

## **U DSL      Records of Hull Subscription Library      1775-1970**

### **Historical background:**

This was probably the most important library development in Hull before the coming of the public libraries in 1893. It was founded in 1775 at the instigation of Thomas Lee, a local merchant when an inaugural meeting of 50 people drew up a code of rules and appointed a committee.

The admission fee was fixed at one guinea and the annual subscription at 12 shillings. The first premises were part of the bookshop of Thomas Browne, who was paid 10 guineas per annum for rent and his services as librarian and secretary. In 1801 the Library moved to a new purpose-built library building and in 1855 moved again to share the Royal Institution, designed by Cuthbert Broderick, with the Hull Literary and Philosophical Society.

The stock consisted almost from the beginning of foreign and standard works together with serials and popular fiction and non-fiction and grew to 80,000 items before financial difficulties led to sales of books in the 1910s and 1920s. The Library also subscribed to Mudie's Circulating Library to give its members access to popular new books. After the destruction of the Royal Institution in an air raid in 1943 the Library moved into temporary premises and then in 1958 to Hull Church Institute. The impending closure of the Institute together with rising costs led to the closure of the Library in 1970. Its stock of about 16,000 items, mostly fiction and biography, was sold at auction in 1975.

### **Custodial History:**

Material donated by Hull Subscription Library in 1970 and purchased from C C Kohler, Antiquarian Bookseller in 1977, with the aid of the V&A Purchase Grant Fund. U DSL/61 was purchased in 2024, funded in full by a grant from Friends of the Nations' Libraries.

### **Description:**

The collection consists of records for Hull Subscription Library, including minute books of annual general, general and committee meetings, attendance books for committee meetings, material relating to shares, including the shareholders' register and shareholders' subscription accounts. A series relates to accounts and vouchers [U DSL/25-49] including librarian's annual accounts, book purchase accounts and receipts and payments. The collection also includes documents detailing the library's rules, orders and laws; catalogues, which include lists of subscribers; correspondence, and miscellaneous items including the visitors' book and documents and reports relating to other libraries.

### **Arrangement:**

U DSL/1-2	Notices, 1817 - 1868
U DSL/3-15	Minute Books, 1775 - 1970
U DSL/16-19	Attendance Books, 1841 - 1913
U DSL/20-24, 38	Shares, 1833 - 1940
U DSL/25-49	Accounts and vouchers, 1775 - 1954
U DSL/50-59, 61-64, 85(h), 89-91	Rules, Orders, 1775 - 1894
U DSL/60-72, 102	Catalogues and lists of books, 1776 - 1921
U DSL/73-82, 103	Correspondence, 1814 - 1953

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U DSL/83-107

Miscellaneous, 1775 - 1945

**Extent:** 12boxes (2 linear metres)

**Related Material:**

Records of Hull Literary and Philosophical Society [DSL], Hull City Archives

**Access Conditions:** Access will be granted to any accredited reader.

U DSL/1	Notices of Annual General Meetings, with Treasurers Accounts and Lists of Subscribers 1 bundle	1817-1855
U DSL/2	Notices of Annual General Meetings, with Treasurers Accounts and Lists of Subscribers 1 bundle	1855-1868
U DSL/3	Minute Book of General Meetings 1 volume	1775-1847
U DSL/4	Minute Book of General Meetings 1 volume	1848-1910
U DSL/5	Minute Book of General Meetings 1 volume	1911-1943
U DSL/6	Transactions of General Meetings 1 bundle	1775-1835
U DSL/7	Transactions of General Meetings 1 bundle	1836-1859
U DSL/8	Minute Book of Committee Meetings 1 volume	1830-1851
U DSL/9	Minute Book of Committee Meetings 1 volume	1876-1893
U DSL/10	Minute Book of Committee Meetings 1 volume	1909-1931
U DSL/11	Minute Book of Committee Meetings 1 volume	1932-1947
U DSL/12	Minute Book of Committee Meetings 1 volume	1948-1970

