

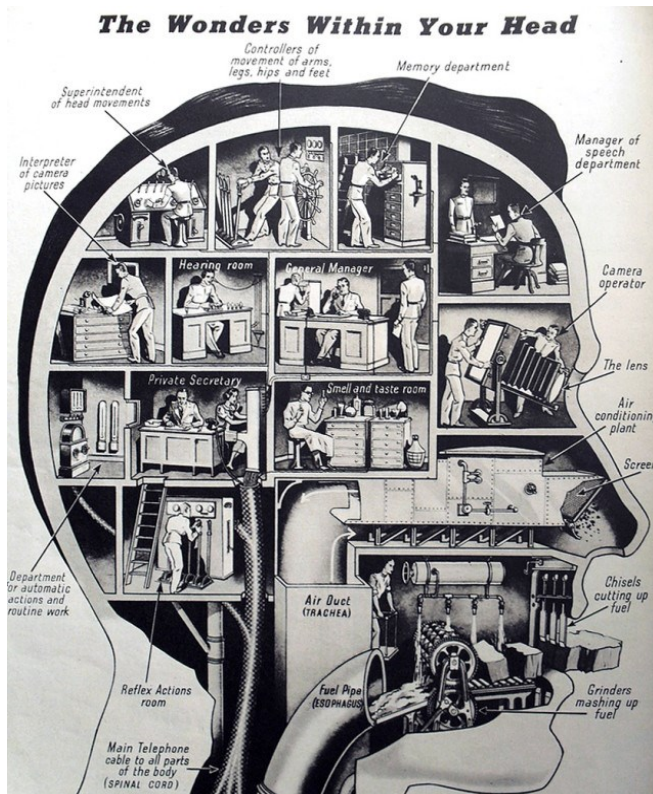


The Maldens and Coombe Heritage Society

(Founded 2012)

NOT EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

Julian McCarthy



Minds are strange things or, should I say, MY mind is a strange thing as it is not good practice to insult a reader – well, not in the first line anyway.

I have said before that, rather than considering my thoughts as being biological and, put simply, chemical or electrical pulses, I sometimes imagine a little team of operatives in a control room, each assigned a specific task.

When I mentioned this to my brother (I try not to tell too many people as, sooner or later, I fear one will suggest that I should go and tell a psychiatrist) he said that it was because I used to read the Beano and there was a cartoon strip called The Numskulls. But these were cartoon characters and solely intended for humour whereas the image I have is more functional and informative.

No, I think that it comes from looking at 'cutaway' images from 'Look and Learn', the 'Eagle' or 'Knowledge', similar to that alongside and one way or another, I am stuck with the imagery.

(The man in charge of controlling 'Digression' has just told me to "get on with it!").

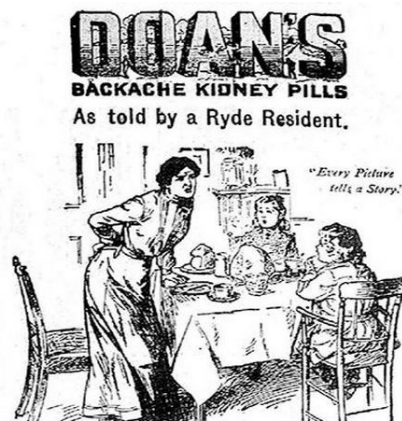
I have recently received a copy of an old postcard, dated 1912 and sent from Canada. Knowing that the local interest part of this piece is not about 'the picture' itself, and wanting to give the piece a title I thought the reference to Every Picture, etc. was apt.

However, the little man inside my brain whose specific task it is to 'know things' rang his little bell and asked "Where does the phrase (perhaps he should have said 'idiom', but no matter) 'Every Picture Tells a Story' come from?" and thereby hangs a tale!

Realising that I had heard my parents and grandparents use the idiom I knew it must have pre-dated the 1970s LP by Rod Stewart so I sought to find out and, surprisingly, it wasn't as easy as I thought. (As an aside the reference to an 'LP' caused the little man to ring his bell again and ask "When did LPs start being called 'Albums'?" I ignored him for the moment!) *

So where did the title come from? I anticipated (incorrectly, it transpires) that it might be Will from Stratford (upon Avon - not the station on the Jubilee Line) but, apparently, it was only first recorded in 1847 and hence is much, much later than I thought.

