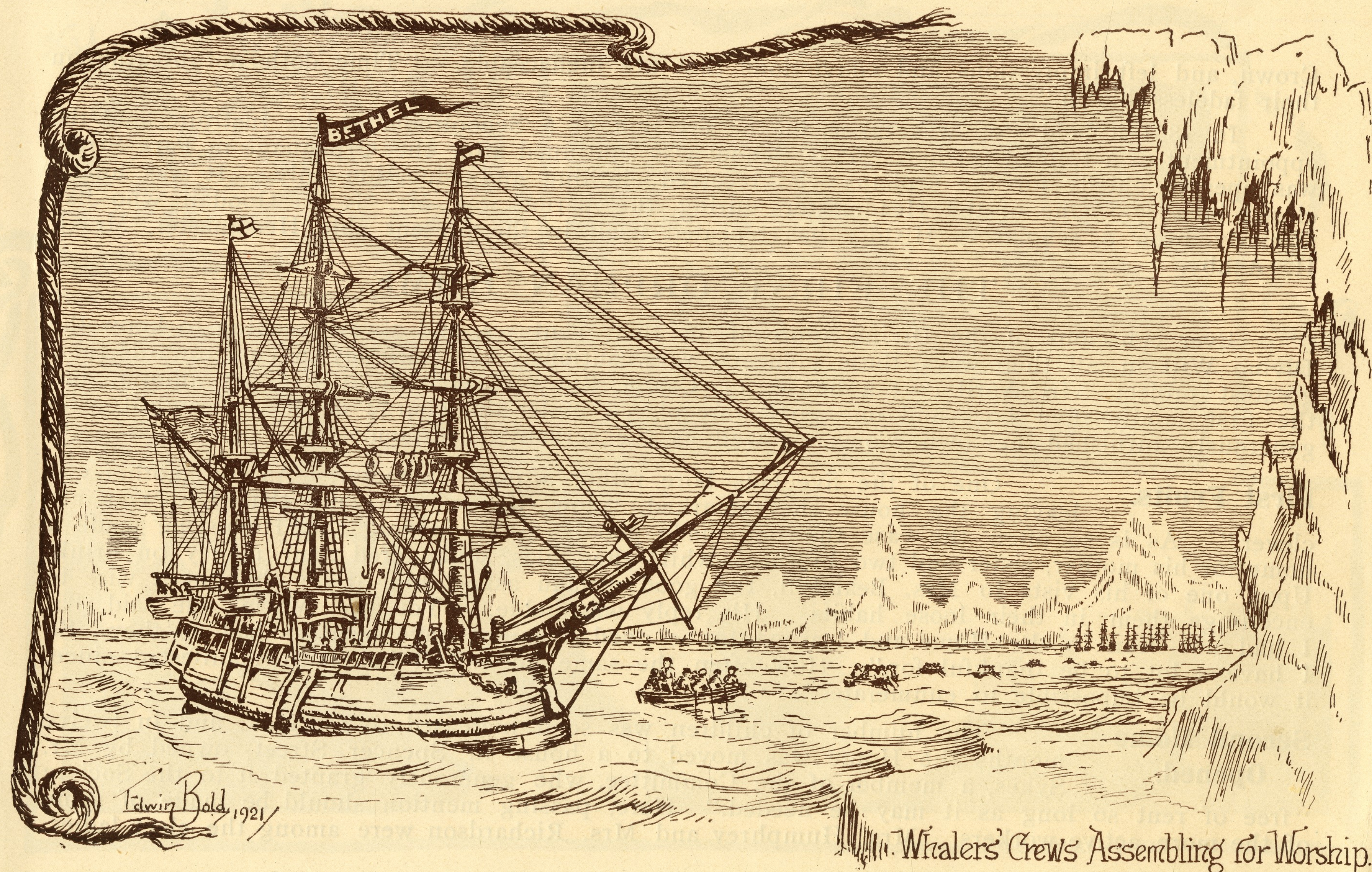


*‘Very favourable accounts had been received from many of the masters of the attention paid to the scriptures by the seamen at leisure times’*

*(Hull Packet, 3 March 1818)*

# HULL MARINE BIBLE ASSOCIATION

Service being held on board a ship flying the bethel flag, part of the missionary trend that saw the development of bible societies [U DMS]



Whalers' Crews Assembling for Worship.

