

Rowell Heritage

Rothwell Arts & Heritage Centre



No: 19

July - August 2017

£2

Dear Readers

Well summer is officially here and we are now in the holiday season so that is the theme of this issue.

Although Rowell Fair has been and gone there is an article on it this month along with photographs of the Proclamation and Frank York, the new Bailiff. Thank you to Geoff Davis for submitting those. Also thank you to two of our regular contributors Helen Brown and David York for their articles.

If you have any articles for submission or photographs to share, please get in touch. Contact details below.

Val & Barry

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Please note that whilst every care is taken to be accurate, no liability will be accepted should any of the contents of this magazine be incorrect.

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On Trinity Sunday, 11th June, the traditional Blessing of the Fair took place and the service was conducted on Market Hill by Canon John Westwood. This followed the Civic Service which had been held in the Methodist Church and celebrated the many years of dedication to the Town Council by Clive Cross, the new Mayor of Rothwell.



On Monday 12th June, the Proclamation of the Fair began with the first reading of the Charter at 06:00 outside the parish church.



The procession then made its way down Squires Hill and paused at the War Memorial where the Band played the 23rd Psalm.

There was a minute's silence in remembrance of the victims of the recent atrocities in Manchester and London. Members of the Rowell Fair Society who had died since the last Proclamation were also remembered, especially the previous bailiff, Alan Mills.



The new bailiff, Frank York, admitted to being a little nervous at first but said that he felt very proud and privileged to hold the role and the first recorded bailiff had actually been one of his ancestors.

The procession was led by Mark Spendlove and Lloyd Mills (Deputy Bailiff).

Lloyd commented that he felt it was a great honour and that his dad would have been very proud since he loved Rowell Fair.





The carriage was occupied by (L-R): Zandra Powell, Clive Cross, Robert Denton & Karen Mills.



Image by Daniel Fountain



Summer Showcase

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The Factory Fortnight and Wakes Week *by Valerie Panter*

The school holidays are upon us and for many families that also means time off work, days out and often the annual holiday. Many of you may remember the 'factory fortnight' when the factories had their annual shutdown. In this area it was usually the last week of July and the first week of August.

In other parts of England and Scotland that annual holiday was referred to as '**Wakes Week**'. Many associate it with the Industrial Revolution, cotton mills and collieries but actually the origin dates back much further.

Every church at its consecration was given the name of a patron saint, and either the day of its consecration or the saint's feast day became the church's festival.

Church services began at sunset on Saturday and the night of prayer was called a vigil or due to the late hour a "wake". The name 'wake' is the same as the one applied to funerals where for mourners kept watch or vigil over their dead until they were buried.

The main custom of the festival was the 'rushbearing', when all the old rushes that were strewn on the church's packed-earth floor were swept out and fresh ones were ceremoniously carried in.

The rest of the day was then a holiday with sports, games, dancing and drinking.

The custom of rushbearing thrived in many areas and also gave rise to the custom of Morris dancing, when dancers became a part of the procession that followed the rushes to the church. It is still practised in some local churches today in other areas of the country such as Derbyshire.



Photo: <http://www.cloggin.co.uk/content/littleborough-rush-bearing-rush-bearing-rushbearing-what-it-all-about>

In time the more boisterous entertainments were moved from the Sabbath to Saturday and Monday was reserved for public entertainments such as bands, games and funfairs.

With the coming of the industrial revolution the wakes survived because many workers simply didn't turn up when the traditional holiday came. So mill owners decided that they might as well close their factories down for a few days at this time to allow them to clean and overhaul the machinery.

It was mainly but not exclusively the North of England and industrialised areas of the Midlands. For instance, each town in Lancashire took the holiday on a different week in the summer so that from June to September one town was on holiday each week.

The expansion of the railway network led Blackpool to become a seaside resort along with Southport and Morecombe. The railway link from the mill town of Oldham to Blackpool was completed in 1846 and during wakes week in 1860 more than 23,000 holidaymakers travelled on special trains to the resort from that town alone.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, trips increased from day trips to full weeks away and 'Wakes Saving' or 'Going-Off' clubs became popular. The saving clubs were a feature of the industrial north until paid holidays became a reality in the 1940s and '50s.

