RETAILING IN EIGHTEENTH- AND EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY CHESHIRE

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THE history of inland trade, including retailing, has traditionally been neglected, less because its importance has not been recognised than because the evidence is frequently sparse and fragmentary. Recently, however, a number of historians have tried to put some pieces of the jigsaw together. For example, Professor Willan has painted a fascinating picture of the eighteenth-century northcountry shopkeeper Abraham Dent[1] and has demonstrated the widespread existence of shops in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[2] The history of (predominantly London) shopping has been written by Dorothy Davis[3] and David Alexander has made good use of the Court of Bankruptcy records in studying shopkeepers in the first half of the nineteenth century.[4] Closer to home, Roger Scola has examined food markets and shops in Manchester in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[5] while across the Pennines Wild and Shaw have looked at the locational behaviour of nineteenth-century retailing.[6] But the history of retailing, both nationally and by region, is yet to be written.

I

This article does not pretend to answer the wider questions, but aims to fill in some of the gaps at local level. It concentrates on three Cheshire towns—Macclesfield, Stockport and Chester—while recognising that the main types of shop existed in the other market towns; and that even villages usually had at least one shop by the 1780s if not much earlier.[7] It also deals primarily with shop retailers rather than markets and hawkers.[8] There seems in general to have been a fair degree of complementarity between markets and shops: markets mainly dealt in perishable goods and some of the essential items bought by the poor while shops stocked non-perishables and often appealed to the middling

and upper classes.[9] Hawkers and street traders may have filled such gaps as were not covered by the other forms of outlet.[10] Sources for the activities of hawkers are almost non-existent; for markets they are scrappy; and for shopkeepers they are limited. In these circumstances a word about some of the evidence underlying the analysis of changes in shop numbers and retail provision in this article seems desirable.

A variety of sources can be used to reconstruct the occupational structure of towns in the period before trade directories and census returns.[11] Some evidence on occupations for each of the towns throughout the period under consideration is given by wills and inventories. This evidence is likely to be skewed towards the wealthier classes who thought it worth their while to make wills or whose heirs felt the need to take out letters of administration. The more prosperous trades such as grocers, drapers and mercers are probably over-represented at the expense of bakers, tailors, shoe-makers and household goods dealers. There is also a danger of changes over time in the propensity of people in general (and of different occupational groupings) to make wills. Finally Chester testators may be over-represented because of their greater physical ease of access to the ecclesiastical courts. Nevertheless, treated with due caution, probate records can give an impression of long-term trends.[12]

In the case of Chester, this can be supplemented by poll books which provide evidence of the occupations of freemen.[13] Clearly the occupational structure of the free population may not have been the same as that of the population as a whole. Moreover shifts in trade structure such as a decrease in the proportion of masters to journeymen would tend to distort figures derived from poll books: a decline in numbers may represent a structural change rather than a shrinkage of the trade. Again caution is necessary. However, freedom was still a live institution in eighteenth-century Chester and numbers of freemen do provide some guide to numbers of master craftsmen and retailers.

The sources discussed above provide some clues about occupational structure but say nothing about the number of independent shop outlets. Trade directories, for all their imperfections, at least provide an approximate measure of this.[14] They are of course likely to offer a fuller coverage of reasonably well-to-do retailers and wholesalers than of back street traders, and the information available to the compiler probably depended very much on his familiarity with the town in question. While it is difficult to assess the reliability of directories purely from internal evidence, some sort of judgement can perhaps be made. For example, where the turnover of names between each issue of a

directory is neither so great as to raise questions about accuracy nor so small as to imply a mere copying of earlier editions then it is not unreasonable to place some trust in the compiler. This is the case for the Broster series of Chester directories in the 1780s and 1790s.[15] Similarly the *Universal British Directory* of the 1790s[16] appears to be very comprehensive for all towns. There is then virtually a gap until the Pigot series: of these the 1816–17 directory[17] omits butchers and some poorer trades. Greater caution is therefore necessary when using this than when using the 1834 directory[18] which seems to provide a good coverage of all trades. Even so, too much emphasis must not be placed on individual figures, particularly when numbers are small, although the picture of overall trends is probably fairly accurate.

II

For most purposes Stockport and Macclesfield can be treated together and contrasted with Chester. The two former towns experienced a rapid growth in the number of textile workers largely dependent on the market for the supply of essentials. There was therefore a need for neighbourhood general shops selling in small quantities; or for an expanded public market or the emergence of a group of street traders. The level of demand from factory workers is indeterminate, but would clearly fluctuate according to the prosperity or otherwise of the industry and could make shopkeeping a hazardous business in such bad times as the late 1810s in Macclesfield or the early 1840s in Stockport.[19] Chester, on the other hand, ought to have been characterised by greater stability with demand continuing to come from urban craftsmen and their employees, urban merchants and gentry and above all a wide hinterland of gentry and farmers. A snapshot of the contrast between the towns is provided by the 1831 census data on the employment of males aged 20 and over: in Macclesfield 40 per cent were in retail trade and handicraft and 2·7 per cent were capitalists and professional men; in Stockport 37 per cent and 2·3 per cent respectively; and in Chester 55 per cent and 10·5 per cent.[20]

Long-term trends, derived from probate evidence (see Table 1) and (for Chester) from poll books, are not easy to assess.[21] For what it is worth, the probate evidence for Stockport and Macclesfield shows a very slow growth in most sectors up to 1780 followed by rapid expansion. Growth was most marked among those groups most likely to cater for working class demand such as provisions dealers, bakers, butchers and possibly grocers—a term that seems capable of covering a multitude of food trades.

