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### **Abstract**

This thesis explores the place of consumer goods in the culturally changing environment of late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Britain. It specifically focuses on the production and consumption of consumer goods in Northumberland, Newcastle and Durham between c. 1680 to 1780. It places the region in a national context and analyses how the diffusion of national taste encouraged the production and consumption of consumer goods in Newcastle, Northumberland and Durham.

Chapter One outlines the historical context, theoretical problems and research questions that frame this thesis. Chapter Two creates an overview of the regional economy. It maps the establishment of consumer industries and discusses their geographical location. Chapter Three analyses the supply side factors that allowed the development of multiple industries. It considers the use of the region's natural raw materials, the importation of raw materials, the role of indigenous landowners and merchant-gentry in the consumer industries, and the movement of skilled craftsmen to the region. Chapter Four focuses on the products manufactured in the local industries. It details the cultural changes that encouraged the creation of new types of consumer goods and analyses the markets these products were destined for. Chapter Five analyses Newcastle's connection to other region's in Britain through the coasting trade. It details the expansion of vessels destined for the Tyne and variety of products entering Newcastle, especially those from London. Chapter Six focuses on retailing, the lynch-pin connecting production and consumption. It traces the chronological growth of retailing and the gradual transition of facilities in the region in response to the availability of consumer goods. Chapter Seven considers the adoption and ownership of new good by the region's middling sorts. Chapter Eight analyses ownership and consumption in a more qualitative manner focusing on individuality, debtors and paupers, and consumption of local goods by indigenous gentry.

Functional Goods and Fancies:  
The Production and Consumption of Consumer Goods in Northumberland,  
Newcastle upon Tyne and Durham c. 1680-1780

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History Department

Submitted to Durham University for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy 2010

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## **Abbreviations**

DRO – Durham Record Office

DUA – Durham University Archive

JCL – John Cookson Letterbook

JCSJ – John Cookson Sales Journal

*NC – Newcastle Courant*

*NJ – Newcastle Journal*

NRO – Northumberland Record Office

TNA – The National Archives

TWA – Tyne and Wear Archive

## **Statement of Copyright**

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

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February 2010, JW

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **Creating and Consuming**

In 1651 William Ellis informed his audience:

‘England’s a perfect World; has Indies too,  
Correct your Maps; Newcastle is Peru’.<sup>1</sup>

The characterisation of the town as a thriving coal producing area generating wealth from the mineral was an apt description in 1651. The industry had been growing gradually from the thirteenth century and the town held and maintained a prominent position in the extraction and trade of coal. This dominant industrial character has remained with the north-east of England throughout its long history. However, much about Newcastle and its surrounding region was changing in cultural, social, and economic arenas during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Despite being generally viewed as ‘the black indies’, by the 1690s Newcastle was described by Celia Fiennes as the place that ‘most resembles London of any place in England’.<sup>2</sup> Historians have identified the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a key period in terms of political, social, and economic change. But how did the north-east fit into this world of increasing regional specialisation, new consumer habits and social mobility? In particular, changes in lifestyle were manifest through the adoption of a range of new goods into the households of all social groups as something of a ‘product revolution’ took place inside and outside of the home.<sup>3</sup> How did this ‘product revolution’ affect Britain’s coal producer, the north-east?

This thesis serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it seeks to bridge the theoretical gap between the concepts of production and consumption by analysing the consumer goods of the new late-seventeenth and eighteenth century culture and economy from both angles. Secondly, it is an examination of the production and consumption of consumer goods specifically in north-east England in the period c. 1680-1780. It essentially focuses on the place of consumer products in the north-east economy and in terms of regional

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<sup>1</sup> W. Ellis, *News from Newcastle* (London, 1651).

<sup>2</sup> C. Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle in the Time of William and Mary* (London, 1888), p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> M. Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2005), p. 7.

demand, and will present a fresh perspective on a region which has had its nineteenth-century heavy industrial character projected back onto its eighteenth-century history. The thesis will allow the north-east to become part of the wider debate on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century cultural change and the connected growth in consumer goods industries and products.

In 1776 Adam Smith announced in his *Wealth of Nations* 'Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer.'<sup>4</sup> Despite Smith's acknowledgement of the explicit connection between the interests of producer and consumer, the areas of supply and demand, production and consumption have been artificially separated by the historian. For years economic historians dominated research on eighteenth-century British economic change, enamoured by the 'industrial revolution', production, and supply. Not until Neil McKendrick's proclamation of an eighteenth century 'consumer revolution' in Britain,<sup>5</sup> did understanding of the eighteenth-century economy begin to move substantially away from production and supply to consider the widespread social, cultural and intellectual changes connected to demand.

Although attracting immediate criticism, McKendrick's research along with contributions from Brewer and Plumb paved the way for detailed research on all aspects of consumption and demand, setting aside the economic concern with production. The new wave of research which followed was largely the arena of social historians who established that rather than simply an industrial revolution, which witnessed increased industry, economic growth, and the production of coal, iron, steel, shipping, textiles, and foodstuffs, there was a mass expansion in consumption and a new world of goods and pleasurable activities that predated and encouraged industrial growth. Research in this area has highlighted unprecedented accumulation of new goods in households, especially in urban areas, increasingly polite manners and sociability which saw the rise of new eating and drinking practices, and the growth of facilities for leisure and sociability such as assemblies and concerts, amongst other changes. In response to this

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<sup>4</sup> A. Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (Everyman's Library Edition, London, 1991), p. 594.

<sup>5</sup> N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J. H. Plumb (eds.) *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (London, 1982), p. 1.

wave of studies the research of some historians known for their work on production, industry and the period of the classic industrial revolution evolved to focus upon the newly recognised issue of consumption. For example, Maxine Berg moved from her *Age of Manufactures* to consider particular issues of luxury and goods imitation, and Mark Overton's study of agriculture developed into an exploration of probate inventories and production and consumption in the household.<sup>6</sup>

Such research has generated a more balanced understanding of eighteenth-century economy and society, but the areas of production and consumption, supply and demand, continued to be considered separately by different types of historian. More recently this gap has been brought to the fore by a number of historians. Maxine Berg wrote in 1998 that:

‘industrialization and consumption have been conceptually separated: the subjects of different types of historian. The Industrial Revolution has been treated by economic historians as a phenomenon affecting the supply of goods; demand has been assumed to follow. Consumerism has been investigated by social historians. The result has been a truncated historiography.’<sup>7</sup>

Jean-Christophe Agnew has argued that the ‘world of goods’ has become detached from the producers that made it.<sup>8</sup> John Brewer likewise highlighted this separation in a workshop paper presented in 2003 when he stated that ‘[a]ny remotely plausible account of consumer society cannot overlook...the complex chains that link production and consumption’ and that a better understanding of ‘the processes which connect forms of production and consumption’ is required.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See M. Berg, *The Age of Manufactures* (London, 1985); Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*; M. Overton, *Agricultural Revolution in England* (Cambridge, 1996); M. Overton, J. Whittle, D. Dean, and A. Hann, *Production and Consumption in English Households, 1600-1750* (London, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> M. Berg, ‘Inventors of the World of Goods’ in K. Bruland and P. K. O’Brien (eds) *From Family Firms to Corporate Capitalism* (Oxford, 1998), p. 21.

<sup>8</sup> J. Agnew, ‘Coming Up for Air: Consumer Culture in Historical Perspective’, in J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds.) *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), p. 30.

<sup>9</sup> J. Brewer ‘The Error of Our Ways: Historians and the Birth of Consumer Society’ (Cultures of Consumption Working Paper Series, September 2003), p. 11, 19.

In light of this acknowledged separation, a number of publications have approached the combined issues of production and consumption using different methodologies. Jan de Vries began by considering both issues in terms of the household, believing the period to be one of 'industrious' rather than merely industrial or consumer revolution. He argued that maximising labour and household production for the market allowed families to purchase more from the market. Mark Overton, Jane Whittle, Darron Dean and Andrew Hann have specifically used probate inventories to explore the production and consumption of households in Kent and Cornwall. They concluded that there was scant evidence of peasant behaviour and that household production was more associated with diversity than increased specialisation in their selected locations. Maxine Berg has expanded her study of luxury to consider the imitation and invention of new 'luxuries', and has viewed them as British versions of imported goods which were popularised throughout the eighteenth century. She rightly concludes: '[c]onsumption needs to be connected with production.'<sup>10</sup>

The movement from study of production and supply to focus on consumption and demand has balanced understanding of the changes taking place in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries initiating the exploration of consumption, cultural and intellectual developments within society. However, interpretation of the north-east of England has remained relatively unaffected by this transition in historical focus. It has been argued that during the late seventeenth century Britain experienced pockets of regional economic growth and specialisation, with historians such as Evans, Nef, Levine and Wrightson emphasising the north-east as an important example of early industrialisation.<sup>11</sup> Such suggestions, when combined with the region's nineteenth and twentieth century prominence as a heavy industrial economy have led to an overwhelming characterisation of the area, in particular Newcastle, as 'the black indies', a dirty industrial landscape, supplying the coal which industrialising Britain was

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<sup>10</sup> J. de Vries, 'Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods: Understanding the Household Economy in Early Modern Europe' in J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds.) *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), pp. 85-132; J. de Vries, 'The Industrial Revolution and the Industrious Revolution', *Journal of Economic History* 54 (1994), pp. 249-270; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 170; M. Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 327.

<sup>11</sup> N. Evans, 'Two Paths to Economic Development: Wales and the North-East of England' in P. Hudson (ed.) *Regions and Industries* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 201-227; J. U. Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry, I* (London, 1932), p. 165; D. Levine and K. Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society* (Oxford, 1991).

beginning to rely upon as it transformed into a mineral-based economy.<sup>12</sup> Only in recent years has the interpretation of the backwards, industrial and uncultured North been seriously questioned. New research focusing on regional social and cultural change has been most prominently presented in Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory's edited collection *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*. A general finding of the collection was that apart from being an isolated region, the north-east did associate with national values and tastes.<sup>13</sup> However, an exploration of the regional economy outside of the important nineteenth century industries of coal, iron and shipping is yet to take place and evaluation of how social and cultural developments were connected to the economy and production has likewise been little considered.<sup>14</sup>

The prominence of coal and heavy industry in the history of the region is in many ways understandable. Contemporary observers were preoccupied with large industries which contributed to the national economy and growth, they therefore noted mainly coal mining, the resultant profits, and the polluting effect the industry had on the landscape of the region, especially on the Tyne. Contemporary commentary of this nature provides little help to those historians wishing to look further than the obvious rapidly growing industries. The existence of glass, pottery, iron, paper, tile, and brick manufactories in the region has been observed by a number of historians, but only a scattering including Francis Buckley, Catherine Ross, E. Thornborrow, Michael Flinn and Joyce Ellis have chosen to study their history in any depth.<sup>15</sup> Studies of coal mining which mention these developing consumer industries only give brief reference to them as spin-offs of mineral mining. Yet according to Ellis by 1812 the glasshouses of the Tyne and Wear were

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<sup>12</sup> E. A. Wrigley, *Continuity, Chance and Change* (Cambridge, 1988).

<sup>13</sup> E. Hughes, *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1952) had been relatively alone in analysis of the social and cultural history of the region during the eighteenth century until a recent growth in research, some of which is presented in H. Berry and J. Gregory, (ed.), *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830* (Aldershot, 2004); H. Berry and J. Gregory, 'Introduction' in H. Berry and J. Gregory (eds.) *Creating and Consuming in North-East England, 1660-1830* (Aldershot, 2004), p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> Joyce Ellis' article 'The 'Black Indies': Economic Development of Newcastle, c. 1700-1840' in R. Colls and B. Lancaster (eds.) *Newcastle upon Tyne* (Chichester, 2001), pp. 1-26 is largely alone in exploration of the north-east economy during the eighteenth century.

<sup>15</sup> F. Buckley, 'Glasshouses on the Wear in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the Society of Glass Technology* 9 (1925), pp. 105-11; F. Buckley, 'Glasshouses on the Tyne in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the Society of Glass Technology* 10 (1926), pp. 26-52; C. Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry on the Rivers Tyne and Wear, 1700-1900' (Unpublished Newcastle University PhD Thesis, 1982); Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies''; E. L. Thornborrow, 'The Rise and Fall of the Glass Industry in South Shields', *South Shields Archaeological and Historical Society* (1992), pp. 11-25; M. Flinn, *Men of Iron* (London, 1962).

producing forty per cent of the national glass output, and commentators of the early nineteenth century highlighted the export of earthenware, bricks, tiles and glass as important on the Tyne, making neglect of these industries unexpected.<sup>16</sup>

In light of the evolution in both national and regional historiographies, a re-evaluation of the north-east economy in terms of production *and* consumption is long overdue. To do this a number of significant questions need to be addressed: centrally, did the north-east participate in the production and consumption of new consumer goods in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and what was the chronology of change? This central question can be broken down into a number of components. Consumer goods and the industries that produced them can be viewed from a number of different angles. How extensive was consumer goods production in north-east England and what resources were available to regional manufacturers? These questions essentially focus on the north-east as a productive region and the possibility that the north-east was a producer of both staple and consumer items. By identifying what market locally manufactured goods were produced for and how extensive and varied goods imported into the region were, we can establish how connected the north-east was to national growth in consumer goods and whether those items produced locally supplemented or supplanted commodities supplied from other areas. What effect did the availability of new consumer items have upon the retailing structure of the region, and essentially, to what extent did households in the region participate in the national adoption of new consumer goods? There is also a strong chronological angle to the analysis of consumer goods in terms of production, consumption and the north-east. Firstly, was growth in consumer industries part of the region's early industrial revolution? Furthermore, did production and consumption, supply of and demand for consumer goods coincide regionally, and indeed nationally?

The questions equate to three overarching motivations. The thesis will assess the place of consumer goods from numerous angles; it will view them as products of both supply and demand. A second motivation is to generate a fuller understanding of the economy and society of the north-east during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by

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<sup>16</sup> Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 25; E. Mackenzie, *An Historical and Descriptive View of the County of Northumberland, and the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle, 1811) mentions the manufacture and export of earthenware, brick, tile and glass from Newcastle.

analysing the new consumer industries and their place in the regional economy. Finally, it will connect the north-east to national cultural changes which not only inspired altered consumption habits, but that also encouraged the establishment of consumer industries in the region to supply it. Hudson has argued that in light of a new 'north/south divide, understanding the interplay between region and nation in historical perspective assumes a renewed relevance and importance.'<sup>17</sup> This thesis intends to explore the north-east as an increasingly integrated region, but will also consider its role in and connection to national change.

Previous study of production and consumption has focused on goods in terms of either luxuries or as aspects of household economy. Jan de Vries and Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann have concentrated on production within the household and how this affected household consumption.<sup>18</sup> At the other extreme Maxine Berg has largely concentrated on understanding the adoption of luxury and exotic items in the new world of goods.<sup>19</sup> However, the reality of the world of goods was more complex. New necessities, decencies and novelties existed at all levels of society. They were not all fancies imported into Britain or items produced as part of a household economy. Many were also functional goods or commodities gradually rebranded as comforts. This thesis will concentrate in particular on the production, distribution and consumption of the glass, paper, pottery, brick, and tile manufactories and their subsidiary trades with some mention of the soap, salt, iron, and sugar industries in the region. These industries have been chosen very particularly in an attempt to plug the gap in recent studies of production and consumption. The industries and products analysed in this thesis were not part of a small scale but lucrative household employment, they were not proto-industries, or luxury goods; they represent production beyond the household, manufactories in their own right, detached from the production of the household economy.

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<sup>17</sup> P. Hudson, 'The Regional Perspective' in P. Hudson (ed.) *Regions and Industries* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 38.

<sup>18</sup> Vries, 'The Industrial Revolution and the Industrious Revolution'; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*.

<sup>19</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*; M. Berg, 'Introduction' in M. Berg and E. Eger (eds.) *Luxury in the Eighteenth-Century* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 1-6; M. Berg, 'The Rise and Fall of the Luxury Debates' in M. Berg and E. Eger (eds.) *Luxury in the Eighteenth-Century* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 7-27; M. Berg, 'From Imitation to Invention: Creating Commodities in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Economic History Review* 55 (2002), pp. 1-30.

There are a number of reasons for selecting the north-east as the focal point of this study. The image of the region as a nineteenth century heavy industrial economy which has been projected back into the eighteenth century makes the area ripe for re-evaluation. This reassessment is even more significant in light of the commentary of historians such as Weatherill, Wrigley and Hughes who have emphasised the trade connections between the north-east and London which saw the north send coal to the capital in return for luxury goods, assuming that the region had no solid production base in consumer goods.<sup>20</sup> The research is compounded by newer studies that hint at a section of Newcastle society that were increasingly polite, commercial, and attuned to national tastes.

But what is meant by ‘the north-east’ region in this study? As Green and Pollard have reminded us, ‘[r]egions are slippery, their definitions varying with perspective and subject’.<sup>21</sup> Alan Everitt has pointed out that ‘the North-East’, just like ‘Tyneside’ and ‘Merseyside’, ‘the West Midlands’ and ‘Home Counties’, are all expressions with only a short history, making them somewhat inappropriate as terms used to describe regions in the early modern period.<sup>22</sup> As Berry and Gregory have highlighted, for some contemporary southerners there was an undifferentiated ‘North’, a belief perhaps encouraged by Newcastle’s status as the only major urban centre between York and Edinburgh. But in reality there was certainly a distinction between the land to the east and west of the Pennines.<sup>23</sup> In fact it is evident that local contemporaries, especially gentry and merchants involved in trade, were keenly aware of county and administrative boundaries within the north-east region.

The immediate Tyne valley region whilst supporting an increasingly urbanised, commercial and industrial population represents too limited an area to understand the full extent of consumer industries in the region. Whilst Newcastle will be the centre of

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<sup>20</sup> E. A. Wrigley, *People, Cities and Wealth* (New York, 1987), pp. 147-148; L. Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760* (London, 1988), p. 51; Hughes, *North Country Life*, pp. 28-58.

<sup>21</sup> A. Green and A. J. Pollard, ‘Introduction: Identifying Regions’ in A. Green and A. J. Pollard (eds.) *Regional Identities in North-East England, 1300-2000* (Woodbridge, 2009), p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> A. Everitt, ‘Country, County and Town: Patterns of Regional Evolution in England’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 29 (1979), p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> Berry and Gregory, ‘Introduction’, p. 6.

much analysis throughout this thesis, Joyce Ellis has suggested that detaching eighteenth-century provincial towns from their hinterlands would be unhelpful,<sup>24</sup> especially for understanding of the north-east. There existed a close connection between town and countryside which made Newcastle regionally and economically important.<sup>25</sup> The geographical area of the north-east 'region' used in this thesis lay between the Tweed in the North, the Tees in the South, with the western boundary outlined by the Pennines. Essentially the area encompassed the ancient counties of Northumberland and Durham including Newcastle and the Tyne at the centre.<sup>26</sup> At some points in the thesis it is important to make the distinction between the counties or the economies of the Tyne and the Wear, therefore for the duration of the thesis geographical areas will be referred to as Northumberland, Durham, the Tyne and the Wear with the acknowledgment that contemporaries would not have recognised the region which in modern Britain is referred to as the north-east.<sup>27</sup> This geographical area has already been identified by Charles Phythian-Adams in his study of cultural provinces as the province of the 'North ('Scandinavian') Sea' (shown on Map 1). This area represents one of the fourteen distinct English cultural provinces which were, 'generally focused arenas of influence and regional interaction'. The 'North ('Scandinavian') Sea' in particular was linked by a 'broad underlying axis of activity' centring on the Tyne and its tributaries between the Tees and Tweed.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> J. Ellis, 'Regional and County Centres 1700-1840' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of England, II, 1560-1840* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 684; Berry and Gregory, 'Introduction', p. 5.

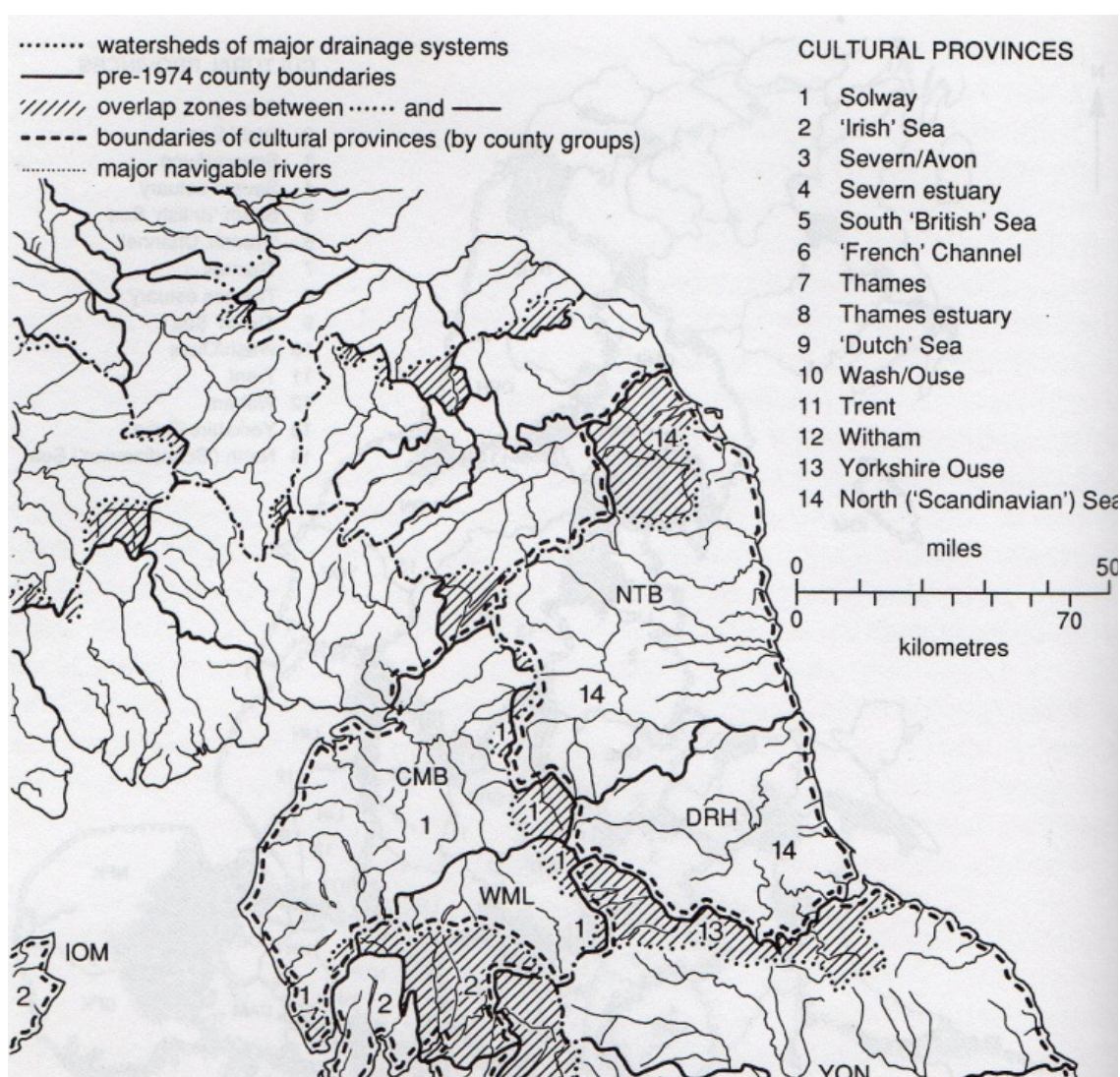
<sup>25</sup> Everitt, 'Country, County and Town', pp. 79-108.

<sup>26</sup> For details of an emerging Tyne-focused region between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries see K. Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity: the Re-Making of the North East, 1500-1760' in R. Colls (ed.) *Northumbria: History and Identity 547-2000* (Chichester, 2007), pp. 126-150.

<sup>27</sup> Green and Pollard, 'Introduction: Identifying Regions', pp. 1-25.

<sup>28</sup> C. Phythian-Adams, *Societies, Cultures and Kinship, 1580-1850* (London, 1992), p. 14; Berry and Gregory 'Introduction', p. 5, 10.

**Map 1: 'North ('Scandinavian') Sea'**



Source: reproduced from Phythian-Adams, *Societies, Cultures and Kinship*, p. 14. The north-east region is the area marked 14.

A focused regional case study of this nature can contribute to our understanding of the individual place. Pat Hudson has drawn attention to the benefits of and need for regional perspectives on economic and industrial change, whilst Jon Stobart has urged that further study of the 'processes of specialisation and integration' will help to uncover the region as 'the fundamental geographical and functional unit of industrialisation'.<sup>29</sup> As a case study the research presented seeks to link Northumberland and Durham to national culture and changes over the period, in addition to enhancing our knowledge of the economic history of the specific region. The study period runs from approximately 1680

<sup>29</sup> R. K. Yin, *Case Study Research* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed (Sage, London, 1994), p. 2; Hudson, 'The Regional Perspective', pp. 5-38; J. Stobart, *The First Industrial Region* (Manchester, 2004), p. 225.

to 1780 encompassing the main period claimed to exhibit signs of early industrial growth and generally acknowledged as the point at which changes in consumption began. The three motivations of this thesis: to further understand the connections between production and consumption; to consider the place of consumer goods in Northumberland and Durham, and to analyse the relationship between cultural change and consumer goods, provide a complex set of questions that cannot be easily addressed with one source. This is an empirically based study in which both quantitative and qualitative original source material is used extensively to answer the research question outlined above, and a method of triangulation of sources is employed to assist with the generation of a more accurate interpretation.<sup>30</sup> With few publications directed at exploring both production and consumption there are many different ways to approach the theoretical gap. Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann have used probate inventories as a central source to address questions of production and consumption in Kent and Cornwall. Whilst this would be possible for Northumberland and Durham, probate inventories have limitations which would inhibit a full understanding of the new industries developing, their produce, and their position in the regional market. For example, probate inventories would not provide a unique insight into the production of consumer goods outside of the household. However, the introduction of other sources can be revealing on this issue.

There is a wealth of sources available to the historian of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, especially for Northumberland and Durham, and each can offer a unique insight into production and consumption during that period. In response to this rich evidence base a variety of sources have been used to address the research questions set. Those sources particularly useful for their detailing of industry, such as family industry and estate accounts, public town histories, trade directories, travellers accounts, and provincial newspapers have been used to draw together an image of consumer goods production in the region. These documents, in addition to some private accounts, have been useful in detailing the products of the new industries and the development of retailing in the region. Port books for the Tyne port have been utilised exclusively to gather data on commodities entering Newcastle from around the country. An extensive probate inventory survey generated data on ownership levels. This has been used

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<sup>30</sup> N. K. Denzin, *The Research Act in Sociology* (Butterworths, London, 1970), p. 310.

alongside analysis of more scarce distraint cases and pauper inventories, and extensively available gentry household accounts and inventories, to analyse ownership and consumption of consumer goods.

There are inherent problems with the majority of historical sources used in the production of this thesis. Private estate and manufactory accounts are clearly individual to the family or industry and are not necessarily representative of every manufactory. Port books and probate inventories are embodied with limitations which restrict their reliability (although they may give the appearance of comprehensive listings), and provincial newspapers have a tendency to utilisation by more commercially minded manufactory owners and retailers. Most of the sources drawn on have limitations which are discussed in more detail in appropriate chapters throughout the thesis. However by combining these rich resources a more comprehensive interpretation and multifaceted view of consumer goods, production and consumption can be generated. The sources used were chosen for their ability to provide evidence for the questions being asked, and therefore a wide range of documents have been consulted.

Despite the wide variety of sources consulted in the research of this thesis, there are a number of questions that cannot be answered. It is impossible to be exact concerning the number of manufactories producing goods locally (although we can be quite accurate) and the quantities of goods produced in these industries. The high rate of business failure during the period under discussion means that it is possible that a short-lived manufactory may have gone unnoticed by all sources. Likewise, the family-based nature of many of these manufactories and varying survival of industry records mean that few extensive production figures survive. Whilst we can construct an image of goods imported into Northumberland and Durham, it is by no means clear that these were the only commodities transferred into the areas (there may have been extensive inland trade) or that these goods remained in the local market, they may have been re-exported or distributed by hawkers to nearby counties. Ultimately only tentative suggestions can be made on the consumption of locally produced items.

The range of sources used in this thesis reflects the many different angles from which the history of the region and the connections between production and consumption can be studied. Due to the focused nature of the thesis, dealing with specific developing

industries which connected the region to the appearance of consumer goods nationally, their place within the changing cultural environment of the period, and retail and consumption of such items, many sources are not utilised as comprehensively as would ordinarily be desirable in a study of an individual industry, its products and consumption. Each chapter could justifiably equate to an entire study on its own. However, the overarching intention of this thesis is not only to look at industry in Northumberland and Durham outside of the areas of coal mining and heavy industry, but to connect consumer goods to both the processes of production and consumption. To track this logical progression within the limitations of a doctoral thesis inevitably means using evidence selectively to approach particular questions associated with the region's position.

Each chapter seeks to build up a logical image of the transition from production to consumption in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Northumberland and Durham. Mapping of the consumer industries of Northumberland and Durham, and the extent of their growth, is followed by an exploration of the raw material and manpower benefits that enabled such a variety of industries to develop in Chapters Two and Three. Chapter Three essentially considers the supply side benefits that encouraged the development of consumer goods industries. Chapter Four focuses on analysing the products created by these industries and whether they were largely destined for the national market as coal was, or if they were actually a form of import substitution and were destined for the local market. It will focus on where the demand for these items lay. Chapter Five will examine the region's connection to national trade by analysing the composition of trade entering Newcastle. Chapter Six focuses on the literal process which connects production and consumption by tentatively exploring the development of retailing and distribution networks in Northumberland and Durham. Chapters Seven and Eight focus on the final link in the process by considering the place of consumer items within the household in terms of ownership, and finally consumption of locally produced items. The thesis will essentially seek to assert that rather than being an economy based solely on production of coal, Northumberland and Durham supported multiple industries and fully participated in the growth and consumption of new consumer goods that were adopted nationally.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Nature of the Northumberland and Durham Economy: Mapping Industry**

#### ***Introduction***

According to D. J. Rowe writing in 1976, '[w]ith the exception of salt (in any event in decline from 1750) and glass (not of major importance before 1800) the North-East developed no base in consumer goods.'<sup>31</sup> Rowe's assessment of economic development in the region was based solidly on the expansion of coal, steel, shipbuilding, and lead mining; the extractive and heavy industries that have so fascinated historians concerned with the process of industrialisation. Despite this appraisal, both John Nef and Michael Flinn connected the use of coal to a long list of consumer and manufacturing industries developing during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including glass, pottery, brick, dye-stuffs, drying malt, brewing, lime, salt, soap, sugar refining, copperas, alum, and metal works. Many of these can be identified in Northumberland and County Durham during the same period.<sup>32</sup>

Why these industries have not been clearly traced in Northumberland and Durham is, at the root, a result of contemporary obsession with economic and commercial success stories and regional contributions to the national economy, a primary concern of Daniel Defoe in the early eighteenth century.<sup>33</sup> The size of the regional coal mining industry and its importance in the national economy resulted in its overshadowing most other industries. The only industries that travellers to the area made any note of in addition to coal mining were salt boiling, with its long history and very visible pollution, and window glass manufacturing, due to its acknowledged national importance. It is clear from volumes such as Norman McCord's *North East England: an Economic and Social History* published in 1978 that there were other industries developing alongside that of coal mining; industries visible enough to be of note to historians.<sup>34</sup> However, McCord's work on the region focuses on the classical period of industrial revolution post-1760, giving only brief mention of the importance of glass, pottery, soap, paper, and lead

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<sup>31</sup> D. J. Rowe, 'The Chronology of the Onset of Industrialisation in North-East England' in *Teaching of Regional and Local History in Universities and Colleges* (Nottingham University, 1976), p. 64.

<sup>32</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry, I*, pp. 180-192; M. W. Flinn, *The History of the British Coal Industry, II, 1700-1830* (Oxford, 1984), p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 1; D. Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman, I*, 1727 (reprinted New York, 1969), pp. 324-325.

<sup>34</sup> N. McCord, *North East England* (London, 1979), pp. 42-48.

production in the region's earlier history. The difficulty with tracing these industries has been their relatively small size compared to coal mining, and an overarching interest in the region as a case of classical industrial development, albeit with a slightly earlier beginning than other areas. For those historians eager to project a tale of increasing regional economic specialisation during the eighteenth century, Northumberland and Durham are the perfect example of a geographical area specialised in coal production. These factors, coupled with the consumer industries absence from contemporary assessments of the region, have marginalised them.

Despite emphasis on the importance of coal mining, and Northumberland and Durham as economic backwaters, both the agricultural sector and new consumer industries were transforming during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Coal mining may have been the region's specialist industry in terms of output and profit, but in terms of labour, agriculture still dominated. Adrian Green has indicated that despite the growth of mining large parts of the seventeenth century population were still dependent upon agricultural activities, particularly in County Durham.<sup>35</sup> This chapter is dedicated to an overview of the Northumberland and Durham economy outside of the coal mining industry. It begins with a summary of agriculture in order to indicate the industrial and agricultural balance of the economy, and is followed by an assessment of the developing manufacturing industries, their establishment and geographical location, and finally discussion of the locations central to these industries, including the Tyne, Wear, and the wider Northumberland and Durham areas.

The intention is not to question the importance of coal mining. Northumberland and Durham combined were one of the most important coal producing regions in the country, indeed in Europe, throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and into the eighteenth century. Newcastle coals were the choice of the country's hearths and industries, with demand from London encouraging local extraction from the sixteenth century. Various estimates suggest differing rates of growth, but all contribute to a general image of expansion in mineral extraction. Coal production apparently increased ten-fold between

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<sup>35</sup> A. Green, 'County Durham at the Restoration: a Social and Economic Case Study' in E. Parkinson (ed.) *County Durham Hearth Tax Assessment, Lady Day 1666* (London, 2006), p. xxxvi.

the mid-sixteenth and late seventeenth century.<sup>36</sup> According to Nef the estimated annual shipments of coal from Northumberland and Durham for the period 1681-90 were 800,000 tons, whilst Joyce Ellis states that coal exports from the Tyne rose from around 413,000 tons in the 1660s to 777,000 tons in the 1750s.<sup>37</sup> In addition to this export trade the local coal pits had considerable land-sale, which included domestic use in household hearths and use in local industries. However a larger percentage of the population were still employed in agriculture. The intention of this chapter, indeed this work as a whole, is to set aside coal mining for a more detailed discussion of other industries.

Assessing the size of these developing consumer industries is not always straightforward, especially given their marginal importance in the regional economy as viewed by contemporaries. Measurement of size in terms of output is barely possible. Lorna Weatherill has highlighted the difficulties involved with attempting to quantify pottery output in the early modern period as being a result of the lack of contemporary evidence of the actual output of different individual potteries.<sup>38</sup> The analysis of other developing industries such as glass, sugar, paper, brick, tile, and soap suffers from a similar lack of evidence. Initially various sources were consulted in an attempt to assess the extent of identified consumer industries in terms of occupation. Local parish registers were tested for analysis of occupational data, however recording of occupation in these registers throughout the period was variable, meaning no coherent longitudinal data could be generated for a substantial geographical area of the region. Probate records were also tested for their occupational data, but as these records exist in substantially declining numbers from 1700 onwards, they could not be relied upon to provide sufficient occupational data from the majority of the period under discussion. Another source approached was the apprenticeship records held in the National Archives in London, which appeared in response to an act of parliament in Queen Anne's reign. The act ruled that from 1 May 1710 a tax was to be paid on all apprenticeship indentures, with certain exception. The records appear to be important for understanding of the development of trades and occupations, but it is the exceptions in paid apprenticeship indentures that severely limit their usefulness. Indentures with

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<sup>36</sup> B. Dietz, 'The North-East Coal Trade 1550-1750: Measures, Markets and the Metropolis', *Northern History* 22 (1986), p. 291; Green, 'County Durham at the Restoration', p. xxxiii.

<sup>37</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, I, p. 36; Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 5.

<sup>38</sup> L. Weatherill, 'The Growth of the Pottery Industry in England, 1660-1815', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 17 (1983), p. 20.

fees less than a shilling were not recorded, nor were those arranged by the parish or public charities, and significantly trades which had not existed when the Statute of Apprentices became law in 1563 were not liable to pay the tax.<sup>39</sup> As a result of these inadequacies, viewing such records as an accurate account of the economic composition of a town or region is naïve, especially as it assumes that there was no movement of craftsmen and labour between geographical areas. Initial analysis of the apprenticeship records when compared to other local sources indicated that they vastly under-recorded the extent of certain occupations in the region, and were therefore ruled out as a method of assessing industry sizes.<sup>40</sup>

Consequently, the evidence used in mapping of the new consumer industries is brought together from a variety of sources and is focused on assessing numbers of manufactories rather than occupation or output (although some mention of these components is made). The sources include an expansive survey of the advertisements in Newcastle upon Tyne's two earliest provincial newspapers, the *Newcastle Courant* and the *Newcastle Journal*, from their initial circulation in 1711 and 1739 respectively until 1790 and 1788. Additionally, local town and regional histories, contemporary travel accounts, parish registers, trade directories, gentry estate papers, and the secondary literature concerned with these industries has also been surveyed.

The local provincial newspapers are not without their limitations. Given the localised and small-scale nature of some of the industries under analysis, it is possible that small paper manufactories, potteries, brick and tile works could have escaped mention by both papers. Advertisements were largely utilised by more commercial manufactories rather than smaller enterprises; those by their nature more likely to leave some sort of record. Advertisements for industries generally only appeared when a manufactory (or part of a manufactory) was for sale or to be let, or when sale of a particular commodity was announced publicly. John Walton has expressed these limitations most clearly stating that newspapers only convey an 'impression' of the number of firms at work over a

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<sup>39</sup> TNA, Apprentices of Great Britain, Series 1: 1710-62, Index to Apprentices, SOG/204, IR1.

<sup>40</sup> The apprenticeship record data from IR1 for shipwrights was compared with apprenticeship figures in D. J. Rowe (ed.) *The Records of the Company of Shipwrights of Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1622-1967* (Surtees Society, 1971).

‘defined period’.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, surveys of newspapers may inevitably include firms that were later casualties of eighteenth-century business failure.<sup>42</sup> As a result the mapping from newspapers is as comprehensive as the available sources will allow. Trade Directories likewise have limitations. Shaw highlights problems associated with coverage and duplicate entries, and suggests some directories included only a small percentage of the working population in particular areas.<sup>43</sup> However, when combined with the other sources listed, a more accurate image of consumer industries can be established, with limitations of the provincial newspapers and directories somewhat compensated for by other sources. Due to the problems with identifying evidence for some industries, the survey is limited to the larger industries that can be identified in sources and those that fit the chronology of change. These include the glass, pottery, paper, brick, tile, and sugar industries.<sup>44</sup>

### ***A Mixed Economy: Agriculture***

The historical focus on coal mining and heavy industry in the region, whilst obscuring the significance of consumer industries, has also overshadowed the importance of agricultural development in Northumberland and Durham. By nature the region had a variable climate, soil, and geological conditions meaning that historically it had ‘some of the least productive farmland in the country and, potentially, some of the most productive’.<sup>45</sup> Although acknowledged in modern times as a cohesive ‘region’, geological conditions and climate meant that farming conditions could vary considerably between and within the two counties. Despite these differences Brassley identified three coherent farming zones, not all of which were unproductive by nature: the highlands in the west, an intermediate area towards the Pennine and Cheviot

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<sup>41</sup> J. R. Walton, ‘Trades and Professions in Late Eighteenth-Century England: Assessing the Evidence of Directories’, *The Local Historian* 17 (1987), pp. 344-345.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 345.

<sup>43</sup> G. Shaw, ‘British Directories as Sources in Historical Geography’, *Historical Geography Research Series* (1982), pp. 5-60.

<sup>44</sup> Salt boiling, like coal mining, had a long history in Northumberland and Durham and during the seventeenth century had widespread presence on the coast at Hartley in Northumberland, at the mouth of the Tyne at North and South Shields, and to a smaller extent at Sunderland. However, the chronology of this industry is somewhat at odds with the pattern of consumer industries development which is the focus of this study. By the eighteenth century the region’s salt boiling industry was in terminal decline, unlike the other industries under discussion which saw continued growth. Therefore, although the industry is usually detailed in histories of the region, it will not be subject to investigation here. It is also evident from the newspaper surveys that soap was extensively produced in the region, but there is not sufficiently detailed evidence of this production to explore the industry in this chapter.

<sup>45</sup> P. Brassley, ‘Northumberland and Durham’ in J. Thirsk (ed.) *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, VI 1640-1750 Regional Farming Systems* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 30.

foothills, and the coastal lowlands in the east. Pastoral farming was the mainstay of the agricultural economy in the highlands and foothills of both counties.<sup>46</sup> In contrast, arable farming was more important in the lowland areas, especially on the coastal plains where a more mixed form of farming was possible. Hodgson accurately stated that in County Durham ‘farming practices reflected the physical diversity of the county’;<sup>47</sup> indeed the same can be said of Northumberland.

The region did not remain unaffected by the major agricultural changes which were taking place nationally. The most significant improvement introduced in both counties was enclosure. In both Northumberland and Durham enclosure generally took place in two stages. The first stage, which was largely undertaken by private agreement, and was mainly complete by 1750, saw the enclosure of open townfields, better areas of common pasture, and arable and meadow lands of the township. According to Smailes there was little of arable fields left to be enclosed in the North by the great period of Parliamentary enclosure in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>48</sup> The second stage, which was mainly brought about by act of Parliament after 1750, saw the enclosure of common waste.

Enclosure could have a significant impact upon the profitability of farming as national successes have shown, and old arable lands of townships which were enclosed experienced immediate successes as a result. However these developments were particularly significant in the North which had been essentially a pastoral region. Consolidation of farmland allowed for the beneficial use of lime, manure and new crop species, although these techniques were generally more advantageous in Northumberland than in areas such as the lowlands of County Durham where short leases and conservative crop rotation systems hindered growth. Enclosure had allowed the agricultural economy of the region to develop. The stronger inclination towards ‘improvement’ in Northumberland existed alongside commercial agricultural developments in eighteenth-century County Durham. Change region-wide was complex and varied greatly in ‘pace, process and effects’, but it was taking place.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Brassley, ‘Northumberland and Durham’, pp. 30-31.

<sup>47</sup> R. I. Hodgson, ‘The Progress of Enclosure in County Durham’ in H. Fox and R. A. Butlin (eds.) *Changes in the Countryside* (London, 1979), p. 86.

<sup>48</sup> A. E. Smailes, *North England* (London, 1968), p. 149.

<sup>49</sup> Brassley, ‘Northumberland and Durham’, pp. 30-59.

The changing organisation of agriculture in Northumberland and Durham suggests that from an early period it was adapting in response to a growing population, an increasing percentage of which were wage-labourers based in heavy industry and production of manufactured goods and staples. Between the 1540s and 1740s the population of Newcastle alone grew five-fold, whilst increasingly urbanised areas, specifically around the Tyne region, also experienced concentrated and exaggerated population growth.<sup>50</sup> In this context agriculture and industry were clearly interconnected. For Brassley industrial growth and resultant urbanisation were directly associated with agricultural change, as they resulted in increased demand for food and further pressure on the agricultural sector to adapt to meet this demand.<sup>51</sup>

The region exhibited a mixed economy, one in which both agriculture and industry played a role. Indeed the role of agriculture was of the upmost importance as an essential sector supporting the growing urban and industrial population. Although Newcastle, with its concentrated and growing population, had been dependent on agricultural imports since the early seventeenth century, the regional agricultural economy played an important role in supporting the wider area of both Northumberland and Durham, and by the eighteenth century was a thriving sector. Furthermore, although poor geological conditions may have restricted agricultural efficiency, they benefitted regional economic developments in other ways. Coal and clay both played an essential part in the development of the region's consumer industries, discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

### ***Mapping Consumer Industries***

#### *i) Glass*

Glass was one established industry noted by Daniel Defoe for being 'particularly owing to the coals', which expanded significantly during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the river banks of the Tyne and Wear.<sup>52</sup> The origins of glass making in the region were born in the early seventeenth century when Sir Robert Mansell acquired the exclusive right to make glass with coal in 1615 in place of timber, which was

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<sup>50</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', pp. 140-141.

<sup>51</sup> Brassley, 'Northumberland and Durham', p. 31.

<sup>52</sup> D. Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* 1724-27, III, (London, 1748), p. 223.

increasingly in short supply.<sup>53</sup> The relocation of a steady stream of Huguenot glass making families to England and the subsequent movement of branches of these families to Newcastle during this period brought glass manufacturing expertise from the Continent alongside Mansell's capital.<sup>54</sup> Although the Tyne was not the first area to benefit from Mansell's endeavour to produce glass, through his pioneering use of sea coal in place of wood, glass production at Newcastle grew rapidly. During the first half of the seventeenth century this growth was sufficiently rapid to make the industry notable to contemporary travellers and commentators in the area. In 1635 Sir William Brereton wrote in his journal of the Quayside in Newcastle, which extended almost to the glass works 'where is made window glass', and by mid-century William Gray claimed that the window glasshouses of the Newcastle 'serveth most parts of the Kingdom'.<sup>55</sup>

Window glass was evidently an important product of this early industry (discussed further in Chapter Four), but reports of the significance of this initial glass production have, to some extent, been exaggerated. The figures below indicate an initial period of growth in the national industry following the lapse of Mansell's monopoly. Catherine Ross estimates that under Mansell there were nine glass manufactories, a number which had expanded significantly by 1696 when John Houghton drew up his list of glasshouses in England. In this period the industry was apparently open to natural expansion as it was free from both monopoly and crippling duties.<sup>56</sup> John Houghton's figures of working flat glasshouses at Newcastle in 1696 (six window glasshouses, four bottle houses and one flint glasshouse) provide a snapshot assessment of the size of the local industry and its structure.

Comparison between the number of glasshouses at Newcastle and those at other centres of glass production in England, specifically Stourbridge, Bristol and London, emphasise the limited size of each branch of the industry, and the small overall size of glass

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<sup>53</sup> J. Clephan, 'The Manufacture of Glass in England. Rise of the Art on the Tyne', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 8 (1876-9), pp. 108-126.

<sup>54</sup> R. J. Charleston, *English Glass and the Glass Used in England, circa 400-1940* (London, 1984), pp. 64-76.

<sup>55</sup> J. Hodgson (ed.) 'Journal of Sir William Brereton' in *North County Diaries* (Surtees Society Publications, 1915), p. 19; W. Gray, *Chorographia* (Newcastle, 1649), p. 97.

<sup>56</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 40.

manufacturing at Newcastle on the eve of the eighteenth century. This comparison taken from Houghton's figures is displayed on Table 1.

**Table 1: John Houghton's Figures of Working Flat Glasshouses in England 1696<sup>57</sup>**

Location	Branch of Glass Industry			
	Crown and Plate Glass	Window Glasshouses	Bottle Houses	Flint (fine) Glasshouses
Newcastle	-	6	4	1
London district	4	-	9	9
Bristol	-	-	5	3
Stourbridge	-	7	5	5

This modest position held by the Newcastle glass manufacturers in the national industry altered significantly during the eighteenth century as the industry grew generally and new manufactories began work on the Tyne and the surrounding region. Evidence from various sources, including business accounts and deeds, pictorial material, secondary accounts, and the provincial newspaper surveys, reveal considerable growth in the glass manufactories on the banks of the Tyne at Newcastle (presented on William Beilby's map of Newcastle, Fig. 1) and South Shields, the Wear (represented pictorially on John Rain's map of Sunderland, Fig. 2), and at Hartley in Northumberland during the eighteenth century.

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

**Fig. 1: Glasshouses of Newcastle by Beilby, 1788 \***



Source: TWA, (D/NCP/2/8).

\* Left to right on the North side of the River, the high, middle and lower glasshouses.

Catherine Ross' extensive study of the Tyne and Wear glass industry provides a relatively accurate account of the number of glasshouses working at various dates throughout the eighteenth century, listing the following figures (Table 2) for the Tyne, Hartley in Northumberland and the river Wear (no separation is made between Newcastle and Gateshead).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ross' estimation of numbers of glasshouses in the north-east is drawn together from Licence returns, PRO CUST 48/17, John Houghton's list of 1696, and figures in a number of local histories and excise returns.

A hand-drawn map of the River Pan area, showing various industrial and residential sites. The map is oriented with the river at the top. Key locations include Mr. Bunn's Landing, Mr. Galleys yard, Mr. Bonners Raff yard, Slafford's, Mr. Abbots Common, and a Brewery & Ice Yard. In the center, there is a Block & Makers yard, a Bottle Works Factory, and a Raff yard. To the right, there is a Ship Building Yard and Mr. M. Michaels's Ship Building Yard. The map also shows a road to the Pan ferry, a pump, and various other buildings and structures.

**Table 2: Glasshouses at Work in Northumberland and Durham, 1700-1800**

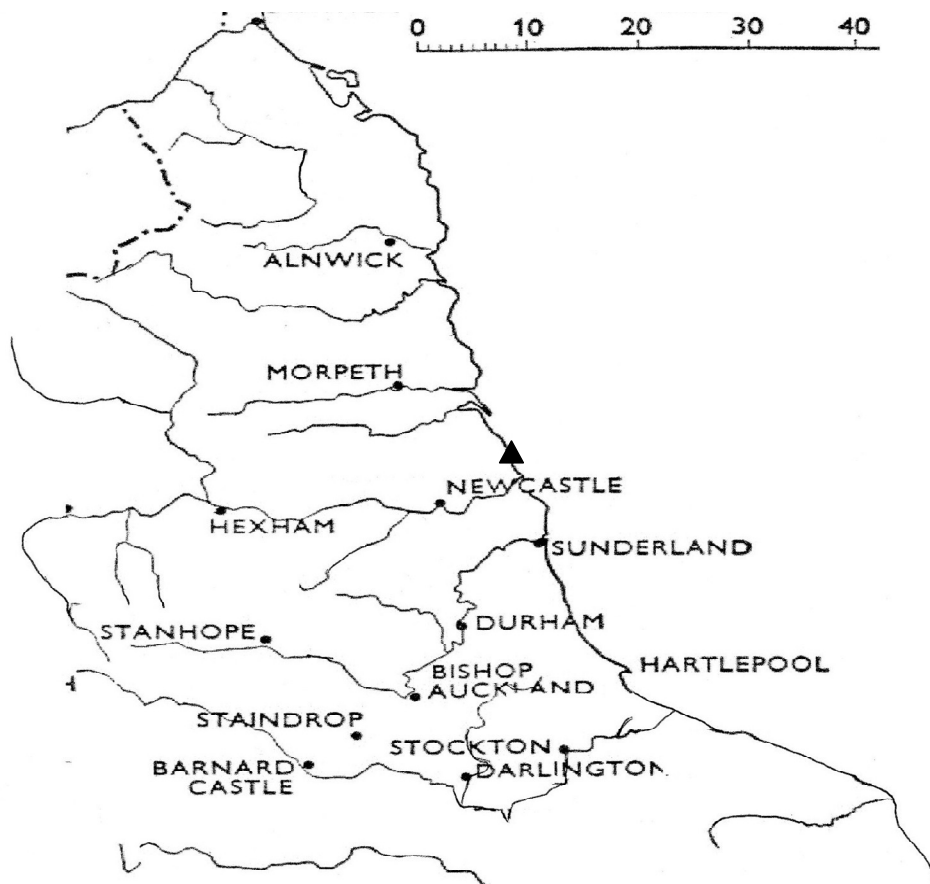
Date	Location and manufactory type							
	The Tyne and Hartley					The Wear		
	Broad	Crown	Bottle	Flint	Plate	Bottle/Broad	Crown	Flint
1700	5 or 6	-	2 or 1	1	-	3	-	-
1732	6	1	5	1	-	3	-	-
1745	6	2	6	1	-	3	-	-
1775	4	2	8	2	1 (2) <sup>59</sup>	3	-	-
1800	4	7	10	4	1	3	1	-

According to Ross' figures, the number of glass manufactories on the Tyne and Wear was somewhere between ten and twelve in 1700, a similar figure to that presented by Houghton in 1696. The figures presented in Table 2 indicate a steady growth in

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manufactories with the bottle making sector expanding most rapidly from one or two at Newcastle and Hartley in 1700 to ten by 1800. The most notable growth in numbers of manufactories appears to have taken place from around mid-century onwards. The number of crown glass manufactories grew by three and a half times between 1745 and 1800, with an estimated thirty glasshouses in the region by 1800. The total number of manufactories had expanded by 150 per cent or 200 per cent (approximately tripling) over the century.

**Map 2: Glasshouses in Northumberland c. 1690-1790**



Maps 2 and 3 are drawn up from a survey of the *Newcastle Courant* and *Newcastle Journal*, Ross' figures, and a survey of the existing literature on glass (mainly Francis Buckley's surveys of the Tyne and Wear glasshouses).<sup>60</sup> The maps display the number of glass manufactories and their locations scattered along the banks of the region's ports at Newcastle, Sunderland, South Shields and Hartley. As the maps indicate the manufactories were exclusively located on river and at port locations. They were drawn

<sup>60</sup> Buckley, 'Glasshouses on the Wear', pp. 105-11; Buckley, 'Glasshouses on the Tyne', pp. 26-52.

by four-fold benefits; by the concentration of water, available coal, access that such port locations gave to the export and domestic coastal markets, and imported raw materials, which were frequently transported as ballast by returning coal ships (a factor considered further in Chapter Three). The industry appears to have been most significantly located at Newcastle, with smaller concentrations on the Wear, at South Shields and at Hartley, where only one manufactory existed.

Assessing the extent of labour employed in these glasshouse is not as straightforward as calculating their growth in numbers. A handful of glassblowers can be traced in parish registers, particularly in Newcastle, but the occupational composition of a glass manufactory was complex and included a variety of craftsmen. Documentary evidence for the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works at Hartley illustrates this point and gives some indication of the size of employment in a glasshouse by the later eighteenth century. In 1773, 1775, and 1778 the workers at the Hartley glasshouse were recorded in various lists of 'The Whole Workmen Depending Upon The Glassworks'.<sup>61</sup> These lists record seventy-two, seventy-one, and ninety-four workers respectively employed at the glassworks, who were listed under eighteen different occupational titles including finishers, blowers, gatherers, founders, ash sifters, colour mixers, masons, smiths and pot makers.<sup>62</sup> Not all of these occupations were that of skilled craftsmen, some were glass packers and drink tenders, whilst by 1778 fourteen employees were simply listed as 'labourer'.<sup>63</sup>

It is unlikely that all glass manufactories on the Tyne and Wear equalled the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works in size, but it is clear that during the course of the eighteenth century glass manufactories had grown rapidly and the employment structure of these manufactories had also accordingly expanded. By the end of the century the glass industry held an important position in the economy of the Tyne and Wear, which would further develop in the nineteenth century. By 1801 Baillie estimated that the regional glass industry was paying £140, 000 per annum in duty to the government,

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<sup>61</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/9/18.

<sup>62</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/9/18; 2DE/11/9/22; 2DE/11/9/71.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

Map 3: Glasshouses on the Tyne and Wear c. 1680-1790

PARISH and CHAPELRY  
BOUNDARIES - c1800.

Ancient Parishes - HART  
Chapelries - SATLEY  
Extra-parochial - Sherburn House



making it, according to him, the next largest industry after coal mining in Newcastle.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, Ellis suggests that the glasshouses of the region were producing 40 per cent of the national glass output in the fifteen years after 1812, indicating change in the significance of the glass industry in terms of numbers of manufactories in the region and output as part of the national industry.<sup>65</sup>

## *ii) Potteries*

Also *particularly owing* to the available coal was the pottery industry which, unlike glass, was unnoticed by Defoe and little noted by travellers to the region, probably as a result of it being only a minor industry in the eyes of contemporaries. Although archaeological material provides evidence of pottery items in the region before 1700, much of this was imported wares from Germany and other parts of Britain. Working pottery kilns undoubtedly existed in the region before 1700, but lack of contemporary evidence and difficulties identifying excavated kiln sites hinder definite quantitative estimates. For example, John Baker claims there are references to ‘a kiln’ at Newbottle in County Durham in 1615, but there is no clear evidence that this was a pottery and not a lime burning kiln.<sup>66</sup> Certainly William Gray, eager to highlight the importance of regional window glass production, made no mention of pottery production in Newcastle in 1649.

Consequently Stafford Linsley estimates that the earliest documented pottery in the region was that at Newbottle in County Durham around 1720 (shown on Fig. 3 John Rain’s *Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth 1785-1790*), whilst on the Tyne the first documented pottery undertaken by John Warburton at Pandon Dean was established somewhat later around 1730.<sup>67</sup> By 1736 there was at least one other pottery at Newcastle noted by Henry Bourne who states that at Skinnerburn there was ‘a Pot-House to Mr Joseph Blenkinsop and Ralph Harl’.<sup>68</sup> These dates probably refer to the establishment of more commercial manufacture, rather than localised individual domestic production.

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<sup>64</sup> J. Baillie, *An Impartial History of the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne and its Vicinity* (Newcastle, 1801), p. 513.

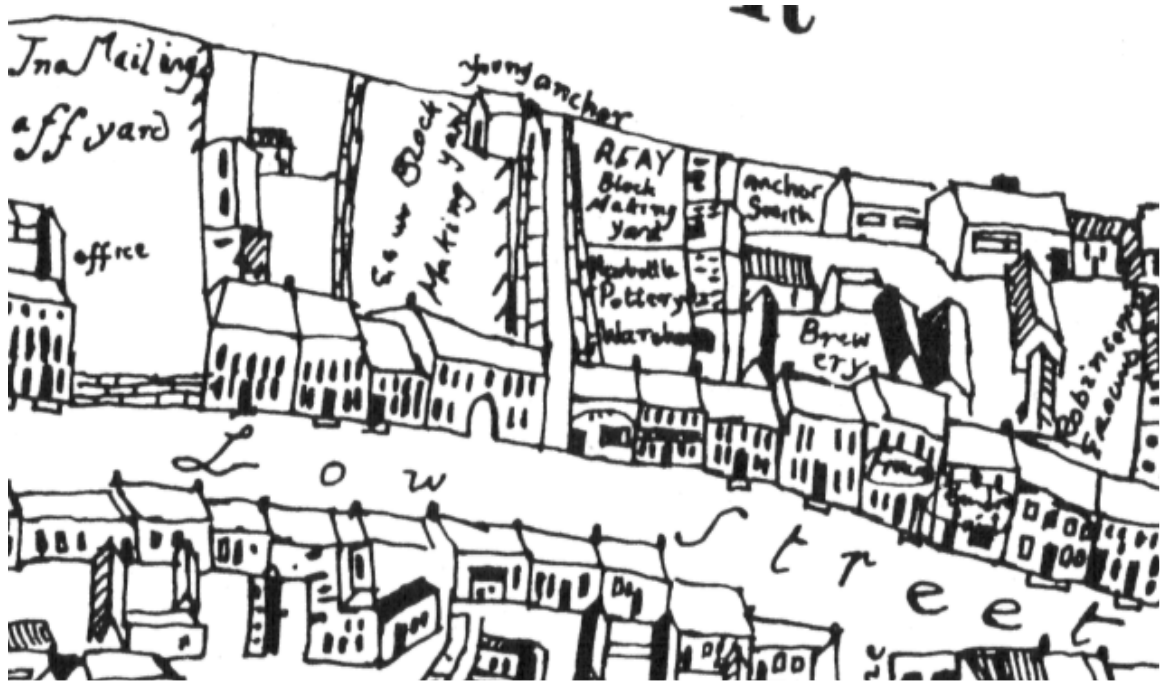
<sup>65</sup> Ellis, ‘The Black Indies’, p. 25.

<sup>66</sup> J. C. Baker, *Sunderland Pottery* (Sunderland, 1984), p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> S. Linsley, ‘Tyne Industries’ in D. Archer (ed.) *Tyne and Tide* (Northumberland, 2003), p. 194.

<sup>68</sup> H. Bourne, *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle, 1736), p. 145.

**Fig. 3: Newbottle Pottery indicated on John Rain's *Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth 1785-1790***



Parish registers record only scant references to potters and William Whitehead's *First Newcastle Directory* details only three potteries in Newcastle in 1778, but the local newspapers indicate an expanding pottery sector which largely followed the developments taking place in the national industry.<sup>69</sup> Following the establishment of Newbottle pottery in the 1720s and Warburton's Pandon Dean pottery in 1730, the next sixty to seventy years saw a considerable expansion of the industry. Francis Buckley indicates twenty working potteries between 1736 and 1790; my surveys of the *Newcastle Courant* and *Journal* confirm these twenty, but also identify two additional manufactories at Coxhoe and West Auckland in County Durham (these results are shown on Maps 4 and 5).<sup>70</sup> This apparent growth reflects Weatherill's estimation of the expansion of the national pottery industry between 1660 and 1820. Weatherill's 'North' category, although not representative of merely Northumberland and Durham, reveals an estimated growth from twelve potteries in 1660 and forty-eight employees to eighty-four in 1790 and approximately 1,435 employees.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>69</sup> W. Whitehead, *First Newcastle Directory* (Newcastle, 1778); Weatherill, 'The Growth of the Pottery Industry', pp. 15-46.

<sup>70</sup> F. Buckley, 'Potteries on the Tyne, and other Northern Potteries during the Eighteenth Century', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4 (1927), pp. 68-82.

<sup>71</sup> Weatherill, 'The Growth of the Pottery Industry', p. 40.

**Map 4: Potteries in Northumberland c. 1700-1790**



As the maps indicate, potteries were more geographically dispersed than glass manufactories. General studies have suggested that potteries clustered on the banks of the Tyne and Wear, however many potteries began by producing mainly brown earthenware with local ganister clay, making it more efficient for them to be located inland at the site of raw materials.<sup>72</sup> As a result, potteries were more flexible than glass manufactories in terms of where they could be established. Such flexibility explains why the maps reveal a number of potteries positioned away from the Tyne and Wear areas. However the particular advantages of location near major or expanding ports were enough to attract substantial manufactories to Newcastle and Sunderland. It was essentially the economic advantages provided by these locations, including access to quality imported white clay, coal and the centre of the local consumer and export

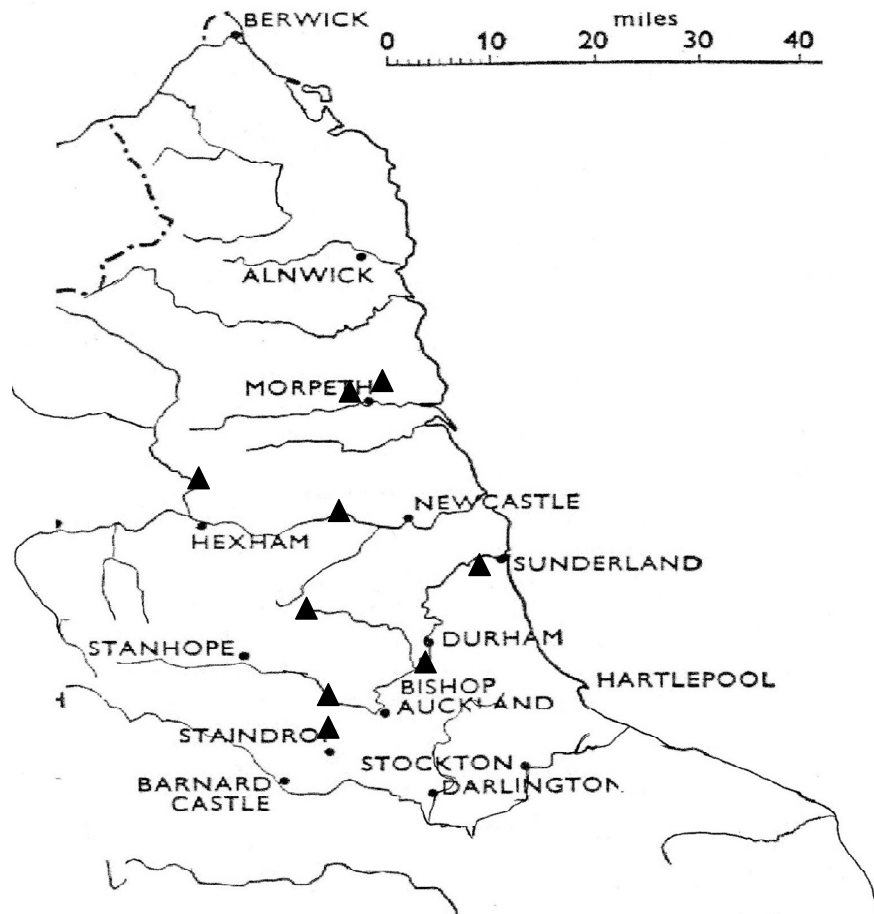
<sup>72</sup> Studies of the north-eastern pottery industry have concentrated on potteries of Tyneside and Wearside with only passing note of those in the wider Northumberland and County Durham areas. For example see R. C. Bell, *Tyneside Pottery* (London, 1971); R. C. Bell, *Maling and Other Tyneside Pottery* (Princes Risborough, 1986); Baker, *Sunderland Pottery*; R. C. Bell and M. A. V. Gill, *The Potteries of Tyneside* (Newcastle, 1973).

### Map 5: Potteries in County Durham and on the Tyne and Wear c. 1700-1790



markets, which drew potteries to Newcastle and the Sunderland area. Those manufactories located at a distance from these major trading centres were not situated without attention to trade connections and buyer markets, and were mostly located near navigable rivers and market centres as Map 6 displays. There were various reasons for these river and market town locations. Navigable rivers provided access to imported raw materials and more distant access to the export centres of Newcastle, Sunderland and Stockton. They also housed flint grinding mills which were closely connected to the potteries through the process of glazing. Furthermore, market towns provided an immediate access to the domestic market centred in those towns.

**Map 6: Example of Potteries near Rivers and Market Towns during the Eighteenth Century**



Pottery manufacture never eclipsed glass in importance in the regional economy, despite the significant growth in number of manufactories from 1750 onwards. The quality of the local industry's produce will be considered in the following chapters, but it is certain that by 1800 there were a significant number of manufactories producing variable qualities of pottery. How large these establishments were is difficult to estimate. Weatherill explains that estimations of output are hindered by lack of contemporary evidence, but she has also stated that Tyneside potteries were relatively small, the largest being approximately a fifth of the size of the larger Staffordshire potteries in the later eighteenth century.<sup>73</sup> Regardless of their size, by the last decades of the eighteenth century the area around the river Ouseburn in Newcastle had particularly grown as a centre of pottery production. Certainly by the early nineteenth century pottery manufacture was prominent enough in Newcastle to warrant note by local writers of town histories where before it had been largely absent. Mackenzie noted proudly in 1811 the vast quantities of locally produced earthenware 'particularly the coarser sort' which was destined for the export market.<sup>74</sup>

### *iii) Brick and Tile*

Closely connected to pottery manufacturing by their overlapping use of raw materials were the brick and tile industries which experienced concentrated growth in Northumberland and Durham during the eighteenth century. Both fired bricks and tiles had a long history in England, being produced since the Roman times, but neither was immediately popular and their rise to national building materials was a drawn out process. As Alec Clifton-Taylor has stated in *The Pattern of English Building*, the use of brick in particular was initially restricted and it was not found universally throughout the country socially or geographically.<sup>75</sup> Production and use of tiles was similarly limited. Brick and tile were both used prominently in the eastern counties of England rather than nationally, predominantly those influenced by the Netherlands in building design and materials. Clifton-Taylor suggests that by the accession of Queen Anne, England was entering the 'second golden age of brick architecture' following which

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<sup>73</sup> Weatherill, 'The Growth of the Pottery Industry', pp. 20-22.

<sup>74</sup> Mackenzie, *A Historical and Descriptive View of Northumberland*, p. 214.

<sup>75</sup> A. Clifton-Taylor, *The Pattern of English Building* (London, 1962), p. 214.

brick as a building material became increasingly dominant in most parts of the country.<sup>76</sup>

It is clear that by 1700 the use of brick in English architecture had had an important impact in some isolated towns. When visiting Newcastle in the 1690s, Celia Fiennes described it as the place that ‘most resembled London of any place in England, its buildings lofty and large, of brick mostly or stone...’.<sup>77</sup> Whether the brick used in these buildings before 1700 was locally produced is difficult to ascertain. Contemporary commentators before the eighteenth century do not mention brick production in the region. However given the industry’s position as a localised activity that was largely not standardised, it is unlikely that any regional production would have drawn particular attention.<sup>78</sup> The close trading connections between the ports of Newcastle and Sunderland and those in Holland suggests that this brick may have been imported at first. However it is clear that during the eighteenth century production of brick in Northumberland and Durham expanded rapidly in line with its adoption as a building material. Clifton-Taylor suggests that before the eighteenth century brick found limited use in County Durham which had plentiful supplies of stone, but it was the building material of Newcastle. In rural areas such buildings were rare, the exception being on the estates of landowners where a brick kiln existed. Elsewhere brick buildings could be found in market towns such as Morpeth, Alnwick and Berwick.<sup>79</sup>

The survey of the *Newcastle Courant* and *Journal* recorded twenty-two references to brickworks or sale of local bricks during the period from 1710 to 1790, and as Maps 7 and 8 (drawn up from estate documents and the newspaper surveys) indicate, these brickworks were heavily situated along the Tyne from South Shields at the coast as far as Heddon-on-the-Wall inland. A handful of manufactories were located in the wider area of County Durham and at least two in Northumberland, one at Morpeth and one on

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, p. 217.

<sup>77</sup> Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle*, p. 176.

<sup>78</sup> Clifton-Taylor, *The Pattern of English Building*, p. 216.

<sup>79</sup> A. Clifton-Taylor, ‘Building Materials’ in N. Pevsner (founding ed.) *The Building Materials of England: County Durham* revised by E. Williamson (London, 2002), p. 73; J. Grundy and G. McCombie, ‘Architecture from 1550 to 1800’ in N. Pevsner (founding ed.) *The Building Materials of England: Northumberland* revised by J. Grundy, G. McCombie, P. Ryder and H. Welfare (London, 2002), p. 73; J. Grundy, ‘Small Domestic Buildings of the Countryside’ in N. Pevsner (founding ed.) *The Building Materials of England: Northumberland* revised by J. Grundy, G. McCombie, P. Ryder and H. Welfare (London, 2002), pp. 78-80.

the Delaval estate at Ford. The surviving brickworks accounts and records from the Delaval estate confirm that the Ford manufactory largely produced for the family estate and the local Northumberland market. The Ford brick and tile manufactory records indicate that bricks were sold to customers in Northumberland and over the Scottish border in Wooler, Heaton, Kilham, Fenton, Kelso, and Coldstream.<sup>80</sup>

**Map 7: Brick Works in Northumberland c. 1710-1790**



Unlike the pottery industry where quantities of earthenware and stoneware produced are rarely recorded, the Ford brick and tile manufactory records do provide some indication of the quantities produced at that manufactory. In the six month period from June to December 1769, 71,675 bricks were produced and sold at Ford.<sup>81</sup> This quantity could vary between manufactories, of course, which may have produced fewer or greater amounts. For example in 1718 John Sands, a brick maker from Darlington, was employed by William Blakiston Bowes of Streatlam to make and burn a hundred thousand bricks at Streatlam castle, with particular sizes and specifications outlined.<sup>82</sup> Such examples indicate a process of gradual commercialisation, but that brick

<sup>80</sup> NRO, NRO.650/G.4.

<sup>81</sup> NRO, 2/DE/16/8.

<sup>82</sup> DRO, D/St/E1/17/1.

### Map 8: Brick Works in County Durham and on the Tyne and Wear c. 1710-1790



production largely remained an unstandardised process in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

The production and use of tiles is clearer. Although tiles were produced and used from Roman times, the predominant tile produce of the Northumberland and Durham manufactories was pantiles, a product which did not appear in England until the seventeenth century, and was first imported from the Low Countries.<sup>83</sup> British manufacture was established in East Anglia at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and by mid-century home production had overtaken that of the Dutch. The popularity of pantiles grew during the Georgian period, but it was not a national phenomenon and their use was largely restricted to eastern and north-eastern parts of the country.

Maps 9 and 10 (which are based on the newspaper surveys and estate documents) show the location of tile works throughout the region. Their distribution largely mirrored that of the brickworks, particularly due to their overlap in raw materials and production process. Tile manufactories were slightly less widespread than brickworks, with seventeen references found in the *Newcastle Courant and Journal*. Although many were situated on the banks of the Tyne, like brickworks, they were also distributed throughout the counties with more in Durham than Northumberland. The more flexible distribution of tile and brickworks was due to raw materials distribution, difficulties in transporting the bulky products, and the very local nature of the industries. The Ford manufactory documents again provide a glimpse at levels of pantile production with 68275 tiles produced in the six months between June and December 1769.<sup>84</sup> This individual example however, may not be representative of the industry as a whole. The Ford manufactory supplied a wide area of Northumberland where there appear to have been few other tile manufactories and population was notably lower. On the Tyne, where manufactories were more densely packed, competition may have been greater, but concentrated urbanisation also increased demand. Unlike bricks, which had a limited but expanding market, pantiles were used widely throughout the region and could be found in both County Durham and Northumberland during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> N. Davey, *A History of Building Materials* (London, 1961), p. 159.

<sup>84</sup> NRO, 2/DE/16/8.

<sup>85</sup> Clifton-Taylor, 'Building Materials', p. 74; Grundy, 'Small Domestic Buildings', pp. 78-79.

Concurrent with the initial appearance of potteries in the *Courant* and *Journal*, from around 1740 onwards various advertisements for brick and tile manufactories in the region occurred. The evidence from the newspapers suggests the existence of two distinct periods when brick and tile products were advertised and workers were required in those industries, the 1720s to early 1740s and the late 1760s into 1790s.

**Map 9: Tile Works in Northumberland c. 1710-1790**



Both phases represented periods of growth in the national building cycle, suggesting that local production was reacting to this demand.<sup>86</sup> This is unsurprising. Local clays and coal permitted extensive production, whilst tile and brickworks, manufacturers of increasingly popular building materials, could be profitably situated on gentry estates. This building pattern was also reflected in the building of English country houses with distinct peaks throughout the country between the 1690s and 1730s, the 1770s and the 1790s.<sup>87</sup> More specific to the region, Adrian Green confirms that late seventeenth- and

<sup>86</sup> R. Machin, 'The Great Rebuilding: A Reassessment' *Past and Present* (1977), p. 37.

<sup>87</sup> R. Wilson and A. Mackley, *Creating Paradise* (London, 2000).

### Map 10: Tile Works in County Durham and on the Tyne and Wear c. 1710-1790



early eighteenth-century rebuilding was connected to changes in building materials, particularly bricks and pantiles.<sup>88</sup> During the period 1771 to 1790 fifteen new brick and tile manufactories were advertised in the *Newcastle Courant* in addition to those in the *Journal* and others such as the Delaval manufactory at Ford, reflecting both the popularity of brick and tile nationally and the favourable conditions for production that existed in the region. Whether this production remained largely for local consumption is difficult to ascertain, however John Baillie was clear by 1801 that large quantities of bricks and tiles were manufactured on both sides of the Tyne for both 'home consumption & exportation'.<sup>89</sup>

#### *iv) Paper*

No mention is given to paper manufacture in contemporary travel accounts, nor do Northumberland and Durham feature as a major centre of production in general histories of the paper industry,<sup>90</sup> yet by 1800 Newcastle boasted a reputation as one of the largest printing centres in England.<sup>91</sup> It is possible that much of the paper for this printing industry may have been imported into the region. Paper was produced in England from the fifteenth century, but early production remained limited and of a poor quality with continental producers dominating supply. However it is evident that during our period national paper production was growing, with notable establishment and expansion at Northumberland and Durham.

Donald Coleman estimates that the first English paper mill was established in Hertfordshire in 1495, though it was not until the seventeenth century that the English industry began to develop significantly.<sup>92</sup> Northumberland and Durham are absent from Alfred Shorter's assessment of existent mills between 1601 and 1650, confirming that there were no early mills in the region.<sup>93</sup> As a result Maidwell's claim that Croxdale mill in County Durham was the first in the region, noted in a parish register in 1678, is

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<sup>88</sup> A. Green 'Houses and Household in County Durham and Newcastle, c. 1570-1730', I, (Unpublished Durham University PhD Thesis, 2000), p. 132.

<sup>89</sup> Baillie, *An Impartial History*, p. 526.

<sup>90</sup> D. Coleman, *The British Paper Industry 1495-1860* (Oxford, 1958), p. 4.

<sup>91</sup> H. Berry, 'Promoting Taste in the Provincial Press: National and Local Culture in Eighteenth-Century Newcastle upon Tyne', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 25 (2002), p. 1.

<sup>92</sup> Coleman, *The British Paper Industry*, p. 4.

<sup>93</sup> A. Shorter, *Paper Making in the British Isles* (Newton Abbot, 1971), pp. 20-21.

likely to be accurate.<sup>94</sup> The estate records of the gentry Salvin family from Croxdale in County Durham, on whose land the Croxdale mill was situated, record the lease of the mill to an Edward Harrison dated the 27 September 1682.<sup>95</sup> The first recorded dates for the Croxdale mill as a paper manufactory, during the late 1670s and early 1680s, occur concurrently with Coleman's estimation of the initial major growth in English paper production and expansion in number of mills.<sup>96</sup> The closing quarter of the seventeenth century saw increased activity in terms of establishment of paper mills, patents and production techniques, suggesting that the setting up of mills in Northumberland and Durham was a reaction to the growth of the national industry.<sup>97</sup> The initiation of this expansion nationally was the result of a combination of factors. Everywhere the demand for all qualities of paper was growing. Increased quantities were required for publishing, in the expanding retailing sector paper for packing was in demand, the expansion of bureaucratic recordings required good quality paper, even within the household it had numerous uses. Simultaneously the interruption and restriction of continental paper imports encouraged the national paper industry to develop better quality papers and improve techniques and production, with incentives regularly offered to manufacturers to improve quality.<sup>98</sup>

As Maps 11 and 12, which are drawn up from business and estate records, trade directories and the *Newcastle Courant and Journal*, indicate, by 1780 the region had at least eleven working mills. At least one of these was a double mill producing greater quantities. Few were shown in the records before 1700, Shorter records only three (including the Croxdale mill), making it likely that expansion of paper manufacture in the region largely followed widespread national growth during the eighteenth century.<sup>99</sup> The advertisements for paper manufactories in the provincial newspapers suggest that there was no significant point at which growth of paper mills took place during the eighteenth century. Although the advertisements do not necessarily indicate establishment of mills, Stirk's detailed research on the paper mills of County Durham

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<sup>94</sup> C. Maidwell, *History of the Book Trade in the North* (Newcastle, 1987), p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> DRO, D/Sa/E/387.

