

STORED SECRETS EXHIBITION GUIDE



CASTLE DROGO National Trust

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Before Drogo: Creating a Legacy

This section of the exhibit focuses on the key stories that became before Castle Drogo: how Julius Drewe made his money, the grand houses the family lived in before Drogo and the genius of Sir Edwin Lutyens and Julius' vision of dreaming up a castle.

Julius Drewe became interested in his ancestry and employed a genealogist to trace his family tree, who made a tentative connection to a 12th century Norman knight known as Drue or Drogo. He became set on building the ancestral home he might have inherited to pass down the generations. He wanted a castle rather than a house and one that looked as if it had stood for a thousand years. He employed Sir Edwin Lutyens, one of the great 20th century architects, in 1910 to make his dream a reality.

That summer, Drewe and Lutyens would peg out the site for the castle on a craggy outcrop overlooking Dartmoor. Lutyens had concerns about the scheme, writing in a letter to his wife: "... *I do wish he didn't want a castle – but just a delicious loveable house with plenty of good rooms in it*". Despite his concerns, Lutyens indulged his client's romantic fantasy, and even with challenging locations, materials and changing design, completed the castle in 1930.

Object highlights

- Wadhurst Hall Clock

When the Drewes sold Wadhurst Hall in 1928 to move to Castle Drogo, a number of fixtures came with them, including the windows from the chapel that Julius had commissioned in 1901 and the clockfaces from the outside clock on the tower. One of these was installed in the Stable yard and the other three have remained in store.

- J.C.Walker's cart (wheels and axle)

J.C. Walker, Clark of Works for the build at Castle Drogo was instrumental in delivering the plans on the ground between architect and client and has been seen as a bit of an unsung hero of the build. He lived in Drewsteignton and used to travel to site on a horse and cart. Although

the chassis has not survived, it would be possible to recreate it in the future.

- Letter Books and Wage book

Amazingly, copies of the 8000 business letters which Walker wrote during his 17-year supervision of the site between 1912 and 1919 survive in the collection today, giving us a detailed account of the build here and who worked on it.

How Julius Drewe made his money

Julius Drewe started his working life as a tea buyer for his uncle, Francis Peak, before opening his first tea shop. Later, he started the Home and Colonial Stores, one of the first supermarkets, with his business partner, John Musker. He realised to make money he needed to cut out the middleman, so sourced and imported his own goods to sell through his shops. Julius was so successful he was able to retire at 33, selling his remaining shares in 1919 for £1million (around £67million today!). Home and Colonial Stores disappeared from high-streets by the mid-1970s, re-branded as Allied Suppliers to reflect the post-colonial era.

1878 – opened a shop named The Willow Pattern Tea Room in Liverpool

1883 – first branch of Home and Colonial Stores opened in London

1919 – Julius sells his remaining shares for £1million (around £67million today!).

1940s and 50s - The Home & Colonial Stores group continued to expand before going through a series of re-organisations and re-structures after the Second World War because of changing shopping patterns. As people became more mobile, due to the increasing availability of motor vehicles, High Street shops began to lose business to newly emerging out of town supermarkets.

1968 – The last branch of the Home and Colonial Stores closes, re-branded as Allied Suppliers to reflect the post-colonial era. Allied Suppliers was later sold to Argyll Foods which became Safeway in 1982 before being sold to Morrisons, which is now part of a larger American company.

Grand houses. 1926 marks 100 years since the family first took up residence in the completed North Wing section of the castle (during August 1926) and

celebrated their first Christmas at Castle Drogo in the Dining Room, even though it wasn't quite finished.

Basil Drewe writes about his first fortnight stay in the castle a few months before in Easter 1926, with Ruth and his children. Mary, Cedric and Beatrice were holidaying abroad. Julius, who was recovering from his illness, Frances and daughter Frances were at home in Wadhurst.

Basil's letter to Mary reads "without our knowing Mummie has completely furnished the nursery here and when we arrived it was just as if it had been inhabited for years with a sofa and three armchairs and two little fireside stools for the children, and Daddy's picture over the mantelpiece, the photograph of the painting with the salmon. The children are having a good time just running wild over the moors."

Culverdon Castle. In 1890, Julius brought Culverden Castle, a 19th century folly castle that was built as an observatory in the grounds of Culverden House. Julius and Frances had Adrian (1891), Basil (1894) and Cedric (1896) whilst at Culverden. The folly was demolished in 1959 to become the site of the Kent and Sussex Hospital. It is now part of a housing estate following the hospital's demolition.

The family left Culverden Castle and purchased Wadhurst in 1898. They moved in after a year of renovations, and it became their main residence for thirty years. Julius Drewe bought the contents with the house. Many objects at Castle Drogo today came from Wadhurst and once belonged to the Du Murietta brothers, the former owners of the Hall. The Spanish bankers, favourites of the Prince of Wales, lost their fortune in 1890 when Argentina defaulted on bond payments.

Wadhurst Hall was a magnificent Victorian mansion surrounded by a park with a three-quarter mile long lake, a chapel, pleasure grounds, a riding school, outbuildings, and many tenant farms. The estate provided opportunities for shooting and fishing. It was the scene of many social events throughout the year, for schoolchildren, scouts, teachers, gentry and nobility, who were invited to walk in the grounds, enjoy fireworks, dances,

teas, or Christmas festivities. Large-scale entertainments were regularly laid on, when the grounds were decorated with electric lights and Chinese lanterns. Firework shows were organised by none other than Brocks or Pains themselves. Tenants were always treated to Christmas presents and entertainments. Family events – birthdays, coming-of-age, marriages – were celebrated here on a lavish scale. Wadhurst witnessed a great many family milestones, as the Drewe children grew up and had their young lives here. Wadhurst Hall was partly demolished after WWII and a new house built on the land, owned by Rausing family. Kilmorie was the Drewe family's beloved home in Devon from 1919 whilst Castle Drogo was being built.

Kilmorie. A large, luxurious mid-19th-century house set on the cliff, Kilmorie gave the family access to beaches, bathing, tennis, croquet, yachting and frequent trips to Dartmoor and the coast in the summer months. This house was very important in the lives of not only Julius, but also to the wider family, his children and grandchildren, and friends. It meant much more than a holiday place visited occasionally – it was very much their home in Devon. The family's love of Kilmorie is clearly evident in Mary's diaries of this decade, and their use of it continued even after Castle Drogo was completed. The family based themselves at Kilmorie for weeks or even months at a time with a full retinue of servants.