TABLE 1 *Occupations of testators (selected retail trades)*

	Macclesfield			*Stockport*			*Chester*		
	1721/40	*61/80*	*1801/20*	*1721/40*	*61/80*	*01/20*	*1721/40*	*61/80*	*01/20*
Food & Drink									
provisions dealers & bakers	2	3	6	1	3	16	12	8	17
grocery trades	2	2	4	6	4	14	3	5	11
butchers	0	1	6	4	2	5	1	4	9
wine & spirit dealers	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	10
Cloth & Clothing									
mercers & drapers	2	1	5	3	1	6	7	2	14
tailors	0	1	5	2	0	3	1	3	8
shoe trades	1	2	3	2	4	8	6	3	18
Others									
furniture dealers	0	1	1	1	1	4	4	2	4
watch & clock makers	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	7	2
printers & book trades	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	7

Sources: see note 12

The increase in numbers is less marked for mercers, drapers and dealers in household goods. For Chester there is some evidence that growth was not sustained in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and indeed that some of the craft trades may have been in decline, but that by the early nineteenth century the number of food traders was showing a clear increase as was the number of wine and spirit dealers, mercers and drapers and booksellers. The rise in numbers engaged in the book and printing trades was very marked, there being five freemen in these trades in 1734, eight in 1747, ten in 1784 and 21 in 1812.[22]

In all the towns the main break in the long-term series seems to come after 1780. The figures (Table 2) for both Macclesfield and Stockport show very significant nineteenth century increases in the numbers of provisions dealers and butchers but less clear trends for grocers and wine and spirit dealers. The early nineteenth century also saw an increase in the number of shoe dealers—18 to 36 in Macclesfield between the 1790s and 1834; 24 to 65 in Stockport and Heaton Norris—and these presumably catered to some extent for mass consumption. The number of furniture dealers rose from 5 to 20 in Macclesfield in this period and from 4 to 22 in Stockport. On the other hand, as might be expected from the nature of the population, there was no discernible trend in the number of clockmakers and jewellers and the growth in the book trades was very largely a post-1810 phenomenon.

Trying to express these figures in terms of population per retail outlet is not easy given the deficiencies in the data, but provided the results are treated with due caution, they can be illuminating (Table 3). In general the figures for Macclesfield and Stockport suggest a substantial worsening of retail provision between the 1790s and 1816–17 followed in some, but by no means all, cases by improvement in the next 20 years. To some extent the less comprehensive nature of the 1816–17 directory may account for this, but I do not believe that this is the whole explanation since, given the staggering urban growth of the period, especially in Stockport, the picture is credible. For in the key area of general provisions dealers there was deterioration only in Stockport and there to the not unacceptable level of 345 persons per shop outlet. Similarly the number of butchers (probably excluding occasional market traders) rose from one per 1,000 people in Macclesfield in the 1790s to one per 530 in 1834 and in Stockport from one per 1,575 to one per 840. The trades where persons per shop outlet increased most were those likely to be little used by a factory proletariat, e.g. there was an increase from 2,665 to 4,800 persons per wine and spirit dealer in Macclesfield

TABLE 2 *Selected shop numbers*

	Macclesfield			*Stockport*			*Chester*		
	UBD	*1816/17*	*1834*	*UBD*	*1816/17*	*1834*	*UBD*	*1816/17*	*1834*
Food & Drink									
provisions dealers & bakers	21	50	123	69	56	201	67	57	147
grocery trades	41	25	27	27	31	34	47	27	30
butchers	8	0	45	7	0	43	19	0	35
wine & spirit dealers	3	7	5	4	9	6	18	21	25
Cloth & Clothing									
mercers & drapers	8	11	11	16	16	36	23	24[3]	28
clothes shops	0	2	4	0	3	1	1	0	11
tailors	10[1]	8	25	15	6	24	27	9[3]	26
shoe trades	18	19	36	24	16	65	26	21	53
Others									
glass & china dealers	3[1]	4[2]	3	4	4	6	3	10	7
furniture dealers	5	10	20	4	11	22	14	26	26
watch & clock makers	6	4	5	6	3	6	11	6	10
gold & silver smiths	0	2[2]	1	0	0	0	4	5	6
printers & book trades	2	4	7	3	7	7	12	14	33
pawnbrokers	2	2	4	0	6	17	6	10	10

Sources: P. Barfoot & J. Wilkes, *The Universal British Directory*, 5 vols. London (n.d.), (*UBD*); *The Commercial Directory for 1816–17*, Manchester (1816); J. Pigot & Co. *National Commercial Directory*, London (1834).

Notes: [1] includes one tailor and glass dealer;
[2] includes two jewellers and glass & china dealers;
[3] includes three woollen drapers and tailors.

TABLE 3 *Population per retail outlet*

	Macclesfield			*Stockport*			*Chester*		
	UBD	*1816/17*	*1834*	*UBD*	*1816/17*	*1834*	*1797*	*1816/17*	*1834*
Food & Drink									
provisions dealers & bakers	380	300	195	160	345	180	300	305	145
grocery trades	195	600	890	410	630	1060	415	650	715
butchers	1000	—	530	1575	—	840	1075	—	650
wine & spirit dealers	2665	2140	4800	2750	2160	6000	1075	835	860
Cloth & Clothing									
mercers & drapers	1000	1250	2180	690	1220	1000	680	730	770
clothes shops	—	7500	6000	—	6500	36000	7500	—	1955
tailors	800	1875	960	730	3250	1500	880	1950	830
shoe trades	445	790	775	460	1220	555	715	835	405
Others									
glass & china dealers	2665	3750	8000	2750	4875	6000	5000	1750	3070
watch & clock makers	1330	3750	4800	1840	6500	6000	2145	2910	2150
booksellers & stationers	4000	3750	4000	11000	4875	18000	1875	2910	1650

Sources: Census Returns for 1801–1831; Directories as in Table 2 except for Chester 1797, where the source was P. Broster, *The Chester Guide . . . with directory for 1797*, Chester (1797).

between the 1790s and 1834 and from 2,750 to 6,000 persons per glass and china dealer in Stockport in the same period.

These figures, at first glance, suggest that the growth in shop numbers may not have been sufficient to keep pace with the growing needs of a rapidly expanding urban workforce. It must, however, be remembered that at the same time attempts were being made to expand the public markets.[23] Similarly the number of hawkers and street traders was probably growing, although the evidence is very fragmentary.[24] What seems to have been happening therefore was an expansion of low cost retailing. Even fixed shops, selling basic provisions, required little more than the front room of a house and could easily be run by a woman. So it is conceivable that a basic level of retail provision, at least of essential items, was maintained but that the demands made on relatively scarce resources of capital and potentially skilled labour were minimal. A flexible and frequently informal service sector was perhaps a necessary counterpart to the rapid expansion of the more formal, and resource hungry, industrial sector of the economy.

Stockport and Macclesfield were not, however, identical in all respects. There were consistently more grocers and wine and spirit merchants (compared to population) in Macclesfield than in Stockport, perhaps because Macclesfield grew from a broader service base than did Stockport and grew at a slower rate. Similarly Maccelsfield was generally better provided with ironmongers and with most dealers in luxuries and seems to have had a greater potential for filling a general service centre role in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This may have been due in part to a different internal population structure in Macclesfield, but also to the proximity of Stockport to Manchester which may have tended to inhibit the growth of a wider range of shops and services.

