

**From Marketplace to Domestic Space: a Comparative
Analysis of the Processes of Consumption in Bristol,
England, and Boston, Massachusetts, c1700-1760**

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Thesis Abstract

This thesis analyses the processes of consumption in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world and the ways consumer marketplaces affected such processes. It identifies differences in the interactions, experiences and priorities of consumers and retailers on both sides of the Atlantic, through an analysis of the process of consumption in Bristol, England, and Boston, Massachusetts, between c1700 and c.1760, from the advertising of a range of consumer goods in newspapers, to evidence of their purchase in household accounts, and their ownership in probate inventories. Just as eighteenth-century shopkeepers in both cities worked to improve the physical experience of shopping for their customers, they also strove to create virtual consumer spaces in their newspaper advertisements, especially for a selection of fashionable goods, through the increasing use of descriptive adjectives. Despite these marketing efforts, household accounts provide evidence that consumers continued to spend a large proportion of their income on a wide range of basic household consumables that were not heavily advertised, sold through a network of supply based on reputation, loyalty and familiarity. Suppliers included family members, local craftsmen and farmers, as well as established retailers. Probate inventories demonstrate the influence of a variety of factors on the accumulation of a range of household goods during the lifetimes of consumers in both cities. Emphasis has been placed on the increasing importance of fashion and fashionable goods during the eighteenth century, but probate inventories, together with newspaper advertisements and household accounts, also provide evidence of the continuing influence of quality, price, availability, and a range of environmental factors upon processes of consumption in the Atlantic world, and the continued importance of local marketplaces to eighteenth-century consumers.

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Chapter 1: Studies of Consumerism in Eighteenth-Century

England and America

Modern consumption has been helpfully described as ‘a social process that goes well beyond the isolated act of purchase into cycles of use and re-use as the meaning of goods is transformed through their incorporation into people’s daily lives’.¹ There are a number of processes involved in the consumption of goods, from marketing to the act of purchase and their eventual ownership. Yet the majority of research concerning the rise of consumption during the early modern period has focused on one or other of these aspects rather than the complete process, for example through developments in eighteenth-century advertising, or the accumulation of specific goods in probate inventories. This thesis presents a more comprehensive approach by demonstrating the complex processes involved in the consumption of a wide range of goods in the first-half of the eighteenth century among citizens in Bristol, England, and Boston, Massachusetts. By analysing the marketing of these goods, their relative position in the purchasing considerations of early modern households, and their eventual accumulation in probate inventories, it provides a more complete picture of the variety and complexity of consumption processes in England and America between 1700 and 1760.

¹ Daniel Miller, Peter Jackson, Nigel Thrift, Beverley Holbrook and Michael Rowlands, *Shopping, Place and Identity*, (London, 1998).

In Glennie's overview of the state of consumption studies in 1995, he concluded that:

North American commentators commonly consider English and colonial consumption changes as a single process, occurring at different speeds in different places...beginning with expansion in traditional areas of consumption, followed by growing consumption of novel items, and the social and geographical diffusion of new consumption habits.²

Analysis of the marketing of a range of goods in newspaper advertisements, their purchase in household accounts, and their ownership in probate inventories in Bristol and Boston between 1700 and 1760, illuminates the purchasing choices of middle-class urban consumers, who had access to a wide range of household goods through their respective marketplaces. The care taken in this thesis to ensure the samples are closely matched with one another minimises the potential influence of variables surrounding consumer knowledge, social rank, and product availability in the two locations, thus enabling resulting conclusions to be attributed to purchasing preferences, and the influence of the particular virtual and physical consumer landscapes of the two localities on those decisions.

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the rich historiography surrounding the study of consumption in the early modern period. It outlines and critiques the contrasting schools of thought that have developed around studies of rising consumerism in England and America during the eighteenth century. It highlights the main themes uncovered by the research to date, particularly in terms of the processes involved in eighteenth-century consumption. Section 1.1 outlines the foundations of the debates, and 1.2

² Paul Glennie, 'Consumption Within Historical Studies', in Daniel Miller (ed.), *Acknowledging Consumption: A Review of New Studies*, (1995), p. 176.

considers the extent to which the eighteenth century experienced a 'consumer revolution', in terms of the take-off of demand. Section 1.3 assesses the depth of participation in rising consumption among the populations of England and the colonies. 1.4 assesses the role of the household in consumption decisions, and 1.5 outlines a range of factors driving increases in consumption on both sides of the Atlantic. Section 1.6 addresses the varying definitions of consumption used by historians, and sections 1.7 to 1.9 look at the types of goods, the varying sources, and the range of geographical areas studied, in order to assess their impact on the conclusions reached. Section 1.10 draws conclusions about the current state of consumption studies, highlighting the ways this thesis adds to our knowledge of the processes involved in eighteenth-century consumption.

1.1: Studies of Consumerism in Eighteenth-Century England and America

There is a wealth of existing research surrounding rising levels of consumption in eighteenth-century England and America. Such research provides insights into important developments in the economic marketplaces of the Atlantic world and facilitates our understanding of the commercial lives of English and colonial citizens in the period prior to the American and Industrial Revolutions. One contemporary, Josiah Tucker, signalled his awareness of rising consumerism in eighteenth-century England thus:

...the English...have better Conveniences in their Houses, and affect to have more in Quantity of Clean, neat Furniture, and a greater variety, such as Carpets, Screens, Window Curtains, Chamber Bells, polished

Brass Locks, Fenders etc., than are to be found in any other country of Europe.³

During the 1960s and 1970s, research on rising levels of consumption divided into two schools of thought: those, like John, who concentrated their attention on the rise of manufacturing, or the supply side of the equation⁴; and those, like Deane, Eversley, Thirsk, Habakkuk and Coleman, who argued that rising demand was an equal, if not more, important factor.⁵ They reasoned that demand for products increases in line with supply, and that this provides stimulus for further increases in demand. While Deane, Habakkuk, Minchinton and Crafts, among others, looked to the growing export trade to explain these increases in demand,⁶ an opposing group, led by Coleman, concluded that

³ Josiah Tucker, 'A Selection from his Economic and Political Writings', quoted in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, (London, 1983), p. 26.

⁴ A.H. John, 'Agricultural Productivity and Economic Growth in England, 1700-1760', *Journal of Economic History*, 25, 1965, 19-34; A.H. John, 'Aspects of English Economic Growth in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century', *Economica*, 28, 1967, 176-190; A.H. John, 'English Agricultural Improvement and Grain Exports, 1660-1765', in D.C. Coleman and A.H. John (eds.), *Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England: Essays Presented to F.J. Fisher*, (London, 1976).

⁵ Phyllis Deane and W.A. Cole, *British Economic Growth, 1688-1959*, (Cambridge, 1969); Phyllis Deane, *The First Industrial Revolution*, (Cambridge, 1979); H.J. Habakkuk, *Population Growth and Economic Development since 1750*, (Leicester, 1971); H.J. Habakkuk, *England's Nobility*, (Cambridge, 1984); D.C. Coleman, *The Economy of England, 1450-1750*, (New York, 1977); Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: the Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England*, (Oxford, 1978); D.E.C Eversley, 'The Home Market and Economic Growth in England, 1750-1780', in E.L. Jones and G.E. Mingay (eds.), *Land, Labour and Population in the Industrial Revolution*, (London, 1967).

⁶ Deane and Cole, *British Economic Growth*; Deane, *First Industrial Revolution*; Habakkuk, *Population Growth and Economic Development*; Habakkuk, *England's Nobility*; W.E. Minchinton (ed.), *The Growth of English Overseas Trade in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, (London, 1969); N.F.R. Crafts, *British Economic Growth During the Industrial Revolution*, (Oxford, 1985).

the home market absorbed the majority, perhaps as much as four-fifths, of the growing total production during the period.⁷ The 1980s saw a rapid expansion in consumption studies, beginning in 1982 with the publication of McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb's *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*. The authors found evidence for a consumer revolution during the eighteenth century, demonstrating that 'more men and women than ever before in human history enjoyed the experience of acquiring material possessions.'⁸

Debates surrounding rising levels of consumption in the colonies during the eighteenth century have been equally vigorous. On the eve of the American Revolution, Price maintained that American markets '...took more than half the total English exports of wrought iron and copper, nails, cordage, beaver hats, linen, wrought silk, and printed linens and cottons.'⁹ Breen estimated that the average colonist spent just under £1 on British imports in 1700, and by 1770 that figure had risen to £1.20 per capita per year.¹⁰ This was a particularly significant rise considering the eight-fold increase in the population of the colonies during the same period. Additionally, Main's research led her to conclude that '...the same monetary outlay in 1750, pound

⁷ Coleman, *Economy of England*.

⁸ McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 1.

⁹ Jacob Price, 'What Did Merchants Do? Reflections on British Overseas Trade, 1660-1790', *Journal of Economic History*, 2, 1989, 276.

¹⁰ T.H. Breen, 'An Empire of Goods': The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776', *Journal of British Studies*, 25, 1986, 485; T.H. Breen, 'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, 119, May, 1988, 78.

for pound, achieved more in living standards than it had in 1650, and people had more choices for the same amount of money.’¹¹

Prior to the 1980s, colonial researchers also focused on the increasing supply of goods, as opposed to increases in demand, through the use of statistics on trade with England.¹² McCusker and Menard’s *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* highlighted this bias and sought to redress the balance in favour of consumption, adding to the growing body of research begun in the early 1980s by Shammass, Walsh, and the Mains, among others.¹³ The remainder of Chapter 1 outlines the numerous debates surrounding the rising demand for consumable goods on both sides of the Atlantic during the eighteenth century.

¹¹ Gloria L. Main, ‘The Standard of Living in Southern New England, 1640-1773’, in ‘Toward a History of the Standard of Living in British North America’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, January, 1988, 128.

¹⁰ Examples include Charles McLean Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History*, (Yale, 1938); Jacob Price, ‘The Economic Growth of the Chesapeake and the European Market, 1697-1775’, *Journal of Economic History*, 24, 1964, 496-511; Jacob Price, ‘Economic Function and the Growth of American Port Towns in the Eighteenth Century’, *Perspectives in American History*, 8, 1974, 123-186; Jacob Price, ‘Colonial Trade and British Economic Development 1660-1775’, *Lex et Scientia: International Journal of Law and Science*, 14, 1978, 106-126.

¹³ John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789*, (North Carolina, 1991); Carole Shammass, including ‘The Domestic Environment in Early Modern England and America’, *Journal of Social History*, 14, 1, Autumn, 1980, 3-24; Gloria L. Main, including ‘The Standard of Living in Colonial Massachusetts’, *Journal of Economic History*, 43, 1983, 101-108, ‘Probate Records as a Source for Early American History’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 32, 1975, 89-99, and *The Tobacco Colony: Life in Early Maryland, 1650-1720*, (New Jersey, 1982); Jackson Turner Main ‘Standards of Living and the Life Cycle in Colonial Connecticut’, *Journal of Economic History*, 43, 1983 159-165; and Lorena Walsh, including ‘Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency: Living Standards and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1643-1777’, *Journal of Economic History*, 43, March, 1983, 107-117.

1.2: The Timing and Spread of Rising Consumption

Glennie observed that the terms ‘birth of a consumer society’, ‘emergent modern consumption’, and ‘the rise of mass market culture’ have been used to explain what was happening to societies from the sixteenth century all the way up to the present time.¹⁴ Section 1.2 outlines the different schools of thought surrounding the timing of rising demand and the extent to which the various levels of contemporary society were able to participate.

1.2.1. A ‘Consumer Revolution’?

Although attempts to determine the timing of growing demand have formed an important area of English and American consumption studies, this thesis deals with the important developments which occurred during the first half of the eighteenth century. The term ‘consumer revolution’ was first coined in 1982 by McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, and used to describe the rapid take-off of demand for consumer goods in England in the mid-eighteenth century. They maintained that the ‘embryonic signs’ of a consumer revolution were evident in the seventeenth century, but that significant increases in demand only really emerged in the second-half of the eighteenth century.¹⁵ Eversley found evidence for a significant increase in consumption from the middle of the century onwards, and a large number of researchers publishing in the 1980s, including Porter and Earle, concurred.¹⁶

¹⁴ Glennie, ‘Consumption Within Historical Studies’, pp. 164-203.

¹⁵ McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 5; B.A. Holderness, ‘Birth of a Consumer Society’, *English History Review*, 99, 1984, 122-124.

¹⁶ Eversley, ‘The Home Market’; Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Harmondsworth, 1982); Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660-1730*, (London, 1989).

A number of American historians, like McCusker and Menard, also pointed to a boom in the consumption of goods in the colonies in the mid-eighteenth century. They concluded that the size of the colonial market for semi-manufactured and manufactured goods rose rapidly, highlighting the 50 per cent increase in per capita imports into the colonies between 1720 and 1770.¹⁷ Breen and Bailyn noted the particularly rapid acceleration between 1740 and 1771, with Breen proposing the 1740s as the key decade when 'British goods flooded the market, (and) advertisements grew, driven largely by demand.'¹⁸ In her studies of the Chesapeake, Walsh observed an explosion in 'the range of domestic props that gentlefolk found desirable' by the middle of the eighteenth century.¹⁹ Shamas concurred, particularly highlighting 'the diffusion of eating and drinking goods into the ordinary household.'²⁰

Nash noted the particular enthusiasm among colonial historians for the notion of a 'consumer revolution' in the eighteenth century, highlighting the general acceptance of the idea of a mass market for British manufactured goods by the eve of the American Revolution, with only a 'qualification of the argument, and of its periodization, rather than to its outright rejection.'²¹

¹⁷ McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America*, p. 279.

¹⁸ Breen, 'Empire of Goods', p. 486; Bernard Bailyn, '1776: A Year of Challenge – a World Transformed', *Journal of Law and Economics*, 19, 1976, 447. Bailyn calculated that 'England's exports to North America increased almost eight times from 1700-1773; between 1750-1773 it rose 120 per cent; and in the five years from 1768-1773 it rose 43 per cent.'

¹⁹ Walsh, 'Urban Amenities', 110.

²⁰ Shamas, 'Domestic Environment', 14.

²¹ R.C. Nash, 'Domestic Material Culture and Consumer Demand in the British Atlantic World: Colonial South Carolina, 1670-1770', in David S. Shield (ed.), *Material Culture in Anglo-America: Regional Identity and Urbanity in the Tidewater, Low Country and Caribbean*, (South Carolina, 2009), p. 222.

Clemens, for instance, found evidence of evolution rather than revolution in his research on rural Maryland, Pennsylvania and Connecticut from the 1760s onwards, and emphasised that 'distinctive patterns of accumulation existed and persisted within different regions and among different classes.'²²

1.2.2: Alternatives to a 'Consumer Revolution'

A number of consumption studies on both sides of the Atlantic have challenged the idea of a 'consumer revolution' in the eighteenth century, providing evidence for alternative arguments concerning the timing and spread of rising levels of consumption during the early modern period. Lenman and John proposed that a take-off in demand in England was apparent from the early eighteenth century, rather than mid-century, but other historians have found evidence of earlier growth.²³ Thirsk proposed that the roots of developments in the domestic market for goods in England could be traced back to the first half of the sixteenth century.²⁴ Spufford and Lemire's work on textiles found signs of a significant growth in demand from the mid-seventeenth century onwards.²⁵ Weatherill concurred, and Smith and Shamma's research on levels of consumption in England and the colonies also found evidence of growth from the seventeenth century onwards.²⁶

²² Paul G.E. Clemens, 'The Consumer Culture of the Middle Atlantic, 1760-1820', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3, 62, 4, October, 2005, 577.

²³ Bruce P. Lenman, 'The English and Dutch East India Companies and the Birth of Consumerism in the Augustan World', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 14, February, 1990, 47-65; John, 'Aspects of Economic Growth'.

²⁴ Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*.

²⁵ Margaret Spufford, *The Great Reclotting of Rural England: Petty Chapmen and their Wares in the Seventeenth Century*, (London, 1984); Beverly Lemire, *Fashion's Favourite: The Cotton Trade and the Consumer in Britain, 1660-1800*, (Oxford, 1991).

²⁶ Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760*, 2nd Edition, (London, 1996); W.D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600-*

Despite Nash's assertions about the comparative popularity of the notion of a consumer boom, a number of studies have also disputed the idea of an explosion of demand in eighteenth-century America, demonstrating earlier signs of change. Shammass analysed new groceries like tea, coffee and chocolate, which all became 'mass items of consumption between 1650 and 1750', and semi-durable goods which, in the colonies, appeared in 'many households without a concomitant upgrading in housing.'²⁷ Looking specifically at London and the Atlantic economy, Zahedieh stated that American markets were already very important to the capital by the latter stages of the seventeenth century. Her evidence led her to conclude that the 'value of domestically produced exports to the colonies almost doubled between 1663 and 1686 and, by 1700, they accounted for 71 per cent of goods shipped from London to North America.'²⁸

1.2.3: Conclusion

Summarising the historiography of consumption studies, Fine declared in 2002 that 'the notion of a consumer revolution has been discredited'²⁹, and much of the recent research on consumerism in early modern England concurs with this conclusion, finding evidence of significant rises in consumption beginning in the seventeenth century and earlier. Many researchers of colonial consumption, however, continue to find evidence of a

1800, (New York, 2002); Carole Shammass, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America*, (Oxford, 1990).

²⁷ Shammass, *Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 291-3.

²⁸ Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660-1700*, (Cambridge, 2010), p. 257.

²⁹ Ben Fine and Ellen Leopold, *The World of Consumption: The Material and Cultural Revisited*, (Economics as Social Theory), (Routledge, 2002), p. 227.

consumer boom in the mid-eighteenth century, with Carson arguing its validity as recently as 2017.³⁰ Much of the explanation for these differing conclusions comes from the source material used, the types of goods studied, and the focus on one particular aspect of the consumption process. A focus on the marketing of goods, from the analysis of advertisements, and evidence of their ownership, seen in probate inventories, tends to provide evidence of a rapid growth in consumption, particularly for fashionable items. However, evidence of purchases via household accounts emphasises elements of continuity in the consumption process. Colonial researchers have only begun to consider the act of purchase relatively recently, through household accounts and other additional sources, and this explains much of the divergence of opinion that continues to the present.

Despite disagreements concerning the precise take-off of consumer demand, there is a broad consensus among researchers on both sides of the Atlantic about the importance of the developments in consumption that occurred in England and America between 1700 and 1760. By exploring the process of consumption on both sides of the Atlantic during the first half of the eighteenth century, through an analysis of marketing, purchase and ownership, this thesis underlines important developments in the consumer marketplace during this period and endeavours to address the issues outlined above. By highlighting the complexity of consumption decisions surrounding a range of traditional and fashionable household consumables, it also challenges the notion of a 'consumer revolution'.

³⁰ Cary Carson, *Face Value: The Consumer Revolution in the Colonizing of America*, (Virginia, 2017).

1.3: The Participants in Rising Consumption

Although differing views have also emerged about the spread of rises in consumption among English and colonial societies, this thesis demonstrates the important role of middle-class consumers in these developments. Prior to the publication of McKendrick's work, researchers divided into two schools of thought concerning those who were able to participate in rising levels of consumption. Stone, Habakkuk, Cannon, Mingay and others, focused on increasing demand from the elite, due to their wealth and relatively high levels of spending.³¹ By contrast, Perkin, Plumb, Earle and others, emphasised the growing role of the middle-classes in any consumer boom.³² McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, however, argued that rising demand penetrated all levels of society in the second half of the eighteenth century. In their view:

Objects which for centuries had been the privileged possessions of the rich came, within the space of a few generations, to be within the reach of a larger part of society than ever before, and, for the first time, to be within the legitimate aspirations of almost all of it... 'luxuries' came to be seen as mere 'decencies' and 'decencies' came to be seen as 'necessities'.³³

Porter and Lemire also proposed that the market for manufactured goods reached down to the unskilled factory worker and the domestic servant class,

³¹ Lawrence Stone and Jean C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite? England 1540-1880*, (Oxford, 1986); Habakkuk, *Population Growth*; Habakkuk, *England's Nobility*; John Cannon, *Aristocratic Century: the Peerage of Eighteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge, 1984); G.E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (London, 1963).

³² Harold Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780-1800*, (London, 1969); J.H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, (Harmondsworth, 1950); J.H. Plumb, *The Commercialization of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Reading, 1973); Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*.

³³ McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 1.

finding evidence of enormous growth in the numbers and kinds of goods being purchased across the social spectrum.³⁴ Lemire found evidence that the increasing demand for second-hand clothing during the period was two-tiered:

...at the top open and apparent and expressed by middle and upper ranks through the acquisition of new products; below were the most numerous of Britain's families, at a level below 50 [pounds] per annum who benefitted from a well-established system of distribution.³⁵

Weatherill's study of probate inventories led her to conclude that such claims were exaggerated, highlighting two problems with much of the evidence used to support the argument for a mass market for goods during the first half of the eighteenth century. She argued that it was wrong to conflate the evidence from the consumption of textiles and clothing with the demands for other goods like domestic utensils, and she also pointed to the lack of reliable evidence for the majority who did not leave inventories or accounts.³⁶ More recent studies, undertaken by Vickery, Berry, Foyster, de Vries, Stobart and Whittle and Griffiths, have turned the focus of the debate away from the lower orders of society and back towards the gentry, using country house accounts to gain an understanding of the consumption patterns of those at the top of society.³⁷

³⁴ Porter, *English Society*; Beverly Lemire, 'Developing Consumerism and the Ready-Made Clothes Trade in Britain, 1750-1800', *Textile History*, 15 1984, 21-44; Beverly Lemire, 'Consumerism in Pre-Industrial and Early Industrial England: The Trade in Second-Hand Clothes', *Journal of British Studies*, 27, 1988, 1-24; Lemire, *Fashion's Favourite*.

³⁵ Lemire, 'Consumerism in Pre-Industrial', 2.

³⁶ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, pp. 193-194.

³⁷ Amanda Vickery, 'Women and the World of Goods: a Lancashire Consumer and her Possessions, 1751-81', in John Brewer and Roy Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, (London, 1993), pp. 274-304; Amanda Vickery, 'Women, Consumption and Couverture in England, c1760-1860', *Historical Journal*, 1996, 703-722; Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England*, (New Haven, 1998); Amanda Vickery, 'His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Household Accounting in Eighteenth-

The study of colonial probate inventories provided Shammas with evidence that even 'laboring class households readily purchased the more expensive tools of domesticity, teapots, knives and forks, cheap crockery and so forth.'³⁸ Price and Jones concurred, with Price stressing that not only was demand great at the top end of the market for quality goods not made in America, but also at the bottom for inexpensive goods like German linens, which were cheaper than anything available in the colonies.³⁹ By studying 4000 probate inventories from three counties in Virginia and Maryland, Walsh was able to conclude that, by the 1730s '...middling families got into the act and by the 1750s even the poorer sorts were finding a wide variety of non-essentials increasingly desirable.'⁴⁰ Pogue used archaeological evidence concerning architecture, diet and ceramics, to identify eighteenth-century

Century England', *Past and Present*, 2006, 12-38; Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: at Home in Georgian England*, (New Haven, 2009); Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (eds.), *Creating and Consuming Culture in North East England, 1660-1830*, (Aldershot, 2003); Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster (eds.), *The Family in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge, 2007); Jan de Vries, 'The Industrial Revolution and the Industrious Revolution', *Journal of Economic History*, 54, 1994, 249-270; Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behaviour and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present*, (Cambridge, 2008); Jon Stobart, *Spend, Spend, Spend: a History of Shopping*, (Stroud, 2008); Jon Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers: Supplying the Country House in Eighteenth-Century England', *Economic History Review*, 64, 2011, 885-904; Jon Stobart, Andrew Hann and Victoria Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption – Leisure and Shopping in English Towns, c1680-1830*, (London, 2007); Jane Whittle and Elizabeth Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth Century: The World of Alice Le Strange*, (Oxford, 2012).

³⁸ Shammas, 'Domestic Environment', 17.

³⁹ Jacob Price, 'The Transatlantic Economy', in Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole (eds.), *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era: Based on Papers Presented at a Conference held at St Catherine's College, Oxford, August 1-7th, 1981*, (Baltimore, 1984), p. 35, and Alice Hanson Jones, *Wealth of a Nation to Be: the American Colonies on the Eve of Revolution*, (New York, 1980), p. 340.

⁴⁰ Walsh, 'Urban Amenities', 111.

Chesapeake society as one where 'a culture of consumption was both possible and viewed as beneficial by a significant portion of the population'.⁴¹

Main disagreed with the extent to which rising consumption percolated down to the lower levels of the society but concluded that, although the poor did not participate fully, they did not lose ground during the period, and the changes did not take place at their expense.⁴² A number of other researchers also questioned the level of participation for many sections of colonial society, with Nash concluding that:

while Americans were well fed...the mass of colonists experienced standards of domestic comfort and convenience...that were no better, and for large sections of the population considerably worse, than those prevailing in low-income British households.⁴³

Smith painted a very spartan picture of life for labourers in Philadelphia, revealing that 'they dined like prisoners, dressed in the same fashions as almshouse inmates, and crowded into cramped quarters.'⁴⁴

Theories surrounding the spread of increased consumption within eighteenth-century society on both sides of the Atlantic have changed over time. Beginning with the notion of rises in consumerism being chiefly confined to the wealthiest elements of English and colonial society, attention has subsequently focused on the spending habits of those further down the social scale. While those studying textiles have pointed to the eager participation of the even the lowest classes in rising consumption, subsequent corrections

⁴¹ Dennis J. Pogue, 'The Transformation of America: Georgian Sensibility, Capitalist Conspiracy, or Consumer Revolution?', *Historical Archaeology*, 35, 2, 2001, 54.

⁴² Main, 'Standard of Living in Southern New England', 128.

⁴³ Nash, 'Domestic Material Culture', 224.

⁴⁴ Billy G. Smith, 'The Material Lives of Laboring Philadelphians, 1750-1800', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 38, 1981, 202.

have led to the conclusion that the lowest orders were able to participate, but only to a comparatively limited extent. Much depends on the types of goods studied and disagreements over what constitutes 'consumption'. Studies of second-hand clothing inevitably address the purchasing habits of the lower classes, while those looking at household goods highlight the consumption habits of the middling ranks and above. While probate inventory analysis has formed the basis for much of this research, a focus on household accounts, especially among those studying English consumption, has enabled a renewed focus on the spending habits and purchasing preferences of gentry and middling families. By analysing the appearance of a range of goods, including food, textiles, and a range of household goods, in a variety of sources, this thesis provides an alternative to many previous studies of changing consumption habits, through a multi-focused analysis of the processes of consumption among the middling ranks of eighteenth-century Bristol and Boston.

1.4: The Role of the Household in Rising Consumption

Another important aim of this thesis is to highlight the important role of the household unit in purchasing decisions. Attention has traditionally been focused on the particular roles of women and men in the consumption of goods in the eighteenth century. Vickery provided a summary of contemporary opinions regarding female consumers:

Flashy, extravagant, meretricious and avaricious, the female consumer is an archetypal villainess, while the male consumer is oddly invisible, somehow uncontaminated by the dirty business, his mind presumably on higher things.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p.107.

Researchers such as Berry, Cox, Walsh and Kowaleski-Wallace focused on the spending habits of women, highlighting their dominant role as consumers in the public arena of the shop.⁴⁶ Weatherill, Shammas, Lemire, Davidson and others, specifically addressed the important role of women as consumers in the private sphere of the home.⁴⁷ Weatherill used almost 3,000 probate inventories from eight areas of England to assess the position of middle-ranking women in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century society. While finding indications of differences in material and cultural values between the sexes, she was also sceptical about the value of inventories for exploring gender.⁴⁸

A shift in focus has occurred in more recent years to take into account the spending habits of men. Many, like Stobart, Vickery and Styles, contrasted

⁴⁶ Helen Berry, 'Polite Consumption: Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6, 12, 2002, 375-394; Berry and Gregory, *Creating and Consuming Culture*; Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman: a Study of Retailing, 1550-1820*, (London, 2000); Clare Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of Design History*, 8, 1995, 157-176; Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping and Business in the Eighteenth Century*, (New York, 1997); Margot Finn, 'Woman, Consumption and Coverture in England, 1760-1860', *The Historical Journal*, 39, 1996, 703-722; R. Sweet and P. Lane (eds.), *Women and Urban Life in Eighteenth-Century Britain 'on the town'*, (Aldershot, 2003).

⁴⁷ Lorna Weatherill, 'A Possession of One's Own: Women and Consumer Behaviour in England, 1660-1740', *Journal of British Studies*, 25, 2, April, 1986, 131-156; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*; Carole Shammas, 'The Determinants of Personal Wealth in Seventeenth-Century England and America', *Journal of Economic History*, 37, 1977, 675-689; Shammas, *Pre-Industrial Consumer*; Lemire, 'Developing Consumerism'; Lemire, 'Consumerism in Pre-Industrial and Early Industrial England'; Lemire, *Fashion's Favourite*; Beverly Lemire, 'Peddling Fashion: Salesmen, Pawnbrokers, Tailors, Thieves and the Second-Hand Clothes Trade in England, c.1700-1800', *Textile History*, 22, 1991, 67-82; Caroline Davidson, *A Woman's Work is Never Done: a History of Housework in the British Isles, 1650-1950*, (London, 1982); Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England*, (London, 1993).

⁴⁸ Weatherill, 'Possession of One's Own', 156.

the roles of men and women in eighteenth-century consumer society. They argued that women had a very visible role as consumers precisely because they were involved in the everyday purchase of essential items, but that men also played an important, if more hidden, role. Their research demonstrated that the head of the household tended to be involved in the larger one-off purchases of pieces of furniture and other high-status items.⁴⁹ Finn analysed the diaries of two clergymen, a shopkeeper and a schoolmaster, and concluded that men were just as acquisitive as women, rejecting the assertion that women were the primary consumers.⁵⁰

Debates surrounding the participation of colonial women in rising consumption have taken a different direction. Colonial women do not appear in many accounts of the retail trade in counties like Virginia. Females were not liable for debt under Virginia law, and therefore would not have had access to the same credit facilities as men, being unable to hold separate store accounts. Therefore, the vast majority of their purchases have been lost behind male names or left no record as cash transactions.⁵¹ This has led to

⁴⁹ Stobart, *Spend, Spend, Spend*; Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers'; Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*; Jon Stobart and Ilja Van Damme, *Modernity and the Second-Hand Trade: European Consumer Cultures and Practices, 1700-1900*, (Basingstoke, 2010); Vickery, 'Women and the World of Goods'; Vickery, 'Women, Consumption and Couverture'; Vickery, 'His and Hers: Gender'; Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*; John Styles, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*, (New Haven, 2007); John Styles and Amanda Vickery, *Gender, Taste and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830*, (London, 2006).

⁵⁰ Margot Finn, 'Men's Things: Masculine Consumption in the Consumer Revolution', *Social History*, 25, 2000, 133-155.

⁵¹ See examples in Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England*, (New York, 1944); Philip J. Greven, *Four Generations: Population, Land and Family in Colonial Massachusetts*, (Cornell, 1970); Rhys Isaac, *The*

an underestimation of the role of women in such purchases, and an overestimation of the dominance of men in retail environments such as country stores. Innes, however, concluded that the 'growing number of domestic furnishings found in probate inventories by mid-eighteenth century suggest more female input in decisions about purchases', and research undertaken by Carr, Walsh and Main concurred.⁵²

Ulrich outlined a more complex picture of the role of women in the colonial economy, rejecting the simplistic idea of a shift over time from producer to consumer. She demonstrated that many women retained both identities well into the eighteenth century, and that their roles differed in urban and rural areas.⁵³ Some also argued that by the end of the eighteenth century, while women eagerly participated in the new retail culture, seeing it as an opportunity for self-expression and independence, men also 'stepped out of their more comfortable business identities to negotiate the vagaries of fashion and consumer choice.'⁵⁴

Attention has increasingly turned to the important role of the household as a unit of consumption in England and the colonies. In the view of de Vries,

Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790, (North Carolina, 1982) and C. L. Hudgins, *Patrician Culture, Public Ritual and Patrician Authority in Virginia, 1680-1740*, (London, 1984).

⁵² Stephen Innes (ed.), *Work and Labour in Early America*, (North Carolina, 1988), p. 34; Lois Green Carr and Lorena Walsh, 'The Standard of Living in the Colonial Chesapeake' in 'Toward a History of the Standard of Living in British North America', *William and Mary Quarterly*, January, 1988, 135-159; Lois Green Carr and Lorena Walsh, 'Inventories and the Analysis of Wealth and Consumption Patterns in St Mary's County, Maryland, 1658-1777', *Historical Methods*, 13, 1980, 81-104; Main, 'Standard of Living in Colonial Massachusetts'.

⁵³ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750*, (New York, 1980), p.15.

⁵⁴ Ann Smart Martin, *Buying into the World of Goods: Early Consumers in Backcountry Virginia*, (Baltimore, 2008), p.145.

in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries 'the industrious household helped lay the groundwork for the Industrial Revolution through demand-led changes in its behaviour.'⁵⁵ Comparing English and colonial consumption, Shammass also highlighted the importance of the household unit as 'the site of both production and consumption' between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.⁵⁶ Weatherill also used household accounts to assess the household finances of three families, the middle-class Pengellys and Fells, and the lower-class Lathams.⁵⁷ Despite such examples, Vickery highlighted the relative lack of research in this area in 2009, pointing out that the 'neglect of the household as a unit of consumption is especially odd for the Georgians when family and household loomed so large.'⁵⁸

Stobart, Whittle and Griffiths, and Muldrew, have subsequently made major contributions to research surrounding the consumption habits of a range of households. Stobart, and Whittle and Griffiths, used gentry household accounts to highlight the complexity of the supply chains involved in provisioning the Leigh and Le Strange families in the early modern period, and the wide variety of goods they consumed.⁵⁹ Muldrew used the household accounts of Latham and others to assess the material culture of agrarian

⁵⁵ Jan de Vries, 'Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods: Understanding the Household Economy in Early Modern Europe', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, p.121.

⁵⁶ Carole Shammass, 'Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1500-1800', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, p.177.

⁵⁷ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, and Lorna Weatherill, (ed.), *The Account Book of Richard Latham, 1724-1767*, Records of Social and Economic History, (Oxford, 1990).

⁵⁸ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p.108.

⁵⁹ Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers'; Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*.

labourers in the early modern period, particularly focusing on their diet.⁶⁰ The inclusion of household account books from Bristol and Boston, together with evidence from probate inventories concerning the positioning of objects within the home, enables this thesis to emphasise the important role of the middle-class household unit in the processes surrounding consumption, and to compare their interactions with the consumer marketplace to those of the gentry.

1.5. Motivations for Rising Consumerism

1.5.1. Emulation

Although there is broad consensus concerning the evidence for increasing demand in eighteenth-century England and the colonies, disagreement exists about the specific forces responsible for such growth. This thesis analyses the role of emulation in the consumption process through an assessment of newspaper advertisements. Evidence for the importance of emulation as a stimulus for demand comes from a number of contemporary commentators, like Henry Fielding, who wrote:

while the nobleman will emulate the Grandeur of a Prince and the Gentleman will aspire to the proper state of a Nobleman; the Tradesman steps from behind his Counter into the vacant place of the Gentleman. Nor doth the confusion end there: It reaches the very Dregs of the People, who aspire still to a degree beyond that which belongs to them.⁶¹

Perkin agreed that ‘...the compulsive urge for imitating the spending habits of ones’ betters...’ was the main driving force of rising consumption in

⁶⁰ Craig Muldrew, *Food, Energy and the Creation of Industriousness: Work and Material Culture in Agrarian England, 1550-1780*, (Cambridge, 2011).

⁶¹ Henry Fielding, *Fielding’s Works II*, (London, 1884).

England.⁶² He subsequently concluded that if consumer demand 'was the key to the Industrial Revolution, social emulation was the key to consumer demand.'⁶³ McKendrick and others highlighted the closely stratified nature of eighteenth-century society in England, and the consequent striving for social mobility, as key causes of such emulation.⁶⁴ Porter concurred, providing evidence that householders were buying goods that had previously only been within the reach of their betters, such as ceramics, and metal forks.⁶⁵

Many historians of rising colonial demand also highlighted the importance of social emulation as a major motivation. Carr and Walsh, in their analysis of the standard of living in the Chesapeake, emphasised the colonists' imitation of the English nobility. Walsh cited the comments of a visitor to Annapolis in 1771, which demonstrated the speed with which fashions spread from London to the colonies:

The quick importation of fashions from the mother country is really astonishing. I am almost inclined to believe that a new fashion is adopted earlier by the polished and affluent American than by many opulent persons in the great metropolis.⁶⁶

Even in rural areas of the Chesapeake, this same observer wrote that he encountered '...elegance as well as comfort...in very many of the habitations.'⁶⁷

⁶² Harold Perkin, 'Social Causes of the British Industrial Revolution', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 18, 1968, 123-43.

⁶³ Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society*.

⁶⁴ McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*.

⁶⁵ Porter, *English Society*, p. 245.

⁶⁶ Lorena Walsh, 'Urban Amenities', p.107.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Walsh also found evidence in probate inventories of emulation between different classes of colonists, observing goods previously considered as luxuries, such as silverware and fine china, appearing with increasing frequency among the estates of middling planters, and concluded that these goods were used to reinforce and bridge social distinctions among the colonists.⁶⁸ Breen maintained that emulation reached down to the lowest classes, concluding that 'poorer colonists aped their social betters, just as wealthy Americans mimicked English gentlemen, eventually reaching the lowest levels of society.' In his opinion such imitation led to the 'anglicization of goods' in colonial America, and the subsequent politicisation and rejection of these same British manufactured goods, as the colonists attempted to '...turn back the clock by reversing the consumer tide...' following the Non-importation Agreements of the 1760s and 1770s.⁶⁹

1.5.2. Novelty and Fashion

The pursuit of 'novelty' has been identified as a major motivation for increasing consumption, particularly with regard to emulation, but such conclusions depend on the definition of 'novelty'. McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, and Berg, took novelty simply to mean the arrival of a range of goods never before seen by eighteenth-century consumers, and which must therefore be available to only a few at the top of society.⁷⁰ However, Whittle

⁶⁸ Carr and Walsh, 'The Standard of Living in the Colonial Chesapeake', 137.

⁶⁹ Breen, 'Empire of Goods', 487, and Terence Witkowski, 'Colonial Consumers in Revolt: Buyer Values and Behaviour During the Non-Importation Movement, 1764-1776', *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16, September, 1989, 216-226. See also T.H. Breen, 'Narrative of Commercial Life: Consumption, Ideology, and Community on the Eve of the American Revolution', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 50, 3, July, 1993, 471-501.

⁷⁰ McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*; Maxine Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury: Global Origins of British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and*

and Griffiths used a broader definition in their research on Alice le Strange, concluding that:

Novelty could come in a surprising range of forms depending on exactly what was new: new goods could be fitted into old practices...old goods could be produced in new ways...⁷¹

Styles and Bianchi felt that the relative nature of novelty opened up its consumption to every member of society.⁷² Muldrew's study of probate inventories downplayed the relevance of novelty in the consumption decisions of the labouring classes in particular in early modern England, demonstrating that the majority of the increase in value of their household goods came from the accumulation of 'better quality bedding, furniture and kitchenware', rather than 'more novel consumer items'.⁷³

The acquisition of novel and 'curious' objects became increasingly fashionable during the eighteenth century, and the importance of the pursuit of fashion in general as a motivating force for rising consumerism has also been highlighted by a number of researchers of English and colonial consumption. Campbell underlined the importance of the 'rise of fashion' in his attempts to explain the explosion in English demand during this period, especially emphasising the fact that 'London was the geographical and social

Present, 182, 2004, 85-142; Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, (Oxford, 2007).

⁷¹ Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*, p. 4.

⁷² Marina Bianchi, 'Consuming Novelty; Strategies for Producing Novelty in Consumption', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 28, 1998, 12. Similar arguments can be found in John Styles, 'Clothing the North: the Supply of Non-Elite Clothing in the Eighteenth-Century North of England', *Textile History*, 25, 1994, 139-166; John Styles, 'Product Innovation in Early Modern London', *Past and Present*, 168, August, 2000, 124-169; Styles, *Dress of the People*.

⁷³ Craig Muldrew, *Food, Energy*, p.15.

centre of fashion and innovations spread outward to the provinces...'⁷⁴ In Bermingham and Brewer's *The Consumption of Culture, 1660-1800*, the authors concerned themselves with commodities and leisure, and consequently found consumption to be 'driven largely by fashion and not economic necessity', with the objects consumed being 'for the most part non-essentials that made life more pleasant, interesting and comfortable'.⁷⁵ Lemire's study of the second-hand clothes trade led her to conclude that by the end of the eighteenth century 'popular fashions of all descriptions had become a fixture of British economic and social life'.⁷⁶

Breen labelled the colonists 'Anglicized provincials', concluding that fashion 'provided the catalyst necessary to transform normal human desire into a powerful social force capable of driving the new consumer marketplace'.⁷⁷ Calvert highlighted similar complexities in her research surrounding the spread of different styles of clothing throughout the colonies. She found evidence that, while 'the upper classes could appropriate elements of costume from the lower classes, these...could emulate the middling sorts, who...copied the fashions of the elite (including the bits inspired by working-

⁷⁴ Colin Campbell, 'Capitalism, Consumption and the Problem of Motives', in Friedman (ed.), *Consumption and Identity*, p. 32; Colin Campbell, 'Understanding Traditional and Modern Patterns of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century England: A Character-Action Approach', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*; Colin Campbell, 'The Sociology of Consumption', in Miller (ed.) *Acknowledging Consumption*; Colin Campbell, *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism*, (Oxford, 1987), p. 22.

⁷⁵ In the Introduction to John Brewer and Ann Bermingham (eds.), *The Consumption of Culture, 1660-1800: Image, Object, Text*, (London, 1995), pp. 1-20.

⁷⁶ Lemire, *Fashions Favourite*, p. 200.

⁷⁷ Breen, 'Baubles of Britain', 85; T.H. Breen, 'The Meanings of Things: Interpreting the Consumer Economy in the Eighteenth Century', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, p. 255; Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution*, p. 152.

class clothes).'⁷⁸ However, a growing number of historians have found evidence of appropriation as opposed to emulation, highlighting the differences between the items purchased by the various classes of consumers during the period, and analysing the array of meanings people attached to the goods they acquired.

1.5.3. Appropriation

Evidence of the variety of meanings appropriated to consumable goods can be found in the household accounts and probate inventories studied in this thesis. A growing body of existing research questions the importance of social emulation as a cause of increasing demand for manufactured goods in England and the colonies. Weatherill proposed that middle-class English consumers purchased goods to improve their own lives instead of trying to adapt to those of the elite.⁷⁹ Borsay concurred, proposing that the lifestyles of the urban middle-class differed markedly from those of the landed gentry, and it was therefore only natural that they would demand newer and different kinds of goods.⁸⁰ Campbell also argued in favour of appropriation when he concluded that goods 'may be desired for their own sake rather than for any prestige which may be attached to them.'⁸¹ Borsay, Davidoff and Hall went

⁷⁸ Karin Calvert, 'The Function of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America', in Cary Carson (ed.), *Of Consuming Interests: the Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*, (Charlottesville, 1994), p. 281.

⁷⁹ Weatherill, 'Possession of One's Own', 195; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*.

⁸⁰ Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770*, (Oxford, 1989); Peter Borsay, 'The Landed Elite and Provincial Towns in Britain, 1600-1800', *Georgian Group Journal*, 13, 2003, 281-294.

⁸¹ Campbell, 'Understanding Traditional and Modern Patterns of Consumption', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, pp. 40-57. See also Campbell, 'Capitalism, Consumption and the Problem of Motives', in Friedman (ed.), *Consumption and Identity*; Campbell, 'The Sociology of Consumption', in Miller (ed.), *Acknowledging*

further by suggesting that the elite sometimes followed the tastes and choices of those lower down the social scale arguing that, because of increasing consumption among the middle classes, the upper echelons of society were spurred to buy even more goods in order to maintain some degree of social distance:

No one could escape the pressures generated [by the spending habits of the middle class] not even the traditional country squire, who was now compelled to justify his social standing by the continuous purchase and display of cultural products.⁸²

Further support for the importance of appropriation can be found in Vickery's conclusion that consumers in the early modern period used '...objects to convey a multitude of meanings – from fashion, taste, and style, to wealth and status, history and lineage, from political and religious allegiance, to personality, relationships, memory and mortality.'⁸³

J.T. Main concluded that, while patterns of consumption among the colonists correlated with social status, the kinds of goods the wealthy bought demonstrated their preference for plain living compared to their English counterparts. Rather than imitation, he saw the evolution of a distinct colonial

Consumption, pp. 96-126; Campbell, *The Romantic Ethic*. Similar conclusions can be found in the work of Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, (Cambridge, 1986); Jonathan Barry, *Culture in History: Production, Consumption and Values in Historical Perspective*, (Exeter, 1992); Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*, (London, 1979); Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities*, (Indiana, 1988).

⁸² Borsay, *English Urban Renaissance*, p.231; Borsay, 'Landed Elite and Provincial Towns'; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Classes, 1780-1850*, (London, 1987).

⁸³ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p. 107; Henry French, *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England, 1600-1750*, (Oxford, 2007).

culture during the eighteenth century. Main felt that ‘...the people were not simply responding to powerful external forces, but exercised choices...’⁸⁴

There has also been a shift in emphasis towards a concentration on domestic spaces and furnishings to try and analyse the material culture of early Americans. Martin has contributed greatly to this field, using her study of a backcountry merchant to ‘shed further light on various aspects of the availability, affordability and desirability of goods.’⁸⁵ She paid particular attention to his possible motivations for buying into a ‘World of Goods’, defining those goods as ‘complex bundles of individual, social and cultural meanings, grafted on to something that can be seen, touched and owned.’⁸⁶ Valeri turned his attention to the changing meanings of goods to New England consumers concluding that, by the eighteenth century, goods which had previously been regarded as luxuries came to be seen as rewards for economic endeavours, and therefore markers of industriousness and respect.⁸⁷

Bushman pointed to competition between two strands of material life in eighteenth-century America: ‘high-style’ and ‘vernacular’. He looked at the ‘Diffusion of Genteel Culture’ imported from the mother country, but he also saw the persistence and developing role of the vernacular whose inspiration

⁸⁴ Jackson Turner Main, ‘Summary, The Hereafter’, in ‘Toward a History of the Standard of Living in British North America’, 162. For an analysis of differences in the seventeenth century, see James P.P. Horn, ‘“The Bare Necessities”: Standards of Living in England and the Chesapeake, 1650-1700’, *Historical Archaeology*, 22, 2, 1988, 74-91.

⁸⁵ Martin, *Buying into the World of Goods*, p. xii.

⁸⁶ Ann Smart Martin, ‘Material Things and Cultural Meanings: Notes on the Study of Early American Material Culture’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 52, 1996, 5-12.

⁸⁷ Mark Valeri, *Heavenly Merchandize: How Religion Shaped Commerce in Puritan America*, (New Jersey, 2010), pp. 192-3.

'...was the province, a particular locale, with only tenuous connections to the metropolis.' Furthermore, he concluded that, while 'high culture was cosmopolitan and fashion-conscious, vernacular was place-bound and enduring.'⁸⁸ A number of researchers also noted different patterns of consumption between those in rural and urban areas of the Chesapeake and New England. Walsh concluded that, while '...urban lifestyles did produce new spending habits, rural consumers were able to improve their consumption patterns without necessarily changing their traditional patterns of resource allocation.'⁸⁹

Carson's concluding essay in *Of Consuming Interests* highlighted the different pace of change from region to region and the 'self-fashioning' among colonists that led to enormous diversity. He highlighted the relative flatness of the social structure in the colonies, compared to England, which he believed placed 'a heavier burden on consumer goods to define [social] status.'⁹⁰ Carson underlined this argument further in *Face Value*, identifying the especially fluid nature of colonial society:

In a world in motion, migrants and travellers needed a standardized system of social communication...a set of conventions they could carry with them that signified...the status they enjoyed...⁹¹

1.5.4: Economic Explanations for Rising Consumerism

Attention has been paid not only to possible motivations for purchasing and marketing goods, but also the means that enabled consumers to acquire

⁸⁸ Richard L. Bushman, 'American High Style and Vernacular Culture', in Greene and Pole (eds.), *Colonial British America*, pp. 360-71.

⁸⁹ Walsh, 'Urban Amenities', 107.

⁹⁰ Cary Carson, 'The Consumer Revolution in Colonial British America: Why Demand?', in Carson (ed.), *Of Consuming Interests*, pp. 483- 697.

⁹¹ Carson, *Face Value*, p. 35.

increasing quantities of those goods. Some aspects, such as developments in marketing, are dealt with in detail in this thesis, and outlining the varying schools of thought surrounding this and other aspects of the economy enables a more complete understanding of the complexities of the debates surrounding consumption. As Shamas noted, when seeking explanations for the increasing ability of consumers to purchase manufactured goods during this period, it is important to know if 'rising incomes, falling prices or a switch in the way the household budgetary pie was divided accompanied new demand...' ⁹² Coleman, Deane, Eversley, John, Ashton and Lenman, highlighted rising wages and falling food prices in England. ⁹³ Others focused particular attention on the falling prices of manufactured goods during the eighteenth century brought about by a number of factors. Increasing competition, due to the proliferation of shops selling the same kinds of goods, was one such example. ⁹⁴

Others looked to improvements in transportation and technology that were making some goods, like cutlery and ceramics, cheaper and more

⁹² Shamas, 'Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550-1800', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, p. 178.

⁹³ Coleman, *Economy of England*; Deane and Cole, *British Economic Growth*; Deane, *First Industrial Revolution*; Eversley, 'Home Market and Economic Growth in England'; John, 'Aspects of English Economic Growth'; John, 'English Agricultural Improvement'; Coleman and John (eds.), *Trade, Government and Economy*; T.S. Ashton, *An Economic History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, (London, 1955); Lenman, 'English and Dutch East India Companies'.

⁹⁴ H.C. Mui and L.H. Mui, *Shops and Shop keeping in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Montreal, 1989); Berry, *Polite Consumption*; Stobart, Hann & Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*.

plentiful.⁹⁵ McKendrick and Weatherill emphasised the importance of merchandising innovations for stimulating demand in England, taking their examples from the pottery trade. McKendrick studied the developments instigated by Josiah Wedgwood and Thomas Bentley, and Weatherill highlighted the important role of the middlemen in the pottery industry, particularly their innovations in marketing and sales techniques.⁹⁶

McCusker and Menard provided a summary of the economic conditions that enabled an increasing number of colonists to participate in rising consumption in the eighteenth century:

The size of the colonial market grew tremendously because the population increased...also because improvements in communication and transportation drew the several initially separate population centres more closely together...demand intensified also on a per capita basis as individual levels of income and wealth increased.⁹⁷

Egnal pointed to the rising cost of many agricultural commodities, and Price highlighted the role of easy credit, which enabled the colonists to buy

⁹⁵ Maxine Berg and Kristine Bruland (eds.), *Technological Revolutions in Europe: Historical Perspectives*, (Cheltenham, 1998); Maxine Berg (ed.), *Markets and Manufacture in Early Industrial Europe*, (London, 1990); Maxine Berg, 'From Imitation to Invention: Creating Commodities in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Economic History Review*, 55, 2002, 1-30. For improvements in transportation, see Dorian Gerhold, 'The Growth of the London Carrying Trade, 1681-1838', *Economic History Review*, 61, 1988, 392-410.

⁹⁶ Neil McKendrick, 'Josiah Wedgwood: An Eighteenth-Century Entrepreneur in Salesmanship and Marketing Techniques', *Economic History Review*, April 1960, 408-433; Neil McKendrick, 'Josiah Wedgwood and Thomas Bentley: An Inventor-Entrepreneur Partnership in the Industrial Revolution', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5, 14, 1963, 1-33; Lorna Weatherill, 'Capital and Credit in the Pottery Industry Before 1770', *Business History*, 1980, 243-257; Lorna Weatherill, 'The Business of Middlemen in the English Pottery Trade Before 1780', *Business in the Age of Reason*, January, 1985, 51-76.

⁹⁷ McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America*, p. 277-278.

increasing quantities of manufactured goods from Britain.⁹⁸ Walsh also placed emphasis on the expansion of credit, proposing that the appearance of Scottish factors in the Chesapeake in the eighteenth century may have enabled planters to purchase increasing quantities of non-essential goods, as they frequently offered their customers generous credit terms. She proposed that prices were further reduced by the substitution of home-produced goods from the 1760s onwards.⁹⁹

Despite evidence of rapidly rising levels of exports of British goods to the colonies in the eighteenth century, a number of commentators have concluded that the early colonists were largely self-sufficient, supplying most of their material needs from within their local community.¹⁰⁰ McCusker and Menard particularly highlighted the shrinking volume and growing quality of pottery imported to the colonies during the eighteenth century, with cheaper earthenware being increasingly supplied by colonial manufacturers.¹⁰¹ Shamas, however, was one of many to question the ‘...serene rustic image of self-sufficient communities...’ that many social historians have portrayed in the pre-industrial colonies. She stressed that the colonial economy remained largely underdeveloped because it was ‘...initially shaped in response to the demands of European powers and trading interests’, making it exceedingly

⁹⁸ Marc Egnal, ‘The Economic Development of the 13 Continental Colonies, 1720-1775’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 32, 1975, 205. For example, see Price, ‘What Did Merchants Do?’, 273.

⁹⁹ Walsh, ‘Urban Amenities’, 113.

¹⁰⁰ Price, ‘Colonial Trade and British Economic Development’, 107. Jacob Price also discusses this growth more specifically in ‘A Revolution of Scale in Overseas Trade: British Firms in the Chesapeake Trade, 1675-1775’, *Journal of Economic History*, 47, 1987, 1-43.

¹⁰¹ McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America*, p. 279-281.

difficult to break out of its dependent state.¹⁰² Perkins concurred. Using probate inventories, store accounts and merchants records to look at consumption patterns in Kentucky, she concluded that the consumption of 'manufactured goods and metropolitan styles...transformed the Kentucky backwoods into a consumer frontier...'¹⁰³

Other researchers proposed that improvements in marketing also increased colonists' awareness of the choice of goods available, which could also have spurred demand. Carr and Walsh demonstrated that, by the 1730s and 1740s, shopkeepers in the Chesapeake were displaying their goods more attractively and appealing more to women.¹⁰⁴ Breen also highlighted the importance of new marketing techniques, including the use of bow windows in shops as an example of attempts by proprietors to grab the attention of potential customers. Another important factor was the proliferation of newspapers in the colonies, and shopkeepers' increasing reliance on advertisements in them as a means to appeal to broad numbers of potential customers, as demonstrated by Breen.¹⁰⁵

1.5.5: Conclusion

The numerous debates outlined in Section 1.5 demonstrate the complexity of the range of motivations surrounding eighteenth-century purchasing decisions. Weatherill concluded that there were 'many reasons

¹⁰² Carole Shamas, 'Consumer Behaviour in Colonial America', *Social Science History*, 4, 1982, 84. For further comment see Carole Shamas, 'How Self-Sufficient was Early America?', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 6, 1982, 247-272.

¹⁰³ Elizabeth A. Perkins, 'The Consumer Frontier: Household Consumption in Early Kentucky', *Journal of American History*, 78, 2, September, 1991, 508.

¹⁰⁴ Carr and Walsh, 'Standard of Living in the Colonial Chesapeake', 142.

¹⁰⁵ Breen, 'Baubles of Britain', 77.

why people wanted to own material goods, some practical, some financial, some psychological...'¹⁰⁶ While emulation between the differing ranks of eighteenth-century society was an important force driving increasing demand, a level of appropriation was also visible. The pursuit of fashion supports the importance of emulation and 'trickle-down' as motivating factors for increasing consumption, but fashions were also modified between the different sectors of society, and sometimes trickled upwards. Therefore, rather than attributing rising demand for consumables to the desire to compete with those higher up the social scale, many researchers have focused their research on other motivations, seeking to understand the material culture of the individuals purchasing the goods. Stobart, for instance, found evidence that members of the Leigh family 'were concerned with fashion as novelty and a marker of rank; but they also valued traditional markers of status'.¹⁰⁷

Also important were the economic circumstances that enabled consumers in the eighteenth century to participate in rising consumption. Walsh concluded that, while social emulation was a longstanding motivator:

what was new was the availability of new kinds of goods, a distribution system that enabled these goods to reach broad markets, and discoveries of how to advertise and display them in ways that appealed to buyers...the process becomes self-perpetuating.¹⁰⁸

The consumers studied in this thesis came from the middle ranks of society, shared similar social and economic backgrounds, and were therefore able to participate fully in the rising tide of consumer goods entering the eighteenth-century marketplace. Developments in marketing and distribution gave them

¹⁰⁶ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, p. 200.

¹⁰⁷ Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers', 902.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

knowledge of the available products and facilitated their acquisition of these goods. In such circumstances, the motivations for the choices they exercised become key to our understanding of their consumption decisions.

The comparison between eighteenth-century consumers in Bristol and Boston enables an analysis of the roles of emulation and appropriation in purchasing decisions made on both sides of the Atlantic, and the influence of local markets on patterns of supply in both places. Whilst this thesis provides evidence of the role of emulation in consumption practices, through advertisements and the purchase of fashionable goods, it also provides evidence of the complexity of the range of motivations involved in the consumption of everyday grocery items found in household account books, and the persistence of traditional items of furniture apparent in many probate inventories. This thesis assesses the evidence for emulation versus 'self-fashioning' between the colonists in Bristol and Boston, particularly focusing on the influence of economic and social factors on patterns of consumption in both cities.

1.6: Definitions of Consumption

The conclusions historians have reached concerning patterns of rising consumerism in England and the colonies have been influenced by their definitions of consumption. Many researchers, including Appleby, and Fine and Leopold, concentrated on the study of physical goods, with Fine and Leopold defining consumption as 'the active seeking of personal gratification through material goods...' ¹⁰⁹ McKendrick and Weatherill paid particular

¹⁰⁹ Joyce Appleby, 'Consumption in Early Modern Social Thought', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, p.164; Ben Fine and Ellen Leopold, 'Consumerism and the Industrial Revolution', *Social History*, 13, 1990, 151-179; Fine and

attention to the pottery trade and Lemire and Pointon focused on the clothing trade.¹¹⁰ Others, like Whittle and Griffiths, used a much broader definition, including ‘...the acquisition of goods and services and their use within the family and household.’¹¹¹

Plumb embraced the broadest definition, including cultural aspects of consumption, such as leisure, as well as conventional goods.¹¹² As Douglas and Isherwood stated in *The World of Goods*, ‘...commodities are good not only for eating, clothing and shelter, but also for thinking and for non-verbal communication.’¹¹³ Brewer and Porter also placed themselves firmly in this latter group with their volume of essays, *Consumption and the World of Goods*, which brought together twelve ‘distinguished scholars of radically different backgrounds...’, who approached the topic from economic, literary and material culture perspectives.¹¹⁴ A research project titled *Culture and Consumption in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, organized by

Leopold, *The World of Consumption*; Ben Fine, ‘From Political Economy to Consumption’, in Miller (ed.), *Acknowledging Consumption*.

¹¹⁰ McKendrick, ‘Josiah Wedgwood’; McKendrick, ‘Josiah Wedgwood and Thomas Bentley’; Weatherill, ‘Capital and Credit’; Weatherill, ‘Business of Middlemen’; Lemire, ‘Developing Consumerism’; Lemire, ‘Consumerism in Pre-Industrial and Early Industrial England’; Lemire, *Fashion’s Favourite*; Lemire, ‘Peddling Fashion’; Marcia Pointon, *Strategies for Showing: Women, Possession and Representation in English Visual Culture, 1665-1800*, (Oxford, 1997).

¹¹¹ Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*, p. 3.

¹¹² J.H. Plumb, ‘Commercialization and Society’, in McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, pp. 265-285.

¹¹³ Douglas and Isherwood, *World of Goods*, p. 40-1.

¹¹⁴ Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, p. 3. See also Plumb, *Commercialization of Leisure*; Jeremy Black, *A Subject for Taste: Culture in Eighteenth-Century England*, (London, 2005); Jean-Christophe Agnew, ‘Coming up for Air: Consumer Culture in Historical Perspective’, in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, pp. 19-39.

Brewer at University of California at Los Angeles, resulted in the publication of three influential volumes in the 1990s, which continued this trend by addressing the consumption of property and culture.¹¹⁵

The majority of the definitions of consumption employed by historians, even those who broaden their research to include culture and leisure, still concentrate on the act of purchase. This thesis is interested in the complex array of processes involved before, during and after the actual purchase of consumable goods. From the ways such goods were marketed, the varying methods employed in their acquisition, and their relative place of importance in the eighteenth-century home.

1.7: The Range and Types of Goods

The conclusions reached in the debates outlined above often depend on the range and types of goods studied. This thesis assesses a wide range of goods, from food and drink, and textiles and clothing, to large items of furniture. The aim is to demonstrate developments in the consumption of an array of items, both traditional and fashionable, luxurious and basic, purchased by eighteenth-century families throughout their lifetimes. Many historians have concentrated on luxury goods, including McKendrick, Brewer and Porter, Vickery, Berg, Clifford, and Peck, consequently focusing on the wealthier members of society.¹¹⁶ Berg was particularly influential in this area,

¹¹⁵ Brewer and Bermingham, (eds.), *Consumption of Culture*; Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*; John Brewer and Susan Staves, *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, (Consumption and Culture in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, 2), (London, 1995)

¹¹⁶ McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*; Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*; Porter, *English Society*; Christopher Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: a Conceptual and Historical Investigation*, (Cambridge, 1994); Vickery, 'Women and the World of Goods', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*;

as well as in collaboration with Clifford in 1999, and Eger in 2002, producing two volumes following the *Luxury Project* at Warwick University.¹¹⁷ A number of researchers have turned their attention to more everyday consumable items in order to address the consumer experiences of a wider section of eighteenth-century society. Main and Walsh looked at a range of items, including household linens, religious books, secular books, watches and clocks, earthenware, silverware, knives, forks, wigs and pictures in order to chart major changes in the preferences of ordinary people.¹¹⁸ They concluded that styles of living, as well as standards of living, changed throughout the period.¹¹⁹

Thirsk, Mintz, Pennell, Smith, and Shamma, among others, turned their attention to the consumption of food, initially focusing on the arrival of new items such as coffee, tea and sugar into the marketplace during the eighteenth century. Shamma studied such groceries alongside durable goods in her comparison of consumption in England and the American colonies, and Mintz concerned himself with ‘.... the way new ‘foods’ were conjoined to the emergence of an industrial, time-conscious society...’.¹²⁰

Vickery, ‘Women, Consumption and Couverture’; Vickery, *Gentleman’s Daughter*; Vickery, ‘His and Hers: Gender’; Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*; Berg, ‘In Pursuit of Luxury’; Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*; Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford (eds.), *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer Culture in Europe, 1650-1850*, (Manchester, 1999); Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England*, (Cambridge, 2005).

¹¹⁷ Berg and Clifford (eds.), *Consumers and Luxury*; Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger (eds.), *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*, (Basingstoke, 2002).

¹¹⁸ Main, ‘Standard of Living in Southern New England’, 126.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* 129.