Its unique and beautiful setting, perched on a then unspoiled cliff overlooking the bay, gave them access to beaches, bathing, tennis, croquet, yachting and frequent trips to Dartmoor and the coast in the summer months. Mary was involved with the local hospital, and Brownies, and did other charitable work. At the time Torquay still boasted high-class entertainments, often with world-class musicians and actors. The family when based in Torquay were able to access these concerts and plays.

The most significant milestone at Kilmorie is the death of Julius on November 10th, 1931. From Mary's diary for that year, it seems they spent a lot of time at Kilmorie – an interesting choice given that Castle Drogo was newly completed (although it would possibly have been warmer nearer the coast at times during the year). Kilmorie was let in 1932 after Julius' death

and sold in 1935 when it became a hotel. Following demolition in 1960, a modern block of luxury flats now occupies the site, also called Kilmorie.

Collections Re-examined

This section of the exhibition explores how, as an accredited museum, we collect, care for and acquire objects, how certain objects raise conversations about the importance of authenticity and how choices are made about what to keep and what not to keep.

This theme builds on the work we've been doing over the last couple of years to accept objects that were once at Castle Drogo back into the collection. We are looking at how we might display these objects and tell different stories in the future. Some of the objects in this section highlight questions of:

- How we collect (and what we accept into our care)
- Acquisition process of new objects
- Museum disposals
- Authenticity
- Legacy of colonialism
- Objects with a racist narrative
- Endangered species
- Environmental impact
- Responsibly displaying and handling objects

Object highlights

Nursery Education Poster: The Toy Shop. This poster was part of a set used at Castle Drogo when it housed a nursery school during the Second World War, until 1954. Former pupils remember the posters in the school room. Central to this poster is an image of a 'golliwog' in a blue toy car. Golliwogs are racist caricatures of black people based on the minstrel (mostly white actors wearing blackface makeup for the purpose of portraying racial stereotypes of African Americans) with exaggerated features. The character

was adopted by authors where the golliwog was often depicted as naughty or a villain and the name used as a racial slur. Golliwog children's toys were very popular in the early and mid-twentieth century but changing political attitudes and civil rights movements led to the recognition of the golliwog as a symbol of racism.



Image: The Toy shop poster Copyright National Trust/Ben Dale



Image: Model of Folly Farm. Copyright: National Trust/Lydia Aiano [NT 903199]

Lutyens Model. During 1981/2 the Castle Drogo kitchen table went to an exhibition about Lutyens in London. After the exhibition had finished Castle Drogo accepted several models of other properties designed by Lutyens. For a time they were displayed at the castle but have been in store for a number of years now with the space used for other purposes. Do you think these models should be back on display?

Part of our work managing the collection is to make sure it is still right to keep each object at Castle Drogo. This can include disposing of objects, such as those which were never at the castle but might have been acquired in the past because it was felt there was a link, those that might have deteriorated to a point where we cannot display them or those that were bought in to 'set dress' rooms. Disposal might be offering to another museum, recycling or as a last resort responsibly destroying the object.

Objects with baggage: how do you feel about seeing some of these objects? This display looks at some of the objects in our collection that are seen differently now to when they were made or collected, reflecting shifting attitudes. Museums need to be aware of different object narratives and create displays with appropriate context. We all look at objects from different points of view and our particular backgrounds will shape how we see them. Exploring some of the objects and questioning portrayals of past practices help highlight the relevance these collections still have today to help us learn from them whether through raising awareness of the impact of racial prejudice, promoting conservation efforts or enabling us to make informed and ethical decisions about products we buy. Examples in this case include the links to the tea trade and how today we can support ethical fair-trade practices, organic farming and plastic-free tea.

Questions of Empire?

In the early 20th century, Britain had an Empire that spanned a quarter of the globe, including colonies in India and Africa. It was the largest Empire in history. Following the Second World War the Empire went into decline with many countries gaining independence. British government and society benefitted economically from the Empire, but the people colonised by the British had British laws and customs imposed upon them, lost their ability to govern themselves and were, in many cases, violently oppressed.

Many of the objects in our collection today were collected when the British Empire was at its height.

Why is it important?

In an increasingly diverse Britain, there is growing interest in exploring how complex histories of race, migration and Empire have shaped the society that we share today.

The National Trust's policy on interpreting history emphasises the importance of inclusive and respectful representation of diverse stories and experiences. The organisation's approach to history interpretation is guided by principles such as respect for the historic places we look after, the need to

engage a range of needs and interests, and the importance of presenting and preserving the past with care and thoughtfulness.

Killer Collections

From arsenic in wallpaper to radioactive uranium vases, there are many deadly objects in the collection at Castle Drogo that can do what the title suggests...kill you! The 'Killers' have been well-researched by our wonderful team of Research Volunteers, with details of each killer component, the story behind the uses and the changing awareness of the risks of using many of these materials.

'Starring', in alphabetical order, **'The Killers'**: Arsenic, Asbestos, Cellulose Nitrate, Cyanide, Electricity, Lead, Mercury, Nicotine, Phosphorus, Radon and Uranium.

Arsenic

What: Mounted otter head

Killer component: Arsenic

What's the story:

Arsenic was used in the preparation of animal skins for taxidermy up until the 1970s either using powder or soap and the dust given off by them today is still toxic. Anyone dealing with such articles must be suitably protected with masks and gloves. Arsenic was used because it was a good killer of insect pests and mould.

The otter head comes from Parke, another property on Dartmoor cared for today by the National Trust, where the Hole family were keen otter hunters. It is stored at Castle Drogo and cared for by our Dartmoor Collections Team.

Conservation assistant carefully cleaning the collection of animals heads at another National Trust property, Llanerchaeron, Wales
©National Trust
Images/Arnhel de Serra



What: Wallpaper

Killer component: Arsenic

What's the story:

Many Victorian wallpapers were coloured with arsenic, as were textiles and cosmetics. Arsenic is a naturally occurring element that was mined for the vivid green colour it provided. Devon had numerous arsenic mines, including some owned by William Morris in the 19th century near Tavistock, who used it in early Morris & Co. wallpapers. The pigment would release as dust or gas in air, poisoning people in their homes. With growing awareness of its toxicity came regulation and wallpapers with arsenic were phased out in the 1890s.

The wallpaper on display, and in many National Trust collections, serves as a striking reminder of how aesthetics and safety were once in conflict, and how historical design can prompt reflection on the relationship between beauty and wellbeing.