The tradition has now disappeared in much of the UK. This is due to the decline of traditional manufacturing industries, schools objecting to the holidays at crucial exam times and businesses staying open all year with employees taking staggered holidays.

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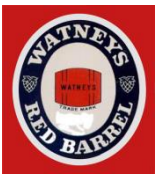
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Back in Northamptonshire the **'Factory Fortnight'** saw the days out and trips to the seaside. In those days fewer families had cars and many took advantage of the local buses and coaches. In Rothwell, Buckbys and Coopers were two very well-known names. The local bus service was run by United Counties and was also very popular.

Each year my family would go to Southsea for our holiday and even though we had a car, with mum, dad, three children and two grandparents there wasn't enough room for us all. Luckily Coopers Coaches ran a trip to Southsea too so my brother and a friend used to catch the bus from the Market Hill and the rest of us would go by car.

Dad (pictured right on Market Hill) drove us and granddad and Janet sat alongside him on the bench seat in the front. Mum, grandma and I sat in the back.

Once the coach had set off then we could too. In those days it often took us about six hours and the coach even longer. The journey seemed endless and we played games to pass the time.



One of our favourites was to count the 'red barrel' signs outside the Watney's pubs. For years dad had a miniature one on his key ring.



We would have several 'comfort' breaks en route. Janet and I often felt car sick which wasn't surprising given that granddad used to smoke his cigarettes in the car. The first stop was always at Brackley where dad also bought his daily newspaper. He has never been allowed to forget the year when I discovered, at the first stop, that I'd forgotten my teddy bear. We were too far into the journey to go back for him. If only we had, dad would have seen his shoes that he had left behind!

Once we had arrived, we checked into our B&B. Like many other families we returned to the same one year after year. If Mrs Veitch (the owner) moved house then we simply followed. It was like going to visit family.

The next job would be to go and meet the coach and pick up Keith and his friend.

At the end of the holiday it was the same routine. Take the boys to the coach, drive home and wait the other end for them.

Every year, after mum and dad retired they continued to go on holiday but instead of driving went with a group of friends on Cooper's coach trips. The photo below shows them all in the early 1980's with Howard Cooper the driver, second from left.



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Above: Buckby's charabanc all set for a day trip maybe. Do you recognise anyone? Maybe you can help us put names to faces.

Below left: the company is still going strong in 1985.

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Below right: Barry's family had a different mode of transport, a BSA 650 Golden Flash. What was yours? Barry is seated in the front with his sister, brothers in the back and mum and dad on the motorbike. Luggage went on top. On one trip his dad braked hard and Barry ended up stuck in the nose section. No seatbelts in those days.



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The United Counties Buses were a lifeline for Rowell people, in the fifties and sixties, enabling them to travel further afield. The bus which served Desborough Rowell and Kettering was number 259 and mostly double-deckers were used. The buses from Rowell to Market Harborough were less frequent. The United Counties Bus depot in Northampton Road, Kettering was a busy hub all those years ago, with the green buses departing and arriving frequently. From here you could travel to Northampton, Corby and even to Peterborough. The world was our oyster!!

The busiest bus stop in Rowell still exists today and is on the Kettering Road, opposite the chip shop, at the bottom of Squires Hill. Years ago it was such a busy bus stop that often the queue would go right round into Squires Hill – especially on a Saturday afternoon when it was market day in Kettering. Sometimes an extra bus would be sent out, just for Rowell and it would swing round at the old Midland Bank – now a Turkish restaurant; there was no roundabout – the large double decker bus just swung round on the A6 and everyone queuing, would gasp in delight – “It’s a swinger!” (.....that has a different meaning today!)



One of the busiest times was 8.30 in the morning when all those children who went to Kettering Grammar School, High School or Central School had to catch their bus. About four or five double decker green buses arrived and the girls and boys shoved and pushed their way on to the buses, heavy leather satchels swinging from their shoulders, bashing anyone in their way, as they tried to get a seat. Many would have to stand and the poor bus conductor would have great difficulty in controlling the youngsters as they shouted and yelled to each other or quickly copied someone else’s homework or took a hat from a girl’s head and threw it to the other end of the bus. The hat would then be passed back and forth, often landing on the floor which was strewn with cigarette ash, sweet wrappers etc. After five years of schooling most of the black felt hats, which girls wore to the High School, were a disgusting shade of grey from the dirt of the bus floor. I imagine being a bus conductor on the school buses in those days, would be every conductor’s nightmare!

