

Seaside 4 - In the water

Source 14

Extract from the personal unpublished "memoirs" of Florence Alice Holloway (1901-1994)

At the moment it's only "1911" and we went to Worthing for our holiday.....

We booked two bedrooms and a sitting room and the lady of the house cooked and cleaned for us. It was a real holiday for mothers. Apart from looking after the kids of course. We went two or three times to the same small but comfortable house, and the same small comfortable landlady made us welcome.....

One thing we liked, in the mornings a boy would come round before breakfast with a large basket full of hot rolls, which he held up to our bedroom window on a pole. Of course he could have knocked at the door, but how much nicer they tasted coming through the window.

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Before I leave the sea for a while, I mustn't forget the bathing machines. If you've never bathed from one you have missed a great experience! A horse was harnessed to the hut which had two large wheels and steps down which one could step straight down into the sea. Inside a narrow bench one side, a small shuttered opening, too high for peeping Toms, some hooks for clothes and towels, a small mirror which advertised Jeyes Fluid, although that advertised itself by the "scent" used to disinfect the interior. If you began to undress as the hut was dragged down the stony beach, you could and did land on the floor. You could hire a swim suit (bathing costume) then, and a towel if you hadn't one. Altogether it was more fun and more comfortable than trying to undress on the beach under a towel. In these days, there aren't so many layers to remove before putting on about six inches of material. Strangely enough the men wore long convict striped costumes with half sleeves and "legs" past the knee. No mixed bathing was allowed at the sea, one section of beach set aside for each sex. I suppose they met in the water, but not many swam then, the ladies played about squealing!

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