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Ports and the Origins of the Seaside Resort in England

Introduction

During the first half of the 18th century, the earliest seaside resorts created in England were at small coastal towns that made predominantly their living as commercial and fishing ports. Today, seaside resorts may still be co-located with ports, ranging from small, quaint fishing and leisure harbours to major container and ferry ports. In most types of town, industrial places of work are in areas around the periphery or where the edge of the town was located when the factories, or mills, were created. However, harbours normally lie at the heart, and on the front, of many seaside towns and often this aspect of their story has continued alongside the new leisure industry that has come to dominate their identity. Nevertheless, over 300 years the detailed geographical and economic relationship between leisure and commerce on the seafront has changed. New arrangements have been reached as visitor numbers have increased and as commercial facilities have expanded.

This paper will examine a number of 18th-century ports in England that pioneered sea bathing and seaside holidays. Some are now seaside resorts, some are purely ports and a small group have managed to negotiate a more or less uneasy relationship between these two apparently conflicting functions. It will also examine how these early ports fit into the story of the origins of England's seaside resorts.

Ports Embrace Tourism

By the mid-18th century a number of small coastal towns were beginning to be transformed into seaside resorts, due to the arrival of visitors seeking to bathe in the

sea for the benefit of their health. Scarborough, a popular spa town since the 1620s, which already had all the entertainment facilities that spa, and later seaside, visitors would require. During the 1730s, a wealth of documentary material, including effectively an early guidebook, miscellanies of poetry celebrating the town and sea bathing, scientific texts and Setterington's wonderful panoramic view of the town, clearly demonstrate that sea bathing was a prominent new factor in the identity of the town.[1] **Fig 1**

At Brighton and Margate, the central narrative of their history in the first half of the 18th century is that the new fad for sea bathing came to the rescue of these struggling coastal towns. Brighton was a small seafaring and fishing community with no harbour, its boats being drawn up on to the beach.[2] The cessation of fishing in the North Sea, prompted in part by the erosion of the town's foreshore, led to long-term economic decline and a reduction in population.[3] A struggling fishing industry was also impacting heavily on Margate's economy and by 1736, some fishermen had given up fishing due to poor catches in the North Sea.[4] These two examples contrast with Scarborough where the expansion of the coal industry in north-east England during the 18th century led to significant investment in the town's harbour and increasing prosperity in the commercial part of its economy. They also make an interesting contrast because unlike Scarborough, with its pre-existing tourist market due to its spa, Brighton and Margate had to rapidly establish the range of bathing and entertainment facilities expected by visitors. Local entrepreneurs, often innkeepers and doctors, began to make available bathhouses, bathing machines, circulating libraries, theatres and assembly rooms at these and other coastal towns for a growing number of aristocrats and gentry socialising while seeking to improve their health.

[1] Anon 1734; Anon 1732-4; Shaw 1734; Shaw 1735; J. Setterington, *View of the antient Town, Castle, Harbour, and Spaw of Scarborough* (British Library Maps K.Top.44.47.b.)
[2] Berry 2005, 2-6, 10-11
[3] Walton 1983, 48; Borsay 2000, 788
[4] Lewis 1736, 33

Although the first sea bathers belong to the highest strata in society, they were content, at least initially, to endure staying in existing houses in such small ports, ‘fishing holes’ as John Byng described them: ‘That the infirm, and the upstart, should resort to these fishing holes, may perhaps be accounted for; but that the healthy owners of parks, good houses and good beds, should quit them for confinement, dirt, and misery, appears to me to be downright madness!’[5] In the early 18th century, John Macky described Margate as ‘a poor pitiful Place’ and Revd Lewis in 1736, recorded that the town was 'irregularly built, and the Houses generally old and low'.[6] These ports that were adding a resort function had unpretentious buildings set in small plots separated by narrow streets and the buildings were predominantly vernacular in style and materials. Something of the atmosphere of these proto-resorts can still be experienced in the old town at Margate, in the Laines, the original part of Brighton and behind the harbour at Scarborough. Although these towns were now being favoured for sea bathing, their orientation, despite the presence of harbours, was not originally primarily towards the sea and it was still common for buildings to be facing inland rather than seawards.

