Shops, Retailing and Consumption in Eighteenth-Century Provincial
England: Norwich 1660-1800

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
At the University of Northampton

2010

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Abstract:

The history of retail and consumption during the eighteenth-century has enjoyed interest from historians for a number of decades, yet few studies have concentrated on large cities or utilised a case study method to develop an in-depth and longitudinal understanding of change across the whole century. This study seeks to rectify this by concentrating on the city of Norwich, which was the second largest city in England in 1700, in order to build up a detailed social history of retail, shopping and consumption. The research seeks to clarify the exact nature of change in urban retail and consumption, exploring the existence of consumer and retail 'revolutions' and the relationship between them.

Using a variety of archival sources the study uncovers the extent of the consumption of novel goods, the changing nature of the economic character of each of Norwich's thirty-four parishes and uncovers the dual personality of the city, with evidence for a leisured town set within the larger industrial city. Detailed mapping of directory data points to a concentration of luxury retail in key streets, making up a cultural thoroughfare which linked the traditional cultural centre of the city in the east to the new purpose-built leisure arena on the western boundary. The character of retail change and the role of the shopkeeper is assessed through newspaper advertisements, trade cards, probate inventories, diaries and contemporary visual representations of the city centre. While a clear transformation was detected across the century, the evidence suggests that change was cumulative rather than a big shift at a fixed point in time. However, although the changes noted in this research did not constitute 'revolution' in an immediate sense, the modifications in urban spaces, retail and consumption, which were evident from the beginning of the century, were undoubtedly significant in their long-term effects by laying the foundations for current practice.

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The study that follows is an in-depth analysis of retail and consumption culture during the long-eighteenth century. These two areas of research have gained popularity amongst historians over recent years, with an increasing body of work informing our understanding of the development of retailing and the rise of the consumer society. Yet few of these studies have taken an integrated approach, looking at the development of both retail and consumption within one location over a sustained period of time. In the research presented here the City of Norwich has been the focus of investigation. The city was the second largest in England in 1700, with a population of thirty thousand, and yet has been generally overlooked by historians of this period – and the areas of retail and consumption are no exception.[1]

The current research will not only expand our understanding of the city during this period but will build on work undertaken elsewhere to develop the broader themes within current discourse. The literature is rich with suggestions of an expanding 'world of goods' during the eighteenth-century in Britain and Europe, and that there was a definitive shift in the types of goods that people owned. The move was away from the traditional, durable, expensive items towards less-durable fashionable goods.[2] In fact 'fashion' began to influence the consumption choices and practices of many more people, particularly the middling-sorts who were able to access these novel goods more readily from the beginning of the century through an expanding retail and service sector. The established wisdom long held that the 'consumer revolution' was temporally detached from any retail revolution.[3] Early work on the history of retailing suggested that it was only in the nineteenth-century that retail became a dynamic force, with structured spaces and 'modern' selling practices. This opinion has been revised after extensive work in recent years and we now know that shops, shopping and retail were already quite sophisticated in the first half of the eighteenth-century, and earlier in London.[4] But the development trajectory of retail in large

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[1] Corfield, P. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004), p.158 Table 6.3.

[2] Weatherill, L. (1988); Overton et al. (2005).

[3] Jefferys, J. B. (1954).

[4] For example, Berg, M. (2005); Cox, N. (2000); Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993); Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005); McKendrick et al. (1982); Stobart et al. (2007); Walsh, C. (1995).

provincial towns remains surprisingly hazy.

Norwich, the largest of provincial towns in England in 1700, was a key city in the Eastern region, an active commercial city, an inland port, an industrial centre, as well as being the cultural and social focus for the surrounding counties. And because of its sheer size during this period, it was expected that the records would reflect with greater clarity the transformations reported in other smaller towns.[5] Chapter two of this volume offers a more detailed examination of Norwich as a city, its place within the discourse on 'urban renaissance' and how this linked with the revolutions in retail and consumption.[6] However, it is important to say at this stage that this dynamic city has the potential to offer a unique viewpoint of the cultural changes under discussion here, as well as an opportunity to fill the gaps in our knowledge about the context within which consumer culture and retail practices spread beyond London into the provinces.

The case study methodology is the most useful for an in-depth, holistic investigation into the daily life of the city and its inhabitants; looking at developments from the perspective of the participants.[7] While a micro-historical approach is preferred, the conclusions can be applied to test much broader key theses; firstly that a 'consumer revolution' was occurring in provincial England during this period; secondly, that significant changes occurring in retail culture were also visible in provincial cities, which constituted a retail revolution; and thirdly, that these 'revolutions' were profoundly connected. This is, at least, the starting point.

In addition since each of the chapters is formulated to generate a rich context for the discussion of the main 'revolutionary' threads, they highlight some unique aspects of consumption and retail history not discussed elsewhere in the literature. These include the discovery of Norwich's dual character, with a leisured town nestling within an industrial city (chapter 2), for example, or the existence of a luxury retail thoroughfare through the city connecting the older cultural arena to the purpose-built spaces built from the mid-eighteenth-century onwards (chapter 3). Equally the study into the long- term development of newspaper advertising, using newspapers spanning the whole of the century, found that

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[5] See for example McInnes, A. (1988).

[6] In particular 2.1 for 'Urban Renaissance' and 2.2 for a focus on Norwich.

[7] Tellis, W. (1997).

shopkeepers were utilising both traditional and modern techniques across the period, and by the end of the century were utilising emotive techniques within the language of the advertisements (chapter 6).

The sources utilised for the study that follows are wide ranging, and discussed more fully within the chapters themselves. Probate inventories, poll books, advertisements, diaries, letters, accounts, bills and receipts, trade directories, are used in trying to uncover how Norwich reacted to the consumer and retail revolutions. Did Norwich follow the trends described elsewhere in the country? Or was it a period of relatively little change for this large city? Equally it is important to understand how our new knowledge of Norwich informs our current understanding of the broader cultural changes, affected by fashion, trade and urban renewal.

As well as these broader questions a case study offers an exciting opportunity to uncover the relationship between the shop, shopkeeper and the consumer, and in doing so we are able to chart the changing nature of this relationship over time. The interaction between traditional culture and the rising imperative of novelty and fashion is also more easily illustrated using these methods, both in retail and consumption. Importantly for this thesis, it is possible to get at the detail that lies within the historical record but which is often overlooked in favour of quantitative analyses. The beauty of detail is that the sources begin to tell a more personal story, and offer a populated, more fully formed, view of the period in question.

In order though to fully appreciate the discoveries of this research it is imperative to place it within the context of earlier and ongoing research in the key areas addressed. To this end the following sections discuss the nature of material culture, the motivations of consumption and our current understanding of retail development through this period. Section I.1 concentrates on the literature about material culture, looking at prominent research on the ownership of particular household goods and how this is affected by wealth, occupation and geography. In section I.2 the motivations for the acquisition and consumption of goods are discussed. This section considers the importance of fashion and social imperatives in object choice, and how social change was illustrated within the domestic scene. In the final section, having discussed the objects and the importance of social and cultural capital, we turn to the actual acquisition process – shopping and retail –

and how these important daily activities became vital to the cultural and social life of urban provincial England during the eighteenth-century.

I.1 Consumption and Material Culture

The term 'material culture' has been part of the language of social scientists and anthropologists for a long time. More recently, it has become a vital framework in historical studies, focussing on the social and cultural activities of individuals involved in the processes of consumption or consumerism, particularly it would seem during the early modern period. This is due, in part, to the designation of the late eighteenth century as the time of a 'consumer revolution', which has remained a central element in recent discussions despite being criticised on the grounds of an anglo-centric approach and that in fact tangible changes had occurred before the period specified by McKendrick.[8] While no one seems to dispute that this era was a time of significant change, there is no real evidence for such a dramatic transformation implied by its revolutionary title; an emphasis on the evolutionary nature of change is now much preferred.[9] In addition there is a danger in seeing the transformation of the consumer landscape, both in practice and in individual desire, as part of an inevitable shift towards an ultimately 'modern' way of doing things or of viewing the era as anything other than a moment in time or as a distinctive culture in its own right. It is important not to lose the identity of the eighteenth century by lumping it in with a grander process of modernisation.

Material culture remains a central element of this debate and is used to mean both the specific items or objects in use, and as a broad umbrella term for all things 'material'. The whole body of popular material culture is often lumped together in this way, sometimes being used to describe the more abstract notion of all physical things or things in the non-spiritual realm. Early anthropological discussions were couched in terms of economics, relating directly to exchange, status and wealth.[10] Even if different cultures created value within a varying and wide range of objects (vegetables, pottery, livestock and so on), the processes of exchange followed similar rules. Rather unsurprisingly then the use of material goods to analyse the social and economic structures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has often concentrated on broad values and levels of ownership, with the emphasis on finding an average or standard degree of acquisition, rather than on the symbolic nature of possessions or the individual stories caught up within the historical

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[8] McKendrick, et al. (1982); Nijboer, H. 'in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005), p.21; Blondé, B. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005); Berg, M. (2005), p.9; Brewer, J. unpublished working paper (2003); Levy-Peck, L. (2005).

[9] Nijboer, H. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005).

[10] See for example the classic study of The Nuer by E.E. Evans-Pritchard, (1940).

sources used.

There have been a number of key surveys undertaken in Britain and Europe looking specifically at the ownership of material goods in the eighteenth century. These have used probate inventories, wills, diaries and correspondence.[11] In this section, the appearance and distribution of particular household objects is discussed, alongside the means by which the changes, described by McKendrick as revolutionary, were measured, primarily through the use of the probate inventory[12].

In terms of the domestic environment, probate inventories form the key archival source, despite their manifold problems (see chapter 1). Studies that have utilised them have changed our understanding of eighteenth century households, regarding both their physical nature and the use of rooms, objects and the creation of space[13]. They have provided a deeper and fuller picture of the daily lives of the citizens of the areas studied and have put the revolution into a longer term perspective.[14]

The potential of inventories as a tool for understanding the historical scene was noted in the early eighties but it was not until the extensive survey of inventories was undertaken by Lorna Weatherill in the late 1980s that such investigation was taken to another level, creating a wealth of data and a benchmark for subsequent studies.[15] By tracking the appearance and spread of particular items over time (1675 – 1725), Weatherill concluded that larger numbers of items, such as tables, chairs and mirrors were owned at the end of the period, and preferences for less durable items were becoming more apparent, for example, earthenware, china, glass. [16] This trend was also demonstrated by Overton et al (1600-1750), who suggested that consumption was cyclical and that objects were likely to fall out of use, as well as becoming more widespread. For example, chests of drawers, dressers and presses were replacing the use of trunks, chests and boxes for storage[17]

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[11] Arkell, T. et al. (eds) (2000); Weatherill, L. (1988); Overton, M. et al. (2004); Beckett, J. and Smith, C. (2000); Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005); Berg, M. (2005); Vickery, A. (1998).

[12] McKendrick, N. et al. (1982).

[13] See footnote 4.

[14] Blondé, B. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005) p. 44; Nijboer, H. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005).

[15] Woude, A. and Schuurman, A. (eds) (1980); Riden, P. (1985); Weatherill, L. (1988).

[16] van Damme, I. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2006).

[17] Overton, M. et al. (2004), pp. 89, 93.

De Vries makes the case for a significant growth in consumer demand for novel goods rather than more expensive, traditional items, being driven by the collective income and desires of the domestic household. Intensification of household labour, whether sold as paid labour or in increased internal production of excess goods, was part of an 'industrious revolution', which enabled more easily the satisfaction of fashionable desires.[18] Nijboer has recently suggested that a preference for less durable goods, those with little intrinsic value, was linked to a rise in the importance of fashion in place of those that acted as stores of wealth.[19] This can be seen, for example, in the switch between pewter and earthenware or chinaware, noted by Weatherill.[20] The initial outlay for an earthenware vessel was much smaller than that for a pewter vessel, they were of course more fragile and as Nijboer notes were valueless if broken.[21] But this did not prevent the rise of earthenware as the preferred alternative to pewter, or indeed the later widespread use of chinaware for hot drinks. Overton et al make the important point that one did not replace the other immediately. In fact they were utilised alongside each other, perhaps with earthenware providing a 'second service' for dining or drinking.[22] Indeed, this is not just the case with pewter and earthenware, it could equally be the case for benches, stools and chairs.[23] This reinforces the notion that changes occurring within the domestic sphere during this century were not exceptionally quick and that there was a steady alteration in the material culture found in middling households.

The types of objects which have been highlighted by these studies as constituting a change in the material culture of domestic spaces, include a more widespread use of window curtains, upholstered seating, chairs, pictures, clocks, mirrors and other decorative items (including lighting and wallpaper). They concluded that the use of these novel domestic goods increased throughout Britain during the long eighteenth century. But the arrival and dissemination of such items was not uniform across space or time. Moreover, Overton et al suggest that the rise in the use of some items was directly related to the size and type of housing.[24] In addition to this they highlight the changing nature of the use of space within the homes, and that consumption practice had to be modified to encompass changes in

[18] de Vries, J. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) pp. 85-132.

[19] Nijboer, H. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005).

[20] Weatherill, L. (1988), p. 110.

[21] Nijboer, H. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005) p.23.

[22] Overton, M. et al (2004) p.104.

[23] Garrard, R. in Woude, A. and Schuurman, A. (eds) (1980) p. 59.

[24] Overton, M. et al. (2004) p. 113.

personal and familial circumstances. There were also the wider cultural changes underway; for example in cooking methods and eating habits.[25] The changing material field was linked not simply to the preferences of the individual but also to the significant changes in domestic culture that were becoming dominant. Most prominent among these was the rise of domestic sociability and the creation of tasteful arenas in which to entertain, discussed later; but there were also alterations in the way people viewed their domestic space both in its practical and social functions (ie. cooking, sleeping, privacy, servants).[26]

Location played a significant part too. Weatherill's study showed significant variation in the ownership of material goods across Britain's region. London and the London area, which included rural spaces, had a much higher ownership of the fashionable, less durable goods such as window curtains and china. Indeed, the arrival of these and other items occurred earlier in London than elsewhere.[27] This is not surprising, perhaps, given the size and wealth of the metropolis, but it is also linked to London's importance as a centre for fashion, trade and retailing. The study by Overton et al of Kent and Cornwall highlights these significant regional differences in terms of material possessions and suggests that it was directly related to the respective distance from London of each of the counties, with Kent showing a higher incidence of novel goods than Cornwall . These results indicate that part of the dissemination of material goods was related to the amount of exposure people had to these items, and as Overton et al conclude, of local practice and cultural norms remaining uninfluenced by metropolitan mores.[28]

Location alone was not the sole reason for the variable nature of material ownership in the country at this time. Occupation (sometimes influenced by location) might have created opportunity and equally could have reinforced limitations for many people who may well have been exposed to particular goods and fashion. Weatherill states that there is a distinction between the goods owned by agricultural workers and those in trades or in professional occupations, with the former being less likely to own novel goods.[29] An occupational analysis of her results led to the conclusion that people in lower status jobs were less likely to own novel goods than those in better jobs, and therefore of a higher

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[25] Overton, M. et al. (2004) pp. 130-3; see also Priestley, U. and Corfield, P. (1982) and Vickery, A. (1998).

[26] Sarti, R. (2002); Cox, J. & Cox, N. in Arkell et al. (eds) (2000) p34.

[27] Weatherill, L. (1988) p. 49.

[28] Overton, M. et al (2004); Weatherill, L. (1988).

[29] Weatherill, L. (1988) p. 191.

status. The two major problems with this are that Weatherill's geographical regions encompassed both rural and urban areas making a comparison between the two difficult, and secondly that the use of generic occupational titles taken directly from the inventory. does not allow for variation in wealth or income between 'weavers' or 'potters', some of whom were likely to be masters. As Tom Arkell suggests, there is evidence that many trades were involved in other sorts of production activity, so their income and their exposure to a particular level of culture, material or otherwise, cannot be assumed from their official occupation as noted by appraisers. [30]

Karl Estabrook, in his study of rural and urban ownership in the Bristol area (1660-1780), takes this a stage further. He returns to the importance of location and its relationship to material wealth, and suggests that urban culture created a richer and more diverse material landscape than its rustic counterpart. Estabrook argues that the ownership of goods was not a result of occupation or of gender (though both are debatable), but was directly related to the spatial relationship between individuals and the urban centre. [31] For him, differences between rural and urban ownership were not accounted for by wages or the fact that there was more money around in the towns, as Beckett and Smith suggest. [32] Indeed Estabrook notes that many of the urban poor owned mirrors and other luxury items, not owned by people in rural areas with a higher income. [33] He looks specifically at the occurrence of musical instruments, which was apparently higher in urban settings and was directly linked to the way in which the instruments were viewed by their owners and others around them. [34] In urban areas luxury items were seen as cultural capital and were therefore a worthwhile investment. The same items were seen through slightly different cultural spectacles in the rural areas and were not subject to the same social rewards and were therefore not worth the expense or alteration. [35]

The function of cultural capital and the ownership of social wealth has been linked with the rise in the importance of fashionable pursuits by the expanding middling classes. This is often used to explain the emergence and rapid dissemination of material goods specifically

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[30] Arkell, T. in Arkell et al. (eds) (2000) p. 80.

[31] Estabrook, K. (1998) p. 133, p. 143; for gender issues and material culture see for example Berg, M. (2005), Vickery, A. and Styles, J. (2006).

[32] Beckett, J. and Smith, C. (2000) p. 37

[33] Estabrook, K. (1998) pp. 137-9.

[34] Estabrook, K. (1998) p. 133; see also Arkell, T. in Arkell et al. (eds) (2000) p. 94.

[35] Estabrook, K. (1998) p140.

related to domestic sociability.[36] It seems that the combination of novelty, style, fashion and a newly important household function was the key to a rapid emergence and spread of novel items. The importance of cultural capital as a motivation for the acquisition of goods is discussed below, but the presence of the items was not isolated from the external cultural developments of the day and, as Nenandic points out, different and complex forces shaped the material world of the middling strata.[37] The preferences of the middling classes for the new luxuries, as described in diaries, journals and household accounts, was heightened by the availability of cheaper and less durable goods and a greater exposure to them.[38] The nature of the home was going through a period of modification and the availability of imported or home produced goods, using new materials, and the use of innovative production methods kept the domestic material culture in a constant state of flux. Ponsonby reminds us, however, that not all items in the home were fashionable: households utilised a few novel pieces to complement their homes which were already stocked with furniture and linen, all of which was serviced, and altered when necessary, to create a picture of good taste and refinement.[39] Again, this highlights that changes occurring in the material culture of the domestic sphere were neither rapid nor total.

Those studies that have led to a fuller understanding of the material wealth and domestic culture of Britain and Europe in the eighteenth century have all concluded that there was a rise in the number of material goods owned by individuals and that, at the same time, there was a move towards cheaper, less durable and fashionable objects. These were needed to satisfy new social and cultural imperatives. However, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the proportion of household wealth spent on necessities was still far higher than that spent on luxuries, particularly for the poor.[40] Vickery's accounts of middling women in Lancashire show us as well that expenditure on novel items was not a frequent event and that when they purchased items they did so for different reasons.[41] Motivations for the consumption and acquisition of particular material items were complex and intertwined with personal, familial and wider social pressures. What drove the inhabitants of eighteenth–century Britain to alter their consumption patterns so markedly and what was the attraction of the novel goods listed in the probate inventories examined by Weatherill,

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[36] Berg, M. (2005), Chapter 1.

[37] Nenandic, S. (1994) p. 125.

[38] Berg, M. (2005) pp. 19-20.

[39] Ponsonby, M. (2006) p. 79.

[40] Weatherill, L. (1988) p. 134.

[41] Vickery, A (1998).

Overton et al and others. It is to this area that we now turn.

I.2   Motivations for Consumption.

Since the early 1980s, following McKendrick's declaration that the eighteenth century marked the birth of a consumer society, historical commentators have been grappling with the notion of consumption and the complex nature of the motivations of early-modern actors in their articulation of choice. The increased availability of new goods, cheaper materials and innovative designs was part of an economic shift, apparently driven by the demand of the middling classes, in which the social and cultural order of previous centuries was rapidly changing and adapting to new demands[42]. Based on Veblen's ideas of conspicuous consumption and the leisured classes, early research into this area pronounced that the emulation of the elite classes by the middling sorts, was the primary (and collective) motivation for increased consumption.[43] Equally, the trickle down effect of elite tastes and choices, linked to Veblen's emulation, was discussed by Simmel as a reason for the development of fashion, and was thought to hold some sway in motivating the population.[44] More recently, however, studies have noted that both of these ideas are too simple an explanation. They relate to perceived practices rather than the true motives of individual actors, a symptom but not the cause of increased consumption.[45]

The act of consumption itself remains problematic in terms of definition; does it mean to purchase, to use or to use up? At what point is an object consumed? Is consumption a single event or process over time? And is exposure to objects and experience of objects consumption in the same way that ownership is? Clearly, though, the act of consumption is the point at which economic and cultural spheres become blurred, creating a complex overlap of meaning and value.[46] The world is articulated through material goods, acting as symbolic representations of identity, affiliation and function. As such, they are endowed with a social, as well as economic value.[47]

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[42] McKendrick, N. et al. (1982); Berg, M. (2005) Introduction.

[43] Veblen, T. (1899); Weatherill, L. (1988).

[44] Simmel, G. (1904).

[45] Campbell, C. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993); Glennie, P. in Miller, D. (ed.) (1995) suggest that neither this nor Veblen's emulation are motivations in themselves, a symptom but not the cause.

[46] Miles, S. (1998) p. 4.

[47] Kopytoff, I. in Appadurai, A (1986) pp. 64-91.

From an economic point of view, the consumption of goods is driven by need and the value of an object is directly related to its function and utility. Commentators have noted that part of this function was to enable the retention of wealth in goods which could be speedily liquidated should funds be required.[48] The choice of goods reflected this intrinsic economic value.[49] However, the retention of such wealth was in itself a form of social display, an indication of status and the material expression of distinction directly related to Veblen's notions of conspicuous consumption. Andersson takes this a stage further by suggesting that the purchase of expensive items with an intrinsic value was a conscious strategy employed by the elite (Swedish in her study), to create and maintain social standing.[50] However, throughout the eighteenth century these articles of investment, such as pewter, silver and pieces of furniture, were not immune to social changes in fashion or the additional cultural value of being fashionably worked, highlighting the overlap between economic and cultural spheres.[51]

Cultural historians, and many social scientists, espouse the notion that choice, within the framework of lifestyle and taste, is the product of culturally determined, symbolic value which takes precedent over functional imperatives. Material goods are seen to have sign value, or a symbolic nature, and collectively are vital in our interpretation and understanding of the world in which we live.[52] Without codified social indicators and information systems we would not be able to relate to society or to articulate our position within the wider social structure. The material goods of the eighteenth century, in light of this, can be seen as the means by which people negotiated their position in the world. This social imperative was a key motivation in consumer choice.[53]

The creation of an individual identity is clearly part of the above process. However, the notion of the individual as we see it today did not exist until the late 1700s. Up until this point individuals were thought to represent a general type, and were identified as part of a grouping, by class, family, occupation and so on.[54] On the surface such identity forming constructs appear to be relatively stable. However, there has been some debate over

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[48] Muldrew, C. (2001) p. 109; Kopytoff, in Appadurai (ed) (1986) p. 75.

[49] Nijboer, H. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005); Levy Peck, L. (2005) p. 29; Nenandic, S. (1994) p. 134.

[50] Andersson, G. (2006) pp. 21-44; see also Veblen (1899).

[51] Blondé, B. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2005) pp. 37-52.

[52] Douglas, M. and Isherwood, B. (1978); see also Berger, P. and Luckman, T. (1966) for discussion about the 'social stock of knowledge'.

[53] Crowston, C.H. in Walker, G. (ed.) (2005) p. 168; Klein, L. in Bermingham, A. and Brewer, J. (1995) pp. 363-4; Douglas, M. and Isherwood, B. (1978).

[54] Wahrman, D. (2004) Chapter 4; Barry, J. and Brooks, C. (eds) (1994) p. 2.

whether the term 'class' can be used to describe the social stratification of eighteenth century society, or whether the term 'sort' might reflect more accurately the contemporary vocabulary.[55] Indeed, the historical origins of these words have informed the debate, with 'sorts' being widely utilised in the sixteenth-century.[56] Langford notes that the eighteenth-century was the era in which the language of class was invented, but it was not yet defined by the ideology of class conflict; such connotations became more fully developed in the second quarter of the nineteenth-century.[57] While historians have tended to avoid the use of 'class', preferring to utilise the term 'sort' in order to avoid association with neo-Marxist theory, both terms were in fact used interchangeably with other terminology by people in the eighteenth-century, 'the language of orders and the newer language of social description could co-exist.'[58] It is for this reason therefore that both terms will be utilised in this thesis, since both were present in the vocabulary of the time.

Taking into account the contemporary use of these defining terms does not detract from the fact that both are used as general short-hand for large, apparently homogenous, sectors of society, and do not easily convey the complexity of the strata they seek to describe. Barry suggests that the lower sorts and the elite are more easily defined than the 'middling sorts', agreeing with French that it is difficult for historians to reconstruct the key defining aspects of the increasingly large middle strata of society, those between the lower and upper orders.[59] The middling sort is according to French 'a shadowy creature, seldom emerging in clear relief against the historical landscape.'[60] It is with this large middling class that many of the people involved in the retail and consumption practices described in this thesis might have identified themselves. But to reconstruct what it meant to be a member of the middling sorts has proven a difficult task. To begin with the term related to a broad and variable proportion of the population, and within this broad group there existed fluid and recognised substrata defined perhaps by a combination of criteria, for example, financial, social, moral or intellectual; with social position dependent on the particular criteria used for definition.[61] French's article highlights the issues involved for historians who choose to

[55] French, H.R. (2000).
[56] French, H.R. (2000) p. 279.
[57] Langford, P. (1989) p. 654; Hay, D. and Rogers, N. (1997), p. 30 and p. 202; O'Gorman, F. (1997) p. 328.
[58] O'Gorman, F. (1997) p. 328; see also Langford, P. (1989) p. 653 and Barry, J. and Brooks, C. (eds) (1994) p3.
[59] Barry, J. in Barry, J. and Brooks, C. (eds) (1994) p. 11; French, H.R. (2000) p. 277.
[60] French, H.R. (2000) p. 277.
[61] Barry, J. in Barry, J. and Brooks, C. (eds) (1994) p. 17.

utilise only one set of defining criteria (economic for example), suggesting that such methods are limited and do not give a clear enough picture of the middling sorts. Equally, the notion of national identity, or nationally acknowledged criteria that might connect this group of society, is misguided, with Barry suggesting that identity was very much rooted in 'local particularism'.[62] Yet, there was a clear sense of shared experience within the middling classes, some very apparent unifying tendencies, such as polite sociability or the need to work for a living, which set them apart from the lower and upper classes.[63] It is these shared experiences or landmarks that assist historians of this period to understand the nature of eighteenth-century social stratification and the variety of lives within the generalised social groupings. People were caught up in the intricacies of playing a role, socially determined and relational, and utilised a range of identities which were multiple and context driven.[64] Gender, family ties, social relationships and hierarchical position were all affirmed by the consumption of specific types of objects whose meaning was part of a symbolic language shared by others.[65]

More widely, material symbolism allowed the effective communication of identity beyond the boundaries of the family or immediate social territory. Object consumption, including food, clothes and furniture, was a means of advertising membership of a particular layer of society or group. In the extreme case of the Beau Monde, the elite London crowd, the purchase of expensive items of clothing from particular shops or of bespoke furniture were part of a strategy for maintaining affiliation and confirming a sense of solidarity.[66] The introduction of goods displaying novelty, innovation and fashion facilitated a clearer articulation of domestic space. This extended the owner's knowledge of taste and refinement into the public domain, allowing the household to be measured in relation to other households of a similar social standing as well as in terms of ever changing cultural expectations.[67] Such common cultural codes operated at all levels of society and not only served to maintain social cohesion, but also as a barrier to potential incomers[68]. Clammer also notes that this adherence to prescribed social practice allowed for the toleration of occasional rebels without fear of a threat to the wider status quo.[69]

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[62] French, H.R. (2000); Barry, J. in Barry, J. and Brooks, C. (eds) (1994) p. 20.

[63] Langford, P. (1989) p. 652.

[64] Barry, J. in Barry, J. and Brooks, C. (eds) (1994) p. 15.

[65] Breen, T.H. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (1993) p. 250; Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006), introduction.

[66] Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 293-309

[67] Cf. Berg, M. (2005) p. 205-6.

[68] Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) p. 293; Kopytoff, I. in Appadurai, A. (1986) p78.

[69] Clammer, J. in Shields, R. (ed) (1992).

According to Baudrillard, the primary role of consumption was the manipulation of signs, where the meaning and not simply the function of an object is consumed. In terms of group identity, this manipulation of symbols included the appropriation of material culture by different groups to project association and image. Hebdige discusses this in research about the Mod culture of the 1960s, where he explains that goods previously identified with mainstream culture (i.e. the moped) were appropriated by Mods, their sign value being manipulated to create sub-cultural identity. It aptly demonstrates that signs were not understood in the same way by all observers and that objects with the same function can possess quite different symbolic and social value.[70] In the eighteenth century the consumption of second hand goods meant that the meanings of goods were in a constant state of flux, with the meaning ascribed to an object by one owner being superseded by the use and meaning of another.[71] With each cycle the object becomes part of a different framework of collective goods; a slightly different scene is therefore set, both in terms of space and meaning. Clothing was widely recycled, particularly through the bequests of clothes in women's wills or as gifts from the lady of the house to her servants. They were valued for the cloth used, but also because they were easily transformed with some additions and alterations, into more fashionable items – or, indeed, cashed in and thus exchanged for other material objects.[72]

Material goods were not, however, consumed in a vacuum, they became a set of belongings and symbols with a collective identity of their own.[73] Objects were distributed to signify areas of utility and of private, semi-public and public space.[74] As a group, goods were used to convey a sense and understanding of taste, something which was particularly important at a time when status through excess fell out of favour with the expanding middle classes, to be replaced by a more delicate articulation of gentility through moderation and virtue. Vickery's recent study on the purchase and selection of wallpaper confirms the view that customers were concerned with keeping up to date with fashion whilst avoiding the danger of being 'too showey'.[75]

Yet taste in itself is not easily defined. Woodruff Smith links the concept of taste with the moral worth of the individual, with health and character, and that under such constraints social

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[70] Baudrillard, J. (1996); Hebdige, D. in Hall, S. and Jefferson, T. (eds) (1976) pp. 87-98.

[71] Stobart, J. in in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2006);Van Damme, I. in in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2006).

[72] Vickery, A. (1998); Berg, M. (2005).

[73] Douglas, M. and Isherwood, B. (1978) p.72, Chapter 4.

[74] See Andersson, G.(2006); Kross, J. (1999); Nenandic, S. (1994).

[75] Vickery, A. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 201-221; cf. Berg, M. (2005), Berry, H. (2002).

roles became idealised – taste became personified.[76] Maxine Berg, however, highlights the sensual nature of 'taste': its "shapes, scents, colours, flavour and sounds". She also argues that, if taste is considered as variable and made up of sensual responses, we can begin to understand its relationship with fashion.[77] Objects considered to be of good taste by observers reflected on the refinement of the owner. Thus, the fear of failing to keep up with the cultural demands of taste could well have been a motive for particular kinds of consumption. As Veblen points out, consumption provided the cultural orientation for refinement, it therefore follows that the wrong type of consumption created a negative social impact. Parson Woodforde comments on a meal he had in 1783, 'Each course nine Dishes, but most of the things spoiled by being so frenchified in dressing' his feeling was clear, despite previous comments on the handsomeness of his host's furniture, their taste was in question.[78]

Taste was linked directly with consumption through the materials required to keep the domestic arena and external image up to date; it manifested itself as a keystone of the new rituals surrounding the consumption of hot beverages, (tea-taking, for example), which increased in popularity throughout the century and across social divides. The accessories connected to this new ritual (tea tables, chests, cups, saucers, teapots and trays) are noted as part of a widespread increase in material goods during this time.[79] but they were also indicative of the pressures created by fashion and a 'polite' culture, households must be seen to possess such accoutrements.[80] Whyman explains how sociable visits, to take tea with members of a social network, were couched in symbolic meaning, correctness and taste. Actors who were unable to read and therefore to display the significant symbols within these social encounters were likely to cause serious offence or be branded as impolite, unrefined and lacking in taste[81]. Indeed, the consequences of social faux pas or of not displaying the requisite consumer knowledge could be a reduction of status, exclusion and diminished personal moral worth.

Good manners and self-control were external indicators of social knowledge. Equally important to taste was the display of cultural knowledge through the consumption of books, music, clocks,

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[76] Smith, W.D. (1992) p.279; see also Edwards, C. (2005) p. 89.

[77] Berg, M. (2005) p. 249.

[78] Beresford, J.(1967) p. 210.

[79] Weatherill, L. (1988); Sarti, R. (2002).

[80] Smith, W.D. (2002); Herman, B. L. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 37-59.

[81] Whyman, S. E. (2002), chapter 4; cf. Vickery, A (1998) and Borsay, P. (1989).

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and art.[82] Bourdieu notes the importance of cultural capital in the maintenance of social relations and identity, and highlights the central role consumption plays in the habitus of actors.[83] Cultural achievement therefore reflected directly on status and, as with the possession of material objects, a lack of knowledge reflected badly on ones character. The successful ownership of cultural and material goods was vital in gaining social acceptance and a good reputation.

Not all consumption, however, resulted from an act of purchase. Indeed many anthropological studies focus on the meaning of goods in gift relations.[84] Just as today, people in the early modern period would have experienced commodities through transactions in a rich and thriving gift culture.[85] Gifts of objects (food, clothes, furniture and time (visits)) served to strengthen group and familial identities through a web of obligations developed over time.[86] Grieg discusses the loan of jewellery for social occasions between members of the *Beau Monde* and notes that onlookers responded to the layered symbolism created by such gestures: the value of the jewels on loan, who was wearing them, who had lent them for the evening and so on. The relationship between the parties involved was interpreted as part of the display of material goods and utilised the obligations created to develop and maintain cohesion.[87] Indeed, similar links were accomplished by the bequests of personal items in wills, as previously mentioned with regard to the giving of clothing. Social and familial ties were, of course, emphasised, but such post-mortem activity ensured that the flow of material goods continued within existing social networks.

There is of course a danger in relying on overtly cultural explanations of eighteenth century motives in consumption and thus losing sight of the economic act of consumption. Grassby, states that 'people are culturally influenced but not culturally constructed', warning that the 'material aspects of culture should never be subordinated to its symbolic manifestations'.[88] Indeed there is a risk that theorists might view the cultural contexts of the eighteenth century

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[82] For a discussion on the rise of manners and self control, as traced through probate inventories see Blondé, B. in Blondé, B. et al. (eds) (2006) pp. 37-52.

[83] Bourdieu, P. (1984).

[84] See for example, Appadurai, A. (1986); Carrier, J. G. (1995).

[85] Finn, M. (2000).

[86] Whyman, S. E. (1999); and see Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) for examples of Woodforde's gifting like that on p. 381.

[87] Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006), pp. 303-4.

[88] Grassby, R. (2005) p. 603. See also White, J. (2006), Campbell, C. (1987), Trentmann, F. unpublished paper (2004).

from an entirely modern perspective and, in the process, lose contemporary notions of the individual. Carrier argues that the boundary between people and things in early modern Europe was far more fluid than it is now: the same intellectual distance was not present. With this in mind, the importance of material goods in the creation of identities is clear.[89]

This brief discussion has highlighted the complex nature of consumption in the eighteenth century. The cultural context for the increasing availability of commodities was one of a highly stratified society, whose boundaries were undergoing a significant upheaval. The process of identity creation, for individuals and wider groups, was paramount to the stability of society, and was articulated by the consumption of material goods. The significance too of the social framework of taste must not be underplayed and appeared to colour the choices made by people from all walks of life. Motivations for consumption during this period were both economic and cultural: they were mutually inclusive spheres of daily life and not easily separated. Eighteenth-century consumption was a process of negotiation in a changing world, employing goods as symbols and language. However, it is possible that people did not always act with others in mind - even within such an extensive social and cultural framework as outlined above.

The motivations for consumption though complex were largely met by an ability to actively consume, particularly by those in the elite. Regardless of the actual motivation retail outlets were increasingly on hand to facilitate both the creation of social identity and the realisation of desire. An increase in consumer demand for novel goods, functional and/or socially significant objects was met by retailers and suppliers, who not only provided the objects of desire, they created a novel environment in which to sell them.

I.3 Retailing in the eighteenth-century

Current literature relating to the history of retailing in Eighteenth-Century Britain has sought to dispel the assumptions of previous decades of researchers, suggesting that nothing very much of consequence happened to the retail sector between the middle ages and the nineteenth century. It was assumed that recognisably modern retail practices were developed in parallel with the sweeping economic changes brought about by the industrial revolution.[90] Shops and other such

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[89] Carrier, J. (1995).
[90] Adburgham, A. (1979), Alexander, D. (1970) p. 231.

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premises were assumed to be basic both in terms of their physical space and the way it was utilised, and in the type of commodities that were regularly sold. What has instead been brought to light is that the eighteenth-century was a time of steady development in retailing. Changes which were seen in the mid to late seventeenth century in the fashionable shopping areas of London, were expanding into the provinces and to some extent across the social divides.[91] By the end of the century the commodities available from retail traders included many imported luxuries, fashionable goods transported from London and other areas of Britain - on a scale that McKendrick et al., described as revolutionary.[92] Developments during the eighteenth century allowed the creation of a new kind of consumer, one that was discerning and able to strategically utilise knowledge of different aspects of retail to procure the best quality and well priced items from an ever increasing array of goods. Shopping had become a pastime in its own right and was, by the end of the century, a fixture in the leisure routine of many polite and sociable people. The idea that the eighteenth century was a humdrum consumer vacuum, void of any initiative or change has been dismissed by much of this recent work.[93]

Linda Levy Peck's volume on seventeenth century consumption of luxuries maintains the above argument, though the analysis is confined to the salubrious and fashionable retail areas of the metropolis: the Exchanges and shops of the West End. It clearly makes the point that the framework for consumption of a new set of luxuries was in place by the end of the seventeenth century and that in the metropolis such luxuries were easily available for those with enough money. Imported cloth, glassware, chinaware, toys and trinkets, not to mention consumables such as coffee, tea, chocolate and tobacco, were becoming readily available to those with enough funds to partake of such luxuries.[94] The monarch was seen as the maker of fashion within the upper classes of the time and thus was the primary agent for the creation of new luxurious desires. Kroen points out, however, that courtly consumption led by the monarch, was already being threatened by a literature on the moral dangers of conspicuous consumption, as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century.[95] Much further down the social scale and away from London, rural communities were also being exposed to newer, cheaper, goods and materials (which they would have considered as luxuries) by way of petty chapmen.[96] The flow

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[91] Mui, H-C and Mui, L H. (1984); Walsh, C. in Benson, J. and Ugolini, L. (eds) (2003).

[92] McKendrick, N. et al. (1982); Berg, M. (2005) chapters 2 & 3.

[93] Berry, H. (2002); Cox, N. (2000) Introduction; Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004); Walsh, C. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006).

[94] Levy Peck, L. (2005) p. 352; and Chapter 1.

[95] Kroen, S. A. (2004).

[96] Spufford, M. (1984).

of consumer goods that ran through these channels was, by the late seventeenth century, clearly already more than a trickle.[97] These goods included imported cloths, small printed books, and other small items. The chapmen operated over large areas, often restocking in London.[98]

What is clear from both of these studies is that while the retailing was not entirely confined to the fixed shop, the goods on offer to people across the country, at varying levels of expense, were relatively sophisticated and becoming part of the transmission of wider cultural changes. This exposure to an escalating array of goods was heightened by an increase in the number of fixed shops across the country over the course of the eighteenth century, as described by Mui and Mui.[99] Their comprehensive study suggests that developments in transportation and communication were factors in the growth, as was an increasing population (particularly the middling classes), but they do not expose the urban/rural division of the figures.[100] Carole Shammas agrees that population density was a vital factor in the growth of fixed retail space, however she suggests that a growing fondness of certain groceries (tea, coffee, tobacco, sugar etc) was also undeniably important, especially in rural locales where a shopkeeper needed an immediate return on his goods in order to survive.[101] Indeed, the evidence suggests that shopkeepers, despite utilising specific occupational titles to describe themselves (e.g. grocer or bookseller), supplemented their income by selling a wider range of goods. Or as Cox suggests, they stocked a combination of goods, ordinary every day ones and those that were a bit more luxurious, requiring a greater consideration on the part of the customer.[102] The minimisation of risk, on a fiscal level, was also achieved by leaving a 'manager' in charge of the shop, usually the wife or other relative, whilst the shop owner worked or traded elsewhere, possibly acquiring stock or collecting debts from customers, but sometimes in an entirely different craft.[103]

The separation of goods, as suggested by Cox, into everyday and luxury, probably in different areas of the shop, had implications for display and sales techniques. Integral to the display of diverse items, those requiring considered choices not based on a customers basic needs, were

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[97] Spufford, M. (1984) p. 4.

[98] Spufford, M. and Went, J. (1995) p. 26.

[99] Mui, H-C and Mui, L.H. (1984); Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) p.31.

[100] See also Berg, M. (2005) p. 212.

[101] Shammas, C. (1990), p. 251, 260; See Smith, W. D. (1992) for one explanation of increases in such a market within the eighteenth century cultural context.

[102] Bennett, A. (2005) p. 59; Cox, N. (2000) p. 89; Stobart et al. (2007) p. 154.

[103] Cox, N, (2000) p. 86, p. 99, p. 131.

changes in both the outward appearance of shops and their internal organisation of space.[104] Research has shown that the external features of fixed shops changed over the course of the century, with the most common open window shop being replaced by glazed windows which gave the shopkeeper additional control over his retail environment. Not only was he able to display goods in the window and manufacture a context within the space itself by installing shop counters and fittings, he was able to control the clientele that came through the door.[105]

Within the shop space itself chests, boxes, and trestles were replaced with a fixed counter, shelves and nests of drawers for stock.[106] On a practical level these changes made the goods for sale more accessible to staff and customers, with the added benefit of creating an impression of organisation on the part of the shopkeeper. On another level however, these developments in the organisation of internal space was indicative of a move towards the professionalisation of shopkeeping as a trade in itself.[107] Additional lighting and the staging of shop interiors to appeal to a particular sector of the community (especially the middling sort) resulted in a wider exposure to the material opportunities open to people. Glazed windows meant that they could see these as they walked past the shops. Such attention to detail reflected on the trader and his family directly and, since at this time shopkeepers were likely to be residing behind or above the shop, an attractive and fashionable shop display and building exterior were the positive proof of respectability and refinement.

Contemporary urban improvements and changes in priorities for corporations meant that the shop was not transforming itself in isolation. Peter Borsay has outlined the provincial initiatives in street maintenance, lighting, cleaning and widening, alongside the re-fashioning of older buildings with new facades. At the same time a wide range of new cultural spaces, such as theatres, libraries, assemblies, gardens and so on were commissioned and built.[108] Within this context the shop began to play a crucial role alongside fashionable cultural pursuits - shopping was fast becoming a leisure activity in its own right. Indeed, Stobart illustrates how high status retailers tended to cluster around these cultural attractions, altering the socio-cultural dynamics of particular spaces within towns.[109] Shops servicing the needs of the lower ranks were found

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[104] Fowler, C. in Alexander and Akehurst (eds) (1999) p. 51.

[105] Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005); Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004); Cox, N. and Walsh, C. in Cox, N. (2000), Chapter 3.

[106] Davis, D. (1966) p. 193-5; Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005); Stobart et al. (2007) chapter 5.

[107] Van Aert, L. and Van Damme, I in Blondé, B. et al. (2005) p. 166

[108] Borsay, P. (1989); Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) p. 32.

[109] Stobart, J. (1998) pp. 3-21.

elsewhere, away from the elite cultural centres, but they too existed within their own cultural context and were not simply a watered down version of select establishments. They provided their customers with a range of goods, new and old, at a price and quality they could afford.[110]

The shopkeeper's ability to target his resources was a consequence of the most enduring feature of early modern retail, the creation and maintenance of long-lasting relationships with customers. This affiliation, often beginning during the retailer's apprenticeship, had benefits for both parties.[111] For the shopkeeper, a guaranteed customer base was essential, particularly at a time when it was considered that demand was relatively static. This was linked to a moral code that existed between retailers which prevented them from actively poaching customers from their contemporaries. A transaction history and knowledge of the customer's social status was vital when dealing in credit, but it also enabled the retailer to influence the buyer, by offering particular types of goods or limiting the selection in some way.[112] It also facilitated the creation of a recognisable setting conducive to the selling of domestic and fashion items. The customer too invested in the relationship in the hope of receiving the best advice, quality and value for goods sourced from across the country and abroad.[113] In London, those who existed outside the upper echelons of the elite Beau Monde and who wanted to be considered fashionable were reliant to some extent on shopkeepers to provide them with the knowledge of new styles and manufactures, in the same way people on the periphery of any status group did.[114] Both Cox and van Damme have highlighted the importance of retailers in making new items comprehensible to customers. Alongside displays within the shops, customers were more able to explore the ways in which new commodities and fashions could be integrated within their existing domestic spaces.[115] The new emphasis in the eighteenth century on personal taste, and the social and cultural implications of displaying the correct things at home, meant that consumer choices had to be guided by what van Damme describes as the 'social construction of taste and fashion', the responsibility for which often fell on the shoulders of the retailers.[116]

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[110] Bennett, A. (2005) p. 38; Mitchell, I. in Clark, P. (ed.) (1984) p. 274; Mui, H-C and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 109.

[111] Berg, M. (1995) p. 36, p. 233; Berry, H. (2002) pp. 375-94; Carrier, J. G. (1995), chapter 3; Cox, N. (2000) pp. 127-136; Edwards, C. (2005) p. 39; Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) pp. 34-35; Smart Martin, A. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) p. 179.

[112] Smart Martin, A. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) p. 182.

[113] See Edwards, C. (2005) Chapter 3.

[114] Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) p. 307.

[115] Van Damme, I. in Blondé, B. et al. (2006) p. 201.

[116] Van Damme, I. in Blondé, B. et al. (2006) p. 199.

The role of the shopkeeper as 'taste-maker' or at least as a fashion facilitator, has been acknowledged elsewhere. Kimberley Chrisman Campbell discusses the role of the milliner who supplied small goods other than hats, 'The milliner supplied these trimmings and accessories and her influence was paramount.'[117] Glennie and Thrift also note the importance of the shopkeeper in making new goods familiar to customers who trusted the shopkeeper to provide up to date and good quality items.[118] Naturally, the retailer had to tailor metropolitan high fashion to the tastes of his provincial clientele, but the use of pattern books for furniture makers and the provision of goods and ideas from the capital meant that fashion, taste, new ideas and new materials were within easy reach of provincial middling types and country elites. Moreover, with an apparent increase in the numbers of second hand items available, facilitated by the rapid changes in fashion, the lower sections of the middling sort were exposed to these newer goods as well; they were able to partake in commandeering the elite cast-offs to create their own fashions and tastes.[119] Again, even in the provision of second hand goods the role of the retailer was one of persuasion, he had to make the objects attractive to the consumer and enable them to place the object within their existing material frameworks.[120] The retailer was thus the pivotal point between production and consumption and made the novel goods, new or second hand, accessible to customers.[121]

Retailers were not just involved in face to face sales where active persuasion took place through the manipulation of the goods for sale or the relative quality of one item over another was made obvious. Amanda Vickery provides an insight into the use of agents, usually family members, in the purchase of items such as china and cloth.[122] These agents would only go to their trusted retailers, where a positive reputation and previous experiences were paramount. Walsh has more recently discussed this type of shopping, calling it 'proxy shopping', where trust is paramount, between consumer and proxy, and proxy and retailer; particularly when, as Vickery describes, ordering goods sight-unseen, and in this case wallpaper.[123] Ann Smart Martin comments on women utilising such connections from abroad. Again, they were reliant on a

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[117] Chrisman Campbell, K. (2002) pp. 158-9.

[118] Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) p. 36.

[119] cf. Lemire, B. in Blondé et al (eds) (2006).

[120] van Aert L. and van Damme, I. in Blondé et al. (2006) pp. 139-168; see also Stobart, J. in the same volume pp. 225-244.

[121] See also Edwards, C. (2005).

[122] Vickery, A. (1998) pp.165-169.

[123] Vickery, A. in Styles and Vickery (eds) (2006) pp. 201-221; Walsh, C. in Blondé et al. (2006) pp. 331-351.

relationship assumed to be an enduring and well-placed one.[124] Often the bonds were enhanced and maintained by more sociable activities such as tea taking with the proprietor of a shop, or having dinner with a merchant.[125]

Carrier suggests that around 1800 the relationship changed to something more impersonal, that fewer shops were connected to the home: objects were becoming more standardised so that the validation of the seller was no longer required, and customers were more familiar with the objects and therefore more able to formulate their own expectations. Increased demand began to abstract the consumer from the shopkeeper - a process closely linked with advertising and fixed pricing emerged.[126] While it is arguable that advertising made such a late appearance, with the first provincial paper appearing in 1706 in Norwich, advertising certainly developed as an art through the eighteenth century.[127] Berg and Clifford explain that advertising occurred earlier and not just newspapers were utilised, with trade cards being most important between the 1730s and the 1770s. In reality, what was being sold was not a specific set of goods or products, but the reputation and business image of the shop.[128] Advertising in newspapers and the presentation of wares in shop windows were also creating awareness, not only of the products, but also of the shops themselves. In this way shopkeepers were able to manipulate their image within the context of their social environment and to reinforce the relationship that had once been created directly between themselves and the customers.

Retail of course was more than the sum of the emerging fixed shops in the eighteenth century. Consumers employed a variety of strategies to meet the needs of their households, including the shop, but also the petty chapmen, fairs, markets, second hand sales and so on[129]. As Mitchell points out, one form of retail did not supersede the others; they co-existed throughout the century.[130] Shoppers negotiated their way around their purchasing opportunities with skill; with the help of their own social networks and the those of trusted retailers they were able to access a wide variety of goods.

Cox suggests that the eighteenth century consumer was aware of wider issues when choosing a

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[124] Smart Martin, A. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) p. 193.
[125] Berry, H. (2002) p. 386; cf. Cox, N. (2000); see also Beresford, J. (ed) (1967) for a number of examples.
[126] Carrier, J. G. (1996) pp. 74-79.
[127] Cox, N. (2000) p. 109.
[128] Berg, M. and Clifford, H. unpublished conference paper, (February 2004) p. 9.
[129] See Beresford, J. (ed) (1967).
[130] Mitchell, I. in Clark, P (ed) (1984) p. 264.

particular retailer to frequent. Although the relationship between the trader and customer remained paramount, she notes that Samuel Pepys considered the social value of being seen purchasing items at a particular shop.[131] However, the depth of this socially strategic consideration is unlikely to have had an influence in the acquisition of ordinary items and, as Glennie and Thrift remind us, most acts of consumption were 'naturalised' rather than consciously 'calculated'. As such shopping was part of the daily routine, whether the place of purchase was a shop, a market, fair or warehouse.[132] The distinction appears to be when items of luxury were purchased.

The division of goods on this basis, between the mundane items of daily life and the luxury or semi-luxury items purchased intermittently suggests that different strategies might be employed in the process of acquisition. Berry demonstrates that the rules of conduct varied according to the location of the retail premises and the shop type, and the kind of goods being purchased. The 'Browse-Bargain' model that Berry identifies allowed for sensory interaction between the consumer and the goods, while the polite and deferential behaviour of the shopkeeper reassured the consumer. Following inspection of the goods, and if a choice was made, a bargain was struck; the illusion of polite sociable interaction remaining fully intact.[133] Vickery, meanwhile, points out that there was a division in the types of goods purchased along gender lines. Women were more involved in the day to day provisioning of the household, directly or through servants; whilst men had the final say on larger more expensive and unusual purchases, regardless of the motivations that led to the decision to buy.[134] For women it would seem that the bulk of their shopping experiences was for household items, but even so the role of the retailer remained crucial, particularly if the servants of middle status households, or the elite, were charged with purchases.

The use of another party to source and purchase items for others, or shopping by proxy, is well documented in the world of the Lancashire women discussed by Vickery, and Cox notes that the rise in numbers of trusted carrier services around the country made mail ordering a viable alternative to shopping in person.[135] Vickery notes in her more recent work on the purchasing of wallpaper that many customers relied on the abilities of the supplier to gauge exactly the kind

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[131] Cox, N. (2000) pp. 126-7

[132] Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1989) p. 39.

[133] Berry, H. (2002) pp. 387-390.

[134] Berry, H. (2002) p. 383; Vickery, A. (1998).

[135] Vickery, A. (1998); Cox, N. (2000) p. 123; Hartigan-O'Conner, E. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (2006) pp. 133-5.

of thing they were looking for, with only vague instructions.[136] Indeed, the reputation and knowledge of a retailer or trader was discovered through word of mouth, personal experience or, as Grieg suggests, through satisfactory reports from other customers within the same social groups. This meant that shopkeepers could trade more widely than their immediate locale and were relied upon more heavily for their knowledge of taste and fashion than was the case in face to face circumstances where customers could compare items and make a more informed personal choice.[137]

The daily grind of shopping for mundane items to service household and family needs was only one side of the coin for many eighteenth century shoppers. Leisurely shopping, according to Hann and Stobart was beginning to emerge in the provinces at this time, as part of a wider leisure based culture existing within new urban centres.[138] Mitchell, some twenty years ago, noted that people utilised large cities for specialised goods, where a trip might be undertaken especially to choose and purchase a significant item. Provincial cities thus became shopping centres in the second half of the eighteenth century. [139] London of course had offered unique leisurely shopping opportunities before this. Walsh for example describes the shopping galleries of the exchanges of seventeenth century London, outlining the novelty of large numbers of retailers under one roof, with fixed stalls and open displays to tempt the well to do visitors promenading past in their small groups. Walsh also highlights the leisurely way in which customers walked round, browsing, window shopping (without the windows), haggling with the retailers and so on. Perhaps more importantly the social nature of the activity is underlined. Shopping had value as an experience, being seen at the exchange or at the right shops created the right sort of impression to others (especially those within a similar social milieu) who were also involved in a touch of light shopping before the rest of the days events unfolded. [140]

The emergence of provincial shopping centres alongside the increasing provision of urban cultural pursuits and opportunities (libraries, theatres, assemblies etc) within the same geographical areas as the luxury shops created a peculiarly eighteenth century development. As Stobart et al demonstrate, the boundaries between cultural experiences and consumption were

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[136] Vickery, A. Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006).

[137] Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 293-314.

[138] Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005)

[139] Mitchell, I. in Clark (1984) p. 263, p.270

[140] Walsh, C. in Benson, J. and Ugolini, L. (eds) (2003) pp52-79

becoming increasingly blurred. Within the newly constructed social spaces and the bright, welcoming, glazed shops of these refurbished town centres, men and women of the middling classes could easily browse and window-shop their way around town. The increasing numbers of novel goods available to those with the purse to satisfy their desires (and on display through the shop windows to those who could not afford to partake in this new form of consumption) were discussed with the shopkeeper and handled by the customer, often without making a purchase.[141] Meanwhile, shopkeepers were keen to accommodate the wishes of their customers, even if a sale was not the result of the interaction, he knew that the goods would be discussed with others.[142] This slow and considered browsing was of additional benefit to retailers who could assess the social standing and creditworthiness of the client, whilst initiating a deepening of the social relationship between the two which, as we have seen, was a central tenet of success.

The customers themselves had expectations of the relationship, not simply that the best advice would be given but that they would be treated in a particular way. Berry points out that the customers expected a certain amount of flattery which left the shopkeepers looking slightly sycophantic.[143] Some elite customers were served in their carriages without even entering the shop, whilst others were known to visit them in their homes.[144] However, the tactile and sensual experiences of the leisurely shopper, and the sociable nature of shop exchanges, further blurred the boundaries between the social and economic elements of consumption. The movement from one shop to another, dependent on both interest and need, was not cyclical as it had been in the shopping galleries of London, but had a satisfactory flow conducive to social networking and 'being seen'. The creation of elite or fashionable shopping areas within town, linked to the cultural amenities of provincial and spa towns, allowed for a more leisurely, almost symbiotic relationship between the environment and the activity of shopping itself.[145]

From the above brief discussion of eighteenth century retailing it is clear that there was a greater depth of consumer possibilities than historians had previously allowed, with shop numbers rising steadily over the period. Consumers were sophisticated in their strategies and used a number of different means to procure goods for their homes and families. The

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[141] See section on material culture above.

[142] Berry, H. (2002) p.387; Cox, N.(2000) p.143.

[143] Berry, H. (2002) pp. 387-8.

[144] see Cox's discussion of Turner (2000) pp. 128-9.

[145] Stobart et al, (2007), p. 148.

shopkeeper was responsible for introducing an array of new goods to the provincial population and for exciting the demand for new innovative goods specifically aimed at the middle classes, which, Berg reminds us, were not simply cheaper versions of commodities purchased by the elite.[146]

The wider cultural context changed the face of retailing, almost literally with urban renewal occurring in the provinces. With the proximity of retail to the new cultural centres, shopping was to become a fashionable pastime of the middling and elite members of society. Retailers responded to this change in status by creating, within the shop itself, a specialised selling space of comfort and display aimed at the customers they knew so well.[147] Goods were sold within a defined context, no longer through a window in most cases, and were made more appealing by large light windows and an atmosphere of sociability. In rural areas too, shops took over in importance from the petty chapman and offered their communities a range of goods which consumers supplemented by trips to the nearest large towns. Purchases by letter, agent or proxy were not uncommon but these still utilised the reputations of the retailer and the social networks of the consumer. The nineteenth century therefore, was not the *beginning* of a recognisably modern retail sector; it built on the sophistication of eighteenth century retailers and further modified the developments in retail practice that occurred during the earlier period.

The eighteenth-century was therefore an important period for consumption, retail and the spread of 'polite' culture, which had sociability at its heart. The new social imperatives, which were informing the choices of consumers during the century, were supported by the spread of a novel material culture which encouraged consumption of non-essential goods, rather than items with intrinsic value. These novel goods, described by Weatherill and others, were increasingly evident in probate inventories from the end of the seventeenth-century and into the first half of the eighteenth-century. Yet traditional goods were not entirely relinquished; they were still evident in the record alongside the novel goods, but the balance had shifted. Traditional means of consumption were also not entirely relinquished and the development of retail culture over this period suggests that retailers facilitated this move from essential to non-essential consumption by developing new ways of selling. Retailers had always had a role as informer and supplier, yet their role expanded as the century progressed to one of taste-maker, enabling

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[146] Berg, M (2005) p. 20.
[147] Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004); Berg, M (2005) p. 233

consumers to articulate their needs and desires through the expanding world of goods. The management of retail space, the use of display and the encouragement of sociable shopping meant that, during this period consumption, material culture, shopping and retail itself, underwent something of a transformation.

I.4   The research.

The above review has created the context for the research undertaken here, the findings of which are described in the following six chapters. The first chapter explores the nature of material culture and the consumption habits of over two hundred Norwich inhabitants through evidence found in probate inventories. The survey spans a period longer than those discussed in the key studies noted above, with documents from the 1670s to 1790, thus allowing a closer examination of the long-term consumption trends in provincial England.[148] Within this chapter too a more qualitative approach to the source was taken.

This informs a discussion of the creation of domestic space and of the ways in which material goods were used to define private and public space.

The definition of space is a feature of the second chapter, which focuses on urban renewal during the eighteenth-century and places Norwich within the wider 'urban renaissance' as discussed by Borsay and others.[149] The city underwent a notable amount of change, but it was not as rapid as that seen in other towns in England during this time. Purpose-built leisure arenas were created for use by the expanding middling classes and the elite as part of their social and cultural entertainment, yet occupational evidence from poll books suggests that the overall character of the city remained industrial even at the end of the century. This chapter explores the way the city maintained this dual identity (leisured and industrial) by investigating its changing occupational geography, and reveals the existence of a sizeable leisured town *within* the city itself.[150]

The geography of the city is again the focus of the third chapter, enhancing our understanding of the spatial distribution of retailing at both the city-wide and street level. The Norwich Trade Directory. was used to map traders – a technique utilised elsewhere, but generally for the nineteenth-century or later. The Directory used here had the benefit of a numbering system

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[148] For example Weatherill, L. (1988); Overton et al (2004).
[149] Borsay, P. (1989).
[150] McInnes, A. (1988).

devised by the publisher to make the listings clearer to readers. [151] The mapping exercise revealed the real correlation between the dispersal pattern of luxury shops and the dispersal of the leisured classes. Similarly the locations of 'shopkeeper's, who were linked with a more general style of trading, were found largely away from the leisured central parishes. A clear clustering of drapery and haberdashery outlets was also uncovered, in two streets in the city centre, which formed part of a fashionable link between the retail centre and the two key cultural centres of Norwich.

Chapters four, five and six, move on from the broad geography of retailing to consider the way retail spaces and practices changed over the course of the eighteenth-century; looking at the notion of 'modernisation' within the sector and the social construction of the role of the shopkeeper. Chapter four examines the alteration in retail practice, which occurred during this period, as well as the significant changes in retail spaces, and considers whether the evidence in Norwich itself supports claims for a 'retail revolution'. In fact there was clear evidence to suggest that shop exteriors underwent alteration, such as the use of glazed windows, and that spaces were utilised for display. Equally probate inventory evidence suggested that retailers were consciously constructing a well ordered commercial space by using shelving, drawers, counters and display cabinets, There was less evidence however, to support the idea that shop spaces were highly decorated or furnished with comfortable items for customer use. Using a variety of sources Norwich's retail position is explored and used to inform the wider debate on retail change, suggesting in the end, that change was profound, rather than revolutionary. [152]

The following chapter develops the notion of change and applies it to the role of the shopkeeper. This is not an area of enquiry that has been tackled very often in the literature, in part due to the lack of direct evidence. However, having tracked the changing nature of retail, is it possible to assume that the job of the shopkeeper also changed considerably over the century? The way that people shopped during this period can shed light on how shopkeepers facilitated daily and luxury consumption (and everything between), and mediated the increasing complexity of the commercial world. This is a key area of discussion. Defoe outlined clearly the business and personal requirements for success in the retail trade and, while his thoughts might be a rather romantic ideal, the suggestion that retailers had to master all aspects of the trade was clear. Shopkeepers during the eighteenth-century at the very least had to facilitate the

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[151] Chase, W. (1783).

[152] See Walsh, C. (1995); Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004); Borsay, P. (1989); Blondé, B. and van Damme, I. (2008).

needs and expectations of the customers: keep abreast of the latest fashions, and have the language and skill to negotiate with suppliers spread all over the country and potentially the world. That the trade did not stand still is evidenced in the bills, letters, catalogues and shop books in the archives. Developments in retail were also clearly illustrated in newspaper advertisements during the century and this source forms basis for discussions in chapter six.

Norwich was home to one of the first (if not the first) provincial newspapers, *The Norwich Post*, which began printing in 1701; this was soon followed by the Norwich Gazette in 1706.[153] The beauty of this source is the fact that, although ephemeral in nature, there are surviving copies dating back to this early period which allow a detailed long-term assessment of retail advertising in one location across the whole century. It is therefore possible to track real change, without concerns about radically different locations, economic structures and so on. The primary concern had been, at the beginning of the research, to quantify the importance of newspaper advertising within the broader marketing strategies available in provincial England at this time, in order to show the modernisation of retail. However, as the data was collected it became clear that, while certainly outlining an increasing use of newspaper advertising by retailers, the source was rich in qualitative material that could be used to really understand more about the active construction of shopkeeper reputation and virtual images of the shop. Moreover, the construction of the advertisements themselves, the language, content and layout, reveal a great deal about the fashionable imperatives of the day, which were of importance nationally as well as more locally in Norwich itself.

This study draws on the rich archive of information held in Norwich, and sheds light on the daily lives of its inhabitants. At the same time the research informs the wider debates concerning the retail and consumption revolutions in the eighteenth-century; each chapter extends current knowledge, and looks at the evidence in a more qualitative way leading to new insight into the structure and function of retail in provincial England during this period.

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[153] Fawcett, T. (1972).

The material scene: a survey of Norwich probate inventories.

Scholars of British material culture have tended to concentrate their efforts on quantitative research methodologies in order to trace the emergence and use of novel and luxury items during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. The use of probate inventories to trace the changing material domestic scene has been part of an historical agenda for some years. As early as 1980 Carl-Johan Gadd suggested that social changes could be illustrated through inventories. Lorna Weatherill's ground breaking national study of probate inventories undertaken in the late 1980s set the benchmark for subsequent regional and local studies, which followed a now predictable numerical analysis. [1] The general picture created by her study was one of a distinct alteration in the type and number of goods appraised, between 1675 and 1725. Overton et al's comparison of Kent and Cornish inventories highlighted the regional differences thrown up by Weatherill's study, and Estabrook's discussions regarding the region around Bristol, exposed localised differences between urban and rural communities.[2] These, and other studies, confirm Weatherill's finding, that regional differences notwithstanding, there appeared to be a shift in consumption patterns away from wealth retaining goods of the past, towards less durable, cheaper, material culture, which in later years was increasingly influenced by fashion, and these developments were also seen across Europe.[3]

According to Maxine Berg, novelty was as much about innovative production and material use as it was function and decoration.[4] Novel goods, with an emphasis on style and decoration, were seen in increasing numbers, alongside the use new materials (e.g. mahogany, porcelain), and changes in production processes, imitating imported goods both fuelling and responding to the demand for semi-luxury goods from a growing middling class.[5] The desire for these new things, including clocks, mirrors, china and glassware, window curtains, toys, trinkets, pictures and goods relating to leisure time, was

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[1] Gadd, C-J. in Woude, A. and Schurrman, A. (eds) (1980) pp. 229-237; Weatherill, L. (1988).
[2] Estabrook, C.B. (1998); Overton et al. (2004).
[3] See for example, Beckett, J. and Smith, C. (2000); Shammas, C (1990); Nijboer, H in Blondé et al. (eds) (2005); Clifford, H. in Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (eds) (1999); Sarti, R. (2002).
[4] Berg, M. in Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (eds) (1999) pp. 63-85.
[5] Crowley, J.E. (2001); Edwards, C. (2006); Overton et al., (1994).

not borne out of a need to emulate the social elite as Veblen supposes, nor were people purchasing goods that would previously have been produced at home, these objects were integral to the negotiation of changes in the wider socio-cultural context, and were utilised as a means of negotiating social position, identity and space within a relatively fluid cultural framework.[6]

. In order to place the city of Norwich within such frameworks, during the long eighteenth century, a survey of just over two hundred probate inventories was undertaken. The results of this research confirms significant changes in domestic material ownership within the city itself, and illustrates that these changes were neither short lived, nor confined to the social elite. In the first section of this chapter, the results of the survey are discussed, in terms of their comparison to the national and London based figures published by Weatherill, and a more localised analysis, highlighting particular differences and similarities. In addition to this an occupational analysis of the selected material goods of three groups of inhabitants (widows, weavers and traders/retailers) was also addressed, and a comparison with Weatherill attempted.

In the second section the notion that probate inventories take the material goods out of context, and do not reflect the true nature of domestic life, when considered in.numerical terms, is explored.[7] It is argued that the inventory, when considered qualitatively, *does* in fact allow the creation of a context: for particular objects, for groups of objects, and for the people inhabiting these spaces. The same novel goods are highlighted as in the first section and tracked within rooms, and the inventories are analysed using a case study approach, exposing the problems created when considering the social domestic scene through an assumed division of space as 'public' or 'private'. Suggesting instead that a more flexible view of domestic space will allow a more realistic understanding of the way homes were negotiated and populated, and ultimately a deeper understanding of space, identity and meaning as reflected in the novel goods found in Norwich homes.

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[6] Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) ; Herman, B.L. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006).
[7] Grassby, R. (2005) p. 598.

1.1 The Survey

With the above themes in mind the survey of Norwich inventories was undertaken. Although on a smaller scale than other studies, it sought to place Norwich within this changing material context. Primarily the purpose of the survey was to gauge the levels of ownership, and whether these were similar to other parts of the country; of particular importance when considering the status of the city at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[8] Margaret Ponsonby's recent book, suggests that the nature of provincial material culture is just that, provincial; bearing a relation to the culture found in London, but with a localised, provincial, interpretation.[9] As the second city was Norwich's material culture markedly different from the capital? From the point of view of the overall purpose of the project, this survey provides a solid basis for the analysis of the retail activities of the city, by uncovering the kinds of objects citizens were exposed to and the connections this culture had to the wider social and cultural scene.

However, the picture created by probate inventories alone is not a complete one. Probate inventories are notoriously imperfect as historical sources, and the majority of in-depth studies usually qualify their data with a warning that the inventories only cover certain types of moveable goods. Food, drink and other perishable provisions, were seldom recorded, indeed in only one example was there any mention of family provisions, but otherwise the dietary habits of the population were conspicuously absent. Real estate also was seldom noted, although again there are a few exceptions to the general rule.[10] The point being that the inventories did not record every aspect of daily life or consumables, or indeed show an accurate account of a person's wealth.[11] The inventory must be treated with caution. Ownership of goods was dependent on a number of things – women , for example, had fewer possessions of their own than men did. And in some cases a lack of ownership was not proof of a lack of knowledge of particular items or a lack of daily exposure to a varied and rich material culture; it is quite possible that culture was transmitted without every individual owning all the objects associated with it.

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[8] See Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2005).

[9] Ponsonby, M. (2006).