<sup>96</sup> Coleman, *The British Paper Industry*, p. 54.

<sup>97</sup> Shorter, *Paper Making in the British Isles*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>98</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, pp. 106-107.

<sup>99</sup> Shorter, *Paper Making in the British Isles*, pp. 29-30.

confirms there was a steady expansion of the industry over the century with no particularly notable periods of growth.<sup>100</sup>

**Map 11: Paper Mills in Northumberland, 1678-1780**



Many of the consumer industries expanding in Northumberland and Durham were tied by their mutual use of raw materials and the advantages that a coalfield or portside location could provide. However the paper industry existed with a relative independence from coalmining. Coal only really influenced the paper industry in an indirect manner by encouraging increased commercial activity which required paper. In contrast to manufactories which clung to the banks of the Tyne and Wear, paper production was best located at a distance from main rivers. Production required clean water to make better quality paper, and therefore mills were invariably situated along tributaries and

<sup>100</sup> J. V. Stirk, *The Lost Mills* (Sunderland, 2006).

PARISH and CHAPELRY  
BOUNDARIES - c1800.

[illegible]

streams at a distance from the growing industrial port areas where water was less likely to be tainted by waste materials or coal dust.

For the majority paper mills were small scale affairs, and although the production requirement of clean running water meant that they were best located away from large developing industrial centres such as Newcastle and Sunderland, the other essential raw material required, rags, was in greatest supply near urbanised areas. A further difficulty was the retail market for paper, which was highly centralised. It seems that whilst potteries, glasshouses, and brick and tile works could sell directly from the manufactory, by the last quarter of the century the distribution of paper was largely concentrated in urban centres. William Whitehead's *First Newcastle Directory* records five paper warehouses in Newcastle in 1778 (also plotted on Map 12), four of which were directly owned by regional paper mill owners or paperhanging manufacturers.<sup>101</sup>

#### v) *Sugar*

For the larger consumer industries developing in Northumberland and Durham the supply of raw materials, particularly coal, was a major factor influencing growth and location. As such the small size of the sugar industry in the region is surprising. The expansion of the sugar industry nationally was a response to growing colonial trade, increased supply and use of the sweetener in food, and in combination with other imported consumables including tea, coffee, and chocolate. English sugar imports apparently rose sevenfold between 1700 and 1800 from 430000 cwt. to 3000000 cwt.<sup>102</sup> Sugar refining or boiling for consumption was not initially undertaken in Britain. However, as the popularity of sugar grew and it developed from a luxury into a decency and necessity for all social groups, it became profitable for businessmen to begin the process of sugar boiling on a larger scale in Britain by the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>103</sup>

London was the centre of the trade, but other sizable manufactories developed at major ports throughout Britain during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries including Bristol, Liverpool, and Glasgow where colonial trade was rapidly expanding.<sup>104</sup> The Tyne and Wear sugar industry was tiny in comparison to Bristol's where there were

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<sup>101</sup> Whitehead, *First Newcastle Directory*.

<sup>102</sup> K. Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 184.

<sup>103</sup> S. W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power* (London, 1986), Chapter 2: Production.

<sup>104</sup> C. Wilson, *England's Apprenticeship 1603-1763* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, London, 1984), pp. 200-201.

twenty sugar houses by 1750 and where between fifteen and sixteen manufactories were in constant general employment during the eighteenth century.<sup>105</sup> The widespread demand for sugar meant substantial profits could be made from sugar boiling. For example Edward Moore, the Liverpool property owner, estimated that a London sugar baker, Mr Smith, could make £40,000 a year from the Barbados trade by setting up in Liverpool.<sup>106</sup> The size of these potential profits makes it surprising that sugar boiling was not more substantial on the Tyne or Wear where entrepreneurs were apparently driven by opportunism and gain.<sup>107</sup>

According to the evidence, there were only four recorded sugarhouses in the region during the period 1680 to 1780; three situated on the Tyne and one at Stockton. These manufactories are displayed on Map 13, which is drawn up from the newspaper surveys and Whitehead and Bailey's trade directories. The first mention of a manufactory in the region was the Closegate sugarhouse in Newcastle which was recorded to let in 1713.<sup>108</sup> There do not appear to be any records of the lease of this house in gentry family accounts, making it difficult to trace its origins or initial establishment. However, it was known as the Old Sugarhouse, suggesting that it had a longer history than other sugar manufactories in the region. The second was established at Hillgate in Gateshead, and records in the Cotesworth manuscripts suggest that it was first leased in 1749.<sup>109</sup> The Hillgate sugarhouse was described as the New Sugarhouse, distinguishing it from the Old Sugarhouse on Closegate. It is not clear when the third sugar refinery on the Tyne was established, but it appears in Whitehead's *First Newcastle Directory* of 1778 on the Quayside owned by Atkinson and Co.<sup>110</sup> Likewise, there is no evidence of the establishment of the Stockton sugarhouse, but it is recorded in William Bailey's *Northern Directory* of 1781.<sup>111</sup>

It is not clear how extensive these enterprises were, but at least two were regularly advertised throughout the eighteenth century, suggesting that they were not necessarily

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<sup>105</sup> Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade*, p. 185; W. Minchinton, 'The Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century' in P. McGrath (ed.) *Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Newton Abbot, 1972), p. 133.

<sup>106</sup> Wilson, *England's Apprenticeship*, p. 200-201.

<sup>107</sup> Levine and Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, p. 107.

<sup>108</sup> NC, 18 October 1713.

<sup>109</sup> TWA, 1917/1-4, An abstract of the title deeds relating to a Sugar House in Hillgate.

<sup>110</sup> Whitehead, *First Newcastle Directory*.

<sup>111</sup> W. Bailey, *Northern Directory* (Warrington, 1781).

### Map 13: Sugar Refineries on the Tyne and at Stockton, c. 1700-1790



profitable, or that leases were particularly short and not renewed. Sugar was shipped constantly from London in the eighteenth century, which suggests that these refineries were far from fulfilling local demand or that they were simply supplementing imports on a small scale. London's dominance in the supply of sugar to Northumberland and Durham is not only confirmed by the shipments entered into the port books of Newcastle (discussed in further detail in Chapter Five), but also by glasshouse owner, John Cookson, who wrote to a correspondent in December 1758. Cookson informed his correspondent 'at present the supply of our people here for Sugar is from London I would not advise your sending any here without some certainty'.<sup>112</sup>

The Tyne and Wear both had the coal necessary for refining sugar, so lack of refining may have been a result of sugar cane supplies. Raw sugar was supplied from colonial trade that was more prominent with London and the major west coast ports.<sup>113</sup> Although the port of Newcastle did have some trade with the Americas, it tended to trade towards the east, most significantly with Holland, Norway, and the Baltic. It is possible that local sugar production was more extensive than available sources indicate, but Cookson's evidence certainly seems to suggest that London was the main source of sugar. Moreover, later town histories, eager to highlight glass and pottery production, make no mention of these local sugar refineries.

## **Geographical Location**

### *i) The Tyne and Derwent Valleys*

The separate industry maps reveal that most manufactories, no matter how widely dispersed throughout the region, had a considerable concentration of manufactories on the banks of one side of the Tyne or the other. The attraction of industry to the Tyne, and particularly to Newcastle, was a result of not only geological and geographical features that made Newcastle attractive as a centre for development, but also its history as a trading centre and port town.

Newcastle had a long history from the middle ages as an economic centre. As a medieval port town it thrived on trade and the export of wool, agricultural goods and grindstones. From the thirteenth century coal had been mined in Durham and

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<sup>112</sup> TWA, JCL, 2 December 1758.

<sup>113</sup> Wilson, *England's Apprenticeship*, p. 200.

Northumberland, and by the fourteenth century the produce of the Tyneside industry was an important part of Newcastle's trade, such that by the sixteenth century Newcastle's traditional exports of wool and agricultural goods were beginning to be replaced on a large scale by export of coal.<sup>114</sup> The adoption of coal as the country's fuel source enabled Newcastle's role as the main commercial and trading centre of Northumberland and Durham to be maintained.

Despite a traditional role as the central port of the northern region, as an inland port Newcastle was not ideally situated for a major expansion of trade and Ellis claims that only the privileges of the Newcastle Corporation kept the town from a fate similar to other inland ports.<sup>115</sup> In 1583 the Grand Lease, a lease for all the mines in the manors of Whickham and Gateshead (two mineral-rich areas), was purchased from Elizabeth I by a partnership of Newcastle Hostmen, adding to the dominant ownership they had over large parts of the Northumberland and Durham coalfields. In spite of much opposition, seventeen years later in 1600, the Newcastle Company of Hostmen were incorporated in a charter granted by Elizabeth I, and the Hostmen's monopoly of the coal trade was recognised in return for a tax of 1s. per chaldron of coal shipped.<sup>116</sup> This incorporation gave them exclusive rights to trade in coal from Newcastle. Thus the Hostmen had created a monopoly over both the production and export of coal from Newcastle, leaving them dominant in the regional coal market, and Newcastle as the head port for the region with the lucrative trade in coal centred there.

The consequences of the growth of coal mining and concentrated exportation from Newcastle were wide reaching. By the seventeenth century the town was not only a centre of sea trade, but had also become unquestionably the provincial capital of Northumberland and Durham, the largest urban centre between York and Edinburgh. During the second half of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century the town continued to grow, its population doubling between 1660 and 1760 to around 29000.<sup>117</sup> During this same period Newcastle had come to be known as a 'large and exceedingly populous town', a town which 'next to Bristol, may be called the greatest

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<sup>114</sup> Smailes *North England*, p. 129-130; J. B. Blake, 'The Medieval Coal Trade of North East England', *Northern History* 2 (1967), p. 1-2.

<sup>115</sup> J. Ellis, 'A Dynamic Society: Social Relations in Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1660-1760' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns 1600-1800* (London, 1984), p. 195.

<sup>116</sup> G. L. Dodds, *A History of Sunderland* (Roker, 1995), p. 25.

<sup>117</sup> Berry, 'Promoting Taste' p. 1.

trading Town in England'.<sup>118</sup> In response to the growth of the urban population based in the town, Newcastle developed both general retailing facilities to support the population, and polite facilities of sociability to cater for local gentry and merchants rich from the coal trade who chose to reside in increasingly fashionable parts of the town away from the busy bustle of the Quayside. As a result the town's continuing position as the first port of the region and the concentration of coal on the banks of the Tyne, other manufactories developed around the town further along the river. These can be viewed on the separate industry maps to the east towards North and South Shields at the coast, to the West as far as Heddon-on-the-Wall, and also on the south side of the river near Gateshead. The expansion of industry was mirrored by concentrated and exaggerated demographic growth which was located specifically along either side of the Tyne.<sup>119</sup> Ellis correctly states that Newcastle had become the ideal example of one of Defoe's seaport towns 'where Trade flourishes, as well foreign Trade and home Trade, and where Navigation, Manufacturing, and Merchandize seem to assist one another',<sup>120</sup> and this trade developed to consume a large portion of the banks on the Tyne, not only those in the direct vicinity of Newcastle.

Despite the concentration of coal-related trades, the development of newer industries around Newcastle and along the Tyne, combined with the general expansion in population, resulted in a relatively diverse occupational mix. Joyce Ellis' survey of the baptismal register data from the parishes of All Saints, St Andrew's, St. John's and St. Nicholas's in Newcastle for the period 1660-1760 provides some suggestion of the occupational composition of the town. Table 3 shows a selection from Ellis' breakdown.<sup>121</sup> Whilst coal workers, merchants, Hostmen and shipbuilders were found in significant numbers, others involved in the glass, pottery and metal industries were also in evidence throughout the period.

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<sup>118</sup> Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island*, III, p. 220; Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 1.

<sup>119</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 139.

<sup>120</sup> D. Defoe, *A Plan of the English Commerce* (London, 1728), p. 85; Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 2.

<sup>121</sup> For a full breakdown see Ellis, 'A Dynamic Society', pp. 217-220.

**Table 3: Extract from Joyce Ellis' Data**

Occupation	1660s	1700s	1710s	1720s	Total
Merchants	75	32	26	23	156
Hostmen, fitters	7	12	8	10	37
Chapmen	5	7	2	0	14
Printers, instruments	2	5	8	3	18
Shipbuilders	41	24	23	23	111
Painters, glaziers	12	16	10	18	56
Pitmen, coal-workers	65	63	65	105	298
Clay, earthenware	6	5	5	4	20
Glassmakers	3	5	12	18	38
Metalworkers	5	5	12	11	33

Source: Ellis, 'A Dynamic Society', pp. 217-220.

These may only be a baseline for occupations in Newcastle, as occupation is not always consistently recorded in parish registers. However, Ellis' significant finding, in terms of this study, is that the town's occupational mix was 'more notable for breadth and variety than for specialization'.<sup>122</sup> A more nuanced example can help to emphasise this variety more clearly. Table 4 lists the occupational data taken from St. Nicholas' marriage register in Newcastle for the period 1680 to 1746.<sup>123</sup> Although an example from only one parish, the figures do indicate the diversity of the town's occupational composition, and give an image of Newcastle as an urban and commercial centre. Unlike towns such as Norwich and Sheffield which were becoming increasingly specialised on textile production and the steel trade respectively, it is clear from this parish's record data that Newcastle had a varied occupational structure that reflected the differing functions it had as a growing industrial, commercial, retailing, polite and trading centre.

**Table 4: Occupation Figures from Marriage Register St. Nicholas' Parish Newcastle 1681-1746**

Occupations	1681-90	1691-1700	1701-10	1711-20	1721-30	1731-40	1741-45/46
Mariner	3	6	12	7	20	9	4
Tailor	25	17	18	12	39	23	12
Weaver	6	1	1	3	6	3	2
Free porter	5	4		2	1	2	
Physician	1						
Labourer	13	6	5	1	3	9	

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, p. 194.

<sup>123</sup> Correlated from H. M. Wood (ed.) *The Registers of the Cathedral Church of St. Nicholas', in the City of Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Marriage 1574-1812* (Newcastle, 1914).

Gunsmith	1	1				1	
Vintner	3	3					
Shoe Maker	4	2					
Yeoman	15	14	1		8	8	2
Glover	1		1	1			
Merchant	8	6	10	3	7	3	4
Joiner	2	7	5	4	10	8	5
Mason	3		2	1	5	2	2
Wheelwright	1	1		1			1
Attorney	1	1		1	2		2
Skinner and Glover	2	4					
Miller	5	3	2				
Barber Surgeon	1	2	1		5	1	
Soldier	1			6	7	5	
Heel Maker	1				1		
Butcher	1	3	1	1	3	4	1
Roper	2	1			1	1	2
Draper	1		1				
Cordwainer	11	11	23	7	29	30	10
Shipwright	7	2	1	1	6	3	
Keelman	1		1			2	
Hatter	2						
Brickmaker	1				1		
Coachman	1						
Musician	1						
Currier	2	3	2	1	2	3	1
Bodice Maker	1	1	1				
Pipe Maker	1	1					
Glass Maker	1	1		1	4	1	3
Smith	2	3	5	9	22	7	3
Waterman	3					1	1
Cooper	3	5	1	1	8	1	1
Master Mariner	3	1		2	2	4	
Tanner	1	1	1			3	2
Cutler	1						
Malt Maker	1		2	1	1	2	
Brewer and Baker	1				1		
Felt Maker	1						
Baker	1		1			2	
Fuller and Dyer	1						
Glass Seller	1						
House Carpenter	6		1	2	3	4	
Grocer		1					
Dyer		4	2	1	4	2	1
Tobacconist		1			1		1
Barber		1		2	3	5	
Stationer		1			1		
Fitter		2			1		
Carpenter		2	1	1	4	3	
Pitman		1	2				
Sadler		1	3		6	3	
Milner		1		1	1		
Goldsmith		1			2	1	
Meal Maker		1					
Slater		1	1	1			

Watch Maker		3					
Brick Layer		1			3		
Surgeon		1		1	2	1	1
Haberdasher		1			1		
Glazier		1	2		2	3	
Jeweller			1				
Perriwigmaker			1	1			
School Master			1	1	1		
Maltster			1				
Doc of Divinity			1				
Confectioner			1				
Tallow Chandler			1			2	
Gardener			1	1	1		
Chapman			1		5	5	
Brewer			2		1	1	1
Cobbler			1				
Armourer			1	1			
Flax Dresser			1		8	5	
Dragoon			1				
Wright			1				
Master				1			
Wine Cooper				1			
Ship Carpenter				1			
Inn Holder				1			
Upholsterer				1			
Turner				1			
Free Host				1	1		
Cloth Maker				1		1	
Pulley Maker				1			
Skinner				1	1	1	2
Barrister of Law					1		
Salesman					1		
Printer					1	1	
Paver					1		
Officer of Excise					1		
Bookbinder					2		
Cork Cutter					1		
Nailer					1		
Pewterer					2		
Apothecary					1	1	
Sailor					1	1	
Glassman					3	8	
Felt Maker					1	2	
Whip Maker						1	
Officer						1	
Pot Founder						4	
Hostman						2	
Pinner						1	
Millwright						1	
Appraiser						1	
Silk dyer							1
Wool comber							1
Potter		1	1				
Sinker		1					
Basket maker		2					

According to Smailes, 'Gateshead from the first was only a poor neighbour of Newcastle'; an interpretation which may explain the lack of emphasis placed on Gateshead as the industrial partner to Newcastle. However, despite being only a *poor neighbour* and being officially part of the county of Durham, it did share in much of Newcastle's growth, as did areas along the Tyne towards the coast and further inland. Although the Bishop of Durham held the south bank of the Tyne, the south side of the Tyne Bridge and the land at Gateshead, it was not used as a main port. As a result Gateshead was never a major threat to the trade monopoly held by the Newcastle Hostmen and Merchant Adventurers.<sup>124</sup> Nevertheless, Gateshead did represent a potential threat. The mineral, strategic, and financial benefits to be had from the mineral rich lands at Gateshead and neighbouring Whickham were evident through the desirability of the Grand Lease and persistent attempts by the Hostmen to annexe Gateshead from the Bishop of Durham.

These tensions and the eventual acquisition of the Grand Lease by the Hostmen meant that Gateshead was never given a chance to develop into an independent trading centre akin to Newcastle. However, just as the land on the north side of the Tyne surrounding Newcastle became the home of new manufactories, so too did Gateshead and to a lesser extent its neighbours Hebburn and Heworth. The concentration of coal, imported raw materials, and access to the local and export market that drew manufactories to the north side of the river was reflected simultaneously on the south side. As a result, the industrial landscape of Gateshead mirrored that of Newcastle and its surrounding river banks on a smaller scale. Pottery manufactories, glasshouses, soap boilers, tile and brick works were located on the south side of the Tyne, one of the region's four sugar refineries was situated at Gateshead, and clay tobacco pipe making was also particularly located at there.<sup>125</sup> In his history of Gateshead, Manders identified that during the eighteenth century there were four main industrial areas in the town where most of these manufactories were located, Teams, Pipewellgate, Hillgate and South Shore.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Smailes, *North England*, p. 120.

<sup>125</sup> L. Edwards, 'Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Tyneside Tobacco Pipe Makers and Tobacconists' P. Davey (ed.) *The Archaeology of the Tobacco Clay Pipe* 11 (Oxford, 1988).

<sup>126</sup> F. Manders, *A History of Gateshead* (Gateshead, 1973), p. 52.

Developments on the south shore of the Tyne are understandable given the concentrations of coal and ballast on the river, but as the industry maps suggests manufactories were not exclusively drawn to the Tyne. The Derwent valley, dominated by the river Derwent, a tributary of the Tyne which stretches through county Durham and Northumberland beside the North Pennines, also experienced more limited expansion. Michael Flinn claims that even in the late seventeenth century the Derwent valley was a 'backwater' where coal mining was the only industrial activity of any importance.<sup>127</sup> However, the raw material attributes of the Derwent valley area and its transport connection to the Tyne via the river Derwent made it an ideal location for industrial development, and Flinn believes that in the early eighteenth century the valley region experienced something 'in the nature of an industrial revolution' largely connected with metallurgical industries.<sup>128</sup> Flinn noted in particular Ambrose Crowley's iron works which had relocated from Sunderland to Winlaton and Swalwell on the Derwent valley in 1691, William Bertram furnace at Blackhall Mill which supplied raw materials to German sword-makers at Shotley Bridge (four miles up the river Derwent), and two other furnaces at Allensford and Derwentcote.<sup>129</sup> It is evident from the separate industry maps, specifically those for paper and pottery, that other manufactories developed in addition to metallurgical industries. At least one pottery was situated beside the river Derwent at Derwentcote, and five paper mills took advantage of small streams springing from the Derwent, specifically those at Chopwell, Shotley, Blackhall Mill, Gibside and Linzford. Furthermore it is evident that the Derwent valley area had particular reserves of clay, coal and iron which could be used in developing industries, discussed further in Chapter Three. The concentrated area along the Tyne belt was clearly a focal point of consumer industry development during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

#### *ii) Wear Valley*

Newcastle, the Tyne and Derwent valleys were not alone in housing concentrations of new manufactories and during the same period significant developments occurred at Sunderland and along the Wear valley. During the early sixteenth century Lord Dacre had described the diocese of Durham with Sunderland as 'an economic back-water, a

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<sup>127</sup> M. W. Flinn, 'Industry and Technology in the Derwent Valley of Durham and Northumberland in the Eighteenth Century', *Transactions of the Newcomen Society* (1960), p. 225.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 256.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 256-261.

savage and infertile country', in which only Newcastle's merchants 'constituted a single element of civilization.'<sup>130</sup> This interpretation creates a dramatic contrast with the image presented in John Rain's *Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth from the South 1785-179* which presents a rapidly growing commercial and industrial community.<sup>131</sup> Newcastle and the Tyne may have supported a concentrated majority of new industries and have been the centre of the coal industry in the region, but Sunderland's was a story of continual growth and development between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

The establishment of industry at Sunderland appears to have struggled against two factors, the jealousy of the Newcastle Corporation and the unsuitability of the Wear and Sunderland as a port. Exports of coal from Sunderland had been expanding from the seventeenth century but had remained far behind those of Newcastle largely because of the protective rights held by the Hostmen of Newcastle. The absence of the Hostmen at Sunderland made it a perfect location for enterprising new men hoping to avoid the restrictive practices of the Hostmen, and the exportation of coal from Sunderland resulted in a concentration of waste coal as it had done on the Tyne. Such waste coal was ideal for the manufacture of glass, pottery, sugar, tobacco pipes, and soap. However, despite continual growth in the seventeenth century, by the beginning of the eighteenth century the river Wear's port facilities were deemed unsuitable for further industrial expansion.

To address these issues the River Wear Commission was established in 1717 to save the harbour at Sunderland from decay and develop its fitness for the growing coal trade. The action undertaken involved pier building, dredging of channels, and general maintenance of the river, and as a consequence Sunderland became an increasingly attractive industrial area. It was during this period that economically Sunderland came to 'vigorous life', with the town's population rising from around 1,400 in 1640s to 12,412 in 1801, and increasing quantities of coal shipped from the port by the end of the eighteenth century. Dodds suggests that in the 1730s Sunderland's coal sales to London were 40 per cent of those sent from the Tyne, by the 1790s this had risen to 60 per

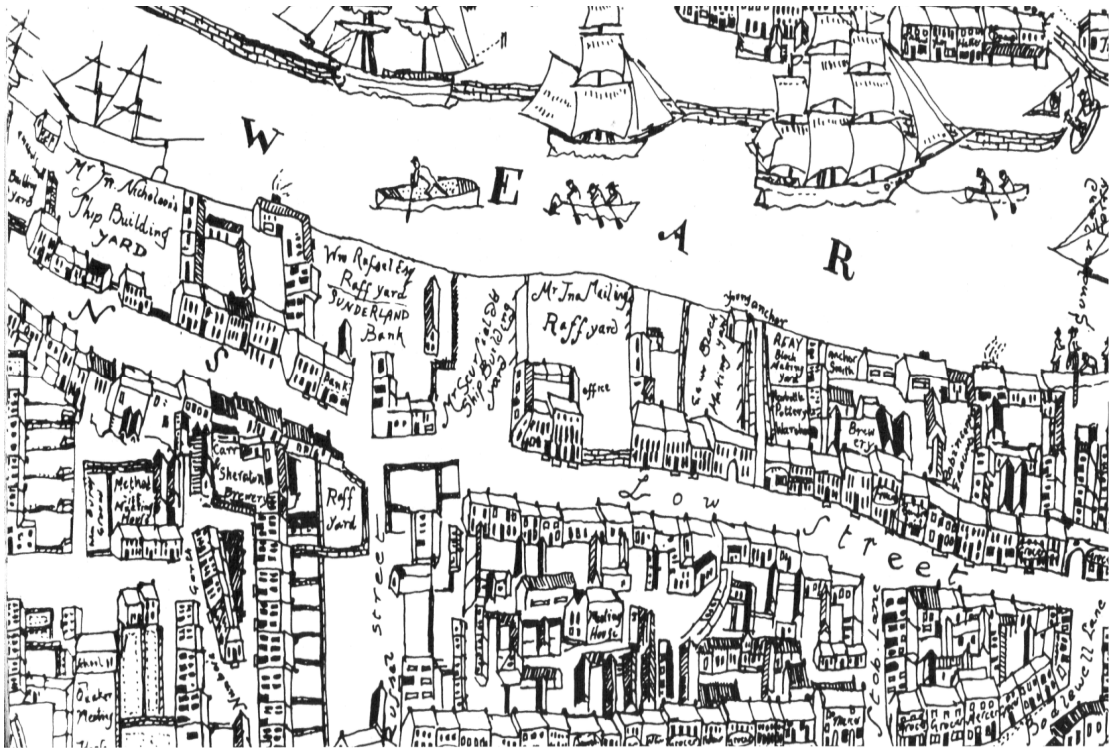
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<sup>130</sup> Lord Dacre cited in Dodds, *A History of Sunderland*, p. 23.

<sup>131</sup> Rain, *An Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth*.

cent.<sup>132</sup> Rain's pictorial map of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth indicates the extent to which the town had developed by the 1790s, showing a busy harbour and industries crowding the river side, a high street filled with shops and taverns, and varieties of houses and gardens (Fig. 4).

**Fig 4: Excerpt from Rain's Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth**



Recent research suggests that Sunderland's economic expansion was initiated much earlier than previous studies have indicated, but it is clear that growth in consumer industries was fixed in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries mirroring developments on the Tyne.<sup>133</sup> Glass had been produced at Sunderland since the 1690s, but the improvements to the river Wear and increased quantities of waste coal available from the growing export trade encouraged its expansion along with pottery production. The region's first documented commercial pottery was that at Newbottle near Sunderland established around 1720. By 1780 the town had five potteries including the important Maling pottery at Hylton, which would come to prominence in the nineteenth

<sup>132</sup> T. Corfe, *Sunderland: A Short History* (Newcastle, 1973), p. 51; Dodds, *A History of Sunderland*, p. 30, 41, 49.

<sup>133</sup> Most recent research on Sunderland's growth can be found in M. M. Meikle and C. M. Newman, *Sunderland and its Origins: Monks to Mariners* (Chichester, 2007).

century. Manufactories were not only concentrated at Sunderland but also on the Wear valley, reflecting distribution on the Tyne and Derwent valleys. On the river Wear and its tributaries were paper mills at Croxdale and Hett and potteries, brick and tile works at Coxhoe, Cockfield and West Auckland in addition to the industries located at Sunderland. Mirroring the Tyne and Derwent valleys, manufactories were clearly established in response to available raw materials and transport links, which in this case were provided by the river Wear connected to the growing port of Sunderland.

### *iii) Tees Valley and the wider Northumberland and Durham area*

In addition to the more prominent geographical areas of the Tyne and Wear valleys, which experienced growth in consumer industries, smaller scale expansion occurred along the Tees valley and at more dispersed locations throughout Northumberland and County Durham. Identification of consumer industries located in the Tees valley area was less common suggesting that sources were biased towards the central region, or that the river Tees simply attracted less development. One paper mill at Eggleston abbey was identified, one brick works at Hurworth and one tile maker at Darlington. It is likely that industry in this area remained limited and Tony Barrow has detailed that whilst the port of Stockton was developing, the area's export trade continued to be centred on commodities of a pre-industrial economy, such as butter.<sup>134</sup> Likewise, consumer industries were thinly distributed away from the Tyne in Northumberland. Particular areas in Northumberland, especially around the river Wansbeck drew manufactories as a result of coal and clay concentrations combined with water transport. Brick, tile and glasshouse developments at Ford and Seaton Sluice in Northumberland grew through the concentration of available raw materials and the attentions of Sir John Delaval. As with population growth, industrial expansion away from the main Tyne belt and Wear valley was certainly more limited, depending largely on the attentions of entrepreneurial landowners or particularly favourable conditions.

### ***Conclusions***

The evidence presented in this initial overview and mapping of industry suggests that the characterisation of the Northumberland and Durham economy as one exclusively based on coal is somewhat misleading. It especially casts doubt on Rowe's conclusion

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<sup>134</sup> T. Barrow, *The Port of Stockton-on-Tees* (North East England History Institute, 2005), p. 34.

that the region had no base in consumer industries. More recent evaluations of the region and its economy as one of contrasts are more accurate. Lorna Weatherill, Adrian Green and Keith Wrightson, amongst others, have noted the contrasting attributes displayed in Northumberland and Durham in terms of economy, population and industry.<sup>135</sup> Green in particular has described the region as supporting a 'quasi-industrial economy'.<sup>136</sup> Such contrasts are confirmed and emphasised by the evidence of an increasingly efficient and commercialised agricultural system and the establishment of multiple consumer based industries. Essentially the region was both a specialised economy producing coal, a well documented industry, whilst it also supported multiple consumer industries. It appears the economy was more akin with that of London or the industrialising north-west, which supported a diverse range of industries, than with progressively more specialised economies such as Sheffield and Norwich.<sup>137</sup> In many ways it was a port town economy that spilled out into the hinterlands.

The growth of each industry in Northumberland and Durham generally occurred simultaneous to the establishment or expansion of the national industry, suggesting that the changes taking place regionally were part of a more widespread development. It is not evident that regional industries led initial national expansion; they appeared to have responded to and participated in national changes. Both the glass and pottery industries grew considerably in numbers during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was the glass industry, however, that almost certainly developed to be the second largest industry in the region after coal. Contemporaries throughout the period were acutely aware of the importance of the coal industry, but both local and national commentators also observed a developing glass sector. In the late seventeenth century the Tyne and Wear glass sector was only a small part of a rapidly growing national industry, but by the mid-nineteenth century it produced a large percentage of national output. Potteries grew equally rapidly in number, but it is clear that they did not develop the same significance. Weatherill openly observes that northern potteries were significantly

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<sup>135</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 51; Green, 'County Durham at the Restoration', pp. xxxiii-xxxvi; Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', pp. 126-150.

<sup>136</sup> Green, 'County Durham at the Restoration', p. xxxv.

<sup>137</sup> P. Earle, 'The economy of London, 1660-1730' in P. O'Brien, D. Keene, M. 'tHart and H. van der Wee (eds.) *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 83, 94; P. Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class* (London, 1989), pp. 17-81; Stobart, *The First Industrial Region*; D. Hey, *The Rural Metalworkers of the Sheffield Region* (Leicester, 1972).

smaller in size than Staffordshire's and this did not alter drastically between 1680 and 1780.

Glass may have been the only industry to craft a national reputation throughout the period, but what is evident is that all of the industries were expanding in a more commercialised economy as commercialised industries. The ability to trace the industries in the advertisements of Newcastle's newspapers is representative of this development. Brick and tile manufactories are clear examples of these industries that were entering this new type of market. Their establishment and expansion represented a change in building materials and style which also encouraged the commercialisation of previously unstandardised industries.

Significantly, the individual industries largely shared a similar chronology of expansion (with the glass industry experiencing slightly earlier establishment, but a similar chronology of growth). This shared chronology suggests these industries may have been linked by more widespread cultural and economic changes; changes which were encouraged by simultaneous supply and demand side developments, changes which saw the availability of better raw materials, improved technical knowledge and skills in production, and more widespread demand for the products they created. Whilst the shared chronology of these industries is of interest, the appearance of a variety of consumer industries in Northumberland and Durham, rather than only one or two, is also of import. The location of individual manufactories gives some indication of why a variety of industries thrived in the region. It is clear that both Newcastle and Sunderland had particular concentrations of glass, pottery, tile, brick, sugar, and soap manufactories suggesting the importance of port facilities. However, it is apparent that manufactories of all types were drawn to navigable rivers, perceptible from the concentration of manufactories on both sides of the Tyne from South Shields to Heddon-on-the-Wall, on the Wear from Sunderland to Cockfield, on the river Derwent, the river Wansbeck and river Tees. Evidently the ability to access raw materials and the local and export markets by navigable rivers were essential factors of early industrial growth.<sup>138</sup> The limited size of the regional sugar industry, which was not suitably situated to receive raw sugar as Atlantic imports, emphasises the importance of raw materials in the

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<sup>138</sup> Stobart, *The First Industrial Region*, pp. 64-137.

context of local industry. But to what extent were these industries entirely reliant on available raw materials? As Hudson advises, it is important not to rely on a 'soil to society' interpretation of regional industry.<sup>139</sup> The existence of raw materials may not entirely explain why and how these industries were established and expanded in Northumberland and Durham in particular. The next chapter will explore in detail the factors that united these industries in production, allowing them to expand in a similar timeframe. It will essentially consider the supply side factors that allowed consumer industries to develop in the region.

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<sup>139</sup> Hudson, 'The Regional Perspective', p. 21.

### **Chapter Three**

#### **An Economy of Convenience**

##### ***Introduction***

The mapping undertaken in the previous chapter indicates that far from being a specialised economic region, economic expansion of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the growth of multiple consumer industries in Northumberland and Durham. The variety of industries in the region was more akin to those existent in London and the north-west than other areas such as Sheffield, with its thriving but increasingly specialised metal trade. Their existence, however, raises a number of questions surrounding why and how such a cross-section of manufactories were able to develop specifically in one region. What supply side resources were available for the development of this collection of consumer industries?

Those historians who briefly noted the appearance of consumer industries in Northumberland and Durham logically connected their rise to the existence of plentiful coal; a convenience abundantly available. This was a regional version of what Nef noted on a national scale, the rise of a variety of manufacturing industries resulting from the widespread adoption of coal as an energy source.<sup>140</sup> Contemporaries made this initial connection. For Defoe the thriving glass industry of early eighteenth-century Newcastle was ‘particularly owing to the coals’ available on the banks of the river Tyne, as was the extensive salt industry.<sup>141</sup> But was the sole existence of coal enough to promote the establishment of these industries? For others it was the port facilities available on the Tyne in particular, and to a lesser extent on the Wear, that allowed for easy access to additional imported raw materials.<sup>142</sup> Those manufactories situated away from the ports suggest the importance of other local minerals and resources. All of these factors recommend the conveniences accessible to regional industries. The availability of coal, navigable rivers, and important port facilities point towards consumer industry growth as a natural step in the development of the regional economy. A growth that was perhaps even easily achieved as a result of the natural resources the region possessed. This chapter considers to what extent the growth of consumer industries in

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<sup>140</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, I, pp. 180-230.

<sup>141</sup> Defoe, *A Tour Thro’ the Whole Island*, III p. 223.

<sup>142</sup> Linsley, ‘Tyne Industries’, pp. 194-198.

Northumberland and Durham was the result of supply side conveniences available in the region.

For Frank Atkinson it was the combination of ‘men, money and minerals’ that led the establishment and expansion of consumer industries, though according to Atkinson ‘it is scarcely possible to allocate precedence’.<sup>143</sup> Despite the obvious alliterative nature of this phrase, there may be a large degree of truth in this conclusion. It has elsewhere been suggested that the existence of ‘men of enterprise, vision, and resources who were prepared to take risks and to seize opportunities with both hands’ encouraged and allowed a range of industries to develop.<sup>144</sup> These statements both suggest another element to the supply side resources. Raw materials were essential, but active agents were required to take advantage of these resources. The following discussion will analyse the importance of their resources, which were considerable and included land, minerals, industries, money, family, and trade connections at their disposal. It will consider whether the growth of consumer industries was entirely an accident of the available mineral resources, and what sort of role landowners, merchants, and entrepreneurs played in encouraging this growth to take place.

The following discussion is focused on constructing an image of the resources used to develop the glass, pottery, brick, tile, paper, and metal industries in the region. The question of supply side resources is considered from four different angles to assess the extent to which consumer industry growth was a result of the natural endowments the region possessed. It will firstly consider the importance of available coal and other local raw materials, and secondly the role of imported raw materials. It will then focus on the role of landowners and merchants in the region and also explore the social networks that were key to the provision of raw materials, entrepreneurs and finance. Lastly it will explore whether the capital, craftsmen, and expertise required to create new consumer goods were indigenous to the region, or whether they were supplied and enticed from other parts of the country. Essentially, were supply side resources indigenous to Northumberland and Durham?

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<sup>143</sup> F. Atkinson, *The Industrial Archaeology of North-East England, 1* (Newton Abbot, 1974), p. 16.

<sup>144</sup> Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 11.

### ***Local Raw Materials***

The geological conditions of the counties of Durham and Northumberland may have had a limiting effect upon the early size and efficiency of the agricultural economy in the region, but the minerals that could be found in the counties grounds were ripe for exploitation by landowners and merchants in a variety of manufacturing industries. Coal is well-documented as one of the key advantages of the regional economy creating local wealth, but one which was also linked to most of the new consumer industries as Nef highlighted in his important history of the coal industry.<sup>145</sup> The production processes which created glass, iron, pottery, salt, brick, tile, soap, and sugar all required coal, thus earning them the title of “satellite” industries, which circulated around the main industry of coal. The growth of these industries nationally in a period during which coal began to replace timber as the energy source of the nation, is testament to their reliance on that mineral. Between them the industries could consume vast quantities. Hodgson estimated that the glasshouses of the region alone consumed around 50 to 60 thousand tons of coal annually, around one and a half times the amount used by the salt industry.<sup>146</sup> Ambrose Crowley’s ironworks at Winlaton in County Durham was said to have consumed 540 tons of coal in four months of winter in 1708/9, whilst 1,600 tons were consumed annually at Winlaton Mill and Swalwell.<sup>147</sup> The French mineralogist and civil engineer, Gabriel Jars, observed when examining the Northumberland pottery industry in 1765: ‘Newcastle is very advantageously placed for this trade; coal is very abundant, and very cheap because no duty is paid for local consumption.’<sup>148</sup>

Widespread availability of coal throughout both Northumberland and Durham reduced the major difficulties and costs of transporting the bulky raw materials that other parts of the country incurred, providing an undoubted advantage to consumer industries in the region. Furthermore, the increasing exportation of coal from the region had necessarily encouraged improvements in overland transportation which reduced costs. Waggonways apparently reduced costs by around 50 per cent.<sup>149</sup> In the later eighteenth

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<sup>145</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, I, pp. 180-230.

<sup>146</sup> R. I. Hodgson, ‘Coalmining, Population and Enclosure in the Seasale Colliery Districts of Durham (Northern Durham), 1551-1810: a Study in Historical Geography’, I, (Unpublished Durham University PhD Thesis, 1989), p. 70.

<sup>147</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 117.

<sup>148</sup> Gabriel Jars cited in F. S. C. Celoria, ‘Techniques of Pottery Making at Newcastle upon Tyne in 1765’, *Science and Archaeology* (1976), p. 21.

<sup>149</sup> Linsley, ‘Tyne Industries’, p. 192.

century the added transportation costs of moving coal even a short distance from collieries to ports or navigable rivers could have a large impact upon price, doubling it in some cases.<sup>150</sup> The immediate availability of coal and improved overland haulage cut many of these transportation burdens.

However, the claim that these industries were “satellites” of coal mining is to place them in utter dependence of that industry. Coal was a key ingredient, but the profitability of the mining industry was also dependent on the consumption of poorer ‘grades’ or ‘small’ coals by the consumer industries. In 1755 John Cookson, owner of the crown and plate glass manufactory at South Shields and member of a wealthy Penrith family with iron, salt and glass interests in Newcastle, wrote a sober and careful letter to one prospective colliery owner, cautioning him about the running of a colliery. He also advised, ‘[i]f you Can not sell your Coals otherwise a Bottle house may consume them.’<sup>151</sup> A glasshouse which specialised in the production of bottles was the ideal way to dispose of small coals profitably as these particular works consumed large quantities and the dark green colour of the glass meant imperfections resulting from sulphurous coal fumes were not noticeable.<sup>152</sup> Although glass manufactories, amongst other industries, were reliant on coal as an energy source, it is clear that colliery owners could often be equally dependent on glasshouses, potteries, brick and tile works, salt pans and other industries. When the market for coal waned or when colliery owners were overloaded with unsalable small coals, the new manufactories consumed them. Gabriel Jars noted on observations at Northumberland in 1765 that for glazing pottery ‘[a]ny grade of coal can be used for...firing.’<sup>153</sup> The developing consumer industries in the region were ideal counterparts to its large coal mining sector.

A letter written by Sir John Delaval, the owner of the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works at Hartley, emphasises and expands this idea of mutual dependency. Delaval not only wrote of the ‘mutual and inseparable profit’ linking his colliery and other industries, but also stated to a London coal factor in 1777: ‘[w]ere it not for my glass works, salt works, copperas works etc. in which I consume annually several thousand

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<sup>150</sup> G. Turnbull, ‘Canals, Coal and Regional Growth During the Industrial Revolution’, *Economic History Review* 40 (1987), p. 544, 547.

<sup>151</sup> TWA, JCL, 24 March 1755; Ross, ‘The Development of the Glass Industry’, p. 6.

<sup>152</sup> Ross, ‘The Development of the Glass Industry’, p. 7.

<sup>153</sup> Gabriel Jars cited in Celoria ‘Techniques of Pottery Making’, p. 23.

chaldrons of my small coals, I could not work the seam I furnish the London market from and send such large coals as I do without a loss that would be insupportable'.<sup>154</sup> Nor was this mutual dependence between coal and other manufacturing industries a new practice. Nef admitted that the gentry were encouraged to invest in the mining industry because of its potential for profit and expansion, but that 'it also led them to invest in other industries and to become traders.' Nef used the example of Sir Francis Willoughby's descendent Sir Francis, who apparently built glass furnaces at Wollaton shortly before 1615, 'partly in order to stimulate the local market for coal from his collieries.'<sup>155</sup> The new consumer industries were part of a delicate balance in a changing economy.

Large amounts of coal extracted was not of a good enough quality to be sent to London or other areas of the country for domestic hearths, and with increased coal extraction and export elsewhere in England, it was important for Northumberland and Durham colliery owners to maximise profitability. The so-called "satellite" industries produced marketable goods, but in this interpretation they were essential in the fight to ensure collieries were profitable and colliery owners could continue the ready supply of quality coal to the London market at the most competitive prices. It was in the interests of colliery owners to invest in other manufactories that could consume their waste coal. Consumption may have been the sole end in production of consumer goods in Northumberland and Durham, but it was not the sole purpose of production.

There was a clear two-way relationship between the coal mining industry and those industries that required coal for manufacturing, but as W. M. Hughes has remarked, it is misleading to believe 'that it was 'King Coal' which was to drag this reluctant area [Northumberland and Durham] in its wake into the prosperity of the classical industrial revolution', or that coal was solely responsible for the growth that took place before that recognisable period.<sup>156</sup> The growth of the paper industry is a pertinent example of this as the paper manufacturing process was entirely independent of coal, and yet grew substantially in Northumberland and Durham from the 1670s onwards. More

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<sup>154</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/10/44, Delaval to Isaac Cookson, 7 May 1807; Sir John Delaval writing to Peter Barker, a London factor, on 31 January 1777 cited in R. Smith, *Sea Coal for London* (London, 1961), p. 113; Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 6.

<sup>155</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, II, p. 17.

<sup>156</sup> W. M. Hughes, 'Economic Development in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries' in J. C. Dewdney (ed.), *Durham County and City with Teesside* (Durham, 1970), p. 228.

particularly most of the industries which did use coal in their production process required at least one or two other raw materials, of which some could be also be found beneath the soil of the region. The establishment and growth of consumer industries in Northumberland and Durham existed outside of the advantages provided by available coal. The availability of clay as well as coal was in many cases equally important for the encouragement of pottery, brick, tile, and glass works. Sea water enabled the production of salt, whilst the paper industry thrived on the existence of tributaries of clean water and rags from the expanding local population.

The superficial geology of Northumberland and Durham reveals extensive resources of local boulder clay, but it was clay found beside coal in the underlying or solid geology that was most useful in a number of the consumer industries. A coal seam often lay below or between layers of better quality fire or ganister clay, and it is evident that this was utilised by a number of local industries including potteries, brick and tile works, and to some extent glasshouses. The overlapping use of raw materials which saw pottery, tile, and brick manufactories situated in the same locations was a result of the availability of this fire clay, and the situation of the clay next to coal meant they were also often next to coal seams. Direct location by clay and coal seams cut transportation costs for pottery, brick and tile manufactories considerably before canals and railways provided reduced costs for bulk transportation of raw materials to inland locations.

Northumberland and parts of County Durham had distinct concentrations of this ganister clay beneath the soil (as Fig. 5 indicates), and a particularly rich source could be found at Rivergreen, near Morpeth in Northumberland. Rivergreen was situated on the river Wansbeck about three miles from Morpeth, and according to Matthew White's letter of 1747 to his glasshouse agent, the clay 'lyes between two coals, One coal 18 Trekes and the other one 12 the Clay is 32 Inches between them' suggesting that this was better quality fire clay.<sup>157</sup> A letter from glasshouse manager Joshua Henzell in 1780 confirms it as fire clay (shown on Fig. 6 which displays the solid geology in Northumberland).<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> NRO, ZRI/36/1, Letters and papers re St Lawrence Bottle Works 1742-96, 28 March 1747.

<sup>158</sup> NRO, ZRI/36/1, Letters and papers re St Lawrence Bottle Works 1742-96, 18 December 1780.

By 1740 the Rivergreen estate already had ‘A very good EARTHEN-WARE MANUFACTORY, the best in the North, with Houses, Kiln, and other Conveniencies; and either with or without any convenient Quantity of Ground’ which was advertised to let.<sup>159</sup> Clearly the pottery was established in response to the availability of fire clay and coal, the situation of which reduced production costs. Further growth on the estate saw the additional establishment of both brick and tile works, and it is evident that Rivergreen clay was trialled at various times throughout the eighteenth century by the Ridley’s at their Newcastle glasshouses. Landowner, coal magnate, glasshouse owner, and MP, Matthew White Ridley, wrote to the broad glasshouse manager in 1747: ‘I send you by Bearer a little River Green Clay wch I desire you may Try and if it will answer I have enough of the same for Working. I have made enquiry and find Mr Lisle sent several 100 Tons of it to the Glasshouses above 50 years ago.’<sup>160</sup> It is not clear how successful these early trials were, but in 1780 the clay was again trialled at the middle broad glasshouse in Newcastle with the ‘purpose to make into Glasshouses potts in either alone, or by mixed in equal Quantities with ye Stourbridge Clay.’<sup>161</sup> Clay was required to make glasshouse pots in which sand and ash were melted; the clay needed to resist extremely high temperatures and some clay was naturally better for this than others. The best clay for glasshouse pots was Stourbridge fire clay, but local fire clays could also be used. The 1780 trial by the Newcastle glasshouse saw Rivergreen clay mixed with that from Stourbridge, a process which resulted in some success. When Joshua Henzel wrote to Ridley in December 1780 he concluded, ‘I now can wth pleasure say yt ye first tryal potts mix’d with Stourbridge clay, is at present standing well, in ye middle brd Glasshos’.<sup>162</sup>

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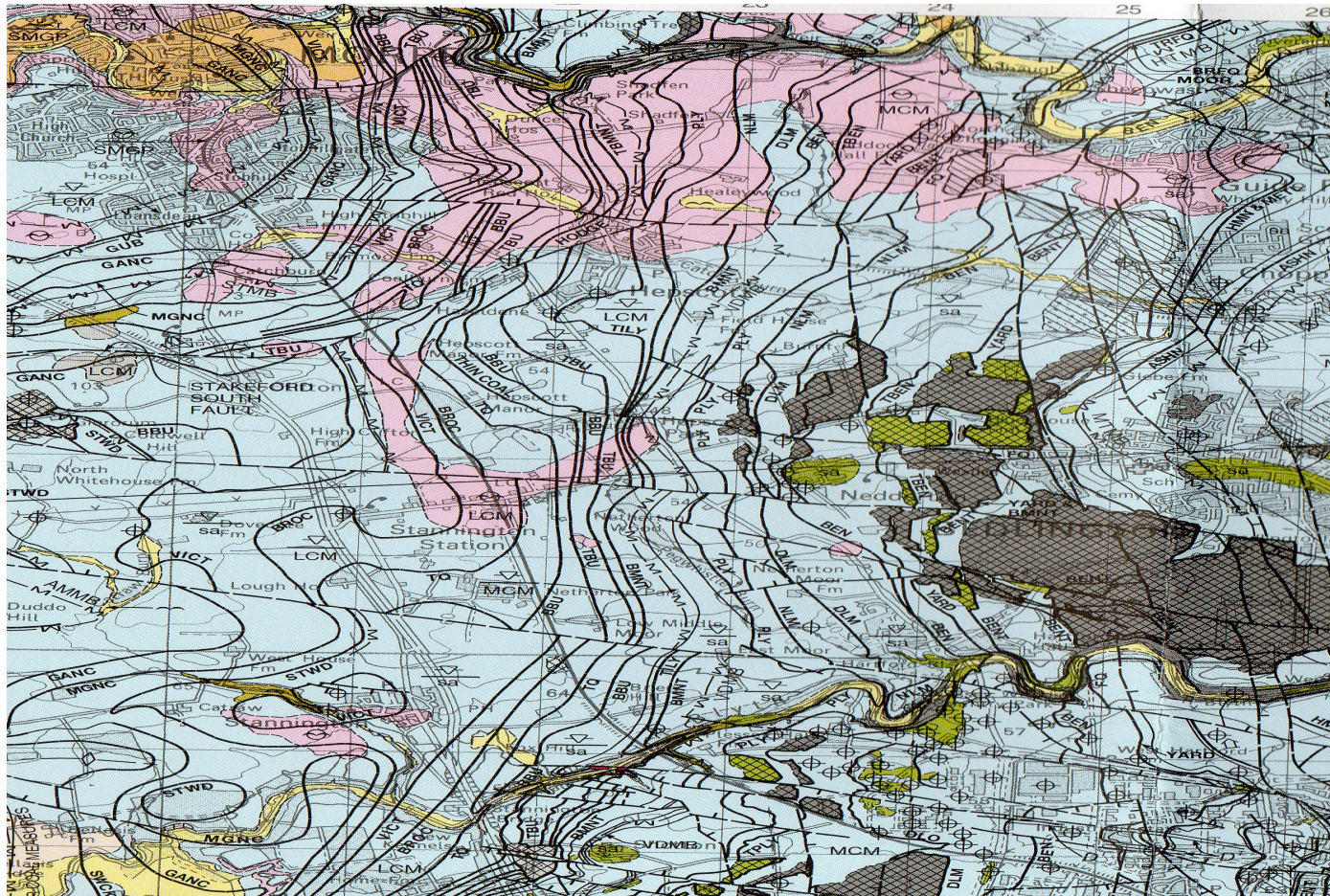
<sup>159</sup> *NJ*, 16 February 1740.

<sup>160</sup> NRO, ZRI/36/1, Letters and papers re St Lawrence Bottle Works 1742-96, 28 March 1747.

<sup>161</sup> NRO, ZRI/36/1, Letters and papers re St Lawrence Bottle Works 1742-96, 18 December 1780.

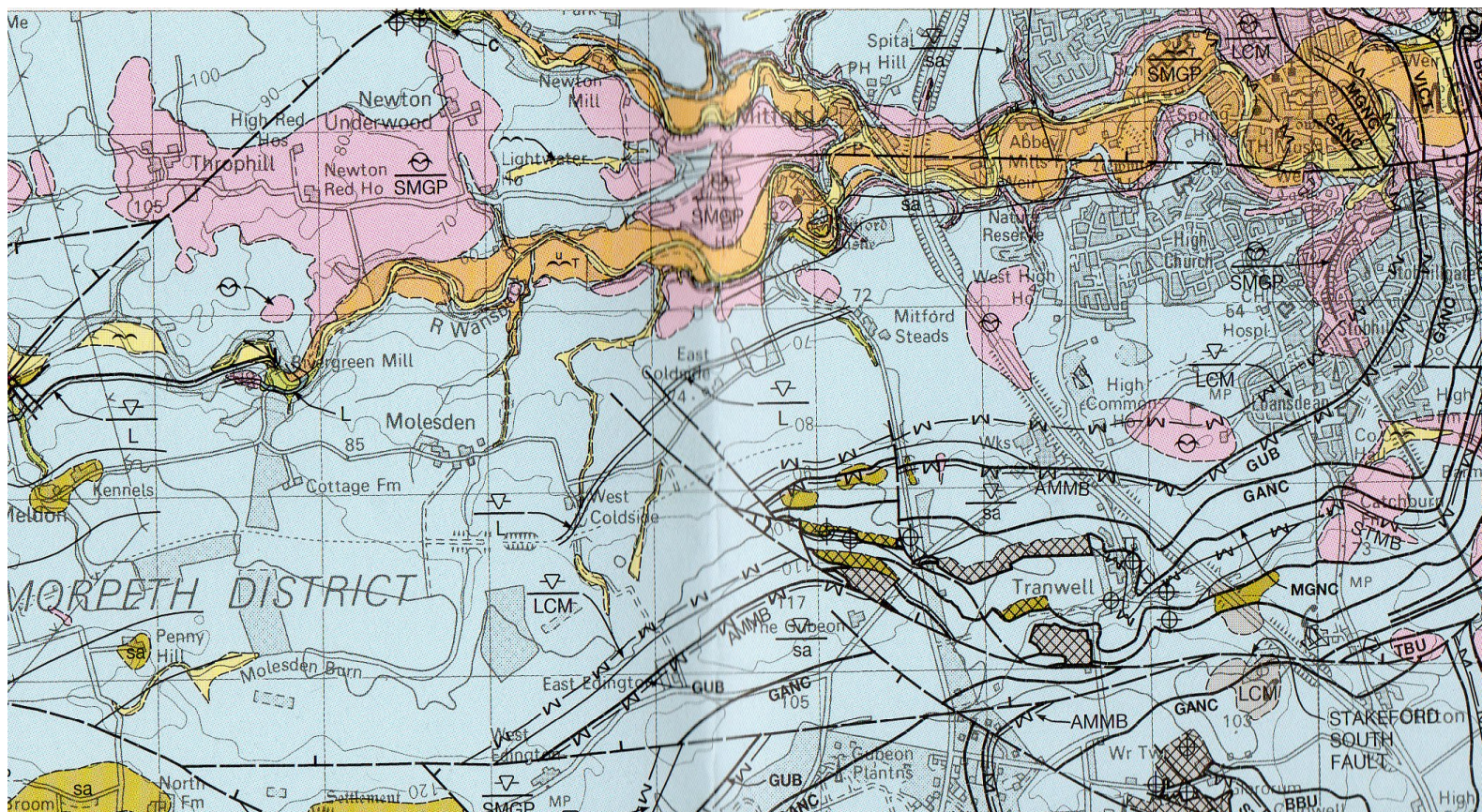
<sup>162</sup> NRO, ZRI/36/1, Letters and papers re St Lawrence Bottle Works 1742-96, 18 December 1780.

**Fig. 5: Examples of Ganister (fire) Clay in Northumberland**



Source: British Geological Survey, Natural Environment Research Council. Ganister Clay is represented on the map by the abbreviated phrase GANC

**Fig. 6: Rivergreen Estate and Local Ganister Clay Deposits**



Source: British Geological Survey, Natural Environment Research Council. Ganister clay is represented on the map by the abbreviated phrase GANC

Essentially the use of local resources in new consumer industries and the role of landowners and merchants were intertwined in the region. It was, after all, gentry landowners and merchants who exploited estate minerals and resources. Despite the variable use of local clay in glasshouses, gentry with land to lease were eager to emphasise the benefits of using local resources. An advertisement in the *Newcastle Courant* highlighted a clay mine ‘use of the glass-houses situated at Shotly-fields [next to the river Derwent in County Durham]’, displayed on the solid geology map in Fig. 7.<sup>163</sup> Likewise, Riplington in the parish of Whalton, Northumberland (shown on Fig. 8) was advertised with a mine of very good clay for glasshouses or earthenware, and another advertisement announced the use of Felton clay which was worked as part of the estate of the Earl and Countess of Northumberland.<sup>164</sup>

These types of lands were most commonly leased by gentry landowners confirming Charles Wilson’s claim that ‘manorial lords...enclosed land just as much to control and lease out the coal, mineral or clay under the soil as to improve the agriculture on the surface.’<sup>165</sup> For some gentry families this leasing of land was a combination of estate management and involvement in trade which was increasingly in progress during the seventeenth century, but for others it was merely a way of turning a profit from unused land.<sup>166</sup> According to W. M. Hughes a new race of local businessmen looked to estate ownership not as an ‘inevitable element in a static society...but as something the exploitation of which could and would produce power’.<sup>167</sup> Whilst the exploitation of estate minerals and clays was not particular to the region, the gentry and merchants of Northumberland and Durham, educated in the exploitation of coal, were ever sensitive to opportunities to turn a profit.<sup>168</sup> Towards the end of the eighteenth century landowners were so eager to utilise their resources which were increasingly in demand by newer industries that even kelp rocks for the use of glasshouses were advertised to let.<sup>169</sup> As industry grew on the Tyne, Wear and in the wider region such deposits

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<sup>163</sup> NC, 26 July 1746.

<sup>164</sup> NC, 8 March 1740; 25 September 1762.

<sup>165</sup> Wilson, *England’s Apprenticeship*, p. 205.

<sup>166</sup> F. Heal and C. Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales 1500-1700* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 120-127.

<sup>167</sup> Hughes, ‘Economic Development’, p. 228.

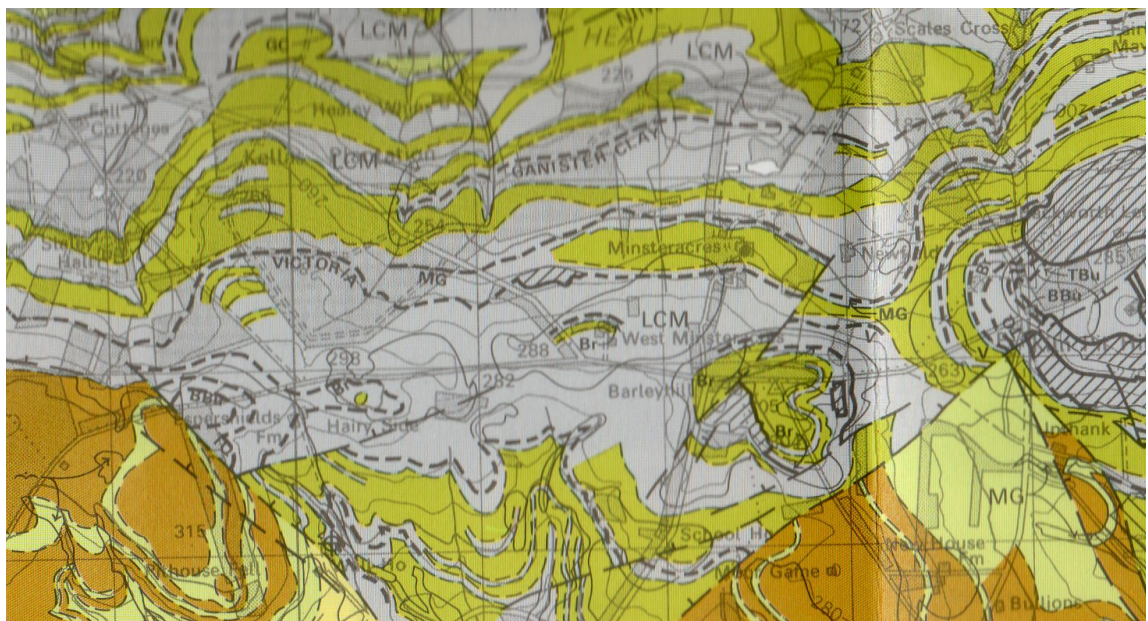
<sup>168</sup> G. E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1963), pp. 189-190; G. E. Mingay, *The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class* (London, 1976), pp. 98-104; Wrightson and Levine, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, p. 107.

<sup>169</sup> NC, 14 November 1786.

became increasingly sought after. In terms of clay however, manufacturers of glass tended to prefer better quality white Stourbridge clay transported via Bristol and Gainsborough when it could be supplied.

Notwithstanding its proclaimed suitability for glasshouses, it was in the production of pottery, bricks, and tiles that local clay was most commonly used. In a letter to Sir John Delaval written in 1768, his agent described trials of local Flodden clay explaining that he had ‘spent some time at a pottery & pantile Shade Near Ncastle [Newcastle] I found to be a sort of Clay Like that at Flodden I have got 2 men their to make trial of alittle Floden Clay into pots of Difrent Sorts and will send the Clay by the wagon this week I hav likewise brought some of thee Clay from thence to Shew

**Fig. 7: Clay Deposits near Shotleyfield in County Durham**



British Geological Survey, Natural Environment Research Council. Ganister clay is indicated specifically by the dotted line marked ‘ganister clay’ slightly north in the centre of the map excerpt.

what likeness it bears with the Clay at Flodden.<sup>170</sup> The clay pit at Flodden, relatively near the Delavals’ brick and pantile manufactory at Ford, was used to produce bricks and tiles for the Delaval estate and tenants on the estate.<sup>171</sup> This type of integration seen at Ford and Rivergreen which saw potteries, tile, and brickworks clustered together for

<sup>170</sup> NRO, 2/DE/4/10/41.

<sup>171</sup> NRO, NRO.650/G.4, Accounts and receipts Hartley brickworks 1757-93.

easy access to raw materials was common throughout Northumberland and Durham. Both Cottingwood and Heddon-on-the-Wall had sufficient reserves of clay to support potteries, brick, and tile works. Heddon-on-the-Wall was advertised ‘together with the pantile shades, brick conveniencies, and Pottery and Clay Warehouses, and Conveniencies for the making Pantiles, Bricks and all sorts of Clay Ware, which have been carried on to great advantage to the owner, lots of clay and other materials on estate’.<sup>172</sup>

Northumberland and Durham clearly had raw materials that were sufficient to encourage the growth of moderate local production; materials which, in the opinion of one potter, could not be surpassed in quality. In 1757 an advertisement appeared in the *Newcastle Journal* declaring that:

‘Whereas Joseph Warburton had been employed for some years in making China at Bow near London. He does hereby make known to the publick that he finds better materials here for the purpose and to be had at a cheaper rate. Therefore any gentleman willing to encourage such an undertaking may know particulars of the expence by applying to the above Joseph Warburton at Mr Hilcot’s Pot-house on the South Shore.’<sup>173</sup>

The notice not only accentuates the region’s raw material advantages, but also the extent to which, as Helen Berry has highlighted, London appeared as a ‘kite mark’ of quality to the provincial centre during the eighteenth century.<sup>174</sup> Evidently this ‘kite mark’ or standard of excellence was not limited to culture; quality of raw materials was also something worthy of comparison. This was not so much a cultural standard as an actual quality standard. The manufactory in Bow was known for producing a quality bone china; Warburton’s expertise at Bow qualified him to judge the quality of raw materials. However London was not the only kite mark or standard of excellence,

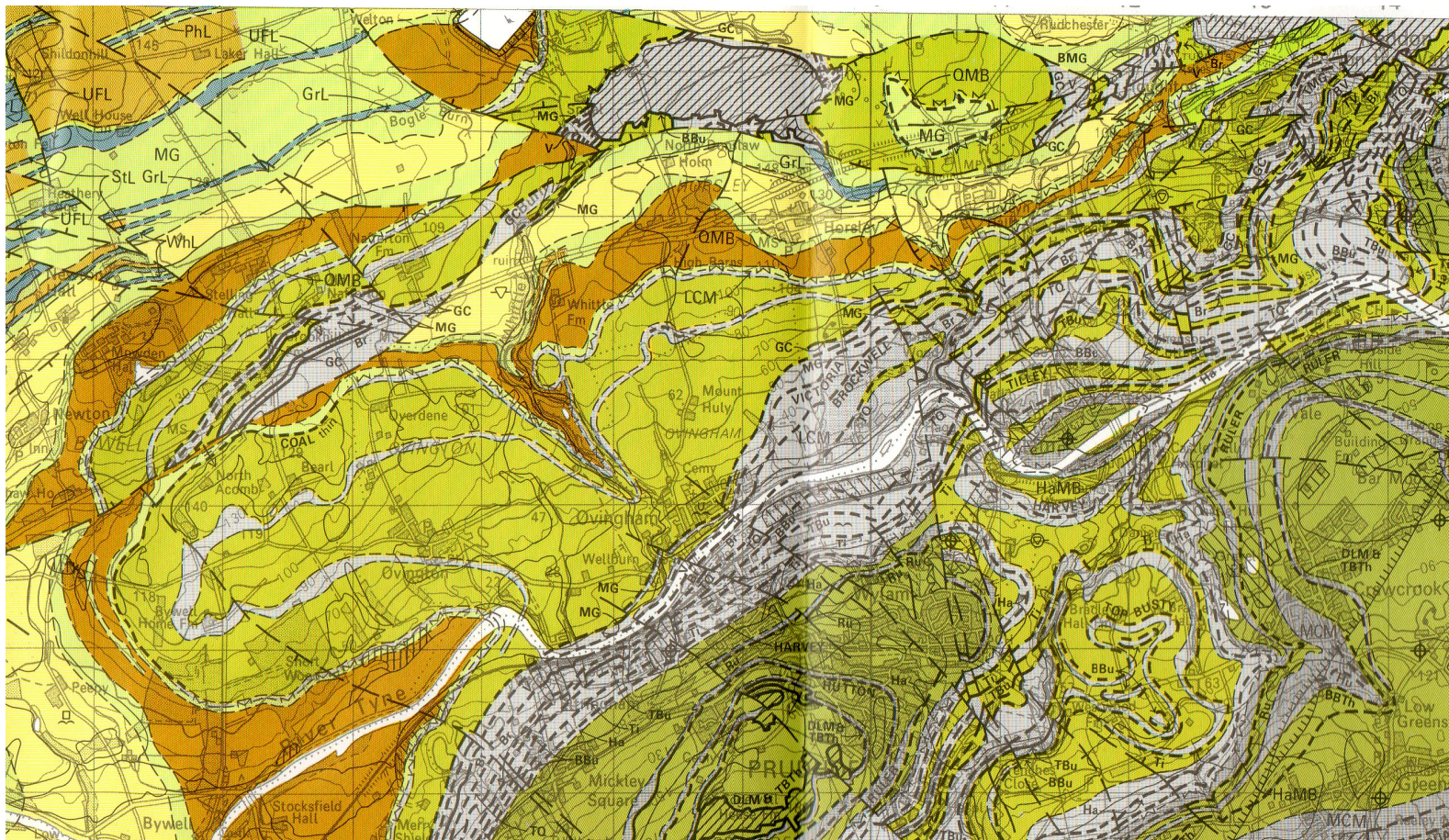
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<sup>172</sup> NC, 18 July 1772.

<sup>173</sup> NJ, 12 February 1757.

<sup>174</sup> Berry, ‘Promoting Taste’, pp. 6-11; N. Cox and K. Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 109-111.

**Fig. 8: Ganister Clay Deposits near Whalton and Ovingham in Northumberland**



Source: British Geological Survey, Natural Environment Research Council. Deposits indicated by abbreviated GC

as Chapter Four details, regional producers and retailers compared their produce (if not their raw materials) to various centres of quality and excellence; for example, London was compared for wallpaper, Staffordshire for earthenware, Sheffield for cutlery, and Holland for pantiles. The notice also suggests that the Tyne and Wear's relationship with the capital was not a linear one in which London's superior goods were supplied to the North and the North sent coal to London, but the relationship was a dynamic one in which London set a cultural and economic standard whilst additionally becoming a competitor which northern producers faced in the economic market. On a more basic level, by highlighting the cost-advantages, the advertisement indicates that production and consumption of fashionable items or household goods was as much about economic sense as it was about cultural prestige or origins.

The availability of coal and clay was undoubtedly important in the establishment and location of pottery, tile and brick manufactories, but these industries, like the paper making industry, struggled with a need for raw materials versus a need to be located near running water. For the pottery and tile industries it was the essentiality of proximity to flint mills. Given these circumstances it is unsurprising that potteries located away from the main rivers of the Tyne and Wear were situated at a close distance to tributaries. Flints were not available in the region but were ground in mills locally, thus water was required both for the transportation of flints to the flint mills and for their grinding. Water supply was also elemental in the papermaking process. In basic terms water was needed to clean the raw material, drive the waterwheel that powered the paper making machinery, and to help in the beating of linen and rags into a pulp that could then be dried. The paper mills required clean pure water for the making of white paper which usually meant location away from major urban or industrial centres where rivers and tributaries were often more polluted (although the production of poorer brown paper from discoloured water did often occur).<sup>175</sup> Unfortunately it was these growing urban centres that produced the required rags for production of paper, making access to transportation also essential. A number of mills apparently benefitted from the growing rope making trade situated at Newcastle and Sunderland, with Croxdale mill in County Durham using rope rags from the port at Sunderland to produce brown paper

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<sup>175</sup> Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, p. 7.

and Chopwell mill using old rags and sails to make coarse grey paper.<sup>176</sup> For paper, pottery and tile manufactories location on or near the region's rivers and tributaries was essential for the movement of raw materials, and in some cases for their entire production process, making it unsurprising that they appear clustered around these areas in the Wear, Derwent and Tees Valleys and near the river Wansbeck or Tyne.

It cannot be denied that coal played a vital role in the establishment of consumer industries in Durham and Northumberland, and was certainly key to regional industrial growth and the spatial distribution of manufactories.<sup>177</sup> The advantages of a location beside a coal seam or coal export centres such as Sunderland and Newcastle were considerable. Savings could be made on transportation of coal, and the poor grades of coal required by most industries could also be purchased cheaply. The availability of cheap coal encouraged the development of new industries, but their interconnection with the coal trade was not simply as satellites. Increasingly, new goods manufactories, as consumers of poor grade coal, were vital if colliery owners were to maintain profits sufficient to mine and ship high grade coal to London and other areas. Coal was not the only raw material advantage that the region boasted, and clay seams were of equal importance in the pottery, brick and tile industries, with some use in glassworks. These concentrations of clay and coal together saw the clustering of pottery, brick, and tile works in particular locations throughout the counties, whilst the necessity of flints (though not readily available in the region) for production and glazing also bound them to riverside locations. Additionally gentry, merchant, and landowners' willingness to exploit their land and mineral resources provided ample opportunity for the growth of new industries dependent on both coal and clay. The availability of these basic necessary mineral raw materials and access to them undoubtedly had a large impact upon the initial establishment of consumer industries and their location.

### ***Imported Raw Materials***

The availability of local coal, clay, and rags was an important factor in the establishment of the glass, pottery, brick, tile and paper industries on the Tyne and Wear and in the wider areas of Northumberland and Durham, but the industries could not be wholly satisfied from within the region. The dependence of a number of them,

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<sup>176</sup> Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, p. 19; Flinn, 'Industry and Technology', p. 261.

<sup>177</sup> Stobart, *The First Industrial Region*, pp. 64-137.

particularly glass, pottery and iron manufacture on imported raw materials is evident. As a result of this dependence some of the industries identified as satellites of coal mining were also known as ‘ballast’ industries.<sup>178</sup> The increasing exportation of coal, grindstones, and ironware amongst other items from the Tyne and Wear during this period resulted in a rising number of ships in need of ballast which was required to weigh them down on their return journey and prevent them from capsizing. Ballast was usually some heavy item such as sand, flint, or clay that was readily available at the ships destination. As port towns both Newcastle and Sunderland were ideally placed to benefit from the expanding export trade, and receive additional raw materials delivered as ballast, which could be shipped cheaply and would improve the quality of the local wares produced. Given the availability of sand, clay, and flint ballast at the region’s ports it is unsurprising that the individual industry maps in Chapter Two show major concentrations of manufactories along the rivers Tyne and Wear. Although manufactories were not exclusively situated on those rivers, most other manufactories were located at a close distance to smaller rivers and tributaries allowing for the easy transportation of raw materials and finished goods via water. Furthermore, these raw material requirements ensured the development of more complex trading links between merchants and suppliers around the country, specifically links with traders who often purchased finished goods from the Tyne and Wear manufactories in a return trade.

Those industries most dependent upon imported raw materials during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were glass, pottery and iron, with the glass industry demanding a relatively extensive list of materials in its production process. The essential raw materials, with the exception of coal, were sourced from around the country. Even in the glass industry, where the option of using local clay was available, most glasshouses preferred to use the most superior quality clay sourced from Stourbridge to construct glasshouse pots. A survey of Newcastle port books, analysed in detail in Chapter Five, reveals large and regular shipments of glasshouse and iron raw materials delivered to Newcastle between 1680 and 1780. Sand, soaper’s ashes and broken glass were delivered from Lynn, kelp was shipped from Aberdeen, iron from Hull, broken glass, pearl ashes, barilla ashes, pot ash, lead ash, old iron, Russian bar

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<sup>178</sup> Linsley, ‘Tyne Industries’, p. 195.

iron and pig iron from London, and ashes from Ipswich and Yarmouth.<sup>179</sup> The use of these port book records as evidence of the movement of raw materials is essential, highlighting specially the origins of materials, but is certainly an underestimate of the quantities of raw materials entering the region. The port books expressly do not record ships returning in ballast, suggesting that the trade in imported materials was far more extensive.<sup>180</sup>

By the 1730s and 40s a set of quality raw materials had been sourced from around the country and these were particularly prized in the glass industry. Sand from Lynn, clay from Stourbridge and various types of sodium carbonate including kelp, potash, pearl ash, and barilla from various locations including Scotland and Spain were shipped to the Tyne and Wear.<sup>181</sup> These raw material requirements linked Northumberland and Durham to a network of ports along the east and south coast of England and Scotland, but more infrequently to ports on the west coast. Only Stourbridge clay, also known as white pot clay, was desirable enough to require regular shipping to and from the west coast. In the 1750s, glasshouse owner John Cookson preferred Stourbridge clay to any other and wrote to order either Batchelor's or Glover's clay, both from the Stourbridge area shipped via Bristol.<sup>182</sup> By the 1780s the glasshouse preference for Stourbridge clay was well-established and Sir John Delaval, owner of the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works, was contacted by merchants from Gainsborough who wished to 'acquaint [him] that the Worcestershire & Staffordshire canals being open, and a free navigation to this place, a good deal of Stowerbridge Clay for Glasshouse about you, is likely to come this way, and as we suppose you must use a good deal of it, it may be a good commodity to stow at the Bottom of your Timber Vessel, or any other you may send here'.<sup>183</sup> Although the port book surveys do not regularly record shipments of clay, it is clear from business correspondence that Stourbridge clay was that prized by glasshouse owners.

Whilst Tyne and Wear glasshouses benefitted from the availability of cheap waste coal, unlike London houses which were forced to purchase coal at London prices, securing

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<sup>179</sup> See Chapter Five for detailed analysis.

<sup>180</sup> R. W. K. Hinton, *The Port Books of Boston: 1601-1640* (Hereford, 1956), p. xx.

<sup>181</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', pp. 7-8.

<sup>182</sup> TWA, JCL, 30 November 1756.

<sup>183</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/12/5, 29 April 1773.

steady trading relationships to supply additional raw materials such as Stourbridge clay, sand and kelp were essential for the smooth running of the regional manufactories. In 1739 Cookson claimed to use anywhere between 100 and 220 tons of kelp per year in his glassworks. Cookson considered that it was better to be supplied by one seller alone rather than several, and during this period the glassworks appears to have been supplied regularly by a Mr Hugh Clark.<sup>184</sup> However, by 1741 Cookson was discontent with this trading relationship and was in search of a new contract with another trader. Secure trading connections could be relied upon for regular deliveries of clay, kelp and sand, lack of which could have a disastrous effect upon the production process. In 1778 the bottle works at Hartley in Northumberland suffered from lack of sufficient quantities of ashes. The works agent explained to Sir John Delaval that ‘the bad Situation the Glasshouses is in at Present On Account of the want of Ashes’. The ordinary monthly consumption of ash at the bottle house was 120 tons, however the house had only 104 tons and it was thus necessary to use a combination of lime and kelp which used in the wrong quantities could be damaging to the glasshouse pots.<sup>185</sup> The absence of these imported raw materials could have a crippling effect on production which neither the availability of local clay or coal could compensate for. These regular trading connections, as well as being necessary for the smooth running of the glasshouses, were also important in terms of networks of credit which dominated trading relationships.

The acquisition of raw materials from around the country was not a one-way process and it gave glasshouse owners many opportunities to vend their produce to a wider market. John Cookson combined the search for reliable raw material suppliers with opportunities to vend glass. In 1740 Cookson wrote to a Mr John Orphin of Dublin to explain his sending glass to Whitehaven as he was sent iron in return: ‘I sent last winter some Glass to Whitehaven Some of it was Sold at Dublin as I have Occasion yearly for one ship or two to come Here from Whitehaven Loaden with Iron could freight ym pretty Easy back with 100 or 150 half case of Glass of Different sorts and any other Goods you had amind for.’<sup>186</sup> This trade connection with Whitehaven and Ireland was important for the sale of crated glass – Cookson’s correspondent suggested that 400 half crates of glass could be disposed of in Ireland - but also for the acquisition of Irish kelp

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<sup>184</sup> TWA, JCL, 29 July 1739, 6 October 1739.

