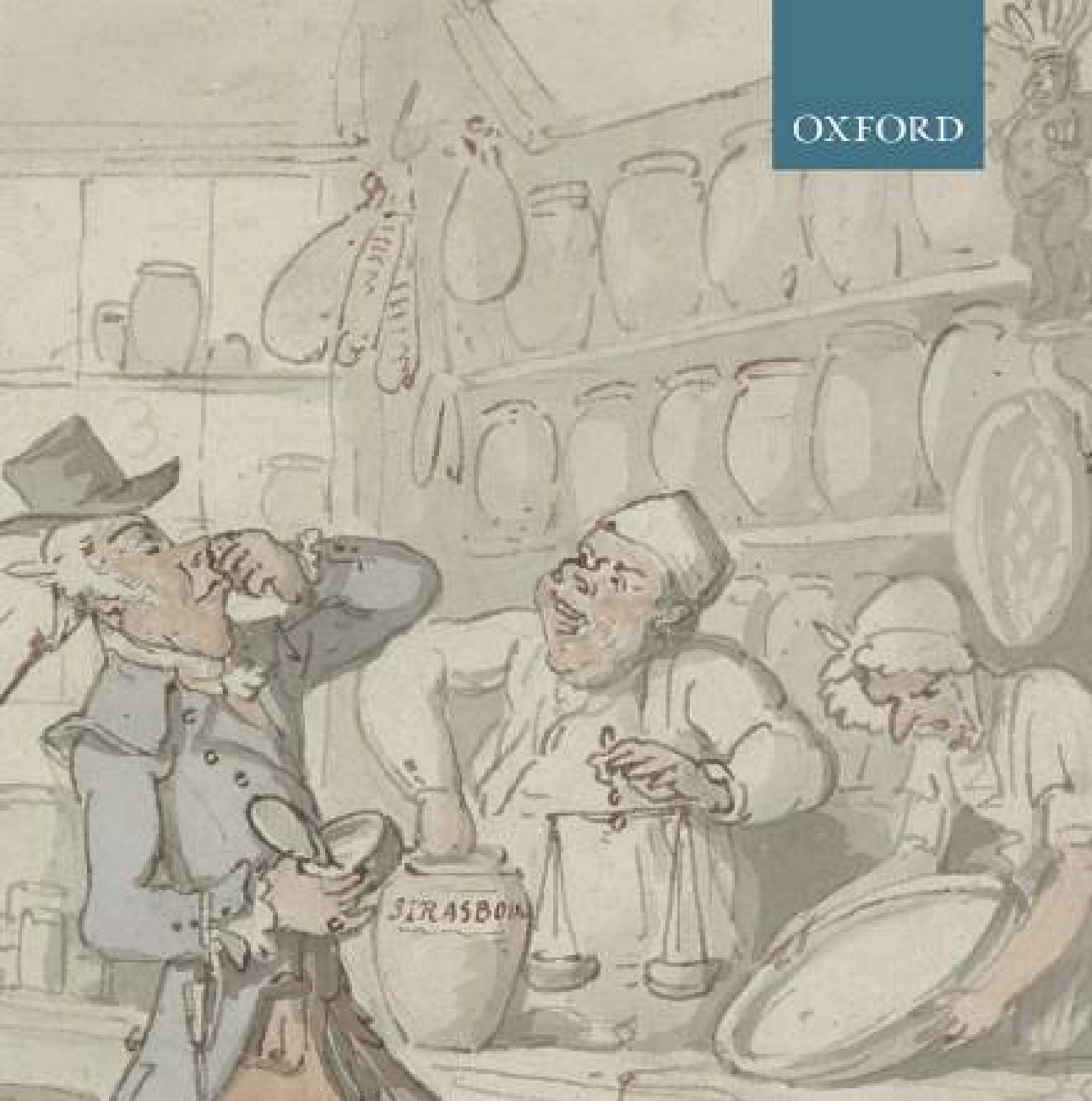

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FAMILY & BUSINESS *during the* INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Hannah Barker

FAMILY AND BUSINESS DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Family and Business during the Industrial Revolution

HANNAH BARKER

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This book is dedicated to my parents-in-law,
Lily and Norman Leighton

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Abbreviations

Borthwick	Borthwick Institute for Archives, University of York
Carter	Warrington Library, MS 2433, Notebook of James Carter, 1780–1869
CCALS	Cheshire and Chester Archives and Local Studies Service
Coleman	Liverpool Record Office, 920/COL 1–2 Life and ledger of John Coleman
Crosfield	Unilever Archives and Records, Port Sunlight, Diary of George Crosfield of Warrington, early twentieth-century transcript, original lost, JCS/11/10/01
Dixon	Wellcome Library, Letter-book of Joshua Dixon, 1764–5, MS.2196
Heywood	John Rylands Library, Eng MS 703, Diary of George Heywood
Holt	LivRO, 920 DUR/4/31/1, 'Some Memorials of our Mother, Emma Holt, by Anne Holt', 1875
LivRO	Liverpool Record Office
Longbottom	University of Huddersfield Library, E. H. Longbottom Archive
LRO	Lancashire Record Office
TNA	The National Archive

Introduction

A visit to a town in the north-west of England 200 years ago would have been an assault on the senses. Though some parts of Liverpool, in particular, experienced widespread 'improving' measures from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, in the majority of other places (and indeed throughout significant parts of Liverpool too) it was not until the extensive street-widening schemes of the nineteenth century that most central thoroughfares were anything other than narrow and dark, with buildings tightly packed together and their upper levels often jutting out over the streets below.[1] Those wishing to navigate their way around would often have found mud and waste underfoot where pavements had yet to appear, streets bustling with a population hurrying about their business, and the air filled with both the shouts of market and itinerant sellers, and the types of odours one might expect to encounter in the days before municipal sanitation schemes and systematic curbs on air pollution. These sorts of urban experiences—exacerbated in many towns in the north-west, which were growing at unprecedented speed—drew mixed reactions from visitors and residents alike, so that, while one commentator described Manchester as 'a dog hole' in 1792, another noted excitedly in 1811 that he thought it 'a busy place' that offered 'a good deal to be seen and learnt'.[2]

Then—as now—shops offering both daily necessities and more exotic luxuries packed town-centre streets. Ralston's view of Manchester's Market Street in 1821, for example (Figure I.1), shows the distinctive timber-framed, jettied, and gabled structure of William Hyde's grocery shop: at the centre of the picture on the left-hand side of the street, with its porch leaning at a rather drunken angle. Next to Hyde's shop (moving towards the foreground) were the premises of the cheesemonger and provision dealer Charles Pollitt, in another timbered building. In the more modern four-storey brick building adjacent to that operated John Hemingway, silversmith and watchmaker, with Clough and Hill, ironmongers, next to it and closest to the viewer. On the other side of Hyde's shop was Mary Walker's ironmongers, and, next to her, Catherine Crossley's toy warehouse, then an 'exhibition of ancient and modern paintings', the premises of John Wickstead, umbrella maker, and the Red Lion public house. Across the street were shops and workshops variously run by a druggist, a boot- and shoemaker, a hosier, a linen

[1] C. W. Chalkin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England: A Study in the Building Process, 1740–1820* (London, 1974), 57–72, 89–112; Rosemary Sweet, *The English Town, 1680–1840: Government, Society and Culture* (Harlow, 1999), 75–90.

[2] C. B. Andrews (ed.), *The Torrington Diaries*, 4 vols (London, 1934–8), iii. 116–17; Heywood, fo. 10.

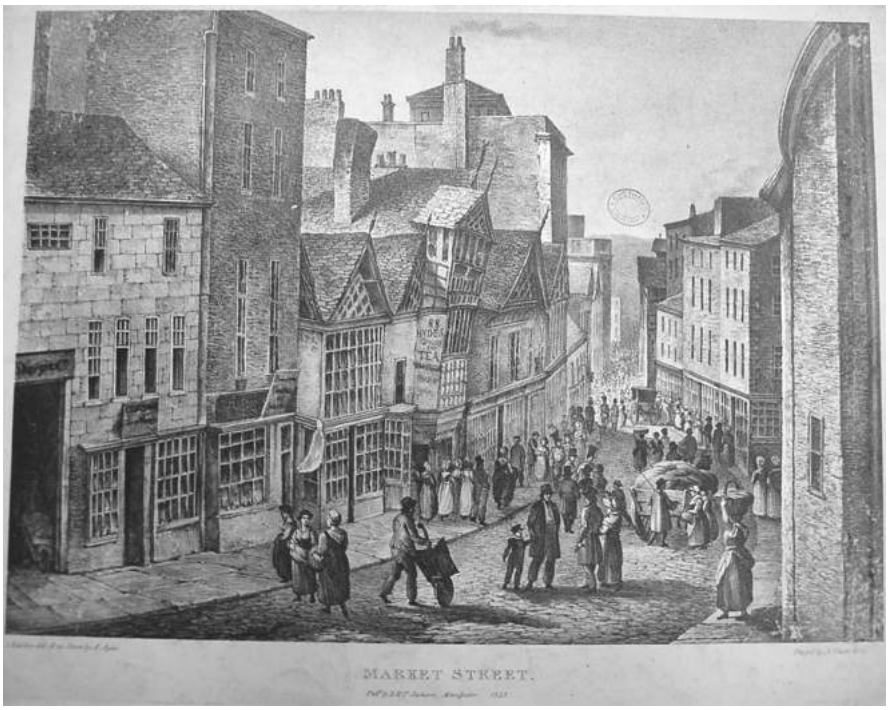

Figure I.1. View of Market Street, Manchester, 1821: John Ralston, *Views of the Ancient Buildings in Manchester* (Manchester, 1823–5), plate 4.

draper, another cheesemonger, a straw-hat maker, a cutler and surgeon's instrument maker, a milliner, and a tea dealer.[3] This eclectic mix of small manufacturers, shopkeepers, and service providers was replicated both in other Manchester streets, and in other towns, across the north-west, and, though certain thoroughfares might boast more 'exclusive' shops than others, as a rule—and in contrast to the capital—there was no retail specialization by street.[4] Today shopworkers usually commute into town centres to sell goods produced elsewhere, while the buildings in which they work tend to house offices above the ground and first-floor levels. But, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these buildings were generally inhabited day and night by individuals who both lived and worked in them, and who constituted anything from 20 to 60 per cent of the urban population.[5]

[3] *Pigot and Dean's Manchester and Salford Directory, for 1819–20* (Manchester, 1819).

[4] Ben Wilcock, 'Provincial Luxury: Buying and Selling High-End Goods in Liverpool and Manchester, *c.*1710–1785', University of Manchester Ph.D. thesis (2016), ch. 2.

[5] This estimate is based on L. D. Schwarz's calculations for London's 'shopkeepers and other tradesmen' in his *London in the Age of Industrialisation* (Cambridge, 1992), 57–73; E. A. Wrigley's assessment of occupational change based on the number of adult males employed in retail and handicraft in the 1831 census: E. A. Wrigley, 'Men on the Land and Men in the Countryside: Employment in Agriculture in Early-Nineteenth-Century England', in L. Bonfield, R. M. Smith, and K. Wrightson (eds), *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure* (Oxford,

The businesses that dominated the streetscape of towns were central to the economic growth and urban transformation that characterized the Industrial Revolution in Britain. Both the dates of the Industrial Revolution, and the term itself, are contentious, and have been much debated by historians.[6] It is used here, not just, as G. N. Clark put it, as 'a handy term for describing a period',[7] but also because, in those north-west English towns that form the basis of this study, the second half of the eighteenth century and the opening decades of the nineteenth were times of unprecedented change, which was linked, at least in part, to the growth of industry.[8] Our view of the commercial world in this period tends to be dominated by narratives of particularly big and successful businesses, and those involved in new and large-scale modes of production.[9] Yet, in places such as Manchester, Liverpool, Preston, Bolton, Salford, Blackburn, Warrington, and Wigan, it was not great factories and mills that altered the urban and economic

1986), 87–128, pp. 297, 300–1; and my own calculations of the percentages of individuals with listed occupations in Manchester trade directories compared to estimates of the general population of the town between 1773 and 1823 in Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760–1830* (Oxford, 2006), 51, coupled with my estimates of household size in Ch. 5 of this work.

[6] See, e.g., David Cannadine, 'The Past and the Present in the English Industrial Revolution, 1880–1980', *Past and Present*, 103 (1984), 149–58; N. F. R. Crafts, *British Economic Growth during the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, 1985); Pat Hudson, *The Industrial Revolution* (London, 1992); Pat Hudson and Maxine Berg, 'Rehabilitating the Industrial Revolution', *Economic History Review*, 45/1 (1992), 24–50; J. Mokyr (ed.), *The British Industrial Revolution: An Economic Perspective* (Boulder, CO, 1993); Patrick O'Brien and Roland Quinault (eds), *The Industrial Revolution and British Society* (Cambridge, 1993); Steven King and Geoffrey Timmins, *Making Sense of the Industrial Revolution: English Economy and Society, 1700–1850* (Manchester, 2001); Jeff Horn, Leonard Rosenband, and Merritt Smith (eds), *Reconceptualizing the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, MA, 2010).

[7] G. N. Clark, *The Idea of the Industrial Revolution* (Glasgow, 1953), 32–3.

[8] Barrie Trinder, *The Making of the Industrial Landscape* (London, 1982); J. K. Walton, *Lancashire* (Manchester, 1987); J. Langton, 'The Industrial Revolution and the Regional Geography of England', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, NS 9 (1984), 145–68; E. A. Wrigley, *People, Cities and Wealth* (Oxford, 1987), 160–1; J. K. Walton, 'Proto-Industrialization and the First Industrial Revolution: The Case of Lancashire', in P. Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries: A Perspective on the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (Cambridge, 1989), 41–68; Hudson and Berg, 'Rehabilitating the Industrial Revolution'; J. Stobart, 'The Spatial Organization of a Regional Economy: Central Places in North-West England in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 22 (1996), 147–59; Geoffrey Timmins, *Made in Lancashire* (Manchester, 1998).

[9] Neil McKendrick, 'Introduction', in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1983), 1–6, pp. 5–6; Maxine Berg, 'Small Producer Capitalism in Eighteenth-Century England', *Business History*, 35/1 (1993), 17–39, p. 18; Julian Hoppit, *Risk and Failure in English Business 1700–1800* (Cambridge, 1987), 9–12; P. L. Payne, *British Entrepreneurship in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1974). For examples, see T. S Ashton, *An Eighteenth-Century Industrialist: Peter Stubs of Warrington, 1756–1806* (Manchester, 1939); R. S. Firth and A .R. Wadsworth, *The Strutts and the Arkwrights, 1758–1830: A Study of the Early Factory System* (Manchester, 1958); Neil McKendrick, 'Josiah Wedgwood and Factory Discipline', *Historical Journal*, 4/1 (1961), 30–55; Mary B. Rose, *The Gregs of Quarry Bank Mill: The Rise and Decline of a Family Firm, 1750–1914* (Cambridge, 1986); R. Lloyd-Jones and M. J. Lewis, *Manchester and the Age of the Factory: The Business Structure of 'Cottonopolis' in the Industrial Revolution* (Beckenham, 1988); Marguerite W. Dupree, *Family Structure in the Staffordshire Potteries 1840–1880* (Oxford, 1995); Robin Holt and Andrew Popp, 'Emotion, Succession and the Family Firm: Josiah Wedgwood & Sons', *Business History*, 55/6 (2013), 892–909; Kenneth Quickenden, Sally Baggot, and Malcolm Dick (eds), *Matthew Boulton: Enterprising Industrialist of the Enlightenment* (Farnham, 2013).

landscape—at least not before the 1820s—but rather the proliferation of small businesses.[10] As Maxine Berg has argued, the transformation of towns and regions in the early Industrial Revolution in Britain was achieved 'on the backs of a myriad of smaller and medium-scale producers, and not on the spectacular but isolated successes of small numbers of giant industrialists and financial elites'.[11] Moreover, as historians of consumption—including Berg—have explained, it was not only producers that promoted growth during the long eighteenth century, but also consumers, who bought goods from an increasing army of retailers, many of whom also contributed to the supply chain by being involved in the manufacture of the goods that they stocked.[12]

The heavily localized nature of business activity in Britain during the Industrial Revolution would make a national approach both unwieldy and unrealistic,[13] which is why this study focuses on one region: the north-west of England. This was an area famed for its striking urban growth and economic development, and significant parts of the north-west witnessed changes for which the epithet revolutionary does not seem out of place. The book examines those towns that were most closely associated with the most rapid transformations in the region, and the two largest of these—Liverpool and Manchester—in particular. It does not tell the story of the way in which small businesses in these places drove the Industrial Revolution, but rather it looks at the lives of those who ran and worked in these enterprises within the context of the many changes—economic, social, and

[10] Pat Hudson, *The Genesis of Industrial Capital: A Study of the West Riding Wool Textile Industry c.1750–1850* (Cambridge, 1986), ch. 2; Clive Behagg, *Politics and Production in the Early Nineteenth Century* (London, 1990), 54–5; Maxine Berg, 'Commerce and Creativity in Eighteenth-Century Birmingham', in Maxine Berg (ed.), *Markets and Manufacture in Early Industrial Europe* (London, 1991), 173–204; Hudson and Berg, 'Rehabilitating the Industrial Revolution', 31–2; Berg, 'Small Producer Capitalism in Eighteenth-Century England'; G. Jones and M. Rose, 'Family Capitalism', *Business History*, 35/4 (1993), 1–16; R. Church, 'The Family Firm in Industrial Capitalism: International Perspectives on Hypotheses and History', *Business History*, 35/4 (1993), 17–43; Mary B. Rose, 'The Family Firm in British Business, 1780–1914', in Maurice Kirby and Mary Rose (eds), *Business Enterprise in Modern Britain: From the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London, 1994), 61–87, pp. 63–5; Maxine Berg, *The Age of Manufactures, 1700–1820: Industry, Innovation and Work in Britain*, 2nd edn (London, 1994), 198–207; Maxine Berg, 'Inventors of the World of Goods', in K. Bruland and P. O'Brien (eds.), *From Family Firms to Corporate Capitalism* (Oxford, 1998), 21–50; Geoffrey Tweedale, 'Backstreet Capitalism: An Analysis of the Family Firm in the Nineteenth-Century Sheffield Cutlery Industry', *Business History*, 55/6 (2013), 875–91.

[11] Berg, 'Small Producer Capitalism in Eighteenth-Century England', 23.

[12] McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*; Ben Fine and Ellen Leopold, 'Consumerism and the Industrial Revolution', *Social History*, 15/2 (1990), 151–79; Beverly Lemire, *Fashion's Favourite: The Cotton Trade and the Consumer in Britain, 1660–1800* (Oxford, 1991); John Brewer and Roy Porter (eds), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993); Ben Fine and Ellen Leopold, *The World of Consumption* (London and New York, 1993); Maxine Berg, 'New Commodities, Luxuries and their Consumers in Eighteenth-Century England', in Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford (eds), *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer Culture in Europe, 1650–1850* (Manchester and New York, 1999); Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger (eds), *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods* (Basingstoke, 2003).

[13] Pat Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries: A Perspective on the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (Cambridge, 1989); Rose, 'The Family Firm in British Business, 1780–1914', 62–3; J. F. Wilson and Andrew Popp, *Industrial Clusters and Regional Business Networks in England, 1750–1970* (Aldershot, 2003).

cultural—associated with industrialization and urbanization. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were both exciting and turbulent times for the residents of our north-west towns. Here, society was in a constant state of flux, as population growth, commercial uncertainty, and religious and political divisions were all particularly marked. Not only were many towns increasing at a rapid rate, and manufacturing and consumption generally booming, but it was also a period of frequent warfare, poor harvests, and periodic food shortages, coupled with rising taxation, and frequent financial crises, which resulted in several episodes of provincial bank failures and waves of individual bankruptcies on the part of businessmen and women, especially from the 1790s onwards.[14]

The experiences of one individual, the Liverpool baker John Coleman, demonstrate both the opportunities and the risks of urban commercial life in this environment. According to his memoir, he became a fully-fledged and independent businessman in 1771, when he established 'a bakery of my own' near St George's Dock, having parted company with a joint enterprise with his mother. In the months that followed, 'business wore a pleasing aspect', and Coleman declared that he 'found an annual increase of friends and fortune': so much so that in 1778, 'finding I had more money than my business required', he 'launched out into merchandize' by investing in a series of privateers, with the silversmith Samuel Warren as his partner.[15] These privateers were armed ships that were privately owned, but that held a government commission (a letter of marquee) that authorized the capture of merchant shipping belonging to an enemy nation: in this case, Holland. One of these privateers quickly netted Coleman 'a neat three thousand pounds',[16] while a series of further investments in shipping soon amassed yet more money, so that he could claim 'a property of twenty thousand pounds' by the mid-1780s. In 1780, based on his early success in privateering, and 'finding my family and fortunes so increase', Coleman bought a plot of land on James Street, on which he built 'a large house and warehouse, the house to occupy myself and the warehouse for my mercantile concerns'. 'The building', he noted, 'cost me about £3600' (though this might have been an exaggeration).[17] While previously he had been listed in Liverpool trade directories as 'bread baker', by 1787 his rise in wealth and status meant that he was also described as a 'merchant'.[18]

[14] Pamela Sharpe, 'Population and Society, 1700–1840', in Peter Clark (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, ii. *1540–1840* (Cambridge, 2008), 491–528; John Langton, 'Urban Growth and Economic Change: From the Late Seventeenth Century to 1841', in Clark (ed.), *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, 451–90; John Bohstedt, *The Politics of Provisions: Food Riots, Moral Economy and Market Transition in England,* c.*1550–1850* (Farnham, 2010); T. S. Ashton, *Economic Fluctuations in England, 1700–1800* (Oxford, 1959), ch. 5; Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*; L. S. Pressnell, *Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, 1956); J. V. Beckett and Michael Turner, 'Taxation and Economic Growth in Eighteenth-Century England', *Economic History Review*, 43/3 (1990), 377–403.

[15] Coleman, fo. 55^{v}. [16] Coleman, fo. 56^{r}.

[17] Coleman, fo. 57^{r}. A Sun Life Insurance policy for 1780 lists the building 'not yet finished' and insured for £1,600: London Metropolitan Archives, MS 11936/289/436379.

[18] *Bailey's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1787).

But, though Coleman was quick to make money and to ascend Liverpool's social ladder, he noted ruefully in his memoir that 'my wish for more took more than all away'. 'My family growing larger and likely to be numerous, by yearly births', he explained, 'my mind still ran on merchandize more than my own business'. Ignoring what he later realized should have been his primary concern—his bakery—Coleman described himself as being seduced into a series of risky investments. He did this, he explained, not just because of the money that he might accumulate, but also because of his rise in status: 'The name of merchant and the appellation of squire were high sounding names,' he noted, and these, coupled with his leap in income, 'were two powerful motives to resign [i.e. re-sign]'.[19] Expansion into trading with agents in Africa and the West Indies apparently resulted in heavy losses, so that in 1786 'our funds grew short and of course our credit injured, our vessels sold to liquidate the debt of the concern and here was an end of our merchandize'.[20] More bad fortune followed in 1789 when John Coleman's warehouse at the bakery burnt down.[21] Though their partnership was ended in 1786, the affairs of Coleman and Warren continued to dog Coleman, apparently owing to a number of bad debts, and in 1791 he sued Warren's widow, Margaret, along with various other merchants at the Court of Exchequer in London, for not settling with Samuel Warren's creditors.[22] Though details of events around this time are unclear, it is apparent that Coleman's personal fortune continued to decline rapidly, and in 1793, in common with many other traders, he was hit by the effects of a financial crisis that affected the provinces particularly badly, and that was accompanied by many bankruptcies, including Coleman's own.[23]

With his fortune and his James Street house gone, his bankruptcy declared and his ability to throw lavish parties and dinners curtailed, Coleman also plunged back down Liverpool's social hierarchy:

> Thus from the exalted station of esquire and merchant by which appellation all letters were addressed to me, I soon was reduced to the old character of a tradesman and a biscuit baker. Consequently, I left off in a great degree giving large dinners, turtle feasts, and such other entertainments as esquires and merchants too frequently do. I soon found when I left off feasting my good friends they lost their friendship and instead of proffered service, a hearty shake by the hand and kind enquiries after my health and that of my family, I found alas a short nod of the head with a passant indifferent "How do you do" and pass on without wanting an answer to their own common place enquiries. Joints of lamb and barrels of oysters that used to find their way during the winter months from London, sent by my insurance brokers, these now all lost their way to my house, also presents of game, presents from the different agents abroad, presents from the different manufactorys who was in the habit of receiving orders from our house, these all lost their way and made good an old vulgar adage, though not less true—viz. No longer pipe, no longer dance.[24]

[19] Coleman, fo. 56[r]. [20] Coleman, fo. 56[r].
[21] *Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, 2 February 1789. [22] TNA: E 112, 1530/227 (1791).
[23] Ashton, *Economic Fluctuations in England, 1700–1800*, ch. 5; Hoppit, *Risk and Failure,* 105, 130–2; Coleman, fo. 57[r–v].
[24] Coleman, fo. 59[r].

Despite his fall from grace, Coleman declared that he 'made up my mind to bear all these things with true Christian philosophy and fortitude and I did do so'.[25] With some financial help from his remaining friends, Coleman was able to reinstate himself as a baker,[26] and found he could still be 'very comfortable indeed': for 'what I thought my utter ruin viz., my bankruptcy, proved my greatest blessing. I was now freed from the clamour of needy creditors, from the complicated accounts of "Coleman and Warren" and from other concerns equally unpleasant. Thus I continued happy in my family, happy in my friends and happy in my business', at least until his wife's untimely death in 1797.[27] Directory listings for John Coleman had dropped the title of 'merchant' as early as 1790, and he was once again a plain 'baker', as he remained until his death in 1815.[28]

Coleman's journey from 'tradesman and baker' to 'esquire and merchant'—and back again—is a cautionary tale of the risks and vagaries of urban commercial life in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. His rise and fall in Liverpudlian society—although unlikely to be typical, in terms of neither its speed nor the heady heights to which he rose and from which he fell—remind us that the wealth and social status of individuals living in provincial towns during the Industrial Revolution could be extremely changeable. Notions of social class in such fast-changing urban commercial landscapes were particularly slippery, and, while it is clear from Coleman's account that hierarchies certainly existed in the society in which he operated, and that these were keenly regarded and extremely important to contemporaries, they can be difficult for historians to categorize. The complexity of social structure, and the fine gradations of status that constituted British society during the long eighteenth century, have been noted for many years. Though the very richest and most powerful members of the social elite, as well as those who were poorest and had least control over their destinies, seem relatively easy to identify, individuals who were positioned in between are much harder to classify. One part of this section of society, the 'middling sorts', has particularly interested historians of the eighteenth century, and the size, wealth, culture, and politics of the urban middle classes have all been subjected to scrutiny by scholars keen to map the fortunes of the 'polite and commercial people' of the eighteenth century, as well as tracing the emergence of the assertive bourgeoisie of the nineteenth.[29] However, it

[25] Coleman, fo. 59[r]. [26] Coleman, fo. 60[v]. [27] Coleman, fo. 60[r].

[28] *Bailey's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1787); *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1790); *Liverpool Mercury*, 21 July 1815.

[29] See, e.g., Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660–1730* (London, 1989); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989), and Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman* (Oxford, 1991); Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender and the Family in England, 1680–1780* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996); Geoffrey Crossick and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt (eds), *The Petite Bourgeoisie in Europe, 1780–1914: Enterprise, Family and Independence* (London and New York, 1995); D. Wahrman, *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain, c.1780–1840* (Cambridge, 1995); R. J. Morris, *Class, Sect and Party: The Making of the British Middle Class, Leeds 1820–50* (Manchester, 1990); P. Joyce, 'Introduction: Beyond Class?', in P. Joyce (ed.), *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1848–1914* (Cambridge, 1991), 1–26; Simon Gunn, *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class: Ritual and Authority and the English Industrial City, 1840–1914* (Manchester, 2000), 3–4.

seems likely that the middling sorts of the long eighteenth century (and indeed thereafter) constituted neither a unified nor a stable social group.[30]

The majority of tradesmen and women who form the basis for this study could be defined as a subset of the middle class(es)— the 'petit bourgeoisie' or lower middle class—with the addition or inclusion of skilled artisans, which in the past some historians have termed the 'labour aristocracy',[31] and also taking in rather wealthy members of the middle, or even upper middle classes, consisting of those who had been particularly successful in business. But to describe them thus appears to shoehorn these men and women into categories that have far more meaning for modern historians than they would have had for those at the time. Instead, it seems more useful to describe our subjects in a way that would have made sense both to the individuals concerned and to their contemporaries[32]—namely, as being traders, by which is meant the buyers and sellers of goods, those involved in small-scale manufacturing or skilled handicrafts, and the providers of allied services. Though 'trade' was used very broadly for much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to describe any occupation, business, or profession, by the late eighteenth century a distinction is apparent between those who traded merchandise overseas on a grand scale (and into whose ranks John Coleman rose), who were called merchants, and those whose efforts were more modest, and generally involved selling to individual domestic customers, who were termed traders or tradesmen (and women).[33] From around 1750, authors of a variety of publications aimed at helping individuals negotiate day-to-day issues of business and commerce were clear in their understanding of 'tradesmen' as a recognizable group that was distinct from 'gentlemen' and 'merchants', as well as being far more numerous.[34] There is some indication that the

[30] P. J. Corfield, 'Class by Name and Number in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *History*, 72/234 (1987), 38–61; Nicholas Rogers, 'Introduction' to special edition of *Journal of British Studies*, 'The Making of the English Middle Class, *c*.1700–1850', 32/4 (1993), 299–301; G. Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832–1982* (Cambridge, 1983); R. Crompton, *Class and Stratification: An Introduction to Current Debates* (Cambridge, 1993).

[31] E. J. Hobsbawm, 'The Labour Aristocracy in Nineteenth-Century Britain and Trends in the British Labour Movement', in Hobsbawm (ed.), *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London, 1964), 272–315; Geoffrey Crossick, *An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society: Kentish London, 1840–80* (London, 1978); Robert Q. Gray, *The Aristocracy of Labour in Nineteenth-Century Britain, c.1850–1900* (London, 1981).

[32] See Corfield, 'Class by Name and Number in Eighteenth-Century Britain'; Geoffrey Crossick, 'From Gentleman to Residuum: Languages of Social Description in Victorian Britain', in P. J. Corfield (ed.), *Language, History and Class* (Oxford, 1991), 150–78.

[33] *Oxford English Dictionary*: 'trade, n.'. OED Online (Oxford University Press, September 2014) <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/204274?rskey=QkC7eW&result=1> (accessed 2 December 2014); Sheryllynne Haggerty, *The British Atlantic Trading Community, 1760–1810: Men, Women and the Distribution of Goods* (Leiden, 2006), 35–61; Sheryllynne Haggerty, '*Merely for Money?' Business Culture in the British Atlantic 1750–1815* (Liverpool, 2012), 26–33.

[34] 'A Gentleman of the Bank of England', *The Gentleman, Tradesman, and Traveller's Pocket Library* (London, 1753); Richard Boote, *The Solicitor's Guide and Tradesman's Instructor, Concerning Bankrupts* (London, [1760?]); *The New Pocket Conveyancer; or, Gentleman, Tradesman, Lawyer and Attorney's Magazine of Law by a Gentleman of Lincoln's Inn* (London, 1761); *The Complete Pocket Book; or, Gentleman and Tradesman's Daily Journal, for the Year of our Lord 1764* (London, 1763); J. Leadbeater, *The Gentleman and Tradesman's Compleat Assistant; or, the Whole Art of Measuring and Estimating, Made Easy* (London, 1770); 'A Merchant', *The Way to be Wise and Wealthy: Recommended to All; Apply'd, more Particularly, and Accommodated to the Several Conditions and Circumstances of the*

term of tradesmen was being used to identify a broad group of craftsmen in the seventeenth century,[35] while in the early eighteenth century Daniel Defoe differentiated between retailers (whom he described as 'tradesmen' or 'tradingmen') and small manufacturers (whom he termed 'manufacturers', 'artists', or 'handicraftmen').[36] Though his definitions continued to be reproduced in a handful of works later on in the century,[37] most publications tended to conflate these different meanings into the single term of tradesmen from the mid-century onwards. Thus Catherine Kearsley's *Gentleman and Tradesman's Pocket Ledger, for the Year 1795* includes a section on 'secrets in arts and trades', some of which are specifically aimed at manufacturers.[38] In the satirical *Tradesman's Looking-Glass* from around 1785, a meeting of 'poor tradesmen' is described as being composed largely of small manufacturers, including:

> Crispin the shoemaker, Trim the taylor, Grim the Blacksmith, Glue the Joiner, Chip the Carpenter, Laystone the Mason, Pick-quarrel the Glazier, Hemp the Ropemaker, Lath the Tiler, Thum-it the Tinker, Lanck-wool the Serge-maker, Hanging Arse the Weaver, Greasy the Comber, Turn-round the spinner, Mend-all the Cobbler, Bloody the Butcher, Pinch-load the Baker, and Grind-all the Miller.[39]

Similarly, Hannah More's *The Apprentice Turned Master*, published in 1796, described how James Stock, the 'faithful apprentice' of Williams, the idle shoemaker, became a 'creditable tradesman' after being allowed to set up in business as a shoemaker himself by his ex-master's creditors: 'such is the power of a good character.'[40] Those involved in manufacturing seem to have been typically described as traders, despite Defoe's injunction that the term should be limited to shopkeepers who did not make their own wares. His definition of merchants, however, as a degree of people above traders, 'who import the goods and growth of other countries, and export the growth and manufacture of England to other countries', was generally shared into the nineteenth century, as was his understanding that there

Gentleman, the Scholar, the Soldier, the Tradesman, the Sailor, the Artificer, the Husbandman (Belfast, 1773); *The Birmingham Directory; or, Merchant and Tradesman's Useful Companion* (Birmingham, 1777); William Bailey, *Bailey's Northern Directory, or, Merchant's and Tradesman's Useful Companion, for the Year 1781* (Warrington, 1781); John Thomson, *The Universal Calculator; or the Merchant's, Tradesman's, and Family's Assistant* (Edinburgh, 1784); Catharine Kearsley, *Kearsley's Gentleman and Tradesman's Pocket Ledger, for the Year 1795* (London, 1795); *The Daily Journal: Or, Gentleman's, Merchant's, and Tradesman's, Complete Annual Accompt-book, for the Pocket or Desk* (London, 1799).

[35] Mark Hailwood, '"The Honest Tradesman's Honour": Occupational and Social Identity in Seventeenth-Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 24 (2014), 79–103, pp. 86–7.

[36] Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman, in Familiar Letters* (Dublin, 1726), 1–2.

[37] See, e.g., William Wright, *The Complete Tradesman: Or, a Guide in the Several Parts and Progressions of Trade* (London, [1786?]).

[38] Kearsley, *Kearsley's Gentleman and Tradesman's Pocket Ledger, for the Year 1795*, pp.151–7.

[39] *The Tradesman's Looking-Glass; All Trades in an Uproar: Or, a Hue and Cry after Money and Trade: Being an Account of the Miseries of those that Want Money* ([Newcastle upon Tyne?], [1785?]), 2–3.

[40] Hannah More, *The Apprentice Turned Master: Or, the Second Part of the Two Shoemakers* (London, 1796), 2.

were 'several degrees of people employed in trade below [tradesmen], such as workmen, labourers and servants'.[41] Traders and tradesmen and women thus appear in contemporary texts as a diverse, yet distinct, social group: above unskilled workers, but below merchants and those in the professions.[42] By the early nineteenth century, and into the twentieth century, the emergence of the term 'in trade' underlined this distinction between traders and those of higher ranks, and specifically precluded the possibility of tradesmen and women being considered genteel, whatever their wealth.[43] Styling oneself as 'esquire' or 'gent' then, as Coleman was so proud to do, seems to have indicated not just greater wealth, but also either access to forms of income not accrued by domestic trading (as was the case when he became a merchant in addition to being a baker), or that individuals were consciously distancing themselves from involvement in trade, typically after a lifetime spent accumulating wealth and following some form of retirement.[44]

Rosemary Sweet has noted that involvement in different trades could confer varying degrees of social status in eighteenth-century towns, so that 'wholesale shopkeepers, such as mercers, drapers, and hosiers, were of higher status than the retail shopkeepers, and among the shopkeepers, the dealers in luxury finished goods, such as china and silverware, occupied a position above those who dealt in foodstuffs and other basic goods'.[45] Such distinctions seem to have been largely dictated by relative wealth: not just in terms of income, but also concerning the varying costs of setting up in different trades.[46] For, as Alex Sheperd has recently noted, 'social estimation was firmly rooted in the assessment of people's material assets' in the early modern period.[47] Thus John Coleman was able to rise in Liverpudlian society by becoming richer, despite remaining a baker throughout. Moreover, it is also clear that, even within occupational groups, huge differences in wealth and status could occur.[48] Bakers, grocers, publicans, hairdressers, confectioners, and drapers could all be both relatively poor and surprisingly rich. After his death in 1790, the Manchester grocer Peter Berry left an estate valued at between £1,000 and £2,000, in addition to houses, a shop, and land.[49] Conversely, when another Manchester grocer, Joseph Wright, died thirty years later, his personal estate was valued at under £100 by his executors (though he did lay claim to two houses in the Manchester suburb of Ardwick).[50] We do not know how Berry and

[41] Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman*, 2.
[42] P. J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain, 1700–1850* (London, 1995), 19–20.
[43] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 'trade, n.'. OED Online.
[44] R. J. Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780–1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategy amongst the Leeds Middle Classes* (Cambridge, 2005), 149.
[45] Sweet, *The English Town, 1680–1840*, 180.
[46] R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (London, 1747); George Kearsley, *Kearsley's Table of Trades, for the Assistance of Parents and Guardians, and for the Benefit of those Young Men, who Wish to Prosper in the World* (London, 1786), 4–23; Schwarz, *London in the Age of Industrialisation*, 57–71.
[47] Alex Sheperd, *Accounting for Oneself: Worth, Status and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2015), 2.
[48] Jon Stobart, *Sugar and Spice: Grocers and Groceries in Provincial England, 1650–1830* (Oxford, 2012), 22–4.
[49] LRO, WCW, Will of Peter Berry (1790).
[50] LRO, WCW, Will of Joseph Wright (1820).

Wright would have seen themselves in relation to each other: as fellow grocers and tradesmen, or whether differences in wealth would have inculcated a perceived gulf in status. Most likely, a bit of both. Thus, when another Manchester grocer, George Heywood, while a poor journeyman, sought the hand of his much richer, widowed employer in 1811, he was reportedly told by her brother that 'you are as good as her and may look up to any tradesman's daughter', while also being informed in no uncertain terms that any property that she had would be placed firmly out of his reach if they did marry.[51]

Unlike John Coleman, George Heywood had not come from a trading family, and rose from being an apprentice to owning his own shop largely—it seemed to him—through his own efforts.[52] Yet it is also clear from his account of his life that, while he was not born into the grocery trade, family money helped him secure both his initial training and the subsequent funds for him to set up in his own business.[53] Heywood's story also reveals how many of the firms he worked in—first as an apprentice, then as a journeyman grocer—were family businesses, in the sense that they were owned and controlled by the members of a single family, and were run to support more than one family member.[54] Though John Coleman had a different career trajectory, he also spent his life in family businesses: first as an apprentice to his father, then in partnership with his mother after his father's death, before leaving her to run the business with his brother when John set up on his own following his marriage and an apparent falling out with one of his brothers-in-law.[55] Family constitutes an important theme in this book, for it would be difficult to study tradesmen and women and their businesses without examining families, since they were central to the organization of so many of the firms—both large and small—during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[56] Indeed, several historians have argued persuasively that family businesses can be understood only within the context of family ambitions and priorities.[57] Alastair Owens has suggested that the family 'needs to be seen less as an influence on business activity and more as its *raison d'être*',[58] while Andrew Popp has stated that entrepreneurship and family

[51] Heywood, fo. 18.

[52] His grandfather had been a clothier and his father, John, although apprenticed as a cloth dresser, left the business to work as a groom for local trading families: Heywood, fo. 9.

[53] Heywood, fo. 10.

[54] Rose, 'The Family Firm in British Business, 1780–1914', 62.

[55] Coleman, fo. 55^{v}.

[56] Payne, *British Entrepreneurship in the Nineteenth Century*, 19–21; P. L. Payne, 'Family Business in Britain: An Historical and Analytical Survey', in A. Okochi and S. Yasuoka (eds), *Family Business in the Era of Industrial Growth* (Tokyo, 1984), 171–206; Hunt, *The Middling Sort*; A. Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle of Family Firms in the Early Industrial Revolution', *Business History*, 44/1 (2002), 21–46; Jones and Rose, 'Family Capitalism'; Tweedale, 'Backstreet Capitalism'.

[57] P. Mathias, *The Transformation of England: Essays in the Economic and Social History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1979); Rose, 'The Family Firm in British Business, 1780–1914', 72; Mark Casson, 'The Economics of the Family Firm', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 47/1 (1999), 10–23; M. Dupree, 'Firm, Family and Community: Managerial and Household Strategies in the Staffordshire Potteries in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,' in K. Bruland (ed.), *From Family Firms to Corporate Capitalism: Essays in Business and Industrial History in Honour of Peter Mathias* (Oxford, 1998), 51–83.

[58] Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle', 43.

business 'existed in service to a greater set of priorities' than can be understood by simply examining economic rationales and imperatives.[59]

Though the interests of both individuals and families featured highly in such considerations, so too did God. Indeed, faith influenced most aspects of the lives of those in trade, whose principal concerns arguably centred on family, making a living, and religion.[60] The tradesmen and women in this book tended to display what could be described as the 'unspectacular orthodoxy' practised by people of all sorts in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: for whom regular church attendance, the scrutiny of one's actions and those of others, a belief in providence, and the need both to engage and to struggle with the world and its expectations were a part of daily life.[61] Articles of faith concerning work and business have been described by historians as influencing the conduct of Quakers in particular, yet similar considerations were also apparent among those of other dissenting sects prominent in north-west towns, such as Presbyterians, Methodists, and Unitarians, as well as Anglicans.[62] Indeed, all Christians were exhorted to uphold their duty to labour, while the requirement to ensure fair dealing and honesty was not unique to Quakerism.[63]

Yet, because this book focuses on relationships within families, it is biblical prescriptions on family life and love that are most in evidence in what follows. Ideas about Christian duty, coupled with the existence of profound emotional

[59] Andrew Popp, *Entrepreneurial Families: Business, Marriage, and Life in the Early Nineteenth Century* (London, 2012), 2.

[60] Hannah Barker, 'Soul, Purse and Family: Middling and Lower-Class Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Manchester', *Social History*, 33/1 (2008), 12–35.

[61] This phrase is taken from Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570–1640* (Cambridge, 1987), 94 and *passim*. See also W. M. Jacob, *Lay-People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1996); John Walsh and Stephen Taylor, 'Introduction: The Church and Anglicanism in the "Long" Eighteenth Century', in John Walsh, Colin Haydon, and Stephen Taylor (eds), *The Church of England* c.*1689*–c.*1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), 22–9; G. Ditchfield, *The Evangelical Revival* (London, 1998); David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1989), 2–18.

[62] D. H. Pratt, *English Quakers and the Industrial Revolution* (New York, 1985); Ann Prior and Maurice Kirby, 'The Society of Friends and the Family Firm, 1700–1830', *Business History*, 35/4 (1993), 66–85; T. A. B. Corley, 'Changing Quaker Attitudes to Wealth, 1690–1950', in David Jeremy (ed.), *Religion, Business, and Wealth in Modern Britain* (London, 1998), 137–52; Leslie Hannah, 'The Moral Economy of Business: A Historical Perspective on Ethics and Efficiency', in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison, and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), 285–300; John Seed, 'Unitarianism, Political Economy and the Antinomies of Liberal Culture in Manchester, 1830–50', *Social History*, 7/1 (1982), 1–25; Anne Orde, *Religion, Business and Society in North-East England: The Pease Family of Darlington in the Nineteenth Century* (Stamford, 2000); Matthew Kadane, 'Success and Self-Loathing in the Life of an Eighteenth-Century Entrepreneur', in Margaret C. Jacob and Catherine Secretan (eds), *The Self-Perception of Early Modern Capitalists* (Basingstoke, 2008), 253–71; Barker, 'Soul, Purse and Family'.

[63] *The A, B, C, with the Shorter Catechism, Agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster* (Edinburgh, 1778), 22; Benjamin Beddome, *A Scriptural Exposition of the Baptist Catechism by Way of Question and Answer* (Bristol, 1776), 41; Disney Alexander, *Christian Holiness Illustrated and Enforced, in Three Discourses; Preached at the Methodist Chapel* (Halifax, 1800), 82; Daniel Bellamy, *The Family-Preacher: Consisting of Practical Discourses for Every Sunday throughout the Year* (London, 1776), 51; Thomas Adam, *Evangelical Sermons* (London, 1781), 242; Thomas Bancroft, *A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church in Chester* (Chester, [1795?]), 17.

attachments, emerge as central to understanding how trading families functioned. These families were particularly complex social entities, as the locations where belief systems were inculcated, identity was formed, and emotions were focused, as well as being economic units that both produced and consumed, the site of both physical and social reproduction. Yet, despite their apparently tightly knit nature, trading families did not necessarily act as single units with shared interests, so that the notion of 'family strategy' is one that is also interrogated in the following pages. What is meant by the 'family' in the context of this examination is also complicated. Though many accounts of families in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England focus primarily on the 'nuclear' family,[64] an understanding of the importance of the extended family is also important, as is the concept of the 'household family', which defines family by co-residence, rather than by consanguinity.[65] This book also tests current understandings of gender, work, and power in this period, by exploring the importance of age and generation in familial and business hierarchies, particularly through an examination of the control of property and the meanings and uses of interior space. Finally, integrating an overlooked, but important, social group into our vision of English society during the Industrial Revolution also allows us to reconsider existing understandings of class and identity, particularly amongst the 'middling sorts'. In examining some of the forgotten businesses of the Industrial Revolution and the men and women who worked in them, this book presents a largely unfamiliar commercial world. Its approach, which spans economic, social, and cultural history, as well as encompassing business history and the histories of the emotions and material culture, alongside studies of personal testimony, testatory practice, and property ownership, provides us with new insights into the lives of ordinary men and women whose relatively mundane lives are easily overlooked, but who were central to the story of a pivotal period in English history.

* * *

This book begins with an examination of the ways in which those in trade managed and invested their wealth. Material that describes property ownership provides particularly rich information on this subject. The records of courts that administered both equity law, and the laws relating to probate, are peppered with cases that describe traders' property, while the wills of tradesmen and women can also provide us with detailed insights. Drawing on both these sources, Chapter 1 shows that traders pursued pragmatic investment strategies that demonstrated sophisticated attitudes towards risk and broader economic contexts. Inheritances were also

[64] See, e.g., D. E. C. Eversley, P. Laslett, and E. A. Wrigley, *An Introduction to English Historical Demography from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1966); Peter Laslett and Richard Wall (eds), *Household and Family in Past Time: Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America, with Further Materials from Western Europe* (Cambridge, 1972); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (London, 1977).

[65] David Cressy, 'Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 113 (1986), 38–69; Naomi Tadmor, 'The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 151 (1996), 303–33; Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage* (Cambridge, 2001).

handled in ways that suggest a shrewd approach to familial wealth, the importance of ensuring economic security for surviving family members, and the value of the family firm as an asset. It is also clear that the formal written instructions made in wills were routinely ignored so as best to suit changing circumstances. Inheritance is further explored in Chapter 2, which examines in more detail the will-making practices of those in trade, and demonstrates the degree to which the passage of property across generations was materially and ideologically 'constrained', despite a legal framework that apparently left individuals free to act as they wished. Ensuring a 'right disposal' of property was important, and meant securing provision for one's immediate and dependent family, and specifically wives and children, while offspring of both genders tended to be treated equitably. Such was the desire to ensure that 'family money' remained in family hands that a great deal of effort was put into protecting wealth bequeathed to female relatives from any unrelated interlopers who might appear in later years, in the form of new husbands.

The middle two chapters of the book focus more explicitly on the nature of familial relations. Though it is clear from the discussion in Chapter 3 that family members argued and fell out—especially over property—this chapter shows that cooperation, duty, and affection were seen as the ideal basis for familial relationships, and that this belief seems to have influenced individual actions. Chapter 3 also considers the concept of 'family strategies' when examining trading families, and concludes that joint strategies were driven by a mixture of shared understandings about hierarchies of age and gender, coupled with self-interest, love, and a strong sense of duty—a heady mix that was decided in the main by consensus and compromise between individual family members exercising varying amounts of power. Within these familial hierarchies of power, generation and age were often more important than gender, so that the concept of gerontocracy must be considered alongside that of patriarchy in terms of understanding the ways in which families functioned. Familial relations continue to be explored in Chapter 4, although here the majority of archival sources used are very different: for, while the preceding chapter is based largely on court records, the one that follows it relies for the most part on letters, diaries, and memoirs. The difference in methodological approach produces a very different picture of familial relations among those in trade. It is one in which cooperation and support are emphasized, as is the importance of both love and religious faith within family groups.

The final two chapters of the book turn to the physical sites in which people in trade spent much of their time: those buildings in which many trading families both lived and worked. Though there has long been scholarly interest in the family and household, we still know relatively little about the physical context in which most familial relationships were negotiated, at least below the level of the social elite. By examining the structures of the home, shop, and workshop, and the use of the spaces within it, Chapters 5 and 6 show that combining the commercial and the domestic under one roof was not easy. Pressures on space, coupled with the competing demands of work and domesticity, and of different household members, meant that tensions often arose. While Chapter 5 examines the types of houses that trading families occupied, as well as the constitution of these households and the

ways in which space was organized, Chapter 6 explores the meanings of different domestic spaces, and what access to space can tell us about household hierarchies. Practice varied between households, reflecting both the physical constraints of the households concerned, and differing understandings of 'family'.

While the discussion of inheritance practices in the first four chapters of this book focuses our attention largely on the 'nuclear' family of parents and their children, the last two chapters suggest a more complex picture among those in trade, in which the household family was also very much in evidence: so that those unrelated by either blood or marriage, but living under the same roof, might still view themselves as bound by familial ties. Yet, however families were constituted and understood, an examination of space underlines the fact that both generation and gender tended to determine household hierarchies. These structures of power were sometimes challenged, and, when they were, families, and the homes they lived and worked in, could be sites of unhappiness and friction. In such circumstances, the turbulence caused could also have a serious impact on the family firm. But co-residence also promoted compromise as well as forging strong emotional bonds within families. In these instances, not only was there greater evidence of domestic contentment, but family businesses also ran more smoothly and were much more likely to survive.

1

Wealth-Holding and Investment

Hannah Barker and Mina Ishizu

When John Coleman, the social-climbing Liverpool biscuit baker, sat down to write his memoir towards the end of the eighteenth century, he was keen to relate various aspects of his life, but what most preoccupied him were his past business dealings with the goldsmith and merchant Samuel Warren. It is an account of their affairs that begins the work, and its first fifty-two pages are taken up with Coleman's narrative of his involvement with Warren and the detailed listing of payments, receipts, and the various ships that the pair invested in together.[1] According to Coleman, he and Warren became both friends and business partners around 1781. The date was significant, swiftly following as it did the formal declaration of hostilities between Britain and the Dutch Republic at the end of 1780 and the extension of an 'open season' on foreign trade. This resulted in a desperate scramble in ports throughout Britain to transform trading vessels into armed privateers during December 1780 and the opening months of 1781.[2] As has already been discussed, although Coleman and Warren's shipping investments initially proved rewarding, and they soon diversified into trading ventures, including slave trading, by 1786 all the money they had made had disappeared after their good luck began to reverse, ships were lost, and Warren allegedly mismanaged their affairs. Coleman was dogged for several years by a series of bad debts as a result, which culminated in 1791 with a suit brought by him against Warren's widow at the Court of Exchequer in London and, after a fire at his bakery two years later, Coleman's own bankruptcy.[3] As we have seen, these events saw Coleman hurtling both up and down Liverpool's social ladder and were central to his own narrative of his life. Though at other points in his memoir Coleman offered both cautionary and celebratory tales on subjects as diverse as the choice of a marriage partner, how to behave towards one's parents, and life and work in the capital, the opening section of his autobiography was devoted specifically to a subject especially close to the hearts of members of the trading classes: managing and investing one's wealth.

[1] Coleman, 29^{r}–43^{v}.

[2] David Starkey, 'British Privateering against the Dutch in the American Revolutionary War, 1780–1783', in Stephen Fisher (eds), *Studies in British Privateering, Trading Enterprise and Seamen's Welfare, 1775–1900* (Exeter, 1987), 1–18. See also Gomer Williams, *History of the Liverpool Privateers and Letters of Marque, with an Account of the Liverpool Slave Trade* (London and Liverpool, 1897).

[3] TNA: E 112, 1530/227 (1791).

Despite the attendant risks, the financial rewards of privateering and overseas trading could be great,[4] and John Coleman was not alone among Liverpool residents 'in trade' in speculating in privateers or trading vessels during this period. The grocer James Aspinall, for example, was one of three owners of the *Lady Franceys* (along with the master of the ship, Thomas Hawkins, and a merchant, William Hurry). The ship was described as an 'armed ship or privateer' in a case brought by Hawkins in 1807 concerning the alleged withholding of the profits arising from the capture of a Spanish vessel, the *Saint Anna*.[5] Bakers, coopers, grocers, and victuallers have also been identified among the owners of Liverpool trading ships in both the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[6] Elsewhere, ironmongers, wet glovers, ropers, and innkeepers from Chester, Preston, and Lancaster were found buying shares in slaving vessels from the mid-eighteenth century onwards,[7] while David Pope has shown that some of Liverpool's leading slave merchants in the second half of the eighteenth century were the sons of men in trade, and that a significant proportion of these merchants married the daughters of traders and/or saw their own sons go into trade.[8] Yet, while clearly not uncommon, such investing practices—which offered both high rewards and significant risks[9]—fit uneasily with the security-focused model of 'petit bourgeois' investing described by other historians, or with most depictions of wealth-holding and investment in studies of the broader middle class in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[10]

[4] Williams, *History of the Liverpool Privateers and Letters of Marque*; Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (London, 1964); David Pope, 'The Wealth and Social Aspirations of Liverpool's Slave Merchants of the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century', in David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz and Anthony Tibbles (eds), *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery* (Liverpool, 2007), 164–226; Sheryllynne Haggerty, 'Risk and Risk Management in the Liverpool Slave Trade', *Business History*, 51/6 (2009), 817–34.

[5] TNA: E 112, 1537/457 (1807).

[6] D. J. Pope, 'Shipping and Trade in the Port of Liverpool, 1783–1793', University of Liverpool Ph.D. thesis (1970), i. 463–4; ii. 331–49; Frank Neal, 'Liverpool Shipping 1815–1835', University of Liverpool MA thesis (1962), appendix 8; R. Craig and R. Jarvis, *Liverpool Registry of Merchant Ships* (Manchester, 1967).

[7] M. M. Schofield, 'The Slave Trade from Lancashire and Cheshire Ports outside Liverpool, *c*.1750–1790', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 126 (1976), 30–72; M. M. Schofield, 'Chester Slave Trading Partnerships 1750–56', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 130 (1980), 187–90; Melinda Elder, 'The Liverpool Slave Trade, Lancaster and its Environs', in David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz, and Anthony Tibbles (eds), *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery* (Liverpool, 2007), 118–37, p. 121.

[8] Pope, 'The Wealth and Social Aspirations of Liverpool's Slave Merchants of the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century', 166–7, 176–7.

[9] Haggerty, 'Risk and Risk Management in the Liverpool Slave Trade'.

