

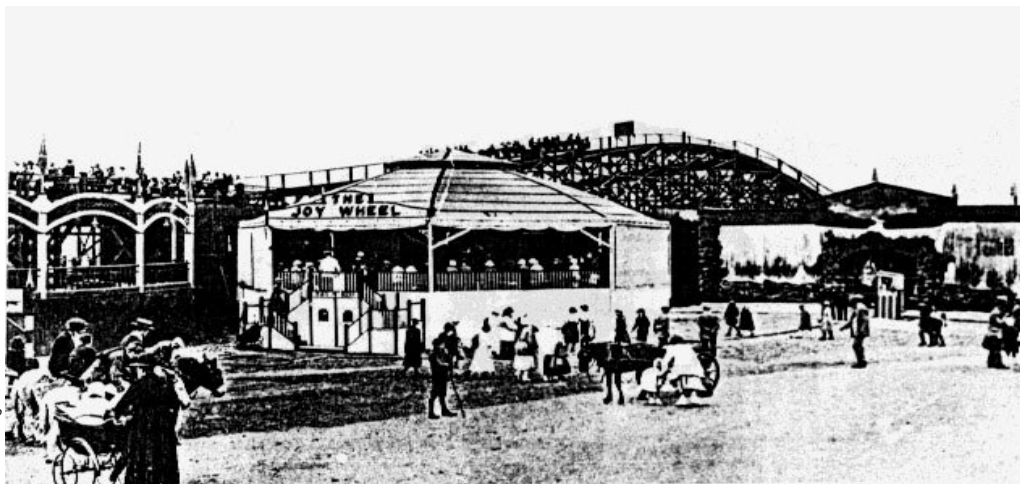
The Pleasure Beach

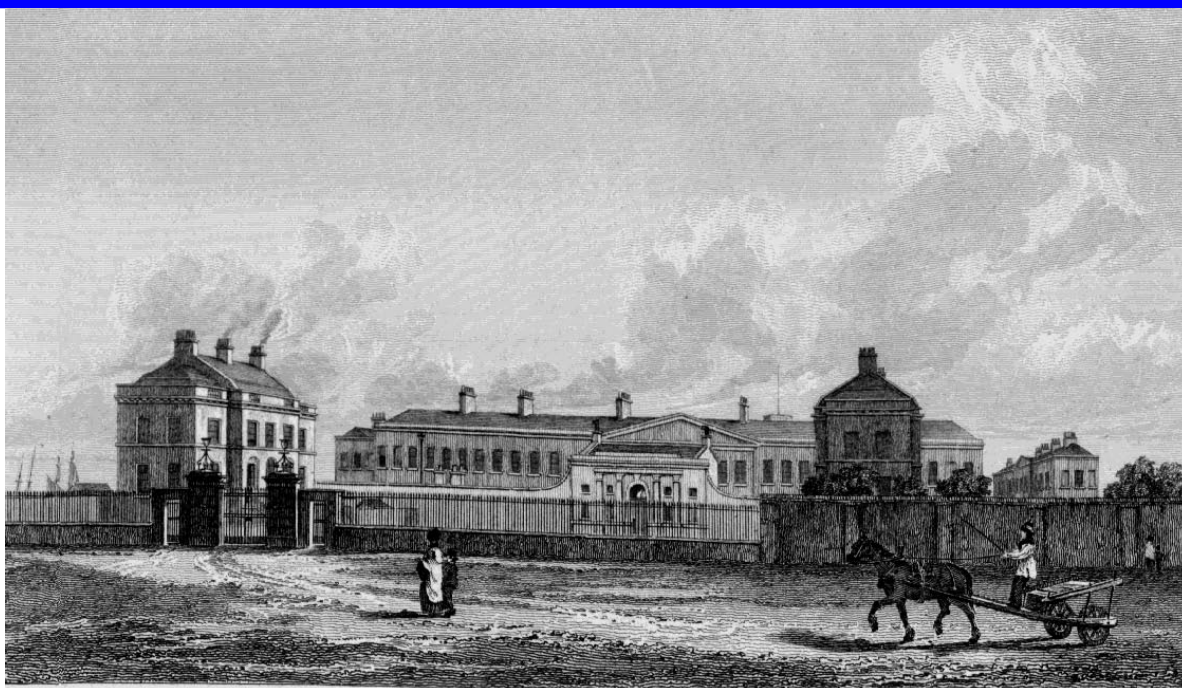


29th August 2005.

First known as the “Beach Amusement Centre” this opened in 1909. Under the terms of the original lease issued by the Council, there were only three attractions permitted. Charles B. Cochrane was the first lessee. The first amusements included the scenic railway, as seen below. There were two lift hills and the ride was formed with plaster mouldings. It was designed by William Napier. Another attraction was the “Katzen Jammer” Haunted Castle. The third attraction was a roundabout. The Haunted Castle was replaced in 1911 by a joy wheel. The complex closed during the First World War, then after reopening, in 1919 a fire destroyed the scenic railway. In 1925 a water schute was added, to be dismantled in 1928, at which time the scenic railway, subject to its own lease, was removed to Aberdeen.

