

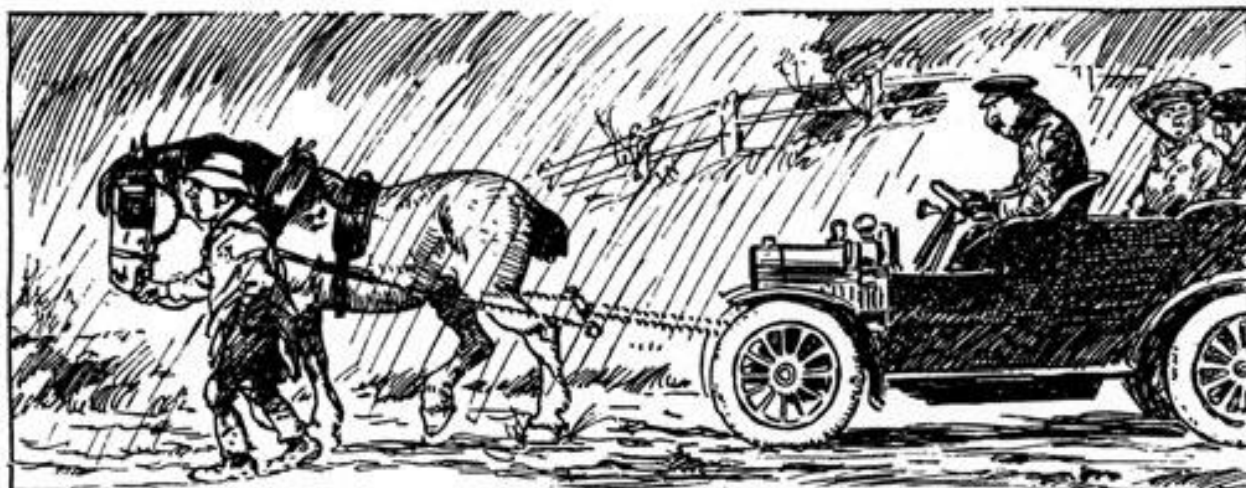
The Edwardian postcard revolution – a literacy studies perspective



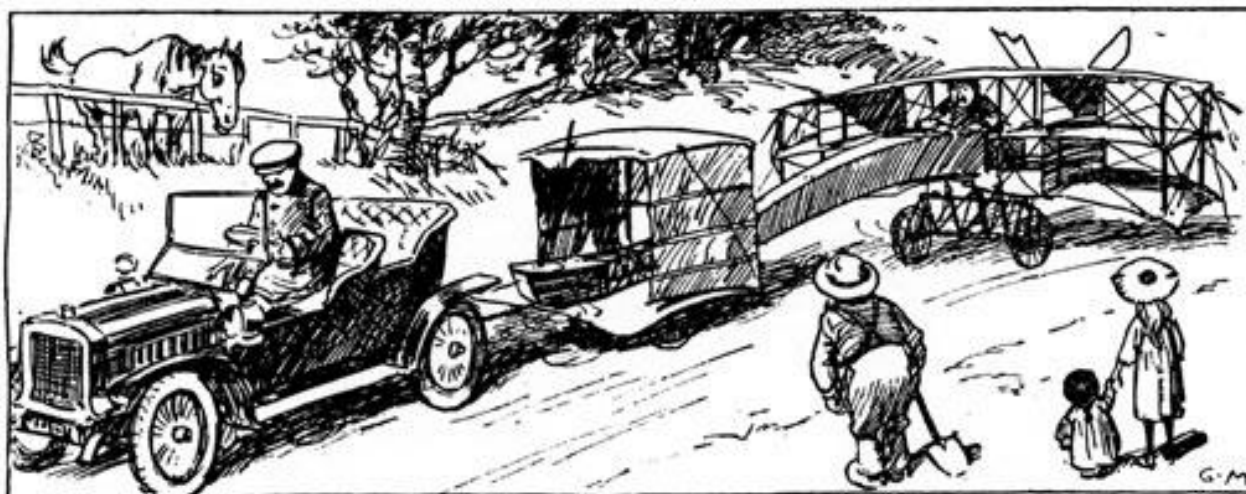
Julia Gillen,

Literacy Research Centre, &
Department of Linguistics and
English Language
Lancaster University