[10] The inventory of John Ames in 1734 included a freehold property in Norwich and a country estate, NRO, ANW 23/22A/6.

[11] Cox, J. and Cox, N. in Arkell et al. (eds) (2000); Overton et al. (2004) pp. 14-18; see also chapter four in Arkell et al. (eds) (2000).

Jeff and Nancy Cox summarise the probate process and highlight that the probate inventory existed as part of this process, in part to check up that the executor was doing the job properly; but it also served to protect the executor from having to pay off the debts of the deceased by recording the exact value of goods and chattels. Without an inventory it was assumed that all debts were covered by the value of the estate, and although it was not a legal requirement for the executors to create an inventory, it ensured that all parties were protected.[12]

Although on the surface one inventory seems easily comparable with other inventories from different areas, they do not in fact follow a uniform, or prescribed, pattern. The information included in the inventory seems to be very much down to the appraiser, and while the format is similar across samples, they are not neatly formalised, unlike those in Sweden after 1724, where familial and personal information was included.[13] Priestley and Corfield recognise this in their article about Norwich room use, stating that 'The paucity and patchiness of their survival, and their inconsistency, make it difficult to reach any general conclusions about the population as a whole', and later they go on to say that the practice of listing room names 'was simply an expedient form of tabulation for the appraisers, and in no way an obligatory part of inventory making.'[14] At an even more basic level the inventory is beset with other irritations, for example being illegible, damaged, incomplete, all highlighted by the fact that the majority of Norwich inventories are stored and read on microfilm.[15] However, they remain a hugely useful resource in setting up the material nature of Norwich homes.

The survey of 201 inventories was the result of an initial search at the Norfolk Record Office (NRO), online, for Norwich city probate records only, between the years 1660 and 1800. From the five hundred or so inventories that resulted from these parameters, roughly half were chosen. Further reduction in the sample occurred because some inventories were damaged, smudged, or contained no details about the material goods of the home, for example, Thomas Morris's inventory of 1690, noted only a single price for

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[12] Cox, J. and Cox, N. in Arkell et al. (2000) pp.25-8.
[13] Gadd, C.-J. (1980) p. 229.
[14] Priestley, U. & Corfield, P.J. (1982) pp. 94, 100 respectively.
[15] Grassby, R. (2005) p. 598; Garrard, R.P. (1980) p. 61.

his wearing apparel, and a note of monies owing for work done.[16]

In terms of the socio-economic level of those leaving inventories the majority of them were from what would be considered the middling ranks of society, neither poor nor rich, but somewhere in between. Of course, this sector, of middling types, is a broad one, but the poor, as elsewhere in the country, were under-represented, possibly as a result of prohibitive nature of the fees connected with the probate process. Figure 1.1 provides an illustration of the total values of the inventories across the entire period, clearly highlighting the middling nature of the sample, and the wide spectrum of values within the middling strata itself. Within the entire sample the lowest inventory value was 13 shillings for Mary Wilde in 1739, and the highest for the grocer Thomas Wise in 1702, appraised at £2, 657. [17]

Figure 1.1

Appraised value of Norwich inventories, 1673-1791

- £5 and under
- £6 - £20
- £21 - £100
- £101 - £200
- £201 - £300
- £301 - £600
- £601 - £1000
- £1001+
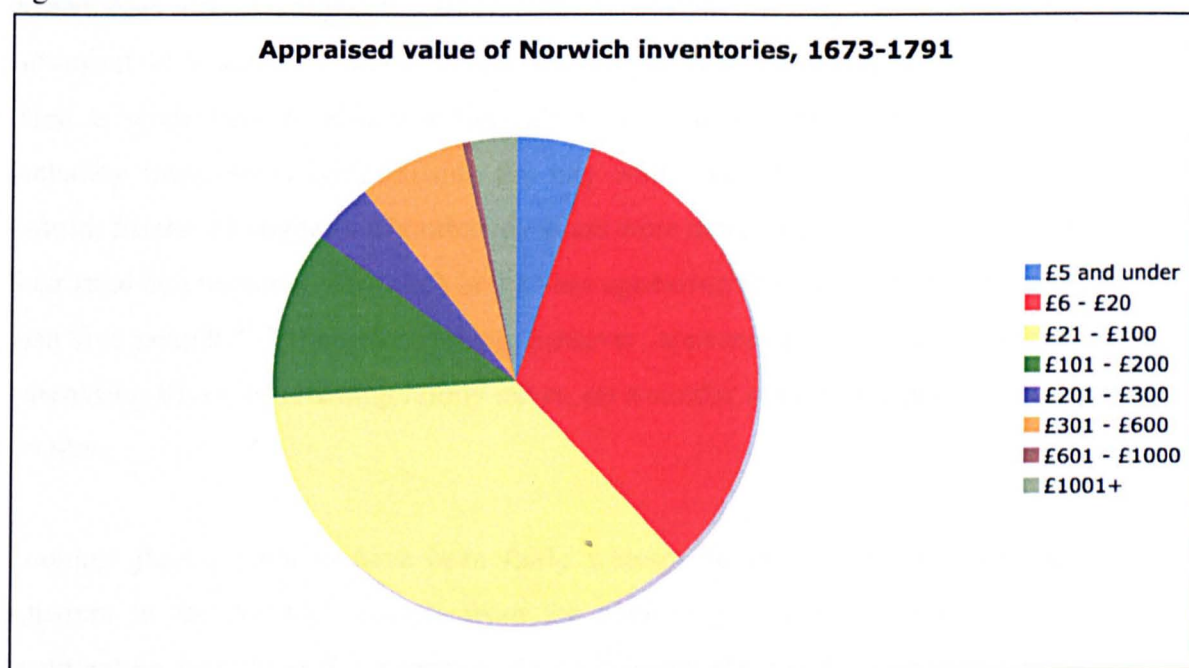
The material culture of Norwich in the years 1675 – 1725 showed similar patterns to those studies described above. Table 1.1 compares the ownership of particular objects with that found in other studies. It is possible to see that even at this stage Norwich had access to a wide range of material goods, some of them novel and others which were of a more traditional nature. In the later seventeenth century the inventories displayed a large

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[16] NRO DCN 73/2/40.
[17] NRO ANW 23/23/56, ANW 23/5A/10.

number of stools, chests, and trunks, which by the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century had become less apparent, being replaced by a growing number of chairs of varying design and quality, and by other storage devices such as cupboards and chests of drawers.[18] This indicates that changes were not simply occurring in relation to the spread of new cultures; more functional goods, for seating and storage, were also part of the domestic transformations.

Particular items are of interest in the Norwich results including the high level of silver and gold. Although few appraised items were actually gold, there were those with gold rings; for example, William Tawell, a weaver died in 1724, had four gold rings appraised. However, the majority of precious metal was silver.[19] The national figure is somewhat lower than that displayed in Norwich, by nearly 20% in fact; and Norwich is markedly higher than Beckett and Smith's numbers for the Nottingham area. However, the 45% in Norwich, is more readily comparable with Weatherill's London area (urban and rural) survey, at 44%, and 47% when considering only the urban residents of London.[20] Clearly there is scope here to extend a Norwich survey along similar urban and rural lines, including those areas lying outside the city walls such as Pockthorpe and Heigham. Indeed, Estabrook suggests that urban dwellers were more likely to own luxury items than their rural counterparts, often such items were appearing in inventories with a value lower than five pounds.[21] Urban Norwecians, however, appeared to have had a preference for purchasing silver, or retaining family silver, on a similar scale as the population of urban London.

Looking glasses seem to have been fairly widespread already at this time, and were apparent in the Norwich sample from the beginning of the period (see Table 1.2), proliferating steadily as the century wore on.[22] Nationally the ownership of mirrors was lower than in Norwich, but again, the London figures suggest that within the capital, the consumption of looking glasses was more prevalent than elsewhere in the country at 74%. In fact for a number of items, including window curtains, pictures and books, Norwich was apparently more accustomed to their presence in the domestic arena than elsewhere;

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[18] Overton et al. (2004) p. 91.
[19] NRO ANW 23/16/44.
[20] Weatherill, L. (1988) p. 44, p. 80.
[21] Estabrook, C.B. (1998) p. 132.
[22] cf. Overton et al. (2004) p. 112.

but when compared to the results for the London area, rural and urban, Norwich is once again overtaken. From this it is possible to conclude that Norwich, as the second city was able to command a greater diffusion of particular material goods within the same period (1660-1725), than other provincial areas, but could never match the greater preponderance of goods found in London. Indeed, it would be expected that Norwich would show the same trends as the evidence shows in London inventories, but equally it was unlikely that Norwich would be ahead of the capital city with its vast population and consumption opportunities. Equally though it is slightly unexpected to find that some items were not more widespread in Norwich. Clocks for example are apparent in much lower quantities than in London, Nottingham or Kent. 41% of inventories in Kent included clocks, and 16% in Nottinghamshire, compared with the 29% in London, and just 10% in Norwich . Perhaps clocks were lower down the list of cultural importance for households than other items, for example paintings, silverware or hot drinks utensils, all of which have a higher appearance rate than other areas. This suggests that there might be localised and provincial preferences at play in the articulation of choice by Norwich consumers. Estabrook does however suggest that urban dwellers were less likely to own clocks than they were other luxury items.[23]

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[23] Estabrook, C.B. (1998) p41.

Table 1.1: Comparison of material objects found in Norwich, Nottingham and Kent inventories, with Weatherill's national survey (1675-1725)

Location/Date	Pewter	Earthen-ware	Silver/gold	Hot drinks	Books	China	Delft	Looking glass	Window curtains	Knives/ forks	Pictures	Clock
National[1] 1675-1725	93%	73%	23%	4%	19%	4%	-	33%	13%	4%	13%	19%
Norwich 1673-1719	65%	30%	45%	4%	30%	1%	2%	58%	20%	3%	27%	10%
Nottingham[2] 1688-1720	62%	13%	28%	-	20%	4%	-	48%	-	-	23%	16%
Kent[3] 1690-1719	95%	-	-	4%	25%	-	-	36%	16%	5%	6%	41%

[1] Weatherill, L., 1988, p26

[2] Beckett, J. and Smith, C., 2000, p43

[3] Overton, M. et al., 2004

Table 1.2: The appearance of objects in Norwich City inventories between 1673 - 1791

Date	Total Number of Inventories	Pewter %	Earthen-Ware %	Silver/gold %	Hot drinks %	Books %	China %	Delft %	Looking glass %	Window curtains %	Knives/ Forks %	Pictures %	Clock %	Birdcage %	Leisure %
1673-1699	37	76	40	51	3	40	0	0	43	19	0	24	8	3	0
1700-1719	56	57	23	41	5	23	2	3	68	21	5	28	11	0	2
1720-1739	57	49	37	46	24	19	12	26	72	25	21	46	19	12	9
1740-1759	30	50	40	40	47	27	37	10	77	43	20	40	13	13	7
1760-1791	20	55	35	60	95	15	50	25	70	45	40	50	45	15	10

In Table 1.2 however, the clock does seem gradually to make more of an appearance over time, seeming to take off towards the latter half of the century, very much like other goods in the survey. Commentators have noted that some items took time to diffuse through the population, for example knives and forks, being subject to differential patterns of exposure.[24] Indeed it is in the period after Weatherill's survey stops that the growth in the consumption of more fashionable goods in Norwich really takes off .[25] Figure 1.2 illustrates this nicely, particularly in relation to hot drinks utensils, such as tea tables, kettles, pots, coffee pots, chocolate pots, tea chests, cups and saucers and so on.

Figure 1.2
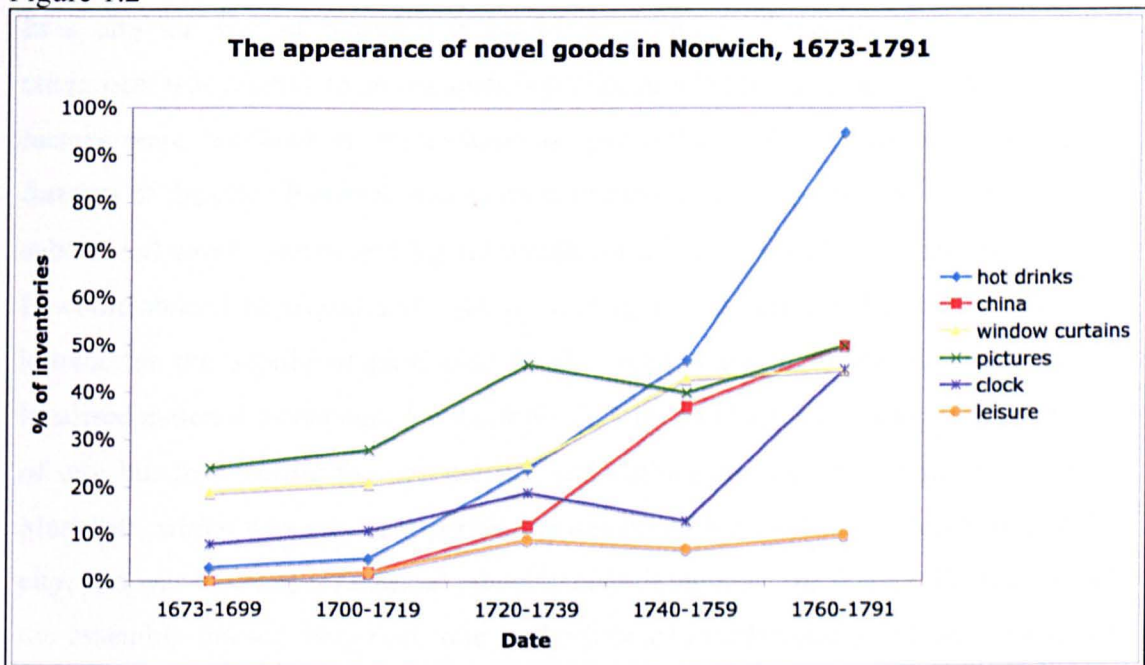
Source: Norwich probate inventories

According to the data collected the years around 1730 were the point when the use of novel items became widespread. They included chinaware, window curtains, pictures, knives and forks (not all included in the chart), and bird cages begin to appear in small numbers around 1720. This suggests that decorative (and pleasurable) objects were both more popular and increasingly within the reach of the less well off. Innovative production techniques, partly as a means of copying imported goods for

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[24] Sarti, R. (2002) pp. 150-153.
[25] cf. Nenandic, S. (1994) p. 144.

the domestic market, were creating opportunities for the people of Norwich to furnish their homes with more references to fashion, and with less emphasis on intrinsic value.[26] While this may appear to be a sweeping generalisation, and that firm conclusions can only be made about the actual inventories surveyed, it is fair to surmise that the changes noted in this sample are likely to reflect other homes of a similar economic bracket within the city at this time. By the end of the century, most items that were part of the 'novel' goods range at the beginning of the century were commonplace within a large percentage of homes. Books however, seemed not to follow that pattern, and as noted elsewhere this could be as a result of appraisers no longer considering them worth appraising.[27]

In a city the size of Norwich it would be useful to determine whether material attainment was relative to an occupant's parish, or whether some kind of geographical factors were involved in the creation of particular kinds of homes, in particular districts of the city. Norwich was a city with over thirty parishes at this time, and was subdivided into 12 wards and 4 great wards, for the purposes of corporate governance. It would indeed be useful and very interesting to see whether the parts of the city known for the supply of particular goods, might have seen specific examples of localised material ownership. For example St John's of Sepulchre housed the majority of city butchers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while St Peter of Mancroft, which was a central parish, encompassed the market and retail hub of the city, and was the base for cultural pursuits, containing inns, the theatre, the library and the assembly house. However, due to the lack of standardisation in the creation of inventories, many had no note of the testator's parish. Given the large number of parishes in the city, those inventories that did include a note of the parish, were spread very thinly. In addition many of the parishes were long and thin in shape, extending from the centre, containing the market, the castle and the majority of fixed retailing, outwards towards the city walls, which contained areas that were residential, trade related and industrial (cloth dying, distilling of vinegar etc) nearer the river. Fifteen examples were, however, found in St Peter Mancroft (the largest and possibly most affluent), but this was the largest single grouping; in other parishes only two, three or four inventories were found grouped together, making a comparison between areas of

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[26] Berg, M. (2005) pp. 85-110.
[27] Overton et al. (2004) p. 114.

the city impossible. Priestley and Corfield, come to similar conclusions about Norwich, and when combined with a similar inconsistency for occupation, 'makes parochial, or even ward, comparisons unprofitable.'[28]

Having said that the fifteen inventories from the parish of St Peter Mancroft, though a small sample, remain interesting. Nearly 90% (13 inventories) owned looking glasses, 60% listed window curtains and pictures, and 20% even used knives and forks. In addition 53% had items listed as silver and 33% owned paraphernalia enabling the preparation and consumption of hot drinks. It is impossible to draw firm transferable conclusions that can be compared with other parishes in the city, but this particular parish was, as expected given its location, exposed to the rigours of the new consumer practices, and the inventories display this.

If parish remains an unhelpful means of analysing the city's material culture, then perhaps occupation can shed some light on any differences between groups of inhabitants. Since, as has been said, there was a lack of inventory standardisation only three large groups could be identified within the sample. They were the weavers (44 inventories), widows (22 inventories) and those employed in trade and retail (42 inventories).

Table 1.3 Inventory values, highest and lowest, for the occupations of weaver, widow and retailer. (c. 1673-1791)

Occupation	No. of inventories	High	Low	Date range
Weaver	44	£2,512	£4	1674-1764
Widow	22	£1,839	£6	1674-1781
Retail	42	£2,657	£7	1673-1791

Figure 1.3 shows the comparative spread of some items in the homes of weavers, widows and retailers. Most immediately obvious from this is that a greater proportion of retailers owned the novel goods selected here than the other two groups. In only one category, that of the looking glasses, were the figures higher for widows than retailers. For other objects such as the hot drinks utensils, chinaware, and knives and

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[28] Priestley, U. and Corfield, P. (1982) p. 97.

forks, widows owned a larger number than the weavers. The weavers, owned more books than widows and retailers, which is something of a surprise given Weatherill's assertion that weaving was a low status occupation, and were more likely to own a clock than the widows, but less likely than the retailers. Again, one must remember that probate inventories are not a complete record of household objects, and perhaps more importantly, that the ownership of material goods for widows was linked directly to the provision or wishes of their late husband, who might well have left the majority of household goods to their heirs, leaving widows with a disproportionate number of smaller items like the chinaware or cutlery. The substantial goods like clocks, increasingly subject to fashion and shifts in eighteenth century taste, remained an expensive item, one of intrinsic value as well as a statement of status, and it is possible that they might have been bequeathed to a family member, and therefore might not have been part of the inventory taking processes.

Figure 1.3: Material goods owned by widows, weavers and retailers.
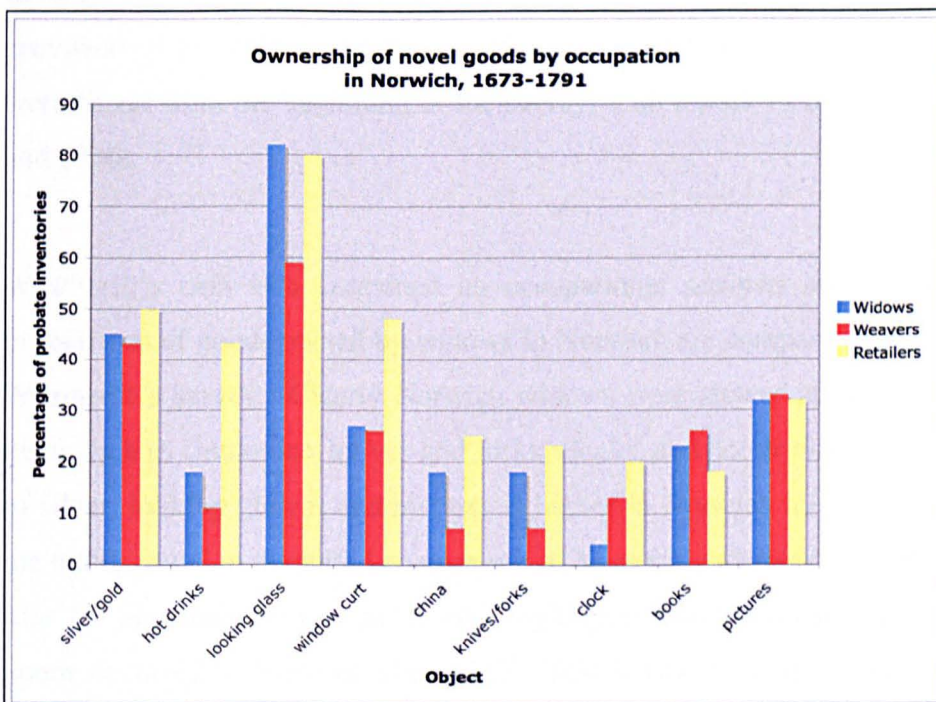
Following on from this, the comparative figures for the occupational groups are considered alongside the figures from the full survey of 201 inventories (Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4: Occupational groupings compared with the total survey figures for Norwich. (c 1673-1790)

Ownership of novel goods by occupation
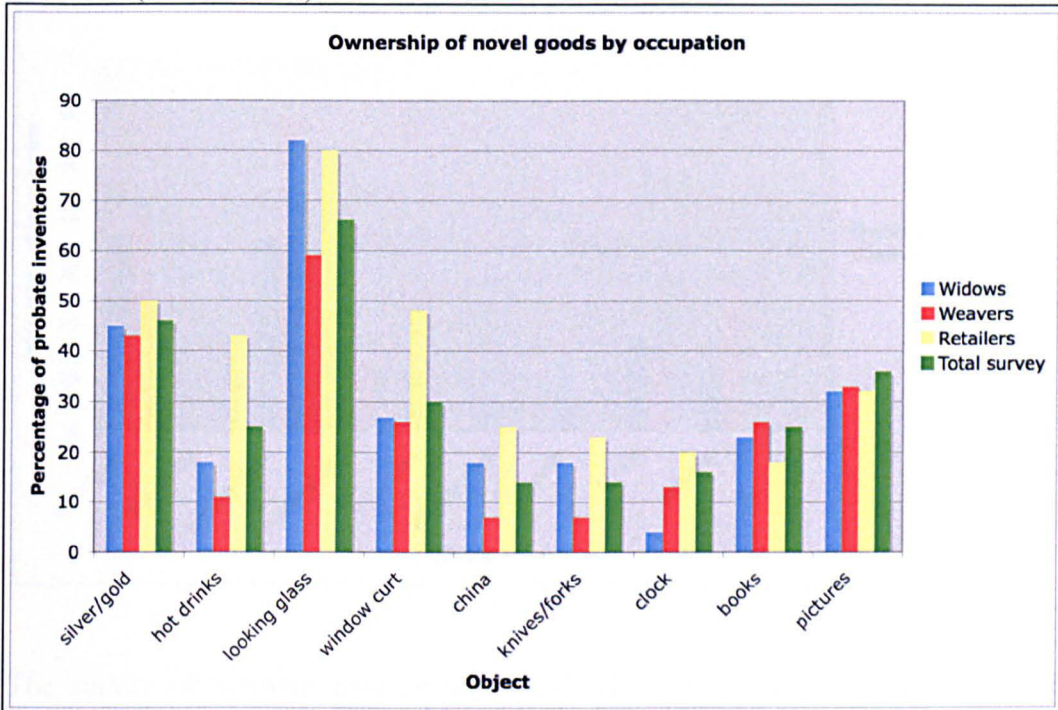
In only one case can similarities between the groups be seen and that is in the provision of pictures in the home. Pictures, including prints, maps and paintings, were found from the beginning of the survey, with a peak of ownership in the 1720s and 1730s.

Weatherill's data also contained an occupational analysis and in Figure 1.5 the proportions of goods owned by widows in Norwich are compared with the widows in Weatherill's survey. Clearly Norwich widows were slower in their uptake of novel items such as chinaware, knives and forks, clocks, and hot drinks utensils. Ownership of silver, looking glasses and pictures is higher in Norwich however, suggesting that the trends found in the initial comparison of Norwich with Weatherill's survey remain true for occupational groups. It also highlights that significant increases in novel goods occurred in Norwich after 1725. This is true also of a comparison between weavers in Norwich and their counterparts elsewhere, although this is complicated by the fact that Weatherill includes weavers in her 'low status occupation' group, and as can be seen from the spread of inventory values for weavers, low status does not necessarily equate here with the actual wealth levels, as described by the inventories.

Figure 1.5: Ownership of novel goods by widows, 1675 – 1725.
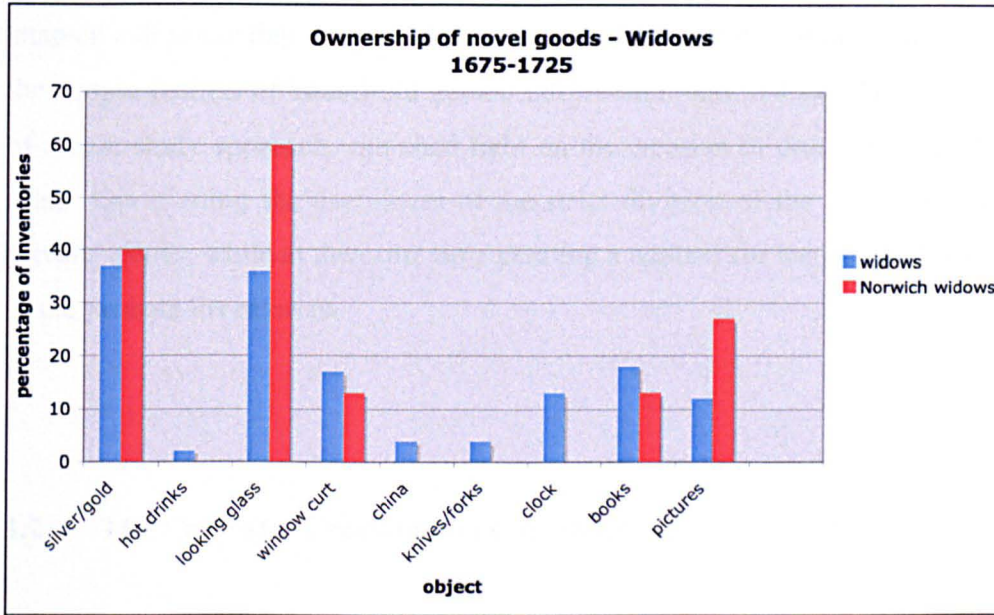
The survey of Norwich probate inventories has created an interesting springboard from which to view the importance of retail provision in Norwich in terms of taste and exposure to novel items or those of luxury, which were to become the norm by the end of the eighteenth century. Probate inventories are not a perfect source by any means but the information contained therein can really open up the field of enquiry, providing us with a picture of the appearance and spread of goods within the city and compared with the results of other larger surveys they place the material culture of Norwich into a national context. Results suggest that the ownership of some material goods in Norwich was comparable in some cases to the London area, more so than the rest of the country, perhaps illustrating Norwich's status. A lack of information in terms of parish, or other geographical markers connected with the creation of inventories precludes a geographical analysis of the current sample, but the differences seen in occupational groups, between widows, weavers and retailers, suggest that the retail sector not only provided the rest of the city with the provisions for daily life and novel goods, but they were also consumers of these goods themselves, perhaps more so than other occupational groupings.

The quantitative analysis of the probate inventories has provided a solid grounding for the following section, creating a picture of a thriving city, whose material goods and levels of ownership were not as great as those in London, but were considerably

higher than other regions of the country. However, the following section of this chapter will argue that the probate inventory holds a great deal more information than the simple listings of household goods; information that, if looked at through the use of a case study approach, can shed light on the creation of domestic spaces and their uses. Questioning the usefulness of the strict division of the home into public and private spaces, while at the same time creating a context for the material objects found in the probate inventories.

1.2   The Context – Creating domestic space.

Whilst the inventories allow a tantalising glimpse of the array of goods within eighteenth century homes, the objects listed, within quantitative analyses, appear without context, and are not obviously linked to their domestic space, each other, or indeed their owners. A more qualitative approach highlights the rich nuances in eighteenth century domestic home making, as recorded by appraisers, and at the same time illustrates the need for a more fluid understanding of the boundaries between particular types of space within the home, which should facilitate a deeper understanding of space, identity and meaning as reflected in the novel goods found in Norwich homes.

The presence, at the end of the seventeenth century, of window curtains, mirrors, earthenware, clocks, pictures, alongside the more usual items (tables, wall hangings, presses and chairs) suggests that this shift to include novel goods, certainly in richer households, was already noticeable. The extensive inventory of Sarah Bocking, a widow who died in 1674, leaving moveable goods worth over £1839, is a wonderful example of such a collection containing elements of the old and the new.[29] This suggests that Norwich citizens were able to access and utlilise two distinct forms of material culture at the same time. But whether that would have been a conscious strategy is difficult to assess.

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[29] NRO ANW 23/8/188.

From the inventories it is possible not only to analyse the ownership of goods, but thanks to many appraisers who made a note of the location of these items within the home, they can throw light on how owners viewed, placed and valued their possessions. This is of great interest, particularly when considering the wealth retention motivations of consumers, or the importance such material groupings might have as status indicators. If, as Veblen suggests, people actively, and publicly, displayed items of status and wealth (non-essential and expensive), we might suppose that these newer items would appear within particular domestic spaces, such as the parlour, or at least be able to conceive of predictable domestic locations where such items might appear.[30] Andersson's recent study into a local group of the Swedish elite, does show that the public spaces within such homes were considerably more richly appointed than the private areas, and this was seen as a conscious strategy for maintaining social position.[31]

Norwich however, did not follow this pattern; instead the inventories highlighted the decorative nature of many chambers, and the obvious care with which some private spaces were created. The survey results indicate that the distinctive separation of space on the grounds of monetary value or display is not as clear as might have been expected, with many items of value appearing in all rooms of the house, and more decorative items appearing in the bed chambers as well as the 'public' areas. For example, clocks were found most often in kitchens and window curtains appeared in chambers more often than parlours. During the period after 1720, this separation is blurred further still by the multiple appearance of some items in an inventory, such as mirrors (see below) providing evidence that not only were goods appearing in more inventories, but owners often had more than one of particular items; novel goods were fast becoming the norm.

However, too narrow a view of value, one relating to a purely financial interpretation, prevents the consideration of objects as retainers of cultural and social value, of knowledge and identity. · Social scientists have long discussed the importance of goods in the creation of social identities, in maintaining family and social group

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[30] Veblen, T. (1899).
[31] Andersson, G. (2006).

cohesion, as coded messages to those in the know, and in forming the indicators of social boundaries and acceptance, and rather than talking of status, this discourse focuses on symbolic status and communication rather than anything quantifiable in monetary terms.[32] Estabrook also notes that domestic material culture created artificial surroundings, expressing active choices and meaningful preferences, but even at this symbolic level the objects only derive their value from their audience, from the people who have the right knowledge to assess and understand the messages conveyed by collections of material goods and household spaces.[33] This is suggestive of Goffman's notion of 'front' and 'back' stages, bringing the idea of performance into the domestic sphere, where objects are involved in the complex interplay between groups of people and the stage setting, or the home.[34] Indeed, Weatherill's analysis of material culture draws on this premise, now more usually described as a distinction between public and private space.[35] This has been extended further, in recent years, to look at the presence of different types of public (within a defined space), multiple publics or indeed the creation of gendered spaces.[36] The introduction, therefore, of goods displaying novelty, innovation and fashion, both enabled the articulation of these varying types of space and began to extend the idea of status symbol, beyond the limitations of intrinsic value, towards the more complex arena of socio-symbolic value, and the negotiation of taste.[37]

The negotiation of space, in these terms, was not lost on the inhabitants of Norwich or Norfolk. In 1771, the mirrors of Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk were appraised, and sketched, giving both the location of the mirrors and their dimensions. They were present in the dressing rooms, bed chambers and eating parlour, and their decorative nature was as important as their physical dimensions (Plate 1.1). Such objects were at once practical and decorative, and were no doubt part of an elaborate display of taste and wealth. James Woodforde, in 1783, remarked on the size of a mirror in the home of the Townshend's, 'which was the finest and largest I ever saw, cost at second hand

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[32] Baurdrillard, J. (1996); Douglas, M. and Isherwood, B. (1978); see also Berger, P. and Luckman, T (1966).

[33] Estabrook, C.B. (1998) p. 129.

[34] Goffman, E. (1959).

[35] Weatherill, L. (1988).

[36] Kross, J. (1999); Nenandic, S. (1994).

[37] See Berg, M. (2005) pp. 205-6.

£150.0.0.[38] The ownership of looking glasses in Norwich peaked between the years 1740 and 1759, (see Table 1.2), although their presence was noticeable from as early as 1674. Between 1720 and 1791, the period covered here, 68% of mirrors were located in bed chambers, and only 13% in parlours; even the most modest households could boast a mirror, though less impressive than the mirror noted by Woodforde, or indeed the quality of those at Felbrigg Hall.[39] In 1720 for example, Michael Mason died leaving only £7 worth of moveable goods, located in three rooms, but he had a mirror in his chamber. His mirror was noticeable within the sparsely populated bedchamber as the only non-essential means of decoration. The mirror was not grouped within a larger decorative collection of material goods, and probably served as a functional addition to the room, increasing the effects of light and presenting opportunities for personal grooming. Next to the pewter however, which was also in this room, fifteen dishes in all, the mirror might have been a statement of his awareness of the socio-symbolic realm, and of wider cultural expectations.[40]

Sixteen years later, Mary Delitate left four mirrors as part of her moveable estate, (appraised at £97 8s), these were located in the kitchen, little parlour, little parlour chamber and the kitchen chamber.[41] Again, the contextualisation of the mirrors within the material groupings that occurred in each of these rooms, suggests fashion and comfort, which were both relatively new assimilations to the cultural framework of provincial England.[42]

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[38] Beresford, J. (ed) (1967) p. 210.
[39] See Crowley, J.E. (2001).
[40] NRO ANW 23/14/36.
[41] NRO ANW 23/22A/22.
[42] Edwards, C. (2005).

Plate 1.1: An inventory of mirrors, Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk, 1771.
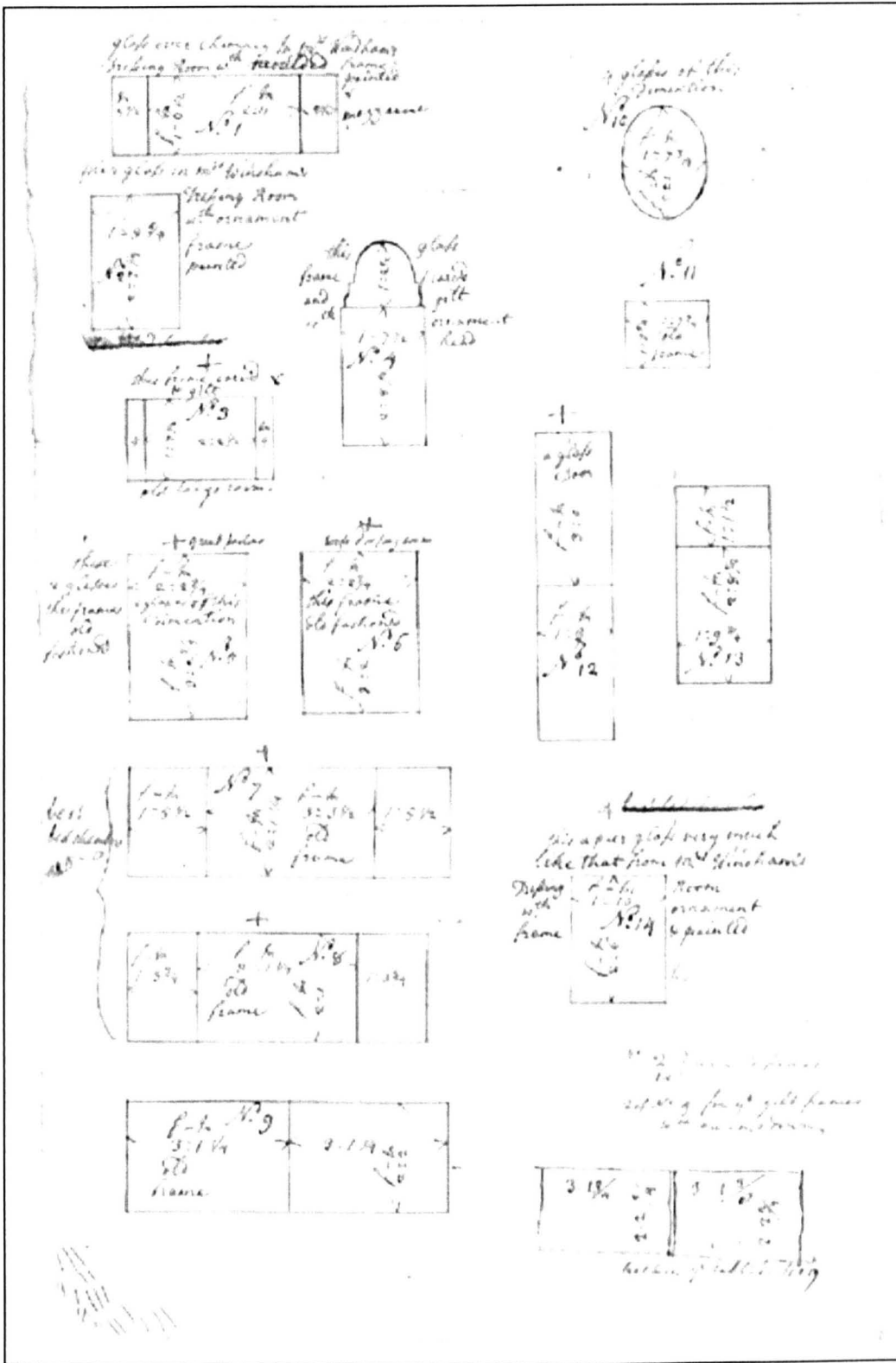
Source: WKC 6/460, 464x4, reproduced with kind permission of the Norfolk Record Office.

Looking glasses were both functional and indicative of an attention to notions of taste. In the kitchen, for example, the mirror is listed alongside the more usual cooking utensils and furniture, and in the bedchambers the looking glass appears with window curtains and pictures. The little parlour however, is an example of the contrast, found in this study, between formal rooms and smaller rooms, with a greater emphasis on intimacy. It contained:

> Stove, fender and board, a brass catch, a brass sconce, a marble table, a looking glass, 2 small tables, 6 chairs, window curtains and hangings, window cushions and screens, a brass sconce, 2 pictures and a small parcel of goods.

The great parlour, on the other hand, housed the delft ware and glassware, with an oval table and chairs, but lacked the small detail of the little parlour, and, although 9 pictures and window curtains featured in this room, the dining table enforces a singular formality over the space; unlike the two small tables which allow separation, movement and spatial fluidity in the lesser room.[43] But this does not mean that the lesser space was wholly private or indeed that the formal great parlour was entirely public in its use. Again a strict adherence to static notions of distinct spaces within the home, on the basis of conspicuous display, is unhelpful in determining the use or meaning of domestic arenas.

Andersson suggests that there is a need for a third type of space, one that she describes as semi-public, reserved for a more intimate public, of family and friends, implying that Goffman's distinctions of front and back stages do not address the true nature of household usage. This is, of course, useful in enabling a more complex view of how people used and populated their domestic environment, but her results are limited by linking décor with degrees of intimacy; the more expensively decorated rooms were those with a public function, as the intimacy of the area increased the decorative nature and monetary value of the space decreased.[44]

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[43] NRO ANW 23/22A/22.

[44] Andersson, G. (2006).

In Norwich, decorative items, such as pictures, prints and maps, showed a steady increase between 1720 and 1791. Their distribution within homes was not as clear cut as Andersson's results suggest they could be, with a relatively even distribution between parlours (or living spaces) and chambers (those with beds). Kitchens, halls and garrets also housed pictures, but only in a minority of cases. In 1736 Phyllis Stanton, a widow leaving moveable goods valued at just £12, had pictures in three of her five rooms. In the parlour chamber 2 prints were appraised, and in the parlour itself five pictures and four prints were listed, in addition to a corner cupboard, chairs and stools, window curtains and six pieces of earthenware. In the less formal kitchen chamber, 'a bed... window curtains.. [fireside goods], a chest of drawers, a table, a looking glass, six chairs, sixteen small glazed prints and a chest.'[45]

The goods, as a collective, are responsible for defining space. The bedchamber was used for social engagement (chairs), and had a decorative interior, unlike the rooms that were described in the study of Swedish elites, which were, in contrast to the highly decorated public rooms, dressed with wallpaper, tapestry hangings and cloths, 'sparsely furnished, figuratively as well as literally, containing beds and tables of a more ordinary kind'.[46] Ponsonby notes that the bedrooms were the most expensively furnished rooms in provincial homes, particularly where space limitations meant that the bedroom was also the living space, in some cases the centre of domestic hospitality in modest homes, and perhaps a study of the Swedish middling classes would present similar results to this, rather than the the more easily defined spaces of the elite.[47]

Window curtains too are decorative and practical, although they appeared in less than half of the inventories in the latter part of the sample, so their presence in any house could well be seen as an indicator of social status and of fashionable associations. In only one example was the fabric used for window curtains noted, in the dining room of William Money, who died in 1770, and they were made of chintz.[48] From the sample, however, most window curtains were found in chambers, well away from the

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[45] NRO ANW 23/22/9.

[46] Andersson, G. (2006) p. 31; cf. Overton et al. (2004), p132-134

[47] Ponsonby, M. (2006) p. 63; Estabrook, K. (1998) p. 152.

[48] NRO ANW 23/36/35.

public areas of the home. We have already seen that this separation is simplistic, and it is not really surprising that window curtains appear in semi-public and private spaces, alongside other newer goods, with their colour and pattern on display, as much as the objects hung on the walls, or arranged around the room. As well as their decorative nature, window curtains had more practical functions, such as minimising draughts or the maintenance of privacy, which were primarily related to assessments made by visitors. However, in assisting other objects within the room to create a decorative space, one that was comfortable and warm, they maintained a level of intimacy that was conducive to smaller gatherings, making all the right kinds of suggestions to social knowledge in a more subtle way than those visitors restricted to more formal areas.

These details, often lost when probate inventories are discussed only in quantitative terms are useful in illustrating the conscious creation of domestic space, and alongside other sources, such as correspondence, diaries and journals, this premeditated spatial construction is confirmed.[49] In letters to her brother-in-law in 1707, Mary Knyvett asks for his assistance in the purchase of a clock, and appears to have considered where she would place such an imposing item prior to the request, '...and a pendulum clock I would have and thinke to sit it in the Great Parlour.'[50] Nearly a month later she sent a further letter, 'Deare Brother, Yesterday the clock came home and we have this day fix't it in our Great Parlour it's a mighty ornament to the room and hope it will goe very well.' According to a letter sent in the following July her initial thoughts about the clock, and its appeal in the parlour, were justified, 'I must not forgitt to thank you for the kindness you did us in buying our clock it's reckoned very well worth the money and goes very well and is a mighty ornament in our parlour.'[51] There appears little doubt that the £12 which Mary Knyvett paid for the clock was money well spent, and her pleasure at its addition to the space is obvious.

Mary Knyvett must have considered the impact the addition of the clock to the material groupings of her parlour would have had on the space, as well as her pocket; but there would have been implications too, on how other people would receive such

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[49] Berg, M. (2005), p199.

[50] NRO KNY 912.

[51] NRO KNY 913; KNY 914.

a 'mighty ornament'. Taste was something that, although is now incredibly difficult to define, was a primary factor in the social life of the middling home and for its inhabitants.[52] Objects are often seen as the material articulation of taste and the right kind of material culture had to be acknowledged in order to create the right impression within social groupings, either to maintain social groupings, or create links with others, particularly through marriage. Relationships in the eighteenth century were increasingly subject to a social vigour, one that reflected familial reputation and individual accomplishments, alongside wealth; appearances really did matter. And the tasteful articulation of the latest appurtanences in the right kind of setting was crucial to the social success of the household.[53]

The rise in fashionable associations across the tea table, as illustrated by the astounding growth in the numbers of hot drinks utensils (see Tables 1.1 & 1.2) seen in Norwich, were linked to a domestic sociability as the platform by which people displayed not only their moral worth, through their manners and self control, but also their social knowledge, wealth and cultural capital.[54] Household and individual identity was created by this type of social interaction; gender, family ties, social relationships and hierarchies were all affirmed by the consumption of specific types of objects whose meaning was part of a symbolic language shared by others.[55] People were concerned with keeping up to date with fashion, but were aware that being 'too showey' was unacceptable.[56] Social knowledge was paramount and a lack of acquaintance with the rules was reflected in one's material accessories; self and social awareness were as much on display over the tea table as the china teapots and silver sugar tongs.[57] Such presentation must have been more than adequate at Felbrigg Hall, an inventory of china in 1771, 'some of it very old fine China', included 12 different tea pots, with 9 stands, 105 plates of differing sorts, 83 tart pans, 2 complete sets of tea china, each with six coffee cups, and 22 other tea cups, including eight small, old, octagon, blue and white cups, the household was obviously well prepared

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[52] Vickery, A. (2009) p. 163.

[53] Berg, M. (2005), p. 241; Gell, A. in Appadurai (ed.) (1986) pp. 110-138; Smith, W. (2002).

[54] see Bourdieu, P. (1994).

[55] Breen, T. H. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds)(1993) pp. 249-260; Gell, A. in Appadurai, A. (ed.) (1996); Smith, W. (2002); Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) Introduction.

[56] Vickery, A. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 201-221.

[57] Berg, M. (2005) p. 230; Smith, W. (2002), pp. 81-6, p. 198.

for every sort of social interaction.[58]

Parson Woodforde is well known for his tea taking and social visits, and the diary of Mary Hardy shows that visits enabled links to be formed within communities, and between families.[59] These relationships were maintained by repeated interaction, and social knowledge was transferred through visits to other people's homes.[60] Dissemination of particular cultural practices, like the use knives and forks for example, were dependent on this kind of social exposure. Visiting friends and other local contacts was as important in Norfolk as elsewhere in England and Ann Fellowes' notebook, listing an enormous number of visits to pay and receive between 1778 and 1799, is evidence of how seriously this was taken, with each accepted visit carefully crossed out and a return visit added to the list of those to pay.[61] It is important to note that the activity of tea taking, visiting and being sociable was central to the cultural imperatives of the day and that women, in presiding over the ritual which included both men and women, were able to exert a controlling influence, which they were prevented from doing elsewhere. Women, literate in the visual language of material culture, would have manipulated their setting to the best social effects, perhaps regardless of the limitations of space.[62]

Domestic sociability, therefore, had an effect on the recorded items in the inventories too (see hot drinks and china in tables 1.1 and 1.2). The majority of goods associated with the consumption of tea – tea tables, trays, cups and saucers, tea pots, spoons, boards, chests – were found in parlours, but these items were also present in chambers. The division of goods in this case appears not to be on the grounds of public or private spaces, or indeed of formality and intimacy, rather by function and practicality. Objects associated with the preparation of hot drinks were found in the kitchens and pantries, and this appears to be so for coffee and chocolate as well. From the inventories, parlours or best chambers appear to be the rooms in which these hot drinks were taken.

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[58] NRO WKC 6/460, 464x4.

[59] Beresford, J. (1967) p. 210; Hardy, M. (1968) p. 70.

[60] Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 298-300.

[61] NRO, FEL 619; cf. Whyman, S. (2002), chapter 4.

[62] Estabrook (1998), p142; Smith, W, (2002) chapter 6.

The parlour of Thomas Bell, a baker, (c1738), is one of a few examples of collections of china and glassware, but is the only one appraised 'Upon the tea table':

'Upon the tea table: 2 Burntin china tea pots and saucers, a ditto sugar dish, a basin, 8 cups and saucers.' The glassware was located in the corner cupboard with some other bits of china, but 'Upon the chimney piece' were, '... 2 enamelled chocolate pots, 12 tea cups, ditto Burntin basins, 6 ditto coffee pots, 3 ditto tea cups and other china there.'[63]

The tea table was linked to the notion that certain goods, and domains, can be gendered in some way. Bernard Herman, suggests that 'tea tables [are] associated with behaviors that we tend to categorize as more feminine, more refined, and more intimate'.[64] The tea table became the seat of female domestic power, in a world more generally controlled by men, a place where material goods could be manipulated to serve a myriad of purposes. It is possible to assume that the goods themselves, (the tables, tea pots, cups and saucers, and so on), are themselves considered feminine.[65] But it is a big leap to assume that the rooms, in which these utensils were found, were the dedicated personal space of women. Indeed, other areas noted as female include the closet, where women were able to create a private or intimate space, over which they had some control;[66] in 1797 Louisa Gurney, a teenager at the time, noted that following a walk with Elizabeth (later Fry), 'Instead of going in after tea we thought it would be snugger to go and write our journals, so here we are now in Elizabeth's suite closet as snug and as happy as possible...' [67]

Nenandic argues that, as part of a separation of gendered spheres, the dining room became the domestic alternative to the (male) coffee house, a safer, more controlled arena in which men discussed external (i.e. non domestic) affairs, and created their own rituals.[68] Other sociable activities in the home, like card playing or light gambling, could also be linked to the spaces away from feminine dominance, but they did not exclude women in the same way that after dinner separation apparently did.

[63] NRO, ANW 23/22A/44.
[64] Herman, B. (2006); Vickery, A. (2009) p. 273
[65] Smith, W. (2002) p. 171-187; see also Dahn, J. (2001)
[66] Lipsedge, K. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp107-122
[67] NRO, MC 1593/1.
[68] Nendandic, S. (1994); Smith, W. (2002), chapter 5; see also Kross, J. (1999).

In January 1777, Mrs Leathes wrote to her parents Mr and Mrs Reading, apologising for not sending a note with the turkey sent for Christmas, saying '...and having only an hour notice found it impossible to leave the Card table where I was engag'd with a good deal of company' illustrating the fact that card games were a diversion enjoyed by both men and women. Later she wrote,

> ...[once] called to dinner & there is no stirring out of the Parlour afterwards except into the Drawing Room where tea coffe and cards are the evenings amusement till nine o clock. After that supper and cheerful conversation engage us till Eleven when we all retire to our different apartments.[69]

However, the movement from one space to another, from the dining room to the drawing room, suggests that, where house size permitted, different rooms were associated with different kinds of activity. Each room was populated with different groups of material goods, yet entertained the *same* company, supporting the idea that boundaries between spaces were fluid and related to more than just a notion of levels of publics, or indeed of gendered spaces. Indeed, Kross notes that in smaller houses the creation of discrete types of public was not possible, suggesting that the use of space was necessarily fluid in these cases.[70]

In the Norwich sample of probate inventories there were ten examples of 'games', from 1722 onwards, and all of them owned by men. These included such things as, card tables, a 'massassippa board and ball', Gammon tables, gaming tables. There are too few examples of such leisure activities to recognise any patterns, but domestic diversions were not only found in the records of the rich; with occupations ranging from a weaver to a gentleman. Jeremiah Bottomly's card table appeared, in 1722, in the parlour chamber and it is not clear whether this room was used for lodgers, or for himself.[71] It shared its space with window curtains, a looking glass, six prints, six black chairs, 2 enamelled and 5 brass candlesticks, and a bed. The only table in the room was the card table. Mr Bottomly was an alehouse keeper and it is possible that the card table, was the feature of a gentleman's room within the establishment, and

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[69] NRO BOL 2/27/3.

[70] Kross, J. (1999) p. 388; see also chapter 1 in Vickery, A. (2009).

[71] NRO ANW 23/16/50.

therefore the presence of such a table was necessary. Richard Clark's 'Massassippa board and ball' was in the sparsely furnished 'little chamber', alongside a bed, a form and a table, highlighting the social heterogeneity of gaming[72]. Drawing conclusions about the gaming tables though is difficult. It is not possible to determine whether the tables allocated by appraisers for particular games were utilised only for the purposes of leisure or whether it is possible that these tables were in use more ordinarily as just tables. Also, the organisation of spaces, particularly the bedchambers, might well have been arranged around the pressing needs of a sick or dying occupant, and in cases where furniture was thin on the ground, the daily needs of the household needs to be considered more closely.

However, at this stage it remains useful to explore the inventories making an assumption that the majority of homes were, for the most part, furnished as they had been during the life of the occupant. In 1771, Isaac Spratt had a card table as part of his dining room furniture, which included, '...a painting of game, seven chairs, a settee, a jamb glass, a card table, a wilson carpet, an India cabinet, ...a small round table, a tea kettle stand, window curtains and two chests...'[73] This illustrates a collection of goods with a masculine edge, in a space seen as increasingly male oriented. The importance of a connection with outdoor pursuits and an expanding empire is displayed alongside the status items, such as the carpet, for which the appraisers have noted its makers. [74]

Gendered spaces however, are not limited in their creation by specific objects or groups of objects. A personal and emotional connection to objects allowed women, in particular, to bypass social constraints, by stamping a strong personal identity, and an emotional ownership on particular things. Maxine Berg explains, through the analysis of the bequests in wills, that women very much more so than men were concerned with creating and maintaining links with family and friends, across generations, through the goods they left to their loved ones. Women were more likely to bequeath china, linen and items of clothing, which were altered and spruced up with fashionable trimmings and whose value was emotional as well as financial. Women,

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[72] NRO ANW 23/19/44 (1730).
[73] NRO DN/INV 81B/11.
[74] Nenandic, S. (1994).

therefore, created their own property transfer to other women, passing on goods whose value is related to an emotional investment.[75] Value, therefore, becomes more complex with the addition of an emotional element.

From another angle, this ownership of material goods, of monetary, emotional or social value, is linked to Bourdieu's notion of 'cultural capital', through the provision of which people enhance their life-chances. Social accomplishments, such as knowledge, musical ability or artistic appreciation, run alongside an informed attitude which allows for success within the higher echelons of society. Material goods, necessary to establish such cultural achievement, such as books and musical or scientific instruments, as well as those objects establishing a knowledge of taste, fashion and social affiliation, are present in the home in order to equip new generations with the cultural capital they need to succeed, and to provide the household with a reputation of cultural and social achievement.[76] In the eighteenth century cultural achievement was linked closely to gentility and a lack of accomplishment reflected badly on one's character. On the other hand, if one was successful in the ownership of cultural and material objects, then social acceptance and good reputations were maintained. The diaries of Parson Woodeforde and Mary Hardy include references to such matters. In the former, the Parson comments in 1787, 'Miss Mary Donne is a very genteel, pretty young Lady and very agreeable with a most pleasing Voice abt 21 yrs';[77] Mary Hardy tries, and eventually succeeds, in enrolling her children with a dance master, in order for her children to learn an important skill.[78]

Books and musical instruments might be examples of objects projecting a level of cultural attainment, not necessarily linked to the ownership of other material goods. Books saw an increase in the early part of the sample but their appearance in inventories was not as widespread as in other areas of the country. Gattuso's recent article on book ownership in Norfolk highlights the difficulties in gauging the spread

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[75] Berg, M. (2005) pp. 239-241; Vickery, A. (1998) pp. 193-4.
[76] Bourdieu, P. (1994); see also Andersson, G. (2006) pp. 37-42.
[77] Beresford, J. (1967) p. 313.
[78] Hardy, M. (1968) p. 47.

of book use through probate inventories.[79] In most inventories, books were collected together at the end of the list simply as 'a parcel of books', giving a value for the lot, without note of number or location. For example, the case of John Bosely, in 1739, whose musical instruments and books were valued together[80], or Reverend Stukely's collection, 'a parcel of old books', valued at £1.[81] Occasionally, greater detail was included, such as 'a family bible, Practicall Goonistry, and other old books'[82], or '…6 volumes of ye magazines, 2 large volumes of Humfres Anotations, A bible, a common prayer book, and other old books',[83] which allows insight into reading matter. But the location of the books was not noted often enough to detect any clear patterns or norms.

Gattuso's study traces the location of books within Norfolk households from the mid-sixteenth century until the early eighteenth century, using probate inventories, suggesting that location was dependent on whether books were used for household administration or for leisure, with the former being stored in easily accessible areas, such as the kitchen or the hall, and the latter being found in parlours, chambers and studies.[84] In Norwich itself, 27 inventories included books within a particular room, the kitchen and the chamber were each noted on eleven occasions, the study and the parlour twice, and the wash-house only once. From the point of view of a differentiation of book use, the results suggest an even spread between leisure and administrative functions, but such analysis needs to include a note on the number of rooms available for use. However, if we take into consideration the flexible use of the semi-public spaces, or the well turned out chambers, as mentioned above, the presence of books here seems to fit a more general pattern of display, and while books might have implied cultural achievement to a variety of publics on the one hand, they were also a source of private leisure. Latterly though it seems that the value of books was so small that they were not considered worth appraising in full by appraisers, which might explain why the figures for Norwich in the latter half of the century seem in such steep decline. For a more in-depth analysis it would be necessary as well to

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[79] Gattuso, S. (2006).

[80] NRO DN/INV 80D/13.

[81] d. 1729, NRO ANW 23/19/12.

[82] Robbins, W. d.1738, NRO ANW 23/22A/69.

[83] Barlow, O. d. 1740, NRO ANW 23/23/24.

[84] Gattuso, S. (2006) p. 79.

investigate the membership and use of the city's libraries, to see whether the numbers of readers is significantly larger than the numbers of book owners displayed in inventories.

Musical instruments were far less common than books, though this might reflect the (re)moveable nature of some goods. Their incidence was too small to read any significant patterns in their location or to allow an occupational analysis of ownership.[85] However, the small numbers do provide evidence of the presence of musical instruments, and not just in the houses of the very rich, James Burkingham a worstead weaver who died in 1703, had a pair of virginals in his parlour, suggesting that leisure and accomplishment were not the preserve of the social elite. [86] Perhaps the existence of musical instruments and other cultural pursuits would be more obvious in later inventories, and there are some for Norwich in the nineteenth century. In fact it would be interesting to track the novel goods of the early eighteenth century, through their existence as standardised items of daily use, towards their possible disuse or eventual relegation to store rooms or removal from the domestic scene.

1.3   Conclusion

The results from the survey of 201 probate inventories of the city of Norwich, between the years 1673 and 1791, have formed an interesting basis from which to look at the retail provision of material culture in the city, and the relationship between retailers and provincial taste making. The results of the survey confirm the assertions made by Weatherill and other researchers that there was indeed a shift in the ownership of material goods, from expensive, durable items of furniture, towards an inclusion of increasingly large numbers of cheaper goods, with an emphasis on style and fashion. Utilising inventories from the latter part of the century highlighted the fact that changing domestic tastes were reflected in the growth of these items from 1730 onwards, and that the trend continued until the end of the century.

From a geographical point of view this sample was not able to make any firm conclusions about ownership in particular parishes, due to the inconsistencies of

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[85] See Estabrook, C.B. (1998) pp. 133-4.
[86] NRO ANW 23/5A/12.

inventory making, and to the large number of parishes in the city at the time. However, St Peter Mancroft the largest and possibly one of the richest parishes in the city, did display a higher than average ownership of novel goods compared with the rest of the city. But what is interesting here is that this small sample were not just inventories from the higher end of the social scale, in terms of the valuations of goods, but as was seen for the occupational groupings, the appraised values of the inventories ranged from the a few pounds to just under four hundred at the top end. However, at this stage the numbers are too small to positively conclude that St Peter Mancroft was greatly different to other parishes, in particular other central parishes such as St Stephen's. The occupational groupings were, however, more substantial and the figures here suggest that the traders/retailers grouping was more inclined towards the ownership of novel goods than the weavers and widows, although the average inventory valuation was nearly one hundred pounds greater than both the weavers and widows. At present this remains an interesting avenue for further investigation and if undertaken a more in depth analysis of the incidence of ownership relative to the actual financial situation of the retailers would be preferable. There was little evidence of a distinctive occupational material culture. Weavers appeared more likely to own a greater number of books than the other two groups, but each of the occupational bands was in ownership of all the material goods chosen here to represent novel items within households.

The more qualitative approach to the probate inventories in the second part of the chapter allows for an alternative reading of the same data. Whilst acknowledging their imperfections as a source, probate inventories do enable us to recreate a context for the goods listed therein, they are capable of providing a deeper understanding of material and cultural life, beyond the rather flat impression given by numbers alone. As a result of this contextualisation of material culture, ideas about the use of space, and the meaning of space, in the eighteenth century domestic environment need to be questioned. Greater flexibility is required than the polarisation of public and private spaces allows, or indeed the notion of definitive gendered spaces. Like today, the use of space was affected by its availability and by the type of functions it had to perform. The clear benefit in utilising a case study approach, when looking at probate inventories, is in the creation of a context, which allows us to collect more information about the entirety of a room, its material culture and perhaps a better idea

of the people who populated these spaces. If a useful separation is required at all it might be worth looking at the distinctions between living and utility, formality and intimacy, of decoration and function, or of consumption and preparation, rather than simply public and private (front and back). Or perhaps we should view room use on a public/private sliding scale, with very few spaces being wholly one or the other, allowing us to shape our interpretation of the historical domestic scene, and to avoid unhelpful assumptions.

Within this fuller context the arrival of novel and semi-luxury goods, as outlined above and increasingly discussed in recent years, can be traced. These newer goods, accessed alongside standard, traditional goods, became valued as much for their decorative and social aspects as their intrinsic value, and in the case of china, social value seemed to be of much higher value than its exchange value. Such items, often found together in defined spaces, fulfilled a practical function and were markers for transmitting and understanding social messages, signals that were heightened by their collective nature. These goods were used to negotiate the changing cultural landscape, to maintain and affirm familial and social ties and to give expression to the visual language, which became increasingly important as the century wore on.

Chapter two: Urban Change and Occupational Geography

In the previous chapter, the novelty of material culture in the domestic scene was explored, highlighting the importance of goods, and collections of goods, in telling the socio-spatial story of the home. The growth in ownership of novel items which had begun to take on a symbolic value highlighted the fluctuating nature of fashion, which was fast becoming a pre-eminent factor in the choice and acquisition of a 'middling' material culture. The items associated with tea taking, for example, retained their functional importance, but it was their aesthetic value, within a developing cultural framework, which became prized and socially visible. Material culture, though, was not confined to the four walls of the home, but was fast becoming an important consideration within many towns and cities. Urban spaces were subject to aesthetic changes; the streets, buildings and facilities were seen to undergo 'improvement', as part of a wider 'urban renaissance'[1].

Both Borsay and later McInnes saw the period between the Restoration and the end of the eighteenth century as one of significant change. Urbanisation was a dominant feature of provincial life and, although growth was by no means uniform, the process affected a great many towns and cities across the country, and in some cases altered their economic character and that of the surrounding settlements. McInnes draws on evidence from Shrewsbury, which suggests that over the course of the century the town moved away from manufacturing towards a more leisured economy, feeding on middling and elite demand for sociable activities, events, novel goods and services. Shrewsbury was not alone in this, many towns were beginning to compete with one another, not just on industrial or economic terms, but culturally too. And this inter-urban competition shaped the occupational and physical character of many settlements. Socio-cultural facilities, structures and institutions reflected a town's position in the urban hierarchy, and the aesthetic appearance of urban spaces became an increasingly important element of civic cultural capital.[2]

Borsay looks closely at the architecture of the period and charts the arrival of leisure

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[1] Borsay, P. (1989).
[2] See Borsay, P. (1989); McInnes, A. (1988); Sweet, R. (2002); see also previous chapter; cf. Ellis, M. (2001).

activities and purpose-built social spaces, such as theatres and assembly houses, within provincial towns. Norwich however is not widely discussed in his work. Even recent detailed work on Norwich during this period, by Dain, leaves the city's place within the 'urban renaissance' relatively unclear, because she does not look at alterations in the occupational structure in the city.[3] The following chapter therefore will discuss the nature of Norwich's urban renaissance; the first section assessing the extent of Norwich's cultural infrastructure, determining whether the leisure activities and arenas were in existence before the eighteenth century, and how the urban renaissance affected the provision of cultural activity within the city itself. The second section will look closely at Norwich's occupational character in order to gauge whether Norwich underwent a transformation, becoming a leisured town like Shrewsbury or Chester, or whether the city retained its manufacturing base and character.[4] In addition to this the place of retailing will be focussed upon, a parish analysis of occupational data providing a relatively clear picture of which areas of the city were most involved in retailing and the provision of luxury goods. Norwich was such a large settlement that there was potential for a number of retail areas co-existing in the same period and, because little work has been undertaken on very large cities in England, (Shrewsbury and Chester had populations of only about 8,000), we cannot assume, though it is likely, that commercial activity was confined to the central areas, as it was in Chester and York. This forms, therefore, an additional aim of this chapter: to identify the area of the city where retailing was taking place, and where the novel goods and provisions discussed in chapter one, were acquired.

2.1 Urban Renaissance.

The development of a leisure and cultural infrastructure in many large towns across the course of the eighteenth-century has been widely discussed and resulted in a more clearly defined distinction between rural and urban cultures, as well as a further division between the old and new towns.[5] Both small and large towns were seen by Borsay as islands in a rural sea. He estimated that there were about 600 – 700 towns in Britain in 1700, and that roughly one quarter of the nation's estimated population

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[3] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) pp. 193-218; cf McInnes, A. (1988).
[4] Stobart, J. (1998a).
[5] Clark, P & Slack, P. (1972) p. 14; Braudel, F. in Clark, P and Slack, P. (eds) (1972) pp. 53-57.

of 5 million lived in them; although the majority of those were in London.[6] Corfield suggests a smaller percentage of the population were urban dwellers, some 19% in 1700, but by 1800 this figure had increased to 31% and, despite the fact that any projections of this nature are subject to limitations set by the sources themselves, the urbanisation of the nation is not in question.[7]

The division between town and country is not so clear-cut, unless perhaps one begins to think in cultural terms.[8] In economic and political spheres the town and the country are clearly linked. Historical studies of the 1970s had noted the interrelationship between rural and urban economies, focussing on the necessary links which inevitably formed between them. The town served as the market for rural unprocessed goods, and was also central to the distribution of processed goods to town and countryside dwellers alike. Chalkin suggested that towns served a hinterland, the size of which was commensurate with the size of the settlement itself. (a small market town would have a hinterland of between three and six miles, for example). It provided a number of things. Firstly, it was a source of provisions; secondly it bolstered demand and created a wider customer base for finished goods; and thirdly, the rural hinterland of many towns was also a significant source of labour.[9] Indeed, a lot of the unskilled labour relating to the production of textiles, Norwich's primary industry, was drawn from outside the city walls. The primacy of this relationship was clearly outlined by Braudel who stated that, '[E]very town, in fact, needs to be rooted in and nourished by the people and land surrounding it', and in this Norwich was no different to other urban settlements.[10] However, this was not a modern observation. Adam Smith, writing in 1776, astutely observed that 'The inhabitants of the town and those of the country are mutually the servants of one another.'[11] The connection between urban growth and the rural economy was a clear one and Braudel suggests that the 'urban renaissance' was instigated by rural vigor.[12]

In fact, a significant factor in the urbanisation of England at this time was an

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[6] Borsay, P. (1989) p. 3.

[7] Corfield, P. in Clark, P. and Slack, P. (eds) (1972) pp. 263-310.

[8] cf. Estabrook, C.B. (1998).

[9] Chalklin, C.W. (1974) p. 34.; see also Wilson, R. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. xxiii, p. xxv

[10] Braudel, F. in Clark, P and Slack, P. (eds) (1972) p65.

[11] Smith, A 'An inquiry into the nature and cause of the wealth of nations', Book 3. See http://www.adamsmith.org/smith/won-b3-c1.htm (accessed 10th January 2009).

[12] Braudel, F. in Clark, P. & Slack, P. (eds) (1972) p. 70.

increased agricultural efficiency, resulting in greater yields, the surplus of which became a building block in the creation of a more stable and prosperous environment, one more able to withstand temporary alterations to the economic well being of the region or nation as a whole[13]. The importance of agriculture at this early stage of development was seen by Smith as 'the natural course of things' and, once established, a surplus would give rise to the predominance of manufacture and later the opportunity for overseas trade.[14]

The economic connection between the country and towns, was not confined to the realm of production, but was evident in the activities of the elite, whose country seats were located within the rural hinterlands described by Chalklin. Borsay has written widely about the decisive role that the county gentry had on urban development and, in particular, the role they played in the phenomenon he has called the 'urban renaissance'. Politically the landed gentry, with their wealth and connections, were able to influence the choice of MPs and other local figures, cementing the relationship between the town and the country. Having said that, in Norwich the political system was a more open one, based on the votes of freemen of the city. Political influence was therefore less direct; in some years the numbers of freemen were increased considerably in an effort to sway the results[15] Aldermen and city officers required financial strength in order to take up their posts, with the majority of mayors coming from the merchant classes.[16] Elite influence, though not as obvious as in other areas of the country, was still likely even in such an open system, with allegiances cemented by an emerging two party political system and MPs themselves belonging to the elite.[17]

In addition, the rural elite were often landowners within the urban settlements, able to assess social, cultural and economic value of urban improvement; they were also the key players in the creation of a demand for 'polite' recreation. Alongside the less wealthy who inhabited the countryside, the gentry formed part of the increasingly important, consumer base, upon which greater retail and leisure provision could be

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[13] See Daunton, M.J. in Abrams, P. and Wrigley, E.A. (eds) (1978) pp. 245-277 for relationship between London and agriculture; and Wrigley, E.A. in Abrams, P. and Wrigley, E.A. (1978) pp. 215-243 for an alternative view.
[14] Smith, A. (1776). Book three (see footnote 11).
[15] Knights, M. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) pp. 167-173.
[16] Hawes, T. (1989) p. xviii (merchants, grocers, mercers, drapers).
[17] See Knights, M. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004), pp. 167-192.

constructed, supported further by visitors and seasonal residents.[18] The gentry formed an established link between town and country, and their presence within towns also afforded a sense of stability.