The United Counties buses each had a driver and a conductor on board, who wore very smart black uniforms with hats. The driver had his own cabin away from the passengers, so it was the conductor who had to cope with any problems involving passengers.

The job of the conductor was to collect the fares and hand out a ticket from his ticket machine which was strapped across his shoulder. My Uncle Alf Page (who was married to my mum’s sister, Winifred Roughton and lived in Spencer Street) was a bus conductor. He was small and slim, so when lots of passengers were standing, he could push by them quite easily to collect his fares. It was harder for the fat bus conductors! Occasionally, if I was travelling to Kettering on my own, when I handed Uncle Alf the money, he would give it back to me.....so I travelled free! I was always very thrilled when this happened.

There were no Health and Safety regulations about the number of passengers standing on a bus and the conductor would yell, “Move on down the bus!” and more people would push their way on to the already crowded bus, so that we were packed like sardines. Sometimes the bus was so crowded that people were standing on the platform where the conductor usually stood. If the bus stopped suddenly you could be flung to the left or right, so you had to hang on tightly to the metal pole near the step of the bus. If you were standing in the aisle you could almost end up on someone’s lap if the bus gave a sudden lurch!

As a frequent traveller on the United Counties buses, I got to know the personalities of some of the bus conductors. One such conductor was Bert, who was small and stout with a twinkle in his eye – he was a real character. As we reached certain bus stops he would always have a quip. As we approached Butlin’s shoe factory from Kettering he would shout “Ooz fer Butlin’s olidee camp?” An even better one was when we approached The Three Cocks pub at Kettering, coming from Rowell and he would shout “Ladies delight! The Three Cocks!”

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We weren't actually going to see the Welland Valley – it was just a means to an end – a rail journey to get to Rugby for us trainspotting lads, and for my parents – a shopping trip to Corporation Street, Birmingham. It was August bank holiday Saturday 1959 and we couldn't afford a holiday that year so this was the alternative – one of several day trips. We'd caught the train at Desborough and had descended at Market Harborough – a journey we'd done many times before when visiting Leicester for the Abbey Park Flower Show or on shopping trips especially to Lewis's department store – although on these occasions we'd only passed through Market Harborough.

It was the first time we'd used the dark underpass to get to the platform for Rugby. We climbed the stairs and sat on one of the benches. It was early – about 7.45am – all was still and it was a bit drizzly. Nothing much happening, then in draws an unrebuilt Patriot hauling freight. It bore a 10B shed plate – that's Preston – and the name 'Bradshaw' (no. 45518) – that was a rare cop for us spotters. All of a sudden the day got more interesting. It came to a halt right in front of us as the signals were against it. Suddenly the safety valves lifted and showered us with even more drizzle and damn near deafened us. It didn't last for long, and we just sat there looking at the nameplate. Who was this Patriot hero? What did he do to save the country or did he head a regiment that won a battle in WW1? Well, we all know now, don't we? – thanks to Michael Portillo's programme 'Great British Railway Journeys' – He was George Bradshaw – the pioneer who compiled the universal Bradshaw railway timetable in the late 19th Century.

The signals cleared and the train moved off disappearing down the track to either Rugby or Northampton. Somehow or other it had to eventually get back to its home at Preston for its fortnightly examination and wash out. Five minutes later and in draws our train – another name – B1 61005 'Bongo' - an antelope – named for its speed I suppose - anyway, it was another cop. It had arrived from Peterborough or further afield as it was a 31B March loco so probably worked from Cambridge. We alighted and sat in one of those old suburban carriages with bouncy seats full of horse hair. We looked at the pictures above us and there was a nice heat wave rising from underneath the seats. The train waited fifteen minutes at the platform then moved off. We were on our way, past the backs of terraced houses and gardens with washing out on the line and the engine's exhaust echoing against the buildings. Boy, I wondered, wouldn't I have liked to have lived in one of those houses with a railway at the back of your garden.

