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ASPECTS OF HOLIDAYMAKING AND RESORT DEVELOPMENT
WITHIN THE ISLE OF THANET, WITH
PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO MARGATE,
CIRCA 1736 TO CIRCA 1840.

Thesis submitted to the University of Kent
for a postgraduate degree (Doctor of Philosophy).

J. WHYMAN,
UNIVERSITY OF KENT AT CANTERBURY,
1980.

91072

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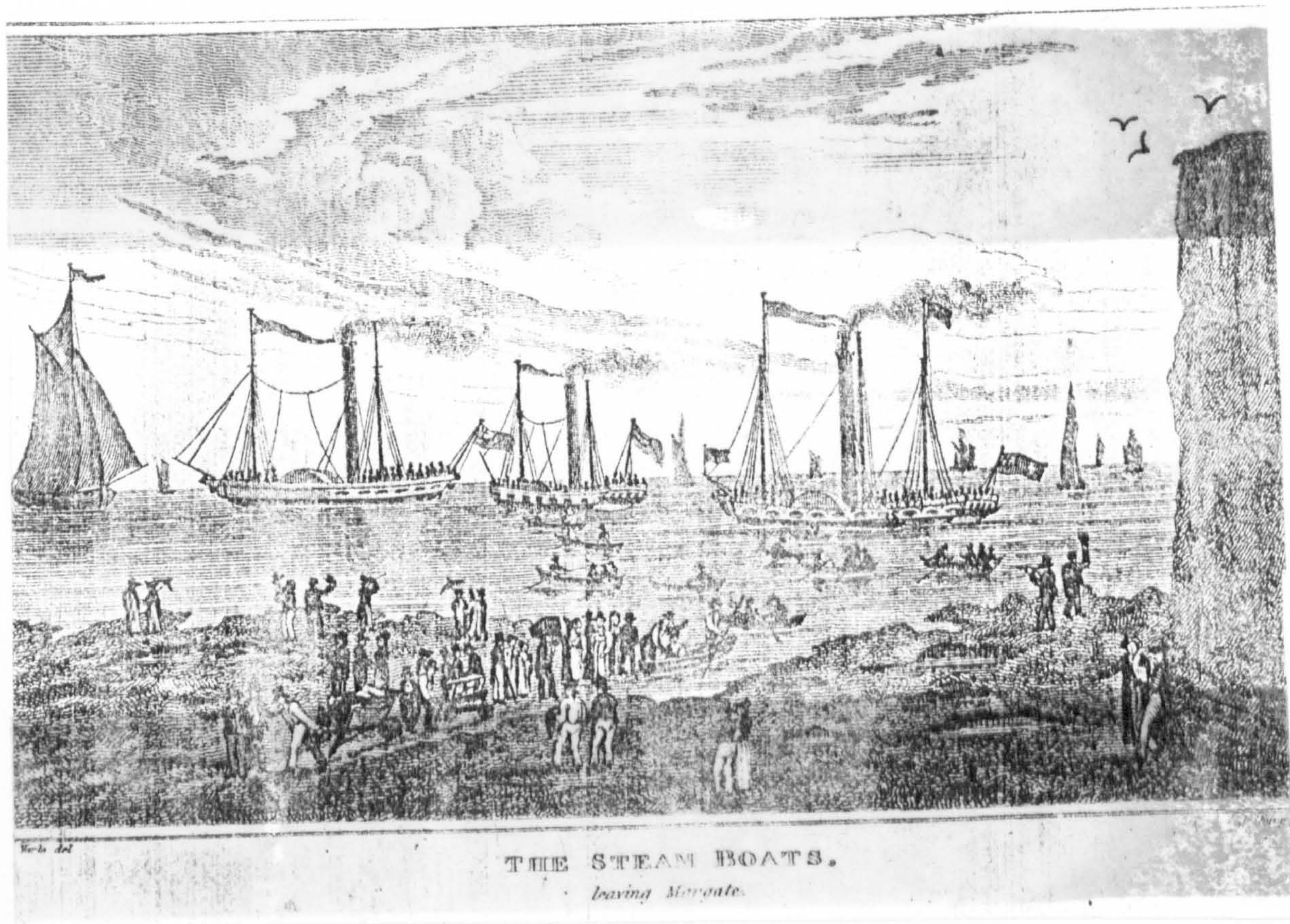
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STEAMBOATS LEAVING MARGATE.



W. C. Oulton del.

THE STEAM BOATS.
leaving Margate.

W. C. Oulton, Picture of Margate, and Its Vicinity (1820), p. 104.

To my dear Mother and brother Colin.

P R E F A C E

This study examines aspects of pre-railway holidaymaking and resort development, with particular reference to Margate. The coastal towns of Thanet have notable post-medieval histories, apart from their rise as seaside resorts. These aspects are considered in Chapter I.

Kent's contribution to the history of English holidaymaking has been significant and this fact is fully reflected in the rise of Margate as a seaside resort from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, when medical publicity was bestowed upon sea water and sea air. This background boost to early holidaymaking and Margate's importance in the development of sea bathing are examined in Chapter II.

The next three chapters show the achievements of Margate before 1815 in terms of physical expansion, the provision of essential entertainments and the development of leading commercial sectors. Chapter VI demonstrates how communications by road and water contributed enormously to Margate's overall growth and character as a sea side resort.

Chapters VII and IX point to significant changes in the social composition of visitors and in patterns of holidaymaking between the 1760's and the 1840's. A history of the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital in Chapter VIII illustrates once again Margate's importance in the history of sea bathing. It reveals how poorer people benefited from sea bathing and sea air.

Although parallel developments in Broadstairs and Ramsgate are mentioned to some extent, and in particular an unique personal record of a three week holiday to Ramsgate during July and August 1829, the main emphasis is on Margate, as one of England's oldest sea side resorts, rising to early maturity because of advantageous water communications, being one of few pre-railway resorts to entertain society's lower orders, becoming, therefore, the first sea side resort to acquire a 'popular' image.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In presenting this thesis I am particularly indebted to Professor T.C. Barker for his valuable supervision and patience over a long period. I offer to him my sincere thanks.

Many people have courteously supplied me with valuable information or have drawn my attention to useful historical sources, and in this connection I wish to thank Dr. T.L. Richardson, Mr. R. Scola, Dr. W. Urry, Dr. F. Hull, Miss E. Melling, Dr. D.A. Baker, Mr. B. Austen and Mr. R.J. Grover.

Historians cannot work effectively without the assistance of librarians, which from the public libraries of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate has been generous and helpful.

I am grateful to Dr. D.J. Richardson and to Miss M. Roake for having commented upon some of the chapters in draft; to Mrs. C. Edwards, Mrs. E. Hurste, Mrs. M. Waring and Mrs. M. Roots for having undertaken some preliminary typing; to Mrs. M. Roots for having typed the captions and handled the illustrations and to Mrs. M. Waring and Mrs. A. Beer for having typed this thesis so expeditiously and at such short notice.

Lastly, I wish to thank my mother for her general encouragement and assistance in so many respects.

5

Oh! I do like to be beside the sea side.

Yvonne Cloud, Beside the Seaside: Six Variations
(1938), p. ix.

C O N T E N T S

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INTRODUCTION

It is now over thirty years since the first classic history of English holidaymaking appeared, namely Mr. J.A.R. Pimlott's The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History (1947). It was preceded by an important article in January 1939 in The Scottish Geographical Magazine on "The Growth of Inland and Seaside Health Resorts in England" by Professor E.W. Gilbert,¹ who subsequently wrote a second major study entitled Brighton: Old Ocean's Bauble (1954), with its two important opening chapters on "Holiday Towns and the Holiday Industry" and "The Rise of English Seaside Resorts".² The 1950's ended with J.A. Williamson's The English Channel: A History (1959), followed eight years later by A. Hern, The Seaside Holiday: The History of the English Seaside Resort (1967). Reprints of the major works by Gilbert and Pimlott appeared respectively in 1968 and 1976.

Supplementing these and other general histories of seaside holidays and resorts,³ have been several useful histories of particular resort towns.⁴ The greatest flowering of literary output, however, belongs to the later 1970's, and particularly to 1977 and 1978 with the appearance of the following works:

1. E.W. Gilbert, "The Growth of Inland and Seaside Health Resorts in England", The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Volume 55 (1939).
2. E.W. Gilbert, Brighton: Old Ocean's Bauble (1954), 1 - 32.
3. Such as Ed: Yvonne Cloud, Beside the Seaside (1938); H.K. Cook, Over the Hills and Far Away: Three Centuries of Holidays (1947); C. Marsden, The English at the Seaside (1947); H.G. Stokes, The Very First History of the English Seaside (1947); or Ruth Manning-Sanders, Seaside England (1951). It is noteworthy how an initial spate of publications coincided with the ending of the Second World War and the universal implementation of guaranteed paid holidays, following upon the Report of the Committee on Holidays with Pay, Cmnd. 5724 (1938), and the Holidays with Pay Act of 1938, the full benefits of which had been postponed by the war itself.
4. For instance, F.A. Bailey, A History of Southport (Southport, 1955); D.S. Young, The Story of Bournemouth (1957); P. Russell, A History of Torquay (Torquay, 1960); Ed. M. Edwards, Scarborough, 966-1966 (Scarborough, 1966); L.J. Bartley, The Story of Bexhill (Bexhill-on-Sea 1971); C.H. Bishop, Folkestone: The Story of a Town (1973); or J. Whyman, "A Hanoverian Watering Place: Margate before the Railway", in Ed: A. Everitt, Perspectives in English Urban History (1973), 138-60.

Muriel Searle, Bathing Machines and Bloomers (1977); Alan Delgado, The Annual Outing and Other Excursions (1977); John Lowerson and John Myerscough, Time to Spare in Victorian England (Hassocks, 1977); James Walvin, Beside the Seaside: A Social History of the Popular Seaside Holiday (1978); Janice Anderson and Edmund Swinglehurst, The Victorian and Edwardian Seaside (1978);¹ and John Walton, The Blackpool Landlady: A Social History (Manchester, 1978). A 1979 definitive thesis on Holidaymaking in Victorian Margate, 1870-1900² deserves also a mention on any respectable bibliography of post-war histories of seaside holiday-making and resorts. Just as Miss Stafford's thesis fills an important gap in historical knowledge, so far as later Victorian Margate is concerned, so it is the intention and hope of this thesis that it fills an equally important gap in Margate's history between circa 1736 and circa 1840, for prior to now and "in comparison with some other resorts Margate has attracted little attention".³

Despite this expanding volume of well-researched literature on the rise of English seaside towns, not to mention an extensive literature on them in contemporary sources from at least the 1750's onwards, this important social and urban phenomenon still receives a poor press in any overall surveys of early nineteenth century living standards, town development or general economic and social history. Economic historians have been

1. This is a lavishly illustrated book which visualizes an important aspect of recent social history by drawing upon a rich historical legacy of Victorian and Edwardian times, in the form of contemporary prints, photographs, postcards and posters, all of which are now expensive collectors' items. It has a total of 193 illustrations. Apart from those which appear within the text, 91 out of the 160 pages of this book are devoted wholly to visual material and seven of its nine chapters are followed by ten or more pages of illustrations.
2. (Miss) F.M. Stafford, Holidaymaking in Victorian Margate, 1870-1900, Kent M.Phil. Thesis (1979), the Introduction to which contains a very good summary of the background literature relating to the history of holidays, excursions and seaside resorts, especially 5 - 13.
3. Ibid., 13.

pre-occupied mainly with examining the history of economic activities and trends; in looking at developments in population, towns, agriculture, industry, trade, communications, investment, banking, public finance, taxation, prices, employment, wages and living standards. On all those past aspects of a developing economy there is a voluminous and sometimes controversial literature. Overlapping somewhat with the work of economic historians has been the interest of historical geographers in the history and development of settlement patterns.

While economic historians have been locked in heated debate for some considerable time over the question of working-class living standards between 1780 and 1850, they have commented but little on the development of leisure, and particularly on the diffusion of the holiday habit from the nobility, gentry, clergy and a few wealthy merchants and professional people in the eighteenth century, to the expanding middle classes and certain tradespeople during the nineteenth century, not to mention the popular development of day excursions, the latter assuming no small significance in the 1830's when the low-cost river traffic on the Thames to Greenwich and Gravesend was at its most competitive period.¹ Leisure appears as a neglected aspect of English Economic and Social History for all periods before the latter part of the nineteenth century, and this is so despite an immense contemporary and modern literature on just one element of the whole leisure industry, namely inland spas and seaside resorts. Historians generally have focused their attention too narrowly upon industry and work. Yet people have always had some free time to themselves. Is it not truly amazing that the famous debate on working class standards of living ignores almost completely the possibility that participation in leisure or day excursions represents one fair indicator of material betterment or human happiness?

1. See: T.C. Barker and Michael Robbins, A History of London Transport, Volume I (1963), 42-3.

This thesis will demonstrate how it was steamboats and not railways which pioneered popular cheap day excursions from London to such expanding resorts as Gravesend and Margate from the 1820's onwards.¹ Thereafter, both steamboats and railways, as well as public parks, thrived on Sunday excursions, so that it was possible for The City Press to observe how on Sunday, 16 August 1857, about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. Londoners "were engaged in what has been characterized as the 'public desecration of the Sabbath'".² It is charitable to think that perhaps historians have been overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of leisure, for it is a huge and varied topic, covering a multitude of interests and activities.³

While historical geographers and others have provided some useful studies on the rise and growth of certain resorts, they have narrowed their interest rather to the size and urban morphology of selected resorts through time, paying often but scant attention to the day-to-day economic life of the resorts - why people came, where they came from, how they came, how they spent their time once they had arrived, where they stayed, how much money they spent and the multiplier effects of all this on the local area, and even on more distant regions, in terms of generating income, increased employment and capital investment.

Such omissions in English social and urban history are capable of rectification, particularly since any study of the history of seaside resorts or the rise of the popular seaside holiday can be quite easily justified; in the words of James Walvin, for instance:

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1. See Chapter VI below.
 2. The City Press, 22 August 1857, 3.
 3. See, for instance, R.W. Malcolmson, Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850 (C.U.P., 1973).

"The English summertime rush to the sea is so customary, so fixed a part of the nation's annual routines, that it seems scarcely to require explanation.../but/ there is, however, a... complex historical dimension to /the/ story,... /and/ the story itself is quite remarkable. By 1900 millions of people had come to regard a visit to the seaside as a fact of urban life, yet a century before only the upper reaches of English society had been able - or even thought it worthwhile - to visit the seaside." (1)

In one sense examining the history of the seaside holiday, or explaining what transformed small coastal towns and villages into "classic Victorian cities, catering for the varied leisure demands of urban people", demand "not so much a study of resorts themselves but an investigation into the wider, shifting economic patterns of an advanced industrial society".² No resort has ever developed or prospered in a vacuum, divorced from wider economic and social influences. "Basic historical forces"³ have shaped the general history of both seaside holidays and resorts. The first and earliest of these forces was associated with medical thinking on sea water, sea air, sea bathing and ozone.⁴ Seaside holidays quite literally developed out of publicity bestowed on the alleged medical advantages of sea water treatment during the 1750's and 1760's. Finding out who could afford to benefit from 'the gospel of the sea', being mindful that taking a holiday cost money, added to which certain expenses were still attached to running a home, while residing elsewhere at the seaside, introduces a second basic historical force, as determined by the social structure and living standards of British society.⁵ Over the eighteenth

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1. J. Walvin, Beside the Seaside: A Social History of the Popular Seaside Holiday (1978), 11.
 2. Ibid., 11 - 12.
 3. Ibid., 156.
 4. See Chapter II below.
 5. See Chapter VII below.

and nineteenth centuries more and more people acquired time and found the money to visit the seaside. Yet another major influence arises out of developments and changes in communications,¹ there being several historians who would argue that transport facilities have contributed most to the emergence and expansion of seaside resorts.² For James Walvin

"seaside resorts are united by their common historical reliance on communications with the major cities. Indeed, their history can often be written in terms of the changing methods of transportation." (3)

Thus, Margate in its relationship to London emerged as an early seaside watering place because the town was "easily reached by boat down the Thames."⁴

In another sense, however, "to claim that the English seaside holiday was created by changes in English social and economic life does not tell us a great deal about the resorts themselves, or about the vast differences between them", for although on the surface there appears to be a certain similarity in their history, equally "it takes only a few cursory visits to the coast to appreciate that the differences are more striking than the similarities."⁵ Hanoverian and Victorian descriptions tell much the same story, in such a way as to show quite clearly that many local factors have shaped the development and fortunes of particular resorts,⁶ which becomes one good reason for studying their specific histories. As between the three Thanet resorts of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, the increasing

1. See Chapter VI below.

2. J. Anderson and E. Swinglehurst, The Victorian and Edwardian Seaside (1978), 18, certainly support a widely held view that communications have determined the fortunes of most English seaside resorts.

3. Walvin, op.cit., 156.

4. Ibid., 156; also see Chapter VI below.

5. Walvin, op.cit., 156.

6. For instance, "The Advantages and Facilities for Sea Bathing which Margate in particular Possessed and Exploited, as an Early Sea Bathing Resort", as detailed in Chapter II below.

popularity of Margate compared to the selectness of Broadstairs was a constant theme in guide books from the 1780's onwards, while Ramsgate celebrated "both as a watering place and a place of commerce" in the 1880's,¹ with its harbour facilities and commercial importance, has never been so overwhelmingly a seaside resort in the sense that Margate and Broadstairs have been.

The emergence of popular seaside resorts is attributed invariably to railways, even though it is well documented that several English resorts originated in the middle of the eighteenth century from contemporary publicity bestowed on drinking and bathing in sea water as well as inhaling and sniffing sea air and ozone, which had the effect of shifting preferences for medical treatment, holidays and convalescence away from inland spas to the extensive coastline of the British Isles. Georgian seaside resorts derived much of their initial growth and prestige from well-publicized patronage by royalty and the upper classes,² who were often prevented from undertaking continental travel until after the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.³

It is difficult to quarrel with the overall assertion that "Kent and Sussex between them can claim to have done more than most counties to develop the seaside holiday."⁴ By 1851 seaside resorts featured prominently in the urban scene and not least of all in Kent and Sussex. Whereas the

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1. Historical and Descriptive Guide to the Isle of Thanet (1883), 48.
 2. Both national and provincial newspapers were particularly influential in publicizing the presence of individuals and families of royal and notable distinction at Georgian and Hanoverian seaside resorts.
 3. General and specific support for the statements contained in this paragraph can be found in the following references among others: J.A.R. Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History (1947); A. Hern, The Seaside Holiday: The History of the English Seaside Resort (1967); Walvin, op.cit.; and Whyman, op.cit.
 4. L. Taylor, London's Coast and Countryside (1950), 17.

North and the Midlands witnessed developments in industry; commerce and town growth, counties in the South East of England, notably Kent and Sussex, were prominent in the development and expansion of seaside resorts.

Published in three volumes in 1841 was Dr.A.B. Granville's The Spas of England, and Principal Sea-Bathing Places. The seaside resorts which he ranked as 'principal' numbered 36,¹ two-thirds of which lay south and east of a line linking the Wash and the Bristol Channel, a quarter or nine of which were located in Kent and Sussex, namely Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate, Dover, Hastings, Eastbourne, Brighton, Worthing and Littlehampton. There were other places in Kent which he might have visited, such as Deal and the steamboat resorts of Gravesend and Herne Bay.

An equally impressive record of the importance of the South Eastern resorts appears in the 1851 Census, which enumerated eleven English "watering-places" of importance on the coast, namely Brighton, Ramsgate, Margate, Worthing, Weymouth, Scarborough, Ryde, Cowes, Ilfracombe, Dover and Torquay,² only one of which, Scarborough, lay north of a line drawn linking the Thames and Severn estuaries, whereas two, Brighton and Worthing, were in Sussex and three, Margate, Ramsgate and Dover, were in Kent. Moreover the combined population of these eleven seaside resorts over the first half of the nineteenth century had risen from 39,447 in 1801 to 163,360 in 1851, which produced in effect a percentage increase over these fifty years of 314%. Only two relatively small towns engaged largely in the manufacture of straw plait achieved over the same half century a higher percentage increase of 351%. Eleven English seaside resorts, five of which were in Kent and Sussex, claimed a higher rate of population increase between 1801

1. A.B. Granville, The Spas of England, and Principal Sea-Bathing Places, 3 Volumes (1841).

2. Census of Great Britain, 1851 : Population Tables I, 16317 (1852); xlix; quoted also by Gilbert (1954), op.cit., 2.

and 1851 than 212 "Towns in all Classes" (176%); than London (146%); than 99 county towns (122%); than 26 seaports other than London (195%); than 51 manufacturing towns (224%), including 14 based on cotton (282%); than 28 mining and hardware towns (217%), including eight based on coal (192%), or seven based on iron (289%).¹

Clearly by 1851 seaside towns had acquired in the words of Professor Gilbert "real significance in the life of the nation as a whole",² as urban phenomena of significance in their own right, particularly in the more rural counties of Southern England where they were important outposts of an increasingly urban society, for had not the population of England and Wales doubled over fifty years, shifting from being 75% rural in 1801 to 50% urban by 1851? Kent and Sussex escaped much of the factories, mills, slums, grime and industrial pollution of Midland and Northern counties, but equally attracted some of the income and wealth of Lancashire, Durham, Yorkshire or the Black Country, which found their way into genteel living or were spent on excursions of pleasure in the leading coastal resorts of Southern England. People were attracted to these towns both as holiday-making visitors and as newly-settled permanent residents. Money may have been easily made in the Midlands or the North. In Kent and Sussex it was agreeably spent!

In the single case of Brighton Professor Gilbert shows how its population more than doubled between 1811 and 1821, which as a decennial increase of over 102% was "the greatest individual percentage increase made by any

1. Census of Great Britain (1852), op.cit., xlix.

2. Gilbert (1954), op.cit., 1.

town in England and Wales during one decade in the nineteenth century".¹ During the next decade the town's population increased from 24,429 in 1821, to 40,634 in 1831, as "the highest percentage growth of any English town in that decade, Bradford being second to Brighton in this respect".² By 1851, Brighton had a population of 65,000 compared to over 7,000 at the first census in 1801;³ in other words, its population over half a century had risen ninefold. In 1851 James Caird in his authoritative study of English Agriculture in 1850-51, having noted how "the influence of manufacturing enterprise" had added "37% to the wages of the agricultural labourers of the Northern counties, as compared with those of the South", also noted how it was only in Sussex, alone of the Southern counties visited, where wages reached 10s. a week. He concluded that it was "the local circumstances of that county" which explained why labour there was "better remunerated"; in other words, "the wealthy population of Brighton, and other places on the Sussex coast, affording an increased market for labour beyond the demands of agriculture".⁴ Domestic service would have featured prominently among the non-agricultural demands for labour.

While no Kentish seaside resorts could match up to such achievements, a wealth of contemporary literature reveals quite clearly that the 1851 Census did not specify all resorts in existence or prospering by that time, since among Kentish resorts Gravesend, Sheerness, Herne Bay, Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate, Deal, Dover and Hythe/Sandgate assumed varying significance as pre-railway resorts, whereas the railway era between the 1840's

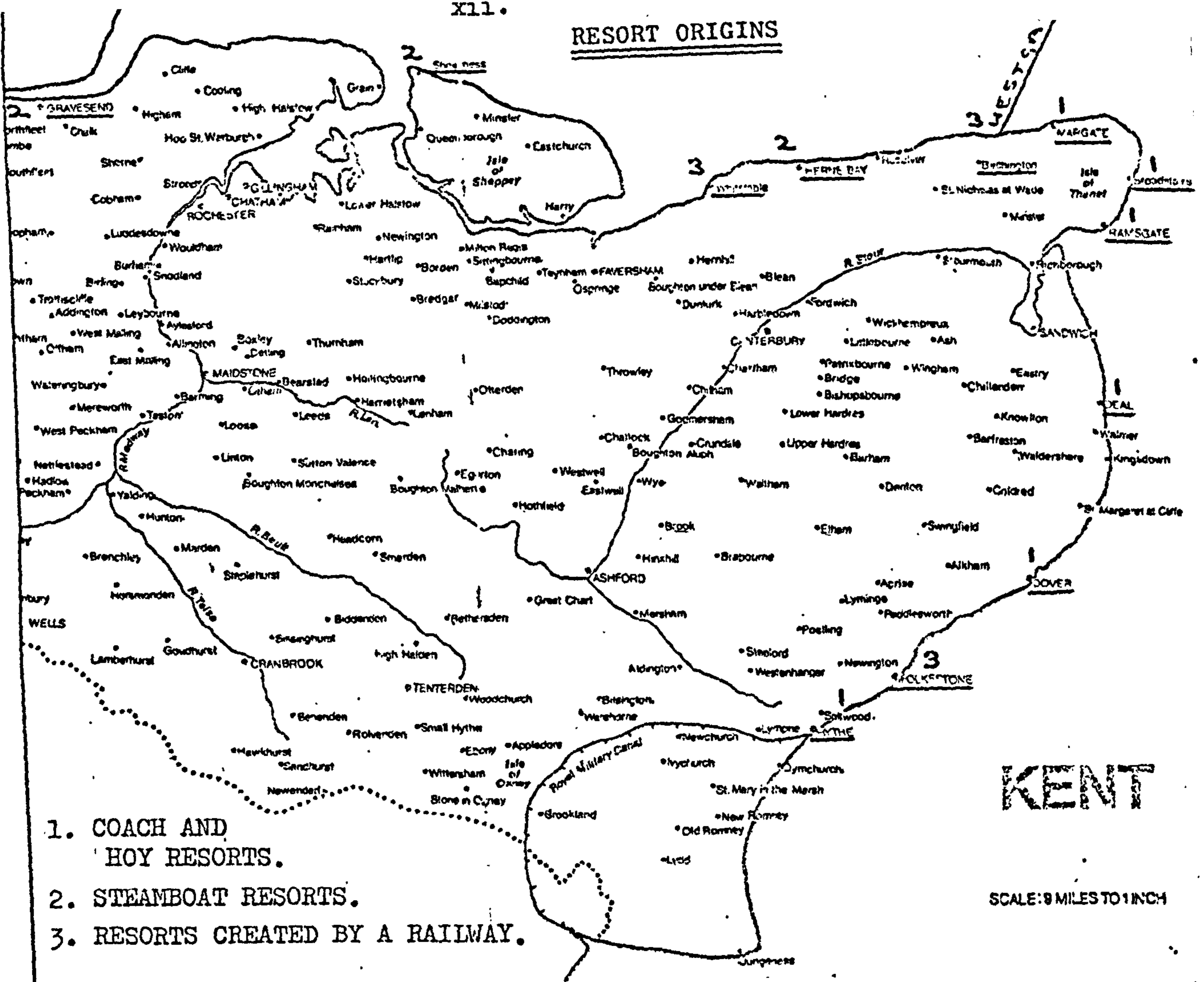
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1. Gilbert (1954), op.cit., 92; also G.T. Griffiths, Population Problems of the Age of Malthus (1926), 22.
 2. Gilbert (1954), op.cit., 97.
 3. Ibid., 92, 153.
 4. J. Caird, English Agriculture in 1850-51 (1851), 511-2.

and the 1860's produced only Whitstable and Tankerton, Birchington-on-Sea, Westgate-on-Sea and Folkestone as purely railway creations. Of these, Folkestone was most notable for making its début during the mid-1840's,¹ whereas Whitstable, Birchington and Westgate assumed significant resort functions only from the 1860's onwards. The two maps on "Resort Origins" and on "Railways to Kentish Resorts" indicate the overall chronology of resort and major railway development in the county of Kent. In the coaching and hoy era up to 1815 Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate developed substantially as seaside resorts, along with Deal, Dover and Hythe/Sandgate. Thus, Kent was prominent in the rise of seaside resorts prior to the conclusion of what is popularly termed "The Industrial Revolution" or "The Canal Age". The Thanet resorts and Dover continued to prosper when Gravesend, Sheerness and Herne Bay emerged after 1815 as purely steamboat resorts. It is clear that communications have played a decisive role in the evolution of Kentish seaside resorts.

Kent more or less followed national trends in population between 1801 and 1851, just about doubling its numbers from 308,667, to 615,766,² being by 1851 about half rural and half urban. Seaside resorts were notable among the towns of Kent which doubled or tripled their populations over the same period, as shown in the following table.

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1. Spencer Thomson, Health Resorts of Britain: and How to Profit by Them (1860); The Illustrated Hand Book to Folkestone and Its Picturesque Neighbourhood (1865), 13-15; Folkestone : Past and Present (Folkestone, 1954), 3-4, 10, 21, 24; Bishop, op.cit.; J. Whyman, "The South Eastern Railway Raised Folkestone to Fashionable Heights", Cantium : Kent Local History, Volume 6, No.3 (1974), 64.
 2. G.S. Minchin, "Table of Population, 1801-1921", in Ed: W. Page, The Victoria History of the County of Kent, Volume III (1932), 358.

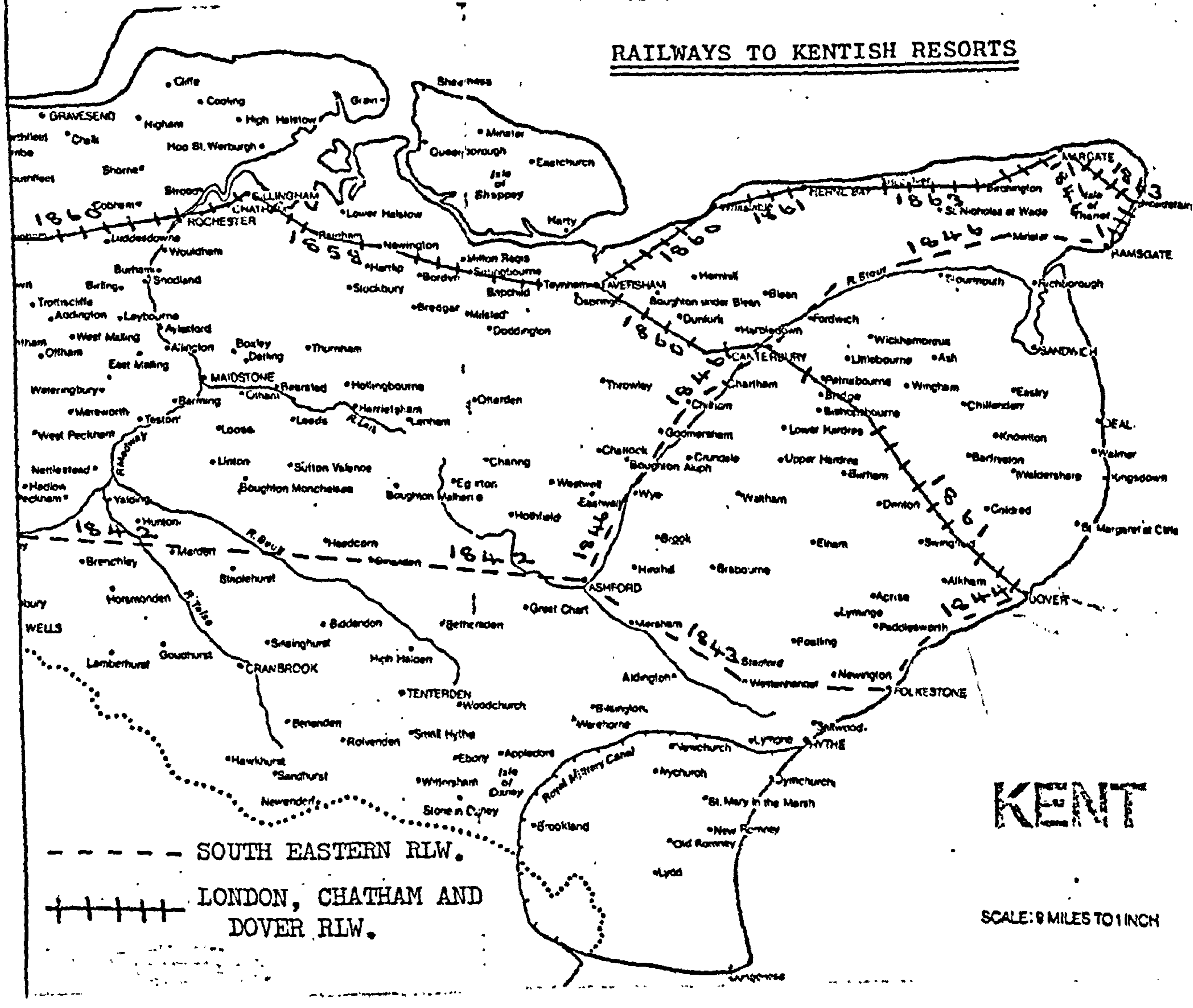
RESORT ORIGINS



KENT

SCALE: 9 MILES TO 1 INCH

RAILWAYS TO KENTISH RESORTS



KENT

SCALE: 9 MILES TO 1 INCH

TABLE 1: POPULATION GROWTH BETWEEN 1801 and 1851 IN THE MAJOR KENTISH RESORTS. (1)

<u>RESORT</u>	<u>1801</u>	<u>1851</u>
Gravesend & Milton (a)	4,539	16,633
Sheerness	5,561	11,082
Herne & Herne Bay	1,232	3,094
Margate	4,766	10,099
Broadstairs & St. Peters	1,568	2,975
Ramsgate & St. Lawrence	4,178	14,853
Deal	5,420	7,067
Dover (b)	7,709	19,000 plus
Folkestone (c)	3,704	7,549
	<u>38,677</u>	<u>92,352</u>
<u>9 Resort Towns</u>		

Notes:-

- (a) The jurisdiction of the Corporation of Gravesend covered the two adjoining parishes of Gravesend and Milton.
- (b) Attempting to calculate the population of Dover is complicated by the fact that parish boundary changes in the town have been so intricate that comparable population statistics are difficult to assemble over the nineteenth century.²
- (c) Between 1841 and 1851 the population of Folkestone rose sharply from 4,413 to 7,549, following the completion and opening of the South Eastern Railway during 1843.

Although several of these nine resort towns had other functions, such as servicing shipping at Gravesend or Deal, working in a dockyard at Sheerness, or handling passengers at Dover or Folkestone, their combined population more than doubled between 1801 and 1851, while accounting for

1. Minchin, op.cit., 358-70.

2. J. Whyman, "Rise and Decline : Dover and Deal in the Nineteenth Century" (Part II), Archaeologia Cantiana, LXXXV (1970), 35.

12½% of the county's total population in 1801, compared to almost 15% by 1851. Almost 30% of Kent's urban inhabitants resided in nine of the county's major resort towns in 1851, in contrast to only 1.8% of the nation's urban residents living in the eleven English "watering-places" of importance on the coast, as enumerated in the 1851 Census.

It is the general aim of this survey, available information permitting, to adopt the widest possible approach to a historical study of the rise and expansion of the Thanet coastal resorts, commencing with an examination of their economic functions and fortunes prior to the onset of sea bathing during the middle decades of the eighteenth century.¹ An attempt is made to show why they developed so rapidly in the first instance² and how prior to 1815 they achieved so much in terms of:

1. Their physical expansion from the 1760's onwards, as measured in particular by building developments, and the provision of inns, hotels, and lodging houses. (3)
 2. The provision of essential entertainments and social facilities, including bathing machines and rooms, assembly rooms, circulating libraries, a playhouse or theatre, churches and chapels, and other forms of amusement. (4)
- and 3. The expansion and development of leading commercial sectors, such as markets, shops, methods of supply and distribution, postal services, and brewing and banking facilities as associated particularly with the Cobb family of Margate. (5)

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1. See Chapter I below.
 2. See Chapter II below.
 3. See Chapter III below.
 4. See Chapter IV below.
 5. See Chapter V below.

Communications by coach, sailing packet and steamboat occupy a prominent and important role in the overall story.¹ Prior to 1840 there were significant changes in the social composition of visitors² and in patterns of holidaymaking.³ Finally, those who could not afford holidays in the conventional sense acquired some access to sea bathing, or to the benefits of sea air, as and when a decision was taken in 1791 to found a charitable Sea Bathing Infirmary at Margate.⁴

It is hoped that this study provides answers to several interesting questions which inevitably present themselves for discussion; for instance:

What were the main economic features of the Thanet coastline prior to the onset of sea bathing?

What were the principal forces underlying the emergence of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate as watering places during the middle and later decades of the eighteenth century?

Did their physical expansion assume an intermittent or sustained character?

How were entertainment facilities and leading commercial sectors developed? How much profit did they bring to their proprietors?

In what numbers and at what cost did holiday-makers travel to Margate in coaches, sailing vessels and steamboats?

Who were the eighteenth and nineteenth century holiday-makers to Thanet? How far is it possible to identify broad categories of visitors or specific individuals? Did the social composition of visitors change as between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?

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1. See Chapter VI below.
 2. See Chapter VII below.
 3. See Chapters VII and IX below.
 4. See Chapter VIII below.

Can anything useful be said about the cost of holidays
and how they affected the economies of seaside towns?

Certainly holidaymaking, almost as much as industrialization, created a distinct type of town, with recognizable physical and economic features. This thesis seeks to combine a social history of Thanet holidays with some assessment of the parallel economics of travel and holidaymaking.

More detailed references throughout are made to Margate than to Ramsgate or Broadstairs, and this choice or bias of emphasis may be justified on the grounds that Margate historically can claim to be unique among English seaside resorts for four reasons at least.¹

1. In company with Scarborough and Brighton, it is certainly one of the oldest of English seaside resorts. It has been renowned as a bathing resort for about 250 years, since at least the 1720's. (2)
2. Water communications played a decisive role in Margate's early rise to maturity as an English seaside resort. (3)
3. Few were the pre-railway resorts which catered for social classes beneath the aristocracy, gentry and clergy. Margate was soon an exception to the general rule that spas and watering places were almost exclusively the resorts of the upper classes. Neither did it benefit from the sustaining influence of royal patronage which contributed so enormously to the expansion and popularity of Brighton and Weymouth. (4)
4. Margate was the first seaside resort to become 'popular' in terms of its amenities and entertainments, and this fact is widely acknowledged by historians and historical geographers. (5)

Neither does the period covered by this thesis from circa 1736 to circa 1840 require much justification other than to point out that there

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1. J. Whyman, "The Uniqueness of Margate as a Seaside Resort", The East Kent Critic, New Series, Nos. 165-70 (January-June 1977); or Whyman (1973), op.cit., 139-41.
 2. See Chapter II below.
 3. See Chapter VI below.
 4. See Chapter VII below.
 5. See Chapters IV and VI below.

have been two periods of marked expansion in the development of Margate as a popular resort. The first lasted from 1736 to 1840, with Margate enjoying an advantage over other resorts on account of direct and easy water communications from London using the natural highway of the Thames. The competitive position of Margate over other resorts was further strengthened by a lowering of the steamboat fares between 1820 and 1840, and it was from such facilities of cheap communication that the Thanet resorts underwent a considerable pre-railway expansion which placed them in a leading position over most other watering places. This lead, however, was not maintained during the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

The opening-up of direct railway communication between London and the south coast resorts, commencing with the Brighton line in 1841, destroyed the relative advantage of access from London enjoyed hitherto by the Thanet resorts. Railways placed English coastal resorts on a completely new footing. The very rapid growth of Brighton during the 1840's represented an intensifying competition between resorts so far as Margate was concerned. The almost exclusive advantage of a water highway to Margate was reduced as soon as railways were opened to the south coast. The growth of Margate was checked simply because railways boosted or created rivals along the south coast. There followed, nevertheless, a second period of marked expansion which began in the 1860's, when a more direct railway communication with London was established, with holidays and day excursions enjoying by then an increasing demand owing to rising living standards among almost all sectors of society.¹ Thereafter, in the words of Miss Stafford, "Margate seemed to regain the popularity she had lost."²

1. Whyman (1973), op.cit., 140-1; Stafford, op.cit., 13-14.

2. Stafford, op.cit., 14.

Although a concluding Bibliography lists all the sources which have been used in compiling this study, it seems sensible in this Introduction to indicate those sources which have proved to be most valuable, apart from theses and secondary works. The most useful information has been gleaned from the following contemporary sources: eighteenth and early nineteenth century local histories relating to Kent or to Thanet; medical treatises on sea water, sea bathing and sea air; guidebooks and other topographical works; trade directories; national and local newspapers; journals; printed and manuscript letters and diaries; parliamentary papers; the 1841 census returns for Margate; certain manuscripts relating to the Cobb family of Margate; certain manuscripts relating to Broadstairs harbour; the minute books of the Margate or General Sea Bathing Infirmary; literary references; maps and prints and other illustrations.

This study shows quite clearly that seaside resort towns command an extensive literature in three main sources: guidebooks and other topographical works, newspapers, and manuscript or printed diaries and letters.¹ Local guides vary in quantity and quality, but in the case of seaside resorts and inland spas, perhaps more than any other type of town, they occupy a prominent place among the literature which the historian or geographer can consult to record the general growth or impressions of a place. The amenities, as well as the atmosphere and tone, of a resort are often well brought out in guidebooks, which increase and become particularly abundant throughout the nineteenth century.²

Many sizable resorts possess extensive local history collections in their public libraries which are usually sufficient in themselves to write up most of the local history of the place in question. Kentish towns known

1. Whyman (1973), op.cit., 247-8.

2. See: J. Vaughan, The English Guide Book c. 1780-1870 (Newton Abbot, 1974).

to the author with good local collections include Margate, Ramsgate, Gravesend and Folkestone. As far back as December 1933 the Local Collection in Margate Public Library comprised 13,867 items, including books, pamphlets and excerpts relating mainly to Margate and Thanet.¹ Since then that particular collection has benefited from further acquisitions. From the 1760's there is an almost unbroken series of guidebooks relating to Thanet, Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs to which reference can be made. For the period 1763 to 1880, and including all subsequent editions of guidebooks as separate entries, Margate Public Library alone can offer to the reader 137 guidebooks on Thanet and Margate. During those 117 years guidebooks on this area were being published at the rate of more than one a year. In addition, numerous directories contain topographical as well as commercial information, and further excerpts of a topographical nature can be abstracted from such well known journals as The Gentleman's Magazine or Chambers's Edinburgh Journal to name but two.

Newspapers in their entirety represent an abundant source of information on seaside holidays, excursions and resorts. Useful facts and impressions are to be found not only in articles and reports but also in correspondence and advertisements for travelling by coach, by boat or by railway, for lodgings and accommodation, for entertainments, and for coastal schools and academies. Newspapers are an inexhaustible mine of information on the history of leisure. The task of consulting them, although rewarding, can be tedious, but The Times has the advantage of having been indexed for the nineteenth century.

With respect to manuscript or printed diaries and letters, the upper classes of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were renowned correspondents and diarists, and from this source the historian can draw

1. A.J. Gritten, Catalogue of Books, Pamphlets and Excerpts dealing with Margate, etc. in the Local Collection of the Borough of Margate Public Library (Margate, 1934), 4. The Catalogue itself runs to 166 pages.

on the contemporary impressions and reminiscences of real people. Letters and diaries furnish in the broadest sense some idea of the individuals and families who travelled to seaside resorts; their reasons for going, whether for health or pleasure; and their impressions of particular resorts and their amenities. Specific observations are frequently forthcoming on the mode of travel; on the company residing in the selected resort; and on lodgings, entertainments, provisions and prices. This thesis cites some interesting examples of letters and diaries, some of whose authors went to coastal resorts other than Margate, Ramsgate or Broadstairs.

CHAPTER I

THE COASTAL TOWNS OF THANET PRIOR TO AND APART FROM THEIR DEVELOPMENT AS RESORTS

In order to show that Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs acquired permanent significance and expanding economic prosperity from their role as watering places from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, it is necessary to know something of their earlier history and of other economic functions independent of their growth as seaside resorts. Since the pre-1750 history of the Thanet coastal towns has been considered in some detail elsewhere,¹ this chapter indicates only in broad outline the functions and prosperity of Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs at that time.

Introducing Thanet Geographically and Historically

The economy of Thanet up to the middle of the eighteenth century rested on commercial arable farming. Agriculture supported a small population settled in villages and farmsteads a little inland from the sea, some of which had access to small harbours, where people pursued independent or ancillary maritime occupations. The area was covered by a survey ordered by Queen Elizabeth in 1563, which enumerated 532 households in seven Thanet parishes.

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1. A.M. Kay, Growth of Settlement in Margate and its Region, University of London, Diploma in Geography Thesis (1951); W.T.W. Morgan, The Development of Settlement on the Isle of Thanet, in its Geographical Setting, with special Reference to the Growth of the Holiday Industry, London, M.Sc(Econ) Thesis (1950); J.H. Andrews, Geographical Aspects of the Maritime Trade of Kent and Sussex, 1650-1750, London, Ph.D. Thesis (1954); J.H. Andrews, "The Thanet Seaports, 1650-1750", Archaeologia Cantiana, Volume LXVI (1953), reprinted in Ed: M. Roake and J. Whyman, Essays in Kentish History (1973); C.W. Chalklin, Seventeenth Century Kent : A Social and Economic History (1965); and J. Lewis, The History and Antiquities Ecclesiastic and Civil of the Isle of Tenet (1723) and The History and Antiquities, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, of the Isle of Tenet, in Kent (1736).

TABLE 2 : THANET HOUSEHOLDS IN 1563

<u>Parish</u>	<u>No. of Households</u>
St. Peter's	186
St. John's	107
St. Lawrence	98
Minster	53
Birchington	40
St. Nicholas	33
Monkton	15
	532 ¹
<u>Total</u>	

Emerging from the sixteenth century, and still perceptible in the eighteenth century, were two features of the Thanet coastline which contemporary observers were much given to commenting upon, namely dual settlement patterns and dual occupations, or an interdependence between farming and fishing.

The first signs of a definite settlement pattern in the vicinity of Margate date from the Middle Ages,² which also saw the early development of a corn trade outwards from Margate to London.³ Corn shipments to London were fundamental to the Thanet economy throughout the period covered

1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide, or An Historical Epitome of the Ancient and Present State of the Isle of Thanet (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), 15. This source noted also that Thanet once contained 11 parishes, "but only 7 churches have withstood the destructive power of time", ibid., 7.
2. Kay, op.cit., 51.
3. Close at hand stood the Manor of Monkton, one of the two capital manors in Thanet, and in the possession of Canterbury Cathedral Priory whose system of corn farming on the light soils of East Kent was well organized to meet the commercial needs of an outside market. The shipment abroad of corn produced on the estates of Canterbury Cathedral Priory has been traced back to 1207, not to overlook the surplus corn, particularly from manors in East Kent, which was sent to London, R.A.L. Smith, Canterbury Cathedral Priory : A Study in Monastic Administration (Cambridge, 1943).

by this thesis.¹ Between the tenth and fourteenth centuries two zones of settlement evolved within the Margate area. A chapel of ease to the Abbey of Minster, subsequently St. John's Parish Church,² was founded circa 1050³ on elevated ground, some three quarters of a mile from where fishermen's cottages were growing up around a creek, or outlet to the sea. Two zones of settlement emerged comprising the houses situated about the creek, known as Mergate or Meregat, associated with seafaring and fishing; and the village of St. John's, attracting houses around the church, the livelihood of which depended on farming the fertile fields to the south of the two settlements.⁴

For some considerable time these two settlements were distinguished by their individual names; that is, St. John's and Margate, or a variation

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1. Daniel Defoe for the 1720's refers to Margate "shipping a vast quantity of corn for London Market, most, if not all of it, the product of the Isle of Thanet, in which it stands", A Tour through England and Wales 1724-6 (Everyman's Library, 1928), Letter II, 119; while a few years earlier, J. Harris, The History of Kent in Five Parts (1719), 314, calculated "that above 20,000 Seams or Quarters of all Sorts of Grain are sent to London, in a Year, from this Island, besides what is sent by the Inhabitants, and sold to other Places". In 1782 we are told that "a great quantity of corn is shipped here for the London Market, on board the Hoys, which go from hence every week. The land near the towns produces excellent Barley", C. Seymour, A New Topographical, Historical, and Commercial Survey of the Cities, Towns, and Villages, of the County of Kent (Canterbury, 1782), 556. Harris, op.cit., 314, claimed in 1719 that Thanet barley was the best barley produced in England, and this reputation was maintained through the nineteenth century; for instance, G. Buckland, Prize Report "On the Farming of Kent", The Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, Volume VI (1845), 259-60. It is noted elsewhere in this thesis that the pull and certainty of the London market caused little diversification away from corn cultivation, see Chapter V, the section "Markets, Food Supplies and Local Farming and Fishing".
 2. The local Thanet historian and scholar of the 1720's, the Rev. John Lewis, was vicar of the parish of Minster in Thanet and minister or curate of St. John's Church, Margate. He explained thus why the Church could not provide a full living in the 1720's: "It is now a Vicarage, but was so instituted without any other endowment than a Manse, a small glebe, two Bushels of Wheat...and a Pension of eight Pounds a Year", op.cit., 102-3.
 3. D.G. Scurrrell, The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist in Thanet (An Introductory Leaflet, 1977).
 4. Kay, op.cit., 52.

on that word.¹ This distinction still survived in the 1720's and not only from the pen of Thanet's famed historian, John Lewis.² The New General Atlas of Mr. Senex referred in 1721 to 'MARGAT, ...where there's a good Bay for Ships, and where Passengers from Holland frequently put in, when the Wind does not serve to carry them up the Thames - 'tis chiefly inhabited by Mariners and Fishermen" while 'St. John's, a Member of the Town and Port of Dover, adjoins to it".³ T. Cox, A Compleat History of Kent (1730), differentiated "St. John's, a Member of the Town and Port

1. A common origin exists in the place names of the Thanet resort towns: Margate as "Gate leading to the sea"; Broadstairs, as "the broad steps"; Ramsgate, also as a gap leading to the sea through the chalk cliffs which bound the Thanet coastline, E. Ekwell, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names (4th Ed., Oxford, 1960). Many explanations have been put forward in the way of place name origins, some of which have hardly a grain of truth in them; for instance, "There is a tradition, that Claudius Caesar landed at Westgate in this Island; but as 'tis supported by no Authority, so 'tis more probable that he landed where Julius did - They will have it also, that Ramsgate in St. Lawrence, was originally Romansgate; and was so called from some of the Roman armies landing there; but this is likewise a Suggestion without any good Support: Tho' that the Romans have been, and very anciently, over all Parts of this Island, is plain from their Coins, Vessels and other Antiquities which have been frequently found here", Harris, op.cit., 315. Lewis, op.cit., 86, writes of Margate in 1723 deriving its name "from there being in it a gate or way into the Sea which lies just by a little Mere called... the Brooks. It was well known to eighteenth century writers that places in Thanet having 'gate' or 'stairs' as part of their name were possessed of an outlet to the sea; for instance, The Margate Guide... In a Letter to a Friend (1770), 9.
2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 86-7, 91, 96-7, 102.
3. Mr. Senex, A New General Atlas Containing a Geographical and Historical Account of all the Empires, Kingdoms, and other Dominions of the World (1721), 201. The parish of St. John's, including Margate, was one of the limbs of the Cinque Port of Dover, to which it was subject in all matters of civil jurisdiction, the Mayor of Dover appointing one of the inhabitants to be Constable and Deputy in the town, Lewis (1723), op.cit., 91. The two medieval settlements must obviously have grown in size and stature to be elected as members of the Cinque Port of Dover in 1229, after which in the course of time Margate became "the most important non-corporate limb of power in the Cinque Ports Confederacy", A.G. Bradley, England's Outpost : The Country of the Kentish Cinque Ports (c.1919), 114. At the seige of Calais, in 1347, Margate took the lead in the naval contributions of all the non-corporate members of the Cinque Ports furnishing 15 ships and 160 men, Arthur D. Lewis, The Kent Coast (1911), 90. In a similar capacity and relationship St. Peter's and Broadstairs were a limb of Dover, Lewis (1723), op.cit., 115, and Ramsgate a limb of Sandwich, ibid., 124.

of Dover", from "Margate [having] an ancient Haven...in this Parish".¹

The dual settlement of St. John's, as an agrarian community, distinguished from Margate, as a fishing community, applied equally to St. Peter's and Bradstow or Broadstairs,² and to St. Lawrence and Ramsgate.³ The three parishes of St. John's, St. Peter's and St. Lawrence exhibited during the eighteenth century a close and traditional interdependence between farming and fishing. John Mockett, a native yeoman farmer of St. Peter's, described in 1786 a parish with two distinct settlements: St. Peter's, "as a beautiful rural village, the inhabitants respectable and very hospitable", containing "a population of about 1,740 inhabitants and 2,584 acres of land", with "a great many respectable yeomen residing on, and farming, their own estates"; and Broadstairs, as "a small fishing place in this parish", where "the inhabitants are few".⁴

The remainder of Thanet was overwhelmingly rural. Sarre stood on the road into Thanet from London and Canterbury and "anciently it seems to have been more populous than it is now, on account of its being the most frequented passage into the Island".⁵ Originally the Isle of Thanet formed a complete island bounded by the North Sea, the eastern extremity of the Channel, and the Rivers Stour and Wantsum. This fact is illustrated in

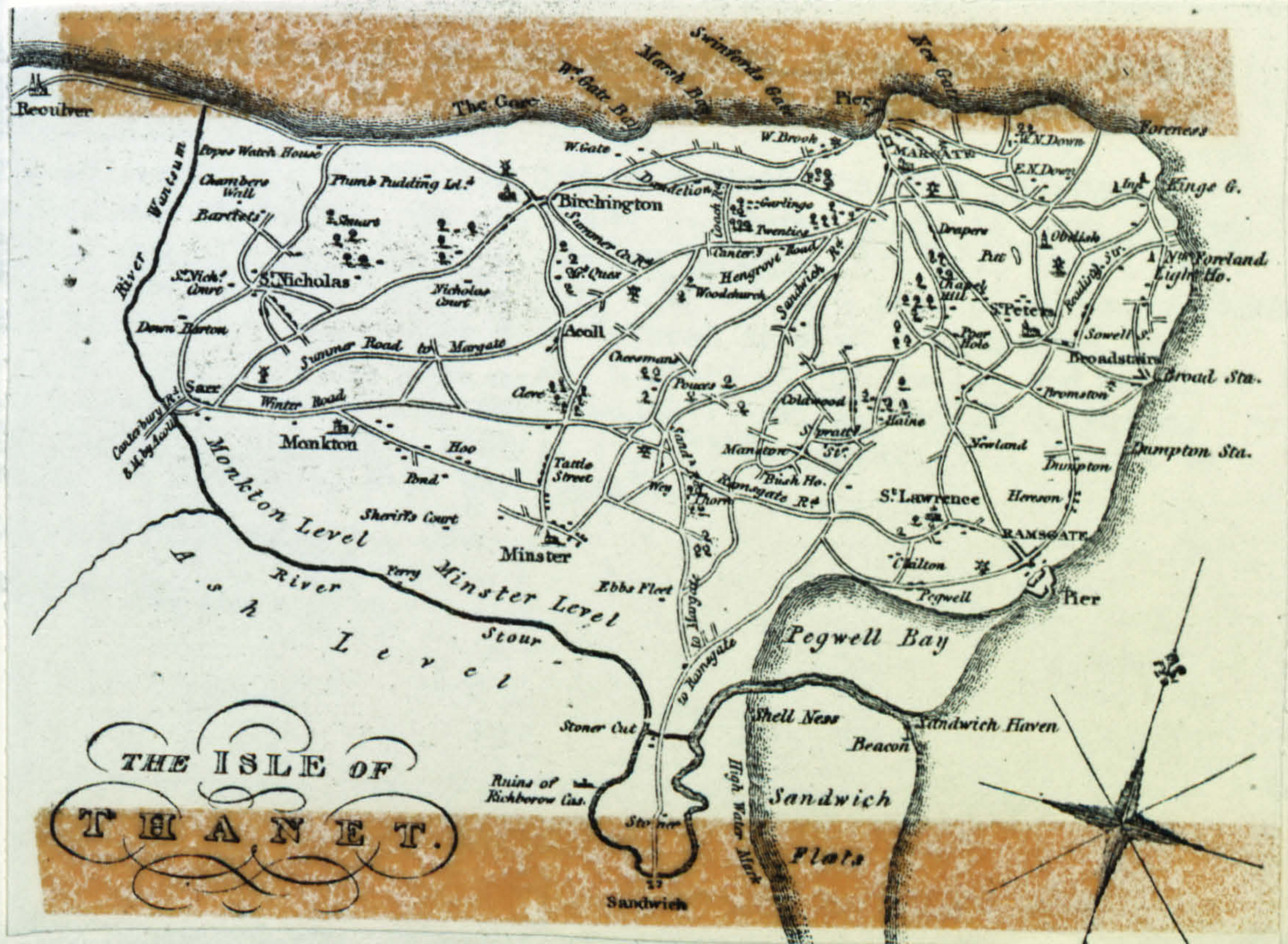
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1. T. Cox, A Compleat History of Kent (1730), 1160.
 2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 115-6, 118. Broadstairs became Bradstow in the 2nd Ed. (1736) of Lewis's History..of the Isle of Tenet, in Kent, 163.
 3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 123-7.
 4. John Mockett, Mockett's Journal : A Collection of Interesting Matters, Relating to Remarkable Personages, Ancient Buildings, Manners and Customs, etc. (Canterbury, 1836), 1-2.
 5. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 26, as "a place where shipping often came to an anchor", ibid., 26.

two maps.¹ From having been formerly the half way port on the old Wantsum Channel, Sarre had changed through the centuries to become a bridging point and a small agricultural community.² The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter advertized the closure of Sarre bridge for repairs in May 1729: "whereas the Bridge at Sarr that doth lead into the Island of Thanet being out of Repair, it is by the Honourable the Commissioners of Sewers ordered to be immediately repaired...for the safe Passage of Cattle, Carriages, Horses, and Passengers".³ Lewis described it in 1723 as "a small wooden bridge not above 10 or 12 feet".⁴ Consequently upon an increasing coaching traffic to and from the Thanet bathing resorts after 1750, it was observed

1. Taken from Lewis (1736), op.cit., 2 and from E.W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports (1817), Volume I. John Leland noted in his sixteenth century Itinerary "a Place cawled Sarre, which was the commune fery when Thanet was fulle iled", Ed: Lucy Toulmin Smith, The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535-1543, Volume IV (1964), 61. The Wantsum at this point in the seventh century had been three furlongs broad, and even in 1052 the channel remained wide enough to enable the Danish fleet, after plundering the east coast of Kent, to sail right past Sarre and out into the North Sea, A.J. Kay, "Sarre", Panorama: The Journal of the Isle of Thanet Geographical Association (1958), 30.
2. Kay, Panorama (1958), op.cit., 30; due to silting in the Wantsum, Sarre declined in importance as a port, causing the vicarage to be dissolved, and as there were no funds its church fell into ruin and the materials were carried away; also Lewis (1723), op.cit., 27-8, "at this time there are no remains of the Church left... The Inhabitants of Sarre are assessed to the repairs of the Church of St Nicholas, but they still keep up their distinction in maintaining their own Poor".
3. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 7-10 May 1729, 4. The care of the Thames shore and of the marshes between Thanet and the mainland was fundamental to the economic prosperity of Kent. The East Kent Commissioners covered the North Kent Coast from Graveney (midway between Faversham and Whitstable) to Deal, incorporating the Chislet Marshes and the River Stour up to and just beyond Ashford, Kent Record Office, S/EK.
4. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 28.



J. Lewis, The History and Antiquities, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, of the Isle of Tenet, in Kent (1736).



E. W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports (1817), frontispiece.

in 1796 that Sarre "being half way between Margate, Ramsgate and Canterbury, this little town has two exceeding good inns for the accommodation and refreshment of the company travelling to and from the Isle of Thanet".¹ Thus, from having declined as an ancient half-way port, Sarre emerged in the course of the eighteenth century as a half-way coaching point on the road between Thanet and Canterbury.²

The parishes of Minster, Monkton, Birchington, and St. Nicholas at Wade, the latter being joined to Sarre,³ were agricultural communities. Harris, writing in 1719, saw Thanet as

"a plain open country, [which] consists of almost all Sorts of land. There is little Woodland in it... The South and West Parts of the Island, are a great Part of them Marsh or Pasture Land... The Soil is generally very fertile: That of the Upper Part of the Island is a light chalky land, but yet produces very great crops of all Sorts of Grain... Barley is produced in very great Quantities and...is the best of that Grain in England". (4)

Harris was impressed by the productivity of Thanet arable farming which he attributed to two causes:

1. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet; being Chiefly Intended as a Directory for the Company Resorting to Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs (Margate, 1796), 75.
2. Travellers of the 1760's and 1770's referred to this functional importance of Sarre; for instance, G. Keate, Sketches from Nature, Taken, and Coloured, in A Journey to Margate (5th Ed., 1802), 28, "Why do we stop?... Only to give the horses a pail of water, replies the postillion - we always just refresh them at coming into the island. Nay prithee, boy,...add a whisp of hay to it, and we'll look around us while they take breath"; or Ed. Philip C. Yorke, The Diary of John Baker (1931), 417, 11 September 1777, "stopt to water the horses at Half Way House".
3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 29.
4. Harris, op.cit., 314.

"This natural Fertility of the Soil is very much holpen by the Industry and good Husbandry of the habitants; who spare no Charge or Pains in tilling their Land; and a great Help and Advantage they have of the Alga or Sea-Ore, as they call it; which they mix together with their other Dung, and when 'tis rotted, lay it on their Land... Experience has shown the Farmers, so much of the Advantage and Profit, arising to them by the Use of this Manure, that they are not likely to be in a haste to change it for any other".¹

The use of seaweed in fertilizing the land, which finds constant mention in successive works,² reflects the close connection which naturally existed between the sea and the land.³

Thanet's farmers of the 1720's being

"generally Men of good substance, have some particular advantages. They have sometimes good Crops when the other parts of England miss theirs, (4) and thereby have the advantage of selling their Corn at a very good price: they have likewise the priveledge of sending their Corn by water to London Market at an easy rate, where they have ready money for their commodity". (5)

1. Harris, op.cit., 314.
2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 13; Mockett, op.cit., 8; W. Marshall, The Rural Economy of the Southern Counties; Comprising Kent, Surrey, Sussex, etc. (1798), Volume II, 14-15; etc.
3. Harris, op.cit., 314, mentions also another use to which Thanet seaweed was put in 1719: "the gathering it to spread and dry on the shore and to burn it, in order to make what they call Kelp; which is a sort of Cynder or Pot-Ash used by the Potters in glazing their Ware. However it must be owned, that these Uses of this Weed contribute not a little to make the Island in Summer-Time unpleasant since the Smell of the rotten Ore, and the Smoak that arises from the burning of it, is very noisome and disagreeable". Lewis (1723), op.cit., 13, observed this to be a summer-time occupation of the poorer inhabitants. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 13, mentions that kelp in the eighteenth century was barrelled for despatch to Holland.
4. The Thanet proverb, "When England wrings, the Island sings", was well known in the nineteenth century and was quoted and explained thus by The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 10, "in very dry seasons, all kinds of grains are much injured by the heat; but the ground affords an uncommon produce when most other places are almost drowned with rain".
5. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 15.

Contemporaries of the eighteenth century were impressed by the wealth and independence of Thanet farmers, so that in 1719 "the Yeomen and Farmers are many of them Men of good Estates, as well Real as Personal; and accordingly live in a way Handsome and Gentleman-like manner".¹

Of the farmers around Minster Lewis wrote in 1723:

"it has been observed that in this Parish there are more large Farms than in any Parish in Kent. By which means the Farmers here are generally men of ability,.. they most of them live in good credit, and pay their rents half-yearly". (2)

Thanet's farming received praise from the pen of George Dempster when writing to Sir Adam Fergusson, on 1 October 1771:

"in the Isle of Thanet where I have been this fortnight past the soil is a rich black mold, their manure chalk and seaweed, and their crops wheat, barley, beans, wheat, ... sometimes clover instead of beans. What profitable crops! Yet the land lets from 10s. to 20s. per acre. And of course there are farmers upon the island worth 40, 50, £60,000. The forbearance of the landlords is the source of all the riches in England and for my life I cannot trace that forebearance up to any other cause but their popular county elections". (3)

It was noted of St. Nicholas at the end of the eighteenth century that there "are many good houses, inhabited by several families of very great respectability and opulence".⁴ Generally Thanet's early nineteenth century farmers were "intelligent and wealthy", occupying "mostly large and considerable" farms, "inasmuch as to be generally denominated Gentlemen Farmers,... from their hospitable and substantial mode of living".⁵

John Boys, in his General View of the Agriculture of Kent, remarked of

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1. Harris, op.cit., 314.
 2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 50.
 3. Ed: James Fergusson, Letters of George Dempster to Sir Adam Fergusson 1756-1813 (1934), 71.
 4. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (1796), op.cit., 72.
 5. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 10.

Thanet farming:

"Thanet always was and most likely always will be famous for its fertility... In short, is there not perhaps another district in Great Britain, or in the World, of the same extent, in such a perfect state of cultivation; where the farmers are so wealthy and intelligent; where land... is let for so much money and produces such abundant crops?".¹

He calculated that the whole island contained about 3,500 acres of marsh-land, and 23,000 acres of arable.²

Moving forward in time to the Prize Report "On the Farming of Kent", by George Buckland, in The Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society in 1845, and comparing his findings with the main elements of Thanet farming as outlined for the eighteenth century, certain permanent features of Thanet husbandry are immediately apparent.³ Buckland noted how the Isle of Thanet had "been celebrated from time immemorial for the excellence of its agriculture".⁴ In this unenclosed area there was an "almost total absence of hedges or fences", there being scarcely any trees, "in order to make every foot of ground available for cultivation".⁵ Thanet

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1. John Boys, A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Kent (1796), 2-4.
 2. Ibid.
 3. These features are important to an understanding of Chapter V, under the section on "Markets, Food Supplies and Local Farming and Fishing".
 4. Buckland, op.cit., 259.
 5. Ibid., 259. In 1823 William Cobbett passed through Thanet and commented as follows on the wellbeing of the labourers - "It is a country of corn... All was corn around me. Barns, I should think, two hundred feet long; ricks of enormous size and most numerous; crops of wheat, 5 qtrs to an acre on the average... The labourers' houses, all along through this Island beggarly in the extreme. People dirty, poor looking, ragged... Invariably have I observed that the richer the soil, the more destitute of woods; that is to say, the more purely a corn country, the more miserable the labourers. The cause is this, the great, the big bull frog grasps all. In this beautiful island every inch of land is appropriated by the rich. No hedges, no ditches, no commons, no grassy lanes; the country divided into great farms... The wretched labourer has not a stick of wood, and has no place for a pig or cow to graze, or even to lie down upon. The rabbit countries are the countries for labouring men", Ed: G.D.H. and M. Cole, Rural Rides, by W. Cobbett (1930), Volume I, 233.

was noted in the 1840's for producing a fine malting barley, the Chevalier, and for employing seaweed as a fertiliser; indeed, "after a heavy sea a great number of carts and waggons may be seen along the coast carrying away the weed",¹ and "this angle of the county lies peculiarly favourable for the shipment of its agricultural produce for the London market".² The size of farms was observed to be small; "very few exceed 200 acres", but "many of them are occupied by their owners".³

Thanet farmers lived well from a vigorous corn trade to London. Their farming was productive and profitable partly because the soil of Thanet was renowned during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for its thin, light, and chalky texture, fertilized by an inexhaustible supply of seaweed manure. The risks of arable farming were lessened by a favourable climate. Commercially Thanet's arable farmers benefited from a geographical proximity to an expanding London food market,⁴ served by hoys passing up and down the Thames, but the area had also a maritime economy. Fishing, smuggling and rendering assistance to vessels in distress at sea were among the major maritime occupations extending back certainly to the sixteenth century.

Dual employment as between farming and fishing during the sixteenth century is well known from William Camden's observation in 1586, when

1. Buckland, op.cit., 261.

2. Ibid., 262.

3. Ibid., 261.

4. The expansion of the London food market has been analyzed by F.J. Fisher, "The Development of the London Food Market, 1540-1640", Economic History Review, Volume V. (1934-5); and by E.A. Wrigley, "A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750", Past and Present, Number 37 (1967), 44-70; also T.C. Barker, "London and the Great Leap Forward", The Listener, Volume LXXVII (1967), 845-7.

he recorded:

"nor must I here omit the mention of a thing very much to the honour of the Inhabitants, those especially who live near the roads or harbours of Margat, Ramsgate, or Broadsteer; namely, That they are exceeding industrious, and are as it were Amphibious Creatures, and get their living both by sea and land; they deal in both elements, are both fishers and ploughmen, both husbandmen and mariners; and the self same hand that holds the plough, steers the ship. According to the several seasons, they make nets, fish for Cod, Herrings, Mackerel, etc., go to sea themselves, and export their own commodities. And those very men also dung their ground, plough, sow, harrow, reap; being quick and active in both employments; and so the course of their Labours runs round". (1)

Exactly two centuries later Mockett, in his description of St. Peter's and Broadstairs, drew attention to the financial ability of local agricultural interests to invest capital in the fishing industry, which confirmed both the wealth of eighteenth century Thanet farmers and the close economic interdependence between sea and land. Broadstairs then had vessels trading to Iceland, to the cod fishery, "and to enable them to perform their voyage many farmers and their sons are induced to advance a sum which they call venture, say £10, £15, or £20, in shares, towards

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1. William Camden, Britannia : or a Chrographical Description of Great Britain and Ireland Together with the Adjacent Islands, Edmund Gibson's 2nd Ed. (1722), Volume I, 244. Although this interdependence between land and sea caught particularly the eye of Camden, the arrangement was by no means peculiar to Thanet. In East Norfolk, for instance, "Joskin" described men who worked on the land in summer and went to sea fishing in the autumn and winter, A.M. Samuel, The Herring : Its Effect on the History of Britain (1918), 21; while "throughout the eighteenth century, the crofter-fisherman was typical along the north-west coast", H. Hamilton, An Economic History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century (Aberdeen, 1963), 357-60. An overlap between agriculture and fishing was common also to Norway.

freighting those vessels, and partake of the profits, if any, on their return".¹

Margate, Broadstairs, and Ramsgate possessed small piers and harbours which by the middle of the eighteenth century were at least two hundred years old. The three coastal parishes of St. John's, St. Peter's and St. Lawrence embraced within their areas, apart from Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, several small villis or clusters of houses, all of which had rural economies,² except Kingsgate,³ as a second fishing settlement within the parish of St. Peter's: "at present its a pleasant little Vill consisting mostly of Fishermen's Houses, who get their living by Fishing, going off to Ships in distress, or carrying them fresh Provisions, Beer, etc., when they return from a voyage, which they call by the name of Foying".⁴

1. Mockett, op.cit., 2. Along the shores of the Moray Firth there were several towns and numerous villages in the eighteenth century, such as Cullen, Banff or Portsoy, whose livelihood was derived in large measure from fishing, and white fishing was the principal activity, in which the largest boats employed were of 10 tons and with sails, line and other equipment cost about £24. Local landowners provided part of the capital for the purchase of such boats, Hamilton, op.cit., 125-6; along the West Coast and in Shetland also financial assistance came from local landowners, ibid., 113.
2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 96-7, included within St. John's, for instance, were Westbrook, situated on "the West-side of the Mere just by Margate commonly called the Brooks"; Garlinge, "which is a pretty large Vill consisting of about 20 or 30 houses", between Margate and Birchington; also "Shonken-dane; Lyden; Flete; Little Nash; East-North-down; West-North-down, and Lucas-dane", almost joining to "Margate East in the same Valley"; likewise for St. Peter's, ibid., 120-1, and for St. Lawrence, ibid., 125.
3. The place name Kingsgate had been assumed only for about forty years, Lewis (1723), op.cit., 120, noting "of late Years this place is often called by the name of Kings Gate from K. Charles II once landing here in his way by Water from London to Dover"; he mentions also the great battle fought on this spot in 853 with the Danes in memory of which "it seems as if the adjoining Gate or Way into the Sea in a little Valley was called by the Inhabitants Battle'em Gate", ibid., 120. The landing of Charles II and the Duke of York took place in 1683, when the gap was known as Bartholomew Gate, William Hills, Jottings of History Relating to the Isle of Thanet (Ramsgate, 1887), 21. The former name of Bartholomew's Gate is given in many other sources; indeed by Lewis (1736), op.cit., 167, "Bartholomew or Bartlem Gate, and often King's Gate. a Way into the Sea, made for the Conveniency of the Fishery".
4. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 120.

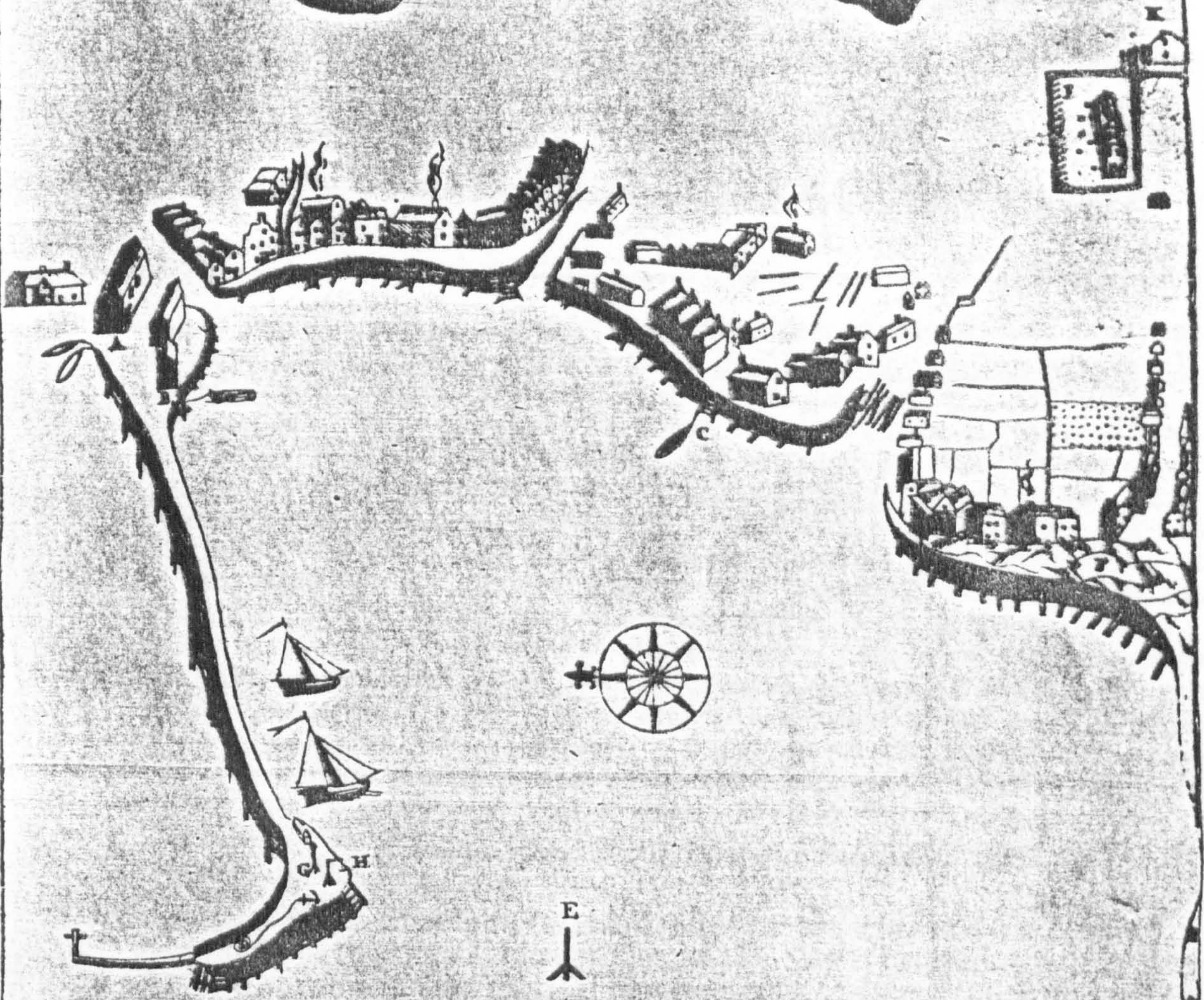
The early eighteenth century harbours of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate were similar in design and contained single curved wooden piers which excluded winds and waves from the most dangerous and exposed direction, the north east.¹ Lewis provides the following account of Margate harbour:

"on that part of the Town which lies next the Sea is a Peer of timber built East and West in the form of a half-moon to defend the bay from the main sea, and make a small harbour for ships of no great burden, and for Fishing-craft. By the present appearance of the chalky rocks on each side of this Peer at low water, it should seem as if anciently Nature itself had formed a Creek or harbour there, the mouth of which was just broad enough to let small Vessels go in at. But as the land on each side of this Creek was, in process of time, wash'd away by the Sea, the habitants were obliged to build this Peer, to keep their Town from being overflown by the Ocean; and to defend that part of it which lies next the Water by JETTES, or Piles of timber".²

Precisely when the first pier or harbour at Margate was constructed remains unknown, and contemporary sources offer few clues.³ Marine erosion

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1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 37.
 2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87; also ibid (2nd Ed., 1736), 123.
 3. For instance, Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87, "at what time this Peer was built at first, is now unknown"; J. Lyons, A Description of the Isle of Thanet, and particularly of the Town of Margate (1763), 10, "it is difficult to determine at what time Margate Pier was first built"; G.W. Bonner, The Picturesque Pocket Companion to Margate, Ramsgate, Broadstairs and the Parts Adjacent (1831), 44, "it is to be regretted that we are unable to fix the period when such a building first existed in this place"; Samuel Lewis, A Topographical Dictionary of England (1831), Volume III, 253, "a pier of timber was constructed at a very early period"; G.A. Cooke, A Topographical and Statistical Description of the County of Kent (New Ed., 1830), 296, "there was a Pier at Margate in ages considerably remote"; etc.

A VIEW of the PIER of MERGATE



In the Parlor window of
S^t JOHN'S Vicarage in



Genet

- A Range Watchhouses & Warehouses
- B Warehouses
- C R. George's Stairs
- D Glasshouses & Storehouses
- E The Moorings Post
- F Chalk Clay
- G Lamp on the Pier Head
- H Crane
- I S^t John's Bay
- K The Vicarage

I. A. del.

I. M. sculp.

J. Lewis, The History and Antiquities,
as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, of The
Isle of Tenet, in Kent (1736).

which affects all the cliffs around Thanet,¹ inevitably compelled the construction of a pier and harbour in the town.² Among the Harleian MSS at the British Museum there is a very crude sketch of Margate made in 1646, as part of a scheme for building a sea wall, showing a wooden pier, resembling the present structure in shape and position,³ and following a semi-circular course from south-east to north-west, which is believed to

1. Thanet coastal erosion caught the attention of eighteenth and nineteenth century contemporaries. E. Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Volume IV. (1st Ed., Canterbury, 1799), 294, recorded that "TIME has made so great an alteration in this island, that it is very difficult, if not impossible, perhaps for us now to judge of the ancient state of it. On the north and east the land has certainly gone much farther into the sea, which has washed away many hundred acres, not to say thousands, as it must have done, if it encroached in proportion for the 700 years before as it has for these last 150". This last sentence refers back to Lewis (1723), op.cit., 6, who noted that some of the chalk cliffs "are more firm and durable than others which being of a more crumbly nature do fall away in great quantities after anything of a frost, and rage of the sea". Centuries of erosion would explain Hasted's point as to the rocks or footings at low water, once forming what would have been chalk cliffs, extending in the 1790's sometimes $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the then existing shore, ibid., 294 n.(m), or The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 19.
2. A considerable body of evidence suggests that on the site of the present pier there was formerly a small creek or natural inlet from the sea which gave origin to the town, as distinct from the parish, but the sides of this natural harbour were eroded away until the inhabitants were obliged to construct a pier to protect the town from the sea, E.W. Brayley, The Beauties of England and Wales; or Delineations Topographical, Historical and Descriptive, Volume VIII : Kent (1808), 957. Kay, op.cit., 55, argues that geological evidence suggests that a pier at Margate probably became a vital necessity some time between 1300 and 1400 in order to save the town from being washed away by the sea.
3. The shape and position of Broadstairs pier is likewise known to have remained constant from the seventeenth century, J. Whyman, "Broadstairs Harbour", Thanet Panorama : A Modern Guide to the Island (Isle of Thanet Geographical Association, 1966), 33; and J. Whyman, "Broadstairs Harbour", Thanet Panorama : A Modern Guide to the Island, Volume 15 (Isle of Thanet Geographical Association, 21st Anniversary Issue, January 1977), 35-6.

be the oldest harbour plan of Thanet.¹ The need for some form or protection a century before that is evidenced in John Leland's famous tour 1535-43, during which time he observed: "Margate lyith in St. John's parochie, yn Thanet, a V myles upward fro Reculver, and there is a village and a peere for shyppes, but now sore decayed".²

It is possible to be more specific concerning the origins of Broadstairs pier and harbour, even though many of the records relating to its early history have vanished.³ A local family by the name of Culmer constructed a pier sometime during the reign of Henry VIII.⁴ Two indentures, dated 1564 and 1586, showed "that this Pier and the Way leading thereto was the Estate and Possession of the Family of Culmer of this Place".⁵ A 1571 parchment established certain orders and agreements "between the Landsmen and Fishermen of the Parish of St. Peter", concerning Broadstairs harbour, signed by John Sprackling, John Culmer, and Robert Emptage.⁶ A 1587 document told of the sale of Broadstairs Harbour:

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1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 37 n(3), 44; British Museum, Harleian MS. 7598.
 2. Toulmin Smith, John Leland's Itinerary, Volume IV, op.cit., 61.
 3. This fact, as also with Ramsgate and Margate, complicates any attempt to compile a full history of these harbours. However, entered at the back of The Broadstairs Harbour Account Book for 1842-1852 is "A List of Ancient Deeds and Documents relating to the Pier and Harbour of Broadstairs, Presented to the Commissioners by Robert Covell October 1st, 1850". These documents, six in number, are very valuable for giving some indication of the early existence of a pier and harbour in Broadstairs.
 4. Whyman (1966), op.cit., 33 and (January 1977), op.cit., 35; Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 39, states merely that "little is known of Broadstairs Harbour".
 5. Lewis (1736), op.cit., 164. It is interesting to note that among the deeds presented by Robert Covell there is no mention of the dates 1564 and 1586.
 6. Broadstairs Harbour Account Book, 1842-52, op.cit.

"A parchment of the Sale of Broadstairs Pier, from George Culmer, to John Sprackling and others for the Sum of £10.¹

Dated 22nd May, 29th Elizabeth, 1587".²

Ramsgate too had a curved pier, projecting from under the East Cliff to the south and west, which existed at least from the sixteenth century.³

According to a 1575 MS the duties payable towards its upkeep were in dispute.⁴ Although the pier was lengthened in 1715,⁵

"most surviving descriptions seem to refer to its subsequent condition...Historians tend to belittle the old harbour of Ramsgate in comparing it with the modern structure begun in 1749". (6)

For Lewis in 1723 Ramsgate pier defended

"the Town against the Ocean. Accordingly Ships are laid up, and fitted out here, of considerable burden". (7)

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1. £10 was obviously no small sum in those days, and I would calculate its equivalent in modern reckoning to be at least £1,000, Whyman (January 1977), op.cit., 35.
 2. Broadstairs Harbour Account Book, 1842-52, op.cit.; The extent to which Lewis had access to these deeds and documents is not known, but the account which he gave in 1736 of the history of the harbour and pier showed that very clear conditions attached to the sale of the pier and its approaches to the inhabitants of Broadstairs and St. Peter's, Lewis (1736), op.cit., 164-5; also P.W. Barlow, Broadstairs : Past and Present (1882), 5.
 3. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38.
 4. Lewis, (1723), op.cit., 124.
 5. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38.
 6. It was the much enlarged and improved stone harbour, constructed under an Act of 1749, viz: 22 Geo.II c.40, to serve as a harbour of refuge for small vessels driven from their anchors, etc., in the Downs, the cost incurred on the improvement of which rose to £2m. by 1850, Report from the Select Committee on Ramsgate and Margate Harbours; together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence /660/ (1850), iii, which has attracted the attention of contemporaries and subsequent historians. Sources specifically on the history of Ramsgate Harbour include J. Smeaton, An Historical Report on Ramsgate Harbour : Written by Order of, and Addressed to The Trustees (1791); by a Naval Officer, A Brief History of Dover and Ramsgate Harbours (1837); Mrs. J.E. Munslow, Ramsgate Harbour, 1748-1862, University of Kent M.A. Thesis (1972); Janet Munslow, "Ramsgate - A Harbour of Refuge", Thanet Panorama (January 1977), op.cit., 38-41.
 7. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 124.

The Maritime Economies of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate.

Each of the three Thanet harbours had characteristic functions during the eighteenth century. Margate monopolized the Thanet corn trade to London:

"the Trade of this poor Town is now [1723] very small and would be considerably less, was it not for its being the Market of the whole Island, where the Inhabitants bring their Corn to send it to London by Hoys which go from hence every week. By this trade is the Pier and Harbour chiefly maintained". (1)

Margate's harbour dues yielded between £140 and £150 in 1724.² This sum compared favourably with those collected at Dover and Sandwich.³ Corn dominated the outward coastwise trade of Thanet, almost all of which during the eighteenth century was shipped from Margate in small cargoes of 200-300 qtrs. each. Ramsgate harbour could have handled these cargoes just as easily as Margate harbour, but Margate had the advantage of closer proximity to London.⁴ Dues arising from the corn trade were used likewise

1. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 94.
2. Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XX (1722-7), 361.
3. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 42.
4. Andrews, op.cit., 41. Many early eighteenth century contemporaries wrote of a weekly hoy service from Margate to London; for instance, A Brief Director for All Those that Would Send Their Letters to any Parts of England, Scotland or Ireland (1710); Lewis (1736), op.cit., 134. Numerous references for the seventeenth century point to a brisk corn trade outwards from Margate, such as Calendar of State Papers Domestic, William III : January-December 1698, (H.M.S.O., 1933), 6 June 1698, 284. There is mention moreover for the seventeenth century of Dutch participation in Margate corn shipments, viz: ibid., 1629-31 (1860), 12 April 1630, 234, or ibid., Charles II : March 1676-February 1677 (H.M.S.O., 1909), 21 November 1676, 426. Unfortunately, as Dr. J.H. Andrews has demonstrated, quantification of the maritime trade of the Thanet seaports is beset with the difficulty that the trade of Thanet was recorded in the Exchequer Port Books of the Port of Sandwich, usually without being distinguished from that of Sandwich; otherwise the character and volume of the maritime trade of English seaports in the period 1650-1750 is best studied from this particular source. Moreover, in March 1702, in relation to outward coastwise trading, it was ordered that all Kent ports west of the North Foreland, which inevitably took in Margate, would be able henceforth to send agricultural produce coastwise to London without using the cocquet, which hitherto had been the normal means of authorizing coastwise trade, etc.,

to repair and maintain the harbours of Broadstairs and Ramsgate, but both remained subordinate to Margate in the business of shipping corn from Thanet to London, because it was not worth the trouble and hazard of rounding the North Foreland merely to eliminate a few miles of land carriage.¹

Ramsgate achieved distinction as a harbour of refuge during the eighteenth century. Adjoining the coast of Kent was one of the greatest shipping routes of the world, the importance of which increased with the commercial expansion of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Ramsgate was the obvious site for a harbour of refuge, because of its

4 (contd).

Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 40-1, and Thesis, op.cit., 29-30. Thus, "although there are no detailed records of the coast-wise trade in the first half of the eighteenth century, ... the available evidence suggests that its volume was maintained", Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 41. Lewis (1736), op.cit., 123-4, hints as follows at how the Thanet corn trade from Margate must have expanded over the centuries: "It is very certain that this Pier was not then in Leland's time near so large as it is now, and that the Lands in this Island were not so well cultivated as they have been of late Years, and consequently that not so much was paid for corn shipped in this Pier, by which it now chiefly subsists", and this despite a situation by the 1720's of some of the hoymen paying "even what they pleased, on a Supposition, that the Pier Wardens had no legal Power to compel them to pay the Droits assigned by the Pier Decrees", which "obliged the Pier Wardens and Inhabitants to petition Parliament A.D. 1724", ibid., 126.

1. Andrews, Thesis, op.cit., 115.

RAMSGATE AS AN HARBOUR OF REFUGE.



RAMSGATE

An Original Print.

proximity to the Downs, as "an important but not altogether safe anchorage".¹ An Act of Parliament in 1749 provided for its construction, and settled the choice of site once and for all in favour of Ramsgate.² Its Preamble stressed the advantages to be derived from having a harbour of refuge in the Downs.

1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 43; storms and the Goodwin Sands rendered the Downs a dangerous navigational channel so that in fair weather ships passed through, but in foul weather they sought shelter in the Downs, concerning which it was noted in 1762: "Yet on some particular Winds, and especially if they overblow, the Downs proves such a wild Road that Ships are driven from their Anchors, and often run on Shore, or are forced on the Goodwin Sands, or into Sandwich Bay, or Ramsgate Pier, in great Distress: this is particularly when the Winds blow hard at South East, or at East by North or East North East, and some other Points; and terrible Havock has been made in the Downs at such times", By a Gentleman, A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies (6th Ed., 1762), Volume I, 167; also Defoe, op.cit., 121: cf: Smeaton, op.cit., 4, who reckoned that the most troublesome winds to ships riding in the Downs, arose from South-South-East to South-South-West. One of the most famous and worst of storms occurred in 1703, Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 43, which in the eighteenth century was described as "that terrible tempest" or "by way of Distinction, The great Storm, November 27, 1703", when "England may be said to have received the greatest Loss that ever happened to the Royal Navy at any one time, either by Weather, by Enemies, or by any Accident whatsoever", amounting to 4 vessels, carrying 290 guns and 1,290 men bound for Chatham Dockyard to be laid up; and "all this, besides the Loss of Merchant Ships which was exceeding great", A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, op.cit., 167-8, also Defoe, op.cit., 121-2 and Daniel Defoe, The Storm : or, a Collection of the Most Remarkable Casualties and Disasters which happened in the late Dreadful Tempest both by Sea and Land (1704). The financial losses arising out of storms in the Downs caused increasing concern as the commercial expansion of the eighteenth century got under way, particularly in the long distance trades to the East and West Indies and to North America, Ralph Davis, A Commercial Revolution : English Overseas Trade in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (The Historical Association, 1967), 3.
2. The necessity for a secure harbour of refuge somewhere in the Downs was increasingly urged. Deal, despite its great importance as a shipping station in the Downs, which in 1713 was described as "a place very much frequented by such as belong to Shipping...a chief Station both for Men of War and Merchant Men", British Curiosities in Nature and Art (1713), 27, could in no way offer the requisite facilities, having merely a steeply shelving beach, and no harbour. This fact left but two alternatives : Sandwich or Ramsgate, the choice between which caused considerable friction in the eighteenth century which lingered on into the 1830's; Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 43-4; Sandwich Guildhall, Water Treasurers' Accounts, 1706 and 1736; Smeaton, op.cit., 1-9; Dorothy Gardiner, Historic Haven : The Story of Sandwich (Derby, 1954), 208-9, 210; The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume XXI (January 1752), 18.; Edward Boys, Remarks, etc, on the Practicability and Advantages of a Sandwich or Downs Harbour (Sandwich, 1832).

"Frequent losses of the lives and property of his Majesty's subjects happen in the Downs for want of an Harbour between the North and South Forelands; the greatest part of the ships employed in the trade of the nation, being under a necessity at going out upon, as well as returning from their voyages, to pass through the Downs; (1) and frequently by contrary winds being detained there a long time, (2) during which time they (especially the outward bound ships) are exposed to violent storms and dangerous gales of wind, without having a sufficient harbour to lie in, or retreat into, or from whence they can receive any assistance.... A harbour may be made at the Town of Ramsgate proper and convenient for the reception of ships, of and under 300 tons burthen, and from whence larger ships in distress in the Downs may be supplied with pilots, anchors, cables and other assistance and necessaries; and by the smaller ships taking shelter in this Harbour, the larger ships may take the anchorage which at present is occupied by the smaller, and by that means their anchors will be fixed in more holding ground and the ships be not so exposed to the ocean". (3)

The control and management of Ramsgate harbour passed by the terms of the 1749 Act from locally chosen Pier Wardens⁴ to an appointed Board of Trustees, under whose management the subsequent history of the harbour has often been told.⁵ Ramsgate was functioning, however, as a harbour of refuge prior to 1749. This fact is confirmed by reports of rescues in the

1. By definition all vessels passing from northern to southern waters, or outwards from London to the East or West Indies, had to pass through the Channel between England and France. The presence of the Goodwin Sands dictated that ships had to negotiate one of two channels: either on the French side to the back of the Goodwins or through what was known as the Downs or the English side.
2. George Byng Gattie, Memorials of the Goodwin Sands (1890), 49-50, showed that as many as several hundred ships would congregate in this roadstead while waiting for a favourable wind; and George Bethel Bayley, Seamen of the Downs (Edinburgh, 1929), 3, showed that the East India Company would take advantage of any delay in the Downs, often of several weeks, transacting much of the inevitable business associated with arrivals and departures of their vessels, through their own office and agent at Deal.
3. Smeaton, op.cit., 8-9.
4. According to Lewis (1723), op.cit., 124, the inhabitants of Ramsgate were empowered by orders and decrees given by the Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports "to choose Wardens to look after the repairs of the said Peer, and to collect such Droits or Rates as by the said Decrees and ancient immemorial Custom are payable for Shipping and Goods brought into this Peer".
5. The Select Committee on Ramsgate and Margate Harbours (1850), op.cit.; also Munslow, op.cit.

national and provincial press of the early eighteenth century, such as appeared in The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter during January 1729:

"On Wednesday, the Mary, Captain Pack, bound for Jamaica ran aground on the Goodwin Sands - boats from Deal and Ramsgate went to her. Two Mates, the Doctor, a Gentleman Passenger, three Sailors,... the Pilot, and three or four more, were all well landed on the Isle of Thanet last night". (1)

Frequent references in The Kentish Post to ships arriving off Deal during the 1720's from Jamaica or Virginia provide local evidence for the expansion of international trading noted above.² As well as lives being saved, cargoes were salvaged if at all possible. A public sale at Deal, on 2 January 1730, involved "1,717 Bars of Swedish Iron, containing about 31 Tons, saved out of the Ship Catherine, John Jochine Fisher, Master bound from Stockholm to Opporto, and stranded upon the Goodwin Sands... lodged at the following places, and to be taken away by the Buyer":

	<u>Bars</u>
Deal	1,341
Dover	87
Sandwich	18
Ramsgate	<u>271</u>
	1,717 ³

Among the great volume and variety of evidence which was submitted to the Commons Committee, preceding the 1749 Act, much of it to do with

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1. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 15-18 January 1728-9, 1.
 2. Noted in this section above.
 3. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 24-27 December 1729, 1.

tides and winds,¹ two points were "fully and clearly proved to the satisfaction of the Committee":² firstly, that in the great storm of December 1748 "a number of ships were actually forced into, and saved in Ramsgate Harbour,... the pier there having been only built and maintained by the Fishermen of the place";³ and secondly, that "if an Harbour was made only for the reception of Ships of 200 tons and under, it would prevent 9/10ths of the damage that happens in the Downs".⁴

Eighteenth and early nineteenth century Broadstairs was distinguished by its fishing and shipbuilding, whose origins extended back certainly to the seventeenth century. The Calendar of State Papers Domestic contains an entry for August 1626 giving the "Returns by George Marsh, Deputy Vice Admiral of the fisher-boats and sailors, or fishermen, belonging to St. Peter's and Broadstairs, in the Isle of Thanet".⁵ In 1723 Broadstairs harbour was used "to lay up the Fishing-boats which go from hence to the North-sea, and other small craft".⁶ The pre-1700 fishing industry of

1. Smeaton, op.cit., 4-5, 6-7.

2. Ibid., 4.

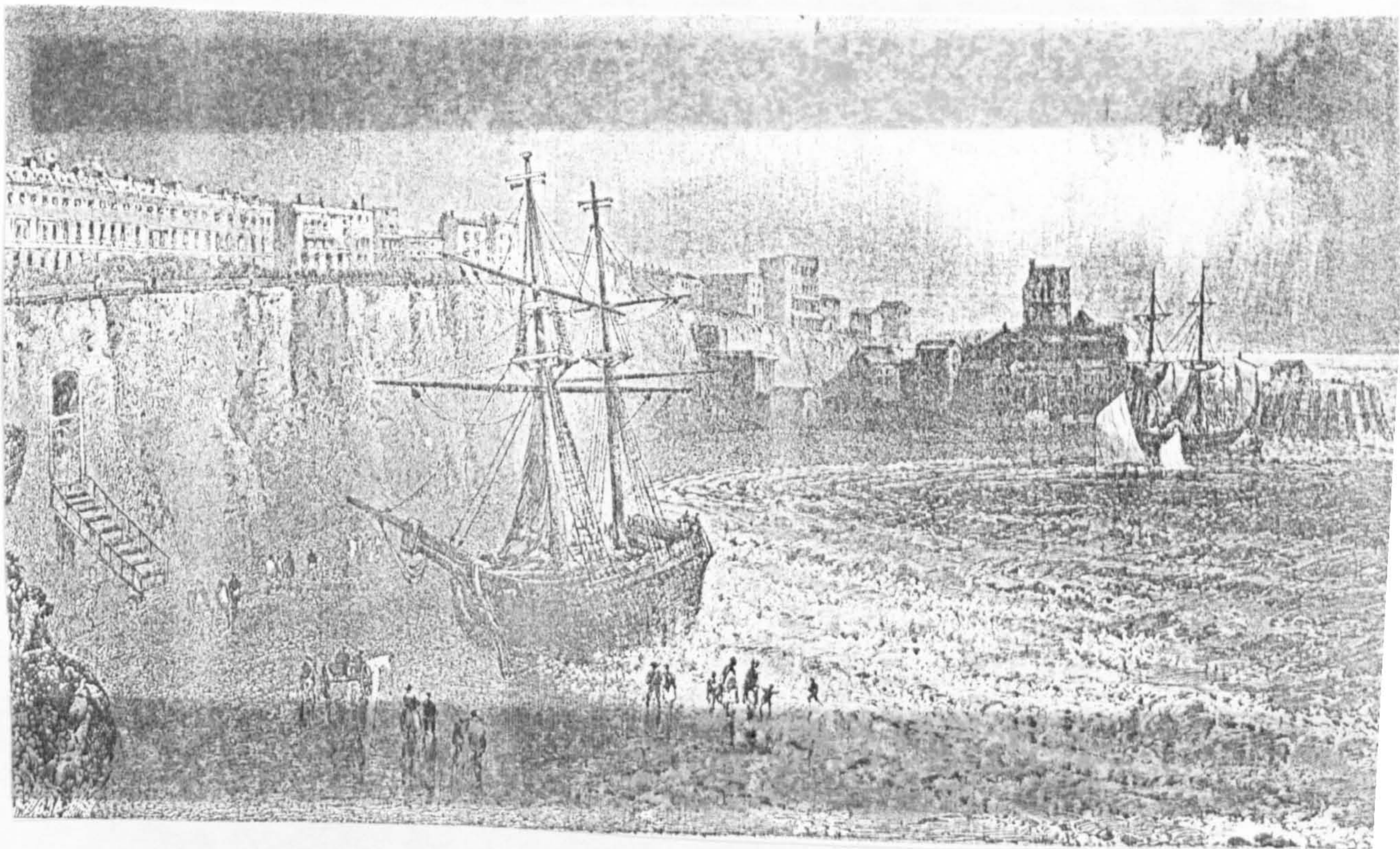
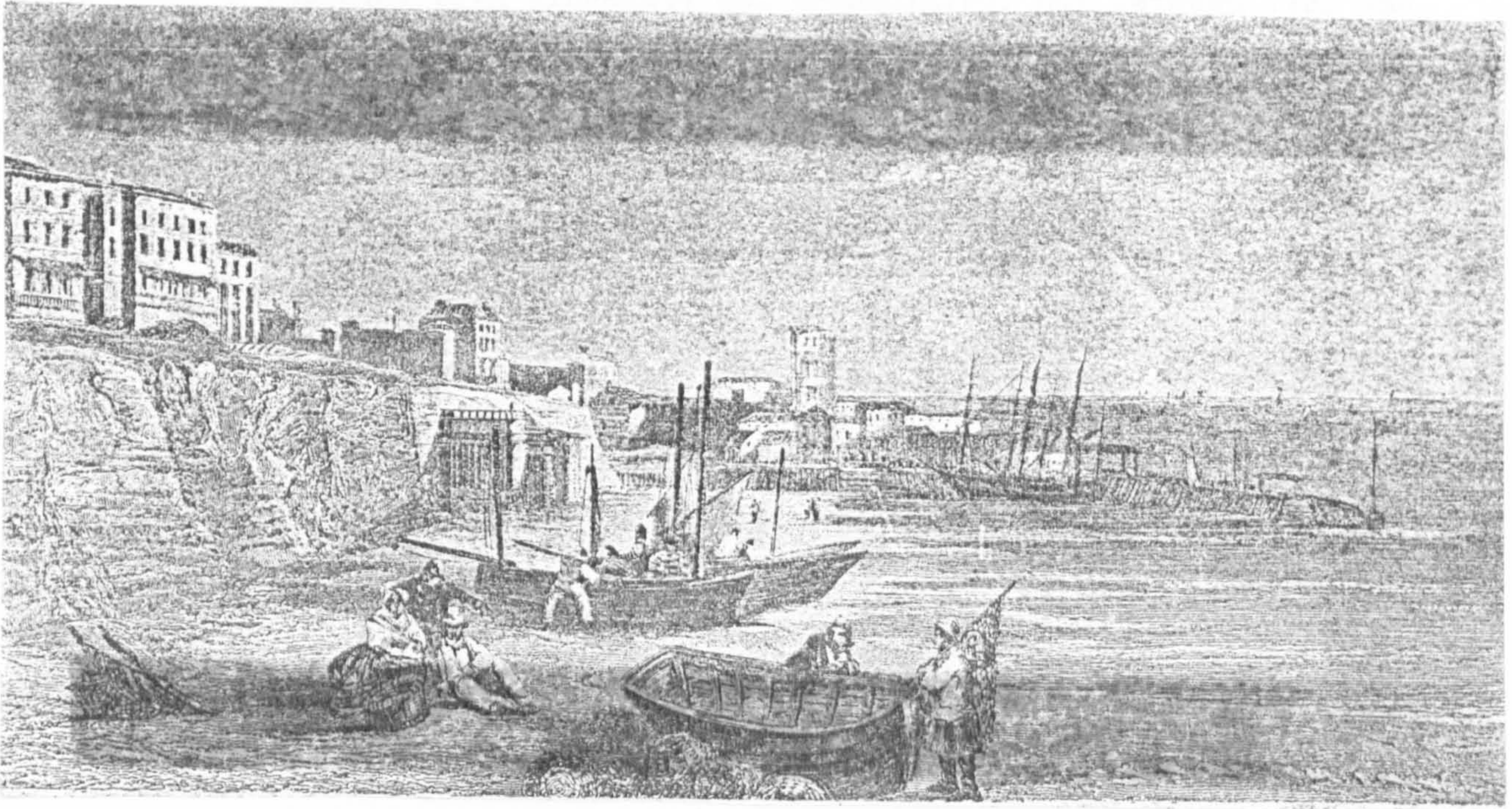
3. Ibid., 4; the harbour prior to 1749 consisted solely of a wooden pier projecting 200' into the sea with a beacon near the entrance and a flag on the pierhead to guide such ships as used it, A Brief History of Dover and Ramsgate Harbours, op.cit., 21. Discussions as between Ramsgate and Sandwich as to the best site for a harbour of refuge were abandoned for three years after 1745, until a violent storm on 16 December 1748 had the effect of once more bringing Ramsgate to the forefront of discussions, Smeaton, op.cit., 3. During this storm a great number of vessels were driven from their anchors in the Downs and, "being forced upon the South Coast of the Isle of Thanet several found safety in the Little Harbour of Ramsgate", ibid., 4; others were wrecked on the Thanet Coast, and many more on the Goodwin Sands, but those which managed to reach the small harbour at Ramsgate remained there in safety, Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XXV (1745-50), 721.

4. Smeaton, op.cit., 6.

5. Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1625-6. (1858), 417.

6. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 118; also ibid (1736), 164.

THE MARITIME ECONOMY OF BROADSTAIRS.



Original Prints.

St. Peter's included both Kingsgate and Broadstairs, but between 1723 and 1736 fishing activity receded into Broadstairs so that Kingsgate in 1736, "consisting mostly of Fishermen's Houses, is of late...pretty much deserted".¹

Shipbuilding in Broadstairs was closely associated with the White family, whose family roots and connections with other Thanet families can be traced back to the sixteenth century.² The Whites began constructing ships in Broadstairs during the seventeenth century,³ when the great bulk of trading vessels consisted of small craft, which were produced from the many small shipbuilding yards situated along the English coastline.⁴ White's shipbuilding yard at Broadstairs soon increased in importance. It flourished during the eighteenth century. By 1764 John White the Fifth was well established there with a shipyard partly on the present approaches to Broadstairs Harbour, and partly cut into the cliff, under what is now the promenade.

Although this Yard acquired more than a local reputation, only occasionally are the names of customers revealed. The 'Lapwing', an H.M. Cutter was built there in 1764.⁵ Three years later the shipyard suffered severe storm damage⁶ but, with an expanding business, a remarkable recovery was

1. Lewis (1736), op.cit., 168.
2. George Fardell in April 1946 deposited in Broadstairs Public Library the family tree of the White family, showing that during the sixteenth century Thomas White of Broadstairs, Isle of Thanet, Kent, was father to Elizabeth born 1582, Richard and John, twins, born 1583, Robert born 1586, and Solomon born 1588.
3. J. Samuel White & Co. Ltd., Whites of Cowes, Shipbuilders (c.1946), 8, evidences a John White building ships during the first half of the seventeenth century. Certainly the family tree compiled by G. Fardell, op.cit., lists John White (1693-1732), his son John (1714-1782), and his grandson John (1732-1801). It is unfortunate that correspondence with J. Samuel White & Co. Ltd. revealed that all their old records relating to their origins in Broadstairs were destroyed by enemy action during World War II.
4. R. Davis, The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (1962), 80: "vast numbers of small craft of 20, 30, 40 or 50 tons...carried on much of the coasting trade", ibid., 80, and nearly all ships were much smaller than 200 tons even as late as 1788, ibid., 79.
5. Whites of Cowes, Shipbuilders, op.cit., 8.
6. Mockett, op.cit., 20.

effected. Mockett's Journal provides a glimpse of the industry in 1786:

"Mr. Thomas White, Ship-builder, employes a large number of hands, and has sent from his stocks, some of the best East and West India Vessels".¹

Ships belonging to the East India Company were among the largest known vessels of their day, and carrying bullion and luxury goods they were armed vessels, sailing often in convoys, for protection against pirates and armed attack.

The fact that Thomas White constructed some of its vessels explains why the East India Company gave financial assistance towards repairing the pier and harbour in 1774,² after suffering on three occasions severe storm damage over the previous decade.³ Other customers included local fishermen and the Customs and Excise.⁴

The shipbuilding industry of Broadstairs under Thomas White remained active until the 1820's. The Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book of the 1790's sheds some light on Thomas White and his father.⁵ Fourteen vessels

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1. Mockett, op.cit., 2.
 2. Barlow, op.cit., 6.
 3. Broadstairs pier was nearly swept away by gales in 1763 and 1767, Hills, op.cit., 17; or Barlow, op.cit., 6. Mockett, op.cit., 20, describes graphically the damage inflicted upon Broadstairs by the 1767 storm from an original source to which he had access: "Poor Broadstairs, in St. Peter's Parish, has felt the whole force of the storm, the pier is utterly destroyed and, probably, ruined for ever". Subsequently in 1774 the pier sustained considerable damage in yet another storm, Barlow, op.cit., 6.
 4. Whites of Cowes, Shipbuilders, op.cit., 8-9, 14. Also according to ibid., 9, 12, 14, Thanet smugglers were for many years important clients of the Whites, the revenue authorities then learning that it was just as sensible for them to obtain the fastest cutters on the market, some of which were built apparently at Broadstairs, causing the Whites to become an important supplier of swift revenue cutters to H.M. Customs and Excise.
 5. For instance, entries in The Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book, 1792-3 and 1793-4 show on the side of expenses bills to Mr. John White for working on the pier amounting to £15 3s.7d., 14 November 1792; £41 14s.5d., 20 December 1792; and £17 15s.9½d., 10 April 1793. The revenue side of the accounts shows him paying 6 April 1793, £5 11s. 4d. to the Commissioners for "sundry shipment and landings", and 21 April 1794, 7s.6d. was paid by Mr. White for shipping 4½ bars of iron. Similar entries can be traced through the Account Book, from year to year; thus, on 24 March 1797, Thomas White paid 4s. in harbour dues on four new boats, while three days later on the 27th John White paid £13 4s.4d. "for Sundrys Shipt and Landed", Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book, 1796-7.

which are known to have been constructed by Thomas White between 1787 and 1824 had a combined tonnage of 3,424 tons,¹ or an average tonnage of just under 245 tons, which was just over the average for the period.² 70 per cent were built as trading vessels for West Indian trading routes,³ and were probably among the largest ships ever constructed at Broadstairs.⁴ 'The Kent' and 'The Woodcock' for the West Indies trade were 354 and 352 tons respectively.⁵ Over the same period eight brigs of between 100-160 tons each, and several sloops were also constructed.⁶

Fishing was the other major activity of eighteenth century Broadstairs. The mackerel season commenced about the beginning of May, and the herring season lasted from the end of harvesting until November. Edward Hasted

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1. Barlow, op.cit., 7-8; they were the Barbadoes Planter (220 tons), The Isaacs (280 tons), The Venus (130 tons), The Woodcock (352 tons), The Kent (354 tons), The Liberty (266 tons), The Bridgetown (248 tons), The Mary (188 tons), The New Barbadoes Planter (250 tons), The Friendship (280 tons), The Olive Branch (190 tons), The Isle of Thanet (224 tons), The Venus (262 tons) and The Desperate (180 tons).
 2. Davis, op.cit., 79 shows that an official registration of 1788 enumerated 9,355 ships owned in British ports, of which 7,756 (5 out of every 6) were of less than 200 tons.
 3. The remainder served the Straits and African trades, while The Desperate, a 14 gun-brig for government service, was one of the last ships of any size to be launched from Broadstairs and was built in 1824, Barlow, op.cit., 8; Whites of Cowes, Shipbuilders, op.cit., 9.
 4. Whyman (1966), op.cit., 35 and (January 1977), op.cit., 36. Although many attracted considerable attention, notably The Isle of Thanet West Indiaman, launched in 1800, it is unlikely that Thomas White ever constructed a vessel in Broadstairs of more than 400 tons, Whites of Cowes, Shipbuilders, op.cit., 9.
 5. Barlow, op.cit., 7.
 6. Ibid., 7.

observed how in 1799

"they who live by the seaside are generally fishermen, or sea-faring men... There are two seasons for the home fishery, which are called by the inhabitants shot fare and herring fare. The first of these is the mackerel season, which is commonly about the beginning of May. The other is the season for catching herrings, which begins about the end of harvest, and finishes about November, and on this account it is no uncommon thing here for servants to bargain with their masters, especially such as hire small portions of land, to go to herring fare, etc. These fisheries find employment for the poor people on shore, who are greatly employed in spinning, twisting and knitting the nets". (1)

Broadstairs enjoyed also an eighteenth century fame for fine lobsters.²

There was a keen demand for fish, as a substitute for meat and as a commodity of general consumption. Apart from local markets, reaching out to Canterbury,³ there was an enormous demand in London. Fishing craft from other ports followed the migration of mackerel and herring, and among these other ports in the eighteenth century were Yarmouth, Hastings, Hythe, Folkestone, Dover, and Torbay. When all these craft were fishing together and using the small harbour of Broadstairs for landing their catches, as in the 1760's, a considerable trade was done, often to the amount of several tons per day, which were forwarded to London by vans.⁴

Eighteenth century Broadstairs did not confine itself only to the home fishery, but extended its fishing activities to include Islandic cod.⁵ The town sent thirteen sloops in 1759 to Iceland for the cod fishery,⁶ while in 1763 "ten or twelve ships go annually from this place to the Iceland Cod Fishery, which, in some seasons, is a very lucrative employment", and "a considerable trade is carried on, of the oil drawn from the livers

1. Hasted, op.cit., Volume IV, 293, n(k).

2. Lyons, op.cit., 22; The Margate Guide (1780), 28.

3. Seymour, op.cit., 218, noted fish coming to the City's fish market from the Isle of Thanet.

4. Barlow, op.cit., 6.

5. Whyman (1966), op.cit., 35, and (January 1977), op.cit., 37.

6. A Tour through the Island of Great Britain Divided into Circuits or Journies (8th Ed., 1778), 140.

of the fish, which are brought home in casks for that purpose".¹ There were considerable fluctuations in the cod trade from year to year:

"in a successful year it is a very profitable trade. The cod bring on an average, at home markets about £2.10s. an hundred, by tale; a considerable trade is carried on of the oil made of their livers". (2)

The Icelandic cod trade from Broadstairs reached its peak of achievement and prosperity during the middle decades of the eighteenth century, to such an extent that the expansion of Broadstairs, as "a considerable hamlet in the parish of St. Peter, which within the last century has been gradually growing in size and consequence...was probably first occasioned by the number of vessels fitted out for the North Sea and Iceland Cod-fishery".³ Although from the end of the 1760's the cod fishery in Icelandic waters declined, it revived for short periods and proved highly prosperous in some years. The Margate Guide of 1770 related how "a few years since, several Ships went annually from this place to the Iceland Cod-Fishery, and it was deemed a lucrative Employment, but they have lately been discouraged, by want of Success, and that branch of Trade has fallen almost to nothing".⁴

By the 1790's Broadstairs fishermen were seeking cod nearer to home, in the North Sea.⁵ The Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book provides

1. Lyons, op.cit., 22.
2. The Kentish Traveller's Companion, in a Descriptive View of the Towns, Villages, Remarkable Buildings and Antiquities situated on or Near the Road from London to Margate, Dover and Canterbury (5th Ed., Canterbury, 1799), 280.
3. Ibid., 280.
4. The Margate Guide... In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 30-1.
5. Whyman (1966), op.cit., 35-6 and (January 1977), op.cit., 37; The Kentish Traveller's Companion (5th Ed., Canterbury, 1799), op.cit., 280.

some details of the fishing trade for the 1790's.¹ So far as fishing in distant waters was concerned, the eighteenth century presented two drawbacks. Not only had local fishermen to contend with increasing foreign competition which, in the case of the Dutch, was highly organized,² but they suffered also from frequent wars between 1690 and 1815, from the War of the Spanish Succession through to the end of the Napoleonic Wars. These wars produced an insecure environment on the seas to the detriment of the fishing industry, and they adversely affected eighteenth century Broadstairs. The French and Napoleonic Wars were the final deathblow to the Icelandic cod trade, so that "this place had once a great trade to Iceland, and employed several vessels in the cod fishery, but from the ravages of war and other disasters it is now 1816 gone to decay".³ There still remained, however, local markets to be supplied, and if less is known about them this is because so little is known about the flow and volume of internal trade in general.⁴

1. The Harbour Commissioners were paid on 29 October 1792, £1.18s.9d. for landing 1,500 cod from the Sloop Lively; on 7 November 12s.6d. for shipping "2,500 cod on y Kent"; on 17 November 2s.6d. for "500 cod shipped on y Boat Endeavour"; on 3 December 1792, £2.2s.6d. was paid on "Fish landed from y Sloop Neptune" and 8s.6d. for 27 "Barrels of Liver"; on 25 January 1794, £1.9s.8d. was paid on "Fish and Oil landed from the Neptune", Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book, 1792-3, 1793-4. From the same source emerge the names and payments of local fishermen: thus, on 9 July 1792, J. Mockett paid 5s. for a fishing season, and subsequently on 27 November he paid 4s. for the herring season; on 2 March 1797, Richard Culmer paid 2s. for his whaling boat, and Mr. Philpot 2s. for his lobster boat, ibid., 1792-3, 1796-7.
2. The Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book, 1792-3, and 1797-8 indicates the intrusion of foreign fishermen into native waters: 3d. was paid on 7 November 1792 for a "Dutch fisherman on Watering", and 1s. harbour dues by two Dutch vessels on 18 November, and a French fisherman paid 1s. harbour dues on 5 May 1793.
3. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 108.
4. Whyman (1966), op.cit., 36 and (January 1977), op.cit., 37. One indication of the possible demand for fish existed in Canterbury and its environs, the City containing in 1801, 2,018 houses and 10,498 inhabitants, H. Moore, A New and Comprehensive System of Universal Geography (c.1811), 46. Canterbury traded with the neighbouring villages and farms of the surrounding countryside.