Paper presented at
“What is a letter? An
interdisciplinary
approach.” St Edmund
Hall, Oxford 2-4 July
2014



1900

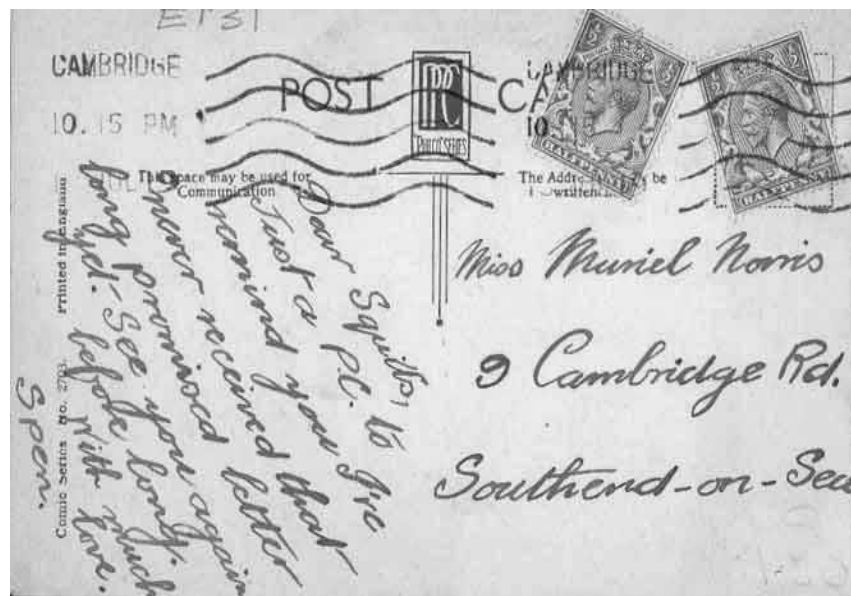


1910

G.M.



Berlin





Significant postcard dates

World's first postcard: 9th September 1869

Britain's first postcard: 1870

Pre-printed official cards

76 million in 15 months (GB)

Write address only on one side

First part-pictorial UK postcards:

1st September, 1894.

25% increase in cards posted
(312,800,000)