Despite the interconnectivity, Borsay argues that the social and cultural rebirth of towns, borne of greater prosperity, served to more clearly differentiate urban culture from the rural.[19] According to Estabrook, the distinction between urban and rural material culture is clear, suggesting that the symbolic nature of goods was interpreted very differently in each of the spheres, with priority in the rural areas (around Bristol), given to goods with a practical function rather than those of novelty.[20] But the urban renaissance brought with it an increasingly specialised work force in towns as well; and as Clark and Slack point out, the larger the town the more varied the occupational diversity.[21] Borsay and others have looked towards the middling classes as the real driving, 'dynamic and decisive', force behind the sustained demands for change during the period.[22] The gentry, having initiated the movement towards the cultural primacy of towns, were not solely responsible for the subsequent speed and dispersion of the new cultural ideals. Increasing numbers of professionals for example, were forming a new urban elite, also made up of traders and merchants, who had the means to maintain a more leisurely lifestyle and demanded sufficiently refined spaces in which to enjoy their leisure time.[23]

Naturally, not all towns reacted to urban development in the same way. Part of Borsay's argument is that particular types of town emerged from the processes of urban renaissance and were ranked by population and influence. He talks of commercial towns, industrial towns, county towns, provincial capitals, ports and resort towns, and highlights the essentially dynamic nature of such urban settlements.[24] Growth and improvement, and general urban change, were noted at the time, Defoe for example, in the preface to the second volume of his *Tour* published in the 1720s, states:

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[18] Borsay, P. (2003); Borsay, P. (1989) pp. 199-205.
[19] Borsay, P. (1990) p. 149.
[20] Estabrook, C.W. (1998); see chapter one.
[21] Clark, P. and Slack, P (eds) (1972) p. 5.
[22] Borsay, P.(1989) p. 204.
[23] See Langford, P. (1989); Borsay, P. (2003) p. 281.
[24] Borsay, P.(1989).

As we observed in the first volume, and frequently this, there will always be something new, for those that come after; and if an account of Great Britain was to be written every year, there would be something found out, which was overlooked before, or something to describe, which had its birth since the former accounts.[25]

Defoe captures the feeling that the alterations to the urban landscape were happening at a pace and infers that the changes were indeed widespread. But not all towns experienced a move towards a culturally oriented urban environment in the same way, or indeed at the same speed. The creation of a cultural infrastructure was not uniform and was dependent on the size and type of town in question, and on the needs of the rural and urban communities. Stobart et al, have described some key features of this urban (cultural) improvement, such as the presence of a regular assembly, a circulating library, theatre, or pleasure garden. Their analysis suggests that some of these fashionable components were present in many towns in north-west England and the west Midlands, and not just confined to an elite few.[26] Purpose-built structures, such as assembly rooms, or designated areas for polite promenading were the physical manifestation of an increasing preference for polite sociability. The building of large uniform structures, such as the squares and crescents seen in London and Bath, were meant to house the rich elite and aspiring middling ranks, and did so through the use of nationally known and accepted architectural styles, which were of course the height of fashion. Squares were seen as the epitome of classical design and created residential spaces with built-in promenading and display opportunities.[27] The vernacular, higgledy-piggledy evolution of towns in preceding centuries was being replaced, in some areas, by new and precise urban planning, where attention was given to the overall aesthetic as well as the function of the buildings that were being built. The spaces which were created through these improvements, new buildings and middling demand, produced a fashionable arena in which a novel cultural life was increasingly played out. [28] The people inhabiting the new arenas of the eighteenth century were endorsing these cultural shifts, which were occurring nationally. However, while knowledge of the new styles appears to have been widespread, by the end of the century, the resulting improvements were not necessarily happening

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[25] In Rogers, P. (ed) (1992) p. 84.

[26] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 29, p. 55.

[27] Borsay, P. (1989); Stobart et al. (2007).

[28] see Borsay, P. (1989).

everywhere.[29]

With this in mind the following section will try to assess the cultural development and urban improvements in Norwich, during the eighteenth century, in order to assess the extent to which Norwich was involved in an eighteenth century urban renewal.

2.2 Cultural Infrastructure and Urban Improvement.

The city of Norwich during the century was a county town and a provincial capital, an industrial centre, and an important inland port. Its population in 1700 was around thirty thousand and it was, until the middle of the century, Britain's second city in demographic terms. Over the course of the century, however, its position was rocked by the growth of industrial cities in the north-west and Midlands, and by the growth of Bristol, whose population had surpassed Norwich's by 1750.[30] However, the population was still relatively large, particularly when compared to the majority of other urban settlements in the country, and even though overall growth was slow over the century, its county and regional roles meant that the city remained the cultural and social capital of the Eastern region. The provision of an elite urban culture and the creation of leisure spaces within the city, the improvement of streets, buildings and facilities, would therefore be an expected feature of the city if it were undergoing the kind of renewal described by Borsay, particularly if such changes were being seen in towns of all sizes across the nation. McInnes' research on Shrewsbury charts the increased reliance on leisured visitors and describes the transformation of the town's economy and occupational structure, resulting in a "substantial shift in the whole character of the town."[31] So how did this cultural rebirth manifest itself in the towns themselves? And did Norwich display similar alterations to its cultural infrastructure and spatial useage, or did it create a more unique strategy for development?

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[29] Vickery, A. (1998) p.13.
[30] Sweet, R. (1997) pp. 5-6.
[31] McInnes, A. (1988) p. 64.

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Table 2.1. The cultural infrastructure of eighteenth century Norwich.

Event/Activity	Earliest Date	Details	Location
Library	1608	Public repository of books	St Andrew's Hall, (BF)
	1720s	Circulating libraries in operation	
	1780s	Subscriptions libraries expanded in number and use	
	1784	Norwich Library built	
Walk/Pleasure garden	16th Century	Walk	Chapel Field
	1663	Commercial Garden/later Bunn's/Quantrell's	
	1679	'walk' on Market Square	
	1728 1739	New Spring Gardens Vauxhall Gardens	
Relocation of rural trades	1616	Cattle market moved.	Haymarket to castle ditches.
	1744	Horse fair ended	
Flower show	1630s	Annual florists feast; a show and a play	
Assembly	1688	During Assize Week	Chapel Field House
	1754	New Assembly Rooms built	St Stephen's
Street Lighting Act	1700		
Newspaper	1701	Norwich Post	
Horse Racing	1710	3 Meetings per year	
Music	1714	City Waites – bye-law	
	1724	Concert Society founded	
Theatre	1757-8	New Theatre Built	St Stephen's
Square	1766	Terrace of Houses built by Thomas Ivory	Surrey Street
Turnpike Roads	1766		
Infirmary	1771	Norfolk and Norwich hospital founded	Subscription, outside St Stephen's Gate
Bath/Spa	1789	Bath Houses	Chapel Field
Literary Institution	1822	Norfolk & Norwich Literary Institution	
Improvement	1806	Act of Parliament	
Art	1803	Society of Artists – became known as the Norwich School	
Gas Lighting	1814	First gas light was in a Hosier's shop	Market place
Dispensary	1804		

Source: Borsay, 1989, appendices 4,5,6,7; Dain, 2004; Meeres, 1998

Norwich played a key role in the social life of the landed gentry of Norfolk and by the eighteenth century, the city was already practised in the art of offering a choice of quality entertainments, and events. (see Table 2.1) As early as 1688 a regular assembly was organised during Assize week held at Chapel Field House on the Western side of the city. By 1717, dancing and card assemblies were being regularly held, still at the same location, and an advertisement in the Norwich Gazette in June of 1725 stated:

> This is to give Notice to all Persons of Quality, Gentlemen and Ladies, That an Assembly will be held at Mrs CATHERALL'S in Chapel Field House on Tuesday 27th and Thursday 29th July Next, being Assize week. There will be the City Musick, and another set of Musick, and all other Attendence ready by six o clock. Particular Care shall be taken to oblige the Gentlemen with a glass of Good Wine; and every thing as normal at the Norwich Assembly. Tickets to he held at the said house, and at Brathwaite's Coffee House; price 2s 6d. [32]

Patrons had apparently come to expect a certain level of entertainment and company at the Norwich assemblies since their inception and, in 1737, Mrs Catherall was able to offer board and lodgings to refined patrons and a good supply of candles, as was advertised in the Norwich Gazette in March of that year. The location of the property, it being "situated in the best of Air", was a clear selling point, the state of the air being something that genteel folk were concerned with.[33] By 1754, despite the fact that there already existed adequate space for the assembly, a purpose built venue was designed and built by the architect Thomas Ivory (see Plate 2.1). Jehospophat Postle, a prominent city brewer, noted an evening in August 1754, when he visited the Assembly at the 'New Hall', at about 8pm, 'which was very brilliant.'[34] The social importance of these gatherings should not be underplayed, Dain suggests that they were opportunities to size up potential marriage partners, which she describes as 'social commerce'.[35] Patrons were expected to appear at their very best, with additional hairdressers travelling from elsewhere for the busy periods. Bull and Sizeland hairdressers, for example, hailed from London and advertised their extensive

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[32] Norwich Gazette, June 1725.

[33] See also Chase's directory (1783) p. v.

[34] NRO MC 2375/1; the Assembly house was also described as 'brilliant' in the Directory of 1783 (p. 66).

[35] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 203; Norwich Mercury, August 16th 1783.

knowledge of up to date fashions, carrying with them accessories. They were to be found in the shop of Mr Brown (hairdresser), on Surrey street Norwich, for the period of the Assizes.[36] The Assembly house itself reflected its important social and cultural role, and was a fine example of contemporary architecture, with classical lines and understated elegance.

Plate 2.1: The Norwich Assembly House

Source: www.assemblyhousenorwich.co.uk (at January 2009)

Thomas Ivory was responsible for a number of other well received buildings in the city. He designed the Theatre Royal, erected next to the Assembly house in 1758, which according to Meeres was only the second purpose-built theatre in the country. It was described by William Chase, in his directory of 1783, as a 'handsome house'.[37] This was, however, replaced in the early part of the nineteenth century because its original dimensions were thought too small.[38] Again, the fact that the theatre was built in the first place reveals a burgeoning demand for polite leisure facilities, since at least two well-established play houses were already in existence prior to 1758. The White Swan, in Upper Market Street, and the Angel Inn, in Market Place, were home to a group of city players, hosted troupes of visiting players and were both centrally and conveniently placed. Indeed, it is said that the company of players at the Angel

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[36] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R.(eds) (2004) p. 208.

[37] Meeres, F. (1998) p. 127; Chase (1783) p. 66.

[38] Meeres, F. (1998) p. 103; Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 216.

Inn was established as early as 1692. Even after the opening of the Theatre Royal, the inns retained their status as places of theatrical entertainment. However, the quality of the entertainment on offer was perhaps less high brow, with such offerings as 'Mr Matthews and his company from Sadlers Wells ..., PANTOMIMICAL DANCES, and also TUMBLING' being advertised in the *Norwich Gazette* in 1761.[39]

It is possible that the building of a new theatre stratified the type of performances available to city dwellers, perhaps even widening participation by enabling the creation of a popularised public space. Equally though, the specialisation of space extended acceptable cultural opportunity for those who could afford it and in an arena separate from those who could not. Parson Woodforde was a well-known consumer of culture in the city of Norwich and in 1785 records a trip to Norwich to see a play, where he sat in the Mayor's box alongside the Mayor and other members of local elite.[40] While the inns and well known popular playhouses continued to stage varied performances and floor shows, the social life of the elite was firmly centred on the events at the newly constructed theatre and assembly house.[41] This does not mean that the middling sort avoided more 'popular' shows or events. Woodforde again notes a trip to Norwich in 1785, when he went to see 'The learned pig' at the Rampant Horse in St Stephens. While the financial barriers largely excluded the lower classes from enjoying these new spaces, the popular and genteel cultural experiences were not mutually exclusive - for those with money at least. The elite were able to choose from all that was on offer and on their own terms; the benefits of purpose built genteel accommodation was therefore manifold.[42]

Stanley Sadie described eighteenth century Norwich as 'a rich city with a full musical life'. The city Waites were established in 1294 and in 1714 their duties were clearly formalized by a city bye-law, which stated that the group had to perform monthly.[43] In 1724 a Concert Society was founded giving weekly concerts during the winter season. Clearly, this sort of entertainment was aimed at the gentry and elite leisure seekers. The commercial benefits of such gatherings had not been ignored but Dain suggests that there was a deeper motive for the provision of musical meetings,

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[39] Norwich Gazette, June 10th 1761.

[40] Beresford, J (ed.) p. 249 April 18th 1785.

[41] Jewson, C.B. (1975) p. 9; see also Meeres, F.(1998) p. 128.

[42] Borsay, P. (1989) p. 144.

[43] Sadie, R. (1958) p. 19.

'Shared musical experience was seen as improving morals and manners, as well as promoting individual and corporate harmony.' Unlike the theatre, music was not blessed with a purpose built space and was instead reliant on the provision of a number of concert rooms, such as the large room in The Kings Arms.[44] As Sadie notes, 'for more than a dozen were used during the century, as well as several theatres.'[45] The demand for such musical gatherings was clearly established, but even in 1783, the directory does not list a purpose built venue, nor does the publisher call for the erection of such a space in his suggestions for improvements.

Often the very large and well known parish church of St Peter's Mancroft was utilized for important concerts. Its location at the heart of the city, next to the market square, made it an ideal showcase for both visiting performers and the city authorities. The primacy of this location, and also that of St Andrew's Hall at the opposite side of the market, was evident in Parson Woodforde's account of his experiences at the Norwich Music Festival of 1788. In September of that year, the Parson attended Norwich for a few days in order to see some of the concerts, the first of which at St Andrew's Hall was packed with the local elite, gentry and important local merchants. The following day he went to his barbers to be shaved in order to make ready for the recital by Madame Mara in St Peter's about which he says: 'Scarce ever seen so much company in Norwich. ... Almost all the principle Families in the County there.'[46] However, by the festival of 1790 he was not keen to attend again, 'Norwich Musick Festival begun this morning. I did not go having had enough of the last Musick Meeting in September 1788', because, he says, it caused 'uneasiness' and cost 7 pounds, highlighting once again the cost involved in cultural events and its sometimes prohibitive nature.[47]

Music was not limited to inside spaces and was an important accompaniment to another major component of eighteenth century cultural life. Pleasure gardens and promenades were, according to Dain 'intrinsic to enlightened sociability'. [48] The promenade at Chapel Field (Plate 2.2) had existed since the sixteenth century, but it was during the eighteenth century that the area became an integral part in the

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[44] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 204.
[45] Sadie, R. (1958).
[46] Beresford, J.(ed.) (1967) pp. 328-9.
[47] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 382.
[48] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 205.

developing cultural infrastructure. (see Table 2.1) The area was maintained and improved over time, in line with fashionable expectations, with three avenues of trees being planted in 1746 and a new bowling-green opening in 1755, shortly before the new assembly rooms. In 1789 this same area became the site of the public baths.[49]

Plate 2.2: Detail of Chapel Field
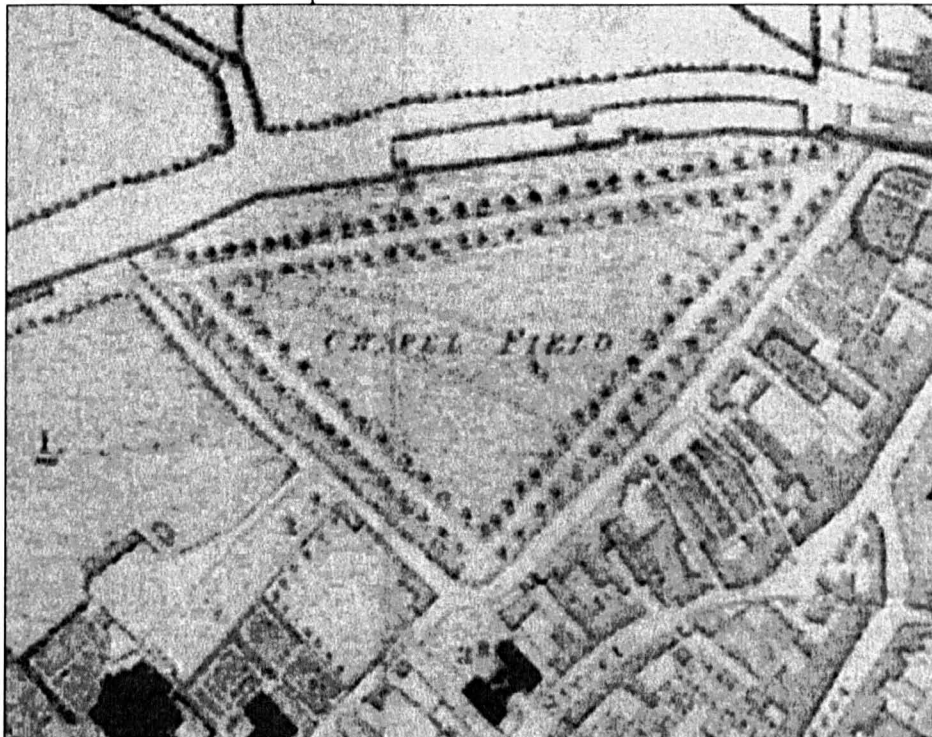
Source: Hochstetter's Map of Norwich, 1789.[50]

The close proximity of these developments is significant. The earlier cultural arenas, the inns for example, were all centrally located, but the development of the chapel field area, set a short distance from the hustle and bustle of the market square, indicates the creation of a small, but elite complex of cultural opportunities for consumers. Chapel Field was not the only promenade available to the sociable and polite classes of Norwich during the eighteenth century. Other more formalised gardens, attractions in their own right, were present by the time the Norwich directory was printed in 1783. Cater's garden was renamed 'Spring Garden' in 1739, and later became Vauxhall gardens, housing a Pantheon. The rural gardens, later known as Quantrell's gardens, after their owner, were a regular feature of Parson Woodforde's itinerary, although this same area is listed by Meeres as the Ranelagh gardens which

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[49] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 194, p. 214; Meeres, F. (1998) p. 130.

[50] Can be found at http://www.georgeplunkett.co.uk/Website/maps.htm (accessed 22nd March 2006).

had an illuminated walk by 1768.[51]

Although Chapel Field retained its name (the area is still known by that name today), the other gardens' name changes reflected the changing nature of polite fashions across the century, from an association with nature (rural and spring gardens), to an aspirational association with well known gardens in the Capital city. The creation of a link with London, however tenuous, was a clever move. It meant that visitors to the city could, and should, expect a certain level of culture, on a par even with the metropolis.

The gardens were not solely utilised for promenading and display, though display was a crucial factor in any elite outing. The spring gardens for example, in 1761, advertised public breakfasting during Assize week, beginning at seven in the morning and accompanied by a concert of music.[52] And when the balloon craze hit the country in the 1780s, Parson Woodforde watched as Mr Decker's balloon ascended from Quantrell's gardens outside the city gates of St Stephen's parish.[53] The combination of sociable promenading with the novelty of such experimental flights, meant that the gardens were cultural spaces of local importance, but also provided a link with national culture and innovation by hosting such spectacles.

Norwich was not, however, limited to pleasure gardens for its fashionable diversions. Indeed, Table 2.1 indicates that many of the cultural indicators suggested by both Borsay and Stobart et al as indicative of urban renewal came to Norwich over time. These were not limited to the sphere of entertainment.[54] As with other towns, Norwich's corporation made an active effort to improve the appearance and flow of the city streets. The area around the market was busy and active measures were taken to preserve and improve one side of the square which became known as 'Gentleman's Walk'; this was the promenade of choice for the gentry on market day, parading in their finery up and down in front of the fixed shops.[55] The proximity of the 'walk' to the market traffic was noted and in an effort to foster a more acceptable environment

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[51] Chase, W. engraved map (1783); Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 203, p. 250; Meeres, F (1998) pp. 129-130.

[52] Norwich Gazette, July 18th 1761.

[53] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 250.

[54] Borsay, P. (1989), see appendices p323 onwards.

[55] Pardue, B. (2005) p. 58.

for the walkers, the corporation employed a 'Cross-keeper' in 1675, to sweep and keep the market and four bridges, although the market cross was eventually taken down in 1732; he was asked to sweep the market once a week and the city bridges and waste grounds once a fortnight.[56] Further efforts were made in 1679 when the corporation instigated a rule to prevent carts being parked too closely to the fashionable walkway in the Market Place.[57] It was not until the late eighteenth-century that this part of the market was marked with a pavement:

> The broad Pavement of Scotch Granite which runs the whole extent of the East Side of the Market Place was erected at the expense of the Owners and occupiers of the respective shops in 179-[sic] and will always reflect an honour on their Public Spirit.[58]

Although, the market in Norwich was well known for its orderly appearance, with Silas Neville commenting in his diary of 1777, that it was 'one of the largest and best furnished in England.'[59] Improvements were made to the fish market in 1727, when the street was paved, and the main market was paved throughout in 1731, apparently very much later than the paving in Chester.[60] In 1738 the removal of the cattle market to the castle ditches, redefined the market as a provisions market only and made the environment for shoppers and traders far more pleasant.[61] Butchers were prevented from trading on a Friday, although this, it would appear, had more to do with protecting the fish market, which was held on that day. Indeed, the treatment of butchers in Chester, being squeezed out of the central, fashionable, shopping areas, was apparently not matched in Norwich. Poll book data from 1714 clearly shows that the majority of butchers were based in the parish of St John Sepulchre, quite a distance from the commercial hub of the city throughout the century.[62] However, Baskerville writing in 1681 suggests that the market was home to a considerable Shambles for the sale of meat.[63]

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[56] Mceres, F. (1998) p. 88, p. 97.

[57] Rye, W. (1903).

[58] W.S. Stevenson, nineteenth century manuscript 'Guide to Norwich', NRO BOL4/127,742x4 quoted in Mceres, F. (1998) p106.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Stobart, J. (1998) p. 15.

[61] Mceres, F. (1998) pp. 105-6; see Stobart, J. (1998) p. 15 for Chester.

[62] Jewson, C.B. (1975) p. 7; see Ayers, B. (1994) pp. 151-2.

[63] Mceres, F. (1998) p. 74.

Steps had clearly been taken by the corporation to create an appealing and vibrant city. Although cultural provision was apparent in the seventeenth century, the city had utilized the existing framework and improved it with purpose-built spaces for polite sociable gatherings, and with additional features, such as the trees in Chapel Field, thus enhancing the aesthetics of the area but also creating a more formalized space. Formality and uniformity were features of a fashion that was at the heart of Borsay's urban renaissance and their inclusion in urban spaces signaled that the city was in possession of a wider knowledge and awareness; that it was connected to the outside world and its fashions. Norwich was, through the creation of polite spaces, in possession of significant cultural capital and national status. The city was the hub, therefore, of the East Anglian urban renaissance, leading the way for other towns such as Lynn and Yarmouth.

Despite this, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the author of the first Norwich directory was concerned by the lack of progress within the city as a whole in terms of building, improvement and planning. Norwich's streets were, by the end of the eighteenth-century, still narrow and cobbled, and the street layout was still influenced primarily by the flow of streams through and underneath parts of the city.[64] Pevsner and Wilson note that the population of the city, though large, was not sufficient to disturb the medieval street pattern with a need for housing, so the traditional pattern remained in place. Unlike other cities, which were renowned for their up to date architecture and street layout, like Liverpool and Bristol, Norwich was not experiencing a period of significant growth and the population was still accommodated within the old walls of the city. Central streets were so narrow that in 1790, Mr. O'Brien, a hairdresser, had his windows demolished by a passing hay wagon.[65] In an age where image was becoming increasingly important, the traditional arrangements of streets was too old fashioned to compete with the developments in other cities and towns. Maximilien de Lazowski, quoted in Meeres, was not impressed when visiting the city in 1784, 'Norwich, like all ancient cities, is badly planned and built. It is not that there are no good or beautiful houses, but a well built house on a bad site or in a narrow street can never appear more than mediocre.'

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[64] Jewson, C.B. (1975) p. 6; Ayers, B. (1984) p. 14; see also Dain's comments in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 214.
[65] Jewson, C.B. (1975) p. 9.

Four years later, Dorothy Wordsworth thought Norwich, was 'an immensely large place, but the streets in general are very ugly, and they are so ill-paved and dirty, as almost entirely to take away the pleasure of walking.'[66]

Although such keen observations were made by metropolitan visitors to the city, they are useful in understanding the nature of eighteenth-century expectations and reflect an emerging inter-urban competition which Sweet suggests is highly visible in the production of town histories during this period.[67] Improvements in road links, which by the end of the century provided Norfolk with nine turnpike roads around Norwich, were creating new opportunities for national travel, exposing towns to comparison and criticism in a way that had not been previously seen.[68] Visitors were able to assess the cultural and social value of a town through its urban material culture in the same way that visitors assessed domestic material culture.[69] If a town was to compete with others regionally or indeed nationally, the settlement as a whole had to have the cultural credentials.[70] Inter urban rivalry, was, therefore, instrumental in the drive for improvement which became a matter of civic pride in many towns and which Mr. Chase had tried hard to incite through his wish- list of improvements.[71] The elements of civic pride and inter-urban competition led to the expansion in the number of printed city guides which often contained historical facts and claims to fame.[72] The directory of 1783 did indeed contain a brief history, but the overwhelming impression, aside from the dynamic lists of traders and retailers, was one of frustration on the part of the author, that Norwich was falling behind in its urban improvements.[73]

William Chase acknowledged that the city was 'abounding in opulence and fashion', but maintained that there should be a drive for improvement, for the convenience of inhabitants and visitors. His primary desire was to have street names painted clearly on buildings and to have houses numbered. In fact, he put his own scheme of

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[66] Meeres, F. (1998) p. 117; also in Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (2004) p. 217. Quoted in Dain pp. 216-7.
[67] See Sweet, R. (1997).
[68] See Langford, P. (1989) pp. 392-4.
[69] Cf Ellis, J. (2001).
[70] Stobart, J. (2002), p. 472.
[71] Sweet, R. (2002), p. 237.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Chase, W. (1783).

numbering into operation for the purposes of the volume, to which we will return later. Below, in Table 2.2, which lists Chase's 'Hints for Public Improvements', we get an impression of the breadth of improvements he had in mind. From street widening and paving, to the movement of burial grounds to the outskirts of the city, the desire of the author to see Norwich presented most advantageously are clear. He urges the people of Norwich and the corporation not to miss an opportunity for improvement, 'Though the elegant plan of Sir Christopher Wren, for rebuilding the City of London, after the dreadful fire in 1666, was, through prejudice and ignorance, rejected, the citizens of London have seen, and regret, the evil consequences of narrow minds, and narrow streets!'[74]

Table 2.2 – List of improvements suggested in Chase's 1783 Directory

1. Street naming	11. Improvements to Chapel Field
2. House numbering	12. Creation of Bath rooms
3. Removal of hanging signs in the city	13. Removal of city gates
4. Total removal of water spouts	14. Out of town burial grounds
5. Paving of the wider streets	15. Raising of water works, removal of well
6. Conversion of stables on the lower close to dwelling houses	16. Opening into the castle ditches
7. Extension to the level ground in front of St Andrew's Hall	17. Replacement of old bridges with new
8. Widening of certain streets	18. Hotel and tavern for genteel families not currently catered for
9. The building of a square on Castle Meadow	19. Gentleman's Walk should be flagged and posted off from the carriage way
10.Enclosure of the Upper Close, like the Lower, to create walk and fashionable mall	20. Changes in the organization of goods in the Market, 'classed and ranged methodically' in rows.

Source: The Norwich Directory, 1783, p. iii-vi

It is not clear whether William Chase was speaking for the majority of people in Norwich or whether he just had a particularly strong sense of civic pride, but his insistence was not entirely wasted. In 1789 the city Bath rooms were constructed and the town gates were demolished between 1791 and 1810. In fact, the city walls, which had been left to fall into disrepair by this stage, were beginning to crumble in direct contrast to the city of Chester whose walls were seen as a prestigious and

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[74] Chase, W, (1783) p. vi.

historical feature of the city's cultural infrastructure and were cared for accordingly.[75] The removal of the gates was part of a broader plan of street widening and general improvement to the frontages of houses and shops. Norwich was beginning to conform to the national trend and uniformity, with smooth facades, sash windows and clean classic lines. But, as Dain comments, Norwich was relatively slow in this.[76] In Bristol, for example, the construction of its first square was under way by 1700, Norwich on the other hand waited until the late 1760s before a large scale residential project was undertaken, a terrace designed and built by Thomas Ivory. Indeed the purpose-built theatre mentioned earlier, was constructed some thirty years after the first theatre in York.[77]

Norwich's involvement in an urban renaissance is therefore not entirely straightforward. Certainly, improvements were made, and specialized buildings for leisure were erected, but it is unclear whether the city was taking part in the national movement or whether the changes that did occur were simply an result of evolution. Building on any scale within the city was limited, with relatively few building schemes undertaken during the century, certainly when compared to Bath, or industrializing towns in the North West. The fact that an Improvement Act for Norwich was not passed until 1806, suggests that the city felt no great need to improve or perhaps it was due to the fact that, as Corfield says, Norwich was not a newly fashionable city, it was an established social centre and lacked any serious local competition.[78] Norwich had been the county town and provincial capital of East Anglia for a long time, it had an established industrial base, and the population was not growing with any great vigour. Those towns and cities displaying the most dynamic changes were those whose population was rapidly increasing.

Meeres noted that Norwich rebuilt itself after the great fire in 1507, when some 718 houses and buildings were destroyed.[79] Perhaps then the rebuilding was more a replacement of the old than a renaissance, in Borsay's sense. Houses were not replaced though with bricks and slate, but in the established vernacular building style and practice. In terms of an eighteenth century architectural urban renewal,

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[75] Stobart, J. (1998) p. 9.
[76] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 216.
[77] Borsay, P.(1989) p. 323; p. 331.
[78] Corfield, P. (1972) p. 290.
[79] Meeres, F.(1998) p. 59.

Norwich's involvement is restrained, but in cultural terms Norwich had clearly acknowledged the changing nature of leisure and demand, and made attempts to address the needs of inhabitants and visitors.

2.3 A second Urban Renaissance?

Increasing numbers of people connected with urban life were offered a wide range of leisure activities and cultural opportunity during the eighteenth century. The social elite was mixing in ever widening social circles. The introduction of leisure to the expanding middling groups meant that the elite were no longer central to the cultural pursuits on offer. Indeed, according to Borsay, the elite began to retreat once again into their own homes in order to regroup and create exclusivity elsewhere.[80] It was no longer enough for a town to have an assembly or theatre as a means of distinguishing its culture, taste or politeness, 'Libraries, book clubs and reading societies offered sounder evidence of the superior taste and goods sense of the town.'[81] Sweet discusses the likelihood, therefore, that the urban renaissance was a process with two distinct phases.[82] In the second phase, emphasis was placed on knowledge (and its acquisition and dissemination through large numbers of clubs and societies and, of course, through reading), in an effort by the elite to distinguish themselves from the middling sorts, who had populated the cultural spaces created in the earlier phase.[83] But was this intellectual development or improvement visible in Norwich?

Angela Dain suggests that the proliferation of clubs and societies was a more permanent element in the cultural renaissance of Norwich .[84] In an effort to clarify and reinforce social boundaries, and to remain culturally active, clubs and societies were often exclusive and the art of learning, whether as a means to impress or in the true pursuit of knowledge, reinstated the elite classes at the top of the cultural pile.

Meeres notes that Georgian Norwich boasted scientists, leading artists and thinkers, writers and musicians amongst the population.[85] It is unsurprising then that Norwich

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[80] Borsay, P.(2003) p. 291.

[81] Sweet, R. (2002) p. 371.

[82] Sweet, R. (2002) p. 373.

[83] Stobart J.(2002) p. 481.

[84] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 195.

[85] Meeres, F. (1998) p. 127.

was the home of the first provincial newspaper in the country, the *Norwich Post* which was established in 1701, quickly followed by others; the *Norwich Gazette* in 1706, the *Norwich Postman*, also in 1706, and the *Weekly Mercury* in 1714. [86] The newspapers became important in political circles and were a key tool in the advertising of wares, social events, shop goods, house sales, auctions, books, and quack medicines. Books sales and subscription opportunities were regularly advertised in the Norwich papers from an early date and London publications were very much part of the scene. However, the number of books advertised in the papers of the 1780s was far greater than those in early 1700s. Thus while newspapers really belong to the first period of urban renewal, they represent a connection between the two phases and are illustrative of the evolutionary nature of some cultural objects.

Other reading matter in Norwich was widely available through booksellers and various libraries. The first purpose-built library opened in 1784 and was established and maintained through the subscription of rich patrons, although a public repository of books had been established in 1608 in St Andrews Hall. [87] The wide ranging reading matter available to and taken up by Norwich readers can be seen in the advertisements for new and second hand books. It serves to emphasise the demand for more private cultural pursuits, as well as being a key indicator of personal and urban politeness in the late eighteenth century. [88]

Reading groups were formed within civilized communities where the moral benefits of knowledge were valued and where membership brought with it a certain kudos, enhancing personal cultural capital. [89] It is this cultural capital that became the underlying motivation for the second urban renaissance, as opposed to the pursuit of politeness which appeared to mark the developments of the first phase. But other groups began to proliferate during this period. This is seen in the establishment of 'pseudo-masonic' groups such as the Society of United Friars in 1785. The latter promoted the 'ideals of enlightened sociability, it provided a forum for the exchange of useful knowledge, an environment conducive to good fellowship and a

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[86] Knights, M. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 178.
[87] Meeres, F. (1998) p. 92.
[88] Priestley, U. and Fenner, A. (1985); Sweet, (2002).
[89] Sweet, R. (2002) p. 371.

collaborative platform for philanthropy.'[90] Belonging to such clubs was not entirely driven by a social need for polite spaces and good conversation; the knowledge exchanged was not just academic. Connections within groups could have brought with them economic benefit as well as instigating the formation of vital social and business networks which could potentially extend beyond the walls of the city. Dain also reminds us that urban culture was not always the preserve of the elite and notes that some clubs were not part of a drive for an enlightened society at large, but were concerned mainly with social drinking, of which there was plenty in Norwich! [91]

Membership of such intellectual groups or philanthropic organizations was as much a part of the cultural capital of the city as it was the individual. The quest for knowledge and involvement in the key cultural arenas of science and natural philosophy became a civic matter as well as a personal one. The thrust of the second phase in the 'urban renaissance', at least according to Sweet was in part a growing compulsion for philanthropic deeds and charitable societies.[92] Personal improvement, as well as urban improvement, enabled settlements to construct a public social conscience; one that was perhaps driven, on the surface, by the needs of the poor or afflicted, but also the need to be seen to be involved, a new form of genteel urban cultural capital was therefore generated.

Philanthropic drive was in line with the dissenting nature of the city, a dislike of excess, and for leisure time to be spent doing charitable works; though this was becoming part of a wider polite consciousness. The Norfolk and Norwich hospital was built in 1771, through subscription, and was a valuable addition to the city and its hinterland. Cherry notes that there was a wave of general hospital building in provincial England from 1736, spurred on by the establishment of London facilities. The hospital at Norwich was well planned, thought was given to the building, the 'H'-shaped plan promoting 'the freest circulation of air'.[93] Subscribers were responsible for recommending the admission of non-emergency or accident patients through the use of letters allocated to them on payment of subscription, which were in proportion

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[90] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 197.
[91] See also Meeres, F. (1998) p. 129; cf Clark, P. (2000).
[92] Sweet, R. (2002); see also Stobart, J. (2002).
[93] Cherry, S. in Rawcliffe, C and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 274.

to the amount donated.[94]

The second phase of the urban renaissance, as described by Sweet, involved the intellectualization of urban spaces, rather than a physical alteration as was seen in the first phase, with significant emphasis on the accumulation of personal cultural capital. This capital, which was still linked to the wider cultural frameworks of polite sociability and genteel taste, reflected more profoundly on the meaning of personal cultural activity. Membership of one of the groups described above, and in more detail by Dain, reflected directly on the nature of the individual and was an important statement of integrity and gentility. The city, in turn, took ownership of these groups and was therefore able to boost civic cultural capital by association; invaluable in this period of emerging inter-urban competition.

2.4 Summary.

The creation of purpose built spaces to facilitate the recreational activities of the urban and country elite, seems to have been a key element in Norwich's urban development. Borsay, McInnes and more recently Stobart, have all assessed the nature of the leisured, activity based elements of the urban renaissance. Norwich developed a purpose-built cultural environment, similar to that seen in other towns, but was slow to introduce other pivotal improvements, such as large scale building projects, squares, street widening and lighting. This was due to the fact that Norwich was not experiencing rapid growth. As a result the city remained confined to the medieval street layout, within the city walls; an evolutionary development. Indeed, Norwich's ancient origins meant that the city already provided a colourful cultural experience for its inhabitants and visitors, yet the corporation recognized the need for purpose built spaces, built within the new aesthetic frameworks, and to service the growing need for fashionable and sociable events which were also part of this standardization of style. By the 1760s the city had many of the elements identified in Borsay's thesis and was thus undergoing an urban renaissance.

Perhaps, though, Norwich sits more comfortably within the second phase of urban renewal, described by Sweet, where the proliferation of clubs, societies and

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[94] See Cherry's chapter in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004), for a discussion on other healthcare available at this time.

associations provides evidence of the growing importance of intellectually driven cultural pursuits (for men). Collecting knowledge and sharing it was well thought of and reflected positively on the character of the individual. Such learning was valued not just for personal improvement and achievement, but it was also a key element in the maintenance and acquisition of social and cultural capital; an important motivation for membership in groups and charities. This capital, and its value, belonged also to the city, assisting the authorities in the newly competitive atmosphere between towns.

Norwich, therefore, was aware of the changing needs of a city competing nationally for status and also the changing needs of its inhabitants. According to Borsay and McInnes, the changes in infrastructure and architecture, which marked the urban renaissance, were accompanied by a shift in the economic bases of some towns and cities, and the creation of leisure towns. Having seen that Norwich was involved in the provision of specialized spaces, in the first phase of renewal, and of clubs and societies present in the second phase, it is important to assess whether the economic changes, highlighted by McInnes in particular, were also part of Norwich's development.

The following section will look at this element of the urban renaissance, utilizing occupational data from four city poll books. Did Norwich display similar economic tendancies to Shrewsbury? Was the growth in the city's cultural infrastructure reflected in a shift in the occupational and economic structure? And in a city the size of Norwich, do the two necessarily go hand in hand?

2.5 Urban change and occupational characters.

McInnes proposed in his study that the clearest way to measure a shift in the economic base of the town is to look for any changes in the occupational pattern. In Shrewsbury, a leisure sector comprising freemen involved in the professions, services, luxury trades and leisured classes (those calling themselves gentlemen or esquire), increased by some twenty percent over the period 1650 to 1775. In measuring the frequency of the appearance of particular trades and occupations in the freemen lists of the town, McInnes provided evidence of a significant shift in the economic structure of the town, stating that Shrewsbury began the century 'as a marketing and

manufacturing centre and ended it as a leisure town.'[95]

In light of this evidence, perhaps a more detailed study of the occupational character of Norwich could provide a clearer context within which the urban improvements were taking place. Did demand for purpose-built spaces stem from a significant growth in the provincial capital's leisure sector? Or was the growth in philanthropic societies a result of the professionalisation of city occupations? Borsay warns that not all centres were affected by the market for leisure services and luxury goods and suggests that in some cases an alteration to the economic character of a town was a consequence of earlier strain or decline. York for example had become "the most prestigious social rendez-vous" of the provincial capitals, having already seen a shift from manufacture to a service based economy.[96] Norwich, a traditional city like York, was built on the success of the textile manufactures, which, although entering a period of decline, were still a central feature of the eighteenth century economy. Did Norwich show any signs of moving away from its industrial base towards the leisured and service economy?

In order to determine the nature of Norwich's occupational character, data from four city poll books, (1714, 1734, 1761 and 1784), were collated and the occupational trends assessed.[97] The poll books provide a similar data set to the freemen's lists used by both McInnes and Stobart, for research in Shrewsbury and Chester respectively. In Norwich at this time all freemen of the city were eligible to vote in elections. However, in order to fully understand the importance of the free status of Norwich's electorate, and therefore the scope of the poll books, it is important to briefly review the enduring political context in which they were produced.

Norwich was a city considered to be relatively 'free' in political terms, 'remarkably open and popular', and the variety of trades listed in the poll books demonstrate that the franchise was not limited by wealth.[98] Evans notes the large number of poor voters in the Norwich constituency at the end of the seventeenth century, which was not at all the norm, as well as the significant differences in wealth between members

[95] McInnes, A. (1988) p. 83, see table 1 on p. 56.
[96] Borsay, P. (1989) pp. 29-30.
[97] 1714, 1761 & 1784 poll books for Norwich City, held at the Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millenium Library; 1734 poll book, IHR, London, library shelf mark BC.25.
[98] Knights, M. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 168.

of the electorate; office holders however had to have sufficient wealth to carry out their duties.[99]   Across the country there was no clear uniformity of franchise, with County and Borough constituencies operating 'a patchwork of voting rights...based variously upon property, residence, membership of the corporation, and freemen.'[100] The political system in Norwich was a long-standing complex organisation with the freemen at its heart, 'only freemen could hold civic office and only freemen could vote in municipal and parliamentary elections.'[101] In fact, the major division within the city was between freemen and non-freemen, with significant commercial and trading restrictions in place for non-freemen, as well as limited involvement in civic matters.[102]

The centrality of freemen in civic affairs had a long tradition and was established by early city charters, the first of which, in 1194, stated that citizens should choose their own civic leaders. The corporate structure visible in the eighteenth-century was set up by the charter of 1417, whereby 'the Mayor and one of the sheriffs were elected by the *entire* freeman citizenry', the common council was made up of freemen, and the aldermen were voted into life-long office by city freemen; this remained the system until the early nineteenth century.[103]   For this reason then attaining the status of freeman was an aspiration and necessity for many men. Such a status was only awarded to men of the city who were 'legitimate and freeborn sons of freemen'; those who had served a seven year apprenticeship under a Norwich freeman; those who could afford to purchase the freedom of the city (at quite high rates, and including foreigners) or had it purchased for them, and those men who the Norwich Assembly, made up of the Court of Aldermen and the Court of Common Council, considered had something of benefit to offer the corporation. Evans suggests that on this basis during the 1690s the Norwich electorate comprised some 30% of adult males within the city, Knights agrees but suggests that by the end of the eighteenth-century this had been reduced to around 22% because of population expansion. [104] This compares with

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[99] Evans, J.T. (1979) p. 12; Hawes, T. (1989) p. ix; Meeres, F. (1998) p. 18.
[100] Hoppit, J. (2000) p. 30; Dickinson, H.T. (1994) p. 31; see O'Gorman, F. (1997) p. 140.
[101] Evans, J.T. (1979) p. 7; Knights, M. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 168.
[102] Evans, J.T. (1979) p. 12.
[103] Meeres, F. (1998) pp. 18-19; Hawes, T. (1989) p. ix; the civic structure in Norwich during this period is too complex for a full explanation here, but detailed discussions can be found in Knight's work and Evans' volume on the politics of seventeenth-century Norwich.
[104] Evans, J.T. (1979) p. 8, p. 12; see also Knights, M. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p169.

Olsen's suggestion that only 7% of the adult male population could vote by the end of the eighteenth-century.[105] This still leaves a large proportion of the population without voting rights, even within the city of Norwich itself.[106] Women's exclusion from formal politics is well known, although Rogers notes that this was more to do with convention rather than legal prohibition.[107] Men were also barred from civic activity on religious grounds, with Catholics and dissenters prevented from holding office by the Test and Corporation Acts of the late seventeenth-century, though as Knights points out, 'in practice when political tensions were low the religious test could be ignored', stating that between 1740 and 1760 half of the serving mayors in Norwich were non-conformist, and from the 1750s onwards the core of the 'civic elite were predominantly dissenting.'[108]

Although the freemen system created a fluid basis for politics in Norwich, with elections to the council every year and equally frequent changes in elite personnel, the systems was a traditional and a highly valued part of Norwich's identity. It was not a system that avoided manipulation and it is well known that on occasion the numbers of men admitted to the freedom rose dramatically before a parliamentary election, but as Hawes points out 'in later times [franchise was] limited to those of twelve months standing, and resident at least six months'.[109]

Poll books therefore provide a record of those freemen who chose to vote, and while these records are not representative of the entire adult population, they do offer a significant indicator of the occupational make up of the city at this time, with each book recording the names of over two thousand individuals. In addition, freemen whose occupations were not listed and a record of non-resident freemen were also noted in the books. In both these cases, however, such entries were not included in this survey; only freemen of the city parishes were counted for the purposes of this study, resulting in an interesting expression of the occupational character of Norwich and its parishes.

Although each of the poll books contains the names and occupations of two thousand

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[105] Olsen, K. (1999) p. 6.
[106] Hawes, T. (1989) notes the relatively small proportion of ratepayers within the Norwich electorate.
[107] Rogers, N. (1998) p. 216.
[108] Knights, M. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 177.
[109] Hawes, T. (1989) p. ix.

freemen of Norwich, the sources remain limited in their scope, and this needs to be considered before the results are discussed. The books were drawn up at the time of an election and were later printed as a record of those who voted. John Cannon states that printers decided how to print the books and their contents, while Richard Hall goes further and suggests that their provenance is vital in understanding their contents.[110]

In addition to this, though, the occupational labels used here to distinguish the economic character of the city tell us nothing about the status of the individual; whether as a weaver, for example, the man was a master of the craft or a novice. The occupational labels do not allow for variation in work or acknowledge the fact that many people had more than one job. Very few men in the poll books are listed as having more than one occupation, but there can be no doubt that people were involved in strategies involving more casual, irregular or secondary work than their title might suggest.

The usefulness of the poll books in determining the extent of urban change, is considerable, even when taking the source's bias into account. Morris suggests that the poll books are a major source of economic and social history.[111] Norwich was most widely known, of course, for its textiles, the production of 'Norwich stuffs' was an important feature of the urban landscape. Celia Fiennes, in 1698, commented on the huge numbers of people involved in the work, from the combers and spinners to the weavers, and finishers.

> ...ye Crapes, Callimancos and damasks wch is ye whole business of the place. Indeed they are arrived to great perfection in worke, so fine and thinn and glossy......they are all Employ'd in spinning, knitting, weaveing, dying, scouring or bleaching stuffs. [112]

And Blyth, writing in 1842, noted the great history of cloth production in Norwich, 'Even before the conquest, there can be little doubt that course woollen goods were

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[110] Cannon, (1962) p. 167; Hall, R. (2001) p. 173.
[111] Morris, R.J.(1983). p. 29.
[112] Fiennes, C. (c.1698), London to Bury St Edmunds section of her travels – full text can be found at http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/text/chap_page.jsp?t_id=Fiennes&c_id=19&cpub_id=0 (accessed August 2010)

made here, although the first mention we find of worsted articles is in the reign of Henry I.'[113] Even at the end of the eighteenth century, when competition from the new textile towns of West Yorkshire was threatening Norwich's industry, textiles were celebrated and the Wool Combers Jubilee, also known as the pageant of the 'Golden Fleece', was a great event.[114] The letters of Philip Stannard, a manufacturer of Worsted cloth who served his apprenticeship in the city and who in 1747 served as Mayor, attest to the great overseas demand for the Norwich stuffs during the middle of the century, though by the end of the century production was primarily for the home market.[115] Although the literature on the textile industry suggests that it was experiencing the beginnings of recession by the end of the century, it was still a major part of the city's economy and structure (see Table 2.3).[116]

Table 2.3 The number, and percentage, of voters involved in particular occupational categories.[117]

	1714		1734		1761		1784	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Building	151	7	172	7	137	7	135	7
Commerce/Trade	111	5	131	5	192	9	254	13
Leisured	182	8	244	9	201	10	244	12
Manufacture	418	19	407	16	297	15	290	14
Textile	1141	52	1470	56	1082	53	900	50
Rural	6	0.2	0	0	6	0.2	16	1
Victuals	199	9	193	7	131	6	163	8
TOTAL	2208		2617		2050		2002	

Source: the poll books of 1714, 1734, 1761 and 1784

In McInnes' accounts of Shrewsbury the data illustrated a significant reduction in manufacturing, with the leather grouping down by 10% and the textile groups also dropping by 8% each. In Norwich the percentage of voters involved in textile production and other manufacturing, which includes the leather industry, showed a relatively small decline during the century. Indeed, in 1784 with 900 voters directly involved in the textile industry, it is possible to assume that the character of the whole city of Norwich remained one of an industrial and manufacturing nature. Corfield notes, however, in her study of Norwich's occupational structure during the period

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[113] Blyth, G.K. (1842) p. 55.
[114] Blyth, G.K. (1842) p. 38.
[115] Priestley, U. (ed.) (1994) p. 3; Corfield, P. (1972) p. 279.
[116] See introduction to Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) and chapter 16 by Christine Clark in the same volume; also Pound (1988) for discussion of earlier decline in textile industry and the use of Dutch and Walloon manufactory methods, pp. 60-1.
[117] Please see appendix 1 for categorisation of occupations.

1660 to 1749, that there was a decrease in the number of textile workers being admitted to the freedom of the city at the turn of the eighteenth century. In fact such a decline in numbers of men entering the manufacturing trades was also seen in Shrewsbury, but the decline in Norwich was not sustained.[118]

Despite the continued importance of textiles manufacturing, the occupational structure of the city was not static. The broad categories in Table 2.3 highlight the fact that there were areas of growth as well as those of decline. A small decline in manufacturing was matched by a slight increase in the percentage of voters in the 'leisured' and 'commerce/trade' categories. In percentage terms the leisured grouping doubled between 1714 and 1784, which was not as dramatic as the increases noted by McInnes, but nevertheless illustrates an important shift. In absolute terms, this represented an increase of 62 voters. However, the Commerce/Trade grouping showed significant growth, more than doubling its number by 1784, with an additional 143 individuals.

For Norwich, the leisured category, which included those persons who were listed as 'gent' or 'esquire', without any other indication of trade, as well as those employed in the service industry, and the professional sector, grew by some 5%. Within this grouping, the trajectory of each sub-category is seen in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4. – Proportion of voters involved in the sub-categories making up the 'Leisure' grouping (seen in table 2.3)

Occupation/%	1714	1734	1761	1784
Leisured	1.4	3.2	3.2	2.9
Service	3.8	3.2	3.5	4
Professional	1.6	2.5	2.5	4

Source: the poll books of 1714, 1734, 1761 and 1784

The professional category here was apparently the driving force behind the increases seen, going from 36 professionals in 1714 to 82 in 1784. However, the leisured classes also doubled their number, whilst the service sector remained stable across the period. McInnes notes the importance of the professionals in the re-creation of Shrewsbury as a 'leisure town' and Borsay argues that the growing middling sorts within towns and cities became the driving force behind urban renaissance. The expansion of the middling sorts, in conjunction with increased trade and a widespread

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[118] Corfield, P. (1972); McInnes, A. (1988) p. 56 Table 1.

growth in relative affluence, meant that the number of occupations making up the leisure sector expanded as well; with five professional occupations in Norwich in 1714, for example, and fourteen by 1784. Increasing numbers of school masters and the appearance of bankers and their clerks suggest firstly that a cultural shift acknowledging the importance of education was underway and secondly that the foundations for a shift in occupational character, towards financial services, which occurred in the nineteenth century, were already in place.[119]

In fact, Norwich had been a commercial centre for a long time, but the proportion of freemen involved in commercial activity increased by 8% over the eighteenth century, and again what was notable here was the expansion in trade types, from 5-13%. Table 2.5 illustrates this point, with 7 additional occupations listed in the poll book of 1784, compared with that of 1714. The list is not an exhaustive one of luxury traders in each of these years, but the numbers are very suggestive of an increase in luxury activity and tie in well with the rising consumption of non-necessities. Indeed, the types of trades that were experiencing growth by the end of the century were those that were closely linked to the changing domestic material culture, mentioned in chapter one. The process of decorating and stocking one's home with material goods was undergoing a transformation and according to Edwards, the upholsterers were central to that process. The upholsterer was not just responsible for covering furniture with cloth, he was often concerned with the decoration and furnishing of whole rooms and sometimes houses, from the wallpaper to the furniture, taking on the design, outsourcing and general project management for customers who were interested in creating a comfortable, tasteful and fashionable domestic space.[120]

The increase in numbers of Norwich upholsterers suggests a burgeoning demand for their work and that the population was sufficiently able to sustain thirteen within its voting ranks.

[119] Clark, C. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) pp. 385-408.
[120] See chapter 1; Edwards, C. (2005); Vickery, A. (2009) p. 169, p. 324 note 51.

Table 2.5 Number of freemen in luxury trades in 1714 and 1784

Occupation	1714	1784
Bookseller/binder	1	2
Cabinet Maker	0	20
China man	0	2
Clock/watch maker	2	12
Coach maker	0	1
Confectioner	3	3
Cutler	7	3
Goldsmith/Silversmith	1	2
Gunsmith	1	1
Instrument maker	1	1
Mounter	0	1
Peruke Maker	0	4
Printer	1	4
Stationer	0	2
Sugar baker	1	0
Toyman	0	2
Upholsterer	8	13

Source: Norwich poll books of 1714 and 1784

Michael Baldwin, based in St Giles's parish, was the only coach maker mentioned in any of the four poll books. Ownership of personal transport was unusual for townsfolk, even towards the end of the century. A resident coach maker in the city suggests that a well to do element of society were buying large items locally rather than relying on the skills of metropolitan craftsmen and that there was demand from the surrounding countryside.[121] The Norwich Directory of 1783 lists twelve regular coach services, along with a very long list of carriers working a large network of connecting towns. The intensification of transport links, assisted of course by the nine turnpike roads which from 1766 linked Norwich to an even wider section of the population, opening up potential new markets which Mr Baldwin was excellently placed to exploit. [122] Combined with the growth in luxury consumption, the expansion of retail provision and the importance of civic cultural capital, this offers a sound explanation for the growth in the commercial sector in Norwich at this time.

How does the expansion of the commercial and leisured sectors fit with the

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[121] Vickery, A. (1998) p. 167-8.

[122] Chase, W. (1783) p. 72-3; Langford, P. (1989) pp. 391-410.

experience of other towns and cities during this period? We already know that Shrewsbury was transformed from a town whose primary economic concern in 1660 was as a marketing and manufacturing centre, but that by 1760 it had become a 'leisure town'. Chester, too underwent a similar alteration: the 'leisured classes grew modestly, whilst luxury trades and services expanded very rapidly', to take the place of the declining proportion of manufacturing.[123] Indeed, in Norwich, the fact that manufacturing did not really weaken its hold on the economy over the period, explains why other sectors were slower to expand in proportional terms; although the evidence from the poll book does suggest that leisure, luxury, and retail sectors were expanding.

Transformation from one type of economy to another created leisure towns like Shrewsbury and Bath, where the leisure sector over took the traditional manufacturing base, creating a new economic character. Such transitions probably stemmed from the rise of inter-urban competition (perhaps the result of competition from industrial centres nearby) or as part of a strategy of urban improvement competing for civic pride, or as a combination of the two. The urban renaissance therefore was made up of many elements, of growth, of decline, of improvement and of change, yet, as Sweet reminds us, some towns did not experience these developments until quite late in the century, the changes were not uniform.[124]

2.6 Summary.

Richard Wilson notes, Norwich 'has always been something of a puzzle' and was unusual in that it "could combine a reputation for great sociability with one as a leading manufacturing centre.'[125] Dain, in the same volume, ponders on Norwich's involvement in the urban renaissance, suggesting that, 'The impact of an Enlightenment driven modernisation in Georgian Norwich is therefore not clear cut. Yet all its attributes [of an 'English Enlightenment' and 'Urban Renaissance'] are evident enough in the city.'[126] Undoubtedly Norwich retained its manufacturing character, and the textile industry was at the heart of the city, but it did experience an increase in the proportion of freemen involved in leisure and commerce. The cultural

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[123] McInnes, A. (1988) p. 83; Stobart, J.(1998) pp. 10-11.
[124] See Sweet,R. (2002).
[125] Wilson, R. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. xxi, p. xxv.
[126] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) pp. 216-8.

infrastructure, which was refined over the century with a number of purpose built spaces for entertainment and sociability, and the improvements to the urban spaces populated by this expanding middling class, all suggest that Norwich was undergoing a 'cultural blossoming', and that it was part of wider national trends towards an enlightened and respectable urban culture. Yet, even saying this, the fact that these two disparate functions (leisure vs. manufacture) existed within the same city, with manufacture predominating well into the nineteenth century, raises some questions about how this urban space was organised.

Up until now eighteenth-century urban studies have concentrated on the transition of whole towns or cities during the period of urban renaissance. Towns became something (leisured) or expanded and became something else (industrial). Even within the later discussions of a second phase of renewal or a second urban renaissance, studies concentrate on the overall function of a settlement or on the inter-urban competition pushing civic authorities towards change. There has been no discussion of the possibility of 'intra-urban' differences; that a single settlement could maintain areas of 'leisure' alongside equally important areas of 'production'. Perhaps cities with a dual character such as Norwich, were too few in the eighteenth century, but although cities of a similar size did exist, little research has been undertaken on their occupational character or occupational geography. How did this duality manifest itself in the spaces of Norwich? Did Norwich have specialised areas for textile manufacture? Were the new luxury trades and retail concentrated in a central area? Or were all areas of the city involved fairly equally in the production and consumption of goods?

It is to the internal geography of the city that we turn now. The poll books, having given us a clear indication of the occupational character of Norwich, also allow a much closer parish level investigation in order to answer these questions, and to find out how manufacturing interacted geographically with the growth areas of commerce and leisure, both in terms of occupation and access to goods.

2.7 Geographies of Specialisation – Intra urban divisions.

It has already been noted that Norwich was a city of considerable size during the eighteenth century, both in terms of population and in area; even so, the existence of 34 distinct parishes within the city walls is somewhat surprising. Between the parishes themselves there is little uniformity in shape, area or population density, and this next section will discover whether there is any uniformity or similarity in the occupational character of the parishes. Closer attention to the textile industry will allow us to gauge the geographical spread of production within the city and how this relates to the geography of luxury and of retail. Indeed, by mapping the occupational geography of the city it is possible to draw links between the cultural infrastructure, discussed above, and the economies of surrounding parishes.

Mapping at the parish level has been undertaken by some researchers dealing with traditional towns of this period, such as Mui & Mui's investigation into York, though little has been attempted on English towns as large as Norwich. Both Mui & Mui, and Stobart looking at Chester, identify a central commercial region, very reminiscent of the Central Business Districts (CBD) discussed by urban geographers of the 1960s and 1970s.[127] These twentieth-century geographers were concerned with the analysis of spatial organisation within towns of the period, looking at the effects of out of town developments and so on. However, commercial centres were not a modern invention, the CBD was present in York and in Chester, but one wonders whether such a straightforward pattern was found in Norwich during the eighteenth century. Norwich could potentially have housed a number of districts associated with the provision of goods, if not at parish level then perhaps at ward level. Or perhaps the notion of a parade of local shops is something that should be confined to later periods.

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[127] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.C. (1984) chapter 5; Stobart, J. (1998) pp. 10-15; Carter, H.(1995) pp. 164-182.

2.8 The geography of textile production.

As noted in the previous section, the textile sector was an enormous part of the economic infrastructure of Norwich and remained so right up until the end of the eighteenth century, despite the fact that the West Riding had overtaken Norwich in textile output by 1770.[128]

In 1714, all city parishes were involved in the production of textiles (see Figure 2.1a). This city-wide spread of industry was made possible by the nature of production, done mainly at home or in small workshops, rather than in large collective factories. There is evidence of this in probate inventories, such as that for Matthew Cordey, who died in 1699, whose loom was in the garrett, or the old looms and pressboard that were found in the parlour of John Hodson, in 1703.[129] Sometimes, production was on a larger scale, though there were rarely more than four looms housed in one place. One exception was Francis Stoughton who, on his death in 1733, had five looms in his garrets together with cloth. He also owned cloth elsewhere, implying perhaps that he was putting out work to other weavers.[130] The fact that so many people were involved in the production of cloth was in part down to its versatile nature; it was a secondary income for some, could be done within the home, and was still able to involve all members of the family or an apprentice. Yet there were still very clear concentrations, as can be seen in Figure 2.1, with the central areas demonstrating a lower involvement in production than the parishes on the periphery.[131]

[128] Wilson, R. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) chapter nine; Chalklin, C.W. (1974) p. 32.
[129] NRO, ANW 23/5/45, NRO, ANW 23/5A/4.
[130] NRO, ANW 32/21/66.
[131] Please see Appendix 2 for full parish map.

Figure 2.1. Illustration showing the proportion of voters in each parish involved in textile production during the eighteenth-century.
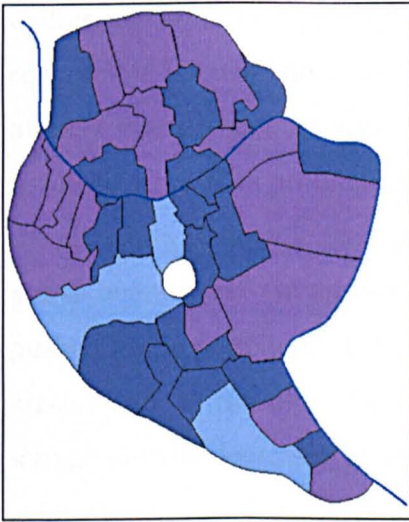
2.1a. 1714
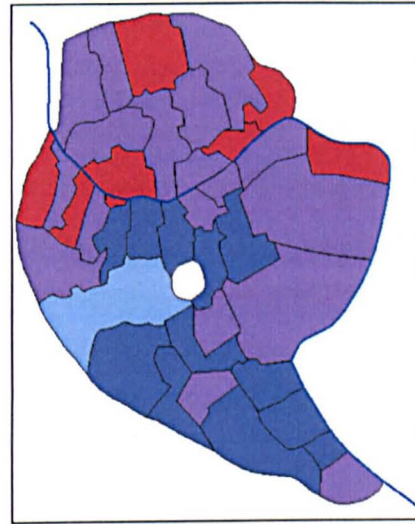
2.1b. 1734
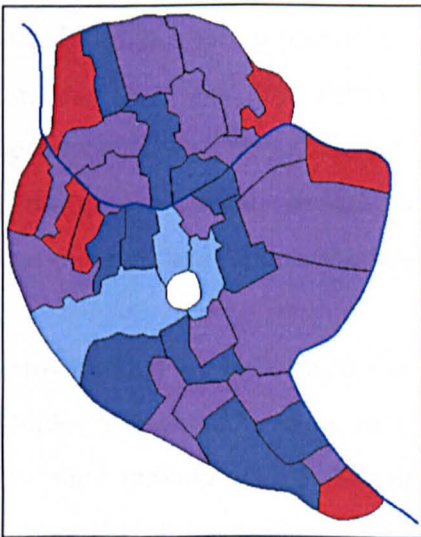
2.1c. 1761
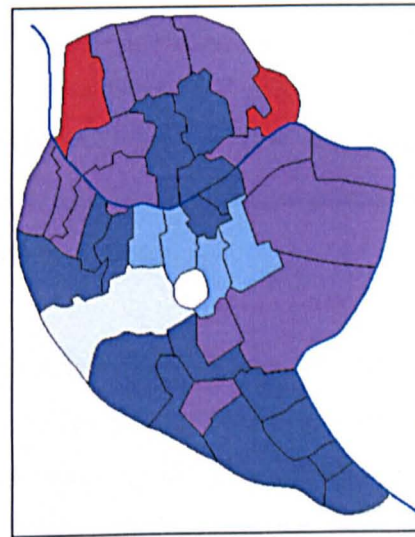
2.1d. 1784

KEY:

0-9%	*very light blue*	
10-29%	*blue*	
30-49%	*dark blue*	
50-69%	*purple*	
70-99%	*red*	

Source: Poll books of 1714, 1734, 1761 and 1784.

In 1784, textiles manufacture had intensified and become fairly decentralised, in comparison to the pattern noted in 1714 (see Figure 2.1d.). St Martin at Oak and St James, on the north-western and north-eastern edge of the city respectively, were the parishes with the most intense production, seen in red on the map. Between 70-99% of freemen from these parishes voting in that election were in the textile category, a remarkable intensification in those 70 years. St Peter Mancroft, which in 1714 was already one of least intense areas of textile production, now had only 17 freemen involved in textiles production, roughly 9%. Indeed all the parishes at the centre of the city showed notable declines in the number of freemen textile workers within their parish boundaries. On the one hand then the data suggests that textile work was being pushed to the periphery of the city and was undergoing some intensification in these areas, and on the other hand, all parishes in the city retained some involvement, though notably decreased in the central area.

The production of leather goods was also a key industry in Norwich and many other towns during this period. Though not comparable to textile manufacture in sheer volume, its representation in the poll books remained similarly steady. In 1714, 8% of Norwich's voting population were involved in the production of leather and leather goods, by 1784, this figure stood at 6%. However, the geography of leather production was very different to that of textiles, so that by 1784, the industry had become centralised. In fact, those parishes now most intensely involved with textile production, had relinquished their interest in leather production.

However, if we look more closely at the types of occupations involved in the leather trades, it is possible to see that in the central area leather work was very much limited to shoe making, glove making, and in three cases, saddle production. One could argue that this was consumer oriented production, aimed at a the middling and elite market, and that these craftsmen could be classified as retailers. The growth in the number of specialised luxury leather workers within this central area, particularly the parishes of St Peter Mancroft, St Andrews and to some extent St Stephens, served to strengthen the retail focus of this area.

2.9 The geography of Retailing.

When comparing figure 2.1a, which shows the industrial landscape of 1714, with figure 2.2a, the retail landscape of 1714, it is possible to see that one is the negative of the other. The two central parishes with the least involvement in textiles production are the same parishes that are more heavily involved in retail. Figure 2.2 demonstrates that there is an intensification of retail activity within the central parishes of St Andrews, St Peter Mancroft, St Michael at Plea and St George Tombland. By 1784 the parishes with least involvement in retail were on the periphery, most notably the parishes of St James' and St Pauls whose involvement in textile production was seen to intensify in figure 2.1d.

At first glance this does indeed seem to back up the notion that the city was divided into two distinct areas, one that was central and based on retail and consumption; and the surrounding city, the periphery parishes, which retained an industrial character. However, the distinction was perhaps not as marked as figures 2.1d and 2.2d imply, since many parishes showed involvement in retailing. This is in part due to the fact that the maps are a proportional representation of the voters. In parishes such as St Peter Southgate (the most southerly parish), the proportion of retailers is 7%, yet this only equates to two retailers in a parish where the voting population is relatively small.

Figure 2.2 Illustration showing the proportion of voters in each parish involved in retailing in the eighteenth-century.
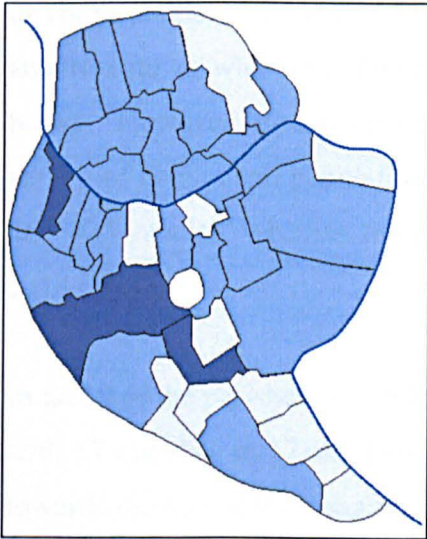
2.2a. Retailing 1714
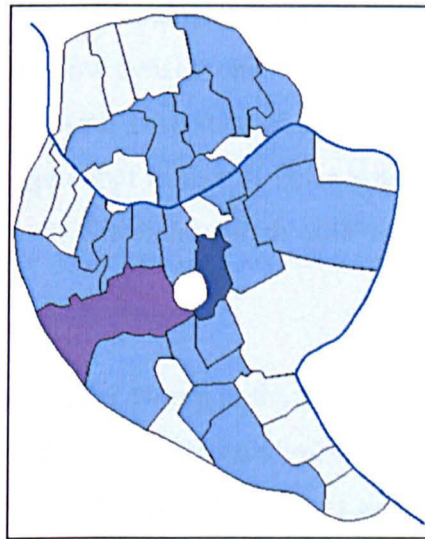

2.2b. Retailling 1734
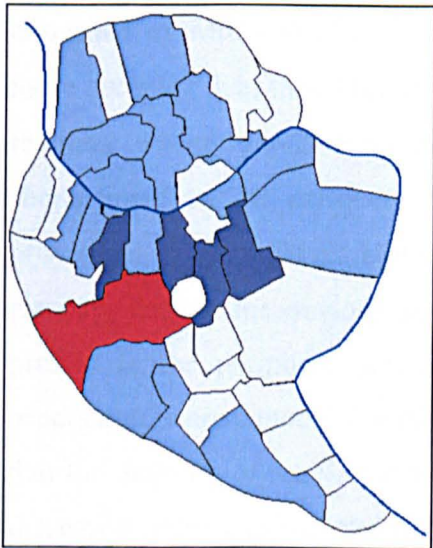
2.2c. Retailing 1761
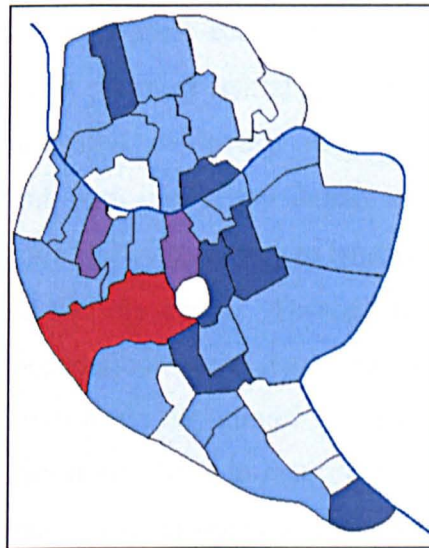
2.2d. Retailing 1784.