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U DSL/13	Minute Book of Binding Committee, 1813-1816 and 1829-1830. With: List of new books laid in the reading room for one month prior to circulation, 1856-1864 1 volume	1813-1864
U DSL/14	Minute Book of Committees of the Hull Subscription Library and the Hull Literary and Philosophical Society appointed to consider erecting buildings on Albion Street for their joint use (Hull Royal Institution). With: Press cutting relating to its demolition, 22 Aug 1947 1 volume	1852-1855
U DSL/15	Minute Book of Sub-Committees (Hiring; Books Revision; Catalogue; House Purchase; Reorganisation; Painting; Shelving; Binding; Works) of Hull Subscription Library. With: List of books enquired for, not in Library, circa 1870 1 volume	1868-1908
U DSL/16	Attendance Book: Committee Meetings 1 volume	1841-1852
U DSL/17	Attendance Book: Committee Meetings 1 volume	1852-1864
U DSL/18	Attendance Book: Committee Meetings 1 volume	1894-1908
U DSL/19	Attendance Book: Deposit Room 1 volume	1897-1913
U DSL/20	Share Transfer Book 1 volume	1847-1929
U DSL/21	Shareholders' Register 1 volume	1915
U DSL/22	Shareholders Subscription Account Book 1 volume	1849-1861
U DSL/23	Shareholders Subscription Account Book 1 volume	1905-1915
U DSL/24	Shareholders Subscription Account Book 1 volume	1915-1940
U DSL/25	Cash Account Book 1 volume	1775-1827
U DSL/26	Cash Book 1 volume	1816-1819

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U DSL/27	Cash Book 1 volume	1819-1824
U DSL/28	Cash Book 1 volume	1824-1829
U DSL/29	Cash Book 1 volume	1829-1833
U DSL/30	Cash Book (copy of U DSL/29?) 1 volume	1829-1833
U DSL/31	Cash Book 1 volume	1833-1839
U DSL/32	Cash Book 1 volume	1839-1857
U DSL/33	Cash Book 1 volume	1858-1868
U DSL/34	Cash Book 1 volume	1892-1909
U DSL/35	Librarian's Annual Account Book 1 volume	1817-1832
U DSL/36	Librarian's Annual Account Book 1 volume	1833-1848
U DSL/37	Librarian's Annual Account Book 1 volume	1849-1868
U DSL/38	Loan Shares Account Book 1 volume	1833-1850
U DSL/39	Occasional Subscribers' Account Book 1 volume	1834-1870
U DSL/40	Book Purchase Account Book 1 volume	1837-1842
U DSL/41	Committee Fines Account Book 1 volume	1843-1858
U DSL/42	Subscribing Members Subscription Account Book 1 volume	1904-1936
U DSL/43	Petty Cash Book 1 volume	1909-1939

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U DSL/44	Receipts and Payments Book 1 bundle	1922-1941
U DSL/45	Receipts and Payments Book 1 bundle	1941-1954
U DSL/46	Account of expenditure 1 item	1775-1798
U DSL/47	Accounts and vouchers for building and furnishing new library 11 items	1801
U DSL/48	Accounts and vouchers for building and furnishing Hull Royal Institution c. 75 items	1853-1855
U DSL/49	Miscellaneous vouchers 8 items	1864
U DSL/50	Standing rules and orders 1 item	1775-1856
U DSL/51	Laws (printed) 1 item	Mar 1878
U DSL/52	Laws (printed) 1 item	Mar 1878
U DSL/53	Laws (printed) 1 item	Mar 1878
U DSL/54	Laws (printed). Amended 1 item	Mar 1878
U DSL/55	Laws (printed). Committee copy 1 item	Mar 1878
U DSL/56	Laws (printed). Committee copy, amended 1 item	Mar 1878
U DSL/57	Laws (printed). Reading Room copy, amended 1 item	Mar 1878
U DSL/58	Byelaws 1 item	1878
U DSL/59	Byelaws 1 item	1894
U DSL/60	Catalogue of tracts and pamphlets (Ms.) 1 item	1814-1876

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U DSL/61	Catalogue (printed). With laws and list of subscribers 2 volumes	1822
U DSL/62	Catalogue (printed). With laws and list of subscribers 1 item	1855
U DSL/63	Catalogue (printed). With laws and list of subscribers 1 item	1855
U DSL/64	Catalogue (printed). With laws and list of subscribers. Also with history of the Library; lists of officers (to 1925) and members; accounts of expenditure on books, and biographical notes on Presidents, Treasurers and Honorary Secretaries 1 item	1776-1876
U DSL/65	Catalogue (printed). With laws and list of subscribers 1 item	1876
U DSL/66	Catalogue (printed). With laws and list of subscribers 1 item	1876
U DSL/67	Catalogue, volume 2 (Ms.) 1 item	c.1854
U DSL/68	Catalogue, volume 3 (Ms.) 1 item	[1856-1888]
U DSL/69	Catalogue, volume 4 (Ms.) 1 item	1889-1921
U DSL/70	List of books offered for sale 1 item	1912
U DSL/71	List of 'Books sent to the paper mill'. Catalogue nos. only 1 item	1914
U DSL/72	List of 'Books sent to Mayfields' 1 item	1915
U DSL/73	Letter. John Richardson (to the Librarian?): charges for books sent 1 item	12 Nov 1814
U DSL/74	Correspondence relating to the removal from and sale of the Parliament Street property. 30 items	1855-1865