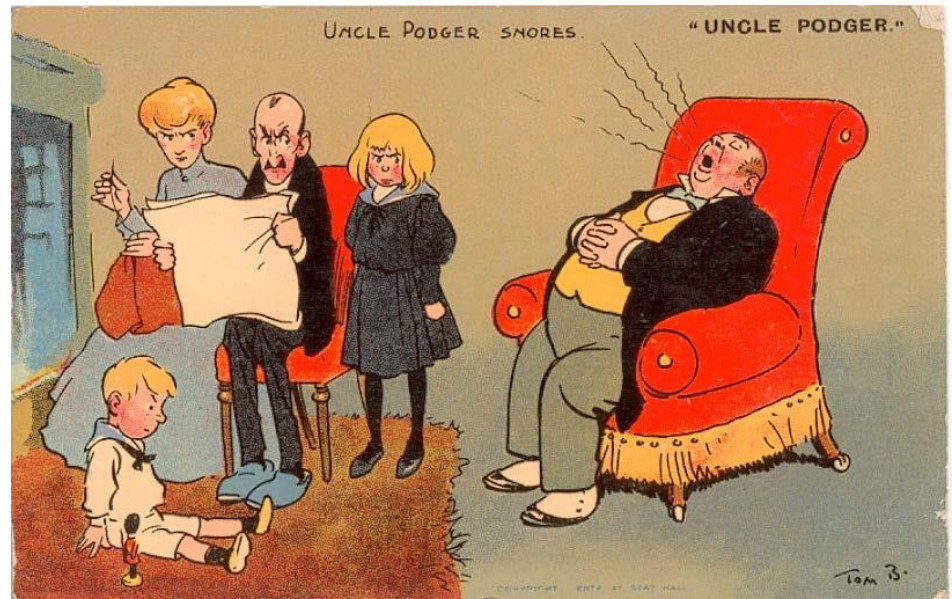
1902 divided back

6 billion cards 1902-1910



Edwardian Postcard Project

Julia Gillen, Lancaster
Literacy Research Centre
&
Nigel Hall, Emeritus
Professor of Literacy
Education, Manchester
Metropolitan University



Data:
3000 cards written
posted between 1901 &
1910 in Great Britain
and Ireland, transcribed
& analysed

census & other
historical records





Caledonian Road cattle market at the end of the 19th century

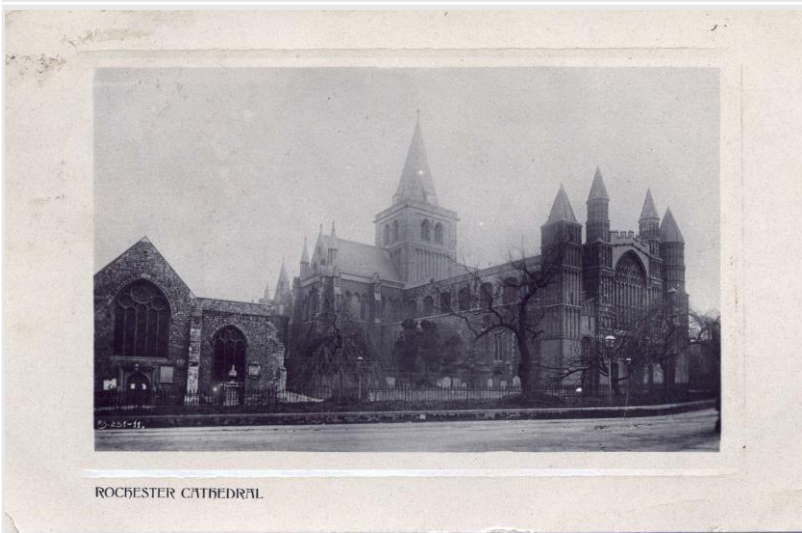


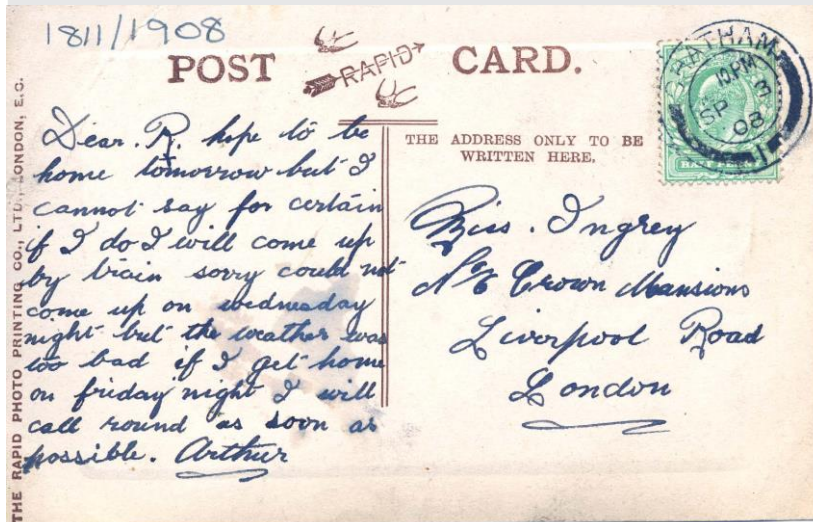
Card 1 - 13th August 1908

Miss R. Ingrey
No 6 Crown Mansions
Liverpool Road
London

Dear R. Just a line to let you know I shall be home on Saturday I will come round to meet you about the usual time with the bike if the weather is fine but it does not look very promising down here at present it has been raining hard I hope you have not been doing any more damage to yourself this week

