

Knole seemed fated, beginning with Henry VIII and Cranmer, to be a bone of contention between someone determined to obtain it and someone else equally determined not to give it up.

This peculiar situation became further complicated when Leicester suddenly abandoned all claim to Knole and returned it to the Queen, who immediately presented it to her cousin, Thomas Sackville (June, 1586).

The lease to the Lennards, however, was deemed to hold good, and it was not until 1603 that Thomas Sackville was able to buy the balance—and, incidentally, a 62 years' balance left out of the 99 years' lease granted by Leicester to Thomas Rolf. Fortunately, Thomas Sackville was a rich man, well able to afford this luxury. For over 300 years Knole remained in the firm and undisputed possession of the Sackvilles.

ALICE R. BUNCH.

A Royal Duchess Visits South Ockendon Hospital.

A LOVELY CRISP DAY on October 27th, saw H.R.H. The Duchess of Gloucester journey to South Ockendon Hospital, near Grays in Essex to perform ceremonies for the benefit of the sick, whose welfare she has so much at heart.

South Ockendon Hospital built in villa style, stands in extensive, beautiful grounds, the entrance and drive beflagged for this special occasion.

Very efficient and good looking members of the nursing staff lined the covered way forming a guard of honour for the passage of Her Royal Highness.

After many presentations the Duchess proceeded to the platform, where she was welcomed by Major A. M. Young, T.D., J.P., who said:

"This hospital was first opened for patients in 1932.

"Owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining accommodation for mental defectives, the County Boroughs of West Ham and East Ham had obtained permission to erect a hospital of 750 beds to meet existing needs. By 1939, nine villas (500 beds), the Recreation Hall, Nurses' Home, Workshops, Central Kitchen and Laundry were completed, but further work had then of necessity to cease.

"In 1948, arising out of the National Health Act, this hospital together with six others were merged into one group and the management and control of them was entrusted to the Committee of which I have the privilege of being Chairman.

"The Regional Hospital Board with the active co-operation and assistance of my Committee has since then carried out further extensions at this hospital and these are still in course of construction. This treatment centre, of which your Royal Highness has graciously consented to lay the Foundation Stone, forms part of these.

"Further large extensions are being considered, ultimately increasing the number of beds to about 1,200 which it is hoped to complete within three years.

"My Committee views with satisfaction this proposed increased accommodation which is expected to absorb the existing waiting list of patients in this Region.

"Our satisfaction however is qualified by the fear of inability to staff these extensions by reason of shortage of male and female nurses, which already is causing difficulty.

"It is regrettable that this distressing form of mental incapacity does not seem to attract nurses, partly because of the limited improvement possible in the severest types of defectiveness and the improbability of complete recovery even after years of patient and arduous nursing endeavour.

"This is the first occasion on which any member of the Royal Family has visited hospitals for this class of illness to which public attention is now drawn and it is hoped that your

presence here today may provide that stimulus which is so necessary.

"It would be tragic if, when additional accommodation is available, it were not possible to use it through lack of nurses. Any impetus which your Royal Highness may be able to give towards the provision of nurses cannot fail to be effective and would be greatly appreciated.

"This treatment centre which we are asking your Royal Highness to open in addition to the provision of beds for Tuberculous patients will form, we hope, a centre for Research which is so much needed for this class of mental illness, and the name of your Royal Highness would inevitably be associated with the resultant success.

"I now ask your Royal Highness if you will graciously lay this Foundation Stone and formally open the two new villas, already overcrowded with patients, and we all pray that the Divine Blessing may rest on your daily life and charitable works and that the future years may bring every happiness to you, and if I may add, to the patients in this hospital."

Her Royal Highness then carefully and methodically laid the Foundation Stone of the new Clinical Centre with a silver trowel, and unveiled two commemorative plaques symbolizing the "Hazels" and "Hawthorns" villas.

A short service, conducted by the Bishop of Chelmsford, ended the proceedings, and before taking tea Her Royal Highness made a tour of the villas accompanied by tremendous cheers from some of the patients gathered at vantage points along the paths of the Royal procession.

May we wish added success to the work undertaken by the South Ockendon Hospital, and the staff with which to carry on their noble calling.

"Safety in the Home" Week.

DURING THE WEEK beginning Monday, 14th November, 1955, the London County Council is running a campaign designed to bring home to the people of London the urgent need for minimising the alarming number of accidental deaths and injuries which occur every day in the home. Special emphasis will be given to the prevention of burns and scalds, which account for about 10 per cent. to 13 per cent. of all fatalities resulting from home accidents, the victims amongst females being about double that of males.

The Extent of the Problem.

More people are killed in their own homes than are killed in road accidents. In Great Britain 7,723 people died last year as the result of fatal accidents in their homes—this is some 2,700 more than were killed on the roads—and many more were injured and disabled. Some 12 per cent. of the victims each year are children under five years and about 69 per cent. are elderly people 65 years of age and over. Falls were by far the most common cause of fatalities and accounted for approximately six out of every ten deaths.

It is estimated that, in addition to the 700 or more deaths caused by accidental burns and scalds in the home, there are 15,000 to 20,000 victims admitted as in-patients to hospitals and a further 50,000 or more treated as out-patients. The average stay in hospital is 40 to 50 days (some individual cases requiring as long as a year). The total number of days hospital beds are occupied in caring for these injuries is believed to be at least 875,000 per annum and the cost of in-patient treatment alone is about one million pounds each year.

In London—The home safety problem lies particularly with the terminal points of life, i.e., the very old and the very young and, of the 305 fatal falls which occurred in London last year, 240 were in respect of persons aged 65 and over and of these 186 related to persons aged 75 years and upwards, two thirds of whom were women. 57 deaths from burns and scalds were recorded in London last year. There were

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