<sup>185</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/3/5, Letters from William Allen, 27 January 1778.

<sup>186</sup> TWA, JCL, 5 September 1740.

and for the shipping of Stourbridge clay which was collected at Bristol on the return journey.<sup>187</sup> This one trading relationship was complex, but one that was of dual benefit to Cookson's manufactory. Similarly, at Hartley by the 1780s the bottle works had a regular contract with agents in London, Harrison and Broughton, who purchased large regular quantities of bottles and in return sent raw materials in the form of soaper's ashes and broken glass (cullet) back to Hartley.<sup>188</sup> Furthermore, the same traders who offered to ship Stourbridge clay for the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works stated: '[an] agent informs us that Sir John intends having Bottles, & Salt for sale. We believe a few Cargos of Glass Bottles would sell here', and consequently offered to sell bottles for a small commission.<sup>189</sup>

Such trade connections were vital for many of the region's glasshouses, creating dual benefits from the inconvenience of reliance on imported raw materials. Evidence of transactions of raw materials and finished glass also questions the extent to which the arrival of ballast used in these industries was a random process. According to John Cookson's correspondence, acquisition of raw materials could require the sending of specific ships to collect them when they were needed, rather than being sent randomly. In January 1768 he wrote to a supplier George Holmes: 'As I am in want of Stowerbridg Clay will be obliged To send Another ship sooner than Intended'.<sup>190</sup> It is clear that sending essential raw materials as ballast was more convenient for glasshouse owners than sending them as ordinary cargo. Cookson explained early in his manufactory's history his desire to have sand sent as ballast as he would 'get it brought without any freight'.<sup>191</sup> Although raw materials could be sent as ballast, this was not accidental; they were ordered specifically for their value in glass production and required as ballast to reduce costs.

The dependence of the Tyne and Wear glass industry upon imported raw materials is well-documented, but more strongly debated and more difficult to assess is whether the Northumberland and Durham potteries were supplied with imported raw materials. The advantages of using local brown clay were considerable and its availability determined

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<sup>187</sup> TWA, JCL, 4 March 1741.

<sup>188</sup> NRO, 2DE/12/4/1-105, Ship bills of lading for bottle to Broughton and Harrison in London and soaper's ashes from them 1771 Dec - 1773 Oct.

<sup>189</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/12/5, 29 April 1773.

<sup>190</sup> TWA, JCL, 28 January 1768.

<sup>191</sup> TWA, JCL, letter to Richard Hawkins from John Cookson, 14 September 1738.

the location of a number of potteries in the wider county areas, as the previous discussion of local raw materials highlights, but the eighteenth-century fashion was increasingly for white clay ceramics. According to Shaw, proximity to navigable rivers was also an important factor for potteries in order that they could receive imports of white pot clay (most prominently Stourbridge clay), which was brought into the region by colliers as ballast.<sup>192</sup>

Harold Blakey, whilst acknowledging the importation of white pot clay, has questioned the extent to which these loads were used in local potteries. Instead he suggests that pot clay from Bristol was most likely destined for the glasshouses of the region, with the pottery industry using its own local clays.<sup>193</sup> Whilst pot clay was used in the glass industry there is little conclusive evidence to suggest it was not being used in local potteries. The major absence of detailed business records for any potteries in the region, especially compared to the wealth available for the glass industry, makes this a problematic issue. The use of mere local clays would restrict the regional potteries to the production of coarse items, and indeed Blakey's argument is based on his claim that local potteries produced only coarse brown earthenware that was made with local clays.<sup>194</sup> However, as Chapter Four details, evidence suggests that a variety of earthenware and stoneware was manufactured in the region. Furthermore, Gabriel Jars' observations of the Northumberland pottery industry confirm that better quality imported clay was used. According to Jars, '[t]he clay used to make pottery comes from Devon whence it arrives by ship, acting like the flint as ballast for returning vessels...Its colour is greyish-white and it consists of very fine particles.'<sup>195</sup> It is possible that manufacturers in Northumberland and Durham chose to produce some ceramics using imported clays in order to manufacture types of pottery reminiscent of Staffordshire ware, a popular type of pottery at the time, whilst still continuing to produce coarser wares. It may also be possible that individual manufacturers preferred to use imported clay. For example, Manders suggests that John Warburton, who produced pottery at Pandon Dean in Newcastle and then Carr's Hill in Gateshead, is said to have moved

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<sup>192</sup> Shaw, *The Potteries of Sunderland*, p. 5; Bell and Gill, *The Potteries of Tyneside*, p. 5.

<sup>193</sup> H. Blakey, 'Newcastle Potters and the Expansion of Earthenware from Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1739-1796', *Northern Ceramic Society Journal* 18 (2001), pp. 118-20.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> Gabriel Jars cited in Celoria 'Techniques of Pottery Making', p. 22.

from Staffordshire to the region.<sup>196</sup> It may be possible that Warburton preferred his home raw materials enough to demand specific deliveries to his new manufactory.

According to Jars, in addition to this ‘greyish white clay’ brought from Devon the pottery industry in Northumberland was also supplied with flints which were ‘known to be very plentiful in southern England, since from Dover to London almost all the ground is a mixture of chalk and flint.’<sup>197</sup> Like the sand, kelp, and clay required by the glass industry, flint was ‘carried very cheaply abroad coal ships returning from London’ as ‘[s]uch vessels are obliged to take on ballast.’<sup>198</sup> It is also likely that flints may have been transported from nearby Whitby, although there is no evidence in the port book sample analysed in Chapter Five to confirm this. However, as the port books do not record shipment of ballast only business records can confirm these movements of flint.

Outside of the glass and pottery industries one of the greatest beneficiaries of the import and export trade of Sunderland and Newcastle was Ambrose Crowley’s ironworks which has been described as very likely England’s ‘largest single consumer of pig iron’, and even in the early eighteenth century is said to have consumed around 1,300 tons of Swedish bar iron annually which rose to 2,400 tons by mid-century.<sup>199</sup> Accordingly, the works drew in supplies of iron from a large cross-section of locations, both national and international. The works’ situation beside the river Derwent offered access to deposits of lead and iron in the valley, but it was proximity to the port of Newcastle that was most valued as it provided access to large scale imports.<sup>200</sup>

Crowley, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, had the Swalwell works supplied by English smelters scattered throughout the country, but such was its size that by second quarter of the eighteenth century the firm was looking ‘for bulk purchases from abroad’.<sup>201</sup> By 1765 when Gabriel Jars visited the Crowley works he confirmed that Scotch pig iron was being used at the works there.<sup>202</sup> However, the manufactories at Swalwell and Winlaton were particularly well-suited to be supplied from Sweden. The

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<sup>196</sup> Manders, *A History of Gateshead*, p. 63.

<sup>197</sup> Gabriel Jars cited in Celoria ‘Techniques of Pottery Making’, p. 21.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 103, 107.

<sup>200</sup> Flinn, ‘Industry and Technology’, p. 256.

<sup>201</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 102.

<sup>202</sup> Gabriel Jars cited in Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 102.

continuous shipment of Swedish bar iron is evident from the region's port books, with Newcastle receiving it directly as a result of foreign trade and also in coastal vessel cargoes from Hull and London.<sup>203</sup> Freight of English bar iron was cheaper, but for some purposes Swedish bar iron could not be substituted, furthermore the iron could be supplied in large quantities from one location.<sup>204</sup>

Coal may have been Northumberland and Durham's greatest natural raw material attribute, but its availability was not sufficient to encourage the development of new consumer industries alone. The glass industry in particular was reliant upon imported raw materials from England and Scotland which could be supplied frequently and relatively cheaply due to Newcastle's position as a major port. Although attempts to smelt iron locally did take place, due to its size it was inevitable that the regional iron industry would also be dependent on imported raw materials. Nor was this reliance upon imported materials necessarily a hindrance, although lack of sufficient quantities could have a crippling effect on production. John Cookson, Sir John Delaval and Ambrose Crowley all combined the need for raw materials with the vending of their glass and iron, making sure they received dual benefits from the transportation of raw materials.

### ***Gentry, Merchants and Craftsmen: Interchange, Exchange, Investment and Networks***

The natural resources available within the counties of Northumberland and Durham, and the major ports of Sunderland and Newcastle which allowed access to other quality raw materials, were all to the benefit of the glass, pottery, iron, brick, tile, sugar, and paper industries. However these raw materials were merely the building blocks of the new consumer industries. The foundations were laid, as Hughes suggests, by those 'men of enterprise, vision, and resources who were prepared to take risks and to seize opportunities with both hands'.<sup>205</sup> It was their spirit of enterprise and improvement, their trading connections, land, and their capital that drove forward the creation and growth of many consumer industries. Their role has already been indicated; estate management was an essential aspect in the availability of local raw materials and

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<sup>203</sup> See details in Chapter Five for further discussion of iron received into the Tyne port.

<sup>204</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 107.

<sup>205</sup> Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 11.

business connections were vital to the acquisition of imported raw materials. Whilst it may appear that for many gentry and merchants this was a time of building individual estates, they were also intertwined in systems of partnership and interdependence.<sup>206</sup> As the discussion of imported raw materials suggests, these connections and partnerships were made with merchants and businessmen outside of the region, but fundamentally with those directly involved in the economic prosperity and growth of Northumberland and Durham. These connections and the influence they had upon the economy were manifest in various ways. In some cases gentry could have an indirect influence through the straightforward lease of land and mineral deposits. Others took a more direct role in business and industry by investing money, leasing land to accommodate manufactories, vending finished products, and by selling raw materials internally between the manufactories they owned. As Mingay suggested, landowners were inevitably drawn into commerce and trade by the exploitation of their estates.<sup>207</sup> This was never truer than in Northumberland and Durham where involvement in the coal industry involved both the exploitation of minerals and subsequent vending.

At the root of the new industries were two factors; the utilisation of minerals on gentry and merchants lands, and ties between entrepreneurs solidified through partnerships, both formal and informal. According to Nef colliery partnerships dated from about 1575 and were especially preferred in Northumberland and Durham as a method of raising capital.<sup>208</sup> Coal mining was a notoriously risky enterprise and colliery partnerships were an effective method of raising capital, spreading risk, and to some extent, monopolising the industry.<sup>209</sup> Ellis has also emphasised the use of partnership in industries outside of the mining sector.<sup>210</sup> The importance of partnerships is evident at all levels of trade from large manufactories to small craftsmen, and was evidently popular in the region. The Cookson family enterprises provide excellent examples of how capital and partnership dominated the establishment of many Northumberland and Durham manufactories and industries. The creation of a new industry could not be accomplished easily and start up

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<sup>206</sup> D. Oldroyd, *Estates, Enterprise, and Investment at the Dawn of the Industrial Revolution* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 23, 76-80; A. W. Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry in North-East England 1650-1830* (Sunderland, 1999), pp. 146-148.

<sup>207</sup> Mingay, *The Gentry*, p. 104.

<sup>208</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry, II*, p. 44, 49-50.

<sup>209</sup> Oldroyd, *Estates, Enterprise, and Investment*, pp. 76-80.

<sup>210</sup> J. Ellis, 'Risk, Capital, and Credit on Tyneside circa 1690-1780' in K. Bruland and P. O'Brien (eds.) *From Family Firms to Corporate and Industrial Capitalism* (Oxford, 1998), p. 97.

costs could be considerable. According to Ellis ‘involvement in Tyneside’s major industries required access to considerable sums’ and she states that even a small scale business such as William Cotesworth and Robert Sutton’s tallow chandelling and merchant firm in Gateshead started with a capital of £600.<sup>211</sup>

Bottle houses were favoured by many moving into newer industries, not only because they consumed large quantities of unsalable small coal, but because the equipment needed to produce bottles was relatively cheap and thus reduced the amount of capital needed. However the larger enterprises of the region were initiated with considerable sums. Isaac Cookson, glass and iron manufacturer and father of John Cookson, sunk huge quantities of capital into starting his own business enterprise. For example, he began a partnership with Joseph Button in March 1721 leasing a founding house for casting iron and brass wares from William Cotesworth. In total £4800 in capital was employed, with Cookson supplying £3900 of that sum.<sup>212</sup> The initial establishment of John Cookson’s glass manufactory located at South Shields also reflects this need for substantial funds. Dominated from the very beginning by a partnership between John Cookson and Thomas Jeffreys, each partner sunk huge sums into the founding of the crown and plate glass manufactory on land leased from the Dean and Chapter of Durham. Cookson invested £3750, whilst Jeffreys invested £2250, equalling a capital stock of £6000.<sup>213</sup> These sums did not include lease of the land which had been provided by Cookson’s father, Isaac Cookson. Ralph Carr, a prominent Tyneside merchant, was involved in a number of different partnerships including one to open an alum works at Saltwick near Whitby. Carr invested £4,000 into the enterprise with John Cookson and Richard Ellison of Thorn in Yorkshire and partner-manager Jonas Brown.<sup>214</sup>

The glassworks’ deeds for John Cookson and Thomas Jeffreys’ enterprise at South Shields emphasise the importance of partnerships in supplying sufficient capital, but also the strength of partners in terms of the special skills they could bring to the business. Extended partnerships brought in business expertise, kinship ties and specific

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid, p. 92.

<sup>212</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography online, Cookson family:  
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47488/49070>.

<sup>213</sup> DUA Special Collections, Cookson Deeds, Cookson I/9.

<sup>214</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. 147.

industry knowledge. For example, Thomas Jeffreys held twelve thirty-second parts of the works and sold two thirty-second parts to Francis Hawkes for £375.<sup>215</sup> Hawkes was a glassmaker from Vauxhall in Surrey whose expertise could prove invaluable to Cookson's glasshouse. However it was kinship ties which solidified the crown and plate glass manufactory partnership in particular. By 1746 there were six partners in the plate and crown glass manufactory and their connections reflected the integral ties of family and business expertise which characterised industrial partnerships in this period.<sup>216</sup> Hawkes was no longer a partner, but Thomas Jeffreys had assigned four thirty-second parts over his brother, Richard Jeffreys. Thomas Jeffreys was allocated a role which involved looking after the London side of the glasshouse trade. John Cookson and his brother Joseph, with experience of the regional market and ties through their father, were assigned with Richard Jeffreys to attend the glasshouse at South Shields, whilst John Dixon a merchant from Snow Hill, London was to attend the London warehouse and Sir John Delange, another London merchant, had also purchased shares.<sup>217</sup> This partnership structure emphasises the existing kinship ties which were further solidified by the marriage of John Dixon to Isaac Cookson's daughter, Hannah. According to Ross the Cookson partnership was essentially 'recognisable' as an eighteenth-century business organisation because it was 'a family firm whose partners and capital were drawn from a close circle of relatives and business associates.'<sup>218</sup>

Partnership was an ideal way to spread financial risk during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and industries large and small were dominated by both official and informal partnerships and agreements. At the heart of the regional mining industry was a community, or partnership of sorts, of wealthy colliery owners in the form of the Grand Allies who dominated the sector. Many other industries and individual manufactories were the result of partnerships of two or more. Extensive partnership allowed various merchants and gentry to risk smaller amounts of capital in more than one manufactory or business in a period when Julian Hoppit claims the economy did not allow for universal success in industry and trade.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> DUA Special Collections, Cookson Deeds, Cookson I/8.

<sup>216</sup> DUA Special Collections, Cookson Deeds, Cookson I/11; Ellis, 'Risk, Capital, and Credit', p. 95; Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. xix.

<sup>217</sup> DUA Special Collections, Cookson Deeds, Cookson I/11.

<sup>218</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 75.

<sup>219</sup> J. Hoppit, *Risk and Failure in English Business 1700-1800* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 12.

Partnerships, sometimes particularly extensive, dominated the glass industry especially, most probably as a result of the high start up capital required. Already noted is Cookson and Jeffreys' crown and plate glass manufactory, which at its most extensive in 1746 had six partners. However other glass manufactories could have much larger partnership lists with mixtures of active and sleeping partners. One unusual example for the period was the Newcastle Company of Broad and Crown glass owners. In 1729 a deed establishing the Newcastle Company of Broad and Crown glass owners was signed by thirteen owners which equalled 114 shares in total. The majority of partners were from the local area including Newcastle, Durham and Morpeth with four female partners, whilst two were from outside the region, one from London and one from Norwich.<sup>220</sup>

Of course manufactory partnerships were not all as complex as those which dominated the glass industry, and not all manufacturers of consumer goods required extra investment to establish a successful manufactory. Glass manufactory and coal mining were unique in terms of the capital they required and connected risk they brought with them. More generally the organisation of manufactories and industries in Northumberland and Durham was varied and complex. Established and prominent merchant-gentry and landowners did not necessarily require the support of their peers. For example John Delaval, William Blakiston Bowes and George Bowes could afford to manage enterprises without the support of partners. However, there were other incentives to entering into official and unofficial partnerships, and successful industry in Northumberland and Durham was equally about established social networks. For those wealthier gentry and merchants intertwined in business networks, connection went further than partnerships tied by capital investment.

The demand for nationally available raw materials connected the region's manufactory and landowners, often merchants in their own right, with merchants and traders throughout the country, as previous discussion indicates. However, the additional transfer of these raw materials between the region's manufactories created a network of dependence extending the connections of partnership that already existed. The sales journal of John Cookson, covering the period 1744 to 1747, and an account book from George Bowes' estate at Gibside for the period 1746 to 1750 highlight these interactions

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<sup>220</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 52.

most clearly.<sup>221</sup> The most valuable assets traded by the Bowes family of Gibside in County Durham and Streatlam near Barnard Castle were coal, lead and salt. The exchange of both coal and salt were particularly in evidence in the Gibside account book. As a founder member of the Grand Allies, a small group of wealthy coal-owning families who from 1726 took control of the northern coal trade, George Bowes had special involvement in the coal industry. It was this interest which principally connected Bowes to consumer industries developing in the region, particularly the glasshouses on the Tyne. Bowes' account book which records business transactions from 1746 to 1750 indicates particular association with Tyne glasshouses with the supply of coal in 1746 to John Cookson's crown glass manufactory, to John Williams' bottle house (paid for by his partner John Cookson), to the broad glasshouses of Newcastle, and to the Dagnia glasshouses in Newcastle.<sup>222</sup> In return Bowes purchased bottles from the Williams bottle house and paper from the papermaking family, the Ords, who produced paper at the mill on the Gibside estate.<sup>223</sup> The Bowes family were also specifically tied to the Crowley iron works at Swalwell and Winlaton with Bowes apparently providing land for the works and Ambrose Crowley negotiating with Bowes for supply of charcoal in 1702.<sup>224</sup> George Bowes provided the raw materials and land for the manufacture of glass, paper and iron, and in return purchased from those manufactories.

John Cookson's sales journal, which records sales from the South Shields crown and plate glass manufactory, documents this type of interchange more consistently. Cookson specifically sold glass making utensils and raw materials from his manufactory to other glasshouses, including '12 Bunches of Rods' (used for blowing glass) to Mr Dagnia and Co. in December 1744, six tons of small kelp to Joseph Liddell and Co. of Newcastle in April 1745, and common cullet (broken glass) to the owners of Bill Quay glassworks in May 1745.<sup>225</sup> Raw materials including small kelp, iron, barilla, and crown cullet were regularly sold during the period recorded in the sales journal, with occasional sales of straw and deals (both for packing glass) alongside pots and clay. These were not regular contract agreements, but occasional transactions involving raw materials, most probably to help other manufactories when they were running low on particular items (such as the

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<sup>221</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572; DRO, D/St/E5/1/1.

<sup>222</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/1/1.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 117.

<sup>225</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572.

ashes shortage at the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works discussed previously). However it was not only with glasshouse owners that Cookson traded. It is evident that Cookson purchased coal from Bowes; however Bowes' salt pan agent, Joseph Pickering, also purchased iron from Cookson's ironworks, most probably for the supply of the salt pans.<sup>226</sup> Cookson also transferred raw materials between his own business interests, again suggesting the importance of partnership and investment in more than one industry. The varied trade from the glasshouse reflects the interconnections inherent in the regional economy that linked owners and industries via raw materials, capital, business and family in social and trading networks.

The business ties and exchanges emphasised by this evidence largely encompassed Northumberland and Durham's wealthy gentry and merchants, revealing that whilst it is true that the men involved in the foundations of consumer industries were those of enterprise, vision and resources, Purdue is correct to state that there was little gulf between those of commerce and those of land.<sup>227</sup> The merchant class may have aspired to convert their business success into landed wealth, but changing attitudes to estate management saw landed gentry and even aristocracy taking an increasingly active role in trade from the seventeenth century.<sup>228</sup> The extraction of minerals from estates directly connected landowners to trade, and Mingay concluded that in some cases gentry were closer in nature to merchants than landowners.<sup>229</sup> This issue of estate management and mineral extraction has been partially explored in the discussion of local raw materials with emphasis on leasing of clay and coal seams. Whilst Mingay believed that the distinction between gentry and businessmen was largely a clear one, the connection between estate exploitation, trade, and industry meant this distinction was blurred in Northumberland and Durham.<sup>230</sup> The Bowes, Riddleys, Ellisons, Carrs, Liddells, and Delavals were important examples of these enterprising gentry, with varying merchant, trading and landed backgrounds who combined their land and mineral resources to take an active role in industry and trade.<sup>231</sup> However there were exceptions to this trend of creative gentry who dedicated themselves to mineral extraction, whilst also having direct

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. xviii.

<sup>228</sup> Heal and Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales*, p. 104-133.

<sup>229</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. xviii; Mingay, *English Landed Society*, pp. 189-190; Mingay, *The Gentry*, pp. 104-106; P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People* (Oxford, 1989), p. 668.

<sup>230</sup> Mingay, *The Gentry*, p. 106.

<sup>231</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity' p. 145.

involvement in trade and industry. Some, such as the Salvins of Sunderland Bridge in County Durham, preferred to play a more indirect role in consumer industry growth by renting out their mineral rich land where new industries could be developed by lessees, or by establishing water powered mills upon their estate which could be leased to papermakers or other millers.

Industries in Northumberland and Durham, further away from the Tyne and Wear, were more often established on gentry land, frequently by gentry themselves, but were leased out to craftsmen either with or without the necessary tools and raw materials for working. According to Mingay, whilst enterprises such as mills, potteries, brick and tile works could be profitable on gentry estates, many encountered problems with working these manufactories themselves, and consequently they were more often leased out to craftsmen.<sup>232</sup> The paper mills of Croxdale and Gibside are important examples of this. For some landowners and merchants involvement in the new industries meant a process of buying into land, investing money, and an active role, but for some such as the Salvin family of Croxdale and Sunderland Bridge, involvement in developing industries was more about land management and utilising the resources they had at their disposal. The Salvin fortune was based upon exploitation of minerals and agricultural land upon their estate and the Croxdale paper mill was an extension of this system of estate management. The mill was first constructed in 1650 on the Croxdale Beck, a stream off the river Wear, as the result of an agreement between Gerrard Salvin and John Palmer, a mason from Flasse, and may have been initially used to grind corn.<sup>233</sup> By the 1670s the mill existed as a manufactory for paper and was leased to various tenants during the final decades of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth for amounts rising from £10 in 1710 to £35 in 1752.<sup>234</sup> The Salvins' involvement in the paper mill went as far as maintenance and enhancement of the property to increase its' efficiency and potential, with extensive rebuilding undertaken in 1771, but no direct role was taken in the production or sale of paper from the Croxdale mill.<sup>235</sup>

The rental of paper mills upon gentry land was a relatively uncomplicated way of generating income and was also undertaken by the Blakiston and Bowes families who

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<sup>232</sup> Mingay, *The Gentry*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>233</sup> Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, p. 17.

<sup>234</sup> DRO, D/Sa/E/387-393, Croxdale Paper Mill; Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>235</sup> DRO, D/Sa/E/636; Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, p. 20.

rented out a paper mill on the Gibside estate in County Durham from the late seventeenth century. This pattern of renting out manufactories was not exclusive to paper mills, and various brick and tile manufactories were leased, whilst some potteries and glass works could be leased or part shares of them purchased. The Bowes were closely involved in the production of salt and leased out considerable numbers of salt pans to tenants along with cottages by the salt pans. This was another branch of what David Oldroyd has viewed as the management of the Bowes estates as 'profit centres'.<sup>236</sup> Various potteries were leased from gentry lands with or without all the convenience of raw materials and tools. For example, on the 18 May 1765 the *Newcastle Courant* announced 'a pottery to lett at Newbottle, which for many years was carried on to great advantage by the late Mr. Wilson, all conveniences, workmen, large stock of clay, flints and other materials for making both white and brown wares, which are now made to a great perfection as in Staffordshire'.<sup>237</sup> Likewise, land housing a pottery at Cockfield was leased to George Dixon and Lancelot Harrison, potters of Cockfield, in 1762, and later advertised 'to be let immediately...for a term of thirteenth years, Cockfield pottery, with all manner of conviencies and utensils for making of Brown-ware, tortoise-shell-ware and cream-colour ware' in 1771.<sup>238</sup> Rivergreen clay seam, pottery, brick works, tile works, and estate were situated on the land of Captain Thomas Middleton of Belsay and were leased frequently throughout the eighteenth century with the pottery advertised to let in 1740 'with Houses, Kiln, and other Conveniencies; and either with or without any convenient Quantity of Ground'.<sup>239</sup> This pattern was also seen in the lease of brick and tile works, and at least one of the region's four sugar houses.

Merchants, landowners and businessmen were at the root of the developing new industries. For a few this role was limited to exploitation of land and mineral resources, a form of estate management and a way of raising profits, but largely passive involvement in new industries. For many others, including Isaac and John Cookson, Matthew White Ridley, William Blakiston Bowes and George Bowes, Ralph Carr and

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<sup>236</sup> DRO, D/St/B3/1-4; A. Green, 'Heartless and Unhomely? Dwellings of the Poor in East Anglia and North-East England' in P. Sharpe and J. McEwan (eds.) *Accounting Poverty* (Palgrave, forthcoming); D. Oldroyd, 'Through a Glass Clearly: Management Practice on the Bowes Family Estates c. 1700-70 as Revealed by the Accounts', *Accounting, Business and Financial History* 9 (1999), p. 177.

<sup>237</sup> *NC*, 18 May 1765.

<sup>238</sup> DRO, D/St/D1/10/5; *NJ*, 2 March 1771.

<sup>239</sup> *NJ*, 16 February 1740.

John Delaval, estate management was directly connected to the establishment and expansion of new consumer industries. They were landowners and traders simultaneously. Exploitation of land was at the root of many new industries. However, capital investment provided the large sums required to establish a manufactory, and partnerships cemented these investments whilst drawing in industry and business expertise and access to additional raw materials. Official partnerships encouraged the transfer of raw materials, but such was the closeness of Northumberland and Durham gentry and merchants that exchange of desired raw materials between manufactory owners was a common occurrence. Such evidence indicates a tight-knit business community, which is evident in other industrialising areas,<sup>240</sup> but this should not be taken for granted. Tensions did exist in the region between landowners, merchants and industry owners, but as Wrightson has accurately asserted; '[t]here was much rivalry and conflict amongst them...but they could also hold together politically in the interests of trade, or as members of cartels, and they were commonly allied by marriage and kinship.'<sup>241</sup> Development of consumer industries was dominated by estate management and business connections which were enhanced by social networks already in existence.

Availability of local raw materials allowed for the development of new industries manufacturing consumer goods, and the swift trade of the ports of Newcastle, and increasingly Sunderland, allowed for easy access to the better quality prized raw materials required for the glass and iron industries. Gentry ownership of mineral rich lands, economic relations and partnership ties, together created a largely tight-knit economic community. However capital and land could not be used to create finished items without the expertise to create bottles, glasses, mirrors, window glass, pottery, bricks, tiles and paper. Purdue has stated that vertical ties within the community were as important as horizontal divisions.<sup>242</sup> In this respect the vertical ties between landowners and lessees, or manufactory owners and craftsmen, were as important as the divisions that divided or ties that united gentry and merchants in the process of creating consumer goods. The work of recent historians has highlighted the process which saw the new consumer goods of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries created out of imitation of foreign goods and invention, a process which saw the diffusion of these skills

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<sup>240</sup> J. Ellis, 'Industrial and Urban Growth in Nottingham, 1680-1840' in J. Stobart and N. Raven (eds.) *Towns, Regions and Industries* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 153-154.

<sup>241</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 145.

<sup>242</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. 24.

throughout England and the resultant popularity of new consumer goods.<sup>243</sup> Evidence suggests that the skills to create glass, pottery, paper and ironware were not always readily available in the Tyne, Wear, Northumberland and Durham areas, and much of the skill was sourced from outside of the area.

The earliest example of outside expertise being introduced into the region was during the early history of the glass industry. It is argued that during the 1570s the persecution of Protestants in Europe resulted in the movement of immigrants to England, significantly Lorraine glassmakers. These Lorraine glassmaking families included the Henzell or Henzey, Tyttery, and Tyzack families, and it is clear that at some point during the early decades of the seventeenth century members of these glassmaking families moved to Newcastle, although it is unlikely that they initially set up on the Tyne.<sup>244</sup> Branches of the family were scattered throughout the country at glassmaking centres, especially Staffordshire and Newcastle, and the appearance of their anglicised names in parish registers tracks their diffusion, and the diffusion of their skills, throughout the country. The Henzells, Tytterys and Tyzacks had expertise in broad glassmaking, and it was this branch of the industry that they worked at Newcastle.<sup>245</sup> It is possible that Sir Robert Mansell encouraged these foreign glassmaking families to the Tyne and Wear regions, but this is not certain. Elsewhere the Dagnias, an Italian family of glassmakers, moved to England at some point during the seventeenth century. The first flint glass (fine glass vessels) manufactory in Newcastle was begun by a branch of the Dagnia family who moved from Bristol to Newcastle during the second half of the seventeenth century, bringing with them their flint and bottle making expertise and setting up at the Closegate at Newcastle in 1684.<sup>246</sup> This movement of skilled craftsmen and expertise to Northumberland and Durham mimics the initial movement of skilled craftsmen to London from the Continent highlighted by David Ormrod.<sup>247</sup> Ormrod indicates that the ability to home produce many foreign goods, a form of import substitution, was encouraged by the appearance of skilled and knowledgeable foreigners

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<sup>243</sup> Berg, 'From Imitation to Invention', pp. 1-30; Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, pp. 76-84.

<sup>244</sup> Charleston, *English Glass*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>245</sup> Clephan, 'The Manufacture of Glass', pp. 108-126.

<sup>246</sup> U. Ridley, 'The History of Glass Making on the Tyne and Wear', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 40 (1962), p. 148.

<sup>247</sup> D. Ormrod, 'Cultural Production and Import Substitution: the Fine and Decorative Arts in London, 1660-1730' in P. O' Brien, D. Keene, M. 't Hart and H. van der Wee (eds.) *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 210-232.

in London.<sup>248</sup> It is clear that many of these new skills and practices also transfused throughout the country to Northumberland and Durham where both raw materials and capital were available.

This movement of new skilled craftsmen and expertise into the area initiated the development of glassmaking on the Tyne and Wear, but as the catalogue of glassware produced in the region developed throughout the eighteenth century to include crown glass and hollow-ware additional expertise was often required. Expertises for these new products were also sourced from outside the region. In the crown and plate glass manufactory at South Shields this acquisition of expertise ran from the investment and management down to the craftsmen level. The Cookson partnership not only included the business experience and monetary funds of the Cookson family and Thomas Jeffreys, but glassmaking expertise were also provided by 'Francis Hawkes the Elder of Vane Hall in the County of Surrey Glassmaker' mentioned previously.<sup>249</sup> Hawkes had evidently moved from the plate glass manufactory at Vauxhall. John Cookson's correspondence indicates that in addition to investing in the business Hawkes held a managerial role at the glasshouse.<sup>250</sup> Acquiring skilled glassblowers for the burgeoning crown glass manufactory was not something that Cookson found himself qualified to do, despite his father's involvement in the Tyneside glass industry since the early decades of the eighteenth century. He was forced to rely on the expertise of others. In September 1738 Cookson suggested that Francis Hawkes, in his managerial role, was fit to judge the performance of craftsmen at the glasshouse, and had suggested a new addition to the glasshouse, Mr. John Hawks.<sup>251</sup> In the same year he also wrote to an experienced glasshouse owner, Mr Batchelor of Stourbridge, concerning the merits of Paul Tyzack, a glassblower, who was considered for work at Cookson's manufactory. It is apparent that Tyzack had been known or had worked in the Stourbridge glass industry (he was possibly a descendant of the original Tyzack family who had brought glassmaking expertise to England) and was known to Mr Batchelor, of whom Cookson believed 'none is a better judge' of Tyzack's skill.<sup>252</sup> Ambrose Crowley was forced to make similar enquiries of his brother-in-law, Sampson Lloyd, concerning the

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> DUA Special Collections, Cookson Deeds, Cookson I/8.

<sup>250</sup> For correspondence concerning Hawkes managerial role see TWA, JCL, 15 September 1738, 27 July 1739, 18 September 1739, 27 October 1739.

<sup>251</sup> TWA, JCL, 15 September 1738.

<sup>252</sup> TWA, JCL, 23 September 1738.

personalities of possible clerks and managerial employees to the ironworks in County Durham.<sup>253</sup>

Whilst in Cookson's opinion Tyzack's skill was important, a more pressing factor addressed was the wage he or any potential glassblower should be employed at. During Cookson's December 1738 correspondence to partner Thomas Jeffrey he discussed the terms at which he could have qualified glassblowers. Paul Tyzack, he suggested, could be employed for 25 s. per week, whilst John Wilkins, a blower of crown glass and bottles, could be employed for 20 s. per week. Whilst these discussions were taking place Cookson used information acquired from the Bristol glassworks to decide in what manner he would undertake their services. He enquired 'how they go about things in Bristol', who they had working and whether they advanced wages.<sup>254</sup> The acquisition of expertise from outside the region inevitably tied Northumberland and Durham industry owners to other owners and experts throughout the country. It was the sourcing of craftsmen, in the first instance, which linked regional industry to national industry.

The making of glass involved not only the expertise of glassblowers, but a network of skilled craftsmen contributed to the production of a single item. A set of documents from the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works at Hartley highlights the range of expertise that was required in the industry (these occupations are correlated in Table 5).<sup>255</sup> The lists also indicate that the works was not necessarily a settled business. Even during the course of the five years between 1773 and 1778 there was change in the employees of the Hartley works, particularly amongst the glassblowers, extra blowers, and finishers. For example, William Hampseed, who was recorded as an 'extra blower' in 1773 had progressed to full employment as a 'glass blower' by 1775. James Mustard, who was recorded as a gatherer in 1773, had moved to a position as a glassblower by 1775, and James Glover, who had been a glass finisher in 1773, was by 1778 recorded as one of the managers of the bottle works. Others were recorded in 1773 but did not appear in any of the later lists.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 234.

<sup>254</sup> TWA, JCL, 8 December 1738.

<sup>255</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/9/71, 2DE/11/9/22, 2DE/11/9/18.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

**Table 5: List of Persons Employed at the Glassworks at Seaton Sluice and Hartley Pans during the 1770s**

Occupation	Year		
	1773	1775	1778
Finisher	9	9	8
Blower	8	13	9
Extra Blower	4		
Gatherer	8	6	6
Packer	1	1	2
Founder	4	3	4
Teazer	4	4	4
Calkerman	2	2	
Ash Sifter	4	4	4
Warehouseman	3		
Labourer	3	1	14
Cartman	1		
Coal Wheeler	3	2	1
Joiner	3		1
Smith	1	1	2
Mason	1	1	1
Potter	1	1	2
In the mill	10		
Illegible	2		
Employed Boys		18	
Run?		2	
Carpenter		1	
Drink Tender		2	2
Manager			2
Apprentice			27
Colour mixer			3
Warehouse manager			1
Total	72	71	93

Sources: correlated from lists of workers at the glassworks Seaton Sluice and Hartley in NRO, 2DE 11/9/71; 2DE/11/9/22; 2DE/11/9/18.

It is not entirely clear where the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works craftsmen were sourced from, but it is evident that with the introduction and development of new glass products, new expertise was required at the bottle house. In 1780 Harrison, the London buyer of Northumberland Bottle Works bottles, demanded that the works expand its product range to include hollow-ware. Harrison apparently believed that the bottle

blowers already employed at Hartley were not suitably qualified to execute the new products and suggested an outside addition, William Oxley, a glassmaker who was capable of making hollow-ware.<sup>257</sup>

Outside of the glass industry similar practices saw the Tyne and Wear economy thrive on the imported skill of those from outside the region and even abroad, particularly the iron, pottery and paper industries. Ambrose Crowley was known for bringing a work force for his Winlaton Mill works from abroad. Crowley introduced Catholic workers from Liège in the Sunderland days of the ironworks, but by the time the ironworks was established at Swalwell and Winlaton skilled workers were brought from other parts of England.<sup>258</sup> According to Flinn the labour force was initially drawn from Midlands and Yorkshire, although later local workers were trained.<sup>259</sup>

It is not entirely apparent where the skills of potters were acquired or whether those potters who worked in Northumberland and Durham were trained elsewhere as the apprenticeship records record only one earthenware potter during the period. Whilst glassmaking was a process which required a large number of workers, pottery production seems to have been a simpler process. However, Joseph Warburton's advertisement, cited earlier in this chapter, does suggest that the new techniques in pottery production also diffused throughout the country. Warburton's own experience of manufacturing bone china had been acquired from employment for 'some years in making China at Bow near London'.<sup>260</sup> His experience of working at Bow had qualified him and this was knowledge which could be passed on to local potters, like an art or technique. Elsewhere Manders has claimed that John Warburton, the manufacturer of glazed earthenware at Newcastle and later Gateshead, had probably relocated north from Staffordshire in the early eighteenth century, bringing pottery expertise to the region, especially in producing white earthenware.<sup>261</sup> Other potters also brought their expertise to the Tyne and Wear during the mid-eighteenth century, most notably the Maling family who became renowned for their pottery during the nineteenth century.

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<sup>257</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/3/8, 2DE/11/3/12.

<sup>258</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, pp. 234-235.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>260</sup> *NJ*, 12 February 1757.

<sup>261</sup> Manders, *A History of Gateshead*, p. 63.

The Maling family were Protestant Huguenot refugees who had settled in Scarborough during the sixteenth century after fleeing persecution. During the 1740s William Maling purchased land at North Hylton near Sunderland and began the North Hylton Pot Works in 1762, where his sons Christopher, Thomas and John Maling began transfer printing on pottery in the same year.<sup>262</sup>

Northumberland and Durham may have had the raw materials and capital to establish a variety of new consumer industries, but it is clear that the initial expertise and skills that were required to manufacture items were not indigenous to the region. Nef observed that English manufacturing techniques were, during the seventeenth century, influenced profoundly by those of Holland, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy.<sup>263</sup> The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries evidently saw the diffusion of these imported skills throughout the country, importantly to Northumberland and Durham, where capital and resources were ample. Furthermore, evidence of migration of skilled craftsmen to the north from other industrialising regions reinforces Hudson's comments that despite regional specialisation there was considerable transfer of technology between areas which followed 'skill-specific migration'.<sup>264</sup> Regions may have been increasingly specialised, and Northumberland and Durham were particularly reliant on their own raw materials, capital, and entrepreneurs, but diffusion of skills required regions to be accessible and cooperative.

### *Conclusions*

Whilst 'men, money and minerals' may appear to be merely an alliterative phrase, there is substance behind it. Men, money and minerals combined were vital for the establishment and growth of consumer industries in the period 1680 to 1780 in many parts of the country, but the combination of available local and imported minerals, enterprising gentry and merchants, capital, and imported skill allowed the development of multiple industries on the Tyne, Wear, and wider region. Enterprising parties in Northumberland and Durham utilised their land, mineral, connections and capital assets in a variety of ways. It was essentially the combination of natural resources, aspiring men and imported expertise that allowed for such diverse development.

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<sup>262</sup> Bell, *Maling and Other Tyneside Pottery*, p. 3.

<sup>263</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry, I*, p. 242.

<sup>264</sup> Hudson, 'The Regional Perspective', p. 29.

The geological attributes of Northumberland and Durham, which could be blamed for the variable quality of regional agriculture, provided at least two essential raw materials, in the form of coal and quality clay, required by a variety of new industries which developed simultaneous to the adoption of coal as a major energy source. The concentration of coal and clay in specific locations in the region made those areas particularly ripe for the establishment of potteries, tile, and brickworks, where raw materials could be acquired relatively cheaply due to reduced transport costs. However the new consumer industries did not grow out of the convenience of available cheap coal alone. Elsewhere the continually expanding ports of Newcastle and Sunderland provided excellent connections to imported raw materials important in the glass, pottery, and iron industries. The rivers Tyne and Wear provided access to white pot clay, sand, kelp, barilla, iron, flints, ashes and cullet, materials which could be distributed through the region via smaller navigable rivers. However the existence of raw materials was insignificant without landowners and merchant-gentry willing to lease out land and manufactories, and skilled craftsmen available to utilise the materials. As a result, whilst coal was important to each of these industries, the role of gentry, landowners, and merchants was paramount, especially in providing imported raw materials in the region.

According to Heal and Holmes, use of estate resources and involvement in glass works, alum production, pottery and mills by landowners was about exploiting local market opportunities, and that most went into trade to develop the non-agricultural potential of their estates.<sup>265</sup> The involvement that Northumberland and Durham merchants, gentry and landowners had in the establishment and running of consumer industries varied considerably depending on their resources, interests and connections. Whilst partnerships could incorporate outside capital, most notably from London, into new industries, they were essentially built on the capital and enterprise of local gentry. Their enterprise was vital to the development of consumer industries. These men were from varying backgrounds as Wrightson has emphasised, but the minute gulf between land and commerce in the region encouraged the frequent building of official partnerships, reinforced by money and marriage, and more informal connections which could be

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<sup>265</sup> Heal and Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales*, p. 123, 127.

mutually beneficial.<sup>266</sup> Such men of enterprise were so often associated with coal that their large-scale involvement in the developing consumer industries has often been overlooked. It was their capital and minerals which supplied the consumer industries. Consequently it was their involvement directly through management of manufactories, such as Cookson and Delaval's glass manufactories, and more distantly, in the form of mill rental on the Salvin and Bowes' estates, that encouraged the movement of skilled craftsmen to the area. Whilst capital and enterprise was largely indigenous, the craftsmanship which manufactured new products was largely not. Certainly in the initial stages of the new industries skilled craftsmen were imported into the region. Even in the 1780s glassblowers required to produce new products were recommended to particular works. However, at the root it was the combination of these factors which saw the development of a variety of industries.

Although gentry and merchant involvement was clearly about investment and profit, the industries they invested capital in were creating consumer goods for the market. In this sense the culture of production and the improving spirit which saw these merchants, businessmen and landowners plough money into mineral extraction and industry was directly connected to the culture of consumption. They ensured the supply of goods to cater for a developing market of demand. On the supply side there was evidently a combination of factors working together in order that industries could develop and expand, but their continued growth (if not their initial establishment) could not have been possible without an existent or potential market for their produce. The proverbial chicken and egg of supply and demand have long been debated by historians attempting to tease out the igniting factor in eighteenth-century industrial growth. It is a debate that will undoubtedly continue with little hope of satisfactory conclusion for all. However what is certain is that without an existent market these new consumer industries could not have continued to expand as they did throughout the eighteenth century. Evidence indicates that Northumberland and Durham's consumer industries participated in, rather than led, national growth suggesting that their establishment and expansion was a response to a market of demand for their produce. As a result, it is the products of these industries and their markets, the demand side influences, to which we must now turn.

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<sup>266</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 145; Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. xviii.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Producing for the Market**

#### ***Introduction***

The spirit of enterprise and ingenuity and the availability of raw materials may have encouraged gentry and merchants to risk large sums of capital in new industries, but the existence of an identified market for new products was equally important during this period. As Gilboy has argued, a broadening of production was not possible without an extension of demand throughout the population.<sup>267</sup> The industries were not producing the eighteenth and nineteenth century raw staples of coal and iron, but finished and semi-finished durables which were increasingly desirable in the changing cultural and social environment of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The region was not alone in development of these industries and during the same period a number of regionally specialised manufacturing industries appeared nationally, the produce of which Maxine Berg claims was representative of a ‘product revolution’.<sup>268</sup> The products were directed at a varied consuming public with changing tastes for new commodities of elegance, variety, durability, and fine craftsmanship. They were essentially products integrally connected to cultural changes taking place during the period.

The history of the cross-section of goods which were part of this product revolution has not always been well researched. Many products such as glass, pottery and paper have been subject to individual analysis, but it was not until recent years that these collections of new products have been studied together as items representative of wider cultural change. In these studies the cross-section of goods have been viewed mainly as objects of ownership and consumption, not necessarily as items which connect production and consumption or that were created for particular markets. The intention of this chapter is not only to continue the story of the region’s consumer industries by identifying the particular products that were created, but also to connect them to the cultural changes and demand that encouraged their production. A full understanding of how production and consumption or supply and demand are connected hinges upon the products themselves. It is essential to consider the development of techniques used to

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<sup>267</sup> E. W. Gilboy, ‘Demand as a Factor in the Industrial Revolution’ in R. M. Hartwell (ed.) *The Cause of the Industrial Revolution in England* (Norwich, 1967), p. 122.

<sup>268</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 5.

manufacture these specialised products, but additionally the cultural, architectural, and household changes which encouraged their creation and intensified demand.

During the period under discussion London was the centre of cultural change, the place from which taste and culture diffused to the provinces, be they English provinces or England's colonial provinces.<sup>269</sup> It is evident that whilst Northumberland and Durham possessed the raw material resources to manufacture pottery, glass, and paper it initially did not possess craftsmen with the technical knowledge and expertise to create such items. The previous chapter indicates the movement of skilled craftsmen to the region, but their initial absence suggests a delay in local production compared to the establishment of national industry. Furthermore, it is possible that the cultural changes, taste and subsequent demand that brought about this product revolution may also have taken time to diffuse to the provinces from the capital, resulting in delayed production of new goods. This possible lag in demand and cultural diffusion is a central feature in understanding the development of consumer goods production in Northumberland and Durham, and will be considered throughout this chapter.

The chapter also closely considers products in terms of the markets they were destined for. For Daniel Defoe the purpose of individual regional production was to benefit the nation as a whole. According to Defoe a large variety of goods and 'many other things which are the proper produce of one part of the country only, [were] from thence dispersed for the ordinary use of the people into many, or perhaps into all the other counties of England, to the infinite advantage of our inland commerce'.<sup>270</sup> McKendrick followed this interpretation in his explanation of the consumer revolution which 'is supposed to have created a national culture and market, which eroded and transcended regional and local cultural forms'.<sup>271</sup> This national culture and taste is argued to have diffused from London.

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<sup>269</sup> E. A. Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750', *Past and Present* 37 (1967), pp. 44-70; Wrigley, *People, Cities and Wealth*, pp. 142-153; L. Schwarz, 'London 1700-1840' in P. Clark (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain II 1540-1840* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 641-671; Earle, 'The Economy of London', pp. 81-98; T. H. Breen, 'Baubles of Britain: the American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century' *Past and Present* 119 (1988), pp. 73-104; J. Styles, 'Product Innovation in Early Modern London' *Past and Present* 168 (2000), pp. 124-169.

<sup>270</sup> Defoe, *Complete English Tradesmen*, I, p. 235.

<sup>271</sup> McKendrick cited in Berry and Gregory, 'Introduction', p. 1.

Directly connected to this focus on production for the national market is the emphasis on regional specialisation in production. Defoe listed various specialised produce from particular regions in his *Complete English Tradesmen*, a theme which historiography has followed.<sup>272</sup> Wrightson, for example, has argued for increasingly specialised regions which connected themselves through a national market.<sup>273</sup> Northumberland and Durham have been seen as the producers of coal, Staffordshire as the specialised centre of pottery production, Bristol as the prominent centre of glass manufacture, Sheffield as the centre of cutlery production, and so on. Northumberland and Durham may have produced large quantities of coal for the national economy, but they also produced a variety of consumer goods, more usually associated with other specialised regions throughout England. What has not been considered yet is whether these industries were actually spin-offs of the coal industry catering for only a small local demand, or whether they were, as Defoe preached, producing largely for the national market. What position did new manufactories have in an already specialised economy? What will be considered here are the products that were created in the region's industries and where the impetus for their production came from. Was it the diffusion of a metropolitan taste for items that created demand and inspired production for a national market centred in London, or were local industries producing regional versions of nationally desirable products for the local market? Was this production a form of internal import substitution? And how extensive was the local market which Heal and Holmes suggest gentry glasshouses, potteries, alum works, and mills were seeking to exploit?

Discussion of markets in this chapter is based on considering national versus local. It is near impossible to differentiate the market socially as such analysis would require in-depth knowledge of a wide range of product prices in addition to accurate understanding of a range of household budgets and assumptions of how consumer decisions were made. It is possible to suggest that some locally produced products may have appealed more widely to labouring families, but it cannot be stated definitively that they did not appeal to the wealthy. Discussion is set out in terms of three case studies which will analyse the products of the glass, paper, and pottery industries of Northumberland and Durham. These three industries have been chosen particularly as they provide clear and

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<sup>272</sup> Defoe, *Complete English Tradesmen*, I, pp. 324-325.

<sup>273</sup> K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities* (London, 2000), pp. 227-248; Hudson, 'The Regional Perspective', pp. 5-38.

sufficient documentary evidence of produce and markets. However mention is also made of the brick, tile, cutlery, and iron industries where relevant evidence supports discussion. Additionally these industries have been selected for detailed attention as their produce reflected the wide cultural, architectural, and household changes that were taking place during this period.

### *Glass*

Of all the new consumer goods industries undergoing expansion and commercialisation during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, glass was the largest and most well-established in the Tyne and Wear areas. Glass production had an established history on the Tyne dating back to the early seventeenth century, and by the eighteenth century it had staked its place as one of the major glass producing regions in the country. The discussion presented in Chapter Two confirms that the number of glass manufactories on the Tyne and Wear increased substantially during the eighteenth century, and evidence suggests these manufactories were producing an expanding variety of glassware.

#### *i) Window Glass*

Initially glass production on the Tyne and Wear was a narrow affair, with production limited to only a small selection of products. Window glass, in the manner of broad glass – a type of glass cut into ‘quarries’ or diamond shaped panes and set in lead frames – was the primary product of both the Tyne and Wear glasshouses. Sir William Brereton observed this early production writing in 1635 of the Quayside in Newcastle which extended almost to the glassworks ‘where is made window glass’, and later in the century William Gray claimed boldly in his *Chorographia* that the glass manufactories of Newcastle ‘serveth most parts of the Kingdom’.<sup>274</sup> Gray’s statement, although partially based on local pride, indicates that even at an early stage Newcastle’s manufactured goods were destined for a national market. The attentions of Sir Robert Mansell and his glass production monopoly at Newcastle had given the area an advantage in production of broad window glass, pushing it ahead of other regions. The continued existence of a narrow glass production range is confirmed by John Houghton’s list of working flat glasshouses in England in 1696. Houghton’s figures

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<sup>274</sup> Hodgson (ed.) ‘Journal of Sir William Brereton’ in *North County Diaries*, p. 19; Gray, *Chorographia*, p. 97.

record six window glasshouses, four bottle houses, and one flint glasshouse on the Tyne.<sup>275</sup> The range of items produced had expanded since the early seventeenth century to include bottles and flint (fine) glasses, though the manufacture of window glass remained dominant.

Catherine Ross' table of glasshouses at work in the region (Table 6) provides an account of the differing varieties of glass manufactories that appeared after 1700, in addition to an assessment of growth.

**Table 6: Glasshouses at Work in Northumberland and Durham**

Date	Location and manufactory type							
	The Tyne and Hartley					The Wear		
	Broad	Crown	Bottle	Flint	Plate	Bottle/Broad	Crown	Flint
1700	5 or 6	-	2 or 1	1	-	3	-	-
1732	6	1	5	1	-	3	-	-
1745	6	2	6	1	-	3	-	-
1775	4	2	8	2	1 (2) <sup>276</sup>	3	-	-
1800	4	7	10	4	1	3	1	-

Source: Table reproduced from Ross, 'The development of the glass industry' (unpublished PhD, University of Newcastle, 1982), p. 32.

Table 6 indicates that traditional window glass production, represented by the category of 'broad' glasshouses, continued to dominate in the region until the later eighteenth century alongside bottle manufacture. Towards the end of the century broad glass production was seemingly less important, whilst the production of crown glass had become more prominent. Superficially the development of crown glass did not represent a fundamental change in the produce of northern glassmakers. Both broad and crown glass were used in windows. It was the manufacturing techniques and specific use that separated them. Broad glass production resulted in poor quality glass containing many imperfections. The thickness and relatively small sizes manufactured meant that broad glass was generally cut into heavy quarries – small rectangular, square, or diamond

<sup>275</sup> Houghton's figures referenced in Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 40, 187, 284.

<sup>276</sup> Whilst Catherine Ross' figures appear to be accurate in all other sectors, it is likely that there were two plate glass manufactories working on the Tyne by 1775. The Howden Pans Glasshouse had started as a manufactory for broad glass, but in 1772 it was converted by Ridley and Co. into a plate glass manufactory. Its products were advertised in the local newspapers. This existed alongside John Cookson's manufactory at South Shields where he manufactured crown and plate glass from the 1730s onwards.

shaped pieces – that were fitted in leadlights. Although leadlights continued to be used after the seventeenth century, during the eighteenth century they were largely replaced by the use of crown glass in domestic windows. Crown glass, produced using a different manufacturing technique, was a thinner, lighter, superior quality glass that could be cut into panes. The lightness of the glass meant it could be fitted in wooden frames in the new sash window style, a style exclusive to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century in terms of its introduction. Its quality and clarity was perfect for creating light in rooms and it was often used in salon windows alongside new commodities such as mirrors which reflected more light.<sup>277</sup> The growth of crown glass at the expense of broad glass reflected an important cultural change which was manifest as an architectural modification.

Crown glass production, although being perfected by the French during the fourteenth century, was not produced in Britain until the seventeenth century. According to the London Crown Glass Company the first British crown glass was produced in London in 1678, revealing a significant delay in Tyne and Wear production where the first crown glass manufactory did not appear until 1729.<sup>278</sup> Whilst the introduction of crown glass production to the region may represent northern manufacturers' desire to further break into an increasingly lucrative sector of the glass market, the lag in establishment between London and the Tyne may also suggest that the process was partly demand led. It is possible that the creation of this branch of the glass industry was inspired by changes taking place in house design which London producers catered for, but which took time to diffuse to the provinces. Ross claims that 'the spread of sash windows throughout the country was inseparable from the spread of crown glass'.<sup>279</sup> As a supplier of window glass nationally, national as well as local demand and taste would undoubtedly have impacted upon Tyne producers. The lag in Tyne production may have also been tied to lack of expertise or technology available in the region. It is clear from John Cookson's business letterbook that the establishment of his crown glass

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<sup>277</sup> J. E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort* (London, 2000), p. 124.

<sup>278</sup> <http://www.londoncrownnglass.co.uk/History.html>; The first crown glass manufactory in the region was the Newcastle Broad and Crown Glass Company founded by a deed of trust in 1729. It is possible that crown glass was manufactured informally in small runs at other manufactories before the official establishment of the Newcastle Broad and Crown Glass Company. See Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 49.

<sup>279</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 48.

manufactory was based on the expertise of glassblowers from elsewhere in the country, especially Bristol.<sup>280</sup>

The appearance of crown glass production on the Tyne may have been a reaction to the changes in cultural and architectural taste that began at a gentry level. The earliest documented sash windows in County Durham appeared at Croxdale Hall in 1704, however the first crown glass manufactory did not begin production until the later 1720s, occurring concurrently with widespread adoption of the window style.<sup>281</sup> According to John Crowley the sash window became a ‘defining characteristic’ of gentry housing, increasingly adopted in the eighteenth century in yeoman and townsmen’s homes.<sup>282</sup> Lack of regional availability before the 1730s may explain why the gentry Ellison family’s reconstruction of their house, Gateshead Park, in the early 1730s saw the use of established London crown glass for the larger salon windows presented in the sash style and local glass in the form of broad glass quarries for the smaller kitchen windows where light and visibility was less important.<sup>283</sup> Local crown glass production, in its infancy, was unlikely to be of a reliable enough quality until the mid to late 1730s; the region’s broad glass production, however, was well-established and vended nationally. For example, John Cookson complained that of his early crown production ‘some [was] good glass comparable to London glass And the other of excellent colour but seedy and Boily which is expected of a new works.’<sup>284</sup>

Changes in architectural design of the house, with the adoption of sash windows and the ability of crown glass to create light in rooms, encouraged demand, but production also responded to a more widespread change in the urban environment locally and nationally. Waves of rebuilding, particularly of gentry and town homes in urban areas and construction of public buildings, reflected Newcastle and other large towns’ increasingly ‘polite’ status, and were connected directly to demand for new building materials such as crown glass, brick and tile.<sup>285</sup> Production was further stimulated by

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<sup>280</sup> TWA, JCL, 1738-42.

<sup>281</sup> Green, ‘Households in County Durham and Newcastle Upon Tyne’, p. 294; Ross, ‘The Development of the Glass Industry’, p. 48.

<sup>282</sup> Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort*, p. 68.

<sup>283</sup> Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 29.

<sup>284</sup> TWA, JCL, 14 April 1739.

<sup>285</sup> P. Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 54-59, 101-113; H. Berry, ‘Creating Polite Space: The Organisation and Social Function of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms’ in H. Berry and

more standard building types, especially shops with window displays requiring clear glass panes in order that goods could be attractively presented and viewed by potential customers.<sup>286</sup> Such window displays in both town and county shops increasingly saw the adoption of sash windows in the style shown in Fig. 9 to display items for sale. The number of shops in Newcastle was growing during the period due to its status as a regional shopping centre, as were the number of shops region-wide and nationally, thus demand for crown glass was intensified.

**Fig. 9: Example of a Sash Window**



It has been suggested that fine glass, even when produced in the regions, was usually sent to the London market, however it is evident that Tyne and Wear window glass, especially crown glass, targeted wide regional, national and even international

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J. Gregory, *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1600-1830* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 120-140.

<sup>286</sup> H. Louw, 'Window-Glass Making in Britain, c. 1660-1860 and its Architectural Impact', *Construction History* (1991), p. 50; J. Stobart and A. Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century? Evidence from North-West England', *Business History* 46 (2004), pp. 179-180.

markets.<sup>287</sup> Whilst it is difficult to get a full sense of glass production in the region, a remarkable set of records can help to illuminate the extent and distribution area of one prominent crown glass manufactory at South Shields owned and run by John Cookson. Cookson's sales and production had grown considerably in the years since the manufactory had begun operations in 1738 when correspondence had been dominated by attempts to secure raw materials, purchasers and trading partners. Cookson's early business communications indicate that from the beginning of production crown glass was destined for a national as well as a local market. Cookson's early letters attempting to secure raw materials and gain market information were characterised by attempts to promote his crown glass, which he explained 'the Quality of Which I Hope will be Exceeded by none from these parts'.<sup>288</sup> Due to limited local competition it is unlikely that other crown glass did exceed Cookson's in quality, but once production had begun he also claimed that his product was 'Equal to what is made in London'.<sup>289</sup> Cookson's reference to London emphasises the quality and cultural 'kite-mark' that London represented, as stated by Berry, however this typical promotional language used by Cookson in his early correspondence may have had some substance to it.<sup>290</sup> Crown glass was produced in London and Cookson's glass undoubtedly competed with the capital's products. The amount of sales recorded in his sales journal suggests that Cookson's crown glass was of a good quality, equal to what was made in London and was desirable in the capital, elsewhere in the country, and to some extent internationally. Furthermore, regional production largely supplied the local market.

By the 1740s Cookson's crown glass manufactory had rapidly established its position in the national and local market. Cookson's sales journal records consignments sent from the manufactory at South Shields between 1744 and 1747, when there were still only two crown manufactories on the Tyne. Rather than being destined only for a southern market centred in London, Cookson's glass supplied both national and local customers. By the 1740s large consignments were sent to London and other major ports displayed on Map 13, which presents destinations of major consignments sent during the period 1744 to 1747. The sales journal records delivery of glass to local buyers with 261 consignments to contacts in the Tyne region, five to Sunderland and Monkwearmouth,

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<sup>287</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 122.

<sup>288</sup> TWA, JCL, John Cookson to Mr Thomas Martin, 20 February 1739.

<sup>289</sup> TWA, JCL, John Cookson to Mr Nathaniel Cunningham, 8 December 1739.

<sup>290</sup> Berry, 'Promoting Taste', p. 7.

and eight to the Tees area.<sup>291</sup> On a smaller scale crown glass was also sent to larger market towns and rural villages in the region which included Durham, Barnard Castle, North Shields, Hexham, South Shields, Bishop Auckland, Gosforth, and Blanchland, and to glaziers and independent customers.<sup>292</sup> This, of course, is only an indication of the amounts of glass vended from the region. It is likely that the Newcastle Broad and Crown Glass Company also had a wide client base. In total during the period 1744-47 Cookson's crown glass manufactory sold to customers in ninety-two locations, the majority local or national with a scattering of international adventures. Map 14 indicates that distribution of Cookson's crown glass was strikingly concentrated on the east and south coast with penetration inland, especially in the North and East. This distribution largely followed the pattern of ports shipping to Newcastle and Sunderland, discussed in detail in Chapter Five, however river and land transport also enabled glass to be vended inland.

Despite the large number of destinations which the Cookson works supplied, sales were concentrated in the local region, London, and larger towns serviced by a water way. For example, York received twenty-five consignments, Hull received forty-one, London received fifty-four, Portsmouth received eighteen, Kendal received fourteen, and Norwich received twenty-three.<sup>293</sup> Most of these consignments contained large quantities of glass suggesting that they were of a wholesale nature destined for merchants who would vend them in their regional area. For example, the dominance of London is not apparent by the fifty-four consignments sent. The size of these consignments was large and of a wholesale nature, with Pilbin estimating that around 60 per cent of glass sent from the Cookson manufactory was destined for London.<sup>294</sup>

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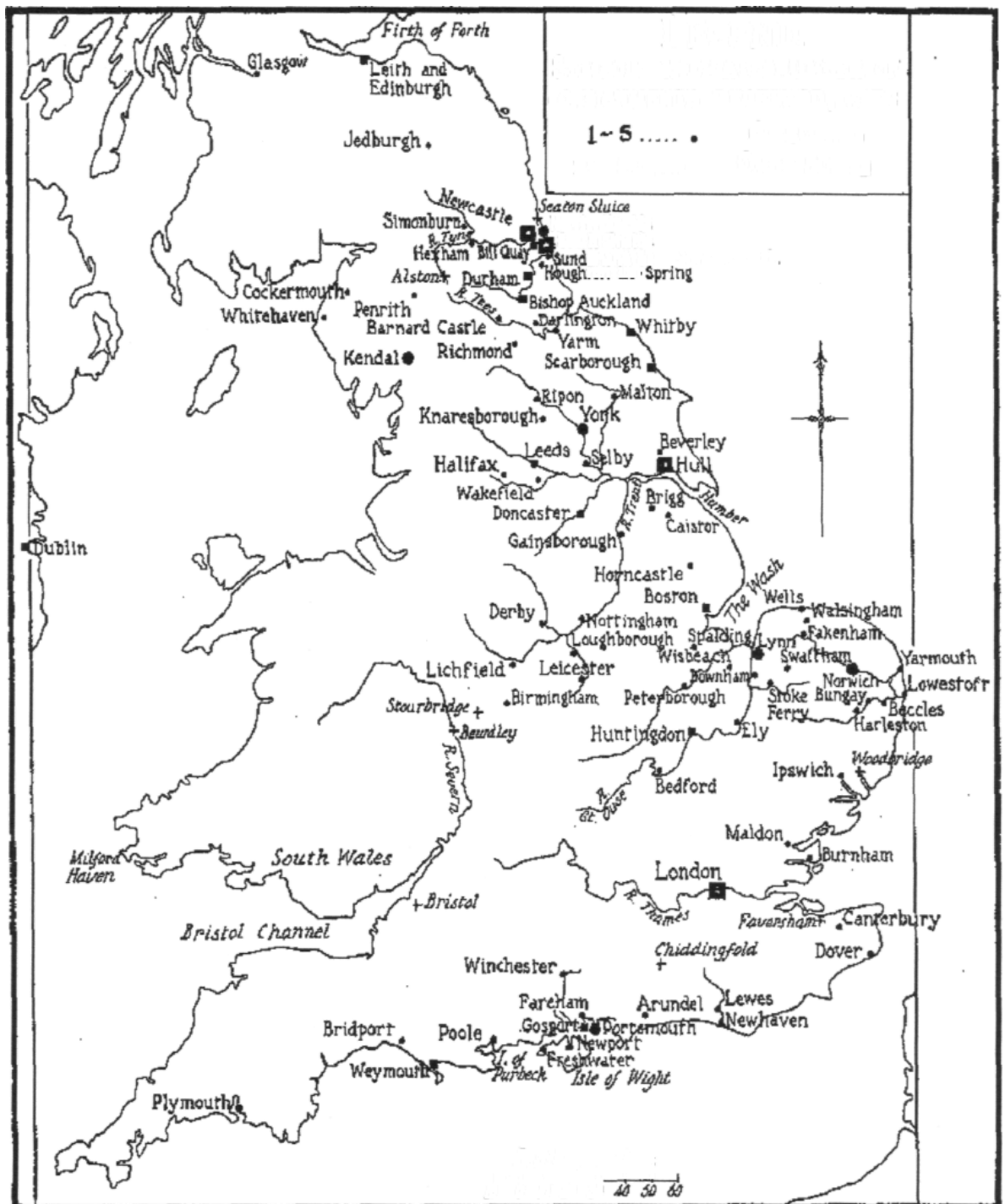
<sup>291</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572; P. Pilbin, 'External Relations of the Tyneside Glass Industry', *Economic Geography* (1938), p. 310.

<sup>292</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572.

<sup>293</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572.

<sup>294</sup> Pilbin, 'External Relations of the Tyneside Glass Industry', p. 309.

**Map 14: Locations receiving Consignments of Glass between 1744 and 1747  
recorded in John Cookson's Sales Journal**



Source: Image reproduced from Pilbin, 'External Relations of the Tyneside Glass Industry', p. 302.

Those consignments which were sent to more localised areas were apparently private orders and therefore smaller. The large scale absence of glass consignments to the west coast and Wales may have been partially connected to the difficulties involved with

shipping from the Tyne, but also determined by the availability of glass produced in Bristol, Stourbridge and London. To some extent international vending followed a similar pattern to national sales. Cookson's early correspondence noted intentions and attempts to vend glass abroad with Amsterdam and Copenhagen as notable places. The sales journal reveals regular sales were delivered to Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Bergen by the 1740s. However there were approaches on new markets and adventures were made to Dublin, New York and Carolina. In his letterbook Cookson states in 1739 that frequent voyages were made to New England from the Newcastle and that local glass was taken on these ships.<sup>295</sup>

Glass for glazing was the main demand placed upon crown glass, but it was not the only source. Cookson's crown glass manufactory, in addition to supplying glass panes nationally, also supplied smaller pieces for the completion of semi-finished decorative and practical items. On the 5 May 1741 the *Leeds Mercury* announced: 'The best Crown Glass from Mr Bold's Glasshouse in London or the best Crown Glass from Mr. Cookson's Glasshouse in Newcastle and Company; any day in the week at the house of Richard Butler, nigh Woodhouse Bar, Leeds. Sash glass is 6d. to 8d. a foot; clock faces and pictures 8d. to 10d. a foot; cut glass for setting in lead from 2 ¾ d. to 4d. a foot.'<sup>296</sup> Although glazing was the main source of demand for crown glass it also played a more direct role in the creation of decorative and practical consumer items, clearly revealing its utility and versatility.

Window glass in the form of broad and crown glass remained the Tyne and Wear's major glass product from the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century. Newcastle had an early lead in broad glass production and apparently supplied the national market. The gradual adoption of the sash window nationally and in the local area encouraged the establishment of crown glass production in Newcastle, but this expansion was not simply a way of supplying local demand at the expense of producers elsewhere in the country. Cookson's business records indicate that early crown glass produced in the region was intended for a national market. It was not necessarily a form of local import substitution. By 1800 according to Catherine Ross' figures there were seven crown glass manufactories on the Tyne and one on the Wear, suggesting that

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<sup>295</sup> TWA, JCL, 5 June 1739, 11 June 1739, 10 Oct 1740; JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572.

<sup>296</sup> *Leeds Mercury*, 5 May 1741.

crown glass and the sash window may have become a standard comfort of the eighteenth century, and also that use of crown glass had expanded to the finishing of items such as clocks and pictures.

## *ii) Bottles*

The comments of contemporary writers during the early seventeenth century emphasised the importance of window glass production on the Tyne, however it was not until the second half of the century that manufacture of glass bottles took off as a major sector of the glass industry. Despite the existence of bottle houses on the Tyne and Wear, the region was not prominent in bottle glass production at this time. Before 1650 bottles for storing liquid were principally made of earthenware, wood, leather, or metal, and it was not until the introduction of dark green bottles (shown in Fig. 10) during the 1650s, made of thick and strong glass, that bottle making became a major industry. Unlike window glass production, which had benefitted from Mansell's monopoly and particular attention at Newcastle, the Tyne and Wear bottle industry had no real advantage over other glass producing regions before 1700. John Houghton's figures record four bottle houses producing on the Tyne and Wear in 1696, compared to nine in the London district, five in Bristol, and five in Stourbridge.<sup>297</sup>

Despite the absence of any particularly favourable conditions before 1700, the Tyne and Wear did have raw material advantages that made bottle manufacturing an attractive and relatively trouble-free enterprise to participate in. The equipment for manufacturing bottles was relatively cheap, and less skill was required than that needed to produce window or flint glass.<sup>298</sup> Bottle houses were more suited to consuming small or poor quality coal than other types of glass production, and therefore were most suitable for colliery owners to invest in. John Cookson's correspondence to a prospective colliery owner, discussed in Chapter Three, again reinforces these benefits of involvement in bottle production.<sup>299</sup> If coal could not be consumed by other means a bottle house would consume it. The availability of small coal, which could not be shipped for domestic use elsewhere in the country, was matched by the ever expanding demand for glass bottles. As a result, whilst the Tyne and Wear did not play an important role in bottle production

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<sup>297</sup> John Houghton cited in Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 187.

<sup>298</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', pp. 187-188.

<sup>299</sup> See Chapter Three p. 71.

at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the expanding demand for bottles meant that by the end of the century it did have a place of significance in the national industry.

**Fig. 10: Example of an Early Wine Bottle, c. 1650.**



Source: Museum of London Collections online  
[http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj\\_id=148565](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj_id=148565)

During the course of the eighteenth century demand for bottles came from a number of areas which led the growth of bottle making in the region and throughout Britain. The sector thrived as a result of the widespread bottling of beer and cider, imported wine and spirits, and even spa waters. The movement to a more commercialised brewing industry in place of the individual household brewing system further encouraged growth. The growing popularity of pharmaceuticals during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries encouraged another expanding section of demand for smaller bottles and phials.

The potential and actual market for bottles was widespread. Bottles were required anywhere that wine or spirits were imported, or beer, cider or pharmaceuticals were

produced. Furthermore, the industry was given additional encouragement by an act of 1728 which prohibited the importation of wine in bottles.<sup>300</sup> Whilst the act was not enforced strictly and was relaxed in 1784 it did generate huge demand in Britain especially for the bottling of French, Spanish and Portuguese wines. London, as the major port for colonial and European goods, required large numbers of bottles as did other major ports. The importation of wine and spirits into the ports on the Tyne and Wear additionally created substantial local demand.

The range of bottles produced in the Tyne and Wear bottle houses and the size of production for the majority of the period under discussion is unclear due to lack of business accounts for bottle houses. However it is evident that despite being described by John Styles as a manufacturing industry less sensitive to changes in style, the general shape and design of bottles did develop during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.<sup>301</sup> Fig. 11 displays a collection of bottles from the Sunderland museum and indicates the development in shape that took place in bottle design from a short onion shaped bottle to a taller long necked shape particularly in the period between 1715 and 1780. This development in shape was not exclusive to the Tyne and Wear bottle houses, and to some extent Styles is accurate in suggesting that the industry was less sensitive to change. Despite this broad development in shape, bottles did not experience the frequent fashion changes of clothing, ceramics or wallpaper.

The market for glass bottles largely reflected that of window glass and it is clear that London was the major consumer of Tyne and Wear bottles. The Royal Northumberland Bottle Works at Hartley in Northumberland produced and sent 100,000 dozen bottles to its London agents, Broughton and then Harrison, with whom the works had a fixed contract.<sup>302</sup> Such quantities were regularly sent during the 1770s with productive capacity doubling to 200,000 dozen by 1800.<sup>303</sup> The Ridley family's St. Lawrence bottle works at Newcastle was also directly involved in supplying the capital. Its 'sales [were] principally depending upon the Export London, and Newcastle trade'.<sup>304</sup> Most Tyne

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<sup>300</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', pp. 188-189.

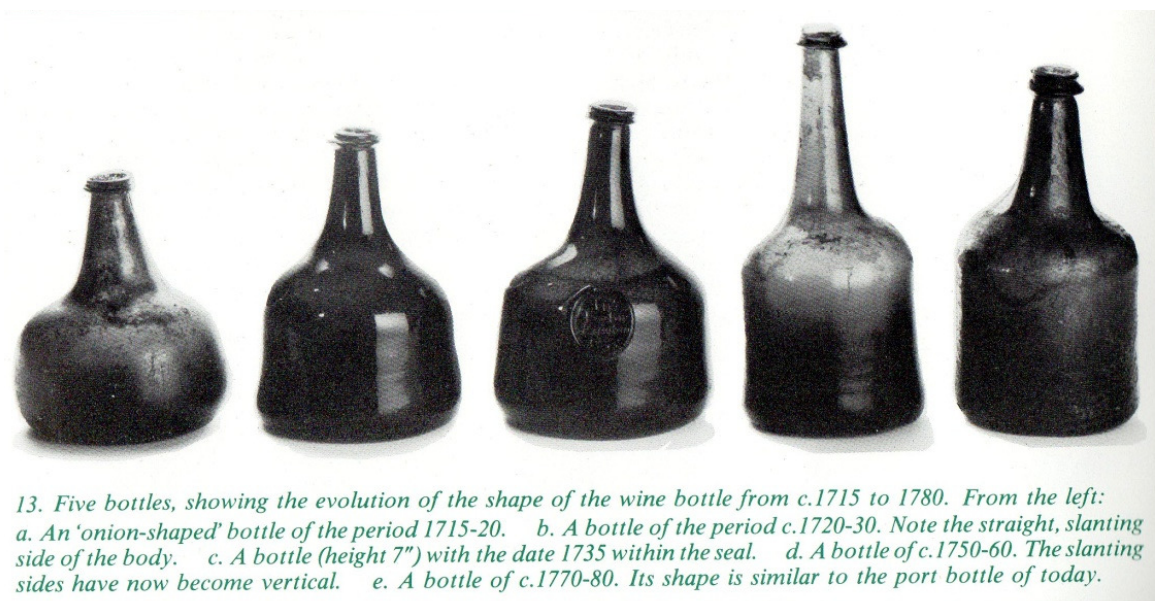
<sup>301</sup> J. Styles, 'Manufacturing, Consumption and Design in Eighteenth-Century England' in J. Brewer and S. Roy (eds.) *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), p. 532.

<sup>302</sup> NRO, 2/DE/11/7/1.

<sup>303</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 211.

<sup>304</sup> NRO, ZRI/36/1.

**Fig. 11: Bottle Shape Development c. 1725-1780**



Source: *The Glass Industry of Tyne and Wear Part 1: Glassmaking on Wearside* (Tyne and Wear County Council, Gateshead, 1979), p. 14.

and Wear bottle houses sent to London as well as to the regional market, however it is evident by the 1780s that growth in the number of bottle houses was the root of intense regional competition and overcapacity in the market.<sup>305</sup> The St. Lawrence bottle works manager, Joshua Henzell, wrote that Sir John Delaval's Royal Northumberland Bottle Works was sending bottles 'both by sea and land carriage into Newcastle he has disappointed me of some orders from Scotland by his selling price being 22s p gross [per gross]'.<sup>306</sup> The 1780s were a difficult period for the bottle houses and selling price was key to maintaining the bottle industry; it is clear that overcapacity in the north was blamed for the slowing of trade.

Certainly between the 1740s and 1780s the variety of products from Tyne, Wear, and the Hartley bottle manufactories had expanded, and to some extent this was a response to demand from London rather than that generated locally. Most bottle houses produced common bottles, 'champain' bottles, common quarts and 'champain' quarts (bottles with capacity equalling quarter of a gallon or two pints). By the 1740s these standard products had expanded and between 1744 and 1747 John Cookson shipped square

<sup>305</sup> By the last quarter of the eighteenth century bottle manufacturing had become the single largest branch of the regional glass industry.

<sup>306</sup> NRO, ZRI/36/1.

bottles and phials, ordinary types of bottles, and bottles of different sizes including gill bottles.<sup>307</sup> By the 1780s the product range at the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works at Hartley had expanded again under the demand of the London market. The Hartley works' London agent, Harrison, required hollow-ware – essentially bowl or tube-shaped glass pieces – for the London market and recommended a hollow-ware glassblower who was capable of producing the items required.<sup>308</sup> The result of this action was the production of items for distilling and pharmaceuticals, including gallon receivers, boltheads, sublimers, retorts, large globes, small globes, small pints and half pints.<sup>309</sup>

London apparently could direct the product catalogue of northern producers, but it was not the only market for Tyne and Wear bottles and they were shipped to other parts of the country and to foreign markets. In 1745 John Cookson shipped 500 Dozen bottles for a William Row of Newhaven, half a gross of bottles to Mr John Sherenham of Poole, 4 gross of three gill bottles (one fourth of a standard pint) to Mr William Davis of Caster, and in 1746 Cookson adventured ten baskets of gun phials to King's Lynn.<sup>310</sup> Joshua Henzell's letter to Sir William Ridley, referenced previously, indicates that by the 1780s large quantities of bottles were sent northwards into the increasingly competitive Scottish market, and correspondence from the Hartley works to Sir John Delaval in 1780 record bottles shipped to a merchant of Newcastle which included '1440 Dozen of Mould Champain Bottles And Shipped for Mr Thomas Mark Merch in Norwich 360 Mould Champain Bottles. Likewise we have Sent by way of Tryal to Mr John Wormald of York 5 Dozen of Champain Bottles by a Sloop Loading...'.<sup>311</sup> Evidence for a national bottle market outside of London supplied by the Tyne and Wear bottle houses may be slim, but it certainly existed.

