

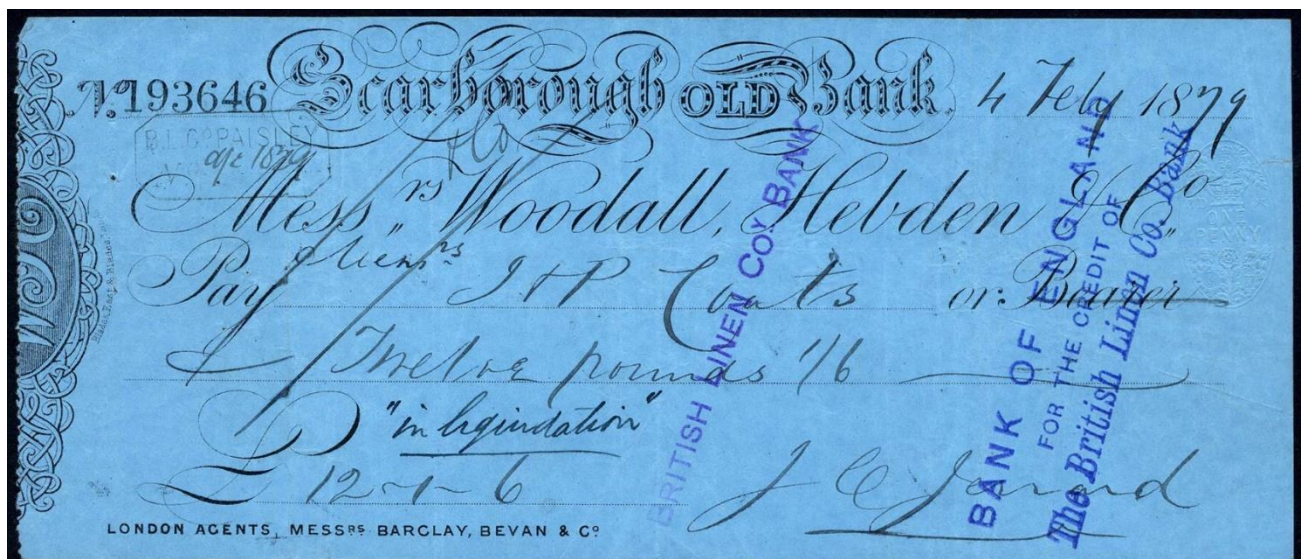
Festivals, Carnivals and Celebrations and Saucy Sophia's Snippets plus trailer for next month.

September, 2023.

George, the eldest son the William and Emily Ashbourne, sat in a corner seat of the second-class railway carriage of the Midland Railway (MR) idly watching the landscape of Warwickshire pass by, orchards of apple, plumb, quince, damson, and pear trees. In many of the orchards he perceived groups of farm hands collecting the ripened fruit which were placed in wicker baskets waiting to be loaded onto hay wains on which usually two lads were engaged stacking the fruit to be taken to market. In other fields cattle and sometimes sheep could be seen grazing as the train of maroon/red carriages drawn by a 4-2-2 locomotive also displaying the maroon livery of the railway company. It was now the 20th September, 1887, and George Ashbourne was enroute for Scarborough in the North Riding of Yorkshire, the county the natives referred to as God's wonderful County, but this was not a holiday visit, it was all business.

Almost twenty-four months earlier, on the 16th October, 1885, William Ashbourne, the principal of the business of Ashbourne and Sons, carriage builders of Ross in Herefordshire had received a letter from a certain Nathaniel Smallbeer of Regent Livery Stables and Carriage Hire of Victoria Road, Scarborough placing an order for two "Victorias", with the offer to purchase four more if the first two proved satisfactory. Initially William was delighted, to receive an order from so far way suggested that the firm's reputation for quality and efficiency had spread far and wide. The writer, Mr. Smallbeer, had promised payment of fifty per cent on acceptance of the order and the balance on delivery to Regent Livery Stables, and requested an invoice for the total cost including carriage by railway.

An invoice was duly despatched to Nathaniel Smallbeer, and within a week a reply was received enclosing a cheque drawn on the bank of Messrs. Woodall, Hebden & Company OLD Bank Scarborough.



Example of a cheque of Messrs. Woodall, Hebden & Co.

All seemed in order and so to show good faith on the 9th January, 1886 when the construction of the two Victorias had been completed they were loaded onto flat waggons at the “Great Western” railway station in Ross-on-Wye for delivery to Mr. Smallbeer’s address in Scarborough. Again, within a week another cheque was duly received for the balance of the monies due. Five weeks later another letter arrived from Mr. Smallbeer stating his entire satisfaction with the two vehicles and placing an order for the extra four, but with only a token payment by way of deposit. George had not been happy saying to his Father, “I think we should be cautious, is his business as good as it seems, last time he paid fifty per cent, and now only a cheque for Two Pounds, Ten Shillings and Six Pence. We could ask our Bankers to make an enquiry as to Mr. Smallbeer’s credit worthiness.”

William considered the thought sitting in his study at their home in Western-under-Penyard, but replied “No Son, the Gentleman was as good as his word and we will only give offence by instigating such enquiries.”

And so, against George’s better judgement, obedient to his Father’s wishes, instructions were given for the manufactory to begin construction of a further four Victorias once the order they were presently engaged on had been completed, but George could not relieve himself of doubts regarding the whole matter. By the first week of July construction had been completed and the four vehicles were ready for delivery. William wrote to Nathaniel Smallbeer to inform him that the vehicles were ready for despatch and requested the balance of the monies due including carriage by railway. Three weeks went by and nothing was heard from Scarborough, so a polite reminder letter was sent requesting payment. Then on the 4th August, 1887 a letter was received from Mr. Smallbeer enclosing a cheque for twenty per cent of the amount due and requesting delivery of the four vehicles as soon as possible. This action put the Ashbourne household in a dilemma. They could tell Mr. Smallbeer that unless payment in full is received within the next two weeks, then they will cancel the order and hold the deposits against future sale, meaning that if they could not sell the Victorias for the same sum, then the deposit would be applied to make up the amount due. The problem here was that although they had built Victorias before, they were a popular light vehicle, they were rather expensive compared to gigs, traps and dogcarts and to make space they would have to be offered for sale at auction. As an alternative they could threaten Mr. Smallbeer with legal action for breach of contract, but this would be both expensive and protracted with no certainty of success. So it was decided to try another letter to the Proprietor of the Livery Stables, pointing out that they had accepted the order in good faith, but that they could not send the vehicles without payment in full.



Example of a “Victoria”, the very popular light carriage.

