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BRIGHTON CIRCULATING AND SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARIES BETWEEN 1750 - 1850

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A dissertation submitted to Aberystwyth University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA under Alternative Regulations

Department of Information Studies

Aberystwyth University

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DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed .......................................................... (candidate)

Date ..............................................................

STATEMENT 1

This work is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s).

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed .......................................................... (candidate)

Date ..............................................................

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I hereby give consent for my work, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Signed .......................................................... (candidate)

Date ..............................................................
ABSTRACT

This research was conducted on the libraries of Brighton, East Sussex, between 1750 and 1850. It discusses why this village/town had over seventy subscription and circulating libraries, and how some of these libraries operated in this provincial town.

Aim

Explore the development and use of subscription and circulating libraries in Brighton.

Objectives

- Examine the history of the beginning of libraries and reading in an English context during the 1700 -1800’s.
- Establish the political, social, and cultural framework for the development of libraries in Brighton.
- Analyse the growth, management, and use of libraries in Brighton between 1750 – 1850.

Methodology

This study will take a micro-history approach, with a focus on Brighton and its libraries, as well as how residents and visitors lived in relation to the libraries. It will make use of surviving archival sources from Brighton libraries, such as catalogues, trade directories, advertisements, travel books, diary entries, maps, and images from the time, as well as look at local and national history from this period. This method will aid in answering the study's goals and objectives, as well as increasing our understanding of library history in England. Five case studies will be discussed.

Conclusion

Brighton's transformation from fishing village to thriving liberal town, with over seventy libraries established during this time, cannot be attributed to a single factor. The local nobility promoted Brighton; Dr Russell and his seawater treatments; excellent transport links; the Prince Regent, royal family, and nobility having houses built or rented in Brighton; upper and middle classes wanting to be seen and network; and embracing the liberal and enlightening ideas of the age were all factors. All these factors, and more, contributed to Brighton having so many libraries to educate as well as entertain its many visitors, through reading, lectures, gambling, and as social hubs.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Those researching and studying circulating and subscription libraries between 1750 and 1850 have made some assumptions, such as there were only a few libraries in towns or cities, and that most of these libraries were found in the North or in wealthy cities. Southern seaside towns have been underrepresented and possibly not taken seriously in the literature.

Therefore, the aim of the research is to:

Explore the development and use of subscription and circulating libraries in Brighton.

The objectives are:

- Examine the history of the beginning of libraries and reading in an English context during the 1700–1800’s.
- Establish the political, social, and cultural framework for the development of libraries in Brighton.
- Analyse the growth, management, and use of libraries in Brighton between 1750 – 1850.

This research will examine both the United Kingdom (UK) and Brighton’s social, political, and economic culture of the time, also how and why libraries came about. Using the micro-history methodology, it will focus on the libraries in Brighton, their library membership, their collections, and what function they served in the town will be investigated, by using surviving archival sources of Brighton libraries, such as catalogues, trade directories, advertisements, diary entries, maps, and images from the day, as well as looking at the local and national history from this time, these questions will be answered.

Historical research has advantages that other types of research do not have, such as the chance to gain new perspectives on historical events, and since the researcher was not present for the event, been written about, no intentional or unintentional tampering could occur. The numerous written accounts from that time are descriptive and are effective in supporting or disputing the historical theories. Primary sources and oral histories breathe life and colour into this topic that might otherwise seem lifeless and dull. They can add a special perspective to an event, but this also makes them more likely to be unreliable.
A drawback to historical research is that not all historical events can be studied due to a lack of evidence and source materials. This was the case with this research, due to sparse library data sources, it was challenging to analyse membership, management, and even catalogues from 1750 -1850 in both England and Brighton, and then try to extrapolate the findings to a conclusion. Analysing the primary data involved some risks because it was often impossible to determine which item, library catalogues are referring to, and it was even harder to distinguish between book editions. It was challenging to analyse a library's collection because the titles and authors of the books were listed alphabetically in the catalogue by author or title, with no demarcation between subject areas. Other weaknesses can depend on the author's motivation for writing about the event, wanting to write about the truth or it maybe they want to adapt or alter it for various political or personal motives. This can lead to the fabrication of sources, which can result in inaccurate information about the events.

However, discovering a cause for certain effects does not imply that the same cause will result in similar consequences. History is more than simply an analysis of causes and effects; it is a study of human nature.

Brighton was chosen because there has been little research into coastal town libraries, as well as its uniqueness, liberalism, and embracing nature. This research was an opportunity to learn more about Brighton's society and culture, by using the data gleaned about the libraries of the time and how tourism has shaped it both figuratively and literally at this time. It also expands on existing literature in several historical disciplines, specifically, library and reading history, and then explores how and why ‘libraries’ took off to such an extent in a small provincial seaside village/town, between 1750 -1850, as this has not been studied before. The Years 1750 – 1850 were chosen as it would encompass when circulating libraries were established to when the Public Libraries Act 1850 came into force.

This study discovered over seventy libraries that operated in Brighton between 1750 and 1850. So, why did Brighton have so many libraries at a time when other towns and cities often lacked them. What was their purpose, how were they managed, and who used them and why? A look at what was going on in England at the time, politically, economically, and socially, and how it affected Brighton will allow us to investigate these issues.

This research consists of two parts, (Part 1) Literature review and UK history; History of Brighton in the years 1750 – 1850, (Part 2) libraries in Brighton. Part 1 consists of the historical, political, cultural, and literary context to the establishment of libraries in Brighton. Part 2
considers the library establishment and growth in Brighton in the years of 1750 – 1850. Who were their patrons, how were they run, what was in their collections? Five library case studies will be discussed out of the seventy plus libraries that were established at this time. The libraries are, and in brackets and why they were chosen:

- Baker’s Library - Donaldson’s Royal Circulating Library (Most successful and a circulating library)
- Woodgate Library (Female librarian & owner)
- The Royal Colonnade Library (Musical library as well as the standard library)
- Choat’s Library (Operated for hundred years)
- The Brighton Subscription Literary & Scientific Institution (Specialised in science as well as literary subjects and a subscription library).

Finally, this research will culminate in the discussion and conclusion.
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

A timeline of UK history between 1727 to 1901, is provided for context, see appendix 1.

POPULATION AND INDUSTRY

The background to the establishment, and development of libraries between 1750 and 1850 was that the population of the British Isles expanded threefold, from approximately 8.5 million to 27 million, but especially in England’s industrial midlands and the North. This was known as Britain’s industrial ‘take-off’ period (Deane and Habakkuk, 1963; Daunton, 1995), but also the age of enlightenment. There was little change in the social hierarchy, as the great landowners and nobility continued to rule the counties and the country. It was their social world that became ‘society’ (Innes, 2006).

Population growth was the most powerful driving force for social change. The North of England as the centre for the industrial revolution taking place, had the highest birth rates in the country and was where people flocked for jobs in the factories. This period saw the rise of the middle classes (Tranter, 1985). Big towns could support a middling elite, but they were a diverse group; prosperous professionals and businessmen, coexisting with merchants and independent tradesmen. There was also a significant increase in the number and income of shopkeepers, administrators, and clerks, which is likely to have contributed to increased book buying and reading. The rest of the urban population were farmers or small traders. Most people only went to school for a few years, worked, and had few possessions, such as clothing, a few pieces of furniture, crockery and cutlery, and possibly a bible and a few chapbooks. (George, 1966; Cannadine, 2000; Watt, 2015).

Working-class districts erupted in protest movements between the 1790s and the late 1830s (Background of the French revolution, Napoleonic war, and Chartism), attracting the attention of Parliament and the British government. The greatest fear for these men of power was that the crowds would erupt in spontaneous violence (Kidd and Nicholls, 1999). During this time, some members of the lower classes yearned for information and ideas which resulted in the protest movement, but certain higher-class opponents saw these protests as the result of ignorance (Thompson, 2013).
Few below the ranks of the middle classes could have afforded to buy many books for themselves. Population growth, changes in lifestyle, and the accumulation of wealth all impacted the trend for libraries.

**LITERACY**

The Literacy rate in 1640’s was 30% for males and increased to 60% by the mid 18th century (Melton, 2001). Others, however, claim that literacy rates for men remained relatively stable at 60%, while rates for women rose from 40% to 50% during the 18th century. (McIntosh, 1998). It is important to note that three quarters of the English population at this time lived in and had rural occupations, which meant they were not required to read regularly and probably with few opportunities or apparent benefits to improve their reading skills, did not. Cressy (2006) suggests that during these times people were “not strictly oral or literate, but a combination of both”, in the form of reading aloud and listening to sermons (Cressy, 2006). However, publishing increased significantly throughout the 18th century, and while there is some debate about literacy rates during this period, it is clear that they did not keep pace with the increase in book, newspaper, magazine, and chapbook publishing, which became more popular and widely circulated (Plant, 1974).

At the end of the 18th century, a two-volume novel cost between three and four shillings each. In those days, a worker would have made an average of eight shillings per week, and a skilled craftsman would have made about eleven shillings, according to Varma, (1972). In 1821, three volumes of Walter Scott’s ‘Kenilworth’ cost 31s. 6d, which quickly became the standard price and number of volumes (Skelton-Foord, 1998).

The high cost of books demonstrates the extent to which economic constraints limited the public’s ability to read. However, the literate lower classes could buy newspapers and chapbooks, which were small booklets that were inexpensive to make and purchase. They were usually printed on a single sheet and folded to create 8, 12, 16, and 24 pages, which were often illustrated with simplistic woodcuts. They were sold on the streets and covered a wide range of topics, from fairy tales and ghost stories to political news and crime stories, costing from a penny to sixpence and newspapers costing three pence. ‘Robinson Crusoe’ was reprinted and serialised in the *Original London Post*. Their audience would have been primarily made up of the working classes and middle-class children (Richardson, 2014; Watt, 2015).
Throughout the eighteenth century, the quantity of affluent shopkeepers, independent tradesmen, and administrative personnel increased significantly (George, 1966). Whilst it can be argued this is true, this statement was based upon London, and so caution has been taken when extrapolating to the rest of the country. It could also be argued that these people, rather than the rest of the poorer population, were responsible for the greatest increases in book purchasing (Watt, 2015). These people were known as the middling sort, and now they had more spare money for the first time in this period and could buy and borrow books from booksellers and libraries (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996).

Concerns were raised about letting the uneducated and lower classes, as well as young, impressionable, female, and ill-informed minds, read at their will. There was also concern raised about libraries because certain people felt they were a threat not only to public morality but also to the established order in general. For instance, how would increased educational opportunities (libraries) affect the lower classes? Hamilton (1797) believed that the greatest threat to a state is the weakening of moral responsibilities; if religion retains its influence, society’s interests are upheld; when that important social glue is compromised, anarchy and confusion quickly take hold. Therefore, to help avert this threat, every library should have a section on divinity.

It was thought that being educated would increase the growing tension between the classes, and women may begin to question their role. (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996; Allan, 2008; Watt, 2015). Though not all thought this way: Isaac Watts, a non-conformist puritan minister in the eighteenth century, urged his students, who were mostly female, to spend their spare time reading and discussing literature (Watts, 1885).

The conventional view of this time was that the class system was the foundation of social order, and that leisure activities, such as reading, were only appropriate for the leisured classes. The economic theory of the time endorsed this perspective, and by those in a higher social class, which were opposed to anything that would distract the working class away from their jobs (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996; Watt, 2015).

James Lackington who started out as an illiterate cordwainer’s apprentice and ended up as the owner of London’s largest bookshop, described it thus...

Thousands […] have been effectually prevented from purchasing (though anxious so to do) whose circumstances in life would not permit them to pay the full price, and thus
were totally excluded from the advantage of improving their understandings and enjoying a rational entertainment (Lackington, 1791 p. 226).

Books during this period cost 1s. and 1/6, and for this it brought a little book of between 100 – 200 pages, though simply and roughly printed. Most people had enough money to buy a 2d. or 6d. chapbook as a treat sometimes, but not a volume of fiction, which was three shillings and only a few could afford a multivolume novel at 3s. per volume. Agricultural workers who were paid 12d. a day, could afford to buy the occasional chapbook, but a book costing even just 1s. would be the equivalent of a full day’s pay (Curtler, 1909; Hume, 2014). See below, for prices then and those equivalent to now, to understand how expensive books were to the average person and how this would impact and restrict the reading public (Watt, 2015).