Other Thanet maritime activities included foying, shipping and smuggling. Coastal inhabitants always viewed the sea as offering sources of livelihood in ways over and above fishing or coastal and foreign trading. 'Foying', which was common to the ports of Thanet, Deal and Dover, embraced several maritime functions, notably servicing and provisioning passing ships, going off to vessels in distress with anchors and chains, or rescuing crews and wrecks, particularly from the Goodwin Sands. Boats, known as hovellers or luggers, were kept in readiness at Ramsgate, Broadstairs, Margate, Deal and Dover to render assistance to distressed vessels in the Downs. This aspect of foying was apparent to William Camden in 1586: "when there happen any shipwrecks, as there do now and then, for those shallows and shelves so much dreaded by seamen, lie over and against it; namely the Godwin, etc... they [Thanet seamen] are extremely anxious to save the lading".¹ Mockett writing of Broadstairs two centuries later noted "here are sailors of the best descriptions; many ships and their crews have been saved by the exertions of these men, who have ventured their lives to save others".²

Forty years earlier it was observed how "a great Number of Craft and Pilots now actually station themselves at Ramsgate and are the means of saving many lives and much property".³ Eighteenth and early nineteenth century references to foying are numerous, and it was clearly an activity which increased in importance as commerce expanded. Whereas Smeaton reckoned that "more than 4/5ths of all the tonnage and value of shipping is carried on in vessels not exceeding 300 tons",⁴ convoys of East and West Indian and other sizable trading vessels were continually leaving or making for London.⁵

1. Camden, op.cit., Gibson's 2nd Ed. (1722), Volume I, 244.

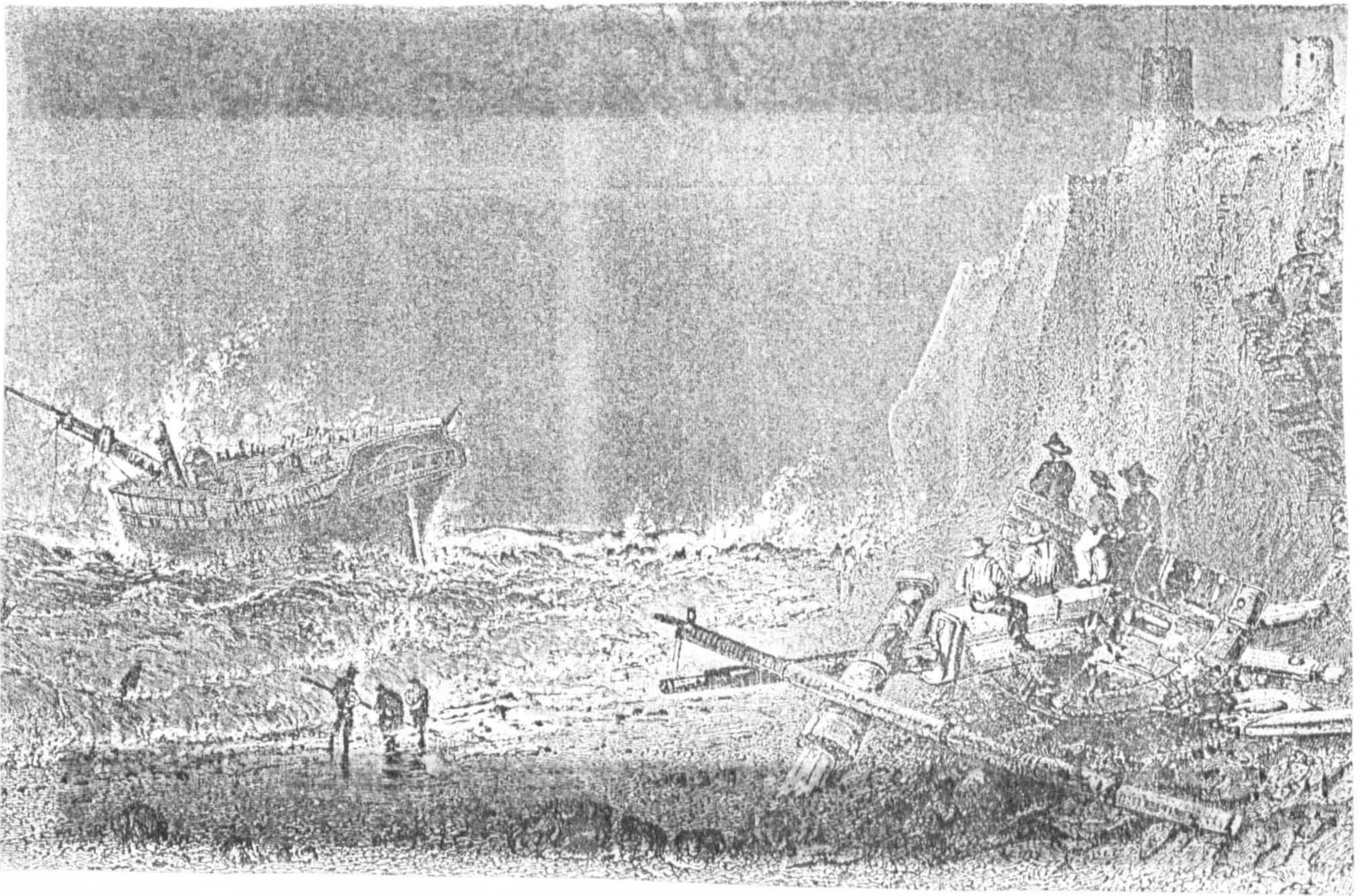
2. Mockett, op.cit., 2.

3. Smeaton, op.cit., 7.

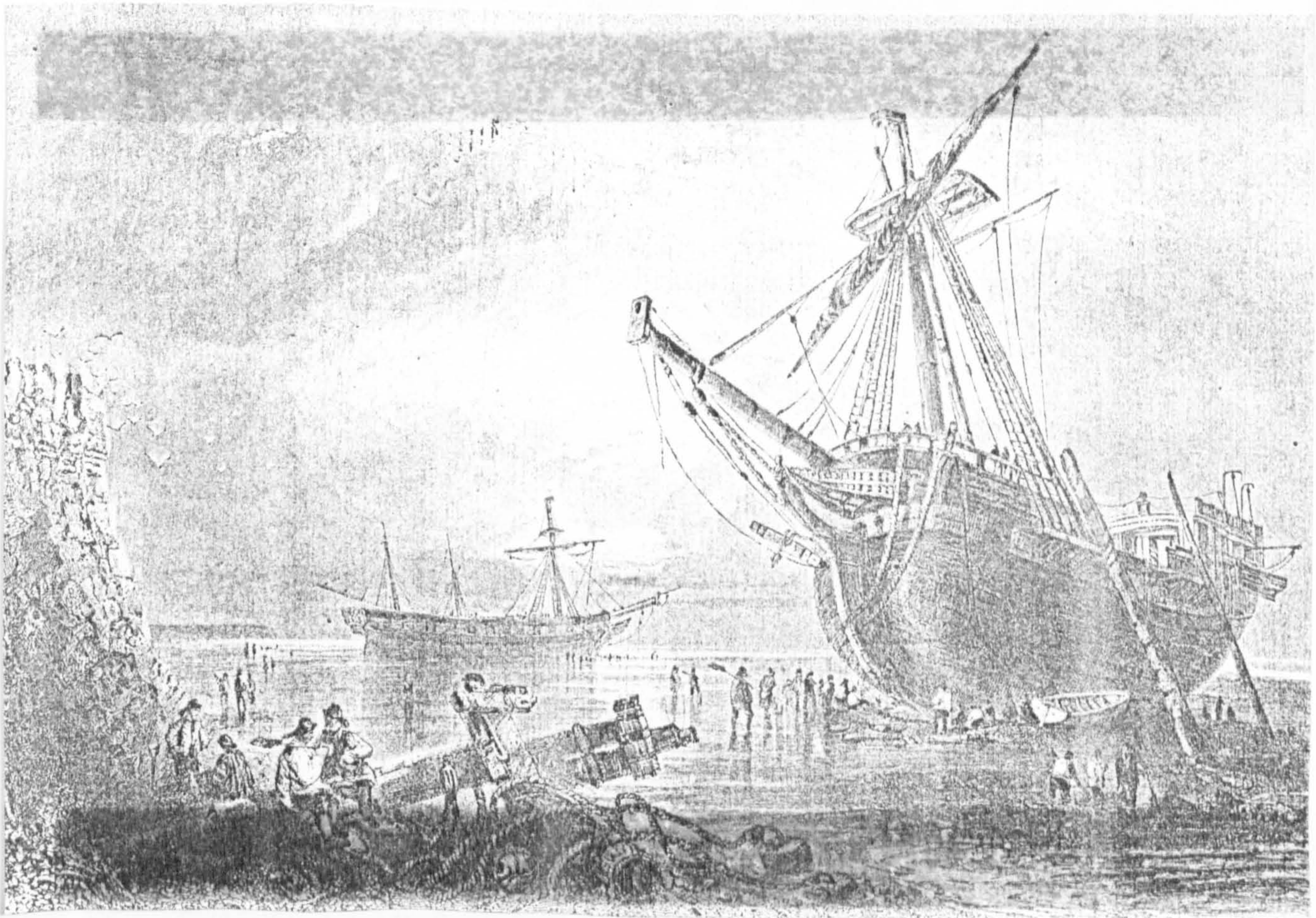
4. Ibid., 5; this seems to bear out Davis, op.cit., 79, noted above.

5. Whyman, (1966), op.cit., 36, and (January 1977), op.cit., 37.

A WRECK AND TWO SHIPS ASHORE.



WRECK IN KINGSGATE BAY (Isle of Thanet).



"THE WESTMINSTER" AND "CLAUDINE",
ASHORE NEAR MARGATE.

Original Prints.

While it is possible to overstate the importance to the local economy in terms of numbers or capital employed of rendering assistance to distressed vessels, it was nevertheless an economic function which gave national significance to East Kent, being of considerable importance to the national economy, when measured by lives and the value of vessels or cargoes saved.¹

There was, however, another side to foying which occasioned much criticism from eighteenth century contemporaries, and this related to pilfering or 'paultring'. In 1723 the Rev. John Lewis sought to defend the reputation of Thanet mariners by stating that they were fine sailors, "very dextrous and bold in going off to Ships in distress", but "it's a thousand pities that they are so apt to pilfer stranded Ships, and abuse those who have already suffered so much", which "they themselves call by the proper name of Paultring, since nothing sure can be more vile and base, than under pretence of assisting the distressed Masters, and saving theirs and the Merchants' goods, to convert them to their own use by making what they call guile shares".² The Margate Guide of 1770 referred to "the Acquisitions arising to the Common People, from what they consider as the greatest Blessing of Providence - a Shipwreck".

1. A study of the commercial gains and losses from vessels being respectively saved or wrecked and/or pilfered could be attempted by collecting the numerous reports of such episodes in the local newspapers. Thus, The Maidstone Journal and Kentish Advertiser, 18 December 1787, 4, reported the East Indiaman Mars being driven on shore off Margate "laden with tea and just arrived from China", and despite the saving of 140 chests of tea "the loss of the East India Company...amounts to between £30,000 and £40,000". Smeaton, op.cit., 85, calculated that up to 1790 Ramsgate Harbour in the space of forty years had been instrumental in saving property to the value of £3m-£4m., as well as some 8,000 to 9,000 lives. Some fifty years later between 1840 and 1844 twenty vessels were lost off Margate, including 'The Westminster' valued at £100,000 and 'The Iarkins' at £95,000, according to The South Eastern Gazette, 8 March 1853, 5cd. These facts are related in J. Whyman "Rise and Decline: Dover and Deal in the Nineteenth Century", Archaeologia Cantiana, Volume LXXXIV (1969), 124-5.

2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 22.

"They call it a God-send, and, as such, make the most of it, and are thankful... Misfortunes of this kind happen so frequently, that they become a good Revenue to the Fishermen and Peasants who live along the Coast, and who seldom fail to improve them to the utmost advantage. This, however, must be owned in justice to them, that, whenever there is a bare possibility of preserving a Ship-wrecked Crew, they act in Contempt of Danger, and do readily often save the lives of Others, at the most imminent hazard of their own". (1)

An actual instance of 'paultring' was reported in The Kentish Post, or Canterbury NewsLetter involving Deal and probably the Thanet ports at the end of December 1753.

"Whereas the Hamburg Merchant, Wm. Marston, Master, bound from Bremen to Bristol, laden with Linnen Cloth, Bars of Steel, and other Commodities, was on the 29th of December wreck'd on the Goodwin Sands, and all the Crew perish'd; And whereas Information has been received that great Numbers of Boats from Deal and other Ports were seen on the 30th to ravage the said Vessel, and carry off the greatest Part of the Cargo: this is therefore to give Notice That whosoever will give Information of any Person or Persons concern'd in so outrageous a Proceeding contrary to the known Laws of the Land, so that he or they may be convicted, shall be very handsomely rewarded, by applying to Mr. George Rainier of Ramsgate, Agent to the Proprietors of the said Ship". (2)

Foying, legitimate or otherwise, continued to be an occupation of no small importance throughout the eighteenth century, so that in 1799 "there are many such as depend on what they call foying; that is, going off to ships with provisions, and to help them in distress, etc".³ It was

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1. The Margate Guide (1770), op.cit., 9, 31; wrecking was also a major activity of the Cornish coastline during the eighteenth century, John Vivian, Tales of the Cornish Wreckers (Truro, 1969).
 2. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury NewsLetter, 9-12 January 1754, 4. The practice of paultring or pilfering is on the face of it perhaps hardly surprising, given the value of some of the cargoes passing the Thanet coast, as instanced above. The only effective remedy was clearly to offer rewards to induce the honest salvaging of precious cargoes, as recommended in 1816: "it is sincerely to be hoped, that the merchant will liberally, and without hesitation, reward those men whose chief employment is to render assistance to ships in distress", The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 18-19.
 3. Hasted, op.cit., Volume IV, 293; also The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 17.

particularly a winter occupation, and so continued to be relevant to out of the season employment once the Thanet watering places had established themselves.¹ The winter incidence of and other details relating to foying can be seen in numerous entries in The Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book for the 1790's.² Dues on foying during the final decade of the eighteenth century contributed much to the revenue of the Broadstairs Pier and Harbour Commissioners.³ Much legitimate business accrued to Thanet boatmen due simply to the smallness of eighteenth century merchant vessels,⁴ without considering the provisioning requirements of naval vessels which were considerable in this period. Inevitably small vessels were restricted to carrying only limited provisions, and had need, therefore, to take on extra provisions where possible at frequent intervals. Storms and rough weather, which forced vessels to drop anchor in the Downs, merely added to the business of foying.⁵

If paultring was but one aspect of foying, smuggling was at the opposite pole from legitimate coastal and foreign trading. The functions of the many gapways along the Thanet coast were identified thus in 1770:

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1. Likewise to some extent with fishing, shipbuilding, coastal trading and particularly with Ramsgate as an expanding harbour of refuge.
 2. From the entries in The Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book, 1792-8, three Broadstairs boats in particular are mentioned, The York, The Hood and The Chance, for instance, in December 1792, and in January, February, March, November and December 1793; other boats involved were The Flora, The Sally, and The Grafton. The sums paid to the Harbour Commissioners for foying were sometimes considerable, such as 3 April 1795, "Recd. of John Hurst for a foy by the Sally", £2.4s.; or 10 February 1797, "Foy of Wm. Goodburn by y Drake", £10.
 3. Whyman (1966), op.cit., 36; or footnote immediately above.
 4. As noted previously in this section.
 5. A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain (6th Ed., 1762), op.cit., Volume I, 167; or J. Iaker, History of Deal (2nd Ed., Deal, 1921), 293, 296.

"as many Places may be hereafter mentioned, which bear the Name of the Gates or Stairs severally annexed to them, it may be necessary to say, that they are no other than sloping wagon-ways, which are cut through the high perpendicular Cliff, to the level of the water's edge. Through these are brought up Sea-waur for Manure of Land, Flint, Gravel, Chalk, Pebbles, not to mention now and then a few Articles in the Way of private Trade". (1)

Smuggling is dealt with at some length in this section because it has attracted little serious comment from historians and because also it was an activity of great importance in Kent,² having social and economic consequences which manifested themselves throughout the county. Possibly smuggling and pilfering were more profitable occupations in eighteenth century Thanet than fishing or labouring.³ The Isle of Thanet shared in five centuries of English smuggling from its medieval origins in wool to its mid-nineteenth century demise. Margate, Broadstairs, Kingsgate and Ramsgate were important centres in the wool, sixteenth century wheat,⁴ and the

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1. The Margate Guide (1770), op.cit., 9.
 2. There are several references to smuggling in Kent before 1700, including Chalklin, op.cit.; Ed: Richard Stead, Bygone Kent (Canterbury, 1892); Ed: H.B. Wheatley, The Diary of Samuel Pepys (1917); Ed: Rev. P.H. Ditchfield and G. Clinch, Memorials of Old Kent (1907); Laker, op.cit., who devotes the whole of Chapter 18 to 'smuggling' in Deal; etc. These and other sources trace the story of Kentish smuggling through the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
 3. This suggestion would find support in Bradley, op.cit., 144-5, "the proletariat in the main took the primary risks and worked at it for stated wages, higher of course than those offered for legitimate work - sailors, mechanics, and agricultural labourers were all deep in it, and earned twice as much in a night as they could make by their ordinary day's work", agricultural labourers receiving between 7s.6d. and 15s. a night; compare "in several Parts of Kent, the Farmers notwithstanding the low Prices of all Sorts of Grain, were obliged to raise the Wages of their Labourers and yet were distressed for Want of Hands to get in their Harvest; which is attributed to the great Numbers who employ themselves in Smuggling along the Coast", The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume III. (September 1733), 492; also, John Whyman, "Kent Coast Smuggling in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", Thanet Panorama: A Modern Guide to the Island (Isle of Thanet Geographical Association, 1966), 29.
 4. P. Muskett, "Smuggling in the Cinque Ports in the Sixteenth Century", Cantium: A Magazine of Kent Local History, Volume II, No. 1 (January 1970), 10-11.

subsequent English guinea, tobacco, wine, spirit, French prisoners of war and other kinds of eighteenth and nineteenth century smuggling, which characterised the Kent coast between the Thames and Medway estuaries and Romney Marsh, at intervals between the late thirteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth century, when contraband trading was finally undermined by the establishment of free trade and major reforms affecting both the Customs and Excise and the Civil Service.¹

Smuggling has long been seen in the popular mind as one of the more fascinating aspects of human history and thousands of visitors are attracted annually to the Smuggling Museum which has been assembled in Cornwall at Polperro. Although this museum contains exhibits drawn from all over the country, there is a natural bias towards Devon and Cornwall which can very easily mislead the visitor into supposing that smuggling assumed a greater significance in that area than in the South Eastern counties of Sussex, Kent and Essex. This impression is corrected, however, by merely looking at a map of Europe and taking stock of the favourable geographical position of Kent, adjoining to and standing between London and the Continent, coupled with a long and varied coastline, containing numerous small ports and several major estuaries. Indeed, Kent may well have been England's most important smuggling county for three reasons:

- (a) It is the nearest county to Europe, where the Low Countries and France were major recipients of English wool, fullers' earth and English guineas. At several points between Broadstairs and Folkestone the coastline of France can be seen with the naked eye. Mr. F.W. Jessup shows how "Margate and Ramsgate are as near to Belgium as they are to London", while "Deal, Dover and Folkestone are nearer to France than they are to Rochester, Maidstone or Tonbridge". (2) As and when they had need, the Flemings, the Dutch and the French offered good prices for English wool, while the same countries at a later date were major suppliers of such noted Hanoverian necessities and luxuries as tea, brandy, Geneva or lace.

1. J. Whyman, "Thanet Smuggling through the Centuries", Thanet Panorama : A Modern Guide to the Island, Volume 15 (Isle of Thanet Geographical Association, 21st Anniversary Issue, January 1977), 29-33.
2. F.W. Jessup, Kent History Illustrated (2nd.Ed., Maidstone, 1973), 5.

- (b) Smugglers as much as farmers or industrialists had need of profitable outlets if they were to prosper. In this respect Kentish smugglers as well as Kentish farmers had to look no further than London which was the nation's largest and wealthiest individual market. The wealth of Hanoverian London presented smugglers with their most profitable outlet, with such imported luxuries as silk, lace, port or brandy being much appreciated by the aristocracy and the gentry who participated in the well-established London season. Devon and Cornwall, by contrast, had no such profitable outlet so readily at hand. George Bishop, as one among a small minority of people in the eighteenth century who condemned smuggling, in his Observations, Remarks and Means, to Prevent Smuggling, which was published in Maidstone in March 1783, as one of the few contemporary works on English smuggling, recorded how

"smugglers are taking every method to increase their trade, and convey immense quantities of spirits into London...They have warehouses at proper distances on the roads, the more easy to convey it forwards, as is best suitable to their purpose". (1)

- (c) The Thames leading off from a long and varied coastline of over 100 miles, as a natural gateway to London and to other parts of England, along with other rivers and estuaries, notably the Medway and the Stour, together with cliffs, islands and marshes, stimulated high levels of Kentish smuggling. The Stour gave access to Thanet as well as to Sandwich and to Fordwich, for Canterbury. The mouth of the Stour was characterised by shoals, tortuous channels and sand hills which were peculiarly favourable to contraband trading. Further physical aids to smuggling arose out of the fogs and storms affecting the whole of the Kent coast which concealed the operations of smugglers and interrupted the vigilance of customs cruisers.

The pre-eminence of Kent in the history of English smuggling is readily apparent by reference to the varied physical geography of the county and its strategic position between London and Europe. Without reference to London and Europe there would be no history of English smuggling, and from this one is reminded of John Newman's statement that "the county's position, between London and the Continent, has always been the most important thing about it".²

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1. Observations, Remarks, and Means, to Prevent Smuggling, Humbly submitted to the Consideration of The Rt. Honorable the House of Peers, and The Honorable House of Commons, in Parliament Assembled, By their obedient humble Servant, George Bishop (Maidstone, 1783), 7.
 2. John Newman, The Buildings of England : North East and East Kent (Penguin, 1969), 31.

THE TITLE PAGE TO ONE OF THE FEW CONTEMPORARY
WORKS ON SMUGGLING.

OBSERVATIONS,

REMARKS, and MEANS,

TO PREVENT

S M U G G L I N G,

Humbly submitted to the Consideration of

The Rt. Honorable the HOUSE of PEERS,

A N D

The Honorable HOUSE of COMMONS,

IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED,

By their obedient, humble Servant,

GEORGE BISHOP.

MAIDSTONE, MARCH 1783.

George Bishop in his 21-page effusion was in no doubt about the magnitude of Kentish smuggling as it appeared to him in 1783.

"THE practice of smuggling has of late years made such rapid and gigantic strides from the sea coast, into the very heart of the country, pervading every city, town and village, as to have brought universal distress upon the fair traders, from the most opulent and respectable, even to the smallest shopkeeper, and requires the united efforts of every honest man to aim at the suppression of it, foreign states having been enriched at the expense of this country, and the destruction of many fair traders.

There are many thousands of sailors employed in this illicit traffick most of whom are victualled and cloathed, and their vessels repaired in foreign countries, who would otherwise become fishermen, and useful members of the community, thereby greatly enriching the sea coasts, training up a hardy race of sailors and enabling the sea-ports, as heretofore, to assist the state in furnishing both ships and men; but so long as that pernicious practice continues, so long will the parish rates remain high and a burthen upon the fair dealer, and the sea ports be unable to afford any real assistance.

The smuggling-cutters, are not only large, full of men and well-armed, but so well constructed for sailing, that seldom one of them is captured in a year...This conduct is productive of many inconveniences, and particularly to the farmer, who in many places near the sea, is unable to find hands to do his work, whilst the great numbers are employed in removing smuggled goods from one part of the country to another...

From the best accounts, there are employed nationally in smuggling sixty thousand of the youngest men and best able to labour, which we may calculate as $\frac{1}{25}$ th. part 4% of the whole of the labourers in the kingdom; and one hundred thousand women and children retailing and hawking about the country spirits and tea.

Smuggling also is one great cause of the high price of provisions as one fifth or one sixth part of all the horses kept are for smuggling, which horses consume more corn than is used in the distillery; if there was no smuggling we should have no occasion for an importation of oats at any time. The charge of maintaining, suppose one hundred thousand horses at one shilling per day each horse, annually amounts to £1,820,000". (1)

It was reckoned by George Bishop that $2\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons of geneva were smuggled from Dunkirk during 1777, when "there were established at Gottenburg, Newport, Ostend, Dunkirk and Calais distilleries for making geneva to supply

1. Bishop, op.cit., 3-6.

our smugglers with", and yet "geneva is prohibited to be used in the French Dominions in favour of their brandies".¹ By 1783 it was Bishop's contention that over 4 million gallons of geneva were smuggled into the country annually, not to mention 2 million gallons of brandy, "besides rum and other spirits".² Moreover, twelve ships of 200 tons each were solely employed in carrying rum from the West Indies to Guernsey, from where it was smuggled into England.³ Finally all these smuggled goods, of whatever quantity, had to be paid for, and so

"the smugglers pay for the articles which they buy either in cash, or by the illicit exportation of English wool, (no other articles of any consequence being carried abroad by them) an injury to the staple commodity of this kingdom, of so serious a nature, as to call on the united efforts of every well-wisher to his country, to join in the suppression of it.

Smuggling is arrived to a height unprecented in this or (perhaps) any other nation in Europe; consequently the quantity and value of different articles thus illicitly imported must be immense; and, as they are paid for either in specie, or by the smuggling of wool, which is worse, this traffic must greatly enrich the French, and other nations, and gradually impoverish this; and, while the fair traders are obliged to sustain various taxes to supply so great a deficiency in the revenue, they are deprived of their trade by a banditti, who are become a terror to the king's officers, and a pest to the community; some hundreds of them having (frequently) been seen assembled together on horse-back at one place, a sort of open rebellion highly inconsistent with, and greatly reproachful to, civil government". (4)

George Bishop did not mince his words, but in his condemnation of smuggling, however, he was neither an entirely disinterested party nor an impartial observer of the smuggling scene of his day, particularly since

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1. Bishop, op.cit., 11.
 2. Ibid., 11.
 3. Ibid., 11.
 4. Ibid., 4-5.

other sources show that he became a leading Maidstone distiller,¹ while prior to establishing his Maidstone distillery he had mastered the art of distilling in Holland where for several years he had not only managed a Dutch distillery² but had also an opportunity to observe the smuggling scene from the other side of the North Sea. In setting up his Maidstone distillery for the making of Hollands gin he firmly believed that it would "tend to prevent smuggling by rendering Hollands a home produce".³

Because smuggling can never be satisfactorily quantified, despite Bishop's estimates for the 1770's and 1780's, historians prefer to belittle the activity. Back in the 1950's Professor W.A. Cole pointed out that

"one of the most serious, and certainly the most baffling problems which confronts the student of eighteenth century trade statistics is that of smuggling. It is well known that high tariffs and the complexity of their administration provided a constant stimulus to all kinds of evasion (4) -

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1. George Bishop was Mayor of Maidstone in 1777 and 1786 and quite a lot is known about him and his business from an article by John W. Bridge, "Maidstone Geneva: An Old Maidstone Industry", which was first published in Archaeologia Cantiana, Volume LXV (1952), and is reproduced in Roake and Whyman, op.cit., 227-35. As a distiller he was sufficiently well-known to be mentioned by Edward Hasted in Volume IV of the Second Edition (Canterbury, 1798) of his History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent where, among the industries of Maidstone, there was "a Distillery, erected and carried on here to a very large extent, by Mr. George Bishop, from which is produced the well-known Maidstone Geneva, being of such a magnitude, that no less than seven hundred hogs are kept from the surplus of the grains from it", 267. In The Universal British Directory (1791) George Bishop Esq. is listed as a Justice of the Peace and there is also mention of three competing distilleries, viz: George Bishop & Co., George Post and Samuel Stephens. In an advertisement drawn up by George Bishop from the Maidstone distillery, 20 June 1795, he advertised "MAIDSTONE HOLLANDS Equal to any Imported", Bridge, op.cit., 235.
 2. Bridge, op.cit., 233.
 3. Ibid., 233.
 4. Ralph Davis, "The Rise of Protection in England, 1669-1786", Economic History Review, 2nd Series, Volume XIX, No.2 (August, 1966), 306-17; E.E. Hoon, The Organization of the English Customs System, 1696-1786 (1938), 1-3, refers to "the loss of millions of pounds due to illicit trade provoked by the incidence of excessive duties, and the introduction of hopeless complexity into the customs organization"; while the years 1727-1760 represented "The Period of Frantic Restrictions and Fearless Smuggling" in the view of H. Atton and H.H. Holland, The King's Customs (1908), Volume I, which is the title to Chapter VII, 204-75.

fraudulent entries at the customs and the re-landing of goods entered for re-export as well as direct import smuggling (1) - until the incentive was at length removed by the triumph of free trade in the nineteenth century. (2) But it has generally been held that although smuggling was certainly widespread, the problem of its precise extent, or even its probable order of magnitude, defies solution";

so much so, that "at this stage, we cannot investigate in detail all branches of the illicit trade".³

In a subsequent study of The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England (1962) P.J. Bowden confesses that "it would be of great interest to know the real extent of the leakage of British wool to the Continent; but smuggled trade always defies any attempt at accurate analysis".⁴ Recently in February 1975 the subject of measuring smuggling again inconclusively dominated the pages of The Economic History Review. In the first of two articles Professor and

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1. Kentish smuggling also covered goods the export of which was forbidden, notably wool, the most obvious outlet for which existed in Romney Marsh, Chalklin, op.cit., 177, and in particular Ditchfield and Clinch, op.cit., "Romney Marsh in the Days of Smuggling". 'Wool running' was the term used to denote the illicit trade of exporting wool out of England in such a manner as to evade export duties, references to which can be traced to Romney Marsh, Dover, Kingsdown, Thanet and Canterbury; a means of escaping detection was to employ a 'back exit' with access to water transport, so that Romney Marsh 'wool running' proceeded via Faversham, for instance, during the eighteenth century, A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain (6th Ed., 1762), op.cit., Volume I, 150; possibly even via Gravesend, The Kentish Gazette, 26 May 1768. Also during the seventeenth century large quantities of fullers' earth, the export of which was prohibited, were dispatched illegally from Kent, Chalklin, op.cit., 179. Bullion was yet another commodity, the export of which was illegal, but it is well known that the export of gold, or 'the guinea trade', was conducted from Folkestone and Deal, Stead, op.cit., 225-7, and The Kentish Garland (1882), Volume II, 648-9.
 2. As late as 1854 the rector of Smarden recorded a smuggling episode and knew of a female smuggler of spirits, F.J. Harvey Denton, A Parcel of Kent (1924), 263-4.
 3. W.A. Cole, "Trends in Eighteenth Century Smuggling", Economic History Review, 2nd Series, Volume X (1957-8), 395. This article goes on to make an estimate of the quantitative importance of smuggling, ibid., 395-409.
 4. P.J. Bowden, The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England (1962), 196.

Mrs. Mui concluded with the following question:

"must we conclude that the quantitative importance of smuggling during the eighteenth century is irretrievably lost? In any precise way, yes". (1)

In the second article Professor Cole re-emphasised the point from his previous article that "any estimate of smuggling is 'bound to be speculative and cannot be exact'".² Although Professor Cole's original attempt in 1957-8 to measure the extent and fluctuations of the illicit trade in tea during the eighteenth century commanded considerable interest, twenty years later historians are no further afield on the road to exact measurement, which raises questions about periods other than the eighteenth century, about many commodities other than tea and more generally about the degree to which the quantitative importance of smuggling will remain "conjectural or impressionistic".³

Direct import smuggling had already become by the mid-eighteenth century an established and important Kentish occupation. In economic terms there had to be incentives to smuggle, which were present and expanding as and when successive governments imposed higher taxes on teas, wines, spirits, tobacco, snuff, lace and silks.⁴ The background to eighteenth century smuggling

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1. Hoh-Cheung and Lorna H. Mui, "Trends in Eighteenth-Century Smuggling Reconsidered", The Economic History Review, Second Series, Volume XXVIII, No.1. (February 1975), 43.
 2. W.A. Cole, "The Arithmetic of Eighteenth-Century Smuggling : A Rejoinder", The Economic History Review, Second Series, Volume XXVIII, No.1. (February 1975), 44.
 3. Mui, op.cit., 28.
 4. Davis, Economic History Review, op.cit., 306-17; T.S. Ashton, An Economic History of England : The Eighteenth Century (1959), 162-3, shows that "in 1698 the standard rate of tax on imports was 10%, but, under the pressure of wars, this was increased to 15% in 1704, 20% in 1747, and 25% in 1759. During the American War of Independence, in 1779 and 1782, further increases were made, each of 5% on the existing duties", etc.

existed in costly wars which were financed in part from indirect taxation,¹ at the same time as the consumer market for imported luxuries was expanding.² For these reasons, therefore, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries emerged as the peak era of illicit trading, which well explains the fact that while fighting a major enemy abroad the government during the French and Napoleonic Wars was compelled to do battle with smugglers, in order to protect its own fiscal revenues. It was during these years that Huskisson, as Secretary to the Treasury, wrote:

"smuggling is carried on so generally and by such large gangs in Kent and Sussex, there can exist no hope of checking it but by the constant and most active vigilance of strong military patrols with re-inforcements ready to come to their assistance. Deal goes to such daring lengths that patrols should be established within the town and for two or three miles east and west of same". (3)

1. Davis, Economic History Review, op.cit., 306-17; Ashton, op.cit., 162-3, having referred to prohibitions and high duties giving rise to smuggling later observes that "the only possible cure for smuggling was to remove the incentive", ibid., 165, ie: "the existence of a marked price difference between the prices in England and those abroad".
2. In the final analysis it is difficult to assess what proportion of the rising consumption of certain imported goods was smuggled into the country. The Accountant of the East India Company calculated in 1784 that hardly 1/3 of the tea consumed in Britain had been legally imported, Ashton, op.cit., 165. The Maidstone Journal, and Kentish Advertiser, 29 August 1786, 2, reported of port smuggling, "from a calculation lately made, it is evident, that the consumption of what is called red port, in London, exceeds by 10,000 pipes annually, the quantity of real wine of that description entered in the Custom-house Books".
3. Quoted by Bradley, op.cit., 148. The government did everything in its power to put down smuggling, but Professor Ashton, op.cit., 164, concluded that the measures taken to suppress smuggling seem to have been of little effect. It was "a tolerant and cynical age", ibid., 165, while Bradley, op.cit., 145, refers to the whole countryside being in sympathy "with cheating the national revenue". The magnitude of illicit trade throughout the eighteenth century made preventive measures, including firm procedures against offenders, matters of particular importance in customs administration; for instance, soldiers by an Order in Council were directed to assist in customs enforcement, Hoon, op.cit., 286-7, and as an illustration the Prime Minister William Pitt ordered soldiers in January 1785 to burn all the boats at Deal; yet a contemporary could observe of Deal in 1808: "It has been said, and probably with truth, that the practice of smuggling at Deal, and its vicinity, is in some degree, to use a common expression, winked at by Government, through the necessity of encouraging a hardy race of seamen upon this coast, ...smugglers, from their extensive local knowledge, and extreme courage, being best calculated to relieve others from danger in bad weather", Brayley (1808), op.cit., VIII, 1020.

(contd. over)

Admiral Edward Vernon in correspondence, dated 13 November 1745, calculated that Deal had over "200 able young men and sea faring people who are known to have no visible way of getting a living but by the infamous trade of smuggling, many keeping a horse and arms to be ready at all calls", compared to possibly 400 at Dover and 300 each at Ramsgate and Folkestone.¹

Although numerous critics poured scorn on the character of smugglers,² evidence also suggests that smuggling was socially respectable during the

Footnote 3: (contd)

3. The government tried through legislation as much as force to make smuggling more difficult. The legislative side to the story is detailed and complicated, with hundreds of regulations reducing the customs service to a state of general confusion, Hoon, op.cit., 2-3. Even the co-operation of the Admiralty over and above revenue cutters, inland riding officers and soldiers was provided for, ibid., 287, yet the government seemed at times to despair of arresting the evil, Bradley, op.cit., 148.
1. William Laird Cloves, The Royal Navy : A History from the Earliest Times to the Present (1898), Volume III, 16. There are several testimonies to the good organization behind smuggling, the Hon. John Byng, later 5th Viscount Torrington, in admiring the smugglers' tools of trade commenting at Aylesford in 1790, "How often have I wish'd to be able to purchase a Horse from their excellent Stables", Ed: C. Bruyn Andrews, The Torrington Diaries (1938), Volume VI, 153. Smuggling in its most developed form was a gang enterprise, well equipped in essentials like intelligence, horses and arms. Kentish smuggling was accompanied by much violence as shown for instance by R.H. Goodsall, A Kentish Patchwork (1966), 119, 121-3, 124-5; or The Times, 17 October 1806; 11 March 1807, 3b; 29 May 1820, 3c; and 30 May 1820, 3b. Perhaps it would be no exaggeration to state that the eighteenth century counterpart to present day bank robberies and the hijacking of commercial vehicles existed then in highway robberies and violent smuggling.
2. Admiral Vernon noted in 1745, that "this smuggling has converted those employed in it from honest industrious fishermen, to lazy, drunken, and profligate smugglers", Cloves, op.cit., Volume III, 16. "Smugglers Who are They?" was the question posed in The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume VII (August 1737), 458: "Whosoever, Sir, may be the Importers and Proprietors of Run Goods, it is most certain, that the lowest class of Men, the Dregs of the People, those Persons who compose Mobs, are the Persons employed in the running of these Goods; and they get so much more, Sir, by this illicit trade, than they can earn by honest Labour, that they neglect their Labour for the sake of this vile and destructive Trade".

eighteenth century.¹ Adam Smith denounced those who took a high moral line, for "to pretend to have any scruple about buying smuggled goods would in most countries be regarded as one of those pedantic pieces of hypocrisy which, instead of gaining credit with anybody, serve only to expose the person who affects to practise them to being a greater knave than most of his neighbours".² Only occasionally did local communities rise up against smugglers,³ and Professor Ashton has contended that "most members of the

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1. It is becoming apparent, and there is documentary evidence to prove the point, that many of the great landed families and other prominent people who dominated eighteenth century national and local politics were involved in smuggling, in many instances indirectly rather than directly. How could legislation hope to succeed when so famous a statesman as Sir Robert Walpole was a party to contraband dealings, if only at the receiving end? The smuggling activities of Walpole and his relations and friends are told in J.H. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole : The Making of a Statesman (1956), 120-2. The Walpoles, the Burchetts (Josiah Burchett then being Secretary of the Admiralty), the Stanhopes and the Turners all wrote absolutely frankly and without the slightest compunction about their smuggling ventures. To them there was nothing abnormal or immoral about cheating the governments which they served, and even when Walpole was Chancellor of the Exchequer he took in contraband lace from Holland, and "in this he was not alone; many great men did likewise", ibid., 122. All this suggests that smuggling was blessed with a stamp of respectability. The counterpart in Thanet existed in Henry Fox, Lord Holland, who during the Seven Years War (1756-63) had occupied perhaps the most lucrative post in any eighteenth century government, that of Paymaster General of the Forces, and who subsequently constructed at Kingsgate a magnificent mansion and estate with complete disregard for their cost, W.J. Reed, "Holland in Kingsgate", East Kent Critic (July 1964), 2; or "An Account of Kingsgate near Margate", The European Magazine (August 1787), 95. Lord Holland had a landing stage constructed to serve his estate and contemporaries were quick to implicate him in smuggling, particularly the poet Thomas Gray, The European Magazine, op.cit., 96. On the Kingsgate estate also see below, Chapter VII.
 2. Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations (1776), Volume II, 379-80.
 3. Denton, op.cit., 264; one exception occurred in Goudhurst in 1747 when some local inhabitants formed themselves into the Goudhurst Band of Militia and challenged the notorious Hawkhurst Gang who were renowned for terrorizing communities, which is again but one reflection of the violence which accompanied smuggling; also at Hawkhurst smugglers "go armed; and although they are well known, People dare not venture to molest any of them", Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XXV (1745-50), 104.

public looked with favour on those who provided them with cheap spirits, tobacco and beer, and even philosophers (a reference to Adam Smith) were on the side of the law breakers".¹ Even George Bishop, for all his condemnation of smuggling in the 1780's, was forced to admit that "country gentlemen and farmers have their spirits, teas, wines, etc., much cheaper from the smuggler than they can of the fair trader".² Smuggling in practice was an all embracing activity involving the squire and parson as much as the merchant, innkeeper, tradesman, sailor or labourer. It has been said of Thanet that "the Isle formed in this exhilarating pursuit one great brotherhood; squire, parson, merchant, tradesman, sailor and agricultural labourer were all in it".³ Indeed, as if to labour the point, The Rochester Gazette noted of

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1. Ashton, op.cit., 165; Adam Smith viewed smuggling as an activity in accord with natural justice, national laws making "that a crime which nature never meant to be so", ibid., 165.
 2. Bishop, op.cit., 12. He also felt that "according to the best accounts from all parts of the kingdom, the maritime counties have about the same proportion of licenced to unlicenced houses as the county of Kent", 12, there being "in the county of Kent 1,607 public houses, licenced to sell spirituous liquors by retail, 4,821 unlicenced, where are sold smuggled spirits in small quantities, and the poor labouring people assemble to drink without being seen by their masters or the parish officers", 11. Close to Maidstone "in the parishes of Barming, East and West Farleigh, Loose, Boughton, Linton and Hunton, ... there are eleven licenced public houses, and forty-one private retailers of smuggled spirits; the greatest quantity of which are sold by the unlicenced houses", 11-12. These facts distressed him for "if publicans entice people to drunkenness and debauchery, how much more do the private retailers", 12.
 3. Bradley, op.cit., 144. It is noted in other sources "that not a few substantial or comfortable Kentish folk of today owe their substance and comfort mainly to their grandfathers, the eminent 'free traders'", or smugglers, Stead, op.cit., 218, 220-5, or The Kentish Garland (1882), op.cit., Volume II, 648-9.

Margate Smuggling in 1846:

"in the pleasant sea-port town of Margate, some thirty five years ago, everybody smuggled. The parson smuggled, the clerk smuggled, the magistrate smuggled, the lawyer smuggled, the lodging house keeper smuggled, the lodger smuggled, the exciseman smuggled, the custom house officer smuggled (1) - everybody smuggled!... Abutting upon the sea, upon the grounds of the Clifton Baths, near the Fort, is a lime kiln, and the lime burner, from time to time, as he required chalk for making lime, penetrated the cliff. The resulting cavern has been used as a smuggling hideout, and what adds to the singularity of the case, is, that the lime kiln is rented of a gentleman who, for many years, has been the Solicitor to the Treasury... Suspicion was alarmed by the very nature of the hiding place, which is also within a very short distance of the Coast Guard station". (2)

Smuggling was directed in many instances by brains at the top of society, but it was ruffians who undertook all the physical work for men of standing, the latter financing the operations, paying danger money to the crews, and having a retailing or consuming interest in the end products. The identity of the men of standing, whether they be local landowners, bankers or merchants was rarely divulged.³ The Times reported on 13 September 1806 how

"on Wednesday two cutters were sent into Dover on a charge of smuggling. They are said to belong to a very opulent person at Hastings, who during several wars has carried on a very extensive intercourse with the Continent". (4)

Smuggling offered the possibility of earning great profits, a handsome pay off in economic terms for the risks incurred from the evasion of high tariff duties, often after only a brief period of exertion,⁵ but equally the risks

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1. According to Ashton, op.cit., 165, the dishonest among the riding officers not only connived at but took part in smuggling; another good instance of customs officer involvement in June 1785 is cited in Ed: Henry B. Wheatley, Memoirs of Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall (1772-1784)(1884), Volume IV, 140-1, also Hoon, op.cit., 192, 286.
 2. The Rochester Gazette, 14 April 1846, 3d; The Maidstone & South Eastern Gazette, 21 April 1846, 5b.
 3. Denton, op.cit., 182, 264.
 4. The Times, 13 September 1806.
 5. The participation of agricultural labourers and seamen in smuggling to their own material advantage has been referred to above; also E.J. Hobsbawm & G. Rudé, Captain Swing (1969), 43.

were tremendous and capture could mean death by hanging or transportation overseas.¹ There can be no doubt that many prominent persons, who could afford the ostentatious consumption of luxuries, were interested in the end products of smuggling. Through the Sevenoaks district, for instance, passed one of the main smuggling routes between the coast and London, and a great country house such as Knole would have seen its fair share of illicit brandy and other contraband spirit on its dining tables, while much undutied silk adorned the backs of its ladies. Mr. A.G. Bradley has written of smuggling: "some people seem to think it was a sort of intermittent but exciting pastime, by which a bibulous generation living near the sea got a portion of its table liquor free of duty, or a lady here and there with dreadful joy secured a silk dress or a box of gloves".² Quite to the contrary smuggling was organized on a large scale, it had a history extending over many centuries, and it was an extremely profitable trade, so that "hundreds of families rose by it from obscurity into prominence; many of position and wealth today owe their origin to smuggling or to financing smuggling, of which all memory has been lost".³

The eighteenth century was essentially the dramatic era of smuggling, when demands for luxuries were greater, when methods of navigation improved, and when whole fleets of fast ships for carrying contraband were built on both sides of the Channel,⁴ for

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1. For instance, The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume II (August 1732), 925, reporting the conclusion of the Maidstone Assizes; the head of the notorious Hawkhurst Gang was executed at Tyburn in 1749, Denton, op.cit., 264; a six oared galley carrying contraband arrived off Margate on 1 September 1821 resulting from which 18 smugglers were arrested and four were hanged on Penenden Heath before a crowd estimated at 40,000 on 4 April 1822. Often common smugglers when arrested were put promptly on a man of war and pressganged into naval service, Bradley, op.cit., 147; The Times, 29 May 1820, 3c.
 2. Bradley, op.cit., 144.
 3. Ibid., 144-5.
 4. The activity of cross channel smuggling from Northern Europe extended even to the building of great distilleries in France and Holland for the specific purpose of meeting the requirements of the contraband trade with England, Bradley, op.cit., 146-7; also Bishop, op.cit., 11, as noted in this section above.

"hitherto the lugger had been the smuggler's favourite rig; now sloops and schooners, as they manoeuvred better and required fewer hands, came into more general use. The Customs found it difficult to build ships that could outsail them". (1)

It was for this reason, as noted above, that H.M. Customs and Excise cast an eye in the direction of White's shipyard in Broadstairs.²

It is one of the purposes of this analysis to draw attention to some of the more reliable evidence, apart from direct customs records, bearing on the history of smuggling during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The shadow of the smuggler is always present throughout the whole of the Cinque Port country, and perhaps more insistently than in any other part of England, but where does the historian of smuggling locate his sources? Several writers have put together and published all the smuggling stories which they have been able to collect,³ amounting in total to a considerable literature, but few students of the subject have gone to the fountain head and treated the subject from the authority of the mass of details lying in various official quarters all over England. Because smuggling enters into English folklore wild and legendary stories dominate its history, which makes it difficult to separate legend from fact. The task of the economic historian is to collect only factual evidence, but at this point he comes up against one immediate difficulty: lack of information. Smugglers by definition did not intentionally leave records behind them. The number of contemporary works which touch on the history of smuggling does not exceed twenty-five, which is considerably less than for almost any other activity of man. George Bishop's Observations (1783) in this respect represent an exceedingly rare treatise. The extent of smuggling has to be calculated and assessed from

1. Bradley, op.cit., 147.

2. See this section above.

3. There is a considerable recent literature on smuggling including John Vivian, Tales of the Cornish Smugglers (Truro, 1969). Other works include John Banks, Reminiscences of Smugglers and Smuggling (Newcastle, 1966) and first published in 1871; and Memoirs of a Smuggler, compiled from His Diary and Journal : containing the Principal Events in the Life of John Rattenbury, of Beer, Devonshire (Sidmouth, 1837), recent editions Newcastle, 1964 and 1967. Also, Frank Graham, Smuggling Inns (Newcastle, 1966), and E.F. Nicholls, Honest Thieves: The Violent Heyday of English Smuggling (1973).

mere scraps of information, coupled with anecdotes and stories which more than likely have come down to the present generation exaggerated beyond comprehension. It is no easy task to calculate the volume and direction of contraband trading from mere scraps of written or oral information. However, there is one small statistical compensation. Surviving figures are likely to err on the conservative side. Since only a proportion of smuggling has ever come to light, the historian, in presenting whatever figures he discovers, is not likely to overstate his case.

A second body of evidence observed from the ground is almost as difficult to assess as separating legend from fact. Visual evidence is claimed to abound in cliff caverns, in tunnels or in the cellars of old properties. This evidence too is not always authentic. It has been common to deduce smuggling from the nature of the coast, from the general lie of the land or from buildings and then draw conclusions, from chalk cliffs with their readily-made hiding-holes and little secluded bays, and yet still more from the great flat marshes of Romney, Pevensey and the Stour, theoretically "so easy of escape to the local expert, so difficult of pursuit to the always undermanned Revenue forces".¹ The shape of cliffs, houses, tunnels, and cellars can change appreciably over time.² As a general principle it is not evidence enough to look at cliff caverns or cellars in old houses, and by putting two and two together to conclude from this that there was extensive smuggling. Topographical and architectural evidence can be as misleading to the historian as the numerous stories handed down by fathers and grandfathers.

1. Bradley, op.cit., 145.

2. "The discovery of a 'smugglers' cave' is one of the highlights of a seaside holiday for children and around the coast of Thanet there are more than a hundred caves to choose from...Sea caves are the spearhead of the sea's attack upon the land. During the course of a single day there may be as many as 7 or 8,000 waves breaking in constant succession upon every part of the coast, and every one of them causes some sort of change", "The Thanet Coast" Thanet Panorama : A Modern Guide to the Island (Isle of Thanet Geographical Association, 1966), 4.

A true picture, in short, of some part of the activity can be built up only from masses of details remaining in customs and excise records, legal proceedings, newspaper reports, and occasional contemporary references in diaries and correspondence. The historian must burrow industriously among the minutes of the Board of Customs and of the Ports, the reported trials of smugglers, the correspondence of the collectors of customs, details of seizures, and other kinds of authentic sources, which "tell no lies but set forth the grim and naked facts".¹ For the layman, however, an easily accessible and surprisingly detailed source exists in newspapers. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries national and provincial newspapers frequently reported the achievements and failures of smugglers.

While it is romantic to think of seaside resorts growing out of old smuggling towns, references to Thanet smuggling are many between the 1720's and the 1840's. During October 1726 The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter announced that 30 small casks of French brandy were to be sold to the highest bidder in the Margate Customs House on 28 October.² A further 190 gallons of French brandy were advertised for sale "in several Lotts" during August 1729 at "the King's Ware-house in Margate".³ Late in September 1729 "the King's Warehouse in Ramsgate" auctioned off to the highest bidders, "in several Lotts, 209 Gallons of Foreign Brandy, 6 Quarts of Arrack, 5½ Gallons of Rum, and 100 lbs. of Cake Soap".⁴ Just about a month later a theft of wine at Reculver was reported as follows:

"whereas some Persons hath lately broke open the Storehouse at Reculvers, and carried off a Quantity of Wine and Brandy; the Hon. Commissioners of His Majesty's Customs promises a Reward of £20 to any Person or Persons who shall discover unto Edward Blackwith, Collector of the Customs at Faversham, one or more of the Persons concerned in the breaking open of the said Warehouse and carrying away the said Wine and Brandy, upon their being convicted". (5)

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1. Bradley, op.cit., 144.
 2. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 19-22 October 1726, 4.
 3. Ibid., 2-6 August 1729, 4.
 4. Ibid., 17-20 September 1729, 4.
 5. Ibid., 29 October - 1 November 1729, 4.

Thanet and East Kent smuggling, which was often large scale and well-organised and which assumed many different forms, intensified as the eighteenth century progressed. Richard Stead in Bygone Kent (1892) argued that

"whatever else Bygone Kent did it smuggled. It smuggled hard, it smuggled long, it smuggled not unprofitably". (1)

Six years later Henry Francis Abell in his History of Kent (1898) boldly asserted that smuggling was "the chief industry of Kent" during the eighteenth century.² He had, of course, his tongue in his cheek knowing full well that farming was the mainstay of the Kentish economy at that time. Some fifteen years previously an old Folkestone smuggler, Mr. E. Dale, recalled how in the early part of the nineteenth century "smuggling was looked upon as a legitimate occupation" and, "from high to low, the inhabitants of many towns on the south east coast were concerned in illicit trading".³

Kentish and Thanet smuggling not only long pre-dated the tariff build-up of the eighteenth century, but smuggling was often a two-way traffic. Several were the commodities which were smuggled prior to the better known contraband of the eighteenth century, such as tea, brandy, geneva, tobacco, snuff, lace or silks. Contraband trading had its origins in wool smuggling from the later thirteenth century onwards, when wool exports were taxed, followed by the stipulation that exported wool must be channelled through Calais. Because medieval England had developed a reputation in the great cloth-making centres of the Low Countries and Italy for producing the best quality wool in Europe, they welcomed its illicit shipment from England.

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1. Stead, op.cit., 218.
 2. H.F. Abell, History of Kent (Ashford, 1898), 275.
 3. English's Reminiscences of Old Folkestone Smugglers and Smuggling Days By an Old Folkestoner (Folkestone, c.1883); republished (Newcastle, 1967), 7. This booklet, which provides a vivid account of many smuggling episodes which took place in Folkestone and its neighbourhood, arose out of a series of articles in The Folkestone Express, which were written by John English, the Editor and owner, drawing on a verbal account given to him by an old smuggler, called E. Dale.

While known instances of medieval wool smuggling are rare, the Patent Rolls of the fourteenth century and the Close Rolls of the fifteenth century frequently provide details of the elaborate precautions which were adopted to ensure that no wool left English shores without first having paid the appropriate export duties.¹

During 1417 problems arose over what to do with wool salvaged from a wreck off Ramsgate. Following upon a petition from fifteen merchants an order was issued from Westminster, 30 November, which was recorded in the Close Rolls. It was addressed "to the collectors of customs and subsidies in the port of Sandwich", inviting them

"to view the Cocket made them the merchants by the customers in the port of London witnessing the parcels of their wool and the names of the masters of the ships wherein it was shipped and, if assured that the wool cast safe ashore is the same therein contained and none other, that the merchants did pay and agree the customs...thereupon due, and that it ought not to pertain to the King as wreck, to take of them security that they shall bring the wool to Calais and nowhere else over the sea and without taking custom or subsidy to suffer them to ship it in the port of Sandwich".

In their petition the merchants told how they had loaded and customed in the port of London wool in four ships but "those ships being bound for Calais

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1. An actual instance of wool smuggling was revealed when on 22 September 1350, William Condy, bailiff of Sandwich, was ordered to cause wool "of John Foghel of Sandwich and John Facy of Caleys to be kept in custody,... to cause their persons to be arrested and sent before the King and his Council at London without delay...To warn Stephen James of Sandwich, William de Yok, Henry de Littlebourn and certain others of Sandwich, to be there to give information... The King is informed that Stephen and the others lately arrested the said wool about Midnight at Kyngesdoune near the sea in Kent, brought there by night in two carts, to be laded in a small ship of Donkirke whereof John Gollard is master, near that place, to be taken to parts beyond the sea, without paying the custom or subsidy thereon, and they had the wool taken to Sandwich and delivered to the said bailiff there".

Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Edward III, Volume IX, 1349-54 (1906), 268.

were cast upon the 'rokkes' of Rammesgate by Sandwich in the Isle of Thanet and totally lost, and the wool cast safe ashore".¹

During the 'Mercantilist' seventeenth century export prohibitions in the interests of English clothiers took the place of export duties. Acts were passed forbidding the export of raw wool in 1661 and 1675.² The export of fullers' earth overseas was also prohibited, yet during the seventeenth century large amounts were despatched illegally from Kent.³ A further Act of Parliament of William III's reign⁴ tried to stamp out the illegal export of wool specifically from the Kent and Sussex coasts. Despite these legislative measures illicit shipments of Kentish wool and fullers' earth particularly to France flourished throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Canterbury had an important controlling interest in the wool smuggling trade of the 1660's.⁵ Published in 1669 was a work with a quaint title England's Glory, by the Benefit of Wool Manufactured Therein, which revealed how smugglers secured combed wool in Canterbury and then with "ten or twenty men well-armed to guard it, ...they will carry it 10 or 15 miles at night towards the sea".⁶ It was in 1669 that two vessels were ordered to patrol the coast, having instructions to search all suspected vessels, and as an extra deterrent a troop of horse guards was quartered in the vicinity of Canterbury.⁷ Thereafter cruisers, riding officers and naval and military support became regularly involved in the drive against smugglers. Perhaps at this point it should be noted that when historians refer to Kentish agriculture, they emphasise the county's significance as an extensive granary, which was also renowned commercially for its hops, apples and cherries, forgetting

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1. Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry V, Volume I, 1413-9 (1929), 416.
 2. Chalklin, op.cit., 177.
 3. Ibid., 179, or P.R.O. SP 16/408.
 4. 9 William III c.40.
 5. Chalklin, op.cit., 177.
 6. England's Glory, by the Benefit of Wool Manufactured Therein (1669), 17.
 7. Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1668-9 (H.M.S.O., 1894), 556; quoted also by Bowden, op.cit., 198.

perhaps that of all the wool producing counties of England around 1700 "the garden of England" was second to Lincolnshire in total wool production, producing about 1.3 million lbs. annually.¹

"Wool running" between the mouth of the East Swale and the North Foreland was noted by Daniel Defoe in the 1720's: "nay, even the owling trade (so they call the clandestine exporting of wool) has seem'd to be transposed from Rumney Marsh to this coast, and a great deal of it has been carry'd on between the mouth of the East Swale and the North Foreland".² Within this area two decades later in March 1745 The Gentleman's Magazine reported on how some smugglers had entered the house of Mr. Rose, who was a farmer near Sheerness, plundering it of £1,500 of wool; a week later a vessel was seized with £3,000 of wool "designed for France, and eight of the rogues were secured".³

Wool smuggling from Kent was frequently reported throughout the eighteenth century. During 1773 the editor of The Gentleman's Magazine was informed by "a gentleman of veracity" that on his way home from France he had visited "Van Robbe's cloth manufactory at Abbeville, where he saw, in their magazines, an amazing quantity of English wool, which they made no secret of". This observation appeared by way of a footnote to an article concerned with how to suppress smuggling, which referred to "the intolerable and much lamented grievance of our wool being carried to France, so fatal to our own woollen manufacture".⁴ It was observed how smugglers transported wool to Dunkirk and to other French ports, because "the French are too wise and know our fondness for their commodities too well, ever to pay us one livre of their

1. Bowden, op.cit., 40.

2. Defoe, op.cit., 112.

3. The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume XV (March 1745), 163.

4. "An easy and practicable Plan for increasing the consumption of Tea, augmenting the Revenue, suppressing Smuggling, and lowering the price of one essential article of Provisions, which by habit is become a necessary of life", ibid., Volume XLIII (1773), 60.

money in return for anything we carry them".¹

Fourteen years later The Maidstone Journal drawing on reports from Normandy carried the following report on wool smuggling to France:

"the smuggling of raw wool has, for this little time past, been practiced with...extent and success. Above 2,000 hogsheads of wool have been landed on the coast of Picardy and Normandy, undamaged and without much loss of time! The wool was combed, and so well pressed and packed that each hogshead contained, on the average, 3 cwt. The average price paid for the wool was not less than 1s., nor more than 15d., per lb. The quality of the wool was mixed, and of all sorts, but for the most part, such as, if it had been vended at home, would have fetched about 8d., a lb.". (2)

In addition to this 6,000 cwt. of wool at a minimum, the newspaper had further ascertained that

"through the whole range of the Kentish and Sussex coast... the vent of raw wool /had/ been of late uncommonly large! There is every evidence for thinking that illicit trade has been very busy. Much wool has been carried out in the smuggling cutters; much is certified to have left our ports in Kent and Sussex as if destined to other parts of England". (3)

Even the subsequent wars with France did not finally end illicit wool shipments as The Times was able to report on 3 September 1801:

"English wool still continues to be smuggled to a great amount into the ports of France. /Also/ a great number of English manufacturers in our staple manufactures of cottons, woollens, leather, and pottery are said to have found their way into Normandy. The subject has...been taken up by the principal persons who are likely to sustain the greatest injury from these emigrations, and from the exportation of raw materials of trade. It is a subject of very high importance... At the same time it appears incredible that wool can be smuggled away to any great amount considering the number of our cruizers off the enemy's coast and the blockade of their harbours". (4)

Allied to Thanet's role in five centuries of wool smuggling were other forms of outward smuggling which assumed a degree of significance during

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1. The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume XLIII (1773), op.cit., 60.
 2. The Maidstone Journal, 25 September 1787, 4.
 3. Ibid., 27 September 1787, 4.
 4. The Times, 3 September 1801, 2d.

Tudor and Stuart times. Recent research has uncovered several neglected aspects of Kentish smuggling commencing with sixteenth century Thanet wheat smuggling, where it was not taxation which was being avoided, but prohibitions on the export of grain.¹ As an underdeveloped country sixteenth century England was confronted by the well-known problem of population growth outpacing food supplies, which produced not only threats of famine but also sustained and prolonged inflation. These were hard realities in a society burdened by poverty and underemployment, and because Tudor monarchs were not secure on their thrones they felt obliged to preserve food supplies on occasions by forbidding exports. Such interventions were not to the liking of Thanet farmers and seamen who had long enjoyed commercial contacts particularly with the densely-populated Low Countries.² 1586 was a year of famine when cereal prices on the London market reached unprecedented levels. Grain shipments had been prohibited, yet according to Privy Council records corn shipments to the Netherlands from Thanet and elsewhere still continued, for "there are of late eight ships with wheat and salt, laden within the Isle of Thanet and at Sandwich, arrived at Sluce in Flanders and sundry other ships to be laden with grain in Kent are expected".³ The salt alluded to was derived from evaporating salt water at Stonar on the Isle of Thanet.⁴

The sixteenth century was also notable for other contraband dealings, which find only brief mention in the literature on the subject, notably for the illegal smuggling abroad of cannon, some of which had been produced by the flourishing iron industry of Kent and Sussex, while against the background

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1. Muskett, op.cit., 10-1.
 2. Sandwich trading accounts show corn being exported overseas to the Low Countries during the Middle Ages.
 3. Muskett, op.cit., 10-1.
 4. Saltworks at Stonar close to Sandwich are mentioned, for instance, in The History and Antiquities of Rochester and Its Environs (Rochester, 1772), 327-8; or in The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), 116-7.

of a Protestant Reformation there were illegal shipments into the country of Catholic literature and Jesuit priests.¹ All forms of smuggling have legitimate explanations, in much the same way as the thinking of a philosopher is best understood by appreciating the background in which he lived and was brought up. The last point was no less true of the eighteenth century "guinea trade". This developed against a "Mercantilist" background which preached the virtues of export values exceeding import values so as to sustain a net inward movement of gold and silver, which, it was believed, enhanced the wealth of the nation. Not surprisingly bullion too was a commodity the export of which was illegal, but the profits of what became known as "the guinea trade" were too enormous for the temptation to be resisted whenever an English guinea was worth 30s. in Paris.² It was considered bad enough in 1773 "that we should annually send out £250,000 of our Specie, ... for the purchase of 2,500,000 lb. weight of tea, at two shillings a pound, (so much being the supposed quantity now smuggled,) besides much more of our specie which is sent abroad to purchase other superfluous contraband articles from France", added to which it is "universally agreed, that the article of tea lays the very foundation of every smuggling cargo, without which there could not subsist one smuggling vessel out of twenty which at present carry on that destructive trade".³

Quite apart from French desires to possess English guineas, it was noted in 1745 that the Dutch, who were still major European bankers and financiers, cared for nothing "but ready hard money".⁴ There is much evidence

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1. Muskett, op.cit., 13-5; also P. Muskett, "Smuggling in the Cinque Ports in the Sixteenth Century: Part II", Cantium: A Magazine of Kent Local History, Volume III, No. 2. (Summer 1971), 39-41.
 2. The Kentish Garland, Volume II (1882), op.cit., 648-9.
 3. The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume XLIII (1773), op.cit., 60.
 4. Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XXV (1745-50), op.cit., 104-5.

in the Customs Letter Books of the eighteenth century touching on illegal exports of coin. The quantities handled in single shipments ran into thousands of guineas.¹ To the Customs and Excise Commissioners the export of specie was one of the most disturbing aspects of the entire smuggling trade. A 1745 House of Commons Committee was informed that up to £1,000,000 per annum was lost in specie shipments during the 1730's and 1740's.² Just as the Napoleonic Wars and blockades failed to prevent wool smuggling so also they did not halt "the guinea trade", which was often associated with the carriage of government despatches to English spies in France, and with return cargoes of silk, brandy, lace or tobacco, plus letters from the spies.³

Another feature associated with Kentish smuggling during the Napoleonic Wars involved operating escape routes for French prisoners of war in England. It might seem strange against the background of the two World Wars of the twentieth century to learn that French officers who were taken prisoner during the Napoleonic Wars enjoyed the somewhat dubious benefits of being on parole and thus able to join in the congenial society of the Kent countryside. Inevitably they came into contact with Kentish smugglers who, in return for cash payments, whisked them back to their homeland. Official figures show that of 2,142 paroled French commissioned officers in England in 1812, 242 broke their parole, 63 were retaken and 179 escaped, compared to 57 escapees in 1810 and 71 in 1811.⁴

What were in effect "aided escapes" prompted the government in 1812 to order "the seizure of all gallies of a certain description, carrying eight oars", in order "to check the escape of French prisoners, as also the guinea

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1. Stead, op.cit., 225-7; The Kentish Garland, Volume II (1882), op.cit., 648-9.
 2. Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XXV (1745-50), op.cit., 102-4.
 3. The Kentish Garland, Volume II (1882), op.cit., 648-9.
 4. The Literary Panorama, Volume XII (1812-3), 316.

export and smuggling system". Accordingly seventeen vessels were seized at Deal, ten at Folkestone, and "they are a beautiful description of boat, about forty foot long, so painted on the outside as to elude the sight at sea in the night, so lightly constructed that nothing can catch them, and in calm weather they can row over to the French shore in two hours".¹

The government further authorized Charles Jones, who was an Admiralty Solicitor, to investigate the various methods by which the escapes of French prisoners were effected. Their escape was facilitated in at least three ways

- (a) Smugglers or their associates on the coast preceded with horses and covered carriages to pre-arranged depots, from where they travelled back to the coast through the night or during the day, hiding in woods and coverts as was necessary. The horses they used were excellent and having embarked at night the prisoners before morning were in France. These escapes were generally in pursuance of orders received from France.
- (b) Certain and disreputable inhabitants of the parole areas offered their services as conductors to those prisoners who chose their own plans of escape. Generally these prisoners travelled in post-chaises the conductor's role being that of a guide, paying any expenses and giving orders on the road to any inn-keepers, drivers, etc., so as to prevent discovery or suspicion as to the nature of the travellers.
- (c) There were some prisoners who, on having one among their number who could speak good English, travelled without conductors, but their escapes were aided in many cases by inn-keepers and post-boys who, if they had a greater sense of duty, could prevent successful escapes. At Canterbury the landlord of the Fountain Inn had arranged the transport of six French prisoners at a time without a conductor. (2)

Waiters and searchers of the customs service were stationed at the Thanet ports to supervise the loading and discharging of goods.³ In 1773 it was reckoned that "little short of £100,000 per annum" was spent by the government on "the admiralty, excise, and custom-house cutters, sloops and smacks" which, "at a very great expense", were being "constantly employed... to cruize against the smugglers".⁴ Newspapers and other sources continued

1. The Literary Panorama, Volume XII (1812-3), op.cit., 509-10.
2. Wallace Harvey, Whitstable and the French Prisoners of War (Whitstable, 1971), 41-2.
3. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 37.
4. The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume XLIII (1773), op.cit., 61.

to advertise auctions of confiscated contraband goods, which represented government successes in trying to stamp out the activity of smuggling. A correspondent of The Times found himself on Margate pier early in October 1805 where he noticed a seized smuggling vessel:

"the Pier is a scene of incessant activity. Numerous ships are unloading in the harbour...I noticed the seizure of a smuggler a few days since. This vessel constructed so lately as last winter, now exhibits a singular appearance. According to the established regulation, she has been cut through the hull into three distinct and equal portions, and she is at this instant on sale with her masts, rigging, stores and cargo". (1)

He also noted how geneva, a spirit distilled from grain and flavoured with juniper berries, and known otherwise as Hollands, fetched up to 11s. per gallon under the hammer, but "this is to be the last auction of this kind" in Margate, and "in future the commodity is to be sent to London, there to be disposed of at the periodical sales of the Customs".² It was on account of allegations of corruption that Margate forfeited its right to hold auctions of seized contraband, the reason given for a change of policy on this occasion being a misapplication of funds at Margate. Given that geneva was fetching approximately 10s. per gallon under the hammer, a seizure on 6 March 1811 of 528 gallons of geneva gin in 150 casks "under the cliff...in the Parish of St. Peter's" had a value placed on it of over £250, but seized also at the same time were "69 gallons of spirit of brandy, in 19 casks".³

Three years later the London Customs House, in Lower Thames Street, and much of its eighteenth century books and papers, were destroyed in a

1. The Times, 5 October 1805, 3a.

2. Ibid., 5 October 1805, 3a.

3. Correspondence between James Denne and V. Simmons (Margate, 1828), The Parker Collection, a miscellaneous pamphlet in the Margate Public Library Local Collection.

fire which broke out on the Saturday morning of 12 February 1814.¹ Back in 1718 the first London Customs House had also been burnt down,² but fortunately despite these disasters, a Letter Book of the 1740's covering Thanet has survived, and it provides some interesting insights into local smuggling at that time. A letter to the Customs House in London, dated 17 October 1743, advised that "Mr. Cowper the Surveyor at Margate hath several times informed us that they have no signal there and that one is very necessary... to communicate intelligence to one another".³ Ten days later after the sloop Ia Margritt Francoise carrying tobacco bound for Calais had parted with her anchors and was brought into Ramsgate harbour, it was reported that "we have boarded Tidesmen to prevent Embezzlement of the Cargo".⁴

All was not well at Margate during December 1743 when on the 24th., because "the six oared Boat there is quite worn out and not fit for the Service", a new vessel was requested,⁵ followed on the 27th. by a report

1. A graphic contemporary account shows that this fire

"burnt with great fury, and in a few hours destroyed that vast pile of building, and all the valuable property, including books and papers deposited therein...The engines arrived soon after seven o'clock [the fire having broken out shortly before 6 o'clock]. About 8...all attempts to save the Customs House were abandoned... Documents approaching 100 years old have been nearly all destroyed.

The actual loss to [the] Government...cannot be calculated; books, bonds, debentures, pearls, coral, valuable property of every description, and securities of all kinds have been consumed.

Business is, and must remain, quite at a standstill for some time". The Literary Panorama, Volume XV (1814), 266-8. Shortly afterwards it was reported that a new Customs House would be built, at an estimated cost of £209,000, exclusive of £12,000 for piling, sleepers and planking, ibid., Volume XV (1814), 631.

2. Ibid., Volume XV (1814), 270.

3. H.M. Customs and Excise Archives, Letters from Sandwich, 1743-1750, Customs 51/25, 24.

4. Ibid., 25.

5. Ibid., 31.

from the Margate surveyor "that he and his men were out along the coast and at night five of them met with a Gang of Smugglers, arm'd about 24 in number who beat the said Officers very much, particularly Henry Bassett, whose Head is in such a miserable condition that the Surveyor thought proper to put him under the Care of a Surgeon which we humbly hope your Hons. will approve of".¹ The surveyors both of Ramsgate and Margate reported that smugglers "travel in such Gangs and so well-armed that it is impossible for the Officers to cope with them, there being seldom or never less than 30 in a Gang who bid defiance to all the Officers when they meet them".²

The Customs establishment at Margate, Ramsgate and Kingsgate at Christmas 1743 comprised one supervisor, two tide surveyors, one waiter and searcher, four riding officers, one chief boatman and twenty boatmen.³ These 29 officers had an average age of almost 44 years. Their individual ages and distribution were as follows:

<u>At Margate</u>	<u>Age</u>
Thomas Ketcherell, Supervisor	32
Cervas Cowper, Tide Surveyor	34
7 Boatmen - Thomas Moulden	53
Henry Bassett	52
Bradwell Brothers	44
Edward Marshall	51
John Debock	34
Thomas Malpas	36
John Friend	32
William Hewett, Waiter and Searcher	49
Establishment of 10.	Average age of almost 42 years.
<u>At Ramsgate</u>	
Thomas VARRIER, Tide Surveyor	43
7 Boatmen, John Eastland	49
Thomas Fitch	49
George Parke	54
Richard Farrell	59
Thomas Collier	49
William Fox	42
Isaac Bradford	41
Establishment of 8.	Average age of almost 46 years.

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1. Letters from Sandwich, 1743-1750, Customs 51/25, op.cit., 32.
 2. Ibid., 32.
 3. Ibid., 34.

<u>At Kingsgate</u>	<u>Age</u>
Thomas Preston, Chief Boatman	48
6 Boatmen - Thomas Story	48
Matthew Oates	51
George Long	33
John Pringle	25
John Perkins	42
Hannibal Phenoden	39
Establishment of 7.	Average age of almost 41 years.

The Four Riding Officers

Thomas Bunting	59
Edward Elsted	39
Thomas Wanstall	45
Thomas Shinder	32
Average age of almost 44 years.	

Despite their high average age, which at first might seem surprising, the customs authorities in London were assured that "the Officers above mentioned are in good health and are able to do their duty".¹ On 20 March 1744 the Kingsgate officers applied for "the Reward, for seizing a yaul Burthen six tons, by Thomas Story, which has been condemned and ordered to be burnt by your order of the 18 of February last".²

Four decades later a letter from the Isle of Thanet submitted to The Maidstone Journal early in September 1786 described how a French vessel in the smuggling trade had been driven on shore "in a storm of wind, hail and rain". Part of her cargo she had disposed of on the coast, "and a body of smugglers were waiting for the rest", when "some revenue officers with assistance seized her", but "part of the crew being English and Scotch made off towards Dover to get a passage to France".³

Smuggling continued throughout and beyond the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and neither did it lessen in violence. The Times reported a serious affray with smugglers at Broadstairs which took place late in the summer season on the night of Saturday, 13 September 1817. Over 300 tubs of gin were seized, but "in the affray, we are sorry to learn, a British officer was so severely wounded by the smugglers, that but small hopes are entertained of his recovery".⁴

1. Letters from Sandwich, 1743-1750, Customs 51/25, op.cit., 34.

2. Ibid., 46.

3. The Maidstone Journal, 5 September 1786, 4.

4. The Times, 16 September 1817, 3a.

Smugglers also continued to devise all sorts of ingenious methods to evade detection. With memories of the 1830 agricultural labourers' disturbances still fresh in people's minds and against the severity of the New Poor Law introduced in 1834, The Times reported how

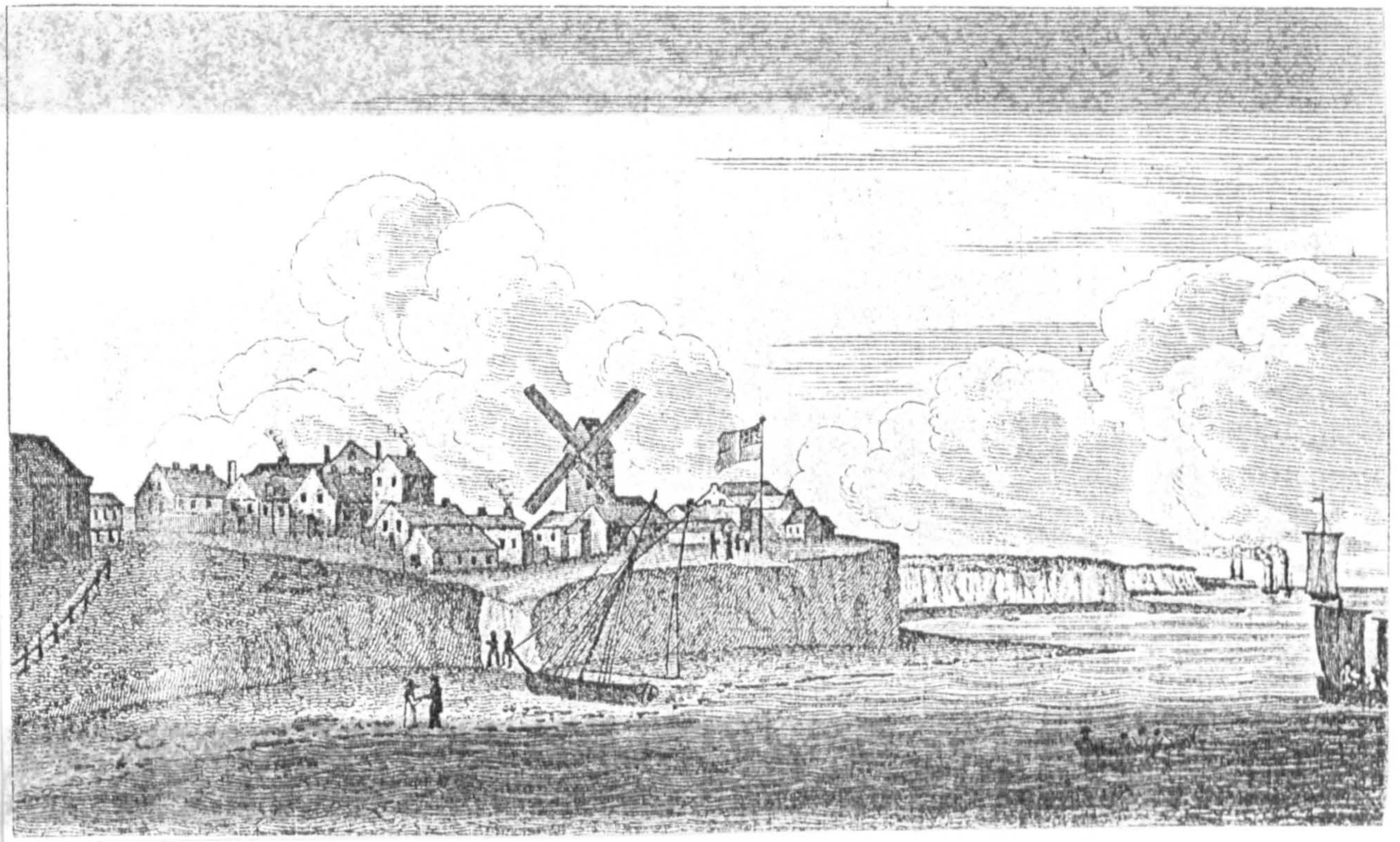
"a few days ago hand-bills were circulated amongst the agricultural population of the Isle of Thanet, calling upon them to assemble in the neighbourhood of the new workhouse to take their prospects into consideration... The surplus men of the Preventive Service were collected from the coast and stationed near the spot named for the meeting. The labourers, however, did not obey the call, and the guard, after remaining in their hiding place a considerable time, were dismissed to their stations. It was soon afterwards discovered that the whole was a ruse of the smugglers, who in the temporary absence of the Preventive men, contrived to 'run' a very large cargo of valuable goods without detection". (1)

In the meantime naval responsibility for the prevention of smuggling had been transferred in 1822 from the Admiralty back to the Customs Board. In 1832 everything was merged in the Coastguard system.² Thereafter, it became official policy, as a precaution against smuggling, to appoint coastguards to operate in areas well distant from their counties of origin, the assumption rightly being that locally born coastguards were potential smugglers as and when they were in close touch with the local community. The 1841 census returns revealed that 86% of Thanet coastguards had been born outside Kent and nearly 41% had been born in Ireland.³

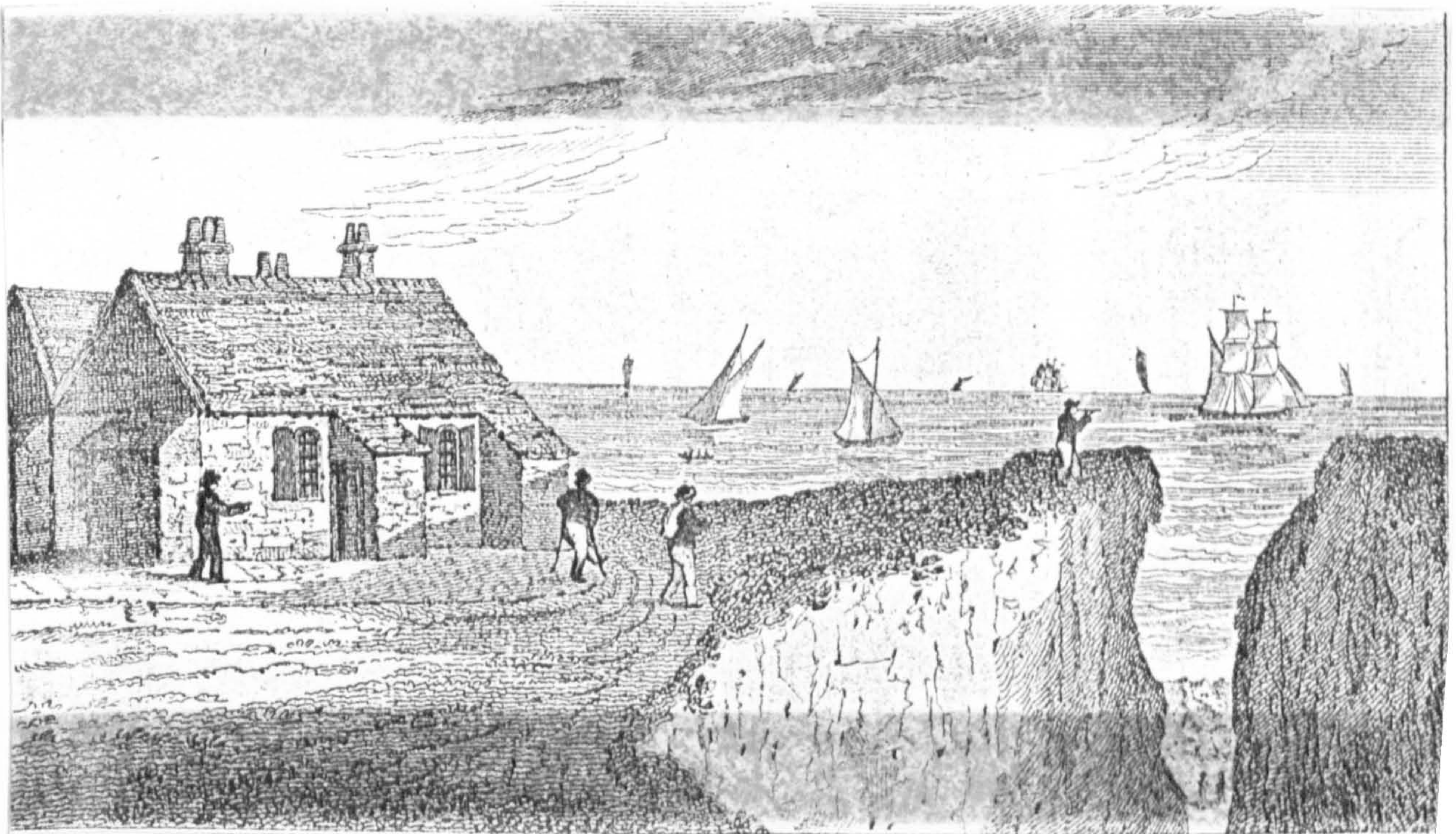
National and local newspapers, parliamentary papers and even the most unexpected historical sources show that there was no appreciable let up in smuggling as late as the 1840's. The directors of the Margate Royal Sea Bathing Infirmary considered at their meeting on 8 June 1843 a request from the Coastguard at Margate for access "to the Grounds of the Institution for

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1. The Times, 6 November 1835, 3b.
 2. Bradley, op.cit., 150.
 3. P.R.O.H.O. 107/468/and/469.

TWO THANET COASTGUARD STATIONS.



BUENOS AYRES, WITH THE PREVENTION POST.



NEW GATE, WITH THE PREVENTION POST.

W. C. Oulton, Picture of Margate, and its Vicinity
(1820), pp. 58, 69.

the prevention of smuggling".¹ Two years previously during May 1841 it was reported that some brandy "and 10 cwt. of cigars were seized on board the 'Ion' trader from Margate to London", the duty on which alone was estimated at £900.² One of the crew was captured by "the Preventive Coast Guard".³

A Ramsgate smuggling case, involving 3,225 lbs. of tobacco, 1,213 lbs. of snuff and 412 lbs. of tobacco stalks or cigars, was reported in The Maidstone and South Eastern Gazette during January 1846. The smugglers were Edward Lowther, Daniel Gardener and George Bath, "all fishermen belonging to the May Flower fishing smack, the property of John Cook". It was indicative of a greater leniency that when they all pleaded guilty they were fined £100 apiece, but "the boys belonging to the vessel were discharged, it being supposed [that] they acted under the influence and orders of the master and the men".⁴

For a Parliamentary Paper which the House of Commons ordered to be printed during August 1851 collectors and comptrollers at the various ports were asked to supply details concerning the nature and extent of smuggling during the period 5 January 1841 to 5 January 1851. The following facts were supplied from Ramsgate.⁵

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1. The Royal Sea Bathing Infirmary Court of Directors' Minute Book, 1826-1851, 8 June 1843.
 2. The Dover Telegraph and Cinque Ports General Advertiser, 8 May 1841, 8b.
 3. Ibid., 8 May 1841, 8b.
 4. The Maidstone and South Eastern Gazette, 6 January 1846, 5c.
 5. "(No.5) Abstracts of Reports from Collectors and Comptrollers of Customs and Inspecting Commanders of Districts, in each Year, from January 1841 to January 1851 inclusive, showing their Opinions as to the Cause of any Increase or Decrease in the Contraband Trade: 1-Nature and Extent of the Smuggling between 5 January 1841 and 5 January 1851", Coast Guard, etc. Abstract of Return, stating the Amount of Coast Guard in each Year from 1841 to 1851, distinguishing Mounted Guard and Cutters' Men; the Number of Revenue Cutters; and the Annual Expense of each Year; Seizures in Each Year; Runs of Contraband Goods officially reported; and Cargoes Destroyed when Chased - Also of Reports from Inspecting Commanders and Collectors of Customs, in each Year /454/, Accounts and Papers (23), Volume LIII (1851), 600-1. The same source also showed from Sheerness that there was a "great willingness prevailing among the boatmen and rivermen to smuggle whenever they have the opportunity", and reported on the "suspected smuggling carried on by the numerous vessels and barges heavily laden passing up the River Medway for Rochester, Maidstone, etc." ibid., 606-7.

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Details</u>
1841	86 tubs of spirits picked up, and 8 small seizures made, no runs effected.
1842	Several small seizures effected; no particulars stated.
1843	24 tubs of spirits seized.
1845	103 tubs of spirits picked up at sea.
1846	Seizure of tobacco; particulars not stated; also 63 half ankers of foreign spirits. A half anker represented five gallons or just slightly larger than the small beer barrel today. Weighing about 55 lbs., this was the amount that one man could manage, or two either side of a donkey or horse for carrying inland once the casks had been landed.
1847	Petty smuggling of tobacco and cigars.
1848	Seizure of 63 tubs of spirits found buried in the sands of Sandwich Bay.
1849	70 half ankers of spirits seized at Westbrook.
1850	40 bales of tobacco and 44 tubs of spirits seized.

The total quantity of spirits seized or picked up between Westbrook and Sandwich Bay during the 1840's amounted to 320 tubs of spirits and 665 gallons of foreign or other spirits.

Smuggling, however, was on the decline and as a large scale well-organized activity was finally undermined by important reforms in the customs service and by the establishment of free trade during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, so that "once Great Britain became committed to a policy of free trade smuggling became relatively unimportant",¹ and the Commissioners of Customs in their first annual report in 1857 could proudly claim that "with the reduction of duties and the removal of all needless and vexacious restrictions, smuggling has greatly diminished".²

The Harbours of Eighteenth Century Thanet and Evidence of Economic Decay.

To what extent did the Thanet harbours display scenes of incessant activity before 1750? This is a question which leads on more specifically to

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1. Neville Williams, Contraband Cargoes: Seven Centuries of Smuggling (1961), 204.
 2. Quoted by ibid., 205.

their role in shipping and coastal trading. Lewis noted in 1723 how Margate was losing ground while Ramsgate was gaining ground in these respects.

"Margate was, on account of its harbour, and trade to London the only place of business, and whose inhabitants were wealthy and lived in plenty. But time has made a very great alteration in those places. By the Sea's falling so heavy on the North part of the Island, the Harbour of Margate is gon very much to decay, and the Masters of the Ships which used to live there are almost all removed to London for the sake of their business. So that the place is in a manner deserted by them. Whereas the Town of Ramsgate has all this while been growing and encreasing, being almost half of it new built, and their Peer being considerably enlarged; so that there are many wealthy persons among them". (1)

Lewis showed in more detail elsewhere in his History of Thanet the contrast which existed in the 1720's between a declining Margate and a prospering Ramsgate. In the former, "the shipping trade (which once was pretty considerable before the Harbour was so much washed away by the Sea, and the Ships built too large to lay up here) is now all removed to London, where the few masters who live here lay up, victual, and refit their Vessels";² whereas Ramsgate, "anciently a small Fishing Town consisting of a few houses and those poorly and meanly built, [is] of late years since 1688, thro' the successful trade which the Inhabitants have been concerned in to Russia and the East-Country, ...very much enlarged and improved - the old houses are many of them raised and made very commodious dwellings, and [an] abundance of new ones [is] built after the modern way, in a very elegant and beautiful manner".³ Dr. J.H. Andrews contends that "the most remarkable feature of the Thanet ports

1. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 22. His reference to the pier being considerably enlarged refers to the lengthening of Ramsgate pier in 1715, which was noted in the first section to this Chapter.
2. Ibid., 94.
3. Ibid., 123-4; also The Kentish Traveller's Companion (1st Ed., Rochester, 1776), op.cit., 138; compare Hasted, op.cit., Volume IV, 372, "by the return made by Archbishop Parker, in 1563, to the Privy Council, it appears that there were then 98 households; but the place [parish] of St. Lawrence, owing to the prosperity of Ramsgate, has greatly increased for many years past, insomuch that in 1773, there were in this parish, including Ramsgate, which contains more than 2/3 of the houses and inhabitants of the whole parish, 699 houses, and 2,726 inhabitants".

during the period [1650-1750] was not the trade passing through them, but the number of ships belonging to them".¹

Several contemporary references to Margate suggest that the town's fortunes were clearly not buoyant during the 1720's and 1730's. Lewis both in 1723 and 1736 dwells more fully on this point than any other single writer, but what he has to say of declining sectors in Margate's economy over those two decades is corroborated from other evidence, and is not inconsistent with Margate as a shipping centre,² having an extensive corn trade to London.³ Indeed, Daniel Defoe observed how

"the shore from Whitstable, and the East Swale, affords nothing remarkable but sea-marks, and small towns on the coast, till we come to Margate and the North Foreland; the town of Margate is eminent for nothing that I know of, but for King William's frequently landing here in his returns from Holland, and for shipping a vast quantity of corn for London Market most, if not all of it, the product of the Isle of Thanet, in which it stands". (4)

Margate enjoyed some renown in the eighteenth century as port of embarkation and disembarkation to the Low Countries. In 1691 "King William landed at a wretched village named Margate".⁵ William III landed at Margate on 14 November 1697, and

"this evening the Towne guns, etc., fired and bells rang for news of the King's landing". (6)

The London Gazette reported the King's departures from Kensington for Holland via Margate, on 20 July 1698 and on 3 June 1699;⁷ the latter event was recorded in The Calendar of State Papers Domestic.

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1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 39.
 2. Ibid., 39, and also later in this section.
 3. See earlier in this Chapter; also below, Chapter V.
 4. Defoe, op.cit., Letter II, 119; also above.
 5. House of Lords Record Office.
 6. Ed: E.S. de Beer, The Diary of John Evelyn (Oxford, 1955), Volume V, 273.
 7. Ibid., Volume V, 294, 327; The London Gazette, 18-21 July 1698, 2b, and 1-5 June 1699, 2a.

"His Majesty left Kensington about 10 last night, in order to embark at Margate, in which road the yachts and men-of-war, which attend His Majesty, are ordered to be.

The Earl of Romney, Lord Albemarle, Monsr. d'Auerquerke, Lord Raby, Lord Selkirk and Mr. Blathwayt, and other persons of quality, accompany his Majesty". (1)

In 1721 it was noted how passengers from Holland frequently disembarked in Margate, "when the wind does not serve to carry them up the Thames",² and

"as the passage from England to Holland is reckoned the shortest from this place, it has had the Honour of being often visited, of late Years, by Great Personages, who have gone over thither. Thus, in particular, that Noble Asserter and Defender of the Rights and Liberties of Mankind, and particularly of those of Great Britain, K. William III of glorious memory often came hither in his way to and from Holland. His present most excellent Majesty has twice landed here. Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales came first on shore at this place, and that successful and victorious General the late Duke of Marlborough used to choose this for his place of going abroad, and landing when he went and came to and from the several Campaigns he made". (3)

Margate functioned as a cross-channel port throughout the eighteenth century.⁴

Lewis in 1723 was distressed at seeing Margate as "a small fishing Town,

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1. Calendar of State Papers Domestic, William III, January 1699-March 1700, (H.M.S.O., 1937), 217.
 2. Senex, A New General Atlas, op.cit., 201; also see the first section of this Chapter above.
 3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 91.
 4. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 10-13 September 1729, 1, reported the landing of George I at Margate, "about 10 o'clock in the Morning... in perfect Health, and having refresh'd himself in the House of Capt. Brooke, set out for London about Noon...His Majesty landed out of the William and Mary Yacht"; Lyons, op.cit., 11, adds by 1763 "George II once and the late Queen Caroline, with the young Princesses, landed and lay here, when they first came to England"; apart from troop movements during the Napoleonic Wars which were reported frequently in The Times, the peak of passenger travelling from Margate to the Low Countries occurred probably in the 1780's, The Margate Guide (1780), 17-18; The Morning Herald, and Daily Advertiser, 2 August 1781, 1c; The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser, 3 August 1781, 1b, and correspondence for the 1780's in the Cobb Papers, in the Kent Record Office. See also Chapters IV and V below.

irregularly built, and the houses very low", which had "formerly been of good repute for the fishing and coasting Trade",¹ for "it seems owing a good deal to this decay of the Fishing here, with the falling off of the foreign trade and the removal of so many of the substantial inhabitants, on that Account, from this place to London, that the charge of the Poor is so much encreased within these 80 Years past".² Another contemporary traveller was sorry that he went there in 1732, "for it is a poor, pitiful place".³

The fortunes of Margate were probably at their lowest ebb during the 1720's. Lewis tells of a pier which had been washed away by the sea, and for which the dues had not been and were still not being properly collected;⁴ trading had decayed and merchant vessels were being constructed of a tonnage too large to lay up in the harbour. Evidence supporting these specific points of weakness in the Margate economy during the first quarter of the eighteenth century emerges from two petitions of 1717 and 1720.

The problem of harbour maintenance was involved in the first of these petitions. Parliament was considering a new Dover Harbour Bill,⁵ which proposed to extend the term of years for imposing "3d per Tun upon every English Ship, Vessel or Crayer of the burthen of 20 Tons or upwards, ... for every loading and discharging within this Realme for, from, to, or by Dover, or coming into the Harbour there".⁶ The owners and masters of ships

1. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87.

2. Ibid., 95-6; he quoted poor law expenditure from the Overseers Accounts of £84.3s.6d. in 1663, £72.16s.8d. in 1664, as against £303.10s.9d. for 1701, and £279.1s.2d. for 1702, ibid., 96.

3. J.Mackay, A Journey through England (1732).

4. Mentioned below in this section.

5. An Act for enlarging the Term of Years, granted by the Acts of the Eleventh and Twelfth Years of King William the Third, and the Second and Third Years of Queen Anne, for the Repair of Dover Harbour, Journals of the House of Lords, Volume XX (1714-18), 638b, 641b.

6. House of Lords Record Office, Main Papers, 1717-18/365.

in Margate petitioned the House of Lords against the Bill on the grounds that

"your Petitioners have lately and severall times before Expended very great sums of money for repairing the Pier and Harbour of Margate over and above the Income thereof, And as they fear must necessarily every year on account of the Sea's lying harder thereon than usual lay out more than the revenue thereof will amount unto, Without which the said pier and harbour of Margate must fall to Decay and become useless to your Petitioners and very prejudiciale to the Inhabitants of the said towne and Island, The said Port of Margate receiving no benefitt from any but small Ships and Vessels which belong to and so use the same. Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray your Lordships That they may be heard what they have to object against the payment of the said Duty, or if the said Bill should passe That your Lordships will be pleased to give leave That a Clause may be inserted in the said Bill, That the Ships and Vessels belonging to the Port of Margate may be exempted from payment of any Dutyes towards the Repaire of the said Harbour of Dover, in such manner as the Ships and Vessels belonging to the Port of Ramsgate in the said Isle of Thanett by the said Act of the 11th and 12th of King William III are exempt, or grant them such other Reliefe as to your Lordshipps in your great Wisdome shall seeme meet to". (1)

The second petition was placed jointly by "the Merchants, Owners and Commanders of Ships of the Towns of Ramsgate and Margate in the Isle of Thanett",² against "An Act for prohibiting the Importation of Raw Silk and

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1. House of Lords Record Office, Main Papers, 1717-18/365, op.cit. Among the signatures the name of Edward Swinford appears and he might have been an ancestor of the Swinfords who appear in nineteenth century directories as Margate hoy proprietors; below Chapter V, the section on "Thanet's Economic Dependence upon the Hoy, and Inward Coastal Shipments". Lodged also against the Dover Harbour Bill, 7 March 1717, was the "Petition of several Merchants in and about the City of London and Ports adjacent, in Behalf of themselves and others concerned in Navigation; praying 'That the Duties may not be continued on their Trade and Navigation towards the Repair of Dover Harbour, any longer, except on such Ships only as enter the Port'", Journals of the House of Lords, Volume XX (1714-18), op.cit., 641a.
 2. House of Lords Record Office, Main Papers, 1720/578; Journals of the House of Lords, Volume XXI (1718-21), 300b.

and Mohair Yarn, of the Product or Manufacture of Asia, from any Ports or Places in The Straights or Levant Seas, except such Ports and Places as are within the Dominions of the Grand Seignior", which was before Parliament in 1720.¹ Forty seven petitioners from Margate and fifty two from Ramsgate, including the Deputies of the two towns,² argued their case thus:

"the Inhabitants of the towns of Ramsgate and Margate are become Owners and Proprietors in a great Number of Ships using the Levant Seas and are considerably concerned in the fishery of these Kingdoms, Which fish is for the most Part consumed in Italy, and Your Petitioners observe with great Grief that there is now Depending in your Lordships House A Bill to repeal so much of the Act of Navigation as permits the Importation of Goods of the growth of Asia into Great Britain, by which Restraint Your Petitioners will Loose A part of the freight of their ships in their return to England and the Burthen will lye Wholly on the outward bound Cargo, Which will render the same Delivered at Markett very Deer and hinder the Consumption of Fish and other Manufactures of these Kingdoms. Wherefore Your Petitioners humbly hope that the said Act will not pass which in its Consequences must be very Detrimental to your Petitioners and the Navigation of these Kingdoms". (3)

The trade in fish from northern waters to Italy, where there was an insatiable demand for the product, was of such commercial importance that other petitions against the same Bill were presented from London, Exeter, Totnes, Great Yarmouth, Falmouth, Penryn (Cornwall) and Plymouth, all of which stressed the importance of their fishing trade. Support for the Bill came, however, from West Country clothiers and the Royal Assent was granted on 11 June 1720.⁴

Among the Margate petitioners was Richard Prince,⁵ and

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1. Journals of the House of Lords, Volume XXI (1718-21), op.cit., 294a.
 2. House of Lords Record Office, Main Papers, 1720/578, op.cit. The Deputy of Margate was Joseph Sandwell, and of Ramsgate, Daniel Rainier; the position of Deputy is noted above. Also among the Margate signatures was Stephen Swinford, cf: Edward Swinford noted above.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Journals of the House of Lords, Volume XXI (1718-21), op.cit., 358b.
 5. House of Lords Record Office, Main Papers, 1720/578, op.cit.

"about 40 Years ago one----- Prince of this place drove a great Trade here in brewing a particular Sort of Ale, which from its being first brewed at a place called North-down in this Parish went by the name of North-down Ale, and afterwards was called Margate ale. But whether its owing to the Art of brewing this liquor dying with the Inventor of it, or the humour of the Gentry and People altering to the liking the Pale North Country Ale better, the present brewers vend little or none of what they call by the name of Margate-Ale, which is a great disadvantage to their Trade". (1)
Also "malting is another branch of the trade of this place which was formerly so large that there were about 40 Malt-houses in this Parish. But this trade is now gone much to decay; tho' certainly here might be made the best Malt in England, the Barly which grows here being so very good, and the land naturally so kind for it". (2)

And the decay of fishing at Margate before 1723 was such

"that they who depended on it were forced to sell their large Boats, or let them run out. So that now the Boats in which they fish are so small that they dare not go far off to Sea in them, nor venture out of the Peer in a fresh gale of Wind". (3)

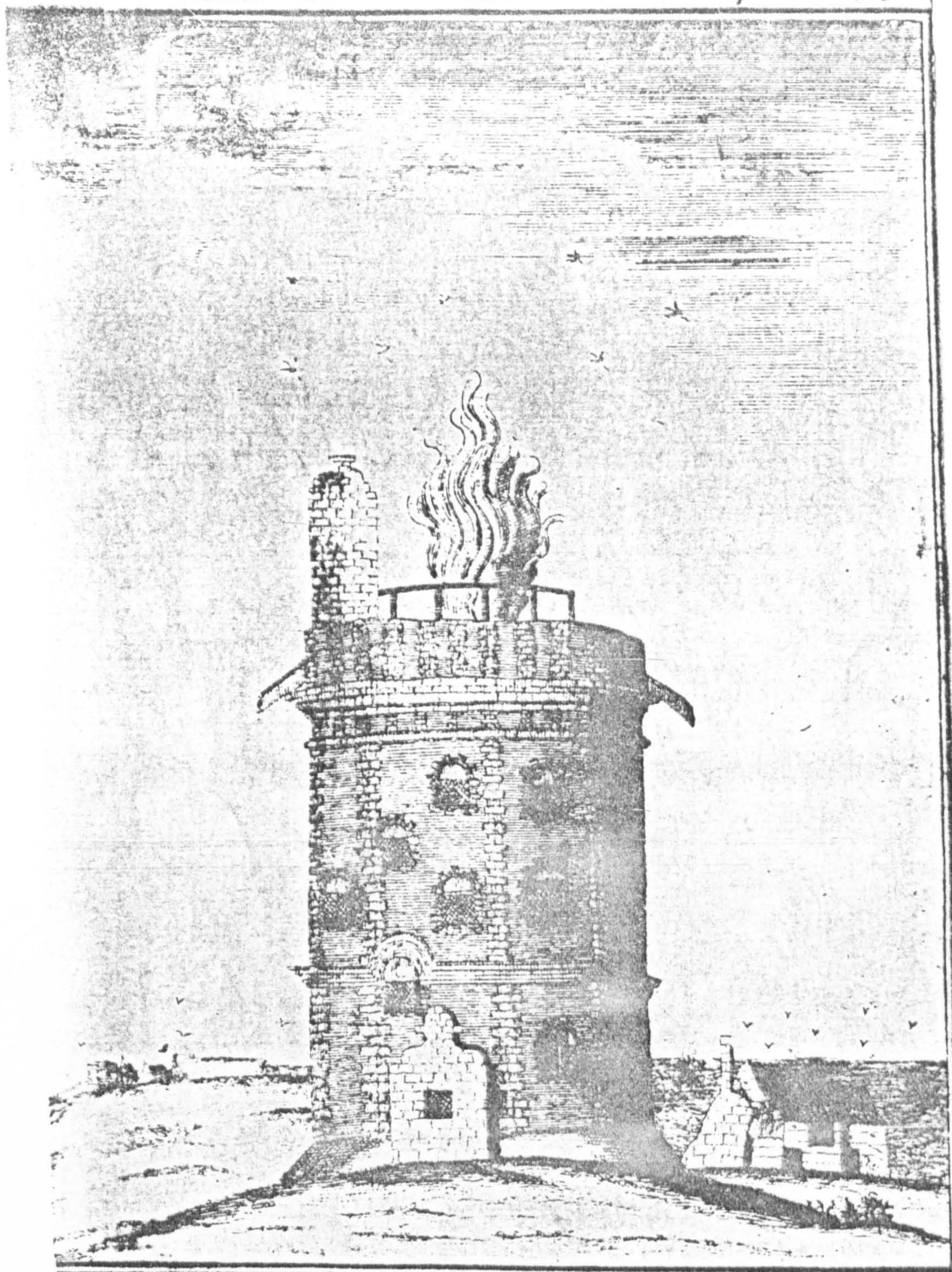
Fishing, malting and brewing had been prosperous Margate activities of the seventeenth century. The consumption of Margate ale is mentioned in The Calendar of State Papers Domestic,⁴ and in the diaries of Samuel Pepys⁵ and John Evelyn for the 1660's and 1670's. During May 1672. John Evelyn

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1. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 94-5.
 2. Ibid., 94; the excellence of Thanet barley as commented on by Harris in 1719 was noted in the first section above.
 3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 95.
 4. Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Charles II, December 1671-May 1672. (H.M.S.O., 1897), 117, 373, Richard Watts sending to Sir Joseph Williamson, Secretary to Lord Arlington and Clerk of the Council, Margate ale, the second reference reading, "the hoyman at Margate told me yesterday the ale was sent to Lord Arlington's office for you", Deal, 24 April 1672.
 5. Ed: Henry B. Wheatley, The Diary of Samuel Pepys (1917), Volume I, 131, 7 May 1660, "this morning Captain Cuttance sent me 12 bottles of Margate ale"; also, ibid., 268, 26 October 1660, "my father and Dr. Thomas Pepys dined at my house, the last of whom I did almost fox with Margate ale"; and Volume II, 56-7.

"took horse for Margate, where from the North-foreland lighthouse top (which is a pharos built of Bricque, having on the top a Cradle of yron in which one attends a great Sea-Coale fire, all the yeare long when the nights are darke, for the safe-guard of Sailors) (1) we could see our fleete as it lay at Anker... Margate much consists of Brewers of a certaine heady Ale; and deale much in Mault.... For the rest tis raggedly built, and an ill haven, with a small fort of little concernment". (2)

The Dutch wars of the seventeenth century must have boosted local fishing, brewing and malting. Indeed, there are frequent references to military activity at that time off the Thanet Coast,³ but Margate fort had declined in importance by 1723.