By the 20th August they had not received any response from Scarborough, and so another reminder was despatched. At the end of August, a rather begging letter arrived from Smallbeer pleading time to pay and enclosing a cheque for ten pounds. At the family discussion George was in favour of sending Smallbeer notice to comply with the contract within the next fourteen days, adding that they should follow this with a letter stating that the matter of Smallbeer's default would be placed in the hands of their solicitor. Grandfather Ashbourne shook his head sadly and muttered, "None of this would have happened in my day, great mistake galivanting across the country, better to keep with people you know." William, George's father remained silence, but seriously considering the situation.

Emily, George's mother said, looking up from the dress collar she was croqueting, "You can't trust these foreigners, suspicious lot, all of them!"

This outburst provoked George to remark, "Now Mother, Yorkshire, even the North Riding of Yorkshire, is hardly a foreign country, they are all stout and true Englishmen, anyway, unlike brother Edward you have hardly left Herefordshire so what do you know of foreigners!"

At this William looked up from his consideration of the problem and looking sharply at his Son, in a severe voice said "That's quite enough George, you will apologise to your Mother this instant!"

"Yes Father" said George rather humbled and turning to his Mother added "I'm sorry Mother, that was quite unforgivable of me, I ask your forgiveness."

Emily, smiling softly at her triumph, and knowing that it is better to quietly accept the apology merely said to George "That's quiet all right dear, this whole business must be getting on all our nerves."

At this point their Sister, who was only there because the discussion had followed dinner in the dining room after Mrs. Jones, the daily, had left, with typical feminine clarity of observation remarked, looking up from her copy of that month's "Young Ladies Journal" and directed at George, "Why don't you just go across to Scarborough and give Mr. Smallbeer a good thrashing, that will let him know not to mess us about, that's what Edward would do".

"By Jove, I think you've got it," said William looking directly at Annabel "Not thrashing the man, might land George before the beak, but a visit could well clear the whole business up. Either Smallbeer pays up, or he understands the contract is revoked and we sue for expenses plus breach of contract.

Through the open windows, it being a warm late summer evening, at quiet moments they could hear Emma's soft silky voice as she sang lullabies to the two babies "Hush a bye baby in the treetop" to try to induce sleep, and a little later " three men in a tub baker, the candle stick maker"

"Well I'll be damned" exclaimed Grandfather Albert who had been quietly re-filling his briar whilst reading that part of the "Morning Post" he had missed earlier in the day, "General von Werder died yesterday, damned good chap he was, knocked the Frogs for six in 1870, says here that he died at Grussow in Pomerania. Hmm rather older than I thought." Turning to his Son he continued "You remember him from the newspaper reports at the time don't you? Impressive list of honours, including being elevated to the nobility, Graf von Werder, Pour le Merite, Grand Cross of the Red Eagle, Hohenzollern,

Commander of the Imperial Order of Leopold, and many more.” But none of the family were listening, the decision had been made that George would go to Scarborough to confront Smallbeer. Emma, George’s wife, they married at St. Mary’s Church in Ross on the Saturday the 6th June, 1885, who had been seeing their two children, Alfred born in 1886 and baby Charles only four months of age, returned to the dining room to hear of the decision that her husband would be going to Scarborough.

“When will you go? By railway no doubt, but how long will it take to get there?” she enquired of George, concerned as always for her husband’s welfare.

Annabell, who was now twenty-two years of age pronounced rather irately “I really don’t know what all the fuss is about, just look it up in Bradshaw’s.” There was an awkward silence, they all knew the reason for Annabell’s outburst, her fiancé, who had been posted to New Zealand by the Colonial Office had been killed when Mount Tarawera suffered a volcanic eruption. He was one of an estimated 153 people who died on that frightful night on the 10th June, 1886, just over twelve months ago, when the famous pink and white terraces near Rotorua were obliterated, and she was both fearful and convinced that she would be left on the shelf, to die an old spinster after years of miserable dependence of her relatives, and always getting in the way.



Pink and White Terraces near Rotorua in New Zealand by Charles Bloomfield.

And so at the family conference on the evening of the 13th September, 1887 it was decided that George should travel to Scarborough to confront Mr. Smallbeer and establish once and for all if Smallbeer was going to settle the debt or not. However, it was to be another week before George set off for the North Sea port and spa resort partly because there was business urgently needing his attention, and because Grandmother Dorothea, who was now seventy-five years of age and addicted to laudanum (the main ingredients of which are brandy and opium) and had suffered ill health for years had taken a turn for the worst. Finally, on the 20th September George walked to the Great Western Railway (GWR) halt at Western-under-Penyard to embark on the first train to Hereford. Changing there for the train to Worcester Foregate Street Railway Station via Colewell and the tunnel under the

Malvern Hills, and so George was travelling through West Herefordshire and on to Worcestershire on the “GWR”. At Foregate Street, a station shared with the “MR” George changed again and now, behind one of Matthew Kirtley’s 2-4-0 passenger engines they steamed along, through Bromsgrove to Birmingham New Street Station where there was a delay, and then on to Doncaster, stopping at Tamworth for the Leicester connection.



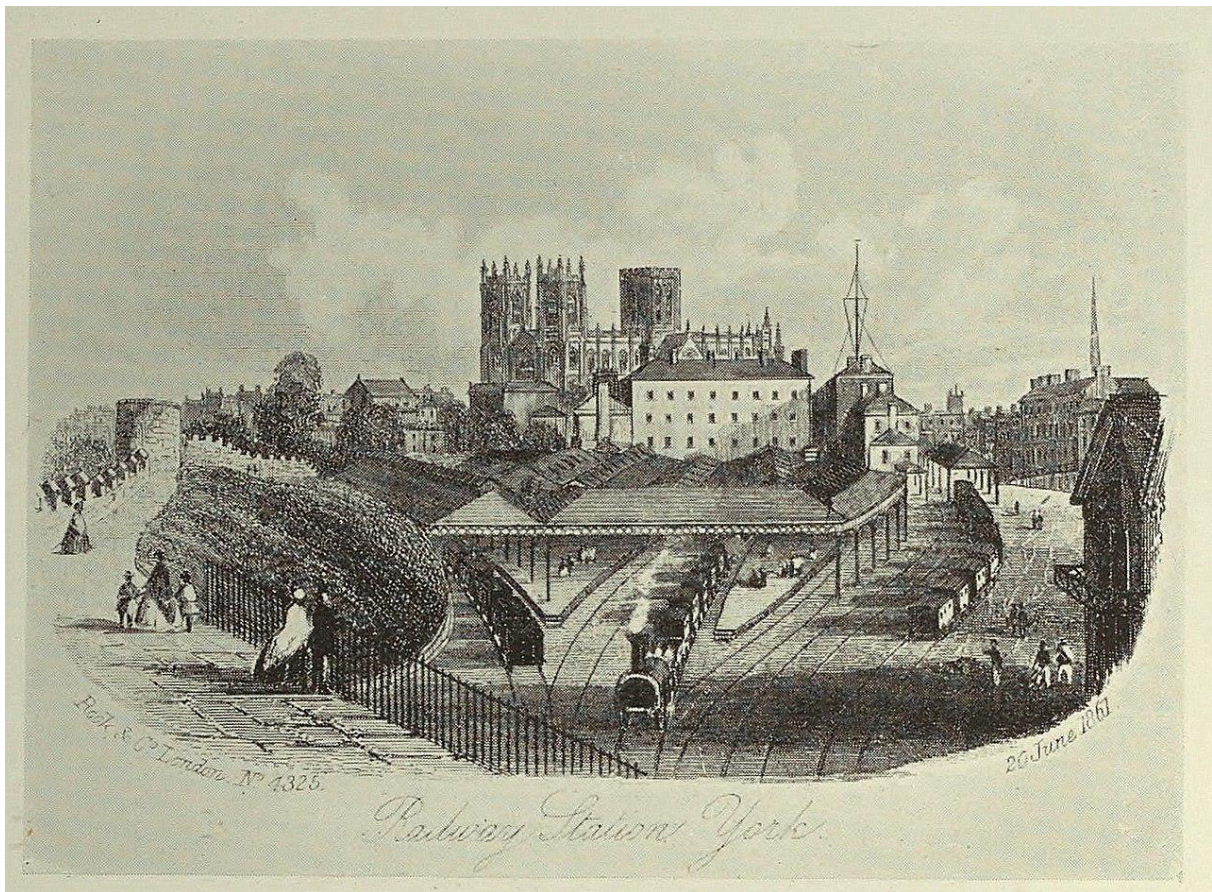
Midland Railway Kirtley 2-4-0 Passenger Locomotive