2d - 3d = £1.60 and £3.75 approximately in today’s money.

3s = £30 - £45; 5s = £50 - £75; 8s = £85 - £125 approximately in today’s money (Hume, 2014).

During 1750 – 1850, gin was very cheap, and a person could get drunk for less or equal to the price of a newspaper. In Hogarth’s picture ‘Gin Lane’ (see below) there is an inscription over an entrance “Drunk for a Penny / Dead Drunk for two pence / Clean Straw for Nothing” (Hogarth, 1751), which highlights this point.
AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

'Dare to know! Have courage to use your own reason!' (Kant, 1784 p. 2)

Prior to the above timeline, there was the Age of Enlightenment, also known as the Age of Reason, which lasted approximately from the 1680s into the 1800s. This was a cultural, political, and intellectual movement that questioned traditional authority and the widely held belief that rational change could improve humanity. Thinkers, writers, artists, political leaders, and “ordinary people” of the time advocated for the educational system to be updated and to play a larger role in the dissemination of these ideas and goals. This resulted in a larger reading public and increased demand for printed material across all social classes and interests (Kant, 1784; Darnton, 1987; Golinski, 1999; Melton, 2001).

In the 1680s, Isaac Newton’s “Principia Mathematica” (1686) and John Locke’s “Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (1689) were published in England, providing the scientific, mathematical, and philosophical framework for the significant developments of the Enlightenment movement. Mary Wollstonecraft wrote “A Vindication of the Rights of Women” in 1792, which was essentially an appeal for education for all (Wollstonecraft, 1992). Thomas Paine wrote “The Age of Reason; Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology” in three parts 1794, 1795 and 1807. Where he wrote an easy and engaging prose advocating the philosophical position of deism so that the ‘ordinary people’ could engage with it, and it was published cheaply so many could purchase it. The British government, fearing its revolutionary ideas, particularly in the wake of the French Revolution, suppressed it and persecuted any who published or printed it, issuing a writ for his arrest (McIntosh, 1998).

It can be argued that reading encouraged the growth of individualism and Protestantism, with the emphasis on private reading, introspections and thought (Watt, 2015). Religious texts were still the largest category of items to be published and read, though with novels and periodicals such as the ‘Tatler’ and ‘Spectator’ becoming fashionable during the eighteenth century, the shift towards having items that most people could read and want to read began in earnest. Sir Richard Steele, in The Tattler, No.147, 18th March 1710, wrote, “Reading is to the mind, what exercise is to the body” which highlights the changes in opinion to literacy that were happening at that time.
The history of libraries may help us better understand this changing society, as it demonstrates and highlights various aspects of this multifaceted period. During the eighteenth century, there was rapid population and economic growth, which helped fuel the expansion and development of libraries, which were influenced by shifts in society’s structure and patterns of living. In 1700 there were approximately five million people in Britain and by 1801, there were almost nine million (White, 2009).

Commercial circulating libraries were founded in the 1740s and were based on booksellers’ lending services. Booksellers and other businesses soon realised that this was a new method to make money by accessing those who couldn’t buy books outright but were prepared to pay a minimal subscription fee to borrow them to read, as the cost of buying a book was vastly too expensive for many (Darnton, 1987; St Clair, 2004). For example, The London edition of Daniel Defoe’s Moll Flanders (1722) sold for 4s in the 1730s (Mann, 2022) which is equivalent to two days skilled tradesman’s wages (The National Archives, 2017).

The first person in England to open a circulating library was a bookseller named Thomas Wright at No. 132 The Strand, London, in 1743, he was succeeded by Batho and then Bell, according to Eloquent, (1801) and Hamlyn, (1946). However, Feltham, (1807) suggests it is William Batho in 1737, again in the Strand who opened the first circulating library. Conversely, Samuel Fancourt coined the phrase ‘circulating library’ in 1741 when he opened his proprietary subscription library in London, which was opened to the public in 1742, and its aim was mutual improvement, and was influenced by Leakes circulating library in Bath (est. c. 1728) and Dr Williams’s (a Unitarian) library (est.1730) in London (Manley, 2007). Whereas Bowd (2015) proposes it is the Liverpool library in 1758 and implies most of these libraries were in the north and the Midlands during the latter part of the 18th century. There were 20 such institutions in London in 1760, and over 200 countrywide by 1800 according to Raven, Small and Tadmor, (1996). Though, according to a letter written in ‘The Monthly Magazine’ in 1801, the author writes that in Great Britain in 1800, there was not less than 1,000 such libraries (Eloquent, 1801). Some libraries only lasted a few years, but others sprang up in their place to accommodate the public’s need for books to read. Since many libraries must have vanished without a trace, it is difficult to give statistics to back up this claim. Consequently, figures are unreliable, and while they demonstrate a constant increase, they should not be taken as
definitive; they represent the bare minimum of libraries that existed within the later part of the eighteenth century (Hamlyn, 1946).

Circulating libraries were created as a business with the goal of profiting from the nobility, upper classes, rising middle-classes, and women by renting books to customers for payment (Jacobs, 2006). Hamilton (1797) states that a circulating library appears to offer itself as useful and necessary for two types of people: businessmen and busy men. However, such libraries also gave women opportunities that went beyond the cultural ones in their semi-private spaces. For instance, Anne Lister frequently visited the Halifax library, which served as a crucial resource and satisfied enough of her literary needs to prevent her from subscribing to another “book society” in 1821. The library was not only a cultural resource, but also an erotic one. Anne Lister frequently met up there with the women she was in love with because it was one of the few places where respectable women could go alone (Lister, 1992; Pearson, 2008).

Instead of focusing on specific subjects, circulating libraries offered a diverse range of materials intended to appeal to a wide range of reading preferences as possible, for example, the novel, which quickly became popular among women. Lowndes Circulating Library was one of London’s first and largest libraries in the eighteenth century (in business from 1751 to 1780) with over 6,290 titles, of which 10% was fiction (Jacobs, 2003).

A group of like-minded individuals created subscription libraries, who each purchased a share in the library and paid an annual subscription to borrow books. The shareholders owned the library, selected the books, and ran it themselves (Forster and Bell, 2006). Science, history, travel, and theology are some themes covered in the book collection. The subscribers were mostly men, and the annual fees were used to purchase books for the collections, which tended to be highbrow and not accessible to the masses (Forster and Bell, 2006; Raven, 2006, 2006; Halsey, 2020; Manley, 2020).

Subscription libraries, according to Manley (2020) did not exist in the physical sense in the eighteenth century, but in pubs, clubs or people’s homes. The continuing position of dominancy of the landed gentry and elite within the social and political systems, and their enduring idea that a gentleman should be literate and educated meant that they should have a library in their homes, if not, have access to the considerable libraries in the ‘gentleman clubs’ of the day (Manley, 2020)
According to Raven (1998), there were ten times as many circulating as subscription libraries, which is difficult to believe given how frequently both terms are used interchangeably. By the end of the eighteenth century, people were occasionally referred to subscription libraries as public libraries, because anyone who had subscribed could use the library.

The increasing number of upper and lower middle classes (professionals, merchants, shopkeepers and clerks) as well as the gentry, were served by subscription libraries, Literature and Philosophical societies, legal and medical together with the circulating libraries (Innes, 2006). Libraries supplying books to the working class were few and far between until the 1820’s, when the Mechanics’ Institute movement took off to improve working people’s literacy and numeracy and providing them with some basic technical education and with this, a library (Walker, 2012).

Manley (2020) identified three types of circulating libraries: booksellers who also lent out books. Ones that had a primary business besides the library, such as a grocer, haberdashers, toy shop, stationers and so on. The third type was only found in spa towns, or seaside resorts such as Scarborough and Brighton, as these libraries catered to the nobility, upper and middle classes, and the primary reason for visiting these places was sociability. Hamilton (1796) puts forward the premise that a circulating library profits alone are not enough to support a family, therefore another business that compliments the library should be added, such as the ones listed above.

All these libraries had one thing in common: they all promoted themselves with varying degrees of directness in their statements about what a library represented. These statements provided information about the purpose and effects of reading, as well as the traits and requirements that readers should possess. One way to accomplish this was through the types of books available and how they were stored and managed (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996; Raven, 2006; Watt, 2015). During the Regency period, the Greek revival in architecture began, inspiring several library owners to build in this style and incorporating their ideas about books by embodying them in the architectural features of the library, as it said ‘look at me’ and ‘join if you want to get ahead in life’ (Manley, 2020). This was the case in Brighton, with Donaldson’s Royal Circulating Library and a few of the smaller libraries incorporating this style.
Circulating library proprietors were urged to promote sales and subscriptions among individuals (the ‘middling sort’) or whom the book was no longer a costly luxury but a social need, as circulating libraries claimed to be both stylish and exclusive (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996; Watt, 2015) with the purpose of making money.

Circulating libraries also catered to people who wanted to engage in the new fashion of reading novels, but also raised several ethical, theological, and political issues, such as what types of reading should be permitted, facilitated, or encouraged. Libraries often included in their rules the ability to ‘censor’ what was held in their collection due to these sensibilities (Innes, 2006).

During this period, the increase of news reporting and political journalism, as well as a more open political culture, generated interest in newspaper and magazine reading, which meant library reading rooms become a popular place to catch up on all the news, due to their supply of newspapers (Innes, 2006).

A subscription fee was required to join a library, and libraries typically offered a variety of membership length options and payments, depending on how long you were in town, or could afford, etc. The longer you paid, the better the value. Table 1. shows an example of some subscription prices that existed during the 18th century.

**Table 1. Subscription Prices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1740’s</th>
<th>1760’s</th>
<th>1770’s</th>
<th>1789</th>
<th>1800</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Bath</td>
<td>Bath</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Annum</td>
<td>10s 6d – 21 s (£1)</td>
<td>10s 6d</td>
<td>10s 6d</td>
<td>15s</td>
<td>16s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>3s</td>
<td>4s</td>
<td>5s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>18d</td>
<td>2s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hamlyn, 1946, p. 209-211)

Library patron subscription fees were kept low due in part due to competition among the libraries.
According to the prevailing opinion, circulating libraries denigrated literature by attracting women, servants, and other groups who were formerly prevented from reading because of prohibitive costs or their lack of literacy. The preface of The Catalogue of the Books of the London Library of 1786 states, ‘young of both sexes too frequently suffer from a deprivation of morals as well as taste from indiscriminate reading of common circulating libraries’ (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996 p. 179).

The prejudices held against circulating libraries at the end of the eighteenth century were weakening, as evidenced by the surge in book demand, especially with the lower classes making significant advancements in modest learning and wanting to read (Hamilton, 1797).

Women, despite being assumed to be avid users of circulating libraries due to their love of novels, were frequently discouraged from joining or attending subscription libraries by society (Innes, 2006). This is evident when looking at the Royal Brighton Literary and Scientific Institution, Subscribers’ book, where only a handful of women were listed as members (Committee of Management, 1847).

Hamilton, (1797) in defence of circulating libraries tells of a story that a man who was a gambling addict was:

> perfectly cured of this evil by subscribing to a library… has gradually acquired a love of books, and now devotes those hours to reading, which formally were spent in gaming (Hamilton, 1797 p.11).

A nice anecdote, in favour of reading, if slightly unbelievable. Unfortunately, the idea that circulating libraries were just for ‘frivolous young women, with too much time on their hands’ and were stocked largely with light fiction and romantic novels, persists today, as can be seen in Eric Glasgow’s 2002 article (Glasgow, 2002). He neglects to recognise the increased social and economic mobility of the eighteenth-century classes, and that most people could afford to pay to read the odd chapbook, pamphlets, and books on all manner of subjects. He goes on to say that there was only a smattering of circulating libraries, and these were in ‘the elegant streets of such places as Bath Southport, and Cheltenham’ and catered only to the leisured middle-class women. He suggests that it wasn’t until the Victorian period that women would encounter the rudiments of serious thinking in literature aimed at them. However, I would argue Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 -1797) who wrote ‘A Vindication of the Rights of Woman’ would disagree with this sentiment (Wollstonecraft, 1992).
The records of two provincial circulating libraries, owned by Samuel Clay (Daventry, Rugby and Warwick) and Timothy Stevens (Cirencester), were analysed and found that the majority of the library users were men and that they were the biggest readers of novels (Fergus, 2007). It was noted, however, that women were more likely than men to borrow/buy novels. Because of the small sample size, the analysis and conclusions drawn cannot be extrapolated to all circulating libraries, but it does provide an indication of who might use provincial libraries and what they might read.