Chester developed somewhat differently. The most striking feature of the figures is the stability in most trades from 1781 to 1816–17 and in some trades right up to 1834. As in the other towns the 1820s saw the emergence of a large group of general dealers, although this may be overstated as a result of improved directory coverage, and a doubling or more of the number of shoe traders. Otherwise, there was a steady increase in the number of wine and spirit dealers from 13 in 1781 to 21 in 1816–17; in furniture dealers from 10 to 26; and printers and book traders from 8 to 14 and up to 33 by 1834. The number of mercers remained quite stable as did that of grocers and dealers in luxuries. Population per retail outlet seems to have worsened a little between 1797 and 1816–17 for food and clothing trades,

but by 1834 retail provision was better, or only marginally worse, for all major groups than in the late eighteenth century.

The structure of Chester's retail sector was also quite different from that of Stockport or Macclesfield, reflecting of course its status as a county town. For example, Chester had many more wine merchants than the other towns, substantially more mercers and drapers until the 1830s, many more furniture makers and dealers, three or four times as many makers of or dealers in luxury goods and more printers and book traders. The city's advantage in terms of persons per retail outlet became more marked throughout the period under review, with little to choose between the towns in the 1790s, but Chester having the advantage in almost all trades by 1834. There were two and a half times as many people per wine and spirit dealer in Macclesfield or Stockport compared with Chester in 1816–17 and similar disparities for chemists and druggists and booksellers and stationers.

On the other hand the early nineteenth century saw an increase in all the towns in shops which possibly catered for working class demand. Ready made and second-hand clothes shops appear in Stockport and Macclesfield from the 1810s and there were eleven such traders in Chester in 1834. There were one or two dealers in old furniture in Chester in the 1790s and furniture brokers began to appear in Macclesfield and Stockport in the early nineteenth century. Pawnbrokers numbered six in Stockport in 1816–17 and 17 in 1834: they existed in Macclesfield and Chester but were much less numerous. The large number in Stockport may reflect the chronic insecurity of much of the population. In 1833 it was said that the average business of each pawnbroker in Stockport had increased threefold in the preceeding 25 years and that one-quarter of the population of the town went weekly to the pawnbroker taking almost all their clothing.[25]

Chester was distinguished not by the absence of this type of shop but by the presence of many more high class shops and by the splendour of its central shopping area. Hemingway, writing in 1831, observed that the Rows were generally considered the best situation for retail shopkeepers and that shops on the southern side of Eastgate Street and the eastern side of Bridge Street were especially preferred and let at very high rents and were in considerable demand. He remarked on the rapid and extensive improvements to shops in the previous 30 years, particularly the introduction of glass windows, and considered that many of the shops in the Rows were equal in elegance to those of Manchester and Liverpool. The establishment of Messrs William and Henry Brown, silk mercers and milliners, which had recently been built in Eastgate Street he regarded as equalling

the shops of Regent Street.[26] There is other, earlier, evidence of shop improvements in Chester. In 1762 Holme Burrowes petitioned the corporation asking leave to extend his shop in order to lighten it and better display his toys and goods.[27] Six years later Thomas Griffith, grocer, sought permission to extend his shop 4 feet 4 inches into the street to lighten it and ornament it to public view.[28] Such improvements, however, were not to everyone's benefit and could create obstructions. In 1779 therefore a general order was made by the Chester Assembly that persons who had made projections in Chester by bow windows or otherwise were to remove them.[29]

It seems to have been at about this time that Chester's main shopping streets began to develop the characteristics that have been theirs ever since. In the late eighteenth century most Chester shops seem to have been located in the main streets of the inner city—bakers and butchers being not unexpected exceptions.[30] As time went on though there was a tendency for a greater dispersion of shops and for individual streets to become less dominant for a particular trade. Similarly some traders may have been less acceptable in the city centre. For example, in the early 1750s[31] there were many butchers occupying cellars on the south side of Eastgate Street and this remained true in the 1780s. But by 1797 they had almost all moved outside the walled city to —rather appropriately—Cow Lane.[32] By contrast drapers and similar traders consistently located in the heart of the city around the intersection of the main streets and especially in Eastgate and Bridge Streets.

Other features of shop location in Chester include the striking —and still persisting—contrast between the north and south sides of Eastgate Street. On the north side was a heterogeneous collection of food shops, inns, craftsmen and miscellaneous dealers but on the south side drapers, mercers, goldsmiths and dealers in luxury goods.[33] There were also contrasts, particularly in Eastgate Street, between street and row level with the higher class trades more often found in the row.[34] Of the four main streets, Watergate Street was least developed with a large number of craftsmen and some pawnbrokers but also a few grocers and wine merchants. But essentially Chester did have a central shopping area characterised by a high proportion of grocers, wine merchants, mercers and drapers, a few clothing shops and some dealers in luxuries. On the fringes of this area were to be found the provisions dealers, probably more clothing dealers and some of the craftsmen-retailers like cabinet makers. Finally there was a scattering of bakers and provisions dealers in the outlying areas.

III

Then as now retailing was a risky business, quickly entered by the naive who rushed headlong to financial disaster. Contemporaries were well aware of the risks and books like Defoe's *Complete English Tradesman* are full of sound advice to the aspiring shopkeeper.[35] One indication of risk is the high turnover of retail businesses implied by the directories. For example, in Chester between 1783 and 1797 only wine merchants and goldsmiths had a survival rate of over 50 per cent while milliners, butchers, bakers and druggists were all under 35 per cent. Even over shorter periods of two and four years milliners seem to have been very vulnerable (55 per cent survival rate 1783–1787) and bakers relatively so (65 per cent). In general members of the pure shopkeeping trades seem to have been more vulnerable than craftsmen-retailers.[36]

The incidence of retailers among bankrupts in all three towns, especially Chester, is similarly noticeable.[37] Macclesfield seems to have had a quite stable business community with few bankrupts among either manufacturers or shopkeepers while Stockport, not a great deal bigger than Macclesfield, had a very large number of bankrupts among manufacturers and a lesser, though still significant, number among shopkeepers from the 1790s onwards. In Chester retailers almost always predominated among bankrupts with cloth and clothing retailers much in evidence. Generally speaking, the main groups of shopkeepers finding their way to the bankruptcy courts were grocers and drapers, together with a number of innkeepers and, in Chester, several wine merchants. The number of bankrupts naturally increased in general years of crisis and it also seems possible that the failure of one trader in a town might bring down other traders. In Chester it was not uncommon when two traders went bankrupt in one year for them both to be in the same line of business, and between 1765 and 1771 five of the seven shopkeepers to go bankrupt were grocers.

