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‘Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties’: the Audit House Library, Southampton, 1831-63 and Winchester Library & Museum, 1851-63

The above aphorism of Henry Brougham, used as the title to a much-reprinted work by George Lillie Craik, first published 1830-31 under the sponsorship of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, seems an apt heading for a combined article on two neighbouring but very different public libraries. 1863 is chosen as the terminal date for the Winchester section in order to match up with its Southampton counterpart.

1) THE AUDIT HOUSE LIBRARY, SOUTHAMPTON, 1831-63

It is a commonplace that Southampton’s first public library opened on 15 January 1889 in a former music hall adjoining the Kingsland Tavern in St Mary’s Street. This followed adoption of the Public Libraries Act, 1855, only Hull amongst the larger English towns adopting later. It is less commonly known that Southampton had, earlier in the century, possessed a library that conformed to the accepted criteria of a public library: owned by the burgesses with the Corporation as trustee, responsible to the Town Council through a Library Committee, with a Corporation-appointed librarian, supported out of the borough rate and available to all free of charge.

The core of the Audit House Library was the collection of William Molyneux (1656-98), an Anglo-Irish philosopher, mathematician, physicist and astronomer, and his son, Samuel (1689-1728), also an astronomer and a politician who moved in Court circles in London. The subsequent vicissitudes of the library, passing first to Nathaniel St Andre (1680-1776), who added further books mainly on medicine and surgery, through Samuel Molyneux’s widow (with whom Nathaniel eloped on the very day of Samuel’s death) and then to the brothers William Henry and George Frederick Pitt, the children of St Andre’s former maid-servant Mary Pitt, is a story best suited to the fiction shelves. It can be enjoyed in the introduction by L A Burgess to the *Catalogue of the Pitt Collection*, 1964 (reprinted 1984) and in a dissertation on the Pitt Collection by Ann Pearce, 1988 (copy in the Special Collections Library, Southampton Central Library). Ultimately, the library (excluding those medical works sold to the Royal College of Surgeons in 1818) passed by deed of gift dated 20 September 1831 from Captain George Frederick Pitt to the Mayor, Bailiffs and Burgesses of the town and county of the town of Southampton ‘in order to encourage the pursuit of literature and general information amongst the inhabitants of the town’.

The history of the Audit House Library is, until the reforms of the new Liberal administration in the Corporation in the late 1840s, hidden in darkness. It was a darkness shared by contemporaries. ‘Southampton’s Mysteries’ is the sub-editor’s header given to a quasi-satirical letter of 11 April 1849 printed in the *Hampshire Independent*:

‘Does Southampton possess a Civic Library, or not? Are there numerous valuable old books (as I have been told in strict confidence) kept under lock and key in some obscure nook of the Bargate, or Jail, or within the remains of the old fortifications somewhere – books so valuable that they are kept chained like the old volumes in St

Paul's Cathedral and Wimborne Minster; that no person (except a Town Councillor) is permitted to see them even – as the Pole saw the treasonable pamphlet – 'at a distance'; and that one can only be borrowed on condition of leaving as security its weight in solid gold? Is this the case, sir?'

We can clear up some of the uncertainties. The library was housed on the first floor of the Audit House, built in 1771 (figure 1). The impressive Council chamber, Borough Magistrate's courtroom and various committee rooms lay on the first floor, above the town's market. It was located in the lower High Street (figure 2). There was, until 1859, no direct entrance from the street to the upper floor, forcing potential library users (if any) to negotiate the shambles and garbage of the poultry market. Within the Audit House, the library was housed in the Council chamber, in two mahogany bookcases made by Richard Perkins, on either side of the door leading into the Magistrates' room. In May 1849 a bust of Captain Pitt (taken from his death mask) was placed on a bracket over the door, the gift of John Rushworth Keele, Mayor at the time of the original donation. Pictures bequeathed by Pitt adorned the Chamber walls. Access to the collection was so tightly controlled that it was virtually unused. The library was *per force* inaccessible during Council meetings and at other times the Chamber was in use. It was equally out of bounds when the Audit House itself was closed. A deposit of £5 was required for the loan of the book, an 'absurd and prohibitory regulation' according to John Coupland of the *Hampshire Advertiser*. Authorisation from two Councillors was a further deterrent. One of the Town Serjeants, Martin Spearing, acted as librarian, and was expected to keep the books in a good state of preservation. The acerbic comment by Captain Breton at a Town Council meeting in March 1845 that, although never used, the books ought at least to be opened and cleaned, suggests that this was not a priority. The Corporation failed to exercise any control. What seems to have been an isolated Town Council motion of 22 June 1837 appointed a committee of three – Dr William Oke, Stephen Judd (both former Mayors) and James Whitchurch – to consider the most eligible means of permitting the burgess (interestingly, not the inhabitants at large) to peruse the books in the Corporation library. There is no record of any further committee action. Some of the most valuable books were said to have suffered from pilferers.

Attitudes to the Audit House Library began to change in the middle years of the century, after the Liberals wrested control of the Town Council from the Tories in November 1847 and as new social anxieties began to surface. Of increasing concern, especially in a growing commercial town like Southampton, was that of the 'early closing generation': young men, typically unmarried, with ever more time on their hands after the business of the day was done, which (in the words of the Select Committee on Public Libraries in 1849) they 'too frequently occupied by their frequenting places of trifling amusement and expense, as well as places of debauchery and vice'. The provision of public libraries, critically open in the evening, was perceived as providing an alternative way of life. The Library Committee was resuscitated in January 1848. In March 1853 the first rules and regulations for a public library in the town were published, characterized by the *Hampshire Advertiser* as 'Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties'. Some were a codification of existing practice. Martin Spearing was confirmed as librarian at a salary of £5 *per annum*. This supplemented his main Corporation post as Keeper of the Debtor's Ward at the town gaol (housed in the South Castle), a responsible position to which he had been appointed in midsummer 1834 but which he was to lose at the end of 1856 with the

Figure 1 The Audit House, Southampton. Photograph of 1930 in Special Collections Library, Southampton Central Library (viewable on the PortCities website)

building of a new, integrated gaol. Our first librarian came from a family steeped in Corporation service. His father, James Spearing, had been Town Crier for 37 years, retiring in 1833 at the age of 87. Another relative, William Spearing, had been a Town Serjeant like Martin, and at his death in 1837 was Keeper of the Common Gaol. For the first time the library had specific, if limited, times of opening: every Wednesday from 3 to 7 *pm*. Spearing was to be in attendance during these hours, presumably in the Town Serjeant's blue uniform and wearing the silver badge of office. The books were to be 'free for reference or perusal', with borrowing permitted, as before, only on the authority of two Members of the Town Council. The requirement of a financial deposit was abandoned, but an embryonic issue system was set up with Shearing entering loan details in a special book. A catalogue was to be prepared and printed 'at once', to be available for consultation at the Audit House during Wednesday opening and, at other times, at Martin Spearing's own residence, *i.e.* the already much dilapidated Governor's House in the Debtor's Ward.

This last, apparently straightforward, requirement was a mare's nest. A printed catalogue was the essential key to opening up the collection. It had been the first item considered by the revived Library Committee in January 1848, when the matter was referred to Dr Joseph Bullar and, through him, to his father John Bullar. The latter, believing that no bookseller in the town would be able to cope with the complexities involved nor with the number of books in a foreign language, offered to prepare a catalogue himself from existing manuscript lists. By May he had abandoned the idea of a vicarious catalogue, as the books 'are now arranged on shelves, corresponding I believe with a catalogue I have seen in the hands of Mr Martin Spearing'. It is not clear what this catalogue was (it may have been based on the 1776 catalogue prepared on St Andre's death), but we can recreate the arrangement of the books by using the manuscript amendments to the 1831 indenture under which the library was donated to the Corporation (kept in the Special Collections Library, Southampton Central Library). This suggests a broad subject classification:

A Military studies
B The arts
C Literature
D Historical studies
E Horse riding and other pastimes
F Biography
G Natural sciences
H Mathematics
I Antiquities
J British history
K Bibliography
L Travels and voyages
M Government
N Law
O Religion
P Classical works
Q Poetry

John Bullar made a start on the new catalogue, with a shelf (or part shelf) sent at a time to his house at Bassett Wood. He was ostensibly the ideal man for the job. A schoolmaster for nearly 40 years, he was a much respected author, particularly on local antiquity. His A *companion in a tour round Southampton* was published, anonymously, when he was only 21 years old. However, before he could complete this latest 'little service' for the Corporation, he fell into ill-health and within a year had to abandon the scheme.