It could be suggested that circulating and subscription library catalogues provide some of the most enlightening perspectives on what people read from 1750 to 1850. This is because the owners’/librarians’ livelihoods depended on providing people with what they wanted to read.

**NOVELS**

Mary Astell in her pro-feminist book suggests women shouldn’t read idle novels and romances, as they are among the vices of the age, but focus their efforts on education (Astell, 1695). Warnings against this harmful influence of novels were abound in eighteenth-century publications and sermons (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996).

It was believed that novels threatened not just public morality but also, for all intents and purposes, the established order. The brother of Margaret Nicholson, a woman who assaulted King George III, used such reasoning when he appealed to the court for mercy, saying “reading Milton’s Paradise Lost, had contributed to turning her brain” (Sands, 2022 at 31.01 mins).

Daniel Defoe’s novels, such as ‘Robinson Crusoe’ (1719), had a significant impact on the middle-class viewpoint of economic individualism, where the ideology is focused on independence and self-reliance along with puritan ethics and theology, portrayed in his novels (Singh, 2006; Watt, 2015).

Women in the upper and middle classes had a lot of leisure time on their hands, so frequently became voracious readers (Watt, 2015). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in a letter to her daughter, talks about reading novels and how they will pass away the idle time, and Mrs Thrale explains her husband ordered her not to think about housework and thus she was driven to read as her sole resource (Montagu, 2012; Watt, 2015).
Stone (1990) suggests that novel readers were mainly middle-class, yet novel subjects were drawn from landowners or nobility. He goes on to say that upper and middle-class women delegated the chores to the servants, decreased how many children they were having, and wasted their days reading, at the theatre, playing cards, and paying formal visits. Novel reading, he believes, is both empty-headed idleness and the potential for change. Novels were accused not only of supporting idleness and immersing readers in a surreal world but also of igniting emotions and causing a craving for the sensational and romantic pleasures (Innes, 2006).

The eponymous protagonist of George Colman the Elder’s (1732-94) play ‘Polly Honeycombe’ loves to read romantic novels and loses herself into that world, wanting to marry her ‘lover’ by eloping rather than the sensible, sober man (Mr. Ledger) her parents want her to marry. Polly behaves very badly towards Mr. Ledger by leading him on. Her father is furious and locks her in her bedroom. Polly believes it will all work out, just as it does in the novels she reads, and enlists the help of her nurse to escape with her lover. The plan is rumbled, however, and they are brought back to the family home, where Mr Ledger refuses to marry her and she is now ruined and does not marry her romantic lover either. Polly does not seem to be able to distinguish fact from fiction due to, according to her father, reading novels, and thus this causes her downfall. Mr Honeycombe exclaims, ‘A man might as well turn his daughter loose in Covent Garden, as trust the cultivation of her mind to a CIRCULATING LIBRARY’ (Colman, 1778). Covent Garden during this time was an area of ill repute. Stone agrees with Mr Honeycombe that reading romance novels, which overstated expectations of marital bliss, romantic love, and sexual fulfilment, often left the reader disappointed (Stone, 1990). Oliver Goldsmith states the case against romances and novels as; ‘They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed’ (Forster, 1855, p. 106).

In the defence of novels, Hamilton (1797) considers that they have the potential to improve the morals of the age and are among the most enjoyable of our literary works.

Because of social propriety, the middle classes did not want to be seen owning novels, seeing them as commodities to be consumed rather than owned. (Skelton-Foord, 1998). This can be appreciated when Jane Austen was dismayed when her father bought the novel, ‘Arthur Fitz-Albini’, in two volumes rather than borrow it, even though she admitted to her sister, this would not stop her reading it (Faye, 2014).
**Publishing**

Often circulating libraries were publishers as well. In contrast to the big London library publishers, many provincial librarians who ran little stores focused on fiction and, if they printed and published books at all, they did so for the local rather than national market (Feather, 1985). A proposal from The Minerva Press (the largest publisher of fiction at the time) to supply a stock of gothic and romantic novels for their libraries, accompanied with a catalogue, may have inspired these libraries to focus mostly on fiction (Blakey, 1939). It is possible that the increased portrayal of fiction in library collections was also due to the continued demand for novels. The average yearly output of new books, excluding ephemera, nearly quadrupled during the eighteenth century (Plant, 1974).

Circulating libraries who were also publishers, were linked to low-cost goods, and centred on fiction, particularly that would appeal to women and often written by women (often anonymous), thus constructed femininity as an ‘author function’ for fiction (Foucault and Bouchard, 1980). The anonymity of an author was not guaranteed; in fact, it was debatable, because library catalogues sometimes revealed the author’s real name, couched as “insider information,” or through reviews, or even when referencing other works, they had written (Jacobs, 1995, 2003).

Female authors and library publishers found each other to be useful due to social and economic factors. Since circulating libraries had a dubious reputation for satisfying popular demand for certain books and subpar literary works, female authors may have requested anonymity (Taylor, 1943). The author Frances Burney’s novel, ‘Evelina’, was published anonymously in 1778 by Lowndes of London (Jacobs, 2003). Some anonymous feminine works might have been written by men but were purposefully categorised as being by a woman so that they would sell (Jacobs, 1995, 2003). Whereas Samuel Richardson wrote novels such as ‘Pamela’ and ‘Clarissa’ in the 1740’s, about subjects that would interest women and thus would want to read them, even though they were written by a man (Watts, 1885; Harris, 2009).

**Catalogues and Library Management.**

In 1697, Fredric Rostgaard published his ideas for a new method of creating a library catalogue, in which a subject arrangement was subdivided both chronologically and by volume size. He suggested using a printed catalogue with facing pages divided into four parallel columns, each containing books of a specific size, arranged so that books of different sizes that had been
published on various topics within the same year would come directly opposite each other in the parallel columns. His was one of basic chronological order (Smalley, 1991).

By the early eighteenth century, catalogues had evolved from mere inventories to information retrieval tools. They were sometimes classified and sometimes alphabetical; indexes were thought to be useful but unnecessary; some catalogues were still divided by size, but authors were now categorised by surname and frequently arranged chronologically (Strout, 1956). During the French Revolution, the custodians of all districts received instructions on how to catalogue the library collections (gathered from all the deposed aristocrat’s homes) producing the first National Code of Cataloguing Rules. (Norris, 1939).

Subscribers to libraries should always be provided with a catalogue; they show the number and variety of items available and save all parties a significant amount of time and effort. It also listed the conditions that bind both the subscriber and the librarian in the catalogue (Hamilton, 1796).

Virtually all circulating libraries made catalogues available to subscribers so they could place orders. These were often priced at 6d or free if the person subscribed to the library. The details in these catalogues could tell you a lot about how a library was run and its target audience. The rules and regulations that library patrons had to follow reveal a lot about social norms of the time (Schürer, 2007). Circulating library catalogues depicts the past as it appeared to those who lived in and created it (Jacobs, 2003).

There was no universally accepted method of creating a circulating or subscription library catalogue at this time, and there is little evidence that the catalogues were designed using general standards, with subscription and circulating libraries frequently adopting changeable varied cataloguing practices.

During the eighteenth century, librarians and proprietors often assigned a number to books, so that the patron could look up what they wanted in the catalogue and give it to the library staff, so that their request could be fulfilled (Hamilton, 1796).

However, it was essential that patrons had the current catalogue, because as the library’s stock grew, books could be renumbered, and giving an out-of-date number for an item, meant the patron might not get what the book they wanted (Schürer, 2007). Hamilton (1796) suggests
that books on various subjects be alphabetically arranged and classified under their respective headings.

When analysing primary data, such as a library catalogue, it is repeatedly difficult to determine which text the catalogue refers to, telling different editions apart even harder due to this method of composing a library catalogue. Less than a quarter of the surviving eighteenth-century catalogues, according to Kaufman (1967), had any sort of alphabetical ordering, as it was more common for the subject to be listed before the size.

To enable a smooth running of a circulating library, a subscription book, followed by another volume that was used to keep track of books lent out were kept. The subscribers’ names are added to this later book as well as the number of the book they have borrowed from the library, and when it is returned, it is crossed out. It is possible that a book that was not returned on time or was stolen was being re-read, which may show how popular that title was (Skelton-Foord, 1998). Library records from this time are incredibly rare because the owners paid little attention to the long-term preservation of their own business files (Allan, 2008).

There is almost no information available regarding selection for circulating library collections, and occasionally an entire stock may be purchased or sold. Since these were for-profit businesses, the owners would have chosen what they thought would be appealing and profitable to stock, but even though popular fiction predominated, it wasn’t necessarily the entire selection (Knott, 1972). Hamilton (1796) suggests that out of a collection of 1500 books, 1050 should be novels (70%), 130 romances, and 60 each of history and divinity, with the rest divided among the other subjects. However, there is a dark side to selecting books for the library collection: censorship. There are the external forces at work, such as the government, concentrating on seditious, libellous, and obscene material, but there are also the librarians, proprietors and of course the users themselves, as well as social norms. Hamilton (1796) advocates librarian censorship of any book that is profane, immoral, or indelicate. He says what the lower classes should read:

I would recommend books of authenticity, rather than those of entertainment, as these will leave a more lasting impression on the mind (Hamilton, 1797, P. 43).

Libraries had two fundamental ways of acquiring stock: purchase or donations. The individual library and its clientele determined the percentage of each. Another method of acquiring new
books for readers was to apply to other libraries and exchange books that their users and yours had read, resulting in a supply of books for both (Hamilton, 1796; Innes, 2006).

Mechanics institutes had a high proportion of donated items, whereas a subscription library in a well-to-do area of London, would be the opposite (Innes, 2006). By purchasing the newest fiction in large quantities from publishers, librarians and owners could pay much less per volume than customers were charged at the bookshops (Skelton-Foord, 1998; M. Lyons, 2011). Hamilton (1796) claims that there is no need to look to other countries for authors to instruct, inform, or entertain; our country has produced the greatest men in the study of letters. This comment shows that that there was a definite bias towards Great Britain and prejudice against ‘foreign’ parts during this time.

Management of the library was often by a learned librarian was one who could recommend purchases with judgement, knew what was in his collection, and had the cognitive ability to use it as well as point confused readers in the right direction. Dedicated librarians are present during library hours and conduct library business throughout this time. Library staff did not receive official training or study for a qualification, as this was normal for administration / clerk occupations, but often learning from their employer, a colleague or on the job (Anderson, 1986). Circulating libraries were often owner -managed, and employed other staff, as they were often adjuncts to such business as bookselling, printing, fancy goods, haberdashery etc. (Knott, 1976). These libraries drew staff from various walks of life and women who are widowed, single, or retired would often be hired to work in circulation libraries (Lyons, 2011).

Subscription libraries often employed a librarian, and the London Library in 1840 paid theirs £150 p.a. (Baker, 1992), whereas provincial libraries paid less, and annual increases were rare, such as in the case of the Leeds library, who paid their librarian £80 p.a. from 1825 to 1853 (Hapgood, 1981). One disadvantage of having bookseller-librarians was that it could lead to a conflict of interest and a lack of sympathetic learning, whereas a learned librarian could restrict change (McCarthy, 1980).

2.2. BRIGHTON’S HISTORY

Brighton was known as Brightelmston until the mid-nineteenth century, so the names are interchangeable. Brighton’s two most important trades during this period were fishing and agriculture and, with Brighton having several flour mills, the land around was intensively
farmed for wheat, rye, oats, and barley. Market gardens produced fruits and vegetables on a smaller scale (Bishop, 1895; Berry, 2005). Farmers lived above the cliffs in the 1700s, while fishermen lived beneath the cliff on the foreshore. The decline of the fishing industry, combined with the devastation caused by storms in the 18th century, resulted in many people leaving Brighton in search of work and a home. The remainder of the population were so poor that three quarters of them didn’t pay rates in the 1720s. In 1724 Brightelmston was described as “a poor fishing town” by Daniel Defoe and he continued by saying that over a hundred houses had recently been consumed by the sea. He says that Brightelmston was begging for funds to raise banks against the sea, which would cost £8000 and, he claims, likely more than the entire town is worth (Defoe and Rogers, 1978 p. 145). However, with the money that was raised, groynes were erected along the seashore to help protect the town from the sea.

