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THE SEASIDE RESORTS OF SUSSEX c.1730–1815: RESORT DEVELOPMENT AND MILITARY DEFENCES ON THE SOUTH COAST OF ENGLAND

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INTRODUCTION

From the 1750s, seaside resorts became part of the social routine of wealthy people. By the 1790s they were so well established that they were explored in novels, prints and works of art, all of which were bought by the social groups which used them. 'Heat' by Gillray (Fig. 1) is typical of the prints that were available from successful print sellers such as Hannah Humphrey. In 1817, Jane Austen, by then very ill, began her unfinished novel *Sanditon*, in which she focussed on the hypochondriacs attracted

to the resorts and on a fairly common phenomenon: the resort promoted by an individual or small group of people which failed to work because it was over-ambitious and failed to recognise what made its more successful rivals work. The success of seaside tourism was influenced by the interaction of several factors and cannot be viewed either in isolation or solely in the context of leisure development in the eighteenth century. The most significant supports vital for seaside resort tourism in Sussex were: the greatly improved protection of the coast from



Fig. 1. 'Heat' by James Gillray, 1810. Published by Hannah Humphrey, who is shown in profile on the left. (Author's collection)

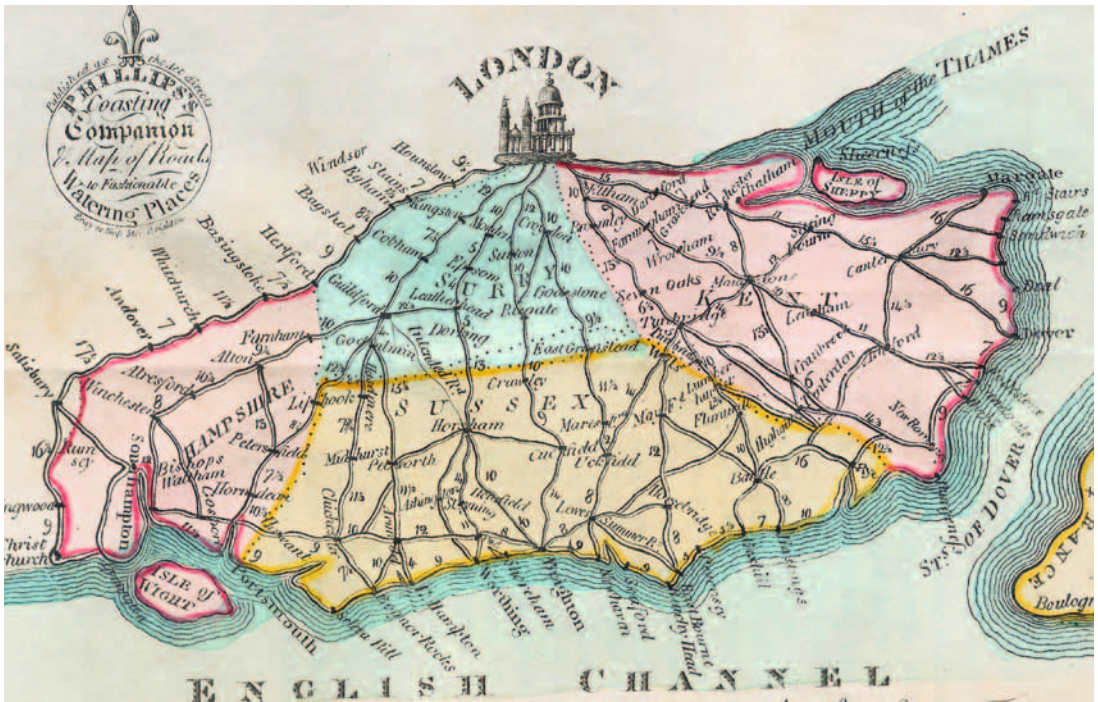


Fig. 2. South-east England in 1808 showing Sussex resorts and turnpike roads by T. Attree. (Author's collection)

invasion between the 1730s and 1815; wealth; the fashion for urban based leisure in resorts where real and imagined illnesses could be treated; access to London; and a dry climate with a warm sea from later August into the autumn.¹ Of these, the first was an important influence on the south coast: something that has not been recognised before, and is explored here in some depth.