There were further stops at Burton, Derby, the headquarters of the railway where George was very relieved to be able to alight from the carriage of the train composed of a mixture of four and six wheeled non corridor stock where a longer halt allowed time to visit the platform convenience and obtain a little refreshment from station cafe. It was just as well, the “MR” across the Midlands seems to consist of one junction station after another with an annoying wait at each, Ambergate Junction, Clay Cross Junction, Chesterfield, and a delay at Sheffield before arriving at Doncaster, a joint “Midland” and “Great Northern” station. George descended from the train and set off to find the north bound “Great Northern” platform. There was a wait of 38 minutes before the Great Northern Railway (GNR) express for York arrived, a splendid bright green locomotive, one of Patrick Stirling’s Eight Foot Singles drawing a collection of six wheeled carriages all in the company’s varnished teak. Most of the route to York was over “Lancashire and Yorkshire” metals, a commercial treaty arrangement, but by the time George arrived under the curving roof of the major junction station the sun had set and it was obvious that he would not be able to travel further that day.



George travels north to York on the “Great Northern”

Leaving the Railway Station George was fortunate to secure a room at the “William Etty”, a smart hotel in Micklegate, named after the famous artist who is heralded as the saviour of much of the city walls and the bars (gate houses) of York in the late 1830’s, as well as putting a stop to plans to largely remodel York Minster after the fire in 1829. The hotel certainly lived up to its name, there were numerous pictures adorning the walls depicting the works of the great man who had died thirty-eight years ago in November 1849. There was a print of the North Midland Railway station within the city walls which had so much dismayed William Etty, although since demolished to allow through running between London and Edinburgh via the present railway station without the city walls.



North Midland Railway Station within the City Walls of York in 1861.

Examples of William Etty's work included lithographic copies of the Monk Bar from beyond the city walls, displayed in the entrance hall,



The Monk Bar by William Etty, RA

Whilst in the drawing room there was another lithograph of William Etty's work, a painting of Miss Mary Arabella Jay painted in 1819, and in the Dining Room a copy of a



Miss Mary Arabella Jay by William Etty, RA, 1819

self-portrait painted in 1823 when he was thirty-six years of age, which also proved that he had been born in 1787, exactly one hundred years ago. There were other examples scattered about the hotel, in corridors and the guests' bedrooms, some well-known and others less so,



Self-portrait by William Etty, RA, 1823.

including a steel engraving of “Combat” the original painted in 1848, and lastly, reserved for a bedroom, an 1835 painting “Venus and her Satellites”, represented in lithographic print.



Venus and her satellites by William Etty, RA, 1835.

After an enjoyable breakfast in a hotel he was sorry to leave, George returned to York Railway Station in time to purchase a railway ticket and board the North Eastern Railway (NER) train departing at seven hours of the fore noon for Scarborough forty two and a half miles away on the North Sea coast at a cost of Ten Shillings and Six Pence first class, this was somewhat extravagant but for the relatively short distance George decided to treat himself, and he had found the second class journey to Doncaster rather irksome and tiring. It was a two-hour journey stopping at numerous wayside stations including Castle Howard and Rillington Junction where the line diverged for Whitby. The route had been surveyed and built for speed of construction and cost saving, and completed in just over twelve months, mainly by laying the permanent way around hills rather than tunnelling through them, but an attractive scenic route had been created in the mid 1840's. Arriving at Scarborough Railway Station at noon, George booked in to the North Eastern Hotel near the station, and set off to find Mr. Smallbeer's premises. After an hour's walking, partly due to misdirection by various passers-by who seemed to think they knew the way but did not George arrived at Mr. Smallbeer's livery stables, but unfortunately the proprietor was not there, and the stable boy, who was quite indifferent to George's enquiries, had no idea where his employer had gone or when he might return. Not a good omen for transacting business. George decided to search for somewhere to obtain luncheon, the time now being close to two o'clock in the afternoon, and fortunately he came across delightful refreshment rooms overlooking the south beach, where George lingered longer than he had planned enjoying Welsh rarebit, scones, cream and jam all washed down with a pot of earl grey tea and milk, served on a matching bone china tea service with silver cutlery set on a white damask table cloth. The pretty waitress was perhaps the cause of George's lingering, as he particularly enjoyed her open and endearing personality. She had asked him if he would be going to the Harvest Festival the day after tomorrow at Herston on Friday, (23rd September) and on hearing that her customer did not have any plans to do so she was both surprised and dismayed declaring that he would be a silly to miss such an

event as it would be great fun with much dancing and all having a good time. George wondered if she was hoping he would offer to take her, and she was certainly attractive, but he thought of Emma at home and could not bear to raise false hopes in the girl's heart. He did discover that her father and brother had been lost at sea in a great storm a few years ago and she had to work to support her grief-stricken mother, adding that there were many worse places of employment, and smiling sweetly disclosed that she had such a nice gentleman to talk to. Her name he discovered to be Madelaine, and that they were lucky this afternoon as Madam is out with her "friends" it being later revealed owned the establishment and is a right sourpuss, always finding fault. "She needs a husband to keep her in order, though he would need to be blind to keep her sweet" she giggled. On leaving and making his way back to Mr. Smallbeer's premises George reflected that probably the girl had mistaken him for an unattached chap, a possible future husband, and then again, perhaps not, who knows. When Madelaine returned home, she sat on the kitchen table, the only table they possessed and recited the afternoons conversation with the "nice gentleman" to her aged mother.