¹²⁰ Shamma, ‘Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption’, 178; Sidney W. Mintz, ‘The Changing Roles of Food in the Study of Consumption’, in Brewer and Porter (eds.),

Lemire focused on the trade in second-hand clothing, at the same time acknowledging that it was a 'largely invisible trade, leaving few records...'¹²¹ Styles turned his attention to the consumption of clothing and textiles, concentrating primarily on the north of England, but offering conclusions which could be applied to the whole of the country. Woodward looked at the prevalence of recycling during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹²²

This thesis considers the consumption processes involved in the choice of a broad range of consumable goods. It is concerned with the processes involved in the acquisition of such goods, from traditional items, such as tables and beds, to those fashionable items involved in the consumption of tea, coffee, and changing fashions in fabrics. It covers items purchased regularly, such as basic groceries and items of clothing, as well as occasional investments in expensive furniture. Analysis of the variety of processes by which these goods were acquired, and the network of suppliers involved in provisioning eighteenth-century households, broadens the debates surrounding consumption and enables the formation of a detailed and

Consumption and the World of Goods, p. 271; S.D. Smith, 'Accounting for Taste: British Coffee Consumption in Historical Perspective', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 27, 2, Autumn, 1996, 183-214; Sara Pennell, 'Pots and Pans History: The Material Culture of the Kitchen in Early Modern England', *Journal of Design History*, 11, 3, 1998, 201-216.

¹²¹ Lemire, 'Consumerism in Pre-Industrial and Early Industrial England', 1; Beverly Lemire, 'A Good Stock of Cloaths': the Changing Market for Cotton Clothing in Britain, 1750-1800', *Textile History*, 22, 1991, 311-328, Lemire, 'Peddling Fashion'.

¹²² Styles, 'Clothing the North'; Styles, *Dress of the People*. For further discussion of textiles, see Anne Buck 'Buying Clothes in Bedfordshire: Customers and Tradesmen, 1700-1800', *Textile History*, 22, 1991, 211-237, and Lorna Weatherill, 'Consumer Behaviour, Textiles and Dress in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries', *Textile History*, 22, 1991, 297-310. Also, Donald Woodward, 'Swords into Ploughshares: Recycling in Pre-Industrial England', *Economic History Review*, 38, 1985, 175-191.

comprehensive picture of the factors responsible for influencing the priorities and preferences of middle-class consumers.

1.8: The Range and Types of Sources

This thesis takes carefully selected samples of newspaper advertisements, household accounts and inventories, and uses them to explore the detail of purchasing patterns and networks of supply in eighteenth-century households in Bristol and Boston. Divisions have occurred between historians over the source materials used to study consumption patterns, and therefore the particular part of the consumption process studied. The shift in focus away from the export market to the home market necessitated a corresponding move away from the use of trade statistics, towards probate inventories, shop accounts, and household accounts. The largest volume of research has been concerned with the ownership of goods through the analysis of probate inventories, with Shamma, Weatherill, and Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, among others, making use of these records to analyse possessions held at death.¹²³ In Vickery's estimation 'quantitative inventory study has done most to recreate the domestic interior of the polite and middling sorts...'¹²⁴

However, many historians of English consumption, including Weatherill, Pennell and Vickery, have highlighted the limitations of a reliance on probate inventories, including the fact that they were most common for the

¹²³ Shamma, 'Determinants of Personal Wealth'; Carole Shamma, 'Constructing a Wealth Distribution from Probate Records', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 9, 2, Autumn, 1978, 297-307; Weatherill, 'Possession of One's Own'; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*; Mark Overton, Jane Whittle, Darron Dean and Andrew Hann, *Production and Consumption in English Households, 1600-1750*, (London, 2004).

¹²⁴ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p. 3.

middling ranks and rare for labourers and poorer people.¹²⁵ A group of researchers of colonial consumption, including Walsh, Carr, and the Mains, have also made extensive use of probate inventories to assess changes in consumption patterns and living standards in colonial New England and the Chesapeake during the eighteenth century. Main asserted that ‘...probated estates provide the sole objective guide to the distribution of wealth in the colonies.’¹²⁶ Within those probate inventories, Walsh found that ‘...consumer goods are the best indicators of living standards, for, unlike stocks of capital goods, they reflect the consequences of income.’¹²⁷ Studying a range of inventories from Massachusetts and Connecticut, she concluded that the standard of living improved for the majority of the population during the eighteenth century.

However, Clark’s research on the increasing wealth of the average testator between 1600 and 1750, which highlights inherent biases in the quantities and qualities of consumable goods appearing in probate documents during this period, leads him to conclude that, ‘the idea that there was a dramatic and fundamental change in the consumption and production behaviour of people in England in the short interval 1600-1750 lacks any empirical foundation’.¹²⁸ Others have also urged caution when using probate inventories to assess demand across the whole of colonial society as the

¹²⁵ Weatherill, ‘Possession of One’s Own’, p.133; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*; Sara Pennell, ‘Consumption and Consumerism in Early Modern England’, *The Historical Journal*, 42, 1999, 551; Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*.

¹²⁶ Main, ‘Probate Records as a Source’, 95.

¹²⁷ Lorena Walsh, ‘Questions and Sources for Exploring Standards of Living’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1, 1988, 122.

¹²⁸ Gregory Clark, ‘The Consumer Revolution: Turning Point in Human History, or Statistical Artifact?’, *Department of Economics, University of California, Davis*, July, 2010.

poorest sections were generally absent from the probate record. Smith questioned their validity because ‘...the sheer number of adjustments required to make the data consistent over time and from place to place creates some doubts about the conclusions.’¹²⁹ Main’s later research led her to admit that inventories only provide imprecise glimpses of material culture. She looked at changes to living spaces, and the increasing separation of houses into rooms with specified functions, particularly highlighting the increasing appearance of dining rooms and the resultant importance of purchasing the appropriate accessories to equip them. She concluded that many of these changes were signs of the growing importance of comfort.¹³⁰ J.T. Main also urged caution, stating that, probate records are showing ‘what happened, when, and to whom. The ultimate understanding...must come from broader research, as part of a total history of the colonial era.’¹³¹ In other words, that studying additional sources alongside probate inventories enables a more complete appreciation of the day-to-day experiences of eighteenth-century consumers.

Indeed, there have been efforts to incorporate other written sources, including wills, account books, personal correspondence, newspapers and the study of the objects themselves to gain a greater understanding of the motivations behind the rise in consumption during this period. Vickery, Stobart, and Whittle and Griffiths, are among a number of researchers who have addressed the act of purchase, using letters and household accounts to present a more holistic picture of the consumption patterns within particular

¹²⁹ Billy G. Smith, ‘Comment’ in ‘Towards a History of the Standard of Living in North America’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1, 1988, pp. 163-164.

¹³⁰ Gloria L. Main, *People’s of a Spacious Land: Families and Culture in Colonial New England*, (Cambridge, 2001), p. 221 and p. 143,

¹³¹ Main, ‘Summary, The Hereafter’, 162.

households.¹³² As was the case for England, colonial researchers have also turned their focus to act of purchase of a range of goods, including merchant and household accounts, contemporary diaries and letters, to add extra layers to the picture of the lives of early American consumers.

Pennell summed up the future of consumer studies in her article of 1999:

...greater attention to the consumers as much as the consumed, to the motivations for consuming rather than the act of consumption alone, offers a way out of the explanatory cul-de-sac reached by over-indulgence in the early modern 'world of goods'.¹³³

Those historians who studied probate records naturally concentrated on what Carr and Walsh, and Pennell, described as 'pots and pans history'.¹³⁴ The sources they used necessitated a focus on the objects being consumed, rather than an analysis of what those goods represented to the individual consumer. Purely statistical studies of consumption patterns have therefore been found to present too incomplete a picture of the lives of men and women in eighteenth-century England, focusing on a single aspect of the consumption process, and it has been necessary to combine the information they hold with other records, such as account books and personal correspondence. In more recent studies it has been possible to gain a detailed picture of the consumption patterns of individual families by utilising a

¹³² Margaret Spufford, '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); Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal*, 36, 2, 1993, 384-414; Vickery, 'Women and the World of Goods', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*; Vickery, 'Women, Consumption and Couverture'; Vickery, *Gentleman's Daughter*; Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*; Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers'.

¹³³ Pennell, 'Consumption and Consumerism in Early Modern England', 549.

¹³⁴ Carr and Walsh, 'Inventories and the Analysis of Wealth', 81; Pennell, "Pots and Pans History".

combination of these sources. There has also been a shift towards studying the material culture of the colonists during that period, through the analysis of a broadening range of sources, and such research has shed additional light on the lives of people during the early modern period. However, while such studies have broadened the focus to include the marketing and purchase, or the purchase and ownership of goods, there has been no previous attempt to analyse the complete consumption process.

The newspaper advertisements, household accounts and probate inventories used in this thesis enable an analysis of the three aspects of consumption outlined above. They have been analysed for quantitative and qualitative data, both of which provide crucial information about developments in consumerism. For example, tables have been compiled demonstrating total incidences of items appearing in newspaper advertisements, while at the same time analyses have been made of the language used to market them. Statistical analyses of the relative importance of different categories of household consumables appearing in account books appear alongside details about changing room function in the probate inventories. Their combination serves to enrich our understanding of the concerns of eighteenth-century consumers and the factors affecting their purchasing choices.

1.9: Geographical Areas

This thesis analyses consumption processes in the important urban centres of Bristol and Boston, where consumers had access to a wide range of consumable goods. Although it is possible to gain important insights into the processes surrounding consumption through the study of one particular location, the importance of a comparative study is that, as Shammass

explained 'it is useful when testing theories about how shifts in consumption take place.'¹³⁵ This is particularly in the case of England and America in the eighteenth century, where there were similarities in trading networks and cultural values, but differences in their material situations. Emphasis has traditionally been placed on the importance of London as the hub of shopping and fashion and identified it as the birthplace of the consumer society, with many English studies focusing on the capital. Earle, Borsay, Wrigley and others, examined the spread of goods from the centre of London, out into the provinces, proposing that consumers there copied the purchasing patterns of their counterparts in the fashion capital.¹³⁶ Lemire also demonstrated that London was the centre of the trade in second hand clothes.¹³⁷ However, a number of studies have subsequently bucked this centralising trend, with researchers turning their attention to the provincial markets for various consumer products and discovering differences compared to London. French, Overton et al., and Stobart, are among those who have drawn on regional

¹³⁵ Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*; Borsay, *English Urban Renaissance*; Borsay, 'Landed Elite and Provincial Towns'; E.A. Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy, 1650-1750', *Past and Present*, 37, 1967, 42-70; McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*; Patrick Wallis, 'Consumption, Retailing and Medicine in Early Modern London', *Economic History Review*, 61, 2008, 26-53; Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods'; F.J. Fisher, 'The Development of London as a Centre of Conspicuous Consumption in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 30, 1948, 37-50; Barbara M. Benedict, 'The 'Curious Attitude' in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Observing and Owning', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, November, 1990, 59-98; Barbara M. Benedict, *Curiosity: the Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry*, (Chicago, 2001); Barbara M. Benedict, 'Saying Things: Collecting Conflicts in Eighteenth-Century Object Literature', *Literature Compass*, 3, July, 2006, 689-719; Breen, 'Baubles of Britain'; T.H. Breen, 'The Meaning of Things' in Brewer and Porter (eds.) *Consumption and the World of Goods*, Breen, 'An Empire of Goods', pp. 249-260.

¹³⁷ Lemire, 'Consumerism in Pre-Industrial and Early Industrial England', 9.

studies to highlight the habits and preferences of consumers in those areas, and to illustrate the particular factors that influenced consumption decisions outside the capital.¹³⁸ The north of England and Scotland have received a great deal of attention, with studies focusing on the consumers of Lancashire, Cumbria, the northeast, Edinburgh and Glasgow.¹³⁹ Whittle and Griffiths have completed an important study of the consumption practices of a Norfolk gentry family, Stobart has worked extensively on the Leigh family of Warwickshire, and Williams has focused on Audley End House in Essex.¹⁴⁰

There has also been a division between those researchers in America who studied the colonies as a whole, and those who narrowed their focus to one particular region. Using probate inventories, and other supplementary data, Jones compared levels of wealth among colonists and discovered significant inequalities between regions. She concluded that it took the wealth of two middle colonists, or two and a half New Englanders, to equal the assets of an average southern free wealth-holder, thereby highlighting difficulties in drawing conclusions about general living conditions in the colonies as a

¹³⁸ French, *Middle Sort of People*; Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, *Production and Consumption*; Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers'.

¹³⁹ J.D. Marshall, 'The Rise of the Cumbrian Market Town, 1660-1900', *Northern History*, 19, 1983, 128-209; Styles, 'Clothing the North'; Vickery, 'Women and the World of Goods', in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*; Berry and Gregory (ed.), *Creating and Consuming Culture*; Stana Nenadic, 'Middle Rank Consumers and Domestic Culture in Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1720-1840', *Past and Present*, 145, 1994, 122-156.

¹⁴⁰ Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*; Stobart, for instance in 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers' and 'Rich, Female and Single'; J.D. Williams, 'The Noble Household as a Unit of Consumption: the Audley End Experience, 1765-1797', *Essex Archaeology and History*, 23, 1992, 67-78.

whole.¹⁴¹ Breen, however, identified a process he termed the 'Anglicization of Goods', emphasising the similarities of the material experiences of all the colonists. He highlighted an 'imperialism of goods', '...little manufactured items that found their way into gentry homes as well as frontier cabins.'¹⁴² This echoed Deetz' findings that, '...on the eve of the American Revolution, Americans were more English than they had been in the past since the first years of the colonies.'¹⁴³

However, due to the physical size of the colonies, and the fragmented nature of their development, many researchers have chosen to focus on regional studies, mainly of the Chesapeake or New England, often concentrating on probate inventories.¹⁴⁴ Despite some research into consumption in South Carolina, and backcountry areas such as Kentucky,

¹⁴¹ Alice Hanson Jones, 'Wealth and Growth of the 13 Colonies: Some Implications', *Journal of Economic History*, 44, 1984, 250.

¹⁴² Breen, 'Empire of Goods', 496-497.

¹⁴³ James W. Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life*, (New York, 1977), p. 38.

¹⁴⁴ The most extensive work on the Chesapeake can be found in Lorena Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763*, (North Carolina, 2010), but there are many other examples, including R. Menard, P.M.G. Harris and Lois Green Carr, 'Opportunity and Inequality: The Distribution of Wealth on the Lower Western Shore of Maryland, 1638-1705', *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 69, 1974, 169-184; Lois Green Carr and Lorena Walsh, 'The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth-Century Maryland', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1977, 542-571; Blake D. Smith, *Inside the Great House: Planter Family Life in Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake Society*, (New York, 1980), and T.H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: the Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution*, (Princeton, 1985). The most recent work on New England was undertaken by Valeri in *Heavenly Merchandize*, but other examples include all Gloria Main's work, the most recent being, *Peoples of a Spacious Land*; Robert Blair St George, 'Afterthoughts on Material Life in America, 1600-1860: Household Space in Boston, 1670-1730', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 32, 1997, 1-38, Ulrich, *Good Wives*.

many of the other colonies have yet to be studied.¹⁴⁵ Price found evidence that disputed the traditional view of the Chesapeake as a backward area compared to the Northern colonies.¹⁴⁶ Horn compared English and Chesapeake society between 1650 and 1700 and concluded that, 'even the lowest economic group in England had living standards comparable in many respects to those of householders of middling wealth in Maryland and Virginia.'¹⁴⁷ Carr and Walsh found that, during the course of the eighteenth century, Chesapeake planters and their families were able to participate in the rising consumerism without reducing the amount of money they invested in productive capital.¹⁴⁸

The overriding view of rural New England as an area in economic decline during the eighteenth century was challenged by Main through her analysis of probate inventories in colonial Massachusetts. She sought to provide an alternative view by measuring the value of the material goods of farmers. She concluded that ideas of decline had been exaggerated and '...each generation succeeded in raising their children in material circumstances no worse and possibly a little better than that enjoyed by themselves.'¹⁴⁹ Main and Main concluded that, '...Yankees of the 'middle

¹⁴⁵ The most recent example for South Carolina is Nash's 'Domestic Material Culture and Consumer Demand', in Shields (ed.), *Material Culture in Anglo-America*. Other examples include Max Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina* (Cambridge, Mass, 2006), and Peter Coclanis, *The Shadow of a Dream: Economic Life and Death in the South Carolina Low Country, 1670-1920*, (New York, 1989). For Kentucky, see Sarah McMahon, 'A Comfortable Subsistence: The Changing Composition of Diet in Rural New England, 1620-1840', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1985, 26-65.

¹⁴⁶ Price, 'Economic Growth of the Chesapeake', 496.

¹⁴⁷ Horn, 'Bare Necessities', 88.

¹⁴⁸ Carr and Walsh, 'Standards of Living in the Colonial Chesapeake', 142.

¹⁴⁹ Main, 'Standard of Living in Colonial Massachusetts', 101-108.

class' were participating in what became a transatlantic revolution in consumer tastes and were doing so at the same rates as their counterparts in wealthier colonies.'¹⁵⁰ McMahon looked at the changing diet in rural New England, challenging the previous assumptions of the early American diet as '...plentiful, narrow, and fundamentally unchanging...'¹⁵¹

With the exception of London, much of the research to date on changes in consumption in England has focused on the spending habits of rural consumers in middling and gentry households. Colonial researchers have also focused on the consumption habits of rural communities, and the size of the colonies in particular has led to fragmentary conclusions. Direct comparisons between regions in England and the colonies have been further complicated due to the differing social and economic makeup of individual communities. Research on retailing during the eighteenth century demonstrates the importance of developments in provincial towns during this period, but there has been little attempt to address the wider experience of the consumers who lived in those towns. This thesis looks at the ways consumers in Bristol and Boston interacted with their urban marketplaces in order to assess the influences that coloured purchasing decisions. Analysis of the consumption habits of middling consumers in both towns enables an assessment of the interplay of local, national and international factors on consumption decisions, and to demonstrate their relative impact on eventual purchases.

¹⁵⁰ Gloria L. Main and Jackson Turner Main, 'Economic Growth and the Standard of Living in Southern New England', *Journal of Economic History*, 48, 1988, 44.

¹⁵¹ McMahon, 'Comfortable Subsistence', 27.

1.10: Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the variety of approaches to the study of consumption undertaken by researchers to date. Many initial theories about the motivations for rising levels of demand in the eighteenth century, and the meanings consumers attached to the goods they purchased, have been challenged by subsequent studies. This is particularly true for the notion of a 'consumer revolution' in the eighteenth century, and the importance given to the role of social emulation as a motivation for increased consumption. The outcomes of many of the studies listed above have been influenced by the choice of goods being analysed, the types of sources used, the particular geographical locations chosen, and the aspect of the consumption process being addressed. Although a number of comparative studies have been undertaken, the absence of closely matched samples of data has limited the opportunities for direct comparisons of the timings of changes to consumption, and the social and economic backgrounds of the consumers themselves.

This thesis addresses a number of the issues raised above through the analysis of the complete process of consumption. It uses closely matched samples of newspaper advertisements, household accounts and probate inventories from Bristol, England, and Boston, Massachusetts, between 1700 and 1760, to assess how goods were advertised to potential consumers, the factors affecting the subsequent purchasing decisions of households, and changes in the ownerships of a range of goods over time. Carson recently drew attention to a problem with a large number of existing consumption studies, stating that 'English and American scholars have not used the same market basket of goods or employed the same social and economic

categories...thus making direct comparisons impossible'.¹⁵² The use of the same 'basket of goods' in Bristol and Boston, and the selection of very similar groups of consumers from both cities, enables the current study to make the direct comparisons that Carson is referring to.

Whilst Chapter 1 has outlined and critiqued the conclusions of previous studies of consumption, Chapter 2 analyses the particular 'basket of goods' chosen, the sources used and the reasons behind their choice, and the ways the particular sources facilitate an investigation of the complex processes involved in the marketing, acquisition and ownership of consumables in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world. Chapter 3 looks at Bristol and Boston during the eighteenth century, comparing and contrasting the physical, social and commercial environments of Bristol and Boston during this period, and focusing on the marketplaces within which buyers and sellers interacted. It also underlines the rationale behind the decision to undertake a comparative study of two urban centres rather than a single case study,

As the historiography detailed in this chapter reveals, previous studies of consumption have focused on one particular aspect of the process of consumption. The strength of this thesis lies in its analysis of the marketing, purchase, and accumulation of goods and the ability to compare purchasing patterns and networks of supply on both sides of the Atlantic. As each of the source materials used encompasses a different aspect of the consumption process, this thesis will address each in turn.

Chapter 4 looks at how goods were marketed in newspaper advertisements, comparing and contrasting the types of publications printed in

¹⁵² Carson, *Face Value*, p. 244.

both cities, the virtual consumer landscapes engendered by the notices appearing in them, and their influence on eighteenth-century consumers in Bristol and Boston. Chapter 5 looks at the processes involved in the acquisition of goods by comparing the household accounts of two middling families in Bristol and Boston. By analysing the day-to-day purchases of two middle-class families to assess the myriad factors involved in spending decisions, it reveals the plethora of choices needed to provision eighteenth-century households. These results are further contrasted with some examples of contemporary gentry spending habits. Chapter 6 addresses changes in the ownership of goods through a range of probate inventories from middling citizens in Bristol and Boston. It looks at the types of objects listed in order to investigate the enduring influence of tradition in the household, and the relative importance of fashion, by analysing the objects themselves and their position within the home. Structuring the thesis in this way enables the discussion to move away from the notion of consumption as the act of purchasing goods, to address the processes that influenced consumer choice, the particulars of individual purchases, and the eventual place of these goods within the home.

Chapter 7 presents the conclusions of the thesis, summarising how research into each aspect of the consumption process reveals important new information on the ways eighteenth-century consumers interacted with their particular marketplaces. It emphasises the variety of processes involved in the consumption of a range of consumable goods, highlighting differences in the advertising, acquisition and accumulation of each, shedding light on the wider process of economic development across the 'Atlantic World'.

Chapter 2: Eighteenth-Century Bristol and Boston: Sources and Methodology

The primary focus of this thesis is an analysis of the processes involved in the consumption of a range of goods among middle-class consumers in Bristol and Boston during the first-half of the eighteenth century. Through the combined analysis of newspaper advertisements, household accounts and probate inventories, this thesis presents an integrated view of the processes involved in the marketing, purchase and ownership of consumable goods unavailable in many previous studies. The wealth of resources available in the archives of both cities has made it possible to investigate the full range of consumption decisions, from the presentation of goods in newspapers, to the act of purchase noted in household account books, and the ownership of goods demonstrated in probate inventories. This chapter analyses the rationale surrounding the choice of each source and what they reveal about the processes involved in consumption in eighteenth-century Bristol and Boston.

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the historiography surrounding consumption studies in eighteenth-century England and America. Although many reveal significant developments in consumption, their research generally only presents a partial picture of the processes involved in the marketing, acquisition and ownership of goods. A significant proportion focused on probate inventories to assess changes in the ownership of goods. As Shamma has pointed out, while probate inventories list accumulated stocks of goods, they are unable to address the process of consumption.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Shamma, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 100.

Others, like Whittle and Griffiths, and Stobart have turned their attention to the pages of shop and household account books to reveal details of the sorts of goods being purchased by early modern consumers.¹⁵⁴ Weatherill analysed a selection of inventories and household accounts in *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, however as the geographical areas studied and the time periods covered vary, she was unable to make as close a comparison as the one performed for this thesis.¹⁵⁵ Analysis of newspaper advertisements has also been undertaken to provide information on the marketing strategies of eighteenth-century retailers.¹⁵⁶

This study of the processes of consumption utilises a combination of newspaper advertisements, household accounts, and probate inventories to illuminate the progression of a range of consumable goods through the consumer marketplaces of Bristol and Boston. The archives of both cities contain a wealth of such primary sources, largely untapped in prior studies of consumption, and not previously used together. A number of Bristol newspapers are held in the Bristol Reference Library, and the Codrington Library in Oxford. Eight Boston newspaper titles are available through the *Early American Newspapers* database.¹⁵⁷ The Bristol and Boston archives contain very detailed account books for two middle-ranking families, and substantial numbers of probate inventories.

¹⁵⁴ Examples include Stobart, *Sugar and Spice*, and Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*.

¹⁵⁵ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*.

¹⁵⁶ Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*; Stobart, *Sugar and Spice*.

¹⁵⁷ *Early American Newspapers, Series 1: 1690-1876*, an online collection of 340,000 fully searchable issues from more than 730 titles, published by Readex, in co-operation with the American Antiquarian Society.

By providing the rationale behind the selection of the particular primary sources used in this thesis, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, outlining the methods used to analyse those sources, and demonstrating what they reveal about consumption practices, this chapter underlines the important contribution to current consumption debates provided by this thesis. Section 2.1 looks at the categories of goods investigated, outlining the reasons for their selection and the methods used to analyse the resulting data. Section 2.2 addresses developments in newspaper publishing in Bristol and Boston between 1700 and 1760, and the methodology involved in the selection of the newspaper samples used in this study. Section 2.3 outlines the nature of eighteenth-century household account books and the benefits of their use in studies of household purchases. Section 2.4 demonstrates the methodology of sample selection for the probate inventories used to illustrate changes in ownership of goods during this period, and section 2.5 looks at alternative source materials and addresses the reasons for their exclusion from this thesis. Finally, section 2.6 assesses the impact of source selection on conclusions surrounding the study of consumption processes.

2.1: Categories of Goods

This thesis analyses the incidence of a broad range of goods appearing in newspaper advertisements, household accounts and probate inventories. The study of durable and semi-durable goods in probate inventories have proved valuable in our understanding of changes in consumption in England and America during the eighteenth century. The analysis of notices for textiles and clothing, furniture, pottery and glass, and metal wares and jewellery appearing in Bristol and Boston newspapers during

the first-half of the eighteenth century enables the current study to make direct comparisons between the data from newspapers and probate inventories.

The additional examination of items of food and drink in newspapers enables further comparisons to be made with household accounts, in which such items accounted for a significant proportion of a family's expenditure. Household expenditure noted in the account books is divided into similar categories to those used for the analysis of newspaper advertisements, with the addition of agricultural produce and miscellaneous household goods, due to their important place in overall household expenditure. This again enables direct comparisons to be made between primary sources. Purchases of food and drink, while dominant in household accounts, are largely absent from probate inventories. However, inventories contain a similar variety of textiles and clothing, and other durable and semi-durable goods, to those that appear in the newspaper advertisements and household accounts. These include traditional items such as beds, tables and silver, and fashionable goods such as window curtains, pictures, looking glasses and a variety of tea and coffee-making equipment.

The inclusion of relatively cheap and basic consumables, such as food and drink, relatively expensive items such as beds and bedding, traditional items such as tables, and fashionable items such as tea and coffee making utensils, underlines the comprehensive nature of this study of consumption. The data collected about this wide variety of goods, across all three sources, has also been analysed in a number of ways. Quantifiable evidence has been gathered, through counting the appearances of particular goods in order to assess changes over time, and calculations to demonstrate percentage

variations and changes in the mean number of incidences across the sources. Qualitative investigations of the language used in advertisements, together with the evidence from probate inventories of the relative importance of tradition and fashion within the home, further enrich the conclusions about consumption priorities and preferences in Bristol and Boston during the first-half of the eighteenth century reached in this thesis.

2.2. Newspapers

Consideration of differences in the availability of eighteenth-century newspapers for both Bristol and Boston had to be taken into account when deciding how to select the two samples used in this study. The digitisation of a large number of titles and issues of Boston newspapers meant that it was necessary to begin by selecting as broad a range of newspaper issues as possible from the relatively patchy collection surviving for Bristol. The wealth of coverage for Boston enabled two samples to be chosen, one broad, and the other closely matching the Bristol sample. As the number and spread of advertisements were similar between both Boston samples, the decision was made to use the broader of the two. This ensures that the study is able to present as balanced a picture as possible of the state of advertising in both cities during the period.

Printers in Bristol and Boston played a central role in the early development of newspaper publishing in England and America. While the first English newspaper, *The London Gazette*, began publication in 1666,¹⁵⁸ the first regional newspapers were *The Norwich Post* and *The Bristol Postboy*, the

¹⁵⁸ See P.M. Handover, *A History of the London Gazette, 1665-1965*, (London, 1965); and Michael Harris and Alan J. Lee (eds.), *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, (New Jersey, 1986), p. 27.

first issues of which appeared in 1701.¹⁵⁹ *The Boston News-Letter* was the first colonial newspaper, beginning its run in 1704, but residents of Philadelphia had to wait until the publication of the *American Weekly Mercury* in 1719, and those of New York until the first appearance of the *New York Gazette* in 1725.¹⁶⁰ *The Bristol Postboy* and *The Boston News-Letter* were joined by numerous additional publications during the eighteenth century, providing evidence of a thriving newspaper culture in both cities. Despite their increasing popularity, the production of newspapers in the first half of the eighteenth century was a very volatile business. In Bristol, 14 titles were launched between 1704 and 1760, of which only nine continued in print for a significant number of years. In Boston, out of a total of 71 newspapers begun during the eighteenth century, only 18 remained in print for 10 years or more.¹⁶¹ However, due to the relatively low price of such publications, at around two pence per issue, comparatively high literacy rates in both cities, and the availability of copies in coffee houses and other public spaces, those newspapers that maintained a long print run also enjoyed a wide readership. Bristol newspapers were sold through the printer or by post and average print

¹⁵⁹ C.Y. Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins and the Provincial Newspaper Trade in the Eighteenth Century*, (Oxford, 1997), p.11.

¹⁶⁰ Details surrounding the publication of the *American Weekly Mercury* by Andrew Bradford, and the subsequent publication of the *New York Gazette* by his father William, can be found at www.americanantiquarian.org. Copies of the first issues of the *American Weekly Mercury* can also be found in Andrew Bradford, *The American Weekly Mercury, Volume 1: 1719-1720*, (Forgotten Books, 2018). Further details on the beginnings of *The New York Gazette* can be found in Alexander J. Wall Jr., *William Bradford, Colonial Printer: a Tercentenary Review*, (American Antiquarian Society, October, 1963).

¹⁶¹ The Bristol figures are a product of my own research. The Boston figures can be found in Alfred McLung Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America: The Evolution of a Social Instrument*, (New York, 1973), p. 30.

runs grew to between 1000 and 2000 copies per issue by the 1740s.¹⁶² Colonial newspapers could be collected from the printer or post office...or sent out by post ‘...to any house in Town...’ at ‘Twelve Shillings per Annum’ and ‘the same rate for the Country.’¹⁶³ Heyd notes that by mid-century ‘the average circulations of Bostonian newspapers were 600 sheets.’¹⁶⁴

Newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic were similar in size, being printed in folio format on both sides of a single sheet of paper, 11 x 7 inches being the general size in England, and 10 ½ by 6 ½ in the colonies. They contained a growing number of advertisements for a variety of consumable goods, the length and detail of which increased rapidly as the eighteenth century progressed. In the earliest issues, notices tended to appear in the last column of the last page, presented in a standard typeface occasionally accompanied by basic woodcut illustrations. Over time, however, decorative and detailed advertisements came to occupy upwards of 50 per cent of each issue, representing a significant proportion of the printers’ income.¹⁶⁵ This helps to explain the rapid growth in the notices appearing in the pages of newspapers as the eighteenth century progressed. In Bristol, Felix Farley charged advertisers ‘3s Entrance, and 2s 6d continuance, or 10s for 4 Insertions, without anything for Entrance.’¹⁶⁶ A good proportion of this fee was composed of tax levied by the government. In Boston, specific advertising

¹⁶² Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p. 16.

¹⁶³ The Bristol figures are a product of my own research. The Boston figures can be found in Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America*, p. 25.

¹⁶⁴ Uriel Heyd, *Reading Newspapers: Press and Public in Eighteenth-Century Britain and America*, (Oxford, 2012), p. 15.

¹⁶⁵ Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America*, p. 31.

¹⁶⁶ *Farley’s Bristol Newspaper*, 8 Jan. 1726.

rates were rarely published, with printers instead offering to include insertions at 'reasonable rates' or 'under the usual conditions', but again up to 50 per cent of the cost went to the English government as tax. Lee found that many colonial printers traded advertising space for groceries, dry goods and patent medicines.¹⁶⁷

According to Poole, Bristol had a 'large, literate and politically sophisticated freeman electorate' in the eighteenth century, who were hungry for news and information.¹⁶⁸ Heyd's research on newspapers in Britain and America not only confirmed the high levels of literacy in England, but also identified literacy rates of 75 per cent and above among the adult male population in urban areas of Boston by the 1770s, with newspapers being 'second only to religious publications as reading material throughout the American colonies'.¹⁶⁹ Literacy rates were therefore relatively high in both Bristol and Boston during the eighteenth century, and the information contained in newspapers would have been accessible to a wide range of their citizens.

As Stobart, Hann and Morgan have proposed:

¹⁶⁷ Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America*, p. 33.

¹⁶⁸ Steve Poole, 'Bristol 1709-1815' in Adrian Randall and Andrew Charlesworth (ed.), *Markets, Market Culture and Popular Protest in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*, (Liverpool, 1996), p. 109. For additional background on Bristol in the eighteenth century, see Steve Poole and Nicholas Rogers, *Bristol from Below: Law, Authority and Protest in a Georgian City*, (Woodbridge, 2017).

¹⁶⁹ Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*, pp. 20-22. Details of the methods employed to assess literacy rates in the early modern period can be found in Farley W. Grubb, 'Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future Research', *Social Science History*, 14, 1990, pp. 451-482.

Spaces of consumption drawn on and reproduced through advertisements transcended the town and region, linking consumers to national and international circuits of exchange and cultures of consumption.¹⁷⁰

Eighteenth-century newspapers provided a thriving medium by which retailers were able to disseminate important information concerning the wares they had for sale to a significant proportion of the urban population. Such notices provide essential detail about the marketing of a wide range of new and established goods within a virtual consumer marketplace. As such, an analysis of the similarities and differences in these virtual landscapes in Bristol and Boston enables us to draw conclusions about the dissemination of tastes within and between two important urban centres, and to assess the impact of local and international consumer marketplaces in the purchasing decisions of a broad range of eighteenth-century consumers in England and the colonies.

2.3. Household Account Books

Although household accounts have been used in a number of previous studies of consumption, as outlined in Chapter 1, their survival is relatively rare. An initial assessment of the available archives in Bristol and Boston uncovered a promising number of references to account books, but further investigation revealed most to be unsuitable for the purposes of this study. The majority related to business affairs, contained insufficient detail for a thorough analysis, or covered an insufficient period of time to enable a worthwhile investigation of consumption habits. Fortunately, however, each archive did contain one set of household accounts, for the middling Wharton

¹⁷⁰ Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, p. 178.

and Greene families, which contained sufficient detail, over a significant time period, to facilitate a meaningful comparison. Two partial sets of accounts for the Smyth family from Bristol also enabled a comparison of middling class and gentry spending, helping to address additional questions in the general consumption debate.

Account books were an important method of organising business and household finances in the early modern period. However, their survival has been sporadic, particularly where they were compiled for the sole benefit of the members of a particular household. Those that do survive are often piecemeal and concern the spending habits of gentry families. The survival of the account books of Joshua Wharton and Rufus Greene, especially as they run concurrently for 9 years, provides an important opportunity to study the day-to-day purchases of two middling families, and to compare and contrast their consumer choices.

Members of the middling and upper classes, including tradespeople and professionals, used account books to keep track of the large numbers of cash and credit transactions involved in provisioning their businesses and households. A range of shop and household accounts have been analysed by researchers, as outlined in Chapter 1, but usually to answer questions surrounding gentry consumption or changes in the appearance of shops. Household accounts give a valuable insight into the economic background of specific families, and the efforts required to keep them supplied with the wide variety of goods needed on a regular basis.

During the eighteenth century, as earlier, the provisioning of the household required a variety of suppliers from the locality and further afield.

As Merry and Richardson conclude in their analysis of the domestic expenditure of Sir Thomas Puckering in the early seventeenth century, the detail in his account book 'suggests the often complex processes of planning which lay behind the acquisition of material objects in a period before mass production...'¹⁷¹ Detailed household account books reveal the range of supply chains, and the procedures involved in obtaining goods, from the exchange of items with neighbours and friends, to shopping expeditions to urban centres. By evaluating the processes involved in the purchase of a variety of household goods, household accounts provide fascinating insights into the budgetary priorities of individual families, and an indication of the opportunities available to others of similar social rank in the wider population as a whole.

Rates of survival for household accounts are lower than for business accounts, perhaps because of the personal nature of their contents. They were of immediate value to the individual who needed to keep a record of their family finances but had little relevance beyond that. The relative dearth of such records enhances the importance of those that have survived to the present day, as in the case of Wharton and Greene, increasing our understanding of the economic lives of particular eighteenth-century citizens, and allowing their application to the wider society beyond. Their importance also lies in the opportunity they present to assess the impact of the various

¹⁷¹ Mark Merry and Catherine Richardson (eds.), *The Household Account Book of Sir Thomas Puckering of Warwick, 1620: Living in London and the Midlands*, (The Dugdale Society, 2012), p. 72. See also the research outlined by Judith M Spicksley (ed.), *The Business and Household Accounts of Joyce Jeffreys, Spinster of Hereford, 1638-1648*, (Oxford, 2012).

marketing strategies identified in newspaper advertisements, with the realities of spending priorities within eighteenth-century households.

2.4. Probate Inventories

Probate inventories formed an important part of the legal documentation gathered following the death of a head of household in early modern England and the colonies. They listed the household possessions, sometimes on a room-by-room basis, attaching second-hand valuations in order to provide an estimate of the value of the deceased's estate. The samples of probate inventories used in this study were selected from collections held on microfiche at Bristol Records Office, and online through the New England Genealogical Society. The Bristol archives contain a large number of probate inventories spanning the eighteenth century, and the Boston archives contain an even larger number of inventories for Suffolk County, which comprised the centre of Boston during the same period. Although many prior studies where the sole focus was on probate inventories consisted of analyses of thousands of documents, this thesis needed to ensure a balance between the three sources used. A decision was therefore made that a careful analysis of a smaller sample of inventories, when combined with the research conducted on newspapers and household accounts, would yield a sufficiently robust body of research to answer the central tenets of the thesis.

The survival of large numbers of eighteenth-century probate inventories in both cities reinforces the significance of this comparative study. Unlike other areas of England, where there is a significant drop in the number of inventories after 1730, a large number of Bristol inventories are available

throughout our period of study and beyond. This is especially important, considering the identification of 1730-1740 as a period of rapidly increasing consumption, particularly among those who identified an eighteenth-century 'consumer revolution' in the studies outlined in Chapter 1, and reinforces the significance of this comparative study. Probate inventories also survive in large numbers for the population of Boston throughout the eighteenth century. The New England Genealogical Society has digitised the entire archive of probate records for residents of Massachusetts from the seventeenth century onwards, meaning that it has been possible to gain access to a much larger number of probate inventories for Boston than was the case for Bristol.¹⁷²

The probate inventories of Bristol and Boston provide information on the accumulated possessions of a broad section of the population of these two important urban centres. The breadth of middle-income families represented by such inventories, provides the researcher with scope to study a large section of the population in each city, and to make detailed comparisons between the two. Probate inventories formed part of the documents compiled following the death of the head of a household in the early modern period. They comprised a list of the possessions of the deceased individual, compiled shortly after death by two appraisers, one family member and one creditor where possible. Second-hand, or auction, values were generally attributed to the goods listed, for the purposes of assessing the value of the household estate and the subsequent payment of any outstanding debts. In Bristol, lists of assets included 'moveable goods, trade goods, tools of trade, farm stock, cultivated crops and any chattel

¹⁷² Digitised copies of Suffolk County probate inventories can be found at *American Ancestors*, via *Family Search.org*, probate records, vols. 13-45.

leases'.¹⁷³ Unlike their Bristol counterparts, most Boston probate inventories also listed houses and land in the deceased's ownership at the time of death. Assets listed might also include 'investments, overseas estates, shares in vessels and their cargoes, pasture and commons rights...and debts due to and from the estate'.¹⁷⁴

As mentioned in Chapter 1, probate inventories have been widely used as sources in previous consumption studies and have subsequently been criticised for presenting too narrow a picture of the consumption practices of early modern consumers when used in isolation. Glennie, however, proposed two ways in which the information they contain can be utilised to present a more multi-dimensional picture of consumption. Firstly, by pairing them with other historical documents in order to consider multiple aspects of consumerism, and secondly by taking note of the 'contextual information' that inventories provide. This includes the various ways items were described, the ways they were combined with one another, and their positioning within the house.¹⁷⁵ Monitoring these three aspects of probate inventories can therefore bring context and meaning to eighteenth-century consumption decisions.

2.5: Alternative Source Materials

While this chapter has demonstrated the availability of each source material analysed in this thesis, it is also important to discuss why they were chosen above other alternative documents, and to demonstrate their particular suitability to this study of consumption processes. Trade cards have

¹⁷³ Edwin George and Stella George, *Guide to the Probate Inventories of the Bristol Deanery of the Diocese of Bristol (1542-1804)*, The Bristol Record Society, (Bristol, 1988), p. xii.

¹⁷⁴ Peter Benes (ed.), 'Early American Probate Inventories', *The Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife: Annual Proceedings* (1987), p. 6.

¹⁷⁵ Glennie, 'Consumption Within Historical Studies', p. 171.

been used alongside newspaper advertisements in a number of previous studies of consumption.¹⁷⁶ Trade cards were produced by retailers in order to promote their premises and the goods on offer there to potential customers. They became an important marketing tool in the eighteenth century and were often illustrated. They are particularly useful where the focus is on shopkeepers and shopping in general. While some survive for Bristol and Boston, they are not as plentiful as the advertisements in surviving newspapers. They were intended to target particular individuals, often being included with a consumer's bill for purchases, and therefore would not have reached the wider audience of the newspaper notice. As the primary focus in this thesis is on the marketing of a range of different types of goods to a wide group of consumers, rather than developments in retailing, it was felt that the inclusion of trade cards was unnecessary for this particular study.

A number of historians have used letters alongside household account books when assessing developments in purchasing.¹⁷⁷ Personal letters can add background and context to some of the transactions appearing in family accounts. In the case of the account book of Joshua Wharton, the pages include many extra and detailed notes about gifts given and received, trips to town and relatives, rental income, and expenses incurred in maintaining his several properties. Such detail has been included in this thesis, where it was deemed to add to our understanding of purchasing considerations, and to illustrate complexities in the networks of supply employed by the Wharton family. While such extra information was largely absent from the Greene

¹⁷⁶ Examples include Stobart, 'Selling (Through) Politeness' and *Sugar and Spice*..

¹⁷⁷ Examples include Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors* and Jon Stobart and Mark Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House*, (Oxford, 2016).

household accounts, and there was no accompanying letter book in the Massachusetts archive, it was possible to gather qualitative material from a range of other sources as outlined in Chapter 5. Therefore, in both cases, the absence of additional primary material was deemed not to impede a thorough analysis of the spending habits of either family.

Wills form part of the bundle of probate documents produced upon the death of an individual. They contain details of personal belongings that the deceased wished to pass on to family members and friends, so there is potential to use them alongside probate inventories when assessing the range of goods accumulated over a lifetime. A selection of wills are available in the Bristol and Boston archives and their study can add context to the patterns of ownership revealed by probate inventories. However, the extensive quantities of available newspapers, account entries and inventories analysed for this thesis meant there was not sufficient time to include a detailed analysis of wills on this occasion. They could be usefully studied in the future to reveal more about consumers' attitudes to the objects they owned.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates how each type of source illuminates consumption in a different way, and how this informs the resulting conclusions. The combined data from the three sets of primary sources compensates for the partial picture of consumption gained from each particular source, thereby enabling the presentation of a more complete picture of what it meant to be a middle-class consumer in Bristol and Boston during the eighteenth century. The increasing variety of types and styles of goods possessed by households in the two cities during this period highlights

the growing choices for consumers and the differing factors that influenced their participation in the Atlantic world of goods as the century progressed.

An assessment of the complete process of consumption, from the appearance of goods in the marketplaces of Bristol and Boston, to the regular provisioning of the household, and finally the accumulation and physical placement of those goods within the home, whilst acknowledging the importance of emulation and fashion in the eighteenth-century consumer world, also underlines the persistence of tradition and conservatism among middling households. It also reinforces the influence of the local and familiar in purchasing decisions, despite developments in marketing, and the changing physical consumer marketplace in both cities.

The pages of newspapers in both samples presented consumers with an increasing wealth of choice as the period progressed, and advertisers on both sides of the Atlantic reacted to increased competition with other retailers. Household accounts demonstrate that, although families were interested in novel and fashionable goods, considerations surrounding non-essential purchases continued to have a limited impact on their spending habits. However, although the majority of a household's budget in the eighteenth century was spent on basic items such as food and drink, with only the occasional purchase of items of furniture, it is these extraordinary purchases that survive in probate inventories and therefore retain long-lasting significance within the home.

Chapter 3: Comparison of The Lives and Life-Styles of Consumers in Bristol and Boston

Chapter 1 provided a broad outline of the historiographical background to the debates surrounding existing studies of consumption in eighteenth-century England and America, underlining the importance of such studies in furthering our understanding of important aspects of the lives of citizens in the Atlantic world during this period, while also highlighting the fragmentary nature of the results presented. Shammass underlined the value of comparing patterns of consumption between England and the colonies, emphasising a number of similarities and differences between the experiences of people on both sides of the Atlantic. She concluded that:

If one wants to know the trend in ownership of certain goods over a period of time or wants to make comparisons between communities at one point in time, one can do so as long as similar biases exist in all of the samples.¹⁷⁸

Rather than presenting an exploration of conditions in one particular environment, a comparative study allows the researcher to move beyond the static to explore change and causality. Thus, this comparative study of the processes involved in consumption on both sides of the Atlantic during the same time period, including the same biases in each sample, allows a broad and valid comparison of developments in such processes, rather than a narrow presentation of evidence from one particular group of consumers.

As outlined in Chapter 1, consumption studies have been undertaken for a variety of locations, giving a detailed picture of life in particular places at specific points in time. Where comparative studies have been made between

¹⁷⁸ Shammass, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 19.

locations in England or the colonies, these analyses have utilised sources from differing time periods, and varying environments, enabling evidence of general trends over the longer term, but making specifically targeted comparisons problematic. Walsh compared three samples of inventories from Virginia and Maryland between 1640 and 1777 in her studies of living standards and consumption in the Chesapeake, and Main and Main looked at the estates of inventoried men in Connecticut, Hampshire, and the Massachusetts counties of Suffolk and Worcester, at various periods between 1640 and 1774, with Main specifically excluding Boston itself 'so that we may confine our attention to non-urban inhabitants'.¹⁷⁹ Existing studies comparing consumption patterns between locations in England and the colonies also concentrate on rural populations. Horn compared standards of living between the Vale of Berkeley in Gloucestershire, St Mary's County in Maryland, and the Northern Neck of Virginia,¹⁸⁰ and Shamas looked at 538 inventories proved between 1660 and 1677 from Worcestershire, East London and Virginia for her assessments of personal wealth.¹⁸¹ While such studies have allowed an analysis of the consumption choices of restricted groups of individuals, they are limited in their ability to shed light on the wider patterns within seventeenth and eighteenth-century society.

¹⁷⁹ Walsh, 'Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency', 111; Main and Main, 'Economic Growth and the Standard of Living', 30, with the specific quote appearing in Main, 'The Standard of Living in Colonial Massachusetts', 103.

¹⁸⁰ Horn, 'The Bare Necessities'. In this article, 480 inventories were analysed from the Vale of Berkeley, 372 for St. Mary's County, and 150 for Lancaster and Northumberland, 76.

¹⁸¹ Shamas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer* and Shamas, 'The Determinants of Personal Wealth in Seventeenth-Century England and America', *The Journal of Economic History*, 37, 3, September, 1977, p. 677.

As outlined in Chapter 2, despite their position as major urban centres, neither Bristol nor Boston have benefitted from detailed studies of consumption during the eighteenth century. Indeed, comparatively little attention has been paid to the spending habits of urban populations in general in eighteenth-century England, outside of London, and America. Recent studies focusing on the retail structures of Philadelphia, Newport Rhode Island, and Charleston South Carolina, have begun to improve our understanding of urban commercial networks.¹⁸² Research has also been conducted into the trade between Liverpool and Philadelphia¹⁸³, but there has been a lack of investigation to date into the comparative consumption habits of urban citizens in England and colonial America. Beckett and Smith, in their research on Nottingham probate inventories, established differences between the consumption habits of town and country residents, and concluded that ‘the consumer conscious middling sort promoted urban change’.¹⁸⁴ The study of the consumption habits of the middling ranks in Bristol and Boston in this thesis enables us to address previously unexplored aspects surrounding the methods employed by the middling ranks of society in their acquisition of a range of goods from urban consumer marketplaces.

Here Bristol and Boston are compared using carefully selected samples of the same types of documents from the same time periods. These

¹⁸² Ellen Hartigan O'Connor, *The Ties That Buy: Women and Commerce in Revolutionary America*, (Philadelphia, 2009) and Emma Hart, *Building Charleston: Town and Society in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World*, (Charlottesville, 2010)

¹⁸³ Sherrylynne Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760-1810: Men and Women, and the Distribution of Goods*, (Leiden, 2006)

¹⁸⁴ John Beckett and Catherine Smith, ‘Urban Renaissance and Consumer Revolution in Nottingham, 1688-1750’, *Urban History*, 21, 1, 2000, 31.

cities are particularly suitable for comparison because, despite their contrasting situations, they had a number of important similarities. This chapter compares the two cities, assessing the geographical, social and economic backdrop within which citizens pursued their daily lives. Section 3.1 describes the geographical situation of both cities, and 3.2 provides background on their social structures and the distribution of wealth among their citizens. Section 3.3 looks at their respective economies, 3.4 assesses the trading connections between the two cities, and section 3.5 compares the consumer marketplaces which developed in Bristol and Boston during the eighteenth century. Section 3.6 draws all these strands together in a conclusion which addresses the many similarities and differences between the everyday lives of consumers in both cities during this period.

3.1: Geography

Situated on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean, Bristol and Boston were both important port cities in the early modern period,. They were vital hubs in the trans-Atlantic trade, attracting people from far and wide, and making lasting impressions on many of those visitors.

The Bath and Bristol Guide, published in 1755, provided the following description of Bristol:

...the Second Trading City in England, is situated on the Bank of the River Avon. The situation of the City is low, but on the side of a rising Hill. The Ground-Plat of it is said very much to resemble that of old Rome, being circular, with a something greater Diameter.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵ T. Boddely, *The Bath and Bristol Guide: or, the Tradesman's and Traveller's Pocket-Companion*, (Bath, 1755), p.43.

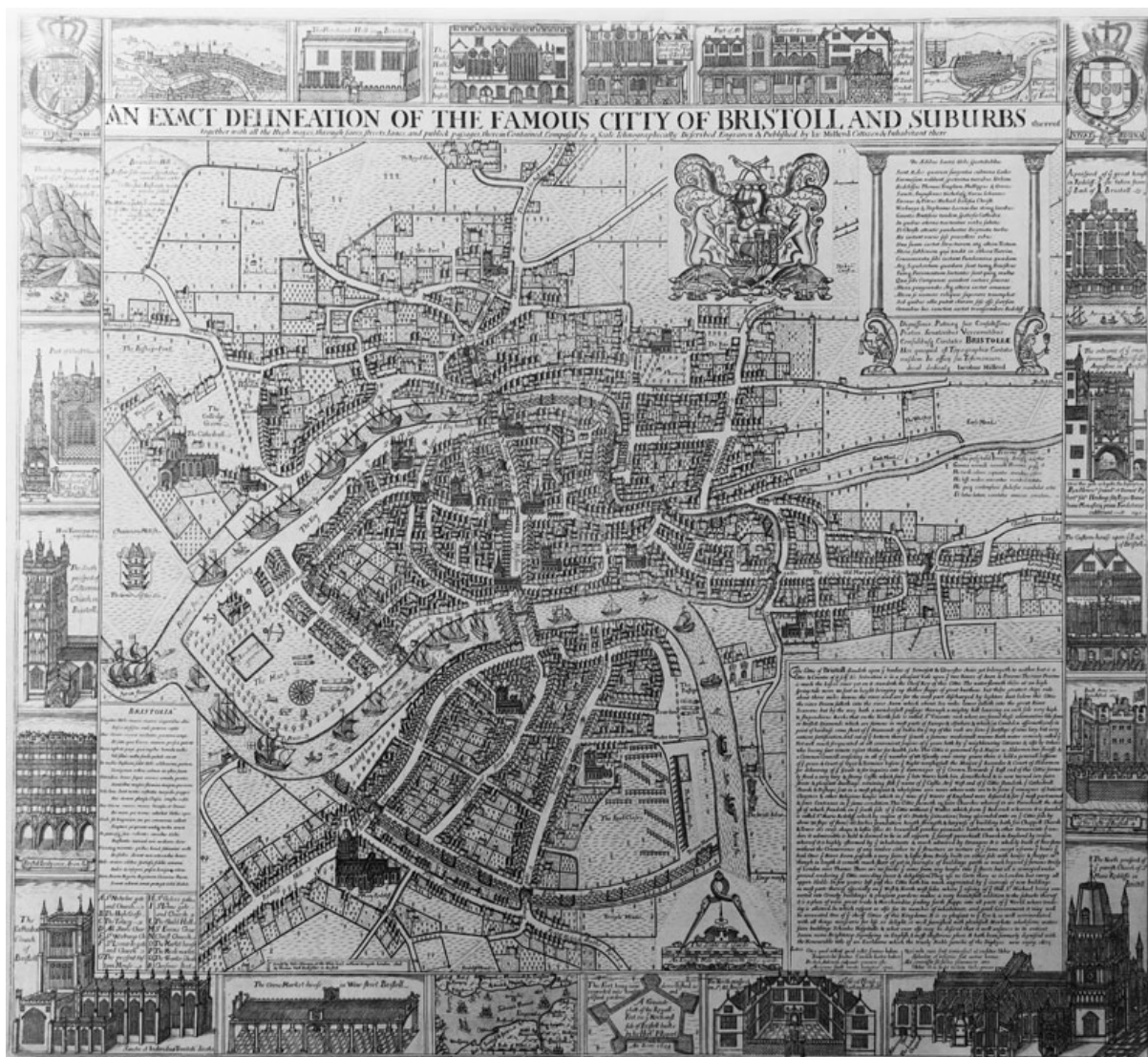


Figure 3.1 Bristolia – Millerd’s Map 1673. *English City: The Growth and the Future of Bristol*, (J.S. Fry & Sons Ltd.; 1945)

A map drawn up by JOHN BONNER in 1722 defined the geographical borders of Boston at that time. According to the accompanying inscription, eighteenth-century Boston consisted of:

a hilly treeless peninsula...bounded on the north by the Charles River, on the west by extensive salt marshes, on the south by a neck of land linking the peninsula to the Roxbury mainland, and on the east by the harbour and mud flats.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ Walter Muir Whitehill, (ed.), *Boston Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, (Virginia, 1986), Figure 8, pp. 6-7.

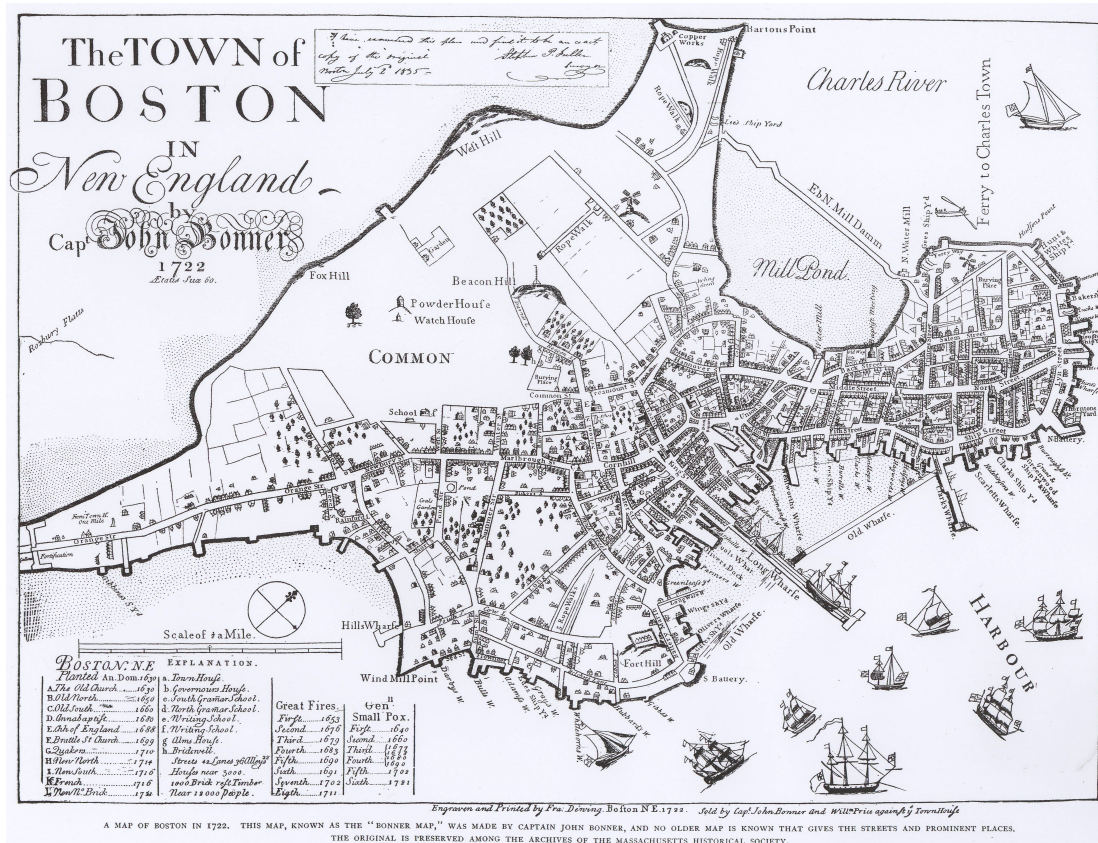


Figure 3.2 'The Town of Boston in New England by Capt. John Bonner 1722.' Facsimile engraved and published by George G. Smith, Boston, 1835. MHS Image Number 2. Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

In England, Bristol was second only to London in terms of size and influence in the first half of the eighteenth century. The population of Bristol rose rapidly through the eighteenth century, from around 20,000 in 1700, to 50,000 in 1750, and reaching 64,000 by 1801. Cities like Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, however, experienced even greater economic growth during the second-half of the eighteenth century, and by 1800 Bristol's prominent position was challenged by all three cities.¹⁸⁷ Although Boston's population rose throughout our period, it lagged behind that of Bristol, with only 6,000 inhabitants in 1690. Its population reached 11,000 in 1720, and

¹⁸⁷ W.E. Minchinton, (ed.), *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century*, Bristol Record Society, (Bristol, 1966), p. ix.

17,000 in 1742, before falling back to only 16,000 by 1770. It remained the largest city in the 13 colonies during the first-half of the eighteenth century, but by the time of the American Revolution had become lesser in commercial influence and importance to New York and Philadelphia.¹⁸⁸

Although there were differences between Bristol and Boston in terms of population size, with Bristol being home to more than three times the number of residents of Boston, this chapter demonstrates the many similarities between the two cities during this period and their suitability for a comparative study of the processes of consumption. Each city stood at the centre of a complex national and international trading network, meaning that their consumer marketplaces were at the forefront of developments in eighteenth-century consumption trends in their immediate hinterlands and beyond.

Despite the decline in the relative importance of both cities as the eighteenth century progressed, both Bristol and Boston remained important national and international ports throughout the period, involved in the import and export of a wide variety of goods. As a result, both cities held positions of great prominence within their geographical regions: Bristol stood at the centre of a large trading network stretching from South Wales to the West Midlands and beyond, and Boston served Massachusetts, the broader area of New England, and beyond to the Chesapeake and the Carolinas.

The Bath and Bristol Handbook highlighted the most prominent features of the physical landscape of Bristol at mid-century:

¹⁸⁸ Conrad E. Wright and Katheryn P. Viens, (eds.), *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community, 1700-1850*, (Boston, 1997), p. 83.

The great Square call'd Queen's...is very handsomely built and inhabited: And it is reckon'd larger than any Square in London, except Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. The Kay is very noble, and well filled with all Sorts of Merchandize, and a handsome Row of Houses fronts it. This Kay is reckoned the longest in England.¹⁸⁹

In 1743 The Bristol Exchange was opened, a copy of the covered shopping centres already popular in London. As the published description stated, 'Convenience was the predominant Principle required...' and the purpose of the project was to build an Exchange 'for the use of the Merchants and Traders of that City...' and '...a General Market, in Lieu of those Markets which now incumber the chief Streets, in the Heart of the Town.'¹⁹⁰ Perhaps to reflect the centrality of this new building to the life of Bristolian consumers and tradesmen, the structure had 'an arched Roof, surmounted by a Dome, with a Turrit upon it...whose Summit was intended to be raised one hundred Feet high above the level of the Street...'¹⁹¹ The final boast was that '...the Exchange of Bristol is much more Capacious for the Company that meet in it, than the Royal Exchange in London is, for the Merchants and Traders of that Metropolis.'¹⁹² The same period also saw the building of a number of other grand buildings in the centre of Bristol, including the Merchant Taylors Hall, the Post Office, the Assembly Rooms, and a new city library, and residential squares, such as Queen Square, completed in 1727.¹⁹³

The first impressions of Boston recorded by Elizabeth Murray upon her arrival in the city in 1749 provide vivid testimony concerning the developing

¹⁸⁹ Boddely, *The Bath and Bristol Guide*, p.44.

¹⁹⁰ See John Wood, *A Description of the Exchange of Bristol*, (Bath, 1743), Preface and p.7.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.16.

¹⁹² *Ibid*, p. 38.

¹⁹³ Patrick McGrath, *The Merchant Venturers of Bristol: A History of the Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol from its Origin to the Present Day*, (Bristol, 1975), pp. 91-92.

urban landscape there. The first thing that struck her, upon disembarking in the harbour, was the great number of wharves, especially the recently constructed Long Wharf, 2100 ft. in length, and the array of warehouses where merchants stored and sold a large variety of imported goods. She went on to describe her journey through the town 'conveniently laid into Streets which are paved with Stone', commenting on an 'area where elegant structures stood, replacing those destroyed by...fire in 1711.' She was particularly impressed by Faneuil Hall and Market, which was opened as Boston's new market hall in 1742. Modelled on an English country market, it had an open ground floor, which was the market house, with an assembly room above, and was '100 ft. long, 40 ft. wide, and two stories high.'¹⁹⁴ Peter Faneuil, a prominent local merchant, gifted it to the city of Boston in an attempt to establish an official marketplace for the use of 'country men' and farmers who wished to sell their wares to the residents of Boston.¹⁹⁵

The sight of these fine buildings and bustling waterfronts left a lasting impression on many visitors to eighteenth-century Bristol and Boston. However, despite similarities in terms of their geographical and physical situations, and the parallel developments of The Bristol Exchange and Faneuil Hall in the early 1740s, there were a number of underlying differences between the consumer marketplaces of the two cities, which are addressed in section 3.5 of this chapter.

¹⁹⁴ James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, (eds.), 'Peter Faneuil', *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, (New York, 1900); Patricia Cleary, *Elizabeth Murray: A Woman's Pursuit of Independence in Eighteenth-Century America*, (Massachusetts, 2000), pp. 37-38.

¹⁹⁵ Abram English Brown, *Faneuil Hall and Faneuil Hall Market*, (Boston, 1900), p. 79.