Most of the resorts and clusters of rural facilities on the south coast developed where there were also fortifications. Both investors in resort facilities and the military identified the importance of easy access to the sea. The sea was needed for bathing machines, but military experts also regarded it as vulnerable and in need of defending. Attree's map of the roads of south-east England, published in 1808, highlights the importance of access to London for both seekers

of pleasure at the resorts and any prospective invading force (Fig. 2). For most of the period between 1730 and 1815, the coastline of southern England was periodically at risk of invasion and attacks because of Britain's involvement in European wars.² Investment in seaside facilities in Sussex began during the period of peace between the War of the Austrian Succession (1739–48) and the Seven Years War (1756–63). The resorts continued to grow thereafter despite the presence of French privateers in the English Channel during the Seven Years War and the American War of Independence (1775–83), which chased the fashionable, fast and armed leisure yachts which visited the resorts.³

The success of British forces and their allies abroad in these European campaigns gave the country and the county greater confidence in its



Fig. 3. Bognor c.1823 by W. Daniell and R. Ayton. The development of the resort was funded by wealth from investing in the East India Company. (© *Sussex Archaeological Society*)

security. Nevertheless, defences from seaborne attack were built along the Sussex coast and were periodically garrisoned. This must have given a sense of security, and the development of the resorts did not falter during subsequent periods of warfare. Attempts to invade either England or Ireland had been made by the French in 1759–1760 (led by the Duc de Choiseul), and again in 1797 and 1798 (Ireland, under General Hoche and then Napoleon) and in 1801 and 1803, the latter two aimed at the south coast. The plan of 1803 was regarded as the most dangerous because of Napoleon's obsession with invading Britain and the large, costly force of about 130,000 men and 2,240 vessels.⁴

There was concern about the risks of attack or invasion, reflected in the local press and letters and captured by writers, artists and cartoonists,

especially from the 1790s. In *Northanger Abbey* (1803, published 1817), Jane Austen referred to the sense of unrest and fear of the mob that were experienced when the country was at risk of invasion in 1798 and 1803.⁵ Coleridge's 'Fears in Solitude' of 1798, William Wordsworth's 'Anticipation', written in 1803, and cartoons by Gillray and others all worked on the same theme; Gillray's print of 1795, 'The Blessings of Peace and the Curse of War', is but one example of a cartoon.⁶ But resorts developed and became a major part of the county's profile and economy, and some saw the military as a diversion. Lydia's obsession with Mr Wickham in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) did not end well, almost undermining something which affluent Georgian society valued highly, and which the novelist played upon: reputation. Most of her

readers would have known from the press coverage that thousands of soldiers were sometimes stationed in Sussex, most of them in and around Brighton because the bay's shallow inshore waters made it a suitable target for an invading force.

'They are going to be encamped near Brighton; and I do so want papa to take us all there for the summer! It would be such a delicious scheme; and I dare say would hardly cost anything at all. Mamma would like to go too of all things! Only think what a miserable summer else we shall have!'⁷

Despite the high cost of involvement in wars, and periodic fears of unrest in England, a substantial number of landowners and investors in the rapidly growing manufacturing and service sectors prospered, particularly those involved in trade and its ancillary services such as banking and insurance. The expansion of the urban middle classes, whose richest members could afford to go to resorts, extended the market and ensured that by 1815 a seaside lifestyle was a well-established habit for an ever – increasing group of very prosperous people.⁸ Most of the visitors to the Sussex resorts came from London and were either based there or staying for the London Season. They were regarded locally as the crucial market.

The wealth of many of these visitors mirrored the fact that the nation's prosperity substantially depended on the largest merchant fleet in Europe. Its importance was one of the reasons why so much was invested in the navy to protect shipping channels, of which the English Channel was the most important. By the end of the eighteenth century the complex trade network was still dominated by trade with Europe and Asia. Trade stimulated industrial development, and it sustained the economy throughout the series of costly wars.⁹ It also provided the profits invested in some resorts. Hothampton – now known as Bognor – was built with the profits generated by Sir Richard Hotham's involvement in the East India Company (Fig. 3). The Ogle brothers, who invested heavily in Worthing, were importers of sugar. Increasing wealth also

encouraged a love of display and a taste for following fashion, both of which could be indulged in by visiting resorts.¹⁰