On Friday morning, the first Anniversary Meeting of the Hull Marine Bible Association, was held in the Subscription School-Room, Salthouse-lane; Mr. Alderman Egginton in the Chair.—The Report of the Committee stated, that during the year, 722 Bibles and 207 Testaments had been sold on board ships connected with this port, at the reduced prices, and at a loss of nearly 50*l.* to the Association; and that subscriptions of one guinea each, on behalf of thirty-eight fishing-ships, and half-a-guinea each for twenty-five merchant ships, had been put down by the owners; and expressed the hope that further subscriptions would be obtained. It stated also, that regular Associations, for the reception of one penny a week each, from such of the crews as chose to subscribe that sum, had been formed on board some vessels, and that the extension of this plan to most of the other ships, was anticipated. Very favourable accounts had been received from many of the masters, of the attention paid to the Scriptures by the seamen at leisure times. The Meeting was attended by a great number of ship-owners, masters, seamen, &c. and was addressed and resolutions moved by C. Lutwidge, Esq. Mr. Terry, Mr. Bowden, the Rev. Messrs. Gilbert, Clarke, Sibthorp, Terrott, Scott, Dikes, Myles, Green, Shuttleworth.

Hull Packet, 3 Mar 1818



**Fact:** In 1817, Hull Marine Bible Association was formed to provide cheap bibles for seafarers

at our parts of the country.

The sixth anniversary of the Hull Marine Bible Association was held on Friday night in the Boy's Subscription School Room, in Salthouse Lane, the Right Worshipful the Mayor, Christopher Bolton, Esq. in the chair. The business of the meeting was opened by the worthy Chairman in a short speech, in which he stated the gratification he felt in the adoption and success of the measures pursued by the Society, and his sincere wishes for both the temporal comfort and spiritual welfare of seamen. The Rev. Messrs. Dikes, King, Scott, Cope (of Wakefield), and Messrs. Rust, Garbutt, Henwood, Locking and Manger, successively addressed the meeting, which broke up about nine o'clock. From the report of the society it appears, that since its formation, six years ago, 3000 copies of the Holy Scriptures have been sold, at the reduced prices, to the sailors belonging to and frequenting this port. Sixty-four vessels have been visited in port this year, the crews of which amounted to 663 men and boys. Of this number 635 were stated to be able to read, and they had among them 193 Bibles and 28 Testaments. Exclusive of the steam packets employed in the Humber, and between this port and London, only one vessel was found totally destitute of the scriptures.—Although the evening was particularly unfavourable, there was a good proportion of seamen present, who were particularly attentive to the different speakers.

Hull Packet, 10 Mar 1823

In 1817 a Hull Marine Bible Association was formed, as a section of the Hull Auxiliary Bible Society, to provide reduced-cost bibles to seafarers working out of the port of Hull.

This development was part of a wider missionary trend towards the religious education of seamen for their own moral and spiritual self-improvement.

The trend had begun with the Naval and Military Bible Society founded in 1779, whose objectives were stated as such: 'For purchasing Bibles in order to be distributed among the British Soldiers and Seamen of the Navy, in order (by the blessing of God) to spread abroad Christian knowledge and reformation of manners'.

Meetings of the Marine Bible Association were held at a boys' school in Salthouse Lane before later moving to the Mariners' Church on Prince's Dock Side.

Subscriptions to the association were taken up by merchant ship owners and fishing vessel owners who saw that the scheme could benefit their crews.

