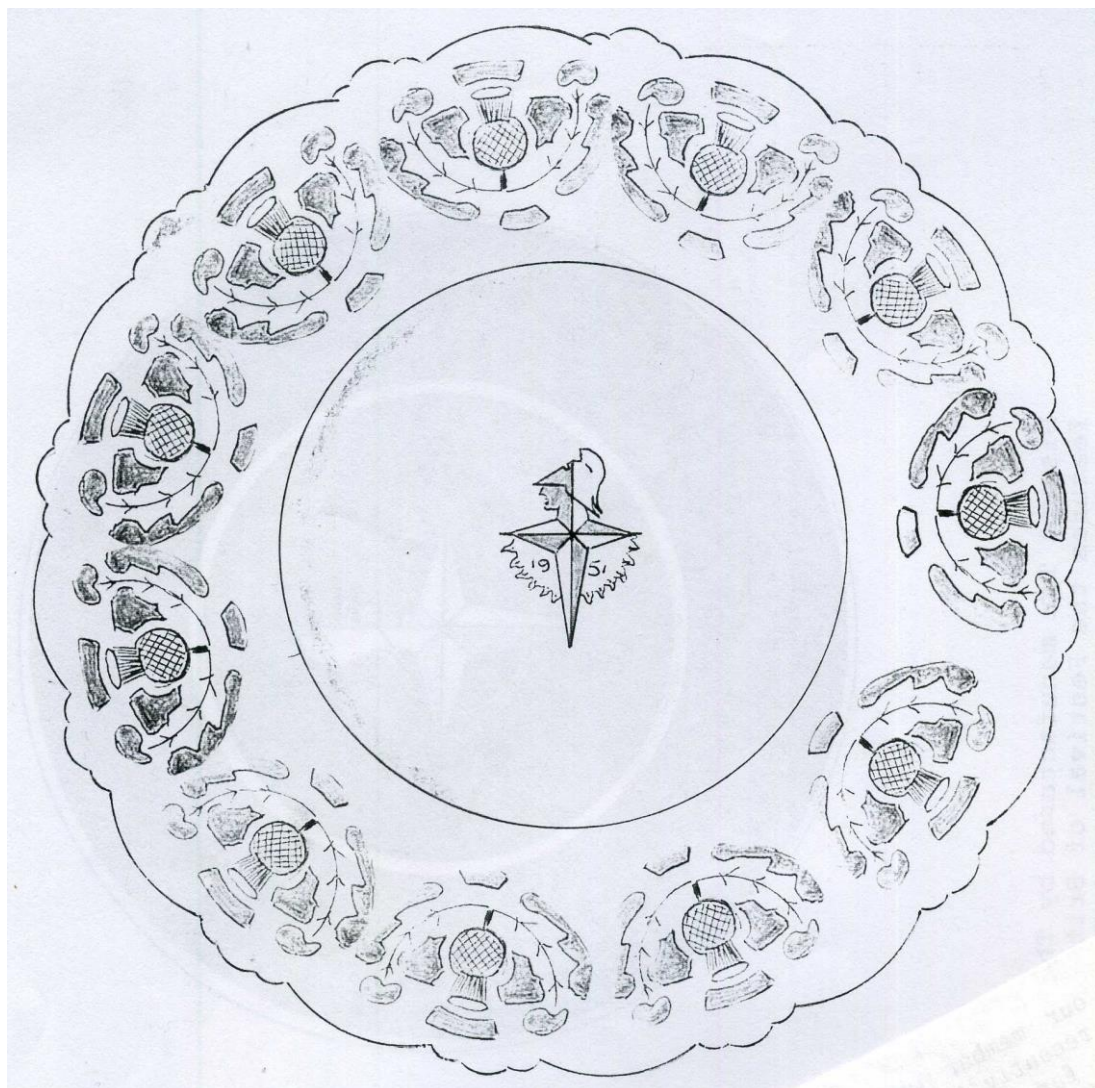


# EXHIBITION STUDY GROUP

DEVOTED TO THE CONSERVATION AND STUDY  
OF ALL MATTERS RELATING TO EXHIBITIONS

Journal No. 133

Summer 2019



An item from Fred Peskett's collection drawn by Fred.

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### **Honorary Life Members**

At our 2011 A.G.M. Don Knight (Founder member and Secretary since 2006 and who has displayed at every Convention), Fred Peskett (For services, organising several conventions and serving as assistant editor since 2005), and Kenneth Tonkin (Who has financed and distributed our Journal since 1999), joined Andrew Brooks and Bill Tonkin our existing two Honorary life members.

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**Visit our new web site at [www.exhibitionstudygroup.org](http://www.exhibitionstudygroup.org)**

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Coincidences are very common, they happen all the time  
Here's a couple of odd ones, the subject of my rhyme.

I have just had a letter from Fred Peskett who tells me he has been to a post card fair, his first such outing since he died and was brought back to life after his heart stopped for sixteen minutes in December 2016 nearly two and a half years ago. It's been a long time for Fred and I am sure his friends in the Study Group and also the Festival of Britain Society will be happy to hear some good news at last about him. My son Kenneth who went through a similar experience to Fred but not nearly so serious, at about the same time recovered much quicker, perhaps because he was a bit younger.

Way back in our Winter Journal one of our foreign members Bram Costin asked if anyone could give him any information about a post card he got on E-bay and so far no-one has come up with anything. I think his card must date from the early 1930's as I have a similar one postmarked 1933. I think that the post office at that time must have liked the artist (Frank Newbould) impression of a four engine aeroplane as they used it on several occasions on post cards to promote their stands at various exhibitions during that period. Then in the June letters page of the Picture Postcard Monthly I see an old friend and past Founder Member of the Study Group Graham Hall wrote a letter about the artist Frank Newbould who went to the Bradford College of Art, which explains Graham's interest.