BRISTLING WITH DEFENCES

The government built new gun batteries in the late 1750s in the hope that the range of cannons would deter attacks. Six batteries were built along the Sussex coast in 1759–60 because of the fear of invasion during the Seven Years War, augmenting those already *in situ* at Brighton and Hastings. Those at Hastings were an attempt to prevent landings on the foreshore in front of the valley in which the Old Town area is located (Fig. 4). Some, such as the battery on Blatchington Down, west of Seaford, were paid for by local people and equipped with guns by the Board of Ordnance (Fig. 5).¹¹ Coastal erosion was an enemy of many defences. The guns of the East Battery at Brighton were washed into the sea in 1786, the battery's foundations having been undermined (Fig. 6).¹² During peak periods of invasion scares, soldiers were billeted along the coast. During the American War of Independence, soldiers were accommodated in inns and homes in Brighton, and no doubt at other coastal locations for which the evidence has not survived.¹³

Resorts flourished during the decade of uneasy peace after 1783, and the decision by the Government to defend the county during the French Revolutionary Wars (1793–1802) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) ensured that they continued to prosper. More batteries were built, the West Battery in Brighton becoming a feature of prints sold to visitors (Fig. 7). This was also the period of greatest investment in both new barracks and the enlargement of existing ones, as at Eastbourne and Seaford, in order to accommodate the large numbers of militia and regular soldiers brought into the county.

Residents and visitors became accustomed to the reassuringly frequent sightings of soldiers on the



Fig. 4. Map of Hastings 1749-50 by Samuel Cant. (*ESRO, SAY 1415, reproduced with the permission of East Sussex Record Office, copyright reserved*)



Fig. 5. Seaford Battery by Caroline Scutt, drawn in 1842.
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Fig. 6. Erosion at Brighton; the Battery, built in 1759 but useless by 1773, the date of this engraving.
(*Author's collection*)



Fig. 7. Artillery Place and the West Battery at Brighton, with guardhouse on left, c.1820.
(© *Brighton Museum Fa207958*)

march from one barracks to another. Some soldiers attended worship in the chapels and churches in resorts and at least one group of Methodist soldiers founded a chapel in Brighton. Resorts benefitted from the presence of visiting wives and sweethearts of soldiers and from providing food, travel services and accommodation for the soldiers themselves.¹⁴

Brighton benefitted most from soldiers being present. This was because the same factors which made it an excellent location for a resort – access to London, a sheltered bay with shallow waters for disembarkation, and the shortest route to Dieppe – also made it especially vulnerable. Some reports suggest that around 10,000 troops were living in and around the resort at peak periods between the 1790s and 1810s. The presence of barracks in the town centre and Preston Barracks to the north are signs of the numbers deployed (Fig. 8).¹⁵ Tented encampments were set up on the South Downs during periods of particular danger. The camps were held infrequently until 1792, but then annually until

1798 and finally in 1803. Jane Austen referred in *Pride and Prejudice* to the camp which her brother Henry attended in 1793 whilst serving with the Oxford Militia. The military manoeuvres associated with the camps also became the subject of cartoons such as those featuring Dr Syntax by Rowlandson, and were very popular with visitors. Francis Wheatley's two paintings of the Brighton camp were executed in 1788 and were issued as prints by Colnagni in 1796.¹⁶

Brighton grew rapidly in the later 1700s, and it continued to do so between 1801 and 1831. Hastings developed more slowly, despite the stationing of troops nearby in the 1770s and from the 1790s. This was probably because it had poorer access to London and lacked the regular ferry service to France that Brighton had enjoyed since the mid-1760s. Such was the concern about its vulnerability to invasion when the Napoleonic Wars began that the barracks were extended.¹⁷ At Bexhill the King's German Legion had a parade ground and Artillery Barracks, built in 1804, which was sketched, for



Fig. 8. Preston Barracks c.1851 by DelaMotte. (© Brighton Museum, Delamotte Collection)



Fig. 9. Bexhill Barracks plan. (ESRO AMS 5819-1
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example by Francis Grose¹⁸; a cavalry barracks was built in 1809 and extended in 1814 (Fig. 9).¹⁹ One of the biggest in England, the Barracks covered sixteen acres and accommodated 5,000 men and their officers; the Prussians were there long enough to fit into the community of Bexhill and marry local girls.²⁰

