

Seaside Entertainment & Tourism

Keynote speaker: Dr. Tony Lidington

Title: British Seaside Entertainments 1891 to the present: an overview'





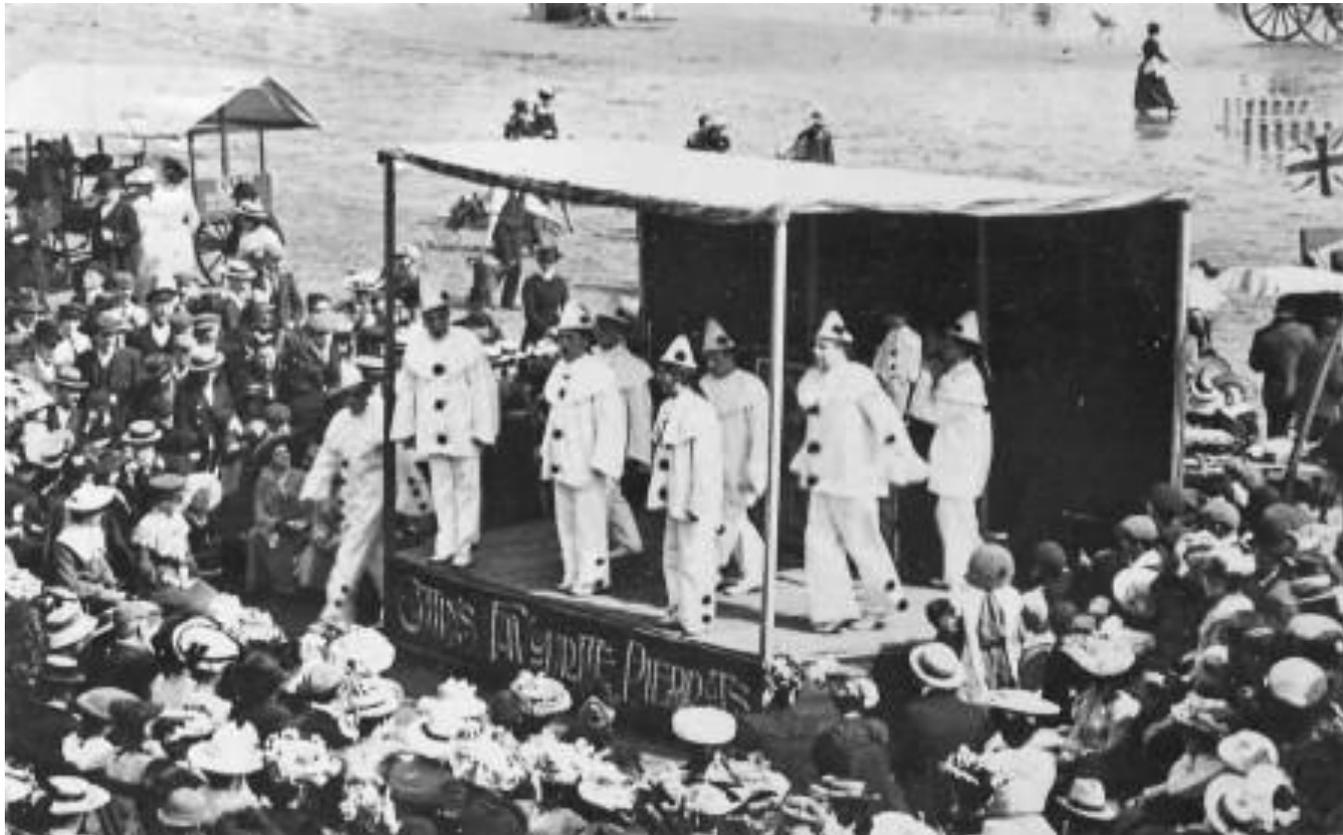
1. TD Rice was an American performer who performed for the first time in London in 1836 – his act became a craze that led to the creation of many so-called Minstrel troupes in Britain throughout the Victorian era.