I get a free magazine published by a firm called PostScript that specialises in selling the remains of print runs that have not sold to the expectations of hopeful authors and PostScript sells the books off cheaply, usually at about one third of the price they were published at. And there after a gap of about eighty five years on the front page of their magazine in glorious colour is a picture of Frank Newbould's aeroplane. (see on next page but unfortunately not in colour)

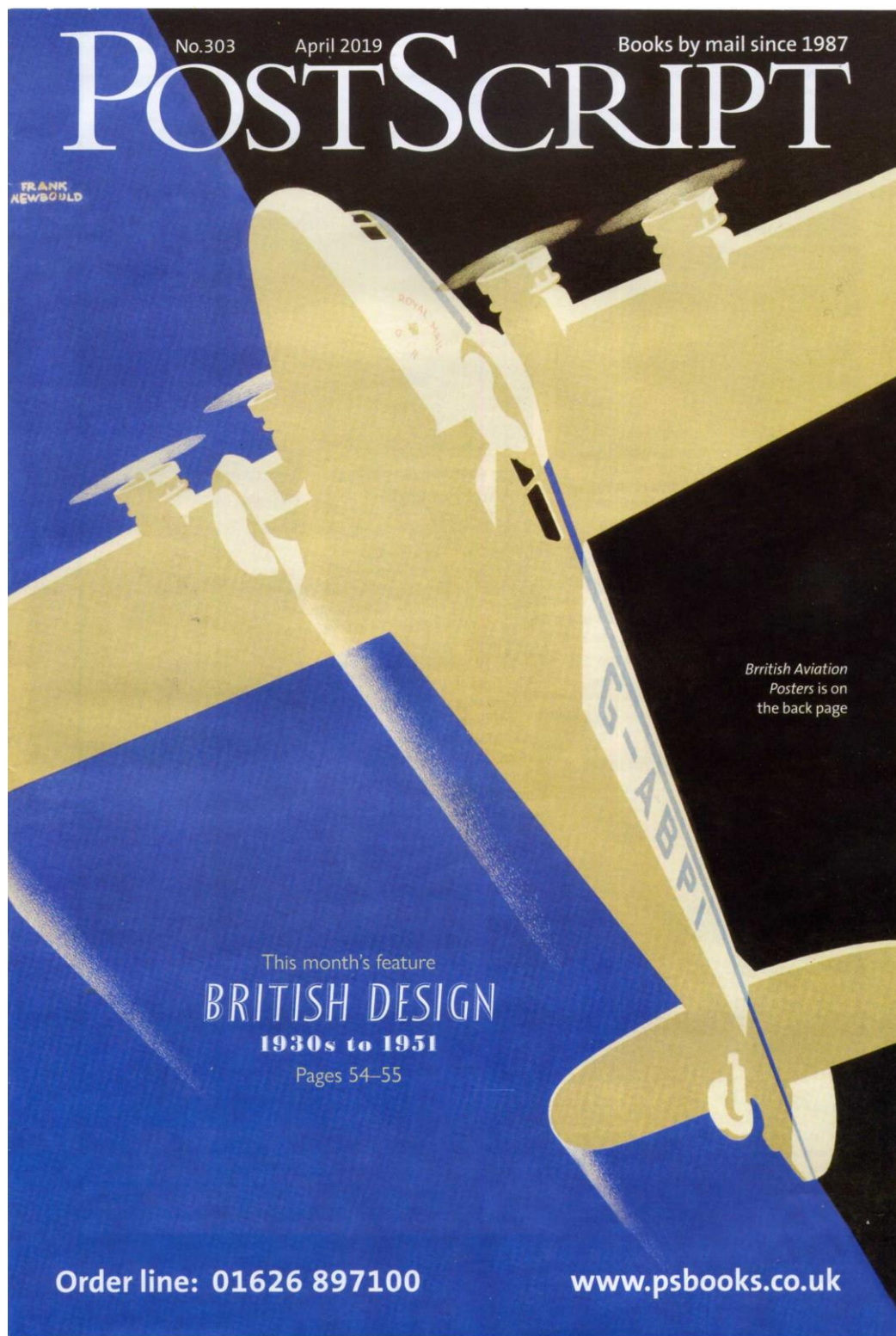
On an entirely different subject when I was in my late teens I got hooked on New Orleans Jazz, and in those days the only jazz to be heard was at clubs where they would have talks on Jazz illustrated by the playing of gramophone records. The first English band to play real Jazz was George Webb's Dixielanders and they played in a pub called the Red Barn at Barnhurst in Kent. It seems strange now to think that as recently as the early 1940's Jazz could only be heard on 78 records, and there was no English band in those days that played it. L/Ps, Tapes and C/Ds were still waiting to be invented. George Webb was the first and it caught on and soon there were other bands playing Jazz.

George Webb worked at Siemens during the week as a milling machine operator (Nothing to do with flour, a milling machine was used to cut and shape steel with circular cutters) and he had an apprentice under him who he was training to be a miller, and on occasions he took his apprentice with him to the Red Barn to hear the band play. So it is very likely that the apprentice and myself were in the Red Barn at the same time listening to the band playing, although we did not know each other. About 1947 the band broke up and that was the end of Jazz evenings at the Red Barn.

Many years passed by, over fifty of them and by then I was retired and involved in many other interests, one of which was writing a book on the post cards of the Festival of Britain with a friend, who by a remarkable coincidence turned out to be the milling machine apprentice who used to go to the Red Barn so many years ago listening to George Webb's Dixielanders. And the apprentices name? you should have guessed it by now, none other than our own Fred Peskett.

Now that I do not get to post card fairs any more, I still manage to keep up to date through two magazines The Picture Postcard Monthly which I have advertised for post cards in every month since 1990, and the Philatelic Exporter which I have subscribed to for over fifty years. The latter while being mainly about stamps does have a couple of pages devoted to post cards written by an old friend Brian Lund who used to be the proprietor of the P. P. M. I no longer actively collect stamps which I started collecting seriously about 60 years ago. I don't know when I started collecting post cards, I drifted into it when I became a bit disillusioned about the quantity of new issues by the British post office. Associations involved in both stamp and post card collecting seem to be going through a period when they are concerned about falling numbers of members which seems at variance with some of the prices being realised on E-bay. Perhaps it's just that collectors are no longer interested in joining clubs which is a pity, they don't know what they are missing.

The Editors



Frank Newbould's aeroplane is still alive and kicking after about 80 years.

When Mike Perkins and myself did our book on post cards of the British Empire Exhibition we speculated that the Australian Fauna and Flora series might have been organised as a publicity stunt involving school children in Australia. We wrote,

"Printer unknown, coloured, blue back. All copies of these cards seen are postally unused and bear a message on the back from Australian school children. It would appear that these were written by children in Australia, brought over in bulk and distributed in this country, either to schools or more likely to children visiting the exhibition, possibly to encourage 'pen friends'."