The prestigious pure shopkeepers like grocers and drapers were in a risky business, but also had the opportunity of making a great deal of money. Eighteenth-century shopkeepers, no doubt especially London ones, were sometimes accused of being excessively wealthy as by one writer justifying the shop tax:[38]

> 'Do not . . . a considerable portion of them live in a style of opulence and even of splendour? Do they not keep their horses, their whiskies, and their phaetons? Have they not their country lodgings, and their country villas? Have they not their clubs where they regale at ease and leisure? Their private entertainments and their public dinners; where

> luxury if not riot predominates? Do they not, in general, enjoy a much greater share of the conveniences and superfluities of life, than landholders of far superior property?'

Cheshire shopkeepers may not have reached this standard, but some were wealthy even if their wealth may have been derived from manufacturing and wholesaling as much as from retailing proper.

Probate sources provide some indication of this wealth, although no more than an indication. In general Chester retailers seem to have been more wealthy than similar traders in other towns, more frequently leaving over £1,000 personal estate.[39] But even in a single trade group there could be a vast spread of wealth. Nevertheless some sort of wealth hierarchy seems to emerge with mercers and drapers at the top. For example, one Stockport draper left over £1,400 in specific legacies in 1736,[40] one Chester mercer £1,750 in 1738[41] and another £3,600 in 1760.[42] In the nineteenth century, John Brown of Chester was valued at £12,500[43] and Samuel Brittain at £3,500.[44] Corn and cheese dealers were also often wealthy by the early nineteenth century,[45] perhaps a consequence of an expanding grain trade to growing towns. Many grocers were wealthy, one in Chester leaving £3,200 in specific legacies in 1751,[46] though none in Stockport in the mid-eighteenth century seem to have been worth more than a few hundred pounds. Brewers were not infrequently worth over £1,000 and in Chester ironmongers and, by the end of the eighteenth century, druggists made bequests of £1,000 or more. One Chester upholsterer was valued at £1,700 at his death in 1736,[47] but most other trades had few members worth over £500. Occasionally a butcher or baker would reach this figure but tailors, shoemakers and other craftsmen were, along with provisions dealers, in the £100 or under category in most cases in the eighteenth century. Wealth of between £100 and £500 was not uncommon for any tradesman by 1815.

A certain amount of wealth was, of course, held as property. Perhaps about half the wills of traders make reference to property, often simply a house and shop in the town where they lived but not infrequently other houses in the town or land outside it. One Stockport grocer had land in Prestbury and Bramhall[48] while another had land in Warrington[49] and several Chester retailers had land in Wales. Some shopkeepers may have bought land with money they made in trade and John Swanwick retired in 1812 from his Macclesfield linen draper's business to live the life of a country gentleman at Brereton in south Cheshire.[50] Other retailers invested money in public undertakings, particularly transport improvements, although never to a very great extent.

A linen draper and a baker from Chester were among the undertakers of the River Dee Navigation in 1733[51] and several grocers and drapers, along with a few other retailers including druggists and upholsterers, subscribed to the Chester canal project in 1772.[52] Investment in roads was less popular but Bradford Norbury, cornfactor, and John Brown, grocer, both of Stockport had money invested in the Manchester and Wilmslow turnpike trust.[53] Such investments were probably made more out of a desire to earn a fairly steady return on capital, and perhaps out of local feeling, than out of specific hopes of benefits from improved communications.

Chester shopkeepers were not only wealthy but played a major role in the government of the city. For example, between 1730 and 1815, 176 people held the office of sheriff and of these 19 were gentlemen or of no stated occupation, 109 were retailers and 48 from other occupations. Among the retailers, 19 were mercers and drapers, 18 grocers, 17 druggists or apothecaries, 10 wine merchants and 8 hatters. Other trades were of very limited importance and at this level of city government the major trades had a very strong position.[54] In Chester the big shopkeepers, along with the urban gentry and to a lesser extent the merchants, must have dominated town life. They were wealthy, they were organised through the guilds which were not yet extinct as social bodies and they had a firm grip on the local administration. While drapers, grocers and corn dealers, and perhaps occasionally other traders, may have been influential in the other towns, they were unlikely to have rivalled the power of the textile manufacturers.

IV

Traders at the higher class end of the market reveal how retailing was developing in this period. The true grocer was the elite of the food traders. He dealt in sugar, spices, dried fruits, household goods and stationery[55] and the 1744 inventory of James Royle of Stockport showed him stocking all these goods, along with tobacco, rice and hops in a total stock valued at £53 3*s* 6*d*.[56] Coffee seems to have been sold by many grocers by the early nineteenth century and in 1812 Joshua Thorley of Macclesfield was advertising, 'London Patent Roasted Coffee. Sold only by Appointment of the Proprietor'.[57] Grocers often traded in wines and spirits, candles and drugs although specialist retailers existed in all these fields and in Chester at least there were also specialist tea dealers. In 1785 Pierce Davies advertised a long list of teas ranging in price from Middling Bohea at 1*s* 11*d* to Superfine Gunpowder at 13*s* 0*d*.[58]

While many grocers dealt in wines, specialist wine dealers were important in Chester—where they probably had a significant wholesale role—and existed in the other Cheshire towns. Brandy, rum, gin and occasionally porter and cider were mentioned by many wine merchants in their advertisements, while in 1807 Richard Edwards of Chester listed 15 varieties of British wines, including raspberry, cowslip, currant and orange, that he could supply.[59] Wine merchants were often a wealthy section of the community and in Chester several city officials and at least one banker[60] came from their ranks. One Chester wine merchant, John Johnson, seems to have extended his operations to Macclesfield and in 1795 announced that he had purchased an extensive stock of rum, brandy, gin, Herefordshire cider, vinegar and stale London porter, the latter he claimed being suitable for harvest drink, and which were on sale in Chester and Macclesfield.[61] Not all wine merchants were wealthy. John Ellis, at his bankruptcy examination in Chester in 1798, stated that he had begun trading in the city 27 years previously with a capital of £100 which he had borrowed. This he had paid back in a year and his trade had been successful, though not spectacularly so, until the outbreak of war. He had stock valued at £93 18*s* 4*d*, comprising rum, brandy, gin, port, wine and vinegar and owed money to suppliers chiefly in London amounting to at least £1,200. His total assets were perhaps a little over £850 and while he might have had some trade difficulties, the real cause of his bankruptcy seems to have been imprudently guaranteeing some of his son's dealings.[62]