Margate and Brighton demonstrate an almost total shift from an economy dependent on the sea for commerce and fishing to one focused on leisure. By the 19th century, the seafront of these towns was being recast with new buildings enjoying the now-prized sea view. At other early seaside resort, the commercial dimension of the original coastal towns has continued to the present day. For instance, Scarborough and Weymouth successfully combine busy working harbours with entertaining holidaymakers, though the size of the harbour and the scale of the commercial economy has not grown nearly as quickly as the leisure industry. At Hastings, a more or less uneasy truce exists between the traditional beach-launched fishing fleet and the encroaching seafront amusements and accommodation desired by tourists.

Ports Reject Tourism

[5] Bruyn Andrews 1934-5, I, 87
[6] Macky 1722, I, 50; Lewis 1736, 123

Inevitably, anyone considering the origins of the seaside resort will concentrate their efforts in existing resorts, plotting the shift from commerce to leisure, and examining the territorial and economic tensions that exist between two more or less incompatible functions. There is also a clear reorientation of these early seaside resorts from a geographical focus on the harbour and the town centre to the seafront and the sea view. England's rich heritage of seaside resorts has some settlements that can trace their roots back to historic coastal ports and some are still more or less active today. However, there were a handful of Georgian 'proto-seaside resorts' that have followed a different path, shedding their initial seaside, seafront leisure activities as the commercial dimension of the towns expanded.

At the beginning of the 18th century, many resort facilities were available at Liverpool.[7] In 1673, Liverpool had around 1,500 inhabitants, living in a town that consisted of only seven main streets covering only 300 metres from north to south and spreading a similar distance inland from the waterfront.[8] **Fig 2** By 1700, the population had risen to over 5,000, and by the beginning of the 19th century, it had reached more than 80,000.[9] Liverpool had moved from being a small provincial town to being the second largest town in England.[10] Its rapid growth was in large measure due to its location. Like Bristol, it was convenient for the Atlantic trade in slaves, sugar, textiles and tobacco, but it also had a substantial hinterland that had expanded rapidly as a result of the Industrial Revolution.[11]

With a rapidly growing population and increasing commercial activity, Liverpool had also begun to expand its civic facilities including the construction of a new custom house in 1721-2 and an ambitious new exchange with a lavish ballroom was erected

[7] For a longer discussion of Liverpool's sea bathing story, see Brodie 2012, 63-76
[8] Chalklin 1974, 98-100; Sharples and Stonard 2008, 3-4; Daniel Defoe in 1680 described 'a large, handsome, well built and encreasing or thriving town'; ten years later 'it was much bigger than at my first seeing it, and, by the report of the Inhabitants, more than twice as big as it was twenty Years before that'. Defoe 1968, II, 664-5
[9] Chalklin 1974, 20; Enfield 1773, 28; Mitchell 1962, 24
[10] Chalklin 2001, 79
[11] Porter 1982, 199-200; Chalklin 1974, 19-20, 49-51; Ascott, Lewis and Power 2006, 16; Longmore 1989, 117-9

in 1749-54.[12] New entertainment facilities were also being provided, including walks and pleasure gardens, a purpose-built theatre in 1772 and a Public Concert Room.[13] The 1766 *Liverpool Directory* listed a range of professions and facilities that would be expected in a major port.[14] There were booksellers and stationers providing services similar to circulating libraries, innkeepers and coffee-house proprietors, and tradesmen providing luxury goods and services for people of wealth. This infrastructure of leisure may have evolved to cater for a prosperous port, but these were also the type of facilities that would be fundamental to the development of seaside resorts in the 18th century.

Proof that Liverpool was more than just a growing port, is provided by the history of its sea bathing facilities. The first reference to sea bathing in the vicinity of Liverpool occurs in August 1708 in the journal of the local landowner Nicholas Blundell: 'Mr Aldred & I Rode to the Sea & baithed ourselves … it was extreamly hot as were also the two preceding days, the lick hardly ever known at this time in these parts'.[15] Blundell bathed because it was hot, but a year later the sea was used for medical reasons: 'I went part of the way towards the Sea with my Children but turned back, my Wife & Dorothy Blundell went with them, they were put into the Sea for some out breacks.'[16] **Fig 3**

At the beginning of the 18th century, Liverpool had two urban bathhouses, one where the Old Dock would be built and the other probably at the bottom of Water Street, on the riverside beside the Custom House.[17] The first reference to organised sea bathing, which is unlikely to have been in the heart of the town, occurs in the early 1720s. On 1 August 1721 Blundell wrote that: 'Pat: [Father] Acton lodged here, he came with an Intention to stay some time to Baith in the Sea, I went with him to the Sea side to shew him what Conveniency there was for him.' The entry for the

