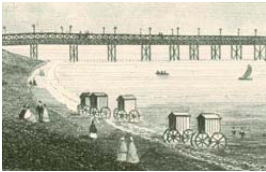


Seaside 4 - In the water

Learning Objectives

- Find out about how people visiting the seaside enjoyed bathing or paddling in the sea
- Develop children's research skills in interpreting historical images, in particular with a view to recognising which are older and which are more recent

Sources



Source 1. Bathing machines in the sea at Worthing, 1866



Source 2. Bathing machines on the beach, Bognor, c1885



Source 3. Bathing machines in the sea, Bognor, c1910



Source 4a. The Holloway family with bathing machine, Worthing, c1914

Source 4b. A description of using a bathing machine, written by Florence Holloway.



Source 5. Girls paddling on Worthing beach, c1900



Source 6. Paddling in the sea, Worthing, c1911



Source 7. Children paddling at Littlehampton, c 1910

Seaside 4 - In the water



Source 8. Paddling on the beach, Worthing, c1925



Source 9. Children paddle near a boat on Worthing beach, c1928



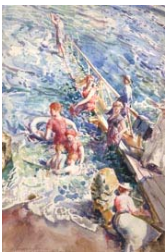
Source 10. Boys with a shrimping net, Bognor Regis, c1950



Source 11. Paddling on a crowded beach, Shoreham, c1958



Source 12. Children paddling at Bognor Regis, c1975



Source 13. Bathers at Splash Point, Worthing, 1908



Source 14. The story of Mary Wheatland, Bognor's bathing-machine woman

Sources 1, 2, and 3

Bathing machines were in use from the mid 18th century into the early 20th century. People hired them to use as private changing rooms to get into their bathing suits and then back into their clothes. The bathing machines were pulled by horses to move them up and down the beach as the tide came in or went out, so that people could get into the sea without having to walk on the beach where others could see them in their bathing costumes. There were separate machines for men and women who would bathe on different parts of the beach.

In Source 2, note the woman standing by the wheel - this gives a good idea of the size of the bathing machine.

See also Source 4.

Seaside 4 - In the water

TEACHERS' NOTES

Sources 4a and 4b

The Holloway family took a holiday at the seaside once a year, and came several times to Worthing.

In the photo, Frank Holloway (b1866) stands in front of the bathing machine with his son Frank (b1902) next to him, and his daughters Florence Alice (b1901, front right) and Elizabeth Kate (b1907, left). The woman on right is their mother's helper, the child sitting in the centre is unidentified, though could possibly belong to the helper.

Again, the bathing machine's wheels are as tall as the adults.

Source 4b is a description of using the bathing machine written in 1979-80 by Florence.

Other extracts from Florence's memoirs can be found in "Getting there", "On the beach", and "Piers". The complete text of her description of the family's holidays in Worthing can be found in the Source Gallery (search by keyword "seaside" and select document titled "Florence Holloway's holiday - at the seaside").

Sources 5 to 12

These photographs from c1900 to 1975 show men, women and children enjoying the timeless pleasure of paddling in rock pools or in the sea. In some they are just standing in the water. In others they are collecting treasures in their buckets (7), looking at the sea creatures and plants in shallow pools on the beach (8 and 12), or checking to see what they have caught in their shrimp-net (10).

Source 13

This painting, dated 1908 and signed R. Ponsonby Staples, shows women and children swimming in the sea at Splash Point, Worthing.

Source 14

Mary Wheatland worked as a "bathing machine woman" in Bognor from her teens into her 70s. She became famous for saving 34 people from drowning, and was pictured in postcards of Bognor.

Note that in the first and fourth pictures used in this source, the dress she is wearing is like the one she wore when swimming and working as a bathing machine attendant.

The second picture shows Mary's striped bathing machines. On the promenade just in front of the second machine from the left is the little hut that Mary used as her office.

The third picture shows towels spread out on the beach to dry, and bathing costumes on the concrete base of the promenade also drying in the sun. The woman standing by the bathing machine is probably Mary.

[To find additional material related to this topic, go to the Source Gallery and search by keyword, e.g. bathing, or click on 'Extra material' in the topic list.]