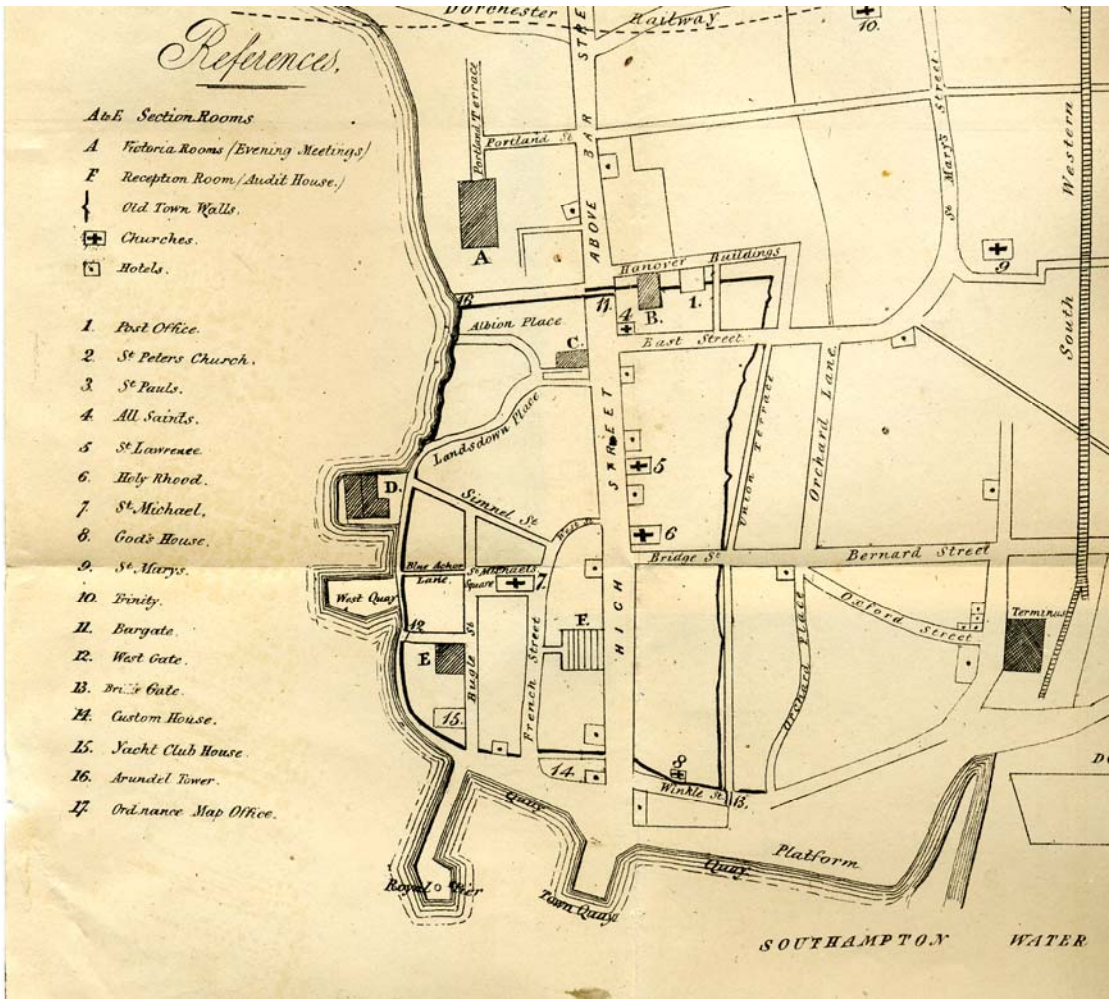

Figure 2 The lower part of Southampton in 1846. Map accompanying John Bullar, *Hints to assist the enquiries of visitors*, 1846, printed to assist members of the British Association for the Promotion of Science at their annual congress. The letter F marks the Audit House

When the idea of a printed catalogue was revived in March 1853, few on the Library Committee could have foreseen the cataloguing nightmare that lay ahead. They initially turned to a man already in the Corporation's employ. The Reverend Thomas Lawes Shapcott was Chaplain to the town gaol, in addition to holding the living of St Michael's and the Headmastership of the Free Grammar School. His death in August 1854 forestalled any early production of a catalogue. Five months later his successor as Chaplain of the gaol, the Reverend George Bradshaw, was appointed in his *lieu*. It was an abortive appointment, as this controversial cleric became embroiled in a bitter libel case with Thomas Leader Harman and Henry Pond of the *Hampshire Independent*, climaxing in a trial before the Court of Exchequer in Westminster. Six months after Bradshaw's appointment, with no catalogue in sight, the Corporation turned to the Reverend Edward Edmunds, Shapcott's successor as Vicar of St Michael's. He appointed as his assistant John Fletcher, bookseller, printer, former librarian of the defunct Southampton Literary and Scientific Institution, and connected to the publishing firm of Isaac and Thomas Fletcher (incidentally, publishers of many of the works of John Bullar). To the relief of all, Edmunds informed the Library Committee on 1 March 1856 that the catalogue was completed. 'The undertaking has necessarily been one of time and patience. I had free access to the several catalogues already completed, but chose rather to do the work from the beginning. Each book, in passing thro' my hands, has received a careful survey, previous to its insertion in the catalogue'. Any sense of relief was short lived. Several Committee members – of whom Aldermen Edward Palk and Richard Coles are named – and the Town Clerk had reservations about its quality and, without consulting Edmunds, authorized John Fletcher to make alterations. Edmunds complained of interference, but he left town in December 1856 following his resignation from the duties of vicar of St Michael's (although he continued to hold the vicarage) owing to 'congregational difficulties'. Fletcher took over responsibility for overseeing the work through the press for a fee of 2 guineas. The printed catalogue was finally laid before the Library Committee in May 1857, with a proof of the second sheet having been in the printer's hands for some six months. It was over four years since the catalogue had been requested 'at once'. Five hundred copies were printed by J J Bennett and put on sale at 6d each.

What this mountain of effort produced was but a molehill. L A Burgess, compiler of the replacement catalogue in 1964, called the original 'incredibly bad'. The classified element, however rudimentary in the pre-1857 version, was lost altogether, a point made forcibly at the time by John Coupland, proprietor of the *Hampshire Advertiser* and owner of the largest circulating library in the town. The catalogue as published was simply in two alphabetical sequences, one of works in English and one of foreign works, each book allocated a running number and its size (duodecimo, octavo, quarto, folio) noted. Fletcher was employed physically to number each book. The catalogue was compiled not from the title page, as is good practice, but from the brief title labels on the canvass book covers. This caused endless problems over the course of time as the labels fell off. It also meant that there was little consistency in the form of entry. Several works were entered twice.