It seems that it became a popular advertising slogan in the late 19th and early 20th Century for Doan's Backache Kidney pills, which regularly featured a picture of someone bent double in pain alongside which was the phrase "Every picture tells a story".



Here's proof.

A SOUTH DAKOTA CASE

W. R. Smart, Belle Fourche, S. D., says: "Rheumatism caused me terrible suffering. I had to give up work. I had to be lifted around and was perfectly helpless. Doan's Kidney Pills acted like magic in driving away the rheumatism. It soon left me entirely and I haven't had an attack since."

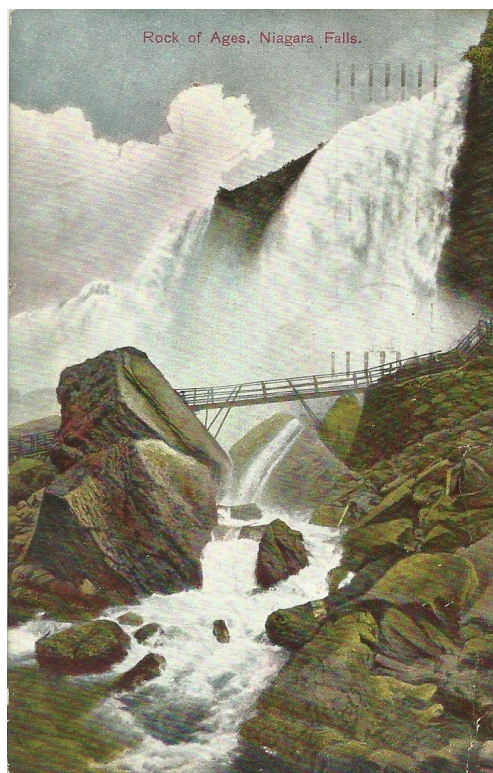
Get Doan's at Any Store, 50c a Box

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

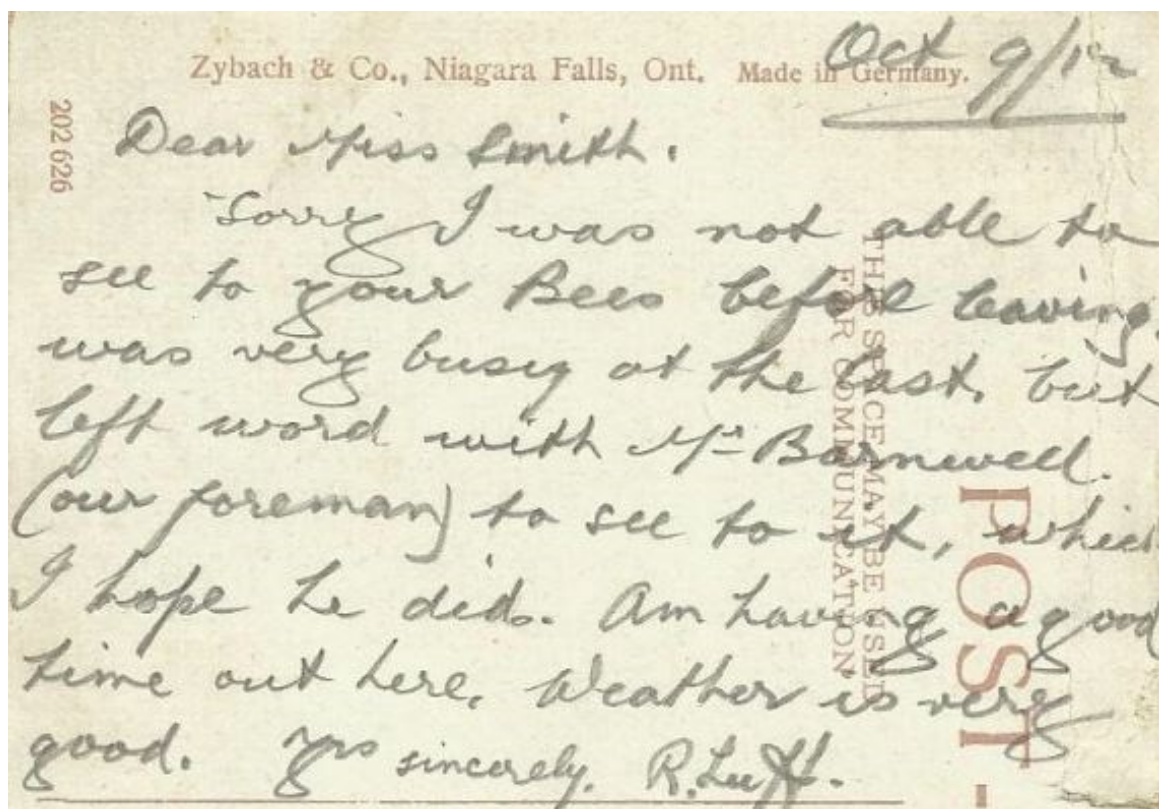
FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N. Y.