Pat Collins took over the park in 1928 and installed a new figure of eight roller coaster. The photo below shows the Joy Wheel, and appears to date to around 1911. It is clear from the photo that the wheel ran horizontally, unlike today's high wheels. Also seen are the donkey rides. The council sold the freehold in 1993/4. In the thirties John Plane worked as a labourer in the gang re-constructing the pleasure beach. The construction manager was a German, Herr Heidrich, who had his own team of German labourers, and was most unpleasant to work for. Nevertheless he took on a few local men. John Plane subsequently





The Barracks 1842. (The same two buildings in the foreground are seen also three pages back.

East Norfolk Regiment on the South Denes in 1854, Sir E.H.K. Lacon, Bart., became Hon. Col. in Chief in 1859. In 1871 the Prince of Wales had been ill, but the commander of the Norfolk Regiment having died, the Prince, then came to Yarmouth by rail on the east Suffolk line. He was received by the Mayor at the station, and a luncheon was held at the town hall for a large number including the Earl of Leicester, Lord Sondes, Lord Suffield, and Hon. F. Walpole. In the evening the Prince dined with the troops at the Southtown Barracks and the town was brilliantly illuminated.

On the following day his Royal Highness placed himself at the head of his regiment, which was then inspected by General Sir Edward

*The Barracks 27.7.1853
(below)*



Militia Barracks, South Beach, Yarmouth



Prince Edward "Bertie" (later Edward VII) and the militia exercising on South Denes. Edward visited Great Yarmouth several times, and met up with Lilly Langtree his mistress, who was on stage at the Royal Aquarium. He stayed at the Shadingfield Lodge on the South Denes.



29th August 2005



10th September 2006

beginning and end of the season. There were photographs taken and write-ups in the local papers. This was to open and close every season, when there was a big civic party. All the stars attended as guests of the mayor. At the Wellington in 1957 was Benny Hill;

financially viable, so the scheme could not be undertaken. The pier soldiered on with very low attendances, and a run-down skating rink. Then in 1996 Jim Davidson, who had several times appeared as a comedian, took over the lease. He invested some £750, 000

in 1958 there was Tommy Cooper, in 1959 was David Nixon, then in 1960 Charlie Drake was on stage. In 1961 Bruce Forsyth was in Yarmouth at the Wellington. In 1962 Harry Secombe had a show here. In 1963 Harry Worth appeared. In 1964 it was Morecambe and Wise. In 1965 Mike and Bernie Winters as well as Jim Tarbuck. Next year in 1966 it was Terry Scott and Hugh Lloyd. In the following year (1967) it was Val Doonican and Arthur Askey on stage. In 1968 Des O'Connor, appeared, and then in 1969 Charlie Drake took the stage. Although the structure of the pier was seriously deteriorating in the 1980's, Francis Holmes proposed a plan to take the theatre over and invest a very large sum into a grand new complex. The Council refused this unless the lessee was fully responsible for repairs to the pier, which was not



10th September 2006



Above: The Grand Plan (never undertaken). Drawing of what was first planned by the Victoria Building Company.

Prior to 1863, the architect's impression of the proposed work at Albert Square was grand in the extreme, and could not be undertaken due to the cost.

The Victoria Building Company had been formed in 1841, (Secretary C.J. Palmer) for the purpose of providing "large and elegant houses for the accommodation of the higher classes of sea bathers", and partly by purchase and partly by arrangement with the town

council, possessed a large extent of building ground upon the South Denes. In 1845 only three houses had been erected, a range called Kimberley Terrace, the terrace itself being 40 feet wide, and 480 feet long, with a substantial sea-wall of white brick with stone coping, seats and a flight of steps at the north end. There were two spacious private houses, and the **Victoria Hotel**, finished in 1843. £17,000, was expended on these, and the next construction to take place was of Brandon Terrace and a street of "second class" houses called "Camperdown Place".