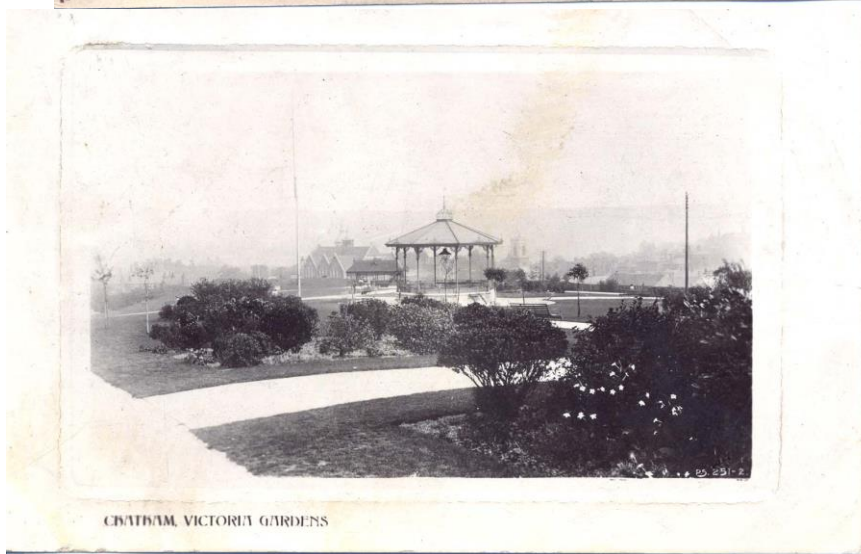
Arthur

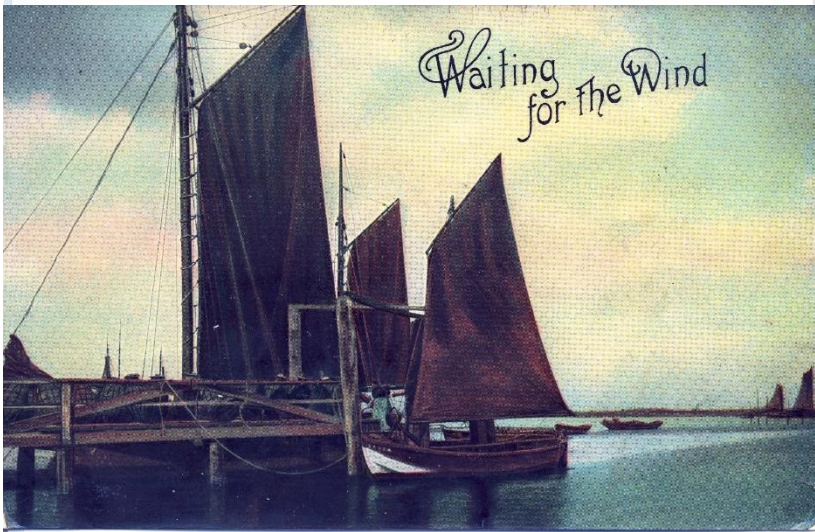
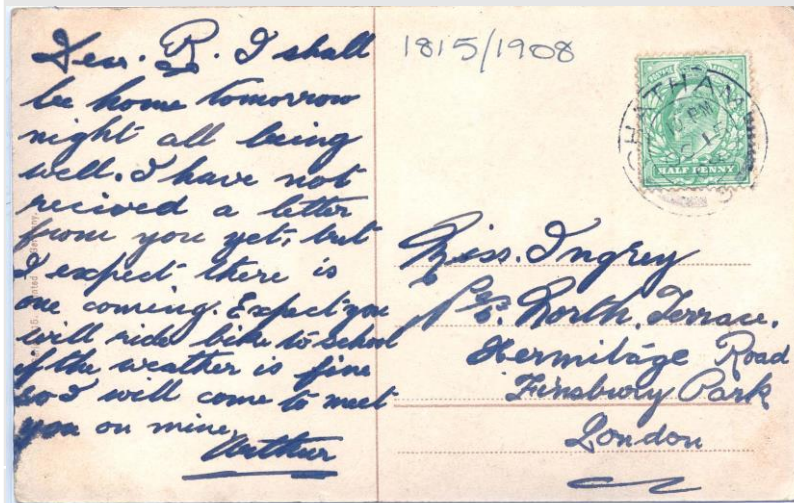