[12] Rideout 1927, 5-6; Borsay 1991, 109, 157; Sharples and Stonard 2008, 7
[13] Moss 2007, 125-6, 128-9. Brodie 2012, 66-7
[14] Shaw 1987
[15] Tyrer 1968-72, I, 181
[16] Tyrer 1968-72, I, 225
[17] Peet 1908, 55-6

following day reads: ‘I went with Pat: [Father] Acton to Leverpoole & Procured him a Place to Lodg at & a Conveniency for baithing in the Sea …’[18] ‘Conveniency’ is a word similar to ‘thingummyjig’, namely something that has not yet acquired a name and Blundell is using the term to refer to something to aid bathing. A similar usage of the word appears in 1735 referring to sea bathing at Scarborough:

‘Bathing in the Sea, is, of late Years, at Scarborough, with the Spaw, grown into great Credit, frequented by both Sexes, and those of the best distinction, as a pleasant, and a medicinal Exercise; there being few Cases, wherein a moderate use of it, cold or warm, that is, Morning, or After-noon, when the want of the Sun has chill'd, or his lucid beams beat for hours on the Surface. They have a fine long Sand from the Town to the Cape, commodious for Gentlemen to retire and undress at any Distance from Company, or to push a little off the Beach in Boats; and the Ladies have Guides, Rooms, and Conveniences for it, under the Cliff.’[19]

In the same year, John Setterington’s view of Scarborough depicts a figure emerging from what appears to be a primitive bathing machine and this seems to be the only ‘convenience’ to which the guidebook author can be referring.

Blundell’s companion, Father Acton, appears to have a primitive bathing machine, which was probably available to the north of the town where there was a waterfront bathhouse by the 1720s. A small rectangular building labelled ‘Bath’, divided into two sections presumably for male and female bathers, is depicted on a 1765 map by John Eyes and another of 1785.[20] Frustratingly, Chadwick’s map of 1725 does not cover this area, as if it was still largely or wholly undeveloped, and the southern viewpoint of a 1725 painting of the town means that a distant bathhouse could not be seen.[21] However, the bathhouse does appear at the far left-hand side of the 1728

[18] Tyrer 1968-72, III, 52, 2 August 1721.
[19] Shaw 1735, 35-6
[20] Liverpool’s 18th-century maps are reviewed in Stewart-Brown 1911, 143-74
[21] Tibbles 2003, 21-5

engraving by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck entitled the *South-West Prospect of Liverpoole*, which shows the river frontage of the rapidly expanding town.[22] This work depicts a small, rectangular building standing on its own beside the river in the same position as the bathhouse on the 1765 and 1785 maps. Its slightly odd size and shape, the number and position of the chimneys, and its tall proportions as depicted by the Bucks is confirmed in a view of the bathhouse as it existed at the end of the 18th century. The bathhouse continued in use until the early 19th century, but was apparently demolished in 1817 to make way for the Prince's Dock and subsequently a dual carriageway and the site of the famous Liver Building.

As well as Liverpool there are other major cities where sea bathing was once a significant presence on the seafront, but has now been driven to the peripheries of the settlement or beyond. In a letter dated 'Saturday 9 August 1755' 'Mr H' wrote that 'Portsmouth has been now, for many months, the rendezvous of the fashionable world; every gay young man of fortune, and woman also, in their circle of joyous amusements, took a transient view of it'.[23] The reason for this seems to have been a nascent sea bathing culture in the town. Remarkably, Portsmouth still retains its Georgian bathhouse near the docks. **Fig 4** Quebec House was built in 1754 and was mentioned in the same year by Dr Richard Pococke: 'The town of late has been resorted to for batheing and drinking the sea-water, and they have made a very handsome bathing-house of wood, at a great expence, with separate baths and apartments for men and women.'[24] In 1755, Archibald Maxwell waxed lyrically about this new facility in a footnote to a poem: 'The open and close Baths begun and finish'd by the worthy Corporation and principal Inhabitants, at their own private Expence; which for Elegance of Structure, and Salubrity of the Water, are no where