Going to the beach was frequently regarded as a medical endeavour with the belief that a shock of cold water followed by a vigorous massage would alleviate a variety of ailments (Lencek and Bosker, 1998). So around 1736, notable visitors began to arrive in Brightelmston on an annual basis. There were no lodging houses back then, only a few coaching inns. These visitors enjoyed hunting, horse racing, and sea water for their leisure and health (Erridge, 1862).

In 1747 Dr Richard Russell of Lewes, sent his patients to Brighthelmston for the sea water treatment, which involved the submersion or bathing in, and drinking of, seawater. In 1750 he wrote a Latin thesis De Tabe Glandulari, in which he recommended the use of seawater for the cure of enlarged lymphatic glands. This was translated into English a couple of years later into Glandular Diseases, or a Dissertation on the Use of Sea Water in the Affections of the Glands, and was an instant hit, and by 1769 it was in its sixth edition. He particularly recommended Brighton seawater as he felt it was superior to inland Spa water (Richard Russell, 1755; Salzman, 1940; Lauste, 1974; Musgrave, 1981). In 1753, Dr Russell moved his family and medical practice to Brighton, where he built Russell House near the beach, where the Royal Albion Hotel now stands. Russell Street was named after the doctor, and this housed lodging houses for invalid visitors (Erridge, 1862; Collis, 2010).

In 1761, the town had only six main streets: East, Black-lion, Ship, Middle, West, and North Street, as well as many lanes and Squares (Castle Square and Little Castle Square). There are two public inns; one is conveniently located, while the other is additionally elegant (The Old Ship Inn), which is unmatched in England outside of York, according to Erridge (1862). See Appendix 5 for a map of Brighton in 1779, showing these streets.
Erridge (1862) calculated the town’s population in 1761 as 2000. 400 families with an estimate of 5 people per family = 2000 plus 35 supported by the workhouse but strangely not included in the inhabitant’s figure. He said that the population in Brighthelmston = almost 2 births to 1 death, whereas in London there was a death for every 32 people, which equated to 2 to 1 in favour of Brighthelmston. The rates of the population increase in Brighton were far greater than those of England and Wales during the same period. See Table 2 for Brighton’s population.

In 1773, the Brighton Town Act went into effect, which included sixty-four commissions to light and clean the streets and lanes of Brighton, as well as a general regulation of town improvement. The chalk stream known as Winterbourne, though Musgrave, (1981) refers to it as Wellesbourne, flooded the Steine in front of the Royal Pavilion, and so in the latter part of the season it was contained in a drain in 1793, under this Act (Berry, 2005).

By 1800, one-third of Brighton's houses were in the suburbs, and the other two-thirds were used as lodging houses or lodgings. The number of houses increased by 61 percent from 1,420 to 2380 between 1801 and 1811 (Berry, 2005), and in 1814, one-third of houses were charged

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**Table 2: Brighton Population Information 1753 - 1821**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1753</td>
<td>407 houses</td>
<td>2140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761</td>
<td>400 families + 35 in poor house</td>
<td>2035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>598 houses</td>
<td>3140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>Local census smallpox outbreak</td>
<td>3620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>1233 houses</td>
<td>5669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>7339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>12012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>24429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>40,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>46,661</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Relhan, 1829; Bishop, 1895; Musgrave, 1981; Berry, 2005; Fisher, 2019).
rates, and it was on these that the town's income was based to pay for street cleaning and poor relief etc. under the Act (ESRO Brighton 1814 Rate Book). The Act was repealed in 1825 and replaced by another in which there were now 112 commissions with more power as the town had grown significantly. In 1830, the Police were established in the town and from 1833-35, the Sea Wall, which ran from Cannon Place to the west end of Kemp Town, was constructed (Fisher, 2016).

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**TRANSPORT LINKS**

In the 1750s, it took just a day to travel by stagecoach from London to Brighton, making it one of the most reachable towns on the south coast (Farrant, 1984). Steam-powered packet ships, offered a cross channel service to Dieppe from 1764 (Wallis, 1836), and then the London to Brighton railway opened in 1841 (Berry, 2005).

**ACCOMMODATION**

The following are types of accommodation available for visitors to Brighton:

- Hotel and Inns (food and lodging);
- Lodging houses (the whole house was rented);
- Own seaside house;
- Boarding houses (food and lodging);
- Lodging (rented just a room/s) (Berry, 2005).

Accommodation will have been scarce in the early 1770s because there were very few places to rent or lodge at this time, particularly with a large influx of those who wanted to be seen and see in the libraries and Steine. Even with all its drawbacks, the town's popularity as a summer resort grew with 'fashionable society’ (Bishop, 1895; Erickson, 1990).

**MILITARY**

Invasion was a recurring worry for Britain from 1756 when England declared war on France right through to the Napoleonic wars up to 1815. As Brighton is in the middle of a shallow bay that runs from Selsey Bill to Beachy Head, this would entice to would-be invaders, making Brighton one of the primary locations for soldiers to be sent to defend the south coast (Berry, 2005). In 1759 a battery was built at the bottom of East Street and in 1778 a troop of dragoons and 300 militia arrived. Barracks were built in Church Street and the village of Preston in 1793 and the Army was in residence in Lewes Road (Wallis, 1834; Bishop, 1895; Collis, 2010). It could be suggested that the soldiers reassured and attracted visitors to Brighton.
Henry Dundas, the Secretary of State for War, received a lot of letters from residents of coastal localities asking for weapons and supplies to protect their towns from any French attacks at the beginning of the First Coalition War in 1792. The government outright rejected requests to form “military associations” in Kent and Chichester, but Brighton established them anyway (Bishop, 1895).

**Religion**

The following are places of worship and when they were first established. Church of England church – sixteenth century, Quakers meeting house - seventieth century, Unitarian chapel – 1773, Jewish Synagogue – 1780’s, Roman Catholic church – 1791 and Methodist chapel – 1800’s (Berry, 2005)

**Schools**

First ever school recorded was in 1581, licenced by the Bishop of Chichester and in 1665 a ‘freescoole’ was documented. In 1702 a free school was founded in Bartholomew’s, named after the founder Revd Springett, and in 1769 a further school was founded by the behest of William Grimmet (former Springett pupil) in Meeting House Lane, and in 1805 the Springett and Grimmet school amalgamated in 1818, known as National School, which moved to Church Street in 1829. In 1826 the Central Infants School opened in Upper Gardner St. and Brighton college in 1845. There were so many propriety schools for the wealthy established in the nineteenth century, that Brighton was nicknamed ‘School Town’ (Wallis, 1836; Erridge, 1862; Bishop, 1895; Collis, 2010).

**Hospital - Medical**

Brighthelmston Dispensary was founded in 1809 as a medical charity for the poor and the Prince of Wales was its patron. It moved a few times before settling on North Street, across from Ship Street, where the Sussex General Infirmary was later built in 1812. Because of the climate of Brighton and its unique medical benefits, the Earl of Chichester believed they should build there a county hospital. In 1819, the dispensary and infirmary were relocated to 25 Middle Street to accommodate more patients. Mr. Charles Barry was the architect (later Sir Charles, and the architect of the Houses of Parliament, etc.) (Lauste, 1972; Collis, 2010; Anderson, N.K.). The Sussex County Hospital was built on Eastern Road in 1828, and the Infirmary was closed. It had a road leading down to the sea because sea bathing was still deemed valuable; a daily supply of sea water was brought to the hospital so patients could bathe privately. The
Sussex Maternity Hospital opened in 1831, followed by the Sussex Eye Hospital in 1832. The dispensary remained open for several more years. It saw 400 patients in 1810 and had treated 6,000 by 1845. In 1847, land on Queen’s Road was purchased for a new dispensary, and a Brighton Dispensary Building Fund was established; it opened on March 1, 1850 (Lauste, 1972).

**FINANCIAL**

Although insurance brokers, lawyers, and other financial support functions advertised their services, with a few notable exceptions, very little information about them has survived, though it is known that the insurance agents often worked for London-based companies. Brighton required a bank to facilitate the movement of money among businesses and to offer this facility to visitors and residents alike (Berry, 2005).

- Thomas Harben and Associates, 103 North Street. Est. 1787 – 1793, it was taken over by Shergold Michell Mills and Company and was known as the ‘Old Bank’.
- Brighton Union bank, 7 North Street Est. 1805 this was eventually taken over by Barclay’s Bank in 1894.
- Wigney & Co. est. 1794 as Brighthelmston Bank. It took over the ‘Old Bank’ after the financial panic of 1825 but failed in 1842.
- London and County Joint Stock Bank, Est. 1838. Pavilion Buildings and Western Road (not a private bank).

There were seven private banks between 1787 and 1842, however, only 2 survived the financial panic of 1825 and only one after 1842 (Erridge, 1862; Collis, 2010).

**THE POOR**

Elizabeth Fry, a British Quaker philanthropist, and a leading advocate for prison reform in Europe, came to Brighton in 1824 for health reasons and was distressed by the large number of poor seeking help. As a result, she established the Brighton District Visiting Society to assist the poor by encouraging industry and frugality among them, through visits to their own homes, to see what relief could be done for them, whether arising from sickness or other causes, and assisting in the prevention of these in the future. Following the formation of this society, other towns and cities throughout the county followed suit (Richards, 1916; Fry, 2011).
Dr Jenks, in 1839 wrote a report on the Sanitary Condition of Brighton, which was then compiled into the following report for the Queen:

Owing to the imperfect and insufficient drainage of the town, the inhabitants are compelled to have recourse to numerous cesspools as receptacles for superabundant water and refuse of all kinds; and to save the inconvenience of frequently emptying them, they dig below the hard coombe rock till they come to the shingles, where all the liquid filth drains away. The consequence is inevitable; the springs in the lower part of the town must be contaminated (Gillman, 1840).

Most of the poor’s homes in Brighton were in congested streets and courts. They were inadequately ventilated and poorly drained, if at all, because many of them were constructed using subpar bricks and mortar made of sea sand and were dreadfully damp. Dignity is nearly impossible in them due to the amount of people living in them. The poor tenants, often unable to bear their situation, attempted to drown their feelings in the nearby beer shops (A London Graduate, 1860).

Entertainment

Sea Bathing

The Steine, where it was fashionable to promenade, had a moderate incline to the sea and provided simple access to the beach, where ‘bathing machines’ have been present since 1753 (Wallis, 1836; Bishop, 1895; Collis, 2010). A tiny mobile hut with doors on both sides served as the bathing machine. Swimmers would enter and change into their bathing suits. The bathing machine would then be towed into deeper water and away from the inquisitive eyes of those on the beach, the swimmer would emerge from the opposite door and dive into the water (Walton, 1983).

Assembly Rooms

The first assembly rooms in Brighton were in 1754 at the Castle Inn on the Steine, The Old Ship followed suit in 176, where concerts and balls were held (Berry, 2005; Collis, 2010).

Theatre

The first permanent theatre opened in Brighthelmston in North Street in 1774 and in 1790 it moved to Duke Street. The Prince of Wales bestowed his patronage on the theatre, and it was
then known as the Theatre Royal. The theatre, relocated from Duke Lane to New lane, in 1807, where the Theatre Royal stands today (Erridge, 1862; Bishop, 1895; Collis, 2010).

**Racecourse**

In 1783, the Duke of Cumberland, Duke of Richmond, Marquess of Queensberry and the Earl of Egremont and a few other influential residents of Brighton organised the first Brighton Race in July, over White Hawk Downs, later known as Race Hill. The Prince of Wales visited the second event in 1784 and became an avid Brighton race goer from then, donating a trophy named the Brighton Cup. Race Balls became a thing from 1785 and it was the fashionable thing to do, go to the races and the balls. The first stand was built in 1788 and the course was one mile long (Wallis, 1834; Erridge, 1862; Bishop, 1895; Collis, 2010). See below for an image of the stand and racecourse.