George called again at the Livery Stables but finding that Mr. Smallbeer had not returned he repaired to the North Eastern Hotel where he penned a letter to his wife Emma and read the parts of the "Morning Post" he had purchased at York but not yet read, later he dined at the same hotel.



Madelaine sat on the kitchen table and recited to her mother.

After breakfasting on a large plate of fried eggs, bacon, black pudding, fried bread, a large cup of English breakfast tea followed by toast, butter and marmalade at the North Eastern Hotel, George made his way again to the premises of Nathaniel Smallbeer in Victoria

Road. On arrival he was ushered into a small and disorganised office on the first floor above a small part of the stables and informed that the Gaffer would see him shortly, although George was kept waiting for the best part of half an hour. When he arrived, Mr. Smallbeer's appearance did not immediately inspire confidence, and it was obvious from the overall view of the situation that the business did not live up to its rather grandiose name, which George had been left with plenty of to assess both from the disorganised office and the view of general inactivity in the yard from the office window. George quickly came to the opinion that travelling to Scarborough had been a sheer waste of time and money, but now that he had arrived, he decided to stay and follow up enquiries.

"Good of you to come old chap" declared Mr. Smallbeer exuding a joviality that George rightly perceived to be more of an assumed manner than delivered with any depth of gratitude. The visiting card George had given to the stable boy on arrival which Smallbeer was holding now lay on the desk in front of him as though he needed constant reminder of his visitors' particulars.

"Now what can I do for you?" Enquired the Proprietor, "Have you been to see the castle yet, and I recommend a good walk along the promenade, good healthy Yorkshire sea air, just what you need, a what!"

This was obviously an attempt to avoid the purpose of Mr. Ashbourne's visit. Nathaniel was very well aware of the outstanding debt regarding the "Victorias", he just did not wish to discuss the matter, and George guessed correctly that Smallbeer's business was in trouble, possibly grave trouble.

Not wishing to cause offence and risk a beating at the hands of the stable lads, George approached the matter with some caution, though he would have preferred to tell Mr. Smallbeer that he had not travelled across the country just to see the sea.

"I thought I had better come to see you, as we have not received a reply to our letters, we thought one of us should call on you," George did not get any further, he was halted by Mr. Smallbeer's interruption in typical blunt Yorkshire style.

"No need to remind me, I know what you're here for, you want your money don't you, well you had better come with me, we'll call on my Solicitor, he's good at explaining things, that way you'll get it from the horse's mouth, a what." Adding that "It's only a short walk to the Northern Bank Chambers where Penwig has his office, he'll soon let you know what's what."

George thought that he would be lucky if any good came of seeing the Solicitor, but decided he had little option, and so after about ten minutes they arrived and were shown into the Solicitors office by his articled clerk. The Honourable Archibald Penwig was a little round and bubbly gentleman dressed in a black frockcoat over black and grey striped trousers, black shoes, white spats, whilst a crisp white wing collar shirt and brightly coloured large bow tie completed his dress complimented by a gold watch chain attached to his black waistcoat.

"Now gentleman" said the Solicitor, and turning to his clerk said "Mr Buxton, are you not forgetting something?" The harassed clerk quickly turned from the door by which he had been leaving to return to his own little cubby hole and quickly produced another chair so that both the visitors could be seated as they were invited to so do.

"As I was saying." Continued Mr. Penwig. "Highly unusual this is, discussing a Client's business before a third party, but nevertheless, Mr. Smallbeer has persuaded me to explain the situation to you." Turning to George. "I am given to understand that my Client seems to think that he is in debt to you, would you like to explain to me how this indebtedness occurred." In a tone that was both conciliatory and doubting at the same time, it was designed to put George Ashbourne at a disadvantage, a ploy which almost succeeded. George thought for a few moments before replying.

"I trust I am correct in assuming that Mr. Smallbeer has acquainted you with the circumstances of the case." Mr Penwig sat still waiting for George to continue. "Almost two years ago we received an order for four "Victorias" with promise of payment, the vehicles have been built and for over twelve months we have been waiting for settlement." And continuing "We did receive a request previously from your client to supply two "Victorias" which were duly delivered and our invoice settled promptly, thus when we

received a further order for four “Victorias” we thought we could rely on Mr. Smallbeer to honour the contract and proceeded with the construction of the four vehicles. However, despite repeated requests for settlement we have not even received an offer of settlement or explanation for the delay.”

The Solicitor then asked a few questions regarding dates of correspondence which he made notes of with his gold fountain pen in a file before him on his desk. Then turning to his client, he enquired if this summary corresponded with his recollection, and receiving a response in the affirmative, he turned to George observing. “It seems to me that there is no debt to settle, you have the carriages in your coach house plus a small deposit, therefore you can find another buyer and simply cancel your invoice. My dear young gentleman.” Adding “There is no case to answer.”

The expression on George’s face must have revealed a mixture of fury, annoyance that at home they had not given due consideration to this aspect of the case, and what action to adopt now. The Solicitor was right though, they had received a deposit Two Pounds, Ten Shillings, and Six Pence plus Twenty per cent of the total price, he should at least be able to resist returning the monies received so far. To allow time to think, and to return possibly to a more conciliatory discussion, George enquired. “May I ask gentlemen the reason for the cancellation, if it is not too delicate a question, were the first two “Victorias” short of expectation, or is there some other matter?”

The Solicitor was about to say that he could not possibly be party to his client’s personal opinions when Mr. Smallbeer spoke up, having gained confidence from the way his solicitor had demolished the problem he had been worrying about for some weeks. On its own Smallbeer could have coped well enough, but he had larger worries, turning to the Solicitor he said. “Tell him Mr. Penwig, better let Mr. Ashbourne know what’s been going on.”

The bespectacled Solicitor looked up from his desk blotter and remarking to his client. “Oh. Very well then if you wish.” He turned to George and enquired. “Are you familiar with Pearce and Brooks, 1865 or was it 1866, my young fellow?”

“Not especially.” Replied George wondering if they were somehow involved.