1. The North Foreland was famous as a promontary housing a lighthouse. As far back as 1505 the North Foreland was the site of the lighthouses which had been erected by Sir John Meldrum, J. Saxby Wryde, British Lighthouses (1913), 127. It is in this fact that the origins of the place name Thanet are said to lie. Harris, op.cit., 313, makes reference to Dr. Battely, Antiquitates Rutupinae etc. (Oxoniae, 1711), to the effect that the name of Tanet, came from the 'British Tan', a 'Fire', "because of the Fires or Lights which have been always kept on this Island to direct ships in dark weather". Lewis (1723), op.cit., 1, stresses a Saxon origin from "tane or Fire or Beacon", but Hills, op.cit., 19, thinks that there is no definite proof of a beacon here at the time of the Roman occupation. Sir John Meldrum's first lighthouse was constructed of timber and plaster, Saxby Wryde, op.cit., 127. The necessity for a lighthouse Lewis (1723), op.cit., 119, explained thus: "to direct Ships in the night in their course, that they might keep clear of the Goodwin-Sands which lie off this Point, and on which Ships are apt to strike before they are aware on account of their endeavouring to keep clear of this land which extends so far into the Sea". The guiding light was provided at first by "a Fire beacon in an open iron grate fed with coals, which the light keepers had on calm nights to blow into flame with bellows", Saxby Wryde, op.cit., 127.
2. de Beer, op.cit., Volume III, 615.
3. Ibid., 610, 27 March 1672, "To Deale: next to the Isle of Thanet by Sandwich and so to Margate...here we had abundance of miserably wounded men, his Majestie sending to meete me, Serjeant Knight, his Majestie's chief Chirurgion & Dr. Waldron". John Knight who died in 1680 was principal surgeon to Charles II, E.M. & R.T.C. Calvert, Serjeant Surgeon John Knight (1939). Dr. Thomas Waldron c. 1619-77 was a physician from 1653. Pepys makes reference to the Dutch in Margate Road, that is, offshore from Margate, 12-13 January 1665 and 16 October 1665, Wheatley, op.cit., Volume IV, 329-30, and Volume V, 118-9. Also in 1678 troops and horses were carried from Margate to Ostend and Antwerp, Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1678. (H.M.S.O., 1913), 261, 375, and in 1691 two vessels were appointed to ply between Margate and Ostend carrying intelligence, ibid., 1690-91. (H.M.S.O., 1898), 313.



*The South Prospect of the North Foreland Light-House.
J. Kinggate.*

J. Lewis, The History and Antiquities,
as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, of The
Isle of Tenet, in Kent (1736).

"A large and deep ditch is on the land side of it next the Town, which used to be scoured and kept clean of weeds and rubbish. At the entrance into it towards the East was a strong gate which was kept lock'd to preserve the Ordnance, Arms and Ammunition here. For here were two brass guns which the Parish bought and repaired at their own charge. Here was likewise a Watch-house... In War time this Place is still made Use of; A Gunner is appointed by the Government with a Salary of £20 per ann (1) and a Flag staff erected to hoist a Flag upon occasion. There are likewise sent hither from the Tower 10 or 12 Pieces of Ordnance Carriages, etc., with Ammunition for them. This Provision is not only a Safeguard to the Town, but a great means of preserving merchant ships, going round the North Foreland into the Downes, from the enemies' privateers which often lurk there-about to snap up ships sailing that way, which cannot see them behind the land. But as these lurking thieves lie open to the Places on the other side of the Foreland, (2) particularly Broadstairs, (3) an account of them is sent to the Gunner of this Fort or Plat-form, who gives notice to the ships, sailing that way, of their danger, by hoisting a flag and firing a Gun". (4)

1. Ordnance Office Papers, 1 December 1692, List of the Officers and Ministers belonging to the Office of their Majesties' Ordnance, with their respective yearly salaries and allowances, William Cooke, store-keeper at Margate, £20, Historical MSS Commission, 14th Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (1896), 190; House of Lords MSS, 1692.
2. The North Foreland to Lewis (1723), op.cit., 119, appeared as "a Promontary or Cape of land that reaches further into the Sea, and is somewhat higher than the rest of the Land hereabouts".
3. Lewis (1735), op.cit., 163-4, wrote of the approach to Broadstairs Harbour: "In the way leading to the Pier here is erected a Stone Arch or Portal, walled on each side with Flints, to which were formerly fixed strong Gates and a Portcullis to prevent any Incursions being made here by Privateers, etc. to plunder the Inhabitants. These Gates have now for many Years been quite gone, having been either taken away, or quite worn out by length of Time, and the Stone Work is going to Decay, there being no Care taken to repair it". This strong arched gateway across the road in the cliffs leading from the shore to St. Peter's, and defended initially by a portcullis, owed its erection in the sixteenth century to the Culmer family who sought to protect this section of the Kentish coastline from periodical invasions by pirates or foreign enemies. On subsequently being repaired by Sir John Henniker in 1795, it was renamed York Gate, Hills, op.cit., 17.
4. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 96.

When Charles I plunged into a war with France, and sent large bodies of troops across the Channel, towns along the coast nearest the Continent feared French retaliation. They therefore solicited that cannon might be sent for their defence and, on 24 March 1627, the Master General of Ordnance, George, Earl of Totness, was ordered to despatch two pieces of ordnance to each of the three towns of Folkestone, Rye and Margate.¹

By the time Lewis was writing in the 1720's any economic bustle which the wars of the seventeenth century may have occasioned, particularly in Margate, was but a memory, and certainly it is interesting to note how he prefaces the decline of malting, brewing and fishing with the words, "about 40 Years ago".² He noted, however, the coarseness of the malt which had been produced, hence "it has so much lost its credit, that the present Malsters find little encouragement to make their Malt fine for a London market, where they are almost sure to be outsold by the Hertfordshire and North Country Malt-Men, whose Malt bears a better Name".³

In the 1720's the hanging and drying of herrings were

"of great Use to the Poor of this Town, a great many of whom are employed, in the season for them, to wash, salt, spit, and hang them. But this is a trade that would be still more beneficial to the Place were those Herrings caught by the Inhabitants. Because there would then be more employment for the Poor, many of which here have little to do, in spinning and twisting of twine to make nets with, and knitting the Nets". (4)

Apart from foying, "paultring" and smuggling,⁵ the shipment of Thanet corn to London was the one flourishing activity which caught the contemporary eye.⁶

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1. W.A. Scott Robertson, "Medieval Folkestone", Archaeologia Cantiana, Volume X (1876), cxxxv.
 2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 94-5.
 3. Ibid., 94.
 4. Ibid., 95.
 5. As noted in the previous section.
 6. Defoe, op.cit., 119; Harris, op.cit., 314; also see this Chapter above.

Dr. J.H. Andrews is not wholly convinced that Margate was as depressed in the 1720's as Lewis maintained,¹ but much of the evidence which he cites for the whole century 1650-1750 relates to all three Thanet ports and to periods of time apart from the 1720's, while Ramsgate achieved an importance from developing a harbour of refuge,² and Broadstairs acquired some significance from fishing and shipbuilding.³ Dr. Andrews argues that "the chief foreign trade of the Thanet ports was almost certainly the export of fish".⁴ Throughout the century 1650-1750 there were many references to the Thanet fishing fleets, and foreign exports of herrings reached a maximum in the period 1712-33, when the average annual export was nearly 1,500 Barrels.⁵ It is not clear from these figures that Margate was specifically involved to any substantial degree in this trade, nor that the exports were entirely from the catches of local Thanet fishermen. Other ports followed the migration of herring,⁶ and the one statistical record which Dr. Andrews has found distinguishing the fishing vessels of the different Thanet ports is indeed interesting. Lists of Cinque Port vessels visiting the Yarmouth Free Fair,⁷ between 1648 and 1660 show that the usual numbers were nine from St. Peter's (Broadstairs and Kingsgate), compared to only one from St. John's (Margate).⁸ From the 1730's the export of herrings declined, and was replaced by a growing trade in Icelandic codfish in the 1740's,⁹ but this concerned particularly the port of Broadstairs.¹⁰

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1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 37-44.
 2. See the second section of this Chapter.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 42.
 5. Ibid., 42-3.
 6. As noted in the second section of this Chapter.
 7. Town Hall, New Romney, Cinque Port Records, 8.
 8. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 42-3.
 9. Ibid., 43.
 10. As noted above in the second section of this Chapter.

Generalizing over the century 1650-1750 Dr. Andrews reaches the conclusion, however, that Thanet exported more fish than any of the other ports in Kent or Sussex except Dover, about one half of which went to the Mediterranean.¹

One fact which is not in dispute is the early eighteenth century importance of the Thanet ports as shipping centres, which "is probably to be explained by their position at the lower end of the Thames Estuary, the most convenient place for ships to gather while awaiting dispatch on what were mainly seasonal trades", Ramsgate deriving most benefit from this position because of the relatively superior quality of its harbour facilities.² Significant seasonal trades involved coal, timber and naval stores.³

Professor T.S. Willan has shown that ships which might trade anywhere⁴ 'belonged' to the places of residence of their owners. Margate had once housed shippers or merchants who "were wealthy and lived in plenty".⁵ Dr. Andrews has uncovered a previously unknown or neglected source⁶ which reveals the pre-1750 importance of the Thanet ports as centres of shipping activity.

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1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 43; the shipment of fish to the Mediterranean is obviously consistent with the mention of Italy in the petition of 1720 from Margate and Ramsgate to the House of Lords, House of Lords Record Office, Main Papers, 1720/578, op.cit., noted above.
 2. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 40.
 3. Ibid., 39.
 4. T.S. Willan, English Coasting Trade, 1600-1750 (Manchester, 1938), Appendix 6.
 5. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 22; also this section above.
 6. Public Record Office, Admiralty Correspondence from Customs Commissioners, 29 January 1702.

TABLE 3 : VESSELS BELONGING TO THE PORTS OF KENT IN 1701

<u>Port</u>	<u>Ships</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Men</u>
Ramsgate	45	4,100	388
Margate	37	2,909	138
Sandwich	21	1,146	104
Rochester	22	1,054	70
Faversham	32	888	47
Milton	34	807	53
Broadstairs	17	731	90
Whitstable	33	701	46
Dover	7	415	44
Deal	1	50	5

Ramsgate ranked fifteenth among all the ports of England,¹ and the number of ships belonging to Margate and Broadstairs had increased greatly in number and tonnage, judging by a survey ordered by Queen Elizabeth in 1563.

TABLE 4 : THE SHIPPING OF MARGATE AND BROADSTAIRS IN 1563

<u>Boats and Other Vessels</u>	<u>Margate</u> ²	<u>Broadstairs</u> ³
<u>Total Vessels</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>8</u>
1 Ton	8	-
2 Tons	1	3
5 Tons	1	-
8 Tons	-	2
10 Tons	-	1
12 Tons	-	2
16 Tons	1	-
18 Tons	4	-
<u>Total Tonnage</u>	103 Tons	56 Tons

In 1563 Margate vessels had employed sixty persons, who were "occupied in the carrying of grain and fishing".⁴

1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 39.
2. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 47.
3. Barlow, op.cit., 17.
4. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 47.

J. Brand produced in 1789 a table of vessels employed in the Newcastle coal trade in 1702-4. The figures for Kent were as follows:

TABLE 5 : KENTISH VESSELS EMPLOYED IN THE NEWCASTLE COAL TRADE, 1702-4.¹

<u>Port</u>	<u>Ships</u>	<u>Chaldrons of Coal</u>
Ramsgate	42	2,147
Margate	24	1,001
Rochester	21	808
Sandwich	17	554
Broadstairs	12	241
Dover	8	232
Faversham	2	59

No Sussex port imported as much coal as Margate during the decade 1676-86.²

Newcastle coal was the cargo of seven out of every eight ships entering the ports of Thanet.

TABLE 6 : AVERAGE ANNUAL IMPORTS OF NEWCASTLE COAL, 1676-86.³

<u>Port</u>	<u>Chaldrons</u>
Sandwich	1,710 ⁴
Margate	579
Ramsgate	427
Broadstairs	190 ⁵

By contemporary standards these amounts were not inconsiderable for ports of this size. Compared to Sussex and much of Kent, Thanet was "more than unusually dependent on imported coal", owing to a timber shortage on the island.⁶ Contemporaries commented on the shortage of wood; thus in 1719

1. J. Brand, History of Newcastle (1789), Volume II, 677.
2. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 42.
3. Ibid., 42.
4. Some proportion of this large figure for Sandwich no doubt passed through the port and up the river Stour to Canterbury.
5. See Chapter V for some analysis of the coal trade into Broadstairs in the 1790's under "Thanet's Economic Dependence upon the Hoy and Inward Coastal Shipments".
6. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 42; Romney Marsh also faced a local timber shortage, but supplies were abundant in the Weald and could be imported via Rye.

"there is little Wood-land in it, which is a great Rarity; and I think I was told, there was but one Oak in the Island".¹

"Anciently a good part of the Island was wood-land, which is now almost all grub'd up, and converted into sowing land. Several of the little Vills hereabouts still preserve the memory of those woods, viz: West-wood, Northwood, or South-wood". (2)

In 1672, when enemy privateers confined Thanet ships to harbour, it was claimed that "if speedy care be not taken our people will starve for want of fuel in the winter".³

Concerning shipping passing through the Sound to and from the Baltic, an annual average of more than twenty Ramsgate ships made this voyage between 1680 and 1730. In the last decade of the seventeenth century the average was nearly fifty, and "in 1700 Ramsgate sent more ships through the Sound than any English port except London".⁴ These facts support Lewis's observations in 1723 on the recent growth of the town.⁵ The average for Margate was more than ten between 1671 and 1710, and no other Kent port achieved an average of more than three ships per year.⁶ Margate's figures, however, were a way behind those of Ramsgate. These vessels left Thanet in ballast, or with small amounts of corn,⁷ and returned laden with hemp and timber to the Dockyards of Chatham, Woolwich and Deptford.⁸ From the early

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1. Harris, op.cit., 314.
 2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 16; compare, Hasted, op.cit., Volume IV, 290, 292-3, who quotes Ieland, op.cit., Volume vii, 137, that "In the Isle is very little woode"; also Cobbett, Cole, op.cit., Volume I, 233.
 3. Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1672 (H.M.S.O., 1899), 387.
 4. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 40.
 5. Noted above in this section.
 6. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 40.
 7. Ibid., 42.
 8. Ibid., 40.

1680's the Rochester Port Books, having within their jurisdiction Chatham and Gillingham, listed many Ramsgate ships from the Baltic, Norway and New England.¹ The shipment of hemp and timber up river to Woolwich and Deptford must partly explain Lewis's references to Margate vessels having moved to London.² Inward shipments to Thanet, apart from Norwegian timber, embraced general cargoes from Rotterdam and Ostend.³ Trading connections by hoy with these Low Country ports were maintained into the nineteenth century.⁴

After 1730 the Scandinavian and Baltic traffic greatly diminished,⁵ which affected Margate only to some degree. The effects of this decline on Ramsgate, enjoying little or nothing in the way of an outward corn trade to

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1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 40; commencing in the sixteenth century the major industrial activity of the Medway Towns became centred on Chatham Dockyard. 1585 saw the launching of the first ship known definitely to have been built at Chatham, J.G. Grace, Some Notes on the History of Chatham Dockyard (1946), 4. The value of the yard, which saw many additions during the seventeenth century, was put at £45,000 in 1688 and in ten years this rose to £56,000, ibid., 10. Daniel Defoe writing in the 1720's noted that "the river and its appendices are the most considerable of the kind in the World. This being the chief arsenal of the Royal Navy of Great Britain the buildings here are indeed like the ships themselves, surprisingly large. The warehouses, or rather streets of warehouses, and storehouses...are the largest in dimension, and the most in number that are anywhere to be seen in the world...the whole monstrously great and extensive, and not easily described", Defoe, op.cit., (Everyman's Library Ed., 1962), 105. Deptford too was a dockyard town which underwent a great expansion during the seventeenth century, its population rising from 1,200 in the 1600's to almost 7,000 in the 1680's, Chalklin, op.cit., 31.
 2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 22, 94; also this section above.
 3. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 42; references to an eighteenth century passenger traffic were noted in this section above.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate 1816), op.cit., 45-6, "the intercourse between the two coasts from this place /Margate/ may be said to be daily"; Post Office steam packets were established between Margate and Ostend in April 1828, Post Office Packets: Accounts in Detail of the Whole Expense incurred in navigating, repairing and maintaining the Post Office Packets between Dover and Calais and Margate and Ostend /575/(1828), and Post Office Packets: Accounts of Expenses incurred in navigating, repairing and maintaining the Post Office Packets between Dover and Calais and between Margate and Ostend in the Years ending 5th January 1829 and 5th January 1830 /325/ (1830).
 5. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 40.

London,¹ were severe and gave added impetus to the port's future primary function as a harbour of refuge.² Thus Ramsgate in 1763 was

"a very neat sea-port town, with many good houses, but no great trade. The new Pier, now building there, (3) attracts the admiration of all strangers, being the finest of its kind in England, or perhaps in the world... This is intended as a place of refuge for ships to flee to in hard gales of wind,...when they are exposed to the utmost danger in the Downs". (4)

Another contemporary reference circa 1780 saw Ramsgate as "a small port", but "should the traveller make the King's Head the inn he stops at in this town, he will have a near view of this new harbour just under him".⁵ The Scandinavian shipping trade of the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries brought more wealth and prosperity to Ramsgate than Margate but when it declined the reputation of Ramsgate became firmly based thereafter on two major economic functions, amounting to a dual economy revolving around the seaside holiday, and the maritime requirements appropriate to a harbour of refuge.

Problems of Harbour Maintenance and Finance.

In spite of foying, fishing, smuggling, shipbuilding, exporting corn to London, importing coal from Newcastle, and shipping, the Thanet ports faced increasing problems of harbour maintenance which, by the early and middle decades of the eighteenth century, had become acute. Apart from trading and offering shelter to shipping, Thanet's piers were a protection against marine erosion, and prevented to some extent north-easterly waves

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1. As noted above in the second section of this Chapter.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid., and under an Act of Parliament, 22 Geo. III c.40.
 4. Lyons, op.cit., 25.
 5. The Curiosities, Natural and Artificial, of the Island of Great Britain (circa 1780), Volume II, 11-12.

from sweeping-in.¹ Margate pier having been "at first, but small", extending "but a little way out into the Sea" had been "by degrees, enlarged".² Marine erosion through the centuries caused Margate pier to be lengthened from time to time. As the cliffs continued to be cut back by the sea,³ so added protection had to be given to the collection of houses and businesses growing up on the margin of the haven.⁴

The chief natural danger confronting all three Thanet ports came from attack by storm waves. Storms were quite fortuitous, and they could strike quite suddenly, at any time. Winter gales were the most likely to inflict severe storm damage on the harbours of Thanet. Margate and Broadstairs fared worse on average than Ramsgate; and because Margate was more exposed, its history in this connection was consequently more eventful.⁵ The pier, the road linking it to the town, the sea wall and the houses which it was intended to protect all suffered from storm damage and marine erosion during the period 1650-1690.⁶ About £100 worth of damage was inflicted by storms on Margate pier in September 1671, and "it is thought the Isle of Thanet has lost in these storms at least £3,000 in shipping".⁷ By 1690 estimated costs of repair had reached £2,500.⁸

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1. Andrews. Thesis, op.cit., 116.
 2. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87; also see the first section of this Chapter above.
 3. The extent of Thanet coastal erosion was referred to in the first section of this Chapter above.
 4. Brayley, op.cit., 957; Kay, op.cit., 56.
 5. Andrews. Thesis, op.cit., 116.
 6. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38.
 7. Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Charles II, January-November 1671 (H.M.S.O., 1895), 506; other references, ibid., 1650 (1876), 173; or 1682 (H.M.S.O., 1932), 127. In the 1682 storm it was reckoned that Margate pier had suffered "above £1,000 damage".
 8. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38; on 14 December 1724 the House of Commons was informed that "about 34 Years ago, the Pier was almost lost, and it cost about £500 to repair the same", Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XX (1722-7), op.cit., 361.

Broadstairs pier too has suffered severely from gales on several occasions throughout its history. A terrible storm which raged round the coast of Kent in 1667 destroyed Broadstairs pier, which was rebuilt subsequently by a national subscription.¹ During the eighteenth century it was nearly swept away by gales in 1763 and 1767.² Margate suffered from notable storms in 1755, 1763 and 1767, "when the pier and town itself was greatly damaged by the impetuosity of the surge".³

A great storm in 1767 was felt alike by Margate and Broadstairs: "on the 6th of January, a violent gale of wind at North West brought on a most furious tide at MARGATE, which injured the pier and jetties to the amount of £1,000; the houses on the parade, and buildings between Hall's library and the sea, were so injured that the inhabitants removed their goods".⁴ Copying from an original source Mockett described the damage inflicted upon Broadstairs.

"Poor Broadstairs, in St. Peter's parish, has felt the whole force of the storm, the pier is utterly destroyed and, probably, ruined for ever. Twelve ships belonging to the Iceland cod fishery, (5) and one vessel on the stocks, will, with great difficulty, if ever, be got out. The place is undone, and many honest people turned adrift to seek their bread where they can find it. What makes their calamity the more pitiable is, that their pier having suffered very great damages in the storm of 1763, they presented a petition for a Brief, which was rejected; their case is truly deplorable, and yet they bear these accumulated miseries with most unexampled patience". (6)

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1. Hills, op.cit., 17.
 2. Ibid., 17; Barlow, op.cit., 6. Margate also felt the force of both of these storms, so that "during the dreadful storm on this coast in 1763 the sea overflowed the pier, and threw down the guns mounted for the defence of the harbour, but that loss was soon made good", Nathaniel Spencer, The Complete English Traveller (1772), 164.
 3. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (5th Ed., Canterbury, 1799), op.cit., 260-1.
 4. Mockett, op.cit., 19-20.
 5. Compare the Broadstairs Icelandic fleet of 13 vessels in 1759, and 10-12 in 1763, noted in the second section of this Chapter above.
 6. Mockett, op.cit., 20.

The Thanet ports lacked sufficient financial resources of their own to maintain their harbour facilities in good repair.¹ In Broadstairs, dwarfed as it was by the other Thanet ports, with the smallest harbour and a negligible trade, apart from fishing and shipbuilding,² problems of financing the maintenance of the pier and harbour became acute. Thus, in 1772,

"this pier has been frequently injured by storms and as the revenue for its support and preservation is but small, the inhabitants of Broadstairs have been sometimes obliged to solicit the subscriptions of the public, which in consideration of its commercial utility have been liberally promoted". (3)

Examples of public subscription followed severe storm damage in 1767 and 1774.⁴ Contemporary descriptions of damage inflicted were no doubt often highly coloured, if not grossly exaggerated, and yet despite the importance of Broadstairs for shipbuilding and fishing, the frequency and severity of storms during the eighteenth century were such that it was not always possible to repair the pier and harbour with the slender financial resources then available. The buoyancy of fishing during the 1760's, and the practice whereby fishing vessels from other ports followed the migration of mackerel and herring, making use of the harbour at Broadstairs for sheltering or unloading fish,⁵ helped to ensure outside financial assistance towards the repair of Broadstairs pier during the 1770's. In 1774, only seven years after the severe storm of 1767, the pier sustained considerable damage in yet another major storm but, because the harbour there was thought to be of such value to the fishing trade, the Corporations of Yarmouth, Dover, Hythe and Canterbury, assisted by the East India Company and the Trinity House, subscribed £2,000 towards meeting necessary repairs.⁶

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1. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38.
 2. As noted above in the second section of this Chapter.
 3. The History and Antiquities of Rochester and its Environs. (Rochester, 1772), op.cit., 322.
 4. Barlow, op.cit., 6.
 5. Above in the second section of this Chapter.
 6. Barlow, op.cit., 6; the East India Company were possibly interested in the preservation of White's shipyard at Broadstairs, and almost certainly in the foying facilities offered by the Thanet ports, as noted above in the second section of this Chapter.

The position of Ramsgate pier projecting from under the East Cliff to the south and west offered some protection from north easterly winds,¹ but even so the early eighteenth century brought constant watchfulness for the protection of the haven,² and in 1715 the pier was lengthened.³ Dues on the export of corn were used to repair and maintain the haven.⁴ Although Ramsgate was a shipping centre to and from Scandinavia,⁵ the port generated little commerce⁶ and was subordinate to Margate in the corn trade from Thanet to London.⁷ Ramsgate trading produced only a small revenue for the purposes of harbour preservation and maintenance.⁸ It was for this reason that Ramsgate masters were exempted from Dover harbour dues⁹ but, apart from this, no other financial aid was forthcoming.¹⁰ In 1735 the port of Ramsgate petitioned the House of Commons for a Bill to finance the construction of a second pier and the preservation of the first,¹¹ but this petition became enmeshed in the long struggle between Sandwich and Ramsgate as possible sites

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1. Andrews Thesis, op.cit., 113.
 2. Gardiner, op.cit., 208.
 3. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38, and Thesis, op.cit., 113; also above in the first section of this Chapter.
 4. Gardiner, op.cit., 208.
 5. As noted in the previous section of this Chapter.
 6. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38, and Thesis, op.cit., 113-5.
 7. As noted in the second section of this Chapter.
 8. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38, and Thesis, op.cit., 113.
 9. For instance by 11 & 12 William III c.5; also noted above in the previous section of this Chapter.
 10. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38; and Thesis, op.cit., 113.
 11. Andrews Thesis, op.cit., 113-4, or Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XXII (1732-7), 591-2.

for a harbour of refuge for the Downs.¹

Harbour dues, called 'droits', and levied from "time out of mind", were used to finance Thanet harbour maintenance, repairs and improvements. During Elizabeth's reign, certain rates on corn and other goods were imposed to keep Margate pier in repair. These rates were confirmed subsequently by successive Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports, who from time to time renewed and altered the decrees regulating the small harbour, which was under the management of two pier wardens, who had to collect the droits or dues, and inspect and repair the pier.² According to Lewis in 1723:

"this is certain that in Q. Elizabeth's reign this Peer was maintained by certain rates paid for Corn and other Merchandize shipped, and landed in it. These rates were confirmed by the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports who from time to time has renewed and altered the Decrees made by him for the ordering and management of this little Harbour". (3)

These dues or 'droits' were confirmed in September 1615, 1629, and February 1693/4.⁴ In the first confirmation of 1615 by Edward Lord Zouch, it was stated "that they have been usually confirmed by the Lord Warden for the time being, and time out of mind used by the inhabitants of Margate and St. John's in the Isle of Tenet".⁵ Additions to the decrees and orders were

1. Noted above in the second section of this Chapter and also The Kent Echo, 2 January 1878, 1d, "The jealousy which subsists among the ports of this division of the English Coast is historical and an early instance of it are the obstacles with which Sandwich sought to impede the construction of a harbour at Ramsgate"; eventually in 1749 Parliament decided in favour of Ramsgate and "for silencing the opposition offered by Sandwich, £200 a year was granted out of the profits and dues of Ramsgate Harbour". Sandwich feared that if piers were extended into the sea at Ramsgate "they would in a short time swerve mud into the mouth of Sandwich haven, ruin the trade of the town, and flood the lands between Sandwich and Canterbury by obstructing the passage of the Stour to the sea", ibid., 2 January 1878, 1d.
2. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 34.
3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87.
4. Ibid. (1723), 87; (2nd Ed., 1736), op.cit., 124.
5. Ibid. (1723), 87.

made in 1629 by Theophilus, Earl of Suffolk.¹ The Kent Record Office contains 25 detailed bye-laws relating to Margate pier:

"Orders, decrees, and rates tyme out of mynd used by the inhabitants of Margate and St. John's, ... a member of Dover, one of the five Ports, (2) for and towards the perpetual maintenance and preservation of the Peere and Harbour of Margate, ... newly revised and ratified ... by Theophilus, Earle of Suffolke, ... Lord Warden ... of the Cinque Ports". (3)

Because "collecting the Droits, according to the orders or Decrees required a constant Attendance, the Pier Wardens had antiently allowed them a Droit gatherer".⁴ The Pier accounts of 1609-10 list Henry Culmer as the droit gatherer. He collected £125.14s.7d. on which he was allowed £12.11s.0d., representing about 2s. in the £ which, argued Lewis, "this Officer well deserves, if he collects the Droits according to the Lord Warden's Decrees".⁵

Concerning Broadstairs harbour

"Leave and Privilege of using the said Way, had been granted and confirmed to the Inhabitants and Parishioners, as well Fishermen as others, on condition of their rendering and paying to the said George Culmer, (6) his Heirs or Assignees forever, half a man's share of every Boate appertayning to the said Parishes, of all such Profits, ... which shall happen to them, by Wrecks of the Sea, or by any other Casualtie or Means whatsoever, by them or any of them saved, gained, or taken up there or near adjoining. And also in consideration of £10 paid to George Culmer (7) they had granted and confirmed to them all that the Pier of Bradstow, with all the Right, etc., of the said George Culmer to hold forever, for the good of the whole Common Wealth with them, on their paying to the Wardens of the Pier for the Maintenance of it, such Dues as have been accustomed, only that George Culmer and his Heirs, living in his House at Bradstow, shall pay only $\frac{1}{2}$ d for every Load ... That the Inhabitants shall have room on George Culmer's Land to frame Timber, etc., for the Repair of the Pier ... That there be chosen two Wardens, one at least, to be a Fisherman, who shall gather up the Duties for the Maintenance of the Pier and, if any Damage happens, repair it on Notice given, within two Years at further, on Pain of voiding this Agreement". (8)

1. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87.

2. As noted above in the first section of this Chapter.

3. Kent Record Office, U47/11 010.

4. Lewis (2nd Ed., 1736), op.cit., 125.

5. Ibid., 125.

6. See above the first section of this Chapter.

7. Ibid.

8. Lewis (2nd Ed., 1736), op.cit., 164-5; Barlow, op.cit., 5.

Very clear conditions attached to the maintenance of Broadstairs pier from the sixteenth century, and following its sale in 1587,¹ rules and duties were established, which were confirmed subsequently by several Lord Wardens after the fashion at Margate. Thus, Broadstairs Pier was regulated by

"An Indenture of Covenant, between JOHN SPRACKLING and Others, and GEORGE CULMER, for Settling Rates and divers rules for maintaining the Harbour of Broadstairs - Dated May 1st, Elizabeth 33, 1591".

"The Lord Warden's Precept for better recovering the Rates and Duties payable to Broadstairs Pier, dated the 26 December 1593". And

"The Lord Warden's Confirmation of the Orders, Decrees and Rates, Observed and Paid, for Maintaining Broadstairs Pier - Dated 20 September 1616". (2)

1616 saw the last confirmation of the droits and rules respecting Broadstairs harbour.³

Similar provisions having origins probably in the sixteenth century applied equally to Ramsgate harbour:

"for the maintenance of this Peer Orders and Decrees have from time to time been given by the Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports, by which the Inhabitants are empowered to choose Wardens to look after the repairs of the said Peer, and to collect such Droits or Rates as by the said Decrees and ancient immemorial Custom are payable for Shipping and Goods brought into this Peer. One of these Orders is dated in Q. Elizabeth's reign, Henry Brook, Lord Cobham, being then Lord Warden: and the last of them AD 1616". (4)

Without records appertaining directly to the finances and management of the Thanet ports in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, such as harbour accounts and minute books, it becomes extremely difficult to assess the degree to which the Thanet harbours were solvent, adequately administered and kept in good repair. Disputes and difficulties over the payment of duties inevitably arose.

In 1575 the payment of dues to Ramsgate harbour "was disputed by some

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1. Also noted above in the first section of this Chapter.
 2. Broadstairs Harbour Account Book, 1842-52, op.cit.
 3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 118; The Broadstairs Pier Orders, 1616, are lodged in Margate Public Library.
 4. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 124.

contentious Persons; but on the Peer Wardens applying themselves to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, at that time Lord Warden, they obtained his Injunctions for their Payment".¹ Margate pier and harbour through neglect fell into a state of decay in the middle of the seventeenth century.²

"In 1662, I find complaint made to the Duke of York, then Lord Warden or Admiral of the Cinque Ports, that this 'Piere and Harboure was much ruinated and decayed,...that the Moneyes formerly collected and received for the Repaire thereof, had not been duely improved for that End, and that for a long time past there had been noe due Accounts given nor Elections made of successive Piere Wardens yearly', as by antient Custom and Orders of former Lord Wardens ought to be. On which Colonel John Stroode, then Lieutenant of Dover Castle,...summoned Edward Taddie, Thomas Wheately, John Franklyn, Jeffery Tomlin, and the Widow Bishop, late Pier Wardens, to produce the Writings and Orders touching the Pier and give up their Accounts, which Summons is dated March 6, 1662. But what was the Effect of this I don't find; I suppose the Persons summoned obeyed...and did as they were required". (3)

At this time continued coastal erosion was necessitating a larger and stronger pier, at the same time as the corn trade outwards from Thanet was expanding, yet in the 1660's masters of vessels were refusing to pay the harbour dues, and pier wardens were not being appointed to collect them.⁴ Eventually this abuse was remedied, and pier wardens were regularly appointed after 1679,⁵ but in 1690 they were £200 in debt, and a new schedule of harbour dues was requested.⁶ Under Orders, confirmed by the Lord Warden on 7 February 1694,⁷ two persons resident in Margate and St. John's were to be

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1. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 124-5.
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 35.
 3. Lewis (2nd Ed., 1736), op.cit., 125.
 4. E. Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Volume X (2nd Ed., Canterbury, 1800), 317.
 5. Margate Public Library, MS: List of Pier Wardens.
 6. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38.
 7. Orders, Decrees and Rates, Time out of Mind Used by the Inhabitants of Margate and St. John's...For and Towards the Perpetual Maintenance of the Pier and Harbour of Margate, 1694.

chosen every year on May Day, known by the name of pier wardens. Assisted by two deputy pier wardens, they were to take care of the pier and harbour.¹ Requests for increased harbour dues must have been refused, because the list of dues chargeable in 1694 states that these had been the rates for "time out of mind".²

In 1723 the 1694 orders still applied.

"Its the Office of these Wardens and their Deputies to collect the Droits, as they are called, or the moneys or or rates due to the Peer, of which they are to give an Account to the Parishioners and their Successors in this Office within 20 Days after they are out of their Office. But this being a little troublesome the Peer Wardens for many Years past have got rid of this part of their Office, by getting a Droit gatherer appointed to the no small prejudice of this Harbour and Peer. Its likewise the Office of these Wardens to inspect and provide for the repairs of the Peer, but they cannot make any new works above the value of Five Pounds, without the Consent of the Inhabitants". (3)

The strength and value of Margate pier by the early eighteenth century depended on a tussle between coastal erosion on the one hand and effective management and finances on the other. Even after 1694 it was still maintained that the pier wardens had no legal powers to compel the payment of droits, and such opposition threatened the destruction of the pier and harbour.⁴ During the 1720's the payment of harbour dues was again in dispute;⁵

"the Hoy-men having agreed with the Farmers to carry their Corn at a certain Rate, and they, the Hoymen, to pay the Pierage,...some of them pretended to pay even what they pleased, on a Supposition that the Pier Wardens had no legal Power to compel them to pay the Droits assigned by the Pier Decrees. This obliged the Pier Wardens and Inhabitants to petition Parliament A.D.1724". (6)

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1. Lewis (2nd Ed., 1736), op.cit., 124.
 2. Orders, Decrees and Rates, etc., 1694, op.cit.
 3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87-8.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 35-6.
 5. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38; also Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XX (1722-7), op.cit., 361.
 6. Lewis (2nd Ed., 1736), op.cit., 126.

This Petition was for an Act, which passed through Parliament in 1725, "to enable the Pier-Wardens of the Town of Margat, in the County of Kent, more effectually to recover the ancient and accustomed Droits, for the Support and Maintenance of the said Pier".¹ Its Preamble, after justifying the value of Margate harbour to the navigation and trade of the country,² proceeded to argue that

"the Safety of the said Town of Margat and of all the Neighbouring Country depending upon the preservation of the said pier and harbour, (3) There hath for and towards the Maintenance and Preservation thereof been time immemorial paid to the Pier Wardens or their Deputies for the time being Certain Droits... (which have been confirmed by the Orders and Decrees of the Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports), and without the due payment thereof the said Pier and Harbour must inevitably fall to decay, to the utter Ruin of the Inhabitants of the said Town and of all the Neighbouring Country, and to the Great Prejudice of the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom.... It is necessary therefore to make more effectual Provisions as well for Recovery of the said Droits and Rates or Duties and for Enforcing due Payment thereof in Case of Refusal or non-payment as also for better Serving the said Pier and Harbour". (4)

Clearly whatever had passed during the seventeenth century in the way of orders made by various Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports to confirm and uphold the droit payments due to Margate pier produced revenues which in the early eighteenth century were insufficient to cover essential costs of maintenance and repair. Several Acts of Parliament thereafter were necessary to enforce the payment of dues, from which to finance improvements and extensions to the harbour. The 1725 Act sought to remedy legally the deficiencies then

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1. Journals of the House of Lords, Volume XXII. (1722-6), 409a.
 2. "The ancient Town of Margat in the County of Kent hath time out of Mind had a Pier and Harbour very Commodious and of Great Benefit and Advantage to the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, in the Preservation of Ships and Mariners in Storms and Stress of Weather and from Enemies in Times of War, And also very Convenient for the Exporting and Importing many Sorts of Commodities", MS Roll, 1725 Act, House of Lords Record Office.
 3. Lewis (1723), op.cit., 87.
 4. MS Roll, 1725 Act, House of Lords Record Office, op.cit.

applying to finances and administration. Droits due to the harbour had to be duly levied, paid and collected. The pier wardens could appoint from 25 March 1725 a collector or collectors, allowing them so much from the sums collected not exceeding 1s.6d. in the £, after taking from them security.¹ The collectors had to account for their takings, when so directed by the pier wardens. On suspicion of embezzlement or misapplication of funds any person could submit a written complaint to the Court of Admiralty of the Cinque Ports, whose judge could then issue a summons to examine the accounts and the person or persons so accused. Offenders on being found guilty could be fined a sum not exceeding three times the amount concealed or embezzled, to be raised if necessary by the sale of goods and chattels belonging to the accused. The fines had to go towards the repair and maintenance of the pier in the same manner as the droits. The pier wardens or collectors could board any vessel belonging to the town and port of Margate, for the purposes of inspecting and making an account of what duties were payable. Goods on which duties were unpaid could be seized and sold as a means of meeting the sums owing. Masters of corn hoys and other vessels could be summoned by the pier wardens and examined under oath concerning duties for which they were liable, the penalty for non-appearance being £10. All revenues had to be applied "towards the repairing, improving, and continually keeping in good Repair, the said Pier and Harbour of Margate, and shall not be applied or disposed to any other Use, Intent, or Purpose whatsoever". The pier wardens could make provisions designed to keep the harbour clean and commodious.²

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1. II Geo.I c.3; An Act to enable the Pier-Wardens of the Town of Margat, in the County of Kent, more effectually to recover the ancient and accustomed Droits, for the Support and Maintenance of the said Pier (1725).
 2. Ibid.

Margate pier and harbour were maintained under this Act until Margate's first Improvement Bill was passed in 1787, which had as one of its objects the support, maintenance and rebuilding of Margate pier.¹ Some improvement must have been effected to Margate harbour by the legislation of 1725, since no further complaints were made concerning the non-payment of harbour dues² and, although in the 1750's the harbour was regularly used by vessels of a hundred tons burden,³ contemporary writers of the 1760's and 1770's observed that "the Harbour is pleasant, but not greatly frequented, for want of a depth of water sufficient for ships of heavy burden".⁴ Thereafter Margate's pier and harbour were covered by far-reaching legislation before the Napoleonic Wars were through. The 1787 Act was followed by further Acts in 1799,⁵ 1809⁶ and 1812.⁷ Under the 1812 Act the present Margate Pier and Harbour Company was created.

Thomas Deverson and William Goodson, who were the two pier wardens of Broadstairs in 1744, had printed at their command "the Orders, and Decrees

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1. 27 Geo.III c.45: An Act for re-building the Pier of Margate in the Isle of Thanet, in the County of Kent; for ascertaining, establishing, and recovering certain Duties, in Lieu of the ancient and customary Droits for the Support and Maintance of the said Pier: for widening, paving, repairing, cleansing, lighting and watching the Streets, Lanes, Highways and public Passages, in the Town of Margate and Parish of St. John the Baptist [etc] (1787).
 2. Andrews, Archaeologia Cantiana, op.cit., 38.
 3. Ibid., 38.
 4. Lyons, op.cit., 10; The Margate Guide...in a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 12; or "the water in the harbour is extremely shallow, so that ships of burden cannot get in", Spencer, op.cit., 163-4.
 5. 39 Geo.III c.2; An Act to amend and render more effectual an Act, passed in the 27th Year of the Reign of His Present Majesty, for rebuilding the Pier of Margate in the Isle of Thanet in the County of Kent; and for other Purposes mentioned in the said Act (1799).
 6. 49 Geo.III c.117; An Act to amend and render more effectual two Acts for the Maintenance and Support of the Pier and Harbour, and Paving and Lighting the Town of Margate in the County of Kent (1809).
 7. 52 Geo.III c.186; An Act separating the Management of the Harbour of Margate, in the County of Kent, from the Paving and Lighting of the Town of Margate, and for vesting the future Management of the said Harbour in a joint Stock Company of Proprietors (1812).

and Rates, time out of Mind, used and taken by the Inhabitants of Broadstairs, for and towards the perpetual Maintenance and Preservation of the Pier".¹ All trace of "the Cash Accounts of the Treasurer from the Year 1769" has been lost, despite their inclusion in a list of books and papers, received by Mr. J. Collins, Treasurer 1849-50, from the late Treasurer, Mr. Thomas Christopher, who died in 1849, as listed at the back of the Broadstairs Harbour Account Book, 1842-52. Also listed were "eight Copies of a Memorial to the House of Commons from the Commissioners of Broadstairs Pier, for building a New Harbour, containing a List of Ships there built, vessels that have taken shelter in distress, and assistance that has been rendered them by the Luggers and Sailors of this place".² By the end of the eighteenth century the local economy was expanding and the population of Broadstairs was increasing, but the harbour remained in a poor state, and the time had arrived, as at Margate, to radically alter the administration and finances of the pier. These objectives were achieved subsequently by two Acts of Parliament passed in 1792 and 1805.³

The size, administration and finances of all three Thanet harbours were altered out of all recognition over the century 1750-1850, compared to 1650-1750; but these were developments not wholly unrelated to the emergence and growth of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate as watering places. All three towns came to depend on colliers, hoys and other vessels for supplying their visitors and inhabitants with coal, foods, and other necessary articles.⁴

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1. Broadstairs Harbour Account Book, 1842-52, op.cit.
 2. Ibid.
 3. 32 Geo. III c.86: An Act for repairing or rebuilding the Pier adjoining to the Harbour of Broadstairs, in the Isle of Thanet, in the County of Kent: and for the better preserving the said Harbour; and for removing and preventing Obstructions, Nuisances, and Annoyances, and regulating the Mooring of Ships and Vessels within the said Harbour (1792); and 45 Geo. III c.102; An Act for amending an Act passed in the Thirty-second year of His present Majesty, for repairing or rebuilding the Pier adjoining to the Harbour of Broad Stairs in the Isle of Thanet in the County of Kent (1805); also see Whyman (1966), op.cit., 35.
 4. See Chapter V, particularly the section on "Thanet's Economic Dependence upon the Hoy and Inward Coastal Shipments".

This Chapter has been concerned with the history of the coastal towns of Thanet not only prior to, but also apart from, their development as resorts. The holiday industry in its infancy was no more than seasonal in its economic impact, and had to expand considerably before it overshadowed all the other traditional activities of maritime ports. With the passing of each summer season, everyday life reverted to established economic activities, such as foying, fishing, some shipbuilding or repairing, and coastal trading, with Ramsgate functioning as an increasingly important harbour of refuge.

The Changing Fortunes of Margate and Brighton after 1750.

If Margate was the most lagging of the Thanet seaports before 1750, except for its corn trade to London, it led the way as a Thanet resort during the next half century after 1750. Another early starter as a watering place was Brighton, and there are close parallels between Margate and Brighton during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.¹ As the middle of the eighteenth century approached, there came an important turning point in the development of both towns, and their paths parted only when royal patronage came to Brighton and not to Margate.

Brighton in the 1640's was a considerable fishing port, containing perhaps 600 families or about 2,400 inhabitants,² but then the town "began

1. Sue and John Farrant in a paper on "Aspects of Brighton 1650-1800", submitted in May 1977 to the British-Canadian Symposium in Historical Geography, under the auspices of the Institute of British Geographers, argue that certain developments were common to Brighton, Scarborough, Margate and Weymouth, all of which experienced a decline in fishing during the later seventeenth century,⁴. The collapse of Brighton's fishery resulted principally from coastal erosion,². Chapter I of this thesis as a background Chapter has not like the Farrant paper attempted a detailed analysis of such sources as wills, parish registers or probate inventories.
2. Magna Britannia (1730).

to decline... and did not again hold up its head until the middle of the next century, when it gradually became prominent as a watering-place".¹

A petition to Parliament in 1666 referred to "the poor distressed and much decayed fishing town of Brighthelmstone, in Sussex".² The sea was encroaching upon the shore, and by

"the beginning of the eighteenth century Brighton was indeed in so miserable a condition, that a contemporary writer, remarking that it would cost £8,000 to guard against further encroachments of the sea, indicated very clearly his opinion that it would be money wasted to do so, since, he said unkindly, 'If one were to look on the town, (this sum) would seem to be more than all the houses are worth'". (3)

Brighton and Margate shared two common problems. Firstly, fishing which had been the cause of Brighton's earlier prosperity reached its highest level in late Tudor times, so that "in 1580 the Brighton fishing fleet of some 80 vessels, with 400 mariners and 10,000 fishing nets, must have been one of the most important on the south coast".⁴ In 1761 there were 300 fishermen, 11 vessels and 57 fishing boats in Brighton,⁵ by which time the prospects of the town were on the mend and Brighton was in the process of becoming a resort. Secondly, sea encroachments had slowly destroyed the lower town which housed the fishing settlement, with losses of land being recorded from early times.⁶ Brighton became so poor that in 1722 collections were made in churches and chapels throughout the country to raise

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1. Lewis Melville, Brighton : Its History, Its Follies, and Its Fashions (1909), 10.
 2. Ibid., 16-17.
 3. Ibid., 20.
 4. E.W. Gilbert, Brighton Old Ocean's Bauble (1954, reprinted 1968), 50.
 5. A. Relhan, A Short History of Brighthelmston, with remarks on its air and an analysis of its Waters (1761); quoted by Gilbert, op.cit., 51.
 6. Gilbert, op.cit., 51.

£1,700 for constructing two groynes, and it was also about this time that Defoe painted a gloomy picture of the decay of Brighton, describing it as "a poor fishing town, old built".¹

Professor Gilbert concludes that

"before 1750 Brighton appeared but seldom in the main stream of English history, but... /then/ the practice of sea-bathing...brought new life to the decayed town of Brighton. /Once/ doctors had prescribed sea-water and sea-bathing as a cure for numerous ills of mind and body, and had commended the health-giving properties of sea air, Brighton became in due course a seat of the court and the social capital of the country". (2)

Margate had fewer social pretensions. After 1736³ the days of being a poor coastal community against a productive hinterland were over, and there occurred a turning point in the development of the town, the causes and effects of which were all too apparent in the course of a few decades at most.

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1. Gilbert, op.cit., 52; Farrant, op.cit., 3.
 2. Gilbert, op.cit., 53, 55.
 3. The significance of this date can be seen in Chapter II below.

CHAPTER II

KEY FACTORS IN THE EARLY RISE OF THE THANET WATERING PLACES

Having examined the main economic features of the Thanet coastline prior to the onset of sea bathing, the next stage in the rise of the Thanet resorts is to identify the principal forces underlying the emergence of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate as watering places during the middle and later decades of the eighteenth century. It is necessary to explain the vogue for sea bathing and sea air which developed dramatically during the eighteenth century, noting too the facilities which Thanet could offer in these matters.

The initial growth of the Thanet resorts resulted from a combination of three major developments:

- (a) From the eighteenth century medical publicity which was given to sea water and sea air;
- (b) From the facilities which Thanet possessed and developed so that sea bathing could be practised with comparative ease; and
- (c) From an extension of inland and water transport linking London or the county to Thanet.

These developments were key factors in the rise of the Thanet resorts.

They explain Margate's new role as a watering place from the 1730's onwards.

The first two developments are examined in this Chapter.

A Developing Craze for Drinking Sea Water and for Sea Bathing

The cult of sea bathing, particularly for medical reasons, was very much an eighteenth century phenomenon, which became "a very serious matter".¹ Doctors had long considered the benefits of mineral water cures, added to which sea bathing as a form of medical treatment became popular through the efforts of Dr. Richard Russell and other medical practitioners. The

1. John Vaughan, The English Guide Book, c.1780-1870 (Newton Abbot, 1974), 19.

Visitor's Guide to the Watering Places, or a Summer Excursion round the Coast of England, in Pursuit of Health and Recreation (1842), which contained an introductory Chapter on the use and abuse of warm and cold water bathing, observed that although "bathing, as a luxury, or as a remedy in disease, has been practiced from the earliest periods", yet "in this country alone, with all its refinements in the arts, which contribute to the happiness or comfort of man, and with all its improvements in medical science and jurisprudence, this salutary and luxurious practice is almost entirely neglected".¹ While this source is perfectly correct in stressing the long history which bathing had enjoyed, it was the eighteenth century which publicised and practised the merits of sea bathing. In England the middle decades witnessed a great outburst of publicity concerning the medicinal value of sea water.

For two or three decades before 1750 several physicians explored the possibilities of sea-water cures. Although there is evidence from Roman times of annual movements of large numbers of people from Rome to the seaside during the summer, sufficient to indicate a well developed tourist trade,² and although Roman physicians discussed the medical properties of sea water, such facts and thoughts were largely alien to inland and London dwellers of the early eighteenth century, who were more aware of the curative properties, both external and internal, of the waters of inland spas, such as Bath or Tunbridge Wells. Few people in the 1740's thought of applying sea water, externally or internally, as a form of medical treatment.³ In the 1750's, however, the merits of sea water were given great publicity by

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1. The Visitor's Guide to the Watering Places, or a Summer Excursion Round the Coast of England, in Pursuit of Health and Recreation (1842), xv.
 2. L.J. Lickorish and A.G. Kershaw, The Travel Trade (1958), 21.
 3. James Johnston Abraham, Lettsom His Life, Times, Friends, and Descendants (1933), 277.

the pen of Dr. Richard Russell, F.R.S. (1687-1759),¹ the founding father of Brighton.² He was the most active propagandist among the physicians working in this field, and

"there seems to be no doubt that he was the father of all seaside watering places. The health value of the summer holiday by the seaside is now such an accepted fact in English life, .../but/ it was the sudden craze for sea bathing that arose in the mid-eighteenth century, and the teaching of 'Sea Water Russell', that started the idea". (3)

The published work, which made him famous at the age of sixty three, was entitled A Dissertation on the Use of SeaWater in the Diseases of the Glands, particularly the Scurvy, Jaundice, King's Evil, Leprosy, and the Glandular Consumption. This work was first published in Oxford in Latin in 1750: De Tabe Glandulari, sive De Usu Aquae Marinae in Morbis Glandularum Dissertatio. Retailing at 5s., its publication was noted in

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1. Abraham, op.cit., 278-9. Richard Russell was born on 26 November 1687 at Lewes, the son of Nathaniel Russell, a surgeon apothecary who was in practice in that town. He received an education at the local grammar school of St. Anne's Southover, after which he was apprenticed to his father, in accordance with the then customary form of medical training. He graduated as a physician at Leyden, where he is said to have studied under Boerhaave. On returning to England he entered into practice at Lewes, moving to Brighton in 1753. He died on a visit to London on 19 December 1759, having in his lifetime established the reputation of Brighton, to which royal patronage later contributed, his epitaph reading:

"Admiring ages Russell's fame shall know
Till ocean's healing waters cease to flow".

Dr. C. Häberlin, "Historia Hydrologica, III: Thalassotherapy", Archives of Medical Hydrology (October 1934), 294, shows that this Dr. Richard Russell is often confused with another Dr. Richard Russell who graduated as a physician at Rheims on 7 January 1738, practised medicine at Ware and on 23 July 1742 was admitted as an extra licentiate of the College of Physicians in London. Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society on 13 February 1752 he died in Reading on 5 July 1771, as noted by The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume 41 (July 1771), 335. Dr. Norman Moore writing of Richard Russell, M.D., died 1771, in The Dictionary of National Biography (1897) incorrectly states that he was the author in 1750 of De Tabe Glandulari, or A Dissertation on the Use of Sea Water in the Diseases of the Glands, etc., 470-1, rather than Dr. Richard Russell (1687-1759) of Lewes in Sussex.

2. "The history of Brighton is full of Russell, as he made the place... Russell Street, Russell Square, Russell Place are called after him", Häberlin, op.cit., 294.
3. Abraham, op.cit., 277.

THE FIRST MEDICAL TREATISE
ON SEA WATER.

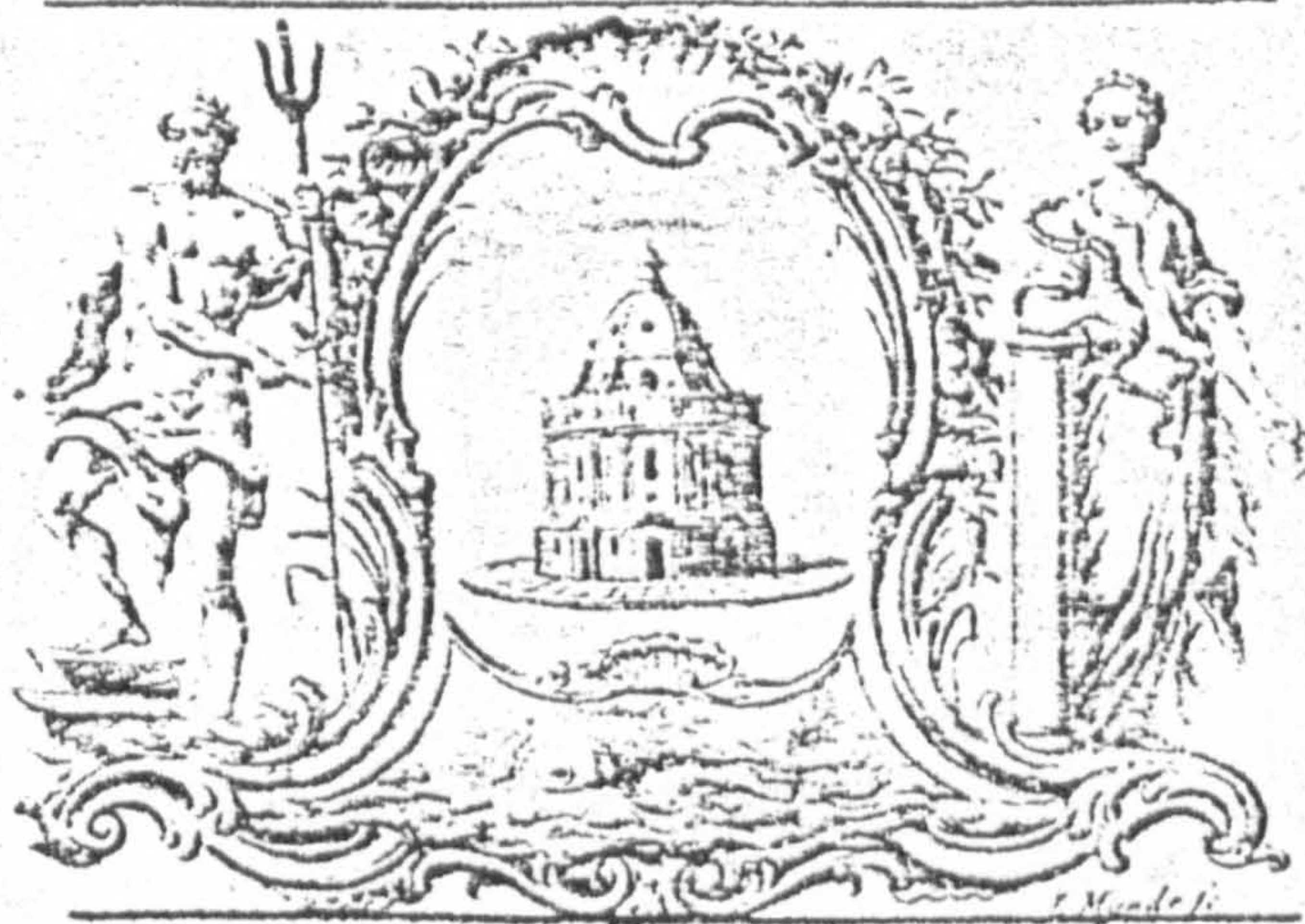
DE.
TABE GLANDULARI,
SIVE
DE USU AQUÆ MARINÆ
IN
MORBIS GLANDULARUM
DISSERTATIO.

AUCTORE RICARDO RUSSELL, M.D.

Θάλασσα κλύζει πάντε τ' ἀνθρώπων κακά.

Mare abluat omnia hominum mala.

Euripides Iphigen. in Taur. V. 1193.



E THEATRO SHELDONIANO,
Prostant venales apud JACOBUM FLETCHER, Oxon. & J.
& J. RIVINGTON, Lond. MDCCL.

Title-page of the first edition of Dr. Russell's book on sea-water

E. W. Gilbert, Brighton Old Ocean's
Bauble (1954), facing p. 57.

The Gentleman's Magazine under "Books and Pamphlets" on "History, Philosophy and Surgery", published during June 1750.¹ Pirated English translations were published in London in 1752 and in Dublin in 1753. Listed in The Gentleman's Magazine under "Books published in June 1752, Medicine, Surgery" was "1. A dissertation on the use of sea water in diseases of the glands... translated from the Latin of R. Russell, M.D., 2s.6d. W. Owen".² Now the medical profession and the public had access to an English translation which in two years had been halved in price. This so annoyed Dr. Russell that he issued himself an authorised translation in 1753.³ The Kentish Post during May 1754 advertised a 2nd Edition of Dr. Russell's treatise: "This Day is published, Printed in a Neat Pocket Volume, Price Bound 2s.6d., Sew'd 2s. The Second Edition Revised and Corrected With all the Receipts carefully translated into English, A DISSERTATION ON THE USE OF SEA WATER In the Diseases of the Glands, Particularly the Scurvy, Jaundice, King's Evil, Leprosy, and the Glandular Consumption, Translated from the Latin of RICHARD RUSSELL, M.D. Printed for W. OWEN, Fleet-street".⁴

Dr. Russell's Dissertation offered to the scrutiny of the medical profession and the reading public several instances of illness which he claimed had been cured by sea water taken either inwardly or by means of bathing. He recommended the use of sea water for the cure of enlarged lymphatic glands. He demonstrated at some length how he had come to take notice of the medical properties of sea water, stressing that what he wrote about was the outcome of years of observation: "as some Persons, perhaps, will be desirous of knowing how I came first to take Notice of this Medicine,

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1. The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume 20 (June 1750), 288.
 2. Ibid., Volume 22 (June 1752), 290-1.
 3. Abraham, op.cit., 277.
 4. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 18-22 May 1754.

and upon what Authorities I was induced to apply my Studies to discover its Use, I shall add a few Lines on this Matter".¹

He admitted that the use of sea water was no novel invention of his, the ancient physicians having employed it,² references being made to Pliny³ and to Dioscorides,⁴ but "I might claim the Credit of having brought a Medicine of the antient Physicians again into Practice that had been too little regarded, and of having more accurately considered its Qualities".⁵ Dr. Russell, in common with other educated men of his day, was a competent classical scholar, and this enabled him to make references to the writings of ancient physicians on the subject of sea water. The Romans certainly erected magnificent bathing resorts along the Mediterranean Coasts and in North Africa,⁶ but with the decline of the Romans thalassotherapy or treatment at the seaside had an intermittent history. Sea bathing received mention from Avicenna (980-1037). Ambroise Paré (1519-1590) believed that sea bathing was useful in the treatment of scabies.⁷ Tabernaemontanus (1520-1590) believed in the destroying power of sea water against fleas, and the same treatment also helped people with dropsy.⁸ Père Fournier in his Hydrographie (Paris, 1643) showed how "those of Greenland and of

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1. R. Russell, M.D., Dissertation on the Use of Sea Water in the Diseases of the Glands, particularly The Scurvy, Jaundice, King's Evil, Leprosy, and the Glandular Consumption (1752 Ed.), 68.
 2. Ibid., 26.
 3. Ibid., 26. Pliny, the younger, who died in A.D.113, and who achieved renown by a series of historical Letters, noted that "physicians think Sea-Water alone more effectual in dispersing Tumors", and "some physicians prescribe the sea water in a Quarten Ague and in a Tenesmus", Letters 36, c.b.
 4. Russell (1752 Ed.), op.cit., 68, having "a whole Chapter in reciting its virtues".
 5. Ibid., 35.
 6. Ludwig Friedländer, Roman Life and Manners Under the Early Empire (1908), 322, 332-8.
 7. Hæberlin, op.cit., 294.
 8. Ibid., 294.

the Strait of Maine drink sea water without any inconvenience, according to the Hollanders".¹ Ranges of thought occurred through the centuries between the Romans and the eighteenth century, but they were sporadic and isolated in their impact, and the fact remains that learned physicians of the early eighteenth century hardly considered the question of bathing cures, even though people living along the seashore never ceased to practice thalassotherapy.² Indeed, the natural inclination of an insular country like England to make use of the sea was stressed in 1687 when Dr. Russell was born by Floyer of Lichfield, who argued that

"No part of medical treatment is older than cold bathing; we cannot possibly have want of an excellent cold bath, living on an island with the sea all round us. It can cure us of many diseases and at the same time preserve our health. The English Nation has discovered that cold bathing is good for Rachitis and Rheumatism. It is not long ago since it is again taken up in England". (3)

The Gentleman's Magazine in April 1734 quoted "a letter from the late Sir John Floyer to Mr. King of Bungay, in Suffolk, in Recommendation of the Cold Bath", dated Lichfield, 21 April 1728, in which he stated that "you cannot be far from the Sea, so that you may try the Sea-Water Bath, in Dropsies, and Dull-Hearing; I know a Deaf Person who told me he could hear perfectly well that Day he bath'd in the Sea".⁴ Dr. Russell had long been impressed by the sound state of health which he found among seaside inhabitants: "in the first place, I had long since observed, that the Inhabitants of the Sea Coast made use of Sea Water in Disorders of the lower Belly and chiefly in those proceeding from Worms".⁵ What he had seen of fishermen and their families led him to conclude that sea water

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1. Père Fournier, Hydrographie (Paris, 1643), Book III, Chapter 31, quoted in Notes and Queries, Volume VI, No. 152, 25 September 1852, 290-1.
 2. Häberlin, op.cit., 294.
 3. Quoted by ibid., 294.
 4. The Gentleman's Magazine, op.cit., Volume IV (April 1734), 197-8.
 5. Russell (1752 Ed.), op.cit., 68.

"is an excellent Dentifrice, because amongst the great Number of Women that get their Living by daily picking up Shells upon the Sea-shore, you shall seldom see one with rotten Teeth; on the contrary, their Gums are generally firm, their Lungs sound and free from any scorbutic Cough; and this is chiefly caused by the saline Particles which are communicated to the Air from the Surface of the Sea; or rather which are dashed out by the breaking of the Waves". (1)

The years around 1730 were important for the development of Dr. Russell's theories. He exchanged ideas and findings in conversation and correspondence with colleagues and friends in the medical profession. He discovered that sea water was an excellent medicine in glandular complaints.² In 1730 he read a book entitled The Domestic Companion advising the use of sea water and commending it to sailors as a most convenient purge.³ During 1731 he drew the attention of Dr. Johnson and Mr. Craddock, a Surgeon, to a case of leprosy which he was treating: "the Patient was almost covered over with a Scorbutic Leprosy,...yet this violent Disease was subdued by Sea-Water".⁴

Dr. Russell paid tribute to the encouragement which he had received from his colleagues and friends in the medical profession: thus, "some Years ago, having some conversation about this Matter with Mr. WEBB, who is a very worthy Man, and a skilful Surgeon, and who had try'd the Virtue of this Medicine, he press'd me to try farther, and consider it more accurately".⁵ He concluded his treatize by quoting some of the case findings and evidence of physicians with whom he was in correspondence during the 1740's, notably Richard Frewin, Edward Wilmot, William Lewis, and Dr. Lee.⁶

1. Russell (1752 Ed.), op.cit., 65.

2. Ibid., 69.

3. Ibid., 69.

4. Ibid., 12.

5. Ibid., 69.

6. Ibid., 65-6, 139-204.

The background history to his studies he summed up as follows:

"and those are the Reasons and Authorities which first led me to use Sea Water, and afterwards confirmed me in the Knowledge of its Virtues. And, indeed, I have employ'd much Labour, Study, and Diligence in this Matter, in repeating various and almost infinitive Experiments". (1)

How did Dr. Russell try to prove the merits of sea water as a form of medical treatment? He believed that sea water possessed innumerable virtues, which could be applied in the treatment of several diseases, but admittedly there were some cases in which there was little advantage to be expected from sea-water treatment. He argued that every cure ought to be terminated by cold bathing in the sea, and in support of this recommendation it was his practice to send patients to the coast. As a practising physician at Lewes he sent patients to the South Coast, above all to Brighton. He did much to establish the reputation of Brighton to which royal patronage made a subsequent and important contribution.² In one famous passage he described how children who were sent to him for treatment, pale and delicate, over-clothed and with long hair, were returned to their parents much improved in their health after a course of sea bathing:

"I have often had boys brought to me weak, pale, with long thick Hair hanging down their Necks, and covered up with the greatest Care, lest the tender Creatures should be killed with the Cold, the whole Texture of the Body being relaxed with the Heat of their Cloathing...I have sent them back to their Parents, with their Hair cut off, their Necks bare, with a florid youthful Countenance, having first strengthened their Limbs by bathing in the Sea". (3)

Dr. Russell maintained that time and patience were needed from patients who wished to effect cures through sea-water treatment. While in some cases there was little to be expected from sea water, great stress was laid on the

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1. Russell (1752 Ed.), op.cit., 69.
 2. As noted in this section above and below.
 3. Russell (1752 Ed.), op.cit., 67.

application of sea water over long periods: "the Patient will bear the Stimulus of the Sea Water six Months without any Inconvenience, and in an obstinate Disease of the Skin, I have known a Patient bear it tolerably well for a whole Year".¹ He recommended that patients display fortitude and patience when undergoing a course of sea-water treatment: for,

"there is no other Medicine, that I could ever discover, which may be safely continued so long Time...I must acknowledge there is required great Constancy and Resolution to support the Tediousness of the Cure; but I think it is better to bear this than to suffer a languishing Death by a Consumption, or a Rottenness of the Bones...Experience shows that in those Cases which properly belong to the Medical Art, the Physician seldom wants Success but where the Patient wants Constancy". (2)

The reader of Dr. Russell's Dissertation was introduced to 39 cases illustrating the medical value of sea water. Case 2 concerned "a servant of the most noble Duke of _____ ...I sent him to Brighthelmstone"³/Brighton⁷. Case 32 was the most sensational, indicating the importance which he attached to the drinking of sea water; inserted as

"a Confutation of those Persons, if there be any such, who condemn the long Use of Sea-Water, as being too strong a medicine...The Woman in the present Case, took 25 Gallons of Sea Water, not at stated Intervals, but in one continued Course of Purging, at a Pint every Morning, which makes in all 200 Pints...If this Vast Quantity of Sea Water drank, which was followed by the Cure of the Patient and a better State of Health than before, does not procure and demonstrate its harmless Virtues; I fear there will never be any Arguements strong enough to remove the unjust Prejudices of some People". (4)

The final Case, number 39, concerned a "Boy entering upon his 13th Year, who was a Native of Jamaica, and was sent by his Friends to Brighhelmstone, to be under my Care".⁵ Significantly Dr. Russell moved to Brighton, where on

1. Russell (1752 Ed.), op.cit., 12.

2. Ibid., 44-5.

3. Ibid., 73.

4. Ibid., 112-3.

5. Ibid., 122.

a site "to the South of the Steine" he had built in 1754 a large house with grounds in front extending to the sea, known as 'Russell House', which subsequently became part of the Royal Albion Hotel.¹

Dr. Russell concluded that "Sea Water is endued with many and great Virtues; but the Unskilful may easily use it to no Purpose".² His Dissertation was studied by the medical profession including Dr. John Coakley Lettson, who was one of the principal founders of the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary.³ It enjoyed an extensive readership among the public, who rapidly adopted sea bathing and the drinking of sea water. During 1769 the work passed through a 6th Edition. Individual copies found their way into gentlemen's libraries. The Third Edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica (1797) noted under 'Sea Water':

"we have a dissertation by Dr. RUSSELL, concerning the medical uses of sea water in diseases of the glands...It may be justly expected to contribute to the improvement of physic". (4)

Physicians sent wealthy patients and their children to the seaside when they considered such treatment desirable, and George III's recovery from an alleged attack of insanity, followed in 1789 by a prolonged stay at Weymouth, made such advice extremely fashionable.⁵ Dr. Russell had an enormous vogue in the British Isles and on the Continent. In Europe his ideas were studied well into the nineteenth century.⁶ Michelet in his poem 'La Mer' (1861) called him "Inventeur de la mer".⁷ In Schleswig-Holstein the use of sea water as a form of medical treatment was reported in 1759, and the foundation of sea-bathing resorts in nearly all European countries can be traced to English

1. Abraham, op.cit., 279.

2. Russell (1752 Ed.), op.cit., 131.

3. Abraham, op.cit., 281; also see below Chapter VIII.

4. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Volume XVII (3rd Ed., Edinburgh, 1797), 195.

5. Abraham, op.cit., 281.

6. Ibid., 277.

7. Ibid., 277.

influence.¹

Historians may indeed ponder over how much the popularity of the seaside owes to the bathing publicists of the eighteenth century; but equally their crusade in favour of improved health from the sea might "not have been the immediate success it turned out to be had it not coincided with a time when people unable to travel abroad on account of...wars, and heartily tired of the amenities of the inland spas, wanted a fresh outlet for their activities".² Seaside watering places springing up all round the English coast provided this outlet. Initially Brighton, having associations with Dr. Russell, and Margate, enjoying easy access from London by water communications, were among the first resorts to emerge once "the gospel of the sea was preached".³

Dr. Russell was not the only physician who was working in this field in the early eighteenth century. There were several other physicians who were convinced of the medical virtues of sea water, some of whom had corresponded with Dr. Russell.⁴ The independent researches of a Dr. Speed culminated in a second major work, A Commentary on Sea Water, which was published prior to 1760.

Dr. Speed was less enthusiastic about the drinking of sea water and altogether struck a more cautious note in observing

"I have known that Sea Water would not purge at all, and then it created a very great Uneasiness in the Stomach... Others, who have drank it unadvisedly, have been...thrown into an almost incurable Looseness, which has sometimes proved fatal". (5)

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1. Hüberlin, op.cit., 294-5. This was seen most distinctly in Germany, Joham Christoph Lichtenberg making visits to Margate and to Deal and interesting himself in the establishment of seaside resorts.
 2. Abraham, op.cit., 280. The frequent wars of the later eighteenth century were a constant interruption to foreign travelling.
 3. Abraham, op.cit., 280.
 4. See this section above.
 5. Contained in the 1760 Edition of Russell, op.cit., 153.

Clearly there were disputes within the medical profession concerning the merits of drinking sea water. Almost from the outset medical thinking questioned this aspect of sea water treatment. In addition, the difficult question of measuring the efficacy of sea bathing interested Dr. Speed. His researches led him to argue that

"Sea Water is not simply a Cold Bath, but a Cold medicated Bath. But whatever Virtues this Water may have, we cannot so exactly calculate its Force as to determine what Numbers of Immersions are sufficient for the Recovery of any particular Patient. Yet many are so silly as to expect this, and sometimes Physicians are so rash as to pretend to comply with their Requests". (1)

Dr. Speed, in common with Dr. Russell, drew on case evidence to demonstrate the medical effects of sea-water in treating particular diseases. The most interesting part of his Commentary centres around his conclusion and in particular his own comments on Dr. Russell's work.

"There may be some Things in which I seem to clash with Dr. RUSSELL's Account of Sea Water, and some may think I have done it with Design. But this is so far from being true, that I had written the greatest part of this Commentary before I had ever heard of Dr. Russell's Book or Name. But I could not help taking Notice while I was reading this Book, that though the Author says a great deal concerning the internal Use of Sea Water, yet in all his Cases which he wrote himself, or received from his Friends, which he thought proper to publish, there are only four who experienced the internal Use of Sea Water alone. In the rest it is joined to the external Use, to which the principal Effects seem to me to be owing, or else with other Medicines which have been noted for their Efficiency against particular Diseases, and in most, both these Assistances were used... He affirms, that Patients may indulge themselves in the plentiful Drinking of Sea Water, from the Example of a Woman who drank a large quantity, viz, 25 Gallons, without any Harm, perhaps forgetting we cannot infer Universals from particular Cases. I must needs own I have not been so fortunate as to make the same Observation, nor have I been so happy as never to have perceived any Inconvenience from the free Internal Use of Sea Water". (2)

Doctors Russell and Speed prepared the way for quite an extensive literature on the medicinal value of sea water which continued into the

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1. Russell (1760 Ed.), op.cit., 153, 154.
 2. Ibid., 173-4.

nineteenth century:

W. Logan, Observations on the Effects of Sea Water in the Scurvy and Scrophula (1771).

R. White, The Use and Abuse of Sea Water (1791).

Dr. John Anderson, A Preliminary Introduction to the Art of Sea Bathing: Wherein is shown its Nature, Power and Importance; With some Necessary Hints for the Attention of Visitors, at the Watering Places, Previous to, and During a Course of Bathing (Margate, 1795).

C. Pears, "Sea Bathing", The Literary Panorama, Volume IV (1808).

This crusade in favour of improved health at the seaside won popular acceptance. Drinking and bathing in sea water became fashionable. Essex sea water was conveyed by ship to London baths which were advertised in The Times during July 1808.

"As many of the Nobility and the Public may not be acquainted with the existence of these Baths, they are respectfully informed that they have been established eleven years and have been patronized by the most eminent Physicians in London and its vicinity. The Water is brought from the Sea, a few miles beyond Southend, in Essex, in a vessel particularly adapted for the purpose. A Warm, Cold, or Shower Bath may be had at any hour, from 6 in the morning until 11 at night, at one minute's notice - pure Sea-water, in small or large quantities. The Baths and accommodations may be inspected, and terms known, by application at the Bathing House, No. 13, George-street, Adelphi". (1)

The sensation of sea bathing could be experienced at home in 1845 by means of "HUMPHREY'S Medical Marine Essence", which was sold in bottles at 1s. 1½d. each by all chemists. "A little added to the water... in any domestic bath gives the refreshing influence of sea bathing, with the marine aroma so grateful to the lungs", being "highly strengthening to infants, effective in rickets, scrophula, etc".² The rapidity with which people adopted sea bathing during the later eighteenth century reflects how widely

1. The Times, 8 July 1808, 1c.

2. Ibid., 5 July 1845, 1r.

the medical profession and the public accepted the alleged benefits of sea-water treatment, but equally a demand for seaside holidays could come only from those sectors of society who possessed incomes and standards of living which were sufficiently high for pleasurable pursuits.

Assessed scientifically these new eighteenth century ideas on the medical properties of sea water were just one aspect of a general striving on the part of surgeons and physicians to comprehend the nature and treatment of different diseases. In reality there was an almost total failure to understand the causation and treatment of disease before the second half of the nineteenth century.

Sensible doctors were cautious in their diagnosis and treatment. They admitted the need for further investigation. This was the message of Dr. John Anderson, M.D., F.R.S., C.M.S., a local physician and a Physician and Director of the General Sea Bathing Infirmary in Margate,¹ where he published in 1795 his Preliminary Introduction to the Act of Sea Bathing, etc., which was immediately obtainable from the libraries-come-bookshops of Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs.

"In compliance with the request of some highly distinguished gentlemen of the Faculty, I have undertaken to write on the nature, power, influence, and effect of Sea-Water and Sea-Bathing, cold and hot... But the subject matter, thus assigned me...stands in much need of further investigation. Sea-bathing is certainly more practised, at the present day, than a Knowledge of it is yet possessed. There is in it great room to advance, explain, enforce and restrain". (2)

Dr. Anderson's arguments rested on "long practical experience, ...supported by the respectable living evidence of gentlemen of the Faculty on the coast",

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1. Also see below Chapter VIII.
 2. Dr. John Anderson, A Preliminary Introduction to the Act of Sea-Bathing: Wherein is Shown its Nature, Power, and Importance; With Some Necessary Hints for the Attention of Visitors, at the Watering Places, Previous to, and During a Course of Bathing (Margate, 1795), 3-4.

coupled with the experience of "sagacious sea-bathing guides, male and female, at MARGATE", and "where anything is left doubtful or equivocal, it is for professional men, resident at the sea-watering places, to advance a step further, and add to, and refine on, my arguments".¹

He claimed that "sea-bathing comprehends in it the powers and qualities of fluidity, gravity, pressure, attraction, repulsion, stimulation, friction, attrition and velocity; cold, heat, humidity, dryness, effluvia, etc."² For over twelve years Dr. Anderson had practised at Kingston in Surrey, before coming to Margate. During that time he confessed to little practical knowledge concerning "the power and effects of Sea-bathing", for as "an inland practiser...all my Knowledge of it was derived from the very few practical treatises I had seen, or could obtain on the subject".³ Although he had recommended patients to try sea bathing, some of whom had "returned no better, some worse,...my mind was not prompted to consider the efficacy of Sea-water as anything beyond that of a mere wash for a foul skin".⁴

It was Dr. Anderson's firm belief that

"It is for me, and for every one of us, who undertake the important charge of lives, to open and expand our ideas... which, if everyone did, we should see fewer improper objects arrive at the sea-watering places with very inadequate directions and large packages of compounded drugs...by which some have suffered severely, others received no benefit, and the water forsooth blamed for what it had no hand in - None have suffered at MARGATE except the indiscreet and unthinking, or who have been so unfortunate as to be badly advised and injudiciously directed...I have observed some to have come, and, under judicious direction, receive much benefit; come a second time, resting on their own judgement and experience, and suffer...

By an improper application of sea bathing, through ignorance, the intention of the bath is frustrated, the symptoms of a complaint aggravated, new fatal ones brought on and the voice of nature is silenced". (5)

1. Anderson, op.cit., 4.

2. Ibid., 8.

3. Ibid., 9-10.

4. Ibid., 9-10.

5. Ibid., 11-13.

When in 1786 Dr. Anderson visited Margate "in quest of strength, after a long and severe fever", and having benefited from "sea-bathing and the salubrious air of Thanet, I was thereon led to make enquiry into their special effects on other visitors, and what I actually saw, and was credibly informed of by some of the bathing guides, I thought important, and...immediately published it in my Medical Remarks on Evacuation".¹ Thereafter he had frequent opportunities to observe minutely the effects of sea water and sea air, "under various states, circumstances, and conditions of body: in simple and complicated, acute and chronic, casual and inherent complaints".²

Dr. Anderson was convinced that

"there are but few distempers incident to human nature in which either the cold, the warm, or vapour sea-water bath, and the air of a salubrious spot...such as Thanet are not equal to meet and prove more or less beneficial in...These baths are certainly most excellent auxiliaries to medicine, diet, exercise and amusement,... which accounts for the great flux and re-flux of company, from the king to the beggar, to and from the sea-watering places, during the temperate seasons". (3)

For three or four years at Margate Dr. Anderson stood as "a mere spectator and inquirer into the power, influence, and effects of sea bathing".⁴ Subsequently he was the author of three other works: Medical Remarks on Natural, Spontaneous, and Artificial Evacuations (1787); A Practical Essay on the good and bad Effects of Sea-Water and Sea-Bathing (1795); and A Practical Essay on the Power, Influence and Effect...good and bad, of the tepid, warm, hot and vapour Sea-Water Bath(?).

1. Anderson, op.cit., 15.

2. Ibid., 15.

3. Ibid., 15-16.

4. Ibid., 18.

While for Dr. Anderson "the bountiful ocean" appeared to answer "the peremptory demands of...tens of thousands of proper claimants every year,... still it was no universal panacea; its gifts are by no means appropriated for, or disposed to all: nor are all applicants equally capable of receiving them".¹ He was critical of the view that sea bathing was good for everybody and could cure all ills, for

"I clearly saw the impropriety of the sea receiving all that come without exception, as if sea bathing was a universal sovereign specific remedy for all complaints, whatever their nature or cause, was proper at all times, and suited to all constitutions, temperaments, states, and conditions of body or modes of living...Can there be any error, theoretical or practical, more absurd or unphilosophical?". (2)

He had cautioned the Margate bathing guides "against receiving any ailing persons, except with and by the suffrage of the Faculty", but "the guides were not to blame; they were not competent to advise and moreover their bread depends wholly on the multiplicity that bathe".³

In the final analysis, "in as much as it is for physicians and their brethren of the Faculty, at the sea-watering places to explore and industriously acquire a competent knowledge of the nature, power, influence, and effect of sea-bathing, and its essential supporting auxiliaries for the relief of pain, agony and distress", so "it is for VISITORS themselves not to be too indolent or refractory", but rather to take and be guided "by reason and judicious counsel on the spot, not only previous to, but from time to time, during a course of bathing, to prevent embarrassment, and to allow the bath to have fair play for answering the end and intention of it".⁴

Back in 1786 a cautious observer had contributed a short article to The Gentleman's Magazine, entitled "Strictures on Sea Bathing Founded on Experience".

1. Anderson, op.cit., 21-2.

2. Ibid., 19-20.

3. Ibid., 21.

4. Ibid., 27-8.

"I BELIEVE that the fashionable practice of sea bathing ought to be used with more precaution than it is... - because I believe the custom...is dangerous when it is suddenly left off. I am confirmed in this belief, not only from my own experience, but from the inconvenience or misfortune which others have felt. The first year I was at Brighthelmstone, I bathed, for two months, constantly every day, after which I was called to London in some haste. On the first and second day after I came to town, I had a violent head-ache, felt a sickness at my stomach, and an intolerable heat. My eldest boy...felt the very same complaints, but in a much stronger degree...He vomited, bled at the nose, and complained very much of his head. It presently occurred to me, that sea bathing having become so habitual to us, the leaving it off too suddenly was the cause of these complaints...I told this to a friend of mine, whose wife had been some weeks at Margate, and I desired him to caution her not to leave off the bathing all at once: but having neglected this advice, in three days after coming to town she was seized with a fever, and in ten days more she was carried to her grave". (1)

Sea-water treatment remained a subject of some controversy. Eventually the medical advantages of consuming sea water and sea bathing were seen to be somewhat limited. Doubt prompted the following remark in 1842: "though sea bathing has by some physicians been recommended for glandular enlargements, and other complaints of a scorbutic nature, it has generally been found to aggravate rather than diminish the disorder".²

Assessed in the light of present-day medicine, drinking and bathing in sea water appear as one of the curiosities of past medical history. Doctors Russell, Speed and others were trying to comprehend the nature, causes and treatment of different diseases, in days when medicine lacked a firm scientific foundation.

The most significant medical advances commenced only from the 1860's and 1870's:

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1. The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume 56, Part II (December 1786), 1035-6.
 2. The Visitor's Guide to the Watering Places (1842), op.cit., xvii.

"few of the medicines available in the eighteenth century would now be judged to be of value...Their usefulness was restricted by inability to identify the conditions in which they should be given...The fall in the death rate during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was not the result of medical treatment as Griffith (1) and others have supposed. Only in the case of vaccination against smallpox is there any clear evidence that specific therapy had a substantial effect on the prevention or cure of disease earlier than the twentieth century. The decline in mortality from diseases other than smallpox was due to improvements in living conditions, and to changes in virulence and resistance upon which human effort had no influence". (2)

Doctors McKeown and Record have argued that

"with the notable exception of vaccination against smallpox, specific preventive or curative measures could have had no significant influence on mortality before the twentieth century....It is quite certain that specific therapy, preventive or curative, made no contribution...before the twentieth century". (3)

Against the claims of sea water, counter cures were proposed, as and when Sir G. Noel presented a petition to the House of Commons on 3 July 1815 from Elizabeth Pearson, of Alfred Place, Bedford Square, London, "stating that she had discovered a cure for the scrofula and praying that her Petition be examined by a Committee", which was ordered to lie on the table of the House.⁴ During the 1790's, however, the fact that sea water was strongly recommended as a cure for this particular ailment had led to the foundation and establishment of the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary.⁵ On the following day Elizabeth Pearson's sponsor wrote to The Times explaining why he had agreed to introduce the Petition.

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1. G.T. Griffith, Population Problems of the Age of Malthus (Cambridge, 1926).
 2. Thomas McKeown and R.G. Brown, "Medical Evidence Related to English Population Changes in the Eighteenth Century", Population Studies, Volume IX (1955-6), 125, 139.
 3. Thomas McKeown and R.G. Record, "Reasons for the Decline of Mortality in England and Wales during the Nineteenth Century", Population Studies, Volume XVI (1962-3), 94, 115.
 4. The Times, 4 July 1815, 3a.
 5. See below, Chapter VIII.

"I have documents by me which have given me... confidence in the success of Mrs. Pearson's practice. I introduce the subject as a matter of national importance". (1)

Whatever the cure proposed, it was impossible to isolate the effects of sea bathing from those of sea air, as was appreciated in 1910: "the physiological and therapeutical effects of sea bathing cannot be separated from those of sea air, for it is impossible to take sea baths without being under the influence of sea air; and a stay at the seaside alone, without sea bathing, produces on many constitutions all the effects which are usually ascribed to sea bathing".²

The real benefits of a seaside holiday have always come from a complete change of environment, to which sea air makes a contribution, coupled with good food, exercise, relaxation, and to some extent sea bathing. On the other hand, many people in the eighteenth century genuinely believed in the curative properties of sea water, just as their predecessors had placed great faith in the medicinal value of the waters and springs of inland spas.

Physicians and surgeons from the 1740's onwards became obsessed with the idea that sea water was the panacea for all human ills. Doctors recommended their patients to drink and bathe in sea water. Letters and diaries tell of visits to the seaside for medical reasons. Guidebooks recommended the merits of sea-water treatment. Initially it was mainly the wealthy, from among the nobility, gentry, clergy and top literary, mercantile and professional occupations, who could afford to travel to the coast for medical or other reasons. Guidebooks flatteringly described them as visitors of "the first distinction", but among their numbers were hypochondriacs, whose obsessions and behaviour attracted comment from wits and newspapers.

Every age has produced its share of hypochondriacs, not least of all

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1. The Times, 5 July 1815, 3a.
 2. Quain's Dictionary of Medicine (1910), 1469.

the eighteenth century. Advertisement columns in the national and provincial press illustrate only too clearly that the Georgian era was an age of hypochondriacs. Newspaper reports confirm this impression. The Morning Post and Fashionable World noted two instances during the second half of August 1795:

- a) "Earl GUILDFORD and the amiable Miss COUTTS are among the water drinkers at Cheltenham. Lord FAUCONBERG continues, the Valetudinarians say, his search after truth, as he has more than once this season drank the wells dry!" (1)
- and b) "Lord LOUGHBOROUGH, by copious draughts of Sea Water, is trying to get rid of those stomach acidities, which occasion frequent attacks of the Gout". (2)

Not everyone, even in the early days, felt inclined either to drink sea water or to bathe in it. The poet Thomas Gray only warmed to the sea air when he confessed in 1764 that "my health is much improved by the sea, not that I drank it, or bathed in it, as the common people do".³ Dr. Speed was bold enough to place a question mark against his own recommendations. People were free to act on his advice or to ignore it, for "I have said all that I intended concerning Sea-Waters,... If any Person should think all that I have said of no Value, he is welcome...I shall not endeavour to persuade him to the contrary".⁴

Among the contemporary wits who wrote amusingly of sea-water medical treatment was George Keate in his Sketches from Nature Taken and Coloured, in a Journey to Margate, during the 1770's, beginning with an "Address to the Sea".

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1. The Morning Post and Fashionable World, 15 August 1795, 2d.
 2. Ibid., 29 August 1795, 2d.
 3. Quoted by C.H. Woodruff, "The Making of Margate", The Home Counties Magazine, Volume IV (1902), 171; also by F.A. Bailey, A History of Southport (Southport, 1955), 31.
 4. Russell (1760 Ed.), op.cit., 173.

"HAIL! thou inexhaustible source of wonder and contemplation... I must address thee as that oblivious flood into which we plunge to drown our infirmities - How many diseases, real or imaginary, are now washing off under yonder range of canvass machines, drawn up in rows in the water?"

There was "the fine lady", who "withdraws herself from the pleasurable toils of high life, to new brace those nerves which luxury hath relaxed", while

"the bon vivant, who has eat /en/ away his stomach solicits from thee a new appetite. - The antiquated virgin, who has shunned every warmer embrace, flies eager and unattired into thine. - The young and the healthy court thee for pleasure - the barren to become fruitful - the debauché asks of thee a restorative - the corpulent, a scouring - the feeble, strength - the hypochondriac, spirits - and the numerous family of the rheumatic, a set of muscles more pliant than they possess.

Good heavens! What a world of wants! - and what claims, bountiful Ocean, for thee to answer! - Whether the diseases of life multiply, or...thy medicinal virtues have been but lately discovered is a question which I leave to the decision of the college; certain it is, that thy shores are daily more crowded with suppliants. - Every little town thou washest, so swarms now with a species of inhabitants, unknown to it in former times, that the ancient tenants of the place are compelled to stretch out their homely dwellings into more spacious houses, for the admission of the migrating stranger!" (1)

George Keate devoted a whole chapter to the Margate bathing rooms. He entered one of the rooms where he listened to invalids talking about their own cases, and reflected on their opinions concerning the virtues of sea water. Their medical assessments were as varied as their ailments.

"On entering one of the bathing rooms, where people assemble and converse till such time as their turns come to take the machines, I was agreeably surprised to find a face or two among the company which I had three years before often seen in the same place...It is a pleasing circumstance to invalids to meet after a considerable absence: their hopes are mutually fortified, being thereby induced to conceive there is not so much mortality in their complaints as they may have suspected. My lean carcase was complimented on being plumped out since we had last seen each other: - I returned as gracious a salute to the billious gentleman who had the civility to tell me so... A poor crippled figure, with an eye of languour, was commending the improved looks of a lady, whose face wore the colour of an INDIAN pickle, which was strongly confirmed by a nervous gentlewoman, who sat in the next chair, shaking like a CHINA Josse...

1. George Keate, Sketches From Nature, Taken and Coloured, in a Journey to Margate (5th Ed., 1802), 45-8.

It is among the courtesies of life to keep people in good humour with themselves;...the world rubs on pleasantly by it...Most of the company had talked over their own case, which invalids are particularly fond of doing, and all had given a judgement on the sea; but in general so contradictory, that had I formed my opinion on theirs, it would have amounted nearly to this - that it thinned and it thickened the blood - it strengthened - it weakened - it made people fat - it made them lean - it braced - it relaxed - it was good for everything - and good for nothing - It will wash you all clean, however, says a grave gentleman in the gallery, if it does nothing else. -

I had, from my first coming into the bathing room, observed the person who threw out this observation sitting close to the balustrade. He was in a night-cap, and gold-laced hat, wrapped in a great coat, with a silk handkerchief tied round his neck. - As he had remained silent till now, and had uttered his only sentence in a tone of dry humour, I wished to see a little more of him; and as soon as the machines had gradually carried off the company, I accosted him with the trite question of Sir don't you bathe? Bathe Sir! - no truly, not! - 'tis diversion enough to see others do it. - Wet, or dry, none will be out of the fashion - I see all the folks here, young, or old, take to the water as naturally as the Duck...What a cackle did yonder woman keep about its miracles, -...by what one hears in these places, if it were not for broken limbs, all our hospitals might be shut up. - The virtues of sea-water, said I, may be overrated - but I still think it an instrument of health to many - you are happy to have no demand on it. - I beg your pardon for that, replied my gentleman - presenting me such an enriched full face, as had not obtained its colouring at a small expence - if I have no demand Sir, my physician has sent me for three months from LONDON on a fool's errand - and yet he is an honest fellow, too, and I follow his rules - but he prohibits me my morning whet - denies me good source and CAYENNE pepper with my fish - drenches me with salt water and mutton broth - and obliges me to sit and walk two hours every morning by the sea-side, and as many after dinner in order to smell the sea-mud. - As it was a high tide today, I took my station in this gallery". (1)

Contemporary sources claimed that considerable medical advantages were to be derived from sea-water treatment. Visitors to Margate in 1762 were advised that "here is lately erected a Salt-water Bath, which has performed great Cures in nervous and paralytic Cases, and in Numbness of the Limbs; and seems every day to be more and more in Request".² Charles Seymour repeated

1. Keate, op.cit., 49-53.

2. By a Gentleman, A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain (6th Ed., 1762), 160.

the same recommendation during the mid-1770's.¹ Twenty years later the benefits of coastal treatment were assessed as follows by a local inhabitant in accompanying notes to a descriptive poem on Margate.

"Thousands can testify,...for we annually see many who come to Margate, even on crutches, after bathing a few weeks, not only throw aside their auxiliary legs, but are restored to such health and florid countenances that scarcely their most intimate friends can recognize them. Sea bathing can no where be enjoyed with a greater probability of success than here; and its beneficial effects, in all glandular and cutaneous disorders, are so well established, that they need no eulogium... If anything were wanting to prove the efficacy of sea-bathing, which seems now to be fully established, our numerous visitors would be sufficient testimony; few of them leave Margate without having realized their most sanguine expectations. Those who wish to make themselves acquainted with the good and bad effects of salt water, may consult a Practical Essay on that subject, lately published by Dr. Anderson, a resident Physician /A Preliminary Introduction to the Act of Sea-Bathing: Wherein is shown its Nature, Power and Importance, (1795)/; (2) who for many years has made sea-bathing the peculiar object of his study, and has thereby been enabled so to appropriate these waters to the various ills of human life, as to give great success to his practice.

The benefit of the warm salt-water bath has been experienced in the removal of many obstinate complaints, which had baffled the power of medicine; and in most cases, where the cold-bath disagrees or fails, the tepid has the desired effect. It is frequently recommended preparatory to a course of the former; as it tends to relax the fibres, open the pores, and give greater energy to the powers of the natural bath". (3)

A visitor to Margate late in the 1790's could choose between seven bathing rooms, "situated on the Western side of the High Street, on the margin of the sea,...contrived on a plan the most consistent with convenience", which every morning formed "an agreeable lounge", attached to which up to 40 bathing machines were employed during the season. "Exclusive of these

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1. Charles Seymour, A New Topographical, Historical and Commercial Survey of the Cities, Towns and Villages of the County of Kent (Canterbury, 1776), 557.
 2. This work and its theories were noted in this section above.
 3. By an Inhabitant, The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), 7, 61-3.

conveniences for cold sea bathing, there are elegant marble baths at Mitchener's Hotel, and at Hughes's Bathing Rooms, where the salt-water is brought to any degree of temperature required, at a few minutes notice",¹ and "whether considered as a pleasing amusement, or a necessary means to restoring declining health,...no situation can be more conducive to answer either end". Margate's bathing place offered "a fine level sandy shore, defended from the furious blasts...and the foaming waves,...by the pier, promontories, and rocks, which encircle the bay", wherein "the sea may be said 'in calm security to sleep'." ²

Support for the recuperative qualities of sea water continued to find adherents during the nineteenth century. A resident of the New Kent Road, Mr. C. Pears, commented thus on "Sea Bathing" in 1808:

"To such Persons as intend to visit the SEA COAST...

In general, every disease which is founded in, or is accompanied by debility, derives very material and important advantage from bathing; and as sea bathing has a decided superiority over every other, from its possessing greater strengthening powers, so in proportion it is deservedly preferred. The combination it also has with other favourable circumstances, and under which it is sought, are almost equally important, viz: a fresh and invigorating air, change of situation, abstraction from usual pursuits, the exclusive application of the mind to the immediate object of health... are all of them to be taken into the number of those advantages which are intended to be secured by going to the sea coast...

At first, only walking or riding on the beach should be attempted, to receive the sea air, and let the spray blow over... A small quantity of the sea water may be drank, where advisable, in such doses, and at such intervals, as the constitution requires. After this... bathing may be attempted...The time for bathing is not so important as has been supposed. Such as prefer the morning may bathe early; and perhaps with advantage. But many persons cannot do this, from a variety of causes: nor need they. To such, any other time of the day, provided they avoid evening damps, will be beneficial. Such persons as chuse to go into what is called the open sea, should select a good and proper situation, with a clean sandy or gravelly bottom...

1. The Margate Guide, etc. (1797), op.cit., 61-3.

2. Ibid., 19, 21; also see the third section of this Chapter below.

Exercise and air should be sought at every proper opportunity...Walking, riding in a carriage or on horseback, sailing in a boat,...the mind must be relieved... The proper length of time to stay at any watering place must be regulated by its effects, which must also influence the renewal and repetition of the means; the diseases of young people generally being removed in a shorter period, often one season, while those of older persons frequently require the attention of several seasons in succession to establish their health, from the influence of what is called their chronic, or lasting complaints...And it should always be remembered, that whatsoever good has been secured by the sea air, water, etc, can only be rendered permanent by the continuance of the same care and regularity which obtained it". (1)

Although the drinking of sea water gradually dropped out of medical favour doctors continued to recommend the practice. Charles Lamb wrote to John Rickman, on 16 September 1801: "your Letter has found me at Margate, where I am come with Mary to drink sea water and pick up shells".² A manuscript diary recording a stay at Ramsgate during July and August 1829 contains the following entry for 21 July: "Charlotte, myself and the Servant each took half a pint of Warm salt Water - Breakfast at 9".³

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who visited Ramsgate in 1819, 1822, 1824 and 1825, believed in the efficacy of sea bathing. On 20 August 1819 he wrote to James Gillman:

"whether from the mere intensity of the heat, and the restless, almost sleepless, nights,...or whether simply the change of air and the sea bath...I have been miserably unwell for the last three days...Finding myself convalescent this morning, I bathed, and now am better still, having had a glorious tumble in the waves, though the water is still not cold enough for my liking... The tide comes up to the end of the lane...and exactly a hundred of my strides from the end of the lane there is a good, roomy, arched cavern, with an oven or cupboard in it, where one's clothes may be put free from the sand". (4)

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1. C. Pears, "Sea Bathing", The Literary Panorama, Volume IV (1808), 1266-9.
 2. Ed: E.V. Lucas, The Letters of Charles Lamb to which are Added those of his Sister Mary Lamb (1935), Volume I, 272.
 3. Journal of an Excursion to Ramsgate in July and August 1829, uncatalogued MSS, Tyler Collection, Cathedral Library, Canterbury. This diary is reproduced in full in Chapter IX below.
 4. Ed: Ernest Hartley Coleridge, Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1895), Volume II, 700-1.

In 1824 he was bathing at Ramsgate early in November, and was mindful of the dangers of drowning.

"Ramsgate, November 2, 1824.

Bathed yesterday, and again this morning in spite of the rain, and in so deep a bath, that having thrown myself forward from the first step of the machine ladder,...I had at least 10 strokes to take before I got into my depth again, so that it is no false alarm when those who cannot swim are warned that a person may be drowned a very few yards from the machine". (1)

Sea water treatment continued to be recommended during the 1820's:

"in cases of languor and debility, hysterical affections, epilepsy, St. Vitus's dance, convulsions in children,...bathing, at proper times, has been found remarkably efficacious".² A medical pamphlet in 1828 recommended cold and warm sea baths as being effective in the treatment of acute and chronic rheumatism, gout, consumption, asthma, indigestion, diseases of the liver, scrofula, rickets, measles and whooping cough.³

In 1841 Dr. A.B. Granville, F.R.S., in his Spas of England and Principal Sea Bathing Places, recommended the use of sea water both externally and internally. This advice coming from so famous a nineteenth century physician was important. He enjoyed esteem as a specialist in mineral water cures.⁴ For him the "active principles" of sea water included iodine, bromine, common salt, muriate of magnesia, muriate of potash, Epsom salts and, according to a German professor, "subtile and volatile animal particles of which chemistry knows nothing, but which extraordinarily increase [its] stimulating power".⁵ He concluded that the beneficial results to be expected from sea water might be as much as to be expected from other mineral waters, "proportionate to and in accordance with their respective chemical composition".⁶

1. Coleridge, op.cit., 729-30.

2. W.C. Oulton, Picture of Margate and Its Vicinity (2nd Ed., 1821), 54.

3. William Harwood, On the Curative Influence of the Southern Coast of England; especially that of Hastings (1828).

4. J.A.R. Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History (1947), 292.

5. Quoted by ibid., 105.

6. Quoted by Pimlott, op.cit., 105.

As late as 1860 the recommended dose of sea water was half a pint, which might prove more palatable if mixed with port wine, milk or beef tea.¹ Increasingly the drinking of sea water dropped out of medical practice, and the remedial benefits of sea bathing were seen to be more limited.² Value was more likely to be attached to sea air, with emphasis on ozone.

The preference bestowed on sea air was apparent to George Roberts in 1856. Sea water had been "the panacea for every ailment" following on Dr. Russell's Dissertation.

"Physicians talked of the sea; descanted upon the number of dips, the hour of immersion, the number of times a week, the particular locality, and the relative strength or saltiness of the water. /But now/ the rush to the sea coast to procure the benefit arising from the virtue of SEA WATER must be distinguished from the subsequent movement to the coast to secure the curative effects of the balmy SEA AIR. This was a later movement. The first rush was of those who came to bathe in sea water; the second, of those who desired to breathe sea air". (3)

The Parallel Value Attached to Sea Air.

Physicians began to explore and exploit the medical properties of sea air during the eighteenth century. In 1724 J.B. Bertrand compiled a Dissertation sur l'Air Maritime. In 1780 Dr. Ingenhousz concluded his experiments into the properties of sea air and submitted his conclusions to Philosophical Transactions. His experiments had been conducted at Gravesend, at three miles from the mouth of the Thames, in the middle of the English Channel and between the Kent coast and Ostend, from which it appeared "that the air at sea and close to it is in general purer and fitter for animal life than the air on the land,...so that we may now with more confidence send our

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1. Spencer Thomson, M.D., Health Resorts of Britain; and How to Profit by Them (1860), 29-30.
 2. Pimlott, op.cit., 106.
 3. George Roberts, The Social History of the People of the Southern Counties of England (1856), 548.

patients labouring under consumptive disorders, to the sea, or at least to places situated close to the sea, which have no marshes in their neighbourhood".¹ Sea air by the 1790's was known to be beneficial in the treatment of certain illnesses. Dr. Damman, an eminent physician and professor of midwifery at Ghent, had spent seven years in practice at Ostend where nothing was rarer than to see a patient labouring under a consumption, an asthma, a malignant putrid, or a spotted fever.² Ozone was recommended as medical emphasis switched to the value of sea air.³

It was not long before the Isle of Thanet became renowned for its salubrious sea air. Seventeen years before Dr. Ingenhousz completed his experiments in 1780, the first original guide book of the area, published in 1763, described Thanet's air as being "remarkably pure", and "often ruffled by winds from the sea",⁴ while The Gentleman's Magazine observed in 1771 that

"the salubrity of the air of the Isle of Thanet and the longevity of its inhabitants, speak...not a little in favour of Margate. There are now living in that town many healthy people from eighty to ninety years of age...In short, this Island...enjoys all the beauties of fine prospects and clear healthy air". (5)

Exactly fifty years later W.C. Oulton in his Picture of Margate (1821), having noted how "the salutary effects of sea-air and sea-bathing have been universally experienced in many complaints", pointed out that while "sea-air is of great utility to some constitutions, though nugatory for others; it cannot...be prejudicial to those who boast of 'enriched full faces'".⁶

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1. Philosophical Transactions (1780), 354.
 2. "Sea Air", Encyclopaedia Britannica, Volume XVII (3rd. Ed., Edinburgh, 1797), 193.
 3. Pimlott, op.cit., 106.
 4. John Lyons, A Description of the Isle of Thanet and particularly of the Town of Margate (1763), 5.
 5. 'Philomaris', "Some Peculiar Advantages which Margate pre-eminently Enjoys, for the Benefit of Bathing in the Sea", The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume XII (April 1771), 167.
 6. Oulton, op.cit., 54, 58.

A dry chalky soil and cliffs rather than marshes dominated the Thanet coastline from Birchington to Pegwell Bay. The Margate Guide (1780) pointed out how Thanet's "Air is remarkably pure", and its

"Inhabitants are remarkably healthy...The Salubrity of the Air tends to make them long lived and prolific. Several Instances of Longevity may be adduced. I will mention a few only. Out of seventy three Persons, who were buried at St. Peter's (the parish adjoining to Margate) in the Year 1762 ten of them were of the Age of seventy eight Years and upwards: and in the Year 1760 five old Persons were interred whose Ages as they died in successive Order, amounted to four hundred Years. Several Persons of very advanced Years are now living in and near Margate; and in last April (1780) an old Lady was buried there, in her hundredth Year". (1)

Nineteenth century treatizes continued to publicize the medical benefits of sea air both in this country and on the Continent. Doctors recommended exposure to sea air during the winter months as much as during the summer. From 35, Hawley Square, Margate, Alfred Wright, who was receiving medical treatment for an ailing foot, informed his cousin on 7 September 1822 that

"I don't think it likely I shall be able to come this year for my foot is not quite well though I am happy to tell you it is a great deal better and I am wonderfully improved in my Health, which is a great blessing...I think it is one of the greatest blessings to have good Health, far beyond Riches or anything else, for what can be enjoyed without Health?... You will perceive by the date that I am still at Margate, and I am likely to be so for some time, and the Physician says it is likely I may stay here through the winter, for many persons who are here during the summer for their Health stay over the Winter, for it braces very much". (2)

Over sixty years later an invalid wrote glowingly of "Margate in Winter" in The Daily Telegraph during April 1885. The secret of Margate's popularity was attributed to its air.³ Margate, as a winter resort, had several medical

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1. The Margate Guide (1780), 5-6.
 2. Family Papers of the Gambier and Howe Families, Correspondence of Charlotte Sophie Gambier, Kent Record Office, U 194 C55. Charlotte was the youngest daughter of the Rector of Langley, the Rev. J.E. Gambier (1789-1839), who was related to Lord Gambier, Admiral of the Fleet.
 3. 'By an Invalid', "Margate in Winter", The Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1885.

and other advantages: "the secret of Margate's popularity lies...in the air of the town possessing the precise curative qualities needful for certain complaints and diseases".¹ The reason why "eminent London doctors" advised patients to go to Margate was clear the moment

"one emerges from the railway carriage, still oppressive with the sulphur loaded atmosphere of London, into the air that comes straight off the magnificent surface of ocean which the Margate coast confronts. The pulse leaps, the nerves respond instantly to the intoxicating tonic draught... And the winter repose, too! I felt the magic of this here as I had felt it nowhere else, owing to the vitalizing influence of the air. ...This lifegiving air... is the source of Margate's fame". (2)

Additional evidence concerning Margate's advantages as a winter residence for invalids and others, which by 1885 constituted "a fashion that happily was growing", was sought from Mr. Knight Treves, the Margate Borough Medical Officer,³ who was also "one of the surgeons to the Royal Sea Bathing Infirmary for Scrofula".⁴ First and foremost in his opinion

"the air is full of life...the climate has the effect of a sea voyage. Another peculiarity of this climate is the bright sunlight. Nothing is more essential to the health of men and women, and more particularly of children, than plenty of sunlight. Here you get it in purity and wonderful abundance". (5)

Margate was

"a wonderful place for the nerves; for every degree of nervous affection, from the worn out brain which wants only rest, and bracing air, to the various forms of spinal and infantile paralysis. I have known cases of hysteria, which have bothered friends and doctors for years to get well here, and not only get well but keep well...People who are dyspeptic, jaded with a liver and no appetite, soon pick up in Margate. They take a walk before breakfast, bathe in the forenoon, sail for an hour or two in the afternoon, walk on the jetty in the evening, and in a week or two they are well." (6)

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1. 'By an Invalid', 'Margate in Winter', The Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1885,
 2. Ibid. . op.cit.
 3. Margate had been granted a Charter of Incorporation as a Corporate Borough during 1857, G.E. Clarke, Historic Margate (2nd Ed., Margate, 1961), 1-5.
 4. The Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1885, op.cit.
 5. An Invalid interviewing Mr. Knight Treves, the Borough of Margate Medical Officer, The Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1885, op.cit.; also see Chapter VIII below.
 6. Mr. Knight Treves, The Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1885, op.cit.

Margate was famous for the treatment of scrofulous ailments, where The Margate or "General Sea Bathing Infirmary",¹ for poor patients suffering from scrofula or tuberculosis, had been founded in 1791. Among the local population consumption was almost unknown and there was little or no rheumatism, for "the air is too dry"; however,

"the mistake with the various scrofulous or tuberculous disorders is that the patients do not come soon enough... People do not clearly recognize that scrofula and all its allied diseases are constitutional, and can be cured by the sea air alone, and not by taking physic in London... We see many cases of wasted opportunity among the rich as well as the poor. Convalescents from all the acute diseases do well here". (2)

From the 1780's a considerable medical value was attached to sea air and the seaside throughout the nineteenth century was recommended for convalescence.³ Although eminent doctors advised patients to visit Margate during the winter months, few were the seasons such as 1814 when winter residence there looked promising.⁴ In 1763 John Lyons, a Margate resident, had willingly admitted that Thanet's air "is rather too keen in Winter for persons of tender constitutions".⁵ Margate fronting northwards to the sea was not so advantageously situated for winter convalescence as were milder resorts elsewhere, such as Bournemouth or Torquay on the South Coast.

This Chapter so far has explored some of the theories which explain a developing craze for sea bathing and sea air during the eighteenth century.

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1. Cited as such in The Original Minutes of the Margate Infirmary, 1791-1793, 15 June 1792; also in The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume LXXXVIII, Part II (October 1818), 325-7. Further details concerning the foundation and development of the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary are provided in Chapter VIII below.
 2. The Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1885, op.cit.
 3. Pimlott, op.cit., 106.
 4. The Morning Post, 21 October 1814, 3e.
 5. Lyons, op.cit., 5.

Thereafter any initial significance attached to drinking sea water diminished, but medical support and research for sea bathing, and particularly for sea air, retained a considerable currency. The section which follows shows how Margate possessed and developed certain essential facilities for sea bathing which contributed enormously to its early popularity and growth as a seaside resort.

The Advantages and Facilities for Sea Bathing which Margate in particular Possessed and Exploited, as an Early Sea Bathing Resort.

Margate occupies an honourable place in the history of English sea bathing. It won considerable praise during the 1750's and 1760's as a bathing place with fine sands. The latter as a natural asset prompted the following comment in 1763: "the sands are so safe and clean, and every convenience for bathing is carried to so great perfection, that it is no wonder this place should be frequented by such multitudes of people, who go into the sea either for health or pleasure".¹ By 1776 Margate possessed "several bathing rooms, which are large and convenient", where the company resorted "to drink the water", and from where 30 bathing machines were "driven out into the sea, often to the distance of 200 or 300 yards, under the conduct of careful guides". What had given Margate "so great an éclat in the beau monde is its conveniency for bathing", for "the shore, being level and covered with fine sand, is extremely well adapted for that purpose".²

Safe and convenient arrangements for 'dips into the sea' were important to people who, having perhaps never set eyes on the sea before, were scared of the water.³ To eighteenth century contemporaries the open sea had a child-

1. Lyons, op.cit., 12-13.

2. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (Rochester, 1776), 118.