Symptoms of arsenic poisoning include persistent headaches, nausea, abdominal pain, skin lesions, vomiting, diarrhoea, and in severe cases, confusion, convulsions, and even death. Chronic exposure could also lead to fatigue, darkening of the skin, and various organ complications. Symptoms of arsenic poisoning were similar to other diseases of the early Victorian period, such as typhoid and cholera, so it was not always recognised. Many deaths were accidental but there were cases of arsenic being used to murder. One famous case was that of Mary Ann Cotton who was suspected of poisoning 21 people. The items in the collection, the otter mask and the William Morris wallpaper were not produced with murder in mind but still have to be treated with care. At this time arsenic was used as an additive to various foodstuffs including children's sweets which led to episodes of mass poisoning as often the powder was mistaken for things like flour and sugar.

It was famously used as a green colouring in William Morris wallpaper, also present in National Trust collections but now as copies and not still on the walls. It has been suggested that the arsenic found in Napoleon's hair after his death in exile may have come from his wallpaper.

The symptoms of arsenic poisoning can also apply to other illness around at the time, such as typhoid and cholera. It was difficult to definitely say that arsenic was the cause until the introduction of the Marsh Test in 1836. The use of arsenic became limited by law in the mid-19th Century in the UK.



An example of William Morris Wallpaper in the National Trust Collections: Daisy wallpaper in the Service Corridor, designed by William Morris, at Gunby Hall, Lincolnshire ©National Trust Images/Nadia Mackenzie

Asbestos

What: The Bunty House.

Killer component: Asbestos

What's the story:

On display in the exhibition is the wooden door from the original Bunty House (a playhouse), bought for Frances Drewe (Julius and Frances' youngest daughter). Originally at their Sussex home, it came to Castle Drogo with the family and was put in the garden. Part of the Bunty House was made of asbestos, a common naturally occurring fibrous mineral, that is strong, resistant to heat, fire and chemicals. Once widely used in construction and other industries, asbestos is found in insulation, ceiling/floor tiles, boilers, pipe lagging, automotive parts such as brakes and clutches, and in asbestos cement for roofing sheets and pipes.

You can see the new Bunty House near the top of the formal garden and children can play in it. The replica Bunty House in the garden today does not contain asbestos.

Symptoms: The main danger is inhaling invisible fibres which become trapped in the lungs and can cause aggressive lung cancers, asbestosis (lung scarring) and thickening of the lung membrane, causing breathlessness.

Awareness of asbestos: Dangers began centuries ago but formal scientific recognition started in 1898 when British factory inspector Lucy Deane highlighted dust risks. By the 1960s, the link to severe lung diseases was scientifically proven. Importing blue and brown asbestos (the most hazardous types) was banned in the UK in 1985. White asbestos was banned in 1999.

If you do not disturb asbestos, it will generally be safe. If you suspect asbestos, don't cut, drill, sand, or break the material. Due to the long period of time this disease takes to develop, children exposed to the same amount of fibres as adults are at an increased lifetime risk of mesothelioma.



The Bunty House in the garden at Castle Drogo, near Exeter, Devon. This is the children's playhouse, modelled on a 1930s suburban house, bought by Julius Drewe for his grandchildren ©National Trust Images/Andrew Butler

Cellulose Nitrate

What: Photographic cellulose nitrate negatives. The negatives on display are replicas of cellulose nitrate negatives in the Castle Drogo Collection and include images of the castle being built, the children from the nursery playing at Castle Drogo, the Bunty House in the gardens and some of the Drewes enjoying activities such as riding, driving and aboard their yacht, the Devonia. We've had the negatives produced as photographic positive prints as well as extracting high quality digital images.

Killer component: Cellulose nitrate is highly flammable and an irritant to the skin, nose, throat and eyes. Chemicals used in its manufacture include nitric and sulfuric acids and solvents like acetone, methyl alcohol, and ethyl alcohol. From the 1940s onwards cellulose nitrate was replaced with Safety Film – cellulose acetate or polyester-based material. This safety film was common for pre-1960 home negatives.

What's the story: The earliest negatives were made of paper and called calotypes or Talbotypes after William Henry Fox Talbot. They date from the 1830s. From then on, the 19th century saw lots of development in the field of photograph. Glass plates negatives were adopted from the 1850s until the 1890s. From the 1890s flexible film became the standard for many. The key material for this was cellulose nitrate. It was developed by the Hyatt brothers in America and first patented in 1874 and was known as celluloid.

Symptoms: The first well documented case of poisoning/death due to toxic fumes happened in the 1890s. It was closely associated with the rapid growth and popularity of cinematography in the silent movie era and beyond. It was very dangerous for those engaged in its production, due to the high fire risk and the exposure to hazardous chemicals. It could produce toxic fumes in all stages of production, combustion or decomposition including nitrogen oxide. Exposure to these fumes could be fatal. The hazardous chemicals involved in its production risked chemical burns as well as inhalation of toxic fumes.

Its highly flammable nature was especially dangerous as it burns very intensely, even under water, so it is difficult to extinguish. It could quickly

ignite under the heat of early projectors, and it has been known to spontaneously combust. This is more common in film reels where the quantity is greater, and the gases are sealed in a storage tin. Fires in factories and movie houses were quite common. By the 1930s, it was estimated that a film projectionist in the U.S. died every 18 days, often due to the fire/fume hazards.

Why was the poisonous element used in the piece?

Cellulose nitrate film (or celluloid film) revolutionised photography. It was a flexible film medium which was lightweight, practical and portable, a significant improvement on the heavy and fragile glass plates. It soon allowed film to be produced in rolls and film cassette. The first rolls had to be loaded in the darkroom; later developments produced the cassette/roll that could be loaded in daylight. Together these innovations gave all photographers much more freedom. It led to the development of true movies with the first projected moving pictures to a paying audience taking place in 1895 in Paris, France.

Infamous cases involving the objects poisoning people? London Cinema Fire (1896): Just one year after the first public motion picture exhibition, caused by a “careless assistant” working with highly flammable 35mm film.

Bazar de Charite, Paris (1897): A cinematograph projection caused a major fire in a temporary wooden structure built to house a charity fair. It caused the death of 126 people many of them aristocratic women

Cripplegate Fires (c. 1921): A series of six fires over nine weeks near Cripplegate, London, they were linked to the storage of celluloid (cellulose nitrate) goods, such as buttons and collars.

Cyanide

What: First Aid kit belonging to Mary Drewe, daughter of Julius Drewe and was kept in her car for emergencies throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s!

Killer component: Cyanide

What's the story: Cyanide gauze bandages were historically used in medical settings, particularly during the First World War to prevent infection.

Invented by pioneering surgeon Joseph Lister, they were made from gauze impregnated with double cyanide of mercury and zinc, which served as an antiseptic for wounds. Use of these bandages carried on long after the First World War.