“A test case” muttered Mr. Penwig “Set a legal precedent nineteen years ago, all over the newspapers at the time, but then people’s memories are short, always looking for the next sensation. As my Client does not seem to mind me acquainting you with the situation, the facts of the matter are that just as the case of Mr. Pearce who hired a Brougham to Miss Brooks knowing her local reputation, she was a loose woman, a woman of easy virtue, a lady of the night and a lady of pleasure who hired the carriage for the sole purpose of drumming up customers the only way she knew how, by displaying her charms or as much as she could get away with. When the vehicle was returned not only was it damaged, but she refused to settle the bill, all Mr. Pearce had was the deposit. Mr. Pearce brought a legal action against Miss Brooks, and my learned judge decided that as the purpose of the hire was to promote an illegal activity, then the contract for hire was also illegal and he dismissed the case. You see Mr. Ashbourne, your “Victorias” were hired to Juliet Gotobed, a local “Madam” of a house of ill repute, both vehicles were used on quite a few occasions to display her “Girls” about the town, and she requested more carriages, hence the additional order, Nathaniel Smallbeer here extended credit to Miss Gotobed, I cannot think why.”



Example of a “Brougham.”

“She was very difficult to deal with, Mr. Penwig, good as gold when she was getting her own way, and a veritable amazon if you asked for money. We are in business to please the customer, but this was different, you don’t know her Mr. Penwig, a right “Madam” that one.”

“Anyway” resumed the Lawyer, “Unfortunately you” nodding to Mr. Smallbeer, “were badly advised, I cannot think how, and a legal action was brought against Miss Gotobed for settlement of the debt, naturally the defence referred to “Pearce and Brooks” and the trial judge agreed, case dismissed.”

“It was a swindle,” declared Mr. Smallbeer, “Why do we have courts and all those chaps in periwigs when all they do is stich up honest folk just trying to make an honest living, I don’t mind telling you, Mr. Penwig, I’ve been robbed and the law just sits by and lets it happen, a right disgrace, that’s what I call it.”

If George wondered what would come next, he did not have long to wait.

“But it did not end there, did it my Friend,” said Mr. Penwig, “No, you were persuaded to Appeal, and that cost more money, and just landed you in greater debt.”

“I know.” Bemoaned the unfortunate proprietor of the Livery Stables. “I’ll be very lucky to escape the Union Workhouse in Victoria Street, once it’s all sold there will be very little left after I’ve settled Messrs Hassel, Grab and McNab’s fees.” And the poor man looked so dejected that George felt quite sorry for him.

For a while the conversation continued, and George thought he had heard enough when suddenly the Solicitor bounced from his swivel chair and announced that a table is waiting for them at the “Earl of Londesborough”, adding for George’s benefit that the tavern is almost next door, not far to walk. On arrival they were shown into a private dining room on the first floor overlooking the South Bay from the vantage point of Bland’s Cliff. Once seated, and Mr. Penwig set Mr. Smallbeer’s mind at rest by announcing that luncheon would be entirely his pleasure, the repass was ordered, and the Lawyer sat back in his chair saying that he had a proposition to make that could be to their mutual benefit. With his guests undivided attention, he proceeded to outline his plan, being that Mr. Smallbeer now had two “Victorias” plus other carriages, harnesses and bridles which he would be unlikely to have a use for in the near future, if at all, whereas Mr. Ashbourne had a business supplying carriages etc. The chances of Mr. Smallbeer obtaining a good price for these assets locally, with the taint of Miss Gotobed, are very unlikely. If Mr. Ashbourne could see his way clear to make a reasonable offer, below actual value, a deal could be

struck to their mutual advantage, Mr. Smallbeer could be saved the Union Workhouse, and Mr. Ashbourne would acquire portable assets for his business at a knock down price and avoid the inconvenience of manufacture.

“What do you think, Gentlemen.” He concluded.

“I dun’ no,” said Smallwood, seems like I lose out anyway. Before George could say anything, the Lawyer piped up. “Look at it this way, if you sold the lot to Mr. Ashbourne here,” indicating George “Your Creditors will think you are doing your best to settle the debt, you own the stables unencumbered so far, and I think I could arrange to sell them for Six Hundred Pounds, if Mr. Ashbourne paid you One Hundred Pounds for the stock you would have just enough to pay Messrs Hassel, Grab and McNab’s fees, put you in the clear, Old Boy, you would still have your house.”

“But I owe them more than Nine Hundred Pounds.” Wailed Smallbeer.

“I think not.” Said Mr. Penwig, “Not when I’ve finished with them” said with a shy grin.

And so, it was settled, George would arrange transport for the carriages etc, following some bargaining George gave Smallbeer a cheque for Twenty Pounds, with a promissory note for the balance to be paid as and when the carriages were sold.

Well satisfied with the days business, Mr. Penwig announced that he had better return to his chambers as he now had much to attend to, and that he would be drawing up an Agreement for them both to sign, checking where Mr. Ashbourne would be staying so he could be notified at attend the signing, whilst Mr. Smallbeer asked George what his plans are for the afternoon, and being informed that apart from transport Mr. Ashbourne had none, Nathaniel Smallbeer, who had recovered his sense of proportion and joviality, offered to show his visitor the town, saying that it would be a pity not to see such a fine town having come so far.

Having obtained George’s agreement, Nathaniel, they now allowed themselves the liberty of addressing each other by their Christian names, firstly explained that the tavern they were seated in is named after the founder of the Scarborough Football Club, which was established in 1879 when a group of cricketers, including the Earl of Londesborough, were looking for a game to play in the winter, and at a meeting in North Marine Road they started the football club. Great celebration this year, the almost ex Livery Stable proprietor beamed, football being his principal hobby, and he continued to expand on the club’s success as members of the Northern Leage, and their joining the FA Club this very year, 1887.

“Isn’t there a fair here on St. Michael’s Day,” Enquired George, “The 29th September.”

“There was once,” Said Nathaniel, “Last one in 1788, closed down by taxation and that lot at Seamer, couldn’t survive with what the Revenue Men wanted, always the way.” Nathaniel grumbled. “Soon as a business thrives it’s closed down by lopsided law and taxation.”

George remembered the train yesterday stopping at Seamer before Filey and then Scarborough. Further enquiry revealed that not only would the fair at Seamer be starting on Michaelmas Day, the 29th September, but it was one of most important along the coast, and also at the village of Herston tomorrow, the 22nd September, there would be one of the most enjoyable Harvest Festivals in North Yorkshire.

Thus, on the morrow George borrowed a gig from Mr. Smallbeer, for which the Proprietor was only to please to oblige George and throw in a bag of oats for the horse. George did not hurry, he knew that the festival would not start until mid-day, and thus a leisurely gentle trot over a distance of approximately fifteen miles saw George arrive at ten minutes past one o’clock, in time for a light luncheon at the “Fox and Hounds.” However, he had hardly started, in fact he had only just placed an order with the landlord when a smartly dressed gentleman in a Harris tweed Norfolk jacket and matching plus fours greeted George with “Good afternoon, sir, George Ashbourne, Mr. George Ashbourne, I presume, good day to you sir.” And extending his right hand in a gesture of friendship, continued, “Maitland, Archibald Maitland, Maitland Grange at your service, sir.”