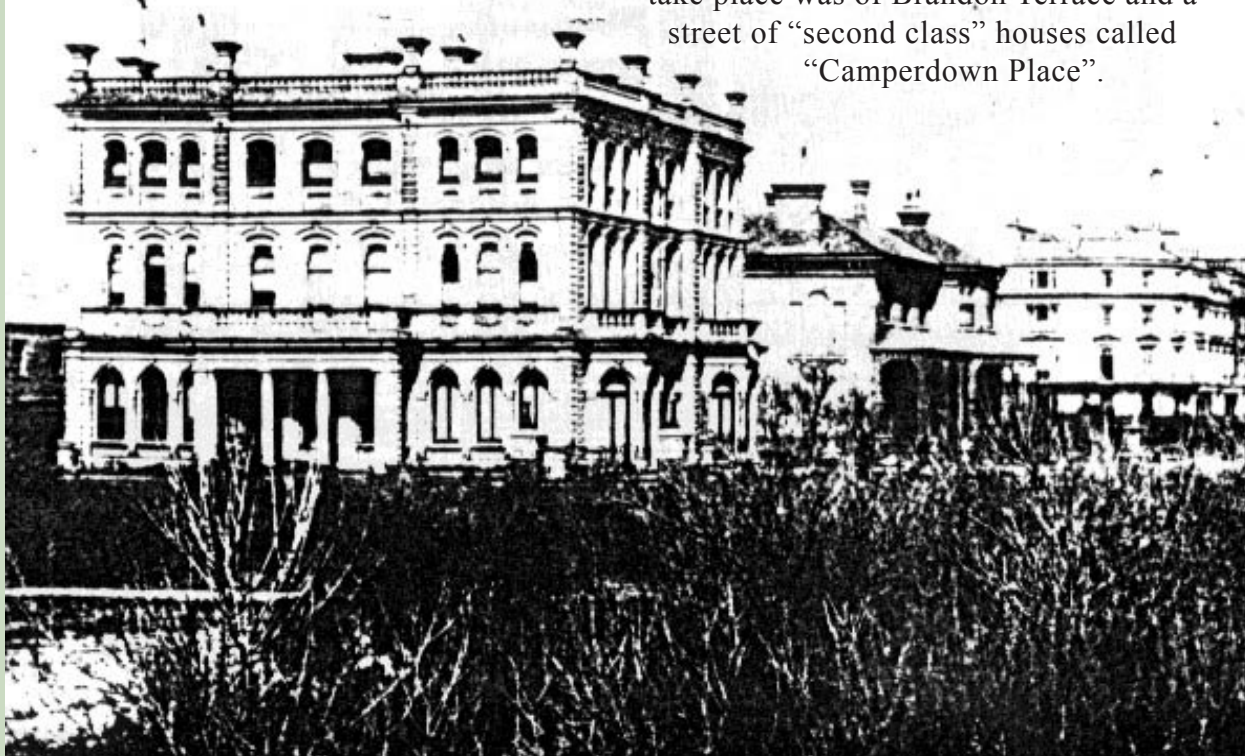


Photo. about 1880



An early picture of the Hippodrome, above. Frank Ginnett was ringmaster for many years until his death in 1953. Professor Alexander Zass from Turkestan performed at the Hippodrome as a strong man. He had been wounded in the Russo-Japanese war and later imprisoned in Hungary during the 1914-18 war. After escaping, he went under cover by joining the circus, and was later hailed as the strongest man in the world. In later life he had a troop of performing chimps at the Hippodrome.



This photo taken 29th August 2005. Previous to the circus being housed at the Hippodrome site, travelling circuses would pitch their tents, in open ground, and on Friday March 14th 1879, W & G Pinder's Grand Continental Circus was to be found on open ground at Nelson Road North, advertising "New and Matchless Feats" by the whole company of artists, some of whom were to perform the next week at the Aquarium (Adair the juggling Lion, on the inner rink.).

some herring for bait, then shoot lines for skate and cod. In May they would then cast the mackerel nets until the holiday season, when they would run as pleasure boats from the beach, taking passengers on trips out to Scroby to see the seals. The "GVH" they used was called after Bertie's sister (Gladys Violet Hubbard). [Interview with Bertie Hubbard on disk and internet]



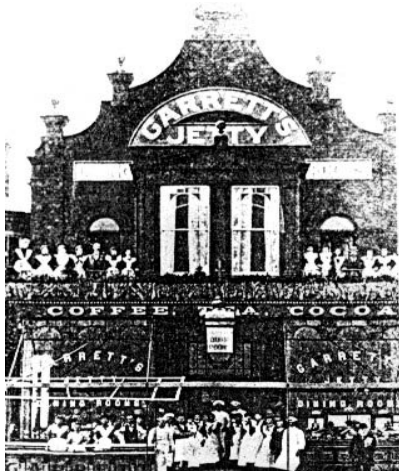
Bertie and passengers at Scroby Elbow Buoy.

Tom Parker of Row 90 had longboats on the beach that were used to row out to Scroby with the visitors in the twenties. Bob Haylett of Wellington Road was also engaged in this trade.

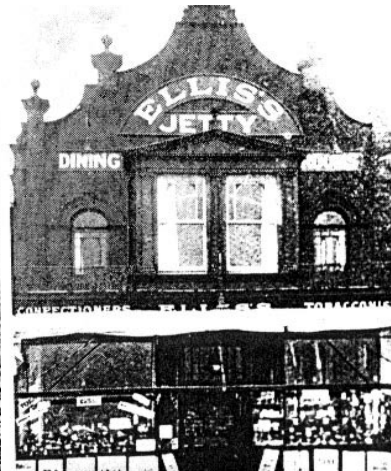
Parker was an Irishman who wore a white jacket and starched waistcoat. Haylett wore a navy pullover and "cheese-cutter" hat.