Card 3 - 3rd September 1908
Miss Ingrey
No 6. Crown Mansions
Liverpool Road
London

Dear R. hope to be home tomorrow but I cannot say for certain if I do I will come up by train sorry could not come up on Wednesday night but the weather was too bad if I get home on Friday night I will call round as soon as possible. Arthur.



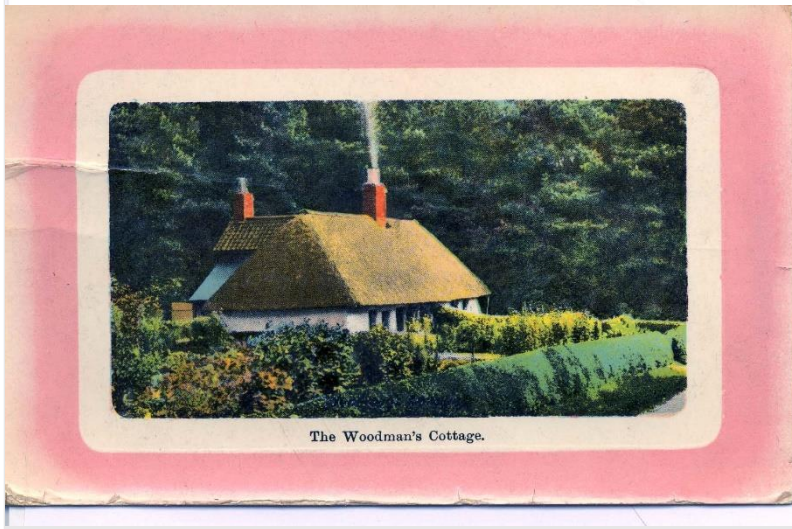
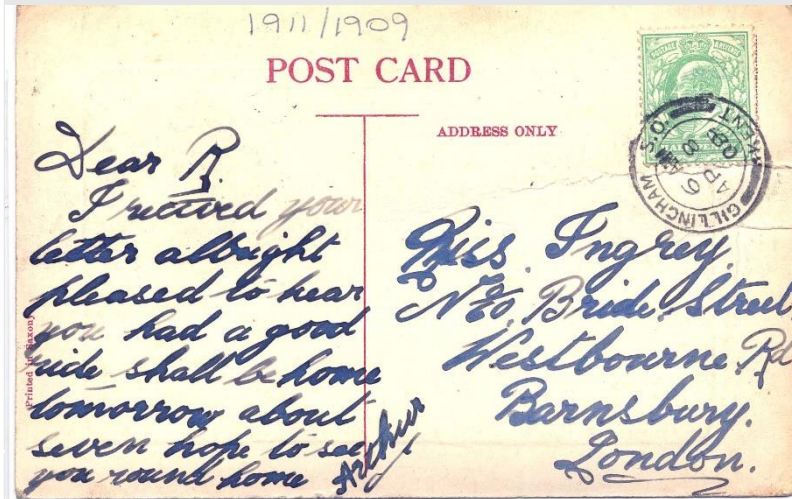


Card 6 - 15th October 1908

Miss Ingrey
No.6 North Terrace
Hermitage Rd
Finsbury Park
London

Dear R. I shall
be home tomorrow
night all being
well. I have not
received a letter
from you yet, but
I expect there is
one coming. Expect you
will ride bike to school
if the weather is fine
so I will come to meet
you on mine.