[10] See, e.g., Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London, 1987), chs 4–5; Geoffrey Crossick, 'Meanings of Property and the World of the Petite Bourgeoisie', in Jon Stobart and Alistair Owens (eds), *Urban Fortunes: Property and Inheritance in the Town: 1700–1900* (Aldershot, 2000), 50–78; R. J. Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780–1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategy amongst the Leeds Middle Classes* (Cambridge, 2005); H. V. Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain 1756–1833* (Cambridge, 2006); Anne Laurence, 'The Emergence of a Private Clientèle for Banks in the Early Eighteenth Century: Hoare's Bank and Some Women Customers', *Economic History Review*, 61/3 (2008), 565–86; Anne Laurence, 'Women, Banks and the Securities Market in Early Eighteenth Century England', in Anne Laurence, Josephine Maltby, and Janette Rutterford (eds), *Women and their Money 1700–1950: Essays on Women and Finance* (London, 2009), 46–58. Though see Helen Doe, 'Waiting for her Ship to Come in? The Female Investor

This chapter examines how traders in Liverpool and Manchester managed and invested their wealth. As we shall see, businesses and real estate (the latter most commonly in the form of houses) tended to constitute their most valuable possessions. These are both types of property whose inherent value was linked not just to their assets but also to their potential profitability (from rental income and commercial profits). They also tended to constitute very localized and familiar forms of wealth-holding and investment. This might suggest an aversion to risk (contra Coleman). However, while the security of family money was certainly important, keeping it close by—by investing locally and in family-run businesses—may well have been driven by pragmatism rather than caution, since buildings and business appear to have produced some of the best returns for much of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Moreover, during many of these years, very few alternative investment opportunities were available. As other possibilities—such as investing in government securities or consols, or in stocks and shares—became more accessible to the trading classes from the 1790s, they began to impact on their investing practices. The changing economic and political landscape of the period 1760–1820 also affected the choices made by those in trade, with individuals and families showing flexibility in the face of a series of wartime and post-war booms and slumps, at the same time as they considered the best way to negotiate their own family resources and setbacks. Such practices reveal often quite sophisticated attitudes towards investment and risk in decisions about how to provide for family members. This understanding of the need to consider a range of current factors when making choices about managing and investing wealth also meant that many wills gave executors and trustees a degree of discretion in terms of how they sought to ensure future family prosperity, based on an understanding that circumstances could change considerably between making a will and executors being granted probate. Moreover, the need to take into account the immediate context when deciding how to direct postmortem estate management also meant that specific directions made in wills were often ignored, specifically in terms of the fate of the family business, so that executors and surviving family members clearly felt themselves unconstrained by the law and bound instead by the need best to serve familial (and, no doubt, sometimes individual) interests.

WILLS AND PROPERTY

This chapter explores wealth-holding largely through an examination of wills.[11] These were sampled at ten-yearly intervals by the year in which probate was granted

in Nineteenth-Century Sailing Vessels', *Economic History Review*, 63/1 (2010), 85–106, for a description of female investors, usually portrayed as the most risk-adverse, and shipping—though she also argues that most of her subjects were locally based and that 'local knowledge was a key component of decision making concerning investment in shipping, and family knowledge enabled the decisions to be made on a less speculative basis for those living locally' (p. 104).

[11] Wills and testaments were strictly speaking separate documents, which dealt with different types of property—real estate and personal property—but as they were generally written as one document they are considered together here and described, for the sake of brevity, as 'wills'.

and were selected according to occupation. Though a few of the trading wills examined left very large estates, 90 per cent sat comfortably under the £1,000 valuation band, with 76 per cent of the total said to be worth under £500.[12] Occupational title and probate valuation are clearly rather rough-and-ready measures of social status, not least as the sum set on an individual's wealth measured gross rather than net worth, and did not take real estate into account.[13] Yet research on early nineteenth-century London probate valuations by Owens, Green, Bailey, and Kay suggests that we can have some degree of confidence in these figures, at least to the extent that personal estates were unlikely to be worth more than the valuation given, while at the lower end of the social scale, and specifically in terms of valuations under the £2,000 band, they found that probate valuations probably deviated most *above* their 'real' net value, perhaps by as much as 50 per cent.[14] The difference between estimated and actual wealth is not surprising given what we know about the ways in which small enterprises operated in relation to credit: as Olwyn Hufton has noted, the estates of traders and small manufacturers were particularly vulnerable to the army of creditors who 'moved in immediately to demand payment of all outstanding bills' upon the death of the head of household.[15]

Our sample consists of 124 Manchester wills and 130 from Liverpool. These 254 wills were produced by individuals described by a wide range of occupational titles. The most common trades by which will-makers identified themselves are presented in Table 1.1. Almost all of our sampled wills were written by men (96 per cent). Married women rarely made wills in this period and those widows and spinsters who did tended to be described according to their 'civil' status rather than by occupation. Although we examined women's wills internally for evidence

[12] Although executors were supposed to provide a valuation of estates for the purposes of assessing stamp and death duty (the former payable from 1694, the latter from 1796), these valuations appeared in extant records for Liverpool and Manchester wills held in the LRO only from around 1790, so estimates were made based on internal contents in earlier cases. Morris's analysis of average sworn probate values from Leeds, 1830–4 (for which valuation figures are more complete than in the case of our sample), showed those individuals in 'distribution' with a mean of £985 and a median of £200; those in 'craft' with a mean of £460 and a median of £100; and those in manufacturing with a mean of £1,443, and a median of £100: Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 84.

[13] Tom Arkell, 'The Probate Process', in Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans, and Nigel Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early-Modern England* (Oxford, 2000), 3–13, pp. 7, 12; David R. Green and Alastair Owens, 'Metropolitan Estates of the Middle Class, 1800–1850: Probates and Death Duties Revisited', *Historical Research*, 70/173 (1997), 294–311, p. 295. Technically, those valuing estates should have excluded the value of freehold property from their valuations but not that of leasehold property. It is not clear that these rules were always followed in north-west towns when property held on very long leases (as was common in both Manchester and Liverpool) often appears to have been treated as if it were freehold.

[14] A. Owens, D. Green, C. Bailey and A. Kay, 'A Measure of Worth: Probate Valuations, Personal Wealth and Indebtedness in England, 1810–40', *Historical Research*, 79 (2006), 383–403.

[15] O. Hufton, *The Prospect before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe, 1500–1800* (London, 1995), 239. See also B. L. Anderson, 'Money and the Structure of Credit in the Eighteenth Century', *Business History*, 12/2 (1970), 85–101, pp. 96–8.

Table 1.1. Most common trades among sampled will-makers (n = 254)

Trade	Number	%
Innkeepers, publicans, and victuallers	34	13.4
Tailors	14	5.5
Cordwainers and shoemakers	10	3.9
Shopkeepers	8	3.1
Joiners	8	3.1
Grocers	7	2.7
Drapers	6	2.4
Slaters	6	2.4
Warehousemen	6	2.4
Brewers	6	2.4
Saddlers	5	2.0
Butchers	5	2.0

Notes: Although n = 254, only the trades of 115 individuals in the sample are listed here. The remainder were involved in trades where fewer than 5 individuals were located. Those 'shopkeepers' listed here are unspecified shopkeepers only, and other specific types of shopkeeper and dealer appear among the sample.

Source: Wills of individuals 'in trade' proved at the Consistory Court of Chester, 1760–1820, decennial data.

of business activity (and cross-referenced with trade directories) we still managed to identify very few female wills that could be included in our sample. We know from other sources that women were likely to head around 10–20 per cent of urban businesses at this time,[16] whilst other studies have found that women constituted between 10 and 25 per cent of will-makers between the seventeenth and mid-nineteenth centuries,[17] and our own survey shows women's wills constituting between 4 and 17 per cent of wills in Liverpool and Manchester overall.[18] It therefore seems likely that we were simply unable to identify all of the women's wills that could have gone into our sample of trading wills. Here probate inventories listing business-related property would have been a great help.[19] However, these survive in only small numbers for north-west England after the middle of

[16] H. Barker, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760–1830* (Oxford, 2006), 56; Sheryllynne Haggerty, *The British Atlantic Trading Community 1760–1810: Men, Women and the Distribution of Goods* (Leiden, 2006), 73.

[17] B. A. Holderness, 'Wives in Pre-Industrial Society: An Essay upon their Economic Functions', in R. M. Smith (ed.), *Land, Kinship and Life-Cycle* (Cambridge, 1984); Amy Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1993), 204–5; Maxine Berg, 'Women's Consumption and the Industrial Classes of Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of Social History*, 30/2 (1996), 415–34, p. 417; Alastair Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life Course: Inheritance and Family Welfare Provision in Early Nineteenth-Century England', *Social History*, 26/3 (2001), 299–317; Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 85–6; Mary Hodges, 'Widows of the "Middling Sort" and their Assets in Two Seventeenth-Century Towns', in Arkell, Evans, and Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part*, 306–24.

[18] The Liverpool samples contained smaller proportions of women will-writers (4–10%) owing to the large number of male mariners who made wills. In Manchester, 12–17% of written wills were made by women.

[19] Hodges, 'Widows of the "Middling Sort" and their Assets in Two Seventeenth-Century Towns'.

the eighteenth century, and we did not locate any which listed the property of women traders.[20]

In Manchester, around 10 per cent of adults who died left a written will that has survived,[21] and around a quarter of these wills were written by members of the trading classes, who might have constituted anything from 20 to 60 per cent of the town's population as a whole, and were likely to have made up the majority of the potential wealth-holding population (though a majority that was strongly weighted towards the poorer end of the scale).[22] In Liverpool, the proportion of all will-makers was significantly higher, though the percentages of trading wills as a proportion of estimated deaths were the same as in Manchester (2.4 per cent). This discrepancy between the two towns appears to be the result of the large numbers of mariners who made wills in Liverpool, which had no equivalent in Manchester—this was particularly marked in those wills proved in our sample for 1800, where there are an exceptionally large number of such wills: almost certainly because of the war with France. These figures suggest either that most people in trade (and most of the population in general) did not make a will or that their wills have not survived. Moreover, intestate succession might have been a deliberate strategy for some—saving the expense of executing a will and ensuring the equitable transmission of the estate to the immediate family.[23] In one contemporary account, Robert Richardson argued that, 'generally speaking, the law makes a better will for the deceased, than he perhaps would have made for himself', especially if the task was left until near death or one did not have 'an honest practicer [*sic*] or friend at hand'.[24] Yet it was also the case that most families did not go to the probate court to gain letters of administration after a relation had died without having made a valid will either (or, if they did, the paperwork has been lost).

Because of the patchy use of wills and the probate courts by those in trade, our attempts to trace patterns of inheritance within family groups over time by locating

[20] Peter Spufford, Matthew Brett and Amy Louise Erickson (eds), *Index to the Probate Accounts of England and Wales*, 2 vols (London: British Record Society, 1999). Indeed, inventories were mentioned in several men's wills in our sample, but do not appear to have survived: e.g. LRO, WCW, Wills of Benjamin Fanshaw (1760); Thomas Galley (1770); Thomas Pinder (1780); William Aldcroft (1790); James Dixon (1820).

[21] Morris found a similar proportion of Leeds deaths resulted in probate in the 1830s: Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 79; and Green in terms of country as a whole in 1841: D. Green, 'To Do the Right Thing: Gender, Wealth, Inheritance and the London Middle Class', in Anne Laurence, Josephine Maltby and Janette Rutterford (eds), *Women and their Money 1700–1950: Essays on Women and Finance* (London, 2009), 133–50, p. 135.

[22] These estimates are based on the sources described in the introduction, n. 5.

[23] Alastair Owens, 'Property, Will Making and Estate Disposal in an Industrial Town, 1800–1857', in Jon Stobart and Alastair Owens (eds), *Urban Fortunes: Property and Inheritance in the Town, 1700–1900* (Aldershot, 2000), 79–107, pp. 82–3; Amy Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England: Share and Share Alike* (Manchester, 2012), 58.

[24] Robert Richardson, *The Law of Testaments and Last Wills: What is Necessary to Be Known by Testators, their Executors, Administrators* (London, 1769), pp. v–vi. See also Peter Lovelass, *The Law's Disposal of a Person's Estate who Dies without Will or Testament, Shewing, in a Plain, Clear, Easy and Familiar Manner, how a Man's Family and Relations Will Be Entitled to his Real and Personal Estate by the Laws of England*, 2nd edn (Dublin, 1787).

the wills or administrations of individual family members proved difficult. Take the Manchester wood-milling family, the Wetheralls, for example. Thomas Wetherall died in 1790, leaving his estate to his widow, Ellen, in his will. She was to act as trustee, along with her and Thomas's eldest son, Nicholas, so

> that she my said Wife Shall . . . during so long Time as she and my said son Shall think it most for the Benefit and Advantage of her him and my two other sons . . . continue to occupy such part of my said Messuages Mill Buildings Lands and Premises as they shall think proper and therein to carry on and continue my Business by me usually carried on . . .

for 'the Maintenance and Education of my said Wife and two Youngest sons', James and Robert.[25] The local trade directories marked the change of management, with the 1788 directory containing an entry for 'Thomas Weatherall, wood miller, no. 5 windmill', while by 1794 a listing was given for 'Ellen Weatherall and Sons, logwood-mill, 2 Windmill Street, Lad Lane'.[26] Nicholas, Ellen's eldest son, died in 1810, leaving a will that left the bulk of his estate to his wife, Elizabeth, as well as his share in the family windmill to his mother. Both his brothers, James and Robert, also appear to have died before their mother, who herself died at some point before April 1816, when the will of her surviving son, 'James Wetherall, logwood miller', was presented to the church court, with a plea by Elizabeth Wetherall, his sister-in-law, and widow of Nicholas, to act as executor, since Ellen had 'departed this Life without taking upon her the execution' of James's will.[27] Though this was a family of fairly prolific will-makers relative to our sample as a whole, no wills could be traced for Robert, Ellen, or Elizabeth, nor for their offspring. Despite the fact that it is clear from their actions that the womenfolk of this family understood the probate process, even as widows they failed either to produce written wills or to produce wills that have survived among court records—and the same is true of at least some of their male relatives.

Though only those with *bona notabilia* ('notable goods') valued at over £5 were required to have their wills or administrations proved by a church court, it seems likely that the distribution of many estates that fell into this category were still not formalized in this way.[28] Both real estate and personal goods could be shared out before death, which Nigel Goose and Nesta Evans suggest would have been more common among those lower down the social scale, and which would have saved on the expense involved in proving a will or intestate administration at a church court.[29] But it also seems likely that individuals and families decided themselves how to distribute wealth by way of informal agreements and understandings. The continuance of family businesses over time, without evidence of formal written

[25] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Wetherall (1790).

[26] Edmond Holme, *Directory for the Towns of Manchester & Salford* (Manchester, 1788); *Scholes's Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794).

[27] LRO, WCW, Deposition of Elizabeth Wetherall, attached to Will of James Wetherall (1816).

[28] Owens, 'Property, Will Making and Estate Disposal', 84.

[29] Nigel Goose and Nesta Evans, 'Wills as an Historical Source', in Arkell, Evans, and Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part,* 38–71, p. 44.

Table 1.2. Types of bequest in Liverpool and Manchester sampled wills, 1760–1820

Bequest	Number	%
Liverpool		
Business	9	7
Business goods	16	12
Cash	42	32
Complete estate	49	38
Household goods	39	30
Real estate: family dwelling	40	30
Real estate: not family dwelling	34	26
Any real estate	63	48
Other investments	15	12
Total probates	130	
Manchester		
Business	17	14
Business goods	25	20
Cash	57	46
Complete estate	34	27
Household goods	49	39
Real estate: family dwelling	36	31
Real estate: not family dwelling	33	26
Any real estate	61	49
Other investments	30	24
Total probates	124	

Source: Wills of individuals 'in trade' proved at the Consistory Court of Chester, 1760–1820, decennial data.

instructions regarding their fate, suggests that property was distributed within families in ways that had not been sanctioned by the church courts. Though, as we shall see, such practices can be deduced in relation to certain types of property, what happened to the estate as a whole in these cases is something for which it is extremely difficult to find evidence. The high survival rates of probate material compared to other types of historical source mean that it remains a crucial source for historians trying to understand the nature of wealth-holding and investment outside the elite; and, while will-making remained a minority activity, our samples still constitute a significant proportion of men in trade who died in Liverpool and Manchester in our chosen years.

The wills that we have sampled most commonly bequeathed cash, household goods, real estate, and the gift of the 'complete estate' whose exact constitution was usually unspecified, as shown in Table 1.2. It seems likely that leaving an estate in its entirety without specifying its constituent parts was more common lower down the social scale, when estates were both less valuable and less diverse, and we found that this was also more common among the wills of childless men and those leaving to a single beneficiary, where the estate was unlikely to be divided. While the value of household goods appears to have been relatively low among our sampled wills, real estate—in the form of houses (either freehold or on long leases)—seems to have constituted one of the most valuable elements of many estates, and was bequeathed

in almost half of all sampled wills.[30] Moreover, an additional 10 per cent of Liverpool wills and 14 per cent of Manchester wills described real estate owned or leased by the testator that executors were instructed to sell immediately in order to raise cash either to pass on directly to beneficiaries or, more commonly, to invest on their behalf. Though our sampled years showed small degrees of fluctuation in real-estate ownership, the broad pattern was one of continuity over time. The level of real-estate holdings indicated by these findings—around 60 per cent—appears higher than that among similar social groups, or indeed the middle class as a whole, in some other studies of adjacent periods, though not necessarily greater than in other large northern provincial towns, and specifically Leeds.[31] Peter Earle's examination of the London middle class in the early eighteenth century showed that fewer than 20 per cent of estates valued at under £2,000 possessed real estate; his findings have been used subsequently by Green and Owens, in their study of London's middle class in the first half of the nineteenth century, to downplay the importance of real estate in the context of the urban middle class in general, and in the capital in particular.[32] Their conclusions fit with Michael Winstanley's findings on the middle class of nineteenth-century Oldham, whose members he suggests were not generally 'propertied' in the sense of owning real estate, but were instead more likely to rent the buildings in which they lived and worked.[33] More recently, though, Green and Owens have noted a higher propensity among the English and Welsh middle classes during the late nineteenth century to invest in property the further they were located from the capital.[34] The focus on property-holding among our sample of Liverpool and Manchester wills can be seen as evidence of a different model of northern real-estate acquisition, which R. J. Morris has described as being synonymous with an 'urban peasantry': town dwellers who centred their life-cycle strategies on the accumulation of land located within their own immediate locality, and among whose ranks, Morris argues, craftsmen and shopkeepers were typical.[35]

[30] The leasehold properties referred to in our sampled wills were generally attached to long leases. In Manchester, these usually ran for anything from ninety-nine to several hundred years, while, in Liverpool, leases were generally granted for three lives plus an additional twenty-one years: that is until twenty-one years after all three people named on the original lease were dead. See C. W. Chalklin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England: A Study in the Building Process* (London, 1974), 60–1.

[31] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 228–9. Though we found a slight over-representation of some building trades among the occupations of owners of real property (bricklayers, stonemasons, and plasterers), the number of individuals involved was too small to suggest a general trend. Similarly, the diversity of the sample as a whole in terms of occupations made analysis linking specific occupations to specific types of wealth holding and investment difficult and largely inconclusive, even when we tried to group occupations together by economic sector.

[32] Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660–1730* (London, 1989), pp. 152–7; Green and Owens, 'Metropolitan Estates of the Middle Class'.

[33] Michael Winstanley, 'Owners and Occupiers: Property, Politics and Middle-Class Formation in Early Industrial Lancashire', in Alan Kidd and David Nicholls (eds), *The Making of the British Middle Class? Studies in Regional and Cultural Diversity since the Eighteenth Century* (Stroud, 1998), 92–112.

[34] D. R. Green, and A. Owens, 'Geographies of Wealth: Real Estate and Personal Property Ownership in England and Wales, 1870–1902', *Economic History Review*, 66/3 (2013), 848–72, pp. 867–8.

[35] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 129–30, 228–9.

Geoff Crossick has argued that the appeal of real estate reflected a concern for security among the broader European petit bourgeoisie during both the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, which was translated into a fixation with real rather than personal property, and with the ownership of rental housing its best-known manifestation. According to his account, the petit bourgeoisie showed a 'preference for the secure and the local; a preference for real property over personal; and, amongst the latter, a preference for the known over the impersonal'.[36] However, as has been noted, the focus on real estate might also have been evidence of a pragmatic approach to investment, given the relatively high returns from rents coupled with a lack of alternatives, rather than being evidence of an anxiety concerning personal property per se.

The enthusiasm with which some of our sampled will-makers invested in local property is evident from their bequests. The Liverpool victualler Thomas Howorth, for example, left a variety of freehold and leasehold properties within half a mile of each other to his widow, Mary, in order for her to receive an income from the rent.[37] Howorth attested in his will, written in 1788, that:

> I now stand legally possessed of Two Several Messuages or Dwelling Houses and premises in Tarleton Street Also one other Messuage or Dwelling House and premises in Sparling Street under Lease from the Corporation of Liverpool And also one other Messuage or Dwelling House in Stanley Street wherein I now live and reside together with a back house and other Premises thereunto adjoining and held under lease from the Earl of Derby which said several Houses and Premises Altogether yield a Clear Profit Rent of Fifty Pounds and upwards yearly.[38]

When the Manchester wheelwright and innkeeper Thomas Pointon died in 1800, he left his five children two premises to share between them 'standing and being on the south easterly side of Newton Lane', plus the 'House Occupied by myself and allso my Right Share and Interest in those Eight Other Messuages and Dwelling Houses standing and being in a Certain Place in Manchester Aforesaid Common Called or known by the name of Gibralter'.[39] These addresses are all within two-thirds of a mile of each other, to the north and east of the Collegiate Church.[40] While Howorth and Pointon seem to have owned the freeholds or leases on their properties outright, other testators appear to have built up their real-estate holdings by taking out mortgages: a practice that was not without risk. In 1820, the Liverpool mason Thomas Maher left his son William four dwelling houses in Gloucester Street and Parr Street, subject to him paying off mortgage debts raised on the properties that totalled £580. Maher also left a parcel of land on the east side of Lime Street that was then the site of a smithy as well as several dwellings in the Cumbrian village of Harrington.[41]

[36] Crossick, 'Meanings of Property', 56.
[37] Richard Horwood, 'Plan of Liverpool' (1803).
[38] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Howorth (1788).
[39] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Pointon (1800).
[40] William Green, 'Map of Manchester and Salford' (1794).
[41] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Maher (1820).

Maher's Cumbrian property appears to have been inherited, while the real estate that he purchased himself by means of loans was found much more locally. It is true that members of the trading classes were likely to have a very good understanding of local property conditions, and having their investments on their doorstep meant that they could inspect them regularly to be assured of their upkeep. In addition, collecting rents and organizing repairs themselves would reduce management costs as well as enforcing a sense of security in terms of controlling income.[42] We see this pattern of investment in the notebook of the Warrington watchmaker James Carter, as well as in an examination of wills. In 1815 James Carter succeeded his uncle George Birchall to his shop on Bridge Street. During the course of a decade and a half, he purchased four more houses that he let out to other tradesmen, all within a few feet of each other and his own shop in Warrington.[43] Though, for Crossick, such an apparent 'fixation' with property was linked to a resistance towards mobile capital on the part of the lower middle classes,[44] it is worth noting that half of our Manchester wills and just under a third of those in Liverpool (where the prevalence of 'complete-estate' gifts tended to disguise the exact constitution of estates) gifted the most mobile form of capital—namely cash. These cash bequests were not the random contents of the deceased's pockets, but were of named amounts that generally constituted significant sums of between 1 guinea and several hundred pounds, usually deposited with local banks and attracting interest as a result.

The popularity of cash suggests that those in trade were not necessarily averse to mobile property, while the frequency with which they invested their wealth in 'bricks and mortar', apart from its profitability, may be evidence of the difficulty in accessing other rentier forms of investment, aside from urban real estate. B. L. Anderson noted some years ago that raising money on property appears to have been comparatively easy in eighteenth-century Lancashire, while for lenders it proved to be 'one of the most reliable investment outlets known to the provincial saver'.[45] Conversely, other forms of investment—mostly London-based—both would have been less easy to access, and were the subject of contemporary warnings against the intermediaries whom one had to pay to access them.[46] Though speculation in shares was well known in Britain from the early eighteenth century, joint stock enterprises were not numerous before the mid-nineteenth century, and there is limited evidence of investment in stocks and shares outside either the wealthier classes or beyond the capital where the stock market was based until the development of provincial stock markets from the 1830s.[47] Though there were a

[42] I am grateful to Bob Morris for his thoughts on these aspects of real estate ownership.

[43] Warrington Library, MS 2433, 'Notebook of James Carter, 1780–1869'; Kit Heald, 'James Carter—Warringtonian, Watchmaker and Wesleyan', *Cheshire History*, 26 (1990), 3–9, p. 4.

[44] Crossick, 'Meanings of Property', 53.

[45] B. L. Anderson, 'Provincial Aspects of the Financial Revolution of the Eighteenth Century', *Business History*, 11 (1969), 11–22, p. 19.

[46] Anderson, 'Provincial Aspects of the Financial Revolution', 22.

[47] Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 146–7; Philip Mirowski, 'The Rise (and Retreat) of a Market: English Joint Stock Shares in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Economic History*, 41 (1981), 559–77; David Hancock, '"Domestic Bubbling": Eighteenth-Century London Merchants and Individual Investment in the Funds', *Economic History Review*, NS 47/4 (1994), 679–702; Ann

few stockholding ventures that appealed to smaller investors, such as the East India Company, it appears that an extremely small proportion of investors came from the north of England.[48] The end of the eighteenth century did, however, witness the creation of local joint-stock canal schemes, gas and water works in the north-west, and there was some contemporary discussion of a canal 'frenzy' in Liverpool in the early 1790s[49]—though, even in the case of such local initiatives, it has been suggested that the ownership of shares was still largely the preserve of the upper and more wealthy middle classes and elites, while they were almost certainly viewed with a degree of public suspicion.[50] The Liverpool brewer John Johnson, who along with several rental properties left four shares in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in 1790, was one of the richer individuals that we examined, and he produced the only will in our sample that left this type of bequest. Though we located a few advertisements in Manchester and Liverpool newspapers for auctions of canal shares in our period,[51] we found no notices for the sale of stocks and shares related to more distant enterprises, which suggests that these remained less accessible. One instance was also found of the ownership of a share in a building society, or, as the testator, the Manchester tailor Robert Finney, put it, the 'interest and benefit in a certain Club [or] Society in Manchester . . . for the erection of a number of Houses in Manchester . . . of which Club or Society I am a member'.[52] Chalkin describes such societies as 'the creation of the industrial town' that spread from the Midlands to Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire in the late eighteenth century, and that allowed a shared investment project by a small number of individuals without the need to form a joint stock company.[53]

Towards the end of our period, some of our trading wills began to mention 'government securities' or consols—a type of government bond based on the consolidated debt that had been in existence since the mid-eighteenth century and that was both marketable and provided a regular, quarterly income. By the early nineteenth century it appears that consols were more readily available outside

M. Carlos and Larry Neal, 'The Micro-Foundations of the Early London Capital Market: Bank of England Shareholders during and after the South Sea Bubble, 1720–1725', *Economic History Review*, 59/3 (2006), 498–538; J. Taylor, *Creating Capitalism: Joint-Stock Enterprises in British Politics and Culture, 1800–1870* (Woodbridge, 2006), 3–13.

[48] Bowen, *Business of Empire*, 101, 111.

[49] Stephen Quinn, 'Money, Finance and Capital Markets', in Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson (eds), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, i (Cambridge, 2004), 147–74, p. 172; W. A. Thomas, *The Provincial Stock Exchanges* (London, 1973), 4–7; J. R. Killick and W. A. Thomas, 'The Provincial Stock Exchanges, 1830–1870', *Economic History Review*, 23 (1970), 96–111.

[50] Killick and Thomas, 'The Provincial Stock Exchanges, 1830–1870', 100; Taylor, *Creating Capitalism*, 22–3, 97–119.

[51] See, e.g., *Manchester Mercury*, 6 March 1810.

[52] LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Finney (1820).

[53] C. W. Chalkin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England: A Study in the Building Process* (London, 1974), 174–80, quotation from p. 180. See also E. J. Cleary, *The Building Society Movement* (London, 1965); S. J. Price, *Building Societies: Their Origins and History* (London, 1958); Jane Springett, 'Land-Development and House-Building in Huddersfield 1770–1911', in M. Doughty (ed.), *Building the Industrial City* (Leicester, 1986), 23–56; Clive D. Field, 'Safe as Houses: Methodism and the Building Society Movement in England and Wales', in Peter Forsaith and Martin Wellings (eds), *Methodism and History* (Oxford, 2010), 91–139.

of London and the south of England, though this had not been the case previously when the provincial take-up had been low.[54] Though Green and Owen's research shows that government securities remained significantly less popular among those outside London and the south-east well into the nineteenth century,[55] nine wills in our sample mentioned 'government securities': all written after 1798. These nine wills constitute only 3 per cent of our overall sample, but they were all proved between 1800 and 1820, when they constituted 6 per cent of the wills we examined. This move towards consols might not constitute a sea change in traders' investing habits during the opening decades of the nineteenth century, but it was a development that suggests a widening of investment opportunities and the willingness of those in trade to consider new ways in which to manage their wealth. Only two of the nine wills that mentioned investing in consols came from Liverpool, where enthusiasm for investing in government securities, banks, or mortgages in general appears to have been more muted than in Manchester throughout the period 1760–1820. The differences in investment practices in the two towns might well have reflected a propensity in Liverpool to engage in the sorts of shipping investments that were not readily available in Manchester. Though no signs of the type of shipping ventures favoured by John Coleman were found in any of the Liverpool wills in our sample,[56] the evidence cited at the start of this chapter suggests that he was not alone in making these types of investments. Perhaps they were not generally recorded in probate documents because of their relatively short-term nature. It was also the case that there were different models of will-making in the two towns, illustrated by the more common practice in Liverpool of leaving an estate in its entirety without detailing its constituent parts, which meant that cash and other forms of investment were not listed—further masking the ways in which traders managed their wealth.

In both towns, executors and trustees were often left to decide how cash sums should be invested, which suggests they were expected to make decisions based upon their understanding of both the current economic climate as well as individual family circumstances and requirements. The Liverpool quill merchant Nicholas Cocoran, who made his will in 1817 and died in 1820, for example, instructed that his estate be sold and invested 'on government or good mortgage security', leaving his executors with a choice to make about which was the most advantageous at the point of investment.[57] Likewise, Benjamin Bolton, tailor and draper from Manchester who died in 1820, ordered that his estate be sold and that his executors should 'invest upon Government or real security or in the hands of some Banker or

[54] P. G. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688–1756* (London 1967), 297–8, notes the absence of provincial investors in government securities in the earlier period, as does Anderson, for the century as a whole in 'Provincial Aspects of the Financial Revolution', 21.

[55] Green and Owens, 'Geographies of Wealth', 868. Their findings also show a high prevalence of share ownership outside London in this later period, which contrasts with our findings for the earlier period of 1760–1820.

[56] Coleman's own will—if it ever existed—cannot be traced, though it seems unlikely from the contents of his memoir that he chose to reinvest in privateers again later in life.

[57] LRO, WCW, Will of Nicholas Cocoran (1820).

Bankers' in order to provide an income for his children.[58] The Manchester shopkeeper James Clayton, who made his will in 1784, instructed his trustees, John Marsden and John Joule, to sell his house in Oldham Street by auction, and to place the money 'out at Interest on such good and eligible security or securities, as they in their discretion shall or may from time to time think most proper and eligible' in order to provide an income for his wife, Alice.[59] Crucially in this case, Clayton made explicit his understanding that the best investment strategy meant revisiting one's decisions and reinvesting according to changing opportunities, risks, and rates of return.

In his study of provincial banking, L. S. Pressnell found that deposit accounts might earn anywhere between 2 and 5 per cent in the closing decades of the eighteenth century and up to the 1830s (the rate dependent on the length of deposit and the amount involved as well as 'the origins and specialisms of individual banks, and upon local custom').[60] The Manchester journeyman grocer George Heywood demonstrated how attuned he and his acquaintances were both to variations in rates of return on invested money and to different levels of risk. He detailed in his diary receiving interest on bank deposits between 1814 and 1815, and in May 1815 he noted that 'I received 21/for one years interest on 30£', which is equivalent to a rate of 3.5 per cent.[61] Later in July, while trying to raise loans to buy his own business, he recorded that 'Rd. Collier called, he said he had been with some money to the bank, he only gets 4 per cent. I said I would give him 5 per cent and security for £100.'[62] Yet banks may themselves have appeared more risky at certain points in the wake of a series of banking crises and bank failures that affected both Manchester and Liverpool directly during the 1790s and the first two decades of the nineteenth century.[63] In the light of these events, consols may have been considered more secure, which is no doubt why they appeared as an alternative form of investment in sampled wills made from the 1790s onwards. Consols offered rates of return that varied between 3.8 and 5.9 per cent, peaking in value around 1780 and between the late 1790s and the end of our period. In 1798, the returns from consols were at a record high of 5.9 per cent, which may be what prompted John Mather to suggest them as an investment option to his executors in his will made the following year.[64] The same possibility was left open to executors

[58] LRO, WCW, Will of Benjamin Bolton (1820). See also LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Cottam (1810); Will of Richard Turner (1820).

[59] LRO, WCW, Will of James Clayton (1790).

[60] L. S. Pressnell, *Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, 1956), 251–6, quotation from p. 252.

[61] Heywood, fo. 54. [62] Heywood, fo. 63.

[63] T. S. Ashton, 'The Bill of Exchange and Private Banks in Lancashire, 1790–1830', in T. S. Ashton and R. S. Sayers (eds), *Papers in English Monetary History* (Oxford, 1953), 37–49, pp. 41–4, 46; Quinn, 'Money, Finance and Capital Markets'; K. J. Weiller and P. Mirowski, 'Rates of Interest in Eighteenth-Century England', *Explorations in Economic History*, 27/1 (1990), 1–28, pp. 6–7; Gregory Clark, 'Debts, Deficits and Crowding out: England 1727–1840', *European Review of Economic History*, 5 (2001), 403–36, p. 411; L. Grindon, *Manchester Banks and Bankers* (Manchester, 1877); Pressnell, *Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution*, ch. 15.

[64] LRO, WCW, Will of John Mather (1800).

in six wills made between 1807 and 1820,[65] when consol rates varied between 4.4 and 4.9 per cent,[66] while a further two will-makers in our sample had already purchased consols when they died: the Liverpool pawnbroker Richard Gregory, who made his will in 1815, and the Manchester housepainter Robert Cottam, whose will dated from 1807.[67] In both cases, the sums invested in consols appear to have constituted the bulk of their moveable property and suggest a conscious move away from banks.

Usury laws during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries limited the rate of return on mortgages and bonds to 5 per cent, though income from renting out properties was not proscribed in this way, and may well have been higher at various points in towns where the pressure on housing was particularly high.[68] This suggests that a propensity among those in trade to invest in rental housing was not necessarily related to suspicions concerning other, more mobile, forms of investment, but may have been driven by ease of access and a simple desire to maximize returns. Finally, we should consider the possible profits from overseas trading and privateering with which this chapter began. Though it has already been acknowledged that the risks of such ventures were likely to be higher than others discussed here, and it seems that relatively large sums of capital investment were required up front—which would have precluded many in trade from getting involved—the rewards could be great. Thus, according to his account, John Coleman's initial investment of £435 of his 'own money' in his first shipping partnership with Samuel Warren resulted in profits of £10,000 within a year (which constituted a return of over 2,000 per cent).[69]

BUSINESSES AS INVESTMENTS

As has been noted, many of the wills in our sample left executors with an explicit degree of flexibility when it came to deciding what to do with an estate in order best to provide for surviving family members. An unusually detailed set of instructions about how executors should reach particular decisions was laid out in the will of William Oliver, a Manchester reed-maker who died in 1820.[70] What sets this will apart from others examined was the focus on his business—a type of bequest that has thus far been overlooked in our discussion. In common with most individuals in our sample, Oliver does not appear to have been rich enough to withdraw from business in middle age, but instead he carried on operating as a reed-maker until his death. He directed a personal estate valued at under £300 into the hands of three

[65] B. R. Mitchell with Phyllis Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge, 1971), 455–6.

[66] LRO, WCW, Wills of Joseph Woolrich (1810); Joseph Corcoran (1820); Samuel Shawcross (1820); Richard Turner (1820); Joseph Wright (1820).

[67] LRO, WCW, Wills of Robert Cottam (1810); Richard Gregory (1820).

[68] Clark, 'Debts, Deficits and Crowding out: England 1727–1840', 406, 416–17.

[69] Coleman, fos 4^{r}, 55^{v}.

[70] LRO, WCW, Will of William Oliver (1820).

trustees: Robert Livesy and Isaack Smith—both warehousemen—and John Oliver, a 'manufacturer' and probably a relation. The long-term fate of his business at 4 Fountain Street was left uncertain, for Oliver specified that, while it should be 'carried on by my said Trustees as Executors', they should examine the accounts at least twice a year so that, if the profits of the business, which were to be passed to his widow and children, 'do not realize a clear five per cent then and in such case it is my Will and Mind that my said Trustees shall forthwith convert the whole of the then residue of my Estate and Effects both real and personal into Money and place the same out upon sufficient security'. Not only did Oliver require that any investments made were periodically revisited in the light of changing circumstances, but he also treated his business as a means of raising revenue to provide for his family, which was expendable if it did not raise the same level of profit that other forms of investment—such as mortgages and government securities—would be expected to attract. Either his trustees failed to meet his exacting demands in terms of commercial return, or, one suspects, they might have decided against the time-consuming task of running or monitoring someone else's business for them, for, while Oliver's reed-making business appears in the Manchester directory for 1820, there is no trace of it after that.[71]

Though Oliver gave centre place in his will to a discussion of his business, it is striking, given the central role we might think that the firm played in the lives of the individuals and families that we are examining, how seldom firms figure in our sampled wills from either town (Figure 1.1).[72] This absence contrasts forcibly with the interest shown in small businesses by economic historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Most of these historians have been particularly struck by the rapid turnover rates of these enterprises.[73] Some, like R. Lloyd-Jones and A. A. Le Roux, have ascribed a lack of longevity to issues of scale, suggesting that medium and larger firms were less vulnerable to economic downturn.[74] Craig Young also concluded that medium-sized firms tended to be more successful than their smaller counterparts, and blamed both undercapitalization and poor management for the short life span of many small Scottish enterprises.[75] Crossick has argued that insecurity was endemic among small businesses in the nineteenth century, sustained as they were 'by credit networks whose fragility was a source of continuing anxiety' and limited by the size and nature of their markets.[76] His findings are

[71] *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1819–20* (Manchester, 1819).

[72] As we have seen, significantly more of the Manchester wills mentioned bequests of businesses and business goods (see Table 1.1), but, since wills produced in Manchester were also less likely than those from Liverpool to pass on a 'complete estate', it seems probable that business-related bequests in Liverpool may have been hidden within this category.

[73] G. Crossick, *An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society: Kentish London 1840–1880* (London, 1978); S. Nenadic, 'The Small Family Firm in Victorian Britain', *Business History*, 35 (1993), 86–114.

[74] R. Lloyd-Jones and A. A. Le Roux, 'Marshall and the Birth and Death of Firms: The Growth and Size Distribution of Firms in the Early Nineteenth-Century Cotton Industry', *Business History*, 24 (1982), 141–55.

[75] C. Young, 'The Economic Characteristics of Businesses in Rural Lowland Perthshire', *Business History*, 36 (1994), 35–52.

[76] Crossick, 'Meanings of Property', 52.

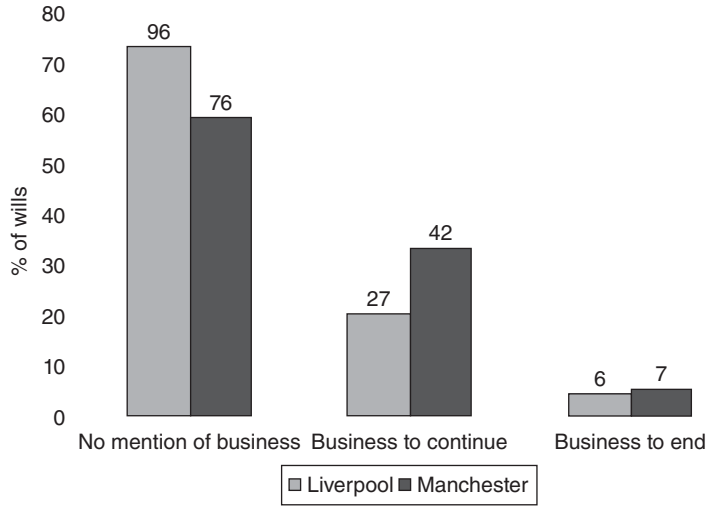

Figure 1.1. References to businesses in wills, Liverpool and Manchester.

Note: Figures above columns refer to absolute numbers of wills.

Source: Wills of traders proved at the Consistory Court of Chester, 1760–1820, decennial data.

echoed by David Kent, who describes how retailers and craftsmen formed the majority of insolvent debtors in early nineteenth-century England, and by Julian Hoppit, who has demonstrated the frequency with which businesses went bankrupt in the eighteenth century.[77] Since families were central to the organization of many small businesses throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[78] this has led some historians to focus on the nature of 'family capitalism' to explain the death of individual firms. Tom Nicholas has noted that those who inherited businesses were likely to be far less successful than those who founded them, while Martin Daunton, Mary Rose, and Stana Nenadic have described how problems of succession upon a proprietor's death could mean that family enterprises were not continued.[79] Indeed, in their study of late-nineteenth-century Edinburgh, Nenadic, Morris,

[77] David Kent, 'Small Businessmen and their Credit Transactions in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Business History*, 36/2 (1994), 47–64; J. Hoppit, *Risk and Failure in English Business 1700–1800* (Cambridge, 1987).

[78] P. L. Payne, 'Family Business in Britain: An Historical and Analytical Survey', in A. Okochi and S. Yasuoka (eds), *Family Business in the Era of Industrial Growth* (Tokyo, 1984); Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender and the Family in England, 1680–1780* (London, 1996); A. Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle of Family Firms in the Early Industrial Revolution', *Business History*, 44/1 (2002), 21–46; G. Jones and M. Rose, 'Family Capitalism', *Business History*, 35/4 (1993), 1–16.

[79] Tom Nicholas, 'Clogs to Clogs in Three Generations? Explaining Entrepreneurial Performance in Britain since 1850', *Journal of Economic History*, 53/3 (1999), 688–713; M. Daunton, 'Inheritance and Succession in the City of London in the Nineteenth Century', *Business History*, 30/3 (1988), 269–86; Mary B. Rose, 'Beyond Buddenbrooks: The Family Firm and the Management of Succession in Nineteenth-Century Britain', in Jonathan Brown and Mary B. Rose (eds), *Entrepreneurships, Networks and Modern Business* (Manchester, 1993), 127–43; Nenadic, 'The Small Family Firm'.

Smyth, and Rainger conclude that 'it was rare for a firm to go into the second generation'.[80]

Most of these accounts frame their explanations for the demise of businesses in terms of mismanagement or misfortune. More recently, historians examining inheritance practices have argued that the short life span of family businesses should be seen not in terms of economic failure, but rather in the context of family ambitions and priorities. Such family-centred accounts of business provide an important corrective to those histories that fail to take into account the wider social and familial contexts of small business activity.[81] They build upon the earlier arguments of Peter Mathias, Martin Daunton, Mary Rose, and others that businesses and businessmen and women must be examined with an understanding of family and of its priorities and aspirations.[82] As has been noted, Alastair Owens has argued persuasively that 'the institution of the family needs to be seen less as an influence on business activity and more as its *raison d'être*'.[83] From his study of Stockport cotton manufacturers, tailors and drapers, and publicans and brewers in the first half of the nineteenth century, he has suggested that the needs of the family were more important than prolonging the life of the firm, so that, upon the death of the head, 'many firms were voluntarily disposed of not through misfortune but in order to realise widely held ambitions of providing for family members'.[84] Owens's survey of Stockport wills led him to conclude that the continuation of the family business to generate income for surviving family members was an option chosen only in a minority of cases: just 14 per cent of his sample.[85] Similarly, Bob Morris in his examination of Leeds wills between 1830 and 1834 noted that, 'for the bulk of the middle class, business continuity was one of several options for fulfilling obligations to widows and equity to children', but it was 'an option suited to a minority of families'.[86] Instead, as Owens and Morris describe, the majority of the cases they examined saw executors instructed to liquidize business assets and place the monies raised in a variety of passive investments in order to provide an income for dependants.

[80] S. Nenadic, R. J. Morris, J. Smyth, and C. Rainger, 'Record Linkage and the Small Family Firm: Edinburgh 1861–1891', *Bulletin of the John Ryland's University Library of Manchester*, 74/3 (1992), 169–96, p.183.

[81] Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle'; Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England*.

[82] P. Mathias, *The Transformation of England: Essays in the Economic and Social History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1979); Daunton, 'Inheritance and Succession in the City of London'; Mary B. Rose, 'The Family Firm in British Business, 1780–1914', in Maurice Kirby and Mary Rose (eds), *Business Enterprise in Modern Britain: From the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London, 1994), 61–87, 72; M. Casson, 'The Economics of the Family Firm', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 47/1 (1999), 10–23; M. Dupree, 'Firm, Family and Community: Managerial and Household Strategies in the Staffordshire Potteries in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,' in K. Bruland (ed.), *From Family Firms to Corporate Capitalism: Essays in Business and Industrial History in Honour of Peter Mathias* (Oxford, 1998), 51–83.

[83] Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle', 43.

[84] Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle', 24–5.

[85] Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle', 32.

[86] Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England*, 123.

Morris draws a distinction in his examination of middle-class will-makers between 'cash economy capitalists'—who wanted everything sold up and the profits shared out after their deaths—and those 'urban peasants' who were less likely to wish their property to be liquidated and turned into cash, and among whose ranks craftsmen and shopkeepers were typical.[87] For Morris, involvement in business was something that most individuals attempted to withdraw from in later life, as they preferred instead to draw an income from rentier forms of investment.[88] No doubt in large part because of their generally modest standing, the individuals and families that form the subject of this study fit more readily into Morris's 'urban peasantry' than his much larger category of 'cash economy capitalists', and so did not tend to disassociate themselves from business in middle age. We also see far less evidence of the short-lived nature of businesses and of problems with intergenerational succession. For a significant proportion of our subjects, businesses were worth continuing after the death of the proprietor and were a key strategy for supporting surviving family members. Many of the individuals and families that we have examined clearly understood the worth of their enterprises as going concerns, rather than as a set of assets. Some of these assets, such as the 'goodwill' of the business, may appear fairly intangible, but they were nevertheless valuable.[89] Indeed, the Salford dyer Robert Bancroft claimed to have been paid £50 in 1789 'for the good will of the premises' from which he and his brother operated.[90] The tendency to hold onto the family firm becomes apparent when one examines formal methods of postmortem estate distribution—and specifically wills—alongside evidence of informal processes by which those who inherited could use their own judgements about the best interests of surviving family members.

Only 40 per cent of our Manchester sample of wills discussed the fate of the family business, while in Liverpool the figure was just 26 per cent.[91] Of these wills, 5 per cent of those from Liverpool and 6 per cent of those from Manchester instructed that the business should be wound up, while the remaining 21 per cent of Liverpool wills and 34 per cent of Manchester wills either ordered or implied (usually by specifying the transfer of stock and/or tools) that a business should carry on under the direction of one or more family members. The will of the Manchester vintner, Adam Grundy, written in 1747 and executed in 1760, for example, left his wife Margaret 'the use and occupation' of the contents and premises of the Angel Inn tavern, 'if she continues to Hold the said inn and keep on the Business I am now in', but, should she decline to do so, he instructed that his whole estate be sold,

[87] Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England*, 129–31, 228–9.

[88] Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England*, 149.

[89] John K. Courtis, 'Business Goodwill: Conceptual Clarification via Accounting, Legal and Etymological Perspectives', *Accounting Historians Journal*, 10/2 (1983), 1–38; J. Cooper, 'Debating Accounting Principles and Policies: The Case of Goodwill, 1880-1921', *Accounting, Business and Financial History*, 17/2 (2007), 241–64; Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle', 23.

[90] TNA: E 112, 1530/239.

[91] These figures are notably lower than in Owens's examination of early nineteenth-century Stockport wills (Owens, 'Inheritance and the Life-Cycle', 30), though Morris noted a similar lack of reference to business continuity in the wills of the Leeds middle classes in the early 1830s (Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England*, 119).

the money invested, and the interest go to his widow.[92] Conversely, when the Manchester painter and gilder Richard Potter died in 1800, his will specified that he did not wish his 'beloved wife Elizabeth' to continue his business, except to complete work already begun. Moreover, he named one of his workmen, William Reddish, as a suitable buyer, providing he was 'in my service at the time of my Decease, and be minded to purchase the remaining part of my stock'. Richard Potter specified how his stock in trade should be valued (by two 'skilled persons', one acting for the seller, one for the buyer) and how Elizabeth Potter should receive payment by instalments from the proceeds and from the rent of two houses on Deansgate.[93] Though Reddish appears to have been trading on his own account from 1797 as a painter and gilder from a separate address, an advertisement appeared in the *Manchester Mercury* less than a week after probate was granted in which he announced that 'the whole . . . [of Potter's] branches of business have devolved on him at the particular request of the late Mr P' and that prospective customers could 'Enquire for W.R. at Mrs Potters . . . where orders will be [t]hankfully received and duly attended to'.[94]

Unlike the wills of Oliver, Grundy, and Potter, however, most of the wills in our sample did not discuss business assets at all: 74 per cent of Liverpool wills and 60 per cent of Manchester wills either failed to mention the testator's business, or did not specify what should happen to it. The high proportion of wills that remained silent on the issue of business succession should not lead us to conclude that businesses were considered unimportant or expendable. Rather such acts of apparent amnesia reflect the existence of common forms of will-making that tended not to make explicit mention of businesses when describing an individual's estate, coupled with informal practices of estate distribution by which the fate of the business was more usually decided. It is worth noting at this point that we did not find evidence that certain types of business were easier to pass on than others. While some trades, because of the specific skills required, might appear more difficult to transfer to others, this was not generally the case in practice, not least because other family members were often brought up and trained in the family business and because managers could be hired. Though some trades were clearly more technically skilled than others, we found little evidence that certain types of business were more or less likely to be continued by families, with watchmaking, shoemaking, peruke-making, and cabinet-making firms being continued, for example, and innkeeping, flour dealing, pawnbroking, and house-painting firms ending.

We find specific evidence of a business being inherited informally and without reference to a written will in a case brought before the Court of Exchequer in 1815, when John Lang, a draper from Manchester and one of the executors of the will of his late brother Robert, also a Manchester draper, was accused by both his fellow executor and his brother's widow of withholding and misappropriating the

[92] LRO, WCW, Will of Adam Grundy (1760).
[93] LRO, WCW, Will of Richard Potter (1800).
[94] *Scholes' Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1797); *Manchester Mercury*, 13 May 1800.

proceeds of the estate that he had been entrusted to administer.[95] Robert Lang had died in October 1805, having made a will in July in which he left his estate in trust to his wife, Jane, and their five children (four of whom were still alive at the time when the case was brought). His will made no mention of his business, and instructed that all his property—except 'the whole household furniture and plenishing' and his clothing, which he left to Jane—be sold and the proceeds invested 'upon undoubted security' to provide an income for his wife and children.[96] In the court case, it was claimed that 'the said testator Robert Lang after the execution of his said will gave verbal directions to your orator Robert Climie [John Lang's co-executor] and the said John Lang . . . to permit . . . the said testators wife to carry on the business for the benefit of her family which they consented to do' and 'in pursuance of the said verbal request of the testator so made after the making of his said will . . . his widow was permitted to possess herself of the said testator's stock in trade and effects'. Following this assumption of ownership, Jane Lang 'carried on and conducted the said business from the death of the said testator until the month of March 1808', when she married Samuel Clarke, 'who continued the business in the same manner until the 14th day of September 1808 when your orator Samuel Clarke agreed with your orator Robert Climie and the said John Lang to purchase the said stock in trade and effects'. It was money paid for the business by Clarke, which was to be placed in trust for Robert and Jane's children, that John Lang was accused of misappropriating and 'applying . . . to his own private purposes'. The transfer of the business first from Robert Lang to his widow, and then to her new husband, is apparent in trade directory entries. Here the drapery business in Exchange Street is listed as being under Robert Lang's charge in 1804, with Mrs Jane Lang as owner in 1809, and Samuel Clarke as head of the business in 1811.[97]

Though evidence such as this concerning informal inheritance practices is rare, it does hint at the commonplace nature of familial arrangements concerning inheritance, which took place either in addition to the formal instructions left in wills, or without a will being made or formal letters of administration being issued by a court. In the Lang case we can also trace the fate of the family business through local trade directories. Indeed, in contrast to court records, trade directories provide more frequent indicators of the fate of family businesses, which we can use to examine further the role of wills in determining the distribution of estates (Figure 1.2). A comparison between the two sources reveals that businesses were often transferred between individuals and generations without reference to a written will—even when one had been made by the owner—and, moreover, that instructions in wills concerning businesses were not always followed, which again emphasizes the flexibility of approach to wealth management and investment among those in trade.

[95] TNA: E 112/1543/660 (1815). [96] LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Lang (1808).

[97] *Deans & Co.'s Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1804); *Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1808 and 1809* (Manchester, 1808); *Pigot's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1811* (Manchester, 1811).

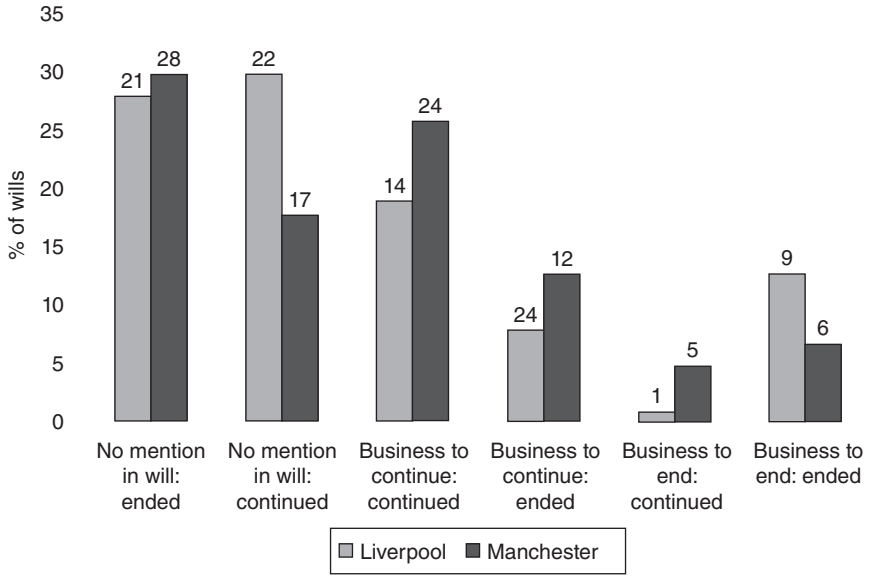

Figure 1.2. Fate of businesses according to wills and trade directories, Liverpool and Manchester.

Note: Figures above columns refer to absolute numbers of wills.

Sources: Wills of traders proved at the Consistory Court of Chester, 1760–1820, decennial data; Liverpool and Manchester trade directories 1772–1825.

Using trade directories to trace the fate of family businesses demonstrates a much greater reluctance to let go of the family firm than we might expect. Between 1770 and 1820, 58 per cent of our sample of Liverpool testators and their businesses could be traced in the town's directories and 74 per cent of those in Manchester.[98] Of these, half of the businesses in both towns seem to have ended upon the death of the head of household and disappeared from the published lists, while the other half appear to have continued and been passed on to other family members—a significantly higher level of continuity than indicated by reading the wills alone. Indeed, 37 per cent of those Manchester businesses traced in the directories that were continued after the death of the family head, and 59 per cent of those from Liverpool, were linked to wills in which no reference was made to the fate of the family enterprise. The will of the Liverpool painter Robert Johnson, for example, was silent on the fate of his business in Paradise Street when it was proved in 1760. By the publication of the first Liverpool directory in 1766, his son, Thomas,

[98] Trade directories are an imperfect source, for not all businesses and traders appeared among their pages and the information they contained could sometimes be out of date or inaccurate. Moreover, the first Liverpool directory did not appear until 1766, and that of Manchester six years later in 1772. Yet, despite the need for these caveats about their use as a census of the trading classes in urban societies, they provide the best means of tracking the fate of businesses over time, especially in northern English towns: Barker, *The Business of Women*, 42–54.

appeared to have taken over the reins.[99] The will of the Manchester linen draper William Smith, dated 1809 and proved in 1810, mentioned his share of the business's stock in trade only to direct that he wished it to be valued and sold off to pay sums of cash to his sons, Samuel and James, and his two daughters. His other, and presumably eldest, son, also William, was to be discharged of some debts owed to his father instead. Nothing further is said about the future of the business itself, which appeared before William senior's death in trade directories as 'Wm Smith and sons, Linen drapers and hosiers, 17 Old Millgate'.[100] For this family, the assumption that the sons would continue to trade after their father's death may have been implicit or spoken but appears not to have been written. It seems likely that some of Smith's children agreed to buy out the shares of their siblings, though it is also possible that they ran the business together and split the profits. According to the directories, the business continued to run under the same name of 'Wm Smith and sons' until at least 1818, which suggests that the name itself was of commercial value.[101] Such a practice was not unusual, and a court case from around the same time described two brothers, Thomas and John Hutchinson, running a Bury wool-staplers together as 'Mr Hutchinson & Sons' which appears to have been the name used when their father was alive.[102]

Though it was common for wills to appear vague about the fate of the family firm, when they did instruct or indicate that other family members should continue to run it, evidence from trade directories shows that such directions were usually followed (in just over two-thirds of cases).[103] Most businesses in this category passed directly to wives (52 per cent). Moreover, whatever the will indicated, widows were most likely to take over the family business (63 per cent of all businesses that passed to family members). Though contemporary writers such as William Wright might bemoan the alleged tendency for a tradesman's wife to think involvement in her husband's businesses 'a step below herself', so that, if he died, 'she should not qualify herself to make the best of things that are left her; or to preserve herself from being cheated, and imposed upon',[104] the reality of such women's lives seems somewhat different, with little indication that they were unacquainted with business and unprepared to take over the reins. Thus John Ward's household broking business at 25 Stanley Street in Liverpool was left in trust with the instruction that the trustees 'permit and suffer my wife Phebe Ward

[99] *Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1766* (Liverpool, 1766).