He used to row visitors to Scroby with Albert Symonds (see Rows 90 and 112) They told tales of wrecks and ship's bells tolling under the sea!

Alderman Percy Charles Ellis was Mayor of Great Yarmouth in 1934. He ran **The Jetty Dining Rooms**, although they were owned jointly by his sisters.



Garrett's Dining Rooms



Ellis' Dining Rooms

On the corner of Wellington Road, where there is now the bus office, (also see St.Peter's Road) Percy's brother kept the

"Fifty One" restaurant.

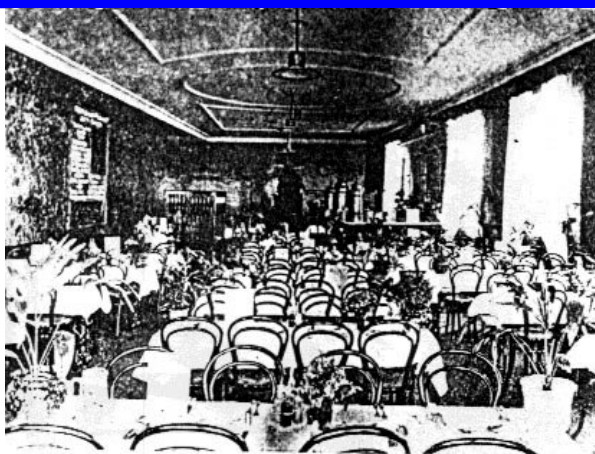
Their parents were Charles Arthur, and Freda (prev. Goate). The Jetty Dining Rooms were owned by Charles Arthur Ellis, but when he bought it he

immediately gave it to his daughters to provide them with an income. They in turn leased it to Percy. It was already of course, a restaurant called "Garrett's Dining Rooms".

Percy Ellis already possessed a shop, which in 1992 was Doughty's sports shop on Regent Road, but which earlier was a tobacconist's. Ernest, another brother, was a painter and decorator. Percy was Mayor in 1934, and there is a photo of him in his Mayoral Robes. The jetty dining rooms had been used during the war by the war ministry. Reginald Ellis sold the dining room in St.Peter's Road in 1949, and died shortly thereafter. The Jetty Dining Rooms did open briefly after the war, but were pulled down to make way for the "Golden Nugget" amusements, where Kathleen Powles' son had just been offered



Here is a picture of Percy with his sister Queenie, when babies.



Inside the Jetty Dining Room.

deed is dated March 3rd., 1753, an attested copy of bargain and sale of a Tar House, goods in trade, and assignments of debt in trade between Samuel Errington to George Errington. Samuel Errington the elder, of Great Yarmouth was a rope maker. The site was purchased for the sum of two hundred pounds. His son George Errington was also town ropemaker. There was a tar house and a shed, belonging to the spinning ground on the Denes, abutting against the east mount wall. The tar house, standing and being on the Denes, now in his own occupation, was built by Henry Brown, and bought and purchased by Sam. Errington from Nathaniel Symonds and Henry Gibson, executors of Henry Brown, together with the tar, copper etc. Palmer records that this hut had had a lookout at one time, and subsequently became a store and packing shed for fish, before being taken for sale by the railway. (Palmer Vol. 3., p.128)

Kathleen Powles of Row 142, was one of the waitresses at the Jetty Dining Rooms in 1932. They had to work from 7am. to 11pm., serving breakfast lunch and supper. Percy junior was something of a snob, and did all he

could to show up the waitresses, who also had Percy senior shouting at them to hurry up, whilst his wife sat in the pay booth! The waitresses thus had three bosses. Percy often had the waitresses in tears. They received 15 shillings a week for seven days a week. They had to carry their trays head high, and wore black dresses, white collar and cuffs, with a little white apron and a hat.