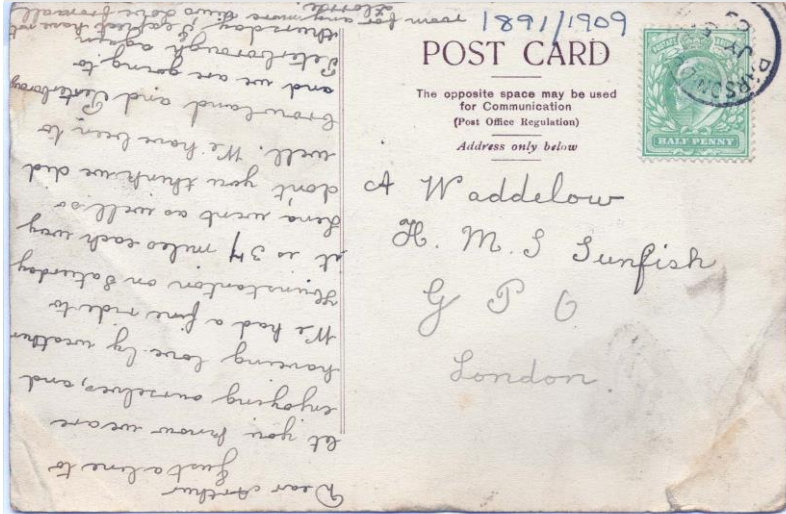
Arthur



Card 7 - 8th April 1909

Miss Ingrey
No. 60 Bride Street
Westbourne Road
Barnsbury
London

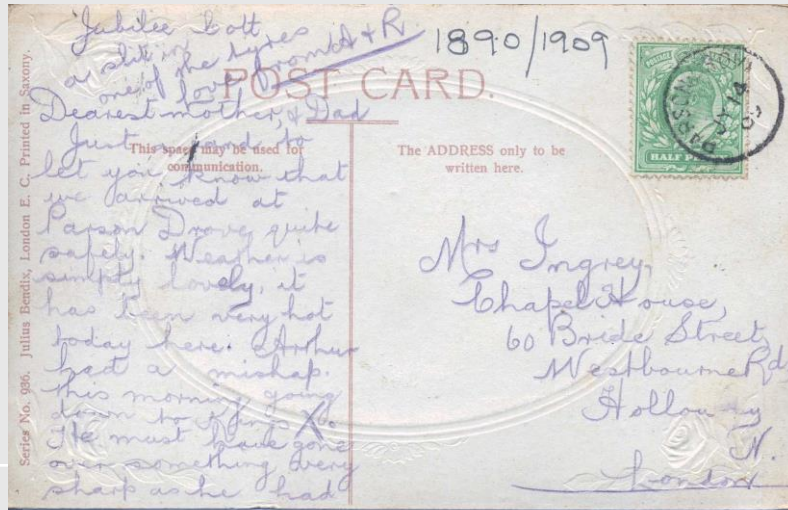
Dear R.
I received your
letter alright
pleased to hear
you had a good
ride shall be home
tomorrow about
seven hope to see
you round home
Arthur



A Waddelow
H.M.S Sunfish
G P O
London.

Dear Arthur
Just a line to
let you know we are
enjoying ourselves, and
having love-ly weather
We had a fine ride to
Hunstanton on Saturday
it is 37 miles each way
Lena went as well so
don't you think we did
well. We have been to
Crowland and Peterborough
and we are going to
Peterborough again
thursday, I expect have not
room for any more news Love
from all
Florrie.






Jubilee Colt
Dearest mother, & Dad
Just a card to
let you know that
we arrived at
Parson Drove quite
safely. Weather is
simply lovely, it
has been very hot
today here. Arthur
had a mishap.
this morning going
down to Kings X.
He must have gone
over something very
sharp as he had
a split in
one of the tyres.
Love from A & R.