![Racecourse Image](image)

Credit: Reproduced from ‘Peep into the Past’ (Bishop, 1895)

**Chain Pier**

In 1823, The Chain Pier, or its full title, Royal Suspension Chain Pier, was erected. It was 1134 foot long and had four 260 feet spans. Initially, sailing ships made calls, but when steam-powered packet ships took their place in 1825, passenger traffic increased. The Isle of Wight excursions were also available (Drewry, 1832). Storms in 1824, 1833, and 1836 all caused damage to the pier, and because of Brighton’s less protected location, there was a decline in the number of steamers willing to come to Brighton. A camera obscura, a regimental band, small kiosks and shops, a weighing machine, shower baths, and a saloon lounge/reading room were among the additional attractions added to the pier. King William IV was among the visitors and Turner and Constable both painted the pier in their works (The National Pier Society, 2016).
The larger libraries, such as the Royal Marine Library, were not merely for literary pursuits, as their name implies, as after eight o’clock in the evening, during the summer season, that portion of the business in connection with books ceased, and blinds were drawn down to protect the bookshelves and their books. A saloon was formed which attracted many people to the music and to join in the ‘raffles’ and the ‘Loo sweepstakes’ (Sicklemore, 1815; Erridge, 1862; Colclough, 2001). See fig. 1 for an image of the inside of the saloon of the Royal Marine Library in 1826. The numbers on the print refer to the game of Loo, which is in progress: 1,4,6 and 7 are still to be bought for that round.

An extract from an anonymous diarist, dated 21 September 1807, “Donaldson’s and Pollard’s libraries have had crowded assemblages, and the game of Loo has had more than its usual number of votaries” (P. K. Lyons, 2011 p. 61)

**Figure 1.** A Summer Evening at The Royal Marine Library, Brighton

![Image](image.png)

2,3,5 & 8 in 1826 at the Royal Marine Library, Marine Parade, Brighton.

Credit: Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

Colonel Henry Mellish, whilst staying in Brighton, is said to have lost £40,000 on a single throw of the dice at Raggett’s (library) on the Steine gambling (Nevill, 1909; Sitwell and Barton, 1935). Attree (1809) wrote in his topography of Brighton, that the dice are frequently
rattled at Raggett’s, and bank notes are transferred from one to another with little formality (Attree, 1809).

In 1810, an attempt was made to create the game of Loo an illegal act. Mr Donaldson and Mr Walker, proprietors of Donaldson and the Marine Libraries, were charged and their case was heard at Lewes Court. It was thrown out of court and the libraries returned home in high spirits. Eventually, in 1817, the Loo parties were expelled from all libraries by the magistrates under an obsolete act of Henry VIII, as they were not happy with the influence gambling seem to have over the ladies (Sicklemore, 1827; Erridge, 1862).

**DISTINGUISHED VISITORS: THE PROSPEROUS, THE POWERFUL AND THE PRESTIGIOUS!**

**THE SEASON**

The Season ran from April to August and in Regency times it was late October to June (due to Parliament).

**ROYALTY AND NOBILITY**

The Sussex-based Pelham family was one of Brighton's most active supporters by the year 1760. The Stanmer Park Estate was owned by Thomas Pelham-Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Baron Pelham of Stanmer (on the outskirts of Brighton) who was Prime Minister (Whig) during 1757-1762. During the 1750s and 1760s, Stanmer was a hub of social and political activity for the Pelhams and several high-ranking members of Royalty, politicians and aristocrats visited the Pelhams (Farrant, 1980; Berry, 2018).

According to an unknown author, Lord Chief Justice Wilmot preferred Brighthelmston over all other public places he visited in 1763. (Bishop, 1895) and between 1777 and 1782, there was excellent weather and a very successful season, with many Royal and First Families of the Kingdom visiting Brighthelmston (Bishop, 1895).

The first Royal visitor to Brighton in 1765, was the Duke of Gloucester, Prince William Henry, who was the brother of King George III, followed by the Prince Edward the Duke of York 1766. The 4th Duke of Marlborough, Charles Spencer, lived in Brighton during the season between 1771 – 1786, in which he let Dr Russell’s house once he had died. He purchased a house that was built on the Steine and named it Marlborough house. In 1786 he sold it to the
MP William Gerald Hamilton, he then rented until he bought Grove house, which was rented to the Duke of Cumberland in 1790.

The Prince of Wales (later Prince Regent) came to Brighton in 1783 for the first time to visit his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, coming back in 1784 for the whole summer. He then commissioned Henry Holland to build him ‘Brighton House’ a two-storey villa in the shape of an ‘E’. In 1802 two oval shaped winds were attached. In 1815 and 1822 John Nash created the Indian-style exterior and Chinese interior and renamed it the Royal Pavillon, we know today. In 1817, the Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia (went on to be the Tsar) stayed with the Prince Regent at the Royal Pavillon. After his death in 1830, his successor visited and used the Pavillon, but Queen Victoria did not like Brighton, and after her last visit in 1845, she sold it to the town for £53,000 in 1850 under the Brighton Improvement Act 1850 (Collis, 2010).

George IV and his brothers the Dukes of York, Clarence, Kent, Sussex, and Cambridge visited and stayed in Brighton most years particularly between 1800 – 1807.

Maria Fitzherbert (the unacknowledged wife of George, Prince of Wales) built her house on the Steine in 1804. She died in 1837 (Bishop, 1895; The Twickenham Museum, 2001; Munson, 2002; Collis, 2010). You can see from the map below that it was just a short walk between the Pavillon and her house.

Credit: Google Maps 2022

Duke of Orleans and other French nobility and Russian nobility visited Brighton during 1784 – 1820 (Bishop, 1895).
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

William Pitt, Tory MP and then later Prime Minister (1783–1801, 1804–06) and a close friend of Prince Regent (George III) visited Brighton regularly from 1784 (Bishop, 1899). The Hon. Charles James Fox, Esq (1st British Foreign Secretary) was a frequent visitor (Bishop, 1895; Collis, 2010).

John Wilks, a progressive politician, and journalist, who wrote the poem ‘Essay on Women’ (a parody of 'Essay on Man'), and was known as the champion of Liberty, first visited Brighton in 1770, where upon the bells were rung in pleasure at his visit. He visited again in 1773 and 1774. In 1771, he was appointed sheriff of London and Middlesex, and in 1773, he was elected Lord Mayor of London. During his adult life, he fought two duels, was imprisoned in the 'tower' for libel, and was expelled from Parliament several times, one of which was for writing the aforementioned poem (Erridge, 1862; Bishop, 1895; Musgrave, 1981; Cash, 2007).

Edward Gibbon, a historian, and Member of Parliament, and author of “Decline and fall of the Roman Empire” who’s premise was that it was because of their conversion to Christianity, visited Brighton in 1781. The Church was unhappy with him due to his attack on Christianity, in particular in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters (Musgrave, 1981; Gibbon and Trevor-Roper, 2010).

Henry M.P. and Hester Thrale had bought a house in Brighton in 1765. Henry was a British politician who sat in the House of Commons from 1765 to 1780. They were a close friend of Dr Samuel Johnson. Hester was an author. After Henry Thrale M.P. died in 1781, Dr Charles Burney, Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, and father of Fanny Burney, introduced Signor Piozzi (Italian Singer and composer) to Mrs Thrale at a Party he was hosting in 1777. Their second and most significant encounter was in 1780 at the door to one of the libraries on the Steine in Brighton. She later married him in 1784 (Musgrave, 1981; Thrale, 2009).

AUTHORS

Fanny (Francis) Burney, English satirical novelist, diarist and playwright and author of ‘Evelina’ who later became Madame d'Arblay, Keeper of the robes to Queen Charlotte, was a family friend of the Thrales, with whom she stayed with, in their home near the bottom of West Street, opposite the Kings Head Tavern (Burney, 1890). Dr Samuel Johnson, writer, wit, and lexicographer visited Brighton to see his friends the Thrales on numerous occasions in Brighton from 1782 (Burney, 1890; Musgrave, 1981). Lady Shelley, the English novelist who wrote
**Frankenstein:** or, *The Modern Prometheus* (1818), and whose mother was Mary Wollstonecraft, visited Brighton on numerous occasions (Bishop, 1899). Daniel Defoe also visited on a few occasions (Bishop, 1899; Musgrave, 1981, 1981; Collis, 2010; Lyons, 2011). While in Brighton, Charles Dickens is said to have written a large portion of *Bleak House* and *Dombey and Son*. He first came in 1837 and became a regular visitor for the next 30 years (Elms, 2011). Despite not finding any conclusive evidence that Jane Austen visited Brighton, she did write in detail about Brighton in several of her works, including *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sanditon*. Brighton could be interpreted as Jane's embodiment of extravagance and indulgence. This could be especially true given how the Prince Regent spent his time in Brighton, gambling, drinking, and eating in excess, having secret liaisons with Mrs Fitzherbert, his secret lover, away from London's glare and attention.

**ARTISTS**

John Constable brought his wife and family to Brighton to try to improve his wife's deteriorating health due to tuberculosis. Constable writes to his friend Archdeacon Fisher in 1824 that Brighton has *'nothing here for a painter but the breakers and the sky...’* (Leslie and Leslie, 1896, chapter VIII). John Constable's famous oil on canvas painting of Brighton was the Chain Pier 1826-7, whose size was, 50×72 (127×183) (Royal Pavillion, Art Gallery and Museums, 1995; Tate, 2004). William Turner was a landscape artist who liked to paint the coast. He began visiting Brighton from about 1796 (Brighton & Hove City Council, 2013).

**NOTABLE**

Pellegrine Treves (1733–1817), the first Jewish member of the Prince Regent’s court and well-known in Brighton, frequently strolled along the Old Steine during a time when such promenades were important to social gatherings for the wealthy and powerful. ‘A fashionable Jew Traversing the Steyne at Brighton’ is the subtitle of Dighton's 1801 caricature of Treves walking the Steyne (close to the Royal Pavilion). The ease of social mixing made possible by the more relaxed customs of this resort, which allowed for easier social integration, and was one of the reasons Brighton was popular among the Jewish upper classes at the time (Roberts, N.K.).

Gideon Mantell a physician, geologist, and palaeontologist, relocated his family to fashionable Brighton in 1833, with the support and encouragement of the Earl of Egremont where he planned to start a more prestigious medical practise, reopen his museum, and carry out his geological research. He moved to 20 The Steine where he established The Sussex Scientific
Institution, and Mantellian Museum, which had a museum, a library and Reading Room (Wallis, 1836; Musgrave, 1981; Collis, 2010; Cooper, 2014).

All these amenities and distinguished visitors to Brighton meant that Brighton had the most facilities for visitors compared to the five earliest seaside resorts, which could be why it was the best ‘watering place’ in the kingdom. See Table 3.

**Table 3**: Facilities of the five earliest seaside resorts, showing Brighton's lead by 1780

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Brighton</th>
<th>Hastings</th>
<th>Margate</th>
<th>Scarborough</th>
<th>Weymouth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>1759</td>
<td>1780</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>Early 1700’s</td>
<td>1785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1761</td>
<td>1777</td>
<td>1773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Family</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement Commissioner</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging Houses</td>
<td>1750’s</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>1760’s</td>
<td>1770</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Berry, 2005 p. 29)

These distinguished visitors and residents of Brighton had an impact on the middle classes and other people, so that Brighton became the place to be seen. Looking at table 4. The visitors to Brighton and the number of residents, increased six-fold in fifty years, showing just what tourism had done for the town. See appendix 6 & 7 for maps of Brighton in 1815 and 1851 showing how Brighton had expanded and thrived, with many more streets and houses since the 1779 map was drawn.
Table 4: Estimates of the Number of Visitors and the Resident Population - Brighton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Min 320</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Tolerably full</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>July-Oct Library list 2000</td>
<td>3,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>5,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>12 - 15000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1814</td>
<td>4,000 on day 1 of the Steine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1817-18</td>
<td>June-Oct 7,000; Nov-Feb 2,300 11,000; Feb-Jun 1,700</td>
<td>18000,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Berry, 2005 p. 40)

This chapter examines the libraries that were in Brighton from 1750 to 1850, focusing on five case studies: Baker’s Library, Woodgate library, Choat’s Circulating Library, Wright’s & Son’s Royal Colonnade Library, and the Brighton Subscription Literary & Scientific Institution. It will offer some clarification as to what function they provided for their users, their clientele, what types of libraries existed at this time, and how these were operated.