That locally produced bottles found their way into the local market is also clear, and the consumers who required these bottles were diverse. In 1747 a Bowes family cash book for the Gibside estate recorded the purchase of bottles from Williams and Company bottle house in Newcastle to the amount of £6 18s. 11d. These were presumably for the Gibside estate brewery, as they were purchased alongside corks and smaller bottle

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<sup>307</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572.

<sup>308</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/3/8.

<sup>309</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', pp. 230-231.

<sup>310</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572.

<sup>311</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/3/8.

purchases.<sup>312</sup> Further evidence of local demand is provided by the account books of Bewick and Beilby Company of engravers. Although better known for glass enamelling and woodcut prints, Bewick and Beilby also engaged in engraving and printing moulds, marks and bottle labels for the bottle houses of the Tyne and Wear. The account books of Bewick and Beilby for the periods 1767 to 1797 and the period 1798 to 1812 studied by Margaret Ellison give some indication of the types of local clients requiring and producing glass bottles during this period.<sup>313</sup> The marks and moulds engraved by the company suggest a simultaneously private and local aspect to a business that was increasingly wide, commercial and London-centric. According to Ellison the marks were mainly produced for bottle manufacturers for wine, beer, and other large cheaper bottles, whilst the moulds were generally used by flint glass manufacturers who often produced pharmaceutical bottles.<sup>314</sup>

Marks could be general or personal, suggesting both the commercial and private aspect of the bottle industry. Some orders, like that placed in November 1793, were obviously for personalised bottles, possibly for wine. The mark commissioned was 'I. G. Berry', possibly a brewer's or personal name. Others were apparently for general industry. In 1792 the St. Lawrence bottle house commissioned a 'Brandy' mark, in the same year they also commissioned a 'Gin' mark as did Cookson, Deer, and Co. in 1797. In 1786 Simpson and Co. Glasshouse commissioned a 'Daffy's Elixir' mould for a pharmaceutical product that had become increasingly popular and was vended nationally throughout the eighteenth century. Marks and moulds were commissioned by a variety of clients. Bottle house owners could commission general marks such as 'Gin' and 'Brandy', well-known commercial brands such as Daffy's Elixir, or personal names and dates for wine bottles. Other orders came from wine merchants such as Mr Darnel, who commissioned a 'Grapes' mark in 1799. Others were engraved for druggists such as Mr. J. Taylor who commissioned a mark and mould in 1794.<sup>315</sup> Not all marks and moulds were described, but Ellison does suggest that a large number of bottles must

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<sup>312</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/1/1.

<sup>313</sup> M. Ellison, 'The Tyne Glasshouses and Beilby and Bewick Workshop', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 3 (1975), pp. 143-93.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>315</sup> See Alphabetical list of bottle marks and moulds in Ellison, 'The Tyne Glasshouses' pp.164-193.

have been plain, especially as Bewick had orders for printed labels for chemist bottles, as well as marks and moulds.<sup>316</sup>

Local production was certainly capable of meeting local demand, however widespread demand for bottles of various types had enabled the Tyne and Wear bottle houses to expand and develop an important position in the industry. The market served by the Tyne and Wear bottle industry largely reflected that of window glass, a pattern which is unsurprising given that many glasshouse owners had shares in both branches of the industry. The size of the bottle making sector in the region, which had grown from four or five in 1700 to thirteen in 1800, reflected the demand for bottles which was growing rapidly, national in its geographical market, and stimulated by restrictive duties. It also reflected the suitability of bottle making as an additional interest for regional businessmen, gentry and merchants. Unfortunately, by the end of the period overcapacity in the region was causing serious competition between Tyne and Wear bottle manufacturers in their attempts to continue supplying the national market. Furthermore, in terms of regional bottle manufacturing, the London market had a crippling hold on the industry. Overcapacity gave London purchasers precedence in shopping for cheaper bottles. Additionally, as the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works example indicates, London agents could determine the types of bottle produced, even to the extent of recommending craftsmen to execute new ranges of items. However local demand was well-catered for with the Beilby and Bewick workshop providing a subsidiary trade in moulds and marks for bottles.

### *iii) Fine Glass*

Window glass and bottles may have been the dominant manufacture of the Tyne and Wear glass industry, but by the later eighteenth century they existed alongside a small yet renowned section of manufactories producing flint glass (drinking vessels and decorative items), a small group of plate glass manufactories (producing looking glasses or mirrors), and a sector of craftsmen involved in subsidiary trades which dealt in glass decoration, finishing, flowering, silvering, and enamelling. Whilst the growth of window glass occurred hand-in-hand with changing architectural design and urban developments, the growth of flint glass manufacture catered for changes at a household

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<sup>316</sup> Ibid, p. 144.

level connected with both imitation of luxury Venetian glassware and developments in consumer taste. Decorative and practical glassware and looking glasses forged a place in the market as part of a new range of domestic decoration and tablewares which, alongside paper hangings and ceramics, became increasingly popular from around 1680 onwards, finding their way from the luxury market into popular culture.

Prior to 1675 fine glass for tables was almost entirely imported from Venice until flint (lead) glass was first patented in England in 1674 by George Ravenscroft who, by using Italian expertise, perfected the process of producing an imitation of Venetian crystal glass (named flint or lead glass due to the ingredients in the glassmaking process) at his manufactory in London.<sup>317</sup> Although the transfer of Venetian glass techniques into England was apparent, for Berg it was imitation of Venetian glass which resulted in the invention of flint glass that 'made glass a modern luxury'.<sup>318</sup> English flint glass used raw materials available in England to produce a type of glass like that produced by the Venetians. When Ravenscroft's patent expired in 1681 large numbers of flint glasshouses sprung up in London and then around the country. In his list of flint, green and ordinary glasshouses (producing fine glass) John Houghton recorded only one glasshouse at Newcastle compared to three in the Bristol district, five at Stourbridge, and nine in the London district.<sup>319</sup>

It is not clear why flint glass manufacture did not expand in the Tyne and Wear areas in the manner that window and bottle glass production had, but for the majority of the eighteenth century there existed only two flint glasshouses in the region, both at Newcastle. The first was that established by the Dagnia family on the north side of the Close in Newcastle around 1690. The Dagnias, a family of Italian glassmakers, were apparently enticed from Provence by Sir Robert Mansell in the early seventeenth century to produce glass in England, and in the late seventeenth century a branch of the family moved from Stourbridge to Newcastle to produce bottles and flint glass. There is some confusion concerning the ownership of the Dagnia manufactory after the death of Onesiphorus Dagnia in 1728. Ross suggests the glasshouse remained in the Dagnia family until 1750 when John Williams bought it, but J. D. Banham, writing in the

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<sup>317</sup> L. M. Bickerton, *English Drinking Glasses 1675-1825* (Haverfordwest, 1984), p. 3; Charleston, *English Glass*, pp. 109-111; Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>318</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 119.

<sup>319</sup> John Houghton cited in Ross 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 284.

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, states that the glasshouse was taken over in 1728 by Joseph Airey, a Newcastle mercer, and Isaac Cookson, a merchant adventurer originally from Penrith (father of John Cookson) who had interests in the iron industry.<sup>320</sup> This confusion is likely a result of Cookson and Airey's ownership of the second flint glass manufactory in Newcastle, which was also located at Closegate. Regardless of disagreement over the ownership of these manufactories, it is certain that both were at work by 1750 and both were located on the Closegate, Newcastle. A handful of other attempts were made to produce flint glass in the region before the end of the eighteenth century, most notably John Hopton's works at Sunderland and a works on the South Shore near Gateshead. However both were unsuccessful and relatively short-lived enterprises.

Records of glassware produced at these works during the early eighteenth century are scant, although some image of the product range can be glimpsed from various gentry estate records and glasshouse sales journals. Despite the small size of the regional flint glass industry, Newcastle's manufactures were important. It is evident that the majority of flint glass produced in the region was plain or cheaper 'utility ware', with cut and engraved glass mainly manufactured in London.<sup>321</sup> In 1714 William Ramsay of Gateshead Park purchased 'Eggend Goblet[s]' from the Dagnia glasshouse at Closegate, clearly linking the region's gentry to purchase of local fine glass.<sup>322</sup> Port book samples indicate that flint glass and drinking glasses produced in the region were shipped from Newcastle by merchants with involvement in the industry, although detailed descriptions of these glass pieces are not always provided. These shipments included 'drinking glasses', 'water glasses', 'coarse glasses', 'pieces flint glass', 'wine glasses' and 'glass lamps'.<sup>323</sup> It is likely that many of these drinking glasses were in the form of the Newcastle light baluster, a variation on the popular flint baluster glass that the region became renowned for (shown in Fig. 12). This drinking glass, produced mostly during the reign of Queen Anne between 1702 and 1714, reflected the craftsmanship of the industry, but also the fashion of the time which saw the combining of crafted glass and architectural styles into practical and decorative household items. The stem of the

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<sup>320</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', pp. 285-287; J. D. Banham, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography online, Cookson Family, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47488/49070>.

<sup>321</sup> R. W. Douglas and S. Frank, *A History of Glassmaking* (London, 1972), p. 17.

<sup>322</sup> TWA, CM/1/278.

<sup>323</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', pp. 288-289.

light baluster incorporated a stem pattern or 'knop' which imitated the short baluster pillar.<sup>324</sup> The introduction of crown glass responded to architectural changes determined by the desire for light and balance in rooms, whilst the baluster glass reflected the lightness and crafting of household goods in a mirror of popular architectural styles. These 'knops' could take varying forms and it is possible that the 'Eggend Goblet[s]' purchased by William Ramsay were actually baluster glasses which contained a rare egg-shaped knop.

**Fig. 12: The Newcastle Light Baluster**



Source: image reproduced from J. Rush, *A Beilby Odyssey* (Buckinghamshire, 1987), p. 37.

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<sup>324</sup> Charleston, *English Glass*, pp. 133-137.

John Cookson's crown glass manufactory occasionally shipped glass for the flint glasshouse in Newcastle, and Cookson's sales journal gives a more detailed image of glass produced in and shipped from Newcastle. During the period 1744 to 1747 the journal records the shipping of 'Bell glasses' and 'small flower glasses', hampers of phials for the pharmaceutical trade, white glass, wormed ale glasses (glasses with highly decorative air twisted stems, like the example displayed in Fig. 13), green glass, decanters for wine, glass mugs, candlesticks (example shown in Fig. 14), and glasses for sweetmeats (example shown in Fig.15).<sup>325</sup>

**Fig. 13: Wormed Ale Glass, c. 1746-1770**



Source: image from Museum of London's Ceramic and Glass Collections online at [http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj\\_id=528916](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj_id=528916)

<sup>325</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1744-47, 1512/5572. According to the Oxford English Dictionary a 'bell-glass' was a bell-shaped glass or cover used to protect plants.

Further evidence of purchases highlight the types of items produced by the 1780s. In 1786 the Ellison family of Gateshead Park bought 'Best Plain Goblets', 'plain water Cups' and 'Best ¼ pint wines' from the manufactory of Airey, Cookson and Co. at

**Fig 14: Glass candlestick, c. 1720-1750**



Source: image from Museum of London's Ceramic and Glass Collections online at [http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj\\_id=528705](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj_id=528705)

**Fig 15: Sweetmeat Glass, c. 1740**



Source: image from Museum of London's Ceramic and Glass Collections online at [http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj\\_id=521408](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/object.asp?obj_id=521408)

Closegate in Newcastle.<sup>326</sup> These varieties reflected the fashionable appetite for glassware which demanded assortments of drinking glasses for different drinks including ale, wine, and water. Just as the types of bottles produced responded to increasing varieties of liquid available, so too did drinking vessels. Such was the new fashion for glassware that assortments continued to develop to include other household goods, such as glasses for holding sweetmeats and candlesticks. It was not just the increasing variety of household glassware that was significant in the eighteenth century, but the fact that it was available in a variety of prices. It was fashionable and could be

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<sup>326</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/139, 11 May 1786.

decorative, but it could also be practical, making it ideal for expansion from luxury to decency, from the tables of gentry to the ordinary household in all shapes and forms.

The varieties of flint glass discussed here seem to confirm that whilst it was produced in Newcastle, it remained plain without decoration for a large part of the period under discussion. The Tyne and Wear may have played a prominent role in the production of window glass and bottles growing at the expense of other areas such as London, but London's glasshouses remained dominant in the crafting and cutting of fine glass.<sup>327</sup> The additional crafting, engraving, and cutting of glass raised such items from status as largely functional pieces to that of luxury, and also altered price. Quality was the priority in production and sale of flint glass and this was reflected by costs. The plainness of Newcastle flint glass may have restricted its appeal nationally, as London manufacturers created quality cut glass, but possibly gave it more widespread social appeal in the region.

The small size of flint glass production does not mean it was insignificant in the region and the concentration of glass production on the Tyne and Wear did encourage the growth of a number of related subsidiary occupations for the crafting of new and fashionable items. Glass vessels were produced in various qualities, just as window glass and bottles were, but additional crafting, engraving, and decoration added to the value and desirability of an item. By 1778 William Whitehead's *First Newcastle Directory* listed not only glass warehouses and glaziers, but also three plate polishers and silvers (involved in producing looking glasses or mirrors), and two glass grinders and flowerers.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', pp. 282-283.

<sup>328</sup> Whitehead, *First Newcastle Directory*.

**Fig 15: Clavering Glass**



Source: image reproduced from J. Rush, *A Beilby Odyssey*, p. 69.

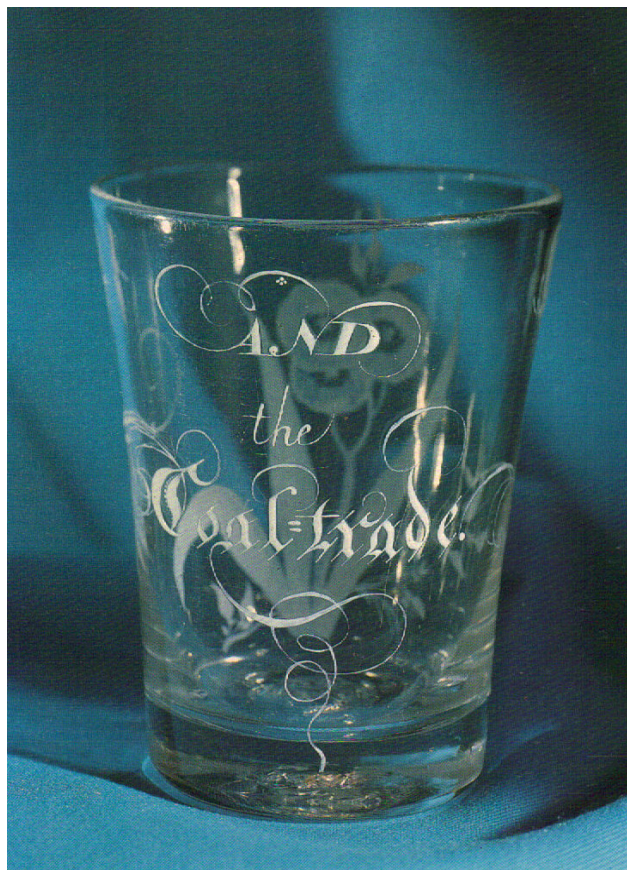
Surviving artefacts reinforce the existence (however small scale) of subsidiary crafting of glassware, and partially emphasise the local connection involved in consumption of finer items. Local engraver and enameller, William Beilby, had a close relationship with the flint glasshouses of the Tyne, producing enamelled glasses commissioned by local gentry families and gentry from elsewhere in the country.<sup>329</sup> Beilby's enamelling

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<sup>329</sup> See J. Rush, *A Beilby Odyssey* (Buckinghamshire, 1987) for details of the Beilby's glass engraving.

transformed Newcastle's flint glass from a locally important plain manufacture to a highly crafted item that was desirable nationally. However they were not elaborate pieces for practical use, they were essentially decorative. The development of enamelled designs which included heraldic arms encouraged the patronage of gentry. For example, Fig. 16 displays a glass enamelled for the Clavering family inscribed 'Liberty and Clavering For Ever'. Other decoration also had a regional significance, such as the tumbler shown in Fig. 17 which displays the words 'And the Coal Trade', alluding to the dominant role that coal extraction played in the Tyne and Wear economy and society. The decoration of local glass by Beilby raised such items from plain manufactured products to decorative items, but they were luxuries significantly connected with family display and politics not necessarily culture changes that affected a wide cross-section of the population.

**Fig. 17: Glass Coal Trade Tumbler, c. 1760s**



Source: image reproduced from Rush, *A Beilby Odyssey*, p. 97.

It is evident that a variety of glassware was produced in the two Tyne flint glasshouses during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but where demand for this flint glass came from is more difficult to ascertain. It is clear that broad, crown, and bottle glass production on the Tyne and Wear grew out of demand from London, the wider national market, and steady local demand, however flint glass demand was more complex. There is little evidence to suggest that the London market consumed even small amounts of Tyne flint glass, but this is possibly a reflection of a thriving flint glass sector in the capital rather than the quality of Tyneside items. Berg's claim that glass was sent to be vended in London appears not to be reflected in the case of Newcastle flint glass.<sup>330</sup> Ross claims that the small size of the Tyneside flint glass sector suggests that such finer glass was dependent for most of the eighteenth century 'primarily on a local consumption', a statement which is confirmed by lack of shipping to London and examples of local purchase by regional gentry.<sup>331</sup> For example, in 1714 William Ramsay of Gateshead Park purchased glass from the Dagnia glasshouse which included 'one Dozen Eggend Goblet.'<sup>332</sup> Clearly the glasshouses sold retail to customers as Ramsay's purchase exhibits, but the Tyne flint glasshouses also supplied wholesale to Newcastle retailers who in turn vended glass to the local market. On the 1 April 1780 Mr John Harris advertised that at his china shop in the Newcastle Bigg Market he sold products from the proprietors of the glass houses of the town which included all sorts of flint glasses, plain, engraved and cut.<sup>333</sup> The 66 year gap between these examples of wholesale and retail purchasing methods do not represent a fundamental change in sale of glassware from the glasshouses. In 1786 the flint glasshouse run by Airey, Cookson, and Co. were recorded as selling retail again to the Ellison family of Gateshead Park who purchased 'Best Plain Goblets', 'plain water Cups' and 'Best ¼ pint wines' from the manufactory.<sup>334</sup>

Although Tyne and Wear flint glass did not have the national reputation that window and bottle glass held, and was possibly a product largely for the local market, there is evidence to suggest that some fine glass was exported from Newcastle during the eighteenth century. It is possible that some of this may have been re-exports, but a

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<sup>330</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 122.

<sup>331</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 282.

<sup>332</sup> TWA, CM/1/278.

<sup>333</sup> NC, 1 April 1780.

<sup>334</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B11/139, 11 May 1783.

number of the shipments were sent by glasshouse owners, suggesting that they may have been venturing their own products. For example, in 1745 John Cookson shipped 10,000 pieces of flint glass to Dublin and 720 drinking glasses to Hamburg. Ralph Carr sent 36 drinking glasses to Moss. In 1749 Airey, Cookson and Co sent 28 cwts 3qrs 11lbs to Amsterdam, and in 1750 John Williams shipped 20 dozen drinking glasses to Christiansand.<sup>335</sup> Other shipments of flint glass were sent to Guernsey, New York, Jamaica, and South Carolina. How successful these adventures were is not clear, and the quantities ventured were certainly much smaller than the bottle and window glass vended from the region, but expansion into a wider international market was certainly attempted.

#### *iv) Looking Glasses*

In terms of production technique looking glasses or mirrors were more clearly related to broad and crown window glass, however in terms of goods categorisation looking glasses were more closely associated with the decorative and practical glass vessels that were increasingly in evidence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Untangling the looking glass industry on the Tyne and Wear is somewhat complicated due to contrasting evidence. Surveys of regional probate inventories during the period 1680 to 1723, discussed in detail in Chapters Seven and Eight, reveal high levels of looking glass ownership in Northumberland and Durham. However evidence of manufactories is largely absent. Blown broad glass of the type used to make leadlights could be used in the production of looking glasses, but its variable quality meant it produced looking glasses with poor clarity. Furthermore there is no documentary evidence to suggest that this glass was used to produce looking glasses on the Tyne and Wear. Despite the numbers of looking glasses owned, it is not evident that they were produced in the region before the early eighteenth century.

Both blown and cast plate glass (a technique adopted from the French in the late seventeenth century) were produced in Britain by the eighteenth century, however, according to primary evidence available, and Buckley and Ross' research, no plate glass was produced on the Tyne or Wear until the early decades of the eighteenth century. The delay in production was likely a result of lack of expertise in the region and the

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<sup>335</sup> Ross, 'The Development of the Glass Industry', p. 288.

development of the market for looking glasses. Probate inventory evidence indicates that the market for looking glasses had been developing in Northumberland and Durham since at least the late seventeenth century, but these items were largely restricted to the homes of gentry, professionals and some gentlemen until the eighteenth century (discussed further in Chapter's Seven and Eight). It is possible that production of plate glass for looking glasses was a response to both technical knowledge and a broad widening of demand.

The first plate glass manufactory in the region was that owned by John Cookson and Thomas Jeffreys who also produced crown glass. Cookson's early letters and deeds for the crown glass manufactory reveal his intention to move into plate glass manufacture to produce looking glasses, which he apparently intended to export.<sup>336</sup> However, during the 1740s Cookson's journal indicates that only small quantities of plate glass were sold, making it most probably a sideline enterprise to the production of crown glass and involvement in the production of bottle and flint glass. It is likely that this small scale production continued into the later century despite the expansion of bottle and window glass manufacture. Whilst other branches of the industry competed against products from other manufactories throughout Britain, the small quantities of plate glass for looking glasses produced in the region almost certainly struggled against continental competition. Buckley references discussion in a Parliamentary Committee of 1773 to that effect. It was stated at the Parliamentary Committee that '[i]t appeared by the evidence of Mr. Dickson that at Mr. Cookson's Manufactory for Plate Glass, the largest Size made is 34 x 52 inches, which he believes were cast. This Manufactory has been carried on for 30 years; but as there is no call for them (the French underselling us) very few had been made, and he could not tell the Price'.<sup>337</sup> Tyne and Wear production of window glass and bottles could compete in the national market against other English producers, but could not complete against superior quality French looking glasses and French techniques.

French competition may have hindered the progress of Cookson's plate glass nationally, but the region's other plate glass manufactory did appear to cater for at least the local market by the later eighteenth century. It also promoted the growth of other crafts which

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<sup>336</sup> TWA, JCL, 7 February 1739, 20 February 1739.

<sup>337</sup> Parliamentary Committee of 1773 cited in Buckley, 'Glasshouses on the Tyne', p. 34, 46-47.

transformed plate glass into finished and saleable articles. The second plate glass manufactory in the region was that at Howden Pans, on the Tyne near Newcastle, the products of which were detailed in an advertisement of 1773. John Reed advertised in the *Newcastle Courant* that he had ‘begun business in grinding and polishing and silvering plate glass, With produce of the New Plate Glass manufactory at Howdon Pans. With Looking glasses, Chimney glasses, seeing glasses. Plate glass ground and polished for windows, pictures.’<sup>338</sup>

Whilst looking glasses of all sizes were a main area of demand for plate glass, developments in techniques and technology, in terms of casting glass onto metal plates rather than blowing the glass and then flattening it, enabled the sector to expand into other sections of demand. By the 1760s the industry also supplied one of the national leisure activities developing during the eighteenth century that was particularly prevalent in Northumberland and Durham, gardening.<sup>339</sup> The history of the greenhouse dates back to the sixteenth century, however the essential idea of the glasshouse was not popular until the later eighteenth century.<sup>340</sup> According to Hughes, by 1720 greenhouses were increasingly used by the genteel to grow fruit in the region, however only by the 1760s was demand for glass greenhouses extensive enough to promote local production and a South Shields (most probably Cookson’s) glass manufactory advertised in 1768: ‘garden glasses from eleven to twenty-six inches diameter, finished in the best manners’.<sup>341</sup> Clearly by the 1760s production techniques were advanced enough in the region to produce very large sheets of glass. Furthermore, the popularity of this particular leisure activity is reflected in the number of earthenware flower pots that were identified in surveys of seventeenth century probate inventories for Newcastle, and by their specific production by china shop owner John Brougham.<sup>342</sup> Brougham advertised in 1749, ‘at his Potwork at Newburn, all sorts of Flower Pots for Gardens, ornamental Pots for Summerhouses, Garden Walls or Court Walls’.<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> *NC*, 24 July 1773.

<sup>339</sup> R. King, ‘Aspects of sociability in the North East of England 1600-1750’ (Unpublished Durham University PhD Thesis, 2001), p. 89-95.

<sup>340</sup> C. Thacker, *The History of Gardens* (London, 1992), p. 236.

<sup>341</sup> Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 29-30; *NC*, 9 July 1768.

<sup>342</sup> G. Heley, ‘The Material Culture of the Tradesmen of Newcastle upon Tyne 1545-1642: The Durham Probate Record Evidence’, I (Unpublished Durham University PhD Thesis, 2007), p. 194.

<sup>343</sup> *NJ*, 10 June 1749.

It is clear that all branches of the glass industry on the Tyne and Wear evidently *responded* to national demand and trends. Although Newcastle had an established reputation in broad glass production, this type of glass was gradually replaced with the lighter and better quality crown glass. Particular manufactories did break into this crown glass market successfully, but the lag in initial crown glass production suggests they were responding to the diffusion of demand and expertise on a national and local scale. Bottle manufacturers produced in a similar market. They supplied both local and national markets, though it was the national market that determined the type and shape of bottles produced and the quantities required. The small size of the fine glass sector reinforces suggestions that it catered largely for the local market. However it is unclear whether these fine items were intended as localised import substitutions. Evidence suggests that Newcastle's fine glass was largely plain and coarse compared with the fine cut crystal manufactured in London, and therefore it may have been destined for an entirely different market. It is possible that northern manufacturers were not attempting to produce for the same social market as London manufacturers. It was not until the last quarter of the eighteenth century that crafting and decorating of Newcastle fine glass took on any significance. The evidence for the looking glass sector indicates that whilst Tyne producers were able to engage in a local and national market and compete with other national producers, they could not compete with continental competition.

## **Paper**

### *i) Common Paper and Books*

On first appearance the place of the paper industry in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century cultural change may not be strikingly apparent. The glass and pottery industries responded to a wide and growing market of demand generated by the very visible changes in household tableware and house building, producing finished goods which can be traced through their manufacture, purchase, and ownership. The role of paper is less obvious, but no less significant. Paper fed a variety of fundamental developments and the expansion in number of paper mills manufacturing was a direct response to growing demand. By the end of the eighteenth century the industry supplied paper for books, newspapers and periodicals in the growing print market, increased commercial correspondence, rising bureaucratic recordings, wrapping for the huge quantities of goods sold by retailers, and even decoration for the newly stylised Georgian home.

The expansion of paper mills during the eighteenth century was a nation-wide experience, as outlined in Chapter Two, however it was not only the number of mills manufacturing paper that rose. Seventeenth-century mills predominantly produced brown and common paper, with better qualities coming from a concentrated group of white paper mills or imported from France, Italy, or Holland.<sup>344</sup> It was clearly demand that encouraged the development of new techniques that allowed increased production and diversity in quality. During the eighteenth century national production developed as a result of new techniques in paper production and the improved skills of English papermakers, increased supply of raw materials, duties on imported paper, and a widespread growth in the demand for all types of paper.<sup>345</sup> By the mid-eighteenth century English mills were producing many types of good quality paper in addition to the common types which largely catered for the retailing sector.

Despite the requirements of the retail industry, commerce, printing and everyday household needs, general paper industry histories suggest that Northumberland and Durham's paper production was limited to poorer quality brown paper. Certainly the location of some mills on tributaries near coal mines meant water was polluted and paper would be of a poorer quality. Stirk claims that the paper made at Croxdale mill in County Durham was largely brown and whitey brown, while that produced at Blackhall mill was coarse grey paper.<sup>346</sup> Additional evidence and a survey of local provincial newspapers indicates that regional manufacture was more expansive than these examples suggest, with both white and brown paper mills at work. For example, in 1741 an advertisement in the *Newcastle Journal* announced that three or four men 'who can be recommended as good Workmen in making BROWN PAPER, may have immediate Employment, by applying to RICHARD CLARK on the Key-Side, Newcastle upon Tyne. Also, against May-day next, a Sett of Workmen will be wanted for a White Mill.'<sup>347</sup> It is apparent that water clarity was sufficient to allow the manufacture of quality white paper at both Lintzford mill and Gibside mill.<sup>348</sup> The advertisement indicates that paper production, like both glass and pottery making, was a particular craft that required skill and specialisation. Just as skilled glassblowers and potters were

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<sup>344</sup> Shorter, *Paper Making in the British Isles*, p. 47; Coleman, *The British Paper Industry*, p. 21.

<sup>345</sup> Shorter, *Paper Making in the British Isles*, pp. 44-47; Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, pp. 4-11.

<sup>346</sup> Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, p. 19, 37.

<sup>347</sup> *NJ*, 12 September 1741.

<sup>348</sup> Stirk, *The Lost Mills*, p. 25; DRO, D/St/E5/1/1, 1 February 1745/46-31 May 1750.

essential for the development of the glass and pottery industry in Northumberland and Durham, specialist papermakers were required to produce even basic paper.

Common paper was undoubtedly produced and consumed in large amounts. However this existed alongside better qualities made into books for writing and account books listed as purchases in the Bowes, Delaval, Salvin, and Baker family account and cash books. The Bowes family cash books for the 1720s record the purchase of quires of paper, gilded paper, paper books, large paper, brown paper, newspapers, and black paper, whilst the Delaval estate accounts recorded the purchase of similar types including scouring paper and account books.<sup>349</sup> How much of this paper was actually produced by regional paper mills is impossible to estimate, and the port books evidence analysed in Chapter Five certainly indicate that the region was supplied with paper from elsewhere. However the sheer varieties of paper required by middling and gentry households without doubt had an impact upon the types produced. Plentiful evidence of locally produced and purchased common paper does not exist, but the Bowes family estate accounts do provide some evidence. The Bowes family plainly had a close connection with the Ord family, who were papermakers and tenants of the Gibside paper mill during the eighteenth century. The Gibside mill was situated on the Bowes' Gibside estate, and the Bowes' regular purchases of paper from the Ords provide a useful indication of the paper produced in some Durham and Northumberland mills, and that purchased by local consumers. The Bowes' accounts do not always specify the exact paper products purchased from the Ords paper mill, often the items were just described as 'paper', but a number of entries are more specific, revealing a variety of paper types manufactured. In the 1730s Robert Ord supplied the Gibside estate from the Gibside mill with plain paper, but by the next decade the types and qualities supplied had expanded.<sup>350</sup> In December 1746 the Gibside paper mill supplied the Bowes with 'paper for books' amounting to 1s. suggesting that paper produced in the region was of a better quality than has previously been assumed.<sup>351</sup> In July 1748 the Gibside paper mill supplied 'six sheets of stronger paper' and an unspecified amount of blue paper for 1s. 6d.<sup>352</sup> Blue paper was typically used during this period for wrapping grocery goods, in some cases specifically wrapping for sugar. The Ords were not the only suppliers of

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<sup>349</sup> NRO, 2DE/25/1, 2DE/25/2; DRO, D/St/E5/1/1.

<sup>350</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/5/4, 31 December 1737-31 December 1741.

<sup>351</sup> DRO, D/St/ E5/1/1.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

paper to the Bowes, but all other suppliers provided plain types from unspecified manufacturers.

It is likely that a number of Northumberland and Durham paper mills produced common paper, most probably brown paper for wrapping or packing retail goods. The expansion of retailing, analysed in Chapter Six, was significant enough to place a heavy demand on brown paper production. Evidence of better quality paper production is more difficult to identify, possibly as the national expansion in paper production made paper an increasingly common functional item. However evidence from the Bowes estate accounts indicates that better quality paper was produced at some mills and that it was purchased by local consumers. The expansion in types of paper produced regionally undoubtedly responded to increased types of demand, but locally produced types only existed alongside those supplied from other parts of Britain probably as a localised form of import substitution.

#### *ii) Wallpaper*

Just as expanding glass production encouraged the growth of a number of subsidiary crafts such as glass silvering, polishing, flowering, and engraving, improving techniques in paper production additionally led to subsidiary trades in that industry. In addition to the expansion of common paper for wrapping goods and better quality writing paper, fashionable trends associated with interior house decoration encouraged the growth of more specialised paper manufacture and design, specifically the manufacture of paper hangings or wallpaper. The earliest makers and sellers of wallpaper in Britain appeared around 1690, and the first manufactories were located in London, where they were predominantly situated during the eighteenth century. The Victoria and Albert museum's online introduction to paper hangings estimates that between 1690 and 1820 there were more than 500 stationers, paperhangers and paperstainers in London, meaning that somewhere around 90 per cent of all wallpaper manufactured in Britain in 1800 was produced in London. Despite the predominance of the capital, techniques in wallpaper production spread throughout the country relatively rapidly, and it was not

long before London papers hangings were sold in provincial towns, such as Leeds, alongside products of small scale local production.<sup>353</sup>

The first advertised paper hanging manufacturer in Northumberland and Durham was located at North Shields. On 9 March and 29 June 1745 the *Newcastle Courant* and *Journal* both announced: 'To be sold, by James Davenport, the MAKER, Several sorts of PAPER for Room-Hangings, wholesale or retail, as good and as cheap as London.'<sup>354</sup> The date of these advertisements reveals the lag that existed between the beginnings of production in the region and London. This lag may have existed for a variety of reasons. It is possible that the area lacked the knowledge or the ability to stain paper until later in the eighteenth century, or there may have been insufficient demand for these products in the region before the 1740s. It is clear that this lag in production was not exclusive to Northumberland and Durham. By the mid-eighteenth century a number of other manufacturers in provincial cities throughout Britain had begun to produce in a market dominated by London. Berg certainly suggests that despite being initially expensive, by the 1740s wallpaper had become fashionable, displacing more extensive types of plasterwork.<sup>355</sup> This chronology of demand certainly fits with more widespread production of wallpaper in provincial centres.

Paper hangings were used in Northumberland and Durham before local production was first advertised, however it is important to stress that these examples were not widespread. One house hung with wallpaper was specifically advertised for sale/to let in the *Newcastle Courant* before 1740, however this one example was also hung with tapestry, perhaps indicating that wallpaper was only beginning to gain popularity.<sup>356</sup> Other than this example it is only evident that gentry homes were hung with paper in the early years of the eighteenth century, and even in these households use of wallpaper was variable. For example, on the marriage of William Cotesworth's daughter, Hannah, to Henry Ellison in 1729 an inventory of the furnishings of Park House, Cotesworth's house at Gateshead, was taken. The inventory recorded numerous rooms hung with material including mohair, gilt leather, and 'Dutch pictures on lyn', but only the best

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<sup>353</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum Collections online, [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/Wallpaper/Shopping\\_Wallpaper/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/Wallpaper/Shopping_Wallpaper/index.html).

<sup>354</sup> *NC*, 9 March 1745; *NJ*, 29 June 1745.

<sup>355</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 115.

<sup>356</sup> *NC*, 28 June 1729.

garrets were hung with ‘printed paper’.<sup>357</sup> Due to the apparent lack of production in the region it is most likely that these early wallpapers were supplied from London.

Evidence that regional production was breaking into the local market that had been supplied by London producers is suggested by the wording of Davenport’s advertisements. He compared his hangings to those of the capital exclaiming that they were ‘as good and as cheap as London’.<sup>358</sup> The comparison with London quality and price is a typical rhetorical style used by provincial sellers in many British cities, and again supports Berry’s suggestion that the capital provided a ‘kite mark’ or cultural standard which the provinces aimed towards. Although Berry suggests that Newcastle wallpaper ‘could only be recommended with reference to the standard of metropolitan chic’ not as a better quality local product, Davenport’s rhetoric is more complex.<sup>359</sup> The advertisement does draw on the London ‘kite mark’, however the reference to quality and price suggests that these locally produced paper hangings were in direct competition with more established London-based products. By advertising in both the *Newcastle Courant* and *Newcastle Journal* it is evident that Davenport had intentions to inform and alert a potential local market (and those further afield who read the paper) as extensively as possible. Furthermore, by selling wholesale and retail Davenport ensured that his hangings could be purchased more easily than his localised manufactory at North Shields would allow.

Paper hanging manufacture in the Tyne and Wear region was not an expansive industry and only one other producer appears in the pages of the Newcastle newspapers during the eighteenth century. Bartholomew Elmes advertised himself as the ‘Paper printer’ in 1750 and manufactured and sold at his shop on Low Street in Sunderland.<sup>360</sup> However there was a growing body of competition in the paper hanging market, with many provincial retailers supplied with the latest London designs. For example, in the same year that Davenport first advertised his North Shields paper manufactory, Mr John Punchion, upholsterer, advertised that he sold paper hangings amongst other goods from London.<sup>361</sup> This was followed by a relatively constant stream of advertisements, mostly

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<sup>357</sup> Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 28.

<sup>358</sup> *NC*, 18 May 1771.

<sup>359</sup> Berry, ‘Promoting Taste’, p. 6, 10.

<sup>360</sup> *NJ*, 26 May 1750.

<sup>361</sup> *NJ*, 9 March 1745.

by upholsterers, who stocked the most fashionable styles from London.<sup>362</sup> Most prominent amongst these was upholsterer, Bartholomew Kent, who was supplied regularly from London. It is most likely that Kent sold to a broad market, however it is also evident that he sold to prominent gentry in the region, specifically the Ellison family, whose account receipts record purchase of paper and upholstery goods from Kent.<sup>363</sup>

Davenport's business may have begun in the Tyneside town of North Shields, but by the second half of the century he had moved his manufactory to a prime location at St. Nicholas's Church Yard, Newcastle, the centre of printing and engraving in the region. Davenport's advertisements from this period provide a clearer image of the types of paper he sold and their price. He produced and sold 'COMMON, STUCCO, and GOTHIC PAPERS, at 2s 3d per Piece – GREEN GLAZED, at 2s 9d – BORDERING, at 6d per Dozen'.<sup>364</sup> It is clear from this description that Davenport produced and stocked the popular papers of the period. By the middle of the eighteenth century most paper hanging manufacturers advertised 'gothic' papers (shown in Fig. 18) which displayed architectural designs, designs that were desirable nationally and regionally for a time. For example, in September 1761 the poet Thomas Gray shopped for wallpaper in London for his friend Dr. Wharton M. D. of Old Park, Durham. Wharton apparently desired paper in the gothic style but Gray declared in a letter to Wharton, 'I am forced to tell you there are absolutely no papers that deserve the name Gothick or that you would bear the sight of.'<sup>365</sup> Wharton's desire for gothic papers and Davenport's production of them suggests that whilst there may have been some lag in the initial establishment of paper hanging manufactories in the region, within twenty years the distance had been narrowed. There was little lag in the diffusion of fashion and taste for particular designs between London and the provinces by the second half of the eighteenth century.

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<sup>362</sup> *NJ*, 22 June 1751; 27 January 1753; 31 August 1754; 4 June 1757; 1 July 1758; 18 April 1767.

<sup>363</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/126, 4 April 1786.

<sup>364</sup> *NJ*, 3 October 1767.

<sup>365</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum Collections online, [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/Wallpaper/Shopping\\_Wallpaper/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/Wallpaper/Shopping_Wallpaper/index.html).

**Fig. 18: Example of Gothic Wallpaper, c. 1769**



Source: Victoria and Albert Museum Collections online. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/images/image/41209-popup.html>

At Sunderland Bartholomew Elmes, paper printer, produced and stocked an even larger assortment of paper, suggesting the varied appetite that existed in paper design. Elmes' designs included 'a large and neat Assortment of Paper Hangings for Rooms, &c as Stucco, Mosaick, Chint, Brocade, Ovolo, Aoriculas, India Birds, Beasts, Fruits, and Flowers, of the newest and most Admired Patterns'. Elmes' rhetorical association with London mirrored that of Davenport as he claimed to 'sell as cheap as the like are sold in London, viz. from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. 4s. 4s. 6d. to 16s. per Piece'.<sup>366</sup> However, this comparison to London again reflects the actual competition that existed between provincial and London producers. Styles changed regularly throughout the eighteenth

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<sup>366</sup> *NJ*, 26 May 1750.

century and both Elmes and Davenport advertised frequently during the second half of the century, updating knowledge of the new styles stocked in order to maintain their competitive edge. As such it is likely that Elmes may have stocked ‘the newest and most admired Patterns.’<sup>367</sup>

Their styles may have been fashionable, but whether Davenport and Elmes’ prices were ‘as cheap as London’ is more difficult to access. Both northern manufacturers sold by the piece whereas many other manufacturers sold by the yard. Richard Hills suggests that during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a ‘piece’ of wallpaper could vary in size dramatically due to the difficulties of producing large standardised sizes of paper to print on. By the middle of the eighteenth century wallpaper was generally being sold in a standard width of twenty-two and a half inches and lengths of around eleven and a half yards, but this could still vary slightly.<sup>368</sup> When Hills’ assessment of wallpaper lengths is applied to James Davenport’s prices per piece of wallpaper it is apparent that his prices were on the lower side at just over 2d. a yard. This is based on the assumption that Davenport’s ‘piece’ corresponded with what was becoming the standard length of a piece of wallpaper. There was, however, considerable variation in the price of paper hangings which was based on the quality and/or the intricacy of the decoration. The records of Frances, Countess of Hartford, emphasise this considerable variation in wallpaper prices. When visiting a paper warehouse to select papers in 1741 the Countess found varying prices from a high price of 12 and 13 s. a yard, but she was contented with paper costing 11 d.<sup>369</sup> Just as other consumer items such as glass and pottery could vary in price depending upon quality, craftsmanship and rarity, there was also large variation amongst paper hangings and the market cannot necessarily be socially differentiated by price.

Elmes’ prices were also set by the piece, and if the standard length of a piece is taken to be eleven and a half yards they were also quite modest, but certainly higher than the paper sold by Davenport. Elmes’ prices, between 2s. 6d. and 16s. per piece, may be a reflection of the intricacy of his designs which he described in detail in his advertisements as ‘large Stucco, decorated with Festoons of Fruits and Flowers,

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<sup>367</sup> *NJ*, 26 May 1750.

<sup>368</sup> R. Hills, *Papermaking in Britain 1488-1988* (London, 1988), p. 88-89.

<sup>369</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum Collections online,  
[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/Wallpaper/Shopping\\_Wallpaper/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/Wallpaper/Shopping_Wallpaper/index.html).

Zephyrs, Eagles, Lions and Leopards' Heads, Baskets of Flowers, cornishing, panelling, and surbasing, &c. in Immitation of Carving and Architecture, being his own Designs, and perform'd by none else in the North.'<sup>370</sup> Elmes' promotion of his own designs suggests that in many cases it was individuality and exclusivity of design that was prized, although some customers did prefer off-the-peg paper hangings. By comparing his designs to those of the London market, whilst simultaneously suggesting that they were individual in the provincial market, Elmes attempted to promote an exclusivity that only his products could provide. Whilst Davenport's advertisements suggested direct competition with London manufacturers, Elmes' imply that he was also competing regionally.

The expansion in numbers of paper mills in Northumberland and Durham during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was mirrored by an apparent expansion in the types and quality of paper produced. These paper types found varied use within households, on the printing press, and the growing retailing and commercial sector. It is unlikely that regional papermakers adequately supplied the rapidly expanding demand for paper, either common or wallpaper, but they were certainly not limited to production of poor quality brown paper. It is unlikely that Northumberland and Durham producers competed with other national suppliers; production was simply not extensive enough to meet local demand. Port book data recording shipment of paper to Newcastle, discussed in detail in Chapter Five, confirms that the region continued to accept significant parcels of paper from other parts of the country. Whilst most of the paper manufactured in the region served a very practical function, the development of a subsidiary trade in printing of paper hangings indicates a more decorative side to the expansion of the paper manufacturing industry which developed simultaneous to provincial development elsewhere. The apparent delay in paper hanging manufacture between London and the region suggests that both the cultural impetus which initiated demand, and the technical knowledge of production techniques, took time to diffuse to the North. Wallpaper, most probably from London, was used in the region before the 1740s, but its use was not widespread. The simultaneous appearance of local manufacturers and retailers advertising London designs suggests that it was only from the 1740s that this type of wall decoration became widely popular. Even in the late 1720s gentry homes were still

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<sup>370</sup> *NJ*, 26 May 1750.

outfitted with both material wall hangings and paper hangings. Unlike ordinary or common paper produced in Northumberland and Durham, paper hangings appear to have existed in a competitive market. In the case of wallpaper, London existed as the quality production centre in England. By comparing their designs and prices to the capital's, the region's paper hanging manufacturers pitted themselves as competitors in a market previously dominated by London hangings. Common paper did not require strong advertising, but paper hangings were a product of both taste and price, placing them in a competitive market.

### *Ceramics*

According to Berg the principles of innovation were born in imitation, and just as British fine glassmaking carved out a path to celebrated craftsmanship through imitation, the perfecting of British earthenware and china followed a similar pattern.<sup>371</sup> British porcelain and earthenware production was born of a desire to imitate imported oriental porcelains and during the first half of the eighteenth century a number of important centres developed in Britain including Bow in London, Chelsea, Derby, Worcester, and Staffordshire. With the introduction of luxury drinks such as tea, coffee, and chocolate, and a greater tendency towards eating many dishes from separate plates, demand for earthenware and porcelain grew in all sections of society. As a consequence, the number of potteries in Britain grew significantly, as did the types of pottery produced which included various creations in earthenware (a type of manufacture largely for domestic use), stoneware (previously imported from Germany between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries), and porcelain (imported for the East). These ceramics catered for a wide and growing section of demand through the aristocracy, middling sorts, and labouring population. Despite expanding numbers of potteries working in Northumberland and Durham during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is more difficult to assess the development of ceramic products in the region. Unlike glass manufactories, for which some records survive, little detail of the day-to-day workings of local potteries remains. As a result, the range of ceramic products and distribution of these can only be glimpsed through newspaper advertisements, business correspondence, and occasional detailed household accounts.

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<sup>371</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 126.

The development of manufacturing techniques, the appearance of earthenware as a decency and necessity in the household, and the commercialisation of the pottery industry all encouraged an expansion of the varieties of locally produced ceramics. This was likely a result of the adoption of new techniques from centres around the country. From the 1750s onwards earthenware in particular was transformed and was produced in ‘many new styles and finer shapes’.<sup>372</sup> In Northumberland and Durham change was more limited than in other areas, but was occurring. Weatherill states that during the period 1720 and 1750 potteries on Tyneside did not appear to specialise in particular wares, making pieces of both coarse and fine earthenware.<sup>373</sup> Pottery advertisements after 1750 indicate a broadening of wares produced. By 1759 Heworth Common pottery was producing ‘Tortishell, Agatestone and Blackware’, in 1771 Cockfield pottery manufactured ‘tortoise-shell-ware and cream-ware’, and in 1787 St. Anthony’s pottery in Newcastle was producing cream coloured earthenware, common black and brown-ware.<sup>374</sup> The most diverse assortment of earthenware was produced by Paul Jackson who advertised in 1775 that he had brought different types of earthenware to perfection, which included cream colour, enamelled, fine black and gilded, spotted and brown earthenware.<sup>375</sup> Notwithstanding these developments regional potteries remained producers of earthenware and stoneware. It is not evident that any potteries produced any finer, more delicate porcelain.

Development of these locally produced types of earthenware and stoneware mirrored the progress that was taking place nationally in the industry, progress that had encouraged the market for basic kitchen and table earthenware, intended for the labouring population, to extend into the luxury and fashion market.<sup>376</sup> These types of pottery produced in Durham and Northumberland mimicked the better quality items manufactured in Staffordshire, revealing another industry in which regional manufacturers and entrepreneurs attempted to take advantage of a large and expanding market which fed from the cultural changes taking place within the household and at the dinner table. Despite being cheaper versions of high quality Staffordshire ware, locally manufactured pottery would have found appeal in a market wider than the labouring and

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<sup>372</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 34.

<sup>373</sup> Weatherill, ‘The Growth of the Pottery Industry’, p. 20.

<sup>374</sup> *NC*, 3 November 1759; 9 March 1771; 28 April 1787.

<sup>375</sup> *NC*, 17 June 1775.

<sup>376</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 130.

the middling sorts. Large gentry houses had complex arrangements and whilst Wedgwood and Worcester would have found prime place on display, the kitchen, service and servant's ware would have been comprised of available, modestly priced earthenware. For example, whilst the Baker family's china inventory contained Bow china and Wedgwood teapots, the housekeeper's pottery was stoneware.<sup>377</sup> The Baker's cash books record numerous payments for earthenware and stoneware between 1752 and 1754, but none for chinaware.<sup>378</sup> Pottery produced in Durham and Northumberland was required at all social levels, which may explain why the number of potteries grew throughout the eighteenth century even though they were not necessarily producing wares of the highest quality.

Just as crown glass manufacturers, glass finishers and paper hanging manufacturers compared their products to those produced in London, pottery manufacturers compared their produce to the major centre of earthenware manufacture at Staffordshire. An advertisement for the Newbottle pottery in Sunderland announced that white and brown wares were 'now made to a great perfection as in Staffordshire'.<sup>379</sup> The advertisement utilises the quality 'kite-mark' used by other manufacturers to promote their wares, however instead of London representing the quality centre, in this case it was Staffordshire. The use of Staffordshire as a reference point for pottery suggests that it was the *quality* of items that was valued rather than necessarily the *fashionability* or *cultural significance* which was continually London-centric. This quality comparison with centres of renowned production can also be seen in reference to items such as bricks and pantiles. For example, a brick and pantile works at Salt Meadows in Newcastle advertised that its bricks, pantiles and flooring tiles were 'to be the best of every Sort made in England, and equal to the Dutch'.<sup>380</sup> Whilst Staffordshire was the quality comparison for pottery, Holland provided quality bricks and tiles and thus a *quality* rather than exclusively a *cultural* comparison for local manufactures.

Wallpaper manufacture in the Northumberland and Durham was a localised business which competed against imported paper hangings from London, and locally produced pottery was sold in a similar market. Neither locally produced wallpapers nor ceramics

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<sup>377</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 58/122; BB 58/128.

<sup>378</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 43/3; BB 43/4.

<sup>379</sup> *NC*, 18 May 1765.

<sup>380</sup> *NJ*, 6 June 1741.

were destined, during the eighteenth century, to appeal to a national population unlike window glass and bottles. They were destined for a local market, a market which was already infiltrated by products purchased wholesale in the capital. However, unlike wallpaper manufacture which faced direct competition from imported papers, it is not certain that local pottery manufactures competed directly against imported china. China supplied from London was of a different quality, a different type, and thus targeted a different area of demand.

From the 1740s onwards an increasing number of chinaware shops and sellers provided more delicate tableware and ornamental china for the regional market. The most enduring amongst these sellers was John Brougham who sold chinaware supplied from London at his shop on the Quayside alongside his own manufactured earthenware.<sup>381</sup> The lack of china produced in Durham and Northumberland meant that these imported wares did not necessarily compete directly with locally produced earthenware and stoneware. Although supplied from London, it is clear that much of this was not produced in the capital but imported from elsewhere in Britain or abroad. Some china shops appear to have been supplied from Edinburgh, whilst others were supplied with imported wares from sales in London. For example, on the 30 August 1746 a Mr Gibson advertised that he sold an assortment of chinaware from the East India warehouse, London and John Brougham was also supplied from 'the late India sale, London'.<sup>382</sup> Whilst earthenware and stoneware appealed to all levels of society, china had a more gradual adoption into the household. However, as the analysis of probate inventories, pauper inventories and distraint accounts (which are discussed in detail in Chapter's Seven and Eight) displays, it was not the ownership of ceramics that separated labouring, middling and gentry, but the quantities and qualities owned. After 1750 the market for ceramics encompassed all sections of society. As the popularity of imported hot drinks expanded in the 1750s, there was a connected demand for hot drinks utensils which included china.<sup>383</sup> However according to inventory data gentry and middling households were more likely to own china, or own it in larger quantities.

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<sup>381</sup> NC, 12 October 1751.

<sup>382</sup> NJ, 30 August 1746; NJ, 3 September 1748.

<sup>383</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 37.

The limited quality of the pottery produced in Northumberland and County Durham may be reflected in attempts made to sell these products in the international market during the mid-eighteenth century. A letter from Ralph Carr, a local merchant from Newcastle, to a correspondent in Boston, highlights the limitations that existed in local pottery in the context of both quality and the variety. Carr wrote to his contact, 'you desire to have some Tea Sugar & Milk potts but nothing so small is made. Our Earthen Ware is exceeding Course [sic] & low priced'. According to Blakey, Carr's adventures attempting to sell regionally produced earthenware overseas were unsuccessful.<sup>384</sup> However there may have been a number of reasons for this. Firstly, production techniques may not have been advanced enough in Northumberland and Durham to produce more delicate items, or manufacturers may have focused on the lower end of the market. Secondly, the failure of these adventures may have been connected to the climate for earthenware and china in Britain, rather than the particular quality of the goods produced. According to Weatherill the boom years for exports were between 1785 and 1800, with exports doubling in that period.<sup>385</sup> Such growth would be consistent with the progress of local potteries. Mackenzie, writing in 1811, outlined the vast quantities of locally produced earthenware, 'particularly the coarser sort', destined for the export market.<sup>386</sup>

Just as the types of pottery produced in the region developed over the century in response to and in imitation of Staffordshire ware, the range of particular items available also expanded. In response to demand for varieties of tableware, expansion took place with 'new qualities of taste and aesthetics, manners, and eating cultures...combined with technology and industrial development' to create new items.<sup>387</sup> In the mid-eighteenth century when Ralph Carr wrote to his contact in Boston he offered descriptions of the types of earthenware made which included 'only Bowls, plates, porringers & other large things'.<sup>388</sup> However, by the end of the 1780s at least some manufacturers had developed the production of more delicate items. Influenced by the popularity of hot drinks and the established manners and customs of family

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<sup>384</sup> Ralph Carr cited in Blakey 'Newcastle Potters', p. 119.

<sup>385</sup> Weatherill, 'The Growth of the Pottery Industry', p. 28.

<sup>386</sup> Mackenzie, *A Historical and Descriptive View of Northumberland*, p. 214.

<sup>387</sup> Weatherill, 'The Growth of the Pottery Industry', p. 27; Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 130.

<sup>388</sup> Ralph Carr cited in Blakey 'Newcastle Potters', p. 119.

sociability at the table, varieties of specialised tableware expanded.<sup>389</sup> Gentry accounts and inventories from the period indicate that the tea, sugar and milk pots, which Carr's correspondent desired, were being produced locally, albeit on a small scale. The records of Henry Ellison list an extensive range of pottery goods made by and purchased from John Warburton who produced and sold from his manufactory at Carr's Hill, Gateshead, and sold from 'his shop on the Keyside'.<sup>390</sup> The bill does not specify the type of pottery purchased but lists in detail the particular items which included '3 Chamber Potts' at 6d. each, '12 Handled cups' for 6d., '3 Tea Potts' for 6d. and '6 Beff Potts' for 3s.<sup>391</sup> Such products were certainly within the means of those with a more modest income than the Ellison's, though most likely consumed in smaller quantities. Instead of the coarse basic products of the earlier eighteenth century, regional production became increasingly refined in order to cater for the new items demanded by all sections of society, which were required for the dinner table and the tea table.

According to Shaw much of the locally produced pottery catered for families of moderate income.<sup>392</sup> The quality of most local produce, being largely coarse brown earthenware, confirmed this for Shaw. However the ceramic items produced regionally and demanded by households at all social levels were in transition throughout the period. Earthenware was traditionally a kitchenware of labouring homes, but throughout the eighteenth century it was changed by fashion, taste, and technology into a polite product. From the 1750s onwards both the types of earthenware and stoneware expanded, as did the particular shapes and styles available. The comparison of locally produced earthenware and stoneware to Staffordshire ware indicates that producers did look to the centre of quality production rather than just to London for validation of their products. Local pottery was evidently created as a more modest alternative to more fashionable Staffordshire ware, but this did not mean it was only popular with those of modest incomes. Gentry homes consumed ceramics in many different quantities and qualities, and evidence from the Ellison family records confirm that even wealthy families consumed locally produced products. Unlike wallpaper, locally produced ceramics do not appear to have competed in the provincial market against imported wares. There is no evidence that porcelain was manufactured in Northumberland or

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<sup>389</sup> Weatherill cited in Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 162.

<sup>390</sup> NC, 14 May 1774.

<sup>391</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/167, 22 September 1786.

<sup>392</sup> Shaw, *The Potteries of Sunderland*, p. 7.

Durham, meaning the market for those china items supplied as imports was largely unaffected by locally produced ceramics.

### *Conclusions*

The products created in the Northumberland and Durham manufactories supplied a range of cultural, commercial, architectural, and intellectual changes taking place in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These items have been widely recognised as products dedicated to the household, items for the table and interior decoration, practical goods and trinkets. Important works concerning consumption have highlighted china, cutlery, glass, earthenware, and other new durables as commodities integrated into households at many social levels, undoubtedly a consequence of their affordability and practicality. The products created in the Northumberland and Durham consumer industries reflect the widespread rise of household comfort notable through the integration of new goods. Ceramics, fine glassware, wallpaper and mirrors, all products of the regional industries, were created in response to a new desire and ability to purchase household goods which spread through every social level of society, but one that was particularly evident amongst the middling sorts.

However the products created in the regional consumer industries were not merely fancies. Ceramics, wallpaper and even fine glasses were local versions of better quality goods created as a regional type of import substitute. Whilst initial development of these new goods in Britain was as import substitutes for foreign goods, those produced locally were regional import substitutes of nationally produced goods.<sup>393</sup> As local substitutes they were compared to their better quality versions from Staffordshire, London, Sheffield, and Holland. Other products fed cultural changes outside of the household. The production of window glass, bricks and tiles responded to widespread architectural changes which saw the rebuilding of gentry houses, building in brick instead of stone and the adoption of the sash window. These products not only reflected the ingenuity and innovation developed by English craftsmen, but also embodied the essence of the rococo; the lightness, durability, and skill of the age. The production of common paper responded to a variety of new demands on the industry which came from increased retailing, commercial and bureaucratic recordings. In the case of paper

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<sup>393</sup> Styles, 'Product Innovation', pp. 128-131.

manufactories, mills may have been established in order to take advantage of the local market. Furthermore, both the pottery and glass industries were able to supply the developing leisure pursuit of gardening, providing glass for greenhouses and earthenware flower pots. The products of the industries were diverse, both functional goods and fancies.

It can be suggested from the research presented in this chapter that the impetus for consumer goods production in Northumberland and Durham came from a diffusion of metropolitan taste and demand throughout the country. However unlike the American province, represented by colonists, that relied directly on London for the supply of manufactured goods of taste, manufacturers in Northumberland and Durham responded to metropolitan taste by producing the items themselves.<sup>394</sup> This process reflects the movement of production away from London, despite the continued presence of extensive manufacturing in the capital, whilst taste, innovation and demand were still centred there.<sup>395</sup> Regional manufacturers responded to national changes by producing first and foremost for the local market and then in some instances for the national market. In fashion-sensitive branches such as pottery, wallpaper and fine glass, regional producers continued to *respond* to national fashion changes. However, the case of wallpaper suggests that the lag between metropolitan trend and regional response narrowed throughout the eighteenth century. Furthermore, this lag in establishment was not particular to Northumberland and Durham. In many industries there was a delay between fashions in the capital and their diffusion to the provinces. Essentially on a national scale Newcastle and the counties of Northumberland and Durham were peripheries to a centre, but in terms of consumer goods production that centre was not always London. It could be Staffordshire for pottery, Sheffield for cutlery, Holland for pantiles, Bristol or London for glass, and London for wallpaper. However, essentially it was from London that tastes for these goods diffused.

In other instances northern manufacturers supplied more distant markets. Both window and bottle glass supplied the London market, following the pattern of the coal trade. However the cross-section of goods produced for the national and international market was certainly more limited. The existence of a specialised coal industry qualifies

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<sup>394</sup> Breen, 'Baubles of Britain', pp. 73-104.

<sup>395</sup> Styles, 'Product Innovation', p. 129.

Defoe's interpretation, which has been followed by historians, of a variety of regions all producing for a national market where specialised goods are distributed throughout the country, but close attention to regional industries suggests the regional economy was more complex.<sup>396</sup> As a practical response to local and national demand, consumer goods production in the region was directed more widely than the expanding spheres of household and decorative items. Regional production was not simply directed towards creating fancies for the home, but involved utilising resources to manufacture functional goods as well. It is testament to the resources available, flexibility of regional manufacturers, range of culture changes and social diversity of demand that both functional goods and decorative items were produced in the region.

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<sup>396</sup> Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, pp. 227-248.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Coastal Trade**

#### ***Introduction***

Evidently the market for consumer goods produced in Northumberland and Durham was adaptable. The ability to produce a selection of consumer items in the region specifically was a result of available raw materials, capital, and diffusion of skill and demand throughout the entire country from their innovative location of origin. Yet the products created were not entirely a form of import substitution, and unlike coal they were also not largely destined for the national market. Locally produced common paper, wallpaper, earthenware, stoneware, and flint glass pieces largely catered for the local market with some signs of export to other areas, whilst window glass, glass bottles and ironware also fed a large national and smaller international demand. The local production of items for the local market is by no means a staggering concept. However, for a region characterised in the past for its dependence on London and for being specialised in the production of one staple item for the national economy, the identification of locally produced and vended consumer goods is significant. It is also important for our understanding of how demand for consumer goods may have diffused throughout the country from the cultural centre of London.

Whilst this thesis is primarily concerned with the development, availability, and consumption of new consumer goods in Northumberland and Durham, no economic region is an island. The creation and consumption of goods which were part of this period's product revolution took place throughout Britain, and it is clear from probate inventory studies that they were distributed throughout the country.<sup>397</sup> It is essential to consider what was shipped into the region, partially for its influence upon cultural practices and local product development, but also to generate a more accurate knowledge of the goods available to local consumers. If Northumberland and Durham produced a number of their own consumer goods, what other items were supplied to the region? The aim of this chapter is to look in further detail at the composition of trade and range of traded goods entering the region via coastal trade, and whether this range changed with the growth of regional consumer industries.

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<sup>397</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*.

Recent historiography has offered a two-dimensional interpretation of Newcastle's import and export trade. Equally, as preoccupied as contemporaries were with the region's coal industry and its size, historians have frequently offered a simplistic view of Newcastle's sea trade, as an exchange of coal with London in return for luxury and consumer goods.<sup>398</sup> Richard Pocock's observation in 1760 that '[b]eside the great trade in coal...they...import every thing for the use of Northumberland, Durham Westmoreland and part of Cumberland', led Weatherill to the conclusion that the high levels of new goods ownership, evident in the region's probate inventories, were a result of the north-east providing London with bulky goods and receiving household commodities in return.<sup>399</sup> But what did London send coastwise to Northumberland and Durham, and which other regions contributed to northern retailing and consumption?

The basic export products of the region have been well documented, however no research, with the exception of T. S. Willan's *The English Coasting Trade*, has addressed in detail what was actually being shipped into the region from other areas in Britain, and even that study did not consider Newcastle's Tyne port in detail.<sup>400</sup> Were those consumer goods produced in the region simply supplementary to imported items, did their increasing production throughout the eighteenth century lessen the demand for imported goods, or did items produced in the region compliment those imported commodities? The chapter will essentially detail the items imported into the region and whether they were exclusively consumer durables and semi-durables. It will analyse how Newcastle was connected in trade to other regions, whether the region's consumer and luxury goods did come exclusively from the capital, and exactly what the relationship between London and Newcastle was.

Despite the major growth of Sunderland, improvement of its port facilities and increased shipment of coal from the port, Newcastle and the river Tyne remained the hub of the region's coastal and international trade throughout the eighteenth century. Newcastle boasted a large medieval port and by the early sixteenth century it was one of

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<sup>398</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 61; Wrigley, *People, Cities, and Wealth*, pp. 147-148; Hughes, *North Country Life*, pp. 28-58.

<sup>399</sup> Richard Pocock cited in Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 52; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 52, 61.

<sup>400</sup> T. S. Willan, *The English Coasting Trade, 1600-1750* (Manchester, 1967).

the five seaports in the country with a population of 5,000 or more.<sup>401</sup> Despite being an inland port, Newcastle managed to maintain its position, with Ellis suggesting that it was only the privileges of the Newcastle Corporation that had saved the port from a similar decline experienced by other inland ports.<sup>402</sup> As a result, by the early eighteenth century Newcastle was apparently a perfect example of Daniel Defoe's seaport towns 'where Trade flourishes, as well foreign Trade and home Trade, and where Navigation, Manufacturing, and Merchandize seem to assist one another'.<sup>403</sup> Ellis claims that Newcastle's principle trade was with London and between the 1660s and 1750s the average annual export of coal from the Tyne had risen from 413,000 tons to 777,000 tons.<sup>404</sup> The trade and bustle of the port was noticeable to all visitors. Defoe observed that Newcastle had 'the largest and longest key for landing and lading goods that is to be seen in England', whilst on his visit to Newcastle Sir John Clerk noted that the busyness of the Tyne meant 'the River seemed every where to be in motion'.<sup>405</sup> By 1700 Newcastle was the fourth largest port town in England behind only London, Norwich, and Bristol.<sup>406</sup> In acknowledgement of the overwhelming concentration of trade at Newcastle, and the limited space available for an extensive discussion of sea trade into all of the region's ports, the analysis in this chapter focuses on trade entering the Tyne specifically.

A comprehensive study of Newcastle's coastal and international trade is beyond the limits of this work, being sufficiently complex to occupy an entire thesis alone. Accordingly this chapter is limited to a sampling of British coastal trade entering the Tyne. Whilst concentration on domestic trade means a full image of goods entering the Tyne is not possible, this sampling strategy does fit the general aim of this thesis in terms of viewing the production and consumption of goods in Northumberland and Durham primarily with reference to the rest of Britain. Furthermore, as Ellis has asserted, Newcastle's domestic trade, particularly early in the eighteenth century,

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<sup>401</sup> D. Harris Sacks and M. Lynch, 'Ports 1540-1700' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain II 1540-1840* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 383.

<sup>402</sup> Ellis, 'A Dynamic Society', p. 195.

<sup>403</sup> Defoe, *A Plan of the English Commerce*, p. 85; Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 2.

<sup>404</sup> Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 5

<sup>405</sup> Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island*, III, p. 222; E. Birley, 'Sir John Clerk's Visit to the North of England in 1724', *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*, xi (1958-65), p. 228.

<sup>406</sup> Harris Sacks and Lynch, 'Ports 1540-1700', p. 384.

greatly exceeded that going overseas.<sup>407</sup> Although there are a number of important sources for generating data on coastal trade to the region, particularly the Newcastle Chamberlain Accounts which record receipts of shipping dues and fees, the limited space available for discussion of coastal trade means that only one source has been selected for analysis. The port books for the port of Newcastle, which are stored along with other books from English ports at The National Archives in London, are the main source used to analyse trade entering the region in the period from approximately 1680 to 1780.

According to the National Archives guide on port books, the books are ‘locally-created records of customs duties paid on overseas trade between 1565 and 1799’,<sup>408</sup> but those included in this survey do not record duty as they detail coastal trade only. The books are copies of a port’s customs book sent to London for inspection by the exchequer; they record vessels entering a port, in this instance Newcastle, and provide details of a ship’s origin, master, cargo and how much duty was to be paid.<sup>409</sup> Superficially port books are an excellent source for the study of coastal and international trade, rather like probate inventories appear to be comprehensive records of goods ownership. However, as Hinton states, ‘port books are seducers’, their appearance of accuracy and meticulous listings of cargoes are a deception.<sup>410</sup> Historians have highlighted the difficulties of using the port books generally, and specifically Newcastle’s. Widespread issues of smuggling and defrauding of customs mean that the books do not necessarily provide as full an account of trade as they appear to, and the fragmentary nature of the records, with poor survival for some ports and years, make it impossible in some cases to access a comprehensive range of books.<sup>411</sup> Furthermore, doubt specifically concerning the Newcastle port books has been raised by Matthew Greenhall. Greenhall discovered that when compared with other sources recording trade entering the region, such as shipping reports in the *Newcastle Courant*, the Newcastle port books underestimated trade during

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<sup>407</sup> Ellis, ‘The ‘Black Indies’’, p. 3, 4.

<sup>408</sup> The National Archives, Research Guide, Port Books 1565-1799, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/RdLeaflet.asp?sLeafletID=83&j=1>.

<sup>409</sup> Hinton, *The Port Books of Boston*, pp. xx-xxvii.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid*, p. xxxii.

<sup>411</sup> The National Archives, Research Guide, Port Books 1565-1799, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/RdLeaflet.asp?sLeafletID=83&j=1>; S. E. Åström, ‘The Reliability of the English Port Books’, *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 16 (1968), p. 126; J. H. Andrews, ‘Two problems in the Interpretation of the Port Books’, *Economic History Review* 9 (1956), pp. 119-122; D. M. Woodward, ‘Port Books’ in L. M. Munby (ed.) *Short Guides to Records* (London, 1972), pp. 207-210.

this period, in some years by large percentages.<sup>412</sup> Furthermore, although it is likely that a large percentage of Newcastle's trade was done by sea, this was accompanied by a surprising amount of overland carriage which should not be discounted. Such limitations do not make the port books, or Newcastle's specifically, unusable. Despite not providing a full image of trade due to the likelihood of evasion, smuggling and fraud, they are still 'a vital source of evidence about the development of trade' as long as it is borne in mind that the figures represent the lowest estimate of trade during this period.<sup>413</sup>

The data that is presented in this chapter is based on analysis of six Newcastle port books from the National Archives which have been sampled from the period c. 1680 to 1780 to gain a longitudinal view of sea trade and the changes taking place. The initial intention in the sampling of the port books was to select four books at approximately forty year intervals to analyse in detail for cargoes, two additional (six in total) were surveyed to analyse quantities of vessels entering the Tyne. However, poor survival and legibility of many port books means that the process of selecting books was necessarily more random. For detailed analysis of cargoes port books for the years 1695-96, 1732-33, 1755-56 and 1782-83 were selected. The years 1695-96 and 1782-83 were chosen from fully legible surviving books as approximate dates for the beginning and end of the period studied in the whole thesis. The year 1732-33 was chosen as an example of trade in the mid point of the first half of the century and 1755-56 was chosen as representing regional trade at the mid eighteenth century. For wider analysis of quantities of vessels entering the Tyne and their origins, the above port books were analysed alongside the year 1682-83, to provide a full one hundred years view of trade, and the year 1715-16, as a point between 1695-96 and 1732-33.<sup>414</sup> As a result of poor survival and condition, this sampling strategy is not ideal, but does provide a relatively well-stratified sample for the period. The port books sampled were analysed for details of origins of vessels, quantity of vessels, and cargo contents.

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<sup>412</sup> M. Greenhall, 'From Cattle to Claret: Scottish Economic Influence in North-East England, 1660-1750' (Unpublished Durham University BA Dissertation, 2005), p. 23.

<sup>413</sup> The National Archives, Research Guide, Port Books 1565-1799, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/RdLeaflet.asp?sLeafletID=83&j=1>.

<sup>414</sup> TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/200/15 (1682-83), E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/220/9 (1715-16), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

Whilst ideally cargo analysis would consider both the composition of cargoes and the quantities of each item shipped, varying descriptions of goods recorded and the volume of these goods make quantitative assessment of items difficult and in some cases impossible. Willan indicates that the coasting trade played an important role in the movement of industrial goods such as ironmongery, glass, earthenware and salt, yet there are inherent difficulties with substantiating statistically many manufactured goods from port book data, problems which arise from the organisation of such items within cargoes.<sup>415</sup> Weatherill stated of her attempts to use port books to estimate British pottery production that ‘[t]he most difficult technical problem in using the port-books is the multiplicity of units of measurements used in the originals...’.<sup>416</sup> Furthermore, Hinton states that it is very likely impossible to establish how reliable an image port books provide of the trade passing into and out of a country, and as such ‘the safest course with the port books is to use them for qualitative rather than for quantitative information’.<sup>417</sup> This does not mean it is impossible to gain insight into the coastwise trade in manufactured and other commodities. In order to gain some understanding of goods entering Newcastle, cargoes have been treated qualitatively, as Hinton suggests, but with counts listing the number of times an item occurs in a cargo or year rather than the actual volume of goods. Rather than analyse the cargoes from each port separately they have been split into content groups. However it must be remembered that many cargoes were not neatly packaged. Those from Newcastle’s more regular trade ports were mixed cargoes containing luxury foods and foreign drinks as well as manufactured goods and raw materials. Using port books to analyse trade does not produce a perfect image, but can illuminate Newcastle’s relationship with the rest of Britain.

### ***Coastal Traffic***

Graph 1 displays the volume of vessels entering Newcastle throughout the period from English and Scottish ports (from 1715-16 onwards) noted in the port books surveyed in the years 1682-83, 1695-96, 1715-16, 1732-33, 1755-56 and 1782-83. Whilst there may have been variations in the intervening years absent from this survey, the number of ships entering Newcastle in the twenty years before 1700 appears to have been

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<sup>415</sup> Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, p. 93, 97.

<sup>416</sup> Weatherill, ‘The Growth of the Pottery Industry’, pp. 17-18.

<sup>417</sup> Hinton, *The Port Books of Boston*, p. xxxiii.

relatively constant with a marked drop between 1695-96 and 1715-16, and a slight rise in 1732-33 and 1755-56. The apparent slump between the 1690s and the first half of the eighteenth century is likely indicative of the unsettled period the country was experiencing. The late seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century were characterised by financial crises, economic uncertainty (despite a slow but steady growth), and in particular war with France, the Jacobite risings of 1715, the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714), and renewed tensions with Spain in the second quarter of the eighteenth century in which British shipping was disrupted. During this period in particular British trade was the victim of French privateers. It is not unlikely that such periods of war may have significantly disrupted trade, and Walter Minchinton indicates that even Bristol experienced a fall in trade during the Seven Years' War.<sup>418</sup> According to Langford every war during the period 1727 to 1783 was 'in essence a commercial war...Every peace was the continuation of war by economic means'.<sup>419</sup> It is also possible that the effects of war and economic instability, culminating in the crash of 1720, may have masked the impact that union with Scotland had upon domestic trade to Newcastle. As the port books consulted record domestic shipping only, those port books consulted before 1707 do not include cargoes from Scottish ports, whilst those after 1707 do record Scottish trade. The 1715-16 port book, as the first example analysed after the union, would possibly be expected to reveal a rise in domestic trade, however it records the lowest number of vessels in any year surveyed.<sup>420</sup>

It is apparent that rapid growth in the number of vessels entering the region only took place from the 1750s onwards. This rapid rise in vessels aligns with the classic period of industrial take-off, population increase, and major urbanisation. According to work by Wrigley and Schofield, from the 1750s onwards population growth was not only slightly higher but was also more constant, increasing demand for all types of goods and their transfer throughout the country.<sup>421</sup> Such a rise is also consistent with the continued expansion of overseas, especially colonial, trade which was then distributed throughout

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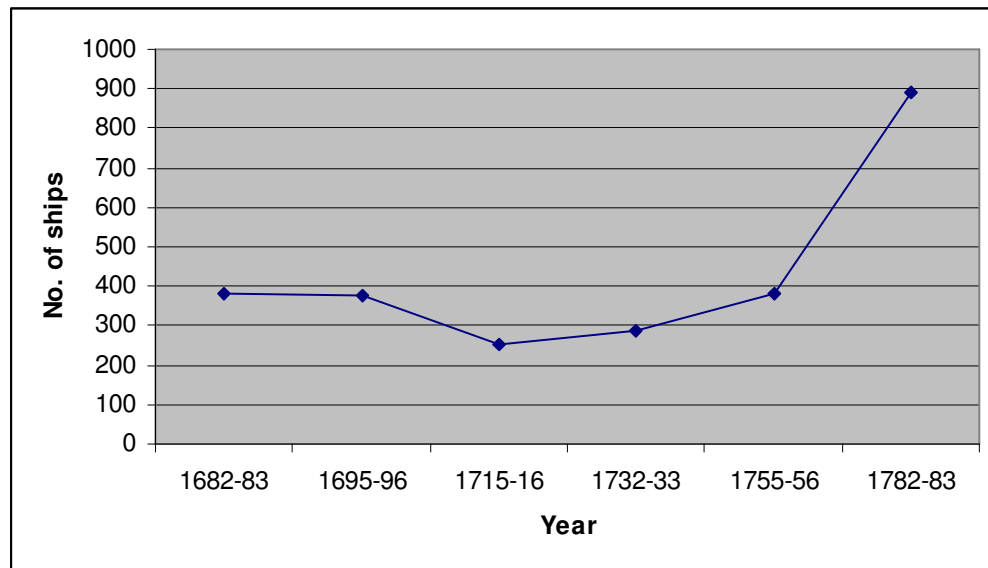
<sup>418</sup> Harris Sacks and Lynch, 'Ports 1540-1700', pp. 397-398; J. Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?: England, 1689-1727* (Oxford, 2000), p. 83, 112; W. Minchinton, 'The Port of Bristol', p. 153.

<sup>419</sup> Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 3.

<sup>420</sup> For detailed discussion of the economic impact of the 1707 union with Scotland see M. Greenhall's forthcoming PhD thesis, 'The Evolution of the British Economy: Anglo-Scottish Trade and Political Union, 1580-1750'.