3.2: Social Structures and Wealth Distribution

Although the populations of Bristol and Boston varied from one another in terms of total numbers, both cities were the most populous centres in their respective regions during the first half of the eighteenth century and occupied similar positions of prominence. Shammass's study led her to conclude that social structures differed substantially between England and America in the eighteenth century, and that these differences could be used to help explain variations in consumption habits between residents of the colonies and England.¹⁹⁶ Speck pointed to the relatively flat structure of social divisions in Boston, Philadelphia and New York, compared to London during the same period, and also concluded that social structures generally in England were different from the colonies until the second half of the century.¹⁹⁷

Writing about eighteenth century Bristol, Marcy concluded that, 'broadly speaking, there was a two-class and not a three-class society, and that although there was a middle class and a lower class, the city could not boast of a noble or aristocratic class.'¹⁹⁸ McGrath found this to be too simplistic a picture of Bristol society during this period, highlighting the broad range of wealth and status groups within the ranks of merchants, industrialists and professionals, also maintaining that 'the middle classes shaded imperceptibly into the lower classes...'¹⁹⁹ Other studies found evidence of the existence of three classes within Bristol society, with Baigent identifying an 'urban patriciate' at the apex, but there was a general consensus concerning the

¹⁹⁶ Shammass, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 3.

¹⁹⁷ W.A. Speck, '*British America, 1607-1776*', British Association for American Studies, Pamphlet No. 15, (London, 1985), p. 39.

¹⁹⁸ Peter T. Marcy, *Eighteenth-Century Views of Bristol and Bristolians*, (Bristol, 1966), p. 15.

¹⁹⁹ McGrath, *Merchant Venturers of Bristol*, p.97

absence of an aristocracy.²⁰⁰ Leech presented evidence for changing social structures in Bristol through his study of changes in housing, noting a movement away from 'medieval, feudal patterns' in the fifteenth century, towards an early modern, capitalist society during the eighteenth century.²⁰¹ Moore's study of probate inventories from areas bordering the city of Bristol revealed that six per cent came from members of the gentry and professionals such as clergymen and schoolmasters, and he felt this was representative of their proportion of the population as a whole.²⁰² Dresser used a range of primary sources including Corporation minutes and registers, insurance records, diaries, legal cases, letters, wills, inventories, newspapers and trade directories, along with a re-evaluation of some secondary sources, to identify changes in the social structure of Bristol during the eighteenth century, and found that by the 1760s:

new networks of elegant squares and crescents, assembly rooms, theatres and libraries...made the city scape more genteel...even as it signalled the evolution of a more socially polarised society.²⁰³

Her sources provided evidence of expansion among the middle-classes in Bristol and their increasing ability to challenge the traditional mercantile elite

²⁰⁰ Elizabeth Baigent, 'Bristol Society in the Later Eighteenth Century with Special Reference to the Handling by Computer of Fragmentary Historical Sources', *University of Oxford D. Phil*, 1985, p. 57.

²⁰¹ Roger H. Leech, *The Town House in Medieval and Early Modern Bristol*, English Heritage, (Swindon, 2014), p. 328.

²⁰² John Moore, (ed.), *The Goods and Chattels of our Forefathers: Frampton Cotterell and District Probate Inventories, 1539-1804*, (Chichester, 1976), p. 21.

²⁰³ Madge Dresser, 'Middling Women and Work in Eighteenth-Century Bristol', Working Paper, University of the West of England, <http://eprints.uwe.ac.uk/222127>, (2013), p 1.

that had dominated the city's civic and economic institutions during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.²⁰⁴

Economic instability, often brought about by war and political unrest, meant that bankruptcy was a fairly common occurrence in eighteenth-century Bristol, as evidenced by the significant number of bankruptcy notices appearing in Bristol newspapers of the period. Minchinton's list of bankruptcies among Bristol merchants between 1711 and 1770, confirms that even prominent merchants could become victims of a difficult economic environment. Among the names listed are a number of important members of the Merchant Venturer's Society, including Graffin Prankard, Sir Abraham Elton, and Nehemiah Champion.²⁰⁵ However, there is plenty of evidence to confirm the survival of more general merchants like Isaac Hobhouse and Noblet Ruddock.²⁰⁶

Baigent's work on Bristol, using Sketchleys Bristol Directory of 1775, the 1774 Parliamentary Poll Book, and city rates and national tax returns for 1774/1775, led her to conclude that 'to some extent, the economy and society of the city had remained unchanged since the early eighteenth century.'²⁰⁷ However, she found that the growth of commerce and shipping did cause an increasing concentration of wealth into the hands of an economic elite, and a widening gap between those who prospered from such economic activity, and those who were left behind.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

²⁰⁵ Minchinton, *The Trade of Bristol*, pp. 184-186.

²⁰⁶ Isaac Hobhouse and Noblet Ruddock, referenced in newspapers and household accounts in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis.

²⁰⁷ Baigent, 'Bristol Society in the Later Eighteenth Century', p. 396.

According to Nash, two groups made up the top echelon of Boston society. The first were high status professionals, such as doctors and clergymen, and the second wealthy seaport merchants. Artisans filled the middle ground between these two groups and the labourers, but there was also a lot of variation within occupational groups. Below artisans, in descending order, were free unskilled labourers, hired servants and apprentices, indentured servants, and finally slaves.²⁰⁸ There is evidence of increasing social stratification in Boston after mid-century, and signs of increasing economic inequality.²⁰⁹ Among the causes cited was increased migration into Boston from the surrounding countryside, caused by a shift away from agriculture, which in turn led to the space occupied by households becoming smaller and more overcrowded. Henretta concluded that such processes culminated in the emergence of 'an integrated economic and political hierarchy based on mercantile wealth' by the latter half of the eighteenth century, as 'successful families tightened their control of trade', and a much more unequal society than that which predominated in 1700.²¹⁰ Nash agreed, concluding that in the half-century leading up to the American Revolution cities like Boston were transformed from communities in which economic opportunity was widely available and economic mobility quite

²⁰⁸ Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution*, (Cambridge, Mass, 1986), p. 6-9.

²⁰⁹ G.B. Warden, 'Inequality and Instability in Eighteenth-Century Boston: A Reappraisal', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 6, 4, Interdisciplinary Studies of the American Revolution, Spring, 1976, 586.

²¹⁰ James Henretta, 'Economic Development and Social Structure in Colonial Boston', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3, 22, 1, January, 1965, 89.

general to communities in which the 'rich were getting richer, some spectacularly so, while the number of poor grew...'²¹¹

However, Greene's research led him to conclude that there was a lack of comparative economic equality between the ranks of society in Boston from the late seventeenth century onwards, and that 'the concentration of wealth remained relatively high and relatively stable...with the wealthiest 30 per cent of property holders possessing around 85 per cent of the town's private wealth.'²¹² Although the bottom 30 per cent controlled only three per cent of the wealth, while the top ten per cent controlled 40 per cent, Nash concluded that this represented a slightly more even distribution of assets than was the case in European towns during this period.²¹³ Extra financial and social burdens were placed on the population of Massachusetts, and in particular Boston, following several outbreaks of smallpox, and regular and continuing involvement in a series of wars against Native Americans and the French Canadians. A shortage of currency, especially during periods of conflict, led to the issue of paper money on many occasions during the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This led to the devaluation of Massachusetts currency by 44 per cent between 1715 and 1721.²¹⁴ The period 1720 to 1740 saw a mixture of economic fortunes for residents of Boston, despite it being a

²¹¹ Gary B. Nash, 'Urban Wealth and Poverty in Pre-Revolutionary America', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 6, 4, Interdisciplinary Studies of the American Revolution, Spring, 1976, 566.

²¹² Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture*, (North Carolina, 1988), p. 69.

²¹³ Nash, *The Urban Crucible*, p. 11.

²¹⁴ Nash, *The Urban Crucible*, p. 50.

period of relative peace, leading to the widening of the gap between rich and poor highlighted in this section.

Many studies have highlighted the importance of a growing 'middle-class' in eighteenth-century society. Earle found evidence of a 'tripartite division' in London society during the eighteenth century, made up of an upper-class 'West End society', a 'middle station', comprised of professionals and industrialists, and a working class, or 'mechanick part of mankind'.²¹⁵ Although he highlights the increasing fluidity within social strata over time, he also emphasises the especial challenges of those members of the middle station who attempted to take their place among the aristocracy. The relatively flat social structure of Bristol and Boston, compared to that of London, calls into question the conclusions of previous studies by Shamma and others that were based on comparisons between consumption patterns in London and the colonies. These often highlighted the differences in social structures to explain differences in the consumption patterns between England and America. The social structure of Bristol was similar to that of Boston during the first-half of the eighteenth century, with wealthy merchants holding the top economic and social positions, but a relative absence of aristocratic and gentry families in both cities. These similarities reinforce the relevance and importance of comparisons between the consumption processes at work in Bristol and Boston that follow in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis.

3.3: Economies

Bristol's geographical location at the head of the River Severn led to her development as an important port, and her position as 'metropolis of the

²¹⁵ Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, p. 327.

west' ensured that Bristol-based carriers controlled the international and domestic trade of the whole of the southwest region.²¹⁶ Ships sailed up the Severn River and down the Avon into the heart of the town, and their dominance of the urban landscape was highlighted by Alexander Pope on a visit to Bristol in 1739:

in the middle of the street, as far as you can see, hundreds of Ships,
their Masts as thick as they can stand by one another, which is the
oddest and most surprising sight imaginable.²¹⁷

Bristol merchants were supplied with goods from a wide geographical area, with the immediate hinterland providing an important source of agricultural commodities and a variety of textile products, particularly west-country woollen goods.²¹⁸ Leech et al. found that cloth, which made up 18 per cent of Britain's export trade to the colonies, together with clothing, tobacco pipes, nails and candles, were mainly sourced from Bristol and its hinterland.²¹⁹ Morgan listed other goods transported to Bristol from further afield, including a variety of metal goods from Birmingham, buttons from the North of England and Scotland, cotton goods from Manchester and Kendal, and pottery from the Severn valley.²²⁰

²¹⁶ W.E. Minchinton, 'Bristol: Metropolis of the West in the Eighteenth Century', The Alexander Prize Essay, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5, 4 1954, 69-85.

²¹⁷ Quoted in P.J. Corfield, *The Impact of English Towns, 1700-1800*, (Oxford, 1982), p. 47.

²¹⁸ Patrick McGrath (ed.), *Bristol in the Eighteenth Century*, (Newton Abbot, 1972) pp. 133-134.

²¹⁹ Roger Leech, Jonathan Barry, Alison Brown, Catherine Ferguson, and Elizabeth Parkinson (eds.), *The Bristol Hearth Tax, 1662-1673*, Bristol Record Society, 70, (Bristol, 2018), p. 47.

²²⁰ Kenneth Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century*, (Cambridge, 1993), p.105.

Besides trading commodities produced in other regions, Bristol was also one of the main manufacturing centres for a number of industries, ranging from sugar refining and rum distilling to the manufacture of glass, soap, bricks, tiles, leather, copper and brass, earthenware and ceramics, and chocolate. According to McGrath, contemporaries commented on the domination of the city's horizon by 11 glassworks and 15 or 16 sugarhouses in the eighteenth century.²²¹ Wrightson noted the central role of Bristol merchants in funding the development of such industries and their importance to the Atlantic trade.²²²

Buchanan and Cossons identified specific areas of Bristol where particular industries were concentrated. According to their research, Redcliff was the main centre of glass manufacture, and there were a number of potteries located in the Temple Back area of the city, although 'Delftware' was also made at Brislington Pottery on the outskirts of the city. The Fry family built large premises in Pithay for the processing of cocoa, and this together with the large number of sugar-refining houses, emphasised the importance of the trade of these two commodities between Bristol and the plantation colonies.²²³ Roger North's comment in the late seventeenth century that a 'poor Shopkeeper, that sells candles, will have a bale of stockings, or a pieces of stuff for Nevis or Virginia etc.'²²⁴ reflected the participation of a large

²²¹ McGrath, *Bristol in the Eighteenth Century*, pp.133-134.

²²² Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain*, (New Haven, 2000), p. 240.

²²³ R.A. Buchanan and Neil Cossons, *Industrial Archaeology of the Bristol Region*, (London, 1969), pp. 10-11.

²²⁴ J.H. Bettey, *Bristol Observed: Visitors' Impressions of the City from Domesday to the Blitz*, (Bristol, 1986), pp. 58-9.

number of modest Bristol entrepreneurs in colonial trade at that time. By the middle of the eighteenth century such trade had become more concentrated in the hands of prominent members of the Merchant Venturers Society, like Richard and Nehemiah Champion, Thomas Goldney and Graffin Prankard.²²⁵

Across the Atlantic during this same period, it has been estimated that over 40 per cent of the carrying capacity of all colonial-owned shipping was in Boston hands.²²⁶ However, unlike Bristol, which held a central position over an area rich in agricultural and manufacturing industries, the area around Boston was lacking in the sorts of commodities that the plantation colonies of Virginia, Maryland and South Carolina were able to produce. Shipbuilding and fishing were the means by which a large proportion of residents of Massachusetts earned a living. Relatively poor soils hindered the growth of corn and other staple commodities and meant that, according to McCusker and Menard, 'the fields of New England produced grain and stones, the latter more easily and abundantly than the former.'²²⁷ Even during years where their harvests were better than average, there was no demand for their surplus grain in England, which produced ample quantities of its own wheat and other grains. The same was true of attempts to sell fish caught in the waters off New England, and other commodities like dyewoods, potash and oil also failed to generate sufficient demand in England. Restrictions imposed by Parliament, where colonial industrial development was only permissible provided it did not compete with English interests, made it very difficult to

²²⁵ Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade*, pp. 10-11; Minchinton, *Trade of Bristol*, p. xvii.

²²⁶ Henretta, 'Economic Development and Social Structure', 76.

²²⁷ McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America*, p.93.

establish colonial manufacturing.²²⁸ The inability to establish a strong agricultural or manufacturing base ensured that Massachusetts, and Boston in particular, remained reliant on English imports to feed and clothe their population, particularly in the first half of the eighteenth century. Henretta concluded that this absence of self-sufficiency led to currency shortages and an extensive use of credit, which in turn led to further economic problems for the colonists in and around Boston. This was particularly true when the shipbuilding and distilling industries went into decline after 1750.²²⁹

One illustration of the effects of such economic problems concerns the shortage of furniture makers in the colonies. Cooke noted that there was little immigration of English-trained cabinetmakers, and blamed ‘...chronic economic difficulties’, which ‘caused a depreciation of currency, hyperinflation, and wage-price trends in which real income decreased dramatically for all but the wealthiest merchants and landowners in Boston.’²³⁰ Continued agricultural underproduction and outbreaks of epidemic diseases, such as smallpox, added extra stresses to the economic outlook in eighteenth-century Boston.

Evidence of the effects of such events on the fortunes of a proportion of the Boston population can be found in the tax records. Henretta found that large merchants comprised the top quarter of the taxable population in 1687, controlling 66 per cent of the town’s wealth.²³¹ Menand concluded that ‘by the early 1740s, one-fourth of the town inhabitants ‘had fallen sufficiently near or

²²⁸ McGrath, *Merchant Venturers of Bristol*, p. 141.

²²⁹ Henretta, ‘Economic Development and Social Structure’, 75-92.

²³⁰ Edward S. Cooke Jr., ‘Boston Clothespresses of the mid-Eighteenth Century’, *Journal of the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston, 1, 1989, pp. 75-95.

²³¹ Henretta, ‘Economic Development and Social Structure’, 78.

below the subsistence level' to be too poor to pay taxes.²³² However, despite these economic problems, Main's research led her to conclude that 'the average value of consumer goods among farmers and other rural inhabitants in that colony did not decline...but fluctuated around an average value little different from...Maryland'. Further work led her to the even more optimistic conclusion that 'the standard of living did not decline but actually improved for the great majority of the population over the course of the eighteenth century.'²³³

Although Main's study excluded the experience of Boston consumers, there is evidence that points to continued economic growth in the city, albeit fuelled to a large extent by credit. Over time, the farms of the south end of Boston disappeared and 'the central business district became crowded.'²³⁴ At the same time that the physical size of Boston was expanding, her economy was growing and diversifying. Henretta found that by 1742, 'the town led all the colonial cities in the production of export furniture and shoes.'²³⁵ However, despite these particular successes, there was a general failure to develop home-grown industry until the 1760s and the beginning of the non-importation movement. Attempts to begin local manufacturing of linen, for example, failed. The seaport merchants continued to be involved in all aspects of colonial commerce and to dominate the economic life of Boston, importing and

²³² Catherine Menand, 'The Things that were Caesar's: Tax Collecting in Eighteenth-Century Boston', *Massachusetts Historical Review*, 1, 1999, 53.

²³³ Main, 'The Standard of Living in Colonial Massachusetts', 101, and 'The Standard of Living in Southern New England', 125.

²³⁴ Henretta, 'Economic Development and Social Structure', 79.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 81.

exporting, selling goods wholesale and retail, building ships and warehouses, throughout the first half of the eighteenth century.²³⁶

3.4: Connections

The constant movement of a range of people within, and between, Bristol and Boston, facilitated the spread of tastes and fashions among their citizens, and ensured that contemporaries quickly became aware of the latest news and trends. As a result of the position of both cities as important Atlantic ports, many trading connections developed between them during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Trade from Bristol to North America was divided into two distinct categories: trade with the plantation colonies and the fisheries, which involved large regular shipments of a specific type of commodity; and trade with temperate colonies, which was more sporadic in nature, and involved the shipment of smaller quantities of a much broader range of goods.²³⁷ As Morgan summarised, ships leaving Bristol:

carried packages of textiles, metal ware and hardware for sale to colonists, and filled up excess cargo space by taking voluntary and involuntary passengers (indentured servants and convicts), and by picking up provisions in southern Ireland. On homeward bound voyages the same ships brought back cargoes that included tobacco, wheat and iron from Virginia and Maryland, deerskins, rice and indigo from South Carolina, naval stores (pitch, tar, turpentine) from New England and New York, and sugar, rum, pimento and ginger from the Caribbean islands.²³⁸

Such trade from Bristol to the colonies was carried out by around 200 merchants, many in partnerships with other local or foreign merchants, including a number from Boston. According to Morgan ‘...an increasing

²³⁶ For further detail on life and the economic conditions in Boston during the eighteenth century, see Nash, *Urban Crucible*, and McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America*.

²³⁷ Minchinton, *Trade of Bristol*, p. xiii.

²³⁸ Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade*, p.11.

minority of Bristol merchants were born or trained overseas in Boston...’, and a number of Boston merchants visited Bristol, so commercial links between the two cities were stronger than the quantities of trade alone would suggest.²³⁹

Connections between the two cities remained fluid, with a number of individuals moving between Bristol and Boston many times throughout their lives. Boston newspapers provide evidence of such journeys. Capt. Benjamin Atkinson and Capt. William Atwood were among those who regularly gave notice that they were either bound for Bristol, or just returned with beer, and a variety of other goods.²⁴⁰ Capt. John Jones Sen., originally from Bristol, crossed the Atlantic to Boston and back on many occasions between 1742 and 1749, bringing a variety of English goods including Bristol Ale in bottles to sell at his premises. He changed addresses in 1755 but continued to sell English goods until his permanent return to Bristol in 1759.²⁴¹

3.5: Consumer Marketplaces

Despite the range of geographical, physical and social similarities between eighteenth-century Bristol and Boston, the differences in economic development outlined in Section 3.3 inevitably led to differences in the consumer marketplaces in both cities. Newspapers, to be discussed in Chapter 4, provide evidence of the range of retail outlets available to

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁴⁰ Capt. Benjamin Atkinson and Capt. William Atwood, *The Boston News-Letter*, 13 Aug. 1716; Belthezer Bayard, *The Boston News-Letter*, 11 Feb. 1731, 10 Jun. 1731, and 15 Jul. 1731; James Griffin, *The Boston News-Letter*, 15 Oct. 1716.

²⁴¹ Capt. John Jones, *The Boston Gazette*, 31 Aug. 1742, and multiple advertisements, including *The Boston Gazette*, 13 Dec. 1743 and *The Independent Advertiser*, 10 Apr. 1749. He advertised his change of premises in *The Boston Evening Post* 14 Jun. 1756, and his return to Bristol in *The Boston Evening Post*, 13 Aug. 1759.

consumers in both cities for the purchase of a wide variety of household products, from food and drink, to clothing and textiles, pottery and glass, furniture, metal wares and jewellery, and books and stationery. As Bristol was the focal point of a wide array of goods from a number of areas, consumers in the city also had a wide range of outlets from which to buy their goods. Agricultural products and fish had long been sold on the streets and on the quayside in Bristol, but by the beginning of the eighteenth century overcrowding meant that there was need for the establishment of more formal marketplaces. Several specialist outlets were consequently established around the city. Minchinton notes that:

Broadmead market was established on one side of the city, which specialised in the sale of produce from Gloucestershire, and one across the city in Temple Street for produce from Somerset. In 1717, the quay became the home for a new fish market, and in 1726 a new corn market was built.²⁴²

Several fairs also took place at various times of the year in Bristol, in particular the St. Pauls, or winter fair, and the St. James, or summer fair, where cattle, grain and manufactured goods were traditionally sold.²⁴³

As well as markets and fairs, consumers in Bristol were also able to avail themselves of the services and goods of a wide range of shops and shopkeepers from the later seventeenth century onwards, many of them specialising in the sale of particular types of goods. Bristol newspapers from the period contain advertisements from cabinet makers, carpenters, victuallers, silk dyers, glovers, cutlers, stay makers, hat makers, shoe makers, chocolate makers, pewterers, goldsmiths, paper makers, saddlers,

²⁴² Minchinton, 'Bristol: Metropolis of the West', 79.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 80.

upholsterers, grocers, tea men, booksellers, stationers, musical instrument makers, confectioners, and sellers of earthenware, among others. A large number of advertisements were placed by linen drapers, haberdashers, mercers and woollen drapers, publicising the large range of wares available in their shops in the city centre. This corresponds with Hussey's analysis that Bristol was the source of a wide range of goods, including those normally only available from London: 'luxury goods, consumer novelties and overseas commodities like looking glasses; foreign wares; bespoke, crafted furniture...and fine ceramics...'.²⁴⁴

Many Bristol retailers moved to larger premises during this period in order to better display their burgeoning array of wares, but without sacrificing their reputation as specialists. For instance, Morgan found 'by the 1720s there was a Norwich Warehouse at the Sun Inn, outside Lawford's Gate, which sold all sorts of Norwich Goods at low rates, plus a warehouse at the upper end of St James' churchyard where John Shirtcliffe of Sheffield retailed goods from Sheffield and Birmingham.'²⁴⁵ This move is also reflected in the newspapers, with advertisements in the 1740s and 1750s for a Paper Warehouse, Birt and Hall's Manchester Warehouse, the Tea Warehouse, a Gun Warehouse, a Broadcloth Warehouse, and an Upholstery/Paper Hanging Warehouse, among others.²⁴⁶ Mui and Mui's analysis of bankrupt shopkeepers uncovered evidence that Bristol experienced levels of increasing specialisation similar to

²⁴⁴ David Hussey, *Coastal and River Trade in Pre-Industrial England: Bristol and its Region, 1680-1730*, (New York, 2000), p. 75.

²⁴⁵ Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade*, p. 101.

²⁴⁶ *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 14 Feb. 1756; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 11 Aug. 1759; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 17 Jul. 1756; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 13 Oct. 1759; *The Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*, 18 Apr. 1755; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 2 Dec. 1758.

London, which was different to other provincial centres such as Manchester during this period.²⁴⁷

The overwhelming majority of manufactured goods entering Boston were imported from England and sold from warehouses owned or rented by merchants and the captains of the numerous ships sailing between Boston and England. Unlike the warehouses that were becoming increasingly popular in Bristol at mid-century, those lining the quay in Boston tended not to specialise in the sale of particular goods. The advertisements placed in Boston newspapers during the eighteenth century were dominated by merchants, and ships' captains landing in the port, who noted the vast array of goods they had available for purchase under one roof. Colonial wholesalers referred to what they classed as 'sundry merchandize'. According to Breen:

...assortments of different kinds of British goods from ceramics to cloth. British exporters tried to anticipate the colonial markets, knowing in advance that most shipments would depart England in two great waves governed by prevailing weather systems, one in January, the second in mid-to late summer.²⁴⁸

There were also a number of individuals who sold goods from the front rooms of their houses, as a means of supplementing their regular income, and these were joined by growing number of shopkeepers as the century developed.

The domination of Boston's consumer market by English and, subsequently, colonial merchants resulted in the growth of a haphazard selection of retail alternatives. According to civic leaders:

...country peddlers, itinerant dealers, hucksters, and small shopkeepers violated commercial laws...selling during prohibited

²⁴⁷ Mui and Mui, *Shops and Shop keeping*, p. 66.

²⁴⁸ T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumers Politics Shaped American Independence*, (Oxford, 2004), p. 115.

hours, purveying inferior goods, cheating customers, reselling goods (sometimes purchased earlier in the same day from respectable wholesalers) at exorbitant mark-ups...²⁴⁹

Despite concerted efforts by these civic leaders to change what they considered to be a disadvantageous situation for consumers, there was resistance from residents to the idea of establishing organised markets in Boston. In the spring of 1696, it was ordered that there should be a market in Boston, taking pains to ensure that 'hucksters and traders couldn't buy until the afternoon, in order that housekeepers might have the benefit of early chance', but the public remained opposed to the idea, believing that it would drive prices up.²⁵⁰

Several further attempts were made to impose some structure onto the market for consumable goods in Boston. The first market day was held on 4 June 1734, when 'market houses provided, sanctioned, and protected by town government' were opened, but it was abandoned four years later.²⁵¹ Although the opening of Faneuil Hall in 1742 appeared to finally provide a fixed and central location for the market of goods, there was unrelenting opposition to its establishment, it was slow to gain popularity among consumers, closed in September 1747, and burnt to the ground in 1761.²⁵² Shamma's research led her to conclude that there was little evidence that the colonies 'created anything comparable to the [English] market town system in America', and

²⁴⁹ Valeri, *Heavenly Merchandize*, p. 191.

²⁵⁰ Brown, *Faneuil Hall*, p. 68.

²⁵¹ Brown, *Faneuil Hall*, p. 71.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 86-91.

that for most of the colonial period, 'hawkers going from door to door victualled much of Boston'.²⁵³

There is, however, increasing evidence of the establishment of shops in Boston as the century progressed. The first mention of a shop or shopkeeper in the Boston newspaper sample appears in 1716. It was owned by Jonathan Mountford, and was the premises from which he sold 'very good Bohea Tee, Nutmegs, Cloves, Pepper and other Spice'.²⁵⁴ The number of shops, and references to shops in newspapers, in Boston gradually increased until, 'whole neighbourhoods evolved into distinct wholesale and retail districts' and 'half of the town's shops (chiefly those offering so-called wet goods, that is imported groceries, wine, liquor, and tobacco) were located on or near the Long Wharf'.²⁵⁵ The royal governor of Massachusetts highlighted a potential reason for the failure of attempts to establish a marketplace in Boston, and the parallel increase in the numbers of shops, when he wrote in 1768 that:

For some Years past the London Merchants for the sake of advancing their Profits have got into dealing immediately with the Retailers, and have thereby abolished the Distinction of Merchants at Boston: so that at present every Merchant is a Shopkeeper & every Shopkeeper is a Merchant. Hence instead of dealing with Respectable and Creditable Houses, the London Merchants are engaged in a great Number of little Shops.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 266.

²⁵⁴ *The Boston News-Letter*, 9 Jan. 1716.

²⁵⁵ 1768 Francis Bernard, royal governor of Massachusetts to Lord Shelburne, cited in John W. Tyler, *Smugglers and Patriots: Boston Merchants and the Advent of the American Revolution*, (Boston, 1986), p. 113.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 189.

3.6: Conclusion

There are many reasons why Bristol and Boston prove particularly attractive for a study of consumption practices in the eighteenth century. As both cities stood at the centre of extensive commercial networks, consumers in each benefitted from the regular supply of a wide range of consumable goods, and the ready availability of novel items at the point of entry into the English and colonial marketplaces. We can therefore presume that problems of supply were minimal, and that consumers in both places could actively choose from the most up-to-date stocks of goods. As well as being important commercial centres, Bristol and Boston were also hubs of political and cultural activity, and an analysis of their consumer markets carries additional resonance concerning developments in the wider populations of both countries. Therefore, by comparing and contrasting the marketing, purchase and accumulation of consumable goods in these two large urban centres, it is possible to shed light on the consumption habits and preferences of two influential groups of consumers largely neglected hitherto.

Despite their separation by thousands of miles, Bristol and Boston shared many geographical, physical, and social similarities during the eighteenth century. While the pre-eminence of Bristol as England's second city during the early decades of the eighteenth century was well-established, as Nash concluded, seaboard commercial cities like Boston were at 'the cutting edge of economic, social, and political change' in the colonies.²⁵⁷ Greene drew parallels between the developing societies of urban centres like Bristol and Boston as the eighteenth century progressed, so that 'in both the

²⁵⁷ Nash, *Urban Crucible*, p. ix.

Chesapeake and New England [cities], wealth became significantly more concentrated and social stratification more marked...imitating the genteel urban lifestyle of contemporary British cities.'²⁵⁸ These, and other factors, led to a myriad of connections arising between these important urban ports and their citizens. A number of local economic conditions, however, also led to the development of differing consumer marketplaces, and both the similarities and differences outlined in this chapter demonstrate the significance of a study of changes in consumption patterns between Bristol and Boston during this vital period in English and colonial history.

The plethora of supply lines for consumable goods entering Bristol, meant that consumers in this city could purchase a wide variety of household goods from a growing number of specialist outlets. Weekly markets for agricultural products and fish, and additional markets for goods from specific locations, existed alongside a growing number of shops established by specialist retailers such as haberdashers, hat-makers, pewterers, and cabinet-makers, among others. As the century progressed, many of these retailers moved to larger premises, increasingly housing and displaying their burgeoning stock of goods in a number of warehouses springing up around the city.

The dominance of imported goods entering the Boston marketplace inevitably led to different developments in the retail environment there. Warehouses remained the preferred outlet for the large number of merchants who dominated the centre of Boston between 1700 and 1760. These merchants sold a wide variety of different kinds of household goods under one

²⁵⁸ Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness*, p. 136.

roof, and this system was supplemented by a range of auctions, and a number of wandering pedlars and hucksters, selling their wares from door-to-door. The Boston marketplace did change over the period, with more shopkeepers advertising in newspapers, and a rise in colonial manufactories but warehouses and auction rooms continued to play an important role in the retail sector, despite several failed attempts to establish organised markets in the city.

The wealth of resources available in the archives of Bristol and Boston enables a thorough investigation of consumption practices from the initial appearance of goods, to their day-to-day purchase, and their survival after death. Evidence of the widespread availability of newspapers in Bristol and Boston, high literacy rates in both cities, and the increasing importance of advertisements in such publications, underlines the significant role of such notices in reaching a large proportion of the consumers in both cities, and thereby influencing their consumption choices. Household accounts, although relatively rare in both archives, provide evidence of the priorities within household expenditure, and the detail needed to recreate a rounded picture of the purchasing decisions made, and the range of suppliers used, by specific families. Finally, probate inventories demonstrate the varying levels of importance attached to a whole range of goods, through their accumulation over a lifetime.

The comparative research that follows in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 enables this thesis to explore changes in the consumption processes of consumers in eighteenth-century Bristol and Boston, and the causes of those changes. Such a comparison enables this thesis to address three main aims. The first is

to assess the complexity of consumption process in Bristol and Boston, from the marketing of goods, to their purchase by households, and their accumulation by eighteenth-century families. The second aim is to identify the experience of consumers on both sides of the Atlantic and the range of factors that influenced purchasing decisions and networks of supply, in order to assess parallel changes in urban consumption patterns in England and America. Finally, this thesis aims to relate these findings to the broader issue of the consumer marketplaces in Bristol and Boston, thereby incorporating individual consumer preferences and priorities into the wider economic arena.

Chapter 4: The Marketing of Goods in Eighteenth-Century Bristol and Boston

This chapter assesses the evidence that can be gleaned from newspaper advertisements concerning the ways a range of goods were marketed in the eighteenth century, and how this influences our impression of developments in consumption. Using eighteenth-century newspapers, it demonstrates one aspect of the process of consumption in Bristol and Boston, to assess the responses of retailers and consumers to the burgeoning variety of goods entering the marketplace, and to highlight a resultant shift in the balance of power between retailers and consumers during the first-half of the eighteenth century. It analyses the ways in which retailers and wholesalers used newspaper advertisements to create virtual consumer spaces that would appeal to potential customers and the extent to which the physical marketplaces in both cities influenced their strategies. Just as shopkeepers in Bristol and Boston worked to improve the physical experience of shopping for their customers, concerted efforts to attract further custom through newspaper advertising, particularly for fashionable goods, meant that eighteenth-century consumers were presented with a wide range of choices from which to make consumption decisions.

Section 4.1 provides an overview of the ways researchers have used eighteenth-century newspapers to research different aspects of early modern life, including investigations into the ways newspaper advertisements were used to market a range of goods to consumers. Section 4.2 looks at newspaper publishing in England and the colonies, and Bristol and Boston, and 4.3 explores the methodology surrounding the selection of newspaper

samples. Section 4.4 measures the rise of advertising in the newspapers of both cities, and 4.5 assesses changes in advertising during the period. Sections 4.6 to 4.10 examine the various ways that advertisers marketed their goods to potential customers, and sections 4.11 and 4.12 take a more in-depth look at some of the individuals who advertised regularly in Bristol and Boston newspapers. Section 4.13 analyses the advertising of earthenware in Bristol, and groceries in Boston, two key commodities in terms of advertising space, and the final section draws conclusions about the extent to which developments in advertising in Bristol and Boston during the first-half of the eighteenth century reflect changes in the consumer marketplaces in both cities.

4.1: Studies of Eighteenth-Century Newspapers

This section looks at the ways newspaper advertisements have been used by English and colonial historians to date, specifically in relation to the subject of consumption. Eighteenth-century newspapers played a vital role in keeping their readers informed about important international and national events, and newspaper advertisements provided citizens with information about a whole range of goods and services available in their local marketplace. Despite the growth in advertising during this period, there has been little attempt to analyse advertisements for goods such as textiles and clothing, furniture, pottery and glass, and metal wares and jewellery, appearing in English and colonial newspapers during the first-half of the eighteenth century. This chapter analyses developments in the marketing of such goods, and food and drink, in a range of Bristol and Boston newspapers between 1700 and 1760.

English and colonial newspapers have been used in a number of different ways to highlight aspects of eighteenth-century life. A number of researchers have studied English newspapers to analyse general developments in the publishing trade, focusing on titles published in London, particularly the government-sponsored *London Gazette*.²⁵⁹ Some, including Cranfield and Wiles, turned their attention to the provincial press during the eighteenth century, and a parallel development has seen a shift in emphasis away from quantitative studies towards an analysis of editorials and articles appearing in newspapers. Black, Heyd and Barker have analysed the political influences wielded by the individuals who owned newspapers, while an important collection edited by Raven, Small and Tadmor linked the growth of newspapers with changes in literacy rates during the period.²⁶⁰ Those researchers who studied colonial newspapers used them to illustrate a variety of aspects of life in eighteenth-century America. A significant group, including

²⁵⁹ James R. Sutherland, 'The Circulation of Newspapers and Literary Periodicals, 1700-30', *The Library*, 4, 15, June, 1934, 111-124; A. Aspinall, 'Statistical Accounts of the London Newspapers in the Eighteenth Century', *English Historical Review*, 63, 1948, 201-232; Henry L. Snyder, 'The Circulation of Newspapers in the Reign of Queen Anne', *Library*, 5, 23, 1968, 206-235. Aspinall, 'Statistical Accounts of the London Newspapers', 201-33; Handover, *A History of the London Gazette*; Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole: A Study of the Origins of the Modern English Press*, (New Jersey, 1987); R.B. Walker, 'Advertising in London Newspapers, 1650-1750', *Business History*, 15, 2, 1973, 112-130.

²⁶⁰ G.A. Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper, 1700-1760*, (Oxford, 1962); R.M. Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England*, (Ohio, 1965); G.A. Cranfield, *The Press and Society: From Caxton to Northcliffe*, (New York, 1978); Jeremy Black, *The English Press, 1621-1861*, (Stroud, 2001); David Newton and Martin Smith, *The 'Stamford Mercury': Three Centuries of Newspaper Publishing* (Stamford, 1999); Ferdinand, Benjamin Collins. Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, (London, 1987); Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*; Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society, 1695-1855*, (Harlow, 2000); James Raven, Helen Small and Naomi Tadmor (eds.), *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, (London, 1996).

Pasley, focused on editorials and articles to present an analysis of the political influence individual titles wielded in the run up to the American Revolution.²⁶¹ Another popular area of American research consisted of studies of the letters published in newspapers in order to highlight particular areas of colonial life, including changes to the portrayal of women and changes in national identity, as highlighted by Copeland and Torsella.²⁶²

Wischermann explored the important role of newspaper advertising in the general development of urban lifestyles and its broader impact in a number of European cities.²⁶³ Of those researchers who looked at the growth of advertising in English newspapers during this period, Walker, Sutherland, Raymond and Clark focused on the marketing of books and medicines, often items that early publishers sold alongside newspapers in order to boost their incomes.²⁶⁴ While these filled the pages of many early newspapers, Ferdinand's studies of the *Salisbury Journal* pointed to their relative decline from the 1740s onwards as the numbers of notices for other types of goods

²⁶¹ Jeffrey L. Pasley, 'The Two National Gazettes: Newspapers and the Embodiment of American Political Parties', *Early American Literature*, 35, 1, 2000, 51-86; Jeffrey L. Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers: The Rise of Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*, (Charlottesville, 2002).

²⁶² David A. Copeland, 'Virtuous and Vicious: The Dual Portrayal of Women in Colonial Newspapers', *American Periodicals*, 5, 1995, 59-85; Joseph M. Torsella, 'American National Identity, 1750-1790: Samples from the Popular Press', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 112, 2, April, 1988, 167-187.

²⁶³ C. Wischermann, 'Placing Advertising in the Modern Cultural History of the City', in C. Wischermann and E. Shore (eds.), *Advertising and the European City: Historical Perspectives*, (Aldershot, 2000), 1-31.

²⁶⁴ Walker, 'Advertising in London Newspapers'; James R. Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and Its Development*, (Cambridge, 1986); Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain*, (London, 1999); Charles E. Clark, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture 1665-1740*, (Oxford, 1994).

and services grew.²⁶⁵ More recent research by Stobart concentrated on the marketing strategies of members of the grocery trade, in newspapers and through trade cards, looking at the varied use of each in promoting the sale of exotic and everyday items of food and drink to eighteenth-century consumers.²⁶⁶ Stobart also looked at the ways advertisements drew on and promoted notions of politeness in order to sell goods to a wider audience.²⁶⁷ Research carried out by Cox and Dannehl addressed the important part played by advertising in the promotion of a whole range of other consumable goods during this period.²⁶⁸ Those who turned their attention to the analysis of colonial newspaper advertisements focused on those for slaves and medicines, like Desrochers and Gevitz, or utilised them in an attempt to analyse the changing roles of women in the colonial economy during the eighteenth century, like Cleary, Schultz and Lantz.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁵ Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, pp. 193-194.

²⁶⁶ Jon Stobart, *Sugar and Spice: Grocers and Groceries in Provincial England, 1650-1830*, (Oxford, 2013); Jon Stobart and Andrew Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century? Evidence from North West England', *Business History*, 46, 2, 2006, 175-6.

²⁶⁷ Jon Stobart, 'Selling (through) Politeness: Advertising Provincial Shops in Eighteenth-Century England', *Cultural and Social History*, 5, 2008, 309-328.

²⁶⁸ Nancy Cox and Karin Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing in Early Modern England*, (Aldershot, 2007); Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*.

²⁶⁹ Robert E. Desrochers Jr., 'Slaves for Sale: Advertisements and Slavery in Massachusetts, 1704-1781', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3, 59, 3, Slavery in the Atlantic World, July, 2002, 623-664; Norman Gevitz, "Pray let the Medicines be Good": The New England Apothecary in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries', *Pharmacy in History*, 41, 3, 1999, 87-101; Patricia Cleary, 'She will be in the Shop': Women's Sphere of Trade in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia and New York', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 119, 3, July, 1995, 181-202; Martin Schultz and Herman R. Lantz, 'Occupational Pursuits of Free Women in Early America: An Examination of Eighteenth-Century Newspapers', *Sociological Forum*, 3, 1, Winter, 1988, 89-109.

Styles found that ‘the texts of most advertisements, especially those in the provincial press for manufactured goods other than books and medicines, were ‘pedestrian’, that is, they simply listed the types of goods available in their premises, without making any further efforts to market those goods to potential customers.²⁷⁰ Lyna and Van Damme’s research on commercial notices appearing in newspaper advertisements in Antwerp during the eighteenth century concluded that rather than being seen as attempts to persuade customers advertisements were there to provide information that would lower transaction costs between buyers and sellers.²⁷¹ However, Stobart’s work on advertisements placed by English grocers found that, far from being ‘pedestrian’, long lists of goods were ‘important because of the uncertain availability of new stock and the pressure to keep up with other businesses’. In his view they ‘contributed to growing consumer knowledge and presented an image of plenty and choice...’²⁷²

Along with Styles and Stobart, Cox and Dannehl highlighted the growing length of advertisements in a range of English newspapers. They concluded that providing a simple list of available goods proved a very effective advertising tool as it ‘creates an Aladdin’s Cave of choice yet maintains a structured format which the customer can trust’.²⁷³ Also, in contrast to Styles, their research on retailing in early modern England also

²⁷⁰ John Styles, ‘Manufacturing, Consumption and Design’, in Brewer and Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods*, p. 541.

²⁷¹ D. Lyna and I. Van Damme, ‘A Strategy of Seduction? The Role of Commercial Advertisements in the Eighteenth-Century Retailing Business in Antwerp’, *Business History*, 51, 2009, 100-121.

²⁷² Stobart, *Sugar and Spice*, p. 177.

²⁷³ Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p. 94.

revealed an increasing emphasis being placed by advertisers on 'advertising buzz words', such as variety, quantity, price, quality, fashion, novelty, service, and the origins of goods, particularly those from London and other important centres.²⁷⁴

Comparative studies of newspapers in England and America during the eighteenth century, by Heyd and Clark, concentrated more on 'the news culture they generated, the history of reading and newspapers, than about the ways they were formed, produced and disseminated.'²⁷⁵ Breen analysed newspaper advertisements for a range of durable and semi-durable goods, but he used them to address the 'Anglicisation', and resultant politicisation, of goods in the colonial marketplace, leading up to the American Revolution. He argued against notions of early American self-sufficiency, using colonial newspaper notices to demonstrate the extensive and ubiquitous nature of English imports throughout the colonies and the role of these consumer goods in creating a colonial identity that eventually led to the birth of a new nation.²⁷⁶

In order to begin the process of consumption, potential customers need to be informed of the types of goods available to them, and to be persuaded of their need to purchase such items. Through a study of developments in the marketing of food and drink, textiles and clothing, and a range of durable and semi-durable goods during this period, this chapter analyses the 'virtual consumer landscapes', identified by McKendrick, Mui and Mui, and Stobart,

²⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 89-91.

²⁷⁵ Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*, p. 3. See also Clark, *The Public Prints*.

²⁷⁶ Most recently explored in Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, pp.70-71.

Hann and Morgan, that newspaper advertisements created.²⁷⁷ This chapter addresses changes in the way goods were marketed in Bristol and Boston during the first-half of the eighteenth century, the reasons for such changes, and how consumers responded to the information contained in newspaper advertisements. It demonstrates the extent to which developments in the virtual consumer landscapes of Bristol and Boston reflected changes in the physical marketplace, and highlights the relative impact of marketing strategies on consumption decisions.

Household consumption in the eighteenth century, which is dealt with in Chapter 5, was dominated by the purchase of food and drink, and textiles and clothing. By assessing developments in newspaper advertising for these and a range of durable and semi-durable goods during the first-half of the eighteenth century, the current chapter assesses the role of marketing in promoting a shared culture of consumption, particularly through the use of a range of persuasive adjectives. Studies of the ownership of durable and semi-durable goods listed in probate inventories have proved very valuable in developing an understanding of changes in consumption in England and America during the eighteenth century, but as Muldrew has pointed out, 'descriptive terms used in probate inventories are too limited to get an idea of whether consumers bought items because of aesthetic or novelty appeal.'²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ N. McKendrick, 'George Packwood and the Commercialization of Shaving: the Art of Eighteenth Century Advertising', in McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, pp. 146-196; Mui and Mui, *Shops and Shop keeping*, pp.221-248; Stobart, Hann, and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, p.172.

²⁷⁸ For further detail, refer to the literature review in Chapter 1. Craig Muldrew highlights the limitations of using probate inventories alone to assess consumer motivations in, *Food, Energy*, p. 206.

The increasing use of a range of descriptive adjectives in newspaper advertisements makes it possible to gain insights into the range of factors that motivated consumers to respond to marketing strategies.

4.2: Newspaper Publishing

4.2.1: England and America

This section provides an overview of the growing popularity of newspapers in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world. Although the survival of eighteenth-century newspapers is limited for some locations, and during certain time-periods, there is a wealth of information regarding the general growth of newspaper publishing in England and the colonies during the eighteenth century. A number of researchers have noted the volatility of the publishing market, highlighting the large numbers of newspaper titles that came into existence in the eighteenth century, and the corresponding failure of many over the longer term. Raven estimated that, between 1701 and 1760, 130 provincial newspapers were founded in England, but that, by 1760, only 35 titles remained in circulation.²⁷⁹ However, for those publications that survived, Ferdinand provided evidence that circulations rose considerably during the period. In the 1710s, print runs of 200-300 copies were considered respectable for country newspapers, but by the 1740s the average number of subscribers had risen to between 1000 and 2000 per issue.²⁸⁰

Newspapers also attracted many more readers than circulation figures would suggest. It has been estimated that each newspaper sold during the

²⁷⁹ James Raven, *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750-1800*, (Oxford, 1992), and Harris and Lee, *The Press*. These specific figures come from Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, p. 21-22.

²⁸⁰ Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p.16.

period would have passed through the hands of up to 20 people, at coffee houses, through circulating libraries, between groups of friends and colleagues, and within families, meaning that the potential readership of newspapers was even greater than the sales figures would suggest.²⁸¹ Rising newspaper circulations during this period would therefore have given shopkeepers access to large numbers of potential customers, underlining the importance of newspaper advertisements in the study of consumption.

4.2.2: Bristol and Boston

Outlining the newspaper titles published in Bristol and Boston between 1700 and 1760 demonstrates the important role of these publications in both cities during the eighteenth century. Newspapers began to be printed regularly in Bristol and Boston in 1704, and both cities were among the earliest to establish the publication of a weekly broadsheet. According to H.R. Plomer's index of provincial printers, newspaper ownership was constantly changing in eighteenth-century Bristol. The Farley family dominated, with many family members trying their hand at newspaper publishing from 1712 onwards.²⁸² There is general agreement that Norwich produced the first newspaper outside of London in 1702, although no issues survive from that year. The earliest extant copy of a provincial newspaper can be found in the Bristol archive, dating from 12 August 1704. It was called *The Bristol Post Boy* and published by William Bonny, a printer recently arrived from London. From

²⁸¹ Further details of these estimates can be found in Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, and Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, among others.

²⁸² H.R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1688-1725: Vol. 1 1688-1725, and Vol. 2 1726-1775*, (London, 1922), Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, and Wiles, *Freshest Advices*.

the number of this issue, it is possible to establish that the first copy of this newspaper probably appeared in November 1702, just after that of *The Norwich Post Boy*. No issues of *The Bristol Post Boy* can be traced after May 1712.²⁸³

Samuel Farley began publishing his weekly newspaper, *The Bristol Post Man* in 1712, and it remained in print until 1725. Samuel's two sons, Samuel II and Felix, continued to publish newspapers together under the various titles of *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, *Sam Farley's Bristol Newspaper* and *Farley's Bristol Journal*. A dispute between the brothers led to Felix Farley publishing a rival newspaper in 1752 entitled *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*. Andrew Hooke also established a newspaper in the city in 1742. It began as *The Oracle or Bristol Weekly Miscellany* and continued to alternate between *The Bristol Oracle and Country Intelligencer* and *The Bristol Oracle and Country Advertiser* through this period. Ensuring that neither title was published on a weekly basis enabled publishers to avoid taxation under the Stamp Act.

The Boston News-Letter was the first newspaper to be published in America in 1704, and many followed in its wake across the 13 colonies. A total of 250 newspapers were established during the colonial period, but by 1765 only 23 survived, reflecting the volatility of the publishing marketplace. Circulation figures for colonial newspapers varied greatly, ranging from 100 to 1000 copies per issue, but it has been estimated that by the middle of the eighteenth century, the average was around 600 copies per issue.²⁸⁴

²⁸³ For a discussion of surviving copies of early provincial newspapers see Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, pp. 13-35.

²⁸⁴ A detailed overview can be found in Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*.

The first issue of *The Boston News-Letter* was printed on 17 April 1704, and it continued to appear on a weekly basis until 1776. Initially published by printer and postmaster, John Campbell, it was later taken over by Bartholomew Green, who was followed by his son-in-law, John Draper, and then by his son Richard Draper. Its first competitor in Boston emerged on 21 December 1719 in the form of *The Boston Gazette*, which remained in publication until 17 September 1798, published by Timothy Green and Samuel Kneeland, among others. *The Boston Evening Post*, published by Thomas Fleet and then Thomas Fleet Jr., and *The Boston Post Boy*, were both formed in 1735 and published until 1775. Several less successful titles emerged during this period in Boston, including *The New England Courant*, which ran for five years until its demise in 1726, *The Independent Advertiser*, which only lasted 18 months, and *The New England Weekly Journal*, which only produced 70 issues between 1727 and 1741.

As many cities in England did not begin publishing newspapers until later in the century, and none were published in Philadelphia and New York until 1719 and 1725, the early publication of newspapers in Bristol and Boston underlines the importance of studying developments in advertising in both places. Literacy rates in New England were comparable to, and by many estimates higher than, those in England during the same period, meaning that the numbers of potential readers, and therefore potential customers, would have been high in both cities from the beginning of our period, as discussed in Chapter 2.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵ In *The Public Prints*, Clark estimates at least 75 per cent of adult male colonists in urban areas could read by 1770.

4.3: The Samples Selected for this Study

The survival of early newspapers in England and the colonies is very piecemeal, due to their fragile nature and the ephemeral quality of the medium. This section outlines the rationale and methods employed in order to compile the two samples used in this study. Four newspaper issues have survived in the Bristol archive for the period 1700-1710, and 10 issues for the 1730s, but availability is generally good for the intervening decades, and from the 1740s onwards there is a steady increase in the number of surviving issues, with a very good run for two separate newspapers available during the 1750s. Therefore, enough copies survive over the period to enable a meaningful analysis of changes in advertising in Bristol over the longer term.

Table 4.1 presents a detailed listing.

Table 4.1: Bristol newspaper sample¹

	1700-1710	1710-1720	1720-1730	1730-1740	1740-1750	1750-1760	Total
Bristol Post Boy	4	65	-	-	-	-	69
Sam Farley's Bristol Post Boy	-	6	-	-	-	-	6
Farley's Bristol Newspaper	-	-	76	2	-	-	78
Sam Farley's Bristol Newspaper	-	-	-	8	-	-	8
Farley's Bristol Journal	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Oracle or Bristol Weekly Miscellany	-	-	-	-	9	-	9
Bristol Oracle & Country Intelligencer	-	-	-	-	22	-	22
Bristol Oracle & Country Advertiser	-	-	-	-	9	-	9
Oracle Country Advertiser	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Bristol Weekly Intelligencer	-	-	-	-	21	49	70
Felix Farley's Bristol Journal	-	-	-	-	-	82	82
Total	4	71	76	10	65	131	357

1. Sources: Sample of Bristol newspapers detailed in the Bibliography and held at the Central Reference Library, Bristol, and the Codrington Library, Oxford.

Many more titles and issues of eighteenth-century Boston newspapers have survived in that city's archives than is the case for Bristol.²⁸⁶ The Boston sample focuses on five titles that provide the best combined coverage over

²⁸⁶ *Early American Newspapers, Series 1: 1690-1876*, an online collection of 340,000 fully searchable issues from more than 730 titles, published by Readex, in co-operation with the American Antiquarian Society.

the period: *The Boston News-Letter*, *The New England Courant*; *The Boston Gazette*, *The Independent Advertiser*, and *The Boston Evening Post*. Two newspaper samples were initially chosen from the Boston archive: the first (Sample A) mirroring the Bristol total of 357 issues, and the second (Sample B) taking one issue per month from each title where available. The greater availability of surviving copies in the Boston archives means that Sample B contains a total of 799 issues. An analysis of Sample A and Sample B produced very similar results in terms of the numbers and types of advertisements in each issue and the decision was therefore made to use the second, more extensive sample, in the belief that it would give a more comprehensive picture of newspaper advertising in Boston, without affecting the validity of any resulting comparisons.²⁸⁷ Full details are provided in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Boston newspaper sample¹

	1700-1710	1711-1720	1721-1730	1731-1740	1741-1750	1751-1760	Total
The Boston News-Letter	63	118	76	112	61	20	450
The New England Courant	-	-	57	-	-	-	57
The Boston Gazette	-	-	75	7	68	38	188
The Independent Advertiser	-	-	-	-	21	-	21
The Boston Evening Post	-	-	-	-	-	83	83
Total	63	118	208	119	150	141	799

1. Sources: Sample of Boston newspapers listed in the Bibliography and available to access online from Early American Newspapers, Series 1: 1690-1876.

4.4: The Rise of Advertising in Bristol and Boston

Previous studies of newspaper advertisements have provided strong evidence of the growth of advertising in a number of newspapers during the

²⁸⁷ Full details of the Bristol and Boston newspaper samples are included in the bibliography.

eighteenth century, and the same is true of the Bristol and Boston samples.²⁸⁸ From the publication of the first titles in 1704, through to the end of our period of study in 1760, the numbers of advertisements in Bristol and Boston newspapers rose from one or two brief notices per issue, providing a general overview of a handful of goods for sale, to several pages of closely typed notices per issue, listing dozens of different kinds of textiles, and all manner of pottery items, in a wide variety of materials and patterns. Tables 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.4a and 4.4b provide a summary of the frequency of advertisements for a range of consumable goods appearing in the Bristol and Boston newspaper samples between 1700 and 1760. The figures demonstrate considerable growth during the period, both in terms of the numbers of retailers advertising in newspapers and the frequency with which they chose to use this particular medium to promote the sale of their goods.

Table 4.3a: Appearances of goods in Bristol newspaper advertisements¹

	1700-1710	1711-1720	1721-1730	1731-1740	1741-1750	1751-1760	Total
Food & Drink	1	23	25	5	8	70	132
Textiles & Clothing	-	1	15	6	21	196	239
Pottery & Glass	-	-	-	-	1	13	14
Furniture	-	-	1	-	3	5	9
Metal wares & Jewellery	-	-	3	-	7	43	53
Books & Stationery	1	7	5	1	14	18	46
Total No. of Notices	2	31	49	12	54	345	493
Total No. of Issues	3	72	73	14	49	146	357

1. Sources: See Table 4.1.

²⁸⁸ For examples see Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, Ferdinand, Benjamin Collins, and Walker, *Advertising in London Newspapers*.

Table 4.3b: Appearances of goods in Bristol newspaper advertisements in percentages¹

	1700-1710	1711-1720	1721-1730	1731-1740	1741-1750	1751-1760	Total
Food & Drink	50	73	51	42	15	20	27
Textiles & Clothing	-	3	31	50	39	57	48
Pottery & Glass	-	-	-	-	2	4	3
Furniture	-	-	2	-	6	1	2
Metal wares & Jewellery	-	-	6	-	13	12	11
Books & Stationery	50	24	10	8	26	5	9
Total No. of Notices	<1	6	10	2	11	70	
Total No. of Issues	1	20	20	4	14	41	

1. Sources: see Table 4.1.

Table 4.4a: Appearances of goods in Boston newspaper advertisements¹

	1700-1710	1711-1720	1721-1730	1731-1740	1741-1750	1751-1760	Total
Food & Drink	6	58	192	162	235	370	1017
Textiles & Clothing	-	41	96	80	209	389	815
Pottery & Glass	1	6	35	29	61	101	233
Furniture	-	19	21	17	78	107	242
Metal wares & Jewellery	4	15	31	33	77	179	339
Books & Stationery	12	20	80	63	195	160	530
Chandlery	1	39	83	61	123	203	509
Total No. of Notices	24	198	538	445	978	1509	3692
Total No. of Issues	57	112	209	122	143	155	798

1. Sources: see Table 4.2.

Table: 4.4b: Appearances of goods in Boston newspaper advertisements in percentages¹

	1700-1710	1711-1720	1721-1730	1731-1740	1741-1750	1751-1760	Total
Food & Drink	25	29	36	36	24	25	28
Textiles & Clothing	-	21	18	18	21	26	22
Pottery & Glass	4	3	7	7	6	7	6
Furniture	-	10	4	4	8	7	6
Metal wares & Jewellery	17	8	6	7	8	12	9
Books & Stationery	50	10	15	14	20	11	15
Chandlery	4	20	15	14	13	13	14
Total No. of Notices	1	5	15	12	26	41	
Total no. of Issues	7	14	26	15	18	19	

1. Sources: see Table 4.2

These figures demonstrate that, although a rapid growth in advertising occurred on both sides of the Atlantic, copies of Boston newspapers

contained a significantly larger number of notices advertising a range of consumable goods than their Bristol counterparts from the 1740s onwards. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, whereas consumers in Bristol could rely on a regulated and organised array of retail outlets from which to purchase domestic consumables, the retail environment in Boston presented contemporaries with a more haphazard range of options. The higher number of notices in Boston may reflect extra steps taken by retailers to help potential consumers navigate a relatively confusing marketplace for goods in that city. Bristol newspapers were dominated by advertisements for clothing and shoes, averaging 48 per cent of the total. In Boston, it was only in the 1750s that notices for clothing and shoes began to dominate the advertising space of newspapers. Notices advertising food and drink were consistently high across both samples, accounting for almost 30 per cent of the total over the period. With the exception of a dip in the 1730s, which could be attributed to a shortfall in the number of surviving newspaper issues in both samples, each category of goods demonstrates a significant rise in the total number of advertisements as the period progressed. Regardless of fluctuations in the numbers of issues analysed in any one decade, there is clear evidence of a significant rise in the rate of advertising in Bristol and Boston newspapers over the period.

The data presented implies that certain trades relied more heavily on newspaper advertising than others. Clothing and shoes, and food and drink, were businesses in which retailers and wholesalers competed with one another in an increasingly aggressive manner. In such circumstances, newspaper advertising gave sellers the added benefit of access to large

numbers of potential customers. Rapidly changing fashions in clothing, and the rising popularity of relatively new groceries such as tea, coffee and sugar, also necessitated that retailers and wholesalers keep customers continually updated with news of new arrivals in their local marketplaces. As Barry has pointed out, 'the consumer goods advertised were those that depended on fashion or arrived irregularly' as nobody 'needed to advertise everyday or regularly repeated' items.²⁸⁹ Traders whose sales were not as reliant on following the latest trends, and who do not appear to have placed as many notices in their local newspapers, possibly found alternative marketing strategies more useful. Local knowledge and personal recommendation may have proved more effective tools for maintaining the demand for their goods.

This rapid growth in advertising in English and colonial newspapers occurred during this period despite rising costs. The British and colonial governments placed a levy of one shilling on each advertisement from 1712, doubling this to two shillings per notice in 1757.²⁹⁰ These taxes were additional to the charges levied by newspaper publishers themselves on individual notices. Evidence of the costs of advertising appear in the account books of Joshua Wharton, a retired Bristol Mercer. In 1742 he paid the printer Benjamin Hickey 3s 6d for 'putting in the advertisement of my house in Redcliff Street to be Lett the first time.' He then paid 2s 6d per month for its reinsertion.²⁹¹ Publishers themselves were aware of the relatively high costs

²⁸⁹ Jonathan Barry, 'The Press and the Politics of Culture in Bristol, 1660-1775', in J. Black and J. Gregory (eds.), *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain, 1660-1800*, (Manchester, 1991), p. 74.

²⁹⁰ A summary of changes to taxation can be found in J.P. Feather, 'The English Book Trade and the Law', *Publishing History*, 12, 1982, 54.

²⁹¹ BRO 6783, *The Account Book of Joshua Wharton of Brislington, 1733-1742*.

of advertising and sought to provide some incentive for regular advertisers. In 1726, Felix Farley informed potential advertisers that he would reduce the cost of placing notices in his newspaper to '3s Entrance, and 2s 6d continuance, or 10s for 4 Insertions, without anything for Entrance.'²⁹² Retailers and wholesalers would not have continued to advertise their goods in newspapers if the returns from such notices were not felt to be significant in terms of introducing their goods to a much larger audience than would have been otherwise possible. As newspaper circulations rose rapidly during the period, so the potential market for their products increased further. In 1745, Felix Farley was proud to announce that the interest from readers had been so great that he was forced to reprint the 11 May edition of his *Bristol Journal* three times to keep up with demand.²⁹³

4.5: Changes in Newspaper Advertisements

Studying advertising in Bristol and Boston newspapers between 1700 and 1760 provides evidence of a number of changes in the advertisements themselves, particularly regarding the increasing variety of goods being marketed to consumers on both sides of the Atlantic as the century progressed. Retailers began to make reference to having 'all sorts', 'sortment', 'variety', 'all manner', 'great choice', 'all kinds', 'good assortment' and 'various' goods available to consumers, along with 'many other things too tedious to mention', and this tendency increased towards mid-century.

Advertisements appeared very rarely in William Bonny's *Bristol Post Boy*, between 1713 and 1715, and were generally placed there by the publisher himself. In one example he advertised his desire to 'buy old rope

²⁹² This notice about costs appeared in *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 8 Jan. 1726.

²⁹³ *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 11 May 1745.

and paper stuff' and 'sell Bibles, Welsh Prayer Books, paper hangings, music, maps, blank ale licenses, and blank Commissions for private men of war.'²⁹⁴

More detailed advertisements started to appear during the 1720s, placed by specialist retailers such as haberdashers and linen drapers. The following example, placed in 1726, advertised the range of textiles and haberdashery wares available from John Steward, but notices like this were still the exception, when compared to the much briefer and more general notices which predominated:

kept by John Steward from Norwich, (whose Pennyworths are so well known, by his keeping the Fairs here)...he hath now an entire fresh Sortiment of all Sorts of Norwich Goods, at very low Rates; as good black and white Silk Crapes at Nine-pence per Yard; and fine dark Short Mixtures, and Silver Crapes, proportionable to that price...All sorts of Camblets for Hoods and Cloaks, and Ladies Riding Habits; with Variety of Calamancos, strip't and plain. Also, Ready-made Hoods and Cloaks, Quilted Petticoats, and Children's Coats of the Newest Fashion; and all Sorts of Fashionable Stuffs and Half-Silks, Silk-Poplins, Dunjars and Ruffel Damasks: All at very cheap Prices, both Wholesale and Retail.²⁹⁵

Advertisements for consumables in the Boston newspaper sample were also relatively scarce at the beginning of the period, but the lists of goods advertised for sale were often more varied than those appearing in Bristol newspapers during the early part of the eighteenth century. Examples in the four surviving issues of the *Bristol Post Boy* printed between 1704 and 1710 typically listed 'Good wine Vinegar very cheap' or 'Salt at Four Shillings per Bushel' for sale. By 1711, the following was a more typical example, advertising the sale of a wide variety of goods, from textiles to iron pots and kettles, by auction at the house of Stephen North:

²⁹⁴ Plomer, *Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers*, p.41.

