

**C TFL**

**Records of the Finance Department  
of the Hull Corporation  
Relating to Libraries**

**1898-1949**

**Historical Background:**

The origins of government in Kingston upon Hull began with the King appointing a mayor to govern the town, but in 1331 his powers were transferred to a mayor elected by the burgesses. In 1440 the town was separated from Yorkshire as an independent county with its own sheriff, and the burgesses were empowered to elect twelve aldermen to assist the mayor and to serve as magistrates for the new county (Oxley, 1973, p.3). This system of government remained in force in the town until 1835.

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 (5 & 6 Wm. IV., c.76), sometimes known as the Municipal Reform Act, was an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom that reformed local government in the incorporated boroughs of England and Wales (Warren, 1948, p.21). In Kingston upon Hull the revolution accomplished by the Municipal Reform Act of 1835 was to give political power to a different set of voters, namely those inhabitants who fulfilled a property qualification (Oxley, 1973, p.8).

The only new function given to the reformed corporation was the administration of the police force and despite the financial position of the corporation being strengthened by the granting of wider powers to levy rates, these powers were little used. Fifteen years elapsed before the political changes of 1835 were matched by major changes of function.

The replacement of the old Improvement Commissioners with the new Board of Health in 1851 and with the Boards' attack on the problem of providing a really healthy environment for the people of Kingston upon Hull saw the beginning of major changes to the town, both structurally and in the services provided by the Corporation.

The finance department of the Hull Corporation played a major role in the improvements to the town, as well as in the general functions of the corporation, as it possessed the responsibility for providing the funds to finance such functions and for recording income and expenditure for the many departments and functions of the Hull Corporation.

Financial decisions of the Hull Corporation were officially made and represented by a Finance Committee. The Finance Committee joined with the Property Committee in 1876/7 to form the Finance and Property Committee in order to consider and from time to time report on the amount of rates necessary to be levied by the Corporation, so as to proportion the amount of rates to the actual expenditure in each year. However, after a short period of just three years the two committees reverted back to their original committee titles in 1879/80.

The finance department held responsibility for such functions as borrowing and debt collection, as well as recording the finances of various sectors of the Hull Corporation, such as education, libraries, telephones, and water. Each of these sectors were, and still remain, extremely important to the City.

In 1775 the first subscription library was founded. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century library facilities in Hull were extended by three educational institutions: The Mechanics Institute, the Church Institute, and the Young People's Christian and Literary Institute (Allison, 1969, p.425-426).

Hull History Centre: Records of the Finance Department of the Hull Corporation: Libraries  
When Hull adopted the Public Libraries Acts of 1850 and 1855, which authorized a 1d. rate for library purposes, the James Reckitt library on Holderness Road was offered to the town free of charge, as James Reckitt subscribed annually the 1d. rate. The success of this library helped to convert many previous opponents of public libraries and in 1892 the Public Libraries Acts were finally adopted, although by a minority (Allison, 1969, p.427).

In 1894 the Central library was opened in temporary premises in Albion Hall, Baker Street, and in 1898 a permanent site in Albion Street was found and the new building was opened in 1901, where it still remains to this day. Libraries were established throughout the town and services were extended to include the supplying of books to clubs, hospitals, etc. and in 1926 a school libraries service was begun, which assisted in the development of the East Riding Rural Libraries Scheme (Allison, 1969, p.427).

Today, the Finance Department of the Hull City Council, also known as the Corporate Finance Team, remains responsible for the financial functions and activities of the Hull City Council.

**Description:** The records of the finance department of the Hull Corporation were created during the natural course of the department's business processes.

The collection consists of ledgers relating to public libraries. For notes on the cost of Corporation Libraries and other works see C DBHT/5/439.

**Extent:** 6 volumes

**Related material:** For records regarding the Borough of Kingston upon Hull before the Corporation was reformed by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 please see C BR. For minutes of the Finance Committee meetings please see the Hull City Council minutes at reference C TCM.

**Custodial History:** These records were created and stored by the Finance Department of the Hull City Council until they were transferred to the Hull City Archives in October 1983

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<b>C TFL/1</b>	<b>Public Libraries Ledgers</b> The heading given on each page relates to expenditure for items such as books, furniture, newspapers and periodicals, printing and stationery, rates and taxes, interest and instalments on loan. The name of the library is written next to each heading. 6 volumes	<b>Mar 1898- Dec 1949</b>
C TFL/1/1	Public Libraries Ledger Includes accounts with individuals and companies for work with all public libraries, such as the State Fire Insurance Company, Eastern Morning News Company Ltd, and the British Gas Light Company Ltd. A list of sundries and details of revenue account and balance sheet is also included at the back of the volumes. 1 volume	31 Mar 1898- 31 Mar 1906
C TFL/1/2	Public Libraries Ledger 1 volume	1 Apr 1906- 31 Mar 1909
C TFL/1/3	Public Libraries Ledger 1 volume	1 Apr 1909- 1 Apr 1913
C TFL/1/4	Public Libraries Ledger Indexed 1 volume	1 Apr 1913- 31 Mar 1920
C TFL/1/5	Public Libraries Ledger 1 volume	1 Apr 1920- 31 Mar 1931
C TFL/1/6	Public Libraries Ledger The ledger is divided into sections by each library and is also indexed 1 volume	1 Apr 1947- 31 Dec 1949