Australian Fauna



Australian Flora

Australian Fauna Emu.  
 Australian Fauna Kangaroo.  
 Australian Fauna Kookaburra. Vert left.  
 Australian Fauna Lyre Bird.  
 Australian Fauna Magpie. Vert left.  
 Australian Fauna Native Bear. Vert left.  
 Australian Fauna Opossum.  
 Australian Fauna Platypus.

At that time (1994) no Flora cards were known. Twenty five years have gone by and I have found just one Flora card 'Silver Wattle' I was discussing this with one of our members David Ogden via E-mails and he has also only found one Flora card the 'Waratah' The second part of this series featured the Flora of Australia, but unlike the Fauna series the titles are not preceded by 'Australian Flora'. The backs are the same and the cards are written by Australian school children. I see in the Wembley update we did in 2004 that we recorded no new Fauna cards but recorded four Flora cards three written by Australian school children like the Fauna cards

Boronia. (Brown) (Red).  
 Red & White Heather.  
 Silver Wattle. Vert. left  
 Waratah. Vert.

And now David tells me he has two Tanner Bros Ltd. post cards both extolling the wonders of New Zealand and again like the Australian Fauna and Flora cards not postally used and written from a school probably by school children (Careful handwriting adults are more likely to scribble). So it looks as if both Australia and New Zealand used post cards to encourage communications between Colonial and British school children. The Tanner backs are not the normal green back that was in use for many years.

Message on back card titled, At the Muella Hut, Mt. Cook N. Z. S.1523

N. Z. is a land greatly blessed with beautiful scenery. In the South are magnificent mountains, glaciers and beautiful sounds. In the North there are hot springs, geysers and caves full of exquisite stalactites. Come over here and see them for yourself. Go to the Wembley Exhibition and see pictures of them. L. Whitworth Hutt D. H. School



At the Meuller Hut Mt. Cook N. Z.



Mt. Cook from Muletebrun N. Z.

Message on back of card titled, Mt. Cook from Muletebrun N. Z. S 1528

“N. Z. is a land of many wonders. One great feature is the great area of volcanic activity in the centre of the North Island, while another wonder is the glacial district on the west coast of South Islands. Wiatomo caves are decorated with stallactites and stallagmites. These caves are situated on the west coast of the North Island. A conspicuous but beautiful landmark is Mt. Cook 12349ft  
A. I. Thomas Lower Hutt. Hutt District High School.”

Text of both cards supplied by David Ogden

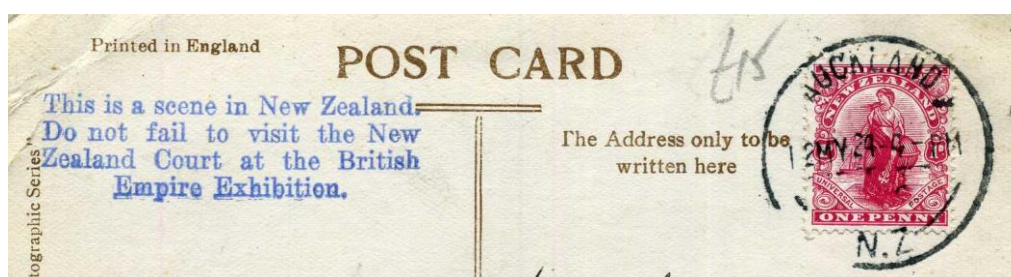
I should be interested to hear from any member who can add to this story with any scans of messages from school children on unposted post cards.



Australian Fauna and Flora by an unknown printer, both series had identical blue backs

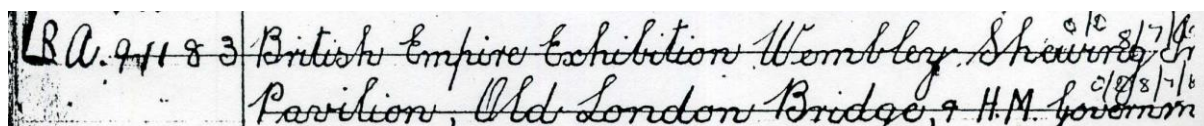


The standard Tanner Bros. back in green. Cards with this back were available at the British Empire Exhibition and are quite common with Wembley stamps and exhibition post marks.

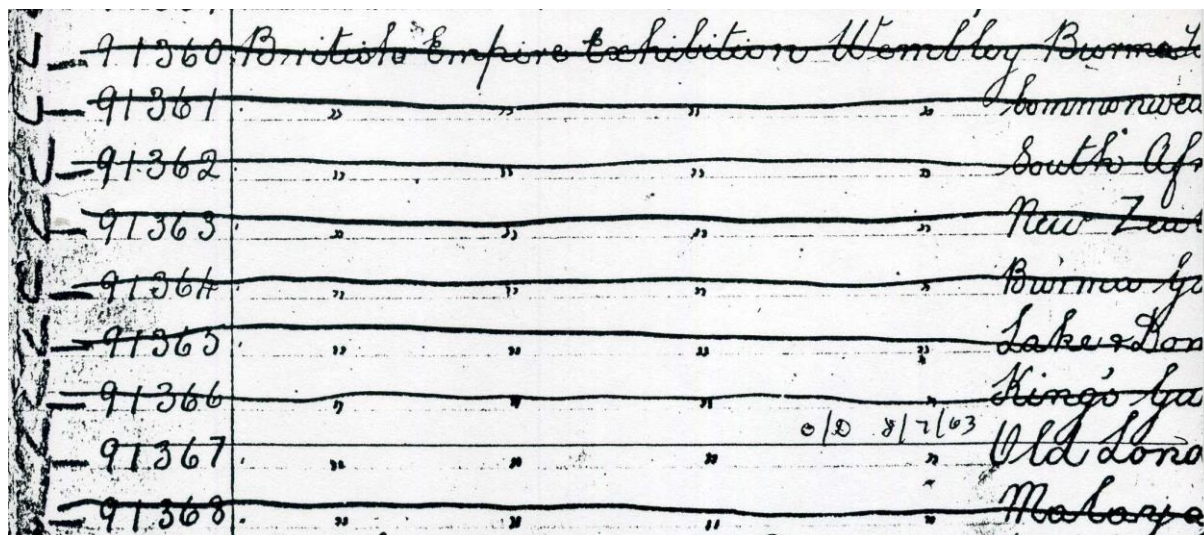


Tanner cards with the above back and overprint in blue or violet were available in New Zealand and were used to advertise the British Empire Exhibition.