The presence of the military could temporarily increase the number of visitors to a resort, but soldiers and defences were not enough to ensure long-term growth. By 1815 Eastbourne, in the large, sheltered Pevensey Bay – chosen as the point of landfall for William the Conqueror’s invasion of 1066 – had a large infantry barracks north-west of Sea Houses, a cavalry barracks and a Redoubt to act as backup for its two Martello Towers, part of a string of fortifications that stretched eastwards along Pevensey Bay (Figs. 10, 11, 12).²¹ But the distance from London deterred tourists; an exception was Sarah Hurst from Horsham in West Sussex, who stayed several weeks



Fig. 10. Map of Eastbourne, showing the Barracks, Redoubt and Martello Tower c.1810.
(ESRO GIL3-017-01. Reproduced with the permission of East Sussex Record Office, copyright reserved)



Fig. 11. View by John Graham. 1813, showing the Eastbourne Martello Tower (now Wish Tower) in the forefront and Martello Towers in Pevensey Bay in the distance. (ESRO AMS 7107. Reproduced with the permission of East Sussex Record Office, copyright reserved)



Fig. 12. The Martello Tower (Wish Tower) at Eastbourne (which survives), by R.H. Nibbs, 1859. (Author's collection)



Fig. 13. The Redoubt at Eastbourne, now open to the public, which provided soldiers and supplies to the nearby towers, especially those along Pevensey Bay. (*Author's collection*)

in the 1760s.²² Seaford likewise was not patronised by the local gentry, who preferred Brighton, just a short distance to the west over the cliff tops. The barracks at Blatchington, nearby, begun on a twelve-acre site in 1794, were badly built, and their inadequacies resulted in members of the Oxford Militia rebelling, some of whom were shot at Brighton, creating adverse publicity for the place; Jane Austen's brother Henry, a member of the Oxford Militia, witnessed the executions and was probably her source of information about the army at Brighton.²³

When the fear of invasion by Napoleon was at its peak between 1803 and 1805, the government built Martello towers along the coast from Aldeburgh in Suffolk to Seaford as part of a system to fend off or delay invaders.²⁴ A string of these low, ovoid and brick built structures were erected about 600 yards apart between 1805 and 1812, and were provided at intervals with redoubts which had accommodation for more soldiers and stores and military training ground in the centre (Fig. 13).²⁵ The Towers became

symbols of resistance to invasion, and they appear in sketches, prints and paintings, adding to the attention given to Sussex during this period;²⁶ J.M.W. Turner's 'Martello Towers near Bexhill, Sussex' painted in 1808 is one example.²⁷ The Royal Military Canal across Pevensey Marshes, though later mocked by William Cobbett, also served as re-assurance; he was not there when the Government had to find ways of limiting the use of troops to maximum effect.²⁸

RESORT DEVELOPMENT – SEASONAL USAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON INVESTMENT

Some resorts were boosted by the military and naval presence, but, apart from Brighton and Hastings, they remained small and attracted low levels of investment. The few comments on the defences in letters and in the press suggest that people took them for granted; there are many more remarks about the

presence or absence of the officers, regarded as a useful source of companions at social events, and on the movements of troops. Others addressed the varied landscape of Sussex and its local climates. Visitors came mainly for the social contact, for bathing and for entertainment. They enjoyed the military parades and sightings of fleets, but the resorts remained seasonal, fitting into the social routines of the wealthy.²⁹

The local gentry and prosperous townsfolk were of far greater importance than royalty to the growth of resorts. Brighton's transformation from a declining town to a resort began in the 1750s when enough local gentry and wealthy investors from prosperous Lewes (just eight miles away) and their networks brought enough visitors to the town for

confident investors to take the risk of developing facilities. Thus, the Castle Inn was developed by Samuel Shergold and his partners. In Hastings, Thomas Hovenden, an innkeeper from Rye, added a much-needed Assembly Room to the Swan Inn, not a cheap investment. The Castle in Hastings (Fig. 14) shows how most hotels of the period were simply assembled by expanding along a terrace of houses.³⁰ Wealthy and well-connected physicians brought their own clientele, and some of them owned houses in the resorts. In Brighton before 1800, that group included Dr Russell and Dr Poole from Lewes, Dr Lucas Pepys from London (married to Dame Denise Hart who owned a house on the north side of North Street), Dr Frewen who practised in Brighton and Rye and Dr Schomberg of London.³¹