BRIGHTON LIBRARIES.

According to an unknown writer, Lord Chief Justice Wilmot liked Brighthelmston the best of all the public places he had visited in 1763. There were occasions and seasons when visitors and residents could not enjoy outdoor activities, in which case the newspaper and a book from the library were necessities for at-home entertainment. From this need came supply, as circulating and subscription libraries (Bishop, 1895).

Circulating libraries were among the earliest buildings in the resort of Brighthelmston in the mid eighteenth century. Brighton’s libraries were open to visitors who wanted to read, talk, listen to music, buy trinkets, or gamble. Visitors signed their names in a visitors’ book and paid subscription to join the library. This would enable other members to see who was in Brighthelmston for the season and how to contact them to meet up for social engagements. From 1760, Brighthelmston had a Master of Ceremonies, who would use the visitors / subscribers’ book to contact members about social events; he oversaw the social events and served as a social behaviour moderator to facilitate all of this (Farrant, 1980; Berry, 2002).

Long before Brighton’s reputation as the best watering place in England was established, libraries were the main amenity offered for the entertainment and attraction of those who came to enjoy the seaside and climate. Visitors with plenty of free time were accustomed to spending hours in these establishments, which housed a variety of attractions such as books and music, raffling, and games with a dubious morality.

David Allan and James Raven state subscription libraries are “libraries for sociability” because they frequently host discussions, dances, talks, and other social events. (Raven, 2006; Allan, 2008). However, Manley, (2020) rejects this idea, saying that ‘libraries for sociability’ is a
falsehood and do not exist, except in very rare cases, such as holiday resorts. They say that for this to be true, the library’s primary aim should be sociability, which is not the case. Nevertheless, this appears to be the case in Brighton, where libraries resembled public clubs where both men and women could read, buy, or borrow the latest novel, book, play, or poems; gather and gossip, write letters, try a new piece of music, buy a raffle ticket, or make up a card party, and thus were of great social significance (Feltham, 1806; Burney, 1890; Musgrave, 1981; Erickson, 1990; Colclough, 2001; Berry, 2005).

Charlotte Francis, Fanny Burney’s niece, kept a journal about her trip to Brighton in 1799 while still a teen. It details the different libraries that are available, as well as how her family and friends use them. She frequently visited Donaldson & Wilks Marine Library and Fisher’s Circulating Library.

We went to Fishers where we bought some trifles and found the address of a Mrs Pritchard an old... acquaintance of Mamma’s by the book for if you pay a crown, you may write your name in the books and your address and your friends find you out, so we called upon her (Colclough, 2001p.11).

This is referring to the book where the list of the members of the library were. Charlotte often played ‘the raffle’, which is the game of Loo and she indicated libraries were social hubs rather than places to only read (Colclough, 2001).

The only activity that didn’t take place in circulating libraries, according to modern satirists, was reading. However, Charlotte describes the library as being essential to the Brighton holiday experience in her journal, which serves as a reminder of the part that reading performed in the commercialisation of leisure. Charlotte used Fisher’s library to practise her French by borrowing Voltaire’s plays (Colclough, 2001).

See appendix 1 & 2. For a list of Brighton’s libraries and a little information about each.
3.2. Case studies

**Baker’s Library**

The first library to be established in Brighthelmston was Baker’s Library (Cubby, 1800). Edward Baker from Tunbridge Wells, who was both an auctioneer and postmaster, established a library in Brighton in 1758, which was a single-story building, and it had a billiards room and a wooden rotunda for musicians to perform. It was called ‘Bakers Library’, and both ran it between him and his Uncle Thomas Baker. It was erected on the east side of the Steine, now the south-west corner of St. James Street (Dale, 1951; Collis, 2010; Goulden, Richard, 2020). Mr. Baker advertised in 1761 that the library would buy and trade books and that it had 200 books for sale (Berry, 2005). They lent books to read at 10s 6d per year, or 3s per quarter. It can supply people who live far away from the library books by paying the cost of postage and packaging. The library will be open regularly throughout the year, and all monthly publications will be available (Cubby, 1800). In 1769, Edward Baker published the first guide to Brighton, "The Brighthelmston Directory" (Smith, 2002). In 1774 Mr Baker died and Mr Richard Thomas took it over and named it Brighthelmston Circulating Library. He established the Post Office within the library from 1781 to 1784 (Collis, 2010).

Mr Thomas’s first advert, published May 30th, 1774

Reproduced from (Bishop, 1895 p. 112).

Mr Thomas according to Fanny Burney (author) ‘has a surprising degree of precision in pronouncing French-English and often reads aloud to his subscribers’, with an audible voice in a most feminine manner. She also notes that a Miss Fanny Fussic, states that ‘Mr Thomas must be a most prodigious man, monstrously intelligent, and withal, that he is amazingly
communicative: He knows but everything, and tells but everything he knows’ (Erridge, 1862, p.199). The subsequent proprietors were Mr J. Dubot and Mr R. Gregory circa 1787. Mr Donaldson in approximately 1796 took over the library. See fig. 2 for a lithograph showing Donaldson’s library on the right, the Prince Regent sitting atop of his horse with the Royal Pavilion in the background.

**Figure 2.** A lithograph published by Gavin Pocock, June 1849

![Figure 2](image)

**Credit:** Society of Brighton Print Collectors

In 1806, Mr Donaldson demolished and rebuilt the library, (see fig. 3). The Brighton Ambulator published in 1818, recommended the library for its ‘spacious accommodation’ and as an ‘agreeable rendezvous for the gay and polite’ and that Donaldson’s catalogue of books contained 15,000 volumes (Wright, 1818). Donaldson Library's dimensions and beauty are an ornament to the Steine, and are unrivalled in any 'watering place' in the Kingdom, a beautiful three-story neo-classical edifice. (Sicklemore, 1827). His annual subscription charges were in 1821, £1. 1s, no other options were recorded in this subscription book, see fig. 5.
Figure 3 & 4. Donaldson’s Library

(View on the Steine, Brighton, 1808 [Coloured Aquatint], 1808)

Credit: Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove.

In fig. 4 above the balcony, there is a sign saying ‘Boarding House” however, I can’t find any information regarding this, but it would suggest that this is another adjunct to the library business. Donaldson occupied the building until about 1827, when it was taken over by Mr. Lucombe, who was well known for his comic recitations. The annual membership of his library in 1831 cost £1.11s.6d., or 8s per month (Wallis, 1831).

It is very fortunate that a membership / master of ceremonies book has survived from Donaldson’s library for the year 1821. See fig. 5 of the first page showing some of those who had subscribed to the library. The library continued until 1856 when the building was sold (Collis, 2010).

**Figure 5.** A Master of the Ceremonies: Subscription Book for Donaldson’s Circulating Library, 1821.

Credit: Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove.
The list of subscribers reads like a who's who of influential people in the United Kingdom. There was His Majesty the King, 'the king of Brighton,' i.e., Thomas Attre, one of the most influential and powerful solicitors in Brighton who acted for the Royal Family; Charles Pepys, a lawyer, judge, and politician (later becoming Lord High Chancellor); HRH Princess Augusta, the King's sister; Marchioness of Conyngham (the King's Mistress); Countess of Liverpool, Countess of Warwick; Sir and Lady Strachan. There was a scandal at the time, involving two of the above ladies (see fig 6.). Lord Viscount Molesworth of Swords (Irish Peerage), a slew of Lady and Sirs, and a large number of Clergy, Doctors and Military personnel with the ranks of Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel and a Rear Admiral of the White Squadron and a significant number of the middle classes (Donaldson, 1821).

**Figure: 6.** Lady Strachan and Lady Warwick making love in a park, while their husbands look on with disapproval.

(Coloured etching. Gillray, 1820)
WOODGATE LIBRARY

The second library that was opened in Brighton was Woodgate’s library, built on the south side of the Steine 1767. The Honourable and Reverend Richard Trevor, Lord Bishop of Durham, and owner of the Glynde Estate, had a subscription to the library (see below) and he believed in religious, political, and social tolerance

Vouchers to Account. Glynde Place, 1768

Credit: The Keep: GLY/2/2/897

It was a two-story structure with a Doric colonnade and in circa 1775, Miss Widgett took over. The author Fanny Burney mentioned Miss Widget in her diary dated Saturday May 29th, 1779, “Mrs and Miss Thrale took me to Widgett’s, the milliner and library woman on the Steyn” (Burney, 1890, p. 111). Mr Bowen took over from Miss Widgett in circa 1780. It was known that there was a rivalry between Mr Thomas and Mr Bowen. This resulted in a constant struggle between librarians over who could be the most courteous and helpful to their clientele. Mr Thomas was regarded as the "fashionable bookseller" from the start; however, Miss Widgett's successor, Mr Bowen, who bowed in the style of "a la Noverre or Gallini," soon seemed to take away most of the custom and company from Thomas' (Cubby, E, 1800). In one of her letters in 1780, Fanny Burney noted that Mrs Thrale overheard a Brighton visitor in Bowen's Circulating Library asking for "Russell on Sea-water" (Burney, 1890).
In 1784 Mr Crawford was the proprietor, and he rebuilt the library (see fig. 8) and housed the Post Office from 1784 to 1803 and at which point it had 5000 volumes in the collection. Mr Fisher purchased the library in about 1793 and within ten years closed and sold off all the inventory because of bankruptcy (Smith, 2002).

Credit: Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove.

(Quartermain, 1800)
Charlotte Francis, Franny Burney’s niece, in her journal wrote about the libraries in Brighton during her visit in 1799. Fisher's (previously Woodgate) Circulating Library on the Steine and Donaldson's Marine Library on Marine Parade were her two favourite libraries, (Colclough, 2001).

**CHOAT’S CIRCULATING LIBRARY**

Thomas Choat's library began at 136 North Street and 1&2 Princes' Place which started in 1805, renting out new square and grand pianofortes and selling Tunbridge ware goods as well as having the library. It quickly became a gathering place for the city's elite and gossips. In 1818, he had 3,826 volumes in his catalogue, the majority of which were of a high-class nature, both English and foreign (Bishop, 1899).

Choat's Library is in North Street, and for some time it has been celebrated as the Emporium of Literature, and we may observe that from this consideration it has become distinguished for literary support. Possessing a Library selected with discrimination, which an examination of the Catalogue of 12,000 Volumes proves. It contained a reading room furnished with the principal London and weekly papers, magazines, reviews, and new periodical publications, and we are not surprised at the patronage it receives. The Proprietor is continually adding New Works of established merit to his repository (Wright, 1818, p.148).

To be able to announce that the Morning Daily Papers were regularly delivered to the library from London via coaches by early afternoon on the day of publication was considered an impressive achievement. All news arrived in Brighton six hours after it broke in London, an advantage that no resort in England had.

*Choat’s Circulating Library.*

Reproduced from (Wakeling, 1872, Introduction)
During the Romantic period (end of eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century), representations of circulating libraries and their patrons exposed a conflict between the encouragement and fear of reading in debates across the country during that period (Raven, Small and Tadmor, 1996). It was in Mr Choat's library, that a serious heated debate was conducted about whether it was desirable for people to learn to read (Wakeling, 1864).

1820 the library passed from Mr Choat to Mr Loder, bookseller to the king, who moved the library to No.170 North Street around 1828. In the Royal Edition of Brighton as it is 1834, the write up for this library says:

..embracing above twenty thousand volumes in every branch of science. Hither may the student resort, secure from the interruptions of the giddy and the gay, to pursue with new ardour his favourite and soul-elevating pursuit; while the mere idler may gratify himself by an occasional peep at the newspapers and magazines, of which a general assortment will be found in the adjoining reading -room, where charts and plans are provided for the convenience of reference (Wallis, 1834 p. 41).

Loder’s subscription charges in 1836 were £1. 6s pa, 7s pm, 2s 6d per week.

Mr Loder’s library assistant was a Mr Richard Lemmon Gregory, formerly from the Old Steine library, as assistant to his brother James Gregory. The Brighton Herald newspaper (Liberal) in 1851, printed a valedictory notice, saying he was

a smart, dapper, active, brisk little man, who dressed in corduroy breeches, speckled worsted stockings, tie-low shoes, dark-figured swansdown waistcoat, and a dark brown single-handed coat, cut like a Quaker's. He was remarkably clean in his person, and his face was always radiant with smiles. He had sharp, ready answer for everyone, and everyone liked to have a gossip with ‘Dick Gregory’; he was full of anecdotes and told them with a gusto that kept the attention of the listeners wide awake. No wonder that, with such a coadjutor, Mr. Loder’s Library and Reading Rooms thrived (Brighton Herald, 1851, p.5).