The shortcomings of the catalogue lay in the future. The immediate effect of its publication was that the Audit House Library opened to the public on 28 May 1857 as 'Southampton Free Library'. To John Coupland it was, albeit sarcastically, 'THE PEOPLE'S LIBRARY'. The rules and regulations of 1853 were updated, the main

difference being in opening hours. It was now open every day (except Sundays) from 2 to 5 *pm* and from 6 to 8 *pm*. The librarian, now paid £15 *per annum*, was to be in attendance during these hours to 'afford every convenience and assistance' (the hour's closure was to allow Spearing to take a break). The condition of the bookstock had been improved. John Fletcher, who had commented on the very damp and bad state of the books whilst engaged on the catalogue, was allocated £10 to make necessary repairs and to 'polish and give a new appearance' to the remainder. The antiquarian value of the library had been increased through the deposit of 37 folio volumes by the Record Commissioners of England and Wales (part of the old Rolls series), making available some of the more important national records. These were listed in the 1857 catalogue. There were also, for the first time, facilities in the Audit House for reading books on the premises.

Stimulus towards the modernization of the library came in large measure from pressures outside Corporation control. The Patent Amendment Act of 1852, creating the patent system we know today and setting up the Patent Office, allowed the Patent Commissioners to donate a complete set of specifications dating back to 1617 and accompanying drawings (both reprinted in 1853) to public libraries and museums. The Corporation received the offer in July 1855. It was referred to the Library Committee who, possibly without realizing the full implications, voted for acceptance. It was a huge commitment. There were over 15,000 specifications. The Patent Office recommendation, essential before they could be effectually used, was that they be bound. One estimate was that this would produce nearly 200 volumes of letterpress, each volume paired with a sheet imperial volume of illustrative lithographs, mounted on cloth. The specifications were arranged in strict date order. It was initially thought that their subject classification, essential for use of the collection, would be a Corporation responsibility. A sub-committee was set up to superintend the classification, assisted by David Geddes, Corresponding Secretary of the Southampton Polytechnic Institution and clerk of the works of the new gaol: another library connection with the prison. Fortunately, this was made irrelevant by the government's subsequent gift of Bennet Woodcroft's indexes. Three of the conditions for acceptance of the gift were that the specifications be deposited in a Public Free Library of the town, that they be open to the inspection of the public daily and at all reasonable hours, and that they should not be removed from the library. Hence, the essential need for six-day and evening opening, together with a reading room. The specifications were place in two recesses in what was called 'the small room' in the Audit House, and the room itself converted into a general reading room. The collection was placed under the supervision of Martin Spearing. The increased cost for gas and coals was, however reluctantly, met.

The opening of the library in May 1857 initially created little enthusiasm in the town. The *Hampshire Advertiser* noted that in its first week it had been visited 'by about half-a-dozen persons, who have strolled about just from curiosity, and then left', adding 'we hope the taste of the early closing men will improve'. Gradually, however, improvements in the bookstock, allied to a warm, comfortable, gas-lit reading room, began to attract a new clientele, especially in the evening. Spearheading the library campaign in the Corporation was Edmund Palk, a Liberal Alderman and, between November 1858 and November 1859, Mayor. He was a chemist and druggist in the High Street, an Anglican and a close friend of Richard Andrews, with a strong belief in the power of reading. He marked the end of his mayoralty by a gift of over 300

books to form a circulating library at the Ragged School. Contacts were made with library leaders in many of the large English towns, including Edward Edwards at Manchester. Catalogues were solicited from Liverpool Free Public Library, Sheffield Free Public Library, Manchester Free Libraries, Bristol City Library and the Free Library of Winchester Museum amongst others. These survive today in Southampton Archives (TC box 38) as a valuable collection for the early history of public libraries.

A concentrated effort was made by Alderman Palk to attract donations of works of a popular nature in order, as the *Hampshire Advertiser* wrote, to render to the working classes a great and essential advantage. John Bullar, in a letter of support to Palk, spoke of the Mayor's 'experiment', and counselled the need to avoid 'the mere refuse of our book-shelves'. Lists of donations and their donors were published in both the *Hampshire Advertiser* and *Hampshire Independent* in order, in the words of the greatest of all library benefactors Sir Thomas Bodley, to 'stir up other men's benevolence'. The lists show the fallibility of reliance on donations, the age and obscurity of many of the works making them of little practical use. Did the gift in December 1857 by James Gray, Rector of Dibden, of his own work *Harmony of Scripture and geology; or, the Earth's antiquity in harmony with the mosaic record of the Creation* really appeal to the town's youth? Nevertheless, the lists do reveal a stratum of useful works. Daily newspapers were always a draw, and donations of *The Times* (by John Bullar), *Morning Herald* (by Alderman Tucker) and *Daily News* increased footfall. Some donations were specifically aimed at the target audience. Dr William Bullar presented 151 numbers of the popular periodical *Orr's Circle of the Sciences*. This was supplemented by runs of the *Mechanics' Magazine, Penny Magazine, Saturday Magazine, Blackwood's Magazine,* the *British Essayist* and *Quarterly Review*. Current affairs were covered with several donations of books on slavery and British rule in India (including George Thompson's *Lectures on British India*) which would appeal to those following events in America in the prelude to the Civil War and in India at the height of the Mutiny. Official publications included Board of Agriculture reports, minutes of the Committee of the Council of Education and, presented by Colonel James, Director of the Ordnance Survey, an account of the principal triangulation of the United Kingdom. The Smithsonian Institution supplied seven quarto volumes of the United States Survey and works from the United States Patent Office. There was a smattering of works of local history, such as Sir Henry Englefield's A *walk through Southampton* and, direct from the author, Henry Moody's *Antiquities of Winchester*. John Fletcher presented a subscriber's copy of Cary's *Atlas*. Topics of perennial interest to library users, works on travel, biography, history (Palk himself presented 25 volumes of Hume and Smollett's *History of England*) and self-improvement, figure prominently. The latter included *How a penny became a thousand pounds* by the great Victorian compiler of reference works Robert Kemp Philp, published first in 1856 and re-issued as an ebook in December 2007. The list of donors comprises many of the more important people of the town, of different political and religious affiliations. Archdeacon Joseph Wigram, Rector of St Mary's and founder in 1851 of the South Hants and Isle of Wight Book-Hawking Society, together with Canon William Wilson, Vicar of Holy Rood and noted bibliophile, were directly approached by Palk to search their libraries for likely donations. The Bullars, *per et fils*, William Lankester of the Holy Rood Foundry, Henry Buchan, owner of a decorating firm employing over 150 workmen and creator in 1860 of a work's library for his employees, Joseph Rankin Stebbing and R D Ellyett were powerful allies.

Even the Reverend Henry Smith, who we met in number 12 of this *Journal*, donated two volumes from his library.

The conventional next step in setting up the new library as a permanent feature in the town would have been adoption of the Public Libraries Act of 1855, allowing a borough rate to be levied. There was a precedent. The first in the run of the adoptive acts, the Museums Act of 1845, had been applied in the town. As early as the end of 1845 there had been attempts to use the act to preserve the museum of the recently dissolved Southampton Literary and Scientific institution. These failed after intermittent negotiations between a committee representing the Institute (amongst whom Edward Palk was prominent) and the Town Council came to naught. Revival of interest had to await the new Whig ascendancy in the Corporation. Adoption of the Museum Act was the last, crowning achievement in November 1849 of the mayoralty of George Laishley, leading Methodist and champion of the Early Closing Movement. It was a clear political move, possible only – so Laishley claimed – because of the Liberal's success in reducing borough expenditure (£5,406-16s-6d under the last Tory administration to £3,644-7s-7d under the Liberals). The act was aimed specifically to establish 'museums of art and science', but ambiguities in its wording (allowing 'Specimens of Art or Science, and Articles of every description' to be interpreted as encompassing books) had allowed Canterbury (1847), Warrington (1848) and Salford (1849) to establish a public library within their museum. This all-embracing interpretation of the act was clearly in the minds of its proponents in Southampton. George Laishley himself, in the November 1849 Council debate, talked of 'a public library'. When the first rate levied under the act - £255-8s-0d – was transferred to the public museum account in February 1850, John Coupland of the Tory *Hampshire Advertiser* invoked the vision of a 'people's Museum and Library'. It was a false dawn. The Museums Act was repealed by the Public Libraries Act of August 1850. Those boroughs who had adopted the 1845 Act and had either established a museum, or set the process of establishment in train, passed seamlessly under the provisions of the new Act, and later, equally effortlessly, under the provisions of the 1855 Public Libraries Act. Southampton had made no such provision. The museum rate of February 1850 was the only rate levied, and lay untouched for over a decade in the Corporation coffers.