<sup>421</sup> E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England 1541-1871* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 208-209.

**Graph 1: Total Number of Vessels recorded entering Newcastle, 1682/83-1782-83**



Sources: TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/200/15 (1682-83), E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/220/9 (1715-16), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56) , E190/281/1 (1782-83).

the country. This rise in vessels is indicated most clearly on Graph 1 which displays the volume of vessels entering the Tyne in each year, and Table 7 which also records each port recorded delivering to Newcastle in the surveyed port books, the amount of vessels from each port and the total number of ports and vessels arriving on the Tyne in each surveyed year. Between the last two surveyed port books (1755-56 and 1782-83) the number of ports sending vessels to Newcastle rose by 54.8 per cent, a 92 per cent increase on the first year of the survey, and 140 per cent more than the lowest year surveyed (1715-16). This figure is surpassed by the rise in the total amount of vessels entering the port in this period which increased from 381 in 1752-53 to 891 in 1782-83, a year to year rise of 133.8 per cent. The increasing number of vessels represents the rising numbers of cargoes and goods of all sizes and sorts entering the Tyne. It is evident that this rise in trade reflected in the Newcastle data was not exclusive to the Tyne, confirming the widespread impact of demographic change and constant expansion in national commerce. Certainly the tonnage of ships engaged in foreign trade was increasing during this period, and Minchinton confirms that trade from and to Bristol was also expanding with both the number of vessels rising and their size. Ships

leaving the port at Bristol rose from 240 in 1687 to 448 in 1787 and ships entering the port rose from 240 in 1700 to 485 in 1787.<sup>422</sup>

The rapid growth in vessels entering the Tyne does not necessarily highlight any fundamental change in the origins of Tyne-bound vessels or goods. Map 15 displays the location of ports recorded in the six port books included in the general survey. As the supply of raw materials and vending of John Cookson's crown glass discussed in Chapters Three and Four indicates, Newcastle was almost exclusively connected to ports situated along the eastern and southern coast of Britain, a finding confirmed by the port books survey.<sup>423</sup> Of those ports positioned on the west coast and further North in Scotland, no port provided a constant stream of vessels throughout the period. Not all of the ports shown on Map 15 shipped to the region constantly throughout the period, nor did many of the ports provide large numbers of vessels or large cargoes. The detailed data in Table 7 makes this more apparent.<sup>424</sup>

The more prominent ports which provided a larger volume of ships, including Hull, Lynn, Wells and London, regularly shipped to Newcastle throughout the period, reinforcing their leading position in trade of particular items. Some smaller ports shipped only before 1700, whilst a large number only appeared to trade with Newcastle in the 1782-83 port book. Long lasting connections were made with the most prominent ports, possibly for particular goods, whilst others provided goods only occasionally. Eleven of the forty-eight ports of origin recorded in 1782-83 did not occur in any of the previous books, but of those eleven only Perth provided a substantial number of vessels, the others supplied only one or two. It was vessels leaving the largest ports that increased most significantly in the 1782-83 survey, accounting for the rapid rise. This may indicate a restructuring of the economy during the eighteenth century which saw larger ports dominating trade at the expense of the smaller ports. Yarm, for example,

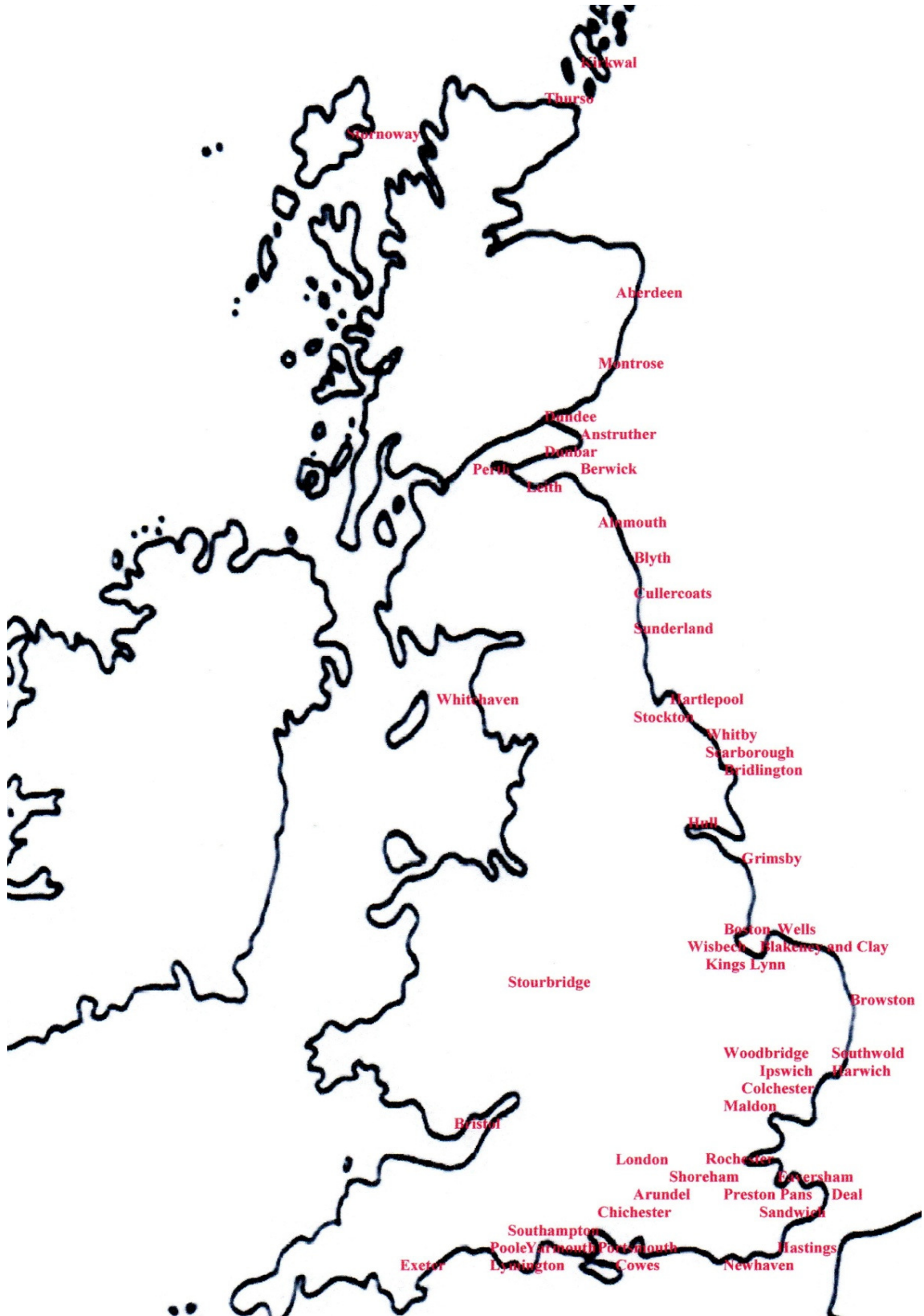
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<sup>422</sup> G. Jackson, 'Ports 1700-1840' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, II 1540-1840*, p. 708; Minchinton, 'The Port of Bristol', p. 129.

<sup>423</sup> See Chapter 3, pp. 84-86; Chapter 4, pp. 115-117; Pilbin, 'External Relations of the Tyneside Glass Industry', p. 302; Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, p. 111.

<sup>424</sup> Sources for Table 8, TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/200/15 (1682-83), E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/220/9 (1715-16), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

Map 15: Ports Shipping to the Tyne, 1682/83-1782/83



Sources: TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/200/15 (1682-83), E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/220/9 (1715-16), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

was forced into decline by the growth of the port at Stockton, despite continuing to trade throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>425</sup> Certainly from the mid-eighteenth century many smaller ports were forced into decline as a result of rapidly growing new ports such as Liverpool which fed off an expanded colonial trade.

Striking amongst the figures is the lack of vessels arriving from Bristol, the country's largest port, and the growing port at Liverpool. However this merely reinforces the dominant nature of the east coast trade which saw major and minor ports on the east and south coast shipping to the Tyne. Both Bristol and Liverpool were driven by colonial trade which included imports of sugar, rum and tobacco. These could be more easily supplied to Newcastle through London which was nearer by sea, had already forged its place as the centre of foreign trade in Britain, and had existing strong trading connections with Northumberland and Durham through the shipment of coal.<sup>426</sup>

With the exception of 1695-96, London supplied the largest percentage of traffic entering the Tyne. Given the role that Newcastle held as the largest supplier of coal to the capital, these findings are not exceptional. Ellis states that in 1706 two-thirds of the 1,862 coastal vessels from Newcastle were bound for London.<sup>427</sup> Furthermore, this dominance is unsurprising given that London was the English centre of international trade and the hub of coastal trade. The year 1695-96 stands out as an oddity amongst the others, with London only providing 11.9 per cent of all ships entering the Tyne, the lowest figure recorded for the capital in the survey. This may have been a result of privateering and disruption to trade encountered during the Nine Years' War. Harris Sacks and Lynch suggest that the 1690s were the worst period before 1700 when coastal and overseas trade was affected by war, particularly war with the French.<sup>428</sup> Despite this figure the total vessels entering the port only dropped marginally, by two, from the previous surveyed year (1682-83). On this occasion Hull made up the numbers, its vessels rising sharply from 4.7 per cent in 1682-83 to 21.2 per cent in 1695-96. Despite being the major port shipping to Newcastle, Table 12, which displays percentages of vessels from major ports shipping to the Tyne, indicates that London may have had a

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<sup>425</sup> Barrow, *The Port of Stockton*, p. 13, 34.

<sup>426</sup> Minchinton, 'The port of Bristol', p. 134; F. E. Hyde, *Liverpool and the Mersey* (Newton Abbot, 1971), p. 26.

<sup>427</sup> Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, appendix; Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 3.

<sup>428</sup> Harris Sacks and Lynch, 'Ports 1540-1700', pp. 397-398.

**Table 7: Number of Vessels from each Port Delivering to the Tyne, 1682/83-1782/83**

Location	Year					
	1682-83	1695-96	1715-16	1732-33	1755-56	1782-83
Aberdeen	N/A	N/A	3	6	4	35
Alnmouth	1			2	6	7
Anstruther					1	
Arundel						23
Berwick	35	17	9	5	5	18
Blakeney & Clay	10	7	4	1	11	8
Blyth					2	28
Browston						1
Boston	5	5		1	1	3
Bridlington	18	35	2			2
Bristol				8	6	3
Chichester					1	12
Colchester	13	21	1		1	1
Cowes	2					
Culler Coates	2					
Deal						1
Dunbar	N/A	N/A	3	3	1	3
Dundee	N/A	N/A			4	17
Exeter						2
Faversham						3
Grimsby	4	10	5			
Hartlepool		1			1	3
Hastings						10
Harwich		4			1	
Hull	18	80	39	58	35	93
Ipswich	29	10	3			14
Kirkwall	N/A	N/A		1	7	21
Leith	N/A	N/A	8	7	13	14
London	97	45	109	140	142	234
Lymington						1
Lynn	57	17	17	24	72	67
Maldon	2	3				5
Montrose	N/A	N/A		1		20
Newhaven						1
Perth	N/A	N/A				10
Poole	4	3	1	2	3	
Portsmouth		1	1		1	9
Preston Pans				2	2	1
Rochester	1					10
Sandwich		1			1	1
Scarborough	1					10
Shoreham						2
Southampton		1	3			17
Southwold	1					
Stockton	5	23	1	5	2	27
Stornoway						1
Stourbridge				1		
Sunderland	1				1	26
Thurso	N/A	N/A		1	2	
Wells	7	51	24	13	44	50
Whitby	3	3	3		2	30
Whitehaven						1
Wisbech	1	12			1	4
Woodbridge	12	12				11
Yarmouth	50	15	15	4	8	40
Total Ports	25	23	20	21	31	48
Total Ships	379	377	251	285	381	891

declining role in shipping to the region. In the 1782-83 port book London only contributed 26.2 per cent of all vessels entering the Tyne signifying that Newcastle may have been developing a gradual independence from the capital, as suggested by Berry.<sup>429</sup>

The evidence of vessels entering the Tyne presents an image of gradual growth during the first half of the eighteenth centuries, followed by a particularly sharp rise in the number of vessels between mid-century and the 1780s. It is possible that the variable pattern in terms of vessels entering Newcastle and vessels sent from London in the late seventeenth century and early decades of the eighteenth century were a result of the turbulent political atmosphere in England characterised by intense periods of war that disrupted coastal and international trade at many English ports. Whilst the number of ports shipping to the Tyne also increased during the period surveyed, those sending regular vessels to the region remained largely the same. It is clear that London did dominate internal trade to Newcastle, but it is important to view this relationship accurately. London never contributed more than 50 per cent of vessels entering the Tyne and cannot necessarily be viewed as having a monopoly on trade to Newcastle. However, to look at these trading relationships in more detail and what they contributed to the Northumberland and Durham economy it is essential to consider the contents of the cargoes entering the Tyne.

### *Cargoes*

General data suggests that the port of Newcastle was primarily connected to Britain's largest east and south coast ports, specifically London, although the capital appears to have a declining importance from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. Newcastle's trade was not a one-way process and most ports shipping to the Tyne received substantial consignments of coal at some point during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Newcastle's outward cargoes to British ports appear to have been confined to a rather narrow selection of goods. Coal dominated outward trade with glass, salt, iron and grindstones making up another large part of these cargoes. Small cargoes also consisted of lead, tallow, skins, rye, feathers and butter.<sup>430</sup> With the exception of coal, these were largely products of an agricultural economy dominated by

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<sup>429</sup> Berry, 'Promoting Taste', p. 13-14.

<sup>430</sup> Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, p. 115.

pastoral farming practices and reflect the balance of the agricultural economy which relied upon imports of grain from East Anglia to supply the expanding urban centre of Newcastle and the Tyne belt.<sup>431</sup> The dominance of coal and agricultural goods in these shipments indicate that whilst coal was a dominant export commodity, Northumberland and Durham had a dual-economy benefiting from export of both mineral and agricultural produce. Outward cargoes remained roughly the same for the entirety of the period (the exception was a rise in the amount of butter shipped), only their size modified.<sup>432</sup> Although Ellis maintains that ships leaving Newcastle outnumbered those entering even in the eighteenth century, the composition of cargoes sent northwards was certainly more diverse than those sent from the Tyne port. The composition of these shipments can roughly be divided into four main categories; agricultural goods, raw materials, manufactured goods and consumables. It is these categories that will be analysed in the following discussion.

#### *i) Agricultural Goods*

A rising population during the seventeenth century, in line with national growth, began to place an increasing demand upon regional agriculture during the late seventeenth century.<sup>433</sup> According to Wrightson this demographic growth was even more striking on the developing industrial belt along the Tyne from South Shields at the coast to Ryton inland and also along the Wear valley. At the heart of this growth was Newcastle where the population expanded from around six thousand in the 1540s to thirty thousand in the 1740s.<sup>434</sup> Such expansion placed a heavy demand upon regional agriculture. As Chapter Two has already highlighted, the regional agricultural economy was largely geared towards pastoral farming and was successful in the supply of livestock.<sup>435</sup> William Gray's observations of the flesh market in Newcastle in 1649 emphasise the dominance of supply of meat products from throughout the region to Newcastle, and even at the end of the seventeenth century this market was still a notable attribute of the town remarked upon by Celia Fiennes.<sup>436</sup> Localised growth in coal mining areas was a huge incentive for the development of a more commercial agricultural system and the use of new techniques. However despite improvements in regional agriculture during the

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<sup>431</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 142.

<sup>432</sup> Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, pp. 115-116.

<sup>433</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 139.

<sup>434</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 139-141.

<sup>435</sup> Brassley, 'Northumberland and Durham', p. 30-59.

<sup>436</sup> Fiennes, *Through England on Side Saddle*, p. 177; Gray, *Chorographia*, p. 68.

period, local grain provisions failed to effectively serve Newcastle's needs and the town's population was supplemented with imported grain supplies from East Anglia.<sup>437</sup> This importation of agricultural goods is highlighted by data from the port books analysed. Agricultural products were the predominant cargo entering the Tyne throughout the period, with cargoes from almost every port containing some item of staple food during the surveyed period.<sup>438</sup>

Wells-Next-the-Sea led the trade in foodstuffs providing constant shipments throughout the period that almost completely comprised of agricultural goods. Wells' shipment of agricultural produce was most pronounced in the 1695-96 surveyed port book when forty-six shipments of barley, forty shipments of malt, thirty-one shipments of pease and forty-one shipments of rye were received in Newcastle. These cargoes dropped substantially in the 1732-33 port book; however they were recovered by 1755-56 with thirty-nine cargoes including barley, fourteen of rye and fourteen of wheat. By the period under discussion the port at Wells was one of the main points of contact for transfer of grain between East Anglia and the Tyne, a clear example of the extent of grain production in that region and the easy transfer of goods that took place between east coast ports. The amounts shipped from Wells did not increase greatly over the period. However other ports also contributed to the supply of agricultural goods to the North, specifically those ports in East Anglia. The port at Wells had grown during the sixteenth century at the expense of Blakney, but both Yarmouth and King's Lynn were also developing rapidly, eventually supplanting Norwich.<sup>439</sup> This development is also reflected in the port book data with King's Lynn shipping large quantities of barley from 1755-56 onwards along with apples, flour, pease, rye and wheat flour. Such transfers were testament to the efficiency of the national market for grains which had developed over the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century.<sup>440</sup>

The shipment of grain to the Tyne was required for the maintenance of Newcastle's growing urban population, and other basic foodstuffs shipped to the region were generally provided irregularly in small quantities, confirming Northumberland and

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<sup>437</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 142; Brassley, 'Northumberland and Durham', pp. 42-32.

<sup>438</sup> Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, pp. 114-116.

<sup>439</sup> E. Rutledge, 'Medieval and Later ports, Trade and Fishing, up to 1600' in T. Ashwin and A. Davison (eds.) *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk* (Chichester, 2005), p. 78.

<sup>440</sup> Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?*, p. 57, 364.

Durham's strong pastoral farming sector. Red meats were shipped rarely. Only occasional mention of bacon, pork or beef in all four port books confirms the dominance of pastoral farming in the region. Leather was also not widely imported, although large quantities from London were sent in 1755-56. Cargoes of fish however, were frequently shipped. Despite the ready supply of fish in Newcastle, different types were sent from Berwick, Yarmouth and London throughout the period surveyed including ling, cod, herring and red herring. Perhaps as a result of the healthy state of the northern fishing industry the fish that was shipped to the Tyne did not appear in overwhelming quantities. It is also possible that the shipping of different types of fish into the region reflects the increasingly rich diet of particular sections of English society which apparently saw less reliance placed upon local produce.<sup>441</sup> The production of cheese in Northumberland and Durham, for example, did not prevent the product being shipped in cargoes to the area from Hull, Stockton and London. This is a somewhat surprising occurrence given Willan's assertion that cheese was one of Newcastle's more prominent exports.<sup>442</sup> It could be possible that the high quality of Northumberland and Durham cheeses meant it was more profitable to export locally produced products and import cheaper versions from elsewhere for consumption, or it could reflect the development of regional specialisation with saw certain high quality products associated with particular regions. Certainly the dominant produce and exports of the Stockton and Yarm economies were butter and cheese, to the extent that Yarm had become 'an important dairy market for the whole of the North East'.<sup>443</sup>

The importation of corn is understandable, however the shipment of leather, fish and cheese to the Tyne exemplifies the complexity of the late seventeenth and eighteenth century economy whereby the region accepted imports of items which were produced and could already be procured in the region. The shipment of leather and cheese to the Tyne, whilst locally produced versions were simultaneously exported, suggests that the eighteenth century commercial economy was not precisely geared towards regional self-sufficiency but a wider national integration of the economy. It is also possible that these items were exported for their high value and cheaper versions were imported for regional consumption.

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<sup>441</sup> Mingay, *English Landed Society*, p. 219.

<sup>442</sup> Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, p. 116.

<sup>443</sup> Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, pp. 227-248; R. T. Fieldhouse, 'Agriculture in Wensleydale from 1690 to the Present Day', *Northern History* 16 (1980), pp. 169-95.

## *ii) Raw Materials*

Agricultural products were essential in support of the region's growing and increasingly urbanised population, and raw materials, as Chapter Three highlighted, were essential for the maintenance of the region's developing consumer industries. The region was endowed with many essential raw materials, however there were materials required in those burgeoning industries, such as glass, earthenware and iron, which were not readily accessible. Chapter Three indicated that many of these materials, especially those required for the glass and iron industries, were sourced from around the country, and the port book data for the period supports the shipment information and evidence gathered from merchant correspondences. Such cargoes were substantial throughout the period, but grew in frequency specifically after mid-century. By 1782-83 raw materials were shipped frequently to the Tyne for the specific use of the iron and glass industries, with small amounts of clay presumably destined for the clay pipe and earthenware producers as well.

Iron of various types was predominant among the raw materials shipped into the Tyne. Small amounts were shipped in 1695-96 from Hull, but it was after the turn of the century that domestic shipments of iron began to rise dramatically in accordance with the take-off of iron manufacture in the region. In the 1732-33 port book London was recorded as delivering ninety-two of the total 106 consignments containing iron, almost 87 per cent of all iron shipped to the Tyne that year. The recordings of iron shipments from London became more detailed after 1700. In 1755-56 105 cargoes from London of the 125 iron cargoes received contained various types of iron which included cast iron, old iron, Russia bar iron, Spanish raw iron, and Sweedish bar iron as well as simply 'iron'. The sheer variety of iron, which included 'old iron', indicates the constant need for the raw material in the region generated to a large extent by the massive Crowley ironworks at Swalwell and Winlaton in County Durham. Flinn observed that Sweedish bar iron, a quality material, was that used most frequently in Crowley's ironworks which could not be supplemented by national supplies.<sup>444</sup> By 1782-83 total shipments of iron had increased again to 234, 148 consignments coming from London. Hull, possibly working as a central point for the exportation of iron from the West Riding of

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<sup>444</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 106-110.

Yorkshire, continued to send varying quantities of iron to Newcastle which peaked in 1782-83 with forty-two consignments shipped. Other less frequent iron cargoes were sent from 1732-33 onwards arriving from Stockton, Leith, Aberdeen, Sunderland, Montrose, Whitby, Blyth and Berwick. However, it was London, with its central position as an industrial and international trading centre, that provided the most frequent consignments.

Raw materials that fed the glass industry were also prominent in cargoes arriving at Newcastle, with shipments increasing throughout the period. Various types of ashes were shipped from London after 1700 in line with the major expansion of the glass industry on the Tyne, Wear and at Hartley.<sup>445</sup> In 1732-33 London sent twelve cargoes which included ashes (four bone ash, five pearl ashes, two pot ashes, and one soapers' waste), by 1755-56 this had increased to twenty cargoes (six bone ash, eleven pearl ashes, two pot ashes, one Suffolk ashes), and by 1782-83 the number of shipments including ashes had risen to 136 (twenty-five barilla ashes, twenty-seven bone ashes, twenty-seven lead ashes, thirty-nine pearl ashes, fourteen pot ashes, and four soap ashes). The rise in shipments of ashes after the 1750s testifies to the extent of the Tyne glass industry, which was beginning to reach its zenith in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Whilst particular ashes such as soapers' ashes and barilla ashes were prized later in the eighteenth century, any ash was suitable for the production of glass. The usability of most ashes benefitted the Tyne glass industry's circumstances as huge quantities of ash were required annually to maintain production. It is logical that the growth in all kinds of glass manufactory placed increasing demand on raw material resources, especially ashes, justifying the rise in raw materials shipped to the region. By 1775 there were approximately twenty glasshouses in the region requiring large quantities of ash. In 1778 the Royal Northumberland Bottle Works at Hartley in Northumberland alone required 120 tons of ash per month.<sup>446</sup> As a waste product of industry, the use of ashes in glass manufacturing was at the root a process of recycling. Furthermore as waste products, ashes were available at a variety of locations nationally, but especially in

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<sup>445</sup> Some of these ash cargoes may also have been used in the production of soap on the Tyne.

<sup>446</sup> NRO, 2DE/11/3/5, Letters from William Allan, 27 January 1778.

London with its huge manufacturing sector.<sup>447</sup> Hull sent a small number of ash consignments to the Tyne, as did most of the ports that Newcastle regularly received cargoes from. Although no other port shipped as many cargoes as London did (possibly due to the large size of industry centred around the Thames which resulted in waste ashes), Wells, Ipswich, Yarmouth, Lynn, Stockton, Leith, Aberdeen, Sunderland, Montrose and Whitby supplemented this ash trade, particularly in the 1782-83 port books when the regional glass industry was at its largest.

Broken glass or cullet was another essential ingredient in the glass making process. Vital in the process of melting raw materials into a molten glass liquid it was increasingly shipped to Newcastle throughout the eighteenth century in line with the growth of the regional industry. Much of the cullet shipped to the Tyne originated in the region and represented the recycling of broken items from cargoes sent throughout the country. Whilst oats and straw are recorded as being used to pack fragile glass for transportation by ship and land, journeys were not without breakages and it was increasingly useful for this broken glass to return to the Tyne.<sup>448</sup> The Royal Northumberland Bottle Works at Hartley had a regular contract to supply bottles to Broughton and Harrison of London, a contract which saw ships return to Hartley with cargoes of ashes and broken glass that had been discovered when the London-bound cargoes reached their destination.<sup>449</sup>

It was specifically after the mid-eighteenth century that consignments of broken glass were shipped to the Tyne. In 1732-33 only six consignments were sent to Newcastle. In 1755-56 these had risen to twenty-eight, with London providing twenty-three consignments, and by 1782-83, ninety-seven consignments of broken glass were shipped with London providing sixty-nine. These figures may have ultimately been higher as some cargoes from London are described as containing 'glass' with no further description. There is a possibility that some of this 'glass' could have been broken glass. The amount of cullet sent from London reinforces the close connection that existed between Tyne glass manufactories specifically and the London market, a relationship

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<sup>447</sup> Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, pp. 18-34.

<sup>448</sup> Hodgson 'Coalmining, Population and Enclosure', p. 70; NRO, ZRI/36/1, Letters and paper re. St. Lawrence Bottle works 1742-96.

<sup>449</sup> NRO, 2DE/12/4/94, 2DE/12/4/87, 2DE/12/4/88, 2DE/12/4/92, broken bottles and ashes shipped by Broughton and Harrison of London, 1772-1773.

which to an extent mirrored that of the coal industry.<sup>450</sup> Other shipments of broken glass reflect the pattern identified with shipment of ashes. A number of other ports which were identified as shipping ash, including Wells, Ipswich, Yarmouth, Lynn, Hull, Stockton, Leith, Aberdeen, Montrose and Berwick, sent less frequent cargoes containing broken glass. Shipment of broken glass from these ports reinforces the habit glassmakers had of sending their finished produce to ports that could provide raw materials in exchange, highlighting the two-way exchange of coastal trade. It also emphasises the very strong connection that existed between Newcastle and the east coast ports in terms of export and import of goods. All of the ports that sent broken glass to Newcastle appear to have received shipments of finished glass in the eighteenth century.<sup>451</sup>

More specialised was the shipment of clay, kelp and sand for the use of the glass industry. Sand was shipped from Hull in 1755-56 as were ten consignments of Stourbridge clay in 1782-83. Lynn provided quantities of sand from the 1750s onwards with nine consignments in 1782-83. Kelp however, was almost exclusively the product of the Scottish ports with Aberdeen, Kirkwall, Montrose, Dundee and Berwick the primary suppliers of the product to Newcastle. Although shipments of these raw materials appear limited in the port books surveyed, personal correspondence and business records confirm that trade in sand, kelp, and even cullet were more extensive than the port books surveyed suggest.<sup>452</sup>

Many of the connections between ports, especially those on the east coast, were clearly based upon the demand for raw materials. Whilst regions grew out of specialisation and use of natural resources during this period, they were integrally tied to other developing regions. Significantly the quantities recorded in the Newcastle port books are most certainly the lowest possible estimate of raw materials entering the region. Hinton states that ships carrying ballast were not entered in the port books, and therefore any sand, flint or clay ballast entering the Tyne would not be recorded.<sup>453</sup> John Cookson's desire to have sand sent as ballast to save on freight, highlighted in Chapter Three, clearly

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<sup>450</sup> Pilbin, 'External Relations of the Tyneside Glass Industry', p. 309.

<sup>451</sup> TWA, JCSJ, 1512/5572, 3 December 1744-15 February 1747.

<sup>452</sup> Both the JCL and Sir John Delaval's Royal Northumberland Bottle Works document frequent agreements and correspondence with raw material suppliers.

<sup>453</sup> Hinton, *The Port Books of Boston*, p. xx.

indicates that raw materials sent as ballast were preferred.<sup>454</sup> Although Ellis suggests that the amounts of deposited ballast on the banks of the Tyne indicate the one-way nature of large quantities of Newcastle trade, it is evident that ballast was actually vital to the running of many of the region's consumer industries.<sup>455</sup> Ballast was not necessarily a waste product of Newcastle's coal trade, and it is highly likely that shipment of raw materials to the Tyne were much more extensive than this survey indicates.

The movement of raw materials between London and Newcastle reveals that the relationship between capital and provincial capital was not a linear one of raw materials in exchange for luxury and new goods as some historians have suggested. It also involved the shipment of raw materials from London to the Tyne.<sup>456</sup> Bulk items such as iron comprised a large part of small cargoes brought frequently from the capital. The movement of ashes for the glass industry was a process whereby the removal of surplus waste materials from one port or industrial centre was sent for the use of Newcastle's extensive and developing industry. Whilst London apparently provided these goods in increasing quantities, it could not provide for all Newcastle's needs. Indeed London never supplied more than 30-50 per cent of the total vessels entering the Tyne and therefore was never likely to have monopolised trade to the North. Other ports sent supplementary quantities of raw materials to the North, whilst independent relationships with specific ports (and merchants) were created for the procurement of highly specialised commodities such as Stourbridge clay, sand and kelp as ballast.

### *iii) Manufactured Goods*

Willan suggests that of all the goods shipped through the coasting trade manufactured goods are most difficult to quantify, being often found in miscellaneous cargoes without much indication of quantity.<sup>457</sup> Despite this difficulty, an understanding of the manufactured goods sent to Newcastle is important for forming a clear insight into the region as whole, especially as probate inventories, the subject of analysis in Chapters Seven and Eight, indicate that ownership of manufactured items (British and foreign) was rising rapidly during this period. A striking difference is apparent once the recorded

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<sup>454</sup> See Chapter Three, pp. 84- 86.

<sup>455</sup> Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', pp.3-4.

<sup>456</sup> Earle, *The Making of the Middle Class*, p. 43.

<sup>457</sup> Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, p. 93, 96.

shipments and types of manufactured goods to Newcastle are considered. Importantly, the number of ports shipping manufactured goods to the Tyne was considerably smaller than the amount sending agricultural goods or raw materials.

Manufactured goods were supplied mainly from Hull and London, with London dominant and frequently shipping the most diverse range of goods. A smaller selection of goods was also supplied from Scottish ports such as Leith, Montrose, Dundee and Aberdeen. The predominant manufactured items amongst these Scottish shipments were various types of linen and cloth, which included brown and white linen, linen yarn, sail cloth, buckram and thread. Leith, the most prominent of all Scottish ports shipping to Newcastle, sent a large number of cargoes containing linen and woollen drapery amongst consignments of wearing apparel and furniture. A breakdown of items shipped from Leith is displayed in Table 8.

**Table 8: Manufactured Goods Shipped from Leith to Newcastle, c. 1732-33 to 1782-83**

Item	Leith		
	1732-33	1755-56	1782-83
Bottles	4	0	7
Cloth	11	20	22
Furniture	1	3	9
Books	0	2	1
Haberdashery	0	1	0
Glass	0	0	1
Apparel	0	2	9

Sources: TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

The composition of goods sent from Leith is unsurprising considering its role as the port for Edinburgh. According to Jackson it was a major place for European trade, being the port of Scotland's capital city.<sup>458</sup> As such its prominent shipping of foreign linens, linen drapery, woollen drapery and consumables (discussed in the next section) is unsurprising.

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<sup>458</sup> Jackson, 'Ports 1700-1840', p. 710.

Of the English ports sending large numbers of vessels to Newcastle throughout the surveyed period only Hull and London provided any substantial quantity or frequency of manufactured goods. Those items brought from Hull were rather limited in number compared to London, and are displayed on Table 9. Iron goods were foremost in Hull's cargoes with ironmonger wares and nails, presumably from Sheffield and its surrounding area, shipped frequently from the first book in 1695-96 and the amount of cargoes roughly doubling in frequency by 1782-83. Groceries and German linen were also shipped from Hull, perhaps reflecting the East Anglian connection with Baltic and Northern European trade, although these appeared less frequently than iron goods.<sup>459</sup>

**Table 9: Manufactured Goods Shipped from Hull to Newcastle, c. 1695-96 to 1782-83**

Item	Hull			
	1695-96	1732-33	1755-56	1782-83
Household goods	1	5	1	0
Books	1	0	1	0
Apparel	1	4	1	1
Tableware	2	12	22	24
Haberdashery	1	2	0	0
Cloth	0	5	11	7
Paper	0	1	3	0
Furniture	0	2	2	3
Bottles	0	0	1	0
Ironmongers ware	10	13	20	22
Nails	9	12	20	17
Earthenware	0	11	21	15
Glass	0	0	1	1

Sources: TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

Alongside ironware it was tableware, specifically earthenware, which stood out in cargoes from Hull. In 1732-33 eleven cargoes from Hull contained specifically 'English' earthenware, in 1755-56 twenty-one cargoes contained 'earthenware', as did a further fifteen in 1782-83. This earthenware was possibly that produced in Staffordshire and shipped through Hull to Newcastle. It is likely that these domestically shipped items represented better quality earthenware desired by wealthier or more particular

<sup>459</sup> Rutledge, 'Medieval and Later Ports', p. 79.

customers, and supplemented the more basic pottery produced locally. This imported earthenware may also have been imported by merchants involved in international trade who, like Ralph Carr, were looking for a better quality product for the international market. For example, as already referenced in Chapter Four, Carr wrote to a Boston correspondent in the mid-eighteenth century, 'you desire to have some Tea Sugar & Milk potts but nothing so small is made. Our Earthen Ware is exceeding Course (sic) & low priced'.<sup>460</sup> It is possible that items shipped from elsewhere in England were subsequently re-exported by merchants to cater for international demand. It is clear that in 1750 Carr was shipping 'great quantities yearly for all parts of America, as crown glass, bottles, sheet lead shot all sorts of woollens...nails, edge tools and every kind of iron ware, coarse felt hats and coarse earthenware' from Newcastle.<sup>461</sup> It is not clear that all of these items were manufactured regionally. It is apparent that Hull's primary role in trading with Newcastle was based on the position it held as a major outlet for its extensive hinterlands. Jackson indicates that Hull's position in trade was 'based firmly on superior inland transport connections' which meant the port was connected to manufacturing areas such as Sheffield, Wakefield, Leeds, Gainsborough, Leicestershire and the Potteries.<sup>462</sup>

It was London that outstripped any other port in the shipment of manufactured goods to Newcastle, revealing the important relationship between London and other ports and provincial centres. London alone sent substantial shipments which included thirty-four different types of manufactured goods. Books, chairs, earthenware, haberdashery, household goods, oilmenwares, paper, pins, soap, stationary ware, tobacco, upholstery and wearing apparel were shipped constantly throughout the period. Other goods such as linen, starch, china, furniture, foreign linens and toys rose and fell in importance during the period accordingly. A selection of the most frequently shipped items is displayed on Table 10. Not all of those goods shipped throughout the period remained constant or grew in numbers. Parcels or boxes of books appeared in twenty and sixty-eight cargoes in 1732-33 and 1755-56 respectively but were shipped much less in the previous and following port books studied. One cargo containing books in 1695-96 may be indicative of the limited extent of literacy in the region at the time, limited ability to

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<sup>460</sup> Carr cited in Blakey, 'Newcastle Potters', p. 19.

<sup>461</sup> W. I. Roberts, 'Ralph Carr: a Newcastle Merchant and the American Colonial Trade', *Business History Review* 42 (1968), pp. 73-4.

<sup>462</sup> Jackson, 'Ports 1700-1840', p. 711.

purchase books, or may simply be an oddity in that particular year. By 1782-83 the number of cargoes containing books had dropped from previous surveyed years to fourteen, which may be a result of the growth of Newcastle's own printing sector and book trade represented by the expansion of local booksellers and binders.<sup>463</sup> It may also be the case that these items were included in the inclusive term 'stationary ware', again emphasising the difficulties of port book use highlighted by Willan, Hinton and Weatherill.

**Table 10: Consignments of Manufactured Commodities Sent from London to Newcastle**

Item	London			
	1695-96	1732-33	1755-56	1782-83
Haberdashery	21	68	91	84
Furniture	10	7	22	32
Tableware	25	56	91	33
Books	1	42	68	14
Apparel	9	32	61	44
Cloth	23	24	268	14
Upholstery	7	13	43	12
Paper	20	15	48	4
Household goods	10	30	46	17
Looking glasses	4	0	0	4
Pictures	2	3	4	1
Glass	0	11	26	23
Bottles	0	1	1	0
Earthenware	9	18	26	20
China	0	11	0	9
English China	0	0	46	0
Paper hangings	0	7	4	13

Sources: TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

Reams of paper in varying sorts (including writing paper and printed paper) were mentioned in London cargoes of every port book surveyed. Twenty cargoes contained paper in 1695-96, fifteen did in 1732-33, forty-eight did in 1755-56 and four did in 1782-83. As Chapters Two and Four indicate, during the eighteenth century, Northumberland and Durham had a growing papermaking industry which was creating an expanding range of products and the dramatic drop in paper shipment in the 1782-83

<sup>463</sup> According to Berry Newcastle was the largest printing centre outside of London and the university towns during the eighteenth century, see Berry, 'Promoting Taste', p. 1.

port book may represent the extent of this growth. Unfortunately it is difficult to estimate the output of the local paper manufacturing industry and the extent of local demand. Thus assessment of how important London's shipments of paper were in the pre-1780 period is not straightforward. Furthermore, it is difficult to quantify the size of these paper imports. It is clear that demand for paper was increasing throughout the period. Paper was required to record trade in the expanding commercial centres of Newcastle and Sunderland, and the administrative centre of Durham. From the first half of the eighteenth century Newcastle supported two provincial newspapers and throughout the century developed a substantial print industry. It remains difficult to assert whether London's shipments of paper supplemented Northumberland and Durham production or dominated local supplies until the later eighteenth century. However given the gradual development of the papermaking industry in the region it is likely that local production initially supplemented imports, but contributed a growing percentage to satisfy local demand throughout the period.

A number of the items shipped constantly throughout the surveyed port books were very clearly associated with the position London held as a centre of production and of international trade, and a distributor of goods throughout the country. It is not surprising that London was a mass supplier of Russian and German linens and various types of tobacco (manufactured, unmanufactured, cut and leaf). The large counts of soap ('soap', 'soft soap' and 'hard soap') arriving from the turn of the century onwards (accumulatively forty-nine in 1732-33, ninety in 1755-56, sixty-three in 1782-83) emphasises London's role as a major manufacturing centre.<sup>464</sup> Although some soap production took place on Tyneside it was not extensive enough or of a good enough quality to cater for local demand inflated by an expanding population.

Many of the manufactured goods found in London's cargoes cannot be explained fully in terms of consumer demand. The amounts of furniture and chairs shipped in London cargoes are a clear indication of the capital's importance in furniture production. These shipments emphasise the specialisation of production in London. However, some of these items may also have been the movement of existing possessions. For example, estate records detail the shipping of furniture from the Bowes family property in

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<sup>464</sup> Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, pp. 17-35; Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance', pp. 44-70.

London to their estates in County Durham.<sup>465</sup> Likewise, the shipments of glass could either be products from London makers which were destined to be sold in the Northumberland and Durham markets, or they may represent re-shipped Tyne and Wear glass from London merchants that was returned to the region when stocks had run low.

Other items shipped from London are significant for their lack of frequency. Looking glasses were only recorded in four cargoes in 1695-96 and four in 1782-83, a surprising result given the extent of looking glass ownership in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century (discussed further in Chapters Seven and Eight) and the apparent absence of any major regional looking glass manufacturers before the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>466</sup> However, evidence does suggest that despite the manufacturing of mirrors in London, demand was largely catered for by high quality French looking glasses.<sup>467</sup> Likewise, the records of paper hangings (wallpaper) in cargoes were much lower than expected. As the centre of paper hanging manufacture in the country, it is surprising that there is not more evidence of movement of wallpaper from London. This may reflect low demand for the product in the region or the possibility that growth of local producers lessened the need for London products. However, it is a constant possibility that these items were masked in general shipments of upholstery goods and that paper hangings were more extensively shipped than is apparent.

It is clear that London dominated shipment of manufacturing goods to Newcastle, an outcome representative of the capital's position as a manufacturing centre and the crux of international trade. A number of Scottish ports supplemented this trade by supplying mainly linen and cloths. Only Hull amongst the English ports sent any quantity of manufactured goods to Newcastle before the 1780s, largely as a result of its advantageous location and inland trade connections. Manufactured items from other ports were of an occasional and small scale nature. However, despite the dominance of London in this branch of trade, the evidence of Table 10 suggests a declining reliance on London for manufactured goods. Haberdashery, tableware, books, apparel, upholstery goods, glass, paper, earthenware and household goods were significantly

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<sup>465</sup> DRO, D/St/E12/23-31, 33-37, Account of household expenditure at London and goods shipped; Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, p. 103.

<sup>466</sup> See Chapters Four, Seven and Eight for further detail on regional production and ownership of looking glasses.

<sup>467</sup> See Parliamentary Committee of 1773 cited in Buckley, 'Glasshouses on the Tyne', p. 34, 46-47.

recorded in fewer shipments in 1782-83, suggesting that local production may have begun to have an influence upon local demand and trade. Not only was London sending fewer cargoes to Newcastle in 1782-83, but those cargoes appear to have contained fewer manufactured items.

*iv) Imported and Exotic Consumables*

Manufactured goods predominately found their way to Newcastle from London with few other ports sending much in the way of manufactured items. However it was the shipment of essential, imported and exotic consumable foodstuffs that dominated Newcastle-bound cargoes. It is impossible to assess which category of items (agricultural commodities, raw materials, manufactured goods, or imported consumables) had a greater value in the region. Both economically and socially agricultural goods and raw materials were essential, but many manufactured goods and imported consumables, in addition to being economically and socially significant, had an added cultural currency which characterises late seventeenth and eighteenth century society. Consumption of manufactured and luxury consumables was both socially and culturally significant. Comparisons of the importance of each category are worthless, however both in variety of goods shipped and in frequency of items in cargoes, it was consumables that dominated all other categories. Such goods represent the extent to which the region's participation in luxury and increasingly popular cultural practices of tea and coffee drinking could only be catered for by imports. This data also reinforces the belief that in terms of consumption, it was food that altered significantly during the early modern period.<sup>468</sup> Whilst manufactured durables were becoming increasingly important, it was smaller, less expensive groceries such as sugar, coffee, raisins, rum, tobacco and confectionary that continually entered the Northumberland and Durham markets.

Where shipment of consumer durables was localised to Hull and London, consumables were provided by a broad range of ports, with almost every port shipping a cargo containing food, alcohol, or ingredients for drinks. According to Harris Sacks and Lynch the role of smaller ports in consumables distribution was possibly a result of dominance of London in overseas trade. They argue that as London's overseas trade

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<sup>468</sup> Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 122.

grew the other east coast ports increasingly took on ‘the function of collecting and redistributing points for domestic products and foreign imports.’<sup>469</sup> Cargoes from other ports in regular contact with the Tyne were bulked out with the inclusion of increasingly affordable consumables, but in contrary to Harris Sacks and Lynch’s suggestion of the role of east coast ports, these consumables were sent irregularly and in small quantities. From Lynn, Wells and Stockton were vessels carrying various spirits, sugar, wine, cider, plumbs, lime juice and prunes. The Scottish ports, specifically Leith and Aberdeen, sent consumables relatively more frequently. For example, in 1782-83 eleven cargoes from Aberdeen contained coarse black tea, sixteen contained fine black tea, and thirteen contained ordinary black tea. However, it was London again that dominated in this category of goods with both frequency of shipments and varieties of consumables expanding over the surveyed period.

In the 1695-96 port book London shipped only twenty-one different types of consumables including various alcohols (brandy, canary, cherry brandy, cider, English spirits, and wines), citrus fruits (oranges and lemons), vinegar, sugar, ginger and confectionary (these last four occurred only occasionally). Between the last decade of the seventeenth and the first quarter of the eighteenth century a significant shift took place in the availability and demand for essential and luxury consumables. The amount of cargoes containing such commodities sent from London increased dramatically. The narrow group of items shipped in 1695-96 had expanded considerably by 1732-33 with fifty-nine different consumables shipped. Many of those goods shipped in 1695-96 continued to be part of north-bound cargoes, especially spirits, wine, citrus fruits and vinegar, but they were joined by other goods which were gradually finding their way into northern households. From the 1732-33 port book onwards, cargoes contained the increasingly popular hot drinks ingredients tea and coffee. A breakdown of the most frequently shipped consumables from London is displayed on Table 11.

The shipment of many of these consumables was a reflection of increased trade with Europe and the colonies, but also significant changes in the British diet. This dietary change apparently did affect Northumberland and Durham, and is reflected in the rapid rise in shipment of particular items. The specific figures above confirm that imported

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<sup>469</sup> Harris Sacks and Lynch, ‘Ports 1540-1700’, p. 398.

items such as sugar and tea, luxury items in the seventeenth century, not only showed the most dramatic growth nationally over the period, but also specifically to Newcastle. Sugar was shipped only once from London in 1695-96, but by 1782-83 this had risen to 124 shipments. Shipments of tea likewise rose from 0 in 1695-96 to 102 in 1782-83, tobacco from eighteen to eight-four in the same period, and rum from 0 to 77. Such growth indicates the extent to which these consumables became popular with the widest range of social groups during the eighteenth century. Increased trade meant prices fell making such groceries available to a market wider than the elite. These consumables, specifically sugar, tea, and tobacco, were products of a new mass market, all increasingly popular.<sup>470</sup>

**Table 11: Amount of Vessels containing Consumables from London**

Goods	1695-96	1732-33	1755-56	1782-83
Sugar	1	68	90	124
Tobacco	18	55	69	84
Vinegar	22	40	43	52
Treacle	0	0	22	0
Tea	0	6	85	102
Sweet	0	0	12	42
Spanish Wine	20	4	1	1
Rum	0	14	26	77
Raisins	0	50	58	68
Port wine	28	23	4	5
Pepper	0	20	25	37
Oranges	6	18	55	41
Nuts	0	1	25	31
Molasses	0	29	43	22
Lemons	7	22	65	47
Foreign Brandy	0	2	24	68
Confectionary	4	32	67	27
Coffee	0	5	29	44

Sources: TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

The increasing supply of sugar and tea to Newcastle particularly represents this widespread change in diet and food consumption which affected the nation as a whole. By the 1720s England and Wales were importing around 92.6 million lbs of sugar

<sup>470</sup> S. Mintz, 'The Changing Roles of Food in the Study of Consumption' in J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds.) *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), pp. 261-273; Shammass, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 78.

(although some was exported). According to John McCusker, per capita sugar consumption in England had risen from 1 lb. to 25lb between 1670 and 1770, with even the poor able to purchase the sweetener, except in times of economic depression. Furthermore, Shammass claims that by 1787-96 ten per cent of annual income was spent by English labouring families on tea, sugar and treacle.<sup>471</sup> The increased shipping of tea, coffee, sugar and tobacco from London to Newcastle is by no means surprising. According to Hoppit by the 1720s London supported nearly two-thirds of shipping to and from the New World.<sup>472</sup> The metropolitan was the hub of European and colonial trade and it was Newcastle's closest colonial trade port by sea.

These consumables were new and popular foodstuffs of the eighteenth century. Increasing colonial trade made them cheaper and therefore within the reach of a wider section of the population. However, as Table 11 indicates, sugar, tobacco, tea and coffee were only a section (albeit a rapidly growing section) of the new consumables shipped. Nuts, pepper, and raisins also began to appear in increasing quantities in the port books alongside less frequent cargoes of cloves, cinnamon, aniseed, almonds, mace and nutmegs. Items such as tea, sugar, tobacco and rum had gained popular appeal through their cheapness, sweetness and stimulating effect. It is more difficult to pinpoint demand for less frequently shipped spices and nuts, but it is evident that they were certainly consumed by local gentry.

### ***London and Newcastle***

Some assumptions concerning the nature of trade between Newcastle and London can be substantiated by the port book data presented in this chapter. However the relationship between the capital and provincial capital was not a straightforward one of raw materials from Newcastle in exchange for luxury, exotic and household goods from London. The composition of Newcastle's shipments to London changed little throughout the period 1680 to 1780, but London did not simply provide the manufactured and luxury household goods that were increasingly found in urban probate inventories. London's cargoes were a mixed bag, often containing those essential raw materials that the Tyne industries required. Manufactured goods, while

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<sup>471</sup> Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?*, p. 266; Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade*, p. 184; Shammass, *The Pre-industrial Consumer*, pp. 136-7.

<sup>472</sup> Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?*, p. 264.

shipped more often from London than from any other port, took second place to foreign and exotic consumables, and were possibly sent in a declining number of cargoes. Other ports did ship similar items, such as the Scottish ports which sent consumables and linen in notable quantities, but it was simply more practical for colonial, foreign and manufactured items to be sent from London which was a major centre of manufacturing and the hub of international trade.<sup>473</sup> As a result, goods were delivered more often in London cargoes than those from any other port.

Despite this it cannot be claimed that an individual special relationship existed between the coastal trade of Newcastle and London. The goods shipped from the Tyne to London were of the same variety shipped from Newcastle to numerous other ports, large and small, throughout the country, and even to the continent. The quantities may have been larger, but this was simply a reflection of London's swelling population and industry. Likewise, those goods shipped from London to Newcastle (with the exception of raw materials) mirrored cargoes sent from London to ports throughout Britain. In addition to being the centre of foreign trade London's main outward trade involved the redistribution of imports throughout the country.<sup>474</sup> The only significant connection between the two ports was the sheer amount of vessels, goods and quantities sent. Although the basic assumption of London as the centre and Newcastle as a periphery may be a simplistic way of viewing their relationship, it cannot be denied that centres and peripheries did exist. London, as the capital city, centre of manufacturing and commerce, and core of international trade was the centre for the entirety of Britain. However, Newcastle was only one of its peripheries. Given this assertion it is unsurprising that London dominated trade entering the Tyne.

However it is also evident that Newcastle may have been becoming increasingly independent of the capital city towards the later eighteenth century, at least in the supply of manufactured goods. Table 12, which displays the percentages of vessels entering the Tyne from the four major ports constantly shipping to Newcastle, indicates that London never contributed more than 50 per cent of vessels in any surveyed year, suggesting that it never truly had a monopoly of coastal trade to Newcastle. Indeed the percentage of

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<sup>473</sup> Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, pp. 17-81; Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance', pp. 44-70; Wrigley, *People, Cities, and Wealth*, pp. 142-149.

<sup>474</sup> J. Boulton, 'London 1540-1700' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain II 1540-1840* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 323.

vessels from London fell between 11.9 per cent and 49.1 per cent. From 1732-33 onwards the percentage of vessels from London declined, dropping from 49.1 per cent to 26.2 per cent in 1782-83. This pattern reinforces the evidence presented in Table 10 of declining cargoes of particular manufactured goods, and supports Berry's argument that the metropolitan appears to have had a declining influence on the provincial capital of the North.<sup>475</sup> Corfield has observed that the urban world in the eighteenth century was becoming 'notably multi-centred rather than focused upon a single city'; the same appears to be true of domestic trade to some extent.<sup>476</sup>

**Table 12: Vessels from Major Ports entering the Tyne (%)**

Year	Percentage of Vessels entering Newcastle			
	Lynn	London	Hull	Wells
1682-83	15	25.5	4.7	1.8
1695-96	4.5	11.9	21.2	13.5
1715-16	6.7	43.4	15.5	9.5
1732-33	8.4	49.1	20.3	4.5
1755-56	18.8	37.2	9.1	11.5
1782-83	7.5	26.2	10.4	5.6

Sources for Table 8, TNA, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Newcastle Port Books, E190/200/15 (1682-83), E190/205/6 (1695-96), E190/220/9 (1715-16), E190/238/1 (1732-33), E190/255/1 (1755-56), E190/281/1 (1782-83).

Furthermore, it would be naïve to believe that all items in cargoes entering the Tyne were ultimately destined for the Northumberland and Durham market. As Chapter Six, which is concerned with analysing the retailing structure of the region, highlights, the area had a large number of chapmen and pedlars who aided the distribution of goods throughout and outside of the region most likely into neighbouring Cumbria and North Yorkshire. Additionally, it is apparent that merchants selling wholesale in Newcastle, Durham, Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland and other market towns supplied smaller shopkeepers in Cumbria.<sup>477</sup> Further quantities of goods imported through coastal trade may have been re-exported by merchants working in the Tyne industry, such as Ralph Carr or William Cotesworth.

<sup>475</sup> H. Berry, 'Promoting Taste', pp. 13-14.

<sup>476</sup> Corfield cited in P. Clark 'Introduction' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns 1600-1800* (London, 1984), p. 13.

<sup>477</sup> T. S. Willan, *An Eighteenth-Century Shopkeeper* (Manchester, 1970), pp. 29.

### *Conclusions*

Despite the raw material attributes that Northumberland and Durham had and the local growth of specific consumer industries, no economic region is an island. It is clear from the port book evidence that Newcastle was increasingly connected to a number of other important British ports through coastal trade. As Wrightson has stated 'coastal trade further connected it [the north-east] to Britain's vibrant and expanding commercial networks.'<sup>478</sup> The data detailing the number of vessels entering the Tyne suggests that coastal trade accelerated with a growing number of vessels and ports delivering to Newcastle. This growth appears to have been particularly prominent after the mid-eighteenth century with records of vessels entering the Tyne increasing from 381 in 1755-56 to 891 in 1782-83. Although this acceleration appears to have been dramatic, it is possible that coastal shipping before the 1780s was depressed by political disruptions, privateering and the disturbance of a series of wars. However, the acceleration is more likely to have been a result of an expansion of population and trade during this period.

The data on vessels entering Newcastle indicates that the region was almost exclusively connected to ports on the eastern and southern coast of Britain, largely as a result of their proximity to the Tyne. Prominent amongst those shipping to Newcastle were Hull and London, with London providing the largest number of vessels of any port. However, as the number of ports sending vessels northwards increased, it is apparent that London contributed a declining percentage of this traffic. London's dominance in coastal trade is logical as the capital was the centre of both domestic and international trade. It is evident, however, that the percentage of traffic from London to Newcastle dropped from a peak of 49.1 per cent in 1732-33 to 37.2 per cent in 1755-56 and then 26.2 per cent in 1782-83. This evidence may confirm that the provincial capital, Newcastle, was becoming increasingly independent of the national capital by the later eighteenth century.

London and Hull clearly provided quantities of manufactured goods to Newcastle as a result of the position they held. Hull as the trade portal for the Midland's provided frequent shipments of iron (probably from Sheffield) and earthenware from Staffordshire alongside smaller quantities of other items. London, as a centre of

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<sup>478</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 143.

manufacturing, domestic and international trade provided a large variety of manufactured commodities. However the evidence does suggest that some of these items, particularly products of Northumberland and Durham's developing consumer industries, were supplied less frequently after mid-century. During the first half of the eighteenth century manufactured items appear to have been shipped from London increasingly frequently, possibly in response to population growth, demand and enhanced ability to purchase, suggesting that new consumer industries in the North developed in response to the availability and demand for new goods nationally. However after mid-century, by which time local manufactories were clearly established, shipments of items such as tableware, books, bottles, earthenware, paper, household goods and glass appear to have declined noticeably. Other items such as paper hangings and looking glasses seem to have always been shipped infrequently. Initial production of consumer goods in Northumberland and Durham does seem to have been a form of import substitute.

More significantly, manufactured items were only one category of goods shipped to the region. Consumables, including essential agricultural goods and imported foodstuffs, were the most frequently shipped goods. Every port shipping to the Tyne contributed some foodstuff to the Newcastle market. London again dominated this trade, a result of it being the hub of international and colonial trade in Britain. However, Leith also contributed spirits and foreign luxuries, a testament to its position as the centre of international trade in Scotland, and an increasing number of British ports shipped such items reinforcing their roles as redistribution centres. More importantly raw materials also constituted a large part of goods shipped to the Tyne. Just as Newcastle sent coal to most British ports, in return the Tyne drew in cullet, kelp, sand, clay, iron, flint and ashes from around the country to produce its own manufactured goods. Newcastle was part of the thriving British coastal trade, but this trade was one of mutual exchange. To the Tyne came finished and semi-finished consumer durables, but also raw materials which allowed local manufacturing industries to thrive, basic foodstuffs which supported the region's growing population, and newly desirable imported consumables. Furthermore, it is evident that Newcastle was a thriving international port in its own right. Although Newcastle's merchant trade with the America's was limited, the provincial centre certainly had close trading connections with Europe, in particular Holland and the Baltic. Coastal trade was evidently essential to the regional economy,

but we must also be open to the possibility of extensive contributions from Europe in the form of foreign trade which made further goods available in Northumberland and Durham.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Retail Therapy**

#### ***Introduction***

The first historians of the subject long held that a modern system of retailing did not emerge in Britain until the mid-nineteenth century. As such, eighteenth-century retailing was denounced as a primitive and unsophisticated structure based upon uninformed consumers, shops which offered little choice, and haggling over prices.<sup>479</sup> Whilst it is clear that modern structures such as the department store, which heralded an era of large scale distribution, were a phenomenon exclusive to the late nineteenth century, the assumption that retailing before this time was primitive has increasingly been challenged. The highlighting of a significant rise in consumption during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, in addition to the rise in production and supply, logically warranted a fuller exploration of the mechanisms that facilitated such a development. A fundamental change must have taken place to accommodate and facilitate the dissemination of goods to an expanding array of consumers, and provide these customers with the relevant information they required to make purchases.

Retailing, a key system connecting the processes of production and consumption, developed as a permanent established structure in response to the rising popularity of services, leisure, and new and existing goods. Recent research has significantly revised the established view of an unsophisticated early modern retailing system. General retailing histories and those concerned with regions have unveiled a complex network of shops and selling techniques which were developing during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as part of a transition from a market-based to a fixed shop retailing structure. According to the Oxford English Dictionary the verb ‘to shop’ meaning ‘to visit a shop or shops for the purpose of making purchases, or examining the contents’ first came into use in 1764, indicating the extent to which ‘shops’ and the act of ‘shopping’ had become embedded in British society and everyday life by the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>480</sup> It was not merely the extent of the shop-based system that was new to this period, but also the techniques used to sell. Goods were visible to customers in shop windows and within the shop itself, and these shop displays were used in an

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<sup>479</sup> P. Corrigan, *The Sociology of Consumption: an Introduction* (London, 1997), p. 52.

<sup>480</sup> The definition of the verb ‘to shop’ is taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary* online.

attempt to entice customers in an increasingly competitive sector. Rather than transactions based solely on haggling, fixed pricing of goods did occur, and these prices were clearly displayed. Advertising took on a new connotation, rather than simply meaning a general public notice, by the later eighteenth century it was also associated with advertisement of a particular good or item for sale.

Hon-Cheung Mui and Lorna Mui's *Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth-Century England*, alongside a series of studies by Jon Stobart, have led this field of research that has considered towns such as Liverpool, Chester, Bristol, London and York.<sup>481</sup> These studies reveal the emergence of shopping networks as a significant feature of eighteenth-century Britain, but simultaneously give the impression of a system of continuity. The emergence of fixed shop retailing grew alongside well-established structures such as markets, fairs and hawkers enabling the distribution of an ever increasing variety of new and used goods. Such research has not always satisfactorily concluded on issues of retailing, nor has it constantly reinforced the 'modernism' of the eighteenth-century system. Indeed, one of the crux of Neil McKendrick's 'consumer revolution', a mass rise in the utilisation of advertising, has been recently called into question, suggesting that the use of advertising to promote consumer goods was not as widespread as McKendrick has argued.<sup>482</sup> Equally, the sale of goods both retail and wholesale by manufacturers and shopkeepers alike shows flexibility in sales which was less visible by the end of the nineteenth century.

Far from destroying the notion of a modern eighteenth-century retail network, such evidence implies that this was a complex system in transition; one experiencing a slow contraction of market centres and a supposed decay of trade, licensing of pedlars and chapmen, and a gradual adoption of fixed shops, fixed pricing and advertising. The slow reappraisal of the late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century retailing and distribution

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<sup>481</sup> H. Mui and L. Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1989); examples of Stobart's work on retailing include, J. Stobart, A. Hann and V. Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption* (London, 2007); Stobart and Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?', pp. 171-94; J. Stobart, 'Shopping Streets as Social Space: Consumerism, Improvement, and Leisure in the Eighteenth-Century County Town', *Urban History* 25 (1998), pp. 3-21; J. Stobart, 'Selling (Through) Politeness: Advertising Provincial Shops in Eighteenth-Century England', *Cultural and Social History* 5 (2008), pp. 309-328.

<sup>482</sup> C. Walsh, 'The Advertising and Marketing of Consumer Goods in Eighteenth-Century London' in C. Wischermann and E. Shore (eds.) *Advertising and the European City* (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 79-95; McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, pp. 9-194.

structure has meant that the ‘revolutionary’ extent of consumption during this period may have been somewhat exaggerated. However, this revision has placed a framework around the changes taking place, revealing a system which experienced very few *revolutionary* modifications but was gradually developing and adopting new mechanisms in response to rising supply and demand.

The history of the counties of Northumberland and Durham, however, has remained unchanged by these studies, and continues to be characterised as a solely production-orientated economy. Despite Lorna Weatherill’s evidence of higher than average rates of consumer goods ownership in Durham at the beginning of the eighteenth century, little has been done to explore how items found their way into the economy.<sup>483</sup> Similarly, though Bill Lancaster suggests that one of the first modern department stores appeared in nineteenth-century Newcastle, no work has explored the earlier history of retailing in the region.<sup>484</sup> The evidence of the previous four chapters indicates that increased production of consumer durables and semi-durables was taking place within the area, in addition to the increasing flow of goods into the region from London and abroad, as was the emergence of demand for consumer items. It must likely follow that during this period a more sophisticated retail system, involving the expansion of a network of fixed shops and prices, shop displays and advertising to attract and inform consumers about goods, emerged simultaneous to the growth of consumer industries and the transition of the national retailing structure. This chapter will be tentatively used as an exercise in exploring retailing in Northumberland and Durham. The growth and changing nature of retailing may be symptomatic of the changes in production and availability of consumer goods in the region. The chapter will help assess whether chronological changes in retailing and distribution mirrored developments in the availability of consumer goods in the region. Was Northumberland and Durham participating in the period’s ‘product revolution’ at all levels of production, retail and consumption?

The space available here does not permit a comprehensive study of retailing in the region, for which there is scope for an entire study. This is merely a tentative exploration of retailing, which could be more fruitfully viewed as the emergence of a

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<sup>483</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 25-69.

<sup>484</sup> B. Lancaster, *The Department Store* (London, 1995), pp. 7-8.

distinct sector, not just a link between production and consumption. The sources selected to explore retailing are those which are informative and accessible. Local histories, contemporary accounts, newspaper advertisements, and late eighteenth-century trade directories have been utilised for the evidence of retailing they provide. A more comprehensive study could incorporate more detailed sources, such as a greater number of shopkeepers' inventories, rather than simply descriptive accounts and directories.

It is not the purpose of this study to make a regimented distinction between distribution in terms of retailing and small scale sales or wholesaling of large quantities of goods. Seventeenth and eighteenth century producers and distributors of all kinds sold both wholesale and retail. For example, producers of paper hanging and glassware sold both wholesale and retail meaning they cannot be categorised as simply producers and retailers. The research in this chapter therefore takes a wide view of the distribution system with the understanding that it was complex, changing, and the roles of producers, middlemen and retailers were not as definitively separated as they would later be in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

### ***Structure and Change***

#### *Mid-Seventeenth to Early-Eighteenth Century – a Market-Based System?*

Scarcity of sources makes any quantitative assessment of retailing before 1700 a difficult task and this general lack of source materials, particularly for Northumberland and Durham, hinders those looking to tease out the first threads of 'retail' and shop development in the region. This deficiency in quantitative material could be seen as testament to the absence of any organised retailing structure. However at a regional level qualitative sources can provide vital data, revealing the early market-based structure that facilitated the distribution of goods.

Evidence for an early traditional market system is largely found for the regional capital, Newcastle. As the third largest provincial town in the country by 1700, and the only major urban centre between York and Edinburgh, it acted as the focal point for the whole area, dominating distribution despite the existence of a number of market towns

and the emerging port town, Sunderland.<sup>485</sup> Newcastle's extensive port facilities allowed for a regular flow of goods and people, and its expanding but concentrated population created an 'urban focus' akin to that described by Everitt, which enabled the creation of regional cultures throughout Britain.<sup>486</sup> Map 16 displays the main trading streets (in red) highlighted by William Gray in his *Chorographia, or A Survey of Newcastle upon Tine* (1649). As an appraisal of the town, it is unlikely that Gray identified all trading locations, but the retailing areas he did mention were recognised as the most significant in Newcastle.

The key retail areas, according to Gray, were concentrated in a handful of locations in a primarily market and fair-based system. Regular markets located at Sandhill (nearest the river), Middle Street (to the left of the map) and Pilgrim Street (to the right) provided the provisions of life, whilst two annual fairs – one at Lammas and the other on St. Luke's Day – brought agricultural and manufactured goods to customers. Markets dominated Gray's description of Newcastle's retailing system, emphasising the primary role that they played in distribution of goods, but there was also a scattering of shops throughout the town and it is worth noting that these were located within the primary market areas, confirming a general national pattern.<sup>487</sup>

It was Newcastle's Saturday flesh market that Gray described as 'the greatest market in England' emphasising the essential position that the market held as a distribution facility during the seventeenth century. Justifying this claim he reasoned, it 'is not the populousnesse of the towne that make it, it is the people in the countrey (within ten [twelve] miles of the towne), who makes their provision there'.<sup>488</sup> Evidently, Newcastle, as a centre of exchange and retailing, had a dominant influence on the hinterlands, drawing in producers and customers from surrounding villages to its central market. A twelve mile radius around Newcastle gave the area a direct economic influence as far as North Shields and Tynemouth to the coast in the east, Cramlington in the North, Prudhoe in the West and Chester le Street in the South. The

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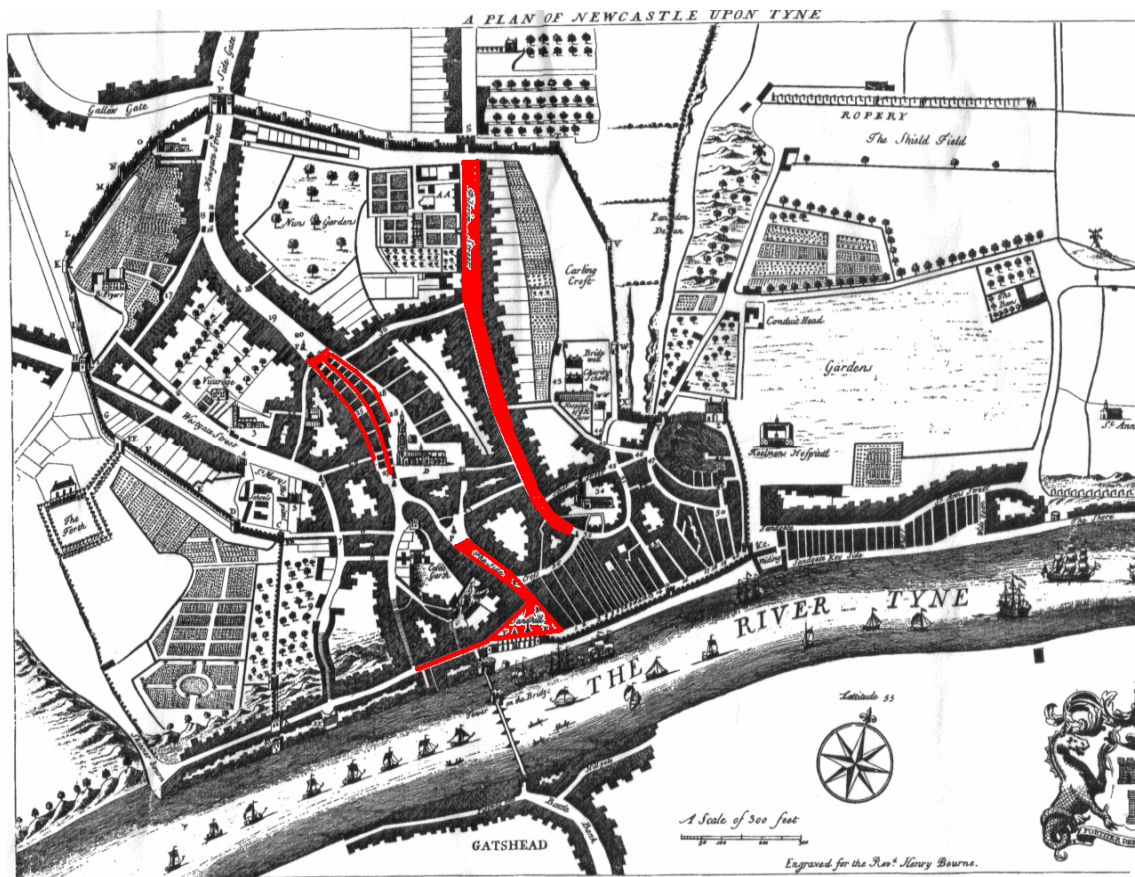
<sup>485</sup> Ellis, 'Regional and County Centres', p. 675.

<sup>486</sup> Everitt, 'Country, County and Town', p. 89-90.

<sup>487</sup> P. Corfield, *The Impact of English Towns, 1700-1800* (Oxford, 1983), p. 19; Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 229.

<sup>488</sup> Gray, *Chorographia*, p. 68.

## Map 16: Shopping Streets of Newcastle, 1649



Source: Gray, *Chorographia* (1649).

markets, especially at Sandhill, also catered more directly for the resident population of Newcastle and were particularly ‘convenient for the merchant adventurers, merchants of coales, and all those that have their living by shipping’ who were concentrated around the Sandhill and the Side.<sup>489</sup> This economic influence again reflects Newcastle’s position as a regional capital even before the mid-seventeenth century, where county and country (meaning the countryside) met together.<sup>490</sup> The prominence of the Side and Sandhill (nearest to the river) as retailing areas reflects again Newcastle’s position as a major port town which depended to a considerable extent on sea trade.

Developments outside of Newcastle before 1700 are more difficult to pinpoint, but it is evident that a network of market towns existed in Durham and Northumberland prior to

<sup>489</sup> Ibid, p. 64.

<sup>490</sup> Everitt, 'Country, County and Town', p. 90.

1700. As ‘predominant concepts of the urban network’ such market towns were invested with essential functions as centres of exchange and distribution further from provincial capitals.<sup>491</sup> D. A. Kirby’s study of population density and land values in County Durham during the mid-seventeenth century suggests that there was an evident hierarchy in the town structure in the area (although Kirby’s focus on County Durham means that the markets of Northumberland such as Hexham, Morpeth and Newcastle are absent from his study).<sup>492</sup> Based on assessment of parishes with the highest yields recorded in the Book of Rates for County Durham during the 1640s and population data, Kirby identifies a number of ‘urban’ areas, including South Shields, Sunderland, Hartlepool, Durham and Gateshead which had ‘recognizable non-agricultural functions as markets and, with the exception of Durham, as ports.’<sup>493</sup>

Newcastle dominated as an urban centre on the north side of the river Tyne, and a number of other important, but less significant areas and market towns, are identified including Darlington, Chester-le-Street, Norton, Gainford, and St. Andrew’s Auckland.<sup>494</sup> Evidently some changes in this hierarchy took place between the mid-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By the eighteenth century a handful of towns which had been of lesser importance in the mid-seventeenth century, Stockton, Barnard Castle and Bishop Auckland, had grown in regional importance, and the significance of those secondary towns highlighted by Kirby, Norton, Gainford and St. Andrew’s Auckland, had diminished. Additionally, Defoe noted on his tour of Great Britain in the 1720s that Stanhope in County Durham had once housed a market but that by the eighteenth century it had been discontinued.<sup>495</sup>

This decline and change in market towns is reinforced by evidence after the mid-seventeenth century. Whilst Kirby identified at least thirteen towns in County Durham of some urban importance during the 1640s, Alan Dyer’s figures for the early 1670s provide a more complete image of the region as a whole and confirm that the urban hierarchy had deteriorated. Dyer listed six markets in Northumberland in 1673 and only

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<sup>491</sup> Corfield, *The Impact of English Towns*, p. 17.

<sup>492</sup> D. A. Kirby, ‘Population Density and Land Values in County Durham during the Mid-Seventeenth Century’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 57 (1972), pp. 83-98.

<sup>493</sup> Kirby, ‘Population Density and Land Values’, p. 89-90.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

<sup>495</sup> Defoe, *A Tour Thro’ the Whole Island*, III, p. 216.

eight in County Durham, suggesting a decline between the 1640s and the 1670s.<sup>496</sup> This deterioration was not exclusive to the counties of Northumberland and Durham. It was part of a more general economic transition taking place throughout the later seventeenth century. A significant decay of trade which preoccupied debate during the period was seen to manifest itself in the decline of market towns. The extent of this decay made it a national phenomenon and Everitt estimates that between the medieval and early modern period there was a dramatic decrease in markets within the country, perhaps as much as 50 per cent. For Clark this reduction of lesser market centres to village status was an important aspect, but only one part, of the reworking of town and country relations which occurred during the period.<sup>497</sup>

Taken from a larger geographical area in the region, Dyer's figures also contribute to a regional understanding of the importance of market towns in the distribution network by revealing few market towns directly around Newcastle between 1600 and 1700. This 'paucity' of market towns is accounted for by claiming the North as economically backwards, scant in population and riddled with large areas of upland waste.<sup>498</sup> Whilst aspects of this explanation may be accurate, it is also possible that the dominance of Newcastle as a distribution centre may have hindered the growth of market towns within its immediate environs. William Gray's observation concerning the area from which Newcastle's Saturday market drew its buyers and sellers reinforces this point. It is unsurprising that the neighbouring areas sported few market towns when the pull of the regional capital was so strong and the economic benefits of trading and buying there were accordingly considerable. If Newcastle's markets drew in customers from a surrounding area of ten or twelve miles it is unsurprising that the nearest market towns were at a considerable distance from the provincial centre – Hexham was over twenty miles from Newcastle, Morpeth approximately sixteen miles away and Sunderland was around thirteen miles away and supporting its own growing population.

Newcastle's importance as a distribution centre grew during the later seventeenth century as the structure of retailing in the town and region began to change and the

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<sup>496</sup> A. Dyer, 'Small Market Towns 1540-1700' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain II 1540-1840* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 430-31.

<sup>497</sup> Everitt, 'Country, County and Town', p. 90; Clark, 'Introduction' in Clark (ed.) *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns*, p. 21.

<sup>498</sup> Dyer, 'Small Market Towns', p. 426, 429.

regional population expanded. The hesitant growth, even decline, in the number of market towns resulted in few large distribution centres near Newcastle, reinforcing its key position in Northumberland and County Durham. Those market towns in existence were distributed relatively evenly and were most likely connected by a network of chapmen and hawkers who formed an essential part of the distribution network. Although chapmen supplemented the market system, they were also charged with 'utterly impair[ing] the wholesale trade of all the cities and market towns in England'.<sup>499</sup> These accusations of chapmen and hawkers as crippling to trade led to an act for the licensing of chapmen, analysed most prominently by Margaret Spufford, which has been useful in highlighting the network of men and women, who worked throughout the country, and were entwined in the distribution of goods.<sup>500</sup>

The act ensured that each individual trading outside of a market or fair carried a license, and Spufford's figures for chapmen licensed in 1697-98 reveal that in Northumberland and Durham they were geographically concentrated with fifty-four registered for the Newcastle district and much fewer recorded for the wider region.<sup>501</sup> The next largest group of registered chapmen in the region were between five and nine recorded further north in Northumberland, possibly at Alnwick. After these the largest concentrations were outside of Northumberland and Durham near Whitby and at Kendal. The chapmen registered for Newcastle clearly served a wide expanse of the region and very possibly worked over the Pennines into Cumbria. The distinct lack of horses licensed to these chapmen in 1697-8 indicates that they mostly traded on foot, serving the more dispersed and sparsely inhabited regions of Northumberland, Durham and Cumbria with goods.<sup>502</sup>

Although their recorded location was geographically concentrated, chapmen could distribute their goods over vast areas and they undoubtedly played an essential role in dispersing goods to the backwaters of Northumberland and County Durham where the nearest market town could be some considerable distance. The goods that such men and women carried could range from small items of cloth, trinkets and buttons, to larger items such as pots, pans and even furniture. According to Spufford the most common item stocked in chapmen's shops in Newcastle was ironmongery goods, which included

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<sup>499</sup> J. Thirsk and J. Cooper, *Seventeenth-Century Economic Documents* (Oxford, 1972), p. 393.

<sup>500</sup> M. Spufford, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England* (London, 1984).

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>502</sup> For maps of chapmen distribution see Spufford, *The Great Reclothing*, p. 15, 19.

spurs, stirrup irons, knives and scissors.<sup>503</sup> The value of goods stocked by chapmen in the region could also vary greatly, suggesting that they catered for a variety of economic conditions. For example, prosperous Robert Carr died worth £247 in Newcastle in 1677, a large percentage of his stock being haberdashery including expensive black hoods of various prices. At the other end of the economic spectrum, William Mackerell, also of Newcastle, had ninety-nine pairs of gloves in stock worth less than £30 in total.<sup>504</sup> Evidence suggests a close connection between shopkeepers, producer and chapmen whereby the latter could be stocked from local outlets. For example, in October 1711 a local shopkeeper informed the population that he sold necklaces at his shop ‘where Country Chapmen may be fitted Cheaper than ordinary’. Later in the century Paul Jackson, a potter from Gateshead, advertised that ‘Hawkers from Northumberland and Cumberland may be supplied at his shop.’<sup>505</sup> Chapmen successfully supplemented the goods distribution system carrying both smaller trinkets and larger items such as pots, earthenware and stools.