²⁹⁵ *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 30 Nov. 1726.

To be Sold...By Publick Vendue...the following Goods in Sundry Lotts, viz. Broad Cloaths, Frizes, Bays, Druggets, Serges, Duroys, Durants, Calaminco's, Stuffs, Buntings, Ready made Cloaths, Printed Linnens... Window Glass, Window Lead, Nails, Time Glasses ...Manchester Wares, Milinary Ware, Earthen Ware, Gloves, Stockings, Hats, Saddles, Whips, a parcel of old Canvas...some Iron Pots and Kettles etc.²⁹⁶

It is interesting to note when the first references to the increasing variety of consumable goods appear in both sets of newspapers. Edward Freeman was the first in the Bristol sample to use the term 'all sorts', to highlight a wide variety, when referring to the range of haberdashery, Manchester Wares and Upholstery for sale in his shop in Wine Street in October 1725. By contrast, the earliest appearance of terms like 'all sorts' in the Boston examples occurred in 1710, when Messrs John George and Nathan Howell advised that they had 'All sorts of Cables and Anchors' for sale.²⁹⁷ This discrepancy is probably a result of the dominance of warehouses in Boston, compared to the prominence of smaller retail shops in Bristol, which would only have had room for a comparatively limited stock of goods. However, the increasing variety of goods in both cities, and the growth of a number of specialist warehouses in Bristol, inevitably led to the average length of advertisements increasing significantly from the 1730s onwards, with exhaustive listings of hundreds of products becoming common by the end of the 1750s in newspapers printed in both cities.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ *The Boston News-Letter*, 7 Jan. 1711.

²⁹⁷ *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 30 Oct. 1725. *The Boston News-Letter*, 12 Mar. 1710.

²⁹⁸ Examples, appearing in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* in 1759, include those placed by Simon Oliver on 6 Jan., Scandrett's Warehouse on 11 Aug., and Harris's Warehouse on 13 Oct. Each listed over a hundred types of textile and ready-made garments.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the consumer marketplaces of Bristol and Boston differed significantly during the first-half of the eighteenth century, and evidence of this can be found in contemporary newspaper advertisements. The Bristol newspaper sample demonstrates the early presence of a number of specialist retail outlets from which consumers could choose to purchase a whole range of goods, including haberdashery, furniture, books and stationery, clocks and watches, and a number of other goods. The owners of such shops, like John Steward mentioned above, placed notices in newspapers offering potential customers increasingly elaborate virtual displays of goods. The Boston marketplace was dominated by imported goods, which were sold from warehouses, the front rooms of importers' houses, and a number of taverns where public auctions of goods were regularly held. The following advertisements, both appearing in *The Boston News-Letter* on 16 May 1715, illustrate this dichotomy in the early Boston marketplace:

Lately arrived from England very good Cordage from an Inch Ratline to Eight Inches, with Spun yarn, and a good Mackerel Saine Sixty Fathom long well fitted, good Gunpowder, Cain Chairs and Couches with a Silk Bed and Cushions, new Fashion Looking Glasses and Chimney Glasses, and Sundry other European Goods, to be sold by Messieurs Hedman and Lewis, at the Warehouse at the lower end of King Street, Boston.

At the House of Benjamin Emmens, to be Sold Mens and Womens Shoes from England, Domestick of all sorts, Jamaica Sole Leather very Good, cheaper than New England Leather.

From the 1740s onwards, notices placed in Bristol newspapers increasingly made use of words and phrases such as 'variety', 'quantity', 'assortment' and 'choice'. Many boasted that they had 'all sorts', 'great

variety', great choice', all kinds', and 'all Manner' of wares in their shops. A good example appears in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 24 July 1756:

Robert Carpenter, Having lately purchas'd a Large Quantity of Enamell'd and Blue and White useful Worcester China-Ware...which will be sold at his Warehouse in the Pithay...better in Quality, and in greater Variety than has hitherto been expos'd to Sale there...

Advertisements often consisted of long lists of goods followed by a statement that an even greater variety, 'too tedious to mention', was available in the seller's shop or warehouse. There were many such examples.²⁹⁹

Such increasing 'variety' resulted in a growing number of retailers and wholesalers in Bristol abandoning their shops for new warehouses, to better display their increasing quantities of stock. However, unlike their Boston counterparts, they maintained their focus on a single category of goods. This is illustrated by the following advertisement, which appeared in the *Bristol Oracle and Country Intelligencer* on 12 January 1745:

...the Original Paper Ware-House...Is still kept by John Stock, Who maketh allsorts of Writing, Printing, and Shop Paper, and sells at the Lowest Prices. Merchants may be supplied with any quantity for Exportation; and as there is no other Maker in this City, consequently can sell on the best Terms.

Other examples include a number of advertisements placed by William Ludlow for the London Tea Warehouse, the appearance of the Scotch and Irish Warehouse, selling all kinds of Scotch and Irish Cloth, the opening of the China Warehouse, and several advertisements highlighting the vast array of

²⁹⁹ Other examples include: *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 5 Feb. 1757 – 'Wm Yarmouth, Cutler and Toyman...selling off his Stock of Cutlery Wares and Toys, consisting of great Variety of both Sorts, At the very lowest Prices.' *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 27 Jul. 1754 – 'John Griffiths, at the Corner of Baldwin Street...Has just come down from London, a great Variety of Foreign China Ware – Likewise, sells all sorts of Liverpool and Stafford Earthen Ware, both Painted, Carved and Plain, of the Neatest...Fashion- Also a great Variety of Ornaments. – As he has by him a very large Stock, is determined to sell...at Prime Cost.'

goods available from Hall's Broad Cloth Warehouse. In 1755, William Stephens, a linen draper announced that '...being determined to quit his shop, and in future to carry on his Trade in a Warehouse...will sell his present Stock in Trade...'³⁰⁰

Merchants continued to dominate the Boston marketplace for much of the period, selling their vast array of imported goods from warehouses lining the waterfront. This continued lack of specialisation can be seen in the notices placed in newspapers: while lists of goods became longer, wholesalers and retailers in Boston were slower than their Bristol counterparts to concentrate on particular categories of goods in their advertisements. However, there are some indications of increasing specialisation from the 1730s onwards in Boston, as more and more merchants and shopkeepers began to concentrate on advertising particular types of commodities. In 1737, Nathaniel Cunningham announced the arrival at his warehouse of twenty-six different types of textiles, and by 1759, Gilbert Deblois was able to boast: 'A large Assortment of Goods, suitable for the season', going on to list well over a hundred varieties of textiles and millenary and haberdashery wares for sale at his warehouse.³⁰¹

By the middle of the eighteenth century Valeri notes that in Boston, 'Whole neighbourhoods evolved into distinct wholesale and retail districts.' and 'half of the town's shops (chiefly those offering so-called wet goods that is, imported groceries, wine, liquor, and tobacco) were located on or near the

³⁰⁰ Examples like these appeared in the *Bristol Weekly Miscellany*, 21 Mar. 1752; *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*, 18 Feb. 1758; *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*, 11 Jan. 1755. William Stephens placed his notice in the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 21 Jun. 1755.

³⁰¹ *The Boston Gazette*, 14 Feb. 1737 and *The Boston Evening Post*, 3 Dec. 1759.

Long Wharf.³⁰² One example of a more specialised retailer is Henry Barnes, who advertised in 1751 that he had the following selection of earthenware available for Boston consumers to choose from his shop at the lower end of King Street:

A Large assortment of...Earthen Ware, either by the Hogshead or opened, consisting of...blew and white Dutch Stone Ware of all Sorts, Delph and Stone Ware, consisting of Plates, Bowles, Dishes, Muggs ...Coffee & Tea Dishes, Butter Plates, brown stone Muggs, Dishes & Patty Pans, Pickle Potts, 3 Gall Juggs, with Sundry other Articles of the same Kind...³⁰³

Newspaper advertisements therefore provide evidence of the relatively slow movement towards specialisation among retailers in Boston compared to those in Bristol, and the individual examples highlighted above reflect the rapidly changing urban retail environments in both cities during this period. Bearing in mind the similarities in the availability, spread and costs of newspapers in both places, the markedly higher number of notices placed in Boston newspapers is also significant. It indicates the increased importance of newspaper advertising as a method of gaining business in a relatively unstructured colonial marketplace. It also enables us to gain insight into the structure of the marketplaces as seen through the eyes of suppliers. Advertisements in both cities were dominated by the marketing of fashionable goods, reflecting the fierce competition surrounding such discretionary purchases. As competition among advertisers in both cities increased, so

³⁰² Valeri, *Heavenly Merchandize*, p.189.

³⁰³ *The Boston Gazette*, 9 Jul. 1751. Also, whereas the earliest advertisements allowed customers to choose between 'silk and worsted stockings', by 1750 they were being offered the following selection: 'Mens Womens & Childrens best 4 threaded, ribb'd and plain, pointed, chiseled and pink Worsted Hose...Mens and Womens Cotton and Thread Hose', *The Boston Gazette*, 13 Nov. 1750.

extra effort was required in virtual marketing. In Bristol, this meant increasing emphasis on specialisation, while in Boston retailers were keen to demonstrate the wide variety of goods they had in stock. Sections 4.6 to 4.10 demonstrate the additional methods used by retailers in both cities to appeal to potential customers.

4.6: Descriptive Adjectives

In her research on eighteenth-century booksellers, Ferdinand identified six categories of consumers that those retailers appealed to during this period:

- 1) To those who would not want to miss an important cultural trend
- 2) To those who were looking for a bargain,
- 3) To those who were interested in quality or authenticity,
- 4) To those who wanted to be up to date,
- 5) To those who could be defined by age, sex or station,
- 6) To those who wanted to be part of the book.³⁰⁴

Cox and Dannehl's research on the increasing use of a range of descriptive adjectives by retailers paired the list of 'advertising buzzwords' appearing in eighteenth-century newspapers with the messages they were attempting to convey, such as 'availability, accessibility, care and speed, choice, completeness, continuity, fashionableness, quality etc.'³⁰⁵

An analysis of the types of language used by those placing advertisements in Bristol and Boston newspapers between 1700 and 1760 reveals the virtual landscapes within which consumers were able to choose a broad range of items to furnish their tables and their homes. The use of persuasive adjectives highlights several ways in which retail and wholesale

³⁰⁴ C. Y. Ferdinand, 'Constructing the Framework of Desire: How Newspapers Sold Books in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in Raymond, *News, Newspapers, and Society*, p. 168.

³⁰⁵ Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p. 90.

haberdashers, mercers, cabinet makers, grocers, goldsmiths and others, began to appeal more directly to particular groups of consumers, using a whole series of persuasive adjectives. Further comparisons with purchases in household accounts, and objects left in probate inventories, enables an assessment of the importance of such advertisements in shaping the culture of consumption in both cities.

4.7. Fashion and Novelty

Definitions of 'fashion' appearing in Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* include 'custom operating upon dress, or any domestick ornaments', and 'manner imitated from another', and definitions of 'novelty' include 'fresh', 'lately produced', and 'of the present time'.³⁰⁶ References to new and fashionable goods became plentiful in both the Bristol and Boston newspaper samples in the period leading up to 1760. Fashion was highlighted by notifying potential customers that goods were 'just arrived' or 'just imported', especially from London, 'fashionable', 'new fashion', 'newest fashioned', and of the 'genteelest fashion'. References were also made to the arrival of 'Compleat Table Services and Tea Setts', and products made 'in imitation of Foreign China', both of which were perceived as being the height of fashion. Novelty was also highlighted by retailers who pronounced their goods to be 'fresh', 'entirely new', 'curious', of the 'newest patterns', of the 'latest Principle' and 'of this year's Printing'.

In Boston, the first reference to novelty and fashion appeared in a notice placed by Stephen Lubbe in 1713, in which he informed interested parties that he was selling 'Sundry sorts of Newest fashion Silk Satinets'. In

³⁰⁶ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, (London, 1755), pp. 775-776, and p. 1359.

1715, Hedman and Lewis informed Bostonians that they had ‘new Fashion Looking Glasses and Chimney Glasses’ for sale.³⁰⁷ There are many further examples, with wholesalers and retailers in Boston informing customers that they had ‘new Fashion Looking Glasses and Chimney Glasses’, ‘Pewter Dishes and Plates of the best Hard Mettal and Newest Fashion’, ‘A Choice Parcel of New Fashion Silks’ and ‘stays and Children’s Coats after the Newest Fashion.’³⁰⁸

References to new and fashionable goods in the Bristol sample began to appear a decade later than in the Boston sample. The first reference to ‘new’ goods in Bristol appeared in *Farley’s Bristol Newspaper* in 1725, when potential customers were advised of the sale of ‘All manner of Goldsmith’s Wares, entirely New...’³⁰⁹ The first reference to fashion in Bristol appeared in *Farley’s Bristol Newspaper* in 1727, in a notice posted for The Norwich Warehouse, where items for sale included ‘Fashionable Stuffs’ and ‘children’s Coats of the newest Fashion.’³¹⁰ From the 1740s onwards, increasing emphasis was placed on both terms in Bristol newspapers notices, as retailers and wholesalers frequently boasted that their goods were ‘fashionable’, the ‘newest fashioned’, and of ‘the genteelest fashion’, in an effort to attract the growing number of consumers determined to keep pace with current trends. Cox and Harford, Silk Mercers, for example, advertised in the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 20 September 1755 that they ‘Have just come from the Looms a Fresh Assortment of fashionable Silks and Half-Silk

³⁰⁷ *The Boston News-Letter*, 15 Mar. 1713, *The Boston News-Letter*, 16 May 1715.

³⁰⁸ *The Boston Gazette*, 2 May 1726, *The Boston Gazette*, 27 Jun. 1726, *The Boston Gazette*, 14 Nov. 1726 and *The Boston Gazette*, 7 Aug. 1727.

³⁰⁹ *Farley’s Bristol Newspaper*, 11 Dec. 1725.

³¹⁰ *Farley’s Bristol Newspaper*, 21 Jan. 1727.

Goods, with Variety of sugar'd Silks and Velvets for Gentlemen's wear, and Gold and Silver Lace of the newest Patterns...'

The increasing emphasis placed by advertisers on novelty during this period, was illustrated by the frequent inclusion of words such as 'fresh' and 'curious' in newspaper advertisements in Bristol and Boston and claims that the goods on offer were 'entirely new', 'lately purchased', of 'the newest Patterns' and made according to 'the latest Principles'. An early example appeared in the *Boston Gazette* in 1729, listing 'sundry curious Prints and Pictures'.³¹¹ In a good illustration from the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 28 January 1758, Matthew Morgan advertised that he 'Makes Horizontal Watches...from the Instructions of one of the best and most ingenious Watchmen in London...on the latest Principles of Mechanicks.' The increasing emphasis on novelty can also be seen in the following advertisement from the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 18 February 1758: 'Samuel Woodford, Has just open'd Shop in High Street...N.B. Millenary Goods made after the Newest and Neatest Fashions. Curious Milliners may be supplied with Patterns of the newest Tastes.'

Further illustration of the increasing importance of fashion to consumers can be seen in the growing recognition towards the end of the period of the limited appeal of items that were not of the latest manufacture, even in provincial England and the colonies. Hester Roe placed a notice in the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 22 May 1756, listing a wide range of mercery and linen drapery goods for sale, before adding:

The following Articles will be sold at, or under Prime Cost, she being determined to leave off dealing further in...viz. A good Assortment of

³¹¹ *The Boston Gazette*, 13 Oct. 1729.

Mens and Womens Silk, Thread, and Worsted Stockings; Mens Waisters; Breeches Pieces, in Silk and Worsted...The remainder of the old Stock of Fancy Silks, Mechlenburghs, and Minionet Lace and Lappets will be sold consistently under Prime Cost.

Fluctuations in supply, often caused by the distance items had to be shipped, led to irregularities in the arrival of imports. The Boston newspaper sample contains many references to the imminent arrival of summer and winter goods into the port, emphasising the importance of timing when it came to supplying consumers with items that would be considered fashionable. Albert Dennie, for example, was keen to inform potential customers that he had ‘a great Variety of Winter Goods’ arriving in October and ‘Summer Goods’ the following May.³¹² This emphasis on seasonal goods is lacking in the Bristol sample, highlighting the restrictions of shipping timetables, and demonstrating the potential impact of distance in the areas of ‘fashion’ and ‘novelty’.

4.8: The Origins of Goods

Where the origins of goods were specified in newspaper notices, they provide a useful guide to the importance of particular centres of manufacture and taste. In both Bristol and Boston, an emphasis on fashion often went hand-in-hand with announcements concerning the arrival of goods from London, the centre of the fashionable Atlantic world. Here again there is evidence of the impact of distance in the newspaper samples. Boston newspaper advertisements placed an earlier emphasis on the origins of their goods than those appearing in Bristol.³¹³ In Boston newspapers, the first

³¹² *The Boston Gazette*, 26 Jul. 1743.

³¹³ See Table A4.5 in Appendix 1 for the origins of goods arriving in Boston identified from newspaper advertisements

reference to London appeared in 1707, when James Batterson, a Clock Maker 'lately arrived in Boston from London' placed a notice outlining the kinds of services he had to offer. This was not unusual, as a number of English artisans and shopkeepers settled in the colonies during this period. However, the first notice highlighting goods arriving from the mother country can be seen in 1711, where a range of gloves had 'lately come from England'.³¹⁴ The first specific mention of goods from London appeared a year later in the same newspaper, placed there by the merchant, Andrew Fanneuil, who had a wide variety of goods for sale 'Newly arrived from London.'³¹⁵

James Atkinson and Albert Dennie began advertising in Boston newspapers in the 1740s. Atkinson was a 'Watchmaker...from the North-side of Royal Exchange in London' who reassured potential customers that he made and repaired clocks and watches '...in all Respects compleat and as reasonable as in London'. Dennie likewise was quick to make his customers aware that he was newly arrived from London, and that 'he will have the first Spring Ship from London...Imports immediately from the Market, and has nothing but the Cream of Goods the City of London affords...' He lists some items before concluding that he will sell '...all sorts of goods that are imported or ever was imported from any part of Great Britain, by Wholesale or Retail...at and near the Sterling Price as they actually cost in London.'³¹⁶

³¹⁴ *The Boston News-Letter*, 13 Oct. 1707. *The Boston News-Letter*, 10 Sept. 1711.

³¹⁵ *The Boston News-Letter*, 16 Mar. 1712.

³¹⁶ Atkinson in *The Boston Gazette*, 15 Jan. 1745. Dennie in *The Boston Gazette*, 30 Nov. 1742. There are many similar examples, including in *The Boston Gazette*, 17 May 1743.

The first reference to London in the Bristol newspaper sample appeared on the 12 August 1727. Ambrose Edwards, a cloth worker, advertised that:

...you may have your Hangings of Rooms, Bed or Window Curtains, Scower'd or Clean'd, likewise Silks, Scower'd and Dy'd; and all Sorts of Cloth knapp'd and dress'd, and all Spots and Stains taken out of Men and Womens Wearing Apparel; All as well performed as in London.³¹⁷

The first references to goods from London appear at the beginning of the same year in advertisements placed in *Farley's Bristol Newspaper* by the bookseller, John Oswald and the mercer, Samuel Edwards. They were both visiting from London and were advertising their temporary presence at the local fairs, which was a common practice in the provinces in the early eighteenth century.³¹⁸

However, the first advertisement announcing the sale of London goods by a permanent resident of Bristol did not appear until 1744. It was placed by The London Tea Warehouse in Mary-Port Street in Bristol, selling 'Fine Teas, Fresh...Coffee, the best...Chocolate...as cheap as in London.' The emphasis was placed not on fashion in this instance, but cost.³¹⁹ An increasing number of examples appear as we move towards 1760, including the following:

Harris, At his Warehouse...has just imported from London A Curious Sortment, and great Variety of the most fashionable Goods in the Warehouse and Millinary Way.... the newest Muffs...a lot of the newest Chinese fans...The Millenary Branch will be carried on and made up by the best of Hands from London...³²⁰

³¹⁷ *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 12 Aug. 1727.

³¹⁸ *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 21 Jan. 1727.

³¹⁹ *The Bristol Oracle and Country Intelligencer*, 18 Aug. 1744.

³²⁰ *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 13 Oct. 1759.

Whilst fashionable goods from London were highly desired by consumers in Bristol and Boston, the middle classes in Bristol could avail themselves of such goods from a variety of sources throughout the year, including a range of specialist shops in Bristol and neighbouring Bath, as well as from London-based retailers who sold their stock at local fairs and markets. However, Boston customers who wished to purchase London fashions could only acquire them directly from the merchants who shipped them from England two or three times a year. This discrepancy led to the employment of more overt marketing techniques, such as the need to proclaim the arrival of such shipments into the consumer marketplace, in order to keep potential customers fully informed.

Besides references to London, it is also important to assess demand for goods from other areas of England. While London represented fashion and novelty, Manchester, Norwich and Birmingham were recognised as centres of manufacture. Manchester was renowned for producing cottons and linen, Norwich for fancy woollens, and Birmingham for metal goods and toys. Many advertisers in Boston were keen to emphasise that their goods were also lately imported from the port cities of Liverpool, Bristol and Glasgow. Shipments from specialised centres of manufacture could be relied upon to contain goods that were fresh, new, and of the best quality. Examples of this can be seen from as early as 1725 when advertisements were placed in *The Boston Gazette* for 'all Sorts of Womens Shoes...Just Imported from London', 'Just Imported from Leverpoole, several Sorts of Earthenware, Pipes, and Woolens' and 'Several Sorts of Broad and Narrow Bed Tickens, Linnen

Cloth...chequered Linnen and Holland...Fine Turtans, Canteloons, Felt Hats, etc, Lately imported from Glasgow.³²¹

In the Bristol sample, the first specific reference to towns other than London also appeared in 1725 in a notice placed by John Steward, proprietor of the Norwich Warehouse. He reassured customers that he had an 'entire fresh sortment of all sorts of Norwich goods', and that 'Any Person that wants a Quantity, may buy as cheap of him as at Norwich, allowing for Carriage...'³²² In *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* published on 27 July 1754, Joseph Howard advertised that, not only was he specialising in Manchester Goods, but that he himself came from that city and could therefore arrange the best deals for his customers.

It appeared to be even more advantageous if sellers in the Boston marketplace could also demonstrate their authentic English or Scottish roots, as further assurance that their goods would reflect the quality and tastes of the most fashionable residents of their country of birth. On 30 May 1726, the following notice was placed in *The Boston Gazette*, illustrating this point: 'Lately arrived here James Maxwell from Glasgow, with all Sorts of Scotch Goods, to be Sold at the Warehouse...upon Mr Belcher's Wharffe.'³²³

As the period progressed, newspaper advertisements in Boston also provide indications of a growing self-sufficiency in the colonial marketplace.

³²¹ *The Boston Gazette*, 20 Sept. 1725, *The Boston Gazette*, 18 Oct. 1725, *The Boston Gazette*, 5 Jun. 1727.

³²² *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 13 Nov. 1725. The promotion of Norwich as a source for high quality woolen goods is interesting in view of the proximity of the Cotswold and West Country woolen industries.

³²³ This is an early example, but there are many similar advertisements appearing in later issues of Boston newspapers.

Rather than being content to continue importing the vast majority of their goods from Britain, an increasing number of notices placed in Boston newspapers in the 1750s advertised the skills and wares of colonial suppliers. *The Boston Gazette* notified consumers that Earthenware was 'made and sold by David Simons at New Boston', that 'Matthew Davis, Staymaker, Makes and mends womens and childrens Stays in the neatest Manner...on the South side of the Market House' and that 'double, middle and single refin'd Loaf Suger, brown suger and Molasses' was made and sold by John Stuthartt in Blackhorse Lane.³²⁴ However, although some changes are apparent in Boston towards the end of the period, London and other English centres of manufacture continued to dominate the virtual consumer landscape as symbols of quality and fashion.

4.9: The Prices of Goods

Evidence from newspaper notices about the prices of goods, and particularly the appearance of 'fixed pricing', has been seen as an important indicator of the beginnings of modern retailing practices. As Cox and Dannehl highlighted in their research on the sales of Hollow Ware, price was not emphasised in early advertisements 'since fixed prices were only slowly gaining acceptance in the course of the eighteenth century.'³²⁵ A lack of standardisation initially in the manufacture of many items, together with inconsistencies in the supply of raw materials, would have led to fluctuations in production costs, fluctuations in product availability, and a need to maintain

³²⁴ All these examples appear in *The Boston Gazette*, 16 Jul. 1751.

³²⁵ Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p. 72. A definition of Hollow Wares as bowls or other hollow vessels made of wood, earthenware or metal can be found in Stuart A. Raymond, *Words from Wills and other Probate Records, 1500-1800*, (Lancashire, 2004), p. 56.

fluid pricing structures in order to ensure a profit on such items.

Advertisers on both sides of the Atlantic therefore began the period by insisting their goods were to be sold at ‘reasonable rates’ or ‘all at very cheap Prices’ without giving details of fixed prices.³²⁶ Retailers were keen to sell their products at ‘low rates’, ‘common prices’, ‘cheaper than ever’, on the ‘best terms’, ‘at or under prime cost’, ‘as cheap as in London’, ‘as cheap as any Warehouse in London or Bristol’, ‘the Cheapest in England’, and ‘as cheap as the maker’.

In Boston the first mention of specific prices for commodities appeared in *The Boston News-Letter* in 1714: ‘Good Capers at 2s 3d per Pound...Ground Ginger at 5d per Pound, and 35 s per hundred.’ While fixed prices for food and drink items appeared fairly frequently in Boston newspapers, the first for items other than grocery and patent medicines didn’t occur until 1722, when Arthur Savage advised that he had ‘Nails by the Cask, of all sorts from 20d downwards. In 1726, Mr John Williams was selling ‘Curling Pipes for Barbers...at 4s a Gross.’³²⁷ While it became common for sellers of textiles to list the different lengths of cloth they had for sale from the 1720s onwards, the first evidence of fixed prices didn’t appear until 1742, when Albert Dennie advertised that he had ‘the greatest variety of most curious Pictures, pick & chuse for 6d & 12d a Piece.’ and in 1743 he had:

³²⁶ One Bristol example comes from John Steward of the Norwich Warehouse, appearing in *Farley’s Bristol Newspaper*, 13 Nov. 1725. A comparable Boston example appears in *The Boston News-Letter* on 14 Aug. 1704.

³²⁷ *The Boston News-Letter*, 16 Aug. 1714. *The Boston News-Letter*, 12 Nov. 1722. *The Boston News-Letter*, 16 Apr. 1726.

fine Mohair newest Fashion Buttons at 12d per Doz, Buckrums finest sort at 3s per Yard; India Chints at 8s per Yard, Broad Cloths Superfine ... from 28 to 48s per Yard; Women's Fans at 2s a piece... and many other articles with a fixed price.³²⁸

In Bristol, the first evidence of fixed pricing appeared in a notice placed in *Sam Farley's Bristol Newspaper* in 1734, where Robert Roe listed a whole range of mercery and linen drapery goods, before reminding potential consumers that: 'N.B. The Prices are fix'd as usual, without Abatement.'³²⁹ Later in the period, the listing of prices appeared to be an increasingly important factor when it came to advertising goods for sale in both cities, especially as competition increased, with retailers and wholesalers quick to emphasise the value of their products in comparison with their competitors. Advertisements highlighted the 'reasonable Rates', 'low Rates', and 'very cheap Prices' sellers were willing to offer their goods at, often ending with a guarantee that 'the lowest Prices will be Fix'd'. On 8 January 1757, Mr Bourne, of Wells, advertised in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* that:

...As the lowest Price is fixed on every Article, whatever is delivered that is not charged as low as is sold in Bristol, or any other Part of the West of England, shall be allowed.

Greater emphasis was placed on advertising the prices of goods in Boston from earlier in the period, possibly with the intention of creating competitive advantage in a relatively unstructured marketplace. Without the element of specialisation apparent in the Bristol marketplace, Boston wholesalers struggled to find ways to make their advertisements stand out. In 1726 two notices appeared in the same issue of *The Boston Gazette*, selling

³²⁸ *The Boston News-Letter*, 14 Oct. 1742. *The Boston Gazette*, 21 Jun. 1743.

³²⁹ *Sam Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 30 Mar. 1734.

the same product and demonstrating this use of competitive pricing. John and Joseph Gooch had for sale:

All Sorts of Loaf Sugar, viz. single refined, double etc...at their Shop in Cornhill Street near the Exchange in Boston...either by Wholesale or Retail, as cheap as can be bought in Boston...

The following notice appeared directly underneath:

To be Sold at Mr James Smiths Sugar Refining House...all Sorts of Loaf Sugar, 1d a pound cheaper than any in Boston, for the Goodness & further Encouragement...³³⁰

A further illustration of the importance of pricing was the increasing mention of discounts for those who bought a reasonable quantity of a particular product. An example of this encouragement of bulk buying appeared in the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 20 September 1755:

At the Bristol Saddle Manufactory...Gentlemen, Ladies, Merchants and Others, may constantly be supply'd with all Sorts of Saddles, and Saddlery Wares, best in Quality and Cheapest in England...N.B. An Allowance of 2 & half per Cent on 5l worth of Goods, and 5 per Cent on 10l worth, and upwards.

Previous research undertaken by Cox, and Stobart, maintained that fixed pricing appeared earlier in advertisements for patent medicines, spreading into the grocery and confectionary trades, often due to aggressive competition from London-based retailers.³³¹ Cox and Dannehl, in their work on the advertising of hollow wares, found that fixed pricing was slow to develop in areas like haberdashery and linen drapery because of the strong

³³⁰ *The Boston News-Letter*, 12 Mar. 1716, *The Boston News-Letter*, 15 Oct. 1716. Both of the advertisements regarding sugar appeared in *The Boston Gazette*, 18 Apr. 1726.

³³¹ Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*; Stobart, *Sugar and Spice*.

tradition of haggling, and that it remained the norm to avoid mentioning prices in eighteenth-century newspaper advertisements.³³²

The larger numbers of advertisements in Boston newspapers, together with the appearance of fixed prices from 1714 onwards, concurs with Cox's conclusion that advertising best served those who needed to 'sell across a large area', or 'those starting up in an expanding or newly developing trade.'³³³ Stobart and Hann identified the use of fixed prices as one of three defining characteristics of modern retailing. They found that it was a widespread practice in their study of early eighteenth-century Lancashire and Cheshire.³³⁴ Analysis of the references to pricing that appear in the Bristol and Boston newspaper samples provides evidence of increasing competition in the consumer marketplaces of both cities, and also highlights the unstructured nature of the marketplace in Boston. The earlier appearance of fixed pricing for particular categories of goods in Boston would have given traders there a means by which to create some distance between themselves and their competitors in a relatively unregulated marketplace.

4.10: Quality and Customer Service

As Freidberg has noted, 'advertising sold both goods and reassurance', and as the marketplace for goods expanded during the period in Bristol and Boston, a divergence appeared between those businessmen and women who

³³² Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p. 72; Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, p.103. For example, *The Norwich Gazette* has fixed prices for tea and coffee from 1707 onwards (perhaps precipitated by direct competition from London). Further examples can be found in Stobart and Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?', 175-6.

³³³ Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, p. 109.

³³⁴ Stobart and Hann, 'Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?', 171.

emphasised low prices and those who highlighted quality.³³⁵ Concerning quality, many sought to assure customers that they were buying goods that were ‘better in quality’, ‘more or less perfect’, ‘Goods as good as any in England’, ‘warranted goods’, ‘of the best materials’, ‘Inferior to none in England’, and made by the ‘best hands from London’. Consumers could also rely on ‘their Favours being punctually complied with’, by suppliers who had ‘carried on trade for many Years’ and would perform their services with the ‘greatest care and punctuality’.

Wholesalers and retailers in Boston made relatively early attempts to emphasise the superiority of their goods in order to set themselves apart from their competitors in a more fluid consumer marketplace, by emphasising the superiority of their goods. In 1716 Mr Ambrose Vincent notified potential customers that he had for ‘Publick Sale at the Crown Coffee House...’ Twenty Eight Pipes of very good Madera Wine’; in 1725 Captain Lithered had ‘Just imported from London, Extraordinary Good Bohea Tea, To be Sold at a reasonable rate, by the Quantity or otherwise’.³³⁶ In 1714, a notice appeared in the Boston sample, highlighting the importance of reputation: ‘the following Goods, lately arrived, all of the best make from John Crowley Esq;...Heir and Successor for his late Father Sir Ambrose Crowley.’ The height of good

³³⁵ Susanna Freidberg, *Fresh: A Perishable History*, (London, 2009), p. 15.

³³⁶ *The Boston News-Letter*, 21 May 1716, *The Boston Gazette*, 4 Oct. 1725. Further examples came from James Lubbock, who informed potential customers that he ‘sells the best of Chocolate by Wholesale and Retail, at Reasonable Rates: Also Cocoa-Nuts taken in to clean and grind with Expedition at the lowest Rates...’, appearing in *The Boston Gazette*, 1 Nov. 1725; and the publisher of the same newspaper announced that he had ‘A Parcel of super fine Burnt China Plates, Cups & other Furniture for a Tea Table; as also a very handsome Japann’d Tea Table lately imported from London.’ Further examples appear in the issue printed on 31 Jan. 1726.

service was reached in 1733 when Thomas Hancock, selling 'Good Bohea Tea', reminded customers that 'If it don't suit the Ladies Taste, they may Return the Tea and receive their Money again.'³³⁷

Many retailers and wholesalers in Bristol, who wished to attract wealthier consumers, were increasingly also keen to demonstrate the superior quality of the goods they had to offer, boasting that they were 'neatly finished', 'True', 'Genuine' and 'of the best Materials'. In *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 13 January 1753, David Butler, a Shoemaker, went even further in stressing the quality of his wares, advising customers that he:

...designs to make his Ready made Goods unto the same end as if bespoke; and Ladies may depend on...all Sorts of Gold and Silver trimm'd and braided work, perform'd as neat as in London. – Take note, His are no Warehouse Goods, but will be warranted Goods, and well made, of the best Materials – Merchants for Exporters and Country Shopkeepers, may depend on being served as cheap as any Warehouse in London or Bristol.

By the 1740s, good service was well-established as an important feature of retailing in Bristol, as can be seen in an example from Job Jenkins, where he reassured readers that '...all Persons may be accommodated after the best Manner'.³³⁸ On 21 January 1744, Mr Perry, having taken over the Cloth Warehouse from the retiring Mr Millet, finished with the promise that '...Gentlemen and Ladies may depend on their Favours being punctually complied with by their very humble Servant...' On 18 August 1744, the proprietors of the London Tea Warehouse pointed out that 'Attendance is...given from Seven in the Morning 'till Seven in the Evening, where great

³³⁷ *The Boston News-Letter*, 11 Jan. 1713, *The Boston News-Letter*, 10 May 1714, *The Boston News-Letter*, 13 Dec. 1733.

³³⁸ *The Bristol Oracle and Country Intelligencer*, 22 Jan. 1743 and 21 Jan. 1744.

care will be taken in fulfilling of Orders...’, and Sarah Bonner, Stay-Maker, advertised in the *Oracle Country Advertiser* on 20 April 1746 that she had ‘a complete Method in fitting disproportioned Bodies...’

Although some contemporary commentators, like Malachy Postlethwayt, and historians like Walsh, have found evidence that advertisements were thought of as vulgar and therefore to be avoided by those selling to elite members of society,³³⁹ Stobart and Hann have found that such concerns were more of a problem in London than the provinces, and that referring to advertisements as ‘notices’ ‘avoided the impression of vulgar self-promotion’.³⁴⁰ If advertisements were being viewed negatively by wealthier consumers in Bristol or Boston they wouldn’t have been used by so many retailers and wholesalers as a means to attract the patronage of more sophisticated consumers, with their emphases on reputation and high levels of service.

From the 1740s onwards, a growing number of advertisements also began to appear in Bristol and Boston newspapers demonstrating the growing rivalry among retailers and wholesalers, and the increasing effort needed to attract potential customers. Traders in Boston increasingly used advertisements to attack their competitors by questioning the quality of their goods. Jonathan Williams felt compelled to respond to a competitor’s criticism

³³⁹ Malachy Postlethwayt, *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*, (London, 1751). The fact that he insists that advertising no longer carries any stigma, implies that it did previously. Claire Walsh, ‘The Advertising and Marketing of Consumer Goods in Eighteenth-Century London’, in C. Wischermann and E. Shore (eds.), *Advertising and the European City: Historical Perspectives* (Aldershot, 2000), pp.79-95.

³⁴⁰ Stobart and Hann, ‘Retailing Revolution in the Eighteenth Century?’, p. 175.

of the wines he sold by reiterating that although he sold them at the 'Cheapest Rate' they were:

reckon'd to be some of the best wines of the sort in Town – And, notwithstanding the moan...of John Hancock, in his late Advertisement, I doubt not will yet be esteem'd and preferr'd by all Gentlemen of Taste in Town and Country.³⁴¹

Advertisers in Boston also lost no time in pressing their competitive advantage following an outbreak of small pox in the city. In 1752, several advertisements appeared which contained lists of goods for sale and the following reassurances for potential customers: 'all which Goods were remov'd from Boston before the spreading of the Small Pox, and can be warranted free from Infection', 'N.B. No Small Pox has been in the House, so that the said Articles may be depended upon to be clear of Infection'.³⁴²

In Bristol, growing competition led to retailers placing notices in newspapers that incorporated the whole range of persuasive language, emphasising not only the great variety and high quality of their goods, but also the very personal level of service they could offer. In 1743, Benjamin Hickey advertised that he had 'A great Quantity of excellent large old superfine Dutch Papers, imported, by himself, at the best Hand...ready to make the same into Merchants Ledgers, Journals or any other Accompt Books, the Binding and Ruling of which will be done in the neatest Manner, inferior to none in Great

³⁴¹ *The Boston Gazette*, 23 Jan. 1750.

³⁴² *The Boston Evening Post*, 20 Jul. 1752, *The Boston Gazette*, 18 Aug. 1752, and in *The Boston Evening Post*, 25 Sept. 1752: 'As the above Goods have been landed but a few days, they may claim the Preference of those purchasers who may be apprehensive of the Small Pox Infection from Goods that have been longer in Town.'

Britain....' He added, '...the Publick may be assured of having their Orders executed with the utmost Expedition.'³⁴³

In conjunction with high levels of service, retailers and wholesalers in Bristol were also keen to highlight any dealings they had with members of the gentry in an effort to attract the custom of the urban elite. One of many illustrations appeared in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* on 3 February 1759: 'Randal Walker, Staymaker...having for many years had his experience in some of the most reputable Shops in London. He will wait on Ladies either in the City or Country on the shortest Notice.' Such inclusions, together with emphases on quality, point to the perceived importance of emulation as a motivation for increased consumption among retailers, wholesalers and consumers.

Although newspaper advertisements provide evidence of increasing competition between retailers and wholesalers in both Bristol and Boston, sellers on both sides of the Atlantic appear to have responded differently to the challenges this presented. Competition led to increasing specialisation in Bristol as retailers sought to demonstrate expertise and specific knowledge in a relatively sophisticated consumer marketplace. Bostonian retailers and wholesalers appear to have felt a greater need to use persuasive rhetoric as a means of gaining an earlier advantage over their competitors in what was a more unregulated consumer marketplace.

The results of an analysis of the increasing use of persuasive language in advertisements in Bristol and Boston ties in with research carried out by Stobart, Hann and Morgan, and Mui and Mui, among others, focusing on the

³⁴³ *The Bristol Oracle and Country Intelligencer*, 15 Mar. 1743.

‘spaces of consumption’ produced by retailers in eighteenth-century England.³⁴⁴ They concluded that retailers in a number of English towns began to pay increasing attention to improving the shopping experience for their customers during this period, particularly focusing on attracting passers-by with elaborate window displays. Newspaper advertisements also became increasingly elaborate over time, creating a virtual consumer landscape to stand alongside the physical space of the shop. The relative lack of specialised retail outlets in Boston for much of the period, explains the comparatively early appearance of a range of descriptive adjectives in newspaper notices in that city. They reflect the increased necessity of creating the virtual window displays that were generally lacking in the physical environment.

4.11: Regular Advertisers in the Bristol Newspapers

While some retailers and wholesalers made only infrequent appearances in newspaper advertisements in Bristol and Boston, others advertised on a regular basis in the cities newspapers, and closer analysis of a carefully chosen sample reinforces many of the trends observed above, while highlighting the benefits of sustained marketing. Abram & Bayly, who sold clothes and hosiery, were keen to remind their customers in the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 22 October 1757 that they had ‘carried on Trade for many years.’ Repeated advertising over a period of time also served to emphasise longevity and a corresponding degree of success in a particular trade, giving consumers added reassurance concerning any future purchases. Thomas Bush, a silk mercer, placed 18 advertisements in a variety of Bristol

³⁴⁴ Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*; Mui and Mui, *Shops and Shop keeping*; Walsh, ‘Shop Design and the Display of Goods’.

newspaper titles between 1752 and 1755, and Benjamin Hickey, a Bristol stationer, advertised in nine newspaper issues between 1743 and 1751. Hulme's Chocolate Warehouse promoted its products 22 times in Bristol newspapers between 1750 and 1755; and Piddings Cutlery and Toy Shop placed eight advertisements in Bristol newspapers between 1753 and 1755.

The Roe family were the most prolific advertisers in the Bristol newspaper sample. They ran a haberdashery business in the city and placed a total of 21 notices over a period of around 20 years, beginning with simple listings of goods for sale in the 1730s to examples that made full use of a wide range of persuasive rhetoric by the 1750s. Robert Roe and Company posted their first entry in *Sam Farley's Bristol Newspaper* on 30 March 1734. It illustrated the wide range of mercery and linen drapery wares they had on offer, listing over 50 different types of textiles for sale. While this notice was much more detailed than the majority appearing at that time, it did not contain any examples of the use of persuasive language to attract potential customers. Just before his death in 1754, Robert Roe placed the following advertisement in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, demonstrating developments in the art of persuasion:

Robert Roe...is just come from London with a large and curious Sortment of Brocades, Tobins, of the newest and genteelest Fashions ...great choice of Chintz Patterns...of this year's Printing, done in the most elegant style...All Silks in the Fancy Ware that have not been made this Year, will be sold exceeding cheap.³⁴⁵

Hester Roe continued running the business for a number of years after her husband's death, also including a whole array of persuasive adjectives in the notices she placed in Bristol newspapers. The Roe family notices illustrate

³⁴⁵ *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, 26 May 1753.

broader changes in marketing practices during the period. A relative lack of competition among advertisers in Bristol in the 1730s meant that Robert Roe needed only to demonstrate a variety of wares to attract consumers. However, by the end of the period, faced with increasing competition, his widow felt it necessary to emphasise, not only variety, but also fashion, novelty, elegance, and the reduction in price of articles just past their prime.

4.12: Regular Advertisers in the Boston Newspapers

Although some advertisers also made only sporadic appearances in the Boston newspapers, a large number were regular fixtures in the pages of *The Boston Gazette* and its competitors. They indicate the importance of stability and longevity among suppliers, underlined in the household accounts of Joshua Wharton and Rufus Greene in Chapter 5 of this thesis. Benjamin Church was one of the most prolific advertisers, placing 84 notices in *The Boston Gazette* between 1743 and 1758, and a handful in its rivals, *The Boston News-Letter* and *The Boston Evening Post*. The following was typical of his earliest entries:

To be Sold by Publick Vendue, By Benjamin Church...at his House
...Broad Cloths, Kerseys, Callamancoes, Russels, Mens and Womens
Hose, Silk, Worsted, and Yard, choice good Chocolate; oval Tables,
Tea Tables, Case Knives etc – Whalebone – Axes; Ratteens, silk
Crapes, fine and coarse. As also a choice parcel of Books, and Sundry
other Articles, not enumerated.³⁴⁶

His final entry, appearing in *The Boston Gazette* in December 1758, was very similar in style and content to his first, highlighting great consistency over the period.

³⁴⁶ *The Boston Gazette*, 15 Nov. 1743.

By contrast, a study of other individuals demonstrates dynamic changes in advertising practices over time. Samuel Hughes informed potential customers in 1750 that he had for sale at his house ‘Sugar Moulds; an Assortment of Earthen Ware; and other European Goods.’ By 1758, however, he was able to tempt Bostonian consumers with over 70 items for sale, ranging from ‘Yorkshire, spanish and scarlet cloths’ to ‘a compleat assortment of cutlery ware’ and ‘West India Rum, Muscovado and clay’d Sugars.’³⁴⁷ Such efforts went some way to reassuring consumers in a rapidly changing marketplace.

Unlike the Roe family, where the notices they placed demonstrate developments in marketing, Church’s notices remained static, changing little over the period. These examples further reinforce some important differences in the consumer marketplaces of the two cities. Robert Roe was a specialist haberdasher with his own shop from the 1720s onwards, yet Benjamin Church continued to sell a wide range of goods right up until the end of the period, comprising ‘A variety of European Goods’ including ‘Broad Cloths...Hats & Houshold Furniture...’³⁴⁸ Although the number and variety of items that Samuel Hughes advertised increased considerably over time, there was no corresponding specialisation, such as that which is evident in the notices of the Roe family.

4.13: Earthenware in Bristol and Groceries in Boston

Focusing on advertisements for particular commodities that appear frequently in the newspaper samples in Bristol and Boston also provides important insights into developments in the consumer marketplace in both

³⁴⁷ *The Boston Gazette*, 27 Dec. 1750 and 13 Mar. 1758.

³⁴⁸ *The Boston Gazette*, 10 Sept. 1758.

cities, including responses to increasing competition. In the 1740s, only one retailer was advertising the sale of earthenware in the Bristol newspaper sample, but by the 1750s, that number had risen to eight individuals, who placed 13 advertisements between them. The following very basic notice appeared in the *Oracle Country Advertiser* on 20 April 1746:

Notice is hereby given that the Pot-House in Water Lane...late Ward's, is now occupied, and the work carried on by Thomas Castle...by whom all persons may be supplied with all Sorts of Earthen Ware, on the most reasonable terms.

More notices began to appear after 1750, highlighting the increasing variety of earthenware and china goods available for potential consumers to purchase. One example appeared in the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* on 12 May that year:

At Magnus Lundberg and Comp's Warehouse...Variety of all Sorts of Blue and White Earthen Ware, Stone Ware, North Country Ware etc. – Where Merchants for Exportation, Country Dealers for Inland Demands, and House Keepers for private use, may be supplied on the best Terms, either Wholesale or Retail.

In *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* on 12 April 1755, Hannah James posted an advertisement stating that:

...Being lately returned from the East-India Tea and China House, begs leave to acquaint her Friends, that she has...a large Quantity of Useful and Ornamental China...Compleat Table Services and Tea Setts, with great Choice of Items all as cheap as in London: China let to Hire.

As demand for earthenware and china products began to grow rapidly from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, advertisements demonstrate the necessity for those engaged in this burgeoning trade to compete more aggressively. Retailers and wholesalers of such products therefore made full

use of all the marketing tools available to them, highlighting variety, fashion, quality, price, novelty, exclusivity and service.

The Boston newspaper sample provides evidence of an increase in specialisation among grocers in the city. While the majority of Boston traders continued to stock a wide variety of goods for much of the period, from the 1720s onwards a number of shops appeared specialising in the sale of a range of groceries. John Merrett advertised in several Boston newspapers in the 1720s as a general merchant selling 'Very fine Raisins in small Jarrs...by Wholesale or by the Jarr...Also Raisins in Barrels and Divers other Merchandise.' By 1731 he had gone into partnership with a Mr Fletcher and established a grocer's shop at the Three Sugar Loaves and Canister in King Street, Boston. They maintained this retail outlet solely for the sale of food and drink items, while keeping their warehouse open for the sale of 'All Sorts of Merchandize from Europe.' By 1732 John Merrett was trading alone as a grocer and from 1735 he was placing advertisements displaying fixed prices for a whole range of chocolate, coffee and tea.³⁴⁹ As was the case for earthenware in Bristol, this specialisation in grocery sales in Boston was also a response to increasing competition and changing fashions.

4.14: Conclusion

As Chapter 3 demonstrated, consumers in Bristol were able to purchase goods from a range of retail shops and markets, which often specialised in the sale of specific categories of goods. This enabled the development of close relationships between retailers and consumers and a sharing of market intelligence concerning the best establishments from which

³⁴⁹ *The Boston Gazette*, 13 Oct. 1729, *The Boston News-Letter*, 10 Jun. 1731, *The Boston News-Letter*, 14 Dec. 1732, *The Boston Gazette*, 13 Oct. 1735.

to purchase goods. The reliance in Boston on imported goods from England, and a relative absence of local craftsmen, left Bostonian consumers largely dependent on the general stock of merchants and pedlars. As shipments of goods from England were heavily dependent on the weather, arriving only a few times throughout the year, unevenness in the supply chain would have led to a wealth of consumer choice upon the arrival of shipments in the city, followed by relative scarcity at other times, and this led to different marketing strategies.

Evidence of the widespread availability of newspapers in Bristol and Boston, high literacy rates in both cities, and the increasing appearance of advertisements in such publications, underlines the significant role of newspaper notices in disseminating market information to a large proportion of potential customers in order to influence their consumption choices. An analysis of advertising highlights important developments in the marketing of goods in Bristol and Boston during the eighteenth century. The period 1700-1760 saw a significant rise in the quantity of advertisements, the numbers of retailers using advertising, and the variety of goods advertised. Increasing competition among retailers necessitated a greater emphasis on marketing in order to promote their unique selling points. While the majority highlighted the choice of goods on offer, some emphasised their reasonable prices, and others promoted the quality of their goods and services in order to set them apart in a crowded virtual consumer landscape.

An emphasis on fashion and novelty became increasingly important as the century progressed. Rapidly changing fashions necessitated that retailers and wholesalers of a range of consumable goods keep customers continually

updated with news of new arrivals in their local marketplaces. A reliance in Boston on imported goods 'lately arrived from England', and the corresponding scarcity of local manufactories for even basic household items meant that Bostonian consumers were heavily dependent on English goods for most of the period, and newspaper advertisements reflect this dependence. Physical distance from the centres of fashion and production were mitigated to some extent by the constant references to London and a number of other towns placed in notices, particularly by Boston traders throughout the period.

Newspapers provide evidence of several additional trends in marketing in Bristol and Boston, which gathered pace during the century. Advertisements became longer and more detailed, and advertisers began to tailor individual notices more specifically to their ideal imagined consumer. Increasing competition among advertisers meant retailers and wholesalers of those goods had to make full use of all the marketing tools available to them, highlighting variety, fashion, quality, price, novelty, exclusivity and service, as they had in Bristol. The earlier presence of these persuasive adjectives in Boston newspaper advertisements, plus the larger number of notices per newspaper issue in that city, reflect differences between the consumer marketplaces.. While consumers in Bristol were able to choose from an established and organised range of outlets, those in Boston were reliant on a relatively unregulated network of supply. Retailers in Boston were forced to market their wares in a more aggressive manner in order to persuade potential customers of the benefits of giving them their custom.

An analysis of the marketing of food and drink in the newspapers in both cities highlights further differences in the priorities of retailers and wholesalers. While the vast majority appearing in Bristol were for tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar, many of those in Boston newspapers advertised the sale of basic foodstuffs. This could be attributable to a relative lack of self-sufficiency in the colonies, with fewer opportunities for consumers to produce their own goods, leading to a heavier reliance on imported foodstuffs. Only towards the end of the period do we begin to see evidence in newspaper advertisements of increasing signs of self-sufficiency in Boston, with the occasional advertising of home-produced goods from the 1750s onwards. In addition, notices for clothing and textiles dominated newspaper advertisements from a much earlier period in Bristol, emphasising the wide range of choice available to consumers from the many shops established in the city.

Therefore, while newspapers reveal important information surrounding the marketing of goods in relation to the differing retail structures in both cities, the growing numbers of advertisements appearing in newspapers in both cities signify the increasingly competitive marketplaces consumers and retailers participated in on both sides of the Atlantic as the century progressed. This increasing competition is reflected in the ways goods were marketed. High levels of specialisation in the retail landscape in Bristol are mirrored in the notices appearing in newspapers, with a move away from the advertisement of retail outlets selling different categories of goods at the beginning of the period, towards the emphasis on specialist shops, and later warehouses, where potential consumers could choose from many varieties of

one particular type of product, be it pottery or stockings. This was in contrast to the notices for warehouse sales of large varieties of goods that dominated newspapers in Boston for the majority of the period. Only advertisements for groceries, the dominant category of notices in Boston for most of the period, provide evidence of increased specialisation.

The pages of newspapers in both samples presented consumers with a burgeoning wealth of choice as the period progressed, and advertisers on both sides of the Atlantic responded to their demands. While the appearance of particular persuasive adjectives cannot provide absolute evidence concerning the degree to which consumers were influenced by particular aspects of marketing, they do reflect the factors which retailers considered influential in purchasing decisions during this period. The evidence that traders in Boston were the first to feel the need to aggressively market their goods is a testament to the relative lack of a specialised retail sector, and a response to the particularly overcrowded virtual marketplace in that city. Due to the increased competition in Boston between suppliers, especially upon the arrival of goods into the port, there was renewed pressure to market such goods to potential customers in order to persuade them to make purchases. There were a number of market centres near Bristol for local consumers to choose from, including Bath, but a relative dearth of such choice in the hinterland around Boston meant that urban retailers could reach an even wider audience with their newspaper advertisements.

The larger number of notices per newspaper issue in Boston together with the earlier presence of persuasive adjectives in newspaper advertisements there, reflect the differences outlined above. Physical distance

from the centres of fashion and production were mitigated to some extent by the constant references to London and a number of other towns placed in notices, particularly by Boston traders throughout the period. However, while the rapid growth in advertising indicates a corresponding rise in the consumption of certain categories of goods, particularly the new and fashionable commodities which dominated newspapers, it could be argued that newspaper notices reflect the priorities of retailers rather than consumers.

However, contrary to the evidence from newspaper advertisements presented in this chapter, Chapter 5 demonstrates the continued dominance of basic household commodities over the family budget in Bristol and Boston. Suppliers of discretionary items, like the fashionable goods listed above, had to overcome fierce competition in order to persuade potential customers of the benefits of purchasing non-essential items. Newspaper advertisements performed a valuable role in such campaigns, especially in Boston where the supply of many goods was comparatively unpredictable. The rapid growth in newspaper advertisements by mid-century underlines this shift in power away from retailers towards consumers, who were presented with a wealth of possible ways to spend their spare cash.

Chapter 5: The Purchasing of Goods in Eighteenth-Century Bristol and Boston

This chapter looks at evidence of purchasing found in household account books and investigates the particular picture they present about eighteenth-century consumption, demonstrating how this differs from the ways goods were marketed to potential consumers during this period. Despite the range of marketing efforts used by advertisers detailed in Chapter 4, household accounts provide evidence that consumers continued to spend a large proportion of their income on a wide range of basic household consumables, sold through a network of supply based on reputation, loyalty and familiarity. Suppliers included family members, local craftsmen and farmers, as well as established retailers who actively marketed their goods in newspapers during this period.

Household account books reveal many important aspects of the processes involved in consumption, especially concerning the networks of supply and distribution that enabled eighteenth-century families to acquire a variety of items to satisfy their needs and desires, from basic foodstuffs to bespoke pieces of furniture. Analysis of the account books of families in Bristol and Boston, between 1700 and 1760, demonstrates that eighteenth-century households were involved in a sophisticated and complex web of communication and interaction concerning the supply of their household goods. Analysing patterns of consumption in household accounts and comparing the experiences of buyers and sellers on both sides of the Atlantic with the marketing efforts of advertisers outlined in Chapter 4, enables an assessment of the ways such families interacted with their consumer

marketplaces, and widens our understanding of the behaviour and motivations of consumers in Bristol and Boston during this period.

While research into the growth of advertising in the eighteenth century highlights the important role of urban retailers in the growth of consumption, evidence from household accounts emphasises the vital part that more informal networks of supply continued to play, highlighting the role of family members, servants and tenants in provisioning households. The household accounts of the middling section of society also demonstrate comparable complexities of supply to those of the gentry households previously studied, in that they required a myriad of interactions with a range of suppliers over a wide geographical area. Finally, evidence from household accounts also emphasises the importance of reputation, loyalty and familiarity in the purchasing decisions made by households on both sides of the Atlantic.

Section 5.1 assesses the types of studies conducted to date using a range of household accounts. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 look at household accounts as a source, and provide details of the accounts selected from the Bristol and Boston archives, as well as some background on the Wharton, Greene and Smyth families. Section 5.4 addresses the categories of goods to be analysed, and the reasons for their choice, and 5.5 compares the household expenditure of the Wharton and Greene households for a variety of goods. Sections 5.6 to 5.10 address the purchasing patterns and networks of supply for the Wharton and Greene families, with a particular focus on the purchase of food and drink, which dominated the household budgets of both. Section 5.11 compares the household accounts of Wharton with those of the Smyth family, members of the Bristol gentry, looking in further detail at the

spending priorities of the Smyths, and the final section, 5.12, compares and contrasts the conclusions about purchasing with those about marketing in order to better understand the processes involved in consumption.

5.1: Studies of Household Accounts

This section analyses the different ways household account books have been used by English and colonial historians in the past. Despite the existence of a significant number of studies involving account books, relatively few have sought to explore their value in relation to the subject of household consumption. Woolgar and Gray are among those who have edited and published a range of account books belonging to English gentry households in the medieval and early modern periods, with the aim of enabling an assessment of the way estates were managed.³⁵⁰ Foster looked at a number of households in Cheshire and Lancashire belonging to the gentry and middling ranks of society, and Smith focused on a letter book belonging to a merchant shopkeeper from Kendal. Each, however, concentrated on the business activities of the families concerned rather than the ways they spent their household budgets. Farm account books from the same period have also been studied with interest being focused more on the management of crops

³⁵⁰ C.M. Woolgar (ed.), *Household Accounts from Medieval England, Part 1*, (Oxford, 1992) and *Part 2* (Oxford, 1993); Gladys Scott Thomson, *Life in a Noble Household, 1641-1700*, (London, 1937); Rev. George Ornsby (ed.), *Selections from the Household Books of the Lord William Howard of Naworth Castle: with an appendix containing some of his papers and letters, and other documents illustrative of his life and times*, (Durham, 1878); Todd Gray (ed.), *Devon Household Accounts, 1627-1659: Part 1 and Part 2*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, (Devon, 1996); Robert Willis Blencowe Esq., *Extracts from the Journal and Account Book of Timothy Burrell Esq, Barrister-at-Law, of Ockenden House, Cuckfield, 1683-1714*, Sussex Archaeological Collection, III, (London, 1850); Simon Adams (ed.), *The Household Accounts and Disbursement Books of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, 1558-1561 and 1584-1586*, (Cambridge, 1995).

and livestock, rather than household expenditure.³⁵¹ Research on the retail side of consumption in England has also been made by a number of historians, including Mui and Mui, Berry, Cox and Walsh, who have studied the account books of shopkeepers.³⁵²

More recently, however, a number of researchers have highlighted the importance of the household in terms of understanding the consumption habits of seventeenth and eighteenth-century families. De Vries argued that a study of households could explain changes in the supply of, and demand for, a range of consumer goods during the early modern period, maintaining that 'Increased production specialization in the household gives access to augmented consumption choices in the marketplace.'³⁵³ A great deal of research on English domestic consumption has been undertaken by Whittle and Griffiths, Stobart and Rothery, and Vickery, on a range of household accounts compiled by members of the gentry families. These and others, like Bailey, have highlighted the intricacies of the relationship between rural retailers and the country house.³⁵⁴ Weatherill, Muldrew, Spicksley, and

³⁵¹ Charles F. Foster, *Seven Households: Life in Cheshire and Lancashire, 1582 to 1774*, (Cheshire, 2002); S. D. Smith (ed.), 'An Exact and Industrious Tradesman': the letter book of Joseph Symson of Kendal, 1710-1720, *Records of Social and Economic History, New Series*, 34, (Oxford, 2002). For a further example, see G. E. Fussell (ed.), *Robert Loder's Farm Accounts, 1610-1620*, (London, 1936).

³⁵² Mui and Mui, *Shops and Shop keeping*; Berry, *Polite Consumption*; Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*; and Claire Walsh, 'Shopping at First Hand? Mistresses, Servants and Shopping for the Household in Early Modern England', in David Hussey and Margaret Ponsonby (eds.), *Buying for the Home: Shopping for the Domestic from the Seventeenth Century to the Present*, (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 13-25.

³⁵³ Vries, *The Industrious Revolution*, p.10.

³⁵⁴ L. A. Bailey, 'Squire, Shopkeeper and Staple Food: the Reciprocal Relationship Between the Country House and the Village Shop in the Late Georgian Period', *History of Retailing and Consumption*, 1, 1, 2015, 8-27.

Richardson and Merry, have also analysed a range of account books in order to assess the purchases of middle and lower-class households.³⁵⁵

Weatherill, Whittle and Griffiths, and Stobart's analyses of household spending concluded that food was the most important category of consumption and accounted for the largest proportion of the family budget. This was followed by clothing, which coincides with the evidence from newspaper advertisements of the period. Also, contrary to the assertions of Gregory King, Weatherill, Whittle and Griffiths, and Rothery and Stobart concluded that relative expenditure on food remained the same regardless of income levels, and did not diminish as wealth increased, as cheaper items were replaced by more expensive alternatives, and a larger number of people were entertained and employed within the household.³⁵⁶ Stobart found strong evidence in his study of the household accounts of the Leigh family for the importance of loyalty and reputation when it came to the spending habits of the gentry.³⁵⁷ Whittle and Griffiths concluded that the Le Stranges acquired

³⁵⁵ Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*; Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers', 885-904; Mark Rothery and Jon Stobart, 'Inheritance events and spending patterns in the English country house: the Leigh family of Stoneleigh Abbey, 1738-1806', *Continuity and Change*, 27, 3, 2012, 379-407, and Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House*; Amanda Vickery, 'His and Hers. Others who have looked at gentry spending include Buck, 'Buying Clothes in Bedfordshire', and Hannah Greig, *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London*, (Oxford, 2013). Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*; Weatherill, *The Account Book of Richard Latham*; Muldrew, *Food, Energy*; Merry and Richardson, *The Household Account Book*, p. 72; and Spicksley, *The Business and Household Accounts*.

³⁵⁶ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, p.135; Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*, p.54; Rothery and Stobart, 'Inheritance Events and Spending Patterns', p.390.

³⁵⁷ Jon Stobart, 'Rich, Female and Single: the Changing Consumption Practices of Mary Leigh, 1736-1806', *Northampton Electronic Collection of Theses and Research*, (2013), p. 17.

their domestic consumables from a wide variety of individuals, but purchasing habits also varied greatly depending on the category of goods.³⁵⁸

Weatherill, Muldrew, and Styles shifted their studies of domestic consumption further down the social scale, moving away from gentry households towards those of the middling ranks and below. Weatherill, through her study of the household accounts of Richard Latham and Rachel Pengelly, and Muldrew, through his work on the material life of agricultural labourers, including Latham, found that the vast majority of their household income was spent on food and drink, with most additional expenditure taken up in the purchase of very basic items such as shoes, candles and tallow. Styles also discussed the purchase of textiles and clothing by the Latham family, highlighting the influence of changing family structures on spending patterns.³⁵⁹

Much of the research undertaken to assess consumer behaviour in colonial America, and among the residents of eighteenth-century Boston in particular, has taken the form of analyses of probate inventories. Unlike the research undertaken on English household account books, colonial household accounts do not appear to have been used to study consumer behaviour. Where attention has been focused on account books at all, they have been utilised to answer questions other than those surrounding consumption. Many studies, such as those by Ditz, Baxter, Breen and Hartigan O'Connor, used merchant account books to study the development and usefulness of book

³⁵⁸ Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*, pp. 67-72.