As one avenue to a public library closed, so a new and utterly unexpected one opened up. The catalyst was the death in Calais on 24 May 1850 of Henry Robinson Hartley, and the subsequent bequest of property worth £103,887 to his native town. The proceeds of this property were vested in the Corporation to promote the study and advancement of the sciences of natural history, astronomy, antiquities and classical literature in the town, by forming a public library, botanic gardens, observatory and museum. The bizarre, almost surreal life of Hartley is given in Alexander Anderson's *Hartleyana; being some account of the life of Henry Robinson Hartley scholar, naturalist, eccentric and founder of the University of Southampton*, published in 1987. Heir to an extensive fortune, Hartley left Southampton in 1825 after a disastrous marriage, spending the rest of his disillusioned and reclusive life in self-banished exile, mainly on the continent: a life of soured misanthropy in the words of Edward Edwards. The will was challenged by (again using Edwards' phrase) his alleged daughter, provoking a tortuous Chancery suit costing the Corporation £35,000 and involving at its peak eleven French and ten English counsel at 10 guineas each a day.

Finally, in 1858, the suit was resolved, largely in the Corporation's favour, by the bequest of £42,525 to the town.

Newspaper accounts of Southampton's apparent financial windfall stimulated a brief flurry of activity in 1850. Less than two months after Hartley's death, the Curator of the then-failing Hampshire Museum, Henry Moody, wrote to Richard Andrews, Mayor of Southampton and an acquaintance of many years. He offered to put his Winchester experience at the service of Southampton Corporation: 'that a Museum in your large and populous borough will be an advantage all will admit, but I think no one can tell how it will be appreciated and enjoyed better than myself' (Southampton Archives TC box 37). The same month, Jausseus Verbeyst, an official in the Belgian foreign ministry, wrote to *The Times* offering to sell the Corporation the huge library, comprising several hundred thousand volumes, of his recently-deceased father-in-law. Circling vultures perhaps, but there was no carcass to feed off for eight years. These years of uncertainty, when neither the certainty nor the generosity of any final settlement was known, proved fatal to the nascent public library movement in the town. Philip Brannon voiced the frustration of many in a typically outspoken letter of December 1855:

'Where there is a will there is a way' and the negative, 'where there is not a will there is not a way', are both equally true. The bugbear to silence all appeals for a long time past has been the Hartley Bequest. To the eloquent orators and influential men of the borough it has afforded the delightful opportunity of making fine speeches and fair professions in favour of libraries, museums, *et caeteris paribus*, and at the same time of effectually quashing every attempt at their extension and establishment.

This goes far to explain the lethargy of the Corporation before the reopening of the town library in 1857. As Brannon teased: the only answer given even for such a simple request as money for glass cases in the Audit House, is 'Let us wait till we get the Hartley Bequest'. The outburst became more personal the following year as the Corporation failed to support Brannon's proposals to restore to their former state the South Castle, South Gate and Towers, left vacant by the removal of the old gaol. His ambitious plan to house a Town Museum, Library (the Audit House Library was to be relocated in the great square tower) and Schools in the restored showpiece buildings evaporated.

The final settlement of the Hartley Bequest in 1858 prompted an internecine war between those who took a close interpretation of Hartley's very specific instructions to the Corporation for an elitist college and those who took a more wide-ranging view. This can be followed both in *Hartleyana* and in A Temple Patterson's *The University of Southampton*, 1962 (chapters 2 and 3). On the liberal wing of the divide was the free library party, with the widely-respected John Bullar as spokesman. In a series of published letters in the first half of 1858 he argued for 'an extensive free lending library with plenty of books to be taken out and read at home, and all the best books of reference on the shelves, within reach for consultation at all times'. He realized that books alone were not enough: 'you must also have a thoroughly competent, active, good-tempered, zealous librarian ever ready to assist those who desire such a guide on the choice of books, and you must pay such a man as he ought to be paid. No favour or affection must prevent you from putting the right man into the right place, or removing him if he does not do his duty. No man is fit for such a

post, who does not love his office for its object. A mere acquaintance with the title of books will not be enough! Your librarian must love literature himself, and delight in leading others to love it'. The library he believed should be brought into provisional operation as soon as the money was received, and based on the present Audit House Library. Henry Moody, Curator of the Winchester Museum and Library, was engaged to validate the proposal. Some in Southampton went further down the populist track. W C Westlake, Quaker and corn merchant in a large way of business, argued for 'A Working Man's Reading Room (separate from the library), comfortably furnished, with a careful and sound assortment of books, periodicals and papers, to which the artizan or mechanic could go in his working dress, and mix with his own class when he so prefers'. More generally in support of the public library he argued 'It is the young men from fourteen to twenty-four years old, who, being occupied in business, require every stimulus and encouragement, both morally and intellectually, but whose education for manhood and sound knowledge is so habitually and utterly neglected'.

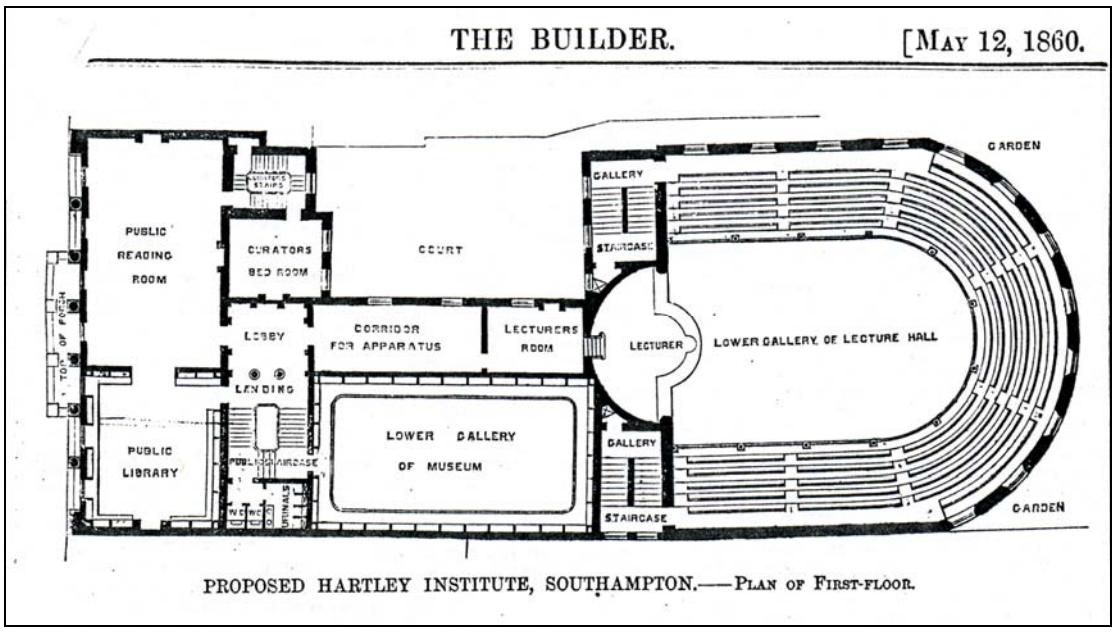

Figure 3 Plan of the proposed Hartley Institution from *The Builder*, 12 May 1860, page 296