Symptoms: Cyanide is a naturally occurring chemical found in many plants and is one of the most lethal substances known to us. The use of cyanide gauze bandage stopped when it was found that when mixed with iodine it caused the wounds to blister and burst open.

Electricity

What: Electric teacup warmer. The wonderful brass cup warmer on display was another of Julius Drewe's gadgets, designed to keep his cup of tea hot. Unlike earlier food warmers, which were powered by fire or candle flame, this device was plugged into one of the castle's 332 electrical sockets and powered by hydroelectricity, all generated in the valley below.

Killer component: Electricity

What's the story: The invention of a solution to electric domestic lighting took a long time to develop. The main challenges lay in making a durable filament that produced a bright and steady light and in creating the best possible vacuum inside the glass bulb to prolong the filament's life. Early experimenters such as Joseph Swan began trialling materials to make a durable filament as early as the 1840s, although it wasn't until the 1870s that he and Thomas Edison produced commercially viable lamp bulbs.

The electricity system in the UK was launched in 1881, when the first public generator was built in Godalming, Surrey. It did not find its way immediately into most homes which were still lit by gas – only 750,000 homes were connected to electricity by 1920.

In the late 19th century, a battle raged over whether an alternating current (AC) or direct current (DC) system was better. Direct Current went back to the beginning of the 19th century and Thomas Edison who was a proponent of Direct Current (DC) transmission. Alternating Current (AC) was developed by Nikolai Tesla (1856-1943), a Croatian-born electrical engineer. He showed that AC produced bigger amounts of electricity and transmitted

it greater distances, and so it superseded DC. AC also triumphed because of its ability to alter the current using transformers.

Although early bulbs were not powerful compared to today's ones, they still gave a much brighter light than earlier gas and oil lamps. Designs for decorative lampshades, switches and bulbs abounded. Electric light sockets were also dual-purpose, used to power other small appliances such as irons and toasters. Once the electric lamp bulb was developed, it wasn't long before the spread of electrical generating plants made electric lighting in the home a viable alternative to gas. A domestic electricity supply was soon being offered to wealthy customers.

One such customer was Julius Drewe, who had a passion for the latest technology. As early as 1903, he had illuminated the Christmas tree at Wadhurst Hall (their residence before Castle Drogo) with coloured electric lights. Generated by a hydro turbine in the valley below, Castle Drogo was equipped with its own electricity supply, which powered a telephone exchange, a lift, and lights. In the dining room at Castle Drogo, the dining table was even fitted with an electric tablecloth, which powered electric candlesticks. Such tablecloths were among many novelties, some of them potentially lethal, associated with the early years of electricity in the home, and often had a bare live wire running through the cloth and special light sockets which had metal pins on the bottom to pierce the fabric.

*Brass teacup warmer: Castle Drogo,
Devon, NT 902809*



Earthing simply did not exist. One touch, and you could be electrocuted.

Julius's daughter Frances remembered that her father was very proud of it. It worked well – until a glass of wine was spilt - causing "a brief panic in case the moisture short-circuited the cloth and blew the fuses".

Leisure

This theme looks at the family life before and during their time at Castle Drogo. We hold many objects displayed throughout the castle – from watercolours to fishing rods (Mary’s fishing rod is in this exhibition and Julius’ is next door!) – that tell the stories of how the Drewes spent their time, highlighting their affluence and social status and how they used the castle and the surrounding areas.

Some of the most notable objects are those relating to their beloved family pets, musical instruments and mementos, postcards and letters that documented their many trips and travels across the world.

Object highlights

Adrian’s banjo. A recent addition to the collection, this hugely poignant object went to war with Julius’ eldest son, Adrian (1891 – 1917), and returned when he did not. This banjo was kept by Mary alongside a microscope from his medical studies (in the Childhood cabinet) and his baby hair and teeth. The instrument highlights the family’s love of music, sat alongside Mary’s mandolin. In the family ‘orchestra’ Mary played the violin or mandolin, whilst her mother played the piano, Adrian the violin, Basil the double bass and Cedric the cello. Adrian also played the piano and was given the Bechstein piano, now in the Boudoir, for his 21st birthday.



Image: Adrian Drewes's banjo. Copyright National Trust/Ben Dale

The travels of the Drewes. Glimpses into the postcard albums of Cedric Drewe (with over 250 postcards) from 1901 - 1910 tell us that the Edwardian period was a golden time for the Drewes who, as well as touring the south of England by car, enjoyed travelling to fashionable destinations such as Paris, the castles on the Rhine, Monte Carlo and New York.



Image: Postcard album. Copyright National Trust/Jemima Gamble

They used methods of travel which were often both luxurious, such as the Lusitania, or novel, as the motor car was at that time. The hotels they chose – the Metropole in Brighton, the Elysee Palace in Paris and the Empire in Bath, Oatlands Park and the Berystede in Ascot, for example - were the finest, most modern or elegant, where the rich, famous and titled gathered too. Travel in this style was the prerogative of the wealthy and leisured, and their stays at the London Metropole Hotel and voyage aboard the Lusitania, for example, clearly demonstrate that the Drewes moved amongst the most privileged and elite of society.

Travel, both in this country and in Europe, was greatly facilitated by the use of the Bradshaw guides. The Bradshaw's Continental Rail Guide offered much more than simply railway timetables for all the European countries it covered. Also included were details about connections with steamers and diligences, recommendations for hotels, clubs and restaurants, advice on clothing and what to take, and a guide to towns and attractions for each country including such details as postal and church services. The Drewes visited Europe many times during this period, a popular journey and destination during the Edwardian years.

“The journey invariably began with a train ride to a Channel port and then a boat to Ostend, Boulogne or Zeebrugge. In the years leading up to the First World War, two million people crossed the Channel annually. The experience was rarely pleasant, as many passengers travelled in small boats buffeted by the choppy waters. The fastest service between London and Paris, using bigger ships, could be achieved in as little as seven and a half hours, provided the tides were kind.”

The majority of these travellers belonged to the upper middle class, and soon the entire middle class, who chose as their destinations to the “newly opened coastal resorts on the North and Baltic Seas”, as well as to the spa, health and gambling resorts. At the same time, the desire to cross the Atlantic was growing and companies such as Cunard and the White Star line responded in the early 1900s by building ever larger, faster and more luxurious liners, which mirrored the standards and facilities of the fine hotels and restaurants to which their clientele was accustomed.