Numbers 91183 from the archives at Dundee University



Numbers 91360 to 91368 from the archives at Dundee University

After the huge output by Fleetway Press I would think that Valentine & Sons must come second as the most prolific publisher of British Empire Exhibition post cards, they are very common and bearing in mind what I have just previously stated perhaps it is time to try and complete a listing of these cards. When Mike Perkins and myself were researching material for our book published in 1994 we not only invited other collectors to provide information but Mike managed to get photocopies from the Valentine archives which were deposited at Dundee University. These proved to be rather disappointing as the record books only recorded a number and the bare title without any information as to whether the cards were published as Bromotype, Sepiatype or Real photograph X L cards.

Valentin's even varied the wording on the published cards of the same view for instance 91127 in Sepiatype was published with three different titles, 'Burma, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley', 'Burma Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley' and 'Burma Pavilion, Wembley, Exhibition'. which is not recorded in the archives

If any members can fill in any of the missing numbers please get in touch with me with details, if you can send me scans of the fronts and backs this would be a bonus.

It is not known why items in the archives are crossed through. Maybe this was done by Valentine's when the numbers were published.

### Valentine's 'Bromotype' Series.



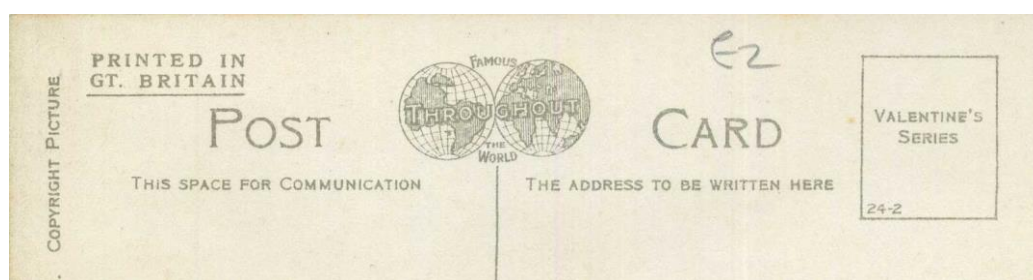
Bromotype back

B/W litho printing, grey back, with '24-2' in right bottom corner of the stamp box, all of these titles finish with 'British Empire Exhibition Wembley'.

- 91118 Canadian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91119 Malaya Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91121 Boating Pool, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - A Number on left.
  - B Number on right.
- 91124 Indian Theatre and Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91126 Hong Kong, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91127 Burma Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91129 Indian Court, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91134 Railodok Bus Passing East Africa Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91136 Burma Gate. British Empire Exhibition Wembley.
- 91137 The Stadium, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley. Copyright Aerofilms Limited.
- 91161 \* West African Section. British Empire Exhibition Wembley.
- 91162 Bridge over Lake, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.

\* The existence of this card in Bromotype has not been personally verified by the authors although it was published in Sepiatype.

### Valentine's 'Sepiatype' Series.



Sepiatype back

Sepia litho printing, grey back with 24-1 in the right bottom corner of the stamp box, or 24-2 in the left bottom corner. Another difference is that some titles end with 'Wembley Exhibition' and some end in 'British Empire Exhibition Wembley' and to add to the confusion some titles are known printed with both endings. The four types are listed as

- Type 1.** 24-1 in stamp box title ending in British Empire Exhibition Wembley
- Type 2.** 24-2 in stamp box title ending in British Empire Exhibition Wembley
- Type 3.** 24-1 in stamp box title ending in Wembley Exhibition
- Type 4.** 24-2 in stamp box title ending in Wembley Exhibition

**Type 1.** 24-1 in stamp box title ending in British Empire Exhibition Wembley

- 91118 Canadian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley
- 91119 Malaya Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91121 Boating Pool, British Empire Exhibition Wembley
- 91124 Indian Theatre and Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley
- 91126 Hong Kong, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91127 Burma, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91127 Burma Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91129 Indian Court, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91134 Railodok Bus Passing East Africa Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91135 Entrance to Australian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91136 Burma Gate, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91137 The Stadium, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley. Copyright Aerofilms Limited.
- 91162 Bridge over Lake, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.

**Type 2.** 24-2 in stamp box title ending in British Empire Exhibition Wembley  
91118 Canadian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley  
91119 Malaya Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91121 Boating Pool, British Empire Exhibition Wembley  
91124 Indian Theatre and Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley  
91126 Hong Kong, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91127 Burma, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91127 Burma Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91129 Indian Court, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91134 Railodok Bus Passing East Africa Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91135 Entrance to Australian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91136 Burma Gate, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91137 The Stadium, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley. Copyright Aerofilms Limited.  
91162 Bridge over Lake, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.

**Type 3.** 24-1 in stamp box title ending in Wembley Exhibition  
91119 Malaya Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.  
91120 On the Lake, Wembley Exhibition.  
91124 Indian Theatre and Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.  
91126 Hong Kong, Wembley Exhibition.  
91127 Burma Pavilion, Wembley, Exhibition.  
91129 Indian Court, Wembley Exhibition.  
91134 Railodok Bus Passing East Africa Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.  
91162 Bridge over Lake, Wembley Exhibition.

**Type 4.** 24-2 in stamp box title ending in Wembley Exhibition  
N.n. Indian Pavilion, Old London Bridge, H. M. Government Building, Wembley Exhibition. Copyright Daily Mirror.  
91118 Canadian Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.  
91119 Malaya Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.  
91120 On the Lake, Wembley Exhibition.  
91121 Boating Pool, Wembley Exhibition.  
91124 Indian Theatre and Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.  
91126 Hong Kong, Wembley Exhibition.  
91127 Burma Pavilion, Wembley, Exhibition.  
91130 H. M. Government Building, Wembley Exhibition.  
91133 View from Old London Bridge, Wembley Exhibition.  
91134 Railodok Bus Passing East Africa Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.  
91137 The Stadium, Wembley Exhibition. Copyright Aerofilms Limited.  
91161 West Africa Section, Wembley Exhibition.  
91162 Bridge over Lake, Wembley Exhibition.  
91361 Commonwealth Way, Wembley Exhibition.  
91362 South Africa Pavilion, Wembley Exhibition.

The existence of a card numbered 91123 titled Atlantic Slope has been recorded but the type was not notified

The card without a number (N.n.) is listed as 91183 in Valentine's records.

### **Valentine's 'Valesque' Series.**

Coloured, grey back, no numbers in the stamp box.