Fig. 14. The Castle Hotel at Hastings, by Rouse c.1820. Such hotels, usually made up of joined-up houses, were often the biggest investment in resorts.
(© Sussex Archaeological Society)



Fig. 15. Littlehampton in 1770, showing the very basic infrastructure for tourism.
(Author's collection)

By the early 1770s, Brighton and Hastings were sufficiently well established for wealthy locals to use as places in which to network in preference to the county towns of Lewes and Chichester. The Shelleys of Michelgrove (Clapham, Sussex) and the Duke of Richmond (of Goodwood) met other local gentlemen in 1770 to discuss forming a turnpike trust for the roads from Brighton to Chichester, and in 1777 the Earl of Sheffield, *en route* to Plymouth from his house, Sheffield Park, north-east of Lewes, passed through Brighton to talk to contacts. Local gentry and businessmen invested in turnpike trusts and toll bridges along the route westwards from Brighton and northwards to London, though communications running east-west were, and remain, less developed.³² The influence of royal visitors was far less than some historians have suggested. Guidebooks gave the utterly misleading impression that George, Prince of Wales and heir of King George III, went to the 'fishing village of Brighton' to sea-bathe. But the letters of other visitors, the press, early prints and archives clearly reveal that the small

town was already a well-established resort. The visits of young children of George III to Eastbourne, and of Princess Charlotte to Worthing, did not boost them. The best example of the failure of celebrities and royalty to help a resort is Hothampton (Bognor), where Sir Richard Hotham let famous people stay free for publicity, but with little gain.³³

Most of the resorts which successfully developed early, such as Brighton and Hastings, were not controlled by a single owner. The presence of many investors was a key factor in spreading the risk associated with trying to make money in such a seasonal industry. Jane Austen probably modelled Mr Parker in *Sanditon* on William Ogle of Worthing, whom she knew from her stay there in 1805. He led development in Worthing, but he was not the only investor.³⁴ The remains of a spit formed by the River Adur made a good promenade, saving investment in the construction of a new one, and Ogle persuaded others to share the risk of investing elsewhere in the resort. But buying the land and building all the facilities and accommodation bankrupted

Sir Richard Hotham, when he developed Hothampton,³⁵ which meant that this resort lagged behind its competitors.

It was important that major owners should not oppose development, even by those who owned pockets of land intermixed with their own. At Littlehampton, the Duke of Norfolk probably gave the land for Berkeley Villa to his relative, Earl Berkeley, and leased or sold land nearby for development, but he left local people to take the risk of investment in building, most of which was simple in design (Fig. 15).³⁶ The same lack of direct involvement applied to Eastbourne, where both the Meads and the Seahouses were largely controlled by the Compton Estate, which became part of the estate of the Duke of Devonshire. When the Dukes eventually began to promote the resort later in the nineteenth century, their involvement played a crucial part in its development.³⁷

The development of seaside tourism at Brighton and Hastings from the 1730s, largely by small investors, pushed them up to the top of the county’s urban hierarchy. The county’s market towns grew much more slowly, Brighton displacing Lewes and Chichester for the second time in two hundred years, and permanently. Hastings also overtook the inland towns.³⁸ Old coastal towns lacking energetic promoters did not flourish, as shown by the slow growth of Littlehampton and Seaford, despite the fact that both had resort facilities in the 1770s. Worthing, by contrast, which developed as a new resort town, more than doubled in size between 1801 and 1811 (See Table). Other new resorts such as Hothampton (Bognor) and the three rural and coastal clusters at Eastbourne did not develop as towns until the 1840s, when the railway arrived. Bexhill had some resort facilities in the early nineteenth century, but its population included the

