

the Supreme Court, and, furthermore, to establish the exact date of the founding of each library from them. Unfortunately there is no trace of the relevant declarations in the files of the Supreme Court at Christchurch.⁽³⁴⁾ Because of the absence of these or other records it is impossible to fix the date of formation of a number of the libraries (in this instance, New Brighton), but this is not as serious as it might appear at first sight, for the adequacy or inadequacy of the system is really of much greater import. This lack of reliable sources makes it impossible to give a precise and detailed summary of the growth of each of the fourteen suburban libraries in the Christchurch metropolitan area. However, even if the necessary information was to hand such an account would be nothing if not tedious, for almost without exception, the libraries have followed a definite pattern of growth.

When the Canterbury settlement completed its first fifty years, there were still only five suburban libraries - but not the original five. By a special local act in 1893, the old Knightstown Library was transferred to the people of St. Albans for the purpose of establishing a new library,⁽³⁵⁾ so that thenceforth St. Albans has had only one library. In 1886 the New Brighton Library received its last government subsidy until 1912;⁽³⁶⁾ presumably the library was closed in the interim. However the balance was maintained by the appearance of two new libraries, one at Sumner in 1883,⁽³⁷⁾ and one

34. The only explanation that the Registrar can suggest is that in the earlier colonial days there were a number of District Courts which have since gone out of existence and whose records have apparently disappeared. The only suburban library filed appears to be Sydenham in 1907.

35. Statutes of New Zealand, 1893. p.498. No.23. (Local)

36. N.Z. A to J, 1883 et seq.

37. *ibid.*