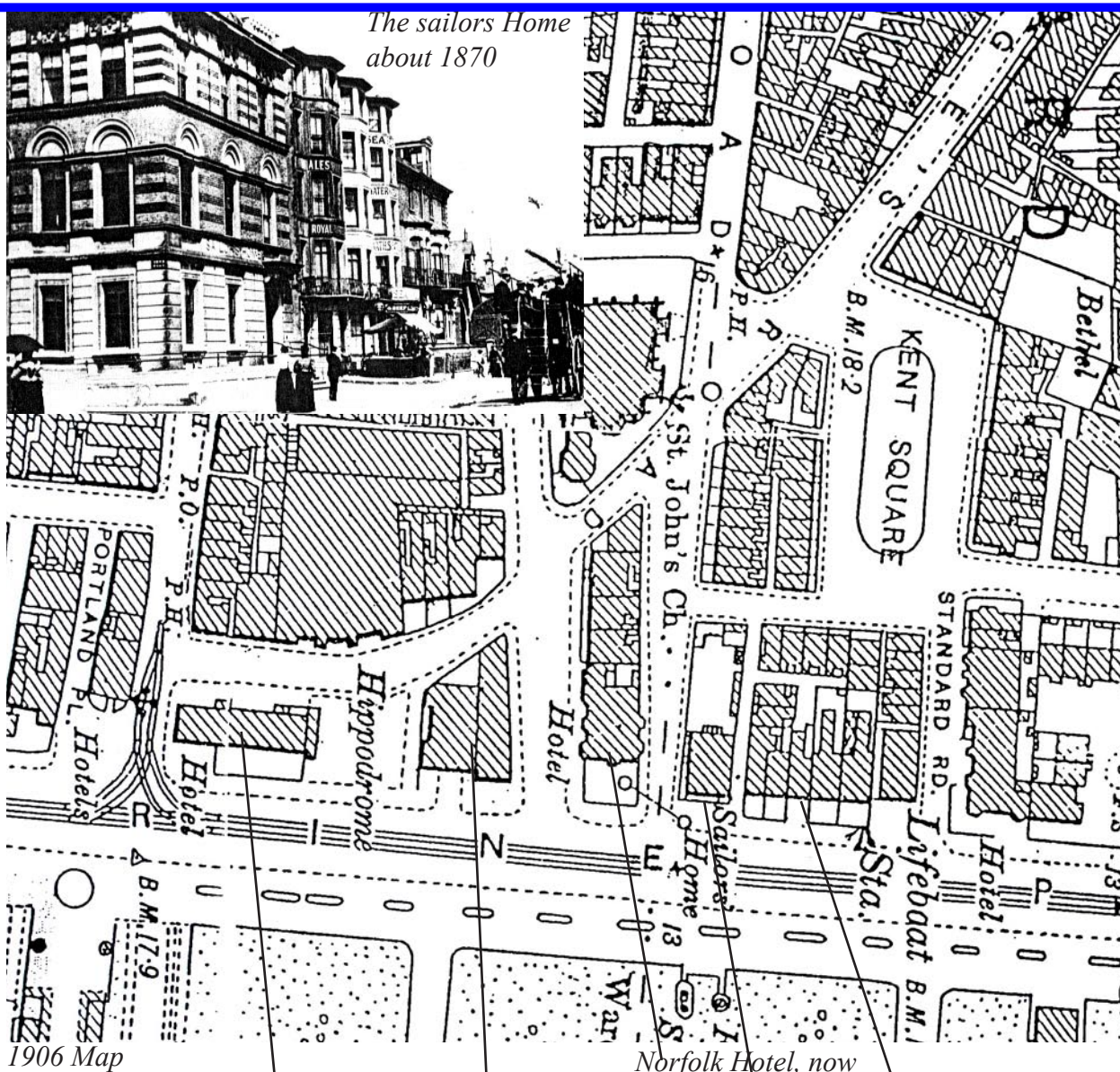
Leonard Ellis had the Holkham Hotel at one time, that had belonged to his father.



Holkham Hotel



Centre right, summer visitors, Holkham Hotel behind, about 1950.
Bottom right, the "Golden Nugget" on the site of the dining rooms, 29th August 2005.