Turning from food to clothing, the mercers and drapers are found to be developing as fashionable, high class shopkeepers. They sold a bewildering variety of muslins, cottons and linens while woollen drapers frequently advertised fashionable worsteds and waistcoat shapes and linen drapers handkerchiefs, stockings and table cloths. The probate inventory of William Bracegirdle of Stockport taken in 1751 included handkerchiefs valued at £21 0*s* 7¼*d*, stockings at £9 19*s* 11*d*, gloves at £4 1*s* 3*d*, hats at £1 5*s* 3*d* and cloaks and a gown at £1 13*s* 0*d*. Bracegirdle also dealt in groceries.[63] There was greater specialisation in Chester where the 1755 inventory of Robert Stewart, a linen draper, listed shop goods, chiefly gloves and worsted and cotton stockings, valued at £82 15*s* 11*d* and linen drapery valued at £88 9*s* 3*d*.[64] A Chester haberdasher, Simon Johnson, whose goods were appraised in the same year had a stock of handkerchiefs, table cloths, linen, stockings and thread worth £58 18*s* 0½*d*. He also had one or two ready made cloaks and gowns.[65]

Total stock worth £100–£200 seems to have been normal in

mid-eighteenth century. Some of the more prosperous traders at the end of the century probably had very much more, although the stock, machinery and utensils of Peter and William Bowler who were linen manufacturers and drapers in Macclesfield in 1806 and 1807 was only reckoned to be worth £600.[66] Normally mercers and drapers were not involved in manufacturing or processing but simply bought from manufacturers and wholesalers and sold to customers who were then at liberty to make their own arrangements for the making up of cloth into goods. However, one or two Chester woollen drapers by the early nineteenth century were combining their function with that of tailor while George Birkin of Stockport in 1814 described himself as tailor and draper and appears to have been both buying cloth wholesale in London and employing journeymen tailors.[67] In Chester Richard Orme announced in 1806 that he had received the latest fashions in cloth from London and added, 'Orders executed as usual, whether the articles are purchased of him or not'.[68] Another Chester woollen draper, Robert Brittain, announced in the same year that he had just engaged a foreman from a fashionable London tailor to make up orders in the most modern style.[69]

London was naturally a major centre for purchases by mercers and drapers. In Chester from the 1770s and in Stockport and Macclesfield by the 1810s the principal cloth dealers were regularly announcing in the local newspapers that they had bought the latest fashions from the London houses. Some details of a spring visit to London by Susannah Brown's servant in 1782 survive and provide evidence of early purchases by Browns of Chester. The servant was given a list of twelve addresses in Cheapside, Moorgate and the surrounding area at which to call, pay bills and look at, and occasionally order, gloves, ribbons and cloth.[70] Although fashion goods no doubt had to be acquired from London, drapers in north west England naturally took advantage of ordering direct from local firms as well as dealing with London wholesalers. Sykes and Co. of Stockport were supplying P. M. and S. Williams of Chester with cloth in 1813 and 1814[71] and there seem to have been trade links between Chester mercers and Coventry manufacturers.[72]

Sales were of course much more local, but drapers and mercers must have relied heavily on the carriage trade to dispose of the more expensive and fashionable articles they stocked. Browns were already supplying the Welsh gentry in 1801 when G. Boscowen of Trevalyn Hall bought muslins from them,[73] but in general there is little customer evidence for drapers. The schedule of Peter Lowe of Macclesfield, woollen draper and insolvent debtor,

lists 209 debts due to him in 1814. These amounted to £1,485 1*s* 6*d*, chiefly from the east Cheshire area, and ranged from over £525 owed by another Macclesfield draper to 5 shillings. The bulk of the debts were between £2 and £5 but the average value seems to have been higher than that for debts owed to other types of traders.[74] Drapers in market towns were moreover often involved in supplying, wholesale, other drapers in smaller towns. Lowe was probably doing this and Mrs Bushell, a Chester mercer, announced in 1775 that she would sell wholesale at reduced prices.[75]

The most striking feature, however, of the trade was the emphasis on fashion. This is found both in the regular announcement of spring fashions for sale and in specific references to fashionable goods as in 1794 when James Williams, woollen draper and mercer of Chester, advertised, 'All kinds and colours of silk, satin, hair, worsted and cotton goods which are now so much the fashion for waistcoats and breeches'.[76] Probably more than any other traders, drapers and mercers had to be aware of the latest fashions and be responsive to changes in consumer demand—as well perhaps as encouraging such changes and leading fashion. Not that price was unimportant. Drapers were only too ready to link fashion and cheapness in their advertisements to attract custom and in Chester in 1774 John Reader announced that his fresh stock of linen drapery, mercery and haberdashery would be sold at 10 per cent below normal shop prices.[77] In March 1785 the Chester woollen draper Thomas Steele advertised his best broadcloth at 17 shillings a yard, other broad cloth at 15 shillings and goods in general at 10 per cent cheaper than at any other shop. This provoked an angry response from three other woollen drapers who declared that the price to them of superfine cloth was 17 shillings and that Steele must either be selling inferior goods or was heading for the bankruptcy courts. Steele replied that the prices he asked produced 10 per cent profit and remained in business in the centre of Chester for another 20 or more years.[78] Prices could clearly be a sensitive matter and although drapers were generally high class and wealthy traders, providing the quality shops of most towns, a keen competitive spirit was not absent from them.

