

BRISTOL OLD VIC

COLOUR IN KING STREET: LITERARY HAVEN



King Street was home to one of the first public libraries in the country. It was housed in a building donated in 1613 “for the free use of the merchants and the shopkeepers of the city.” This library was used by almost every significant figure in the city’s history, including Romantic poets Robert Southey, Samuel Coleridge and William Wordsworth. It played a vital role in Bristol as a source of information about history, science and the wider world. Abolitionists used the library for research when gathering evidence against the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The building is now the Cathay Rendezvous restaurant.