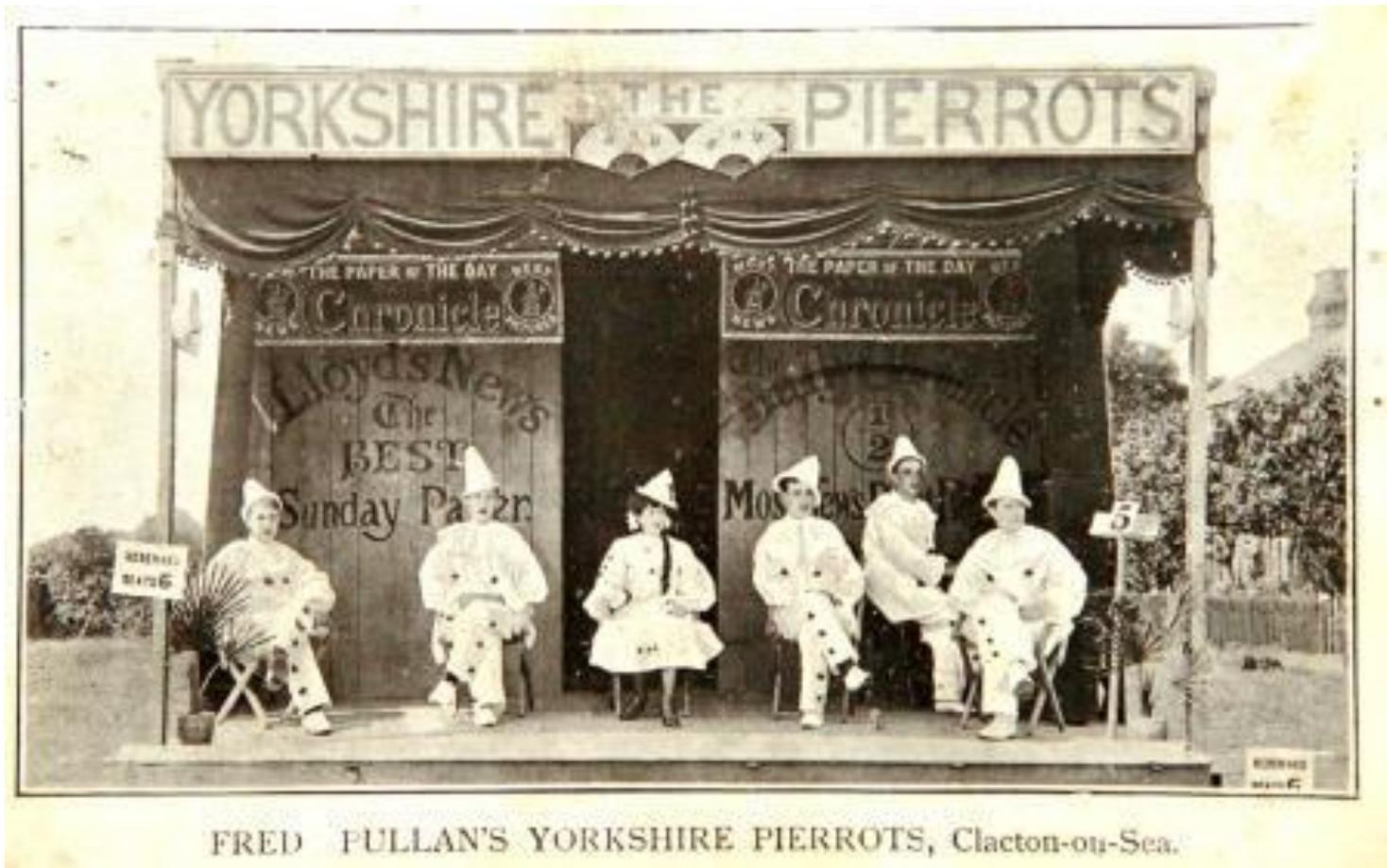
1a. The Clacton minstrels were typical of seaside minstrel troupes.



2. Clifford Essex was a British banjo player and manufacturer, who created the first British pierrot troupe in 1891, as a direct descendent in form from the black-faced minstrels that up until that point had provided the principal musical entertainment at seashores.



2a. Other impresarios soon followed suit and created their own troupes - such as Will Catlin's 'Favourite Pierrots' in Scarborough.



3a. Will Edwards' 'Yorkshire Pierrots' performing in Clacton.



3b. Toft Tate's 'Motley Pierrots' in Harwich.



3c. Some troupes retained connections with the minstrels' tradition in their name, but adapted the costume, such as Will C Pepper's 'White Coons' performing at Clacton and Walton-on-the-Naze.



Copyright Imperial War
Museum

3d. Pierrots were a significant part of the war effort in maintaining morale during the First World War. (Photo copyright Imperial War Museum)



2376 C

MESSRS. GRAHAM, RUSSELL & BENTLEY.

ROTHSCHILD & CO. N.Y.

4. Gradually, the stylised costume of the pierrot tradition was dropped in favour of smart, uniform outfits, such as shown here by Graham, Russell & Bentley – Clacton.



4a. There were many different styles of seaside entertainment evolving at this time – one of Clacton Pier's most celebrated artistes was 'Clown Bertram'.



4b. The last professional concert party regularly performing at the seascides was 'The Ramblas Concert Party', who last performed on Clacton Pier in 1964.



5. The last professional seaside pierrot troupe was 'The Pierrotters' – seen here at Filey in 2010 (the chap with the banjo is Uncle Tacko! AKA Dr. Tony Lidington).

- Photo permissions & enquiries Tony Lidington at info@prom-prom.com