Fashion was similarly important for the house furnishing retailer. For example, paper hangings and carpets were sometimes offered for sale by cabinet makers and upholsterers and the need to follow London fashions was already making itself felt in the early nineteenth century. Samuel Nickson of Chester announced his return from London in 1806 with, 'An entirely new and superb assemblage of printed Furnitures, Moreens, unwatered

with Egyptian Etruscan Borders painted on in the present fashion ... Carpets and Hearth-rugs of the most approved pattern; Dining- and Drawing-room Chairs ...' and many similar items including tables and beds. Nickson was still employing upholsterers and cabinet makers, but apparently was also willing to stock furniture he had bought as well as that which he had made.[79]

Various fancy goods and gadgets also began to appear in the shops. W. Royston of Macclesfield advertised in 1811 that he had just acquired a new stock of jewellery[80] and six months later[81] was recommending improved alarm bells to the inhabitants of Macclesfield (to protect the jewellery?) There were also some specialist dealers in glass and china. For example in Macclesfield, William Henshall and Henry Verdon were frequently advertising their wares in the *Macclesfield Courier* in the 1810s. Henshall dealt in perfumery, glass, china and earthenware while Verdon, selling jewellery, glass, cutlery and perfumery, announced his return from London with a fashionable stock of such goods in May 1814.[82] As well as tableware, such dealers also stocked a range of trinkets probably aimed at the luxury market.

Items of this sort must often have been destined for country gentry and wealthy urban traders. The toy dealers listed in Chester directories must similarly have been looking to this type of customer to buy the trinkets and miscellaneous metal items that they sold. This was yet another trade highly susceptible to fashion and in 1750 George French of Chester was advertising his shop, 'Where all Persons may be served with Goods of any Kind whatsoever in the Toyshop Business, intirely new, from London'.[83] Clock and watchmakers, gold and silversmiths and jewellers were perhaps more solid representatives of dealers in luxuries—and could well be men of considerable skill. They were to be found in all towns, but especially Chester where there must have been a ready market for their goods from both the urban gentry and the country gentry of Cheshire and Wales.

One example of a Chester silversmith is George Lowe who advertised as follows in 1794:

> 'George Lowe, Goldsmith, Jeweller, Cutler, Watch and Clock-Maker, near the Cross ... has laid in an extensive assortment of the most fashionable articles for the approaching fair.
> The utmost value given for old gold, silver, foreign coins, gold or silver-lace.
> Light gold bought.
> Clocks and watches warranted to go well.
> Old plate repaired with neatness and expedition.'[84]

Lowe's business seems to have been established in the 1770s[85]

as a spectacle maker and gunsmith but there is no clear indication of his activities until the 1790s. In February 1791 George Lowe, silversmith, was admitted to the freedom of Chester[86] and in the *Universal British Directory* of about the same year he was recorded as a silversmith and jeweller of Watergate Street. By 1794 he was carrying a very large and varied stock, including buckles, cutlery, watches and watch chains, jewellery, snuff boxes, tea urns and a large quantity of gold and silver plate and lace. The total value of such goods listed in his inventory of stock was £910 14*s* 1*d* of which plate, cutlery and watches each amounted to well over £100.[87] Records of sales in the early day books of Lowes' confirm that buckles, rings, watches, knives, spoons and similar items were typical of articles sold, while a certain amount of repair work was done. Buckles, spoons, ladles, earrings and spectacles were among articles repaired. By the 1810s individual customers could be found buying a wide variety of jewellery, including brooches, lockets and rings and perhaps examining them on approval first.

Lowe bought the goods he was selling from a wide range of companies in London, Sheffield, Birmingham and elsewhere but there are rarely any details of the contents of particular parcels of goods received. Messrs Bateman of London were major suppliers and in 1796 one item supplied by them was a punch bowl costing £24 14*s* 3*d* which was probably sold by Lowe to Chester Corporation for £30.[88] Lowe was able to obtain discount, at least on occasion, and in January 1793 discount of 25 per cent was allowed on purchases from Samuel Deakin of Sheffield. Although Chester alone probably provided a good market for items of gold, silver and jewellery, customers were also drawn from a much wider area. The Chester fairs were a good occasion for making contact with potential customers and jewellers seem frequently to have advertised new stock just before the fairs. By 1810, however, Lowe was in regular contact with customers living in most of Cheshire and north Wales, as far distant as Anglesey. Many of these were likely to have been local gentry, although a few were retailers. In Macclesfield William Royston, ironmonger and jeweller was buying from Lowe as was the town clerk John Clulow. Among the traders buying from Lowe, Chester watchmakers (e.g. George Moyle) were particularly important.

Lowe's trade seems to have expanded rapidly and by 1810 his sales to private customers were very substantially above the level of the early 1790s. In 1804 a new shop was opened at No. 5, Bridge Street Row and Lowe announced that he had greatly increased his stock which he hoped was now comparable to any outside London.[89] In 1806 he announced that he was selling the

newest plate, jewellery and watches just purchased in London[90] and by 1810 his customers included many substantial Chester and Cheshire men.

Men of similar type no doubt bulked large among the customers of booksellers who were becoming increasingly important from the late eighteenth century onwards. Chester in particular was well supplied with booksellers whose catalogues reveal large and wide-ranging stocks. For example, Thomas Ledsham in 1757 was offering over 1,000 titles, many published before 1700, on subjects ranging from theology to medicine and including literary works by Swift, Dryden and Pope.[91] Peter Broster's catalogue issued in 1783 was even more wide-ranging and announced that Broster bought books, bound them and served country shopkeepers with books and stationery.[92] In 1792 John Poole issued a catalogue listing over 5,000 titles in such categories as histories, poetry, plays, novels, philosophy, mathematics, trade, law books, divinity, sermons, classics, French and Italian books and music. In all there were said to be over 20,000 volumes, many from libraries recently purchased by Poole.[93] As well as second-hand books, booksellers were ready to purchase new books from London for their customers. In 1806 Broster and Son advertised a new stock of modern publications and announced that they transmitted their orders to London every Wednesday and Saturday.[94] Broster later referred to the fact that he had goods coming from Longmans every week.[95] Also in Chester was a specialist music and musical instrument seller who in 1789 advertised that he could obtain every musical publication, English or foreign, at the shortest notice, particularly the works for harpsichord of Handel and Haydn and a number of other, now forgotten, composers.[96] Booksellers were not absent from the other towns although Chester was particularly well supplied with them. For example, in 1822 a Stockport bookseller John Lomax advertised that he could obtain magazines from London the second day after publication and that books in all languages were procured from London in four days at the publishers' prices.[97]

V

The great variety of trades which made up the retail sector is obvious. However, some generalisations can be attempted. For example, some trades required substantial initial capital, considerable stockholding, wide trade contacts and the provision of extended credit; others could be conducted on a hand to mouth basis. Equally in some trades craft skills were of continuing importance and the retailer might have a substantial workshop

behind his shop while in others commercial skills were of key importance to men primarily involved in buying and selling.

