

Windsor Castle 1980 to 85

I retired from the Department of Health in the spring of 1980 and found that I was unemployed for the first time in my adult life. So I needed a job which would make it unnecessary for me to attend the office of the Department of Employment each week to sign the appropriate form to qualify for State Pension in 1985. So I went to Windsor Castle and talked my way into the Office of the Deputy Superintendent of the Castle. In consequence I was offered a job as a Warden in the State Apartments starting in September 1980. It quickly became a job which I thoroughly enjoyed in which I learned a lot about the Castle and its fabulous history and I met many well-known people. It was particularly good to meet the Royal Family and find how considerate they are for all who work for them.

Just before Christmas 1980, Dorothy and I received an invitation to the Christmas Staff Ball at Buckingham Palace. Those of us who worked at Windsor Castle and our spouses were taken to Buckingham Palace by coach (motor, not horse drawn) and it was a memorable evening. We saw so many things at the Palace, so many people and learned so much, and enjoyed refreshments and even a short chat with Princess Diana.

During my time at the Castle, Dorothy and I were invited to a Staff Party there one evening. This involved taking our car to Windsor and having the Henry VIII Gate opened for us to bring the car into the Castle grounds. It made us feel important to have the great doors opened for us – just as it did every time this happened, which it did whenever we took friends and family visitors at all times of the day. We have numerous photos of friends we took to see the famous Castle.

During my last few days working at the Castle, the Castle Superintendent, Major Nash, asked me if there was anything which he could do to mark the end of my service there. I asked if Dorothy and I could go to the top of the Round Tower (it had been closed to the public for some years). He agreed and on the selected day he took us to the top. We were able to see the cannon pointing down the many steps we climbed – and the view from the top of the Round Tower was magnificent. One could see how well-protected the Castle was against for instance the Welsh, any of whom over the years may have poured in from the West and tried to reach London by following the river.