George was much taken aback, wondering how this complete stranger could know his name, but did not immediately say so, instead he greeted the stranger with, “Very pleased to make your acquaintance, sir, but I am intrigued, how did you know my name as I am sure we have not been introduced.”

“Quite straightforward, old chap,” replied the other, “The gig you arrived in has the name “Regent Livery Stables” lettered on the side.



Example of a Gig, not the best picture as the shafts are broken, but included to give a correct impression.

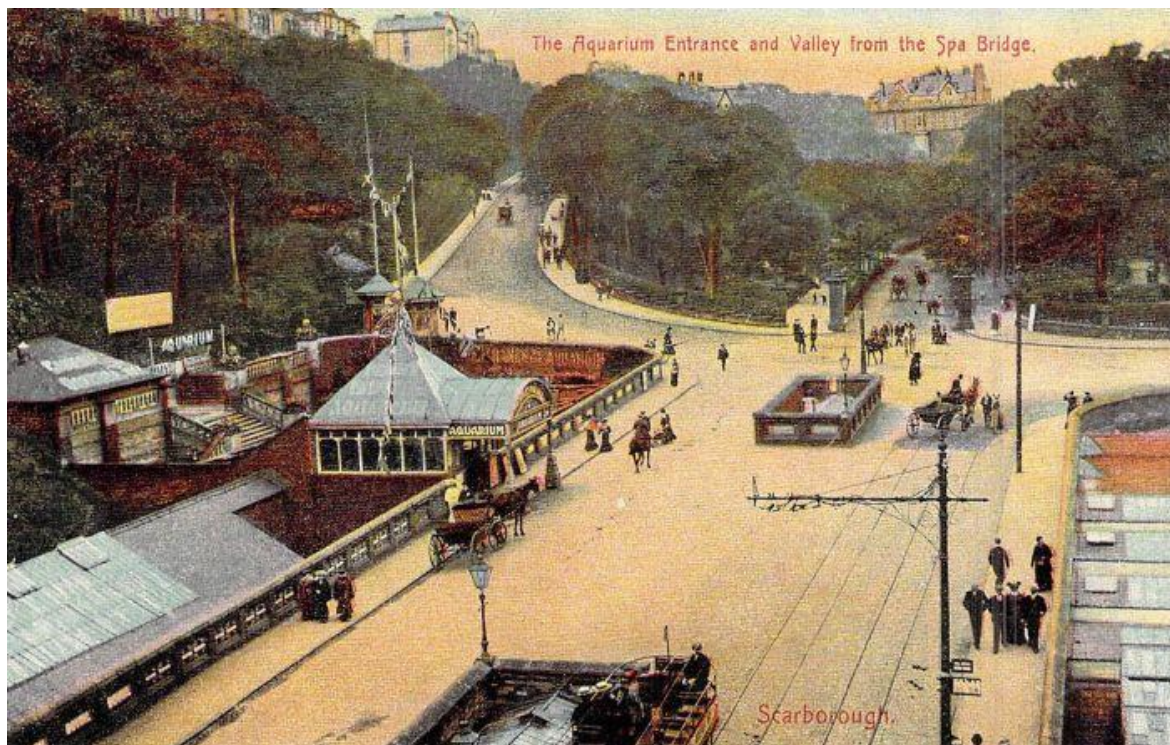
“You’ve been the gossip of the county, or at least that part around Scarborough since you arrived, we all know how that unfortunate fool Smallbeer was hoodwinked by that loose woman Gotobed, regular gorgon she is, pity the trial judge didn’t order a good birching for her and follow that up with transport to New South Wales, not possible now of course, mores the pity!”

They were now joined by several more chaps who all muttered similar sentiments, believing that the whore house madam should be run out of town, and that Smallbeer was a fool, an idiot and an imbecile to get involved. They also wished to know if Mr. Ashbourne would be staying for the festival, and on being assured that he had driven over for that sole purpose they slapped him on the back, said he is a jolly good fellow, and one of the number ordered a round of best bitter for them all. Somehow, they all seemed to know already that he had travelled from Herefordshire and was temporarily lodging at the North Eastern Hotel. George began to wonder if there could be anything about him that these men did not already know, but in such pleasant company did not let it bother him, and he order another round of drinks for the assembled company.

About three o’clock the jollities started, there was a procession from the village church, St. Luke’s to the Common where a short Harvest Festival Service was held, and they all sang “We plough the fields and scatter, the good seed on the ground, but it is fed and watered by God’s almighty hand” At the conclusion the Parish Priest declared the commencement of the temporal festival, and someone struck up with a fiddle. A large circle was formed of alternate boys and girls, young ladies and gentlemen, and yokels and their wives and a country dance commenced, where holding hands they ran towards the centre and out again once, followed by dancing round in a circular movement still holding hands. This was followed by each couple in a waltz type hold twirling round whilst moving in a large circle following each other, all to the fiddler’s accompaniment. When completed with another holding hands in a large circle and running forward to the centre with a loud Harar. Other country dances followed whilst refreshments were served from trestle tables set up by the Publican of the “Fox and Hounds”. George found himself surrounded by a bevy of local beauties all anxious to make his acquaintance hoping he had come to flirt and each one secretly hoped she would be the one to gain his undivided attention. The celebration did not cease until sunset when flares and lanterns were produced to light the revellers home or to the local tavern for more festivities. By now George thought it prudent to make his way back to Scarborough, but his newfound friends would not hear of such a venture in the dark, along lanes which were not familiar to him, and the Master of Maitland Grange insisted on George returning with him to the Grange where a room would be provided for him and stabling for the horse. Thus, after a

memorable and pleasurable afternoon and evening George slept soundly at Maitland Grange, returning on the morrow to Scarborough where he deposited the gig at Mr. Smallbeer's livery stables. It being Friday of the forenoon, though only just, George decided to call on the Honourable Archibald Penwig to enquire if the Agreement might have been prepared for execution, but unfortunately, whilst the Solicitor was away from his chambers, his clerk James Buxton thought it might be more than a week before he could commence writing the document, moaning that it took a long time to draw up such Agreements, takes more than ten minutes it does, the wineing clerk moaned. George reluctantly decided that there would be nothing to be gained by talking to the clerk, so he made his way to the refreshment rooms he had called at a few days ago. However, unlike Wednesday when he had chatted to Madelaine the refreshment rooms were crowded and an authoritative woman, who George took to be the proprietress was marching about with a look of great disapproval. George could see Madelaine and another waitress at the rear of the room but decided it would be more sensible to go elsewhere.