Mercers and drapers fall at one end of the spectrum, with some furnishers and a few grocers also sharing similar attributes. They might need an initial capital of £500, hold stocks of over £1,000, buy in London, have customers coming from 50 or even more miles away and offer extended credit. They were also the innovators in such matters as improved premises, special sales, sophisticated advertisements and fixed price, ready money trading. At the other end of the spectrum, ironmongers, provisions dealers, some shoemakers and many craftsmen-retailers might value their stock in tens rather than hundreds of pounds. Their suppliers were local—often larger traders in the same line of business—and their customers even more so with most living less than a mile away from the shop. Some were as much craftsmen as retailers, though by the early nineteenth century not all manufacturing was done to order nor did such retailers only sell goods they themselves had made. Commercial skills were always important and in many cases an awareness of fashion helped.

But it cannot be doubted that much of the growth in shop retailing in towns in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries took the form of small, under-capitalised outlets, often relying on under-employed and perhaps female labour, and many shops in villages were probably part-time enterprises of the same type. However, it seems clear that shops were widespread by the late eighteenth century if not much earlier and were playing an important role in the distribution of basic foodstuffs and a few basic consumer goods in both towns and countryside. In towns they were part of a distribution network which also included public markets and hawkers. Each of these types of trader filled different and complementary roles and the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw expansion in all forms of retail trading. Such expansion was marked by improvements to market places, increases in the number of shops and developments in the nature and organisation of shop retailing. Although the more revolutionary changes took place after 1850, by 1815 shop retailing was already moving out of the traditional stage and becoming a highly professional and commercially orientated pursuit. The result, in Chester at least, was a recognisable shopping centre of which the citizens were proud.

NOTES

1 T. S. Willan, *An Eighteenth-Century Shopkeeper: Abraham Dent of Kirkby Stephen* (Manchester, 1970).
2 T. S. Willan, *The Inland Trade* (Manchester, 1976).
3 Dorothy Davis, *A History of Shopping* (1966).
4 D. Alexander, *Retailing in England during the Industrial Revolution* (1970). It is interesting to note that hardly any Cheshire shopkeepers are to be found in the Court of Bankruptcy files (Public Record Office B3 series) although many appear in lists of bankrupts. The representative nature of the B3 evidence remains in doubt.
5 Roger Scola, 'Food Markets and Shops in Manchester 1770–1870', *Jnl. Hist. Geog.* i(1975), pp. 153–68.
6 M. T. Wild & G. Shaw, 'Locational behaviour of urban retailing during the nineteenth century: the example of Kingston upon Hull', *Trans. Inst. Brit. Geographers*, lxi(1974), pp. 101–18; 'Population distribution and retail provision: the case of the Halifax–Calder Valley area of West Yorkshire during the second half of the nineteenth century', *Jnl. Hist. Geog.* i(1975), pp. 193–210.
7 The best evidence for the existence of shops in villages comes from the shop tax collected from 1785 to 1789. Parchment duplicates listing the totals paid by each township survive in PRO, Exchequer Tax Accounts, Land and Assessed Taxes, Subsidiary Documents (E 182).
8 For a discussion of these topics see S. I. Mitchell, 'Urban Markets and Retail Distribution 1730–1815 with particular reference to Macclesfield, Stockport and Chester', Unpublished Oxford University D.Phil. Thesis 1975.
9 Cf. Scola, *art. cit.*
10 Cf. Mitchell, *op. cit. cap.* 6.
11 For a discussion of sources see J. F. Pound, 'The Validity of Freemen's Lists: Some Norwich Evidence', *Ec.H.R.* 2nd ser. xxxiv(1981), pp. 48–59.
12 Occupations of testators were derived from *An Index to the Wills and Inventories now preserved in the Court of Probate at Chester*, various editors (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire xxii(1890), 1721–40; xxv(1892), 1741–60; xxxvii & xxxviii(1898), 1761–80; xliv(1902), 1781–90; xlv(1902), 1791–1800; lxii & lxiii(1911 & 1912), 1801–10; and lxxviii & lxxix(1923–4 & 1924–5), 1811–20).
13 Chester Poll Books for 1734, 1747, 1784 and 1812.
14 Directories cannot of course reveal anything about shop turnover, or trends in the size of shops. It seems likely that Chester not only had more shops than the other towns but also had bigger shops. For example, Chester had twice as many shops as Stockport and $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as many shops as Macclesfield in the early 1790s but paid $4\frac{1}{2}$ times as much shop tax as Stockport and 9 times as much shop tax as Macclesfield. The shop tax was charged on a sliding scale related to annual rental value.
15 P. Broster, *The Chester Guide . . . with directory for 1781* (Chester, n.d.) Also editions for 1783, 1787, 1795 and 1797.
16 P. Barfoot & J. Wilkes, *The Universal British Directory*, 5 vols, (London, n.d.).
17 *The Commercial Directory for 1816–17* (Manchester, 1816).