We chugged down to our first station – Lubenham – the train halted, but no more than 30 seconds then we were off again and the scenery changed. We were in the Welland Valley – and hadn't expected this – it was delightful. The morning sun was out now and the mist was still in the fields below, but mainly over the river itself. We arrived at Theddingworth. Beyond that the river started to intertwine with the railway and criss cross beneath us about half a dozen times. What a lot of bridges they had to build to cope with this. The river looked inviting with its lovely reed beds and the sheep were grazing in the fields below – what a glorious pastoral scene in the early morning air mixed with steam occasionally wafting past the windows and the beat of the engine exhaust and carriage wheels on the track connections below us.

Eventually we arrived at Welford and Kilworth station – half way point – after that the scenery was more mundane – rather woody and not the same. Twenty minutes later and we were approaching Rugby station which was a very large cathedral like affair with a wonderful atmosphere. We'd only just stepped off the train when almost immediately there was an express passing though on the avoiding lines (i.e. skipping the platforms) – it was a double header – there was no time to spare – there were two numbers to remember – one an un-named unrebuilt Patriot – 45547 and a Royal Scot 46128 'The Lovat Scouts'. That was how the day went forward – cop after cop after cop – most trains double-headed as it was a bank holiday Saturday and the authorities didn't want any hold ups plus there were loads of specials, and then those off shed including 45733 'Novelty' (borrowed from Bushbury, Wolverhampton) to cover any breakdowns and those on the Great Central passing over the birdcage bridge. Dad had got it just right – but he disappeared with mum and Wal, my brother, to Birmingham to shop leaving Jim and myself at Rugby to spot, but Wal snapped 45552 'Silver Jubilee' (borrowed from Crewe) as station pilot at Birmingham New Street, so he had the last laugh.

The Peterborough to Rugby line was axed as part of the Beeching Plan, but you can still walk along that magnificent stretch of old railway track over the best part between Lubenham and North Kilworth. It's well overgrown these days, but the views are still very much the same.

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Rowell Fair Tarts

Our annual Rowell Fair Tart competition was held on Saturday 10th June and was once again a great success. We'd like to say a special thank you to Ann Jones for arranging everything again. In addition to baking tarts for us to sell she also organised judges and prizes.

There were 14 entrants this year and the baking was judged by Brenda Austin, Linda Thrower and Sharon Davis.

Prizes were presented by Mr Clive Cross (Mayor of Rothwell) and Mr Frank York (Bailiff to the Lord of the Manor) and this year's results were:

1 st prize	Trophy + £30	Nikki Hill
2 nd prize	Italian Kitchen voucher for meal for two	Ruth Blyth
3 rd prize	£10 voucher for Jo's Cakes and More	Jillian Coleman

Thank you to all who supported the event especially those who donated prizes. Over £70 was raised for the Arts and Heritage Centre funds.



Picture above is the Clive Cross (Centre) with Ann Jones (far left) Frank York (back standing) and some of the completion entrants.

Below Clive and Ann presenting to Rowan Smith the youngest entrant and Ann setting out the tarts ready for judging.



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There is nothing nicer than a cold ice cream on a hot day but where did they originate?

There are many conflicting stories about the invention of ice cream including fanciful tales about Marco Polo bringing it back from China, Catherine de' Medici introducing it to France and King Charles I having his own personal ice cream. Sadly there is not a lot of historic evidence to back up any of these tales. Marco Polo didn't introduce either ice cream or pasta to Europe and even today there is debate about whether he actually reached China. Most of these myths seem to have been introduced by the Victorians.

The earliest evidence of anything approaching ice cream being made was in China in the Tang period (A.D. 618-907). Buffalo, cows' and goats' milk was heated and allowed to ferment and the 'yoghurt' was then mixed with flour for thickening and camphor (yes camphor!) for flavour then frozen before being served. King Tang had a staff of 2,271 people which included 94 ice-men.

Freezing was achieved by mixing salt with ice which reduces the freezing point. It's not really known who discovered this process but it was probably the Chinese. The process didn't arrive in Europe (Italy) until 1503 and even then it was more of a chemist's party trick. It wasn't used for food until water ices (sorbets) appeared in the 1660s in Naples, Florence, Paris and Spain.

There is a record of a banquet for the Feast of St. George at Windsor Castle in 1671 where it was served but it was such a rare and exotic dish that only the guests on King's table had it. All the other guests had to watch and marvel at what the Royal table were eating.