3. Pimlott, op.cit., 106-7; also H.G. Stokes, The Very First History of the English Seaside (1947), 13.

like novelty about it, as something visualized from conversation, paintings, prints or the pages of books. Many people were naturally terrified of the sea. In the actual promotion of sea bathing Margate had several distinct advantages, two of which received immense publicity from contemporary writers:

- a) The fact of Margate Bay being what is termed a "weather shore".
- and b) The perfection within Margate of the bathing machine, whereby persons of both sexes could "enjoy all the pleasures of Bathing, whenever they please, in so private a manner as to be consistent with the most strict delicacy". (1)

Sea-water treatment at Margate was promoted from certain natural facilities which the resort possessed, coupled with entrepreneurship in perfecting the bathing machine and providing early on sea water baths, which enabled sea bathing to be undertaken by visitors and invalids of all ages.

An important article in The Gentleman's Magazine in April 1771, entitled "Some Peculiar Advantages which Margate pre-eminently Enjoys, for the Benefit of Bathing in the Sea", gave to Margate an immense publicity boost in its early days as a seaside resort. The town and harbour of Margate were introduced as being "situated on the east side of a fine clean sandy bay,... directly open to the northern ocean", quite removed from any contamination by fresh water. Indeed,

"it may be truly asserted, that no particles of fresh water from any river can mix or incorporate with the Ocean near Margate. The Thames and the Medway are at 30 miles distance, and are both salt for 30 miles from their mouths. Besides the waters of these rivers do not run on the ebb tide half way down to Margate road, before the flood tide turns them back again". (2)

Two decades later the Thanet physician, Dr. John Anderson, forcibly re-iterated these advantages in A Preliminary Introduction to the Act of Sea

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1. Lyons, op.cit., 13-14.
 2. The Gentleman's Magazine (April 1771), op.cit., 166.

Foreland to the Land's End, are on a LEE SHORE during the greatest part of the summer, and are incommoded very much by the southerly winds before mentioned; for those grateful gales, which produce the warm fine weather, and render Margate a smooth pleasant shore, never fail to occasion at the same time a continual swell and surf of the sea on the South Coast of England, which not only makes the water there foul and thick, but annoys, frightens, and SPATTERS the Bathers exceedingly". (1)

Kent's county historian, Edward Hasted, obviously thought well of this particular advantage in repeating it almost word for word, excluding only the reference to the pin, in the tenth volume of his History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent (1800).²

Another "mighty convenience" in Margate Bay rested on the fact that "there is in a manner no...current in it", so that "the sea, with propriety, may be said to sleep between the rocks".³ The Gentleman's Magazine concluded that "for the foregoing and several other reasons which might be added, Margate has the superiority over every other place in England, for the conveniency and propriety of bathing in the salt water".⁴ This conclusion carried weight because The Gentleman's Magazine enjoyed a wide readership among the aristocracy and the gentry who were prominent among Margate's early visitors. These advantages attaching to the sea air and sea bathing of Margate were subsequently stressed not only by Edward Hasted in 1800⁵ but also by locally published guidebooks.⁶

These findings must have been very reassuring to invalids and timid bathers, the more so when they were re-affirmed in the mid-1790's by Dr. John Anderson who stressed that "neither the advantages of Sea-bathing, at Margate

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1. The Gentleman's Magazine (April 1771), op.cit., 166-7.
 2. Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Volume X (2nd Ed., Canterbury, 1800), 322.
 3. The Gentleman's Magazine (April 1771), op.cit., 167.
 4. Ibid., 167.
 5. Hasted, op.cit., 221, 321-2.
 6. For instance in The Kentish Traveller's Companion (5th Ed., Canterbury, 1799), 261, 263-4.

Bathing (1795).

"The sea beach on the coast of Thanet is made up of fine sand, intermixed with chalk that breaks off from the cliffs after intense long continued frost, and is melted by the flowing tides...Thus, there is a bottom that is remarkably clean, soft, smooth, yet invariably firm and gently sloping from the fending banks, which render Thanet's coast very inviting to bathe.

The sea-water at MARGATE is not only pure but strong of its native principles, by reason no rivers run into the ocean to make it muddy and brackish nearer than the Thames and Medway both 30 miles to the westward, and these repelled back again by the flood tide". (1)

In 1771 "the Bay wherein the Company bathe at Margate" was "about half a mile in breadth, and has not its equal in this kingdom, or perhaps any other, for the purposes of bathing", having "fine, clean sand, perfectly free from rocks, stones, seaweed, and all manner of soil and sullage and lying on a gentle and regular descent". Ridges of rocks on both sides of the Bay contributed to the convenience of sea bathing at Margate.

"Margate Bay being thus happily fenced off by these two walls of nature, the swell and surf of the sea, when the wind blows obliquely upon the shore, is broken and repelled; insomuch, that tho' the weather, in this case, be very bad and windy, excepting with a hard gale from the N.N.W. to the N.E. points of the compass, which seldom happens in the summer, the Company go into the water in the open ocean with security and ease; and when the sea, by mere chance, is too rough and boisterous in the bay, the bathing machines find a safe retreat in the harbour; so that the going into the salt water at Margate can never be defeated through the means of bad weather, excepting by violent storms and tempests, which harrow up the ocean in every corner". (2)

The situation was different along the South Coast of England, at Brighton or Hastings, and it was here that Margate derived its greatest natural advantage in possessing what was termed 'a weather shore'.

"Another advantage peculiar to Margate is its being a weather shore, during the greatest part of the summer; or, in other words, the southern winds, which generally prevail in that season, blow on from the land /Margate facing north/; by which means the sea is rendered perfectly smooth, and the water so clear, that, in a considerable depth, a pin may frequently be seen at the bottom; Whereas most of the places on the sea coast, in the English Channel, from the North

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1. Anderson, op.cit., 17-18.
 2. The Gentleman's Magazine (April 1771), op.cit., 167.

nor the salubrious property of the air of Thanet, have hitherto commanded medical attention equal to what their importance deserve".¹

Early visitors desired privacy when bathing in the sea, which was guaranteed by the bathing machine, the Margate version of which attracted equally enthusiastic praise from The Gentleman's Magazine in 1771: "the bathing machines THERE have their merits too; and are universally allowed to be the best contrived of any in the kingdom for convenience, safety, privacy and expedition of driving into and out of the sea".²

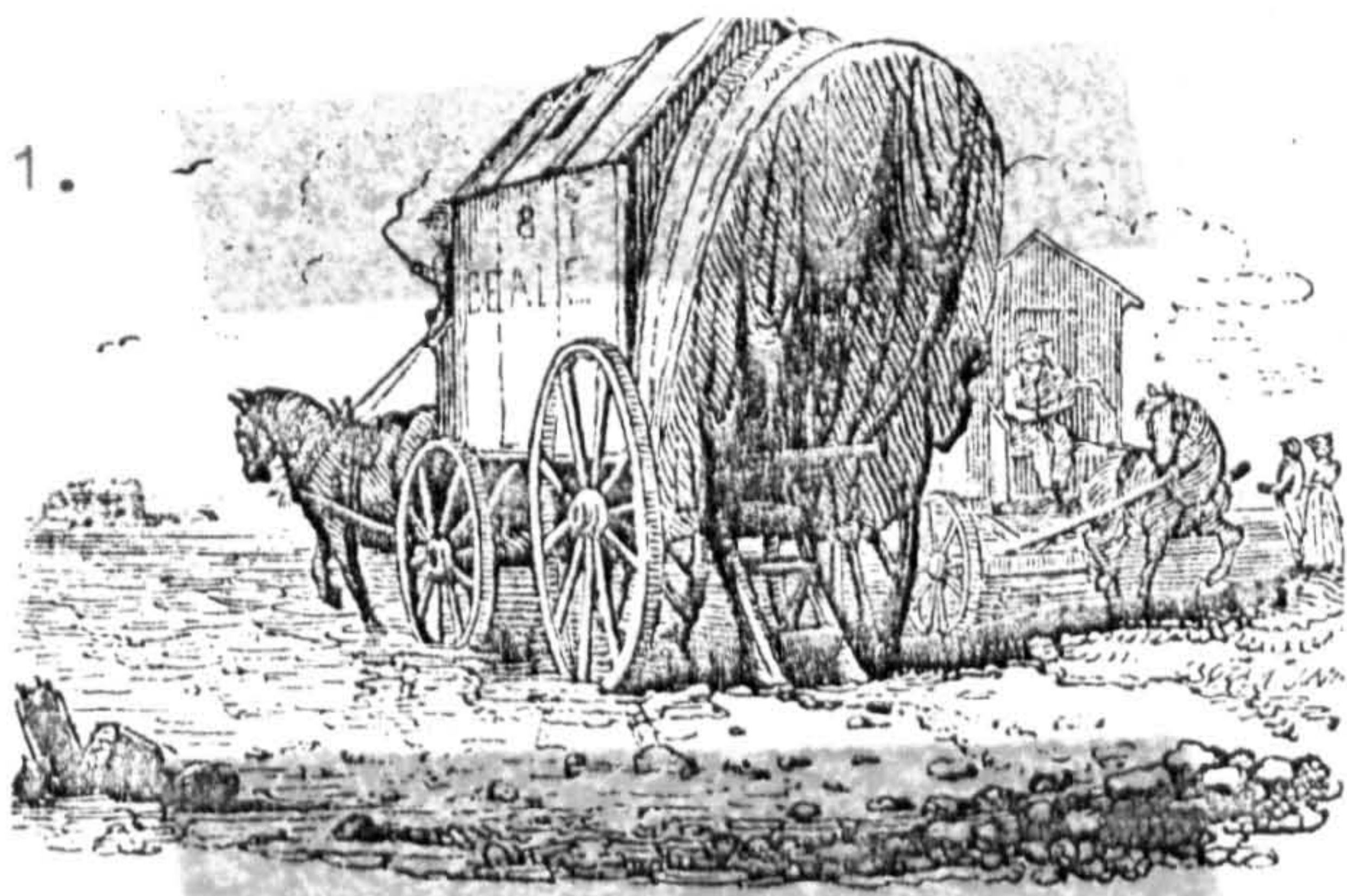
An excellent description of the horse-drawn Margate bathing machine was penned by Zechariah Cozens in his Tour through the Isle of Thanet, and some other Parts of East Kent (1793).

"That sea bathing may be attainable with the strictest decency, there are near 40 machines employed in a season... In the course of more than 30 years experience, hardly any improvement has been made upon them; they consist of a carriage similar to that of a coach, but more simple, much stouter and considerably higher, that it may resist the waves in blowing weather; the wheels are high and strong... In the front is a platform, from which you have admittance into the machine, which forms a neat dressing-room, $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, 5 wide, and $6\frac{1}{2}$ high, with a bench on either side for the bathers to undress upon, the sides and top are framed, and covered with painted canvass; at the back opens a door, and, by means of a flight of steps attached to the machine, the bathers descend into the water, concealed from public view by a large umbrella of canvas stretched on hoops, which is let down by the driver, by means of a rope which comes to the front of the machine, until it touches the water, and forms a bath 10 feet long and 6 wide. There is a horse to each machine, and the proprietors employ very careful drivers, under whose guidance the machines are drawn out to the depth the bather may require: it is a pleasing sight to behold between 30 and 40 of these curious machines in a morning hovering on the surface of the water". (3)

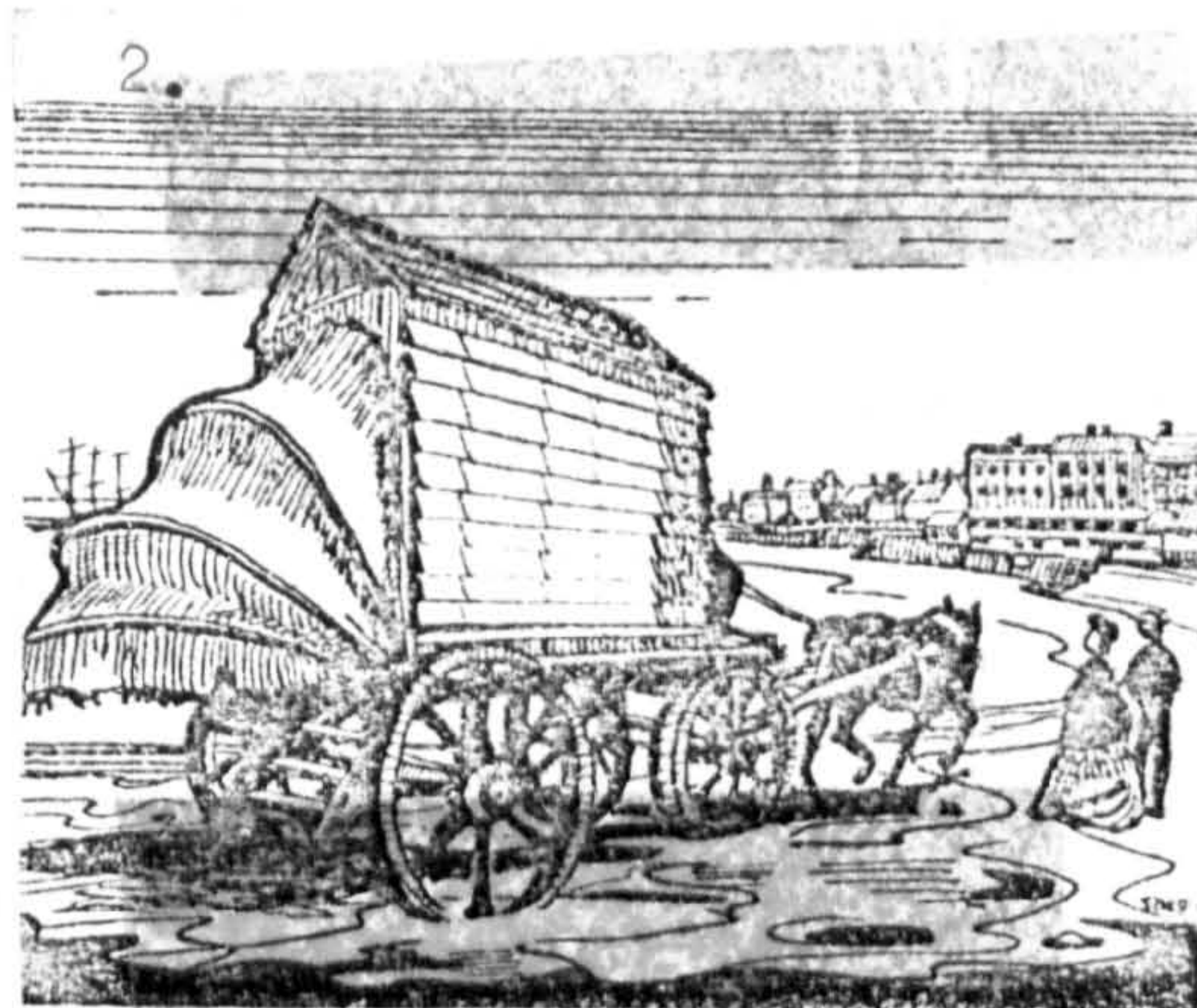
It is assumed that the bathing machine was invented in 1753 by Benjamin Beale, a Margate Quaker. In 1937 The Isle of Thanet Gazette proudly reported

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1. Anderson, op.cit., 9.
 2. The Gentleman's Magazine (April 1771), op.cit., 167.
 3. Zechariah Cozens, A Tour through the Isle of Thanet, and some other Parts of East Kent (1793), 3.

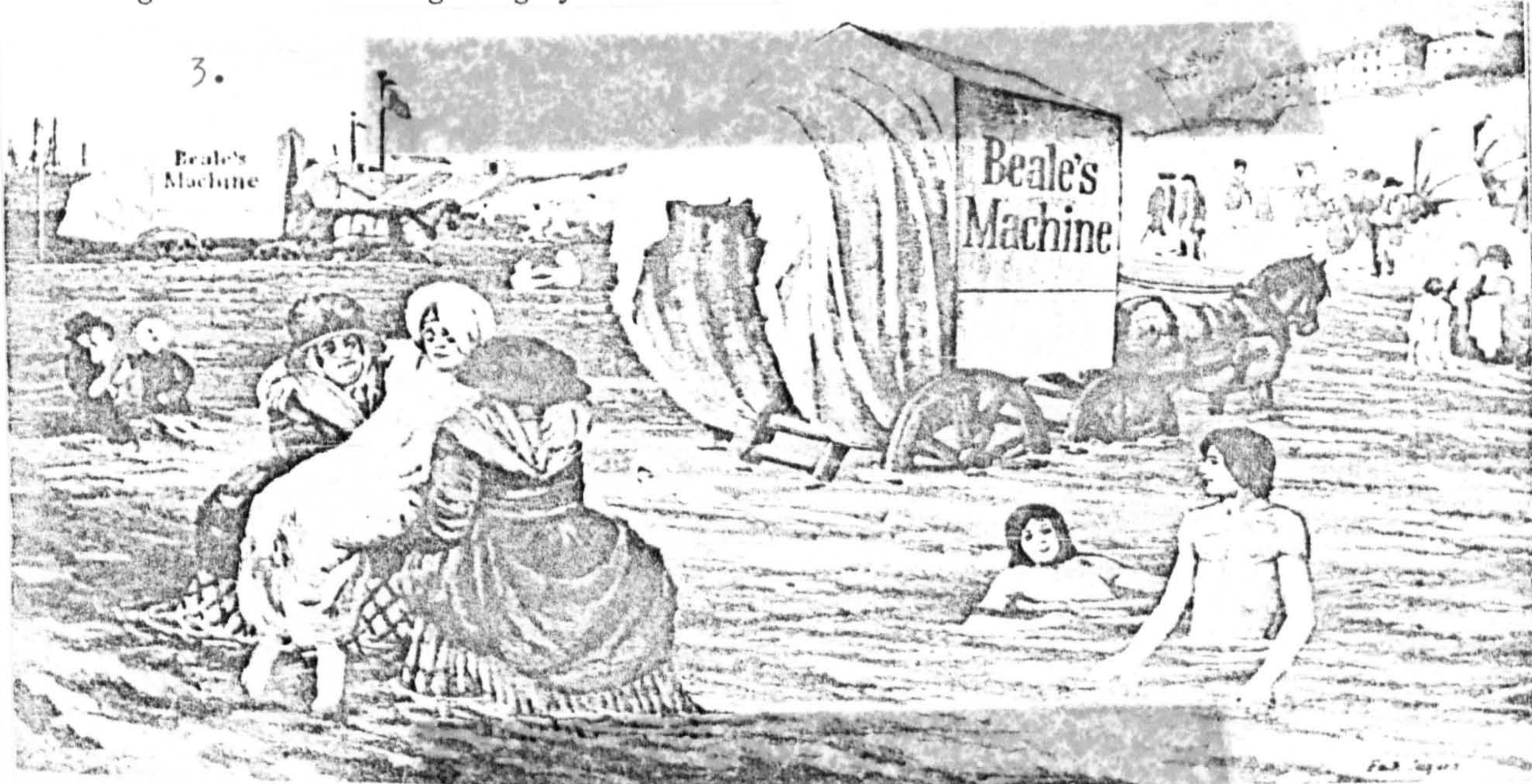
THE MARGATE BATHING MACHINE .



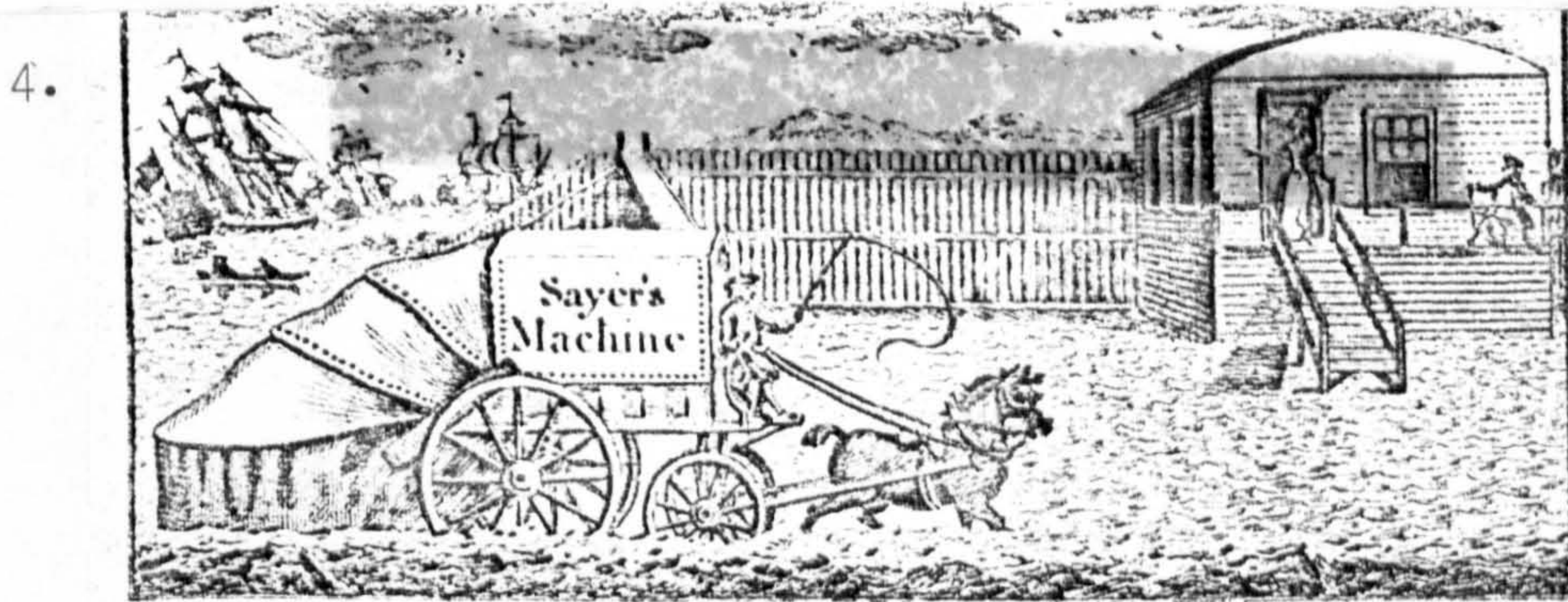
Bathing machines: wood engraving by G. W. Bonner



Benjamin Beale's Bathing Machine



Dipping for Health, Margate c. 1780



For Bathing in the Sea at Margate,

John & Mercy Sayer late Partners with M^r Beale
have good accommodations for Bathing,

Where Persons confer on them will be gratefully acknowledg'd
M^r Sayer will attend y^e Gentlemen & M^{rs} Sayer y^e Ladies as usual

By y^e Favour of a Letter Lodgings & Stabling will be Provided.

1791

BATHING MACHINE AT MARGATE
Engraved trade card, 1791

1. J. Vaughan, The English Guide Book, c.1780-1870 (Newton Abbot, 1974), p. 20.
2. The East Kent Critic, No. 165 (January 1977), p. 7.
3. Margate Public Library, Local Collection, L4010.
4. C. Marsden, The English at the Seaside (1947), p. 19.

that

"Mr. A.J. Gritten, librarian to Margate Corporation, has proved beyond doubt that Benjamin Beale, a Margate Quaker, invented the bathing machine at Margate in 1753, succeeding where distinguished antiquarians had failed... The honour of originating the bathing machine has been claimed by several resorts contemporary with Margate in early emancipation from fishing villages, but no rival can steal Margate's glory". (1)

Some people have disputed this claim.² The genesis of the bathing machine predated Benjamin Beale's birth circa 1717, and his contribution to perfecting it predated 1753. The Beale family originated from Antwerp in the early part of the fourteenth century, when they established themselves as weavers in Kent.³ Benjamin Beale (circa 1717-1775) was one of two sons of Thomas Beale (circa 1690-1748), a Margate glover. He followed in his father's trade. In 1740 he married Elizabeth Bindlock of Canterbury.⁴

The origin of the bathing machine extends back to the seventeenth century, a fact which was known to the Gravesend historian of the 1840's, Robert Peirce Cruden. He showed how bathing machines had been employed in France a century

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1. "Benjamin Beale: His Worth to Margate", The Isle of Thanet Gazette, 13 February 1937, reporting on a lecture delivered by Mr. A.J. Gritten at the Congregational Hall, in Ramsgate, on 10 February 1937; also 1753 is given as the date of the first bathing machines, Woodruff, op.cit., 170. A Margate brochure issued in June 1911, entitled Souvenir of Pettman's Up-to-Date Bathing (Margate, 1911), firmly claims, as a matter of received knowledge, in common with a host of guidebooks, that Benjamin Beale invented the bathing machine; indeed, "Weymouth claims that a Bathing Machine, the invention of Mr. Ralph Allen, of Bath, in 1763, was first used there, but without foundation". The myth of Benjamin Beale has continued to find supporters into the 1960's; for instance, in a letter of Mr. J.L. Bussey to The Isle of Thanet Gazette, 21 August 1965, regarding the invention of the bathing machine.
 2. For instance, John Whyman, "A Hanoverian Watering-Place: Margate before the Railway", in Ed: Alan Everitt, Perspectives in English Urban History (1973), 148-9. The author of this thesis also submitted a letter on this point, dated 2 September 1965, to The Isle of Thanet Gazette, in reply to the earlier letter of 21 August 1965 submitted by Mr. J.L. Bussey, as noted in the previous footnote.
 3. Häberlin, op.cit., 295.
 4. Gritten, op.cit.

before they were used in Margate,¹ when John Evelyn recorded in his diary: "on the 2nd of August 1651, I went with my wife to Conflans where were abundance of ladys and others, bathing in the river; the ladys had their tents spread on the water for privacy".² Mobile bathing chariots were employed at Scarborough, Brighton and Margate well before 1753. The eighteenth century bathing machine was a refined improvement on the seventeenth century tent. Settingington's famous print of Scarborough, dated 1735, reveals the use of a mobile chariot for bathing and Dr. Russell observed the use of "bathing chariots".³ According to The Kentish Companion for the Year of Our Lord, 1792, a tilted cart was used before 1753 at Margate for bathing in the sea.⁴ In 1817 it was recalled how Benjamin Beale's widow had "remembered the first family that ever resorted to Margate for the purpose of bathing being carried into the sea in a covered cart".⁵

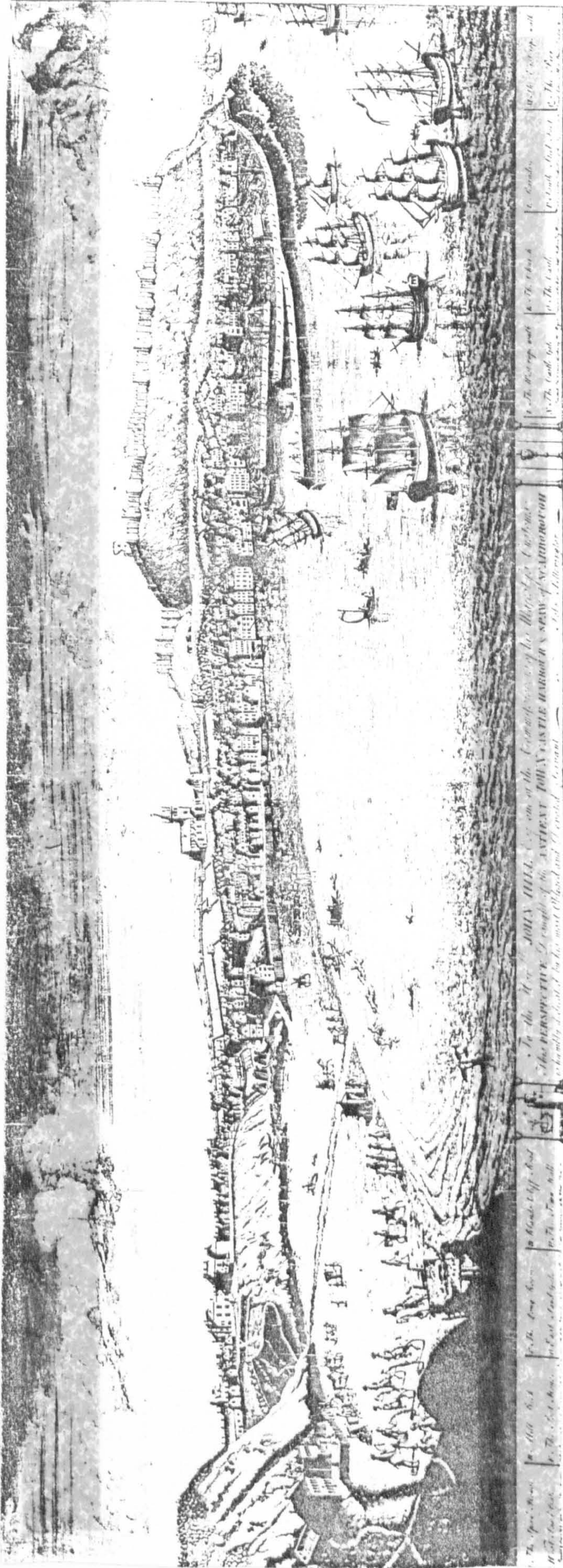
Benjamin Beale's significance in the history of the bathing machine rests on the fact that he added a new refinement, sometime between the late 1730's and 1750. As a Quaker he was horrified by naked sea bathing and the opportunities which that gave to curious eyes, involving "a sudden boom in telescopes".⁶ He introduced a concertina like canvas canopy, which afforded

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1. Robert Peirce Cruden, The History of the Town of Gravesend in the County of Kent (1843), 449.
 2. Ed: William Bray, The Diary of John Evelyn from 1641 to 1705-6 (1891), 212. Quoted also by Ward, Lock & Co., Herne Bay and North East Kent (circa 1939), 38.
 3. Pimlott, op.cit., 58.
 4. The Kentish Companion for the Year of Our Lord, 1792 (Canterbury, 1792), 120.
 5. E.W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports, Volume I (1817), 61-2.
 6. Stokes, op.cit., 17, points out that "the impolite sightseers were not to be so easily outdone - there was a sudden boom in telescopes", while Ruth Manning-Sanders, Seaside England (1951), 22, quotes Rowlandson's Summer Amusements at Margate (c. 1800) showing ladies tumbling about in shallow water, completely naked, and watched from shore by "a bevy of leering old gallants, telescopes to eye".

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 3. Pinlott, op.cit., 58.
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SCARBOROUGH FROM THE SOUTH, ENGRAVING BY JOHN SETTERINGTON, 1735.

Note a bathing tent or bathing machine, bathing boats, the 'Spaw House', sedan chair and shipbuilding along the foreshore.

privacy to both male and female bathers. What was "a discreetly hooded extension"¹ enabled the bathing cure to be taken with the utmost delicacy by both sexes. "The distinguishing feature of his 'invention' was the huge umbrella like attachment at the rear of the waggon which, descending to the level of the water, afforded full privacy to the bather".²

In the meantime a second Scarborough print of 1745 showed mobile chariots mounted on larger wheels which enabled them to be drawn into deeper water.³ In 1947, H.G. Stokes concluded that Scarborough was "the birthplace of the machine which did so much to popularise sea bathing".⁴ Mr. Pimlott, also in 1947,⁵ and more recently Anthony Hern in 1967,⁶ have claimed that Benjamin Beale invented a modesty hood, in the shape of a canvas screen or umbrella, rather than the original bathing machine. This was the view of The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion in 1819:

"The Bathers, from a door at the back of the vehicle, descend by wooden steps until they reach the bottom which is always composed of fine sand. Meanwhile they are entirely concealed from observation by an umbrella of canvas, covering the whole hinder part of the Machine. The screen was an invention of one, Benjamin Beale,...some of whose relatives still carry on the business of Bathers". (7)

1. "Early Bathing Machines", Letter from Sir Ambrose Heal to The Times, 17 June 1933.
2. Häberlin, op.cit., 295.
3. Stokes, op.cit., 17.
4. Ibid., 17.
5. Pimlott, op.cit., 58 - "that odd invention, the bathing machine...made an early appearance on the seaside scene,...and it is probable that Benjamin Beale of Margate, to whom the invention of the bathing machine has been attributed, was the inventor only of the canvas screens or umbrellas which were fitted at some places".
6. A Hern, The Seaside Holiday: The History of the English Seaside Resort (1967), 38. The invention of the bathing machine has been attributed both to Benjamin Beale of Margate and to Ralph Allen of Bath, Hern, op.cit., 38, but according to Stokes, op.cit., 17, "the bathing machine was obviously the invention of neither", because starting on the basis of Setterington's Scarborough print of 1735, "Allen did not visit Weymouth until 1763, and Beale's machines first appeared at Margate in 1753", or earlier as suggested below.
7. The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion (1819), 39 - the descendants then given in the bathing business were listed as Mrs. Beale keeping "a most elegant new Bathing Room, with marble baths, upon an improved plan", ibid., 39, and the bathing rooms of Messrs. T. Hughes and J. Beale, ibid., 39, as among the six bathing rooms listed for Margate.

Despite the introduction of bathing machines nude bathing as late as 1833, at Dumpton Gap, between Broadstairs and Ramsgate, finds mention in A Picture of Ramsgate, or a Guide to the Various Amusements, Public Libraries, Building Improvements, etc, of that Celebrated Watering Place: "near this place is Dumpton Stairs, the retired and favourite bathing place of the inhabitants and visitors who prefer a plunge into open sea without the use of machines".¹ Sea bathing in its infancy was "free and primitive".² Men were rowed a little way out into the sea in boats and then jumped in naked. Often no clothes were worn and there were no bye-laws for bathing. At Bath it was alleged that "one of the favourite pastimes of the throng of idle visitors was to watch the bathing from the galleries", and at Brighton "no one was without his spy glass, until the whole coast bristled with these nautical contrivances".³ It is easy to appreciate why Benjamin Beale was offended when spy glasses were focused as much on sea bathers as on fishing vessels. In 1800 The Observer bemoaned "the indecency of numerous naked men bathing in the sea close to the ladies' bathing machines, and under the windows of the principal houses at most of the watering places, which has long been complained of, but in general has not been...redressed".⁴

Benjamin Beale offered a practical solution and possibly somewhat earlier than 1753 as suggested by most authorities. In 1933 Sir Ambrose Heal drew attention to the fact that a crude version of the Beale machine was sketched before 1740 by Joseph Ames (1689-1759), the famous bibliographer and antiquary.⁵ Ames, as a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries since 1736, enjoyed close

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1. Picture of Ramsgate, or a Guide to the Various Amusements, Public Libraries, Building Improvements, etc, of that Celebrated Watering Place (Ramsgate, 1833), 47-8.
 2. Woodruff, op.cit., 170.
 3. Gritten, op.cit.
 4. The Observer, 14 September 1800, 2c.
 5. Heal, op.cit.

contacts with the well-known antiquary, the Rev. John Lewis of Margate,¹ who was Thanet's own local historian of the 1720's and 1730's.² He had acquired a copy of the 1736 Second Edition of Lewis's History and Antiquities, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, of the Isle of Tenet in Kent, which found its way into the Library of the Society of Antiquaries. It contains notes and drawings by his hand, including a sketch of Margate Pier, where in the foreground is shown a bathing machine.³

In arriving at these facts Sir Ambrose Heal must have consulted that issue of Notes and Queries, dated 28 April 1858, which included a short note on "Margate 120 Years Ago", showing how "Joseph Ames went to Margate in the year 173- (the last numerical is cut off) and as there were no Margate Guides published in those days [the first appearing four years after his death in 1763] he bought a copy of the 2nd Ed. of Lewis's History of the Isle of Thanet (1736) and, after putting in a few notes and drawings,...gave it to the Society of Antiquaries",⁴ of which he was Secretary from 1741 until his death in 1759.⁵ He described what Margate was like at the time of his visit:

"the Town of Margate is 72 Post Miles from London, 16 from Canterbury, and 6 from Sandwich. The Canterbury Stage Coach is the nearest, which is 18s. for a single person. Here [too] are Hoys, which go weekly to London to carry Passengers and Goods. The Passage is 2s. a Head; and since the Physicians have of late years prescribed drinking and bathing in Salt Water, this town is much resorted to on that account; there being a fine sandy beach, and a flat shore, where at all times of the Tide, the Machines or Bathing Waggon can drive a proper depth into the Sea for the accommodation of y^e Bathers. The Prices of Provision, as Mutton, Beef, Lamb and Veal, is from 3d. to 3½d. the Pound. Butter 8". (6)

1. Heal, op.cit., also H.R. Tedder, "Joseph Ames (1689-1759)", in Ed: L. Stephen and S. Lee, Dictionary of National Biography, Volume I (1908), 353-4.
2. The author as noted in Chapter I of The History and Antiquities, Ecclesiastic and Civil of the Isle of Tenet (1723) and The History and Antiquities, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, of the Isle of Tenet, in Kent (1736).
3. Heal, op.cit.
4. Notes and Queries, 2nd Series, Volume VI, No. 139, 28 August 1858, 163.
5. Tedder, op.cit., 354.
6. Notes and Queries (1858), op.cit., 163.

Following this description he provided his sketch of Margate pier and harbour, very prominent in the foreground of which was a bathing machine, "probably the earliest extant picture of one".¹ He proceeded to point out how

"the above is a view of the Machine to bath with: it contains a room to undress and dress in, with steps to go down into the Sea; will hold 5 or 6 People. There are Men and Women Guides, who, if desired attend. The price is 4s. a week, or £1.1s. for six weeks, and you pay the Guide for every attendance. They drive into the Sea till it is about breast high, and then let down the Screen w^{ch} prevents being seen, under which you go down the Steps into a fine sandy bottom". (2)

Exactly when Joseph Ames was in Margate is unknown. A date later than the 1730's is suggested by his reference to the town being much resorted to since doctors had recommended drinking and bathing in sea water, for Dr. Russell's Dissertation was not published until 1750. A date nearer 1750 seems closer to the truth and it is possible that Joseph Ames sketched a Beale-type bathing machine on a second visit to Margate sometime between 1753 and his death in 1759, with Lewis's Thanet forming part of his luggage. However, there are other references which suggest that Benjamin Beale was experimenting with a refined bathing machine before 1753. A machine was first taken into use around 1750 for "bathing in the sea at Margate", according to Dr. C. Hæberlin.³ Francis A. Bailey argues that Margate, as the country's "first 'popular' seaside resort" had witnessed already by 1750 the perfection of the bathing machine by Benjamin Beale.⁴

The riddle of exactly when Benjamin Beale commercially effected his bathing machine remains unsolved. Sometime between the mid-1730's and no later than 1750, probably during the 1740's, he established for Margate the

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1. Notes and Queries (1858), op.cit., 163.
 2. Ibid., 163.
 3. Hæberlin, op.cit., 295.
 4. Bailey, op.cit., 31.

credit of having invented and perfected the umbrella attachment at the rear of the bathing machine, which is a fact that no other resort to date has been able to disprove. This somewhat vague conclusion, as opposed to the customary choice of 1753 as the year when Benjamin Beale introduced his bathing machine to Margate, does not conflict with the fact that Bishop Pococke on a visit to Margate in 1754 was one of the first visitors to record its existence. Until then Margate had attracted only a trickle of visitors. Bishop Pococke confronted at Margate "convenient cover'd carriages at the end of which is a covering that lets down with hoops, so that the people may go down a ladder into the water and are not seen", while "those who please may jump in and swim".¹

Poor Rate Books show that by May 1754 Benjamin Beale was assessed for Mrs. Baker's stables and hayloft, which in all probability served as a storehouse for his bathing machines. Later he had premises and a workshop on the Parade, but even then had to take on additional accommodation in the Brooks.² On 1 April 1767 The Kentish Post acknowledged Benjamin Beale's significance in Margate's early history as a seaside resort by pointing out that his "Bathing-Machine...has been a principal cause of introducing much Company to Margate".³

The introduction of a more refined bathing machine, which took the place of bathing from tilted carts, was widely acclaimed. Margate's thirty or so bathing machines in 1779 were said to be "simple, safe, convenient and private, as the person who bathes cannot be seen".⁴ The Margate Guide...In a Letter

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1. Ed: James Joel Cartwright, The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke, during 1750, 1751 and Later Years, Camden Society, Volume 11 (1889), 86.
 2. Gritten, op.cit.
 3. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 1 April 1767.
 4. Burlington's Modern Universal British Traveller (1779).

to a Friend, published in 1770, noted that

"its Structure is simple, but quite Convenient... The Invention of the Umbrella is so useful, that one would wish to see it extended to the Purpose of Bathing in Fresh-water". (1)

John Lyons displayed much the same enthusiasm for the bathing machine in 1763.² Its fame spread far and wide. It was from the Margate model that bathing machines were introduced to Ramsgate and Broadstairs for the commencement of the 1754 season, spreading outwards to Lowestoft and Dover by 1768 and to Gravesend by 1796,³ among other places. Their introduction to Ramsgate and Broadstairs was announced in The Kentish Post respectively during May and early June 1754.⁴

Fourteen years later The Kentish Gazette carried the following advertisement: "CORNELIUS JONES, near the Rope Walk, Dover, Begs Leave to inform the Public that he has lately provided a MACHINE upon the same Plan as those at MARGATE".⁵ Some years later, however, the diary of John Crosier in 1782 recorded how in Dover

"the Ladies in a morning, when they intend to bathe, put on a long flannel gown under their other clothes, walk down to the beach, undress themselves to the flannel, then they walk in as deep as they please, and lay hold of the guides' hands, three or four together sometimes.../and when/ they come on to the shore,...there are women that attend with towels, cloaks, chairs, etc. The flannel is stripp'd off... Women hold cloaks round them. They dress themselves and go home". (6)

Guidebooks praised the Margate bathing machine. In 1831 G.W. Bonner's Picturesque Pocket Companion to Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs noted how

1. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), 16. "It might with great Ease be affixed to a small Room, built on the Edge of a Canal, or any running Stream", ibid., 16-17.
2. Lyons, op.cit., 13; also see below Chapter IV.
3. See Chapter VI below.
4. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 22-25 May 1754, 1; and 1-5 June 1754, 4; also below Chapter IV.
5. The Kentish Gazette, 15-18 June 1768.
6. C. Willett and Phillis Cunnington, Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century (1957), 404-5.

little its structure had altered since its introduction; "such were the perfection and simplicity of their original arrangement, that the lapse of half a century has produced no improvement in their construction".¹ Furthermore, "soon after their first introduction numbers were built at this place [Margate] and [were] exported to the East and West Indies".² Perhaps Benjamin Beale required the additional premises noted above as a builder and supplier of bathing machines.³

Bathing from the privacy of machines, which were drawn into the sea over fine sands, coupled with the added protection of a "weather shore", guaranteed that Margate would soon become a popular place in which to take sea-water cures. This was already the case when The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser announced the death during May 1775 of Mr. Beale, "one of the people called Quakers", and "the first person who erected a bathing machine at Margate".⁴ Ramsgate claimed by now to be "a very convenient place for bathing, on a clean sand, remote from public inspection", with "several bathing machines for the accommodation of the company".⁵

Although sea bathing was undoubtedly stimulated by the publicity which was given to sea-water treatment by Doctors Russell and Speed during the 1750's and 1760's, there are several references to bathing in the sea during the first half of the eighteenth century. Sea bathing at Margate comfortably preceded the medical publicity of the mid-eighteenth century. Its origins can be traced back to the 1720's. During the next decade a sea-water bath at Margate was the pioneering innovation of a local carpenter, Thomas Barber,

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1. G.W. Bonner, The Picturesque Pocket Companion to Margate, Ramsgate, Broadstairs, and the Parts Adjacent (2nd Ed., 1831), 78.
 2. Ibid., 78.
 3. As noted in this section above.
 4. The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser, 19 May 1775.
 5. Seymour, op.cit., 653.

and this was no less significant as an early instance of seaside entrepreneurship than Benjamin Beale and his improved bathing machine. Thomas Barber's contribution, which is detailed below, has been overlooked. A recent university thesis while being unaware of sea bathing at Margate during the 1720's and 1730's, nevertheless makes it clear that "sea bathing was already an accepted practice when Dr. Richard Russell first published his work on sea water cures" in 1750.¹

Recorded instances of early sea bathing between 1721 and 1750 include Bootle in 1721, Brighton in 1736 and Weymouth in 1748,² plus a reference to Liverpool's "convenience for bathing in the sea" during 1721.³ The function of Scarborough as a mineral-water spa adjacent to the coast naturally occasioned early references to sea bathing there from the 1730's onwards.⁴

A significant development, which helped the timid, or overcame the interruptions of bad weather, lay in the construction and embellishment of cold and then warm sea-water baths. Again Margate led the field, where an alternative to open bathing in the sea was advertised in The Kentish Post or Canterbury News Letter on 17 July 1736.

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1. G.C. Martin, Some Aspects of the Provision of Annual Holidays for the English Working Classes down to 1947, Leicester M.A. Thesis (1968), 5.
 2. J.A. Barratt, The Seaside Resort Towns of England and Wales, London Ph.D. Thesis (1958); also Martin, op.cit., 5.
 3. Martin, op.cit., 5.
 4. The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume II (May 1732), 741 and also Settingington's Print of Scarborough dated 1735, as noted in this section above. In their unpublished paper on "Aspects of Brighton, 1650-1800", submitted in May 1977 to the British-Canadian Symposium in Historical Geography, under the auspices of the Institute of British Geographers, Sue and John Farrant argue that Scarborough, Margate and Weymouth emerged as seaside resorts at about the same time as Brighton and that "at each sea bathing on a small scale considerably antedates significant development of its amenities", 4.

"Whereas Bathing in Sea-Water has for several Years, and by great Numbers of People, been found to be of great Service in many Chronical Cases, but for want of a convenient and private Bathing Place, many of both Sexes have not cared to expose themselves to the Open Air; This is to inform all Persons that Thomas Barber, Carpenter, at Margate, in the Isle of Thanett, hath lately made a very convenient Bath, into which the Sea Water runs through a Canal about 15 Foot long. You descend into the Bath from a private Room adjoining to it.

N.B. There are in the same House convenient Lodgings to be Lett". (1)

Here must surely exist one of the earliest examples of entrepreneurial initiative in the seaside holiday industry. By April 1737 Thomas Barber, having found that "his Bath (which was advertis'd last Year) not large enough for the Number of People which came there to bathe in the Sea Water", had erected "another Bath much larger and more commodious", and "so contriv'd, that there is a sufficient Quantity of Water to bath in it at any Time of the Tide".² Mention was made at the same time of "Lodging Rooms, Dressing Rooms, and a handsome large sash'd Dining Room", as well as "a Summer House,...which affords a pleasant Prospect out to Sea".³

As late as May 1740 Mr. Barber continued to advertise his "Sea-Water Bath at Margate", and

"as a great many Gentlemen and Ladies have been deterr'd from coming to Mr. Barber's Sea Water Bath at Margate, by thinking it was expos'd to the open Air; I have therefore thought it necessary to inform the Publick, that 'tis quite enclos'd, and cover'd by a handsome Dining Room; and that there is a neat Dressing Room, and Dresses, adjoining to the Bath; and as the House fronts the Sea, there is a most delightful Prospect; and the Number of People that have received Benefit from Bathing, sufficiently demonstrates its Usefulness.

N.B. There are good Lodgings and Entertainment at my House, which adjoins to the Bath, and a good Coach-House and Stabling.

THO. BARBER, at Margate, in the
Isle of Thanett". (4)

Thereafter other references to sea bathing at Margate appear during the

1. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 17 July 1736.

2. Ibid., 27 April 1737.

3. Ibid., 27 April 1737.

4. Ibid., 14-17 May 1740, 4a; 24-28 May 1740, 4b.

1740's in The Kentish Post.¹ It was from being an embryonic resort before 1750 that Margate developed rapidly and matured during the second half of the eighteenth century. In so doing it acquired considerable publicity and came to prominence in numerous topographical works and newspaper reports from the 1760's onwards, as subsequent references in this thesis will show. During the 1760's another considerable improvement was introduced in the shape of warm salt water baths, which were provided by John Mitchener, a famous Margate hotelier. Through the medium of The Kentish Gazette he proudly announced at the end of May 1769 that

"JOHN MITCHENER begs leave to acquaint the Publick that he has carried every Accommodation for Bathing in the Sea to the highest Degree of Perfection; he has lately opened a Warm Salt-water Bath, for the Use of those to whom it might be inconvenient to venture into a Cold one; it may be brought in a few Minutes to any Degree of Heat which may be required... The same may occasionally be made use of as a Cold one, whenever the Sea may be so rough as to render bathing in the Machines unpleasant /and/ every Person that makes use of this Bath has the Pleasure of clean Salt Water each Time of Bathing". (2)

During the 1770's he operated "two new warm salt water baths", which "may be brought to any degree of temperature required".³

The Margate bathing rooms of Mitchener and others became more elaborate in the course of time and acquired additional refinements and comforts.⁴ Sea-water baths provided an acceptable alternative to open bathing in the sea. It was claimed of Margate by 1778 that "it is now become a place of great resort for sea bathing, where every accommodation is prepared that the place will admit of to render immersion into the salt water pleasant and efficacious".⁵

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1. For instance, The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 16-20 May 1747.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 27-31 May 1769, 1d.
 3. Seymour, op.cit., 558.
 4. See Chapter IV and the section on "Increased and Improved Bathing Facilities".
 5. A Tour through the Island of Great Britain (8th Ed., 1778), 139.

The bathing facilities of the resort comprised several bathing rooms, to which visitors resorted "to drink the Water, and thence in turns, they enter the Machines, which are driven into the Sea under the Conduct of careful and experienced Guides", and "if warm Bathing is necessary, here are two warm Salt-water Baths, on a very good Construction; which are cleared in a few Minutes, and may be brought to any Degree of Temperature required, with the greatest Facility".¹

The bathing scene remained fairly constant through the years. Six bathing rooms stood at the lower end of Margate High Street in 1819, including "a most elegant new Bathing Room, with marble baths, upon an improved plan, kept by Mrs. BEALE".² Each one had a certain number of bathing machines and warm and cold sea-water baths. The visitor could select one or two shower baths. When all the bathing machines were hired, the names of those people wishing to bathe were inserted upon a slate, so that "everyone is compelled to wait his regular turn, for which purpose convenient waiting rooms are provided, where there are grand pianofortes, newspapers and telescopes".³ Frequently of an evening these rooms were patronized "by a respectable assemblage of visitors", who enjoyed the pleasures of "amateur playing, singing and dancing".⁴

Only occasionally was the ride into the sea an uncomfortable experience. The Morning Chronicle followed up a report in September 1801 of two gentlemen escaping drowning, "when the old crazy machine broke down and overturned",⁵ with the observation that

"the late accident of the bathing machines at Margate has hurt the delicacy of some gentlemen so much, that they are determined to go into the water with their cloaths on. Unfortunately, the present style of female dress does not admit of this precaution". (6)

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1. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 13, 16.
 2. The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion (1819), op.cit., 39.
 3. Ibid., 39.
 4. Ibid., 39-40.
 5. The Morning Chronicle, 29 September 1801, 3c.
 6. Ibid., 1 October 1801, 3c.

Three years later The Times noted how in September 1804 some Margate bathers "have been, lately, using an apparatus of cork, which enables them to swim with ease, and is an effectual protection against the dangers of drowning - The seafaring people here call it the seaman's friend".¹

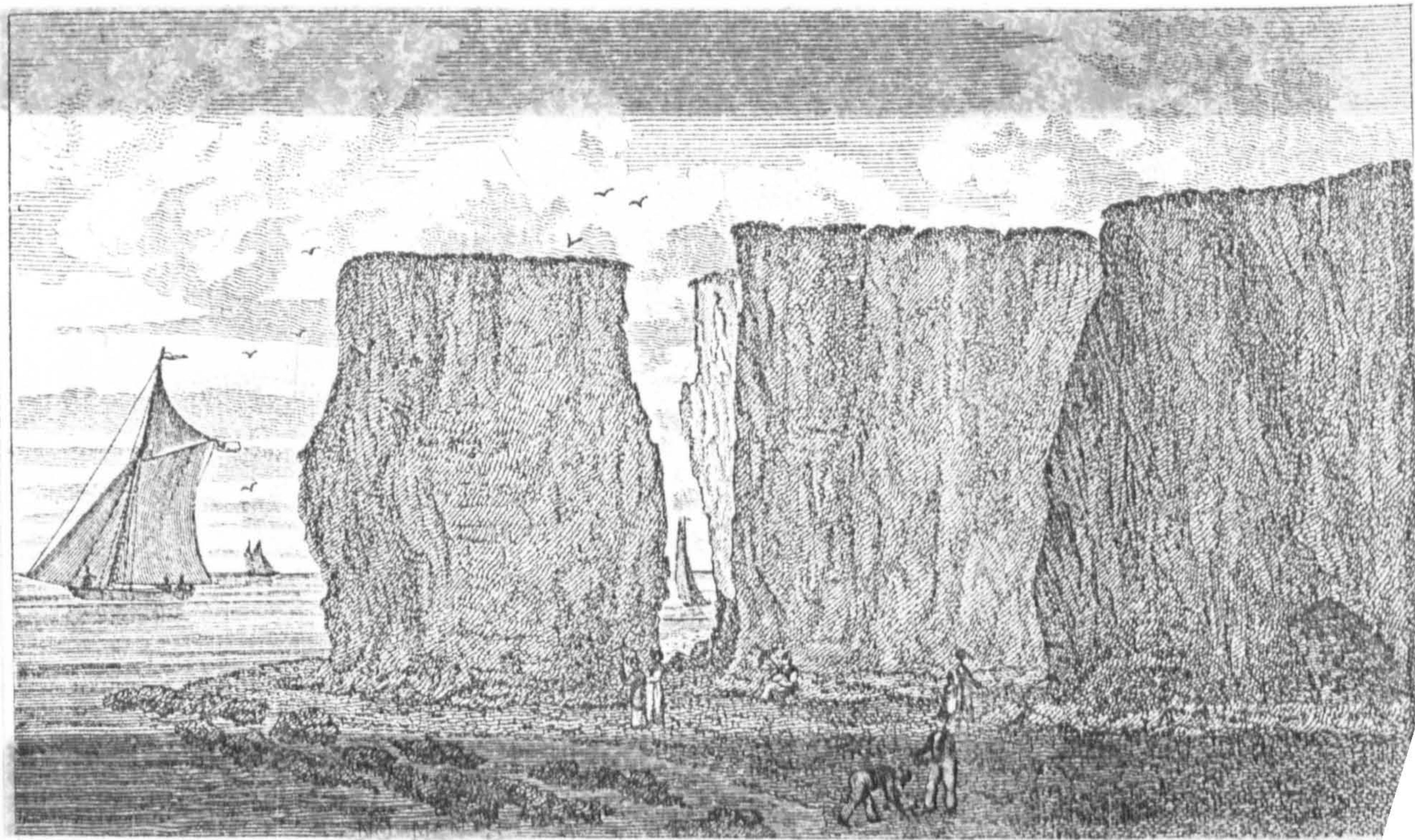
Drowning was a fear shared by many early visitors and prompted the publication in 1806 of "DIRECTIONS for LEARNING to SWIM; by attending to which a person who has never been in the water may escape being drowned", compiled by Benjamin Franklin, L.L.D., which having been printed for J. Callow, 10 Crown Court, Princes Street, Soho, was selling at 1s.² This type of instructive manual was much in demand, and was incorporated into a London guidebook of 1809, entitled Picture of Margate, being a Complete Guide to all Persons visiting Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs, with Instructions to Seabathers by Doctor Buchan and Directions for Learning to Swim by Doctor Franklin.

Few were those occasions during the summer months when bathing was completely interrupted, as happened on 21 September 1804, when the bathing machines were "not allowed to go out, on account of the turbulence of the waves, and the boisterousness of the winds, to the no small mortification and grief of numbers", who raised "the voice of complaint in the streets", and deplored "this unexpected deprivation of the 'benefit' of salt water"; yet, on the other hand, "the stormy weather seems to have been all the better for the Theatre, as two performers have had, on Friday and last night, very crowded benefits".³

Visitors, irrespective of drinking sea water or bathing in the sea, derived other pleasures from the beach and the sea. In 1780, apart from

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1. The Times, 10 September 1804, 3b.
 2. Ibid., 18 July 1806, 2b.
 3. Ibid., 25 September 1804, 3a.

FINDING PLEASURE ON MARGATE SANDS.



NO MAN'S LAND, on Margate Sands.

W. C. Oulton, Picture of Margate, and Its Vicinity
(1820), p. 70.

riding on the sands or along the clifftops, "the Company go often upon the Sands to collect Shells, or Sea-Weeds", and "in fine Weather Parties frequently go out to Sea, for the Diversion of Fishing, or to visit Ships lying at Anchor in the Road".¹ It was noted in 1797 how

"the sands, after the tide is gone down, are much frequented, and afford a walk or ride of several miles as they are sufficiently firm to admit either horsemen or carriages... Many young ladies often amuse themselves, when the tide is out, in picking up, on the sands, sea-weed...and curious shells. Among the rocks are found crabs, lobsters and perriwinkles; the latter are as large as snails, and are fine eating when boiled... The morning amusements of the company in general, are either riding, walking, or making parties to go out a sailing or fishing; for which each person pays 1s. separately... If the company make up 10s.6d. among them, the fishermen will gladly agree to take them, be the number of the party what it may, though seldom more than eight or ten go in one boat". (2)

A rapid onset of sea bathing soon transformed Margate from a stagnant maritime village into an expanding and prosperous Hanoverian seaside resort from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards.³ Within a few decades Margate made a great impact on the public mind. From the 1730's onwards it did much to promote sea bathing on the basis of certain natural advantages which it possessed, combined with enterprising local entrepreneurship in the provision and perfection of bathing machines under Benjamin Beale and various types of sea-water bath, following Thomas Barber's pioneering efforts in the 1730's.

Guidebooks and newspapers described and advertised other instances of enterprise elsewhere in England. Apart from such obvious resorts as Brighton or Scarborough, Portsmouth was something of a pioneer by May 1754, when it was publicly announced that

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1. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 16-17.
 2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), 14, 37.
 3. Whyman, op.cit., particularly 141-5.

"The 'PORTSMOUTH SEA-WATER BATHING HOUSE'...will be finished, and fit for Use, by about the 10th Day of May; and it is judged will be the most Complete Thing of the Kind in England, as above £1,000 will be expended to make it so. It is built near the Harbour's Mouth, on a fine clean Shingle, or Beach, where the Water runs in its utmost Purity, being no ways impregnated with Fresh Water, Rivers, Mud or any Kind of Filth whatever. There are several Baths; and they are so contrived as to be capable of being used at all Times of Tide. There are separate Baths for the Ladies and Gentlemen; and separate Dressing Rooms with Fire-Places in them. The House is so situated as to command, from the Windows of the Rooms, very delightful Views of his Majesty's Dock-Yard, the Harbour, Portsdown, Spithead,...the Isle of White Wight and an unbounded Prospect towards the Sea.

In addition Portsmouth...is a very clean and healthy Town... The Isle of White is within an Hour's sail; and there are always good Vessels, with proper Accommodations, ready to carry Ladies and Gentlemen over. Portsmouth Markets are plentifully supplied with all Sorts of Provisions, and they are remarkable for the great Quantities and Variety of fine Sea Fish which are brought to them. There is an Assembly once a week. The Inhabitants are determined to put their Lodgings and all other Accommodations on as easy a Footing as possible, which it is hoped will be to the Satisfaction of such as shall think proper to favour the Town with their Company". (1)

For about 250 years Margate has been a major seaside resort. The sea functioned also as an important avenue of conveyance to and from pre-railway Margate. Of longer term significance to its growth as a popular seaside resort were the physical means of getting there by land and water, which underwent a profound improvement from the 1750's onwards.² Water communications were vital to the expansion of Margate.

Having examined the value and facilities attached to sea bathing and sea air, the section which follows shows how far these developments found practical application, particularly within Thanet and with respect to the promotion of coastal, medical and scholastic services.

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1. "Portsmouth Sea-Water Bathing House", Notes and Queries, 3rd Series, Volume VIII, No. 191, 26 August 1865, 178.
 2. As shown below in Chapter VI.

How the Fashionable Acceptance of Sea Water and Sea Air influenced Medical and Scholastic Provision within the Isle of Thanet.

It is well-documented that "the appeal of the seaside to those seeking better health is of long standing".¹ Dr. A.W. Rowe writing in 1922 concluded that

"the history of sea bathing is the history of Margate. Somewhere circa 1745 London physicians became obsessed with the idea that sea bathing was the panacea for all human ills....Doctors discovered sea bathing, and bathing made Margate". (2)

These were notable developments of the eighteenth century. Thereafter other "advantages of coast residence provided varying talking points" during the nineteenth century.³

The publicity given to sea-water treatment was put immediately into practice from the early 1750's onwards. Emphasis was placed both on sea bathing and the drinking of sea water. Bishop Pococke found himself in Margate in 1754 in "a fishing town...of late much resorted to by company to drink the sea water as well as to bathe".⁴ A manuscript of 1757 shows how "of late years since the physicians of London have in several cases prescribed drinking and bathing in salt water, the town of Margate has become much frequented in that account as the shore is flat and sandy".⁵ Another observation pointed in 1769 to

"an epidemical disorder that was formerly quite unknown and even now wants a name, which seizes whole families here in town at this season of the year. One would almost imagine that the people were all bit by a mad dog, as the same remedy is thought necessary. In a word, of whatever nature the complaint may be, it is imagined that nothing will remove it but spending the summer months in some dirty fishing town near the sea shore". (6)

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1. Hern, op.cit., 18.
 2. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MSS, Bathing at Margate from 1750, Margate Public Library Local Collection, Y060 . 537; also partly quoted by Hern, op.cit., 39.
 3. J.A. Williamson, The English Channel : A History (1959), 325.
 4. Cartwright, op.cit., 86.
 5. From a MS in Margate Public Library.
 6. Woodruff, op.cit., 170.

with Mrs. Woodington. Baker was then 66 and the entries in his diary indicate that he was a hypochondriac.¹ Before leaving Margate he paid on 14 October 1777 four guineas to Mr. George Slater, apothecary, for his advice on sea bathing.² His diary details both his ailments and the medical visits which he received:

- 11 September - "afterwards Mr. Slater, apothecary, about my bathing".
- 16 September - "continued ill and suffering".
- 19 September - "I am now very bad indeed everywhere".
- 28 September - "my father died wanting about 22 days of completing his 66th year. I want more than 4 months of completing my 66th year which I think it utterly impossible I should ever do, for I grow daily weaker. (3) The sea-bath, sea-air, or any air, has no effect to make me better, but all are flat and useless, and I have neither pleasure nor amendment from them".
- 2 October - "my body all disordered...I am now in a dreadful condition indeed - all pain and wretchedness... Came at 4 Mr. Slater; seemed to think all will go away with dissipation and exercise".
- 4 October - "Mr. Slater came - much talk with him and Mrs. W. about my case; he thinks it right to bathe again".
- 7 October - "I believe the air disagrees with me - it is too damp so near the sea".
- 8 October - "went into the sea the 9th time - seem well after it".
- 11 October - "Mr. Slater still insists on my bathing tho' it weakens me so". (4)

John Baker's concern for his own health as an invalid at the seaside confirms George Keate's amusing narratives on sea-water medical treatment, which were quoted earlier in this Chapter.⁵

George Dempster (1732-1818) took his wife and sister down to Margate during September 1782 "to bathe for both their healths",⁶ while in July 1789

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1. Ed: Philip C. Yorke, The Diary of John Baker (1931), 417-21.
 2. Ibid., 421.
 3. In fact he did surpass his 66th year dying in 1779.
 4. Yorke, op.cit., 417-21.
 5. Under the section "A Developing Craze for Drinking Sea Water and for Sea Bathing".
 6. Ed: J. Fergusson, Letters of George Dempster to Sir Adam Fergusson, 1756-1813 (1934), 111.

"Mrs. J.H.D. writes me from Margate that her little boy has uniformly mended for his last fortnight".¹ George Dempster may have had a prolonged vacation during 1782 for between 1 and 22 November he rented for three weeks at the lower seasonal charge of 31s.6d. per week William Stone's Margate lodging house.²

Medical treatment by the seaside continued to find adherents in the early nineteenth century. One of the letters of Lady Augusta Murray, who in 1793 had married H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex, and who in the early 1800's was heavily indebted to tradesmen and others,³ contained a proposal to visit Ramsgate. The letter has a very pathetic tone about it.

"Dear Mr. Adams,

My little Girl's Eye has (what Mr. Phipps calls) a Blight, - She is at Ramsgate as I am here, which makes me quite miserable. - As I think that there may be some delay in the settling Everything finally - would Mr. Pitt allow Mr. Huskisson to advance me only £1,000 to enable me, not merely to go to Ramsgate, but to pay off every Expence there. - My Girl's Eye is to have Teaches, etc. etc, and unless she is sitting on my Lap, she will not suffer them on. - Pray my Dear Mr. Adams Don't laugh at my request... You have no idea of the many miseries I experience not only on account of my debts, but at being absent from my children, Especially at a moment when one of them is suffering a great deal, and likely to suffer more ...My Dear Mr. Adams do pray represent this to Mr. Pitt - and do beseech him to let me have only a little Money now, and arrange other things at his Leisure. - Will you speak to him immediately and let me have his answer tomorrow morning before the Post goes out? - I cannot tell you what an obligation this will confer on your already much obliged Augusta". (4)

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1. Fergusson, op.cit., 196-7.
 2. Kent Record Office, The Cobb MSS; also see below Chapter III.
 3. This fact emerges clearly from her correspondence with William Dacres Adams (1775-1862), who was then Private Secretary to the Younger Pitt, during his last ministry from 1804 to 1806; Letters from Lady Augusta Murray to Pitt, Dacres Adams Papers, Public Record Office, 30/58 (Bundle 7, Part III). In Letter 72 she wrote, "I am apprehensive that Mr. Pitt is not acquainted with the situation in which I am placed now - the Demands of my Creditors press upon me Daily and hourly in Every Day". Letter 73 stated, "I find three Writs have been issued agst me; - I suspect the Tradespeople do this... I am afraid I must now be Detained prisoner in my own House". In Letter 76, "Dear Mr. Adams if you are not engaged on Friday will you dine with me? - Should Mr. Pitt go to Weymouth pray beseech him not to forget my unfortunate Affairs - Have you forgiven my sending to you (in order to get rid of them myself) the Tax gatherers?".
 4. P.R.O. 30/58 (Bundle 7, Part III), Letter 75. The pleading in this letter is best seen in the context of the correspondence before and after it, as revealed in the previous footnote.
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If this letter was written in 1804 then Lady Augusta Murray succeeded in going to Ramsgate, where the famous topographical artist and diarist, Joseph Farington (1747-1821), commented on her presence at a ball in the assembly rooms on 11 August, noting how she had wrongly entered her name in the subscription book as the Duchess of Sussex.¹ There must have been many thousands of letters like this one written by or about people who chose to visit seaside resorts all over the country for the sake of their health.

Sea air and sea bathing attracted holidaymakers, well-off permanent residents, the medical profession, boarding schools and infirmaries or convalescent homes to the seaside. An early reference to sea bathing and schooling was advertised in The Kentish Post.

"At the Academy at Ramsgate in Kent YOUTH are Boarded and expeditiously Taught, on reasonable Terms, Grammar, Writing, Arithmatick, and Accounts, (either in the Common or Italian Method,) the Latin and Greek Languages, Geography, and the Use of the Globes.

By the Rev. Mr. REYNOLDS late of University College, OXFORD.

N.B. This Academy is pleasantly situated, at a convenient Distance from the Sea, for those who are inclined to have their Sons drink the Salt Water or Bathe". (2)

Nine years later it was noted of Margate that "two Physicians usually reside here, during the summer season", and "here is a Boarding-school for young Ladies, kept in a very decent, reputable manner; and another, where young Gentlemen are taught Arithmatick, Mathematick, etc, so that Gentlemen may now bring down their Children for the benefit of the sea, without losing time in their education".³

The fashionable acceptance of sea water and sea air promoted medical and scholastic provision within the Isle of Thanet. For the medical profession sea bathing and sea air became a profitable source of business.

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1. Ed: James Greig, The Farington Diary, Volume II (1923), 273-4; the King under the Royal Marriage Act of 1772 had in August 1794 declared her marriage to the Duke of Sussex to be void, ibid., 273; also see Chapter VII below.
 2. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 9-13 March 1754, 1.
 3. Lyons, op.cit., 14.

There emerged an expanding demand for medical consultation at the seaside. People believed that they could improve their health by inhaling pure sea air and by indulging in sea bathing. In 1776 at the same time as Charles Seymour stressed that "the Sea-water Bath here [at Margate] has performed great cures in nervous and paralytic cases, and numbness of the limbs", he reminded visitors that "some skilful Physicians reside here in the summer season".¹

Guidebooks and medical treatises strongly recommended medical consultation preparatory to and during a course of sea bathing, in the manner adopted by John Baker, at Margate during September and October 1777.² The same recommendation applied equally to the drinking of sea water. The publicity bestowed on sea water and sea air by guidebooks and medical treatises increased the number of patients seeking advice from surgeons and physicians at seaside resorts. Medical consultations increased the more the medical virtues of a place or type of treatment were stressed.

Patient/doctor contacts had long characterized the inland watering places, as indicated by an "Advertisement to the Reader" in 1760: "it must be owned that at all the greatly-frequented Places, such as Bath, Bristol, Tunbridge and Scarborough, there are Physicians to be consulted, and consequently there will be no Danger of using any of those Waters incongruously; but then there are many others where no such Advice can be readily had, and if there could, it must certainly be most expedient to have some knowledge beforehand of what Water is most likely to yield Relief".³

Dr. Anderson advised caution and consultation in 1795.⁴ He quoted Horace:

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1. Seymour, op.cit., 557-8.
 2. Yorke, op.cit., 417-21 as noted in this section above.
 3. Russell (1760 Ed.), op.cit., i-ii.
 4. Above under "A Developing Craze for Drinking Sea Water and for Sea Bathing".

"Let none but learned doctors
 physic give,
Let each mechanic by his calling live".¹

He argued that "too much being assumed and taken for granted is the reason so little progress has hitherto been made", for "when we talk of sea bathing being efficacious in this, or in that complaint, we must mean to comprehend with it the state and condition of body at the time it has to operate upon".² When sea-water treatment resulted in accidents and misfortunes, "we must rather impute to visitors themselves neglecting to apply for proper advice on the spot".³ In 1816 for "those who wish to make themselves acquainted with the good effects of salt water, either with or without a course of bathing", the recommendation was still to seek medical advice; indeed, "we beg them to consult the medical gentlemen resident in the town, or the ingenious authors who have written on the subject".⁴ When early in July 1781 Edward Gibbon decided to visit Brighton for the benefit of sea air and bathing, he promised in one of his letters to Dorothea Gibbon to exercise caution.

"Tuesday, 3-7-1781.

I have not been able to please myself with any thing in the neighbourhood of London, and have therefore hired for three months a small pleasant house at Brighthelmstone. I flatter myself in that admirable sea air,... /but/ as I know your tender apprehensions, I promise you not to bathe in the Sea without due preparation and advice". (5)

Just how busy the medical profession at the seaside could be was indicated

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1. Anderson, op.cit., 12.
 2. Ibid., 15, 20.
 3. Ibid., 21.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide, or an Historical Epitome of the Ancient and Present State of the Isle of Thanet (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), 61-2. The 1809 5th Edition of the same work carried the same advice, 56, as did also subsequently The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion (1819), op.cit., 40.
 5. Ed: J.E. Norton, The Letters of Edward Gibbon, Volume II [1774-84] (1956), 271.

in a report from Margate in September 1804.

"Our Doctors find the number of their patients considerably on the increase... Our visitors, with scarcely an exception, imagine a few dips in the ocean sufficient either to confirm health or to restore it, no matter what the complaints may be... Hence some who cannot walk are carried in chairs or wheeled in barrows; others are wrapped in a hundred folds of flannel, and not a few of the timid are soused in against their own will. The Londoners consider a morning's bathing as...the cure of all diseases. But though the supposed panacea sometimes fails, the matchless efficacy of its medicinal powers is never impeached. The blame is readily thrown upon some misconduct or inattention of the patient, or the nurse". (1)

With such demands at hand physicians and surgeons took up permanent residence, developing lucrative practices on the coast by looking after wealthy residents and visitors, including invalids, who flocked to the seaside. The following table illustrates the strength of the medical interest on the coast of Thanet between 1763 and 1811.²

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1. The Times, 13 September 1804, 2d.
 2. See page 173.

TABLE 7 : THE STRENGTH OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN THANET, 1763-1811

<u>Year</u>	<u>Margate</u>	<u>Ramsgate</u>	<u>Broadstairs</u>
1763 ¹	2 physicians were normally resident during the summer season.		
1770 ²	"3 or more physicians, usually, reside here during the summer season".		
1772 ³	"2 or more physicians generally attend in the way of their profession".		
1776 ⁴	"Several physicians reside at Margate during the season".		
1776 ⁵	"Some skilful Physicians reside here in the summer season".		
1779 ⁶	"Mr. FORBES (Dr), a physician of eminence, resides at Margate all the year". This seems to be the first indication of permanent residence.		
1790 ⁷	"Several physicians of eminence reside at Margate all the year". Certainly from the late 1770's, therefore, surgeons and physicians took up permanent residence at Margate.		

1. Lyons, op.cit., 14.
2. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 18.
3. Nathaniel Spencer, The Complete English Traveller (1772), 164.
4. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (1st Ed., Rochester, 1776), op.cit., 120.
5. Seymour, op.cit., 558.
6. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (2nd Ed., Rochester, 1779), 171.
7. Ibid. (3rd Ed., Canterbury, 1790), 239.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Margate</u>	<u>Ramsgate</u>	<u>Broadstairs</u>
1792 ¹	6 physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, viz: J. Anderson, M.D., D. Riley, M.D., George Slater, John Silver, Robert Edward Hunter, Daniel Jarvis.	5 physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, viz: J.D. Merry M.D., Edward Daniel, T. Grigson, Chr. Mayhew, S.Joad.	1 surgeon, viz: Samuel Froome.
1796 ²	"Physicians of great ability attend during the season, and several good surgeons and apothecaries reside in the place".		
1796 ³	10 Physic, viz: J. Anderson, M.D., Gilder, Surgeon, Robert Edward Hunter, M.D., Hoile, Druggist and Apothecary, Daniel Jarvis, Surgeon, Walter Plummer, Druggist, etc., F. Ridley, M.D., George Slater, Surgeon, J. Silver, Surgeon, Silver, Apothecary and Druggist.		
1811 ⁴	1 physician 5 surgeons		

The table shows how physicians and surgeons were attracted initially for the season but from 1779 onwards they began to reside permanently in Margate, where their numerical strength increased markedly during the 1790's.

1. The Kentish Companion for the Year of Our Lord, 1792 (Canterbury, 1792), op.cit., 164-5.
2. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet; being Chiefly Intended as a Directory for the Company Resorting to Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs (Margate, 1796), 26.
3. The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796).
4. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory of the United Kingdoms and Wales (1811).

In 1811 there were five surgeons and one physician living in Margate, as opposed to three physicians and four surgeons in 1796. Some of them contributed notably to the development of the town as a popular and expanding Georgian seaside resort. Dr. John Anderson has been noted already as the author of four works on the medical aspects of sea water,¹ and he played a prominent role in the foundation and establishment of the Margate or General Sea Bathing Infirmary from the 1790's onwards, both as an Honorary Physician to and a Director of that charitable institution.² Dr. John Coakley Lettsom (1744-1815) corresponded with him during 1791 concerning a possible site within Margate for the Infirmary.³

Two generations of father and son, both sharing the name of George Slater, sustained a profitable medical practice in Margate for at least 40 years between 1777 and 1817. It was Mr. Slater Senior who offered medical advice to the hypochondriac John Baker during his visit to Margate in September and October 1777.⁴ Father or son appear under the entries for 1792 and 1796 along with Dr. Anderson, Dr. Hunter and Daniel Jarvis. Mr. Slater Junior was apprenticed to his father and father and son shared a joint practice, as is clear from the following obituary on "The Late George Slater Esq., Jun., Surgeon, of Margate", in November 1817:

"Mr. GEORGE SLATER, was the eldest son and third in order of birth, of our venerable and highly respectable medical practitioner, and was born at Margate. He was educated at the school of a gentleman at Ashford. (5) After having been regularly introduced to the knowledge of medicine under the guidance of his father [surgical apprenticeships being common practice in those days], and having completed the usual course of medical instruction at the Borough

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1. See this Chapter above, under "A Developing Craze for Drinking Sea Water and for Sea Bathing".
 2. See Chapter VIII below.
 3. The Original Minutes of the Margate Infirmary, 1791-1793, op.cit., 2 July 1791.
 4. As noted under this section above.
 5. In a like manner he followed in the footsteps of the second Francis Cobb (1759-1831) who from an early age until he was 16 in 1775 attended the Grammar School at Ashford, see below, Chapter V.

hospitals, ...he engaged in the practice of his profession at his native town and in conjunction with his father, about the year 1796. Mr. Slater was fond of his profession, engaged in it earnestly, and found immediate and full employment. ...He was a successful practitioner, and he deserved to be so, for he was a good one". (1)

In common with Dr. John Anderson he was involved in the medical charitable work of the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary. He was elected on to the Infirmary's Margate Committee during 1812-13, 1813-14, 1814-15, 1815-16, 1816-17 and 1817-18.² He appeared as one of the signatories to the Medical Report which was submitted to the Annual General Meeting of the Infirmary, at the Royal Hotel and Assembly Rooms in Margate, late in August 1812.³

Two of Margate's physicians of the 1790's were authors. While in 1795 Dr. John Anderson completed his Preliminary Introduction to the Act of Sea Bathing,⁴ Dr. Robert Edward Hunter was the author of a successful Thanet guidebook which went through eleven editions between 1799 and circa 1826.⁵ Appearing as a surgeon in 1792 he was entered as a physician in 1796. As a surgeon he followed in the footsteps of his father, as had the younger George Slater. His father, William Hunter, was a surgeon to H.M. Forces prior to his death in February 1785 at the age of 75. Robert Edward Hunter was 69 when he died on 6 June 1824.⁶ The house which Dr. Hunter occupied, not as a freehold but on a tenancy, was advertised for sale in The Kentish Gazette on 14 April 1809, as a substantial property which could be put to many uses.

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1. The Thanet Magazine (November 1817), 228-30.
 2. The Royal Sea Bathing Infirmary, Margate Committee Minute Book, 1811-37, 31 August 1812, 30 August 1813, 29 August 1814, 28 August 1815, 9 September 1816, and 26 August 1817.
 3. Ibid., 31 August 1812.
 4. See this Chapter above, under "A Developing Craze for Drinking Sea Water and for Sea Bathing".
 5. See under "The Circulating Libraries", Chapter IV below.
 6. C. Greenwood, An Epitome of County History, Volume I County of Kent (1838), 331.

"To be sold by auction at the White Hart, Margate, on Monday, June 19th by order of the Devises in Trust of Charles Ward Esq, deceased, A convenient, large and well built house, in Charlotte Place, near the Church and Post Office, in the occupation of Dr. Hunter, tenant at will. The premises are suitable as a lodging house, residence of a professional man, or academy, having numerous chambers, good parlours, offices, large yard, four entrances, and detached, a coach house and stable". (1)

Daniel Jarvis, as a fourth medical practitioner of note, listed from 1792 onwards, became a leading Margate figure during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. He became well known in London and elsewhere to many hundreds of visitors, and even to people who never set eyes on the resort. In a report, touching on the Margate Theatre Royal, The Times revealed how at the end of September 1804 Mr. Jarvis, "eminent surgeon of this place", and the circulating librarian, Mr. Garner, had been acting characters on the stage.² As a famous Margate surgeon, who acquired esteem and developed a lucrative medical practice, Daniel Jarvis became closely identified with major physical improvements to the town. He was involved in the construction of a new pier to Margate harbour following severe storm damage in 1808, which had breached the old pier. He was closely associated with the building and design of Jarvis's Landing Place, which the Pier and Harbour Company erected in 1824 to facilitate an easier passage to and from the steamboats, when the water was too low for vessels to enter the harbour. Constructed of English oak, 1,120 feet in length it cost over £5,000.³ Seaside towns came to possess some of the best ratios of doctors per 1,000 resident population. Their numerical representation even before the eighteenth century was at an end

1. The Kentish Gazette, 14 April 1809.

2. The Times, 25 September 1804, 3a. Chapter IV contains details relating to the early history of the Theatre Royal and of Mr. Garner as one of Margate's more famous librarians.

3. See, for instance, Picture of Ramsgate (1833), op.cit., 61-2. A graphic account of two dramatic storms on 15 January and 11 February 1808, which damaged the pier, harbour and the west side of the High Street to "the sum of £15,000 and upwards, exclusive of the very heavy losses sustained by individuals", appeared in The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume 78 (January-June 1808), 78-9, 165; also Margate Pier : Petition and Report from the Committee to Whom the Petition was Referred /46/ (1808).

was such as to give seaside resorts some of the most favourable ratios of doctors to every 1,000 permanent inhabitants. This was certainly true of Margate and Ramsgate in 1792, when Margate with six surgeons and physicians had one doctor to every 794 inhabitants, while Ramsgate with five surgeons and physicians was even better off with one doctor to every 622 inhabitants. These were very favourable proportions compared to many other Kentish towns. The table which follows shows the numbers of surgeons and physicians and their ratios to the resident populations in seaside towns in 1792 compared to other types of town.¹

1. See page 179.

TABLE 8 : THE NUMBER OF SURGEONS AND PHYSICIANS AND THEIR RATIO TO THE RESIDENT POPULATION IN SELECTED KENTISH TOWNS IN 1792 (1)

Type of Area or Town	Town	P. & S. in 1792	Residents in 1801	1 P. or S. to
The Thanet resorts:	Margate	6	4,766	794
	Ramsgate	5	3,110	622
	Margate and Ramsgate	11	7,876	716
	Broadstairs & St.Peters	1	1,568	1,568
	All 3 Towns	12	9,444	787
Other resorts:	Deal and Walmer	5	6,195	1,239
	Dover	6	7,084	1,181
	Hythe	2	1,446	723
Spa and market town:	Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge	5	4,371	874
Regional capitals. The County Town: Fashionable Cathedral City and focal point for East Kent: A conurbation:	Maidstone	9	8,027	892
	Canterbury	16	9,642	603
	The Medway Towns (2)	24	22,629	943
Residential and/or near to London:	Greenwich	11	14,339	1,304
	Lewisham	2	4,007	2,004
	Woolwich	6	9,826	1,639
Smaller, mainly market towns and ports:	Folkestone	3	3,704	1,235
	Sandwich	4	2,452	613
	Whitstable	2	1,205	603
	Gravesend	4	2,483	621
	Sheerness	4	5,561	1,390
	Ashford	4	2,151	538
	Faversham	5	3,488	698
	Sittingbourne and Milton	4	2,969	742
	Bromley	3	2,700	900
	Sevenoaks	2	2,640	1,320

1. The Kentish Companion for the Year of Our Lord, 1792 (Canterbury, 1792), op.cit., 164-5, 172-4.
2. Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Brompton and Gillingham are treated as one conurbation as noted by writers from an early date; for instance, in a "Descriptive Journal of a Tour taken by Three Gentlemen in the Last Year of the Reign of King William III from London to Paris, from the Original MS", The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume LXXXVIII, Part II (November 1818), 18 August 1701, "This City /Rochester/ is between two other towns, Strood towards Gravesend and Chatham towards Canterbury; and these three all lying together in length make the road 2 miles through them", 403.

If there is one conclusion which emerges strongly from these figures it was the desire of doctors to establish profitable practices in resorts and residential towns where there was plenty of money. Apart from specific market towns and ports like Sandwich, Gravesend, Sittingbourne, Faversham and Ashford, physicians and surgeons were concentrated in residential areas near to London, notably Greenwich and Woolwich; in major regional centres like Canterbury, Maidstone and the Medway Towns; and in resorts and towns of fashionable residence, such as Margate, Ramsgate, Deal and Walmer, Dover and Tunbridge Wells.

Several small towns enjoyed favourable ratios of doctors per 1,000 resident population. This was true of Hythe, Sandwich, Whitstable, or Ashford. The best ratio of all belonged to Ashford. Small market towns served as focal points for villages and hamlets often scattered over a wide area, as did the residential and commercial centres like Canterbury, Maidstone and the Medway Towns. Acting as a local or regional focal point explains why there were never less than four physicians or surgeons in Sandwich, Ashford, Faversham and Sittingbourne and Milton.

The Thanet resorts, apart from Broadstairs, were favourably placed in comparison with other towns so far as medical provision was concerned. Residential Canterbury, as the regional capital of East Kent, and as the metropolitan Cathedral City of England, had sixteen surgeons and physicians for a resident population of 9,642, as against twelve physicians and surgeons spread over 9,444 people living in the three Thanet resorts, with an even better figure of eleven for a population of 7,876 resident in Margate and Ramsgate. Broadstairs and St. Peter's had a poor ratio compared to Margate and Ramsgate, but even so a better ratio than Lewisham or Woolwich. Broadstairs suffered because physicians and surgeons preferred to settle and practice in the two larger resorts on either side, which anyhow were within

easy consulting distance of each other and of Broadstairs. The ratio for Margate and Ramsgate of one physician or surgeon to every 716 people was bettered only by Canterbury, Sandwich, Whitstable, Gravesend, Ashford and Faversham. Ramsgate in turn had a much more favourable ratio than Margate which was only narrowly inferior to those of Canterbury, Sandwich, Whitstable and Gravesend.

When the figures are averaged out as between areas or categories of town, then the Thanet resorts, including Broadstairs and St. Peter's, had the best ratio of physicians and surgeons to every 1,000 inhabitants as against Deal, Walmer, Dover and Hythe; as against Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge; as against the major centres of population in Maidstone, Canterbury and the Medway Towns; as against the residential towns nearer to London; and as against the smaller, mainly market towns and ports. This fact emerges clearly from the following summary table.

TABLE 9 : DITTO SUMMARY TABLE

<u>Area or Category of Town</u>	<u>One Physician or Surgeon to</u>
The Thanet resorts	787
The other resorts of Deal, Walmer, Dover and Hythe	1,133
Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge	874
Maidstone, Canterbury and the Medway Towns	823
Residential towns nearer to London: Greenwich, Lewisham, Woolwich	1,483
Smaller, mainly market towns and ports	838

Distinct but not wholly unrelated to the fees which doctors earned on account of consultations in connection with drinking sea water and sea bathing was the fact that patent medicine manufacturers and their sponsors and advertisers, operating often from outside the radius of the Thanet resorts, also cashed in on an evident craze for sea-water treatment. Numerous advertisements in support of this fact can be cited. Medicines were patented

as accompaniments to sea bathing. Dr. Brodum advertised during July 1800 "to the Fashionable World, and to Bathers at Bath Hot Wells, Sea Bathers, etc.", a "Botanical Syrup", to be consumed "immediately after quitting the Bath, and one hour before - 2 table spoonfuls".¹

The Northampton Mercury advertised early in 1820 Whyman's Anti-Billious Pills as being "highly proper to be used preparatory to sea-bathing".² In 1864 it was hair treatment after sea bathing which was being catered for.

"AFTER SEA-BATHING USE RIMMELL'S EXTRACT OF LIME JUICE and GLYCERINE, to counteract the injurious effects of sea water on the hair, and render it beautifully soft. Prices 1s.6d., 2s.6d., 4s.6d. Sold by all perfumery dealers, Rimmell, 96 Strand, and 24 Cornhill, London". (3)

Fees were paid for coastal schooling from the moment that sea water and sea air were alleged to possess medical benefits. Wealthy holidaymakers were encouraged to send their children away to the seaside to be privately educated, and to Ramsgate as early as March 1754.⁴ Increasingly the private boarding school for the children of wealthy Londoners and provincial families emerged as a familiar coastal institution. Scholastic provision as it evolved within Margate on a private basis is set out in the following table.

TABLE 10 : PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN MARGATE, 1763-1816

<u>Year</u>	<u>Boarding Schools, Academies, etc.</u>
1763 ⁵	2 boarding schools - one for "young Ladies", and the other for "young Gentlemen".
1770 ⁶	"Here is a Boarding-School for young Ladies, kept in a very decent, reputable manner, and another where writing, arithmetic, mathematics, etc. are taught; so that Gentlemen may bring down their children for the benefit of bathing, without losing time in their education".
1794 ⁷	4 "good boarding schools, 2 for young ladies, and 2 for young gentlemen".

1. The Times, 9 July 1800, 4a.
2. The Northampton Mercury, 22 April 1820, 4.
3. The Times, 17 August 1864, 15b.
4. See under this section above.
5. Lyons, op.cit., 14.
6. The Margate Guide... In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 20.
7. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (4th Ed., Canterbury, 1794), 257.

TABLE 10 : (contd).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Boarding Schools, Academies, etc.</u>
1796 ¹	6 schools - "3 for the reception of young ladies, and 3 for young gentlemen"; also "music and dancing are taught here by regular professors of ability, who reside in the place".
1797 ²	"There are several boarding-schools for young gentlemen and ladies in and about the town, upon the usual terms of admission".
1804 ³	"There are several good boarding schools for young ladies and young gentlemen, to which the salubrity of the situation, and the merits of the masters and mistresses, attract numerous pupils, and among these many children of persons of fashion and fortune".
1809 ⁴	4 at least - "among the improvements of this place, the Schools ought not to be forgotten: the principal of which are, Mrs. <u>Peacock's</u> , Dane-Hill House (which is most delightfully situated), for young ladies; Mrs. <u>Oldfield's</u> , Grotto House, High-street; Mr. <u>Lewis's</u> , for young gentlemen; besides a private seminary, by a clergyman, for a limited number of pupils, upon the same plan as at the Charter-House".
1811 ⁵	13 schools, viz: 3 day, 2 girls, 1 preparatory, 1 girls' boarding and 6 others.
1816 ⁶	The leading schools included "Mrs. PEACOCK's, No 11, Union Crescent (a pleasant and central situation), for young ladies; Mrs. OLDFIELD's Grotto House, High-street; Miss REYNOLD's Gordon House; Mr. LEWIS's, for young gentlemen; and Mr. MICKLEBURGH's Thanet House, pleasantly situated about half a mile on the foot road leading to St. Peter's".

The benefits of a healthy location, sea air, and sea bathing were commonly stressed in descriptions of and advertisements for seaside academies and preparatory or boarding schools. In Margate the number of boarding

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1. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 25.
 2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 39.
 3. The Maritime Guide (circa 1804), 31.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 68.
 5. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory of the United Kingdom and Wales (1811), op.cit.
 6. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 75.

schools doubled during the thirty years between 1763 and 1794, followed during the later 1790's and 1800's by a further pronounced expansion in private scholastic provision, whereby the number of schools roughly doubled again between 1796 and 1811. The private preparatory school became characteristically a coastal institution during the nineteenth century.¹ In 1885 it was reckoned that there were at least 2,000 children in private schools in Margate.²

Ramsgate had by 1809 "several good seminaries for the education of young ladies and gentlemen; and in particular a large boarding-school for young gentlemen, conducted on the most liberal terms by Mr. Humble".³ By 1816 a further expansion of private schooling in Ramsgate had occurred. Among the boys' schools was "one for a limited number of pupils, conducted on the most liberal principles by the Rev. Mr. ABBOTT", while

"the respective academies of Messrs. HILL and WHITEHEAD are likewise highly respectable. Mrs. GRANT's boarding school, for young ladies, is ably directed; and that of Misses MOSELY and BAKER is in every way well supported; there are others which do not rank so high in regard to numbers of scholars, but are nevertheless managed with ability and the utmost care". (4)

Visitors and holidaymakers to Thanet helped to promote and gave financial support to charity schools in both towns. A charity school in Margate, "supported by voluntary contributions", was established in 1788, educating 30 boys and 30 girls by 1790,⁵ and 40 boys and 40 girls by 1799.⁶ Ten years later it was noted that

1. Williamson, op.cit., 327.

2. The Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1885, op.cit.

3. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 89.

4. Ibid. (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), 97.

5. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (3rd Ed., Canterbury, 1790), op.cit., 241.

6. Ibid. (5th Ed., Canterbury, 1799), 266.

"the first establishment was for thirty boys and an equal number of girls, who are taught reading, writing and arithmetic; the girls are forwarded in knitting stockings, plain work and marking. But through the liberal donations of the nobility and gentry who resort hither, aided by the annual subscriptions of the inhabitants and others, the conductors have increased the number to forty of each sex; and the whole are annually clothed". (1)

Between 1809 and 1816 the benefits of this charity were extended through "the laudable exertions of the Rev. F.W. BAYLAY...to a much greater proportion of poor children, by the introduction of a system of education formed on the plans of Messrs. Bell and Lancaster".² Ramsgate likewise had in 1809 "a charity school, for a limited number of boys and girls, supported by the contributions of the visitants and inhabitants".³

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 68.
 2. Ibid. (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), 75.
 3. Ibid. (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), 89; also (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), 97.

CHAPTER III

THE PHYSICAL GROWTH OF MARGATE, BROADSTAIRS AND RAMSGATE AS EXPANDING SEASIDE RESORTS AFTER 1763.

Introduction : The Overall Position by 1800.

In the previous Chapter it was argued that Margate developed tremendously during the eighteenth century, having been an embryonic resort during the 1730's.¹ Margate was still feeling its way as an infant watering place, when the second Viscount Palmerston, who was in the happy position of drawing £100 per month, visited the town in 1758 on a tour of southern England: "Margate is a small dirty fishing town, frequented by numbers of people for the sake of sea bathing, though at the same time they must submit to every sort of inconvenience".² The removal of the inconveniences of a small port and fishing town, the provision of accommodation and amusements, and the year-by-year physical expansion of the Thanet resorts form collectively a very detailed story, which is one of continuous progress, expansion and improvement.

When the great county historian Edward Hasted produced the second edition of his History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent at the very end of the eighteenth century, he directed his readers' attention to the new resort function which had developed in the Thanet towns during the second half of the eighteenth century. His readers, being drawn predominantly from the aristocracy, the gentry and the clergy of Kent, London and other counties, were the most likely people to take seaside holidays at that time.

The landowners, farmers, seafarers and fishermen of Thanet had been joined as permanent residents by people and families who had invested in a new way of life as proprietors of, or employees in, bathing machines and rooms,

1. See Chapter II above.

2. Brian Connell, Portrait of a Whig Peer Compiled from the Papers of the Second Viscount Palmerston 1739-1802 (1957), 25.

lodging and boarding houses, hotels, circulating libraries, or assembly rooms, so that

"the present constant inhabitants... of Margate... Broadstairs, and Ramsgate...mostly depend on the resort of company in the summer season to those places". (1)

Margate in particular

"has so greatly increased in buildings of late years, and become so noted from the resort of company to it yearly, that it has almost obliterated its antient parochial name of St. John's, that of Margate being the only one now known to most people". (2)

Hasted would agree with the key factors in the early rise of the Thanet resorts, as discussed in Chapter II. Transport is the other key factor which has still to be analysed, and particularly water communications to and from London; the latter's importance to the prosperity of Margate is mentioned by Hasted. In addition to the daily hoys "for the supply of the shops and other inhabitants of this place and neighbourhood", arriving mainly from London, there are "the several passage-boats, or yachts, as they are now called, which are neatly fitted up with cabins and other accommodations, and sail every day to and from London, constantly freighted with passengers, baggage and other lading belonging to them; and the number of persons, which the inhabitants boast are carried to and from this place in the vessels yearly, is almost beyond a moderate credibility, even to 18,000 on an average".³

The other and more immediate key factors sufficed in his opinion to explain Margate's recent and "unexpected" rise from "insignificance"

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1. Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Volume X (2nd Ed., Canterbury, 1800), 227.
 2. Ibid., 312. Compare back to Chapter I.
 3. Hasted, op.cit., 320.

"to wealth and consequence, owing principally to the universal recommendation of sea air and bathing, and the rage of the Londoners at the same time of spending their summer months at those watering places situated on the sea coast; and when it came to be known that the shore here was so well adapted to bathing, being an entire level and covered with the finest sand, which extends for several miles on each side the harbour, and the easy distance from the metropolis, with the conveniency of so frequent a passage by water, it gave Margate a preference before all others, to which the beauty and healthiness of it, and of the adjoining country, contributed still more". (1)

All these factors "induced numbers of genteel people, among whom were many of the nobility and persons of fashion, to resort to Margate, as well for bathing, as for pleasure";² and the results, briefly stated, were all too visible by 1800. To start with there had been insufficient housing to accommodate the visitors, and many of the older properties fell short of the requirements of wealthy holidaymaking families, but "this brought hither numbers of adventurers in building; a new town was built to the southward of the old one, on the side of the hill nearer the church, and the old town too was greatly improved and increased".³ The outstanding improvements and additions to Margate after 1750 included two new and superb Georgian squares, Cecil Square and Hawley Square, new streets, new houses, permanent assembly rooms, "with a public hotel adjoining",⁴ a permanent theatre, and the grant in 1777 of a public market, held weekly on a Wednesday and Saturday, for buying and selling flour, meat, fish, poultry, butter, eggs,

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1. Hasted, op.cit., 321; very much the same sort of explanation of Margate's rise to fame during the eighteenth century as a seaside resort finds frequent mention in contemporary guides and topography appearing immediately after 1800; for instance, Edward Wedlake Brayley, The Beauties of England and Wales; or Delineations Topographical, Historical and Descriptive, Volume VII: Kent (1808), 956, 959; or The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), 28-9, 46-7, 47-8.
 2. Hasted, op.cit., 322.
 3. Ibid., 322.
 4. Ibid., 322.

fruit and vegetables, "so that now this place is exceedingly well supplied".¹ Improvement Bills for Margate received the Royal Assent in 1787 and 1799.² "Several commodious bathing-rooms" were to be found near the harbour in 1800, some 40 or more bathing machines being frequently employed, while "besides the benefit of sea-bathing at this place, there are, if warm bathing is thought necessary, close to the harbour, four salt-water baths, on a very good construction, which may be filled in a few minutes, and the water brought to any degree of heat with the greatest facility".³ Not all the embellishments of later eighteenth century Margate had as their object the accommodation and amusement of the wealthier groups in society, for, as Hasted relates, "on the 21st of June, 1792, the first stone of a general Sea-bathing Infirmary, situated in West Sea-bath Bay [the reference is to Westbrook], and for which a very large subscription had been raised, was laid by John Coakley Lettsom, M.D. of London, assisted by the committees both of London and Margate, with much parade and ceremony".⁴

In 1800 Edward Hasted demonstrated how the development of a holiday-making function had brought about great changes in the economy, society, amenities and physical appearance of Margate. A new prosperity had even induced a revival in one of Margate's traditional maritime activities, namely the fishing industry; because "of late years the affluence of the strangers resorting hither has diffused a spirit of emulation among the fishermen, who are now very numerous; and have furnished themselves with substantial vessels and large boats, by which they not only supply their own town, but in their seasons carry considerable quantities of fish

1. Hasted, op.cit., 324.

2. 27 Geo.III c.45 and 39 Geo.III c.2 both of which are mentioned by Hasted, op.cit., 319, 324-5.

3. Hasted, op.cit., 323.

4. Ibid., 323-4; also see below, Chapter VIII.

to London".¹

While Margate was to the forefront of Thanet resort development up to 1800, the changes which Margate experienced found expression in Ramsgate on a less extensive scale, and in Broadstairs on a very much reduced scale. He wrote thus of Ramsgate in 1800:

"Since sea bathing has been thought indispensably necessary, both to kill time and preserve health, Ramsgate has been much resorted to, during the summer season. It was originally built in the form of a cross; but some few years since, a new handsome street and other buildings have been added to it, and it has now many elegant and commodious houses in it, numbers of which are converted into lodgings, besides which here is an assembly room, several good inns, and other accommodations for the use of the company who resort hither. Warm salt-water baths have, on a very good construction, lately been completed; and a very neat chapel of ease has been erected in the centre of the new street, in consequence of an act passed in 1785... By the authority of parliament likewise, this town has been well paved, lighted, watched, and otherwise improved, and a market established, which is well supplied with meat, poultry, fish and vegetables". (2)

Finally it was quite clear to Hasted and to many other contemporaries that Broadstairs was moving along a lesser but more exclusive path. It had grown to the stature of a small town, "many new buildings having been erected within these few years here, for the residence and other accommodation of families in the summer season, who wish to have the benefit of sea-bathing, and yet be retired from the inconveniency arising from so public a place as Margate".³

Margate in 1796 was said to be "the capital of the Island"⁴ of Thanet.

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1. Hasted, op.cit., 327; also see below Chapter V under the section: "Markets, Food Supplies and Local Farming and Fishing".
 2. Hasted, op.cit., 386-7.
 3. Ibid., 364; compare The Kentish Traveller's Companion (3rd Ed., Canterbury, 1790), 255 and later editions with their stress on Broadstairs offering "a retired and agreeable situation"; also The Maritime Guide (c.1804), 37.
 4. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet : being chiefly Intended as a Directory for the Company Resorting to Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs (Margate, 1796), 11.

It was certainly the first of the Thanet coastal towns to meet extensively the holidaymaking requirements of visitors. Ramsgate by the 1790's was catching up, Zechariah Cozens noting of the resort in 1793:

"Ramsgate, since the rage for sea bathing hath taken place, has had its share of visitants; and consequently is, every year, much improving in its buildings, and other accommodations. Here are many good lodging houses, several excellent hotels, inns, etc., a handsome assembly room, with other convenient apartments, a very good library, coffee rooms, warm salt water baths; in short, everything to make a summer residence comfortable". (1)

Contemporaries commented favourably upon the achievements of Ramsgate as a resort before the end of the eighteenth century. It was observed of Ramsgate in 1799 that "the spirit of this place has been considerably kept up", and it "is much frequented in the summer season, by some of the first families".² Broadstairs showed least signs of equalling the paces of expansion and improvement manifested in pre-1800 Margate and Ramsgate. To Carey, writing in 1799, Broadstairs was "of little extent, and not much note, lately shot up between Margate and Ramsgate".³ Cozens struck a more optimistic note in 1793, by which time the infant resort of Broadstairs had already a number of good houses, a circulating library, and "a good hotel, besides several other houses of entertainment", in predicting that "the village promises fair to become a considerable thriving place".⁴

Between 1763 and 1815 Margate expanded phenomenally and rapidly as a seaside resort. Subsequently both Margate and Ramsgate underwent a further remarkable expansion as steamboat resorts between 1815 and 1846. Underpinning these two periods of expansion was the crucial role of water communications.⁵ Margate flourished, matured and expanded under the nurturing influence of hoys

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1. Z. Cozens, A Tour Through the Isle of Thanet and Some Other Parts of East Kent (1793), 49.
 2. George Saville Carey, The Balnea : or, An Impartial Description of all the Popular Watering Places in England (1799), 38-9.
 3. Ibid., 36.
 4. Cozens, op.cit., 48.
 5. See Chapter VI below.

and steamboats.

The starting point is the 1750's and 1760's, and Margate during these decades is compared with resort development elsewhere. All coastal resorts were then in their infancy and many had still to be born. Much more developed were the inland watering places and spas, including, of course, Scarborough. From the 1760's onwards Margate witnessed a marked and prolonged physical and residential expansion, which added to the town's stock of streets, inns, hotels, lodging houses, boarding houses, and private residences. Coupled with this accommodation expansion was the increased provision of non-residential facilities and amenities, including bathing facilities, assembly rooms, shops, libraries, a theatre, a market, and other commercial sectors. Physical expansion combined with increasing business created a need for environmental improvements, which, in Margate, were associated particularly with four Improvement Acts in 1787, 1799, 1809 and 1813.¹

What had to happen to Margate in the middle of the eighteenth century can be related to the opening years of Herne Bay as a seaside resort.

"Here might a town, full and complete, be raised... The first question that arises when choice is to be made of a watering place, is the salubrity of the air, the next in importance are, the facilities for bathing; for taking exercise; for...amusement; for ready supplies of articles for the table; for clean, commodious, well-arranged lodging-houses; and...agreeable modes of conveyance". (2)

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1. Viz: 27 Geo.III c.45; 39 Geo.III c.2; 49 Geo.III c.117, and 53 Geo.III c.82.
 2. By a Lady, A Picture of the New Town of Herne Bay (1835), 4, 8.

THANET'S FIRST GUIDEBOOK IN
1763: TITLE PAGE AND PREFACE .

A
Description
OF THE
Isle of Thanet,
and particularly of the
TOWN of MARGATE,
W I T H
An Account of the Accommodations provided
there for Strangers, their manner of Bathing
in the Sea, and Machines for that purpose, their
Assemblies, Amusements and Diversions, public
and private, the Antiquities and remarkable
Places to be seen on the Island, as well as on
some Short but pleasant Tours along the Coasts
of Kent; with a Description of Sandwich, Deal,
Dover, Canterbury, Rochester, Chatham, and
other Places eminent for their Situation, and
celebrated in ancient History.

The whole illustrated with a correct Map of the
Island, a Plan of Ramsgate-Pier, and a Representa-
tion of the Machines for Bathing.

L O N D O N .

Printed for J. Newbery and W. Bristow in
St. Pauls Church-Yard, 1763.
Price One Shilling.

To

Margate, May 1, 1763.

S I R,

IT gives me great pleasure to hear, by your
obliging letter, that you design to spend
some part of the Summer at this place.
You are welcome to any information which
it may be in my power to give you con-
cerning it. I think your questions respect the
Isle of Thanet in general, the Situation of Mar-
gate, its Accommodations, Provisions, Manner
of Bathing, and Amusements, Places which
attract the notice of Strangers in the neighbour-
hood; and along the coast. To prevent con-
fusion, I shall give you a short account of each
of them, as they lie in order.

Margate and Other Resorts in the 1750's and 1760's.

Most eighteenth century writers commented favourably on the evolution and expansion of the Thanet resorts. Margate was the first to attract attention from the 1750's onwards in numerous and varied contemporary sources which reflect very well the changes which were taking place. Even though some of the information is admittedly repetitive, an almost inexhaustible supply of observations and descriptions, both literary and visual, can be taken from contemporary guides.

What was happening to Margate up to 1763 is reflected partly in the title to the first original guidebook on the area, which was compiled in that year by a Margate schoolmaster, John Lyons. This guidebook describes Margate as it existed in 1763. Already well before this first guidebook, amusements were provided in addition to baths, bathing machines, and lodgings. Invariably bathing machines and baths were the first seaside amenities to be advertized, and in this connection Thomas Barber, of Margate, appears as a pioneer entrepreneur of seaside advertizing, in the columns of The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter between 1736 and 1740, as was noted previously.¹

His widow continued the business of bathing, advertizing in June 1753 the facilities of an assembly room.

"The Widow Barber, at the 'Black Horse' in Margate acquaints the public that she has erected a very commodious Assembly Room and a very convenient Sea Water Bath". (2)

The Black Horse assembly continued into 1754, subscriptions being invited at the beginning of January.³ The Black Horse Inn occupied a seafront position standing at the junction of Duke Street with the Parade, its future being assured as the New Inn from 1761 and the York Hotel from 1793. It

1. See Chapter II above.

2. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 20 June 1753.

3. Ibid., 2-5 January 1754, 1.

saw the earliest assembly-room activity within Margate and provides thereby a good instance of how the early seaside resorts of the eighteenth century immediately modelled themselves socially on the much older inland spas.

Assembly rooms constituted a major element in the social life of eighteenth century aristocrats and gentlemen; so too did public breakfasting, which finds also a very early mention in Thanet. On 29 July 1731, Philip Papillon wrote to William Turner Esq. at Holt, near Trowbridge in Wiltshire, from Margate, as follows:

"We have met wth. a great many Civilities since we have been here from the People of this Place, especially from Mr. Wyate and his Lady who live at Quecks 3 miles from hence, (1) who no doubt you know, or at least have heard of. They keep every Tuesday a publick Table, where all the Neighbouring Gentry are welcome; there usually is very good Company; the afternoons are spent, at Cards and Bowling only to pass away the time; and wⁿ the comp^y are tir'd...they frequently are entertain'd with Musick, Vocal and Instrumental, which is very agreeable; so we now and then spend a day very pleasantly". (2)

The following picture emerges of Margate and its surroundings in 1763 from John Lyons's earliest Margate guide. The Parade, facing the harbour, had already several good houses built on it and

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1. The reference here is to the manor of Quekes, or Quex in the Parish of Birchington, and so described by Hasted, Volume X, op.cit., 297-302: "anciently the seat of a family who gave name to it, many of whom lie buried in this Church, several of whose gravestones and inscriptions yet remain"; from the Quekes family it passed in marriage to the Crispe family; in the early eighteenth century it passed to Edwin Wiat and came into the possession of Catherine, Countess of Guildford who, in 1767, sold it to Henry Fox, Lord Holland, who conveyed it to his second son, the Hon. Charles James Fox, from whom it passed into the hands of the Powel family. "At this house king William used to reside till the winds favoured his embarking for Holland", and "a room said to be the bedchamber of the royal guest is still shown": see Chapter I above, for references to William III landing at and departing from Margate. Hasted notes that Quex had been "a large commodious structure, built partly of timber and partly of brick, much of which has been within these few years pulled down, and the rest modernized and converted into a farmhouse".
 2. Kent Record Office, C144/2, in U1015. The Papillons were a London merchant family, who typically became Kentish gentry, and were associated with the Excise. The head of the family was nearly always a Member of Parliament, and this Philip Papillon was a close friend of the Rev. John Lewis, author in 1723 of The History and Antiquities Ecclesiastical and Civil of the Isle of Tenet.

"the Lodgings, tho' small, are neat and tolerably commodious, considering that they are now applied to the reception of Strangers, for which purpose they were never originally intended. Some good houses have been built within a few years, and others are building: The old ones daily receive all the improvements they are capable of". (1)

The cost of accommodation is not mentioned. Provisions, including fish, were good but "in general dear".² A market had still to be established but hoys arrived with goods for the shops from London.³ Visitors were conveyed to and from Margate by means of four hoys; alternatively, local coaches connected with the London coaches at Canterbury.⁴ Postal arrangements had developed to the point where "a Post comes in from and returns to London, almost every day, during the season, the additional expense of which is defrayed by a subscription among the company".⁵

The bathing rooms of the early 1760's were described as "not large, but convenient". The bathing requirements of visitors were looked after by three rooms, employing eleven bathing machines.

"Here the company often wait for their turns of Bathing. The Guides attend, Sea-water is drank, the Ladies dresses are taken notice of, and all business of the like kind is managed". (6)

John Lyons was so impressed with Benjamin Beale's refined bathing machine as to state quite categorically, that

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1. John Lyons, A Description of the Isle of Thanet, and particularly of the Town of Margate (1763), 10-11.
 2. Ibid., 11.
 3. Ibid., 14-15.
 4. Ibid., 15-16; also see Chapter VI below.
 5. Lyons, op.cit., 16.
 6. Ibid., 12.

"Benjamin Beale...has undeniably the right of a first claimant to the reward of his ingenuity... I am so well pleased with the invention of the Umbrella, that I much wish to see it extended to the purposes of Bathing in fresh water: It may be, with great ease, affixed to a small room, built on the edge of a canal, or any running stream, where the water can be confined to a proper height. If it be of a right depth, and the bottom be good, nothing further is necessary; but if it be muddy or stony a Stage of close cross-barred grating of wood must be sunk, in such manner as to remedy the inconvenience". (1)

Such stages were already in use at Deal, "where it would be impossible to bathe on the stony beach without them", but Margate had the advantage of a fine sandy beach.²

The author, confronted by the dogmatic assertions of physicians, provides, however, a cautious assessment of the merits or otherwise of sea bathing.