³⁵⁹ Weatherill, *The Account Book of Richard Latham*; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, p.135; Muldrew, *Food, Energy*; Styles, *The Dress of the People*, p.141.

keeping in general.³⁶⁰ Others, like Goler and Gevitz, analysed medical account books in order to answer questions about the provision of medical care in the colonies.³⁶¹

A considerable amount of research has been undertaken on farm, merchant and store accounts in the colonies during the eighteenth century. Menard, Carr and Walsh looked at the accounts of plantation owner, Robert Cole to assess his income and expenditure.³⁶² Rothenberg used farm accounts in rural Massachusetts to analyse commodity prices and contract labour, in order to gain a sense of the development of a market economy in that region as the century progressed.³⁶³ Smith undertook a comprehensive analysis of the account book of a Barbados merchant, Richard Poor, in order

³⁶⁰ Toby L. Ditz, 'Secret Selves, Credible Personas: The Problematics of Trust and Public Display in the Writing of Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia Merchants' in Robert Blair St. George (ed.), *Possible Pasts: Becoming Colonial in Early America*, (Cornell, 2000); W.T. Baxter, 'Credit, Bills, and Bookkeeping in a Simple Economy', *The Accounting Review*, 21, 2, April, 1946, 154-166, and W.T. Baxter, 'Accounting in Colonial America' in A.C. Littleton and B.S. Yamey (eds.), *Studies in the History of Accounting*, (London, 1956); T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*, (Oxford, 2004), pp. 123-24; Ellen Hartigan O'Connor, 'Collaborative Consumption and the Politics of Choice in Early American Port Cities' in Styles and Vickery, *Gender, Taste and Material Culture*, pp. 125-146.

³⁶¹ R.I. Goler, *A Household and its Doctor: a Case Study of Medical Account Books in Colonial America*, (Boston, 1992); Norman Gevitz, "Pray Let the Medicines be Good": The New England Apothecary in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries', *Pharmacy in History*, 41, 3, 1999, 87-101.

³⁶² Russell Menard, Lois Green Carr, and Lorena Walsh, 'A Small Planter's Profits: The Cole Estate and the Growth of the Early Chesapeake Economy', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 1983, p.172.

³⁶³ Winifred Barr Rothenberg, *From Market-Places to a Market Economy: The Transformation of Rural Massachusetts, 1750-1850* (Chicago, 1992).

to gain insight into the types of goods being bought and sold there.³⁶⁴ Main used the account books of farmers and storekeepers in colonial New England to assess gender, work and wages, and Thorp used them to assess developments in business in eighteenth-century North Carolina.³⁶⁵

Store account books have proved a very valuable source for the study of consumption patterns in the colonies during the eighteenth century. Hodge uses a range of account books to chart the commercial strategies of a Newport shopkeeper called Elizabeth Pratt. Although no account book has survived from Pratt herself, Hodge traced her commercial activity through her appearances in the surviving account books of her fellow traders.³⁶⁶ She found similarities with the work of Cleary on Elizabeth Murray, a Boston shopkeeper, during a similar period.³⁶⁷ Even where attempts have been made to assess household consumption, as in Perkins' study of the consumer frontier of Kentucky, the sources utilised comprised 'probate inventories, store accounts, tax lists, newspaper advertisements, museum collections, as well as the observations of travellers and inhabitants.'³⁶⁸

³⁶⁴ S.D. Smith, 'The Account Book of Richard Poor, Quaker Merchant of Barbados', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3, 66, 3, July, 2009, 605-628.

³⁶⁵ Gloria L. Main, 'Gender, Work and Wages in Colonial New England', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 51, 1, January, 1994, 39-66. Daniel B. Thorp, 'Doing Business in the Backcountry: Retail Trade in Colonial Rowan County, North Carolina', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 48, 3, July, 1991, 387-408.

³⁶⁶ Christina J. Hodge, 'Widow Pratt's World of Goods: Implications of Consumer Choice in Colonial Newport, Rhode Island', *Early American Studies*, 8, 2, Spring, 2010, 217-34, and Christina J. Hodge *Consumerism and the Emergence of the Middle-Class in Colonial America*, (Cambridge, 2014).

³⁶⁷ Cleary, *Elizabeth Murray*.

³⁶⁸ Elizabeth A. Perkins, 'The Consumer Frontier: Household Consumption in Early Kentucky', *Journal of American History*, 78, 2, September, 1991, 488.

This chapter contains the first detailed study of American household consumption using a colonial American household account book, comparing and contrasting the purchasing priorities and networks of supply employed with those of a middle class and gentry English household. In order to explore differences in purchasing priorities and networks of supply on both sides of the Atlantic. It also assesses the influence of the marketing outlined in Chapter 4 on such priorities and networks.

5.2: Household Accounts as a Source

This section outlines the advantages of studying household accounts in general, and then assesses the accounts available in the Bristol and Boston archives, explaining the methodology and reasoning behind the selection of the Wharton and Greene account books. In her research on colonial consumption, Martin maintained that account books were 'some of the most neglected historical documents'.³⁶⁹ One explanation for the relative lack of research on household accounts in the colonies, and the concentration on those of the gentry in England, is the relative scarcity of surviving records, and the varying levels of detail contained within them. While Weatherill acknowledged that detailed sets of household accounts are few and far between, cautioning against their use as the sole evidence of patterns of consumption, she also outlined their value in studies of consumption, particularly where they are paired with other sources, as in this thesis.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁹ Martin, *Buying into the World of Goods*, p. 241, and Ann Smart Martin, 'Material Things and Cultural Meanings: Notes on the Study of Early American Material Culture', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 52, 1996, 5-12.

³⁷⁰ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, p.4.

Only a handful of household accounts are to be found in the Bristol and Boston archives but when used alongside other more general sources, they yield specific insights into the household economies of the families who compiled them, adding to the broader picture of household consumption in general during this period. The research that follows is largely focused on a comparison of two sets of detailed household accounts, spanning the period 1733-1759. The first belonged to a retired mercer from Bristol, Joshua Wharton, and the second to a silversmith and merchant from Boston, Rufus Greene. Two further sets of partial accounts relating to the household expenditure of the Smyth family, between 1717-1719 and 1757-1760, have also been used. The Smyths were members of the Bristol gentry and the inclusion of data from their account books enables comparisons of consumption patterns between different classes of eighteenth-century society.³⁷¹ Areas of such comparison include the total expenditure on particular categories of goods in order to assess the relative significance of each, the frequency of those purchases, the numbers of suppliers used, and the hierarchy of supply. Assessment and analysis of changes over time in purchasing patterns can improve our understanding of developments in the consumer marketplaces of England and the colonies during this period.

5.2.1: Bristol Household Accounts

The analysis that follows makes use of three sets of household accounts held at Bristol Record office: the *Account Book of Joshua Wharton, 1733-42*; an *Account of the Smyth Family of Ashton Court, 1717-1719*; and

³⁷¹ BRO 6783; *Rufus Greene Expense Book, 1728-1774* MICROFILM, Karolik-Codman Papers, 1714-1764, Part 1: John Amory Family Papers 1714-1841, Section E: Greene Family Papers, 1714-1791, Massachusetts Historical Society. BRO AC/AS 8-11, and BRO AC/B/44.

the *Account Book of John Hugh Smyth, 1757-60*.³⁷² The account book of Joshua Wharton provides the most detailed picture of household expenditure in the Bristol archive, spanning the longest period, and therefore enables a detailed insight into the spending habits of this middle-ranking family. Joshua Wharton was a retired Bristol Mercer, who moved to nearby Brislington with his second wife, Anna, and two daughters, Ann and Elizabeth, in 1719. Brislington was a picturesque country village on the outskirts of Bristol, and a popular and fashionable retreat for the city's merchants and other successful businessmen during the eighteenth century. The period covered by the account book sees the Wharton's eldest daughter leave the family home following her marriage in 1734, and their remaining daughter enduring a long illness, which resulted in her death in 1738, leaving Wharton and his wife living alone by 1742. After retirement, Joshua Wharton received income from the rental of several properties and parcels of land in and around Bristol, as well as interest payments from a number of outstanding loans.³⁷³

The accounts relating to the Smyth family are less detailed but are still useful in providing an outline of gentry spending to compare and contrast with the Wharton family. The first is a partial set of accounts, totalling 20 pages, detailing items the Smyth family purchased while staying away from their Ashton Court Estate, in Henbury near Bristol. It runs from October 1717 until January 1718, recommencing from October 1718 until July 1719. The Smyth

³⁷² *BRO AC/AS 8-11, BRO 6783 and BRO AC/B/44.*

³⁷³ Additional information about Joshua Wharton can be found in his will of 1744, deposited in the National Archives: *PROB 11/733*. Details can also be found in the Bristol Record Office: *BRO 6378/1-11*, and in *Pamphlet 1578c*, D.P. Lindegard, *The Brislington Bulletin, 1700-1749*, No. 3, (1994). In the Gloucestershire Archives the records of Goldington and Jotcham Solicitors reveal details of some of Wharton's property transactions: *D654/II/8/FS 1697-1762*.

family arrived at Henbury in 1717 with a bag containing £147 17s and 6d in gold coin, and a bag containing £43 2s and 6d in silver coin. The money for items purchased from October 1717 to January 1718 was deducted from these bags, leaving only £2 2s of gold coin, and 8s of silver coin remaining. All subsequent purchases were made from a bag which initially contained £500 'Brought down with me to Henbury Oct ye 24 1718'. Despite the addition of £980 5s and 3d, through rent collections and additional sources, there was only £106 12s and 2d left by July 11th, 1719.³⁷⁴ The accounts of John Hugh Smyth are more detailed and begin from the date of his marriage to Elizabeth Woolnough in 1757, running until December 1760. They are titled 'An account of...money's expended on account of and since my marriage with Elizabeth Woolnough beginning August 26th 1757 and so going forward.' They include a brief section detailing expenditure 'While in London 15th February to the 8th March 1759.'

While the day-to-day accounts for the Wharton family are generally entered on the right-hand pages of the account book, the left-hand pages contain additional notes and more detailed information concerning some areas of expenditure.³⁷⁵ These pages also contain some details of the income coming into the Wharton household during part of the period. Details of income covering April to December 1735, January to May 1736, May to November 1741 and February to December 1742, are outlined in Table 5.1. Together with the levels of expenditure evident in the account book, these figures confirm that Joshua Wharton belonged to the upper middle-rank of

³⁷⁴ These and further details can be found in *BRO AC/AS 8-11*.

³⁷⁵ See appendix 2 for examples of money paid for work performed on the various Wharton properties.

society.³⁷⁶ He was also an active and respected member of the local community, fulfilling his duties as Churchwarden and Overseer of the Poor.³⁷⁷

Table 5.1: The Wharton household income, 1735-1742¹

	1735	1736	1741	1742
Rental Income	109 7 ³	57 3	57 12	107 12
Loan Income	40 0	63 5	10 0	4 10
Miscellaneous Income	15 3	5 5	19 0	5 11
Total Income¹	164 10 (219 7)	125 13 (301 11)	86 15 (148 14)	117 13 (128 7)

1. Sources: Data from *BRO 6783 The Account Book of Joshua Wharton of Brislington, 1733-1742*. 2. Only partial data is available for each of the years listed above. This means the absence of some Michaelmas and Lady Day rent collections. An estimate of total annual income is therefore included in brackets, which is based on average monthly income multiplied by 12. 3. Monetary units: £ and s.

5.2.2: Boston Household Accounts

The vast majority of account books that survive in the Massachusetts archive contain only fragmentary information on household expenditure. Most are primarily concerned with business expenditure and contain only sporadic references to items bought for domestic consumption. *Rufus Greene's Expense Book* is unusual in its length and depth of coverage.³⁷⁸ Kane referred to this account book in her comprehensive study, *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewellers*, but only for the biographical details it provides and not for any attempt at an analysis of household consumption.³⁷⁹ Rufus Greene was born on 30th May 1707 to Nathaniel and Ann Greene, Boston shopkeepers. The couple had five sons: Thomas, born in 1703, Rufus in

³⁷⁶ Social hierarchy outlined by Gregory King in Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, pp.166-189.

³⁷⁷ Anthony Austin, *Transcripts of Brislington Parish Overseers of the Poor Accounts 1693-1719*, (unpublished, Bristol Record Office).

³⁷⁸ *Rufus Greene Expense Book, 1728-1760*.

³⁷⁹ Patricia E. Kane, *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewellers*, (Yale, 1998), p. 509-11.

1707, Nathaniel in 1709, William in 1711, and Benjamin in 1713. Rufus was apprenticed to William Cowell, a renowned Boston silversmith and family friend, in 1721 at the age of 14. He served with him until 1728, leaving that year to set up in business as an independent silversmith, and marry Katharine Stanbridge, daughter of prominent Boston resident Edward Stanbridge at King's Chapel, Boston. The couple had ten children between 1729 and 1748, all of whom were also baptised at King's Chapel, where Rufus served as a vestryman.³⁸⁰

Rufus Greene begins his account book with a detailed listing of income and expenses arising from his gold and silversmith business. The value and availability of currency in Massachusetts fluctuated greatly during the first half of the eighteenth century, and consumers and suppliers came to depend on a complicated array of credit facilities. Sterling conversion rates, calculated by McCusker, have been applied to the figures compiled for the Greene household, in order to lessen such fluctuations, and to provide a more accurate assessment of the comparative cost of goods in Boston.³⁸¹ The majority of Rufus Greene's account book consists of pages of expenses incurred between 1734 and 1759; 101 pages in total detailing a mixture of personal and business transactions.³⁸²

³⁸⁰ Further details of the dates of birth of the children can be found in Kane, *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths*, p. 509-511.

³⁸¹ All calculations are based on the tables of sterling conversion rates provided by John J. McCusker in *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: A Handbook*, (London, 1978), a summary of which are included in Appendix 3.

³⁸² An overview of the contents of the account book is given in E. McKinstry, *The Joseph Downs Collection and the Winterthur Archives, Guide to the Winterthur Collections*, (June, 2003): 'Greene, who was quite wealthy, recorded purchases of such items as clothing, china, liquor, foods, wood, stationery, and a silk bed quilt. Also included are annual evaluations of

After establishing his gold and silversmith business, Rufus Greene appears to have used this craft as a stepping-stone towards a career as a general merchant. Further evidence of this progression can be seen in a series of legal contracts, beginning with a deed of 1728/9, witnessed by Joseph and John Cowell, where Rufus Greene was described as a goldsmith. In 1743 he was still referred to as a goldsmith but in a deed of 1749, he was described as a merchant.³⁸³ Tables 5.2a and 5.2b provide details of Greene's finances, and the income he derived from his work as a silversmith.

Table 5.2a: Rufus Greene's finances, 1736-1742¹

	1736	1737	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742
Assets²	347 9 ⁴	423 8	583 18	729 12	836 13	846 10	969 7
Liabilities³	136 13	197 1	293 7	395 11	462 3	390 8	477 0
Balance	210 16	226 7	290 9	334 1	374 10	456 2	492 7

1. Sources: Data from *The Rufus Greene Expense Book, 1728-1760 MICROFILM*, Karolik-Codman Papers, 1714-1764, Part 1: John Amory Family Papers 1714-1841, Section E: Greene Family Papers, 1714-1791, Massachusetts Historical Society.
 2. Figures after sterling conversion rates have been applied. 2. Assets listed include household goods and plate, shop tools, house and land, unsold silver and gold items held in his shop, cash in gold, silver and paper, bonds and notes of hand, and book debts. 3. Liabilities include debts to sundry people, book debts and interest money due. 4. Monetary units: £ and s after sterling conversion rates have been applied.

Table 5.2b: Rufus Greene's income as a silversmith, 1733-1738¹

	1733	1734	1735	1736	1737	1738
Production Expenses	31 17 ²	24 9	29 8	14 1	9 19	11 18
Sales Income	27 11	25 7	24 16	13 10	8 17	11 17

1. Sources: see Table 5.2a. 2. Monetary units: £ and s after sterling conversion rates have been applied.

Each year saw a healthy surplus of assets over liabilities, rising steadily as the years passed. However, accounts of the income Greene derived from the silversmith business demonstrate quite clearly his motivations for

his personal assets. A few entries relate to his craft and record the production of chains, a spirit cup, spoons and other items'.

³⁸³ Kane, *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths*, p.511.

changing his business focus towards the merchant trade. His production expenses exceeded his sales income on five of the six years, making a total loss of £9 14 over the period. However, the evidence from the account book is one of growing prosperity and demonstrates Greene's position in the upper middle-rank of society, like Wharton.

5.3: The Wharton and Greene Account Books

While there are similarities in terms of the social standing of Joshua Wharton and Rufus Greene, the makeup of their households differed markedly during the period covered by their account books. Joshua Wharton had been a Bristol-based mercer, but had retired by 1734, and presided over a relatively small household containing his wife and two grown-up daughters. The marriage of one daughter and the death of the other meant that by the end of the account book in 1742, Joshua and his wife were living alone. Although he continued to give very generous gifts to his daughter and son-in-law once they were husband and wife, Wharton's family circumstances differed greatly from those of Rufus Greene. In 1742, Greene was the head of a large and growing family, becoming father to ten children. He was also fully engaged with a range of business activities during the period of the account book, moving from a relatively unprofitable time as a silversmith, towards the world of national and international trade.

As a retired businessman, we can assume that Joshua Wharton could devote more time to bookkeeping, which might explain his daily notation of even relatively inexpensive items, and his more thorough recording of the details of these transactions. In the Greene account book, the relatively high proportion of expenditure on miscellaneous household goods could be a

product of the more general nature of the entries, a significantly greater number of which listed 'sundries' or the total payable to an individual. Rufus Greene may have been too busy setting up new ventures, and dealing with his children, to make anything other than a general note of his purchases, including further details only when he bought significant items. Alternatively, his more general style of accounting could be a result of the prevalence of credit in the colonies, where it would have been more beneficial to round up a number of purchases from the same supplier and pay the bills on a monthly or annual basis. Where details are absent from the Greene expense book, it has still been possible to identify the majority of the types of goods he bought by cross-referencing the names of suppliers with newspaper advertisements and other sources.³⁸⁴

5.4: Categories of Goods

To make this analysis more manageable, and facilitate comparisons with Chapter 4, spending on domestic consumables in both account books has been divided into similar categories as those used for newspaper advertisements: food and drink, textiles and clothing, pottery and glass, furniture, metal wares and jewellery, and books and stationery. In addition, expenditure on agricultural produce and miscellaneous household goods has also been included, as they comprise a significant number of entries in both account books. The greater level of detail in the Wharton accounts enables a

³⁸⁴ A great deal of information about Boston retailers can be found in eighteenth-century newspaper advertisements, and details about tradespeople can also be gleaned from sources such as Mary Caroline Crawford's *St. Botolph's Town: An Account of Old Boston in Colonial Days*, (Charlestown, 1908), Alice Morse Earle's, *Costume of Colonial Times: Primary Source Edition*, (New York, 1894), and Kane, *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths*. See Appendices 4 and 5 for full details of suppliers of goods to the Wharton and Greene families.

more accurate breakdown of goods, especially as the majority of his entries list specific items, or ranges of items from specialised retailers. Greene, on the other hand, sourced a number of items from general stores, often grouping such purchases together. Although this makes the task of separation into specific categories more challenging, it is still possible with the help of the additional sources already mentioned.

5.5: Comparison of Wharton and Greene Expenditure

Although the account book of Rufus Greene covers a longer time period than that of Joshua Wharton, both run parallel to one another for a span of nine years, between 1734 and 1742. It is useful, therefore, in the first instance to perform a detailed comparison of their household purchases during this period. A comparison of total household expenditure, together with specific expenditure on consumable goods, highlights the spending priorities of both families and the relative importance of different categories of expenditure. Table 5.3 outlines the proportion of the household budget devoted to the purchase of consumable goods in the Wharton and Greene households. Wharton's spending on consumable goods was generally lower than Greene's, with the exception of the years 1734 and 1738, when he incurred exceptional expenditure relating to the marriage of one daughter and the death of the other.

While spending on food and drink remained relatively stable year-on-year, spending on other categories fluctuated greatly, often influenced by specific family events. Table 5.3 demonstrates that spending on consumable goods by the Wharton family ranges between 29 and 54 per cent of total spending, whereas that of the Greene household never drops below 62 per

cent, reaching as high as 77 per cent in 1734. This is unsurprising given the differences in the size of each household and the resulting financial commitments of the two men. Besides consumable goods, household expenditure included payments of wages to staff members, medical and school fees, and charitable contributions and local levies.

Table 5.3: Wharton and Greene household expenditure, 1734-1742¹

	1734	1735	1736	1737	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742
Household Expenditure									
Wharton	435 16	197 9	259 11	127 18	249 4	122 7	257 1	122 9	167 11
Greene	86 11	100 15	162 9	100 3	120 12	127 10	152 14	185 4	158 5
Consumable Goods									
Wharton	160 9	71 8	104 8	57 13	129 12	53 14	74 15	57 11	90 2
Greene	66 9	72 14	114 15	68 12	86 1	90 6	100 1	126 9	98 13
Percentage of Total									
Wharton	37	36	41	45	52	44	29	47	54
Greene	77	72	71	70	71	71	66	69	62

1. Sources: see Tables 5.1 and 5.2a. 2. Monetary units: £ and s, and after sterling conversion rates have been applied for Boston.

Note: The household accounts provide evidence of a wide variety of goods purchased by the households of Wharton and Greene. Consumable goods include food and drink, agricultural produce, textiles and clothing, pottery and glass, furniture, metal wares and jewellery, books and stationery, chandlery wares, and a range of miscellaneous goods such as soap and candles.

A more detailed breakdown of these consumable goods into specific categories is shown in Tables 5.4a and 5.4b. These reveal that the Wharton and Greene families purchased a wide variety of household goods annually over the period in question. The overwhelming majority of household expenditure for both Wharton and Greene was taken up in the purchase of food and drink, and textiles and clothing. With regard to food and drink, Wharton's expenditure ranged between 30 and 66 per cent of the total, and Greene's between 38 and 56 per cent. For textiles and clothing, Wharton spent between 13 and 49 per cent per annum, and Greene between 18 and 39 per cent. Spending on pottery and glass, furniture, metal wares and jewellery, and books and stationery generally accounted for no more than five per cent per annum of household consumable spending.

Table 5.4a: Breakdown of Wharton and Greene expenditure¹

	1734	1735	1736	1737	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742
Food & Drink									
Wharton	47 17 ⁴	39 3	63 10	27 7	51 15	35 3	38 15	36 12	51 9
Greene	26 2	40 0	43 19	30 8	47 15	39 10	43 4	54 17	51 12
Agricultural Produce²									
Wharton	9 16	5 14	10 15	12 13	4 19	2 2	12 9	8 11	20 19
Greene	-	-	-	-	-	1 5	-	2 9	0 9
Textiles & Clothing									
Wharton	67 13	21 5	22 10	11 7	63 16	9 0	15 1	7 8	11 10
Greene	25 18	12 16	44 17	21 15	26 11	19 17	29 9	37 2	21 12
Pottery & Glass									
Wharton	1 5	0 7	0 6	0 9	0 9	0 18	0 8	0 6	0 16
Greene	1 3	-	2 1	-	-	1 5	0 6	2 18	0 10
Furniture									
Wharton	24 1	-	-	-	-	1 16	-	1 18	0 2
Greene	-	-	1 13	-	-	6 18	0 6	1 5	1 1
Metal wares & Jewellery									
Wharton	3 19	0 2	1	2 3	1 8	0 19	-	0 8	1 0
Greene	-	-	2 4	-	0 7	4 10	3 7	3 10	5 14
Books & Stationery									
Wharton	0 8	0 10	1 0	1 8	0 12	1 1	1 11	0 8	1 5
Greene	-	-	1 8	2 18	-	-	1 2	-	-
Miscellaneous Goods³									
Wharton	5 10	4 8	5 7	2 6	6 13	2 16	6 11	2 0	3 2
Greene	13 6	19 18	18 13	13 12	11 8	17 0	22 7	18 5	17 14
Total Household									
Wharton	160 9	71 8	104 8	57 13	129 12	54 13	74 15	57 11	90 2
Greene	66 9	72 14	114 15	68 12	86 1	90 6	100 1	126 9	98 13

1. Sources: see Tables 5.1 and 5.2a. 2. Agricultural produce includes animal feed such as hay, and hops and oats. 3. Miscellaneous goods include products for lighting and heating the home, including candles and wood. 4. Monetary units: £ and s, and after sterling conversion rates have been applied for Boston. 5. See Tables A5.4.1 and A5.4.2 in Appendix 6 for partial evidence of prices and quantities of goods purchased by the Wharton and Greene households.

Table 5.4b: Breakdown of Wharton and Greene expenditure in percentages¹

	1734	1735	1736	1737	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742
Food & Drink									
Wharton	30	55	61	47	40	66	52	64	57
Greene	39	55	38	44	56	44	43	44	52
Agricultural Produce²									
Wharton	6	8	10	22	4	4	17	15	23
Greene	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1
Textiles & Clothing									
Wharton	42	30	22	20	49	17	20	13	13
Greene	39	18	39	32	31	22	30	30	22
Pottery & Glass									
Wharton	1	1	<1	1	<1	2	1	1	1
Greene	2	-	2	-	-	1	<1	2	1
Furniture									
Wharton	15	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	<1
Greene	-	-	1	-	-	8	<1	1	1
Metal wares & Jewellery									
Wharton	3	<1	1	4	1	2	-	1	1
Greene	-	-	2	-	<1	5	3	3	6
Books & Stationery									
Wharton	<1	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1
Greene	-	-	1	4	-	-	1	-	-
Miscellaneous Goods³									
Wharton	3	6	5	4	5	5	9	4	4
Greene	20	27	16	20	13	19	22	19	18

1. Sources: see Tables 5.1 and 5.2a. 2. Agricultural produce includes animal feed such as hay, and hops and oats. 3. Miscellaneous goods include products for lighting and heating the home, including candles and wood. 4. See Tables A5.4.1 and A5.4.2 in Appendix 6 for partial evidence of prices and quantities of goods purchased by the Wharton and Greene households.

Differences occur in the categories of agricultural produce and miscellaneous goods. Wharton spends a much higher proportion of his household budget on agricultural produce than Greene, which could be explained by his semi-rural location. The proportion spent on miscellaneous purchases, including soap and candles, fluctuates greatly over the period, but generally shows Greene apportioning between 13 and 28 per cent of his total household budget on this category of goods, but Wharton never rising above nine per cent of his total. This could simply highlight a difference in precision between accounting procedures, or it could point to a greater reliance on the market by the Greene family, and a correspondingly reduced ability to source

a number of products through more informal channels. It is interesting to note that while the proportion of the household budget allocated for the purchase of food and drink remained relatively stable during the period of the account books, expenditure on the remaining categories of items varied greatly year on year, often as a result of events related to the changing life-cycle of both families. This reinforces the enduring central importance of the supply of food and drink within the household budget throughout the period and the episodic nature of spending on other items.

5.6: Purchasing Patterns and Networks of Supply³⁸⁵

A detailed analysis of the purchasing patterns and networks of supply to the Wharton and Greene households can also be made using evidence from their account books between 1734 and 1742, and such a comparison adds greatly to our understanding of the frequency with which they received particular household goods, and the sorts of suppliers with which they formed the most enduring relationships. Table 5.5 highlights some interesting similarities and differences in the numbers and size of purchases, and the numbers and types of suppliers to both households. While the totals spent on food and drink, textiles and clothing, and pottery and glass, were very similar in the two households, the numbers of suppliers and purchases in the Wharton accounts are significantly higher than in the Greene accounts. The average size of each purchase is correspondingly smaller in the Wharton accounts compared to those of Greene. These figures demonstrate that the Wharton family were being supplied with goods on a more frequent basis than

³⁸⁵ See Appendices 4 and 5 for complete listings of suppliers of goods to the Wharton and Greene households.

the Greene's and indicates the close and immediate nature of their relationship with a range of suppliers in and around Bristol. The division of the Greene family's household expenditure into larger, but more infrequent bulk purchases of a varied range of goods could demonstrate a lesser degree of engagement with their suppliers in and around Boston, and a correspondingly diminished investment in terms of time spent on such transactions. Alternatively, they could be a symptom of the practicalities of supplying a large family, or a product of the increasing reliance on credit between retailers and consumers in the colonies. Whatever the explanation, they point to differences in the networks of supply which Wharton and Greene were able to utilise in their respective marketplaces.

Table 5.5: Suppliers of goods to Wharton and Greene, 1734-1742¹

	Food & Drink	Textiles & Clothing	Pottery & Glass	Furniture	Metal wares & Jewellery
Total					
Wharton	407 13 ³	235 19	5 5	27 16	11 2
Greene	386 2	243 9	8 8	11 16	21 10
Named Suppliers					
Wharton	242 4	199 6	1 19	27 4	6 17
Greene	87 11	51 19	3 13	1 12	0 6
No. of Suppliers					
Wharton	130	49	7	4	12
Greene	15	11	1	1	1
No. of Purchases					
Wharton	923	302	54	9	51
Greene	44	41	4	1	1
Average per Purchase					
Wharton	0 5	0 13	0 2	3 0	0 3
Greene	2 0	1 5	0 18	1 12	0 6
Main Supplier					
Wharton	Various ²	Thomas Bush	Mr Franks	Christopher Raymond	Mr Lovell
Greene	Jacob Sheaf	Elizabeth Richardson	Moses Pierce	Mr Comber	Mr Bagnal
Total from Main Suppliers					
Wharton	130 10	53 3	0 13	20 15	4 3
Greene	23 18	15 2	3 13	1 12	0 6
Percentage of Overall Total from Main Suppliers					
Wharton	32	27	35	76	61
Greene	27	29	100	100	100
Percentage of Overall Total from all Named Suppliers					
Wharton	59	85	37	98	62
Greene	45	21	43	13	2

1. Sources: see Tables 5.1 and 5.2b. 2. Cuz Ruddock for tea and coffee, Ms Noblett for chocolate, Mr Toler for sugar, Cuz Wall for dairy, and John Bevan for meat and fish.

3. Monetary units: £ and s, and after sterling conversion rates have been applied for Boston.

Despite the generally lower frequency of purchases made by Greene, both sets of accounts demonstrate similarities in terms of the relative frequency of purchases across the different categories of goods. In both sets of accounts, entries for food and drink, and textiles and clothing dominate. Small amounts of money were paid for pottery and glass, and books and stationery, on an infrequent basis, and while items of furniture and jewellery represented more major individual outlays, they also appeared only infrequently in the accounts of both households.

5.7: Suppliers to the Wharton Household

The wide variety of goods purchased by both households necessitated complex supply chains, and a closer examination of the respective account books reveals further insights concerning the purchasing decisions of both families and, by inference, important aspects of the consumer marketplaces in both Bristol and Boston. Many items purchased by the Wharton family came from established retailers in and around Bristol, including those who advertised in the local newspapers. These included Thomas Bush, a silk mercer, Richard Perkins, a linen draper and haberdasher, and Mr Churchman, whose notices for chocolate appeared in *Farley's Bristol Newspaper* around this time.³⁸⁶ Friends and family supplied many other items. The terms 'Cuz', 'Coz' or 'Cozon' appear frequently in the accounts, with various items being supplied by Cuz Ruddock, Cozon Marklove, Cozon Ware, Coz Thos Mary, Coz John Hicks, Coz Wall, Couz Bazell and Coz Nash, among others. While 'Coz' could be used to describe a close friend in the eighteenth century, Coz Ruddock, Coz Marklove, Coz Bazell and Coz Wall all appear as beneficiaries in the will that Joshua Wharton wrote in 1744, pointing to their status as family members.³⁸⁷

Household staff and tenants also supplied items to, and bought items for, the Wharton household, although it is sometimes difficult to separate the two roles. Servants appear in the accounts as 'my man' or 'my Servant', or simply by their Christian name. Hanna, who served a time as Joshua

³⁸⁶ Thomas Bush, *The Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*, 16 Sept. 1752; Richard Perkins, *Farley's Bristol Journal*, 29 Aug. 1741; Walter Churchman, *Sam Farley's Bristol Newspaper*, 12 Feb. 1737.

³⁸⁷ PROB 11/733/105.

Wharton's maid, was paid on several occasions for butter and milk she supplied to the household, as well as other items including horsehair. In subsequent years 'my man Robert' supplied Joshua Wharton with wine, bread, beans and potatoes, and 'my man Joseph' received payment for 'a Crabb and for Bread Potatoes and other things.' Another maid, Betty Sifford bought bread, butter and tripe, among other things, for the Wharton household.³⁸⁸

Other references appear to suggest that a small number of purchases were made through itinerant traders and at local fairs. For example, Joshua Wharton notes that he bought a pound of Bohea Tea from a 'Welch woman', and entries also detail amounts 'spent in the faire' and money paid 'at Bristol Markett'.³⁸⁹ Items were also occasionally purchased from London retailers, most likely during their visits to one of the regular fairs held in Bristol. Examples include payments made to 'Mr Waite of London for pins and for an ivory comb'. Evidence of other items bought in personal trips to Bristol includes a loaf of bread and cuts of veal and pork.³⁹⁰ Evidence from the Wharton account book demonstrates that certain suppliers were relied on more heavily than others. The vast majority of meat was purchased from John Bevan, tea and coffee generally came from Coz Ruddock or from Ms Rogerson, chocolate was purchased from Mr Churchman or Mrs Noblett, sugar mainly came from Mr Tiler or Mr Liddiott, and wine and spirits were supplied by a number of individuals but predominantly purchased from Messrs

³⁸⁸ *BRO 6783*, 1 Feb. 1734.

³⁸⁹ *BRO 6783*, 3 May 1734.

³⁹⁰ *BRO 6783*.

Goddard and Ball or Capt. Symes. The networks of supply surrounding the provision of food and drink are dealt with more fully in section 5.9.

The important category of clothing and textiles can be divided into two main areas: the purchase of fabric, and the manufacture of garments for Joshua Wharton and his wife and daughters. Marmaduke Williams and Richard Stringer generally made Joshua Wharton's clothes, whereas Coz Marklove often made his wife and daughters' gowns.³⁹¹ Thomas Bush, Mr Fisher and Stephen Nash generally supplied the fabric, while ribbons, buttons and lace came from Mr Perkins. Despite this variety, the average spend of over £4 per supplier was much higher than that for other categories of consumable goods, and although Thomas Bush was paid the relatively large sum of £53 over the period, this only accounted for 27 per cent of the total expenditure on textiles and clothing. Table 5.6 outlines the largest suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Wharton family, and highlights the relative importance of specialist haberdashers and tailors, such as Thomas Bush, Mr Perkins, and Marmaduke Williams, and the more informal network of family members, such as Cuz Marklove and Cuz Stephen Nash.

³⁹¹ *BRO 6783*, 2 Feb. 1734; 4 Jan. 1734; 9 Apr. 1734; 23 Apr. 1734; 7 May 1734; 7 Mar. 1734; 30 Mar. 1734; 18 Apr. 1734; 9 Feb. 1734; 22 Jan. 1734; 8 Jun. 1734; 7 Jun. 1734 and 24 Apr. 1734.

Table 5.6: Largest suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Thomas Bush	-	22 17 ⁶	6 19	0 7	-	17 6	2 11	0 18	0 3	2 4	53 5
Cuz Stephen Nash	4 3	0 5	1 1	3 19	-	13 16	0 5	2 9	2 1	2 14	30 13
Mr Fisher	-	7 0	2 12	3 1	2 1	2 4	-	0 6	-	-	17 4
Cuz Marklove	-	4 5	1 2	1 6	0 19	2 6	2 7	0 13	1 5	0 2	14 5
Total from Named Suppliers⁵	5 14	64 11	19 4	15 2	9 3	51 3	7 18	13 8	6 9	6 15	199 7
Total from all Suppliers	6 9	67 13	21 5	22 10	11 7	63 16	9 0	15 1	7 8	11 10	235 19
Per cent from Named Suppliers	88	95	90	67	80	80	87	89	87	59	85

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December 3. Partial year accounts from January to October 4. Partial year accounts from March to December 5. Table A5.6.1 in Appendix 7 lists all named suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Wharton family, and include family members, such as Mrs Wharton and Cuz Mary Hickes, prominent retailers whose names appear in numerous newspaper advertisements, such as Mr Roe and Marmaduke Williams, and a number of servants and tenants, such as a manservant named Robert, and the hatter, Thomas Owen. 6. Monetary units: £ and s.

The vast majority of the Wharton income came from rents on several properties and parcels of land held by Joshua Wharton in Bristol, and the fields in and around Brislington. A list of tenants in the household account book includes many names that also appear in the accounts as suppliers of goods to the household. Among them are Thomas Brayne, Marmaduke Williams, Zachariah Hughes, Cuz Wall, James Horrill, John Dowding and Thomas Owen. Such additional notes provide interesting details about Joshua Whartons household expenditure and give an insight into the complex relationships between the family and those who provided them with the range of goods and services they required.

The Horrill family are an example of tenants who played a large part in the day-to-day lives of the Whartons. Henry Horrill was an employee and also supplied malt, James Horrill received payments for several days work, including 'cutting 2 loads Thornes in ye Comon' and '2 days ½ mowing the grass...and for 2 Days Haymaking', and James Horrill junior supplied coal to the Whartons and took Mrs Wharton on trips to Cirencester. James's sister supplied fowl on occasions, Dorothy Horrill was paid for ironing clothes, and James Horrill's wife sometimes supplied bacon to the family.³⁹²

The remaining categories of consumable goods only accounted for a small proportion of total spending over the course of the period, accounting for a combined total of 11 per cent. Joshua's household spent just over £5 on pottery and glass during the ten-year period and supply was fairly evenly spread among a handful of retailers throughout that time. Table 5.7 looks at the top three suppliers of pottery and glass to the family, and again demonstrates the relatively small sums of money involved, the sporadic nature of the supply, but also the important role played by retailers and family members, purchases from whom often accounted for in excess of 50 per cent of the total spend.

³⁹² BRO 6783.

Table 5.7: Largest suppliers of pottery and glass to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ₃	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr Franks	-	0 3 ⁵	-	0 3	-	-	-	0 2	0 1	0 5	0 14
Mr Jones	-	0 10	-	-	0 2	-	-	-	-	-	0 12
Cuz Bazell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0 1	0 4	0 5
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	-	0 13	-	0 3	0 2	-	-	0 2	0 2	0 9	1 19
Total from all Suppliers	0 2	1 5	0 7	0 6	0 9	0 9	0 18	0 8	0 6	0 16	5 6
Per cent from Named Suppliers	-	52	-	51	25	30	-	48	88	55	37

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December.

5. Monetary units: £ and s. 6. Table A5.7.1 in Appendix 7 provides a complete list of suppliers of pottery and glass to the Wharton household

The purchase of furniture appears to have been another infrequent event in the Wharton household, only taking place in 1734, 1739, 1741 and 1742, with a total of only five purchases throughout the ten years of the account book. Table 5.8 highlights the dominance of Christopher Raymond, with sales from him accounting for over two thirds of the total expenditure on furniture during the period.

Table 5.8: Largest suppliers of furniture to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ₃	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr C Raymond	-	20 1 ^s	-	-	-	-	-	-	0 14	-	20 15
Capt. Furny	-	3 10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 10
Mr Shouring	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 16	-	-	-	1 16
Stephen Button	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 4	-	1 4
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	-	23 11	-	-	-	-	1 16	-	1 18	-	27 5
Total from all Suppliers	-	24 1	-	-	-	-	1 16	-	1 18	0 2	27 17
Per cent from Named Suppliers	-	98	-	-	-	-	100	-	100	-	98

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s. 6. Table A5.8.1 in Appendix 7 provides a complete list of suppliers of furniture to the Wharton household.

Mr Lovell supplied the Wharton family with the overwhelming majority of metal wares and jewellery, over £4 of the total of £6 16s spent over the ten years of the accounts. In one year, three named individuals accounted for 100 per cent of the expenditure on this category of goods, but at other times were responsible for less than half of the total. Patterns of purchasing were not as sporadic as those for furniture, and like pottery and glass they tended to be for relatively small amounts, as demonstrated in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: Largest suppliers of metal wares and jewellery to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr Lovell	-	3 8 ⁵	-	-	0 8	-	0 7	-	-	-	4 3
Mr Martin	-	0 2	-	-	0 1	0 13	0 2	-	-	-	0 18
Mr John Vaughn	-	-	-	-	-	0 10	-	-	-	-	0 10
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	0 3	3 11	-	0 2	0 10	1 5	0 16	-	0 6	0 4	0 17
Total from all Suppliers	0 3	0 19	0 2	1 0	2 3	1 8	0 19	-	0 8	1 0	11 2
Per cent from Named Suppliers	100	90	-	10	24	89	84	-	69	20	62

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s. 6. Table A5.9.1 in Appendix 7 provides a complete list of suppliers of metal wares and jewellery to the Wharton household.

The majority of the total sum spent on books and stationery was made up of the costs associated with writing and carrying letters, and the regular supply of newspapers. Cuz Wall was responsible for sending a large number of 3d letters on Joshua Wharton's behalf, as well as acquiring boxes for packaging up clothes and books destined for Joshua's cousin, Michael Wharton, in Virginia. He also bought several almanacs, packs of playing cards, quires of paper and ink, an Act of Parliament, a 'Prayer Book with ye Companion to ye Alter for Daughter Betty', a Parish Book, and a Primer for ye Girl'. Mr Walker also supplied a number of newspapers to the Wharton family.³⁹³

Evidence that the Wharton family bought newspapers on a regular basis, plus the appearance in the Wharton account book of a range of individuals who advertised in those papers, confirms the likelihood that a

³⁹³ Further details can be found in *BRO 6783*.

proportion of their household purchases were influenced by the types of notices discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis. Books purchased tended to be prayer books, or other religious material, and almanacs, and the total expenditure on books and stationery between 1733 and 1742 accounted for only one per cent of the Wharton's entire spending on consumable goods.

Finally, miscellaneous household goods, comprising soap, candles, pots and pans, and other items of kitchen equipment, made up nearly five per cent of total household expenditure for the Wharton's. Candles, supplied overwhelmingly by Zachariah Hughes, soap by Mr Hazell and Mr Chubb, and a range of leather goods, including saddles and harnesses, purchased from Thomas Little, were some of the most important categories.

5.8: Suppliers to the Greene Household

The Greene household also obtained their domestic consumables from a wide variety of sources, ranging from local to international. When attempting to establish the networks of supply involved, the more general nature of a proportion of the entries has made it more difficult to provide as detailed a picture of the suppliers of goods to the Greene household as for the Wharton household. This is especially the case for items of food and drink, which are discussed further in section 5.9. These tend to be grouped together in the accounts with overall bills being payable to one of a number of general provisions stores. However, there is still sufficient information surrounding the remaining categories of goods to make it possible to gain a great deal of insight into the complexity of trading networks in colonial Boston.

Family members played a large part in the provision of everyday, as well as more specialised, items to the Greene household. Rufus's brother,

Thomas Greene, provided £490 19s worth of goods over a period of 16 years, between 1735 and 1751. Appearing 31 times in the Expense Book, he provided his brother's household with textiles like calico and garlix, hats and thread, tallow, bohea tea, wheat, milk, butter and cheese. The frequent appearances of Benjamin Greene in the account book, another of Rufus's brothers, further highlights the close family ties. As well as supplying shoes, buckles and bohea tea, he also collected Rufus's fire club money and provided pasture for his horse from 1752 onwards. In total, Rufus gave Benjamin £189 over 21 years between 1736 and 1759. Rufus also began to receive a number of items from his son, Rufus Greene Jnr., beginning in 1752. The majority concerned the supply of flour, but there was also mention of rum and shoes. Rufus occasionally gave his sister money for herself and her children, and sometimes gave money for clothes and boarding to his cousins, Nathaniel and John Greene. The joint venture between Rufus, Thomas and Benjamin to build and supply a sailing vessel called The Three Brothers, further demonstrates the influence of family on Rufus's expenditure.

Evidence of the Greene family's immersion in the Boston marketplace can also be seen from a number of advertisements appearing in local newspapers during this period. Rufus's younger brother, Nathaniel, advertised 'fine English salt at six shillings, by the Bushell, and very good sweet Almonds at Eighteen pence a pound' for sale at the Stag's Head in 1732. The following year he had branched out to include 'good black velvet, black Paduasoyes, brocaded silks, strip'd and flower'd Lutestrings, plain light colour'd Lutestring, all at reasonable Rates' from his house in Summer Street.³⁹⁴ Twenty years

³⁹⁴ *The Boston News-Letter*, 24 Jan. 1732 and 14 Jun. 1733.

later, Rufus's older brother, Thomas, also advertised a variety of English goods for sale in the local press.³⁹⁵

A number of prominent merchants and craftsmen also supplied the Greene household with a wide variety of goods. The wine salesman, John Hamock, and the tailor, Henry Laughton, advertised regularly in Boston newspapers during the colonial period and are frequent entries in the household accounts.³⁹⁶ Others falling within the same category include the merchant, Zachariah Johanot, the hatter, John Osgood, and the furniture maker, William Price.³⁹⁷ A substantial quantity of goods supplied to the Greene household came from smaller, more general shopkeepers who stocked a wide range of goods. Examples include Mr William White, who supplied candles, butter and lemons, Ebenezer Storer, who supplied a range of groceries, and Lydia Lewis, who supplied 'Callimanco' fabric, shoes and fish, among other items. Each of these retailers placed advertisements in their local newspapers and their regular appearance in the Greene accounts indicates the relative absence of specialised retailers in Boston at this time, compared to Bristol, and the corresponding relative dominance of general

³⁹⁵ *The Boston Evening Post*, 25 June 1753 and 6 May 1754.

³⁹⁶ John Hamock advertised the sale of wines and spirits on dozens of occasions in the *The Boston News-Letter*, *The Boston Gazette* and *The Boston Evening Post*. Henry Laughton advertised his tailoring business in the *The Boston News-Letter* and *The Boston Evening Post*.

³⁹⁷ Zachariah Johanot in *The Boston Gazette*, 24 Jun. 1728, John Osgood in the same newspaper on 20 Mar. 1750, and William Price on numerous occasions in *The New England Courant*, *The Boston Gazette* and *The Boston News-Letter* between 1723 and 1748.

traders in the colonial marketplace previously highlighted in Chapters 3 and 4.³⁹⁸

The Greene household also purchased goods from a significant number of local suppliers who did not fall into either of the above categories. For example, Mrs Mosley supplied the Greene family with milk for the majority of the period, and Mr Jacob Sheaf supplied them with beer. Finally, Rufus Greene looked abroad for supplies of several lots of goods, beginning in 1748 with a request for his brother Thomas to bring sundry goods back from England. In 1749, he paid Messrs Lane and Caswell for sundry goods from the mother country, and this practice continued more frequently during the 1750s, when Captain Atkins and Captain Partridge were charged with buying 'China for my family use' and 'shoes for my family'.³⁹⁹

The list of suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Greene family is dominated by a handful of names, with Martin Brimmer, Nathaniel Viall, Samuel Grant, Henry Laughton and Mr Crosby accounting for around two-thirds of the total in Table 5.10.

³⁹⁸ William White advertised in *The Boston News-letter* and *The Boston Evening Post*, Ebenezer Storer and Lydia Lewis advertised their goods in *The Boston News-Letter*.

³⁹⁹ *Rufus Greene Expense Book, 1728-1760*.

Table 5.10: Named suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Greene household, 1734-1759¹

Name of Supplier ³	Years Supplied	Total Spent	No. of Purchases	Average per Purchase
Martin Brimmer	1745-1759	624 13 ²	22	28 8
Nathaniel Viall	1739-1753	392 8	30	13 2
Samuel Grant	1735-53	383 5	21	18 5
Henry Laughton	1746-1757	310 18	8	38 17
Mr Crosby	1741-1759	202 7	33	6 3
Thomas Hayes	1743-1759	190 14	21	9 2
Elizabeth Richardson	1737-1744	129 0	20	6 9
Capt. Partridge	1750-1758	126 12	5	25 6
Ann Foot	1743-1755	93 19	8	11 15
Mr Foot	1741-1754	69 19	5	14 0
Mr Simpson	1740-1759	69 14	15	4 13
Mr Henno	1749-1759	52 15	6	8 16
Mr Beach	1749	45 0	1	45 0
Jeremiah Stimson	1752-1758	43 18	7	6 6
John Cornish	1749-1759	42 5	7	6 1
John Clear	1745-1753	39 6	5	7 17
Mrs Downe	1742-1752	34 11	3	11 10
Hannah Deming	1739-1746	31 7	4	7 17
John Allen	1736-1745	30 7	8	3 16
Total		2912 18	283	10 6

1. Sources: see Table 5.2b. 2. Monetary units: £ and s after sterling conversion rates have been applied. 3. Table A5.10.1 in Appendix 8 provides a complete list of the suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Greene household

The network of supply for pottery and glass, furniture, and metal wares and jewellery, in Table 5.11, demonstrate similar patterns in each category, with named suppliers accounting for around half of Rufus Greene's total household expenditure in those areas.⁴⁰⁰ However, there are also clear differences. Entries detailing the purchase of food and drink, and textiles and clothing, from named suppliers appear much more frequently than those for the rest of the categories combined. Together, they also account for well over 80 per cent of the total household expenditure, providing evidence of the importance of establishing strong relationships with those who supplied the household with essential items, whether family members or trusted retailers. Therefore, although, as mentioned earlier, it can be difficult to accurately

⁴⁰⁰ *Rufus Greene Expense Book, 1728-1760.*

ascertain the destination of a proportion of purchases appearing in the account book of Rufus Greene, the figures above represent significant percentages and enable a detailed analysis of many aspects of the network of supply in eighteenth-century Boston for one particular family.

Table 5.11: Named suppliers of additional goods to the Greene household, 1734-1759¹

	Years of Supply	Total Spent	No. of Purchases	Average per Purchase
Pottery & Glass				
Capt. Henry Atkins	1750-1752	41 10 ²	3	13 17
Moses Pierce	1739-1746	17 5	4	4 6
Mrs Demaresque	1747	16 0	1	16 0
Nathaniel Emory	1758	6 0	1	6 0
Mr Box	1755	1 4	1	1 4
Total		81 19	10	8 4
Furniture				
Susanna Condry	1746	62 1	2	31 1
Mr Glen	1744-1750	40 10	3	13 10
William Price	1745-1751	40 1	3	13 7
Mr Comber	1739	7 10	1	7 10
Mr Church	1753-1755	6 3	2	3 1 7
Total		153 5	11	14 4
Metal wares & Jewellery				
William Cowell	1747-1750	354 14	7	50 13
Paul Revere	1748	45 0	1	45 0
William Walter Wallis	1752	8 15	1	8 15
Mr Bagnal	1742-1743	3 10	2	1 15
Total		411 19	11	37 9

1. Sources: see Table 5.2b. 2. Monetary units: £ and s after sterling conversion rates have been applied.

5.9: Household Spending on Food and Drink

This section looks in more depth at the types of purchases dominating expenditure on the important category of food and drink in the Wharton and Greene households. Where probate inventories alone have been used to study patterns of consumption, expenditure on food and drink has largely been overlooked. Perishable food items were not recorded in inventories and they therefore cannot capture the turnover of goods. However, where household accounts have been studied to assess consumption patterns,

whether for gentry families or those further down the social scale, they have provided strong evidence that food and drink made up a significant proportion of domestic expenditure. As purchases of food and drink dominated both the Wharton and Greene accounts throughout the period, it is worth examining in further detail the types of products and the frequency with which they were purchased.

5.9.1: Food and Drink in the Wharton Accounts

The greater level of detail in the Wharton accounts enables a further breakdown of food and drink purchases into individual categories. The most common entries in the Wharton account book, appearing every month, comprise purchases of meat, cheese, butter, milk, chocolate, coffee, tea, sugar, wine, brandy, candles and soap. In addition to these household staples, seasonal items like asparagus, mackerel, oysters, lobsters and anchovies appear on a more irregular basis. Payments for the most perishable items, such as milk and bread, were noted on a weekly basis, while those with a relatively longer shelf-life, such as bacon and cheese were more likely to appear on a monthly basis throughout the period of the accounts. Expenditure on some items followed a seasonal pattern, with asparagus and mackerel only being bought in April and May, and quantities of oysters only purchased in July.⁴⁰¹

Tables 5.12a and 5.12b demonstrate the relative importance of different categories within overall spending on food and drink by the families, as well as the total expended in each year. Between 1734 and 1742, the Wharton household spent just over £408 on items of food and drink. Their

⁴⁰¹ BRO 6783.

annual expenditure fluctuated between £16 13s in 1733 and £63 10s in 1736, but generally ranged between £25 and £50 per year. During a similar period, Muldrew calculated that very poor families were spending an average of between £9 and £13 on food per year, and a 'well-employed family of nine' between £24 and £43 annually on food. The Latham family spent between £7 and £11 on food during the first 15 years of their household account book, and £15 to £22 per year when the children were older.⁴⁰² As the Wharton household fluctuated between two and four members, their spending per head on food was much higher than even the 'well-employed' family, and placed them firmly in the 'middling' bracket of expenditure.

Table 5.12a: Expenditure on food and drink for the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Meat & Fish	6 11 ⁵	18 6	14 16	22 15	10 7	17 13	15 10	13 7	20 13	24 13	164 11
Alcohol & Tobacco	2 19	5 19	4 16	12 19	4 7	13 1	4 10	2 15	0 15	5 0	57 1
Dairy	2 3	7 16	6 7	6 16	5 1	5 7	3 19	5 12	3 14	5 12	52 7
Chocolate	1 0	3 4	3 7	4 17	2 1	4 19	3 12	3 0	3 13	4 19	34 12
Bread	-	2 1	2 14	7 19	1 12	1 15	1 5	6 10	2 10	3 1	29 7
Sugar	1 16	3 15	3 1	3 7	1 13	3 3	2 17	2 9	1 18	3 3	27 2
Tea & Coffee	1 9	4 3	2 15	2 14	1 14	2 10	1 19	3 6	2 12	3 12	26 14
Fruit	0 8	2 1	0 11	1 6	0 6	1 3	0 12	1 7	0 4	0 8	0 6
Veg	0 2	0 7	0 9	0 9	0 3	0 15	0 15	-	0 10	0 8	3 18
Salt & Spices	0 5	0 5	0 6	0 8	0 2	1 9	0 5	0 7	0 5	0 14	4 6
Total	16 13	47 17	39 2	63 10	27 6	51 15	35 4	38 13	36 14	51 10	408 4

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

⁴⁰² Muldrew, *Food, Energy*, p. 29 and p. 52.

Table 5.12b: Expenditure on food and drink for the Wharton household in percentages¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Average Total
Meat & Fish	38	38	38	36	38	34	44	35	56	48	40
Alcohol & Tobacco	18	13	12	20	16	25	13	7	2	10	14
Dairy	13	16	16	11	18	10	11	15	10	11	13
Chocolate	6	7	9	8	8	10	10	8	10	10	9
Bread	-	4	7	13	6	3	4	17	7	6	7
Sugar	11	8	8	5	6	6	8	6	5	6	7
Tea & Coffee	9	9	7	4	6	5	6	9	7	7	7
Fruit	3	4	2	2	1	2	2	4	1	1	2
Veg	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	-	1	1	1
Salt & Spices	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December 3. Partial year accounts from January to October 4. Partial year accounts from March to December.

Tables 5.12a and 5.12b also highlight the relative dominance of purchases of meat and fish over the other categories of goods. Alcohol and tobacco, and dairy products accounted for a sizeable proportion of the Wharton household expenditure, followed by chocolate, bread, sugar, and tea and coffee. Fruit, vegetables, and salt and spices account for only a small proportion of the total food and drink budget. This was undoubtedly due to the family being able to produce a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables from their own gardens. Evidence for this assumption can be found in descriptions of the purchase of a range of seeds, which appear in the account book, and the rural location in which they lived. Salt and spices only made infrequent appearances in the account books because salt was a relatively cheap commodity, which was generally bought in bulk, and spices were only used occasionally in cooking during this period. Having noted the dominance of notices for tea, coffee, sugar and chocolate, appearing in newspapers in Bristol during this period, in Chapter 4 of this thesis, Tables 5.12a and 5.12b

highlight the annual levels of their consumption within the Wharton household. Although each commodity only accounts for a relatively modest average of seven to nine per cent of total household expenditure on food and drink, together they account for almost a quarter of the total.

Table 5.13 provides further evidence surrounding the patterns of expenditure on food and drink by demonstrating the numbers and frequencies of purchases for several of the categories and highlighting the largest suppliers. It demonstrates the breadth of supply chains, with the Wharton family obtaining many of their products from a wide variety of sources including high street retailers, family members and servants. Despite the largest category, meat and fish, being dominated by John Bevan, who supplied 65 per cent of the total, they used 46 other suppliers to source the remaining 35 per cent. Cuz Wall was one of 36 suppliers of dairy products to the family, providing 21 per cent of the total, and this category of food and drink appeared the most frequently in the account book, averaging 22 entries per annum.

Table 5.13: Patterns of expenditure from named suppliers of food and drink to the Wharton household, 1733-1742¹

	Tea & Coffee	Chocolate	Sugar	Dairy	Meat & Fish
Total Spent	18 15 ²	31 5	18 7	36 4	137 14
No. Of Suppliers	20	9	18	36	47
No. of Purchases	199	151	119	222	232
Average per Supplier	0 19	0 9	1 0	1 0	2 19
Average per Purchase	0 2	0 4	0 3	0 3	0 12
Frequency of Purchases	20 p.a.	15 p.a.	12 p.a.	22 p.a.	19 p.a.
Largest Supplier	Cuz Ruddock	Ms Noblett	Mr Tyler	Cuz Wall	John Bevan
Total Spent	4 8	20 7	8 14	7 13	89 8
Percentage of Overall Total	24	65	47	21	65

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Monetary units: £ and s.

With regards to the supply of chocolate, shown in Table 5.14, the degree of specialisation was even greater. Only nine suppliers provided the Wharton household with their chocolate purchases, with 90 per cent coming from named suppliers. Two-thirds of the supply was provided by Ms Noblett and Mr Churchman with the overwhelming majority coming from Ms Noblett. Mr Churchman advertised regularly in the Bristol newspapers and dealt directly with the Whartons on a monthly basis, but it was Ms Noblett who provided the family with the overwhelming majority of their chocolate throughout the period, being responsible for 65 per cent of the total.

Table 5.14: Largest suppliers of chocolate to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Ms Noblett	0 13 ⁵	1 9	1 19	2 0	1 3	3 0	2 15	2 11	2 10	2 5	20 5
Mr Churchman	0 2	1 10	0 9	2 7	0 5	0 16	0 17	0 4	1 2	1 1	8 13
Cuz Wall	-	-	-	0 2	-	-	-	-	-	1 0	1 2
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	0 15	3 4	2 17	4 14	1 8	4 1	3 12	2 15	3 13	4 6	31 5
Total from all Suppliers	1 0	3 4	3 7	4 17	2 1	4 19	3 12	3 0	3 13	4 19	34 12
Per cent from Named Suppliers	77	100	85	96	68	82	100	92	100	88	90

1 Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s. 6. Table A5.14.1 in Appendix 9 provides a complete list of the suppliers of chocolate to the Wharton household.

Cuz Wall, Cuz Ruddock and Ms Rogerson, who were important providers of tea and coffee to the Wharton household, as demonstrated in Table 5.15, occasionally supplied chocolate but only in relatively small amounts. A larger proportion of household income was spent on chocolate than tea and coffee, with some of it being given as gifts.

Table 5.15: Largest suppliers of tea and coffee to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ₃	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Cuz Ruddock	0 12 ^b	1 13	1 6	0 15	0 4	-	-	-	-	-	4 10
Mr Jenkins	-	-	-	-	-	-	0 7	0 11	1 7	1 0	3 5
Ms Noblett	0 3	0 5	-	0 3	-	0 10	0 12	0 6	0 2	-	2 1
Ms Rogerson	0 6	0 13	0 14	0 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 17
Cuz Wall	-	-	-	-	-	0 14	-	0 3	-	0 5	1 2
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	1 5	3 16	2 9	1 17	0 16	1 19	1 12	1 10	1 19	1 13	18 16
Total from all Suppliers	1 9	4 3	2 15	2 14	1 14	2 10	1 19	3 6	2 12	3 12	26 14
Per cent from Named Suppliers	84	92	79	67	46	78	82	45	75	46	73

1 Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s. 6. Table A5.15.1 in Appendix 9 provides a complete list of the suppliers of tea and coffee to the Wharton household.

Among the named suppliers of sugar in Table 5.16, two stand out as the major providers: Mr Liddiott and Mr Tyler. Mr Tyler supplied the largest proportion, 47 per cent, and between them they accounted for almost two-thirds of the total sum spent on sugar. Average expenditure ran at similar levels to those for tea and coffee, but much lower than for chocolate.

Table 5.16: Largest suppliers of sugar to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ₃	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr Tyler	0 4 ^b	0 4	0 16	0 18	1 4	1 12	2 13	1 3	-	-	8 14
Mr Liddiott	0 12	2 0	0 12	0 13	0 3	0 6	-	-	-	-	4 6
Cuz Bazell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 0	-	-	1 0
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	1 0	2 8	1 14	1 13	1 8	2 13	2 17	2 8	1 2	1 4	18 7
Total from all Suppliers	1 16	3 15	3 0	3 7	1 13	3 3	2 17	2 9	1 18	3 3	27 1
Per cent from Named Suppliers	56	64	56	50	83	84	99	98	57	38	68

1 Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s. 6. Table A5.16.1 in Appendix 9 provides a complete list of the suppliers of sugar to the Wharton household.

Purchases of dairy, and meat and fish, demonstrate a number of differences in their patterns of supply compared to tea, coffee and sugar, with a significantly increased number of suppliers and individual purchases. Thirty six people supplied the Wharton household with their cheese, milk and butter between 1733 and 1742. There is also a notable absence of large retailers of dairy products, with family members, servants and tenants dominating the supply chain. Presumably dairy products were bought in smaller quantities and more often than 'dry goods' like tea and coffee, because they could not be kept. This would have affected the supply chain as maintaining a regular supply would have required more people who happened to have what the Whartons wanted on any particular day. Table 5.17 demonstrates that Cuz Wall supplied a large proportion of the Wharton's cheese, with significant quantities of milk being provided by Joise Tucker and butter by Jane Smith. The large number of suppliers and the greater frequency of purchases highlights the relatively complex purchasing patterns involved in the dairy trade, which would have been populated by lots of small, local producers.

Table 5.17: Largest suppliers of dairy products to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Cuz Wall	0 1 ⁵	0 15	0 1	0 18	0 19	1 3	0 12	1 6	1 12	0 6	7 13
Jane Smith	0 15	0 13	1 0	2 0	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 8
Cuz John Hickes	0 12	-	-	-	-	-	1 2	1 0	0 17	-	3 11
Joise Tucker	-	-	-	0 8	0 5	0 6	0 9	0 11	0 3	-	2 2
Betty Bull	-	-	-	0 9	0 8	-	0 8	0 9	-	-	1 14
Henry Pears	-	-	1 1	0 11	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 12
Mrs Wharton	-	-	1 1	-	-	-	-	0 3	-	0 2	1 6
Cuz Mary Hickes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 1	1 1
Robert Ponting	-	-	-	0 6	-	0 15	-	-	-	-	1 1
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	1 9	3 7	5 7	6 1	2 11	3 0	2 15	4 2	3 3	4 9	36 4
Total from all Suppliers	2 3	7 16	6 7	6 16	5 1	5 7	3 19	5 12	3 14	5 12	52 7
Per cent from Named Suppliers	69	43	84	89	50	56	69	73	86	80	69

1. Sources: see Table 5.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s. 6. Table A5.17.1 in Appendix 9 provides a complete list of suppliers of dairy products to the Wharton household.