Having time on his hands, with little chance of any developments until Monday, George decided to explore the town and its many attractions. Being a spa town was certainly a bonus, and as with all spa towns both here and on the Continent every elegant taste, and some not so elegant, are catered for. There were art galleries, assembly rooms, a ball room, hotels, a kursaal, music halls, refreshment rooms, restaurants, theatres, even an opera house so that there was no shortage of places of entertainment, in fact George was spoilt for choice. The coastal spa town also boasted an Aquarium opened in 1877 designed



The Aquarium from the Spa Bridge across the Valley.

in an Indo/Moorish way, which contained a concert hall, a reading room, dining room and a fernery together with a fish tank containing 300 tons of water, the world's largest. The Prince of Wales Circus on St. Thomas Street, actually an opera house, opened in 1878, the Spa Theatre, opened, 1879 providing a music room, restaurant and two ball rooms, this is the kursaal mentioned below on Foreshore Road, the Alexandra Music Hall on Aberdeen Walk, 1858, which George would visit later, the Londesborough Theatre, concert hall and ball room opened 1871, and the Theatre Royal on North Street, the oldest dating from 1771. Being young and energetic George made full use of the entertainments available, and it being Saturday, he visited the Kursaal to enjoy a cure and where he also had luncheon, after which he penned a detailed report of the business arrangements so far, including a personal letter to Emma which he sealed in an envelope provided by "The Spa" together with letter paper, and summoning a waiter he gave the package to him for posting together with one penny for the postage. In the afternoon he took the funicular railway operated by the Central Tramway Company from the lower-level station in

Foreshore Road to the upper level, some 248 feet above at the summit in Marine Parade. This was not the first funicular railway in Scarborough, that honour goes to the South Cliff Tramway opened in 1873, followed by the Queen's Parade Cliff Lift which opened in 1878 in the North Bay, but which closed permanently in 1887. From Marine Parade George explored the upper town, and walking north visited the ruins of the castle, and on North Beach the house once rented by the great and celebrated master of nocturnal paintings John Atkinson Grimshaw, the "Castle by the Sea". Returning from the North Bay, George passed through the oldest part of Scarborough including the harbour where he came across a group of herring girls busy gutting fish.



Glasgow, Saturday Night by John Atkinson Grimshaw.



Herring Girls, Scarborough.

After dining at the Grand Hotel, George made his way to the Alexandra Music Hall on Aberdeen Walk to be entertained by Annie Adams. George Beauchamp, Ada Blanche, Hannah Chaplin, Lottie Collins, and George Lashwood, all of whom did a turn or two on stage, to the delight and amusement of the audience.



Hannah Chaplin.



George Lashwood.



Lottie Collins

Wending his way to the North Eastern Hotel that evening George pondered on the situation, had he been a fool to prolong his visit to Scarborough, he could have just demanded that the solicitor post the Agreement to him in Western-under-Penyard and avoided the additional cost of a prolonged sojourn enjoyable though it had been. He resolved to notify the solicitor accordingly on Monday morning and take the midday train to York. He would also write first thing to the “Etty” to reserve a room for Monday night. As tomorrow would be Sunday he would have to make the best of the day and decided to further explore the town.

George did not arise early on Sunday morning, and it was after ten o’clock of the forenoon before he appeared in the room where breakfast awaited him and where he also consulted the house copy of “Bradshaw’s” for trains from York southwards. Detailed study revealed that by taking the nine o’clock morning train to York he would arrive there at two o’clock in the afternoon and would have just over an hour to wait for the Special Scotch Express (a service which commenced in 1862 and which would be re-named the Flying Scotsman in 1924). Operated as a joint venture following the establishment in 1860 of the East Coast Joint Stock (ECJS) the passenger service provided two trains each day leaving at ten minutes past ten o’clock one from both Edinburgh and the other from Kings Cross, each initially taking ten hours to arrive at ten minutes past eight o’clock, but by the 1880’s more powerful and faster locomotives together with competition from the west coast route of the London & North Western Railway, combined with the “Caledonian” north of Carlisle led to the journey time being reduced to eight and a half hours. Carriages were varnished teak in colour, being a light brown colouring with the letters “East Coast Joint Stock” emblazoned on the sides. Leaving Edinburgh Waverley railway station, the train was hauled by a North British Railway locomotive as far as Berwick-on-Tweed on the English/Scottish border from where the train was taken over by the “North Eastern” to Durham, Newcastle-on-Tyne to York where there was a twenty minute lunch pause, and then Shaftholme, a little north of Doncaster, where originally a “Great Northern” (GNR) locomotive would take the train to London, arriving at Kings Cross at forty minutes past six o’clock. In theory this would allow time for him to travel on to the halt at Western-under-Penyard, but in practice he would probably be stranded at Didcot or Swindon.

Thus, Sunday was occupied with local exploration, visiting the attractions he had not already seen, namely the Floral Hall and Alexandra Gardens, after first visiting the Spa refreshment rooms where in conversation with a local gentleman who wished to know George’s profession, they tentatively struck a bargain for George to supply a “Brake” and a “Victoria”, price to be agreed on production of a written quotation. This seemed very tentative, and George did not expect anything to come of the chance encounter, but the business had prospered by not leaving any stone unturned. Remembering some old prints he had seen, George next went in search of both the Crescent and the Valley Bridge, both of which were not that far away, but sadly, as is so often the way, neither accurately

resembled the engravings he had previously spotted, as although both the Crescent and Valley Bridge were still there, they no longer stood serenely on their own.



The Spa with the Grand Hotel beyond, Scarborough.



Alexandra Gardens and the Floral Hall, Scarborough.



The Crescent, Scarborough, circa 1830.

That Sunday evening George decided it would be unwise to merely disappear and write to the Honourable Mr. Penwig which would also be extremely impolite so he postponed his departure by one day and wrote home accordingly, he expected to arrive in Western-under-Penyard by the afternoon of Wednesday 28th September. On Monday morning he called at the local railway station where the Station Master, a Mr. William Taylor arranged the issue of tickets for George to travel to London on Tuesday the 27th September. He also called on the Lawyer and they agreed that the Agreement, when drawn up would be posted to George at his home address, and they dined together at the Grand Hotel. In the afternoon George wandered to the Refreshment Rooms where he had met Madelaine who was delighted to serve him the cup of tea and a few cakes he requested.

The nine o'clock "NER" train departed for York, and George enjoyed a fairly comfortable journey through a scenic North Yorkshire countryside and studied the copy of the "Yorkshire Post" he had purchased in Scarborough that morning, Tuesday the 27th September. Arriving at York at two o'clock in good time to purchase food and drink for the journey and read the newspaper. At exactly five minutes past three o'clock the Special Scotch Express rumbled into the station under the magnificent arched and curving roof where the "NER" locomotive was uncoupled and replaced by a "GNR" single, a recent change of railway practice to reduce delays.



Special Scotch Express ready for departure at York.

Behind one of Patrick Stirling's eight-foot singles, (see Note 3) the train gathered speed, and fairly pounded along with the occasional shriek of the steam whistle warning others of their rapid approach, especially at level crossings and stations. When picking up water at the various water troughs the carriages would be covered in spray, and failure to close the window would result in an unwelcome soaking for passengers near the open window. George was reminded of Robert Louis Stevenson's poem "From a Railway Carriage".