Mr. and Mrs. Drewe undertook trips to the following destinations:

- Norway – June 1901
- Scotland – February 1902
- France – July 1903
- London – November 1903
- South coast of England – October 1904
- Somerset – September 1905
- Monaco and Monte Carlo – December 1905
- Paris - October 1907
- Belgium and Germany - summer 1908
- New York – summer 1910

The Drewe children also travelled a huge amount and we are increasingly finding more and more about their trips. Amongst the many, wonderful items in a recent proposed gift of Mary’s belongings there are numerous postcards. Randomly found amongst these are a handful from Basil Drewe, which offer glimpses of an exotic and adventurous journey made in 1914.

As a young man of 20, Basil Drewe embarked on a major journey to Australia and Tasmania. He travelled with the Rev. Stevenson, private chaplain to Julius Drewe.

They travelled on the 'Malwa', a P&O passenger ship. A lengthy and arduous journey. He reached Fremantle on 28th July 1914 after weeks of travelling.

We have a series of coloured postcards, dated and sent to members of the family from his various stopovers. Basil's descriptions of the sights, though necessarily brief, nevertheless offer a wonderful snapshot of his travels.

Sadly, almost as soon as they arrived, the First World War broke out – Basil and the Rev. Stevenson were on the 'Malwa' returning from Adelaide to England on 27th August.

All aboard the Devonian! In 1923, after some years of chartering (hiring) yachts, Julius Drewe decided to buy his own. He bought the Steam Yacht Devonian. Yachting, both racing and cruising, was a popular pastime among the wealthy and the aristocracy of the time. Much like the owners of super yachts today.

In July and August of 1923, the Drewe family cruised up the west coast of Scotland in the Devonian. They visited various towns and islands, steamed up and down lochs, hired cars to visit places away from the coast and did quite a lot of fishing.

Something both Julius Drewe and his daughter Mary seem to have very much enjoyed. The cruise to Scotland and Norway seems to have been a favourite route for the Drewes and others as newspaper reports mention others setting off in the same direction.

Unfortunately, Julius Drewe became unwell in 1924, and the cruising seems to have come to a stop. We do not know when exactly the yacht was sold but it had a new owner by 1929. Through the research done, it's not been possible to find any costs, either for chartering or for buying yachts at that time. However, to charter a similar size yacht today would cost, at a conservative estimate, £123,375 a week and would probably have a smaller crew. It really isn't possible to estimate what the modern-day equivalent

cost to buy such a yacht as the Devonia would be as they have changed out of all recognition but safe to say, it would be millions!



*The Devonia display in the Green Corridor also sheds some light on the routes the Devonia took and includes some of the gems from a recent donation of objects, including the Bosun's whistle!
Image: The crew of the Devonia. Copyright National Trust/Ben Dale*

Stories from Kilmorie....a life of leisure. For the Drewes, the times of leisure spent at Kilmorie in the 1920s, with Torquay as a glittering backdrop, had been very special ones indeed. Mary's diary of 1923 gives us a snapshot of the leisured life led at Kilmorie, when early autumn sunshine allowed the family to come together for walks, bathing at the beach and games of tennis. There were almost daily motor trips locally to places such as Dawlish, Dartmoor and Dartmouth or to the river Dart to fish.

On wet days, Mary arranged flowers, practised the piano, developed her photos, or played Bezique with her father. There were social occasions to attend, such as a garden party at nearby Cockington Court, and charity events, such as the Girl's Friendly Society fete at Ilsham.

The chauffeur driven car took them on shopping trips to Torquay, or to Drewsteignton, to survey the progress of the building of Castle Drogo. In her account of life at Kilmorie, her sister Frances recounts how the Kilmorie estate became a community in itself, with some staff living in cottages on site, including the under butler, the head gardener, and 'Griff', the former governess to the children.

Frances recalls how much the whole family liked being there, and how rich the cultural offering of Torquay theatres and the concert halls was at that time, with a wide choice of plays, films, and musical performances always available. The sea and beaches were obviously a constant attraction, whether for bathing, sailing or for playing on the beach. An annual event was the Torbay Regatta, watched keenly by the family either from the water or from their wonderful vantage point at Kilmorie.

Adrian Francis Drewe noted that his grandfather Julius kept a very powerful binocular telescope in his study so that ships in the bay could be so closely observed that the people in them could be seen in detail. This was particularly exciting as it was the age of the big J class yachts and a time when Sir Thomas Lipton and King George V himself competed: "I can well remember sitting in our launch...and watching the yachts thundering down upon us, led by the Britannia with the King standing at the wheel and the entire crew, dressed from head to foot in white..."



The original hand painting silk lampshades now back from conservation on the Dining room table – painted either by Frances or Mary Drewe with boats and local scenes of Torquay and the view of Thatcher Rock from Kilmorie. Image: painted lampshades. Copyright National Trust/ Lydia Aiano

Servants at Castle Drogo

At the height of its use, there were 29 members of staff employed at Castle Drogo - 18 indoor and 11 outdoor servants. Over time, when the Castle was only occupied by Frances and Mary, the numbers dwindled to only five staff.

Object highlights

- Sketch book

This was Mary's sketch book that she kept whilst at Wadhurst Hall, where she made many drawings of the staff such as this sketch of 'Jones' carrying a lantern, perhaps a Groundskeeper?



Image: 'Jones', who worked at Wadhurst Hall, painted by Mary Drewe. Copyright National Trust/Ben Dale



Image: John Robert Booth and his family taken on his Golden Wedding anniversary. Copyright National Trust/Ben Dale

- Photograph of John Robert Booth and his family taken on his Golden Wedding anniversary

Mr. Booth worked for Julious Drewe as the gardener at Culverden Castle, Tunbridge Wells, Head Gardener at Wadhurst Hall, East Sussex and Caretaker at 'The Club', Drewsteignton.

- Hoovers

We have a vintage 1920s wooden Ewbank empire carpet sweeper with handle and the 1940s GEC electric cleaner. Traditionally used by the Between Maid (sometimes known as a 'weeny'), visitors can have a go on the Ewbank hoover next to the case!

Design & use of the domestic spaces

The architecture and design of the domestic spaces is a key consideration in the castle, from the curved kitchen corners for ease of mopping, to the Servants having their own garden and access onto the roof.

Frances's involvement in Julius's great undertaking in constructing Castle Drogo has been little documented or commented upon. However, the letters of J. C. Walker occasionally give us a glimpse of her influence and interest for example in 1913 he wrote to Lutyens stating:

At Mr Drewes wish I am writing you on the question of light in the Kitchen. Both he and Mrs Drewe would like more than this place will get from the roof lantern.