Meat was an expensive yet important component of the household diet of middle-ranking families such as the Wharton's and it accounts for almost £138 of the total £407 spent on food and drink between 1733 and 1742. John Bevan supplied the overwhelming majority of meat with quarterly bills totally nearly £90. Table 5.18 demonstrates that, together with William Maberly and John Smith, these three butchers provided over £120 of beef, lamb, pork and veal for the Wharton family. Bacon, game, fish and seafood were acquired from a wide variety of sources, including family members and servants, and the inclusion of these items goes some way to explaining the large number of suppliers and the relatively high frequency of purchases within the meat and

fish category. Again, this would have been because meat and fish were consumed in smaller quantities and, particularly in the case of fish, they needed to be bought fresh. Comparisons with gentry families like the Smyths appear in Section 5.11. Research carried out by Muldrew calculated that Thomas Turner, a small Sussex shopkeeper, consumed 2lb of meat every day, a large quantity compared to modern standards, and the Wharton accounts confirm the important place of meat in the eighteenth-century diet.

Table 5.18: Largest suppliers of meat and fish to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
John Bevan	3 18 ⁵	16 13	10 3	12 2	8 12	13 1	9 15	8 2	6 18	0 5	89 9
William Maberly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8 4	7 9	15 13
John Smith	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 9	2 17	2 12	1 13	8 11
Cuz Wall	0 1	-	-	0 6	0 6	0 17	-	0 4	0 14	0 9	2 17
Cuz Mary Hickers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0 3	1 9	1 12
James Horrill's wife	-	-	-	-	-	-	0 16	0 15	-	-	1 11
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 4	1 4
Joise Tucker	-	-	0 2	-	0 7	0 4	0 5	0 3	-	0 1	1 2
Cuz Marklove	-	0 4	0 6	-	-	-	0 3	0 2	-	0 6	1 1
Market		-	-	0 4	-	-	0 16	-	-	-	1 0
Total from Named Suppliers⁶	4 2	17 4	12 3	15 6	9 10	15 8	14 5	12 13	19 16	17 7	137 14
Total from all Suppliers	6 1	18 6	14 16	22 15	10 7	17 13	15 10	13 7	20 13	24 13	164 1
Per cent from Named Suppliers	67	94	82	67	92	87	92	95	96	70	89

¹ Sources: see Table 5.1. ² Partial year accounts from July to December. ³ Partial year accounts from January to October. ⁴ Partial year accounts from March to December. ⁵ Monetary units: £ and s. ⁶ Table A5.18.1 in Appendix 9 provides a complete list of the suppliers of meat and fish to the Wharton household.

5.9.2: Food and Drink in the Greene Accounts

Although the Greene accounts do not contain the same level of detail as the Wharton accounts, they can still yield useful information on spending habits surrounding the purchase of food and drink. Wharton's expenditure can also be compared to contemporary colonial estimates regarding average middle-class consumption of a range of produce, which appeared in Boston newspapers in 1728.⁴⁰³ According to one estimate, a middling family of no more than eight people could expect to spend £219 on food and drink in a year, which when converted to sterling equals around £73.⁴⁰⁴ Although this is higher than the Wharton family's expenditure on food and drink, when the differences in household size are taken into account, the per capita expenditure is comparable for middle-class families on both sides of the Atlantic.

Table 5.19 outlines the most prominent individuals who supplied food and drink items to the Greene household between 1734 and 1759, including data on the period they appear in the account book, the total expenditure, the number of purchases, and the average spend per purchase. With regards to food and drink, named suppliers made up almost half of total expenditure, at just over £4483 and 19 shillings. Over half of that total also came from a small group of individuals, including Edward Holliday, John Hamock, Powers Marriot, Unite Mosley, William Henshaw and Ebenezer Storer. As with the Wharton accounts, it highlights differences in the purchasing patterns between various types of goods. For example, the supplier who appears in

⁴⁰³ Carl Bridenbaugh, 'The High Cost of Living in Boston, 1728', *New England Quarterly*, 5, 4, October, 1932, 800-811.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 805.

the accounts most frequently, Unite Mosley, supplied the Greene household with milk, and occasionally cream. As perishable items, both would need to be supplied on a regular and frequent basis, and the average bill payable to Mrs Mosley was £5 18s. Alternatively, John Hamock supplied the Greene family with rum, a product with a long shelf-life, for almost 20 years yet only appears in the account book on an annual basis, with his bills averaging £30 8s. Table 5.19 also highlights the significance of loyalty, trust and reputation concerning the supply of this important category of goods to the Greene household, by highlighting the long-term nature of their relationships with suppliers. The vast majority of the retailers appearing in the table supplied the Greene household for more than ten years, and frequently over 20 years.

Table 5.19: Named suppliers of food and drink to the Greene household, 1734-1759¹

Name of Supplier	Years of Supply	Total	Number of Purchases	Average per Purchase	Goods Supplied ²
Edward Holliday	1746-1759	749 4 ³	24	31 4	flour
John Hamock	1738-1757	486 12	16	30 8	wine
Powers Marriott	1737-1757	482 12	25	19 6	tea
Unite Mosley	1745-1759	354 6	60	5 18	milk, cream
William Henshaw	1747-1759	314 7	53	5 19	lemons, wheat, flour
Ebenezer Storer	1734-1758	270 8	28	9 13	cheese, sugar, oats
Samuel Deming	1742-1759	255 1	21	12 3	corn, wheat, cocoa, rum, butter, sugar, pork
Mr Scarbourer	1740-1758	244 19	14	17 10	cider, milk
Henry Johnson	1749-1750	189 19	6	31 13	lemons, a hog
Mr White	1745-1754	160 11	21	7 13	potatoes, vinegar, butter, lemons
Zachariah Johanot	1743-1758	126 8	12	10 11	flour, sugar, rum
Mr Bromfield	1744-1758	117 11	6	19 12	sugar, tea, cheese
Jacob Sheaf	1735-1748	117 4	13	9 0	beer
Enoch Parker	1740-1758	100 2	15	6 14	milk
John Salmon	1743-1752	84 7	6	14 1	rum, sugar
Capt. Hewer	1749	62 5	2	31 3	rum
Charles Coffin	1740-1758	60 11	8	7 11	lemons
Capt. Bennett	1748	50 0	1	50 0	wine
Wallis Gamalick	1747-1754	49 14	4	12 8	flour
James Griffin	1751	44 13	1	44 13	sugar
Mr Chandler	1744-1756	41 7	5	8 5	butter
Mr Smart	1749	33 6	1	33 6	butter
Mr Gillam	1736-1758	29 14	6	4 19	pork
Capt. Drude	1748	29 5	1	29 5	tea
Mr Potter	1753-1756	27 13	2	13 16	Cheese
Total		4483 19	351	12 15	

1. Sources: see Table 5.2a. 2. Many of the entries in the Rufus Greene account book only provide total amounts payable to particular individuals without detailing the goods purchased. Therefore, the information included in the table only provides a partial picture of the goods supplied to the Greene family by the named retailers. It provides instead an indication of some of the networks of supply at work. 3. Monetary units: £ and s after sterling conversion rates have been applied.

5.10: Conclusion: Purchasing Patterns and Networks of Supply

Analysis of the Wharton and Greene account books reveals the complex networks of supply necessary to supply middling households in both cities with the wide range of goods they required. Purchasing patterns varied between different categories of goods for both families. Although purchases of food and drink appear most frequently in both sets of accounts, the greater level of detail in the Wharton account book also enables us to highlight variances between different types of food. Purchasing decisions were certainly influenced by the relative perishability of products, with some needing to be supplied fresh on a daily basis, whereas other goods could be purchased in advance and stored until they were required.

Therefore, while tea and coffee, chocolate and sugar tended to be purchased on a fortnightly or monthly basis in the Wharton accounts, dairy products, and meat and fish, were purchased in smaller quantities and on a more regular basis. Part of the explanation can be attributed to practical issues surrounding the safe storage of such items. However, dairy products, and meat and fish, were also acquired from a larger number of suppliers by the Wharton household than the other categories of food and drink, from tenants and family members, to Bristol butchers. This could be a reflection of market intelligence concerning the necessity of ensuring the maintenance of a regular and reliable supply of certain, particularly perishable categories of goods.

Purchases of textiles and clothing also appeared with relative frequency in both sets of accounts, ranging from regular individual purchases of ribbon and lace, to the occasional placement of orders for gowns and suits

of clothes. The remaining categories of goods feature far less frequently in both sets of accounts, with only the occasional purchase of items of furniture, metal wares and jewellery, and pottery and glass.

In the Wharton account book, tea, coffee and chocolate were mainly purchased from a limited number of specified suppliers, while meat, fish, dairy products and sugar tended to come from a whole array of, often unnamed, sources. The impression given, therefore, is that these products were more widely available in the consumer marketplace. Conversely, the fact that items like furniture, pottery, jewellery and books, tended to come from a smaller number of suppliers, highlights greater restrictions on supply and a proportionately larger degree of specialisation.

Regardless of differences in the frequency of purchases across the different categories of goods, it is still possible to identify prominent individuals responsible for supplying a large proportion of these goods to each household. Both families acquired their domestic goods from a wide variety of sources, including established retailers, family members, merchants, craftsmen and women, servants and itinerant traders. Both sets of accounts are dominated by a group of individuals whose names appear frequently throughout the account books. They provide evidence of the importance of the establishment of strong ties between consumers and suppliers in order to ensure a regular and reliable system of provision. In the two most important categories of goods, food and drink, and textiles and clothing, the value of purchases from named suppliers was very similar, and a handful of individuals often accounted for a large proportion of the total expenditure. In the Wharton account book, 90 per cent of the chocolate, 73 per cent of the tea and coffee,

and 66 per cent of the sugar were provided by a handful of named individuals. Single individuals dominated some categories of food and drink. For instance, John Bevan accounted for 65 per cent of the meat and fish sold to the Wharton family, and Ms Noblett supplied 65 per cent of the chocolate purchased by them. Named suppliers were also responsible for over half of the total expenditure on food and drink made by the Greene household.

Textiles and clothing were similarly dominated by a handful of individuals in both the Wharton and Greene account books, with in excess of two-thirds of the total purchases made attributable to a relatively small number of suppliers. In the case of the Wharton household, textiles and accessories were purchased from certain individuals, to be made into men's clothes by tailors, or women's clothes by family members. Although it is more difficult to separate the individual processes in the Greene accounts, a range of familiar names also dominate this category of expenditure. For purchases of pottery and glass, metal wares and jewellery, and furniture, although they only account for a relatively small number of entries, they are also dominated by familiar names in both sets of accounts, with a small number of suppliers accounting for around half of Greene's spending on such items. One aspect of supply that becomes clear in both sets of accounts is the important role played by the family in the provision of consumable products to the household. Because of the greater level of detail in the Wharton accounts, it is also possible to identify the significant role played by their servants and tenants in keeping the household supplied with domestic goods. Although there is not the same level of detail in the Greene accounts there is still

sufficient data to be able to highlight the important role of family members in the supply of goods to the Greene family.

Evidence from household accounts primarily emphasises the vital part that more informal networks of supply continued to play, highlighting the role of family members, servants and tenants in provisioning households. Secondly, the household accounts of the middling section of society demonstrate similar complexities of supply as earlier studies of gentry households have shown, requiring a variety of interactions with a range of suppliers over a wide geographical area. They also emphasise the importance of reputation, loyalty and familiarity in the purchasing decisions made by households on both sides of the Atlantic. A detailed analysis of the names appearing in the Wharton and Greene account books, along with attempts to specify the types of goods supplied and the familial and business connections between many of them, provides a useful insight into the complex web of interactions that existed in the consumer marketplace of eighteenth-century Bristol and Boston.

Chapter 4 revealed that advertisements were growing in popularity among retailers during the first-half of the eighteenth-century, and that suppliers were becoming increasingly sophisticated in the ways they marketed the goods they had for sale. Household accounts, however, demonstrate the continued dominance of the household budget by goods that are largely absent from eighteenth-century newspapers. Although the account books of Wharton and Greene contain some suppliers who did advertise in the local newspapers, both families chose the majority of their household goods from those with whom they had long-standing relationships, calling into

question the importance of advertising in affecting purchasing decisions among the middle classes in eighteenth-century Bristol and Boston.

5.11: Comparison of the Smyth and Wharton Accounts

A comparison of the Wharton and Greene accounts with those of the Smyth family enables a focus on similarities and differences in the spending habits of the middle-ranks of society and the gentry. Although the account books cover different periods, they facilitate further exploration of general trends in purchasing, and illustrate the individual priorities of these particular consumers. The Smyths were a prominent family of Bristol merchants who divided their time between the city and their estate at Ashton Court, which they purchased in 1565. Sir John Smyth died in 1726, passing the estate to his only son, also named John, who died in 1741 without an heir, leaving the estate with substantial debts. His main creditor, Jarrit Smith, who was a prominent businessman and politician, and also his brother-in-law, took over the estate by way of repayment of debts outstanding to him from the Smyth family. His son, John Hugh, adopted the surname 'Smyth' and married Miss Woolner in 1757.

5.11.1: Smyth Household Accounts: 1717-1719, and 1757-1760

The Smyth accounts are limited in their scope, compared to those of Wharton and Greene, but can be useful in giving a flavour of the priorities and preoccupations of gentry spending. Tables 5.20 and 5.21 demonstrate that the largest areas of expenditure for the Smyth family came from clothing, shoes and textiles, riding and country pursuits, and metal wares and jewellery, with relatively little spent on food other than meat and alcohol. The other categories of food and drink, which are present in the Wharton and Greene

accounts, could have been produced on their country estates, or these purchases may have been recorded elsewhere in separate kitchen account books. However, regardless of the reasons behind this omission, the Smyth accounts provide insufficient detail surrounding the purchase of food and drink to permit any meaningful conclusions concerning this category of consumption.

Table 5.20: Expenditure on consumable goods for the Smyth household in percentages¹

	1717	1718	1719	Total
Food & Drink	23	17	21	19
Stabling & Hunting	-	11	27	15
Clothing & Textiles	4	66	21	46
Pocket	4	-	9	3
Candles & Soap	26	3	-	4
Furniture	-	<1	<1	<1
Books & Stationery	-	-	3	1
Medical	-	-	7	2
Miscellaneous	45	3	12	10
Total	69 9	498 8	257 6	825 3

1. Sources: *BRO AC/AS 8-11 Account Book of the Smyth Family of Ashton Court, 1717-1719.*

Table 5.21: Expenditure on consumable goods by John Hugh Smyth in percentages¹

	1757	1758	1759	1760	Total
Food & Drink	<1	1	4	<1	1
Stabling & Hunting	3	3	17	10	5
Clothing & Textiles	84	11	73	73	30
Furniture	-	1	-	-	1
Metal wares & Jewellery	13	84	-	-	60
Books & Stationery	-	<1	2	3	1
Miscellaneous	-	<1	4	13	2
Total	94 2	697 19	85 17	110 16	988 14

1. Sources: *BRO/AC/B/44 The Account Book of John Hugh Smyth, 1757-1760*

There is sufficient detail in the Smyth accounts however to present a breakdown of expenditure on clothing and textiles by the family, as demonstrated in Tables 5.22 and 5.23. In both sets of accounts, the vast majority appears to have been spent on textiles. The relative absence of spending on tailoring between 1717 and 1719 appears to be the result of

incomplete accounts, as the later John Hugh Smyth accounts show tailoring accounting for 39 per cent of the total expenditure. More telling are the relatively large sums of money spent on hats and shoes between 1717 and 1719, and the money spent on uniforms between 1757 and 1760. Accessories like hats and shoes, and uniforms, were signifiers of status and they figure much less prominently in the Wharton accounts.

Table 5.22: Expenditure on textiles and clothing for the Smyth household in percentages¹

	1717	1718	1719	Total
Servant Clothes	-	1	2	1
Gloves	-	<1	-	<1
Hats	-	27	-	23
Shoes	-	10	32	13
Tailors	-	-	6	1
Textiles	100	56	60	62
Wigs	-	1	-	<1
Total in £ and s	2 13	326 14	53 7	382 14

Sources: see Table 5.20.

Table 5.23: Expenditure on textiles and clothing for John Hugh Smyth in percentages¹

	1757	1758	1759	1760	Total
Servant Clothes	3	3	1	5	3
Gloves	<1	1	1	-	1
Hats	4	-	3	4	3
Shoes	2	3	8	5	4
Stockings	<1	1	5	<1	2
Tailors	69	18	32	34	39
Textiles	22	70	16	48	40
Uniform	-	1	30	-	6
Wigs	<1	4	6	4	3
Total in £ and s	78 13	75 14	62 6	81 5	297 18

1. Sources: see Table 5.21

Analysing the particular suppliers and the frequency with which the Smyth's purchased textiles and clothing, and paid for these goods, as shown in Tables 5.24 and 5.25, also demonstrates differences from the analysis of the Wharton and Greene accounts. Suppliers to the Smyth family come from a pool of prominent Bristol retailers and craftsmen, and John Hugh Smyth

purchased the overwhelming majority of these items from Bristol retailers, spending a third of his total at tailors like Hagley and Hall. As Stobart has argued, reputation was a major consideration when choosing suppliers. Gentry families continued to purchase their goods from the same pool of trusted retailers, generation after generation.⁴⁰⁵ We see the same reliance on loyalty and reputation in the important part played by family members, tenants and other locals when it came to the purchase of a wide range of goods by the Wharton and Greene households, calling into the question the role of advertising as an influencer of most purchasing decisions.

Assessing the frequency of John Hugh Smyth's purchases across all the categories of goods, it is clear he paid suppliers on a much more infrequent basis than Joshua Wharton and consequently his average spend per purchase was much larger. His purchasing patterns are different to Wharton's, although they were operating in the same Bristol marketplace, and more similar to those of Rufus Greene in Boston. The differences probably relate to the greater use of credit in the transactions of Smyth and Greene. Gentry families like the Smyths made use of extended lines of credit with many of their suppliers, tending to settle bills on a semi-annual or annual basis, and the lack of currency in Boston during the colonial period led to a much greater reliance on credit by many families like the Greenes.

⁴⁰⁵ Jon Stobart, 'Rich, Female and Single: the Changing Consumption Practices of Mary Leigh, 1736-1806', *Northampton Electronic Collection of Theses and Research*, (2013), p.17.

Table 5.24: Suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Smyth household¹

	1717	1718	1719	Total
Woollen and Linen Drapers²	2 13 ⁸	117 2	24 4	143 19
Silk Mercers³	-	82 0	-	82 0
Shoe Makers⁴	-	28 10	17 6	45 16
Hatters⁵	-	32 13	-	32 13
Bristol	-	3 16	-	3 16
Wig Makers⁶	-	1 10	-	1 10
Glovers⁷	-	1 8	-	1 8
Total from Suppliers	2 13	266 19	41 10	311 2
Overall Total	2 13	326 14	53 7	382 14
Percentage	100	82	59	81

1. Sources: see Table 5.20. 2. Including Paul Fisher, William Gough and Humphrey Corsley. 3. Including Arthur Plomer. 4. Including Joseph Kippen. 5. Including Mary Weaver. 6. Including Jackson. 7. Including John Cope. 8. Monetary units: £ and s.

Table 5.25: Suppliers of textiles and clothing for John Hugh Smyth¹

	1757	1758	1759	1760	Total
Tailors²	54 0 ⁹	11 12	19 16	17 12	103 0
Silk Mercers³	-	32 15	-	21 13	54 8
Woollen and Linen Drapers⁴	14 4	-	10 1	15 12	39 17
Hatters⁵	3 1	-	1 11	3 0	7 12
Shoe Makers⁶	-	-	3 5	1 18	5 3
Wig Makers⁷	-	-	1 18	3 3	5 1
Stocking Makers⁸	-	-	2 0	-	2 0
Other	-	0 1	-	-	0 1
Total from Suppliers	71 5	44 8	38 10	62 18	217 1
Overall Total	78 13	75 13	62 4	81 5	297 14
Percentage	91	59	62	77	73

1. Sources: see Table 5.21. 2. Including Mr Hagley and Mr Hall. 3. Including Bush & Broackes. 4. Including Mr Brickdale. 5. Including Mr Owen, Mr Moors and Mr Eames. 6. Including Rich Thomas, Mr Young, and the Shoe Warehouse. 7. Including Mr Howell and London suppliers. 8. Suppliers from nearby Bedminster. 9. Monetary units: £ and s.

In summary, the Wharton and Greene accounts are balanced between a wide variety of goods, from everyday items of food and drink, to the purchase of small to medium-priced household goods such as items of pottery and glass, and the occasional purchase of larger, more expensive, items of furniture and silverware, such as beds and cutlery. The Smyth accounts used in this study demonstrate a much more limited range of purchases, with clothing, shoes and textiles averaging more than two-thirds of the total expenditure, once the two extraordinary items of jewellery totalling £570,

purchased for his wife in 1758, are taken out of the equation.⁴⁰⁶ Also, while Joshua Wharton purchased a wide range of food items, including meat and fish for his family, John Hugh Smyth's purchases of edible goods were largely concerned with hares, game birds and offal bought for his hounds. Another significant portion of his expenditure was devoted to the purchase of saddles, bridles, pistols and other items related to the gentlemanly pursuits of riding and hunting.

5.12: Conclusion

Although household account books are relatively rare in the archives, those that do survive provide a comprehensive source of information about actual purchasing priorities within households, providing important details on consumption choices and the supply networks used by specific families. Following on from the analysis of marketing strategies in Chapter 4, analysis of the household accounts of Joshua Wharton, Rufus Greene, and members of the Smyth family in this chapter present evidence of another important aspect of the processes involved in consumption. It enables a greater understanding of the processes involved in provisioning eighteenth-century families on both sides of the Atlantic. While spending on consumables accounts for a larger proportion of the Greene household budget, at an average of 65 per cent, the wide range of goods purchased, and the divisions between the categories of goods are similar to the Wharton household in many respects, with food and drink, and textiles and clothing, dominating the expenditure of both families.

⁴⁰⁶ A pair of Brilliant Diamond Earrings for £410 and a Diamond Egret for the hair at £160, in *BRO AC/B/44*.

As outlined in the literature review at the beginning of this chapter, household accounts have been largely neglected in studies of consumption in the colonies, and a large proportion of research into English household accounts has focused on spending within gentry households.⁴⁰⁷ Joshua Wharton and Rufus Greene belonged to the middle-ranks of eighteenth-century society, and research undertaken into their household expenditure provides a useful comparison to the work on Latham highlighted at the beginning of this chapter.⁴⁰⁸ Like Latham, Wharton's account book is dominated by a large number of regular purchases of items of food and drink, including sugar, currants and treacle, but no tea, coffee, or chocolate. Spending on staple items of food and drink remained relatively stable over the period. Networks of suppliers varied between different categories of food and drink, with more perishable items of dairy, and meat and fish, being purchased more frequently from a wider range of outlets than dry goods such as sugar and tea and coffee. The seasonal nature of certain items, such as shellfish and asparagus, was also evident through fluctuating levels of expenditure throughout the year.

As with Latham, Wharton's and Greene's account books also provide evidence of the importance of purchases of textiles and clothing, and a similar degree of variance year on year, dependent on the life-cycle of the families. Differences in total spending on consumable goods, and the levels of detail within the accounts, appeared to be a result of differences in personal

⁴⁰⁷ Examples include Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*; Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers'; Rothery and Stobart, 'Inheritance events and spending patterns'; Vickery, 'His and Hers'.

⁴⁰⁸ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, and *The Account Book of Richard Latham*.

circumstances and family structures. Spending on non-food related items fluctuated greatly, peaking at times of important family events, like weddings and funerals. This is particularly apparent in the more detailed Wharton accounts. Although evidence on these aspects of consumption is lacking in the Greene accounts, it is safe to assume that their actual household consumption fluctuated in the same manner. The categories of food and drink, and textiles and clothing, contain the largest number of suppliers and the highest frequency of purchases in both the Wharton and Greene accounts. The remaining categories of goods demonstrate a much smaller number of purchases, and a greater tendency to domination by one or two specific individuals.

Both the Wharton and Greene families used a great range and variety of suppliers to provide their households with the items they needed and desired. These included well-established merchants and retailers, who advertised in contemporary newspapers, and local farmers and craftsmen who relied on word-of-mouth for their sales. Both sets of accounts highlight the important roles played by the family in the supply of household consumables. The Greene accounts appear to demonstrate a greater reliance on the consumer marketplace for everyday living, with the family sourcing a higher proportion of their goods from merchants and general stores whose names appear in advertisements. Differences in spending between categories of goods, and discrepancies in supply networks, are likely to be attributable to differences in the retail structures of both cities discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. The household accounts of Wharton and Greene demonstrate the important role played by more informal networks of supply on both sides of

the Atlantic, in contrast to the concerted efforts of retailers, using newspaper advertising, to persuade consumers to spend their budgetary surplus on fashionable, discretionary goods. The similarities in the range of suppliers and purchasing patterns evident in their account books occur despite the differences in the consumer marketplaces in each city, demonstrated in this thesis, and identified by previous researchers and contemporaries alike during the eighteenth century.

Although comparisons between the Wharton and Smyth accounts highlight differences in purchasing priorities, they also confirm similarities in the complexity of supply to both households. The accounts of Wharton, Greene and Smyth also highlight the importance of reputation and loyalty in relation to household purchases. The dominance of certain suppliers in all three sets of accounts, whether city-based retailers, tenants, or family members, demonstrates the strength of the relationships they built with between consumers and those that supplied their needs and desires over the long term. Advertisers used notices to highlight these particular qualities to potential customers, while others demonstrated them by forming close personal relationships with consumers over many years.

One of the most striking aspects of this study has been the broad similarity between the Wharton and Greene families in terms of the ways in which their households acquired their goods, and the types of goods that dominated expenditure. In other words, middling citizens of Bristol and Boston shared similar diets and spending priorities, despite their physical distance. The spending habits of the Wharton family had more in common with those of the Greene family, separated by around 3000 miles, than they

did with their near-neighbours, the Smyths. However, all three sets of accounts provide evidence of the complexity of supply chains, the role of informal as well as formal networks of supply, and the continued importance of reputation, loyalty, and familiarity in purchasing decisions. Chapter 6 addresses another aspect of the consumption process by analysing the contents of a range of probate inventories in both cities, in order to compare the purchasing priorities visible in household accounts with the types of goods accumulated during the lifetime of individuals in Bristol and Boston. There are differences in the types of goods dominating household accounts and those that filled the pages of eighteenth-century newspapers. The choices presented to eighteenth-century consumers by advertisers were not necessarily reflected in the purchases appearing in household accounts, as made clear in the research on Joshua Wharton and Rufus Greene. While newspapers were increasingly filled with advertisements for new and fashionable goods, household accounts demonstrate the continued dominance of basic foodstuffs, and essential items of textiles and clothing, over eighteenth-century family budgets. While basic food stuffs and textiles and clothing consistently made up the greatest proportion of household purchases, in terms of monetary outlay and frequency of acquisition, the appearance of other categories of goods fluctuated according to the lifecycle of the family and their involvement in specific events. Such non-essential items would have been relatively hard to sell and retailers would have had to expend more effort in order to market them successfully to potential customers.

Notices appearing in eighteenth-century newspapers tended to be placed by the larger retailers, giving the impression that consumers purchased a significant proportion of their goods from such individuals. The important role played by more informal networks of supply found in household accounts presents a different view of consumption trends from those evident in newspaper advertisements over the same period. Although the Wharton and Greene families did purchase items from the retailers who advertised their products in newspapers, these supplied only a small proportion of the goods bought by these households. Indeed, the account books provide evidence of the important roles played by other more informal networks of suppliers, and the complexity of the processes involved in the consumption of a variety of goods. The Wharton and Greene families clearly required the services of a large number of individuals in order to source provisions for their households, and these included tenants and relatives.

Newspaper advertisements and household accounts do concur in highlighting the importance of reputation and loyalty in relation to household purchases. They confirm that such considerations were paramount for eighteenth-century consumers, whether their purchases came from tenants and family members, or from established retailers. Advertisers used notices to highlight these particular qualities to potential customers, while others demonstrated them by forming close personal relationships with consumers over many years, often reinforced by the use of credit.

However, the categories of food and drink dominating household accounts are different to the majority appearing in newspapers. While newspaper advertisements provide evidence of concerted efforts to promote

the consumption of new groceries such as coffee, tea and sugar, account books demonstrate the relatively small proportion of household budgets devoted to the purchase of these fashionable commodities, in comparison to staple items like meat and dairy products.

Chapter 6: The Ownership of Goods in Eighteenth-Century Bristol and Boston

This chapter explores what probate inventories can reveal about the ownership of goods and highlights the differences between these findings and the evidence about marketing and purchasing available from studying newspaper advertisements and household accounts. Probate inventories provide evidence of the influence of a variety of factors on the accumulation of a range of household goods during the lifetimes of consumers in both cities. Many historians have noted the increasing importance of fashion and fashionable goods during the eighteenth century, but probate inventories also demonstrate the continuing influence of quality, price, availability, and a range of environmental factors upon the ownership of goods across the Atlantic world.

Probate inventories are the third and final type of primary source investigated in this thesis. They have been used to great effect, in many prior studies at the local, national and international level, in efforts to gain an understanding of changing living standards, and changes in consumer preferences. Although the sample size of this study is relatively small, it is much more closely matched in terms of time-frame, social and occupational breakdown, and values of goods, than many previous comparative studies. Similarities in levels of ownership of staple household items, such as beds and bedding, and repositories of wealth, such as items of silverware, across the samples emphasises many similarities in the standards and styles of life between the populations of Bristol and Boston in the eighteenth century. These similarities add significance to differences in the ownership of some

categories of goods evident in the inventory samples from both cities, and point to the influence of a range of factors on the accumulation of household goods.

Analysis of the Bristol and Boston probate inventory samples between c1700 and 1760 provides evidence of a rise in the ownership and variety of a range of household consumables, such as tables, looking glasses, window curtains, pictures, clocks, and a range of tea and coffee utensils in both cities during this period.⁴⁰⁹ The increase in the shapes and styles of tables, and a rise in the incidence of a range of fashionable goods in the inventory samples demonstrates increasing attention to decoration and adornment in the home, which in turn highlights changes in notions of comfort and ideas of hospitality during the first-half of the eighteenth century on both sides of the Atlantic. The lower incidences of some categories of goods in the Boston sample, especially where there are no significant differences in values, must be explained by the influence of factors other than monetary ones, including environmental considerations, and differences in the local marketplaces.

Section 6.1 of this chapter reviews the types of research already undertaken using a range of probate inventory samples. Sections 6.2 and 6.3 assess probate inventories as a source, and the particular samples used in the current study. Sections 6.4 to 6.6 address the occupational and social makeup of the samples, the values of goods in the inventories, and the types of goods analysed in this study. Sections 6.7 and 6.8 look at a range of traditional and fashionable household goods, and 6.9 and 6.10 assess the

⁴⁰⁹ Tea and coffee utensils include all items connected to the consumption of the increasingly fashionable beverages of tea, coffee and chocolate. These include tea tables, coffee and tea pots, coffee and tea cups, sugar bowls and tongs.

monetary and psychological values attached to a range of goods, through an assessment of their second-hand values and their positioning within the household. Section 6.11 compares and contrasts the conclusions about ownership of goods with those about their marketing and subsequent purchase in order to better understand the complete consumption process.

6.1: Studies of Probate Inventories

This section surveys the approaches taken by existing studies of probate inventories in England and North America in relation to the subject of consumption. There are many examples of research undertaken by historians using large samples of English probate inventories in order to assess the nature of rising levels of consumption during the early modern period. In 'A Possession of One's Own', Weatherill analysed 2902 probate inventories from eight different regions, between 1675 and 1725, focusing particularly on changes in the ownership of new goods like china and tea and coffee making equipment, books, earthenware and pictures.⁴¹⁰ Her study of these items led her to the conclusion that, while there were similarities in levels of ownership in the inventories across a region, clear differences existed between regions.⁴¹¹ The tables she produced for *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, taken from a sample of 3000 inventories, were divided into the following goods: furniture (tables); cooking equipment (cooking pots and saucepans); eating equipment (pewter dishes and plates, earthenware, knives, forks, china, utensils for hot drinks); domestic textiles (window

⁴¹⁰ Weatherill, 'A Possession of One's Own', 131-156.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 140. The regions were Durham and Northumberland, Cumbria, East London, Hampshire, Lancashire south of the River Ribble, East Kent, Cambridgeshire and North Shropshire.

curtains, table linen); other household goods (looking glasses, pictures, clocks and silver).⁴¹² This enabled Weatherill to assess changes in ownership of a range of traditional and fashionable goods, enabling a more complete picture of changes in consumption habits than studies focusing solely on the newer commodities becoming available in the eighteenth century.

French looked at the types and quantities of goods appearing in 2,246 probate inventories in *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England*.⁴¹³ These inventories were divided into three geographical areas: 953 from the southwest, 642 from the north-west, and 651 from Essex and Suffolk. French studied changing levels of ownership in eight categories of goods: feather beds, bedsteads and bedding; cupboards, chests and chests of drawers; silver, pewter, copper and brass utensils; tables and chairs; china; window curtains; looking glasses; clocks and watches.⁴¹⁴ He concluded that while a growing 'middle sort' of fashionable consumers were most visible and influential in the metropolis, they also had an important role to play in the consumer marketplace in many provincial and colonial cities similar to Bristol and Boston in the second-half of the eighteenth century.⁴¹⁵

In *Production and Consumption in English Households*, Overton et al. organised the data from their study of 8,000 inventories, from Cornwall and Kent between 1600 and 1750, to investigate the ownership of three types of consumable items: 'new goods, disappearing goods and... goods whose

⁴¹² Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, p.187.

⁴¹³ French, *The Middle Sort of People*, pp. 264-265.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 142-200.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.264-265.

presence remains constant.⁴¹⁶ For new goods, they revealed the rise of saucepans, upholstered chairs and occasional tables, and the increasing adoption of completely new items, like clocks and mirrors. In particular they noted the replacement of chests with chests of drawers, benches with chairs, and the growing presence in the inventories of decorative goods, such as pictures and window curtains. They found that while many of these items, such as mahogany furniture grew in popularity, others such as books maintained a constant level of ownership.⁴¹⁷ Overton et al. broke down the range of goods into the following: (1) - heating, cooking and eating: tables, coal, cauldrons, skillets, saucepans, jacks, cooking and hearths, pewter, new pottery, plates, platters, glass bottles, knives and forks, hot drinks and table ware; (2) - linen: linen, sheets, tablecloths, napkins and towels; (3) - miscellaneous goods: clocks, mirrors, pictures, window curtains, books and weapons.⁴¹⁸

Muldrew analysed evidence of the ownership of goods from a variety of sources, including 1,000 probate inventories, to assess developments in the material lives of agricultural labourers in various regions of England between 1550 and 1780. He looked at traditional household items, such as linen, beds and furniture, as well as 'luxury' items like clocks, looking glasses and eating utensils. He concluded that, 'rather than buying more novel consumer items, labouring households bought better quality bedding, furniture and kitchenware.'⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁶ Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, *Production and Consumption*, p.89.

⁴¹⁷ Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, *Production and Consumption*, pp.111-113.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.99-111.

⁴¹⁹ Muldrew, *Food, Energy*, p. 15.

Barry used 2,665 inventories to assess changes in the ownership of books, pictures, clocks, watches and musical instruments in Bristol between 1620 and 1767.⁴²⁰ He discovered that each exhibited different trends over the period: the ownership of books and musical instruments tended to decline slightly over the long term; there was a rapid rise in pictures appearing in inventories from the beginning of the eighteenth century; and the ownership of clocks and watches increased steadily throughout the period. Barry also concluded that household expenditure was dominated by the purchase of textiles and metal utensils, with plate and jewellery accounting for the most valuable items in many houses. Okabe's subsequent work on Bristol focused on the types of goods to be found in very small samples of high value inventories, or from those employed in a range of unusual occupations, from the National Archives and from Ecclesiastical Cause Papers held at Bristol Record Office.⁴²¹ Moore focused on goods listed in probate inventories from areas outside Bristol, including Clifton, Westbury and Frampton Cotterell.⁴²² Neither of the Okabe or Moore publications provides much analysis of the goods contained in inventories, and their main objective appears to have been

⁴²⁰ A discussion of Jonathan Barry's work on Bristol probate inventories is included in the 'Introduction' to Edwin George and Stella George (eds.), *Bristol Probate Inventories Part III: 1690-1804*, The Bristol Record Society, (Bristol, 2008), pp. viii-xviii.

⁴²¹ Additional research on Bristol city probate inventories can be found in Yoshihiko Okabe, 'Probate inventories of Bristol: Examples from the Prerogative Court of Canterbury', *Working Paper Series No. 23, The Economic Society of Kobe Gakuin University*, (July, 2013), and Yoshihiko Okabe, 'Probate inventories of Bristol: Selected examples from Ecclesiastical Cause Papers, 1694-1783', www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/Sources/2013okabe.

⁴²² Research on probate inventories from rural areas around Bristol can be found in Moore, *The Goods and Chattels*, and John Moore, *Clifton and Westbury Probate Inventories, 1609-1761*, (Bristol, 1981).

to transcribe and edit the inventories in order to make them available to future historians.

A wealth of research has also been undertaken by colonial historians on the range and quantities of goods appearing in colonial inventories in order to study patterns of consumption in the eighteenth century. Shamma has been particularly prominent in undertaking studies of the ownership of goods in the colonies and performing comparative research using inventory samples from different regions of England. She analysed changes in the presence of groceries and 'consumer durables', such as textiles, glass, pottery and 'paper products', between 1550 and 1800, in 'Changes in Anglo-American Consumption'.⁴²³ In 'The Domestic Environment in Early Modern England and America', she investigated changes in the types of goods appearing in three probate inventory samples: Oxfordshire between 1550 and 1591, Central and Southern Worcestershire between 1669 and 1670, and Massachusetts in 1774. She estimated that households spent as much as a quarter of their total consumable budget on bedding in all three periods: more than 'they had in their own apparel, household linen, brass and pewter, plate and jewellery or any other single category of goods.' She also noted an increase in the amounts of mahogany furniture over time.⁴²⁴

However, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer* is Shamma's seminal work on Anglo-American consumption. In it she outlined the relevance of a comparison between England and her colonies, concluding that it was a useful test of shifts in consumption because residents in both places 'shared the same trading network and many of the same cultural values, but their material

⁴²³ Shamma, 'Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption', pp.177-205.

⁴²⁴ Shamma, 'The Domestic Environment', 8 and 13.

situation differed substantially.’⁴²⁵ She analysed several new sets of inventories, in addition to those included in ‘The Domestic Environment’, concluding that there were many similarities in levels of ownership of a range of goods between England and the colonies by the 1720s.⁴²⁶ Additionally, she also identified the period 1733-1766 to be the critical period of changes in the accumulation of particular goods in the colonies, particularly demonstrating the ‘mass consumption of tableware’.⁴²⁷ She noted a relative decline in the ownership of brass and pewter, and a corresponding rise in the popularity of glass, china, knives and forks, and tea and coffee- making apparatus.⁴²⁸

Many other researchers also found evidence of rising consumption of household goods in the colonies during the period, differing only in their conclusions about which levels of society were able to take advantage of the burgeoning variety of goods available. Main and Main studied 16,500 probate inventories from Southern New England, including a large part of Connecticut and rural areas of Massachusetts, between 1640 and 1773. Their research into a variety of goods led them to conclude that standards of living improved for the majority during this period, that the rich and middling sorts fully participated in rising levels of consumption, and that the poor didn’t lose any ground.⁴²⁹ Walsh looked at the proportion of household wealth invested in

⁴²⁵ Shamma, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p.3.

⁴²⁶ Additional inventory samples: Southern Worcestershire 1720-21, East End of London 1661-64, East End of London 1720-29, Tidewater Virginia 1660-77, Tidewater Virginia 1724-29, Virginia and Maryland 1774, and Essex County, Massachusetts 1660-April 1673.

⁴²⁷ Shamma, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p.185.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.173 and p.183.

⁴²⁹ Main, ‘The Standard of Living in Southern New England’, 128; Main, ‘Standards of Living and the Life Cycle’; Main and Main, ‘Economic Growth and the Standard of Living, Appendix, 45.

'beds and bedding, all other furniture, cooking, dining and timekeeping' in samples of probate inventories from Somerset County, Maryland, and York County, Virginia, between 1643 and 1777. This research led her to the conclusion that levels of ownership of such items rose across all ranks of colonial society so that 'By the 1730s ...middling families got in on the act and by the 1750s even the poorer sorts were finding a wide variety of non-essentials increasingly desirable.'⁴³⁰ Shamas concurred, finding evidence in her probate inventory samples that the labouring classes 'readily purchased the more expensive tools of domesticity' such as knives and forks, tea pots and cheap crockery.'⁴³¹

Horn has contrasted the portrayal of growing colonial wealth presented by inventory studies alone, focusing instead on the relatively poor quality of the housing stock in the colonies at this time. Comparing standards of living in the Vale of Berkeley, Gloucestershire, St Mary's County, Maryland, and the Northern Neck of Virginia between 1700 and 1750, he found the domestic surroundings of those living in the Chesapeake to be markedly inferior to those of the residents of Gloucestershire.⁴³² Assessing the living standards of labourers in Philadelphia in the second half of the eighteenth century, comparing wages with the costs of rent, food, fuel, and clothing, Smith agreed that many sections of colonial society experienced very poor material standards of living during this period.⁴³³

⁴³⁰ Walsh, 'Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency', 111.

⁴³¹ Shamas 'The Domestic Environment', 17.

⁴³² Horn, 'The Bare Necessities', 74-91.

⁴³³ Smith, 'The Material Lives', 202.

Keibeck and Shaw-Taylor's study of rates of by-employment among the early modern rural workforce highlighted the fact that 'inventories provide information on the activities of the entire household rather than those of the deceased alone'.⁴³⁴ This is what makes the information they contain concerning the ownership of goods so valuable in investigations into the processes of consumption that lie at the heart of this thesis. Indeed there are a number of ways in which the current study differs from previous research carried out on probate inventories. While much of the existing research carried out by Weatherill, and Overton et al and others compares changes in the levels of ownership of goods from different regions of England, direct comparisons after 1730 have proved difficult because of a decline in probate records from 1730 onwards in many parts of the country. The availability of reasonable numbers of inventories beyond 1730 in Bristol is particularly important as this period has been identified as the point of rising consumption in eighteenth-century England.

Where comparative research on the ownership of goods has been carried out between England and America, by Shammass, Main and others, the inventory samples chosen often do not enable direct comparisons as they are taken from different time periods. The current study analyses developments in the appearance of goods in two closely matching inventory samples from Bristol and Boston, taken during the exact same time period. The ability to compare evidence of ownership with marketing in newspaper advertisements and purchasing in household accounts over the same period

⁴³⁴ Sebastian A.J. Keibek and Leigh Shaw-Taylor, 'Early modern rural by-employments: a re-examination of the probate inventory evidence', *The Agricultural History Review*, 61, 2, 2013, 252.

for Bristol and Boston, enables analysis of the many processes involved in the act of consumption, underlining the important role of this study in furthering our understanding of changes to consumption in the early modern period.

6.2: Probate Inventories as a Source

This section examines why probate inventories were made and the information they contain. Probate inventories formed a part of the administration of the estate of an individual after their death in England and the colonies but were not a universal requirement in the settlement of all estates in early modern times. They were only applicable where an individual's possessions exceeded £5, or where there was a dispute over the beneficiaries of an estate, meaning that surviving probate inventories tend to be most representative of the middling ranks of society.⁴³⁵ They were comprised of listings of moveable assets such as household goods, trade items, livestock and cultivated crops. Colonial inventories included any debts owed by the individual, as well as outstanding amounts owed to them by others whereas English inventories generally only listed debts owing to the deceased. Inventories on both sides of the Atlantic were compiled by a minimum of two appraisers. Married women were subject to laws of coverture during this period in both locations, meaning they weren't permitted to own property in their own right, so the possessions listed in men's inventories were those of the husband and wife.⁴³⁶

⁴³⁵ Moore, *The Goods and Chattels*, pp. 1-4. See also George and George, *Guide to the Probate Inventories*.

⁴³⁶ For further details on coverture in England and the colonies, see Erickson, *Women and Property*, pp.99-101, and Ulrich, *Good Wives*, pp. 3-8.

The appraisers of household goods were either neighbours of the deceased, or their executors, and were assumed to be sufficiently knowledgeable to be able to provide a fair assessment of the value of the goods.⁴³⁷ Colonial inventories also listed and valued the real estate of the deceased, but as this study is an attempt to measure changes in spending habits rather than the total wealth of individuals, the focus remains on the moveable assets left after death. Many of these goods would be sold in order to defray any outstanding debts or legacies outlined in the will of the deceased, and therefore the values attached to these goods in the inventories were second-hand values. In some cases, there may have been an incentive in underestimating the value of the goods in order to reduce probate fees. Further consideration will be given to these matters in section 6.9. As the systems of probate, and the processes involved in assessing the values of estates in the colonies were modelled on those in England, the surviving records from Bristol and Boston are formatted in a similar way to one another, which makes comparisons between the documents relatively straightforward.⁴³⁸

Probate inventories vary greatly in terms of the amount of detail they contain; while a number provide only brief and general outlines of the goods their owners left behind, others comprise lengthy, room-by-room, itemisations of household possessions, which sometimes makes comparisons between inventories difficult. However, providing these limitations are borne in mind, probate inventories can provide valuable insights into the changing material

⁴³⁷ A detailed explanation of the process of compiling a probate inventory can be found in George, *Guide to the Probate Inventories*, and in Moore, *The Goods and Chattels*, pp.1-4.

⁴³⁸ Main, 'Probate Records as a Source', 91.

and domestic culture of individuals and communities in early modern England and America.

6.3: Probate Inventories Utilised in this Study

This section addresses the samples of probate inventories utilised in this study, the reasons for their selection, and measures taken to ensure that both samples are balanced and also representative of a large section of contemporary society in early modern England and the colonies. In this thesis, a sample of 300 probate inventories from both the Bristol and Boston archives, spread across six decades, was used to assess changes in the ownership of household goods in the two cities between 1699 and 1756. Twenty-five inventories were selected from each decade, comprising a broad spread of occupations and monetary values, in order to create as balanced a picture as possible of the range of possessions in a variety of households in those two cities. Surviving inventories of the Bristol Deanery of the Diocese of Bristol are held in the microfilm collections at Bristol Record Office, and they provide the bulk of the Bristol inventories analysed in this study. A smaller number, where the deceased held possessions worth more than £5 in more than one diocese, or where there was a dispute over inheritance, were proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and are now held in the National Archives. Approximately 20 inventories registered at the Bristol Deanery of the Diocese of Bristol, held at Bristol Record Office, and five registered with the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and held at The National Archives, were selected for each decade.⁴³⁹ The New England Historical and Genealogical

⁴³⁹ Comprehensive indexes to the surviving probate inventories can be found in George, *Guide to the Probate Inventories*, and in John Moore, *Bristol Inventories Among the PCC Probate Series in The National Archives*, (unpublished).

Society has digitised the entire archive of probate records for residents of Massachusetts from the seventeenth century onwards, meaning that it has been possible to gain access to a much larger number of probate inventories for Boston than was the case for Bristol.⁴⁴⁰

Collecting a sufficiently balanced sample of inventories from a particular year per decade in Bristol has proved difficult because of the prevalence of mariners' 'wages only' inventories in the archive from 1704 onwards. Also, while the remaining Bristol inventories appeared promising in terms of total values, many either didn't specifically list household goods, or they contained insufficient detail about those goods to make their inclusion useful. All of these considerations have necessitated a broadening of the scope of the sample to include a spread of several years around the turn of each decade.

In order to make the best use of the relative abundance of inventories for Boston, two samples of 25 inventories were initially selected from Suffolk County for each decade. The first sample was chosen to closely match the Bristol sample in terms of gender, occupation and total values of household goods. However, such a closely matched sample also contains the same associated limitations as the Bristol sample concerning a lack of choice of inventories for some periods. As a sample constricted in this way is unrepresentative of surviving Boston inventories, a second sample was chosen at random in order to obtain the most complete picture of household consumption in the city in the first-half of the eighteenth century. The total values of household goods, and the varieties and quantities of items found in

⁴⁴⁰ Digitised copies of Suffolk County probate inventories can be found at *American Ancestors* via *FamilySearch.org*, probate records, vols 13-45.

both Boston samples, were remarkably similar. In light of these similarities a decision has been made to focus on the random sample in order to provide the most impartial picture of changes in patterns of consumption in that city, without affecting further comparisons with Bristol.

Several differences are apparent between the surviving probate record in Bristol and Boston in the first-half of the eighteenth century. In Boston, the term 'mariner' is sometimes used to describe relatively wealthy individuals whose inventories contain room-by-room descriptions of a wide variety of household goods. This is in sharp contrast to the Bristol examples, which tend to be 'wages' only inventories, and which are therefore of no value to this study. Consequently, there are more mariners' inventories included in the Boston sample than appear in the Bristol one. Secondly, there are far fewer 'room-by-room' inventories in the Boston archive compared to that of Bristol. This aspect is addressed in greater detail later, but it potentially corresponds with existing research undertaken by Horn, Shamma and Walsh, which highlighted the differing levels of domestic housing and comfort in England and the colonies during the early part of the eighteenth century.⁴⁴¹

The samples of inventories are small compared to those used in many previous probate studies, however, as Weatherill has pointed out, 'relatively small, carefully contrived samples are to be preferred, for these give the most flexible results.'⁴⁴² In other words, the data collected from a tightly focused study can be utilised in different ways from those where thousands of inventories are under consideration. Detailed comparisons of smaller numbers

⁴⁴¹ Horn, 'The Bare Necessities', 74-91; Shamma, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, pp. 157-193; Walsh, 'Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency'.

⁴⁴² Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, p. 201.

of inventories enables the researcher to move away from a purely quantitative study and adds a valuable new dimension to the debate surrounding changing consumption patterns in eighteenth-century England and America.

6.4: Occupational and Social Makeup

Assessing the occupational and social makeup of the inventory samples demonstrates the inclusion of a wide range of individuals, and means that the subsequent data can be used to draw conclusions about a broad range of society. Demonstrating the similarities between samples also strengthens the validity of comparisons between them. Breaking down the Bristol and Boston inventories into occupational categories in Tables 6.1a and 6.2b illustrates the balance Tables 6.1a and 6.2b illustrates this balance.⁴⁴³ The main similarity can be seen in the prominence of those engaged in skilled trades, but there are also similarities in the proportions of commercial proprietors, gentlemen and professionals, and widows and spinsters. Differences include a relative lack of individuals involved in agriculture, and the much higher number classed as unskilled in the Boston sample compared to that taken for Bristol.

⁴⁴³ These classifications are taken from a journal article by Michael B. Katz, entitled 'Occupational Classification in History', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 3, 1, Summer, 1972, 72-75.

Table 6.1a: Occupations in the Bristol probate inventory sample in percentages¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Average
Gentlemen	-	4	4	4	16	4	5
Professions²	-	4	4	8	-	-	3
Agriculture³	8	12	4	4	4	8	7
Commercial Proprietors⁴	4	12	20	4	8	16	11
Skilled Trades⁵	32	48	40	36	48	40	40
Unskilled Trades⁶	4	-	4	4	8	4	4
Widows & Spinsters	4	8	16	28	4	8	11
No Data⁷	48	12	8	12	12	20	19

1. Sources: see bibliography for a full listing of the Bristol probate inventory sample.

Table 6.1b: Occupations in the Boston probate inventory sample in percentages¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Average
Gentlemen	-	4	4	12	8	-	5
Professions²	-	-	8	-	-	-	1
Agriculture³	-	-	-	4	-	-	1
Commercial Proprietors⁴	12	16	8	16	4	20	13
Skilled Trades⁵	32	24	40	16	40	20	29
Unskilled Trades⁶	24	12	4	16	20	12	15
Widows & Spinsters	12	16	16	12	8	12	14
No Data⁷	20	28	20	24	20	36	25

1. Sources: see Bibliography for a full listing of the Boston probate inventory sample.

Notes: these categories were comprised as follows: 2. Lawyers, members of the clergy, doctors, and surgeons. 3. Farmers. 4. Business-owners such as merchants, shopkeepers, and inn-keepers. 5. Craftsmen such as cabinetmakers and butchers. 6. Servants and general labourers. 7. Individuals where inventories omit details of occupation or status.⁴⁴⁴

The hinterland of Boston was relatively under-developed in comparison to Bristol in terms of agricultural production in the first-half of the eighteenth century. This was due in part to the poor quality of the local soils, and the continued dominance of imported commodities into the colonies from England throughout this period. This led to a relative lack of self-sufficiency in food production in and around Boston. The lower number of agricultural occupations appearing amongst the Boston inventories supports this. The higher levels of unskilled workers in the Boston inventory sample can be

⁴⁴⁴ Complete listings for each category can be found in Katz, 'Occupational Classification in History', 72-75.

explained by the inclusion of a greater number of mariners' inventories as already alluded to. Despite these differences, occupational breakdowns within each sample show a number of similarities. The Bristol sample is comprised of 40 per cent skilled trades, 19 per cent without occupational data, and 11 per cent women. The Boston sample is made up of 29 per cent skilled trades, 25 per cent no occupational data, and 14 per cent women. Therefore, both samples demonstrate a similar split in occupations, with the largest category coming from skilled tradespeople. This means that not only does each sample cover a broad spectrum of the society of each city, but they are also comparable in terms of occupational categories.

6.5: Values of Household Goods

This section assesses the values attached to household goods in both inventory samples in order to demonstrate the broad similarities between them, and to remove any biases that could otherwise undermine the validity of comparisons between the two data sets. A vital consideration when analysing and comparing the values attached to probate inventories on both sides of the Atlantic concerns the range of currencies in use in the colonies in the eighteenth century, and their fluctuating values compared to sterling. Paper currency was in short supply for much of the colonial period, and a dearth of silver contributed to inflationary pressures, which reached a crisis in 1749, when £100 sterling was calculated to be equivalent to £1033 of Massachusetts' currency.⁴⁴⁵ Towards the end of the 1740s, the values of goods in inventories were sometimes calculated in Lawful Money and sometimes in Old Tenor, with £7 10s Old Tenor being roughly equivalent to £1

⁴⁴⁵ Details on Massachusetts currency can be found in McCusker, *Money and Exchange*, p. 141.

of Lawful Money. As in previous chapters, the values appearing in the following tables for Boston have been converted into their sterling equivalent using McCusker's detailed tables, in order to provide an accurate comparison with those from Bristol.⁴⁴⁶ Further conversions have been made in order to take account of the differences between values expressed in Old Tenor and Lawful Money using the same methods that Shamma employed in *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*.⁴⁴⁷

Although probate inventories do not make it possible to accurately establish household incomes, as they only contain information on the accumulated possessions of individuals at death, Tables 6.2a and 6.2b use the total values of these moveable assets to demonstrate the broad range of households included in the survey. This is a further measure to emphasise the breadth of the samples and to establish the wide variety of economic circumstances experienced by those included in this study, ranging from the relatively comfortable to the very wealthy. Again, there are many similarities between the Bristol and Boston samples, with similarities between the range of values of household goods included in this survey. For example, 60 per cent of the Bristol sample appear in the £5 - £30 range, compared to 48 per cent in the Boston sample. At the other end of the scale, while only 18 per cent of the Bristol sample falls into the £60 and above range, this same category accounts for 33 per cent of the Boston sample.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 131-151.

⁴⁴⁷ Further information on the validity of converting colonial currency to sterling rates can be found in Shamma, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, 'Appendix 1: Inventory Samples Used in Statistical Analysis', pp. 301-305.

Table 6.2a: Values of household goods in the Bristol inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
Under £5							
No.²	1	2	1	2	2	1	9
Percentage	4	8	4	8	8	4	6
£5-£15							
No.	11	4	8	10	6	8	47
Percentage	44	16	32	40	24	32	31
£15-£30							
No.	8	8	5	3	4	7	35
Percentage	32	32	20	12	16	28	23
£30-£45							
No.	1	1	3	4	4	2	15
Percentage	4	4	12	16	16	8	10
£45-£60							
No.	3	6	3	1	3	2	18
Percentage	12	24	12	4	12	8	12
£60-£100							
No.	-	4	2	3	2	2	13
Percentage	-	16	8	12	8	8	9
£100+							
No.	1	1	3	2	4	3	13
Percentage	4	4	12	8	16	12	9
Total							
No.	25	25	25	25	25	25	150

¹: Sources: see Table 6.1a. Household goods denotes all moveable goods and wearing apparel listed in the inventory, but excludes money, work-related goods or any fixtures and fittings. These include beds, bedsteads and bedding; window curtains; pictures; looking glasses; clocks; books; linen; furniture; kitchenware; tableware; cutlery; silver; jewellery; goods for the fireplace; goods for storage; goods for laundry; miscellaneous goods; and wearing apparel. ². Number of inventories.

Table 6.2b: Values of household goods¹ in the Boston inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
Under £5							
No.²	2	1	2	1	1	1	8
Percentage	8	4	8	4	4	4	5
£5-£15							
No.	2	6	8	4	8	3	31
Percentage	8	24	32	16	32	12	21
£15-£30							
No.	5	6	4	7	5	6	33
Percentage	20	24	16	28	20	24	22
£30-£45							
No.	7	2	-	-	4	2	15
Percentage	28	8	-	-	16	8	10
£45-£60							
No.	4	2	1	3	2	2	14
Percentage	16	8	4	12	8	8	9
£60-£100							
No.	3	5	5	5	3	3	24
Percentage	12	20	20	20	12	12	16
£100+							
No.	2	3	5	5	2	8	25
Percentage	8	12	20	20	8	32	17
Total							
No.	25	25	25	25	25	25	150

¹ Sources: see Table 6.1b. For a definition of household goods see Table 6.2a.

2. Number of inventories.

Table 6.3 shows the total values of the household goods present in both the Bristol and Boston samples of inventories over the period. Comparing the value of a specified list of items, rather than the total inventory values, avoids distortions created by varying definitions of eligible items and differences in the proportion of testators' total estates that are included or excluded from the inventory. The resulting similarities for the majority of the period with those of the Bristol sample confirm the balanced nature of this study. The exception comes in the final decade, where the Boston sample contains more than double the value of household goods compared to Bristol.

Table 6.3: Average values of household goods in the inventory samples¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756
Bristol	25 11 ²	33 3	49 16	41 2	58 15	43 11
Boston	51 18 ³	57 9	57 1	46 15	44 4	98 6
Average of Both Samples	38 15	45 6	53 8	43 18	51 10	70 19

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b. For a definition of household goods see Table 6.2a.

2. Monetary units: £ and s. 3. Figures after sterling conversion rates have been applied.

Tables 6.4a and 6.4b divide the totals into mean and median, and minimum and maximum values, thereby assessing the range of the samples. While the mean and median values demonstrate general consistency in the samples, these tables also highlight the broad spectrum of inventories included, which range from a minimum value of under £2 to a maximum of over £300. Together with the wide variety of occupations appearing in the sample, these figures demonstrate the breadth of society touched upon in this study. Although the overall mean and median values are slightly higher in the Boston sample, the minimum and maximum values are closely matched.

Table 6.4a: Value of household goods in the Bristol inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Average
Mean	25 11 ²	33 3	49 16	41 2	58 15	43 11	42 0
Median	16 3	25 2	19 1	17 6	31 16	24 1	22 5
Minimum	3 0	3 3	4 5	3 12	1 17	2 0	2 19
Maximum	166 8	78 2	346 2	200 2	290 19	206 3	214 12
Range	163 8	74 19	341 17	196 8	289 2	204 3	209 7

1. Sources: see Table 6.1a. For a definition of household goods see Table 6.2a.

2. Monetary units: £ and s.

Table 6.4b: Value of household goods in the Boston inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Average
Mean	51 18 ²	57 9	57 1	46 15	44 4	98 6	59 5
Median	39 14	32 16	23 12	31 4	22 2	46 8	32 13
Minimum	2 0	4 5	2 7	3 14	4 6	1 15	3 1
Maximum	130 5	187 1	274 1	152 8	259 1	459 0	243 13
Range	128 5	182 17	271 14	148 14	254 15	457 5	240 12

1. Sources: see Table 6.2a. For a definition of household goods see Table 6.2a.

2. Monetary units: £ and s after sterling conversion rates have been applied.

6.6: Types of Goods

The focus of this chapter rests on a comparison of the appearances in probate inventories of a specific number of goods that are traditionally connected to the rise of consumerism in the eighteenth century. The probate inventories in this study contain a wide variety of household goods: beds, bedsteads and bedding; window curtains; pictures; looking glasses; clocks; books; linen; furniture; kitchenware; tableware; cutlery; silver; jewellery; goods for the fireplace; goods for storage; goods for laundry; miscellaneous goods; and wearing apparel. The majority of the analysis that follows concentrates on a range of household items that were recorded most consistently, and therefore offer the most complete picture of changes occurring in levels of consumption during this period.

As this study is aimed at uncovering developments in the processes of consumption among a broad section of the inventoried population of Bristol and Boston, a combination of goods have been chosen that also best reflect changes in the tastes and styles of the middle-ranks of society in both cities. These are tables, window curtains, looking glasses, pictures, timepieces, and a variety of tea and coffee making equipment. They include 'new goods, disappearing goods and... goods whose presence remains constant', which, as Overton et al. highlighted, provide a comprehensive framework for studying changes in consumption.⁴⁴⁸ Evidence from these goods is used in this chapter to assess consumption preferences and reactions to changing fashions in Bristol and Boston during the first-half of the eighteenth century.

⁴⁴⁸ Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, *Production and Consumption*, p. 89.

The analysis of newspapers and household accounts in Chapters 4 and 5 highlighted the dominant position of food and drink, and textiles and clothing, in the consumption considerations of retailers and households in the eighteenth century. Purchases of food appear very regularly in the family accounts on both sides of the Atlantic, with Joshua Wharton's spending on food and drink fluctuating between 30 and 66 per cent of total consumable spending, and Rufus Greene's between 38 and 56 per cent. Whilst items of food and drink appear only rarely in probate inventories, aspects of their consumption can be analysed indirectly through the presence of the equipment necessary for their consumption, including coffee cups and tea kettles.

Textiles, comprising bedding and clothing, are also very significant in terms of the proportion of total household expenditure devoted to their purchase in account books, and the relative frequency of their appearances in newspaper advertisements. The Wharton family spent between 13 and 49 per cent of their household budget on textiles and clothing, while the Greene family spent between 18 and 39 per cent on the same category. In comparison, the remaining categories of goods appearing in newspaper advertisements and household account books made up only a small proportion of the total. In terms of textiles and clothing in probate inventories, while there is a great deal of inconsistency surrounding the recording of wearing apparel, beds and bedding generally account for a significant proportion of the total value of most inventories.