"I do not think myself a proper judge of the efficacy of Sea-bathing, having never had occasion to consider it but as an amusement. I will, however, venture to say, that in all cases where Bathing can be of service, this must be at least equal to any other; and in all disorders of the skin, or where the complaints are external, infinitely superior. It's salutary effects are daily experienced in the Rheumatism, and in scorbutick and scrophulous habits; nor is it found that Patients are more liable to a relapse who have been cured by this method, than by other medicines. Nevertheless, it must sometimes happen, from the injudicious use of it, that the sick will go away disappointed of the relief they expected to have received". (3)

Visitors could call on two physicians resident in Margate during the summer season for purposes of consultation.⁴

Many of the amusements and diversions of Margate in 1763 were developing along lines familiar already to visitors to inland spas. Circulating libraries and a permanent assembly room and theatre had yet to make an appearance, but

1. Iyons, op.cit., 13.

2. Ibid., 12-13; compare back to Chapter II above.

3. Iyons, op.cit., 14.

4. Ibid., 14.

"we have a Play-House, where a Company of Comedians from Canterbury perform three times in the week. If you expect to see great elegance in the house, scenes, and decorations, or any extraordinary degree of theatrical merit in the Actors, you may be disappointed. Nevertheless they meet with encouragement, which they do their utmost endeavours to deserve". (1)

The New Inn kept by Mitchener represented "the principal House of Entertainment, ...the accommodations of it, with respect to neatness and good entertainment, can hardly fail to recommend it".² Part of this property was given over to an assembly room.

"It stands on the Parade, and commands a fine view of the Harbour and Roads. This prospect is exceedingly pleasant, especially when it happens that a large fleet is lying there, waiting for spring-tides to carry them up the River. This room, without any pretensions to magnificence, is perfectly neat and commodious, being seventy feet in length, and twenty in breadth, with a gallery for Musick. Publick breakfastings have not been usual, probably, because they would interfere too much with the hours of Bathing. Eighteen or twenty couple dance very conveniently. On Card Assemblies there are generally eight or ten tables; and at other times, seldom less than four or five. There are two Card Rooms adjoining but they are seldom used as such, except on the nights of Dancing Assemblies. Those who have no particular engagements often drink tea here, in the afternoon, and either spend the remainder of the evening at cards, or ride, walk, or go to the Play as their inclinations lead them". (3)

The number of subscribers during 1762 amounted to 429.⁴ In existence also by this time was "a Coffee-house, as well as other Inns and Publick-houses; in one of which is a fine new Billiard-table, with a very neat apparatus".⁵

It was usual to walk "for some time after Bathing", and

"the places most frequented for this purpose are the Parade, the Fort, and the Rope Walk. When the tide is ebbd, many persons go on the sands, to collect pebbles, shells, sea-weeds, etc., which altho' of no great value, are esteemed as matters

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1. Lyons, op.cit., 17.
 2. Ibid., 12.
 3. Ibid., 16.
 4. Ibid., 17.
 5. Ibid., 12.

of curiosity by those to whom such objects have not been familiar. Some of these weeds, when spread on writing-paper, extended with a needle, and pressed down, form an infinite variety of landscapes, in the most beautiful colours. Many of them are to be met with in and about Margate; but the most beautiful collection I have ever seen, of this kind, was executed by a very ingenious young lady who lives in the place... The sands...extend, for some miles, along the shore, quite smooth and dry, at low water, and may be passed with safety, six hours in the day. The ocean on the one hand, and the caverns and grottos everywhere worn in the high chalky cliff, on the other, form together, a scene most beautifully romantic.

N.B. To prevent being overtaken by the tide, for want of knowing the time of its return, you will do well to carry with you one of Lyons Tables, which are calculated with all possible exactness for that purpose; they are printed on a card, and may be understood in a moment". (1)

The seashore was a complete and unexplored novelty to many people in the eighteenth century, added to which "in fine weather, many parties put off to sea, for the diversion of fishing, or to go on board the ships, which lie at anchor in the Roads".² The visitor, who welcomed the opportunity to make landward excursions, was introduced to some of the places of interest in the immediate neighbourhood, as well as further afield to Sandwich, Deal, Dover or Canterbury, for "there are few persons who have carriages, or horses, but do every day, when the weather will permit, take an airing over some part of the island".³ Included among the places in St. John's parish,⁴ "as are taken notice of by strangers", were Nash Court, "formerly a Gentleman's Seat, but now much gone to decay", pleasantly situated "having more trees about it than are usually found here", many resorting "hither for tea-drinking, or an evening walk";⁵ Draper's an endowed Hospital, built in 1709 under the will of

1. Lyons, op.cit., 17-18.

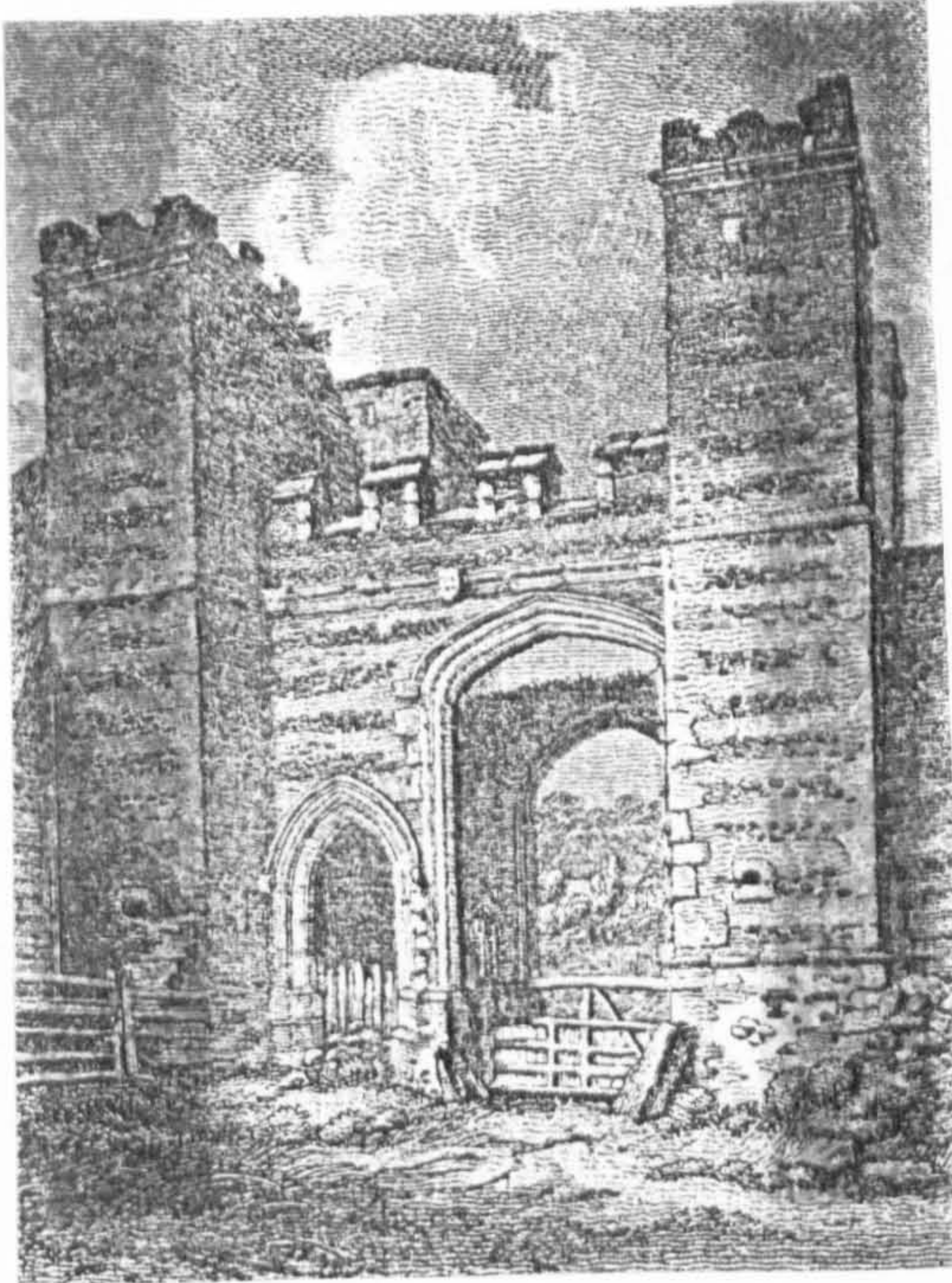
2. Ibid., 18.

3. Ibid., 20.

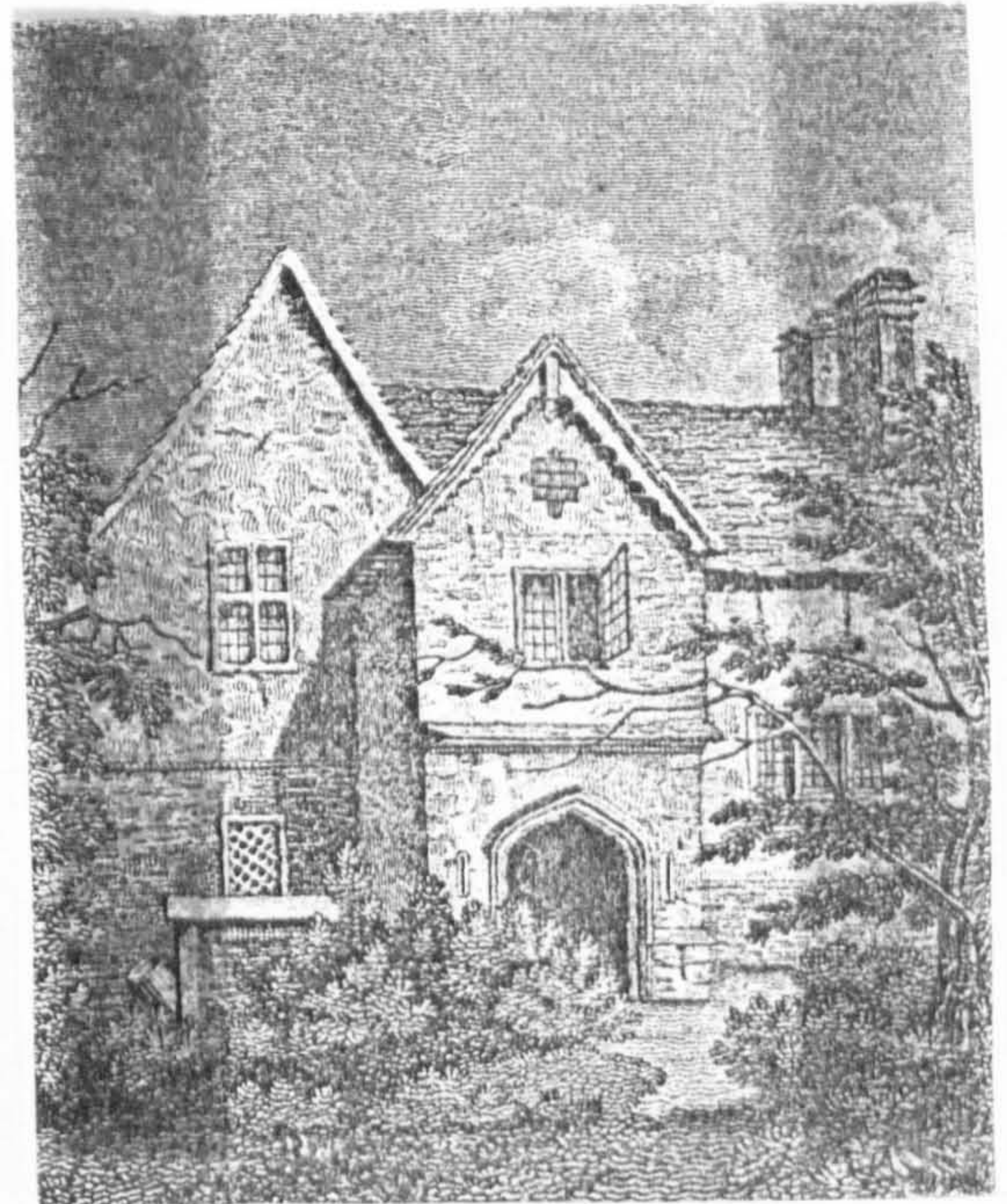
4. The town of Margate lay within the parish of St. John's as noted above in Chapter I.

5. Lyons, op.cit., 18. Its career as a tea garden was apparently over by 1796, according to A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 29.

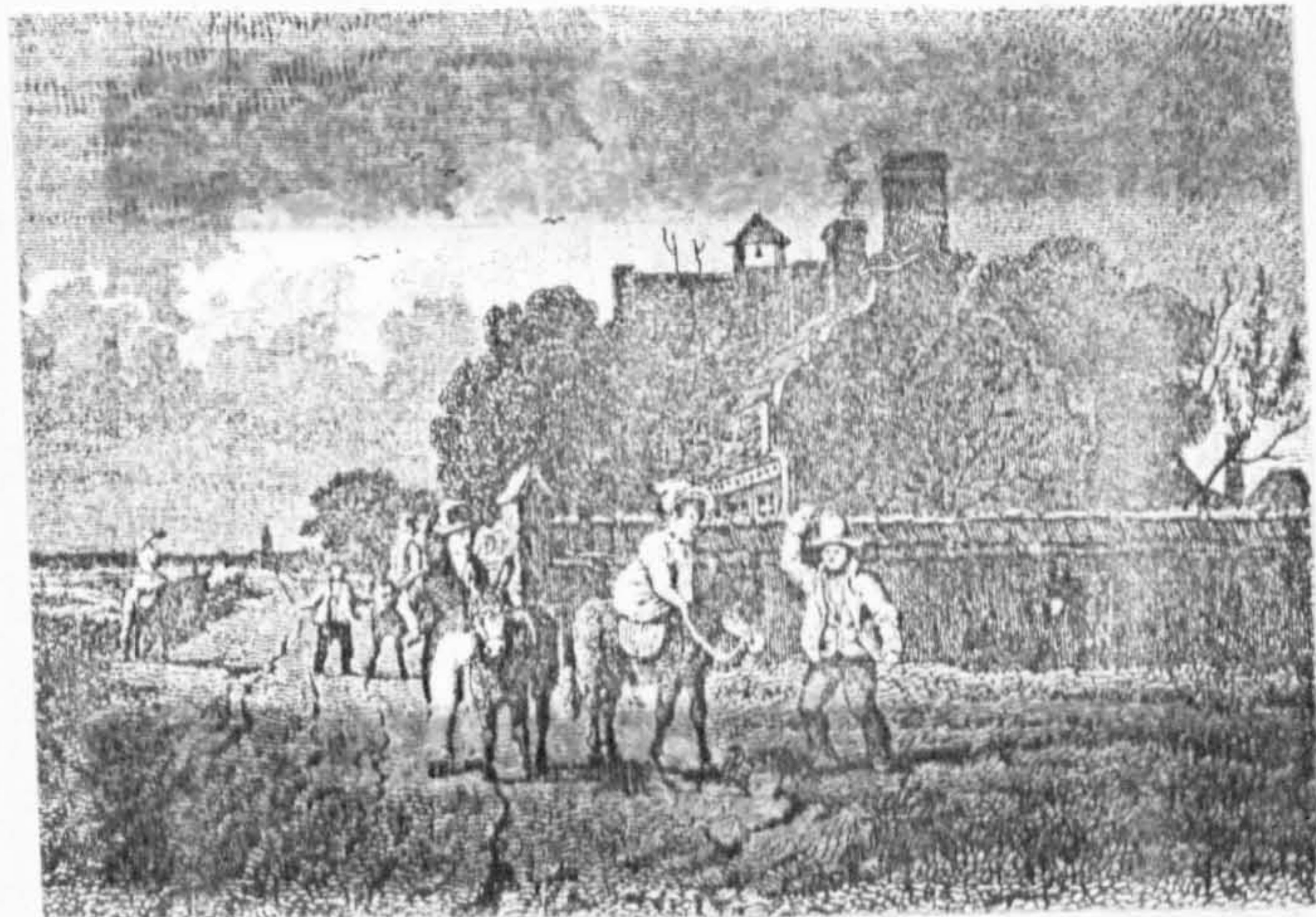
THREE PLACES OF RESORT CLOSE TO MARGATE .



Dandelion, Thanet, Kent.



Nash Court, Thanet.



Drapers, Thanet.

E. W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports, Volume I (1817), pp. 74, 78, 81.

Michael Yoakley, dated 30 October 1707, "with a Meeting-House for Quakers", constituting an almshouse, "where the gardens are pleasant, and are frequented for the same purposes as Nash Court";¹ and Dandelion, "the ruin of a fine old Mansion-House, which belonged to the family of Petit; little of it now remains, but a curious gateway...built of bricks and flints, in rows, with loop-holes and battlements at top".²

The guidebook then proceeded to outline more ambitious excursions, for instance,

"as I know you are fond of riding, I am about to give you directions for a morning's cruize along the coast. It is exceedingly pleasant, and the air of the North-Foreland is so fresh, that you will hardly complain of the want of appetite when you return. Going out of town, the lower way, you will keep to the left, through Northdown to King's-gate; or, if it be tide of ebb, you may pass the sands to Kemp-Stairs, which lie very near it". (3)

1. Iyons, op.cit., 18-19. Some seventeen years later, The Margate Guide (1780), 20, refers to "ten very comfortable Apartments;...the poor Women are allowed a certain Quantity of Coals, and a weekly Stipend... The Company frequently form Parties and go to drink Tea at some of the Apartments". Subsequently the inmates derived material benefit from the growing holiday trade by making knick-knacks to sell to visitors, as noted by The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 79, "here they generally purchase garters, pincushions, etc.". By the 1790's it could be noted that "the stipend given by the founder, of late years, being found inadequate to the support of the poor members, an annual subscription has been promoted among the company, which has added considerably to their convenience and comfort", The Kentish Traveller's Companion, In a Descriptive View of the Towns, Villages, Remarkable Buildings and Antiquities, Situated on or Near the Road from London to Margate, Dover and Canterbury (4th Ed., Canterbury, 1794), 258; or "the increased price of provisions having rendered the stipend allowed to its pensioners less adequate,...the benevolent George Keate Esq. for several years, by promoting a subscription among the company, used formerly to enlarge the comforts and conveniences of its humble inhabitants, who now have great reason to lament the discontinuance of the visits of that worthy character", A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 28-9. George Keate paid his first visit to Margate in the 1770's and was author of Sketches from Nature, Taken, and Coloured, in a Journey to Margate, which went through a 5th Ed. in 1802, where he describes a visit to Drapers, 81-5. Also see Chapter IV below.
2. Iyons, op.cit., 19; this became subsequently a pleasure garden, see Chapter IV below.
3. Iyons, op.cit., 20.

This coastal ride took in Kingsgate in St. Peter's parish, "situate on a small but beautiful bay", where are "two pretty houses, one of which has been lately hired by a person of great distinction",¹ while "near to this place, are those venerable monuments of antiquity, the banks of Hacken-Downe, or field of Battle-Axes".² Thereafter,

"still keeping along the coast, the next place you will think worth a remark is the Light-House, which is a strong octagon building of flint, on an eminence near the cliff, on the point of the North-Foreland; a fire of coals is kept blazing all night on the top of it, for the direction of Mariners. As many parties resort hither for dining, tea, etc., two booths are built for their reception, and attendance is given by the Light-keeper". (3)

When passing through Broadstairs the reader's attention was drawn to the Goodwin Sands, the scene of many wrecks, whose reputation was well known to contemporaries of the eighteenth century.

"Opposite to this place...lie the Goodwin Sands, which extend almost as far as Dover, and are visible at low-water. They are of so voracious and ingurgitating a property, that ships which strike on them, very rarely escape, being usually entirely swallowed up and lost in a few tides. Misfortunes of this kind happen so frequently, that they become a good revenue to the fishermen who live along the coast. (4)

The return journey from Ramsgate was by way of Manston, having a very large cavern, cut out of the chalk, supported by pillars and, "being esteemed

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1. Lyons, op.cit., 21, "it was formerly called Bartholomew's-Gate, but received its present name, by order of King Charles the second, who landed here", ibid., 21; see also above, Chapter I.
 2. Lyons, op.cit., 21. Here is a prime instance of the fact that guidebooks, intended for an upper and middle-class readership, were voluminous and detailed with references to ancient history, archaeology, etc. Hacken-Downe, according to Lyons, op.cit., 21, consisted of "two Tumuli, or Barrowes, of earth, the tombs of some of the chief officers, killed in a bloody battle, fought on this spot, between the Saxons, English and the Danes, in the reign of King Ethelwolf, in the year 853", one of these banks being opened by Mr. Thomas Reed, occupier of the lands, on 23 May 1743, "in the presence of many hundred people", wherein were found several graves.
 3. Ibid., 22; see also above, Chapter I, where there is an illustration of the North Foreland lighthouse as it appeared in 1736.
 4. Lyons, op.cit., 23; also see Chapter I above, and Gail Ferguson, Provisions for Rendering Assistance to Shipping off the East Kent Coast up to circa 1869, University of Kent Extended Essay (1970), which offers a good account of the natural hazards and consequences arising from the Goodwin Sands.

curious, many strangers think it worth a visit",¹ from where

"you will probably return through the village of St. Peter's where the only thing which deserves your notice, is a very neat and beautiful Church",

whose tower

"commands as delightful and extensive a prospect, by sea and land, as the imagination can form". (2)

Another landward tour took the rider out at the upper end of the town "through Galenge³ (a very pleasant village) over a fine fertile country, to Birchington", containing a fine Church and Quex Mansion,⁴ so that "you will be tempted to spend an hour or two here, which you may do very agreeably".⁵ A northern tour from Margate had, however, certain disadvantages, as

"the coast on the North side of Margate is rendered less agreeable, by the noisome smell of burning of kelp,... The sea-weed is gathered fresh from the rocks and dried, then burnt in large holes, on the top of the cliff. By being kept stirred, it first becomes fluid, like melted lead, and is by degrees calcined into a substance much like cinder, which is of great use among Potters, Glass-workers, etc." (6)

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1. Lyons, op.cit., 26.
 2. Ibid., 26. This tower acted as a seamark. Broadstairs lay in the parish of St. Peter's, as noted above, Chapter I.
 3. Known subsequently as Garlinge, benefiting as a horticultural area from the influx of visitors to Margate, appearing in The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion (1819), 48-9, as "a pretty little village nearly midway between Margate and Birchington", where are "several large Gardens which supply the Market at Margate with fruit and vegetables".
 4. Noted earlier in this section.
 5. Lyons, op.cit., 26-7; as happened much later in the Journal of an Excursion to Ramsgate in July and August 1829, uncatalogued MSS, Tyler Collection, Cathedral Library, Canterbury, on 25 July and 6 August 1829; also see Chapter IX below.
 6. Lyons, op.cit., 34.

A more extensive tour along the coast proceeded "by the ruins of Richborough Castle, Sandwich, and Sandown Castle, and thro' Deal, by Walmer Castle to Dover; from thence it is not unusual to go to Canterbury, and round that way back again to Margate".¹

Apart from the amusements and tours specified,

"we have several other ingenuous contrivances to prevent time from hanging too heavy on our hands, but as they differ very little from those which are in use at most publick places, it would be needless to make any particular mention of them". (2)

John Lyons felt that for intending visitors,

"it is of no small advantage to form some kind of idea of a place before we see it; our expectation is raised, and we arrive better prepared to be pleased with whatever may occur worthy of our observation". (3)

Already by 1763 Margate and its vicinity could offer amenities sufficient to guarantee an interesting and enjoyable stay, added to which, states the author, "I have never seen a public place, where people are less on form, or more free from any disagreeable restraints", and where "a good harmony prevails, for the most part, among the company".⁴

The picture which John Lyons was able to present of Margate in 1763 compares very favourably with a contemporary account of Tunbridge Wells in 1762.

"The Buildings at the Wells have much the Advantage of those in Tunbridge, and may be said to constitute a large and populous Town themselves. There is a Church, or rather a Chapel of Ease... The Well is paved, and surrounded with a low Wall, with Stairs to go down. Near the Well is a long Walk... There are also Rooms to drink Chocolate, or Coffee, and to play at Cards, etc., likewise an Hall to dance in";

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1. Lyons, op.cit., 34-5.
 2. Ibid., 18.
 3. Ibid., 35.
 4. Ibid., 16-17.

besides which "the Air is excellent", the High Rocks are "worth a Traveller's Curiosity", and "I made an Excursion to Knowl-house,... belonging to the Duke of Dorset".¹ Sea-bathing apart, the social facilities and amusements of the two places were similar, but whereas Margate had barely thirty years to its credit as a coastal resort, the discovery of mineral waters at Tunbridge Wells dated from 1606,² and as early as 1624 Sir John Chamberlain could write that "the waters are come of late into great request".³

Margate was well out in front as a rising resort in the 1760's and its development to date had certainly been on a par with that of other resorts. Bishop Pococke, who after 1733 acquired a passion for travelling, confirms this conclusion during his journies of 1754, which took in a number of sea-side resorts.

"Wigan, June 2, 1754.

At Blackpool, near the sea, are accommodations for people who come to bathe". (4)

"Dover, September 12, 1754.

I went by Old Deal, and in a mile from it came to New Deal, which is a town chiefly supported by the shipping that lye in the Downs. Company also resort to this place to bathe". (5)

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1. By a Gentleman, A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies (6th Ed., 1762), Volume I, 185-6, 189.
 2. Clifford's Descriptive Guide of Tunbridge Wells (5th Ed., Tunbridge Wells, 1829), 3; A.W. Brackett, Tunbridge Wells Through the Centuries (n.d.), 5-6.
 3. Brackett, op.cit., 5-6.
 4. Ed. James Joel Cartwright, The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke, During 1750, 1751 and Later Years, Camden Society, Volume II (1889), 6. Richard Pococke was born at Southampton in 1704, taking a Bachelor of Laws degree at Oxford in 1731, having conferred on him in 1733 the degree of LL.D. In 1744 he was made Precentor of Waterford, and in 1745 Archdeacon of Dublin. He was promoted to the Bishopric of Ossory in 1756 by the Duke of Devonshire when Lord Lieutenant, and died suddenly in September 1765, ibid., Volume I, i-ii, xi.
 5. Cartwright, op.cit., Volume II, 91. On the importance of Deal in relation to shipping in the Downs, J. Whyman, "Rise and Decline : Dover and Deal in the Nineteenth Century", Archaeologia Cantiana, Volume LXXXIV (1969), 122-8. From Deal, Pococke proceeded to Dover which "chiefly consists of houses on the quay, the square, and one narrow street above a mile long... the great support of this place is the passage to France", Cartwright, op.cit., Volume II, 93-4.

"September 17, 1754.

I went four miles to the seahouses near East Bourne, very pleasantly situated on the beach, and people resort here to bathe and drink the sea water". (1)

"Do.

I came to Brighthelmstone, a long fishing town; it is built with the pebbles of the beach, but greatly improved of late by the concourse of people who come to it to bathe and drink the sea water, under a persuasion that the water here is better than at other places, concerning which a treatise has been written by Dr. Russell. They have a good coffee house and a large room for company, and carriages for the convenience of bathing". (2)

Professor E.W. Gilbert dates "the modern expansion of Brighton... from 1754,... [when] Dr. Russell took up residence in his fine new house at the southern end of the Steine",³ in which case Bishop Pococke was reporting perhaps one of the first years of Brighton's existence as a developing seaside resort. The holiday-making function of Margate certainly equalled and possibly even exceeded in importance that of Brighton during the 1750's and early 1760's. During the 1750's Brighton was still a small, decayed fishing port.⁴ During the summer of 1760 it attracted only about 400 visitors⁵ whereas, in 1762, Mitchener's assembly room in Margate alone attracted 429 subscribers.⁶ C.H. Woodruff, writing of "The Making of Margate", in 1902, was quite correct and justified in concluding that "when the first Thanet guide-book appeared in 1763 the system was in full swing".⁷

While Margate was quite clearly a resort of some standing by 1763, John

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1. Cartwright, op.cit., Volume II, 102.
 2. Ibid., Volume II, 104.
 3. E.W. Gilbert, Brighton Old Ocean's Bauble (1954), 87.
 4. Ibid., 88 and as noted above, Chapter I.
 5. Gilbert, op.cit., 92.
 6. Lyons, op.cit., 17; also see this section above.
 7. C.H. Woodruff, "The Making of Margate", The Home Counties Magazine, Volume IV (July 1902), 170.

Lyons makes it abundantly clear that any real development of Broadstairs and Ramsgate as coastal resorts still awaited the future. Once the bathing machine had been perfected both Broadstairs and Ramsgate came to public notice through the advertising of bathing facilities in 1754.¹ Ten years later, however, neither place had surpassed that stage of development which Margate had reached by the early 1750's, and in Ramsgate the construction of a new harbour was viewed as a much more important and spectacular development than the onset of sea bathing.

Readers of The Kentish Post at the beginning of June 1754 were informed that:

"At BROADSTAIRS, in the Isle of Thanet, Is a New-invented MACHINE for Bathing in the SEA.

The Machine moves on 4 Wheels, on which is erected a commodious Dressing-Room. This Machine is so contriv'd, that the Persons who bathe, descend from out of the above Room into a Bath which forms itself in the natural Sea 10 feet in Length and 5 feet in Breadth; and being an even smooth Bay, [they] may go in at any Time of the Day, both secure and private.

All Gentlemen and Ladies who are desirous of making use of this Machine are to apply to Mr. John Jones...

N.B. A proper Woman is provided to attend the Ladies if required.

This Place affords all Kind of Fish in its Season, both new and good, and all Kind of Provision, very reasonable". (2)

Broadstairs throughout the 1750's and 1760's was no more than an embryonic resort. In 1763 John Lyons wrote of "a small Sea-Port, remarkable for fine lobsters", from where up to a dozen vessels participated in the Icelandic cod fishery, which proved in some seasons to be "a very lucrative employment".³ The bathing machine and lodgings of June 1754 find no mention in Lyons's account; only that "a very pleasant room has lately been built here, in an house of good accommodation facing the Harbour, for the enter-

1. As noted in passing in Chapter II above.

2. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 1-5 June 1754, 4.

3. Lyons, op.cit., 22; also on the fishing industry at Broadstairs see Chapter I above.

tainment of strangers who are fond of sea prospects".¹ Another account of 1762 maintained that from the North Foreland westward "the first Town of Note is Ramsgate, a small Port".²

Ramsgate too had a bathing machine and lodgings which were advertised during May 1754 in The Kentish Post.

"At RAMSGATE in the Isle of Thanet is lately built a large and convenient MACHINE for the Purpose of BATHING in the Sea. At the same Place Gentlemen and Ladies may be accommodated with very good Lodgings, at reasonable Rates". (3)

These facilities also find no mention in 1763; only "the new Pier, now building", which "attracts the admiration of all strangers, being the finest of its kind in England, or perhaps in the world", built chiefly of white Purbeck stone and extending "itself into the ocean near 800 feet, before it forms an angle".⁴

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1. Lyons, op.cit., 22-3.
 2. A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain (6th Ed., 1762), Volume I, op.cit., 162.
 3. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 22-25 May 1754, 1.
 4. Lyons, op.cit., 25; on the choice of Ramsgate as the site for a harbour of refuge, see Chapter I above. It was from 1750 that the construction of the modern harbour was begun and carried on, "yet on the whole public prejudice was strong against it...Parliament was repeatedly applied to... to interfere in the management of it", The Kent Echo, 2 January 1878, 1d. In 1762 work was at a standstill, and in one contemporary's view: "the Work remains a British Babel, stopt by the Confusion of Tongues - A standing Monument of the good Taste, Instability, and Folly of our Countrymen, and unluckily fixed in the most conspicuous Point in the whole Universe", A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain (6th Ed., 1762), Volume I, op.cit., 164. Civil engineering was a comparatively new science in the view of Sir John Rennie in 1850, in evidence on 8 July to The Select Committee on Ramsgate and Margate Harbours /6607(1850), 90; also Sir John Rennie, The Theory, Formation, and Construction of British and Foreign Harbours (1854), Volume I, ii, "Great Britain had scarcely made any great progress in maritime works previous to the time of Smeaton". Difficulties of engineering soon arose, and as the work on the piers advanced it was found that the harbour gradually filled with mud and the whole area of it would have become in a few years a surface of dry land. Smeaton, as consulting engineer, proposed an artificial back water by means of sluices, which was effected in 1779 by forming a bason at the upper end of the harbour by means of a cross wall furnished with sluices. Following the construction of the bason and cross wall, it was found that when the wind was boisterous from the East, South or West the agitation in the harbour was so great that vessels preferred to ride out a gale in the Downs to seeking refuge in the harbour. An advanced pier of stone to the length of nearly 400' was thus constructed from the east pier head which achieved the end required.

By the 1790's, however, bathing machines and rooms, amusements and appropriate residential accommodation characterized both Ramsgate and Broadstairs; and, to some extent, their development as seaside resorts was explicable in terms of the overflowing of Margate. This partial explanation for their growth appears in a 1797 Thanet guidebook.

"When Margate overflows with company, as it generally does at the height of the season (when I am well informed ten shillings and sixpence is often given for a single bed for only one night), then Ramsgate and Broadstairs fill with the overplus, though some persons give the preference to these places, for quietness and retirement, and therefore take lodgings in them out of choice". (1)

Bearing in mind the rivalry that Broadstairs and Ramsgate could offer to Margate, the compiler of this guidebook had a word of warning for the latter.

"Here I cannot but make one remark; which, as I wish well to Margate, I hope the inhabitants will take in good part and attend to; and that is, Beware of imposing, or making exorbitant demands on the company during the season, either respecting lodgings or provisions, lest you oblige them to go to other watering places less expensive and more moderate in their charges". (2)

Broadstairs assumed significance as a bathing resort during the 1780's, some fifty years after the first mention of sea bathing at Margate,³ but its progress by 1797 amounted to no more than "one or two machines for bathing,... several good houses, and an elegant tavern and public library".⁴ Of the two alternative Thanet resorts Ramsgate posed the greatest threat, coming first to prominent notice in The Margate Guide in 1780.

"It has many elegant and commodious Houses in it. Several genteel Families reside constantly here, and the pleasant and healthy Situation of it has induced many to resort to it in the Summer for the Benefit of Sea Bathing; in consequence, a commodious set of public Rooms have been erected near the Pier, from which there is a good Prospect". (5)

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend; describing the Accommodations and Amusements of those delightful Watering Places (1797), 29. Pressures on accommodation were frequent and made themselves felt in Margate as early as 1789, as noted below in this Chapter.
 2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 29.
 3. As noted above in Chapter II.
 4. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 29.
 5. The Margate Guide, Containing a Particular Account of Margate (1780), 29.

The Physical and Residential Expansion particularly of Margate, between the 1760's and 1815.

Sea bathing developed steadily into a fashionable craze during the 1760's,¹ its adherents being principally people of wealth and rank. Quality society from London and elsewhere, to employ a metaphor, had to be in the swim. The practice of going to the seaside was swiftly adopted, and many, no doubt, came to Margate for medical reasons rather than for pleasure. Initially, however, fashionable visitors flocking to Margate were put to considerable discomforts in their quest for health or amusement. In the early years of sea bathing once the local inns were occupied, there were only the fishermen's or small traders' cottages to fall back on. The business of the boarding house or the lodging house took time to evolve; yet to be invaded suddenly by growing numbers of visitors, who were wealthy, represented a bolt from the blue, which inevitably demanded some sort of business response from Margate's inhabitants and others.

A positive response developed from the 1750's and 1760's onwards. The Kentish Gazette early in June 1768 reported that "much Company is already gone down to Margate; and 'tis expected there will be more people of rank and fashion than has ever been known in one season: and indeed, if useful machines and good accommodations deserve encouragement, the inhabitants spare no pains to merit the favour of the public".² There was a pressing need for accommodation from visitors, who were accustomed to the comforts and spaciousness of a country estate and a London home. The provision of residential accommodation soon became urgent. There were limits to the extent to which existing houses or premises could be adapted to the needs and demands of wealthy families. To give a face lift to older property was only a partial

1. See Chapter II above.

2. The Kentish Gazette, 4-8 June 1768.

solution to the problem of housing visitors. Investment in new building was immediately called for, involving land purchase, and the raising or mobilization of capital, materials and labour for construction. Given Margate's early renown and popularity, demands for accommodation exceeded supply, as early as August 1769.

"The Company were never more numerous than at present. Beds have been let at half a guinea a night, and some persons have sat up all night in their carriages, and in the bathing rooms. This Place, like Bath, will soon grow considerable in its buildings". (1)

Physical expansion was, however, under way:

"Margate is now in great repute for its conveniences for sea bathing, by means of most commodious machines, etc., which draws thither a great concourse of company every summer, and has occasioned the town's being lately embellished with several new buildings for lodging houses". (2)

As the lodging house established itself as a specific type of seaside accommodation fewer holidaymakers, as a proportion of the total number of visitors staying in Thanet, chose subsequently to reside in inns or taverns. The lodging house became, and remained, the most predominant and popular form of residential seaside accommodation. Inn or hotel occupancy for the most part became temporary while alternative lodgings were sought. The majority of visitors chose to reside with a lodging house keeper, or occupied spare rooms or floors of a tradesman's house or business premises. A large and wealthy family would rent a single property, without a resident owner or keeper on the premises. Demands for complete lodging houses or for several floors could only be satisfied by a tremendous physical expansion. Many families did not require the catering and other services of hotels. Their domestic servants were brought down to look after the domestic arrangements

1. The Kentish Gazette, 19-23 August 1769, 4b.

2. The Kentish Weekly Post and Canterbury Journal, 28 August - 4 September 1769, 8.

of lodgings and, no doubt, the change of air and scenery benefited their health and well being.¹

Margate had twelve inns or taverns by 1765, which continued to trade during the 1790's, some of them evolving into famous hotels.²

TABLE 11 : MARGATE INNS, OR TAVERNS IN 1765.

<u>Year of Foundation</u>	<u>Name of Inn</u>	<u>First known Source of Information</u>
1683	The Duke's Head	Burial Register
1699	The Ship	Title Deed
1701	The White Hart	Ditto
1732	The Bull's Head	<u>Kentish Post</u>
1748	The Crown	Ditto
1753	The Hoy	Ditto
	The Black Horse - The New Inn from 1761	Ditto
1754	The Foy Boat	Ditto
1759	The Crown and Thistle	Ditto
1761	The King's Head	Ditto
	The Fountain	Ditto
1765	The Jolly Sailor	Ditto

The Duke's Head and the Ship were going concerns in the later seventeenth

1. At least two instances suggest themselves; during the 1770's George Keate took his honest French valet, who had also toured Europe with him to Margate and master and servant participated jointly in riding excursions, Keate, op.cit., 68-79, 138-40. The second instance occurs during July and August 1829 in the Journal of an Excursion to Ramsgate, op.cit., 21 July: "Charlotte, myself and the Servant each took half a pint of Warm salt Water... After tea Charlotte and I with the child and Servant walked on the Pier until 8 o'clock"; 24 July: "At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 went with Mrs. Hunt and her 8 children to Cliffend Farm beyond Pegwell where we had tea, and our party 15 in number, including...2 servants, all enjoyed themselves for several hours upon the grass of one of the fields... reached our lodgings before 9 o'clock all highly delighted by our treat"; also see Chapter IX below.
2. Abstracted from Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Abstract of Deeds: White Hart Hotel, Black Horse, etc.... Margate Public Library Local Collection, Y060.608, Rowe Bequest, 1671-5.

century. The White Hart, having a seafront situation, was patronized by early eighteenth century travellers, such as Nicholas Blundell, of Little Crosby in Lancashire, when returning by water from Calais to London in August 1717. On the 4th "My Wife, I, etc: walked to Margarit /from 'Braud-Stairs alias Bradstar where we cast Ancor!/, where we lodged at the Whit Hart".¹ Nearly three quarters of the inns and taverns dated from the 1740's; four appeared during the 1750's, and three over the four years 1761-5. Although some of their names imply a maritime patronage, their business and foundation owed something to sea bathing. This was certainly true of one of the oldest, the White Hart. On 6 March 1766, Abraham Mummery, a periwig maker of Margate, paid £200 to James Yeomans, a Birchington Yeoman, for

"all that 1/6 share or part in all that māsse commonly known by the sign of the White Hart... also All those two shops and all that Bathing Room, late in the several tenures of Wm Hollands (butcher), 13, Bridge-street, Peter Wootton (peruke maker) and Thomas Surfleu (bather), all of which said are situated and together adjoining next the Pier or Harbour". (2)

The Black Horse Inn, standing at the junction of the Parade and Duke Street, and the White Hart, fronting on to the sea and the Parade, were ideally situated to attract custom from visitors arriving by water. A keen business rivalry developed between these two inns from 1753 onwards. Against the "Assembly Room and a very convenient Sea Water Bath" at the Black Horse,³ "Mrs. Watson Keeps the Old White Hart at Margate".⁴ The adjective 'Old' made its first appearance in January 1748 in The St. James' Evening Post:

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1. The Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell of Little Crosby, Lancashire, Volume II: 1712-1719 (The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1970), 206.
 2. Rowe MS, 1671-5, op.cit.
 3. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 20 June 1753.
 4. Ibid., 18 October 1755; 10 March 1759; 5 June 1765.

"The Old White Hart Inn in the town of Margate, in the Isle of Thanet ...Whoever will be so kind as to make use of my House shall meet with good entertainment... Horses and chaises to be lett". (1)

Keen and growing rivalry between the White Hart and the Black Horse (from 1761 the New Inn) caused the owners of the former to emphasize its age during the 1760's compared with the parvenu Black Horse: thus, " Browning sends his Caravan from Canterbury to Margate and sets up at the Old White Hart",² or "a Coach sets out during the Season 1761 from the 'Old White Hart'... to Canterbury".³ Originating as an inn, the White Hart enjoyed extensive patronage throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and became one of Margate's leading hotels.

In 1761 the Black Horse changed its name to the New Inn, following its purchase by John Mitchener.⁴ Under the enterprising proprietorship of the Mitchener family the premises were enlarged and improved. The New Inn immediately emerged as an even stronger competitor to the White Hart, and from the moment the Mitcheners took over they attracted notice, praise and comment from guidebooks, newspapers and visitors. John Lyons lavished praise on their endeavours in Margate's first guidebook in 1763.⁵

The Mitcheners had a long and honourable reign which ended in 1807 at the death of John Mitchener junior.⁶ Their business became well known. They were one of Margate's premier inn/hotel keeping families. Travellers wrote of them in their diaries and correspondence. The following entries appear in the diary of John Baker during September and October 1777.

13 September: "Up soon after 6; by help of Mitchener and Charles hobbled to bath at the very next door. Mitchener, vast stout man, dipt me".

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1. The St. James' Evening Post, 2-5 January 1748.
 2. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 24 October 1761.
 3. Ibid., 1 August 1761; 8 August 1761. This coach called also at the newly-established Fountain.
 4. G.E. Clarke, Historic Margate (2nd Ed., Margate, 1961), 76.
 5. As noted above in the previous section.
 6. Clarke, op.cit., 78.

14 September: "Bathed as yesterday. Mitchener says he is 55 - a stout, tall man that dips me - born at Petworth, so he must have been born in the year 1722".

14 October: "Paid Mr. Mitchener, bathing £1.1s.0d." (1)

John Mitchener senior died in 1779.² His son John took over the business.

On 19 May 1780 Catherine Hutton when describing her first visit to the seaside told her father how "we supped at Mitchener's, and had afterwards a bottle of wine made into a bowl of negus".³ Joseph Farington on 14 August 1804 patronized Mitchener's Hotel, where "he had 2 turtles in water, and had Turtle ready dressed to be sent anywhere: the price 18 shillings a quart".⁴ The Mitcheners attracted attention even from caricaturists, notably from James Gillray in 1807, in a series of drawings depicting "John Bull and his family" on holiday at Margate, deriving probably from Gillray's own stay at Margate in August of that year.⁵

The first John Mitchener was both a bathing proprietor and an innkeeper, providing accommodation, food and assembly-room entertainment. There are constant press references to his enterprise from the moment he took over in 1761: "John Mitchener from Rochester has taken the New Inn and Assembly Room at Margate".⁶ Improvements had been executed by 1762: "John Mitchener has greatly improved the New Inn".⁷ At the end of May 1764 Mitchener assured

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1. Ed: Philip C. Yorke, The Diary of John Baker (1931), 418, 421.
 2. Clarke, op.cit., 78.
 3. Ed: Catherine Hutton Beale, Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman of the Last Century: Letters of Catherine Hutton (Birmingham, 1891), 24-5. Catherine Hutton (1756-1846) was the eldest child of William Hutton, the Birmingham historian.
 4. Ed: James Greig, The Farington Diary, Volume II (1923), 275.
 5. D. Hill, Mr. Gillray The Caricaturist (1965), 136; for details see Chapter VII below.
 6. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 17 June 1761.
 7. Ibid., 5 May 1762.

"the Public that the Face of Havock and Desolation occasioned by the Winter Storms is no more to be seen".¹ June 1767 produced the announcement that Mitchener had opened "a Warm Sea Water Bath".²

The Black Horse/New Inn pioneered assembly room activity and social life within Margate, The Kentish Gazette reporting late in May 1769 that "the number of Subscribers to his [Mitchener's] Assembly amounted in the last year to 500".³ In June 1769 the same newspaper advertized a "Dancing Assembly at the New Inn and Assembly Room every Friday, John Mitchener, proprietor".⁴ By June 1770 he had erected "two Hot Water Sea Baths with dressing Rooms".⁵ Mitchener improved his premises and developed new lines of business, emerging by May 1769 as a wholesale and retail wine merchant: "he has laid in a fresh Stock of good Wines, Brandy, Rum, Arrack, Cyder, Perry, etc.,...which he sells wholesale and retale".⁶

A substantial investment of both fixed and working capital was involved in the improvement and diversification of the New Inn and sea-water baths under the proprietorship of John Mitchener. In 1772 "New Salt Water Baths" and "a large Billiard Room" adjoined the New Inn.⁷ From 1772 onwards John Mitchener junior played an increasing role in the business,⁸ and this evolving and expanding hotel business benefited from further capital investment. By May 1775 the New Inn was being advertized as an hotel: "Mitchener at the New Inn Tavern and Hotel, on the Parade, Margate, acquaints the public that

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1. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 26 May 1764.
 2. Ibid., 3 June 1767.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 27-31 May 1769, 1d.
 4. Ibid., 24-28 June 1769, 1b.
 5. Ibid., 12-16 June 1770, 1b.
 6. Ibid., 27-31 May 1769, 1d.
 7. Ibid., 14-18 April 1772, 1c.
 8. Ibid., 17-21 March 1772, 1c.

he has made a number of additional lodging rooms".¹

Two years later the Mitcheners were in financial difficulties. Early in 1777 "the Creditors of John Mitchener, Margate, Vintner", were "earnestly requested to meet at the Fountain Tavern in the City of Canterbury", at 3pm on 15 February, "on very special Affairs".² If they had overstretched themselves temporarily this financial embarrassment was only temporary. The seasons of 1778 and 1779 were prefaced by reports of further expansion and improvement.

1778 - "Mitchener at the New Inn Tavern and Hotel informs visitors that he has increased the Size of his house and has taken the wine vaults of the late Mr. William Smith". (3)

1779 - "Mitchener of the New Inn has enlarged his house with a number of additional Lodging Rooms. He has erected a compact Livery Stable opposite his house for near 60 horses". (4)

John Mitchener II acquired from his father a substantial business, which had been built up against the new craze for sea bathing during the 1760's and 1770's, and it was during the son's proprietorship that a final change of name to the Royal York Hotel occurred. In 1793 the New Inn was patronized by Frederick, Duke of York, the second son of George III. The Duke was embarking from Margate on an expedition to Flanders. This patronage prompted John Mitchener II to rename his house the Royal York.⁵

Competition between this hotel and the White Hart remained keen. Both had sprung from humble beginnings.⁶ Both became famous eighteenth-century

1. The Kentish Gazette, 17-20 May 1775, 1c.

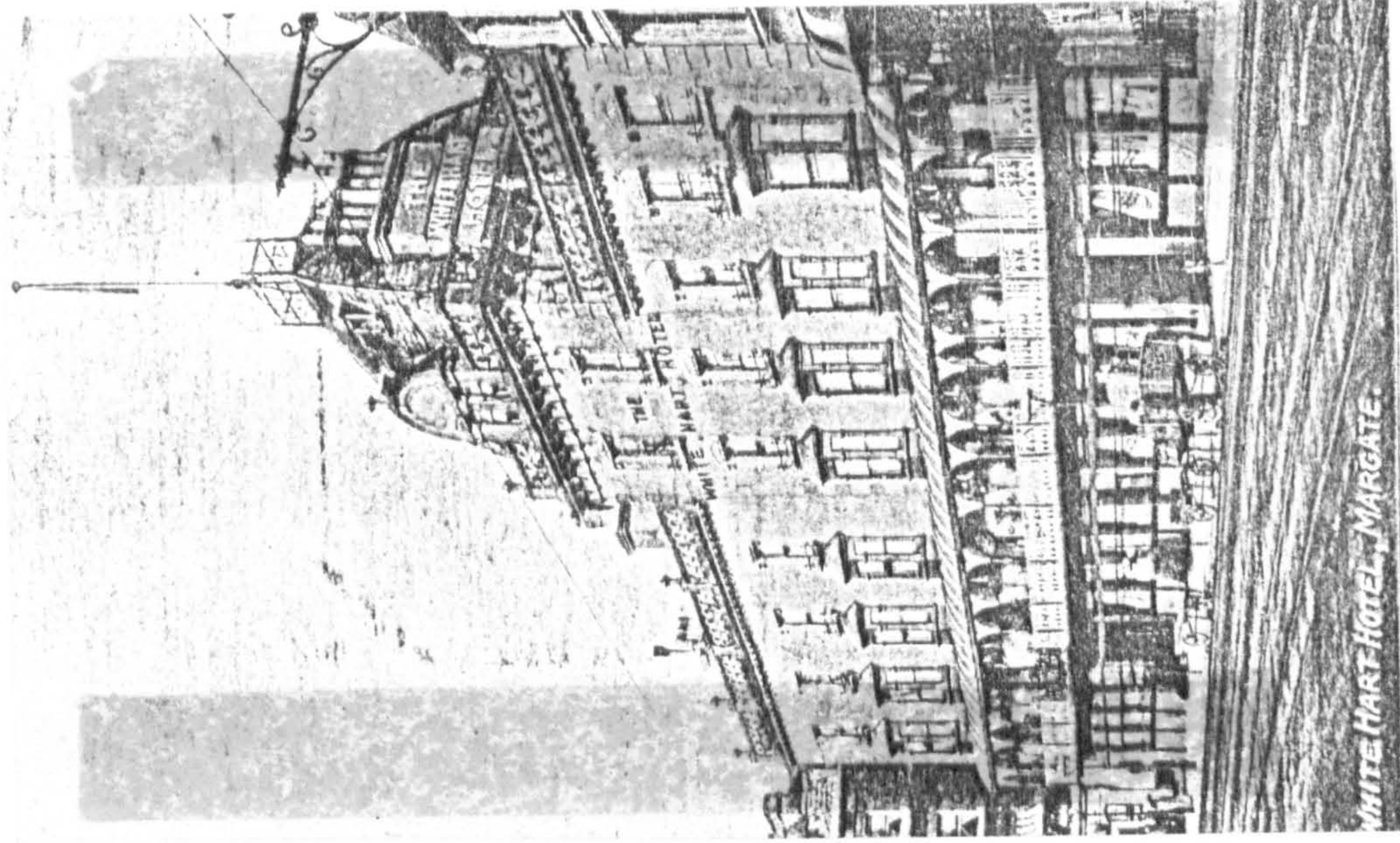
2. Ibid., 8-12 February 1777, 1b.

3. Ibid., 6-10 June 1778, 1b.

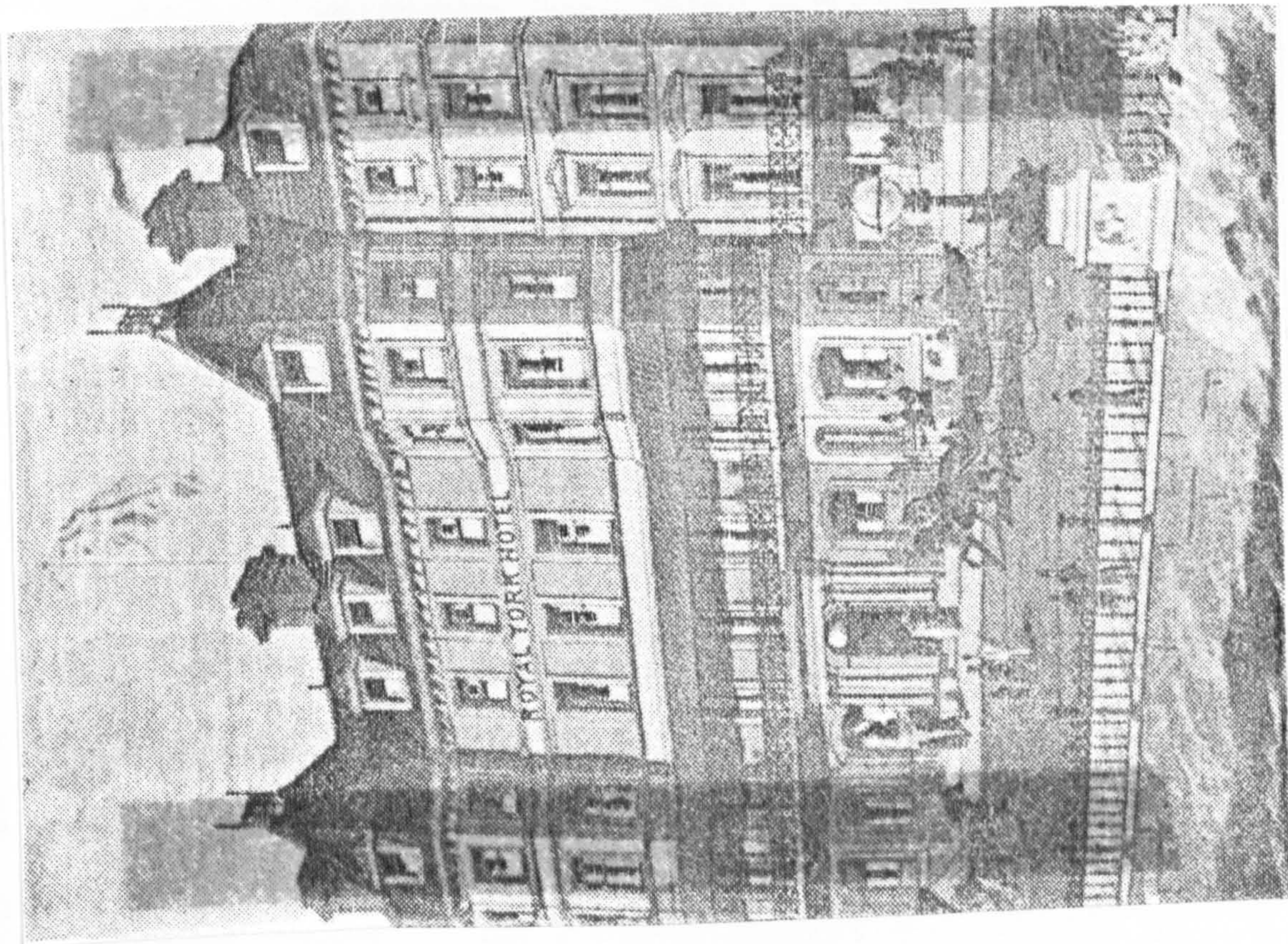
4. Ibid., 22-26 May 1779, 1b.

5. Clarke, op.cit., 78.

6. The White Hart of early days like the Black Horse was a tiny house at the junction of the Parade and King Street.



An Old Postcard .



Royal York Hotel .

G. E. Clarke, Historic Margate (2nd Ed., Margate, 1961), p. 77.

coaching houses, and only small business premises separated them.¹ The growth of the Royal York Hotel to become "a house of very considerable note" was an outstanding development in Margate's history.² This achievement owed much to the business acumen of one family. The first Mitchener

"was a man who moved with the times and thoroughly believed in going ahead. His was the first Assembly Room to be built in the town, ante-dating by some years the more famous Royal Assembly Rooms in Cecil Square". (3)

Mitchener junior was an equally enterprising businessman and managed the New Inn/Royal York with great efficiency, becoming famous for his table and wines. Attracting a considerable patronage, "the Royal York Hotel wrote a brilliant and honourable page in Margate's history".⁴

Apart from the Royal York and the White Hart, most of the other pioneering inns or taverns had less distinguished careers. The Hoy, the Foy Boat and the still older Ship and Duke's Head functioned as ordinary taverns. The Fountain attracted custom from visitors at an early date, and derived benefit from a location close to the sea front. Advertised for sale in April 1761 was a "Public House, having four rooms on a floor, known by the name and sign of the Fountain and Coffee House, in the occupation of Mrs. Elizabeth Pollen".⁵ Coaches departed from the Fountain to Canterbury.⁶ The premises were again advertised for sale in August 1766 as "the Fountain and Margate Coffee House, now in the occupation of Mr. William Martin".⁷

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1. Immediately adjacent to the York was once a well-known library, known as Witherden's, subsequently a tobacconist shop. Then came a small house adjoining the White Hart, known as the Lord Nelson which circa 1860 was pulled down. Subsequently the Royal York and the White Hart became adjoining premises.
 2. Clarke, op.cit., 76.
 3. Ibid., 78.
 4. Ibid., 78.
 5. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 1 April 1761.
 6. Ibid., 8 August 1761.
 7. Ibid., 6 August 1766.

During 1767 John Biles, formerly butler to Sir George Oxenden, acquired "the Fountain Tavern or Margate Subscription Coffee House",¹ where he remained in 1770.² Serving in some senior capacity to a prominent family became a means of acquiring sufficient experience and capital to branch out on an independent business career, examples of which are by no means confined to either John Biles or to Margate. In May 1770, "Samuel Bloxham, Liveryman, late Groom to Sir John Shaw, Bart." humbly took "the Liberty to acquaint the Nobility and Gentry that he had erected very commodious Livery Stables and Coach-houses in King's Street, near the New Assembly Rooms",³ while from Brighton it was announced during July 1810 that "under the Sanction and Patronage of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, C. WICK (many years Head Cook to H.R.H.) ...has opened the house, No.2, South Parade, as a Boarding and Lodging House".⁴

Serving royalty or the great landed families provided a good insight into the demands, whims and fashions prevailing at the top of society, but only a tiny minority had such a headstart, and in the realities of everyday trading they had to compete with their business rivals. Thus, in providing livery and coaching facilities, Samuel Bloxham was in competition with "Mr. Troward's Livery Stables",⁵ which, in 1772, were described as follows: "near the middle of the town Mr. TROWARD has erected a fine range of stables with inclosed coach houses, for the accommodation of gentlemen's horses and carriages".⁶ These stables had been erected in 1764 by Richard Troward in New Street, which then was merely a wagon way running off the High Street. They were destined to become famous as the New Inn Yard Stables.

As visitors poured into Margate, some arriving in their own private

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1. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 1 April 1767.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 21-24 July 1770, 1b.
 3. Ibid., 22-26 May 1770, 1c.
 4. The Morning Chronicle, 26 July 1810, 1b.
 5. The Kentish Gazette, 24-28 April 1770, 1c.
 6. The History and Antiquities of Rochester and Its Environs (1772), 318.

carriages, so there was a corresponding expansion in the provision of stables.

By July 1774 another firm had emerged.

"MARGATE, Isle of Thanet, Kent. At CROFT'S New Stables in Church-field, near Smith's Hotel, and Assembly Room, for the Nobility, Gentry and others, Horses are taken in at Livery. Gentlemen's Horses, Hay 10d. a Night, Hackney Horses 8d. where they will meet with good Usage, with fine Cinquefoil Hay, and the best of Corn. These Stables are allowed to be the best and compleatest in Margate, with convenient Coach-houses, and every other Necessary answerable thereto". (1)

The above reference to "Smith's Hotel" related to a completely new hotel which had been built in conjunction with new and permanent assembly rooms in Cecil Square, having opened their doors to the public in 1769. It was known as the Royal Hotel only from 1794 onwards, and before then as Fox's² or Smith's Tavern and Benson's Hotel.³ Over the assembly rooms in 1770 was "a Flight of Bed-Chambers neatly furnished, for the Accommodation of such Persons as are not provided with other Lodgings at their first coming".⁴

Among the many newspaper advertisements of hotels and boarding houses in Margate extending back into the eighteenth century, The Daily Advertiser informed the public early in June 1774 that

"Mr. SMITH of the Devil Tavern, Temple-bar...has taken the New Assembly Rooms Tavern and Hotel for the ensuing Season, which are now open for the Reception of Company, who may depend on meeting with good Accommodation. ... They may be supplied with the best of Wines, Arrack, Rum, Brandy, etc. in any Quantity, and equal in Quality to any that are now selling in London". (5)

Complaints concerning the quality of wines obtainable in Margate had been voiced during the 1760's. By 1770 this defect had been remedied, "for wine, brandy, etc., is cheap and good; complaints having been formerly made with respect to the first of these articles, no expense had been spared to prevent them for the future".⁶ A visitor in 1797 noted the good red port to be had

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1. The Daily Advertiser, 26 July 1774, 2b; 28 July 1774, 2c.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 24-27 May 1769, 1b; 7-10 June 1769, 1c.; 24-28 June 1769, 1c.
 3. Clarke, op.cit., 72.
 4. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), 13.
 5. The Daily Advertiser, 2 June 1774, 1b.
 6. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 21.

of Pope's wine vaults in the High Street, "from whom I always order my wine as he is a civil honest man, and sells as good, and as reasonable, as any other person in the place"; also "Mitchener and Benson, at their different hotels...keep wine vaults, and sell very good commodities...by the single bottle, in which way many persons are obliged to have it; as they have no cellars or conveniences in some of the lodgings, for a larger quantity at a time than three or four bottles".¹

A vigorous rivalry developed between the White Hart, the New Inn/Royal York, and the Assembly Rooms Tavern/Royal Hotel as the leading innkeeping/hotel businesses of later eighteenth-century Margate. The tenancy of the Royal Hotel and assembly rooms passed through several hands; Fox in 1769-70,² Rumsey in 1772,³ Smith in 1774,⁴ Benson from 1785 to 1797,⁵ and Kidman in 1809.⁶ By May 1785 John Benson had enlarged his assembly rooms and hotel with "an additional Number of large, pleasant Bedchambers". Families could be "served with dinners to their Lodgings". Associated with the hotel were "good stables, coach houses, coaches, chaise and diligence", and "his ostler does not farm the corn". Finally he warned "the Company not to be persuaded by the disgusting Solicitations of some of the Inns, contrary to his Interest".⁷

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 6.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 24-7 May 1769, 1b, etc.; see also this section above, and The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 13.
 3. The History and Antiquities of Rochester and Its Environs (1772), op.cit., 318.
 4. As noted in this section above.
 5. The Maidstone Journal and Kentish Advertiser, 17 July 1787, 2; The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796); By an Inhabitant, The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), 85.
 6. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), 59.
 7. The Kentish Gazette, 31 May 1785.

In 1794, George, Prince of Wales, and afterwards George IV, paid a hurried visit to Margate, for the purpose of meeting his prospective bride, Caroline of Brunswick, daughter of Charles, Duke of Brunswick. The Prince and his fiancée patronized Benson's Hotel in commemoration of which the name was changed to the Royal Hotel.¹

The Royal Hotel became a fashionable hotel in which to stay. By 1808 it was "very handsomely fitted up for the reception of the first company".² The letting of these extensive premises was advertised both in The Times and The Morning Chronicle during July, August and September 1810.

"ROYAL HOTEL, Margate. - To be LET, for a Term of Years... now in the occupation of Mr. BENJAMIN KIDMAN; comprising large and elegant assembly rooms, coffee room, billiard room, and every requisite convenience for carrying on an extensive tavern business. The premises may be viewed by leave of the tenant, and further particulars may be known by application at the office of Messrs. Williams and Walker, Dartford; or of Mr. Flaxney, Chancery-lane, London". (3)

The first waves of visitors soon resulted in a building boom, a vast settlement extension and an active property market. These developments were sustained over seventy years. An increasing influx of visitors produced constant pressures on accommodation. Houses and lodgings had to be available in greater numbers. It soon became apparent that vacant accommodation had to be on the market in the summer months out of all proportion to the everyday housing requirements of the resident population. Quite naturally seaside resort towns developed settlement areas beyond the needs of their resident or winter populations as inns, hotels, boarding houses, lodging houses, shops, stables, libraries, assembly rooms, theatres, coffee rooms, and bathing

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1. Clarke, op.cit., 72; another royal visit in the previous year having occasioned renaming the New Inn the Royal York, as noted in this section above.
 2. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 959-60.
 3. The Times, 2 July 1810, 1c; The Morning Chronicle, 18 August 1810, 1d; 22 August 1810, 1d; 28 August 1810, 1c; 30 August 1810, 1c; and 1 September 1810, 1b.

establishments were speedily constructed, both along the sea front and in new streets, squares, or crescents. The settlement pattern of Margate in 1750 was little altered from previous centuries. The main part of the town was still the High Street,¹ and the zone of settlement around the harbour and creek remained separate and distinct from the settlement surrounding the parish church of St. John's.² A map best illustrates in general terms the settlement expansion of Margate up to 1821.

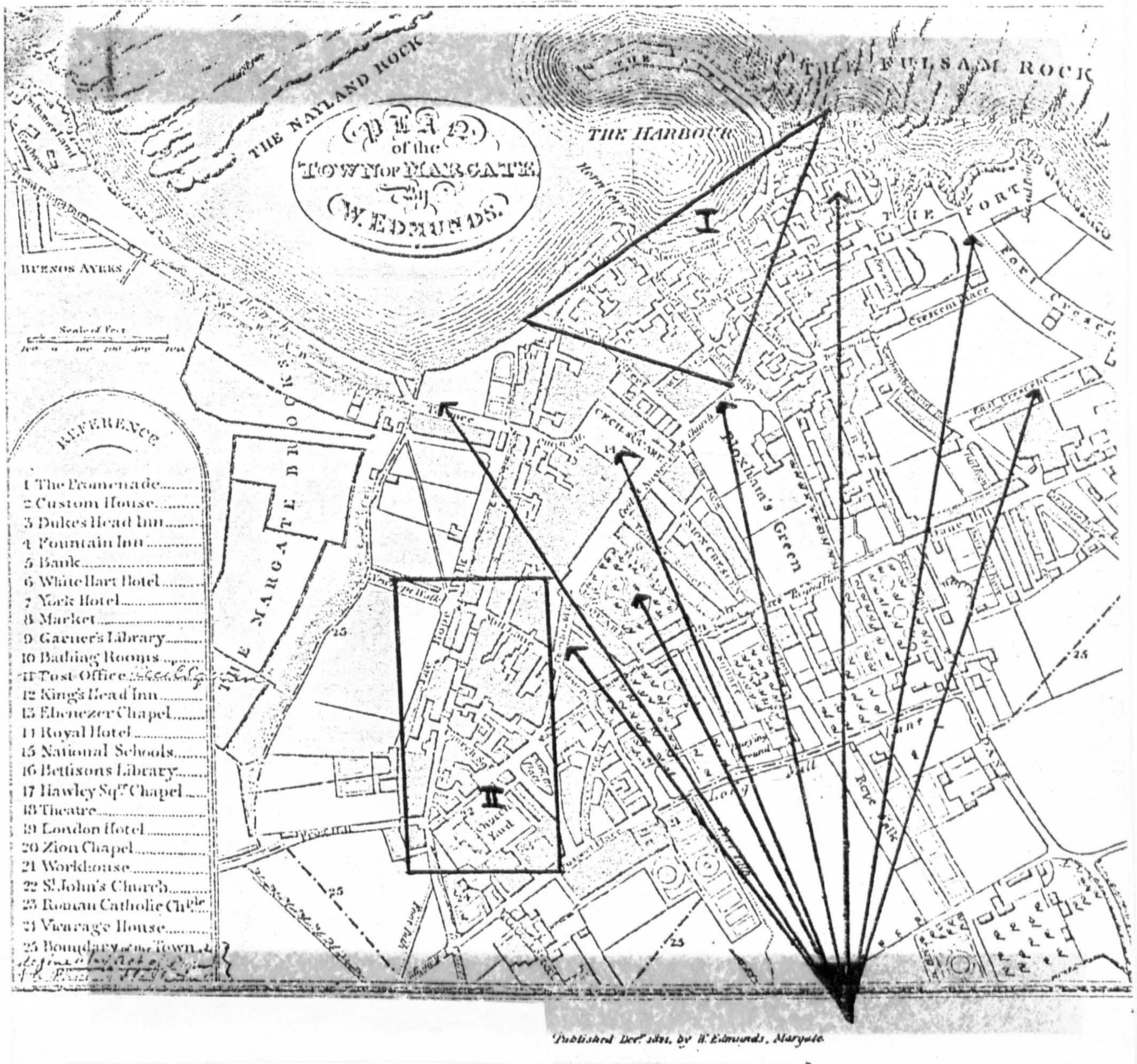
The settlement expansion of Margate spread outwards from the High Street, and from the area immediately around the harbour and creek. To start with inns and bathing rooms sprang up one by one, and the fishermen's cottages of the High Street were renovated or gradually replaced by decent houses and business premises. Inevitably there was a filling in of vacant areas between the harbour and the parish church, with the erection of handsome new streets, squares, assembly rooms, a theatre, circulating libraries, and other buildings.

Major building projects can be highlighted from the 1760's. A New Square, known later as Cecil Square, and New Street were built in 1769. Hawley Square was erected two years later. Permanent assembly rooms opened in Cecil Square in 1769. Guidebooks commented favourably upon these initial outbursts of new building. Thus in 1770

"many Gentlemen of considerable Property are now become Inhabitants of the Place... The New Square, which is a large one, consists of some very handsome Houses, which have been lately erected by Persons of Fortune for their own Use, with several others, intended for the Reception of the Nobility and Gentry. Some of these are fit for present Use, and more are building for the same Purpose.

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1. W.T.W. Morgan, The Development of Settlement on the Isle of Thanet, in its Geographical Setting, with Special Reference to the Growth of the Holiday Industry, London M.Sc.(Econ) Thesis (1950), 40.
 2. A.M. Kay, Growth of Settlement in Margate and Its Region, London Diploma in Geography Thesis (1951), 63; also see Chapter I above.

THE OVERALL PHYSICAL EXPANSION OF MARGATE PRIOR TO 1821.



Plan of the Town of Margate by W. Edmunds (Margate, 1821).

KEY.

- I: Old settlement around the harbour and creek, linked via the High Street to
- II: Old settlement of St. John's around the parish church. (See Chapter I).

→ Arrows indicating some of the new squares, streets, crescents, and various public amenities which were erected outside and between the two original zones of settlement from the 1760's onwards.

A line of very neat Shops forms another Part of the Square, for the Convenience of such Strangers as may be desirous of inhabiting this new and elegant Part of the Town. The Fronts, both of the Houses and Shops, are paved in the same Manner as those in the principal Parts of London and Westminster; and the Scene, both of Business and Pleasure, seems to be transferring itself hither very fast.

The Assembly-Room which has been lately built, stands in the New-square, and is thought to be one of the largest Buildings of the Kind in England... There are several good Lodging-houses and their Rooms, though frequently small, are neat... Many have been built of late Years, expressly with an Intention of their being hired for Lodgings.... There are, likewise, Boarding houses kept in a very decent reputable Manner, for the Convenience of small Families, or single Persons, who rather wish to have a Table provided for them at a certain and easy Expense, than to be at the Trouble of Keeping one of their own". (1)

It is clear from an observation of 1772 that demands on and the supply of new accommodation were expanding rapidly.

"During the summer season this town is full of all sorts of people, whose circumstances will permit them to spend money, and whose health requires bathing for its support... There are some good houses let in lodgings, by which considerable sums are spent in the town; and since the beginning of the present year /1771/ several pieces of ground have been let on building leases, and they are now erecting handsome houses to accommodate the company". (2)

Continuous building during the 1770's meant that Margate ceased to be the small town and port it had once been. It acquired the status of a well-developed and flourishing Hanoverian coastal watering place. By 1778 "it is now encreased to a place of very considerable magnitude,...adorned with houses fit for the reception of people of the first rank, and with places of amusement and recreation".³

The right to hold a market was granted in 1777 and a permanent Theatre Royal in Hawley Square was opened in 1787.⁴ These initial developments and

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1. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 12-13, 15.
 2. Nathaniel Spencer, The Complete English Traveller (1772), 163.
 3. A Tour Through the Island of Great Britain Divided into Circuits or Journies (8th Ed., 1778), 139.
 4. For more detail on the assembly rooms, the theatre, circulating libraries, bathing rooms, or the market, see Chapters IV and V below.

improvements were impressive. They attracted much comment from visitors, guidebook compilers and newspaper reporters. The Maidstone Journal, and Kentish Advertiser reported during July 1787 on the progress of the Thanet resorts:

"Margate has encreased, and is still encreasing, beyond all other sea bathing places. In point of building speculation no place at present can vie with it. Booth, with his Theatre, Benson, with his Hotel, are both in great vogue with all the Margate company.

Ramsgate is to have new rooms which are to be begun on immediately: equal, if not superior, to Margate.

The Masters of the Ceremonies at the different Watering-places are now looking out their summer silks and their dancing pumps with great alacrity". (1)

It took less than half a century to radically alter the physical appearance of Margate, where by the 1790's buildings of a completely different function and dimension had replaced the seafaring habitations of former times. The old maritime economy and society counted for less by 1797, when it was observed that,

"since the failure of these occupations, many of the buildings used for these purposes have been converted into dwelling houses, and others have given place to more spacious buildings, for the accommodation of the visitants.... In Church-field, the Fort, the Dane, and several other parts of the town, large squares, commodious crescents, and handsome streets, are erected, forming an assemblage of spacious buildings, every way adapted for the pleasure and convenience of the nobility, gentry, etc., who visit the Isle of Thanet". (2)

Zechariah Cozens outlined in 1793 major improvements which were of recent vintage. The old High Street had seen demolition, conversion and transformation; originally it "was but a long dirty lane, consisting chiefly of malt houses, herring hangs, and the poor little cottages of fishermen; but now, such of those as were anyways calculated for it, have been improved

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1. The Maidstone Journal, and Kentish Advertiser, 17 July 1787, 2.
 2. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 23.

and converted into decent dwelling houses; and others have given place to more spacious buildings, purposely intended for the accommodation of the visitants".¹ New streets, squares, crescents and buildings were to be found in several parts of the town, including Church Field, the Fort, or the Dane, "for the nobility, gentry, citizens and tradesmen who visit the town".² Handsome and spacious buildings adorned Cecil Square, particularly on its west side, while "on the North is a row of decent shops", and "the South is chiefly occupied by the Royal Hotel and Assembly Room".³ Nearby "the spacious area" of Hawley Square was acquiring "a handsome shrubbery, purposely intended for the pleasure of the visitants; and which when encompassed with an iron ballustrade, which is now preparing, will form one of the most desirable situations in Margate".⁴ This shrubbery is shown on Edmund's map of 1821.

Margate retains today several fine examples of pre-1800 Georgian architecture, situated invariably away from the sea front and the public gaze. Hawley Square is one example where the properties display individuality in their architectural design. Georgian uniformity and regularity were noticeably absent in much of the early building, so that although "many elegant buildings are continually rising into notice,...it is to be lamented that they are not in that uniform and regular order which the situation so eminently demands".⁵

The filling in of several hitherto vacant areas caught the eye of Cozens in 1793, whereby the High Street "and another small village called

1. Cozens, op.cit., 3-4.

2. Ibid., 4.

3. Ibid., 24.

4. Ibid., 25.

5. The Kentish Traveller's Companion, in a Descriptive View of the Towns, Villages, Remarkable Buildings and Antiquities, Situated on or Near the Road from London to Margate, Dover and Canterbury (5th Ed., Canterbury, 1799), 263.

the Dane, formerly Lucas Dane, and which was quite separate...are now, by the multiplicity of the new buildings between them, connected into one town".¹ Dane Valley inland from the harbour was quickly covered with houses and other properties, including the much improved Royal York and White Hart hotels.²

A preference for sea-front lodgings led to ribbon development outwards from the harbour along the coast in both directions, embracing both the higher ground of the Fort and linking the older parts of Margate with the coastguard station, cottages and windmill of Westbrook. Marshland, known as the 'Brooks' or 'Mere',³ had restricted hitherto the westward development of Margate.⁴ A proposal to construct a road from Margate to Westbrook formed part of the town's second Improvement Act of 1799.⁵ It was to be between thirty and forty feet wide.⁶ Work on this road was certainly underway by 1809,⁷ and flanking houses were built during the following decade,⁸ but already a famous row of lodging and residential houses known as Buenos Ayres had been erected in 1806.⁹ On Edmunds's 1821 map they appear at the western

1. Cozens, op.cit., 4; compare Chapter II above.

2. Morgan, op.cit., 42.

3. According to Kay, op.cit., 33-4, there must have been here in prehistoric times quite an imposing sheet of water, and it was from this small lake or mere that the name of Margate originated - Meregate, settlement on the mere, opening out to sea; also see Chapter I.

4. Kay, op.cit., 35; the mere had become swampy and marshy through being protected by a sandbar. In a map of 1717 it is shown as a lagoon into which dykes drained, known as the Brooks or Mere, ibid., 34-5.

5. 39 Geo.III c.2.

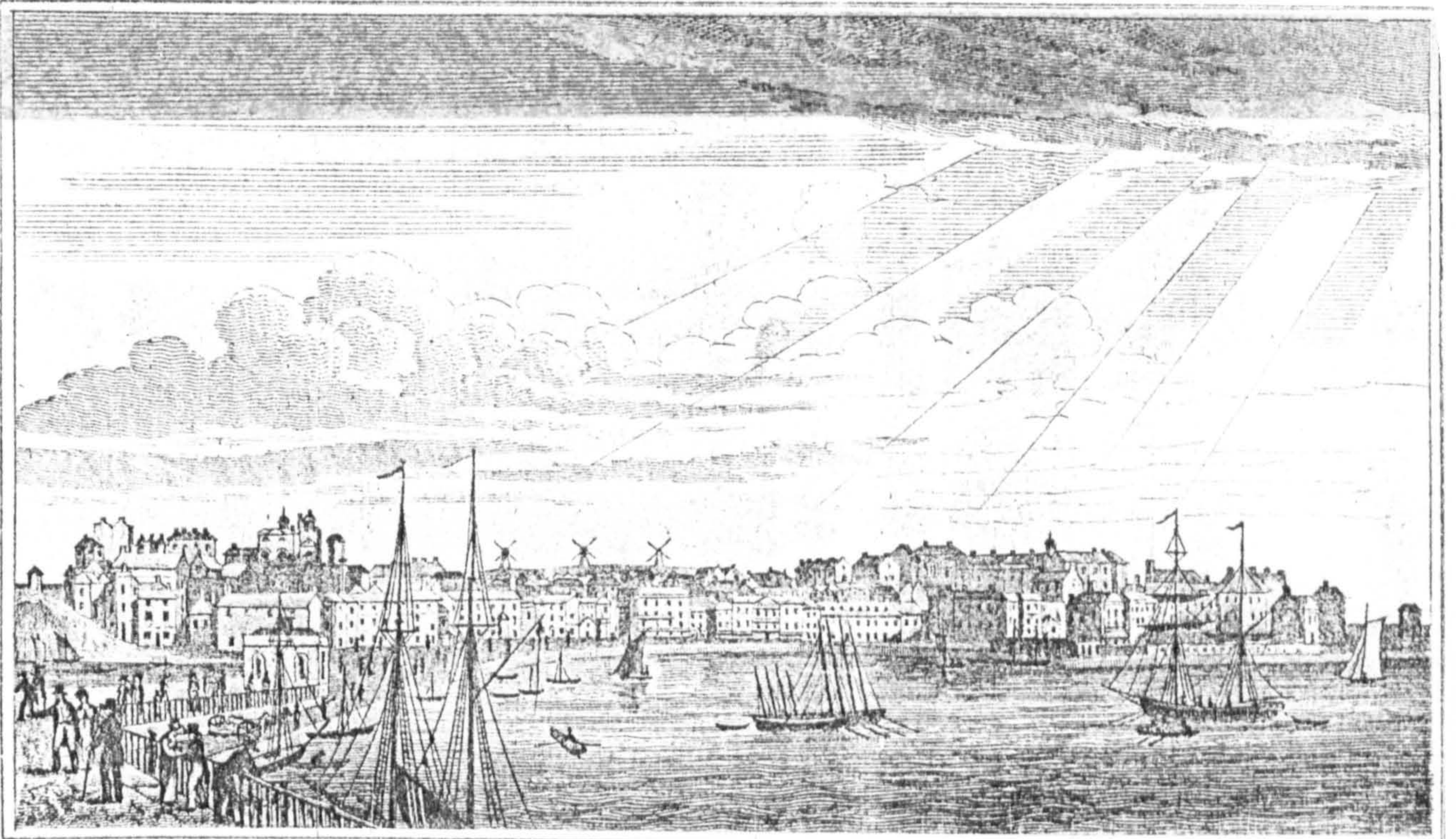
6. Ibid.

7. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 44.

8. Kay, op.cit., 35.

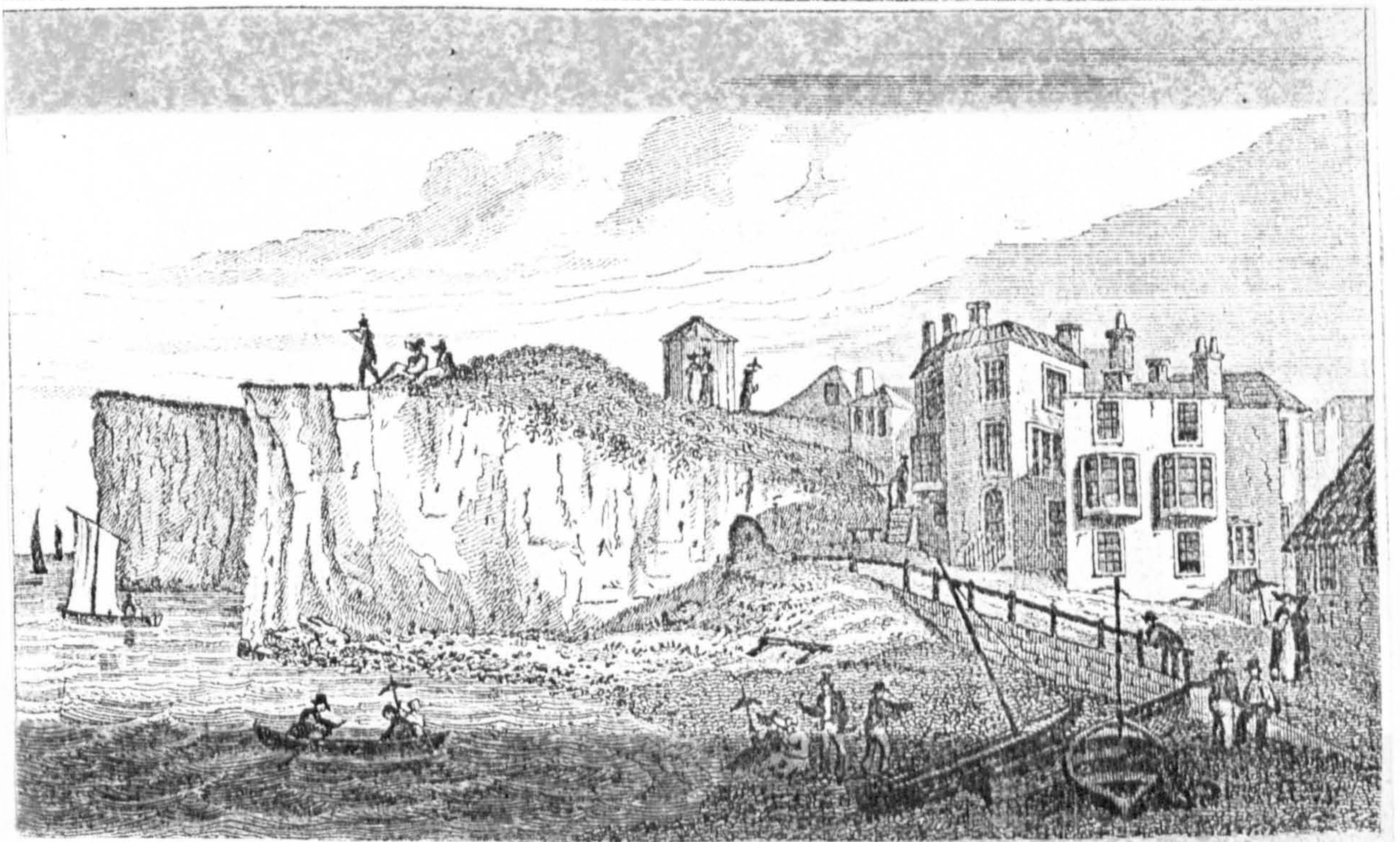
9. Ibid., 35.

MARGATE FRONT AND THE ROAD LEADING TO THE FORT IN 1820.



J. Sharp sculp

MARGATE.



ROAD LEADING TO THE FORT.

W. C. Oulton, Picture of Margate and Its Vicinity (1820),
facing the title page and p. 65.

extremity of Margate's urban development.

The number of properties in Margate increased very substantially during the later eighteenth century. Four hundred and forty houses in the parish of St. John's were chargeable to the Window Tax on 23 January 1781.¹ Margate was returned in 1801 as having 1,004 houses, compared to 639 for Ramsgate, and 1,282 for Brighthelmstone, or Brighton.² In 1808 it was claimed that "scarcely a year passes without some additions being made".³ By 1815 the number of houses in Margate had risen further to 1,275.⁴ Sometimes the influx of visitors was so great as to exceed the increasing supply of residential accommodation. The Rev. M. Papillon, who was vicar of Eythorne, expressed concern about this problem in a letter dated 8 September 1806 to David Papillon Esq of Lee.

"There is I understand, at Margate, at Ramsgate, etc, a greater overflow of Company than was ever remembered, some of the inferior orders, as I hear, being compelled to sleep on board the shipping from the want of houses to accommodate them on shore. I was almost tempted to accept an invitation to dine at Margate next Tuesday on...venison with my neighbour Godfrey of Ash tho' I was otherwise engaged. I am however very glad I do not go, as the crowd and heat would not, I think, have conduced to my entertainment". (5)

In 1800 it was observed that "though fishing villages rise into towns in the season, not a house or apartment is to be got".⁶

Property development brought capital, employment, business, permanent residents and holidaymakers to Margate. Much of the building enterprise lacks actual documentation because it was small scale. Building craftsmen and the property interests, who appear in trade directories of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, reflect, however, the tremendous urban expansion of those days.

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1. David Macpherson, Annals of Commerce, Manufactures, Fisheries, and Navigation (1805), Volume III, 702.
 2. Henry Moore, A New and Comprehensive System of Universal Geography (c.1811), 47.
 3. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 960.
 4. G.A. Cooke, A Topographical and Statistical Description of the County of Kent (New Ed., 1830), xxvii.
 5. Kent Record Office, U1015 C 75/130.
 6. The Times, 1 October 1800, 3a.

TABLE 12 : THE STRENGTH AND VARIETY OF THE BUILDING TRADES AND PROPERTY INTERESTS WITHIN MARGATE IN 1796 (1) AND 1811 (2).

<u>Trade</u>	<u>1796</u>	<u>1811</u>
Auctioneers	1	3
Braziers	1	-
Bricklayers	5	5
Builders	2	-
Cabinet Makers	5	3
Carpenters	36	10
Flint Nappers	1	-
Furniture Brokers	-	1
House Agents	-	1
Painters	3	} 6
Plumbers	1	
Plasterers	1	-
Stonemasons	1	1
Surveyors	-	1

Although the identity of property developers is frequently unknown, the physical expansion of Margate almost certainly involved both local and outside capital and enterprise, drawn from a variety of collective and individual sources, including gentry, professional men, builders and petty tradesmen. The Times referred in October 1800 to the unreasonable profits made by sea-side tradesmen, who "in a very few years...make large fortunes, retire from their shops, and turn builders, and every year proves that they let their houses dearer".³

The largest share of property development concerned the provision of lodgings. The renovation or erection of a lodging house was frequently an individual undertaking, and among the Cobb MSS there is for Margate an excellent

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1. The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796).
 2. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory of the United Kingdoms and Wales (1811).
 3. The Times, 1 October 1800, 3a.

instance of this in the papers of a William Stone, who retired from business in January 1777 possessed of the following assets.

	£	s
Dwelling House	714	14
Loan to Cobb	500	
Cash	1,187	
	<hr/>	
	£2,401	14s. ¹

Included among his papers are "An Acct. of the Purchis of my New Dwelling and Additions made to the same in the Year 1777", and "Lodgings Let to Sundry Persons", 1778-1796.² William Stone saw that a retirement income could result from letting lodgings during the summer months. In 1777 he purchased a house for £200 and paid £19 to "J^{no} Fagg by Bill for Conveyance".³ The purchase of the property and its conversion into a lodging house absorbed £645.9s.11d.⁴ The largest bills were £193.7s.6d. paid to Orpin, a carpenter; £87.0s.7d. to Bayley, a bricklayer; £27.9s.7d. to Stone, a plumber; £16.2s. to Wilds, another bricklayer; £20 to Friend for bricks; and £16.10s. for making a vault.⁵ The work of conversion, which put money into various hands, involved expenditure on bricks, timber, paper, £3.15s. on Newcastle stone, and cartage; and among the tradesmen called in were bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, a stonemason, and blacksmiths.⁶ At least fifteen different names were involved in the work.

The house became ready for letting during 1778, and produced during that season £37.16s. for 18 weeks rent between 13 June and 18 October, from a Mr. William Franks at 42s. per week.⁷ Thereafter the lodgings entries read

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1. Kent Record Office, Cobb MSS.
 2. Ibid. These entries appear in an account book along with payments received by way of interest; "Charge of Cloths and Idle Expenses for My Self", 1780-1795; and "An Acct. of Housekeeping for the Year", 1780-1797.
 3. Kent Record Office, Cobb MSS, op.cit.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Ibid.
 7. Ibid.

as follows:

TABLE 13 : WILLIAM STONE'S LODGINGS LETTINGS IN MARGATE, 1779-96.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>No.of Weeks</u>	<u>Rent per Week</u>
<u>1779</u>	Wm. Barber	7 June-5 July	4	42s.
	Wm. Martindale	9 July-16 August	7	52s.
	Mrs. Patterson	16 August-30 Sept.	4	63s.
			10 days	6s. per day
	John Southerby	3-29 October	4	31s.6d.
<u>1780</u>	Wm. Franks	5-24 May	3	31s.6d.
	Leonard Ellington	1-21 July	3	42s.
	Ann Wilton	22 July-10 Nov.	16	52s.6d.
<u>1781</u>	Richard Halford	17 June-21 July	5	39s.9d.
	Contis, De, Salis	23 July-7 Oct.	11	52s.6d.
	Robert Dormer	8 Oct-5 Nov.	4	31s.6d.
<u>1782</u>	Charles Hoskins Masters	18 April-30 May	6 2	21s. 31s.6d.
	Jno. Gutteridg	22 June-31 August	6	42s.
			4	52s.6d.
	Geo. Brewster	31 Aug-6 Oct.	5	63s.
	Charleton Palmer	6-28 October	3	31s.6d.
	Geo. Dempster ¹	1-22 November	3	31s.6d.
<u>1783</u>	Rev. Leath Hoskins Masters	13 Feb-4 June	14 2	21s. 31s.6d.
	Wm. Legayt	15 June-27 July	2	42s.
			4	52s.6d.
	Mrs. Montrap	28 July-18 August	3	63s.
	Charles Carter	18 August-14 Sept.	4	63s.
			1	52s.6d.
	Mr. Silvester	22 Sept-20 Oct.	4	52s.6d.
	Rev. Mr. Barrett	24 Oct-20 Nov.	4	26s.3d.
<u>1784</u>	Rev. Leath Hoskins Masters	13 April-3 June	7	21s.
	Wm. Pitt Esq	5 June-30 Oct.	3	42s.
			4	52s.6d.
			11	63s.
			3	42s.

1. This must be the same George Dempster (1732-1818), who took his wife and sister down to Margate during September 1782 "to bathe for both their healths", and who commented favourably in 1771 on the state of Thanet's agriculture, Ed: James Fergusson, Letters of George Dempster to Sir Adam Fergusson, 1756-1813 (1934), 71,111; also see Chapters I and II.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>No. of Weeks</u>	<u>Rent per week</u>
<u>1785</u>	R.C. Bricay (?)	31 May-12 July	6	42s.
	Mrs. Seliar Scott	?	?	11 gns.
	Robt. Baxter Esq	2 Aug-17 Oct.	11	63s.
	Miss Lewis	19 Oct-15 Nov.	4	21s.
<u>1786</u>	Jer. Watson Esq	2 June-26 Aug.	12	52s.6d.
	Peter Cazelet Esq	26 Aug-31 Oct.	4	3½ gns.
			4	3 gns.
			1	1½ gns.
<u>1787</u>	Taylor Esq	23 May-5 June	2+2 days	2 gns.
	Mr. Leyget	16 June-28 July	2	2 gns.
			4	2½ gns.
	Mrs. Woodamson	30 July-27 Aug.	4	3 gns.
	Henry Gardner Esq	27 Aug-8 Oct.	6	3½ gns.
	Smith Esq	7-17 October	1½	2 gns.
<u>1788</u>	Mrs. Sharp	13 March-? June	12	£11.11s.6d.
			2	31s.6d.
	Mr. Thompson	29 June-3 August	4	2½ gns.
			1	3 gns.
	Mrs. Halghers	4 Aug-6 Oct.	3	3 gns.
			6	3½ gns.
	Rev. L.H. Masters	6 Oct-3 Nov.	3	31s.6d.
			1	21s.
<u>1789</u>	Mrs. Sharp	2 April-25 July by Agreement.	16	£22.1s.
	Mr. Wright	25 July-8 Sept.	4	3 gns.
			2	3½ gns.
	Mr. Cutler	8 Sept-6 Oct. as per Agreement.	4	£15.15s.
	Mr. Dormer	6 Oct-3 Nov.	4	2 gns.
<u>1790</u>	Mr. Fish	17 March-30 Nov. by Agreement.		£63.
<u>1791</u>	Mrs. Young	1 June-5 Oct.	4	2 gns.
			4	2½ gns.
			10	3½ gns.
	Rev. L. Hoskins Masters	7-28 October	3	31s.6d.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Occupant</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>No. of Weeks</u>	<u>Rent per week</u>
<u>1792</u>	Wm. Anderson	1 May-30 July	4	1 gn.
			4	2 gns.
			4	2½ gns.
	Thos. Dyke	4 Aug-15 Sept.	6	3½ gns.
	Sir Charles Morton Bowe	16 Sept-14 Oct.	4	3½ gns.
			3 days	18s.
	Rev. John Phillips	19 Oct-29 Nov.	6	1 gn.
<u>1793</u>	Peter Campbell	18 June-19 Aug.	6	2 gns.
			3	3 gns.
	Thos. Dyke	21 Aug-21 Oct.	6	3½ gns.
	Benjamin Horans Esq., Foots Cray Place	10 Oct-7 Nov.	4	1½ gns.
<u>1794</u>	Joseph Foskell Esq	17-30 May	2	2 gns.
	Wm. Abott Esq	2-30 June	4	2 gns.
	Thos. Dyke Esq	7 July-6 Oct.	3	2½ gns.
			10	3½ gns.
Geo. Collyer	6 Oct-3 Nov.	4	1½ gns.	
<u>1795</u>	Thos. Dyke Esq	1 July-29 Sept.	4	2½ gns.
			9	3½ gns.
	Mr. Simpson	29 Sept-27 Oct.	2	3½ gns.
			2	1½ gns.
Mr. Fish	30 Oct-14 Nov.	2	1½ gns.	
<u>1796</u>	Mr. Richardson	27 April-20 July	6	1½ gns.
			3	2 gns.
			3	2½ gns.
	Thos. Dyke Esq	22 July-7 Oct.	1	2½ gns.
			10	3½ gns.
Mr. Simpson	10 Oct-	4	1½ gns. (1)	

This record of lettings by one Margate lodging house keeper over the years 1778 to 1796 reveals two points of interest. The rates for letting varied according to the season, except for those periods negotiated by

1. Kent Record Office, Cobb MSS, op.cit.

agreement, possibly by post beforehand, thereby confirming the evidence elsewhere in this thesis that lodgings cost more at the height of the season.¹ The names of some lodgers appeared over several years, suggesting regular holidays and a preference for staying in one particular resort.

TABLE 14 : VISITORS STAYING THERE ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION.

<u>Name of Visitor</u>	<u>Years and Duration of Stay</u>
William Franks	<u>1778</u> (18 weeks), <u>1780</u> (3 weeks).
Rev. Leath Hoskins Masters	<u>1783</u> (16 weeks), <u>1784</u> (7 weeks), <u>1788</u> (4 weeks), <u>1791</u> (3 weeks).
Mrs. Sharp	<u>1788</u> (12 weeks), <u>1789</u> (16 weeks).
Mr. Dormer	<u>1781</u> (4 weeks), <u>1789</u> (4 weeks).
Thomas Dyke	<u>1792</u> (6 weeks), <u>1793</u> (6 weeks), <u>1794</u> (13 weeks), <u>1795</u> (13 weeks), <u>1796</u> (11 weeks).
Mr. Simpson	<u>1795</u> (4 weeks), <u>1796</u> (4 weeks).
Mr. Fish	<u>1790</u> (the entire season), <u>1795</u> (2 weeks).(2)

Mr. Fish in occupying these lodgings by agreement for the entire season of 1790 paid £63 to William Stone.³ William Pitt paid £57.15s. for a twenty-one week stay in 1784, and Mrs. Young £55.13s. for eighteen weeks during 1791.⁴

For William Stone the letting of his lodging house provided a regular income for nineteen years.

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1. As noted later in this section.
 2. Kent Record Office, Cobb MSS, op.cit.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid.

TABLE 15 : WILLIAM STONE'S INCOME FROM LETTING HIS LODGING HOUSE, 1778-96 .

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Weeks Let</u>		<u>Amount Realised</u>		
	<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Days</u>	£	s	d
1778	18		37	16	0
1779	20	3	48	13	6
1780	22		53	0	6
1781	20		44	7	0
1782	29		57	15	0
1783	38		72	19	6
1784	28		65	2	0
1785	21+		63	0	0
1786	21		60	7	6
1787	Almost 20		56	14	0
1788	32		65	13	0
1789	30½		67	14	6
1790	Season by Agreement		63	0	0
1791	21		60	7	6
1792	28½		67	1	0
1793	19		50	8	0
1794	23		63	10	6
1795	19		57	4	6
1796	27		69	6	0 (1)

From this one source of income William Stone derived £1,124, which was not far short of being double the purchase and original outlay on the house at £645.9s.11d. In no year after 1781 did the amount realized fall below £50 annually. Letting lodgings produced a steady retirement income in excess of £1 per week over nineteen years, added to which there was £40 interest per annum on the £500 loaned to the Cobbs, besides the proceeds from other bonds, stock and loans. William Stone spent a comfortable retirement employing two female servants, Ann Crane and Ann Matthews, paying them annually 4 gns. each between 1780 and 1798.²

1. Kent Record Office, Cobb MSS, op.cit.
 2. Ibid.

Collective enterprise was responsible for projects which were larger and more ambitious. The Royal Hotel and the assembly rooms belonged to "a company of proprietors", who let them to a licensee for a rent of between £500 and £600 a year.¹ The rent was lower in 1769 at £400 per annum.² Some of the finest properties in Margate were located in Cecil and Hawley Squares: "among those who took the lead were Mr. Cecil, Sir Edward Hales and Sir John Shaw, from the former of whom, Cecil Square, which was built by these and some other gentlemen, ...received its name"; and, "shortly after the erection of Cecil Square, Hawley Square was built on a contiguous field, then belonging to Sir Henry Hawley, Bart."³ It is probable that these gentlemen were members of the company which leased out the assembly rooms and hotel, but apart from their titles and obvious eminence not a great deal is known about them.

Sir John Shaw, the owner of a country seat at Eltham, was a Kentish landowner of some social standing,⁴ whose visits to Margate were noticed by

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1. Clarke, op.cit., 72.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 19-23 August 1769, 4b.
 3. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 959-60, or The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 48-9.
 4. The Shaw family had risen to social prominence shortly after the Restoration. John Shaw, a citizen and vintner of London, having made a fortune, had lent money to the penniless Charles II while in exile. In 1660 a grateful sovereign knighted Shaw, giving him £500 a year for life, and in 1665 he became a baronet. In the meantime in 1663 Sir John Shaw secured a lease of the manor of Eltham, extending from Southend to Lee on very favourable terms, "embracing the old ruined palace of Eltham and all rights of hunting, hawking and fishing, for £9 a year with 20s. additional for the old house", Roy Brooke, The Story of Eltham Palace (1960), 50. In 1664 a new house or Eltham Lodge was constructed and there the Shaw family remained until 1820, ibid., 50-1. John Evelyn records a visit there in his diary during July 1664. Most of the family were buried in their own vault in the parish church, and one of them the Rev. John Kenward Shaw Brooke was vicar of Eltham from 1783 to 1840, his jubilee in 1833 being a time of universal rejoicing in the village, ibid., 51. Other distinguished members of the family included John Shaw (1776-1832) who practiced as an architect at Bexley from 1798. He was the architect of Clifton House, in Buckinghamshire and of Blendon Hall, near Bexley. He designed St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street, and was appointed architect to Christ's Hospital, Newgate Street, and to Ramsgate Harbour, where he constructed the clock tower and the obelisk, commemorating the visit of George IV in 1821. He died in Ramsgate in 1832, Rev. A. Winnifrith, Men of Kent and Kentish Men, Biographical Notices of 680 Worthies of Kent (Folkestone, 1913), 421. A much later descendant was Sir John James Kenward Shaw, 9th Baronet of Eltham who was born in 1895, the son of the Rev. Sir Charles J.M. Shaw Bart, Who's Who in Kent (Worcester, 1935), 396.

The Kentish Gazette; for instance, during October 1768, "Sir John Shaw from Margate passed through this City [Canterbury] to his Seat at Eltham".¹ His visit to Margate may have been to discuss further building developments.

Within two years his former groom, Samuel Bloxham, was in the stabling business.²

In 1811 his son John Bloxham was running one of the two Margate livery stables in Garden Row,³ opposite to which on Edmunds's 1821 map was Bloxham's Green, used possibly for pasturing, horses being indicative of a considerably expanded business compared to the 1770's.

By no means all the owners or builders of early Margate property came from the more exalted gentry ranks. William Rowe, a Margate fishmonger, of Market Place, and a churchwarden of the parish church of St. John's, owned considerable residential property in the town by the close of the 1760's. In 1770 he was involved in a major building project in the vicinity of the Fort.⁴

"To be erected on a field of eight acres, 44 Houses, extending from the Wall of Mr. Brooke's Garden, almost to the summit of the Hill on which the Windmill stands

Diameter of Crescent	500 feet.
Front of Each House in Length	20 feet.
Depth of Each Ground-plot	80-130 feet.
Breadth of Paved Footway in Front	12 feet.
Breadth of Coach-road	18 feet.

Which will be fenced off with posts and chain.

Plans of Mr. William Rowe's, Margate".⁵

Building proceeded but impeded the activities of one commercial interest in 1772:

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 25-29 October 1768, 4c.
 2. As noted in this section above.
 3. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.
 4. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Margate: Hamlets, Streets and Buildings, Margate Public Library Local Collection, Y060. 182, Rowe Bequest, 1729.
 5. The Kentish Gazette, 25-29 December 1770, 3c.

"last week a Windmill belonging to Mr. Cowell, at Margate, was obliged to be moved a further distance from the town. The many new houses lately built near it obstructed the wind in such a manner that it could not work". (1)

Newspapers cite in detail and abundance properties which were building, selling or leasing. The examples are too many to give in total. Appearing for auction on 22 August 1768 was a freehold "Mansion House,...having four Rooms on a Floor, Closets and other Conveniences, two Gardens walled in, viz: a fore Garden and a back Garden...in Margate, upon a rising Ground, so as to command, from some of the upper Rooms, a Prospect of the Sea and Land in the Occupation of Mrs. Elizabeth Baker, deceased", further particulars of which could be had of Mr. John Baker, at North Down, near Margate, or of Mr. Daniel Marsh, attorney, at Margate.² The fact that John Baker belonged to the Thanet gentry³ suggests a substantial property.

Among the 1769 property auctions was a freehold house, "situated near the Place called the Bowling-green, in Margate, consisting of two Rooms on the First, and two on the Second Floor, with a Cellar, etc., late the Property... of Thomas Surflen, deceased".⁴ Surflen was an old Margate trading name. Thomas Surflen had a bathing room in 1766. There were two other Surflens: Amadis, also a bather, and Edward, a poulterer.⁵

Some of the properties appearing for sale were new and substantial, as in May 1769.

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1. The Canterbury Journal, 1 September 1772.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 3-6 August 1768.
 3. Appearing as a 'Gentleman' in The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796), op.cit.
 4. The Kentish Gazette, 4-8 February 1769.
 5. Listed in The Universal British Directory (1796), op.cit.

"a neat strong-built Brick House, Sash Windows, built about four Years, and late in the occupation of Mr. Thomas Bilton, containing on the Ground Floor two handsome Parlours in Front, with a Back-room, and a small Yard, a good Cellar, Store-rooms, and Kitchen below; on the first Floor, two good Chambers and a Dressing-room in Front, and one back Chamber... Also four neat Lodging-rooms and three Closets, with a handsome open stair-case. The whole House is fitted up quite in a Genteel Manner, commands a very extensive View of the Sea, and may be entered on immediately. For further Particulars enquire of Mr. George Covell, at Margate". (1)

Bilton and Covell promoted and built Bilton Court and Covell's Row. The Covells at the end of the eighteenth century were a gentry family.² In 1811 they were living in two of the best residential areas of the town: Henry Covell Esq. lived in Hawley Square, and John Covell Esq. in Church Field Place.³

As people sought houses close to the sea, London and provincial newspapers advertised their requirements. Wanted "for a Small Family" in May 1781 was,

"a Neat convenient House, ready furnished...to consist of about four Bed Chambers, two Sitting Rooms, Kitchen, Wash-house, and Servants' Rooms; with Stabling for four or five Horses, and Coach-house. It must be at a short distance from the Sea, and if near to a genteel Town or Neighbourhood the more agreeable. If approved of will be taken for a Year or 18 Months certain.

Address Letters (post paid) to H.G.L. No.31, Somerset Street, Portman-square". (4)

Dual purpose properties were also advertised, including one "near the Market Place and Bathing Rooms in Margate, consisting of five Rooms above Stairs, two good Parlours, two Kitchens and Cellars; together with a Shop and a large Stowage for Coals,...[it] stands well for Trade".⁵ Here was a property with a potential both for business and for lodgings, conveniently situated near to bathing facilities.

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 27-31 May 1769, 1d.
 2. A Mrs. Covell is listed under 'Gentry' in The Universal British Directory (1796), op.cit.
 3. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.
 4. The Kentish Gazette, 9-12 May 1781, 4.
 5. Ibid., 9-12 May 1781, 1.

The lodging house became the dominant architectural feature in the seaside urban landscape well before 1815. The need to accommodate large and wealthy families plus servants explains the height and appearance of many of Margate's Georgian residential properties. They followed the pattern of Bloomsbury, having kitchens and workplaces in the basement, ground and first floors for everyday living and entertaining, one or two floors of bedrooms, with the very top floor containing servants' rooms.¹

Inns were frequently a venue for property auctions, from which they benefited in the way of publicity and patronage, as in August 1770.

"To be Sold to the highest Bidder, at the House of Mr. John Mitchener, Known by the name of the New Inn, a large and commodious Freehold Messuage or Tenement fronting the Parade, having a Sea Prospect (lately the Dwelling-house of Mr. Roger Culmer, deceased), with a small Garden and other Conveniences... Also a new built Freehold Messuage or Tenement, situate near the same". (2)

The Culmers were a long established Thanet family, particularly in Broadstairs and St. Peter's.³ Joel Culmer, Gent. was resident in Margate in 1796,⁴ and in 1811,⁵ but the Margate branch of the Culmers played only a minor role in the life of the town. They were not appointed Commissioners under the 1787 Margate Improvement Bill.⁶ Roger Culmer's house had been standing empty for some time, the furniture having been auctioned towards the end of 1769.⁷

Furniture auctions provided an economical means of furnishing seaside lodgings.

Hitherto undeveloped land soon succumbed to new properties and to building.

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1. Morgan, op.cit., 42.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 14-18 August 1770, 3d.
 3. As noted in Chapter I above.
 4. The Universal British Directory (1796), op.cit.
 5. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.
 6. 27 Geo.III c.45.
 7. The Kentish Gazette, 28 October - 1 November 1769, 1c.

Many were the years when the property and land markets were active in a rapidly developing seaside resort. One of the more notable years was 1777. For sale in January was "some Land, in the Church Field, the property of James Hawley and William Prince Esq, being contiguous to the New Rooms, and a most eligible Spot for building upon", enquiries at "Mr. Small's attorney".¹ The conveyancing of land and property was profitable business to local solicitors. Both they and auctioneers benefited from a high turnover in the disposal and leasing of property. Offered for sale in April were "four new-built brick houses, pleasantly situated near the upper End of the Church-field", and "a vacant Piece of Ground", extending 70 feet in front of the houses, and forming "an eligible spot for building upon, commanding a prospect of the Sea, and of the Country towards Northdown and St. Peter's", on application to "Mr. Sawkins, attorney at law".²

Much land and property came on to the market during 1785, to the financial betterment of local solicitors and auctioneers, notably Messrs. Long, Sawkins and Small. Charles Long was a famous Margate auctioneer. Jacob Sawkins and Mr. Small were prominent local solicitors, being listed in 1792 under "Barristers at Law and Attorneys", along with Mr. Garrett, thereby giving Margate a total of at least three solicitors.³ Jacob Sawkins prospered sufficiently to possess in 1816 Nash Court which was an ancient seat lying about a mile to the south of Margate, the mansion having "extensive gardens, walled in" and standing "in a retired situation, enclosed with some fine lofty trees".⁴ Mr. Small had all the details in January 1785 of a brick-built modern house, "to be Sold by Private Contract", complete with a coach house

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 11-15 January 1777, 1b.
 2. Ibid., 30 April - 3 May 1777, 1b.
 3. The Kentish Companion for the Year of Our Lord, 1792 (Canterbury, 1792), 164.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 79; compare above for 1763 under the section: "Margate and Other Resorts in the 1760's".

and stable, and "very pleasantly situated in the Church Field in Margate".¹
Messrs. Long and Sawkins were subsequently interested in another property which had considerable potential for improvement.

"To be peremptorily sold to the highest bidder by Charles Long, at the George Inn, by order of the Assignees of Mr. Robert Brooke, a Bankrupt, on the 8th Day of April Instant, ...a Freehold Estate, consisting of a handsome, modern-built, sashed Dwelling House, with a Stable and other convenient Offices, and a Court Yard in front, situate in King's Street... These Premises, having a Front of upwards of 80 Feet are capable of being much improved at an easy Expense. For further Particulars, enquire of the Auctioneer, or of Mr. Sawkins in Margate". (2)

Jacob Sawkins had built up by now a lucrative legal practice, using some of his profits to acquire property in the town.

During April 1785 Messrs. Small and Long were selling for Thomas Rowe,

"all that Piece or Parcel of Ground with the Buildings thereon; consisting of an eight-stall Stable, and Loft over the same; a Granary for Corn, and a Stand for Carriages; together with the Garden adjoining...in Church Field in Margate, now in the occupation of Mr. James Mitchener. The situation is extremely desirable for building on, commanding a Fine Prospect of the Country, and an extensive View of the Sea". (3)

James Mitchener had an interest in sea bathing between 1768 and 1785.⁴ The situation of this property suggests high ground at the back of the town where bathing horses were kept, it being no great distance to walk them to and from the bathing machines.