[100] *Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1808 and 1809* (Manchester, 1808).

[101] It seems unlikely that William junior's children, if indeed he had any, would have been old enough to join their father in the business so soon after their grandfather's death and more probable that William and his brothers ran it as a partnership under their father's name. On the value of certain family business names, see Nenadic, 'The Small Family Firm', 86, and on the importance of 'credit' and reputation in eighteenth-century society, S. D'Cruze, 'The Middling Sort in Eighteenth-Century Colchester: Independence, Social Relations and the Community Broker', in J. Barry and C. Brooks (eds), *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke, 1994), 181–207; C. Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (London, 1998).

[102] TNA: PL 6/111/133 (1820).

[103] 67% Manchester, 70% Liverpool.

[104] William Wright, *The Complete Tradesman: Or, a Guide in the Several Parts and Progressions of Trade* (London, [1786?]), 72–3.

in my said Warehouse after my deceas [*sic*] so long as she continues my widow',[105] and trade directories from the town suggest the smooth transfer of the business from John to Phebe sometime after 1790.[106] When the Manchester pawnbroker George Bloor died in 1820, he also left his estate to trustees with the proviso that they 'permit and suffer my said Wife Sarah to carry on my said Trade or Business as a Pawnbroker and to have receive and enjoy all the Interest rents and profits of my said Estates and Effects . . . '.[107] The Manchester trade directory for 1822 lists 'Sarah Bloor, pawn broker, Back Piccadilly house, 27 Piccadilly', operating the same business from the same address as her late husband.

George Bloor appears to have left behind both a widow and a son of indeterminate age. However, it should not be assumed that control of the family business was left to his mother simply because James Bloor was a minor. The presence of adult children—although age is sometimes difficult to discern from the contents of wills—does not appear to have determined whether a widow took over the family business or not, and indeed it appears that more than half of our inheriting widows had children who were or who may have been of age (51 per cent). Yet the presence of children of whatever age does appear to have been an important factor in determining whether a business continued or not: 81 per cent of the businesses in our sample that survived were left by individuals with children, while this was the case in only 56 per cent of those businesses that ended. This indicates a correlation between the presence of children and the continuation of the family business, from which we can conclude that firms were considered important in terms of providing for the next generation. The frequency with which widows ran these businesses indicates that they were often best placed to do so because of an intimate and active involvement with the firm before their husband's death, and because of their perceived seniority. It was for these reasons that small businesses in this period were often run by women with adult sons as their junior partners.[108]

Yet, though wives were most likely to assume control of family businesses in our sample, children might take over as well (33 per cent of all businesses that continued) and might also do so with their mothers apparently still living (in just under half of the instances where children took over the business): this suggests that widows were often, but not always, thought best suited to take charge or were willing to do so. The Manchester shopkeeper Thomas Heywood, for example, died in 1820 leaving a widow, Mary, alongside his three sons, John, Thomas, and James. It was the latter three who were bequeathed 'all my Stock in Trade . . . to be equally divided amongst them'.[109] Evidence from the town's trade directories shows the transfer of the Tame Street business from the father to his son John between 1820 and 1822. Why John was preferred over his mother and brothers to take over from his father is unclear, though the reason may well have been linked to skill and

[105] LRO, WCW, Will of John Ward (1790).
[106] *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1790); *Universal British Directory* (London, 1794).
[107] LRO, WCW, Will of George Bloor (1820).
[108] Barker, *The Business of Women*, 114–17.
[109] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Heywood (1820).

inclination. The choice was clearer in the case of the Manchester joiner John Stanley, who was apparently a widower when he died in 1820, leaving his son Edward 'all my tools and bench belonging to my branch of business'.[110] The town's trade directories show the Ormond Street business passing from father to son.[111] Like Stanley, the Liverpool boatbuilder Thomas Galley does not appear to have had a wife at the time of his death, but he had more than one child to share in his wealth. His will, dated 1768 and proved two years later, was more directive in terms of the control of his business than that of Heywood:

> I . . . will and direct that a just and fair Inventory and Appraisement or Valuation shall immediately after my death be made and undertaken by two or more persons skillful in such Matters Of All my Stock in Trade Tools Utensils and other Implements Belonging to and used by me in the said Trade or Business of a Boatbuilder And that my son Thomas shall have and be entitled to the same upon Payment of such Sum or Sums of money as they shall be so Appraised or Valued at . . . And I give unto my Son Thomas the Sole benefit and Advantage to Accrue from the Service of all or any Apprentices or servants which shall or may at the time of my death be bound to me by Indenture or otherwise for and during the then remainder of the respective Terms for which they shall be so bound.[112]

The proceeds of the sale of the business to Thomas junior and that of other personal property were to be divided between Thomas senior's two sons, Thomas and John, and his daughter, Nancy, 'share and share alike', so that Thomas was effectively buying two-thirds of the business from his siblings. 'Thomas Galley, boatbuilder, Old Custom House Yard' continued to be listed in directories between 1769 and 1773, before moving to Gorre Causeway in 1774. From 1772, Thomas junior's brother, John, appeared as a sailmaker, also in Old Custom House Yard.[113] He had presumably been able to set himself up in business with his share of the inheritance paid to him by his brother, which suggests that Thomas Galley's instructions succeeded in ensuring that his children were able to support themselves after his death.

Though children might not take over immediately, wills often stipulated that they would gain control of all or part of their father's estate when their mother died or remarried, or when they themselves came of age (such conditions appeared in 73 per cent of our total sample of wills written by men with both wives and children). The will of the Liverpool brewer Adam Hill, written and executed in 1770, left his estate to his wife and four underage children. While Mary Hill, his spouse, was to receive an annual annuity of £30, and his daughter, also Mary, was left a lump sum of £100, his three sons—Charles, Adam, and John—were bequeathed the remainder of his estate, including his brewery business, which was to

> be managed and carried on for the benefit and Advantage of my said three sons until the youngest shall attain the Age of Twenty one Years for which Purpose I would have

[110] LRO, WCW, Will of John Stanley (1820).

[111] *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1819–20* (Manchester, 1819); *Pigot and Dean's New Directory of Manchester, Salford, &c., for 1821–2* (Manchester, 1821).

[112] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Galley (1770).

[113] *Gore's Liverpool Directory, For the Year 1772* (Liverpool, 1772).

> my Executors hereinafter named to retain and employ some fit and proper Person whom I would have to be allowed a handsome salary and board in order to conduct and carry on the said Business under the inspection of my said Executors.[114]

Though Mary Hill appears to have acceded to her husband's wish that she pass the business to her sons in time, she may not have hired a manager as she was instructed to do. An advertisement in the *Liverpool General Advertiser* on 23 March 1770 stated that 'MARY HILL Widow of the late *Adam Hill*, Brewer, Begs leave to acquaint her late Husband's friends and the Public, that the Business of the said Brewery will be carried on, as usual, and humbly hopes for a Continuance of their past Favours'. Further instructions were given for those with 'any Demands against the Estate of the late Adam Hill' to contact the executors.[115] Seven years later, in 1777, the Liverpool directory shows Charles Hill listed as 'brewer, Smithfield Street'—a small street off Tythbarn Street, which may have been the same address from which his father had previously operated.[116]

The Manchester barber and peruke-maker John Adams (or Haddams) also instructed that his wife should take over his business on a potentially temporary basis. His will, written in 1776 and proved in 1780, stipulated that

> I give and bequeath unto my loving wife Ann Haddams All my Household Goods Furniture Shop Utensils and Stock in Trade of what nature or kind so ever for her own use and Benefit if she shall so long continue my Widow. Provided always that if it shall happen that my said Wife shall marry again then it is my mind and will that my said Son John Haddams shall and may enter into and upon the Shop Utensils and stock in trade and other implements in the said trade of a barber and peruke maker to his own use and benefit of what nature or kind so ever.

Though the 1781 trade directory continued to record 'John Adams Peruke Maker and Hairdresser, 30 Deansgate', by 1794 Thomas Adams, peruke-maker and hairdresser, was listed at 106 Deansgate. Thomas was one of John Adams senior's younger two sons. It is not clear what had happened to his brother John, who was mentioned in the will, nor do we know whether Thomas had inherited because his mother had remarried, or if she had died or declined the business for other reasons, though we can assume that aptitude and inclination on Thomas's part played a part in the decision, as did a desire to keep the family business going because of its role in supporting family members. We can be more sure about the fate of the wife of the Liverpool plumber and glazier James Chambers, who died in 1770 leaving his complete estate, including his 'Trade Utensils', to his 'Loving Wife Ellen Chambers' during her lifetime or until she remarried. After either of these events, the estate was to pass to his two sons, Edward and James. However, an advertisement in the *Liverpool General Advertiser* on 20 April 1770, just three months after probate had been granted, announced that 'EDWARD CHAMBERS, PLUMBER *and* GLAZIER, Takes

[114] LRO, WCW, Will of Adam Hill (1770).
[115] *Liverpool General Advertiser*, 23 March 1770.
[116] *Gore's Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1769* (Liverpool, 1769); *Gore's Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1777* (Liverpool, 1777).

this Method to acquaint his Friends and the Public, that he carries on the said business in all its branches, at the shop of his late Father, in Hanover-street, where he humbly hopes for a continuance of the favours of his father's friends, which will always be gratefully acknowledged'. His mother was clearly neither dead nor remarried at this point, since the advertisement further instructed that 'all persons indebted to the estate and effects of the late James Chambers, plumber and glazier, deceased, are desired to pay the same to Mrs Chambers; or to Mr John Latham, wine-merchant', the executor of the will.[117] Though they complied with the general directions in the will or with the implications of its bequests to continue the family firm, both John Adams senior's and James Chambers's relations clearly felt able to act at variance to the precise instructions set out and to use their own judgement about the best course of action.

This apparent independence of action is evident throughout our sampled group and represents the responses of families and individual family members to both a variety of circumstances over which they had little or no control (such as the death, illness, and absence of individual beneficiaries) and subjective decisions on the part of family groups and individuals about how best to manage (and maximize) their wealth. Here consideration would be given to perceived seniority and who was best placed, and willing, to run a firm, as well as whether continuing a family business was the best option in terms of providing for surviving family members.[118] Making such a decision meant taking into account internal family dynamics, individual inclinations, and the profitability of the business concerned, as well as local economic conditions and how these might affect both the business and the relative profitability of those other forms of investment already discussed. Since many of the individuals and families examined in this chapter did not possess the sorts of passive investments that could provide a family with sufficient income to support it in any case, nor could they realize this through the sale of their businesses or other assets and subsequent reinvestment, it is not surprising that a sizeable proportion of them viewed their businesses as being most valuable as going concerns.

Such an understanding of the family firm seems to have motivated the Liverpool pipe-maker Thomas Morgan, who died in 1810 leaving an estate valued at under £200. Morgan's was the most exacting of all our sampled wills in terms of its maker's desire to see the family business remain in operation. He left instructions in his will for the business to be carried on over several generations, first by his wife, Sarah, and then after her death he directed that 'my said daughter Nancy Gordon shall Carry on the Trade of a pipe maker which I now usith [*sic*] and followeth in order to support her present children and all other children which she may hereafter have'. Furthermore, Thomas Morgan stated that

> it is my Will and desire that as soon after the decease of my said daughter Nancy Gordon aforesaid the first of my Grand Children who shall attain the age of twenty five

[117] LRO, WCW, Will of James Chambers (1770). Elizabeth Raffald, *The Manchester Directory for the Year 1772* (Manchester, 1772), lists the business still under the control of Edward Chambers.

[118] Robin Holt and Andrew Popp, 'Emotion, Succession, and the Family Firm: Josiah Wedgwood & Sons', *Business History*, 55/6 (2013), 892–909.

> years shall carry on the pipe making business in all its Branches and as the rest of my Grand children shall attain the same age shall come into the same concern as partners and that a partnership shall take place and that the profits arising shall be divided accordingly.[119]

Prior to Morgan's death, he is listed in the 1807 directory as 'Thomas Morgan, Pipemaker, Cook Street'. After 1810, a listing appears for 'Sarah Morgan, Pipemaker, Cook Street', which is presumably his widow. In 1813, a new entry appeared for 'James Gordon, pipemaker' at the same address. This was apparently Nancy's husband. This listing appeared in the directories until 1818, after which the business seems to have disappeared, suggesting that Thomas Morgan's instructions were followed for only two generations, rather than three, as he had hoped. Though other branches of the Morgan family remained in pipe-making,[120] Thomas Morgan's direct descendants either seem to have been forced out of, or chose to leave, the trade.

In common with this case, and as we have seen, instructions in wills to continue a family business were usually followed. However, 11 per cent of those Manchester businesses in our sample that appear to have outrun the life of their head and 3 per cent of those from Liverpool were carried on by family members despite explicit directions to end them. The will of the Manchester gunsmith and steel bow-maker Jonathan Johnson, of Market Street Lane, for example, left clear instructions to sell up the business. His two executors, James Slack, surgeon, and Gel Bretland, engraver, were left control of:

> All my household goods and furniture, stock in Trade and personal Estate and effects of what nature or kind soever, Upon Trust, that they my said Trustees (so soon as convenient after my Decease) do and shall sell and dispose of the same, for the most Money that can be gotten . . . and pay and apply the sum of Twenty Pounds to Mary Heatley, my housekeeper, and as to all the rest, and residue of the Money arising from such Sales, Upon further Trust to pay apply and divide the same unto and amongst the said Mary Heatley and all and every my said four children equally share and share alike.[121]

No further indication was given as to whether Heatley and Johnson had a relationship other than that of employer and employee, or indeed if Heatley was actually the children's mother—though the provision made for her, from a personal estate estimated at under £100, is extremely generous. Trade directory evidence indicates that the business was not wound up, as Johnson instructed, and, while Holme's directory of 1788 lists 'Jonathan Johnson, gunsmith and steel bow maker' at Market Street Lane two years before his death in 1790, the 1794 directory shows James Johnson operating the same business at the same address. This was presumably one of his offspring, who are mentioned but unnamed in the will.[122]

[119] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Morgan (1810).
[120] *The Commercial Directory for 1818–19–20* (Manchester, 1820).
[121] LRO, WCW, Will of Jonathan Johnson (1790).
[122] *A Directory for the Towns of Manchester & Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788); *Lewis's Directory for the Towns of Manchester & Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788); *Scholes's Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794).

Richard Edmundson, a Liverpool cabinetmaker and upholsterer whose will was executed in 1810, also ordered his executors to sell his entire estate and to place the money from sales into securities. He specified that his four executors should support his wife Rachel by

> whenever they or he shall think fit Sell and and [*sic*] absolutely dispose of and convey all and singular my said Real and Personal Estate and Effects either entirely and together in parcels by Public Sale or Auction . . . for the most money that can be reasonably had . . . and at their own discretion place out at Interest upon good mortgage security upon land or buildings all such money as shall arise . . . [123]

His widow, Rachel, was to receive the profits during her lifetime to bring up the children (including at least one son, also named Richard). Before his death, Richard Edmundson senior appeared in the 1810 directory as 'Richard Edmundson, cabinet maker and upholster, 2 Oldham Street', with a 'repository' situated at 2 Marshall Street. By 1814, the Oldham Street listing was unchanged, with the business almost certainly under the control of Richard senior's widow, Rachel, whose eldest son joined her in the venture at some point; by 1816, 'Mrs Edmundson' is listed running the business at Oldham Street, while in 1821 the directory lists 'Rachael Edmundon, cabinet maker, 2 oldham street' and 'Rachel Edmundson and son, cabinet repository and upholsters, 12 bold street'. The move to Bold Street from the more minor thoroughfare of Marshall Street suggests that the business was not only surviving, but moving upmarket. It also indicates that Rachel Edmundson's decision to carry on her husband's business rather than accept his advice to try to live off rentier investments was a sound commercial one from which both she and her offspring were likely to have benefited.[124]

Just as testators' instructions to end a business were not always followed, so their directions to continue them could also be ignored by family members unable or unwilling to carry on the family firm. Of those businesses from our sample that appeared to have been ended upon the death of their head, 26 per cent in Manchester and 10 per cent in Liverpool were linked to wills where it was indicated or directed that they should be continued. The Manchester victualler, Thomas Whitlow, for example, listed in the directory for 1819 as 'Victualler, George and Dragon, Fountain Street', left his wife, Sarah, his entire estate in 1820 'to have use, occupy and enjoy the same in the Way of Business for the purpose of supporting herself and for the support maintainance education and bringing up of all my Children until the youngest shall attain the age of twenty one years'.[125] Yet there is no subsequent record of the family in this trade or at this address after his death. Similarly, the Liverpool sadler, Thomas Stelfox left everything he owned including his stock in trade to his wife, Betty, with the implication that she continue the

[123] LRO, WCW, Will of Richard Edmundson (1810).

[124] *Gore's Directory, for Liverpool and its Environs: For the Year 1810* (Liverpool, 1810); *Gore's Directory, of Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool, 1814); *Gore's Directory, of Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool, 1816); *Gore's Liverpool Directory, with its Environs* (Liverpool, 1821).

[125] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Whitlow (1820).

business.[126] But though he appeared in an 1800 directory at 5 Church Street, the Stelfox listing had disappeared by 1803.[127]

Though we have already seen that beneficiaries might chose to manage estates as they saw fit, even when this meant acting at variance to the terms of a written will, several of the wills in our sample were explicit in giving beneficiaries a choice when it came to considering what to do with a business concern, showing a recognition of the role that surviving family members commonly played in deciding what to do with family businesses, and in managing familial wealth more generally. The will of the Manchester dimity and muslinet manufacturer, Ralph Rhodes, written in 1797 and executed in 1800, for example, directed that cash sums should be given to three of his four children, raised in part from the sale of some of his stock in trade. However, he also instructed that 'Notwithstanding the direction of my Executor to place out the fortunes or Legacies by me hereinbefore given to my Sons and Daughter . . . Yet if they think it more proper to remain in Trade with my other Children I give them power so to do . . . '.[128] Ralph Rhodes's business at 20 Church Street appeared in trade directories until 1802 but disappeared after this point, which suggests that his children did not choose to follow in their father's business footsteps for long, if at all.[129] A different outcome resulted from the will of Manchester inn-keeper, John Gratrix, who instructed his executors in his will proved in 1820 to:

> permit and suffer my said Wife and Daughter to carry on and manage the business of an Inn keeper with the stock and capital I may be possessed of at my decease in case they shall so think proper . . . but in case my said Wife and Daughter . . . shall find it more convenient or to their interest to give up the said business with the concurrence of my said Trustees and executors then I direct that my said Trustees . . . do sell and dispose of the stock in trade goods and effects and collect the outstanding debts which shall be due owing or belonging or arising from the said business and convert the same into money which I direct shall from thenceforth be invested in the public stocks or funds or on good security . . .

in order to provide the two women with an income.[130] Manchester directory entries show that John Gratrix's name was replaced after 1820 with that of Isabella Gratix (his widow), as 'victualler' at the 'Dyer's Arms, 15 Lombard Street'. His married step-daughter, Elizabeth Frances Potter, though not listed may well have been running the inn with her mother. Isabella Gratrix appears to have managed the Dyer's Arms until at least 1825.[131]

[126] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Stelfox (1800).

[127] *Schofield's New Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1800); *Gores'* [*sic*] *Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1803).

[128] LRO, WCW, Will of Ralph Rhodes (1800).

[129] *Bancks's Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1800); *Bancks's Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1802).

[130] LRO, WCW, Will of John Gratrix (1820).

[131] *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1819–20* (Manchester, 1819); *Pigot and Dean's Directory for Manchester, Salford &c., for 1824–5* (Manchester, 1824).

The will of James Dixon, Liverpool joiner and cabinet maker, left his estate to his wife, Mary, with a slightly different choice to make. James stipulated that 'should any orders remain unfinished at the time of my decease then it is my Will and Mind that the same shall be finished and delivered', that all debts owed to the business should be collected, that his stock in trade should be sold up 'for the best price that can be gotten for the same and the surplus after the payment of my Debts I Give and devise the same to my Dear Wife Mary Dixon for this express purpose that she my said Wife shall carry on whatever business she might think most conducive for the Maintainance Education and bringing up of my Dear Children until they shall be fit to be placed out into the World to the best advantage for their Welfare'.[132] As several Mary Dixons appeared in the trade directories around the time of James's death and immediately following it,[133] and James Dixon's widow does not appear to have advertised her intentions to set up a new business in the local newspapers, it is not clear what she decided to do. What is apparent though is that James Dixon understood both the importance of business to his family's future welfare, and that those who survived him were best placed to decide the particular commercial direction that they should take.

CONCLUSION

When it came to beneficiaries making decisions about the fate of the family business, we have identified a much greater reluctance to dispose of it upon the death of the proprietor than has been described elsewhere, suggesting that such enterprises were often worth most to surviving family members as going concerns. The relative importance of the family firm in our study is almost certainly linked to the fairly modest status of our sampled group, whose members, for the most part, depended on businesses that were both small in size and not profitable enough to have allowed their owners to build up large reserves. This meant that when they died it was unlikely that these tradesmen and women would possess either the sorts of passive investments that could provide their surviving family members with sufficient income to support them, or that beneficiaries would be able to raise enough by selling a business and its assets in order to live off the proceeds. Instead, we see businesses remaining in family hands, not just because testators thought they should, but because beneficiaries too were convinced of their worth.

These enterprises, alongside real estate and cash, appear to have constituted the main form of wealth-holding in our sampled group and were some of the most common forms of bequest. Though direct familiarity with local building stock and small businesses might have offered those in trade a measure of confidence that bank deposits, government securities, and stocks and shares could not match, they were not risk free. Small businesses were particularly vulnerable to economic

[132] LRO, WCW, Will of James Dixon (1820).

[133] *Gores'* [*sic*] *Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1800); *Gores'* [*sic*] *Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1803).

downturns—as the lists of bankruptcies in local papers attested—while those buying property with mortgages were liable to have their credit curtailed and their rents left unpaid during periods of financial crisis. We have also seen that in Liverpool, at least, some individuals in trade were keen to put their money into shipping in ways that seemed far removed from any security-focused model of investment. Alongside the issue of security commonly used to define 'lower middling' wealth-holding and investment, we therefore need to consider other factors, such as ease of access, in determining investment strategies, in addition to varying rates of return. Such considerations would have been all too evident to those trading families and individuals who form the subject of this study, and who appear to have understood the need to balance a range of issues when deciding what to do with their wealth, including the needs and capacities of families, the nature of their existing assets, and the changeable economic climate of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

It is common for historians to comment on the comparative freedom of English will-makers to dispose of their property after death as they wished in the modern period.[134] The apparent flexibility on the part of those who inherited the estates of those in trade in Liverpool and Manchester between 1760 and 1820 suggests that the beneficiaries of wills could also exercise a degree of discretion, particularly when deciding the fate of family businesses, which were, as we have seen, most commonly left out of testatory instructions. Such freedom is linked partly to the flexibility and complexities of the English legal system governing inheritance, and particularly to the discretion allowed under Equity to those administering estates.[135] This was compounded by contemporaries' adeptness in exploiting (and sometimes ignoring) the law to realize family or personal ambitions. The popular awareness of property law that underpinned such behaviour is examined in more depth in Chapter 2, which continues to explore what those in trade sought to do with their property after their death. The discussion that follows shifts the focus from the types of property that were bequeathed and what was done with it, and looks instead at the intended beneficiaries of wills, and the ways in which will-makers sought to prevent unsanctioned individuals gaining access to their wealth.

[134] Susan Staves, 'Resentment or Resignation? Dividing the Spoils among Daughters and Younger Sons', in John Brewer and Susan Staves (eds), *Early Modern Conceptions of Property* (Abingdon, 1995), 194–220, p. 199; Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England*, 98; Green, 'To Do the Right Thing', 135.

[135] C. Stebbings, *The Private Trustee in Victorian England* (Cambridge, 2002), 10–15.

2

Family and Inheritance

Though wills naturally focus attention on a particular event—namely, an individual's death—as we have already seen, they are more than a record of bequests and the settling of debts. As David Green has observed, 'they provide a glimpse of family relationships, friendships and social obligations at the point of death, when the domestic arrangements of the household—the balance between emotion, duty and property—were laid bare'.[1] This chapter continues to examine inheritance practices among trading families in order to explore the relationship between emotion, duty, and property. It focuses on the beneficiaries of wills and the motivations of testators, arguing that will-making was primarily driven by a desire to control one's property in accordance with a set of social norms that were powerfully influenced by religious belief and a sense of duty towards one's immediate family, and particularly those who were considered to be dependants. In the case of those in trade, this meant making sure that wives and children were provided for, that there was equity between children, and that wealth remained in the hands of those to whom it was bequeathed, with a particular concern that anything left to female relatives should be protected from interlopers. Though such impulses on the part of will-makers reflected their desire to conduct their affairs with propriety, and to behave in ways that would reflect favourably on them and their families in terms of reputation and social standing, there is also evidence of strong emotional bonds between family members and of the particular potency of blood and marital ties. We also see—as was witnessed in Chapter 1—a clear awareness amongst tradesmen and women of the broader contexts of their decision-making, and, in particular, a keen understanding of the laws relating to inheritance.

PATTERNS OF PROVISION

A concern to plan the dispersal of one's property after death is customarily thought of in terms of the desire to take care of one's immediate family, and dependants in particular. Margaret Spufford's examination of peasant inheritance patterns in rural Cambridgeshire between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries led her to conclude that it was family responsibilities, rather than wealth, that determined whether one

[1] David R. Green, 'To Do the Right Thing: Gender, Wealth, Inheritance and the London Middle Class', in Anne Laurence, Josephine Maltby, and Janette Rutterford (eds), *Women and their Money 1700–1950: Essays on Women and Finance* (London and New York, 2009), 133–50, p. 134.

made a will.[2] The great bulk of the wills we have examined were indeed written by men with wives and children: married men constituted 73 per cent of our male will-makers in Liverpool (62 per cent of whom also had children) and 74 per cent of those in Manchester (66 per cent with offspring). An additional 15 per cent of Liverpool men's wills and 16 per cent of those from Manchester were written by widowers with children. Although these findings appear to support Spufford's contention that will-making was driven by the desire to provide for dependants, it is also the case that 12 per cent of the sample of Liverpool men's wills and 10 per cent of those from Manchester were produced by men who had neither wife nor child—figures that appear broadly in line with national trends for adult men at this time in terms of marital and parental status.[3] This suggests that men with wives and children were not necessarily more likely to write a will than those without them. Our sample also contains more childless marriages than appears to have been typical during this period: for, while fewer than 10 per cent of marriages were likely not to have produced children,[4] our figures show a significantly greater proportion of wills where the absence of children was indicated at the time of writing (31 per cent of Liverpool male will-writers in our sample were married or widowed and apparently childless, compared to 28 per cent of those from Manchester). This suggests that marriage was more important than having children when it came to deciding to make a will, but that neither form of 'dependant' was necessarily the deciding factor in will-making, so that—contra Spufford—neither duty towards, nor affection for, one's immediate family was the only—or indeed the main—motivation.[5]

Instead, will-makers appear to have been influenced by a desire to control their property in accordance with certain social norms and the demands of propriety that

[2] M. Spufford, 'Peasant Inheritance Customs and Land Distribution in Cambridgeshire from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries', in J. Goody, J. Thirsk, and E. P. Thompson (eds), *Families and Inheritance: Rural Society in Western Europe, 1200–1800* (Cambridge, 1976), 156–76, pp. 170–1.

[3] E. A. Wrigley and Roger Schofield's figures in *The Population History of England, 1541–1871: A Reconstruction* (London, 1981), 260, suggest that around 6% of individuals in this period never married.

[4] E. A. Wrigley, R. S. Davies, J. E. Oeppen, and R. S. Schofield, *English Population History from Family Reconstruction: 1580–1837* (Cambridge, 1997), 384.

[5] There is evidence that individuals who believed they were at risk of dying appear most likely to make a will: R. J. Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780–1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategy amongst the Leeds Middle Classes* (Cambridge, 2005), 91; Christopher Marsh, 'Attitudes to Will-Making In Early Modern England', in Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans, and Nigel Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early-Modern England* (Oxford, 2000), 158–75, p. 160; Nigel Goose and Nesta Evans, 'Wills as an Historical Source', in Arkell, Evans, and Goose (eds), *When Death Us Do Part*, 46; S. Coppel, 'Will-Making on the Deathbed', *Local Population Studies*, 40 (1988), 37–45; Green, 'To Do the Right Thing', 137. Among our sample, illness, old age, and a belief in impending death seem to have prompted the majority of will-making (or at least the production of revised wills), so that 70% of Liverpool wills and 75% of those from Manchester were witnessed within two years of their authors' demise. It was not uncommon in such wills to find explicit reference made to the testator's poor physical health (this occurred in around 9% of our sample). Yet, though the great majority of our sampled wills were written relatively near to death, most do not mention illness, while the sizeable proportion of wills written some years before their author's death suggests that a significant minority of our sample were concerned not just with immediate events but with long-term future planning.

were not contingent upon the presence of an immediate and dependant family group. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though some legal texts tended to emphasize the freedom of testators under English law,[6] religious and philosophical writers—and indeed the writers of novels—often approached the issue of will-making quite differently.[7] According to the author of the *Treatise on Distributive Justice, Chiefly Confin'd to Will Making*, testators should not consider themselves free to leave their estates arbitrarily, arguing that

> no man can, with strict Justice, deprive his right Heir of the natural Right of inheriting his Substance; except it be even almost for as great a Crime as the Law itself would require to be made plain, before an Heir can be set aside. And as to all little, idle, Family-Disputes, they can in no Degree, be a Reason for doing the most harsh and unnatural Action in the World.[8]

This pamphlet was a protest at the will and testament of Pryce Devereux, 10th Viscount Hereford, who had left his estate to his lawyer, and, in so doing, was accused of acting against both custom and nature. Like many such tracts, it claimed to reproduce a copy of the will in full, to which was supplemented a philosophical and religious discussion about its merits: in this case, these were seen as few, since the will was presented as an example of 'what ought not to be done'.[9] Though most wills were not published and scrutinized in this manner, wills were not private documents, and testators were reminded of the implications of, and likely reactions to, their actions. Thus R. Dickson claimed in his early nineteenth-century text, the *Practical Exposition of the Law of Wills*, that 'no person who is desirous of leaving behind him the character of a just, kind, and wise member of society should delay or defer to perform the simplest and most easy act of human obligation'.[10] Others argued that will-making was a specifically Christian activity, with the Revd Samuel Partridge urging his readers to make a will in order to follow God's ordinance and 'set thine house in order' as 'a duty of very great importance to the quiet of our own minds, to the peace of our families, and the welfare of all those who are most dear to us in the world'.[11] It was difficult, Partridge conceded, for the living to imagine 'the

[6] For the classic legal interpretation, see William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England: Book the Second* (Oxford, 1775), 10–12. See also Susan Staves, 'Resentment or Resignation? Dividing the Spoils among Daughters and Younger Sons', in John Brewer and Susan Staves (eds), *Early Modern Conceptions of Property* (London, 1995), 194–218, p. 199; Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 98; Green, 'To Do the Right Thing', 135.

[7] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 86–109.

[8] *Treatise on Distributive Justice, Chiefly Confin'd to the Consideration of Will Making* (London, 1752), 64.

[9] *Treatise on Distributive Justice*, 66. See also, e.g., *Reflections, Moral and Prudential, on the Last Will and Testament of Gerard van Neck* (London, 1750). Other wills were published without comment as exemplars: e.g. *A True Copy of the Last Will and Testament of Mr Francis Bancroft, Deceased, Late Citizen and Draper of London* (London, 1775); *A True Copy of the Last Will and Testament of James Leverett, Esq, Late of Witney, in the County of Oxford, Deceased* ([Oxford?], [1790?]).

[10] R. Dickson, *A Practical Exposition of the Law of Wills* (London, 1830), 2–3, cited in Alastair Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life Course: Inheritance and Family Welcome Provision in Early Nineteenth-Century England', *Social History*, 26/3 (2001), 299–317, p. 303.

[11] Isaiah 38: 1, in Samuel Partridge, *The Duty of Making a Last Will and Testament; a Sermon* (London, 1799), 5–6.

things which they posses in the possession of others', but individuals held worldly goods merely in 'stewardship', and these were not 'a durable portion' but were instead 'a temporary provision; not as our own, but as committed to us in the way of *trust*'. The 'right *manner* of distributing' such property, he argued, needed to be considered in terms of '*moral* considerations', of which, 'both in life and at death, we must render an account to *Him* who gave them'.[12]

We are used to thinking of women's rights of ownership and access to property being particularly limited in this period, and, while the results of our examination of Liverpool and Manchester wills do not disprove this reading, the similarities in the ways that estates were bequeathed in these two towns—in terms of both who were named as beneficiaries and how testators sought to protect inheritances—also suggest the degree to which men's control of property was similarly materially and ideologically 'constrained' by their compulsion to provide for their immediate family in certain ways, despite a legal framework that technically left them free to act as they wished. Alastair Owens has claimed that most wills made widows 'property custodians' rather than independent agents and 'simply reaffirmed their role as maintainer, provider and protector of the family order'.[13] But these roles are ones that most men in trade also assumed, as is evident from the ways in which they sought to manage their families' inheritances in terms of what Owens has described as 'the moral economy of provision among the middle class'.[14] As David Green has remarked, '*De jure* freedom . . . did not necessarily mean de facto freedom', so that, 'though the law may have allowed testamentary freedom, custom and concepts of propriety and respectability directed otherwise'.[15]

The desire to provide for one's immediate family was associated by both men and women with personal and familial credit and social standing, since making a 'good' will afforded one the 'prospect of posthumous regard' gained by 'a proper disposal' of one's estate,[16] while a failure to act with propriety in this respect would have resulted in a loss of reputation.[17] This reputational risk may have been associated in part to the assumption that heads of households should not burden others with the care of their former dependants.[18] But testators seemed keen to support both minor and adult children (the latter presumably being more capable of supporting themselves), while the fact that those with neither spouse nor offspring were as likely to produce wills as those with them suggests that the desire to control what happened to one's property after death was a universal urge and duty, and not one that was limited to those with dependants and close relations. The ways in which one's wealth was managed (both during one's life and after death) were thought

[12] Partridge, *The Duty of Making a Last Will and Testament*, 14, 16, 18, 20.
[13] Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life Course', 310.
[14] Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life Course', 316.
[15] Green, 'To Do the Right Thing', 135.
[16] J. C. Hudson, *Plain Directions for Making Wills in Conformity with the Law* (London, 1838), 78, cited in Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life Course', 303.
[17] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 100; Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life-Course', 303–4; Green, 'To Do the Right Thing'; Sheryllynne Haggerty, *'Merely for Money?': Business Culture in the British Atlantic, 1750–1815* (Liverpool, 2012), ch. 4, esp. pp. 116–17.
[18] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 98–101.

about not just in terms of duty to one's family and to God then, but more broadly as a series of moral acts that were closely linked to reputation. As Craig Muldrew has demonstrated, for those in trade, individual and household reputation were especially important, as they were so closely linked to trust in business dealings and access to credit.[19]

While the presence of dependants might not have been the principal motivation for making a will, their existence did shape the manner in which a will was drawn up, and, specifically, the provisions and conditions contained within individual wills: for the right disposal of one's property meant ensuring that it was delivered safely into the correct hands. Though our sampled wills display a variety of approaches to ensuring this aim—from the ways in which wills were worded to the manner in which property was both distributed and protected—as Amy Erickson has remarked: 'Individual acts of property transmission in probate documents are isolated and random in themselves, but cumulatively they add up to a pattern of action, of general practice, or . . . habit.'[20] This is an important point to remember, because, among the variety of provisions in our sample, certain patterns of testatory practice—and specifically the desire to leave the bulk of one's property to relations according to a standard set of rules concerning hierarchy and equity—appear to stand out and are repeated again and again.[21]

In part, the 'habits' of provision that have been identified in Manchester and Liverpool wills were the result of customary practice with which individual testators would have been familiar, not least because of their own experience of inheritance and that of other family members, friends, and neighbours. It seems likely that the proliferation of legal handbooks aimed at a popular audience was also influential, with many of them providing their readers with standard templates that they (or their legal agents) could copy,[22] while at least some of the wills in our sample were written in the testator's hand and in a form that suggests that they were free from direct external, professional legal intervention.[23] However, other wills were likely to have been produced with assistance from attorneys. These men, and their clerks

[19] Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1998), 149. See also K. Tawny Paul, 'Credit, Reputation, and Masculinity in British Urban Commerce: Edinburgh, *c.*1710–70', *Economic History Review*, 66/1 (2013), 226–48.

[20] Amy Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1993), 16.

[21] See Morris on Leeds in the 1830s: Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 101–41.

[22] See, e.g., James Barry Bird, *The Laws Respecting Wills, Testaments, and Codicils, and Executors, Administrators, and Guardians, Laid Down in a Plain and Easy Manner; in which All Technical Terms of Law Are Familiarly Explained*, 3rd edn (London, 1799); *Treatise on Distributive Justice;* Dickson, *Practical Exposition of the Law of Wills*; Hudson, *Plain Directions for Making Wills*; see also Robert Richardson, *The Law of Testaments and Last Wills: What is Necessary to Be Known by Testators, their Executors, Administrators* (London, 1769); Thomas Wentworth, *The Office and Duty of Executors; or, a Treatise Directing Testators to Form, and Executors to Perform their Wills and Testaments* (London, 1763); Thomas Edlyne Tomlins, *A Familiar, Plain, and Easy Explanation of the Law of Wills and Codicils, and of the Law of Executors and Administrators* (London, 1785); Eardley Mitford, *The Law of Wills, Codicils, and Revocations: With Plain and Familiar Instructions for Executors, Administrators, Devisees, and Legatees* (London, 1800).

[23] See, e.g., LRO, WCW, Wills of Joseph Clare (1809); James Chesworth (1820).

(many of whom would have been in training to become attorneys themselves),[24] were probably the first port of call for many tradesmen and women who wanted to make a will. Thus, when the Manchester dyer William Duxbury lay dying in 1787, his brother sent for John Lowe, clerk to Thomas Shelmerdine, a nearby attorney. It seems likely that at least some of the uniformity that we have found in wills—particularly in terms of their wording—was the result of the involvement of these legal professionals. Yet this did not mean that individual will-makers (and other members of their family) left their decision-making to these men, nor were they unaware of the law relating to inheritance and how it might affect their own circumstances and choices. John Lowe, the attorney's clerk, described himself as 'taking the instructions' when he first visited William Duxbury, prior to drafting up the will back at his employer's office, and then returning to the Duxbury household later that same day to ask the dying man 'if it was drawn up right or accordingly to his mind'.[25] Lowe's description of the events surrounding the making of Duxbury's will suggest that it was the testator that directed its main terms, not his legal assistant, whose job seems to have been to make sure that Duxbury's desires were written down in a manner that would ensure that they would be carried out.

Similarly, when John Towne Danson, an insurance underwriter, assisted his grandfather, John Danson, a Liverpool barber and perfumer, in drawing up his will in the early 1840s, it was clear both that their attorney was expected to follow the family's directions and that those who were not legal professionals might still demonstrate a thorough grasp of the law. Danson junior carried out an extended correspondence with both the attorney, Alex Stewart, and his grandfather concerning the will's production. He also carefully checked and amended early versions, as evidenced by the pencilled notes that survive on drafts of both the will and a subsequent codicil. In both these activities he displayed an impressive command of both inheritance and property law and their practical consequences, noting, for example, in a letter to Stewart in 1844 concerning bequests made to women that

> Anything given to the Wife, or placed within her reach, or controul, becomes in fact her Husband's if the property be given to Trustees *for her use, without any further restriction*, it makes very little difference . . . the usual course, and perhaps the best . . . is to give the wife only a life Inst. [interest] and then to give the capital [to] their children . . . [the object of the testator being] the benefit of herself and her children.

Having made this confident assertion, John Towne Danson noted further that 'it is necessary that the Testator should understand *something* of the state of the Law respecting such a provision, in order that he may *really know what he is doing*, and so be enabled, in the proper use of the word, to *sanction* it', further claiming that 'the knowledge of the Law required in giving instructions for a Will, is almost equal to that required in preparing it. Add a knowledge of the requisite *forms* and there is

[24] Christopher Brooks, *Lawyers, Litigation and English Society since 1450* (London, 1998), ch. 6; Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain, 1700–1850* (London, 1995), 80.

[25] LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury (1787); *The Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781).

perhaps *no* difference.'[26] While not every lay person might have navigated the law with Danson's aplomb, it seems likely that many understood the legal underpinnings of will-making and the usual forms that wills might take. This means that the manner in which wills were constructed was determined to a great extent by testators and their families, so that the patterns of provision that this chapter describes reveal what those in trade considered was right and just.

Despite the legal force of the custom of the 'thirds' being abolished by statute early in the eighteenth century,[27] so that testators were no longer obliged to leave one-third of an estate for their children, one-third for the care of their widow and one-third as 'the dead's part'—that is, to leave as the testator chose—none of our sampled testators left their wives less than the customary 'widow's third', and most bequeathed a more generous settlement than this. This meant that they acted more in line with continuing practice for intestate succession, which allowed widows a third of residual goods and children the remainder,[28] or in a manner that one legal handbook described as being the same as one that 'every good man, in perfect harmony with his family', would follow.[29] Similarly, children were almost always provided for—unless they had received their share of the estate during the testator's lifetime—with the welfare of minor children being a particular concern, as evidenced by the frequency with which wills dictated that older children would not inherit their share in an estate until the youngest came of age. Yet adult children's rights were also jealously guarded with a clear concern to treat children equitably. Managing one's wealth postmortem meant not just directing to whom it should be passed, but also trying to prevent it from getting into unauthorized (by which was generally meant, unrelated) hands. The concern to avoid this was most evident in bequests to women, whose legal standing under common law made their property vulnerable. It was, therefore, common practice in our sample for testators to put conditions on their bequests and to appoint trustees. This was especially true of men leaving property to their wives.

Most of our testators left the bulk of their wealth to members of their immediate conjugal family: that is, to spouses, sons, and daughters. This was typical of the vast majority of English will-writers throughout the early modern period, whom Keith Wrightson and David Levine have described as bequeathing their estates to a range of kin that was 'genealogically both narrow and shallow'.[30] This bias towards

[26] Liverpool Maritime Museum, Danson papers, D/D1/2, John Towne Danson to Andrew Stewart, 14 February 1844.

[27] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 87.

[28] Jeff Cox and Nancy Cox, 'Probate 1500–1800: A System in Transition', in Arkell, Evans, and Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part*, 14–37, p. 20.

[29] See also Richardson, *The Law of Testaments and Last Wills,* p. v.

[30] K. Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village* (Oxford, 1979), 192. See also Spufford, 'Peasant Inheritance Customs and Land Distribution in Cambridgeshire'; D. Levine and K. Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society: Whickham, 1560–1725* (Oxford, 1991), 330–3; W. Coster, *Kinship and Inheritance in Early Modern England: Three Yorkshire Parishes* (Borthwick Paper, 83; York, 1993); C. Churches, 'Women and Property in Early Modern England: A Case Study', *Social History*, 23/2 (1998), 165–80; Barry Stapleton, 'Family Strategies: Patterns of Inheritance in Odiham, Hampshire, 1525–1850', *Continuity and Change*, 14/3 (1999), 385–402; Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life Course', 304; Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, ch. 3; Carmel Biggs, 'Women,

spouses and children seems to have been sustained from at least the sixteenth century and to well into the nineteenth century across England. Though Johnston identified a focus towards the 'nuclear' family at the expense of unrelated individuals from the second half of the eighteenth century in rural Lincolnshire,[31] such a change does not appear in other regional studies, so the argument that English wills generally demonstrated an increased focus on the 'nuclear' as opposed to the household or extended family during the period of the Industrial Revolution seems unconvincing. In terms of our study of trading families in the north-west at this time, though the importance of immediate family members among those who received bequests from wills is demonstrated, the meaning of 'the family' does not seem to have been increasingly narrowly defined, as we shall see in Chapter 5. Indeed, as David Cressy has noted, 'wills were never intended to present a complete roll-call of relations or even of testators' "effective kin"';[32] rather they tend to focus on those for whom testators were customarily believed to be most responsible: namely, spouses and children.

In our sample of wills, as Figure 2.1 shows, spouses (almost always wives in this sample) inherited most commonly, followed by children. Children are counted here both when they inherited something at the point of death (first stage), and when wills gave provision for them later on in their lives under an arrangement for a second stage of inheritance, which typically took place when they came of age or when their mother died or remarried. The Manchester bookkeeper Samuel Shawcross, for example, left an estate valued at under £300 in 1820 'unto my Dear wife Mary Shawcross to and for her own absolute use, and disposal'. This included the sum of £100, which was to be invested 'upon good security' with the interest accrued going to his wife until his son, John, 'now an infant', reached the age of 21, at which point he would receive the capital 'for his own absolute use and disposal'.[33] The will of the Liverpool victualler John Scrafton dictated that 'the whole of my real and personal Property' should pass to 'my Dear Wife Elizabeth Scrafton for and during the term of her natural life and so long as she shall remain my widow and from or immediately after her decease or upon her marrying again I give and bequeath the same unto my Children William Scrafton and Joseph Theodore Scrafton share and share alike and to their Heirs forever'.[34]

Those identified as being other types of 'relative' or 'relation by marriage' were generally consanguineal relations: siblings, nieces and nephews, cousins and parents as well as brothers- and sisters-in-law. Blood relatives (either immediate or more distant) were almost always preferred when it came to leaving the bulk of one's

Kinship and Inheritance: Northamptonshire, 1543–1709', *Journal of Family History*, 32/107 (2007), 107–32, p. 112.

[31] J. A. Johnston, 'Family, Kin and Community in Eight Lincolnshire Parishes, 1567–1800', *Rural History*, 6 (1995), 176–92.

[32] David Cressy, 'Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 113 (1986), 38–69, p. 59.

[33] LRO, WCW, Will of Samuel Shawcross (1820).

[34] LRO, WCW, Will of John Scrafton (1820).

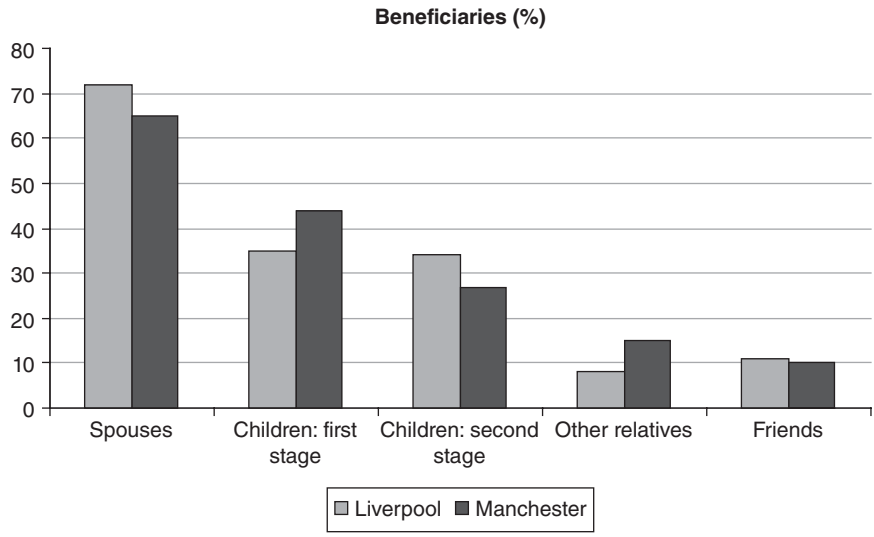

Figure 2.1. Beneficiaries in sampled wills, Liverpool and Manchester.
Source: Wills of traders proved at the Consistory Court of Chester, 1760–1820, decennial data.

estate if spouses and children were not present, so that those who died with neither spouse nor offspring almost always left their wealth to parents, siblings, or to more distant consanguineal relations: what Morris has described as 'the reserve army of cousins, siblings, nephews and nieces', and Cressy as the 'supplementary body of kin who were summoned to keep the property in the family' and who benefited from the wills of single and childless men and women.[35] Among this group of benefactors was the Manchester publican John Hindley of the Admiral Haddock, 5 Parsonage Lane.[36] Hindley died in 1820 and left his estate to three nieces, two of whom lived with him—Martha Hindley, a spinster, and the widowed Ann Richmaw—while the third, Mary Hurst, resided nearby with her shopkeeper husband, William. Richard Elliott, a Liverpool timber merchant, died in 1800 also apparently a childless bachelor and left his entire estate to his shipbuilder father, Joseph. Similarly, the Manchester tanner James Blaykling, who died in 1770, left his estate to his brother, Thomas, and sister, Mary.[37]

This hierarchy of legatees—which privileged spouses and children, followed by other consanguineal family members—appears to have been ignored by testators only in the rare instance where an individual died apparently without family. In such circumstances, apparently unrelated 'friends' might inherit an estate. Though friends are a relatively large category in Figure 2.1, those with surviving family members who also left to friends generally gave the latter relatively modest gifts,

[35] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 125; Cressy, 'Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early Modern England', 65.
[36] *Pigot and Dean's Manchester and Salford Directory, for 1819–20* (Manchester, 1819).
[37] LRO, WCW, Wills of John Hindley (1820); James Blaykling (1770).

usually of cash or personal items. Among the small handful of benefactors who left their entire estate, or large parts of it, to friends was William Williams, a Liverpool tailor who died in 1800 and nominated his 'friends' Edward Irving and Robert Mortimor as executors to settle his estate. Williams left John Johnson 'all my wearing Apparel, Linen, Shoes and Hat', while James Kelly was given 'My Bed and Bedding and my Watch' and Mary Smith was to receive 'my Chest of Drawers'. Williams was unusual in the sample both in terms of the detail with which he described his belongings, and the apparently limited nature of his property. Indeed, the wording of his will suggests that he was not sure that once his debts were settled there would be any further wealth to bequeath. However, since his personal property was valued at around £200 by his executors, it appears that he was more solvent than he thought. After the named items had been handed out, Williams specified that any remainder should be divided equally between his four male friends.[38] The Manchester grocer John Haworth, who died in 1820, also apparently without a wife or children, left what seems to have been the bulk of his estate to his 'friend' Samuel Starkey, a local corn dealer, though Haworth appeared to have had at least one sister living (who did receive some of his wealth), as well as several nephews, who were also left bequests in his will, as was his business partner, George Southam, and several of his relatives.[39] Haworth's will was alone in our sample in favouring friends over blood relatives in this way, though it is possible he was related to either Starkey or the Southams by marriage. Elsewhere we found evidence of individuals leaving relatively small gifts to members of their 'household family' to whom they were not related by blood: thus the tanner James Blaykling left modest sums of money to a maid- and manservant in his will, while the brewer William Stannistreet left six guineas to a servant boy, and the warehouseman John Smith left a minor bequest to a servant, Mary Lewis. All these men, however, left the bulk of their estates to members of their blood family or relations by marriage.[40]

While immediate family members were almost always favoured over more distant relatives, and certainly over those who were not related by either blood or marriage, the general rule regarding children of different genders was to show equity, and few testators with both sons and daughters showed particular favour towards male offspring.[41] In only around 10 per cent of wills made by testators with male and female offspring was more apparently given to sons than to daughters. As other historians have noted, primogeniture appears to have been rare outside the elite (and even here, families generally used their resources to set up younger children as well).[42] It was, therefore, relatively unusual in our sample to find wills such as that of John Mather, a Manchester cornfactor, who instructed that his estate be sold up upon his death, and that his son and daughters split the proceeds 'equally

[38] LRO, WCW, Will of William Williams (1800).
[39] LRO, WCW, Will of John Haworth (1820).
[40] LRO, WCW, Wills of James Blaykling (1770); William Stannistreet (1800); John Smith (1800).
[41] Amy Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England: Share and Share Alike* (Manchester, 2012), 160.
[42] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 77–8; Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 114; Churches, 'Women and Property in Early Modern England'.

share and share alike save and except that it is my will that my said Son John's share and proportion of such monies . . . shall be one half as much more than the share of any other of my said daughters'.[43] The Liverpool hairdresser Thomas Jones seems to have been even less generous towards his female offspring, leaving his daughters Rachel and Elizabeth only two guineas, while his son, John, was given 200 guineas to enjoy once he came of age.[44] Yet, though Jones's will is not clear about the reasons for this disparity, his daughters appear to have been over 21, and may have already been married when he wrote his will. In this case, they might also have received their share of the inheritance while their father was alive as a marriage portion, so that Thomas Jones's provision for his children could have been more equitable than appears from the evidence of his will alone. The lack of transparency in wills concerning the reasons for unequal provision means it is also unclear why some daughters were left *more* than their brothers. Richard Richardson, a Manchester brickmaker, for example, did not explain why he left three sons and a daughter real estate to share, but an additional cash legacy of £200 to his daughter.[45] Similarly, the Liverpool pipe-maker Thomas Rattliff left his entire estate to his female relatives in 1760—namely, his widow, married daughter, and daughter-in-law—as well as to their respective daughters, while excluding his son and son-in-law from the will, both of whom appear to have been living at the time, again, without offering an explanation.[46]

Despite the existence of such exceptional cases, the general tendency for men and women with children was to stipulate that any provision made was to 'share and share alike' between a testator's offspring, regardless of gender, in line with what seems to have been standard practice among non-elite families.[47] Thus the Manchester blacksmith and farrier John Taylor, though he was in business with his eldest son, instructed that upon his death

> such part of my Property or Stock vested in the partnership now subsisting between me and my Son James Taylor shall immediately after my decease be sold and the Money arising from such sale, together with my Book Debts and all and every other property I may die Possessed of I give and bequeath to my Children . . . to be divided amongst them in equal proportions share and share alike.[48]

Sometimes it is difficult to be sure of the monetary value of different types of bequests from the details given in probate documents, and it is worth noting that there was a tendency in some wills to leave male and female offspring different types of bequest, with female heirs left cash or investments and male heirs real estate, but, again, such cases appear in the minority.

Far more common was the tendency to balance a commitment towards equality in provision for sons and daughters with the desire to be equitable in other ways,

[43] LRO, WCW, Will of John Mather (1800).
[44] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Jones (1800).
[45] LRO, WCW, Will of Richard Richardson (1810).
[46] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Rattliff (1760).
[47] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 77–8; Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 109–10.
[48] LRO, WCW, Will of John Taylor (1810).

and specifically by taking into account both gifts made during the testator's lifetime as well as levels of dependency—a practice that was also in line with the rules of intestate succession.[49] This meant that it was common for bequests to be reduced to take into account monies already received prior to the testator's death, and for younger children and unmarried daughters to be better provided for than their married sisters and older brothers. Thus the will of the Manchester tailor William Aldcroft, which was executed in 1790, left instructions for his estate to be divided among two adult sons, Charles and Thomas, and the couple's daughters, Mary and Elizabeth as well as Catherine junior, the eldest daughter and a married woman—though Catherine and her brothers were to receive lesser amounts than their younger sisters because they had already been given part of their inheritance during their father's lifetime. In reference to Charles, his father noted: 'I [have] already advanced and paid for him most of his fortune', while Catherine has been similarly treated: 'I having already advanced and paid to her her Fortune.' Thomas, William stated, had 'cost me a deal of money in putting him out to Apprentice and during the time he was loose'.[50] Likewise the will of the Manchester draper John MacCurdy, written and executed in 1810, gave his married daughter Mary only one guinea, 'taking into consideration what I have already done for my said Daughter Mary, and she being now well and comfortably settled in the world', while his two unmarried daughters inherited the remainder of his modest estate.[51] The Liverpool dyer Philip Adlington left a personal estate valued at under £450 when he died in 1820. Adlington had a married daughter, Mary Rimington, when he made his will in 1796, while his two sons had predeceased him and had left a widow and three daughters between them. Mary Rimington and her husband were appointed as executors and trustees of his estate, with the express instruction that they use it to provide for the sons' families, while they themselves apparently received nothing unless and until all three of his granddaughters had died.[52] Mary Rimington seems likely to have been overlooked in her father's will because she had already received her 'marriage portion' some years earlier. Whatever the situation, given that she was an executor, it seems likely that this arrangement did meet with her tacit agreement.