Although items of silverware appear comparatively infrequently in the inventories, each individual purchase required a significant level of

expenditure, and held a correspondingly important place in the perception of perceived household wealth. However, inconsistencies in the level of detail with which they are recorded means that, like some categories of textiles, there is a great deal of variation in terms of the level of detail included in many inventories. This must be borne in mind when comparing changes in the quantities of each over the period. Despite these issues, Overton et al, and Whittle and Griffiths, have highlighted the importance of stores of household textiles and silverware in their studies of probate inventories and household accounts, and the section that follows presents evidence of their importance in terms of their contribution to the total value of household goods in the inventory sample from Bristol and Boston.

As well as noting the total number of goods across each sample, the incidences per inventory of a specific range of goods has also been quantified. As Overton et al. maintained, because of inconsistencies in the thoroughness of appraisers, 'Inventories should never be used in a negative way to claim that a particular item is not present because it is not recorded.'⁴⁴⁹ In order to avoid any such pitfalls, this study focuses on larger, more significant items of household goods taken from a sample of inventories that generally contain good levels of detail. Focusing on the items that appear in the inventories, and exercising caution where there are only minor differences, reduces the scope for error.

6.7: Traditional Household Items

As mentioned already, probate inventories reveal the importance of household textiles and silverware and their dominance when it came to the

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 18.

valuation of an individual's estate. Overton et al, and Whittle and Griffiths, have highlighted the importance of stores of household textiles and silverware in their studies of probate inventories and household accounts, and Table 6.5 concurs with their findings.⁴⁵⁰ It demonstrates that beds and bedding, and silverware, averaged between 30 and 40 per cent of the total values of inventoried estates in both cities throughout the period. This level of consistency provides a background against which to assess developments in the accumulation of the other types of goods analysed in this study. Evidence of such similarities in two important area of consumption could also enable us to interpret differences in patterns of accumulation for other categories of goods as indications of differing consumer priorities and corresponding preferences of consumption.

Table 6.5: Beds and bedding, and silverware, as a proportion of household goods in the inventory samples in percentages¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756
Beds & Bedding						
Bristol	31	25	25	25	22	28
Boston	29	26	28	25	24	28
Silverware						
Bristol	7	13	10	12	16	12
Boston	13	12	10	17	10	7
Combined Total						
Bristol	38	38	35	37	38	40
Boston	42	38	38	42	34	35

¹ Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b. For a definition of household goods see Table 6.2a.

Changes in the quantities and qualities of tables, which, while performing an essential function, could also be highly decorative and

⁴⁵⁰ Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, *Production and Consumption*, p.87, and Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*, p.119 and p.132. Shammass also highlighted the high levels of domestic expenditure devoted to the purchase of beds and bedding in 'Domestic Environment in', p.7 and p.13.

fashionable items, can also be used to assess changes in consumption habits over time, touching on the tastes and preferences of consumers. Tables 6.6a and 6.6b highlight changes in the styles of tables owned by those whose inventories appear in the Bristol and Boston samples. They demonstrate a move away from the older fashioned table boards and square tables and benches, to oval and round tables, which could be paired with the burgeoning variety of chairs available to consumers. Whilst almost half of the tables are described as table boards in the Bristol sample in 1700 in, by the 1750s these once popular items of furniture are only rarely listed in the corresponding inventory sample. The Boston sample contains relatively few mentions of table boards, but this could be attributed to differences in recording. Both the Bristol and Boston samples show an increase in the total number of incidences of tables as the period progresses, and also display similar total numbers of tables.

Table 6.6a: Incidences of tables and table boards in the inventory samples¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
Tables							
Bristol	34	40	65	72	92	89	392
Boston	60+	51+	66+	84	83	90+	434+
Table Boards							
Bristol	27	21	14	14	1	4	81
Boston	1	1	-	4	-	7	13
Total							
Bristol	61	61	79	86	93	93	473
Boston	61+	52	66+	92	83	97+	447+
Average per Inventory							
Bristol	2	3	3	3	4	4	3
Boston	2+	2	3+	4	3	4+	3+

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b.

Table 6.6b: Shapes of tables and table boards in the inventory samples¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
Square							
Bristol	3	2	7	7	7	9	35
Boston	3	4	-	4	1	2	14
Oval							
Bristol	4	15	27	30	36	22	134
Boston	5	6	5	14	10	5	45
Round							
Bristol	3	1	-	5	2	-	11
Boston	3	-	-	-	1	2	6
Side & Folding							
Bristol	3	2	3	2	2	3	15
Boston	1	-	-	4	-	8	13
Total							
Bristol	13	20	37	44	47	34	195
Boston	12	10	5	22	12	17	78

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b.

Table 6.6a demonstrates the growth in the total number of tables over the period of the inventories, and the corresponding decline in the presence of table boards. Table 6.6b demonstrates that there are twice as many descriptive adjectives concerning table shape in the Bristol sample, compared to the Boston sample, but both demonstrate a move towards oval and round tables, and away from square and oblong varieties. These developments coincide with the gradual replacement of stools with an ever-increasing variety of chairs, which were more suited to being set around curved tables, rather than oblong table boards.

There are additional developments in the variety of tables appearing in the probate inventory samples from both cities as the period progresses. For example, there are very apparent differences in the types of materials used in the construction of tables in Bristol and Boston. Maple is used fairly frequently in the colonies, and walnut is mentioned much earlier there, becoming the dominant type of wood by the end of the period. Although the appearance of mahogany tables increases across both samples, it became the dominant

wood in the Bristol inventories. While maple and walnut would have been in ready supply in New England, mahogany would have been easier for English craftsmen to obtain, being supplied through extensive trade links with the Caribbean and Central and South America.⁴⁵¹

There are many more examples of descriptive adjectives relating to the functions of tables in the Boston inventories, particularly as the period progresses. There are twice as many references to tea tables in comparison to Bristol. It is also common in the Boston sample to see tables described as belonging to the chamber or the kitchen, but both of these terms are absent from the Bristol sample. References to style and decoration are fairly infrequent in both samples, but there are more descriptive adjectives for tables appearing in the Bristol inventories overall. In that sample, more mention is made of the relative size of the tables, while the Boston inventories make a greater number of references to the condition of the tables, with 'old' and 'broken' being the most common adjectives used.⁴⁵² This could imply that consumers held on to their household items for longer in Boston than in Bristol, being unwilling to dispose of worn and damaged items due to the relative expense and scarcity of potential replacements. Such concerns appear to be mirrored in the differences in second-hand values of objects on both sides of the Atlantic discussed in Section 6.9.

The inventory samples demonstrate increasing choices available to consumers in Bristol and Boston wishing to purchase tables in the first-half of

⁴⁵¹ A full discussion can be found in Adam Bowatt, *The English Mahogany Trade, 1700-1793*, PhD Thesis presented at Brunel University, (November, 1996).

⁴⁵² Tables A6.6c, A6.6d, A6.6e and A6.6f in Appendix 10 go into greater detail about the different materials, functions, styles of decoration and sizes and qualities of the tables described in the probate inventory samples .

the eighteenth century. The lists of household goods in probate inventories generally lengthen towards mid-century, mirroring the increasingly long lists of goods in newspaper advertisements as highlighted in Chapter 4, and there is also a corresponding increase in the use of descriptive adjectives to distinguish between a growing number of similar goods. So, although consumers in Bristol and Boston experienced a number of comparable trends, there were differences in the descriptions of tables and the fashions surrounding materials and designs. Many of these, including the types of materials used, can be attributed to differences in the physical environment, whereas some of the similarities, including changes in the shapes of tables, provide evidence of a shared material culture in both cities.

6.8. Fashionable Household Items

Samuel Johnson defined a 'fashionist' as a 'follower of the mode' or particular style, and this section addresses the relative importance of fashion and novelty in the consumption decisions of the household.⁴⁵³ The range of goods considered in this section includes items that had long been used in the home, but which also increasingly formed a decorative role, such as looking glasses, those which were relatively new to the consumer marketplace, such as window curtains, and those required for participation in novel domestic practices, such as the range of utensils needed for tea and coffee-making. In each case, their inclusion in an individual's inventory indicates choices based around considerations other than those of practicality alone.

Table 6.7 assesses changes in the ownership of a range of goods, such as window curtains, pictures and prints, looking glasses, and clocks and

⁴⁵³ Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*, p. 237.

watches, in the Bristol and Boston samples. Looking at the overall total appearances of these fashionable goods in Boston, a peak occurs across all categories in the 1730s, when there is an average of 14 items per inventory. The Bristol sample peaks in the 1740s, with an average of 18 fashionable items per inventory. However, the overall trend in both samples is upwards, with much higher levels of ownership evident at the end of the period compared to the beginning.

Table 6.7: Incidences of fashionable goods in the inventory samples¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
Total No. of Fashionable Goods¹							
Bristol	38	79+	220+	260+	439+	259+	1295+
Boston	69	102	112+	349	168+	198+	998+
Percentage of Total							
Bristol	3	6	17	20	34	20	
Boston	7	10	11	35	17	20	
Average per Inventory							
Bristol	2	3	9	10	18	10	9
Boston	3	4	5	14	7	8	7

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b. In this table, fashionable goods counted are looking glasses, window curtains, pictures and prints, clocks and watches, and items connected to the consumption of the new beverages of tea, coffee and chocolate. Note: + sign used when items are mentioned in the plural, but the exact number is not given.

A focus on individual goods provides further detail. Table 6.8 demonstrates that, while window curtains are mentioned in both Bristol and Boston from the turn of the century, they appear much more regularly in the Bristol inventory sample, especially from the 1720s onwards, with more than 80 sets documented in the 25 inventories taken from around 1750. However, during that same period, the inventory sample from Boston only contains around ten pairs in total. The burgeoning number present in the Bristol inventories is also matched by the increasing use of descriptive adjectives concerning colour, material and pattern.

Table 6.8: Incidences of window curtains in the inventory samples¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
No Description							
Bristol	8	12	56	26	43	34	179
Boston	8	18	10	15	6	4	61
Detailed Description							
Bristol	-	4	4	28	54	49	139
Boston	-	12	2	19	-	5+	38+
Total							
Bristol	8	16	60	54	97	83	318
Boston	8	30	12	34	6	9+	99+
Percentage of Total							
Bristol	3	5	19	17	31	26	
Boston	8	30	12	34	6	9	
Average per Inventory							
Bristol	<1	1	2	2	4	3	2
Boston	<1	1	1	1	<1	<1	1

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b

Previous work by Jonathan Barry found a rapid rise in the numbers of pictures in Bristol during the first-half of the eighteenth century.⁴⁵⁴ The data presented in Table 6.9 concurs, demonstrating a rapid rise across both samples as the century progresses, with the Boston sample in the first two decades showing the higher levels. There is a large increase in the numbers of pictures appearing in the Bristol sample in the 1720s, with ownership far exceeding the levels found in the Boston sample. Despite a reversal in the 1730s, with the Boston sample containing double the number of pictures compared to Bristol, during the 1740s Bristol overtakes Boston again. There is an evening out across the samples in the final decade, but the overall trend is one of growth across both samples during the period, albeit the exact timing of the change differs slightly between the two cities.

⁴⁵⁴ Barry, 'Introduction' in George and George, *Bristol Probate Inventories*, pp. viii-xvii.

Table 6.9: Incidences of pictures and prints in the inventory samples¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
No Description							
Bristol	8	11	87+	89+	103+	30+	328+
Boston	16	30	51	185	81+	72	435+
Detailed Description							
Bristol	-	-	2	16	34	9	61
Boston	1	2	2	33	26+	37	101+
Prints							
Bristol	-	8	22	45	129	82	286
Boston	7	-	-	37	2+	29	75+
Total							
Bristol	8	19	111+	150+	266+	121+	675+
Boston	24	32	53	255	109+	138	611+
Percentage of Total							
Bristol	1	3	16	22	39	18	
Boston	4	5	9	42	18	23	
Average per Inventory							
Bristol	<1	1	4	6	11	5	5
Boston	1	1	2	10	4	6	4

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b.

Overall, the numbers of looking glasses appearing in Table 6.10 is very similar in both inventory samples, with only slight differences in the timing of growth between the two cities. The Bristol inventories contain a marginally higher number throughout the period, but both show a steady progression towards the mid-point of the century, from a total of up to 30 looking glasses in the 1700s, to as many as 47 by the end of our period. What differs over time is the level of description of individual looking glasses included in the probate inventories. While at the beginning of the eighteenth century the majority were listed simply as 'looking glasses', by mid-century the inventories contain detailed descriptions of their frames, including those which were made of walnut or gilt, and those that had been 'japann'd'.

Table 6.10: Incidences of looking glasses in the inventory samples¹

	1699- 1705	1708- 1713	1718- 1723	1729- 1734	1739- 1744	1749- 1756	Total
No Description							
Bristol	21	38+	40	37	37	30	203+
Boston	32	31	34+	38	37	35	207+
Detailed Description							
Bristol	1	-	3	9	29	17	59
Boston	1	2	6	11	8	10	38
Total							
Bristol	22	38+	43	46	66	47	262+
Boston	33	33	40+	49	45	45	245+
Percentage of Total							
Bristol	8	15	17	18	25	18	
Boston	14	14	16	20	18	18	
Average per Inventory							
Bristol	1	2	2	2	3	3	2
Boston	1	1	2	2	2	2	2

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b.

Table 6.11 demonstrates a higher rate of ownership of clocks and watches in the Bristol sample compared to that of Boston. The average incidence per inventory, however, remains below one. Barry found evidence for a steady rise in the levels of ownership of clocks and watches in Bristol during the eighteenth century,⁴⁵⁵ and the findings of the current study demonstrate that, while the trend across both samples is upwards, the growth occurs at a steadier rate than some of the other categories of goods.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. viii-xvii.

Table 6.11: Incidences of clocks and watches in the inventory samples¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
Total							
Bristol	1	4	10	13	22	19	59
Boston	-	7	6	9	8	9	39
Percentage of Total							
Bristol	2	7	17	22	38	33	
Boston	-	18	15	23	21	23	
Average per Inventory							
Bristol	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Boston	-	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1

1. Sources: see Tables 6.1a and 6.1b.

Tables 6.12a and 6.12b analyse the proportion of inventories in Bristol and Boston that contain a range of fashionable containing goods, in order to assess whether these goods were becoming more widespread among consumers over time. As well as looking glasses, pictures and prints, window curtains and clocks and watches, these tables also include items of tea and coffee making equipment, demonstrating the rising importance of fashionable commodities like tea, coffee, and chocolate, and the increasing popularity of the social ceremonies surrounding their consumption, especially after 1730.

Table 6.12a: Percentage of the Bristol inventory sample containing fashionable goods¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756
Looking Glasses	56	68	76	68	64	80
Pictures	4	8	44	40	36	32
Prints	-	4	4	12	32	32
Window Curtains	8	16	20	44	44	36
Clocks & Watches	4	4	28	28	56	56
Coffee Utensils	-	4	16	12	36	40
Tea Utensils	-	4	16	28	40	52
Sugar Utensils	-	-	-	4	4	4
Chocolate Utensils	-	-	4	12	16	16
Paper Hangings	-	-	12	20	20	12

1. Sources: see Table 6.1a.

Table 6.12b: Percentage of the Boston inventory sample containing fashionable goods¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756
Looking Glasses	68	60	68	72	76	76
Pictures	20	16	12	36	56	34
Prints	4	-	-	4	8	8
Window Curtains	16	20	16	24	8	4
Clocks & Watches	8	16	20	44	28	24
Coffee Utensils	8	-	-	12	20	48
Tea Utensils	-	12	18	28	36	68
Sugar Utensils	4	4	4	8	16	24
Chocolate Utensils	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paper Hangings	-	-	-	-	-	-

1. Sources: see Table 6.1b.

Around 70 per cent of the inventories in the Bristol and Boston samples contain references to looking glasses. Similarities can also be seen in the numbers of inventories containing clocks and watches and coffee and tea utensils. However, while similar numbers of inventories contain references to pictures, the percentages containing prints are markedly lower in Boston. The term 'pictures' refers here to portrait and landscape paintings, which required a significant outlay in terms of time and capital and were thus signifiers of high status. The prints listed in the inventories usually refer to mezzotintos, an Italian word that means 'half-painted'. Such prints were made from images engraved onto copper, and multiple copies could be made from each copper plate. They were much cheaper to produce than paintings, and their value was in their decorative appeal, which is why they became increasingly popular during the eighteenth century.⁴⁵⁶

The number of Boston inventories containing objects related to the consumption of tea, coffee and sugar demonstrates a very different pattern. From a relatively low base at the beginning of the period, they undergo a rapid

⁴⁵⁶ Alfred Whitman, *The Masters of Mezzotint: The Men and Their Work*, (London, 1898).

increase from the 1730s onwards, with 68 per cent of the inventories containing 'tea' related items, 48 per cent containing 'coffee' related items, and 24 per cent containing 'sugar' related items by the 1750s. While there are no mentions of any objects relating to the consumption of tea or coffee in the Bristol sample in the 1700s, there are 12 mentions in the Boston sample. In the 1730s, the Boston inventories again contain the highest number of mentions of tea and coffee-making equipment, 138 in total, with a much lower level for the Bristol counterpart. The 1740s sees a reversal, with the Bristol inventories containing the highest number of items by far, but the total numbers of references exceeding a 100 in each case. The 1750s sees the levels of ownership become very similar again between the Bristol and Boston samples, and the overall trend in ownership in both samples increases, especially from the 1730s onwards.⁴⁵⁷

While the proportion of inventories mentioning sugar utensils are higher in Boston, references to items of equipment relating to the consumption of chocolate are absent from the Boston inventory sample. Finally, despite paper hangings appearing in 11 per cent of the Bristol inventories sampled, there are no references to the same in the Boston sample. In summary, clear patterns emerge surrounding the ownership of the various categories of fashionable goods. While Boston matched Bristol in increased levels of ownership of some goods others, noticeably curtains and timepieces, lag behind, and it is worth noting the relatively early appearance of tea and coffee utensils in Boston.

⁴⁵⁷ For a full listing of the incidences of items relating to tea, coffee and sugar in the inventory samples, see Appendix 11.

6.9: Second-Hand Values of Household Objects

As well as looking at the total numbers of objects held in each inventory, it is also important to assess the relative second-hand values of the objects on both sides of the Atlantic. Such values demonstrate the continued demand for household items and their perceived desirability to eighteenth-century consumers in Bristol and Boston. Even when the sterling conversion rates are applied, a large variety of goods are allocated much higher values in the Boston probate inventory sample, compared to those in Bristol throughout the period. For pictures and prints, the values of these objects ranges from a few pence for a small print to several shillings for a larger framed piece throughout the period. Only landscapes and family pictures are estimated to be worth more than five shillings. In Boston, during the same period, 'ordinary' pictures are valued at six shillings or more each, and by the end of the period, pictures in gilded frames are being valued at 50 shillings each. Therefore, the differences in the numbers of pictures appearing in inventories in Bristol and Boston can be attributed to much higher prices in Boston.

Clocks and watches are given much higher second-hand values in the Boston inventories than was the case in Bristol during this period. At the beginning of the century, the highest valuation in the Bristol inventories was £6 for a clock and £3 for a watch. By the 1750s, those values have risen to £15 and £7 respectively. However, Boston valuations are much higher throughout, peaking in the 1750s, when clocks are being appraised in the inventories at anywhere between £6 and £35, and watches between £2 and £25.

The valuations placed on looking glasses in the inventories follows a similar pattern in both the Bristol and Boston samples. There is a wide variation in the values attached but there are similarities at the lower end of the scale, with small and old looking glasses being judged to be worth one or two shillings each throughout the period. Divergences occur, however, around the most valuable items, with Bristol reaching a peak of £2 to £3 for the largest and most ornate looking glasses, and valuations of £10 to £20 in Boston, with the most expensive walnut framed looking glass receiving an appraisal of £35 in the 1750s. However, the trends are upwards in both samples, with the most decorative looking glasses valued at significantly higher levels by the end of the period in Bristol and Boston.

Window curtains and tables maintain similar values to one another in both cities during the period. In the 1700s, window curtains are typically valued at four for ten shillings or two for five shillings in Bristol, and six for twelve shillings and one at two shillings and six pence in Boston at the start of the period. More expensive sets are occasionally noted in each sample, but the numbers drop significantly in the Boston sample. While the numbers of window curtains appearing in Boston inventories is much lower overall than in the Bristol sample, the similar valuations point to reasons other than price for these differences. This could reflect differences in tastes and levels of comfort in the colonies and lower-density housing, which would have made the privacy afforded by curtains less of a priority.

Tables were a more essential item in the household and the range of values attached to them reflects this in both Bristol and Boston. Cheap, small tables have a second-hand value of around two to three shillings on both

sides of the Atlantic throughout the period. However, some styles and shapes attract much higher values. In Bristol around 1700, the most expensive oval table is valued at £1, and in Boston a walnut oval table is valued at £3. By the end of the period, while the values of ordinary tables are still being put at a few shillings, the most expensive large mahogany tables are being routinely valued at between £1 and £2 in Bristol but have risen sharply in value to between £10 and £15 in Boston.

Items associated with tea and coffee drinking are relatively rare in the inventories at the beginning of the period, but begin being noted regularly from the 1730s onwards. Valuations of teapots, teakettles, coffee pots, and sets of cups and saucers, vary greatly depending on the materials used. With, the exception of silver, the valuations decrease slightly over the period, and this corresponds with Shammas's research, which pointed to the ability of eighteenth-century consumers to purchase increasing numbers of such items without the necessity of increasing their total outlay on the same.⁴⁵⁸

Variations in second-hand values underline the environmental and commercial circumstances that consumers in both cities experienced. The accelerated growth in the numbers of window curtains evident in the Bristol inventories as the period progresses not only reflects the increasing desire to decorate the home with matching textiles, but may also have served to enhance the privacy of those consumers. The relative lack of window curtains in the Boston inventories, and their slow growth over the period, could in part be a result of the prominence of window shutters in New England. The Boston winters were harsher than those experienced by residents of Bristol, and

⁴⁵⁸ Shammas, *The Pre-industrial Consumer*, p. 295.

window shutters would have been more practical for insulating the households from the freezing winter temperatures.

Ulrich and Nylander agreed that window curtains were relatively rare in eighteenth-century New England homes, with Ulrich estimating they were only present in 10 per cent of households in Norwich, Connecticut, and Nylander stating that 'when they were used, they served a utilitarian as well as ornamental function', especially for protecting expensive furniture from the harsh summer sun and to prevent a range of flying insects entering properties.⁴⁵⁹ Herman's research on a selection of town houses built in Boston's North Square by the wealthiest residents highlighted the importance of display when it came to planning. In one particular example, the parlour was arranged so that 'the elaborate panelling would be visible to passers-by at night when the room was illuminated with lamps and candles.' In the same house, the dining room faced the back of the house and therefore had a certain degree of privacy.⁴⁶⁰ The wealthiest residents tended to build their houses a long way back from the street, a luxury which was not available in the centre of Bristol due to the comparatively crowded nature of that city.⁴⁶¹

Differences in the numbers of clocks and watches appearing in inventories in Bristol and Boston could be a result of the scarcity of skilled craftsmen in the colonies, compared to England, and the fact that these items

⁴⁵⁹ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth*, (New York, 2001), p. 236; Jane C. Nylander, *Our Own Snug Fireside: Images of the New England Home, 1760-1860*, (New York, 1993), p. 124.

⁴⁶⁰ Bernard L. Herman, *Town House: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830*, (North Carolina, 2005), p. 27.

⁴⁶¹ See Herman, *The Town House*, and Leech, *The Town House*, for outlines of housing in Boston and Bristol in the eighteenth century.

had to be imported from Britain. While advertisements for the sale of textiles, looking glasses, and tea and coffee-making equipment appear very regularly in the Boston newspapers, individuals advertising the sale and manufacture of clocks and watches remain relatively rare throughout the period. In 1707, the only clockmaker to advertise in the Boston sample came from London, 'by way of Pensilvania'. In 1745, James Atkinson placed an advertisement in the Boston Gazette to alert potential customers that he was newly arrived 'from the North Side of the Royal Exchange in London', and by 1752, Gawen Browne was importing a selection of clocks and watches from London.⁴⁶²

Likewise, with pictures and prints, appearances in advertisements are few and far between, but this does not seem to have had a detrimental effect on the numbers catalogued in the inventories. While they are apportioned much higher second-values in the Boston inventories, pictures and prints appear almost as frequently as in the Bristol sample. The large numbers encountered in the inventories, despite their relative expense, demonstrate their growing importance as decorative items in eighteenth-century households, and also underlines the complex web of motives surrounding the consumption of household goods. Consumer choices were made in relation to many factors, including fashion, quality, price, availability, and the surrounding environment. Boston consumers were sometimes restricted in their ability to access certain items, despite their increasing popularity and fashionableness in England.

⁴⁶² *The Boston News-letter*, Oct. 13 1707; *The Boston Gazette*, Jan. 15 1745; *The Boston Gazette*, Jun. 16 1752.

6.10 Room-by-Room Inventories and the Positioning of Household Goods

This section addresses developments in the housing stock in Bristol and Boston through an analysis of the numbers and types of rooms appearing in the more detailed probate inventories contained in each sample. Details concerning where householders chose to place items of furniture, especially where they had a number of options, also reveals changing perceptions concerning the use of domestic space during the period in both cities. Recent work by Leech has utilised a combination of archaeological records, architectural drawings, photographs and a select number of probate inventories to analyse developments in Bristol housing between the medieval and early modern periods.⁴⁶³ As he has demonstrated, detailed probate inventories can provide valuable data on changes to the placement of various goods in the household, and thereby allow conclusions to be drawn with regard to changes in room function and usage. His research found that ‘the decline of the hall as a main living area was complemented by the growing importance of parlours and chambers.’⁴⁶⁴

As previously mentioned, some researchers have highlighted the relatively poor standard of colonial housing in the eighteenth century, and this is another aspect of domestic life that a comparative study of probate inventories can illuminate. An analysis of the number of beds appearing in both inventory samples points to potential differences in domestic comfort and the arrangement of individual households in both cities. As beds and their ‘appurtenances’ account for a substantial portion of the values placed on

⁴⁶³ Leech, *The Town House*.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

goods documented in inventories, and they are recorded in more than 93 per cent of the 300 inventories studied, it is possible to gain an accurate picture of the minimum number of beds. In each decade, a greater number of beds are recorded in the Bristol inventories than in their Boston counterparts, which lag behind by between seven and 23 beds per decade.

Tables 6.13a and 6.13b look at the use of room definitions in the Bristol probate inventories to demonstrate a change from very general categorisations at the turn of the century, to much more specific ones by mid-century. These illustrate the rise of parlours and dining rooms and increasing distinctions between ordinary and 'best' when used to describe rooms in a growing number of the inventories. Although parlours had been in existence for many years before 1700, there is a move in the eighteenth century away from a multi-purpose role for such rooms, which often contained beds and chairs, towards a separation of functions, as they become places for public entertainment.

Table 6.13a: Incidences of room specification in the Bristol inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
No. of Inventories Divided by Room	13	16	15	16	14	21	95
Total No. of Rooms	63	80	90	102	111	114	560
Mean No. of Rooms per Inventory	5	5	6	6	8	5	6

1. Sources: see Table 6.1a.

Table 6.13b: Room descriptions in the Bristol inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
'Best'	2	2	2	3	6	4	19
'New'	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Colour	2	1	3	-	9	3	18
Textile	-	-	2	-	1	-	3
Parlour	3	8	6	7	11	18	53
Dining Room	-	1	1	1	2	3	8
Servant Room	1	1	1	-	1	2	6
Family Room	-	2	2	-	2	-	6
Work Room	2	8	8	4	7	8	37
Total	10	23	25	15	39	39	151

1. Sources: see Table 6.1a.

Table 6.14a: Incidences of room specification in the Boston inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1749-1744	1749-1756	Total
No. of Inventories Divided by Room	6	6	1	6	8	5	32
Total No. of Rooms	27	32	12	28	41	36	176
Mean No. of Rooms per Inventory	5	5	12	5	5	7	6

1. Sources: see Table 6.1b.

Table 6.14b: Room descriptions in the Boston inventory sample¹

	1699-1705	1708-1713	1718-1723	1729-1734	1739-1744	1749-1756	Total
'Best'	-	1	2	-	2	1	6
Colour	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Parlour	4	1	2	-	4	-	11
Dining Room	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Servant Room	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Work Room	1	2	-	2	1	-	6
Total	5	4	4	3	8	2	26

1. Sources: see Table 6.1b.

Tables 6.14a and 6.14b demonstrate marked differences from the Bristol data, again pointing to varying levels of domestic comfort between the two cities. Table 6.14a demonstrates that, while there are only 32 room-by-room inventories in the total Boston sample, these houses contain six rooms on average. This is in contrast to studies by Horn, which highlighted the basic standard of the majority of the rural colonial housing stock during this period,

and points to differences between rural and urban housing.⁴⁶⁵ Of the 32 room-by-room inventories, 11 contain parlours, six make reference to a workroom of some variety, and six refer to at least one of their rooms as the 'best' room, which, along with the references to parlours, demonstrates a desire to differentiate living spaces and room function among a small proportion of the inventoried population of Boston.

Comparing the Bristol and Boston samples, the total numbers of inventories which make note of the particular rooms items appear in are much higher in Bristol than Boston. Where inventories appear as room-by-room lists, the average number of rooms is similar across both samples. There is a greater use of descriptive adjectives in the Bristol sample compared to the Boston one, including 'best' and 'new' and details about how such rooms are decorated in terms of colours and fabrics. There is also a greater level of categorisation denoting the particular functions of rooms, such as dining rooms and parlours in the Bristol sample.

It is also possible to go further and chart changes in the types and varieties of rooms over time by comparing the accommodation of individuals with similar values of household goods. For example, there are significant differences when comparing the inventories of Thomas Hall, from the 1699-1705 Bristol sample, and Thomas Hackett, from the 1749-1756 Bristol sample. Thomas Hall was a blacksmith, and Thomas Hackett is listed as a merchant, but their inventories both contain household goods to the value of around £50 and those goods are divided into five rooms. The differences appear in the descriptions used for those rooms. Thomas Hall's

⁴⁶⁵ Horn, 'The Bare Necessities', and Horn, *Adapting to a New World*.

accommodation is described as an upper fore street room, an upper chamber backward, a backward chamber below, a lower fore street room, and a kitchen, and Thomas Hackett's consists of a green room up one pair of stairs, a fore room up one pair of stairs, a back parlour, a fore parlour, a little parlour. One of the rooms also contains a closet, and a hall is also mentioned.

A similar comparison can be made between Joseph Rosser, a Bristol house carpenter who appears in the 1718-1723 sample, and William Winbow, a Bristol Maltster whose inventory appears in the 1739-44 sample. Again, the goods in both inventories are valued at around £50, but the descriptions of the accommodation differ greatly. Joseph Rosser's property is divided between an inward garret, a fore garret, a first room, a little room, a fore room on the same floor, and a kitchen. William Winbow's is made up of a parlour, a fore room one story high, a closet in the same room, a back room one story high, a fore room two storeys high, a back room two story's high, a best kitchen, a cellar and a back kitchen. Household goods are also found on the stairs and in the entry passage. Such comparisons also highlight developments in room use and increasing specialisation over the period. Each room in Joseph Rosser's house contains a variety of goods. Beds and bedding are listed in the inward garret, the fore garret, the little room and the fore room on the first floor. Tables, chairs and stools appeared alongside the beds in the little room and the fore room on the same floor, and also in the first room and the kitchen, implying that all the rooms are multi-functional.

William Winbow's inventory, which appears twenty years later, shows a different pattern. The fore and back rooms on both storeys are much more recognisable as bedrooms, containing beds, cases of drawers, chests and

trunks, desks, window curtains, looking glasses and the odd chair, but no tables. Tables and chairs are found in the parlour, which also contains a card table and thirteen china plates and two sets of china. Besides two oval tables and chairs with cushions, the best kitchen contains a clock and case, paper hangings, an old looking glass, pewter dishes and cutlery. The back kitchen contains the majority of the pans and pots, some tubs and broken chairs. It is possible to see a division of living space in William Winbow's house, between the public areas of the parlour and best kitchen, where better quality items are on display to potential visitors, and other parts of the house which are kept for the use of family members and any household staff. Such a close analysis of inventories makes it possible to see the demotion of some older, less fashionable items, and an elevation of others into positions of prominence in the home.

Performing a similar exercise with the Boston probate inventory sample, comparing a number of room-by-room inventories with similar values of household goods between 1699 and 1756, produces different results. Beginning with the earliest sample, Ralph Carter and Michael Perry's inventories contain household goods valued between £61 and £71 each. They are each divided between three rooms, and each room contains a mixture of items, demonstrating that each room serves a number of purposes. For instance, in Ralph Carter's inventory, the 'Great Chamber over the Shop' and the 'Chamber next the sea' contained beds, tables and trunks, and the remaining 'Under Room next the sea' contain tables, a looking glass and pots and pans. In Michael Perry's inventory, the 'Middle Room' contains chairs,

tables, a bed, a chest of drawers and pictures, and the 'Kitchen' contains beds, and tables and chairs, as well as the usual pots and pans.

In the 1730's Boston inventory sample, while Samuel Keeling's household possessions, valued at £46, are divided between six rooms, five of these rooms contain beds, and several of these also contain odd tables and chairs. The exception is the 'Dining Room', which contains maps and pictures, a couch, a walnut table, an oak table, cane elbow chairs with cushions, and bass bottom chairs. The Dining Room appears to contain better quality furniture and a number of items that serve to enhance the levels of comfort of members of the household and their visitors. In 1740, three of the five rooms itemised in George Manner's inventory contain a mixture of beds, chairs and tables. The 'Kitchen also contains tables and pots and pans, and the 'Back Low Room' contains chairs, a looking glass, a desk, several tables and some pictures. His household goods are valued at around £60, but in both inventories the room descriptions for the majority of the rooms remain very generic, being labelled either as chambers or rooms, and categorised according to their position in the house – either 'Front', 'Middle' or 'Back' – or according to their size – either 'Little' or 'Long'.

Towards the end of the period, the inventory of John West values his household goods at around £74 and divides them into five rooms: 'Front Room', 'Kitchen', 'Front Chamber', 'Upper Chamber' and 'Other Upper Chamber'. Although room descriptions remain generic, there are signs of a growing specialisation in room use. Each of the chambers contains beds, but the 'Front Chamber' appears to have been the master bedroom, also containing a bureau table, a toilet table, an easy chair and a looking glass.

The 'Upper Chamber' contains rugs and a looking glass, but the 'Other Upper Chamber' only contains a bed and an assortment of linen. The 'Front Room' contains the best quality furnishings, including a mahogany waiter, maple and mahogany tables and chairs, and a range of china and glass, while the 'Kitchen' contains the usual pots and pans, and also teakettles, a folding board and six straw bottom chairs.

Analysis of developments in the use of items of furniture within particular rooms, and changes to the nomenclature of rooms within the home, highlights important aspects of the processes involved in consumption. As rooms became more specialised in terms of their function, so the need to furnish such rooms with appropriate items influenced purchasing decisions. Choices had to be made regarding the items which were deemed suitable to be included in the relatively public arenas of the dining room or the parlour, and those which needed to be moved to, or were to remain in, the private space of the bed chamber.

6.11: Conclusion

The strength of this thesis lies in its ability to analyse the consumption process from start to finish through the study of advertisements and household goods alongside probate inventories, thereby presenting a more complete assessment of the purchasing priorities of eighteenth-century consumers in Bristol and Boston. As the vast majority of a household's expenditure was taken up by the purchase of food, evident from studies of household accounts but largely absent from probate inventories, the incorporation of both sources in this study enables an analysis of each aspect of household consumption. Comparisons of the ownership and purchase of

goods in Bristol and Boston, with the way goods were marketed in the newspapers of both cities, make it possible to assess the influences of such marketing on actual household expenditure.

A comparison of the goods appearing in Boston and Bristol probate inventories adds to our understanding of changes in consumption. The similarities between the samples used in this study, in terms of time period, total values of goods and social and occupational makeup, add strength to the conclusions that can be drawn concerning changes in the ownership of a range of goods on both sides of the Atlantic. While they provide evidence of similarities in the continued prominence of beds and bedding, and silverware, demonstrating the fundamental place of such items in the household, they also illustrate a burgeoning in the varieties and styles of traditional goods such as tables, as well as the introduction of a range of fashionable objects over time.

While an analysis of the total numbers of goods appearing in probate inventories demonstrates a general upward trend, there are also differences in levels of ownership between goods in both cities. The variety of influential factors include differences in fashion, quality, price and availability of goods, and even environmental considerations. The ownership of tables and looking glasses demonstrate similar patterns of growth in Bristol and Boston throughout the period, and the values attached to them in the probate inventories are also closely matched overall. Differences occur in the types of materials used to construct the tables, and these can often be attributed to the availability of certain types of wood. There is also evidence of a burgeoning in the styles and shapes of tables on both sides of the Atlantic over the period.

Differences in the values attributed to tables and looking glasses mainly occur at the upper end of the market, with the most ornate examples fetching much higher appraisals in Boston. Although a dearth of supply could be behind this discrepancy, the inventory samples highlight increasing consumer demand for decorative objects for the home in Bristol and Boston.

Two other categories of decorative items, pictures and prints, and window curtains, demonstrate significant differences in levels of ownership between the inventory samples. Pictures and prints are allocated much higher values in the inventories in Boston compared to Bristol, but their numbers increase at similar rates during the period. However, despite similar valuations on both sides of the Atlantic, window curtains appear far less frequently in the Boston inventory sample, and the increase is marginal over time compared to the evidence from Bristol, which experiences a rapid growth during the same period. Differences in the physical and domestic environments in both places lie at the heart of these differences in ownership. Seasonal extremes of temperature in the colonies explains the popularity of wooden window shutters in Boston, along with the extra space available to town planners and builders in colonial cities compared to their English counterparts.

Evidence of the ownership of tea and coffee utensils appears earliest in the Boston sample of inventories, which corresponds with the evidence surrounding the marketing of such goods in both cities. Indeed, levels of ownership in the Boston inventories are more similar to those of London than Bristol. As mentioned previously, this could be as a result of the dominance of direct imports from London into the Boston marketplace as opposed to the variety of supply channels for goods entering Bristol, especially during the

early part of the eighteenth century. However, ownership of tea and coffee utensils grows quickly in both cities from the 1730s onwards. At the same time the inventories provide evidence of the stagnation and occasional reduction in the second-hand values placed on the same items as the century progresses, confirming Shamma's conclusions mentioned earlier about the lack of change in the proportions of wealth consumers allocated to such goods over time.⁴⁶⁶ Where the levels of ownership of such items are matched in both samples, it provides evidence that the full range of goods were available to consumers in both cities, a conclusion borne out by the large numbers of newspaper advertisements marketing such goods, and the growing importance of purchases of such commodities in household accounts as the century progresses.

Increases in the ownership of window curtains, pictures, looking glasses, time pieces, and tea and coffee making equipment in the inventory samples demonstrates increasing attention to decoration and adornment in the home, which in turn highlights changes in notions of comfort and ideas of hospitality during the first-half of the eighteenth century. Lower levels of ownership of some categories of goods in the Boston sample, especially where there are no significant differences in values, needs to be explained by factors other than monetary considerations. Together with the data surrounding the relatively low number of beds in the Boston inventories, the comparatively small number of room-by-room inventories, and the generic terms used to describe rooms throughout the period in that, confirm the conclusions of other historians concerning the relatively low standard of

⁴⁶⁶ Shamma, *The Pre-industrial Consumer*, p. 295.

housing enjoyed by the majority of the residents of Boston, compared to their Bristol counterparts. While adherence to fashion was equally important in Bristol and Boston, some tastes and choices had to be adapted to the relatively underdeveloped urban landscape in Boston.

The data collected from all three sets of primary sources presents a more complete picture of the range of considerations that influenced the process of consumption, including differences in the physical, commercial and psychological environments that consumers navigated in each city. They also highlight differences in the ownership of goods in Bristol and Boston in the first half of the eighteenth century, and the marketing of goods in contemporary newspapers in both cities. Advertisements for traditional goods were relatively scarce, while those for fashionable goods increased throughout this period. However, while there is a mismatch in the types of goods appearing in each source, both probate inventories and advertisements provide evidence of the rising popularity of fashionable goods. The care taken to record the presence of these goods demonstrates their psychological and social value to householders and appraisers alike.

There were also significant differences in the types of household goods accumulated during the lifetimes of many citizens of Bristol and Boston, compared to the goods dominating their daily and weekly household expenditures. The absence of food items in probate inventories has an obvious impact on the conclusions about consumption that can be reached from their study in isolation. As the entries in household accounts are dominated by the regular purchase of everyday items, evidence contained within them downplays the importance of extraordinary expenditure. Many of

the items that were purchased regularly were consumed immediately and left no lasting trace. Conversely items that were only purchased once in the duration of the account book often lasted long enough and held sufficient significance to the family, to be passed on to future generations.

By underlining the continued importance of traditional items, and the continuing importance of silverware as a repository of wealth for many middling families, probate inventories demonstrates the persistence of conservative purchasing priorities during the first half of the eighteenth century. While fashionable items, such as tea and coffee utensils, and window curtains, did become more prevalent during this period, they continued to account for only a relatively small proportion of the overall possessions of middling households. This could be a result of the relative age of the inventoried population, compared to the average age of consumers, but inventories still reveal a growing interest in fashion over time. The influences of fashion can be seen in the changing styles of tables and chairs, the increasing appearance of matching sets of furniture and bedding, and an increase in the prevalence of specialised rooms for sleeping, eating and entertaining. Comparisons between the probate inventories in Bristol and Boston also provide evidence of the range of additional factors influencing consumption decisions. The relatively simple colonial housing stock, and differences in the urban environments of both cities, led to distinctions between, for example, the ownership of some categories of goods such as window curtains and pictures.

The research conducted in this thesis demonstrates the complexity of the processes involved in household consumption, from the decisions that

influenced the initial choice of particular goods, to the varying often complex networks of individuals required to ensure reliable supplies of commodities to eighteenth-century middle-class families, to the continued and changing use of goods in the home. The burgeoning variety of types and styles of goods possessed by households in the two cities during the first half of the eighteenth century highlights the growing choices for consumers and the differing factors that influenced their participation in the Atlantic world of goods as the century progressed.

Chapter 7: Conclusion: Consumption Processes and the Marketplace in Bristol and Boston, c1700-1760

The processes involved in the consumption of different categories of goods act as indicators of the wider process of economic development across the 'Atlantic World'. The evidence presented in this thesis allows insights into the extent and shape of developments in the consumption of a range of important goods and adds to our understanding, not only of changes in consumption practices in two significant urban centres during the first half of the eighteenth century, but also of important aspects of the economy and society of England and her colonies in the period leading up to the Industrial and American Revolutions. A study of developments in the marketing, purchase and ownership of goods provides evidence of a range of factors influencing consumption decisions, underlining the significant impact of local environments and household circumstances on consumer choices. Finally, this study emphasises the complex range of purchasing considerations bound up in the processes surrounding consumption in the eighteenth century.

The approach taken in this thesis has allowed a focus on the processes involved in the consumption of different categories of goods, from their initial marketing to their eventual ownership. Identifying how these processes varied between types of goods, such as food and drink, textiles and clothing, and household furnishings, has revealed differences in the considerations involved in their marketing and purchase. As well as emphasising the importance of studying the complete consumption process, this thesis provides unique insights into economic developments in England

and the colonies, throwing light on the interactions between eighteenth-century consumers and their marketplaces.

Items of food and drink were marketed frequently in newspaper advertisements in both cities, accounting for almost 30 per cent of all the notices appearing in the newspaper samples. Sellers of new and fashionable groceries such as tea, coffee, sugar and chocolate, were particularly reliant on advertising to keep their customers informed of the arrival of their commodities in the local marketplace. High literacy rates and widening newspaper readerships enabled newspaper advertisements to provide a large proportion of urban consumers with increased access to information on the latest consumer trends. Marketing efforts for other categories of food and drink were relatively scarce in Bristol, but more common in Boston. The relative lack of a structured consumer marketplace in Boston, as well as an absence of competing market centres in the hinterland around that city during the first-half of the eighteenth century further increased the importance of newspaper advertisements as disseminators of market intelligence to potential customers in and around that city.

Despite a growing emphasis on the arrival of new and fashionable groceries in the marketplaces of both cities, purchases of such goods accounted for only a fraction of the entries in the account books of Wharton and Greene, only averaging around 15 per cent of Wharton's total expenditure on food and drink between 1733 and 1742 for example. Instead, the majority of expenditure on food and drink within both households was taken up in the purchase of everyday items like bread, meat and fish, and a range of dairy products. While Boston newspapers did contain some advertisements for

these essential items, they were generally absent from the Bristol newspaper sample, with notices for non-essential goods dominating. Household account books demonstrate relatively flexible levels of purchasing for non-essential items of food and drink, and reinforce the dependence of retailers on marketing to reach consumers who were able to purchase their new and fashionable groceries from a range of competing suppliers.

While the networks of household supply were generally complex, they were particularly so for certain categories of food and drink. Flour, beer and salted fish, along with new groceries such as tea, coffee and sugar, had a relatively long shelf-life, and household accounts provide evidence of these goods being purchased on a monthly or less frequent basis. Some processed dairy and meat items, such as cheese and bacon, were also often only purchased once a month. Account books demonstrate how the perishability of goods affected the patterns of purchasing employed by consumers. More perishable goods, such as milk, fresh meat and fish, had a much shorter shelf life and therefore had to be purchased regularly for immediate consumption. Such considerations in turn affected the frequency with which retailers placed advertisements for particular goods.

Variations in the perishability of certain foods also influenced the total number of suppliers involved in their purchase, as seen in the household accounts. Goods with a longer shelf life, such as tea and coffee, were usually sourced from one or two individuals, while a number of people were often called upon to keep a family supplied with the most perishable items, such as milk. In contrast to their prominent position in newspapers and household accounts, items of food and drink were rarely listed in probate inventories.

Despite occasional mentions of joints of bacon and barrels of beer, most data concerning the consumption of food and drink can be gleaned indirectly from some of the household items listed in the inventories. For instance, the ownership of tea and coffee pots, and their increasing numbers as the period progresses, indicates the growing consumption of these new commodities.

The physical consumer marketplaces of Bristol and Boston differed greatly in the eighteenth century, particularly for the purchase of food and drink items, with Bristol consumers having access to a number of regular and specialist markets. While the relative lack of such a structured marketplace in Boston is reflected in higher levels of marketing for such goods appearing in the newspapers of that city, the purchasing patterns and supply networks for most items of food and drink evident in the household account books of Wharton and Greene demonstrate many similarities. They also demonstrate the many ways that consumers interacted with their marketplaces to avail themselves of a wide range of essential and fashionable groceries, adapting their methods to suit the range of suppliers around them.

Textiles were also heavily marketed in newspaper advertisements from retailers in both cities, accounting for 48 per cent of total advertisements in the Bristol sample, and 22 per cent in Boston. The majority comprised references to haberdashery and items of wearing apparel. As well as detailing sellers of fabric, ribbons and buttons, and ready-made items like aprons and handkerchiefs, notices placed in newspapers in both cities also advertised the services of tailors and others who could make garments to the specific dimensions of each customer as well as cleaning and repairing items of clothing. Household accounts also provide evidence of the central place of

purchases of clothing in the household budget, especially at particular times in the lifecycle of a family, such as weddings and funerals, when additional specialist items of dress were required. Such considerations underlined the need for retailers to market their goods, especially where patterns of demand from households was sporadic and dependent on a range of factors.

Account books provide evidence of the gendered nature of purchasing habits around wearing apparel. Whereas the male head of the household tended to purchase material and the services of a tailor to make his clothes, the women of the household would usually take their fabric to a gifted relative to produce their outfits including their wedding dresses. In each case, the processes involved in acquiring the multiple components needed for each garment, and the securing of a tailor or seamstress to create the items, were complex and lengthy. Finally, although there are inconsistencies in the level of detail among probate inventories, those that do itemise the individual garments left by the deceased reveal the variety of fabrics and designs and emphasise the wide choices that could be exercised by eighteenth-century consumers. They also demonstrate the high value attached to such personal garments during this period, which was also a reflection of the relative expense and complex processes involved in their manufacture and ownership prior to industrialisation.

Evidence from the pages of newspapers and household accounts demonstrate that household textiles, including bedding, tablecloths and napkins, were only infrequently marketed and purchased in both cities. However, evidence of their ownership in probate inventories, where beds and bedding averaged 26 per cent of the total value of household goods, show

that they represented a significant outlay in terms of the household budget of eighteenth-century consumers. The expensive nature of household textiles ensured that they maintained a vital place within the home and were treated with great care. They were often made up of elements that had been passed down between generations, and older beds were rarely disposed of completely, but moved instead to lesser rooms in the house. Probate inventories often demonstrate the ownership of different qualities of beds and bedding within a household, through the second-hand values and detailed descriptions attached to them, while also emphasising their enduring place at the heart of the home. The intrinsic importance of household textiles to the life of eighteenth-century families also explains their relative absence from household accounts and newspaper advertisements. New purchases of household textiles were not subject to impulse purchasing, and their advertisement in newspapers would therefore not have influenced sales sufficiently to merit the associated costs to retailers. Again, while consumers in Bristol benefitted from a larger number of specialist retail outlets than their Boston counterparts throughout the period studied in this thesis, they both employed similar patterns of purchase for a large quantity of basic wearing apparel and household textiles.

Items of furniture, such as tables and chairs, were purchased in a similar manner to beds and bedding. Although notices were placed in newspapers advertising the availability of pieces of ready-made furniture from individual retailers, and bespoke items from furniture makers, their numbers were relatively small. The impression created is one of careful consideration surrounding the procurement of items of furniture, and this is confirmed by the

data concerning ownership collected from household account books. Supplies of such furniture were infrequent and were sourced from a small number of established retailers and local craftsmen. As with beds, the purchase of tables and chairs represented significant expenditure and they maintained some sort of function in the home even when they became old and broken, highlighting their durability and continued value to the family.

While traditional household goods retained an important place in the eighteenth-century household, their consumption was also influenced by the changing styles and patterns of the period. Probate inventories provide evidence of the ownership of increasing varieties of looking glasses and tables, and their increasing ornamentation and decoration. This corresponds to the evidence of the increasing influence of fashion seen in newspaper advertisements during this period. New groceries and new patterned textiles, together with a range of new household goods, were also heavily marketed in eighteenth-century newspapers. Potential customers were kept constantly informed of the arrival of new coffee pots, tea cups, and dinner services made from a variety of materials and in a variety of styles. Unlike basic food items and traditional household items, decisions surrounding the purchasing of such items were dictated by considerations of fashion and novelty. From the suppliers' perspective, increased emphasis on advertising was required where there was fluctuating demand coupled with increased competition. The constantly changing nature of such items meant that an effective marketing strategy was vital for increased sales.

Despite concerted marketing efforts for the new goods identified above, the evidence from household accounts highlights the persistence of traditional

purchasing considerations and the relatively minor role of fashion and novelty in the day-to-day lives of middling eighteenth-century families. While they note the occasional purchase of tea and coffee cups, for instance, the proportion of the annual household consumable budget they account for remains small in comparison to other categories of goods. As such items became more popular in the consumer marketplace, they became cheaper and more widespread. Their growing ubiquity was also related to the replacement of silver and porcelain with cheaper materials such as stoneware, and improvements in their manufacture, leading to further drops in their purchase price. However, although the purchase of such items may not have accounted for a significant proportion of the household budget, their growing presence in the probate inventories studied, reflects their growing popularity. Not only that, but their positioning in the best rooms within the household reinforces the important social role they performed during this period. Consumers in Bristol and Boston experienced differences in the marketplace for many items of furniture, with their purchases often influenced by their physical environment, essential items of furniture were acquired in similar ways by consumers in Bristol and Boston.

Despite their separation by thousands of miles, the cities of Bristol and Boston shared many geographical, physical, and social similarities during the eighteenth century. These, and other factors, led to many connections arising between these important urban ports and their citizens. A number of local economic conditions, however, also led to differing consumer marketplaces, and both the similarities and differences explored in this thesis demonstrate the significance of studying changes in consumption patterns between Bristol

and Boston between 1700 and 1760. The differences in the physical consumer marketplaces in Bristol and Boston had an impact on the way goods were marketed to the citizens of both cities that was not necessarily reflected in their purchasing decisions.

The relatively greater reliance on advertising by Boston retailers came as a consequence of the comparatively underdeveloped marketplace within which they were forced to conduct their business, and underlines the relationship between the virtual and real consumer marketplaces. Differences between these were caused by the continuing reliance of the colonists on goods manufactured and supplied directly from England, often imported by English merchants. Failed attempts to establish a regulated market in Boston, and continued resistance to such a development by a significant proportion of the local population, perpetuated this lack of structure. Local residents were suspicious about the motives behind such regulated markets and felt that they were an attempt to fix prices to the advantage of suppliers rather than consumers. Uncertain supply, plus sporadic demand from an urban population considerably smaller than Bristol, slowed down moves towards specialisation among retailers in Boston, while also leading to their greater dependence on advertising. Consequently, although advertisers on both sides of the Atlantic recognised the benefits of creating virtual consumer landscapes for potential customers, the need was even greater for those retailers situated in the relatively underdeveloped Boston marketplace.

Although advertisements provide evidence of similarities in the arrays of goods available to consumers in Bristol and Boston, in combination with the evidence from household accounts they also demonstrate differences in the

sales outlets in the two cities. However, despite the differences between their consumer marketplaces, the actual processes of consumption employed by the Wharton and Greene families displayed many similarities. Both households made use of a whole range of supply options, including family and friends, local craftsmen, general and specialised retailers, and national and international vendors. The majority of their essential stocks of food and drink and textiles and clothing came from regular purchases from familiar suppliers over a sustained period. This demonstrates that, just as advertising was being increasingly used to promote loyalty and reinforce reputations by a proportion of retailers during the eighteenth century, close personal contact appears to have continued to prove similarly effective for many aspects of the consumer market, often due to the importance of credit and personal trust. During their lifetimes, middling consumers on both sides of the Atlantic were able to acquire significant quantities of household possessions from their respective consumer marketplaces. Although local differences existed in the physical consumer marketplaces they interacted with, and despite some variations in the specific items accumulated, probate inventories provide evidence of the complex decision processes eighteenth-century consumers faced during their lifetimes.

Evidence in this thesis demonstrating the increasing use of marketing 'buzz words' in newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic as the century progressed echoes the research of Cox and Dannehl, Ferdinand and others concerning growing efforts by retailers attempting to persuade potential customers to purchase in a crowded consumer marketplace. Previous research by McKendrick, Mui and Mui, and Stobart, Hann and Morgan, has

demonstrated that the physical spaces produced by shopkeepers had profound and definite effects on consumers, shaping their practices and behaviour and leading to the development of shopping as a polite and pleasurable experience. Newspaper advertising also created virtual consumer spaces, with the layout of advertisements on the page often mirroring shop fronts and street signs in the physical landscape. The evidence from Bristol and Boston newspapers concurs with these findings, and also establishes changes in the boundaries between retailers and consumers in both cities during the first half of the eighteenth century. The more crowded the virtual consumer landscape, the more the onus fell onto retailers to persuade potential customers of their superiority over a growing number of competitors. Increasing choice led to a shift in the balance of power to the consumer, who could pick and choose their suppliers based on a range of criteria. As competition increased between traders in each city, and as the variety of consumable goods continued to grow, newspapers contained an ever-increasing number of notices. Advertisers reacted to this increased competition by appealing more directly to potential customers using a variety of terms to market their goods.

The continued importance of purchases of food and drink in household accounts confirms the conclusions of Whittle and Griffiths, Stobart, and Weatherill that, contrary to estimates by Gregory King and others, relative expenditure on food remained the same regardless of income levels. Analysis of the Wharton and Greene account books also reveals networks of supply as varied as those highlighted for gentry households in previous studies by Whittle and Griffiths, Stobart and others. While Wharton and Greene's

average annual expenditure fell below that of gentry families like the Le Stranges and the Leighs, their spending patterns were similar in that they acquired a wide range of goods from a wide range of suppliers. Household accounts reveal middle-class spending patterns to have been similar to those of gentry families like the Le Stranges and the Leighs, in terms of their complexity, acquiring a wide range of goods from a wide range of suppliers.⁴⁶⁷

As Shamas has pointed out, probate inventories list accumulated stocks of goods, but are unable to address the process of consumption.⁴⁶⁸

Although Weatherill analysed a selection of inventories and household accounts in *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*, the geographical areas studied, and the time periods covered, do not correspond as closely as the samples in this study, placing limitations on the comparisons reached in that study.⁴⁶⁹

This thesis demonstrates the complexities of the consumer marketplaces and consumption processes on both sides of the Atlantic between 1700 and 1760. Like De Vries, Whittle and Griffiths, Stobart and others, it demonstrates the importance of the household as a unit of consumption in the eighteenth century.⁴⁷⁰ This thesis also underlines many similarities between the networks of supply used by gentry and middle class families, and demonstrates the continued importance of reputation and loyalty

⁴⁶⁷ Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers'; Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender*.

⁴⁶⁸ Shamas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, p. 100.

⁴⁶⁹ Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*.

⁴⁷⁰ For example in de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution*; Whittle and Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth Century Household*; and Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers'

in consumption decisions. As with Weatherill and Carson's research,⁴⁷¹ the evidence presented in this thesis confirms the continued importance of a variety of motivations surrounding the purchasing of goods, and questions the relative place of emulation, novelty and fashion in consumption priorities previously highlighted by McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, and Carr and Walsh.⁴⁷² Finally, while Stobart, Cox, and Breen have demonstrated the importance of new marketing techniques in raising levels of demand in the eighteenth century,⁴⁷³ this thesis provides a qualification to such arguments. While newspaper advertisements were increasingly used by retailers of the period, especially in Boston, household accounts and probate inventories provide evidence of their growing but still limited impact up to mid-century.

This thesis demonstrates how the use of newspaper advertisements, household accounts and probate inventories together add greatly to our understanding of the processes involved in the consumption of a wide range of goods between 1700 and 1760. While research into marketing alone emphasises the importance of the arrival of new goods to the marketplace, household accounts demonstrate the continued significance of basic, everyday goods to eighteenth-century families. While probate inventories and advertisements provide information on the goods available in the marketplace, and their accumulation throughout a lifetime, at specific moments in time, household accounts reveal the dynamic nature of the processes surrounding

⁴⁷¹ For example, in Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture*; and Carson, *Face Value*.

⁴⁷² See McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*; and Carr, Lois and Walsh, 'The Planter's Wife'.

⁴⁷³ For example, in Stobart, *Sugar and Spice*; Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*; and Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*.

consumption, highlighting the movement of goods through the home over a number of years.

In summary, despite the rise of advertising, and the growth of specialist retail establishments during the first half of the eighteenth century in Bristol and Boston, newspaper advertisements, household accounts, and probate inventories together provide evidence of the fragmentary nature of the processes used by consumers in both cities, and the variety of factors that continued to influence their selection, purchase and accumulation of a broad range of goods during this period. The study of household accounts and probate inventories alongside newspaper advertisements reveals the categories of goods that were essential to the early modern household, compared to those that were purchased on a more ad hoc basis. They also reveal how the different markets for goods influenced the ways retailers used advertising to market them. Increasing competition among suppliers of non-essential items, such as new groceries and fashionable textiles, necessitated a greater reliance on marketing than for those selling everyday items. In Boston varying levels of supply and demand for some goods necessitated that retailers there promote their goods more aggressively than in Bristol.

The research undertaken in this thesis also reveals differences in the systems of supply between different categories of goods, which again relates to the marketplaces of Bristol and Boston. Middle-class families in both cities spent a large proportion of their time and energy selecting and purchasing goods for their households, from basic groceries to expensive items of furniture. Even where consumers had access to a large number of specialised shops stocking the latest fashions, as was the case in Bristol, they continued

to acquire a variety of goods from more informal sources, obtaining their supplies directly from small producers and farmers, local craftsmen, family member and friends. Therefore, while identifying the impact of differences in market structure on the processes surrounding the consumption of the majority of household goods in eighteenth-century England and America, this thesis also highlights the continued persistence of local environments and personal networks in the processes surrounding the marketing, purchase and ownership of consumable goods during this period.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Origins of Goods Arriving in Boston

Table A4.5: The origins of goods in Boston newspaper advertisements

	1700 s	1710 s	1720 s	1730 s	1740 s	1750 s	Total
London	1	13	41	17	95	185	352
Europe	4	10	26	12	18	85	155
England	-	15	12	9	33	73	142
Scotland	-	3	5	2	15	27	52
Other English Regions	-	1	3	-	13	17	34
Bristol	0	2	4	1	11	15	33
India	-	-	5	1	4	22	32
Great Britain & Ireland	-	3	6	2	14	6	31
No. Specifying Origin	5	47	102	44	203	430	831
Percentage of Advertisements	21	24	19	10	21	28	

Appendix 2: Examples of Additional Notes from the Household Account Book of Joshua Wharton

Many entries appear for general expenditure, for example detailing work undertaken at the various properties owned by Joshua Wharton, including the following in 1735:

'13 Feb The Brick Laier came to Lay ye Sumer House with a Laboror

20 The Brick Lair Mason: 1 Laboror

Sat 22 The Brick Laier mason: 2 Laborors

Mon 24 John Bartly & Boy & a Laboror

25 John Bartly & a Boy

11 Aprill pd in full Noads £03 4 0⁴⁷⁴

On other occasions, Joshua Wharton details gifts to family members, including his cousin Michael Wharton, living in Virginia:

'29 Feb 1737 Sent to my Kinsman Michael Wharton

2 old shirts: sum stript stuf for his son

a paire good stockings and a paire Gloves

By the Martin: Capt Beale Comander

And a Box of Medisons from M Bush £01 3 0⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁴ BRO 6783

Other entries contain detailed accounts for particular individuals showing the complexity of the services they provided to the Wharton household. The following example spans 1740 – 1741 for Giles Nash:

'Mar Mr Giles Nash acot
 15 Rec'd 4 Bush'ls & ½ oats
 25 Rec'd 60 lb Clover seed at 3d £0 15 0
 for Haling swil and facketts 1 Day
 Mar 23 for Plowing sowing and Draging the
 Barly and plower 6 Days
 Rec'd a Holter 6d Rec'd a Holter 6d £0 1 0
 16 Apr Rec'd a peck Pease and a peck Peese
 June Rec'd a peck Pease
 3 July Rec'd a peck Peese
 12 Aug Rec'd a Grose Quart Botles
 Rec'd 3 Doz Pint Botles
 Rec'd 2 Caples. Rec'd a Ball Twine
 20 Sepr Rec'd 3 Load Cole containing 65 Bushell
 2 Octo For Halling 1 Cart Load Barly to
 Temple Back to Mr Stantons
 2 Decr For Halling a Load Thornes home from
 the Comon a Cart Load
 9 Decr Rec'd a young Cherry Tree
 24 Rec'd a Load Cole 23 Bushells
 30 Rec'd a Quart Score Oats
 31 For Halling a Load Stones from Liddiotts Quarry
 24 Janu Rec'd 6 lb Salt Butter: 6 lb Starch 1lb Stone Blew
 3 Febr 1 lb starch & Blew 6 shillings
 8 Octo Mr Giles Nash Dr for a Cart Load Straw £0 7 0
 30 Sepr 1742 Mr Nash and I made up this and all acots between us in full.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁵ BRO 6783

⁴⁷⁶ BRO 6783

Appendix 3: Conversion Rates for Massachusetts Currency per £100 sterling⁴⁷⁷

1734:	355.00
1735:	360.00
1736:	430.00
1737:	516.67
1738:	500.00
1739:	500.00
1740:	525.00
1741:	548.44
1742:	550.28
1743:	550.70
1744:	588.61
1745:	644.79
1746:	642.50
1747:	925.00
1748:	912.50
1749:	1033.33
1750:	137.33
1751:	133.33
1752:	
1753:	130.00
1754:	133.33
1755:	133.33
1756:	133.33
1757:	133.33
1758:	128.34
1759:	

⁴⁷⁷ Based on calculations presented in tables on pp. 138-142 in John J McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: A Handbook* (London, 1978).