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U DSL/75	Letter: RD Blackmore (author of 'Lorna Doone'), Teddington to Miss Rossiter, Southmolton: thanking her for a letter from his father to her great-aunt Mary Blackmore (his aunt). With: (a) a copy of the letter: from J.B., Exeter College, Oxford: a view of Oxford, in doggerel rhyme: 24 Apr 1813 (b) an explanatory note from Elizabeth Anna Carter, n.d. (c) Blackmore pedigree (1689-1925), n.d. 4 items	9 May 1889
U DSL/76	Letter: Eleanor Lambert, Anlaby, to the President of Hull Subscription Library. Regretting inability to attend shareholders' meeting 1 item	late 19th cent.
U DSL/77	Letter: JR Boyle, Town Hall, Hull, to W. Andrews promising to return books; copy of Charles Frost's 'Notices' (relative to early history of Hull) which he has been annotating 1 item	17 Jul 1901
U DSL/78	Letter book of the Librarian 1 item	Oct 1909- Dec 1910
U DSL/79	Circular letter: promoting increased membership 1 item	Jan 1910
U DSL/80	Circular letter: increase of subscription 1 item	10 Dec 1917
U DSL/81	Letter: from Leonard [ ], South African Museum, Cape Town: sorry to hear of Clare's heart trouble; air raid (on Hull?); war news 1 item	21 Mar 1941
U DSL/82	Correspondence: disposal of surplus books 9 items	Jan-Feb 1953
U DSL/83	Photocopy. Will of Thomas Lee of Sutton in Holderness, merchant. With bequest of £10 to Hull Subscription Library 1 item	4 Feb 1778
U DSL/84	'An Address to the Subscribers to the Library at Hull at the Opening of the New Rooms...from the President' 1 item	1 Jul 1801

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U DSL/85	Miscellaneous items relating to Hull Subscription Library (a) 'An Account of the Rise and Progress of the Subscription Library at Kingston upon Hull', by John Norman Cross, 1810 (b) List of subscribers, Jan 1776 (c) List of officers, 1775 -1804 (d) Account of fund for building a new library, 1784-1802 (e) Account of building and furnishing the Library, (1801) (f) Statement of debt on the building, (1809) (g) Number of subscribers and expenditure on books and binding, 1776-1809 (h) Laws, (1810-1811) (i) List of subscribers, 1810-1811 (j) 'An Address to the Saubscribers to the Library at Hull at the Opening of the New Rooms ... from the President', 1 July 1810 10 items	1775-1811
U DSL/86	Visitors' Book 1 volume	1851-1962
U DSL/87	Copy. Inscription on portrait of Charles Frost 1 item	1853
U DSL/88	Annual statement of the Committee of Leeds Circulating Library 1 item	1857-1858
U DSL/89	Rules and Regulations of the Lincoln Librray 1 item	1859
U DSL/90	Papers relating to the decay of stonework at the Royal Institution, Hull 7 items	1859
U DSL/91	Laws of the Athenaeum, Liverpool 1 item	1870
U DSL/92	Papers relating to proposed electric lighting of the Library 4 items	1894-1895
U DSL/93	Papers relating to a flushing tank (for drains) erected on the Library property by the local Board of Health 4 items	Jul-Nov 1894
U DSL/94	Annual reports of the Kingston-upon-Hull Lyceum Library 2 items	1894-1895
U DSL/95	'Notes on the career of Mr William Stevenson of 15 John St., Hull' 1 item	28 Jan 1906



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U DSL/96	Hull Literary and Philosophical Society Annual reports 6 items	1908-1938
U DSL/97	Ground Plan of the Hull Subscription Library, Royal Institution 1 plan	1909
U DSL/98	Book plate of William Andrews 1 item	early 20th cent.
U DSL/99	Prospectus 1 item	early 20th cent.
U DSL/100	Agreement: Hull Subscription Library and Hull Literary and Philosophical Society. Window lights and drains in the theatre or lecture hall 1 item	2 Feb 1922
U DSL/101	Papers relating to proposed partial amalgamation of the Hull Subscription Library and Hull Literary and Philosophical Society 6 items	1930
U DSL/102	Letters and list of books lent by Hull Subscription Library to Hull University College 2 items	1932
U DSL/103	Photographs of the Royal Institution, Hull 17 photographs	mid 20th cent.
U DSL/104	List (of members?) 1 item	mid 20th cent.
U DSL/105	Report of sub-committee on the supply of new books 1 item	mid 20th cent.
U DSL/106	Annual report of the Library Committee 1 item	1941
U DSL/107	List of periodicals for sale by tender 1 item	1945