The treatment of stepchildren neatly illustrates the importance to our testators of blood ties, equity, duty, and emotional bonds. There are seven wills in our sample that mention stepchildren, and in two of them they were placed on an equal footing with the testator's own offspring. The will of the Manchester publican Richard Pointon was among the majority in giving differential treatment to his own and to his wife's children. Both Richard and his wife, Elizabeth, had children from

[49] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 95, 109, 112. Taking into account advance payments to children in the apportionment accorded with canon law as well as being common practice: Cox and Cox, 'Probate 1500–1800', 20.

[50] 'William Aldcroft, tailor' is listed in *A Directory for the Towns of Manchester and Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788). *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1797) gives a listing for 'Thomas Aldcroft, Warehouseman, 6 Wright's Court'.

[51] LRO, WCW, Will of John McCurdy (1810).

[52] LRO, WCW, Will of Philip Adlington (1820).

previous marriages as well as having produced children together: he had two sons from his first wife, and she had a daughter by a former husband. Though Thomas left a legacy for the maintenance of his wife and all their children, he specified that his stepdaughter should be supported only until the age of 21 or until her marriage, stating:

> I will and direct that she shall not take have or be entitled to share any part of my said Estates and Effects along with my own children it only being my intention that she should be brought up with them until she attains the age of twenty one years or should marry in the mean while but no longer.[53]

Ann Tatlock, who ran a linen drapers in Derby Square, Liverpool, and who died in 1760, displayed a similar set of priorities when she left the bulk of her estate—which included a house, business, cash, and household goods—to her four children, John, Benjamin, Hannah, and Mary. Her stepson, William, who appears to have been the child of her husband's first marriage, was given a relatively small cash gift, in common with her own children, of 'five pounds apiece to buy each of them a suit of mourning'.[54] Yet this bias towards one's own blood relatives was not necessarily inequitable: though Ann's will was not generous concerning her stepson, William had been left a significant bequest of real estate in his father's will when he had died in 1734.[55] Taken together, both wills appeared to share the Tatlock estate pretty evenly among the various offspring, which might suggest that it was a reasonable expectation that stepchildren were provided for by the wills of their biological, rather than their step, parents, and that the provisions discussed were about ensuring equity rather than revealing a lack of concern for the children of a spouse's previous marriage.

Similar arrangements concerning equity between siblings and half siblings were described in a court case concerning the estate of the Liverpool pipe-maker Thomas Hayes, who had run a business from 9 Strand Street, Old Dock.[56] Hayes made his will in 1800 (and died soon after) leaving his estate to his wife, Lydia, and their daughter, also Lydia. Hayes's will also contained the provision that £280 from his estate should be passed after his widow's death to her children by her first marriage, of whom Jonathan Hutchinson the complainant was one (the others being Martha Atherton, William Hutchinson, Alfred Hutchinson, and Joseph Hutchinson).[57] This stipulation was in recognition of the property left to Lydia Hayes by her first husband, Jonathan Hutchinson senior, also a pipe-maker, who had died in 1780.[58]

[53] LRO, WCW, Will of Richard Pointon (1810).

[54] LRO, WCW, Will of Ann Tatlock (1760). See also LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Percival (1820).

[55] LRO, WCW, Will of William Tatlock (1734).

[56] *Gores'* [*sic*] *Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1800).

[57] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Hayes, Liverpool pipemaker (1800). James Atherton, Martha's husband, also appears to have been a pipemaker: *Gores'* [*sic*] *Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1800). Jonathan Hutchinson was also listed as a pipemaker and victualler, 30 Lumber Street. William was described as a pipemaker as well in the case documents. Alfred is described at a schoolmaster in the consistory court papers and Joseph's occupation is not listed.

[58] LRO, WCW, Will of Jonathan Hutchinson of Liverpool, pipemaker (1780).

The clause was allegedly repeated in Lydia Hutchinson senior's will, which was made in 1809, two years before she died in 1811, 'without altering or revoking her said Will and without making any other appointment or disposition of the said Sum of Two hundred and eighty pounds or any part thereof'.[59] Yet, instead of her children receiving the money, their stepsister, Lydia junior, was accused of taking possession of her father's premises without offering to pay what was owed, before promptly dying herself, intestate. Since then her husband, Gow Gibson, another pipe-maker,[60] had gained the administration of her estate and was allegedly refusing to pay any money to the Hutchinson children. In 1814 the Chester Consistory Court instructed Gow Gibson to produce an inventory of Thomas Hayes's personal estate at his death. On 25 August of that year Gibson signed an oath for the court that promised to honour the terms of Thomas Hayes's will and to pay Jonathan Hutchinson's children what they were owed.[61]

Two testators in our sample of seven put stepchildren on an equal footing with their own offspring. Josiah Brownsword, Liverpool slater and plasterer, left his daughter, Martha, two houses on Cross Hall Street in 1790, and the same to Sarah Bayley, his wife Abigail's daughter with her previous husband.[62] Edward Litherland, a Manchester mason, specified in his will, written in 1810 and proved in 1820, that, after his wife Bella's death or remarriage, his estate should pass both to his son, William, and to Thomas Halfpenny, Bella's son by a previous marriage. After Edward's death (and perhaps some time before it), Thomas appears to have changed his name to Litherland in a telling sign of loyalty to his stepfather, and he is listed in the 1822 trade directory as a stonemason operating at 4 Murray Street, next door to his mother's inherited stonemasonry business.[63] Though the reasons for these arrangements were not specified, it seems likely that these two cases involved either an unrecorded settlement by the children's biological parents that was taken into account by their stepfathers, or the absence of any such settlement that meant that their stepfathers' actions were driven by a desire to see equitable treatment. This could be coupled—as seems likely in the Litherland case—with a strong emotional bond.

Acknowledging the emotional ties between family members was an important part of testatory practice. Wills often contained expressions of affection for beneficiaries, particularly between husbands and wives, with 'my loving wife' being one of the most common epithets. Similar indications of affection were evident concerning children, suggesting that love for one's closest family members was one reason for making sure that they were provided for properly.[64] Yet more negative

[59] This will cannot be traced.

[60] *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1805) lists 'Gow Gibson, Mariner and Pipemaker, 45 Strand Street, 3 Marshall Lane'; he had apparently taken over his mother-in-law's business before her death.

[61] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Hayes (1814).

[62] LRO, WCW, Will of Josiah Brownsword (1790).

[63] *Pigot and Dean's New Directory of Manchester, Salford, &c., for 1821–2* (Manchester, 1821).

[64] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 156–7. See also David Marcombe, *English Small Town Life: Retford, 1520–1542* (Nottingham, 1993), 148, on affection for spouses shown in wills.

emotions are less apparent, and though we know that family members disagreed and fell out, that parents might favour one child over another in their affections, and that marriages might be miserable and relations bitter, this was rarely expressed in our sampled wills. Strong social expectations about equity, the proper conduct of one's affairs, and the nature of family relationships were a powerful influence upon testators when deciding how to frame their bequests. Though the wills in our sample provide many examples of the existence of affection and love, very rarely did we find evidence of less congenial relations.[65] Just one case was found where a child appears to have been disinherited: William Bowers left his sons Joseph and Benjamin real estate, household goods, and his stock-in-trade, while their brother John was given a shilling.[66] Though the 'snub of the shilling' was a common sign of disinheritance, frustratingly the will gives no indication for the reasoning behind this decision, and we are left to speculate as to why William and John might have become estranged.

A few other wills were explicit about the link between beneficiaries' conduct and their right to an inheritance: hinting at possible problems in familial relations, as well as supporting Morris's contention that the sociology of the gift—in which reciprocal obligations were constructed by the act of giving—is a useful way to view inheritance practices,[67] while reminding us that affection and duty within families were intertwined. The will of John Woodward, a Liverpool shoemaker, for example, specifically instructed that his children should obey their mother and that she, in turn, should care for them.[68] Similarly, the Liverpool blockmaker John Layton decreed in his will of 1744, executed in 1780, that his

> stock and tools in trade in the Blockmakers way I give and Devise the same unto my son John At his Attainment to the Age of Twenty One years he Serving His Mother in the said Trade of Blockmaker Until his said age if he carry on those Trades and She finding and providing for him Meat, Drink Washing Lodging and Cloaths until that time but if he refuse so to do the Devise and Legacy to him shall be void.[69]

With such a large gap between the will being made and John Layton dying, John junior must have been of age for some years by the time probate was granted. However, his father's stipulations suggest he thought that his son and wife might not get on if he was not around, and that he believed that his son should inherit his estate only if he did what he was told. It was not just children who were reminded of their duties towards their parents. When the Manchester innkeeper Thomas Kent made his will in 1786, he left the inn on Hanging Ditch and its contents to his 'affectionate wife', Mary, who was also one of three executors:

[65] Similar findings in Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660–1730* (Oxford, 1989), 188; Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 100.
[66] LRO, WCW, Will of William Bowers (1760).
[67] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 96–8.
[68] LRO, WCW, Will of John Woodward (1760).
[69] LRO, WCW, Will of John Layton (1780). The same impulse to see children gainfully employed is evident in wills that put aside sums of money to pay for future apprenticeships: LRO, WCW, Wills of Rostern Bowers (1760); Henry Kirkman (1790); Peter Little, (1806).

> Upon this express Condition that she my said Wife during her Widowhood do and shall find and provide Meat Drink Washing Lodging and Apparel and all other necessary Conveniences for my Daughters Alice and Mary Kent suitable to their Degree and fitting to their circumstances and situation in life until they shall respectively attain the Age of twenty one years.[70]

Perhaps Mary Kent was not the mother of Thomas's daughters, but the fact that he felt such a direction was necessary for a wife he described as 'affectionate' is suggestive of familial tensions bubbling away under the surface.

Such instructions were also not limited to domestic arrangements, nor to the treatment and behaviour of minors. When James Blomely died in 1780, he left his cook's business in Fox Entry, Smithy Door, Manchester, to his wife and children, with trade directories for 1781 and 1788 recording the transition from James to 'Mrs Blomiley'.[71] The will directed that the business should be carried on by this wife 'with the Assistance of my said Son and Daughter' and that the profits should be shared between the three of them, provided that his children continue to work alongside his wife. However, he instructed:

> if they shall neglect or refuse to Assist her my said Wife in such business then my Mind and Will is that she my said Wife shall have the Sole Management and profits of such Business And also the use and Enjoyment of all my Household and other Goods and Furniture together with the Interest of the residue of my personal Estate during her Singleness of Life and to be disposed of at her decease unto and between her said Son and Daughter in such shares and proportions as she my said Wife shall by Deed Will or otherwise direct.[72]

It is hard to escape the conclusion that James Blomel thought his children might not behave in the way that he wanted, and that this belief was based upon either prior conduct or his understanding of his children's characters. This apparent reading of the familial context meant that he felt obliged to spell out the duties and obligations of individual family members in order to ensure that his wishes concerning both the right disposal of his property, and the proper conduct of his wife and children, were observed.

WOMEN'S INHERITANCES

Aside from providing a specific set of instructions concerning how his wife and children should conduct themselves towards one another, James Blomel also placed a condition in his will that stated his wife should control the inheritance that she received from him only 'during her Singleness of Life' and until she died: this meant that, if she remarried, the estate passed to their children, as it did after her

[70] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Kent (1790). See also the Will of William Robinson (1820).

[71] *The Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781); *Lewis's Directory for the Towns of Manchester and Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788).

[72] LRO, WCW, Will of James Blomely (1780).

death, so that she was prevented from leaving it to any alternative recipients (though she could still do so in the case of any property that was not her passed to her by her husband). Though Blomel's strictures about the conduct of his family's living arrangements and business were unusual, his instructions about his wife's conditional control of his estate were not. Wills that specified that a wife had rights over property only until she remarried have sometimes been described as constraining women's choice of action and 'locking' wives into widowhood,[73] yet, as Erickson has argued, restrictions imposed on bequests in case widows remarried were primarily aimed at ensuring that family property remained in the hands of chosen heirs and could not be squandered by a feckless new husband.[74] Under common law, wives could not control property and were forced to surrender rights to their husbands upon marriage. Although the reality of married women's property ownership was not necessarily so bleak, and married women could and did control property independently of their husbands according to aspects of customary, equity, and ecclesiastic law as well as by sheer force of will,[75] the danger of a new husband acting in opposition to his wife and her family's wishes was a real one. In such cases the common-law principle of coverture could run counter to aspects of other types of law that protected women's individual property rights, and, in the case of widows, those of her earlier husband's family.[76] A widow in possession of her deceased husband's property would, according to coverture, lose that property upon remarriage, which could leave her children at the mercy of a wayward or conniving stepfather, while the inheritances of daughters who married were exposed to similar risks.

Men and women in trade were keenly aware of the potential perils faced by women with property, and they sought to circumvent the dangers posed by marriage and coverture to family wealth in a variety of ways. One of the most common was to place limitations on a wife's inheritance, so that property was left to be 'enjoyed' during the wife's 'natural life' and/or for her term of widowhood, meaning that she lost all or some of her rights over it when she either died or remarried. The butcher William Roscoe, for example, who made his will in 1809 and died the following year, left his entire estate in trust to his widow, Harriet, with

[73] Owens, 'Property, Gender and the Life Course'; Barbara J. Todd, 'The Remarrying Widow: A Stereotype Reconsidered', in M. Prior (ed.), *Women in English Society 1500–1800* (London, 1985), 54–92, pp. 72–5.

[74] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 168–9.

[75] Margaret R. Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680–1780* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996), 157–62; Margot Finn, 'Women, Consumption and Coverture in England, *c.*1760–1860', *Historical Journal*, 39/3 (1996), 702–22; Joanne Bailey, 'Favoured or Oppressed? Married Women, Property and "Coverture" in England, 1660–1800', *Continuity and Change*, 17/3 (2002), 1–22; Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business 1700–1850* (Woodbridge, 2006), chs 2–3; Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760–1830* (Oxford, 2006), 136–40.

[76] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 24–6; Finn, 'Women, Consumption and Coverture'; Margaret Hunt, 'Wives and Marital "Rights" in the Court of Exchequer', in P. Griffiths and M. S. R. Jenner (eds), *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London* (Manchester, 2000), 107–29; Phillips, *Women in Business*, pt 1; Barker, *The Business of Women*, 135–9.

George Swinden, gentleman, and John Rowland, brewer, both of Liverpool, acting as trustees. Swinden and Rowland were to

> permit and suffer my loving wife Harriet Roscoe to hold use and enjoy all my Household Goods Plate Linen and China and all other my personal Estate and Interests Profits and Proceeds of the same for and during the Term of her natural Life or so Long as she may continue my Widow and not marry again . . .

After either of these events, the estate was to transfer to any children that the couple might have, in trust until they reached the age of 21.[77]

Though, as we have seen, making a will was not determined by the existence of children, the conditions placed on wives' bequests were directly related to the presence of surviving offspring and reveal a heightened concern that wealth should remain in family hands and in time be passed to the younger generation. In his study of Leeds wills in the 1830s, Morris noted that the presence of children seemed to have been a deciding factor if the children were minors, and that widows were given more freedom and autonomy if the couple had no children or if those children were adults.[78] In our sample also, those wills where wives were left property 'absolutely'—that is, without restrictions—were rarely ones where a couple appeared to have offspring. However, it does not seem to have mattered what age their children were when determining the future of the bulk of the estate, for testators were keen for both minor and adult children to receive a share of their estates, suggesting that economic dependency was not the main consideration for testators when deciding how to distribute their property.

The use of a variety of different conditions to protect bequests made to wives when a couple had children is shown in Table 2.1. Although some men's wills specified that their wives might inherit household goods or specific moveable items to dispose of as they wished upon their own deaths,[79] we found only two cases in which the wills of married men with children allowed wives this degree of freedom in terms of the whole estate. The Manchester dyer Peter Little was therefore unusual when he instructed in 1806 that his wife, Jenny, was to receive the bulk of his property and that he gave 'full power for her my said wife to dispose of or bequeath the same unto and amongst my younger children in such manner and at such time or times as she shall think proper'.[80] Likewise the Liverpool sailmaker Peter Meadow, who made a will in 1759, which was executed the following year, stated:

> I absolutely rely & depend on my loving Wife Mary providing for & taking care of my Children to the best of her Power in Confidence thereof I herby give devise & bequeath

[77] LRO, WCW, Will of William Roscoe (1810).
[78] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 105.
[79] e.g. LRO, WCW, Wills of Joseph Priestman (1790); William Tillotson (1810), Edward Litherland (1820); Samuel Shawcross (1820).
[80] LRO, WCW, Will of Peter Little (1810).

Table 2.1. Bequest conditions in wills written by men with both wives and children as % of total

Condition	Liverpool(%)	Manchester(%)
Natural life of wife	81	64
Term of widowhood	40	42
Until children come of age	20	18
Equally shared between wife and children	14	17
Second-stage inheritance: children	60	56
Second-stage inheritance: not children	8	8
Absolute to wife	2	3

Note: Individual wills often contained more than one form of condition.

> to her my said loving Wife her Heirs Executors Administrators & Assigns absolutely at her and their own Disposal & not Subject to ye controul of my Children.[81]

Every one of the twenty-five Manchester married men's wills in our sample that specified that property was left to a wife only until she remarried mentioned the existence of children, as did all but four of the twenty-three Liverpool wills in this category. In three of these Liverpool exceptions, other family members inherited if the widow remarried (and also when she died): thus the 1780 will of innkeeper John Whitley left his entire estate to his wife, unless she remarried, in which case half the estate passed to his brother, Michael, another innkeeper in Lancaster.[82] The wife of a ship's carpenter, Elizabeth Woods, was also left her husband's complete estate when he died. Joseph Woods specified that 'in case she marries again to any other Husband' then his entire estate was to go to 'My Mother Mary Woods of Medford in Northumberland, widow'.[83] Similarly, the victualler Thomas Howorth specified in his will, proved in 1790, that the real estate and household goods he had left to his wife, Mary, would revert to his three brothers, William, John, and James, upon her remarriage or death. His siblings had already received a sizeable proportion of his estate upon his demise, including his business.[84] Instances such as these, where a wife's remarriage meant she lost control of her dead husband's estate though the couple had no surviving children, were in a minority, though they attest to a particularly strong desire to keep family property within the wider family. By far the most common reason to impose a term of widowhood condition—constituting 92 per cent of cases—was to ensure that property was protected for the benefit of the testator's children.

When married men did not have any children, they were significantly more likely to leave their property to their wives 'absolutely', often bequeathing them the whole estate. The Liverpool cooper William Higgins, who made his will in 1775

[81] LRO, WCW, Will of Peter Meadow (1760). Green's work on early nineteenth-century London suggests that leaving property to wives 'absolutely' was more common here than elsewhere in the country: Green, 'To Do the Right Thing', 141–3.

[82] LRO, WCW, Will of John Whitley (1780).

[83] LRO, WCW, Will of Joseph Woods (1780).

[84] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Howorth (1790).

and died in 1780, for example, gave instructions to 'Give Devise and Bequeath Unto my Wife Jane All my Estate and Effects of What Nature and kind soever and wheresoever both Real and Personal to Hold the same unto my said wife Jane her Heirs Executors Administrators and Assigns for ever'.[85] In Liverpool, 71 per cent of childless married men left all or the bulk of their estate to their wives absolutely. In Manchester, the figure was 67 per cent. The remaining wills of childless married men left second-stage instructions for their property to pass to other family members after their wives' deaths. In most of the cases where childless men bequeathed their property to their wives absolutely, wives were also appointed as sole executors—as was Jane Higgins—leaving such women in complete charge of both the estate and how it was managed. The manner of a wife's appointment as executor (either alone, with another family member, with a 'friend', or not being appointed at all) appears also to have been determined by whether or not a couple had children. Wives were appointed as sole executors only rarely when this was the case (10 per cent of Liverpool wills where the testator had a wife and children, 5 per cent in Manchester), but this was far more common when there were no children from the marriage (71 per cent of Liverpool wills of childless married men, 53 per cent in Manchester). Having children made wives in both towns much *less* likely to be appointed as executors (48 per cent Liverpool, 44 per cent Manchester, of wills of men with wives and children). Conversely, when the couple had no children, the wife was far *more* likely to act in this capacity (86 per cent Liverpool, 87 per cent Manchester, of wills of men with wives and no children). This pattern echoes the use of bequest conditions in wills and suggests that testators with children expected executors to bolster the protection offered by conditions such as 'term of widowhood' against the threats posed to women's property under common law.

In addition to placing conditions on women's inheritance if they remarried, several of the men in our sample went to further lengths to try to ensure that their estate did not find its way into unsanctioned hands by attempting to establish bequests as 'separate estates' in their wills. The formation of this type of legal instrument was not unusual, nor was it new,[86] and it can be found in legal handbooks aimed at a general readership, such as James Bird's *The Laws Respecting Wills, Testaments, and Codicils, and Executors, Administrators, and Guardians, Laid Down in a Plain and Easy Manner; In Which All Technical Terms of Law are Familiarly Explained*, which provided examples of wills that set up separate estates for female relatives.[87] The form of wording in such texts was echoed in many of the wills in our sample. Thus the will of John Sutherst, a Manchester painter, written in

[85] LRO, WCW, Will of William Higgins (1780).

[86] Amy Erickson, 'Common Law versus Common Practice: The Use of Marriage Settlements in Early Modern England', *Economic History Review*, 43 (1990), 21–39; M. Berg, 'Women's Property and the Industrial Revolution', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 24/2 (1993), 233–50; Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, 157–62.

[87] Bird, *The Laws Respecting Wills, Testaments, and Codicils*. See also Richardson, *The Law of Testaments and Last Wills*; Peter Lovelass, *The Law's Disposal of a Person's Estate who Dies without Will or Testament, Shewing, in a Plain, Clear, Easy and Familiar Manner, how a Man's Family and Relations Will Be Entitled to his Real and Personal Estate by the Laws of England*, 2nd edn (Dublin, 1787).

1789 and executed in 1790, for example, stated that 'the Legacy so by me hereinbefore given to my said Daughter shall not be subject or liable to the Debts Engagments Diposition Power or Controul of any Person with whom she may happen to Marry and that her Receipt nothwithstanding Coverture shall be an effectual acquittance of such Legacy'.[88] The flour dealer Joseph Wright, whose daughter, Mary, was to inherit his estate after the death of her mother, also incorporated a separate estate provision into his will and stated that Mary's inheritance was 'for her own sole and separate use during her natural life free from the Control Debts or Engagements of her present or any future Husband and I do declare and direct that the Receipt of my said Daughter alone for the same notwithstanding her Coverture from time to time shall be a sufficient discharge of my said trustees'.[89] Though most examples of separate estate provision in our sample concerned fathers and daughters, we also located wills such as that of the Liverpool lath cleaner John Lyon, who left his entire estate to his spinster sister, Mary, 'for her same separate use and benefit and so as that the same shall not be subject to the debts disposition power or controul of any husband with whom she may happen to intermarry'.[90] Similarly, the will of James Aldred, a Manchester calenderer, left his wife, Agnes, part of his estate 'during her natural Life & to and for her own sole and separate use and not subject or liable to the debts controul or engagements of any future husband'.[91] Most men leaving property to their wives, however, appear to have felt that this sort of an arrangement was too risky, given that any remarriage meant the potential loss of their children's inheritance, and they therefore preferred the greater certainty apparently offered by a 'term of widowhood' condition on bequests. As we have seen, this was the conclusion of John Towne Danson, who helped his grandfather, the Liverpool barber and perfumer John Danson, to draw up his will in the early 1840s.

Almost every one of the wills in our sample that sought to establish a separate estate for female relatives also appointed trustees, as did many other wills that did not include this legal form, and property was left in trust in 40 per cent of Manchester men's wills and 28 per cent of those from Liverpool. Since the role of the trustee was to control and manage the estate on behalf of the legatee, in the case of a woman in receipt of a legacy this was another tactic to try to circumvent the law of coverture by placing property outside her direct control, and, by so doing, to keep it in family hands.[92] Though we are more accustomed to seeing trustees described for wealthier estates in secondary literature on inheritance,[93]

[88] LRO, WCW, Will of John Sutherst (1790). See also Wills of William Willacy (1800); John Gratrix (1820); Robert Edwards (1800); John Tomlinson (1820).

[89] LRO, WCW, Will of Joseph Wright (1800). See also Wills of John Barber (1820); Joseph Mellor (1818).

[90] LRO, WCW, Will of John Lyon (1820). See also Will of James Blomely (1780).

[91] LRO, WCW, Will of James Aldred (1810). See also Will of William Roscoe (1810).

[92] Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 103; Chantal Stebbings, *The Private Trustee in Victorian England* (Cambridge, 2002), 10–11, 14–15.

[93] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London, 1987), 209–10; Morris, *Men, Women and Property*, 113; Stebbings, *The Private Trustee in Victorian England*, 6–7.

B. L. Anderson has described them as 'acting as custodians of capital over a wide range of the population' in eighteenth-century Lancashire.[94] Neither the formation of a separate estate, nor the appointment of trustees, was reserved for the wealthier members of our sample, and indeed these legal tactics were found most often in wills where personal estate was valued at under £300: which suggests that combining the last will and testament with a document establishing a separate estate might have been more popular among humbler individuals who could not afford separate legal instruments but who still wished to make sure that inheritances were not diverted from their rightful recipients.

The role played by trustees was vital to the proper functioning of a separate estate, since trustees stood a better chance of standing between a family's inherited wealth and a new husband keen on asserting his common-law rights than did the wife acting alone, but trustees were also appointed in other cases where those inheriting were thought to require additional protection. Thus John Wood, a Manchester publican, left his entire estate to his wife, Mary, under the trusteeship of William Tattersall, a Manchester gentleman, William Lupton, a Salford brewer, and William Newell, a Manchester liquor merchant, 'during the term of her natural Life to and for her own proper use and disposal', and was keen to stress that this should be 'free from the control debts or engagements of any after taken Husband'.[95] Though the couple had no children of their own, John Wood did have a 'natural' son, whom he wished to have a share in his estate, along with his siblings, after his wife's death.[96] Most trustees were appointed in the wills of men with wives and children (62 per cent Manchester, 68 per cent Liverpool, of wills with trustees), with some for those with wives only (17 per cent Manchester, 8 per cent Liverpool) and some for those with children only (12 per cent Manchester, 19 per cent Liverpool), or for other family members in the case of single, childless men (8 per cent Manchester, 5 per cent Liverpool). Though wives and daughters might be appointed as both executors and trustees of an estate, they never acted as trustees alone and without the support of male relatives or more usually, male 'friends'. Indeed, 86 per cent of Manchester wills in which trustees had been appointed included at least one apparently non-related friend as a trustee, and 83 per cent of those in Liverpool. It is hard to unpick the nature of the relationship between testator and trustee in such cases, though trustees were almost always local and usually fellow tradesmen. The frequent use of the term 'friend' to describe individual trustees suggests that the testators who appointed them not only knew them well but also felt that they could be trusted with such important commissions.

[94] B. L. Anderson, 'Provincial Aspects of the Financial Revolution of the Eighteenth Century', *Business History*, 11/1 (1969), 11–22, p. 20.

[95] See also LRO, WCW, Will of Richard Turner (1820).

[96] LRO, WCW, Will of John Wood (1820). Though illegitimate offspring were legally 'filius nullis' under common law, and had no rights of inheritance (Trev Lynn Broughton and Helen Rogers, 'Introduction: The Empire of the Father', in Trev Lynn Broughton and Helen Rogers (eds), *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2007), 1–28, p. 11), we found another instance in which a father made provision for his illegitimate children: LRO, WCW, Will of James Dawson (1790).

The careful appointment of trustees and executors, alongside the use of the various legal strategies to protect family property described above, suggest that those in trade were well aware of the possible dangers posed by new husbands and would make considerable efforts to circumvent the law of coverture in an attempt to ensure the 'right disposal' of their estates. Records from both the Consistory Court at Chester and the Court of Exchequer in London show not only that the threat posed to women's bequests was very real, but also that the measures put in place by testators to protect their property were not always successful. In 1767, for example, a case was brought to the Consistory Court against Grace Jones, widow of Edward Jones, a Liverpool joiner who had died intestate in 1765. She had previously been the wife of the Liverpool chair-bottom maker Thomas Wilkins, who died in 1753. Wilkins had made a will that left his estate—including a house on Williams Street—to his wife with the stipulation that, if she remarried, the inheritance should be passed in trust to their daughter, Ellen, who was around 5 or 6 years old at the time of her father's death.[97] Contrary to the terms of Thomas Wilkin's will, Grace's new husband, Edward Jones, was said to have 'possessed himself of the whole of the Real and Personal estate' of the former spouse, giving his stepdaughter a promissory note for £100 in 1764, a decade after his marriage to her mother, 'on account of the Rent he had received from the said House in Williams street as well as what also was due to the said Ellen Wilkins by the Will of her said Father and for Interest thereof as also on account of what work she had done for him the said Edward Jones' in her stepfather's business. This promissory note was presented to the court and survives among the documentation. Ellen Wilkins's aunt, Sidney Ellis, who brought the case to court, claimed that £100 should be paid, along with interest due on it, and this was not denied by her sister—Ellen's mother—when she was summoned to give evidence, although it is unclear whether Ellen ever received her money.[98]

Though Ellen Wilkinson may well have been permanently cheated out of her inheritance by her stepfather, Sidney Ellis's subsequent actions over the course of a three-year court battle suggest both the power of family loyalties—in this case shown by an aunt for her niece, rather than a mother for her daughter, as might have been expected—as well as a popular understanding of the laws concerning inheritance and the agency of women in legal cases involving those in trade. Though it is not clear from the court records if Ellis had the benefit of either legal representation or advice, she had presumably acted independently in her initial identification of a wrongdoing and in seeking redress. Many of the same characteristics of this case are apparent in a more complex series of court cases

[97] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Wilkins of Liverpool, 'cottonman and chaire bottomer' (1753).

[98] LRO, WCW, Disputed probate of Edward Jones. This case rumbled on for three years at the Chester consistory court, being repeatedly postponed between January 1767 and July 1770, when a final verdict was reported on the 26th: CCALS, Consistory Court Book for the Diocese of Chester, EDC1/152. See also EDC1/150, 15 and 29 January, 12 and 26 February, 12 March, 2 and 30 April, 18 June, 2 and 30 July, 1 October, 12 November 1767, 3 December 1768; EDC1/151, 19 and 26 January, 16 February, 13 April, 1 and 15 June, 20 July, 28 September, 7 December 1769; EDC1/152, 18 January 1770.

involving the Greenwood family of Manchester. Here we see illustrated the dangers to family money of second marriages, the understanding and use by tradesmen and women of a variety of legal devices to try to protect inherited estates, and their navigation of a complicated court system. In 1780 Elizabeth Walton, former wife of the painter, chapman, and dealer John Greenwood, along with the children of her first marriage, brought a case to the Court of Exchequer against James Walton, who was Elizabeth's husband and her children's stepfather.[99] John Greenwood, Elizabeth's first husband, had apparently left his wife a valuable estate on his death in 1769, which included a house and shop on Deansgate and a pew in the Anglican St John's Church. In addition, his will stipulated that his 'dearly beloved wife' was to take as much of the moveable property

> as she should think suitable in her own reason and capacity to manage to value of one hundred and fifty pounds or two hundred pounds and such a part of his household goods and furniture as she should think fit to furnish herself a house to live comfortably in and shop to retain such goods as she in her own discretion should choose and think fit to deal in for the preservation of her and her childrens maintenance bringing up and education.

She was also to receive half the rental interest on the real estate, with the other half to be placed in trust for their children. In common with many other widows, 'if his beloved wife . . . married a second husband', John Greenwood's will directed that Elizabeth was to lose almost all of her inheritance 'but that part only given her for the Stocking of her Shop'.[100]

> Immediately following her husband's death, Elizabeth was said to have entered in the possession [*sic*] of the real and possessed the personal estate of the said testator or so much thereof as she was able and occupied the house shop buildings and premises in and near Deansgate in Manchester aforesaid where the said testator had lived and had carried on his trade and which were the whole of his real estate . . . and she carried on the trade or business of selling paints cutting whalebone and the branches of trade which the said testator in his lifetime followed with the said testators whole stock and capital or so much as she could possess herself of for the benefit of herself and her children.

In July 1770, almost a year after her husband's death, Elizabeth 'unfortunately married' James Walton, 'a man of no fortune who was a rider out and servant to the said testator at his death'. Soon after the marriage, Walton was accused of assuming control of all of the business stock and 'took upon himself the management of the said trade which was carried on at the said premises in Deansgate' as well as receiving debts due to John Greenwood's estate. Such behaviour obviously contravened the clause in John Greenwood's will which had stipulated that, in case of his wife's remarriage, her share in the estate was to pass to her children, and this was the basis on which a case was taken to the Court of Exchequer.[101]

[99] TNA: E 112/1527/155 (1780). [100] LRO, WCW, Will of John Greenwood (1769).
[101] TNA: E 112/1527/155; LRO, WCW, Will of John Greenwood (1769).

Yet the situation was more complicated than it first appears, since Elizabeth and her new husband were described as having made a separate prenuptial agreement in which he promised to leave Elizabeth's inheritance untouched. It was claimed that 'Elizabeth previous to her marriage to the said James Walton not willing to put any part of her estate or effects in the power of her said intended husband' made a deed that both she and James Walton signed just before they were wed in which he had agreed that,

> notwithstanding the same marriage he the said James Walton his executors administrators or assigns should not intermeddle with or have any right title or interest either at law or in equity or in or to all or to any part of the rents issues profits or produce of all or any part of the real freehold and personal estate or estates of your oratrix Elizabeth but that the same should remain and continue and be to her or to such as she should think fit and appoint . . . for the separate use of your same oratrix and so that same should not be in the power or disposal or the power of the said James Walton.

Two trustees—Thomas Froggart of Manchester, a gentleman (since deceased), and James Kay of Salford, a brewer—were said to have been appointed to oversee the arrangement, which seems to have been an attempt on Elizabeth's part to hold onto her inheritance despite her remarriage, rather than to hand it over to trustees on behalf of her children.[102]

Yet, little more than a year after the marriage, in November 1770, Walton was alleged to have made Elizabeth sign another deed, which it was said he 'obtained from her . . . by threats of ill usage or unkind treatment and through fear thereof and executed by her for the sake of her own peace with him and not voluntarily of her own accord executed by her'. This 'pretended deed' of 28 November 1770 was described as 'entirely repugnant to the true intent and meaning' of the couple's original 'marriage contract' and put 'the real and personal estates of your same oratrix which were meant to be and continue her separate estate entirely in the power and under the control of her said husband'.[103] After this assumption of control, the 1772 and 1773 Manchester directories listed James Walton variously as a 'painter' and a 'haberdasher and bone-cutter' on Deansgate, operating from his ex-master's and new wife's house.[104]

In September 1775, Walton was said to have paid William Greenwood, one of Elizabeth's sons, the sum of £80 5*s*.4*d*., which he later claimed was a 'general release of all legacies dues duties and demands' in the future. But William claimed that the 'pretended release' was obtained when he 'was out of employ and in great straits for money', while Walton, 'who had then the control and management of the said testators personal estate and the . . . profits of his real estate refused to supply your same orator with any monies unless . . . [he] would execute such a release and therefore . . . [he] charges that the same release ought not be any bar' to William claiming his inheritance and to James Walton providing them with a proper set of

[102] TNA: E 112/1527/155. [103] TNA: E 112/1527/155.
[104] *Manchester Directory for the Year 1772* (Manchester, 1772); *Manchester Directory for the Year 1773* (Manchester, 1773).

accounts.[105] Elizabeth appears to have tried to reassert her rights by way of another deed in June 1780, after which she no longer lived with him, Walton 'being in an habit of disoluteness and dissipation and having most grossly assaulted and threatened the life of your same oratrix in so much as she durst no longer cohabit with him she for her own personal safety'.[106] Soon after Elizabeth secured her husband's arrest and temporary imprisonment. James Walton appeared before the Lancashire Quarter Sessions on 11 July accused of 'assaulting and abusing' his wife 'in a most brutal and violent manner' and was bound over to keep the peace for a period of twelve months. It was alleged that Walton had 'threatened to shoot her and repeatedly put her in fear of her life in so much that she dare not Live with him and has been Obliged to seek Relief and Refuge at Neighbours Houses'.[107] According to Elizabeth Walton's Exchequer suit, 'so great being the defendant Waltons want of credit and the universally received ill opinion of his conduct being such that he was unable to procure sureties towards keeping the peace towards your oratrix his wife', he was thus 'committed to gaol for want of such sureties and remained in gaol . . . for six months'.[108]

While her husband was carted off to prison, Elizabeth instructed the trustees of the second deed—John Beswick, a fustian dresser, and Matthew Falkner, a bookbinder and stationer,[109] both of Manchester—'to aid and support her in possession of the said stock and goods with which such trade was carried on . . . to assist her in preventing the same from being sold and dissipated by the said defendant her husband which your same orators accordingly did'. She also requested that Falkner and Beswick 'assist her in carrying on the said trade which your orators accordingly did and continued and doth yet continue so to do'.[110] The 1781 Manchester directory no longer mentioned James Walton, and instead Elizabeth Walton, 'whalebone cutter and colour shop', is listed with a Deansgate address.[111] On 25 July 1780, two weeks after Walton's trial at the Court of Quarter Sessions, an advertisement appeared in the *Manchester Mercury* asserting Elizabeth's rights to her former husband's estate under the terms of John Greenwood's will and according to her marriage contract with Walton—'which was never legally revoked'—and which had allowed her to appoint Falkner and Beswick as trustees 'with full Power to act for the sole Benefit of her Children'. This public proclamation was

> *to advertise the Public* [*sic*], That *James Walton* (her present Husband) hath not any Concern in the Business of late carried on in his Name (he not having any Property therein:) but all Persons to whom the said Effects are indebted, will have their Demand fully satisfied by applying to the afore-mentioned Trustees; and those who stand indebted to the Effects, are hereby cautioned not to pay their respective Debts to

[105] TNA: E 112/1527/155.
[106] TNA: E 112/1527/155.
[107] LRO, QSO/2/149 (1780).
[108] TNA: E 112/1527/155.
[109] The 1781 Manchester directory lists Falkner as a bookseller, binder, letter case, and pattern card maker with an address at 6 Market Place: *The Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781).
[110] TNA: E 112/1527/155.
[111] *The Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781).

> said *James Walton* (as they will be liable to pay them over again) but immediately to pay the same unto the said Trustees . . . or they will be sued without further Notice.[112]

Despite such assertive action on Elizabeth's part, and the appointment of trustees to try to put Elizabeth at one remove from the family property in order to circumvent the laws of coverture, following James Walton's release he was apparently making claims again on his wife's property and arrived at her shop demanding goods, which he 'insisted on forcibly taking . . . with a weapon which he brandished for the purpose [against] anybody who should oppose him and brought along with him a sheriffs officer and three assistants to aid him . . . in the execution of such his purpose'. Elizabeth and her children were said to be

> not doubting that if the said James Walton should be permitted to take possession of the same premises he would execute his said threats of selling up the stock and goods and living upon the value as he by reason of his having been imprisoned for the cause aforesaid . . . was greatly exasperated at her [Elizabeth] and . . . was become desperate.

Elizabeth was apparently rescued at this time by the intervention of her sons, William and John, as well as by the trustees, Beswick and Falkner. The Greenwoods claimed that any property given to Walton would 'be in the utmost danger of being wasted squandered and spent' and denied his claims that Walton 'is entitled to . . . a moiety of the whole of the said testators real and personal estates' under John Greenwood's will or that his children were 'indebted to him in divers large sums for board lodging cloathes and other necessaries', presumably while they lived with their mother and stepfather.[113]

According to the suit, Elizabeth had 'received cruel usage from her said husband James Walton and is otherwise unprovided for save by what she shall be found entitled to under her said settlement', while her children 'have good right under the said will to all the personal estates whatsoever late of the said testator and of the produce and profits thereof'.[114] The case against Walton centred on upholding the clause in John Greenwood's will that threatened to cut Elizabeth off from most of the estate if she remarried (a clause of which Walton may well have been aware as early as 1769, when he acted as a witness to the will).[115] Yet, while Elizabeth Walton and her children were keen to invoke this clause in their court case against Walton, it is clear that, prior to her remarriage, Elizabeth had planned to ignore this part of her husband's will, as she formed a prenuptial agreement with Walton in which she clearly stated her intention to retain much of her inheritance. Both sides in this case used legal strategies that they felt would serve them best. Thus, at the Court of Exchequer, Elizabeth and her family attempted to use custom, the formulation of a separate estate, and an appeal to equity to circumvent the common-law practice of coverture, in addition to pursuing a criminal case against James at the Quarter Sessions. The Greenwood family claimed in the former court that their treatment at Walton's hands has been 'contrary to equity and tend to the

[112] *Manchester Mercury*, 25 July 1780.
[113] TNA: E 112/1527/155.
[114] TNA: E 112/1527/155.
[115] LRO, WCW, Will of John Greenwood (1769).

great wrong and injury of your orators and oratrixes in tender consideration whereof and for as much your orators and oratrixes are utterly remediless in the premises at common law and only relievable in a court of equity where matters of account trust fraud and discovery are properly cognizable'.[116] Walton, in turn, pursued Elizabeth and her supporters through the Court of Common Pleas, claiming ownership of the business and its stock under common law and forcing her to return to the Court of Exchequer in an attempt to impose an injunction in 1782.[117] In the end, Elizabeth appears to have won out, and what is presumably her son, John Greenwood, is listed in the 1788 Manchester directory as a painter on Deansgate, with James Walton's name once more absent. Her family and local connections—particularly in the form of her trustees—may well have been what won her the day, though both she and her new husband showed an impressive degree of perseverance and an ability and willingness to navigate complex legal waters.

Given the dangers posed to family property when widows remarried, it is not surprising that some would have chosen to avoid this course of action altogether, nor that other family members would have been opposed to them marrying again. Thus, when the widow and grocer Ann Owen, who had inherited a grocery business on Hanging Ditch in Manchester from her former husband, began a romantic affair with her employee, George Heywood, in 1810, alarm bells appear to have rung for her friends and family. Heywood, meanwhile, began to daydream about his future role as head of the Owens family and business, noting:

> I pictured to myself what pains I could take with the business, how regularly I would have everything carried on, what an improvement I could make in the premises, how comfortable and happy it should be my study to make the family, and in doing all this how happy I should be myself with an industrious managing and agreeable wife like this to assist me.

He noted ruefully that

> these bright prospects, these good wishes, these great expectations were only formed to torment me and her and at last to sink into nothing; by us keeping company the family and relations begun to think and speak very disrespectfully of me, they imagined I wanted to do something wrong, to take for my self what belonged to the children.[118]

So when 'her friends saw and heard there was so much intimacy between us they were apprehensive of something serious and wished her to be without me'.[119] Thus the much younger, and poorer, Heywood was the recipient for several warnings from Mrs Owen's friends and relations, such as Mr Bingham, who told him that 'what property there is now must be entirely made over to the children', so that, if Heywood married Mrs Owens, he 'must begin afresh in the world as if you had not a shilling with this property to work upon and this you must pay interest for'.[120]

[116] TNA: E 112/1527/155.

[117] TNA: E 112/2061/152. Blocking or delaying adverse action in another court was a common motive for Exchequer complainants: Henry Horwitz, *Exchequer Equity Records and Proceedings 1649–1841* (London, 2001), 13.

[118] Heywood, fo. 15. [119] Heywood, fo. 18. [120] Heywood, fo. 19.

John Walker, Ann Owen's brother, was also said to be 'very much against' Heywood.[121] When George wrote to Walker to try to persuade him of his honourable intentions towards his sister, he reportedly received a reply that told him that

> so very unlikely and inconsistent a match, could scarcely ever seriously enter the mind of any thinking person as that of a woman with a large family, some of whom have nearly attained the years of manhood, should engage herself with a young man to whom she might at least very well be mother too. This inconsistency I have never yet been induced to attach to my sister Owen but if she should commit herself in an unwarrantable act of this kind it must be at the sacrifice of family reputation, connection and friends . . . You must know how averse the family of Mrs Owen are to you and nothing but destruction could possibly attend them in the event of a union of this kind besides agreeable to your own professions you could not be benefited by a shilling of the property of that family earned by the hard industry of their departed father. Deprived of this means, by what possible way can you propose a successful issue to your endeavours however meritorious and praiseworthy they may be. I am still, however, willing to think favourably of my sister's prudence and conduct . . . [122]

Indeed, Ann Owen did decide to conduct herself in a manner of which her family could approve: breaking up with George Heywood and persuading him to seek employment elsewhere. Eventually her son assumed control of the family business, while she appears to have remained an unmarried widow—though it should be noted a widow who enjoyed more than one admirer, and who seems to have pursued a variety of romantic adventures while enjoying her relatively independent widowed state.

CONCLUSION

While Chapter 1 suggested that those in trade were not as risk averse as has been assumed when it came to accumulating and investing their wealth, this chapter has shown that most still tried extremely hard to keep what they had in family hands: a fact that was especially evident following the death of a head of household. Ensuring the 'right disposal' of property in wills meant that inheritances were allocated according to a strict hierarchy that placed spouses and children above other consanguineal family members, while being guided by equity towards sons and daughters, as well as between offspring who had been helped financially during a testator's lifetime and others who had not. Managing one's wealth properly postmortem meant not just directing to whom it should be passed, but also trying to prevent it from getting into unauthorized hands at a later date. The concern to avoid this was especially evident in bequests to women, whose legal standing made their property particularly vulnerable. It was, therefore, common practice in our sample for testators to put conditions on their bequests to female relatives and use

[121] Heywood, fo. 24. [122] Heywood, fos 24–6.

other legal tactics to try to protect their inheritances, such as appointing trustees and establishing separate estates. This means that the different treatment meted out to women and men in wills reflects their differing status under the law, rather than the desire to restrict women's access to property per se.

Despite the evident focus on families as the main recipients of inherited wealth in this chapter, controlling what happened to one's property after death was a universal urge and duty, and not one that was restricted to those with dependants and close relations: so that individuals with neither spouse nor offspring were as likely to produce wills as others who had them. The desire to determine the proper passage of one's property was linked to credit, custom, duty, and the existence of emotional bonds: the latter most evident within families, but also apparent among unrelated friends who acted either as the recipients of bequests or as executors and trustees. Above all, though, making a will was considered a profoundly moral act, and one that was thought to be sanctioned by God. This meant that, even when families did not get on, strong expectations about the nature of familial relationships, the importance of equity, and the proper conduct of one's affairs were a powerful influence upon testators when deciding how to construct their wills. However, such reticence was not always evident in the court cases cited, which took place after wills had been made, nor is it apparent in Chapter 3, where the focus turns more firmly towards property disputes and court proceedings.

3

Family and Business

Despite concerted attempts to ensure the 'right disposal' of property, the transfer of wealth between individuals and across generations could both cause and exacerbate deep fault lines within families, resulting in bad feeling, estrangement, and—in some cases—family members dragging each other through the courts. The fact that families sometimes fell out—and particularly that they argued over inheritance—is no surprise to anyone who has examined court records or family papers in the past, nor does the revelation that individual family members might act to further their own interests at the expense of those of their relations seem a particularly startling one.[1] Yet such findings sit uneasily alongside both contemporary ideas about the family, and some more modern research. Familial relations among all ranks in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were ideally based upon both duty and love,[2] exemplified most clearly in religious terms by Christ's instruction to 'love one another' and the Old Testament commandment to 'honour thy father and thy mother'. For those in trade, these qualities were also the basis of the trust that was so vital to the proper functioning of family firms.[3] Meanwhile, modern scholars who have described 'the family' as a historical actor have not tended to make the conceptual distinction between the ways families have interacted with society in general, and the internal relationships of family life. Families are thus assumed to act as single units whose members are united in their aims—an interpretation that means that internal fractures are overlooked, and the ways in which familial decision-making operates are obscured.

[1] See, e.g., Ralph Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation, 1520–1570* (London, 1979), and Ralph Houlbrooke, *The English Family, 1450–1700* (London, 1984), esp. 54–8; Michael Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1971), 68–78, 177–8; John Addy, *Death, Money and the Vultures: Inheritance and Avarice, 1660–1750* (London and New York, 1992); Amy Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England: Share and Share Alike* (Manchester, 2012), esp. chs 3, 5.

[2] Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England*, 28–38, 55–79; Joanne Bailey, *Parenting in England 1760–1830: Emotion, Identity, and Generation* (Oxford, 2012); Leonore Davidoff, *Thicker than Water: Siblings and their Relations, 1780–1920* (Oxford, 2012).

[3] Stana Nenadic, 'The Small Family Firm in Victorian Britain', *Business History*, 35/4 (1993), 86–114; Mark Casson, 'The Economics of the Family Firm', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 47/1 (1999), 10–23. See also Sheryllynne Haggerty, *'Merely for Money'? Business Culture in the British Atlantic, 1750–1815* (Liverpool, 2012), ch. 3.

FAMILY STRATEGIES

This chapter uses the concept of 'family strategies' to try to unpick the tangle of individual and familial interests, societal and religious ideals, and emotional ties that underpinned the ways in which trading families functioned. It is based largely on court records, and, as a result, the discussion that follows predictably reveals many sites of tension among families in trade. But these same sources also demonstrate the existence of agreement and cooperation between family members, as well as providing further evidence of more congenial norms of familial behaviour. By focusing again on the fate of the family business, we are able not just to explore the importance of such firms to the fortunes of individual families, but to examine further the dynamics of power within families, and to consider some of the less easily quantifiable issues that lay behind the formulation of familial (or individual) strategies. This chapter demonstrates that family strategies in business were driven by a mixture of understandings about the natural hierarchies of age and gender, a variety of practical considerations, self-interest, love, and duty, and decided in the main by consensus and compromise between individual family members who exercised varying amounts of power. This did not mean that families or individuals always acted in ways that were necessarily rational or cordial, but it was the case that ideals about family relationships strongly influenced decision-making (including decisions to challenge particular plans or strategies).

In contrast to such a 'messy' understanding of families, the work of twentieth-century functionalist sociologists is one field of scholarship that encouraged a vision of the family as a single social and economic body.[4] Raymond Pahl's influential research on work and the family, for example, was based on the belief that families acted as units. His analysis is incisive in its depictions of the ways in which these units had fluid boundaries, so that membership altered at different stages of the life course, while families remained key to understanding how work was defined and allocated in society.[5] However, while Pahl demonstrated the manner in which households engaged with economic life, there is little sense in his account of the internal dynamics of families and/or households.[6] Some economists have also ignored internal dynamics and described families as single units.[7] A unitary view of the 'nuclear' family was given theoretical justification in the work of Gary Becker and others: creators of the 'new home economics' in which families are depicted as being unified in their interests under the command of a male head of household upon whom other family members are dependent. According to Becker, within

[4] Talcott Parsons and Robert F. Bales, in collaboration with James Olds, Morris Zelditch, and Philip E. Slater, *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process* (New York, 1955); Neil Smelser, *Social Change in the Industrial Revolution: An Application of Theory to the Lancashire Cotton Industry 1770–1840* (London, 1959); David H. Morgan, *Social Theory and the Family* (London, 1975).

[5] R. R. Pahl, *Divisions of Labour* (London, 1984).

[6] Leonore Davidoff, Megan Doolittle, Janet Fink, and Katherine Holden, *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830–1960* (London, 1998), 34.

[7] Nancy Folbre, 'Hearts and Spades: Paradigms of Household Economics', *World Development*, 14/2 (1986), 245–55.

families—in contrast to any other area of economic life—individuals also behave altruistically in relation to one another (with the possible exception of children).[8]

Conversely, feminist scholars have tended to look more closely at the internal workings of the family—in its nuclear, household, and extended variants—conscious that researchers who attempt to ignore the non-material and less quantifiable factors that dominate family decision-making have difficulty explaining their behaviour or strategies convincingly.[9] Feminist sociologists have pointed out that households are key sites for the sexual division of labour and unequal distribution of resources, rather than being social units that pursued joint strategies.[10] Feminist economists too have noted the unequal distribution of income within families, and have argued that neoclassical economic models fail to acknowledge properly the internal dynamics of families and the relative bargaining powers between members of different genders and generations, with the work of Amartya Sen being especially influential.[11] Feminist historians have raised similar concerns, so that scholars involved in demographic research have also questioned the extent to which families shared joint agendas. Thus, in 1979, Sheila Ryan Johannson challenged the assumption of many demographic historians that the interests of husbands and wives in relation to family size were necessarily identical,[12] while, more recently, Alison McKinnon has chided historical demographers in an article entitled 'Were Women Present at the Demographic Transition?'[13] In the field of social history, too, historians of the family have been criticized by feminist scholars for assuming that families necessarily act collectively.[14]

[8] G. Becker, *A Treatise on the Family* (Cambridge, 1981); Nancy Folbre, 'Family Strategy, Feminist Strategy', *Historical Methods*, 20/3 (1987), 115–18, p. 115; Barbara Bergmann, 'Becker's "Theory of the Family": Preposterous Conclusions', *Feminist Economics*, 1/1 (1995), 141–50.

[9] Davidoff et al., *The Family Story*, 35; Folbre, 'Family Strategy, Feminist Strategy'.

[10] Heidi Haartman, 'Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework', *Signs*, 6/3 (1981), 366–94; J. Brannen and G. Wilson (eds), *Give and Take in Families* (London, 1987); Janet Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change* (Oxford, 1989); Christine Delphy and Diana Leonard, *Familiar Exploitation: A New Analysis of Marriage in Contemporary Western Society* (London, 1992); Diane L. Wolf, 'Does Father Know Best? A Feminist Critique of Household Strategy Research', *Research in Rural Sociology and Development*, 5 (1991), 29–43.

[11] Amartya Sen, 'Economics and the Family', *Asian Development Review*, 1 (1983), 14–26; Amartya Sen, 'Gender and Co-Operative Conflicts', in I. Tinker (ed.), *Persistent Inequalities: Women and World Development* (New York, 1990), 123–49. See also Bina Agarwal, '"Bargaining" and Gender Relations: Within and Beyond the Household', *Feminist Economics*, 3/1 (1997), 1–51; Marianne Schmink, 'Household Economic Strategies: Review and Research Agenda', *Latin American Research Review*, 19/3 (1984), 87–101; Diane Wolf, 'Daughters, Decision and Domination: An Empirical and Conceptual Critique of Household Strategies', *Development and Change*, 21 (1990), 43–74; Jane Humphries, 'Towards a Family-Friendly Economics', *New Political Economy*, 3/2 (1998), 223–40.

[12] Sheila Ryan Johansson, 'Demographic Contributions to the History of Victorian Women', in Barbara Kanner (ed.), *The Women of England from Anglo-Saxon Times to the Present: Interpretative Bibliographic Essays* (London, 1979), 259–95.

[13] Alison McKinnon, 'Were Women Present at the Demographic Transition? Questions from a Feminist Historian to Historical Demographers', *Gender and History*, 7/2 (1995) 222–40. See also Diana Gittins, *Fair Sex: Family Size and Structure, 1900–39* (London, 1982); Nancy Folbre, 'Of Patriarchy Born: The Political Economy of Fertility Decisions', *Feminist Studies*, 9/2 (1983), 261–84.

[14] Rayna Rapp, Ellen Ross, and Renate Bridenthal, 'Examining Family History', in Judith L. Newton, Mary P. Ryan, and Judith R. Walkowitz (eds), *Sex and Class in Women's History*

The concept of family strategies—one used by economists, sociologists, anthropologists, and historians alike—is tied to many of these debates and can both illuminate and cloud issues of familial relationships and actions, not least as the term is utilized by scholars in a variety of different ways, some of which treat families as unified units that pursue joint strategies, and some of which do not, while understandings of what constitutes 'family' can also vary considerably.[15] Those models that emphasize the differential bargaining power of different genders and generations within the family, rather than assuming a unity of interest, are particularly relevant in the examination of families and business that follows. Though many of the case studies discussed in this chapter suggest competing designs within families, which appear to have been driven largely by self-interest, we should be wary of viewing the family simply as constituting what Peter Laslett has described as 'a knot of individual interests'—in which family members are interested only in themselves, or are engaged in a constant process of power politicking and bargaining over resources.[16] Even when certain individuals seem to have acted entirely in their own interests in familial disagreements, at least one party in any dispute tended to seek recourse to ideals about familial harmony, unity, and equity, as powerful influences on both the actions and the emotions of family members and judges.[17] What was best for families was often not straightforward either, so that different individuals might hold differing views, each motivated by a mixture of duty, emotion, and ideas about proper conduct—a powerful combination that could sometimes divide families as easily as it united them, particularly when issues of reputation and property ownership were at stake.

(London, 1983), 232–58; Louise A. Tilly, 'Women's History and Family History: Fruitful Collaboration or Missed Connection?', *Journal of Family History*, 12 (1987), 303–15.