In the euphoria of the times, the scheme adopted by the Town Council in May 1858 had at its heart a public library, although falling short of what the purists would have wanted. The Hartley Institution was to be based on the principles of the Southampton Polytechnic Institute, binding together existing institutions such as the Polytechnic (the old Mechanic's Institute), the Athenaeum (formerly the Mutual Improvement Society), the Chamber of Commerce, the Medical Society, the School of Art and the Choral Society. Its leading proponents, Joseph Rankin Stebbing (President of the Polytechnic), Dr Francis Cooper (radical and ex-Chartist), Timothy Falvey and Henry Pond (editor and publisher respectively of the Liberal *Hampshire Independent*) had been strong supporters of the public library ideal for over a decade, and a library was indeed to be the 'first object' of the proposed institution (figure 3). It was to be physically at the centre of the new building, on the first or principal floor and approached by the grand staircase. The library and adjoining reading room (separated by folding doors) extended the whole 70-foot length of the frontage facing the High

Street, and lit by seven large windows (figure 4). The chief officer was to be designated Principal Librarian. After a protracted selection process, Dr Francis T Bond was appointed in July 1862. It was a critical decision. Dr Bond was a physician by profession, a graduate of the University of London. He later turned to *academia*, and at the time of his appointment was Professor of Chemistry, Curator of the Museum and Library and Dean of Faculty at Queen's College, Birmingham. As the only member of staff, Bond undertook the traditional role of a librarian, selecting books and producing a catalogue, but his main focus was to report on the future direction of the institution.

Figure 4 The Hartley Institution on 25 October 1862, the day of its official opening by Lord Palmerston. The library and reading room occupy the whole of the first-floor frontage. Engraving in the Special Collections Library, Southampton Central Library (viewable on the PortCities website)

When published in February 1863, the report brought a cold sense of reality to the debate, which hitherto had been conducted in a vacuum of idealism and hope. Not only did Bond follow the letter of Hartley's instructions, that the bequest be employed for the exclusive benefit of 'the select scientific public of the town', but he also realized that the residue of the bequest, after legal expenses and massive Corporation extravagance had been deducted, was woefully insufficient to support any but the most limited scheme. He applied financial criteria to identify those who were allowed to use the institution, and hence be admitted to the library and reading room. Full privileges were given to those paying a subscription of one guinea a year, far beyond the reach of working men. This included the right to take out two works at a time from any circulating collection and admission at a reduced rate for a family member.

A half-subscription allowed admission to the library and reading room to the subscriber alone, and borrowing was restricted to one book at a time. A five-shilling subscription allowed access to the library and reading room only after 6 *pm* (later relaxed to 5 *pm*), with no borrowing privileges. A minor concession was made for those who could not afford the subscription, but it was a concession in name only. These unfortunates had to present a certificate of poverty together with a recommendation of character and an assurance of their special capability to profit by the advantages of the institution signed by three members of the Town Council. It comes as no surprise that the report was poorly received, calculated it was said to unsettle society in the town, create class distinctions and penalize family men. At the subsequent public meeting to discuss the report, this disappointment was eloquently expressed by Henry Pond, Liberal publisher and journalist, Vice President of the Southampton Polytechnic (responsible for its library) and Secretary to the Early Closing Association. 'If they consented to the proposition by which, on payment of the lesser sum, the honest, industrious, respectable, and skilled mechanic, with a small salary to support a large family, was kept out till five o'clock, while some little empty-headed vain puppy was permitted to lounge about in it as he pleased, because he could pay the higher rate of subscription, they would be ticketed, labelled, servile slaves, and degraded in the eyes of their fellow-townsmen; and, for himself, he would rather see the Institution a blazing ruin than a monument of a public swindle and fraud (loud cheers)'.

The report was ultimately passed almost in its entirety. At one stroke, the free public library movement in Southampton had been killed. In hindsight, publication of the final financial settlement had been its death knell, but the reality of the new situation had been not been faced. Stebbing told the Town Council in May 1863 that it was a common misapprehension in the town that, being Corporation property, the Institute – and hence the library and reading room – was to be as freely accessible as the Parks, the Common and the cricket ground, also owned by the Corporation. The 1861 Forbes and Bennett Southampton directory specifically refers to a Free Library and Reading Room under its entry for the (proposed) Hartley Institute. Shops were closed by order of the Mayor, Frederick Perkins, for the laying of the foundation stone in October 1862 to allow shop assistants to share in the celebrations. A painted motto at the entrance to the workhouse read 'The Hartley Institution, a place of thought unto the poorest free'. This was echoed a year later when Lord Palmerston, Liberal Prime Minister, officially opened the Institution. He concluded unambiguously: 'I say this town will be greatly advantaged by an institution like this, in which knowledge will be freely communicated to all who choose to come and drink at the fountain'. Stebbing himself probably helped to perpetuate this false optimism. His proposal of a modest 5-shilling subscription was only made widely public after Bond had issued his report.

Throughout the traumatic gestation of the Hartley Institution, the Audit House Library had continued to live its little life. Donations continued to be received up to October 1861 at least, when Mrs Charles Hammond completed the donation from the library of her late husband, the former Recorder of Southampton. The 814 books in Hartley's own library were sent to the Audit House after being rescued from his deserted and crumbling former residence in the High Street (a manuscript catalogue of the library is in Southampton Archives TC box 38). The balance of interest, however, was inexorably passing over to the new power. Donations, often from significant

collections, were from mid-1861 increasingly being kept in store awaiting the opening of the Hartley Institution. These included donations from both the United States and French Consuls in Southampton, the residue (350 volumes) of the Southampton Theological Library from the Reverend William Wilson and the Reverend John Keble of Hursley, and, most usefully, about 2,500 volumes from the Southampton Reading Society selected over a period of 50 years. In the Town Council, the Library Committee was replaced by the Hartley Committee. Martin Spearing was released as librarian at Christmas 1862, already having taken alternative employment as keeper/porter at the new Savings Bank in West Marlands at a salary of £20 *per annum*. He died in March 1878, leaving in his will a tidy sum of money, a collection of books and plate and four properties (6 Albion Place and 1 to 3 Castle Buildings) in the town. The Audit House Library ceased to exist in January 1863 on its removal to the Hartley Institution. The books donated by Captain Pitt were kept as a separate collection, each work identified by a bookplate, to become available once more in September 1863 when the Library, Reading Room and News Room of the Hartley Institution were officially opened. They returned to Southampton Library in 1905 and are still in the City's care. The amount standing to the credit of the museum account (risen to £337-8s-4d) was transferred to the Hartley account at the same time that the books were handed over.

The library at the Hartley Institution was demonstrably of greater benefit to the town than the Audit House Library, both in the short and medium term. It was open far longer, between the hours of 10 *am* and 9 *pm* (the Reading Room's hours were extended to 10 *pm* in November 1863). It contained over 4,000 volumes. Staffing had been improved with the appointment of an assistant librarian. Over the course of the next two decades, the library was progressively liberalized, and took on attributes of a free public library. But in 1863 the library was not universally available (unlike the museum which had free admission on three days a week). There were some who thought that the ratepayers had been shortchanged. Thomas James, owner of the Book Emporium in Above Bar Street and father of the photographer Thomas Hibbett James, argued before the Town Meeting of July 1863 on the future of the Institution that 'by the removal of the public library from the Audit House an injustice had been done the ratepayers, who had not now the opportunity of reading the books which they formerly possessed'. It is appropriate to leave the uncertain history of the early public library in Southampton on a note of controversy. Thomas W Shore, Chief Executive of the Hartley Institution, reflected in April 1873 on lost opportunities during a lecture on the Free Libraries and Museum Act held in the Hartley Hall. He talked of the financing of the Hartley Institution as a series of misfortunes almost unparalleled in the history of municipal institutions. He contrasted the situation in 1873 to the days when the town adopted the Museums Act – 'but then those burgesses of five and twenty years ago were happy men, they knew not the Hartley Bequest…'.