So even thinking of a title takes me to places that I didn't realise I was going to go to or indeed didn't intend to take you, the reader, along with me. (You may have also noticed the phrase 'thereby hangs a tale' above - this IS by Will from Avon, who was a prolific writer when not selling cosmetics at the door! (Old, I know, but hey, I 'had to'!)

Ok, now onto the picture postcard that set this piece in motion, ("**Eventually!!!**" I hear being screamed from all parts of New Malden) which has a view of Niagara Falls.



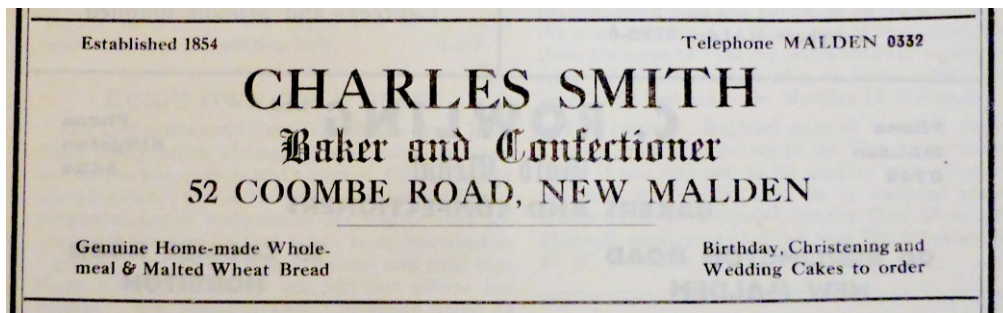
Whilst this is a pleasant scenic postcard there is no story or any real relevance to Maldens and Coombe and you could start to wonder as to the relevance. However, as is so often the case with postcards, the story is on the reverse.



(Thanks to R Gill for the Postcard images)

The card has been sent by one R. Luff to Miss L Smith c/o Bakers and Confectioners, Coombe Road, Malden Surrey.

So what do we know of Smith's (the Bakers) and who was the apologetic R Luff?



It was later called Charles Smith with J Treslove as proprietor



Then simply called J. Treslove



The postcard is dated October 10 1912 so referring to the 1911 census we can see that there were three potential 'Miss Smith' s living at the address, the eldest of whom is Lilian aged 21.