[15] Louise Tilly, 'Individual Lives and Family Strategies in the French Proletariat', *Journal of Family History*, 4/2 (1979), 137–52; Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (Cambridge, 1982); C. Goldin, 'Family Strategies and the Family Economy in a Late Nineteenth-Century American City', in T. Hershberg (ed.), *Philadelphia: Work, Space, Family and Group Experience in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), 277–310; Pier Paolo Viazzo and Katherine A. Lynch, 'Anthropology, Family History, and the Concept of Strategy', *International Review of Social History*, 47/3 (2002), 423–52, pp. 424–5, 430; R. J. Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780–1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategy amongst the Leeds Middle Classes* (Cambridge, 2005).

[16] Peter Laslett, 'The Family as a Knot of Individual Interests', in R. McC. Netting, Richard R. Wilk, and Eric J. Arnould (eds), *Households: Comparative and Historical Studies of the Domestic Group* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), 353–81. See also Michael Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1971).

[17] Tessie P. Liu, 'Le Patrimoine magique: Reassessing the Power of Women in Peasant Households in Nineteenth-Century France', *Gender and History*, 6/1 (1994), 13–36, pp. 30–1; Julie Nelson, *Feminism, Objectivity and Economics* (London, 1996), ch. 5; Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender and the Family in England, 1680–1780* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996), 11; Tamara K. Hareven, 'The Family Process: The Historical Study of the Family Cycle', *Journal of Social History*, 7/3 (1974), 322–9; Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time*, 105–10; Tamara K. Hareven, 'A Complex Relationship: Family Strategies and the Processes of Economic and Social Change', in Roger Friedland and A. F. Robertson (eds), *Beyond the Marketplace: Rethinking Economy and Society* (New York, 1990), 215–44.

DISPUTES OVER INHERITANCE

The fact that the death of the head of household was a particularly tough test of familial harmony was not lost on those making wills, and it was common to find the desire to avoid disputes clearly expressed, often accompanied by a description of how to force beneficiaries to accept the distribution of property set out. The will of Thomas Norris, a Liverpool slater, who left his estate to his sons and his wife with two 'good friends' acting as executors, for example, cautioned that 'in case any dispute should arise touching the Exposition of any part of this my last will I will and desire and do hereby give unto my Exectutors . . . my full power to settle and adjust the same in such a manner as they think proper'.[18] Will-makers appeared especially concerned that disputes did not result in expensive legal action. Thus the will of James Garbett, a Liverpool joiner who died in 1820, proclaimed that 'I particularly enjoin those interested under this my Will not on any account to commence proceedings at Law or in Equity against either of my said Trustees unless for some gross misconduct', adding—to mollify the proposed trustees—that 'in case any such proceedings shall be commenced I direct that my said trustees do reimburse themselves their full costs out of my Estate except they shall be found guilty of such improper conduct as aforesaid'.[19] Some wills even threatened future troublemakers with disinheritance if they went to court. The Liverpool sadler Joseph Clare, who left his estate to his nephews and nieces, issued a stark and pointed warning that 'if my nephew Thomas Clare or any of his Brothers or Sisters do annoy or disturb either of my executors herein named by endeavouring to get a greater share than I have herein directed I hereby direct that such Person or Persons so offending shall not be entitled to such legacy but only to one Guinea'.[20] Similarly, the Manchester fustian maker Benjamin Illingworth informed the recipients of part of his estate that

> In Case either my said Nephew Thomas Illingworth or my said Niece Mary Crompton or any other person from by or under them shall raise any Dispute or commence and sute [*sic*] of Law against my said Executor or Executrix . . . [then they] shall be Excluded from his or her Legacie or Share . . . And his or her share or part shall go to my other legatees above mentioned.[21]

These wills clearly singled out potential promoters of dissent from the wider family, but it was not only nieces and nephews who received warnings. Robert Johnson, a Liverpool painter, cautioned his four children that

> if any of my said Children shall cause any differences disputes or Lawsuits to be had or brought touching or concerning any Matter or thing in this my will contained with intent to alter the plain sense true intent or meaning thereof or shall refuse to comply with the same that then and in such cases I do hereby direct that such of my said

[18] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Norris (1780).
[19] LRO, WCW, Will of James Garbett (1820).
[20] LRO, WCW, Will of Joseph Clare (1810).
[21] LRO, WCW, Will of Benjamin Illingworth (1760).

> Children which cause such differences shall have no benefit or advantage from anything in this my will but the share or shares herein before given to him her or them shall go to the other of my said Children.[22]

Such warnings might well have persuaded some beneficiaries to do as they were told, but they also suggest that will-makers were well aware that the opposite could happen, and that disgruntled beneficiaries might try to secure a form of property distribution that differed from the plan set out by the deceased, and that might in turn result in family disputes and recourse to the law. As we saw in Chapter 1, testatory directions were routinely ignored by those in trade. The discussion of business succession that formed the focus of this earlier chapter offered some hypotheses as to why instructions were not carried out. This chapter tests some of these hypotheses further, and provides further insights into the management (and mismanagement) of inheritance and what this tells us about familial relationships and individual behaviour by focusing on exactly the sorts of court proceedings that will-makers tried so hard to avoid, but clearly failed to achieve in a good many instances.

Court records provide an excellent source for the historian of small business families—both because these legal documents survive in great numbers, and because people in trade feature prominently. Civil litigation was commonplace in early modern England, and affected a broad swath of society.[23] Craig Muldrew found that litigation penetrated deeply in terms of social reach in late-seventeenth-century King's Lynn, revealing that 'both credit, and the use of litigation over credit were not something exceptional, but a common feature of life for most members of the community', while noting that 'the court was a surprisingly egalitarian and accessible institution . . . available to all as an organ of dispute settlement'.[24] Amy Erickson has described how popular awareness of legal issues was widespread throughout the early modern period, and that this was 'all the more striking because of the confusing coexistence of four separate but overlapping legal systems: common law, equity, ecclesiastical law and custom'.[25] We saw good evidence of such lay knowledge in Chapter 2, when Elizabeth Walton (formerly Greenwood) battled with her new husband through a variety of courts and using a number of different legal devices. Though no doubt she was assisted by an attorney, her actions suggest a broad understanding of what she might be able to achieve through the law. It seems likely that the early eighteenth century witnessed something of a decline in

[22] LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Johnson (1760).

[23] C. W. Brooks, *Pettyfoggers and the Vipers of the Commonwealth: The 'Lower Branch' of the Legal Profession in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986); Craig Muldrew, 'Credit and the Courts: Debt Litigation in a Seventeenth-Century Urban Community', *Economic History Review*, 46/1 (1993), 23–38.

[24] Muldrew, 'Credit and the Courts', 30–1, 36. See also J. A. Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency in an Essex Parish 1600–1640', in J. S. Cockburn (ed.), *Crime in England, 1550–1800* (London, 1977); A. Macfarlane, *Reconstructing Historical Communities* (Cambridge, 1977), 56–66, 128–35.

[25] Amy Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1993), 22–4. See also Amy Erickson, 'Coverture and Capitalism', *History Workshop Journal*, 59 (2005), 1–16.

civil litigation proceedings that lasted several decades,[26] while ecclesiastical courts also seem to have experienced a decrease in business from an earlier period from which they did not recover.[27] Yet it is not evident that this pattern extended into the late eighteenth century in all courts and regions, nor that that those among the more humble sections of society were either less liable to take legal action or knew less about the law in the later period.[28] Margot Finn has revealed how the growth and spread of small-claims courts during the second half of the eighteenth century, with a renewed phase of expansion in the nineteenth century, helped to reverse any exclusion from the civil courts that plebeian producers, retailers, and consumers might have experienced during the seventeenth century.[29] She has also shown how willing and able to act those in trade were when it came to pursuing debts through local Courts of Request from their recalcitrant customers.[30] In addition, Carolyn Steedman has recently demonstrated a widespread understanding of the law among the poorer inhabitants of rural Nottinghamshire in the early nineteenth century,[31] while Henry Horwitz has estimated that 'commercial/artisanal' litigants made up around 30–45 per cent of all first-named plaintiffs and defendants in the Court of Exchequer from 1735 onwards.[32] He also concluded that, while the proportion of cases brought in Exchequer from outside the capital during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries declined, the numbers emanating from northern English counties rose significantly.[33]

The records used in this study are those of courts that dealt in equity and ecclesiastical law: the Court of Exchequer at Westminster, the Chancery Court of the Palatine of Lancaster, which sat at Lancaster and Preston, and the Consistory

[26] Christopher Brooks, *Lawyers, Litigation and English Society since 1450* (London, 1998), ch. 3; H. Horwitz and P. Polden, 'Continuity and Change in the Court of Chancery in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Journal of British Studies*, 35/1 (1996), 24–57; Henry Horwitz, 'Chancery's "Younger Sister": The Court of Exchequer and its Equity Jurisdiction, 1649–1841', *Historical Research*, 72/178 (1999), 160–82; Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1998), 237–42; W. A. Champion, 'Recourse to the Law and the Meaning of the Great Litigation Decline, 1650–1750: Some Clues from the Shrewsbury Local Courts', in C. W. Brooks and Michael Lobban (eds), *Communities and Courts in Britain, 1150–1900* (London, 1997), 176–98; C. W. Brooks, 'The Longitudinal Study of Civil Litigation in England 1200–1996', in W. Prest and S. Roach Anleu (eds), *Litigation Past and Present* (Sydney, 2004), 24–43.

[27] J. Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689* (London, 1991), 209; R. B. Outhwaite, *The Rise and Fall of the English Ecclesiastical Courts, 1500–1860* (Cambridge, 2006), 78–94.

[28] Wilfred Prest, 'The Experience of Litigation', in David Lemmings (ed.), *The British and their Laws in the Eighteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2005), 133–54, pp. 136–43; Christopher Brooks, 'Litigation, Participation, and Agency in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England', in Lemmings (ed.), *The British and their Laws in the Eighteenth Century*, 155–81, pp. 171, 175.

[29] Margot Finn, *The Character of Credit: Personal Debt in English Culture, 1740–1914* (Cambridge, 2003), chs 5, 6.

[30] Margot Finn, 'Debt and Credit in Bath's Court of Requests, 1829–39', *Urban History*, 21/2 (1994), 211–36.

[31] Carolyn Steedman, *An Everyday Life of the English Working Class: Work, Self and Sociability in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2013), ch. 6.

[32] Henry Horwitz, *Exchequer Equity Records and Proceedings 1649–1841* (London, 2001), 49, 51. These figures exclude tithes cases, which were dominated by clergymen.

[33] Horwitz, *Exchequer Equity Records and Proceedings*, 38.

Court of the Chester Diocese, which was based in Chester.[34] The courts of Exchequer and the Palatine of Lancaster dealt with many cases concerning inheritance, as well as disputes over debts and other property matters, and operated according to both common law and equity, while the Diocesan court exercised jurisdiction over probate matters under ecclesiastical law.[35] Since the Palatinate and Consistory courts sat locally, this might have made them more convenient and cheaper for north-west litigants, while Somerville claims that the Palatinate courts may have acted much faster than their London counterparts.[36] However, Chancery and Exchequer cases were not held before a jury and the proofs required generally consisted of depositions taken out-of-court by officials or commissioned court agents. This meant that witnesses were not required to travel long distances to give evidence, though their legal representative was expected to appear.[37] Moreover, while Somerville notes that Palatinate courts were less expensive options for litigants in the late seventeenth century, he suggests that by the mid-nineteenth century 'it was often almost as cheap to try a cause from Manchester and Liverpool in London as in Lancaster'.[38] Those in trade might thus bring cases at any of the courts described here, while they were likely also to appear in court papers as both defendants and witnesses.

The records of all three courts are thus littered with a variety of property disputes involving tradesmen and women. We are largely reliant for our information regarding the nature of these disputes on the preliminary stages of court proceedings in

[34] The London-based Court of Chancery would also have been an option for the subjects of this study and was a busier court than the ones considered here, in that it heard significantly more cases: Henry Horwtiz, *Chancery Equity Records and Proceedings 1600–1800: A Guide to Documents in the Public Record Office* (London, 1995), 35. However, the organization of Chancery records does not lend them easily to a regional study in the same way as does the organization of Exchequer records (which are ordered by the county in which the suit emanated and by date), while Palatine court records and Chester Consistory court records are by their very nature regionally focused. See Erickson, *Women and Property*, 114–17; J. Milhous and R. D. Hume, 'Eighteenth-Century Equity Lawsuits in the Court of Exchequer as a Source for Historical Research', *Historical Research*, 70/172 (1997), 231–46; Horwitz, *Exchequer Equity Records and Proceedings*, 72; T. Rath, 'Business Records in the Public Record Office in the Age of the Industrial Revolution', *Business History*, 17/2 (1975), 189–200, pp. 195–8. It has been suggested that the business of the Palatinate courts declined rapidly during the seventeenth century, so that 'they were of little importance after 1700' (Jeff Cox and Nancy Cox, 'Probate 1500–1800: A System in Transition', in Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans, and Nigel Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2000), 14–37, p. 19). See also Erickson, *Women and Property*, 31, 117. But this conclusion seems to be based solely on research into the Palatinate of Durham, which has received the most historical attention: see Kenneth Emsley and C. M. Fraser, *The Courts of the County Palatine of Durham* (Durham, 1984); Marcus Knight, 'Litigants and Litigation in the Seventeenth-Century Palatinate of Durham', University of Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (1990), while the Lancashire court appears to have remained relatively popular with those in trade at least into the nineteenth century.

[35] J. T. Law, *Forms of Ecclesiastical Law, or, the Mode of Conducting Suits in the Consistory Courts* (London, 1831); Outhwaite, *Rise and Fall of the English Ecclesiastical Courts*, 33–9. Some earlier examples of disputed wills in consistory courts can be found in Addy, *Death, Money and the Vultures*.

[36] R. Somerville, 'The Palatinate Courts in Lancaster', in A. Harding (ed.), *Law-Making and Law-Makers in British History* (London, 1980), 54–63, pp. 61–2. See also R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, ii (London 1953); Rath, 'Business Records in the Public Record Office in the Age of the Industrial Revolution', 195–8.

[37] Horwitz, *Exchequer Equity Records and Proceedings*, 11, 23.

[38] Somerville, 'The Palatinate Courts in Lancaster', 62.

which plaintiffs set out their cases. In terms of the two temporal courts under examination, records from the pleadings stage (which generally consisted of the bills of complaints by those bringing the case and initial answers from those accused of wrongdoing) tend to have survived, while, for the Consistory Court, the initial libels (which, like the bills of complaints, outlined the plaintiff's case), can be examined, with further interrogatories and depositions (records of questioning and witness statements) also available, as they seem more likely both to have been produced and to have survived. The progress of cases in the Consistory Court can usually be traced through the surviving Chester court books (and, if taken to appeal, in the court books of the York Consistory Court). Such documents generally record a verdict, though often they do not give an explanation of the court's decision. Exchequer and Palatine court cases, by contrast, rarely appear to have progressed past the preliminary pleadings stage. This suggests that many of these disputes were resolved soon after legal action had been instigated, making it likely that the initiation of a dispute was part of an attempt to bring about a settlement.[39] Cases might also not progress further because one of the parties gave up or died, or it may be that records are incomplete.[40] Frustratingly for the historian, the lack of records for the later stages of Exchequer and Palatine court cases means that usually we do not know the outcome of a case, though we can sometimes infer this based on other types of evidence. Yet, just as Chapter 1 alerted us to the need to be wary of assuming that the contents of wills necessarily provide us with an accurate description of how an estate was actually administered and distributed, so we need to remember that the losing side did not always adhere to the judgements in court cases. Thus, in 1772, the plaintiffs in a case brought to the Palatine Court concerning the estate of the Preston grocer Luke Astley referred to an earlier judgment by the court directing the distribution of the estate, which had apparently been ignored.[41] What court records can provide us with, however, are rich and often detailed insights into the ways in which some family businesses were run, as well as the nature of intra-family relations prior to litigants receiving their day in court. Though depositions are couched in legal language and the words spoken were almost certainly altered by clerks' pens and the directives of advisors and judges, we can still detect the particular arguments, concerns, and opinions of individual plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses.[42]

[39] J. A. Sharpe, 'Such Disagreement betwyx Neighbours: Litigation and Human Relations in Early Modern England', in J. Bossey (ed.), *Law and Human Relations in the West* (Cambridge, 1983), 167–88; Muldrew, 'Credit and the Courts', 27.

[40] Margaret Hunt, 'Women and Marital "Rights" in the Court of Exchequer', in P. Griffiths and M. S. R. Jenner (eds), *Londinopolis: Essays on the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London* (Manchester, 2000), 107–29, p. 112; Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760–1830* (Oxford, 2006), 140–1. Horwitz suggests that around 80% of equity proceedings in Exchequer never went beyond pleadings: *Exchequer Equity Records and Proceedings*, 31. He also notes that a quarter of bills filed in 1819 took over two years to proceed: p. 44.

[41] TNA: PL 6/85/50.

[42] Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, 1987); Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words and Sex in Early Modern*

Court cases concerning wills were common, and, while they took a variety of forms, not surprisingly, they often concerned accusations that a testator's wishes or instructions had not been properly carried out. Sometimes a failure to act according to the directions set out in wills appears to have been the result of apathy or parsimony. This was allegedly the case when Ellen Davies, widow of the Liverpool bricklayer Henry Davies, was accused in 1820, along with her daughters, of failing to take any action relating to her husband's will, since they 'never proved the said will in the proper ecclesiastical Court nor took upon their self the execution thereof'.[43] The behaviour of John Brown, a Liverpool grocer and one of the executors of the will of the engraver Thomas Lawrenson, appears to have been similarly lax.[44] Brown was accused in 1773 of mismanaging Lawrenson's estate in a court case brought by Lawrenson's children four years after their father's death. Yet Brown claimed that it was his fellow executor and Thomas Lawrenson's widow, Mary Lawrenson (by this time also deceased), who was responsible for any mismanagement, since he had had little involvement in settling the estate. Instead, Brown protested that 'immediately after the death of the said Thomas Lawrenson the said Mary Lawrenson took possession of the whole of the Goods Chattels and Credits of the said Deceased and solely Administred [*sic*] the same'. Further he claimed that he 'in no way intermeddled in the Goods Chattels and Credits of the said deceased or in any manner acted as executor of the said Will save and except in proving the said Will [i.e. presenting it to the consistory court]',[45] and was seemingly unabashed by his lack of proper conduct in the role of executor.

More often in court records, though, we find claims of probate instructions being deliberately ignored. Such cases demonstrate that some families were all too easily reduced to acrimonious infighting over the spoils of a relative's estate, and often show individuals acting for apparently selfish motives. Though there seems little sense in these instances of any unified family strategy, such cases should not be read simply as proof that trading families were sometimes constituted of individuals who pursued their own interests over and above that of their relatives. It is important to note that the basis for the challenges made against those accused of taking more than their fair share of family property was always expressed—in both legal and moral terms—as a desire for equity in the dispersal of familial resources. This suggests the potency of contemporary ideas about fairness and the importance of a just settlement within families and between individual family members. A case brought to the Chester Consistory Court in 1763 concerning the will of another

London (Oxford, 1996), 232–9; Joanne Bailey, 'Voices in Court: Lawyers' or Litigants'?', *Historical Research*, 74/186 (2002), 392–408.

[43] TNA: PL 6/111/47.

[44] John Brown, flourman and grocer of Dale street, appears in Liverpool trade directories between 1766 and 1774, though there is no sign of Thomas Lawrenson or his widow: *Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1766* (Liverpool, 1766); *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (1767); *Gore's Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1769* (Liverpool, 1769); *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1773); *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1774).

[45] LRO, WCW, Disputed will of Thomas Lawrenson (1773). Unusually, this case could not be traced in the Consistory court books, so its outcome is unknown.

Liverpool bricklayer, Richard Millett, for example, spoke eloquently of both the bitter rivalries and grievances that the (alleged) misadministration of wills could promote, and the expected norms of behaviour within families that were said to have been breached, and that formed the basis of the action.

In this case, Ann Pounden, one of Richard Millett's daughters, charged her sister, Frances Moore, of 'subtraction' from their father's legacy by means of drawing up a false inventory in which she failed to list all of their dead father's property, including between three and six silver teaspoons, a pair of silver buttons and buckles, and three gold rings. Frances was also accused of having 'willfully and knowingly concealed and secreted or otherwise hath omitted out of the said pretended inventory the Wearing Apparrel of the said Testators late Wife Mary Millett who died in his lifetime'. In addition, it was alleged that 'seven shillings and six pence which was in his the said Testators Pockets at the Time of his Death' were also omitted. Ann claimed that rent collected from houses owned by Richard Millett had also not been included in the inventory, while a bill for groceries that had been consumed, not by Richard, but by his daughter Frances, and that Richard during his lifetime had reportedly refused to pay saying 'he never wou'd it was not his debt', was fraudulently charged against Richard's estate. Other amounts Ann claimed Frances had tried to claim on her father's estate illegitimately included a bill for glazing work on both the defendant's house and that of her son, sums charged for poor and church rates, and a lawyer's bill that 'was occasioned by the obstinate perverse troublesome and litigious Temper and disposition of the defendant'. The detail with which even goods of relatively minor value were listed, and the fact that the case was not pursued until six years after the testator's death, suggests the simmering family dispute that lay behind the action and the sense of grievance that had resulted from the alleged misappropriation of family money. In the event, the case was deferred in court on at least five occasions before disappearing from the record, after having apparently been dropped. It is not unreasonable to speculate that the costs to both sides of taking this case to court might have outweighed the value of the disputed inheritance. But what appears to have been at issue here, at least for Ann Pounden, was an issue of both justice and reputation, rather than a strictly financial one, so that it was the failure to distribute their father's estate fairly that seems to have most rankled, not least as the facts of the case were said to be 'public and notorious . . . within and throughout the Town and Parish of Liverpool'.[46]

The financial stakes were somewhat higher in another case brought to the Consistory Court in which the process by which the will itself was produced was a source of complaint, even before the administration of the estate had begun. Here too, however, a bitter battle between siblings seems to have centred on a perceived failure to ensure the right disposal of their father's estate, and can be read as a struggle between an individual desire for gain and a prevailing sense of how family resources ought to be shared out and the ways in which individual family members

[46] LRO, WCW, Disputed will of Richard Millett (1763); CCALS, Consistory Court Book for the Diocese of Chester, EDC1/147, 6 October, 3, 10, 24 November 1763, and EDC1/148, 17 January 1765.

should behave towards one another. Less than a year after the will of the Manchester druggist Richard Miller was proved by his son, John, in 1795, a case was brought to the Consistory Court at Chester by John's sister Margaret Barlow. Margaret claimed that the version of her father's will presented to the court had been 'surreptitiously and upon false suggestions obtained', and she argued that the document should be declared invalid as a result, so that her father should be considered to have died intestate. This would almost certainly have given her brother a smaller share of the estate, for under canon law it is likely that ecclesiastical courts would direct that the personal property of an intestate would be divided equally between surviving children if their mother was already dead, as appears to have been the case here.[47] She asked the court to seek confirmation that the will had been approved by her father while of sound mind (as the law dictated), that 'the said Will was audibly slowly and distinctly read all over to or by the said Testator', and that he 'distinctly heard and well knew and understood the Contents of the said Will and well liked and approved of the same'. In particular, she questioned whether her father had meant for herself and her sister, Emery Taylor, to receive an annual annuity of ten pounds 'for their own sole and separate uses' rather than the six pounds that was stated in the will presented to the court and preserved among the documents: the wording of which has been visibly amended.[48] While the surviving will clearly shows that someone had altered the wording, John's claim that the amendment had been made on his father's instructions was central to the case and appears to have been believed. On 2 July it was noted in the court book that 'the Judge having maturely weighted and considered the merits and circumstances of this Cause pronounced and decreed and declared for the force and validity of the last Will and Testament of Richard Miller' and instructed that probate be granted to his son, meaning that Margaret had lost her case and that she did not achieve what she perceived as a more equitable distribution of property for herself and her sister.[49]

Accusations that a will was produced fraudulently were repeated in a particularly well-documented case concerning William Duxbury, a Manchester dyer. While John Miller might have been busy with a damp cloth doctoring his father's will without his knowledge, the defendants in the Duxbury case were accused of a more audacious act of deceit at the Chester Consistory Court in 1789, two years after William's death.[50] Again, the finger was pointed at those who were both executors and close family members: Robert Duxbury, William Duxbury's brother and business partner for twenty-nine years, and John Duxbury, William's only son. The pair were indicted by William Duxbury's sole surviving daughter, Mary

[47] Cox and Cox, 'Probate 1500–1800', 20.

[48] LRO, WCW, Disputed will of Richard Miller (1795).

[49] CCALS, Consistory Court Book for the Diocese of Chester, EDC1/175, 2 July 1795. See also entries for 5, 12, and 19 February, 12 March, 15 April, 7 May, 4, 18, and 25 June 1795.

[50] LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury (1787). Notes on the will show that it was presented to the church court on 21 April and probate was granted on 14 May 1787 to the executors, but a further note states 'Revoked Hilary Term 1789 the cause appealed to York and not remitted [i.e. returned to the lower court]'.

Fullerton, wife of John Fullerton, a sadler with a house on Deansgate.[51] The brothers, Robert and William, had both lived and run their business from nearby Dole Field, where they had been based since at least 1772, appearing in Manchester's first trade directory in that year.[52] According to the inventory produced at the time, the nature of their business relationship had been 'jointly share and share alike in Partnership'.[53] The case is worth describing in detail because of what it reveals about relationships within trading families—specifically the importance of love and dutiful conduct—as well as the ways in which wills were made and the part played by both family members and the wider community in trying to uphold (or disrupt) the right disposal of a testator's property. The Duxbury case clearly shows the tensions between contemporary ideals about the family—expressed most clearly by the complainant—and the desire of individuals to secure for themselves the best possible settlement. Like many cases regarding disputed wills, this is a story of a fractured family rather than of a unified unit pursuing a shared strategy. But all those involved acknowledged, albeit in different ways, their adherence to powerful ideals concerning family life that emphasized the importance of loving and dutiful family relations and that they argued—with different degrees of success—shaped both their own actions and those of the deceased.

Duxbury's will had been made on 13 February 1787, just six days before his death. This document, which was presented to the court, included provision for an annuity for his 'loving wife Mary' and a cash sum for his daughter, also Mary, upon reaching adulthood. The will mentioned neither William's share in the business, nor any real estate, though it left the 'remainder' of his estate to his son, John, after the bequests had been made to his wife and daughter and his debts settled. The distribution of his effects and the management of his estate were left to his brother and son, who were appointed as executors.[54] In common with the court proceedings over Richard Miller's will, Mary Fullerton claimed she should have received a greater share of her father's wealth (stating that she had been promised an annuity in addition to the lump sum), that the manner in which her father's will was produced rendered it invalid, and that the deceased should be declared as having died intestate as a result. Her case centred on the drawing-up of the will, and specifically her father's alleged inability both to formulate its contents and to agree to what was laid down. According to Mary, William Duxbury's will was made at a time when her father was too ill either to issue instructions or to understand their implications. As a result, she and her mother received less than William had intended to give them, while her brother had managed to secure the bulk of the estate—including William's half share in the family business—for himself.[55]

[51] *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794) lists 'Fullerton John, sadler, 20 Deansgate'.

[52] *The Manchester Directory for the Year 1772* (Manchester, 1772).

[53] 'Inventory', in LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[54] LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury (1787).

[55] Mary Fullerton's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 6 December 1787: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

Fullerton alleged that during February 1787, when the will was produced and her father died, he was 'violently afflicted with a paralytic complaint which in a few days deprived him of his speech reason and understanding in so much that he continued total insensible without the uses of his speech or reason and without knowing his Wife or friends who attended him or understanding anything which was said to him, to the time of his death'. The day on which Duxbury's will was both drawn up and signed—13 February 1787—was central to most of the testimony presented in the case. Mary had been away at her brother's house in Blackpool in the first weeks of February, suggesting a degree of sibling cordiality at this point, though she returned soon after—accompanied by her sister-in-law, John's wife—when news of her father's ill health reached her from an acquaintance on the 14th. Crucially for Mary, her brother—whom she alleges had been informed of their father's illness in a letter from his uncle on the 10th, but who failed to pass on the news before heading off to Manchester himself—had beaten her to it, and was in attendance when the will was made. Mary was thus reliant on the testimony of others concerning the day's events. In her accusation she claimed that her father's nurse, Ann Gillibrand, attended him on the 13th and up until his death, and found him 'quite helpless and totally insane and insensible' throughout that period. A visiting physician, Dr Easton, was said to have complained on the 13th that he had not been called sooner, suggesting neglect on the part of both her uncle and her brother.[56]

After Easton's visit, John and Robert Duxbury were alleged to have gone to William's room, asked his nurse to leave them, and called in John Lowe, a clerk from a neighbouring attorney's office.[57] In William's bedchamber, uncle and nephew were alleged to have concocted the contents of the will between them, and to have deliberately misled the clerk when asked if William owned any real estate. According to Mary's account,

> during all the time the said instructions for the will were given Robert and John or either of them did not consult or pretend to consult William respecting the disposition of his estate and effects, but gave directions and instructions for the making of the pretended will as if the same had been the will of one of them Robert or John and not the will of a third person.

Meanwhile, Mary alleged, 'William lay in his bed without taking any notice of what was said or done, totally speechless insane and insensible and wholly incapable of being made acquainted with what they Robert and John and John Lowe were about'. John Lowe was said to have left the house briefly to write up the will, returning to the bedchamber, where the three men were joined by Robert Duxbury's son, also William, who witnessed the will being signed while 'the door of the room was made fast on the inside and Robert and John or one of them lifted William's hand out of bed and guided the same to the will and therewith Robert or John

[56] Mary Fullerton's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 6 December 1787: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[57] John Lowe was said to have been employed by Thomas Shelmerdine, who is listed in the 1781 directory as an attorney in Dole Field: *The Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781).

Lowe made the mark now appearing thereon'. An extremely shaky 'X' having been made at the foot of the document, the men proceeded to ask William 'whether he published it as his last will and testament, but William was utterly incapable of making and did not make any answer'. When John Lowe 'returned home', he was said to have 'informed Mr Shelmerdine his Master that [he] had been up on or about the most rascally piece of business that he ever was concerned in in his life'. Moreover, it was alleged that Lowe 'has many times since in a serious and solemn manner and in the presence and hearing of several persons of good credit and reputation declared that he had been deceived and imposed upon respecting the pretended will and that the same was unjustly and fraudulently obtained'.[58]

Not surprisingly, those accused of wrongdoing denied the allegations. In a joint statement, Robert and John Duxbury agreed that William was very ill before his death, being 'very much indisposed in his bodily health', but claimed that 'he was not occasioned by any paralytic complaint neither was he deprived of his speech reason and understanding so as not to know his Wife or Friend when they attended him'. Dr Eaton was said to have visited him more than once, finding him 'in a very weak low and declining condition' on 12 February, but declaring him to be 'much better' on the following day. During the whole of 13 February, William Duxbury was described as being 'of sound mind and memory and understanding', and Robert and John maintained 'that whilst the will was being made he was perfectly sensible and well knew and did understand what was said to him and In his hearing and could and did understand and answer any question that was put to him by saying aye or no very placidly'. They denied asking the nurse, Ann Gillibrand, to leave the room, but alleged that she had simply not been there when they entered.[59] Robert Duxbury appears to have taken over the dyeing business after his brother's death, and subsequent depositions by members of his household and employees predictably sided with his version of events. Robert's wife, Ellen Duxbury, backed up her husband's story that on the 13th William was physically weak but of sound mind.[60] Luke Asley, a dyer aged 36 and 'servant [i.e. employee]' of William and Robert for four years before William's death, stated that in the days before his demise William was 'very sensible and knew what he was about and would give answers to such questions as were asked him by this Deponent or any other person by replying Aye or No, but his voice was so feeble and weak that it was difficult to understand him in other words tho' by a close attention it might be done'.[61]

Conversely, neighbours and other friends of the family who were called as witnesses supported Mary Fullerton's version of events. Mary Turner claimed to have known William Duxbury for four years as a 'direct opposite neighbour'. She

[58] Mary Fullerton's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 6 December 1787, and Will of William Duxbury (1787): LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[59] Robert and John Duxbury's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 25 September 1788: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[60] Ellen Duxbury's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, n.d.: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[61] Luke Asley's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 29 January 1789: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

asserted that he had a 'stroke of palsy' in February and that she saw him several times in that month, including the days before and after his will was produced, 'and at both these times the decedent was quite helpless, almost senseless and as far as this Deponent could perceive knew nobody about him, nor did this deponent ever hear him speak a word to anybody nor does she believe he was able to speak'.[62] Sarah Rothwell, a widow aged 46 and a neighbour of eighteen years standing, testified confidently that 'nobody she believes knew the decedent's family better than she did'. Rothwell claimed to have been a frequent visitor to the Duxbury household, particularly during his illness 'and at all these times the decedent appeared to her to be quite helpless, so senseless as not to know anybody about him, and not able to answer any questions that were putt to him . . . tho' she frequently putt such little questions to him as whether he would have a little Biscuit or a little Wine and water and the like'. The chatty Mrs Rothwell appears to have been on particularly intimate terms with the family, for she seems to have had unfettered access to all the rooms of the house, noting that on 13 February

> she went again to the decedent's and going up stairs to the Bed Chamber as she was used to do, she putt her Hand to the Latch or Katch of the Door to have opened it, but finding the Door fastened she came down stairs into the Kitchen where she found Mrs Duxbury crying who told her they were making the Will at which this proponent professed her surprise not thinking the decedent capable of doing any such thing . . .[63]

Mary Fullerton also received important support from the nurse called in from outside the household to assist during William's illness. Ann Gillibrand, aged 37, claims to have been present all day on 13 February. When she arrived at the house at seven in the morning she reportedly found him 'in bed speechless almost, quite senseless and incapable of giving an answer to what was said to him or of knowing any person about him'. That day, according to her account, Dr Eaton visited 'for the first time as she heard him then say, and the decedent being in the most hopeless state the Doctor shook him and asked him several Questions to which he seemed totally insensible and gave no manner of answer'. She described the period of time when the will was written, but claims to have been asked by Robert to leave the room. Gillibrand alleged that, after the clerk had arrived, Mary Duxbury senior attempted to enter the room 'but she came down again crying and said the Door was made and she could not gett in and she lamented much to this Deponent that there should be any attempt to make a will because her Husband was not capable to make anything of the sort'.[64]

The testimony of the clerk who helped to draw up the will—John Lowe—was also not helpful to the defendants, even though Lowe was at pains to defend his

[62] Mary Turner's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, n.d.: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[63] Sarah Rothwell's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, n.d.: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury. James Rothwell, fustian cutter, Dolefield appears in the 1781 directory. This was presumably her former husband: *The Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781).

[64] Ann Gillibrand's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, n.d.: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

involvement. According to his account, Lowe was called urgently to the Duxbury household on the day that the will was drawn up. Upon arriving, Robert Duxbury was said to have informed him that William 'would not be able to answer them because his speech was gone or his speech was very bad or to that effect'. According to Lowe's testimony, a curious pantomime appears to have followed in which Robert made a suggestion to his supine brother about the size of his daughter's bequest and placed his ear next to William's mouth for an answer, which he then pronounced aloud, though Lowe noted he 'did not himself hear or understand the answer William made and this deponent does not remember any other questions being putt to William'. When he returned with a draft of the will, 'he found Robert and John there in the same bedchamber and there at the decedent's bedside close to it', and Robert asked Lowe 'to read the same over just as it now appears in a plain and distinct manner when Robert asked this deponent if it was drawn up right or accordingly to his mind or to that same effect and when he had asked the question Robert put his ear to William's mouth and then he says "Aye" but this deponent as in the first instance before did not hear him say so'. At this point, Lowe appears to have been complicit in the deceit, for he described how he placed a pen into William's hand, 'but he was so weak in body that he could not guide it and with this deponent's assistance therefore, who took hold his hand with the pen in it the Mark was made'. In his defence, Lowe claimed to believe

> that at the time of this whole Transaction the decedent was very sensible for he once or twice whilst this deponent was taking the instructions and whilst the will was proceeding burst into tears which this deponent then apprehended to proceed from a sense of his approaching dissolution, but he showed no other marks of approbation or disapprobation of what was doing than what are before deposed to and he seemed to this deponent by no means to be in a condition to converse reasonably with any one he was so weak and so much reduced by his disorder.

Lowe seems to have been unaware that a different interpretation could have been made of William's tears, and denied having ever complained to his employer or anyone else about the proceedings that day.[65] Such a defence is not surprising, given that Lowe, as an attorney's clerk, should have raised the alarm about any deceit in the making of the will, though it reminds us of the power of the will-maker, or his or her family in cases such as this, in dictating proceedings when they were paying for them.

As we have seen, much of the case presented to the Chester court centred on whether the will had been correctly made according to William Duxbury's instructions and with his full and conscious agreement, as the law required. Many pages of depositions and legal arguments were thus concerned with his state of health and the manner in which the will was drawn up. But a great deal was also made by Fullerton of the different ways that she and her brother had behaved towards their father during his lifetime, and his differing affections for his son and daughter as a

[65] John Lowe's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 7 February 1789: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

result. Her argument centred on the role of love in family relationships, and was founded on the belief that the court would consider William Duxbury unlikely to have treated his daughter inequitably in his will if they believed her claims. According to her complaint, Mary was the sibling who always 'expressed the greatest affection for her father', while her father retained 'the greatest paternal love' for her until he was 'deprived of his reason and understanding shortly before his death'. By contrast, he was said to be not nearly so fond of his son, John, who had 'imprudently lavished spent or squandered away' money lent to him by his father during his lifetime so that 'by his dissipated course of life continual irregular conduct and inattention to William had greatly disobliged and offended him . . . and lost his good liking and affection'.[66] In a joint statement, Robert and John Duxbury claimed that John 'did not imprudently lavish spend or squander away all or the greatest part of the money so given and lent to him by William but employed the same in extending and improving his Trade or Business of a Calico Manufacturer'. Moreover, they asserted that John did not lose his father's affection, since:

> John never did by a dissipated course of life singular conduct or inattention to William or by any other means whatever greatly or at all disoblige or offend him or lose his good liking or affection. On the contrary John by his sober industrious and regular manner of life and conduct, and duty and attention to William gained and preserved the affection of William until the time of his death and William always had and upon all occasions to the day of his death showed and expressed the greatest love and affection for John.[67]

But Mary Fullerton's version of events was supported by William Duxbury's neighbours. William Barkely, a fustian dyer, claimed that, prior to the illness that resulted in his death, William Duxbury had became ill following a fall at his son's Blackpool house. As a result of his failing health, Barkely claims that he 'frequently took [the] opportunity to advise him to make a will that no disputes might happen after his death'. He told the court that Duxbury's response was that he should 'not be afraid for he would not make Moll a Bastard, or to such effect, meaning his Daughter Mary for whom he always expressed a great affection and who he believes always behaved tenderly to her father'. Barkely also testified that William Duxbury told him that he had given his son several large loans and 'hath heard it said (tho' never by his father) that he the son was not making the most of his Trade or Employment but was rather high and extravagant . . . '.[68] The talkative Sarah Rothwell testified that 'the said Mary his daughter always appeared to this Deponent to behave with great duty and affection to her father in his lifetime and her father always retained the greatest Paternal Love and affection for her', adding that 'on account of a complaint or weakness in her head left, as this deponent believes,

[66] Mary Fullerton's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 6 December 1787: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[67] Robert and John Duxbury's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 25 September 1788: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[68] William Barkely's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, 7 February 1789: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

from the small Pox her father was always partial to her infirmity and she thinks rather fonder of her than of her Brother'.[69]

The evidence concerning William Duxbury's differing affections for his children, which suggested that the terms of the will did not reflect his feelings or wishes, appears to have had a significant impact on the judge, a fact that emphasizes the link that contemporaries made between the distribution of estates and emotional bonds within families. While Margaret Barlow—the daughter whose father's will had been visibly altered—lost her case at the Consistory Court, the judge presiding over Fullerton *v.* Duxbury appears to have believed the plaintiff, and the case was declared 'fact' in the Chester Consistory court book entry for 18 June 1789 following a series of hearings over the preceding year. This meant that probate was revoked and that William Duxbury was declared by the Chester court to have died intestate.[70] This was not the end of the matter, however, for John and Robert Duxbury, presumably nervous about the possible outcome at Chester, had already launched an appeal at the Consistory Court at York in April 1789, after the case had moved to judgment but before the sentence was declared, claiming—as was a common practice at the time—that the judge in the original case had been biased, and specifically that he favoured Mary Fullerton 'more than in Law he ought to do, and not in the least regarding the just and requisite forms for Law, but against the said John Duxbury and Robert Duxbury acting in all things nully and unjustly'.[71] Though the case rumbled on in the York court for several months, and was referred in February 1790 to be heard again at a latter date, it appears to have disappeared from the record at this point.[72] This might suggest that the parties reached a compromise concerning the distribution of the estate at some point in this year. There is little evidence that the circumstances of any of the parties changed after 1790, however. John Fullerton, Mary's husband, stayed listed in directories trading from the same Deansgate address until 1817.[73] The surviving Duxbury men also continued to appear in Manchester trade directories in subsequent years.[74] When Robert Duxbury died in January 1793, he left a will in which, rather tellingly, one

[69] Sarah Rothwell's affidavit to the Consistory Court at Chester, n.d.: LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury.

[70] CCALS, Consistory Court Book for the Diocese of Chester, EDC1/169. See also EDC1/168, 22 May, 12 and 26 June, 3, 10, 31 July 1788; EDC1/168M, 27 September, 4 and 11 October, 8 November 1788, 17 January 1789; EDC1/169, 22 and 29 January, 5 and 12 February, 5 March 1789.

[71] Borthwick, Diocesan Courts of the Archbishopric of York, Cause Papers, Trans CP 1789/1. Also Borthwick, Consistory Abstract Book, York Court, 26 May 1789, and LRO, WCW, Disputed will of William Duxbury. I am grateful to Philippa Hoskin of the Borthwick Institute for information about appeals to York.

[72] Borthwick, Consistory Abstract Book, York Court, 26 May, 22 October, 6 November, 10 December 1789, 4 February 1790.

[73] The last entry traced for Fullerton trading as a saddler appears in *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory for 1817* (Manchester, 1817).

[74] By the time that *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794) was published, John Duxbury was listed as a 'silk and cotton manufacturer, 18 Charlotte-street' and William Duxbury junior included as a 'dyer at 62 Water-street', next door to his brother, Robert junior, listed as a dyer at number 63. In the next directory, published three years later, William Duxbury had moved his business to nearby Quay Street, while Martha Duxbury appears to have inherited her husband John's business: *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (1797).

of the witnesses was Thomas Shelmerdine—whose firm of solicitors had been involved in drawing up William Duxbury senior's disputed will five years previously. He left his estate to his son and grandchildren, and perhaps not surprisingly, there was no mention of his niece, Mary Fullerton, suggesting that the family remained estranged.[75]

FAMILIAL RELATIONS, FAMILY STRATEGIES, AND BUSINESS

It was common to find partnerships between brothers such as that of William and Robert Duxbury in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Family members were supposed to be able to trust each other, which made such arrangements particularly popular among those in trade. However, while deemed safer than partnerships between non-relations, they were clearly not risk free—either during the lifetime of those in partnership, or following the death of one of the partners, as the Duxbury case so clearly illustrated. The knowledge that familial relationships could break down and that disagreements were possible, however auspicious the start of any venture, was behind the formal partnership contracts entered into by some siblings. These sought to lay down various ground rules about future conduct and how the business might be dissolved at a later date. Such arrangements reflected the legal status of most 'family property', which was not held in common by family members, but was controlled by individuals, as well as demonstrating a belief that individual family members might have a right to such property, even if their share was transferred to them only when certain events took place: such as upon marriage or the death of a parent or other relative. Though there existed a clear sense that family members, and blood relatives at least, had a duty to help each other, and could be trusted more than individuals to whom they were not related, such trust was clearly not always unconditional. This mix of concerns was evident in the agreement drawn up between William and James Leigh in 1784, in which William appears to have wanted to help set up his younger brother in business for reasons of sibling duty and emotional attachment, while, at the same time, he clearly also saw their dealings as sound from a commercial point of view, charged the going rate of interest for the money he lent (as appears to have been common practice in this period when loans were made between relations), and sought to protect his investment carefully.[76] The Leigh brothers demonstrated a particularly cautious approach, as is apparent in their surviving partnership agreement, which set out the terms of their partnership in a tobacconists shop over seven detailed pages. While we often need to infer the strategy of trading families and individuals in their business dealings, here their plans, if not their motivations, were explained in great depth.

[75] LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Duxbury (1793).

[76] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London, 1987), pt 2.

William was a grocer with an established business in Warrington when the agreement was drawn up, while James had recently completed his apprenticeship in Liverpool to 'aquire the Art and Skill of manufacturing tobacco and snuff'. Their contract explained James's desire to set up as a tobacconist in Warrington and also his lack of capital 'to commence and carry on the said trade'. In return for the supply of a property in which both to live and to work, plus a loan of £500 to set up his brother's new venture, William was to become a 'copartner' in the business for a period of seven years, with the firm trading as James Leigh and Co. With his own grocery business to run, William was a sleeping partner who was not 'obliged to give his attendance in any ways himself in or about the affairs and business of the said copartnership', while his younger brother was to 'transact and manage the principal part of the said Business' and undertook 'diligently Honestly and faithfully [to] imploy himself in and about the Affairs and Business of the said copartnership and devote his whole time thereto'. James agreed to repay the loan owed to his brother at 5 per cent interest, and, if the business made a profit of over £200 a year, he was allowed to draw a salary of £40 'for his service and attention in carrying on the said Business', receiving only £30 if profits fell below this level. All profits were to be divided between the two brothers 'share and share alike'. The document also outlined arrangements for winding up the firm in the future, and forbade either of the brothers to take out loans using the business or its premises as security without the other's consent, while neither of them was allowed to 'waste spoil Embezzel give away or convert to his own private use' any of the firm's assets without agreement. James also had to gain his brother's consent if he wished to purchase anything for more than £200, and was charged with keeping a set of business accounts that would be available at any time for inspection, while an up-to-date set of accounts was to be scrutinized at a twice yearly meeting. If their partnership was to end, then it was stipulated that any 'Difference or Dispute shall be referred to two indifferent persons to be chosen by and on behalf of each party to settle and determine the same'.[77] These 'indifferent persons' would presumably not have been close family members, but individuals who could act with impartiality, unaffected by any emotional bonds or feelings of particular loyalty. Just as formal as the Leighs in arranging their business affairs were the Manchester tea dealers Edward, Thomas, and Benjamin Binyon. In 1827 they signed a long and extremely detailed agreement for the dissolution of their copartnership, only for the three to set up again in business together four years later, in 1831, formalized by a deed of copartnership that was itself formally dissolved six years later.[78]

Though the survival of such partnership agreements is not particularly common, more examples were found in court papers of siblings in business together who did not appear to have drawn up formal partnership agreements. Perhaps this is not surprising, given contemporary beliefs about the importance of trust within families

[77] LRO, DDCS/39/1/Warrington. *The Universal British Directory* (London, 1798), lists Leigh and Co., Tobacco and snuff manufacturers, and Leigh and Co., grocers, in Warrington, both without full addresses.

[78] Manchester Local Studies Library, MC750–4.

and the emotional bonds that existed between close family members, and siblings in particular.[79] Indeed, even when court cases involved brothers in business pitted against one another, it was clearly believed that the natural state of familial relations should be that of trust and cooperation, resulting in shared economic strategy. This is illustrated in two separate cases concerning brothers in business together, both of which came to court in 1790. In both instances it was alleged that the trust that one sibling had placed in the other had been abused, and that, while each wronged party had believed himself to have been involved in a joint enterprise, the brother accused of wrongdoing had secretly been acting out of self-interest. These claims were made by both accused and complainant in a case that described the dissolution of a firm of Salford dyers, run by two brothers, Robert and James Bancroft, and that was brought before the Court of Exchequer. Each brother accused the other of betraying the trust placed in them to keep the firm's accounts properly.[80] The Bancrofts were said to have dissolved their partnership 'by mutual consent' in September 1789, while the business was continued under a new partnership consisting of James Bancroft and William Gregory, and Robert was presented with a bond for £240 for his share in the business.[81] But, though the switch in ownership appeared unproblematic initially, it was claimed that Robert had not been honest in his dealings with his brother and his new partners, and he should not have received so large a sum for his share in the business.

James's affidavit alleged that Robert had kept the firm's books while James 'had nothing to do therewith and he knew nothing of the aforesaid matters and dealings between him and the said Robert Bancroft except from the accounts the said Robert Bancroft declared and gave to him thereof', so that James 'relied entirely on such accounts . . . being in every respect fair and full accounts'. It was on this trust that James asserted he gave his brother the bond, though since then he claimed to have 'discovered and found out that the said defendant Robert Bancroft during the copartnership . . . did from time to time receive divers sums of money for and on account of the said copartnership business between them', but that, instead of including such monies in the company's accounts, he 'took to and for his own the divers goods matters and things of and belonging to the said partnership concern between them amounting in the whole to the sum of £153 9*s*. 8*d*. and hath not in any manner accounted with your said orator for the said moiety'. Robert was charged with having committed a variety of accounting frauds that 'did suppress and conceal', including taking out a loan charged to the firm's accounts that James 'had nothing to do [with]', so that their business 'ought not to have been charged and debited with any part thereof'. James claimed therefore only to owe his brother £55 7*s*. 2*d*., rather than the £240 listed in the bond for which Robert was now pursuing payment at the Court of Kings Bench at Westminster. James argued that

[79] Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England*, 28–38, 55–79; Davidoff, *Thicker than Water*.

[80] TNA: E 112, 530/239.

[81] *A Directory for the Towns of Manchester and Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788) lists 'James Bancroft, Dyer, Quay Street, Salford' and 'Robert Bancroft Fustian Dyer, Quay Street and Bridge Street, Salford', as well as 'William Gregory, Grocer, Chapel street, Salford'.

Robert 'ought to be restrained' from his King's Bench actions, which were 'contrary to equity and good conscience'.[82]

In his defence, Robert claimed to be 'a very bad writer and being totally unacquainted with book keeping or the nature thereof and having a great confidence in the honesty and integrity of his said brother . . . left the whole and sole care and charge of the books belonging to the said copartnership and the conduct and management of the said partnership dealings to [James]', so that it was 'he or John Pendlebury of Manchester . . . who acted as clerk or bookeeper to the said copartnership' who had 'received and paid all sums of money for and on account of the said partnership'. Any sums of money for the partnership that Robert received, he claimed to have passed on to his brother, who kept the firm's books 'at the house where the said partnership business was carried on'. While Robert allegedly 'never interfered or concerned himself' with compiling the accounts, since he lived 'at a considerable distance from the house and premises where the said partnership business was carried on', he apparently 'requested that the said books or the said John Pendlebury would once a month go to this defendants house for the purpose of giving this defendant an account of the said co-partnership dealings and transactions . . . and to enter the same in a book provided by the defendant for that purpose', but which he claimed 'James Bancroft promised this defendant that he or the said John Pendlebury would regularly do but notwithstanding such promise he frequently neglected so to do'. Robert stated that at a series of meetings in September 1789 the firm's accounts 'were at length done though after a great deal of deliberation and after very minutely investigating and examining the said partnership accounts and the balance was ascertained and fixed'. He denied receiving any other sums from the business, and accused his brother and his new business partners of refusing to pay him what he was owed. Both brothers emphasized the trust that they had placed in their sibling: Robert Bancroft stated that he had 'a great confidence in the honesty and integrity' of his brother, while James described himself content to rely 'entirely on his brother' producing 'fair and full accounts'.[83]

A similar case involving a pair of Chorley butchers was brought before the Chancery Court of the Palatine of Lancaster in 1790. Again, the dispute centred on allegedly false accounting, and the ideal of trust between family members was repeatedly asserted. William and John Pilkington were described as having been in partnership for twenty years 'in the Trade or Business of a Butcher and in buying and slaughtering fat cattle and selling the same out to their Customers' from a stall on market days, 'as well in their Shop in Chorley', where they traded as 'William and John Pilkington', so that 'their Shop Bills were made out to their customers in such joint names and under the firm of "William and John Pilkington"'. During the previous eleven years of the partnership, William claimed, he and his brother had 'lived together in the same House'. Here they apparently had an arrangement whereby William 'kept the House and paid all the charges and Expences [*sic*]

[82] TNA: E 112, 530/239. [83] TNA: E 112,530/239.

thereof (except the Rent)', while John paid the rent, with both drawing on their joint business for funds, so that it seems that money held in the business and domestic expenditure were not clearly divided.[84]

According to William, it was John who kept the 'Accounts of the said Partnership and of the Buyings Sellings dealings and other transactions thereof . . . on Account of his understanding how to read and write and keep Accounts which your Orator cannot do'. William claimed that 'there hath never been any Settlement of Accounts between your Orator and the said John Pilkington since they first entered into Partnership together', nor had William 'ever received any Part of his Share of the Profits of the said joint Business further than such Part of his Moiety thereof as was necessary for the Support of himself and his family'. Instead, his brother John was said to have retained possession of the accounts, as 'the Keeper of the Cash and of the Accounts', with 'the whole thereof in his Custody and Care'. John was accused of refusing 'to divide the same with your Orator or to come to any Account within concerning the same'. William claimed that John had invested the profits of their business in real estate, purchasing five houses in New Street in Chorley, while also lending out £600 under his own name in secured loans.[85]

After William had demanded to see the accounts of the business profits, and to receive half of these profits himself, he claims that his brother 'refused to come to any account with your Orator for the same but at first offered to pay your Orator the Sum of two hundred pounds' for his share of the business. When William refused, John was said to have employed an attorney to repeat the offer, and to have rejected William's proposal to appoint 'two indifferent persons in the Town or Neighbourhood of Chorley one to be nominated by your Orator and the other by the same by the said John Pilkington' to settle the business account, 'which proposal the said John Pilkington rejected and refused and still refused to come to any account with your Orator for his Share of the said joint Profits otherwise than paying your Orator the Sum of one hundred pounds in lieu of his Share thereof'. John was accused of conspiring with others 'to injure and oppress your Orator', and to have prevented him from receiving his share of the business profits that William had 'so fairly and industriously carried'. John was described as sometimes denying that the pair were in partnership together, while at other times claiming that the business did not make any profit, but was running at a loss and had debts. Meanwhile, William claimed that the account books had been 'burnt for the purpose of preventing your Orators recovery of his just share of the Profits of the said Joint Business'.[86] Though the facts of this case were contested, the readiness with which both the Pilkington and Bancroft brothers might work (and even live) together and run a business in ways that left them open to being defrauded says as much about expectations that family members could trust one another as it does about the propensity of some individuals to betray that trust and to pursue their own interests at the expense of the joint concern.

[84] TNA: PL 6/90/20. [85] TNA: PL 6/90/20. [86] TNA: PL 6/90/20.

Though seemingly irreconcilable rifts appear to have affected the families discussed so far, other business families are described in court records as functioning more harmoniously, and working together to ensure familial prosperity. Such cases demonstrate apparent consensus over family strategies that were determined by shared understandings about hierarchies of age and gender, coupled with a mixture of practical considerations—such as ideas about whether a business should be continued or not, and, if so, who was best suited to take charge—coupled with the existence of strong bonds based upon love and a sense of duty to one's family. One reason suggested in Chapter 1 for the continuance of the family firm following the death of the head of household was the level of prior involvement that other family members—and wives in particular—might have had in running businesses, which meant that they were well placed to take over successfully. Female involvement in business in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries should not surprise us. Beverly Lemire's research on credit depicts women at the centre of small-scale financial dealings among non elite groups between 1600 and 1900,[87] and Amy Erickson has described husbands and wives working closely together to run both joint businesses and complimentary enterprises from the same premises in the early eighteenth century.[88] Recent research on women's work in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England has also shown that female ownership of small-scale urban enterprises was commonplace.[89] When male heads of household died or became incapacitated, it was normal for their wives to take over from them without apparent controversy, just as less senior male family members would do on other occasions. And, though female business heads were more common in certain trades than others, one can still find examples of women running most types of small enterprise.[90]

Contemporary writers in the early modern period often argued that the essential division in the family or household was not based on gender, but was rather between '"governors" (husband and wife, or master and mistress) and "those that must be ruled" (children and servants)', or, as Keith Thomas stated of early modern Britain, 'the prevailing ideal was gerontocratic: the young were to serve and the old were to rule'.[91] As we saw in Chapter 1, sons might take over the family firm on the

[87] Beverly Lemire, *The Business of Everyday Life: Gender, Practice and Social Politics in England, c.1600–1900* (Manchester, 2005), ch. 2.

[88] Amy Erickson, 'Married Women's Occupations in Eighteenth-Century London', *Continuity and Change*, 23/2 (2008), 267–307.

