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Week-End at Southend Gives Barrel of Fun to Londoner; Lively Trip Start to Finish

(By Sid Webb)

Probably you have never heard of Southend-on-Sea, England's home of the delectable shell fish known as the "cockle" and a close relative of Prince Rupert's delicious clam, but that fact need not deter you from reading on. This seaside resort, situated at the mouth of the River Thames, some 35 miles from London, is the rollicking summer playground of "Mr. and Mrs. London" and the family and is easily reached by rail, motor coach and river steamboat. The cost of the return journey is around \$1.25 while living costs are very reasonable, hence the lure of the sea to the city workers. More especially at the week-ends do the "natives" hit the Southend trail to revel in the balmy sea breezes and disport themselves at every conceivable vantage point on the broad beach and esplanade. It is then that "King Cockle" comes into his own, served all iced and juicy and blended with vinegar by the white coated "cockle trawlers" who hand them out at 2c a plate—no extra charge for the vinegar. It is a dire transgression of etiquette to fail to gorge a few cockles—in fact it is tantamount to going to Terrace in the strawberry season and eating dirt.

Let's Go!

In imagination accompany the writer from Fleet Street, in the heart of London's city, to Southend. It is 1 o'clock on a Saturday afternoon, the sun is shining invitingly and the business cares of the week have had the doors slammed on them for a few hours. We jump on a bus at Ludgate Circus and a "penorth" takes us to Fenchurch Street Station. In about 15 minutes, having threaded our way past the Bank of England and up Cornhill, we take our stand in the queue for our tickets. Wending our way upstairs we follow the crowd to the platform amid the clamor of happy folks and kiddies, the latter playing a tattoo upon their sand-buckets with the inevitable sharp edged sand spade. A dig or two in the nether regions with a spade or, perhaps, some sweet young lady's parasol, only adds zest to the venture.

We finally pack ourselves into one of the many trains which leave every few minutes, the guard (conductor) blows his whistle and off we go. Believe me folks the "old bus" can sure travel and soon we are sliding over the sleepers like hot butter down a bell rope. On the fast trains only one or two stops are made enroute and, at spots, we hit up 60 miles per hour. On the way south we pass through Dagenham, the British home of the new Henry Ford motor works. Some three years ago the place was only a little country village but has since grown up to "man's estate" with the erection of a monster factory plus hundreds of workmen's dwellings. It is said that the town is now alive with squirrels which come to pick up the "nuts."

Just before pulling into Southend, we stop at Leigh-on-Sea, an old seaside village, which is the home port of the cockle fleet, and to see the small boats out on the cockle beds reminds one forcibly of the Prince Rupert mosquito fleet. Leigh is a very picturesque old place and boasts of some fine sea traditions. Then we stop at Westcliffe—the Rolls Royce residential section, adjoining Southend—where the gardens are a blaze of color with the beauty of rambler rose trees, sweet peas, lilacs, etc. The soil is particularly fertile in this district both for flower and vegetable growth. In fact, it has been said that the potatoes would be as juicy as oranges if they grew on the rose bushes. Nearly every garden running down to the railway track boasts of a tennis lawn and every encouragement is given to sport generally. And so it is that we enter Southend proper. The gardens are a blaze of color and, when the sun shines, as it usually does, sun-bathing is much enjoyed by the residents in the privacy of their gardens or on the spacious balconies of their houses.

Arrival at Southend

Well, folks, we now pull into Southend and, as we alight, the tang of the sea air strikes us forcibly in the nostrils in vivid contrast to the begrimed atmosphere of London. We are soon wallowing among the crowds of happy sea hunters and, to the banging of kiddies' spades, perhaps, an occasional operatic or music hall air on a mouth organ, we wend our way to the main street of Southend. It has just turned three o'clock and we

haven't many steps to go to find a sumptuous restaurant and a good cup o'tea. Unfortunately—perhaps fortunately—the saloons are not open yet for these do not begin business until later in the evening. After our refresher we start out to explore this comparatively new Londoner's paradise and endeavor to fix ourselves up for the night. Perhaps we'll be sure of a roof and a comfortable bed first. If we decided to stay in the town it would be quite an easy matter to find a home but, if we decided on somewhere quieter, we just jump on a penny bus, or street car, and land in a few minutes at Southchurch on Thorpe Bay. Both these suburbs are fine residential sites and nearly every house caters to the visitor.