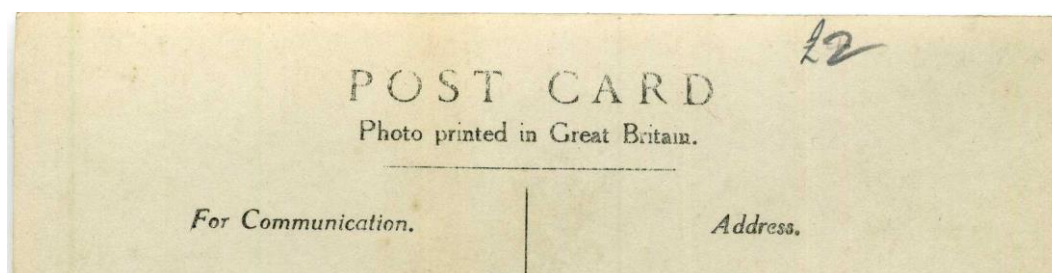
N.n. British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, shewing Indian Pavilion, Old London Bridge, H. M. Government Building.  
91118 Canada, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91120 The Lake, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91125 Palace of Engineering, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.  
91127 Burma, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.



Valesque Series back

- 91130 H. M. Government Building, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91131 Hong Kong, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91135 Australian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91360 Burma Temple, and Old London Bridge, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91361 Commonwealth Way, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91362 South Africa.
- 91365 Lake and Dominion Way, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91366 View from King's Gate, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.

Note. The card without a number is listed as 91183 in Valentine's records.



1925 Railway Centenary back no stamp box or imprint

### Valentine's X.L. 1925 Railway Centenary Series.

Sepia R/Photo, black back, no stamp box or numbers. 'POST CARD' measures 48 mm. A series of multi views issued for the Railway Centenary in 1925. Although the Centenary was celebrated in Darlington I am sure that the cards were also available at Wembley. They were reissued in 1930, the latter have 30-2 in the stamp box and either had the titles altered or re-positioned.

- 93973 Horse Dandy of 1825 at York / Early carriage No. 59 at York / Stone Sleepers  
Brusselton / No. 1 Locomotive Darlington / Geo Stephenson. 93973 'JV' left  
of Brusselton picture
- 93974 Copy of first ticket issued / First Booking Office, Shildon / First public Railway  
station, Shildon / Geo Stephenson.
- 93975 N. E. R. Railway Memorial / Largest Railway Crossing / Old Stone Sleepers / High  
level bridge / No. 1 Locomotive.
- 93976 N. E. R. Pacific type / No. 1 Locomotive, Darlington / Geo Stephenson. 93976 JV  
lower right Vert left.

### Valentine's X.L. Real Photo Series.

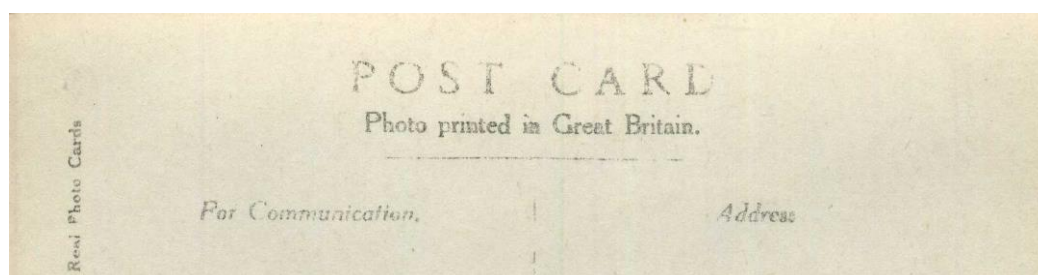
Sepia R/Photo, black back, no numbers or stamp box. The backs come in two types, in one 'POST CARD' is in thin black letters and measures 45mm, and Type 2 where the letters are thicker and greyer and measure 48mm. These cards were sold in packets of twelve, only packet No. 2 has been seen.

Type 1. X L Real Photo 'POST CARD' measures 45mm.

- N.n. Indian Pavilion, Old London Bridge, H. M. Government Building, British Empire  
Exhibition, Wembley. Copyright Daily Mirror.
- 91118 Canadian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- 91120 On the Lake, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.



Type 1. X L Real Photo back 'POST CARD' measures 45mm.



Type 2. X L Real Photo back 'POST CARD' measures 48mm.

- |       |                                                                                  |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 91121 | Boating Pool, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                |
| 91122 | Prince's Avenue, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                             |
| 91123 | Atlantic Slope, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                              |
| 91125 | Palace of Engineering, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                       |
| 91127 | Burma, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                       |
| 91128 | Dominion Way, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                |
| 91129 | Indian Court, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                |
| 91131 | Hong Kong, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                   |
| 91132 | Ceylon Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                             |
| 91133 | View from Old London Bridge, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                 |
| 91134 | Railodok Bus and East Africa, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                |
| 91135 | Australian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                         |
| 91137 | The Stadium, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                 |
| 91138 | Birds eye view, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley. Copyright Aerofilms Limited. |
| 91161 | West Africa Section, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                         |
| 91361 | Commonwealth Way, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                            |
| 91362 | South Africa, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                |
| 91363 | New Zealand, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                 |
| 91364 | Burma Gate and Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                     |
| 91367 | Old London Bridge, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                           |
| 91368 | Malaya, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                      |
- Note. The card without a number (N.n.) is listed as 91183 in Valentine's records.
- 91132      Ceylon Pavilion is known with a plain back.

Type 2. X L Real Photo 'POST CARD' measures 48mm.

- |       |                                                                                                                            |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| N.n.  | Indian Pavilion, Old London Bridge, H. M. Government Building, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley. Copyright Daily Mirror. |
| 91118 | Canadian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                                                     |
| 91120 | On the Lake, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                                                           |
| 91121 | Boating Pool, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                                                          |
| 91122 | Prince's Avenue, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                                                       |
| 91123 | Atlantic Slope, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                                                        |
| 91125 | Palace of Engineering, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                                                 |
| 91127 | Burma, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.                                                                                 |

- 91128 Dominion Way, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91129 Indian Court, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91131 Hong Kong, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91132 Ceylon Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91133 View from Old London Bridge, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91134 Railodok Bus and East Africa, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91135 Australian Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91137 The Stadium, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91138 Birds eye view, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley. Copyright Aerofilms Limited.
  - 91161 West Africa Section, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91361 Commonwealth Way, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91362 South Africa, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91363 New Zealand, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91364 Burma Gate and Pavilion, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91367 Old London Bridge, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
  - 91368 Malaya, British Empire Exhibition, Wembley.
- Note. The card without a number is listed as 91183 in Valentine's records.
- 91132 Ceylon Pavilion is known with a plain back.