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
 Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
 And charging along like troops in a battle,
 All through the meadows the horses and cattle:
 All the sights of the hill and the plain
 Fly as thick as driving rain;
 And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
 Painted stations whistle by.

There was a stop at Grantham, having sailed through Retford where it was once necessary to change locomotives to avoid overheating, and then on to Peterborough North. Watching the passing countryside, the fellow passengers in the compartment saw many trees now clothed in autumn colours of yellow/gold and light brown, whilst sometimes reading the newspaper George read reports of losses at sea, the barque "Gartmore" had been wrecked off the Mull of Galloway in Wigtownshire yesterday whilst the "Dandy" had been lost on Longsand in the North Sea on the 24th. Seventeen of a crew of twenty died, the three survivors were rescued by the "PS India". It was also reported that Mr. Emile Berliner had patented a "Gramophone" yesterday in New York. The pacification of Baluchistan was making good progress, and it seemed likely that the Yellow River in China would overflow with disastrous consequences to follow (see Note 3). There was also a parliamentary report on the previous day's activities where since the General Election on the 27th July, 1886 with a 8.7% to the Conservative Party largely caused by a Unionist revolt against William Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill led by the Member for

Birmingham, Joseph Chamberlain who crossed the floor of the House. The Marquess of Salisbury's party held 393 seats whereas the Liberal Party of Mr. Gladstone had only 192 seats.

Now it was nonstop to Kings Cross, speeding through St. Neots where they crossed the line from Cambridge to Oxford, Hitchin where the station was shared with the "MR", passing the sleepy station at Stevenage where the northern end of the Hertford loop rejoined the mainline, on to the viaduct across the Mimram Valley which the Queen refused to cross by train in 1850 and a carriage was produced to convey her and the Prince Consort to the little railway station of Welwyn on the north side of the valley. Next, they whistled through Hatfield where an engine was kept with steam up as the Prime minister, the Marquess of Salisbury could be required urgently at the Palace of Westminster, it being only a short carriage drive from his residence at Hatfield House. They arrived at Kings Cross punctually on time at ten minutes past eight o'clock; then it was on the Great Western Hotel for the night, before the nine forty for Gloucester, and the Hereford train which would stop at the halt at Western-under-Penyard.

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In a small country estate near Memel little had changed; Alexandra still thought of the debonair Englishman whose stay had been all too short. Would he be deterred from calling when he found out about their elevation to the aristocracy, and if not, would she be able to trust his motives. A totally unexpected turn of events brings Edward closer to Alexandra, but how much closer, read next months chapter of the Ashbourne Family Saga, only in the Chimes online.

Author's Acknowledgements:

Engraved print of "Madelaine sat on the kitchen table and recited to her mother" from the Young Ladies Journal of 1884.

Notes:

1. Reference to the Ashbourne family, Mr. James Buxton, Graf Karl von Czernowitz Miss Gotobed, Madelaine, Honourable Archibald Penwig Nathaniel Smallbeer including the Etty Hotel are entirely fictional as also is the village of Herston although all other matters are historically accurate.

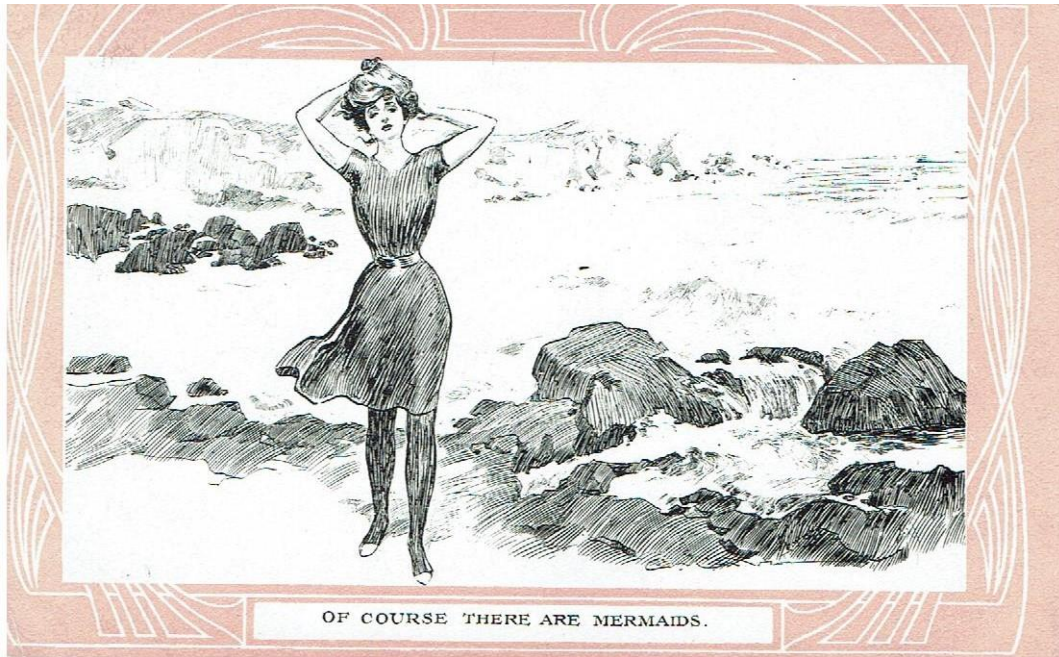
In this narrative I attempt to mentally and emotionally transport you, my dear reader to the world of the late nineteenth century, but I cannot do is transport you physically.

2. Whilst serving the Great Northern Railway as Chief Mechanical Engineer Patrick Stirling designed and supervised the building of new engines, firstly a 7 foot single, and in 1870 his 8 foot single, widely regarded as the most attractive steam locomotive ever built. However, when first introduced the Company had enormous trouble with the footplate crews who refused to take the engines out because of the small shelter provided by the semi cab declaring that the shelter was an insult to their manhood. Until then locomotives had only a screen for protection in adverse weather conditions.

On the 28th September, 1887 the Yellow River caused flooding over 50,000 square miles of surrounding land and the deaths of an estimated 930,000 to two million Chinese.

Saucy Sophia's Snippets

Another post card from
the Author's private collection.



Another of Charles Dana Gibson's very collectable Gibson girl postcards.

The model for the girl in the picture was Miss Camilla Clifford.

Trailer for next month.

In which Edward returns from Shanghai, but not to Great Britain. Will he travel to Memel?

Historical Talks.

In addition to writing these articles or "blogs" for the Chimes, I am available to give illustrated power point talks on a variety of historical subjects. To see the complete list please email to me at brockswoodfs@yahoo.co.uk, or telephone 01989 780634.

Dorian Osborne

1st September, 2023.