18 J. Pigot & Co., *National Commercial Directory* (London, 1834).
19 See, for example, British Parliamentary Papers 1842 (158), *Report ... into the State of the Population of Stockport*, pp. 26–7 for evidence of the depressed value of shop property and the incidence of bankruptcies.
20 1831 Census Return, British Parliamentary Papers 1833 (149) xxxvi.
21 See above for a discussion of the nature and difficulties of these sources.
22 Chester Poll Books.
23 The market in Macclesfield was improved and extended in the 1770s and in 1807 and the butchers were provided with 80 stalls in 1809; in Stockport the need for enlargement of the market was recognised from the 1780s and some improvement took place in the 1820s; in Chester a market hall was built in the 1820s.
24 National figures for licensed hawkers show a very sharp increase in the first quarter of the 19th century (with revenue received more than trebling). There are no separate Cheshire figures but there are early 19th century complaints from both Stockport and Chester about the activities of hawkers.
25 British Parliamentary Papers 1833 (690) vi 1, *Report from the Select Committee on Manufactures, Commerce and Shipping*, evidence of Henry W. Sefton.
26 J. Hemingway, *History of the City of Chester from its Foundation to the Present Time*, 2 vols (Chester, 1831) i, pp. 387–8.
27 Chester City R.O., Chester Assembly Minutes Calendar AB 4 f 200v.
28 *Ibid.* f 259v.
29 *Ibid.* f 336.
30 Evidence mainly from Broster directories. About one-third of the bakers and confectioners listed were located outside the five main shopping streets (Bridge Street, Eastgate Street, Foregate Street, Northgate Street and Watergate Street).
31 Chester City R.O., Earwaker Collection, Sketch Plan of Eastgate Street by Peter Broster *c.* 1754 (CR 63/2/133).
32 P. Broster, *The Chester Guide ... with directory for 1797* (Chester, 1797).
33 Broster plan of *c.* 1754.
34 Cf. *Ancient Chester: A Series of Illustrations of the Streets of this Old City ... Drawn and Etched by George Batenham*, edited by Thomas Hughes (London, 1880); and *The Commercial Directory for 1816–17* (Manchester, 1816).
35 D. Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman*, 2 vols (2nd ed. London, 1727).
36 Figures derived from P. Broster, *The Chester Guide* (Editions for 1783, 1787, 1795 and 1797).
37 Sources for bankruptcies: *London Gazette* 1731–34, 1737–41; *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1735–37, 1742–85; William Smith & Co., *A List of Bankrupts from Jan. 1 1786 to June 24 1806 Inclusive* (London, 1806) with continuations to 1815.
38 *A Vindication of the Shop Tax* (London, 1789), p. 42.
39 Wealth figures derived from probate records in Cheshire R.O.
40 Cheshire R.O., Will of John Sidebotham, linen draper 1736 (WS Series).
41 *Ibid.* Will of John Parker, mercer 1738.
42 *Ibid.* Will of Robert Davies, mercer 1760.
43 *Ibid.* Will of John Brown, mercer 1811.
44 *Ibid.* Admon of Samuel Brittain, mercer 1814.

45 E.g. Bradford Norbury of Stockport whose personal estate was valued at £17,500 in 1813; that of Samuel Pickering of Macclesfield at £3,500 in 1811 (Cheshire R.O. Wills).
46 Cheshire R.O., Will of William Goodwin, grocer 1751 (WS Series).
47 *Ibid.* Will of Abner Scholes, upholsterer 1736.
48 *Ibid.* Will of Ralph Brock, grocer 1746.
49 *Ibid.* Will of Henry Arderne, grocer 1747.
50 *Macclesfield Courier*, 4 April 1812.
51 Chester City R.O., Quarter Sessions File 1732–36, Names of Undertakers (QSF 96).
52 Eaton Estate Office, Grosvenor Family Papers 1731–1802, Printed List of Subscribers to Chester Canal Navigation 1 July 1772.
53 Manchester Public Libraries, Archives Department, Manchester and Wilmslow Turnpike Trust, Mortgages of Tolls (M 124/4/1/1–43).
54 I. M. B. Pigott, *History of the City of Chester* (Chester, 1815), pp. 250–59 (list of sheriffs with occupations).
55 R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (London, 1747), p. 188.
56 Cheshire R.O., Inventory of James Royle 1744 (WS Series).
57 *Macclesfield Courier*, 17 October 1812.
58 *Adams' Weekly Courant*, 5 July 1785.
59 *Chester Chronicle*, 24 July 1807.
60 Henry Hesketh who went into partnership with William Thomas, banker in 1791 (PRO, Court of Bankruptcy Order Books 1793–96 Bl/87 & 88).
61 *Chester Courant*, 11 August 1795.
62 PRO, Palatinate of Chester, Papers in Causes, Bankruptcy (Chester 10/1/1).
63 Cheshire R.O., Inventory etc. of William Bracegirdle 1751–59 (WC Series).
64 Chester City R.O., Sheriff's Files 1754–55 (SF 186).
65 *Ibid.* 1755–56 (SF 187).
66 PRO, Exchequer Bills and Answers, Cheshire, George III (E 112/1383/170).
67 *Macclesfield Courier*, 23 April 1814.
68 *Chester Chronicle*, 5 September 1806.
69 *Ibid.* 26 September 1806.
70 H. D. Willcock (ed.), *Brown's and Chester* (London, 1947) pp. 24–5.
71 Stockport Reference Library, Sykes MSS, Banking Ledger 1813–1824 (D 171/17/2).
72 E.g. John Burnett who was in dispute with John Bird of Coventry in 1731 (PRO, Palatinate of Chester, Exchequer Paper Pleadings 1731–32, Chester 16/125).
73 Flintshire R.O., Trevalyn Hall MSS, Vouchers 1733–1839 (D/TR/49).
74 PRO, Palatinate of Chester, Papers in Causes, Bankruptcy (Chester 10/1/2).
75 *Chester Chronicle*, 4 September 1775.
76 *Chester Chronicle*, 18 February 1794.
77 *Adam's Chester Courant*, 19 April 1774.
78 *Adam's Chester Courant*, 29 March & 5 April 1785.
79 *Chester Chronicle*, 28 March 1806.
80 *Macclesfield Courier*, 27 July 1811.
81 *Ibid.* 25 January 1812.
82 *Ibid.* 14 May 1814.
83 *Adam's Chester Courant*, 17 April 1750.
84 *Chester Courant*, 1 July 1794.

85 M. A. Smith, *The Bicentenary of the Family Firm of Lowe and Son* 1770–1970 (Chester, 1970).
86 Chester City R.O., Description of Lowes' Records.
87 Lowes' of Chester, Silversmiths, Day Books 1792–95 and 1810–11, Inventory of Stock, January 1794. These books are in the possession of the firm and I am grateful to the manager for allowing me access to them. All subsequent information on Lowes is derived from the Day Books except where stated otherwise.
88 Chester City R.O., Description of Lowes' Day Books.
89 *Chester Courant*, 24 April 1804.
90 *Chester Chronicle*, 3 May 1806.
91 Chester City R.O., Earwaker Collection, Thomas Ledsham's Catalogue (CR 63/1/14).
92 *A Catalogue of Scarce and Valuable Books . . . offered . . . by P. Broster* (Chester, 178–).
93 *Poole's Catalogue for 1792* (Chester and London, 1792).
94 *Chester Chronicle*, 18 April 1806.
95 Chester City R.O., Earwaker Collection, Peter Broster (CR 63/2/133).
96 *Chester Chronicle*, 6 March 1789.
97 *Stockport Advertiser*, 17 May 1822.