### **Zoo Studies.**

Coloured, grey back, no numbers in the stamp box. This card is known with a Wembley stamp and exhibition cancellation, and message reading 'I am posting this at the exhibition.'

### **Zoo Studies.**

The Tiger.

### **Venice Bride of the Sea by Bill Tonkin**

The early history of Olympia and Earls Court was dominated by two people Harold Hartley and Imre Kiralfy and they came together in 1890 for one of the first spectacular shows put on at Olympia In the 6d libretto the show was called "Venice the Bride of the Sea." But on the daily programmes price 2d the show was called "Venice in London."

Harold Hartley had started his working life in his father's wine business but when he was 21 in 1872 he decided to branch out in a different line and with a friend William Emmott started a publishing and advertising business in Fleet Street. An early venture was to publish a weekly journal for the retail and wholesale drapery trade. In those days there were no trade directories and to get the business known in the provinces they sent a copy of their first number to every station master in the country with a letter asking them to fill up a form giving the names of the principal drapers houses in their neighbourhoods, in return for this they offered to send a free weekly copy of their Journal for three months. More than 70% responded which enabled them to compile a list which they used to increase the circulation of their publication which soon became a very profitable venture.

Later he sold his interest in the publishing firm and started a pure water business making distilled water for table and other uses. It was in connection with this business that he was to meet the two brothers Montague and Isidore Gluckstein and Joseph Lyons who was later to become famous for his Joe Lyons tea shops.

Imre Kiralfy was born in Budapest in 1845, and his reputation as an organizer of these events had been established in Europe. When he was twenty three he had already began to organize pageants and processions, and was decorated by King Leopold of Belgium in 1868 for his management of a monster fete in Brussels. It included operas, pantomimes, sports and a spectacle in which 4,000 soldiers took part.

In 1869, he emigrated to America and remained there for over twenty years organising several huge shows. His first was "The Fall of Babylon" this was followed by "Nero" or "The Burning of Rome" employing 1,500 performers. At the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893 he organised "America" in twelve acts in the then largest auditorium in the world which was an outstanding

success. Just before this in 1890 he had returned to London and a syndicate was formed with Kiralfy being appointed Director General to organise “Venice in London” in 1891-92. Followed by a series of Exhibitions at Earls Court. His greatest achievement was yet to come the designing and building of the 1908 “Great White City,” at Shepherds Bush and building the Stadium for the London Olympic games.

In the year 1890 Hartley met Joe Lyons who was then running the bars at Olympia which at that time was being used as a roller skating rink, and they discussed the possibility of a spectacular show featuring the canals of Venice. They first made enquiries about being able to rent Olympia for a long period and succeeded in securing an option for a year at a rent of £300 a week. The rent was to commence on opening day as they felt it would take six months to build and organise the show.

They managed to raise £18,000 on condition they used the services of a known showman. A message was sent to Imre Kiralfy in New York asking if he would come over and produce Venice in London and if so on what terms. The reply which came the next day was “I am leaving by the next boat”. On his arrival a meeting was held of all those concerned Montague and Isidore Gluckstein, Joe Lyons, John Hart and Harold Hartley. They put their scheme before Kiralfy and asked for his ideas and an estimation of the costs and terms and if he was prepared to act as producer of the show. His estimate of the cost was £17,000 and he suggested a percentage of the takings. This was not acceptable to the group and it was finally agreed to pay Kiralfy 40% of the profits.

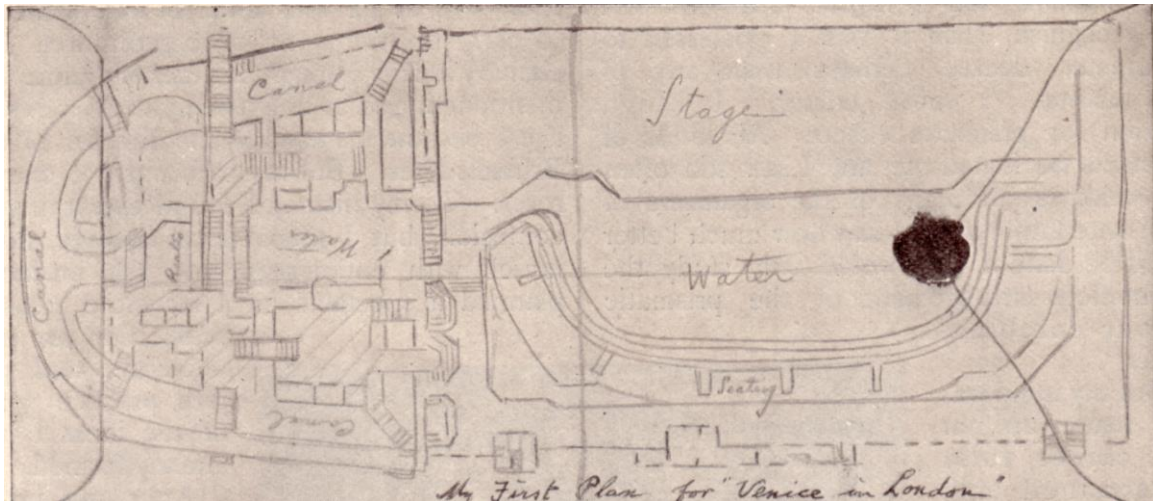
They then formed themselves into a syndicate under the title of Imre Kiralfy Ltd. John Hart was elected chairman and the rest being called the committee of management, Kiralfy held no interest in the syndicate. The project was well under financed but they were able to secure bank loans, and by the time they opened the doors their expenditure was over £60,000.

Early in September 1890 Hartley and Lyons and their wives left for Venice hoping to secure up to 30 second hand gondolas, unfortunately they found the Venetian gondolas were about eight feet too long for the turns and twists in the canals being built at Olympia, while in Venice they organised the manufacture of smaller gondolas. Owing to their size they could not be shipped as they would have to have travelled as deck cargo and be un-insurable so had to be sent by the more expensive railway. While in Venice they arranged for a number of gondoliers to travel to Olympia to man the boats. The party then moved on to Florence where they were able to secure the co-operation of sufficient firms to fill the stands at Olympia.