Key: *0%*   *very light blue*
         1-5%   *blue*
         6-10%   *dark blue*
         11-15%   *purple*
         16-20%   *red*

Source: Poll books of 1714, 1734, 1761 and 1784

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In contrast, a parish such as St Stephens, whose voting population was larger, comes out with a 2% retailing, yet had 4 retailers. Whether this low number (St Peter South) of voters is related to the fact that a large number of inhabitants of this parish were not able to vote, or whether in fact the parish was a low density one, is unclear in the poll books. However, figures published in the Norwich Directory of 1783, relating to a survey of houses and population in 1752, suggest that in fact St Peter Southgate only had 425 'souls', whereas the population in St Stephens parish was an enormous 2314.[132]

In fact 9 of the parishes by 1784 had only one retailer voting in the election, compared with 17 parishes in 1714. This suggests that the spread of retailing was contracting towards the end of the century; by 1784, nearly fifty percent (48%) of retailers listed in the poll books were either in the parish of St Peter Mancroft or St Andrews. Retailing then was clearly concentrated centrally, very like the layout of York described by Mui and Mui.[133] However, the city's socio-economic geography was more complex than this. Mui and Mui found that the most central parishes contained retailers whose goods were mainly non-essential or luxury items, whilst the shopkeepers on the periphery tended to deal with every day items, and general provisions. This might explain why retailing for Norwich appears to be spread across the city, despite the obvious concentration in the city centre. Perhaps the retailers present in the periphery parishes, whose occupations were dominated by textile production, were concerned with the provision of every day goods. Indeed it appears that the majority of retailers outside of the central area were in fact grocers – a point discussed more fully in the following chapter. The distinction is significant and perhaps the geography of the luxury trades will emphasise this more notably for Norwich.

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[132] Chase, W.(1783) p. 66.
[133] Mui, C-H. and Mui, L.C. (1984) pp. 121-134.

2.10 Geography of Luxury

Figure 2.3: Illustration showing the proportion of voters in each parish involved in luxury trades in the eighteenth-century.
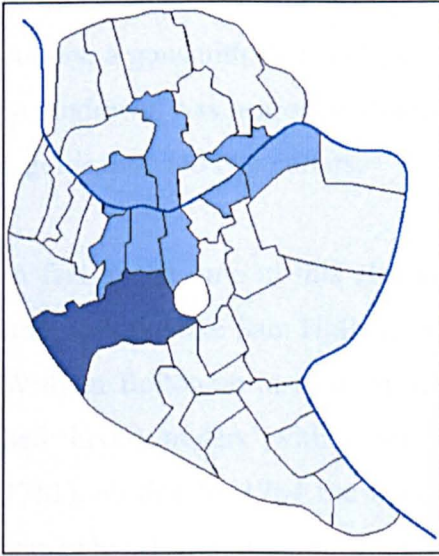
2.3a. Luxury 1714
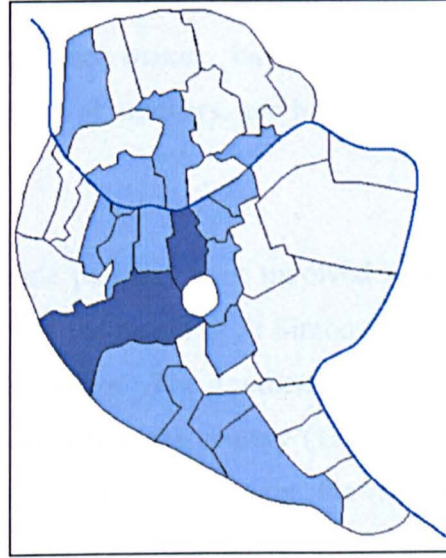
2.3b. Luxury 1734
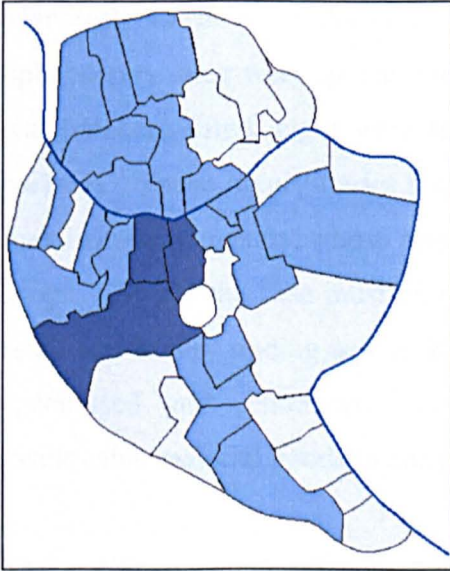
2.3c. Luxury 1761
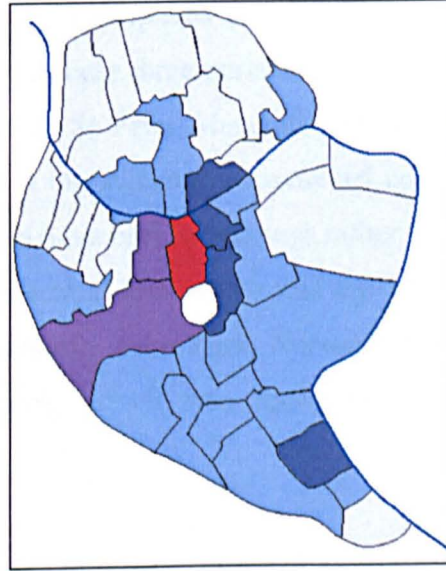
2.3d. Luxury 1784.

Key:	0%	very light blue
	1-5%	blue
	6-10%	dark blue
	11-15%	purple
	16-20%	red

Source: Poll books of 1714, 1734, 1761 and 1784

The growth of the luxury traders was seen partly as a response to the growing demands of consumers at all levels of society.[134] The parish most involved with luxury goods and trades was St Peter Mancroft. This was already apparent in 1714 onwards when it could boast, a bookseller, a clockmaker, two confectioners, four cutlers, a gunsmith, four upholsterers and one watch maker. Its neighbouring parish, St Andrews, was nearest in distance and in terms of numbers, and had a confectioner, a goldsmith and two cutlers.

In fact at the time of this election (1714), nine parishes were involved with luxury trade; people like Sam Holland, a sugar baker in the parish of St Simon & St Jude, or William Bolton an instrument maker in St Gregorys. The numbers of parishes who had 'luxury traders' within their electorate rose across the century (12 in 1734, 20 in 1761), so that by 1784 the number stood at 19 parishes. Again, the perception is somewhat distorted, and the actual numbers give a more dramatic impression of the geography of luxury within the city – comparable to York. Sixty-two percent of luxury traders, in 1784, were contained within three central parishes; 20 in St Peter Mancroft, 15 in St Andrews and eleven in St Stephens parish. Of the thirteen upholsterers, nine were spread evenly between these three parishes. And of twelve watchmakers listed, eight were to be found in St Peter Mancroft and St Stephens parishes. Those luxury trades seen outside of this dynamic commercial centre were mainly cabinet makers, whose premises would have been workshops rather than retail shops. Clearly the case must be made for a central area which was the hub of both retail and luxury trading across the whole century. Like York, Norwich displayed a specialised and centralised commercial area, which was apparently providing fashionable material goods to consumers.

The notion of a central commercial area is not a new one and undoubtedly the presence of the main provisions market within St Peter Mancroft had assisted with the evolution of a specialised zone. Yet the concentration of the luxury traders suggests that something more interesting was involved in the process of both fixed shop retailing and luxury trading in this area. Perhaps the specialised traders were drawn to this area because they were close to their customers, or alternatively there was a natural concentration of similar and complementary traders in certain areas. Yet the

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[134] See also Chapter 1 above.

area of some of the parishes was large, and from the poll books it is impossible to fully understand the street level geography of the city. However, it is possible from this data to look at the correlation between the residential patterns of the leisured elite and the professional classes, and this centralised commercial core. Was a distinct leisured area within this industrial city created over the course of the century? The cultural geography of the city is helpful here as well, to see whether the location of the key cultural arenas, new to the city during this period, was linked to the location of traders, professionals and the leisured classes.

The leisured classes in 1714 found themselves confined to the central parishes south of the river, between the cathedral and the western edge of the city. The men that made up this category were listed as either 'gent' or 'esq.' within the pages of the poll books, with no other indication as to occupation. This does fit rather nicely with the dual character of the city with a specialised leisured area in the central parishes, however, with subsequent poll books the pattern became less neat. By the time of the election in 1784, the leisured classes were seen in more parishes and not all of them central. However, this could be as a result of a number of things; firstly the location of residential areas was undergoing change during this period, and has suggested that the urban elite were starting to move to the suburbs of large cities and towns, and secondly, the real numbers of leisured freemen was going up and therefore competition for exclusive residences would have been intensifying, particularly when one considers the relatively slow pace of urban renewal. Even so, the majority of these men were still residing in areas of the city closely linked to the central parishes of St Peter Mancroft.

Professionals played their part in the transformation of Shrewsbury, and Chester, and Chalklin has noted that the expansion of the professional sector played a role in creating an attractive and culturally vibrant city, bridging the gap between economic and intellectual sectors.[135] In 1714 thirty-six professionals were limited to the central parishes. St Peter Mancroft, the largest of the parishes, was home to three Apothecaries, one clerk (vicar), a Doctor of Physick and a mathematician. The Close, was home to nine clergymen, and St Stephens could boast a further four apothecaries. By 1784, the number of parishes with professionals in had increased considerably, but

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[135] McInnes, A. (1998); Stobart, J.(1998); Chalklin, C.W. (2001) p. 49; Reed, M. in Clark, P. (ed.) (1995) p. 139; see also Corfield, P. (1972) p. 293.

the bulk of professionals were still concentrated more or less in the central area.[136]
Across all of the poll books, there it appears to be the general rule that those professionals listed in periphery parishes, for example St Pauls, St Martin at Oak and St Helens, were either clergymen or school masters. The central areas appeared to be more attractive to professional apothecaries, doctors and surgeons. Certainly in 1784 the three doctors (MD) in the parish of St Giles were in good company with fellow voters – four clergymen and a surgeon.

St Giles itself was not, however, a 'central' parish in the sense that it bordered the western side of the city, but it was a neighbour of St Peter Mancroft, the city's commercial hub. If the professionals were a link between the intellectual and the economic in one sense, they also formed a bridge between the two groups in a geographical sense. St Giles was far enough away from the centre to offer more reasonable residential opportunities, whilst at the same time being close enough to partake in the central commercial activity. St Giles was a parish whose involvement with the textile industry was still relatively high, over 40% of voters being in the textile grouping. Yet at the same time, the parish was also the area whose green areas were part of the new and improved 'chapel field' region. It was a parish in which the two characters of the city appeared to meet.

Mention of the Chapel Field region reminds us that the cultural infrastructure of the city, with its purpose-built and improved social arenas, was very much a part of this commercial zone. The theatre and the assembly house, for example, were both near the border between St Peter Mancroft and St Stephens, and the socially important rural gardens (see above) were located just outside St Stephen's gates. This area was home to the majority of leisured men and was near the chosen residence of many of the professional men, was also the hub of cultural and commercial life. The central parishes of the city were in effect an area very similar to McInnes description of Shrewsbury at this time; a town (area) whose industry was all but gone, and whose commercial, luxury and leisured economy changed the character of the town. It is possible to take this idea a stage further, and to suggest that the central zone, with a population similar to Shrewsbury, at just over eight thousand, constituted a leisure

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[136] St Peter Mancroft; one apothecary, banker, musician, surgeon, 2 school masters and clerks. St Stephen; one apothecary, one banker's clerk, schoolmaster, writing master, 2 surgeons, 3 clerks. See Appendix 2 for location of parishes.

town, within the city of Norwich itself.[137] It is this 'intra-urban' differentiation that have allowed for a confusing, variable urban development. Where Dain and Wilson have suggested that Norwich is something of a 'puzzle', the acknowledgement of these two differing arenas within one city, allows the city to experience both the first and second phases of urban renaissance, whilst also maintaining a stability that is closely linked to an unwavering manufacturing base; the central area was remodelled into a leisure town, and the outlying areas retained their industrial identity. Perhaps then the puzzle is not a puzzle at all, perhaps the notion of intra-urban duality allows us to abandon the assumption that the character of eighteenth century towns was relative only to neighbouring towns, when in fact a more flexible view of the urban structure might solve sometimes contradictory evidence.

2.11   Conclusion.

The urbanisation of Britain, a process described by many and for some years, has been the backdrop for the discussions in this chapter about the economic and cultural character of Norwich. The process of urbanisation has not been the focal point of the chapter, rather Norwich's place within this shifting context has been the primary purpose of investigation.   The city itself was nationally important during the eighteenth century and, although not as large as some towns by the close of the century, maintained its provincial status as a legal, commercial, industrial, political, religious and cultural centre, serving a vast hinterland of smaller towns, villages and the countryside. The variety of its roles has meant that Norwich's involvement in the wider movements, such as those described by Borsay's 'urban renaissance', has never really been clear-cut.

The confusion stems from the fact that Norwich was heavily involved in the production of textiles and, unlike other traditional towns like Shrewsbury, this involvement did not significantly decline over the course of the century. Therefore, its character, both economic and occupational, was widely seen as industrial. At the same time, the city was experiencing the forces of urban improvement, spurred on by a new civic pride and the demands the growing professional and leisure sectors. The

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[137] According to the Norwich Directory of 1783, from a survey conducted in 1752; the combined population of the central parishes, St Peter Mancroft, St Giles, St Gregory, St John Maddermarket, St Andrew, St Michael at Plea & St Stephen, was '8,527 souls'.

fact that these improvements took some time to come about, does not detract from their importance or their connection with the wider national movement. Indeed, even the second urban renaissance, one that had a more intellectual basis, was equally attended to by the people of the city, with the proliferation of clubs and societies, and philanthropic charities. The social importance of culture, and therefore the importance of the cultural infrastructure within the city, was highlighted by a number of purpose-built spaces within the parish of St Stephen's , the theatre, assembly house and so on. The urban elite was well catered for, and Norwich appeared to have all the elements required to be included in Borsay's urban renaissance. Yet it was still a largely industrial city.

The location of the purpose built cultural environment within a particular area of the city suggests that there might have been changes to the economic infrastructure at the parish level that were not picked up in the initial city survey. Indeed what was found in the closer inspection of the poll books, was that significant changes, in line with those presented in McInnes's work on Shrewsbury, did occur across the city, and there was an apparent polarisation of parishes. A form of specialisation within the central parishes of the city was observed, the industrial emphasis was weakened and in its place a more leisured area was created.

There was a clear distinction between the two areas, and a central zone, with increasing numbers of leisured classes, professionals, luxury trades and retailers, was created. This area, with a population similar to that of Shrewsbury, demonstrated significant changes as McInnes suggests and arguably became a leisured 'town' within the city itself. However, industry did not disappear completely and the numbers of retailers, and the market, maintained the commercial nature of this leisured arena.

Chapter three: Retail Geography in Eighteenth-Century Norwich.

Discussions in the previous chapter regarding the occupational character of Norwich established the notion of a city with a dual identity. On the one hand the city maintained its long-standing connection with the production of textiles and all the trades associated with this manufacture; while at the same time space was made for the improvement and development of civic amenities and urban cultural life, indicative of an 'urban renaissance'. This balance between the two characters was achieved, in part, by a geographical separation of the two. In the centre of the city, the commercial hub was characterised by luxury, leisure and retail; on the periphery the textile industry intensified. Naturally there was some cross-over in certain parishes, St Giles for instance; but the poll books identify an area of the city which might well be considered as a nascent Central Business District. To what extent, though, does this broad analysis represent reality? Were there traders, perhaps specialised, who were operating outside the official listings of the poll books? Certainly the city was large enough to accommodate clusters of shops away from a central area – can these be identified? And, within this central area (those three or four parishes which constituted the retail and luxury hub), were the shops confined to a small number of streets within each of the parishes? Did shop types tend to cluster or perhaps the spread, in both these senses, was more even? These questions can only be answered by close inspection of the distribution of shops at street level.

Mui and Mui suggest that the retail pattern within traditional cities, such as York and Norwich, was limited by medieval geography, leaving little room for internal expansion.[1] Neither city expanded outwards greatly during the period and for that reason commercial activity was confined to the central areas. Mui and Mui argue that specialised shops were found in the middle of the city of York, around the market while general shops served the periphery parishes. The commercial centre of Norwich had moved once before though, when the Cathedral was being built, between 1096 and 1145, the market in Tombland was disrupted by the work, and was thus moved to its present position next to St Peter Mancroft parish church. Perhaps, the area around Tombland, even in the eighteenth century, had retained a commercial

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[1] Mui, C-H. and Mui, L.C. (1984) pp. 121-134.

edge that was not fully illustrated in the poll book data.

Very few sources allow an insight into the spatial arrangement of retail in the eighteenth century. No plans exist of the distribution of shops alongside a readily accessible source listing the names and occupations of their owners. The numbers of streets and buildings potentially involved in retail, even within the central area, are large, and collating data over the period would have been very time-consuming. The poll books highlighted the changing nature of the central parishes, but these covered large areas of the city and it is probable that only a few streets within these CBD parishes were actively involved in specialised provision and luxury trading. Chase's trade directory of 1783 has therefore been used to provide a street level snap shot of retail life in Norwich. Not only does this volume provide a close up look at what was on offer to the middling and elite consumer (including retail outlets owned by women); it also shows how the shops interacted spatially with the street and with each other.

The directory listings from 1783 were mapped onto Hochstetter's plan of 1789 and consequently a picture emerges of a vibrant, sophisticated shopping centre, linked to the cathedral area and the cultural spaces. In reality this process also serves to shed light on the spatial experience of shoppers, as well as looking at the patterns, clusters or routes through various urban spaces which was the primary aim of this exercise. If the centre of the city was the place to go for luxury goods, like those discussed in chapter 1, it is important to understand how the street was laid out, what other shops would have been seen close by, and how this was linked to the personal experiences of consumers. Mapping confirms and, in a sense, re-personalises the data found in the poll books and enables us to more easily visualise the shopping scene: where people shopped, met, and as was increasingly the case in the eighteenth century, where they went to socialise.

3.1 Retail mapping and trade directories.

> THE utility of a DIRECTORY in so extensive and populous a city as Norwich, is so very obvious, that little need be said on its eligibility.[2]

This is the opening to the introduction of Norwich's first trade directory, published in 1783 by William Chase & Co., a local bookseller, printer and newspaper publisher. The author's intentions were, from the outset, very clear: to supply the inhabitants of the city and 'the intelligent stranger' with pertinent and useful information about the trade and commercial opportunities to be found in Norwich. The directory, as noted previously, was also intended as a platform for the promotion of urban improvement, with twenty key improvements listed in the opening pages, urging the citizens of Norwich to take advantage of the peaceful climate, to once again 'turn their thoughts to that very desirable object [Norwich].'[3] Chase used the pages of the directory to advocate his desire for all street names to be made clear, and for all houses and establishments to be numbered. Indeed it seems that this was his greatest wish: 'The vague and general name of a parish being the only direction to persons of every denomination; so that the enquirer may perambulate the boundaries of three or four adjoining parishes before he can ultimately determine [his destination]...' In an effort to prevent confusion, some parishes had put up street names, 'but even this has been done in so partial and improper a manner, that little benefit can accrue to the complainant.'[4] The improvement of street signage was a practical suggestion, making businesses easier to locate within the city, particularly those that Mr Chase had chosen to list in his directory. Equally though it was about conformity and uniformity and was part of a broader vision of modern improvement.

Chase's Directory proposed to lead the way in the creation of a clear and concise means of identification of streets, and also of individual houses and premises. The very last page of the directory again reiterates his desire that for the benefit of all city users, people should encourage each other 'to adopt and put in force the Regulations they have endeavoured to render Efficacious - THE NAMES of STREETS and

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[2] Chase, W. (1783) p. iii.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

NUMBERS on HOUSES'.[5] He had already put his plan into action by creating a numbering system of his own, listing retailers, traders and the gentry in the directory, by name, by street, and by house number. To readers more than two centuries later the benefits are considerable. Firstly of course, in terms of the mapping exercise it equips us with adequate information to look at the proximity of retailers within single streets. Secondly, the numbering system allows us to more accurately locate shops along streets, offering a more systematic understanding of the clustering of particular shops and the importance of streets and sections of streets. Thirdly, the organization of streets through the process of numbering is something with a 'modern' feel, something that historians can grasp immediately, tying in easily with concepts of city spaces. As a result, the survey of directory listings for this one year has really expanded our understanding of the spread of retailing within Norwich.

Not all directories of this period are quite so accessible, which perhaps explains why eighteenth century directories are seldom used in such a specific manner as that proposed here. This is in part due to the fact that, although the first European trade directory was published in London in 1677, they were much more widely available in the nineteenth century than the eighteenth. It also relates to the fact that as a source they have been felt to be unreliable by historians. [6] The specific objections to these volumes revolve around the compilation of the data held within and with the consequent bias towards inclusion of the middle ranks and elite members of society, rather than giving a clear picture of the trading activity of all social levels. Corfield notes this particular feature of the Norwich directory under discussion here, "[The Norwich Directory] designated approximately 25 per cent of all entries as people of status, either in addition to, or instead of, a recorded occupation..".[7] Clearly, this level of bias is an issue, and it has been noted that certain occupations do not appear at all in the directory. Brewers, distillers and even weavers are ommitted, despite the fact that they were a key feature of Norwich's industrial economy.[8] However, it must be said that William Chase makes very clear from the outset that his directory is one of

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[5] Final page of Chase, W. (1783) page unnumbered.

[6] See Maenpaa, S. unpublished working paper (2004); Shaw, G. (1984) p. 38; Corfield, P. (1984); Lewis, C.R. (1975); and see Scola, R. (1975) p. 157-9; Glennie, P. (1990) p. 29.

[7] Corfield, P.(1984) p. 26.

[8] Corfield, P. (1984) p. 32.

'An alphabetical List of the Principal INHABITANTS' [sic].[9] The low visibility of the manufacturing trades or local industry, therefore, is not surprising.

It could be argued that these omissions are not an overwhelming problem here because the focus of this study is on retailers and traders, rather than on manufacture. And we already have a clear picture of the extent of Norwich's involvement with textiles from the poll books. However, the bias towards the middle ranks, elites and entrepreneurs, suggests that a vast number of the lesser, petty traders would not have been included. Such traders, perhaps selling from their front rooms or on the streets, were a vital cog in the consumption patterns of city inhabitants and should not be ignored.[10] As Davies et al point out, the compilation of a directory is essentially a private matter, so it is not at all surprising that errors or omissions occur.[11] The authors of such volumes have to make choices about their readership, their wider appeal and the time it takes to compile adequate listings. And as Corfield notes, 'compilation could be pretty rough-and-ready, and it cannot be assumed that all local bigwigs were correctly identified.'[12] Chase however, assures us that the book contains a 'faithful and minute' listing, (see Plate3.1 below). Yet, it remains unclear exactly how this particular volume was put together. Sadly, no reference is made to the methods that Chase used to gather information; did the company, for example, take payment from the 'principle inhabitants' in return for inclusion, or was this a more altruistic exercise, perhaps to create more efficient and useful business networks, or as a way of promoting the city more generally?[13] Clearly, the bias noted by Corfield above, might suggest that entries were on the basis of payment, but despite the lack of surviving evidence, and the bias towards the upper middling and elite strata of Norwich society in the listings, there is a strong sense that the source does offer a realistic illustration of a fairly broad fixed shop retail population.

[9] Chase, W. (1783) Front page.

[10] See Maenpaa, S. unpublished working paper (2004); Shaw (1984); Corfield, P. (1984).

[11] Davies et al. (1968) p. 42.

[12] Corfield, P. (1984) p. 26.

[13] Maenpaa, S. p. 1.

Plate 3.1: Section of an advertisement for the Norwich Directory
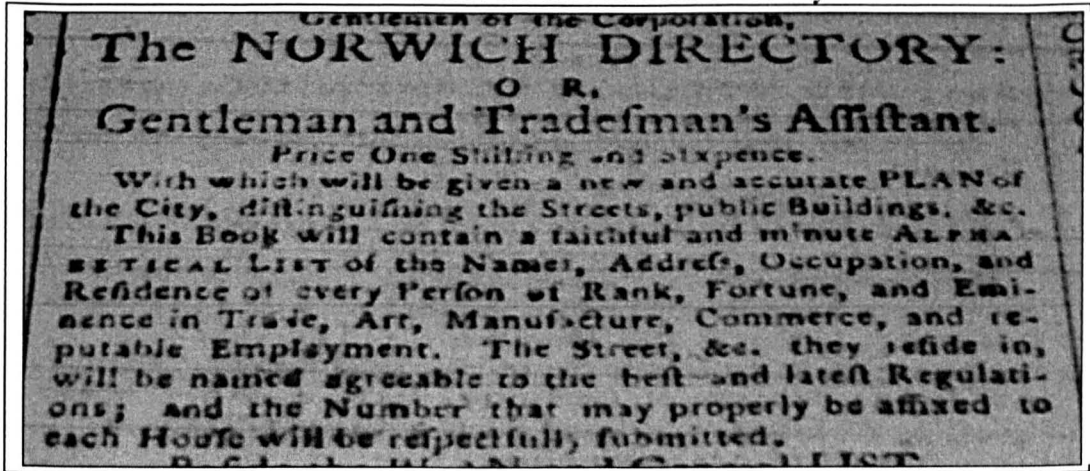
Source: Norwich Mercury, February 1st 1783.

Equally, we cannot assume that if someone appears in a directory listed as a grocer, for example, that his retail or business interests do not spread beyond the grocery branches. And in cases where a dual occupation is listed, such as Joseph Springall, a grocer *and* tallow chandler, it is difficult ascertain what bearing the title has on the actual goods he might have sold.[14] Conversely, when there are occupational titles which are non-standard, or no longer in common usage it can be difficult to classify the work that people did. However, the directory used here was largely free of such difficulties and occupational classification was fairly straightforward.

Comparative historical research is sometimes limited by the fact that standardization of directory contents only occurred from the mid nineteenth century, both in terms of content and layout. Obviously, certain elements were a key feature of the books, such as the brief history of the town or city, its topography, perhaps a mention of famous sons and so on. Corfield, suggests that 'Many early directory compilers were also advocates and celebrants, as well as chroniclers, of urban society,' reiterating Davies' point that compilation was a private matter, and equally, a personal one.[15] In the case of Chase's directory it is clear from the way it was presented and advertised that the book was part of a personal drive to speed up improvements to the city, perhaps driven by the author's civic pride, or involvement with the corporation – it was dedicated to the "Right Worshipful the MAYOR, and Gentleman of the

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[14] Bennett, A. (2005) pp. 59-60; Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) pp. 184-5.

[15] Corfield, P. (1984) p. 22.

Corporation".[16]

Comparison however, of directory data is not impossible and really the success of the source is bound up with the reasons for using it in the first place. The directory clearly does not provide an all encompassing listing of trade and retail of a particular period.[17] Certainly, the directories of the eighteenth century were imperfect; as Corfield reminds us, their purpose was immediacy, rather than accuracy, providing a means for visitors to navigate a new town, to make contacts, and for everyone to more easily identify a retailer who might supply specific goods.[18] It was about creating a context within which people could more easily function. Indeed, with the inclusion of house numbers and street names, the Norwich volume of 1783 made these tasks easier, although it is doubtful that such signage physically existed. With the help of the map included in the volume, however, visitors to Norwich would be a step ahead of the game.

Despite the apparent incompleteness of directories, they are useful both for socio-economic investigation, as Corfield suggests, and for the spatial examination of a town or city at a particular time.[19] This is the purpose for which the 1783 directory is employed here: specifically to map the geography of Norwich's retail and luxury trades.[20] Indeed, 'having accepted that directories were not censuses, they can be studied, not for what they might have been, but for what they were', a listing of principal traders and inhabitants, the directory offers a unique insight into the spatial and economic life of the city; one that will help us to create a spatial context for eighteenth century consumers in Norwich.[21]

3.2 Urban retail geography.

The problems outlined above reflect the concerns of historians engaged in

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[16] *Norwich Mercury*, February 1st 1783.
[17] See Glennie, P. (1990) p. 28.
[18] Corfield, P. (1984) p. 22.
[19] Corfield, (1984) p. 32; see Shaw, P. (1984) and Maenpaa, S. unpublished working paper (2004).
[20] Note that Linton (1956) used 1787 Directory of Sheffield to map industry, followed recently by Griffith's recent work on metal workers in Sheffield (2006).
[21] Corfield, P. (1984) p. 32.

comparative and quantitative studies of retailers and traders within a wide period, and the application of a singular source does not necessarily accurately reflect the situation on the ground, as Mui and Mui point out.[22] In 1784 the number of shops in Norwich was reckoned to be around 247, at least according to the data taken from Bailey's Eastern Directory.[23] Yet Chase's directory suggests numbers were far greater than that with just over three hundred retailing businesses included therein. This illustrates that the regional directories such as Bailey's, were often limited in their coverage and that comparative analyses with these early sources can be unsatisfactory. However, when Mui and Mui's comprehensive study of shopkeeping focused on the retail geography of York, using the data from a directory, the potential of such snap-shot data is highlighted. Their main finding was that the 'major shops were not evenly dispersed throughout the city of York'.[24] Indeed, their observations suggest that the central area of the city was home to 94% of 'major' shops, and that clustering patterns of drapers, haberdashers, grocers and milliners occurred within this central arena. Focusing on retailers who sold tea, they noted that the central areas were home to dealers of a higher income class than those elsewhere in the city. Indeed, the higher class merchants were found on the main streets of the city, whereas 'ten of the fifteen dealers identified in Classes VI [income of £10-24] and VII [under £10] were keeping shop in poor areas south of the Ouse and east of the Foss'.[25]

Some studies have attempted to go further by actually mapping their data onto city plans, yet few of these are during the eighteenth century and fewer still are English towns. Quantitative analysis of guild data in Antwerp in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries allowed van Damme and van Aert to look at the development of different types of retail, particularly those selling the novel goods described in chapter 1. Their sources allowed them to map the position of certain retailers on contemporary maps.[26]

In looking at the retail provision of the 'new commodities', such as coffee, tea and chocolate, the mapping results suggested a dispersed pattern across the city (Antwerp), particularly for tea, which was sold by the mercers. This dispersal they

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[22] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 167.

[23] see Mui, H-C and Mui, L.H. (1984) table 7, pp. 67-9.

[24] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 124.

[25] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 185, p. 188 and p. 182 for income table.

[26] van Damme, I. and van Aert, L. in Blondé et al. (2005).

argue, was created by the preference of retailers to live and sell within their communities. The distribution of fashion shops provided an entirely different picture.[27] These shops, likened to millinery shops in England, were largely run by women and were located in a central area of the city. However, the evidence does not support the idea that these shops were clustered together, the authors suggesting instead that, although as a 'type' the shops were centralised, individually they served a small and particular community - they too wanted to be near their customers who were living in the central, wealthy areas of the city.[28]

The centre of eighteenth century cities was also more expensive, in terms of rent, than areas on the periphery – a pattern expressed by the considerable amount of shop tax collected in Norwich's central commercial parishes.[29] Bennett discusses this in relation to shops in Hull, suggesting that luxury outlets needed to be centralised in order to cover their overheads and maintain their income; whereas those selling necessities, turned over smaller more regular amounts of money, and were more closely linked to their immediate neighbourhoods, including poorer ones.[30] Being part of a central shopping area, which was also connected to cultural and leisure pursuits, or in close proximity to the desirable residences of the wealthy, could only have enhanced their luxury appeal. This theme of centralised shopping areas, appealing to the middling and upper strata of society, is taken up by Stobart who places the creation of such shopping spaces within the wider context of leisure.[31] In looking closely at the layout of Chester, in North West England, he notes that there was a significant concentration of retailers along the four main thoroughfares of the city, converging in the cross.[32] Interestingly, he goes on to illustrate that particular trades, occupying the rows on Eastgate Street (two storeys of shops on main streets), were clearly clustered: '[r]ather than being spread evenly along the street, different trades were concentrated into distinct zones, creating a remarkable micro-geography on this single street.'[33]

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[27] van Damme, I and van Aert, L. in Blondé et al. (2005) p. 160.
[28] van Damme, I. and van Aert, L. in Blondé et al. (2005) pp. 137-167.
[29] National archives E182/707.
[30] Bennett, A. (2005), p. 38; see also Conzen, M.P. and Conzen, K.N. (1979) p. 46.
[31] Stobart, J. in Blondé et al (2005) p.194; see also Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004) p. 179.
[32] Stobart, J. in Blondé et al, (2005) pp. 193-196.
[33] Stobart, J. in Blondé et al (2005) p. 194.

By recording the occupations and names of retailers within this small area of Chester the author of the document used by Stobart to reconstruct the site, has enabled an analysis of the spatial organisation of the area. Equally, information like this also allows the historian to picture more vividly how the space was populated and how it functioned on a daily basis. The arrangement and extent of the collection of similar type shops did not happen over night, it developed over time and for a number of reasons which were not mutually exclusive. Firstly, as noted by Bennett, the rental value of these central spaces would have been prohibitive for shopkeepers with a small, generalised stock of daily necessities; with the likely effect that the provision of necessities would have been pushed to the outer edges of the shopping area. Urban geographers in the 1950s and 1960s found that the same was true in more modern centres with bid-rents preventing lower order shops taking premises in the centre. [34] Secondly, clustering could be a response to the need for shopkeepers selling luxury fashionable goods to be near to potential customers; those people who could afford to purchase luxury goods were also generally found in the central areas of early modern towns. Van Damme and van Aert comment upon this phenomenon after exploring the dispersal of fashion boutiques in Antwerp.[35] Proximity to non-retail aspects of the urban environment could have had a significant effect on the clustering of particular kinds of shops. The relationship between cultural spaces and urban shopping spaces was key in creation of social and polite shopping, with the shopping experience rapidly becoming established feature of elite and middling leisure time. Perhaps, therefore, there has been an assertion by recent research that clustering was a luxury-based phenomenon.[36]

It is possible that the creation of a single area within a larger commercial centre, known for the sale of particular goods, such as cloth or gold, encouraged the construction of group reputation and a joint spatial identity that was more readily recalled by consumers. Reputation by association or proximity to well regarded shops was worth building on for the retailer. In theory, the close proximity of shops with other luxury shops selling similar goods, would have offered the consumer some

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[34] Bennett, A. (2005); Murphy, R.E. (1982).
[35] In Blondé et al. (2005).
[36] See chapter 2 above; Stobart, J. in Blondé et al. (2005) pp. 194-5.

benefits too, facilitating new modes of consumption, browsing and the comparison of goods. It remains unclear whether these were primary concerns of retailers setting up shop in a given area, but it does seem plausible that such considerations were taken into account; particularly for luxury shops who would need to be seen in fashionable areas of the city.

Norwich, a city whose central area was leisured and whose periphery was industrial in character, was undoubtedly involved in sophisticated and specialised retail provision, but the parish level sources are not detailed enough to inform us about the shops in particular streets. The following section will explore the data taken from the listings in the Norwich Directory of 1783 and will determine the type of retail pattern the city followed. How was Norwich's retailing spread across the city? Did clusters occur, perhaps in terms of a concentration onto one or two streets within the central commercial area, like Chester for example? Or did Norwich display a dispersed pattern of mercers and fashion shops as seen in Antwerp?

The process of mapping will allow for the first time a city-wide picture of retailing in the eighteenth century, showing clusters, dispersal patterns and the relationship between these retail patterns, the residential distribution of the local elite, and the cultural infrastructure of the city. In addition, the numbering system utilised by the directory publisher sheds some light on the spatial relationship between trades and traders, allowing us to reconstruct the retail population of central streets and once again to repopulate this urban space.

3.3 Retail in the city.

At the insistence of the author of the Norwich Directory, both the street name and the house (shop) number were included for nearly all the entries, and those without were probably so well known that such direction was considered superfluous. William Chase (&Co.) could see the benefit of a standardized addressing system and was keen to utilise and to encourage the scheme that they had devised or something similar. The benefits for the current research are equally clear, allowing for a more realistic mapping of the city's retailers in the late eighteenth-century.

Figure 3.1 shows the retail mapping using the retail data taken from the Norwich directory of 1783, with each red dot representing a shop (squares denote a female shopkeeper). One is immediately struck by three things; the first is the concentration of outlets in the city centre, around the market and to the north of the castle. Secondly, the existence of quite a large number of shops to the north of the market and the river Wensum, particularly when compared to the third observation, which is a rather sparse area in terms of shops to the south east of the city. This lack of retail outlets in the South East of the city could simply be that the author of the directory did not consider them good enough for inclusion in the volume. Equally much of the population of the parishes in this area was involved in the production of textiles, and the proximity to the city staithes would suggest that market potential was small, particularly for specialised retailers. Moreover, the population of this area was, when compared with the central parishes, where most of the shops appear, much smaller, and the existence of a small number of shops might therefore be related to the size of the population, and their economic standing.

Figure 3.1: Norwich retailers and luxury traders, 1783.

Source: Norwich directory of 1783, mapped onto Hochstetter's map of Norwich, (1789)

The relative importance of central and peripheral parishes is further underlined by analysis of the shop tax for 1785 (figure 3.2). The total return for the city of Norwich, taken from retailers whose rent was £5 or more per year, was just over £371. The three central parishes of St Peter Mancroft, St Andrews and St Stephens were together responsible for over three quarters of Norwich's shop tax return, with over half (£190) being collected from St Peter Mancroft alone. This highlights the status and (rental) value of this central arena. However, all except four parishes made a contribution to

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the city's tax return. The parishes of St Helen, St Julian, St Etheldred and St Edmund, were all assessed at zero for the shop tax. Matching the pattern of distribution in Figure 3.1.

The tax returns also have their limitations: a notice in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1788 suggested that the assessment of retail shop tax was not as straightforward as it seemed, resulting in many retailers being assessed on the rent value of the entire property, rather than the premises occupied by the shopkeeper and his family. The author of the notice states:

> A watchmaker, occupying a Shop of the rent of £30 per ann. In Exchange-alley, is compelled to pay a shop-tax upon a house of £100 per ann. Which is in the possession of another person, but forms part of the same building. [37]

This does imply that there are some questions about the amounts collected from each shopkeeper, and that perhaps the figures are not based solely on the shop premises that were rented. It also underlines the suggestion that shops were located in desirable locations, and in the above example, were part of large houses of some worth.It also suggests that the premises themselves (certainly in this example) were in desirable locations, with high rent values,

We are left with a pattern that confirms the observations made from the poll book data, with the central area being the retail hub of the city. This core, like the centre of Hull described by Bennett, was not strictly confined to the streets around the market, yet what the directory illustrates, quite profoundly, is that there are a number of key streets, which appear to be the location for many of the city's retailers and luxury traders and in the following section these clusters will be more closely assessed.[38]

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[37] The Gentleman's Magazine, (1788) Volume 63, p. 254.
[38] Bennett, A. (2005) p. 38; see also Stobart et al. (2007) pp. 79-81.

Figure 3.2   Retail shop tax return for Norwich, 1785
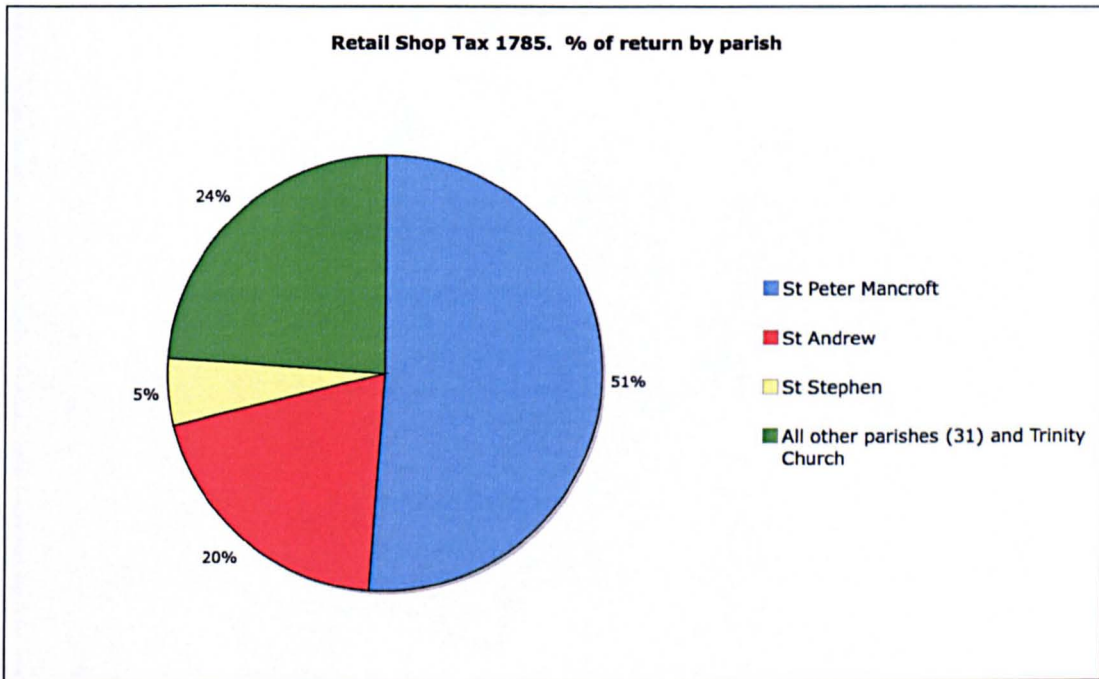
Source: assessed taxes for the City of Norwich, at the National Archives, E182/707

3.4 Retail Streets.

Within the retail sector, the clearest clustering was of shops selling textiles and haberdashery (Figure 3.3). They were concentrated in Cockey Lane, the main street leading eastwards from the market place to the castle, and in locations around the market place itself (Figures 3.3a and 3.3b).

Figure 3.3: Norwich Retailers, 1783
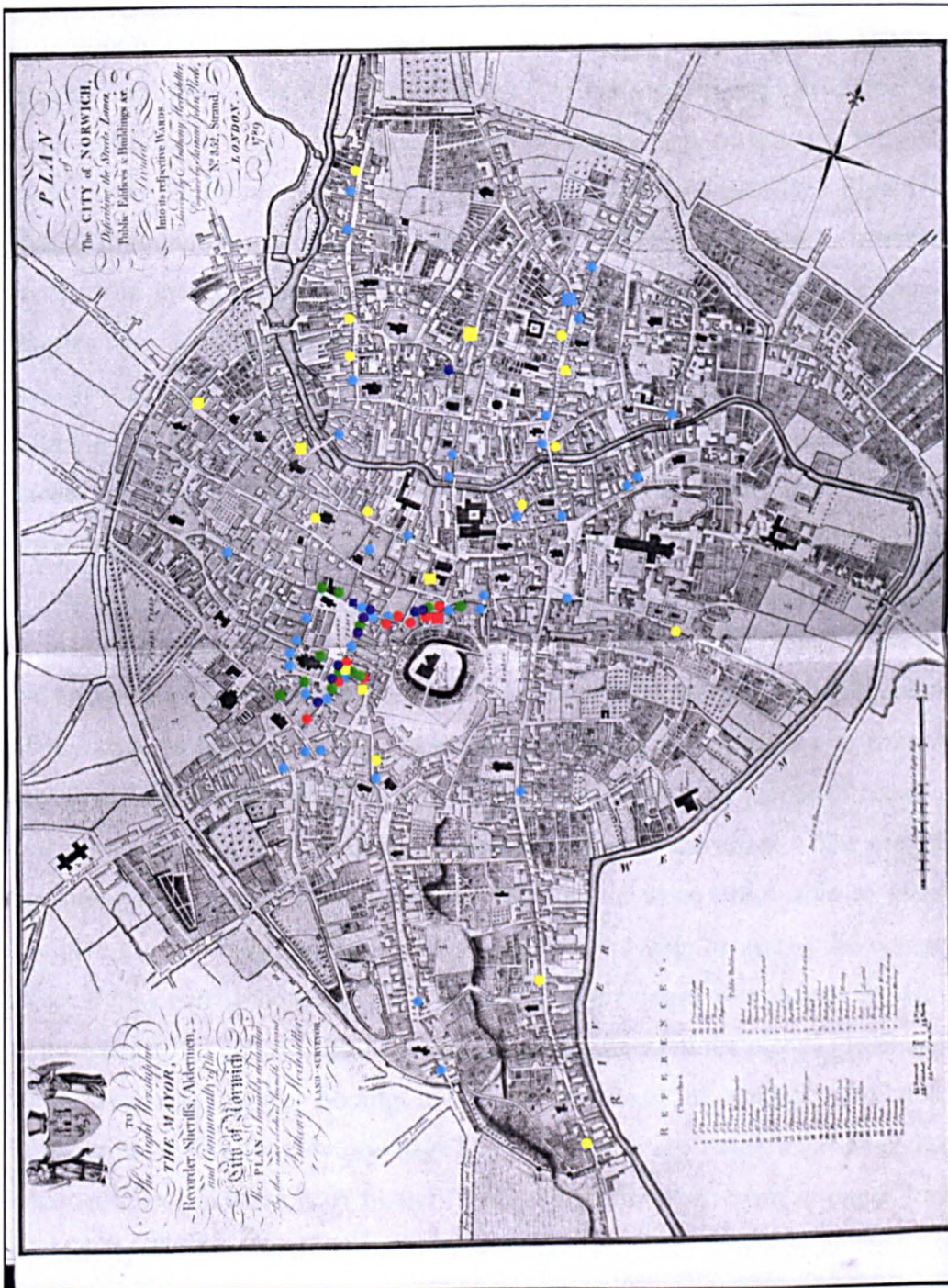
key: • Haberdasher
      • Grocers
      • Shopkeepers
      • Woolen Drapers
      • Linen Drapers
      • Clothes Sellers
      • Earthenware Sellers

Source: The Norwich Directory, (1783); Hochstetter's map of Norwich (1789)

All eleven of the haberdashers in the city were situated within this small area in close proximity to each other, though not all confined to Cockey Lane itself. Drapers, both woolen and linen, were very closely related to the area around the market, Cockey Lane and London Lane. No drapers, or haberdashers were recorded in the area north of the river Wensum, east of the castle, or south of Hog Hill (see Figure 3.3). A similar distribution was noted in Hull during the same period, where sixteen drapers were to be found in the market place, and again in Chester, where the majority of drapers were found together in the core area described by Stobart.[39] This distinctive area of retailers of cloth and accessories, therefore, was confined to the central area discussed in the previous chapter, and was even more closely associated with three streets in particular (Market place, Cockey Lane & London Lane, see fig 3a/b). Closer inspection of London Lane suggests that it was almost devoid of retailers selling items of necessity. There were of course a few, for example, Samuel Scott, whose premises were at 44 London Lane, at the furthest point from the market place. He was a grocer, but also a 'lace man'. It is impossible to know whether he set up shop there because of his trade in lace, or came to sell lace because of his proximity to other people selling similar goods, but it is significant that his secondary source of retail income was from a product so well suited to the other shops in the street. The proximity of the shops of a similar type meant that consumers were better able to assess and compare the goods on offer, and shopkeepers were able to assess the competition, which by the end of the century was increasingly important (see chapter 5). However, to have a shop based on one of the key shopping streets in the city suggests that these were shops of quality, hoping to attract customers of quality. Cox notes the importance of location as a message to customers about 'what level of market was intended', and clustering of higher 'level' shops gave an even stronger image of exclusivity.[40] The visual impact of these shops altogether in one place would help to reinforce the location in the mind of the consumers, and form a point of reference for those goods in future.

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[39] Bennett, A. (2005) p. 38; Stobart, J. (1998) pp. 13-14.
[40] Cox, N. (2000) p. 98.

Figure 3.3a Close up of Market Place, Cockey Lane and London Lane.
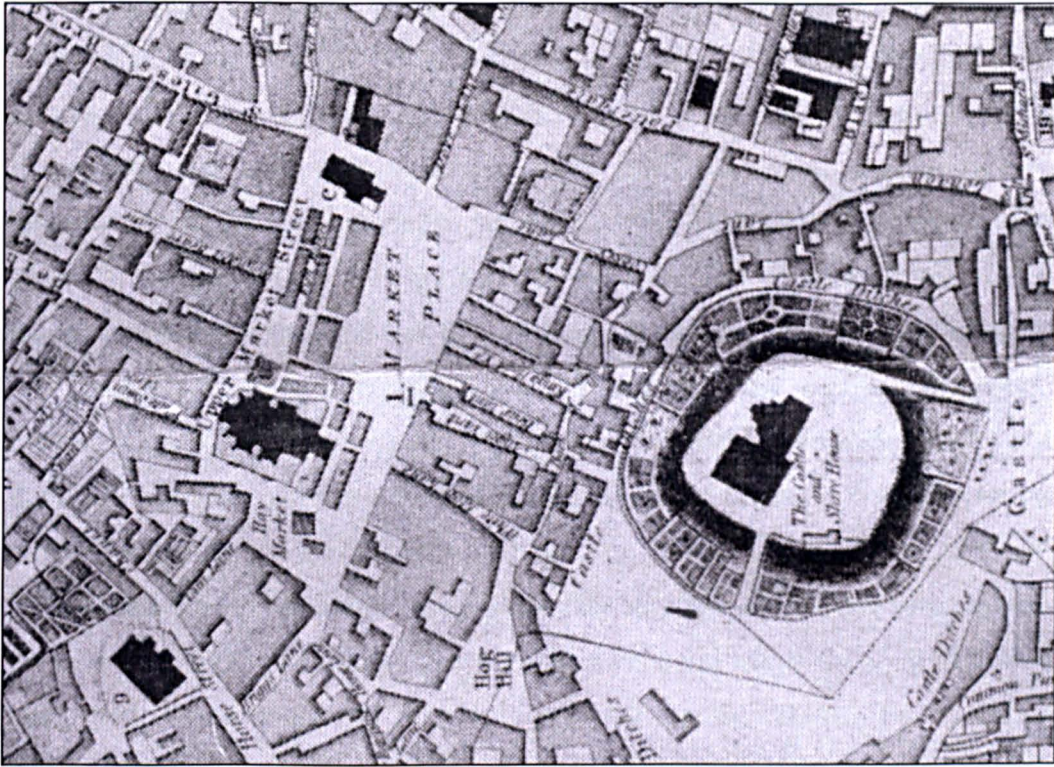
Source: Hochstetter's map of Norwich, (1789)

Figure 3.3b. Close up of 'Retailers' in the Market Place, Cockey Lane and London Lane.

- Haberdasher
- Grocers
- Shopkeepers
- Woolen Drapers
- Linen Drapers
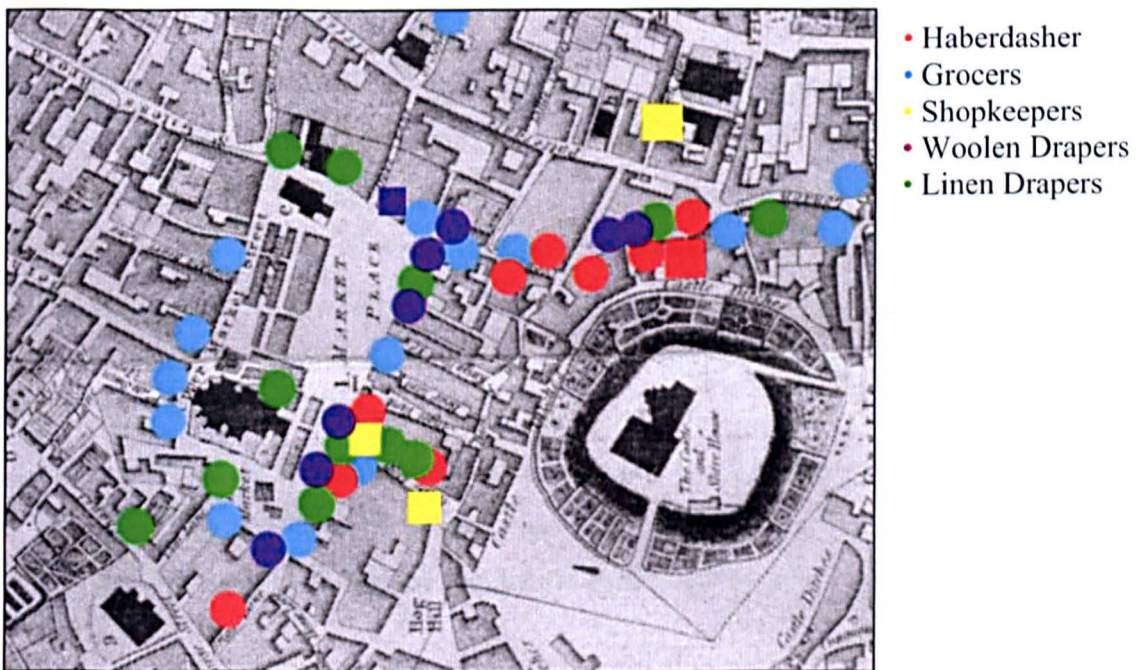
Source: Norwich directory, (1783); Hochstetter's map of Norwich, (1789).

Luxury trades were also broadly clustered into the central streets (Figure 3.4). Metal traders, such as cutlers, goldsmiths and silversmiths were mainly situated within the

central parishes of St Peter Mancroft and St Andrews. The clock and watchmakers of the city displayed a similar grouping, again the majority within the central area. This is also true of many of the booksellers and upholders. What is interesting about the luxury trades however, is that many of those listed in the directory are not confined to the central zone, trading some distance away from this central commercial area – a location which Bennett, amongst others, suggests is crucial for the non-essential trades.[41] Looking at the area north of the river, we can see that three clock/watch-makers have shops here and that two of them are situated along a major artery of the city (Magdalen street). Interestingly it is the peruke makers and the hairdressers who are spread most widely across the city, mostly scattered between the central areas to the north and west, yet there are two peruke makers in the most southerly area of the city and without any other luxury traders nearby. The dispersal of some of the luxury traders causes us to rethink the assumption that all non-essential trade was linked with the overtly commercial areas. The peruke makers and hairdressers, though likely to have shops, were essentially offering a personal service, one that was connected to fashion and appearance. The Norwich Mercury of 1783 includes many advertisements for hairdressers, particularly around the time of the assizes when the season was in full swing, even offering to attend ladies in the privacy of their own homes.[42]

It is this personal attention to their customers, which offers us a clue as to the dispersal of these skilled luxury traders across the city. Both hairdressers and peruke makers would have visited their clients at their homes, possibly at short notice, to maintain the hair styling that was essential in fashionable society.[43] How then does the dispersal of these groups relate to the residential patterns of the upper classes who were also listed in the directory? Figure 3.5 illustrates the residential structure of the 'Gents' and 'Esquires' who were listed without other occupation. Comparison with Figure 3.4 shows the similarity between the dispersal of luxury traders and that of the urban elite. This would suggest that there was a correlation between the provision of certain goods and services and the residential pattern of their customers; very like the

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[41] Bennett, A. (2005). p. 38.
[42] See for example the Norwich Mercury, August 16th, 1783.
[43] Cox, N. (2000).

Figure 3.4:Norwich Luxury Traders, 1783

Key: • Booksellers   • China
     • Cabinet makers   • Hairdressers
     • Clock and watch makers • Peruke makers
     • Luxury victuals   • art/ists
     • Metals   • Upholders

Source: Norwich directory, (1783); Hochstetter's map of Norwich (1789).

findings of van Damme and van Aert's study which demonstrated a clear association between 'fashion' fashion shops and their customers in Antwerp. Whether this also explains the disassociation of the cabinet makers from the commercial core of the city is not so clear, though it is likely that shops away from the city might offer additional workshop spaces for these producer-retailers to work.[44]

The location of the urban elite residences might also explain the dispersal of grocers shown in Figure 3.3 which, given the tight groupings of other retailers, seems unusual at first. This is not to say that they were absent from the central area, with 2 listed in the market place itself, and a small cluster on Upper Market Street. Grocers sold luxury provisions, such as tea, coffee and chocolate, alongside perishable goods, and in some cases tobacco. This may have encouraged a location near to those selling luxury or semi-luxury durable goods. But many of Norwich's grocers were listed as tallow chandlers as well, perhaps suggesting a more down-market orientation. Many grocers would have been utilised on a regular basis by their customers, rather than for one off major purchases that might be seen at the drapers or haberdashers, and therefore like the peruke makers, needed to be accessible.

Equally, the 'shopkeepers' listed in the directory were needed in the residential areas of the city, but by poorer customers whose residential pattern can only be assumed. Shopkeepers were likely to have offered provisions in small amounts to local residents, but were also a local source of general items, small basic household goods. Mui and Mui also identified a similar dispersal of general shops in the parishes away from the centre of York during this period.[45] The shopkeepers listed in the Norwich Directory were limited to only two in the central area around the market, both of them women, Widow Keer and Eliz Shreeve, and both of them in White Lion Lane. In fact out of the nineteen shopkeepers, six of them were women. It is important to remind ourselves that the directory was somewhat biased in its listings and that these shopkeepers may have been lower down the retail ladder than the grocers, but they were not the bottom of the heap; consequently in the areas of the city most involved in textile production (St James') and those parishes linked with the distribution of

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[44] Stobart et al. (2007); van Damme, I. and van Aert, L. in Blondé et al. (2005) pp. 139-167.
[45] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 127.

Figure 3.5. The residential pattern of the leisured classes; 'Gents' and 'Esquires' in Norwich, 1783.

Source: the Norwich Directory, (1783); Hochstetter's map of Norwich (1789)

goods on the waterways (St Julian, St Etheldred and St Peter Southgate), there was little or no retail provision, at least not of the sort that Chase & Co felt could be included in their directory. Lesger's mapping of retail in Amsterdam has highlighted

that poorer residential areas which appear devoid of retail shops, were crowded with bakeries and purveyors of other essential items, not to mention the large numbers of unofficial street vendors and so on.[46] Once again the notion of a city with dual characters is highlighted, yet the central area was not devoid of poverty, nor the outlying parishes devoid of elite members, except in the south.

The mapping exercise undertaken here has thrown considerable light onto the actual location of shops within the city of Norwich at the time the directory was compiled. The central area, as discussed in the previous chapter, was the hub of commercial life in the city, yet in fact three main roads were involved in the majority of luxury and non-essential retailing. Drapers, haberdashers, woollen drapers, hatters and hosiers formed a large cluster of outlets in London Lane, Cockey Lane and the Market place. Yet there were a fair number of shops listed in the directory with an address far beyond the boundaries of central zone. These included hairdressers, peruke makers, cabinet makers and grocers, whose dispersal was found to be directly related to the residential patterns of the male urban elite (as listed in the directory). Shopkeepers were also rather spread out, though very few were listed in the central area itself, suggesting that the goods they sold, of a general nature and daily necessities, kept them out of the leisured commercial zone.

3.5 The Gentleman's Walk – a cultural thoroughfare.

The above discussion linked the pattern of dispersal of some retailers with the residential patterns of the elite, but perhaps the most notable link between the elite and the provision of retail is found on one side of the market square, an area which became synonymous with the parading of the elite: Gentleman's Walk.[47] Historians have noted that the relationship between cultural provision and urban space was enhanced by the arrival of leisurely shopping during the eighteenth century; shopping became an accepted part of an emerging urban culture.[48] The retail mapping exercise has identified three key shopping streets, where luxury and non-essential retail were concentrated; London Lane, Cockey Lane and The Market Place, though most notably

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[46] Lesger,C. unpublished (2008).
[47] Pardue, B. (2005) p. 58.
[48] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 83; Berry, H. (2002a); Cox, N. (2000) p. 135.

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the stretch of market known as Gentleman's Walk. Was there a connection between these three streets and the cultural infrastructure outlined previously?

Table 3.1. Market Place traders numbers 21 to 46 (Gentleman's Walk) in 1783

Name	Occupation	Street	No.
Hirst, Thomas (Jnr)	Linen Draper	Market Place	21
Reynolds, Charles	Woollen Draper	Market Place	22
Toll, John Jnr	Hatter	Market Place	23
Bleckley & Toll	Wine Merchants	Market Place	24
Toll, John & Co	Woollen & Linen Drapers	Market Place	24
Coleman, William	Inn keeper (The Angel)(& coffee house)	Market Place	25
Baker, Merchant		Market Place	26
Woodcock, Cath	Milliner	Market Place	27
Marks, John	Upholder & Appraiser	Market Place	28
Newman, Thomas	Grocer	Market Place	29
Probert, Benj	Inn keeper	Market Place	30
Marsh, Isaac L.	Silversmith and toyman	Market Place	31
Yallop, Wm	Haberdasher and Toyman	Market Place	32
Schuldham & Barker	Woollen Drapers	Market Place	33
Booth, William	Linen Draper, wholesale	Market Place	34
Blumfield, John	Clock and watchmaker	Market Place	35
Smith, Wm & James	Woollen Drapers	Market Place	37
Oxley & Co	Hatter & Hosier	Market Place	38
Tuck's Coffe House	Coffee house	Market Place	39
Brownsmith, Gilbert	Silk mercer	Market Place	40
Lewis, Leyson & George	Linen Drapers	Market Place	41
Wardlaw, William	Bookseller & binder; Circulating library	Market Place	42
Johnson's	Coffee House	Market Place	43
Sexton, William	Ironmonger	Market Place	44
Roe, Nath Esq.	Goldsmith & Jeweller	Market Place	45
Yeoman, Eliz	Milliner & Linen draper	Market Place	46

Source: Norwich Directory, (1783).
* St Peter Mancroft Shop tax (and other taxes) assessor; link with the Angel Inn.

It is quite plausible to suggest that the thoroughfare created by these three streets, which inter-connect, was essential to the movement of the gentry from one side of the city, with the Cathedral, Close and Gardens, through the centre of the city, to the purpose built spaces in St Stephen's parish (the assembly house, walks, theatre and so on). London Lane, the street which housed the cluster of haberdashers, led on to Cockey Lane, ideal for cloth, gold and books, connected to the north eastern corner of the market place: which was also the beginning of Gentleman's Walk. This thoroughfare was the main connection between an old culture, of the religious centre, and the new purpose-built urban culture, whose primary inspirations were fashion, taste and improvement.

None of the retailers seen in Table 3.1 were selling essential items and the goods on offer reflect the level of sophistication of their customers and the investment of the shopkeepers themselves. The mix of social spaces, retail goods, professional services and cultural pursuits (in the form of library) all in one street provide ample evidence that the heart of Norwich was home to considerable retail and cultural provision, and the link between the two is made all that stronger. This suggests that the clustering of the walk was more to do with the exclusive nature of the address and its cultural meaning than an ad hoc collection of goods and services. Also in this area of the city was St Andrews Hall, a multipurpose venue that was acquired on behalf of the corporation in 1541. At the other end of the market place was the parish church of St Peter Mancroft, where concerts were often held.[49] Meeres suggests that the market was an area which the corporation worked hard to improve, yet the improvements along Gentleman's Walk were initiated by the shopkeepers themselves.

> The broad Pavement of Scotch Granite which runs the whole extent of the East Side of the Market Place was erected at the expense of the Owners and occupiers of ther respective shops in 179- [sic]... This Promenade is on Market Day the rendervaux [sic] of the Gentlemen and Farmers and is hence denominated Gentleman Walk.[50]

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[49] Pardue, B. (2005) p. 95.
[50] Stevenson quoted in Meeres,F. (1998) p. 106.

Plate 3.2: Norwich market place, with Gentleman's Walk on right.

c. early nineteenth century. Norfolk Online Access to Heritage (NOAH) ref. NWHCM : 1954.138, Todd 7, Mancroft, 143 : F www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk (accessed 5 September 2010)

This street was the pride of the corporation and represented Norwich as a city that was competitive, fashionable and culturally aware: even at the end of the century Norwich was still sufficiently important to attract genteel shoppers to its commercial centre.[51] In many ways the improvement of this area was part of the purpose-built environment described in Borsay's urban renaissance, thus provided an urban promenade between the two main cultural areas of the city. But was this enough of a reputation to avoid any additional marketing? Given the nature of the surroundings, the geographical relationship with the cultural infrastructure and other luxury shops, was it likely that shops within this area were involved in newspaper advertising? Did they place importance on the cultural amenities on their doorstep or were their concerns much more practical, like how to attract customers or maintain their standing in the retail hierarchy. Advertising was in its infancy during the eighteenth century, particularly in the provincial press; yet for some retailers it appeared to be a useful tool for keeping

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[51] Meeres F. (1998) p. 106.

in contact with customers and potential trade. The following section will look briefly at the geography of advertising in eighteenth century Norwich in order to see whether the most active advertisers came from the central areas of the city.

3.6 The Geography of Advertising.

The first newspaper in Norwich was printed in 1701, but as Ferdinand points out, the newspaper was not the only form of advertising at this time. In the seventeenth century, hand bills, word of mouth, town criers and shop signs were the primary tools utilised in retail marketing. Indeed the clustering of shops and the creation of a spatial reputation would also have been important. Trade cards were used primarily to maintain customer awareness rather than to promote particular goods or fashions, whereas newspaper advertisements were also used regularly for promotion.[52] The motivations to advertise are many, but it might be expected that the largest concentration of high order shops would also be the primary site of early newspaper advertisers. Was this the case?[53]

For the sake of consistency, it was decided to sample four separate years of retail advertisements in the *Norwich Gazette*, (1711) and the *Norwich Mercury*, (1737, 1761, 1783). These years were chosen because they were the closest full years to each of the poll books utilised previously and the Norwich directory itself. Looking at the first complete year under observation here, 1711, the idea that people who are centrally placed were more actively advertising their goods is apparent. (see Table 3.2) In fact, 40% of retail advertisements were placed by retailers based in the parish of St Peter Mancroft alone. Interestingly, the area near the cathedral, known as The Close, was also an active area for advertising at this time. However, this is not the case in later years and could well indicate the relocation of specialised luxury trades within the city centre. This shift also coincides with the growing consumption of non-essential material goods by a wider proportion of the population (see chapter 1).

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[52] Berg, M. and Clifford, H. in North, M. and Omrod, D. (eds) (1998) pp. 187-200; Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) Chapter 4; Stobart et al. (2007), Chapter 7.
[53] For a fuller discussion on early advertisements see chapter 6.

Table 3.2: Retail geography, newspaper advertisements by parish, %

Parish/Location	1711	1737	1761	1783
Outside Norwich	7%	14	23	35
Within Norwich but location unknown.	7	9	2	8
St Andrews	12	19	23	14
St Augustine			1	
St Benedict			1	1
St Etheldred			2	
St George Colegate	1	5		1
St George Tombland	4			1
St Giles			2	2
St Gregory		5		1
St John Maddermarket		2	10	1
St Michael at Plea	1		3	
St Michael Coslany			2	
St Peter Hungate			3	
St Peter Mancroft	40	43	15	18
St Simons		3	5	
St Stephen	3		2	16
St Clement	8		4	1
The Close	13			1
St James	1			
St Martin at Palace	1			1
St Saviour	1			
St Swithin				1

Source: Norwich Gazette, 1711; Norwich Mercury, 1737, 1761 & 1784.

In 1737, the number of parishes in which retailers were advertising decreased markedly in comparison to 1711, perhaps part of the geographical contraction and concentration of traders noted earlier. That said, 19% of advertisements in this year were placed by traders in St Andrews. The significant rise in the involvement of this parish reflects the similar growth observed in retailing occupations in the poll book of 1734; it was quickly becoming a key part of Norwich's commercial centre, so much so that by 1761 St Andrews had overtaken St Peter Mancroft as the primary location for advertisers (23% to 15%). The final year in this geographical survey suggests that a sense of balance had emerged within the luxury and retail trades, with advertising being relatively evenly spread across three main parishes, St Andrews, St Peter Mancroft and St Stephens. Again the emergence of St Stephens as a major player in the retail arena was observed in the 1784 poll book.

In terms of the retail geography described above, these three significant parishes were linked together both by their shared boundaries, but also by the luxury thoroughfare outlined above: London Lane, Cockey Lane, Market Square. This led directly to the cultural spaces in St Stephens. But did the retail trades in the advertisements reflect the predominance of luxury items in these particular areas? Were those shops situated along the major shopping route for the gentry involved in advertising, or were shops whose status was not as profound as those we have noted from the Directory trying to market themselves? Looking at the results for the year 1783, it is apparent that advertisements from both St Peter Mancroft (Gentleman's walk, Cockey Lane) and St Andrews (London Lane), were placed by luxury traders. In St Andrews there were advertisements from upholders, a gilder, a perfumer, a hairdresser, a bookseller, a linen draper, a woollen draper, a milliner and a hatter/hosier; in St Peter Mancroft the list of advertisers comprised a confectioner, cutler/toyman, staymaker, mantua maker, hatter/hosier, milliner/haberdasher, grocer/tea dealer and a china man. Interestingly, though, a butcher was also seen to advertise in the Mercury in November of 1783:

> TO be SOLD, by Thomas Lincolne, at his Butcher's shop in the Fishmarket, also at his House near St Giles Gates, several Collars of choice BRAWN, and where Gentlemen and Ladies may be constantly supplied during the Brawn Season, by their humble Servant THOMAS LINCOLNE. [NB] He gives the best Price for Brawns.[54]

This advertisement, which was incredibly unusual, being the only butcher who advertised in the samples, tells us a number of things. Firstly it reminds us that the market area, which was in St Peter Mancroft and in very close proximity to the fashionable Gentleman's Walk, was also a provisions market. The commercial hub of the city was a working hub and not just made up of luxury traders or consumers only interested in display and cultural satisfaction. Secondly, Mr Lincolne's also highlights that many of the advertisements listed in newspapers were linked to seasonal marketing or when the trader had a particularly large supply of certain goods. This was more notable in parishes away from the centre, though many of the adverts from luxury traders were advertising new and updated supplies of goods (see chapter 6).