Seeing that the people who work in the Kitchen live almost entirely there Mrs Drewe thinks it most desirable that some alteration be made to give additional light, so that even on a dull day they will not have to use artificial light. Will you kindly send to Mr Drewe or me, a sketch shewing how you would propose to get in the ceiling a few glints of the sun...

Walker was then required to play diplomat as Lutyens refused to alter the window arrangements of the kitchen.

The North Tower was where the single girl servants lived. It may be that their bedroom was at the top of the North Tower on the South side as this was situated above one of the house bell boards and close to the 'amenities'.

There are around 5 bell boards located around the property, all with different sounding bells to differentiate the different zones of the house. The different bell boards had different labelled locations depending on which part of the castle the switchboard is located, and which servants are in that area.

For example, the maids' switchboard is located near the top of the North Tower and would have labels of the areas that the maids would be attending. A bell board on the

ground floor outside the Servants' Hall (just along from where the family tree is located near the exit door onto the East Terrace) is located next to where the servants had their lunch breaks, so this bell board would be a more general one for the whole house. The bell board and switch board in the Butler's Pantry catered for the day to day running of the house.

On certain bell boards throughout the castle there are some room names that have been covered over and/or changed. This would suggest that these rooms have changed their purpose over time. usually near fireplaces – there are often two. One would be for 'upstairs' staff (e.g. a ladies maid) one for 'downstairs' staff (e.g. someone to bring coal for the fire). A 'Beetween Maid (or Tweenie') would do both. Each bell rang in different parts of the castle to attract the right member of staff for the job.

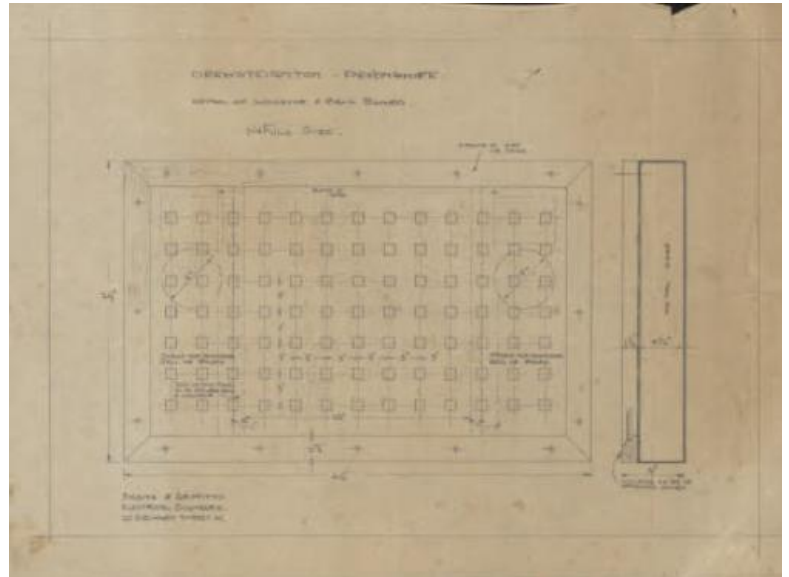


Image: Detail of Indicator and Bell Board at Castle Drogo. Copyright National Trust (NT902111)

Servant Snippets from the Archive

We have growing research through reminiscences and historical records and starting to learn more about the individual staff that worked here. The servant's hard work at Drogo didn't go unnoticed as Frances (youngest daughter) remembers:

"There must have been a staff comparable in size to that at Wadhurst, but we seldom saw many of the servants. The cleaning and the dusting downstairs would be done by the housemaids before the family came down to breakfast and our bedrooms would always be 'done' when we were out. Our clothes, often left littered about the room would be carefully put away, our suits pressed, shoes cleaned, riding breeches scrubbed and pressed, and our evening clothes put out ready on the bed."

Mr Martin Rayner and Mrs Sarah Jayne Rayner – Butler & Housekeeper

Mr Rayner (Martin Sadler Rayner) was the highest ranking of the servants and was responsible for the running of the house, including purchasing goods, hiring and firing and paying the other staff. A Butler's annual salary at the time would have been between £40-60. Mrs Rayner (Sarah Jane, nee. Chandler) was responsible for all the female staff

and for looking after all the castle's furnishings. The annual salary of a Housekeeper was usually between £5-10 less than the Butler's. Mrs Rayner left the employ of the Drewes in the late 1930s, but later returned in 1944 as the Cook to Mrs Frances Drewe.

Due to their important roles, Mr. and Mrs. Rayner resided at Castle Drogo and 'lived in'. It is not known if they had a single room or more than one. The North Tower was where the single girl servants lived. It may be that their bedroom was at the top of the North Tower on the South side as this was situated above one of the house bell boards and close to the 'amenities'.

Mr. Rayner's domain whilst working was the 'Butler's Pantry' and this was the hub of the castle for the servants. Mrs. Rayner did have a 'Housekeeper's Room' at Castle Drogo which is located on the ground floor corridor overlooking the East Terrace and closest to the North Tower. From here she would carry out her many tasks when time would allow and when she was not cooking for the family.

Irene Bond - Scullery Maid/Between Maid and Housemaid at Castle Drogo 1936 – 1941

Irene left school at 14 in 1936 and her first job was at Castle Drogo. Irene's exact role is unknown but it is likely, because of her age and inexperience, that she was employed as a scullery maid or between maid. The following paragraph is based on reminiscences of Hilda May who was employed at Castle Drogo as a between maid between 1928 and 1930.

Hilda started her duties at 7.00 am daily and, in the early evening, had to change into her uniform and lay up the servants' dining table, to serve them their dinner. Her working day normally ceased anytime between 7.00 and 8.00 pm. Hilda shared a room in the North Tower with another young girl. There were lots of spiders, and they used to throw their pillows at them. They always had to be in bed by 9.00 pm, even on their one half-day off per week.



Image: Irene May Bond (nee Shilston) in 1938 aged 16. Photograph reproduced by kind permission of Mrs. Angela Arnott (nee Bond).

For many female servants, household service represented a phase in their lives between leaving school and getting married. The usual working day could be long and the servants were allowed one afternoon off a week. They were encouraged to attend church on a Sunday. Indoor servants such as Irene received part of their earnings in kind, in the form of bed and board and, perhaps, free laundry. Indoor servants were expected to travel around with their employers.

By September 1939 Irene had been promoted to the role of housemaid – one of four housemaids at Castle Drogo – where she was chiefly ‘above stairs’, and better paid, than a scullery maid. She was meant to do much of the work out of view of the family.

She joined the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force in 1941 She served throughout World War II as a cook.