It doesn't take us long to find a good bed and breakfast for about \$5 so we park our toothbrushes and pyjamas and, after a wash and brush up, we return to the town to see the sights—and there are plenty. There is no more cosmopolitan crowd in England than at Southend and there are practically no restrictions as to dress, so long as one keeps within the bounds of propriety. Going on to the sea front we see crowds of men, women, girls and boys, of all ages, descriptions and sizes—some in comical paper hats, soldier hats, sailor hats, bonnets, top hats, in fact all shapes. Along come a string of young female beauties in beach pyjamas the colors of a rainbow stew, followed by a beauty chorus in bathing suits of all shapes and hues, perhaps adorned also with a light bathing wrap, perhaps not, for Southend has no use for Mrs. Grundy and her prudish nonsense.

Ships a Hoy!

Ah! about the ships and the sea! If the tide is out it is out and a good telescope will be necessary if one wants to see the breakers breaking. Of course there is the pier, quite a show place of its own, and a 4c ride on the electric railway—for it's the longest pier in the world—will prove to us that we are actually at the sea. However, if the tide is up, then we are in luck and one can step off the esplanade into the briny. It is then the hire boats ply their trade and what a real live fleet it is. It includes sailing boats—mostly of the old fashioned "sky-lark" type—motor boats, speed boats, rowing boats, and luxury yachts the latter boasting of a bar where "heavily" intoxicants are sold to passengers and boats mostly utilized on the long runs. For 12c one can take a real nice seagoing trip of about half-an-hour's duration and, in addition, be entertained with catchy music and songs provided the sea hasn't got into the works of the piano but even then there's music from a banjo, a saxophone or a guitar to take away the thoughts of seasickness, for some of the Londoners are poor sailors but they are few and far between. For 39c one can do the seagoing business properly for a few hours, a visit to the warships at Shoeburyness or, perhaps, a few hours' run along the coast and very nice too. The writer had 12 cents worth on one visit and the view of the West-cliffe gardens from the sea with the sunlight upon the beautiful flowers and foliage was a sight for a king.

Well, we're back on shore and the blow has given us an appetite, to say nothing of a thirst, so we go to find something to eat and have not a very arduous quest. The sea front abounds with good restaurants and, at some of them, one can watch the eats being put through their paces through the windows for everything is cooked in full view of the universe. For 50c one can get a real good wholesome blow-out, even steak and chips or ham and tomatoes, perhaps fish and chips plus free vinegar. Anyway there is no need to starve so long as one has the price. We satisfy the inner man and look to spend the evening.

The town abounds in cinemas, theatres and vaudeville but, if we want some real fun and excitement, we turn into the Kursaal where we can get all the fun of the fair and (Continued on page 6.)

Advertisement for OGDEN'S FINE CUT CIGARETTE TOBACCO. Includes image of a cigarette pack and text: 'Here's Something You'll Like!', 'Choice quality Virginia tobaccos blended for men who "roll their own"', 'FREE Chanticleer cigarette papers with every package.', 'YOUR PIPE KNOWS OGDEN'S CUT PLUG'

Advertisement for The Bank of Canada. Includes image of a cheque for \$150.00 payable to John Doe, signed by J. W. Smith. Text: 'To The Bank of Canada GENERAL BRANCH', 'Pay to the order of John Doe \$150.00', 'ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY AND 00/100 Dollars', 'Account No. 678', 'LIFE INSURANCE CO.'