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[54] Norwich Mercury November 22nd, 1783.

The distinction between the commercial centre and the industrial parishes outlined in chapter 2, was also noticeable in the columns of the newspapers. The most profound distinction being that very few parishes on the outer edges of the city actually placed any adverts in the years covered here. Often goods and services, such as pavior, plasterer, tobacconists and brewing, were found in non-central areas (see 1711), whilst the provision of some particular items were directly linked to the facilities on offer in that part of the city. For example, in 1711, Thomas Thurston advertised as a gardener and nursery man, selling a service but also selling seeds to customers from premises in St Faith's Lane, St Peter Parmentergate. This was also the location of one of the gardens which, by the end of the century, was favoured by genteel persons, and could boast a Pantheon as well as exciting spectacles (see chapter 2). In 1783, R Oldman advertised a seed warehouse in Surry Street, St Stephens, which was the location of Thomas Ivory's development of terraced houses in the latter part of the century. But this area was also close to the city walls and to another garden of repute, suggesting that location was related to a passing trade of visitors to the rural gardens. However, in the directory itself there is only mention of a 'Manchester warehouse' on Surrey Street, alongside residences of male and female gentry, and professionals. This area was predominantly residential.[55]

Indeed other advertisers in St Stephens suggest a broader view of semi-luxury goods and services, not quite as luxurious as the goods on offer in the Walk or London Lane, but still non-essential. In 1783 these adverts included one for a boot and shoemaker, an upholder, stay maker, mantua maker, harness maker, coach maker, hair dresser, seed warehouse and a woman undertaking clear starching. The common feature to all of these advertisers is that they are engaged in production, rather than straightforward retail, which may explain why they were not able to find a place within the main shopping streets. Perhaps then, the parish of St Stephens was still part of a growth in retail and luxury trades, but was not quite close enough to the centre to offer true 'luxury' items.

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[55] The Manchester Warehouse was selling linen goods.

3.7 Conclusions.

The plotting of different retailers onto the plan of late eighteenth century Norwich, using the Norwich directory of 1783, and Hochstetter's plan of the city (1789), has provided an invaluable view of the central area of the city and a deeper understanding of the provision of goods to the city as a whole. Such mapping has been attempted elsewhere, particularly in two large European cities, yet few have looked at English cities of a substantial size, where the potential for unusual or unexpected dispersal patterns of retailers was quite significant.[56] Despite the limitations of the source, as described by many urban researchers, the information collated in Chase's directory has allowed the creation of a snap-shot of the retail geography of the city as a whole and has shed light on the existence of important retail clusters within the central area of the city. Equally it has highlighted the extent of luxury trades and services in the outer areas of the city.[57]

The most notable clusters were for those shops selling items of luxury or semi-luxuries which were all found in the central commercial area around the market square. In particular the drapers and haberdashers appear to have been closely linked, geographically. The appearance of a 'community' of traders all involved in the same business will have had implications on the retail practices and experiences of consumers. Indeed, the directory has given the retail geography of Norwich a sense of clarity not reached by parish level investigations. Yet, as Mui and Mui pointed out in their discussions of the retail geography of York, the fact that some cities did not expand at any significant rate across the course of the century would have affected the way retail and luxury provision was distributed. Therefore a close relationship between the luxury and geography is not entirely surprising.[58] This is probably equally true of Norwich, although the maps presented here quite clearly illustrate the concentration of retail and luxury in key streets within the larger, perhaps logical, commercial area identified by the Poll books previously. Closer inspection of the traders along these city streets accentuate the density of luxury retail there.

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[56] See Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) pp. 121-134; van Damme, I. and van Aert, L. in Blondé et al. (2005) pp. 137-167; Lesger unpublished (2008); see also Allen, A. (2006).
[57] For example Corfield, P. (1984); Shaw, G. (1982).
[58] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 122.

The same maps show that there were outlets and shops in areas of the city well away from the commercial centre.[59] Comparison with the residential patterns of the urban elite in some way explains the presence of grocers, perukemakers and hairdressers away from the luxury core, somewhat similar to the dispersal of fashion shops in Antwerp.[60] Cabinet makers too were seen in the outer areas of the city and, although their customers would undoubtedly have been the urban elite, their positioning probably had more to do with the need for production space than a need for regular contact with clients. At the other end of the social spectrum, the dispersal pattern shown by 'shopkeepers' was also related to customer base, but this time the customers were not elite members of society, a point underlined by the lack of 'shopkeepers' within the leisured core.

The shop tax and the retail geography provide us with additional evidence of the centralisation of luxury and non-essential retail. Perhaps though, the clustering was a result of more complex social and cultural developments within the city itself. In the previous chapter, the cultural infrastructure of the city was discussed; shopping was a distinctive part of that culture. The shopping streets of Norwich were not confined to the city centre, that much is clear; but those shops within the central parishes - those that have been identified here as luxury traders and retailers - were concentrated within the 'leisure town'. (see chapter 2) The drapers and haberdashers in Cockey Lane and London Lane were on the main thoroughfare from the market to the Cathedral, whose grounds were home to many gentlemen and women of means. The drapers, watchmakers and the goldsmiths in the market place themselves were part of the social circuit, that of Gentleman's Walk which led the way towards the other cultural centres at the time: the assembly rooms, the theatre and the rural gardens just outside the city walls. In some ways the clusters formed a luxury walkway between the important cultural centres of the city, and came to form a cultural and social diversion in their own right.

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[59] Bennett, A. (2005) pp. 37-8.
[60] van Damme, I. and van Aert, L. in Blondé et al. (2005).

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Chapter four: Retail Change: Norwich and the retail revolution.

Historians in previous decades have insisted that it was during the nineteenth-century that recognisably 'modern' retail emerged, particularly with the arrival of department stores. It was only then that retailers engaged in fixed pricing, ticketing, display and other such 'modern' retail practices. They assumed that prior to the nineteenth-century, retailers offered basic and traditional services from dark and impermanent closed shops.[1] However, as Stobart and Hann, and Cox point out, shopkeepers in the eighteenth-century were already very much 'engaged in sophisticated selling', reacting to and encouraging the culture of leisurely shopping, even in the provinces. More recent research has therefore revised these assumptions and the retail revolution that was said to have occurred in the nineteenth-century, now appears to have gained a firm foothold in the eighteenth.[2]

Retail revolution, it is argued, describes the rapid alteration in the provision and practice of shopkeeping, from traditional to modern practices, highlighted in the ninteenth-century by the arrival of the department stores.[3] Stobart and Hann, argue that this revolution was more accurately placed in the eighteenth-century, and point to the growing numbers of retail outlets and increasing trade specialisation seen in the provincial north-west of England as evidence for this revolution. So too is the arrival of fixed pricing, window displays, advertising, ticketing and the setting out of the shop.[4] There is evidence, for example, that shopkeepers fitted out their shops and consciously defined the internal space to create a more conducive arena for social, polite and comfortable 'shopping'.[5] While this may be the case for London or other rapidly growing areas of provincial England, such changes were not necessarily universal, nor perhaps so rapid as to constitute a revolution. Indeed, Mitchell suggests caution at branding the changing nature of retail provision a 'revolution', instead

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[1] Eg. Jeffreys, J.B. (1954) and Alexander, D. (1970).

[2] Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004) p. 172; Cox, N. (2000) chapter 3; see also Walsh, C. in Crossick, G. and Jeumain, S. (eds) (1999) p. 157; Walsh, C. (1995); Fowler, C. in Alexander, N. and Akehurst, G. (eds) (1999) pp. 37-54; Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996).

[3] See footnote 1; Blondé, B. and van Damme, I. (2008); Cox, N. (2000) p. 11; also Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004) p. 171.

[4] Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004) pp. 171-177; Cox, N. (2000); Mitchell, I. in Clark, P. (ed.) (1984) p. 259, p. 275, p. 278; Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005) for the new uses of shop space during the eighteenth-century; see also Walsh, C. (1995).

[5] Walsh, C. (1995).

arguing for a more considered evolutionary approach.[6]

Whether evolutionary or revolutionary, the eighteenth century was a formative period in the development of retail. Fixed pricing, ticketing, window displays and sociable spaces, are seen within the historical record, but it is not really clear how widespread these features were by the end of the century. Certainly, in direct contradiction to the evidence set out by Walsh and others, retail in Antwerp was not following the same developmental pattern as the larger cities of England, recent research by Blondé and van Damme calling into question the nature of change within retail during this period.[7] Indeed, their work suggests that 'shop design', the creation of space and the promotion of comfort as a tool to attract customers into the shop had no role to play in the growth of consumption, nor were they responsible for the successful retailing of new material goods. Indeed, they conclude that shops were places where a variety of goods were sold using 'different selling practices', reminding us that perhaps it is not so easy to pin-down a definitive point of change.[8]

In light of this debate, the position of Norwich, a city not dissimilar to Antwerp in terms of growth (see chapter 2), might shed light on provincial changes in retail practice. Did Norwich undergo a retail revolution similar to that described by Stobart and Hann, and others, or did retailers err on the side of function, rather than fashion as suggested by Blonde and van Damme? This chapter will explore Norwich's shops in more detail, placing the city for the first time within the debate outlined above, and will examine more closely the emergence of key 'modern' characteristics such as fixed pricing, ticketing and window displays. Indeed, section one will question the novelty of some of these aspects of retail, even in the eighteenth century, and will discuss in part the co-existence of a number of retail strategies, both traditional and revolutionary. Section two will look at the shop space itself and the physical nature of the eighteenth century shop: how it interacted with urban spaces, how it created an efficient environment for all parties and how it was altered to fit in with the changing expectations of provincial customers and retail needs. The separation of retail practice and retail space is only for the purposes of explanation, in reality such a division would be impossible since one informs the other and both are essential to the notion of retail revolution.

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[6] Mitchell, I. in Clark, P. (ed.) (1984) p. 278.
[7] Blondé, B. and van Damme, I. (2008).
[8] Blondé, B. and van Damme, I. (2008) p. 13.

4.1 Eighteenth century retail practice and innovation.

Tracing the emergence of novel retail practice is made difficult by the relative lack of surviving historical sources in this area. Mui and Mui use newspaper advertisements to track the appearance of certain retail methods, what they term 'aggressive sales techniques', such as charging fixed prices and selling for ready money. Prior to the arrival of fixed pricing, haggling had been the traditional means of reaching agreement over the price of goods, relying on mutual trust and a strong relationship between customer and retailer. The arrival of fixed pricing signified the beginning of a movement away from this traditional retail and cultural form (though it did not disappear altogether), and would have constituted a significant change for consumers and retailers alike. Mui and Mui's work informed future research into eighteenth century retail and consumption by providing a broad idea of developments in provincial England, but there has been little concentrated effort since then to test the assumptions that these broad surveys created.[9] By tracking the development of fixed pricing and cash sales in Norwich through newspaper advertisements, this chapter will create a more refined understanding of the arrival and significance of change.

Quack medicines were widely sold for a fixed price, often in book shops and other retail outlets, but it is the pricing of other consumables which interests us here.[10] Berry suggests that fixed pricing occurred towards the end of the century, but evidence from Norwich suggests that it was actually in place at the beginning of the century and certainly by 1707.[11] One of the first surviving advertisements to mention fixed prices was for a range of groceries including tea and coffee. Although it turned out to be a hoax (see Chapter 6), it is likely that part of its success lay in its familiarity. Consumers would have been convinced by its contents precisely because it did not suggest something dramatically unfamiliar. This suggests that fixed pricing was far from an unusual feature in early eighteenth-century retail transactions.[12]

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[9] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 232.

[10] cf Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) pp. 393-411.

[11] Cox, N. (2000) p. 104; Stobart, J. (2008a) p. 313 table 1.

Table 4.1: Number of advertisements with fixed priced goods.

Date	Fixed pricing (%)	Fixed pricing total.	Total retail ads.	Ready money
1711	36%	10	28	0
1737	17%	4	24	1
1761	26%	15	57	0
1783	9%	8	88	2

Source: Norwich Gazette, 1711; Norwich Mercury, 1737, 1761, 1783

By 1711, things had moved forwards, and as many as ten advertisements were noted with fixed price goods (Table 4.1). However, only four different traders were responsible for the adverts. John Hoyle was one of them, a grocer based on the eastern side of the city near to the cathedral, was advertising cheese. His advertisement placed in March 1711, offered 'Good Cheshire Cheese at Three Pence Half-Penny a Pound, Warwickshire at Three pence Farthing'.[13] Interestingly, his previous advertisement placed in January of the same year, made no mention of pricing, stating only that 'Right good Cheshire and Warwickshire Cheese sold by Mr JOHN HOYLE'.[14] Of course it is impossible to state categorically why Mr Hoyle chose not to mention price in his earlier notice, but in his subsequent advertisement in March of the same year, he maintained his pricing policy.[15]

This example reminds us that advertising strategies were malleable and sensitive to the changing nature of retail and consumer expectations (see chapter 3). Many of the advertisements suggest a desire to create a competitive edge, with phrases like 'reasonable rates' or 'good penniworth'. Businesses were clearly aware that they were not unique in the market place and equally that value assurances were of paramount importance to a retailer's commercial identity and success.[16] But still very few were intent on naming their price so publicly.

William Stout, an ironmonger and grocer in Lancaster in the late seventeenth century, suggests in his autobiography that customers were keen to haggle over goods rather

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[12] Cox, N. (2000) pp.103-7.

[13] Norwich Gazette, March 10th-17th, 1711.
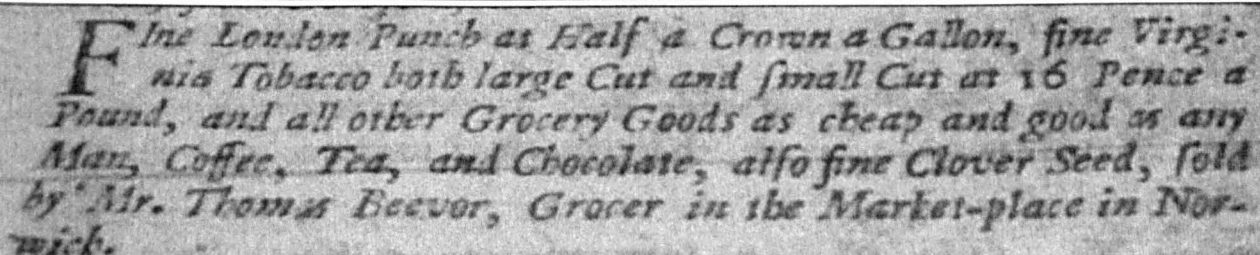
[14] Norwich Gazette, January 13th – 20th, 1711.

[15] Norwich Gazette, March 24th- 31st, 1711.

[16] See Widow Bassett's (draper) and John Middleton's (Brewer/tobacconist) advertisements, Norwich Gazette, March 24th – 31st, 1711.

than accept a fixed lowest price.[17] Berry suggests that it was up to the customer to 'decide when the conversation should move to discussing actual price', with the bargaining process being 'integral to the experience of polite consumption'. On the other hand Stout, a Quaker, found it unpleasant to ask more for goods than they are worth, despite this being the common practice. He claimed that he '…. usually set the price at one word, which seemed offensive to many who think they never buy cheap except they get abatement of the first price set upon them.'[18] And even Defoe noted that 'it is the buyers that make this custom necessary', going on to explain that the Quakers, who resolved 'to ask no more than they would take, upon any occasion' were soon drawn back into the more general practice of haggling.[19] In addition to the familiarity of such norms, the haggling element of consumption was seen by many as an enjoyable as well as essential process, Pepys recording his peasure at having 'cheapened ribbands' that he was buying.[20] This might explain why fixed prices did not feature predominantly in the retail advertisements in Norwich's newspapers, even if, as Stout noted, the benefits of fixed pricing were immediately apparent by creating a 'worthy' customer and making 'business go forward with few words.'[21] However, the suggestion that consumers in Norwich were, by 1707, familiar enough with the concept of fixed pricing, particularly for goods such as the tea and coffee, implies that some goods were widely sold without haggling.

Plate 4.1: Mr Beevor's advertisement in the Norwich Gazette.

Source: Norwich Gazette, January 5th -12th, 1712

Brandy, advertised by James Fleming in 1711 at sixpence per pint, or the tobacco sold in 1712 by Mr Beevor (Plate 4.1) were part of a list of consumables that appeared with a fixed price between 1707 and 1712. Is it possible from these few examples to

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[17] Harland, J. (ed.) (1842) p22.
[18] Ibid; Berry, H. (2002) p. 391.
[19] Defoe, D. (1839) chapter 17 pp. 177-8.
[20] Latham, R. (ed.) (2003) p. 915.
[21] Harland, J (ed.) (1842) p. 22.

infer that fixed pricing was applied generally to foodstuffs and other consumables, such as tobacco and liquor, and less often to other goods, like drapery, clothing and household goods? This would be contrary to Alexander's early assertion that the drapery trade led the way by showing the earliest characteristics of 'modern retailing'.[22]

What is apparent from Table 4.2, is that it was really only in the second half of the eighteenth-century that non-grocery goods were regularly advertised with fixed pricing. The use of fixed pricing as a method of promotion or as a tool to create a more efficient service, offered convenience for the early eighteenth-century shopper and was likely to have included items that were easily packaged or which could be purchased complete and ready made. Groceries fell into this category and, according to Cox, had been sold in that manner for some time; so too did some items of clothing.[23] More complex durables, required a greater element of choosing and were still haggled over. Did this trend continue as the century progressed? Were more novel, non-essential goods being advertised with fixed prices, or was the browse/bargain model of polite consumption maintained?[24]

Table 4. 2: Fixed price advertisements – grocery goods vs other (non-grocery) goods

Date	Fixed pricing total.	Grocery goods	Other goods	Total retail ads.
1711	10	4	6	28
1737	4	4	0	24
1761	15	7	9	57
1783	8	2	7	88

Source: Norwich Gazette, 1711; Norwich Mercury, 1737, 1761, 1783

In 1711, the only non-victuals advertised in the Gazette with a clear fixed price, were stockings. Hosiers Ephraim Eaton, in the cathedral Close, and Anthony Tolver each advertised more than once, both offering stockings at a competitive price; in fact the same price:

> Ephraim Eaton.... Has a parcel of very good Stockings to sell by Wholesale or Retale...long rolling Hose at 3s. a pair, the shorter hose at 2s. 8d. a pair. They are as good as anyone can sell.[25]

[22] Alexander, D. (1970) p. 136.
[23] Cox, N. (2000) p. 83.
[24] cf Berry, H. (2002).
[25] *Norwich Gazette*, March 10th – 17th, 1711.

Anthony Tolver used the fixed pricing method to tell customers and the wider public that he also offered competitive, unbeaten, value for money (see Plate 4.2).

Plate 4.2: Anthony Tolver, hosier, advertisement May 1711
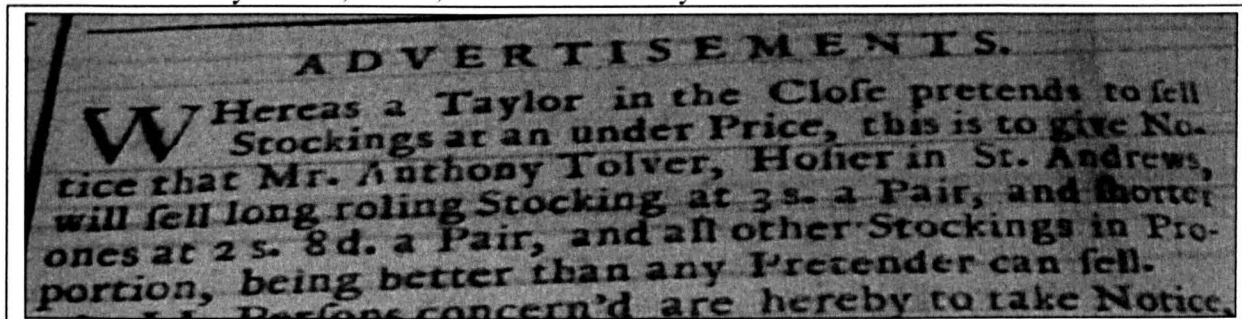
Source: Norwich Gazette, May 5th-12th, 1711

Unlike the gradual, 'growing minority', of retail advertisements to utilise fixed pricing in a survey of newspapers during the eighteenth century undertaken by Stobart, the Norwich samples shows a fluctuation in their occurrence across the samples and no clear pattern overall.[26] For 1737, the sample reveals only a small number of fixed price retail advertisements with the majority of traders, including drapers, cutlers, glovers, upholsterers, soap sellers, choosing to offer goods at the '*best price*' or on the '*lowest terms*' or, in one case, '*as cheap as any person whatsoever*'.[27] Perhaps the shopkeepers wanted to hedge their bets, with an attractive promise of value, but with no price commitment until the customer was seen in person. Alternatively, if Berry is correct, this was part of the production of a polite framework for the sale of non-essential goods. William Steel, a draper, offered consumers a sort of half-way-house, somewhere between haggling and fixed prices. He promised his customers, '*No more is asked for any Goods than they really will be sold for.*'[28] A phrase reminiscent of the sentiments expressed by Stout in his autobiography.[29]

William Chase, a bookseller and stationer of some repute, offered his customers a diverse range of goods, from the usual books, stationery, inks, maps, quack medicines and beauty treatments, to musical instruments and decorative bird cages. The majority of these items were not openly priced, yet he did list some goods at a fixed rate - '*Indian Ink 3d a stick*', '*Spanish Snuff, 4d an ounce*'- and coffee, tea and chocolate

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[26] Stobart, J. (2008a) p. 313 Table 1, p. 321.

[27] Simpson's advertisement, *Norwich Mercury* March 26th, 1737.

[28] *Norwich Mercury* November 19th-26th, 1737.

were each clearly priced.[30] As can be seen in Table 4.2 there were no advertisements in 1737 offering a fixed price on non-grocery or 'polite' goods. Robert Baret's advertisement in October 1737, also lists his assortment of teas, priced by type, even his Brumswick Mum, Capers and anchovies carry a clear tariff.[31] Perhaps, Mr Chase was attempting to retain some level of polite mystery for his customers by only fixing the price on some items, but his goods were so diverse it would have been impossible to price all of them within the confines of an already large advertisement. It is more likely that he was announcing the price of his tea, coffee, chocolate, etc. because the public would already have been familiar with the prices for such goods which were sold widely in the city.

In 1737 the occurrence of fixed pricing in advertisements remained fairly low, offering no clear development or suggestion of revolutionary growth and spread of this sales technique. Yet these early advertisements do suggest very clearly that fixed pricing was in use at the beginning of the eighteenth century; it was not a development which occurred as part of a later modernisation process. On the basis of the evidence offered here fixed pricing was familiar to consumers, though the method was by no means universal. Indeed, Cox notes that retailers utilised both traditional ways of selling alongside more novel approaches.[32]

Returning to Table 4.1, it is clear that by 1761 there had been a distinct growth in the actual numbers of advertisements using fixed pricing, compared to 1737. The numbers in Norwich were in fact proportionally higher than those revealed by Stobart's survey, where 14.7% of advertisements in the 1770s chose to use fixed pricing.[33] Yet the shifts that appear in Table 4.2 suggest that a cultural change was taking place as more non-grocery goods were being advertised at a fixed price, including clothing and wallpaper hangings. For example, Davenport's Manufactory, a paper hangings factory, and Thomas Bradford, a stay-maker, advertised regularly through the year. Bradford declared his expertise and usefulness to customers in very polite terms, announcing that he ' has a peculiar Method to himself to help defective shapes', which suggests that his designs and methods were exclusive. His stays were

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[29] See footnote 21 above.

[30] *Norwich Mercury* March 26th - April 2nd, 1737; June 11th – 18th, 1737.

[31] *Norwich Mercury* October 15th – 23rd, 1737.

[32] Cox, N. (2000).

[33] Stobart, J. (2008) p. 313.

priced from 35 to 25 shillings, depending on size and finish.[34] This example suggests that by the second half of the century, even expensive, fashion related goods were being openly priced. The cost of these items, though essential to the wardrobe of polite fashionable women, was high. Yet for many women this was a necessary expense. The appearance of greater numbers of stay makers in the advertising section of the Norwich newspapers suggests a growing sense of competition, but not all stay makers were keen to fix a price. John Thurgar, for example, also advertised his stay making skills, but made no mention of price, materials or a link with the physical manifestations required by fashion. Neither did he offer, as Bradford did, a no quibble returns policy.[35]

With eight staymakers appearing in the poll book of that year, Bradford was keen to reach above the competition. Using polite language in his advertisement he played on the cultural and social imperatives of fashion. Stays were a key purchase, but not a regular one. They were expensive, well crafted, bespoke items which were not purchased daily – it is significant therefore, that a fixed price was attached to them. Of course we are still left with many questions unanswered, as the advertisements do not tell us whether goods were fixed in price within the shop, rather than in the pages of a newspaper, nor can we assume that such techniques extended to all shops.

By the late eighteenth-century, the fixed shop had become the focal point of polite consumption, but retail had diversified to allow other forms of shop to flourish. In particular the arrival of the 'manufactory' or 'warehouse' signified more immediate forms of retail and consumption, and more generally used fixed pricing. Davenport's Manufactory in Norwich, had a '..great variety of the newest Patterns of Paper for Hanging, as cheap as in London, such as is usually sold for Fivepence or Threepence Halfpenny per yard for Twopence Halfpenny and all other Sorts in proportion....'[36]. Paper hangings were not widely advertised at all in the Norwich newspapers, though the decorative use of paper was fairly widespread in polite society, offering a relatively cheap means of altering and creating fashionable interiors.[37] Davenport's advertisement did not try to hide the cut price nature of the goods and did not enter into a polite preamble, but did attempt to combine fixed pricing with an element of negotiation on the part of the consumer. Even for such specialised goods consumers

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[34] Thomas Bradford, staymaker, advertising in the *Norwich Mercury* August 1st, 1761.
[35] John Thurgar, *Norwich Mercury* May 23rd, 1761.
[36] *Norwich Mercury*, May 9th, 1761.

would have had some idea of the price before purchasing the goods, before going into the shop even. Cut price goods were also advertised by William Livingstone, a tobacconist. After some polite words about a change in premises and his hopes to see his friends and customers well used, he stated 'The best Old York River Tobacco at 20d down to 16d per pound. Neat and well manufactured'.[38] This suggests that fixed pricing was increasingly part of normal discourse, yet not always combined with the polite narrative of the main body of the advert, perhaps to avoid offence.

Creating large selling spaces and selling quantities of stock at a reduced rate, warehouses were well known for the 'pile 'em high, sell 'em cheap' principles, ensuring a quick turnover of stock and fast return for the retailer.[39] One such warehouse appears to have been trading in Norwich by 1761. Variously called 'The Irish Linen Warehouse' or just 'Linen Warehouse', and run by Mr Fitzsimmons, it urgently advertised its goods, reminding consumers that the warehouse was open for a limited time only before the proprietor went away to restock for the next season. Yet the goods on offer here, for a fixed price, were not cheap, or of poor quality: linens, hollands, sheeting and diapers of different widths were priced per yard, ' 3-4ths wide Linnen from 7d. halfpenny [to] 20d per Yard.... Yard wide [Linen] from 10d. 3 farthings [to] 5s. per Yard'. And while the tone was altogether more urgent, more demanding of the consumer, the polite framework was retained. The final paragraph of the advertisement is given over to thanking customers for their support, stating that, 'They would think themselves extremely deficient if they did not return Thanks for the great Encouragement they have met..'.[40]

The India warehouse, whose advertisements were placed in the Norwich Mercury in 1783, continued in this theme, extoling the virtues of its expanded range of goods and a successful tea trading business (Plate 4.3).

[37] Vickery, A. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) p. 203.
[38] Norwich Mercury, May 23rd, 1761.
[39] Fowler, C. in Alexander, N. and Akehurst, G. (eds) (1999) p. 49; Berry, H. (2002) p. 383.
[40] Norwich Mercury, December 26th, 1761 – appearing from early November of 1761.

Plate 4.3: India warehouse advertisement

India Warehouse

NORWICH,

Where (from the Year 1773) no other Article hath been sold than TEA, is now opened for the Sale of other

EAST AND WEST INDIA ARTICLES, viz.

Cinnamon, Cloves, Mace, and all other Spices; Sago, Sago-Powder, Coffee, Cocoa, and Chocolate: Also Vermicelli, Saloup, &c. &c.

Likewise Half-Ell, three Quarters, and Yard-wide black Modes; Sattins, Mantuas, Lustrings; black, white, and coloured Sarcenets, and Persians: Also very rich black Silk Florentines for Breeches and Waistcoats, &c.

Water-proof Silks, Water-proof Capuchins, (made very portable for the Pocket) Umbrellas, or Parapluies, and Parasols; superior to those from INDIA; Men's and Women's Hat Covers, Riding-Dresses, Market Hoods, &c. &c.

☞ The very lowest Prices are fixed upon the SILKS, SATTINS, and every other Article.—Proper Allowance made to those who sell them again.

Source: Norwich Mercury April 5th 1783.

Unlike the advertisement for George Gynne's Upholstery warehouse, which focused on the sale of a particular kind of 'elastic' cloth, its price and uses, the stock on offer at the India warehouse was far too diverse to publicise prices within the space provided.[41] The use of a catch-all statement regarding their pricing policy is an interesting solution – one that echoed earlier practices (see above). The advertisement itself appears to revert slightly to early informative notices and there is no serious effort to use the polite deference seen widely in other advertisements of this period (see chapter 6). Perhaps years of good reputation meant that such issues were overlooked or unnecessary; more likely the social conventions seen in polite retail advertisements at the end of the century did not apply to warehouses. In practice, Fowler suggests, warehouses encouraged fixed pricing and the retail space was an ideal set up for those who wanted to sell things quickly, which kept costs down, and for consumers who preferred a more impersonal method.[42] Certainly from these

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[41] George Gynne advertised in the *Norwich Mercury*, December 20th 1783.

[42] Fowler, C. in Alexander, N. and Akehurst, G. (eds) (1999) p. 49.

examples, fixed pricing was prevalent in the warehouse setting.

To summarise, fixed pricing was not a phenomenon confined to the late eighteenth-century. The method was already in use at the beginning of the century, certainly in Norwich, and the evidence from newspaper advertisements suggests that it was the way in which the method was used, and for which goods, that altered across the century; suggesting that the change was a cultural rather than one of process. Yet such change did not exist in a vacuum, other shifts in retail culture and practice had significant parts to play. In the second advertisement placed by the India Warehouse in 1783, one phrase alludes to the development and use of other sales techniques: 'lowest Ready-money Prices are fixed upon every Article.'[43] Not only can we see that the prices were fixed, it seems that the use of cash (ready money) was encouraged and that items were labelled with the price.

The use of ready money was not widely advertised during the century. We know from the few examples that do survive, that it was a significant part of the shopkeepers armoury. In 1737, a Norwich draper, based on Tombland near the Cathedral, used the phrase before launching into a long stock list: 'William Steel…selleth the following Linen Drapery Goods, and at the lowest Prices; for Ready Money only'.[44] In a similar manner, Samuel Clarke (cutler) made mention of ready money in April 1737, offering cash in return for gold and silver items bought to the shop, but does not link it to the sale of his own goods.[45] Cox and Dannehl, suggest that the phrase 'ready money' was not one much used by high ranking shopkeepers, particularly in advertisements.[46] This might be one explanation for the very small number of occurrences of the phrase. Much more than the use of fixed pricing, it was not immediately acceptable by those whose consumption practices were based on more polite terms.[47]

By 1783, however, William Beloe, was offering wholesale dealers who attended his china warehouse in the market place, a good deal for ready money: 'All Wholesale Dealers will meet with very great Encouragement, for Ready Money'.[48] But even at this date, the advertisements do not suggest that the 'ready-money' trade was

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[43] *Norwich Mercury*, December 27th, 1783.

[44] *Norwich Mercury*, November 19th – 23rd 1737.

[45] *Norwich Mercury*, April 2nd – 9th, 1737.

[46] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 141.

[47] Berry, H. (2002) p. 392.

[48] *Norwich Mercury*, July 12th, 1783.

universal. Fowler points out that smaller coinage was rare until it was reintroduced in the 1790s, making transactions in small denomination coinage unusual.[49] Perhaps a survey of advertisements at the end of the century would have a greater proportion mentioning 'ready-money', though common sense suggests that the sorts of goods and services being advertised widely in the 1780s in Norwich were not natural partner for ready-money sales. The preservation of social status and reputation in both retail and consumption transactions prevented a quick shift from the credit system to one based on cash – credit was part of the service offered to customers and a way of binding together shopkeeper and consumer with ties of mutual obligation. Practicalities too meant that this particular 'modern' practice would be a slow burner, but there is clear evidence that the concept was in use in provincial England prior to the nineteenth century.[50]

The practical use of pricing, ticketing and ready money were features of a changing retail landscape, but change was not confined to these elements of retailing. Shopkeepers and traders across the country were exploring the possibilities that had opened up through the spread of newspapers and a more efficient transport network. Cox and Dannehl suggest that 'the most important development [in retailing] was the establishment of forms of distance selling'.[51] Wealthier customers living in the provinces were able to make orders by post for goods and such orders were widely invited by London firms. Eagleton, one of the new breed London tea dealers, placed an advertisement in the Norwich Mercury in July 1783, as well as other major towns in the country. The advertisement itself is quite lengthy, listing tea, coffee and chocolate, all clearly priced, and extends the choice of the provincial customer. Eagleton required all orders to be paid for before delivery, with 'Good bills at a short date taken in payment' and sent by post to town and country. He was one of the first to bring a number of tried and tested techniques together and advertised in many provincial newspapers, also offering a money back guarantee and reduced postage for cash sales.[52] Eagleton's mail order and agency business was so successful that in 1793 he opened his first provincial warehouse in Norwich.[53] People in Norfolk regularly purchased goods by mail (see chapter 5) and not just from dealers like Eagleton. Sir Martin Folkes, for example, purchased over £17 worth of goods from Joshua Long, a

[49] Fowler, C. in Alexander, N. and Akeburst, G. (eds) (1999) p. 48.
[50] See Cox, N. (2000); Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984).
[51] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 141.
[52] Flanders, J. (1999) p. 60.
[53] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 271 and for in depth discussion about Eagleton see pp. 268-72.

grocer and tea dealer based in London in 1775. From the note that was sent with his bill, and a short catalogue of available goods, it seems that Sir Folkes was a regular customer. His goods were delivered by post.[54] Indeed, such mail order was not unusual for a variety of goods, Vickery, for example, has written about consumers buying wall paper unseen from manufacturers by post; and the use of pattern books and catalogues was widespread by the end of the century.[55]

The use of such methods also had implications for the spread of fixed pricing and cash sales. The short catalogue that was sent to Martin Folkes for example, had items listed with handwritten prices alongside (see Plate 4.4), so Folkes would know the price of the goods he might order. Mail order necessitated the use of fixed pricing as lengthy negotiation could not take place, particularly for customers at a significant distance. Conversely, distance shopping in this manner preserved the need for credit which was extended to customers who paid their accounts at regular intervals across the year. More locally, provincial customers who chose to order goods through the post or via a carrier were amply provided for in Norwich and Norfolk. Syer a stay maker assures that the 'Country [] will be attended to', and the draper William Fisher, states that 'His Friends that reside in the Country, may depend on their Commissions being duly and strictly attended to'.[56] Connecting the town to the country in this manner expanded the spread of the developing consumption and retail culture; consumers were more able to purchase goods of a quality and style that they might struggle to find locally. This is not to say that local or village shops were unused or that all mail order purchases were focussed on London: as Flanders reminds us, shopping was 'neither entirely local nor entirely London-based'.[57] Provincial consumers were confident in using a variety of sources to make purchases and mail order undoubtedly widened the experiential framework for polite shoppers unable to make a face-to-face connection with the retailer.[58]

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[54] NRO MC 50/23/5.

[55] Vickery, A. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 201-222; see also Vickery, A. (2009), p.127; Flanders, J. (2006) p. 49.

[56] *Norwich Mercury* June 14th, 1783; May 24th, 1783.

[57] Flanders, J. (2006) p. 48.

[58] For example, NRO MC 50/23/5; BOL 2/162, 740x6 – Household bills of Mrs Leathes, Norwich suggest that she purchased goods in both Norwich and London.

Plate 4.4: Extract from Thomas Long's catalogue, 1775

From the WEST INDIES   P

BARBADOES Limes   French, H
 Citrons, Papaws, &c. preserved green Sanfparell
The fame fort, preferved white   Jeffamin,
Perfimon Plumbs and Chaddocks Eau de V
Whole Guavas, Guava Jelly   Eau de Co
Ditto Marmalade   Bergamott
Preferv'd Cafhew Apples   Lemon dit
Fine preferv'd Tamarinds 1/.   Eau de Lu
Tamarinds in the Shell as they grow 2/. Millis & N
Preferved Ginger 3/6   Green Ma
Fineft ditto, 4/ Candied ditto 6/. & 4/. From Swi.
Candied Sweet-meats   warrant
Preferv'd Pine Apples
Candied ditto, Preferv d Sorrel   Fre.
Sorrel Jelly, Ditto Jam   Fine Noy
Preferv'd Water Lemons   Huile de C
Ditto Mellon for the Heart-burn Cinnamon
All Sorts of Eaft-India Sweet-meats Creme de
Eaft-India Ginger, Fineft ditto 2/6 Huile de V
Preferv'd Nutmegs 2/6   Eau de Ca
Ditto Cloves, Ditto Mangoes   Fine Oran;
Coker Nuts, Ditto dry for Cheefecakes Hypoteque
Cafhew nuts 12 d   Elixir de N
            Eau de Fle

Source: NRO MC 50/23/5

From the evidence outlined so far, Norwich was not active in its use of fixed pricing in advertisements, like the evidence from north west England, such advertisements were the exception rather than the rule.[59] But what we have seen, very clearly, is that the use of such techniques (and fixed pricing in particular) were not new developments that relied on the rapid changes in consumption culture for their existence. Consumers were familiar with the options that shopkeepers offered to them and were comfortable with the notion that, for certain goods, fixed pricing was acceptable.[60] Throughout the century retailers were wise enough to utilise the most acceptable forms for their business, with luxury retailers apparently preferring not to offer goods at a fixed price. Perhaps they feared insulting the sensibilities of polite customers or perhaps they wished to maintain the gap between polite and commercial

[59] Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004) p. 174-5.
[60] Mitchell, I. in Clark, P. (ed.) (1984) p. 275.

experience right up until the last minute.[61] However, the evidence here suggests that this was subject to significant change by the 1760s, when expensive semi-luxuries became the subject of fixed pricing, removing the necessity for haggling or negotiation, but also challenging the notion that fixed pricing was unacceptable for bespoke goods.

Consumers and retailers, by this time, were able to use simultaneously a variety of sales/consumption methods to meet their needs, without losing the more traditional frameworks. By the end of the eighteenth century, warehouses selling goods at low fixed prices, some even for ready money, were more apparent in the advertising pages of the Norwich Mercury. New areas of consumption and retail had been created during the century, promoting polite luxury shopping, or areas where quick sales were known to take place. Value for money, choice and service, were all available in different forms within the retail sector and consumers were able to experience the whole spectrum in the city of Norwich and beyond.

Innovation was not only to be found in the retail practices observed in newspaper advertisements, but also in the construction of retail space itself. Fixed shops and warehouses, for example, facilitated and shaped eighteenth century consumption; according to some research, retailers thought carefully about the creation of the right kind of retail environment.[62] As the century progressed, the fixtures, fittings and utilisation of space within the shop itself were very much part of the development of retail and the creation of the modern consumer. The following section will discuss the provision of retail space in eighteenth century provincial England and how, in provincial cities such as Norwich, this aspect of retail was negotiated.

4.2: Eighteenth-century retail space, the shop and its fittings.

Blondé and van Damme are clear in their conclusion that the provision of fashionable shops, with lighting, novel furnishings, window displays and altered facades were not imperative for retail success. Shops in Antwerp displayed a more functional and practical association with space than work by Walsh (for example) might lead us to believe.[63] Indeed, while they agree in their article that all of these elements put together might suggest a retail revolution, they equally suggest that such alterations to

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[61] See Berry, H. (2002) p. 390.

[62] Cox, N. (2000) pp. 90-93; Walsh, C. (1995); Berry, H.(2002).

[63] Blondé, B. and van Damme, I. (2008); Walsh, C. (1995); Stobart et al. (2007) chapter 5.

eighteenth-century retail practice were not universal, or even particularly widespread. This section therefore will look more closely at evidence in Norwich to create a picture of retail spaces and the importance of decoration, display and shop furniture in eighteenth century provincial retail. Did Norwician shopkeepers opt for a more functional approach to space creation, or were they caught up in the revolutionary space creation when dressing their shop?

The assumptions of historians writing some decades ago, that shops in eighteenth century towns were unsophisticated, have been revised, as we saw above, and much of this revisionist research has concentrated on the physical, visual and spatial features of the shop.[64]   Borsay's observations about an urban renaissance, which are more widely discussed in chapter two, suggest that urban space was reshaped to meet the new aesthetic values of the age. In some towns and cities new areas were developed, streets were widened and improved and some unsightly markets were removed from the central thoroughfare to preserve the polite decorum of eighteenth century leisure time.[65] A significant part of improvement was the reshaping of the visual aspect of existing spaces: houses and shops were renovated and remodelled, particularly in London.[66] New façades eased the interaction between street and shop (or house) by making physical sense of the lines that were already metaphorically drawn between them and by creating a link between public and private spaces.[67]

The shop window was a very important part of the new façade, even in buildings that had not had the full renaissance treatment. Across the century it is generally regarded as one of the clear signs of a changing retail culture. In the seventeenth century, as Cox outlines, some sales were likely to take place through the shop window, with the shutter serving as a platform for exchange. She notes that the open window technique made retailing open to the public and to scrutiny, and allowed the shop to compete with the 'immediacy' of the market, which was usually taking place nearby.[68] The openness of window sales was vital in the creation of a shopkeeper's reputation as fair and just, which was the key to success. Defoe warned of the dangers of taking liberties, it being one of the many causes of potential downfall.[69] Such windows were

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[64] For example Cox, N. (2000); Walsh, C. (1995); Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005).
[65] Borsay, P. (1989).
[66] Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) p. 32.
[67] Stobart, J. (1998); see Morgan, V. unpublished thesis (2003) p.146.
[68] Cox, N. (2000) p. 85, p. 78.
[69] Harland, J. (Ed) (1842) p. 177.

not devoid of any means of display, with some being fitted with lattices or grates on which to display goods to the passing public. Hann and Stobart note that, even in those shops with a relatively low stock value, in various provincial locations, there was evidence of some sort of window ornamentation.[70] Clearly though, there is evidence to suggest that the shopping experience differed markedly between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. By the end of the eighteenth century many shop windows in central areas of towns and cities were glazed.[71]

In Norwich at the turn of the eighteenth century, as in other provincial towns and cities, it is likely that the majority of premises around the central market were fixed shops, retailing out of the front room. Richard Reepis, a shopkeeper whose probate inventory was drawn up in 1681, owned a lattice, which was listed with other shop furniture and could easily have been used for display.[72] Twenty years later Henry Warner, who was probably a barber given the presence of razors and bowls in his shop, had a 'window, pole, new board and sign', with a combined value of one pound and ten shillings, listed in the 'shop' section of his inventory.[73] This does not suggest the early presence of glazed windows, but does show that shops were keen to mark themselves out from their neighbours with eye-catching signage. There was no mention of lighting or heating within the shop, though one assumes that candles were present and simply too low in value to be mentioned by appraisers. In 1734 the extensive inventory of John Lily lists *the sashes* as part of the shop furnishings - probably the first evidence of glazed windows to be found within the inventory survey for Norwich.[74] This of course does not imply that no other shops were glazed at this time. Cox notes that the two types of shops co-existed throughout the century and in Thomas Hearne's representation of the market cross in Norwich, it is possible to see goods being purchased through a window on the left hand side, and glazed closed shops depicted in the background (Plate 4.5).

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[70] Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005) p. 175 Table 2.
[71] Walsh, C. (1995); Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005) p. 171; Cox, N. (2000).
[72] NRO DCN 73/1/19.
[73] NRO ANW 23/10/113.
[74] Glass sashes appeared on the conveyance of a shop in Yarmouth dated 1747, showing that glazing was evident at this time. NRO Y/D 11/61-98; John Lily inventory NRO ANW 23/21/14.
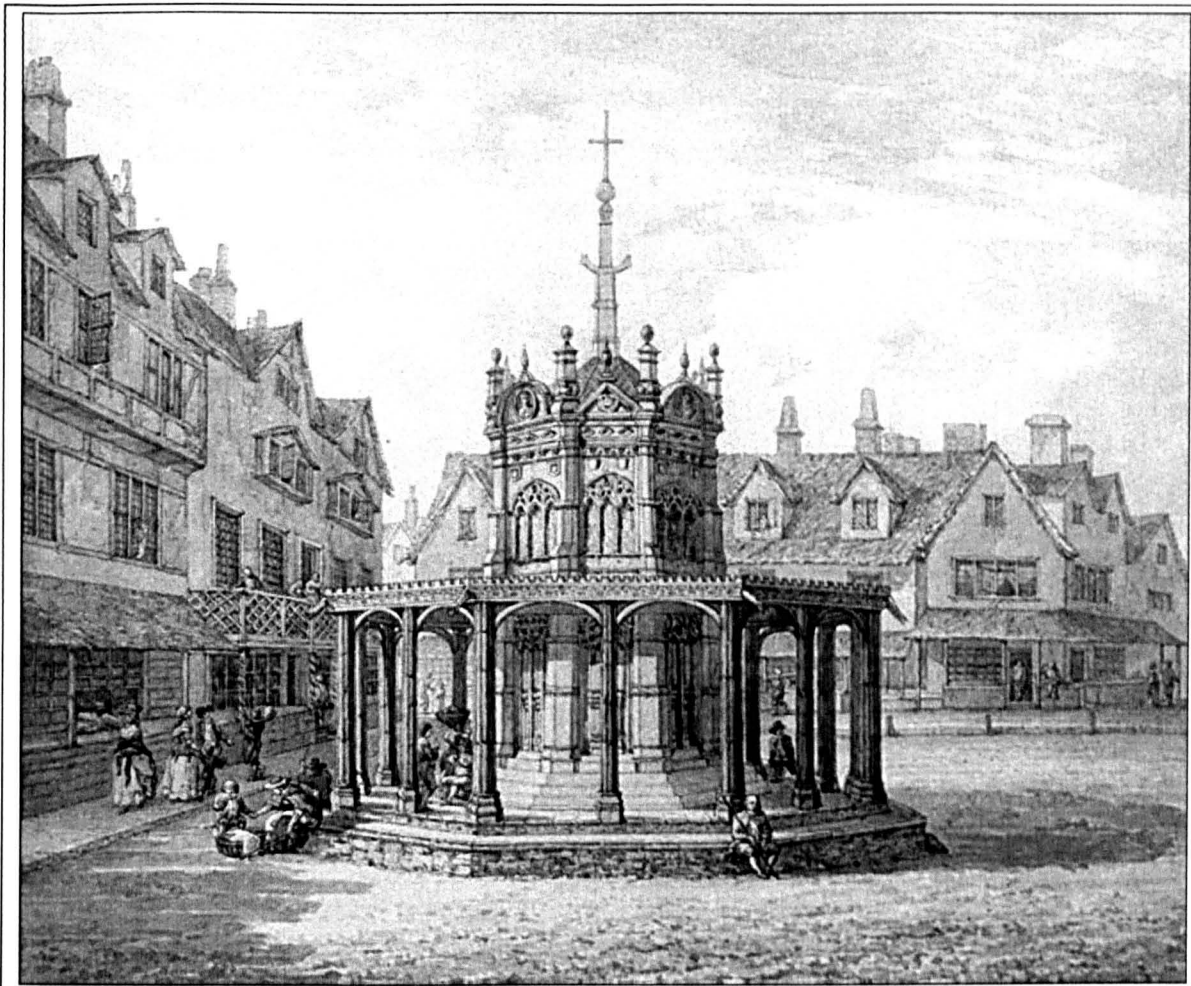
Source: picture by Thomas Hearne (no date).[75] Accessed via NOAH ref: NWHCM: 1903.36: F 5 www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk (accessed 8th September 2010).

Also in Hearne's illustration the open window shops appear to show a covered area under which customers would stand. In fact in most of the shops visible, the shop board, as well as the awning or pentice, stick out from the front of the buildings, taking up the full frontage of the shop. By 1788, when Thomas Rowlandson painted part of the market place, many of the shops were already glazed, apart from a butcher's shop where the meats are hanging in the open, and a row of shops on the right hand side in the background, which appear to retain the features described above. (Plate 4.6). This butchers shop is also seen in a painting of the market square by Robert Dighton in 1799: a distinctive presence in the foreground on the left hand side (Plate 4.7). But again many of the shops on the market place and along Gentleman's Walk were glazed with small panes of glass. What is significant, if we look at all three images, is that the transition from the 'through the window' practices in Plate 4.5, to the fully glazed and sometimes bowed windows of the late eighteenth

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[75] the official weights and measures of the market were chained to the wall within the market cross for anyone to use, but was demolished in 1732 as part of the market improvements. (Meeres, 1998, p105)

century, required a full refitting of the shop front. A whole new façade was created by removing the external shop board and pentice, bringing the shop front forwards to ensure the straight lines required by architectural fashions of the time and to remove the overhanging floors and windows above.[76] Indeed, the window space itself increased dramatically, no longer a hatch but almost the full width of the shop would be glazed in order to create an image of light and modernity.

Plate 4.6: Norwich Market Place
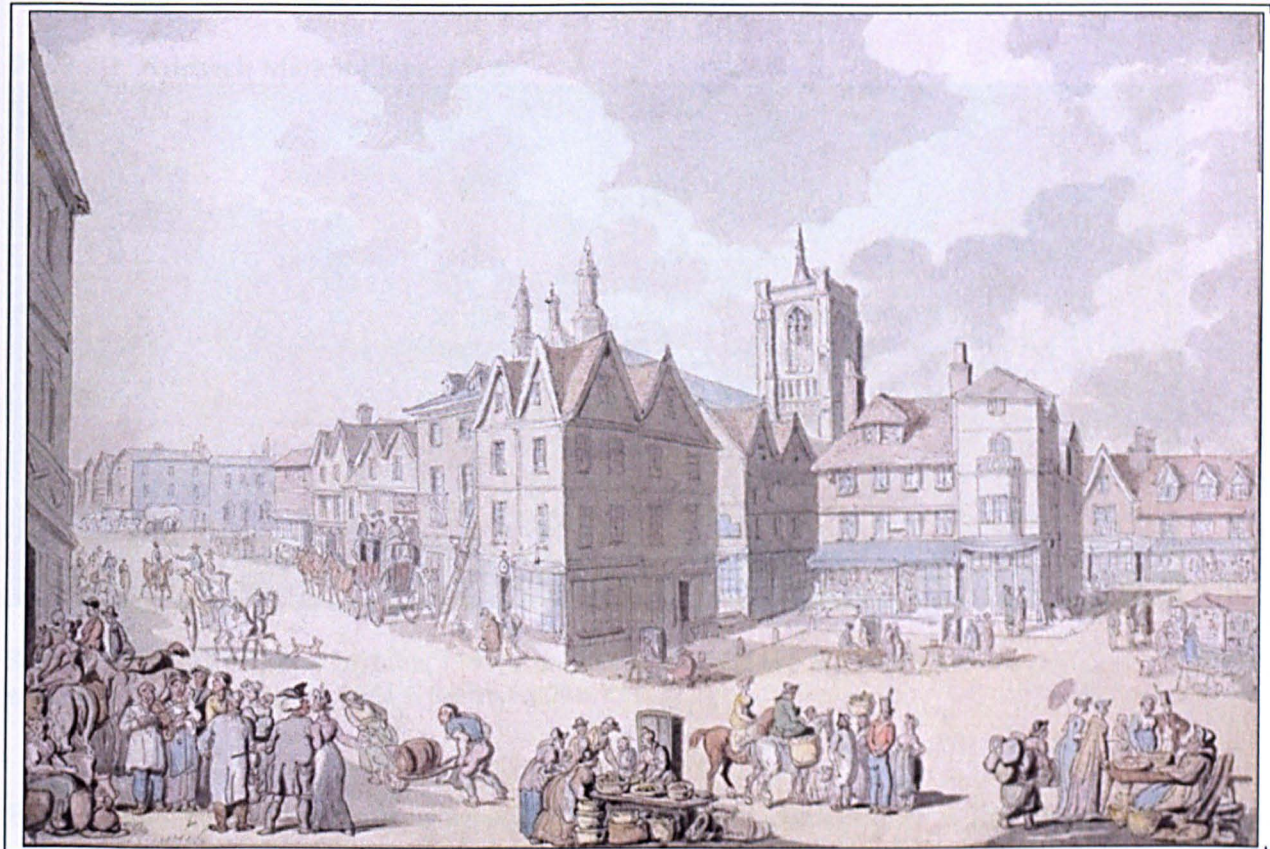
Source: painting by Thomas Rowlandson, 1788. Accessed via NOAH ref: NWHCM : 1960.442 : F 5 www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk (accessed September 2010)

Morrison notes that one of the most important aspects of shop design since the eighteenth century has been the shop front and, although glazing was an expensive choice for many retailers, the benefits were profound.[77] This seems to be the opinion of other researchers suggesting that glazed windows portrayed wealth, modernity and conveyed messages about the shopkeeper as well as the goods on sale.[78] Walsh goes further, stating that the shop design was the 'external manifestation' of a successful

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[76] Stobart, J. (1998) p. 17.

[77] Morrison, K.A.(2003) p. 41.

[78] Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2005) p. 175.

business.[79]   Not only was the shop opened up to the public passing by, but the window became a key tool in the promotional armoury of competitive retailing. In December 1783, Widow Nutter, a confectioner in Cockey Lane, advertised that she would be putting on a window display for twelfth night:

> …They beg leave to inform the Public, that next Tuesday evening, being TWELFTH NIGHT, their Shop will be handsomely illuminated and decorated after the London taste with Plumb Cakes..[80]

Plate 4.7: Norwich Market Place, 1799
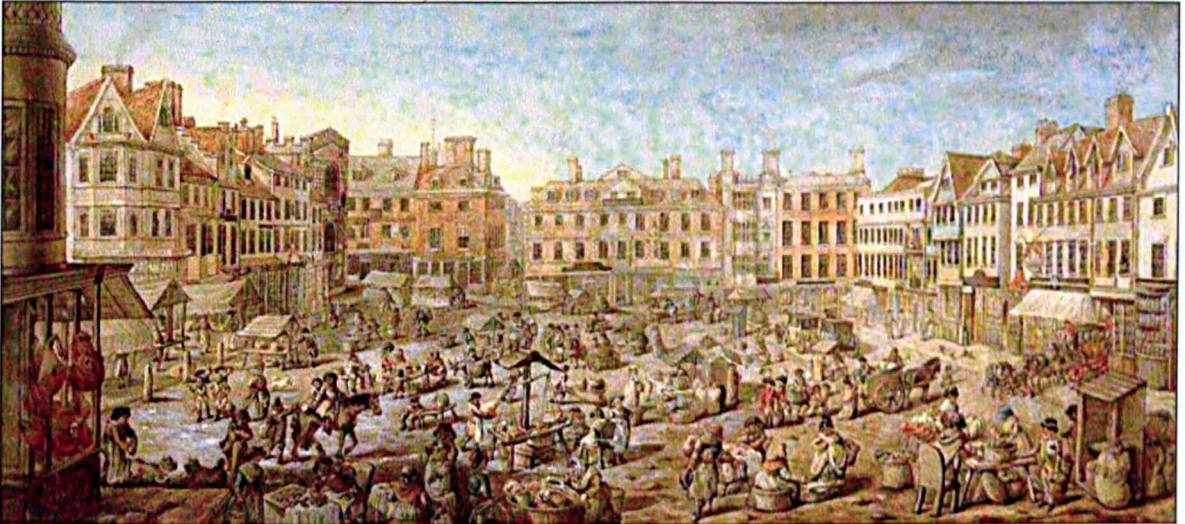
Source: painting by Robert Dighton, 1799. Accessed via NOAH ref: NWHCM : 1929.68 : F
www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk (accessed 5 September 2010).

But Widow Nutter had some competition from another confectioner a few doors down in Cockey Lane. Francis Horne was also advertising his plans for twelfth night, stating that 'his Shop will be elegantly illuminated in a most elegant Manner, and decorated in the Pastry Way, with all the Ornaments that Art and Fancy can invent…'[81]   Display could enliven a shop, draw in custom and reinforce the reputation of a shopkeeper, and was very much a part of the shop façade and image.[82] In the case of the confectioners advertising here, the shop window presented an opportunity to showcase their skills to a wider public. This was the case for many retailers, who took the opportunity on a daily basis to present their retail skills, knowledge and stock to the people walking past in the street (see Plate 4.8).[83]

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[79] Walsh, C. (1995) p. 171.
[80] *Norwich Mercury*, December 27th 1783.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Stobart et al (2007) p. 115.
[83] Ibid.

Above all, though, the window was used for display. Wallis notes that apothecaries used each pane of glass to display a bottle or ornament of some kind and this was the case for other traders.[84]

Plate 4.8: Felgate and Osborne, Jewellers, Norwich
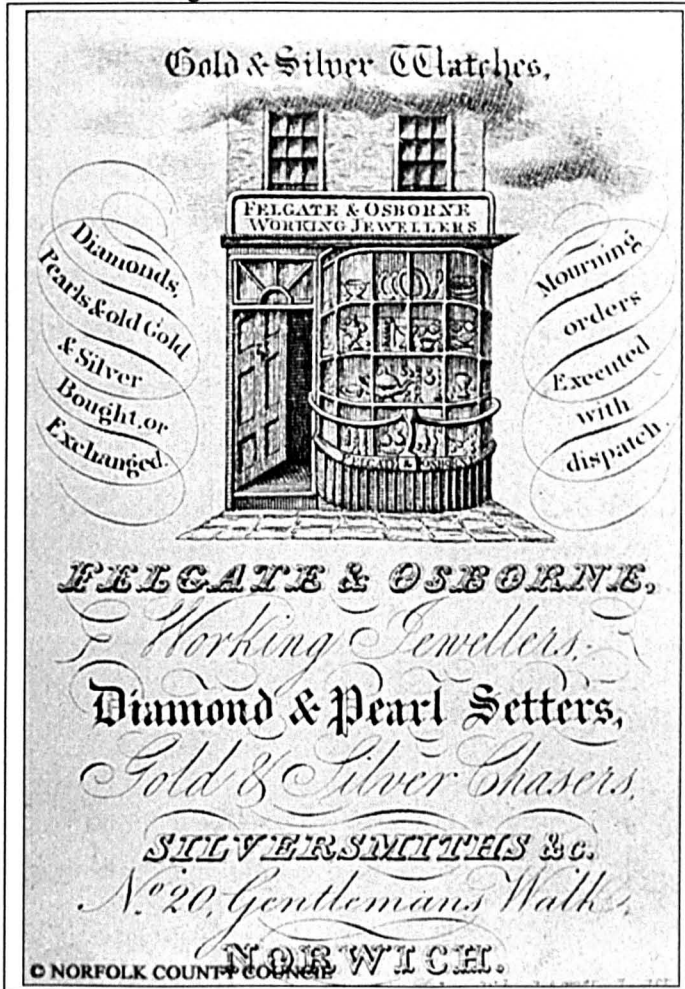
Source: Trade card, no date. NOAH Ref/id: NP00012329.
www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk (accessed 5th September 2010).

Plate 4.8 above provides an excellent example of a shop window full of goods, with a well thought out and accomplished display. It is more than possible that the trade card is merely indicative of this particular company's shop front, but the design suggests that shop windows were fully utilised by retailers. Indeed, this picture is an impressive example of eighteenth-century design and improvement. The panes of glass are much larger and more impressive in the shop window than they are in the upstairs windows. The design of the hand rail around the window for passers by to lean against whilst looking through the window is also impressive, framing the shop

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[84] Wallis, S. (2008).

and effectively joining the shop to the street itself. As mentioned in chapter two, Gentleman's Walk was the first street in Norwich to have a purpose built pavement for shoppers, and the neatness of this pavement is accentuated by the careful representation of the flagstones in this print. All together the shop front depicted in the trade card illustrates the innovative nature of retail at this time, particularly in the luxury sector.

The window was not just a means of attracting people into the shop; the display from the inside of the shop needed to be informative and useful too. Indeed, the space that the window provided allowed for the regular circulation of stock without hampering the work that went on at the counter, as is apparent from Plate 4.9, which also illustrates well the use of the window. The street can barely be seen from inside the shop! (see also Plate 4.12)

Plate 4.9: The Shopkeeper

Source: The Shopkeeper, wood engraving from Gaye, M. *The Progress of Man and Society for the use of schools.* Second edition (Bath, England: n.d.), p. 115
www.librarycompany.org/economics/2008Conference/index.htm (accessed 23 March 2010).

The window was thus constructed as a physical space within which goods were displayed, but which did not encroach on the shop itself or indeed the street. It also created a frame for the shop within. Wallis notes that glazing made the separation of

internal space and external appearance difficult.[85] Not only did the glazed window (literally) offer a light onto the internal workings of the shop, it created a 'semi-permeable' barrier through which customers had to be enticed.[86] In some cases, though, it is questionable whether a large amount of light made it past the goods on display.

Polite society was increasingly using shopping as a social event. Browsing in the luxury outlets of provincial towns and cities was part of the cultural lives of many upper and middling classes as the century progressed.[87] The stimulation of window-shopping and the swift visual exchange of knowledge between retailers and consumers was further enhanced by the opportunities that lay within the shop itself. While glazed windows had opened up the widening world of goods to a greater number of people, they had also changed the nature of the space behind the window, in the shop itself. The space was now defined by the fixtures and fittings within, making what had been essentially a private space, into something more public, an arena mixing social, commercial, cultural and private worlds.

The shop space, the space in which the exchange of goods took place, was the most important tool in retail as it was simultaneously the space in which information was exchanged, the key point of persuasion and thus the place in which consumers became familiar with the goods.[88] Examination of the shop spaces in Norwich and elsewhere can shed light onto wider cultural developments, seen as a physical expression of consumer expectation and the retail process. Retailers engaged with the active production of space. Although regulated by wider social frameworks, they sought to promote sales and to create a lasting positive reputation.[89] While Defoe warned against excesses in fitting out shop interiors, highlighting instead the importance of stock and salesmanship over show, many shopkeepers in the eighteenth century were changing the way their shops were furnished. Few of them were going to the lavish extremes described by Defoe, but most retailers were keen to provide facilities for display and choice, even in lesser outlets.[90] Hann and Stobart's research into the fixtures and fittings listed in probate inventories between 1680 and 1750,

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[85] Wallis, P. (2008) p. 32.
[86] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 116.
[87] Berry, H. (2002).
[88] Walsh, C. and Cox, N. in Cox, N. (2000) p. 88, p. 91; Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) p. 36.
[89] Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2004) p. 178.
[90] Harland, J. (ed.) (1942), chapter 19; Bennett, A. (2005) p. 43.

shows a regional variation in the provision of shop furniture such as a counter, shelves, drawers and so on. London was well known for its fairly opulent use of shop fittings and furniture, shops in provincial England were more modest generally. Certainly the inventories in Norwich do not show extravagance in this regard.[91]

Richard Reepis' shop fittings were quite modest in 1681 when his inventory was drawn up.[92] A Norwich shopkeeper selling a variety of goods, candles, soap, tobacco, brandy and ribbons, he had shop fittings to assist him in his work:

It. Scales and weights	0	6	2
It. drawers and boxes	0	10	0
It. 2, shelves and a lattice	0	4	5
It. 2 sonces, one candlerack	0	1	0

In 1673 Samuel Cawthorne, a cutler with an extensive list of stock, had a shop chest, a nest of drawers, a press cupboard and cupboard boxes and a vite board, each valued at five shillings.[93] By 1706 the value of shop fittings had increased somewhat and Timothy Allen had four counters and shelves, worth one pound, and 2 chests, 2 cases, 2 chairs and shelves, also valued together at a pound. Noticeable here is the provision of counters, across which negotiation and display would take place, and the case, probably glazed, where goods were displayed within the shop space.[94] In one inventory, (Elizabeth Neale), also dated 1706, the deceased has bequeathed her shop furniture and fittings, amounting to over £24 to, one assumes, another shopkeeper. These goods included four nests of drawers, scales and weights, two shop counters, a candle rack and screen, a number of different sized pots, two stools and shelves in the warehouse, a wire lattice, a black boy and tobacco clock, more white storage jars and another stool. In fact not only was the list of shop goods impressive, it was the fullest account of shop fittings to be seen before the middle of the eighteenth century. Elizabeth Neale's stock also displayed considerable choice in grocery goods and tobacco.[95]

In the illustration above, (Plate 4.9), drapery goods are seen laid out for the customer over the counter and often the counter drawers were placed on top of the counter for efficient service and convenient display, as in Plate 4.10, which shows a London

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[91] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 126.
[92] NRO DCN 73/1/19.
[93] NRO ANW 23/3/209.
[94] NRO ANW 23/6/88.

shop. The widespread use of these items within the shop is also discernible through early advertisements announcing shops for sale. In one, a grocer lists shop counters and drawers amongst other stock. It is unlikely that shop fittings were sold regularly in this manner or that the fittings were the main subject of the advert. In this case the retailer was moving to new premises where it was likely new fittings were required.[96]

Plate 4.10: Shop interior

Source: Detail from trade card 'Martha Cole & Martha Houghton, drapers' in London c.1720 Victoria and Albert Museum[97]

Perhaps more useful are the inventories that not only list the shop furniture within the shop, but tell us where goods were placed in relation to the furniture. In the case of John Lily, d.1734, the furniture in his shop was worth eight pounds and included the sashes (see above), counters, shelves, drawers and two glass cases. The appraisal of his goods though shows us how this furniture was utilised, for example:

8th Row of shades and odd things	0	4	0
9th Row of Buttons and Combs	1	0	0
a drawer of copper toys	0	10	0
1 drawer of Crack Nuttes	1	10	0
1 drawer of Ivory Combs	0	18	0
2 drawers of necklaces and odd things	0	2	0
...			
1 drawer of black buttons	0	4	0
...			

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[95] NRO ANW 23/6/59.

[96] *Norwich Gazette*, April 5th – 12th, 1712.

[97] The full trade card can be seen in Walsh, C. (1995) p. 168.

| 1 drawer of slate pencils | 0 | 1 | 0[98] |

John Lily also sold a variety of children's toys, including dolls, and shuttlecocks. Interestingly, a further clue to the location of the shop is given by the appraiser noting the price of a parcel of broken toys at the 'corner against the market'.

The inventory above illustrates that by the 1730s shop interiors were fitted out conveniently to store a variety of goods. Within this 'the boxes and drawers provided a much more formal and deferential means of presenting goods.'[99] Hann and Stobart note that shop fittings became progressively more complex over time, opening up the shop for browsing and showing a more conscious use of space.[100] Apothecaries naturally had an array of shop goods, expensive storage jars, drawers and preparations. In an inventory for Gilbert Younge (d.1740) we are able to visualise a shop filled with containers, each appraised by size and arranged around the shop, in the hall, behind the counters, in the counter drawers and on the counter itself (see also Plate 4.11)[101] Wallis suggests that apothecaries tied up about forty percent of the total value of their shop in fixtures and fittings.[102] Indeed an advertisement for the sale of such a shop outside the city of Norwich, placed in 1711, describes the shop as both 'handsome' and 'compleat', suggesting that the fittings were still in place, although they are not itemised.[103] None of the inventories can compete with Gilbert Younge's level of shop fixtures or storage of goods and, despite the fact that Hann and Stobart can see a progression in the provision of fixtures and fittings in provincial shops, there is not as yet strong evidence from Norwich to support its continuation past the 1750s.

[98] NRO ANW 23/12/14, 14A, 14B.
[99] Walsh, C. (1995) p. 164.
[100] Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005) p. 172.
[101] NRO ANW 23/23/53.
[102] Wallis, P. (2008) p. 32.
[103] *Norwich Gazette*, April 21st- 28th 1711.

Figure 4.11: Glasgow Shopkeeper (1790s, artist unknown)

.Source: www.theglasgowstory.com (accessed 23rd March 2010).

The shop counter and other purpose built storage helped to divide shop space by function whilst also displaying the careful and particular attention of a well organised and diligent tradesman. Such fittings enabled a clearer negotiation through the commercial and social space, but it also reinforced roles and constructed identity.[104] The counter was undoubtedly the major feature of many shops, with the rest of the space organised around it.[105] Wallis notes that 'Counters divided the interior space, separating vendor and customer', thus maintaining the social and commercial barriers, however narrow, between the two.[106] The creation of these boundaries was essential for the shopkeeper to maintain a level superiority in relation to the goods. As the century progressed the retail sales patter became more deferential, but the retailer was responsible for creating the frameworks and contexts within which people purchased goods.The counter reinforced the superior knowledge and information that the retailer was able to impart, politely, to his customers.