Messrs. Small and Long remained in partnership when they arranged the auction of a substantial freehold dwelling house in Church Field during July 1785, "Complete, modern built and handsome", it was "genteely fitted up, ... commanding a pleasant View of the Fields, Hotel, Assembly Rooms, and other principal Buildings in Margate", containing "exceeding good Kitchens, with

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 15-19 January 1785, 1c.
 2. Ibid., 30 March - 2 April 1785, 1a.
 3. Ibid., 27-30 April 1785, 1d.
 4. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Bathing at Margate from 1750, Margate Public Library Local Collection, Y060. 537, Rowe Bequest, 1915.

Vaults, three Parlours, three Chambers, a Dressing Room and four Chambers on the Attic Story, with Light Closets".¹ New houses had recently been built in Carroway's Row, one of which came on to the market in September 1785.

"To be Sold by Auction, at the White Hart Inn, a convenient Freehold Brick Dwelling House, with its Appurtenances, situate in Carroway's Row,...being the western most of two new built Houses there... Enquire of Mr. Jacob Sawkins, Attorney". (2)

The physical expansion of Margate proceeded in a piecemeal fashion. Notable exceptions were Cecil and Hawley Squares. Piecemeal development certainly occurred in Church Field during the 1770's and 1780's. For sale in January 1787 was "a piece of Land 39 Feet frontage, 60 Feet deep, in Church Field, Margate, near the new playhouse, now in the possession of Mr. Joseph Hall".³ The new playhouse or permanent Theatre Royal was being constructed on a site at the north-east end of Hawley Square, before opening its doors to the public in June 1787.⁴ Joseph Hall had begun his career as a circulating library proprietor in 1766.⁵ In 1786 he had built the Hawley Square library, part of the financing of which may have come from the above sale of land in Church Field.

Not all the land and property of late eighteenth century Margate was sold freehold, as the following advertisement shows.

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 5-8 July 1785, 1c.
 2. Ibid., 9 - 13 September 1785, 1c.
 3. Ibid., 23-26 January 1787, 1c.
 4. See Chapter IV below.
 5. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 1 February 1766; also see Chapter IV below.

"to be Lett on Building Leases of 99 years Ground Plots for houses to be erected on a Field called Dane Hill near Margate: front faces at an agreeable distance to the Assembly Room, Playhouse, etc; the back the fields, /with/ an extensive view of the sea. The situation will be always clean, airy and free from the many inconveniences attending a Street or Houses too near a Town: Plans... at Mr. Hall's Library". (1)

Situation was an important consideration in the selling of property.

It was advantageous for property to be situated fronting or close to the sea or in proximity to major social amenities, such as the assembly rooms, the libraries, the theatre, or the bathing rooms. This was so in January 1778, when the sale was announced of "a Freehold Estate, consisting of a strong well built and completely furnished Dwelling-House (known by the name of Crow's Boarding House), advantageously situated in the principal Street in Margate, commanding a fine and extensive prospect of both Sea and Land".²

When Mr. A. Mackey opened the King's Arms Tavern and Hotel in Church Field in May 1783 he emphasized its position "near the New Assembly Rooms".³ Within three years he was seeking to let this substantial eleven-bedroomed property, as

"all that commodious Brick Messuage or Tenement, completely fitted up, in Church Field; with large front Parlour, back Parlour, Bar and Land adjoining, with good wine cellars. First Floor, three Dining Rooms, one Bed Chamber; Second Floor, Four Chambers; Attic Story, two Servants' Rooms; back Building, large Kitchen, compleat with Lobby and Well-house, three Bed Chambers over it; adjoining large Room fit for Tap; Bar, Cellars, private Offices; large handsome Billiard Room, and Billiard Table, compleat with three Bed-Chambers, Garden, two Offices, with two Passages from the front. Enquire of A. Mackey on the Premises". (4)

This property became subsequently the Shakespeare Hotel.

Margate's physical and residential expansion did not lessen as the seasons rolled on. Visitors seeking accommodation confronted a gradual increase

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 4-7 September 1787, 1d.
 2. Ibid., 14-17 January 1778, 1c.
 3. Ibid., 10-14 May 1783, 1b.
 4. Ibid., 6-9 December 1785, 1c.

in the number of residential inns and hotels from 22 in 1796,¹ to 24 in 1811.² A Margate inhabitant publicized the local inns and hotels in poetical form in 1797.

"Among the num'rous inns which throng this spot,
We here shall mention those of greatest note;...
Benson is foremost of the numerous train,
And all his guests he well does entertain;
Next Mitchener invites his ev'ry friend
To prove the blessings which his house can lend;
With Jenkins too, who always strains each nerve
To serve his friends, their favours to deserve;
And Rayner here implores each annual guest,
Now to renew his wonted kind bequest;
And Stevenson, and Crickett, now implore
That notice which you have conferr'd before;
And Humble here your friendly smiles does crave,
With those above, may he your custom have". (3)

Benson's Royal Hotel in Cecil Square represented "a capital house", having "every requisite to render it comfortable either to families or individuals", and for some visitors "it may be the more desirable residence,... on account of its being contiguous to the Assembly Rooms".⁴ Mitchener's Royal York Hotel had the advantage of being "most pleasantly situated on the Parade", where "it commands a fine view of the Harbour, and of the Ocean"; the house being also "commodious, and every way calculated to please the numerous visitants it receives".⁵

Jenkins occupied the Prospect Tavern, standing "attached to a large bowling green, on a delightful eminence, near the sea", being "much frequented".⁶ Rayner's Shakespeare Tavern enjoyed a favourable location opposite the Theatre Royal in Hawley Square and, "during the season, it is a resort for many genteel people, being in a very polite part of the town".⁷ Stevenson kept the Fountain

1. The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796), op.cit.

2. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.

3. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 84.

4. Ibid., 85.

5. Ibid., 85.

6. Ibid., 85.

7. Ibid., 85.

Inn in King Street, close to the market and the pier, which was "a good house, affording excellent accommodation".¹ In the same street was the George Inn, kept by Humble. Adjoining Bloxham's Livery Stables, it was "peculiarly convenient for those who have horses or carriages with them".² The King's Head, "well managed by Mrs. Crickett" stood "near to the Bathing Houses and the sea", being "both pleasant and convenient for strangers".³ The White Hart received no special commendation in 1797, but the smaller inns kept by Mrs. Mitchener, Mrs. Adams and Mr. Dunkin "are comfortable houses, whose occupiers do their utmost to oblige".⁴

The best hotels and taverns were close to the seafront, or in the more fashionable parts of the town. The same was true of lodging and boarding houses. An 1811 directory listed specifically 38 lodging houses in Margate. They were located as follows:

TABLE 16 : THE LOCATION OF 38 MARGATE LODGING HOUSES IN 1811.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number</u>
High Street	10
Hawley Square	3
Dane Hill	3
Crescent Place	2
Cecil Square	2
Northumberland Row	2
Broad Street	2
Paradise Street	2
Cecil Street	1
Duke Street	1
Bankside	1
Garden Row	1
King Street	1
Addington Square	1
Lower Booth's Place	1
Booth's Place	1
Parker's Court	1
Church Street	1
Church Field Place	1
Church Square	1
<u>Total</u>	<u>38 (5)</u>

1. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 85.
2. Ibid., 85.
3. Ibid., 85.
4. Ibid., 85.
5. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.

This list did not cover all the lodging houses in Margate by 1811. Furthermore there is no means of knowing how many private residents or local tradesmen chose to convert floors or rooms in their houses or above their business premises into lodging accommodation for visitors.¹ In June 1774 a small family having taken too large a house at Margate offered to accommodate four ladies or gentlemen.² The following personal observation on the location and character of Margate lodgings dates from 1797. It relates to an apartment in Fort Square,

"from whence I have a prospect of the Parade in the front, and the sea from my back chamber...I spend my time, far removed from the noise and bustle of the metropolis and in the daily view of the restless briny main. A view of the sea is what most persons wish for here; but those lodgings which have such a view are always let first, and are the dearest; one guinea per week for a parlour, chamber, and use of a kitchen near the sea, is counted reasonable; many of the inhabitants make it a constant rule to raise the price of their lodgings in the height of the season, during July and August; (3) and, if the town is nearly full at that time, some persons will not let their lodgings for less than a month certain; so that a family or single person coming here in the season, are obliged to pay for a month's lodging, though they may stay but a week or two... Here, as well as at most public watering-places, the inhabitants in general have learnt the art of charging exorbitantly for lodgings, provisions, etc. They know the season lasts but a few months, and therefore they make the company pay handsomely for their accommodations, which in many houses about the town are but indifferent; this may at first sight appear good policy, but if they continue so doing, I am apprehensive, in a few years, they will do more hurt to the town than they are at present aware of; and other bathing towns not far distant, may reap the benefit of it". (4)

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1. Drapers, tailors, milliners, dressmakers, hatters, shoemakers, or hairdressers were to be found letting "the upper parts of their houses" to visitors in Herne Bay in the 1830's, A Picture of the New Town of Herne Bay (1835), op.cit., 11.
 2. The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser, 2 June 1774, 3b; or The Daily Advertiser, 3 June 1774, 4c; also see later in this section below.
 3. As did William Stone, as noted in this section above.
 4. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 6, 8, 24.

Nearby towns included, of course, Broadstairs and Ramsgate.¹ On 21 March 1803 William Ward (1727-1821), a Quaker, from Benenden in the Weald of Kent, set sail from Margate in an open boat for Calais, having spent a night at Margate, where he experienced extortion out of season. In a letter post-marked Calais, written on 27 March 1803, he complained that "I was used most infamously at Margate - 4s.6d. for a dinner not worth 6d; wine at 4s. a bottle; 2s. a night for my bed; charges for more than I had - on proof I caused them to abate 4s. from my bill".² One wonders how he fared in France for

"the French innkeepers are said to be great extortioners. English landlords envy their great reputation, and seem determined to convince all whom it may concern, that they know how to charge as well as their neighbours; so that though the people of the two countries hear no more of the shocks of contending armies, they have still to meet the shock of charging hosts". (3)

The holidaymaker to Ramsgate confronted lodging houses like those of Margate, "upon similar terms", and "those which have a view of the sea are always dearest and soonest let".⁴

Boarding houses having made their appearance were fewer in number and were less well patronized than inns, hotels or lodging houses. The boarding house was a familiar feature in the Margate seaside scene as early as 1770.⁵ An enterprising boarding house proprietor caught the eye of Charles Seymour in 1776:

"Crow, who keeps a Coffee-House, and Bathing Machines, has a convenient neat house, where small families, or single persons, may find a genteel table and decent lodgings, upon easy terms; he is a good natured, civil and obliging man, and takes a delight in making his house agreeable to his guests; he has lately fitted up a Music-Room". (6)

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1. Compare the warning given to Margate in the very same source in 1797, as noted in the second section to this Chapter above.
 2. Ed: C.F. Hardy, Benenden Letters: London, Country and Abroad 1753-1821 (1901), 283, 290-1.
 3. The Morning Post, 26 August 1814, 3c.
 4. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 33.
 5. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 15; also as noted in this section above.
 6. Charles Seymour, A New Topographical, Historical, and Commercial Survey of the Cities, Towns and Villages of the County of Kent (Canterbury, 1776) 558.

Perhaps this glowing account has to be related to the fact that Seymour's New Topographical, Historical, and Commercial Survey of the Cities, Towns, and Villages, of the County of Kent could be "had of Crow, Margate".¹ In his 1782 edition Mr. Crow was described in identical terms,² yet, as noted already,³ Crow's Boarding House had been advertised for sale in The Kentish Gazette during January 1778.⁴ Here is an instance of a guidebook being reprinted which failed to keep up to date.

Margate possessed at least eight boarding houses in 1811.⁵ Information about them is readily available from guidebooks and newspapers. In 1796 they were said to be furnished in a modern taste, and "their tables are covered in a style of plenty and elegance; at any of which such ladies and gentlemen as may wish to decline the fatigue of an establishment at private lodgings will find themselves very comfortably and agreeably accommodated".⁶ There were, in 1797,

"several boarding houses about the town, for the accommodation of small families or single persons, who having not brought down their own servants (as many do), nor intending to stay here above two or three weeks...do not think it worth while to lodge and board themselves: The terms for lodging and board at these houses are from £1.11s.6d. to £2.2s. per week: (7) And frequently in the height of the season, near 30 sit down together at each boarding-house". (8)

The principal boarding houses were managed by Lautier and Rogers in Cecil Square, Mrs. Brazier in Church Field, Humble opposite Surfle's Coffee

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1. Seymour, op.cit., 558.
 2. Ibid. (1782), 558.
 3. As noted in this section above.
 4. The Kentish Gazette, 14-17 January 1778, 1c.
 5. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.
 6. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 25-6.
 7. For a comparison with nineteenth-century terms see Chapter IX below.
 8. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 35-6.

Room in the High Street, and Mrs. Eden opposite the post office.¹ Information on how many guests a particular property could accommodate occurs infrequently. On the basis that thirty people could reside in one boarding house, some of the leading hotels and inns accommodated 50, 60, or more guests, as in Blackpool at the end of the 1780's.² The following advertisement appeared in The Times during July and August 1807.

"MARGATE - Mrs. DAVIS begs to inform her Friends and the Public /that/her BOARDING HOUSE, No 21 Hawley-square, is now open for the reception of Ladies and Gentlemen; its delightful situation, joined with her exertions and attention to the comfort and accommodation of those who honour her with their patronage will, she trusts, meet with that approbation she is solicitous to obtain". (3)

Three years later James Cotterill (or Cotterell) announced that he had taken over Mrs. Brasher's Boarding House in Cecil Square:

"no expense has been spared in repairing the House, and furnishing it in a style that he flatters himself will be found superior to any in the above line of business. The bedrooms are lofty and airy, with a sea view, which, together with the beds, require only to be inspected to be approved". (4)

This boarding house became famous under the management of the Cotterell family. James Cotterell competed in 1816 with Surflen in Cecil Square, Webb in Hawley Square, and Mrs. Fleming in the High Street, when Margate had several boarding houses, which were "well furnished, with good accommodations", where "the society in general /was/ pleasant and select".⁵ In 1812 Mrs. Pilkington confronted a female shrimpseller, "with a basket of shrimps, covered over

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 35.
 2. Catherine Hutton was in Blackpool in August 1788, at the height of the season, and noted of a resort which counted fewer than 400 visitors annually: "Blackpool is situated on a level, dreary, moorish coast: the cliffs are of earth and not very high. It consists of a few houses ranged in a line with the sea, and four of those are for the reception of company; one accommodating 30, one 60, one 80, and the other 100 persons. We were strangers to all, and on the recommendation of the master of the inn at Preston, we drove to the house of 80, which is called the Lane's End. The company now consisted of about 70", Hutton Beale, op.cit., 54-6.
 3. The Times, 1 July 1807, 1b, 13 August 1807, 1b; also noted later in this section below.
 4. The Morning Chronicle, 13 August 1810, 1b.
 5. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 69.

with a clean napkin", who transacted business with the Cotterells: "I have not more than a pint and a half left...everyday of my life I walks as far as Pegwell's Bay, and gathers shrimps, greater part of which Mrs. COTTERELL, at the great boarding-house, always buys of me".¹ The Cotterell's weekly terms were then 3 gns. single and 5 gns. double.²

Lodgings were selected from advertisements which appeared in London newspapers. Families arrived at the seaside having made no prior accommodation arrangements. Many visitors had no opportunity to inspect the lodgings which they took, including a thrifty Northamptonshire country family, who found themselves cooped up in the first lodgings they happened to find vacant in 1796.³ The residential accommodation of any seaside resort varied greatly in quality. Dr. Larking's Notes on Folkestone (1899) contained advice "on Selecting Apartments":

"It is most important for those who are spending a holiday at the seaside to take every precaution with regard to their health and comfort. How often does it happen that a hard-worked businessman, his wife and family visit the seaside; their means being limited, they take apartments in a back street with small rooms, badly lighted and ventilated; the weather is perhaps bad and they stay indoors with the result that they return from their holiday in a worse state than when they started!

The first thing to do in selecting a house or apartments is to ask whether there has been any infectious disease on the premises... Another relevant point is to have plenty of light and ventilation... It is generally possible to tell on entering a house whether it is well ventilated or not. If it smells stuffy and has an unpleasant odour, have nothing to do with it...

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1. Mrs. Pilkington, Margate!!! or Sketches amply Descriptive of that Celebrated Place of Resort, with Its Environs, and Calculated to Inculcate in the Mind of Youth a Fondness for the Productions of Nature and Art (1813), 113-4.
 2. Ibid., 118-9.
 3. As noted later in this section.

It is well to inquire whether the house is damp or not. You can detect this by noticing the condition of the walls... These points may appear to be trivial and unimportant, but there are nevertheless many persons who have had their holidays spoilt through neglecting to make inquiries of this kind when they go to any strange apartments". (1)

Eighteenth and early nineteenth century visitors to seaside resorts were discomfited on occasions, being less conscious of public health and personal hygiene, but one further observation from Dr. Larking would have been equally applicable to the 1800's:

"such matters as ventilation, cleanliness, etc., depend entirely upon the character and habits of the people occupying the houses; and a good well-built house may be made most unhealthy by an undesirable tenant". (2)

Guidebooks advertised elegance and improvement. They told visitors where they would find the best lodgings in Margate. By 1815 these were in areas which had been farming country back in the 1760's. Margate's great expansion had produced "many adventurers in building".³ In 1797 it was noted that "the Church-field has been, within the last seven years, so greatly built upon, that a very small part of it remains at present uncovered; streets, squares, and rows of houses, in different directions, are now to be seen, where, a few years since, the farmer sowed his corn".⁴ Churchfield witnessed rapid urban development during the 1790's. Houses which had once boasted a rural outlook could no longer do so by the 1800's.

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1. A.E. Larking, Notes on Folkestone, Historical, Climatological and Medical, With a Chapter on Hints on Selecting Apartments (1899), 74, 76-8. Folkestone contained in the 1890's some luxury hotels and some substantial and spacious properties; "in the western and best class parts of the town the houses are built according to the latest sanitary principles, and are fitted up with modern appliances", and "in the other parts everything possible is done to maintain a high standard of sanitation", ibid., 78. Houses of 18-22 rooms, letting at from 10-14 gns. per week, were mentioned in correspondence in The Folkestone Chronicle and Visitor's Guide, 22 September 1855, 2bc.
 2. Larking, op.cit., 78.
 3. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 48.
 4. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 17.

By 1804 Cecil Square, Hawley Square and Union Crescent contained "modern piles of building, which recommend themselves to visitants by the elegance of their structure and the airiness of their situation".¹ The following assessments date from before 1820. Cecil Square "consists of some spacious houses and several good shops, which have been so constructed as to admit an extensive prospect over them from the assembly room windows which command a fine view of the sea, and of the fields towards Kingsgate".² Hawley Square and the "entire range of genteel houses from one end of Church-field to the other".³ were considered fashionable. Union Crescent opposite Cecil Square represented "a handsome row of good houses",⁴ being the "most regularly constructed of any in the place".⁵ And "on the Fort and several other places have been built many mansions of equal elegance; most of which command delightful prospects of the sea, Isle of Sheppy, and adjoining country".⁶ Many were "commodious houses, newly erected".⁷

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1. John Evans, The Juvenile Tourist: or, Excursions Through Various Parts of the Island of Great Britain...In a Series of Letters to a Pupil (1804), 373. The author was master of a seminary for "a limited Number of Pupils, Pullin's Row, Islington".
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 49.
 3. Ibid., 49.
 4. Ibid., 50.
 5. Pilkington, op.cit., 94.
 6. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 45.
 7. Pilkington, op.cit., 94.

Seaside accommodation in the form of hotels, inns, boarding houses, lodgings, villas, private residences and mansions, was provided on a vast scale from the 1760's onwards. Properties were improved and enlarged. At the Royal Hotel and assembly rooms Mr. Benjamin Kidman was succeeded by Mr. Howe, who carried through extensions and improvements, which were praised in 1816:

"the present occupier, Mr. Howe, conducts the business of this hotel in a manner that fully entitles him to the patronage of the public, and has lately built several new chambers with suitable conveniences, which, independent of the improvement to the building in its external appearance, afford a larger scope for the accommodation of his numerous and respectable visitors, and indeed we are satisfied that, for neatness, comfort, or luxury, the Royal Hotel will not suffer in comparison with any house in the Kingdom". (1)

The reputation of another famous Margate hotelier was also well established by 1816 in the person of James Wright, who had taken over the Royal York Hotel when the second Mitchener died in 1807:²

"WRIGHT (the successor of the late Mr. MITCHENER) has also a tavern of great excellence, most delightfully situated on the Marine Parade; it commands a fine view of the harbour, and the ocean; the front is simply elegant; the house is in every respect well adapted to please the numerous visitants it receives. Mr. Wright became the possessor of these extensive premises in 1808, and we consider it our duty to state that if indefatigable attentions, with the greatest civility, deserve public recommendation and support, we are fully persuaded Mr. W. will be entitled to a liberal share". (3)

The number of houses in Margate increased by more than 250 between 1800 and 1815,⁴ despite all the economic difficulties confronting the building industry during the Napoleonic Wars. The rate of building averaged 17 new houses per annum, or one new house about every three weeks. Thus, there was no appreciable reduction in Margate's residential building expansion, and

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 65.
 2. Clarke, op.cit., 78; on the Mitcheners, see this section above.
 3. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 68.
 4. As noted in this section above.

the land and property markets continued to be active during the 1800's. Three lots of freehold land, partly occupied by stabling and coach houses, were offered for auction on 27 November 1800, "near the top of High Street, on the west side, and on the north side of Frog Hill":

- "I Land on the north side of Frog Hill, 46 feet in breadth, with four Coach Houses and Stabling for thirteen Horses.
- II Adjoining Lot I, in breadth 49 feet 6 inches in front, 67 feet 8 inches in rear.
- III Land adjoining Lot II on the south side thereof... in breadth in the front 18 feet to the depth of 45 feet thence to the rear 52 feet 8 inches, with four Coach Houses and Stabling for thirteen Horses". (1)

Advertised for letting during May 1806 was "the WHOLE, or PART of a HOUSE... elegantly Furnished, situated in the pleasantest part of High-street, with a double entrance, and commanding a beautiful and extensive view of the sea".² It was a substantial property containing two kitchens, two parlours, and two drawing rooms, having six bedrooms, three on the second floor and three in the attic, with further details obtainable from Mr. Beck, saddler, Oxford Street, London.³ The size and facilities of this property were such that it could accommodate either a large family with servants, or two families, each having access to a kitchen, a parlour, a drawing room and three bedrooms.

The Times advertised two substantial Margate properties during June 1806. Mr. C. Long, acting for Messrs. Bowes, was arranging the auction of No 2, Prospect Place. It was

"A FREEHOLD BRICK DWELLING HOUSE; comprising six bed-rooms, drawing room, two parlours, two kitchens, with coal vaults, wash-house, containing a well of excellent water; near 400 feet of garden, walled in; an area in front, leading to the kitchen, pallisadoed. The whole in good repair, and

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 18 November 1800.
 2. The Times, 24 May 1806, 1b; 27 May 1806, 1c.
 3. Ibid., and also noted later in this section below.

immediate possession may be had. For particulars apply to Mr. Hannah, No 15, Blackfriars Road, and at No 3 next door to the premises. It may be viewed at any time previous to the sale. The house is 19 feet 6 in front, about 50 feet in depth. The whole depth, from front to back gate, is 145 feet. The back-gate opens to a 20 foot coach road. Should this Estate be disposed of by Private Contract, timely notice will be given in this Paper". (1)

The second property was for unfurnished letting: "a very compact DWELLING-HOUSE in thorough repair", containing front and back parlours, drawing and dining rooms, four bedrooms, front and back kitchens, cellars, "a good coach house, and stabling for three horses adjoining", situated on Dane Hill, "commanding a beautiful prospect of the Sea as far as the Nore, and in front, an extensive view of the island" Thanet, particulars from Mrs. Adams at the Duke's Head in Margate,² "or of J.W. 53, Haymarket, St. James's, London".³

The price of property is rarely mentioned. To what extent there was an inflation of property values it is impossible to say, but certainly the widest possible potential market was tapped through such media as The Times or The Kentish Gazette. Thanet properties were advertised in London and throughout Kent. Offered for sale "much under value" at 700 guineas, during July 1807, was "a handsome FREEHOLD HOUSE, well built only 14 years since 1793 in a desirable situation which commands a fine prospect", further enquiries of Mr. Weston, Great Bell-alley, Coleman Street, or at Mr. Betterson's Library in Margate.⁴ Circulating libraries became centres of information about properties or lodgings for sale or for letting.⁵ Some inflation in property values must have occurred, comparing the 700 guineas above, with the £200 paid by William Stone for a house in 1777.⁶

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1. The Times, 10 June 1806, 1b.
 2. She was keeping an inn in 1797 as noted above.
 3. The Times, 23 June 1806, 1c.
 4. Ibid., 2 July 1807, 1c.
 5. See also Chapter IV below.
 6. As noted in this section above.

Margate in the 1800's possessed several substantial and new residential properties, compared to the poorer and older properties of earlier days in the eighteenth century. They were lived in or hired by families of substance and social standing, either permanently or during the summer months. Seaside towns, as much as inland spas, attracted both permanent and fashionable residents. Eight houses in Union Crescent, occupied by wealthy and respectable tenants, were advertised for sale during August 1810: they were numbers 3, Mrs. Thompson; 5, Mr. Macdonald; 7, Sir Edward Hales, Bart.;¹ 8, Sir Richard Brooke, Bart.; 9, Lord Trunklestown; 10, Joseph Etridge Esq.; 11, Sir Horace Mann, Bart.; and 12, Lt. Col. Derby.²

The best properties in Margate compared favourably in size and elegance with some of the best properties in London. They were new and substantial, having frequently private coach houses and stabling. The more fashionable parts of the resort housed respectable residents. There were 81 gentry living in Margate in 1811,³ compared to 69 in 1796.⁴ In 1811 thirteen 'gentlemen' lived in Hawley Square, eight in the High Street, five in Church Field Place, four on Dane Hill, three in Cecil Square and two in Cecil Street.⁵

Any desire that "here might a town, full and complete, be raised"⁶ had been achieved in Margate by 1815, particularly with respect to residential properties, both in permanent and seasonal demand. A building boom, sustained over several decades, had extended Margate physically. New and elegant

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1. A Sir Edward Hales was among several gentlemen who took the lead back in the 1760's and 1770's in promoting Cecil and Hawley Squares, as noted in this section above.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 8 August 1810.
 3. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.
 4. The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796), op.cit.
 5. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.
 6. As noted above in the first section to this Chapter.

buildings had promoted the resort socially. These observations were equally applicable to Ramsgate and Broadstairs. Ramsgate in 1804 was

"well built, containing many good and elegant houses, and the streets are well paved and lighted. Within these few years vast additions have been made to it, and the inhabitants are now near 4,000, being an increase of above $\frac{1}{3}$ within these thirty years... Chapel-row, Prospect-row, Sion-hill, Nelson's-crescent and Albion-place are reckoned the best situated and finest piles of buildings in the Isle of Thanet: the latter is the most extensive and complete, from whence the best marine prospects are comprehended". (1)

Ramsgate likewise had experienced demolition, conversion and building, "since sea-bathing had been found indispensably necessary, and indeed the only possible remedy in various diseases", causing the town to be "much resorted to, during the summer season", so that "a new handsome street and other buildings have been added to it within a few years, and it has now many large and elegant edifices, purposely calculated for the accommodation of the visitants to this improved watering-place".² Ramsgate, like Margate, had acquired an "assembly room and Tavern", managed in 1816 by Mr. Bear, "who exerts his best endeavours to give satisfaction to all who honour him with their company"; added to which "there are several other inns well calculated for the accommodation of company and travellers, from which we must particularize the London Hotel, and the King's Head, which are both excellently conducted by their respective proprietors".³

Broadstairs had several new buildings by 1816, having "become a summer resort for many respectable families; and from the many new buildings erected it forms a small town".⁴ By 1797 the Phoenix Hotel, "facing the High Street and

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1. The Maritime Guide (circa 1804), 40, 42.
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 87.
 3. Ibid., 93.
 4. Ibid., 105.

Sea" was mostly "let as lodgings; it is convenient, and has every necessary accommodation", while the nearby village of St. Peter's was "the residence of several genteel families".¹ Broadstairs in 1816 boasted "two good houses of accommodation; the Albion Hotel, a new built house conveniently fitted up and kept by Mr. PEYTON, and lower down in the same street...the Rose Inn kept by Mr. FIDDLER (late PEYTON)";² while

"an elegant villa, at the entrance of this pleasant town, on the road to Margate in fact between Broadstairs and St. Peter's, has lately been built by Thomas FORSYTH Esq for his summer residence, with a spacious range of convenient stables, whose situation, for the beauty and extent of its prospect, is scarcely to be exceeded in this admired island Thanet: There are many other good houses in this place, the principal part of which are situated on the cliff towards the pier... Near is a good row of houses called Chandos-place, at the end of which is an elegant mansion called Chandos-Lodge... There are many good buildings in this marine village, and it is much frequented in the summer months by select families". (3)

Forsyth's villa, known subsequently as Pierremont House, was one of several newly erected or renovated marine estates which were used by wealthy families as summer retreats, several of which are described in The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (1816).

Although provision suppliers, and entertainments prospered from holiday expenditure, not all holidaymakers used public transport or stayed in rented seaside accommodation. The majority obviously did, but a wealthy minority did not. Some people stayed with relatives or friends. Aristocrats, gentlemen, wealthy merchants and professional men purchased marine estates and so never used seaside commercial accommodation at all. Their purchases of property, however, benefited the local property market and its agents. Local architects, builders and contractors were employed to improve and extend

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1. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 104-5.
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 109.
 3. Ibid., 109-110.

their estates.

Hengrove, close to Margate, belonged in 1816 to Sir Henry Hawley, Bart., of Leybourne,¹ after whom Hawley Square was named.² East Cliff Lodge, an imposing Gothic-style villa standing on the cliffs between Broadstairs and Ramsgate was purchased by Nathaniel Jeffrys Esq, "as a retreat during the summer from the noise and bustle of the metropolis".³ Four years later this elegant marine villa was auctioned by Mr. Christie at his Great Room in Pall Mall. It was a substantial property, having stabling for six horses and two coach houses, lying in grounds of ten acres, and constituting "one of the most distinguished Marine Villas in the Kingdom".⁴ Four years previously Mr. Christie had handled the sale of "an elegant freehold house, with large garden, nearly an acre", situated on Hooper's Hill in Margate.⁵

John Garratt Esq owned and resided at Ellington in 1816, about half a mile west from Ramsgate: "formerly [it was] a gentleman's seat...it has lately undergone a complete repair, and is certainly one of the best houses in the Isle of Thanet".⁶ As Attorney General, Sir William Garrow, erected close to Pegwell Bay "a neat villa" to which he occasionally retired "from the publicity of business".⁷ Between the latter and Ramsgate stood Belmont, which was an "elegant building in the Gothic taste", erected by Joseph Ruse Esq. It was sold subsequently to Lord Darnley and to T. Warre Esq, who owned the property in 1816.⁸ In the Parish of St. Peter's were Sackett's Hill,

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 84-5.
 2. As noted in this section above.
 3. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 57.
 4. The Times, 14 June, 3c; 16 June, 3c; 19 June, 4c; 21 June, 3d and 26 June 1800, 4a; also see Chapter VII below.
 5. The Kentish Gazette, 2 September 1796.
 6. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 98-9.
 7. Ibid., 100.
 8. Ibid., 100.

"the seat of Richard Burton Esq", and the hamlet of Stone, "where Sir Charles Raymond Bart. had built an elegant house, lately purchased by James Ramsey Cuthbert Esq".¹

Cleeve Court in the Parish of Monkton was described in 1817 as "a modern built mansion", having been "the site of a gentleman's seat for many centuries,... it commands a most extensive view of land and sea".² In 1758 it had been purchased for £5,800 by Josias Farrer of Doctors Commons, London. At his death in 1762 a very considerable property in estates and money passed to his only son Josias Fuller Farrer, then a minor.³ In riotous waste a fortune exceeding £100,000 was soon dispersed, reducing its thoughtless proprietor to comparative want.

"This young man coming thus prematurely into the possession of an ample fortune, fixed his residence principally at Cleeve, and converted it into a scene of riot and extravagance almost incredible. This is seen from the report of persons now 1817 living... He kept a kind of open house, where all visitors who could amuse or be amused, were welcome. He had seldom less than 40 guests with their servants; maintained 30 horses in his stables for various purposes, drove six in his carriage, with out riders mounted and furnished with french horns; kept hounds and hunters, and even a seraglio of women for the accommodation of his visitors. When his cellars overflowed with wine, butts were deposited to ripen in the out offices, and when required for use too frequently found emptied by a train of rascal attendants. A brewer's dray regularly conveyed three butts of ale to his vaults in a fortnight, and ...consumption occasionally exceeded that amount. Brewers' bills were delivered in, amounting to £400 and £500 and other tradesmen's in proportion". (4)

This account, perhaps slightly exaggerated, refutes the idea that what the wealthy consumed had no beneficial effects on an economy for, by way of a footnote, it was noted how

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 112.
 2. "Cleeve-Court, in the Parish of Monkton", The Thanet Magazine (August 1817), 91.
 3. Ibid., 93.
 4. Ibid., 93-4.

"several tradesmen, some of whom have since risen to opulence, may date the commencement of their prosperity from the extravagance of Mr. Farrer. Thus out of evil, arises good, and wanton waste of money, though it ultimately produces distress and repentance in the individual proprietor, enriches and improves the neighbourhood of his profusion". (1)

Josias Fuller Farrer considerably improved Cleeve Court. He laid out and walled in a kitchen garden, consisting of more than two acres, and planted a shrubbery surrounding a lawn at the back of the house.² The remains of what had been an ample property passed at his death to his son of the same name burdened with a mortgage, the whole being sold in 1807 for £15,000 to Henry Pott Hannam of Northburn Court who, after retaining a considerable portion of the estate, sold the remainder with the mansion house in August 1807 to Benjamin Bushell for £12,000.³ These prices represented considerable gains on the £5,800 which had been paid in 1758. Benjamin Bushell continued to reside at Cleeve Court in 1817.⁴

Although Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate witnessed a substantial residential expansion between the 1760's and 1815, there were many seasons when demand pressed on the supply of lodgings. This problem has already been briefly noted earlier.⁵ During 1759 Mr. and Mrs. Mount, who were prosperous London stationers and proprietors of copperas works at Whitstable, and their friends undertook a tour of Kent,⁶ which on 16 May took them to Margate.

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1. The Thanet Magazine, (August 1817), op.cit., 94. He afterwards retired to France, and occupied a post in the establishment of the Duke of Orleans, but with the French Revolution he returned to England and fixed his residence at Douglas, in the Isle of Man, where he died circa 1804, ibid., 94.
 2. Ibid., 94-5.
 3. Ibid., 95.
 4. Ibid., 95.
 5. As noted in this section above.
 6. Ed: F. Hull, "A Tour into Kent, 1759", Archaeologia Cantiana, Volume LXX (1955); reproduced also in Ed: M. Roake and J. Whyman, Essays in Kentish History (1973), 185-92. The fact that the Mounts possessed copperas works at Whitstable was clearly a reason to visit Kent, 171-2. This diary exists among the Mount papers in the Berkshire Record Office, D/Emt F5. In 1760 the Mounts followed the path of many prosperous business families in purchasing a country residence in Berkshire, ibid., 171.

"Hunt and Goodwin who had staid behind in Canterbury on account of the heat, found the party in the utmost confusion at Margate, occasioned by a Scarcity of beds, and at the Aspect of the Landlord where they had applied, Goodwin proposed to leave their Quarters and try elsewhere. Happily they were better, tho' indifferently off at one Jewell's, who by the much intreating of Mrs. Jewell, took them in, upon the resignation of a bed by a young Clergyman". (1)

Valentine Jewell, who died on 19 August 1766, was landlord of the White Hart on the Parade at Margate, his name appearing in advertisements in The Kentish Post of that period.

Pressures on lodgings occurred at the height of the season. A contemporary noted how in 1777 the company had "greatly varied at different times".² August and September were the peak months. During August 1781 it was reported from Margate that "we muster so strong at this delightful Summer retreat...that as to lodging, we are stowed of a night as thick as well packed figs in a grocer's cask!"³ Margate was "unusually full" late in August 1798, and "there is scarce an apartment in the town unoccupied: Muhener Mitchener makes up 40 beds".⁴ A year later almost to the day it was recorded that "there has been many a wrinkled brow in the City, since Margate was reported so crowded as to oblige the visitors to lie three in a bed".⁵ Early in September 1810 it was reported from Margate that "notwithstanding the increase of accommodation within these few years, a bed is at present obtained with difficulty".⁶ Margate in September 1814 was "full to an overflow: you may walk from one end to the other, without seeing half

1. Hull, op.cit., 174.
2. Letters of Momus, from Margate, Describing the most distinguished Characters There; And the Virtues, Vices and Follies to which they gave occasion, in what was called the Season of the Year 1777 (1778), 51.
3. The Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser, 23 August 1781, 3c.
4. The Observer, 26 August 1798, 2c.
5. The Morning Post and Gazetteer, 24 August 1799, 2c.
6. The Morning Chronicle, 4 September 1810, 3a.

a dozen bills; and, it is an absolute fact, that a gentleman devoted three hours yesterday in search of two beds and one sitting room, and failed in his object", while in Ramsgate the "town is now so full that a lodging cannot be procured in any leading situation".¹

A spell of fine weather could easily produce a great influx of visitors, thereby transforming the whole appearance of a resort. Fine weather caused visitors to stay longer, as was reported from Brighton on 6 October 1810: "the beauty of the weather keeps the town very full; large houses for families of distinction are in great request, and even the smaller houses are well filled".² Poor weather late in the season had the opposite effect, so that at the end of September 1786 "the late stormy weather has cleared Margate and Brighton of all their visiting inhabitants, and from the coldness of the season, families are coming to town from their country seats for the winter as fast as possible".³ Financial affairs in the City tempted visitors back to London during the final week of September 1810.

"Margate, October 2.

Since the last week, some of our mercantile men have left us to attend to their commercial concerns in your vast metropolis; and not a few of the monied interests have been allured by the sudden fall of the stocks to London to make cheap and profitable purchases in the public funds". (4)

Accommodation in advance was secured in a variety of ways. Visitors who were making for Broadstairs during the summer of 1754 were advised "to apply to Mr. John Jones, from whom they may hear of good Lodgings in the Neighbourhood pleasantly situated to the Sea". He knew of "one, two or three Rooms ready furnished or whole Houses, if desir'd and at reasonable Terms".⁵ Joseph Dyason, who owned warm sea-water baths in Ramsgate, financed

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1. The Morning Post, 12 September 1814, 3a.
 2. The Morning Chronicle, 8 October 1810, 3a.
 3. The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, 30 September 1786, 3b.
 4. The Morning Chronicle, 4 October 1810, 3b.
 5. The Kentish Post, or Canterbury News Letter, 1-5 June 1754, 4.

a front page advertisement, dated 13 May 1800, in The Times, whereby "Letters (post paid) of enquiry after Lodging Houses, at Ramsgate, will be strictly attended to".¹ Lodgings were secured through circulating libraries² and through the agency of London taverns or City and West End tradesmen. In June 1774 board and lodging at Margate were advertised with "a Small Family having taken a large handsome house", who "would be glad to accommodate about four ladies or gentlemen with lodgings and board if agreeable, on reasonable terms", if they would "enquire at the Half-moon Tavern, Holborn".³ Details, as noted above, of the whole or part of an elegantly furnished house in Margate High Street were available during May 1806 from an Oxford Street saddler, Mr. Beck.⁴ During the 1807 season particulars of Mrs. Davis's boarding house at No 21, Hawley Square, Margate, could be had from No 23, Red Cross Street, Cripplegate.⁵

Not all visitors sought or found accommodation in advance. One Northamptonshire country gentleman took the first lodgings, which he happened to find vacant in 1796, and then admitted that "we did not indeed give them a very scrupulous examination, for the place was so full, ... /rather/ we eagerly engaged the first lodgings we found vacant, and have ever since been disputing about the terms which from the hurry were not sufficiently ascertained".⁶ Margate inevitably had some disgruntled visitors who complained of the shortage, quality and price of lodgings.⁷ He also found much else to

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1. The Times, 9 July 1800, 1a.
 2. See Chapter IV below.
 3. The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser, 2 June 1774, 3b; The Daily Advertiser, 3 June 1774, 4c; also noted earlier in this section above.
 4. The Times, 24 May 1806, 1b; 27 May 1806, 1c; also noted in this section above.
 5. Ibid., 1 July 1807, 1b; 13 August 1807, 1b.
 6. 'Henry Homelove', "On Watering Places", The Annual Register (1796), 480.
 7. As noted earlier in this section above.

complain about.

"The chief gratification proposed [from a visit to Margate] was an entire freedom from care or form. We should find everything requisite in our lodgings. It was not until after we had taken them, that we discovered how far ready furnished lodgings were from affording every article in the catalogue of necessaries... We are continually lamenting that we were obliged to buy things of which we have such plenty at home... The spirit of greediness and rapacity is no where so conspicuous as in the lodging houses... In this manner, sir, has the season past away. I spend a great deal of money... I am cooped up in less room than my own dog kennel, while my spacious halls are injured by standing empty... As to the great ostensible object of our excursion, health, I am afraid we cannot boast of much improvement. We have had a wet and cold summer; and these houses, which are either old tenements vamped up, or new ones slightly run up for the accommodation of bathers during the season, have more contrivances for letting in the cooling breezes than for keeping them out,... apartments which, during the winter, have only been inhabited by the rats, and where the poverty of the landlord prevents him from laying out more in repairs than will serve to give them a showy and attractive appearance... I am told by the good company here, that I have stayed too long in the same air, and that now I ought to take a trip to the Continent, and spend the winter at Nice, which would complete the business. I am entirely of their opinion, that it would complete the business". (1)

Such complaints had long characterized the inland spas as in Tunbridge Wells in 1724.

"Lodgings are so dear and scarce, that a Beau is sometimes glad of a barn, and a lady of honour content to lie in a garret: the horses being commonly put to grass for the servants to lie in the stable. My landlord was a farmer, and his very outhouses were so full that, having sheared some sheep, he abated me 2s.6d. a week to let the wool lie in my bed chamber". (2)

The passage of time did not necessarily produce any improvement, so that at Cheltenham at the end of the century lodgings were "enormously dear, and, like those at Tunbridge Wells, ill adapted, to the middling sort of society, not only extravagant in the extreme, but shamefully deficient in point of

1. The Annual Register (1796), op.cit., 479-80, 481, 482-3.
2. Mr. Ward, "The London Spy" in Familiar Letters (1724), Volume II published by Samuel Briscoe and quoted in Notes and Queries, 3 July 1858, 8.

accommodation".¹

When pressures of demand were absolutely at a peak, as in Brighton in 1801, events could soon get out of control in which case it was not only the price of lodgings which was driven up but also the market value of land: "building at Brighton continues with much spirit - a field at the entrance of the town of about $\frac{3}{4}$ acre sold for 3,000 guineas, and a piece of ground, at present occupied by a pile of old atables...near the Duke of Marlborough's has been sold at 15 guineas per foot - Portland Place cost only 25s. per foot, and that price was deemed inordinate".² An acre of building ground, to the east of the New Steyne at Brighton, sold in April 1802 "for the immense sum of 1,000 guineas".³ On the lodging house front problems had reached such a pitch as to demand some collective action, so that in the last week of July 1801 it was announced that "the Proprietors of Lodging Houses at Brighton have resolved for the remainder of the season to make public a List and Description of their Houses, with the terms per month, so that families may be able to accommodate themselves without trouble or imposition".⁴ It was further announced in January 1802 that

"the system of forestalling or jobbing lodgings at Brighton, by which the rent was, during the last season, raised to a most exorbitant price, has been discontinued, in consequence of the owners of those houses having resolved not to let them excepting to the party immediately occupying them; and to facilitate to the visitors of the place the obtaining of suitable apartments a registry is formed at the Post-Office, descriptive of the accommodation, rent, etc, of all lodgings in the town". (5)

Bath was more organized at the end of the eighteenth century, where apartments

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1. G.S. Carey, The Balnea; or, An Impartial Description of all the Popular Watering Places in England (1799), 145; also on Tunbridge Wells, ibid., 52.
 2. The Times, 8 June 1801, 3a.
 3. Ibid., 16 April 1802, 2d.
 4. The Morning Chronicle, 24 July 1801, 3b.
 5. The Times, 18 January 1802, 3b. Extortion in the price of lodgings at Brighton in 1801 had been preceded in 1800 by extortion in the price of provisions.

"let at a stipulated price: half a guinea each room, no more, or less, even in the very best lodging houses".¹

The price of lodgings varied according to supply, demand, quality and situation. Lodgings with a sea view or in a particularly fashionable or convenient area commanded higher prices.² When Joseph Farington arrived in Broadstairs on 2 August 1804 he found "John Offley Wine Merchant and His wife and Miss Glover her sister agreeably lodged at Barfield's Library for four guineas per week - We dined with them and lodged near them".³ Barfield's Library commanded "a most delightful view of the ocean, with the Downs and coast of France,"⁴ so that lodgings taken close by could have been at the Albion Hotel fronting the sea. On 3 August Farington took cheaper lodgings "a little removed from the sea side, two minutes walk from Barfield's Library - at Mrs. Redman's, a small neat House for which Wm. Offley and I agreed to pay two guineas a week for three weeks, - and she undertook to make our beds, etc. - Linen we agreed to hire".⁵

In 1812 at Mrs. Cotterell's boarding house in Margate each lady or gentleman paid "three guineas a week, for which they are furnished with an excellent table, and a separate bed-room; but when a gentleman and his wife are together, under the consideration of their occupying only one sleeping apartment, the terms for board and lodging are reduced to five".⁶ Some saving on the cost of a holiday could be achieved when a family let their London home, while they were away at the seaside:

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1. Carey, op.cit., 121.
 2. As noted earlier in this section above.
 3. Greig, op.cit., Volume II, 271.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 99.
 5. Greig, op.cit., 271.
 6. Pilkington, op.cit., 118-9.

"To be LET, Ready Furnished, for 3, 4 or 6 months, the family going to the Coast, a small genteel House, situated about four miles from London, on the Essex Road, where stages pass every hour,...the terms very moderate - Apply to Mr. Richardson, Bookseller, Royal Exchange; Mr. Gould, Hatter, Ludgate-hill; Mr. Winterbourn, Taylor, Soho-square; and Mr. Phillips, Shoemaker, Fenchurch-street". (1)

Holidaymakers who patronized the inns, hotels, lodging and boarding houses and private residences of the Isle of Thanet indulged not only in sea bathing. They also demanded amusements and "ready supplies of articles for the table".² How did Margate, in particular, provide such facilities for the comfort, health and amusement of its visitors?

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1. The Times, 23 May 1806, 1c.
 2. See Chapters IV and V below.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROVISION WITHIN THANET OF ESSENTIAL ENTERTAINMENTS
AND SOCIAL FACILITIES FROM THE 1760's.

By the end of the 1760's extra bathing facilities, assembly rooms, circulating libraries and a playhouse had made their début in Margate. Entertainments, including a permanent theatre, increased and improved thereafter. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine the provision of essential entertainments and social facilities, including opportunities for religious worship in churches and chapels, which developed along lines familiar to the older inland spas and which were taken for granted by visitors drawn from the ranks of the aristocracy, the gentry and the clergy.

Increased and Improved Bathing Facilities.

The development and perfection of bathing arrangements at Margate occurred before the 1760's.¹ Thereafter the bathing facilities of Thanet as a whole increased and improved, the improvements including hot, cold and vapour baths. The bathing machine had been developed and enjoyed a considerable renown,² so that in 1776 "the Machines for bathing are so generally known that a description of them is needless".³ Early guidebooks proudly recorded that twenty machines were sometimes in use in Margate at the same time,⁴ but by the 1800's the number of machines exceeded forty.

1. See Chapter II above.

2. Ibid.

3. C. Seymour, A New Topographical, Historical and Commercial Survey of the Cities, Towns and Villages of the County of Kent (Canterbury, 1776), 557.

4. For instance, The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), 16.

TABLE 17 : BATHING ROOMS AND MACHINES IN MARGATE, 1763-1816

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rooms</u>	<u>Machines</u>
1763 ¹	3	11
1770 ²	5	20
1779 ³	7	30
1790's ⁴	-	30-40
1816 ⁵	8	Over 40

The bathing machines of the 1790's were employed in the season from April to November,⁶ and generally there was a favourable contemporary approval for Margate's pre-1815 baths and machines:

"every bathing-machine has a kind of canvas umbrella affixed to it, not much unlike the end of a waggon; that is let down to the water's edge, and forms a pleasing retired bath, happily calculated to preserve the modesty of the female sex in particular; very different from the marine watch or sentry-boxes of Brighthelmstone", (7) and "the pleasures and advantages of bathing may under their friendly shade be enjoyed in so private a manner, as not to offend the strictest and most refined delicacy". (8)

1. J. Lyons, A Description of the Isle of Thanet, and particularly of the Town of Margate (1763), 12.
2. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 16.
3. Burlington's Modern Universal British Traveller (1779).
4. Z. Cozens, A Tour through the Isle of Thanet and Some Other Parts of East Kent (1793), 3; A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet; Being Chiefly Intended as a Directory for the Company Resorting to Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs (Margate, 1796), 14.
5. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide, or An Historical Epitome of the Ancient and Present State of the Isle of Thanet (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), 60-1.
6. The Kentish Companion for the Year of Our Lord, 1792 (Canterbury, 1792), 160; likewise at Ramsgate "a great number are employed in the season, which begins in April and ends in November", ibid., 162; also by this time Folkestone had two bathing machines; Hythe had "bathing machines and lodging-houses, in the season"; Deal had two bathing-machine proprietors, Pitcher & Co., and N. Mockett & J. Wood; and Dover had "bathing-machines in the season by B. Gardner, and Iggulden, Austin & Hawker", ibid., 153, 156, 158, 159.
7. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), 12-13.
8. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 15.

The provision of baths and bathing machines was combined into one enterprise, and this was so both in 1770, and during the 1800's. In the bathing rooms of 1770 "the Company wait for their Turns; the Guides attend; Sea-water is drank; the Ladies Bathing-dresses are taken care of", and "there are five of these Rooms which employ twenty Machines".¹ By 1808 Margate had seven bathing rooms situated near the harbour, on the western side of the High Street, "constructed for the use of the company intending to bathe, who enter the bathing machines in the order in which their names have been inscribed on a slate in the lobby".² Sea bathing was by no means inexpensive at the commencement of the nineteenth century.³

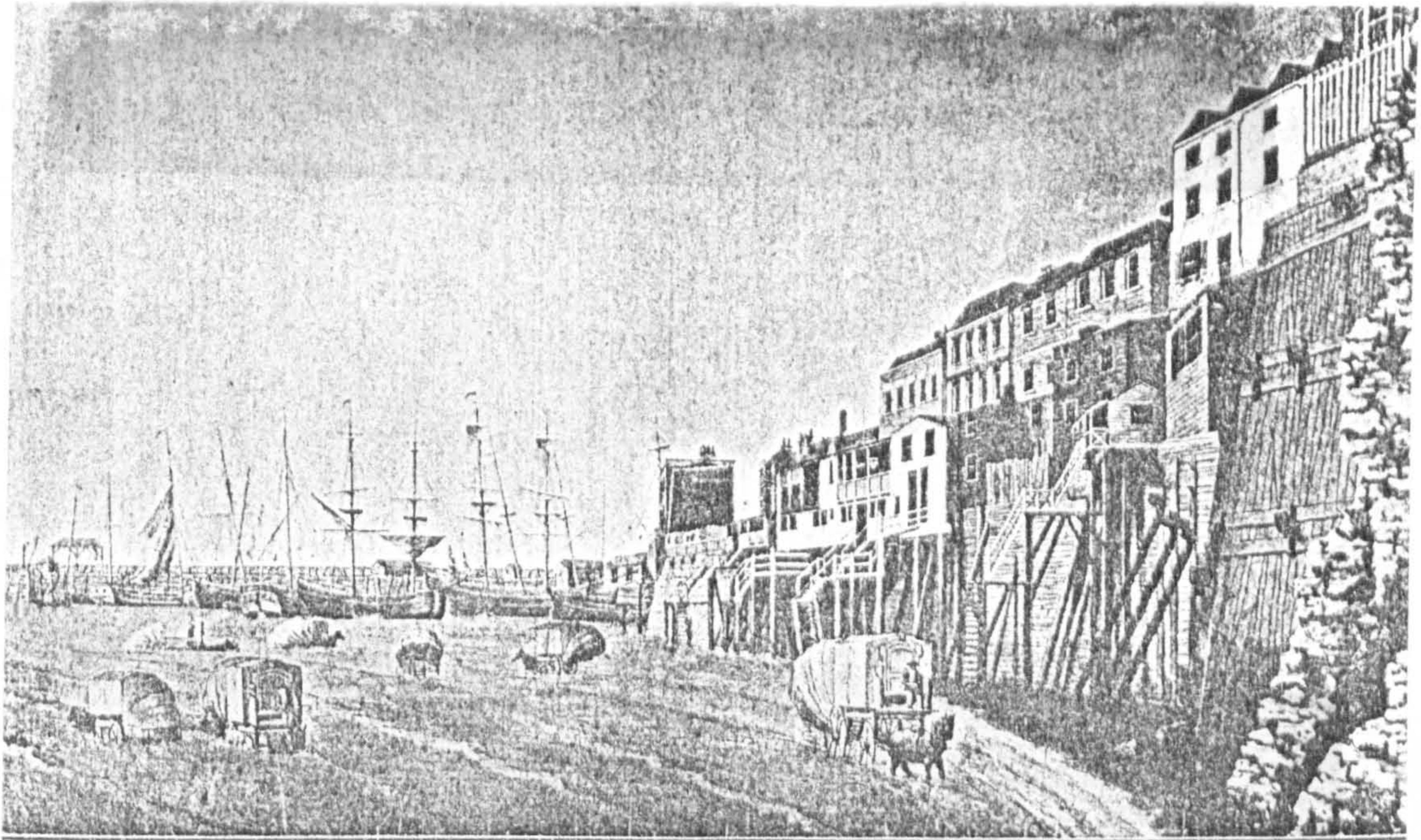
Margate's early bathing rooms were "not large, but convenient";⁴ later, in 1779, they were "excellently well calculated for their intended purposes";⁵ in the 1790's they transacted a brisk business:

"I get up generally about seven, and the first thing I do every morning...is to go to the bathing or waiting room to have my name put down among the company who bathe, of whom there are frequently not less than one hundred, and sometimes more, in the height of the season. The bathing or waiting rooms, from seven till nine, are generally full of persons of all ages; men, women and children, waiting till their turns come to go bathing, according as their names appear on the slate; (one being kept at each room for that purpose). 'First come first served', is the invariable rule, and I think a very proper one; no distinction is made between the rich and the poor". (6)

1. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 15-16.
2. Edward Wedlake Brayley, The Beauties of England and Wales; Or Delineations Topographical, Historical and Descriptive, Volume VIII: Kent (1808), 960.
3. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), 55.
4. In 1763, Lyons, op.cit., 12; in 1770, The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 15.
5. Burlington's Modern Universal British Traveller (1779), op.cit.
6. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 8-9.

MARGATE'S BATHING ROOMS IN 1788 AND 1820 AND

TERMS OF BATHING IN 1809.



Margate Pier and Bathing Rooms.

From a water-colour drawing by Robt. Sherbourne, 1788.

TERMS OF BATHING.

Lady taking a machine, guide included	1	3
Two or more ladies, guide included	1	0 each
Child taking a machine, guide included	1	3
Two or more young children, guide included ..	0	9 each
Gentleman taking a machine, guide included ..	1	6
Gentleman bathing himself	1	0
Two or more gentlemen, guide included	1	3 each
Two or more gentlemen bathing themselves ..	0	9
Warm bath 3s. 6d. each time, or Seven times for One Guinea.		

The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), p. 55.



THE BACK OF BATHING HOUSES.

W. C. Oulton, Picture of Margate, and Its Vicinity (1820), p. 52.

In 1797 there were five bathing or waiting rooms, kept by Phillpott Surflen, Sayer, Wood and Hubbard, serving a "great number of persons who come here to bathe", each of which employed between July and October "five or six machines for bathing every morning", which meant that "from 20 to 30 machines are often seen in the water together at one time, and a pretty sight it is as they much resemble an aquatic encampment, the chief of them being painted white".¹ Ladies, children and "small talk" characterized the bathing rooms.

"The principal enquiry of everyone is, 'Is it my turn? or how long will it be before my turn comes?... How do you like bathing? Is it of service to you? Do you design to drink the water this morning? If it is agreeable, I will go with you in your machine...', for it is quite tiresome waiting so long'. ... Indeed I can compare the bathing-room, from seven till nine in the morning, to nothing better than an exchange for ladies". (2)

The time spent in waiting to enter a bathing machine depended upon the state of the tide:

"sometimes the tide is down at the time of bathing, when the machines are obliged to be drove about a quarter of a mile on the sands before they come to a proper depth for bathing; at other times, when the tide is in, they are not drove out above five or six yards from the bathing rooms; this naturally occasions a great difference as to the time of persons waiting to bathe". (3)

This correspondent of 1797 preferred bathing at Margate to Brighton, for two reasons.

"The sands, where the company bathe, are almost as level and smooth as a bowling green for near half a mile from the bathing-rooms, which makes bathing greatly preferable to Brighthelmstone, where the descent into the water is within a few yards from the beach, and in some parts covered with gravel. There are young women appointed at each bathing-room, to take down the names of

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 9.
 2. Ibid., 10-11.
 3. Ibid., 10.

the company as they come, and see that none go out of their turn; but as the bathing machines will hold six persons, sometimes three or four go together; the women bathers are, in general, very.... well behaved young women, very different from the clumsy old women guides at Brighthelmstone". (1)

During September 1805 The Times reported that

"bathing has been so much the mode, that the female guides have been converted into mermaids; they are become a sort of amphibious animal in pickle, from blushing June to dark November". (2)

Warm salt-water baths appeared in Margate during the 1760's. John Mitchener's bath in May 1769 could be heated to any temperature within a few minutes, "according to the Regulation of [a] Faxulecto Thermometer, which has been provided for that purpose".³ A year later he possessed "two new Hot Salt-water Baths on a most excellent Construction".⁴ In 1792 Mitchener's Hotel and Marble Salt Water Baths stood "ready for use every day".⁵ Of three warm sea-water baths in Margate in 1796 two belonged to Mitchener, the third having been recently established by Hughes.⁶

Margate was to the forefront in the provision and perfection of eighteenth century bathing facilities, being "the first seaside town to organize sea-bathing on a commercial footing".⁷ Improvements were many, rapid and progressive from open shore bathing in the 1720's, to the first bathing rooms of the 1730's and 1740's;⁸ to the perfection by Benjamin Beale of the bathing machine which replaced tilted carts;⁹ to the adoption in the 1760's of warm salt-water baths, ending ultimately in douchet and vapour baths, which were

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 10.
 2. The Times, 26 September 1805, 3b.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 27-31 May 1769, 1d.
 4. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 14; see also Chapter II above.
 5. The Kentish Companion For the Year of Our Lord, 1792 (Canterbury, 1792), op.cit., 160.
 6. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 18.
 7. The Isle of Thanet Gazette and Thanet Times, 30 July 1927, 9.
 8. As noted in Chapter II above.
 9. Ibid.

on a par with the "strictest delicacy" machines, comprising a flannel tent into which steam was led.¹

Contemporary sources marvelled at these developments. Early guidebooks praised the virtues of the Margate bathing machine. Those of 1763, 1770 and 1780, contained plates of the machine as a frontispiece, with John Lyons offering his readers "a Representation of the Machines for Bathing".² A rear hood, worked by a driver by means of a cord and pulley, descended to the water, thereby sheltering the bather from the prying eyes of 'Peeping Toms' with telescopes. In 1768 William Crow possessed two bathing rooms and "a machine House".³ Nearly all of Margate's sea bathing took place at the back of the High Street, where the bathing rooms were situated. From the rooms there was access to the machines, and to the sands, steps leading down to the latter from the galleries behind them. Margate's bathing rooms soon served a double purpose, developing both as bathing and social centres. Visitors met their friends at the bathing rooms where, for a small subscription, the daily and weekly newspapers could be consulted. Some contained coffee rooms which remained open after bathing hours. Amateur concerts were held in the evenings. Bathers issued their own trade cards, containing illustrations of the bathing machine. John Mitchener, the landlord of the New Inn,⁴ and the proprietor of machines and baths, issued cards from 1768 onwards.

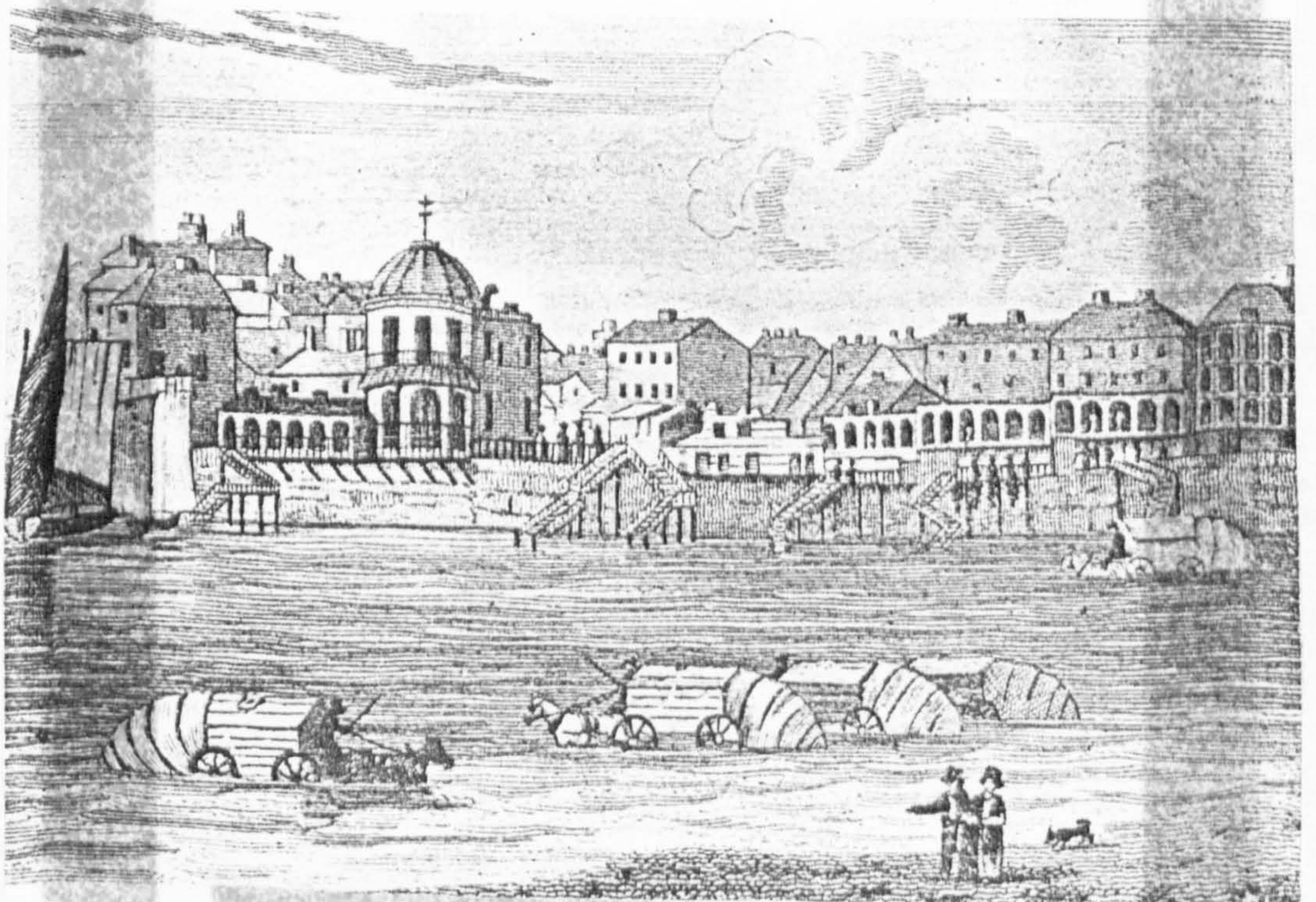
How Margate's bathing proprietors carried on their craft is apparent from multitudes of old pictures and prints. Among the visual impressions are those of James Gillray for 1807.⁵ Compared to the nineteenth century, the

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1. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Bathing at Margate from 1750, Margate Public Library Local Collection, Y060.537, Rowe Bequest, 1915.
 2. Lyons, op.cit., 70-1; The Margate Guide;..In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., contains "a View of the Bathing Machine in its several Positions", and an "Explanation of the Structure of the Machine", 52-4, the latter being repeated word for word in The Margate Guide (1780), 49-50.
 3. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Bathing at Margate from 1750, op.cit.
 4. See Chapter III above.
 5. D. Hill, Mr. Gilray the Caricaturist (1965), 136-7; also see Chapter VII below.

PRIVACY IN MATTERS OF SEA BATHING.



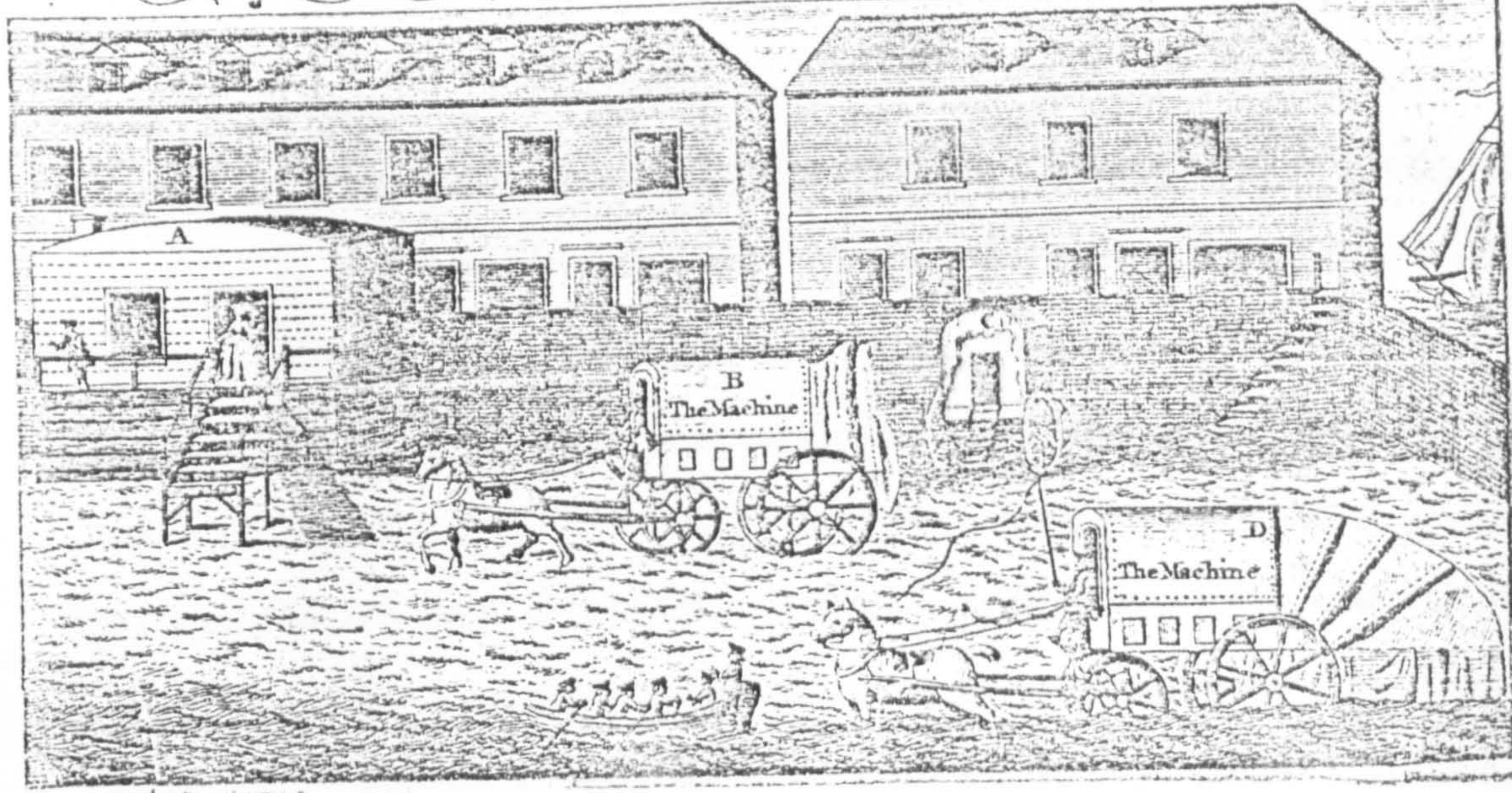
But still the Telescopes were busy



Bathing in a Manner consistent with the most Refined Delicacy

H. G. Stokes, The Very First History of the English Seaside (1947), pp. 16-17.

For Bathing in the SEA at Margate in the Isle of Thanet KENT.



BEACH OF MARGATE
 The
 Parker Collection
 No. 2775

EXPLANATION
 of the STRUCTURE of the MACHINE.

A. The Bathing Room, to the steps of which the Machine B. is driving, with its umbrella drawn up.

C. A back view of the Machine, shewing its steps, and the folding doors which open into a Bath of eight feet by thirteen feet, formed by the fall of the umbrella.

D. The Machine, as used in Bathing, with its umbrella down.

The entrance into the Machine is through a door, at the back of the driver; who sits on a moveable bench, and raises or lets fall the umbrella by means of a line, which runs along the top of the Machine, and is fastened to a pin over the door. This line is guided by a piece of wood of three feet in length, which projects, pointing a little downward, from the top of the back part of the Machine, through which it passes, in a sloping direction. To the end of this piece is suspended a cord, for the Bather to lay hold on, if he wants support.

The umbrella is formed of light canvas, spread on four hoops. The height of each of which is seven feet, and each is eight feet wide at its axis.

The last hoop falls to an horizontal level with its axis, from whence depends the curtain.

The pieces which support the hoops are about six feet in length; they are fastened to the bottom of the Machine, but are extended, by a small curve, about one foot wider than the body of it on each side. The hoops move in grooves in these pieces. The distance of the axis of the first hoop is more than two feet from the Machine; of the rest from each other, something more than one foot; but no great exactness is required in these proportions, as scarce any two of them are built alike.

names of bathers did not appear as a rule in the early guidebooks. Owning bathing machines was a competitive business. It was a more lowly pursuit than running a circulating library or possessing a hotel. The bathing trade was confined largely to certain well-known families. It often survived in the same family hands over long periods. The Beales were bathers in the 1750's and 1760's, and from 1819 to 1842. Despite the praise showered on Benjamin Beale (circa 1717-1775) and his bathing machine,¹ he derived little material benefit from his invention. In 1817 he was said "to have ruined himself by bringing...bathing machines into use",² while a subsequent historian has argued that

"Beale did not reap the pecuniary advantage which his ingenuity deserved. After successive storms, when his machines and bathing rooms were damaged and destroyed, he became so financially embarrassed that a public subscription, under the auspices of Sir John Shaw, Bart., and Dr. Hawley, was promoted for his benefit". (3)

His successors derived greater benefits from owning bathing rooms and machines, "than the inventor".⁴ The Surfleens were in the bathing business between the 1760's and the 1790's. The Hubbards operated between 1775 and 1807. The names of Phillipott, Surfleens, Sayer, Wood and Hubbard occurred in 1789, and those names plus Hughes and Jarrett appeared in 1796.⁵ Eleven years later Hughes and Wood were still in the business,⁶ but the Phillipotts were the doyen of the craft, the family having an unbroken record from 1789 to 1878, when the construction of the Marine Drive put an end to their operations.⁷ The Woods had almost as long a run from 1774 to 1848.

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1. As noted above in Chapter II.
 2. E.W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports, Volume I (1817), 61.
 3. G.E. Clarke, Historic Margate (2nd Ed., Margate, 1961), 29. The Shaw and Hawley families also played a prominent role in promoting a Margate building boom during the 1760's and 1770's, as noted in Chapter III above.
 4. W.C. Oulton, Picture of Margate and Its Vicinity (2nd Ed., 1821), 53.
 5. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Bathing at Margate from 1750, op.cit.
 6. Hill, op.cit., 136.
 7. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Bathing at Margate from 1750, op.cit.

Although the business of bathing involved a considerable capital outlay in rooms, machines and horses, in wages paid to drivers and guides, the latter dipping the timid, and scaring off encroaching onlookers, and in feed for horses throughout the year, including the long winter months when they were not working, it could prove a profitable trade, where bankruptcies were less frequent than among circulating library proprietors.¹

There is little information concerning capital investment in the bathing business, except that in 1834 the cost of a new bathing machine was about £60. It had a life expectancy of about 30 to 40 years, depending on treatment and wear and tear. The rate of depreciation was such that after two years a machine would fetch 40 guineas, but after 30 years it might fetch only 4 guineas.² If a bathing machine proprietor employed ten machines, his initial fixed capital outlay on machines alone was £600, on the price of 1834. In addition, he had need of a bathing or waiting room, horses to drive the machines into the water, stables to house and fodder to feed the horses, some means of storage for the machines out of season, winter pasture for the horses, to say nothing of the drivers and guides employed to drive and direct the machines. While the latter were employed seasonally, a bathing proprietor could not escape the cost of caring for his horses during the winter months. No doubt, the horses provided dung which could be sold to local farms, or could be employed in other ways out of season, but always a sufficiently large profit had to be realized during the summer months to provide a winter income over and above certain expenses incurred throughout the year.

From the 1770's the number of bathing rooms in Margate fluctuated between five and eight. The growth curve levelled off as baths became more costly and luxurious. A trend towards greater lavishness was a feature of the

1. See the section on "The Circulating Libraries" below.

2. General Sea Bathing Infirmary, Margate Committee Minute Book, 1811-37, 15 July 1834.

nineteenth century. Sea bathing had taken on new refinements by 1816. There were improved bathing rooms, which were "contrived on a plan so commodious and convenient, as to form an agreeable lounge to those who do not bathe, some of them being well supplied with the daily papers, and [they] have grand pianofortes...for the use of the subscribers".¹ Bathing occurred every morning, when "these rooms are mostly resorted to...by the company who intend to bathe; a slate is affixed in the lobby for the insertion of names, and everyone in his regular turn, is driven in the machines a convenient depth into the sea, under the conduct of careful guides; at the back of the machine is a door through which the bathers descend a few steps into the water, and an umbrella of canvas falling over conceals them from public view".² These facilities for cold sea bathing were supplemented by two shower baths and "six marble warm salt-water baths, upon a good construction,... [which are] filled from the sea, and heated to any degree of temperature required, at a few minutes notice".³ Surgeons and physicians were available for consultations on "the good effects of salt water".⁴

Developments along similar lines occurred also in Ramsgate and Broadstairs, least of all in the latter, where "the bathing place is in and off the harbour", and where "the machines and rooms are upon the same plan, and...the same terms as those at Margate and Ramsgate".⁵ Messrs. Elgar, Nuckell & Co. and Mr. Osborne were listed as the proprietors of bathing machines in Broadstairs in 1797: they "have spacious waiting rooms, and every accommodation necessary for the conveniency of Bathing".⁶ Jurisdiction over the main bay at Broadstairs,

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 60.
 2. Ibid., 60.
 3. Ibid., 61.
 4. Ibid., 61-2; also see Chapter II above.
 5. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 109.
 6. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), 104.

between the pier and Fishness Point, was given to the Pier Commissioners under the Broadstairs Harbour Bill of 1792.¹ They received rents on bathing rooms and bathing machine stands, which were entered in The Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book between 1792 and 1807:

29 March 1796, "Rec'd. of Mr. Thos. Elgar for Rent of the Bathing Rume - 11s".

17 March 1797, "Mr. Nuckle for y Rent of y Bathing-house - 11s. For y Stand of y Machines £1".

16 March 1798, "y Rent of the Bathing House by Mr. Stephen Nuckel - 11s. y Stand of y Machines £1". (2)

Improved facilities at Broadstairs by 1816 included warm baths, which one of the town's librarians Mr. Barfield had erected "upon a good construction".³

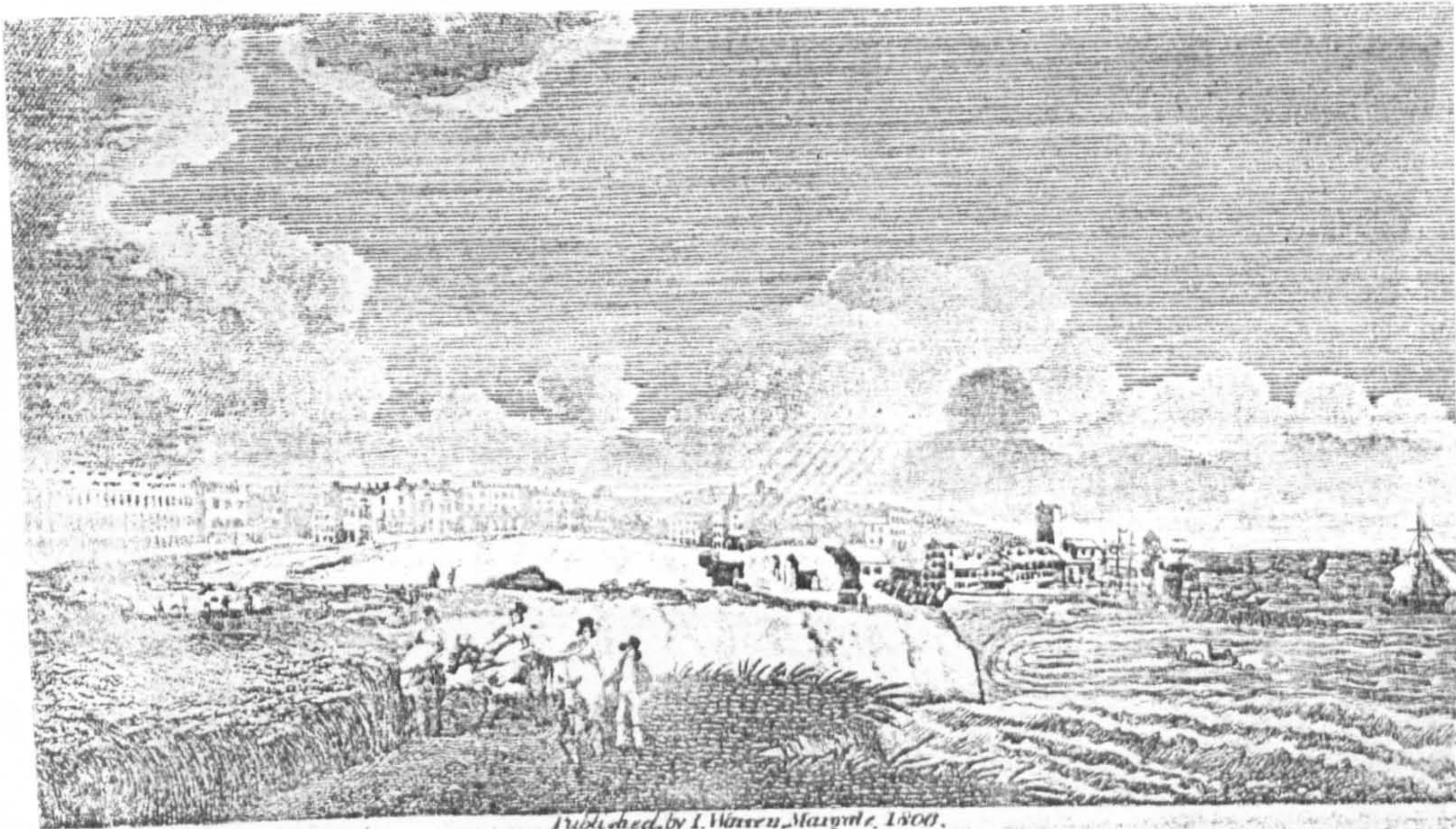
The bathing facilities of Ramsgate were described thus in the early 1800's:

"the bathing place, which is furnished with machines, guides, and all other accommodations, is under the cliffs on the east side of the harbour, and has every advantage that can be desired... There are also two well constructed warm salt-water baths". (4)

The completion of "warm and cold water baths, on a very good construction" was first accomplished in Ramsgate during the 1790's.⁵ Sea bathing at Ramsgate in 1816 took place from "the sand at the back of the pier, where the machines ply after the same manner as at Margate, [and where] are good waiting rooms for the bathers; but they are neither so large nor so well situated for the purpose as those of Margate, and are totally divested of newspapers and other sources of accommodation".⁶ Mr. Dyason, of "The Bath House", was a prominent bathing-room proprietor, possessing a conventional bathing room,

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1. 32 Geo. III c.86, Clause XXIV.
 2. Broadstairs Pier Treasurer's Account Book, 1796-1798.
 3. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 109.
 4. The Maritime Guide (circa 1804), 39-40.
 5. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 53.
 6. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 94.

VIEWS OF BATHING AT BROADSTAIRS AND RAMSGATE.



Published by I. Waverley, Margate, 1800.

BROADSTAIRS, FROM THE CLIFFS.

The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), facing p. 96. Note the new buildings lining the top of the cliff.



The Bathing Place at Ramsgate by Benjamin West.

This appeared on the front cover of The Listener, Volume LXXII, No. 1866, 31 December 1964.

four warm sea-water baths and "a plunging and shower-bath, which are so contrived as to have a continual supply from every tide", attached to which were "very convenient waiting and dressing-rooms". The whole premises had been "completed on such a plan as to be much approved and recommended".¹ Some of these additions and improvements had been finished by 1797, "at a very considerable expense, and in a superior style of elegance", the whole enjoying the recommendation of "several of the most eminent Physicians in the Kingdom".²

Ramsgate laid claim to the newest and most lavish warm salt-water baths, which were publicly opened on 10 June 1816.³ They were described in the Introduction to a guidebook which was written ten days later.

"They are situated on the west cliff, and terminate the elegant range of buildings called the Paragon. The front is placed towards the sea, the space between it and the cliff being laid out as a promenade; an elegant saloon forms the centre compartment, having the baths and dressing rooms in each wing. All the baths are formed of white marble, and are of the dimensions of the celebrated warm baths of Naples; to allow...invalids using the friction brush...not to expose any part of their bodies above the surface of the water, they are placed in a room lighted and ventilated from the ceiling; the dressing rooms which communicate with them are of ample size and fitted up with everything that can administer to the comfort and pleasure of the bathers; the saloon is furnished with the daily papers, reviews, and other periodical publications; and commands delightful views of...Pegwell Bay, Deal, Dover, and the coast of France from Dunkirk to Boulogne". (4)

This extensive establishment possessed shower and vapour baths, "constructed to produce medicated vapour if required".⁵ A tent-like construction for the

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 94.
 2. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 99.
 3. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 94.
 4. Ibid., 94-5.
 5. Ibid., 95.

vapour baths contained sleeve-like pockets, opening on the outside, through which the operator thrusting his hands rubbed the bather down.¹ The pumping of sea water and steam heating were also featured in these new baths, which attracted much favourable comment.

"A horizontal funnel, in which the tide ebbs and flows, has been excavated in the chalk rock, and runs under the building until it joins with the vertical funnel containing the pumps and pipes, which raise the water to the reservoir on the top, from which it is conveyed by pipes to the boilers and other parts of the buildings. The pumps are worked by horses, and are so placed as always to get their supply at high water.

Considerable inconvenience often having been experienced by invalids using the warm bath, in consequence of the unequal temperature of the apartment, and the currents of cold air acting on some parts of the body, great attention has been paid to obviate this objection to the mode of heating these buildings in general. This has been accomplished by adopting steam as the heating power, and the heat is so equally diffused over the whole building that in the coldest days it has all the delightful warmth of a day in summer". (2)

Customers of Thanet's newest baths paid for the latest luxuries, according to their preferences in bathing: "each warm bath is charged 3s.6d.... cold bath, 2s.... cold shower-bath, 1s.6d....warm shower-bath, 2s.6d."³ A primitive kind of central heating was far removed from the very simple bathing arrangements of the 1750's. The latter had been considered adequate in their day, but with the passage of time greater attention had been given to the comforts of bathing and merely lounging visitors. Ramsgate's new baths in 1816 were indicative of a nineteenth-century move towards greater lavishness. Margate maintained an overall lead over Ramsgate, in having a greater number of bathing machines and a finer bathing beach, but having the latest in luxury bathing placed Ramsgate in a strong position to rival Margate, until the famous Clifton Baths were constructed during the 1820's, "for the

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1. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Bathing at Margate from 1750, op.cit.
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 95-6.
 3. Ibid., 96.

accommodation of the numerous houses built on the Fort".¹ Here was an immense undertaking involving a tremendous capital outlay in coastal excavation and sea defences. They followed complaints that "amidst the many improvements of this public-spirited town, no attempt had been made to render the sea-bathing more pure and more private".²

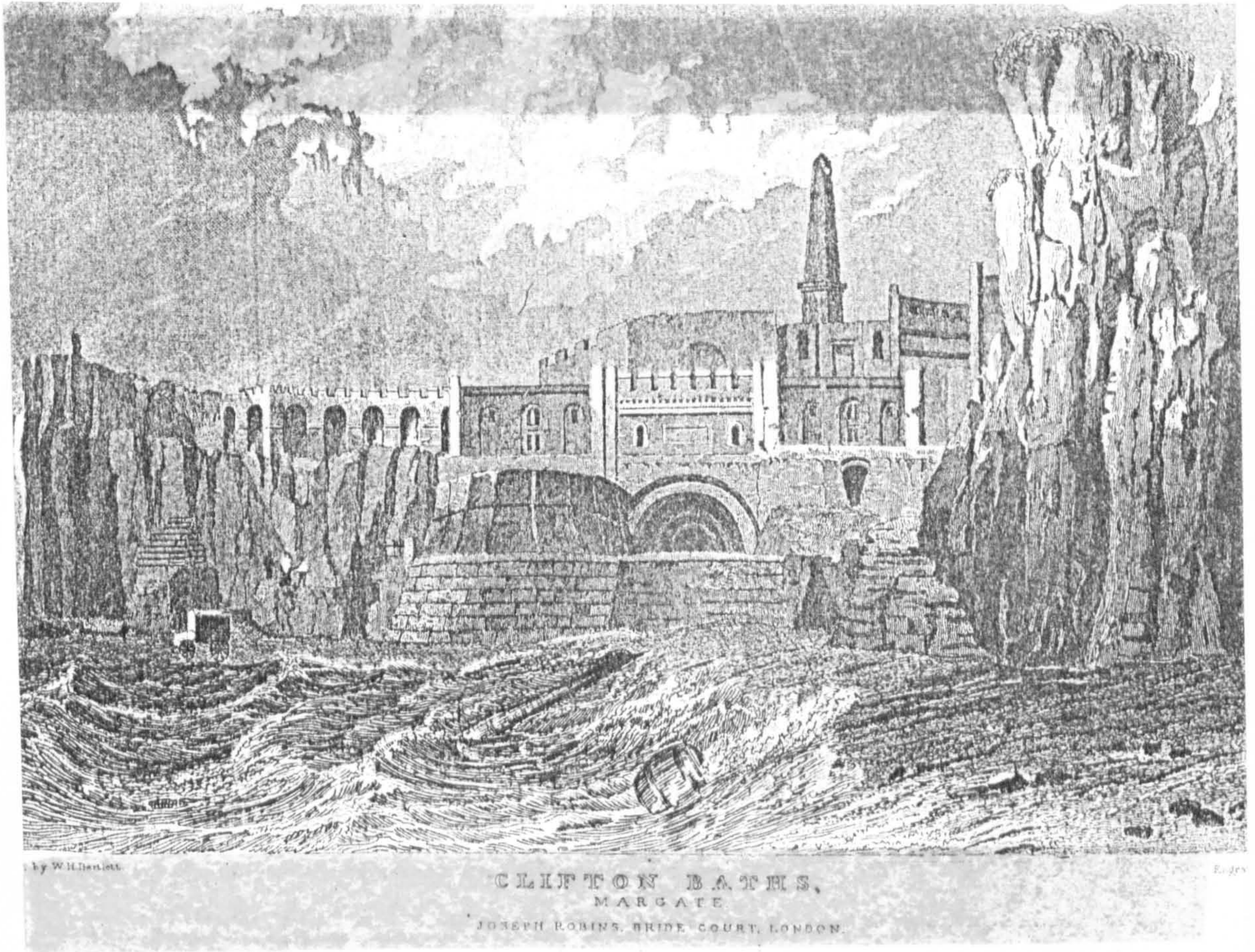
The Clifton Baths were projected as "a very novel and peculiar Bath, or rather Baths, excavated from the solid chalk rock, rising in a circular form from the bottom and surmounted with a dome of large dimensions, of the height of 33 feet", by a famous Margate solicitor, Mr. John Boys,³ who happened to own land "opposite to a good sand", where the sea water was "remarkably pure".⁴ Excavation and construction began in 1824 and the Clifton Baths opened about four years later. At the commencement of the work the cliff was cut down to within about six feet of the level of the seashore, "and the part so left (being a hard rock chalk) was cased with brick-work".⁵

A guide book of 1828 described the Clifton Baths as being "well worthy of notice, being equally novel and extraordinary",⁶ while two years later it was admitted that

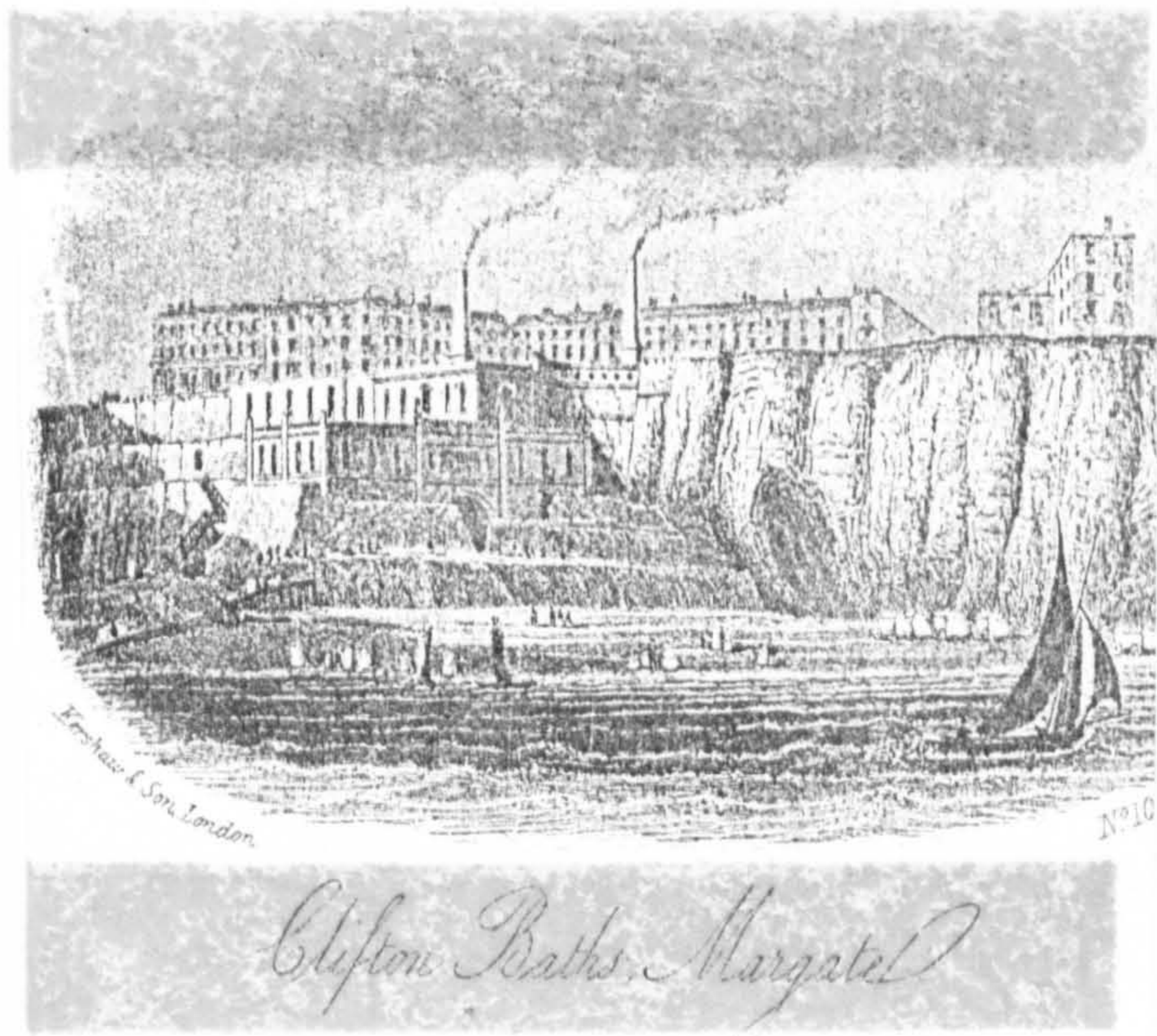
"to many persons it would seem at first, that these works and buildings are exposed to rapid inroads of the sea; but the out-works are so planned and constructed, that the force of the sea is broken and dispersed before it can reach the foundation, and a very slight observation of the effects of the sea during tempestuous weather, will convince the most timid, that the works are securely defended. Moreover when it is understood, that so violent and powerful is the sea from the Northern Ocean, in spring tides and Northerly winds, that it frequently dashes its spray to the top of

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1. Picture of Ramsgate, or a Guide to the Various Amusements, Public Libraries, Building Improvements, etc. of that Celebrated Watering Place (Ramsgate, 1833), 63.
 2. G.A. Cooke, A Topographical and Statistical Description of the County of Kent (New Ed., 1830), xxx.
 3. Picture of Ramsgate (Ramsgate, 1833), op.cit., 63-4.
 4. Cooke, op.cit., xxxi.
 5. Ibid., xxxi.
 6. R.B. Watts, A Topographical Description of the Coast between London, Margate and Dover (1828), 66.

TWO VIEWS OF MARGATE'S FAMOUS CLIFTON BATHS.



Noting also building expansion on the Fort.



Original Prints.

the cliffs (a height of more than 60 feet), it becomes a matter of surprise that any individual should have been found resolute enough to undertake the task, and succeed without the assistance of any scientific persons accustomed to sea-works and defences, /for/ we frequently see great projects undertaken by public bodies...fail... It is to be sincerely hoped that the public will patronize and support it in the manner it deserves". (1)

The Clifton Baths in 1830 contained a tunnel which was cut into the solid chalk, "and arched over, so as to form a roadway of...about 130 feet, for bathing machines to pass up and down, as the tides should render necessary".² 40,000 cubic yards of chalk were excavated and removed, including "an immense excavation of chalk...in a circular form at the bottom".³ The whole of the interior was cased by brickwork and was supported by eight arches, which radiated from the centre "in exact distances and proportion".⁴ Each archway led into an excavated storage area which could store between 20 and 30 bathing machines.⁵ Two archways were cut from the top of the cliff, one of which allowed "the machine horses and small carriages to pass up and down from the sea-shore", the other forming an entrance for foot passengers by means of a flight of 34 steps.⁶ Communicating with the upper entrance was a porter's lodge, with three arched and three cemented rooms, "for the residence...of a toll gatherer, or /for/ those who take care of the property".⁷

Further improvements were being executed in 1830, since "a waiting or lounging room is building, 40 feet long by 20 wide", which was to communicate

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1. Cooke, op.cit., xxxii.
 2. Ibid., xxxi.
 3. Ibid., xxxi-ii.
 4. Ibid., xxxi.
 5. Ibid., xxxi.
 6. Ibid., xxxi.
 7. Ibid., xxxi.

"with a terrace walk, cut down 15 feet below the natural surface of the cliff, and of the length of about 200 feet, upon which it is intended to place seats and benches for the subscribers. The room and terrace have a northerly aspect towards the ocean, and are expected to be attractive in the hot summer months, from their shade, and from the peculiar purity of the sea-air there". (1)

The Assembly Rooms.

The provision of assembly rooms was as natural to eighteenth century seaside resorts as it was to inland spas, such as Bath or Tunbridge Wells. Both types of watering place appealed to the upper classes, who desired the formality and organized social life of assembly rooms, theatres and circulating libraries. In Margate Cecil Square, with its permanent assembly rooms and an adjoining hotel, represented the resort's first major building venture at the end of the 1760's. The Margate assembly rooms were built in 1769 as part of this new square,² and on their completion an attempt was made to build up an organized social life, under the command of a Master of the Ceremonies, based very much on the pattern of the older spas.³

Visitors were informed in an 1809 guidebook that the season for the assembly rooms "begins on the 4th of June, and terminates the last ball night in October" and that "equitable Regulations, formed for the pleasure and advantage of the visitants, are enforced with the greatest politeness by Mr. Le Bas, Master of the Ceremonies, with such attention to the company, as highly deserves every mark of public approbation".⁴

Charles Le Bas occupied the post of Master of the Ceremonies at both the Margate and the Ramsgate assembly rooms,⁵ for over twenty years. By 1816 he

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1. Cooke, op.cit., xxxi-ii.
 2. Clarke, op.cit., 71; also see Chapter III above.
 3. W.T.W. Morgan, The Development of Settlement on the Isle of Thanet, in its Geographical Setting, with Special Reference to the Growth of the Holiday Industry, London M.Sc.(Econ) Thesis (1950), 42.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 59-62.
 5. Ibid., 59-60, 62, 86.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS and RULES
for MITCHENER'S ASSEMBLY-
ROOM. Margate 1763.**

Subscriptions to the Room for the season
to each Gentleman or Lady, *s. d.* 5 0
Dancing Assembly on Monday night, (Tea
inclusive,) each Subscriber, Gentleman or
Lady, 2 6
Each Non-subscriber 5 0

**CARD-ASSEMBLY, ON
Thursday night.**

Whist, &c. each table 6 0
Lottery-table 12 0
Each Non-subscriber for admission, (Tea in-
clusive,) 1 0

BREAKFASTING.

To Subscribers 0 8
To Non-subscribers 1 0

TEA in the AFTERNOON.

To Subscribers 0 6
To Non-subscribers 1 0

COFFEE-ROOM.

Subscriptions for the Coffee-Room, to each
Gentleman for news-papers, extra post,
pens, and paper. 2 6

J. Lyons, A Description of the Isle
of Thanet, and particularly of the
Town of Margate (1763), p.68.

MARGATE ASSEMBLY-ROOMS.

Rules and Orders for Admission.

I. THAT every person, to be entitled to walk and play at
cards in the rooms, during the season, do subscribe 10*s.* 6*d.*
and none but subscribers to be admitted into the card-room of
a morning.

II. That on Mondays and Thursdays, subscribers do pay
1*s.* 6*d.* admittance, and non-subscribers 4*s.* Tea, at Ten
o'clock, 1*s.* each.

III. That on Sundays, subscribers do pay 6*d.* admittance,
and non-subscribers 1*s.*; each person to pay 1*s.* for tea, if
called for.

IV. That all persons playing at whist, quadrille, commerce,
or loo, do pay 11*s.* for two packs of cards; 7*s.* for a single
pack; and lottery-tables to pay 15*s.* No other games to be
played in the rooms, without the permission of the Master of
the Ceremonies.

V. That no person be permitted to play with cards which
have been left by another party.

VI. That no person be admitted into the gallery without a
written order, signed by the Master of the Ceremonies; and
no servants to be admitted up stairs on any account whatever.

N.B. After two o'clock, subscribers, or non-subscribers,
to pay 6*d.* an hour so long as they continue to play at
cards, whether ball-night or not.

As the utmost decorum is necessary to be observed in
all public assemblies, the Master of the Ceremonies re-
quests of the company a strict compliance with the fol-
lowing regulations:

I. That on ball-nights no ladies be admitted into the great
room in habits, nor gentlemen in swords, boots, or pantaloons;
military gentlemen excepted.

The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broad-
stairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809),
pp. 60 - 2.

II. That the balls do begin at eight o'clock and finish at
twelve, precisely, even in the middle of a dance.

III. That after a lady has called a dance, when it is finished,
her place in the next dance is at the bottom.

IV. That all ladies who go down a dance do continue in
their places till the rest have done the same.

N.B. As a deviation from this rule gives universal offence,
the Master of the Ceremonies will pay the utmost at-
tention possible, to see it strictly observed.

V. That ladies, whether of precedence or not, do take their
places at the bottom after a country-dance is begun.

VI. That the balls be on Mondays and Thursdays, and that
they both be considered as undress balls. Cotillions and reels
will be danced on Monday nights.

VII. That the rooms be open on Sunday evenings for a
promenade.

VIII. That two sets for country-dances be not formed, till
upwards of twenty couple stand up, to be then equally divided,
and no person to change from one set to another.

IX. That no lady do permit another to stand above her,
after she has taken her place in a set.

§ The Master of the Ceremonies entertains those ladies and
gentlemen whom he has not the honour of knowing personally, to
afford him an early opportunity of being introduced to them,
as it will not only in a certain degree be a means of preventing
improper company from coming to the rooms, but will enable
him to pay every individual that attention, which it is not less
his inclination than his duty to observe.

CHARLES LE BAS, M. C.

It is necessary to observe here, that Mr. Le Bas some
time since published a Letter, addressed to the company
frequenting Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs, to
which we would particularly refer our readers.

THE NEW
MARGATE,
RAMSGATE, AND BROADSTAIRS
GUIDE,

OR,
 AN HISTORICAL EPITOME OF THE ANTIENT
 AND PRESENT STATE OF

THE ISLE OF THANET:

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE
Public Assemblies, Libraries, Theatre,

And other Accommodations of those improved

Watting-Places;

BEING CHIEFLY INTENDED AS A DESCRIPTIVE

POCKET COMPANION

FOR THE COMPANY RESORTING THERETO.

Illustrated with Views of Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs;

Embellished with a striking Likeness of

CHARLES LE BAS, Esq. M. C.

(ENGRAVED BY HEATH)

A CORRECT MAP OF THE ISLAND,

From a Survey by Hogben;

And a PLAN of the Harbour, and Part of the Town of Margate,
 with the proposed NEW PIER, by Mr. RENNIE.

FIFTH EDITION, WITH MANY ADDITIONS.

Bargatt:

Printed and sold by G. WITHERDEN, Stationer, on the Marine Parade;

Sold also at Mrs. Witherden's Library, Ramsgate;
 Taylor and Hessey's, 93, Fleet Street, London; and at the
 Libraries in Margate and Broadstairs.

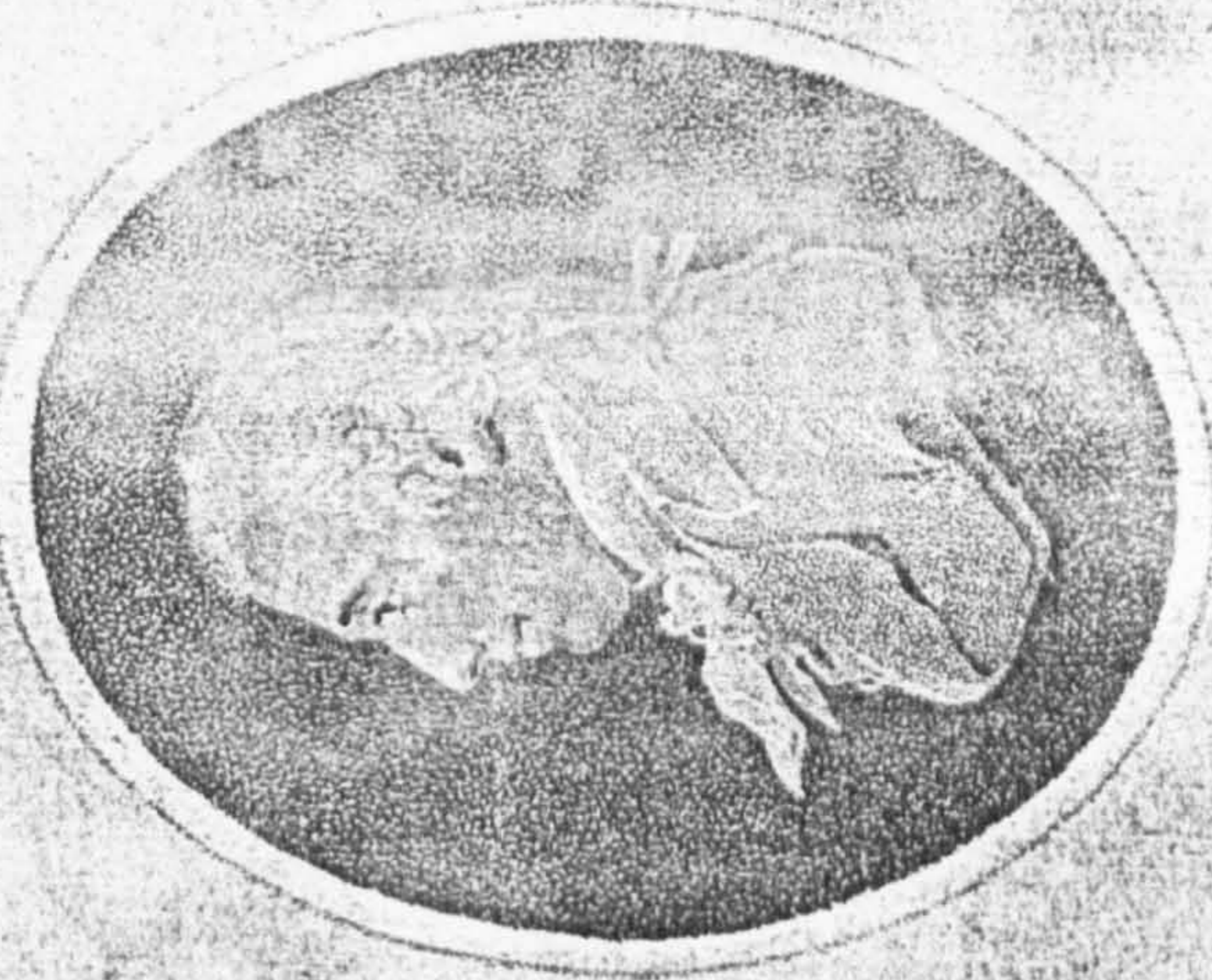
1809.

VI

The Editor feels great pleasure in having it in his power to prefix the portrait of Mr. LE BAS, M. C. to this Fifth Edition of the Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide, to all of which places he is equally, in his official capacity, attached. He considers it highly appropriate, from the circumstance of his being Master of the Ceremonies; but more so from the very able and conciliatory manner with which he has conducted himself in this arduous and difficult situation. It is now upwards of twenty years since Mr. LE BAS succeeded Mr. WALKER as M. C. and from that period to the present, the testimonies of approbation from the Subscribers to the Margate and Ramsgate Assembly-Rooms, have been constantly increasing. That he may long enjoy the fruits of his indefatigable exertions, is the sincere wish of his and the Public's faithful and obedient humble servant,

L. S.

Margate, July 1809.



CHARLES LE BAS ESQ.

M. C.

had been succeeded in both places by Captain Charles Clough, formerly an officer with the West York Militia,¹ and compared to 1809 the "Rules and Orders for Admission" to the Margate assembly rooms remained virtually unchanged.² Patronage of assembly rooms was costly but the strict rules of dress and behaviour met the approbation of the aristocracy, clergy and gentry, particularly since promenading, dancing, tea drinking and card playing were manifestations of genteel social life in provincial county towns, as well as in England's spas and seaside resorts.

Ramsgate's assembly rooms, situated near the harbour, formed in 1809 "a neat structure, with the conveniences of coffee, tea, billiards and card-rooms" and, although less pretentious and slightly cheaper than the Margate rooms, they were nevertheless governed by similar "Rules and Orders, for admission".³

Broadstairs was too small to possess its own assembly rooms. Its visitors subscribed to either the Margate or the Ramsgate rooms, or to both, and joint subscriptions applied equally to those holidaymakers patronising Margate or Ramsgate. Elements of assembly-room life existed in Margate sixteen years prior to the opening, in 1769, of the institutionalized rooms as noted in the previous Chapter.⁴ Ten years later John Lyons drew visitors' attention to "MITCHENER'S ASSEMBLY-ROOM, Margate", where the subscription for the season for each gentleman or lady was 5s. and where dancing and card assemblies were held weekly on Monday and Thursday nights respectively. Mitchener claimed to attract over 400 subscribers during the season, or over £100 at 5s. per head. The card assemblies attracted up to ten tables, and two card rooms provided a convenient dancing space for up to twenty couples.⁵

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 66, 92.
 2. Ibid., 66-8.
 3. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 86.
 4. See under "Margate and Other Resorts in the 1750's and 1760's", Chapter III above.
 5. Lyons, op.cit., 16-17, 68; also Chapter III above.

RAMSGATE ASSEMBLY ROOMS

RULES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS IN 1809 .

RAMSGATE ASSEMBLY-ROOMS.

- I. That every person, to be entitled to walk and play at cards in the rooms, during the season, do subscribe 7s. 6d.
- II. That the balls be on Tuesdays, the card assemblies on Mondays and Fridays, and on Sundays the rooms to be open for tea.
- III. That there be no dancing whatever in the rooms on the nights of the card assemblies.
- IV. That on Tuesdays subscribers do pay 2s. 6d. admittance, and non-subscribers 5s. and on Mondays, Fridays, and Sundays, subscribers do pay 1s. admittance, and non-subscribers 1s. 6d. Each person calling for tea, at ten o'clock, to pay 1s. ;
- V. That all persons playing at whist, quadrille, commerce, or loo, do pay 10s. 6d. for two packs of cards; 7s. for a single pack; and lottery-tables to pay 15s. No other games to be played in the rooms, without the permission of the Master of the Ceremonies.
- VI. That no person be permitted to play with cards which have been left by another party.

Margate's new and permanent assembly rooms opened in a blaze of publicity when on 24 May 1769 The Kentish Gazette announced:

"As it is impossible to give a personal Invitation to the Nobility and Gentry who frequent this Place, I am requested by the Proprietors of the New Assembly Rooms to take this Method of presenting their Compliments to the Nobility and Gentry, and to acquaint them that the said Rooms will be opened on Monday the 5th of June, with...a Ball in honour of His Majesty's Birth-Day, when they shall esteem it as a Particular Favour to be honoured with their Company. The greatest endeavour to render every Thing agreeable shall be employed.

