

April 27, 1858, page 3: The Claimant of the Pavilion. – It is gratifying to be able to state that there is a probability of the unfortunate man Philip Scroggins and his wife, whose strange manner respecting their right to the Crown of England and the Brighton Pavilion we noticed last week, are recovering from their delusion. They were brought before Mr. Bigge at the Town Hall, on Thursday, and underwent a lengthy examination in the presence of Messr. Verrall and Rugg. They appeared to be much better in, almost recovered. It would appear that trouble, arising from a few small debts, and, on the part of his wife, the long suckling of a sickly infant, induced a state of mind in which they appeared. On Friday Scroggins and his wife were discharged from the infirmary, and the Magistrates have promised to pay for them out of the Poor-box L2 10s. due to the landlord for rent. The medical officers were of the opinion that the man is now able to return to work.

## Sussex Advertiser Tuesday 20 April 1858, page 8

A BRIGHTON CLAIMANT TO THE CROWN OF ENGLAND: From the Brighton Herald. "No Scandal against Queen Elizabeth, I hope" - The Critic. A singular case of what we may term bi-mania has occurred in the town this week. The circumstances are sad; and yet, in some respects amusing. As the matter has been the subject of an investigation in the borough court, we may without impropriety lay the particulars before our readers. They are to this effect. – On Thursday morning, about nine o'clock, a pale, emaciated wild-eyed man, in the garb of a mechanic, presented himself at the grand entrance of the Pavilion, and demanded admittance. Mr. De Val, who has charge of the building, was called, and, to his astonishment, the early visitor announced that he had come for the purpose of taking possession of the Pavilion, which was his property! The calm, matter-of-fact manner in which the announcement was made contrasted so greatly with the subject of the announcement itself, that Mr. De Val was for a moment quite bewildered. A few words, however, served to convince him that the man was a monomaniac, and he endeavoured to humour him so that he might quit the premises. He represented that this was a most inconvenient time for the rightful owner to take possession inasmuch as the building was not furnished, there were no beds, and so forth, "Oh," said the stranger, "it would not be the first time I have slept out of bed." Mr. De Val then ascertained that his visitor was of Royal descent: a Plantagenet (alias Tudor) with the blood of the Virgin Queen running in his veins, and that he bore the noble and distinguished name of – Philip Scroggins! He learned also that Scroggins Plantagenet was united by marriage to another branch of the house of Scroggins – a first cousin; and that they were the favoured parents of half-a-dozen princes of tender years, in whose veins also ran the pure blood of the Scroggins branch of the Plantagenet. On this Mr. De Val suggested that it would be better for the Royal

Scoggins took possession accompanied by his family, and armed with the authority of the Chief-Officer of Police; and this appearing to be a proposition such as a reasonable man could entertain without periling his dignity or his rights, the Prince, having expressed himself to the effect that on taking possession of the Pavilion he should greatly benefit all those employed on it, took his dignified departure.

Some hours elapsed, and the affair had been well-nigh forgotten; when Mr. De Val was passing through the hall, he was startled at again beholding the emaciated, wild-eyed Plantagenet of the morning, accompanied by a female Plantagenet, equally emaciated and equally wild-eyed, and half a dozen juvenile Plantagenets, of a hungry, not to say starved, but by no means Royal or Courtly aspect, clinging around them. The youngest Plantagenet was sucking at the breast. Mr. De Val advanced to meet them.

“Now,” said the man Plantagenet, “we are come to take possession.” “Indeed!” “Yes: come my girl,” he added to his wife, “let us go and inspect the apartments which await us.” “Stay,” said Mr De Val, “you have gotten one thing.” “What is that?” “The Chief-Officer of Police. His presence is indispensable because, until you have authority, I must exercise mine.” The wretched claimant made hastily towards the State apartments. The custodian of the property placed himself in the doorway: dejected royalty sank passively into a chair. Mr. De Val drew the wife on one side. He sympathized with her, and said, the delusion under which her husband suffered was most unfortunate-- “Delusion?” she exclaimed, indignantly. “Why surely” “He only seeks his rights. I have received papers from the Lord Chancellor, which prove that this property is ours. This is the heir to it all.” She pointed to the eldest of the six emancipated Plantagenets. That pale youth in the corduroys was, she intimated, the rightful prince of Wales!

The bewilderment of Mr. De Val will be conceived. That one insane Plantagenet should present himself as the claimant of the Pavilion property was conceivable; but when it came to two, when a case of bi-mania presented itself, the thing became very curious, and also very perplexing. “Where,” he asked, “are the papers?” They had none. Papers were unnecessary. They had already taken possession! Mr. De Val adopted the wisest course under the circumstances. He communicated with the police. Detective Starley came to the

Rescue, and, by a mixture of kindness and firmness, succeeded in removing Scroggins pere and family to the Town Hall. The Assistant-Overseer was then communicated with, and he at once recognized the family. It is only just to the public, however, to that in this case the Assistant-Overseer’s sagacity has been at fault; he was familiar only with the Scroggins phase of the matter, and had never dreamed of the Plantagenet mystery which it over-laid. He knew Philip Scroggins as a workman employed at the Railway Company only; not as a monarch in disguise. That he lived at 37, Francis Street, was a patent fact; but it seems never to have occurred to the worthy official that this was only a temporary abiding place until the proper moment. “When the King should claim his own,” and enter in state, “our Summer Pavilion at Brighton.”

A little inquiry showed that both the man and his wife had acted very strangely for a fortnight past. Scroggins has left his work at the Railway, and declined to apply for wages due to him, on the score of his being about to enter upon the enjoyment of boundless wealth. The strange part of the matter is, as we have shown, that his wife should have shared this delusion. It would appear, however, that he has been entertained for a much longer time. We have been informed that some three months since, the eldest son of the family – the supposed heir to the Crown of England – went to a Sunday-school in connection with the London road Chapel. He was very fiery and irascible, as became one of his high blood, and at length left in disgust. The teacher called at the house, and saw the boy, from whom he tried to get a promise to return. The father interposed saying, "Do not promise, boy. Better than you should not vow, than that they should vow not to pay." And he added, by way of explanation to the teacher, that his son was of noble birth, and would come into possession of L20,000 in a few days. But to return to Thursday. The case was submitted to the attention of Mr. Verrall, surgeon, and on his recommendation Mr. Smith, the Chief Clerk to the Assistant Overseers, attended at the Borough Court, and brought the subject under notice of the sitting magistrate, by whose orders the unfortunate pair were sent to the Infirmary, with a view of testing the effect of medical treatment there for a week.

Summary: A condensed version of the above article was published in newspapers throughout England in April – May 1858; perhaps throughout the world.

### **Brighton Pavilion**



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