[22] British Library Maps K.Top.18.76.a. On 26 August 1727 Nathanial Buck visited the Blundell's house to try to sell prints: 'Nathaniall Buck came to see if I would subscribe to his Proposalls for Publishing the perspective Views of some old Abbies and Castles &c: in Lancashire, Chesshire and Darby-Shire.' Tyrer 1968-72, III, 221
[23] Mr H 1757, I, 16
[24] Cartwright 1888, II, 114

exceeded.'[25] The incoming tide was used to fill four baths, two of which were reputedly large enough for swimming.[26]

This bathhouse still stands near the dockyard and can be seen most clearly from passing car ferries. This location may seem strange to us today, but a quayside position was also used for Weymouth's first bathhouse in the 18th century, despite the town having a long beach and seafront.[27] And in the same letter written in 1755 by 'Mr H' he also recorded that: 'In this reign of saltwater, great numbers of people of distinction prefer Southampton for bathing; but you agree with me, that the bathing-house is not comparable to that of Portsmouth: not only as being smaller, and uncovered, but here is no water, except at certain times of the tide; whereas at Portsmouth one may always bathe.'[28] At one time, Southampton had three bathhouses beside its two quays as the town only had a muddy foreshore rather than a beach.[29] Again, although the dockside may not seem a particularly salubrious or glamorous location, in 1750, Frederick Prince of Wales, the son of George II, bathed in the town while staying nearby.[30] Dr Pococke, who visited in 1757, noted that: 'if it had not of late been much frequented for bathing and drinking the salt waters they would have had very little commerce, except among themselves.'[31] Count Friedrich von Kielmansegg, who visited England in 1761-2, described how: 'Many people come here every year, partly for sea-bathing, partly by order of their physicians, who consider the air of Southampton to be the healthiest in all England.'[32] Baths survived on the quayside until the 1830s when the main bathing establishment was converted into the 'Dock-house'.[33] Like Portsmouth and Liverpool, the growing scale of the commercial dimension of the town displaced sea bathing to further afield.

[25] Maxwell 1755, 15
[26] Riley 1972, 5; Lloyd 1974, 49, 51
[27] Brodie et al 2008, 12
[28] Mr H 1757, I, 25
[29] Temple Patterson 1966, I, 39; Hembry 1990, 242. A 1771 map shows bathing houses on the water's edge, beside the West Quay with the 'Long Room' behind, while an 1802 map shows a similar arrangement along with Goodman's Baths further to the south. British Library Maps K.Top. 14.48, 14.49
[30] Temple Patterson 1966, I, 39
[31] Cartwright 1888, II, 242
[32] von Kielmansegg 1902, 270
[33] Freeling 1839, 51

Other, smaller ports also managed the dual function of being a commercial port and a seaside resort for a time. Dover, although primarily a cross-Channel port, provided many features expected at a seaside resort. During the summer, it hosted visitors who used its hot baths and bathing machines, as well as its circulating libraries and its new assembly rooms and theatre.[34] Harwich was a small port in the 18th century, with private baths filled by the tide and by 1810 it was also offering bathing machines.[35] From 1766, a 'mixture of county, naval and Plymouth families' in search of a colourful social life could use the Long Room and the accompanying tepid bath on the shore of Mill Bay at Plymouth.[36] Swansea, by the early 19th century, was attracting sea bathers despite the smoke from the copper smelters that apparently hung over the periphery of the town.[37] It had hot and cold sea water baths, libraries, and an assembly room and theatre, the key types of facility needed, initially, for a successful resort.

Other Origins for Resorts

During the mid-19th century, the construction at Swansea of commercial docks on the foreshore traditionally used for sea bathing, meant that this leisure activity was transferred out of the town to Mumbles. Elsewhere, there are other major towns where, like Swansea, the central seafront or riverfront became dominated by commercial activity. Leisure access to the sea was displaced to the edge of the settlement, or to a twin or linked settlement. In the case of Portsmouth, Southsea serves as its twin with extensive sea bathing and leisure facilities. Waterloo, Crosby and further away Southport now meet the leisure demands of Liverpudlians on the east bank of the Mersey, while on the Wirral, on the west bank of the Mersey, New Brighton remains a popular place for a day out from Liverpool. Dover, now dominated by its ferry terminal, still attracts some people to bathe in the sea, though

[34] Anon 1810, 225-9
[35] Anon 1810, 261
[36] Gill 1993, 193; Rolf 2011, 51
[37] Miskell 2011, 115-7

many appear to be waiting for a ferry or preparing to swim across the English Channel. And a modern creation, Port Talbot in South Wales, has the adjacent Aberavon where residents can enjoy access to the sea against the backdrop of the steelworks, much as the inhabitants of Swansea 200 years ago bathed under clouds from the nearby copper works.