Dear R. I am writing
this card from shore. I
hope you will like it its
not one of the set. I have
come ashore to get a few
things for the mess or I
should have wrote a letter
tonight I am sorry to
say we are leaving
Chatham tomorrow for
Scotland but hope it
will not be for long but
we are expecting to be
away about a month well
between but wait a
month. Hope you take a
change of walking down
to the Thames before Thursday

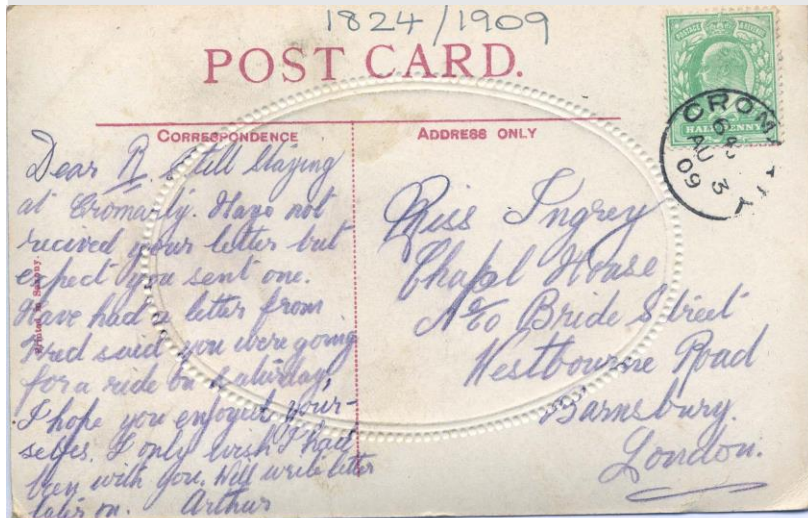
1812/1909

Miss Gregory
No 30 Bride Street
Chapel House
New Town Rd
Barnsbury
London



Dear R. I am writing
this card from shore. I
hope you will like it its
not one of the set. I have
come ashore to get a few
things for the mess ?? I
should have wrote a letter
tonight I am sorry to
say we are leaving
Chatham tomorrow for
Scotland but hope it
will not be for long
but we are expecting to be
away for about a month ???
between two weeks of a
month. I hope you take a
change of walking down
to the Thames before Thursday
Arthur





Card 9 - 3rd August 1909

Miss Ingrey

Chapel House

No. 60 Bridge Street

Westbourne Road

Barnsbury

London

Dear R. Still staying

at Cromer. Have not

received your letter but

expect you sent one.