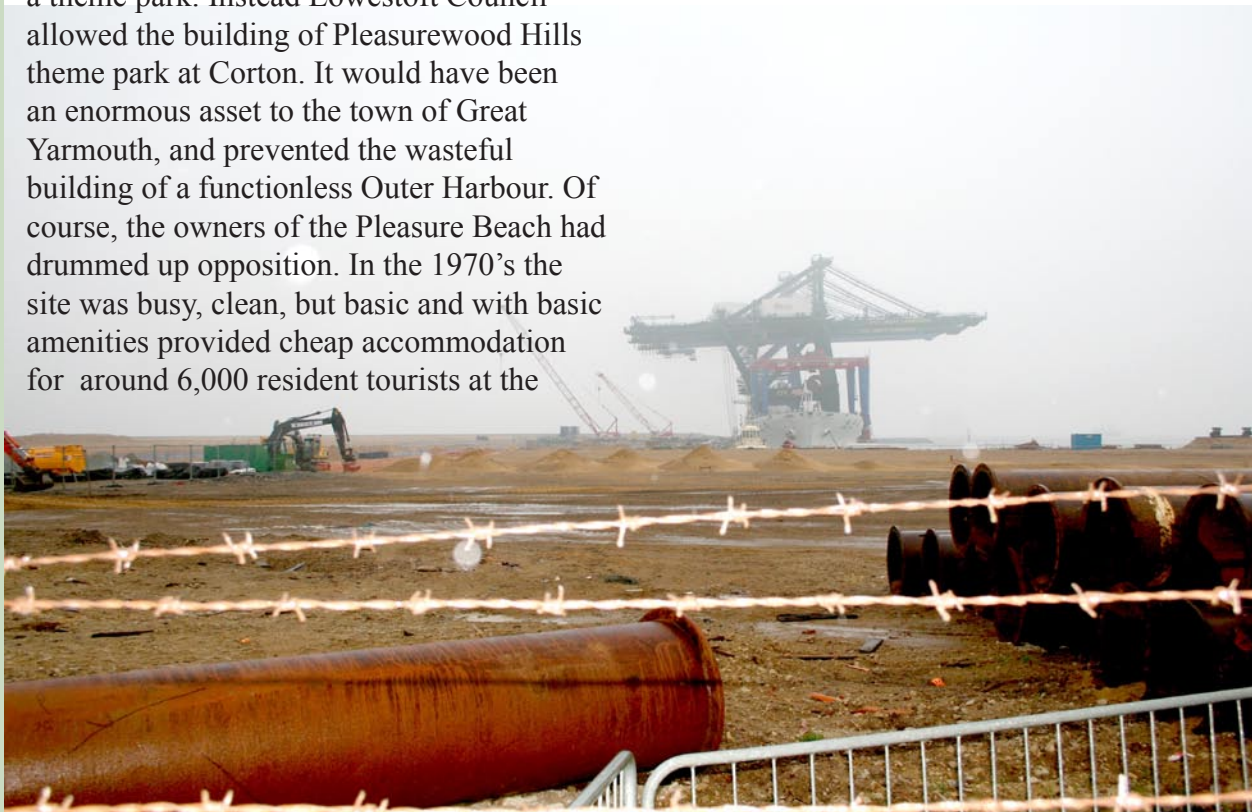
The Sailors' Home was built on the site of a former coastguard station. George Simon Harcourt, a magistrate from Buckinghamshire, had lobbied hard and was the mainstay of the effort to build this. The building was designed by Morant, and erected in 1858. The need for this as a refuge for shipwrecked sailors is substantiated by the statistic that by 1870, some 4,000 shipwrecked sailors had already been accommodated. Sailing ships were incredibly vulnerable to bad weather. In one infamous storm, some 100 vessels were wrecked off Yarmouth on one night alone. Wooden ships could not stand a severe battering, and would break up, as happened to a vessel from Yarmouth that struck anchor off the Holy Island in 1643, broke up during a storm in the night and all the crew drowned.

The Sailor's Home (inset above left) now the Maritime Museum, was opened in February 1861 as a refuge for shipwrecked sailors.

None were saved. The Sailors Home was financed entirely by voluntary contributions and legacies, and substantial legacies were sometimes received from quite distant parts (Palmer vol. 3., p.124). The Sailors Home continued as such during the early 20th. century, looked after by Richard Stockman and his wife Selena in 1906. An illustration of ship wreck was given by J.M.W. Turner, in his painting (1831) of a ship wrecked at Yarmouth "Stranded Vessel at Yarmouth". By 2006, having long been owned by the Corporation, the Sailors Home was noted to have become a museum.

people would come away to the seaside with acute illnesses, even in heart failure, going to the seaside for a rest! Even then there was a scheme afoot to turn the South Denes into a pipe yard for north sea oil rig pipe storage. That particular scheme never came to fruition, but the council seemed determined to find another use for the site, though they foolishly declined the application for a theme park. Instead Lowestoft Council allowed the building of Pleasurewood Hills theme park at Corton. It would have been an enormous asset to the town of Great Yarmouth, and prevented the wasteful building of a functionless Outer Harbour. Of course, the owners of the Pleasure Beach had drummed up opposition. In the 1970's the site was busy, clean, but basic and with basic amenities provided cheap accommodation for around 6,000 resident tourists at the

Once the harbour was completed, two docking piers were brought in for the use of roll on-roll off ferries. No ships having used the port for many months, these were then removed again so as to save money, and now the port has simply been sealed off. Below, the docks being installed.



This photo shows the huge pile of rock on the beach. The rock was then taken out by one ship and manouvred into place using the huge derrick on the other ship.

height of the season. During the 1980's there was no investment and the site deteriorated, with only a very



Inset is the gantry on the ship seen through the mist in the distance.