The counter was a key feature of the shop space, and was utilised by both shopkeepers and customers as a focal point for consumption. It provided an

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[104] Wallis, P. (2008) p. 46.

[105] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 130.

[106] Wallis, P. (2008) p. 33.

opportunity for consumers to inspect the goods closely, utlising the tactile and visual aspects of browsing, which were greatly enhanced by the presentation of goods on the counter itself.[107] The combination of commercially appropriate and well organised shop fittings served to confirm the status of the shopkeeper as knowledgeable and trustworthy, with exceptional entrepreneurs like Wedgwood taking the element of display to new extremes and carving out a reputation as 'taste-maker'. Provincial shops rarely had the space for such display, but over time many traders utilised novel goods to enhance shop interiors and to present the shopkeeper's credentials through the symbolic use of material culture (see chapter 1).

Trade cards, particularly of shops in large urban centres, portrayed these elegant interiors furnished with novel goods such as mirrors, upholstered chairs, looking glasses and considerable lighting. These were all used to create a more familiar context for goods which may themselves have been unfamiliar. Blondé and van Damme have questioned the necessity of such furnishings in order to sell novel goods. They note that a shopkeeper had to actively sell new products and that shops in Antwerp, 'remained generally undecorated' with no discernible lighting or heating devices, even at the end of the century.[108] On the one hand we have pictorial evidence of highly decorated shops in fashionable areas of English cities, (see Plate 4.12 below – a satirical take on shopping but illustrative of 'fashion' shops) and on the other inventory evidence from Antwerp suggesting that no attempt was made by retailers to create a domestic-style environment through decoration, yet their businesses were still successful. Is it possible to reconcile the two extremes?

There is limited evidence from Norwich shop inventories over this period that the city's shops were fitted out with novel goods in an effort to create a comfortable shopping environment or one that enabled the selling of novel goods more readily. This is not to say that such decoration did not exist, but it was certainly not as elaborate as some of the trade cards or other studies have suggested. For the most part the appraisal of shop goods was confined to listing the stock in trade and not shop furnishings. The commodious nature of some central shops was not unnoticed by contemporaries, however. Parson Woodforde notes in 1778 that Mr Landy, a chemist in the market place in Norwich, 'keeps a good shop and house', which for Parson

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[107] Berry, H. (2002) p. 387.
[108] Blondé, B. and van Damme, I. (2008) p. 8-10.

Woodforde is something of a compliment.[109] Some trade cards show a small parlour to the side or back of the main shop, which was used by shopkeepers to entertain their better customers away from the more public shop floor (see also Plate 4.10 above). In this small space, the customer might have been treated to tea and a more private discussion with the retailer about material goods. In many ways, the creation of the semi-public, or quasi-private, space creates a more personal link with the shopkeeper as well as a link between the shop space and the domestic realm.[110] Indeed, this evidence suggests that shops were furnished for comfort and sociability, particularly in fashion shops (see chapter 5). Woodforde, it seems, took full advantage of these social links and often noted in his diary that he had been for tea with a retailer with whom he had commercial dealings. In 1790 he visited and played cards with his friend Mr Priest, a chemist in Norwich and again in 1794, after dining with the Bishop of Norwich, Woodforde visited Mr Priest for a bowl of chocolate.[111] And Woodforde of course was not the only person to develop these relationships. In 1783 Mary Hardy arrived in Norwich by stage coach and visited Mr Hayward a linen draper, with whom she drank tea and later 'supt' at Mr Wilkins'. [112]

It remains unclear however, whether the creation of sociable space, not directly linked to the shopping area, has left a trace in the record other than in representations on trade cards or often satirical illustrations. The floor plans of buildings which housed shops and living spaces have been investigated recently by Walsh. Her recent paper provided an example of shop premises internally divided to provide specific areas for specific goods, not entirely dissimilar to the nineteenth century department store.[113] Bennett has looked closely at the interplay between spaces in eighteenth century new-build which appeared to follow a familiar pattern. A shop would be found at the front and behind it a sitting room, kitchen, yard on the ground floor; dining, lodging and storage rooms were located above. Bennett notes that, although based on traditional building plans, the shop space was larger than the earlier or converted shops, and would have allowed far more room for counters and shop furniture in addition to the large windows.[114] But there is no mention of a designated semi-private or semi-commercial area in these purpose-built premises. The sitting room may well have

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[109] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 175.
[110] Morgan, V. unpublished thesis (2003) pp. 154-5; see also Stobart et al. (2007).
[111] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 379, p. 479
[112] Hardy, M. (1968) p. 47.
[113] Walsh, C. unpublished paper CHORD Conference, 2009; see also Walsh, C. in Blondé et al. (2006); Cox (2000) p. 99.

served this purpose, with other rooms upstairs devoted to purely domestic lodgings. This overlap between shop and domestic life is noted elsewhere in relation to the storage of stock.[115] Defoe encouraged retailers to keep a good stock, to spend money on the provision of goods rather than the shallow fitting out of the shop itself, but in small premises this could cause problems. In Bennett's new builds, the need for storage was dealt with by the provision of ware rooms, but, in Norwich's more traditional shops, stock spilled over into the living space.

Plate 4.12: 'A morning ramble or the milliners shop'

A MORNING RAMBLE, or The MILLINERS SHOP.

Source: print after Robert Dighton, printed for Bowles and Carter, London, c1782 picture sourced at British Museum, Prints and Drawings Ref: 1935,0522.1.31

The extent of some of the stock listings in probate inventories was great and storage would have been of paramount importance, yet for the majority of traders their

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[114] Bennett, A. (2005) pp. 41-3.

holdings were relatively small. In 1700 Matthew Taylor's business, selling cloth, flour, laces and tapes, he used his front room as a shop, but his stock was also found in the back room and the parlour, and there were large quantities of vinegar and liquor to be found in his cellar. In the hall his weights and scales were laid out, with some chairs and a chest.[116] Two years later a wealthier merchant Thomas Wise sold candles, tobacco, sugar and grocery goods in his shop. He stored much of his stock in the warehouse and cellar, but it encroached on the closet room where there were 'several parcels of dying stuff, spice, cotton yarn, sugar'. And it was in the stable that he kept his molasses, vinegar, alum and oil.[117] These inventories show a practical and necessary use of non-shop space, and were a visible connection between the shop space and the rest of the house.[118] Later examples, such as John Wass, a weaver by trade, kept some stock in the back garret, but most of his goods (flour, soap, spices, bottles and candles) were kept in the shop.[119] Ann Jarvice also utilised the garret for storing a small number of goods including aprons, handkerchiefs and petticoats.[120] Of course the situation was different for producer-retailers such as the turner William Bradford, whose chairs were found in the shop, the chamber and the garret in great quantity.[121] What these examples emphasise is that, while larger traders such as John Lily (1734) or Thomas Hutton (1674) utilised space specifically given over to stock, the majority of retailers simply did not hold a quantity of stock bigger than their immediate, domestic, storage options. But, by the end of the eighteenth century, as Bennett notes, a new arrangement of space suggests that retailing had gained a more professional status, with all aspects of the trade considered in the planning of new units.

Conclusion.

In this chapter the key aspects of eighteenth century retail in Norwich have been considered in light of the 'retail revolution' debate. Early developments in retail practice, which had once been placed in the nineteenth-century, were in fact already in place in Norwich at the beginning of the eighteenth-century. The investigation has shown that fixed price retailing was a familiar and accepted aspect of consumption at

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[115] Stobart, J. (2007).
[116] NRO ANW 23/5/64.
[117] NRO ANW 23/5A/10.
[118] Morgan, V. unpublished thesis (2003) p. 161.
[119] NRO DN/INV 81C/8 (1743).
[120] NRO ANW 23/26/5 (1767).

the time and was generally used for small parcels of goods or for groceries.[122] It was clear that by the end of the century the most significant change in pricing had not been whether an item carried a fixed price, rather the change was in the type of goods that were being sold using these methods. Drapery goods of quality were being sold in Norwich at a fixed, non-negotiable price; even some expensive fashion items, which previously would have been the subject of considerable haggling, used this retail form by the end of the century. An interesting exercise would be to look closely at other provincial areas to see which goods were being sold by the end of the century at a fixed price. A more detailed examination of Norwich's newspapers of the 1790s might shed more light on the development of this phenomenon, to see whether this trend was sustained, and how quickly other goods in the city began to be sold at fixed prices. However, the early arrival of fixed pricing suggests that this aspect of retail was not in itself a revolution, yet the cultural shift that has been exposed by this study (grocery goods to fashion goods) suggests that significant changes were afoot.

In addition to the changes in process that were occurring within shops, it was revealed that Norwich shops themselves were seen to undergo considerable alteration across the century. New frontages and the movement away from open window sales, were evident in a number of representations of the market place in Norwich. The provision of glazed windows and the total revamping of shop façades were an essential, and undeniable, feature of retail change. Window displays were carefully orchestrated by the shopkeeper to show off novel goods and quality items to passers by. Evidence suggests that in this Norwich was no different to other major provincial cities in England at the time. However, as the discourse suggests (and the pictures highlight), shop fronts of different kinds existed together over long periods of time. There was not a sudden shift from one form to another.

Yet all of these factors coupled with the provision of comfortable, fashionable, and constructed interiors do suggest a movement away from a space utilised for the provisioning of goods, towards a more managed retail environment: one that was recognisably modern. Blondé and van Damme persuasively argue against the revolutionary aspects of retail, outlined by Walsh or Stobart and Hann, for example, stating that decorative interiors and fancy fittings did not alter the success of the retail

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[121] NRO ANW 23/5/60 (1700).

[122] See discussion about Hannah Ware's shop book in Chapter 5.

trade in an economically challenged city like Antwerp. But evidence from Norwich, also a city of slow change and economic challenges, is less certain. There is little direct evidence that novel interiors were key to the success of Norwich businesses, particularly those selling novel goods themselves; but indirect evidence from diaries suggest that Norwich retailers were very much caught up in sociable retailing. If we consider this in light of the evidence described in chapter one, showing Norwich homes to be well populated with novel and fashion goods, one could infer that the shops might also be more inclined to display goods for the socio-cultural benefit.

In terms of a retail revolution it is difficult not to sit somewhere in the middle of the two extremes described. The arrival of new retail processes has been widely described but not looked at in any depth, and as such there are few comparative examples to draw on. The fact that many of the processes thought of by earlier historians as revolutionary were in existence in the early part of the eighteenth century suggests that the term revolution is too strong. Yet the combination of all the factors involved in retail undergoing some change, does point to a significant shift in the status of retail in the wider socio-cultural framework. Retail had become something dynamic, and had, by the end of the century, to create the tools with which to negotiate a pathway through an increasingly complex world of goods. In this sense then the eighteenth-century provincial England did undergo something of a retail transformation, and this was linked both to the construction of the shop space, novel retail processes and the construction of the role of the shopkeeper.

Chapter five: The Role of the Shopkeeper: construction, change and modernisation.

According to Defoe, 'there is not a man in the universe deserves the title of a complete tradesman, like the English shopkeeper.' Defoe's book, first published in 1727, was written as a guide and friend to trainee retailers and established tradesmen outlining the character and skills required for success and illustrating the many pitfalls that might beset the life of a shopkeeper who neglected his business. [1] By the time this volume was published the role of the shopkeeper was a complex one, and no less so in the provinces where the retail sector was expanding and encompassing a greater variety of specialised trades.[2] The retailer required significant social and commercial know-how, a good grasp of all aspects of the trade in question and a strong command of language, as well as general business acumen and a knowledge of the customer. These aspects of the trade have not gone unnoticed by modern researchers, variously describing the pivotal role of the shopkeeper as 'tastemaker' or 'conduits' for taste, innovation and information, as well as describing them as 'stakeholders in a consuming culture'.[3] Stobart notes the crucial role that provincial retailers had in disseminating fashions through the country, and more recently has described the shopkeeper as the 'point of access' to fashionable material goods.[4] While all this may be true, it is something of a stretch to assume that the retailers themselves were aware of their role within the broader rise of the consumer classes.

Is it possible that we look back with something of a romantic view? Was the shopkeeper really the 'kingpin' of a flourishing market, or were they merely answering the call of the shopping public, providing the goods that they required and desired in an effort to turn a profit?[5] Whether or not the shopkeeper was aware of his central place in modern history, it is clear that the developing role of the shopkeeper during the eighteenth century laid important foundations for subsequent developments and the rise of modern consumer culture. This chapter will explore the emergence of a more 'professional' form of shopkeeping during the eighteenth century and how the role of the shopkeeper was constructed. It will do this by firstly discussing the way

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[1] Defoe, D. (1839).
[2] See Chapter 2.
[3] Edwards, C. (2007) p. 40, Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 9.
[4] Stobart, J. (1998) p. 13; see also Mui, H-C and Mui, L.H (1984) p. 148; Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005) p. 185.
[5] Coquery, N. in Blondé et al, (2009) p. 129; Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 11.

the shopkeeper facilitated shopping within a defined retail space. Shopping is central to the discussion below and the first section considers the realities of regular household provisioning. Secondly, by exploring how the emergence of consumer expectations were responsible for a new kind of retailer, one that was sensitive to changes in the material fashion landscape, but one that also created sustainable levels of choice, particularly in provincial England. Therefore, the way in which the role of the shopkeeper changed across the century will be explored, and will discuss whether the role as an occupation became more 'professional' as the century wore on. Finally, the social foibles of a large aspiring class which were readily picked upon by satirists of the day, will be discussed; as well as look at how such portrayals further constructed the public images of shopkeeping. In short the chapter will explore the nature of shopping and the construction of the role of the shopkeeper across the century.

5.1 Shopping.

Shopping as a social activity was not a new phenomenon in the eighteenth-century. Walsh and others note how Pepys was a regular at the shopping arcades in London, and how appealing these spaces were to the fashionable folk of the day, as a place of promenade and show.[6] This is in contrast to Levy-Peck's suggestion that shopping in public during the seventeenth-century was widely criticised, particularly for those of the elite classes.[7] Indeed, the diary of Thomas Turner, a provincial village shopkeeper, suggests that, even in the mid-eighteenth-century, his elite customers preferred to be visited at home rather than making a journey to the shop themselves. As Berry notes in urban settings, the rich used to wait in their carriages to be served.[8] An example of this appears in the proceedings for a shoplifting trial at the Old Bailey in 1778, where a shopkeeper's wife left the shop to serve at a carriage, allowing a diversion for the accused to steal some expensive goods:

> I was alone in the shop; a carriage came to the door just at the same time as the prisoner came in, upon which I made some apology to him to be excused to go to the carriage; he said by all means; while I was at the carriage, my husband came

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[6] Walsh, C. in Benson, J. and Ugiolini, L. (eds) (2003) p. 61; Levy-Peck, L. (2005) p. 69; see Latham, R. (Ed) (1985) p. 97, p. 252, p. 304.

[7] Levy-Peck, L. (2005) p.61.

[8] for example Vaisey, D. (1985) p. 93; Berry, H. (2002) p. 136.

into the shop, and attended upon the prisoner. I was about ten minutes with this carriage.[9]

By the end of the century there were more opportunities for the rich to shop in exclusive environments, including furnished warehouses and shops, although it appears that people still opted to shop from their carriages in urban settings. Wedgwood and his contemporaries created quite exclusive spaces that only the rich were able to attend. They went to browse and to view the goods in a re-created setting, including full dining sets laid out ready for use (see Plate 5.1).[10]

Plate 5.1: Messrs Pellatt & Green, St Paul's Church Yard, London, 1809

Source: British Library Ref: Maps K Top 27 23, www.imagesonline.bl.uk (accessed 7th May 2010).

But not all shopping was about luxury, novelty and expense. Much of the commercial activity in the fixed shops of provincial England was based on the daily provisioning of the household and as Walsh suggests household shopping was generally 'burdensome'.[11] Using Hannah Ware's shop book, dated 1744, we can piece together a fairly substantial image of how people used their local grocery shop and which goods featured highly in daily consumption for people in the mid-eighteenth century.[12] It is

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[9] Old Bailey online ref: t17780916-74, the case of John Fredrick Gabelhousen, www.oldbaileyonline.org (accessed 13th August 2010)

[10] Walsh, C. (2006) p. 154.

[11] Ibid.

[12] NRO BAR76. The book is dated 1744, but bill entries date to 1747.

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unclear from the book or associated records, where exactly in Norwich or Norfolk Hannah Ware was based. Indeed the book itself is rather disorganised, serving both as a day book (without customer names) for the shop and an account book. There is no distinction between these pages and the overall effect is confused and the lack of names against purchases in the day book makes it difficult to assess the customers and the frequency of their puchases. However, there are lists of goods sold each day and many of the accounts give details of the items purchased and the monies owed thereon. Although customers bought cloth, buttons, stockings and other goods on occasion, it appears that this shop was used mainly for the regular provisioning of household commodities such as flour, sugar and tea.[13] This was not eighteenth-century shopping at its most affluent or stylish, but this record illustrates that the regularity of shopping for groceries was integral to the establishment of retail consumption culture.

Table 5.1 shows Ware's recorded sales for one full week during July 1744.[14] Interestingly, the pricing suggests that there was little variety in the types of goods on offer, with a standard price in place for tea, coffee, butter, sugar and so on. On the first and third of July for example, an ounce of tea was sold for one shilling and four pence, with 'grene' tea purchased on the fourth of July for the same price. There was no distinction between the types of coffee sold either, in terms of price and presumably quality, with two ounces of coffee costing a shilling, an ounce costing six pence and half an ounce, three pence. This fits in well with the observations made in the previous chapter about fixed pricing being regularly used on small quantities of daily commodities. In addition this illustrates the regularity with which very small amounts of goods were purchased, particularly the new commodities of tea, coffee and sugar.

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[13] See Stobart et al. (2007) p.152.

[14] The table is set out in the same way as the listing in the original book.

Table 5.1: Goods purchased in one week from Hannah Ware's shop, 1744.

Date	Goods purchased	£.s.d
July 1st	1/2 pack of flower	0.0.5
	2 ounces caffe	0.1.0
	ounce tae	0.1.4
	3 1/2 pack lofes	0.1.9
	6 pound Buter	0.2.6
July 2nd	tae and suger	0.2.4
	peper	0.0.4
	sope	0.0.6 1/2
July 3rd	3 pound sope	0.1.7 1/2
	pound Backen	0.1.4
	Bruld	0.0.8
	ounce tae	0.1.4
	pound carrants	0.0.7
	3 pound candels	0.1.9
	2 1/2 pack lofes	0.1.2
	2 pound suger	0.2.4
	6 pound Buter	0.2.6
	3 pound lofe sugar	0.3.6
July 4th	2 pound sope	0.1.1
	ounce caffe	0.0.6
	2 1/2 pack lofes	0.1.2
	1 ounce grene (?) tae	0.1.4
	4 pans	0.0.4
July 5th	pound Suger	0.0.6
	1/2 Yard cloth	0.1.6
	4 pound Buter	0.2.3
	1/2 ounce caffe	0.0.3
	sope	0.0.7
	3 1/2 pound lofes	0.1.9
July 6th	ounce tae	0.1.0
	3 1/2 pack lofes	0.1.9
	5 pound Buter	0.2.3
	Round Backen	0.1.4
	1/2 pound candels	0.0.3
July 7th	sope	0.0.1
	4 pound suger	0.4.8.
	2 ounces caffe	0.1.0
	pound carrants	0.0.7
	Ginger	0.0.2
	1/2 pack flower	0.0.5 1/2
	Basket salt	0.1.2
	6 pound Buter	0.2.6
	2 1/2 pack lofes	0.1.2

Source: NRO BAR76

The everyday nature of these sales is evident, and the importance of these particular items for the survival of the business are clear. During this single week there were 44 purchases logged in the shop book; 25% of these were for sugar (loaf and loose

combined), 11% for tea, butter and soap, and 9% for coffee (see Figure 5.1)

Figure: 5.1

Goods purchased from Hannah Ware, July 1-7 1744

Legend: sugar, butter, tea, soap, coffee, flour, tobacco, currants, candles, salt, ginger, pepper, cloth, bruld, pans
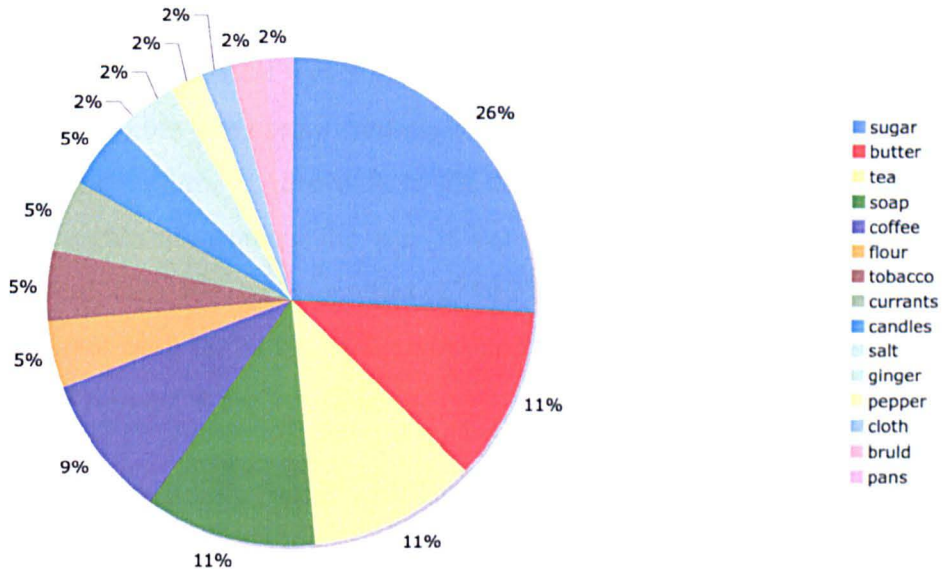
Source: NRO BAR7.

Table 5.2: Proportion of shop income by commodity.

Item	Total spent on this item over the week - £ s d	Total in *d*	% of total weekly sales
Tobacco	2s 8d	32	5
Bruld	8d	8	1
Butter	12s	144	21
Candles	2s	24	3.5
Coffee	2s 9d	33	5
Currants	1s 2d	14	2
Flour	10.5d	10.5	1.5
Ginger	2d	2	0.3
Pans	4d	4	0.5
Pepper	4d	4	0.5
Salt	1s 2d	14	2
Soap	3s 11d	47	7
Sugar loaf	12s 3d	147	22
Sugar loose	8s 6d	102	15
Tea	6s 4d	76	11
Cloth	1s 6d	18	3

Source: NRO BAR76.

But how did the number of purchases translate into income? Table 5.2 details the amount spent on each item in the week between July 1st and 7th, 1744, and the proportion of income each item generated. The total income for the week was £2 16s 6d. Unsurprisingly, because it was bought so regularly, 36% of the total income came from sugar, both loose and loaf. The importance of this particular commodity in domestic life during this period is discussed by Smith, who highlights the uses of sugar in the creation of 'tasteful' deserts, wines, preserves and so on. Sugar remained a luxury commodity, but was used increasingly with tea, and thus became an essential feature of tea-table culture.[15] According to the data discussed in chapter one, by the middle of the eighteenth-century the use of hot drinks related paraphernalia was rapidly increasing, with 40% of inventories (1740-1759) listing items for the tea-table, and it appears that both tea (11% of income) and sugar were regular items on the shopping lists of Hannah Ware's customers.

Butter, something not usually linked with fashionable consumption, constituted 21% of the shop's income for the week in question. The quantities of butter being sold, 6 pounds on the first of July, a further six pounds on the third, four pounds on the fifth, five on the sixth and six pounds on July seventh, seem relatively large amounts - remembering that modern refridgeration was not available at this time, it is likely that each entry constituted one sale. Interestingly the price of butter was not the same in each entry. Those customers purchasing six pounds in weight of butter were charged 2s 6d, working out at five pence a pound; the customer who purchased four pounds of butter on July 5th, were charged at nearly seven pence per pound.

It is impossible to know how many of these goods were purchased by different people or whether a number of items were purchased in one visit, the shop book is disorganised, making analysis of this nature problematic with the bills dotted around in no date order, in fact few dates at all, interspersed with pages of daily entries for shop sales. For the purposes of discussions here however, the customer bills do suggest that the shop was used in a variety of different ways by different customers. Mrs King, for example, bought only flour from Hannah Ware's store, though in substantial amounts. Out of the ten purchases listed in her account, nine of them were for some quantity of flour [flower], with one being for paper (see Plate 5.2). It is possible that Mrs King was reselling the flour in smaller quantities or using it for a

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[15] Smith, W. D. (2002) pp. 92-103; see also Chapter 1 for tea-table culture and the social importance of consumables.

food production business, though this is speculation. Groceries made up many of Hannah Ware's sales, but there was some diversity in the kind of goods for sale in the shop. In March 1747, Mrs Loving's outstanding bill was made up of a mixture of both grocery and drapery items.

Nedles	0-0-1
thred	0-0-4
cotten	0-0-5
1 sugar	0-1-0
Eggs	0-1-2
musterd	0-1—
4 quarts of sand	0-0-6
2 pd of sugar	--1--
1oz of ginger	0-0-1
21yrds of/12 carawill	0-2-9
1pd sugar	0-1-0
apples	0-0-2
9 paper	[illegible][16]

Sadly the purchases themselves are not dated so it is unclear how many visits were made to the shop to build up these items on credit. However, it is apparent that Mrs Loving used Ware's shop on a regular basis to make small purchases. Some customers bought rather more substantial items of clothing, for example the apron ordered by Mr Carel which included enough cloth for the apron and strings.[17]

Plate 5.2: extract from Hannah Ware's shop book – Mrs King's bill.
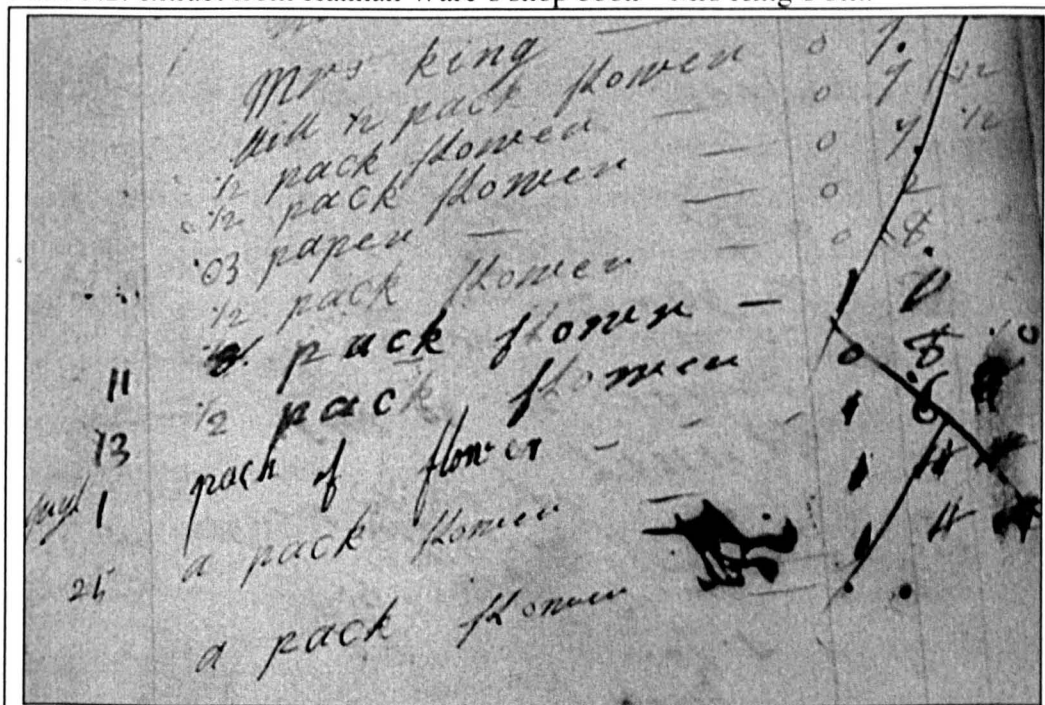
source: NRO BAR 76

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[16] NRO BAR76.
[17] NRO BAR 76.

It seems clear that Ms Ware's shop met the regular or routine requirements of many local customers, offering daily provisions and goods to support the material side of domestic life. As Walsh has noted, shopping for the household required constant interaction between the retail site and home, whatever the social group.[18] Household provisioning was seen to be a feminine preserve, but it is difficult to assess whether one person was responsible for all the purchases made, with women being virtually hidden from the consumption process in sources such as account books. The legal status of married women meant that they could not accrue debt in their own name, thus shop books like Hannah Ware's seldom show the name of the person making the order, just the person, usually the male head of household, who was responsible for the debt. It is possible, but unlikely that Mr Carel (above) had gone to the shop and ordered an apron himself.[19] Equally, Walsh asserts that the kind of daily provisioning recorded in the examples above could have been the preserve of servants, under the watchful eye of the housekeeper.[20] The participation of the servant within the domestic provisioning and domestic consumption of the household during this period remains somewhat masked, not least because of difficulties of identification of individual shoppers in shop records. This is not always the case however; Stobart et al detail Thomas Dickenson's day book from 1741-2, where purchases are listed and customers names are recorded.[21]

In the accounts of Norfolk gentry the diverse needs of the fashion conscious are apparent, yet the detail of who bought what and when is still difficult to ascertain. Ashe Windham's personal accounts of the early eighteenth-century suggest that he purchased goods from a number of retailers, and that many of the bills were paid on his behalf, certainly during 1709-1711 (Plate 5.3) What is fascinating about the extract pictured in plate 5.3 is that a record of the repayments were made, and that many of them were for quite considerable sums. What is equally frustrating, however, is that there are no clues as to what he spent his money on with the only note next to many of the entries being *'shop acct'*.[22]

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[18] Walsh, C. in Hussey, D. and Ponsonby, M. (eds) (2008) p. 13; see Stobart et al. (2007) pp. 151-2.

[19] Shammas, C. (1990) p, 246; Vickery, A. (2009) p. 5.

[20] Walsh, C. in Hussey, D. and Ponsonby, M. (eds) (2008) p.18.

[21] Stobart et al. (2007) p152, the chapter also includes a number of other traders with detailed sales records.

[22] NRO WKC 6/30/25.

Nonetheless, using Hannah Ware's shop book and the accounts of the local elite it is possible to highlight a number of points. The first is that the retail spectrum was fairly broad, with shops providing goods for both the wealthy and the poor during this period. Shopping was not just about novelty and fashion, but about domestic and material provisioning at all levels. At one end of the spectrum were shops like Hannah Ware's selling a selection of goods like tea and coffee, without much variety. At the other end were the large London grocers offering the delights of the exotic commodities through mail order. Secondly, the shop book presents clear evidence of fixed pricing for small goods and provisions, and evidence also that people went back to the same shop time and again to make their consumption choices - perhaps more so for the mundane items seen listed in Ware's shop book than for fancy goods. Thirdly, that, although people's names appeared in the shop books or in receipts, it is possible, even likely, that a number of people would have been involved in purchasing the goods listed in bills, receipts or shop accounts, including servants and other family members.

Plate 5.3: Extract from Windham accounts.

Source: NRO WKC 6/30/5.

The shopkeeper was therefore required to serve a variety of goods to a variety of people, with the bulk of consumers coming from the middling classes, rather than the

elite members of society.[23] Langford reminds us that this group of people was made up of a 'wide range of incomes and a great variety of occupations' and it was the role of the shopkeeper to meet the needs of all his customers.[24] For those retailers whose stock was considered a luxury however, particularly in provincial capitals like Norwich, the shopping experience required something a little more sophisticated than perhaps was offered by grocers like Hannah Ware.[25]

Already by the middle of the eighteenth-century retail advertisements were displaying the kind of deferential language that signaled the arrival of polite consumption within mostly urban settings.[26] Many modern commentators have noted the shift within the retail environment, away from the necessity driven exchanges of previous centuries and towards a more polite leisured shopping experience.[27] Indeed the counter, which was the focal point of commercial exchange, enabled customers to browse and compare the goods on offer. The shopkeeper here was responsible for matching the quality of goods with the quality of customer. The 'browse-bargain' model that Berry outlines in her paper on polite consumption offered the customer plenty of time to survey the goods on offer and to make a choice based on a sensual appreciation and monetary assessment of the objects; but it also allowed the shopkeeper to get the measure of the customer though not always successfully.[28]

Gray's recent book on crime in London during the eighteenth century notes that shopkeepers were particularly vulnerable to theft and the numbers of legal cases relating to shoplifting attest to this.[29] Nearly two thousand cases were heard at the Old Bailey between January 1700 and December 1799, with 1,061 being heard before 1750. Shoplifting carried a number of gruesome penalties depending on the severity of the case and the record of the accused. Often the punishment was one of whipping, branding or transportation, but some defendants were sentenced to death. Stobart et al, suggest that acts of theft or 'violence' against the shop detracted from the polite and honest reputation that shopkeepers worked so hard to forge and maintain.[30] What is

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[23] Cox, N. (2000) p. 130; Stobart et al. (2007) p. 145; see also chapter 1.
[24] Langford, P. (1989) p. 61.
[25] See chapter 4.
[26] Berry, H. (2002) p. 387.
[27] E.g. Berry, H.(2002); Cox, N.(2000); Berg, M.(2005) chapter 7; Stobart et al. (2007).
[28] Berry, H. (2002) p. 389.
[29] Gray, D (2009).
[30] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 135.

most notable from the court reports is the way in which shoplifters were able to infiltrate this managed shop space by imitating the daily process which went on there. Clearly, therefore, a pattern to shopping existed and was exploited by thieves. The case of Martha Walker in 1708 is one of many examples where goods were taken from the counter in the shop whilst the retailer's back was turned retrieving items of interest for the customer. Martha was accused of stealing 30 yards of silk to the value of 35 shillings after entering the shop and behaving as a normal customer about to barter the price of some cloth:

> The Evidence depos'd that the Prisoner came to the Prosecutor's Shop to cheapen Silks, and as the Servant's Back was turn'd to reach some, the Prisoner made use of that opportunity to take the Goods and went off with them.[31]

This example, suggests a number of things. Firstly, we can visualise from the description the daily use of the counter and storage behind the counter, and how this facilitated polite browsing. Secondly, that 'cheapening' or haggling remained a traditional part of the shopping process coupled with the more novel comparative methods. And finally that the shopkeeper was often not alone in the shop - assistants, apprentices and other family members were generally present, particularly in larger or more wealthy establishments.[32] Indeed, the number of people in the shop - retailers, their assistants and the customers - made the experience of shopping a very sociable one, as well as being practical in serving a number of customers at once.

The above illustration (Plate 5.4) emphasises one major aspect of the new retail and consumption culture, that of sociability. This was important both in terms of shopping itself, and for the creation of relationships between retailers and customers. Shopping for goods was not necessarily a solitary activity, nor was it distinct from other forms of leisure by the end of the century. Diarists like Parson Woodforde who recorded details about shopping trips and purchases, often combined shopping in Norwich with other cultural events and social activities. For example in June 1783, Woodforde was in Norwich and went to Mr Priests to taste and purchase some port wine, he then went to the fish market to purchase some fish from Mr Beales, went to Baker for some large scissors, and then to Mr Buckles to purchase a lock for the back door. After all that shopping he visited Quantrell's gardens for a glass of gin and water. In November

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[31] www.oldbaileyonline.org.uk, ref: t17080414-14 (accessed 13th August 2010).
[32] See for example the diaries of James Turner and William Stout, Vaisey, D. (ed.) (1984), and Harland, J. (ed) (1851) respectively.

the following year, Woodforde combined a trip to Norwich to visit the bank (Kerrisons), with a visit to a china merchant called Studwell, and another trip to Beale to pay his fish bill. This was followed by a visit to a side show to see the 'Dwarf Man', James Harris, who was 'exactly three feet high, very well proportioned in every respect.'[33]

Plate 5.4: A Milliner's Shop or Splittfarthing's the Milliner's. Artist unknown. 1789

A MILLINER's SHOP

Source: The Lewis Walpole Library Collection, Digital Collection, ref: 234233.
http://lwlimages.library.yale.edu/walpoleweb/ (accessed 10th September 2010).

The connection between cultural life and shopping is clearly there, particularly when one is making a trip into the local urban centre. In June 1780, Mary Hardy visited Norwich with her husband and son and whilst there purchased a silk gown, before going to a Quaker meeting.[34] At one extreme Walsh suggested in a recent paper that the shopping galleries of London were akin to the promenades in parks and gardens, at once social and cultural, and that, within this exclusive space, consumers were more visitors than customers. Parading, for shoppers in Norwich, was done in groups on the key streets of the city and, although this was spatially linked with the urban

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[33] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 203, p. 237.
[34] Hardy, M. (1968) p. 37.

cultural infrastructure, it was not quite the same as promenading in one of the popular parks. The shop became central to the journey of the shopper, with groups moving from shop to shop, browsing the goods on offer in windows and across the counter, relying on family and friends for advice and opinion, but remaining consumers, albeit involved in a leisure activity.[35] It was down to the shopkeeper to create and maintain the environment for this type of social and polite consumption, with polite shopping rituals 'framing the social experience of consumption'.[36]

Shopping was not a social event purely for groups of women, or indeed just men. Pepys regularly shopped with his wife and Vickery notes that visits by married couples to auction houses and showrooms were common.[37] Indeed, the general consensus has been that men and women had distinct roles within the 'world of goods'. Men, apparently, were more likely to dominate major household expenditure, with women involved in more basic provisioning for the home.[38] Earlier work by Shammas notes the difficulty of evaluating the gendered roles within consumption. Men's names were listed in shop books but we have no record of who actually made the choices (see above) or the motivation behind them.[39] Margot Finn's exploration of male consumption practice reveals that the male consumer was active at all levels of consumption, not just showing interest in large purchases.[40] Woodforde, for example, took an interest in the very basic provisioning for his household and often came back from Norwich with food, as well as cloth and clothing for his niece and things for the house. In 1789, on one trip to Norwich, he bought some cut glass salt cellars for sixteen shillings, an expensive purchase, and later on he bought some mushroom ketchup from Widow Nutter, 12 yards of diaper for towels, 6 yards of huckabuck for towels, and ordered some substantial mahogany furniture. Although he was unmarried, there were women within the household who could have taken on much of the provisioning, but Woodforde it seems had a genuine interest in choosing household goods.[41] One entry in the unpublished diary of Jehosophat Postle, a Norwich brewer, suggests that he was in part responsible for the choice of domestic

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[35] Walsh, C. in Blondé et al. (2006) p. 334; Walsh, C. (2003) p. 71; Walsh, C. (1999) p. 60.
[36] Berry, H.(2002) p. 377.
[37] Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) p. 307; Vickery, A. (2009) p. 153; Mary Hardy's diary for example, (1968) p. 40, Mary went to the Letheringsett sale with her husband and purchased a stove, safe and shelves.
[38] Vickery, A. (2009) p. 124.
[39] Shammas, C. (1990) p. 246; Vickery, A. (2009) p. 9.
[40] Finn, M. (2000).
[41] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 363.

paper hangings, recording that 'Rose before 6, after b at N and Mr Press's. Mr Pages abt the Paper Hangings', though sadly no other details were recorded.[42]

Equally women's purchases were not restricted to household goods, as Mrs Knyvett's purchase of a large clock in 1706 suggests.[43] Nor were women always hidden. Evidence from bills and receipts suggest that they were spending money on non-essentials, albeit using their husbands credit or money. In Robert Doughty's accounts he notes that in 1692 (writing in 1694) that:

'Mother had out for Napkins..... .... 0-18-0' [44]

And later a receipt from William Guybon (unknown location), listed the drapery goods that 'Madam Doughty' bought in the late seventeenth century, amounting to £3 3s 2d. The bill was addressed to Robert Doughty and was no doubt paid for by him too, but her involvement in the consumption process was clearly and officially noted. The receipt clearly states that, 'Madam Doughty bought of William Guybon...' and went on to list a number of expensive items that she had purchased including:

| 1 | Gowne | 0 -12 – 0 |
| 1 | guilted faxfrett pettycoat | 0 – 17 – 0 |

This bill is unusual in that it notes directly the person who was responsible for the purchase itself, and also suggests that Madam Doughty went to the shop herself and chose the items directly.[45]

Woodforde even records that he had a conversation with a retailer about trusting his niece 'after paying', implying that he was happy for her to choose and purchase goods in his name.[46] In the 1760s, John Bury, a Norwich draper, sent his customers notes of their outstanding bills. Two of those surviving bills were addressed to one Mrs Grand of St John Timberhill parish and one to Mrs Warmer by Heighem Church. Both

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[42] NRO MC2375/1, 26th July 1754.
[43] NRO KNY 912-913; see chapter 1.
[44] NRO AYL 823.
[45] NRO AYL 823.
[46] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 238.

women purchased cloth and other fashionable items, each spending over a pound.

Bought of John Bury, Mrs Grand, St John Timberhill, Norwich

		£	s	d
Decr 2nd 1767	As by bill delivered	0	17	9
24th	3/4yd Ribbon at 4d - 1/2 oz pinns		0	4 ½
	1yd Ribbon			6
	2 1/2 yds 4d Do			10
	1 1/2 yds Bays 12d	0	1	6
	1/4 yd Lawn 4/4	0	1	1
	5 yds binding			5
	2 yds ribbon 4			8
	silk 1d threads 2 1/11			3 ¾
	Total	1	13	6 ½

Bought of John Bury, Mrs Warmer, by Heighem Church, Norwich

		£	s	d
Sept 9th 1766	A silver snuff box	0	7	0
	A muslin handkerchief	0	4	0
	a paper snuff box	0	1	6
	a pair stockings	0	4	0
	5/8 black sattin 4/	0	2	6
	1/4 yard Muslin 6/	0	1	6
	5 nails clear Do 3/	0	1	10 ½
	Total	1	3	1 ½

Mrs Warmer's purchases were a mixture of items, many fashionable, the silver snuff box and stockings in particular but sadly for John Bury it appears that Mrs Warmer was not quite who she professed to be and a note next to the address states 'No such person'![47] The address she gave lies outside the boundaries of the city of Norwich, and this highlights some of the changes in retail culture during this period. Firstly, that people were using a variety of different shops, able to shop around and not required to create long term relationship with their shopkeeper, and secondly, that customers were able to use credit based not on these relationships, but on how they looked and how they were dressed. Shopkeepers had to be skilled in sizing up the customers, to gauge whether they were trustworthy, difficult when access to fashionable dress was widespread.

The other bills in the collection were addressed to men, but all of them for goods similar to those purchased by Mrs Warmer and Mrs Grand. Perhaps these particular ladies were widows responsible for their own finances and debts. Perhaps too this emphasises Vickery's point that men's names clouded the purchases made by women,

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[47] NRO NCR Case 5m/7.

but women's role in consumption is not entirely invisible in the historical record.[48]

The surviving receipts and bills in Norwich and other towns in Britain demonstrate the active participation of consumers in the growing world of goods; the choices that were made, and sometimes who made those choices. Consumers by the eighteenth century were proficient shoppers with well honed skills in finding value for money, function and quality, as well as finding goods to meet symbolic and social needs.[49] But how far was this world of experience shaped by the retailer? We have seen that shop space was consciously constructed by the shopkeeper and that retail practice shaped the frameworks within which consumers made their choices. Consumers in Norwich were well aware of retailers, through newspaper advertisements from the early part of the eighteenth-century and of course through word-of-mouth and reputation.[50] Shoppers were not only proficient at shopping but also had information about the shop and the shopkeeper even before arriving in the city. However, it is fair to assume that the shopkeeper had some control over the creation of this reputation and public knowledge about their retail business. This image construction, which is discussed more fully in the advertising chapter, became an essential element in the emergence of polite shopping.[51] But social and polite shopping created a new kind of relationship between the key players - frequent visits to the same shops for supplies created social relationships, perhaps more traditionally trusting and beneficial than modern historians allow. Yet the proliferation of retail outlets allowed the consumer a greater variety of choice than might previously have been the case. During the eighteenth-century a key development was one where the fluidity of the new landscape was combined with the security of the traditional.

Woodforde's friendships with key Norwich retailers were notable in this sense. In August 1778 he drank a 'dish of tea' with Mr Baker, a haberdasher in the Market Place. In the 1783 trade directory Mr Baker, was listed as 'Merchant Baker, haberdasher and Bookkeeper to the London Coaches from the Angel Inn'.[52] Later he mentions Mr Robert Priest ('Chemist, Druggist, wine and brandy merchant') where he

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[48] Vickery, A. (2006) p. 17.
[49] Walsh, C. (2006) p. 333; Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 19.
[50] See Advertising chapter in this volume; also Grieg, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (2007) pp. 293-314.
[51] Cf. Berry, H.(2002).
[52] Beresford, J. (ed) (1967) p. 145; Chase, W. (1783) p 7.

tasted and ordered some port.[53] Ten years later, following a lavish breakfast, he accompanied the Bishop of Norwich back to the same Mr Priest's for a cup of chocolate.[54] Woodforde also stayed with Priest in 1783 and records playing cards with him in 1790.[55] The Priests were also mentioned by Mary Hardy, who was born in 1733 and who moved to Letheringsett in Norfolk with her husband in 1781. She makes a special note of the marriage of Mr Priest's son John in her diary. Woodforde also mentions this event in passing but he did not attend the wedding.[56] Mary Hardy also had social connections with retailers and on 31st March 1783 she went shopping in Holt, purchasing two white Irish frocks, drinking tea at Mr Davy's (John Davy, grocer and draper), and buying her son William a brown jacket and trousers.[57]

Across the years Woodforde recorded a number of expeditions to Norwich to purchase goods and settle bills. He clearly enjoyed shopping. However, although his diary contains the names of some fifty or more traders with whom he had dealings, they are not names which are often repeated. Perhaps as the years go by the names of trusted retailers necessarily changed. Mr Priest is mentioned socially rather than as a retailer and only Peter Amyot, a perfumer and watchmaker in Haymarket central Norwich, is mentioned specifically more than once.

Whether this alters the perception of sociable retailing or not is unclear. Woodforde obviously had dealings with a number of retailers and not all of them in fixed or legitimate shops. For example, Woodforde mentions purchasing 'stuffs for gowns' to the value of £1 6d, from a 'Man from Windham' in 1783 and earlier in 1782 both he and his niece Nancy purchased goods from Mr Aldridge, a traveling salesman.[58] Perhaps only a few of the retailers that he patronized were in the right social strata to warrant a beneficial relationship. If Woodforde had been socially lower down the scale he might perhaps have coveted favour socially with more retailers.

This form of sociable retailing and consumption was, according to some historians, fairly common by the end of the century.[59] Shops were equipped with more private spaces to drink tea and make arrangements with customers, away from the hustle and

[53] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 203.
[54] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 469.
[55] Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967) p. 225, p. 379.
[56] Hardy, M. (1968) p. 70.
[57] Hardy, M. (1968) p. 47.
[58] Beresford, J. (ed) (1967) p. 202, p. 183.
[59] Berg, M. (2005) pp. 269-70.

bustle of the front shop. But the sociable aspect of eighteenth century retail required shopkeepers to develop a persona in order to deal with the obvious frustrations of the browse-bargain method of polite consumption.[60] Even in the early part of the eighteenth-century, Defoe suggests that the shopkeeper must be patient, particularly with those customers who have no real intention of buying anything, 'nay, not so much as carrying any money out with them.'[61] Even if browsers do not buy anything, it is the job of the shopkeeper to show their goods and perhaps encourage a return visit and future sales. 'The man that stands behind the counter must be all courtesy, civility and good manners,' and if he felt offended by any of the customers he was required not to show it for fear that any reaction might adversely affect his reputation and standing. In the Spectator, 1712, Steele wrote a letter as a disgruntled shopkeeper who is bothered by customers who do not buy, 'under Pretence taking their innocent Rambles forsooth, and diverting the Spleen, seldom fail to plague me twice or thrice a Day, to cheapen Tea or buy a Screen', and after setting out the goods requested the customers say 'this is too dear, that is their Aversion, another thing is charming but not wanted: The Ladies are cur'd of the Spleen, but I am not a Shilling the better for it.'[62] Although this is an early reference to the 'retail therapy' phenomenon, shopkeepers were often troubled by customers who were simply browsing, not buying. However, the shopkeeper, for the purposes of reputation, had to maintain a level of service despite the fact that a sale was not guaranteed.[63]

Flattery and deferential language were the corner stones of the social frameworks within which retail flourished. Not only did it appeal to the polite consumer, it simultaneously informed and reinforced consumer expectations of retail. Such language was seen in newspaper advertisements, with the terms 'humble servant' and 'favour' scattered freely across the commercial pages.[64] This language was also seen in correspondence between traders and merchants, as well as between retailers and their customers. A letter from the wealthy cloth manufacturer, Philip Stannard of Norwich, to a customer illustrates this point and shows that such communication was made within the socially constructed norms of polite interaction and good manners. But it was also formulaic and expected.

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[60] Berry, H. (2002).
[61] Defoe, D. (1839) p. 63.
[62] In Mackie, E. (1998) pp.222-3.
[63] Defoe, D. (1839) pp. 63-71.
[64] See Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) Chapter 4; Stobart et al. (2007), chapter 7; Stobart, J. (2008) pp. 312-317

The letter, like many, begins:

> Norwich, Jan 2, 1751
>
> Sir!
> I am honoured with your esteemed favour of the 31 Dec...

and finishes:

> I shall be thankful for the honour of your commands, and am, Sir, your most obedient servant. [65]

In 1754 Philip Stannard received a letter from a drapery firm in London, Henry Loubier & Co, who were keen to secure the best goods for their customers. The language conformed to the polite expectations of the day and the retailer was clear in his requirements:

> London Aug 8, 1754
> Sir,
>
> The bill you drew on us for £133.14. has been punctually accepted, and when due will be paid with the same readiness. We expect the assortment of patterns you promised us. It is not the quantity, but the quality we desire, and particularly the newest and latest taste, adding a note of the general prices of all the stuffs you manufacture. Expecting which, we remain most perfectly, Sir, your most humble and obedient servants,
> Henry Loubier & Co. [66]

This example really demonstrates the importance retailers placed on the quality of their stock, providing goods that met with the needs of the consumer, whilst offering something novel and unseen. This attention to such detail was maintained through regular correspondence with manufacturers like Stannard.

Deferential language was not just reserved for communications between a retailer and supplier. It was also essential to the creation of ongoing and beneficial communications with customers, even over long distances. Examples of letters to Sir Martin Folkes, near Kings Lynn, show that many traders were utilising the same type of language in correspondence with their customers. Thomas Jeffreys was an agent engaged by Martin Folkes to find a 'turrit clock', for his home at Hellington Hall. Mr Jeffrey's language was deferential, but also skilled and persuasive.

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[65] Priestley, U. (1992) p. 25 (1).
[66] Priestley, U. (1992) p. 92 (143).

Sir

Since Mr Jones had the Honor of writing to you, we have heard several Turrit Clocks;

& shall be very happy if any one of them answers your purpose... the one we think

most likely is a middle sized one fit to Strike a Bell of 2 Cl is warranted a good piece of

work & in perfect Order cost £70, to be sold for £40.0.0 goes 8 days.

He also notes that the clock at 'Horse guards' is to be sold, as is the Cheshunt Church clock, none of them with the bell included. Mr Jeffreys advises his client on the cost of a bell and goes on to ask for swift consideration of the matter:

if the acct of the Diamt is to your satisfaction shall be much obliged to you for

Information as the Expectation of taking them prevents our buying the same sort of

Goods; till we know your Determination

I am with great Respect Sir Your much obliged and most humble Servant.[67]

In fact this is exactly the kind of communication that Defoe urges of all retailers in a bid to foster success.[68] Cressy notes that the pressures of regulations and correspondence made literacy of significant importance to retailers during this period, and the clear use of language was a sign of social standing.[69] Defoe was also of the opinion that retailers should be able to communicate with suppliers across regions and must therefore be familiar with any regional terminology pertaining to business.[70] By the time Defoe published his work 'The complete English Tradesman' in 1727, shopkeepers were required to mediate between the more traditional expectations and the increasing importance of fashion within commerce. The importance of business skills, literacy and a broad knowledge of trade were now vital for provincial shopkeepers.[71]

The polite imperative had a direct effect on shop space too. Although the main aim of the shopkeeper was to maintain a business, he increasingly had to stretch his knowledge and skill set to encompass polite modes of communication, novel goods and changing fashion environments. Walsh suggests that, whilst the shop was

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[67] NRO MC50/32/2.

[68] Defoe, D. (1839), Chapter 2.

[69] Cressy in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) pp. 315-316.

[70] Defoe, D. (1839) Chapter 2.

[71] Defoe, D. (1839) p. 25.

'colonised' or owned by the customers, the retailer was very much in control of that space, creating a commanding framework for this temporary 'ownership'.[72] Yet the shopkeeper held the space together. Not only was the consumer's possession of the shop space a temporary one, it was also fluid and as such the nature of the space within the shop was altered by the through-flow of different customers. It was the job of the retailer to maintain the integrity of the space, through his role as 'host' and 'regulator'.[73] As polite social imperatives became the norm, the retailer had to create a slightly different kind of space and shopping experience. Shopping became a 'serious business' and the 'pleasures of shopping shaped the customary practices of shoppers and shopkeepers, and linked shopping to wider social and leisure activities.'[74] Once again it would seem that the shopkeeper reacted to this alteration in standard retail processes by putting sociability at the heart of business strategy.[75] This was in evidence locally with the expansion of the retail sector and proliferation of shops along the central streets of Norwich and other towns and cities. However, the strategy of sociable and polite retail was transferred to long distance sales and mail order, with the shopkeeper retaining a central role. Cox and Dannehl suggest that the success of the retail sector was about "overcoming space, whether literal or virtual. "[76]

In 1775, Sir Martin Folkes was sent the latest grocery listings from Joshua Long, a London based grocer and tea dealer. His customer, a wealthy, landed gentleman of Norfolk, had previously ordered a quantity of goods and the catalogue accompanied the bill for the following items: three different types of tea, some 'best' turkey coffee, finest chocolate, and sugar in three forms, loaves, lumps and 'clay'd'.[77] His order totaled over seventeen pounds. The note accompanying the bill (see Plate 5.5) was deferential and informative, and the tone indicative of the language one might have heard in the shop itself. As with the advertisements of this period, certainly later in the eighteenth century, the language reflected the expected social forms.

> Sir
>
> In Consequence of the Hor of yours of the 11th Inst
>
> I have sent as above per Gillams Cambridge Waggon which I hope you will receive
>
> safe & approve. I have sent them as near in quality to the last, as I am at this distance

[72] Walsh, C. (1995) p. 169.
[73] Morgan, V. unpublished thesis (2003) p. 237.
[74] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 157; Morgan, V. unpublished thesis (2003) p. 160.
[75] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 157-8.
[76] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 20.
[77] NRO MC 50/23/5.

of time able to judge, & have charg'd every article of 'em the very lowest prices tho'
comn Teas are a great Deal Dearer. I have charg'd you only 3d & 6d higher than the
last the chocolate is better than last, I have sent you 2 § of fine Hyson Tea at 12/ as a
Sample of the fine teas I have now. I have also sent 1§ Truffles & Morrells which hope
you will accepte in Liew of yr last which I am sorry to hear was bad, they you Sir wod
please do me the Honr to accept the 2 boxs of fruits in yr Hamper. I have a very great
addition of articles since you did me the honr to Call & if any thing else is wanting
your Commands shall be executed with punctuality by Us your most Hbl Srt.
Jonathan Long.

All sorts of goods were purchased by post, not just tea or other luxury grocery
goods.[78] Wallpaper was ordered unseen, for example, to match the rest of the decor of
a room. Indeed the wallpaper supplier had to interpret the requirements of the
customer through letters along, and possibly samples of material.[79] For something like
this Vickery notes that women were particularly adept at describing pattern.[80] A
purposeful purchase such as wallpaper, exotic food or a clock for a bell tower,
required specific instructions from the customers and this reflected the language of
normative social exchange.

Plate 5.5: Extract from Martin Folkes bill, dated 1775 from Joshua Long, London.[81]
(transcribed above)
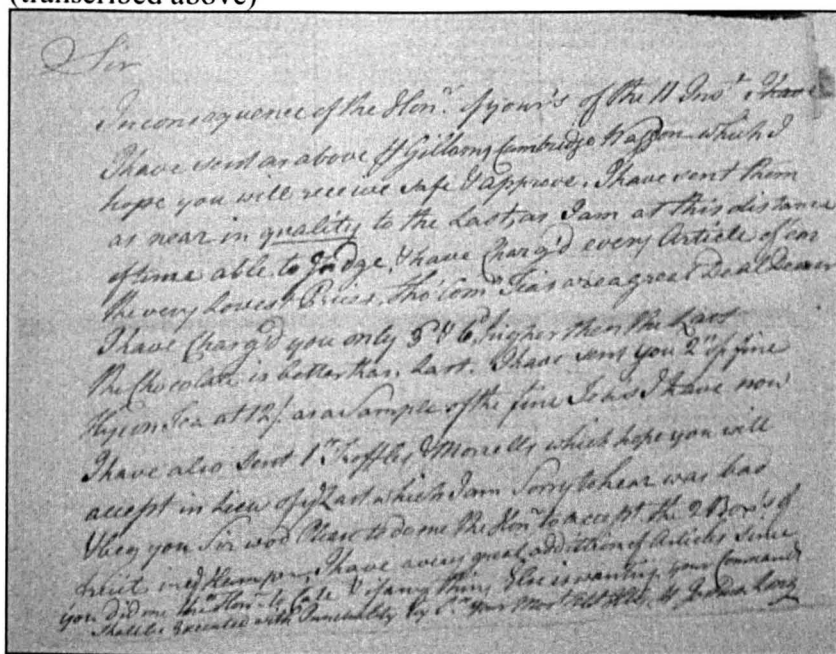
Source: NRO MC 50/23/5

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[78] Bennett, A. (2005) p. 124.
[79] Vickery, V. (2006) p. 208.
[80] Vickery, V. (2009) p. 127.
[81] NRO MC 50/23/5.

Country houses, which surrounded large towns like Norwich, utilised shops in the metropolis, in the local county town and in other market towns, operating within the broad choice of retailing that these centres had to offer.[82] Grocery goods, material, made up suits and clothing, and other goods were sent to the home of the Folkes family in Norfolk by retailers in Norwich, Kings Lynn and London,. This pattern was repeated elsewhere in the country, with grocery goods from Bristol and London were delivered to large houses in Dorset, although Joanna Martin notes that these were generally exotic goods - not dissimilar to those offered by Joshua Long. In fact, part of the skill of the shopkeeper was producing descriptive and orderly stock lists to send to customers, noting the origin as well as the price of the goods on offer in order to create interest in items not normally purchased.[83]

In a more indirect manner, proxy shopping, a phenomenon much discussed by historians of consumption, often resulted in the procurement of better items than if the customer had gone to the shop themselves, rather than sending a trusted associate in their place. Walsh explains that there was an additional pressure on the proxy shopper, to source exactly the right kind of items, in the right style, at the right price and with purpose in mind.[84] This was not, however, a new development in the eighteenth century, as this letter written in 1684, from Charles Cobrett to his sister demonstrates [in full]:

> Dear Sister
> You may think I have bin very negligent of yr commands in having been so long without sending you the muffe you writ for, but it hath bin a fault of care & not neglect, for I went presently into the Towne to get one for you, but being tyed to so low a price, I could not find any fitt for your wearing, but of the sortes you have forbidden. Those most in weare this winter are of Ermin cut in workes with imbroidery of gold & silver between; of which I could see none tolerable but of three pounds and fifty shill at least; the other sort which are so very much worne by persons of quality is sables & they to be good are also high prized and dearer this year than formerly, but I was promised by a man that in a little time I should see some that would be reasonable, wch he then was about to buy; so that I have imfeigne to stay for their making up; now they are so I find them very meane ones

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[82] See Hardy, M. (1968); Beresford, J. (ed.) (1967); Folkes family accounts NRO MC50/32/2.
[83] Martin, (2004) p. 162; NRO 50/23/5.
[84] Walsh, C. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 170-172; Vickery, A. (1998) p.165.

but cheap enough for sables that has no art used to it; I have therefore chose one for you which is the best that I have seen within your price, for it cost but 27 shills, but being of that sort t many be worne with credit; for though the furre be not deep it is well coloured, baiting some very grey haires in it for wch there is an abatement in the price; so that upon the whole matter I hope you will not dislike it. [85]

Charles Cobrett was concerned to match the precise demands that his sister placed with him and on her behalf he negotiated price and style in order that she have a reasonable 'muffe' which she could wear with pride. The shopkeeper needed to use all his skill to deal with proxy shoppers who felt the responsibility of their charge with more vigour than someone browsing for themselves. For those using the post as a means of consumption, sometimes of significant items such as dinner services and furniture, the shopkeeper had to follow social convention in his communications. But they also had to take on an enhanced responsibility of choice for the customer, within the frameworks already in place for shop based sales. In addition, with possibly little or no knowledge of the consumer in question, the shopkeeper had to make the same judgments about position, creditworthiness and honesty, as he did for shop-based consumers. Here visual signals were replaced by the communications he received and other social knowledge he might have to hand. Language and penmanship might have assisted the retailer in assessing these potential customers, but equally reputation, social standing and credit with other traders might have affected the outcome of the order.

For regular postal sales, shopkeepers were able to produce stock lists and catalogues, like that of Joshua Long. With the price annotated by hand, this offered a personal approach and drew the buyer's interests to goods that they might enjoy.[86] The impression given by the language of communication is that the trader will be incredibly accommodating to any order and will facilitate the customer's orders to the highest standard. Although the logistics of distance shopping were different to those encountered with shop sales, the reputation of the shopkeeper, the quality of his stock, and his service are all projected beyond the walls of the shop by relatively simple means. Ultimately then the polite, sociable business model maintains efficacy over long distances.

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[85] NRO PRA 664/2.
[86] NRO MC 50/23/5.

The shopping practices of the eighteenth-century consumer altered across the century to take full advantage of the retail developments outlined previously, using the shop as a gateway to an expanding world of goods. How did the shopkeeper facilitate these changes and indulge the customer in their new consumer role? The emergence of polite shopping as a sociable, often cultural experience enhanced the business strategies being utilised by the shopkeeper, constructing a good reputation and trustworthy persona. Moreover the shopkeeper's presence within the shop enabled the consumer to fully utilise the space set up to facilitate a specific shopping experience. The organisational skills of the retailer, the use of display and space created a workable framework for customers to browse, make choice, compare the full range of stock, and purchase particular items - or not. The shopkeeper stablised the environment by mediating between the commercial and social worlds. Similarly at a distance, the retailer was able to convey a sense of order, and of control, the goods on offer and the service reflected this, despite the fact that negotiations were done across considerable distances sometimes.

5.2 The modernisation of the role.

The previous section served to highlight the way the shopkeeper honed the skills to enable the development of polite consumption, both within the shop and more virtually through correspondence. The utilisation of space within the shop itself was discussed in a previous chapter, layout, furnishings and stock helping to create a space within which the shopkeeper directed consumption. The way that shoppers utilised these opportunities was explored, with the realisation that, like now, there were very different levels of involvement of the world of goods and luxuries. Luxury consumption was at the extreme end of the spectrum with shopping for daily necessities at the other. Even those shopkeepers with specialist and luxury pretensions sold a variety of goods, often with regular provisioning in mind and retailers were thus required to perfect the full range of skills to enable different levels of consumption within the same space. Still the bottom line remained, 'the most elevated aim of retail was to make a profit.[87] Success after all did not depend solely on those customers with whom a shopkeeper drank tea in the back parlour, it was measured by business longevity. Defoe's guidance within 'the Complete Tradesman' was concerned

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[87] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 11.

with the avoidance of financial ruin and in grounding the shopkeeper firmly in the practicalities of the task at hand. Bankruptcy was the nightmare of many of the eighteenth century middling classes, including shopkeepers.[88]

In light of the changing nature and structure of retail and consumption practice, the practicalities of the role of the shopkeeper were also seen to undergo distinctive modifications across the course of the eighteenth century. The role itself expanded beyond the experiences of shopkeepers in the seventeenth century to one where polite deference, sociability and knowledge were the cornerstones of success. Consumption in fixed shops - with glazed windows, specialised and often large stock, displays and orderly shop furniture – meant that, in Norwich and other provincial towns, the retailer stood apart from other salesmen. It was the management of this modernisation that had altered the role of the shopkeeper by the end of the eighteenth century.[89] Perhaps one of the most significant features of this modernisation process was the arrival of a more competitive style of retailing and the proliferation of shops in urban settings.

Defoe states that a tradesman, 'must neither cheat nor defraud, over-reach nor circumvent his neighbour, nor indeed anybody he deals with'. He later notes that 'to undersell is looked upon as an unfair kind of trading.' Mui and Mui explain that there had been a 'fair-trade' convention, an unspoken rule not to affect the business of other shopkeepers, 'the goal of the shopkeeper was to maintain a regular and steady clientele' but not by poaching the customers from other traders.[90] Something of the problems created by competitive selling can be seen in an advertisement placed in the Norwich press:

> Whereas a Taylor in the Close pretends to sell stockings at an under Price, this is to give Notice that Mr. Anthony Tolver, Hosier in St. Andrews, will sell long roling Stocking at 3s a pair, and shorter ones at 2s 8d a Pair, and all other Stockings in Proportion, being better than any Pretender can sell.[91]

This advertisement has a slightly bitter overtone to it. Mr Tolver takes issue with the

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[88] Defoe, D. (1839); Langford, P. (1989) p. 76; for a discussion of bankruptcy records see Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) pp. 49-61
[89] See previous chapter.
[90] Defoe, D. (1839) pp. 177-9; Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 17.
[91] Norwich Gazette, May 5 – 12 1711 see plate 4.2.

suggestion that his competitor would attempt to undersell him and rebuffs the 'pretender' with fixed pricing and a promise of quality. This early advertisement represents a turning point in the relationship between traders. Not only does it highlight the issue of competition, the very fact that this argument is being played out through the medium of advertising is incredibly telling.

As the numbers of shops swelled in expanding urban centres, this 'golden rule' was put under considerable pressure (see chapter 4). The geographical clustering of the luxury trades around the market place in Norwich, which increased across the century, meant that the shopkeepers had to define themselves in relation to an increasing number of competitors. Morgan notes that they used the shop as a defining tool, consciously constructing a retail environment that would appeal to the polite consumer; marketing the spaces that they owned and created, and advertising a particular kind of service as well as the goods available.[92] Indeed the proliferation of outlets which created the wonderfully sophisticated urban shopping streets, also served to broaden the expectations of the shopping public. If one shop was doing something then another had to keep up in order to maintain trade. Moreover, from the evidence of account books and receipts it appears that Norwich consumers made active choices between the different centres and shops available to them.

For example, in 1791 Mrs Peach, a resident of Norwich used the stay making skills of one John Lewis, a staymaker in London. However, sometime later she used the services of Robert Tomlinson, a Norwich based staymaker whose advertisements appeared regularly in the local paper, for which he sent a bill in December 1794 and another in 1799.[93] While it is impossible to know the reason behind the choice of staymaker, the profile of Robert Tomlinson was widely marketed and his advertisements outlined his appeal. He stated that he was 'just returned from town with the newest of fashions', and that should customers choose him over his competitors he was able to offer the assurance of them 'being served with materials, and neatness of work, equal to any in London'. His array of French, Italian and English stays would have been appealing, but what this advertisement says about the shopkeeper is that he is knowledgeable, he has contacts in London, and he

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[92] Morgan, V. unpublished thesis (2003) p. 227; Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005) p. 178.
[93] NOR BOL 2/156 bills and receipts.

understands fashion and the needs of his customers.[94]

Reputation was key to success. Newspaper advertisements mentioned the completeness of choice, the reasonable prices, the promise of good quality service and prompt delivery, and they served to create a package around the shopkeeper. Not only were his goods novel or of good quality; he was also skilled in his trade and could deliver in all areas of business.[95] Reputation was equally about personality and trust. The necessity to formulate the right kind of reputation in a competitive environment and to conform to broad national, more modern, standards forced a sort of uniformity on the shopkeepers of the eighteenth century. An ideal image was constructed, retail and consumption practice altered, and retailers were measured in relation to their local peers and those in other commercial centres. In some senses then, the retail trade was 'professionalised' across the century.

Other aspects of professionalisation, such as the formation of learned associations, self-regulation and formalised training, leading to academic qualifications, were not widespread in the retail world.[96] Apprenticeships were the backbone of the training for shopkeepers, they provided essential knowledge of the trade, introductions to customers and useful contacts, and led the way to gaining the right to trade within the town or city. Defoe outlines the stages of learning that apprentices should undertake in order to be successful. He notes that the state of an apprenticeship in the 1720s was no longer one of 'servitude' and 'hardly one of subjection', and that masters and apprentices had a companion-like bond, though this is probably a rather romantic view.[97] After the first few years, according to Defoe, an apprentice ideally began to learn 'good judgment in wears', finding out about the goods he was selling; he should also lean to weigh and measure; he should learn about costs and business processes to avoid being duped in the future stating that 'a judgement of goods taken in early, is never lost'.[98] In addition the apprentice must be given the opportunity to acquaint himself with the master's chapmen, to learn how to keep the books and to know how to buy. If the apprentice was diligent and faithful, then it is possible he would be allowed to acquaint himself with his master's customers, though there were clearly

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[94] Norwich Mercury, February 22 1783, advertisement appears also in 1784.
[95] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) pp. 81-2
[96] Corfield, P. (1995) p. 180.
[97] Defoe, D. (1839) p. 8.
[98] Ibid.

still issues about taking custom away.[99] This level of knowledge could only be acquired after at least seven years of good service, and only then could a young man successfully set up in a retail business.