Have had a letter from

Fred said you were going

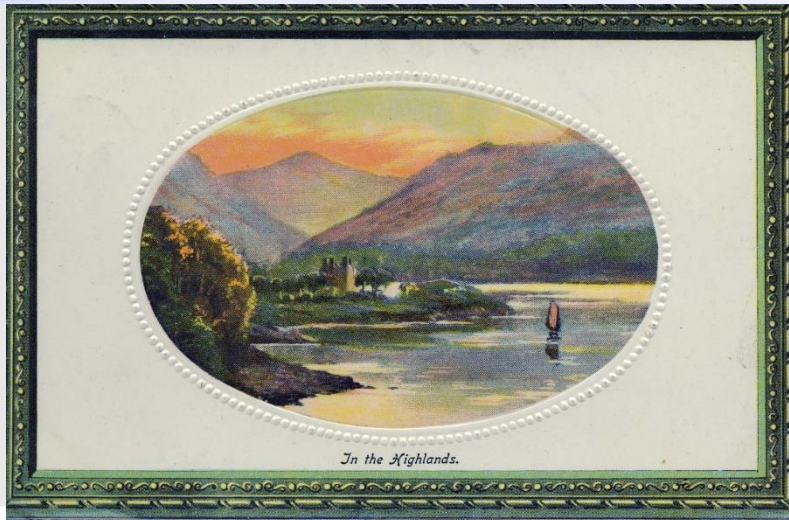
for a ride on Saturday,

I hope you enjoyed your

selves. I only wish I had

been with you. Will write letter

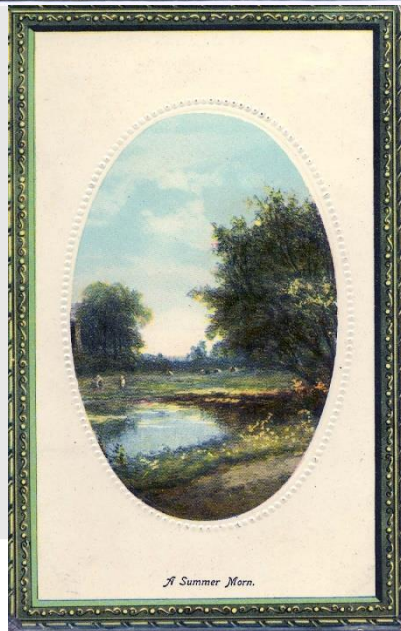
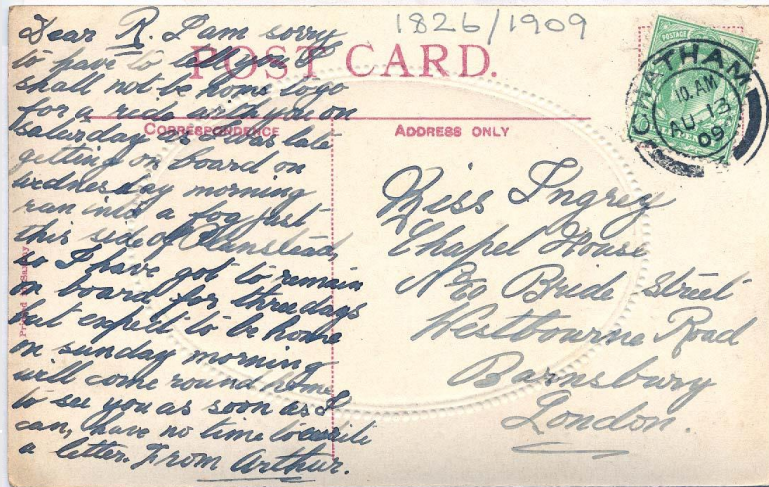
later on. Arthur.



Card 11 - 13th August 1909

Miss Ingrey
Chapel House
No. 60 Bride Street
Westbourne Road
Barnsbury
London

Dear R. I am sorry to have to tell you I shall not be home to go for a ride with you on Saturday as I was late getting on board on Wednesday morning ran into a fog just this side of ??anstead so I have got to remain on board for three days but expect to be home on Sunday morning will come round home to see you as soon as I can, have no time to write a letter. From Arthur.



Card 12 - 27th August 1909

Miss Ingrey
Chapel House
No. 60 Bride Street
Westbourne Road
Holloway
London

Dear R Pleased
to receive such a
nice letter from you
hope to be home
tomorrow about the
same time, I will
come round to see
you as soon as I
can hope you are
quite well
Arthur



James Douglas, writing in 1909:

1. The affordances and constraints of the Edwardian postcard were exploited.
2. Postcards were entwined with letters in a continuous chain of communications.
3. Moving beyond textual analysis can be fruitful.

'When the archaeologists of the thirtieth century begin to excavate the ruins of London, they will fasten upon the Picture Postcards as the best guide to the spirit of the Edwardian era... Like all great inventions the Picture Postcard has wrought a silent revolution in our habits. It has secretly delivered us from the toil of letter-writing...'

[http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/
projects/EVIIpc/](http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/EVIIpc/)

Twitter @eVIIpc

Julia Gillen

j.gillen@lancaster.ac.uk