Appendix 4: Named Suppliers of Goods to the Wharton Household⁴⁷⁸

Mr Bagnall: miscellaneous goods

Farmer Baiksell: dairy goods

Cuz Bazell: tea and coffee, sugar, dairy, meat and fish, pottery and glass,
books and stationery, and miscellaneous goods

Ms Beale: textiles and clothing

Betty: pottery and glass, and miscellaneous goods from Bristol

John Bevan: meat and fish

Mrs Bevan: miscellaneous goods

Mr Bidwell: textiles and clothing

Mr Black: textiles and clothing

Martin Bramble: miscellaneous goods

Richard Bray: tea and coffee, and miscellaneous goods

Bristol: meat and fish

Michael Brock: metal wares and Jewellery

Mary Brookman: meat and fish

Mr Browne: miscellaneous goods

Robert Browne: tea and coffee

Mr Bruton of Crumhall: metal wares and jewellery

Betty Bull: dairy, and meat and fish

Thomas Bush: textiles and clothing

Mr Butler: miscellaneous goods

Stephen Button: furniture

Mr Chard: sugar

Cuz Chilcott: tea and coffee, and meat and fish

Miss Chubb: dairy

Mr Chubb: miscellaneous goods

Mr Churchman: tea and coffee, and chocolate

Mrs Cole: sugar

Mrs Collett: meat and fish

⁴⁷⁸ Information in bold comes from the pages of the Wharton Account book. Additional information comes from other sources

Mr Collier: pottery and glass
Mr Cosley: metal wares and jewellery
Country Butcher: meat and fish
Mrs Crane: textiles and clothing
Thomas Darby: textiles and clothing
Mr Davis: textiles and clothing
Mr Dowding: books and stationery
Thomas Dowlestone: textiles and clothing
The Fair: miscellaneous goods
Felix Farley: newspapers
Jane Fisher: sugar, dairy, and meat and fish
Martha Fisher: tea and coffee, meat and fish, and miscellaneous goods
Mr Fisher: textiles and clothing
Pat Fisher: tea and coffee, meat and fish, and miscellaneous goods
Fisher and Baker: textiles and clothing
Fisher, Baker and Griffin: textiles and clothing
Mr Ford: textiles and clothing
Mr Ford of Crumhall: books and stationery
Mr Franks: pottery and glass
Capt. Furny: furniture
J Furney: textiles and clothing
Mr Goldwire: sugar
Mr Goold: textiles and clothing
Mr Grevill: sugar
John Griffon: meat and fish
Mr Grimstead: textiles and clothing
Hanna: sugar, dairy, and meat and fish
William Harding: meat and fish
Mrs Harris: textiles and clothing
Mr Hazell: meat and fish, and miscellaneous goods
Mr Henbury: sugar
Cuz John Hickes: dairy, and metal wares and jewellery
Cuz Mary Hickes: tea and coffee, sugar, dairy, meat and fish, and textiles and
clothing

Benjamin Hickey: books and stationery
Old Hill: miscellaneous goods
Thomas Holmes: miscellaneous goods
Holton: miscellaneous goods
Mr Hopper: textiles and clothing
Dorathy Horrill: meat and fish
James Horrill: meat and fish
James Horrill's sister: meat and fish
James Horrill's Wife: meat and fish
Zachariah Hughes: soap, candles, and miscellaneous goods
William Hurford: sugar
Ms James: tea and coffee
James: dairy
William James: textiles and clothing
Jane: tea and coffee, and dairy
Mr Jenkins: tea and coffee, and dairy
Mr Jones: pottery and glass
Mr Mark Jones: miscellaneous goods
Mary Jones: textiles and clothing
Joseph: chocolate, dairy, meat and fish, and books and stationery
Mrs King: textiles and clothing
Lacy: dairy
Mr Liddiott: sugar, and books and stationery
Mr Little: textiles and clothing
Mr Joseph Little: dairy
Thomas Little: sugar, and miscellaneous goods
Farmer Lockstone: dairy, and meat and fish
Dame Loscom: meat and fish
Mr Lovell: metal wares and jewellery, and miscellaneous goods
William Maberly: meat and fish
Market: dairy, and meat and fish
Cuz Marklove: tea and coffee, chocolate, dairy, meat and fish, textiles and
clothing, metal wares and jewellery, books and stationery, and
miscellaneous goods

Mr Martin: textiles and clothing, and metal wares and jewellery
Anthony Merne: miscellaneous goods
Widow Merne: dairy, and meat and fish
Mr Milborah: dairy, and meat and fish
William Miller: miscellaneous goods
Mr Morode: miscellaneous goods
Cuz Thomas Murry: dairy, pottery and glass, metal wares and jewellery, and
miscellaneous goods
Ms Nash: dairy, and meat and fish
Cuz Stephen Nash: textiles and clothing
Ms Noblett: tea and coffee, and chocolate
Walter Norman: tea and coffee
Mr Owen: meat and fish
Thomas Owen: hats
Henry Pears: dairy
Mr Perkins: textiles and clothing
Robert Perry: textiles and clothing
Benjamin Pewsey: textiles and clothing
Morgan Phillips: dairy
Robert Ponting: dairy
Mr Pope: miscellaneous goods
Mrs Powell: textiles and clothing
Mr Price: textiles and clothing
Christopher Raymond: furniture
Robert: meat and fish, and miscellaneous goods
Mr Roe: textiles and clothing
Ms Rogerson: tea and coffee, and chocolate
Cuz Ruddock: tea and coffee, chocolate, sugar, dairy, meat and fish, textiles
and clothing, books and stationery, and miscellaneous goods
Ms Sanderson: tea and coffee, chocolate, and meat and fish
Mr Sargent: meat and fish
Mr Shouring: furniture
Sison: dairy
James Smith: sugar

Jane Smith: dairy, meat and fish, and miscellaneous goods,
 Jenny Smith: meat and fish
 John Smith: meat and fish
 Madam Smith: books and stationery
 Mr Smith: textiles and clothing
 Mr Thomas Smith: miscellaneous goods
 Son Stephens: meat and fish
 Mr Strech: metal wares and jewellery
 Richard Stringer: textiles and clothing
 Capt. Symes: books and stationery
 Thomas Taylor (Acton): meat and fish
 Thomas Tinker: metal wares and jewellery, and miscellaneous goods
 Ms Tipton: textiles and clothing
 Tom: tea and coffee, chocolate, sugar, dairy, meat and fish, and textiles and
 clothing
 Mr Torey: meat and fish
 Cuz Towgood's tenant: dairy
 Joise Tucker: dairy, and meat and fish
 Robert Tucker: meat and fish
 Mr Turnbull: textiles and clothing
 John Tustin: textiles and clothing
 Mr Tyler: sugar
 Mr John Vaughn: metal wares and jewellery
 Mr Waite of London: metal wares and jewellery
 Mr Walker: books and stationery
 Benjmin Walker: dairy
 Cuz Wall: tea and coffee, chocolate, sugar, dairy, meat and fish, textiles and
 clothing, pottery and glass, books and stationery, and
 miscellaneous goods
 Cuz Ware: dairy
 Mr Watts: textiles and clothing
 Peter Waymouth: dairy
 Mr Waymouth and wife: meat and fish
 Welsh woman: tea and coffee

Mrs Wharton: dairy, meat and fish, and textiles and clothing

Betty Wharton: textiles and clothing

Nancy Wharton: textiles and clothing

Mr White of London: textiles and clothing

John Whittock: textiles and clothing

Mrs Wilcox: meat and fish

James Wilcox: textiles and clothing, and miscellaneous goods

Sam Wilcox: textiles and clothing

Mr Williams: meat and fish

Marmaduke Williams: textiles and clothing

Appendix 5: Named Suppliers of Goods to the Greene Household⁴⁷⁹:

Mr John Allen: shoes (Sealer of Leather, *The Boston Evening Post*, 18/3/1754)

Mr Ames: Stone Cutter

Mrs Allen: schooling

Mr Arnold: hats

Mrs Atkins: Nurse

Mr John Avery: oil. (Distil House or next house to The White Horse, *Olden Times* 2)

Mr Bagnal: Watch Cleaner (confirmed in *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewellers*, p.999: Ben Sr., Ben Jr. and Samuel – all watchmakers)

Mr Banister: beer

Mr Barrett: crimson damask

Capt. Bennett: wine

Mr Martin Brimmer: Caty's stays

Mr Bromfield: cheeses, tea, sugar, callico (Thomas *The Boston News-Letter*, 11/7/1734 - gloves; Edward *The Boston Gazette*, 23/1/1750 – choice wheat & corn. *Samuel Grant Account Book, 1730-1737* – Edward Bromfield – camblett)

Mr Browne: flour, beer and bBread

Capt. Bruce: cheese

Mr Burdon: shoes

Mr Calder: beer

Mr Chandler: butter, payments for horses (Brother Benjamin Greene married Mary Chandler, the daughter of Judge John Chandler of Worcester and Hannah Chandler, *Entrepreneurs*, p. 33. Thomas

⁴⁷⁹ Information in bold comes from the pages of Rufus Greene's account book. Additional information comes from other sources, including *The Samuel Grant Account Book, 1730-1737*, a variety of Boston newspapers, Kane, *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewellers*; Wright and Viens, *Entrepreneurs*, Henry M. Brooks, *The Olden Times Series*, 1-6, (Fili-Quarian Classics, 2010).

Greene was married to Mary Chandler's aunt, Elizabeth

Gardiner

Mr Clark: sawing wood

Clark & Lee: sugar

Mrs Clarke: Staymaker

Mr John Clear: shoes

Elizabeth Clurg: mends stays

Mr Coffin: shoes, lemons (Charles Coffin – shopkeeper selling variety of goods
The Boston News-Letter, 14/12/1727. *The Boston News-Letter*,
 10/4/1740 – choice good indigo wholesale. *Samuel Grant Account Book* – Charles Coffin – textiles and rugs. Ebenezer Coffin – metal wares imported from London)

Mr Thomas Cole: candles

Mr Comber: picture frames

Susanna Condy: sconces, furniture

Cord Cordis: sugar

John Cornish: looking after Rufus Greene's shoes

Edward Cowell: cyder barrels

Mrs Crab: Teacher

Mrs Crosby: Nurse

Mr Crosby: wigs and shaving London made wigs – sold by John Crosby,
 Periwig maker and wig things 1763, *Olden Times* 2)

Mr or Ms Cross: candles

William Cunningham: Glazier

John Cutler: Doctor

Samuel Deming: textiles, cheese, rum, pork, milk, cider, cocoa, butter (*The Boston News-Letter*, 10/4/1740 – London double-glazed pipes. No. 41 in *Samuel Grant Account Book*: Hannah Demming – duroy)

Mrs Demaresq: Dishes (Dumaesque, Capt. Phillip: *The Boston Gazette*, 17/6/1734 – best salt; *The Boston Gazette*, 5/6/1727 – sugar and tea. *Samuel Grant Account Book* – Dumaresq Phillip – his note to Thomas Greene. Mr Phillip Dumaresq – merchant married 1762, *Olden Times* 6)

- Mrs Doane (Downe?): textiles
- Mr Douglas: Doctor
- Mr Doulton: mutton
- Mr Joseph Dowse: coffee, wine, paying soldiers, Church Warden
- Capt. Drude: tea
- Mr Durant: rent
- Mrs Dyer: schooling
- Mr Fellows: Tailor
- Mr Fisher: wood
- Thomas Fleet: newspapers (Bookseller with regular advertisements: *The Boston News-Letter*, 11/12/1740)
- Mrs Ann Foot: textiles
- Mr Foot: gloves and mourning
- Mr James Forbes: taffety
- Mr Thomas Foster: lumber
- Mr or Ms Gillam: shirts, pork, flour (Jane and Elizabeth Gillam – shopkeepers, *Entrepreneurs*, p. 51)
- Mr Glen: tea tables and furniture
- Mr Gooch: sugar (John and Joseph, *The Boston Gazette*, 18/4/1726 and 2/5/1726)
- Mrs Gooding: schooling
- Uncle Gould: pipes, tobacco (John – shop, *The Boston Gazette*, 9/4/1745 English and European Goods, *The Boston News-Letter*, 14/3/1746 tea, textiles, peas and beans)
- Samuel Grant: shirts, coats (*Samuel Grant Account Book*, Merchant, *Entrepreneurs*, p. 92)
- Benjamin Greene (brother): shoes, buckles, Bohea tea (After 1750, largely abandon gold smith business in favour of merchant activities. May 1747 – Benjamin, Thomas and Rufus building ship The Three Brothers to undertake voyages to North Carolina and London. They had to obtain all the ironwork, pitch, tar and oakum for this vessel, *Entrepreneurs*, p. 33-36)

Rufus Greene Jnr.: flour from 1753 onwards

Mr Thomas Greene: cheese, callico, tallow, Bohea tea, wheat, hat and thread, milk, butter, garlet (*The Boston Evening Post*, 6/5/1754 Cheshire cheese)

Thomas and John Greene: butter (*The Boston Evening Post*, 25/6/1753 textiles, nails, glass and steel)

Mr James Griffin: sugar (sugar and wine, *Entrepreneurs*, p 81 and 87)

Mr John Hamock: wine (Multiple references in advertisements: *The Boston News-Letter*, 15/1/1747 wine and brandy; *The Boston Evening Post*, 21/5/1753 wines, rum etc.)

Colonel Hatch: fines for not trooping

Jabez Hatch: wood

Mr Thomas Hayes: shoes (Sealer of Leather, *The Boston Evening Post*, 3/18/1754)

Henno/Fenno/Trenno/Tienno: shoes, leather goods. (Tanner, *Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewellers*, p.366)

Mr William Henshaw: groceries, lemons, flour (*Samuel Grant* – William Henshaw stay. Dr to his wife. To shop left to pay on a diaper tablecloth £1)

Capt. Samuel Hewer: rum and nails

Mr Richard Hill: textiles (Merchant. *The Boston News-Letter*, 9/6/1718 pressing papers fit for weavers at his warehouse. *The Boston News-Letter*, 12/9/20 Jamaica sole leather)

Mr Edward Holliday: flour

Mr Hurd: wine

Mr Ireland: wood

Mr Johnson Jackson: rum (Thomas Jackson Distiller, *The Boston Evening Post*, 1754)

Mr Zachariah Johanot: rum, flour, sugar (*The Boston Gazette*, 24/6/1728, New York gammon, bacon and snuff. Dan Johonot, *The Boston Gazette*, 2/12/1728 Bohea tea, Verde Gris)

Henry Johnson: hog, lemon, tallow, wood

Mary Johnson: wood

- Mr Jones: hat for Rufus (Daniel Jones – Hat and Helmet – hats and assortment of English goods, *Olden Times 4*)
- Mr Jourdan: Shoemaker
- Lane & Caswell: goods from England
- Henry Laughton: Tailor/textiles (*The Boston News-Letter*, 15/11/1759 and *The Boston Evening Post*, 3/12/1759, textiles and tailoring. *The Boston Gazette*, 26/12/1726, cloth etc.)
- Mrs Lydia Lewis: callimanco, shoes, fish (Shop, *The Boston News-Letter*, 8/5/1746 and 12/6/1746, oil in bottles for fish etc.)
- Mrs Liddell: schooling
- Mr Lovell: wine
- William Lowder: leather
- Powers Marriott: tea (*The Boston News-Letter*, 16/12/1742 Cheese. *The Boston News-Letter*, 10/5/1744, Florence Oil.
- Mr Marshall: food, groceries, cheese
- Mrs Marshall: Silk
- Mr Mason: hat (No. 78, *Samuel Grant Account Book* – one pair of men's gloves and chintz. James Mason – merchant – textiles, *Olden Times 4*)
- Mr Mayse: hairs/food
- Mr Melvin: Tailor
- Mrs Unite Mosley: milk
- Mr Mears: leather
- John Osgood: hats (*The Boston Gazette*, 20/3/1750 Hatter)
- Mr Enoch Parker: milk (John – Groceries, *The Boston News-Letter*, 11/9/1735)
- Capt. Partridge: shoes from London
- Mr James Peerpoint: lumber
- Capt. John Phillips: sugar, lace (*The Boston Gazette*, 14/5/1751 textiles. *The Boston Evening Post*, 18/12/1752 textiles. Imported West Indian produce, *Entrepreneurs*, p. 89)
- John Pigeon: thread (*The Boston Evening Post*, 14/3/1757 textiles and thread)
- Mr Robert Potter: cheese

Mr William Price: furniture (Shop, *The New England Courant*, 10/6/1723, and
The Boston News-Letter, 13/10/1748 pictures, looking
 glasses and maps)

Mrs Prince: satin gown

Mr Ransford: wood

Mrs Read: schooling

Mr Read: pump

Henry Rhodes: shoes.

Elizabeth Richardson: textiles

Nathaniel Richardson: hog

Mr Sales: candles

John Salmon: sugar, flour (*The Boston Evening Post*, 5/11/1753 Cheshire
 cheese)

Mr Scarbourn: cyder

Jacob Sheaf: beer,

Mr Sherif: beer

Mr George Shore: waistcoat, textiles (*The Boston Evening Post*, 19/11/1744,
 deceased and textiles to sell)

Simpson: German serge and taffety

Mr Smart: butter

Mr James Smith: sugar (*The Boston News-Letter*, 10/9/1747 Sugar Refining
 House, selling sugar)

Mr Stainer: coffins

Richard Stayner: flour

Mr Stewart(d): Doctor (*The Boston News-Letter*, 11/5/1719. Stuart, *The
 Boston News-Letter*, 14/4/1718)

Jeremiah Stimson: Hatter

Thomas Stoddard: brown Holland (No. 91 in *Samuel Grant Account Book* –
 Simon Stoddart – cambric and muslin)

Storer: groceries (Ebenezer? *The Boston News-Letter*, 13/5/1731 moved
 shop, English goods very cheap, wholesale and retail. No. 46 in *Samuel
 Grant Account Book* – shalloon)

Mr Sutherland: chocolate

Mr Swett: schooling

Mr Symes: shoes

Mr Taylor: wood, boards

Tilly: wood

Townsend & Wigglesworth: fustian and German serge

Mr Ephram Turner: schooling (Dancing Master, *Olden Times* 4)

Nathaniel Viall: textiles

William Waine: clothing and textiles (*William Waine Account Book*)

Mr Gamalick Wallis: flour

Mrs Wardell: plum cake

Mr Ware: labour

Ephram Wheeler: Blacksmith

Mr White: candles, butter, lemons, vinegar, potatoes (William and William Hall, *The Boston News-Letter*, 8/11/1733 cheese.)

John Winslow: wine

Sam Williams: clothing and textiles

Mrs Wroe: gingham (Magdalen? *The Boston News-Letter*, 10/11/1737, textiles, millinery and haberdashery)

Appendix 6: Evidence of Prices and Quantities of Goods from the Wharton and Greene Household Accounts

Table A5.4.1: Prices of goods in the Wharton and Greene account books

	Joshua Wharton	Rufus Greene
Coffee per lb	0 5 9	0 0 7
Tea per lb	0 8 8	0 5 7
Chocolate per lb	0 4 5	0 2 8
Butter per lb	0 0 6	0 2 3
Cheese per lb	0 0 3	0 2 0
Brown Sugar per lb	0 0 4	0 3 0
Loaf Sugar per lb	0 0 8	0 0 6
Fine Loaf Sugar per lb	0 0 8	0 0 8
Meat per lb	0 0 3	0 0 2
Pig/Hog each	0 2 7	0 14 11
Potatoes per bushell	0 4 3	0 1 10
Rum per gallon	1 12 0	0 1 3
Wine per gallon	0 5 1	0 3 0
Candles each	0 0 5	0 0 4
Shoes per pair	0 5 0	0 4 10 / 0 14 5
Gloves per pair	0 1 1	0 1 5
Stays per pair	1 12 6	0 13 6
Hose per pair	0 2 11	0 5 0
Cap/Hat each	0 5 0 [velvet] 0 1 3 [cotton]	cap 0 12 7 hat 0 18 0
Drab Cloth per yard	0 10 5	sheeting 0 2 11
Irish Cloth per yard	0 1 10	0 0 5
Lace per yard	0 0 3	0 6 4
Luxury Cloth per yard	0 0 7 1/2	0 5 6
Cambrick per yard	0 13 0	0 8 9
Check/plaid per yard	0 0 9	0 1 5
Striped Cotton per yard	0 0 3	0 12 7
Holland per yard	0 2 5	0 2 11
Paper per Quire	0 1 0	0 0 7
Earthen Plates each	0 0 5	0 1 3
Chair each	0 17 6	0 4 4

Table A5.4.2: Quantities of goods purchased by the Wharton and Greene households

Goods	1734	1735	1736	1737	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742
Wine (in gallons)									
Wharton	-	16	40	17	34	16	<1	-	-
Greene	-	32	23	38	41	23	20	-	-
Rum & Brandy (in gallons)									
Wharton	12	3	4	1	-	2	2	-	<1
Greene	9	25	75	38	-	16	44	-	184
Chocolate (in lbs)									
Wharton	13	-	22	-	17	-	-	-	20
Greene	6	-	8	-	28	-	-	-	12
Butter (in lbs)									
Wharton	196	193	156	65	95	55	53	46	124
Greene	116	270	174	172	265	272	216	263	223
Cheese (in lbs)									
Wharton	263	290	283	192	166	56	268	179	147
Greene	146	180	198	260	385	270	298	133	496
Meat & Fish (in lbs)									
Wharton	738	508	625	415	466	-	549	723	769
Greene	320	160	475	236	138	-	525	951	150
Sugar (in lbs)									
Wharton	154	111	112	76	125	-	129	75	-
Greene	250	178	224	181	359	-	243	750	-
Tea (in lbs)									
Wharton	-	4	6	2	5	2	-	-	4
Greene	-	18	20	11	20	10	-	-	37
Coffee (in lbs)									
Wharton	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Greene	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Textiles (in yards)									
Wharton	307	86	69	108	234	59	107	30	39
Greene	64	25	178	89	85	71	58	144	60
Shoes (in pairs)									
Wharton	-	-	4	-	3	4	8	5	5
Greene	-	-	3	-	2	1	4	2	3
Stockings (in pairs)									
Wharton	-	-	-	-	4	2	-	2	5
Greene	-	-	-	-	2	10	-	2	3
Hats									
Wharton	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greene	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
Earthenware (in pieces)									
Wharton	-	-	24	-	-	-	-	9	61
Greene	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	37	-
Candles (in pieces)									
Wharton	180	113	-	-	-	-	-	36	-
Greene	105	252	-	-	-	-	-	340	-

Specified Supplier	1733 ¹	1734	1735 ²	1736	1737 ³	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr Price			0 8								0 8
James Wilcox								0 3	0 2	0 2	0 7
Cuz Wall		0 5						0 2	0 1		0 7
Wm James					0 2		0 5				0 7
Mrs Powell		0 6									0 6
Mr Blacke										0 6	0 6
Tom								0 5			0 5
Mr Turnbull			0 5								0 5
Mr White					0 4						0 4
Benj. Pewsey									0 3		0 3
Betty Wharton		0 2									0 2
Ms Beale										0 2	0 2
Mr Davis										0 1	0 1
Mr Goold			0 1								0 1
Total from suppliers	5 14	64 11	19 4	15 2	9 3	51 3	7 18	13 8	6 9	6 15	199 6
Total overall	6 9	67 13	21 5	22 10	11 7	63 16	9 0	15 1	7 8	11 10	236 0
Percentage	88	95	90	67	80	80	87	89	87	59	85

1. Source: *BRO 6783 The Account Book of Joshua Wharton of Brislington, 1733-17421*. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

Table A5.7.1: Suppliers of pottery and glass to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr Franks		0 3 ⁵		0 3				0	0 1	0 5	0 13
Mr Jones		0 10			0 2						0 12
Cuz Bazell									0 1	0 4	0 5
Cuz Wall						0 3					0 3
Betty									0 3		0 3
Mr Collier									0 2		0 2
Cuz T. Murry								0 2			0 2
Total from suppliers		0 13		0 3	0 2	0 3		0 4	0 5	0 9	1 19
Overall Total	0 2	1 5	0 7	0 6	0 9	0 9	0 18	0 8	0 6	0 16	5 5
Percentage	-	52	-	51	25	30	-	48	88	55	37

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

Table A5.8.1: Suppliers of furniture to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Christopher Raymond		20 1 ⁵							0 14		20 15
Capt. Furny		3 10									3 10
Mr Shouring							1 16				1 16
Stephen Button									1 4		1 4
Total from suppliers		23 11					1 16		1 18		27 4
Overall Total		24 1					1 16		1 18	0 2 4	27 16
Percentage		98					100		100		98

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

Table A5.9.1: Suppliers of metal wares and jewellery to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ²	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ⁴	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr Lovell		3 8 ⁵			0 8		0 7				4 3
Mr Martin		0 2			0 1	0 13	0 2				0 18
Mr John Vaughn						0 10					0 10
Mr Strech									0 6		0 6
Mr Bruton of Crumhall							0 5				0 5
Michael Brock										0 4	0 4
Tho Tinker	0 3										0 3
Mr Cosly						0 2					0 2
Cuz John Hikes							0 2				0 2
Cuz Thomas Murry				0 2							0 2
Cuz Marklove		0 1									0 1
Mr Waite of London					0 1						0 1
Total from Suppliers	0 3	3 11		0 2	0 10	1 5	0 16		0 6	0 4	6 17
Overall Total	0 3	3 19	0 2	1 0	2 3	1 8	0 19		0 8	1 0	11 2
Percentage	100	90	0	10	24	89	84		69	20	62

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

Appendix 8: Suppliers of Textiles and Clothing to the Greene Household

Table A5.10.1: Suppliers of textiles and clothing to the Greene household¹

Name of Supplier	Years Supplied	Total Expenditure	No. of Purchases	Average per Purchase
Martin Brimmer	1745-1759	624 13 4 ²	22	28 7 11
Nathaniel Viall	1739-1753	392 8 5	30	13 1 7
Samuel Grant	1735-53	383 5 4	21	18 5 0
Henry Laughton	1746-1757	310 18 3	8	38 17 3
Mr Crosby	1741-1759	202 6 11	33	6 2 8
Thomas Hayes	1743-1759	190 14 0	21	9 1 7
Elizabeth Richardson	1737-1744	128 19 8	20	6 8 7
Capt. Partridge	1750-1758	126 11 8	5	25 6 4
Ann Foot	1743-1755	93 19 3	8	11 14 11
Mr Foot	1741-1754	69 19 1	5	13 19 10
Mr Simpson	1740-1759	69 13 7	15	4 12 11
Mr Henno	1749-1759	52 14 7	6	8 15 9
Mr Beach	1749	45 0 0	1	45 0 0
Jeremiah Stimson	1752-1758	43 18 3	7	6 5 6
John Cornish	1749-1759	42 4 8	7	6 0 8
John Clear	1745-1753	39 5 6	5	7 17 1
Mrs Downe	1742-1752	34 11 3	3	11 10 5
Hannah Deming	1739-1746	31 7 1	4	7 16 9
John Allen	1736-1745	30 6 10	8	3 15 10
Mrs Marshall	1745-1751	23 19 3	2	11 19 8
Mr Barrett	1744	22 10 0	1	22 10 0
George Shore	1734-1736	22 0 0	3	7 6 8
William Waine	1753-1758	21 13 3	3	7 4 5
Mr Melvin	1752-1757	21 9 10	6	3 11 8
Richard Hill	1745-1751	20 18 1	3	6 19 4
James Forbes	1752-1758	18 10 1	5	3 14 0
Sam Williams	1752-1759	18 6 0	3	6 2 0
Mr Jones	1749-1757	13 5 1	3	4 8 4
Henry Rhodes	1758-1759	10 19 4	2	5 9 8
Mr Townsend	1754-1757	9 16 4	5	1 19 3
Mrs Clarke	1750	8 0 0	1	8 0 0
Mrs Wroe	1744-1745	7 15 0	2	3 17 6
William Lowder	1753	6 5 0	1	6 5 0
Mr Martin	1754	5 3 4	1	5 3 4
Mr Arnold	1738-1754	4 4 0	2	2 2 0
Mr Mason	1737	4 0 0	1	4 0 0
John Osgood	1745	4 0 0	1	4 0 0
Mrs Prince	1755	4 0 0	1	4 0 0
John Pigeon	1747	3 15 0	1	3 15 0
Thomas Stoddard	1756	3 5 4	1	3 5 4
Mr Jourdan	1756-1759	2 10 8	2	1 5 4
Mr Fellows	1759	1 18 3	1	1 18 3
Mr Symes	1755	1 4 0	1	1 4 0
Mr Burdon	1753	0 16 0	1	0 16 0
Total		3103 2 5	283	10 19 4

1. Source: *The Rufus Greene Expense Book, 1728-1760 MICROFILM*. 2. Monetary units: £, s and d after sterling conversion rates have been applied.

Appendix 9: Suppliers of Food and Drink to the Wharton Household

Table A5.14.1: Suppliers of chocolate for the Wharton household¹

	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ₃	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Ms Noblettc	0 13 ⁵	1 9	1 19	2 0	1 3	3 0	2 15	2 11	2 10 3	2 5 3	20 7
Mr Churchman	0 2	1 10	0 9	2 7	0 5	0 16	0 17	0 4	1 2	1 1	8 12
Cuz Wall				0 2						1 0	1 2
Cuz Ruddock		0 5	0 3								0 8
Joseph				0 5							0 5
Ms Sanderson			0 4								0 4
Cuz Marklove						0 3					0 3
Ms Rogerson			0 3								0 3
Tom						0 2					0 2
Total from suppliers	0 15	3 4	2 17	4 14	1 8	4 1	3 12	2 15	3 13	4 6	31 5
Overall Total	1 0	3 4	3 7	4 17	2 1	4 19	3 12	3 0	3 13	4 19	34 11
Percentage	77	100	85	96	68	82	100	92	100	88	90

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

Table A5.15.1: Suppliers of tea and coffee to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ₃	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Cuz Ruddock	0 12 ⁵	1 13	1 6	0 15	0 4						4 8
Mr Jenkins							0 7	0 11	1 7	1 0	3 5
Ms Noblett	0 3	0 5		0 3		0 10	0 12	0 6	0 2		2 2
Ms Rogerson	0 6	0 13	0 14	0 4							1 18
Cuz Wall						0 14		0 3		0 5	1 2
Cuz Marklove		0 2	0 6	0 6	0 2	0 2	0 2				1 0
Mr Churchman				0 6	0 4	0 3	0 3	0 1	0 1		0 18
Cuz Bazell							0 7	0 1	0 6	0 1	0 16
Robt. Browne	0 4		0 4		0 4						0 12
Walter Norman		0 10									0 10
Cuz M Hickes						0 4		0 7			0 11
Ms Sanderson					0 3	0 6					0 9
Welsh Woman		0 7									0 7
Richard Bray		0 7									0 7
Jane										0 5	0 5
Cuz Chilcott				0 4							0 4
Martha Fisher										0 2	0 2
Pat Fisher										0 1	0 1
Tom									0 1		0 1
Ms James							0 1				0 1
Total from suppliers	1 4 7	3 16	2 9 4	1 17	0 16	1 19	1 12	1 10	1 19	1 13	18 15
Overall Total	1 9	4 3	2 15	2 14	1 14	2 10	1 19	3 6	2 12	3 12	25 14
Percentage	84	92	79	67	46	78	82	45	75	46	73

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s

Table A5.16.1: Suppliers of sugar to the Wharton household¹

	1733 2	1734	1735 3	1736	1737 4	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Mr Tyler	0 4 ⁵	0 3	0 16	0 18	1 4	1 12	2 13	1 3			8 14
Mr Liddiott	0 12	2 0	0 12	0 13	0 3	0 6					4 6
Cuz Bazell								1 0			1 0
Wm Hurford								0 2	0 14		0 16
Cuz Wall									0 5	0 10	0 15
Grevill			0 1			0 8	0 4				0 13
Mr Chard	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 1							0 10
James Smith										0 8	0 8
Tom						0 2		0 3	0 1		0 6
Cuz Ruddock		0 1				0 5					0 6
Jane Fisher										0 4	0 4
Hanna			0 2								0 2
Mrs Cole	0 1										0 1
Mr Henbury									0 1		0 1
Cuz M Hickers										0 1	0 1
Thomas Little			0 1								0 1
Mr Goldwire		0 1									0 1
Total from suppliers	1 0	2 8	1 14	1 13	1 8	2 13	2 17	2 8	1 2	1 4	18 7
Overall total	1 16	3 15	3 0	3 7	1 13	3 3	2 17	2 9	1 18	3 3	27 1
Percentage	56	64	56	50	83	84	99	98	57	38	68

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s

Table A5.17.1: Suppliers of dairy products to the Wharton household¹

	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ₃	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Cuz Wall	0 1 ^b	0 15	0 1	0 18	0 19	1 3	0 12	1 6	1 12	0 6	7 13
Jane Smith	0 15	0 13	1 0	2 0							4 8
Cuz John Hickes	0 12						1 2	1 0	0 17		3 10
Jane										0 3	0 3
Joise Tucker				0 8	0 5	0 6	0 9	0 11	0 3		2 1
Betty Bull				0 9	0 8		0 8 4	0 9			1 14
Henry Pears			1 1	0 11							1 12
Mrs Wharton			1 1					0 3		0 2	1 6
Cuz M Hickes										1 1	1 1
Robert Ponting				0 6		0 15					1 1
Benjamin Walker			0 6		0 12						0 18
Cuz Marklove			0 9		0 6	0 1					0 16
Jane Fisher		0 9	0 7								0 16
Farmer Lockstone								0 1	0 12	0 2	0 15
Joseph Little		0 3		0 11							0 14
Sison				0 12							0 12
Cuz Towgood's tenant						0 12					0 12
Hanna		0 5	0 5								0 10
Miss Chubb			0 9								0 9
Cuz Ruddock		0 8		0 1							0 9
Market		0 8									0 8
Morgan Phillips										0 8	0 8
Farmer Baiksell								0 8			0 8
Cuz Ware		0 5									0 5
Joseph				0 5							0 5
Ms Nash						0 4					0 4
Mr Jenkins								0 3			0 3
Mr Milborah			0 3		0 1						0 4
Cuz Bazell							0 3				0 3
Lacy			0 2								0 2
Tom								0 2			0 2
James							0 2				0 2
Peter Waymouth	0 2										0 2
Miss Wharton				0 2							0 2
Cuz Thomas Murry		0 1									0 1
Widow Merne									0 1		0 1
Total from suppliers	1 9	3 7	5 7	6 1	2 11	3 0	2 15	4 2	3 3	4 9	36 4
Total overall	2 3	7 16	6 7	6 16	5 1	5 7	3 19	5 12	3 14	5 12	52 7
Percentage	69	43	84	89	50	56	69	73	86	80	69

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

Table A5.18.1: Suppliers of meat and fish to the Wharton household¹

Specified Supplier	1733 ₂	1734	1735 ³	1736	1737 ₄	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
John Bevan	3 18 ⁵	16 13	10 3	12 2	8 12	13 1	9 15	8 2	6 18	0 5	89 8
Wm Maberly									8 4	7 9	15 13
John Smith							1 9	2 17	2 12	1 13	8 11
Cuz Wall	0 1			0 6	0 6	0 17		0 4	0 14	0 9	2 17
Cuz M Hickes									0 3	1 9	1 12
J Horrill's wife							0 16	0 15			1 11
Bristol										1 4	1 4
Joise Tucker			0 2		0 7	0 4	0 5	0 3		0 1	1 2
Cuz Marklove		0 4	0 6				0 3	0 2		0 6	1 1
Market				0 4			0 16				1 0
Robert Tucker		0 3	0 16								0 19
Cuz Bazell							0 9	0 4	0 4		0 17
Farmer Lockstone						0 13		0 3			0 16
Tom						0 1			0 14		0 15
John Griffon				0 15							0 15
James Horrill					0 1					0 13	0 14
Joseph				0 14							0 14
Ms Sanderson										0 10	0 10
Mr Sargent					0 3	0 6					0 9
Mr Williams			0 5							0 4	0 9
Cuz Ruddock				0 8							0 8
Pat Fisher										0 8	0 8
Mr Waymouth & wife						0 6				0 1	0 7
Jane Fisher	0 2			0 4						2 2	0 8 2
Mr Owen					0 2		0 6				0 8
Mrs Wharton			0 4	0 3							0 7
Country Butcher				0 6							0 6
Martha Fisher										0 5	0 5
Dority Horrill									0 5		0 5
Mr Torey							0 4				0 4
Thomas Taylor										0 3	0 3
Hanna			0 3								0 3
Son Stephens										0 3	0 3
Betty Bull							0 3				0 3
Dame Loscom			0 3								0 3
Jenney Smith				0 3							0 3
Widow Merne				0 2					0 1		0 3
Mrs Collett	0 2		0 1								0 3
Mr Milborah								0 2			0 2

Specified Supplier	1733 ¹	1734	1735 ²	1736	1737 ³	1738	1739	1740	1741	1742	Total
Wm Harding										0 2	0 2
Robert				0 2							0 2
Cuz Chilcott									0 2		0 2
Mr Hazell								0 2			0 2
J Horrill's sister		0 2									0 2
Jane Smith		0 1	0 1								0 2
Mrs Wilcox		0 1									0 1
Mary Brookman			0 1								0 1
Mrs Nash					0 1						0 1
Total from suppliers	4 2	17 4	12 3	15 6	9 10	15 8	14 5	12 13	19 16	17 7	137 14
Total overall	6 1	18 6	14 16	22 15	10 7	17 13	15 10	13 7	20 13	24 13	154 2
Percentage	67	94	82	67	92	87	92	95	96	70	89

1. Source: see Table A5.6.1. 2. Partial year accounts from July to December. 3. Partial year accounts from January to October. 4. Partial year accounts from March to December. 5. Monetary units: £ and s.

Appendix 10: Additional Information on Tables in the Bristol and Boston Probate Inventory Samples

Table A6.6c: Breakdown of tables and table boards by material in inventory samples¹

	1699- 1705	1708- 1713	1718- 1723	1729- 1734	1739- 1744	1749- 1756	Total
Mahogany							
Bristol	-	-	1	3	15	14	33
Boston	-	-	-	-	2	14	16
Oak							
Bristol	-	-	-	1	5	4	10
Boston	1	-	-	4	-	-	5
Walnut							
Bristol	-	-	2	-	1	1	4
Boston	2	5	-	7	5	10	29
Cedar							
Bristol	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maple							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	1	5	4	10
Deal							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	2	8	10
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slate							
Bristol	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Boston	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Screen							
Bristol	-	-	-	2	4	9	15
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pine							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	4	5	4	10
Japan							
Bristol	-	-	-	1	2	-	3
Boston	-	3	-	1	-	1	5
Total							
Bristol	-	-	5	9	29	36	79
Boston	3	8	-	19	17	33	70

1. Source: the bibliography contains a full listing of the Bristol and Boston probate inventory samples.

Table A6.6d: Breakdown of tables and table boards by function in inventory samples¹

	1699- 1705	1708- 1713	1718- 1723	1729- 1734	1739- 1744	1749- 1756	Total
Tea							
Bristol	-	1	3	5	5	1	15
Boston	-	2	1	9	5	13	30
Games							
Bristol	1	1	2	-	2	6	12
Boston	-	-	-	2	2	-	4
Drinking							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dining							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drawing							
Bristol	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chamber							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	2	2	2	4	10
Toilet							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Twilight							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Kitchen							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	2	3	1	-	6
Bureau							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total							
Bristol	1	3	5	6	7	9	31
Boston	-	2	5	16	11	21	55

1. Source: see Table A6.6c.

Table A6.6e: Breakdown of tables and table boards by style and decoration in inventory samples¹

	1699- 1705	1708- 1713	1718- 1723	1729- 1734	1739- 1744	1749- 1756	Total
Spanish							
Bristol	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dutch							
Bristol	-	-	2	-	-	2	4
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Painted Cloth							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
Carpet							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Painted							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Green							
Bristol	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boston	-	-	-	1	2	6	9
Scolloped							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pillar							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Claw Foot							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total							
Bristol		1	3		3	7	14
Boston	1			2	2	7	12

1. Source: see Table 6.6c.

Table A6.6f: Descriptive adjectives relating to size and quality of tables and table boards in Bristol and Boston inventory samples¹

	1699- 1705	1708- 1713	1718- 1723	1729- 1734	1739- 1744	1749- 1756	Total
Large/Long							
Bristol	3	2	9	5	10	7	36
Boston	2	-	1	2	3	2	10
Small/Little							
Bristol	10	11	13	18	25	19	96
Boston	14	-	4	8	5	4	35
Old							
Bristol	10	14	8	10	11	13	66
Boston	7	8	18	3	8	3	49
Broken/Battered							
Bristol	-	-	-	4	-	2	6
Boston	2	2	2	3	1	3	14
Ordinary							
Bristol	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fine							
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Total							
Bristol	24	27	30	37	46	41	205
Boston	25	10	25	17	17	15	110

1. Source: see Table 6.6 c

Appendix 11: Tea and Coffee Making Equipment in the Bristol and Boston Probate Inventory Samples:

1699-1705:

Bristol:

0

Boston:

1 tin sugar chest, 1 coffeepot, 14 earthen cups, 4 coffee dishes

1708-1713:

Bristol:

1 coffee mill, 4 earthenware coffee dishes, 5 earthenware saucers, china ware and other things belonging to the tea table valued at £1 10s, 4 silver teaspoons, 1 silver sugar dish

Boston:

1 tea chest, some cups and earthenware, 5 earthen cups, 1 sugar tub, 1 sugar bowl, 1 old teapot, 2 teapots

1718-1722:

Bristol:

3 teakettles, 2 coffeepots, 1 tin coffeepot, 1 chocolate pot, 1 coloured teapot, 8 silver teaspoons, 2 sets of china, 1 blue sugar dish, 2 large blue mugs, 20 coloured cups, 12 ribbed coloured teacups, 12 odd cups, odd saucers, 12 odd coloured saucers, tea saucers, odd saucers

Boston:

1 teakettle, 1 sugar can, 1 sugar box, £3 of china cups and saucers, 4 cups

1729-1734:

Bristol:

1 old teakettle, 2 teakettles and covers, 1 copper teakettle, 1 brass teakettle, 1 old teakettle, 1 coffeepot, 1 coffeepot and lamp, 1 tin coffeepot, 1 coffee mill, 1 copper chocolate pot, 1 chocolate pot, 1 large copper chocolate pot, 1 sugar bowl, 1 low glass sugar dish, 2 saucers, some odd china, 24 pieces of china, broken and whole chinaware totalling £1 10s, 6 cups, 2 glass cups, 2 silver

teaspoons, 1 silver teapot, 1 silver coffeepot, 2 silver strainers, 2 pairs of silver tea tongs, 1 silver sugar dish and cover, 1 silver milk pot, 1 small silver milk jug

Boston:

1 copper teakettle, 1 teakettle, 1 brass teakettle and stand, 2 copper teakettles (1 of them old), 1 large teakettle, 1 copper teakettle, 1 brass teakettle, 1 old coffeepot, 1 brass coffeepot, 2 old coffeepots, 1 brass coffeepot, 1 broken coffee mill, 1 earthen saucer, 8 stoneware cups and saucers, 1 tin sugar box and lock.

4 blue and white breakfast bowls, 10 slop basins and cups broke, 8 china cups, 12 china cups, 6 small handle cups, 6 cups, 17 china saucers, 1 china mug, 1 china slop basin, 7 china cups, 5 china saucers (some of them broken), 2 coffee cups, 8 cups and saucers, 4 cracked cups, 2 metal, teapots 1 china teapot and stand, 1 earthen tea pot, 1 stone teapot, 1 china milk pot, 1 china sugar pot and cover, 1 canister, 1 boat, 12 teaspoons, 1 strainer, 1 pair tongs

1739-1744:

Bristol:

1 tea chest, 1 tea chest, 1 small tea chest, 1 teakettle, 1 old teakettle, 1 copper teakettle, 1 copper teakettle, 1 teakettle, 1 teakettle and stand, 5 teakettles, 1 coffeepot, 1 copper coffeepot, 1 coffeepot and cover, 1 small coffeepot, 1 copper coffeepot, 1 coffeepot, 1 coffeepot, 4 copper chocolate pots, some tea canisters

2 sets of china, 1 set of tea china, 1 set of enamell'd china, china breakfast basins, cups and saucers 10s 6d, 1 set of burnt china, 15 china coffee dishes, 20 coffee cups, odd ones, 6 coloured coffee cups, 6 blue and white china tea dishes, 24 china saucers, 6 china saucers, 1 china slop basin, 1 china sugar dish, 12 china breakfast basins, 4 tea dishes, 1 teapot, 1 boat, 2 saucers, 5 saucers, odd ones, 6 coloured saucers, 6 teaspoons, 4 little spoons, teaspoons, 6 teaspoons, 5 teaspoons, 4 spoons on a waiter, 7 teaspoons, 2 pairs of tea tongs, 4 strainers, 1 coffee pot, 2 milk pots, 1 milk ewer, 2 teapots

Boston:

1 tea chest, 1 sugar chest, 1 small copper teakettle, 1 old teakettle, 1 copper teakettle, 1 copper teakettle, 2 teakettles, 1 tin coffeepot, 2 coffeepots, 1 coffee mill, 1 glass sugar dish, 2 tin sugar boxes painted green, 3 sugar canisters, 6 coarse cups and saucers, 5 china cups, 5 china saucers, 5 china cups and saucers, 2 broken cups, 14 cups and saucers, 8 china saucers, 1 broken saucer, 1 set cups and saucers, 7 cups and saucers, 12 cups and saucers, 6 burnt china cups and saucers, 1 china teapot, 4 teapots, 1 china teapot, 1 teapot, 1 pewter teapot, 1 china milk pot, 1 strainer, 20 teaspoons, some teaspoons, 1 pair tea tongs, 1 pair tea tongs and box

1749-52:**Bristol:**

1 old tea chest, 1 tea chest, 1 tea chest, 1 mahogany tea chest, 1 tea chest, 1 teakettle, 2 small very old teakettles, 1 old teakettle, 1 teakettle, 1 copper teakettle, 1 old copper teakettle, 1 teakettle, 1 teakettle, 1 teakettle, 1 Dutch teakettle and lamp, 2 teakettles, 1 old teakettle, 1 Dutch teakettle and lamp, 2 coffeepots, 1 coffeepot and pan, 1 coffeepot, 1 copper coffeepot, 1 coffeepot, 1 copper coffeepot and mill, 2 copper coffeepots, 2 coffeepots, 2 coffee mills, 3 chocolate pots, 1 earthenware tea canister,
1 sugar canister, 3 teapots, 2 slop basins, 5 coffee cups, 4 teacups, 4 saucers, 2 coffee cups, 2 saucers, 6 blue and white cups and saucers, 11 cups, 8 saucers, 2 broken saucers, 6 coffee cups, 1 sugar dish, 2 china teapots, 3 blue and white china coffee cups, 1 china teapot, 5 china cups, 6 china saucers, 5 teaspoons, 1 teaspoon, 5 teaspoons, 6 teaspoons, 8 teaspoons, 13 teaspoons, 12 teaspoons, 1 coffeepot, 3 strainers, 1 pair of silver tongs, 1 pair silver tea tongs, 3 pairs silver tea tongs, 2 tea tongs, 1 cream pot

Boston:

1 tea chest with canisters, 3 teakettles, 1 dish kettle, 2 teakettles, 1 old teakettle, 7 teakettles, 2 copper teakettles, 1 large teakettle, 2 small teakettles, 1 old teakettle and stand, 1 teakettle, 5 coffeepots, 1 copper coffeepot, 1 old copper coffeepot, 1 coffeepot, 1 copper coffeepot, 1 black tin coffeepot, 1 old coffeepot, 4 coffee mills, 1 coffee burner, 2 stone cups, 4

china saucers, £3 10 worth of china cups and saucers, 6 small china cups and saucers, 3 china saucers, 3 blue china saucers, 1 set burnt china, a parcel broken cups and saucers, 6 china cups and saucers, 2 china canisters, 6 china cups and saucers, 6 china teacups and saucers, 8 odd saucers, 1 boat for spoons, 6 Delph Ware cups and saucers, 12 cups and saucers, 5 earthen cups and saucers, 1 cream pot, 1 milk pot, 1 stone milk pot, 1 china milk pot, 1 metal teapot, 1 unburnt china teapot, 1 china teapot, 1 teapot, 2 hard metal teapots, 2 china teapots, 1 hard metal teapot, 1 earthen teapot, 2 stone teapots, some teaspoons, 6 teaspoons, 12 teaspoons, 10 teaspoons, 2 teapots, 3 strainers, 4 tea tongs, 1 sugar pot, 2 milk pots

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- 1731: *Farley's Bristol Newspaper*: 21 August
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November, 2 December

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5 May, 2 June, 7 July, 11 August, 8 September, 13 October, 1

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12 November, 17 December

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November, 2 December

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12 May, 9 June, 14 July, 11 August, 8 September, 13 October, 10

November, 15 December

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6 May, 3 June, 22 July, 26 August, 21 October, 25 November, 23
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May, 16 June, 4 August, 6 October, 3 November

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Bristol Household Accounts

The Account Book of Joshua Wharton of Brislington, 1733-1742, Bristol Record Office, *BRO 6783*

The Account Book of the Smyth Family of Ashton Court, 1717-1719, Bristol Record Office, *BRO AC/AS 8-11*

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Boston Household Accounts

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Bristol Probate Inventory Sample¹

1. The probate inventories listed are held at the Bristol Record Office unless they are denoted as TNA, in which case they are held in The National Archives.

1. John Gandy Snr – blacksmith – 1700
2. James Knapp – yeoman – 1700
3. Thomas Neast – 1700
4. Giles Ridley – tailor – 1700
5. Hugh Roe – 1700
6. James Treago – 1700 TNA
7. Francis Bellenger – 1700
8. Joshua Farrenden – needlemaker – 1700
9. William Griffin – 1700
10. William Ballwell – carpenter – 1699 TNA
11. Thomas Eastman – haulier – 1699 TNA
12. Hezekiah Webb – 1700
13. John Finney – merchant – 1700 TNA
14. Richard Frapwell – ropemaker – 1700

15. John Spooner – brass founder – 1703
16. Anna Phillips – spinster – 1700
17. John Pulling – 1700
18. William Nickles – 1700
19. Hannah Hollister – 1700
20. Thomas Hall – blacksmith – 1705
21. Bryan Tandy – cooper – 1699 TNA
22. Philip Lewis – 1700
23. James Walter – 1700
24. John Bumstead – 1700
25. Robert Cullimore – husbandman – 1700
26. Thomas Stainer – shipwright – 1708
27. John Austin – blacksmith – 1710
28. John Bramble – blacksmith – 1710
29. James Brock – shipwright – 1710
30. Thomas Daunsey – gentleman – 1710
31. John Dotson – yeoman – 1710
32. Walter Langdon – maltman – 1710
33. Ann Pain – widow – 1710
34. Walter Palmer – victualler – 1710
35. Esther Price – widow – 1710
36. George Rowlston – yeoman – 1710
37. Richard Bacon – grocer – 1710 TNA
38. Samuel Ware – scrivener – 1712 TNA
39. Thomas Burrowes – yeoman – 1713 TNA
40. William Frances – 1710
41. John Davies – carpenter – 1710
42. Benjamin Willoughby – watchmaker – 1709 TNA
43. Robert Gregory – 1710 TNA
44. Joseph Balies – whitawer – 1709
45. John Boone – vintner – 1709
46. John Langford – currier – 1709
47. Thomas Lovell – cordwainer – 1709
48. Abraham Saunders – mariner – 1710

49. Richard Siscell – tiler – 1710
50. William Cater – 1708 TNA
51. Thomas Avery – stuff maker – 1720 TNA
52. Richard Brickdale – grocer – 1721 TNA
53. Peter Brooks – mason – 1721
54. John Brouse – hatter – 1721
55. Dorothy Buckland – widow – 1719
56. Daubeney Buckler – grocer – 1721
57. William Cannings – shoemaker – 1719
58. David Chandler – lighterman – 1720
59. Elizabeth Edwards – widow – 1722 TNA
60. Joan England – widow – 1720
61. John England – butcher – 1719
62. Thomas Holbin – butcher – 1721
63. Abraham Light – 1719
64. George Longdon – school master – 1723
65. Stephen Paradise – cooper – 1719
66. Catherine Penberthy – widow – 1719 -
67. James Perkins – yeoman – 1719
68. Joseph Rosser – house carpenter – 1718 TNA
69. Israel Rowe – 1721
70. John Russe –linen draper - 1722
71. John Shelbery – gentleman – 1721
72. Abraham Smith – ironmonger - 1721
73. George Stephens – mercer – 1720 TNA
74. Philip Sture – victualler – 1721
75. John Yealfe – saddler – 1720
76. Samuel Daw – salt maker – 1729
77. William Williams – glover – 1729
78. Walter Brewer – yeoman – 1730
79. Catherine Grantland –widow or spinster - 1730
80. Mary Hayden – spinster – 1730
81. John Long – surgeon – 1730
82. Hannah Norrill – widow – 1730

83. John Shute – surgeon – 1730
84. Anne Teast – widow – 1730
85. Elizabeth Nicklus – widow – 1731 TNA
86. Jellicut Bushell – distiller – 1732
87. Michael Phillips – ship carpenter – 1731
88. Nathaniel Warren – hosier – 1731
89. William Bassat – house carpenter - 1731
90. Robert Bedford - 1731
91. Barnaby Atwood – soap maker - 1729
92. Hannah Harding – widow - 1731
93. Richard Cooch – merchant tailor – 1730 TNA
94. Rachel Deverell – widow – 1730 TNA
95. John Elliott – gentleman – 1730 TNA
96. Alice Sloper – spinster – 1730 TNA
97. Walter Webb – tanner – 1734
98. John Milson – carter – 1734
99. John Clement – 1734
100. William Plowman – malter – 1734
101. Mathew Adean – wine cooper – 1739
102. John Brady – stocking maker – 1740
103. William Harris – wool comber - 1740
104. Hester Harrington – widow – 1740
105. Paul Hopkins – mariner – 1740
106. Walter Horseman – victualler – 1740
107. James Lloyd – tidesman – 1740
108. Abraham Page – house carpenter – 1740
109. Charles Stokes – gentleman – 1740
110. William Winbow – maltster – 1740
111. Richard Sanders – cordwainer – 1742
112. Thomas Rudge – butcher – 1739
113. Benjamin Bartholomew – cordwainer – 1741
114. Thomas Crisp – hooper – 1741
115. John Potts – 1741 -
116. John Trotman – saddletree maker – 1741

117. John Tustin – cabinetmaker – 1741 TNA
118. John Woodward – bachelor – 1741
119. Richard Gravett – Esq – 1739 TNA
120. Christopher Scandrett – bachelor 1741 TNA
1121. John Russell – 1740 TNA
122. Joseph Belcher – merchant – 1741 TNA
123. Thomas Baylis- yeoman – 1744
124. John Bartlett – brush maker – 1744
125. William Harris – 1740
126. John Davis – glass maker – 1750
127. Samuel Floyd – fan maker – 1750
128. William King – blacksmith – 1750
129. John Leggatt – victualler – 1750
130. Benjamin Loscom – horse driver – 1750
131. John Overton – house carpenter – 1750
132. Samuel Tucker – gentleman – 1750
133. John Williams – yeoman – 1750
134. Thomas Smith – 1750
135. George Fenton – sail maker – 1749
136. Elizabeth Lawrence – widow – 1752 TNA
137. Henry Poole – wheelwright – 1756
138. William Launder – 1754 TNA
139. Edward Pye Chamberlayne – grocer – 1756 TNA
140. Thomas Hughes – house carpenter – 1749
141. Joseph Myiatt – victualler – 1749
142. Thomas Miles – butcher – 1751
143. Margaret Waters – widow – 1751
144. George Evans – gardener – 1752
145. William Hawkins – 1752
146. John Jayne – yeoman – 1752
147. James Phillips – 1752
148. Thomas Rolph – 1752
149. Henry Evans – clothier – 1753 TNA
150. Thomas Hackett – merchant – 1753 TNA

Boston Probate Inventory Sample¹

1. Digitised copies of all the Suffolk County probate inventories listed can be found at *American Ancestors* via *FamilySearch.org*, probate records, vols 13-45.

1. William Palfrey – sail maker – 1699
2. George Ball – mariner - 1700
3. Jacob Smith – mariner – 1700
4. Ann Travis – widow – 1700
5. Thomas Robinson – cordwainer – 1700
6. James Talbot – cooper – 1700
7. Thomas Perkins – ironmonger – 1701
8. Mary Bradish – 1701
9. Samuel Russell – tailor – 1701
10. Mary Cowell – widow – 1702
11. William Norman – barber – 1702
12. Nathaniel Alden – mariner – 1702
13. Ann Solley – widow – 1703
14. Edward Lloyd – mariner – 1704
15. Peter Warren – 1704
16. Capt. Richard Crisp – merchant – 1699
17. Samuel Poole – carpenter – 1699
18. Ralph Carter – joiner – 1699
19. Thomas Kemble – merchant – 1700
20. John Orris – blacksmith – 1700
21. Amos Wadland – mariner – 1700
22. John Wiswall – mariner – 1700
23. George Thompson – labourer – 1700
24. Michael Perry – bookseller – 1700
25. Edward Gouge – merchant – 1705
26. John Parner – 1708
27. Samuel Grey – 1708 – baker
28. Samuel Hart – 1709
29. William Jedman – 1709
30. Jeremiah Gibson – 1709 – book keeper

31. Thomas Down – 1709 – mariner
32. Robert Ware – 1709
33. Roger Lawson – 1709 – capt.
34. John Stafford – 1709 – butcher
35. Mary Shortridge – 1709 – widow/spinster
36. John Combes – 1710
37. Thomas Livermore – 1710 – carpenter
38. James Hawkins – 1710 – bricklayer
39. Jane Kind – 1710 – widow
40. Elizabeth Peck – 1710 – widow/spinster
41. Israel Vickery – 1710
42. John Harris – 1710 – mariner
43. William Hill – 1710 – gentleman
44. Samuel Kendall – 1711 – merchant
45. Rachel Toker – 1711 – widow/spinster
46. Christopher Mason – 1711
47. Edward Taylor – 1711 – house wright
48. John Parmenter – 1712 – merchant
49. Henry Jew – 1713 – mariner
50. John Wharton – 1713 – merchant
51. Nicholas and Anna Paige – 1718 – colonel
52. Matthew Butler – 1718 – shipwright
53. Sarah Phippen – 1719 – widow
54. Benjamin Street – 1719
55. Charles Heaton – 1719
56. Joseph Gray – 1719 – victualler
57. Thomas Barber – 1719 – mariner
58. Matthew Collins – 1719 – cooper
59. Joshua Roberts – 1719 – japanner
60. Mary Lidget – 1719 – widow
61. Josiah Clark – 1720 – tailor
62. Richard Proctor – 1720
63. Thomas Baddeley – 1720 – watchmaker
64. James Lyndall – 1720 – merchant

65. John Williams – 1720 – brewer
66. Samuel Hughes – 1720 – cooper
67. Sarah Williams – 1721 – widow or spinster
68. James Clements – 1721
69. Thomas Savage – 1721 – colonel
70. Oliver Noyes – 1721 – Esq
71. Mary Swett – 1721 – widow
72. Jonathan Wardwell – 1722 – joiner
73. Thomas Harris – 1722
74. Seth Smith – 1722 – cordwainer
75. James Fines – 1719 – periwig maker
76. Joseph Royall – 1729 – sail maker
77. Richard Draper – 1729 – shopkeeper
78. Nathaniel Sheperd – 1729
79. Peter Cross – 1729 – mariner
80. Increase Gatchell – 1729
81. Joshua Wroe – 1730 – merchant
82. Peter Gibbons – 1730 – joiner
83. Samuel Keeling – 1730 – Esq
84. Walter Goodridge Sr – 1730 – mariner
85. Thomas Robinson – 1730 – cordwainer
86. Ebenezer Chamberlin – 1730
87. Richard Hall – 1730 – baker
88. James Stephens – 1730 – Esq
89. Elizabeth Webb – 1730 – widow
90. John Bushnell – 1731 – innkeeper/house wright
91. Samuel Frost – 1731 – husbandman
92. Mary Mico – 1734 – widow
93. Thomas Gale – 1734 – capt/mariner
94. Thomas de la Place – 1734
95. Place Stevens – 1734 – mariner
96. Samuel Granger – 1734 – gentleman
97. Benjamin Estabrook – 1731
98. Capt Daniel Brown – 1730

99. Richard Clear – 1731 - mariner
100. Mary Cole – 1734 – widow
- 101.** Rachel Snowden – 1739 – widow
102. Elizabeth Emmons – 1739 – widow
103. Francis Alexander – 1739 – mariner
104. Joseph Sleigh – 1739 – capt.
105. Samuel Davis – 1739 – blacksmith
106. Edward Linnington – 1739 – gentleman
107. Ichabod Dimmock – 1740 – mariner
108. John Inglesby – 1740 – shipwright
109. John Foreland – 1740 – shipwright
110. John Wade – 1740 – joiner
111. George Manners – 1740 – silversmith
112. Nathaniel March – 1740 – blacksmith
113. Nathaniel Alden – 1740 – mariner
114. Daniel Tucker – 1740 – tailor
115. Samuel Onions – 1740
116. Edward Gray jnr – 1741
117. James Tileston – 1741 – house wright
118. John Webster – 1741 – mariner
119. Joseph Jones – 1741 – house wright
120. Nathaniel Pitcher – 1741 – peruke maker
121. John Jekyll – 1741 – Esq
122. Robert Snelling – 1741 – mariner
123. Nathaniel Gerrish – 1741
124. Thomas Lathrop – 1741
125. Ezekiel Carver – 1744
126. Samuel Clark – 1749
127. Richard White – 1749 – mariner
128. Anthony Underwood – 1749 – chair maker
129. Samuel Ames – 1749
130. Samuel Rand – 1749 – capt.
131. John Teame – 1749
132. Elizabeth Delhonde – 1749 – widow

133. Robert Rogers – 1750 – capt.
134. Peter Brasier – 1750
135. John McLish – 1750 – mariner
136. Sendall Williams – 1750 – wine cooper
137. Sarah Dennie – 1750 – widow
138. William Thuring – 1750 – house wright
139. Samuel Black – 1750 – merchant
140. John West – 1750
141. Martha Perks – 1751 – widow
142. Sarah Parker – 1751 – widow
143. Benjamin Worthylake – 1751 – mariner
144. Joseph Gerrish – 1751
145. Jeryak Wales – 1752
146. Martha Willis – 1752
147. Nathaniel Viall – 1752 – shopkeeper
148. Robert Duncan – 1752 – merchant
149. Samuel Collins – 1751 – cabinetmaker
150. Theodosia Hay – 1751

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