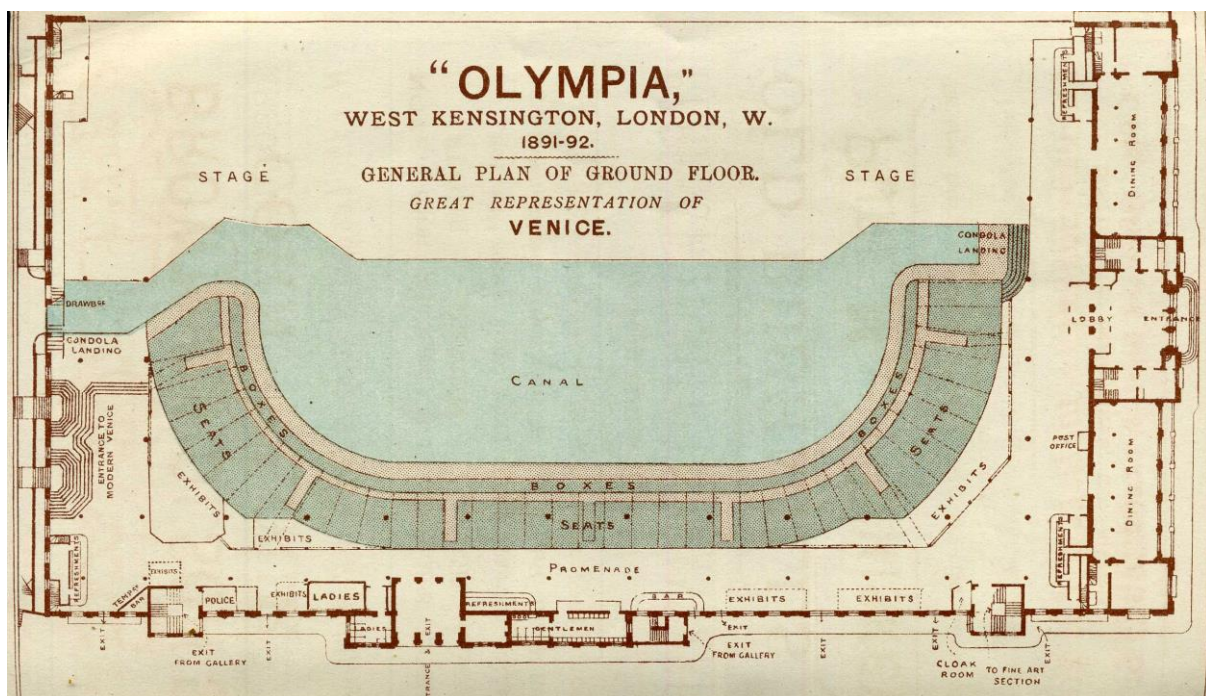
The syndicate had originally intended to construct the lake and canals with concrete but this they found impracticable owing to the possibility of leakage and the cost of removing the concrete after the show closed. The only alternative was lead sheeting and here the cost was beyond their means. Montague Gluckstein suggested hiring the lead and a firm was found who would hire out the lead with the syndicate giving guarantees and being responsible if the price of lead fell during the contract and to benefit if the price of lead rose, and to pay an agreed price for the hiring.

Exhibitions that Imre Kiralfy was involved in not including his period at the White City.

|         |                                                                       |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1891-92 | Venice the Bride of the Sea A grand historical and romantic spectacle |
| 1895    | Empire of India Exhibition                                            |
| 1896    | Empire of India and Ceylon Exhibition                                 |
| 1897    | Victorian Era Exhibition                                              |
| 1898    | International Universal Exhibition                                    |
| 1899    | Greater Britain Exhibition                                            |
| 1900    | Women’s Exhibition                                                    |
| 1901    | Military Exhibition                                                   |
| 1902    | Paris in London                                                       |
| 1903    | International Fire Exhibition                                         |
| 1905    | Naval Shipping and Fisheries Exhibition                               |
| 1906    | Imperial Austrian Exhibition                                          |
| 1907    | Balkan States Exhibition                                              |
| 1908    | Hungarian Exhibition                                                  |
| 1909    | The Golden West and American (USA) Industries Exhibition              |



Kiralfy's original sketch for Venice in London on the back of an envelope.

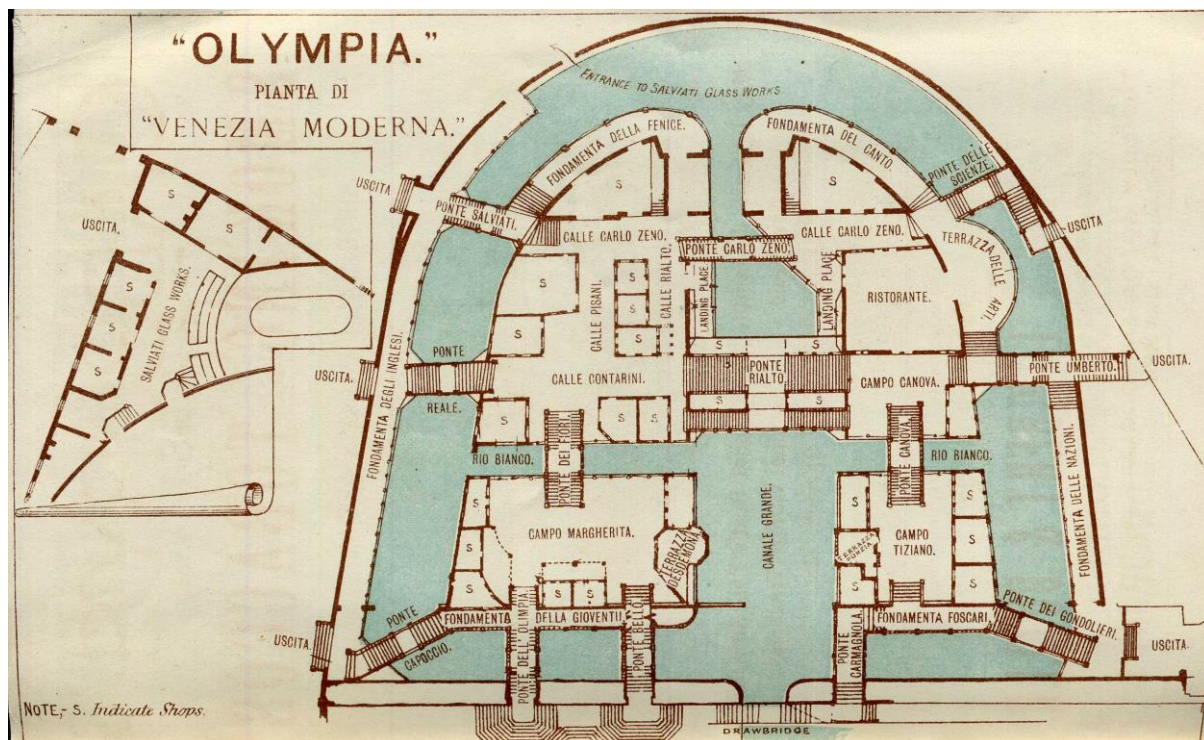


The final plan closely followed Kiralfy's sketch on the back of an envelope

An extract from Kiralfy's autobiography published in the Strand Magazine Vol xxxvii in 1909