2) WINCHESTER LIBRARY AND MUSEUM, 1851-63

Winchester Library is famously the first library to be opened, on 10 November 1851, as a consequence of the Public Libraries and Museum Act, 1850. It was, in effect, an accidental library, a by-product of the urgent need to save the Hampshire Museum, based in the city, from dissolution.

The Hampshire Museum owes its conception in autumn 1846 to the vision of the antiquary Henry Moody. The ground had been prepared a year earlier by annual congresses held in successive months of the two break-away factions of the British Archaeological Association The second congress in September, held by the faction which later became the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (the epithet Royal was gained in 1866), had by far the greater local support. Many of those who we will meet later in this essay were active in its organization: Reverend Thomas Garnier (Dean of Winchester and eminent botanist), Reverend David Williams (former headmaster of Winchester College, Warden of New College, Oxford 1840-60 and Vice Chancellor of the University between 1858 and his death in 1860), Reverend George Moberly (headmaster of Winchester College and later Bishop of Salisbury), Reverend W H Gunner (chaplain and tutor of the College and in day-to-day charge of the Fellows' Library), Dr Andrew Crawford (surgeon to the Hampshire Infirmary and leader of the Whig establishment in the city: the political godfather of John Bonham Carter), Charles Bailey (Town Clerk and antiquarian) and Charles Seagrim (Under Sheriff of the County and three-times Mayor of Winchester). A Museum of Antiquities was created for the duration of the congress in the gallery of the Deanery, with two exhibits – a cannon ball from the siege of September 1845 and the map of Hampshire (with Winchester as an inset) from Speed's *Theatre of the Empire,* 1611 – loaned by Henry Moody. He presented visitors to the Museum with a copy of his recently published *An alphabetical list of such of the present parishes, tythings, and manors of Hampshire, as are mentioned in the Domesday Book.*

The Hampshire Museum was formally established at a meeting in the Corn Exchange in December 1846, of which the Bishop of Winchester would have been chairman but for the sudden death of his mother. A subscription list was set up, a committee of management elected and officers appointed. The latter included Henry Moody as paid curator, responsible to a set of honorary departmental curators. The original concept seems to have been essentially a county museum, bringing together existing local collections, but it soon took on an eclecticism so typical of town museums elsewhere. The initial appeal for donations elicited a collection of arctic curiosities from Dean Garnier, collected by his brother-in-law Sir Edward Parry, and two large chests of fish caught around Port Jackson in New South Wales from Sir Charles Shaw-Lefevre, Speaker of the House of Commons, MP for North Hampshire and a trustee of the British Museum. These, together with other donations, were stored in Moody's house in St Swithun Street until transferred to their permanent place of deposit, the schoolroom of the former Hyde Abbey School, taken on a five-year lease in February 1847. Hyde Abbey School, set up in the early years of the century by Reverend Charles Richards, had been amongst the most highly prized seats of classical education in the country. Three of those most enthusiastic for the Museum were *alumni*: Dean Garnier, Reverend George Moberly and Reverend David Williams. Since then the building had undergone several reincarnations, including use as a Dissenting Chapel, and by 1847 was lying empty.

The Museum opened on St Swithun's Day 1847, and the original momentum ensured initial success. The Ashmolean Library at Oxford later that year donated sizeable collections of British birds and foreign insects. Winchester Mechanics' Institution transferred its small museum of objects of vertu. Winchester Corporation deposited the city's antiquities then housed in the muniment room in the West Gate, including the old Winchester bushel donated by Henry VII. A herbarium, intended to include all

the native plants of the county, was established. Expansion was in the air. Plans for improvement were drawn up in March 1848 by local architect John Colson, including a house for the curator. The Museum, however, gradually lost its appeal and by 1850 was in a terminal state of morbidity. There was a balance in hand (after the entire fitting up of the museum) of £40 at the beginning of 1848. Two years later, the amount received by subscriptions was inadequate to meet expenses. In Henry Moody's words, in a letter to Richard Andrews, 'we may be said to exist rather than thrive'. (Southampton Archives TC box 37: 91/4). By a unanimous vote, the Museum Committee in January 1850 agreed to apply to the Corporation for support under the Museums Act of 1845, giving powers to raise a rate of a halfpenny in the pound for their upkeep. The peg upon which the application was hung was the number of visitors – estimated at over 5,000 – admitted free of charge on those occasions when the museum was open to all, *viz* each Monday, Assize week and Coronation day. The Town Council, meeting in February, was sympathetic, but regarded itself powerless as the act applied only to borough museums. The Mayor, Edward Chamberlain Faithfull, threw out the lifeline that the act might be amended in the present Parliamentary session. Henry Moody, by now Collector as well as Curator, redoubled his efforts to collect subscriptions, only to report a growing number of those approached threatening to discontinue their subscription. It was during these dark days that he applied for alternative employment in the north of England. There was only hostility to a proposal of merger with the other literary and scientific institutions in the city made at a special committee meeting in April 1850. By October the committee, faced with imminent dissolution, was obliged to throw themselves once again on the mercy of the Corporation.

Circumstances, however, were by now different to those applying at the start of the year. The Public Libraries and Museums Act, a more wide-ranging piece of legislation, had replaced the Museums Act in August 1850. It was now no longer simply in the power of the Corporation to adopt. A poll of ratepayers, with a two-thirds majority of those polled, was required. The Town Council unanimously agreed on a poll, sending out a printed extract in support of adoption from the *Hampshire Independent* with the voting papers as a none too subtle indication of the anticipated result. A museum was regarded as an essential adornment to the city, an attraction both to free-spending visitors and to those seeking to purchase property in the city during this time of expansion, particularly in the building of new villas. At a stroke, the whole contents of the museum, valued at between £500 and £600, would become Corporation property. Any criticism that the city was bailing out a county institution was countered by an examination of the subscription list, which was overwhelmingly Winchester based. Fears that the ratepayers might be liable to unspecified future financial obligations were allayed by a categorical assurance (resolutely adhered to) that the general borough rate would never be used to supplement the museum rate. The poll, held on 14 January 1851, was little more than a formality, yielding a majority of 361 to 13 in favour of adoption.

The first questions to be resolved by the Museum Committee, appointed in February 1851, were the location and internal arrangements of the museum. The Hyde Street Schoolroom was untenable. Its distance from the centre of the town was held to be a prime cause of its failure. Henry Moody told Richard Andrews that he had tried to persuade the first committee against this 'foolish act', adding that many of the subscribers had never visited the museum from one years end to another. The fact that

part of the lease still remained could have proved a difficulty, but the owner, Isaac Warner, himself a subscriber and incidentally father of (later Sir) George Frederic Warner, Keeper of Manuscripts and Egerton Librarian at the British Museum 1871-1911, agreed to cancel the lease on equitable terms. Various sites were mooted – including the theatre at the southern end of Jewry Street and an extension over the vegetable market with an iron and glass roof similar to that of the Crystal Palace - but there was in reality but one option. The former Governor's House in the former gaol on Jewry Street had lain empty since the building of a new county prison, begun in 1845, on Romsey Road, on land purchased from Charles Hammond, the former Recorder of Southampton. It had proved difficult to sell. The old gaol *in toto* was first offered at auction in May 1850 in one lot, but failed to reach its reserve. Subdivided into 400 lots, the property was resubmitted to public competition the following month, with the former governor's house again failing to sell. In February 1851, the City purchased it for £1,300. This was regarded as a good price, thanks perhaps to the influence of the Mayor, Charles Seagrim, who as Under Sheriff to the County and Deputy Clerk of the County magistracy had strong connections with the county bench.