In most towns and cities guilds generally formed the institutional regulation and structure of occupations, with tradesmen taking up membership of a guild following the successful completion of an apprenticeship; but by the eighteenth century their influence was ineffective and they offered little control. In the city of Norwich there had never been an effective or strong craft/merchant guild system.[100] Indeed, the city's charter of 1256 included the clause 'that no gild shall be held in the city to the detriment of the said city.'[101] Meeres notes that the most important gild of the city was therefore a religious one, the Gild of St George, which by the eighteenth-century was no longer in operation.[102]

As Corfield notes, it was not always possible to generate a notion of collective identity, although vital links with other traders were made through social and political means, particularly within Norwich's corporation. Indeed, many of the key roles in the corporation were filled by retailers, traders and merchants, and it is possible that the legitimisation and control of retail through the 'freedom' of the city was the most obvious method of creating structure.[103] Retail did not become a 'profession' like the legal services nor did they create large bodies for accreditation as with the medical profession; but the uniformity displayed in their advertisements, shop fronts, catalogues and communications suggests that a level of professionalisation within retail occurred over the century.

Unlike the role of a doctor, or lawyer or cleric, the role of the shopkeeper was apparently transparent and, on the surface at least, its purpose was clear and commercial. Yet many researchers have alluded to the key part retailers played in the provisioning of fashion goods, novelty and innovation, and in opening up the world of goods to consumers.[104] Retailers had to be very adept to deal with the influx of novel

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[99] Defoe, D. (1839), chapter 1.
[100] Corfield, P. (1995) p. 180; Meeres, F. (1998) p. 43.
[101] Quoted in Meeres, F. (1998) p43.
[102] Meeres, F. (1998) p. 43, p. 97.
[103] Corfield, P. (1995) p. 183; Stobart, J. (2005); Hawes, T. (1986) p. xviii, p. xix.
[104] Berg, M. (2005) pp. 35-6; Stobart, J. (1998) p. 13; see also Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p.148; cf. Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993).

goods and quick turn around of fashion. At the very least the retailer sought to educate the buyer in two ways; first how to be a good customer and second how to be a good consumer.[105] Information was provided at all turns to familiarise the consumer with new goods. The catalogue sent out by Joshua Long in 1775, for example, clearly listed all goods on offer, their prices and their geographical origin.[106] With goods from the West Indies and Europe, Joshua Long was not alone in providing a gateway to the world of goods. The producers of foreign commodities were hidden, and could only be imagined by the consumers themselves, with their only link to production being provided by the shopkeeper himself. The separation of production and consumption was addressed by the use of illustrations on trade cards and headed bills, though they were often rather romantic depictions of 'foreign' workers seated near boxes of tea and coffee, not quite the reality of the situation (see plates 5.6 and 5.7 for example).[107] Van Damme notes the importance of the retailer in making the new goods comprehensible and attractive to consumers, and familiarising them with the way in which these goods functioned. [108]

Clive Edwards , in his investigation into the sale and consumption of furniture during the eighteenth-century, suggests that the role of retailer acquired a broader remit than mentioned above. He states 'in the best circumstances the retailer was the conduit for the purchase of good taste, comfort and gentility that the customers would then display as their own.'[109] Edwards highlights too the dual nature of the role of the shopkeeper. On the one hand he had to respond to client orders and on the other he was responsible for imparting advice, guidance and instruction to customers on points of elegance and taste.[110] In light of the discussions in chapter one (above) such advice was an essential part of the creation of domestic space and the movement away from traditional goods to those inspired by fashion.

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[105] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 11.
[106] NRO MC 50/23/5; see other examples in the John Johnson Collection, Oxford.
[107] Coquery, N. in Blondé et al. (2006) p.126-7.
[108] van Damme, I. in Blondé et al. (2006) p. 201.
[109] Edwards, C. (2005) p. 40.
[110] Edwards, C. (2005) p. 39; also van Damme, I. (2006) p. 199.

Plate 5.6: Trade card: Edward Jones, tea dealer and grocer

Source: John Johnson Collection, The Bodleian Library, Oxford. Trade Cards 11 (28) – date unknown. www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/johnson (accessed 17th November 2008).

Even more responsibility is placed on the shoulders of the shopkeeper by Cox and Dannehl who suggest that retailers were 'stakeholders in a consuming culture and concomitant culture of retailing, and with that the promoters of material aspiration and stability.'[111] They were not simply purveyors of a goods in a shop on the high street. There is little doubt that the consuming public relied on the advice of retailers when making purchases, and it is not a great stretch to see that an ability to maintain the new social frameworks through the consumption of goods might be a perceived feature of the retailer's role, certainly by modern historians. Is it more probable though that shopkeeper's primary role and motivation was to make money?

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[111] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 9.

Plate 5.7: Trade card: S. Hockly, Tea Dealer, London
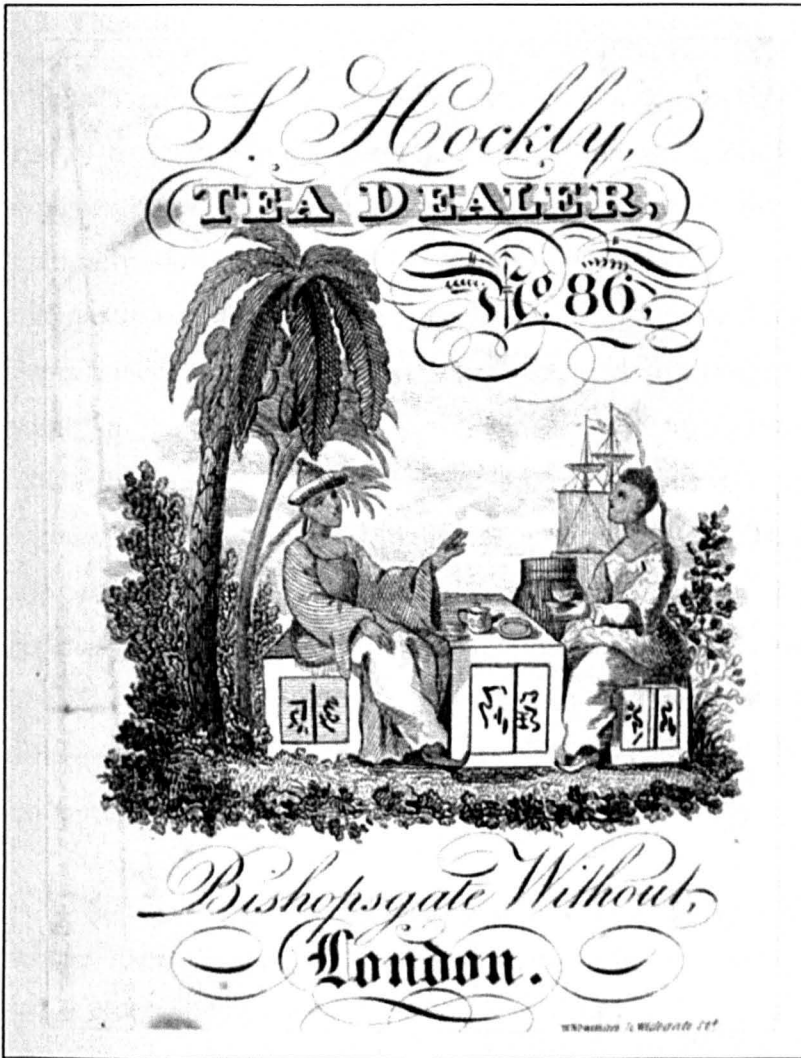

Source: John Johnson Collection, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Trade Cards 11(26a)
www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/johnson (accessed 17th November 2008)

Of course, by performing all of the above tasks (creating a sociable space for consumers, holding the latest stock, offering advice, maintaining a good reputation and adhering to the social forms) whilst undertaking this role, he was more likely to be a successful business man, than if he simply stuck to selling commodities over the counter? Is it likely that by calling the shopkeeper, a 'king pin', for example, his role is aggrandised into something more than it was seen at the time? Contemporary commentators and satirists certainly made fun of the over -inflated purpose of the retail trader and the aspirational nature of his existence, and it is to this alternative view of the shopkeeper that we now turn.

5.3 The role of the shopkeeper, an alternative view: economic.

The previous section has described the view that retailers held a central position in the rise of consumption and the articulation of the expanding world of goods during the eighteenth century. Some commentators have argued that their role was socially, culturally and commercially vital for the developments in Britain's economy in the nineteenth-century. But contemporary feelings about the rising number of tradesmen were mixed. Cox suggests that shopkeepers were considered of 'dubious worth' by some in the early modern period, a view which stemmed in part from a well established moral aversion to trade and credit, and one which persisted until the eighteenth-century.[112] This public wariness manifested itself most simply as a need for customers to take extra care in their dealings with the retail community and most seriously as physical attacks upon premises and riots stemming from the fear of deceit. As Shoemaker notes, 'several riots took place at markets or outside shops where transactions were unregulated and unstandardised'.[113] Yet this fear was based on more profound cultural and economic issues than these riots suggest.

Cox notes that there had been a long history of concern about retail particularly those whose trade encouraged foreign imports and had the potential to alter carefully balanced class frameworks.[114] Indeed the enduring economic theory was based around the notion of a balanced trade, one where imports did not exceed export and where exports of goods produced at home paid for the importation of foreign novel goods. The balance of payments was critical in measuring wealth for the nation and the economic activity of shopkeepers was not considered beneficial to this overarching economic theory; indeed for some the shopkeeper contributed nothing of benefit to the nation.[115] In addition, there was a fear that shopkeeping was unregulated and that anyone could turn their hand to the art of retail, particularly as numbers of retailers were on the increase.[116] Yet all of these criticisms and widely believed assumptions ignored the nature of internal domestic trade and the role of the shopkeeper in it. Defoe extolled the benefits of internal trade on consumption and production, stating that 'by which increase of trade and people the present growing prosperity of this

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[112] Cox, N. (2000) p. 17; Cox, N. (2003) p.36.

[113] Shoemaker, R. in Borsay, P. (ed.) (1990) pp.194-5.

[114] Cox, N. in Benson, J. and Ugolini, L. (eds) (2003) p.32.

[115] Cox, N. (2000) p. 18.

[116] Cox, N. (2000) p. 23; in Benson, J. and Ugolini, L. (eds) (2003) p. 41.

nation is produced'. However, it was not until Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, that the role of the shopkeeper in the distribution of domestically produced goods was acknowledged. For the first time the vital link between the producers and consumers was made, and the efficiency of the middlemen and the economic benefits of a smoothly run domestic system of re-distribution were highlighted.[117]

The economic benefits of the growth in the retail sector were not just felt in the broad arena of domestic trade, there were advantages on the ground too. In London for example, at the end of the eighteenth-century, shopkeepers comprised 37% of those paying taxes, with the tax figures suggesting that they made up between 11% and 14% of the total population.[118] Indeed, the better shopkeepers in London were able to earn on average between £80 and £100 a year, significantly more than the average income of the middling classes, and were in a position to spend that money elsewhere in the city. Figures suggest that retailers were also the largest sector of the community taking out insurance policies in the 1770s and 1780s, thus putting large sums back into the local and national economy.[119] Borsay notes that 'The wealth made by business men was not only directed towards private aggrandizement,' and that building schemes and philanthropy benefited from the increasing wealth of merchants and traders. Even retailers had their part to play in the 'urban renaissance', putting their wealth towards improvements to their own properties and adjusting shop facades in line with current trends.[120] Despite this their position in society was still derided by many.

5.4 The role of the shopkeeper, an alternative view: social.

In many ways this derision during the eighteenth-century was no longer the product of moral panic, but was born out of social fear: the shopkeeper was an aspirational character, bridging the gap between the elite and the middling classes. Borsay notes that by the middle of the eighteenth-century the term 'Gentleman' could be applied to men in a variety of occupations and professions, not just those with land.[121] At the

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[117] Cox, N. (2000) p. 27; for a more detailed summary of the developments see Cox, N. (2000) Chapter 1 and Schwarz, L. in Borsay, P. (ed) (1990) pp. 315-337; Defoe, D. (1839) p251 chapter XXIII.

[118] Schwarz, L. in Borsay, P. (ed) (1990) pp. 327-8.

[119] Gattrell, V. (2006) p.85.

[120] Borsay, P.(1989) p. 210.

[121] Borsay, P.(1989) p. 227.

same time retailers were beginning to offer the trappings of the upper classes to those lower down the social scale (see Chapter 1). As early as 1674, for example, Robert Crane was selling expensive drinking glasses in his Norwich shop alongside the more usual stone pots and white dishes. Drinking glasses were seldom seen in probate inventories even towards the end of the eighteenth-century.[122] The use of luxury goods by the working and middling orders threatened the social status quo, and questioned the social boundaries that had been in place for centuries. One commentator complained that even the best of accessories and fashionable dress 'lose their lustre strangely, when the noble peer is dressed like his groom.'[123]

Trade was seen by many as an inferior occupation, certainly in comparison to the 'professions'.[124] As has been noted before, the retail sector covered a wide range of social groups. Inventory evidence confirms that some shopkeepers operated with considerable wealth and others struggled on a very small turnover – a contrast was reflected in their customer profiles and their geographical location.[125] But for those successful in their business there were social as well as economic rewards. Defoe observed that retailers had been elevated through the ranks of society and, where once only the elite were seen, partaking in leisurely pursuits for example, shopkeepers and their families were now a common sight.

> .. the play-houses and balls are now filled with citizens and young tradesmen, instead
> of gentlemen and families of distinction; the shopkeepers wear a differing garb now,
> and are seen with their long wigs and swords, rather than with aprons on, was formerly
> the figure they made.[126]

He goes on to defend the position of those in society whose wealth had derived from trade:

> ... trade and learning have been the two chief steps by which our gentlemen have raised
> their relations, and have built their fortunes; and from which they have ascended up to
> the prodigious height, both in wealth and number, which we see them now risen to.[127]

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[122] NRO ANW 23/3/234.

[123] Drake (1736), quoted directly in Borsay, P. (1989) p. 303; see also p. 275.

[124] Cox, N. in Benson, J. and Ugiolini, L. (eds)(2003) p. 37; Langford, P. (1989) pp. 72-3.

[125] See chapter 3.

[126] Defoe, D. (1839) chapter V p. 39.

[127] Defoe, D. (1839) chapter XII p. 241.

Similar observations were made by contemporary fiction writers:

> The gayest places of public entertainment are filled with fashionable figures; which upon inquiry will be found to be journeymen taylors, serving-men, and abigails, disguised like their betters.[128]

These observations illustrate the tensions between the established social order and the increasing fluidity of social positions. Lower orders were invading the leisure and social spaces of the upper classes, wearing the uniform of the rich instead of something more suited to their station, and effectively masquerading as gentlefolk. This was not acceptable to the elite and the shifting boundaries between social classes threatened the status quo and was a cause of anxiety, not just for the elite.

Some, like Defoe, were optimistic about this social climbing and the social and economic momentum that went with it. He likens the old monied classes to a pond taking water from the surrounding ground: ' 'tis well and 'tis expected', but those families building up wealth through trade are like a spring, 'an inexhausted current.'[129] Others were less generous and felt that traders and retailers climbing the social ladder were rather full of themselves and out of place 'the affectations of social-climbers were pilloried.'[130] The print 'Taylor turn'd Lord' (Plate 5.8), shows a tailor changing premises, dressed with all the trappings of wealth and elite status, and being ridiculed by his contemporaries. This, highlights the fact that not all retailers were discovering wealth in the way that Defoe suggests and that derision came from within the shopkeeping ranks.[131] Indeed the cohesion of the social strata was threatened at all levels.

More broadly, there are a number of satirical prints displaying the social inadequacies of newly upwardly mobile middling sorts, not just retailers, and these portray the awkward joining of the two levels of society. New wealth allowed access to the polite balls and assemblies, but inexperience of such settings is illustrated by the wrong kind of dress, improper behaviour or a lack of knowledge in the polite sociable ways of the upper classes. Corfield discusses the use of satire as one of the most 'pungent forms of eighteenth-century communication': 'to scoff lightly at known targets for criticism

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[128] Smollett quoted in Gatrell, V. (2006) p. 84.
[129] Defoe, D. (1839) p. 291.
[130] Corfield, P. (1995) p. 44.
[131] Gatrell, V. (2006) p. 578; see also Vickery, A. (2009), p. 295.

was a viable formula for social exchange.'[132]

Plate 5.8: Taylor Turn'd Lord by Rowlandson, 1812.

Another print by Rowlandson (Plate 5.9) deals head on with the conflict between the two worlds: of manual shop work and accomplished leisure. The daughter, Miss Marrowfat, sits in the parlour within the old fashioned open shop of her father, demonstrating her cultural achievements. At the same time as she plays her music, her father is yards away chopping meat to sell through the open shop. The family have decorated the carpeted room with an ostentatious show of social capital, the portrait of the butcher, Mr Marrowfat, the bowls and ornaments on the mantelpiece underneath a fashionable print of the day; and the presence of a black boy pokes fun at the over the top nature of the display.

[132] Corfield, P. (1985) p. 43.

Plate 5.9: The Hopes of the Fammily or Miss Marrowfat at home for the Holidays.
Rowlandson. 1809

Source: The Lewis Walpole Library Collection, Digital Collection ref: 300146.
http://lwlimages.library.yale.edu/walpoleweb/ (accessed 10th September 2010).

5.5 The role of the shopkeeper, an alternative view: character.

It was not only the social role of the shopkeepers that was made fun of by
contemporaries. The deferential language and demeanor of the shopkeeper, which was
part of the professionalisation of shopkeeping and which came about as part of the
new sociable consumption practices, was also mocked. Satirical descriptions of
shopkeepers poked fun at their 'foppish' ways:

> They are the sweetest, fairest, nicest dish'd out creatures, and by their elegant address
> and soft speeches, you would guess 'em to be Italians.

> Our fellows are positively the greatest fops in the Kingdom; they have their toilets, and
> their fine night-gowns, their chocolate in a morning, and their green-tea two hours
> after, turkey polts for their dinner, and then perfumes, washes and clean linen equip
> 'em for the parade.[133]

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[133] From the Female Tatler, number 9 in Mackie, E. (1998) pp. 293-4; Mackie notes that the reference

The mercers who were mocked in this entry in the Female Tatler were thought to be effeminate, overtly fashion conscious and not entirely focused on business. Other trades were pilloried for their stereotypical characteristics. One who received particular attention was the tailor: seen as sharp and often disfigured in some way, as can be seen in Plate 5.10. This suggests perhaps that he was crooked and untrustworthy. His wife on the other hand is preparing to go to one of the most fashionable places in London at that time. The Pantheon, a large project designed by James Wyatt as a winter alternative to Ranelagh gardens, was opened in 1772, and was regularly attended by elite members of society. It was *the* place of leisurely diversion, and as such carried an expensive entrance fee when it was first opened.[134] Plate 5.10 depicts the tailor's wife preparing to attend this exclusive social arena in the year that it was first built, and mocks her attempts at dressing appropriately; her face accessories are over done, perhaps in an effort to hide unsightly blemishes, the outfit is lacking taste and the ribbon on her sleeve is loose. Not only does this not fit in with social conventions, or the exclusive dress code, but it reflects poorly on the character of the tailor.

For this kind of satire to be effective the signs that appeared in the pictures and the stereotypes that were employed would necessarily have to be familiar to the population at large. A growth in the numbers of shopkeepers and the social elevation of some towards elite status caused friction and concern about the structural integrity of the social framework, threatening the status quo. Satire served as a safety valve, articulating cultural responses to change, whilst highlighting the worst defects of the subject matter, in order to create an image of how things should be. That said, in comparison to the professions, shopkeepers who were more staple to the economy and greater in number, actually attracted relatively little satirical abuse.[135] In terms of the day-to-day relationship the shopkeeper had with his customers, the real concern was still one of honesty, trustworthiness and service.

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to 'Italians' refers to the castrati of the Italian Opera. Suggesting that the mercers were effeminate sodomites.
[134] http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=41477 (August 2010).
[135] Corfield, P. (1995) p. 47, p. 63.

Plate 5.10: A City Tailor's Wife dressing for the Pantheon. 1772
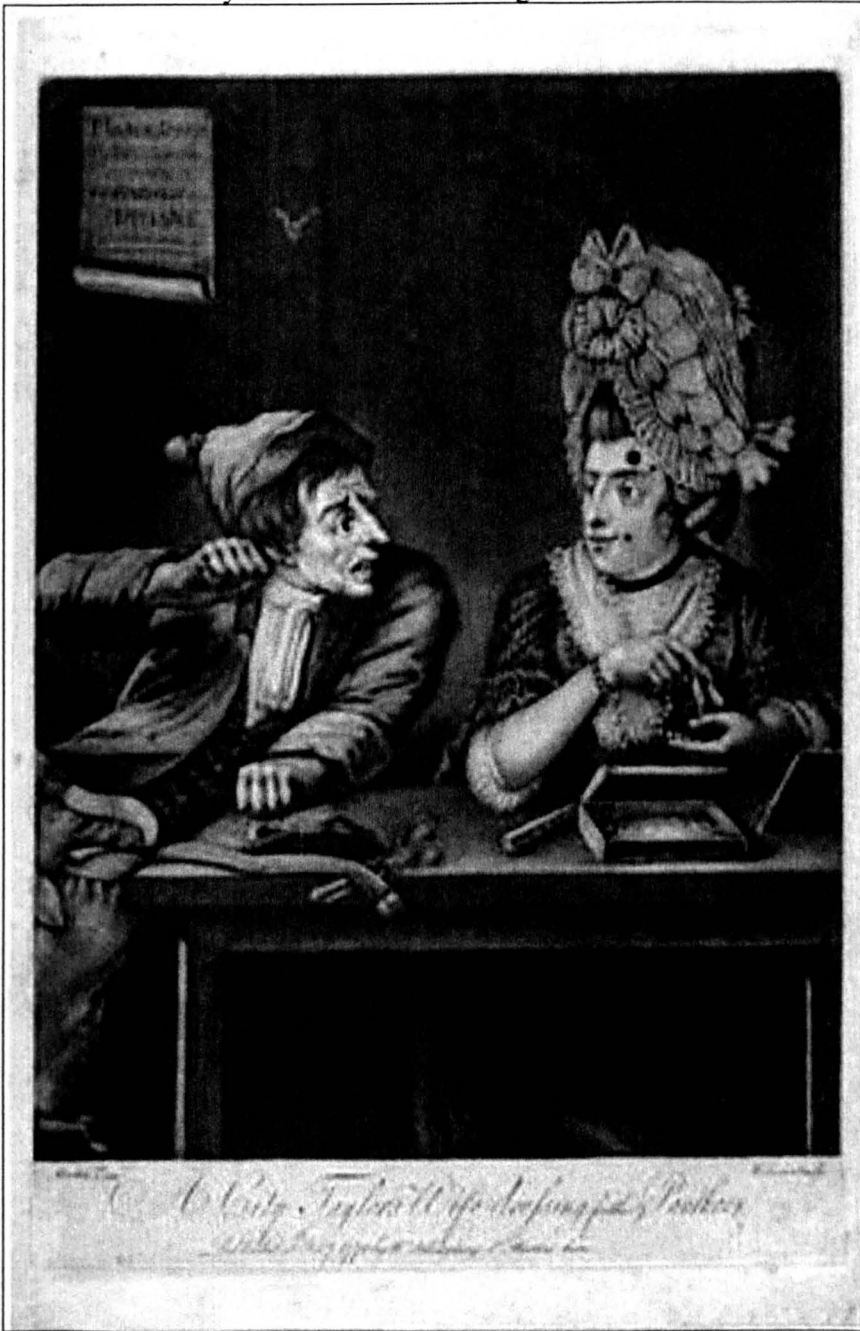
Source: The Lewis Walpole Library Collection, Digital collection ref: Lwlpr03260.
http://lwlimages.library.yale.edu/walpoleweb/ (accessed 10th September 2010).

People were aware that retailers held the knowledge that they required to set themselves up in the latest fashion. They relied heavily on advice from the shopkeeper and his assistants, and, as Fenneteaux notes, toy dealers were often portrayed as arbiters of elegance and taste.[136] The retailer used the patter of his trade to inform the customer of the choices available, to create trust and to convince the consumer that he was an honest dealer. Prints such as that seen in Plate 5.11,

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[136] Fenneteaux in Blondé et al. (2009) pp.17-28.

however, cast doubt on the intention of the tailor pictured with his client, fitting a jacket that is clearly too big, and saying 'why it sits like wax and goes off and on like a glove.' Perhaps the mistrust of shopkeepers discussed above was still paramount in popular consciousness and certainly the pointed and determined face suggests shady undercurrents. As Ling notes the outer wrapping depicted in satirical prints was presented as a representation of the inner self. The sharp exterior of the tailor in Plate 5.11, therefore, suggested the ruthless, untrustworthy, sharp practice of the trader; emphasized perhaps by the presence of a shadowy figure hovering at the edge of the shop.[137] The consumers of the eighteenth-century would have been well-aware of the visual clues included in the satirical prints of the day, and although shopkeepers were not as ridiculed as other professions, there was clear evidence of public's lack of confidence in some of these aspiring retailers.

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[137] Ling, E. unpublished exhibition leaflet. Vive la différence! The English and French stereotype in satirical prints, 1720-1815 p. 6; this can also be found at http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/viveladifference/index.html.

Plate 5.11: Monmouth Street, by Samuel Collings, 1789

Source: The Lewis Walpole Library Collection, digital collection ref: 202215.[138]
http://lwlimages.library.yale.edu/walpoleweb/ (accessed 10th September 2010).

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[138] The text at the bottom of the print reads: *Not fit! – Tho' to be sure as yousay a man can't see himself behind!_ Why it sits like wax and goes off and on like a Glove_To be sure 'tis a little tightish or so about the Arms_But no Gentleman would go far to have a Coat hang like a Hop-sack_ I never Sold a more genteeler thing in the whole course of my life_&I could not sell it for the Money, but it was made for a Gentleman, A Man of Fashion I assure you. But I happen'd to be a little out in the measure_Now as I hope to be Saved I lose a Guinea by that there Coat.*

5.6 Conclusion.

This chapter has sought to provide a greater insight into the construction and modernisation of the role of the shopkeeper through the eighteenth-century as part of a wider process of modernisation within retail more generally. Very little research has been done on the nature of the retailer during this period, in part because little material evidence remains. What has been saved requires 'judgement and interpretation' rather than providing 'information and knowledge'.[139] Equally, the perceived importance of other areas of research, such as the ownership of material goods or the discussions around 'retail revolution', for example, has meant that the retailer has not been a priority for historians. The fact that the shopkeeper was central to the emergence of new retail practices, shop spaces and the provision of luxury goods and services, suggest that a investigation into the creation of the role is warranted.

The evidence deployed in this chapter suggests that the role of the shopkeeper changed between the late seventeenth-century and the late eighteenth-century, despite the fact that the purpose of retail remained the same – to make money. The first point to make is that the whole process of retailing altered in accordance to the new social rules of polite sociability which were culturally integrated with the commercial world by the middle of the eighteenth-century; the retail trade was required to absorb and react to these changes. The material landscape of provincial Britain was filling up with novel and fashionable goods, and a new polite imperative guided the consumption patterns of increasing numbers of people. Retailers had to provide the spaces to articulate these alterations to material culture and had to use their shops as the platform for introducing new goods to a wider public. Such spaces constituted part of the framework within which consumers made choices and the retailer was the key to the boundaries of that framework; whether in a shop like Hannah Ware, selling the most rudimentary of goods, or the luxury grocery outlet of Joshua Long in London, selling his goods through postal services to the landed elite in Norfolk. In both cases the retailer provided options from which the consumer was able to choose.

The skills that Defoe outlined in *The Complete English Tradesman*, offered retailers

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[139] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 186.

and traders the ultimate ideal image to aspire to. A full knowledge of all aspects of the business, combined with social awareness and an ability to communicate with very different types of customers and suppliers, were the key to success.[140] Although the record is generally unclear about precisely who bought what and when, evidence does suggest that both women and men were involved in domestic provisioning, both material and perishables. This heterogeneity within the customer base of many shops would have drawn on the skills outlined by Defoe. Sociable shopping worked both within the shop and at a distance. As a result retailers became practiced in the language of deference and flattery, as seen in newspaper advertisements, bills and letters. This became a rather formulaic element in the consumption process and remained only part of a wider strategy based on more traditional practice. Consumers still required trust, and relied on the shopkeeper for advice and fair dealings. This brings us to a second key point, that the eighteenth-century was a period where the fluidity of the new was tempered by the security of the traditional, and this was much in evidence in the retail sector.

In fact within the shopkeeper, as with other aspects of the study so far, the balancing of old and new, traditional and modern, was key to commercial success, and shaped the role of the shopkeeper further. On the one hand, retail strategies based on trust and open dealing were still important to the customer (like cheapening of goods), but this was tempered with a desire for modern techniques like the use of display, deference and comfortable, closed shopping space. All of these served to encourage a level of uniformity between shops and retailers. In addition competition with larger numbers of shops in towns and cities, and a relaxation of the unspoken codes of conduct between retailers, fostered conformity in the retail sector. In many ways this uniformity created an air of change, and of professionalisation, although Cox and Dannehl clearly point out that 'few, if any, retailers would have positioned themselves in the professions.'[141]

What we have though is an image of a role that was expanding and changing to encompass the needs and expectations of the consumer, other retailers and suppliers. Yet the role itself was socially constructed. It was that construction which can be seen in the derisory prints and stereotypical images of occupations, particularly at the end

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[140] Defoe, D. (1839).
[141] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 187.

of the eighteenth-century. Despite attempts by retailers to meet the expectations of customers, the latter saw 'the retailer himself as someone whose skill lay in ruse and deceit.'[142] Satire picked up on these fears using recognisable character images to 'contrast the ideal professional performance with its obverse.'[143] Shopkeepers were not ridiculed as much as the true professions but there was clearly an element of public fear in the changes that aspirational businessmen presented to the social system, and this was tempered by this public imagery and satirical culture.

The role of the shopkeeper then is in many ways a social construction determined by: the desire and expectations of the consumers themselves; the commercial structures of the time; the assimilation of a more national cultural imperative (social shopping), and the modernisation in retail practices.[144] Retailers in the late eighteenth-century were able to bridge the gap between the traditional and modern, whilst managing the flow of novel goods into an expanding consumer culture.

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[142] Ibid.
[143] Corfield, P. (1995) p. 63.
[144] See Berger, P.L. and Luckman, T. (1966).

Chapter six: Newspaper Advertising, Virtual Shopping and the Modernisation of Retail.

In the early eighteenth century small numbers of provincial retailers and traders were utilising printed advertising to promote their shops. The evidence of this exists within the pages of early newspapers, seen outside London from 1701 when both Norwich and Bristol produced the first provincial newspapers in England. The trend gradually spread across the country as the century progressed. Ferdinand notes the importance of tracing the rising numbers of commercial notices, as a way of tracking the emerging culture of consumption which has so interested historians in recent decades; whilst Mui and Mui suggest these surviving examples provide us with an important window into the retail processes of years gone by.[1] Yet it is surprising that there are few in-depth studies of newspaper advertising itself in this period. This is not to say that advertising is ignored. Often the subject is touched upon in larger studies in consumption or retail, adding more detail and interest to the bigger stories.[2] Alternatively, they are looked upon as interesting novelty, illustrative of the varied nature of social life in times gone by; as Turner said, '[M]any advertisements of the eighteenth century add such piquant footnotes to social history...', which is true of course.[3] What is needed, then, is a focused analysis of newspaper advertisements in provincial towns, whose authors were generally unexceptional (unlike Wedgwood and Packwood) and whose businesses were relatively mundane.[4] This would fit so much more effectively into studies of everyday consumption and everyday retailing.

Indeed, it is not just the message of these advertisements that has failed to take centre stage. The place of the newspaper advertisement itself within the wider promotional toolkit open to retailers of this century is often overshadowed by the visual delights of the trade card, for example.[5] Even more surprising is the fact that many marketing historians suggest that it was only in the nineteenth century that recognisably modern forms of advertising were produced. This implies that the eighteenth century had been devoid of any sophisticated advertising, something beyond the one line notice, or

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[1] Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) p. 397; Mui, H-C and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 222.

[2] For example Berg, M. (2005), chapter 7; Hartingan-O'Conner, E. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 125-149.

[3] Turner, E.S. (1952) p.32.

[4] McKendrick, N. in McKendrick et al. (1982) chapter 1.

[5] See Berg, M. and Clifford, H. unpublished conference paper Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Forschung

that marketing was limited to traditional media.[6]

This chapter, therefore, will illustrate the true nature of eighteenth century marketing and to reveal the cultural and social importance of newspaper advertisements within the context of available marketing tools. Retailers, themselves responsible for the writing and placing of adverts in newspapers up until the nineteenth century, were not naïve and used their skills as shopkeepers, and their knowledge of the market and customers, to produce appealing messages in the pages of newspapers. Along with developments in retail and consumption practice, advertising became a significant element in the modernisation of the shopkeeping role.

The main purposes of advertisements were to attract new custom, to maintain contact with existing customers, and to keep the wider public informed of the existence of the shop and its wares. There were of course clear distinctions between the early commercial notices and the advertisements of the very late eighteenth century and beyond, yet it is equally 'clear that, even by the early years of the eighteenth century considerable thought was being put into the writing and presentation of advertisements.'[7] This was not a century devoid of marketing strategy or promotional tools. Rather, it was a period in which advertising became a crucial part of the retail and commercial landscape; laying the sturdy foundations for modern marketing and modern retailing.

Using a survey of advertisements placed in Norwich newspapers over the century, I will show that there was indeed a growth in overall numbers and that the form, content and style of these notices changed significantly over the course of the century, reflecting wider social and cultural shifts. However, what comes across significantly is that, while the delivery may alter, the underlying promotional purpose remains the same; retailers and traders were essentially marketing their businesses and shops, rather than one particular product or another. The shop was the key factor in advertising, whether through traditional forms or through the newspapers and trade cards of the eighteenth century, and the shopkeeper played a pivotal role in establishing the shop as the product.

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in Bielefeld (2004); Berg, M. and Clifford, H. in North and Omrod, D. (eds) (1998) p190.
[6] See Laird, P.W. (1998) p. 23.

The following chapter will be divided into three sections. The first will outline the way in which advertising has been approached by historians and examine the small number of studies primarily concerned with this subject. It will also look at the marketing context in which the newspaper advertisements developed, from the time of the first provincial newspapers in 1701. A further section will chart the rise in advertisements in Norwich papers, whilst acknowledging the continued use of more traditional forms of promotions and how these overlapped. Questions such as which retailers did or did not use the newspaper as their chosen medium will be discussed and the reasons behind these choices will be more broadly considered. The purpose of the advertisements and their effectiveness will then be looked at in more detail. In the final section of this chapter, the adverts themselves take centre stage; changes in composition and language across the century will be used to determine how far the newspaper advertisements reflected the social and cultural changes of the time, and how these surviving records help us to focus more clearly on eighteenth century retail practice.

6.1   Advertising in eighteenth century England.

There is little doubt that the expansion of the world of goods in eighteenth century England had a significant impact on commercial, retail and socio-cultural frameworks. Against this background of variability and growth in retailing and consumption, advertising was, according to Nevett, an obvious and natural development.[8] During the century, the progression of printed media across the country accelerated and, from the arrival of the first provincial newspapers in 1701 to the end of the century, advertisements were an important feature in the papers. Their appearance, style, content and marketing angle were not static and, as the medium changed to reflect eighteenth century fashions, so did the adverts themselves. However, advertisements, as many commentators have noted, were not the only means by which retailers and traders communicated with their customers or promoted their businesses.[9] Indeed, a shopkeeper's strategy was likely to contain a number of marketing methods, drawn from both traditional and novel repertoires.

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[7] Nevett, T.R. (1982) p. 19.

[8] Nevett, T.R. (1982) p.1; also Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 69.

[9] For example, Cox, N. (2000); Berg, M. and Clifford, H. in North, M. and Omrod, D. (eds) (1998);

The traditional forms of promotion included the use of a town crier or bellman who would shout a message about the shop, created by the shopkeeper himself, in the streets to existing customers and the wider public. The Norwich city poll books show that a Bellman was still a part of city life even in 1784, when Nathaniel Eastauge from St Peter Mancroft parish was listed with that title.[10] The shopkeeper, by paying the town crier a fee, was able to reach a broader section of the community with the news of his shop or new stock. In a city like Norwich, which was frequented by visitors from the surrounding country, the message might also travel further, through word of mouth.

Indeed, 'word of mouth', was part of a shopkeeper's stealth marketing armoury; although as Ferdinand notes, it is almost impossible to measure the effectiveness of such marketing.[11] However, by providing a good service, quality items, a polite environment or, as with the shops frequented by the Beau Monde in London, selling the right kind of goods, the reputation of the shop and retailer would be repeatedly reaffirmed.[12] Information like this passed between customers, their friends and relatives, and was essential, particularly locally, for successful trading. The creation of a good reputation was also bound up with a sense of commercial morality, in actions towards other traders and customers. Fairness was seen to be the key and in the early part of the eighteenth century luxury goods did not generally have a fixed monetary value. Shopkeepers determined the price of an item on a case-by-case basis, only offering goods he knew his customer could afford, whilst making sure that he remained within the bounds of fair trading.

> ...he cannot, without underselling the market, and undervaluing the goods, and
> seeming to undersell his neighbour, to whom there is justice due in trade, which
> respects the price of sale; and to undersell is looked upon as an unfair kind of
> trading.[13]

Reputation is, of course, a more complex issue than this, but was a valuable part of a shopkeepers success or failure; reputation was an essential, though not always

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Walsh, C. in Wischermann, C. and Shore, E. (eds) (2000).

[10] See chapter 2; 1784 Poll Book.

[11] Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) p. 397.

[12] Greig, H. in Styles, J. and Vickery, A. (eds) (2006) pp. 293-314.

[13] Defoe, D. (1839) pp. 178-9.

directed or manageable, part of retail promotion strategy.

As the local market began to change, from the 1720s onwards, more in line with the fashion conscious capital, shopkeepers could no longer rely solely on traditional methods for maintaining market position. Reputation, word of mouth and the use of a town crier were part of a strategy that was enhanced by the arrival of printed material. Media, such as bill heads and trade cards, however, offered the shopkeeper a more controlled and considered way of constructing an image, often using imagery related to the shop sign, the business or the shop itself, not the goods on offer. And although essentially ephemeral, some examples survive today. Trade cards in particular[14] were kept and later gathered in large collections. They were produced throughout the eighteenth century but experienced their heyday between 1730s and 1770s.[15] Again the trade card is something mentioned widely, but there are actually relatively few scholars involved in active research specifically on this subject. Berg and Clifford, are perhaps the most well known, and have described trade cards as 'transmitters of fashionable forms', utilising with success the fusion of image and text, to sell the shop and its goods to growing numbers of consumers.[16]

There is some debate about the actual purpose and distribution of trade cards. Nancy Cox suggests that these printed cards were sent to existing customers as a reminder of the shop or were sent along with an order as part of the wrapping. Indeed it is equally possible that they were given out to the passing public, like a flyer. Whichever is the case, the trade cards were offering a codified snap shot of the shop, the shopkeeper and the types of goods on sale. Both informative and suggestive, they offered a visual representation of new material cultures in an accessible form.[17]

Such representations were subject to change, as fashion transformed the expectations and aspirations of consumers. In the 1720s and 1730s, the appealing profusion of goods was portrayed in the cards, for example the trade card of William King (Plate 6.1).

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[15] The John Johnson Collection held at the Bodliean Library, Oxford; the Rothschild collection at Waddesdon Manor; the Heal collection held at the British Museum.; see also discussion in Berg and Clifford (2007) pp. 152-154; Berg, M. and Clifford, H. in North, M. and Omrod, D. (eds)(1998) p. 192.
[16] Ibid. p. 196.

Plate 6.1 Trade card, William King Brazier, London

Source: John Johnson Collection, The Bodleian Library, Oxford. Ref: Trade cards 20 (35). www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/johnson (accessed 17th November 2008).

During the mid eighteenth-century this simplicity was often replaced by a more ornate use of decoration. The addition of cartouches or very ornate frames within a picture created a more complete image of the goods, the shop sign and location details. The frame actively drew the eye around the card itself, encouraging the viewer to take in both the text and the pictures (the message) more effectively.[18]

In the 1770s it was the environment and point of sale which was portrayed by the trade cards. Shopping, by this time, was an acceptable social activity and the card served to remind the customer of its pleasures as well as the tasteful interiors, fashionable fittings and attentiveness of the particular shop keeper. However, as Walsh points out these images were merely an idealised representation of the shop, projecting the expectations of consumers, rather than a picture of the actual space. Often in fact these stylised images were employed by more than one trader, with printers personalising the image through the type setting and wording. (see Figure 4.8) The image still had to be believable and realistic however, otherwise customers would

[17] Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (2007) p. 159.
[18] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 174; Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) pp. 78-80.

be disappointed.[19]

In the 1780s many trade cards reflected the desirability of the classical form, presenting images not directly related to the products for sale or the shop spaces in which they were sold, but connecting the consumer to a broader aesthetic movement. Plate 6.2 is a good example of this, presenting an image of clean lines through the columns and an uncluttered border.

Plate 6.2 Trade card of H Greenwood, Chemist and Druggist, Norwich

Source: Accessed via NOAH online ref: NP00012328
www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk (accessed 17th November 2008).

The phoenix rising from the flames could well have been related to the shop sign used by Greenwood, or it may well have been playing on the symbolism of re-birth and resurrection, ideal for a chemist dealing in patented medicines. The main feature however, is the lack of any obvious suggestion that a shop was being advertised.

The initial cost of this method of advertising was significant, with shopkeepers paying for the services of the engraver, his materials, and the printing costs. Berg and Clifford have noted that these expenses represented a considerable investment on the

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[19] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 184.

part of the retailer, with one copper plate in 1772, costing 15 shillings to produce, with a further shilling and a half for each 100 copies made. Trade cards therefore, formed part of a *conscious* promotional strategy.[20]

However, not all trade cards were flamboyant with detailed engravings, many were kept simple with only the name, address and trade included in the card, much more like modern day business cards in fact. Plates 6.3 and 6.4, are good examples of this

Plate 6.3 Trade card of John Loder, Hatter and Hosier, Norwich
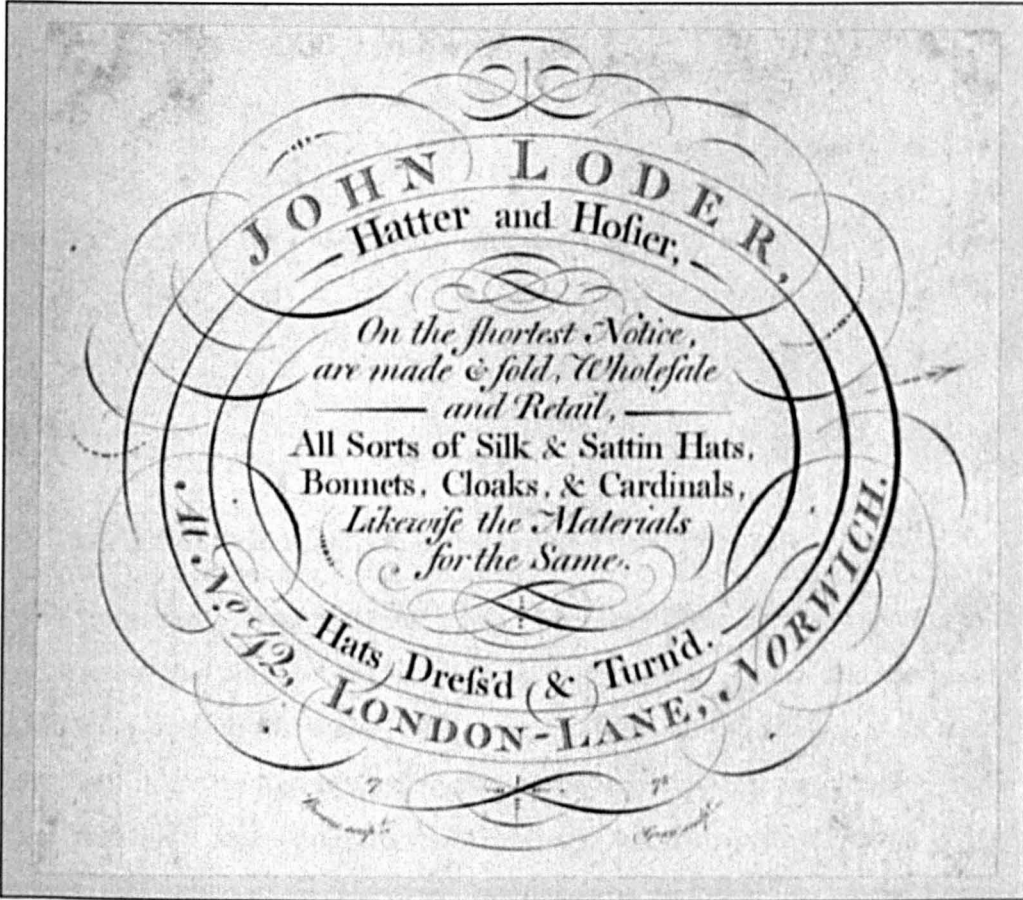
Source: The John Johnson Collection, The Bodleian Library, Oxford. Ref: Trade Cards 13 (69) dated 1775. www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/johnson (accessed 17th November 2008).

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[20] Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (2007) p.149.

Plate 6.4 Trade card of John Procter, Linen Draper, Norwich
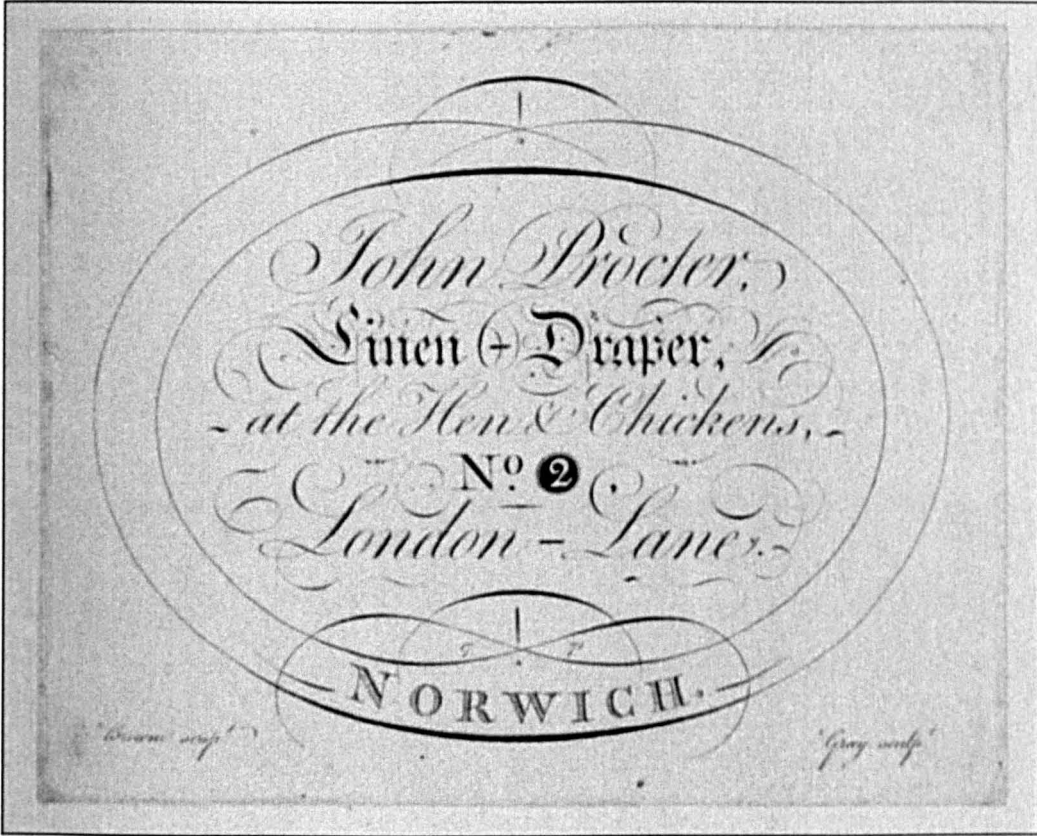
more simplistic approach to trade cards. There are no images, no mention of the shop space itself, and John Procter's card tells us little of the goods and services on offer, other than naming his trade. The message, sent out to previous customers, is still presented in a way that is unoffensive, clean and practical, and possibly highlighting their reliability and straightforward dealings. Alternatively, the cards could simply reflect that the cost of elaborate printing was too high for some Norwich city shopkeepers.

The trade card could evoke a memory of the experience of shopping; placing consumption in the minds of the consumer, from a distance, with a considered mixture of text and image - a combination which went on to be more fully utilised in the nineteenth century as printing technologies developed. By the end of the eighteenth century the trade card was a refined form of advertising, yet even the most unseemly of trades utilised this means of contacting their customers and potential clients (see Plate 6.5).

Plate 6.5 Trade card of James Smith, Muckman, Norwich

JAMES SMITH,

ST. MARGARET'S,

NORWICH,

Whose Progenitors have, for Centuries past, been em-
ployed as

CLOACINA PURIFIERS ;

VULGARLY CALLED

𝔐𝔲𝔠𝔨𝔪𝔢𝔫,

Takes this opportunity, at the Commencement of the
New Century, to return his sincere thanks to his nu-
merous and respectable employers for their distin-
guished Patronage; and begs to inform them, that
his TEAMS, so well known for capital Cattle, Tight
Vehicles, and experienced Drivers, continue their Na-
tional Perambulatory Visits. By his peculiar Nostrums
and Art in his Profession, which he inherits from his
Forefathers, he cleanses that useful Receptacle for Hu-
man Excrement without the least inconvenience to the
Family, or offensive Odours evaporating therefrom.—
He most humbly solicits a continuance of their favors.

N. B. AN APPRENTICE WANTED;

A Premium is expected, as strict adherence will be
paid to his Morals.

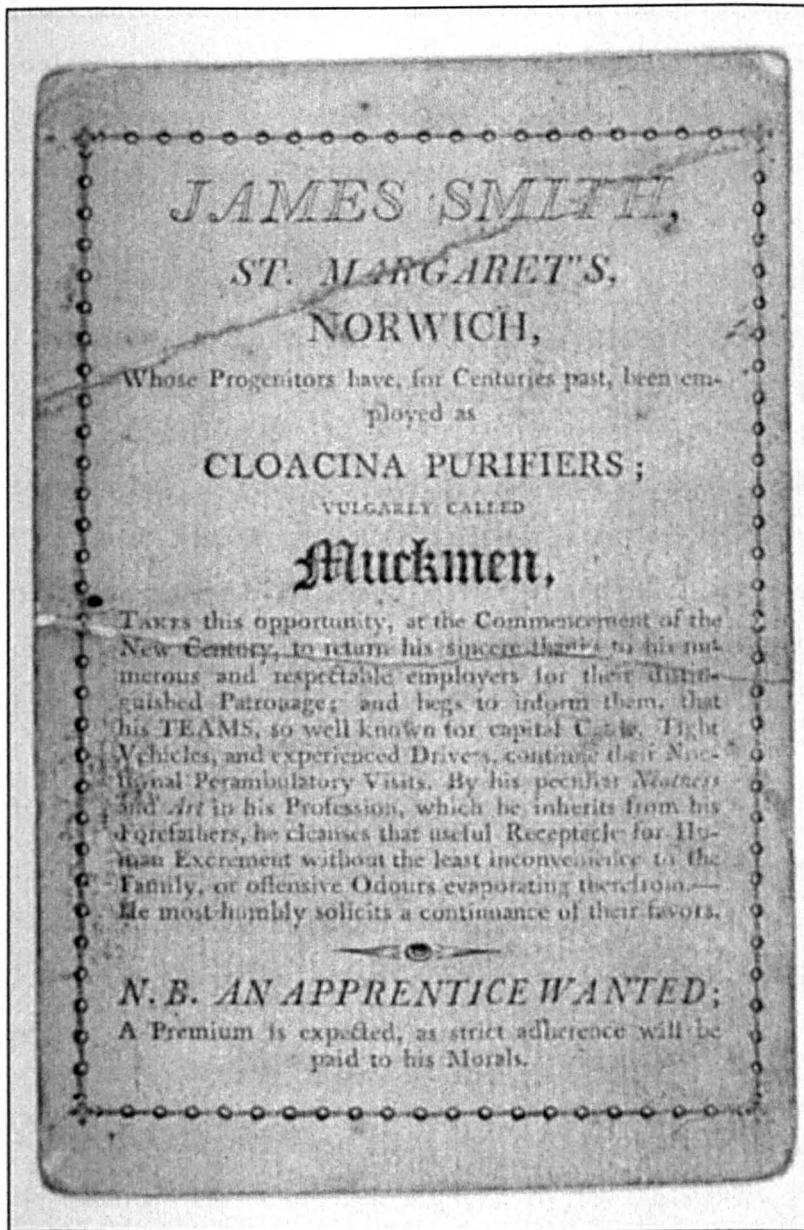Source: The John Johnson Collection, The Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ref: Trade cards 6 (10) dated 1800.
www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/johnson (accessed 17th November 2008).

The trade card was a vital and significant tool for early marketing; it was a means by which retailers, and the engravers responsible for the artwork, created an image of shopkeepers and their shop.[21] The retail identity thus shaped played on consumer desires and expectations, which were expressed as codified messages within the printed images. At the same time, however, these images served to create boundaries to consumer expectations: the 'choice' framework within which desire was moulded

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[21] Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (1998) p. 191.

and around which customers altered their expectations.[22]

For many retailers, though, it is possible that the initial outlay for such promotional tools was prohibitive, even if it was an important and influential, tool. There are too few examples surviving to estimate the numbers of retailers who utilised this method or who might have employed the more stylised pre-prepared option or indeed whether it was limited to the middling-sorts, rather than the less affluent shopkeepers. Research on surviving cards does suggest that upper-middling shopkeepers, selling luxury, fashionable and non-essential goods, were well represented, but, as the Plate 6.5 above suggests, trades of all sorts used the trade card as a marketing strategy.

Despite their success in educating customers about novel goods and their uses, and their obvious artistic relevance, trade cards remained ephemeral and were falling out of use by the end of the century.[23] Perhaps their decline was something to do with the rise in newspaper advertising or perhaps their widespread use meant that the cards no longer held their visual appeal and impact.

If trade cards were a means by which retailers created an image or bolstered an existing reputation, why did some choose to advertise in the increasing numbers of provincial newspapers as the century progressed? Was it just that newspapers offered less immediate outlay, or did advertising in a newspaper set some retailers apart from others? Was the only difference a visual one?

Newspaper advertisements at the end of the eighteenth century conveyed much of the information and symbolism required by the consumers of the time. Language appeared to follow a familiar form and was linked directly to the sales patter of the shopkeeper. Yet, as with other forms of culture, the development of advertising in this form was relatively slow and organic.[24] Unlike the trade cards, whose broad format, combining text and image, changed comparatively little over time, newspaper advertisements show a clear development, from a few short formal notices, to greater numbers of more stylised entries inserted in clearly defined sections of the newspaper.

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[22] See for example Berger, P.L. and Luckman, T. (1966); Bourdieu, P. (1984).

[23] Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (2007) p. 156.

[24] Walsh, C. in Wischermann, C. and Shore, E. (eds) (2000) p. 79.

Ferdinand, writing in 1993, states that the first commercial notice to appear in an English periodical was printed in 1624. Although its appearance and wording did not distinguish it greatly from the more usual public notices, it set the tone for advertisements for both the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[25] The simplicity of these advertisements, often only a couple of lines long, is often the primary reason why some observers consider the eighteenth century as a relatively unimportant period for advertising, since their messages did not convey any sophisticated or recognisably 'modern' marketing technique, they were merely notices to inform the public of such things as a change of address, the arrival of new stock or a change in status. For example this advertisement place by Mrs Markham in 1706:

> This is to give Notice, That Mrs Mary
> Markham, Cork-cutter, that formerly
> liv'd with Mr. Martin Earl, in the Cockey Lane
> is remov'd from thence, and now liveth in St
> Clement's Parish, over-against the Church, in
> Norwich, where you may be furnisht with all Sorts
> of the best of Corks at very reasonable Rates.[26]

Strachan argues, however, that such dismissal 'misjudges the diversity and ingenuity of advertising during this period.'[27] These advertisements were effectively the seedbed of modern advertising and marketing, yet the small number of investigations into the detail of commercial newspaper notices means that a lot of this information is lost. Perhaps even more is missed by the apparent lack of interest in provincial advertising in newspapers across the century. This becomes even more apparent when one remembers the significance of this new form of promotion to contemporary consumers. For the first time, notices were reaching wider audiences, and were not limited to coffee houses. The notices too had a greater reach than the trade card and were open to the reading public, without distinction, provided they could access the information.[28] Style, fashion and information was being spread quickly across the provinces; it was no longer taking months or years to disperse from the metropolis to the provinces, and beyond.[29]

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[25] Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) p. 393.

[26] Norwich Gazette, December 14th – 21st 1706.

[27] Strachan, J. (2007) p. 25.

[28] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) chapter 4.

[29] Berg, M. and Clifford, H. in North, M. and Omrod, D. (eds) (1998) p. 192.

Ferdinand's study focuses on the development of newspaper advertising in Salisbury during the eighteenth century and notes how the number of advertisements placed increased markedly. In the 1730s the annual average for advertisements stood at 296, it was 675 in the 1740s and over 3,300 in 1770. Not only does this show that this media was increasingly favoured by local and regional advertisers, but, according to the author, this increase is also an effective measure of 'developing consumerism'.[30] However, Styles wonders whether the increase was more to do with income generation for the newspaper than forming an organic part of the rising consumer tide.[31] Of course, Ferdinand's study covered the full range of advertisers, ranging from notices for books and quack medicines, to those for real estate to appeals for information on fugitive husbands, wives, prisoners and so on. All ten of Ferdinand's types of advertisements rose in number across the period under study, with the sale of moveable goods, (including retailing), gaining a greater proportion (9% in 1740s – 16% in 1760s) of that total number.[32]

According to Mui and Mui's study, however, 'many established shopkeepers continued to view with scorn the use of newspaper advertisements to attract custom.'[33] Where this assertion stems from is unclear. Perhaps, it is linked to early objections and irritations by serious newspaper readers who said that advertisements took up too much space in the papers.[34] Dr Samuel Johnson, was even more distressed that something as trivial as a bawdy advertisement should be placed near a serious news article regarding the King of Prussia, and that the advertiser should 'endeavour to make himself worth of such association.'[35] Or perhaps, as Walsh suggests, restraint in the use of newspaper advertising was related to the persisting importance of the personal touch, for both the shopkeeper and the consumer.[36] Cox and Dannehl, also note that advertisements were limited by a fear of falsehoods and hyperbole, and that advertising in a public newspaper was simply bad taste.[37]

[30] Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) pp. 397-8.
[31] Styles, J. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) p. 540.
[32] Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) p. 399.
[33] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 234-5; see also Wischermann, C. in Wischermann, C. and Shore, E. (eds) (2000) pp. 1-3.
[34] Harris, M. in Raymond, J. (ed.) (1999) p. 145.
[35] Turner, E.S. (1952) pp. 29-30.
[36] Walsh, C. in Wischermann, C. and Shore, E. (eds) (2000) p. 84.
[37] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 74; Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 234; Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004) note that there was less distaste for advertising in the North-West of England, as there was in London, p. 175.

Although there were bound to be many consumers concerned with such things, it could equally have been that shopkeepers lacked experience in this new medium, so that it was familiarity and commercial need which eventually encouraged retailers to employ this means of promotion.[38]

Mui and Mui's discussion suggests that something happened in the 1770s, 'that encouraged more aggressive sales techniques' in the fashionable wearing apparel trade; with fixed pricing, more overtly commercial text, and increasing numbers of advertisements being part of this newer competitive approach to the consumer. As we have already seen , though fixed pricing in Norwich was visible from at least 1706 and was employed by a variety of traders.[39] This shift towards more aggressive marketing within newspaper advertising was, perhaps, a reaction to the increasing numbers of shops being established. Mui and Mui certainly seemed to identify a geographical distinction in this 'aggression'. Leeds, a town experiencing rapid growth, was faced with intensified competition internally and also externally from the city of Manchester; therefore, its retailers were seen to use more 'aggressive' sales pitch in their adverts than those in York, where the retail sector was expanding fairly slowly.[40]

Consumers were becoming exposed to a greater array of advertisements in the pages of newspapers as the century progressed. The previous obstacles of location and social standing, which prevented access to fashionable goods, were overcome as advertisements reached a far wider audience, democratising retail to some degree.[41] Samuel Stone's advertisement, placed in 1761, is available to all readers of the *Norwich Mercury*, not just those that can afford his wares or who live nearby.

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[38] Nevett, T.R. (1982) p. 15.
[39] Cox, N. (2000) p. 103.
[40] Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 235.

Figure 6.6 Advertisement – Samuel Stone, Norwich 1761

SAMUEL STONE
Mercer and Woollen-Draper

BEGS Leave to inform the Publick that he has open'd a
Shop opposite Mr Maidstone;s, Haberdasher in the London
Lane, where he has laid in an entire Fresh Assortment of Mercery
and Woollen Drapery Goods, which he is determined to sell on the
lowest Terms, and those who please to favour him with their Com
mands, may depend on being served with every Article, as cheap as
any where in Town.

N.B. Funerals compleatly serv'd

Source: *Norwich Mercury*, March 21st 1761.

In addition, retailers from small provincial towns were found to advertise in regional newspapers, alongside the businesses in large centres (ie. Bungay/North Walsham or similar, in the Norwich papers). This created two-way traffic between retailers and consumers, and brought choice to the market at both ends of the urban spectrum. Stobart et al point out how important this integration was in creating a more definite construction of region, with retailers defining themselves within a national framework. They also note how retailers used language in the text to firmly place themselves within urban spaces and retail markets.[42] In the following sections the links to other geographical centres will be discussed further, in relation to the goods themselves. Moreover, it is clear that closer examination of newspaper advertisements can tell us a great deal about the creation of identity. Stobart et al, also investigate the relationship between the advertisements on the page itself, assessing the interaction between rural notices, about poaching for example, and those promoting more urban pursuits, such as the theatre or the shops themselves, and how this reflects on the construction of the rural/urban divide. What is more, a sense of community was fostered by the familiarity displayed in these texts, yet the adverts remained accessible and appealing to consumers unfamiliar with these local signs.[43]

Newspaper advertisements became a virtual extension of the shop and were able to condense the information generated in other promotional forms, (trade cards, bills, word of mouth etc), into a relatively small and mobile space. At the same time the

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[41] See discussion on the mobility of advertisements in Stobart et al. (2007) p. 186.
[42] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 177.
[43] Stobart et al. (2007) pp. 187-8.

language used was able to conjure a mental/virtual image, from memory or experience elsewhere, of the spatial qualities of the shop.[44] The overlying messages remained essentially the same across the century, though the packaging altered in line with fashion and social expectations; the shop was integral to the consumer experience, and choice was becoming essential as consumers were exposed to a variety of options in the pages of newspapers. The following discussion uses newspaper advertisements dating from 1706 to discuss the changing nature of advertising and the promotion of the shop through print.

6.2   Newspaper advertisements in Norwich, c. 1706 – 1783.

This section is based on a survey of four full years of advertisements in Norwich papers during the eighteenth century. The years correspond roughly with the poll books used to inform previous discussions, in order to maintain continuity throughout the project and to connect individuals, trends and sources to build up a fuller picture of retail in Norwich during the century. Those years are 1711, 1737, 1761 and 1783. Unlike Ferdinand's study of Salisbury newspapers and Stobart et al's discussion of advertising space in the Midlands and the North West of England, the research data here is based on retail advertising only.[45] In addition some notices and advertisements outside the years studied will also be included where they can help to inform the discussion, particularly when considering the initial teething problems experienced by printers.

The *Norwich Post* was first printed in November 1701, and by 1707, when there were still very few provincial newspapers in existence in England, Norwich had three of its own. The *Norwich Gazette* began in December 1706 and was published right up until the 1740s, well beyond its early competitors, and offers the first real run of successful provincial newspapers.[46] Ferdinand's work on Salisbury newspapers also highlights the fluctuating fortunes of early provincial publications and shows that in these early years survival was dependent on the number of subscribers, rather than income from

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[44] Stobart et al. (2007) p. 186.

[45] Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993); Stobart et al. (2007) chapter 7; the *Norwich Gazette* and the *Norwich Mercury* can be accessed on microfilm at the Norfolk and Norwich Millenium Library, Norwich.

[46] Fawcett, T. (1972) pp. 363-5.

advertisements.[47]   Yet even the earliest surviving copies of the *Norwich Gazette* show that advertising was an important feature of the paper.

In 1706, when the paper began, advertisements were to be placed at the printing office only. However, by 1707, three sites in the city were taking them in on behalf of the printer.

> You are desired to take Notice, That Advertisement to be put into the TRUE News-paper call'd the NORWICH GAZETTE, are taken in at the three following places in Norwich, namely at the **Printing Office** in Magdalen Street, at Mr George Rose's **Bookseller** in Cockey Lane, and at Mr Cornelius Manley's **Watchmaker**, near the Market-place : and that all others, who pretend to take in Advertisements to be put in this Newspaper, are no better than Cheats and Imposters. [48]

This advertisement tells us a number of things. Firstly, that there was relatively fierce competition between the existing newspapers. The use of the term 'true' here implies, on the one hand, that the other papers were not all that good, less distinguished perhaps, or that news sheets purporting to be the *Norwich Gazette*, were in fact, merely imitations. This competition is highlighted further by a subsequent notice, placed by the printer, assuring the public that he intended to continue with his business, despite the rumours otherwise, stating that it is, 'a forg'd Falshood; and that the Inventor of it is a Person of [as] little Reputation, Sense, and Reason [sic]' and assuring customers that '[P]ersons that have any Dealings shall be treated on such advantageous Terms as they cannot meet with from the others [sic].'[49]

The chosen drop off points for advertisements were higher end traders within the central area of the city, convenient for upper-middling consumers and other retailers, yet discouraging enough to those traders closer to the bottom of the social scale who would probably have dealt directly with the printer's office, if they could afford to advertise. In addition, increased opportunity to place an advertisement indicates that this section of the newspaper was becoming a fixture for the printer and that it had potential to expand. This potential was, however, readily exploited by some 'cheats

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[47] Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993) p. 393.
[48] *Norwich Gazette*, February 8th – 15th 1707.
[49] *Norwich Gazette*, January 11th 1707.

and imposters' who took advantage of the relatively new systems for placing an advertisement which capitalised on the assumed trustworthiness of city traders.

Indeed, the issue of fraud continued in 1707 when an advertisement for a tea and coffee sale, at the shop of an established retailer, was placed in the paper. This later turned out to be false, both in terms of the sale and that the retailer, John Pegnott, knew nothing about it.[50] The printer, in a subsequent notice, issued a disclaimer, stating clearly that, 'it is not my Business to prove that every Advertisement is the Matter of Fact, tis sufficient that they who bring them pay for them'.[51] The discussion continued in the next edition, as a response to accusations that the printer himself was responsible for the 'sham' advertisement. He this vehemently, stating that it,

> was not of my own inventing for sinister Ends, as some do maliciously report; but that it was brought me by one Mr Barns, a one eye'd Man, who (as I am inform'd) belongs to the Stamp-Office, and I knew not but that 'twas Matter of Fact.[52]

This kind of exchange between the printer and the public was not seen again in the later newspapers that were sampled. Perhaps as with the start of any new business the printer had a number of issues to iron out, not least his culpability and responsibility for content, and as a consequence his right to use discretion when printing letters, as this example suggests.

> ALL Letters sent me that reflect upon particular Tradesmen and Parties shall not be answered, my Design being to oblige the City, and not give Offence, however some may misconstrue it. Hen. Cross-grove. [sic][53]

After a series of disclaimers, then, the responsibility for the content of advertisements and their reliability was laid firmly on the shoulders of those placing the advertisements. Commercial life in the early eighteenth century was rooted very much in traditional imperatives and for this reason retailers were particularly sensitive about unfairness and fraud. Reputation was a key factor in business success and any blemish, caused by actual chicanery or through the malice of others, had significant

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[50] *Norwich Gazette*, March 4th-11th 1707.
[51] *Norwich Gazette*, March 12th – 18th 1707.
[52] *Norwich Gazette*, March 15th – 19th 1707.
[53] Ibid.

repercussions. In the brave new world of newspaper advertising, where the shop itself was promoted and represented in print, reputation was actively projected and protected.

The sham advertisement discussed above also draws our attention to the effectiveness of the notice that was placed. The fact that the fraud was discovered and clearly caused something of a storm, suggests that it had some success in drawing in consumers. Taking into consideration the observation by some researchers that retail advertising, in printed form, was thought to be bad taste during the period, the fact remains that the number of advertisements showed a healthy expansion over the century, particularly by the final sample in 1783 (see Table 6.1) The jump between 1761 and 1783 is perhaps indicative of Mui and Mui's assertion that more aggressive marketing became apparent in the 1770s. Equally, however, it could be related to the rise in consumption of novel material goods and fashionable services, described in chapter one of this thesis, and discussed by Ferdinand.[54]

Interestingly, not only was the number of advertisements rising, but the occupational spread of commercial notices was also expanding. From the investigation into occupational change, in chapter 2, we know that specialisation was a feature of the century and that the retail sector in particular was undergoing a period of growth. It is unsurprising then that we see a proliferation of trades choosing to advertise, from 15 in 1711 to 45 in 1783, although this includes producers of goods and those traders offering services, like hairdressers. What is very interesting, when looking at this list, is that many of the additional trades are directly related to luxury goods (coach makers and hairdressers, for example) or to fashion (mantua makers, glass merchants and so on). Others are clearly a result of the specialisation of trades, with merchants selling goods that would previously have been offered by grocers or brewers.[55] Drapers and mercers remained the most likely to advertise, and this was constant across the sample. In 1783, however, hairdressers stood out as the most prolific advertisers, closely followed by upholders and stay-makers. Again the link with fashionable goods and trades is unmistakable.