But as the interest and demand for ice cream grew, wealthy people started to build ice houses on their estates. The ice came from lakes and ponds in winter, was stored under straw and bark, until the summer when it was used for cooling drinks, making water ices and 'iced creams'. The ice was very poor quality and never actually put in food or drink, merely used to chill and freeze it.

In the early days of ice cream manufacture a pewter pot was used surrounded by the ice and salt. The cream mixture had to be regularly hand stirred and scraped from the side of the pots with a 'spaddle' which is a sort of miniature spade on a long handle. In the 19th century, the process was simplified with the introduction in 1843 of the 'ice cream machine' which consisted of a wooden bucket (still filled with ice and salt) which had a handle which rotated.



In the early 19th century ice was imported from Norway, Canada and America. It was shipped into London and other major ports and taken in barges down the canals, to be stored in ice houses, from where it was sold to ice cream makers. The flourishing ice cream industry, run mainly by Italians, started the influx of workers from southern Italy and Ticino, the Italian speaking region of Switzerland.



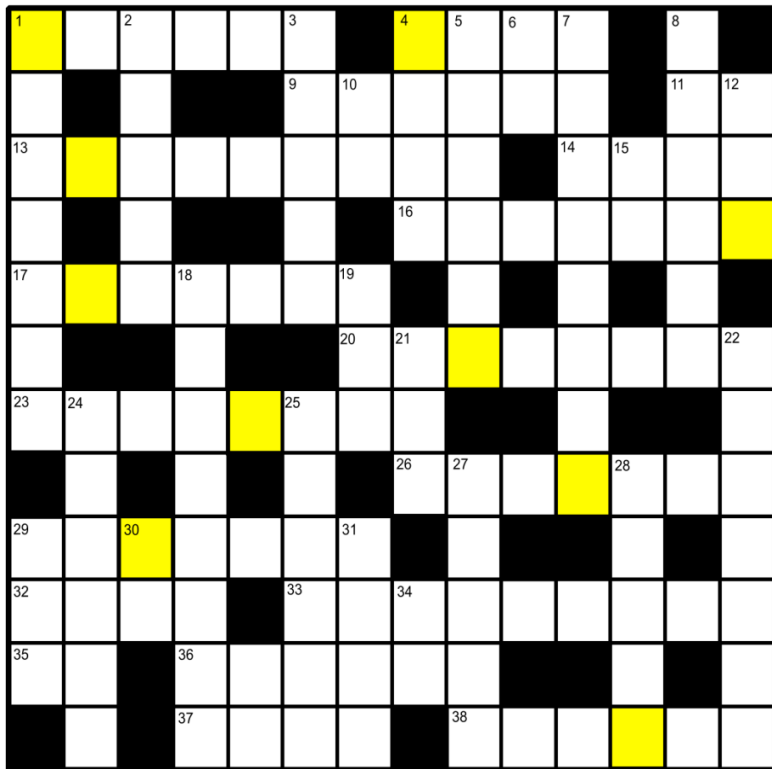
Carlo Gatti came to Britain from Ticino in 1847 and was credited with being the first ice-cream manufacturer in Britain. He took out British nationality in 1855, at the age of 40, while he was a confectioner in Hungerford Market, near the Strand, in London. The huge ice house pits built near Kings Cross by Gatti in the 1850s are still there and have recently been opened to the public at The London Canal Museum.

The advent of mechanical refrigeration using electricity and gas is what made the ice cream industry what it is today. No longer were huge quantities of ice necessary and it was now possible to transport and store ice cream so it no longer had to be eaten within a few hours of it being made. It quickly became a mass market product.

As for the cone, well that is believed to be an English invention and the first recording of cones being used for serving ice cream was in 1888 in Mrs Marshall's Cookery Book. Prior to that ice cream was either licked out of a small glass known as a penny lick or taken away wrapped in waxed paper referred to as a hokey pokey (hokey pokey is supposed to have come from the Italian 'ecco un poco' 'here is a little').



So next time you hear the chimes of the ice cream van or you are enjoying your favourite frozen delight, think back to how it all started.