[89] Maxine Berg, 'Women's Property and the Industrial Revolution', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 24/2 (1993), 233–50; Penelope Lane, 'Women in the Regional Economy, the East Midlands 1700–1830', University of Warwick Ph.D. thesis (1999); Christine Wiskin, 'Women, Finance and Credit in England, *c.*1780–1826', University of Warwick Ph.D. thesis (2000); Barker, *The Business of Women*; Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business, 1700–1850* (Woodbridge, 2006); Geoffrey Tweedale, 'Backstreet Capitalism: An Analysis of the Family Firm in the Nineteenth-Century Sheffield Cutlery Industry', *Business History*, 55/6 (2013), 875–91, pp. 883–5.

[90] Barker, *The Business of Women*, ch. 2; Phillips, *Women in Business*, 134–46; Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, ch. 5; Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995), ch. 2.

[91] Amanda Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2007), 34–7; Keith Thomas, 'Age and Authority in Early Modern Britain', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 62 (1976), 205–48, p. 207.

death of their fathers despite their mother being alive, but this seems to have been done—at least where evidence exists—with their mother's consent. The more common course of events that we saw was that generational hierarchies took priority over gendered ones, so that widows were more likely to seize the reins upon the death of a husband, even when they had adult sons.[92] Adult children might well be taken into partnerships with their mothers, but the division of power was made clear by trading names that typically took the form of 'Mrs X and son (or daughter)'.[93] Such practices seem to indicate not only the importance of age in deciding seniority, but also the part played in familial hierarchies by skill and experience that could be honed by years of involvement in day-to-day business operations. In terms of family strategies among those in trade, we see clearly that widows tended to assert more power over decision-making than their sons, even when they had reached adulthood, but that, within generations, men tended to assume greater control of the family business than women.

The particular independence and agency of widowed tradeswomen derived from their age, experience, and skill in business. These latter qualities stemmed from the frequency with which wives were trusted to run important parts of the family enterprise when their husbands had been alive. This fact is evident in several court cases, in which we see different family members—and specifically husbands and wives—working together as partners in a shared economic strategy in a variety of ventures. Two of the cases identified concerned the role of women running shops that traded under their husbands' names, but where their wives appeared solely responsible for this aspect of the family's business while their menfolk were engaged in other, separate, activities elsewhere. In 1770, a case was brought to the Court of Exchequer concerning unspecified goods pawned by a labourer's wife, Ann Ellison, who had allegedly obtained them fraudulently from a shop run by the wife of the brewer John Johnson, of Dale Street in Liverpool.[94] The pawnbroker, Ralph Pennington, who traded nearby on Shaw's Brow (now William Brown Street), brought the case to claim ownership of the goods.[95] Johnson defended himself against Pennington's accusation that he had refused to show him his 'shop books' or accounts, which the pawnbroker claimed would prove that he had not been paid for the goods that were pawned. Johnson agreed that he kept 'a shop in Liverpool' but asserted that 'his wife principally takes care of the same his time being almost wholly employed in the looking after his brewery', so that 'the books of the shop were mostly taken care of by this defendants said wife he the said defendant very

[92] Barker, *The Business of Women*, 111–12; Hannah Barker, 'Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution: Female Involvement in the English Printing Trades, *c.*1700–1840', in Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (eds), *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities* (London, 1997), 81–100, pp. 96–8; Christine Wiskin, 'Urban Businesswomen in Eighteenth-Century England', in Rosemary Sweet and Penelope Lane (eds), *'On the Town': Women and Urban Life in Eighteenth-Century England* (Aldershot, 2003), 87–110, pp. 97–8.

[93] Barker, *The Business of Women*, 111–15; Tweedale, 'Backstreet Capitalism', 883.

[94] TNA: E 112, 1526/81; *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (1767); *Gore's Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1772* (Liverpool, 1772).

[95] *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1767); *Gore's Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1772* (Liverpool, 1772).

seldom inspecting the same and scarcely ever over making any original entry therein being generally absent from said shop on account of his other employ'.[96]

Johnson might have understated his involvement in an attempt to deflect Pennington's legal challenge, though he must have believed that the argument would be creditable. A wife's role in the shop was central in another case brought to the Court of Exchequer thirty years later, in which her activities were described by the plaintiff rather than the defendant. In this instance, Thomas Briscall, 'gentleman', brought a case against Matthew Lofthouse, a Manchester shopkeeper.[97] This dispute revolved around legal action taken by Lofthouse against Briscall in another court for a debt for groceries. Briscall was said to live 'near the house and shop wherein Matthew Lofthouse carried on and still carries on the business of buying and selling cheese butter flour candles soap and a great variety of other articles of which housekeepers and families are frequently in want of'. Briscall denied that he bought goods on credit from the shop, and claimed that, in any case, Lofthouse would not know whether they had been paid for or not, since 'the said Matthew Lofthouse during the period aforesaid was not accustomed to attend or serve in his said shop but that his wife by his desire and on his behalf usually attended therein and did alone or with the assistance of some servant serve the customers or persons applying there for any goods or articles'. Not only was Matthew Lofthouse said to be ignorant of what went on in the shop, but Briscall claimed that

> the said Matthew Lofthouses wife since the commencement of the said action hath acknowledged and declared to several persons and particularly to your orators wife that all the articles from the shop which had been sold to your orator or on his account or sent from such shop to your orators house had been paid for and that there was no sum of money then due from your orator to her husband.[98]

Mrs Lofthouse was thus held up as the authority on the business dealings of the shop, rather than her husband, though the pair appeared to act in their different business capacities by mutual consent and for a shared familial benefit.

When Anne Tatlock, the widow of the Liverpool brewer John Tatlock, brought a case at the Court of Exchequer against the executors of her husband's will and the trustees of her marriage settlement in 1765, she repeatedly asserted her experience and ability in the brewing trade that had resulted from her marriage, and argued that she was best placed to continue the family firm in the interests of herself and the Tatlock children. Ann accused the executors of 'combining and confederating' with the attorneys who had drawn up her marriage settlement to prevent her from asserting her claim to her husband's real estate. She noted that 'among other things [the executors] entered and took possession of the said brewery coppers washing tubs backs underbacks coolers and other brewing utensils', and, having taken control of John's brewery, they had 'since the death of the said testator carried on the business and trade of a beer brewer whereby they have received a considerable profit . . . which they have converted to their own benefit'. In response to the executors having 'not carried on the said business in a manner so beneficial to

[96] TNA: E 112, 1526/81. [97] TNA: E 112/1532/311. [98] TNA: E 112/1532/311.

the said testators estate as they might', and since Anne claimed to have been 'used and accustomed to the trade and business of the said brewery during the life of her said husband', she asserted that she had frequently asked the executors 'to permit her to carry on the said business of the brewery for the benefit of herself and the children'. This request was apparently refused, and Anne maintained that the executors threatened to sell the brewing tools and dismantle the brewhouse if they were prevented from running it themselves.[99]

Anne Tatlock's request that she be allowed to run the family business as the best economic strategy for her family, based on her expertise in running the business gained while her husband was alive, was echoed in another case brought to the Court of Exchequer in 1788 by John Stevenson and his wife, Elizabeth. Their complaint was against their landlord, John Walker, concerning the renewal of the lease for their house and shop on Cateaton Street in Manchester.[100] Though John Stevenson had not died, it was asserted that in January 1785 he became ill and was judged to be 'insane' so that 'since that time hath been wholly incapable of carrying out the said business of a Tobacconist or of managing his affairs in any respect or entering into any contract whatsoever'. While John was shipped off to 'a place called Scout Hill in Ashton under Line [*sic*]', Elizabeth was said to have acted in a manner which she believed best met her own needs and those of her husband, specifically the costs of his care. She continued the business—briefly with a business partner—then alone from November 1786, when her partner 'quitted and resigned his share in the said business'. Since then, it was claimed, the shop had been managed by Elizabeth, 'who hath also managed the general affairs' of her husband. Elizabeth declared herself 'fully competent to contract with the defendant', who, it was argued, was 'bound in equity and good conscience to perform such contract'. Elizabeth Stevenson's husband, John, appears to have supported his wife's assertion of her commercial competence in his will, dated 1790, and proved after his death three years later. The document described John Stevenson as a tobacconist and stated that Elizabeth 'after my Decease by and with a sufficient Part of my said Estate and Effects shall and may follow and carry on the Trade or Business which I now carry on'. John may well have recovered at some point before he made his will, which is signed with a clear, strong hand.[101]

In a further case brought to the Court of Exchequer, the involvement of both a wife and a daughter in running the family inn is described in some detail by both plaintiff and defendant. Here again, the business competence of female family members, the trust placed in them by their male relatives, and the role of all family members in a shared enterprise as part of a joint family strategy are evident. This

[99] TNA: E 112/1523/17. [100] TNA: E 112/1529/204.

[101] LRO, WCW, Will of John Stevenson (1793). The Stevensons appear to have lost the case, if not the business, from the evidence of trade directories. Though John Stevenson is listed in Elizabeth Raffald, *The Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781), as a tobacconist at Cateaton Street, by 1788 'Mrs Stevenson' was listed as a tobacconist at Old Bridge Street: Edmond Holmes, *Directory for the Towns of Manchester & Salford* (Manchester, 1788). By the time that the next directory was published in 1794, Elizabeth and John had both disappeared from the record: *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794).

action was brought by John Henshall, who ran the Queen's Head on Chapel Street in Salford.[102] Henshall accused William Woolley and Esther Ogden, also of Salford and partners in a nearby brewery, of fraudulently charging him for beer that he had not received. The role played by Henshall's wife (who was deceased by the time that the case was brought) and their daughter, Elizabeth, was crucial for both plaintiff and defendants, and illustrated the active role that both women played in the day-to-day management of the inn, and the sense that this was a shared family enterprise. John Henshall acknowledged that he 'had for some years past been occasionally supplied with beer for carrying on his trade by Esther Ogden and William Woolley'. But he claimed that on two occasions in 1803 they had attempted to deliver unordered beer to the Queen's Head for which they subsequently demanded payment, even though the consignments were refused. The first incident was said to have taken place on 5 January 1803, when William Woolley was accused of coming to Henshall's premises with a consignment of beer while he was away in Liverpool. It was claimed that John Henshall's wife and daughter 'knowing that your orators cellar was then full and that your orator had not given any orders for the said load of beer refused to take the same'. The result of this refusal, according to Henshall's suit, was that Woolley 'said it was not material as the beer would do for somebody else and that he would see your orator when he came home'.[103]

A few months later the trick was allegedly played again and a 'load of beer arrived at your orators house when your orators wife and daughter informed Robert Jordan and James Atherton the men who came with the said load of beer that they had seen the said William Woolley and that the said beer must be taken back'—which was said to have happened. Once again the womenfolk of the Henshall household were described as being fully aware of the requirements and the day-to-day running of the business, and seemed confident to take charge in John Henshall's absence. Not long after, Woolley and Ogden demanded payment for the supposedly unwanted and undelivered beer, which Henshall refused to provide, resulting in an action against him at the Court of Kings Bench at Westminster that he appears to have lost, and which in turn led to Henshall suing them in the Court of Exchequer. Here Woolley and Ogden denied the accusations, and claimed that on 5 January they had 'been informed and believed . . . that the beer was put into the said complainants cellar by the said Robert Jordan and James Atherton [their employees] the said cellar having been previously opened by the said complainants daughter for that purpose'. Around June or July 1803, Mrs Henshall was said to have asked William Woolley 'to bring in his account that they might see what was owing', after which her husband 'informed him that the said account was wrong and that he only owed for one load'. Woolley and Ogden claimed additionally that they 'did not believe' that Mrs Henshall had told William Woolley on 5 January that her husband had

[102] TNA: E 112, 1535/412; *Deans & Co.'s Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1804) lists 'Esther Ogden house and brewery, Cooke Street, Salford'; 'William Woolley,12 Ravald Street, Salford'; 'John Henshall, victualler, Queen's Head, 66 Chapel Street Salford'.

[103] TNA: E 112, 1535/412.

'given no orders for the said load of beer or made any such observation to him'. Whatever the truth of the case, we see Mrs Henshall and her daughter, Elizabeth, acting in William Henshall's place when he was absent from town and (depending on which account one believes) accepting or rejecting deliveries, with Mrs Henshall additionally described as having independently requested accounts from suppliers.[104]

While this case depicted the activities of two women within the family firm working alongside the head of household to ensure the prosperity of the whole family, it seems clear from the descriptions of their individual activities that the mother occupied a more senior role than did her daughter. This is what one would expect, given what we have already seen of the nature of generational hierarchies among trading families. Though generation tended to be seen as a more important consideration than gender, however, within generations, gender was still a crucial factor in the pattern of business succession. Thus family strategies in terms of the management of businesses and the transfer of leadership following the death or incapacity of the head of family often followed a fairly predictable course in respect of both age and gender. We can see this clearly in another Exchequer case that described the passage of a Liverpool beer-brewing business between both male and female family members over two decades. In 1781, Thomas Twist, a brazier, and Zachariah Barrier, a merchant selling barley and hops, both from Liverpool, brought a claim against the estate of Thomas Pavey.[105] Pavey was described in the court documents as 'well established in the trade or business of a Beerbrewer at Liverpool . . . which trade he was desirous of having continued after his decease for payment of his Debts and Legacies and for the benefit of his wife and children'. Thomas Pavey died around 1765, after which his business was duly continued by his wife, Ellen, since 'it was [her husband's] will and mind that his wife Ellen Pavey should and might carry on the Brewery Business and have the use of all his Brewing objects, casks, utensils and materials for said purpose as long as she continued his widow'. The Paveys' son, Thomas, was said to have been instructed in his father's will to continue with his apprenticeship with his master, James Gildart, who appears to have been a local sugar baker, and to help his mother in the brewing business in his 'extra hours'.[106] While running the brewery, Ellen was alleged to have bought regular supplies from Barrier and utensils from Twist to whom—it was claimed—money was still owed.[107]

In October 1778, Ellen Pavey died and it was alleged that her daughter, also Ellen, who should have acted as an executor of her mother's will, failed to do so, which is why her debts had not been settled. The testimony of Thomas and William Calvert, more of Ellen Pavey senior's debtors, who assumed the administration of her estate after her death, confirmed that Ellen senior took charge of her

[104] TNA: E 112, 1535/412.
[105] TNA: E 112/1527/152; *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1781) lists 'Thomas Twist, Brazier, 38 Southside, Old Dock, Liverpool'.
[106] Gildart appears in another Exchequer case: TNA: E 112, 1524/31 (1766).
[107] TNA: E 112/1527/152.

husband's business and that 'she so carried on such Business from the death of the same Testator to her own death'. At this point her son, Thomas, assumed control of the business, and Calvert stated that he was 'informed and believes that the said Thomas Pavey the son carried on the said Brewery Business from the death of his mother the said Ellen Pavey untill the time of his own death'. Following Thomas Pavey junior's death, Calvert claimed that his widow, Elizabeth, proved his will (though, if she did, like the will of Ellen Pavey senior, it appears not to have survived) and assumed control of his estate, including the business and its stock in trade. Soon after, Elizabeth married Peter Humphreys, a former mariner, around 1780, after which point he appears to have taken charge of the brewery. Humphrey's own answer to the complaint describes his success in running the business as 'variable'. He claimed to have 'kept no regular accounts' concerning either the business or the wider Pavey estate, but asserted that he had 'a right to continue in the possession and Management of the said Trade and Business during his life' as the husband of the widow of its former owner.[108]

This case appears to have rumbled on, and in 1783 Thomas Pavey junior's sister, Ellen Matthews, formerly Ellen Pavey, who had allegedly failed to settle their mother's estate properly, also presented an answer to the court. She confirmed her mother's role as executor of her father's will and in continuing the family business, and asserted that 'her mother provided and made for her said children respectively such maintenance and allowance during her lifetime as by the said Will were directed'. Ellen Matthews and her husband, Joseph, also claimed to believe—'although they know it not of their own knowledge'—that Thomas Pavey junior 'being desirous that the said Trade should be continued after his death did make such will as in the said Bill is set forth'. However, Matthews claimed not to know whether or not her brother's widow had proved the will, though she confirmed that 'she possessed herself of the stock in Trade Vessels Utensils and personal Estate and Effects of her said Husband' and 'that she hath since married the said Peter Humphreys who together until very lately carried on the said Brewery Business and was in possession of the Utensils and personal Estate of the said Thomas Pavey the Grandfather and Thomas Pavey the son respectively'. Contrary to Humphrey's account, Matthews claimed that she had 'heard and verily believe that the said Peter Humphreys and Elizabeth his wife greatly neglected the said Brewery Business and carried on the same carelessly . . . and that the said Peter Humphreys is by no means a fit person to carry on the said trade', but rather he had 'declined' it because his business had collapsed.[109]

In passing from Thomas Pavey senior, to his wife, Ellen, then to their son, Thomas, to his widow, Elizabeth, and then to her new husband, Peter Humphreys, the Pavey brewery showed a neat progression in which generational hierarchy trumped that of gender, but where men were given preference over women of the same generation. The various testimonies provided in this case make clear the

[108] TNA: E 112/1527/152.

[109] TNA: E 112/1527/152. This case rumbles on in another set of depositions: TNA: E 134/29 Geo3/Mich16 (1788).

value of the business to family members as a means of support. The accounts presented in court of the series of business successions that took place suggest that they were uncontested, though Ellen Matthew's comments concerning her former sister-in-law and her new husband suggests a level of familial disunity concerning the course of events after her brother's death (though, perhaps not surprisingly, she said nothing of her own alleged misconduct). Ellen's unhappiness was no doubt linked to her claim not to have been given all of the inheritance due to her from her father's will, which might explain the apparent estrangement with her brother's widow, but it was also likely to have reflected her dissatisfaction with the business moving into the hands of her sister-in-law's husband, and thus out of her family's control, and, it seems, no longer of economic benefit to them. Her unhappiness was compounded by Humphreys's alleged incompetence in running the brewery, which led to its decline. Both of these developments were clearly felt to have impacted negatively on Ellen, and presumably also upon other members of her family, and she was therefore extremely critical of its current management, which constituted a strategy likely to benefit only Elizabeth and Peter Humphreys and any offspring (and, arguably, not even them, given the state of the business).[110]

Prior to the appearance of Peter Humphreys, the Pavey family appears to have been in broad consensus about the management of the family firm for many years. But, as this case and the others explored in this chapter demonstrate, it was not always the case that families agreed about how best to run a business and who should be in charge, and moreover, the apparent seniority of parents over their children did not always go unchallenged.[111] The remainder of this chapter examines instances in which disputes arose within families across generations concerning business management and where there was evidence, not only of familial disharmony, but also of different family members having very different views about how best to manage the family firm and pursuing divergent family strategies as a result. All these elements were apparent in a case brought to the Court of Exchequer in 1803. Betty Oldham, widow of Thomas Oldham from Ashton-under-Lyme, who was variously referred to as a 'cabinet maker' and 'machine maker',[112] presented a complaint, along with her sons, John and Joseph, to try to prevent her oldest son, also Thomas, from assuming control of the family home and business. Thomas senior had died intestate in 1795, leaving behind not only these litigants, but several other surviving children.[113] Betty had obtained letters of administration for Thomas's personal estate and some division of his real estate appears to have taken place immediately following his death.[114] She and her children continued to live in the family dwelling 'until sometime about or beginning the year 1800', when Thomas junior married 'and did thereupon go and live and reside with [his wife] in

[110] TNA: E 112/1527/152. [111] See also Barker, *The Business of Women*, 153–7.

[112] Thomas Oldham was described as a cabinetmaker in the letters of administration granted to his widow, and a machine-maker in court papers. His son is listed as a cabinetmaker some years after his death: *The Commercial Directory for 1816–17* (Manchester, 1816).

[113] TNA: E 112, 1534/357 (1803).

[114] LRO, WCW, Will of Thomas Oldham, Admon., of Ashton under Lyme, Cabinet Maker, d. 1796.

another messuage or tenement situate in Ashton under Lime', along with Sarah Oldham, one of Thomas's sisters, who had since died. It was claimed that, after her husband's death, Betty and her children carried on 'the said trade or business of a machine maker' that had been conducted by Thomas senior 'in and upon the same workshops and premises and with the same stock in trade and other effects as the intestate Thomas Oldham has so carried on such trade and business'. During this time 'the charges of housekeeping and servants wages and also the board education cloathing and bringing up' of the children, including Thomas junior, along with Samuel, Betty junior, Hannah, Mary, and Sarah, were said to have been 'paid and come by out of the said stock in trade and the profits arising from the said trade or business'.[115]

Once Thomas and John had both reached the age of 21, it was agreed that they should enter a formal partnership with their mother, and that their five underage siblings should join them in the partnership when they too reached the age of maturity. As a result, Betty, John, and Thomas junior were said to have had papers drawn up in June 1800 in which they were all said to have agreed that the three of them 'should and would be copartners and joint traders in the trade and business of machine maker and in buying and selling of timber brass iron and all other things thereunto incident or belonging in such manner as persons following such trade and business used to do and that such partnership should continue for the term of seven years.' Like that made by the Leigh brothers, this contract appears to have been the result of a conscious act of planning and strategy by the family. Accounts for the business were to be kept that were open to all involved, and the estate of Thomas senior valued, with one-ninth share going to his widow and each of their children. In addition, the family firm was described as being run to support the family's dependent members in particular, and it was said to have been explicitly stated 'that the charges of housekeeping servants wages and also the board education and cloathing and bringing up of the then infant children until they should severally attain their respective ages of twenty one years should be paid and borne by and out of the said joint stock and the profits to arise from the said copartnership'.[116]

Both the business, and Betty's household, were said to have been run along these lines until June 1801, when her eldest son, Thomas junior, wrote to Betty and to his brother John that he 'was minded and desirous that a dissolution of the said copartnership' should take place. Thomas provided the three months' notice required by the terms of the copartnership and promptly left Ashton, having allegedly 'declared that the said copartnership concern and trade should be continued for the best advantage of all parties or to that or the like effect'. While his mother and siblings carried on the business and Thomas junior 'did continue to be absent therefrom for about six months and then returned thereto', it was claimed that he 'has not since that time acted or interfered in the concerns of the said copartnership . . . but he has left the management thereof and conduct thereof to your oratrix and orators'. Moreover, the division of the estate had apparently never taken place, for Betty and John claimed that they had

[115] TNA: E 112, 1534/357 (1803). [116] TNA: E 112, 1534/357.

> applied to the said Thomas Oldham . . . and requested him to join with them in taking a fair and just account of all . . . the said copartnership dealings and transactions and also in making a fair and equal division and distribution of all the said stock in trade and debts and also of all and every the aforesaid estate costs real and personal late belonging to the said intestate Thomas Oldham,

which he had apparently failed to do. Instead, he was accused of 'combining and confederating' with some of Betty and Thomas senior's other children, who appear to have been minors—Samuel, Betty junior, Hannah, and Mary—over the division of their father's estate. Thomas junior was accused of having recently 'caused two several actions of ejectment to be brought for recovery of the possession of the said freehold estates . . . and he threatens to proceed in such action and to turn your oratrix and orators and other persons in possession of such freehold and leasehold estates out of possesion thereof which your oratrix and orators humbly insist the said defendant Thomas Oldham ought not to be permitted to do but that he ought to be restrained therefrom by the injunction of this honourable court'.[117] Though the outcome of this dispute is unclear, the first trade directory for Ashton-under-Lyme from 1817 lists a Thomas Oldham as cabinetmaker in Scotland Street, while Betty appears to have disappeared from the record, suggesting that she failed to fend off her son's attack on her as head of the business.[118]

This court case was the result of what appeared to be a particularly bitter dispute over family property, which pitted a widow and two of her offspring against her other five children, and suggests a deep disagreement over how best to conduct the family business. Though we know very little of Betty Oldham senior's competence as a businesswoman, or of her relations with her children prior to this major and public falling out, given that her husband had died intestate, it is worth noting that she could have assumed control of a 'widow's third' of the estate rather than the ninth that she appears to have accepted before relations broke down (although she refers to her rights to the 'dowers or thirds' of her intestate husband in her Exchequer suit).[119] Moreover, she seems to have entered into a formal partnership with her two adult sons in 1800 in which all three had equal shares and powers, rather than assuming a senior position for herself. All this shows us both that the existence of formalized partnership agreements in family businesses could not ensure that relations did not break down, and that custom as well as law might be ignored by some families in trade for reasons that are obscured from the historical record, so that the decision-making processes behind family strategies remain opaque.

We can gain more detailed insights in another case concerning both intergenerational succession and periodic familial disharmony from the memoir of the Liverpool baker John Coleman. Here he described not only the frictions in trading

[117] TNA: E 112, 1534/357.

[118] *The Commercial Directory for 1816–17* (Manchester, 1816). See also Edward Baines, *Baines's Lancashire Directory* (Liverpool, 1824).

[119] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 174, 178, 186; Susan Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660–1833* (Cambridge, 1990), chs 2, 3; TNA: E 112, 1534/357.

family life, but also the bonds that existed between family members, which encouraged cooperation rather than tension, as well as the negotiations and compromises underlying business and family strategies. In common with many of the court cases discussed in this chapter, the Coleman family story provides more evidence of family infighting over resources, but it also suggests the existence of a family strategy, decided largely by its senior members, which varied according to changing circumstances. Though John Coleman and his parents fought over the distribution of resources once John came of age, and his mother and father had differing opinions about what should happen to the family firm following Robert Coleman's death and during Mary Coleman's widowhood, they were all committed publically to managing the family's commercial affairs to the greatest benefit of surviving family members, and to maintaining as much familial cohesion as possible. This they did through a mixture of bargaining and persuasion to try to diffuse tensions between parents and children and between siblings and their siblings' spouses, and by reminding their children of the right way in which to conduct themselves: according to both God's law and the impulses determined by love.

John Coleman described challenging his parents' authority early in his adult life, and his memoir depicts his battle for what he saw as full adult status within both the family and the family firm. Coleman had been apprenticed to his father for seven years at 14 years of age and wrote peevishly in later life that 'during which servitude I had no more indulgencies than the common weekly labourer'.[120] In 1764 his apprenticeship ended, and Coleman recorded that 'I then began to think of having some money at my own disposal, imagining I should for my labour at least receive journey-man's wages and I could furnish myself with clothes as I thought fit'. But he was to be disappointed:

> I waited anxiously the first Saturday night, my name was not in the wages bill, nor any money offered me. I laid this much to heart as I had, in my own mind, furnished myself with a pair of dancing shoes, being very fond of that exercise and excelled by very few in that polite accomplishment. I reasoned with myself and brought my mind to think my father meant to pay one monthly and thus I consoled myself until the expiration of that period. The month's end came, but no wages. This was a new source of trouble. I mentioned the matter to my mother, but she observed surely I did not put myself on a footing with the common journey-man that had weekly wages, on account of their families. This reply of my mother's, I thought a very rational one and did not doubt but my payments would be made me quarterly and as my mother observed I had meat, drink, lodging and clothing found me. What could I want more—yes! I wanted a little more money in my pocket, on becoming a man, than I could think of as a boy. My quarter-day arrived, still no money came, another came and no money offered. I now began to be uneasy in great earnest.[121]

Chafing at the refusal to give him pay for his work, Coleman then began to hatch a plan to escape his 'servitude' in the family business:

[120] Coleman, fo. 29^{r}. [121] Coleman, fo. 33$^{v–r}$.

> Several letters passing between a young man and myself who had served his apprenticeship with my father and was then in London holding out to me what great wages he had and what great encouragement I might have if I would come up to London, that he had mentioned my very great abilities as a furner and driver [both jobs in the bakery trade] in particular can not be equalled in the kingdom to his masters, Misters Buck and Grub who were the first in their line in their profession as biscuit-bakers only and that my wages at least would be a guinea a week, working from 12 o'clock at night to the same hour at noon. This I thought too good an offer to lose, as I should have my guinea a week and every afternoon to walk where I pleased, etc. I found my plan and determined within myself to see London, having saved a little money from my overwork, the sale of a pig and some gains by starch making, together with the generous subscription of some young friends, enabled me to say I had a purse of ten pounds to set out with. I secretly got all my linen and my clothes in order, borrowed a pair of saddle-bags from a friend who also gave me a very handsome new fashionable crimson waistcoat. Being now entirely prepared, set out for Chester, on Sunday morning the 2nd November 1764 before any of my family were stirring, having previously fixed with my neighbour, Mr John Gundy, to convey the information of my elopement to my parents, etc. on the afternoon of that day, but not my route for fear of being pursued by my father, or any other person he might send after me to bring me back.[122]

Though Coleman reminisced excitedly about his time spent in London,[123] within a short time both his friend Grundy, and his father, wrote to him. John Grundy's letter 'was desiring me to come home by all means on my mother's account, she being quite miserable on my account since my departure and that if I would come she would insure one a hearty forgiveness and every thing I wanted in reason should be done for me'. His 'rigid Anabaptist' father, meanwhile apparently wrote a letter

> full of Bible quotations, showing my offense not only against my earthly father, but also against my heavenly one. However, its last conclusion was his hope that I had seen my folly and the end of it and that if I returned, prodigal like, and confess it my fault, he would forgive me and allow me for pocket money, a guinea a month. I did not hesitate a moment, for as my father in one of his quotations justly observed I was heir to the business as he did not mean long to continue it on account of his health and attachment to his mill and gardens. So that I set to and wrote him a penitential letter, expressive of my sorrow for the manner of my conduct and as I had seen my folly and become a true repentant, I should hasten home as soon as I possibly could . . . [124]

Spurred on by a heady mix of remorse and self-interest, Coleman raced back to Liverpool. He saw his mother first and wrote tenderly of 'our mutual joy at meeting' when 'tears flowed in a plentiful strain and they were tears of pleasure . . . The young ones [his brothers and sisters] that were gone to bed were awoke out of their sleep and brought down stairs to look at their brother John who was come from London. The joy expressed in all their countenances may be conceived, but not expressed.' Since his father was already in bed, John was persuaded by his mother to return the following day 'promising me she would not acquaint him that

[122] Coleman, fos 33^{r}, 34^{v}. [123] Coleman, fos 34^{r}, 38^{r}. [124] Coleman, fo. 39^{v}.

night of my return, but early in the morning, at the same time observing she would use all her influence with him to make our meeting as amiable as the nature of my offence would admit, and she kept her word'. The next morning Coleman was called up to his parents' bedchamber to see his father:

> The moment I entered into my father's presence I observed his countenance, finding no angry aspect, I walked up instantly to him put my arms round his neck and affectionately saluted [kissed] him, after which I dropped on my knee and begged his pardon. He looked me in the face with a calm composed air of parental authority, neither expressive of joy or of displeasure. 'John! (says he) I see you are returned, my prayers to the Almighty Father of the universe has not been offered up in vain, for notwithstanding the magnitude of your crime and your disobedience as a son, yet I did not forget you were my child, I did not forget I was your father. Your mother tells me John you left me because you had not weekly wages as other journeymen had. Now son, if this was your motive why not complain, etc., before you took that rash step.' After a good deal of cool reasoning on both sides, the result was to allow me a guinea a month for my pocket, and in a year or two he would retire from town to his mill on the North Shore and live there and give up the baking business to me.

'This point being settled and everything amiably arranged,' wrote John, 'I set to work with a much lighter heart than ever I experienced in all my life before and indeed, nothing but complete happiness now was diffused in the family. My father's happiness was no less visible than mine, as far as his state of health would admit.'[125]

John Coleman's challenge to parental authority and battle for a greater share of family money had been successful: securing the wages that he so desired and, with it, a feeling that he had risen in status, though he remained subservient to both his parents. In Coleman's account of working with his parents and his subsequent flight to London and return, we see evidence of both the unequal distribution of resources within families, which met with differing reactions from individual family members, and the ties of love and duty that bound families together. As a young man out of apprenticeship, John Coleman bristled at not being paid wages and being treated as if still a minor, though his mother saw this as only to be expected while he continued to live in and had no wife or children to support. Her view appears to have been that all profits from the business were for the benefit of the family as a whole, and that unless and until their children married, such profits were best controlled by the heads of household. After John ran off to London, it was not the loss of a prized worker that his mother and father were said to lament, but the absence of a much-loved (if sometimes wayward) son. Similarly, John Coleman did not claim to return simply for the money and the promise of future control of the family business, but because of a keen sense of remorse and of uneasiness and unhappiness about his actions. As Robert Coleman so clearly reminded his son, John had—like the prodigal son of the New Testament—deviated from expected forms of behaviour but was met with forgiveness in return for his repentance. Thus, as Coleman senior explained to his son: he did not forget he was his child, nor that

[125] Coleman, fos 40^{r}, 41^{v}.

he was his father, and his return was met with tears of joy on all sides with reconciliation bringing about 'complete happiness' for the whole family. The Coleman family story narrated in John Coleman's memoir thus emphasizes not just the importance to a united family strategy of distributing resources within families in ways that were seen as fair, and the powerful ties of duty and obligation, but also the role of love in binding family members together.

Despite the happy ending that John presented concerning his escapade in London, more problems followed his father's death in 1765. Although, when Robert Coleman made his will in 1759, he stated—in common with other will-makers—that he wished to avoid 'dispute after my death', according to his eldest son's account, he failed pretty spectacularly in this respect. Coleman senior specified that his wife, Mary, and the silversmith, Samuel Johnson, should act as executors, with Mary instructed to manage the estate until all their children had reached the age of 21. After this point his property was to be divided between his offspring 'share and share alike', with an annuity provided to support their mother.[126] According to John, immediately after his father's death 'it was judged expedient'—apparently on the part of his mother and himself as her only adult child in the household—that 'the business should be continued and carried on under the firm of Mary Coleman and Son'. In fact, it was listed in trade directories under his name, while, in an advertisement that appeared in a local newspaper, it was noted that following 'the Death of the late Robert Coleman, Baker', control of the business was to be assumed by 'his Widow and Son, MARY and JOHN COLEMAN'.[127] At this point there were six other children in the Coleman home, in addition to John, three of whom were 'very young'. John Coleman, by his own account, appears to have taken over the day-to-day running of the family business out of a sense of family duty, describing himself as 'entrusted with a great charge indeed' with 'a widow mother and six children to provide for'.[128] His narrative of proceedings continually stressed his devotion to his family, noting that his 'first and greatest care' was 'my attention to my mother, my assurance to her of my conduct, being such as would afford her every consolation that was possible for a son to give his mother'. As a self-consciously dutiful son, John claims to have done his best for the family and the bakery, so that by his efforts 'business became very brisk indeed and we were a happy and united comfortable family', while the family was united behind his management of the family firm.[129]

Yet there were black clouds on the horizon. Over the course of the three years following Robert's death, two of John's youngest sisters died and two of the eldest married, 'the husbands of which', John claimed, 'soon disturbed the happiness we enjoyed' for, 'knowing the contents of my father's will, they insisted on their wives fortunes'. This, John claimed, 'was a fatal blow to the peace of my mother's mind. However as we had no remedy, a division of what property my father left at his

[126] LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Coleman (1765).

[127] *Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1766* (Liverpool, 1766); *Liverpool Directory, for the Year 1769* (Liverpool, 1769); *Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser and Mercantile Chronicle,* 8 March 1765.

[128] Coleman, fo. 41[r].

[129] Coleman, fo. 41[r].

decease took place and they were paid (out of trade) their full proportions.' This distribution was clearly considered unsatisfactory by his new relations (and indeed appears to have contravened the instructions in Robert Coleman's will, which called for a division of the estate when his children reached their majority, not based on its value when he died). Yet John was unsympathetic, clearly assuming that the added value to the business resulting from his stewardship should not be shared with his siblings, despite his rhetoric of working on behalf of his family. He noted scornfully that:

> Having increased the property by trade these brothers-in-law insisted on an equal share of what the property then was at the time of their marriage with my sisters. This mother and self resisted. The consequence was [that] lawyers were employed by both parties. However, by the interference of friends the business was left to arbitration and they soon fixed it for them to have their proportion only of what property my father left at his decease. This decision was a sore stroke upon my good brothers-in-law, they ever afterward were at variance with the family a long time and as to myself I kept them at a very respectable distance.[130]

The dispute was clearly not over at this point and tensions continued to simmer, so that after John's own marriage two years later (and five years after his father's death) he noted that:

> Our happiness seemed complete and would have continued so in our respective families had not the baneful disposition of a brother-in-law, by his turbulent spirit, sown the seeds of discontent in our family. Finding this to be the case, I thought it the most eligible way would be for my Mother and myself to part, and our connections in Trade to cease, accordingly I made such proposals to my mother as she readily agreed to and accordingly proceeded to provide myself with a bakery of my own, leaving my mother and brother in peaceable possession of the one we jointly occupied.[131]

In 1772 John Coleman's bakery business was listed in Liverpool directories as operating from New Strand Street, some distance from Batchelor's Lane, where his parents had been based. Coleman presented his decision to leave the Batchelor's Lane bakery as an act of self-sacrifice on behalf of familial harmony (though he does not detail the pay-off he must have received from his mother in order to set up on his own, and his description in the passage quoted appears deliberately vague on this point). It is difficult not to suspect that John's move might have been less voluntary than he depicts, made instead at his mother's insistence, but seemingly for the same motives. The passage of the bakery from Robert Coleman's charge, to that of his widow and eldest son, and then on to Mary Coleman and a younger son, can therefore be seen as part of a coherent family strategy in which—following Robert's death—Mary was the driving force—with disputes between family members the result of the decision to keep the bakery business as a going concern rather than breaking up the estate, as Robert Coleman's will had directed, and changes in personnel driven by tensions between individual family members and fights over

[130] Coleman, fo. 42^{v}. [131] Coleman, fo. 55$^{v–r}$.

family resources. John Coleman was eager to present his own actions as dutiful, and that of his brothers-in-law as selfish, as we have seen, but his account is necessarily a partial one, and one that glosses over the fact that his mother had failed to stick to the terms of Robert Coleman's will, and that, with her son's support, Mary Coleman chose to carry on the family business in order to support herself and her offspring, rather than end it and divide the proceeds. Mary's conduct was governed by her understanding of the best strategy to provide for the family as a whole, and her view won out because she wielded the most power within the family following her husband's death.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the concept of 'family strategy' among those in trade, particularly concerning business. Although it showed that internal dynamics within families might sometimes be difficult, and that the possibility of unseemly fallings-out between individuals was very real, it also demonstrated the pervasive belief that familial relationships should be based on duty, love, and trust and that family members should work together to ensure a shared prosperity. When these cooperative elements of family life appeared to be absent—which was often the case when families fought—it was common to appeal to the ideal of family life to support one's cause. This tendency was apparent in both the court cases considered—especially when petitioning for equitable treatment—and, in the case of the Coleman family, in negotiations that took place within families and outside the courtroom. Though this chapter explored a variety of forms of familial disharmony and struggles over resources, it also presented examples of cooperation within families, apparently without the tensions seen in the court battles that pitted one family member against another. In these cases we saw family members working together to ensure mutual economic benefit as part of a joint business strategy. Though it is not always easy to unravel the tangle of emotional ties, individual and familial interests, contemporary ideas about family life, and differing views about business that underpinned the ways in which trading families functioned, this chapter has shed some light on the dynamics of power within families, and has uncovered some of the less easily quantifiable issues that lay behind the formulation of familial strategies. It has suggested that these were decided most often by consensus and compromise between individual family members, who, while exercising varying amounts of power, tended to be unified in their beliefs about both natural hierarchies of age and gender and the importance of adjusting to changes in circumstances (although what the best course of action might be at such times was not always agreed upon). Moreover, there appears to have been a pervading sense among those in trade that the proper conduct of family life should be governed by a sense of duty towards other family members, and one's parents in particular, as well as involving equity between siblings. Underlying such dutiful behaviour were the emotional bonds within families, and that of love in particular, and it is this subject that we examine in more detail in Chapter 4.

4

Cooperation, Duty, and Love

The focus on wills and court records in the previous chapters has produced a view of trading family life that was frequently either formalized and idealized, or full of division and bad feeling. However, as we have seen, it is also evident that there existed a pervasive sense that family members ought to get on, and should be able both to trust one another and to work together in a common cause, and that some families did just that. This chapter presents a more positive picture of familial and household relations. It continues the examination of family strategies in relation to business, but, rather than focusing on the variable bargaining power of different genders and generations, and the sometimes fraught nature of relationships, it looks instead at evidence of the more cooperative elements of family life, and the instances in which unified interests seem to have been more apparent. This shift in focus is directly linked to the examination of different types of historical evidence. While the first half of this book has been dominated by legal sources—specifically wills and court records—this chapter deploys memoirs and diaries to a much greater extent than previously, as well as extending the study to include letters and images. Texts produced in the courtroom and in the home both provide evidence of personal experience, but they were intended for very different audiences.[1] This means that the pictures they provide of family life also vary considerably. As a result of this methodological shift, this chapter is little concerned with family fights and rivalries, but instead explores the importance of cooperation and the strong emotional bonds produced by love, in particular, in the life of trading families.

In her examination of the middling sort in eighteenth-century England, Margaret Hunt argued that family life was marked by duty towards household and family, which was only rarely overlooked in favour of individualism.[2] Tessie Liu has described such behaviour in past societies in terms of 'a normative view that men and women in families must cooperate', which was in itself 'a powerful reality that

[1] Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2012), 64.

[2] Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender and the Family in England, 1680–1780* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996), 11. See also Tamara K. Hareven, 'The Family Process: The Historical Study of the Family Cycle', *Journal of Social History*, 7/3 (1974), 322–9; Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (Cambridge, 1982), 105–10; Tamara K. Hareven, 'A Complex Relationship: Family Strategies and the Processes of Economic and Social Change', in Roger Friedland and A.F. Robertson (eds), *Beyond the Marketplace: Rethinking Economy and Society* (New York, 1990), 215–44.

acts on family members at many levels'. This, she argued, bound not only the actions of individual family members, but also their emotions.[3] By exploring the ways in which family members engaged with one another and the variety of different forms that familial relations took, the following discussion naturally relates to studies of the ways in which societies attempted to control and manage emotions at a collective level,[4] as well as those that explore the functioning of 'emotional communities' to uncover systems of feeling,[5] and the complex and contradictory ways in which individuals might navigate these waters.[6] Though the history of the emotions is seen as a relatively new field of research,[7] ignoring emotions in the past has long been critiqued,[8] while the specific tendency to divorce the material from the emotional in historical studies of the family was subjected to protest thirty years ago.[9] Recent research on the emotional history of the family has proved particularly insightful in terms of this study,[10] as has work that places an understanding of both the family and emotions at the heart of examining families and business—both past and present—with Robin Holt and Andrew Popp, for example, arguing that family firms in the early nineteenth century were 'suffused with emotion'.[11]

We have already seen evidence of strong emotions among our north-west trading families in preceding chapters—though often these tended towards the less attractive end of the emotional spectrum, with anger and jealousy being particularly apparent. But alongside such examples was evidence that the accepted rules about emotional expression were that family members should both love and trust one

[3] Tessie P. Liu, 'Le Patrimoine magique: Reassessing the Power of Women in Peasant Households in Nineteenth-Century France', *Gender and History*, 6/1 (1994), 13–36, pp. 30–1.

[4] C. Stearns and P. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *American Historical Review*, 90/4 (1985), 813–36; W. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, 1991); Nicole Eustace, *Passion Is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2008).

[5] Barbara Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *American Historical Review*, 107/3 (2002), 921–45; Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY, 2006).

[6] For the problems of studying emotions in the past, see Peter Burke, 'Is there a Cultural History of the Emotions?', in Penelope Gouk and Helen Hills (eds), *Representing the Emotions: New Connections in the Histories of Art, Music and Medicine* (Aldershot, 2005), 35–48.

[7] For a useful overview, see S. Matt, 'Current Emotion Research in History: Or, Doing History from the Inside out', *Emotion Review*, 3/1 (2011), 117–24; J. Plamper, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory*, 49/2 (2010), 237–65.

[8] Joanna Bourke, 'Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History', *History Workshop Journal*, 55/1 (2003), 111–33, pp. 113–14.

[9] H. Mendick and D. Sabean (eds), *Interest and Emotion: Essays on the Study of Family and Kinship* (Cambridge, 1984), 1–27; E. P. Thompson, 'Happy Families', *New Society*, 41 (1977), 499–501, p. 501.

[10] Joanne Bailey, *Parenting in England, 1760–1830: Emotion, Identity and Generation* (Oxford, 2012).

[11] E. Brundin and P. Sharma, 'Love, Hate, and Desire: The Role of Emotional Messiness in the Business Family', in A. Carsrud and M. Brannback (eds), *International Perspectives on Future Research in Family Business: Neglected Topics and Under-Utilized Theories* (New York, 2011), 55–71; Andrew Popp, *Entrepreneurial Families: Business, Marriage, and Life in the Early Nineteenth Century* (London, 2012); Robin Holt and Andrew Popp, 'Emotion, Succession, and the Family Firm: Josiah Wedgwood & Sons', *Business History*, 55/6 (2013), 892–909, p. 893.

another, and that they had a duty to care for other family members. The accounts of cooperation and support, and of courtship, married, and family life that this chapter provides, and the representations of domesticity that accompany them, sit comfortably alongside existing historical accounts of family and home in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Though the timing of the emergence or development of 'domestic ideology' has been much debated, the significance of domesticity to the lives of both men and women is frequently asserted by historians.[12] In the following discussion, the importance of love in forming an emotional bond within families, and both the real and symbolic nature of the home, are both apparent. So too is the influence of religious faith in sanctioning and promoting loving domestic and familial relations.

As other historians of England during the Industrial Revolution have shown, the sorts of diaries and memoirs that form the basis for much of the following discussion can provide particularly rich information about experience, focusing as they do on the minutiae of daily existence and the otherwise unspoken anxieties and expectations of the individual.[13] This study is also unfortunately not alone in finding that more men's accounts have survived in greater numbers than those of women. Part of the appeal of the diary to both historians and literary scholars stems from its apparently 'honest' portrayal of day-to-day life, so that there is a tendency to associate diary writing with 'spontaneity, candour, and "guileless disclosure"' rather than seeing it as a process of deliberate practice.[14] However, as has been evident in the discussion of the writings of both George Heywood and John Coleman, the ways in which diarists shaped the contents of their journals, and the things they wrote about, were—by their very nature—both subjective and self-conscious.[15] The same may be said of memoirs—even those that appear to have been written for private consumption.[16] Letters, though they clearly had an assumed audience (and often one that was greater than just the addressee, since correspondence was often passed between individuals, and especially members of

[12] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London, 1987); John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven and London, 1999); Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal*, 36/2 (1993), 383–414; Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 2009); Karen Harvey, 'Men Making Home: Masculinity and Domesticity in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Gender and History*, 21/3 (2009), 520–40; Harvey, *The Little Republic*.

[13] Jane Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, 2010); Emma Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn: A People's History of the Industrial Revolution* (New Haven, 2013); Carolyn Steedman, *An Everyday Life of the English Working Class: Work, Self and Sociability in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2013).

[14] Adam Smyth, 'Almanacs, Annotators, and Life-Writing in Early Modern England', *English Literary Renaissance*, 38/2 (2008), 200–44, p. 243.

[15] Mark S. Dawson, 'Histories and Texts: Refiguring the Diary of Samuel Pepys', *Historical Journal*, 43/2 (2000), 407–32; Tom Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy: Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', *Historical Journal*, 39/1 (1996), 33–56, p. 40; Elaine McKay, 'English Diarists: Gender, Geography and Occupation, 1500–1700', *History*, 90/298 (2005), 191–212, p. 196.

[16] Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1976); Felicity A. Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Autobiography in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore, 1989).

the same household or family),[17] were more obviously written consciously with specific readers in mind and often with the aim—perhaps especially in the case of love letters—of presenting the writer in the best possible light.[18] Yet, as Mark Seymour has noted, despite our need to acknowledge the discursive rules that govern seemingly private and spontaneous correspondence, 'the subjective experience . . . must, ultimately, lie at the heart of most personal letters'.[19] All the sources described in this chapter that relate, apparently unashamedly, the powerful emotions involved in trading family life can be seen as evidence of both individual emotional experience and of the wider 'emotional communities' that influenced how feelings were expressed.

COOPERATION AND DUTY

As we have already seen, cooperation among family members is most apparent in instances where they lived and worked together in the same enterprise. But we also find evidence of relatives helping each other in alternative ways that speak—at least in part—to the sense of duty in terms of supporting members of one's family described by Hunt.[20] Most importantly, parents and other family members commonly ensured that children were properly trained for employment: this can be viewed both as part of a strategy to ensure ongoing prosperity for the family, and as evidence of a concern for the futures of individual offspring, siblings, and other relations in a network of reciprocal social and financial credit.[21] The Warrington family of grocers, headed by George and Anne Crosfield, used what appear to be religious networks to secure an apprenticeship for their son Joseph. In 1807, when he was nearly 15, George travelled with Joseph to Newcastle, to place him in an apprenticeship with a fellow Quaker, Anthony Clapham, 'having agreed with him . . . to take him as an apprentice for 6 years to learn the trade of Chemist and Druggist'.[22] The use of alternative, familial links to secure apprenticeships is illustrated in detail in the 'memorandums' book left by the Warrington watchmaker

[17] Susan E. Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660–1800* (Oxford, 2009), 23.

[18] Whyman, *The Pen and the People*, 89.

[19] Mark Seymour, 'Epistolary Emotions: Exploring Amorous Hinterlands in 1870s Southern Italy', *Social History*, 35/2 (2010), 148–64, p. 150. See also Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'The Task of the Historian', *American Historical Review,* 114/1 (2009), 1–15, p. 10; Steven Ozment, *Ancestors: The Loving Family in Old Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), 105–6; David A. Gerber, 'Acts of Deceiving and Withholding in Immigrant Letters: Personal Identity and Self-Presentation in Personal Correspondence', *Journal of Social History*, 39/2 (2005), 315–30.

[20] Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, 11.

[21] Amy Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England: Share and Share Alike* (Manchester, 2012), 127–34; John Tosh, 'Authority and Nurture in Middle Class Fatherhood: The Case of Early and Mid-Victorian England', *Gender and History*, 8/1 (1996), 48–64, pp. 53–4; Anthony Fletcher, *Growing up in England: The Experience of Childhood 1600–1914* (New Haven, 2008), 136–8.

[22] Crosfield, 1807, 9 mo.; A. E. Musson, *Enterprise in Soap and Chemicals: Joseph Crosfield & Sons Limited, 1815–1965* (Manchester, 1965), 10.

James Carter, which describes a variety of relationships between members of an extended and intermarried family. Carter's notebook reveals a national familial network in the watchmaking trade, and something of a rolling programme of apprenticeship and training for its younger members, including himself. James was born in 1780 to a Liverpool boatbuilder, Richard Carter, and his wife, Mary. From a Methodist family, James was sent at around 12 years of age in 1792 to school in Warrington, where he lodged with his mother's brother, George Birchall, who was a watchmaker. Two years later, at the age of 14, James quit his academic studies to take up an apprenticeship with his uncle at his shop in Bridge Street. Once his period of apprenticeship was up, he appears to have stayed on as a journeyman, while he began lodging in 1803 with another relation, possibly another uncle, Thomas Birchall, who was another Warrington watchmaker.[23] In 1805, one more member of the Birchall family, and possibly yet another uncle, William Birchall, visited Warrington from London and persuaded James to return with him to the capital, where William ran a watchmaking business in St Luke's (though James gives little detail as to his motivation for moving, stating simply that 'Mr Wm Birchall came down from London and I Promised to go up').[24] A year later he married Margaret Birchall, who seems likely to have been a cousin, when he was 26 and she was 21. After a decade in London, James and Margaret returned to Warrington in 1815 to take over his uncle George's shop, where he had been apprenticed between the ages of 14 and 21, buying the stock for £240.[25] He was to remain as head of the family business on this site for at least the next twenty-five years.[26] Figure 4.1 shows Carter's shop still standing on the same site when this photograph was taken in about 1855. At this point the business was run by James Carter's youngest son, Josiah, who may be the figure just visible in the doorway between the two curved bay windows.[27] One of James Carter's watches can be found in Warrington Museum (Figure 4.2).

All five of James and Mary Carter's sons who survived past the age of 14 were apprenticed to watchmakers, though not all stayed in the trade.[28] The reasons for their sons leaving watchmaking are unclear, but they may have been the ability of adults to take the sort of independent actions that were not possible for minors. Tensions over forced career choices were more evident in the memoir of John Coleman, the Liverpool baker, who remarked: 'My Father's business being part of a bread and biscuit baker [he] brought me up to his trade (though I now confess always against my own wish and consent)'.[29]

[23] Kit Heald, 'James Carter—Warringtonian, Watchmaker and Wesleyan', *Cheshire History*, 26 (1990), 3–9, p. 3; Carter, fos 1–3; *Holden's Triennial Directory . . . for 1805, 1806, 1807* (London, 1805) lists George Birchall as a watchmaker on Bridge Street as well as Thomas Bircham [*sic*] as watchmaker on Bridge Street, the latter entry almost certainly containing a typographical error.

[24] Carter, fo. 2.

[25] Carter, fo. 3. James Carter, watchmaker, begins to appear in directories from 1818: *Commercial Directory for 1818–19–20* (Manchester, 1818).

[26] Heald, 'James Carter—Warringtonian, Watchmaker and Wesleyan'.

[27] *Slater's Royal National Commercial Directory* (Manchester, 1858).

[28] Carter; Heald, 'James Carter—Warringtonian, Watchmaker and Wesleyan', 5.

[29] Coleman, fo. 29^{r}.

Figure 4.1. Carter's watchmaker's shop (timber-framed building in the foreground), Bridge Street, Warrington, *c.*1855. Warrington Library, Image Collection, W910s, Bridge Street, East side south.

As Margaret Hunt and Richard Grassby have noted for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair for the nineteenth century, families were also sources of business finance: particularly for setting up in trade.[30] Griffith Owen, a grocer based at 64 Whitechapel in Liverpool,[31] was lent money for this purpose by his father, Walter, who had also sponsored his apprenticeship. A case brought before the Court of Exchequer in 1812 noted that, having been apprenticed in the grocery trade in 1798 by his father, by 1807 Griffith 'was

[30] Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, ch. 1; Richard Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism: Marriage, Family, and Business in the English-Speaking World, 1580–1740* (Cambridge, 2001), 282–8; Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair, *Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain* (New Haven and London, 2003), 66–70. See also the much broader European overview surveyed in Richard Wall, 'Introduction', in Richard Wall, Jean Robin, and Peter Laslett (eds), *Family Forms in Historic Europe* (Cambridge, 1983), 1–64, pp. 22–8.

[31] *Gore's Directory, for Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool, 1811).

Figure 4.2. Example of a watch and case made by James Carter in 1823–4: watch, two case, 5.7cm diameter outer case, 4.5cm diameter inner. Silver, white dial, heavy roman figures, verge escapement and index regulator, cylindrical pillars, cock-bat-like face and roses, engraving 'Jas. Carter Warrington No. 813' on movement. Warrington Museum, WAGMG, 1917.104.

desirous of commencing business on his own account as a grocer in Liverpool', in which he was reportedly 'encouraged thereto by his said late father'. Thus followed the loan of two sums of £100 over a six-month period, which it was claimed were 'by way of part of the portion or fortune which [Walter Owen] informed [his son] he meant to give in his life time or leave and bequeath . . . by his will'.[32] Similarly, a Manchester-based grocer, Micah Rose, told the Court of Exchequer in 1812 of the financial support that he had received from his late father-in-law, Robert Jones, a Chester shoemaker, upon marrying his daughter, Catherine. Rose's complaint noted that 'on the occasion of the said marriage the said Robert Jones paid and advanced the sum of £300 to your orator Micah Rose by way of marriage portion'. Later on, Rose, 'having occasion for a further sum of money', borrowed additional sums from his father-in-law, secured on some freehold premises in St Ann's Square, where Rose kept his shop,[33] and repayable at an annual rate of 5 per cent.[34]

[32] TNA: E 112/1547/778 (1812).

[33] *Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1811) and *Pigot's Manchester & Salford Directory for 1813* (Manchester, 1813).

[34] TNA: E 112/ 1543/656; Cheshire Record Office, Will of Robert Jones of Chester (1826): will written in 1810, the year Jones died, archival date later owing to a subsequent court case at Chester Consistory court over Jones's property between the executors and Jones's former tenants.