On Mr Loder’s retirement, in approximately 1840, Mr Robert Folthorp took over the business, see fig. 9 for the library on North Street.
The London-Brighton railway opened in 1841, allowing him to receive the morning and evening papers in his reading room just a few hours after they were published. In 1846, the library catalogue contained 24,000 volumes, with new titles being added at such a rate that no one was disappointed. In 1854, he received Royal assent to call the library, The Royal Library, Brighton. He left the library in May 1863, at which point, Mr G Wakeling became the proprietor. There was also a room that could be hired by the Rural Deanery, or any other meeting of the clergy of the diocese (Wakeling, 1864, 1872; Bishop, 1899). In 1895 the Royal Library and Reading rooms at 170 North Street, was the oldest library and reading rooms in Brighton which connected the libraries of the past with the present and had the motto “Locus ad legendum amplissimus” which translates to “A great place to read”.

WRIGHT’S & SONS.

WRIGHT’S & SON’S ROYAL COLONADE LIBRARY, MUSIC SALOON & READING ROOMS – NORTH STREET.

The Wright’s establishments were established in the 1820s. The Wrights actively promoted their goods and services to status-conscious clientele eager to patronise an establishment that exuded a clear air of social superiority with a Warrant from the Royal household in the 1820s. The Army, Navy and Clergy also patronised this institution, such as Captain James Plumridge.
who fought at Trafalgar and received a knighthood (Allan, 2008). It was round the corner from the Theatre Royal, which helped promote it.

They announced in 1834 that they had between seven and eight thousand volumes and were supplied with daily London newspapers, journals, magazines, and popular periodicals. They also advertise that they have harps, piano-fortes and other musical instruments for hire as different terms (Wallis, 1836).

Wright’s & Son’s Royal Colonade Library, North Street

![Image of Wright’s & Son’s Royal Colonade Library](Credit: Author, 2022)

Wright’s & Son’s Royal Esplanade Circulating Library, Reading Room, and Music Saloon – 62 Kings Road.

This establishment is patronised by the Nobility, Gentry, visitors, and residents of the Western part of Brighton. It boasts that that the library is pleasing and attractive, with views facing the new and attractive Esplanade and the finest sea views. It offers the same services and goods as above (Wallis, 1836).

Subscribers to Wright’s Royal Colonade Library, 1821-1830, (Book)

His Majesty the King, Mr & Mrs Forth (master of ceremonies), Dean of Hereford and wife, Sir & Lady Tierney (1st Baronet and physician in ordinary to the King), Countess St. Antonio
(friend of the Duke of Wellington and Mrs Fitzherbert), Lady Shelly (author or Frankenstein & others), Princess Augusta in 1827 (Kings sister), Thomas Attree, Earl of Shaftsbury (politician, Philanthropist and social reformer), Charles Pepys and a number of Sirs and Lady’s and military personnel, but the majority are Mr and Mrs. See fig. 10 for a page of the book.

Except for the King, M.C. Dean and a couple other local dignitaries, each subscriber's address was listed in this book. It also showed how long they were visiting for or if they were potential residents, due to which subscription they chose. See Fig. 10.2 for the prices for 1826.

**Figure 10.** Subscription book to Wrights Royal Colonade Library.

To subscribe to both libraries in 1836 cost: £2 2spa, £1 10s half year, £1 1s quarter year (Wallis, 1836).
BRIGHTON LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION

Founded in 1812 by prominent locals such as the Revd. George Wagner, a member of the celebrated clerical family in Brighton. In the middle of the 1830s, John Cordy Burrows, who would later become mayor of Brighton, and Dr Henry Turrell, the proprietor of a private school, joined the society, revitalising it. They elected Dr Gideon Mantell president in December 1835, with The Right Honourable the Earl of Egremont as patron. Mantell, along with other speakers, gave numerous scientific lectures each month. In March 1836, the organisation relocated to Mantell’s former residence on the Old Steine to include his library and museum. It was later renamed The Sussex Scientific and Literary Institution and Mantellian Museum (Wallis, 1834; Bishop, 1895; Musgrave, 1981; Collis, 2010; Cooper, 2010, 2014).

In November 1836, their Majesties graciously agreed to the Council’s request to rename the Institution the Sussex Royal Institution, and at which time Prince Albert became their patron and president (see Fig 11). It was then known as the Sussex Royal Institution and Mantellian Museum. Gideon Mantell’s health was deteriorating, and his financial situation required him to sell his collections. The British Museum eventually purchased the majority of his museum exhibits, and he relocated to Clapham, London, in 1838, to resume his medical practice (Wallis, 1834; Bishop, 1895; Collis, 2010; Cooper, 2010, 2014).

The institution was reformed and assumed the title of Brighton Royal Literary and Scientific Institution in 1841, where they rented The Royal Albion Hotel’s annex, which served as their home. Their library collection gradually grew over time, and in 1842, it purchased the remainder of the Mantellian Institution’s collection, raising funds for additional purchases through popular lectures on historical and scholarly topics, as well as planning events and exhibitions at the Royal Pavilion. By 1850, there had been twenty-one series of essays and lectures given (Royal Literary & Scientific Institution, 1853).

Mr. Rowland Hill, who invented the postage stamp for which he was knighted for later in 1860, lived in Brighton during the 1840s, received an Honorary membership to the Society in 1845. In 1852-54, it closed its doors and ceased operations, and in keeping with their goal of establishing a public library, they donated the museum and its library to the town (Musgrave, 1981; Berry, 2005; Collis, 2010).
A letter published in the *Brighton Patriot* newspaper (*radical liberal*) in 1835 complains about a lack of resources for the working-class man to improve his mind. They say that now that some people have the right to vote; it is critical that they get the information they need to exercise it wisely, so they recommend reading, reflection, and conversation so that prejudice does not affect their minds. They lament the Mechanics Institute’s demise and propose that the working-class band together to fund and establish a book society (One of yourselves, 1835). The following week, in response to this letter, a reader responded, saying that there is such an institution where the working-class man can join and receive all the knowledge he needs, and that is the Brighton Literary, Scientific library, and he urged them to join (A Well Wisher to Mankind, 1835).

**BRIGHTON GENERAL SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARY; LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE, CATALOGUE, 1840**

Mr. W. Gillman was the Librarian, and there were six rules to follow, all of which related to fines for stealing, late returns, and damaging the books. The library was open from 9am until 9:30pm. Below is the index.
The first part of the catalogue is alphabetical in the sense that it goes ABCD etc. but not by author or subject but both, for instance the following are two lines which are consecutive from the letter A.

555 Aiken’s, Miss, Memoirs of James I. 2 vols.

295 America, British, by M’Gregor. 2 vols. (Gillman, 1840 p. 5)

There are numbers to the left of the title but are not in numerical order, so it could suggest that they are the numbers they were given when they were bought, e.g., first ever book bought was number 1 and so on. Some titles do not have authors, this could indicate that the authors wanted to stay anonymous and none of them have the year they were printed.

The subject classification part of the catalogue doesn’t duplicate what titles were in the alphabetical section at the beginning of the catalogue, which doesn’t make sense, as they would have fallen into one of the classified subject areas, so why not just have classified subject area??

Each subject section’s titles were arranged alphabetically, which meant that if an author had written several books on a subject, you would only know this if the titles started with the same letter. This is very inefficient and unhelpful for the patrons and the authors. In the novel section, the book Self-Control has the authors name given as Miss Austen, but it was Mary Brunton. I don’t know if this was a mistake, and it should have been left anonymous because Sense and Sensibility was below it with no author listed, when as we know, it was written by Miss Austen and Pride and Prejudice had her name listed next to it, but not next to Emma?

ROYAL BRIGHTON LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION: SUBSCRIBERS, 1847

In this book of subscribers are also the laws, the constitution, and regulations, which amount to thirty-nine points in all. It states on point two of the laws, that the objective of the institution is:

    Promotion and diffusion of knowledge in science, literature and the arts by means of a library, reading room, museum collection of apparatus, lectures, literary and scientific conversations and classes for study (Committee of Management, 1847 p. 2).

The library would be open from 9am to 10pm every day except Tuesday, when it would shut at 6pm for the lecture. For the subscription fees see fig 11. The members of the library’s management are listed on the first page, which is quite comprehensive see fig. 12.
Figure 11. Subscription fees.

Credit: The Keep, (BH600001)
The following are subscribers to the Royal Brighton Literary and Scientific Institution. Marquess of Bristol (Lord F Hervey), Viscount Molesworth, and Prince Alexandre de Gonsaga of Mantua, a host of Sirs and Mr. esquires, Thomas Attree, and Cordy Burrows and Henry Turrell (founding members), Military and Clergy personnel. However, I only found a handful of women and they didn’t use a suffix, just their Christian and surname, so I do not know their station in life. Unlike the other subscription records presented in this research, there were very few members of the nobility, which I found surprising. Each subscriber's address was listed next to their name and the vast majority had paid a full year’s payment, which suggests they were residents not visitors.
DISCUSSION

So why Brighton and why so many libraries? Understanding what happened in England at the time can help explain what occurred in Brighton. During this period, society experienced revolutions in almost every aspect of life, including politics, war, social and cultural, and industrial and economic. It could be argued that people who came to Brighton wanted to have fun and forget about the danger and changes that was ever present in their lives. They were learning to open their minds and attitudes because of the changes brought about by the Age of Enlightenment, and to think more for themselves and became more liberal in their thinking.

Brighton embraced all of this, as evidenced by the proliferation of dissenting denominations’ places of worship, particularly the Quakers; Brighton’s newspapers were predominantly liberal and radically liberal; entertainment options were excellent and varied; Brighton was an anti-slavery town, with MPs voting to abolish slavery. In 1830, Brighton residents petitioned Parliament for colonial emancipation. It also established an Anti-Slavery Society, and Isaac Bass, a butcher from Brighton, was elected a delegate to the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840 (Wallis, 1834; Macauley, 2019; National Portrait Gallery, 2022). Unlike elsewhere in the country, Jews could socialise and prosper in Brighton, even though emancipation was not granted until 1858. It could be argued that same-sex, or at least female, relationships were quite common, and Brighton was tolerant of this, i.e., what happens in Brighton stays in Brighton... holiday attitude as well people from elsewhere meeting here for liaisons, such as the Prince Regent and his mistresses. Brighton has always been open to new ideas and movements in literature, politics, medicine, architecture, art, fashion, and other fields, and has carried this on to the present day.

Brighton’s infrastructure and facilities were superior to those of all other seaside towns, as well as some of the larger towns and cities. That so many members of the realm’s nobility, upper classes, and powerful people came to visit, stay, or live also had a significant impact on the number of visitors and consequently the number of residents of the town.

This research demonstrates that there were so many libraries because of the thousands of visitors and new residents who were flocking to Brighton for all the aforementioned reasons.
What were the purposes of Brighton libraries? Were they, as Dr Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1794) suggested, in his famous quote regarding libraries, a place to gain knowledge? Or were they David Allan’s places of entertainment and discussion and where like-minded people who shared a love of books congregated? Brighton’s circulating libraries were social hubs, allowing anyone and everyone who could afford it to socialise with all members, regardless of class, and they engaged in everything from gossiping to reading, gambling, dalliances, and, of course, networking. Whereas subscription libraries sought to acquire literary and scholarly works and provide lectures to share with their members to improve their minds. Therefore, this study has discovered that circulating libraries in Brighton support the sociability theory, whereas subscription libraries support the knowledge theory.
CONCLUSION

Looking at England, circulating libraries developed into a significant cultural institution in the 1700s, facilitating access to a wide variety of reading material, particularly fiction, for the newly emerging middle class. Circulating libraries played a social and cultural role in Brighton from 1750 to 1850, and many of the larger libraries developed into social hubs. They were a sure sign of progress but also a cause for concern because they catered to the different tastes of a large audience and served as a cultural facilitator. The reputation of risk and scandal, as well as worries about the negative influence of libraries and the corrupting effects of reading novels, made circulation libraries contentious places. Reading novels was considered a threat to the social order because it encouraged women to neglect their marriages and families and have unrealistic expectations of life.