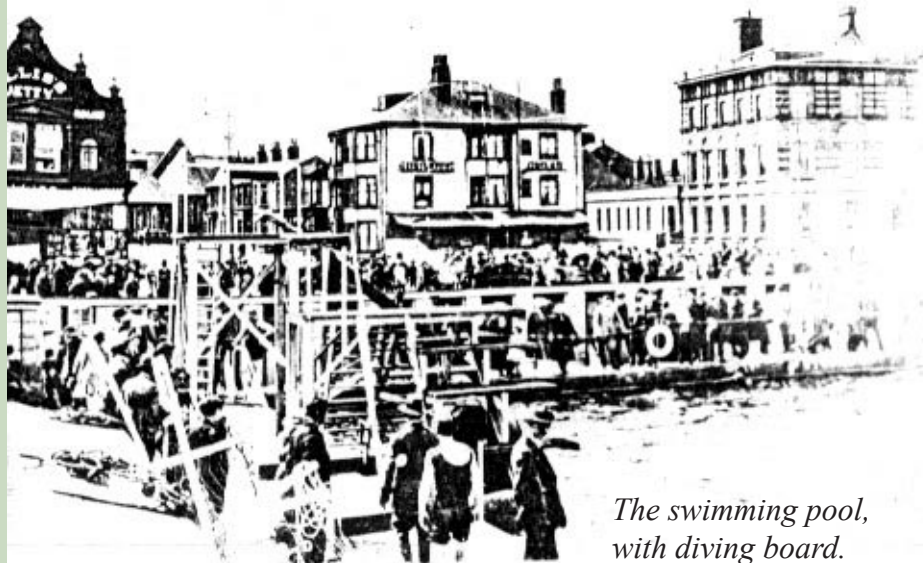
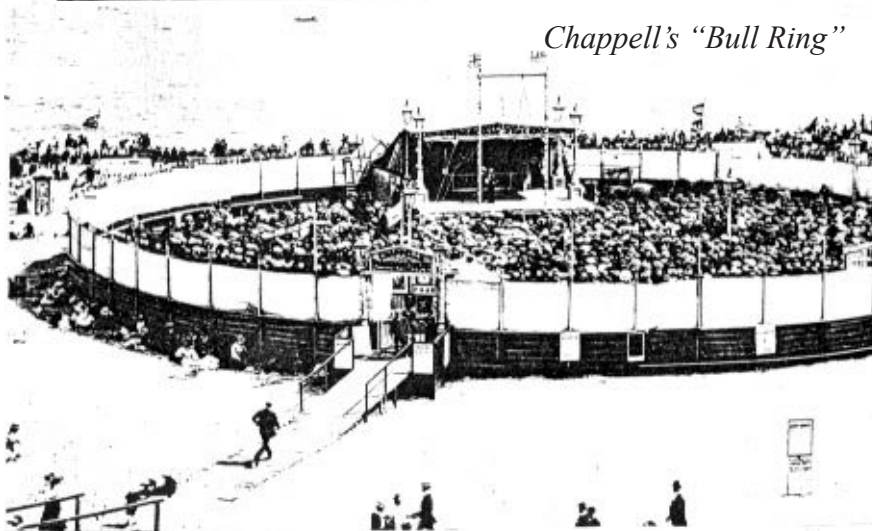
The Marina

On the site of the modern indoor Marina Centre, with its indoor pool, squash courts, gymnasium and indoor bowling green, the previous Marina, had entirely outdoor activities. The open air pool was opened by Councillor Brett in 1922. The boating lake was added in 1926. The goat carts worked in the area south of here in the 1890's, but were in due course prohibited by statute. In 1898, the Yarmouth branch of the R.S.P.C.A. asked that all goat carriages be licensed, like other Hackney carriages (photograph ten pages previous).

In addition to the open air swimming pool and boating pond, of which the pool as below, was opposite to the Norfolk



Chappell's "Bull Ring"



The swimming pool, with diving board.

photo's, these were very well attended, with standing room only, on the upper tiers. When the original open air pool had been built, the Mayor, Councillor Brett, challenged the Borough Treasurer to a race at the opening ceremony, which he won easily enough, though both look rather unfit in the photo. taken at the time (*next page*). See under Row 127 for a detailed

Hotel (centre left). North of these pools was the ring, in which various entertainments were held daily during the season. In the '20's, '30's, '50's and '60's, the holiday trade in Yarmouth was booming, and as seen in the

history and family tree of the Brett family. Now, the modern Marina Centre is heavily subsidised from the rates, since there are no longer the same large numbers of paying vistors.

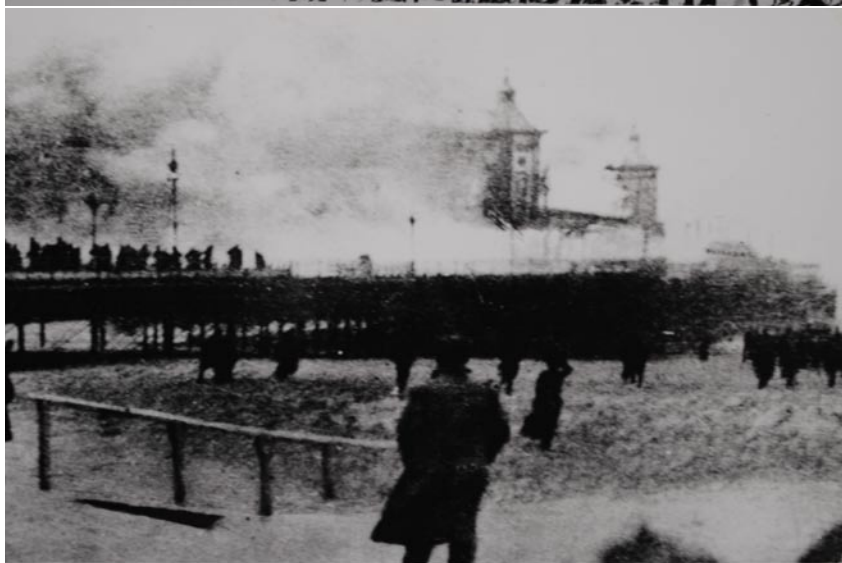


The Marine Parade was concreted in 1896, so the grand pavilion seen left, is certainly after that date, and seems likely to be the one that was built during 1901-2 at the great cost of £65,000, only to get burned down by a fire in 1910.