Table

The Sussex Resorts – Origin by category and population (Decennial Census)						
Origin		1801	1811	1821	1831	1841
Resort						
Bersted (Bognor)	New resort – planned	737	1195	1851	2190	2490
Bexhill	Village	1091	1627	1907	1931	1916
Brighton	Port	7339	12012	24429	40634	46661
Broadwater (Worthing)	New resort – unplanned	1018	2692	3725	4576	5345
Eastbourne	Village clusters	1668	2623	2607	2726	3015
Hastings	Port	3102	3921	6200	9885	11021
Hove	Village	101	193	312	1360	2509
Littlehampton	Port	584	882	1166	1625	2270
Rottingdean	Village	543	559	772	880	983
Seaford	Port	847	1001	1047	1098	953
St Leonards	New suburb, planned	73	104	100	346	768
Resorts Total		17103	26809	44116	67251	77931



Fig. 16. Royal Circus, Brighton, copper engraving in *The Brighton Ambulator* 1818.
(Author's collection)

large barracks of German soldiers during the first two decades. Rottingdean remained a small but fashionable rural outpost of Brighton, the small group of owners of land in this parish disinclined to let the settlement grow much.³⁹

Investment was mainly small in scale because of the small number of visitors to the resorts. Before the later 1740s the number of visitors was so small that offering entertainment was not worthwhile, and an informal life-style prevailed. As the number rose after 1750, entertainment and better accommodation began to be offered. Between about 1750 and 1815 the season usually ran from late August almost until early December, but thereafter it lengthened a little at either end. The small numbers in any resort, even Brighton where by the end of the 1810s some three to

four hundred might be accommodated, meant that facilities were small in scale: mainly libraries, coffee houses and tall and narrow terraces of houses. Big assembly rooms and theatres were riskier projects which worked best in Brighton and Hastings, where more visitors could sustain them.⁴⁰ Even in Brighton and Hastings, however, very ambitious projects were not profitable, as was shown by the closure of the equestrian circus in Grand Parade Brighton (Fig. 16), which became a bazaar and an art gallery before being demolished. Houses were built on the site, whose origins are now remembered only by the name of Circus Street.⁴¹

The seasonal income deriving from resort towns was attractive to lodging-house keepers, many of them woman, because they could build on



Fig. 17. Egremont House, Brighton. Built with a sea view blocked by housing development by the 1820s, but retained by the Earl and his descendent. It was a short distance from the Chain Pier, built in 1822–3, in which the Earl had shares. (© Brighton Museum Delamotte Collection)

cheap land in towns and rural communities with no other possible business apart from the periodic lodging of the sick and army officers. Short-term accommodation did not require elaborate interiors or exteriors, and in the period up until about 1816 most of the occupiers were content with comfortable basic accommodation. The tall and narrow houses typical of this period suited their lifestyle well, and excellent examples survive, notably in Brighton and Hastings. Elaborate houses such as the Royal Pavilion and Marlborough House in Brighton, and coastal villas at Hastings, Littlehampton and near Worthing, were exceptions. But their presence was influential because they were owned by wealthy, seemingly successful people with whom others desired to mix, such as the third Earl of Egremont,

and the Earls Berkeley and Greville. Egremont's villa was called East House (Fig. 17), and until houses were built in front of it had a superb view of the sea; the celebrated Chain Pier was nearby, immortalised by Turner, whose oil painting of it still displayed at Petworth, the Earl's country seat.⁴² Smaller resort sites such as Seahouses, on the coast in the parish of Eastbourne, also offered basic tourism facilities including lodging houses (Fig. 18).⁴³ Urban development did not happen here before 1840, but by then small-scale developments had already made Seahouses and similar coastal villages look and function differently from inland communities which lacked the extra income that derived from libraries, hotels, assembly rooms and clusters of bathing machines and lodging houses.



Fig. 18. Seahouses at Eastbourne, the remains of which survive near Eastbourne Pier.
(*Author's collection*)

In addition to the investment in houses and facilities described above, wealthier visitors supported costly public entertainment such as the horse and yacht races which were major attractions. The British love of sport and gambling on it helped to entice a wider clientele to the coast than sea-bathing alone could have done. Many of the founders of Brighton Racecourse in 1783, such as the Duke of Richmond and Sir John Shelley of Michelgrove, already raced at the well-established racecourse at Lewes, the county town just eight miles away, where the Duke of Richmond had offered the Brighthelmston Plate as a prize for a race in 1774 and continued to do so. The first Brighton racing event lasted two days in August 1783, at the start of the resort season, and by 1790, when Rowlandson visited Brighton, the racecourse had a grandstand built by the founders and was attracting large crowds