Siblings as well as parents might be called on as sources of financial support. We saw this in Chapter 3 in the case of the Warrington brothers, William and James Leigh, in their agreement concerning the setting-up of a tobacconists shop.[35] A case brought before the Palatine Court in 1771 by the administrators of the estates of Charles and James Dagnall, father and son from Eccleston, both combmakers and both bankrupts, described how the pair, despite their debts, used a sum of £350 from an inheritance received by James to start a copartnership between Charles and James and James's two unmarried sisters, Rachael and Elizabeth, as combmakers. The money was to be for 'a Stock for establishing and carrying on the said Partnership'.[36] Sibling support was also evident in a case from 1805, when George Barton Marsden, a Manchester upholsterer and cabinetmaker with a business at 18 Queen Street,[37] opened a bank account with the Wigan firm of Thickness and Woodcock that was secured by his brothers Robert, Jonathan, Thomas, and John.[38] George went bankrupt in 1810, and the bank pressed the brothers for payment that one of them, Robert Marsden, a Wigan tin plate worker, was trying to avoid paying by taking a case to the Court of Exchequer.[39] In addition to parents and siblings, other relations might also lend financial support. Thus the Manchester journeyman grocer George Heywood borrowed money from his aunt, Grace Bates, to help to set up in the grocery business with fellow journeyman Robert Roberts in 1815.[40]

As well as organizing apprenticeships and offering loans, parents and other relations also gave more informal support and guidance. A case brought to the Court of Exchequer in the opening decade of the nineteenth century described a father being actively involved in his adult son's working life: making business contacts for him and trying to arbitrate when things went wrong. In 1808, John Bound, a Salford builder, brought a complaint to the court in order to try to halt William Heap's action against him (also in the Court of Exchequer). Heap was a stonemason who had been employed to help build some houses in Leaf Square, Leaf Place, and Frederick Street in Salford. He had been hired by Bound, who acted as agent for a building society. Heap claimed not to have been paid for his work and to have been made to pay too high a price for a piece of land, while Bound alleged that Heap was making a fraudulent claim, having agreed to take one of the houses in payment. According to William Heap's answer, John Bound's father, Thomas Bound, played an important role in the affair by introducing his son to Heap in the first place. Heap claims to have come to Manchester in 1805, where he was initially employed by the Rochdale Canal Company. While there, it was said, Thomas Bound visited Heap and told him that his son 'was a young man and a good workman and most likely wished for an introduction to business in the town of

[35] LRO, DDCS/39/1/Warrington. [36] TNA: PL 6/86/32.
[37] *Deans and Co.'s Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1804).
[38] *Holden's Triennial Directory* (London, 1805–7).
[39] TNA: E 112/1542/625. George Barton Marsden was involved in two further Exchequer cases, both as claimant pursing debts: TNA: E 112/1541/580 (1811); TNA: E 112/1541/581 (1811).
[40] Heywood, fos 53, 60.

Manchester', and, moreover, that 'he could introduce [Heap] to a job of work which would make [his] fortune'. As a result 'of the representations of the said Thomas Bound', claimed Heap, he arranged to meet John Bound the next day. His father appears to have become involved later on as well when business relations soured and he attempted to arbitrate between Heap and his son. According to Heap, Thomas Bound 'called on [Heap] and said that he wished the dispute between [Heap] and his son . . . was settled'. He arranged for the three men to meet at this house, which they did, though they failed to reach any agreement, as the subsequent court cases show.[41]

Parental guidance could also take the form of advice. In a letter from the Liverpool stonemason John Ellison to his son James, also a stonemason and working away from home in 1828, the father mixed family news (the visit of an uncle, and James's sister-in-law giving birth of another daughter: 'believe both are doing well'), professional news (another mason beginning work on the steps of St Luke's church with Yorkshire stone: 'very hard they say it is'), and advice for his son, who had recently left Liverpool for Newport in Shropshire, apparently for work, about how he should behave. 'I trust you find yourself comfortable where you are', wrote John, 'and I sincerely intreat you by the tenderness of a Parents feelings to Conduct yourself with Industry, sobriety and oeconomy to yourself and to all you may have to deal with especially take care with your causing not to squander them in intemperance but keep yourself clean and respectable in your Apparril [*sic*]'. Though John suspected that working away from home would provide 'many temptations' for his young son, he pleaded with him to 'strive by every lawfull means to forgo them'. Moreover, he entreated, if his son planned to stay away until the summer, he should plan for the future and fix up some work for himself after this point, noting: 'I would advise you to secure a Winter job if you can you know well what this Town is in Winter Also many of the jobs are on the close of being finished.'[42]

PARENTS AND CHILDREN

John Ellison not only described himself in his letter to his son as having tender parental feelings, but also signed himself 'your Affectionate Father'. This was a form of words that emphasized how his advice was born out of concern and love, and echoed the language used by many parents in this period in correspondence.[43] Though the ways in which parents helped their children in business might be seen as driven by the desire to protect familial prosperity and reputation, clearly other

[41] TNA: E 112/1537/444.

[42] LivRO, 920 MD, John Ellison to James Ellison, 18 July 1828.

[43] LivRO, 920 MD, John Ellison to James Ellison, 18 July 1828; Whyman, *The Pen and the People*, 22; Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650–1850* (Manchester, 2011), 111.

factors were also important. These relate to what Ludmilla Jordanova has described as the 'intense emotionality' of the family in this period, already noted in the opening section of this chapter, and specifically identified in terms of business families by historians such as Holt and Popp.[44] As John Ellison's letter to his son suggests, and as the description of John Coleman's relationship with his parents—or at least his mother—in Chapter 3 also illustrated, parents commonly expressed love for their children, even as adults. Joanne Bailey describes love as being 'the most profound emotion that was identified with being a parent' in the late Georgian period (though she also reminds us that anxiety, grief, and distress were emotions consequent upon love).[45] She cites the consensus in contemporary texts that 'parenting should be carried out affectionately', which in this period evoked intimacy and closeness,[46] with 'tender' parenting being advocated for both men and women during the eighteenth century.[47] Such models of tender parenthood are also present in other studies of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century parenthood and family life.[48] Fletcher states that the foundation of upbringing throughout the period 1600–1914 'was parental care and affection for children, in the intimate and private world of family life',[49] and noted that 'there is plenty of evidence in diaries and letters that most mothers and many fathers were deeply involved with, and strongly attached to their children'.[50] The discussion of trading families that follows also presents evidence of what Trev Lynn Broughton and Helen Rogers have described as the 'highly moralized understanding of the family as a microcosm of God's kingdom' coupled with a 'reverence and deference toward the position of the head of household as representing God's authority within the family'.[51] But this was allied increasingly in the case studies below with an understanding of 'tender' fatherhood that was both religiously inspired by Evangelicalism's religious and emotional expressiveness (though not necessarily exclusively experienced by

[44] Ludmilla Jordanova, *Nature Displayed: Gender, Science and Medicine 1760–1820* (London, 1999), 161; Popp, *Entrepreneurial Families*; Holt and Popp, 'Emotion, Succession, and the Family Firm'.

[45] Bailey, *Parenting in England*, 22.

[46] Bailey, *Parenting in England*, 26–7.

[47] Bailey, *Parenting in England*, 28 ff.; Joanne Bailey, '"A Very Sensible Man": Imagining Fatherhood in England, *c.*1760–1830', *History*, 95/319 (2010), 267–92; Beth Fowkes Tobin, '"The Tender Mother": The Social Construction of Motherhood and *The Lady's Magazine*', *Women's Studies*, 18/2–3 (1990), 205–21; Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair, 'Domestic Fathers and the Victorian Parental Role', *Women's History Review*, 15/4 (2006), 551–9.

[48] Gordon and Nair, *Public Lives*, 2–3; Valerie Sanders, '"What Do You Want to Do Next?" Charles Kingsley's Model of Educational Fatherhood', in Trev Lynn Broughton and Helen Rogers (eds), *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2007), 55–84; 'Hands on Fatherhood in Trollope's Novels', in Broughton and Rogers (eds), *Gender and Fatherhood,* 85–95; Julie-Marie Strange, '"Speechless with Grief": Bereavement and the Working-Class Father, *c.*1880–1914', in Broughton and Rogers (eds), *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century*, 138–49.

[49] Fletcher, *Growing up in England*, 55.

[50] Fletcher, *Growing up in England*, 188. See also Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent–Child Relations from 1500–1900* (Cambridge, 1983).

[51] Trev Lynn Broughton and Helen Rogers, 'Introduction: The Empire of the Father', in Broughton and Rogers (eds), *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century*, 1–28, p. 16.

adherents to Evangelical groups) and linked to Enlightenment values, the cultures of sensibility and romanticism, and ideals of domesticity.[52]

The earliest account of parent–child relations in this study is provided by John Coleman in his description of his parents, which was cited at length in Chapter 3. As we saw, John depicted his father as a stern patriarch who expected his commands to his children to be followed. His wife also appears to have seen herself in rightful possession of more power within the family than her son John, even when he reached adulthood. Yet John's challenge to this parental authority, and his leaving home for London, apparently exposed his parents to genuine anguish, with his mother particularly affected and described as being 'quite miserable' as a result. His father displayed fewer emotions according to his son's account. He was said to have sent John a letter 'full of Bible quotations, showing my offense not only against my earthly father, but also against my heavenly one'—emphasizing that John's main offence was his challenge to his father's authority, a position that was sanctioned by God, rather than any emotional upset he had caused.[53] When John returned to the family home, he described his relief at seeing 'no angry aspect' in his father's countenance, so that he felt encouraged to 'put my arms round his neck and affectionately saluted him', before swiftly dropping to his knees and begging his pardon. His father's reaction was said to have been conducted 'with a calm composed air of parental authority, neither expressive of joy or of displeasure', while agreeing to forgive him. This explicitly unemotional greeting on the part of Robert Coleman appears in marked contrast to that given to John by his mother, for whom his return was met with 'mutual joy' on both sides, as 'tears of pleasure . . . flowed in a plentiful strain'. John's account of his return was expressed in explicitly emotional terms. Having been reunited with his parents was said to have given him 'a much lighter heart than ever I experienced in all my life before', so that 'nothing but complete happiness now was diffused in the family'. While he, his mother, and his younger siblings were described as openly and immediately demonstrating their joy at John's return, however, John presented his father as more reserved, yet still affected, and claimed—not entirely convincingly—that his 'happiness was no less visible than mine, as far as his state of health would admit'.[54] As we shall see, Robert Coleman's lack of emotional expressiveness at his son's return around the middle of the eighteenth century appears in marked contrast to other accounts of trading fathers from later in the century, and during the opening decades of the nineteenth century.

John Coleman did not describe his own relations with his children as adults, but he told a tale of love for his children when they were infants during the closing decades of the eighteenth century: expressing joy at their births, which he associated with general feelings of well-being. His memoir suggests that he shrugged off much

[52] Tobin, '"The Tender Mother"'; Jennifer Popiel, 'Making Mothers: The Advice Genre and the Domestic Ideal, 1760–1830', *Journal of Family History*, 29/4 (2004), 339–50; Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture 1680–1760* (Cambridge, 1996); Bailey, *Parenting in England*, 97.

[53] Coleman, fo. 39^{v}. [54] Coleman, fos 40^{r}, 41^{v}.

of the teachings of his strict Anabaptist upbringing, and he did not appear to have followed his father's model of fatherhood, so that in his own behaviour we may see evidence of a more widespread, and perhaps increasing, tendency among those in trade towards fatherly affection and a celebration of domesticity on the part of both men and women from the late eighteenth century.[55] Though 'the baneful disposition of a brother-in-law' caused John Coleman to quit the family firm and move from Orange Street to an address near George's Dock soon after his marriage, Coleman recollected warmly that 'we had not been many days in possession of our new habitation before Mrs Coleman presented me with a very fine little daughter. Business wore a pleasing aspect. Happy in my family and happy in my friends, I counted myself the happy man.' Though this first child soon died, the Colemans were soon 'blessed with a son and heir'. John noted that 'I need not describe the joy on this occasion as Young John was looked upon as a perfect beauty of a boy'. Two years later Mary Coleman 'brought me another son (Robert) and with much heartfelt pleasure I relate it that with the annual increase of family, I found an annual increase of friends and fortune . . . '.[56]

Like John Coleman, the Warrington Quaker and grocer George Crosfield seemed similarly untouched by the influence of eighteenth-century evangelicalism, and was another example of an emotionally expressive and loving father. He recorded the births of his children with evident pleasure: on 5 October 1792, for example, he noted: 'At half past one (p.m.) my dear Nancy presented us with another fine lad to the great joy of us all. We mean to call him Joseph. In the evening we were cheerful on this happy event.'[57] Seven years later, as he set off to Liverpool to begin a new career as a sugar refiner, he took with him the 'fine lad', Joseph, 'to be my companion until the family removes'.[58] Fourteen years after that, when Joseph returned home after his apprenticeship, his father noted proudly (though not uncritically) that 'he looks thin, is lively and good tempered; he appears to possess a large share of good nature but still inclined to offer his opinion on almost every subject mentioned'.[59] Though George did not demonstrate the lack of emotion towards his children exemplified by Robert Coleman, he appears less effusive than John Coleman and others in this chapter. This may, in part, be linked to his writing style, which was particularly terse.

Whilst Robert Coleman's lack of overt emotional display towards his children in the mid-eighteenth century was convincingly linked by his son to his father's Anabaptist beliefs, as both George Crosfield's diary entries and John Coleman's depiction of his own life suggest, the apparent contrast in styles of fatherhood may also have been the result of generational difference. Indeed, we can find evidence of more effusive and indulgent forms of parenthood among those in trade later on in the early nineteenth century. The Liverpool-based wine and spirit merchant William Durning was fondly remembered as a tender and affectionate father in

[55] Fletcher, *Growing up in England*, 132–5. See also Holt and Popp, 'Emotion, Succession, and the Family Firm', 904.
[56] Coleman, fo. 55^{v}. [57] Crosfield, 1792, 10 mo. 5.
[58] Crosfield, 1799, 10 mo. 12. [59] Crosfield, 1813, 9 mo. 11.

an unpublished memoir by his granddaughter that related the life of her mother, and his daughter, Emma. In his youth William had been apprenticed to a cooper,[60] afterwards going into the employ of a West India merchant, as a bookkeeper, before establishing himself in business on his own account as a spirit merchant in 1798, selling—among other things—the rum imported by his former employer.[61] Upon setting up on his own, William apparently felt able to marry the woman with whom he had been engaged for fourteen years: Jane Lang. According to their granddaughter's account:

> They were both well-advanced in life, our grandfather being about fifty and our grandmother about forty years of age, so that he could cheerfully say, as young ones of the second generation were growing up around him, that he had scarcely hoped to see children, much less grandchildren of his own. He said too that it would have been better for him if he had had more faith in the future and had married earlier, for everything prospered with him after his marriage.[62]

Although William was described as a strict Presbyterian, and as a 'a thoughtful, industrious, self-denying man, of most strict integrity and to whom a lie was an abomination',[63] he also appears in his granddaughter's account as a loving and indulgent parent. Though the couple's first son died, the girl that followed 'from the day of her birth to that of her marriage was as far as practicable her father's constant companion—a true Father's-child'. 'In the bleak mornings of spring while yet an infant', Holt related, 'he would himself carry her round the garden before his early start to business'.[64] William Durning's own account book gives few clues to his inner life, save for the opening page, which begins with a description of 'The Dying Child', which seems to have been taken from the *Monthly Mirror* of 1806, and which described how the 'heavy sighs of a disconsolate father . . . mingled with the short, deep breath of his suffering darling'.[65] This choice of text, which he took the time and effort to copy down carefully, was almost certainly linked to the death of his own son several years earlier, which had clearly made a lasting impression on Durning. Its reproduction suggests, as Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have remarked, that 'the death of a child . . . brought out paternal feelings most strongly'.[66]

The apparent change over time in the force with which parental love was expressed among north-west trading families is illustrated in the history of the Fildes and Guest families. James Fildes, a Manchester grocer, was one of the most overtly warm and emotionally expressive individuals located for this study.[67] An ardent Methodist, he was a trustee of the Oldham Street Chapel in later life. As a youth, James had been apprenticed to the grocer John Roylance, the business

[60] LivRO, 920 DUR/29/1, Indenture dated 1765, shows William Durning indentured for seven years to Peter Kennion [?] of Liverpool, cooper.
[61] Holt, fo. 23. [62] Holt, fo. 27. [63] Holt, fo. 23. [64] Holt, fo. 30.
[65] LivRO, 920 DUR 29/11/2, 'Note Book'; John Morris Findall, 'The Dying Child', *Monthly Mirror*, 22 (1806), 311.
[66] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 330–1.
[67] I am grateful to the descendants of the Fildes family, and to Jamie Guest in particular, who kindly showed me his family archive. Mr Guest has recently relocated the archive to the University of Huddersfield Library where it is held as the E. H. Longbottom Archive.

partner of John Jones, who had once employed George Heywood (as is described in more detail in Chapter 6). Fildes's daughter later wrote that 'Father had not the advantage of a God fearing Master, but still his Master did not oppose Methodism. Mr Jones, partner with Mr Roylance, Cannon Street, invited Father shortly after his being bound apprentice, to meet in his class on Sunday afternoon which Father accepted, and joined a Wesleyan Society accordingly when about fourteen or fifteen.'[68] He later married a fellow Methodist, Mary Guest, and the couple had several children, upon whom both of them appear to have doted. James wrote to Mary on one trip from Manchester that 'I know not how matters may be at the shop but shall be anxious to see and embrace my loving wife and sweet Lambs'.[69] The couple's children—the sweet Lambs—were a source of delight and a priority for both of them. Thus Mary wrote in a letter to her husband on a visit to Ormskirk in 1834 that she could not leave the children to visit him as 'being full of life and glee they require constant attention'.[70]

Such affection seems to have been common among both the Guest and Fildes families, yet there was a noticeable shift in behaviour between the generations. A letter from Mary Guest's sister Lydia, in which she expressed her hope that the pair would soon visit with their offspring, described their mother's loving nature, which she linked directly to her faith:

> An assurance from me, that your company will be most acceptable and will consequently secure you a very welcome reception, is unnecessary, as you know my Mothers affection for her children and with continual effort she has inculcated the scriptural Lesson 'Children love one-another' that I flatter myself her advice has been so far taken as to make the interest and happiness of each dear to the rest and of *course* their society likewise.[71]

The Fildes family also appear to have had a tradition of loving relations between children and parents that they linked strongly to their religious belief. An account by James Fildes of his father's death stressed the importance of faith in family life and in his behaviour towards his children:

> My Father died when I was six years old, leaving my mother with six Children;—three Sisters older, and a Brother and Sister younger than myself. I can well remember my Father when he lay on his Death bed calling up to my Mother, and afterwards each one of us separately, according to our age, and exhorting us to Fear the Lord and to love one another, and giving each of us his blessing commended us into the hands of the Father of the fatherless and Husband of the Widow. Notwithstanding I was so young I have a very lively recollection of many circumstances attending the death of my Father; and it appears to me that a gracious God in his infinite mercy caused this lasting impression to be made upon my memory in order that in any future life they might be made not

[68] Longbottom, Leather-bound notebook, 'Particulars of a Conversation about my Late Father with my Aunt [Ann Garfitt, his eldest daughter] [by] John Johnson of Broughton, Janry 19 1858', fo. 13.
[69] Longbottom, James Fildes, London, to Mary Fildes, Preston Brook, 3 May 1826, LT 91.
[70] Longbottom, Mary Fildes, Manchester, to James Fildes, Ormskirk, 12 December 1834, LT 9.
[71] Longbottom, Lydia Guest, Preston Brook, to James and Mary Fildes, Manchester, 21 March 1823, LT 76.

> only a principal means of bringing me to a saving Knowledge of Himself, but also that the recollection of the facts attending the death of *my own Father*, which I *saw* and heard *myself*, might be a means of preserving me from many snares which were afterwards laid for me'. Father's last words were 'hope pray'.[72]

Thomas Fildes, who had been so keen in his dying minutes to impress upon his children the importance of faith, religious observance, and a fear of God, as well as urging them to love each other, was described as having 'a very cheerful and social disposition', but was a man who 'never suffered himself to be drawn into excesses by his love of company'.[73] He ran a shop at 37 Bank Top during the early 1790s, which was taken over by his wife and daughter, Mary and Betty, following his death in 1794. Two sons, James and Thomas junior, also went into the grocery trade, with a shop on Shudehill by the early nineteenth century.[74] Thomas Fildes senior was credited with helping to set up the first Sunday school in Manchester in the 1780s. According to family records, he was also one of the founders of the Strangers' Friend Society in Manchester, and it was through his work with this charity, which involved visiting the sick, that he caught the typhus that resulted in his death.[75]

There is a marked contrast between the way that James Fildes remembered his father's death, and the way in which he was remembered within the family, and it seems that the son was a more emotionally expressive and tenderly loving parent than his father. In an account by James's daughter, Elizabeth Guest Fildes, she emphasized the importance that James Fildes—like his father—placed upon religious devotion, noting that his favourite text was 'All things work together for good to them that love God', recording that the family regularly prayed together, and that the words that he was said to have spoken on his deathbed were 'Good bye, my precious daughter, may God bless thee, and be thy Protector'.[76] She also presented him as a patriarch, who, 'Like Abraham of old . . . commanded his children and his household after him'.[77] Yet she also claimed that 'his faithfulness' was equalled only by his 'tender affection' towards his family, and her focus on him as a tender parent looks significantly different from that of James's account of his own father. Elizabeth described a nightly bedtime ritual between James and his children in which he would 'bless each one on retiring to rest in words such as these; though with sometimes a little variation: "Good night! my precious—May God ever guide you, and may the choicest of Heaven's blessings ever rest upon you, both for time

[72] Longbottom, Leather-bound notebook, 'Recollections of Thos Fildes' Death by his Eldest Son Jas Fildes', fos 11–12.

[73] Longbottom, 'An Account of Thos Fildes of Manchester Written by his Eldest Daughter', fo. 8.

[74] *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794); *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1797); *Pigot and Dean's New Directory of Manchester, Salford, &c., for 1821–2* (Manchester, 1821). Thomas Fildes was also listed in the latter as having a house at 7 Mayes Street.

[75] Longbottom, Leather-bound notebook, 'An Account of Thos Fildes of Manchester Written by his Eldest Daughter', fo. 10.

[76] Longbottom, 'An Account of the Death of the Above James Fildes by his Daughter, Elizabeth Guest Fildes', fos 15–17.

[77] Longbottom, 'An Account of the Death of the Above James Fildes by his Daughter, Elizabeth Guest Fildes', fo. 17.

and for eternity."'[78] Here we see a picture of James Fildes that depicted not only his role as family patriarch and man of God—in common with his description of his own father—but also his conduct as a tender father, who freely expressed his love for his 'precious' children and his 'little lambs'.

A similar form of indulgent and tender parenthood—in which love and affection towards children was freely expressed—was evident in Joseph Livesey's autobiography, published in 1882, but said to be based on 'a very copious memoranda [*sic*]' on his earlier life and written some thirty years before. Though he was to find fame in later life as a Temperance campaigner, Livesey started off as a weaver who managed to improve his lot in life by becoming a cheesemonger.[79] Joseph Livesey claimed that he 'never regretted that poverty was my early lot and that I was left to make my own way in the world', since it taught him both to 'feel for the poor, to acquire the first lessons of humanity', and to 'cultivate my own energies as the best means . . . of self-advancement'.[80] After becoming a Scotch Baptist in 1811, he married Jane Williams, whom he met at the Cold House Chapel on Shudehill in Manchester. He described her as the daughter of a Welsh master rigger based in Liverpool, who, having fallen out with her stepmother, 'was living at Mr Jackson's, an intimate friend of her father's, who kept an earthenware warehouse and china shop in Swan Street, Manchester'.[81] Their entry into cheese-selling is described by Joseph as being almost by accident, and with the practical help of a draper friend he began to sell cheese at Preston market, later setting up in a shop at 28 Church Street in Preston sometime around the late 1820s, where the family lived above the shop.[82]

Both Jane and Joseph appear in Joseph's account as caring and devoted parents. Jane was said to have combined her industry in the family business with complete devotion to her children (of whom they had thirteen, nine of whom survived into adulthood). According to her husband:

> If ever a 'good mother' existed she deserves that name. No labour was ever too much, no anxiety too great, or sacrifice too severe to provide for the wants of her children, to get them well [e]ducated, and to bring them up respectably. Her motherly kindness never waned, and never will; for, to this day, her happiness is bound up with the happiness and well-being of her family. Though delicate from the first, the amount of endurance she has manifested is truly wonderful.[83]

On the subject of his own approach to parenthood, Livesey emphasized affection and delight above all other emotions, noting that 'I was always fond of children, and am so to the present day, and hence, I was not like some fathers, who are

[78] Longbottom, 'An Account of the Death of the Above James Fildes by his Daughter, Elizabeth Guest Fildes', fo. 17.
[79] Joseph Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey* (London, 1882), 3–4.
[80] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 5.
[81] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 12.
[82] Ian Levitt (ed.), *Joseph Livesey of Preston: Business, Temperance and Moral Reform* (Preston, 1996), 19.
[83] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 16–17.

troubled when the "little strangers" make their appearance'.[84] Livesey was keen to stress the joy he felt as a father, at one point quoting an article that he had written 'more than 30 years ago', sometime in the 1820s:

> A real family man always takes delight in his children; and when everything around seems clothed with gloom and embarrassment, the smile of one child, the prattling of another, and the skipping of a third, create a source of enjoyment, and often lead him to forget his troubles. With myself, I confess, this has frequently been the case; and were it not for parental fondness, aided by the fascinations of children, how could we so gladly toil for their support, and spend upon them years of labour, without the least pecuniary return? Who can love and admire Frank like Frank's father? He espies the parlour door open, and in he runs; and if I am on my feet he takes my hand and turns me to a chair. He then fetches my shoes, and does his best to put them on. He climbs my knee, takes my comb out of my waistcoat pocket, and gets me to open it, combs my hair, now and then looking cunningly into my face to see if I am pleased. His next move is to climb up the chair back; perhaps he hurts his thumb, and I have to kiss it, which is an infallible cure.[85]

In common with his wife, Joseph described his efforts to support his children being driven by love, and, like all the men discussed in this section, he expressed great happiness in being a father.

Livesey's pride in his family, and his satisfaction at their loving relations, and the devout nature of their household, was evident in the engraving of the Liveseys, based on a sketch made by a 'friend, Mr Edward Fitch . . . one Sunday afternoon in 1838 while reading in the drawing room, 28 Church Street, Preston' (Figure 4.3). This image formed the frontispiece of Joseph's autobiography, and he recounted that he had asked for the drawing to be made of his family as he was 'proud of them all'.[86] Here Joseph is seen apparently leading nine of his children in family prayers, with Mary near the fireplace nursing their youngest. Though there are not enough seats for all of them, this is still a picture that suggests a degree of measured affluence—with the room's upholstered chairs, a range of ornaments on the mantelpiece, and cosy rug. The image speaks of domestic contentment and order, of the centrality of the home to religious observance, and of the family as one based on loving relations. Like the accounts of parent–child relationships examined above, the picture suggests the importance of love within families. However, it is noticeable how this emotion appears more freely and fulsomely expressed in nineteenth-century sources. No doubt this stems—at least in part—from changing ideas about parenthood, and fatherhood in particular, during the period of the Industrial Revolution, but it also seems to represent changing practices and feelings at an individual level. The bonds of duty and emotion within trading families may therefore have shifted somewhat over time, with duty remaining important throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, while parental love became more emphatically expressed, and perhaps also more keenly felt.

[84] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 17.
[85] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 56–7.
[86] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 17.

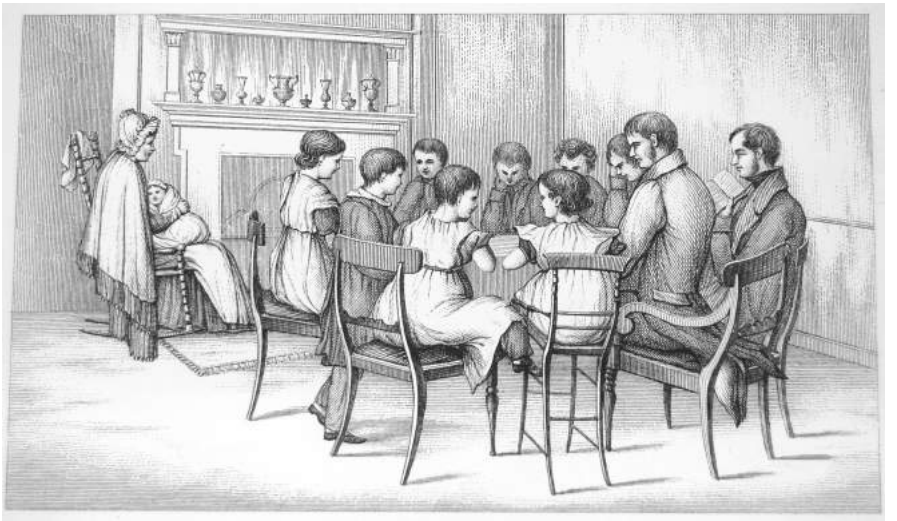

Figure 4.3. Engraving of the Livesey family, by Edward Fitch, 1838. University of Central Lancashire Library, Livesey Library Collection, A58.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

Though relationships between children and parents were of central importance to trading families, the bond between husband and wife was just as crucial, and, in terms of running a business, arguably more so. Here too we find evidence of the key role played by love, and specifically romantic love, as well as a desire for emotional ease or 'comfort' that was linked to the loving relations of a companionate marriage. Some of the richest material located for this study of emotions and family life concerns courtship and marriage—key moments in the lives of many men and women, which prompted a desire to make a record of thoughts and feelings, directed—at least ostensibly—either at oneself (in the form of a diary or unpublished memoir) or to one's beloved (in correspondence). This material provides strong evidence of the importance and prevalence of romantic love among tradesmen and women from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. Though this was not the only reason why individuals chose to wed, and it is clear that those in trade did not ignore issues of status, wealth, family, character, and religious faith when they courted, it would be wrong to conclude that romantic love was no more than a potential additional benefit to the more important 'pragmatic' advantages of married life, rather than being one of the main reasons to wed. In addition, it appears that love was important not only to those who were courting and marrying, but also to their families.

In contrast to Lawrence Stone's now much critiqued contention that it was not until the nineteenth century that the rhetoric and ideal of romantic love and companionate union overtook economic and social considerations in the selection

of a marriage partner,[87] many historians have emphasized the importance of love in much earlier periods.[88] For Hunt, eighteenth-century marriages among the middling sort involved 'a synchronicity between love and money and an ability to bend the passions in the direction of prudence and utility, a feat that was not always readily accomplished'.[89] Though Joanne Bailey has described 'co-dependency' in marriages in this period largely in terms of material factors, she has noted that these could be intensified by the emotional ties between husbands and wives, and that, by 'integrating the economic, power and emotional aspects of marriage with the household, a more subtle dynamic picture of power in marriage emerges'.[90] As Gordon and Nair point out in their study of the middle class in Victorian Scotland, even those marriages that were based on 'economic prudence' and cemented business or political partnerships were 'far from being . . . instrumental and . . . loveless unions' so that 'shrewd economic considerations' might coexist with 'ideals of romantic love',[91] while Vickery has noted persuasively that 'one-dimensional accounts of marital motivation that present families making a clear-cut operatic choice between love on the one hand and lucre on the other crudely reduce the intricacies of human choice'.[92] Such points are reinforced by Steven King, who describes a shifting constellation of factors that might influence the marriage decisions of ordinary people during the early modern period, which included family and community influence, material considerations, as well as sexual desire and love.[93] And, though the influence of families might have waned somewhat over time, it is worth noting that similar considerations about marriage—balancing love and pragmatism—are still evident as late as the twentieth century in England (and, indeed, one might argue, to the present day).[94] Claire Langhamer has

[87] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (London, 1977), 217. See also Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York, 1975), 56–78; John R. Gillis, *For Better or for Worse: British Marriages, 1600 to the Present* (Oxford, 1985).

[88] Martin Ingram, 'Spousal Litigation in the English Ecclesiastical Courts, *c*.1350–1640', in R. B. Outhwaite (ed.), *Marriage and Society: Studies in the Social History of Marriage* (London, 1981), 35–75, p. 50; Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction, 1300–1840* (Oxford, 1986), 11; Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England, 1500–1800* (New Haven, 1995), 174. See also Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580–1680* (London, 1982), 95–8, 101–4; Ralph Houlbrooke, *The English Family, 1450–1700* (London, 1984). On even earlier periods, see Barbara A. Hanawalt, *The Ties that Bound: Peasant Families in Medieval England* (New York and Oxford, 1986); Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*; Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland, 1698–1830* (Edinburgh, 2003), p. ix.

[89] Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, 152.

[90] Joanne Bailey, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660–1800* (Cambridge, 2003), 194; John Tosh, 'Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class: The Family of Edward White Benson', in Michael Roper and John Tosh (eds), *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London, 1991), 44–73, p. 56; Tosh, *A Man's Place*, 68–71.

[91] Gordon and Nair, *Public Lives*, 76.

[92] Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 1998), 44.

[93] Steven King, 'Chance Encounters? Paths to Household Formation in Early Modern England, *International Review of Social History*, 44/1 (1999), 23–46. See also D. Levine, 'For their Own Reasons: Individual Marriage Decisions and Family Life', *Journal of Family History*, 7/3 (1982), 255–64.

[94] Diana O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraint: Rethinking the Making of Marriage in Tudor England* (Manchester, 2000); Claire Langhamer, *The English in Love: The Intimate Story of an Emotional Revolution* (Oxford, 2013), ch. 2.

described how contemporary debates about the suitability of a marriage partner in the mid-twentieth century were concerned not just with romance and love, as we might expect, but also with social status, education, and family background.[95]

The amount of time and energy that many young people in trade expended in putting their thoughts and feelings on paper when in the throes of a new romance was rarely repeated in later life. George Heywood, for example, wrote reams in his youth concerning his search for a wife, but, after his marriage, his diary-cum-memoir petered out, with its remaining entries consisting only of a record of the births of each of his ten children over the following years.[96] John Coleman, writing much later in his life, was also keen to set out his love life during his younger days in considerable detail in his memoir, while for several of the individuals discussed in this chapter a love affair was the cause of a flurry of letter-writing. The personal writings of some of the young men examined here suggest that the thrill and promise of romantic love could almost be an end in itself. This may well have reflected certain cultural developments during our period, which in turn, as Katie Barclay points out, would have influenced contemporary understandings about the meaning of love itself.[97] Ruth Perry describes the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witnessing 'a new idealization of domestic love' coupled with the 'insistent repetition everywhere in the culture—in plays, sermons, newspaper columns, and virtually every novel of the period—that only love could be the basis of a happy marriage'.[98] Vickery has also described a change in the way in which marriage was described in the later eighteenth century, which saw 'a sustained, secular celebration of romantic marriage and loving domesticity'.[99] And, indeed, something of the ideas and language of the novels and other writings of sensibility that may have helped to effect this change can be seen in the life-writings of some of our subjects. These novels celebrated the supposedly 'feminine' qualities of compassion, sympathy, intuition, and 'natural' spontaneous feeling, while neglecting the more established virtues of reason and restraint.[100] In terms of letter-writing as well, Susan Whyman has argued that 'sensibility found its natural home in personal letters', as a 'genre based on sympathetic feelings'.[101] Those in trade frequently echoed this focus in their narratives of their own lives, which were often overtly romantic and which utilized sentimental vocabulary and meanings, particularly that of the 'feeling heart'[102]—a

[95] Langhamer, *The English in Love*, ch. 3.

[96] Heywood, fo. 109.

[97] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*, 102.

[98] Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748–1818* (Cambridge, 2004), 217, 221.

[99] Vickery, *Gentleman's Daughter*, 285.

[100] Janet Todd, *The Sign of Angelica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660–1800* (Columbia, NY, 1989), 120–45; John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1988), ch. 2; G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago and London, 1992); Jerome McGann, *The Poetics of Sensibility* (Oxford, 1996).

[101] Whyman, *The Pen and the People*, 211.

[102] Clare Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture* (London, 2006), 99.

concept that also resonated with evangelical Protestantism, and Methodism in particular.[103]

The memoir of the Liverpool baker John Coleman, written in 1797, when he was in his early fifties, describes in great detail a series of romantic adventures undertaken in his youth in the 1760s, before he settled on a marriage match. His narrative drive was self-consciously and overtly dramatic, aping the contemporary sentimental novel form, and including speaking directly to his imagined readers. He focused on the emotional aspects of courtship and sexual relations, describing in true sentimental style, not just the raptures of romantic love, but also the agonies of rejection and of love lost. Recounting a chance encounter in London with a former sweetheart whom he had met some years earlier in Liverpool, he remarked: 'Listen now my gentle reader to a scene unequalled in fabulous romance.'[104] He then related the 'Story of Maria': the daughter of a 'decayed gentleman' who had been forced from financial necessity to enter the millinery trade in Liverpool, before being falsely accused of theft by her mistress, being rescued from imprisonment by Coleman, and then quitting Liverpool to escape the stigma of her arrest.[105] Their relief at her being released was described by Coleman as 'a scene of such general joy with general tears that no time can ever efface it from my memory'. 'This scene', he asserted, 'and the London one at our meeting there are deeply engraved on my heart'.[106]

As a teenager, Coleman's first love was apparently a Miss Betsey Parkinson, 'then about sixteen years of age'. He describes their relationship as one of exquisite feeling that proved

> nearly fatal to both. We each fell *violently* in Love with the other, And to what a Romantick height our Love was carried you will hear. Every Opertunity was taken, and every stratagem us'd, that each cou'd devise, or invent, for our being together, Where, or How, was of no consequence so it was accomplish'd. I will not say, When, for in that respect, her friends was too watchfull for improper Hours (tho' our Hearts thought there was none) And mine were too rigid in Family decipline, to allow me from home, at that Age, longer than 9 oclock. But morning, noon, and Night, I must see Betsey, or I was miserable. The time allotted for my hour of dinner was frequently spent with Betsey and my meal neglected, going to my work with much more gratification after seeing her than the partaking of my dinner whatever, many days never tasting meat more than once, and that not in the hungry style as might be expected, but in short I knew not what hunger was, I had no appetite nor had Betsey we were both near skeletons in the course of 4 months.[107]

Yet the affair was short-lived, as news of it reaching Betsey's parents meant that 'she was soon ordered home and distance divided passion that time wore away'. Coleman noted ruefully, 'I never saw her afterwards'.[108]

[103] Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility*, 266–73; Phyllis Mack, *Heart Religion in the British Enlightenment: Gender and Emotion in Early Methodism* (Cambridge, 2008). See also John Corrigan, *Business of the Heart: Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002), 1–7.

[104] Coleman, fo. 46^{v}. [105] Coleman, fos 49^{r}–51^{v}.

[106] Coleman, fo. 51^{r}. [107] Coleman, fo. 31^{v}. [108] Coleman, fo. 31^{r}.

Clearly not a young man to be downcast for ever, despite the stated agonies he experienced as a consequence of their broken romance, Coleman related that a few years later, when he was around 20 years of age and working twenty-hour days at his father's bakery, during his '4 hours cessation from labour' he embarked upon another, equally emotionally charged love affair, so that,

> instead of refreshing myself with sleep, and easing my bones and legs with rest, I dressed myself for courtship and tripped merrily away to pay my dear Nancy a visit, with whom I past with raptures of delight, the few hours I had from labour. Six days out of the seven my hours were thus devoted and for upwards of a month successively, my seventh day was Sunday, that day, and evening also, would have been appropriated for the purposes of love also, had not a father's command [to devote the Sabbath to prayer] restrained me.

These youthful romances—as Coleman described them—were based entirely on romantic feeling and what he described as 'violent' love. As we shall see, in later years, his emotions appear to have become calmer and less inflamed, but in his youth, he remained firmly wedded to romantic entanglements that resulted in excitement and heartbreak, but not in marriage. The affair with Nancy soon over and forgotten, Coleman recounted several flirtations with other young women between 1765 and 1769, noting that 'the company of the virtuous fair was a source of agreeable entertainment to me after the hours of business were over, I always wished a friend in one of them for the enjoyment of a social tete-a-tete'. Yet, following the death of his father, he proclaimed his desire to put his family before his heart, and vowed 'never to marry, until my mother and sisters were in a situation of providing for themselves'.[109] This appears to have been a device to protect himself from censure, since, by his own account, at least two of the women he socialized with during this period wanted—and indeed expected, given his attentions—to marry him.

Somewhat chastened by the complaints that resulted from these romantic dalliances, Coleman appears to have modified his conduct towards women somewhat, and, in the process, he forgot his pledges regarding his mother and sisters with some speed, for within a year of supposedly making this promise to avoid romantic entanglements, he met the woman he was to marry: a Miss Barton of Parbold, near Ormskirk, where he went to attend the weekly Corn and Meal Market in the town. Mary Barton was described as a frequent visitor at the house of one of her relations, where Coleman also stayed. She was described as 'a pretty, lively, sprightly, young lady very affable in her manners, sensible in conversations and handsome in person'. Despite her positive personal characteristics, it was their emotional responses towards each other that Coleman describes as drawing them together: which for John meant both increasing feelings of romantic love in Mary's presence, and sensations of emotional discomfort at her absence. At some point in 1769, Coleman recorded:

> On my leaving Ormskirk for my return home, in bidding Miss Barton good bye I began to feel on my road home as if I had left a something behind me and not quite so

[109] Coleman, fo. 44^{v}.

> comfortable as I could wish. I found also my mind more elated as the market day approached and in a few weeks after this on my arrival at Ormskirk.

When he met her again, it was claimed that '*more* than friendship had touched the hearts of both', so that 'during the interval of time from our separation until our again meeting I thought every week a year'.[110] Apparently giving his mother and sisters barely a backward glance, Coleman depicted himself as driven by powerful romantic urges that were far more pressing than any sense of duty towards his family. He described himself affected by 'sensations' that 'began to operate strongly on my mind and brought on serious reflection and I began to have some ideas of matrimony for the first time'. The sensation he refers to appears to have been love, and it was this that compelled him to commit to Mary, even though women who had showed an interest in him in the past appear to have been equally well qualified in terms of social standing, wealth, character, and appearance. Coleman presented himself as making up his mind based on his emotional reactions, as expressed in physiological signs, claiming that he quickly 'came to the resolution that if at my next interview with Miss Barton I found my heart beat equally high in her favour, I determined to disclose my love'. When the time arrived, he wrote:

> we felt a mutual something at that meeting, it was a reciprocal happiness and both were visibly affected. As soon as opportunity offered we embraced it and retired to an apartment made ready for our reception by the lady at whose house we were. And here this night (16 January 1770) I made an honourable declaration of my love and affection for Miss Barton, which was as honourably accepted and a mutual return declared.

The next time the pair met 'the day was fixed for our marriage viz the 15th of May'.[111]

Though both John and Mary's parents were apparently happy in their choice of a spouse, the focus of Coleman's tale was romantic love and mutual affection, rather than more pragmatic reasons and wider familial concerns.[112] His detailed account of the wedding also spoke of his excitement at the time (though likely to have been written almost two decades later) and hinted at the happy marriage that lay ahead, again mentioning the 'comfort' that his new relationship provided. On reaching Ormskirk for the wedding dinner, following the wedding in Parbold, he recorded that:

> On our entering the town the bells instantly began their peal and continued it the whole of the day. At two o'clock we sat down to a sumptuous dinner, we proved to be the celebrated number forty five which gave occasion for some hilarity at the table. After enjoying a very pleasant afternoon, at half past six o'clock we all took our departure for Liverpool except those of the party who were Ormskirk residents. We were about thirty in number in our cavalcade, some in post chaise but mostly on horseback. After a very pleasant ride . . . we reached town a little before nine o'clock before we reached home we heard St Peter's Church bells, musically welcoming the bridal party and continued their melodious sounds through eleven o'clock at night, an hour later than is usual on any occasion, but a barrel of ale will do wonders. On our

[110] Coleman, fo. 53v. [111] Coleman, fo. 53r. [112] Coleman, fo. 53r.

arrival at home, my mother and family were ready to receive us and every thing was as comfortable as our hearts could wish.[113]

Though young lovers have long been warned that to marry in haste meant to repent at leisure,[114] there is little evidence of this being the case in the personal testimonies located for this study, including that of John Coleman. Even after he was declared bankrupt in later life and reduced to more humble circumstances, he proclaimed himself 'happy in my family, happy in my friends and happy in my business', until his wife suddenly fell ill on 3 February 1797: 'a day never to be erased from my memory'. Though 'the doctors observed there was but little hopes of her doing well', John noted that 'in the course of a few weeks she grew better and our hopes were pleasing', at which point his memoir ends abruptly.[115] In fact, Mary died on 6 July that year, and the sudden cessation of John's writing—which appears to have taken place during her illness—suggests that his grief over his lost love overwhelmed him. Though the narrative drive of his memoir was his alternate success and failure in both business and love, the date at which his beloved and 'amiable' wife died was the point at which he left off, never returning to his writing to relate his later career as a baker at various locations outside of the city centre over the next two decades.[116] Like so many men who experienced the death of a loved one, he appears to have been at a loss for words and inarticulate in his grief.[117] In a separate volume, tucked away at the end of a book of accounts, Coleman reproduced two poems—apparently at the same time—marked 'N.N. 1770'. One, a celebration of romantic and married love states:

> How happy I, to win so fair a Bride!
> And happy She with me to be ally'd
> Sure theres a Secret sympathy in Souls
> Strong as the Fam'd attraction of the Poles
> Which leads the Lovers with Magnetick Force
> Governs the passions and directs their course
> Thro Lifes dim curtain sheds the silent ray
> And to the destin'd union points the way.
> To me thou'st all my Fancy can desire

[113] Coleman, fo. 55[r].

[114] K. M. Davies, 'Continuity and Change in Literary Advice on Marriage', in R. B. Outhwaite (ed.), *Marriage and Society: Studies in the Social History of Marriage* (London, 1981), 58–80.

[115] Coleman, fo. 60[r].

[116] From 1804 he appears in local directories as 'baker, Mansfield Street, Edge Hill . . . Bakery and Warehouse, Sea Brow'. Around 1807, the address of his bakery changed to Cable Street, though that of his house remained unaltered. After a decade living at his Edge Hill address, John Coleman moved to a house at Rose Hill with the bakery still located on Cable Street. He died the following year on 11 July 1815. His death was recorded in the *Liverpool Mercury* of 21 July, the same day that he was buried at St George's Church in Derby Square: *Woodward's New Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1804); *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1805); *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1807); *Gore's Directory, for Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool, 1810); *Gore's Directory, for Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool, 1811); *Gore's Directory, for Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool, 1813); *Gore's Directory, of Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool, 1814).

[117] Julie-Marie Strange, *Death, Grief and Poverty in Britain, 1870–1914* (Cambridge, 2005), 208–12.

All charms, all love does in they bosom dwell
I know my Love I know her charms so well
Long may our marriage Happy Happy prove
And long diffuse the pledges of our Love

Immediately following this poem was a much more sombre verse, which spoke of the death of a wife:

Reader remember in this vault does lie
All that of *virtue* good could ever *die*
The relicks of a virtuous pious wife
Who to her God with Joy resigned her life
Her *bones* lie *here* amongst the *kindred dead*
Her *soul* triumphantly to *Heaven* is fled
That *these dry bones shall live* another day
When voice omnipotent from Heaven shall say
Arise ye Dead to *Judgement come away*
Then will they Sacred Dust again appear
In glory bright! And as *an Angel* there.

As the Liverpool spirit merchant William Durning was to do some years later following his son's death, Coleman appears here to have located writings that expressed his emotional reactions to life events, and that signalled to him the joy of married love, the sadness of grief, and the hope of resurrection. He took both poems from the same volume of the *London Magazine* of 1738, and altered the lines in the first poem from the original 'Happy the peer to win so fair a bride | Happy the nymph to such a peer ally'd' to suit his own circumstances, and did the same with the second, whose opening lines in the original version—written on the death of Queen Caroline—read:

Reader! remember, in this vault does lie
All, that of *majesty* could ever
The relicts of a pious, virtuous queen
Wilhelmine, Dorethea Caroline![118]

The courtship of the Lancaster soapmaker Joseph Crosfield was recorded rather more brusquely in his father's diary and without Coleman's love of either sentimental language or detail. Though written in the third person, by a man clearly not keen on long entries and vivid descriptions, and thus lacking the urgency and detail of Coleman's account, the narrative thread also focused on love and its importance within marriages. In 1818 George Crosfield, the former Warrington grocer turned partner in a Lancaster sugar refinery,[119] and at that time living in Lancaster, noted that his son Joseph 'went over the sands, to visit the object of his love, Elizabeth

[118] S. Bowden, 'To the Right Honourable the Earl of Orrery, on his Marriage with Miss Hamilton; and their Arrival at Marston-House, Somerset', *The London Magazine, and Monthly Chronologer,* 7 (1738), 510; T.V., 'An Epitaph on the Queen', *The London Magazine, and Monthly Chronologer,* 7 (1738), 199.

[119] Musson, *Enterprise in Soap and Chemicals*, 5–8, 20.

Goad'—a young woman who appears to have been his cousin.[120] In September, George once again recorded that Joseph had visited Elizabeth, having 'crossed the sand on a visit of love to the object of his affection at Baycliffe'.[121] Further visits were mentioned, until, in January 1819, Joseph and his brother John 'proceeded across the sands on a matter of some importance' so that Joseph could 'lay before Swarthmore monthly Quaker meeting his intention of marriage with Elizabeth Goad'.[122] In March of that year, a month before the marriage, George noted disapprovingly that Joseph, having left Elizabeth's house late, 'travelled in the dark several miles, which I think very imprudent; he found great difficulty in getting off the sands'.[123] Though his father was unhappy about the danger posed by Joseph's late night visiting, Joseph clearly thought the risks were worthwhile, while George's description of Elizabeth Goad as the object of Joseph's love was approving and echoed his sentiments about his own wife. Despite most of George's diary entries being very terse, the wedding was described in some detail, which suggests that—despite a somewhat parsimonious streak—he remembered the event with some pleasure and saw the wedding as a cause of celebration (even wishing that the wedding service itself could have been more joyfully conducted):

> About half past six in the morning left Lancaster with two chaises; the company consisted of my dear A.C. [Ann, his wife] and her sister Harrison—Sons John & Simon-James and his wife, daughter Jane and myself. We had a pleasant ride across the sands by Grange & Tindal to Newton where we met the Bridal party from Baycliffe, took some refreshment and stopped about an hour. Proceeded to the Meeting house at Height [on Cartmel Fell], most of the company on foot. I thought it rather a solemn opportunity; Joseph and Elizabeth repeated the words of the ceremony in a clear and distinct manner. The company then returned to Newton and proceeded by Cartmell through a pleasant country to Flookborough where we dined, the number about 28; several of the Company walked towards the Marsh. The party for Lancaster left Flookborough about half past six and reached Leonard Gate at nine, all in good spirits. By my A.C.'s directions a sumptuous supper appeared on the table, which did not accord with my idea of moderation; the party were all cheerful and pleasant.[124]

The accounts provided by Coleman and Crosfield concerning courtship focus clearly on the importance of love in fixing a match, though both also gave some consideration to status and family, and in Crosfield's case it was also apparent that Joseph was expected to marry a fellow Quaker and that it was important that the wider faith community approved of the marriage. Other, later accounts of courtship among those in trade focus less heavily—certainly than did Coleman—on romantic love, and individuals appeared to balance the need to match social status and property, as well as religion, with the less tangible aspects of love. Yet, even in these later examples, the importance of a love match was central to individuals' understandings of and approaches towards both courtship and married life. As was the case for Coleman, marriage was also associated with 'comfort', an emotional

[120] Crosfield, 1818, 6 mo. 9; Musson, *Enterprise in Soap and Chemicals*, 10.
[121] Crosfield, 1818, 9 mo. 5.
[122] Crosfield, 1819, 1 mo.
[123] Crosfield, 1819, 3 mo. 23.
[124] Crosfield, 1819, 4 mo. 28.

state closely associated with love by our subjects, and linked specifically to the emotional consolation provided by a wife, as well as being associated with family and home. The understanding of comfort shown by all the individuals in this chapter was tied to its more established meaning, which was equated predominantly with spiritual and emotional support or strength, rather than the more 'modern' interpretation of physical comfort.[125] For the men in our study, comfort was thus almost always psychological and emotional rather than physical (though its absence could produce physical symptoms of distress and anxiety).[126] The same emotional responses seem to be bound up in John Tosh's description of the home in Victorian England as the place where men's 'deepest needs were met',[127] in which he defines domesticity as 'not just a pattern of residence or a web of obligations, but a profound attachment: a state of mind as well as a physical orientation'.[128] In this sense, the desire for comfort was another emotional impulse, since its absence resulted in emotional unease or upset.

The Preston cheesemonger Joseph Livesey was one man who appeared to find this form of emotional comfort in his own loving marriage. As has been noted, he met his wife, Jane Williams, at the Cold House Chapel of Scotch Baptists on Shudehill in Manchester. As they were living 30 miles apart, Joseph explained that, 'with the exception of about three visits, all the "love making", which lasted about a [y]ear, was done by long sheets of paper filled to every corner'.[129] Unfortunately, these letters associated with their early love do not appear to have survived, though Joseph records something of the nature of their later union in his autobiography. The couple married in 1815, when he was 21 and she was 19, and were described by Joseph as having 'lived and loved together now more than 52 years' when he wrote his record of his life.[130] He presented their cheesemongering business as a venture dependent on the efforts of both himself and his wife, who 'was quite as active, as persevering, and as successful as myself'.[131] Unlike Coleman, he did not focus much on romance in his account of his life, but his relationship with Jane was described as both loving and supportive, and a source of emotional comfort to her husband. 'I cannot do justice to my feelings,' he claimed,

> if I do not say a few words as to the excellencies of my dear wife. In our early struggles, when commencing business out of nothing, she was not only my counsellor in difficulties, but an active and efficient helper, to the extent of, and even beyond her

[125] It seems likely that both meanings coexisted during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: John E. Crowley, 'The Sensibility of Comfort', *American Historical Review*, 104/3 (1999), 749–82; John E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort: Sensibilities and Design in Early Modern Britain and Early America* (Baltimore, 2000), 142; Marie Odile-Bernez, 'Comfort, the Acceptable Face of Luxury: An Eighteenth-Century Cultural Etymology', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 14/2 (2014), 3–21.

[126] Giorgio Riello, 'Fabricating the Domestic', in Beverly Lemire (ed.), *The Force of Fashion in Politics and Society: Global Perspectives from Early Modern to Contemporary Times* (Farnham, 2010), 41–66, p. 60

[127] Tosh, *A Man's Place*, 1. [128] Tosh, *A Man's Place*, 4.

[129] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 12.

[130] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 13.

[131] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 15.

> power . . . She shared my joys, and more than shared my sorrows, for she wiped them away. Whenever I was cast down she was the one to revive my spirits.[132]

Though Joseph admitted to the occasional argument, he noted that, 'if ever we had a bit of a tiff (and these are sometimes useful in clearing the connubial atmosphere)', it was almost always about her working too hard.[133] Thus, even when they fell out, the cause was said to be one of concern and love.

The Manchester journeyman grocer George Heywood's narrative of his life emphasized the importance of both emotional comfort and romantic love when trying to identify a wife, though he appears to have tempered his emotional responses to romance with explicitly practical considerations after an early relationship had failed. Heywood's memoir and diary suggest the most pragmatic approach to marriage among the cases to be discussed in this chapter, yet his tale is still heady with emotion, specifically love, romantic yearning, and the anguish caused by rejection. Heywood's writing was dominated by two themes: his search for a wife and his desire to set up his own business. Much of his memoir and diary concerns his pursuit of Ann Owen, a widow with her own grocer's shop, who would have provided him with both family and business if she had agreed to marry him. Unfortunately for George, Ann was too fond of her independence and not nearly as smitten with the much younger man as he was with her.[134] His depiction of their relationship is explicitly romantic, and in May 1815 he described his first kiss with Ann as lighting 'a spark' that 'was soon blown into a flame which has continued to burn with ardour ever since', though he admitted at that point that 'now I begin to feel its expiring rays'.[135] Ann Owens appears to have toyed with George's affections for some time, leading him to remark in 1811 that

> Ever since I left Mrs Owen we have kept company as often as we could get together at least as often as I could meet with her. Sometimes she would behave with the greatest kindness and respect at other times she would be as different, which I could not account for, so much so that I begun to make memorandums in order to compare her conduct towards me at different times.[136]

Finally, he wrote that he had 'resolved to keep myself free from the slavish passion of love towards her' that had marked their previous courtship, and he ended their connection.[137] His heart not a little bruised by his experience of being spurned, he seems to have self-consciously decided to seek out a wife concentrating less on romantic attachment—which he believed had formerly enslaved him—and more on his desire for emotional and spiritual comfort. He began to disparage those couples that were united purely by 'passion', noting at one point that

[132] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 16.
[133] Livesey, *Autobiography of Joseph Livesey*, 17.
[134] For a detailed description of Heywood and Owen's relationship, see Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760–1830* (Oxford, 2006), 157–65.
[135] Heywood, fo. 15.
[136] Heywood, fo. 20.
[137] Heywood, fo. 72.