Thomas Holter – Chauffeur to the Drewes at Wadhurst Hall, Kilmorie and Castle Drogo, from 1910s to 1940s

Responsible for maintaining the cars (including a Clement, a Spycka and two Rolls Royces) and driving the family and guests about, Thomas Holter first started working as a Chauffeur at Wadhurst Hall in 1914. Him and his family later moved to a ‘Kilmorie Cottage Flat’ and then settled at Horsley Cottage in Drewsteignton, a house provided by Julius. In 1931 Thomas was one of the pallbearers at the funeral of Mr. J.C. Drewe held at the Holy Trinity Church, Drewsteignton.



Image: Thomas Holter - Chauffeur. Reproduced by kind permission of Amy Manley (nee Holter).

The Drewes’ cars were garaged in the coach house, garage and stable block complex, which is located 100 metres north of Castle Drogo and is Grade II listed, designed by Lutyens and built circa 1930. In the garage block there are five coach house garages and a two-room workshop. In the stable block there are four stables and a two-room groom’s cottage. The coach house, garage and stable block were each connected to the telephone exchange located in the Butler’s Pantry in Castle Drogo.

Thomas Holter's duties changed throughout his time with the Drewes. Although still primarily the chauffeur, his other tasks were those of a general handyman both within the house and also the estate. Horsley Cottage was linked to Castle Drogo by intercom and his daughter Amy Manley remembered the bell ringing at her home and Frances's voice saying *'Tom the lights have gone out'*. This would often entail a long trek down to the hydro house to repair or unblock the generator, sometimes during the hours of darkness. She also recalled her father having some involvement with the Waifs and Strays during World War II, not with the children but with repairs and general maintenance within the castle. A good deal of his time was spent in the switch room on the Service Corridor.

Albert Mudge – Estate labourer (and later the Nightwatchmen), from 1920s to 1960s

Albert Mudge was employed by the Drewe family as an estate labourer and was in charge of the hydraulic ram pumps (commonly referred to as 'hydrants'), which pump the spring water from three springs in Shute Coppice by Cross Farm (near Drewsteignton).

He was also in charge of the two turbines in the turbine house on the River Teign which produced the electricity for Castle Drogo from 1929. Albert was generally around helping anyone who needed him and was described as an assistant gardener and general handyman. Albert would be called upon when the Drewe family were having a dinner party of more than a dozen. He would be dressed up, much to his disgust, to help at table. During the Second World War, Albert was the 'Nightwatchman' at Castle Drogo.



Image: Gladys and Albert Mudge. Photograph reproduced by kind permission of Mrs. Celia Wollacott (née Martin).

Ellis Hall and Violet Hall (née Crofford) – Nightwatchman and Cleaner/Cook from 1949 to 1953/4

Back in 2022, we were lucky enough to have a visit from Mrs. Veronica Barnard whose grandparents, Ellis and Violet Hall (née Crofford), were 'in service' at Castle Drogo in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Veronica was interested to see where her grandparents worked and to rekindle memories of her visits to her grandparents as a child.

In 1949 Mrs. Frances Drewe employed Ellis as nightwatchman at Castle Drogo. Ellis, Violet and daughter Vera lived at Wellfield Cottage, which is in the grounds of Castle Drogo.

Violet did not initially have a role at Castle Drogo but then began to do some cleaning and helping in the kitchen, covering for the cook. At the request of Miss Mary Drewe, Violet eventually took over as cook. Ellis and Violet stayed at Drogo until Frances' death in 1954.



Image: Ellis Hall and Violet Hall. By kind permission of Veronica Barnard.

Philip Stentiford – Gardener from 1940 to 1964

Philip Stentiford was a Gardener at Castle Drogo from 1940 to 1947 and then Head Gardener up until his retirement in 1964. In June 1945, Philip lived in one of the tied cottages owned by the Drewe family called 'Wisdom Cottage', near Drewsteignton with his daughter Grace.

The cottage although beautiful and picturesque had no mains water or electricity. Each evening, Philip ran the diesel pump in an outbuilding that pumped spring water from the well up to the house. Light was provided by oil lamps and the ranges in the main room and kitchen were fired by logs and branches brought back daily from the estate. He would invariably walk back to the Castle grounds to tend the greenhouse, where his tomatoes and strawberries were legendary.



Image: Philip Stentiford circa 1910. Devonheritage.org

It is recorded that Philip's passion was the rose beds and much of his time was taken up in trimming the great yew hedges which surround the garden. All these were done with a standard pair of hand shears. Each corner was a meticulous right angle. He worked until he was 80 and on his death in 1965, his coffin rested in the chapel at Castle Drogo before his burial.

The Story of Childhood

This theme highlights stories of childhood that are woven throughout the castle's history. Many of the toys we have in the Castle Drogo collection are older than the castle and belonged to the Drewe children when growing up at Wadhurst Hall, their previous residence before moving to Devon. Some toys and books were handed down to be enjoyed by later generations at Castle Drogo including the doll's house displayed in the Day Nursery.



Mary Drew's Doll House at Castle Drogo ©National Trust Images/James Dobson

Many of the objects in this exhibition, including the games, children's desk and other toys have recently been donated to the Castle Drogo collection. During the Second World War, the castle was home to a residential war nursery that cared for children under five from the Waifs and Strays Society. After the war ended a private nursery continued at the castle until 1954 when it moved to Exmouth.

Thanks to a recent donation, we are in the process of cataloguing this unique collection of objects and documents that captures an exceptional moment in the castle's history, and through many accounts and oral histories we have the potential to bring these stories to life.

If we redisplayed the nursery, are you more interested in the story of the Drewe children who grew up before Drogo was built, the grandchildren who stayed here, or the evacuees who came to live here?

Object highlights from the exhibition:

- Adrian Drewe's chair

Used by Adrian Drewe for his studies at Eton College, widely considered one of the most prestigious schools. It was not unusual for boys to bring their own furniture with them for their rooms. The theme also highlights the experiences of the family and their privileged upbringing, in contrast to the children that came here during the Second World War.