Today, England has dozens of seaside resorts around its coastline. As has been discussed a number originated as commercial ports during the 18th century. Scarborough and Weymouth manage to combine active working harbours with their seaside function, and Hastings still boasts a beach-launched fleet at one end of its seafront. At Margate and Brighton, the original commercial dimension of their identity has all but disappeared as leisure has come to dominate their economies.

Ports were key to the foundation of England's first resorts, but they were not the only mechanism by which resorts originated during the 18th century. The popularity of sea bathing was attracting people to stretches of the English coast where there was little more than a village or even just a hamlet. Therefore, there might have been some transport infrastructure in place, albeit an occasional coach service, and perhaps an inn, a few houses to lodge in and a church, as acts of worship were, at least on a Sunday, deemed essential for a respectable resort.

In East Anglia, Old South End, began as a small hamlet around a farmhouse on the seafront.[38] A large house built before 1758 had become the Ship Inn by 1764 and in 1768, South-End was first recognised as a separate administrative entity. In the 1790s, Daniel Scratton sold off land on either side of what was to become the High Street, and the Grand Hotel (now Royal Hotel) and Grove Terrace (now Royal Terrace) were constructed in 1794.

[38] Smith 1991, 3

In the 18th century, there were two small bays at Herne Bay, each with its own public house.[39] In 1770, an advertisement appeared in the Kentish Gazette offering a bathing machine that was apparently the equal of any at Margate, while by the 1790s there were baths for visitors.[40] Nevertheless, Herne Bay may have consisted of little more than the seafront inns and a scatter of small houses, the main part of the parish's 1,200 population in 1801 being in the historic village a couple of miles inland.

Weston-Super-Mare also developed on a largely uninhabited stretch of coastline with a nearby, inland village serving the local agricultural community. A coastal hamlet was home to a small number of families who made their living by fishing, farming, teasel growing and collecting seaweed. In 1773, the poet Dr John Langhorne, Rector of Blagdon, visited Weston-Super-Mare, where he met the philanthropist and social reformer Hannah More who was convalescing nearby. **Fig 5** In 1801, Weston-super-Mare's population was just over 100 and although it had risen in 1841 to 2,000, its rapid expansion had to wait until the arrival of railways later in the same decade.

A second alternative was to create a resort on a previously undeveloped stretch of coastline. This undoubtedly involved the highest risk as there was no infrastructure or facilities, though there may in some cases be an inland village a mile or two inland from the coast to provide some basic facilities. A growing number of people were willing to invest in the provision of new facilities and accommodation in these locations, a significantly greater risk than an investment in an historic town with some form of existing market and facilities.

Blackpool began to develop as a resort independent of any port or harbour during the mid-18th century; the earliest reliable reference to sea-bathing visitors is by

[39] Gough 1983, 1
[40] Whitehead 1971, 5; Hawkins 1991, 50

Bishop Richard Pococke in June 1754. [41] This coastline was largely uninhabited, though there were nearby, inland hamlets and a small village a few kilometres away at Poulton-le-Fylde. However, by the 1780s, a series of large houses, predominantly along the seafront, were serving both as hotels and providing the main entertainment facilities for wealthy patrons.[42] **Fig 6** What is unusual about Blackpool at this date is that it was also being visited by working class holidaymakers, who walked there or came in carts. The historian William Hutton noted in 1788 that the visitors were 'chiefly of the lower class' and Richard Ayton, who visited in 1813, recorded that: 'Among the company are crowds of poor people from the manufacturing towns'.[43]

Blackpool's working class clientele was in marked contrast to the people who came to bathe at nearby Southport. There was also no port on which to graft a resort function. Instead a bathing house was built in 1792 by William Sutton, followed by his hotel in 1798 and a range of other facilities accrued gradually during the early 19th century.[44] Lincolnshire faced a similar lack of ports to adapt for leisure and adopted similar solutions to Southport, though in many instances no large seaside resort resulted. This was the case with the New Inn at Saltfleet and at Freiston Shore where visitors could stay at two sea-bathing hotels or at a few lodging houses.[45] **Fig 7** These locations did not develop into popular destinations, but some of Lincolnshire's main resorts such as Cleethorpes, Mablethorpe, Skegness and Sutton-on-Sea did originate as the sites of sea-bathing hotels.[46]