The former Governor's house lay at the centre of the frontage to the gaol, built in 1805 by the architect George Moneypenny (better known to Southampton readers as the architect of Northam Bridge). Conversion of the house, with its multitude of small rooms, to a museum hitherto housed in a single, symmetrical, lofty room 60 feet by 30 feet, was a formidable challenge. The original plans of the City Surveyor, William Coles (earlier responsible for the Winchester Union workhouse), involved significant internal alterations, including removal of the central walls. The Corporation rejected these and would only sanction more limited work in order to ensure that if the project failed the property would be resaleable as a house. Henry Moody criticized the consequent loss of space as making the museum 'a mere curiosity shop'. Moody was soon plunged into a second battle with the Museum Committee over the arrangement of the rooms, a battle that went to the core of what the new building should be. Adoption of the 1850 act had brought the issue of a public library into the equation. More liberal elements in the city emphasized the fact that this act was skewed towards public library provision rather than towards museums. On transfer to the city, there were a paltry 51 books in the museum, a number increased to about 150 by summer 1851 following donations from, amongst others, Dean Garnier, Isaac Warner, the former Mayor E C Faithfull, and the two Borough MP's, Sir James East, Bart and John Bonham Carter. Moody proposed that the library and reading room be placed on the ground floor, and hence easily accessible. A subcommittee of museum honorary curators peremptorily relegated the library to the back room on the second floor, 16 feet square and badly lit, trading places with the specimens of ethnography that Moody had hidden here. Opposition to this effective demotion of the library was orchestrated by the Winchester editor of the *Hampshire Independent*, in a series of fulsome editorials: 'the idea of making the working classes ascend to the attic before they can see a book is preposterous'; 'the asthmatic, in ascending to read, will find it a pursuit of knowledge under difficulties'.

The museum opened to the public on 9 November 1851, three hours before the end of Charles Seagrim's mayoralty, a deadline met only through Moody's indefatigability. It was open three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, Saturday) between 10 *am* and half an hour before sunset. Crucially, the library was closed during winter evenings,

when its proponents argued it was most needed. Attracting few visitors, the library limped along for the first three years, increasing by fewer than 200 volumes. For contemporaries it was not until March 1854 that this collection of books truly became a library as envisaged by the 1850 act, with its conversion to a Free Lending Library. The books were classified by a subcommittee set up for the purpose into those for reference (74 volumes) and those for circulation (263 volumes). Moody raced to publish the first catalogue of the library before the opening on 25 March. A fire and a table were provided for readers on the top floor, and two-week loans, on the authority of a member of the Town Council or of the Museum Committee, begun. The first borrower was Mr J Wiltshire of Bridge Street. With this incentive, the stock grew at a significantly greater rate than before as donors realized that their books might actually be used. The possibility of the purchase of books followed the passing of the 1855 Public Libraries Act, under whose provisions Winchester automatically fell. This was irrelevant so long as money was tight, but in 1860-61 around £15 was found to purchase works of a popular nature. These included *Robinson Crusoe, Pilgrim's Progress,* Walter Scott's *Waverley novels* (all 25 volumes) and *Poetical works, The Museum of Science and Art* begun in 1854, *The land we live in: a political and literary sketch-book of the British Empire* by Charles Knight, published 1847-50, *The history, civil and ecclesiastical, of Winchester* by John Milner and *The History, gazetteer and directory of the county of Hampshire* published in 1859 by William White. The stock had risen to 1,350 by the end of 1863. Issues rose correspondingly, from an average of five a week during the first half-year of the Free Lending Library to 1,730 in 1863, having peaked at 2,043 in 1858. Desperately small figures, with most of the books on Moody's admission unsuited for loan, but still by now a public library.

The Free Library was the first product of the new Liberal majority in the Town Council following the municipal elections of November 1853 (the politics behind this election are dealt with in 'The Winchester connections of Richard Andrews, 1843-59' in number 13 of this *Journal*). It was introduced in the first, adjourned Council meeting. Indeed the Council's motion, allowing loans on the authorization of a ratepayer, was more relaxed than the prescriptive guarantees insisted on by the Museum Committee. The promoter of the Council motion, the radical bookseller Henry Wooldridge, was praised by the politically sympathetic *Hampshire Independent*: 'He has inserted the fine edge of the wedge, and we have no doubt that ere long other honest hands and honest minds will join with his to drive it farther, and that we shall eventually have a good public library, accessible at all reasonable times, to all classes of the population … many a fireside will be enlivened, many a heart impressed, and many an intellect roused to action, by the volumes which, but for Mr H Wooldridge's perseverance, would have lain in their remote garret until moth and mildew had finished them off.' As this hinted, the real battle lay not in the creation of a Free Library *per se* but in greatly improved accessibility. As early as February 1853 Henry Wooldridge had presented a petition to the Town Council signed by 412 working men calling for evening opening and removal of the library to a lower floor. He had been forced to withdraw the motion in Council, but supporters engineered his election onto the Museum Committee. Evening opening remained a chimera, but in November 1855 the library was removed to its rightful place, the right-hand room nearest to the entrance on the ground floor. Two arcane elements in the management and finance of the library militated against reform: the relative position of the

Museum Committee *vis-à-vis* the Town Council and the way in which the library was financed.

The Museum Committee was an unwieldy body of nineteen, comprising nine Town Councillors, nine members with a proven interest in the museum and the Mayor *ex officio*. The non-Council element (often referred to as the 'inhabitants') was a concession to the former Hampshire Museum subscribers. It included men of the calibre of Dean Garnier, Dr Andrew Crawford, Reverend W H Gunner (all of whom we have met before), Reverend Charles Walters (Fellow of the Royal Society and long-time President of Winchester Mechanics' Institution), Henry Woodrooffe and William Carus (both Canons of the Cathedral) and William Whiting (Master of the Choristers' School and author of the hymn 'Eternal Father, strong to save', with the opening line 'For those in peril on the sea'). This hybrid committee was in effect an independent body of management. Its members were Council appointees, but the sole sanction the Council possessed was the dissolution of the committee *en bloc* and the appointment of a new committee. In practical, political terms, this was no sanction at all. The Town Council was powerless either to revise or to reject any decision reached by the Committee. That the Committee submitted the minutes of their meetings to the Council was merely a matter of courtesy. Uniquely among the Council's committees, the Museum Committee had its own secretary and treasurer, with exclusive control over expenditure. The potential for conflict between Council and Committee was initially hidden as the latter was keen to have the full sanction of the Council for its work. The fault lines, however, were increasingly exposed as the more liberal members of the Council tried to force the committee to take more seriously the implications of their decision to establish a Free Library.

The Library Committee had sole control over expenditure, but the way in which the library was financed meant that most of its income never came under the Committee's remit. The museum rate produced about £90 *per annum* throughout the 1850s. Over one half of this was hypothecated to pay for the purchase and conversion of the former Governor's House, a result of the convoluted financial arrangements entered into in 1851. We can perhaps see here the influence of the then Mayor, Charles Seagrim, a money scrivener in an extensive and, as his later tortuous journey through the Bankruptcy and Chancery Courts shows, an innovative way of business. Seagrim saw that it would be cheaper to raise the £1,700 required from the sale of consuls already held by the Corporation and which yielded only 3% *per annum* than by borrowing money on the open market at 4 or 5% *per annum*. The consuls derived from previous sales of property: £1,170 from sale of part of Oram's Arbor and the former Pest House in 1846 to the London and South Western Railway Company and £580 from the enfranchisement of property (*i.e.* its sale after buying in any outstanding leases) required in the rebuilding of St Maurice's Church and the enlargement of Morley's College. Interest on the consuls realized an annual income of £51, an amount transferred annually from the museum rate as compensation. The remainder of the museum rate was taken up in paying the curator's salary (£40 *per annum*) and in essential cleaning. In most years, the only money which the Committee had to spend on the running and development of both library and museum came from annual subscriptions. The majority of subscribers to the Hampshire Museum initially maintained their subscriptions but, despite periodic appeals, numbers gradually fell. In 1855 the treasurer, Alderman Faithfull, revealed that he had to call an average of four times on each subscriber. Subscription income fell from £70 in 1851 to £30 in 1859

and to £17.9s.6d. in 1863. Occasional windfalls, such as the taking over by the Corporation of insurance and land tax payments in 1859 and retrospectively applying this over four years, gave temporary relief. This may have helped to finance the new book purchases. But this could not hide the inevitability of the downward spiral: falling subscriptions, falling expectations, falling performance.