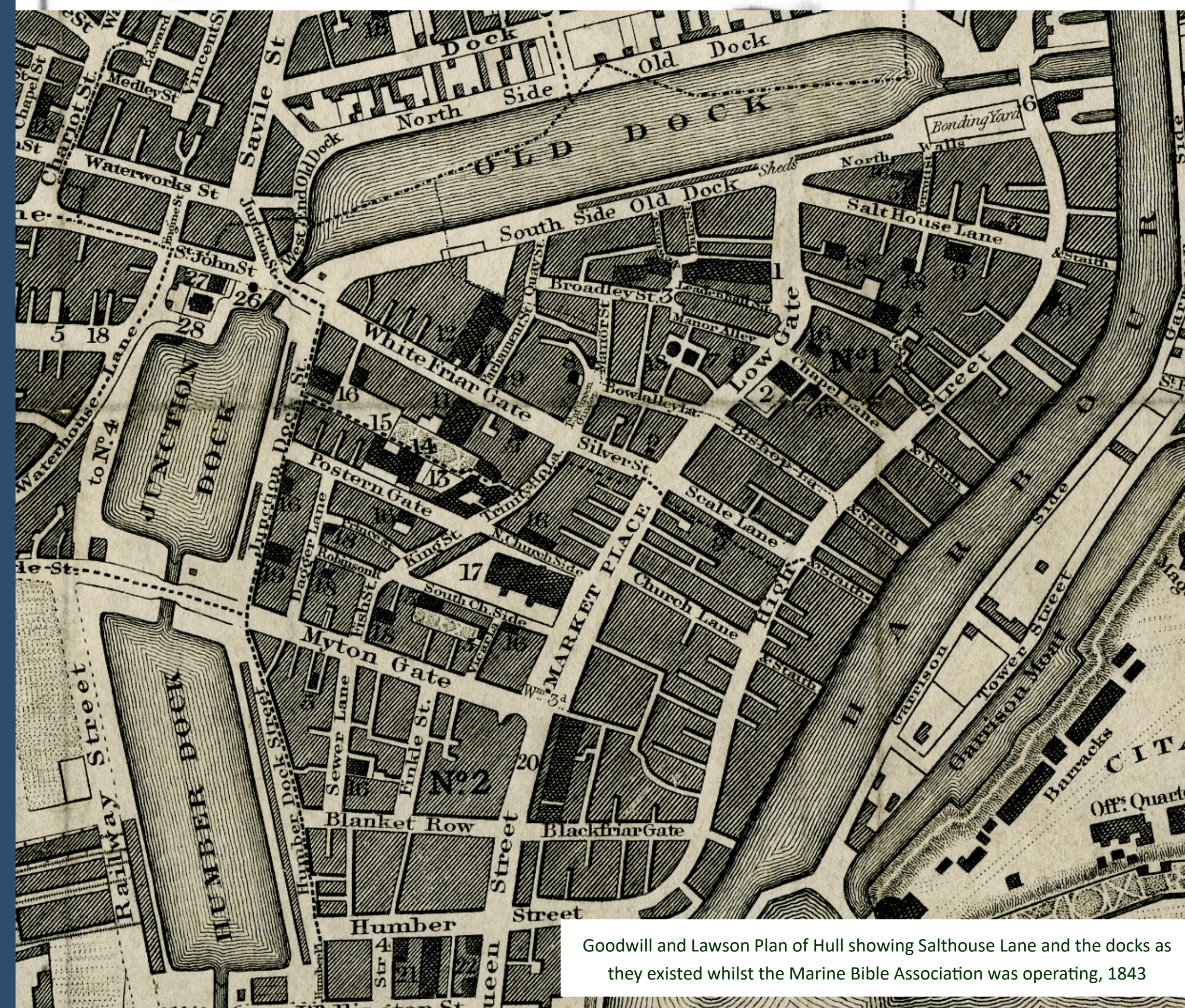


**HULL AUXILIARY OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY.—**  
 The number of copies issued by this society, from February, 1842, to February, 1843, was as follows:—2727 Bibles, 4839 Testaments, 57 Testaments and Psalms, 16 Book of Psalms,—in all, 7639. The ladies' branch of the society has rendered most efficient service to the institution, having not only distributed 1041 copies at cost price, but remitted £56 2s. 5d. for the general object in view. The Hull Marine Bible Association have disposed of 156 Bibles and 94 Testaments; but the subscriptions to that institution are little more than pay the expenses.

Hull Packet, 16 Jun 1843

Whilst reports of the association's meetings repeatedly remarked on the popularity and value of the work being undertaken, the same reports noted financial problems.

Subscriptions apparently did not cover the outlay required by the association in order to purchase bibles and texts, and because they were sold at reduced prices this money was never recovered.



Goodwill and Lawson Plan of Hull showing Salthouse Lane and the docks as they existed whilst the Marine Bible Association was operating, 1843

On 16 June 1843, the local papers announced that the Hull Marine Bible Association was to be discontinued and the remaining stock was sold off.

Whilst this early endeavour had failed, it was an important first step in the development of the more holistic seamen's missionary societies that would emerge in the 19th century.

**Fact:** In 1843, Hull Marine Bible Association was discontinued and the remaining stock was sold off