By the end of the seventeenth century significant changes had taken place in distribution facilities within the region with the decline of some market towns, the continued growth of distribution in Newcastle and the very apparent role of chapmen. These changes reflected prevailing trends in national retailing and distribution. Shops had taken on a new importance nationally, in Northumberland and Durham, and most evidently in Newcastle. Celia Fiennes on her 1690s tour of England was delighted by the town’s Saturday market, previously glorified by Gray, ‘wch is Like a ffaire for all sorts of provision, and good and very Cheape’.<sup>506</sup> Fiennes was impressed by what she saw available there, listing ‘a quarter of Lamb ffor 3d. and 2d. a piece: good Large poultry. Here is Leather, Woollen and Linnen and all sorts of stands for baubles’.<sup>507</sup> Evidently, the market and fair continued to play an essential role, however it was the modernism of Newcastle’s shops that caught her imagination. She enthused, they ‘are good and are of Distinct trades, not selling many things in one shop as is ye Custom in most Country towns and Cittys’.<sup>508</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> Ibid, p. 64.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid, p. 94, 99.

<sup>505</sup> NC, 3 October 1711; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 12 August 1775.

<sup>506</sup> Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle*, p. 177.

<sup>507</sup> Ibid.

<sup>508</sup> Ibid.

Such commentary is ammunition for analysts of post-eighteenth century retailing, for example Corrigan who has viewed such ultra-specialisation as primitive in comparison to the choice available in department stores, but Fiennes' comment should be considered in the context of seventeenth-century discourse.<sup>509</sup> Debate concerning the decay of trade dominated later seventeenth century dialogue, and one solution of 1681 strongly advocated by contemporaries was that in all cities and market towns 'shopkeepers do all they can at the first settling of trades to distinguish the same ... one from another'.<sup>510</sup> Fiennes' description indicates that Newcastle, like London and other major cities, had already made moves towards specialisation. Having such shops separated Newcastle from the 'custom' of county towns and other cities, addressed a key issue highlighted in the decay of trade debate, and suggests that, as Stobart and Hann have stressed, specialisation did not necessarily mean retailers were 'primitive or hidebound', especially in the view of contemporaries.<sup>511</sup> Evidence from the few detailed probate inventories emphasises the geographical spread of this specialisation of shops outwards from the provincial capital that had so impressed Fiennes. The inventory of Thomas Ayre, a mercer from Gateshead, drawn up on the 12 December 1721, for example, listed up to eleven pages of cloths and ribbons of differing sizes and varieties, amounting to £515 5s. 3 ½d.<sup>512</sup> Although Ayre's business was one selling particular wares, he provided a huge variety and choice.

Sources for enumerating shopkeepers are unavailable for the early eighteenth century. However Henry Bourne provides some useful comments in his *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1736) which enables a tracking of the foremost trading areas. The main retailing locations (Map 17) do not indicate a dramatic organisational transition from 1649. Those areas which Gray identified as important places of exchange remained. The markets around Middle Street retained their prominence and the street continued 'as it was in *Grey's* Time, where all Sort of Artificers have Shops and Houses'. The Quayside remained an area for traders and merchants.<sup>513</sup> As Map 16 displays, the Quayside and the streets running down from the centre of the town to join it were the most important locations. This pattern is unsurprising. As with any port

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<sup>509</sup> Corrigan, *The Sociology of Consumption*, p. 52.

<sup>510</sup> Thirsk and Cooper, *Seventeenth Century Economic Documents*, p. 396.

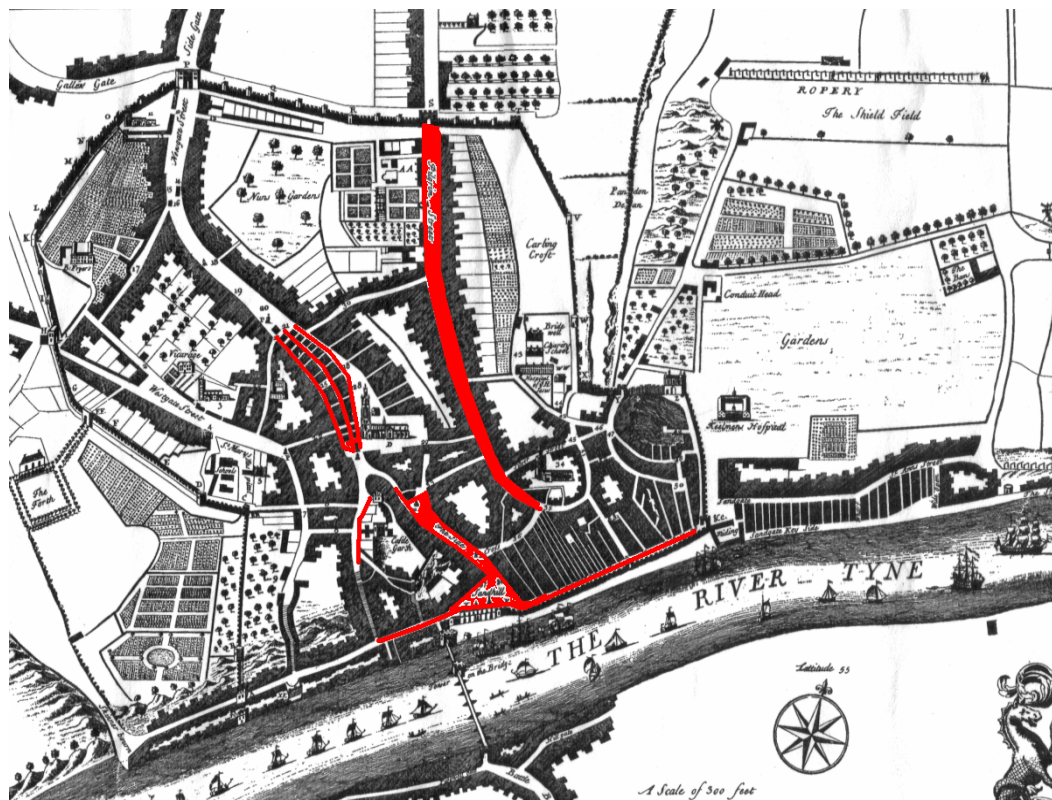
<sup>511</sup> Stobart and Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?', p. 173.

<sup>512</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1721/A5/1-8.

<sup>513</sup> Bourne, *The History of Newcastle*, p. 53, 133.

town, the Quayside was vital and many businesses were fed directly from the trade of the river Tyne. A similar pattern is presented by Stobart and Hann who described the main shopping streets of Liverpool in the 1760s as those that ran down towards St. George's Dock, or perpendicular to the Old Dock.<sup>514</sup> Indeed, both Newcastle and Liverpool, alongside Bristol, were part of a handful of ports and commercial locations rapidly expanding. Not only did the Quayside provide immediate access to goods imported into the town which arrived by ship on the river Tyne, but many local manufacturers established their works further along the Quayside making transportation easier, and thus premises on the busy trading street logical.

**Map 17: Shopping Streets in Newcastle, 1736**



Source: H. Bourne, *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1736).

Bourne's further descriptions of the facilities available do suggest that gradual development was occurring. By early eighteenth century a number of new trading areas had developed. The area around Castle Yard had arisen as a district for trade and

<sup>514</sup> Stobart and Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?', p. 177.

Bourne commented, '[a]t present there are a good many Shops and Houses ... in and about it.'<sup>515</sup> The Side (the street leading down towards the river) was 'from the one end to the other fill'd with Shops of Merchants, Goldsmiths, Milliners, Upholsterers, &c' and led to the Quayside which was already a significant exchange and retail area.<sup>516</sup>

Intertwined with Newcastle's trading strength through the Tyne port was an expansion of population which placed demand upon the retailing and distribution structure and most likely encouraged an extension in retailing areas and density of shops. From 1700 onwards the counties of Durham and Northumberland supported an above average urban population of around 61 per cent, with the continuing expansion of Newcastle and an impressive growth of Sunderland.<sup>517</sup> If anything, this urban growth, especially around the ports of Newcastle and Sunderland, encouraged the further development of retailing within those towns and other concentrated urbanising areas.

### ***1750 Onwards – a Shop-Based System?***

Contemporaries seemed clear by the mid-eighteenth century that the North was well provided for by its distribution system, especially by shops. Richard Pocock commented in a letter to his sister in 1760 that Northumberland, Durham, Westmorland and parts of Cumberland had 'great shops of all kinds'.<sup>518</sup> However, contrary to this contemporary opinion, the first useful quantitative source, the 1759 Excise Enumeration of retail shops analysed by Mui and Mui, does not suggest that the region was well-provisioned in comparison to national standards. According to Mui and Mui's analysis, Durham and Northumberland had the highest ratio of population to shops in England, with 82 people to every shop.<sup>519</sup> This suggested to Mui and Mui that the North 'lacked an appropriate structure and thus lagged behind the rest of the country in the number and types of shops.'<sup>520</sup> How can we account for this evidence which sits awkwardly beside contemporary commentary and probate inventory evidence from the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries that suggest a coherent distribution system and advanced consumption?

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<sup>515</sup> Bourne, *History of Newcastle*, p. 121.

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>517</sup> J. Langton, 'Urban Growth and Economic Change: From the Late Seventeenth Century to 1841' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain II 1540-1840* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 464, 473.

<sup>518</sup> Pocock cited in Weathrill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 52.

<sup>519</sup> Mui and Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping*, p. 296.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

The sparsely inhabited nature of the area, highlighted by Mui and Mui, may have discouraged retail development, but this explanation alone is rather one-dimensional. Northumberland and County Durham covered large geographical areas, had few prominent cities, a reduced number of market towns, and relatively dispersed populations. According to comparative evidence from the Durham Hearth Tax returns, a large proportion of northerners were relatively poorer than those in southern counties.<sup>521</sup> These factors undoubtedly inhibited development. However, the concentration of retailing and population in Newcastle and along the Tyne may also have hindered region-wide growth as it may have done in the previous century when there was a distinct lack of market towns within the immediate vicinity of Newcastle. Gray had written over a hundred years earlier that people travelled from the surrounding area to shop in Newcastle. There is no reason to assume that this had changed dramatically, especially in light of Newcastle's continued economic and demographic growth, infrastructure and communication improvements.

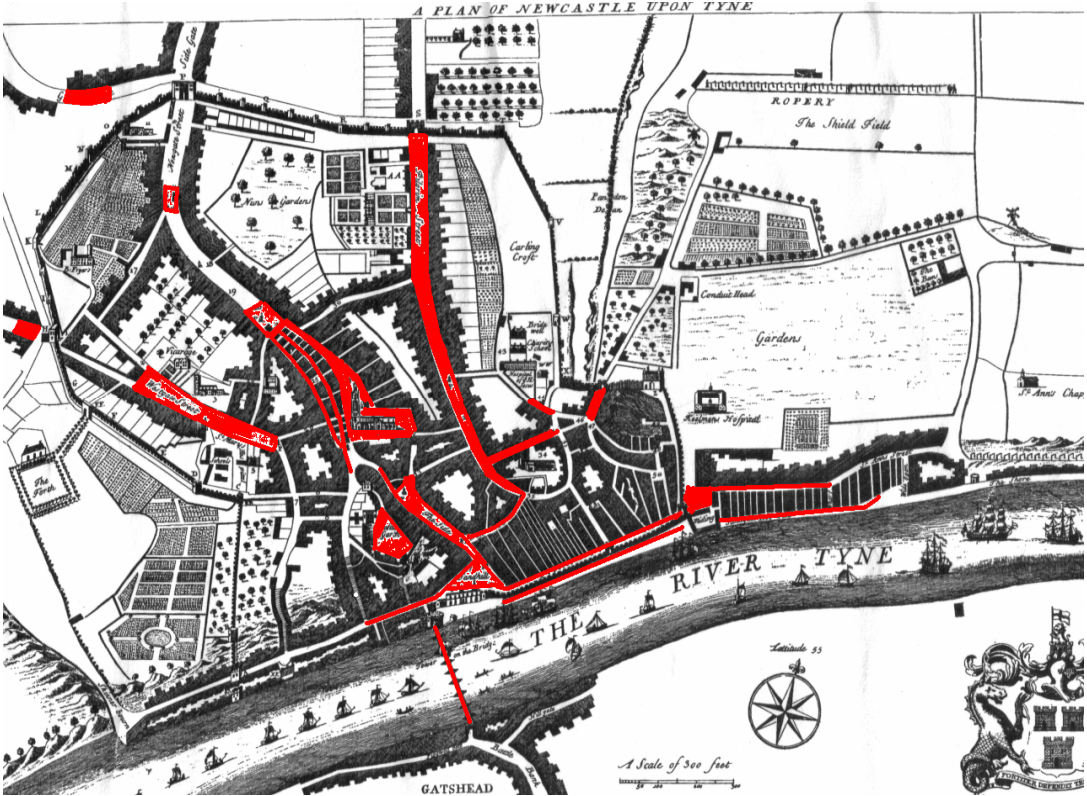
The use of eighteenth-century trade directories as a source for understanding distribution and retail in particular localities has previously been open to considerable criticism due to the high risk of errors and inaccuracies. The plagiaristic nature of eighteenth-century directories has been positively asserted by a number of historians, meaning they should be approached with caution when viewed as accurate catalogues of eighteenth-century trade and retailing.<sup>522</sup> Significantly they are described as 'trade' and not 'retail' directories, again emphasising the complex nature of trade and retailing during the eighteenth century, and the fact that the two were not necessarily viewed as separate. Furthermore, different trade directories were created with differing intentions. It is by no means certain that compilers were intending to list all traders and retailers in a certain town or area. Inaccuracies aside, they provide a useful baseline for numbers of tradesmen and retailers and their location within towns.

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<sup>521</sup> Parkinson (ed.) *County Durham Hearth Tax*, p. xciii.

<sup>522</sup> Walton, 'Trades and Professions in Late Eighteenth-Century England', p. 343.

### Map 18: Shopping Streets in Newcastle, 1778



Source: W. Whitehead, *First Newcastle Directory* (1778).

William Whitehead's *First Newcastle Directory* (1778), the first directory in existence covering the area of Newcastle, indicates that the provincial capital had expanded significantly as a distribution centre, despite the region-wide ratio of population to shops in the late 1750s. The directory records 1,092 traders, producer-retailers, and retailers of goods and services in Newcastle. This evidence does suggest that whilst the retailing system had been in transition for a century in response to the growth of consumer goods and their availability, this change was possibly more exaggerated after 1750. Although there are no earlier figures for comparison, the amount of streets these retailers and wholesalers inhabited when compared with the earlier evidence does suggest the retailing sector was expanding.

Map 18 displays the retail streets in Newcastle as identified by a survey of Whitehead's *Directory*. The map indicates that retailing had grown considerably, and indeed new

retail streets had developed further from the main areas. However, by looking at a breakdown of the number of trading premises per street, displayed on Table 13, it is evident that distribution was still largely concentrated in a handful of locations.

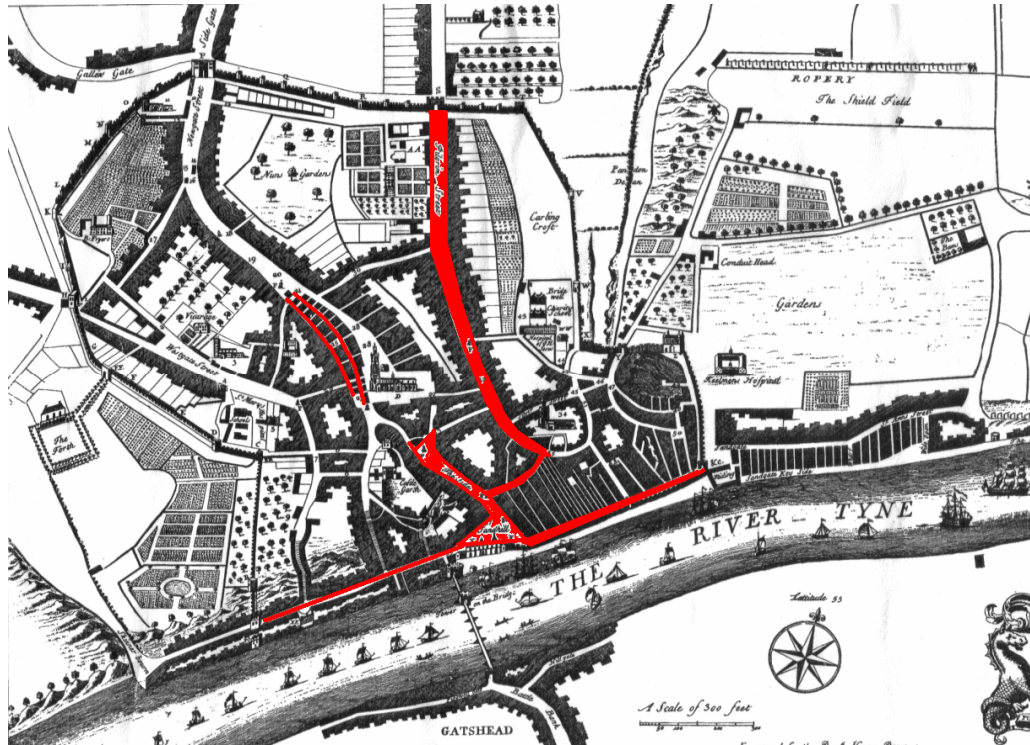
**Table 13: Shopping Streets in Newcastle, 1778**

Tradesmen's Premises per Street	No. of Streets with this no. of Premises
1-9	77
10-19	12
20-29	2
30-39	4
40-49	5
50-59	0
60-69	1
70-79	1
80+	1

Source: Whitehead's *First Newcastle Directory* (1778).

A large number of streets housed only a handful of premises, whilst three particular streets had more than 60 premises each. Map 19 displays the retail streets occurring with more than 40 premises. When displayed in map form it is clear that the *main* retailing areas had changed little since 1649.

### Map 19: Main shopping streets in Newcastle, 1778



Source: Whitehead's, *First Newcastle Directory* (1778).

The principal difference between facilities in 1649 and those in 1778 was not the area that they covered, but the growth of shops. The areas that had been dominated by markets were now additionally crowded with shops. Town histories published in the early nineteenth century confirm that Newcastle's markets and fairs continued to play an important role during the later eighteenth century, but fixed shop trading had become one of the primary forms of distribution.

Development in the traditional market areas was logical, as evidence from eighteenth-century shopkeeper, William Stout, testifies. In his autobiography Stout described how his business benefited from passing additional trade on fair and market days to the extent that he received extra help in his shop from his sister.<sup>523</sup> Markets and shops were

<sup>523</sup> J. D. Marshall (ed.), *The Autobiography of William Stout of Lancaster, 1665-1752* (Manchester, 1967), p. 24, 90, 151.

tied in shopping streets for reasons of economic practicality. Presumably the benefits of a fair-side location could also be experienced on market days which encouraged regular customers from the town and surrounding region. A fixed shop or business premises on a busy market street could be as prime a location as the Quayside, benefitting from passing trade, and according to Morrison '[t]he most valuable tenements in any town were clustered around the market place'.<sup>524</sup>

In response to the growing importance of shopping as a leisure activity certain streets within the provincial capital took on a specialist nature, attracting retailers and traders whose products or services embodied specific polite, educated and sociable connotations.<sup>525</sup> For example, Pilgrim Street, which Bourne had earlier described as hosting 'the Shops of Artificers, and the Houses either chiefly Coffee-houses or Taverns, or Ale-houses', had by 1778 attracted an air of politeness as a shopping and residential area. The street had attracted a number of professionals and craftsmen, including seven attorneys at law, one clock maker, one confectionary dealer, one goldsmith and jeweller, three grocers and tea-dealers, and various school masters, physicians and even a pastry school. It was not simply a retailing area but offered a range of goods and services, emphasising the 'respectability' of the street. The continued growth of Pilgrim Street from the early eighteenth-century into a polite, refined district was largely connected with the development of the town as a polite provincial city and the expansion of leisure facilities for the more refined. Testament to this is the development of shopping and leisure facilities on Westgate Street. Bourne says little of the area in the early eighteenth century, however by 1778 it was home to more than twenty premises and its traders and retailers mirrored those registered on Pilgrim Street.

### ***Newcastle: a Regional Distribution Centre?***

With the exception of a network of chapmen who may have worked within and outside of the region, and a range of market towns throughout Northumberland and Durham, the evidence presented suggests that it was largely in Newcastle that distribution facilities

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<sup>524</sup> K. A. Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping* (London, 2003), p. 19; Shamma, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 229; J. de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 169; Corfield, *The Impact of English Towns*, p. 19.

<sup>525</sup> Stobart, 'Shopping Streets as Social Space', pp. 3-21; Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance*, pp. 60-71.

were centred and most developed. We can only infer that the number of shops recorded in the Excise Enumeration figures represents how concentrated retailing was within Newcastle, but data towards the end of the period indicates the town's regional position more definitely and allows for some comparison between the provincial capital and other urban areas or market towns. Graph 2, a breakdown of percentages of traders and retailers from Northumberland and Durham's towns drawn up from William Bailey's 1781 *Northern Directory*, emphasises Newcastle's position, and reveals a visible hierarchy dominated by the major port towns Newcastle and Sunderland.<sup>526</sup> The important administration centre Durham (although Durham's figures are buoyed by the inclusion of its 'neighbours' Bishop Auckland, Darlington and Hartlepool in Bailey's assessment) and smaller port town of Stockton fell some way behind, followed by other larger market towns. Sunderland, a town whose population and trade had risen steadily during the course of the eighteenth century, was the nearest rival town, but unsurprisingly given its trade function and concentrated urban population, Newcastle remained dominant. The other towns of consequence each had less than a third of Newcastle's traders. Such data reinforces the decline of market towns which had taken place in the mid-seventeenth century, and the continued dwarfing of smaller settlements by larger major towns that existed as regional capitals and participated in the national and even international trading market.<sup>527</sup>

Newcastle's position developed out of its long history, industrial and manufacturing developments, but also its transition into a polite and commercial centre. Outside of Newcastle shops had also gained precedence, most probably under the pressure of region-wide demographic growth which was intensified in particular urban and growing industrial areas. Sunderland was an important example of this. Already noted, in the early sixteenth century Lord Dacre had described the diocese of Durham with Sunderland as 'an economic back-water, a savage and infertile country', in which only Newcastle's merchants 'constituted a single element of civilization.'<sup>528</sup>

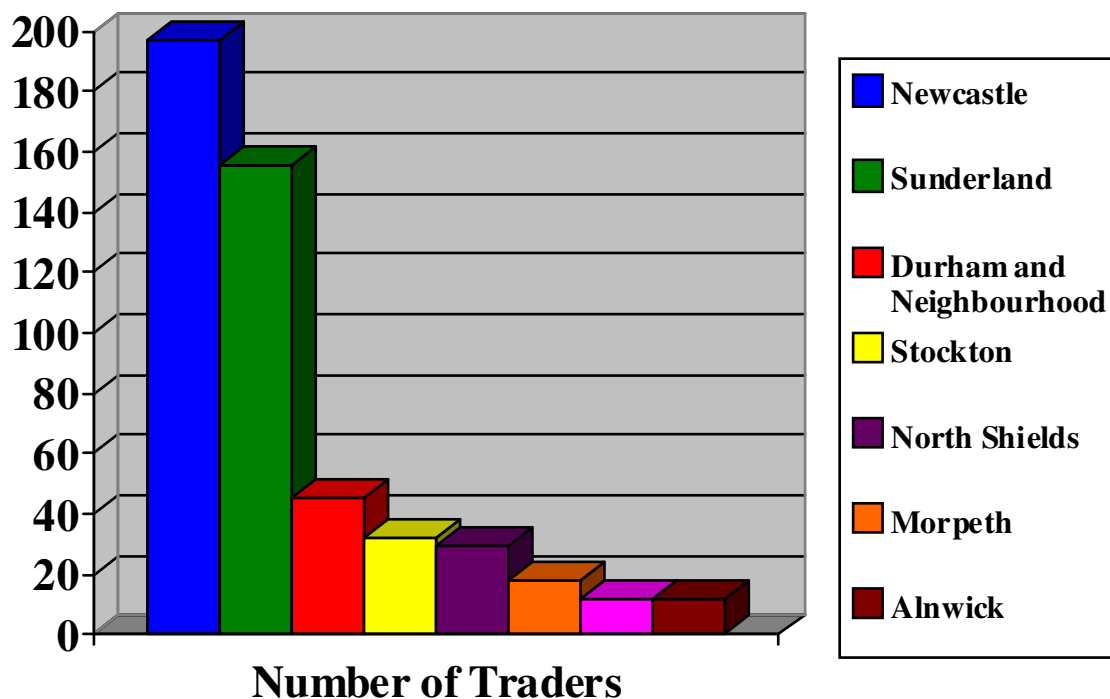
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<sup>526</sup> The same caution should be shown of William Bailey's *Northern Directory* as with any other directory, however the criteria used by Bailey to draw up his lists of traders and retailers may also have been more significantly limited. For example Bailey's list, published only three years after Whitehead's *First Newcastle Directory*, records less than 200 entries for Newcastle, whilst Whitehead records more than 1000.

<sup>527</sup> P. Clark, 'Small Towns 1700-1840' in P. Clark (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain II 1540-1840* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 738-740.

<sup>528</sup> Lord Dacre cited in. Dodds, *A History of Sunderland*, p. 23.

**Graph 2: Retailers and Traders in Northumberland and Durham Towns, 1781.**



Source: W. Bailey, *Northern Directory* (1781).

However by the early eighteenth century, Sunderland in particular was beginning to develop in terms of population, trade and industry. By the 1720s Defoe considered Sunderland to be ‘a well-built, thriving, and populous Town, inhabited by many rich Merchants and Tradesmen’.<sup>529</sup> Sunderland continued to expand during the century. Fig. 19 which shows an excerpt from Rain’s *Eye Plan of Sunderland* displays the extent to which Sunderland’s streets were congested with traders, industry and shops by the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The expert focuses on the area of Low Street and a parallel street both running perpendicular to the river Wear and harbour facilities, mirroring the development of shops which took place along the Quayside in Newcastle.

<sup>529</sup> Defoe, *A Tour Thro the Whole Island*, III, p. 217.

**Fig. 19: Excerpt from Rain's *Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth***

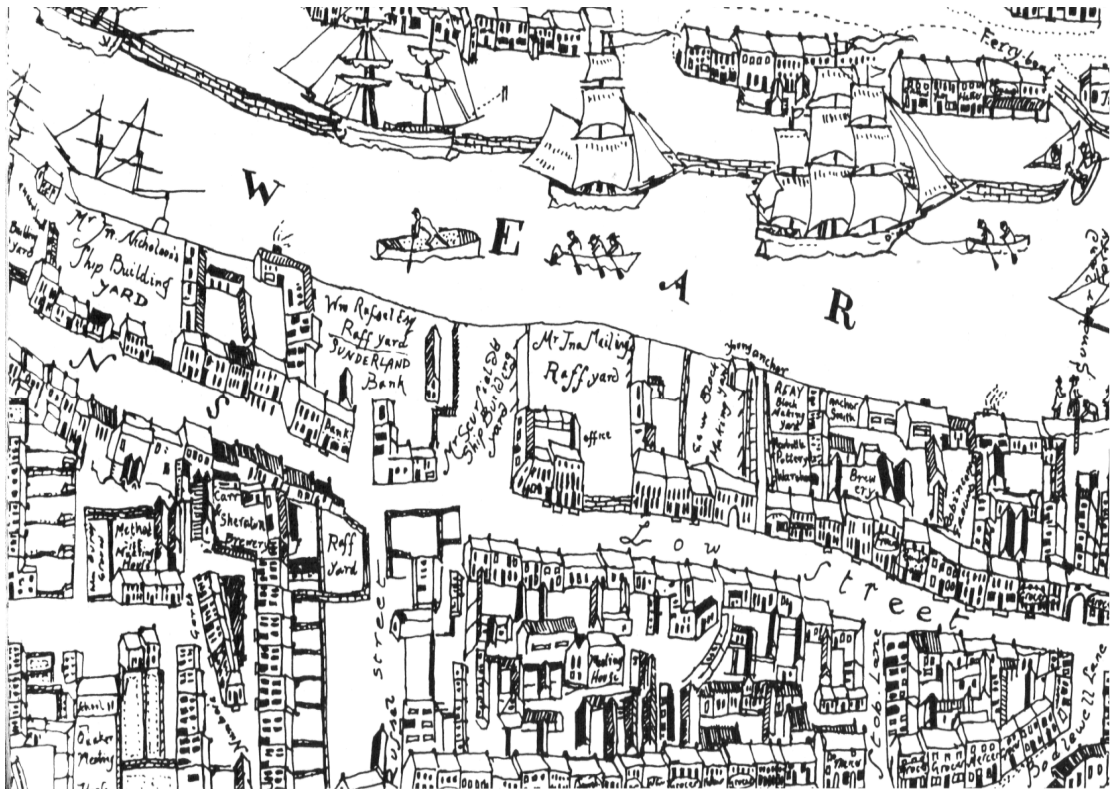


Table 14 lists tradesmen and retailers recorded in William Whitehead's 1778 *Directory* who worked in 157 trades, providing one of the most extensive eighteenth-century accounts of the provincial capital that can be compared to neighbouring towns. The table reveals a wide variety of retailers, traders and services, some of which were recorded in considerable numbers, befitting Newcastle's position as the centre of regional retailing and distribution.

**Table 14: Breakdown of all Traders, Retailers and Producers listed in Whitehead's  
First Newcastle Directory, 1778**

Trade/Occupation	Number	Trade/Occupation	Number	Trade/Occupation	Number
Anchor Smiths	2	Appraisers and Auctioneers	7	Assay Master	1
Attorneys at Law	31	Bacon Dealers	7	Baker	16
Ballist Office	1	Banks	3	Beadles of Parishes	3
Bellman	1	Boarding School	1	Book-binders	7
Booksellers and Stationers	7	Blacksmiths and Farriers	10	Brass-founders	1
Breeches-makers	10	Brewers	4	Bricklayers	6
Brokers, and Ship-insurers	2	Brush-makers	2	Butchers	55
Butter-merchants	8	Cabinet-makers and carpenters	31	Carvers and Gilders	3
Cart-wright	4	Chairmen	6	Cheese Ware-house	3
Cheese Mongers	21	China Shops	2	Circulating Libraries	3
Clergy-men	13	Clock-makers	12	Coach-makers	2
Coffee and Punch Houses	5	Comb-makers	1	Confectionary Dealers	4
Coopers	16	Cork-cutters	5	Corn Merchants	7
Curriers	5	Cutler's and Surgeon's Instrument makers	3	Dancing Schools	2
Dispensary Public	1	Drawing School	1	Druggists	4
Dyers	8	Engravers and Plate Printers	2	Engines for extinguishing Fire	1
Excise Office	1	Fitters' Office	20	Flax Dressers	18
Flour Merchants	6	Flour Shops	21	Founderies	2
Fringe Makers	3	Fruit Dealers	2	Furrier	1
Gardeners	18	Glass Warehouses	2	Glass Plate Polishers and silverers	3
Glass Grinders, and Flowerers	2	Glaziers	7	Goldsmiths and Jewellers	9
Grocers and Tea-dealers	36	Hackney Horse keepers	15	Hackney Chaises	9
Hard-ware Shops	13	Hatters	16	Hearses and Coaches	3
Heckle-maker	1	Hopp merchants	8	Hosiers	6
Insurance Office from Fire	3	Iron-mongers	7	Leather Cutters	6
Linen Drapers	22	Lottery Offices	2	Maltsters	11
Manchester ware-houses	2	Masons	3	Mast and Block Maker	1
Mill-wrights	4	Milliners	9	Mineral Water Ware-house	1
Musical Instrument makers	2	Music and Instrument Dealers	5	Musicians	4
Mustard Makers	4	Net maker	1	Notary Public	5
Organists	4	Painters	3	Palls and Cloaks	6
Paper Ware-	5	Parish Clerks	4		

houses					
Pastry Schools	3	Patten Makers	3	Paviors	9
Peruke Makers	34	Permit Office	1	Perfume Dealers	3
Pewterers	2	Physicians	5	Pilots	17
Plumbers	5	Post Offices	1	Potters	3
Printing Offices	4	Sadlers	9	Raff Yards	6
Rope-makers	4	Sawyers	3	Sail-makers	3
Salt Offices	3	Sealing-wax Manufactory	1	School Masters	27
Seed and Nursery- men	2	Silk Mercers	2	Ship-wrights	9
Shoe-makers	31	Whitesmiths	15	Skinners	2
Slaters	7	Stamp Office	1	Soap-makers	3
Spirit dealers	12	Stocking Weavers	1	Starch Factory	1
Stay-makers	9	Surrogate for granting marriage licenses	1	Sugar-houses	2
Surgeons	15	Tanners	7	Surveyers	2
Tallow Chandlers	12	Tea Dealers	3	Tarr merchants	2
Taylors	50	Tool-makers	1	Thread makers	1
Tobacconists	6	Turners	5	Toy shops	2
Tin-plate workers and Braziers	8	Water-pump Makers	5	Upholsterers	7
Water Office	1	Wharfingers	7	Watch Chrystal Factory	1
Weavers	11	Wire Workers	3	Whip-makers	2
Wine merchants	8	Wheel wrights	1	Wool-combers	3
Woolen-drapers	18	-	-	-	-

Source: Whitehead, *First Newcastle Directory* (1778)

The account of Sunderland's traders provided in Peter Barfoot and John Wilkes *Universal British Directory* (1798) indicates a similar occupational and trading composition to that exhibited in Newcastle. Table 15 lists traders, producers and retailers listed for Sunderland in 1798 in the *Universal British Directory*.

Whilst similar to Newcastle in terms of occupation and trade, it is clear that Sunderland was a more limited distribution centre, even at the end of the eighteenth century. The town hosted a variety of traders, but fewer in numbers than those at Newcastle, and in terms of variety, Sunderland could not compete with the regional capital. Where retailing expansion in Newcastle had led to the development of some

**Table 15: Producer, Traders and Retailers in Sunderland, 1798**

Occupation	Number	Occupation	Number
Coal Fitter	27	Clog and pattern maker	1
Grocer	17	Sailcloth maker	2
Watchmaker	4	Blockmaker	4
Sailmaker	9	Painter	2
Hairdresser	6	Stationer	1
Shoemaker	9	Weaver	1
Earthenware dealer	3	Hat maker	2
Draper	2	Tobacconist	1
Butcher	13	Printer	1
Leather seller	3	Whitesmith	1
Iron monger	4	Cooper	2
Rope maker	2	Linen draper	1
Gun maker	1	Ship chandler	1
Joiner	2	Wharfinger	1
Miller	1	Tanner	1
Baker	4	Insurance Broker	1
Boat builder	3	Post Master	1
Victualler	10	Chandler	1
Brewer and flour merchant	1	Chandler and wine merchant	1
Brewer and victualler	1	Dyer	1
Mercer and draper	9	Flour Dealer	1
Glazier and painter	5	Salt office	1
Limner	1	Blacksmith	1
Grocer and Chandler	2	Smith and Farrier	1
Auctioneer and Victualler	1	Pawn broker	1
Milliners	5	Grocer and merchant	1
Slop seller	6	Upholsterer	1
Brewers	4	Brickmaker	1
Spirit dealer	9	Taylor	3
Dealer in ropes	1	Engineer	1
Grocer and Baker	1	Sadler	2
Anchor-smith	2	Goldsmith	1
Brazier	2	Bookbinder	1
Raff merchant	1	Customs house Coffee House	1
Printer and bookseller	1	Undertaker	1
Jeweller	1	Staymaker	1
Ship builders	1	Gardener	1
Mason	1	Cabinet makers	6

Source: P. Barfoot and J. Wilkes, *Universal British Directory* (London, 1798), pp. 512-516.

specialist streets which housed polite and fashionable services and trades, this was yet to take place in Sunderland. According to the *Universal British Directory* Sunderland was well provisioned, but even at the end of the century this was ‘from a very plentiful market, held here every Friday’. On the one hand this suggests that compared to Newcastle, Sunderland was still relatively restricted in terms of distribution facilities,

but it may also indicate that even at the end of the eighteenth century markets continued to play an important role outside of regional capitals regardless of the growth of shops. The fair, however, was evidently falling in popularity and whilst Sunderland did have two fairs, by the end of the century they were ‘of little consequence, the principal commodities being toys.’<sup>530</sup> Although growing, Sunderland could not compete with the retailing and distribution centre of Newcastle, which had larger concentrations of gentry, urban population, manufacturing, and still had a larger proportion of sea trade than its neighbouring port.

Qualitative material brings further detail to the development of the commercial aspect of retailing, particularly with regard to Newcastle. Although the value of newspaper advertisements is limited in quantitative terms, they can provide a useful qualitative account of the physical location and movement of retailers and traders. As a commercial and trading centre, Newcastle attracted customers to its markets and shops, but the growing concentration of retailing in the town encouraged many producers to keep premises solely for retail in addition to their manufacturing units where they produced and vended their goods.

Paul Jackson, a potter who produced goods at his manufactory on Gateshead Common (located south of the river Tyne), advertised that he sold earthenware ‘at his shop on the quayside’ and also made and sold ‘at his factory on Gateshead Common’.<sup>531</sup> Likewise, the potter John Warburton produced and sold from his manufactory at Carr’s Hill, Gateshead, and sold from ‘his shop on the Keyside’.<sup>532</sup> The actions of Jackson and Warburton, selling wares from their manufactories and shops on the Quayside, reveal a strong current of business sense. They felt their businesses could benefit from location on one of Newcastle’s busiest trading streets. With the Quayside merely across the river from their manufactories, transportation of products to their shops would be relatively uncomplicated.

Other businesses went to greater lengths to utilise the advantages of a Newcastle outlet, such as James Davenport, a paper-hanging printer and retailer. On the 9 March 1745

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<sup>530</sup> P. Barfoot and J. Wilkes, *Universal British Directory* (London, 1798), p. 511.

<sup>531</sup> *NJ*, 4 Dec 1773.

<sup>532</sup> *NC*, 14 May 1774.

Davenport announced that he sold ‘Several sorts of PAPER for Room-Hangings, wholesale or retail, as good and as cheap as London’ from his shop at North Shields, a small town by the coast. By June in the same year, Davenport advertised that he also sold ‘at Mr James Steven’s at the Shop in the Flesh-market [Newcastle]’, suggesting that he was testing the extent of the Newcastle market. By 1771 his manufactory had moved to a central position at St. Nicholas’ Church Yard in Newcastle, which had become a centre of paper-printing and engraving.<sup>533</sup> From the 1770s onwards, Davenport worked outwards into the region from his Newcastle base making his designs and samples accessible throughout Northumberland and Durham. He advertised on the 25 April 1772 that: ‘patterns may be seen at Mr Val. Robinson’s, the Joiner’s Arms, Claypeth, Durham; and at Mrs Margaret Marshall’s, in North Shields.’<sup>534</sup> The extent to which Davenport was prepared to go in adopting a prime location and promoting his business is an untypical example. The majority appear to have lacked either the funds or inclination to adopt central business premises, vigorous advertising *and* distribution techniques, but the desire to strive for a Newcastle retail location was more common, as the examples of Warburton and Jackson suggest.

The expansion of retailing in Newcastle was partially based on the movement of retailers from other towns in the region, such as Durham, North Shields and Gateshead, to the provincial capital. Davenport was one example but William Beilby, silver engraver and father of enameller William, also moved from Durham to Newcastle during this period. However, producer/retailers and retailers were also drawn to Newcastle from further markets by the potential of brisk business and increasing demand in the North. A number of retailers from London also advertised that they had moved to the Newcastle. In 1777 Patrick Mitchell, a looking glass manufacturer from London, saw fit to test his chances in Newcastle setting up business on Silver Street.<sup>535</sup> It is not evident how extensive or successful these traders were. The fact that they needed to advertise their presence to the local market through Newcastle’s newspapers suggests it may have been difficult for an unknown retailer to attract business in a new market, especially in competitive sectors such as glass manufacture. This movement

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<sup>533</sup> *NC*, 9 March 1745; *NJ*, 29 June 1745; *NC*, 18 May 1771.

<sup>534</sup> *NC*, 25 April 1772.

<sup>535</sup> *NC*, 5 April 1777.

however was limited and it was more common for Newcastle shops to be supplied from London than London shopkeepers to open shop in Newcastle.

Whilst Newcastle's retail market drew in traders and retailers who wished to benefit from a location in a trading centre, a number of businesses were also connected to smaller rural shopkeepers, who could be at a considerable distance of the town. For example, Abraham Dent, a shopkeeper from Kirkby Stephen, had suppliers from around the country. Twenty were based in Newcastle, making the town Dent's second largest supplier after Kendal. Dent also sought supplies in other Northumberland and County Durham towns such as one from Durham, one from Bishop Auckland, six from Barnard Castle and four from Gateshead, suggesting that although the region had a high population to shop ratio, the distributors who did exist were large and efficient enough to supply the immediate region and some smaller towns and shopkeepers across the Pennines.<sup>536</sup> To a large extent the goods sent to Dent from Northumberland and Durham were groceries, but some manufactured consumer items were also sent. For example, William Charnley, a bookseller, publisher and paper mill-owner from Newcastle, supplied Dent with paper, magazines and books.<sup>537</sup> The geographical area of Newcastle's retail influence had expanded considerably since Gray's time. Retailers supplied Kirkby Stephen 70 miles away in Cumbria and drew in traders from North Shields eight miles away on the coast. Whilst Newcastle existed as the central retailing area, other towns also benefitted from connections outside of the region.

### ***Selling Techniques: Advertising and Fixed Pricing***

The irrefutable growth of fixed shops and traders alongside the continued existence of markets and chapmen was a necessary result of the expanding production of consumer goods and availability of services during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By the 1780s at least, the region, in particular Newcastle, had an extensive retail and services structure to support the expanding act of shopping, but if the growth of this system suggests a smooth course of development, analysis of the techniques used to sell reveals a more hesitant attitude to changes in retailing. In analysing selling techniques we can consider whether shopkeepers and traders aimed to induce customers to partake in consumption and what methods were used.

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<sup>536</sup> Willan, *An Eighteenth-Century Shopkeeper*, p. 29.

<sup>537</sup> Ibid, p. 40.

Since the advent of research exploring the bold claim of an eighteenth-century consumer revolution, much has been claimed of the role played by advertising in the promotion of new and fashionable goods. Neil McKendrick initiated this discussion listing the commercialisation of advertising as central to the development of eighteenth-century consumerism.<sup>538</sup> Such research focused on the tools that could be utilised to promote sales, but did not adequately take into consideration that such techniques may have been distasteful to many producers and retailers. Furthermore, evidence suggests that to an overwhelming degree advertisements were not used to promote sales of household goods.

Both R. B. Walker and Claire Walsh have shown the limited use that was made of advertisements in London newspapers by retailers.<sup>539</sup> Walker's breakdown of advertisements reveals that although by 1750, 75 per cent of space in some dailies was devoted to advertisements, the proportion of that advertising space for consumer goods was considerably less, and most of this space was promoting books or quack medicines.<sup>540</sup> Walsh, looking more directly at consumer goods advertisements, concluded that those adverts placed by retailers rarely attempted to persuade customers to buy certain products. In the main, shopkeepers adverts announced 'a change of address rather than promoting wares', relocation connected with movement to different premises, a change in partnership arrangements or the opening of a new shop.<sup>541</sup> Walsh found little of the persuasive and commercialised selling that McKendrick has been keen to emphasise. If London retailers and tradesmen showed distaste for advertising their wares, what can we expect to find in Northumberland and Durham? Less densely populated, with fewer shops per person (according to the Muis figures), the region was still able to equal the capital in variety of traders, retailers and services (if not in quantities), as the above breakdowns suggest, but did fewer shopkeepers mean it was less necessary to advertise?

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<sup>538</sup> McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 9-194.

<sup>539</sup> R. B. Walker 'Advertising in London Newspapers 1650-1750', *Business History* 15 (1973), pp. 112-30; Walsh, 'The Advertising and Marketing', pp. 79-95.

<sup>540</sup> Walker, 'Advertising in London Newspapers', p. 117-123.

<sup>541</sup> Walsh, 'The Advertising and Marketing', p. 83.

The advantages of utilising local newspapers as an effective method of commercial communication could be considerable for retailers and manufactories based on the Tyne, Wear, and in the wider Northumberland and Durham areas. The circulation of Newcastle's eighteenth-century newspapers alludes to the geographical extent of the regional economic market and social influence. Similar to many southern newspapers, for example those of East Kent highlighted by David Shaw, Newcastle's papers claimed to have an extensive circulation.<sup>542</sup> According to Manders, in 1720 the *Newcastle Courant* listed agents who sold papers in the region's main market towns and some outside of Northumberland and Durham including Alnwick, Hexham, Morpeth, Sunderland, Durham, Bishop Auckland, Barnard Castle, Kirkby Stephen, Kendal, Appleby, Penrith and Carlisle.<sup>543</sup> By 1771 the printers of the *Newcastle Journal* claimed the newspaper had a circulation of:

‘600 miles within which Circumference are upwards of 250 Towns, of which (as inserted in the Journal for June 21, 1766) are above 80 where no other Newcastle Paper go; and through upwards of One Half of the whole Circulation, (upon a strict Scrutiny) are found seldom more than one of another Sort Distributed – The Journal is conveyed One Hundred miles South West, and North, on the Day of Publication.’<sup>544</sup>

The wide circulation of this newspaper and the *Newcastle Courant* from the provincial centre outwards again reinforces the city's position within the region and its status as the only major centre in the north between York and Edinburgh. Although it is possible that the *Journal's* printers advertised this circulation in direct competition with Newcastle's other paper, the *Newcastle Courant*, it is evident from Berry's work on the region's provincial press that Newcastle's newspapers certainly reached London, regardless of where else they were read.<sup>545</sup>

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<sup>542</sup> D. Shaw, 'Retail Distribution Networks in East Kent in the Eighteenth Century' in J. Hinks and C. Armstrong (eds.) *World of Print: Diversity in the Book Trade* (London, 2006), pp. 197-206.

<sup>543</sup> F. Manders, 'History of the Newspaper Press in Northeast England' in P. Isaac (ed.) *Newspapers in the Northeast: The "Fourth Estate" at Work in Northumberland and Durham* (Wylam, 1999), p. 1.

<sup>544</sup> *NC*, 2 February 1771.

<sup>545</sup> Berry, 'Promoting Taste', p. 9.

Notwithstanding this wide circulation, it is apparent that the experience of London advertising highlighted by Walker and Walsh was not exceptional, and the *Newcastle Courant* and *Newcastle Journal* were not used widely to promote consumer goods. The distribution of advertisements in both the *Courant* and *Journal* reveal a similar pattern to that discussed by Walker and Walsh. Advertisements for both books and patent medicines featured frequently, whilst musical and theatre performances were also heavily promoted, easily outnumbering those for consumer goods. Such advertising was important, but those advertisements that were placed by consumer goods retailers again reflect the pattern of London advertisements, mainly indicating the location of shop and business premises, changes in partnership or the initial opening of a shop, not exhaustive listings of items for sale. The unstable nature of business partnerships, the movement of businesses and shops to better trading locations, and the general increase in traders that took place throughout the century made this type of advertising increasingly necessary. It is apparent that advertising was essential if a trader was looking to break into the northern economic community or was moving their trade from one part of the region to another. As mentioned above, those traders who had made the move from London to set up business in northern towns found it pertinent to advertise themselves to the new community. For example, on the 3 June 1775 D. Castles, milliner from London, announced that he had begun business in Alnwick, and on the 2 May 1778 Ralph Vardy, a sadler and capmaker from London, announced that he had secured a shop in Durham.<sup>546</sup>

Despite the predominance of advertisement for locations of shops and changes of business circumstances there were a small percentage promoting consumer goods which listed items for sale, whilst others indicated the arrival of new goods from London. These advertisements, although still outnumbered by those for books and medicines, could appear in frequent waves and often promoted similar items. For example, on the 30 April 1768 six retailers advertised in the *Newcastle Journal* that they had just returned from London with new parcels of linen goods, these included John Nicholson, Edward Hall & C., William Airey, John Kirsop, Ormston and Lamb, and Anthony Rutherford.<sup>547</sup> This trend for advertising goods ‘just arrived from London’ is similar to

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<sup>546</sup> *NJ*, 3 June 1775; 2 May 1778.

<sup>547</sup> *NJ*, 30 April 1768.

that characteristic in north-western English newspapers, an area where Stobart and Hann claim advertising was not as distasteful as it appeared to be in London.<sup>548</sup>

It is possible that new ‘floating purchasers, with no particular allegiance to any one retailer’ forced shopkeepers to use competitive advertising methods as Christina Fowler has suggested,<sup>549</sup> but it is more likely that competition between retailers – most specifically between those supplying goods from London or those supplying locally produced goods – encouraged advertising. The most rigorous examples of advertising revealed a particular attention to rhetoric, emphasising one of two things. A number, such as those supplying linen goods from the capital, emphasised their connection with London and the arrival of new goods. At the other end of the spectrum, local producers emphasised the cheapness and quality of their goods compared to London or indeed other centres of production such as Sheffield, Staffordshire and Holland, as detailed in Chapter Four.

In addition to linen goods some advertisements for paper hangings and china also succumbed to this competition. For example, James Davenport, mentioned earlier in this chapter, advertised that he sold ‘Several sorts of PAPER for Room-Hangings, wholesale or retail, as good and as cheap as London’.<sup>550</sup> ‘*As good and as cheap as London*’ was rhetoric used relatively frequently by producers and retailers attempting to sell locally produced goods in an increasingly competitive environment. Similarly ‘just arrived from London’ emphasised the newness and fashionability of goods and apparently heightened their desirability. The reference to London by local producers was double-edge. On the one hand vendors were referencing London as a cultural, polite and quality kite-mark or a standard of excellence as Berry has suggested, however these retailers were also trying to sell in a competitive market, in which London was the main competitor.<sup>551</sup> Use of advertisements was connected to politeness *and* commerce.<sup>552</sup> By emphasising and comparing the cheapness and ‘goodness’ (or quality) of items to London standards, or those of other important areas of production, a small

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<sup>548</sup> Stobart and Hann, ‘Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?’, p. 175.

<sup>549</sup> C. Fowler, ‘Changes in Provincial Retail Practice during the Eighteenth Century, with Particular Reference to Central-Southern England’, *Business History* 40 (1998), p. 48.

<sup>550</sup> *NC*, 9 March 1745.

<sup>551</sup> Berry, ‘Promoting Taste’ p. 6.

<sup>552</sup> Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p. 109-111; Berry, ‘Promoting Taste’ p. 6; Stobart, ‘Selling (Through) Politeness’, pp. 309-328.

number of retailers were beginning a rigorous and commercialised advertising campaign. However, in opposition to what is argued by Fowler, it is possible that in the Tyne, Wear, Northumberland and Durham areas this advertising was a response to competition with products supplied by the capital rather than undecided customers. In promotion of consumer goods, the advertisements in Newcastle newspapers fall somewhere between those of London and those from the north-west. Advertising was generally avoided unless to bring some sort of change of circumstances to the attention of the public, but where competition prevailed, promotion was becoming increasingly necessary. Such vigorous advertising was adopted only gradually by retailers and producers, not on a scale large enough to affect the predominant structure of retailing.

By highlighting individual examples of advertisements that do promote goods, one could make a strong case in favour of the commercialised use of advertising, however a quantitative assessment of these adverts would not support such a theory. Such evidence could be taken to suggest that eighteenth-century retailing was less sophisticated than has been previously argued, but it merely supports the theory that this was a transitional period. Walker states that until after the Restoration the word ‘advertisement’ retained its more general meaning of ‘notice’; the absence of an overwhelming tide of vigorous goods advertising into the eighteenth century suggests that this general meaning was largely retained.<sup>553</sup> The nature of advertisements as predominantly informative, concerning changes in business or opening of new shops, rather than overtly persuasive, indicates the customary use of newspapers and advertisements as a tool of communication, whether for social, political or economic purposes. The high proportion of advertisements concerning location reinforces the arguments that ‘the point of information and persuasion’ was the shop.<sup>554</sup> To assess information about goods within a shop one needed, first and foremost, to have knowledge of where the shop was and who the partners in the business were. In a period when the catalogue of goods stocked could vary within the same shop, and the credit-worthiness of a particular shopkeeper or business partner could inspire trust, knowing who owned the establishment and where it was located was still of primary importance.

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<sup>553</sup> Walker, ‘Advertising in London Newspapers’, p. 113.

<sup>554</sup> Walsh, ‘The Advertising and Marketing’, p. 88.

With the continued role of shops as the main arena for acquiring knowledge of goods and inducing customers, many shopkeepers presented their shops in terms of ‘fashionability, elegance and exclusivity’.<sup>555</sup> This trend in outfitting shops has been tracked at various locations throughout the country using trade cards, shop inventories and advertisements.<sup>556</sup> However lack of clear evidence makes it difficult to evaluate how widespread the practice was in Northumberland and Durham. It is evident that some retailers did tailor their shop manners to a polite audience. The general growth of the ‘town’ as a polite and commercial area during the eighteenth century was complimented by the development of shopping facilities which are reflected in some advertisements from the region. For example, John Gibson advertised his tea warehouse in 1752, where he proclaimed ‘[t]he Kettle will be always boiling. Gentlemen and Ladies may try the Teas’. In a later advertisement continued: ‘every Gentleman and Lady that please to favour him with their Custom, may depend upon being well served’.<sup>557</sup>

It is also evident that shops were not sparsely stocked. Shopkeeper’s inventories, though few,<sup>558</sup> suggest well stocked shelves with various items. The inventory of Richard Brice, a hatter from Durham city, taken in 1700, itemised stock of 165 hats in his shop.<sup>559</sup> The inventory of Thomas Ayre, mercer of Gateshead, recorded eleven pages of cloths and ribbons in various colours and fabrics including white, red, scarlet, green, yellow, copper and brown amounting to £515 5s. 3 ½d. in 1721.<sup>560</sup> These were not sparsely stocked shops, and those producers and retailers that did find it pertinent to advertise their wares also indicate a wide range of goods available, as suggested in Chapter Four. For example, James Davenport and Bartholomew Elmes both advertised long and detailed lists the paper hangings they designed and had available for sale. Many owners of these well-stocked shops combined clear presentation with the practice of attaching fixed prices to goods, replacing a system that could involve haggling over prices. How extensive this practice was is difficult to ascertain, but the advertisements of Davenport

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<sup>555</sup> Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p. 34.

<sup>556</sup> Corfield, *The Impact of English Towns*, p. 19; C. Walsh, ‘The Newness of the Department Store: a view from the Eighteenth Century’ in G. Crossick and S. Jaumain (eds.) *Cathedrals of Consumption* (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 46-71.

<sup>557</sup> NC, 15 August 1752; 14 October 1752.

<sup>558</sup> Only a small number of shopkeeper’s inventories were identified in the random sample undertaken for analysis in Chapters Seven and Eight.

<sup>559</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1700/B13/3/1-3.

<sup>560</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1721/A5/1-8.

and Elmes confirm that they did sell at fixed prices, a practice more usually associated with nineteenth-century retailing than that of the eighteenth century.

The divided use of advertising and lack of conclusive evidence as to the popularity of fixed pricing and shop decoration maintains the theme of a system in transition, one that is also reinforced by the practices of retail versus wholesale vending. The line between shops and manufactories that sold retail and wholesale was vague. Glass manufactories, though known for selling wholesale to merchants, would sell retail to local or known customers directly. John Cookson's sales journal records constant small retail sales to customers amongst larger wholesale shipments. Cookson, in particular, was flexible in his selling techniques. Although he did not often sell retail or to unknown customers at a distance, he would make exceptions, as his correspondence reflects. He wrote to his partner: 'I was greatly surprised to receive a Letter from an unknown person in Dublin Inclosing me 2 Bank of England notes £60 - & desiring me to send him glass for it. This affair is so uncommon that I cannot refuse him Glass for that Sum'.<sup>561</sup> Other glass manufactories chose to supply shop-based retailers with their products to vend, for example the Howdon Pans glasshouse supplied items to John Reed who advertised in 1773 that he had started 'grinding and polishing and silvering plate glass, With produce of the New Plate Glass manufactory at Howdon Pans. With Looking glasses, Chimney glasses, seeing glasses. Plate glass ground and polished for windows, pictures'.<sup>562</sup> Likewise, potteries and wallpaper manufacturers sold wholesale, but would certainly sell retail to local customers. For example, the Ellison family accounts record small retail purchases of pottery from John Warburton later in the century and Bartholomew Elmes advertised that he sold both retail and wholesale.<sup>563</sup> The retail sale of small items from large manufactories in Northumberland and Durham exhibited by Cookson's crown glass manufactory was mirrored by the same practice at Crowley's ironworks. Michael Flinn claims that the firm enjoyed 'a steady local trade' revealed by lists of small debts from 1702, sales which were 'clearly of a retail nature'.<sup>564</sup> Whilst it is clear that the structure of retailing and distribution had changed throughout the period under discussion, even at the end of the eighteenth century it was still not fully transformed. Selling techniques were variable. Use of advertising remained a personal decision

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<sup>561</sup> TWA, JCL, 24 November 1761.

<sup>562</sup> NC, 24 July 1773.

<sup>563</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/167, 22 September 1786; NJ, 26 May 1750.

<sup>564</sup> Flinn, *Men of Iron*, p. 137.

individual to shopkeepers, evidence of outfitted shops is scarce, and retailers and manufacturers continued to sell both wholesale and retail.

### *Conclusions*

De Vries is correct to suggest that this period experienced a 'spatial thickening of retailing networks', and the tentative evidence presented in this chapter indicates that Northumberland and Durham did participate in this change.<sup>565</sup> Whilst Mui and Mui have suggested that the region was poorly served by its distribution system, it is more accurate to argue that the system was merely overly concentrated in the regional capital, Newcastle. However the changes that took place cannot be described as a 'retail revolution'. They represented 'a patchy and conditional process'.<sup>566</sup> The growth of fixed shops, which initially complimented fairs and markets, was the main feature of the evolving retailing sector. Fairs, which had been important for centuries, gradually lost their economic function. Markets continued to play an essential role in the distribution system, but they were increasingly surrounded by fixed shops, and between the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries there was a reshuffling of the market town hierarchy with some towns reduced to village status. Shops were clearly becoming the main branch of the new system.

However, much about the established retailing system did not change, especially in Northumberland and Durham. At the end of the eighteenth century markets continued to play an important role in the distribution of goods, as did pedlars and chapmen, and far from crafting a new place for themselves, shops followed the geographical pattern of markets. New selling techniques, highlighted as aiding and encouraging new consumption habits, do not appear to have been widely adopted in the region. Some retailers and producers did implement vigorous advertising campaigns, but by and large advertising was used to inform customers about location of shops and partnerships, rather than promote stock. Likewise, there is evidence to suggest that retailers and producers sold at fixed prices and used displays of politeness to court customers, but these are also limited. Rather than confirming that late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century retailing was primitive and unsophisticated, these varying examples emphasise that this was a system, even a sector, in transition.

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<sup>565</sup> Vries, *Industrious Revolution*, p. 169.

<sup>566</sup> Stobart and Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?', p. 190.

Without doubt Newcastle was, and remained, the centre of distribution in the region. Its market drew in buyers and sellers from the immediate hinterlands, its port received goods from the national and international markets, its eighteenth century transition into a polite and commercial centre enabled Newcastle to maintain a role as the main retailing outlet of the region. Even on the eve of the eighteenth century its shops were viewed as sophisticated. Although the location of retailing did not change in the regional capital, the number of fixed retail premises expanded significantly. The network of market towns throughout the region complimented Newcastle's retailing facilities, as did local chapmen who were also concentrated in the region capital.

The previous chapters have detailed the production of consumer goods in Northumberland and Durham destined for both local and national consumption, and port book data reveals increasing quantities of goods imported into the region. The expansion and development of retailing facilities, however gradual throughout the region, was a necessary counterpart to increased availability of such items locally. More detailed study could explore how retailing during this period was not only a response to increased production and consumer demands, but began to emerge as an independent sector. However, essentially for this thesis, retailing bridged the physical gap between producer and consumer. The addition of fixed shops alongside periodic markets apparently allowed for a new way of living and more frequent purchases.<sup>567</sup> But what effect did this fixed retailing system have on consumption and ownership in Northumberland and Durham? The following chapter will seek to establish what place consumer goods had in regional households during this period, households that were apparently poorer than their southern counterparts.

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<sup>567</sup> de Vries, *Industrious Revolution*, p. 169.

## Chapter Seven

### Goods and Chattels

#### *Introduction*

It is evident from the previous chapters that the availability of both luxury and functional goods, consumer durables and semi-durables, had expanded in Northumberland and Durham from 1680 onwards. This expansion was a result of a dual process. Industries within the region were producing more goods directed at a consuming population, whilst simultaneously imports of commodities and new foodstuffs also rose throughout the period. Accordingly, as Chapter Six has highlighted, retailing facilities expanded in order that these goods could be distributed to the consuming population in a more organised and, in some instances, sophisticated system. Structurally the region had the capabilities to facilitate a large and relatively dispersed body of consumers. The creation of cheap and affordable types of new household goods such as earthenware, glass and paper within the region made it possible for all social groups to participate in new consumption, although not all could participate at an equal level. As numerous recent studies of material culture have revealed, the expansion of consumption was not a phenomenon exclusive to elite families. Essentially, new goods encouraged a change in the consumption, expenditure and ownership patterns of ordinary people, in particular the growing middling sorts.<sup>568</sup> This change in ownership patterns was expressed not only by increased consumption of new luxury and exotic goods, but more widely as consumption of ‘decencies’ and ‘necessities’.<sup>569</sup> Many of these new consumer goods were items that had previously been imported as luxuries, but during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were produced in England, transforming them into decencies and necessities. Regardless of their designation as *luxury*, *decency*, or *necessity* they were relatively new to most English households.

In her significant study, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain*, Lorna Weatherill traced the developing ownership of new and established goods in a sample of Britain’s middling households, using probate inventories for the period 1660 to 1760.

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<sup>568</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p.166-189; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*; McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, pp. 1-2; Levine and Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, pp. 231-240; Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*.

<sup>569</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 14-16; McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 1.

This study revealed the integration of new types of household goods such as cutlery, looking glasses, clocks and china into ordinary homes, distinct hierarchies of ownership, and rural/urban differences. Weatherill's research indicated that the Durham diocese, along with London and Kent, had a remarkably high rate of new goods ownership compared with other areas. These findings were all the more intriguing as Weatherill identified Northumberland and Durham as areas of contrasts, with a relatively under-developed agricultural system next to the commercial and industrial strength of Newcastle which made it the 'vanguard of urban development'.<sup>570</sup> Despite these findings little work has sufficiently developed Weatherill's conclusions on Durham and Northumberland in order to look at the region specifically.<sup>571</sup> This chapter will focus upon the changes in ownership and consumption taking place in the counties of Northumberland and Durham during this period when production and availability of goods was evidently expanding. Such research cannot confirm that inhabitants of the region purchased locally produced commodities; probate inventories rarely provided such detailed accounts. However it can suggest patterns in the types of goods owned which may relate to the growth of regional consumer goods manufactories. Increased demand for mirrors, glassware, cutlery and ceramics may have encouraged local production, and certainly promoted the importation of new goods into the region. By analysing goods ownership patterns it may be possible to ascertain whether changes in ownership of particular new household goods coincided chronologically with the establishment or expansion of consumer goods manufactories in the region. More specifically, it can indicate whether Northumberland and Durham had high rates of new goods ownership, whether these levels changed over the period, and what differences existed in regional ownership patterns.

The chapter will significantly focus on differences in ownership connected to urban or rural locations, occupation and status, and the value of household goods identified within inventories. These findings will build upon Weatherill's research by considering

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<sup>570</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 44-53; L. Scammell, 'Was the North-East Different from Other Areas?' in H. Berry and J. Gregory (eds.) *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1600-1830* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 12-23.

<sup>571</sup> A handful of studies have looked at the north-east but either on a more localised scale, in an earlier period or with a differing methodology: Levine and Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, pp. 231-240; G. O' Reilly, 'Probate Inventories and Consumerism: Rationalism, Autonomy, and Invidious Material Rhetoric' (Unpublished Durham University MA Dissertation, 2004); Heley, 'The Material Culture of the Tradesmen'.

a slightly longer chronological period (Weatherill's 'north-east' sample ended in 1715), and Levine and Wrightson's which focused specifically on the parish of Whickham, in an attempt to understand the continued changes in ownership patterns. Close chronological analysis will help to identify whether the growth of regional consumer goods production and cultural change, which was initiated in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, were mirrored by a correspondent change in goods ownership. These findings will be considered in correspondence with inventory studies centred on other regions in Britain, specially Cornwall and Kent, explored in Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann's most recent study, Estabrook's study of Bristol, and Weatherill's national data.<sup>572</sup> Study of ownership in Northumberland and Durham provides data for the northern end of a geographical triangle of England in which Cornwall represents the south-western tip and Kent the south-eastern. Additionally, whilst Cornwall was not directly influenced by an immediate metropolis of its own, and Kent was at a close proximity to London, Northumberland and Durham were not within the immediate influence of London, but did have Newcastle as their provincial capital. Northumberland and Durham represent a different type of economic region to those represented by Cornwall and Kent, a region more akin to Bristol or London which have been analysed by Estabrook and Earle.

This chapter forms one half of a discussion on ownership and consumption in Northumberland and Durham during this period. As John Brewer has asserted the study of consumption has been divided. One area appears to concentrate on the economic and quantitative concern with density of goods, providing analysis of a quantitative and economic nature. Another area is more 'cultural, anthropological and qualitative' concerned with issues of 'identity, subjectivity, and social distinction'.<sup>573</sup> The search for a stereotypical consumer and examples of generalised growth patterns have placed a disproportionate amount of emphasis on quantitative data and what is common between cases, often at the expense of what is individual in inventories. This chapter follows the traditional pattern of analysis considering probate inventories drawn largely from the region's expansive middling sorts in a quantitative manner. It focuses on the geographical, social/occupational, and wealth aspects connected to ownership patterns.

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<sup>572</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*; C. Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic* (Manchester, 1998); Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*.

<sup>573</sup> Brewer, 'The Error of Our Ways', p. 6.

The quantitative analysis presented in this chapter is not without importance, but it is only half the story of the material culture of the household. The following chapter, Chapter Eight, builds upon this framework of quantitative data, but moves from quantitative to qualitative analysis of the material culture of the household, and also looks at those social groups who do not appear in traditional probate inventory surveys such as debtors, paupers, and the gentry.

The analysis in this chapter is wholly based on evidence from a probate inventory survey. Data for the inventories survey was taken from two different sources. The majority of inventories came from Durham Diocesan Probate Registry which contains documents from the parishes of Durham and Northumberland.<sup>574</sup> A smaller number of inventories from the 1740s were proved at the Prerogative Court of York.<sup>575</sup> These include the inventories of any testators who had goods in more than one diocese in the Northern Province (which included Chester, Carlisle, Durham, and York), and any probate inventories from the areas of Hexham and Hexhamshire pre-1837.<sup>576</sup> In accordance with the geographical area considered in this thesis, inventories from Alston in Cumberland (some of which are held with those for the Diocese of Durham) have not been included in the survey, whilst those from Hexham and Hexhamshire (which were proved at York) have been included.

Unfortunately the creation and survival of these documents declined considerably after the first decades of the eighteenth century, and therefore each sample year does not contain an equal number of inventories. Sample years were chosen at twenty year intervals beginning in 1680. Inventories for 1680 were ubiquitous and so a random sample was undertaken and data was accumulated from 104 inventories. Inventories for the year 1700 were fewer but sufficient enough to provide a similar number to 1680. All usable inventories from 1700 were studied and data was taken from 100 documents. By the 1720 period inventories were scarcer and so a five year sample from 1719 to 1723 was taken to amass a useable quantity of data for this period. Enough useable inventories were identified that could be utilised statistically and data was taken from

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<sup>574</sup> The Durham Diocesan Probate Registry is held in Durham University Special Collections.

<sup>575</sup> Inventories proved at the Prerogative Court of York are held at the Borthwick Institute at York University.

<sup>576</sup> The area of Hexham and Hexhamshire covered the parishes and chapelries of Allendale, Allenheads, Allendale St. Peter, Bingfield St. Mary, Carrshields, High West Allen, Hexham, Ninebanks, Low West Allen, St. John Lee, St. Oswald in Lee, and Whitley Chapel.

fifty-seven inventories. By 1740 the numbers of inventories in the Durham Diocesan Probate Registry were too few, and even attempts to locate further inventories from the York Prerogative Court resulted in numbers insufficient to be used confidently in a quantitative assessment of changing patterns of ownership. Data from the fifteen inventories assessed in the ten year period starting in 1740 are included in the overall assessment of change throughout the period. However they are omitted from analysis which looks specifically at differences between rural and urban locations, value of goods and occupation/status, as the numbers are too few to be used even tentatively. The inventories were taken from parishes within the counties of Northumberland and Durham, they represent varied occupational groups, though are largely representative of the middling sorts (including neither those of the very wealthy or poor), and the total inventory values recorded range between 15s. 6d. and £1132 10s.

Probate inventories, whilst being a rich source for understanding the material culture of the household, are imperfect records, as a number of historians have highlighted.<sup>577</sup> Inventories appear to be exceptional records of household goods, but their limitations put restrictions on the information they can provide and the questions they can answer. They reveal an image of ownership, but not a full one. Crucially they cannot be seen as records of consumption. As Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann have stated, inventories record stocks of goods at the end of a life, not flows of goods throughout a life.<sup>578</sup> They represent goods accumulated over a lifetime which may have been purchased, received as a gift or inherited; the inventories do not indicate how a particular item was acquired.

Although inventories can provide details concerning ownership patterns, some aspects of the material culture of the household cannot be assessed through these documents. Whilst they record leasehold land and moveable goods, they do not include real estate. Legally inventories were not required to record debts *owed by* the deceased (although some individual examples do), but they were to include those *owed to* the deceased. Margaret Spufford has accurately shown how this omission of debts owed by the

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<sup>577</sup> For a detailed accounts of the limitations and uses of probate inventories see M. Spufford 'The Limitations of the Probate Inventory' in J. Chartres and D. Hey (eds.) *English Rural Society, 1500-1800: Essays in Honour of Joan Thirsk* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 139-74; T. Arkell, N. Evans and N. Goose (eds.) *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2000); Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, pp. 14-32, 87-89; Shammass, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, pp. 18-20; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. xviii, 106.

<sup>578</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 87.

deceased can produce a false image of the wealth and comfort of individual households.<sup>579</sup> As a result inventories cannot be viewed as an insight into the total wealth of households. Furthermore, inventories do not always record the full contents of a home. Items belonging to the wife of a deceased male are not always included in the inventory assessment, despite being located in the same home, and goods bequeathed in a will were not recorded. In some cases small trinkets and items were omitted or described together rather than itemised individually, and clothing was rarely given full description.<sup>580</sup> Therefore the inventories are accounts, but incomplete accounts of moveable goods.

No analysis of inventories appears complete without some consideration of the value of goods recorded in them. The inherent problems with considering inventory values as a representation of wealth have been discussed widely, but most comprehensively by Spufford.<sup>581</sup> In light of these issues the integrated analysis of inventory wealth and values is undertaken with certain caution. The generic problems of attempting to discern wealth from inventories are emphasised in the Northumberland and Durham survey. The legal requirements which defined what was to be included in a probate inventory are, like in other regions, not always followed strictly. Debts owed by the deceased were at times included and on occasion debts were not recorded at all (although this could indicate an absence of debt). The significant difference between inventories from the counties of Northumberland and Durham is the inclusion of the value of leases from the Dean and Chapter of Durham. Leases of land in Northumberland or Newcastle are rarely recorded, whilst those recording the leases of the Dean and Chapter included land, salt pans, cottages/houses or shops which could increase the value of an inventory anywhere between £10 and £300. Other examples recorded the value of shares in shipping, but without a full assessment of debts owed to the deceased, these valuations are vastly deceiving. As a result of these variations and difficulties, wealth analysis is provided in the form of total inventoried wealth *and* value of household goods. In total inventoried wealth, leases of land, houses, cottages and salt pans have been omitted as these exaggerate the value of specific inventories. However work equipment, when

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<sup>579</sup> Spufford, 'The Limitations of the Probate Inventory', pp. 139-74.

<sup>580</sup> Ibid, p. 149; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, pp. 14-17.

<sup>581</sup> Spufford, 'The Limitations of the Probate Inventory', pp. 139-174.

listed, has been included in all inventories. Only the value of household goods is recorded in the second wealth assessment.

Probate inventories cannot be understood as accurate examples of change in ownership across all social groups. The legal requirements which put a monetary limit on inventories taken (specifically those which were £5 or above) resulted in a process that was biased towards the middling sort, and such is true of this survey. The expanding and minutely stratified middling class were an essential group participating in the developing culture of consumption.<sup>582</sup> However as a result of this bias the inventories in this sample include neither the poorest nor the richest of society. Few labourers appeared in the probate records, and no inventories for elite homes are recorded here as most had property in more than one county and would be recorded in a higher level court. Analysis must be undertaken with the knowledge that whilst inventories remain one of the most useful sources for understanding the material culture of the household, they do have their limitations. Despite the disadvantages inherent in using this source 'the household goods in inventories do provide an index of domestic comfort...which show change over time'.<sup>583</sup> For the purposes of tracing new goods in homes, increasing ownership, and identifying the location and social status or occupation of these owners, inventories can prove extremely fruitful.

### ***Probate Inventories: Accumulative Data***

Analysis was first undertaken in a quantitative manner with assessment based on whether a categorised item could be identified as present within the inventories.<sup>584</sup> This type of assessment is somewhat crude, as absence of an item cannot be assumed to represent lack of ownership. However, it is revealing on the overall development of ownership within the region, and the method of counting is effective in documenting the spread of new goods and, to some extent, the rapidity of their integration into a range of households. It is evident that Newcastle tradesmen were certainly beginning tentatively

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<sup>582</sup> Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 69-75.

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 145-146.

<sup>584</sup> A group of items were selected for identification and analysis based on those most commonly studied in previous probate inventories (Weatherill's categories were specifically used as guidance), items which were the products of the developing regional consumer industries, and more standard furniture which had been gradually integrated into households during the early modern period (such as beds, chairs and tables). Other more particular categories tested for were inventories which made reference to agricultural goods or work-related equipment, and inventories which only recorded agricultural goods.

to buy into new household goods, though possibly more in volume than variety, in the period 1545 to 1642.<sup>585</sup> Accumulative results will indicate whether this process of new accumulation continued or accelerated in the period 1680 to the 1740s.

The accumulative data, displayed in Table 16, indicates that a growth in ownership between 1680 and the 1740s was taking place, although the figures for the 1740s cannot be viewed as wholly representative as they are based on a small number of inventories. General trends that can be drawn from the data vary little from those Weatherill recounted in her initial study of national ownership patterns.<sup>586</sup> A group of common items experienced high ownership from 1680 and increased slightly over the period. These goods included basic furniture and kitchenware such as tables, chairs, beds, chests and pewter. Another group of commodities were already in use in 1680 but not commonly; ownership of these items grew significantly over the period. This group included looking glasses, cutlery, curtains and glassware. A last group of items were rare in 1680 and showed some growth; these included earthenware, clocks, decorative maps and pictures. Reinforcing Weatherill's findings, books did not see a significant growth in ownership in Northumberland and Durham over the period.<sup>587</sup> This lack of book ownership could be representative of a number of factors. It is possible that technical reasons may have led to the omission of books or that lack of books in the region's inventories could represent low levels of literacy.<sup>588</sup> According to Weatherill's research, levels of book ownership in the 'north-east' category were lower than elsewhere in the North and were two or three times lower than those recorded in London and the southern dioceses.<sup>589</sup> However, it is also possible that lack of book ownership is representative of the number of circulating libraries that existed in Northumberland and Durham. Berry and Gregory have indicated a number of culturally important lending libraries in existence in eighteenth-century Newcastle, but newspaper advertisements and trade directories also confirm a number of more localised circulating libraries located in and around Newcastle and Durham.<sup>590</sup> These included William

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<sup>585</sup> Heley, 'The Material Culture of Tradesmen in Newcastle', I, especially p. 328.

<sup>586</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 25-69.

<sup>587</sup> Scammell, 'Was the North-East Different', pp. 13-14.

<sup>588</sup> Although evidence suggests illiteracy in the region was declining, this was taking place gradually between 1640 and 1750. See R. A. Houston, 'The Development of Literacy in Northern England 1640-1750', *Economic History Review* 35 (1982), pp. 199-216.

<sup>589</sup> Scammell, 'Was the North-East Different', p. 13.

<sup>590</sup> Berry and Gregory, 'Introduction', p. 9.

Charnley's at the Flesh-market (Newcastle), Patrick Sanderson's in Durham which also catered for the neighbouring areas of Bishop Auckland, Houghton-le-Spring and Chester-le-Street, George Vardy's in Alnwick, and R. Fisher's at the Flesh-market (Newcastle).<sup>591</sup> These circulating libraries could represent a form of literary consumption which bypassed ownership of books, or that popularity of books developed after the period covered by the presently discussed inventory survey.

Growth can be viewed in most goods categories listed, but a more significant change took place within the groups of new household goods. The percentages of "common" goods such as tables, chairs, beds and pewter rose only marginally between 1680 and 1719-23, tables rising from 51.9 to 58.8 per cent, chairs from 42.3 to 56.1 per cent and pewter from 53.8 to 56.1 per cent. However new household goods increased dramatically in some instances. For example, ownership of pictures rose from 10.5 in 1680 to 33.3 per cent by 1719-23. In the same period ownership of china rose from 6.7 to 14 per cent, earthenware rose from 4.8 to 22.8 per cent, and clocks rose from 2.8 to 24.5 per cent.