J. WALKER, M.C.

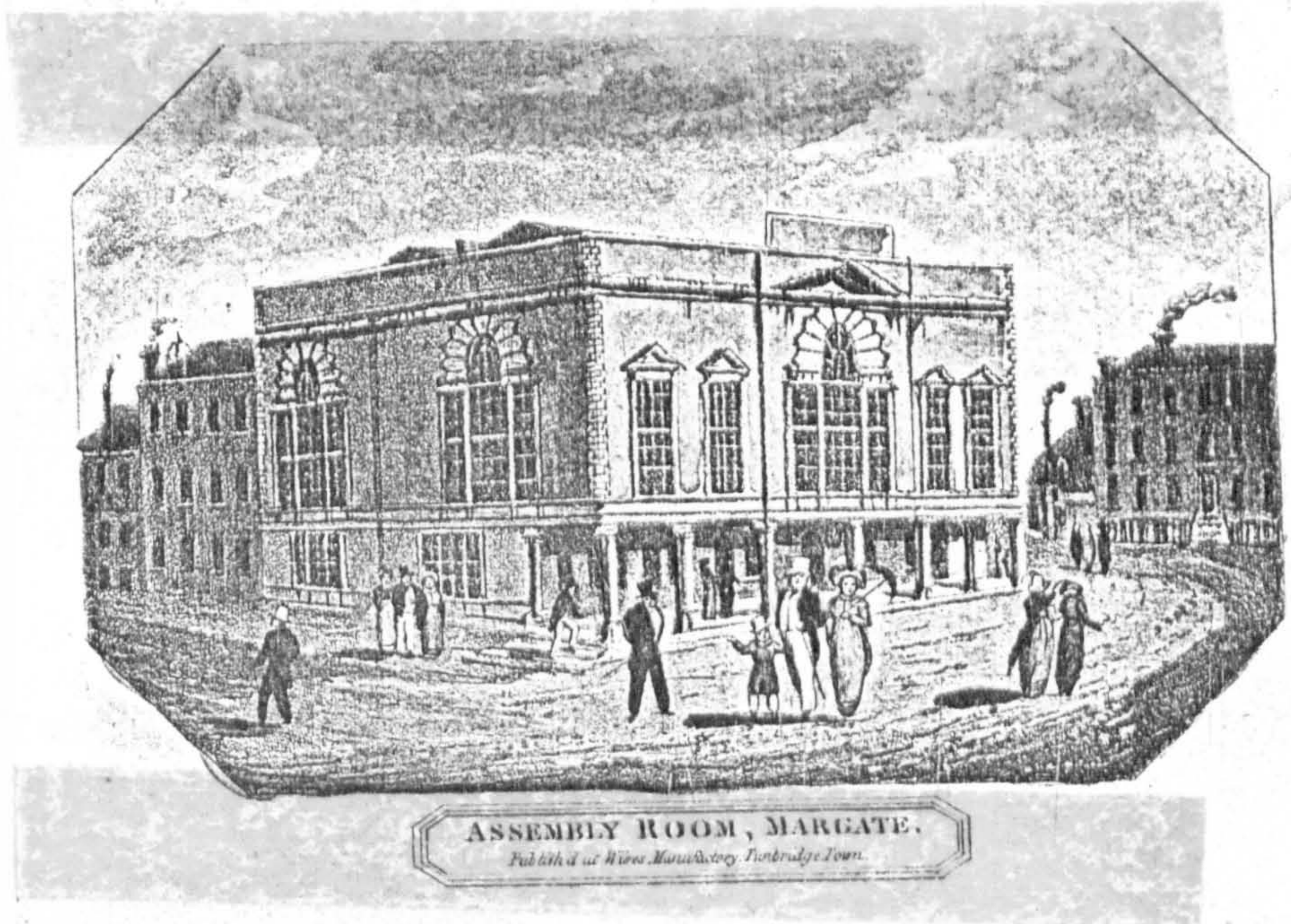
Mr. Fox, from St. Alban's Tavern, having taken the above Rooms, with the late Mrs. Omar's House adjoining, which is made into an elegant Tavern,...hopes to have the Honour of the Nobility and Gentry's Commands, as he has taken care to have a good Cook, and the best of Wines. He will make it a particular Study to oblige and spare no Pains to accommodate those who shall please to favour him with their Orders, and is their most dutiful and obedient Humble Servant.

JAMES FOX" (1)

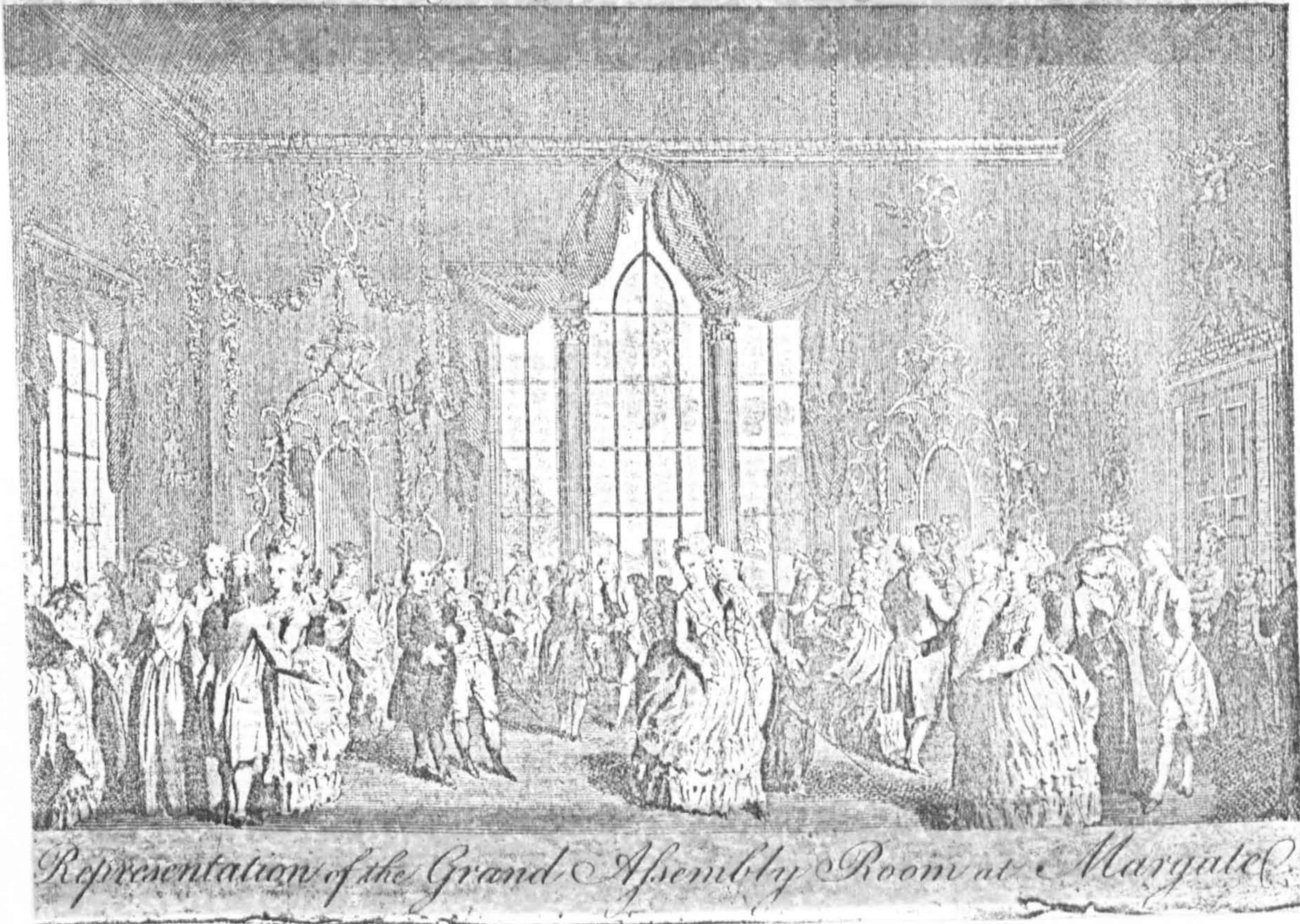
On 7 June 1769 Mr. Fox returned "his Dutiful Thanks to the Nobility and Gentry who did him the Honour to be at the opening of his Room and Tavern on Monday last", hoping that "every Thing was to their Satisfaction" and promising to "take the greatest Care to provide the best for their Accommodation, having prepared Bedchambers for the Reception of the Company, till they can suit themselves with Lodgings". It was announced at the same time that the rooms would "be open Every Day; Ball-nights every Monday; Publick Tea-drinking on Thursdays and Sundays in the Afternoon", while "a very good Billiard Table will be set up next Week" and "the Coffee-house is ready for the reception of Company".² Mr. Walker remained Margate's first Master of Ceremonies until he was succeeded by Charles Le Bas in 1789. In 1785 he was living in Quality Court in "his own House".³

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 24 May 1769.
 2. Ibid., 7 June 1769.
 3. Ibid., 16 September 1785.

THE EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF THE
MARGATE ASSEMBLY ROOMS.



Engraved for Silvers Circulating Library.



Readers of guide books were first introduced to many glamorous descriptions of the Margate assembly rooms in 1770.

"The Assembly-Room...is admirably designed, and as well executed. The great Ball-room is 87 feet in length, and 43 feet in breadth, of a fine Height, and richly ornamented. It fronts towards the Sea. The Apartments for Tea and Cards join to it, and are spacious and perfectly convenient... The Ground-floor consists of a fine Billiard-room, and a large Apartment, for the Use of public Entertainments. It belongs to, and communicates with Fox's Tavern, together with Hall's circulating Library and Toy-shop, and a great Coffee-room....A large Piazza...extends the Length of the whole Building.... The Diversions are regularly conducted under a Master of the Ceremonies, who is a very worthy, prudent Man, and has been hitherto very happy in not having made himself a single Enemy". (1)

During 1769 the new rooms attracted 930 subscribers at 5s. each, and "it is not supposed that any public Place in the Kingdom could boast of more".² Having opened successfully on 5 June the habit of holding public breakfasts commenced at the end of July 1769.

"At Mr. Fox's New Assembly Room, by the particular Desire of the Nobility and Gentry, Mr. Noel proposes on Saturday morning next, at Eleven O'clock, to have a Public Breakfasting.... The Band of Music will play...and afterwards he will perform several Concertos, Solos and Select Pieces, upon that celebrated Instrument called The Pantaleon. After the Entertainment, Country Dances. N.B. The Piece of Music for Clarinets and French Horns, called 'The Echo', is composed by Mr. Noel. Tickets 3s.6d. Each, which include the Breakfasting, to be had at Messrs. Silvers' and Halls' Circulating Library". (3)

By 1776 it was being claimed that "the numbers of subscribers to these rooms have amounted to near a thousand in a season" and "the amusements are conducted with great regularity by Mr. WALKER, M.C. who has the happiness to give general satisfaction".⁴ Ramsgate's "best inn" facing the sea contained by now "a neat and spacious coffee house, with a pleasant breakfast room above,

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1. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 13-14.
 2. Ibid., 14.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 29 July 1769.
 4. A New Display of the Beauties of England, Volume I (3rd Ed., 1776), 207.

and some other rooms, for private parties, which have been lately built for the better accommodation of the company, which becomes, every year, more numerous in the bathing season".¹

Margate's assembly rooms were reckoned "to be one of the largest buildings of the kind".² The Master of the Ceremonies exercised social control over a variety of amusements as The Morning Herald noted during August 1781:

"Our Master of the Ceremonies very politely went round to the first families in the place yesterday morning to acquaint them in due form, that the usual diversions would take place in a few days on the sands consisting of Jack-ass races!
- Men jumping in sacks!" (3)

In 1797 the seasonal subscription to the assembly rooms was half-a-guinea, there were two card rooms, and the 80 foot piazza was a well frequented promenade in wet weather;

"balls, during the season, are twice a week, with public tea-drinking, every Thursday. A band of music attends and plays every day, Sundays and Wednesdays excepted, from twelve till one...for the entertainment of the subscribers". (4)

Elegance and fashion graced the Margate assembly rooms between 1800 and 1815. The elegance emerges from a contemporary description of 1808.

"It is a handsome building of the Ionic order with Venetian windows... On the ground-floor is a good Billiard and a Coffee-room, several Dining-parlours, and a Piazza supported by a range of duplicated Doric columns. On the first floor are the Tea and Card-rooms, and the Ball-room. The latter is a very elegant apartment. ...The walls are tastefully ornamented with various stuccoed compartments, and festoons of flowers encircle the mirrors. At the west end of the room is a handsome orchestra, with wings for the accommodation of spectators; and five large and elegant glass chandeliers are suspended from the ceiling". (5)

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1. Seymour, op.cit., 653.
 2. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (Rochester, 1776), 119, and subsequent editions; The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 14.
 3. The Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser, 23 August 1781, 3c.
 4. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 19.
 5. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 959-60.

The décor was typical of the period. In the pediments of the chimney pieces of the ballroom were "excellent busts of his Majesty George III, and the late Duke of Cumberland, which are considered to be good and expressive resemblances of those royal and distinguished individuals".¹ The assembly rooms occupied the south side of Cecil Square where "on a high Spot of Ground", they commanded "a very fine and delightful View of the Sea".² The houses on the north side of Cecil Square had been restricted in height so as not to interrupt the seaward view from the upper windows. Subsequently there was erected in the tea room a camera obscura of sufficient size to reflect the surrounding scenery.³

The 1804 season exhibited

"no novelties...in the amusements of Margate. The bathing machines, the pier and the cliff divide the occupations of the morning, with the libraries and shops; while the evenings are, as usual, devoted to the promenades, the voluntary music, the auctions, and occasionally the play, or the assembly". (4)

The entertainments of the libraries⁵ competed vigorously with those of the assembly rooms. Attendances fluctuated at all functions. A ball at the rooms which attracted over 200 people on 6 September 1804 was considered only "tolerably well attended", and "was not remarkably distinguished for its splendour".⁶ There were, however, some "rather shewy" promenades during that season.⁷ Two masquerades were held in 1804, but at the second one, on 7 September,

"there was a lamentable falling off from our expectations. Not 150 persons attended... There was but little dancing. The whole broke up shortly after 2 o'clock". (8)

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1. G.W. Bonner, The Picturesque Pocket Companion to Margate, Ramsgate, Broadstairs and the Parts Adjacent (1831), 71-2.
 2. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 14.
 3. Clarke, op.cit., 72.
 4. The Times, 4 September 1804, 3c.
 5. As shown in the next section of this Chapter and also in Chapter VII below.
 6. The Times, 10 September 1804, 3b.
 7. Ibid., 6 September 1804, 2d.
 8. Ibid., 10 September 1804, 3b.

Among the fancy-dress characters were "waggoners, flower-girls, a bathing woman, a fisherman, a ballad singer, a Hebrew conjurer and a Sultana".¹

During September 1805 it was noted how

"the elegant and scientific game of billiards has occasioned a large influx of the friends of the sport at KIDMAN'S. During two days a match has been played between EVANS, ...one of the most skilful persons in the Kingdom at this diversion, and a gentleman from Canterbury... Of 21 games EVANS obtained 16". (2)

Sunday evenings were given over to sacred music and on one occasion

"notwithstanding the full attendance on the Parade to a late hour, the Company at the Rooms exceeded 500. Several pieces of sacred music were performed, and the anthem of 'God Save the King' was heard with that enthusiasm the subject naturally inspires in a generous and loyal nation". (3)

The M.C.'s duties continued to be multifarious including in September 1804 holding a collection plate at the south door of the parish church, along with Mrs. Dampier, the wife of the Bishop of Rochester, when over £60 was collected "for the benefit of the Sea Bathing Infirmary".⁴

Fine weather could adversely affect indoor entertainments as in September 1805.

"The fineness of the weather has occasioned the Assembly Rooms and the Libraries to be deserted, excepting during the sultry hours of noon; but the Fort, the Parade, and the Pier are crowded with sportive visitants; the last is seldom wholly abandoned till the approach of midnight....

KIDMAN'S Billiard Room is the fashionable lounge. SIR WILLIAM YOUNG, the Captain of our Fencible Corps, and several other expert players are frequent attendants". (5)

On 23 September the evening assembly was "select but not numerous", and "only ten couples condescended to the simplicity of the English country dance".⁶

1. The Times, 10 September 1804, 3b.

2. Ibid., 17 September 1805, 2c.

3. Ibid., 18 September 1805, 3a.

4. Ibid., 13 September 1804, 2d; also General Sea Bathing Infirmary London Committee Minute Book, 1801-11, 10 October 1804, 103.

5. The Times, 20 September 1805, 2d.

6. Ibid., 26 September 1805, 3b.

During August 1810 there was "a grand Masked Ball at Kidman's which was most numerously attended by all the beauty and fashion of this gay town", when "the great ball room was brilliantly illuminated with variegated lamps, and crowded with company"; on this occasion "the card and tea room adjoining afforded a most convenient entrance to the variety of masks".¹ Shortly after this event Margate was swarming with "billiard sharks, who generally manage to defray their expenses".² 1814 was a socially active season,³ when during August "Mr. CHARLES exhibited his Mechanical Game and Ventriloquism at the Assembly Rooms, with great success",⁴ and when "the general dress was of white satin...with wreaths of flowers, and bouquets of same in the hair, with Diamonds in profusion".⁵

The Circulating Libraries.

Circulating libraries were not mentioned in the first Margate guide book published in 1763. Indeed, specific mention of them is delayed until the 1770's,⁶ when "the only circumstance, besides a scarcity of books, that distinguishes the circulating libraries is, that the shops are made use of to raffle and smuggle, and not to read".⁷ They became a familiar amenity in the county, spa, resort and principal market towns of England, and the fact that they combined under one roof reading, shopping, socializing, promenading and entertainment was well established by the middle of the eighteenth century.

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1. The Morning Chronicle, 30 August 1810, 3a.
 2. Ibid., 5 September 1810, 3b.
 3. See Chapter VII below.
 4. The Morning Post, 13 August 1814, 3d.
 5. Ibid., 7 October 1814, 3e.
 6. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (1776), op.cit., onwards.
 7. Letters of Momus from Margate; Describing the most distinguished Characters there; And the Virtues, Vices and Follies to which they gave occasion, in what was called the Season of the Year 1777 (1778), 9.

The history of Margate's libraries centres around four names: Samuel Silver, Joseph Hall, William Garner and Samuel Bettison. Three famous circulating libraries developed in the town, situated in areas which became fashionable and were well patronized by visitors, namely the Parade and Cecil and Hawley Squares. Joseph Hall was the first Margate librarian to announce his appearance during February 1766.

"JOSEPH HALL, Bookseller, begs leave to acquaint the Nobility, Gentry, and others, that he has fitted up a commodious Shop near the Parade for a Circulating Library consisting of a large Collection of new and entertaining Books. Each Subscriber to pay 10s.6d. per Year or 3s. per Quarter. All Sorts of Stationery at the most reasonable Rates, viz: Writing-papers, Shop-books, Copy-books, Spelling-books, Bibles, Common-prayers,...with good Allowance to Schoolmasters and Shop-keepers; Books neatly bound, and Gentlemen's Libraries repaired; a great Variety of Paper-hangings as cheap as in London. The Favour of any Commands will be punctually answered, and gratefully acknowledged. By their most obedient humble Servant.

JOSEPH HALL.

N.B. Money for any Library or Parcel of Books, and Books Exchanged". (1)

The Parade and its immediate vicinity witnessed the earliest development of assembly room and circulating library activity before the building of Cecil and Hawley Squares. Hall started his business career as a librarian, bookseller and stationer. Selling fancy articles was not mentioned in the 1760's. His customers included residents, holidaymakers, tradesmen, shopkeepers, pupils and schoolmasters. Joseph Hall's premises were next door to a bathing house when John Baker visited Margate in September 1777.² He used the library to secure lodgings,³ and "Mr. Hall brought his book and I subscribed 5s."⁴ During his stay in Margate he read two volumes of the Vicar of Wakefield "from Mr. Hall's library".⁵ On 1 October he "returned this

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1. The Kentish Post or Canterbury News Letter, 1 February 1766.
 2. Ed: Philip C. Yorke, The Diary of John Baker (1931), 417.
 3. Ibid., 417.
 4. Ibid., 417.
 5. Ibid., 418.

afternoon to the shop Lewis's Hist. and Antiq. of the Isle of Thanet".¹

Because the subscribers to circulating libraries and their reading interests were diverse, extensive stocks of books and a large outlay of working capital were involved. The immense variety of readers and reading interests attracted comment from George Keate during the 1770's. In an age "so enriched by the inundations of the press" readers "may be ranked under one or other of the following descriptions:

The SUPERFICIAL reader,
The IDLE reader,
The SLEEPY reader,
The PEEVISH reader,
The CANDID reader,
The CONJECTURAL reader". (2)

Among the interests were "extracts from newspapers, magazines and reviews"; skimming over "title-pages and indexes"; seeking "knowledge" as distinct from "amusement"; "seducing novels"; little histories; "Memoirs of Prostitutes - Anecdotes of Women of Quality - and Lives of Highwaymen... Works of genius,...a plenty of soporific treatizes, ...Annotations, Books of Controversy, and Metaphysical Dissertations".³

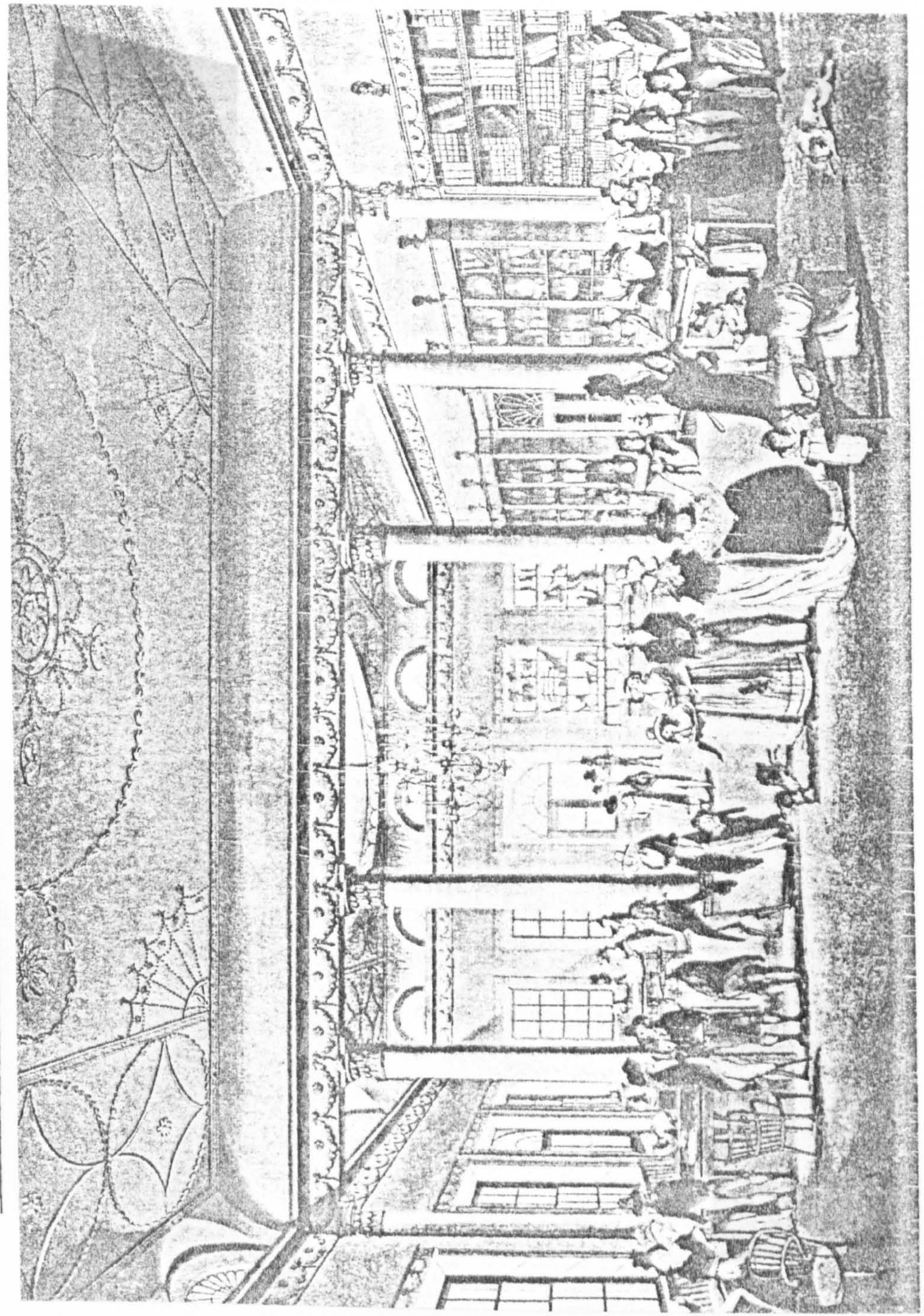
Joseph Hall was a Margate librarian for twenty nine years. By 1780 Margate possessed

"two circulating Libraries, having a very good Collection of Books in all Languages, which the Company read at a very trifling Expence. One is pleasantly situated near the Pier, and kept by Mr. Hall, and the other under the New Rooms by Mr. Silver". (4)

The Margate Guide of that year was printed for "T. CARNAN, in St. Paul's

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1. Yorke, op.cit., 420.
 2. George Keate, Sketches from Nature, Taken, and Coloured, in a Journey to Margate (5th Ed., 1802), 55.
 3. Ibid., 56-7.
 4. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 15.

THE MARGATE GUIDE (1780) AND JOSEPH HALL'S NEW
CIRCULATING LIBRARY IN 1789.



THE
MARGATE GUIDE.
CONTAINING A
PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF MARGATE,

WITH RESPECT TO ITS
New Buildings, Assemblies, Accommoda-
tions, Manner of Bathing, and remark-
able Places in its Neighbourhood.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A Short Description of the ISLE of THANET; and
at the End is added, a TIDE TABLE for
-MARGATE.

*“ Oh ! vobis on Margate’s Sea worn Coast you tread,
“ And court the rosy Nymph, HYGIEA, bliff,
“ To your Embraces, in the briny Waves;
“ May soft Good-nature on each social Scheme
“ Attend, concomitant.”* Dr. DODD.
• Goddess of Health.

Illustrated with a Map of the ISLE of THANET,
and a View of the Bathing Machine in its several
Positions.

L O N D O N:
Printed for T. CARNAN, in St. Paul’s Church-yard,
and J. HALL, in High-street, Margate.

Price One Shilling.

MDCCLXXX.

S. Howell, The Seaside (1974), p. 26.

Churchyard [London] and J. HALL, in High-street, Margate".¹

During the course of his career, Joseph Hall combined the businesses of librarian, bookseller, stationer, wine merchant, postmaster, and by 1780 he was an agent for passenger vessels plying between Margate and Ostend, Holland or France.² He also acquired various property interests in Margate, before being declared bankrupt in 1795. By 1793 he was the proprietor of an "elegant shop and library" on the corner of Hawley Square, only a short distance away from Silver's library in Cecil Square, the latter "containing a good assortment of books, and a comfortable room behind the shop, calculated for the accommodation of the company in reading".³ Joseph Hall employed Crofts, a Margate builder, to erect his new Hawley Square library, and he moved there from the waterside in 1786. He now had the most imposing library in Margate. It was "much the largest of any in the town", and was "finished in an expensive manner".⁴ "Two compartments", a shop and a library, were separated by "a row of handsome columns".⁵ Fancy wares were now being sold. The shop contained "a curious assortment of jewllry, toys, Tunbridge Wares [or] muslins", while the library housed "a well-chosen collection of amusing books, in various languages".⁶ Zechariah Cozens, a local guidebook compiler, and one of the leading inhabitants and architects of Margate, who had a hand in the designing of many Margate properties, may have designed the new Hawley

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1. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., title page; also John Vaughan, The English Guide Book, circa 1780-1870; An Illustrated History (1974), 109, cites Joseph Hall as providing an early example of a librarian pioneering the publication of a guide commencing with The Margate Guide in 1770 and 1780. The librarian, "if unable to print it himself, obtained the services of a firm...nearby or in London", so that Joseph Hall shared the publishing risk of his guide with Thomas Carnan and Francis Newbury of St. Paul's Churchyard, London, "whose firm and its successors are now chiefly remembered for juvenile publications", ibid., 109.
 2. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 17.
 3. Cozens, op.cit., 25.
 4. Ibid., 25.
 5. Ibid., 25.
 6. Ibid., 25.

Square library, but the final result from the builder did not meet with his full approval:

"the building is pleasing to the cursory inspector; but would have given much more pleasure to the informed architect, if the builder had confined himself to a strict observance of the Orders; ...such a departure from them, as is observable in almost all our modern buildings, is proof of the declining taste of this extolled age". (1)

Bankruptcy afflicted Joseph Hall early in 1795.² The Kentish Gazette announced that Charles Long would sell by auction at the Shakespeare Tavern "all the Stock of Wine of Mr. Joseph Hall, of Margate, a bankrupt, 11 pipes of Port, 1,000 dozen in bottles, also Claret, Sherry and other White Wines".³ This was followed by a further announcement concerning the auction of nine properties "of Joseph Hall, a Bankrupt".

1. Hall's library and two houses adjoining on the north side, one in Hall's possession, and the other in the occupation of Mrs. Wragg.
2. A house adjoining the library on the north side of Hawley Square in the occupation of Mr. Hunter.
3. A house adjoining on the north side of Hawley Square and east of the last lot in the occupation of Mr. Thomas Edmunds. (4)
4. A house on the west side of Hawley Square used as a boarding house, in the occupation of Miss Eden, with extensive wine vaults under the same, and building land behind.
5. Stabling for fourteen horses, with two coach houses at the back of Lot 4.
6. One undivided 6th part of inclosed freehold land in the centre of Hawley Square.
7. A house and shop in the High Street in the occupation of Solomon under a lease which expires 5 April 1798. (5)

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1. Cozens, op.cit., 25.
 2. Compare Chapter V below.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 24 February 1795.
 4. Listed as a carpenter in The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796).
 5. Listed as a silversmith in ibid.

8. }
9. } Land held under lease. (1)

Although the centre of Hawley Square has never been built upon, Joseph Hall's connection with $\frac{1}{6}$ th of this freehold land is interesting for suggesting that he could have been one of the promoters and builders of this fashionable square. Certainly he was ambitious and he entertained grandiose schemes. He must have fallen considerably into debt to be declared a bankrupt, and his bankruptcy must have been severe for his circulating library and stock in trade to be put up for auction on 5, 6, 7 and 8 May 1795, followed by his furniture and plate on 9, 11, 12 and 13 May.² Despite his bankruptcy, he managed to publish in 1799 "a new sheet map of the Isle of Thanet 1 inch = 1 mile, by H. Hogben".³

Samuel Silver was the second librarian to commence business in 1769 in High Street premises next door to Isaac Silver, a druggist, and only a few yards away from Joseph Hall, who because of this competition was forced to rebuild his original library in 1770. Samuel Silver came from a circulating library family, and may have migrated from Sandwich to satisfy a growing need in Margate. A surviving advertisement relates to Jacob and Ann Silver, circa 1725.

"Jacob Silver in Sandwich, Sells all sorts of Books, New and Second hand, as Bibles, Testaments, Common Prayer Books, all sorts of Books in Divinity, History, Law, Physick, Chirurgey, Navigation, Horsemanship, Husbandry, Cookery; Books Lent to Read, Books New Bound, Shop and Pocket Books, Scales and Compasses, all Sorts of Stationery Ware, Brown and all Sorts of Paper, Almanacks, ...and many Sorts of Hardware.

Ann Silver, just over the Way, Sells all Sorts of Grocery Ware, Haberdashers' Small Wares, Maidstone and all sorts of fine Threds, good Choice of Iace,

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 31 March 1795.
 2. Advertised in ibid., 7 April 1795.
 3. Advertised in the 1st Ed., of Hunter's Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (1799).

Ribbons and Fans, London and Canterbury Worsted, and Crewels; many Sorts of Hard Wares, as Knives, Scissors, Buckles, or Buttons, Straw Hats, English and Dutch Toys, very good Hops, and Silvers' Best Virginia, fine Double BB, and every good Sort of Tobacco at Three Pence a Quarter, with good Allowance for all these Sorts of Goods to those that sell them again, to encourage future Dealing".

This advertisement suggests a substantial retail and wholesale enterprise.

Joseph Hall and Samuel Silver became great rivals in the Margate circulating library business. Both moved to fashionable squares and both constructed completely new and elegant libraries. By May 1771 Samuel Silver had moved his library into Cecil Square, under the new assembly rooms. In 1782 he began the construction of a new library on the east side of Cecil Square, occupying the site of the present General Post Office. He moved from under the colonnade of the assembly rooms to his new library during March 1783, where he remained in business until February 1808.

Samuel Silver had a long reign as a circulating librarian, extending over 39 years. He was the first of the Margate librarians to expand on a really large scale. The stocks which he carried were enormous and expensive, so that when during July 1773 his shop was broken into he was robbed of 2,000 pairs of silk stockings and gloves valued "to a considerable amount".¹ His 1787 catalogue listed over 5,000 volumes, offering to the reader a wide choice of books. Samuel Silver also ended his career as a bankrupt. In 1808 he sold out to Bousfield and Pallister.² This partnership continued until 1812, when Mr. Thomas Pallister assumed sole proprietorship until 1815.

Viable circulating libraries, it was noted in 1797, required a "number of Subscribers", both "considerable, and sufficient...to reward the proprietors for their heavy expense and attention".³ A seaside circulating library and shop

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 24-28 July 1773, 4cd.
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 65 refers to "Bousfield and Pallister's (late Silver's)".
 3. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 55.

AN ADVERTISEMENT ISSUED BY THE MARGATE
LIBRARIAN, SAMUEL SILVER.



Margate Public Library Local Collection,
Arthur Rowe Bequest.

A NEW CATALOGUE

OF
SILVER'S Circulating Library,

(FORMERLY UNDER)
NOW REMOVED-OPPOSITE

The Assembly-Rooms, MARGATE.

Consisting of many Valuable Books, among which are the following, viz.

Antiquities of Gloucestershire, 2 vol.
Herculaneum
the Isle of Thanet
Aflley's Voy. & Trav. 4 v.
Brookes's Nat. Hist. 6 vol.
Chesterfield's Miscel. 2 vol.
Letters, 4 vol.
Clarendon's Rebellion, 6 v.
Churchill's Poems, 2 vol.
Cooke's Voyages, 4 vol.
Cooke's last Voy. to 1781.
Cox's Russian Discoveries
Gibbon's Rom. Empire, 3 v.
Gray's Poems and Letters
Hume's Hist. of Eng, 8 vol.
Jussamond's Indies, 5 vol.
Journey to the Glaciers
Life of Petrarch, 2 vol.

Where may be had a general Assortment of Books, Stationary, Perfumery, Silver and Plated Goods, Jewellery, Pearls, Cutlery, Hard-Ware and Toys; Hats, Hosiery, Gloves, Purse, Fans, Pieces for Ladies Shoes, Umbrellas, Bathing-Caps, Whips, Canes, Walking-Sticks, Inlaid Tun-bridge-Ware, Pocket-Books, &c.

The same as at the most Capital Shops in London.

N. B. Books Bound in the Neatest Manner.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED BY J. WALTER, AT THE REGENT-PUBLIC PRESS,
PRINTING-HOUSE-SQUARE, BLACK-FRIARS.

1787

TO THE
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
WHO HONOUR THE
LIBRARY
WITH THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS.

(4)
As the Publishing this new catalogue is attended with Considerable Expence, he humbly hopes SIX- PENCE will not be thought too much for it.

This Shop is conveniently situated not only for those Ladies and Gentlemen who frequent MARGATE, but also for the Inhabitants of the following Villages in the Neighbourhood, viz. St. Laurence, Ramsgate, Broad Stairs, St. Peter's, Lord Holland's, Cleve, Birchington, Daun De Lyon, &c.

N. B. S. SILVER is also Agent to the Royal Exchange Assurance Fire-Office, London.

THE PROPRIETOR of this LIBRARY, which has been established, and received the Support of the Public for so many Years, replete with Gratitude to his numerous and respectable List of Subscribers, begs they will accept this Testimonial of his most sincere Thanks, and an earnest Solicitation of future Favors; as under their Protection he presumes to hope, by Diligence and Attention, to render his Library an useful and entertaining Repository of Literature; strictly attending to select such Books as shall be inductive to the Cause of Virtue, serve as a Solace to enliven the Mind, and a continual Mentor for the Improvement of the Understanding.

CONDITIONS

(6)

CONDITIONS OF

SILVER'S Circulating Library,

1. THE Sum of Five Shillings for each Person to be paid at the Time of Subscribing.
2. Subscribers are to give in their Names and Place of Abode, and if required to deposit the Value of the Books they take away, and are to engage not to lend any of the Books to Non-Subscribers on the Penalty of paying a double Subscription.
3. To prevent disappointments, Subscribers are requested to send a List of eight or more Numbers of such Books as they wish to read.
4. If any Book is wrote in, torn, or damaged while in the Custody of a Subscriber, that Book, or (if it should

should belong to a set,) that set of Books to be paid for.

5. Every Subscriber will have the Privilege of reading any Book in the Catalogue, at the Library, where also the Morning and Evening Papers may be read every day.

* * Constant Attendance will be given at the Library, (Sundays excepted.)

Advertisements appearing on pp. 164 and 166.

He has on Sale a general Assortment of Books, Stationary, Perfumery, Silver and Plated Goods, Jewellery, Pearls, Cutlery, Hard-Ware and Toys; Hats, Hofs, Gloves, Purfes, Fans, Pieces for Ladies Shoes, Umbrellas, Bathing-Caps, Whips, Canes, Walking-Sticks, Inlaid Tunbridg Ware, Pocket-Books, &c.

JUST IMPORTED.
A fresh Assortment of French Hair Powder and Pomatum, with every other Article of Perfumery.
Violet and Patent Purified Windsor Soap.

A CATALOGUE OF

SILVER'S CIRCULATING LIBRARY,

MARGATE.

History, Antiquities, Lives, Memoirs, Voyages, Travels, &c.

F O L I O .

- 1 A Ntiquities of Gloucestershire, by Sir R. Atkins, with maps and plates of the city and county
- 2 Antiquities of Herculaneum, with cuts
- 3 Acts of Parliament the First Session of Queen Anne
- 4 A Learned Summarie on the Poem of the Lord Birtas
- 5 Arden of Feversham, a Manuscript Tragedy
- 6 Annals of England: containing the Reigns of Henry VIII. &c.
- 7 Annals of Cornelius Tacitus, describing Germany
- 8 Anatomy of Melancholy; what it is, with all the Kinds, &c.
- 9 Advertisements from Parnassus in Two Centuries
- 10 A General History of the Magnificent State of Venice
- 11 Ancient History of the Kings of France

12 Bayley's

represented a heavy investment of fixed and working capital which is clearly demonstrated in a sequence of advertisements relating to the auction of Mr. Pallister's business in Cecil Square, Margate, during 1815.

"MARGATE

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,...

all that genuine and excellent STOCK in TRADE, belonging to the Library, comprising several thousand volumes of books, and a splendid assortment of JEWELLERY...

All persons having any Books in their possession belonging to the Library are requested to return them immediately that they may be lotted for sale". (1)

Moving on to the end of March:

"To Booksellers, Jewellers, Hardwaremen, and Others,
TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,
By Mr. GILES GRAINGER,
(On the Premises)

PALLISTER'S LIBRARY, CECIL-SQUARE, Margate,
On MONDAY the 3d day of April, 1815, and following days,
The Valuable LIBRARY and Excellent STOCK IN TRADE; the
Library comprising nearly 4,000 Volumes; the Stock in
Trade, consisting of an elegant assortment of jewellery,
gold chains, pins, broaches, lockets, purses, necklaces,
both coral and amber, set in gold,...fruit knives, caddie
spoons, pearl clasp, variegated tortoiseshell and silver
snuff-boxes, nutmeg graters, butter knives, pearl rings,
coral ditto, gold ditto,...a variety of beautiful work
boxes, writing and drawing desks,...card boxes, broach boxes
[and] dressing boxes in Tunbridge Ware.

MOROCCO GOODS.

Writing desk, dressing cases, drawing desks, cotton boxes,
writing boxes, flute cases, backgammon, cheese boards,
spoon cases, handsome work boxes...

IVORY GOODS.

Handsome chess men, backgammon ditto in bone, ivory,
ebony,...

HARDWARE.

High polished scissors, pen knives, boot hooks, cork screws,
patent and common nut crackers, steel purses, razors,...

Also a bagatelle board, 9 feet long, 3 feet wide compleat
[and]...several maps.

The Sale of Books will commence on the first day.

The Sale will commence on each day at eleven o'clock
...Catalogues 1s. each...may be had on application to the
Auctioneer, Margate, or at the place of sale. To be viewed
on Saturday preceding the sale, and on the morning of sale". (2)

1. The Kentish Gazette, 10 March 1815, 14 March 1815.
2. Ibid., 24 March 1815, 28 March 1815, 31 March 1815.

During April the library was advertised for sale or letting on lease.

"All that extensive Premises in Cecil Square, Margate, ...where for many years an extensive business has been carried on in the Jewellery, Stationery, and Bookselling Business; as also a Circulating Library and Musical Promenade, for which it is better adapted, than any other premises, and in point of situation stands unrivalled for that or any other business; consisting of a Shop and Library 75 feet long, and a good proportionable width, with parlour adjoining; six rooms of good proportion on the first floor, and eight on the second, with two good kitchens; large garden and numerous other conveniences. For Particulars apply (post-paid) to Mrs. NEWTON, Cecil Square, Margate, or to Mr. Hodgson, Bookseller, Wimpole-street, London". (1)

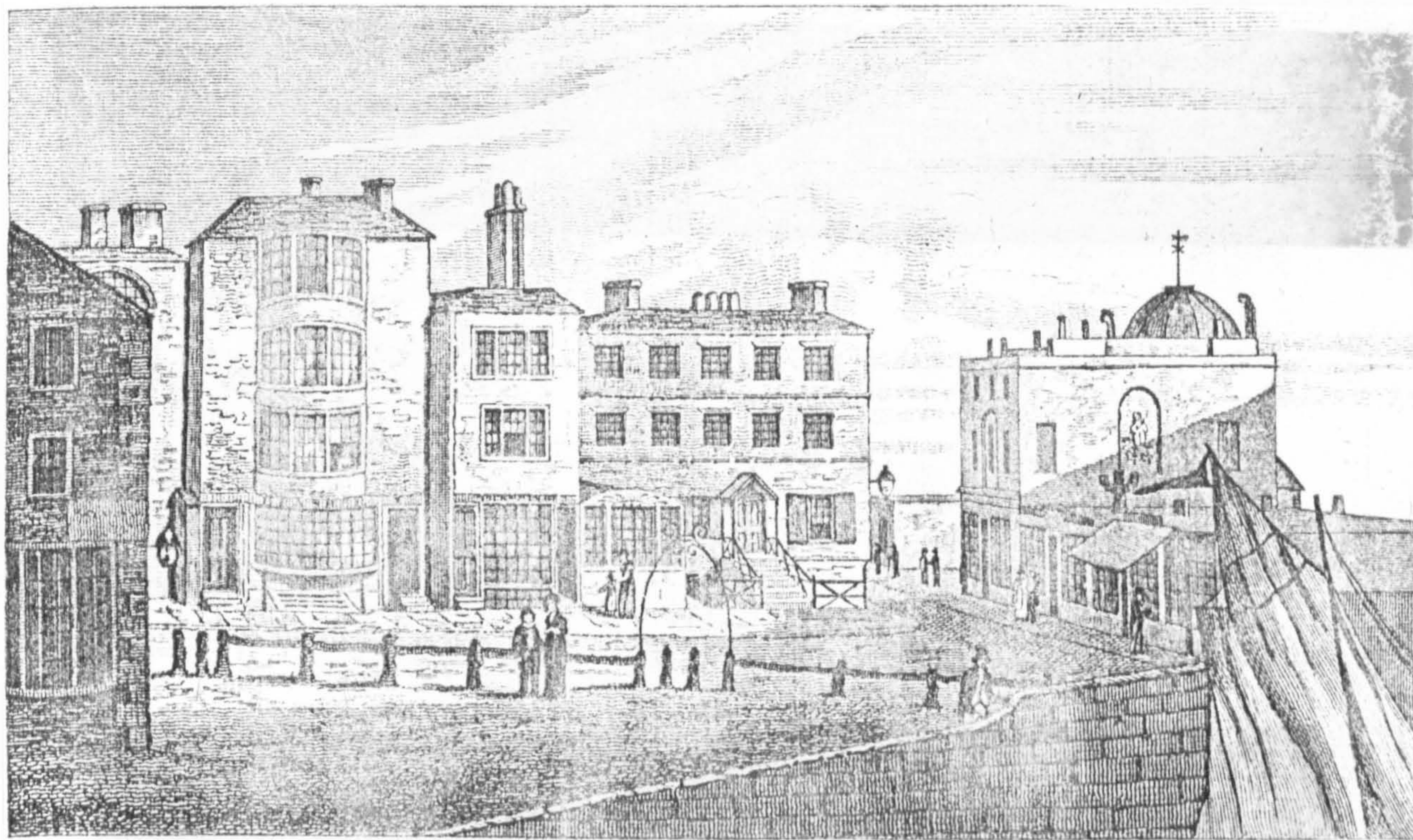
Like Joseph Hall before him Samuel Silver had the vitality to keep going in some line of business. In 1811 he was an agent to the Royal Exchange Fire Office, living in Northumberland Place.² For several years he lived at No.11 Cecil Square. When he died in Margate on 27 August 1829 he was an old man of 87 years. His obituary in The Kentish Gazette noted that he "for many years kept a public Library at that place".³

The fame of Joseph Hall and Samuel Silver was surpassed by that of William Garner and Samuel Bettison who enjoyed extremely long reigns as Margate librarians, being men of tremendous initiative and personality. In 1827 Garner claimed to have been a Margate librarian for 44 years.⁴ In 1789, after having been in partnership in Cecil Square, he founded the Marine library:

"Garner, from Austen's Library, most respectfully acquaints the Nobility and Gentry, frequenting Margate, that he has removed from Cecil Square to the Shop, late Mr. Hall's, near the Water Side, where he hopes by his Attention to the Accommodation of the Public, to merit a Continuance of that Patronage he has before so liberally experienced". (5)

1. The Kentish Gazette, 11 April 1815.
2. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811).
3. The Kentish Gazette, 1 September 1829; presumably his wife had lived to a good age, her obituary appearing in ibid., 2 September 1823.
4. W. Garner, Miscellaneous Recitations or Whims of the Ioo Table (1827), ix.
5. The Kentish Gazette, 12 June 1789.

WILLIAM GARNER'S LIBRARY AS IT APPEARED IN 1820.



W. C. Oulton del.

J. Sharp sculp.

HIGH STREET & GARNER'S LIBRARY.

from Marine Parade.

W. C. Oulton, Picture of Margate and Its Vicinity
(1820), p. 49.

How long he had been in partnership with Austen is not known, but certainly guidebooks could be completely up-to-date in noting that "this Season 1789, he has built the Marine Library at the Bottom of the High Street".¹ He acquired and rebuilt what had been Margate's first circulating library, belonging to Joseph Hall before he moved to his new Hawley Square library in 1786.² Here was a central business property which was established as a library on three separate occasions within a 23 year period (1766-1789). By 1789 there were four competing libraries in Margate: Hall in Hawley Square, Silver and Austen in Cecil Square, and Garner at the foot of the High Street, close to the sea.

The Marine library soon became well known and acquired popularity from its situation. The back of the building faced the sea where there was a large balcony supplied with telescopes. In 1797 it was "greatly frequented for the marine prospect it affords, and no less for the polite behaviour of the proprietor; who is celebrated for acting the part of Shylock in the Merchant of Venice, little inferior to Macklin; as well as several other characters, which he generally does in the course of the season, at the particular request of numerous friends".³

William Garner's career as a librarian was punctuated by misfortunes. In 1808 he was threatened with complete ruin following the great storms of that winter when his library and house were washed out to sea. Previously he had sustained a narrow escape in a storm during October 1800.⁴ "Tempestuous

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1. The New Margate and Ramsgate Guide, in Letters to a Friend (1789), 14.
 2. As noted in this section above.
 3. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 18.
 4. The Times, 25 October 1800, 3d.

weather", at the end of November 1801, had

"occasioned much damage at Margate. The sea beat with much violence upon the beach, as to destroy HUBBARD's Bathing-room, TENNANT's shop, and HUGHES's Hot-baths, and to break down a considerable part of the Parade before MITCHENER's Hotel. The blocks and stairs of most of the Bathing Houses were carried away". (1)

Following the great storm of January 1808 the sympathy for William Garner was universal. His stock had been destroyed and his library was wrecked. He was popular among Margate's visitors as an amateur actor whose name appeared on the boards of the Theatre Royal.² Indeed, for 37 years he was associated with the merriments of Margate visitors. In 1808 he moved temporarily into fresh premises in the High Street and quickly rebuilt the old library, struggling bravely to retrieve his fortunes. When over 70 years of age he was described as "the senior Librarian and one of the oldest inhabitants of Margate"; but

"his whole life has presented nothing but a continued series of unforeseen and unmerited misfortunes. The terrific storm, 1808, entirely washed down his Library, and spread a large proportion of his property adrift upon the waves. Still as he possessed good friends and unshaken credit, he was soon enabled to rebuild his Library upon a plan which has constituted it a handsome ornament to the town. Unhappily, the Builder's expenses so far exceeded his estimate, that Mr. Garner was compelled to sell off all his effects and to become a Tenant in that House of which he should have been Proprietor. Ever since that time, he has been using his utmost endeavours to retrieve his affairs". (3)

Five years later William Garner faced bankruptcy, which resulted from all the problems mentioned above, coupled with advancing age, and an intense competition, both in entertainments and the sale room, from the increasingly popular bazaars of the 1820's.⁴ In 1827 he was living in London, where he was serving one day a week in a friend's shop. Being in

1. The Times, 1 December 1801, 3b.

2. Malcolm Morley, Margate and Its Theatres 1730-1965 (1966), 34-5, 45, 50-1.

3. The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion (1819), 36.

4. See for instance Chapter VII below.

low spirits a former patron invited him to recollect the verses which he used to recite at the loo tables. Garner's Miscellaneous Recitations or Whims of the Loo Table was published during that year for 5s., when he was well into his late seventies. He was succeeded at the Marine library in 1824 by W.G. Bettison junior.

Bettison represents the fourth great name among Margate's circulating librarians. After fifteen years beginning in the High Street in 1785, Samuel Bettison at the end of May 1800 acquired the Hawley Square Library.

"Samuel Bettison returns thanks for the support he has received for the last fifteen years at his shop in the High Street. He is leaving that situation, having engaged that extensive Library in Hawley Square (late Ware's) where he hopes for continued support. N.B. The Library will be regularly kept open during the ensuing winter, with good fires and every other necessary accommodation for the benefit of yearly subscribers. Opens 31 May 1800". (1)

Joseph Hall had been succeeded at the Hawley Square library by Ware in 1796, when three Margate circulating libraries were listed: "Mr. Garner, near the sea; Mr. Silver, opposite the Rooms, and at the corner of Hawley Square under the management of Mr. Ware".² Following Hall's bankruptcy the library had been vacant during much of 1795, Thomas Ware commencing business there in January 1796 and finishing in April 1800.

Samuel Bettison ran the Hawley Square library for 38 years until 1838. During the 1820's and 1830's he also had to contend with increasing age and rivalry from popularly acclaimed bazaars. In 1838 he shared the same fate of bankruptcy as the other library proprietors whom he outlived.

"Samuel Bettison, Librarian, Stationer, Dealer, and Chapman, has been declared a bankrupt. A Ball for the benefit of Mr. Bettison Senior (now in his 80th Year), who has been in business 58 years in Margate, will be held at the Assembly Rooms, on Monday 10th September". (3)

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 27 May 1800.
 2. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 17.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 4 September 1838.

He was approaching 90 years of age when his death was announced from Boulogne in April 1847.¹

Four bankruptcies resulted from three famous circulating libraries being established in Margate, in the High Street, and in Cecil and Hawley Squares. Heavy capital outlays in impressive well-stocked buildings prompted the observation in 1797 that "at each library, there are suitable accommodations as well as ample matter for reading; books of all kinds and the public papers being taken in and kept for the use of the subscribers, of which there are generally some hundreds in the season".² The subscription was 5s. each person, and

"each library has also a shop connected with it furnished with all kinds of Tunbridge Ware, curious trinkets, pocket books, and nicknacks, particularly for ladies, which are continually put up in raffles, from 1s. to 10s.6d. each person, according to the price of the article. There are sometimes above 60 persons in one raffle". (3)

It was the Hawley Square library which most impressed the compiler of this 1797 guidebook, for being "upon a much superior plan, respecting size and elegance, being large enough to contain between three and four hundred people", having "a dome in the fore part of the ceiling, from whence is suspended an elegant glass chandelier, which, when lighted up, is a truly brilliant spectacle", and having "in the front and on the side of this room...a noble piazza, with seats for the use of the company".⁴

How far Margate's libraries had developed in size and elegance by 1816 was discussed at length in the 6th Edition, with many Additions, of The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide. The library at the north-west corner of Hawley Square had been built in "an elegant and magnificent style"

1. The Kentish Gazette, 20 April 1847.

2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 18-19.

3. Ibid., 18.

4. Ibid., 18.

and constituted "a most superb room,...the internal design and execution of which does credit to Mr. CROFTS, formerly a resident of this place". By 1816 Samuel Bettison had completed fifteen seasons at the Hawley Square library, having made "very considerable alterations, and fitted it up in the most tasteful manner". The premises comprised

"an excellent shop and library, forming together a square of 42 feet, of a proportionable height, with a spacious dome in the front department, giving light and ornament to the whole structure, from the centre of which is suspended a beautiful glass chandelier. The shop contains an assortment of stationery, jewellery, cutlery, hardware, silver and plated goods. Nearly across the centre of the room is a range of Corinthian columns, which not only support the roof, but are designed to separate the shop from the library. On the cornice of each of the bookcases are busts of the poets. The side walls and ceiling are most richly ornamented with figures and flowers... The Library contains a good selection of many thousand volumes; the reading of which, together with the privilege of walking in the room, the use of the newspapers, and other periodical publications, are on very reasonable terms". (1)

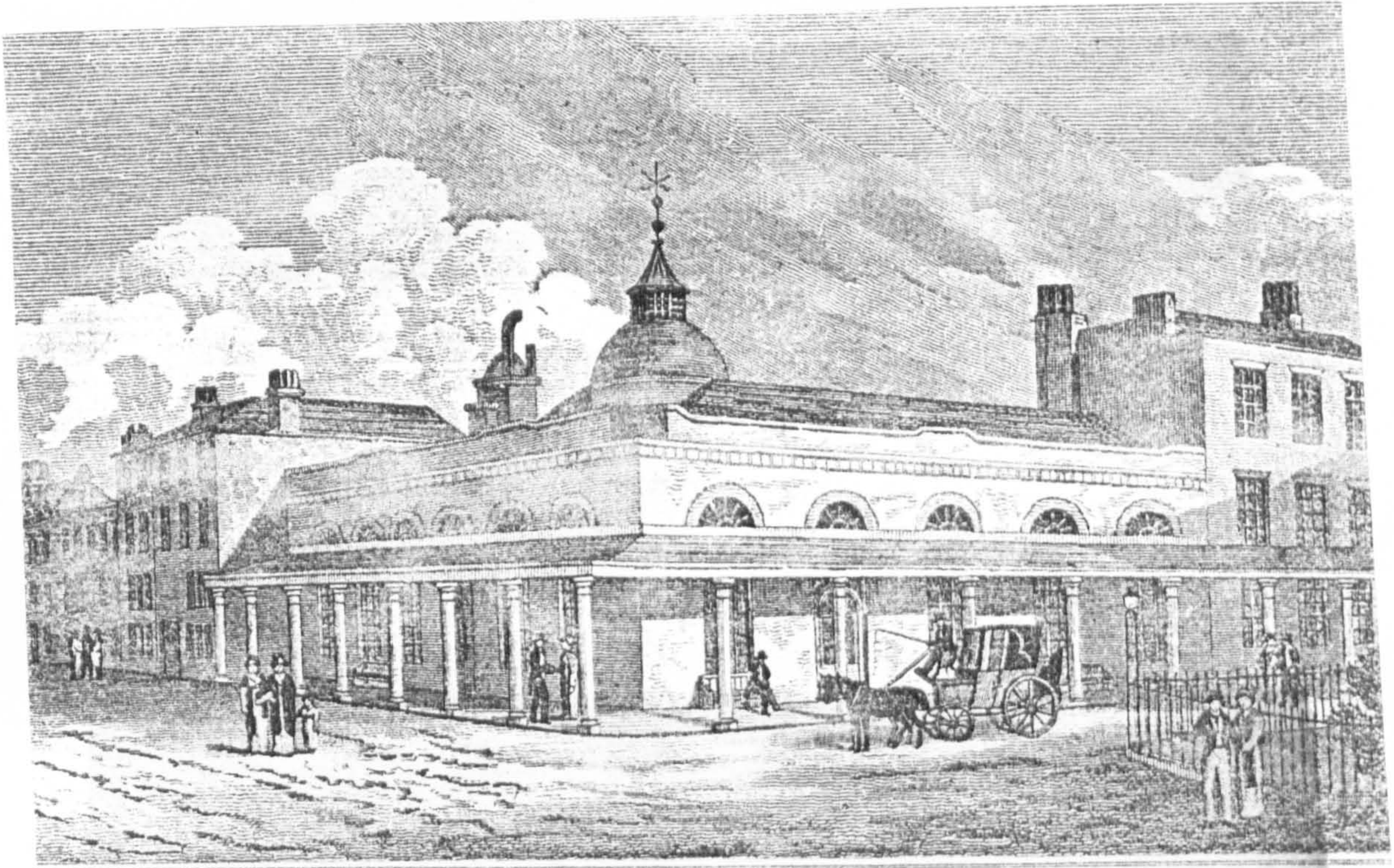
In 1811 Thomas Pallister enlarged the Cecil Square library by adding "a handsome music and reading room", thereby providing "from the entrance at the shop, to the end of the reading room, a pleasing lounge or promenade of 80 feet in length".² Occupying the east side of Cecil Square, "directly opposite the assembly rooms", it was "from its central situation, interior elegance,...convenience, and various amusements,...an establishment of much attraction and public resort".³ In 1816 it contained three departments; a music and reading room, a library and a shop.

"The shop is a repository of real accommodation, being well and extensively furnished, with an assortment of articles of utility, ornament and elegance. The library contains an entire new and well selected collection to the present time, of the latest and best editions of the works of the most esteemed authors, on science and literature. The reading

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 70-1.
 2. Ibid., 72.
 3. Ibid., 72.

SAMUEL BETTISON'S HAWLEY SQUARE LIBRARY

AS IT APPEARED IN 1820 .



J. Shary sculp
BETTISON'S LIBRARY,
Hawley Square

W. C. Oulton, Picture of Margate and Its Vicinity (1820), p. 51.

room, owing to its distance from the shop, has the advantage of being completely retired from the bustle occasioned by the general routine of business peculiar to such establishments, and is agreeably enlivened by overlooking a large garden, and commands a pleasant view of the country towards Northdown. In addition to the above sources of amusement the present occupier (Mr. PURDAY) has rendered this establishment complete, by the addition of a handsome and well constructed billiard room". (1)

Despite the advantages of a central location opposite the assembly rooms, and all these facilities for reading, shopping, lounging, promenading, music and billiards, Purday too was a bankrupt within fifteen months of taking over these premises.

Garner's library, located on the west side of the High Street, offered "the peculiar advantage of a sea prospect", and "from the reading room we enjoy every satisfaction the sea coast is capable of conveying", beholding "at a distance the sister spires of Reculver".² The Marine library was "much resorted to by the company" who had access to a "very extensive collection of books on antiquities and history, with a sufficient assortment of lighter reading", to a "well-furnished" shop and to a proprietor who "is intelligent, attentive and obliging".³

These descriptions show that circulating libraries were multi-functional businesses. With assembly rooms and theatres they were essential to the social life of eighteenth and early nineteenth-century spas and watering places, but Margate's libraries offered more than newspapers or books. They sold through their attached shops a variety of stationery, goods and curiosities, which were bought as souvenirs or gifts. As with the bathing rooms they were centres for socializing and lounging. They were places of entertainment, offering their patrons gambling, musical concerts, and evening

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 72.
 2. Ibid., 73.
 3. Ibid., 73.

assemblies. They advertised and sold tickets for other forms of entertainment, including the Margate playhouse.¹ They functioned as accommodation agencies.² Their proprietors were often well informed about lodgings and amusements. Tickets at 3s.6d. for a public performance and breakfast at the assembly rooms could be purchased early in August 1769 from the circulating libraries of Messrs. Silver and Hall.³ In May 1773 Mr. Silver opened "at his Circulating Library in Cecil Square, Margate, ...a Register Office for Lodgings".⁴ There was scarcely a better venue for matching the demand and supply of accommodation since both residents and visitors patronized the circulating libraries. Finally, they were places where local guidebooks were sold and even published. Librarians published maps and guidebooks of their locality. Joseph Hall issued during August 1777 a map of the Isle of Thanet, from a survey by R. Bridgen, priced at 3s.6d., or 5s. in a case.⁵ Some librarians possessed a good knowledge of the antiquities and topography of their area but clearly commercial gain was a motivating force behind guidebook and map publication.

Money spent on guidebooks and other manuals benefited publishers and printers both locally and in places further afield, particularly in London. Most of the medical treatises on sea water and sea air originated from London. National and local newspapers advertised during the spring and summer months topographical itineraries and guidebooks. Publishers and printing houses faced increasing demands for topographical literature from growing numbers of holidaymakers. Between 1763 and 1870 of 227 guidebooks and articles on

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1. As noted below in the next section to this Chapter.
 2. As noted in Chapter III above.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 2-5 August 1769.
 4. Ibid., 26-29 May 1773, 1d; also, 25-28 May 1774, 1a.
 5. Ibid., 30 August - 3 September 1777, 1b.

Thanet, Margate, Broadstairs or Ramsgate, 64 were published in Margate and 14 in Ramsgate, compared to 132 in London. Margate claimed 28 per cent of the publications and London and Margate publishers between them commanded 86 per cent of the market. For every guide or article published in Margate, however, two were published in London.

As and when libraries and printers published or sponsored their own guidebooks they helped to remunerate a business, which was costly in terms of its capital investment.¹ Joseph Hall combined the business of being a librarian with a modicum of publishing. Hall's New Margate and Ramsgate Guide: containing a Description of the Libraries, Theatre, Assemblies, New Buildings, Accommodations, Mode of Bathing, Lists of the Coaches, Diligences, Hoys, etc, with the Time of their Going out and Coming in and a general Account of the Isle of Thanet : to which is prefixed a Map of the Island, taken from an actual Survey, was published in 1790, followed by a second edition in 1792. In 1796 W. Epps, from his Margate Printing Office, published A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet : being chiefly intended as a Directory for the Company resorting to Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs, With a Map of the Island (Margate, 1796), which noted how two printing offices had recently established themselves in Margate.²

Successful Thanet guides passed through several editions. Thus Robert Edward Hunter's A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet : being chiefly Intended as a Directory for the Company resorting to Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs passed through eleven editions between 1799 and circa 1826,³ while

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1. Vaughan, op.cit., 108-9, cites numerous examples of towns where commercial circulating libraries published guide books, including Brighton (Wright), Bristol (Prust), Buxton (Moore), Cheltenham (Bettison), Chester (Batenham), Folkestone (Stock), Hastings (Barry), Leamington (Elliston), Leicester (Combe), Leominster (Burlton), London (Cawthorne), Malvern (Southall), Manchester (Aston), Reading (Lovejoy), Scarborough (Coultas or Theakston), Southend (Renneson and Tarry), Tunbridge Wells (Colbran or Sprange), Weymouth (Bull of Bath) and York (Hargrove or Bellerby and Sampson).
 2. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 24.
 3. (London, 1799) and (Ramsgate, 1806, 1807, 1809, 1810, 1811, 1814, 1815, 1817, circa 1818, circa 1826). As a Margate physician he was noted in Chapter II above.

A
SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
ISLE of THANET,

Being chiefly intended as a
Directory for the Company

- RESORTING TO
Margate, Ramsgate, & Broadstairs.

BY ROBERT EDWARD HUNTER, M. D. S. R. L. S.

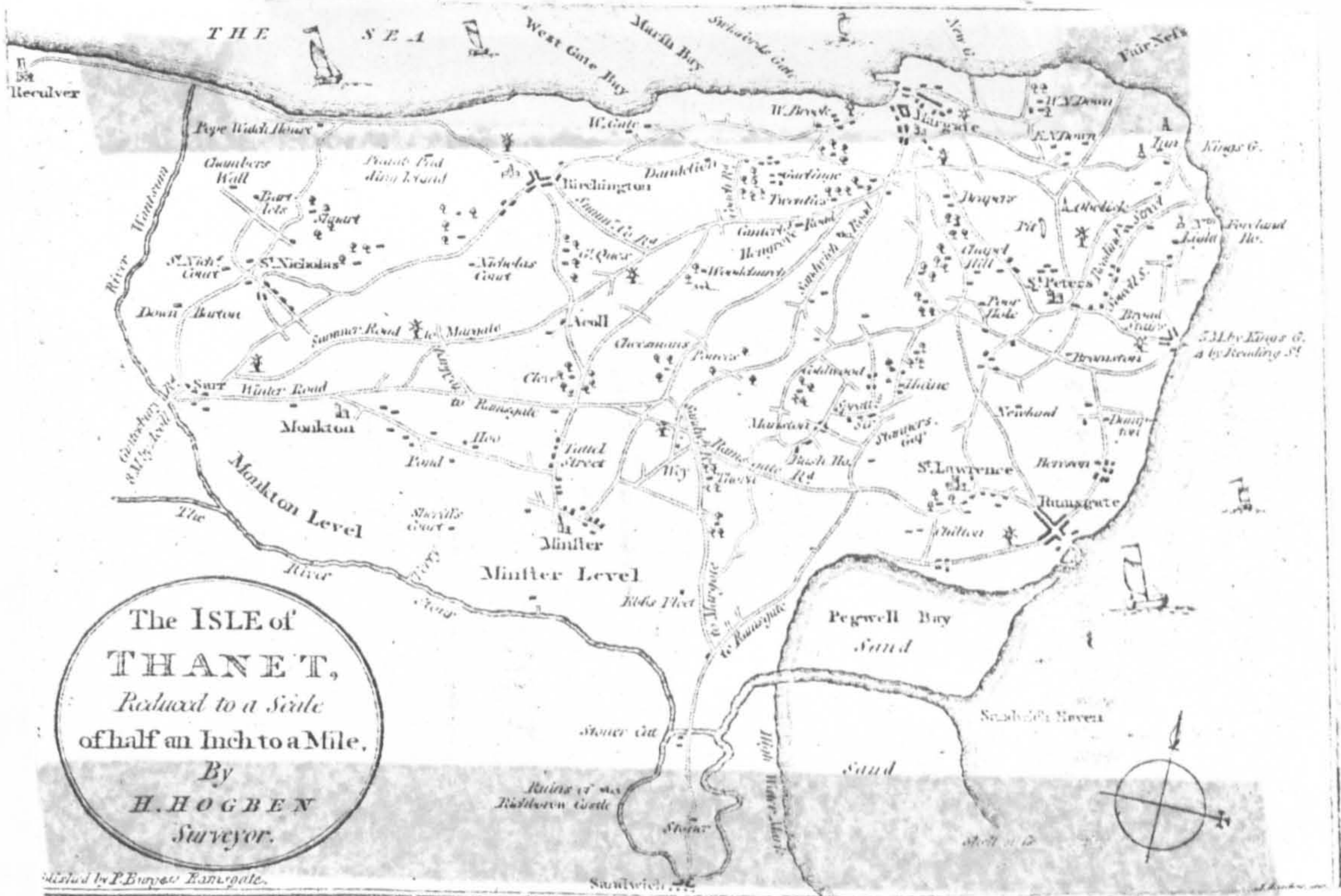
WITH
A Map of the Island.

RAMSGATE:

Printed by Burgess, Hunt & Carter, Queen-Street;
AND SOLD AT BURGESS'S AND HUNT'S LIBRARY.

SOLD ALSO
By all the Booksellers in the Isle of Thanet,

1817.



The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide; containing an Historical Epitome of the Ancient and Present State of the Isle of Thanet; with an Account of the Public Assemblies, Libraries, Theatre, and other Accommodations of those Improved Watering Places, and chiefly intended as a Descriptive Pocket Companion for the Company resorting thereto had nine editions to its credit between 1801 and circa 1825.¹

Another Margate printer of note in the early nineteenth century was George Witherden whose business adjoined the York Hotel on the Parade. He printed a number of local guidebooks, including in 1809 The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate), which was "Printed and Sold by G. Witherden, Stationer on the Marine Parade; Sold also at Mrs. Witherden's Library, Ramsgate"; likewise the 6th Edition of the same work which appeared in 1816.² It was noted how "a Printing Office, which was before merely occasional, became a permanent establishment in this town in the year 1795, and is now [1809] carried on by Witherden, the publisher of the present work, who is Agent to the Atlas Fire Insurance Office, and has a circulating library and commodious shop adjoining the York Hotel, on the Marine Parade, in which the several branches of bookbinding...are conducted on such terms as have met with the most flattering approbation and support".³ In Ramsgate Mrs. Witherden had erected "a most elegant and spacious library in Cliff-street, Zion Hill, which commands an uninterrupted view of the Downs and French coast", the upper rooms of which functioned as a boarding house, for "a limited number, which...are very select and of the most respectable description".⁴

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1. (Margate, 1801, 1802, 1804, 1805, 1807, 1809, 1816, 1823, circa 1825).
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), title page, and (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., title page.
 3. Ibid., (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), 69.
 4. Ibid., 87.

Although circulating libraries were patronized by the middle and upper classes, it was the contention of one Margate guidebook that

"perhaps nothing has added more to the increase of knowledge among the inferior classes, than circulating Libraries; the easy terms of which, not only afford a very favourable opportunity of procuring and consulting such works as would be utterly impossible for them to obtain through any other channel, but create an universal desire for reading; consequently, a clearer view of their rights as men, their duties as Citizens, and their obligations as parents...is brought home to every mind: the effects of which must be, that the generality of the inhabitants of this nation will become more civilised, and the knowledge which they obtain by these means, will be manifested in their exertions for the good of their fellow creatures". (1)

Circulating libraries by becoming centres of promenade and entertainment came into direct competition with the assembly rooms. They attracted a fashionable patronage particularly at the Sunday promenades early in September 1804, when "SILVER had a numerous audience", and "BETTISON's was crowded with beauty".² A few days later Miss Scott was singing "with great applause, in the evenings, at BETTISON's, to very numerous audiences".³ Visitors were informed that "the libraries in Hawley and Cecil Squares have... evening promenades: the rooms are well lighted, and furnished with grand piano-fortes and other musical instruments, and vocal and instrumental performers of merit from London are retained for the public amusement during the season".⁴ Bettison's evening promenades were popular with visitors, "at which there are never wanted (from amongst the numerous visitors) many willing hands; nor are the vocal powers restrained in those who are possessed of that agreeable ability".⁵ On 25 June 1810 "a young lady...made her début

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1. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 55.
 2. The Times, 6 September 1804, 2d.
 3. Ibid., 10 September 1804, 3b.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 74.
 5. Ibid., (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 67.

at Bettison's; her voice and engaging manners gave general satisfaction", while at Pallister and Bowsfield's library "Mr. Eavestaff presided at the pianoforte, and Gibbon, of the late Drury Lane Theatre, sang some excellent songs and deservedly obtained much applause".¹ During September 1810 it was noted how

"the watering places are this season endeavouring to surpass each other in the variety of their attractions and amusements. Margate certainly carries away the palm from her competitors. Miss POUCHÉE, a pupil of LANZA's, sings at BETTISON's Library, and GIBBON, of the late Drury-lane Theatre...at Pallister and Bowsfields". (2)

With music at "Bettison's magnificent Room and at Bowsfield's and Pallister's this lively town is ... the centre of every fashionable amusement", while "at Garner's Loos we laugh in the evening at the sprightly wit".³

A rage for raffles and gambling developed to such an extent by 1809 that "to produce variety, and dispose of various articles, Bowsfield also in partnership with Pallister⁴ exerts his oratorical powers every evening as an auctioneer".⁵ William Robinson wrote of the prevalence of gambling in his poem, A Trip to Margate (1805).

"Resorting to the libraries for news...
Where'er you turn, you find the rage for play,
More properly for gambling every way,
Completely gratify'd. Or cards, or dice,
Or billiards, almost ev'ry street supplies.
In each of these no want is ever found
Of betting company who stand around,
Each bett they'll take, propose it as you may,
...each guinea in your purse, they'll glean,
Of ev'ry feather they will pluck you clean.

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 29 June 1810.
 2. The Morning Chronicle, 4 September 1810, 3a.
 3. Ibid., 27 September 1810, 3b.
 4. As noted in this section above.
 5. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 67.

A certain house there is in _____,
Let youths be cautious how they venture there,
Who's master of that house no one can say;
Enough, that when you enter, you must pay
A fix'd subscription, which admits each man
Without restraint to plunder as he can,
And he who cheats the neatest is the best
Of gamblers that frequent that shameful nest.

To try their luck at Garner's some will go
By cutting cards, the high against the low.
The highest fixes who shall win the stake,
But aces there they always highest make...

For recreations of another sort
Margate is well provided. There's the sport
of Silver's auction. A most curious man
That Silver surely is. Beat him who can
In bowling. To the door, as you advance,
He runs, and as awaken'd from a trance,
Is all surprise and joy. 'Your Honour's well',
'I hope, your lady too, I scarce can tell'
'How much I am oblig'd'. Then leads you on
And seats you in the auction room; that done,
A book is forthwith slipp'd into your hand,
For your subscription - a genteel demand!
You may then read the papers, and are free
To purchase at the sale whate'er you see.
It is the vogue most useless things to buy,...
Papa must mind to overbid the throng;
And if a pretty work-bag please the mother,
No price must let it go to any other...
No man more keen than Silver; he well knows
To turn each passion to his own account,
...He dwells

Longest on plated goods, the rest he sells
For half their value, if you will believe...

'Tis strange to see such numbers faint and sweat,
Enduring all th'extremities of heat,
Within a crowded room, for scissors, knives,
And netting-boxes coveted by wives;
Morocco-folding purses, amber-beads,....
Thus Silver traffics six nights out of seven,
And twice on Sunday seeks the road to heav'n....

From this strange scene, so vulgar and so rude,
We next attend the ball. The music's good:
The company well drest". (1)

An infectious spirit of gambling first gripped Margate during the 1780's,
with lotteries by 1789, featuring not only in the libraries but also in many
of the shops.² Significantly it was the 1780's which produced local demands

1. William Robinson, A Trip to Margate: With a Description of Its Environs, Written in the Year 1805, (1805), 19-24.
2. The New Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1789), op.cit., 15.

for the more effective policing of the town.¹ Bousfield and Pallister maintained petty auctions which had been introduced by Samuel Silver. They were precursors of the Margate bazaars of steamboat days,² but raffles and lotteries had a more chequered history. Shortly after William Robinson's observations the latter were prohibited by legislation, and this interference was greatly regretted by an 1809 guidebook.

"The Raffles, or the Subscriptions, were generally for some article of jewellery, Tunbridge-ware, etc., and were so numerous, that many goods were disposed of in an evening, at the Libraries, by this means. The brilliancy of the company which attended them was astonishingly great, for as they here enjoyed some of the pleasures of the ballroom without being under the restrictions which are necessarily observed in an assembly, not only the generality of the visitants, but those of the highest rank, were found partaking of the amusements which these rooms afforded. An Act of Parliament, not long since passed, called 'The Little Go Bill', has put a stop to this sort of lottery. We cannot avoid lamenting this, as the smallness of the sum subscribed certainly rendered it an innocent recreation; and we hope that the Legislature may yet in its wisdom repeal so much of this Bill as relates to raffling". (3)

The circulating libraries were driven to devote added effort and resources to their evening promenades. In providing evening entertainments they confronted direct competition from the assembly rooms and the Theatre Royal.

Margate's circulating library proprietors displayed considerable initiative. Successive bankruptcies did not deter new enterprise. Failures were due to a combination of causes, some of which were peculiar to their line of business. Some floundered through personal misfortune, or because ambition tempted them to over-reach themselves financially. Here was a business expensive in fixed and working capital. Their premises had to appeal to the

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1. Compare the section which follows.
 2. Compare Chapter VII below.
 3. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 67.

upper classes of society, on a scale that was greatly in excess of the everyday needs of the local population. They carried enormous stocks of books, stationery and shop goods. Gambling, lotteries, raffles and auctions called for additional stock, which was clearly illustrated in the 1815 auction of Pallister's Cecil Square library.¹ Income had to be maximized over the duration of each season. Fashion and the seasons varied greatly. In offering evening entertainment the libraries competed with the theatre and the assembly rooms, and from 1815 onwards they faced an even more popular attraction in the bazaars of the 1820's and 1830's. Margate evidence suggests that there were few seasonal seaside trades where the potentiality for bankruptcy was greater than with the circulating libraries of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Both Ramsgate and Broadstairs developed circulating library facilities before 1815. An interval of ten years elapsed between the opening of Margate's first circulating library by Joseph Hall in February 1766 and the emergence of an early Ramsgate library during August 1776 when it was announced that "a Circulating Library is opened by Miss Croux, Linen Draper, near the King's Head, Ramsgate".² Ramsgate during the 1780's possessed at least one circulating library³ and, in 1793, "a very good library".⁴ Broadstairs had two circulating libraries by 1797: "Nuckell's Circulating Library, Post-Office, and Toy-Shop, furnished with books and stationery", which was "delightfully situated" on the cliff overlooking the pier, "and from its extensive views...is well calculated for the ease and amusement of

1. As noted in this section above.

2. The Kentish Gazette, 14 August 1776.

3. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (3rd Ed., Canterbury, 1790), op.cit., 260.

4. Cozens, op.cit., 49.

the subscribers";¹ and fronting the Rose Inn Barfield's library, commanding "from the back windows...a fine view of the ocean, with the Downs and French coast".² Two circulating libraries in Ramsgate occupied central positions in the High Street. Near the market was

"Burgess's Circulating Library, well furnished with books, and has attached to it a commodious shop, stored with stationery, toys, etc. The Proprietor has for many years filled this situation with much credit", (3)

while "lower down, in the same street, is a smaller Library and Toy-Shop, kept and managed with assiduity and attention by Mrs. Witherden".⁴

Thanet thus closed the eighteenth century with eight circulating libraries, which were sufficiently close to each other to promote competition and to attract any of the Island's inhabitants and visitors. In 1816, the same firms as named in 1797 operated in Ramsgate and Broadstairs, indicating thereby their stability and financial solvency. Mrs. Witherden had moved from Ramsgate High Street to a new library on Sion Hill, employing her upper rooms as a boarding house,⁵ and her "assiduous attentions...to her numerous subscribers and Boarders are too well known to need any comment".⁶ Burgess still operated a "valuable and extensive library", near the market in the High Street, having "attached to it a good shop, well supplied with stationery, jewellery [or] toys".⁷

In Broadstairs Barfield had branched out into owning warm baths.⁸ His library, "desirably situated for business" and for fine panoramic views,

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1. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 104.
 2. Ibid., 104.
 3. Ibid., 98.
 4. Ibid., 98.
 5. As noted in this section above.
 6. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 93.
 7. Ibid., 94.
 8. See the first section to this Chapter above.

contained "a good collection of books, and is well furnished with stationery and toys".¹ Nuckell's "Library, Post Office and Toy-shop" remained in the same premises and possessed "a valuable collection of books, stationery, etc.".²

A Playhouse and a Theatre.

The years 1786-7 were important for the promotion and opening of a permanent theatre in Margate, which was the only Thanet resort to acquire this facility before 1815:

"at the East corner of Hawley Square stands the Theatre Royal, which was erected in the year 1787, at the expence of nearly £4,000. ...The present proprietors, who exert their abilities in the selection of performers, and in the management of the Theatre during the season, spare neither cost nor pains to render their efforts for the public amusement worthy of support; good actors are retained at great salaries; and the acting manager by his frequent introduction of the most favorite performers from the metropolis, shows himself by no means inattentive to give satisfaction, and to ensure the approbation of the visitors and inhabitants of this fashionable summer resort. The house is open only during the season, being limited to that time by its licence". (3)

The history of theatrical activity in Margate is well documented by Malcolm Morley in Margate and Its Theatres, 1730-1965 (1966). This work combined with advertisements and announcements in local newspapers produce a considerable literature on this aspect of Margate's development, and especially on the plays which were performed. Theatrical enterprise in Margate originated before 1787, and predated boarding houses (1770) and circulating libraries (1766).

Initially theatrical activity was spasmodic and originated from places

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 109.
 2. Ibid., 109-10.
 3. Ibid., 69-70.

outside Margate. The presence of visitors inspired companies of players to come to Margate for a season. In the summer of 1752 Mr. Perry from Sittingbourne arrived with his troupe of comedians.¹ For several summers beginning in 1754 William Smith and his company from Canterbury entertained Margate's early visitors:

"their temporary home was any available building that could be rented where on a built-up stage the actors had elbow room and where an audience had sitting or standing room, comfort not necessarily being of prime importance". (2)

Smith offered greater comfort in 1761, when he provided Margate's first definite playhouse, located in the Dane, close to the centre of the town. It was a converted barn, containing boxes set apart for the élite, admission to which was 2s. for each person, with a pit at 1s.6d., a gallery at 1s., and a top gallery situated somewhere under the roof at 6d.³ He opened his summer season during July with Benjamin Hoadley's The Suspicious Husband, and Samuel Foote's The Minor.⁴

For another seven years Smith had control of Margate. He also managed theatres at different times in Deal, Dover, Maidstone, Rochester, and Faversham.⁵ He controlled the well known Canterbury Circuit. Under the circuit system a group of players served under a manager. The company moved from town to town, staying for several months in some places, and for only a few weeks in others, provided a Magistrate's Licence permitted the performances. The Canterbury Circuit, extending out to Margate, Dover, Deal, Maidstone, Faversham and Rochester was in existence for nearly a century.⁶

1. Morley, op.cit., 12-13.

2. Ibid., 13.

3. Ibid., 13.

4. Ibid., 13-14.

5. John Parker, "Margate Theatre Royal", The Isle of Thanet Gazette and Thanet Times, 5 July 1930, 4.

6. Morley, op.cit., 14.

Smith relinquished control of the Canterbury Circuit in 1768, where- upon Thomas Burton from Faversham, hitherto an ostler at the Ship Inn, and a candle snuffer at the local theatre, seized the opportunity of taking over Margate's playhouse, hoping thereby to snatch the town away from the Canterbury Circuit.¹ During May 1769 he was

"fitting up the house in a most elegant taste; it has a new ceiling,...all new painted, with new front boxes; and the scenery entirely new; ...and he has engaged a very good Company of Comedians, who intend to open soon after his Majesty's birthday". (2)

The playhouse re-opened for the 1769 season with Arthur Murphy's The Way to Keep Him. Performances were advertised from June until October, and for a longer period than in any former season.³

It was common in the early days of provincial theatre for the manager to act in one of the parts, and Messrs. Smith and Burton were no exception. Mr., Mrs. and Miss Burton all performed during July in an original production offered as a salute to local patrons.⁴

"By desire of Lady Frances Bulkelly...this Evening will be presented a Comedy called Tunbridge Walks : or the Yeomen of Kent...with Singing between the Acts. To which will be added The Mayor of Garratt". (5)

Burton's Margate playhouse enjoyed a successful season and in 1769 he was firmly established as "lord of the local drama".⁶ He responded to local needs and requests. He canvassed the sale of tickets, and his company included

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1. Morley, op.cit., 14.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 27-31 May 1769, 4d.
 3. Morley, op.cit., 14-15.
 4. Ibid., 15.
 5. The Kentish Gazette, 19-22 July 1769, 1b.
 6. Morley, op.cit., 15.

some worthy actors, such as Mr. Wilson who had played the Prince of Denmark in a June production of Hamlet.¹ At the end of August The Kentish Gazette announced that

"For the Benefit of Mr. Wilson, at the Theatre in Margate will be presented Hamlet, Prince of Denmark ... Between the Acts will be performed several select Pieces on the Clarinet, French Horn /and/ Bassoon. ...Box 2s.6d.; Pit 2s.; Gallery 1s. Tickets to be had at the principal Inns, the two Circulating Libraries, (2) at Surflen's Coffee Room, and of Mr. Wilson at the Fountain.

N.B. Mr. Wilson thinks it his duty to return Thanks in this Publick Manner for the great Favour conferred upon him, ...and it is desired that those Ladies and Gentlemen who please to honour him with their presence, will send as early as possible for Places; he will take particular Care there shall be no Mistake. There will be no Seats on the Stage, and it is hoped that those Gentlemen who are behind the Scenes will not advance further than the Wings". (3)

Following a successful theatrical season in 1769 there were rumours of new theatres and new rivals. Plans for a new theatre for Burton were contemplated:

"last Week the Ground was laid out near the New Assembly Room, at Margate, for erecting a Theatre by subscription, for Mr. Thomas Burton, the present Manager of that Place. Mr. Burton, by the advice and assistance of his friends, is determined to make the House as commodious and elegant as possible for the entertainment of the public the ensuing season. The favours he has already received demand his sincerest thanks". (4)

A new theatre, commanding popular support and run on sound business lines, would have supplemented the new assembly rooms, new libraries and new lodgings but what was a sound proposition never came to fruition, partly on account of Burton's increasing ill health,⁵ leading up to his death in 1771.

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 24-28 June 1769, 1d.
 2. Messrs. Joseph Hall and Samuel Silver, the latter having commenced business in 1769, as noted in the previous section above.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 30 August - 2 September 1769, 1d.
 4. Ibid., 4-7 October 1769, 4d.
 5. Morley, op.cit., 15.

Messrs. Perry and Younger, the new managers of the Canterbury Circuit, declared their intention of regaining Margate for themselves.¹ They boldly announced that they would erect a new Margate playhouse:

"the New Theatre, which is to be built...for the Canterbury Company, from the Theatres Royal, against the next Summer, will be the exact model of that elegant and much admired New Theatre at Bristol". (2)

A month later they decided to confine their activities to the Canterbury Theatre:

"we are authorized to say that Messrs. Perry and Younger have entirely given up their intention of having a Theatre at Margate next season". (3)

Mr. Burton, despite declining health, remained in sole command of Margate's theatrical activity for one more season during 1770. An advertisement for a full evening's entertainment confirms the enterprise and energy which he had displayed in 1769.

"For the benefit of Mr. Burton, at the Theatre in Margate, will be presented a Comedy call'd The Country Lassess, or The Custom of the Manor, ...with the following Entertainment of Singing between the Acts; End of Act I, a Comic Song by Mr. Burton; End of Act II, a Satire on all Trades, by Mr. Burton and Mr. Browne; End of Act III, a Song by Miss Gatton, call'd Sweet Willy'o; End of Act IV, A Song of the Four and Twenty Fiddlers, by Mr. Burton. Between the Play and the Entertainment will be Exhibited a famous Comic Pantomine Interlude from the Rights of Hacate, or Harlequin from the Moon, as it was performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 30 nights, with universal Applause...to which, by particular Desire, will be added The Paddock. Boxes 2s.6d.; Pit 2s.; Gallery 1s.. The Doors to be opened at Five, and begin exactly at Six O'clock, by Reason of the great Variety of the Entertainments. Tickets to be had of the principal Inns, at the two Libraries, at the Milleners' Shops, the Fountain Inn, where Places for the Boxes may be taken.

'Be it a wet Night; or be it a dry Night;
I hope you'll come, because 'tis my Night!'. (4)

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1. Morley, op.cit., 15.
 2. The Kentish Gazette, 16-20 September 1769, 4c.
 3. The Kentish Weekly Post and Canterbury Journal, 16-23 October 1769, 7; The Kentish Gazette, 21-25 October 1769, 4d.
 4. The Kentish Gazette, 29 September-20 October 1770, 1d.

Here was an occasion when Margate's visitors were offered a full and varied programme, including an insight into one of London's sensational theatrical successes. A guidebook of 1770 noted that "the present Playhouse is... an indifferent one, but it has lately received some improvements", and the company "meet with encouragement which they endeavour to deserve".¹

Following Burton's death in 1771, the playhouse in the Dane fell into disuse, and its equipment was acquired by two Canterbury men, William Brown, a currier, and John Richardson, a tailor. They transferred Margate's theatre to a stable at the rear of the Fountain Inn.² Richardson soon left the partnership, but Brown continued until 1778.³ Possibly they had some connection with the Canterbury Circuit, because in 1772 the Canterbury comedians, under Perry's command, visited Margate.⁴ During the seasons of the mid-1770's performances averaged three nights a week.⁵ In July 1778 Margate theatregoers saw for the first time Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer, and on many occasions thereafter this famous comedy attracted good local audiences.⁶

In the meantime another circuit, the Dover Circuit, had been formed, concentrating on the coastal towns of East Kent. It appeared in Margate for the first time in 1779. Originating from a playhouse in Dover, it was owned by an eccentric, Charles Mate, who had given up a maritime career to pursue theatrical management. Mate's players extended their performances from Dover to Deal, Sandwich and Margate.⁷

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1. The Margate Guide...In a Letter to a Friend (1770), op.cit., 20.
 2. Parker, op.cit., 4; Morley, op.cit., 15.
 3. Parker, op.cit., 4.
 4. Morley, op.cit., 15-16.
 5. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (Rochester, 1776), op.cit., 120; (2nd Ed., Rochester, 1779), op.cit., 171; Seymour, op.cit., 559.
 6. During the next one hundred years, Morley, op.cit., 16.
 7. Ibid., 16; Clarke, op.cit., 61.

Charles Mate found in Margate an important ally in Francis Cobb, who as a flourishing brewer was influential as the town's Deputy.¹ Cobb owned the Fountain Inn,² and with his support the Dover Circuit took control of theatrical presentation within Margate. Mate enlarged the playhouse by adding an adjoining stable, which he rented for £20 per season from Mr. Cobb.³ A new theatre effectively resulted from £200 which Mate spent upon reconstruction,⁴ 65 feet long,⁵ having a raised stage with a depth of 25 feet, which is no more than for some modern stages.⁶ The remaining 40 feet of the auditorium were converted into boxes, a pit and a gallery.⁷ The enlarged playhouse operating at full capacity could take £33 in a night, on higher admission charges, with seats in the boxes costing 4s., having abolished the 6d. top gallery.⁸

Mate, like his predecessors, was both an actor and a manager. On 9 July 1779 Sheridan's famous comedy, The School for Scandal, had its first performance in Margate. Mate was cast as Moses, portraying himself as a comedian, while his daughter floated in and out as the maid.⁹

For five years Charles Mate confronted no direct opposition in Margate, and attendances at his theatre were satisfactory.¹⁰ A formidable opponent then appeared in 1785 in the remarkable person of Mrs. Sarah Baker, the first

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1. Also see Chapter V below.
 2. Morley, op.cit., 16.
 3. Parker, op.cit., 4.
 4. Morley, op.cit., 16.
 5. Clarke, op.cit., 61.
 6. Morley, op.cit., 16.
 7. Clarke, op.cit., 61.
 8. Morley, op.cit., 16.
 9. Ibid., 17.
 10. Ibid., 17.

woman theatrical manager in England, "the governess-general of the Kentish drama".¹ Mate used his influence as a Freeman of Dover to see that the intruding Mrs. Baker was refused magisterial permission to remain, and having no alternative but to pack up and try elsewhere, she was henceforth at war with Mate.²

The resilient Mrs. Baker gained command of the Canterbury Circuit and her formidable opposition appeared once more in the very centre of Margate. She sought to destroy Mate's monopoly by erecting another theatre, in which her company would perform regularly.³ She immediately confronted opposition from Francis Cobb who used his position as Town Deputy to refuse her application for a theatre in Margate.⁴ Defiantly she declared her intention of pressing on with her plans, since a legally binding refusal could be issued only from Dover so long as Margate remained a limb and was under the jurisdiction of that cinque port.⁵ In little over a month a wooden theatre costing £500 appeared near the parish church, and Sarah Baker opened up in opposition to Charles Mate.⁶

Visitors to Margate now had the benefit of two theatres, but the inevitable rivalry between them stimulated local wishes for a permanent theatre, which would be more rigorously controlled. Charles Mate commenced his summer season during July 1785, when also Mrs. Sarah Baker opened her new playhouse.⁷

"The battle had begun... Tension ran high between the two theatres competing for public favour. Each tried to anticipate what the other was doing. If it was discovered that a certain play was in rehearsal, the rival house would hurriedly arrange to produce the same work, often on the same night. Rehearsals were kept as secret as possible by both sides in the theatrical war. It was hush-hush here and hush-hush there". (8)

1. Morley, op.cit., 16.

2. Ibid., 16.

3. Ibid., 17.

4. Ibid., 17.

5. Ibid., 17-18; also see Chapter V. below.

6. Morley, op.cit., 18.

7. Ibid., 18.

8. Ibid., 18-19.

Mrs. Baker competed by offering frequent changes of programme and by undercutting her rival. She advertised in The Kentish Gazette.

26 July - The Comic Opera of Robin Hood, or Sherwood Forest.

27 July - The Tragedy of The Garrester.

29 July - The Comedy of The Rivals, or a Trip to Bath
with the Opera of Rosina.

Boxes 3s.; Pit 2s.; Gallery 1s. Door to be opened
at 5.30 to begin precisely at 7.00 pm. (1)

As the season progressed so the rivalry intensified. Mrs. Baker changed her programme almost every day. Mate's Old Theatre responded by charging identical prices of admission and by publicizing the fact that Messrs. Mate, Hillyard and Richlands would be presenting on the same night of 23 August 1785, The Wonder! A Woman Keeps a Secret!, following which "Mrs. Richards and Miss Andrews will perform on the Tight and Slack Rope, and the Slack Wire".²

Mrs. Baker's playhouse introduced Margate to new plays which had never been seen there before. Both theatres changed their programmes frequently and adopted popular plays.

Mrs. Sarah Baker's New Theatre.

13 September, never acted here, the
Comic Opera of The Castle of
Andalusia with the Farce of
Who's the Dupe?

14 September, never acted here, the
Comedy of Which is the Man?,
with never acted before, the
Comic Opera of The Son in Law.

16 September, The Comedy of The Busybody
with never acted here, the much
admired Farce of The Humorist, or
Who's Who?

On account of the Variety of the
new Scenery preparing, the new
Pantomine of The Medley is
unavoidably postponed till next
Week. (3)

Mr. Charles Mate's Old Theatre.

13 September, The Comedy, She
Stoops to Conquer, or the
Mistakes of a Night, to which
will be added a Farce, called
Miss in her Teens. The Part
of Fribble by a Gentleman for
his Amusement.

14 September, The Tragedy of
Alexander the Great to which
will be added the Farce, called
The Quaker. (4)

1. The Kentish Gazette, 19-22 July 1785, 1a.

2. Ibid., 16-19 August 1785, 1b.

3. Ibid., 6-9 September 1785, 1d.

4. Ibid., 9-13 September 1785, 1d.

Mrs. Baker's resourcefulness and enterprise were such that she experienced a very successful season in Margate. She came from an amateur theatrical background, and her company was very much a family concern, including two daughters, Ann for tragedy and Sally for comedy. Henry, her son, although not a leading man, was a useful actor. Mary Wakelin, her sister, combined the functions of wardrobe mistress, cook and occasional actress, and a cousin, Ireland, conducted a band of three musicians.¹ Sarah Baker employed salaried actors, prominent among whom were the names of Rugg, Twiddy and Mr. and Mrs. Glassington.² During October and November 1785 several members of her company were honoured with benefit performances.

October 11, for the Benefit of Miss Baker, the Tragedy, never acted here, called Macbeth, to which will be added the Musical Farce, never performed here, of Gretna Green.

October 12, for the Benefit of Mr. Rugg, a Tragedy called Grecian Daughter, to which will be added the Comic Opera of The Deserter.

October 14, for the Benefit of Miss Tweddy /Twiddy/, the Comic Opera of Turk and No Turk, to which will be added The Poor Soldier.

Doors open 5.30 to begin precisely at 6.30 pm". (3)

Charles Mate and Sarah Baker competed for three months.

"Nightly she sat at the entrance of her theatre collecting the money for Boxes, Pit and Gallery whilst shouting honours to all and sundry. As each person approached, he or she was greeted with 'Your Grace', 'Your Royal Highness', or a similar ennoblement. The money paid, Sarah hustled the patrons inside with the stern admonition 'Pass on Tom Fool'. These alternating hot and cold receptions were the cause of considerable amusement to the crowd swarming round the door". (4)

1. Morley, op.cit., 18.

2. Ibid., 18.

3. The Kentish Gazette, 4-7 October 1785, 1d; other benefit performances were advertised for 18, 19, 21, 25, 26 and 28 October and for 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16 and 18 November in ibid., 11-14 October 1785, 1d; 18-21 October 1785, 1d; 25-28 October 1785, 1a; 1-4 November 1785, 1d; and 8-11 November 1785, 1d.

4. Morley, op.cit., 19.

Week by week Mate lost not only money, but the energy and determination to continue.¹ So powerful was the opposition from Sarah Baker that he was compelled to close down.² After finishing his season during September, he stopped on his way to Dover to play at Sandwich: "Mate, Richland and Company, Old Theatre, of Margate, open the Sandwich Theatre on October 25".³

The prospect that Sarah Baker would be left in complete possession of Margate met with disapproval from Mr. Cobb, who summoned the parishioners to a meeting where he proposed the founding of a permanent theatre.⁴ Sarah Baker's monopoly could be annulled if the townsfolk were to sign a petition which Mate had prepared for a royal patent.⁵ A royal charter would license Mate as the patentee with authority to outlaw Mrs. Baker's Company from the town. The effect would be to banish any intruding company from Margate.⁶ Mr. Cobb undertook to use his influence towards securing the necessary royal charter for a new and permanent theatre.⁷ Thomas Robson, a former singer at Covent Garden who was living in Margate, came forward to help Mate, and with such prominent backing the petition was enthusiastically received.⁸ It attracted over 900 signatures,⁹ but cost £550.¹⁰ Messrs. Mate, Robson and Cobb approached Sir James Watterall, one of the members for Dover. Through his efforts the petition passed through both Houses of Parliament, and the royal patent was secured.¹¹

The petition was introduced to Westminster as the Margate Playhouse Bill:

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1. Morley, op.cit., 19.
 2. Parker, op.cit., 4.
 3. The Kentish Gazette, 18-21 October 1785, 1c.
 4. Clarke, op.cit., 62; Morley, op.cit., 19; Parker, op.cit., 4.
 5. Morley, op.cit., 19; Clarke, op.cit., 62.
 6. Morley, op.cit., 19.
 7. Ibid., 19.
 8. Clarke, op.cit., 62.
 9. Morley, op.cit., 19; Parker, op.cit., 4.
 10. Clarke, op.cit., 62.
 11. Parker, op.cit., 4.

"your petitioners observe the growing Dissipation and Licentiousness which daily extend their baneful Effects among the Inhabitants at large, most of whom are Mariners, Artificers, and others dependent on their Labours, and are apprehensive that such a Licence will be very pernicious in its consequences, as it may render the Inhabitants less active in their industrious Occupations, and more relaxed in their Morals". (1)

Fears had been stimulated by some of the plays performed during the 1785 season as part of the intense rivalry between Charles Mate and Sarah Baker. Here was an early illustration of how public opinion divided between the conflicting interests of holidaymakers and permanent residents, added to which

"the parochial Rates are at present very high and considered by your petitioners as a very heavy, tho' necessary Burthen... The Introduction of a number of indigent Strangers, who by a Licensed Theatre may gain Settlements in, and become chargeable to the Parish, must of course increase the number of the Poor, and consequently increase the Rates". (2)

The fact that theatrical employment was seasonal and casual was evident from reading the London newspapers; for instance, "the number of performers discharged from the two winter theatres exceed all example", but "pray Heaven the Managers do not snuff the candle of economy too close".³ Winter unemployment in Margate was in some respects a more fearful prospect than summer unemployment in London.

Another reason for opposing the Margate Playhouse Bill arose from the existing local government of the town as a limb of the Cinque Port of Dover. The Mayor of Dover was represented in Margate by a Deputy who was also the local Constable.⁴

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1. MS Petition... Against the Margate Playhouse Bill, op.cit.
 2. Ibid.
 3. The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, 1 July 1786, 2c.
 4. See Chapter I above.

"Tho' Dramatic Exhibitions may have been hitherto performed at Margate during the Season for Bathing there without any Interruption or Restraint, the performers at such plays in case of misconduct or the desire of the Inhabitants, were subject and amenable to the Laws in those Respects, and might have been with ease removed from the Town, but should a Licence be granted to perform Plays at Margate, such performers, tho' they should misbehave, and the Inhabitants of Margate should find the Playhouse very injurious to them, cannot be restrained from playing or removed from the Town without great difficulty, if at all, and then at a very heavy Expense, as there is no Police established in the Town, or any Magistrates to apply to for Redress nearer than Dover, which is upwards of twenty miles from Margate". (1)

Locally it was realized that the Margate Playhouse Bill would remove the provision of a 1737 Act "for the more effectual punishing such Rogues, Vagabonds, sturdy Beggars, and Vagrants, and sending them whither they ought to be sent, as relates to Common Players of Interludes".²

The greatest single weakness of Margate's dependance on Dover arose from the difficulties, time and cost of administering justice from some 21 miles away in Dover. Broadstairs and St. Peter's confronted the same problem, Ramsgate being more fortunate in its adjacent proximity to Sandwich. It was not until 1812 that local magistrates for Margate were appointed.³ The judicial inconvenience which had arisen was frankly admitted in 1816, there having been until recently

"but one J.P., who resided at Ramsgate, and could only act as a Justice of the County at large /so that/ in all matters which related to the Jurisdiction of the Cinque Ports, he had no power whatever, not even of administering on oath. The inconvenience and disadvantage resulting from this is /more easily/ conceived than described. In all cases of assault, and in all parochial matters, it was necessary to make application to Dover, the distance of which from Margate,

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1. MS Petition...Against the Margate Playhouse Bill, op.cit.
 2. 10 Geo.II c.28, which explained and amended an earlier Act passed in Queen Anne's reign.
 3. Cooke, op.cit., xxviii.

is 21 miles. As it might be expected, the impunity which this great obstacle to the attainment of Justice presented to all manner of offence, occasioned the more frequent perpetration of every species of crime. The legislature have, however, lately interfered, and by an act passed in the 51st year of his present Majesty, (1) magistrates have been appointed, whose active exertions have already eminently conduced to the restoration of public order and individual security". (2)

In 1785 an attempt to secure a charter of incorporation had failed owing to strong opposition from the town and port of Dover.³ In the words of

Edward Hasted:

"the inhabitants of Margate thought their town of sufficient consequence to throw off the yoke of dependency on the town and port of Dover, and to exempt themselves from the jurisdiction of it; for which purpose they petitioned the crown for a charter of incorporation... On a hearing of the merits of the petition, in 1785, before the king's attorney-general, though he agreed that the town stood in need of a more regular police, yet he disapproved of the matter in question, and observed to them, if they persisted in their present mode, they had still the power of applying to parliament, and recommended to their attention certain propositions previous to such an application, to be taken into their consideration, and after their return and consulting their friends, they would at their own time, acquaint him with their determination; but this so far discouraged them from the further prosecution of a charter, that all further intentions of it from that time fell to the ground". (4)

Another source suggests that "a schism amongst some of the principal inhabitants prevented further application for a charter".⁵ Another 72 years had to pass until Margate was made a Borough under a Charter of Incorporation granted on 29 July 1857. The only really significant local government and

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1. 51 Geo.III c.36, as "An Act to facilitate the Execution of Justice within the Cinque Ports".
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 16.
 3. Ibid., 50-1.
 4. Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Volume X (2nd Ed., Canterbury, 1800), 325.
 5. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 51.

judicial changes so far as Margate was concerned began with the establishment of Improvement Commissioners in 1787,¹ coupled with the provision of two resident Magistrates appointed for the town under an Act of Parliament passed in 1811, "to facilitate the execution of justice within the Cinque Ports"² and through legislative provision four years previously in 1807 for a Court of Requests for the recovery of small debts.³

The application for a permanent theatre was supported by 900 signatures as against 21 opponents to the Bill, but

"notwithstanding the Petition to the Honourable Commons in support of that Bill is subscribed by a great number of the Inhabitants, the same has been so subscribed by some Persons who do not reside at Margate, others who are not Housekeepers, and many who have since been convinced of the pernicious Consequences of the Bill and have therefore changed their Opinions". (4)

Since at its second reading no counsel appeared in support of its opponents⁵ the Bill proceeded unopposed through the House of Lords. The House of Commons accepted a Lords Committee amendment, which deleted November in favour of October, and a House amendment, which replaced the first by the fifteenth.⁶ The royal assent was granted on 22 May 1786,⁷

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1. Under 27 Geo.III c.45.
 2. 51 Geo.III c.36 and Edward Cresy, Report to the General Board of Health on a Preliminary Inquiry into the Sewerage, Drainage and Supply of Water, and the Sanitary Condition of the Inhabitants of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, Margate, in the Isle of Thanet, in the County of Kent (H.M.S.O., 1850), 5.
 3. The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion (1819), op.cit., 44; more specifically 47 Geo.III c.7: "An Act for the more easy and speedy recovery of small debts within the parishes of St. John the Baptist, St. Peter the Apostle, and Birchington, and the vill of Wood, in the Isle of Thanet, and County of Kent", noted by Cresby, op.cit., 8. Broadstairs, within St. Peter's parish, was likewise covered by this provision.
 4. MS Petition...Against the Margate Playhouse Bill, op.cit.
 5. Journals of the House of Lords, Volume XXXVII (1783-7), op.cit., 462b.
 6. Ibid., 468b, 469b, 470b.
 7. Ibid., 487a.

"for establishing a Theatre or Play House within the said Town and Port; that is to say, from the Fifteenth Day of June to the last Day of October in every Year, and which Theatre or Play House...shall be entitled to all the Privileges, and subject to all the Regulations to which any Theatre or Play House in Great Britain is intitled and subjected". (1)

The theatre was granted a permit to sell alcoholic drinks for twenty-four hours daily.²

Having secured a monopoly of theatrical entertainment in Margate, Charles Mate and Thomas Robson re-opened the playhouse in King Street during the summer of 1786 under the name of the Theatre Royal. The Lord Chamberlain made an order for suppressing Mrs. Baker's wooden theatre near the church.³ Mrs. Baker now realized that the full weight of the law would be against her if she continued theatrical activity in Margate, and so moved her operations to Faversham.⁴ Despite her defeat in Margate, she continued to thrive in the Kentish theatrical world, erecting at her own expense a theatre in Rochester in 1791.⁵

Mate and Robson were drawn into a closer partnership. Robson acted initially as a book-keeper. Mate, however, found himself short of funds, having spent £550 on securing the royal patent, whereupon he turned to Robson who joined him as an equal partner before disposing of half of his share for £1,000 to Booth, of Covent Garden fame.⁶ At the conclusion of the 1786 season The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser reported that "the new Manager, at Margate, Robson, has had a very profitable season; and his troop of comedians have conducted themselves with great propriety".⁷ Among the plays

1. 26 Geo.III. c.29.

2. Morley, op.cit., 19-20.

3. Parker, op.cit., 4.

4. Clarke, op.cit., 62.

5. The History and Antiquities of Rochester, and the Vicinity (Rochester, 1833), 16.

6. Morley, op.cit., 20.

7. The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, 16 September 1786, 2b.

TWO OF THE PLAYS STAGED BY MARGATE'S
THEATRE ROYAL DURING 1786.

THEATRE ROYAL MARGATE,
 Tuesday July 23 1786. will be presented a COMEDY call'd THE

BROTHERS,

Or, the SHIP WRECK.

Written by R. CUMBERLAND, Esq. Author of the WEST INDIAN, FASHION-
 ABLE LOVER, NATURAL SON, &c. &c.

Captain Ironsides,	Mr.	MATE,
Bob Bellfield,	Mr.	RICHLAND,
Andrew Eelfield,	Mr.	CURTIS,
Parerfon,	Mr.	HAYMES,
Coodwin,	Mr.	CONNER,
Phillip,	Mr.	SMITH,
Skiff,	Mr.	BROWNE,
Jonathan,	Mr.	VILLARS,
Francis,	Mr.	WILSON,
Sir Benjamin Dove,	Mr.	COOPER,
Lady Dove,	Mrs.	SMITH,
Sophia Dove,	Mrs.	HARWOOD,
Lucy Waters,	Mrs.	CONNER,
Fanny Goodwin,	Miss	PLATEL,
Kitty,	Mrs.	T. SMITH,
Violetta,	Mrs.	VILLARS,

To which will be added a Farce (never Acted Here but Once) call'd

Too Civil by Half.

Sr Toby Treacle,	Mr.	Conner,	
Captain Freeman,	Mr. Richland,	Lieutenant Bumper,	Mr. Haymes,
Bullie,	Mr. Cooper,	Drunken-Butler,	Mr. Mate,
Nancy Treacle,	Mrs. Platel,	Bridget,	Mrs. Villars,
Lady Treacle,	Mrs.	Smith,	

Boxes, 3s.—Pit, 2s.—Gallery, 1s. To begin punctually at 7 o'Clock.
 Tickets to be had at the Libraries, the principal Inns, and of Mr. Roason, in King-
 Street. Places to be taken at the Theatre from Tea o'Clock till One each Day.

THEATRE ROYAL PLAYBILL, 1786
 (By courtesy of the Victoria & Albert Museum)

M. Morley, Margate and Its Theatres, 1730-1965
 (1966), p. 81.

of that season were The Brothers and Too Civil by Half.

In the meantime Mate and Robson were working on plans to erect a new and better theatre.¹ Finances aside this inevitably took time to come to fruition. A site had to be found. A theatre had to be designed and then built. Mate and Robson purchased for £610 a site at the north-east end of Hawley Square.² Over £3,000 went into building the theatre. Newspapers widely reported the laying of the foundation stone on 19 September 1786:

"Margate, September 20.

Yesterday the first stone of the intended new Royal Theatre was laid in this town, by Mr. Robson, Manager of the Company, who spoke an address to the town, amidst the acclamations of near 5,000 people... Several Free Mason Songs were sung, accompanied by a good band of music. The address stated:

'The motive of the present undertaking being to offer a source of entertainment, at once rational and elegant, to the town of Margate, on a more regular plan, and with the sanction of his Majesty's authority'.

Length of building 97 feet by 41 feet". (3)

Robson was Master of the Margate Freemasons' Lodge, and the inscription on the stone recorded how "this first stone for a Theatre Royal was laid in due form, attended by the brethren of the Thanet Lodge, by the proprietors, Thomas Robson and Charles Mate...Duke of Cumberland, Grand Master".⁴ Margate's Freemasons constituted "a respectable Lodge" which met "on the second and fourth Wednesday in every month".⁵

1. Morley, op.cit., 21.

2. Parker, op.cit., 4.

3. The Maidstone Journal, 3 October 1786, 4; The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, 26 September 1786, 2b.

4. Clarke, op.cit., 62.

5. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 24.

