

It has snowed a lot today and we can see it on the Cotswold and the Down Hill where we walked. We went to Measure for Measure which we enjoyed tremendously. It was delightful. As part of the stage revolves there is no delay in changing scenery. The settings were grand and the lighting effects worked wonders. It is a theatre brimful of atmosphere.

Geoff: Part of the theatre was destroyed by fire in 1926 and immediately a building fund subscription was started. Of the amount of £270,000 collected the Americans contributed £140,000 and of the total amount collected £180,000 was utilised for the rebuilding and the balance earmarked for a maintenance fund. The conditions made by the donors, mainly American, was that the price of tickets was to be of a nominal figure to enable both rich and poor to see the plays and so the price was fixed at between 10/6 and 2/6. It was as I have already mentioned that the last seats were only to be let on the day of the play. For these I went into Stratford several times to take my place in the queue on the morning of the play. Then motor home and return for the play that evening.

The theatre is always packed about six or seven plays are put on during the season which is from the beginning of March until the end of September every year.

The theatre was reopened after the fire on the 23rd April 1934, Shakespeare's birthday by the Prince of Wales. The building at first looked horribly new and out of keeping with its surroundings but it has become nicely mellowed now and is a place of great beauty at the edge of the Avon's waters. The mirrored reflection of the theatre on the water on a sunny day makes a very fine picture. It was bitterly cold when we came out from seeing "Measure for Measure" last night but saw the decorated trees by the roadside leading to the theatre and millions of coloured fairy lights shone from the trees. These were all there till the birthday celebrations of 1950. This morning we woke to seeing snow which had fallen during the night, covering roof tops, trees and fields, such a beautiful white glowing sight.

I do hope the children had the same in Surrey.

25/4/50. Lorna takes over: In the afternoon we took the Stevensons to Warwick Castle and as it was bitterly cold we took a couple of rugs in the car. It is a beautiful old Castle in the town of Warwick and we found it most interesting. We found each room as we visited them in turn bulging with museum pieces. Swords, rifles of all kinds, helmets, suites of mail, beautiful tapestries, enormous carpets, very old Chinas, magnificent hand carved furniture, Italian tables, Adams fireplaces and ornate ceilings. The millions of portraits which cover all the walls are to me the most lovely things of all. Henry VIII, horrible old man, was portrayed as a man in his prime and there was one done of him when a little boy. You would never believe it but he was rather a lovely little boy. There was one of Anthony Eden's sisters who is the present Earl's mother. The present Earl at one time acted in films as Michael Brock, but his film career I think is now over. The day we were there he was in residence and his son David, Lord Brock was living with him. From a painting done three years ago he was a fine looking lad. The Earl has married twice but I don't know whether the second marriage is on or off.

For six weeks last year the film 'The Black Rose', starring Tyrone Power was shot at the Castle with the river running by, a setting of great beauty and I am sure a large sum of money was handed over for the shooting of the film. All this money and that paid by visitors is mostly used in the upkeep of the Castle which is certainly in very good preservation and the garden well kept. They have had for the last three years had an expert restoring paintings and portraits which all takes time and lots of money.

We saw one of Queen Elizabeth I in her coronation robes which had been partly restored The colouring in the portion restored was

Soft and lovely/