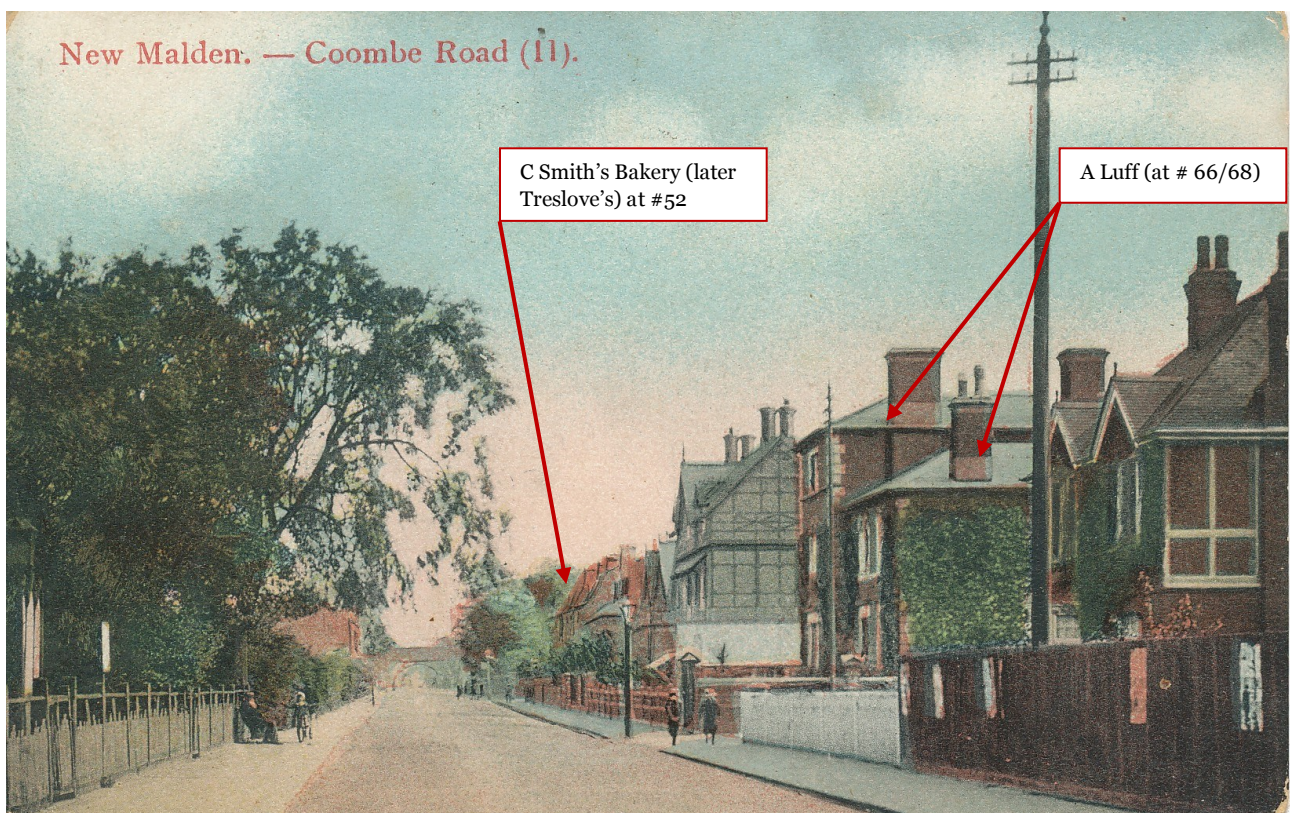
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Charles Smith	Head	57	Married	8	7	X			T. Baker	925		Miss Anne Whitebridge	240		
Fanny Smith	Wife	54	Married	26	8	7	1					Fulham	000		
John Smith	Son	23	Single						Baker	925		From 4 at home New Malden.			
Lilian Smith	Daughter	21	Single						Student	380		New Malden			
George Smith	Son	19	Single									New Malden			
Edith Smith	Daughter	17	Single						Student	1		New Malden			
James Smith	Son	14							School	390		New Malden			
May Smith	Daughter	12							School	1		New Malden			
Albert Smith	Son	9							School			New Malden			
George P. Smith		35	Married						Baker	925		Worked	Clerkenwell	000	
John P. Smith		25	Single						Baker	1		Worked	Yorking	1	

But what of R.Luff? Well scrolling a few more pages through the census we find living at nos 66/68 Coombe Road, Mr Roland Luff, aged 24, son of the Nursery man, Arthur Luff.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Arthur Luff	Head	57	Married						Manager	564		Employed		Freight Luff	Artist
Emily Luff	Wife	54	Married	30	5	5								King Lynn Norfolk	170
Roland Luff	Son	24	Single						Manager	564		Worker	4	Orchard	000
Hilda Luff	Daughter	21	Single						Flourish Clerk	050	564	Worker	0	Orchard	192
Brother Luff	Daughter	16	Single						Assistant of Manager	564		Worker	4	Orchard	1
Frank Brown	Son in law	38	Married						Officer	492		Worker	4	Orchard	
Luffa Brown	Daughter	19	Married	5	2	2								Orchard	
Ellie Brown	Daughter	14	Single						Child			Child		Orchard	000
Stanley Brown	Son	2	Single						Child			Child		Orchard	



(Thanks to P Brand for the Postcard image)



(Thanks to T Kelley for the Postcard image)

So we know a little of the Baker but what about the Nurseryman, Mr Luff?

As the website of A. Luff & Sons advises (<http://www.ripleynurseries.co.uk/photo-albums/9/a-luff-sons-history>) the company was founded by Mr. A. Luff in 1897, and, beginning in a very small way, made during steady and continual progress, until it has attained its position as one of the leading firms in the Landscape gardening and Nursery trade.

