south transept with the hall complex, south-east.

EXTERIOR: The original small cruciform church is still discernible, and several masonry joins reveal its dimensions, for example, on the north wall of the chancel, and west of the second window on the south side of the nave. This window is one of the original uncusped lancets in deep splayed recesses, of which several survive. The third nave bay on the south marks the extension of 1867, perhaps by Benjamin Ferrey. Of the same date must be the bellcote over the west gable. The masonry blocks of 1842 have diagonal tooling which is repeated in the additions. The east gable has a triple stepped lancet framed in a blind arch, all of 1932. The north transept has diagonal buttresses and its north window has Dec Gothic tracery, both probably of 1867. At the north east is a low vestry with flat parapet (Reynolds & Tomlin, 1932-3). It is echoed in the low addition west of the north transept (Richard Scott, 1990-1). He also designed the staircase projection like a west transept, which replaced a porch of 1932. Against the west gable is a high narthex extension (1990-1) with glazed doors in each side, and a west window with triangular head.

INTERIOR: Multiple additions and reordering have left the interior even less coherent than the outside. The small outer porch leads to a big vestibule and library, then into an open space beneath the west gallery. This has a railed front of varnished pine (c. 1991), and is accessed by a staircase to the north. The walls are painted throughout. The kingpost roofs are of 1881, at which date very large beams on corbels were inserted over the transepts to carry the rafters of nave and chancel in a continuous run. In the north-east corner of the north transept is the vestry doorcase, ex-situ and perhaps 14th century French; an elaborate vaulted canopy with heavy finial and flanking pinnacles. It

was probably given by Lord Stuart de Rothesay, who perhaps intended it originally for Highcliffe Castle nearby, which re-used various elements of French historic fabric.

PRINCIPAL FIXTURES: A very mixed bag. The oak altar rail and pulpit, both with some Continental woodwork were given by Lord Stuart de Rothesay. The pulpit has a timber staircase and a base of two very large scrolled brackets, perhaps from a doorcase. The carved wooden decoration has been cut and applied quite randomly. One or two pieces may be medieval French (e.g. the Flamboyant tracery on the upper south face) but most is probably from Jacobean furniture or Victorian infill. The altar rail likewise has Jacobean-style arches on turned balusters, in the same style as the credence table which was cobbled together in 1932. The pews are mixed, Victorian and early 20th century. The stained glass includes the east window, of 1935 by Powell & Sons. The north transept north is a memorial (d. 1870) and the north transept east was designed by H.T. Bosdet (1856-1934). The nave has two north windows c. 1901 by Clayton & Bell. On the south side, one signed Lavers, Barraud & Westlake, c. 1879, and one unsigned c. 1886. The oculus in the west wall has golden glass by Henry Haig representing alpha and omega. In the chancel are fine Gothic tablets to the Stuart family.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: Big triangular churchyard with a good war memorial c. 1920 at the north end (separately listed at Grade II). Many good Victorian graves, and a fine group to the Selfridge family who leased Highcliffe Castle 1916-22, the American department store moguls. Gordon Selfridge's mother has a luxuriant Neo-Renaissance tomb chest with cherubs, his wife (who died of influenza, 1918) has an Art Nouveau angel. Gordon Selfridge has a simple headstone nearby; he died in poverty in 1947.

HISTORY: The land was donated by Lord Stuart de Rothesay (1779-1845), a former ambassador to France who built Highcliffe Castle (1831-5) nearby. The foundation stone was laid on April 14, 1842 and the opening was on January 27, 1843. The founder has a Gothic memorial tablet here. John Bemister of Christchurch was the builder, and probably acted as architect too. The original entrance was in the north transept. The enlargement of 1867 (probably by Benjamin Ferrey, who also came from Christchurch) lengthened the nave westward by about 20 feet and added a gallery, and a north doorway. Kaiser Wilhelm II worshipped here in 1907: evidence of the high social standing of Highcliffe Castle and its church. In 1932-3 the chancel was similarly lengthened and the vestry and organ chamber were added. The architects Reynolds & Tomlin were a commercial Bournemouth firm who designed the ABC cinema, Boscombe in 1930-1. Alterations of 1990-1 were dedicated on April 14, 1991.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: The church of St Mark, Highcliffe, is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * A small lancet style cruciform church typical of the unarchaeological Gothic of the early 1840s * Founded by the first Baron Stuart de Rothesay, who also gave pieces of architectural carving probably left over from the collection installed at Highcliffe Castle, a notable picturesque seaside villa of great ambition. * Various alterations and additions c. 1867, 1932 and 1990, with fittings to suit, reflecting a complex evolution. * Some good quality stained glass, Victorian, 1930s and recent * Early 20th century monuments to the Selfridge family

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