"It was while I was staying at Barnum's place at Bridgeport, Connecticut, that the idea of "Venice" flashed across my mind, not a "Venice in Italy" but a Venice transported to London. I took out a scrap of paper, an envelope, from my pocket, and then and there schemed out my idea. My mind went back to my studies of Venice thirty years before, the whole thing as it should be rose up before me, and down it went, even the details, on the back of that envelope. When "Venice" attracted its thousands and hundreds of thousands to Olympia in 1892, it had all arisen naturally from my plans on the back of that envelope."

The tiers of seats facing the stage across the lake could seat 8,000 people. The lake was connected by a short canal to the section known as the modern Venice built in the Olympia annexe. Modern Venice was a miniature reproduction of many of the most attractive features of the real Venice. All the streets were waterways crossed by bridges and the buildings were occupied by Venetian merchants selling their wares.



The area given over to trade exhibits

The most important of these was Dr. Salviati's glass works with the furnaces in full blast, he having brought over most of his skilled workmen. The furnaces were never out for over a year and burnt nothing but oak and walnut timber. Another popular feature was the lace shop where Venetian girls could be seen making the most delicate of fabrics.

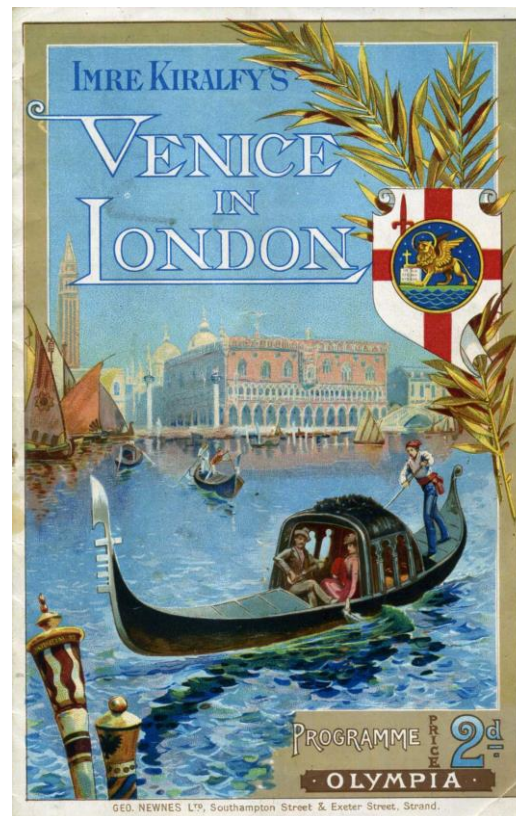
The attendants were all Italian, mostly old soldiers and dressed in the uniform of the Gendarmerie with cocked hats and side arms. They were given official permission to use these uniforms providing they were purchased from the Italian Government contractors and worn by Italians only.

The show opened on Boxing Day 1891 and ran for thirteen months with two performances daily, each visitor having a reserved numbered seat at prices from 1/6 (7½p) to 5/6 (27½p). The success of the show was phenomenal playing to packed houses so that within three months they had cleared off all their debts and could pay a dividend.

During the autumn of 1892 in order to introduce a new feature they opened the Crystal Gardens which occupied a piece of ground on the South side of Olympia. These gardens were the outcome of the purchase of a giant chandelier for £60 at the breakup of Her Majesties Theatre where it lit the whole house. Some of the lustres were nearly two feet long and the trees and sidewalks of the gardens were festooned with these and lit by electric light, in the breeze they struck each other and gave out a musical sound.

Venice in London had many distinguished visitors, one night the Prince of Wales later to become King Edward VII came with a large party including the Duke of Clarence and the party dined in one of the rooms which was reserved for them, Joe Lyons did the catering.

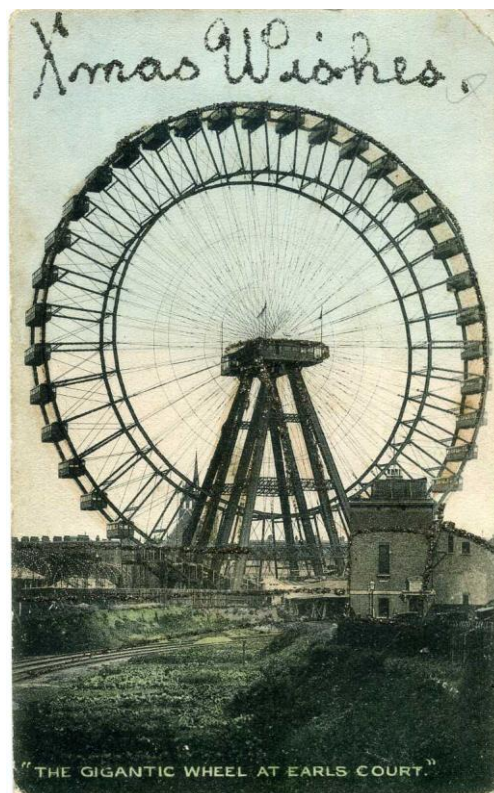
With the closing of Venice the Bride of the Seas the syndicate's contract with Irme finished and for their next production 'Constantinople' they used his brother Bolossy who agreed more favourable terms.



In addition to the 6d libretto there was also daily programmes at 2d



A young Imre Kiralfy



The Giant Wheel

An early attraction at Earls Court was the Great Wheel although it came after the Venice Bride of the Sea show being built in 1894. It was around 300 ft high and 284 ft in diameter with 40 cars each carrying 30 passengers and weighs about 900 tons.