Temporary Pavillion of 1901

Following the fire in 1901, a temporary pavilion was erected, as above. Then, the Britannia Pier was rebuilt in 1901-02, at a cost of £65,000, which included a new pavilion to seat 2,000 persons. Then only a few years later, in 1910 it was again burned down, and there was a third devastating fire in 1914. The building currently can seat 1,000 people. It is not officially recorded, but on 3rd. June 1941, the army deliberately blew up the centre of the pier as a defence in case of invasion. On Friday 22nd. August 1941, just before 4.30pm., a German 'plane dive-bombed a British warship about a mile out from the pier. Out of a complement of 98 men, 68





John Clowes of Caister lived 1702-1781. John Edward Clowes of Great Yarmouth, 1851 -1911, married Emma Louisa Palmer 1851-1946. Their daughter Emma Mabel, 1876-1940, married, in 1899, James Arthur Reavell.

The house called Eastcote, was new built for James and Mabel.

Eastcote hallway.



The old gentleman in the deck chair is John Clowes senior, father of Mabel and of John Edward, who was the grocer on the Hall Quay opposite the Haven Bridge. (Also see Middlegate Congregational Church.)



John Clowes in the garden at Eastcote. The Norfolk Clowes family claimed descent from William Clowes the elder, whose son William (1640-1604) was surgeon to King Charles II. John Clowes of Sedgeford, Norfolk, was a grocer and ship owner. (1809-1882)



Market Road. One sister helped with the fruit round. Mrs Boyce died at the house in Row 112, when aged about 64, a little before the war. Horace Boyce's mother lived on Albion Road. Mabel first went to work for Mr. and Mrs. Wells who kept the coastguard station on Marine Parade, whilst the cook was on holiday for a fortnight, where they had a large dining room and a great long dining table. Mr. Wells sat at one side and his daughter on the other. The gas lamps were in the row then, and a man came round to light them. At that time Mabel was still at school and not quite 14. She went to Nelson school on Jetty road (now St. Peters road) where Mr. and Mrs. Minns and daughter Joan kept a shop opposite, and Mr. and Mrs. Scott kept a sweet-shop which later became the Post-office according to Mabel. The Coopers had another shop nearby, and their daughter married the young man who lived over that same sweet-shop.

There was a cooking class held in a house in Row 112, that was taken by Mrs. Rolling at the South Quay end about 1/4 way up. The children about 12 or so in number, walked from the Jetty Road school, down the paved row (St. Peters Row), and along Middlegate Street to Row 112. Mrs. Rolling was a big woman who gave the children 2 lessons a week. Boys and girls were then in different halves of the School. Mrs. Dyson's sweet shop in Middlegate, Mabel remembered, became Browns the sweet shop. "You could go in the hairdressers shop as a child and stand inside to pass time". (no computer games then!) He would do ladies' hair as well as gentleman's, but not many women actually went there. The "White Swan" public house was next door. They used to put all the sweets in the window in the sweet shop, and also had a shop in Regent road. Mr. and Mrs. Seaman had the hairdresser's. Another shop in Middlegate street made their own rock. The soldiers used to come to Harbord's Restaurant. Now the Sawadee Thai Restaurant, the soldiers would have appreciated the Thai girls.

Harbord had some new coloured glass doors put in. They had thirty or more boarders upstairs. Soldiers were billeted there, and then airmen. Mabel met her husband at Harbord's. One of the ship's captains introduced them. Her husband was a Scots seaman, a most handsome young man, named William Thomason. He came from Stornoway, having joined the merchant Navy. Unfortunately they were only married a few



Mabel and her dog, outside the house at Row 112.

years before he died from tuberculosis, and she was a widow at 32. Mabel stayed working at the restaurant and later became Manageress. Her husband had bought the house at 116 Exmouth Road where she lived in 1992. Harbord, Member of Parliament for the Borough, was at first a Liberal, but later was a Conservative and received a knighthood. Arthur Harbord's restaurant was seasonal. Mabel used to take Mrs. Harbord out in a wheelchair when she got old. The Harbords had lived at the Restaurant for as long as Mabel could remember. Harbord had a daughter who was married to a Naval Commander, but when he died, the daughter came to live at the restaurant also.

The 1936 Row Survey says "Row 112 contains a large