This study looked at Brighton’s social, political, and economic culture through an examination of the establishment of the town’s libraries between 1750 and 1850. It considered the reasons why there were so many libraries opening up in the small provincial town of Brighton on the south coast of England during this time has been taken into consideration. Its methodology, which takes the form of a micro-history approach of existing records, books, newspapers, diary entries, etc. about Brighton and its libraries, paying special attention to five out of the over seventy libraries in combination with the user experience of some library subscribers, has revealed new insights into the functions of libraries and reading in the age of revolutions. Brighton’s circulating libraries have been shown to serve a variety of purposes and to cater to a wide range of needs and interests. It has primarily been argued that their goals included a significant social component in which members of the middle classes could interact socially with members of the upper class. As a result, the needs of library subscribers in terms of educational, leisure reading, and social concerns were significant motivators in the establishment and development of circulating library collections.

I decided from the start that the primary goals of the research would be to understand the history of the beginning of libraries and literacy in an English context between the 1700s and the 1800s; establish what were the social, political, and economic and cultural factors for the development of libraries in Brighton; analyse the growth, management, and use of libraries in Brighton between 1750 – 1850. Unlike the traditional institutional approach of library historians, this study concentrated on the establishment and growth of subscription and circulating libraries in
a single town. Furthermore, it has combined methods from the fields of social history and reading history, as well as partially combining the institutional approach to library history with the reading history method. It has also analysed catalogues, subscription lists, and other sources to better understand library subscribers’ experiences. It is unknown how much influence the reasons behind the number of libraries in Brighton had on the creation of libraries in other southern seaside towns in England during the eighteenth century, such as Margate or Bournemouth.

This study has demonstrated that the history of libraries and the history of reading can shed light on economic and cultural historians’ research, and that the methods and approaches from these fields of study can and should be used by the academic community. Libraries were part of the scientific culture of Georgian Brighton, yet the contents of these libraries, and any scientific collections they held, are largely unstudied.

Finally, this study stressed the significance of a local approach to research. It has showed that libraries can be used as a tool for studying the culture and society of a town in the age of revolutions, therefore this research has added to the collection of local histories of libraries in towns. This research alone has provided numerous insights into Brighton during its transformation from a fishing village to a thriving liberal tourist town. Further research into an urban culture in seaside towns throughout England during this period should help us understand the social, political, and economic factors that influenced the development of libraries in these towns.

The challenges I had was gathering data because of a lack of surviving records and documents from Brighton libraries for the period I was researching, as well as the pandemic. Particularly from Brighton & Hove Libraries, whose special collections department did not reopen after the pandemic until the beginning of September 2022, and where some of the records from the different libraries are kept, making this research ineligible, which was frustrating. Further study and insights could be gleaned from these records, now they are open.

Due to the lack of catalogue, subscriber and user data, the results can’t be extrapolated to all the libraries in Brighton nor to England’s other seaside resorts, but it indicates support for the theory that Brighton’s circulating libraries were for more sociability than just gaining knowledge.
The sheer number of libraries, over seventy, that I discovered to exist in Brighton between 1750 and 1850 was an unexpected discovery from this research. This discovery raises an intriguing question: Is this a Brighton phenomenon, or did it occur in other coastal towns? Further research could answer this question by examining other seaside towns, such as Scarborough, Whitby, Blackpool, Great Yarmouth, Southend, Margate, Eastbourne, Exmouth etc. in Georgian times, and then considering why this was or wasn’t the case.

**Word count: 16,027**
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Wallis, J. (1836) *Brighton as it is 1836: Exhibiting all the latest improvements in that fashionable watering place*. Royal Edition. Dover: W. Batcheller.


APPENDIX 1: UK HISTORY BETWEEN 1727 – 1901

George II 1727 – 1760

The seven years’ war – 1756 -1763. Ware between Great Britain and France = British victory

George III 1760 – 1820

Circa.1760 – Industrial Revolution begins (James Hargreaves – invented the spinning Jenny and James Watts invented the Steam Engine).

1763 - John Wilks MP and a journalist, was arrested for criticising the King in his paper entitled “The North Briton” were he wants parliamentary reform.

1768 – 1771 - Captain James Cook sales round the Pacific in HMS Endeavour.

1771 – First cotton mill and the ‘Factory age’ begins.

1772 – Slavery is outlawed in England.

1773 – Further tensions increase in the American Colonies resulting in crates of tea thrown into the Boston Harbour in protest of taxation.

1775 – 83, American Revolutionary War - American Allied Victory.

1788 - First edition of ‘The Times’ is published.

1792 – 1797, First Coalition War - Austria, Prussia, Great Britain, Spain, Sardinia, and the Netherlands to defeat the forces of the French.

1793 – 1802 French Revolutionary Wars – Britain recognises the French Republic.

1794 – High Treason Trials – Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke & Thomas Thelwall (Radicals, Seditious libel & treason, wanting parliament to reform). Acquittal

1801 – Act of Union which creates the United Kingdom.

1801 - First Census – Understand the demographics of the Country & better utilise the population in times of war.
1805 - The Battle of Trafalgar – Complete control of the seas with the British victory.

1807 – *Britain abolishes slave trade.*

1811 – *George III son is made Prince Regent due his mental health issues.*

1812 – 14, War of the 6th Coalition against France – British Allied Victory

1815 - Hundred days War with France – British Allied Victory

1815 – Battle of Waterloo – British Victory (Napoleon sent into exile on Isle of St. Helena).

1820 George III dies.

*George IV (Prince Regent). 1820 – 1830*

1825 – *The Age of Railways* begins


1829 – Metropolitan Police is created – other cities follow suit

1830 – George IV dies.

*William IV 1830 – 1837*

1832 – *The Reform Act 1832* – expand voting to men over 21 years of age who are freeholders.

1834 – The Tory Party (Monarchists & Traditionalists) had an overhaul and became known as the Conservative Party.


*Victoria 1837 - 1901*

1839 – First Anglo-Afghan War – Afghan Victory.

1839 – First Opium War – British Victory.

1850 – *The Public Library Act.*
APPENDIX 2: LIST OF LIBRARIES


2. **Known by the proprietor’s name**. Woodgate, Widgett, Bowen, Crawford, and Fisher – South Side of the Steine 1767 – 1805

3. **Raggetts Subscription House / Library**. Donaldson Junior, Osborne, Turner. Corner of St James Street and the Steine. Date: circa 1800 -

4. **Marine Circulating Library**. Mr Donaldson & Wilks, Pollard, Mr Henry Tuppen (his main occupation was a butcher), Charles Walker (1809) and finally Parsons. 1798 – 1839. 9, Marine Parade.

5. **Known by the proprietor’s name**. Choat’s, Loders, Folthorp and Wakeling 136, 154, 170 North Street. c. 1810 – 1862. Specialised in scientific publications.

6. **Brighton Royal Literary Society**. 1812 Est. Mr George Wagner, brother of vicar of St Peters Church.

7. **Mantellian Institute (Sussex Scientific Inst. and Museum)**. Gideon Mantell. 20 South Parade

8. **Brighton Subscription Literary & Scientific Institution**. The Albion Rooms in the Royal Albion Hotel (1841); 9 St. James Street

9. **Wright & Sons. Royal Colonnade Library, Music Saloon & Reading Rooms**. Corner of North Street and New Road (160 -161 North Street) 1822

10. **Wright & Son’s Royal Esplanade Circulating Library and Reading Room and Music Saloon**. Corner of Cannon Place and 62 Kings Road; 106 Kings Road


14. **Railway Library and Scientific Institute**.

15. **Morris’s Royal Fancy Repository**.

16. **Whittmore’s Juvenile & Religious Library**. 1825 – on the Pier

17. **Mott’s New Steine Library**. Issac Mott. 1815

18. **Castle Square Circulating Library**. J. White. Castle Square
19. Eber’s Library, Castle Square
20. Large’s Library, 12 Castle Square
21. Minerva, 100 North Street
22. Burn’s Circulating Library, 1830, 23 North Street
23. Bradley, Kings Road
24. East Cliff Library, Mr Nash, Kings Road 1828 - 1834
25. Mrs Searle, Religious books. Kings Road
26. Grancia Library, Signor Gancia (Foreign) 8 East Street (1839) 73, Kings Road (1844)
27. Cordwell’s Circulating Library, Joseph Cordwell. 1823, East Street
30. Saunders & Son’s Circulating Library. 112, St. James Street
31. Dodson’s library. Henry James Dodson. 98 St. James Street
32. Edmeston Select & Juvenile Library, 26 St. James Street.
33. Eagle Library / Sawyer’s Library. George Sawyer. 36, Middle Street (1839)
34. Brighton Mechanics Institution. 1825-1828, then again 1851-1859.
35. Andrews Library. Mary Andrews. 1832 & 1839, 65 High Street

Libraries mentioned in Trade Directories and / or British Book Trade Index

and the date they were mentioned.

- Bailey Circulating Library. 1785
- Booty’s Circulating Library. 1839
- Bradley’s Circulating Library. 1822
- Brighton and Sussex Medico-Chirurgical Library. 1847
- Burtenshaw’s Circulating Library. Henry Burtenshaw. 1789
- Christopherson Circulating Library. Charles Christopherson. 1832
- Clarke’s Music Library. 1815
- Cooke’s Circulating Library. Matthew Cooke. 1840
- Eason Circulating Library. 1818
- Folker’s Circulating Library. 1819
- Gillman’s Circulating Library. 1839
- Girton’s Circulating Library. 1824
- Goldsmith’s Circulating Library. Mrs Elizabeth Goldsmith. 1840
- Grant Circulating Library. William Grant. 1840
Haynes circulating Library. Robert Haynes. 1848
Hindley’s Circulating Library. George Hindley. 1845
Hobden’s Circulating Library. Robert Hobden. 1825
Jackson’s Circulating Library. Charles Jackson. 1839
Johnson’s Circulating Library. Charles A. Johnson. 1848
Jordan’s Circulating Library. Thomas and Henry King. 1822 & 1843
Lauber’s Circulating Library. Ludwig Lauber. 1845
McCarrall’s Circulating Library. Alexander McCarrall. 1839
Nash Circulating Library. 1832
Osborn’s Circulating Library. 1827
Penny’s Circulating Library. Alfred & Samuel Penny. 1839 & 1845
Philips Circulating Library. 1813
W. Prince’s Circulating Library. 1802
Revell’s Circulating Library. John & William Revell. 1822 & 1832
C. Robinson’s Circulating Library. 1807
Swan’s Circulating Library. William Swan. 1822
Tilburn’s Circulating Library. 1813
White’s Circulating Library. Mrs Harriet White. 1826
Wilmott’s Circulating Library. Charles Wilmott. 1848
Wise’s Circulating Library. John Wise. 1845
Wood’s Circulating Library. Miss Elizabeth Wood. 1848

(Wallis, 1830, 1831, 1836; Swaysland and Gill, 1832; Leppard, 1839; Bishop, 1895, 1895; Alston, 2006; Collis, 2010; Goulden, Richard, 2020)

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APPENDIX 3: MARINE CIRCULATING LIBRARY WITH THEIR VARIOUS OWNERS. ADVERTS AND BOOKPLATES.

Credit: Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove
APPENDIX 4: ADVERTS AND BOOKPLATES FROM VARIOUS LIBRARIES IN BRIGHTON

Collis, 2010, p. 177

Credit: Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

Credit: Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove
Appendix 4 continued

Wallis, 1830, p.116 & 128
APPENDIX 5: MAP OF BRIGHTELMSTON, 1779

Yeakell & Gardner 1779.

Credit: Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

References

E. The Theatre       A. Free School       L. Old Ship Tavern
F. Lady Huntingdon’s Chapel   B. Custom House
G. Quakers Meeting   C. Post Office
H. Presbyterian’s Meeting   D. The Bath
I. Free School       K. Castle Tavern

Thomas’s Circulating
APPENDIX 6. MAP OF BRIGHTHELMSTONE C 1815

(Sicklemore, 1815).
APPENDIX 7. MAP OF BRIGHTON 1850

(Victuallers, 1887)