Across

1. A case for archery implements (6)
4. Movable barrier in a fence (4)
9. Joined by an agreement (6)
11. To the same degree (2)
13. Someone responsible for records (9)
14. A single undivided whole (4)
16. A lack of agreement (7)
17. Relating to plants (7)
20. Things that infuse air (8)
23. Tropical storms (8)
26. She owns a box (7)
29. Alter deceptively (7)
32. Wild sheep of northern Africa (4)
33. A taste between dry and sweet (9)
35. Graduate nurse Int. (2)
36. Fermented goats milk (6)
37. A piece of building land (4)
38. A bruised eye (6)

Down

1. A circus performer (7)
2. A kind of parrot (5)
3. Antipodean conifer (5)
4. Cheerful (4)
5. Less stuffy (6)
6. Chemical symbol of Tellurium (2)
7. Informed person (8)
8. Match maker or sock sorter (6)
10. Chemical symbol for Lawrencium (2)
12. Normal Int. (3)
15. A negative (2)
18. People who can't speak, mutes (8)
19. Metal container (3)
21. Telepathy (3)
22. Take off in all directions (7)
24. Hankers for (6)
25. Balance out (6)
27. Sign of spring (5)
28. Large body of water (5)
29. A long way (3)
30. Chemical symbol for Lutetium (2)
31. To give (4)
34. Mister (2)

Rearrange the yellow squares to spell out a word connected to the thoroughfare

Answers in next Issue



Answer to last month's crossword
Owen Ragsdale

A.J. Mills Memorial Masons

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Many of us have sent or received a holiday postcard but do you know how and when this tradition started?

The earliest known picture postcard was a hand-painted design on card, posted in London in 1840 by the writer Theodore Hook. He probably created and posted the card to himself as a practical joke on the postal service, since the image is a caricature of workers in the post office.



Postcards without images were issued by the Post Office in 1870 and were printed with a stamp as part of the design, which was included in the price of purchase. Many people were opposed to the use of them as they felt that it would be too easy to read other people's correspondence. However, they were an extremely easy and fast method of communication and were quickly taken up by businesses. In the first year of use the number of postcards sent was 75 million.

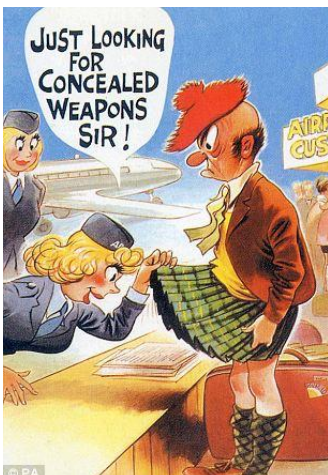


The first known printed picture postcard, with an image on one side, was created in France in 1870 by Léon Besnardeau. He was a soldier training camp (Camp Conlie). The cards had a lithographed design printed on them depicting piles of weapons and the inscription "War of 1870. Camp Conlie. Souvenir of the National Defence. Army of Brittany". However although these are the first known picture postcards, there was no space for stamps and no evidence that they were ever posted without envelopes.

The following year the first known real souvenir picture postcard was sent from Vienna and the first advertising card appeared in Great Britain in 1872.

Cards showing images increased in number during the 1880s including images of the newly built Eiffel Tower. Some, bearing photographs of nude women were commonly known as French postcards due to the number of them produced in France.

In 1894, British publishers were given permission by the Royal Mail to manufacture and distribute picture postcards which could be sent through the mail. Early postcards were pictures of famous landmarks, scenic views, animals etc. such as the one on the right.



In the early 1930's saucy cartoon style postcards became widespread and at the peak of their popularity the sale of them reached a massive 16 million a year. Often tacky in nature they made use of innuendo and traditionally featured stereotypical characters such as priests, large ladies and put-upon husbands similar to the Carry On films.

In the early 1950's, the government became concerned at the apparent deterioration of morals in Britain and decided on a crackdown on these postcards. The main target on their hit list was the renowned postcard artist Donald McGill. The saucy postcard was revived in the more liberal 1960's and to some was even considered as an art form.

During the 1970's and 1980's the quality of the artwork started to deteriorate and the demise of the saucy postcard ensued. Other postcards survived longer but nowadays with the increased use of technology and social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, they are nowhere near as popular.

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