These new resorts began with small-scale investment and grew gradually, but some people were willing to invest in the creation immediately of new resorts, with housing, entertainment venues and bathing facilities. Confidence in the idea of the seaside holiday, its growing popularity and the likelihood that it would continue to attract visitors in the future encouraged investors to dare to create entirely new settlements.

[41] Cartwright 1888-9, II, 6
[42] Hutton 1789, 5, 34-7
[43] Hutton 1789, 28, 5; Ayton 1815, II, 102
[44] Bailey 1955, 29, 34; Glazebrook 1826, 59-64; Alsop 1832, 39; Robinson 1848, 25
[45] Pevsner 1989, 619; Robinson 1981, 57; Lackington 1974, 312
[46] Neller 2000, 14; Kime 2005, 21-2; Henstock 1980, 71

The earliest of these highly risky new developments was Hothamton, promoted by Sir Richard Hotham (1722–1799), a successful London businessman who invested up to £160,000 in a prestigious new development aimed at attracting wealthy visitors.[47] Hothamton was established near the inland village of South Bersted, now part of Bognor Regis and opened to visitors in 1791. **Fig 8** It proved to be an economic failure. Hotham's income in 1795 was only £1,919 5s 6d and in 1796 £1,803 9s 6d. When he died in 1799, his estate was sold off and after debts his heir was left with only £8000.

Bournemouth was another speculative development on a wholly uninhabited stretch of coastline. Unlike Hothamton, but like Southport, it began with rather more modest investments. Lewis Tregonwell first built a house in 1811-12, followed by an inn and a handful of cottages.[48] **Fig 9** In 1825, Bournemouth was described as a 'new-built watering-place' with excellent bathing, but it suffered at this date from limited accommodation.[49] An 1837 guidebook recorded that the politican and landowner Sir George William Tapps-Gervis (1795-1842) was carrying out a series of improvements: 'villas, crescents, streets and baths, in all varied styles of architecture are rearing their heads as if by magic'.[50] Between 1836 and 1840, his new developments were on land on the east side of the River Bourne, including Westover Villas and the Bath Hotel. This development was wholly separate from the activity taking place on the other side of the Bourne, where Tregonwell previously had established his 'neat marine villa', the inn and several detached houses 'in the cottage style'.[51] These developments took place on either side of the river that ran through the gap in the cliffs down to the seafront where the baths, reading room and later the pier were constructed.

[47] Anon 1838, 5; Butler 1984, 2; Young 1983, 1-8
[48] Brannon 1867, 9
[49] Anon 1825, 478; Sherry 1972, 129
[50] Anon 1837, 37
[51] Brannon 1867, 10; Anon 1837, 38-9

In 1822-4 a bridge was built to link Hayling Island in Hampshire to the mainland and this appears to have been the immediate reason for the development of the previously remote island.[52] The Duke of Norfolk, Sir George Thomas Staunton and William Padwick the younger were the three largest shareholders in the company that built the bridge. However, once the bridge opened, the Duke washed his hands of the island, apparently fearing that it would blossom into a watering place like Brighton.[53] The first reference to Hayling Island as a seaside resort was in 1826 when Richard Scott was confident that a watering place would develop on this 'pearl of the ocean'.[54] Padwick was the main force behind the immediate development as he had bought the land from the Duke in 1825. Plans for villas were prepared by Robert Abraham of Torrington Street, Russell Square, London and the foundation stone of the crescent was laid on 3 September 1825. A new hotel was also built, its foundation stone having been laid on 16 December 1825. Many of Abraham's most important commissions were provided by the Duke, probably the reason for his role at Hayling Island.[55] In addition to accommodation, the fledgling resort offered visitors a library, a bathhouse and gardens. The library was a small temple-like building with a Grecian Doric portico, offering 'a spacious reading room, possessing an excellent collection of modern works, the newspapers, and periodicals of the day, many pleasing pictures, and the advantage of a separate room for chess players'.[56] It was located at the centre of 'a well-made esplanade three hundred yards in length, and which at one end is terminated by the Bath-house'.[57] The bathhouse provided facilities for hot, tepid and cold bathing.[58] The Royal Hotel contained a billiard room, another essential for an early resort, but there is no evidence of a theatre. The esplanade, including the baths and library, has gone, but the furze that once separated the hotel and crescent from the sea now dominates the shoreline. **Fig 10**