In 1897 Mr. A. Luff started the business at New Malden, Surrey. In 1899 the Wimbledon Park Nurseries were acquired. Early in 1914, to meet the ever expanding trade, the firm acquired Coombe Wood Nurseries, Kingston Hill, on the retirement from business of Messrs. J. Veitch & Sons Ltd, of Chelsea. In 1922, to further meet the requirements of the business, forty-five acres of land with a quarter of a mile frontage to the main Portsmouth Road, was purchased at Send, near Guildford, Surrey. This nursery was planned on the most up-to-date principle, and stocked with all kinds of trees, roses, shrubs, and plants. In March 1927 the old established of Messrs. D.S. Thomson & Sons of Wimbledon, was acquired.

In July, 1927, the business was formed into a Private Limited Company under the title of A. Luff & Sons and Thomsons Ltd., with Mr. A. Luff as Chairman, and Messrs. Norman and Roland Luff as joint Managing Directors.

Back to the postcard and whether or not the Luff's foreman, who in the postcard message had been asked to look after Miss Smith's bees, lived close enough for us to know that the bees were attended to. He is referred to as Mr Barnwell and, once again, the census reveals his location, as he lived at the nursery on the corner of Lime Grove.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	Edgar Barnwell	Head	35	Married						Nursery Gardens 564	Nurseryman	Woker		Boughton Unwired	100	
2	Ada Barnwell	Wife	36	Married	11	2	2							Boughton Unwired	310	
3	Cedney Barnwell	Son	9							School				Boughton Unwired	1	
4	Arthur Barnwell	Son	2											New Malden Surrey		
5	Sydney Barnwell	Brother	38	Single						Carpenter	210	Builder	Woker	Boughton Unwired	100	
6																

So, was this postcard the start or continuation of a 'budding' or 'blossoming' romance and was Miss Smith destined to change from a life surrounded by self-raising flour to one surrounded by self-raising flowers?

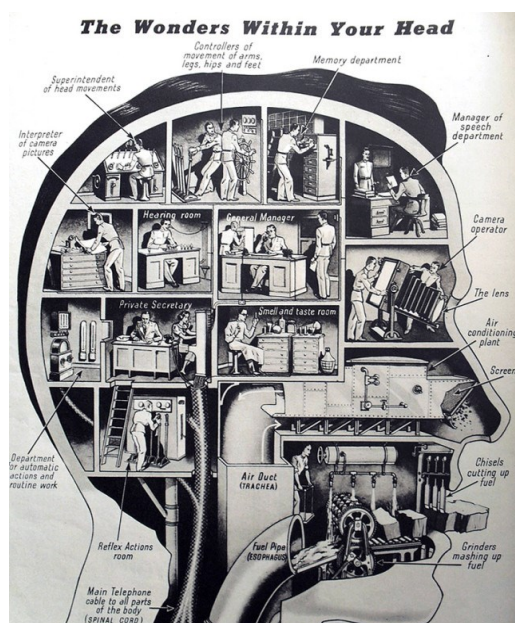
Sadly – No! Records indicate that, in the summer of 1919, Roland Luff married his fiancée, Marian.

But life can often provide a simple touch of irony, and so to complete this story you might find it quirky to know that Marian's maiden name was.....Baker!

Julian McCarthy

Postscripts

If you have any post cards that I can scan and return please can you let me know as there is as much history contained on the reverse as on the front. I am not a postcard collector and your items will be safe. I simply want to record the history! (Thanks).



* Oh yes...With regard to the question about LPs being called Albums that I ignored on the first page.....

Historically, the term "album" was applied to a collection of various items housed in a "book" format, and in musical usage the word was used for collections of short pieces of printed music from the early nineteenth century.

Later, collections of related 78rpm records were bundled in book-like album (one side of a 78 rpm record could hold only about 3.5 minutes of sound). When long-playing records were introduced, a collection of pieces on a single record was called an album; the word was extended to other recording media such as compact disc, MiniDisc, Compact audio cassette, and digital or MP3 albums, as they were introduced.

The introduction of CDs to radio caused a bit of a crisis for a generation of DJs, who didn't know whether an album of music on a CD should still be called an album, as they had all grown up with 33-rpm LPs, which they considered synonymous with albums. (Thanks to Wikipedia)