It may in part be a distortion through viewing the early days of Winchester library from a Southampton perspective, but one of the most insistent of the Councillors trying to galvanize the Museum Committee into reforms that would help the working man was Richard Andrews. His experiences were forged in Southampton, where the Town Council possessed unbridled power over its committees. He brought a new directness to the relationship. Eight months after the creation of the Free Lending Library he moved a Council motion, seconded by his radical ally Robert Smither, 'that it be an instruction to the committee to open the Museum for reading from 4 to 8 in the evening'. It was a typically forthright speech in support of the motion: 'he hoped greater facilities would be given to obtain and read the books (hear, hear, and cheers). People scarcely knew that they could get a book at all, and they ought to have one of the lower rooms to read in. A working man after he had done his day's work, ought not to go to the top of that building to get a book'. Andrews, however, had not the influence in Winchester that he had in Southampton. The committee at its next meeting returned the question as impracticable for want of funds. In May 1856, Andrews joined other disappointed supporters and cancelled the subscription he had first taken out in 1847.

One issue above all illustrates the frustration of liberal reformers like Richard Andrews, battling the entrenched conservatism of many of their Council colleagues and facing the stifling jurisdictional division between Council and committee. The offer by the Patent Commissioners in July 1855 of a complete set of specifications and drawings (detailed above in the Southampton part of this essay) was conditional upon their being open to the public daily and at all reasonable hours. To a man like Andrews, keen to encourage a spirit of enquiry amongst the artisan classes, the patents were a prize to be gained at all costs. He visited the Patent Office to examine the donation, proposed the motion of acceptance before the Council and offered to start the subscription list to fulfil the Commissioners' recommendation that the patents be bound by a £5 donation. Both the Council and the committee unanimously voted for acceptance of the patents, but the latter only on the proviso that this entailed no additional opening. Protests from the Council that this was in direct breach of the terms of deposit were ignored. Worse was to come. The enormity of the deposit only became clear when the patents – over 15,000 in number – arrived in the city. The Council refused to spend any money on binding, a prerequisite to their use, and refused to sanction an appeal for money to the public. The Mayor-elect, Councillor Wright, spoke of 'the entire uselessness' of the deposit in a Council debate reported by the *Hampshire Advertiser* under the subheading 'The Waste Paper in the Museum Library'. An invoice for six guineas received a few months later in order to receive new patents was rejected. The patent collection in Winchester was dead, and Winchester was omitted from the list of patent deposit libraries.

It is not surprising that radicals in the Council thought that they ought to get rid of the museum and library altogether. Robert Smither, Winnall farmer and lessee of the City Mills, spoke for many. 'Unless they could make it more useful to the city, he could

not see any benefit in the thing at all; and at some future day he should make a motion that the building should be turned into a City Hall.' It was a suggestion to be repeated by others in the decade following. Nevertheless, the library continued in the old gaol premises, locked into the museum, until 1873, when the museum was transferred to the new Guildhall and the library to the old Guildhall. It moved to the Corn Exchange in 1936, to be incorporated in the Winchester Discovery Centre in 2008.

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It is perhaps appropriate to end this combined article with an appreciation of the man who not only held the post of museum curator and librarian at Winchester but who also aspired to the same positions at Southampton.

Henry Moody is synonymous with Winchester. He was involved with the museum and library there continuously until his sad resignation in May 1871, six weeks before his death, after selling some of the books and deposits in his care without proper authority. He was the elder son of a Winchester brewing family but renounced his interests in the firm to his younger brother William. Freed from these constraints, Henry immersed himself in Winchester affairs. He was in the early days a printer, responsible for the local voters lists. He edited the *Winchester almanac and Post Office directory* from 1840. He was a Vice President of the Winchester Mechanics' Institute up to 1849. He served for fourteen years as a Pavement Commissioner before resigning in 1848 in protest at the Commissioners' failure to transfer their powers to the Town Council. His investigation into Winchester charities in 1847 uncovered at least one charity (Cawley's) that had fallen into abeyance. He wrote and lectured extensively on local antiquarianism, making the study of the Domesday Book a particular interest. He negotiated in 1862 with Sir Henry James for the facsimile publication of the Hampshire Domesday using the revolutionary photozincography process then being pioneered by the Ordnance Survey in Southampton (only the third English county to be published). To this he added an English translation of his own. This robust, Anglo-Saxon approach to the past spilled over into his other great interest, ornithology. He published in 1853 the first systematic list of British birds employing vernacular rather than Latin nomenclature (a copy is in the Special Collections Library, Southampton Central Library). The Winchester Museum copy was headed 'English for the English'.

Obsessively proud of living within the sound of the bells of old Trinity perhaps, but Moody's relations with Southampton Corporation over the Hartley Bequest suggest that not all was light and harmony. In both 1854, when it was prematurely believed that the Chancery case had been settled, and 1858, on completion of the legal case, Moody applied for the curatorship of the proposed museum with an alacrity that bordered on the indecent. The impressive testimonials for the first application survive in Southampton Archives (TC box 37). They include James Bullar from Southampton and influential figures from his Winchester circle of supporters – Dean Garnier, Reverend David Williams, Reverend W H Gunner, Reverend G C Rashleigh (Fellow of Winchester College), Wyndham Portal (MP for North Hampshire) and both Borough MPs – together with Albert Way and Charles Roach Smith, retrospective Secretaries of the now largely reconciled Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland and British Archaeological Association. Moody supplemented these with testimonials he had received in February and March 1850 on his application for the

vacant post of Secretary to the Leeds Mechanics' Institute and Literary Society, one of the great educational bodies in the north of England The 1850 testimonials included a most fulsome letter from Richard Andrews, then Mayor of Southampton, and, on the other side of the political fence, John Coupland, proprietor of the *Hampshire Advertiser*, for which paper Moody was Winchester correspondent (his son Walter later moved to Southampton as a compositor on the *Advertiser*, transferring later to the *Southampton Times* as a local reporter, a post he held for almost forty years before his death in 1900).

When the post of librarian and curator to the Hartley Institution finally came on the market, in May 1862, the specifications were such that Moody was no longer eligible. A man of classical and scientific learning, with wide experience, able to justify a salary of £300 *per annum*, was required. The *pro forma* application by Moody appealed to those who, like W J LeFevre, believed that a less expensive curator would suffice, but Joseph Rankin Stebbing, Chairman of the Hartley Council, publicly rejected the application even before the selection process was formally begun. At the suggestion of an unnamed Southampton friend, Moody resubmitted his application the following month as a ruse to apply for the post of attendant, which he believed would be the next post to be offered. He told the Hartley Council 'it would be trifling with you for me to enter into the field against better men, and to seek any appointment the duties of which I could not discharge even to my own satisfaction and with a salary far above my deserts'. He applied 'with the belief that a constant attendant would be required, one who with a general knowledge of and fondness for Natural History, Antiquities and Literature in general, one who could classify and arrange in their proper places (subject to revision) the multifarious specimens in the Museum and to be able, and willing at all times, to render the information sought and in the Library not only to perform all the duties of a working Librarian but able and willing to assist the enquirer, or in brief to be in the Institute what a house surgeon is in a Hospital or a Sergeant-Major in a regiment.' (Southampton Archives TC box 37, Hartley Institute Librarian, no.65). This failed act of supplication is an appropriate note on which to end a tale of two libraries.