(Fig. 19).⁴⁴ The stakes could be very high; in 1805 the horses of the Earl of Egremont and 'Lord Barry' (Barrymore) raced for a 200-guinea prize. Racehorses were bathed in the sea, as shown in a painting of 1796 at Petworth by Peter Francis Bourgeois, featuring the horses of the Earl of Egremont, who had raced horses at Brighton since 1786. By 1801 attendance at Brighton Races was good enough for the Duke of Richmond to establish another racecourse at Goodwood in 1802 (first advertised in 1801), which was accessible to the western resorts and also to Portsmouth, one of Britain's most important naval ports. Hunts also encouraged some visitors to join, and local landowners allowed visitors to shoot on their land for a fee.⁴⁵ These visitors also organised cricket matches, boxing matches and foot races which also attracted gambling.

Sea yachting was another costly entertainment

provided by visitors with a link to the armed services. It provided an attraction for visitors who could bet on the races and the tugs of war and enjoy trips as guests of their friends. Most yachts needed professional sailors as crews, and were kept along the south coast and armed.⁴⁶ By the later 1760 influential families were using navy yachts to get them to a resort or to their seaside villas. In 1768, the Duke of Bedford asked that the Portsmouth Yacht owned by the Admiralty be used to take his daughter, Lady Tavistock, on short sea trips from Brighton during the season, as recommended for her health. The next step was to own a yacht. When George, Prince of

Wales, first visited Brighton in 1783, his host was his uncle the Duke of Cumberland, a keen yachtsman, and in 1785 the Prince went to sea on a yacht which a newspaper wrongly claimed he owned, with ‘Colonel’ Payne of the Royal Navy as honorary commander.⁴⁷ The fact that he could berth his yacht in the harbour there encouraged the Earl of Berkeley to build a villa at Littlehampton, a pattern followed by other wealthy yacht owners.⁴⁸

Villas could play a role in the development of resorts. The first sea-facing seaside house in Worthing was built in about 1770 by John Luther (?1739–1786), an MP for the county of Essex who



Fig. 19. Brighton Races by T. Rowlandson, H. Wigstead and T. Rowlandson, *An excursion to Brighton* (1790). The Racecourse was run by the participants. (Author's collection)



Fig. 20. Warwick House, Worthing, and the adjacent Colonnade Library in 1820.
 (Copyright: Sussex Archaeological Society)

also owned land in west Sussex.⁴⁹ His villa was advertised for sale in 1786 immediately after his death, along with about seven acres of land and a pew in the church. Sold in 1789 to George Greville, Earl of Warwick, the house became Warwick House, and the Earl extended the grounds by buying three acres on the site of the present Steine Gardens and part of Ann Street. He sold the property in 1796 to William Commerell, a Londoner, for just over £2,920, and Commerell sold it on in 1801 to William Ogle and his brother James. They were London merchants, and they developed some of the land and sold the rest. The Colonnade Library later went up close to the villa (Fig. 20), which, like many houses of its type did not last long; its former existence, however, and the subsequent extension of its grounds, influenced the subsequent layout of the town, and can still be detected on maps. Newly-developed Worthing, close to the port of Shoreham,

had barracks nearby offering a sense of security for the fledgling resort, which soon became a cheaper and quiet satellite of Brighton.⁵⁰

CONCLUSION

The naval and land warfare which marked most of the period to 1815 helped the resorts of Sussex to become established, helped by the clement climate and relatively easy access to London. The beginnings of the impact of media on consumer taste can be seen too. Frequent mentions of them in the press, due to troop movements and to well-known visitors being listed, boosted their growth, and guidebooks became important. The rapid demolition of many of the barracks after 1814 did not reduce the popularity of resorts, most of which continued to grow quickly because by then they had become part of the way

of life for a significant number of people.⁵¹ Many changed rapidly in later years, as large housing projects, piers, promenades, spacious libraries and baths and other facilities became part of the way of life. Many of the small Georgian facilities were demolished, together with the deteriorating gun emplacements and other defences. But some still survive as place names and in prints and paintings; eloquent reminders of the tumultuous age when resorts began.⁵²

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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