- Mary Drewe's certificate

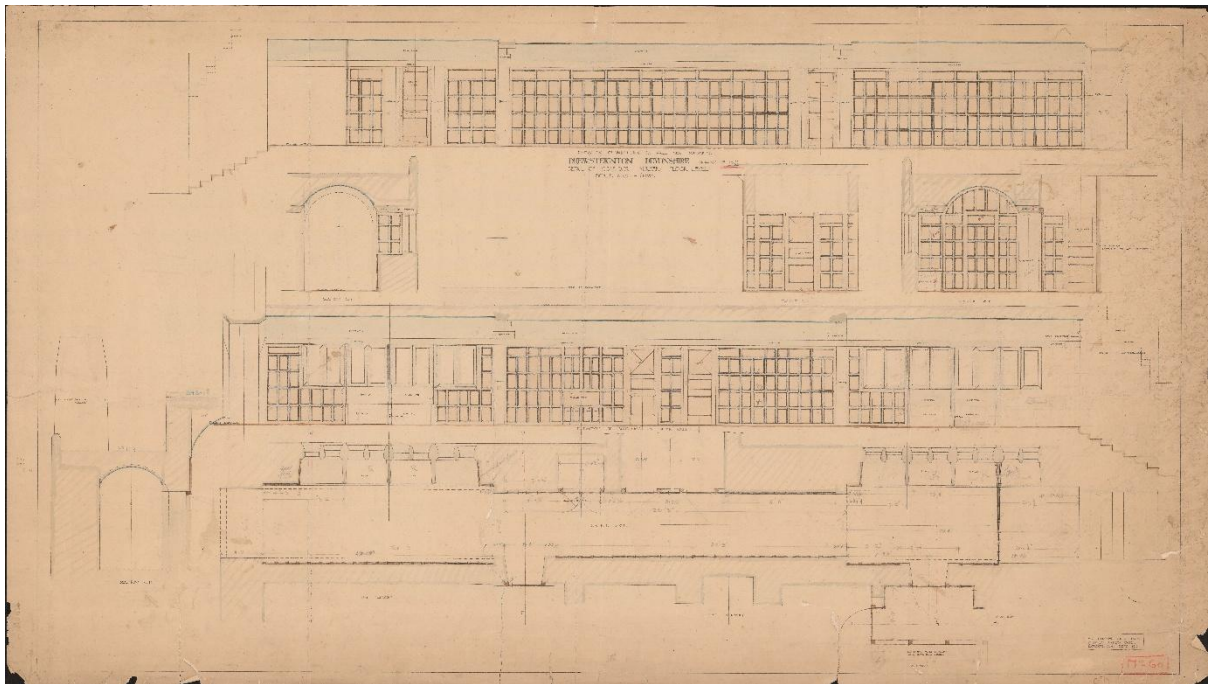
A framed certificate from the Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defence and The Waifs and Strays Society, acknowledging Mary's role in the War Nursery at Drogo. This is one of many objects that prompts conversation on the growing War Nurseries research and how we're starting to discover more details about this period of the castle with previously unseen objects like these.

- The Slide

Discovered in the latest donation of objects to the castle, this slide can be seen in one of the photographs, being played on by the children who were here during the war. This slide accompanies many other toys and games played with during the 40s and 50s.

A place for children? Design of the castle & how it was used

Lutyens loved designing spaces for children. The Nurseries at Drogo feature lower windowsills for views down the Teign Gorge and are east facing, perfect for ensuring the children were 'early to bed and earlier to rise'. The bath in the Nursery Corridor is also sunken into the floor to allow the person bathing the children to be at their eye level.



Details of Corridor, Nursery Floor level by Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens (London 1869 - London 1944) Credit © National Trust / Ben Dale

The Nurseries were one of the first areas of the castle to be completed and although the children were grown up by the time the castle was finished, the rooms were still used by the different generations of the family and later experienced by the children during the 40s and 50s. The grey angora rabbit owned by Catherine, one of the children who lived at Castle Drogo during the private nursery lived in one of the bathrooms on the top floor!

When the family were in residence, they rarely went into the Service Corridor as it was almost entirely the domain of the servants. However, the doll's house was situated in the recess of the window at the dining room end of the corridor and, if they had behaved well, the children were allowed to get down from the dining table and play with the doll's house.

Julius Drewe's granddaughter, Rosemary, spent substantial amounts of time at Castle Drogo from the late 1920s and into the 30s and remembers using the day nursery, where in the afternoons they had to keep quiet as her grandfather was asleep in one of the rooms below. If they made a noise, the message 'keep the children quiet' would be sent up. On occasion he would also think of things to keep the children occupied. This included making parachutes to send out of the nursery window with a prize going to the best one.

During the War, Frances Drewe and her eldest daughter Mary continued to live in the castle, mostly occupying the rooms off the Green Corridor. The rest of the Castle was either closed up or utilised by the Waifs and Strays Society.

Ongoing research into Castle Drogo's Residential War Nursery

The War Nursery here was a unique phase in the history of Castle Drogo, of relatively short duration, which drew together four significant elements: the staff, the children, the host or resident family who owned the buildings, and the location itself.

As part of an on-going partnership between the University of Oxford's Centre for the History of Childhood and the National Trust, a pilot project in Summer 2024 sought to find out more about Castle Drogo's War Nursery and its place within the history of Britain's Home Front from 1939 to 1945. Nurseries took many forms. They ranged in size from as few as four preschool children in relatively modest homes, such as Vicarages, to as many as eighty children housed in palatial Country Estates.

A War Nursery like that at Castle Drogo required around ten staff to care for the children, including nursery assistants and domestic staff, all of whom were managed by a matron and sister who were trained nurses.

When the Castle Drogo War Nursery was founded in November 1940, almost half of London families who applied to admit their child to a Residential War Nursery did so because of the impact of these air-raids. After 1942, most London parents who applied to place their child in a Residential War Nursery did so because mothers needed to work. Whatever the reason for admission, most children who lived in War Nurseries like Castle Drogo were part of ordinary families who wanted to care for their youngest children, but whose lives had been turned upside down by the wartime emergency.

We estimate that there were 30 and 50 children at any one time with a Matron (who was a trained nurse), a Sister and several untrained staff. The first Matron was a Miss Godfrey; later Miss Brotherston took over, pictured in the photograph below.

The memories we have speak of happy scenes of children running in the fields near the Castle, riding in the donkey cart or on a trike, making dens, or playing in the Bunty House.



Photograph of the entrance at Castle Drogo with children from the Waifs and Strays Society during W.W.2. © National Trust / Lynda Aiano

At the conclusion of the war, the use of the castle by the Waifs and Strays Society came to an end. However, Mary Drewe (and perhaps her mother) must have missed the presence of children in the house and with the assistance of Miss Brotherton, set up a Private Residential Nursery School for a small number of children from what the first pupil described as wealthy but 'broken' families. An advertisement in the Western Morning News for the babies' nursery in March 1945, described Castle Drogo as having "healthy, beautiful grounds", and as being "a happy home, 15 miles from Exeter, and 900 ft above sea level".