These figures reinforce Weatherill's data, placing the region as one of the leading in ownership of new household goods. However they build upon Weatherill's figure by suggesting a continuing process of rising new goods ownership. Significantly these figures enable the timing of new household goods integration in the region to be calculated more precisely. It is evident that it was between 1700 and the early 1720s that new goods were incorporated into regional households on a noticeable level. Whilst Weatherill's accumulative figures for the nation end in 1725, her figures for the Durham diocese end in 1715, with the year 1725 missing. Unfortunately direct contrast between the figures presented in this chapter and Weatherill's data for her Durham sample can only be tentative. Weatherill provides percentages of goods ownership for the entire period 1675-1725, whereas my own data is given for each period sampled in order that the chronological integration of goods can be viewed in detail. Furthermore, there are significant differences in the inventories considered in Weatherill's survey and my own. Weatherill states that in selecting inventories those that 'seemed incomplete or which did not give details of the contents of individual rooms' were rejected, whereas those

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<sup>591</sup> *NJ*, 25 December 1756; 22 January 1757; 27 June 1757; 3 April 1773.

which contained less detail or did not specify goods in separate rooms have been included in this survey with the belief that they can also be significant in understanding of ownership and inventories.<sup>592</sup>

The increased ownership of looking glasses, earthenware, cutlery, clocks, pictures and glassware indicates not only the appearance of increased supply (as a result of rising imports, local production, and improved communication systems), but also a rising demand for new types of household goods without a major reduction in the ownership of established alternatives, like pewter and wood for example. Earthenware and glassware continually made inroads into the eighteenth-century household despite the endurance of the more durable pewter, reflecting the pattern in Kent and Cornwall.<sup>593</sup> The other items listed – cutlery, clocks, pictures and looking glasses – represented a whole new type of household adornment associated with both practicality and decorative household interiors. Shammas has traced the increase of consumer durables and semi-durables related to eating, which included glassware, ceramics, knives and forks, in English and American households, but these appeared alongside pictures, looking glasses, maps and clocks which could have a practical and decorative role.<sup>594</sup> Although ‘new’ these were not necessarily ‘luxury’ items. They were, as Shammas has highlighted, owned by middling families and represented affordable versions of elite goods, the type increasingly produced in the region.<sup>595</sup> As discussed in Chapter Four, items such as glassware, ceramics and paper hangings could be purchased in different qualities and at different prices. The development of British manufacturing techniques which encouraged the expanding production of such consumer durables and semi-durables, helped to change these goods from foreign luxuries into popular decencies with both functional and decorative value. These new British goods were consumed by large sections of the population. All were found in greater quantities in Durham and Northumberland inventories by the 1720s, suggesting that parts of Northumberland and Durham, particularly the urbanised areas, were advanced in ownership of new goods.<sup>596</sup>

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<sup>592</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, appendix 1, p. 202.

<sup>593</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, pp. 102-104.

<sup>594</sup> Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, pp. 181-185.

<sup>595</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 185-186.

<sup>596</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 80; Scammell, ‘Was the North-East Different’, pp. 12-23.

Some note must be made of the survey year 1700 which stands out as unusual in the pattern of growth. The data for 1700 shows growth in few categories, and even examples of decline in some categories of common and established goods. This may be explained by the relatively high number of inventories from rural areas, a group of inventories which generally did not record specific detail of household goods (they often simply recorded the total value of goods in specific rooms). Despite this variation in the pattern of growth, the data taken from the survey period 1719-23 shows an increase on both the 1700 and 1680 figures in almost all categories in the accumulative data. Furthermore, although the data from the 1740s survey period must be treated with caution, it does show a further percentage rise on the previous survey years in many categories.

### ***Location: Urban and Non-Urban***

The overall accumulative results fit with a general trend of increased ownership of most commodities both common and new, but as Levine and Wrightson have observed, these generalised advances could mask variation experienced on a parish level in Whickham,<sup>597</sup> and they may also mask variations on a regional level. Percentages of goods ownership may have been high in the accumulative figures for Northumberland and Durham, but they were rarely higher than 50 per cent in many categories, meaning a large number of households did not experience an enriched material culture (or that it was not always clearly recorded in inventories). Northumberland and Durham were areas of major contrasts in terms of occupation and urbanisation during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Those dependent upon mining were expanding as a group, but agriculture was still a dominate sector region-wide. Likewise, population growth was widespread, but rapid growth and urbanisation was concentrated in the Tyne belt.<sup>598</sup> Weatherill's research indicated a gap in ownership patterns between rural and urban areas that could be observed in various regions, a conclusion reinforced by a number of other regional studies such as Estabrook's research of Bristol in which differences between rural and urban ownership of both luxury and basic goods were identified.<sup>599</sup> This rural and urban gap was most pronounced in Weatherill's north-east sample, with a strong association between urban living and goods ownership that was

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<sup>597</sup> Levine and Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, p. 233.

<sup>598</sup> Wrightson, 'Elements of Identity', p. 139.

<sup>599</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 80; Scammell, 'Was the North-East Different', p. 16-17, 22; Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic*, pp. 132-34.

not experienced by other areas in England.<sup>600</sup> Whilst Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann suggest that a 'crude rural-urban dichotomy has been overplayed', the particular identification of a strong rural/urban split in Northumberland and Durham ownership patterns warrants further analysis.<sup>601</sup>

The system of location analysis used by Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, which saw the use of parishes to distinguish areas, is effective in their study of Cornwall and Kent where large numbers of inventories were analysed, but is impossible to use in a study of this nature. The comparatively small number of inventories surveyed here means that in some parishes too few inventories were identified. Therefore this location analysis takes the form of exploring non-urban and urban ownership in order to initiate an understanding of the economic conditions that separated or united Northumberland and Durham as a region, and how the region compared with other identifiable regions that have been studied in detail. By separating the inventories by location, either non-urban or urban, we can identify whether there were any differences in ownership between the two categories and whether these differences changed throughout the period.

The categories of non-urban and urban have been chosen instead of the traditional 'rural' and 'urban' as the focus here is differences or similarities between larger distinctly urbanised towns and market towns, and those areas which were not experiencing major urbanisation. Given the mixed nature of the regional economy in Northumberland and Durham, which consisted of industrial, commercial and agricultural areas, not all areas outside of the major towns and market towns were rural and agricultural. Non-urbanised areas could be rural, industrial and non-agricultural; they supported essentially 'rural non-agricultural population[s]'.<sup>602</sup> Whilst housing concentrations of population they did not have the same social and trading roles as towns such as Newcastle, Durham, Sunderland, Hexham, Barnard Castle or Alnwick. The 'urban' areas that have been separated in this analysis are those that were identified as urbanising areas by Dyer and Kirby (as discussed in Chapter Six for their retailing function as market centres), and continued to maintain this position during the eighteenth century, exhibiting significant concentrations of population and functioning

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<sup>600</sup> Scammell, 'Was the North-East Different', p. 16.

<sup>601</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 137.

<sup>602</sup> Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 172.

as trade and distribution centres.<sup>603</sup> These areas include Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, North and South Shields, Bishop Auckland, Barnard Castle, Hexham, Morpeth, Alnwick, Gateshead and Stockton.

The results of this analysis are shown on Table 17 which indicates a distinct difference between urban and non-urban goods ownership with higher levels of ownership in almost all commodities evident in urban places in all surveyed years. Common goods were more frequently identified in urban inventories than non-urban. For example, tables, chairs and pewter were all found in 69.4 per cent of urban inventories in 1680, whereas they occurred in 42.6, 27.9, and 45.5 per cent of non-urban inventories respectively. Likewise linen was found in 72.2 per cent of urban inventories and only 32.2 per cent of non-urban, perhaps indicating an urban inclination towards comfort. Most of these percentages had risen or fallen slightly by 1700, but the gap between urban and non-urban areas continued at around the same rate. By 1719-23 tables, chairs, chests and linen were found in 100 per cent of urban inventories, suggesting that the urban market for basis goods had been saturated by the 1720s. Other common items such as beds and pewter showed similarly high levels, yet in many of these categories non-urban inventories lagged behind considerably by 1723. Tables were recorded in 35.1 per cent of non-urban inventories, chairs in 32.4 per cent, chests in 21.6 per cent and linen in 40.5 per cent.

The differences in ownership of common goods were pronounced, but the divergences in possession of new household goods between urban and non-urban areas were greater despite showing more variation. In most categories of new household goods urban inventories again recorded a much higher rate of ownership. Counts of cutlery, silver, pictures, looking glasses, china, clocks and earthenware all rose substantially between 1680 and the early 1720s, and remained constantly higher than those recorded in non-urban areas. Ownership of cutlery rose in urban inventories from 27.7 in 1680 to 50 per cent in 1719-23, whereas ownership in non-urban inventories remained roughly constant at 8.8 per cent in 1680, 9.2 per cent in 1700, and 8.1 per cent in 1719-23. Likewise ownership of earthenware rose in urban inventories from 11.1 in 1680 to 55

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<sup>603</sup> For description of Kirby and Dyer's methodology see Chapter Six; P. Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 4-5, 10.

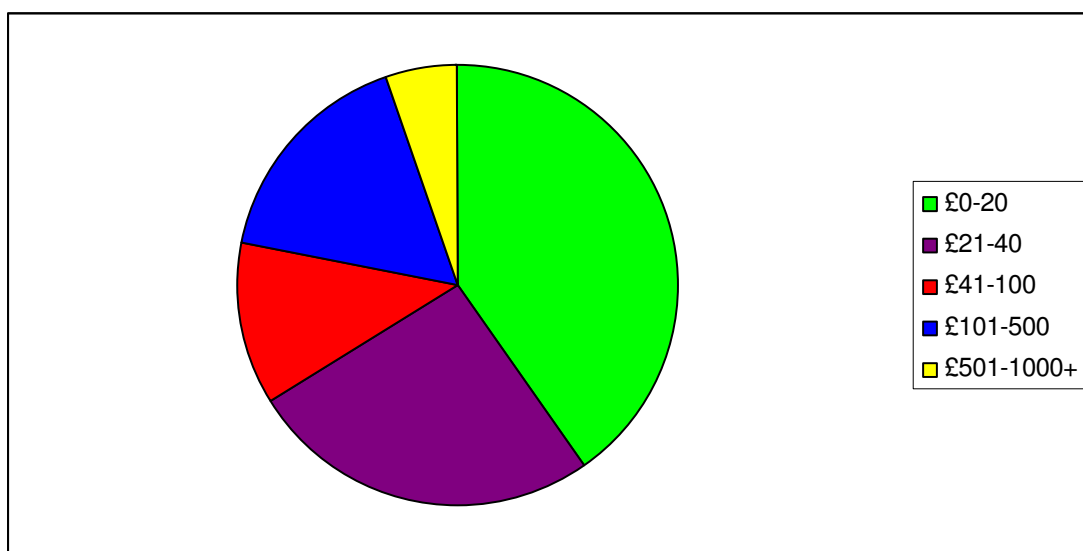
per cent in 1719-23, whilst rising from 1.4 in non-urban inventories to only 5.4 per cent in 1719-23.

Higher instances of ownership in urban areas do not equate to lack of change in non-urban areas. Ownership levels in many categories in non-urban areas *were* rising, but only marginally. Silver, looking glasses, china and earthenware levels experienced a slight rise. Looking glasses were recorded in 7.3 per cent of non-urban inventories in 1680 and 10.8 per cent in 1719-23, whilst china rose from 5.8 to 8.1 per cent in 1719-23. These categories experienced only slight rises, but in others growth was more pronounced. Clocks, invested with a decorative meaning within the household and a practical use concerning work, rose from 1.4 per cent to 10.8 per cent in 1719-23, and books (a weak growth category region-wide, and recorded in declining numbers in urban areas) rose from complete absence in 1680 to 13.5 per cent in 1719-23.

Although measurements of inventoried wealth have significant limitations, it is important to consider wealth and valuation of goods as a factor which may have been connected to ownership of all types of goods in non-urban and urban areas. The graphs below record both the total values of non-urban and urban inventories and the value of household goods in these two categories. Graphs 3 and 4 display the total value of urban and non-urban inventories. They indicate that in more than half of non-urban inventories wealth was concentrated upwards of £40, whereas in urban inventories only approximately a third of all inventories recorded wealth higher than £40. Despite the recording of higher levels of overall wealth in non-urban inventories, it is clear that these did not translate into higher levels of goods ownership or a higher valuation of those household goods owned. Graphs 5 and 6 display the value of household goods in urban and non-urban inventories, revealing that despite more than half of non-urban inventories recording total wealth at upwards of £40, more than three quarters of these households contained household goods valued at less than £20. The value of household goods in urban inventories was marginally higher with around four-fifths of urban households containing goods valued at less than £40. This wealth analysis reflects Estabrook's estimation that in the Bristol area urban households were largely not

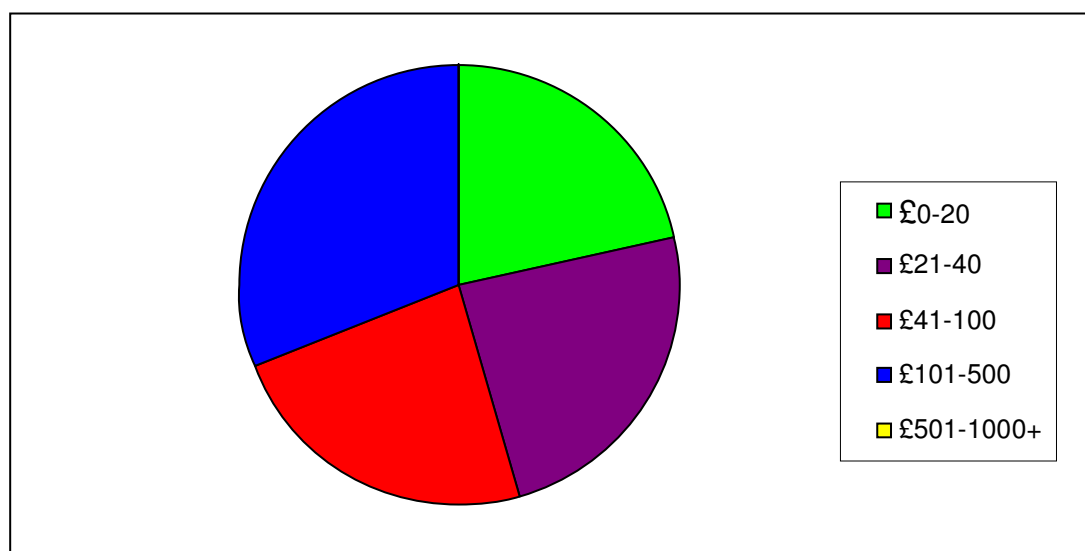
wealthier than rural examples, despite displaying higher levels of new and luxury goods ownership.<sup>604</sup>

**Graph 3: Total Value of Urban Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

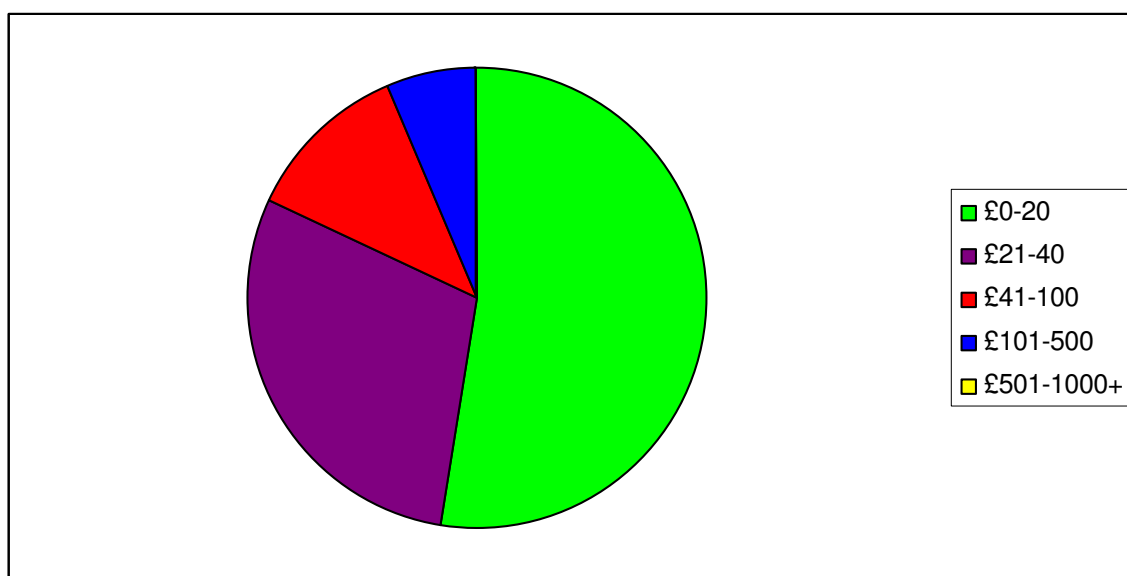
**Graph 4: Total Value of Non-Urban Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

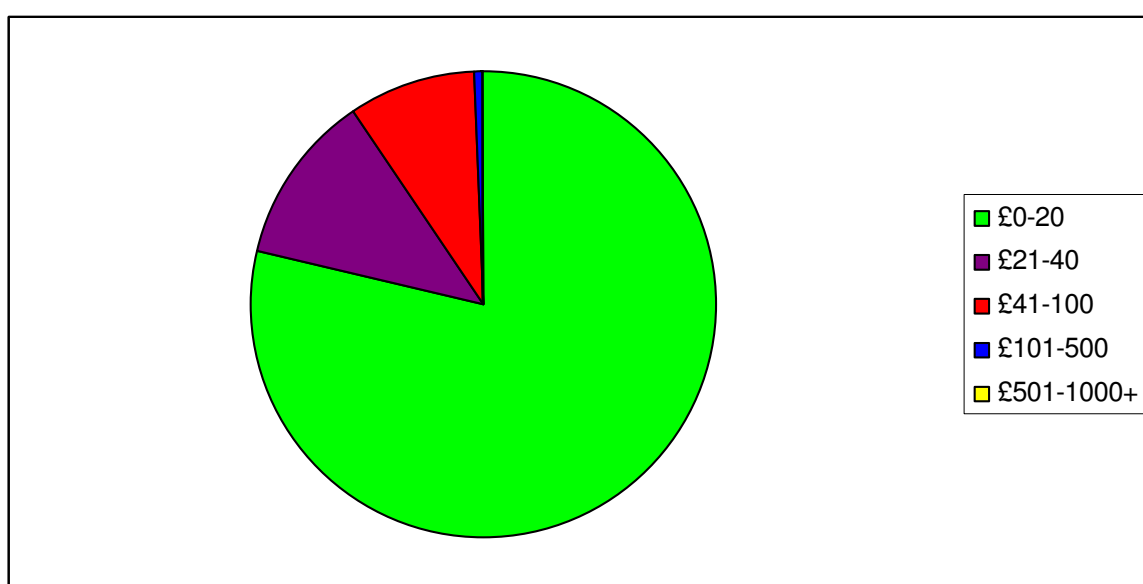
<sup>604</sup> Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic*, p. 136.

**Graph 5: Value of Household Goods in Urban Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Graph 6: Value of Household Goods in Non-Urban Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

The reasons for these differences are largely connected to the types of goods recorded in non-urban and urban inventories, good that were determined by occupation and status as much as they were connected to location. Non-urban inventories tended to be those of yeoman and as such recorded capital held in crops and livestock. These items inflated

the overall value of these inventories, but their appearance reinforces the fact that country living and working was different from that experienced in urban areas. Wealth recorded in these non-urban areas may suggest a profitable farm, but does not represent substantial disposable income that could be spent on household goods. It is possible that the existence of livestock, and at certain times crops, as part of rural inventories, so much more valuable than many household possessions, may have simply overshadowed the importance of less valuable basic items such as beds, chairs and tables. However, it is also possible that items such as chairs appeared in small numbers of rural inventories because traditional sitting furniture such as wooden benches prevailed for longer, or that rural households continued to use wooden dining utensils instead of exclusively using pewter or earthenware.

Some reasons for the differences in ownership levels exhibited can be postulated. The data itself may be biased towards detailed urban inventories. In each surveyed year a higher number of non-urban inventories were collected. However, a large percentage of these inventories, especially those of yeoman, provided little or no detail of household commodities. They simply catalogued 'all of the household goods', followed by an accumulative valuation of these items (sometimes by room), and then listing of livestock and farming equipment in closer detail. Thus, the number of non-urban cases that provide detailed data for specific goods was reduced somewhat. The inventories that lack detail have not been excluded from this study as they are not without value. A high percentage of non-urban inventories which fell into the 'not detailed' category (those which did not record household goods in detail, but provided simply a valuation) also specified agricultural equipment. The value range of these inventories is indicative of the value of agricultural equipment. The value of these inventories (this does not include leasehold farm land which is recorded in a number of inventories) ranged from £2 6s. 8d. to £623.

These figures and ownership levels are suggestive of the structure of consumption and ownership in the countryside specifically. They suggest that the mentality or basic requirements of rural living naturally resulted in a necessity to value agricultural equipment over new consumer items. A high proportion of rural wealth was tied up in agricultural and work-related goods. As such, new household goods may have been secondary to work-related items, which could cost, and were valued at, more than many

household commodities. Additionally, rural living and agricultural work could indicate a propensity to long working hours which resulted in less time spent at home at leisure and a reduced need for household comforts. Given the dramatic contrast between isolated non-urban, even rural, areas and growing urbanised centres, and the needs of their inhabitants, it is unsurprising that this translated into a divergence in ownership habits. It appears that there were indeed significant cultural differences between the urbane and the rustic, as Estabrook argues, that were manifest in the material culture of many households.<sup>605</sup> Thomas suggests that small cottagers, day labourers and husbandmen were consumed by the struggle for 'subsistence and security', meaning that traditional rural communities were not driven by 'individual gain'.<sup>606</sup> The urban/non-urban separation presented here suggests that this preoccupation with subsistence may have continued into the eighteenth century.

The rural areas of Northumberland and Durham were notoriously sparsely populated, providing less opportunity for the emulation or diffusion of goods that has been so freely bandied about as an explanation for high levels of new goods ownership. As Weatherill identifies, the close proximity of urban living, a result of concentrated town populations, may have encouraged inhabitants to look inwardly into their homes, encouraging individuals to acquire comforting commodities. For Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann the use of objects was more about establishing social status rather than expressing it, but even this would have been more appropriate in the town where close proximity may have encouraged the need to assert social status through objects, rather than in the countryside.<sup>607</sup>

The availability of goods is a factor which should also be considered. As Chapter Six detailed, urbanised areas such as market towns were increasingly centres of retail and distribution, with Newcastle in particular developing as the crux of the distribution system in Northumberland and Durham. Weatherill highlights the similarity of high ownership levels in both her north-east and Kent samples, connecting it partially to both Newcastle and Kent's trading connections with London, the goods that these trading

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<sup>605</sup> Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic*, p. 132, 276-280.

<sup>606</sup> K. Thomas, *The Ends of Life* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 110-111.

<sup>607</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 81-83; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 174-5.

connections made available and distribution networks.<sup>608</sup> The importance of proximity to distribution facilities can be assessed simply by creating a breakdown of the urban and non-urban categories by separating Newcastle into an individual category. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 18. If ownership levels were based primarily on proximity to distribution centres, the inventories from Newcastle, the regional capital and centre of distribution, would likely display higher percentages of ownership.

In the 1680 survey non-urban inventories again had the lowest counts of ownership. Inventories in Newcastle and other urban areas recorded most items at a much higher level. In 1680 the Newcastle inventories largely dominated in ownership of common goods categories with relatively higher levels than those recorded in other urban areas. For example, in 1680 the Newcastle sample recorded 90.9 per cent with tables, 81.8 per cent with chairs, 100 per cent with beds, 90.9 per cent with pewter, and 90 per cent with linen. Inventories from the other urban areas recorded 60 per cent with tables, 64 per cent with chairs, 60 per cent with beds, 60 per cent with pewter and 64 per cent with linen. A very high level of ownership of these common items in Newcastle does suggest that the area was well-provisioned. However, percentages of new household goods recorded suggest a varied picture in which Newcastle did not always lead. Cutlery, silver and china were recorded at a similar level in both Newcastle and other urban areas. China was recorded in 9 per cent of Newcastle and 8 per cent of other urban inventories in 1680, and cutlery was recorded in 27.2 per cent of Newcastle and 28 per cent of other urban inventories in the same year. Urban places outside the regional capital recorded slightly higher levels of ownership in some goods categories. Books were recorded in 20 per cent of other urban inventories, and clocks were recorded in 8 per cent but were not found in any Newcastle inventories in 1680.

By 1700 common goods ownership in other urban areas was at a similar level to that of Newcastle, but the regional capital showed high levels of new household goods with cutlery ownership at 41.6 per cent, books at 25 per cent, pictures at 16.6 per cent, looking glasses at 25 per cent, clocks at 33.3 per cent and earthenware at 16.6 per cent. This change could represent the growth of population and facilities in Newcastle by

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<sup>608</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 61; Scammell, 'Was the North-East Different', p. 22.

1700, but the data for the period 1719-23 varies again, suggesting the existence of no clear pattern separating Newcastle and other urban areas over the entire period. Clearly the ownership of new goods such as cutlery and china was not dominated by proximity to the *major* distribution centre of Newcastle, but may have been connected to location next to *a* distribution centre, however small. Assuming that close proximity to retail facilities and new goods in Newcastle would lead to high levels of new goods ownership is to seek a straightforward answer to a complex question. Despite its growth as a retailing and commercial centre, the social makeup of Newcastle was complex. According to Ellis '[t]he nature of the local economy [in Newcastle] had created an unusually uneven distribution of wealth and status in the town', a statement reinforced by the following discussion of status, occupation and inventory values.<sup>609</sup> However, the high levels of new goods ownership in these urban areas (including Newcastle and other urban places) reveals a more rapid adoption of new practices associated with the manners and decoration of the house. The evidence suggests that non-urban and urban differences were more significant than any differences that existed between Newcastle and the other market towns of the region. The differences in percentages of looking glasses, books, pictures, china and cutlery found in urban and non-urban places is, at its root, an example of different engagements with the home. As practical objects they became useful through use within the home, as decorative objects they were invested with meaning by being observed. For those engaged in agriculture the field and the home could both be places of work that were less likely to be associated with decoration, whilst for those in urban areas work and home may have increasingly become separate places.

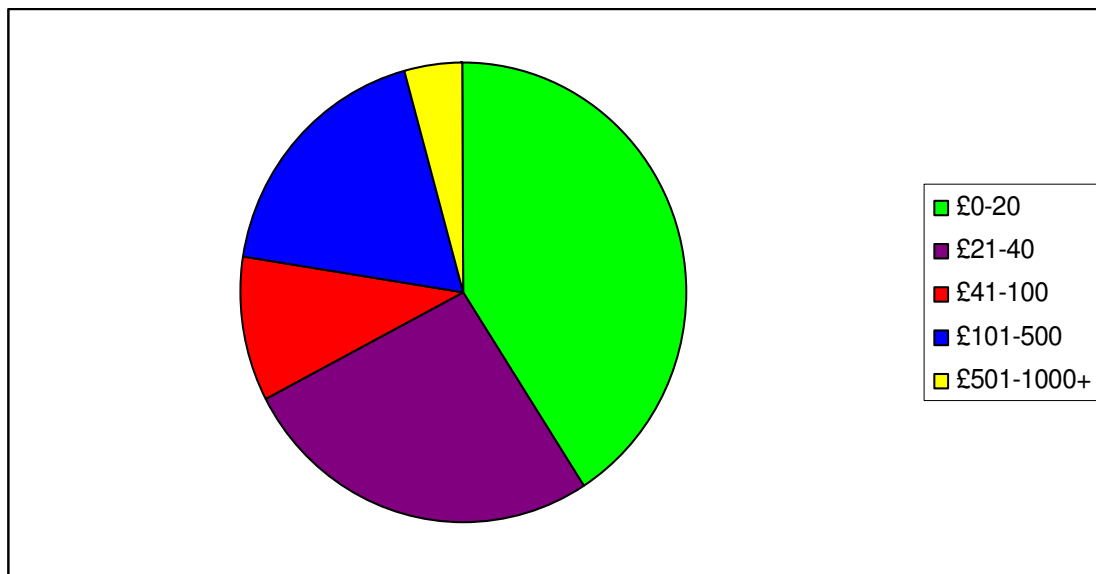
Whilst there was a clear division between non-urban and urban areas, demarcation within urban areas was less clear. Overall wealth data and valuation of household goods in Newcastle and other urban areas reflects this blurring. Graphs 7 and 8 display the total value of inventories in other urban areas and in Newcastle. The full value of inventories in Newcastle and other urban areas reveal a similar pattern, with inventories largely concentrated below the £40 value. The two categories reveal a distinct split between those recorded at less than £40 and a smaller group that valued more than £40. The value of household goods in these inventories (displayed on Graphs 9 and 10)

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<sup>609</sup> Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 13.

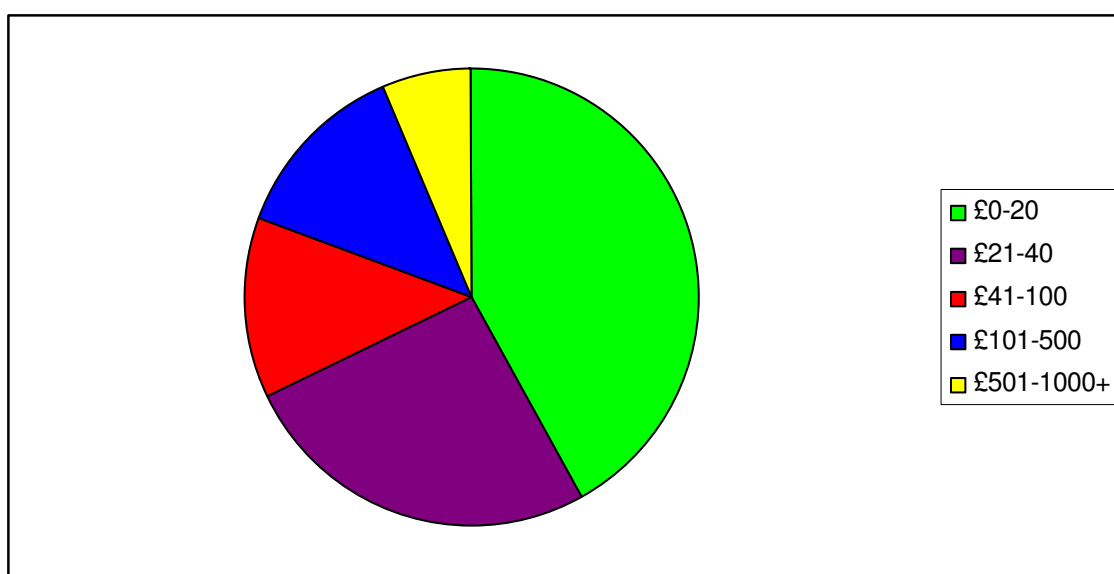
shows a similar pattern, with values significantly falling into the lower categories below £40. In other urban areas the value of goods was largely concentrated in the £31-40 category and £0-5, whilst at Newcastle the dominant category was between £11-20 but with few owning goods valued between £31-40.

**Graph 7: Total Value of Other Urban Inventories**



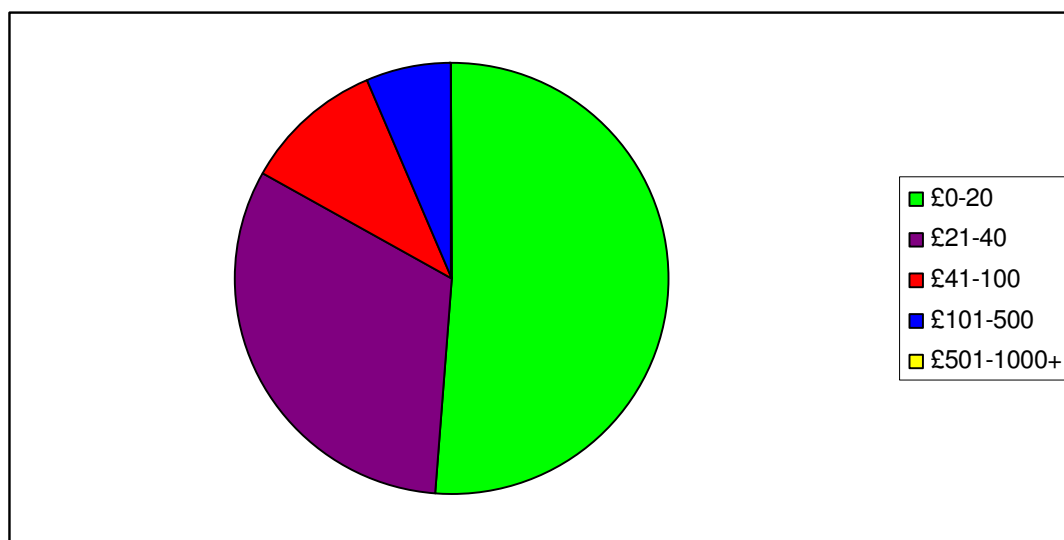
Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Graph 8: Total Value of Newcastle Inventories**



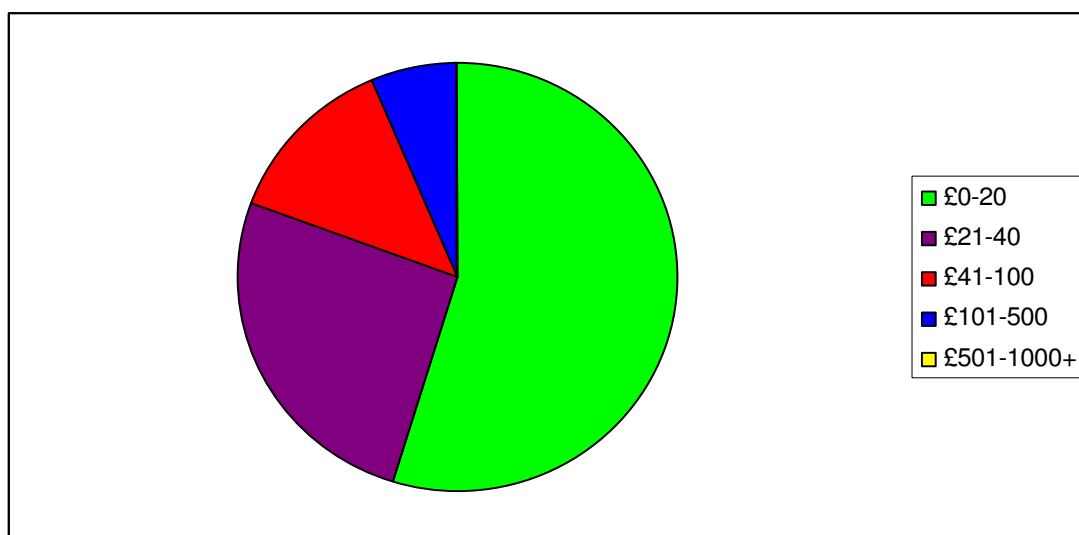
Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Graph 9: Value of Household Goods in Other Urban Areas Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Graph 10: Value of Household Goods in Newcastle Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

The graphs presented here indicate distinct differences in the values recorded in non-urban and urban inventories. Urban households were more often recorded owning goods of all kinds. However, the wealth breakdowns also indicate that a larger proportion of

the wealth valued in inventories was tied in household goods in urban inventories than in non-urban inventories. Measuring this difference in connection to wealth is unhelpful. The overall wealth of an inventory had no reflection on the value, amount, or types of goods owned, possibly confirming Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann's conclusion that the significance of wealth as an indication of material goods consumption has been exaggerated.<sup>610</sup> Total wealth is not an indication of disposable income. However what can be stated is that geographical variations, which were undoubtedly integrally connected to both occupational and cultural differences, manifest themselves in the amount and types of goods owned. Those involved in agriculture with capital primarily tied to livestock, farm equipment and crops did not necessarily have the disposable income or inclination to invest in new consumer goods. Those living and working in the urbanised areas did not necessarily have the disposable income to invest in livestock or small parcels of land but could invest wealth in new household items.

By 1723 those living in market towns and commercial or industrial places elsewhere in Northumberland and Durham (such as those that comprise the 'urban' category) were just as likely to own common and new goods as those living in the regional capital. As Weatherill has stated, regional capitals and provincial centres cannot be viewed as exemplary of a region as a whole.<sup>611</sup> Nor were these non-urban/urban differences exclusive to Northumberland and Durham. The results certainly indicate that urban areas had higher levels of ownership, but they were not islands of consumption.<sup>612</sup> Growth of new consumer durables and semi-durables did taken place in non-urban areas although levels were much lower than in urban areas where access, ability, and inclination to purchase new items was more prominent. However, there was no clear hierarchy of consumption connected to location beyond the straightforward non-urban/urban split. Although Newcastle was a centre of retailing and distribution it did not lead naturally to the highest levels of ownership, and throughout the period residents of the regional capital were no more likely to own common or new goods than those from other urban areas such as Durham – the administrative centre of the region, Sunderland – the rapidly expanding port at the mouth of the river Wear, North and South Shields – towns at the mouth of the river Tyne which equally benefitted from

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<sup>610</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 165.

<sup>611</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 45.

<sup>612</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89.

Newcastle's expansive trade, and Barnard Castle, Alnwick, Hexham, and Bishop Auckland – which continued as important market towns. Location does seem to have some bearing on the extent of ownership, but it did not work alone as a factor.

### *Status/Occupation*

A clear breakdown of ownership by occupation or status is impossible to draw up from the information that inventories supply. Assessors of inventories identified owners by interchangeably using titles of status or occupation, and therefore both status and occupation have been used in this analysis. Status categories such as husbandman, yeoman and gentleman have been retained, whilst individual occupations have been grouped into some more general categories for ease of analysis. To some extent this data must be used carefully as 24.5 per cent (almost a quarter) of all inventories in the survey did not contain definite indication of occupation or status, therefore these inventories are absent from this analysis. As a result many of the status/occupation categories are based on only a handful of inventories and cannot necessarily be viewed as representative.<sup>613</sup>

Furthermore, it is difficult to generate an accurate understanding of some status groups. The period between 1680 and the 1720s was one that experienced important economic and wealth transformations, it was characterised by social fluidity and mobility, made all the more complex by changes in ownership of goods and the appearance of new goods in the household. For example, yeoman were considered to be substantial farmers and husbandmen were small farmers, however wealth assessments and goods ownership do not necessarily confirm these established positions.<sup>614</sup> Husbandmen's inventories in some cases could be valued as highly as yeoman's or in some cases higher. Likewise, the distinction between gentlemen and yeoman is not a straightforward one. Despite these limitations a number of occupation and status groups are highlighted as having a significant connection to ownership of new goods. These groups also correspond with those highlighted by Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann's study of Kent and Cornwall, Estabrook's study of Bristol, Weatherill's general national findings, and Levine and

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<sup>613</sup> An in-depth comparison of male and female ownership levels has not been included in this study due to the small number of female inventories recorded compared to those of males.

<sup>614</sup> Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, pp. 186-190.

Wrightson's localised findings at Whickham in County Durham.<sup>615</sup> The results of this analysis are displayed on Table 19.

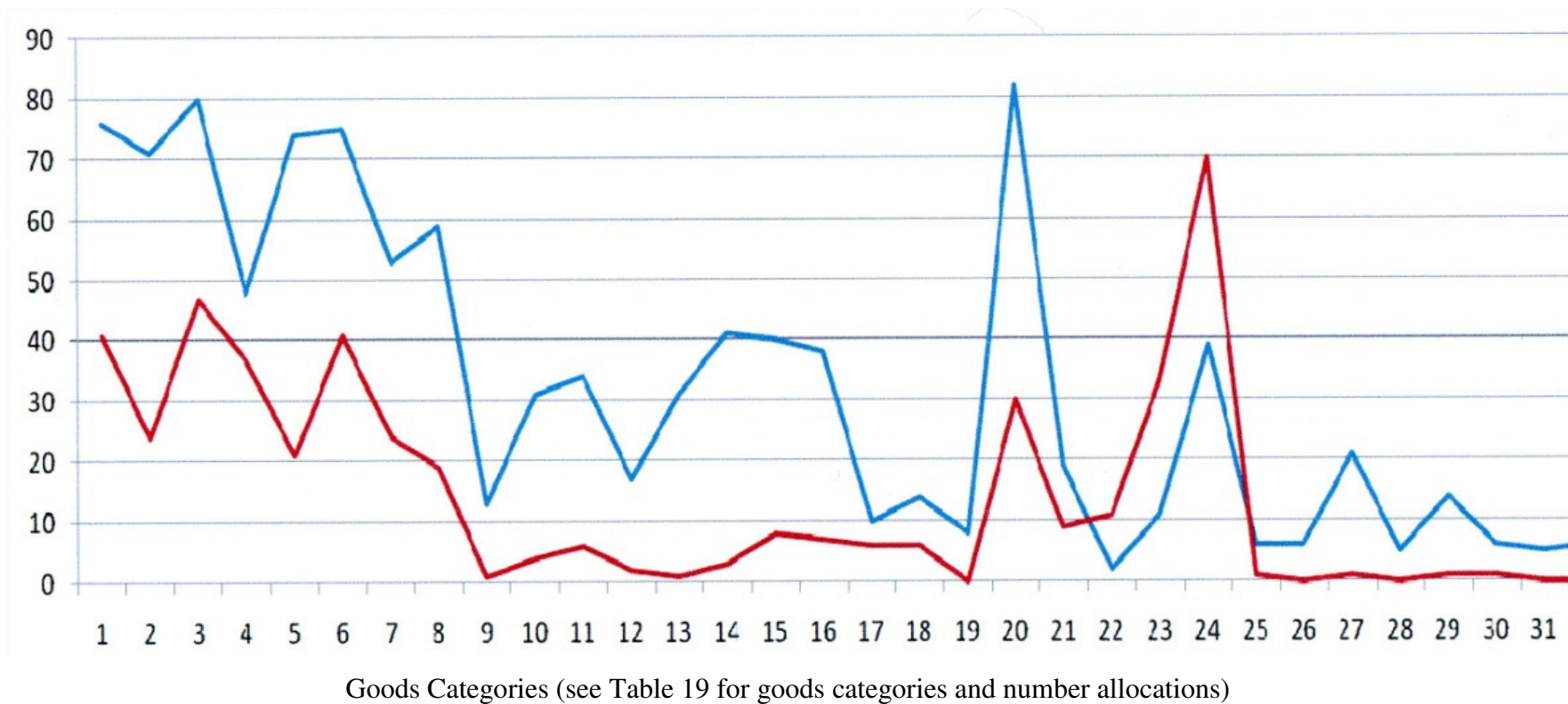
The inventories of yeoman, almost exclusively in rural areas, show low levels of ownership, reflecting the pattern experienced in Cornwall.<sup>616</sup> Nor did this situation change dramatically for farming households of yeomen in Northumberland and Durham between 1680 and the 1720s. Close analysis of individual examples, highlighted in the following chapter, confirms this lack of change chronologically. The inventories of yeoman in particular exhibited a distinct lack of adornment, with no separation of goods into rooms, and often no detailed listing of items within the house, simply the catch-all phrase 'all the household goods'. Those items which were given a fuller description were often farming equipment or agricultural stock, goods with a higher value. Statistical data is suggestive of this pattern. Graph 11 plots percentage ownership levels of all social groups (plot 1), against the ownership levels of yeomen (plot 2). The numbers along the bottom refer to the number allocated to each goods category shown on Table 19. The pattern of goods ownership experienced by yeoman and other social groups rose and fell in roughly the same pattern, however yeoman experienced ownership at an almost uniformly lower level. The only exception were those at points 22 (inventories that listed agricultural goods only), 23 (those that contained no detailed listing of household goods), and 24 (those which listed agricultural equipment). Apart from these categories only tables, beds, pewter and linen were owned in large numbers by yeomen.

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<sup>615</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, Chapter 7; Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic*, pp. 139-140; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 166-189; Levine and Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, pp. 234-238.

<sup>616</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, pp. 149-151.

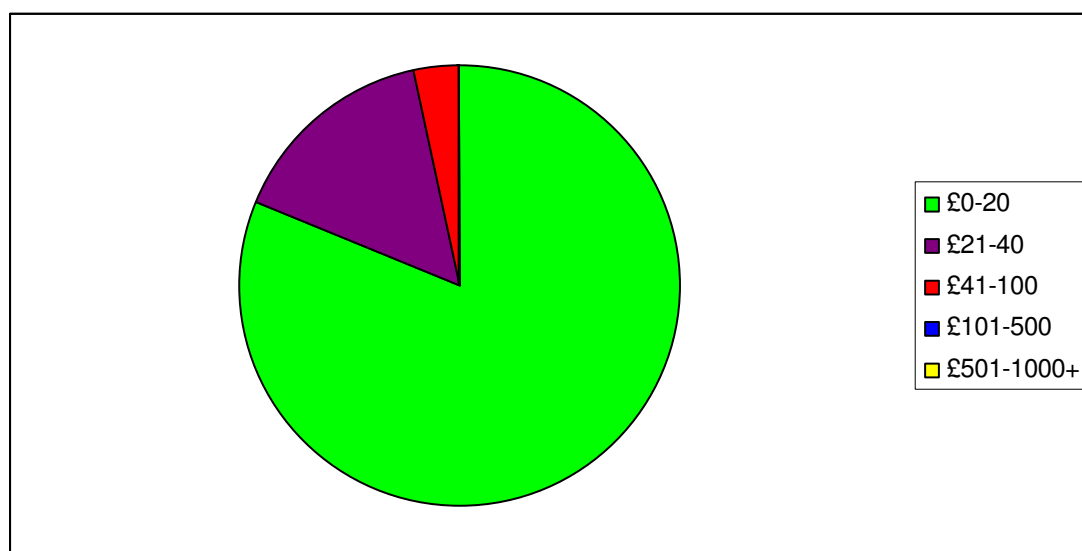
**Graph 11: Percentage of Ownership for Yeoman (red) compared to all Other Social Groups (blue), 1680-1723**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

The value of household goods owned by yeomen, shown of Graph 12, reflects this sparse level of household possession. Slightly more than a third of yeoman inventories contained household goods valued at less than £5, and more than three quarters of yeoman inventories analysed had household goods valued at less than £20.

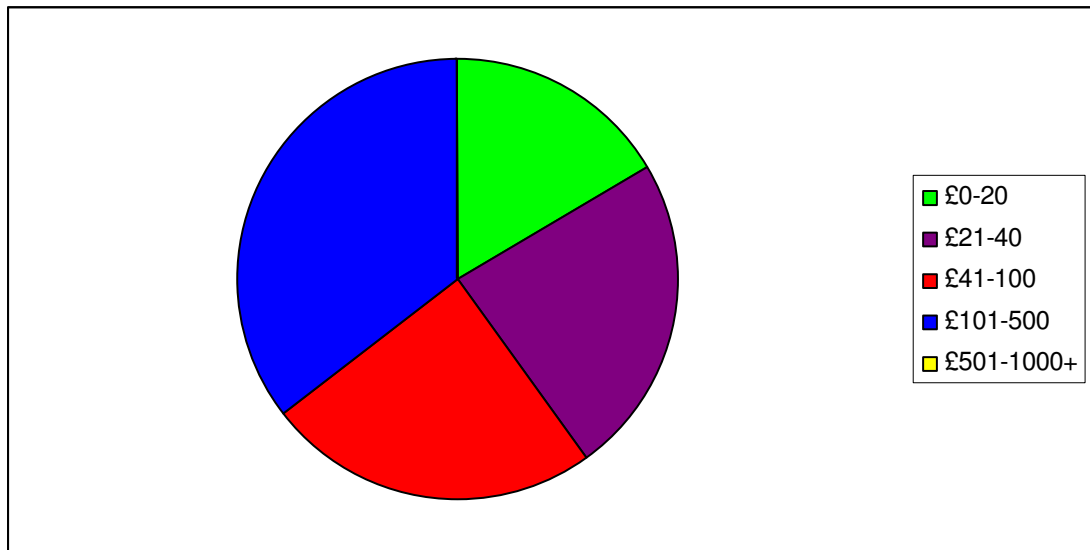
**Graph 12: Value of Household Goods in Yeoman Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

Nor is it evident that these sparse interiors and low values were directly connected to the total wealth recorded in yeoman inventories. As Graph 13, which indicates total wealth of yeoman inventories, indicates, full inventory values were not accordingly low. For example, approximately a third of yeoman households had inventories valued between £101 and £500. Assessment of the mean total value of yeoman inventories at £103 (displayed on Table 20) also supports this. This suggests that yeoman wealth was particularly tied in agricultural work-related items rather than household goods, or that there were distinct cultural differences between rural and urban areas.

**Graph 13: Total Value of Yeoman Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

The exceptions in the yeoman category were inventories that were more akin in valuation and ownership to those of gentlemen. Such blurred boundaries between yeoman and gentlemen based on wealth and goods emphasise the thin line which existed in status definitions. Households of gentlemen were also predominantly in rural agricultural areas and suggested a level of production in line with that of commercial farming, a transformation which was becoming increasingly common in the Northumberland and Durham farming areas from the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth.<sup>617</sup> This distinguished them from yeoman in that the valuation of gentlemen's inventories was generally slightly higher, with a mean value of £160, and they experienced a higher and richer level of basic and new household goods ownerships. Gentlemen were not exclusively located in rural areas, some could be found in urban centres, emphasising again that the status definition was not straightforward in this period of social fluidity. The close stratification of English society, new forms of wealth, potential for rising in social status, and blurred definition of the middling sorts mean that defining the 'gentleman' is and was problematic.<sup>618</sup> Whilst in the countryside

<sup>617</sup> For details of the commercialisation of farming in Northumberland and Durham see Chapter Two above; Brassley, 'Northumberland and Durham', pp. 30-58; R. A. Butlin, 'Rural Change in Northumberland, 1600-1880' in A. D. M. Phillips and B. J. Turton (eds.) *Environment, Man and Economic Change* (London, 1975), pp. 218-237; Hodgson, 'The Progress of Enclosure', pp. 83-102.

<sup>618</sup> For in-depth discussion of the definition of the middling sorts and the changing status of 'gentlemen' see, P. Corfield, 'The Rivals: Landed and Other Gentlemen' in N. Harte and R. Quinault (eds.) *Land and*

the status ‘gentlemen’ seems to have been connected with commercial farming and increased material culture of the household, in the urban environment ‘gentleman’ could represent the “pseudo” gentry of the professional class or even possibly retired tradesmen. Despite the differences in geographical location and possibly in occupation, both urban and rural gentlemen appeared to have experienced similar levels of basic household comfort. The inventories of gentlemen exhibited a relatively high level of new goods ownership, 40.9 per cent of inventories contained looking glasses, 36.3 per cent contained pictures, and 27.2 contained clocks, but within this category there could be large gaps in ownership, specifically between those in rural and urban areas which again suggests the fluidity of the term ‘gentleman’. The significant difference between gentlemen in rural and urban areas was that those in urban homes had no discernable amount of agricultural equipment or work-related goods, suggesting that they were truly urban gentlemen.<sup>619</sup>

However, as Weatherill identified, gentlemen did not lead the way in ownership of new goods, unlike Kent where they could be ‘pioneers’ of new household goods.<sup>620</sup> Professionals, merchants, and those in maritime trades displayed considerably higher levels of ownership, as did retailers in particular goods categories (as shown on Table 19). The households of professionals and merchants, who represented the emerging pseudo-gentry which were increasingly wealthy and polite but landless, displayed some of the highest levels of ownership with over 80 per cent owning basic commodities such as tables, chairs, beds, and pewter. They also showed the highest levels of new goods ownership. Cutlery, pictures and glassware were found in 66.6 per cent of professional households, looking glasses were found in 77.7 per cent and 55.5 per cent had earthenware. Professionals also showed the highest levels of china ownership at 44.4 per cent. Those inventories in the maritime category also displayed remarkably high levels of new goods suggesting the prominent position of such groups especially on the Tyne and Wear with their continually expanding sea ports and maritime trade. These findings also suggest a continuation from the previous century when those in the

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*Society in Britain, 1700-1914* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 1-33; Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 70-75; J. Barry and C. Brooks (eds.), *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke, 1994); R. Hunt, *The Middling Sort* (London, 1996); J. Barry, ‘The Making of the Middle Class? (review article)’ *Past and Present* (1994), pp. 194-208.

<sup>619</sup> Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance*; Everitt, ‘Country, County and Town’, pp. 95-96.

<sup>620</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 191; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 151.

maritime trades had also led in ownership of new goods.<sup>621</sup> Such findings reflect the experience of similar groups in London, where Earle suggests professionals were a significantly expanding group, and in Kent and Cornwall where Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann indicate that maritime, services and retailing households were more likely to own new material goods.<sup>622</sup>

As comparison with other inventory studies reveals, the pattern of ownership associated with occupation and status was not exclusive to Northumberland and Durham, and it was also experienced on a more local level in some individual parishes in the region. Levine and Wrightson highlighted a similar structure to goods ownership in the developing industrial parish of Whickham where ‘new patterns of consumption were pioneered by the lesser gentry, substantial farmers, and the more prosperous participants in commerce and industry.’<sup>623</sup> However, ownership of new goods and a rich material culture in the household was heavily balanced towards professionals, merchants and those in maritime trades. Gentlemen experienced a relatively rich material culture but some were bound by the need to invest in agricultural equipment. They did not have the disposable funds of wealthy gentry, professionals or merchants. Although the region did benefit from a relatively rich agricultural sector, the balance of ownership suggests the prominent position of commerce and trade in the region.

To some extent the high levels of ownership in professional, merchant, maritime and (to some degree) retail categories must be connected to location, occupation and wealth. The homes of professionals, merchants, retailers and those in the maritime trades were all more likely to be located in major urban centres or market towns. Whilst Weatherill has suggested that the close proximity of urban living may have forced householders to look inwards into their homes and decorate them as personal space, the reasons for concentrated new goods ownership in these groups may be more complex. Located in urban centres and larger market towns they were firstly closer to goods distribution points, but also had access to large urban populations which may have increased their trade, earning potential, and as a result, their disposable income. Wealth analysis reflects the concentration of professional, retail and maritime wealth in household

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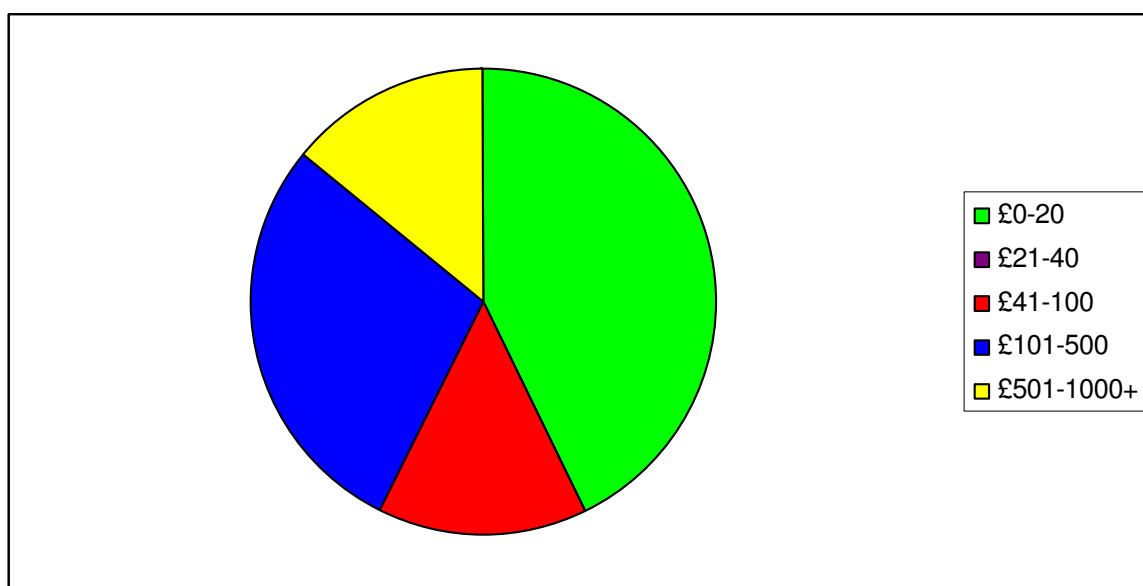
<sup>621</sup> Heley, ‘The Material Culture of the Tradesmen of Newcastle’ I, p. 201.

<sup>622</sup> Earle, ‘The Economy of London’, p. 89; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 150.

<sup>623</sup> Levine and Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, p. 238.

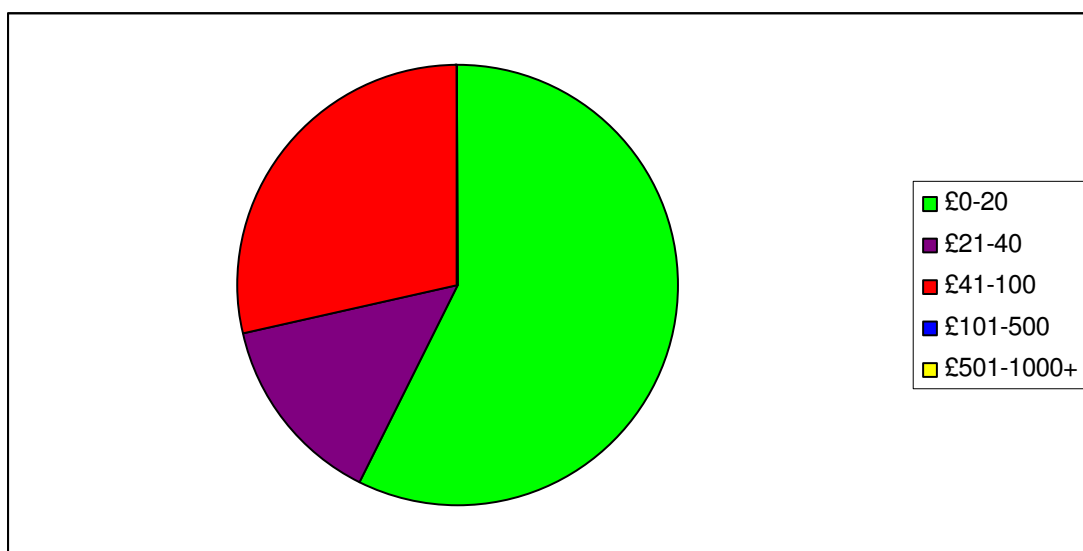
goods, with a close correlation between total wealth in inventories and value of household goods. Some examples of the closeness of total inventoried wealth to value of household goods are displayed in Graphs 14 through 17. Mean total inventory values (Table 20) at £220 for those in maritime trades, £261 for merchants, and £115 for professionals do suggest that for the new pseudo-gentry higher average inventory values were related to ownership of new household goods. Importantly, few of these occupations required the constant outlays that were necessary for those involved in farming, where capital was continually tied to subsistence and work.

**Graph 14: Total Value of Maritime Inventories**



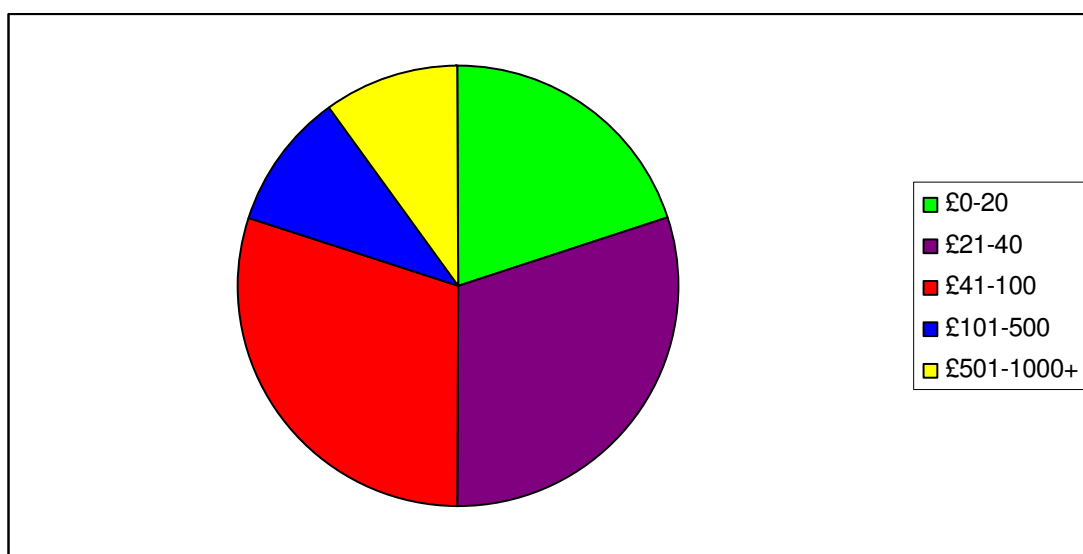
Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Graph 15: Value of Household Goods in Maritime Inventories**



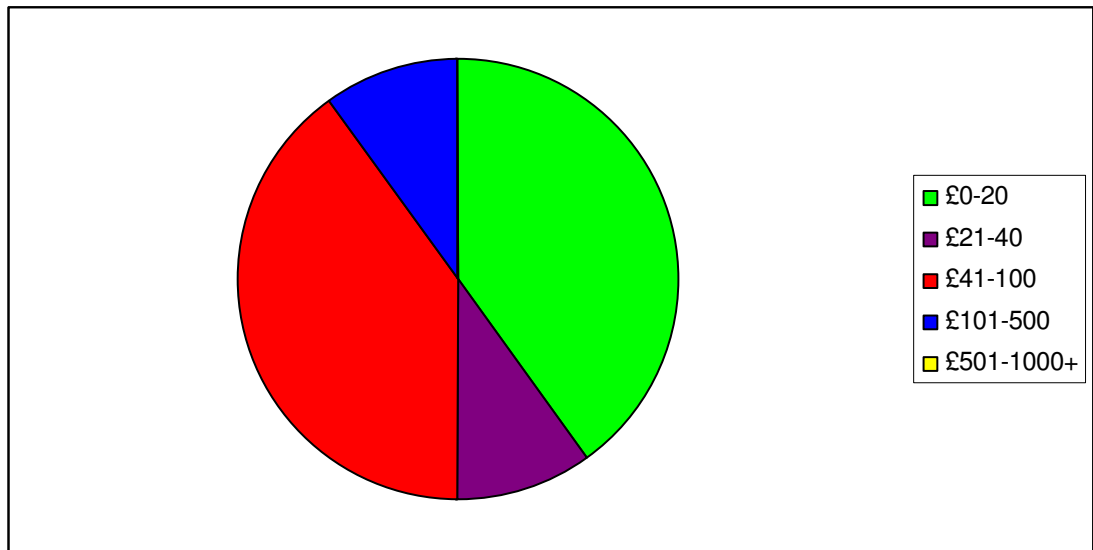
Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Graph 16: Total Value of Professional Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Graph 17: Value of Household Goods in Professional Inventories**



Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

The high levels of new goods ownership in maritime inventories are particularly interesting and could suggest the possible interplay of a gender influence. Where mariners and master mariners were away from home a wife may have been in control of household spending, choosing to purchase decorative or new items. This however can only be speculated as the inventories do not necessarily indicate marital status. Equally this high level of ownership may have been influenced by the proximity mariners had to goods shipped into ports and their location in major urban centres.<sup>624</sup>

Location, wealth, occupation and status did not work alone as factors influencing ownership patterns. To some extent all three factors were interconnected, especially for those individuals who experienced a richer and more diverse material culture in their home. Status and occupation seem to have been defining factors in differences in ownership, supporting Weatherill's conclusions. Unlike the urban/rural (urban/non-urban) differences which were distinctive to Northumberland and Durham, occupational and status differences were experienced at a similar level throughout the country.<sup>625</sup>

<sup>624</sup> Heley, 'The Material Culture of the Tradesmen of Newcastle', I, p. 201.

<sup>625</sup> Scammell, 'Was the North-East Different?', p. 19.

### *Conclusions*

The most significant finding of the probate inventory survey undertaken is how specific we can be about when exactly new manufactured household goods were integrated into Northumberland and Durham households. By the early 1720s items such as pictures, earthenware, china, mirrors and glassware that had once been rare were becoming ubiquitous. Whilst some of these items were recorded in 1680 inventories it is evident that the major period in which they were initially integrated into households on a significant scale was between 1700 and the 1720s. The tentative data for the 1740s suggests continued expansion in ownership of manufactured consumer goods. The continued adoption of items such as earthenware, glass and metal ware, by an increasingly diverse range of households, clearly indicates a local market for the goods produced by the region's consumer industries. It is evident from the data presented in this chapter that not only were established household goods making inroads into homes in Northumberland and Durham, but that new manufactured items were particularly rapidly integrated. It is accurate to suggest, as Weatherill does, that the high levels of new goods ownership in the region may well have been associated with the special connection between Newcastle and London which saw finished goods enter the Tyne.<sup>626</sup> Chapter Five highlights the movement of increasing quantities of manufactured goods and exotic, imported consumables into the region. However, the timing of the adoption of these new goods suggests that local demand may have initiated, encouraged and justified the expanding production of consumer goods in the region.

Households in Northumberland and Durham were clearly participating in new ownership habits that were evident throughout England at this time. As such production of consumer goods in the region may have been encouraged not only by local demand but by cultural changes, adoption of goods, and expansion of demand that was taking place on a national scale. However, the unusual nature of the region's mixed economy meant ownership patterns did not exactly mirror those visible in any other region. There was a definite separation between ownership patterns experienced in the region, but it was more complex than a mere rural/urban, or for the purposes of this study non-urban/urban, split. Differences between urban and non-urban homes were evident. These were clearly not connected to proximity to the major retailing and distribution

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<sup>626</sup> Ibid, p. 12, 22.

centre of Newcastle, suggesting that there was an evident, perhaps cultural, difference between the urbane and rustic. Further analysis indicates that it was possibly not individual wealth levels that explain differences in household goods ownership. Rural and urban living lent themselves to distinctive ways of holding wealth which may be viewed through goods ownership. Essentially, urban and rural living embodied differing cultural values.

Such urban/non-urban differences in ownership were also essentially connected to occupation and status. Analysis of ownership by occupation and status indicates that Northumberland and Durham displayed many similarities to other regions such as Kent, Cornwall, London and Bristol. The nature of their work meant that professionals were more likely to reside in urban areas and apparently accumulate material goods, as were merchants and those involved in maritime activities. Elsewhere, those involved in farming were more likely to reside in non-urbanised areas, and, as a consequence of their trade, had large sums of capital tied in livestock and crops that could not be used to purchase items. The differences in ownership were, at their root, reflective of occupational and status differences rather than wealth.

The probate inventory data discussed above provides a snapshot of the ownership patterns of the middling sort of Northumberland and Durham society, and reveals the adoption of new household goods that likely encouraged the expansion of consumer goods production on a local and national scale. Whilst revealing, this data has its limitations. The quantitative nature of this analysis obscures the individuality of households. The ownership of new household goods may indicate greater participation in the new culture of consumption, but what quantities were goods owned in? It is clear that an increasing number of individuals in the region were wage labourers involved in the coal trade, but like Weatherill's national sample, few labourers appear in this inventory survey. Their absence from the probate record means understanding the material culture of the lower rungs of society is still beyond us. To what extent did the poor participate in this new culture? Likewise, the absence of elite families means we cannot compare ownership levels of the middling sort with those of the wealthier. The essential unanswered question is; how extensive was demand? Although this cannot be answered fully, as large scale absence of evidence hinders us, use of other sources can

enable us to approach this question tentatively and this analysis will be undertaken in the following chapter.

**Table 16: Ownership Levels, Accumulative Results, 1680-1740s (%)**

	Total Number of Inventories	Table	Chair	Bed	Cupboard	Chest	Pewter	Brass	Iron	Copper	Cutlery	Silver	Book
1680	104	51.9	42.3	54.8	43.2	43.2	53.8	37.5	37.5	2.8	15.3	16.3	7.6
1700	100	53.0	43.0	64.0	39.0	42.0	59.0	26.0	36.0	3.0	13.0	12.0	5.0
1719- 1723	57.0	57.8	56.1	59.6	29.8	49.1	56.1	40.3	38.5	17.5	22.8	24.5	10.5
1740s	15.0	66.6	60.0	60.0	33.3	53.3	60.0	40.0	46.6	26.6	26.6	20.0	6.6
	Pictures	Looking Glass	Curtains	Glass	China	Spinning Wheel	Instrument	Linen	Work Related	Agr Goods Only	Not Detailed		
1680	10.5	20.1	24.0	26.9	6.7	11.5	4.8	46.1	10.5	8.6	22.1		
1700	5.0	13.0	21.0	15.0	3.0	6.0	3.0	56.0	11.0	5.0	26.0		
1719- 1723	33.3	31.5	26.3	31.5	14.0	10.5	1.7	61.4	21.0	5.2	36.8		
1740s	13.3	20.0	6.6	20.0	33.3	13.3	0	53.3	13.3	0	46.6		
	Agriculture Goods	Shipping	Map	Clock	Tin	Earthenware	Stoneware	Gold					
1680	47.1	1.9	4.8	2.8	0.9	4.8	1.9	0					
1700	59.0	1.0	1.0	9.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	2.0					
1719- 1723	52.6	8.7	5.2	24.5	5.2	22.8	1.7	5.2					
1740s	46.6	0	0	33.3	6.6	6.6	0	0					

Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723; Borthwick Institute, University of York, Hexham and Hexhamshire Inventories 1740-45.

**Table 17: Comparison of Urban Locations and Non-Urban Locations, 1680-1723 (%)**

		Table	Chair	Bed	Cupboard	Chest	Pewter	Brass	Iron	Copper	Cutlery	Silver	Books
1680	Urban	69.4	69.4	72.2	55.5	63.8	69.4	55.5	61.1	5.55	27.7	33.3	19.4
	Non-urban	42.6	27.9	45.5	36.7	32.3	45.5	27.9	25.0	1.4	8.8	7.3	1.4
	Total	51.9	42.3	54.8	43.2	43.2	53.8	37.5	37.5	2.8	15.3	16.3	7.6
1700	Urban	76.9	65.3	84.6	38.4	73.0	73.0	42.3	46.1	3.84	23.0	26.9	11.5
	Non-urban	43.4	34.2	55.2	38.1	30.2	52.6	19.7	31.5	2.6	9.2	6.5	2.6
	Total	53.0	43.0	64.0	39.0	42.0	59.0	26.0	36.0	3.0	13.0	12.0	5.0
1719	Urban	100.0	100.0	95.0	45.0	100.0	90.0	70.0	75.0	30.0	50.0	50.0	15.0
-	Non-urban	35.1	32.4	40.5	21.6	21.6	37.8	24.3	18.9	10.8	8.1	10.8	8.1
1723	Total	57.8	56.1	59.6	29.8	49.1	56.1	40.3	38.5	17.5	22.8	24.5	10.5

**Comparison of Urban Locations and Non-Urban Locations, 1680-1723 (%) continued**

		Pictures	Looking Glass	Curtains	Glass	China	Spinning Wheel	Instrument	Linen	Work Related	Agr Only	Not Detailed
1680	Urban	30.5	44.4	44.4	50.0	8.33	16.6	13.8	72.2	16.6	0	19.4
	Non-urban	0	7.3	13.2	14.7	5.8	8.8	0	32.3	7.3	13.2	23.5
	Total	10.5	20.1	24.0	26.9	6.7	11.5	4.8	46.1	10.5	8.6	22.1
1700	Urban	7.6	23.0	46.1	38.4	3.8	7.6	3.8	76.9	23.0	0	7.6
	Non-urban	3.9	9.2	11.8	6.5	2.6	5.2	2.6	47.3	6.5	6.5	31.5
	Total	5.0	13.0	21.0	15.0	3.0	6.0	3.0	56.0	11.0	5.0	26.0
1719-1720s	Urban	70.0	70.0	60.0	65.0	25.0	20.0	0	100.0	15.0	0	0
	Non-urban	13.5	10.8	8.1	13.5	8.1	5.4	2.7	40.5	24.3	8.1	56.7
	Total	33.3	31.5	26.3	31.5	14.0	10.5	1.7	61.4	21.0	5.2	36.8

**Comparison of Urban Locations and Non-Urban Locations, 1680-1723 (%) continued**

		Agr	Shipping	Map	Clock	Tin	Earthenware	Stoneware	Gold	Total
1680	Urban	13.8	2.77	13.8	5.55	2.77	11.1	5.5	0	36
	Non-urban	64.7	1.4	0	1.4	0	1.4	0	0	68
	Total	47.1	1.9	4.8	2.8	0.9	4.8	1.9	0	104
1700	Urban	19.2	3.8	3.8	23.0	3.8	11.5	7.6	3.8	26
	Non-urban	71.0	0	0	3.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	74
	Total	59.0	1.0	1.0	9.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	2.0	100
1719-1720s	Urban	15.0	25.0	15.0	50.0	15.0	55.0	0	0	20
	Non-urban	72.9	0	0	10.8	0	5.4	2.7	8.1	37
	Total	52.6	8.7	5.2	24.5	5.2	22.8	1.7	5.2	57

Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Table 18: Comparison of Newcastle, other Urban Locations and Non-Urban Inventories (%)**

Period	Location	Table	Chair	Bed	Cupboard	Chest	Pewter	Brass	Iron	Copper	Cutlery
1680	Newcastle	90.9	81.8	100	63.6	81.8	90.9	54.5	81.8	9	27.2
	Urban	60.0	64.0	60.0	52.0	56.0	60.0	56.0	52.0	4.0	28.0
	Non-urban	42.6	27.9	45.5	36.7	32.3	45.5	27.9	25.0	1.4	8.8
	Total	51.9	42.3	54.8	43.2	43.2	53.8	37.5	37.5	2.8	15.3
1700	Newcastle	66.6	66.6	83.3	33.3	66.6	66.6	58.3	66.6	8.3	41.6
	Urban	85.7	64.2	85.7	42.8	78.0	78.0	28.5	28.5	0	7.1
	Non-urban	44.5	35.1	56.7	39.1	31.0	54.0	20.2	32.4	2.7	9.4
	Total	53.0	43.0	64.0	39.0	42.0	59.0	26.0	36.0	3.0	13.0
1719-1720s	Newcastle	100.0	100.0	91.6	58.3	100.0	91.6	66.6	58.3	25.0	50.0
	Urban	100.0	100.0	50.0	37.5	100.0	87.5	75.0	100.0	37.5	50.0
	Non-urban	35.1	32.4	40.5	21.6	21.6	37.8	24.3	18.9	10.8	8.1
	Total	57.8	56.1	59.6	29.8	49.1	56.1	40.3	38.5	17.5	22.8

**Comparison of Newcastle, other Urban Locations and Non-Urban Inventories (%) continued**

Period		Silver	Book	Pictures	Looking Glass	Curtains	Glass	China	Spinning Wheel	Instrument
1680	Newcastle	36.3	18.1	36.3	63.6	72.7	54.5	9.0	9.0	9.0
	Urban	32.0	20.0	28.0	36.0	32.0	48.0	8.0	20.0	16.0
	Non-urban	7.3	1.4	0	7.3	13.2	14.7	5.8	8.8	0
	Total	16.3	7.6	10.5	20.1	24.0	26.9	6.7	11.5	54.8
1700	Newcastle	50.0	25.0	16.6	25.0	75.0	41.6	0	16.6	8.3
	Urban	7.1	0	0	21.4	21.4	35.7	7.1	0	0
	Non-urban	6.7	2.7	4.0	9.4	12.1	6.7	2.7	5.4	2.7
	Total	12.0	5.0	5.0	13.0	21.0	15.0	3.0	6.0	3.0
1719- 1720s	Newcastle	50.0	25.0	75.0	75.0	58.3	50.0	16.6	16.6	0
	Urban	50.0	0	62.5	62.5	62.5	87.5	37.5	25.0	0
	Non-urban	10.8	8.1	13.5	10.8	8.1	13.5	8.1	5.4	2.7
	Total	24.5	10.5	33.3	31.5	26.3	31.5	14.0	10.5	1.7

**Comparison of Newcastle, other Urban Locations and Non-Urban Inventories (%) continued**

Period		Linen	Work related	Agr Only	Not Detailed	Agr	Shipping	Map	Clock	Tin	Earthenware
1680	Newcastle	90.0	9.0	0	0	9.0	0	9.0	0	0	9.0
	Urban	64.0	20.0	0	28.0	16.0	4.0	16.0	8.0	4.0	12.0
	Non-urban	32.3	7.3	13.2	23.5	64.7	1.4	0	1.4	0	1.4
	Total	46.1	10.5	8.6	22.1	47.1	1.9	4.8	2.8	0.9	4.8
1700	Newcastle	83.3	25.0	0	0	0	8.3	8.3	33.3	8.3	16.6
	Urban	71.4	21.4	0	14.2	35.7	0	0	14.2	0	7.1
	Non-urban	48.6	6.7	6.7	32.4	72.9	0	0	4.0	1.3	1.3
	Total	56.0	11.0	5.0	26.0	59.0	1.0	1.0	9.0	2.0	4.0
1719- 1720s	Newcastle	100.0	16.6	0	0	16.6	8.3	8.3	33.3	16.6	41.6
	Urban	100.0	12.5	0	0	12.5	50.0	25.0	75.0	12.5	75.0
	Non-urban	40.5	24.3	8.1	56.7	72.9	0	0	10.8	0	5.4
	Total	61.4	21.0	5.2	36.8	52.6	8.7	5.2	24.5	5.2	22.8

**Comparison of Newcastle, other Urban Locations and Non-Urban Inventories (%) continued**

Date		Stoneware	Gold	Total
1680	Newcastle	18.1	0	11
	Urban	0	0	25
	Non-urban	0	0	68
	Total	1.9	0	104
1700	Newcastle	8.3	8.3	12
	Urban	7.1	0	14
	Rural	1.3	1.3	74
	Non-urban	3.0.	2.0	100
1719- 1720s	Newcastle	0	0	12
	Urban	0	0	8
	Non-urban	2.7	8.1	37
	Total	1.7	5.2	57

Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723

**Table 19: Ownership Data according to Status and Occupational Categories, 1680-1723 (%)**

	Total Number of Inventories	Table 1	Chair 2	Bed 3	Cupboard 4	Chest 5	Pewter 6	Brass 7	Iron 8	Copper 9	Cutlery 10	Silver 11	Book 12
Craftsmen	19	78.9	68.4	80.4	68.4	73.6	78.9	52.6	57.8	10.5	26.3	26.3	15.7
Retail	11	90.9	90.9	90.9	54.5	90.9	90.9	63.6	72.7	9.0	18.1	54.5	18.1
Esquire	1	100.0	100.0	100.0	0	0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0	100.0	100.0	0
Gentleman	22	72.7	68.1	72.7	31.8	77.2	77.2	50.0	59.0	22.7	27.2	45.4	18.1
Husbandman	2	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0	50.0	0	0
Maritime	11	90.9	90.9	72.7	54.5	90.9	81.8	54.5	45.4	18.1	63.6	45.4	0
Merchant	3	100.0	100.0	100.0	66.6	66.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	33.3	33.3	0	66.6
Spinster	7	0	0	28.5	0	14.2	14.2	0	0	0	0	14.2	0
Professional	9	100.0	100.0	100.0	55.5	100.0	88.8	100.0	88.8	33.3	66.6	44.4	55.5
Yeoman	90	41.1	24.4	46.6	36.6	21.1	41.1	24.4	18.8	1.1	4.4	5.5	2.2
Widow	19	63.1	57.8	73.6	42.1	63.1	57.8	36.8	47.3	0	15.7	15.7	10.5
Labourer	3	66.6	33.3	66.6	66.6	33.3	66.6	0	66.6	0	0	0	0

**Ownership Data according to Status and Occupational Categories, 1680-1723 (%) continued**

	Pictures 13	Seeing Glass 14	Curtains 15	Glass 16	China 17	Spinning Wheel 18	Instrument 19	Linen 20	Work Related 21	Agr Only 22	Not Detailed 23
Craftsmen	15.7	21.0	36.8	42.1	0	10.5	10.5	78.9	52.6	0	15.7
Retail	45.4	54.5	63.6	54.5	18.1	18.1	0	90.9	36.3	0	0
Esquire	0	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	0	0	0
Gentleman	36.3	40.9	40.9	40.9	4.5	4.5	18.1	77.2	14.5	4.5	4.5
Husbandman	0	50.0	0	50.0	0	0	0	50.0	50.0	0	50.0
Maritime	63.6	72.7	54.5	54.5	27.2	27.2	0	90.9	9.0	0	9.0
Merchant	33.3	66.6	33.3	66.6	0	0	0	100.0	33.3	0	0
Spinster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42.8	0	0	14.2
Professional	66.6	77.7	55.5	66.6	44.4	22.2	0	88.8	11.1	0	0
Yeoman	1.1	3.3	7.7	66.6	5.5	5.5	0	30.0	8.8	11.1	33.3
Widow	10.5	21.0	36.8	42.1	0	26.3	10.5	78.9	5.2	5.2	21.0
Labourer	0	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	66.6	0	0	33.3

**Ownership Data according to Status and Occupational Categories, 1680-1723 (%) continued**

	Agr	Shipping	Map	Clock	Tin	Earthenware	Stoneware	Gold
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Craftsmen	36.8	10.5	10.5	5.2	5.2	0	5.2	0
Retail	18.1	18.1	9.0	45.4	9.0	18.1	18.1	0
Esquire	100	0	0	100.0	0	0	0	0
Gentleman	77.2	0	9.0	27.2	4.5	0	9.0	9.0
Hussbandman	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maritime	18.1	9.0	0	36.3	0	27.2	0	9.0
Merchant	33.3	0	33.3	33.3	33.3	66.6	0	0
Spinster	28.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	14.2
Professional	22.2	11.1	0	44.4	11.1	55.5	0	0
Yeoman	70	1.1	0	1.1	0	1.1	1.1	0
Widow	21	0	0	0	0	15.7	5.2	5.2
Labourer	66.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Table 20: Lowest, Highest and Mean Value of selected Occupational and Status Groups (based on total inventory value)**

Occupation/Status	Lowest Value	Highest Value	Mean Value
Craftsmen	£0 15s. 6d.	£141 11s. 03d.	£40
Retailer	£5 00s 8 ½ d.	£50 15s. 09d.	£32
Spinster	£4 16s 8d.	£623 00s 00d	£108
Esquire	£128 00s 08d.	£128 00s 08d.	£128 00s. 08d.
Husbandman	£167 09s 8d	£225 10s 00d.	£696
Maritime	£5	£741 18s 10 ½ d.	£220
Merchant	£38 07s 00d	£621 16s 00d	£261
Professional	£4 00s.06d.	£565 16s. 09d.	£115
Yeoman	£2 6s 8d.	£1132 10s 00d	£103
Gentleman	£4 14s. 0d.	£488 15s. 7d.	£160
Widow	£6 8s 6d.	£362 5s 10d.	£48

Sources: DUA, Durham Diocesan Probate Registry, 1680, 1700, 1719-1723.