In less than nine months a permanent Theatre Royal had been completed. Like most theatres of the eighteenth century the new building was of square-box-like design.¹ Land and building had cost about £4,000.² Margate had acquired

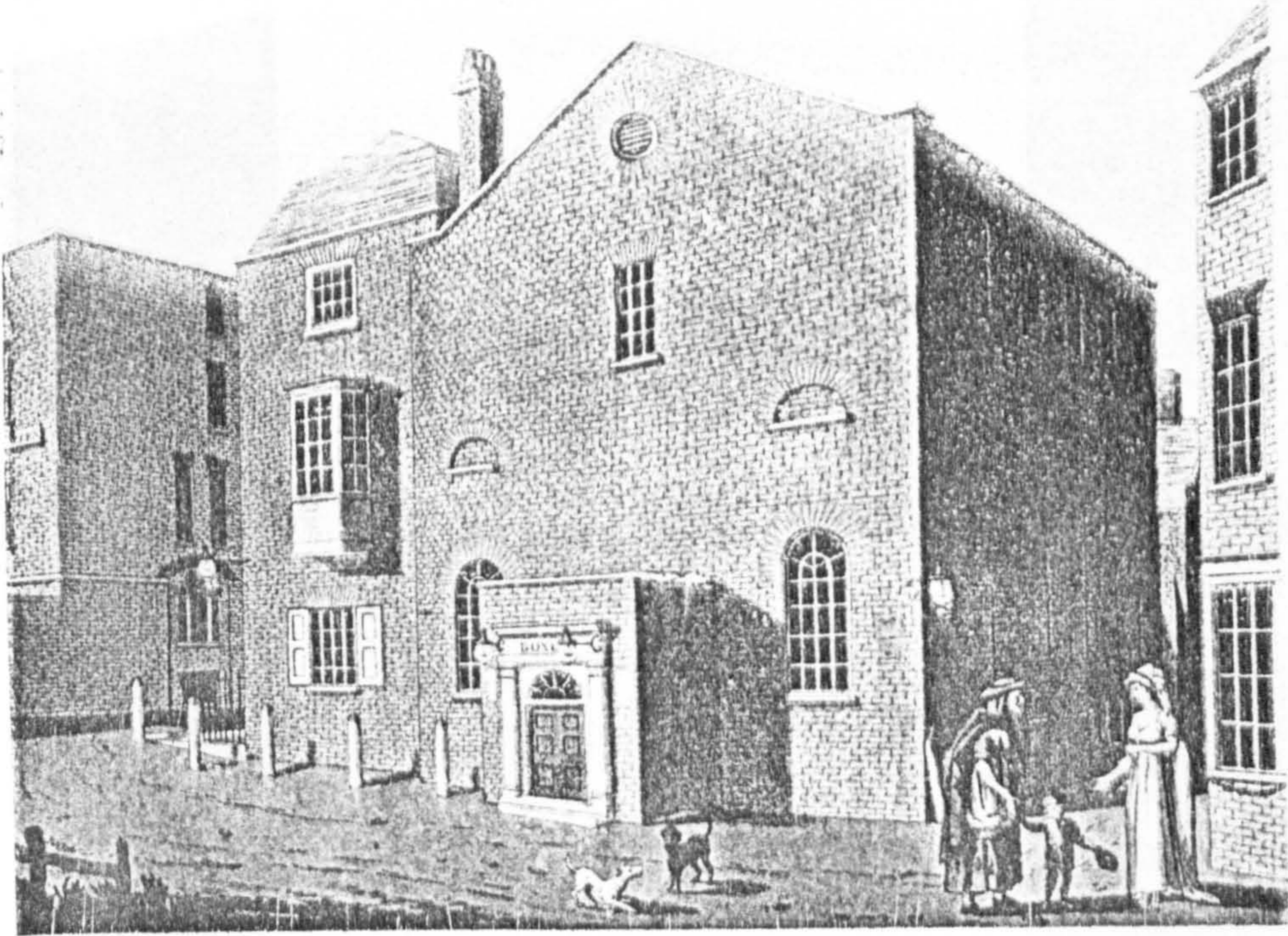
"an unornamented brick structure, totally divested of exterior decoration; but its inside is fitted up in a handsome though chaste style, something after the plan of Covent Garden; and is possessed of a complete wardrobe, as well as some excellent scenery, painted in a bold and masterly manner by Hodgins". (3)

Margate's new theatre was described as spacious in 1808,⁴ and in 1833 it was furnished internally "with great taste and judgement".⁵ It contained boxes, a pit, a gallery, a box office and a treasury. The prices of admission were set at 4s. for the boxes, 2s. for the pit and 1s. for the gallery.⁶ The 4s. admission to the boxes represented a return to the 1779 charges,⁷ or a rise of 1s. since the days of Mrs. Sarah Baker in 1785.⁸ The theatre held 700 people, and gross takings at full capacity amounted to £60 per night.⁹

Margate's Theatre Royal opened on Wednesday, 27 June 1787, with the much favoured comedy of She Stoops to Conquer as the main attraction of the evening, followed by Isaac Jackman's All the World's a Stage.¹⁰ Booth as the third partner in the venture emerged as the leading man at the theatre.¹¹

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1. Morley, op.cit., 22-3.
 2. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (3rd Ed., Canterbury, 1790), op.cit., 238; Cozens, op.cit., 25; The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 83; Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 965; etc
 3. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 69-70; also The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 83.
 4. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 965.
 5. Picture of Ramsgate (Ramsgate, 1833), op.cit., 69.
 6. Morley, op.cit., 23-4.
 7. As noted in this section above.
 8. Ibid.
 9. Morley, op.cit., 24.
 10. Ibid., 24; Parker, op.cit., 4.
 11. Morley, op.cit., 24; The Maidstone Journal and Kentish Advertiser, 17 July 1787, 2.

THE THEATRE ROYAL, MARGATE .



THE THEATRE ROYAL, MARGATE, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
(From the original in the possession of Messrs. Frank T. Sabin, 9 Albemarle Street,
London, W.1)

M. Morley, Margate and Its Theatres,
1730-1965 (1966), p. 14.

Away from Covent Garden which was closed during the summer months, he was able to select carefully the actors he wanted. He flitted between Covent Garden and Margate, playing small parts in London and major parts in the resort.¹ Mate took charge of the stage and scenery and superintended the rehearsals, while Robson looked after the finances.²

The Mate/Robson/Booth partnership lasted until 1790, when Robson, while still retaining the position of Box Office keeper, disposed of his interest to Thomas King of Covent Garden for £900. King was a London actor of considerable repute.³ During the 1790 season there were performances four times a week.⁴ Links with London were strengthened still further when one of the proprietors of Drury Lane, Mr. Grubb, acquired Mate's partnership interest for £2,200, thereby becoming the patentee of the Theatre Royal.⁵ In 1792 Wilmot Wells was appointed manager before acquiring a proprietary interest.⁶

Ownership of the theatre became more diffuse over time, and proprietary shares changed hands and were sold, resold, divided and redivided.⁷ The number of people having proprietary rights entitling them to pronounce on the future of the theatre and how it should be run soon reached sixteen.⁸ Mr. Shaw by acquiring a quarter interest in the concern assumed general command, but the patentee, Mr. Grubb, although fully employed in London, kept nevertheless a watchful eye on Margate.⁹ Visitors to the resort in 1797 were informed that

1. Morley, op.cit., 24-5.

2. Ibid., 25.

3. Ibid., 29; Parker, op.cit., 4.

4. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (3rd Ed., Canterbury, 1790), op.cit., 238.

5. Morley, op.cit., 29; Parker, op.cit., 4; Clarke, op.cit., 62-3.

6. Morley, op.cit., 33.

7. Ibid., 33.

8. Ibid., 33.

9. Ibid., 33.

"the present Proprietors are Messrs. Grubb, Shaw and Wells, who exert their abilities in the selection of performers, and in the management of the Theatre during the Season; in short, no expense is spared to give satisfaction and to insure the approbation of the visitors and inhabitants of this fashionable retreat. The house is open only during the Season, being limited to that time by the Licence". (1)

Another account from the same year noted how "the proprietors of the theatre... style it in their bills, a Theatre-Royal ...; the company of actors are decent, and two or three of them would not be a discredit to a London theatre".²

Margate's Theatre Royal, though "seldom if ever full",³ gave general satisfaction and was ably managed; "good actors are retained, and every attention is paid by the acting manager to the entertainment and accommodation of the public".⁴ Mary and Agnes Berry while staying at Prospect House, near Broadstairs, decided on 7 October 1794 to go "to the play at Margate with the Greatheads √a reference to Bertie Greathead (1759-1826), the dramatist and poet⁷ to see Hamlet acted by gentlemen". This decision prompted the following observation from Mary Berry: "very gentleman-like acting I dare say it will be, but I expect to be much amused".⁵ A Covent Garden/Drury Lane control ensured that most of the plays had the hall-mark of those London theatres. Indeed, many had been originally produced in London. Each summer witnessed the selection of a well chosen company. Old favourites were retained and talented young actors were introduced.⁶ Top actors were expensive to hire as The Observer noted in September 1797.

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1. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 83.
 2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 17.
 3. Ibid., 17.
 4. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 16.
 5. Ed: W.S. Lewis and A.D. Wallace, Horace Walpole's Correspondence with Mary and Agnes Berry, Volume XII (New Haven, 1961), 129.
 6. Morley, op.cit., 34.

"Mrs. Jordan commenced her engagement with the Managers of the Margate Theatre on Wednesday night, when she played Miss Peggy, in The Country Girl ... She is to have £300 for six nights; and the price of admission to the Theatre has been raised to defray this extraordinary expense". (1)

The Times during 1800 observed the leading theatrical personalities making their début in Margate: late in July "Mrs. SIDDONS made her entrée at the Margate Theatre...in the Character of Lady Randolph";² late in August "QUICK, the Comedian, made his first appearance at the Margate Theatre", acting "two of his most favourite characters - Lovegold and Cadwallader";³ while engaging leading foreign performers during a war with France posed serious problems during September:

"CHABRAN, of the corps de ballet, at the opera-house, and one of the band of the Margate Theatre, was on Sunday arrested at Margate, under the authority of the Duke of PORTLAND's Warrant, which specifies that no foreigner shall remain within ten miles of the sea coast. He was examined by Mr. COBB when Mr. SHAW, one of the Proprietors of the Theatre, appeared, and entered into a recognizance of £500 for his appearance at the Secretary of State's Office". (4)

Reports such as these show how Margate's theatrical activity had progressed quickly to performances which were ably directed by men with well known London experience, attracting some of the country's leading performers, at fees reaching up to £50 a night. All this was far removed from the rustic companies of players and comedians operating the circuit system of the 1750's and 1760's.

Mrs. Jordan performed on several nights during August 1804, and "Miss DUNCAN is a very great favourite, not only with the inhabitants of Margate, but also with the majority of the visitors".⁵ Early in September Mrs. Jordan

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1. The Observer, 3 September 1797, 3b.
 2. The Times, 30 July 1800, 3b.
 3. Ibid., 30 August 1800, 2c.
 4. Ibid., 19 September 1800, 3a.
 5. Ibid., 1 September 1804, 2d.

TWO FAMOUS ACTRESSES WHO APPEARED
AT MARGATE'S THEATRE ROYAL.



MRS. JORDAN
(By courtesy of the Victoria & Albert Museum)



MRS. SIDDONS
(By courtesy of the Victoria & Albert Museum)

M. Morley, Margate and Its Theatres,
1730-1965 (1966), p. 65.

was playing to full houses, being "received with great applause" and "Miss DUNCAN, the favourite Heroine of Margate, is re-engaged by the Manager for eight nights".¹ On 7 September Mrs. Jordan concluded her Margate engagement, having as her benefit the play Much ado about Nothing, "in which she played Beatrice with her usual spirit".² The Times observed how "the Manager is much praised by the Margate folks, for endeavouring to treat them with the choicest dramatic excellencies; but £25 per night requires a theatre the size of ours to be very well filled".³ Mrs. Jordan left Margate "having netted, including her benefit and her extra night, £208 [after] eight evening performances".⁴ The theatre manager's benefit night was on Friday, 14 September 1804, when "the Theatre was as full as it could hold"; he "is deservedly a great favourite". The gross takings exceeded £80.⁵ Local people sought fame as actors at the end of the season, so that "Mr. JARVIS, eminent surgeon of this place, and GARNER, the Librarian, have been acting parts".⁶

Miss Duncan returned to Margate's Theatre Royal in 1805, "the principal attraction" on 10 September being

"the Theatre, where the Benefit of Miss DUNCAN had been announced for the evening. The merits of this Actress are so well known in the Metropolis...[that] the House overflowed in every part,...and the receipts of this contracted edifice are said to have exceeded £100". (7)

William Robinson's poem, A Trip to Margate (1805) summarized the achievements of the theatre up to that point in time.

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1. The Times, 6 September 1804, 2d.
 2. Ibid., 10 September 1804, 3b.
 3. Ibid., 10 September 1804, 3b.
 4. Ibid., 14 September 1804, 2d.
 5. Ibid., 18 September 1804, 2d.
 6. Ibid., 25 September 1804, 3a.
 7. Ibid., 12 September 1805, 3c.

"The theatre attracts in ev'ry way,
For who's so narrow does not love a play?
The house is handsome, the performers fair
When lighter comedy is made their care.
Old Shakespeare, it is true, may not succeed
So happily with them, since 'tis decreed
That London boards to him shall sacred be,...
If from old Drury there shou'd chance to come,
Or from its neighb'ring Covent-Garden, some
Distinguish'd in theatric fame, the house
From ev'ry quarter crowded overflows.
Miss Duncan, Quick, or Johnson in the bill,
Pitt, box and gallery are sure to fill". (1)

Following the death of Mr. Wells there occurred during September 1810

"a play at the Theatre for the benefit of the amiable widow and family of our late regretted worthy manager, Mr. Willmott Wells. Mr. Garner, of the Library, whose excellence in the part of Shylock is deservedly celebrated, kindly offered his assistance". (2)

Wells had managed Margate's Theatre Royal since 1792. His policy of attracting leading London theatrical personalities was continued. The Morning Post reported the comings and goings of Mrs. Jordan during August and September 1814, noting on 26 August how she had sailed "from Margate for Ostend, from whence she will take a tour home through Lisle and Paris".³ On her return on 19 September she had

"attended the Theatre the same evening. That Lady gives a very animated picture of the gaiety which presides at Brussels". (4)

From 1787 onwards Margate's permanent Theatre Royal, the assembly rooms and the circulating libraries promoted the social life of one of England's most famous seaside resorts. The passage of time produced an increasing range of amusements, which can be illustrated by reference to the amenities which visitors could expect to find in Margate in 1796⁵ and 1811:⁶

1. Robinson, op.cit., 25.
2. The Morning Chronicle, 8 September 1810, 3a.
3. The Morning Post, 26 August 1814, 3c.
4. Ibid., 23 September 1814, 3c.
5. The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796), op.cit.
6. Holden's Annual London and Country Directory (1811), op.cit.

TABLE 18 : ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES IN MARGATE, 1796 AND 1811.

	<u>1796</u>	<u>1811</u>
Ass Mews		1
Bathers	7	5
Bathing Guides		2
Camera Obscura		1
Libraries	3	3
Livery Stables	2	2

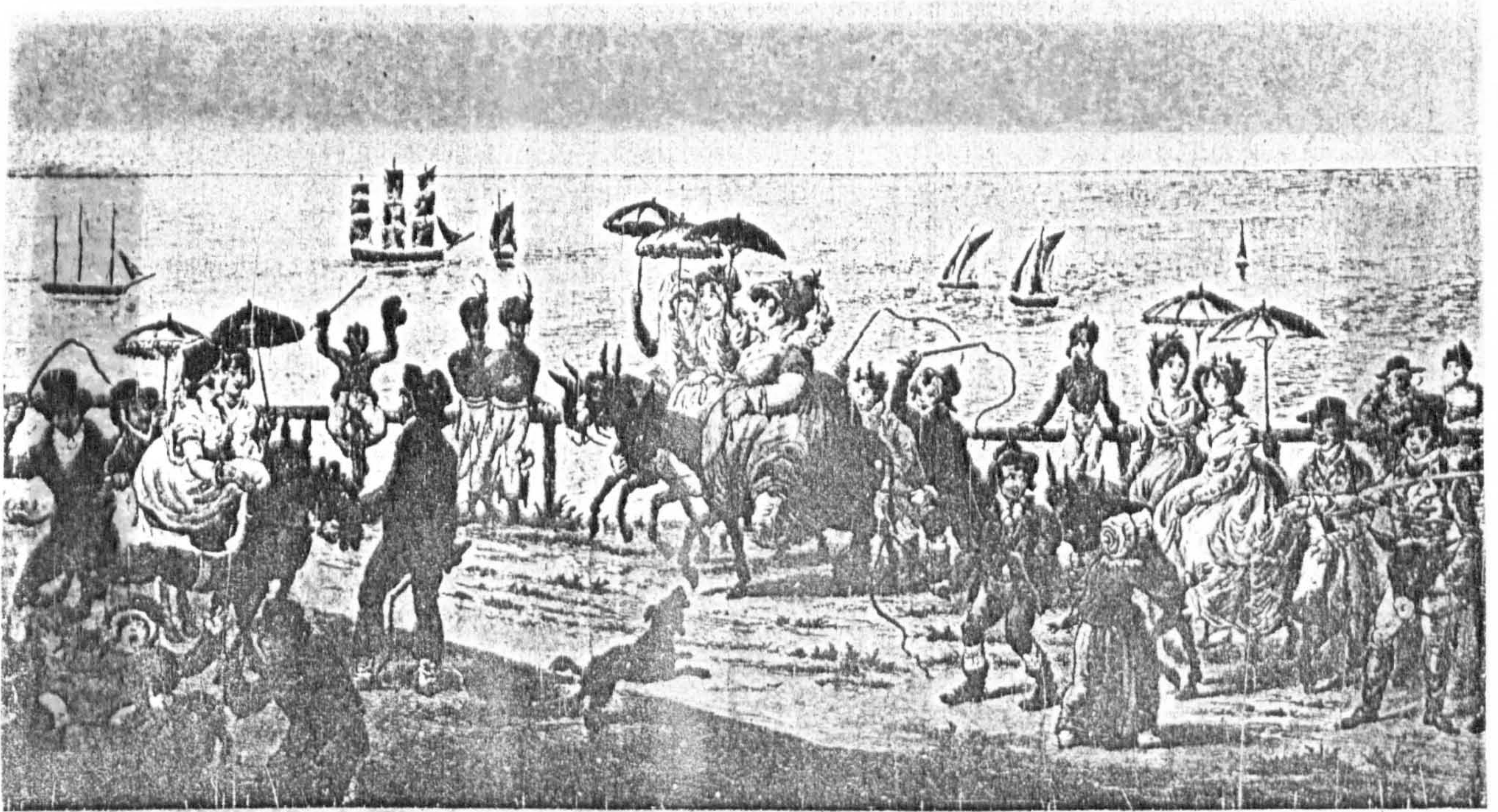
plus assembly rooms, the Theatre Royal, coffee rooms, eating houses, musicians, music and dancing masters and places of worship.

Other Forms of Seaside Amusement.

Professor Gilbert acknowledges that "Margate was the first resort to be 'popular' in the strict sense of the word, ...an unceremonious place in contrast to Brighton".¹ Margate pioneered many popular seaside amusements, including pier promenading, and was "the first town to make the donkey-ride a familiar seaside amusement".² By the 1800's the resort possessed both donkeys and a camera obscura. Here in August 1810 were "asses...to be let... to bear ANGELS by day, and SPIRITS [an obvious reference to smuggling]³ by night".⁴ This reference to ladies riding on donkeys was drawn from a Margate 'Ass Lender's' advertisement. During a two-month stay at Margate in 1812 Mrs. Pilkington engaged donkeys on their second day to ride out to tea gardens at Dandelion. On another occasion when they took a donkey ride across the sands to visit the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary "message was dispatched

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1. E.W. Gilbert, Brighton Old Ocean's Bauble (1954), 18.
 2. Ibid., 19-20; donkeys were ridden by ladies at Brighton from 1806 onwards, ibid., 20n(1).
 3. Smuggling still assumed some importance along the Thanet coast, as noted in Chapter I above.
 4. The Morning Chronicle, 11 August 1810, 2d.

LADIES RIDING ON DONKEYS AT MARGATE DURING THE 1800's.



Smugglers' Sideline: "Asses . . . bear Angels by Day and Spirits by Night"

H. G. Stokes, The Very First History of the English Seaside (1947), p. 49.

to Mr. BENNET's, to order two donkeys". Subsequently they went on "a donkey-cart excursion to St. Iaurance" [St. Lawrence], taking with them "a basket of cold provision" and "plenty of cider and bottled porter".¹ In 1819 it was noted how

"within the last twelve or fifteen years it has become the fashion at most of our watering-places, but especially at Margate, for the Company to amuse themselves by riding on Asses; - for the hire of which, a certain sum (generally 1s.) per hour, is paid to the owner together with a trifling gratuity to an attendance boy. The Ladies are the chief encouragers of this exercise, though for the sake of the frolic, they are generally accompanied on these excursions by their male friends". (2)

Bennett, described as "a notoriety and eccentric", ran the principal 'Asinarium' or 'Donkey Stud' of Margate, where in the High Street ponies or donkeys could be hired. His business comprised "an assemblage of upwards of three score animals: these are frequently paraded thro' the town in due pomp, drums and trumpets sounding, banners flying, and the drivers cracking their whips in concert".³ He was affectionately remembered as "BENNETT the Donkey Hackneyman, as he styled himself, at [that] celebrated watering place".⁴

In 1809 Margate's camera obscura was a major attraction: any

"admirer of those admirable scenes and engaging objects which are beheld from the Pier, would much regret his leaving the spot without re-enjoying a sight of them in the Camera-Obscura, which, from its very extensive scale, and peculiar situation, may be said to equal if not surpass every thing of the kind. Mr. Cuthbert, the late proprietor, styled it The Beauty of all Beauties; we presume, from the marked attention of his numerous visitors, who never failed to express their approbation of the ingenious apparatus, and of that obligingness which for many years distinguished him as a favourite of the public". (5).

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1. Mrs. Pilkington, Margate!!! or Sketches Amply Descriptive of that Celebrated Place of Resort, with Its Environs, etc. (1813), 47-8, 99-100, 163-4.
 2. The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion (1819), op.cit., 42.
 3. Ibid., 42-3.
 4. "A Margate Worthy", Notes and Queries, 2nd Series, Volume VI, No.156, 25 December 1858, 526.
 5. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (5th Ed., Margate, 1809), op.cit., 52.

Margate's "most fashionable promenade" was the pier, which

"being finished by a parapet, breast high, is perfectly safe, and is the general resort of the company before and after bathing. In an evening also, and at the times of the coming in or going out of a packet, as the Margate passage-boats are called, it is frequently crowded with a most motley group, in which persons of all distinctions are indiscriminately blended". (1)

As early as the 1790's the pier "cased with stone" formed "the favourite promenade of the company in the evening, especially on Sundays".² The discovery of a grotto at Margate caused it to become an enduring attraction from the 1800's onwards.

"There is at Margate...a curious grotto, concerning the construction and real date of which nothing is certainly known. It is on the premises and behind the house of Mr. OLDFIELD,...most plentifully adorned with valuable shells of various kinds and sizes... It is only within a short time that it has been discovered". (3)

The beach and the sea provided many kinds of amusement which by 1780 included walking or riding along the sands, collecting shells or seaweed, gazing on shipping out at sea, "with a great many Ships in View steering different Courses", exploring "the Caverns and Grottos worn in the high chalky Cliff", local boat trips,

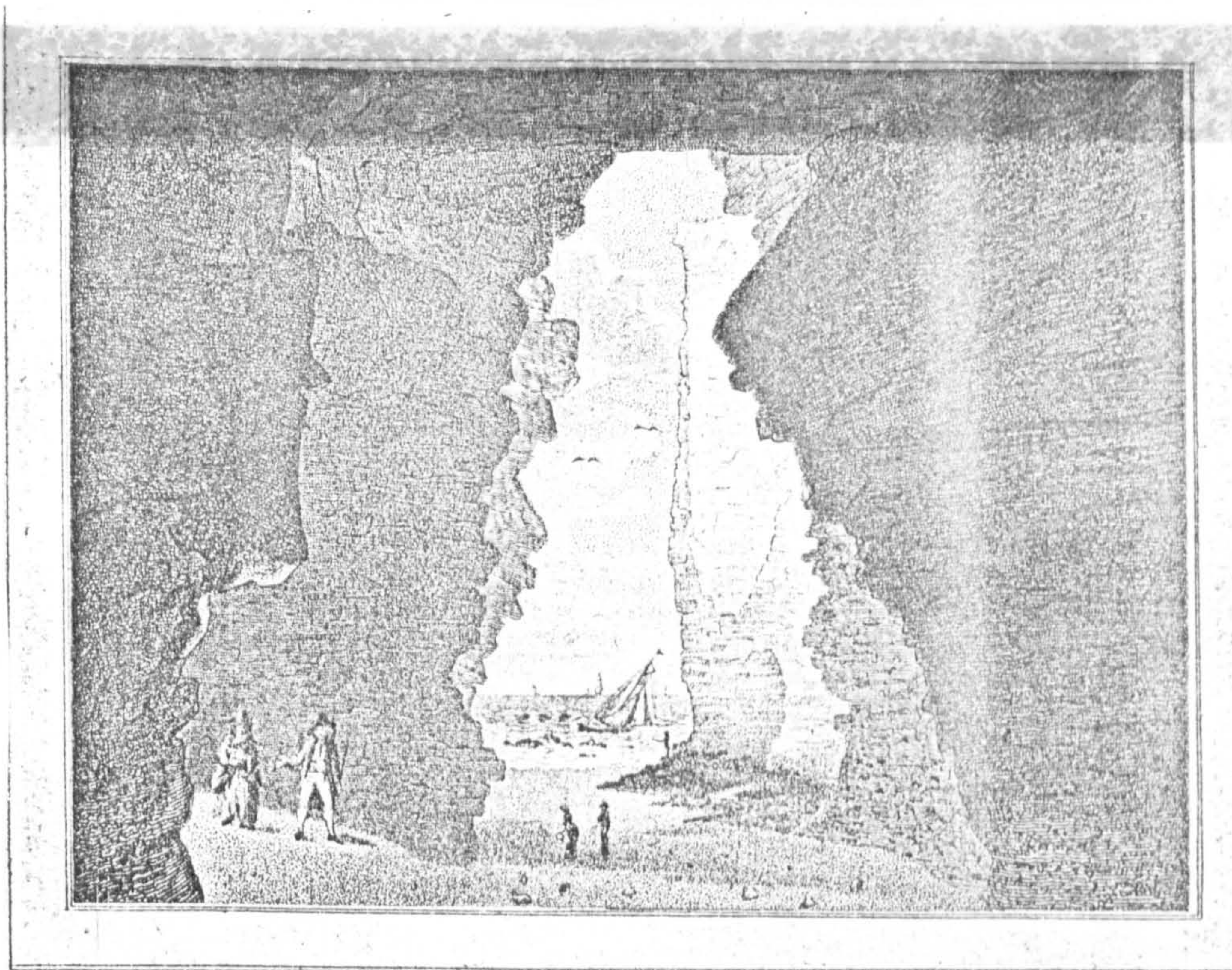
"and as there are established Pacquets regularly passing between Margate and Ostend, under Imperial Colours, the Company will be able with great Safety, and at an easy Expence, to take a View of the most remarkable Places in the Netherlands, Holland, or France". (4)

The Margate librarian Joseph Hall was an agent for this cross-channel service, which could prove

"agreeable and pleasing. The Distance is only twenty Leagues, which with a fair Breeze, they run in nine or ten Hours. Several very pleasant Tours may be performed in Flanders, Holland, and France, within a short Time; and I think an Excursion to the Continent for ten or twelve Days, would afford great Entertainment to Persons desirous of seeing those Countries.

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1. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 961.
 2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend(1797), op.cit., 39.
 3. The Times, 26 September 1804, 4a.
 4. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 16-17; compare also Chapter II above. On the function of Margate as a cross-channel port see Chapter I above.

EXPLORING MARGATE'S CAVES.



A CAVE in the CHALK CLIFFS near MARGATE

Painted & engraved by W. Birch, Enamel Painter.

Published Feb 7. 1790. by W. Birch, Hampstead Heath.

An Original Print.

In that Time, Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, the Hague, Leige, the Spa, Cambray /or/ St. Omer's may be visited with infinite Ease: A particular Description of those Places, with a very accurate Account of their Distances from each other, the best Routes, and other Articles of useful Information, is to be found in a small Book just published, entitled the Traveller's Vade Mecum through the Netherlands, Holland, and France, which may be had at Mr. Hall's". (1)

An early reference to a Margate regatta occurs in September 1789.

"The sailing match this morning afforded a most beautiful spectacle to a great concourse of people of all ranks - assembled upon the pier, Cliffs and Bathing Houses.

About 20 sailing boats started exactly at 1 o'clock, after manoeuvring near an hour - for the Reculvers; the prizes were 2gns. - 1 gn. - $\frac{1}{2}$ gn. and so low as a crown. White was the favourite, and is the winner of the principal prize". (2)

Aquatic and local excursions had become popular by the 1800's: "the fineness of the weather occasions excursions every day, both by land and sea".³

Another report from September 1804 noted that "aquatic parties are daily formed";⁴ while much later that month:

"Margate, September 20.

The gentle breezes which have sprung up within these few days, have considerably increased the number of excursions both by land and water. The sailing boats are hired every day at a tolerable price, for 4 or 5 hours, by parties of 10 or a dozen, who go out a few leagues, by the recommendation of their Doctors, to get the benefit of a sea sickness...and return highly delighted with having faced the dangers of 'the great deep'... Others are fully satisfied with their fish catching talent, who can bring home, after a nine hours sail, 5 or 6 whittings, and a flounder or two". (5)

A personal account of "A Day at Margate" was featured in The Times during October 1795. It shows that a considerable range of amusements was available by the mid-1790's.

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1. The Margate Guide (1780), op.cit., 17-18.
 2. The Maidstone Journal, and Kentish Advertiser, 15 September 1789, 4c.
 3. The Times, 1 September 1804, 2d.
 4. Ibid., 4 September 1804, 3c.
 5. Ibid., 22 September 1804, 3b.

"Rose at seven; went to SAYER's Bathing House, set my name down on the slate: took a walk on the Pier. Came back and waited a quarter of an hour, then bathed... Returned to my lodgings to dress for breakfast. Finding nobody in the Coffee-room, went back to the Pier, arrived at the happy moment, just as a hoy was vomiting out its sick...Went to breakfast at BENSON's, (1) having first called at the Post Office, and found not sorted on the door; ate my shilling's worth, one buttered roll, one dry toasted, and one cold ditto; heard who had won, or lost, at whist, and billiards, the night before; (2) read the newspapers, and wrote a letter. Went over the way to SILVER's library, (3) who at my request gave me the choice of three rides, observing that I might take a little of each by going round by Kingsgate, the North Foreland, and Broadstairs to Ramsgate...

Got back to Margate on my pony, for which I was to pay 18d. ... I thought as I rode along on the sands, where I should dine. The boarding houses were all open to me, on paying for a week, or one guinea. This was a great temptation...I rode to my lodgings to dress, and went immediately to dinner. After dinner proceeded to the libraries, where the raffling lists were filling fast: was induced to throw in my shillings at SILVER's and WARE's; from thence passed on to WOOD's, SURFLEN's, and GARNER's. At Surflen's heard music, and several favourite glees: from thence to the playhouse... It was now time to go to supper: I accordingly returned to the Coffee House, and from thence to the Billiard Room... I retired at one o'clock in the morning". (4)

A long varied day could be spent in Margate and its immediate vicinity in the mid-1790's. One of the most revealing points in the above account concerns the choice of evening entertainment at the several circulating libraries and bathing rooms, apart from the theatre and the assembly rooms.

The choice of things to do and places to visit was even greater for a longer stay. A 1797 guidebook distinguished between "the public walks most frequented" within Margate and places of interest and entertainment elsewhere

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1. The Royal Hotel in Cecil Square.
 2. The hotel in conjunction with the assembly rooms was a fashionable place of resort; see Chapter III above.
 3. Also in Cecil Square and well established in business by this time; see this Chapter above.
 4. The Times, 2 October 1795; quoted in J. Ashton, Old Times: A Picture of Social Life at the End of the Eighteenth Century (1885), 323-4.

in the Isle of Thanet. Walking was recommended after bathing, "to keep the blood in a proper circulation" and "several places about the town are generally frequented of a morning for this purpose, the Rope-Walk, the Parade, the Church-field and Fort, each of which are agreeable from different causes"; also "the sands...are...extremely pleasant in fine warm weather, from the cool breezes off the sea".¹ Sea weed, crabs and shells attracted curiosity and attention.²

The Rope-walk, where ropes were made, lay at the back of the High Street:

"three or four men are generally at this work, principally in the morning, two or three days a week. The gardens belonging to the houses in High-street, are on one side of the walk; and corn-fields and meadows on the other, with an extensive view of the sea at the extremity of it; it is of a great length, extending from the beginning of the town, to the borders of the cliff, from whence there is a pleasing view of the place where the company bathe, and that part of the town which fronts the sea". (3)

The Parade facing the sea provided access on one side to "Mitchener's York Hotel and Coffee Room, with several shops, and one or two private houses let out in lodgings during the season" while "the harbour, or inside of the pier, bounds it on the other, which, when the tide is up, is a truly pleasing view; the different vessels, consisting of fishing smacks, Ostend packets, hoys, and frequently one or two colliers, form an agreeable moving prospect, as they are continually coming in or going out".⁴ From the Fort there were fine panoramic views: this walk

"on the verge of the chalky cliff, with meadows, fields and a fine view of the town and distant country on one side, and the wide-extended ocean on the other, is the pleasantest walk of all in my estimation, it reaches near half a mile, and is terminated by a gateway made sloping down to the sands, for the use of farmers to draw up sea-weed for manuring the land.

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend(1797), op.cit., 13-14.
 2. Ibid., 14; also as noted in Chapter II above.
 3. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 16-17.
 4. Ibid., 15.

Here I often ramble, with a book in one pocket and a telescope in the other; and if the weather is calm and fine, enjoy much pleasure, sometimes in reading, and at other times, spying at the ships continually passing by". (1)

Walking on the sands or upon the Fort "I must acknowledge, I prefer before all the gaiety and splendour of a ball-room, or the polite amusements of the beau monde; in the latter, no real satisfaction or enjoyment can be derived to a thinking mind; no improvement in useful knowledge...can be acquired or result from the dealing out packs of painted paste-boards, or joining in the fanciful mazes of a country dance".² In offering "moral reflections" on cards or dancing in public, the author was expressing a purely personal view in believing that "either of these, in public rooms and among promiscuous company, should, in general, be dispensed with, as no real benefit or advantage can possibly accrue from them; but real harm often has, and may, to both sexes, particularly the younger part of the female sex".³

References to corn fields and meadows in the walks of 1797 show how contained Margate remained despite all the feverish building and development since the 1760's;⁴ moreover "there are several other very pleasant, and more retired walks in the fields near the town, well calculated for the lovers of solitude and meditation".⁵ Having disposed of the "public walks about Margate" The Margate and Ramsgate Guide (1797) proceeded to describe the "several places of public resort and entertainment in and near it, which are no less worthy notice, and serve to make this place more agreeable".⁶ Dandelion, "being the remains of a venerable mansion formerly possessed by a family of that name", lying about 1½ miles from the town, formed

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 20-1.
 2. Ibid., 22.
 3. Ibid., 23.
 4. See Chapter III above.
 5. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 24.
 6. Ibid., 24; compare for 1763 Chapter III above.

"the most agreeable place of entertainment and most resorted to in this neighbourhood... The present tenant has spared no expence in making it a pleasant rural retreat; there is a fine grove of trees at the side of the entrance, with a swing in the middle of it, for the amusement of young gentlemen and ladies: Here is kept in the nicest order a large square bowling green, with boxes for the company to drink tea in, and an orchestra for music, and platform to dance on, which will hold about ten or twelve couples, with a beautiful parterre of flowers and evergreens on the right and left side, and at the end, an extensive view of the sea, bounded only by the horizon: Here are public breakfasts every Wednesday during the season, if fine weather, at one shilling and sixpence each person; a band of music always attends upon these occasions, and sometimes there are twelve or fourteen couples dancing from twelve till two alfresco; parties are often formed on other days to dine or drink tea here, and most gentlemen fond of bowling come here for that purpose, of an afternoon, which is one of the most healthy and rational amusements (in my opinion) persons can engage in.

Here I have spent many an agreeable hour with different friends; tea, on any other day but Wednesday, is eight pence, and coffee, nine pence each; syllabubs are according as the company order them, from one shilling to two shillings and sixpence". (1)

Dandelion was thought to be well worth visiting in 1797, and "the walk or ride to it is very pleasant, being made through spacious fields of corn".²

Furthermore,

"I have seen here of a Wednesday, above three hundred people, and am told by the tenant, whose name is Staines, that there are generally two hundred if the weather is fine; the great neatness this place is always kept in, the fine prospect from the bowling-green, and the civility of the proprietors, all conspire justly to attract the attention and admiration of numerous visitors daily". (3)

Dandelion developed as a place of resort from the mid-1780's onwards. Certainly by 1793 it was "fitted up as a place of entertainment", containing a bowling green and pleasure gardens "much resorted to, during the summer season, by the company from Margate, Ramsgate or Broadstairs, ... especially every Wednesday morning, when there is a public breakfast".⁴

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 25-6.
 2. Ibid., 26.
 3. Ibid., 25-6.
 4. Cozens, op.cit., 29.

These pleasure gardens were owned and promoted by Thomas Staines who during June 1785 sought

"leave to acquaint the Nobility and Gentry, that he proposes opening his Bowling Green for Public Breakfasts on Wednesday next the 29th Inst., which will continue every Wednesday during the Season. The frequent Enquiries for Lodgings at Dandelion during the last Season has induced T. Staines to erect two Lodging Houses, with good Beds, which are now ready for occupation". (1)

Thomas Staines occupied Dandelion as a farmer. The provision of bowling facilities met with disapproval from Hardwicke Lewis who visited Margate in June 1786:

"my course was now bent for Dent de Lyon, the real remains of a very ancient seat, whose entrance gate is still almost entire - I clambered up to the top of the battlements... This venerable pile of antiquity has been lately disgraced by hewing down the trees that fostered it with shelter, for the purpose of amusing refined Londoners with the game of bowls. - Oh! how my resentment rose to see civic poppinjoys in paltry sports before the spot where, formerly, native fierceness softened before the shrine of beauty". (2)

On 5 October 1794 the "Gentlemen of Thanet" played cricket at Dandelion against the "Gentlemen of Kent" for £500, the Thanetonians losing by three wickets.³

Public breakfasting was a well established feature of the seaside social scene by the 1800's but, according to The Morning Chronicle, "we are now told from high authority, that what poor ignoramus have mistaken for a public breakfast, is in fact a cold dinner, and that the company really breakfast before they go. - Every attempt to explain a mystery is to be commended".⁴ One of many public breakfasts took place at Dandelion on

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1. The Kentish Gazette, 21 June 1785.
 2. Hardwicke Lewis, An Excursion to Margate in the Month of June, 1786: Interspersed with a Variety of Anecdotes of Well-known Characters (2nd Ed., 1787), 75, 77. For an illustration of the entrance to Dandelion see Chapter III above.
 3. William Hills, Jottings of History relating to the Isle of Thanet (Ramsgate, 1887), 31.
 4. The Morning Chronicle, 23 July 1801, 3a.

29 August 1804,

"which was pretty numerously attended... The entertainments were, after the usual mode, pleasant enough, but few persons stood up to dance". (1)

On Saturday, 1 September 1804,

"the amateurs of pleasure were summoned to Dandelion, for the benefit of Miss WEIPPERT, who gave a public breakfast, at 3s.6d. a head. Besides the performance of Mr. and Miss WEIPPERT and Mr. PURKIS, on the pedal harp and grand pianoforte, the vocal talents of a Mr. JAMES, a Miss STANLEY, and a Miss KING, were exerted, but to very little effect. The company scarcely amounted to 200, and the amusement was very limited... The benefit was not very extensive". (2)

Dandelion was "not very full" on Wednesday, 5 September 1804, even though "it was given out that it was to be graced with no ordinary share of fashion"; yet "the company were very well dressed, and some few ladies attracted a good deal of notice".³ Nearly 700 visitors flocked from Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs to the gardens for the benefit of Mr. Le Bas, the Master of the Ceremonies,⁴ on Saturday, 15 September 1804, blocking the approach road with their carriages.⁵ On 11 September 1805 "about 250 visitants" were noted "at the Fête Champatre given at Dandelion", while "the humours of the evening on the sands were the antient, honourable and royal amusement of Bob Lemon and a pig race".⁶ Seasons lasted well into September, as in 1805: "almost the whole of the town is at this moment on the alert to unite in the festivities of Dandelion; the dejeuné and the Ball will not be forgotten in our next communication".⁷

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1. The Times, 1 September 1804, 2d.
 2. Ibid., 4 September 1804, 3c.
 3. Ibid., 7 September 1804, 3a.
 4. Who had held that office since 1789 as noted in this Chapter above.
 5. The Times, 18 September 1804, 2d.
 6. Ibid., 14 September 1805, 2d.
 7. Ibid., 20 September 1805, 2d.

By 1816 the days of Dandelion as a place of public resort were over:

"John Powell, esq. is the present possessor. Part of this ancient seat was lately made use of as a place of public resort. It had a good bowling green, skirted with evergreens, shrubs and flowers; alcoves were erected for tea and refreshments, and a platform on the green for dancing, with a handsome orchestra; but for a few seasons past, this elegant spot has not boasted of that degree of patronage which its attractions warranted. The proprietor has in consequence reduced it to its original state of a private pleasure ground, and it now promises to be the honoured retreat of the gallant Sir Thomas Staines". (1)

The demise of Dandelion is not easily explained. Sir Thomas Staines was one of Thanet's eccentric residents, notable for fighting a duel in the neighbourhood.² The gardens were operational on 22 September 1814 when "400 children brought up by the parish...dined together on the lawn, on roast beef and plum pudding", and "the company volunteered their services; the Gentlemen carved, and the Ladies handed bread".³

A favourite outing of the 1790's took visitors out of Margate to Kingsgate and Broadstairs.

"The late Lord Holland's seat at Kingsgate, about three miles from this place, is much resorted to of an afternoon, it being either a pleasant ride or walk to it, through an open country, and a very good road.[Ⓜ]

[Ⓜ]Many go from Margate to Kingsgate on the sands, when the tide is down, and a very pleasant ride or walk it is; but rather a longer way than through the fields.

The house fronts the sea, and is built in imitation of an Italian villa, and has a novel and truly singular appearance: The gardens belonging to it are prettily laid out: Behind them at a little distance appear the ruins of an Abbey...in general a good representation of ruins, but rather too fresh, and having been whitewashed in the inside, betrays its being a modern erection; near this is a range of buildings, called the Convent, as it is in the form of one, and consists of several small houses in a row... Poor women live here all the year round, one of whom provides

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1. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 81.
 2. Hills, op.cit., 31-2.
 3. The Morning Post, 26 September 1814, 3c.

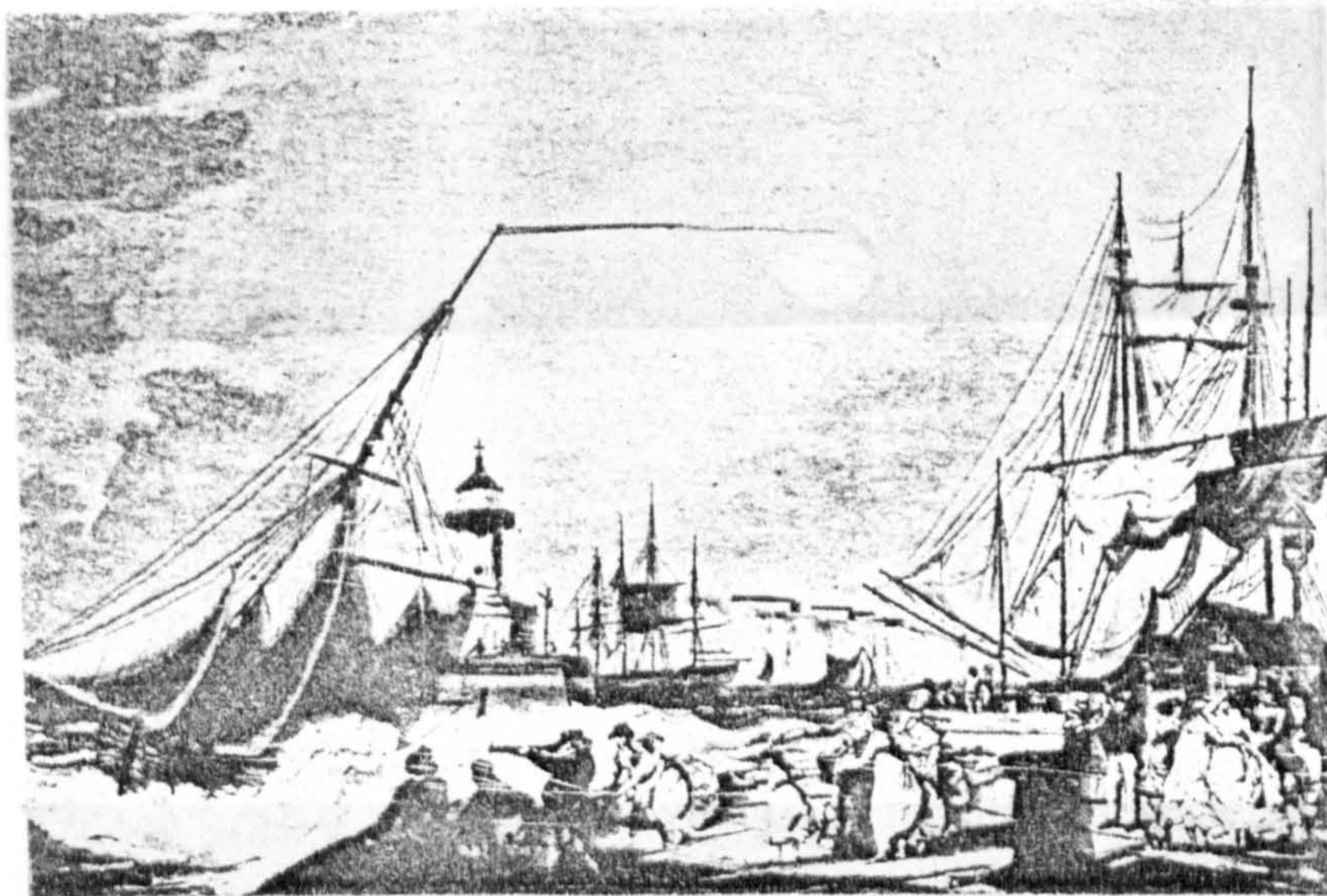
tea at eight-pence each... At some little distance is a public house, where company sometimes dine and frequently drink tea: Here are stabling also, built to represent Gothic ruins, and have a good effect: From hence is an uninterrupted view of the sea almost unbounded.(1) An octagon lighthouse [the North Foreland] is erected, about half a mile from this delightful spot; (2) on the top of which is a very pleasing and extensive prospect both by sea and land. Not far from this is a small sea port, called Broadstairs, where there is a pier, resembling that at Margate, and one or two machines for bathing, upon a similar plan to those at that town: This place is famous for fine lobsters. Several good houses, and an elegant tavern and public library, have been lately built here opposite the sea, for the accommodation of the company who come to this place in the season either for health or pleasure. This port is in the parish of St. PETER's, a very pleasant village about two miles from Margate: From the steeple of the Church in this village is one of the finest prospects of land and water I ever saw; it forms a complete hemisphere, and though the winding ascent to it is rather difficult and fatiguing, yet it well repays one for the trouble, by presenting a landscape to the ravished eye which beggars all description". (3)

St. Peter's Church steeple was a well known land and sea mark, and "the walk to this village from Margate is truly rural; lying through corn-fields and verdant meadows, with an open country on each side, almost without a hedge or tree to variegate the scene".⁴ Near at hand was Ramsgate having one of the nation's new harbours of the eighteenth century. It was also a developing seaside resort.

"Two noble piers, extending about 800 feet in length, and 26 in breadth, have attracted the admiration and astonishment of every beholder; to walk in fine weather on that which is completed,³ and view the Downs, the French coast, and numerous ships continually in sight, is truly pleasing, and as likely to contribute to health as pleasure; the air of the sea being very salubrious.

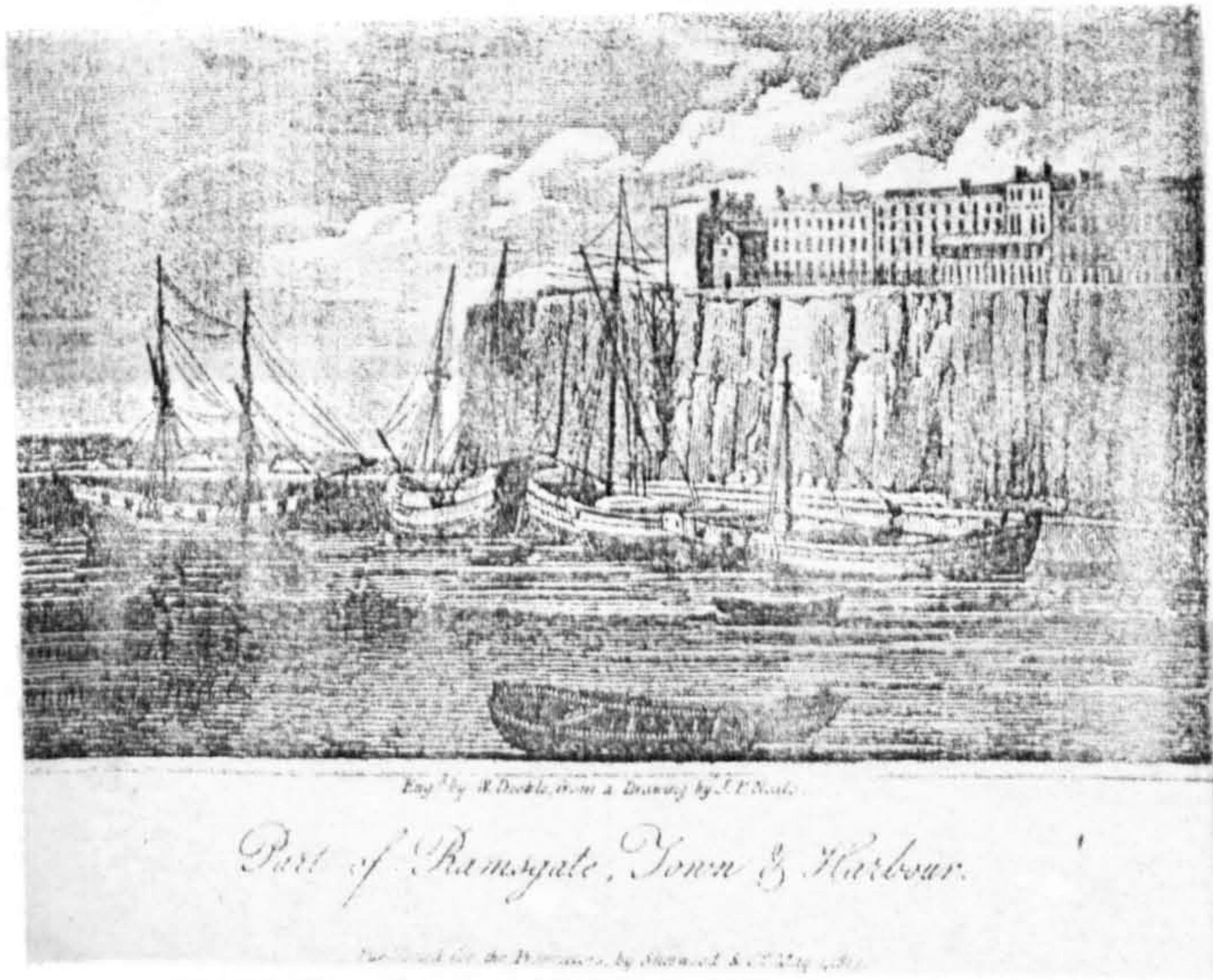
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1. For further information and an illustration on the Kingsgate estate see Chapter VII below.
 2. For an illustration of this lighthouse in 1736 see Chapter I above.
 3. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 27-30.
 4. Ibid., 31.

THREE VIEWS OF RAMSGATE AND ITS HARBOUR.

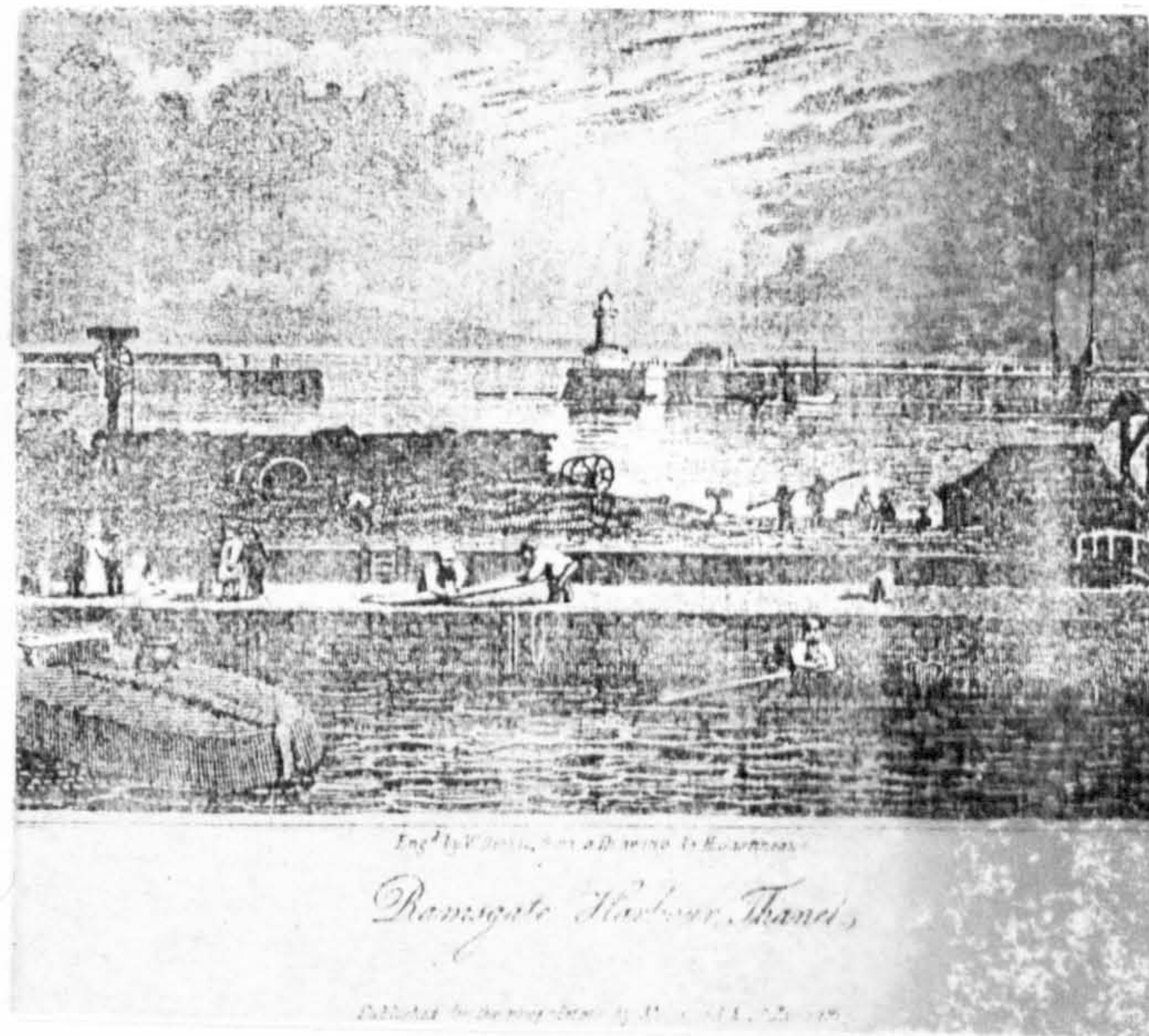


28 Ramsgate, Kent: the Harbour
From a colour print after P. de Louthembourg, 1805

R. Manning-Sanders, Seaside England (1951), p.40.



Part of Ramsgate, Town & Harbour.



Ramsgate Harbour, Thanet's

E. W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports, Volume I (1817), pp. 106, 108.

*One pier is not finished yet, though they were begun in 1750: The expence they have already incurred, I am credibly informed, is about £150,000; how much more they will cost it is impossible to tell, as they are frequently repairing them, or making alterations in the harbour, to keep out the mud brought in by almost every tide. (1)

This town is paved and lighted, has a market-place, lately built, adjoining the High-street, near which is a good circulating library and toy-shop, with a convenient room for reading the newspapers, kept by Mr. Burgess, a deserving young man, who went from Margate a few years since, and meets that encouragement he truly merits, from the company who visit that place during the season.

The assembly and card-rooms front the harbour; under them are a coffee-room and agreeable accommodations for parties to dine or drink tea: The rope-walk is on the back of the High-street. Many genteel families come to this town for bathing, as there are similar machines and attendants as at Margate, but nothing like so numerous.*

*There are but two bathing-rooms here, and not more than twelve machines in use during the season.

The sands on the outer side of the pier are not so level nor extend so far as at Margate, but the town is more agreeable to those who come more for health than pleasure, being more retired and much less gay and fashionable than the latter... The two most frequented walks, particularly after bathing in the morning, are the pier above mentioned, and the verge of the cliff opposite to it; the prospect from which is very extensive both by sea and land". (2)

Further afield, about a mile beyond Ramsgate was Pegwell Bay, where

"there is a beautiful prospect of the coast of France, the Downs, etc. from a house entitled Bellvue, lately fitted up in this place, for the accommodation of parties to dine or drink tea.*

*The finest shrimps I ever saw are caught here, and with bread and butter are a favourite regalement during the season.

Many come here for this purpose both from Margate and Ramsgate, during the season, and there are public breakfasts here every Monday upon the same terms as at Dandelion, at which time the Margate band are engaged to attend". (3)

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1. On the history of Ramsgate harbour, Mrs. J.E. Munslow, Ramsgate Harbour, 1748-1862, Kent M.A. Thesis (1972).
 2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 31-3.
 3. Ibid., 33-4.

Ramsgate and its environs offered much the same range of amenities and amusements as Margate, although on a lesser scale. There was always considerable movement between Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs into the surrounding countryside and villages; indeed, "there are several...pleasant and rural villages within five or six miles of Margate...viz: Minstre Minster, St. Lawrence, St. Nicholas, Monkton and Birchington", and "it may afford an agreeable ride to those persons who have saddle-horses or carriages, to visit these places, but rather too far for a walk".¹

There was one final place of resort, about half a mile from Margate, at Draper's Almshouses, erected in 1709,² where "several poor old women, past their labour, are maintained;³ and often parties visit them from Margate out of charity, and drink tea at their separate apartments, which are kept extremely neat; and buy of them pin cushions, garters, laces, etc., which they knit or make for gentlemen and ladies to purchase, to make presents of; the mottos worked on them are generally short and pertinent".⁴ Such an outing and such purchases were well established in the 1770's,⁵ and Draper's Hospital or Almshouses, quite apart from the Margate Sea Bathing

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1. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 34.
 2. Draper's Hospital, containing in 1816 nine dwellings, one for an overseer and the others for "such poor women as are natives and inhabitants of either of the four parishes of St. John, St. Peter, Birchington, and Acol,... industrious, and of a meek, humble and quiet spirit", was founded by a Quaker of St. John's, Michael Yoakley, "who, by care and industry, raised himself to a most respectable situation"; also, "it is said, that when he was a servant on this estate, he vowed that if ever he became the proprietor he would found a row of alms-houses for distressed widows". This he was able to do by his will, The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 77.
 3. According to ibid., 77, the widows were to have "warm gowns or coats of shepherd's grey for outward garments, firing, and a weekly allowance at the discretion of the trustees; which injunction is altered by the trustees, and each have now 1816 only an allowance of coals, a yearly stipend, and a small garden".
 4. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 37.
 5. For instance, John Baker's visit to Margate in September 1777, in Yorke, op.cit., 420; also see Chapter IX below.

Infirmary,¹ derived some material benefit from the charity of Thanet's holidaymaking visitors:

"the stipend given being found inadequate to the charitable intentions of the founder, owing to the great increase in the price of provisions, the late George Keate, esq. promoted a subscription among the company, by which a considerable addition was then made to the comforts of these poor people. Since Mr. Keate's death, a subscription has been promoted under the name of The Benevolent Fund, from which each old lady has been annually presented with a guinea, and half a chaldron of coals". (2)

George Keate paid a visit to Draper's during the 1770's:

"A TRAVELLER should think nothing below his notice. - Every scene of life is a picture, whereof some part, or other, is worth his attention... The ladies...proposed that we should drink tea at DRAPER'S,...a charity instituted the beginning of this century by a Quaker, as a kind of asylum for eight women, who have each a distinct house and garden; but they are ranged together so as to form one large building, in the centre of which is a meeting-house for people of the founder's profession; and though originally the charity was intended for such, yet now those who are of a different persuasion, may be admitted members... As most of the women employ themselves in knitting garters, laces, pin cushions, etc., they have every day visitors and customers". (3)

1. See Chapter VIII below.
2. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 77-8. The annual subscription from among Margate's visitors was already underway in the 1790's, The Kentish Traveller's Companion (4th Ed., Canterbury, 1794), op.cit., 258 and it "has added considerably to their [the inmates] convenience and comfort". George Keate, "this amiable man and agreeable writer", born circa 1729 or 1730, died suddenly on 27 June 1797, Memoirs of George Keate, Esq. in G. Keate, Sketches from Nature, Taken, and Coloured, in a Journey to Margate...To which is now first added, Memoirs of the Life of the Author (5th Ed., 1802), 1, viii. In the 1770's the independence of Drapers amounted to a "little dwelling, six pounds, and half a chaldron of coals a year, and a stuff gown and petticoat every two years", ibid., 85; in 1812 "they have £10 a year allowed them, and a chaldron and half of coals - Quakers seldom suffer any of their society to be in a situation to require public charity", and "the affluent have formed a fund, by which they are enabled to supply the wants of the indigent", Pilkington, op.cit., 86, 88, also see Chapter III above.
3. Keate, op.cit., 81-2.

The party visited a very old lady who was the well educated daughter of a considerable tradesman of Canterbury, but her father dying insolvent she was engaged as an upper servant and companion by an old lady who was well known to her family. This lady, although "extremely rich herself, and bountiful in her promises", rewarded her "faithful service of near thirty years with a paltry annuity of ten pounds". This and "having by her care saved up about two hundred guineas" should have ensured a comfortable retirement; but

"trusting it with a nephew (to whom at her decease she meant to leave it),...he embezzled the whole and left her without the hope of retrieving a shilling of it. - By the assistance of a friend at CANTERBURY she got placed in this charity, on the first vacancy; and seems, in her little retirement, to have forgotten the disappointments of life". (1)

Keate confronted "a little elderly woman, with an eye full of vivacity", but

"the simple neatness of her person was not more remarkable than that of her little habitation. - Everything was set in order - everything rubbed to a polish. - In one end of the window lay her bible; in the other, a basket of silks and worsteds, and the implements for her work. - A jessamine-tree nicely trimmed, and full of bloom, covered the outside of her dwelling; and before lay her little garden, where not a weed was to be seen, sprinkled with common herbs and vegetables, and here and there a currant bush". (2)

The party inspected "some pin-cushions, and other trifles, which they had employed her to knit, for presents to their friends in town".³

Getting out and about became an important feature of seaside social life as it developed in Thanet. Visitors opened up amenities and amusements in Margate and Ramsgate on a scale undreamed of in the middle of the eighteenth century. Their presence was felt in the wider hinterlands of these towns. Their excursions to neighbouring villages promoted new sources of business in the Isle of Thanet as a whole, whether they be pin cushions at Drapers,

1. Keate, op.cit., 82.

2. Ibid., 83.

3. Ibid., 83.

shrimps at Pegwell Bay, or inns in Birchington, Minster, St. Peter's or Kingsgate.

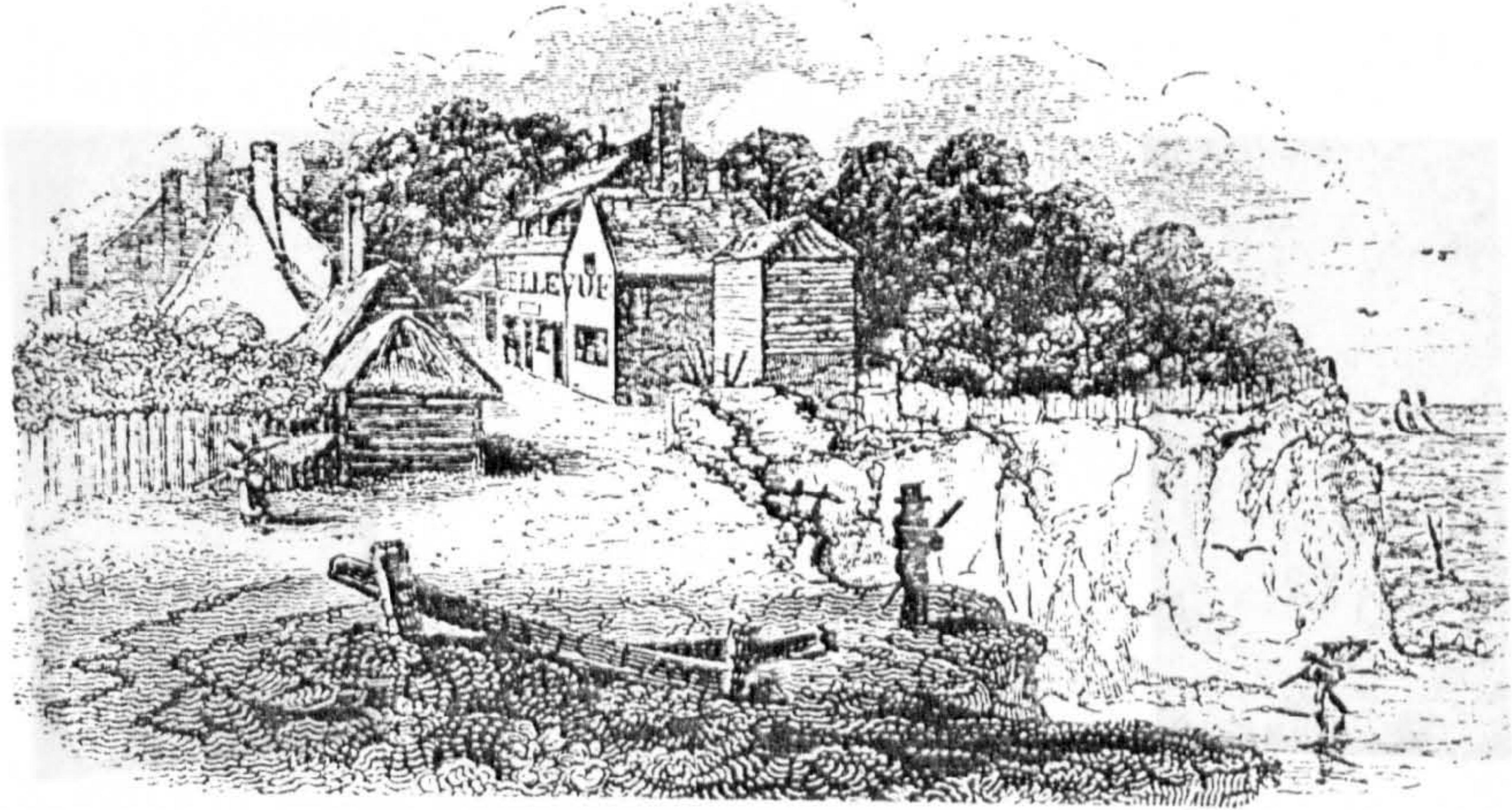
Margate possessed by the 1790's most of the amenities associated with nineteenth-century resorts, notably bathing machines, baths, hotels, boarding houses, rows of lodging houses, a theatre, assembly rooms, circulating libraries, a pier, coffee rooms, and much else besides. In 1796 there were several coffee rooms to choose from, "where the public papers are read, and tea and card parties frequently formed, nothing being omitted by the inhabitants which can in any degree contribute to the convenience or pleasure of the nobility and gentry who resort to Margate during the season".¹ There was the Prospect Coffee House, "an exceeding good tavern", only recently established on Hooper's Hill, near the Fort:

"adjoining to it is a good bowling green with alcoves, where the company often breakfast and drink tea; and in the evening fireworks are sometimes exhibited; the prospect from thence is delightful; every vessel sailing to and from London is within a short distance... Two octagon rooms have been built at opposite corners of this pleasant bowling green for the accommodation of the company". (2)

Here there was "public tea-drinking every Tuesday evening, when a band of music always attends for the accommodation of those who chuse to dance: Tea or coffee, on that evening, is 1s.6d. each person; on other days, tea is 6d. and coffee 8d: The public papers are daily taken in here for the use of subscribers at 2s.6d. each for the season".³ Surflen and Wood also had "coffee rooms over their bathing or waiting rooms, where the newspapers are daily taken in for the use of gentlemen and ladies, who pay 2s.6d. each for the season; coffee, tea and jellies... are provided here at the usual prices".⁴

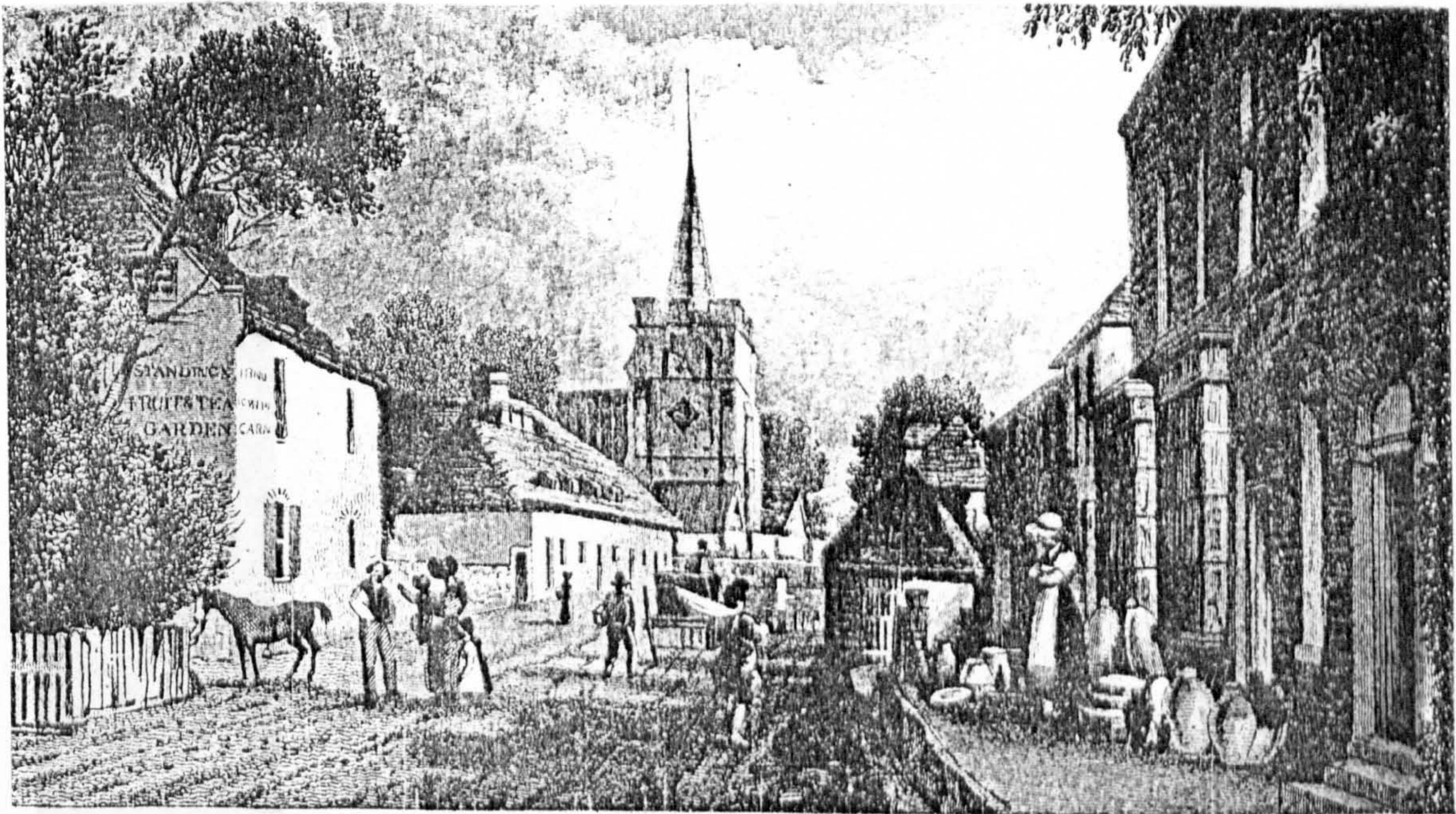
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1. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 17.
 2. Ibid., 21-2.
 3. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 21.
 4. Ibid., 9.

VIEWS OF PEGWELL BAY AND MINSTER.



64. *Picturesque Excursions: Pegwell Bay*

J. Vaughan, The English Guidebook circa 1780-1870
(1974), p. 118.



Engraving by Geo. Shepherd.

MINSTER.
ISLE OF THANET.
KENT.

Engraved by T. Carr.

A Treasury of Kent Prints: A Series of Views from Original Drawings contained in W. H. Ireland, A New and Complete History of the County of Kent (1828-31) (Sheerness, 1972), Plate 13.

The Range of Amusements between 1797 and 1812.

Thanet's recreational facilities were extensive by the 1790's. In 1793 Zechariah Cozens noted how Margate's "busy tribe...are content to lounge away their time in a continued round of unsatiating pleasures".¹ Margate became a town "devoted to gaiety and dissipation"; like "other public watering-places, during the summer season, [it was] visited as much, if not more, by the votaries to pleasure, as the inheritors of disease; and it is become....as much the fashion for the former to resort here".² Apart from the theatre and the assembly rooms,

"the principal evening amusements of the company, are going to the several libraries, and raffling for different things, chiefly trinkets, baubles, and trifles of little use; or walking up and down the rooms to see and be seen". (3)

Here "the motley tribe" exhibited "insipid conversation, affected airs and preposterous dresses, particularly...the female sex", but "the owners of the libraries reap the benefits of it, as their shops are resorted to by all ranks every day but Sunday, when they are entirely shut up; however,

"for my part I must own, though I have not joined in the fashionable amusements of the beau monde, since I have been here; yet between walking, music, reading, and the company of a few select friends, I have not found my time hang heavy on my hands, and upon the whole cannot but say it has been an agreeable journey; my health is greatly confirmed by the water, air and exercise; though my pocket has considerably suffered, and is greatly weakened, which is what I naturally did expect, and therefore provided for before I came down". (4)

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1. Cozens, op.cit., 105.
 2. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 38.
 3. Ibid., 37.
 4. Ibid., 38-9.

Newspapers publicised the great range of facilities and amusements at Margate:

"The busy bustling faces which throng this lively town in pursuit of health or pleasure exceeds description; and the Libraries, the Theatre, the Assembly Rooms each in their turn contribute to give a pleasing variety to the changing scene. Those visitors who are fond of the water frequently pass some hours on the sea in the novel amusement of fishing; and frequently return loaded with those delicious whittings for which this coast has been so deservedly celebrated". (1)

The use made of Thanet's extensive amenities and amusements is illustrated by Mrs. Pilkington's visit for two months during the summer of 1812. She and her party made full use of many of the facilities and recreations provided specifically for visitors. The following extracts provide a good idea of how far Margate and Thanet had progressed up to the second decade of the nineteenth century.

The Second Day. Four donkies were hired for a trip to Dandelion where the party was saluted on arrival by a militia band. There was dancing and breakfasting "in the alcoves which skirt the green". Mr. Barnard, the M.C., introduced himself and "a waiter in the meantime placed a tea equipage before the ladies, accompanied by two plates of cold ham... The young party having made an excellent second breakfast, they strutted round the green; and afterwards amused themselves by swinging, and seeing the gentlemen play at bowls". For half an hour in the evening they walked upon the pier, "for the pleasure of seeing the packet sail for London", and "in returning from the Pier, the party stopped at Mr. WITHERDON's library, where a group was assembled round the loo board". One of the party having the lucky number took the prize of 16s. (2)

The Third Day. Employing one of the bathing machines of STEPHEN HUGHES the party took a dip in the sea. "At 4 o'clock, the children set out in high spirits for Draper's Hospital", where "every door was thrown open to invite the entrance of the strangers". One of the seaside landladies recommended them to visit Mrs. Arnold, and she was the person favoured with the party's company:

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1. The Morning Chronicle, 8 September 1810, 3a.
 2. Pilkington, op.cit., 47-8, 52, 54, 61, 63, 70-1.

"knit and wove garters, pin cushions, and housewives were suspended and displayed...whilst a variety of other Tunbridge, and useful articles were spread out to the greatest advantage upon a table. - Few parties ever visit the inhabitants of this benevolent institution, without making some trifling purchase, and giving their civil hostess a present for the trouble of boiling their tea kettle,...a neighbouring farm house supplies milk". Mrs. Arnold was formerly for "nearly 30 years mistress of a good lodging house at Margate". Before leaving at 6 o'clock the party "made a few trifling purchases, and recompensed Mrs. Arnold for her trouble". An evening treat for the children followed at Pallister's and Bettison's. When they entered the latter a "Mr. Panammo, a young man of superior musical talents...was playing Stoddart's admired concerto, entitled the Storms". At Pallister's they heard "the Cottage Maid, sung by a young lady of the name of Sheen", and a naval song by Mr. Want. (1)

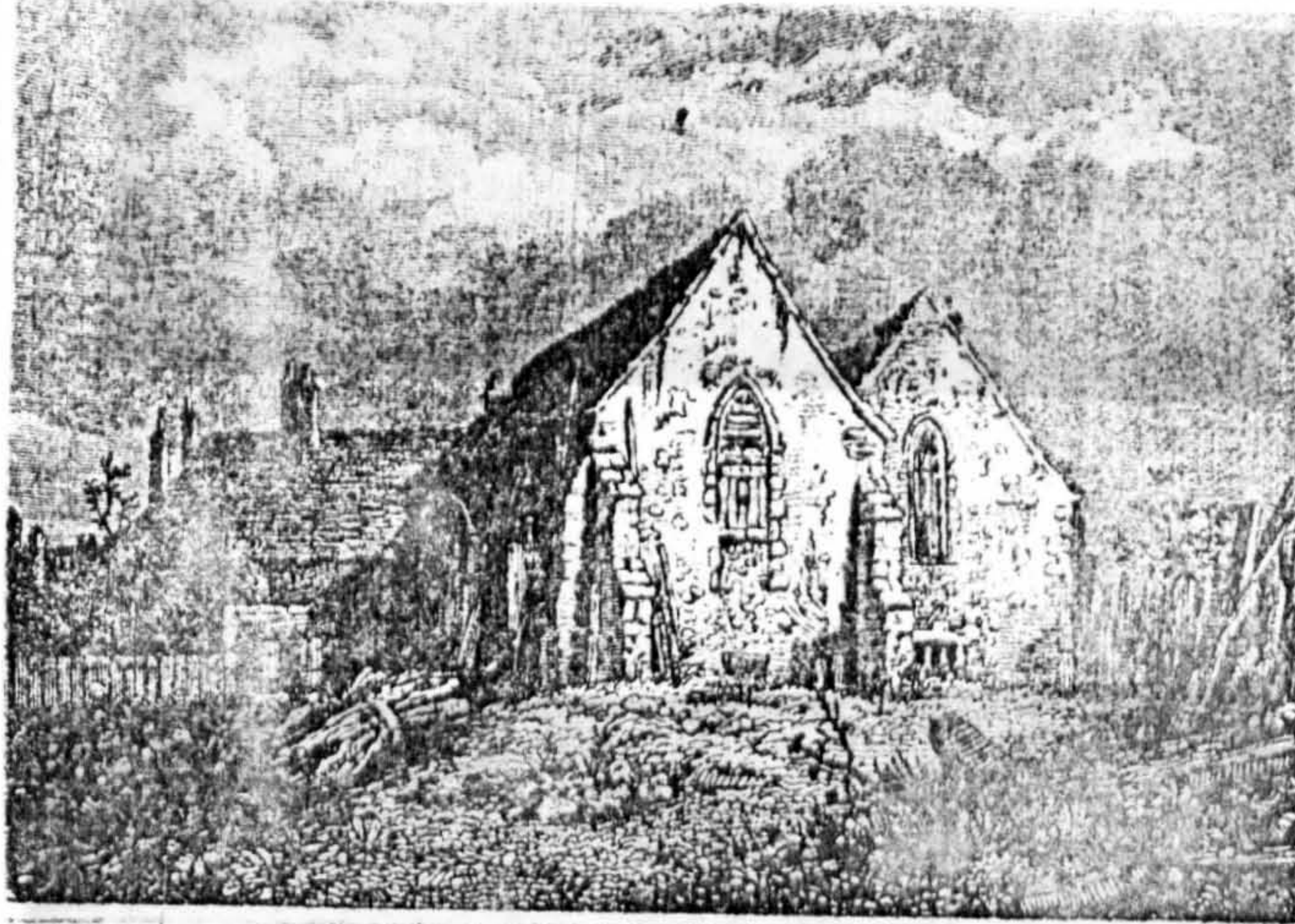
The Fourth Day. The morning was spent bathing and walking upon the sands, looking for shells and the children "filled their little basket with starfish, and small crabs". Hiring two donkeys from Mr. BENNET's the party, including Mrs. Simpson from Ramsgate, proceeded to Westbrook to visit the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary "erected by public subscription, through the charitable contribution of the benevolent... The building is upon a neat, yet simple plan", offering "the benefit of warm sea-baths, as well as sea-bathing, with an ample supply of the most wholesome and nutritious diet". During the evening the party took a walk upon the fort, "a healthy and inviting promenade", where they were approached by "a poor woman" selling Pegwell Bay shrimps from a basket "covered over with a clean napkin". - "Please to buy a few shrimps, ma'am", she said. (2)

The Sixth Day. The party paid a visit to the fish market, held every day. (3)

The Seventh Day. This day being Sunday the party attended the morning service at the parish church of St. John the Baptist, whose organ was a present from Mr. COBB: "the inhabitants of Margate are in many respects indebted to him for several useful regulations". A "most respectable dissenting clergyman of the name of GREGG", residing in a Margate lodging house, was due to preach at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel in the evening and so "the party resolved to drink tea early, for the gratification of hearing him; and were highly pleased with the manner in which he treated the subject he had chosen, and the purity of his doctrine". (4)

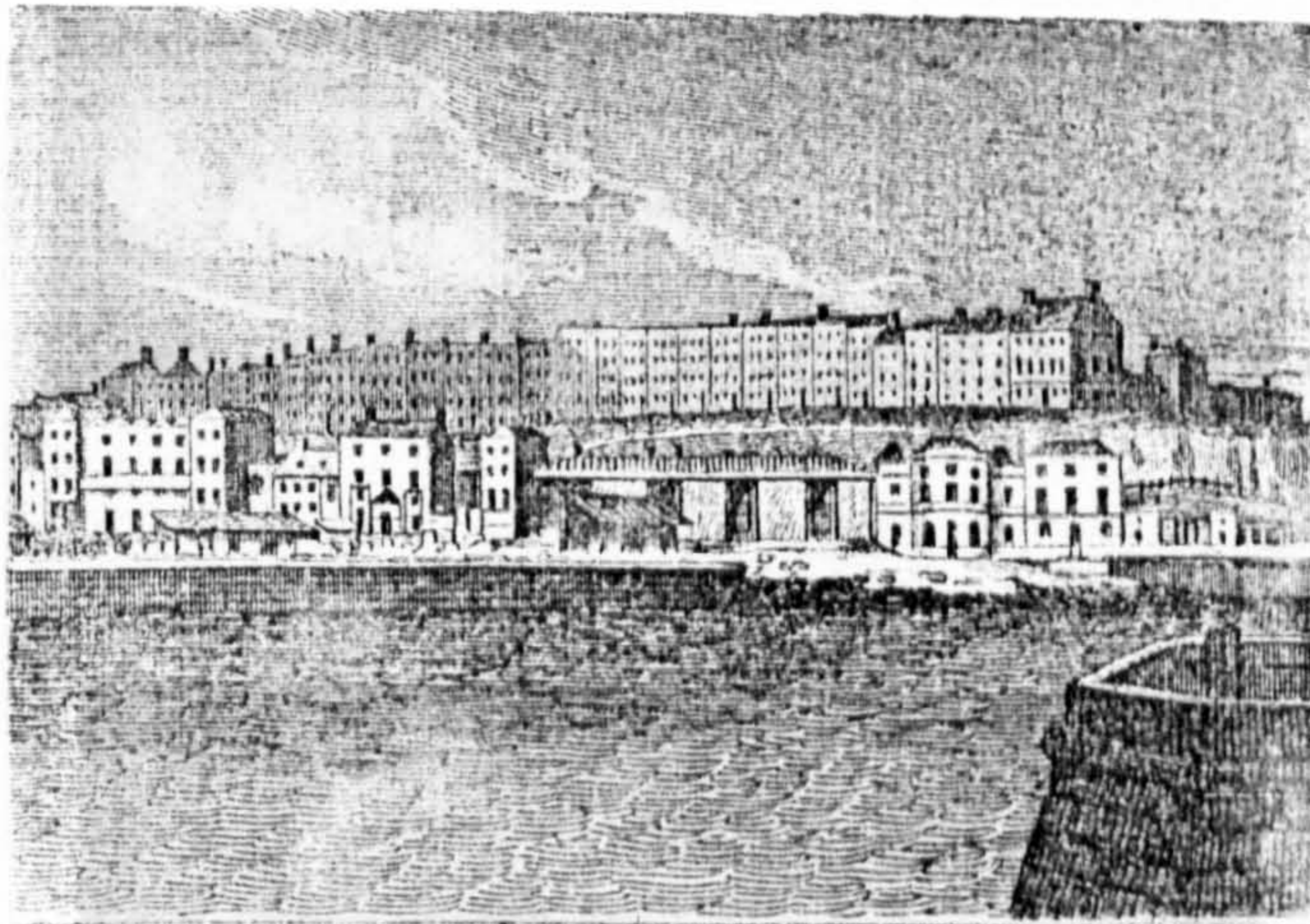
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1. Pilkington, op.cit., 78, 83-6, 87, 90-1.
 2. Ibid., 92, 99-100, 105-6, 108, 113.
 3. Ibid., 120, 125.
 4. Ibid., 129-32.

TWO PLACES VISITED BY MRS. PILKINGTON IN 1812.



Eng. by W. Dingle from a Drawing by H. Jackson.

Salmanstone Grange, Thanet.



Eng. by W. Dingle, from a Drawing by J. E. Hall.

Albion Place, Ramsgate.

E.W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports, Volume I (1817), pp. 76, 111.

The Eighth Day. Walking was the order of the day, in the morning to Nash Court, "a seat...belonging now to Mr. Sawkins", where "the gardens are extensive, and contain a large quantity of wall fruit, peaches, etc", and an "evening walk towards Salmeston, at present a farm house, occupied by Mr. Boys". (1)

The Ninth Day. A ramble was undertaken to Hengrove, in the possession of Sir William Hawley, a donkey being engaged for the children "alternately to ride upon". Before going to the theatre in the evening, the party were delighted "at observing the convenience of the cottagers, and the air of neatness and contentment which appeared amongst the cottagers" in "the pleasant villages of Shottenden, Westbrook, and Northdown". (2)

Mrs. Pilkington's party embarked on some full day trips around Thanet, proceeding to Ramsgate on the tenth day, noting its "rapid growth in recent years".³ They inspected the pier; the assembly room, "a neat, though not attractive structure, situated near the harbour, and to which are attached card, tea, coffee, and billiard rooms"; Mr. Burgess's library in the High Street, observing that

"most of the librarians in the Isle of Thanet unite the hardware and jewellery with their business...Mrs. Witherden has a spacious library in Cliff-street, Sion-hill, which commands a most extensive prospect, and from which the Downs are not only discernible, but the French Coast. The situation of this library carries a strong recommendation with it; the apartments over it Mrs. Witherden has appropriated to her boarders, of whom she every season receives a select number,... accommodated in a very desirable manner". (4)

Albion-place and Sion-hill were observed to be "modern constructions; in short, Ramsgate, like Margate, every year extends in size".⁵ Shrimps, rolls and coffee were consumed at Pegwell Bay in the Belle Vue, "a house of public entertainment"; followed by "a donkey-cart excursion" to St. Lawrence, taking "a basket of cold provision, with plenty of cider and bottled porter", and looking in on the Jolly Farmer at Manston.⁶

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1. Pilkington, op.cit., 134, 139.
 2. Ibid., 141-3.
 3. Ibid., 144-5.
 4. Ibid., 146, 152-3.
 5. Ibid., 153.
 6. Ibid., 161, 163-4, 175.

A trip to Kingsgate, the North Foreland and Broadstairs occupied another whole day, "taking some slices of cold ham and bread and butter with them, and stopping at Kingsgate, and having a bottle of cyder at the Inn"¹ /The Captain Digby⁷. Broadstairs, "like every other sea bathing place in the island, has greatly increased in size within the last thirty years"; but "after having seen the piers of Ramsgate and Margate, that of Broadstairs or Bradstowe (as the lower class of people still call it), appeared rather contemptible".² This small resort could offer to the visitor Mr. Barfield's library, "which commands a most beautiful prospect of the sea", and the Phoenix Hotel; but at the North Foreland Lighthouse, "amply were the party repaid for the trouble of ascending the winding staircase, for the coast of France was clearly discernible".³ By now Lord Holland's Kingsgate seat had been converted into separate lodging houses, and "many of those buildings, which were erected to represent gothic ruins, are falling into decay".⁴

Finally, prior to devoting almost a day to packing, before leaving the Isle of Thanet at 7 o'clock on the following morning, visits were made to Sarre, half way between the principal towns of the Isle of Thanet and Canterbury, which "supports two good houses of public entertainment, which probably would not be the case if the neighbouring gentlemen did not keep an excellent pack of harriers there for their mutual accommodation, which are regularly hunted every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, through the season";

1. Pilkington, op.cit., 177-8.

2. Ibid., 178-9.

3. Ibid., 180, 182, 186; the height of the lighthouse was reckoned at 63 feet, "illuminated by patent lamps every evening, with large magnifying lens, which are always lighted at sunset, and kept burning until break of day"; a man and his wife resided in the octagon structure, "which of course consists of several stories", ibid., 186-7.

4. Ibid., 198.

to Stonar, "now only celebrated for its salt works"; and to Mount Pleasant, a

"house of public entertainment from which the eye embraces a most extensive prospect... The Cliffs of Calais are clearly discernible; also Canterbury Cathedral, and several places of note in Kent and Essex; all of which are so interspersed with hill, dale and water, as to produce the most striking effect". (1)

Newspapers noted how a variety of amusements were being well patronized before 1815, with seasons extending into October and November. Early in October 1810 the splendour of the entertainments on offer was matched by quality among their patrons for

"although Margate cannot boast of so numerous an assemblage of company as it might three weeks ago, yet all the large houses are occupied by Fashionables who intend staying October and November. Sir John Fagg Bart and family are expected... Lord Eardley arrived on Friday ... And the Libraries are still the general morning and evening lounge". (2)

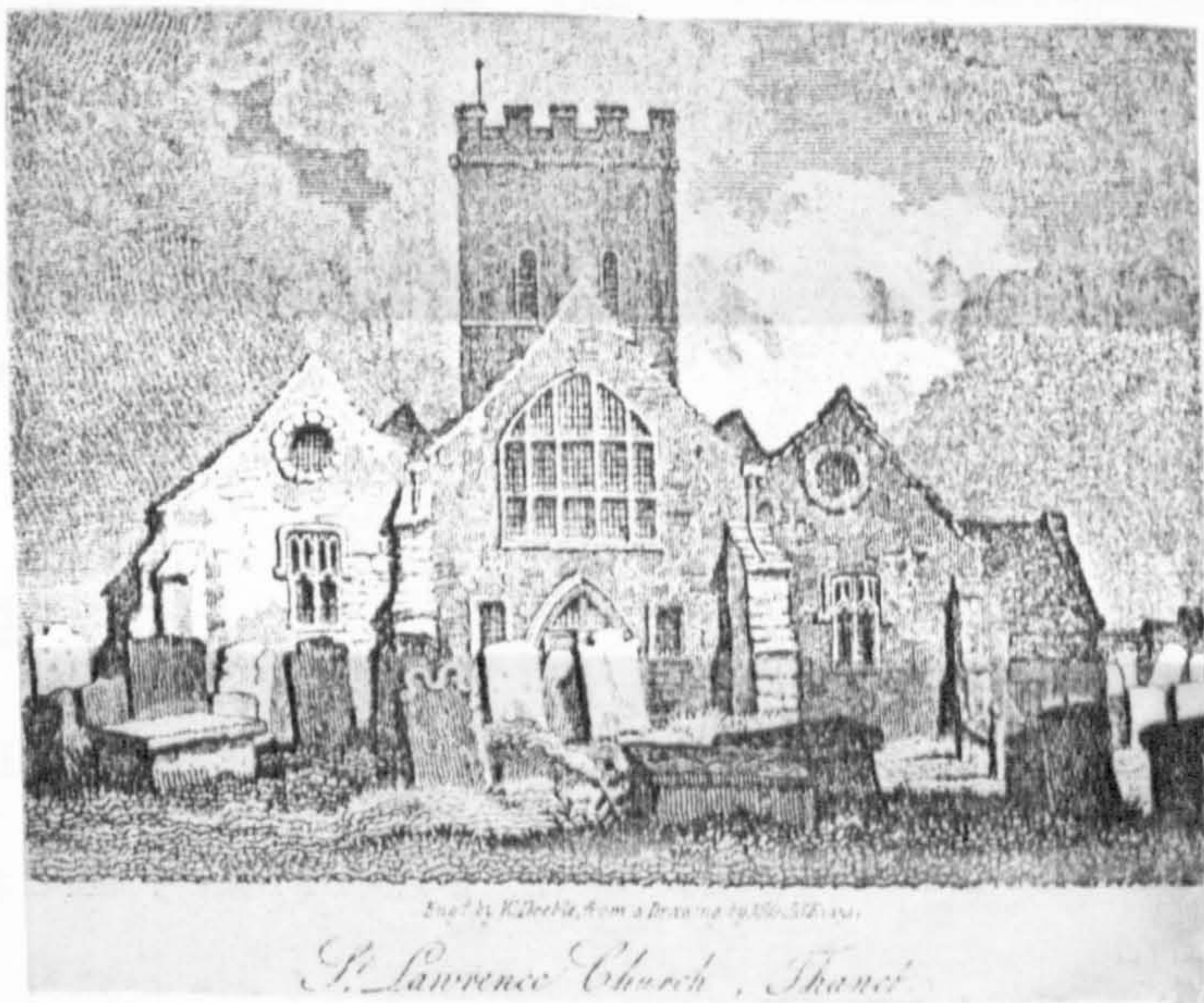
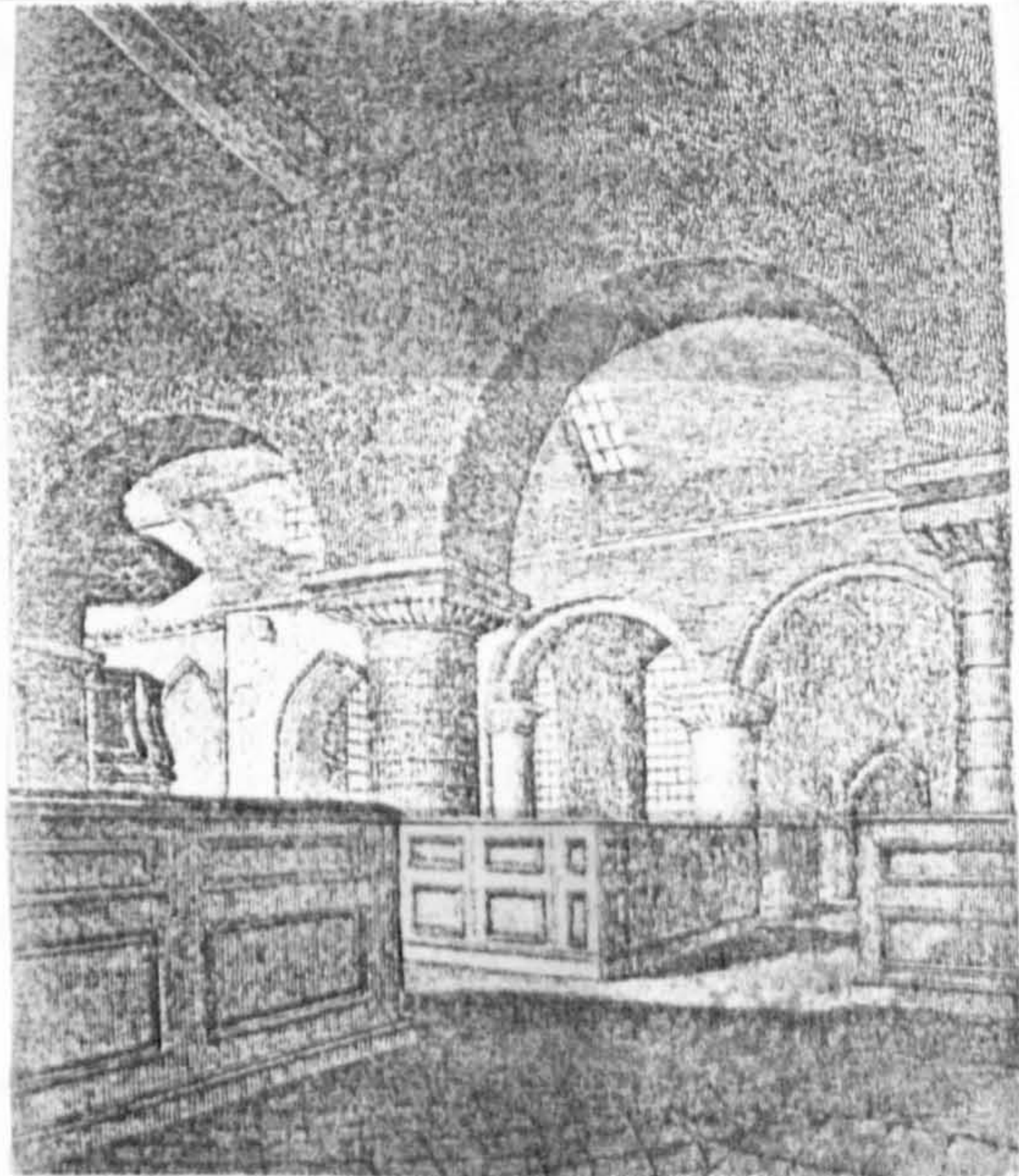
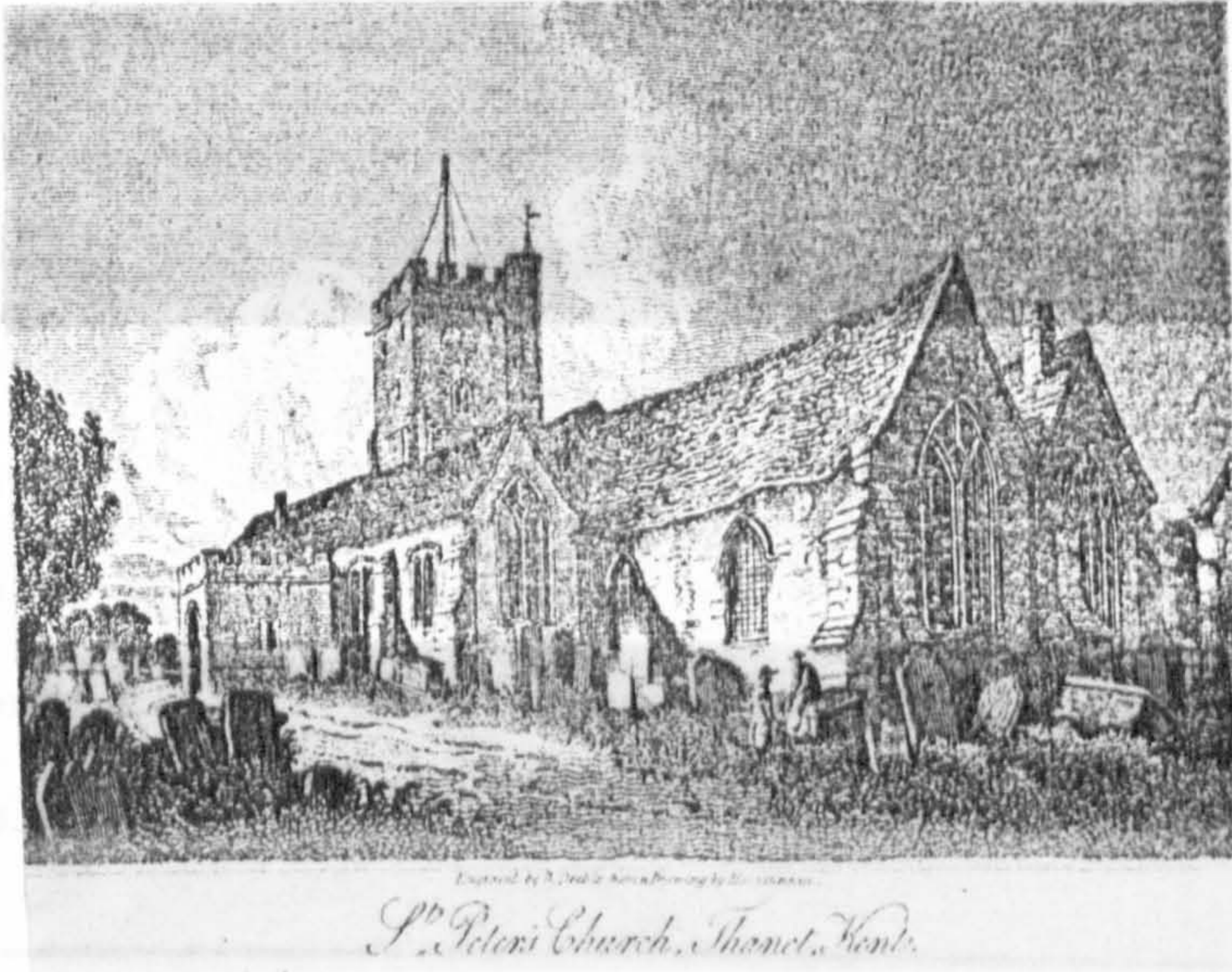
A few days later Margate remained "crowded with the fashionable and the great, and the uncommon fineness of the weather has contributed to make their excursions".³

Churches and Chapels.

A report submitted to The Times from Margate on Sunday, 2 September 1804, noted how "this being Sunday morning, it is very pleasing to observe the decorum of the public manners, and the numbers who attend the places of public worship, of which there is here variety enough; as besides the parish church, we have chapels for Roman Catholics, Methodists, and almost every species of dissenters".⁴

1. Pilkington, op.cit., 207, 212-3.
2. The Morning Chronicle, 2 October 1810, 3b.
3. Ibid., 4 October 1810, 3b.
4. The Times, 4 September 1804, 3c.

THE PARISH CHURCHES SERVING MARGATE, BROADSTAIRS AND RAMSGATE.



E.W. Brayley, Delineations, Historical and Topographical, of the Isle of Thanet and the Cinque Ports, Volume I (1817), pp. 49, 83, 84, 115.

Long before the first visitors arrived Thanet's coastal inhabitants had access to the three parish churches of St. John the Baptist serving Margate, St. Peter's serving Broadstairs and St. Lawrence serving Ramsgate, which were Norman foundations.¹ Initially they were chapels of ease to the mother church of Minster,² once "the metropolis of Thanet", which had the finest church in the island dating back to Saxon times.³ St. John's was founded circa 1050,⁴ as a chapelry to Minster until it was made parochial in 1290.⁵ St. Peter's built in 1184 was made parochial circa 1200.⁶ St. Lawrence was built circa 1200⁷ and made parochial in 1275.⁸

These inland churches attracted settlements around them. For centuries they were parent communities to the coastal vills or hamlets of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate.⁹ It was the people of Margate who lived in closest proximity to their parish church, and with the physical expansion resulting from the development of sea bathing the two settlements of Margate and St. John's soon merged into one.¹⁰ Margate's early visitors attended without much physical effort the old parish church of St. John the Baptist. Longer uphill journeys were involved from Ramsgate and Broadstairs to St. Lawrence and St. Peter's respectively. In 1887 William Hills complained that the old church of St. Lawrence had been "greatly spoiled by the great galleries

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1. Hills, op.cit., 14, 22, 29; T.H. Oyler, The Parish Churches of the Diocese of Canterbury (1910), 123, 127.
 2. Hills, op.cit., 29.
 3. Ibid., 40.
 4. Ibid., 29; also see Chapter I above.
 5. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 961.
 6. Hills, op.cit., 22.
 7. Ibid., 14.
 8. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 102.
 9. As noted above in Chapter I.
 10. See Chapter III above.

which were fixed from time to time to make room for the Ramsgate people, who, previous to the building of the Chapel of Ease [in 1790],¹ had to walk to St. Lawrence if they wished to attend church".² St. Mary's, as "a new and elegant chapel",³ was erected in Ramsgate in 1790 as a chapel of ease to the parish church. It was a simple brick building,⁴ "for the more convenient accommodation of the company,...on the side of the town near the rope walk".⁵ Several new houses were being built around it,⁶ and by 1794 it adjoined "the handsome buildings called Chapel Row".⁷ It reduced the mounting pressure on St. Lawrence church and its value was assessed thus in 1797:

"in Chapel Place. is a very handsome place of worship, erected a few years since by some of its respectable inhabitants, as a Chapel of Ease to the Parish Church, which is St. Lawrence, one mile distant: such an improvement had become exceedingly necessary; as it is not only very inconvenient on account of the distance, but extremely ill adapted for the accommodation of a large congregation". (8)

St. Mary's Chapel, resulting from an Act of Parliament passed in 1785, was consecrated by Archbishop Moore in 1791.⁹

Broadstairs, because it was smaller and developed less rapidly, was less fortunate than Margate or Ramsgate and had to await the building of Holy Trinity in the middle of the nineteenth century, constructed of flint and stone.¹⁰ Broadstairs in 1797 "being a hamlet belonging to St. Peter's parish",

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1. Oyler, op.cit., 124.
 2. Hills, op.cit., 15.
 3. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (4th Ed., Canterbury, 1794), op.cit., 276.
 4. Oyler, op.cit., 124.
 5. The Kentish Traveller's Companion (4th Ed., Canterbury, 1794), op.cit., 276.
 6. Ibid. (3rd Ed., Canterbury, 1790), 261.
 7. Ibid. (4th Ed., Canterbury, 1794), 276.
 8. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797) op.cit., 98.
 9. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 91.
 10. Oyler, op.cit., 120.

had "no place of worship, except a Baptist's Chapel", but a mile away was St. Peter's church, which

"is a handsome structure of the Gothic kind, consisting of three aisles and a beautiful chancel; ...indeed, we scarcely meet with a church kept in such excellent order; it is elegantly pewed with wainscot, and has a very handsome desk and pulpit of the same materials". (1)

By 1816 it had acquired "a good organ lately erected by a subscription of the parishioners".²

In St. John's Church a new organ was installed in 1795 as a gift from Francis Cobb senior of Margate.³ There was mounting pressure on the seating accommodation of the church, during the summer months, from a growing number of visitors who were coming to the town. Obvious solutions were put into operation: "for the accommodation of the company seats have been erected in the west end of the middle aisle, and in the middle chancel; prayers are read every Wednesday and Friday, and an additional sermon preached every Sunday during the season, for which extra duty the curate is very liberally rewarded by the subscribers to his books at the different libraries".⁴ The same arrangements "from the great resort of company" applied in 1816, it being "the custom of visitors to subscribe to his [the vicar's] book, which is left at the different libraries".⁵ By 1808 Margate's parish church was

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1. The Margate Guide, A Descriptive Poem, with Elucidatory Notes (Margate, 1797), op.cit., 104-5.
 2. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 110.
 3. Built by England, of London, ibid., 55; Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 963; this gift to the church was noted by Mrs. Pilkington in 1812, as noted in the previous section.
 4. A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet (Margate, 1796), op.cit., 24.
 5. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 55.

"well pewed, and has a large gallery which crosses it".¹

A Northamptonshire country gentleman who was visiting Margate in 1796 complained that

"my family used to be remarkable for regularity in their attendance on public worship but that too here is numbered amongst the amusements of the place. Lady Huntingdon has a chapel, which sometimes attracts us; and when nothing promises us any particular entertainment, a tea-drinking at the rooms, or a concert of what is called sacred music, is sufficient to draw us from a church... Thus we daily become more lax in our conduct, for want of the salutary restraint imposed upon us by the consciousness of being looked up to as an example by others". (2)

Nine years later The Times painted a completely different picture: "it is... very creditable to public manners here, that it is as difficult to get a seat at church, as at the places of amusement, and yet we have structures for the forms of worship of Methodists, Presbyterians, Quakers and Catholics, but I think we have no Synagogue".³ Joseph Farington when visiting Broadstairs went on 5 August 1804 "to St. Peter's Church upon the Hill a mile and a quarter from Broadstairs, and heard divine service at eleven, by the Revd. Mr. Chapman, a respectable clergyman who has been 40 years there", the church being "large, light and clean, and everything very decorous", but "there was no Sermon".⁴

Dissenters' requirements were also met prior to 1815. Mrs. Pilkington observed in 1812 that "every description of persons who visit Margate may have the satisfaction of offering up public prayers to the Deity, according to the tenets they have imbibed, as there are places of worship for almost all the different modes of religion which influence the human mind".⁵ Baptists

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1. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 963.
 2. 'Henry Homelove', "On Watering Places", The Annual Register (1796), 482.
 3. The Times, 24 September 1805, 3b.
 4. Ed: James Greig, The Farington Diary (1923), Volume II, 271-2.
 5. Pilkington, op.cit., 132.

were the first dissenting group to establish themselves on an organised basis at a Baptist Meeting House in Margate in 1763, when they petitioned "the Worshipfull Justices of y^e Peace for y^e County of Kent at the quarter Sessions":

"We whose names are here unto subscribed The Minister and Deacons of a Baptist Church meeting in the parish of St. Jn^o Baptist in the Town of Margate in the Isle of Thanett and in the County of Kent, Do hereby give Notice that a Brick-house the property of Roger Phillpot and in which Jonathan Purchis now lives is from this Time by the said Church appointed for public Worship of Almighty God and Therefore request that it may be recorded as such in the Records of this Court, According to a Statute of W^m and Mary intituled Exempting their Majesties protestant subjects Dissenting from the Church of England certain penalties, etc, as witness our hands This Day 28th Sept. 1763.

JONATHAN PURCHIS
ROGER PHILLPOTT
FRANCIS SACKETT
WILLIAM BUSHELL". (1)

Five years later it was announced that "a handsome Chapel is going to be erected at Margate for the convenience of families who reside there every summer season for the benefit of bathing".² This probably refers to a Baptist chapel which opened during 1770 in Meeting Court in Margate.³

By 1808 Margate had four other places of religious worship apart from the parish church. The Baptists met in Ebenezer Chapel, "a spacious and elegant building", which fronted a "new street of communication between the Market-place and Cecil-square".⁴ The followers of the late Rev. J. Wesley had been meeting since at least 1797 in "a neat chapel" in Hawley Square.⁵

1. Kent Record Office, Quarter Sessions Records, Q/SB, 1763, Bundle 192.
2. The Kentish Gazette, 25 October 1768.
3. Dr. Arthur Walton Rowe MS, Margate: Hamlets, Streets and Buildings, Margate Public Library Local Collection, Y060. 182, Rowe Bequest, 1729.
4. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 963; The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 55.
5. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 963; The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 55-6; The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 17.

Catholics worshipped in a chapel near Princes Crescent which had been erected by public subscription in 1803.¹ Finally, there was Zion Chapel in Addington Square, which likewise had been erected by subscription. In 1808 it was "a respectable building of modern Gothic, sufficiently large for 1,000 persons".² This chapel was attended by Mrs. Pilkington in 1812.³

Similar developments took place in Ramsgate where several new chapels were built: "the Presbyterians have a meeting-house; a spacious one has been lately built for the Methodists; and, at the lower part of the town, the Anabaptists have another".⁴ Elsewhere in Thanet, the General Baptists constructed a meeting house in Broadstairs;⁵ there was the Quaker meeting house attached to Draper's Hospital;⁶ while in 1797 at Shallows "in the foot-path from Margate to St. Peter's, and within half a mile of the latter, are two or three cottages, and a meeting house for Baptist dissenters, where there is public worship performed every Sunday afternoon throughout the year".⁷ Finally there were five clergymen living in Margate in 1796:

The Rev. Chapman - Schoolmaster.
Rev. Wm. Harrison - Vicar.
Rev. Henry Lloyd - Curate.
Mr. Purchase - Strict Baptists.
Rev. Mr. Williams. (8)

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1. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 963; The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 56.
 2. Wedlake Brayley, op.cit., 963; The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 56.
 3. As noted in the previous section.
 4. The New Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs Guide (6th Ed., Margate, 1816), op.cit., 91.
 5. Ibid., 110.
 6. The Margate and Ramsgate Guide in Letters to a Friend (1797), op.cit., 37 - "there are many /Quakers/ in and about Margate, who...carry on several different trades in the town".
 7. Ibid., 31.
 8. The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1796), op.cit.