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[54] Mui, H-C and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 234; Ferdinand, C.Y. in Brewer, J. and Porter, R. (eds) (1993).
[55] See chapter 3.

Table 6.1: Number of individual retailers advertising in each yearly sample.

	1711	1737	1761	1783
Number of Individual Retailers	28	24	57	88

Source: *Norwich Gazette*, 1711; *Norwich Mercury*, 1737, 1761, 1783

Even so, only a small number of the total retail population were seen to advertise in newspapers.[56] In 1711, there were thirteen advertisements across the year for drapers (linen and wool) and mercers placed by four shopkeepers, three of which were based in Norwich. Looking at the data from the 1714 poll book, 15 individual drapers (etc) can be identified within the city, and while the numbers may have varied slightly over the three intervening years, the poll book data offers us an interesting yard stick by which to measure the involvement of retailers in newspaper advertising. It seems that 26% of resident drapers chose to advertise in the newspaper at this time. Similar results occur in 1737 and 1761, both at roughly 25%. Real growth, when using the poll book data, only seems to appear in the latter part of the century, in 1783, when around 40% of drapers used this marketing method.

Table 6.2: Incidence of multiple advertisements by individual retailers

	1711	1737	1761	1783
Incidence of multiple insertions*	10	6	17	8

Source: *Norwich Gazette*, 1711; *Norwich Mercury*, 1737, 1761, 1783
* two or more per annum

In addition to the higher numbers of advertisers, we see a peak and then drop in the number of individual traders making multiple insertions (more than two) into the paper over the course of a year. Many advertisers placed just one or two advertisements, the latter sometimes, but not always being in consecutive weeks in a single year. (see Table 6.2) In 1711, however, the hat-maker John Hayes placed nine identical advertisements in the *Norwich Gazette* (see Figure 6.7), and he continued to place adverts in the newspaper the following year (though the surviving papers do not cover the whole year).

Figure 6.7 Advertisement of John Hayes, Norwich 1711.

☞JOHN HAYES, Hat maker from London, lives
overagainst Mr Coleburne's in the Dove-Lane
in Norwich, where he now makes all Sorts of fine Cloth
Hats, Carolina's, Castors, Beaverets, and Beavers;
Where all Persons may be furnisht with all Sorts of Hats
by Wholesale or Retale, as Good and as Cheap as in
London. He also buys Rebbit-skins and Hare Skins.

Source: *The Norwich Gazette*, 1711

He was not alone in his prolific use of this medium. For example, William Holland, also a hatter placed five advertisements and Mrs Harvey, a shopkeeper, placed four advertisements for her grocery goods. In 1761, six notices were placed by Thomas Bradford, a city stay-maker, one of them appearing on the front page of the newspaper. This was becoming increasingly common as more space within the paper was utilised for commercial notices (see below). However, by 1783 it seems that there were fewer retailers placing multiple advertisements, choosing instead only to place one or two. It is unclear whether this constitutes a pattern in the sense that retailers were altering their promotional strategy, perhaps as a result of commercial conditions or overt competition within the city. Without doing a further examination of the intervening years, particularly between 1761 and 1783, and later, it would be difficult to assess the implications of this finding or its link with similar peaks observed in the use of trade cards in England.[57] This is complicated further by the fact that many of the advertisers were actually based outside the city of Norwich, some 44% of advertisers in 1783, and as such were competitors only in a remote sense to those in the central commercial area identified previously. Yet this might help explain the diminishing numbers of re-inserted adverts.

The geographical location of advertisers has been commented upon in Mui and Mui's study (though not directly in relation to the proportion of advertisers from outside the cities examined) and the value of the broadcast potential of newspapers was noted by Stobart et al.[58] Logically, the combination of a widening geographical and readership appeal might incite shopkeepers and traders located outside the urban centre to place

[56] Cox, N. (2000), chapter 3 written with Claire Walsh, pp. 108-110.
[57] As described by Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (2007).
[58] Stobart et al. (2007) p182.

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advertisements in these key papers. This would expose the city readership to the availability of goods in the country; more importantly, country readers would be more aware of what was available locally to them. Those areas without a dedicated press, like Kings Lynn in Norfolk, or the more rural hinterland of Norwich, valued the opportunity to promote businesses, goods, real estate and social events, such as their assemblies.

What real evidence is there that these notices were effective, either within or without the main city area? There are few, if any, entries in contemporary diaries or letters relating to the promotional efforts made by shopkeepers. There must have been a reason why some shopkeepers maintained a strong marketing presence. The problems associated with this form of advertising appear to have been overcome, certainly by the second half of the century when it was part of the marketing armoury adopted by so many. In 1761, Edmund Nettleship, a haberdasher based on the fashionable Cockey Lane in Norwich, begins his advertisement, 'As it has become a custom to advertise...', signalling that the early taste-related reticence had been overcome and that newspaper advertising was now the norm.[59] Phrases like 'takes this opportunity' at the beginning of the notice, also suggest that the way advertisements were thought about was changing, it had become a more familiar choice for shopkeepers. This may be the case, and as the sham advertisement in 1707 demonstrates, notices were being read and acted upon very early on, but is there any real way of measuring their effectiveness? And that is dependent on the criteria by which we measure success, and for that we really need to understand their purpose.[60] The following section will look more closely at the form of the advertisements, their language and their physical appearance, in order to reflect on the possible motivations of shopkeepers and to consider the way they changed over time.

6.3   Advertising changes in form, function, and success?

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, provincial newspaper advertisements were simple notices, basic in style and presentation, but informative in their content as their authors tentatively entered the world of print based marketing. The overriding purpose

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[59] *Norwich Mercury*, March 21st 1761.

[60] Stobart, J. (2008) p. 311; see also Wischermann, C. in Wischermann, C. and Shore, E. (eds) (2000) Introduction pp. 1-31.

for the early commercial notice was to inform the public of a change of circumstance in order to justify the use of such methods: a move perhaps or a new product. Later advertisements moved away from the simplicity of these early entries and, while making sure that their reasons for advertising were politely explained to the audience, the language had become more sophisticated and directed at consumer needs, desires and expectations.[61] Newspaper advertisements at the end of the eighteenth century employed emotive tactics to make them, and the goods and shops more appealing to the polite customer. This distinction between informative and emotive advertising, the latter being when the goods and services take on a symbolic, personal or social meaning beyond utility, was apparently not seen in advertising before the early twentieth century. [62] Yet I would argue that such appeal was very much a part of advertising in the late eighteenth century. The desire for novel goods and the need to acquire tangible cultural capital at this time is illustrated in the language of these later advertisements. While perhaps less overtly exploitative than today's advertising, eighteenth century advertisers (that is shopkeepers) were ably playing on the link between desire, marketing and sales, in a way that appealed to contemporary consumers.

At first glance, newspaper advertisements from the early 1700s look a bit dull to modern eyes. They are almost indistinguishable from the other entries in the newspaper. Is it possible that something so simple had a positive commercial effect? Plate 6.8, is an excerpt from the Norwich Gazette of 1706 which shows the notices in rather dark italics, looking squashed within a small space on the third page of the paper. Comparing this early one to the spacious setting of the advertisements in the 1783 Norwich Mercury (see Plate 6.9) it is very easy to appreciate the significant visual changes that occurred during the century. The advertisements look formal, uniform in their organisation, with similar visual techniques used throughout. The setting is further formalised by the use of perpendicular lines marking the boundaries of the advertising columns. Stobart et al look closely at the spatial organisation of newspaper adverts, commenting that the juxtaposition of different kinds of commercial notices, (retail, auctions, property to let, notices to creditors etc), create a 'virtual representation of the town' and, certainly in later newspapers, made real the

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[61] Stobart, J. (2008) p. 303; see also Wischermann, C. in Wischermann, C. and Shore, E. (eds) (2000) p. 8.

[62] Leiss et al. (2005) Figure 6.24 on p. 201.

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'manifold spaces of consumption'.[63]

Plate 6.8 An excerpt from the advertising column of *The Norwich Gazette*, 1706.
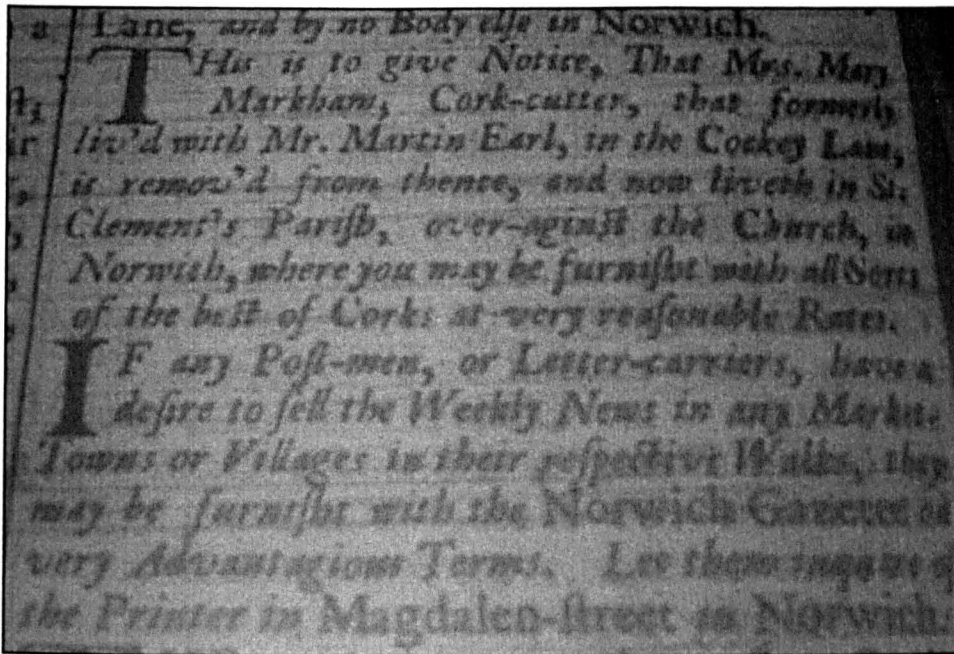
Source: *Norwich Gazette*, December 14th, 1706.

By 1783, advertisements were seen on the front pages of some editions, with the majority of notices often confined to pages two and three in the Norwich Mercury. Only occasionally did they spill onto the back page, which appeared to be reserved for theatre notices, recently published books and health remedies. The earlier papers were smaller in size, with two or three columns rather than the four columns seen in later papers.

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[63] Stobart et al. (2007) pp. 186-7, also the matrix diagram on p. 187.

Plate 6.9   An excerpt from the advertising column of *the Norwich Mercury*, 1783
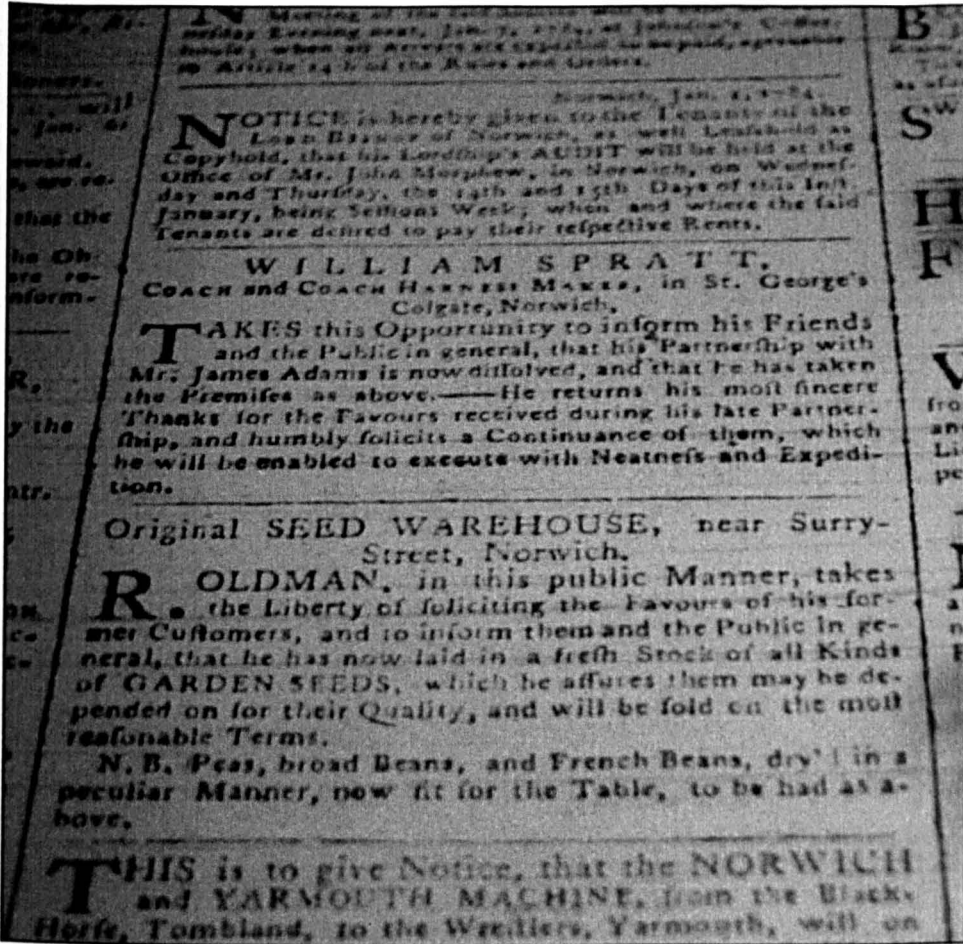
Source: *Norwich Mercury*, December 27th 1783

The story of the developing presentation and layout of advertisements was not one of linear progression. In the 1730s for example, advertisements were distinguished with woodcut images, generally at the beginning of each notice. Often this was related to the shop sign under which the retailer was trading, (see chapter 3 on the geography of advertising), like the 'hand and golden skimmer' representing Major Long who sold hard soap in 1731. He was still selling hard soap in this manner in 1737 (Plate 6.10). On other occasions, they formed a pictorial representation of the service provided, such as carriage or coach services (Plate 6.11) Despite the visual impact of these images, this practice had gone by the 1760s, and brief survey of newspapers from the previous decade suggests that woodcuts were not much used beyond the 1740s.

Plate 6.10 Illustration of Major Long's shop sign, 'Hand and Golden Skimmer'

Source: *Norwich Gazette* January 22nd – 29th 1737.

Plate 6.11 Illustration of 'Coach and Horses' woodcut.

Source: *Norwich Gazette*, May 14th – 21st 1737 (Robert Clements – Carrier).

The earliest surviving advertisements were not marked by pictures or by delineated sections within the newspaper as a whole, but they were not produced without thought. Many of them appealed to consumers looking for good value for money or a bargain. As we saw in chapter 4 in the discussion on fixed prices, John Hoyle was advertising competitively priced cheese as early as 1711.[64] Phrases like, 'good penniworth', 'best price', or 'reasonable rate' were present in many early advertisements, and were often tinged with competitive undertones. The grocer, Thomas Beevor, offered his goods for sale, "as cheap and as good as any man".[65] While this is not a strong competitive statement, avoiding as it does any overt slighting of the moral code between shopkeepers, it tells us that Beevor's shop is as worthy as the next, and will not be beaten on value. Perhaps the moral code, which Defoe outlines in his volume of 1727, was bypassed with careful phrasing in print and

[64] *Norwich Gazette*, January 13th 1711.
[65] *Norwich Gazette*, April 5th 1712.

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possibly even in everyday face-to-face dealings it was being stretched and re-interpreted.[66] It is difficult to say for sure, but as an extension of the shop there is reason to assume that shopkeepers using these expressions in print were also likely to be utilising them on the shop floor. However, inflated claims were commented upon, and if necessary a counter claim was made, as in the example of Tolver, a hosier in Norwich in 1711. (see chapter 5)

Attention was paid to these issues in later advertisements too, with advertisers such as John White, a haberdasher of hats, promising to serve his customers on 'the lowest terms'.[67] And, as we saw earlier, he was far from alone in using this expression. Indeed, this continued to grow as an advertising strategy into the 1780s. In some ways the claims of value, or low prices, appealed very much to the practical consumer who had great experience of choosing goods and getting the best for their money. Shopkeepers however, were aware that consumers were becoming increasingly influenced by fashion, and used advertisements to play on this. References to fashion were most noticeable in the samples taken from 1761 and 1783, yet it was an aspect of a few early adverts too. William Holland, a hat-maker from London, living in the Cathedral Close was keen to emphasise choice and style, announcing that his shop was a place 'where you may have great choice and the latest fashion'.[68]

Such concerns were paramount by 1783, when fashion had become a key factor in many aspects of daily life for the middling and upper classes. Inclusion of the word fashion was no longer a means of standing out from the crowd of other retailers. Rather, it had become an expected part of the conversation, either in person or virtually, through advertisements. In a notice placed by Miss Bell, a mantua-maker in St Stephen's parish, she informed her customers, 'friends and ladies in general', that she is 'just returned from London with the newest fashions'.[69] Similarly, Timothy Money, an upholsterer advertising in 1761, stated that he worked 'after the newest mode now practised in London.'[70] And hairdressers' advertisements, appearing in relatively large numbers, all referred to fashion. A particularly impressive example was placed in 1783 by 'John Ward and Brother' and states that:

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[66] Defoe, D. (1839).

[67] *Norwich Mercury*, March 14th 1761.

[68] *Norwich Gazette* March 24th-31st 1711.

[69] *Norwich Mercury* May 10th 1783.

[70] *Norwich Mercury* April 2nd-9th 1737.

...They have with them very

elegant Flowers, Feathers and Plumes, at remarkable low

Prices, Poudre a la Devonshire, and every Article equally

cheap, to compleat a Lady's Head Dress, in the now most ap-

proved and much admired Fashion.[71]

This example even refers to the Duchess of Devonshire's make up. However, the majority of them referenced fashion more simply, such as Browne's advertisment below:

BROWNE, Surrey Corner, NORWICH

INFORMS the Ladies that he is just returned

From London, with the newest Fashions, and an

Assortment of PERFUMERY, which he sells on the

lowest Terms. ---- He has likewise engaged a capital

Dresser to dress Ladies at his own House,

Dressing, having fitted up a Room for the Purpose.

Ladies waited upon and dressed from 2s 6d to [unclear][72]

Not apparently known by his first name or title, he states that he 'is just returned from London, with the newest Fashions'. His services, specifically enhanced for the assembly season and assizes (August), included perfumery, 'on the lowest Terms' and a dresser, employed by Browne, along with a well appointed fitting room for use by the ladies. Parson Woodforde refers to Browne in 1782 as the 'best frisseur in Norwich.'[73]

The connection between London and fashion was all but ubiquitous. London was the hub of eighteenth century fashion in England and the country elite around Norwich would have used traders and retailers in the capital as well as more locally. Perhaps the Norwich shopkeepers were keen to attract custom from the gentry, but they were also using this connection to attract middling consumers, playing on their desire to be

[71] *Norwich Mercury* August 16th 1783.

[72] *Norwich Mercury* June 14th 1783.

[73] Beresford, J. (1967) p. 182.

linked to the capital in some way.[74] By the end of the century, mentioning London in an advertisement had become a codified short hand for gentility, fashionability and good taste.[75] This was pushed further by an advertisement placed by John Adcock, a stay-maker in Red Lion Lane, who very clearly noted his contacts with London, at St James's, 'and most of the fashionable Places at the Court End of the Town', making it perfectly clear that they were in the very best areas of the metropolis.[76]

For the consumer, a link with the capital, established through the knowledge, expertise and stock of the shopkeeper, was socially very valuable and could accentuate social standing. It was all part of an increasingly accepted socio-cultural framework, where fashion, architecture, consumption and learning, became part of a national movement.[77] In provincial centres, however, consumers were able to pick and choose which elements of this broad cultural framework most suited local sensibilities. Access to the height of fashion though was both desirable and socially necessary.[78]

Retailing however, linked the consumer with other areas of the country, those areas that were heavily involved in the production of various material goods, such as cutlery and silverware from Sheffield and Birmingham, hosiery from Nottingham, cloth from Manchester and other parts of the industrialising North-West. Associations with manufacturers and suppliers illustrated the shopkeepers' skill and business connections, and ultimately improved the reputation of the shop. By advertising the origin of the goods for sale in the shop, the shopkeeper was able to impress upon customers his dedication to selling well-sourced and well made, quality goods. Samuel Clarke's advertisement opens with the origins of the goods on sale, which are many:

> SAMUEL CLARKE, Cutler, at his Shop in the Dove-Lane, Nor
> wich, selleth all Sorts of London, Sheffield, and Birmingham
> Cutlery Wares, viz. as all Sorts of Case, Table, and Pocket Knives and
> Forks: Buckels of all Sorts and newest fashion, in Silver, Pinchbeck's
> Metal, Bath-Metal, or Steel: Necklaces of all Sorts, and newest fashion

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[74] See chapter 5 for discussion on aspiring middling sorts.
[75] Stobart, J. (2008) p. 318.
[76] *Norwich Mercury* March 8th 1783.
[77] Borsay, P. (1989); see also chapter 2.
[78] see Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) chapter 6.

with all Sorts of *Dutch* and *English* Toys: Likewise all Sorts of small *Silver* goods, as *Buttons, Studs, Shirt-Rings, Stock-Buckels,* and *Clasps, Mens Buckels,* and *Women's Snuff Boxes.*.[79]

Cox and Dannehl argue that links with other centres give enhance the cultural meanings of the goods being advertised, with the reputation of these (production) towns already widely known.[80]

It was not just associations with the right kind of goods or suppliers that enhanced the reputation of the shop; customers liked to know the provenance of the shopkeeper as well. Even at the end of the eighteenth century, when consumers were concerned with fashion, a retailer's training and experience was still important. Any links that could be made to former, well-known and respected traders served to augment the reputation of the shop and the shopkeeper. In some instances of course, the provenance of a trader was well known. For example, when a son took over the business of the father it was announced in the form of an advertisement, reassuring customers that business would continue as usual. On other occasions, apprenticeship, whether formal or informal, was highlighted. Thus in 1783, Mary Butter advertised her clear-starching business in the Norwich Mercury, stating that she was for 'Many years an assistant to Mrs Maidstone's, in Post Office court, St Andrews, Norwich.' She also noted, to avoid any ethical issues involved, that Mrs Maidstone was no longer trading.[81] Even more specifically, the names of a previous employer or the master under whom apprenticeships were served, became a part of the advert itself. J Woolford, does this in his 1783 advert (Plate 6.12). In addition he tells his customers that he has taken over the business of a Mr Frearman and will be continuing in the same line having just refreshed the stock. He 'takes this opportunity of requesting the continuence of Mr Frearman's Friends.' Here we have a fabulous example of trading on the reputation of the previous owner of the business as well as the reputation of his former master or employer.

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[79] *Norwich Mercury* April 16th – 23rd 1737.
[80] Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 99.
[81] *Norwich Mercury*, October 25th 1783.

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Plate 6.12 Advertisement headline - J Woolford, 1783
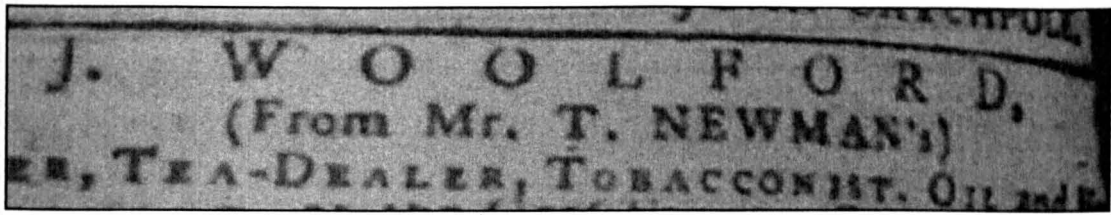
Source: *Norwich Mercury*, November 1st 1783.

By the end of the eighteenth-century, more and more advertisers were addressing the expectations and desires of customers within the printed text. Offering good value for money, well sourced fashionable goods, backed up by a professional and knowledgeable service and so on. They played on the complex associations with traditional retail practice by highlighting their reputations and their trading history, dropping names where appropriate.[82] Yet the messages remained fairly standard over the century; what changed considerably was the language in which these messages were conveyed. New social conventions surrounding service and delivery within the shop itself meant that the advertisements, in many ways, became micro-versions of eloquent and genteel sales patter of the skilled shopkeeper.

Looking closely at some examples from each of the years under examination in the survey, we observe a genuine alteration in the language used in advertisements and a slight shift in emphasis, moving towards the social value of things rather than the genuine, monetary value. Drapers appear in each of the years that were sampled. They represent a significant sector of Norwich's retail community during this century and serve as a means of comparing advertisements over time. Examining their advertisements illustrates very well the changing use of language.

In 1711, Mr John Harvey placed the following advertisement in the Norwich Gazette:

> Mr John Harvey, Merchant, near the Black-boys
> in St Clements, sells all Sorts of Hollands, Ozin-
> brigs, Boslaps, and all other Linnen Drapery Goods by
> Wholesale, as Cheap as any Man can do.[83]

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[82] See also Stobart, J. (2008) p. 314.

This early advertisement states the name of the retailer and the location of his shop. It then focuses on the stock sold and the competitive prices charged. In the 1730s advertisements had developed into detail lists of goods: those in stock, their colour, their texture and the names by which they were known. Thus we read that:

> WILLIAM STEEL, at his Shop on Tomb
> land in Norwich, selleth the following Lin-
> nen Drapery Goods, and at the Lowest Prices; for
> Ready Money only; viz. Wide and Narrow Irish
> Linnen; Coarse and Fine Hollands; Swiss Lin
> nens; Ruffs; Linnens; White and Grey Hes-
> sings; all Sorts of Sheetings; Wide and Narrow
> Diapers; Wide and Narrow Damask; Printed Cot-
> tons; Fine Stockings; Printed Linnen; Striped Cottons
> and Plain Demeties; Cotton and Linnen Checks; Striped Cottons;
> Striped and White fine Flannels; White Callicoes; Coarse and Fine
> Camrbicks; Wide and Narrow Muslins; Printed Handkerchiefs; Choice
> of Scotch Handkerchiefs; Coarse and Fine, Plain and Flower'd [L-]
> With several other Sorts of Goods, that are not here mention'd. N.B.
> No more is asked for any Goods than they really will be sold for.[84]

The basic structure of the announcement remained very similar to that of 1711. Other advertisements are full of information, but remain simple in their construction, providing the consumer with a clear list of goods from which to choose and reassurance that they are offered at a fair price. However, when one compares this advertisement to one printed in 1761, we can see a clear difference in the language and construction employed.

> Samual Stone
> Mercer and Woollen-draper
>
> Begs leave to inform the Publick that he has open'd a
> Shop opposite Mr Maidstone's, Haberdasher in the London
> Lane, where he has laid in an entire Fresh Assortment of Mercery
> and woollen drapery goods, which he is determined to sell on the
> lowest Terms, and those who please to favour him with the Com

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[83] *Norwich Gazette*, January 6th 1711.

mands, may depend on being served with every Article, as cheap as

any where in Town.

N.B. Funerals compleatly serv'd.[85]

Mr Stone points out that he has the latest stock to sell and that he intends to offer his customers the very best value. Note, however, the polite and deferential language that has appeared, in stark contrast to the previous example. He begs leave of the reader and is awaiting their commands, like a servant. His emphasis is no longer on the strength of the variety of his stock; rather he is presenting himself and his shop as a genteel, polite and fashionable establishment. The newspaper advertisement is being offered as an extension to the shop, as an example of what the customer can expect should he favour Mr Stone with a visit.

By 1783, the drapery notices had moved on again and, while the main components of such adverts are still visible, William Fisher has firmly wrapped the key words in polite terms. He has avoided listing goods and has put the customers concerns first. For their reassurance his previous employment is emphasized.

Linen-Drapery

William Fisher

(From Messrs Lemon and George Lewis's)

MOST respectfully informs his Friends and

the Public that he has opened a commodious

Wholesale and Retail Warehouse, in London Lane, Nor-

wich, with an entire new Stock of LINEN DRAPERY,

which he is determined to sell (for present money) under

such Terms as he hopes will give entire Satisfaction.

His Friends that reside in the Country, may depend on

their Commissions being duly and strictly attended to.[86]

Similarly, Joshua Smith used his move to different premises as an opportunity to advertise in the newspaper. He reiterated his close connection to the manufacture of the cloths, explaining that he owned the factories and for this reason was able to keep prices down. Again, though, he was displaying his messages in a polite form, using expected phraseology and deferential terms. He concluded by saying that he was:

[84] *Norwich Mercury*, November 19th-26th 1737.

[85] *Norwich Mercury*, April 4th 1761.

[86] *Norwich Mercury*, May 10th 1783.

> ...most grateful Thanks to those Ladies, Gentlmen and
> others for those distinguishing Favours he has already ex-
> perienced and hopes, by an unremitting Attention to the
> Quality of his Goods, to merit the Continuance of them,
> which will be gratefully acknowledged by their most obe-
> dient humble Servant. JOSHUA SMITH [87]

Perhaps it is possible to suggest that there was something peculiar about drapers that made them concerned with maintaining a polite image and a virtual conversation with potential and existing customers. However, investigation of other trades suggests that this was a universal trend. Here is an example of one that is deferential and utilizes the key phrases which had become part of the vocabulary of consumption.

> John Catchpole
> Peruke maker, Hair cutter & Dresser to Ladies and
> Gentlemen,
> MOST respectfully beg Leave to inform his
> Friends and the Public in general, that he has taken
> the Shop late in Possession of Mr. Edwards, near Mr []
> ... in St Stephen's, Norwich; where such Ladies and
> Gentlemen as will be pleased to honour him with their
> Commands, may be assured of being dressed with Ele-
> gance and Taste , and every Favour conferred will be punc-
> tually attended to, and gratefully acknowledged, by their
> obliged and obedient humble Servant, JOHN CATCHPOLE. [88]

Similarly, John Lovick, a cutler in Norwich, shows how important service is to the continuation of business, and that only satisfied customers will return to the shop. He hoped: 'by a strict Attention to their Commands, and to the Quality of his Goods, to merit their future Continuance and Support.'[89] Many more examples could be given of similar advertisements crossing the boundaries of trade: grocers, drapers, cutlers, upholsterers and many others were all caught up with the need to maintain both a deferential role and polite image.

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[87] *Norwich Mercury*, March 8th 1783.

[88] *Norwich Mercury*, November 15th 1783.

[89] *Norwich Mercury*, March 29th 1783.

Stobart, looked at the occurrence of polite themes and language that appeared in various newspapers from the 1740s to the 1790s. The occurrence of polite phrases, 'seeking favours', 'addressing gentry', 'friends', and 'the public', all showed significant increase in usage in that period.[90] Particularly, he argues that in addressing customers as friends, as was seen in many of the Norwich advertisements, shopkeepers sought to maintain the air of personal contact which had traditionally been such an important part of retailing. This was effectively re-invented in a way that satisfied the expectations of contemporary customers. The language was familiar, but controlled, stylised and part of a prescribed sociability which had become such a considerable influence in domestic interaction.

Having looked at the way that advertisements changed over time, is it possible to work out whether they were successful in their aims? Can we actually define their aims? As Wischermann has noted, the motivation for advertising is unclear, and difficult to discern.[91] In the twenty-first century, competition is so fierce that creating a presence in the commercial world is preferable to not doing so. Church says something very similar about the purpose of retail advertising in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century: advertisers might potentially lose out if they did not insert notices in the newspaper or send out trade cards.[92] The biggest difference, however, between the eighteenth and subsequent centuries was that advertisers were intent on promoting the shop and the business, rather than any particular product or brand. Promoting the shop was the main purpose of advertising. [93] Yet the overall feeling, having investigated the advertisements of middling traders in the city of Norwich, is that shopkeepers were motivated by the potential for increasing or maintaining their business. Advertising appears to have become increasingly necessary to stay in business in a market that was showing signs of a new kind of competition and was beginning to break out of the moral code that had held the sector in a rather static position for years. Some retailers advertised for a number of years, some made only one insertion in the paper; without further, deeper investigation we cannot really tell whether this form of promotion was essential to the continuance of business in the eighteenth century. We do know however, that it was in this century that it became an accepted cultural form.

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[90] Stobart, J. (2008) p. 313.
[91] Wischermann, C. in Wischermann, C. and Shore, E. (eds) (2000)
[92] Church, R. (2000) p. 625.

Advertisements were aimed at existing customers, those who already knew that a shop was worth visiting, reminding them of these past experiences, of the stock and of any new developments. But they were aimed also at new markets, those directly related to expanding luxury provision or created by fashion. These were the markets served by tradesmen like stay-makers, peruke-makers, toymen and watchmakers. Herein lies the newly created competitive market. This competition had to be controlled. It had to fit in with the existing frameworks and needed to attract, rather than alienate, the customer. Shopkeepers had a difficult line to tread, particularly in the late eighteenth century. By using deferential coded language, offering customers the right clues and social incentives, they were able to expand the world of goods and consumer appetite. Rather than reacting to demand, shopkeepers mediated the needs and desires of customers with the practical realities of supply. The adverts of the eighteenth century did use emotive tools to sell goods to consumers, not overtly, but by using language and associations that might only be recognisable to the contemporary consumer.

6.4   Conclusion.

Newspaper advertising in provincial England during the eighteenth century was sophisticated and dynamic, and provided the foundations on which modern marketing now exists. From the early days of the first provincial news sheets, with simple commercial notices, to the rather stylised advertisements placed in newspapers in the late eighteenth century, the potential business returns were clearly understood. Early advertisements were simple, with clear messages based in the traditional retail practices of the previous centuries. As the medium matured and became a familiar part of the press to both consumers and retailers, the advertisements developed into condensed versions of a shopkeeper's patter, with prescribed polite terminology and an adherence to the socio-cultural norms of the time. Fashion, a keyword of the century, was increasingly utilised as a means to promote the shop and its keeper, and the deferential phrases, included in the advertisements of diverse traders, by the end of the century, mediated the boundary between commercial and genteel cultures.

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[93] Stobart, J. (2008).

Whether or not advertising was a success is difficult to assess and depends very much on the initial motivation of the advertiser. The rising numbers of advertisements suggest that print marketing, in a mobile form such as newspapers, must have had some effect on the businesses of the shopkeepers who advertised; particularly those who advertised repeatedly. Whether or not this was a result of developing, or maintaining, a competitive advantage, or the fear of potential consequences if they did not advertise is unclear. What is certain is that the shop was, in many ways, the product being promoted, rather than any single item or brand. Shopkeepers utilised a whole range of tools to promote their shops and to maintain a successful presence in the market, not least 'reputation'. This was enhanced, or disgraced, through the actions of the shopkeeper, the appearance of the shop and the reaction of consumers to the advertising. Newspaper advertisements offered fixed shop retailers the opportunity, at a relatively cheap rate, to control the way their shop was represented, to reach a wider audience and to establish an image of the business in the minds of consumers. In this sense then, such advertising served an important and successful purpose for eighteenth century shopkeepers. It had lasting cultural effects well into the following century and beyond.

Conclusion: The reality of consumption and retail in Eighteenth-Century Norwich.

The research undertaken for this thesis has focussed on one city in provincial England in order to uncover a dynamic context for the exploration of key debates in consumer and retail history. Norwich, the subject of this study, was a city of key national importance at the beginning of the eighteenth-century as a commercial and production centre. Although not rapidly expanding like other urban areas, it remained a dynamic county town, cultural centre, and vital trading hub for the region and beyond, at least until the end of the century.[1] Despite a rich history the city has drawn little interest from retail historians or those interested in provincial consumption. Therefore, Norwich was an ideal subject for a new investigation into the changing nature of material culture and consumption: was change sustained across the whole century or confined to the first half of the century; and how urban categories affected the substance of these changes.

The combination of a key subject and the case study framework adopted has afforded in-depth and detailed insights into a number of key areas, including: the ownership of novel goods, the geographical dispersal of retail and the increasing importance of retail within the economic fabric of the city, for example. It has also enabled a more longitudinal consideration of the suggestion that consumption and retail expanded significantly during the eighteenth-century, and that growth in these two categories was closely connected. Such a long-term view of the evidence encourages a more satisfactory way of measuring the commercial and consumption trends within the city itself. As well as providing data for comparison with other studies, it is able to assess in more detail the existence and maintenance (or not) of the trends under discussion, thus broadening our understanding of events in large provincial cities.[2]

In chapter one the use of probate inventories extended earlier work by Weatherill and Overton et al, and provided evidence that the consumption of novel goods in Norwich increased significantly during the eighteenth-century.[3] This trend was visible at the

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[1] Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) pp. xxv-xxvii.
[2] See chapters 1, 2 and 3.
[3] Weatherill, L. (1988); Overton et al (2004).

beginning of the century and maintained its trajectory right to the end of the century. However, the most notable period of change was the 1730s when items such as window curtains, hot drinks utensils and china products became more visible in the probate data. The Norwich survey built on the findings of these earlier investigations and confirmed that certain novel goods rapidly became part of the domestic material scene. Norwich, however, did not fit neatly into the pattern described by Weatherill, with some items, notably clocks, being fewer in number than seen in the national figures; equally in some cases (for example of silver goods) Norwich was ahead of the national average, closer to the ownership patterns of London. Yet, compared to other 'major towns', Norwich in 1719 had a lower average ownership of many of the novel items highlighted, and again was not easily placed within the hierarchy.[4] Weatherill's analysis uses data up to the year 1725, ending just at the point that consumption of novel goods appeared to take hold in domestic homes in Norwich. This suggests that these consumer changes were not happening at a uniform rate across the country and more importantly that the term 'revolution' is not usefully applied to the changes in ownership patterns.[5] The changes in Norwich's domestic environment are seen to be evolutionary, with a gradual increase and fluctuation in levels of acquisition of the specified goods. Equally the survey confirmed that traditional goods were still a feature of Norwich homes and were utilised alongside fashionable items to produce a material culture that was localised and adapted. The fact that consumers were not removing all traces of older domestic goods suggests that the majority were concerned with complementing existing collections through fashionable consumption, rather than replacing everything with new goods. This would have had a knock on effect for retailers and their wider marketing strategies; they were selling to consumers who were strategic in their consumption and not simply passive participants in a changing world of goods.

Following on from the last point, the use of a varied material culture within domestic spaces was also discussed in this chapter, and a qualitative reading of the probate inventory data prompted a discussion on the creation of domestic space, and the boundaries between private and public. By looking at the appraised goods listed in

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[4] Weatherill, L. (1988) p. 76.

[5] de Vries, J. (2008) p. 122, see also appendix in same volume p. 37.

[7] See Andersson, G. (2006) and discussion in Chapter 1.

each room, it was clear that, rather than utilising decorative goods simply as a means of display for public consumption, many of the homes used novel goods within their more private spaces.[7] By using sets of goods, both old and new, consumers were able to actively construct practical spaces, comfortable spaces, formal spaces, information spaces and so on, which were personalised through the combination of goods found in each. The beauty of looking at the information in probate inventories in this way is that it allows us to build up a picture of the daily life of these objects, where they were situated, how they were used and perhaps more usefully why they were purchased. The effect of placing new objects in established groups may well have been to lift the assemblage in terms of fashion and social meaning, but this might also suggest that consumers were not as active in their pursuit of novelty as the literature suggests. Whether the use of material culture in this way reflected the 'provincial' interpretation of novel goods is unclear, but the results highlight the fluidity of the meanings that lay behind the purchasing process.

Having looked at domestic consumption and the creation of domestic spaces, chapter two went on to investigate the other aspect of material culture: the changing nature of urban spaces and Norwich's involvement in 'urban renaissance'.[8] The provision of new buildings, purpose-built leisure spaces, uniform facades and the improvement of thoroughfares described by Borsay and others, implied that this was something of a national movement. However, Norwich's involvement was not entirely clear cut.[9] As an old city, certain cultural arenas were already in place at the beginning of the century; for example, St Andrew's Hall, which belonged to the city and was regularly the site of cultural and social events, continued to be used even after the construction of fashionable spaces like the new Assembly House in 1754. The theatre, built in 1758, was in addition to the White Swan in the central parish of St Peter Mancroft, which had been home to the Norwich players in the first half of the century, and the Angel in the Market Place, which had been a theatre house since the late seventeenth-century. Indeed, the Chapel Field walk, described in chapter two, was upgraded, with the addition of trees planted in avenues to create a more favourable promenading space.[10] It seems then that changes like those described by Borsay's 'urban

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[8] Borsay, P. (1989); see also papers by McInnes, A. (1988) and Stobart, J. (1998).
[9] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) pp. 216-8.
[10] Dain, A. in Rawcliffe, C. and Wilson, R. (eds) (2004) p. 214.

renaissance', were present in Norwich, particularly in the latter half of the century, and were created in addition to the pre-existing, functional infrastructure. Yet the provision of these purpose-built spaces suggests a perceived inadequacy within the city, which was carefully addressed by the new buildings. On the one hand this illustrates the corporate desire (eventually) to create spaces that would compete with the fashionable spaces in other towns, create civic pride and a sense of urban identity, which could not be instigated without change, and 'improvement'. Equally, the increasing numbers of people, locally, who were taking part in the new cultural pursuits had increased and the new infrastructure was better able to accommodate them, and their changing expectations.

The speed of these changes may well have been hampered by the industrial nature of the city, with the cloth making industry dominating economic and social spheres in all parishes; in turn slowing down the growth in the leisured and luxury sectors which was a key factor in urban renewal[11] Analysis of data from four poll books clearly showed the enormous influence of the cloth industry across the city, yet closer inspection revealed some interesting patterns in its occupational geography. The data captured the shifting nature of the occupational structure of the city and highlighted the fluid nature of these frameworks, with industrial activity intensifying in some areas of the city and shrinking in others. In fact, when compared with the data for the retail and luxury sectors, which also showed intensification over the century, something of Norwich's dual personality was revealed by 1784.

The occupational data uncovered the existence of two very different areas of the city. Cloth manufacturing in the central parishes of the city had decreased notably, and this area had been re-filled by increasing numbers of retailers, luxury traders, and leisured classes. The parishes on the periphery of the city, on the other hand, experienced an intensification of industrial activity. The data thus strongly suggests the existence of a leisured town, similar in size and composition to Shrewsbury at this time and identified by McInnes as a new leisure town, within a larger town whose primary economic activity was manufacturing.[12]

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[11] See Borsay, P. (1989).
[12] McInnes, A. (1988).

This intra-urban differentiation has significant implications for the assumption that the typology of towns is fixed, and that the boundaries between settlement 'types', remained constant. The co-existence of a number of key economic activities suggests that cities like Norwich were able to accommodate change without adversely affecting more traditional activity. Indeed, this is supported by the fact that, although the number of retailers listed in the poll books was increasing, it was doing so quite steadily, with a visible jump between 1734 and 1761 – yet the changes appear to be relatively organic in nature, not displaying the kinds of transformations described for Shrewsbury, or Chester for example.[13]

The occupational geography of Norwich provided an insight into the changing economic nature of the city, but for this particular study it was felt that a more detailed mapping of the retailers would shed some light on key commercial areas within the central parishes. Unlike smaller centres which have been studied hitherto, a city the size of Norwich, at this time, could well have had a number of commercial or retail hubs.[14] The use of the mapping technique, undertaken elsewhere in Europe, and for different periods, seemed an ideal way of visualising the relationship between the retailers and the urban spaces described in chapter two, as well as identifying clusters of shops or particular dispersal patterns.[15] From the poll book data of 1784 it had been possible to narrow down the key areas of the city where traders were based, but the 1783 Norwich trade directory extended this information beyond the official listings to include women retailers and non-freemen. Not only did this information provide evidence that the sector was larger than that suggested by poll book numbers, it also demonstrated that women had an established role in retail at this time. The numbers of women retailers however, was relatively small, but their businesses contributed to the clustering described in chapter 3 (Figure 3.3b).

Figures 3.3a and 3.3b showed clearly the concentration of traders around the city centre, but with particular intensity in three key streets (London Lane, Cockey Lane, Market Place). Drapers and haberdashers formed a significant cluster around Cockey

[13] McInnes, A. (1988); Stobart, J. in Borsay, P. and Proudfoot, L. (2002) p. 174.
[14] See Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) pp. 121-134; Stobart, J. (1998a).
[15] Lesger, C. unpublished paper CHORD conference (2008); van Aert, L. and van Damme, I. in Blondé et al. (2005); Linton, D.L. (1956) used 1787 Directory of Sheffield to map industry, followed recently by Griffith's work on metal workers in Sheffield (2006); Brown, S. (1987); Allen, A. (2006).

Lane and the Market Place, perhaps because new competitive imperatives influenced the location choices made by retailers who wished to keep an eye on the competition and facilitate easy comparison of goods by consumers. Yet this concentration on these central streets, visible once plotted on the plan of the city, was also linked to the leisure infrastructure of the city. These shops were situated along the main leisure route joining the traditional cultural centre of the cathedral precinct with the new purpose-built cultural hub of the assembly house, the theatre, a spruced up chapelfield, and the new gardens just outside the gates at St Stephen's. The thoroughfare essentially created a spatial link between established and novel cultures, thus emphasising the continued importance and the ongoing relationship between the two.

The relationship between the novel/fashionable and the traditional is a theme that can be seen running through the early chapters of the thesis. Although considerable change has been charted through the archival research undertaken, so too has the co-existence of the traditional with the novel developments. Neither is mutually exclusive, and what is interesting is that at no point was there a rapid replacement of the old with the new. Few households opted to replace their possessions with entirely new goods: items were carefully chosen to complement existing belongings and traditional goods were mixed with novel goods to increase their social value. The development of a leisured city centre was still a work in progress in 1784; even though the poll books suggest that the textile industry had decreased in the central parishes of the city, many weavers still produced their material there, despite the concentration of industry in the periphery parishes. The author of the Norwich directory of 1783 was concerned that the city was not improving as quickly as it should have been, the vast majority of the population still being housed within the ancient walls of the city.[16]

The continued relationship between the 'old' and the 'new' within both urban and domestic spaces suggests that even where change was significant, it was not absolute. Modern historians need to consider the co-existence of cultural forms within their analyses of the 'urban renaissance', which implies a sweeping alteration in the urban culture of provincial Britain. Instead, it is more useful to consider the relationship

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[16] Directory map in Chase, W. (1783).

between those elements of culture that were fast moving and fashion related, and those that seem to remain despite changes in fashion. Within the street-scape itself, for example, the contemporary preference might have been for glazed, flat, uniform façades by the end of the century; but in reality such buildings still sat next to traditional, provincial buildings - little effort was made to remove them from this vista. Equally, consumers purchased new domestic goods to *complement* their existing collections, perhaps in an attempt to maximise their social value. The observed alteration in the material landscape was a result of evolutionary change, though much affected by consumer choice, and one that was continually in flux.

Equally important is the need to avoid truncating the period of time under discussion. The effect of trying to pin-point cultural (consumer and retail) change has been to stop thinking about the eighteenth-century as a substantial period of time. At first glance the changes described through urban renewal and the promotion of a more universal urban aesthetic appear to be fairly swift, and the arrival of novel goods is presented as equally so.[17] Yet in reality both are part of a process, which began before the beginning of the eighteenth-century and went on beyond the end of the century, though the trajectory was neither pre-determined nor linear. The growing importance of novelty, (goods, leisure), is not denied, but the research here suggests that it has been amplified by the momentum imposed by modern researchers, who talk of long-term changes as moments in time.

This long-term view is essential to our understanding of the relationship between retail and consumption. Is it possible that changes in retail and consumption are genuinely linked? The logical answer would be that the two are indeed connected, but does this assume that a slow (evolutionary) rise in the consumption of novel goods was linked to an equally slow rise in the provision of comfortable shopping spaces and new retail techniques? Blondé and van Damme have written recently about the disconnected nature of consumption growth and alterations in retail practice; suggesting that consumers engaged with the world of goods without being concerned about the layout of shop space, or the provision of comfortable seating or lighting.[18] It has been noted that there was, in some areas of Britain, a tangible movement towards a more

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[17] See chapter 1.

[18] Blondé, B. and van Damme, I. (2008).

structured shopping environment, with defined spaces and decorative features, constructed to facilitate leisurely shopping and maximise sales potential. Such alterations to the shop fabric have been described as a 'retail revolution', a term which suggests rapid change (as discussed in chapter 4).[19] Historians, having revised earlier suggestions that these changes occurred in the nineteenth-century, showed that fixed pricing, ticketing, cash sales and the use of marketing through a variety of printed media, also became features of retail practice.[20] But how quickly and under what circumstances did these developments take place? Was revolution to be found in Norwich's retail sector? Or did retail show a similar growth trajectory to that of the acquisition of novel goods?

The use of fixed pricing seems an ideal place to start because it occupies the space between traditional retailing and more contemporary methods, and has been used as a measure of 'modernisation'. In 1706 fixed pricing was visible in the retail advertisements placed in the *Norwich Gazette* and was a continuous feature of advertising as the century progressed. The format was apparently familiar to the citizens of Norwich, who expected small grocery goods to carry a fixed tariff. By the end of the century however, the most comprehensive change was in the type of goods seen to carry a fixed price, no longer just small amounts of everyday commodities, but expensive luxury goods. Again this alteration in the use of a particular retail process was not swift enough to be considered a revolution in itself, but the expansion of fixed pricing to include luxury goods is a significant aspect of retail change and is indicative of steady growth in competition within the city centre. It was no longer just those selling daily provisions who had to advertise the price of their goods in order to attract business; those shops selling luxury goods also had to be seen to be offering as good a price as their neighbours if not a better one.

Within the shop itself, recent literature has suggested that retailers were dressing the shop to appeal to the new 'polite' consumers who were increasingly utilising shops as spaces to browse and socialise, as well as to purchase goods.[21] Evidence in Norwich

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Cox, N. (2000), chapter 3, with Claire Walsh; Walsh, C. (2000); Berg, M. and Clifford, H. (2007) see also discussion in chapter 4.

[21] For example Walsh, C. (1995); Stobart, J. and Hann, A. (2004).

suggested that there was certainly a move towards the creation of orderly space, with increasing numbers of counters, drawers, cabinets and so on, yet the expectation that these shop spaces would also be made more appealing with the use of comfortable and fashionable goods was not widely met. Blondé and van Damme suggest that there was also little evidence in Antwerp of the dressing of shops, as described by Walsh, and that this was, in fact, not detrimental to the development of retail. Indeed, there is similarity between Norwich and Antwerp since neither city was expanding as rapidly as their contemporaries, yet both appeared to have a thriving retail and leisure sector. There was clear evidence for the alteration to Norwich's shop spaces and shop fronts, in line with that described elsewhere in England at the time, but without the excessive decorative trappings linked with sociable shopping. Inventories from the late seventeenth-century, for example, feature shop furniture, and in 1734 a large shop, with considerable stock was seen to have a complex collection of drawers, counters, cupboards and shelves. Yet this was not always the case. This is important in that it again challenges the assumption that all provincial shops were undergoing similar changes, at a similar time.

Although there appear to be few moments of 'revolution' or immediate change, it is the cumulative effect of many small changes within the shop which produced the marked alteration in retail spaces between the beginning and the end of the eighteenth-century. Yet there was clearly some value in retaining established elements of retail whilst developing new strategies to generate business, perhaps to make the transition easy for customers, but also to protect businesses from the losses that might transpire should change be too swift. Equally, the shopkeeper had to tread a fine line between traditional and 'modern' roles and practice. Defoe was clear that shopkeepers had to be skilled in all areas of the business, adept at communication, morally sound, with a keen business eye.[22] The shopkeeper, or at least the role of the eighteenth-century shopkeeper, has been elevated in recent years by historians describing their position as 'tastemaker', and as 'conduits' for taste and fashion. In reality, it is difficult to work out from the few records that remain whether this status is warranted - particularly in provincial settings like Norwich.[23] Certainly, the role of the shopkeeper became a

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[22] Defoe, D. (1839).

[23] Edwards, C. (2007) p. 40; Cox, N. and Dannehl, K. (2007) p. 9; Stobart, J. (1998) p. 13; see also Mui, H-C. and Mui, L.H. (1984) p. 148; Hann, A. and Stobart, J. (2005) p. 185.

more defined occupation, enabling exploitation of the growing importance of fashion and the rise of sociable shopping. Indeed, some retailers were so proficient at exploiting these cultural imperatives that they made significant sums of money, rising up the social ladder. However, they were often pilloried for it, never quite fitting into the elite strata and too elevated to mix easily with their contemporaries lower down the social scale. Their pretensions as taste-makers were ridiculed in satirical prints and ballads.

Despite these criticisms, shopkeepers necessarily had to respond to the tastes of the day and they had to find new skills through which to convey a constantly changing and expanding world of goods. In many ways they were the gatekeepers, or conduits, for novel goods, facilitating an understanding of the new material culture. Yet they also presented an already reduced choice of goods to the customers, having made their own primary choices about the items they themselves would stock. Patterns, designs and styles, were chosen from a wide selection and then presented, in a reduced hand-picked form, to the customer. Ideally, a shopkeeper would know his customers and provide a well-chosen assortment of goods that would sell. In this sense then the provincial shopkeeper was a tastemaker, and probably more so for those consumers without access to metropolitan supply networks. But there is little evidence to support the suggestion that provincial shopkeepers were the driving force behind taste or fashion, or that the ultimate role of the consumer in this process was diminished as the century wore on.

In the final chapter the discussion turned to one key form of retail adaptation, the newspaper advertisement, which, although present from the outset, became an important marketing tool in the closing decades of the century. Analysis of the newspapers from four full years across the century highlighted the growing use of this tool as a means of marketing the shop, the business and ultimately the shopkeeper. The focus of the early advertisements was on the provision of information. They often took the form of a notice, letting the customers know about changes in stock and location. By the end of the century, advertisements had taken on an almost emotive tone, highlighting the needs of consumers for the services on offer, as well as assuring consumers, in very deferential language, the best prices and services. These advertisements constituted a move into a far more 'modern' engagement with the

consuming public and were thus illustrative of the broad approach many retailers had to their business, with marketing as part of a wider business strategy. Having said that, the numbers of retailers using this medium as a promotional tool were still relatively small by the end of the century, when compared to the total population of retailers within the city of Norwich itself. A number of advertisers were based outside Norwich and were clearly keen to advertise to as wide a geographical area as possible. There can be little doubt that this was the case for Norwich based retailers too. The newspapers advertisements, however, clearly illustrated the wider cultural changes in taste, fashion and language, and provide very real evidence that retail underwent significant transformation during the century. While this development through time may not always have shown a linear progression, it charts the way retailers negotiated with the novel tools at their disposal.

So how does all this detailed information from the city of Norwich inform the broader arguments regarding the existence of consumer and retail revolutions during this period? Were they in fact related? And what new information has Norwich offered which might assist further studies into the histories of urban life in provincial England at this time?

In order to fully assess whether the putative consumer and retail 'revolutions' were connected in provincial England at this time, it is essential to establish the existence of the events in question. The evidence from the record suggests that consumption patterns underwent considerable change. The population in Norwich appears to have been taking part in the movement away from durable traditional goods towards fashion goods. However, the uptake of the items highlighted by Weatherill, de Vries and others only gained momentum from the 1730s onwards and was a non-uniform and incomplete event. Some novel items were slow to appear while traditional goods, such as pewter or joint-stools, were still found within many homes, even at the end of the century. The alteration in material culture was therefore not revolutionary. Instead it was cumulative, or evolutionary. Samuel Melory, who died in 1773 for example, had four spoons appraised in his little parlour: two silver teaspoons and two pewter spoons. These items were listed alongside 'odd cups and saucers' and a tea chest, in a room

that was full of an assortment of furniture, much of which was described as 'old'.[24] The citizens of Norwich kept elements of the old and mixed them with elements of the new, and as such developed their own interpretation of the world of goods. De Vries' interpretation of the alteration of material culture, arising as a result of changes to the fabric of domestic economics, is supported by the combination of old and new goods seen in Norwich; but only when qualified by the lack of uniformity seen in the inventory evidence. As de Vries notes, the new 'consumption regime was not uniform across the social classes', in Norwich however, both poorer families and the well-off were supplementing fashionable consumption by dipping into those elements that were accessible.[25]

The retail revolution is perhaps more complex in nature, and involves a number of key elements. Firstly, there was a rise in the number of shops in Norwich, centralised by the time the Norwich Directory of 1783 was published, and a key part of the leisure infrastructure. Secondly, the retail spaces, shop facades and retail practices all developed over the course of the century, so that shops and shopping in 1800 was very different from how they were a century earlier. The role of the shopkeeper altered too. Although the primary purpose of the shopkeeper was to make money, the way in which the role was constructed was altered to accommodate wider cultural change. Sociable shopping became more widespread and retailers were working within a more prescribed framework based on often contrived polite social encounters. Yet throughout all of these developments, from one end of the century to the other, there was not a point when traditional retailing practices disappeared to be replaced by the newer methods. In the end it is the cumulative nature of the changes observed in Norwich's records that constitute a rather lengthy revolution in retail. Indeed, the interplay between 'traditional' and 'new' cultural facts, existing as they did within the domestic, retail and urban spheres, is an area that might offer clues to the trajectory of cultural change within provincial towns, and a considerable area for further investigation, within Norwich and beyond.

Therefore, revolution is a poor choice of noun when describing the changes in

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[24] NRO DN/INV 83/67.
[25] de Vries, J. (2008) pp. 20-25.

eighteenth-century consumption and retail patterns. Change was neither swift, nor uniform, yet the long-term combination of a number of key elements (changing shop spaces, furniture, façades, stock, shopping etc.) created a clear and significant shift over the course of the century. It would seem a relatively obvious point to say that the rise in consumption of novel goods was linked to increasing numbers of retailers, particularly of non-essential goods. However, there was only a small increase in the numbers of retailers between 1711 and 1734, and a distinctive rise in the consumption of novel goods from the 1730s onwards, so a temporal link remains elusive. Looking at the trends from a longitudinal perspective reveals a broad link between the two, with the more rapid rise in the acquisition of novel goods by Norwich citizens towards the end of the century and a concomitant expansion of the retail sector. At the same time there were greater changes in the nature of urban spaces (see above), which may well have assisted the expansion of both consumption and retail during the century.

This longitudinal view is facilitated by the case-study methodology, which has been useful in assessing the nature of change: its speed, trajectory and links with other cultural shifts. It has been used to show the dynamic nature of consumption and retail within a given location, and has reduced the number of variables, which often make comparative studies difficult to manage; focusing instead on snapshots of the same city at different points in time. What has emerged is a picture of a city undergoing steady though significant change, so that the city of 1784 was markedly different from the city of 1700, in terms of urban space, retail practice and domestic material culture. This allows for a reassessment of our assumptions about linear change, and about the uniform spread of culture across provincial England. It would be most interesting to look at other large towns and cities which could offer similar data (Bristol in particular) to explore potential common factors in their retail and consumption development.

Equally the method has encouraged a more qualitative interpretation of the data, in looking beyond the numerical analysis of inventories, newspaper advertisements, poll books and so on, to produce a picture of a populated and dynamic city which formed the context for the changes discussed. The study has revealed much about the interaction between types of space (domestic, urban, retail) and the inhabitants of the city. And it is the role of these inhabitants, the individual consumers, that is the

common denominator in the cultural changes outlined; present at the point of articulation between the three areas considered. What actual effect consumers had on the cultural changes in Norwich is difficult to assess given the relatively small amount of empirical data outlining the experience of consumers in Norwich itself. However, it is possible to make some assertions. Firstly, consumers were pro-active actors within the consumption process, despite working within frameworks of limited choice and/or broader systems of taste, they utilised individual choices to pick a selection of novel goods to complement their existing collections. Secondly, this in turn may well have affected the way that retailers operated and developed their retail practice, cautiously creating retail spaces but keen to utilise a broad marketing pallet that included traditional service-oriented selling. Thirdly, the development of urban space, providing consumption of a different kind, was also linked to those individuals who were keen to become part of the fashionable world; yet their continued use of traditional cultural arenas suggests that consumers were not driving the changes displayed by the end of the century. The role of the individual is complex and needs to be explored further by utilising primary sources such as letters, journals, shop books and so on, to connect shoppers to shopkeepers, and to their spaces in order to test the assertion that their role was pivotal in cultural change.
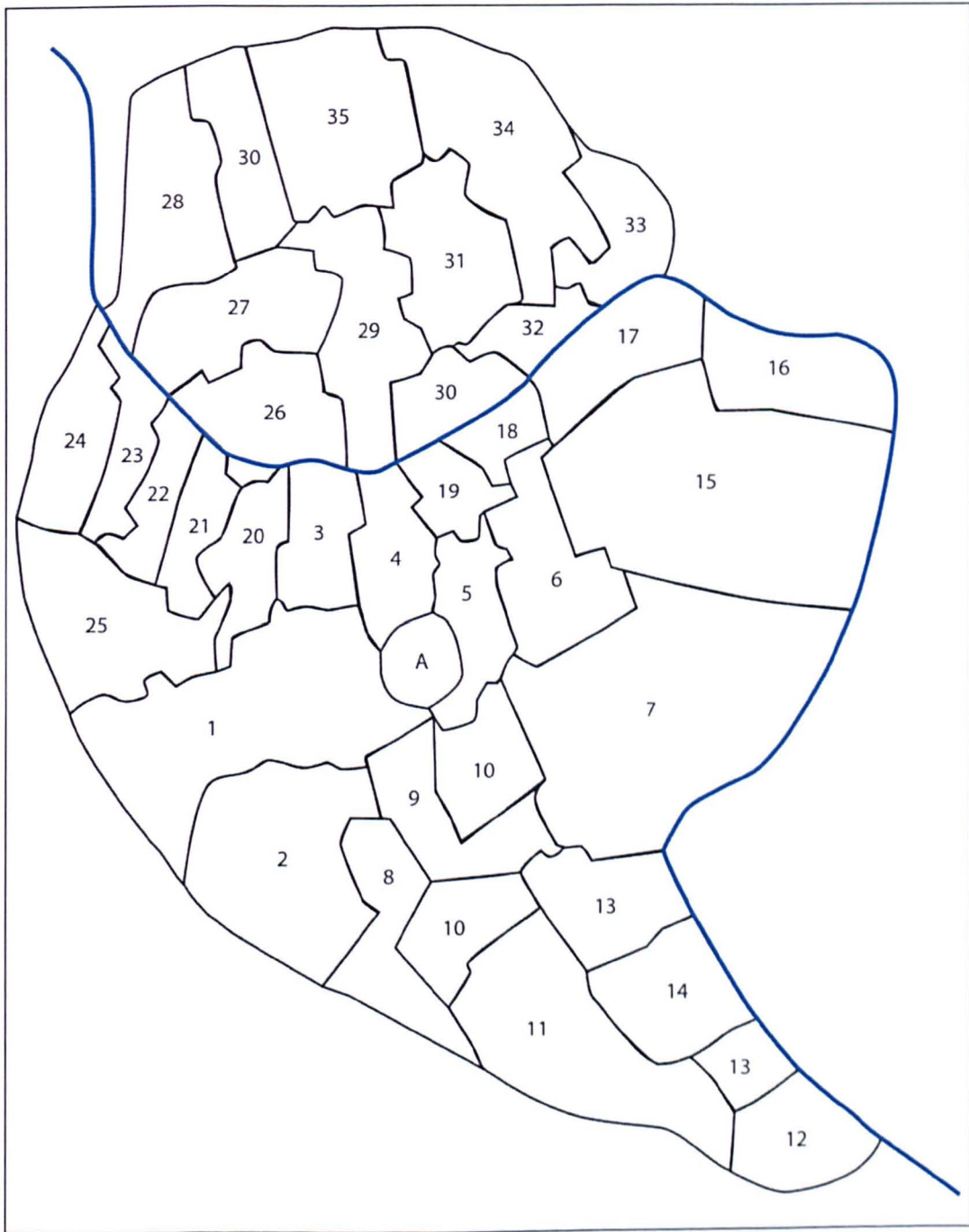
While the detail contained in this thesis has in effect reanimated the streets of eighteenth century Norwich, and given a great deal of insight into the retail and consumption practices of the growing number of shops, it is the combination of the detailed information that allows us to comment on the broader themes of the thesis. There are clear links between the growth in consumption and retail, and a clear alteration in the practices of both, but they were not revolutionary, nor were these changes linked to the same points in time. The case study method however, with data assessed over a period of more than one hundred years, points to the significant changes that occurred in Norwich, transforming the retail and consumption landscape during the course of the long eighteenth-century.

Appendix 1.
Categorisation of occupational titles appearing in the Poll Books (1714, 1734, 1761, 1784) and The Norwich Trade Directory (1783).

Category	Occupation
Building	Carpenter, Joiner, Plumber, Mason, Pump Maker, Bricklayer, Glazier, Thatcher, Tiler, Paver, Nailer, Ship Carpenter, Stone Cutter, Carver, Lath Driver, Sawyer, Lime Burner
Clothing	Tailor, Staymaker, Bodice maker, Hatter, Hat Maker, Collar Maker, Hosier, Milliner, Button maker
City	Town Clerk, Sheriff, Alderman, Mayor, Chamberlain, Sword Bearer
Transport	Waterman, Porter, Keelman, Carter, Carrier
Household	Trunk Maker, Chair Maker, Soap Boiler, Cooper, Sieve Maker, Locksmith, Basketmaker, Glassman, Potter, Brushmaker, Cork Cutter, Wine Cooper, Chandler, Turner
Labour	Labourer
Leather	Cordwainer, Shoemaker (incl. Pattenmaker), Cobler, Glover, Leather Cutter, Currier, Felmonger, Harness maker, Sadler, Tanner
Retail	Merchant, Grocer, Shopkeeper, Linen Draper Woollen Draper, Mercer, Oil Man, Salesman, Haberdasher, Tallow Chandler
Leisure	Esquire, Gent
Luxury	Fan Painter, Goldsmith, Stationer, Bookseller, Sugar Baker, Gunsmith, Printer, Toymaker, Toyman, Gingerbread maker, Cabinet Maker, Clockmaker, Confectioner, Hair Buyer, Watchmaker, Bookbinder, Ivory Turner, Peruke Maker, Typographer, Cutler, Sword Cutler, Silversmith, Instrument Maker, Upholsterer, Seed Merchant, China Merchant, Bell Hanger, Venetian Blind Maker, Engraver
Metal	Blacksmith, Whitesmith, Tinman, Farrier, Brazier, Ironmonger, Pewterer, Plumber, Locksmith, Pin Maker, Pipe Maker, Ribbet Man, Tinplate Worker
Professional	Clerk, Writing master, School Master, Customer House Officer, DDD, MD, Lay Clerk, Organist, Scriviner, Dr of Physick, Mathematician, Excise Man, Physician, Singer, Banker, Attorney, Surgeon, Chiurgeon, Apothecary, City Recorder, City Steward

Category	Occupation
Rural	Cow Keeper, Husbandman, Farmer, Pig Man, Yeoman
Service	Bellman, Barber, Chimney Sweep, Gardener, Muckman, Painter, Sexton, Appraiser, Broker, Knacker, Auctioneer, Gaoler
Textile	Dyer, Hotpresser, Twisterer, Worsted Weaver, Darnick Weaver, Fearnothing Maker, Woolcomber, Comb Maker, Yarn Factor, Sheerman, Starch Maker, Wool Factor, Wool Stapler, Cloth Worker, Cord Maker, Lace Maker, Shearman, Shuttle Maker, Havel and Slea Maker, Rug Weaver, Slea Maker, Throwster, Cordspinner
Victuals	Alehouse Keeper, Baker, Brewer, Butcher, Inn Holder/Keeper, Malster, Oatmeal Maker, Distiller, Fishmonger, Fisherman, Victualler, Vintner, Miller, Pickleman, Publican, Poulterer, Corn Buyer, Meal Man
Miscellaneous	Manufacturer , all entries without occupation/status

Appendix 2. Parish map of Norwich
(Representation only – not to scale)

A Norwich Castle/precincts
1 St Peter Mancroft
2 St Stephen
3 St John Maddermarket
4 St Andrew
5 St Michael at Plea
6 St George Tombland
7 St Peter Parmentergate
8 All Saints
9 St John Timberhill
10 St Michael at Thorn
(split parish)
11 St John Sepulchre
12 St Peter Southgate
13 St Etheldred (split parish)

14 St Julian
15 St Mary in the Marsh
(incl. Cathedral Precincts)
16 St Helen
17 St Martin at Palace
18 St Simon and St Jude
19 St Peter Hungate
20 St Gregory
21 St Laurence
22 St Margaret
23 St Swithin
24 St Benedict
25 St Giles
26 St Michael Coslany
27 St Mary Coslany

28 St Martin at Oak
29 St George Colgate
30 St Clement (split parish)
31 St Saviour
32 St Edmund
33 St James
34 St Paul
35 St Augustine

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BOL 2/162, 740x6 – Mrs Leathes household bills.
BOL 4/127,742x4 – Stevenson manuscript.
FEL 619 – Ann Fellowes notebook.
KNY 912 - 914 - Mary Knyvett Letters.
MC 50/23/5 – Sir Martin Folkes, bill and catalogue from Joshua Long.
MC 50/32/2 – Folkes family accounts.
MC 2375/1 – Diary of Jehosophat Postle.
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