**Chapter Eight**  
**Through the Key Hole and into the Account Book: Material Culture of the**  
**Household**

***Introduction***

Quantitative analysis of probate inventories, as shown in the previous chapter, can indicate change in the material culture of the household over time, significant changes in the ownership of particular items, and suggest variations in ownership based on connections to status/occupation and location. However this analysis focuses overly on the positive ownership of particular items, taking them out of the context of the household, forcing cases to fit into particular patterns. It focuses on what John Brewer has seen as an economic and quantitative concentration on the density of goods; counting in order to understand consumption and growth.<sup>627</sup> This type of analysis follows recent trends which seek to accumulate data from large inventory samples in order to generalise individual findings to a general population. Such research often overlooks the increasing tendency towards individuality in ownership and consumption of items and the individual circumstances of households. Furthermore, there are a wealth of questions that cannot be answered by a straightforward assessment of positive ownership, significantly those concerning the marginal differences in material culture that represent the close social stratification and fluidity of English society. Occupation, value of goods, and location data can indicate general levels of material ownership, but even within these categories subtle valuation differences can indicate a richer or poorer material culture within the household.

Generalised categories are insufficient for recognising the individual culture of the household, especially that of a region as diverse as the counties of Northumberland and Durham. Indeed, the categories set out in the previous chapter's discussion, and the distinction between 'common' and 'new' goods, is somewhat misleading. Not all chairs were common chairs, nor were all tables common tables. They were cane chairs, armed chairs and leather chairs, large tables, walnut tables and tea tables. Likewise, not all items categorised as 'new' by inventory analysis were actually new to their owners. Earthenware, china and tea tables could equally be described as 'old' in an inventory

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<sup>627</sup> Brewer, 'The Error of Our Ways', p. 6.

despite being considered a relatively new item by the historian. Items listed in inventories were given identifiers, makers or modifiers ‘as a means of distinguishing things from one another’, identifiers that are often overlooked in generalised categories. These identifiers reveal something additional about the quality, age, materials, function or rarity of an item, something individual about the household. Mary Beaudry has highlighted the benefits historical archaeology can gain from identification of inventory identifiers, a tool which has also been used by some historians to further study a subject, namely ownership, which has been treated in a largely quantitative and economic manner in many inventory studies.<sup>628</sup> By highlighting identifiers and markers in inventories we can look further at what differed in terms of household material culture, especially in households that appear to be similar in general quantitative analysis.

Rather than simply focusing on probate inventories as data, they can be used as a pathway into the household. We can identify whether new items were owned in small numbers within the household, whether they were part of a catalogue of new commodities in the home, or if they existed alongside a large number of more standard and traditional goods. Such analysis can indicate how these, often subtle, differences could represent the gap that existed between the household goods owned at various social and economic levels. It is in the detail of inventories that differences become evident. For example, Levine and Wrightson have commented that ‘[t]he status-enhancing and status-defining functions of household possessions can be sensed in the very location and arrangements of goods described in the more elaborate inventories’.<sup>629</sup> Likewise, Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann have remarked that inventories ‘indicate the richness (or poverty) of the domestic environment in terms of the variety of objects in the home’,<sup>630</sup> something that is only accessible through the detail of the document. Using inventories qualitatively not only allows the material culture of the household to be studied, but also means that sources which exist in insufficient numbers to be of significance quantitatively can be utilised to provide a glimpse of the eighteenth-century households that are usually unseen. Such analysis reveals groups that are absent from the wealth or chronological range covered by the probate inventory – i.e. the very poor

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<sup>628</sup> M. Beaudry, ‘Words for Things: Linguistic Analysis of Probate Inventories’ in M. C. Beaudry (ed.) *Documentary Archaeology in the New World* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 43-50; Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p.114-116.

<sup>629</sup> Levine and Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society*, p. 238.

<sup>630</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 89.

and rich, yeomen and those from the post-1730 period. These groups and period can be studied by using pauper inventories, distraint documents and gentry accounts. Analysis in this chapter seeks to use probate inventories in a more qualitative manner and other rich sources to build upon and expand the framework of regional ownership created in Chapter Seven.

### ***Individuality and Social Differentiation***

The following analysis is undertaken with various motivations. The overarching theme is one of moving out of the inventory and into the household. Rather than necessarily looking at data patterns, it involves exploring the differences and similarities of material culture within individual households. General data masks the individualism of ownership and consumption, but intertwined with this is a blurring or exaggeration of changes that were taking place. Not all households that contained looking glasses, china or marked objects were comparable; these items existed in larger or smaller quantities in different homes and in varying conditions and combinations with other goods. Combinations are as important as the individual existence of particular new goods.

Studying individual examples of material household culture is of paramount importance for understanding the place of consumer goods created in the region and imported into Northumberland and Durham. It is evident that households in Northumberland and Durham were increasingly buying into the culture of 'new' practical and decorative goods such as looking glasses, china, earthenware, maps, pictures and glassware, but to what extent did they own more individualised goods or buy into the culture of comfort? Were individuals satisfied with owning one new item or did they strive to possess a selection of new goods? Discussion will consider whether close study of these inventories and identification of marked objects can highlight the significant differences that existed, or the closely stratified nature of the society. Instead of looking at goods entirely thematically in terms of furniture, eating and drinking commodities, and decorative items, the following analysis mainly considers these goods within the context of individual households as examples. By looking at whole inventories we can identify how goods were owned in combination with other old and new commodities.

The inventory of William Bird, a blacksmith from Sunderland, recorded in 1680, listed goods in three rooms, 'ye fore house', 'ye Chamber', and 'ye Shopp', confirming the

traditional integrated living and working premises of the craftsmen. The entire contents of Bird's inventory only amounted to £13 13s. 4d., but his house contained a modest amount of staple, simply described items and some newer goods and furniture. For example, in the fore house 'one table', 'one cubbard', 'three pans & one Iron pott' and 'smale wood things' sat alongside 'fine Glases' worth 3s. 4d. Similarly, in the chamber 'one table & forme', 'one Joynt Stowle & one wood chare' were complimented by 'Six Leather Chares' valued at 9s. and 'one piktar & 2 hanging glas cases' valued at 2s. 6d. Bird was by no means wealthy, but he did own some new items. Whilst most of his furniture was plain but solid, comfort and decoration were represented by his glassware, leather chairs, and picture. These were, however, not owned in large quantities. They were small and moderately inexpensive additions to a relatively sparse interior.<sup>631</sup>

Bird's ownership of chairs, glass, a picture, tables and a cupboard could place his inventory into the same statistical categories as many other inventories from the period, but it was the quantities of goods owned by different social groups in different locations that emphasised social differentiation at that time. The inventory of Tobias Blakiston, a gentleman from Durham City, indicates that there were different levels of new goods ownership which are not readily identified in positive ownership assessments, but that are more apparent by assessing the amount of goods owned. The hall of Blakiston's Durham house contained a comfortable feather bed and solid items including tongs and iron shovels, one cupboard and two cabinets, in addition to a number of detailed items which included '6 lether Chaires' valued at 12s., '1 wanded Chaire' worth 2s. 6d., '1 seeing glass' valued at 2s. and '1 darnie carpetcloth' valued at 2s. 6d.<sup>632</sup> The high chamber contained a similar mixture of standard and detailed goods, meaning that in total Blakiston's house contained nineteen chairs, five tables, two seeing glasses, and a relatively large amount of linen, compared to Bird's seven chairs, two tables, one looking glass, and small amount of linen. In terms of variety of 'new' goods, Bird, with his leather chairs, fine glass, mirror and picture was participating in new consumer behaviour as much as, if not more than, Blakiston who owned no pictures. However, Blakiston's home was congested with greater quantities of these goods, as well as greater quantities of standard items.

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<sup>631</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1680/B14/1.

<sup>632</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1680/B17/1.

To some extent these differences in quantity must have been based upon wealth. Blakiston's inventory was valued at £333 17s. 0d. but £305 of this was bound up in his bonds, purse and apparel, meaning that all of his household goods could be valued at £30 17s. If the value of Bird's shop goods is deducted from his total inventory value, his household goods amounted to only £7 5s. 2d. This does suggest that wealth could play a role in household goods ownership though not necessarily the choice of whether or not to purchase new or more comfortable goods, but the quantities owned. In individual cases the ownership of new household goods could be only loosely connected to wealth.

The two households discussed above were both located in urban areas, suggesting that location may have been connected to ownership of more comfortable or newer furnishings. Whilst statistical evidence, discussed at length in the previous chapter, suggests a gap between urban and non-urban ownership, this was more accurately an occupational or status difference between yeoman, mainly located in non-urban or rural areas, and other social groups in urban areas. For example in 1680, John Dunn, from Merrington County Durham, unusually for a yeoman, had a detailed inventory describing his household goods in addition to his agricultural equipment. Dunn's entire inventory was valued at £699 3s. 6d., with his household goods valued at £33 13s. 6d. Despite this value being higher than both Bird and Blakiston's household goods, the inventory indicates that he owned none of the leather chairs, looking glasses, pictures, carpet cloths or fine glasses of his urban-dwelling contemporaries. He owned solid pieces of furniture, kitchen utensils, and linen.<sup>633</sup>

To imagine that John Dunn's household was representative of all yeoman, or indeed all non-urban areas, would be to assume too readily that the separation between the countryside and the town was one defined entirely by different attitudes to new goods, and to rule out individualism. Looking glasses or glassware were the new items most likely to be found in yeoman inventories if any were recorded, but in 1680 at least two yeoman households contained china which was found in a total of only four households studied in that year.<sup>634</sup> The occupations of the two other individuals who owned china, a surgeon and a shipwright, do not indicate that ownership of ceramic wares represented any particular social or occupational differences at this time.

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<sup>633</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1680/D14/1.

<sup>634</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1680/E4/1-2; DPRI/1/1680/F8/1-2.

Some particular households were more likely to own more than one type of new or marked goods than others, for example shipwright inventories stood out due to the variety and quantity of goods owned. However, even in those households where new goods were identified, choice and individualism is evident. Thomas Davile, a mercer from Gateshead had a relatively crowded home with a detailed kitchen inventory (unusual at this time for any social or occupational group other than gentleman), five looking glasses, a map, a landscape painting, seven little pictures, two hanging shelves with glasses, earthen basins and pots, a clock and various other upholstered chairs, cupboards and various sized tables.<sup>635</sup> Across the Tyne in Newcastle John Ornsby, a tailor, chose stone dishes instead of earthenware or china, only one looking glass and three pictures with a similar amount of furniture and some books, but no upholstered chairs, map or clock.<sup>636</sup> Furthermore, the ownership of gradually integrated new goods was not necessarily all that separated households. Unlike some of his contemporary gentlemen who possessed various accumulations of looking glass, clocks, pictures, maps and glassware, William Rutter of Kenton, Northumberland owned only one glass case and a looking glass amongst his new goods, but he did possess two Spanish tables, particular items specified in no other inventory that year.<sup>637</sup> The solid evidence of location and occupational differences in ownership suggested by quantitative data can in many instances be questioned in the light of individual examples.

In response to the ownership of new types and qualities of household goods amongst traditional items, 'common' furniture was increasingly given markers which distinguished them. 'Old', 'small' and 'little' were found constantly in the 1700 survey and the marker 'ordinary' was used in some cases to describe chairs, beds and even looking glasses, clearly separating these items and suggesting that goods which were *not* ordinary or commonplace were more prevalent. Many goods were listed with a detailed description because they were different in value or quality from their more basic versions. For example, the home of Peter Aughton, a quarryman from Lamsley in County Durham, contained '2 little tables & 2 ordinary Chaires', 'Two ordinary bedds',

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<sup>635</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1680/D2/2.

<sup>636</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1680/02/1-3.

<sup>637</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1680/R17/1-2.

and even ‘two little ordinary looking glasses’.<sup>638</sup> In addition to exhibiting these identifiers, those inventories that provided detailed description of household goods in 1700 indicate the continued appearance of new types of furniture, a category containing items often considered to be ‘common’ goods.

Despite being in use since the sixteenth century, leather and cloth chairs were rare in households of the 1680 survey (only 11 of 104 inventories contained leather chairs, and cloth-covered chairs were similarly rare). Nor were they particularly associated with any one social or occupational group (they appeared in the inventories of craftsmen, gentlemen, etc) suggesting that the comfort they represented had a limited, but universal, appeal. By 1700 upholstered chairs were much more readily identified suggesting that they, and the comfort that they denoted, were becoming more prevalent. However the appearance of varied kitchen utensils and cutlery was more restricted indicating that changes in table manners were more slowly adopted. The variety of upholstered chairs identified had also expanded. In 1680 leather chairs, cloth covered chairs, and the occasional Turkey chair (a leather chair from Turkey) were owned. By 1700 the variety recorded had expanded to include elbow, arm and resting chairs. Expansion in the ownership of upholstered chairs in Northumberland and Durham mirrored the experience of Kent on a general level although the pattern varied in the particular types.<sup>639</sup> Turkey chairs, which were becoming increasingly the most common in Kentish households, were not readily identified in Northumberland and Durham.

Amongst these common, cloth and leather chairs was the mention of ‘caine chaires’ which did not appear in the earlier 1680 survey. The appearance of cane chairs at this time is significant and again reinforces the similarities that existed between Northumberland and Durham and other regions in Britain. In Kent as in Northumberland and Durham cane chairs were not widely owned until the 1720s, despite being popular from around 1660, suggesting that not all popular items were rapidly adopted.<sup>640</sup> The preference for upholstered chairs to the popular cane chairs before the 1720s may also indicate a preferment of comfort and practicality to fashion and exoticism.

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<sup>638</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1700/A11/3.

<sup>639</sup> Overton et. al., *Production and Consumption*, p. 95.

<sup>640</sup> Ibid, p. 97.

Whilst such furniture was increasingly recorded in 1700, yeoman inventories continued to contain vague descriptions of household goods and those which do contain detail draw a sparsely decorated image, dominated by function rather than decoration. A typical example is that of Cuthbert Burton, a yeoman from Bishop Middleton, whose household goods consisted of one bedstead and bedding, one cupboard, pewter and brass, ten bowls, one skillet, and an iron pot, which in all amounted to £2 10s.<sup>641</sup> However, this one example should not be considered wholly representative of that social group. Whilst the evidence presented in Chapter Seven suggests a distinct separation between yeoman and other social groups there were individual yeoman households which appear more akin to those of gentlemen. For example, the household of yeoman, Robert Milburne of Warkworth, Northumberland was one of few detailed in 1700 to contain china. Nor was this new commodity owned in isolation. Milburne's home also contained 'cloather chaires', a looking glass, 'two Elbow chaires', 'two White chaires' and a silver tumbler amongst other standard items.<sup>642</sup> The differences that existed between social groups could not always be strictly defined. The material household differences *within* one social or occupational group could be considerable, whilst differences *between* groups could be marginal, even if items and their particular arrangements were increasingly individualised. The strict categories that quantitative data presents are not always representative. Milburne's was the only yeoman inventory to list chinaware, whilst the only other inventory to record any china was that of the Rector of Middleton in Teesdale, Timothy Tullie. Milburne may have owned a larger array of decorative and new goods than his fellow yeomen, but other than the possession of china there was little in common between his and Tullie's material possessions. Tullie owned standard goods in large quantities and also china, earthenware, a clock, looking glasses, knives and forks, a long list of cooking utensils and elbow chairs.<sup>643</sup>

Despite the obvious integration of new consumer durables into households, those that did contain such commodities were still largely not crowded with new goods in 1700. This appears to have been a period of gradual integration. For instance, the parlour of

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<sup>641</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1700/B20/1-2.

<sup>642</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1700/M10/1-2.

<sup>643</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1700/T9/1.

Matthew Currey, a gentleman from Blyth, Bedlington contained 'One large looking glass, one little glass, one Clock & one Case of Drawers' amongst other more standard items. In three rooms Currey had six chairs, five tables, eight beds, one clock, one looking glass, and other common items; a similar arrangement to many other homes.<sup>644</sup> New goods were tempered by traditional items. What made Currey's household interior distinct from all others studied was his ownership of a marble table (no other inventory surveyed included one). This one item may not be strikingly significant on first note but marble was a costly product and its use in furniture was subject to changing fashions throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>645</sup> It was the one item that separated Currey's material culture from his neighbours and other social groups, perhaps his attempt to differentiate himself. New items in the houses recorded in the 1700 survey did not crowd out old or ordinary goods, nor did they immediately replace them. They existed beside them and appear to have been gradually transferred into the household.

The ownership data analysed in Chapter Seven suggests that more households were acquiring new types of goods, but individual households were also accumulating more items. In the 1700 sample only a handful of households displayed a plethora of new goods in any one room, and most rooms were tempered by a mixture of new and common items. Accounts of the household goods of farmers and yeoman remained obscure in the 1720s survey, lacking detailed or sparsely furnished, but other detailed inventories reveal rooms busy with new decorative and practical household goods. Analysis of individual inventories means we can be relatively precise in terms of when new goods were fully integrated into homes, and when they may have stopped being considered as 'new'.

The inventory of John Beckwith, a shipwright in Newcastle, provides a clear example. Beckwith's hall contained 'Two tables One seeing glass, one Dozen of Leather Chaires & three pictures' valued at £1 8s., 'One Eightday Clock', a costly item valued at £4, and 'One chist of Walnut tree drawers' for 14s. His hall chamber contained 'Eleaven Kane Chaires' valued at £2 4s., 'One seeing Glass' valued at £1 and a 'chist of black Japannd Drawers & table' for £2.<sup>646</sup> Likewise, in the hall chamber of Samuel Blackett, a mariner

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<sup>644</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1700/C13/1-4.

<sup>645</sup> C. D. Edwards, *Eighteenth-Century Furniture* (Manchester, 1996), p. 118.

<sup>646</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1719/B5/1-2.

from North Shields, was ‘One Large Glass 15s. One small table 2s. 6d. Six Black Kane chairs 12s. Six Russia Leather Chairs 15s.’, ‘One pair of Drawers 17s. One slate table 1s. 6d. Two large pictures 2s. 6d. Twenty seven small pictures 2s’.<sup>647</sup> Beckwith and Blackett’s household goods particularly indicate the inroads that innovative techniques and new materials were making into many households. The eighteenth century was not only the age of mahogany (evident in few Northumberland and Durham inventories), but also of walnut and lacquered furniture.<sup>648</sup> Blackett’s slate table was representative of a ‘fluctuating fashion’ for stone table tops that occurred throughout the century.<sup>649</sup> His hall similarly contained upholstered chairs, tables of various sizes, earthenware, looking glasses and clocks. Such examples were more prevalent in this survey period, suggesting that the material culture of the household was more uniform despite being richer. These visible changes were possibly a result of increasingly cheap production techniques, but also the continuing fluidity of society.

Many rooms were now congested with consumer items, but the examples above also indicate that there was variation in the particular types and arrangements of items. This may be representative of more definite attempts to use household goods to socially differentiate. Other than George Corney of Stockton who owned a japanned case, Beckwith was the only individual to own japanned furniture and was the only individual to own walnut furniture.<sup>650</sup> Samuel Blackett was the only individual to own a slate table, whilst Beckwith and Corney were the only two individuals to own an eight-day clock in the entire survey. In all surveyed years it was the individual items owned and their arrangement as well as ‘new’ widely popular durables and semi-durables that distinguished households. Blackett’s slate table, as the only listed in any household, is representative of his individual differentiation and ability to separate his household through ownership of a less common item. Unlike many of his peers who were buying into the tea table and its associated polite habits, Blackett separated himself by buying into the ‘fluctuating fashion’ for stone table tops that occurred throughout the century.<sup>651</sup> In 1680 the ownership of any one of a long list of new goods including pictures, clocks, upholstered chairs, cutlery and looking glasses could identify a

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<sup>647</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1719/B10.

<sup>648</sup> Edwards, *Eighteenth-Century Furniture*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>649</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>650</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1722/C10/1-3.

<sup>651</sup> Edwards, *Eighteenth-Century Furniture*, p. 118.

household, but by the 1720s when most households, with the exception of labourers and yeoman, had many of these new goods, it became increasingly difficult to identify social status through supposedly 'new' consumer goods. In 1680 a small but wide socially stratified group had been buying into new items. Looking glasses, earthenware, china, pictures and glasses were owned by a small group which included gentlemen, shipwrights, blacksmiths, yeoman and widows. By the 1720s those buying into the culture of eight-day clocks, japanned tables and slate tables were a small group. The increasing number of households which owned once exclusive goods such as glassware, clocks and pictures, encouraged the consumption of more particular, individualised items by others.

The walnut drawers and japanned table of Beckwith, and the slate table of Blackett, were one aspect of attempts to buy into new fashions, but they also represent efforts to socially differentiate individual households. The increasing tendency towards eating, drinking and cooking equipment was another prominent example of this. Glassware, which was ubiquitous in elite inventories, was increasingly finding a place in the homes of the middling sorts outside the narrow sphere of plain drinking glasses and bottles, albeit more often in the homes of professionals. Their appearance impressed the social value and the delicacy of such objects, and the polite connotations associated with them. Eating and drinking equipment, traditionally found in the realm of the kitchen, found its way to the parlour. For example, the home of James Bane, a dissenting minister from Wooler in Northumberland, contained 'one decanter two glasses three lime bowls'.<sup>652</sup> The parlour of the clerk, Robert Forster from Norham in Northumberland, housed a long list of eating, drinking and cooking utensils including sixteen plates, eleven dishes, a jug, a punch bowl and ladle, three mugs, four knives and five forks, four custard pots, four coffee dishes and two coffee pots.<sup>653</sup> Such goods would never equal the catalogues of glassware and china drawn up in elite inventories, but they represented more than a mere preference for decorative items and the social meaning embedded in them. These types of glass, chinaware, and cooking utensils also represented changes in the food and drinks available to consumers. The increased consumption of sugar, tea, coffee and chocolate generated expanding importation of such substances into the region (outlined in Chapter Five), but their association with particular eating and drinking manners and

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<sup>652</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1720/B1/1.

<sup>653</sup> DUA Special Collections, DPRI/1/1720/F5/1-2.

habits also generated demand for associated furniture and tableware. Their presence in these inventories represents a complete change to the preparation of food and drinks and the ritual of their consumption.

Certainly by the 1720s a large number of new household goods had been integrated into both the urban and non-urban home, including upholstered furniture, tables, looking glasses, pictures, clocks, delph and earthenware, in increasingly large quantities. These goods, many of which were only just appearing in homes before 1700, had in the first two decades of the eighteenth century been widely adopted, and were very possibly no longer 'new' in the 1720s. In the 1680, and even 1700 surveys, few of the homes analysed were cluttered with a plethora of new goods. Items were gradually adopted and their integration was tempered by the existence of old or common goods. By the 1720s not only did more households own newer goods, but more homes contained larger quantities of goods. John Beckwith and Samuel Blackett appear to have been at the top of this ownership level, their hall chambers and parlours contained almost entirely new goods (or those termed new). However, what should be highlighted is whether all of these goods should continue to be considered 'new' and how long it would take to integrate goods into the household. Beckwith and Blackett, along with many other individuals, owned leather chairs, cane chairs, pictures and mirrors, goods which had been gradually integrated into the household since the 1680s, possibly earlier in some cases. The detailed description of upholstered chairs, slate and marble tables, tea tables, decanters, clocks and those specifically described as *old* or *new* suggests that because of their value they were worth describing, but these descriptions do not indicate whether an item that was rarely listed forty years earlier had become so commonplace that it was considered a decency or necessity.

### ***Pauper Inventories and Distraint Cases***

One problem characteristic of the probate inventory survey is the lack of detail concerning those below the middling sorts in the social hierarchy. Labourers, paupers and debtors are all largely absent from the above survey, partially as a result of the legal procedures which guided the creation of probate inventories. The inventories of yeoman contain little description of goods, possibly as a consequence of the distinct differences in rural and urban views towards material goods. However, there are sources that can go some way towards revealing these hidden groups. In the following analysis a collection

of distraint documents from the Bowes estate covering the period 1743 to 1760 (after the decline in recording of probate inventories) are used to reveal the extent of material culture in the households of debtors.<sup>654</sup> These individuals had various occupations and came from varying locations in County Durham. A small number of pauper inventories are also utilised to analyse the material circumstances of those who were officially recognised as poor, unfortunate or elderly.

The documents from the Bowes estate collection record the distraint of tenants' goods, namely the seizure of tenants' goods which were then forcibly sold to cover the cost of rents due in arrears. The documents were drawn up on the orders of landlords who distrained goods in order to recoup rents that were unpaid. After goods were seized, if rents continued to go unpaid, the goods would be sold. It is not always clear why tenants had fallen into rent arrears. According to Steven King there was a close connection between distraint cases and those receiving poor relief, and by the latter part of the eighteenth century the north and west communal welfare system had become 'heavily involved in the payments of rents'.<sup>655</sup> King used the example of Alice Wakefield who had applied for poor relief after her husband had run away with another woman; she had her goods seized for rent, and had then suffered from a bout of ill health.<sup>656</sup> The more particular reasons for rent arrears in Durham are also not clear. A number of poor harvests could easily leave those dependent on agriculture in debt for rents due, but likewise it is possible that in the ever expanding world of material goods some debtors could simply have over-reached themselves. Other than their being in debt for rents due, the Bowes distraint documents do not indicate why these particular tenants had fallen into debt. What is clear is that being in arrears for rent was not unusual, especially for those reliant on agriculture. Hughes highlights complaints by Northern landowners, Sedbury and Ellison, concerning the horrendous arrears of rent of their tenants in the early eighteenth century, and around fifty years later Cuthbert Ellison continually complained of his Hebburn tenants who had rent in arrears.<sup>657</sup>

Distraint cases cannot be approached in the same way as probate inventories, although they do provide a similar type of evidence. The cases are too few and too dispersed

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<sup>654</sup> The distraint documents are from the Strathmore papers held in the Durham Record Office.

<sup>655</sup> S. King, *Poverty and Welfare in England 1700-1850* (Manchester, 2000), p. 199.

<sup>656</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>657</sup> Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 4.

geographically to provide numerical data similar to that produced from inventories. There is no indication that the items seized represented the entirety of a tenant's goods, and therefore they cannot be viewed as a doorway into the complete material culture of the household. They must be treated as individual examples of ownership. Whilst the documents still record stocks not flows, they do record household goods at different points in the life cycle. Although the age of the tenant is not specified, not all the tenants were deceased, and at least one of the tenants had goods seized twice, revealing what could be a cycle of debt. They represent not only the material culture which existed in households in the post-1740 period (when probate inventories were no longer taken), but also reveal the material goods of those who could fall into debt, suggesting that the standard of material culture experienced had risen. Furthermore, despite their small numbers, the distraint cases and pauper inventories represent an important section of Durham society. As the Durham hearth tax figures for 1666 indicate, a large portion of the Durham population was poor enough to be exempt from the tax, and thus very possibly left little material record. Their absence from the probate inventory record is significant in a region dominated by wage labourers and the poor, making the pauper and debtor inventories all the more important.

Despite the limitations of these sources, they do indicate that many of the tenants owned more than merely basic goods, suggesting that those items considered 'new' earlier in the eighteenth century had become relatively commonplace in the household, even in the homes of those who were debtors. The seizure of livestock and agricultural equipment from Robert Blaicklock of Marley Hill in 1749 indicates his occupation in agriculture, but the household goods listed in his distraint document are very different from those listed in earlier rural/yeoman probate inventories. The account records the seizure of 'A Round Table', 'A Cloth Chair', 'Eighteen Pictures', 'Eight Delf Dishes and nine Plates' and 'Cane Chairs' amongst other items.<sup>658</sup> The goods recorded in this account also contained identifiers of age, material, size and shape which had previously been largely confined to the inventories of wealthier merchants, professionals and craftsmen. The goods themselves when mentioned in earlier inventories from 1700 and the 1720s had also been largely confined to urban households. By the end of the 1760s they had been integrated into the households of at least some tenant farmers. The value

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<sup>658</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/10/45 (1).

of these household goods, however, did not differ greatly from earlier inventory values. Whilst the variety of seized goods was more diverse than those previously recorded, the entirety of Blaicklock's goods seized, which included two tables, six chairs (three cane and upholstered), five beds, delphware and pictures, were valued at £12 13s. 3d. Blaicklock's home contained a larger variety of goods than the equivalent valued inventory from earlier in the century, which may suggest that goods that had once been 'new' had become more affordable and thus accessible throughout the social hierarchy.

Robert Blaicklock was not an unusual example amongst the distraint cases. The household goods belonging to Widow Mary Trumble from Ravensworth, seized in 1750 included similar types of commodities, which consisted of 'Two Delfe dishes & 5 earthen do[ditto]', 'Eight spoons & case', 'Six pewter Dishes', 'Six pewter plates', and an 'Arme chair'.<sup>659</sup> The mixture of pewter, delph and earthenware indicate that pewter had remained resilient in the market, possibly due to its durability, regardless of the increasing popularity and widespread availability of earthenware and china. To compliment the delph and earthenware owned, Widow Trumble's goods also included a china rack to display her ceramic items and more decorative items including a dozen pictures for 1s.<sup>660</sup> Such items which had once been confined to urban inventories were now found in rural inventories of widows.

The majority of household items seized highlight the continual diffusion of practices associated with comfort, eating and drinking habits that had been transfusing into homes since before 1700. The household goods listed were overwhelmingly representative of this culture of comfort. Goods taken from the tenants included five feather beds, eight sets of dressers and shelves, armed and cloth chairs, delph and earthenware, dishes and plates. Decorative goods seized mostly included pictures, of which thirty-four were seized, and clocks. Despite the practical use of clocks, they were also invested with decorative meaning due to their status as costly crafted items, and their seizure from a number of the tenants listed was probably due to their high value. Two twenty-four hour clocks were recorded, one owned by Widow Seamers in 1744 valued at £2, and the other owned by John Trumble in 1760 valued at £2 10s. One 'eight days clock' belonging to James Walker, a blacksmith from Fellside in 1752, was seized and valued

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<sup>659</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/10/45 (32).

<sup>660</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/10/45 (32).

at £6.<sup>661</sup> Three years later at his death Walker's goods were again distrained and the 1755 list included another clock valued at £5.<sup>662</sup> Peter King claims that eight-day clocks were items 'not always found in the probate inventories of the better-off tradesmen and farmers of Essex' earlier in the eighteenth century, emphasising the rarity of this item.<sup>663</sup> The value of these goods certainly indicates a rise in ownership levels from earlier in the century. Weatherill's range of clock values between 1675 and 1725 records clocks between £1 and £2 10s., those appearing in the distraint cases, tenants possibly on the verge of pauperdom, ranged between £2 and £6.<sup>664</sup>

Whilst the distraint documents indicate that these goods were, by the 1760s, owned by those in rural areas and further down the social hierarchy than they had been previously, they were still considered as superfluous to the basic needs of life. Distraint of goods usually involved the selective seizure of goods. Landed property, domestic cooking utensils and items considered essential tools of a person's trade were usually not taken, leaving tenants with the mere necessities of life.<sup>665</sup> Seizing goods up to a certain value would probably begin with taking those that were more valuable. Thus the seizure of clocks which were evidently valuable is explicable, as is the seizure of pictures which usually had only decorative value, and those items which represented a level of comfort, decency and luxury including china, armed and upholstered chairs, and feather beds.

The value of clocks seized again raises the issue that those whose goods were distrained may have over-reached themselves by buying into the culture of household comfort and decoration that they could not afford or maintain. Peter King argues that the material household culture exhibited in many pauper inventories from Essex does not necessarily mean those individuals could easily buy into the new culture as the inventories say little about proportions of earnings spent by the poor on household goods, possibly at the expense of necessities.<sup>666</sup> Likewise, the distraint cases do not indicate how income was distributed within the individual households.

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<sup>661</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/10/45(3); D/St/E5/10/47; D/St/E5/10/45(50).

<sup>662</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/10/45(55).

<sup>663</sup> P. King, 'Pauper Inventories and the Material Lives of the Poor in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries' in T. Hitchcock, P. King and P. Sharpe (eds.) *Chronicling Poverty: the Voices and Strategies of the English Poor, 1640-1840* (London, 1997), p. 171.

<sup>664</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 110.

<sup>665</sup> C. W. Brooks, *Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 318.

<sup>666</sup> King, 'Pauper Inventories', pp. 182-83.

These few examples cannot be taken as representative of the entire region or an entire social or occupational sector. They are individual examples, a mere suggestion, of material household culture in a period that is often difficult to study, a largely invisible group. These cases are not necessarily representative of pauper ownership, despite being closely connected to pauper cases. Those whose goods were distrained were not paupers in the sense that they could not make ends meet and their goods were worthless, but the act of goods seizure could have tipped them towards pauper status. Equally, distraint of goods did not necessarily push an individual towards pauperdom. James Walker for example, discussed above, had goods distrained twice. At least three of the distraint documents were drawn up after the tenants had died, and therefore could simply represent the collection of goods for the most recent rent which had not been paid, rather than a long-standing default on rental payments. However, the connections between distraint cases and those on the pauper lists go further than the obvious transition from distraint of goods to pauperdom. Goods distrained were often purchased to give to other paupers. Steven King uses the example of Richard Ainsworth to explore this issue. Ainsworth was twice (in 1810 and 1811) given a cash allowance to pay part of his rent by the poor law, but in 1812 his landlord seized his goods for rents due in arrears. At the sale of his goods, overseers of the poor law attended to purchase furniture and household goods to give to other paupers.<sup>667</sup> Examples such as this also complicate the issue of identifying goods with social status. If distrained goods were purchased in order to maintain paupers, those goods are not necessarily a clear representation of their social position.

However it is clear that the integration of once new items into the households of those who previously possessed only common and basic goods, which the distraint cases highlight, continued into the later century and is reinforced by evidence from the few pauper inventories in existence for the region. Evidence from pauper inventories that were drawn up between 1760 and 1810 indicates that even those reliant on parish relief, who possessed only the basic necessities, owned cutlery, china, looking glasses and other household comforts. The inventories list goods belonging to people who were in receipt of parish relief, often the poorest of society, elderly widows or unfortunates. It is

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<sup>667</sup> King, *Poverty and Welfare*, p. 203.

not always clear when these inventories were taken. Peter King explains that paupers who had been reliant on parish relief were often forced to draw up a will leaving goods to the parish; therefore the inventories represent the goods present at the end of a life.<sup>668</sup> Elsewhere women could enter pauper lists at the death of their husbands and could therefore be recorded with a relatively high level of material comfort; others were single women who were unable to make a living in their old age, or aging men who after a prosperous youth similarly could no longer make a living. Individuals could enter the pauper lists in very different circumstances, either with large quantities of household goods to live out the rest of their lives but with no means of maintaining themselves, or with very sparse home interiors after years of struggling to make ends meet.<sup>669</sup>

The contents of the Durham pauper inventories reinforce evidence from the distraint documents suggesting that by the second half of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century items that were only becoming common place in wealthy tradesmen and gentry homes by the 1720s were now owned by the poorest of society. An account compiled on 1788 of the furniture of Widow Robinson, from Staindrop, County Durham indicates basic items such as a bed, dishes and plates, but also a 'chiney rack', 'a picture' and a 'looking glass', '2 knives and forks' and a feather bed.<sup>670</sup> The list was not exhaustive, but the collection was more extensive than many goods in yeoman homes recorded in the first two decades of the eighteenth century. The standards which the terms 'necessity' and 'decency' represented had visibly altered throughout the century.

The same identifiers used in probate inventories earlier in the century to distinguish the age, quality, material, shape and size of goods also appeared in the pauper inventories, indicating that even within poorer households goods existed in differing qualities. For example, the inventory of Widow Wilson, also of Staindrop, recorded in 1788 included a china rack, '4 Delf Plates' and 'Several Pieces of Earthen wair', '1 oake Table' and '1 oake cupboard', but also '2 old Chairs'.<sup>671</sup> This level of ownership had again changed by the early nineteenth century. Another Staindrop inventory compiled in 1810 recorded

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<sup>668</sup> King, 'Pauper Inventories', p. 159.

<sup>669</sup> Ibid, p. 166.

<sup>670</sup> DRO, EP/Stai7/554(i).

<sup>671</sup> DRO, EP/Stai7/554(ii).

‘4 Chare mahogney’.<sup>672</sup> Such examples emphasise again a certain standard of ‘comfort’ which was evident by the later eighteenth century. Widow Robinson had a feather bed and blankets, but no curtains. Thomas Tailford of Grindon and Thorpe Thewles in County Durham, whose goods were listed in 1788, owned three feather beds and bedding, a clock, a desk, four tables, and six chairs.<sup>673</sup> Although the lists of household goods recorded in these northern pauper inventories are not extensive, it is the nature of what is recorded that is significant. None of the County Durham inventories recorded material culture as extensive as some of Peter King’s Essex cases, but the number of Essex pauper cases identified was much larger and Steven King claims that in the North ‘general consumption standards [were] lower than...the south and east’ in terms of goods supplied by the poor law.<sup>674</sup>

Generally the County Durham distraint cases and pauper inventories suggest that by the second half of the eighteenth century most formerly new goods had been integrated into even the poorest households, and these documents reveal ‘not only the wide range of material circumstances of those who became regular receivers of relief, but also the possibility that a significant proportion of them were not completely excluded from the market for household goods by the later eighteenth century.’<sup>675</sup> However, as Peter King has cautioned it is important not to make too much of these findings. They do not indicate a narrowing of the gap in material culture which existed between the poorest of society and the better off. The few probate inventories from Northumberland and Durham which survive for the post-1740 period suggest that the standards of material comfort experienced by the middling sorts had already been raised once more, just as King reflects was the case in Essex.<sup>676</sup>

The processes which made these goods available further down the social scale than they had been previously can be posited. Changes in how these goods were categorised, i.e. changing status from ‘luxury’ to ‘decency’ or ‘necessity’, as was most likely the case with tea drinking, are most possible. However these changes themselves and the appearance of these goods in pauper and debtor inventories could be associated with

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<sup>672</sup> DRO, EP/Stai7/576.

<sup>673</sup> DRO, EP/Gr/9/46a.

<sup>674</sup> See King, ‘Pauper Inventories’, pp. 151-91; King, *Poverty and Welfare*, p. 191.

<sup>675</sup> King, ‘Pauper Inventories’, p. 172.

<sup>676</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

increased production and cheaper production techniques.<sup>677</sup> This would be especially pertinent in the Northumberland and Durham region, where by the second half of the eighteenth century the supply and local production of pottery, glassware, furniture, cutlery and other material goods, both decorative and practical, had expanded dramatically.

### ***Gentry Consumption and Ownership***

Although the probate inventory's almost exclusive representation of the emerging and widely stratified middling sorts is a partially useful factor, this feature means that other social groups affected by changing cultural and ownership habits remain obscure. Whilst the middling sorts, who represented a large and expanding group, have been identified for their increasing participation in conspicuous consumption, especially during the early years of the eighteenth century, they did not necessarily represent the top rank of consumption.<sup>678</sup> The middling homes represented in the previous inventory discussion were far from possessing the elaborate luxuries and commodities that appeared in gentry homes. There was a sizeable gulf between the material culture of middling and gentry households which is not evident from the probate inventories, validating specific study of gentry inventories. Wealthy gentry and landowners were not excluded from the probate system, but the nature of their landholdings (which were often in various counties) meant that their wills and inventories were proved at higher probate courts such as the Prerogative Courts of York or Canterbury.<sup>679</sup>

Unlike pauper inventories and distraint documents, the personal inventories of gentry are available in estate papers. These documents were recorded for family purposes and provide extensive catalogues of household goods. These inventories are affected by similar problems inherent to probate inventories, and again do not necessarily reveal items of new consumption. However household accounts can indicate active consumer habits. Such accounts for tradesmen and the middling sort are scarce, but availability of household accounts and market bills for gentry households is more widespread. These

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<sup>677</sup> Ibid, pp. 177-178.

<sup>678</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*; McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 1; Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic*, pp. 128-148; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 69-75; Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, pp. 290-301; Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, p. 496.

<sup>679</sup> T. Arkell, 'The Probate Process' in T. Arkell, N. Evans and N. Goose (eds.) *When Death Do Us Part* (Oxford, 2004), p. 11.

accounts reveal the nature of commodities purchased and for some periods their frequency. Furthermore, some detailed purchases recorded in account books of Northumberland and Durham gentry directly connect households to purchase of commodities produced and sold in the region. A number of studies, particularly Helen Berry's research on gentry women, Judith Baker, have suggested that the gentry of Northumberland and Durham preferred to look exclusively to London for their luxury and consumer items. Whilst Berry does hint that purchases may have taken place locally, she paints an image of a gentry women associated entirely with the metropolis, stating that '[p]reference for London goods among the indigenous gentry of the north-east is indicative of their cultural ambivalence towards the so-called 'Black Indies', the 'barbarian' coal-producing region which was the source of their wealth, but into which 'culture' had to be imported from elsewhere'.<sup>680</sup> Whilst it is apparent that 'cultural ideas' were imported into and adopted by the region in response to London taste (as Chapter 4 demonstrates), the evidence presented here will suggest a more balanced approach to consumption. The Northumberland and Durham elite were small in numbers but were discerning consumers, using their purchasing power to buoy both the local economy, which they were investing in, and acquire more particular luxuries from London and other manufacturing centres.

Gentry inventories present a recognisable image of a rich material culture, the likes of which can be seen in the more elaborate 'conversation' piece paintings of the eighteenth century. Association with national or metropolitan tastes, which essentially involved the consumption of new goods, was clearly taking place in Northumberland and Durham. Hughes richly described this period as 'a Caucasian spring, a sudden blossoming of civilization' in the region. This 'blossoming' under the economic prosperity of the region is reflected in the homes of local gentry.<sup>681</sup> The household inventories of the Baker family of Elemore Hall, County Durham are typical of Durham gentry. The Baker family were extensive landowners with holdings in County Durham, Northumberland, Yorkshire and Westmorland, and involvement in the coal, alum and agricultural sectors during the course of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth

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<sup>680</sup> H. Berry, 'Prudent Luxury: the Metropolitan Tastes of Judith Baker, Durham Gentlewomen' in R. Sweet and P. Lane (eds.) *Women and Urban Life in Eighteenth-Century England: "On the Town"* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 131-56, 137; Hughes, *North Country Life*, pp. 28-58.

<sup>681</sup> A. Green, 'A Clumsey Countrey Girl': The Material and Print Culture of Betty Bowes' in H. Berry and J. Gregory (eds.) *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1600-1830* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 72-97; Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 30.

centuries. The Baker's household inventories recorded between the 1740s and 1770s reveal a large array of goods on a much grander scale than anything seen in inventories of even the wealthiest middling households. Various inventories recorded separate types of goods, but it was those documenting new crafted household goods that reveal accurately how gentry were connected to new consumer items.

The Baker's china inventories drawn up between 1743 and 1770 recorded more than 600 pieces of china of varying qualities and in various states of repair, revealing the richness of the polite manners and culinary experience of the gentry home.<sup>682</sup> Varieties of chinaware included coloured, blue and white, stoneware, sets for tea and coffee, some coloured, some scarlet and green, and even a set of Bow china. The china collection also included a number of Wedgwood items, amongst them 'a fine Wedgwood teapot' and '1 Large Wedgwood teapot', designer-specific luxury items that were found in no middling households during the surveyed years.<sup>683</sup> The variety of specialised china mirrored that found in more detailed middling inventories in the 1720s, but was more diverse and extensive, including pickle dishes, milk pots, sugar dishes, melon dishes, breakfast basins, tart pans, butter cups and an array of other utensils indicating the complex dining processes undertaken in gentry households.

Although ceramics was extensively available by mid-century, and earthenware especially has often been viewed as an easily replaceable commodity rather than durable like pewter, the Baker's were not above mending broken items. Items of Worcester and Wedgwood were recorded alongside marked dishes which included, '4 doz plate 2 of wch are broke', a 'sugar dish mended', and '1 white Do [tea pot] without a handle'.<sup>684</sup> The Baker china inventories included a significant number of mended, marked or broken items, whilst other gentry household accounts belonging to the Ellison and Ridley families record payment for the mending of china and even mending of replaceable items such as earthenware.<sup>685</sup> Reasons for such reconstruction are not always clear. Hugh Willmott has recently highlighted the discovery of repaired seventeenth-century glass goblets, stating that despite the careful repairs the goblets

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<sup>682</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 58/122; BB 58/128.

<sup>683</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 58/128.

<sup>684</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 58/122.

<sup>685</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/1-114, Notes and lists of household bills, goods bought and receipts for payment, 1774-1784; NRO, ZRI/47/2.

were still rendered non-functional, thus ruling out repairs intended to prolong the life of the functional item.<sup>686</sup> Whilst Willmott suggests the repairs were undertaken as a result of some sort of connection with the items, it is possible that by the eighteenth century repairs, especially of ceramics, were much more advanced.<sup>687</sup> The Baker's repair of two plates may have been undertaken in order to maintain the collection of plates, however, even if repair technology was more advanced by the eighteenth century, the mending of earthenware is still exceptional given its relative cheapness. It is possible that repairs of earthenware or china were cheaper than purchasing new pieces, displaying a certain sense of 'prudent luxury',<sup>688</sup> or simply that repaired items could be used by servants. Although the quantities of china mended were not specified, the Ellison and Ridley family accounts indicate that repairs could be undertaken modestly. On the 6 May 1754 the Ridley's paid 8s. 1d. for linen and mending of china, and on 4 September 1786 the Ellison's paid 8d. for mending china.<sup>689</sup> The large quantities of goods purchased by gentry, evident in their household accounts, were not necessarily bought in a constant cycle of replacement; china and earthenware could be purchased for life and underwent mending and recycling.

The Baker's glass inventory displays a similar diversity of functional and fancy goods, but on a smaller scale than their china collection, possibly as a result of glass remaining a relatively expensive specialist crafted item. The collection included small cherry glasses, large and small glass salvers, glass baskets, sweetmeat glasses, glasses with flowered edging, and the pinnacle piece, a glass 'Obelisk'.<sup>690</sup> This range indicates a similar diversity of function with specific items for different occasions and meals. These glass items amounted to slightly more than 150 pieces and were, like the china, of varying qualities. Next to fine decorative items such as the glass obelisk, the Baker's also owned plain glass bottles and mended items such as '4 Diamond Cut Glass Basons One of them Mended, 1 Large Ditto Mended'.<sup>691</sup> These collections were enormously different in size and quality from those found in middling households. The inventories

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<sup>686</sup> H. Willmott, 'A Group of Seventeenth Century Glass Goblets with Restored Stems: Considering the Archaeology of Repair', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 35 (2001), pp. 96-105.

<sup>687</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 103.

<sup>688</sup> Berry, 'Prudent Luxury', pp. 131-156.

<sup>689</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/1-114, Notes and lists of household bills, goods bought and receipts for payment, 1774-1784; NRO, ZRI/47/2.

<sup>690</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 58/128.

<sup>691</sup> *Ibid.*

of the middling sorts and gentry records may indicate the increased accumulation of crafted items, earthenware, china, glassware and furniture, but this did not also encourage a society that could simply replace broken items with new. New commodities were integrated into the household, but even in gentry households they were mended and reused.

Many of these items may have been inherited by gentry families on a larger scale than that experienced by middling families, but the account books of the Baker, Salvin, Bowes and Ellison families also record small regular amounts paid for various household items, especially practical commodities like glass, china and earthenware. Basic items such as sugar, bricks and paper were the most ubiquitous purchases recorded. In the half year from June to December 1761 the Delaval family's household account book recorded eighty-two payments for sugar, including fine and soft sugar, and sugar listed specifically for the maids or for the 'ladies'. The account book also recorded twenty-three payments for paper, writing paper, scouring paper and various writing books.<sup>692</sup> The Salvin's spent £2 4s. on 'Glases, Muggs, Knives, Bottles, Corks' collectively in 1723, £2 11s. 7d. on the same items in 1724 and £10 17s. 1d. on glass, bottles and mugs in 1725.<sup>693</sup>

Additionally, a scattering of entries amongst these account books record payment for glasses, cups, saucers, dishes, plates and earthenware specifically. According to the accounts tableware was not generally purchased in large sets in one transaction, but was often acquired in individual piece purchases over a number of years. The extent of this consumption varied from year to year, but could be considerable. In the year 1754 one Baker family cash book records eighteen payments for varying quantities and pieces of earthenware, delphware and stoneware from the local market.<sup>694</sup> Consumption, at least for gentry households, was a continuous affair which could involve small regular payments or more extensive purchases. This continuous process of consumption was not unusual in gentry households. For example, in 1759 the Delaval household accounts record payments for '2 large Cream Potes', '4 small Cream Potes', '2 brown Jugs' and

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<sup>692</sup> NRO, 2DE/25/2.

<sup>693</sup> DRO, D/Sa/E/171, Household Account 1723-33.

<sup>694</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 43/4.

‘1 Dozen of Galley Potts’.<sup>695</sup> The household accounts contained in Matthew White Ridley’s cash book covering the years 1740 to 1743 not only record the purchase of many household items such as a coffee and pepper mill for £1, earthenware, and plate worth £45, but also small personal items including 6 boxes of wooden combs for 8s., and a necklace for £15.<sup>696</sup>

Whilst these regular payments for earthenware, china, glass, brick, sugar, paper and soap indicate a constant process of consumption and were certainly purchased in the local markets, their place of manufacture is not always indicated. However, various inventories and household accounts do positively connect local gentry to purchase of locally produced consumer items. Even early in the eighteenth century some gentry chose to purchase from local manufacturers. For example, in 1714 William Ramsay purchased glassware from John Dagnia’s flint glass manufactory which included ‘one dozn Eggend Globet’.<sup>697</sup> Hughes indicates that although the Ellison family chose to purchase some items from London, an important grandfather clock owned by the family was made locally.<sup>698</sup> The Bowes family purchased glass bottles from the Williams bottle house in Newcastle, and paper from the Gibside paper mill on their estate.<sup>699</sup> The Baker family inventories record, in some instances, items of ceramics purchased locally, suggesting a connection to local producers and retailers in addition to more prominent London-based craftsmen. One inventory in particular recorded an item ‘bought at Hetton’ (i.e. Hetton-le-Hole in County Durham), and also ‘a china cream Pot from Tynemouth’.<sup>700</sup> The Bakers were also connected to purchase of locally produced paper hangings, despite suggestion that some Durham and Northumberland consumers chose to purchase from the capital. The Baker family paid a bill in 1751 to Bartholomew Elmes, a wallpaper printer based on Low Street in Sunderland, ‘for 11 pieces of Paper’ amounting to 7s. 2d.<sup>701</sup> Elmes, as Chapter Four outlines, was one of two wallpaper manufacturers in the region who organised rigorous advertising campaigns to promote products. Alternatively the Ellison family purchased upholstery goods from Bartholomew Kent which included materials, Manchester stripe and Saxon blue check,

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<sup>695</sup> NRO, 2DE/25/1.

<sup>696</sup> NRO, ZRI/47/1.

<sup>697</sup> TWA, CM/1/278.

<sup>698</sup> Hughes, *North Country Life*, p. 29.

<sup>699</sup> DRO, D/St/E5/1/1, Estate accounts, 1746-1750.

<sup>700</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 58/128.

<sup>701</sup> DUA Special Collections, BB 43/3.

the cost of making a cover for a chair, '12 qrs [quires] white Varnisht paper', and '9 Dezn ½ borders'.<sup>702</sup> Although these items were purchased in Newcastle, Kent was supplied from London.

This tendency to purchase from the local market, especially locally produced goods, was certainly more prominent by the later part of the eighteenth century, again suggesting the provincial movement away from dependency upon the capital.<sup>703</sup> By the later half of the eighteenth century the Ellison family of Park House, Gateshead who had steadily risen in the elite ranks of Tyneside through involved in both mining and trade, were closely connected to the purchasing of items from local producers, retailers and tradesmen, some who produced locally and others who were supplied from London. In the 1780s the Ellisons purchased glass in the form of window and household glassware from local glass manufacturers Airey, Cookson and Co. The glassware purchased by the Ellison's in this one transaction was more extensive and elaborate than any found in the households of the middling sorts, and included '½ dozen Best plain Goblets' for 4s., '2 plain water Cups' for 1s., and '1 doz: Best ¼ pint wines' for 4s. 6d.<sup>704</sup> To some extent this purchase may have been based upon local business connections; the Ellisons, Aireys and Cooksons all had a prominent role in major Tyneside industries which were characterised by mutually beneficial trading of raw materials and finished goods.

The Ellisons also purchased items in 1786 from local pottery manufacturer John Warburton who produced and sold from his manufactory at Carr's Hill, Gateshead, and sold from 'his shop on the Keyside'.<sup>705</sup> The purchase from Warburton included a large collection of pottery items which reveal the etiquette of gentry households and the variety which was available to customers by the later decades of the eighteenth century. The account of items purchased from Warburton lists ten chamber pots, six hand basins, five jugs, four mugs, twelve handled cups, one mustard pot and spoon, three tea pots, four bowls, two sauce boats, one marbled porringer, twelve dishes, eighteen beef pots, thirty-six porringers.<sup>706</sup> There is no indication that Warburton specifically supplied

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<sup>702</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/139, 11 May 1786.

<sup>703</sup> Berry, 'Promoting Taste', p. 13-14.

<sup>704</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/167, 22 September 1786.

<sup>705</sup> NC, 14 May 1774.

<sup>706</sup> TWA, Ellison Papers, B.11/167, 22 September 1786.

gentry, and the items the Ellisons purchased were certainly within the price range of many middling families. They included '3 Tea Potts' costing 6d. and '1 Mustard Pott & Spoon' which cost 1½ d. The entire purchase made by the Ellison's, which also included sixteen oval dishes and three dozen tea plates, amounted to £2 18s. 2d.<sup>707</sup> Contrary to other gentry account books and market bills that record constant but small purchases of ceramics and glass, the Ellisons' purchases from Warburton show a more typical large scale purchase.

It is clear that the gentry of Northumberland and Durham owned new consumer items in much greater quantities than the region's middling sort. This is in no way surprising. The eighteenth century requirement for gentry to maintain a lifestyle appropriate to their social position is well-documented.<sup>708</sup> What is significant is evidence of an inclination towards locally produced goods. It cannot be claimed that there was an overwhelming shift towards purchase of locally produced items; many did still choose to purchase items from the metropolitan or those local retailers supplied from London. It has been convincingly argued that the gentry remained closely associated with metropolitan tastes and London's consumer goods.<sup>709</sup> However, the shift towards purchase of local available items rather than those exclusively from the capital was noticeable. Furthermore, it is evident that association with local goods and culture may have been developing into a public issue. According to Ellis, in 1784 Sir Charles Brandling, an unsuccessful candidate in the parliamentary election, was criticised in the local newspapers for 'sending to London or York for what Newcastle could supply as well'.<sup>710</sup> Association with regional industry and society, even if they do appear to have reflected national taste, was becoming increasingly of import.

### ***Conclusions***

Whilst large inventory data sets are often favoured in order to generalise findings, and uncover 'patterns' of consumption or ownership, focusing on individual examples can reveal much about material culture of households in Northumberland and Durham. Analysis of individual examples reinforces some of the quantitative findings of Chapter

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<sup>707</sup> Ibid.

<sup>708</sup> Berry, 'Prudent Luxury', pp. 131-156; Mingay, *English Landed Society*, pp. 215-216; Heal and Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales*, pp. 137-140.

<sup>709</sup> Berry, 'Prudent Luxury', pp. 131-156; Green, 'A Clumsey Countrey Girl', pp. 72-97.

<sup>710</sup> *Newcastle Chronicle*, 3 April 1784; Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies'', p. 21.

Seven, but also suggests that in some instances there were subtle differences in ownership between social and occupational groups not emphasised by quantitative data, variation that were representative of wealth differences. Ownership cannot merely be measured in terms of positive identification of commodities, the quantities and arrangement of household goods is also important. Whilst the general gap between yeomen situated in the non-industrial areas and other social groups is largely reinforced by this qualitative analysis, it is evident that some yeomen did own china and newer items. Individuals did not always fit the ownership 'trends' associated with their social status or occupation. There was a certain degree of indiosyncrasy noticeable in the material culture of particular households.

Qualitative analysis supports the assertion that it was only in the 1720s that new goods were fully integrated into the homes of the middling sorts. Whilst those examples from 1680 and 1700 were tempered by a mixture of standard and new household commodities, many examples from the period 1719-1723 revealed rooms crowded with new items. This general trend of goods integration is also suggested by the few distraint documents and pauper inventories which document the period after the decline of the probate inventory. It is clear that by the second half of the eighteenth century goods once found in the homes of only wealthy tradesmen and professional were now owned by those in debt or on the verge of pauperism. It is possible that this occurred as a result of a redefinition of those goods which had once been seen as new luxuries. Furthermore, the expanding production of these items ultimately lowered their pricing bringing them within the reach of new social groups.

There is no way of connecting these social groups to definite purchase of local goods, although it is likely that increased regional production, in addition to increased national production, helped to lower prices and make goods more affordable. Close study of gentry inventories and account books, however, does question suggestions that regional gentry looked specifically to the metropolitan for their luxuries and household goods. The inventories of regional gentry confirm a standard image of association with national tastes and maintenance of a lifestyle appropriate to social position. Additionally there is evidence to suggest that some gentry families chose to purchase locally produced goods during the eighteenth century. This tendency seems to have been enhanced after mid-century, and may have been in response to the increased availability of consumer items

that reflected national tastes. It may also have been part of a more general move away from reliance on the capital and other provincial centres for consumer commodities. Such progress could reflect, on a much smaller scale, the movement of colonial consumers away from metropolitan and English tastes and products during a similar timeframe.<sup>711</sup> Certainly the consumption of regionally manufactured goods by local gentry confirms that the wealthy, at least, were connected in a circular system which tied the culture of production to the culture of consumption. Furthermore, this system was based on regional industries.

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<sup>711</sup> Breen, 'Baubles of Britain', pp. 73-104.

## **Chapter 9: Conclusion**

### **A Regional Perspective**

This thesis has focused on production, consumption and retailing in Northumberland and Durham in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The research presented in this thesis reveals that the north-east was a coherent economic region, experiencing industrialisation and urbanisation in the period 1680 to 1780, which was an integral part of wider economic developments. As a region active in production *and* consumption, Northumberland and Durham were part of a British consumer economy centred in London. There was certainly more to the regional economy than production of coal for the London market. The region was an integral part of a British eighteenth-century consumer society, both producing and consuming goods for and from national and local markets. The research presented in Chapter Two indicates that in addition to the coal industry, Northumberland and Durham supported multiple expanding industries during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In many senses the growth of the glass, pottery, brick, tile, paper, iron, sugar and soap industries does represent a process of early industrialisation as suggested by Nef.<sup>712</sup> But it was industrialisation beginning in the second half of the seventeenth century, as, with the exception of the small scale establishment of the glass industry, growth in manufacturing industries only began after approximately 1680. Furthermore, the growth of these industries appears to have been tied to demand for their produce, demand which was based on cultural change and taste occurring post-1680. The goods manufactured in these industries were not the products of the reorganised household economy that de Vries highlighted, or consumer goods of a proto-industrial system. Nor were they, for the majority, luxury products or direct imitations of imported luxuries. They were British manufacturing industries producing functional and decorative British goods outside of the household in a gradually industrialised and commercialised environment for a developing consumer economy.

The evidence indicates that Northumberland and Durham were part of a network of regions which were becoming gradually more industrial during this period with small scale manufacturing industries developing in London, Bristol, Stourbridge, Staffordshire, Birmingham, Liverpool, north-west England and Glasgow. These

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<sup>712</sup> Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, p. 165.

findings reinforce Hudson's suggestion that pockets of regional growth were taking place throughout Britain and Stobart's work that specifically outlines the industrial expansion taking place in the north-west England during the same period.<sup>713</sup> It was this regional growth at locations throughout Britain that was central to the development of the first industrial nation,<sup>714</sup> but it was also essential in feeding the country's consumer economy. However, these industries were not industrialised to a nineteenth century level. They represent a level of production between that of the household and the fully commercialised and industrialised factory, and they were essentially producing manufactured goods for an expanding British demand.

The research presented on retailing and distribution in Chapter Six also contributes significantly to knowledge of the north-east. Retailing, a previously unstudied subject in regional history, is shown to be in transition during this period; a transition that was taking place roughly simultaneous to increasing production and new consumption habits. The north-east is shown to be an integrated region in which both increased production and consumption were tied by a slowly developing retail and distribution system centred in Newcastle. The use of probate inventories enhances our understanding of ownership patterns in the region, and the research presented in Chapter Seven builds upon Weatherill's work by looking at a later chronological period and revealing the continued integration of new manufactured goods into regional households. Unfortunately, this may be the extent of our understanding based on probate inventories; we may never find equivalent evidence that details ownership and consumption in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In its entirety, such evidence not only establishes a clearer image of the Northumberland and Durham economy and society, but also places the area firmly in the national picture. Centrally the developments in production, retailing and consumption which were taking place nationally were also occurring in Northumberland and Durham. The region was not isolated or detached from national economic or cultural changes.

The evidence presented in the thesis goes some way towards connecting production and consumption to cultural changes associated with household decoration, material culture, and the urban environment. It also clearly indicates that in addition to being an integral

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<sup>713</sup> Hudson, 'The Regional Perspective', pp. 5-38; Stobart, *The First Industrial Region*.

<sup>714</sup> Stobart, *The First Industrial Region*, p. 219.

part of a national economy, producers responded to culturally inspired demand by producing for regional demand and gradually developing independence from the cultural capital, London. Certainly in those case study industries analysed in Chapter Four (paper, glass and pottery) production and product development were taking place almost simultaneous to national cultural changes in household interior decoration, material culture of the house connected to consumption of foodstuffs, and new architectural designs. That the new goods produced and consumed in the region were directly connected to national cultural changes is clear, but these changes took time to diffuse throughout the country especially to Newcastle, Northumberland and Durham. The development of consumer industries in response to initial establishment elsewhere in the country suggests that the region was in tune with progress in the national economy and society, but it essentially participated in national trends, it did not lead them. Chapter Three highlights that skilled craftsmen were imported into the region from elsewhere in Britain indicating that although regional producers were in line with national changes, both the impetuous and expertise for changing material culture were imported into Northumberland and Durham.

Whilst one outcome of Berry and Gregory's edited collection suggested that the north-east participated in national trends but may have shown distaste for metropolitan taste,<sup>715</sup> the two (national and metropolitan taste) ultimately cannot be separated when considering consumer industries and goods. Staffordshire may have been the centre of quality earthenware production but it was metropolitan tastes that determined its fashionability and created a national market for creamware. Weatherill's finding that London led in ownership of new household goods by 1725 confirms the position the capital held in leading consumer taste.<sup>716</sup> The evidence of Chapter Four indicates that crown glass for sash windows, wallpaper to decorate homes and fine glass were all first produced in London and production in the provincial capital, Newcastle, followed. Likewise, demand from London dominated the production of bottles and window glass. It was from London that consumer taste and culture diffused throughout the country, particularly to urban areas and provincial capitals. As Schwarz has argued, '[t]he most

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<sup>715</sup> Berry and Gregory, 'Introduction', p. 10.

<sup>716</sup> Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp.47-51.

important cultural departures did not necessarily begin in London, but it was in London that they reached their apogee.<sup>717</sup>

However, whilst the capital may have led the initial establishment of consumer industries and adoption of their products, it is clear that its physical influence had begun to wane by the later eighteenth century in some respects. As Corfield has argued, Britain became increasingly multi-centred throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>718</sup> As a result London's leading influence appears to have diminished. For example, as Chapter Four outlined, there appears to have been a forty to fifty year lag between the initial production of wallpaper in the capital in the 1690s and on Tyneside in the 1740s, but this gap appears to have narrowed rapidly and by the 1750s Tyne and Wear manufactures produced the same popular gothic style wallpapers as those found in London. Fine glass may have been initially produced in London, but by the mid-eighteenth century the Tyne had two renowned flint glasshouses. Elsewhere, Chapter Five suggests that whilst many manufactured goods and consumables were shipped to Newcastle from London in the 1690s and early eighteenth century, by the 1780s fewer London vessels were received in the Tyne, and the frequency at which manufactured goods were shipped appears to have declined. Conversely in the same period the frequency at which essential industrial raw materials were shipped appears to have increased. Northumberland and Durham manufacturers absorbed the cultural tastes, national trends and demand then responded by producing goods locally. Local criticism of Sir Charles Brandling for purchasing from London what local producers could provide, referenced in Chapter Eight, displays the extent to which there were certain negative connotations associated with unnecessarily looking outside of the local market by the last quarter of the eighteenth century. This movement away from London parallels a broader British pattern including that experienced by the American colonies in the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>719</sup>

This lessening of London's influence over the provincial capital is also displayed in the consumer choices that the wealthy made. Landowners and merchant-gentry were connected to new industries through ownership and production, but this culture of

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<sup>717</sup> Schwarz, 'London 1700-1840', p. 657.

<sup>718</sup> Corfield cited in Clark 'Introduction' in Clark (ed.) *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns*, p. 13.

<sup>719</sup> Breen, 'Baubles of Britain', pp. 73-104.

production also bound them to the new culture of consumption. Furthermore, their involvement went beyond investment, provision of raw materials and vending of new goods. Evidence presented in Chapters Four and Eight indicates that gentry and landowners did buy from local manufactories. They supported their fellow producers by buying local. The Bowes family bought paper from the Ords at Gibside mill, bottles from Williams' Newcastle bottle house and iron products from the Cookson ironworks. The Ellisons purchased fine glass from Aireys, Cookson and Co. at Newcastle, ceramics from John Warburton at Gateshead and upholstery from Bartholomew Kent. The Baker family purchased wallpaper from Bartholomew Elmes and ceramics from Tynemouth. Whilst parts of Northumberland and Durham may have participated in national culture and taste, and many landed families and gentry did purchase goods in the capital, certainly by the end of the century many chose to buy local produce whenever items were available. Consumption for the wealthier was, in the end, a matter of personal taste. The supposed cultural and social prestige of purchasing from London was not necessarily a defining rule for many gentry who ultimately chose to consume products from many of the manufactories they were investing in.

The thesis outlines the process of production and consumption of manufactured goods in the Northumberland and Durham economy. Whilst retailing provided the physical connection between production and consumption, in Northumberland and Durham they were connected by a process of demand, demand which encouraged local producers to create manufactured goods as a form of regional import substitution. If indeed demand came first, it may be more fruitful to look at the process of production and consumption in reverse. Further research, which is undoubtedly required, would identify purchased items and trace them through their practical use in the home and the middlemen that sold them to their place of manufacture. Given the centrality of demand-led production in Northumberland and Durham, attempting to look to a linear process from production through to consumption is not entirely effective in this thesis. Furthermore, more general limitations restrict the strength of connections that can be made between production and consumption. Firstly, the lack of historical research on the north-east economy during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries means the basics of regional manufacturing, retailing and consumption needed to be outlined before a more detailed discussion of the connections between production and consumption could be attempted. As a result much of the thesis adds to our knowledge of the north-east by

detailing the regional economy, but only begins to draw connections between production and consumption in the area. Secondly, evidence connecting the two processes is limited. Whilst retailing, the physical connection between production and consumption, can be studied to some extent, the networks and chains that tie the two are sometimes not obvious or traceable. On occasion parts of these chains of production and consumption can be identified. For example, the evidence detailing production and industries gathered from trade directories, provincial newspapers and estate records can be checked against consumption evidence from gentry records to reveal transaction chains. Industry sales books and estate accounts can also reveal networks of production and consumption. Recognising these connections relies on a process of linking sources and identifying sales books and accounts, unfortunately these sources are not as plentiful as we may desire. Those chains of transaction that are detected tend to be short, existing between local producers or producers-retailers and individual gentry. Few examples noted appear to have involved middlemen. Gentry accounts indicate that middlemen and retailers were an important part in this system but lack of inventories or business accounts limits our understanding of their role. Lack of household accounts for middling and labouring individuals and the large absence of sources detailing small scale producers means we are limited to knowledge of substantial manufacturing and consumption chains among the wealthy. The research undertaken for this thesis provides little evidence of those middlemen and retailers so integrally tied to the process of production and consumption of regional goods. The inventories of retailers identified for analysis in Chapters Seven and Eight provided little evidence of the credit and debt networks that dominated the trade of such middlemen. This is not to suggest that this type of knowledge is not available. Middling account books may exist, hidden away in a north-eastern record offices, and certainly survive for other regions. Additionally, selective use of regional probate inventories may be more revealing on networks of north-eastern retailing. The newly available database of Durham wills and inventories would enable identification of a substantial number of retailing inventories. At the root, the chains that connected production and consumption were complex, fluid and not straightforward. Neither the connections that existed on a household level, studied by de Vries, nor those that existed with industries working outside the household were straightforward. Indeed the appearance of new manufactured consumer goods during this period may have enhanced the complexity of the chains that linked production and consumption. Inflated numbers of sellers were certainly required to distribute the

increasing quantities of manufactured goods available. The increasing existence of locally, nationally and internationally produced goods in the Northumberland and Durham market required an expanding network of selling and trading structures. Some sold locally produced goods only, some sold goods imported through London (produced in Britain and abroad), and some producers sold directly from their manufactories. The traditional market and fair system was joined by new types of sellers distributing manufactured goods, groceries, staple foodstuffs etc. To study these connections requires knowledge of both producers and consumers in addition to sufficient evidence of middlemen and retailers that is not always available.

Essentially this thesis raises more issues than it answers, some general and some more particular to the region. Certainly the diffusion of culture, increased independence of the provinces in England by the later eighteenth century, and regional interaction deserve more attention than they have been given previously. The north-east is shown to be an integrated region but one that was also an essential part of the British economy. As part of the national economy the north-east not only produced for the country as a whole, but associated with and traded goods, knowledge and expertise with other regions. The extent to which regions interacted with each other is worth exploring further. Associated with this regional interaction are more specific issues concerned with the movement of craftsmen. Whilst gentry ownership of the new manufactories is not surprising, more interesting is the apparent movement of skilled craftsmen from abroad and other areas of England to work in these new industries. The research presented in Chapter Three highlights this movement of craftsmen but further systematic research on this issue would enhance understanding of regional interaction as well as the diffusion of skill and industry throughout the country. Another area for further research would be late eighteenth-century consumption, ownership and debt. Whilst the inventory evidence presented in Chapter Seven does expand the chronological period in which we can discuss ownership patterns, only the discovery of middling account books could expand our knowledge of ownership and consumption of that social group. However the evidence provided from the Bowes distraint cases introduces a new angle to our knowledge of ownership, debt and goods categorisation. Eighteenth-century consumption history has been dominated from the beginning by description of goods as necessities, decencies and luxuries, but what these categories actually correspond to is not clear. As the distraint documents list non-essential goods seized for rents due in

arrears they can potentially reveal (if used alongside pauper inventories) an index of essential and non-essential goods; a standard of material culture.

In many ways this thesis forms the basis for more substantial work looking specifically at the networks that tie production and consumption in Northumberland and Durham. With both production and consumption mapped and outlined, a further study could significantly build upon this evidence by looking more closely at manufactory sales journals, middlemen and consumer accounts. A more profitable approach, mentioned already, may be to look at the process of production and consumption in reverse. In particular the retailing structure is highlighted as an essential component linking production to consumption. Space does not permit an extensive survey of regional retailing and distribution here, merely an outlining of the transitions taking place, but further research could look to provide a more nuanced analysis of this system in Northumberland and Durham. Further research would seek to use more retailers' inventories to attempt to trace the network that connects production and consumption by looking at products listed and list of debts. This type of research could also seek to highlight that retailing was not only a sector that facilitated the areas of production and consumption, but was becoming a sector of the economy in its own right. Whilst this research has helped to re-evaluate the history of north-east England in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and make tentative steps towards connecting production and consumption, it highlights that our understanding of the region is still only partial and if we want to understand the connections between production and consumption we must continue to link evidence that reveals the chains and networks that dominated the economy.

Pat Hudson has suggested that the industrial regions which survived through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century were those 'which saw a succession of distinctive economic bases overlapping and also taking over from one another as earlier successful sectors were overtaken by competition from elsewhere.'<sup>720</sup> Northumberland and Durham are a perfect example of such a region. Few of the industries discussed in this thesis were still producing in the twentieth century, despite growing significantly during the eighteenth century. They appeared as a response to consumer demand, rooted

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<sup>720</sup> Hudson, 'The Regional Perspective', p. 29.

in cultural changes specific to the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. These factors underlay the appearance of new ceramics, sash windows, bottles, glassware, paper, wallpaper and sugar which were increasingly popular, and the expanding production which made such items more affordable. The taste and demand that these consumer industries catered for, the fancies and functional goods they created, were tastes, goods and demand exclusive to the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The development of these industries and consumption of the goods they produced over the same chronological period, between 1680 and 1780, reinforces the assertion that they were responding to cultural changes specific to the eighteenth century. However, these industries were ultimately simply one of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle's many 'economic bases' and they did rely on taste and fashion particular to the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Since they relied on taste and fashions particular to the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they grew to prominence in the eighteenth century but for the most part fell into decline in the later nineteenth century and were overtaken by competition from elsewhere.

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London Crown Glass Company online:

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Museum of London online collections:

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The National Archives Research Guides: Port Books

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Victoria and Albert Museum Collections online:

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