Your Monthly Cheque as long as you live " " "

WHEN you retire, you will appreciate a guaranteed income of \$150.00 a month—a never-failing income which will continue, without change, as long as you live!

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DEFENDS NATIONAL RAILWAY

The Winnipeg Free Press has been publishing a series of editorial articles in defence of the Canadian National Railway. Following is from one of them:

"The fact that, in the face of the intention of the Liberal members to make a minority finding, the majority members of the special parliamentary committee on railways so far moderated their purposes as to consent to findings which commanded unanimity, does not in the least counteract the highly unfavorable impression which the performance of the majority members has made on the public mind. The proceedings of the committee constituted an exposure of malignant partisan minds intent upon gratifying personal and political hatreds without regard to the injury that might be done to a great national institution. That these attacks were made under a transparent disguise of alleged regard to the public interest added hypocrisy to the other repellent features of the inquiry. The men who stand most clearly revealed are Dr. McGibbon, M.P. for Muskoka, and F. R. MacMillan, M.P. for Saskatoon—two men who were known to be afflicted with a form of anti-Canadian National rabies, and were therefore put on the committee in order that they might, under the influence of their obsession, do the dirty work that would be repellent to minds not so afflicted. Then the chairmanship was bestowed on R. B. Hanson, M.P. for York-Sunbury, who considered himself appointed—as perhaps he was—to play the part of a bullying prosecuting attorney. A conspicuous member of the committee was Dr. Manion, Minister of Railways, who certainly did nothing to restrain the trio of inquisitors and occasionally took a hand in the game himself.

"Naturally, Dr. Manion's tactics in filling the public mind with gloom because it is so unfortunate as to be cursed with the ownership of the greatest railway in the world, meets with the enthusiastic approval of the Financial Post of Toronto, which we take as typically representative of dominant financial opinion in Montreal and Toronto. It said in a recent issue that the people of Canada are going to school to Dr. Manion and are for the first time getting instruction from a minister of railways on the reality of the railway situation. It is the common purpose of Dr. Manion and the interests for which the Post speaks to encourage the people to believe that there is nothing to show for the railway expenditures of the past ten years and that the railway situation is now just what it was in 1922, except that it has been worsened by an increase in the indebtedness. That is a most dishonest presentation of the case. The increase in indebtedness is something over four hundred million dollars—not a billion dollars as assailants of the Canadian National Railways put it—and in return for it the country has a real railway, not a fortuitous assortment of railway junk. It has a railway which in 1928 did what the knoockers said could never be done. It paid its way, as it would again if there was traffic in the country to be moved. Does Dr. Manion in his gloomy dissertations upon the terrible plight in which the country has got itself, because it owns a railway, ever think to tell the people that in 1928 this railway earned about 85 percent of the joint earnings of both railway systems in 1931? A simple statement of fact like that would serve to satisfy the people that they were not a lot of fools to put their money into a railway, and that the present misfortunes of the road are but part of a universal collapse of business.

"What is the purpose of this insidious, persistent, far-fung campaign? It is to make the people sick of their investment in the railway and to induce in their minds a hope that some organization will come along and relieve them of the burden. The nature of the game, the end to which it is being played, and the identity of the promoters of the enterprise are open to inspection by those who have eyes to see. In that fact there is a reasonable assurance that the conspiracy will fail."

Advertisement for MILBURN'S HEART NERVE PILLS. Includes image of a pill bottle and text: 'Her Heart Was So Bad Couldn't Do Housework', 'Mrs. E. Drayman, R.R. 2, Midland, Ont., writes: "I had been troubled with heart trouble for many years. My heart would beat so fast I could hardly breathe, and I had headaches, and dizzy and fainting spells. I couldn't get my housework done I was so weak. I took three boxes of Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills and felt much better, and now I would not be without them in the house."', 'Price 50c a box', 'Sold at all drug and general stores, or mailed direct on receipt of price by The T. Milburn Co., Ltd., Toronto, Ont.'