Conclusion

[52] Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 281
[53] Thomas 1961, 117
[54] Scott 1826, 7
[55] Lewis 1840, II, 391; Colvin 1995, 47-8
[56] Anon 1843, 17-8; The library was bought in 1867 by G R Divett who enlarged the building and converted it into a house, named on the 1872 map as 'The Lodge'. Trigg 1892, 37
[57] Anon 1843, 16
[58] Anon 1843, 18

During the 18th century, seaside resorts began to emerge from ports, as a result of the development of coastal villages or, most riskily, on wholly undeveloped stretches of coastline. These three types of resort origins are broadly chronological in order, and represent faith in the longevity of the seaside holiday. Once perhaps considered a passing fad unworthy of much investment, sea bathers returning each year, and in increasing numbers, inspired confidence in investors. Therefore, resort development was no longer small-scale, and exclusively in the hands of the local innkeeper or a householder. Increasingly, they proved attractive to investors from further afield, with large sums of money to invest in the facilities required for leisure.

If this analysis sounds familiar, it is because it matches closely the first stages in the Butler Model of tourist resort development.[59] Richard Butler mapped the phases of resort growth by the status and location of investors and size of their investment, moving from an early stage of local businessmen and landowners establishing small-scale facilities to regional and national level investment. What the Butler model also reflects is the growth of confidence in resort development and the growing certainty that investment would achieve valuable returns.

This description of resort development in 18th-century England, also reflects growing confidence. The first sea bathers had to use existing coastal towns to provide the accommodation, entertainment and company, while gaining access to the sea. As 18th century progressed, there was a growing realisation that sea bathing was not simply a passing fashion. With all the appropriate, and convenient existing towns already being exploited, businessmen were increasingly willing to invest in locations where there was little, or no, pre-existing infrastructure and transport links, features that they would have to fund if their ventures were to be successful.

Captions

[59] Butler 1980, 5-12

1 The right hand half of John Setterington's 1735 view of Scarborough shows the busy harbour and the shipyards at work on the seashore. This print is more widely known for its depiction of the spa and sea bathing to the left. [CC80/00145]

2 Samuel and Nathaniel Buck's view of Liverpool of 1728 includes an isolated building at the far left side. A comparison of this building's location with the position of the bathhouse on the 1765 and subsequent maps, demonstrates that this was the town's early bathhouse, which is dicussed later. [BB86/03830]

3 The Blundell family appear to have visited the stretch of coast nearest their house, possibly Crosby Beach, where Antony Gormley's atmospheric 'Another Place' has become a modern place of pilgrimage. [DP034503]

4 Quebec House on the seafront at Portsmouth is a small, weather-boarded building. Here it is seen from a passing ferry, with the city behind. [A Brodie]

5 The presence of well-connected patients stimulated the erection of new housing, including one constructed by Revd William Leeves of Wrington, a thatched seaside holiday cottage in the dunes. [A Brodie]

6 This view of Blackpool by Edward Finden in 1840 shows the scatter of houses along the cliff top. At the far left on the cliffs is the site of the later Metropole Hotel, with small, thatched buildings in the distance behind it. [A Brodie]

7 Originally built to serve road traffic along the Lincolnshire coast, the New Inn at Saltfleet, with this large, mid-18th century wing, was later described as a 'hotel and bathing house'. [DP022283]

8 Originally called Hothamton Crescent, this terrace of three houses was built by Sir Richard Hotham, but it failed to attract large numbers of aristocrats and Royalty to the new resort of Hothamton. [A Brodie]

9 At the heart of the Royal Exeter Hotel, under the battlemented tower of 1870, sits Lewis Tregonwell's 'The Mansion', the first house built on this once relatively desolate stretch of Dorset coast. [DP001321]

10 This Aerofilms photograph of Hayling Island in 1951 shows the partially constructed Crescent with the hotel beyond it. All the other early tourist infrastructure has now disappeared. [EAW038551]

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