> Mr Lord seems very fond of Miss Bell, but I don't think it would last long he will now squeeze and kiss her before company but this cannot be lasting, it would require some other charms than those of beauty or the *passion* of love to preserve a man's affections, it requires a steady usefulness for that affection to grow into sincere esteem.[138]

This change of heart also coincided with his move away from Methodism and towards Unitarianism, and we can see something of the self-consciously rational approach of this form of Christian belief in his writing after this point. He eventually turned his attentions to Betty Bowyer, the domestic servant of his former employer, John Jones. This was a young woman with whom he had shared a house for some time, and whom he had walked out with for many months before he finally proposed matrimony. After George and Betty began to meet for these walks, he confided in his diary his 'great relief' at having 'a friend to open my mind and tell out all my sorrows'.[139] Though he felt he might have identified in Betty the 'comfortable wife' that he desired, George was very clear that he needed to take his time before deciding on marriage. Having been driven off partly by Mrs Owen's relatives, who saw him as threatening her inheritance, Heywood later mused:

> I begin to think that equality in marriage is desirable for as they are perfectly equal after there should be some comparison before marriage, or it may give one the power of upbraiding the other if they should disagree afterwards. I find it very relieving to have a friend to relate my sufferings to, but it would be much more so if I had a comfortable partner to partake both of pleasures and sorrows. I begin to admire a married life if it can be supported with decency.[140]

Soon he began to form clearer ideas about marriage, based on a growing sense of love for Betty, and his belief that she would relieve him of unhappiness and anxiety. In April 1815 he confessed:

> I begin to feel a great attachment to Betty Bowyer and think if she and I were placed together we could make each other very comfortable. I have no means of showing my respect for her at present but certainly feel much. She is certainly no beauty, she has certainly no property, which are generally the first accomplishments, but I have the evidence of my senses to say she is possessed of care, industry, sensibility, frugality, honesty, sincerity these are much more durable than either riches or beauty. Riches are uncertain they are desirable but many circumstances may happen to displace them, they are inconstant. Beauty is almost sure to fade at farthest in a few years, and the handsomest woman no better in that respect than the ordinary, but the good qualities of the mind will remain when these are gone and disappeared.[141]

Heywood spent a great deal of time weighing up the pros and cons of marriage to Betty. As a result he made many notes in his diary detailing the favours that she did for him, such as mending his stockings and making him cravats, noting: 'She is very kind in doing these little jobs for me, she is one of my best friends as far as she can. I ought never to forget her but to make her some recompense for what she has done

[138] Heywood, fo. 56.
[139] Heywood, fo. 46.
[140] Heywood, fo. 44.
[141] Heywood, fo. 51.

for me.'[142] Though he worried about marrying before he was financially secure, he also began to make it clear in his diary from the summer of 1815 how attached he was to Betty, emphasizing how sure he was that she was not simply after his money, noting that he 'was perfectly satisfied that no alteration did take place when my circumstances were known to be better but that she always showed the same respect and affection to me and from this I conclude that she would be the same to me in adversity as in prosperity'.[143] After much consideration and delay, he finally threw caution to the wind in November of that year, and recorded that they were 'fully determined to go together to share each others care, comfort, pleasure, property, disappointments or whatever else may befall or come to us whether favourable or unfavourable in short to be as one'. Betty was described as 'the object of my choice and in whom all my wishes meet'.[144] When they married on 26 November, Heywood wrote:

> This is the greatest day in my life, this day I have formed a solemn engagement for the remainder of my life, I expect. I have been married to Betty Bowyer, if we are agreeable and comfortable with each other it will be the happiest deed I ever performed, if the contrary, it will be the worst. This I do not fear, the former I confidently hope for and expect and I have the experience of several years, the evidences of my own senses and my own observations to form my opinion from, and can this opinion formed with strict and minute inspection be erroneous, impossible!!![145]

Despite his sometimes pragmatic approach, particularly after his affair with Ann Owen ended, George Heywood seems to have aspired to a life of settled domesticity for emotional over and above more practical concerns. Though his story of his courtship with both Ann and Betty suggested that he was a man increasingly wary of acting on narrowly romantic or passionate impulses, his relationship with both of them was presented in his diary as being based on real affection, which produced both great emotional turmoil, and no little excitement, on his part.

The final courtship and marriage to be considered in this chapter concerns another Manchester grocer, James Fildes, and Mary Guest, daughter of the widowed tanner, Elizabeth Guest, of Preston Brook near Warrington.[146] The early years of their relationship are recorded in a series of letters. In common with George Heywood's wooing of Betty Bowyer, James Fildes initially showed an explicitly practical approach to marriage, and focused on Mary's family, piety, and character. But, by contrast to Heywood, he was ultimately far more effusive in proclaiming his love, echoing something of John Coleman's expression of romantic love some thirty years earlier. In common with all the male courters considered in this section, James Fildes was driven to wed by a combination of romantic love and a desire for emotional comfort. He was also clear in his belief that marriage was sanctioned by God. James's opening salvo to Mary Guest was a formal letter of proposal, which set out his reasons for his choice of her as a partner, his own suitability as a husband,

[142] Heywood, fo. 66. [143] Heywood, fo. 91.
[144] Heywood, fo. 92. [145] Heywood, fo. 96.
[146] J. T. Slugg, *Reminiscences of Manchester Fifty Years Ago* (London, 1881), 96–7. James Fildes's letters were often addressed c/o Mary's mother: Mrs Guest, tanner, Preston Brook.

and the advantages of marriage in general. 'I have frequently heard respectful mention of your family and connections', he wrote, 'and on enquiry was happy to learn amongst all its other excellencies, that it contained a Gem which to me if I could be so fortunate as to succeed would prove inestimably valuable'. In return for gaining such a 'gem', he promised to 'give you a most distinct avowal of my honourable intentions, such a one as even supposing the possibility of a change in my views, I cannot retract as long as a single spark of honour or any principle worthy of a man and a Christian shall glow in my breast—and such an avowal I trust as will remove every scruple from your mind'. Laying out his own personal characteristics, he noted:

> I am a Methodist from principle. I admire the discipline and cordially embrace the Doctrine generally taught amongst us from a conviction that the one is admirable suited to the fallen state of Man, and the other is consistent with the Oracles of Divine Trust. My circumstances are respectable, with the blessing of a kind providence on my endeavours in an increasing business of which I have a thorough knowledge—sufficient to enable me to maintain a family well—I do not promise you affluence, but I do promise, and without any fear as to the issue, that no exertions of mine shall be wanting to make you as respectable and happy as you can reasonably desire . . . [147]

In the weeks that followed, as he continued to try to win Mary over, James was keen to stress also the religious impulse to wed, and that marriage was an institution blessed by God:

> The infallible word of God declares that it is not good for man to be alone—I have felt the force of this truth—you have too much good sense to suffer any sophisticated notion to make any distinction as to females —the *truth* is the *truth* and is equally applicable to each—the word of God in many parts holds out strong encouragement upon this subject—marriage is the favourite image of our sacred writers when they wish to illuminate the Union of our Lord with his church—and 'is *honourable* in all' . . . Marriage is and must be the best and happiest state because the word of God in fact declares it to be so – what *God* declares to be *honourable* must be good indeed!—let us refer to the experience of every conscientious married man and woman whose opinion is worth taking on so momentous a subject, and we shall find that their cool, deliberate, unshaken opinion is, not merely inclining to favour it, but however they may differ on other subjects, on this they are decided—My dear Love, *Experience, Reason* and *Religion* all with one accord combine to say *it is Good*.[148]

But, though much of James's first letter to Mary echoed Heywood's pragmatic reasoning about status, character, and religion prior to marrying Betty Bowyer (whom he was keen to confirm was not a committed Methodist), where Heywood had focused on a desire for 'comfort' in married life, Fildes was both explicitly driven by religious belief, as well as being more openly romantic in his rhetoric: repeatedly declaring his love for his bride-to-be and using the sentimental

[147] Longbottom, James Fildes, Manchester, to Mary Guest, unspecified location, 28 March 1821, LT 171, transcript (original now lost).

[148] Longbottom, James Fildes, Manchester, to Mary Guest, unspecified location, 9 May 1821, LT. 71.

vocabulary of the 'feeling heart' as a Methodist who adhered to a 'heart religion' that was intricately linked to emotion, in contrast to Heywood's more rational Unitarianism.[149] 'I will venture to all that a more honest Hand and sincere Heart was never before tendered,' James wrote in March 1821, before continuing:

> Having ascertained that you are at liberty from any other engagement, pardon me if I state, and I would do it with the greatest possible deference to your judgement, that it is *my fixed determination* to use every necessary means in my power consistent with my character as a man of honour and a Christian to press my suit until *my object is accomplished,* if I find your heart *invulnerable*. My heart is fixed and in *you* I hope to find a Dearer better self. I beg to assure you that I shall never solicit your hand until I have an unqualified assurance that I possess your Heart.[150]

Fildes was true to his word, for, though his initial proposal and a subsequent visit met with rebuttals, he remained determined and eventually won over the reluctant Miss Guest, at that point declaring his profound relief that he had been rescued from his former anxiety so that 'my mind is released from a load which appeared almost too heavy for me to bear—so far from the fear of being discarded, I was now permitted to see and converse with the dear object of my choice . . . and know that her heart is *mine'*. Again, in his joy at her acquiescence he used both the religious imagery of the feeling heart, and its meaning as a physiological site of emotion: 'I have no hope no desire separate from you,' he proclaimed, '*give me then your Heart*—you shall find that you are building upon a Rock—you may place the utmost confidence in me—I will sooner lose my life and all that is dear to me in this world than that I will deceive you . . . your sincere Lover, James Fildes'.[151]

At ten years her senior, he certainly appeared more confident and assertive than his prospective spouse. Though his initial written proposal was both formal and largely pragmatic—focusing as it did on their respectable characters and good family connections, his healthy business, and his religious devotion—his desire to win her heart, and his proclamation that his heart was fixed on her, were more than empty rhetorical flourishes, as their letters from married life appear to confirm. Here we see evidence of a relationship that continued to be based on romantic love, effusively expressed, and, where physical absence resulted in a loss of emotional comfort, professions of anxiety and deep yearning. Two months after their wedding, James wrote to Mary while she visited her mother and siblings at her former residence at Preston Brook, mourning his situation without his wife, and the emptiness of his domestic situation without the emotional and succour that she brought:

> My Dear Wife
>
> The Portmanteau and contents with your welcome affectionate Letter was safe to hand last night—I am thankfull that you all got safe to PB— and it affords me pleasure that you are so happy—I regret exceedingly that circumstances prevent my

[149] Mack, *Heart Religion*; Corrigan, *Business of the Heart*.

[150] Longbottom, James Fildes, Manchester, to Mary Guest, unspecified location, 28 March 1821, LT 171.

[151] Longbottom, James Fildes, Manchester, to Mary Guest, unspecified location, 9 May 1821, LT. 71.

> participation of those pleasures at your *old* home with your Family and *mine*—I am however as happy (as my temporary widowhood will allow) from knowing that the object of my most tender affection is so—
>
> The House—Garden and even the neighbourhood seems to wear a different aspect because you are not here—Mary [apparently a domestic servant] has every thing neat and clean and attends to every thing very well but there is something dull and lifeless in every thing about me which nothing but yourself can set right—it is hardly right to wish time to fly—but really I shall be very glad when Wednesday comes . . . [152]

Their letters continued throughout their marriage whenever they were parted. An undated letter from early in 1823 from Mary to James states: 'My very Dear and affectionate Husband . . . I hope you take care of yourself and be sure you come *early* on Saturday. God bless you and Good Night . . . accept a kiss and my very Dear Dear love from M. Fildes.' [153] The following year, James wrote to his 'Dearly Beloved Wife':

> Your kindly affectionate Letter is duly to hand, and which I assure you is *very very* welcome as it has not only relieved my mind from considerable anxiety—but is a source of pleasure for me to be assured that she who is dearer to me than life is safely and well in the house of her Friends . . . I am through mercy well but most heartily tired I hardly know how to hold my pen or keep my eyes open after a day of complete bustle amidst it all however I have kept wondering and wishing to know [how] my dear dear Mary fared.[154]

The following month he noted that he was 'as comfortable as I could reasonably expect to be in the absence of my dearest earthly comfort', for, though 'Alice [presumably another domestic servant] has everything very neat and clean—and takes very uncommon pains in endeavouring to make me comfortable . . . after all my dearest dearest Mary is not here—and this I must confess is a kind of blank . . . '.[155] Here, as in his earlier letter, he explicitly contrasts physical and emotional comfort, and stresses that it is the latter that he craves so badly.

On a trip to London in May 1824 James wrote to Mary with an effusive display of the romantic love that characterized their relationship, coupled with an acute sense of emotional longing and physical yearning:

> I wrote you on the 16th . . . I could not help kissing it for thy dear sake— bless thee my love I have oft wished I could fly over and see thee assured dear thou art well and happy . . . I long to see thee too—and give thee many loving kisses—and I endeavour every now and then to please myself with the reflection that there is on the road a loving epistle from thee my love . . . I never forget you—oh let us each ever near each other be . . . I often think were [*sic*] you are, how you are, and what you are each doing—

[152] Longbottom, James Files, Manchester, to Mary Files, Preston Brook, 22 June 1822, LT 74.
[153] Longbottom, Mary Fildes [Preston Brook], to James Fildes, Shude Hill, Manchester [undated, *c*.1823], LT 1.
[154] Longbottom, James Fildes, Strangeway, Manchester, to Mary Fildes, Preston Brook, 8 April 1824, LT 82.
[155] Longbottom, James Fildes, Strangeway, Manchester, to Mary Fildes, Preston Brook, 18 April 1824, LT 79.

Figure 4.4. Portraits of James and Mary Fildes in gouache and watercolour, with graphite and/or ink on paper or card, size (including frames), 15.8 x 12.3 cm, undated and anonymous. University of Huddersfield Library, E. H. Longbottom Archive, pictures 7 and 8.

> especially thee my dearer self—here thy fond Husband does what he has often done before kiss the paper for thy dear sake—that thou my sweet lass may kiss it too.[156]

The following week James wrote that

> in the midst of all the gaudy show and pomp with which I am surrounded . . . I do really find that amidst it all—all seems only to have the effect on my mind of raising a more pure and fervent affection for thee my Beloved Mary and our dear and peaceful Home and friends—there under the good providence of our beneficial Father, centres the sum and substance of my earthly happiness . . . be assured my beloved Mary that next to the Lord I love thee far, far above all other comforts and blessings . . . [157]

As lovers often do, James placed Mary at the centre of his happiness, and, as a good Christian, next to God in his devotions. In a physical symbol of their devotion, a pair of miniature portraits of the couple were painted—undated but apparently produced early on in their marriage—which survive among the family archive, with James and Mary pictured in profile in a pair of paintings that were surely designed to be hung face-to-face, so that they could gaze lovingly at each other in perpetuity (Figure 4.4).

Though James and Mary Fildes were among the most effusive in their expressions of love among those examined in the preceding pages, all the tradesmen and women whose courtships and marriages have been described prized emotional comfort and loving relations within marriage very highly. Though more pragmatic

[156] Longbottom, James Fildes, London, to Mary Fildes, Shude Hill, Manchester, 21 May 1824, LT 80.
[157] Longbottom, James Fildes, London, to Mary Fildes, Shude Hill, Manchester, 29 May 1824, LT 81.

considerations such as wealth, religion, and social status were certainly not overlooked when they were considering a future spouse, it was the emotions associated with love, and aroused during courtship, that seemed particularly important, and upon which most ink was expended.

OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

While our subjects focused most strongly in their writings on parental and romantic love, the Fildes correspondence reminds us not just that love was commonplace between parents and their young children, and between married couples, but that it could also be shown between siblings, between adult children and their parents, and for familial relations forged by marriage rather than blood.[158] Before James could get Mary's agreement to marriage, he had much cajoling to do—not just of her, but also of her family. A letter to Mary from her sister Lydia from April 1821 recounted a visit that James Fildes made to the Guest family home at Preston Brook while Mary was in Chester. Lydia reported telling James that, if she were to lose her sister, 'I should be quite at a loss'. James's response that 'to remedy that evil . . . I must come with you' was enough to win her 'good graces'.[159] James was clearly aware of Mary's close, loving relations with her family, and in his early courtship letters he tried further to coax his sweetheart out of her reluctance and nervousness about both running a home and leaving her own family to set up a new one by promising her that she would not lose their love:

> I greatly fear that you have formed an idea of marriage as though it would in some sort sever the tender ties now existing betwixt yourself and your dear and honoured family—nothing can be more erroneous—a moment's consideration divested of any preconceived opinion will convince you that the reasonable result of your union with an individual who meets with the approbation of your family, must be, to cement and make that affection even stronger than before, and without the probability of any circumstances arising out of the union to cause an abatement. Should providence favour us with a family—are you not aware what a fruitful source of affection that is? . . . Dear little Pledzy, and I am sure you will confess that they entwine about the best affection of your heart in a manner which you cannot describe but which you can feel. And is this calculated to lesson affectionate feeling? Besides your mother is your mother still; your sisters are your sisters still and your brothers still bear the same relationship as ever only all find they have additional reason to love you. So far from lessening the field is more ample—my own family, I flatter myself you will love and be by them beloved.[160]

[158] Claudia Nelson, *Family Ties in Victorian England* (Westport, CT, 2007), ch. 4; Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 348–56; Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, 210–15; Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England*, ch. 4; Leonore Davidoff, *Thicker than Water: Siblings and their Relations, 1780–1920* (Oxford, 2012).

[159] Longbottom, Lydia Guest, Preston Brook, to Mary Guest, unspecified location, 8 April 1821, LT 177.

[160] Longbottom, James Fildes, Manchester, to Mary Guest, Preston Brook, 31 May 1821, LT 172.

James later proved his point about the increase in familial love produced by their marriage by extending his frequent proclamations of love to encompass both Mary and members of his new family-in-law as well. This he expressed in terms of both kisses, and—as a grocer—sweet edible treats. Two months after their wedding, he wrote to Mary while she visited her mother and siblings at Preston Brook:

> Please give Mother an affectionate kiss for me and assure her it will be a joyfull occasion for me to welcome her here—
>
> Please to give little Elizabeth a kiss and tell her Uncle will be very glad to see her if Mother is agreeable and Uncle and Aunt can spare her—plenty of Raisins, Sugar Candy &c &c
>
> Please to give Sisters a loving kiss each and Bro[r]. a hearty shake of the hand for me—have sent you a few *sweet* representatives in Sugar Drops.[161]

But James and Mary were unique among our sample of trading families in expressing such warmth in their relations with members of their wider family. John Coleman wrote lovingly of his siblings only when they were children (later falling out with his sisters' husbands), while George Heywood was both physically more distant and emotionally less effusive with his relatives throughout his diary compared to his fellow grocer James Fildes. Though Heywood's mother had died when he was young, so that he had no memory of her,[162] he remained on good—though not expressly warm—terms with an aunt, with whom he kept in regular contact, and with his sister Elizabeth, who lived in Manchester and to whom he paid regular visits. He also described himself on a visit by his father to Manchester as 'exceeding glad to see him and spent as much time with him as I could'.[163] Unfortunately, his father died on the way home from this visit. Though he was apparently killed falling from his coach on Sunday, 28 January, the letter informing George was supposedly misdirected, so that he did not hear till the Wednesday afternoon. George described himself as setting off to Huddersfield 'full of trouble about 7 o'clock the same night and got there about 3 o'clock in the morning. I was almost lost walking so far in the wet and very dark. My sister went in the coach in the morning after but we were both too late, he was buried on the Wednesday, January 31'.[164] Yet, though he seemed to feel real sadness at the death of his father, and some anxiety about missing his funeral, when describing 'the melancholy accident and death of my Father for which I have had much to be sorry', he noted begrudgingly that 'he had not the means to do for me what many parents have *and what I should wish to have*'.[165]

With his parents both dead, George was left in part charge of his younger sister Mary, along with his Aunt Grace. Though he seems to have taken this responsibility seriously, and organized various places for Mary as a domestic servant, his description of his efforts suggest that they were prompted by duty rather than affection. Mary was described as 'troublesome' because 'there was nobody left belonging to her' after their father's death.[166] When he was told by one employer,

[161] Longbottom, James Fildes, Manchester, to Mary Fildes, Preston Brook, 22 June 1822, LT 74.
[162] Heywood, fo. 9. [163] Heywood, fo. 28.
[164] Heywood, fo. 14. [165] Heywood, fo. 34. [166] Heywood, fo. 17.

a Mrs Wilson, that 'she is a good girl and will never be a disgrace to me but a credit', he seemed most pleased with how this news reflected on his character, noting that: 'I am very glad she becomes so promising and it gives me satisfaction to reflect that I have been the principal means with her own conduct of making her in so decent a way and hope she will continue to improve and have no doubt she will make a respectable woman.'[167] However, he showed limited interest in either her welfare or her happiness, restricting his affection to his wife and children. Though the evidence presented here in terms of familial relationships outside those of parents and children and married and courting couples is limited in terms of what it can tell us about emotion bonds within wider families, its relative absence in the life-writing and correspondence of our subjects suggests that the focus of our tradesmen and women's emotional lives generally rested within the narrower sphere of their immediate family of spouses, parents, and children, and specifically most often with those with whom they had most day-to-day contact: their co-resident family. This raises issues about the status and meanings of household and family, which are considered in the final two chapters.

CONCLUSION

This chapter opened with a discussion of the 'memorandums' book of the Warrington watchmaker James Carter. Although this document consisted mostly of a rather terse record of events, rather than being a place for him to record the minutiae of his inner, emotional life, on two occasions—motivated by religious feeling and grief—he did just this. Looking back on his early years, he noted that, soon after he became an apprentice, he 'felt my state powerfully in Conviction as a lost sinner' and at this point recorded the dates of John Wesley's birth and death. Upon the death of his mother in 1803, he noted her age (57), the situation of her grave (on the north side of the Old Church in Warrington) and described her as 'A Good Mother': which he underlined for emphasis, to demonstrate both the strength of his conviction and the force of his emotional attachment. For Carter, family and faith were two subjects that drew him into making fuller entries, and these give us the most fleeting of glimpses into his inner life. Though he differed significantly from the other men and women examined in this chapter in terms of the manner in which he recorded his feelings, James Carter shared with them some of the same preoccupations and emotional responses.

Much of the support and cooperation in trading families that we have seen in both this chapter and Chapter 3, could be explained in terms of shared economic interests and a strong set of social expectations about proper conduct and duty, particularly in terms of supporting family members who were considered to be dependants. Yet these explorations of the emotional life of families suggest that other forces were at work, in addition to those motivations prompted by duty and

[167] Heywood, fos 43–4.

self-interest. An examination of the personal testimonies of men and women in trade has revealed the extent to which close family members were bound together by emotional attachments, and, in particular, by love. This was most evident in relationships between spouses, and between parents and their children, though it was also apparent among siblings and other family members, including those related by marriage rather than by blood. While romantic love between courting and married couples appears to have been important throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, its weight in relation to other considerations could vary from couple to couple (and, indeed, presumably within couples), and was usually accompanied by a desire for emotional comfort. The love shown for children by their parents, on the other hand, does seem to have undergone some change over the same period, especially where fathers were concerned, with a move to a more expressive and indulgent form of 'tender' parenthood. The focus on emotions in this chapter has made trading families appear less as 'a knot of individual interests', in which family members were engaged in a constant process of power politicking and negotiation over resources,[168] but instead as deeply interconnected groups of individuals who were tied to each other by duty and affection. Though this may appear somewhat more attractive than Laslett's 'knot', such an interpretation of the family is no less complicated, as the final two chapters reveal. Here we explore the home as the physical context in which trading families spent the majority of their time, and where familial relationships were both made and reformulated.

[168] Peter Laslett, 'The Family as a Knot of Individual Interests', in R. McC. Netting, Richard R. Wilk, and Eric J. Arnould (eds), *Households: Comparative and Historical Studies of the Domestic Group* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), 353–81. See also Michael Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1971).

5

Home, Business, and Household

Hannah Barker and Jane Hamlett

In 1809 George Heywood—at this point a young journeyman grocer fresh from serving out his apprenticeship in his native Huddersfield—travelled to Manchester to take up a job with William Hyde at his grocer's shop on Market Street. The situation did not last long. 'Here I had a hard place,' Heywood later claimed, explaining that his new employer 'was several times without porter and this made the work heavier upon me as there were only 2 apprentices besides myself'. Yet, although Heywood was clearly unhappy in his work, he complained more about his living conditions with Hyde, noting that 'his house was not very comfortable his beds were very poor, he made more distinction between his family and servants than I was used to or wished to see. We were all together, porter, servant, etc. in a very small kitchen, 2 of us slept in a room just large enough to hold a bed, [and] had to put our boxes under it.' Such was Heywood's discomfort—both physical and emotional—with an individual he characterized as a 'very sharp man in business and about his servants, almost continually finding some fault', that he described himself as 'very strange and unsettled all the time I was with him'.[1]

Living and working in close proximity to employers, employees, servants, apprentices, business partners, one's own blood relatives and those of your employer were all common experiences during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The period of the Industrial Revolution in England is often thought of in terms of the separation of home from work: for both middle and working class alike. However, for the majority of those involved in trade, the domestic and the commercial continued to coexist under one roof.[2] As one might expect, this made

[1] Heywood, fo. 12.

[2] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London, 1987), 364–9; S. J. Wright, 'Sojourners and Lodgers in a Provincial Town: The Evidence from Eighteenth-Century Ludlow', *Urban History Yearbook*, 17 (1990), 14–35; Catherine Hall, 'The Butcher, the Baker, the Candlestick-Maker: The Shop and the Family in the Industrial Revolution,' in Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle-Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge, 1992), 108–23; Jennifer Dawn Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London', Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (1998), 20–1; Owen Ashmore, *The Industrial Archaeology of Lancashire* (Newton Abbott, 1969); Owen Ashmore, *The Industrial Archaeology of Stockport* (Manchester, 1975); Geoffrey Crossick and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, *The Petite Bourgeoisie in Europe, 1780–1914: Enterprise, Family and Independence* (London and New York, 1995), 90–3; R. J. Morris, 'Family Strategies and the Built Environment in Leeds in the 1830s and 1840s', *Northern History*, 37 (2000), 193–214. While trade directories sometimes listed

for particularly complex living and working arrangements, which the final two chapters of this book will explore. This discussion reveals not only a crucial element of the lived experience of those in trade—as Heywood's extended complaints make clear—but also sheds light on both the power relations that existed within households and the different understandings of 'family' that were apparent among the trading classes. This first chapter on household space examines the make-up of trading households, the structures and layouts of the buildings that they occupied, and the different rooms within. It describes a significant variety of households: in terms of both the number and types of people that constituted them, and the amount of physical space in which they lived and worked. Though access to greater or lesser amounts of space was partly linked to the practical demands of different trades, it is clear that, among traders as a whole, there was a feeling that having sufficient space, both commercial and living, was important, but that not all households were able to achieve this. Whatever the size of the building occupied relative to the number, age, gender, and status of the people in it, and however cramped or spacious this might appear, the differentiation between living and commercial space was something that appears to have been attempted, though not always realized. Though there are some indications that the front—or street-facing—rooms of a house were more likely to be devoted to commercial use, and the back spaces to domestic use, this does not mean that households were neatly divided into public and private areas as a result. Indeed, applying such a strict dichotomy to the interior spaces occupied by those in trade is unhelpful when trying to uncover the ways in which such spaces were both used and understood.

Despite historians' interest in the family and household in this and adjacent periods,[3] we still know relatively little about the physical context in which most familial relationships were negotiated below the level of the social elite.[4] While

separate addresses for an individual's home and workplace between 1760 and 1820, these were generally one and the same for those engaged in retailing and most forms of small-scale production.

[3] Peter Laslett and Richard Wall (eds), *Household and Family in Past Time: Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America, with Further Materials from Western Europe* (Cambridge, 1972); Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York, 1975); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (London, 1977); E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1591–1821* (London, 1981); R. B. Outhwaite (ed.), *Marriage and Society: Studies in the Social History of Marriage* (London, 1981); Ralph Houlbrooke, *The English Family, 1450–1700* (London, 1984); Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction, 1300–1840* (Oxford, 1986); Naomi Tadmor, 'The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 151 (1996), 111–40.

[4] See, e.g., Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven, 1978); J. Franklin, *The Gentleman's Country House and its Plan, 1835–1914* (London, 1981); H. C. Long, *The Edwardian House: The Middle-Class Home in Britain, 1880–1914* (Manchester, 1993). Though see Frank Brown, 'Continuity and Change in the Urban House: Developments in Domestic Space Organisation in Seventeenth-Century London', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 28/4 (1986), 558–90; Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London'; Amanda Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2007), ch. 2; Amanda Vickery, 'An Englishman's Home is his Castle? Thresholds, Boundaries and Privacies in the Eighteenth-Century London Home', *Past and Present*, 199/1 (2008), 147–73.

historians of all periods have long been interested in the family, and gender historians in particular tend to concentrate a great deal on the home, they do this largely in terms of its meaning, rather than describing its physical structure or the use of the spaces within it. Internal domestic space is thus too often homogenized into an undifferentiated 'private', in binary opposition to the 'public' space beyond the front door.[5] The recent 'spatial turn' in history and geography has largely been focused on such 'external' space and has also been most concerned with the meaning and symbolism of space, rather than its physical material form and the ways in which it was actually used.[6] Architectural history, of course, has produced a large and distinguished body of work that tells us much about the structure and layout of buildings, but—with the odd important exception—architectural historians tend to prioritize exteriors over interiors and to focus on architects and builders rather than the people who used and inhabited buildings.[7] Though research that links architectural developments and the ways in which people lived has produced some interesting work for our period, this has been often limited in scope—examining the supposed growth of privacy, and largely restricted to a discussion of the social elite and hampered by a narrow focus on architectural evidence.[8]

Tim Meldrum is one historian who has been sharply critical of this approach, arguing that architectural sources alone are not sufficient to determine the use or meaning of domestic space. He contends, for example, that the advent of bells to summon servants might not be evidence of employers' desire to distance themselves from their domestic employees, as has been claimed, but may simply have originated with a fashionable distaste for shouting.[9] Amanda Vickery has also noted the problematic nature of the public/private binary in historical scholarship of this

[5] Leif Jerram, 'Kitchen Sink Dramas: Women, Modernity and Space in Weimar Germany', *Cultural Geographies*, 13 (2006), 538–56. See also I. Cieraad, 'Anthropology at Home', in I. Cieraad (ed.), *At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space* (Syracuse, NY, 1999), 1–12. Though see Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London'; Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England*. On the public and private, see Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*; Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres?: A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal*, 36/2 (1993), 383–414.

[6] See, e.g., Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (London, 1992); Miles Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780* (London and New York, 1998); Joachim Schlör, *Nights in the Big City: Paris, Berlin, London, 1840–1930* (London, 1998); Simon Gunn and R. J. Morris (eds), *Identities in Space: Contested Terrains in the Western City since 1850* (Aldershot, 2001); Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (London, 2000); Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity: Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840–1930* (Cambridge, 2008).

[7] Peter Borsay, 'Why Are Houses Interesting?', *Urban History*, 34/2 (2007), 338–46. Though see Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*; Peter Borsay, *The English Town* (New Haven and London, 1990); C. Saumarez-Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration: Design and the Domestic Interior in England* (London, 1993); D. Cruickshank and N. Burton, *Life in the Georgian City* (Harmondsworth, 1990); Peter Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven and London, 2004).

[8] See, e.g., L. Stone and J. C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite? England, 1540–1880* (Oxford, 1984); Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*; Matthew Johnson, *An Archaeology of Capitalism* (Oxford, 1996), 174–7; Christoph Heyl, 'We Are not at Home: Protecting Domestic Privacy in Post-Fire Middle-Class London', *London Journal*, 27/2 (2002), 12–33.

[9] Tim Meldrum, 'Domestic Service, Privacy and the Eighteenth-Century Metropolitan Household', *Urban History*, 26/1 (1999), 27–39, pp. 37, 39.

period. Her examination of the interiors of the households of ordinary Londoners in the eighteenth century has revealed the differential access that inhabitants had to internal spaces within homes, and the existence of 'internal boundaries' and 'dispersed pockets of privacy' that were not available to all, but rather differed according to status.[10] Similar gradations in the uses of internal spaces in shop premises have been identified by Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift.[11] Meanwhile, as Jon Stobart, Andrew Hann, and Victoria Morgan have asserted in their study of the spaces of consumption in the eighteenth century, though it may be possible to see internal space in trading households as increasingly specialized during the eighteenth century, the boundaries between commercial and domestic space remained fluid for much of this time, so that 'production, retailing and family life spilled over into one another'.[12] These insights are useful in exploring both the complexity of trading households in the north-west, and the relationships between individuals and the physical spaces they occupied. By delineating the spaces that individuals and households occupied, and identifying how densely populated these trading households were, this chapter provides the context for the discussion in the final chapter of the book, which focuses on the lived experiences of those who resided and worked in trading households.

SMALL BUSINESS HOUSEHOLDS

Peter Earle estimates that most middle-class households had between seven and eight people living in them in late-seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century London, and suggests that it was the number of resident children and servants (including apprentices and journeymen) that determined the size of a household.[13] In north-west towns a century later, a similar pattern emerges among small business households. Here, the survival of the 1801 Census Enumerators' Book for Liverpool allows us to examine the populations of streets dominated by those in trade. The entries for a sample of five streets—Prices Street, Chapel Street, Mason Street, Lord Street, and Bold Street—list 162 households involved in trade, in which 1,021 individuals lived. This produces an average of 6.3 people per household, although household sizes ranged from 1 person to 19, with 73 per cent of households falling within the range of 3–8 persons.[14] It is probably reasonable to assume that the figures for other north-west towns would have been similar.

[10] Vickery, 'An Englishman's Home is his Castle?'.

[11] P. D. Glennie and N. J. Thrift, 'Consumers, Identities, and Consumption Spaces in Early-Modern England', *Environment and Planning A*, 28 (1996), 25–45, p. 25.

[12] Jon Stobart, Andrew Hann, and Victoria Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption: Leisure and Shopping in the English Town,* c.*1680–1830* (London, 2007), 117–18.

[13] Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660–1730* (Oxford, 1989), 212–18. Peter Laslett's mean household size for the early modern period was 4.8: P. Laslett, 'Size and Structure of the Household in England over Three Centuries', *Population Studies*, 23/2 (1969), 199–223.

[14] Athenaeum Library, Liverpool, 1801 Census Enumerators' Book. This appears to be the only census listing pre-1841 that survives for any major north-west town: Richard Wall, Matthew

Prices (or Price) Street was the shortest street sampled, and was a modest thoroughfare of approximately fifteen houses (including two uninhabited business premises) that ran between Hanover Street and Cleveland Square near the Old Dock and Customs House.[15] According to the Enumerators' Book, 118 individuals lived here in 18 households. Of these 18 households, 11 can be positively identified as engaged in trade, with an average of 6.6 persons in each.[16] Using the census listing (which shows numbers of males and females at each address, and whether or not they were in trade), directories from proximate years, and Horwood's map of 1803 (which shows building footprints), we can gain some idea of the way in which these households were arranged (Figure 5.1 and Table 5.1).

It is unclear whether children, servants, or employees swelled the numbers of each household in Prices Street, as Earle suggests, though James Burns, the draper and tailor heading a household with three females and ten males at number 5 seems likely to have had several male employees or apprentices. Most of these households were not particularly large, with only that of Burns and Felton exceeding ten members, though there is a marked variation in the size of households and the buildings in which they lived, so that some clearly experienced more cramped living and working conditions than others: number 7, for example, which occupied a relatively narrow plot, appears to have been home to three households and two businesses, accommodating fourteen persons in total. Meanwhile, just two people in one household lived at number 13, at the site of Jane Jolly's Staffordshire ware shop.

Horwood's 1803 plan of Liverpool streets and buildings suggests that the houses on Prices Street were differently proportioned: with numbers 9 and 11 being particularly small, while 3, 10, and 12 were much larger. Number 2 Prices Street, home to the Simmons family and their linen and haberdasher's business, sat between the two extremes. In 1802 the *Liverpool Advertiser* carried an advertisement for its sale and described it as consisting of a house and shop with a street frontage of 36 feet 3 inches wide (with no depth given) and 'consisting upon the first floor [i.e. ground floor] of a good Shop, completely fitted, Parlour, Kitchen, Pantry, and Scullery, on the second floor a Drawing Room, two Bed Rooms, and a Dressing Room, on the third floor three Bed Rooms, and a Dressing Room, and two excellent Rooms on the attic story, with good Cellering'.[17] This house—which, as we shall see, appears somewhat grander than many occupied by those in trade, with its dressing and drawing rooms—was probably not much larger than

Woollard, and Beatrice Moring, 'Census Schedules and Listings, 1801–1831: An Introduction and Guide' (2004) <https://www.essex.ac.uk/history/documents/research/RT2_Wall_2012.pdf> (accessed 6 July 2016). See also P. Laxton, 'Liverpool in 1801: Manuscript Return for the First National Census of Population', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 130 (1980), 73–113.

[15] Richard Horwood, *Plan of the Town and Township of Liverpool Showing Every House* (1803).

[16] The census enumerators listed nine heads of household as being in trade: Hyde, Simmons, Birchall, Burns, Felton, O'Hara, Smith, Hartley, and McVoid. Information from directories adds another two: Jolly and Fearon. O'Harra and Westhead were possibly also in trade.

[17] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 1 November 1802.

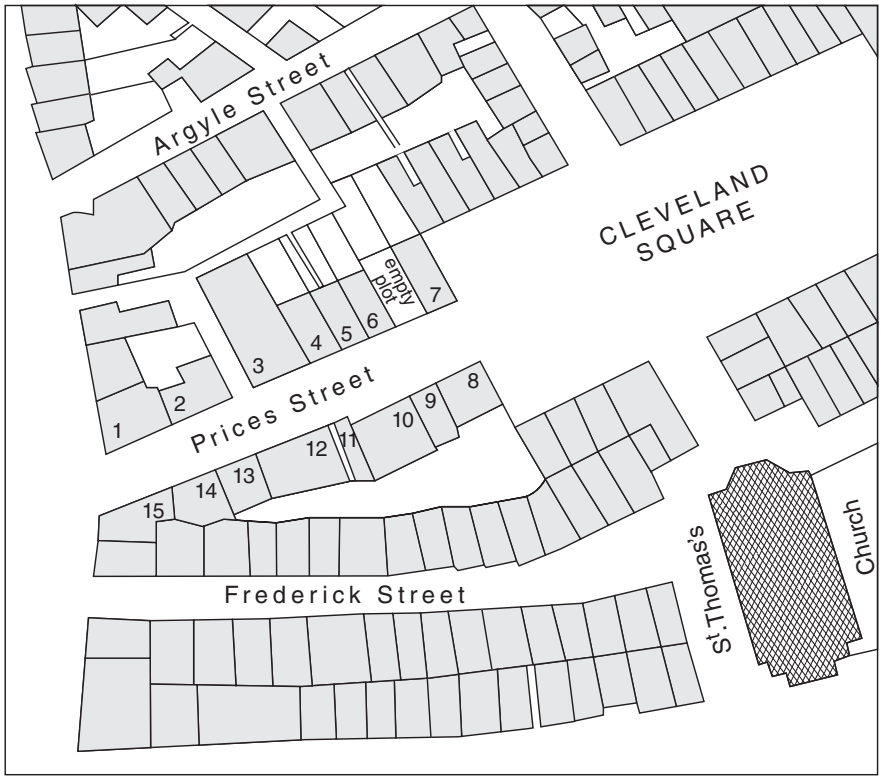

Figure 5.1. Based on Richard Horwood's, *Plan of the Town and Township of Liverpool Showing Every House* (1803).

many other dwellings occupied by small business families,[18] though it had a wide street frontage, which suggests it might have been of older construction than those around it. The advertisement indicates that it had one large, two smaller, and one very small room on each floor (though only two rooms at attic level) and that the whole house was built over four floors. Horwood's map suggests that the building was probably only the depth of the largest room, with a small outrigger.[19] The *Liverpool Directory* of 1800 describes this as the premises of Thomas Simmons and sons, haberdashers, while the surviving manuscript return for the 1801 census has William, presumably Thomas's son, as head of household with seven other people

[18] With a footprint of roughly 36ft x 18ft: Horwood, *Plan of the Town and Township of Liverpool Showing Every House*.

[19] John Eyes, *A Plan of the Town of Liverpool* (1768), seems to indicate that the building could have been there then, though it had been demolished or built onto by the time M. Gage's 1836 *Plan of Liverpool* appeared. The whole block was gone by the publication of the 1848 Ordnance Survey (and what were formerly two buildings were replaced by four with narrow frontages). Between 1803 and 1836 empty plots on the street were built on and some rebuilding had taken place.

Table 5.1. Prices Street, Liverpool, *c.*1801

House no.	Occupants
1	Thomas Hyde, grocer (3 females, 2 males)
2	William Simmons, haberdasher (5 females, 3 males)
3	Brown and Withers, Commission brokers (business premises only)
4	John Birchall, butcher (2 males, 4 females)
5	James Burns, draper and tailor (3 females, 10 males)
6	Ann Nicholson (5 females, 4 males)[a]
7	Edward Fearon, slopseller[b] (4 females, 1 male)
7	James McVoid (3 females, 2 males), listed on census as in trade, but not in directories
7	Sarah Newton (3 females, 1 male)*
8	Robert Hartley, tailor (2 females, 4 males)
8	John O'Harra, shoemaker?[c] (5 females, 2 males)*
9	Samuel Smith, upholder[d] (3 females, 1 male)
10	Sarah Westhead, vitualler?[e] (2 females, 1 male)
11	Robert Wyer (3 females, 2 males)
12	Sellar Henderson, Merchants, counting house and warehouse (business premises only)
13	Jane Jolly, Staffordshire ware shop (1 female, 1 male)
13	William Felton (10 males, 6 females), listed on census as in trade, but not in directories*
14	James Allen, merchant's porter (2 females, 2 males)
15	William Wainwright, ironmonger (2 males, 1 female)
15	James Patterson (6 males, 5 females)*

[a]. Widow of Capt. Alexander Nicholson, listed at 6 Price's Street in *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1796).
[b]. Slopseller = a seller of second-hand or ready-made clothes.
[c]. 'John O'Hara, shoemaker', was listed in *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1796) at 9 Pemberton's Alley, Chapel Street.
[d]. Upholder = upholsterer.
[e]. 'George Weston, victualler', was listed at 10 Price Street in *Gores'* [*sic*] *Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1800). 'Sarah Westhead', as she appeared in the census MS, may possibly have been his widow.

Note: an asterisk (*) indicates a separate household in the cellar.

Sources: Athenaeum Library, Liverpool, 1801 Census Enumerators' Book; *Gore's Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1796); *Gores'* [*sic*] *Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1800); *Schofield's New Liverpool Directory* (Liverpool, 1800). The information given in these sources does not always coincide.

(two male, five female) living with him. The Simmons household thus appears to have accommodated eight people (nine when Thomas was alive) in five 'bed rooms' plus additional living space and rooms—including the cellar—reserved for business use. This suggests not only that living conditions at number 2 were far from cramped, but also that any employees might have slept separately from the immediate family (though not necessarily in the attic rooms, which may have been used for storage). As we shall see—and as the situation at number 7 Prices Street makes clear—other trading households were less fortunate in terms of their living space.

BUILDING STRUCTURES AND LAYOUTS

Evidence about the type of buildings that trading families and their employees inhabited in north-west towns during the period of the Industrial Revolution is limited. Research into smaller eighteenth-century houses outside of London is not extensive, while the buildings themselves have largely disappeared—taken down during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to make way for grander structures on central commercial streets. Although Liverpool boasts extensive Georgian housing stock to this day, it is houses built for, and at least initially inhabited by, wealthier citizens that have survived in the main. However, the dwellings that more modest trading families occupied during the period under discussion do survive in small numbers here, as they do in Manchester, and they can be found still in the centres of some other north-west towns, such as Wigan (Figure 5.2), Warrington, Preston, and Stockport.

Figure 5.2. Row of shops on Millgate, Wigan, 2010.

Many of the houses that are extant have been extended and had their internal layouts altered over the years, but their original structures can still be discerned from architectural evidence. Moreover, even buildings that have been demolished are not entirely lost to historians. A variety of sources, including newspaper advertisements, inventories, maps, guidebooks, memoirs, diaries, photographs, and paintings and prints of street scenes, provide important insights into such houses and the living arrangements and working lives of their occupants.

Contemporary pictorial evidence from the opening decades of the nineteenth century suggests a mixture of building types on central Liverpool and Manchester commercial streets, where many trading families lived and worked. Here adjoining plots could feature very different styles, sizes, and ages of houses. Thus one might find squat timber-framed seventeenth-century houses, only one room wide, next to double-fronted, brick-built later Georgian edifices, four storeys high. Such an assortment was evident in John Ralston's series of engravings of Manchester street scenes in 1822, one of which—depicting Market Street—was examined in the introduction. The sorts of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century timbered buildings that we saw here were by no means unique in early nineteenth-century Manchester, and one can find photographic evidence of other early buildings both in Manchester and in the central streets of neighbouring Salford and other towns such as Warrington and Wigan right up to the First World War.[20] Figure 5.3, for example, shows a butcher's shop at 9 Bridge Street in Warrington, sandwiched between two buildings dating from a much later period.

Liverpool also boasted some timbered, seventeenth-century housing until the mid-nineteenth century at least, and it is clear that here too the buildings on commercial streets could assume a similarly mixed quality to those in Manchester in terms of size and age.[21] Figure 5.4, of Lord Street in 1798, for example, presents a mix of humble two-storey, seventeenth-century housing and grander, more modern, four-storey properties. James Brierley's sketches of Liverpool street scenes from 1828–30 also show a mix of housing. His various views of 'old houses' in Liverpool streets suggest the longevity of many seventeenth-century dwellings.[22]

As these pictorial representations, and the examination of Prices Street indicate, the types of buildings in which those in trade lived and worked were likely to have varied

[20] Chetham's Library, 'Memorials of Old Manchester', set of nineteenth-century photographs, *c.*1866; Chetham's Library, Bancroft's Illustrations of Old Manchester, series of photographs, *c.*1800–57; *Manchester Courier*, 12 February 1910; *Manchester Guardian*, 15 March 1911. The seventeenth-century Wellington Inn is still standing—though moved from its original position at the south-west corner of the Old Shambles, facing the end of Old Millgate, now repositioned and raised in height as part of late-twentieth-century city centre 'improvements': University of Manchester Archaeological Unit, 'The Old Wellington Inn and Sinclairs Oyster Bar, Manchester: An Archaeological Building Survey', unpublished report (1999). See also collection of photographs of old street scenes at Wigan Archives Service by J. Cooper; Janice Hayes, *Warrington through Time* (Stroud, 2010), 47, 52–3.

[21] A watercolour, *An Old House on Lord Street* (1789) shows clear use as a shop: Liverpool Record Office, Local Image Collection, 436. A note on the back of the picture, seemingly by the artist, describes it as a 'view of an old House situated on the North Side of Lord Street in Liverpool about 30 yards from the Top, as it now appears 1789. On one of the Gable Ends is this inscription WW 1610.' See also William Herdman, *Pictorial Relics of Ancient Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1843, and later editions); J. A. Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, 2 vols (London, 1875), ii, ch. 6, for a discussion of 'medieval Liverpool'.

[22] Athenaeum Library, Liverpool, Collection of Drawings by James Brierley of Liverpool Buildings.

Figure 5.3. H. Singleton's butcher's shop, 9 Bridge Street, Warrington, 1913. Photo by J. E. Birtles. Warrington Library, Image Collection, BS W910S.

in terms of both size and age. The relative merits of different premises were outlined in newspaper advertisements. Notices of property sales appeared frequently in the pages of both Liverpool and Manchester papers, which carried details for both towns and the surrounding areas, thus taking in smaller towns such as Warrington, Bolton, and Stockport, which did not have their own newspapers until later in the nineteenth century. The selling points of particular properties varied according to the type of building and the commercial uses and living conditions it might offer. Often it was suitability for business that was emphasized in advertisements, notably the size and location of premises, but the quality of living quarters was also commonly remarked upon, even in advertisements specifically directed at those in trade. This is a point that has been little noted in the existing historical literature on advertising, which tends to focus on the representation of shop premises in adverts as part of a wider discussion of consumption and consumerism.[23]

[23] Neil McKendrick, 'The Commercialisation of Fashion', in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialisation of Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1983), 34–99; H.-C. Mui and L. Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth-Century England*

Figure 5.4. Lord Street, Liverpool, 1798. William Herdman, *Pictorial Relics of Ancient Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1857), plate 13. Though the engraving by Herdman was produced in the nineteenth century, it was supposedly based on earlier sketches.

Property advertisements in the Manchester press tended to be brief to the point of terseness, particularly at the more modest end of the scale. Thus one advertisement in the *Manchester Mercury* in 1772 described 'A MESSUAGE DWELLING-HOUSE, with the Premises thereto belonging, (Late the property of *Thomas Hobson*, joiner, deceased) situated in the Street called, the *Top of the Hill*, in *Stockport* aforesaid, and now in the holding of Mr *Stopport*, Hatmaker', while another described a building 'Adjoining the *Cateaton-street*, at the corner of *Cannon Court, Manchester*, Two large Shops, and Houses adjoining thereto, now in the Possession or Occupation of Mr Leigh, Druggist, the other in possession of Mr Job Jackson. N.B. Both Shops and Houses have been lately built.'[24] A property occupied in 1802 by the Misses Fitton, Bolton milliners, was depicted in slightly more detail as consisting of 'that Messuage Dwelling house and Shop, with cellaring under the same with the back yard, pump and other privileges and appurtenances thereunto belonging, situate standing, fronting and being on the North side of Deansgate, in Bolton'.[25] Liverpool newspaper advertisements could also be very brief, such as that which

(London, 1989), ch. 12; C. Walsh, 'The Advertising and Marketing of Consumer Goods in Eighteenth-Century London', in C. Wischermann and E. Shore (eds), *Advertising and the European City: Historical Perspectives* (Aldershot, 2000), 79–95; Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, 'Commerce and the Commodity: Graphic Display and Selling New Consumer Goods in Eighteenth-Century England', in M. North and D. Ormrod (eds), *Art Markets in Europe, 1400–1800* (Aldershot, 1998), 187–200; Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman: A Study of Retailing, 1550–1830* (Aldershot, 2000); Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, ch. 7.

[24] *Manchester Mercury*, 31 March and 18 August 1772.
[25] *Manchester Mercury*, 25 May 1802.

described 'all the substantial MESSUAGE or DWELLING-HOUSE, situate in the Wall Gate-street, in Wigan, aforesaid, part of whereof is now occupied as a grocer's-shop' in the Liverpool *Advertiser* in 1812.[26]

The street location of houses was always mentioned in advertisements for pragmatic reasons: so that they were easy to locate, and since being positioned on a central thoroughfare clearly provided a significant commercial advantage, both in terms of passing trade, and because a fashionable address could indicate a business's status and polite credentials.[27] An advertisement for a property on Smithy Door in Manchester, advertised in the *Manchester Mercury* in 1790, noted of this former linen and woollen draper's that 'the Situation is inferior to none, it stands particularly well for the Ready Money Country Trade, being in the Heart of the Market, and an old established shop'.[28] Stating current business use was also common, and not only because it was a further means to help readers locate the property in question, but also because it suggested its suitability for others in the same or similar trades. Thus, in 1802, the *Manchester Mercury* carried advertisements for two 'dwelling-houses' at the corner of Old Millgate and Hanging Ditch in Manchester, which suggested that 'with Cellars and Warehouses thereunto belonging' they would suit an upholsterer, the occupation of one of the current tenants, as well as being also 'eligible for a Linen Draper, or any trade that requires extensive room'.[29] But commercial benefits were clearly not the only inducement for potential buyers and tenants, and in 1794, for example, a shop and house on Market Street Lane in Manchester, recently occupied by the tea dealer Thomas Alcock, was described as 'consisting of an excellent Shop, a very good Dwelling House, capable of accommodating a large Family', as well as boasting of having a 'Warehousing, and Yard, sufficient for the carrying on an Extensive Business'.[30] Similarly, in 1802, a former Liverpool linen-draper and hosier's shop on Pool Lane was described as being both a 'LARGE SHOP, and *excellent* DWELLING-HOUSE'.[31]

Adverts in Manchester newspapers tended to describe property sizes in vague terms: messuages were 'commodious', 'substantial' and 'spacious'. Sometimes more detail was given, particularly concerning the size of plots on which more than one building was situated, such as the advertisement that appeared in the *Manchester Mercury* on 6 March 1792 for the sale of 'two valuable and well situated Shops and Dwelling-houses, situate at the bottom of Market-street-lane, in Manchester, now in the occupation of Mr John Hunter, Cordwainer, and Mr Thomas Marsh . . . The above premises are 12 Yards in front and 37 Yards in depth backwards.' Though providing such detailed measurements was rare in the Manchester press, by contrast, adverts for Liverpool properties invariably included details of the plot size. An advert for a 'well-built brick house' currently being let to the mason Robert Making in Pall Mall, Liverpool, in March 1762, for example, described it as 'four

[26] *Gore's General Advertiser*, 9 January 1812.
[27] Stobart, Hann, and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, 76–9.
[28] *Manchester Mercury*, 6 July 1790.
[29] *Manchester Mercury*, 8 June 1802.
[30] *Manchester Mercury*, 1 July 1794.
[31] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 13 September 1802.

yards to the front, and eight and a half backwards, or there-abouts'.[32] Another for a dwelling house on the east side of Derby Square, occupied by 'Mr Barton, draper' was 17 feet 9 inches wide, with a warehouse at the back that ran along the west side of Castle Ditch and was 23 feet 4 inches long. The whole plot was said to be 71 feet 5 inches in length.[33] Lot 8 of an auction taking place at St George's coffee house was advertised in the *Liverpool Advertiser* in 1782 as 'A House situate in Park-lane, at the corner of Liver-street, containing to the front of Park-lane 18 feet, or thereabout, and to the front of Liver-street, 40 feet, or thereabout, having a very good shop facing both streets'.[34] Apart from the relative novelty of having a shopfront on two sides (possible because the building was situated on a street corner), these premises appear to have been fairly typical of the size of properties advertised for use by traders.

Although the depths of plot sizes could differ, a frontage of somewhere between 17 and 22 feet was the norm among advertisements that appeared in the *Liverpool Advertiser* during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries directed at, or mentioning, traders. In 1772, for example, an advertisement appeared for 'Two good dwelling houses, with large shops in front, on the north side of Dale-street' currently occupied by a barber and a sadler, 'The premises are to the front in Dale-street, eleven yards and a half . . . ', while Sarah Oddie's butcher's shop and house at the corner of Prices Street was advertised in 1792 as 'containing in front to the said street 16 feet, and runs in depth backwards 45 feet and 6 inches'.[35] Advertisements in the Liverpool press in the early nineteenth century depicted similarly proportioned properties: Mr W. Ward, hatter, was described as the current occupant of a house and shop on Lord Street in 1802, 'containing the front 6 yards (or 18 feet), and in depth 20 yards'.[36] William Cowell, who was listed as a coppersmith in the 1800 *Liverpool Directory*, had a house at 25 Mason Street in 1802 that was 18 feet 10 inches wide and 52 feet deep.[37] At the end of our period—and at the upper end of the trading scale—in 1822 a Mr Clay, druggist, was described as occupying a house and shop on the south-west side of Bold Street that was 21 feet wide and 103 feet deep.[38]

The London Building Act of 1774 described any house with a frontage of 25 feet and a depth of up to 37 feet deep as 'second rate', anything 18 feet wide and 27 feet deep as 'third rate', and anything 15 feet by 23 feet as 'fourth rate'. Similarly, Peter Nicholson's *New and Improved Practical Builder* of 1823 gave his first-, second-, third-, and fourth-rate houses frontages of 28, 24, 19, and 16 feet respectively. As in the capital, standard dimensions did not exist in north-west town housing, not only in terms of street frontages, but also, as we have seen, in terms of the depth of plots, which were even more variable (and would have consisted in part of outside space,

[32] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 12 March 1762.
[33] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 3 January 1782.
[34] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 7 February 1782.
[35] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 3 January 1772; *Gore's General Advertiser*, 5 April 1792.
[36] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 8 February 1802.
[37] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 20 December 1802.
[38] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 2 July 1822.

such as a yard, rather than being entirely built over).[39] These differences in size reflect common processes of piecemeal development in north-west towns over many years, and the sizes of traditional burgage plots. It is likely that none of the housing described here was either designed by an architect, or based on plans from any of the number of house building books published from the seventeenth century onwards as guides for both builders and buyers. Instead, smaller houses appear to have been built according to traditional practice, and were representative of a vernacular architecture structurally and formally indebted to timber predecessors that changed only very slowly between the seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries.[40]

The sorts of houses occupied by those in trade in north-west towns appear to have been 'second' or, more frequently, 'third rate' by London standards. A relatively narrow street frontage—resulting from population density and the value of street-facing land[41]—meant that all but the oldest houses were invariably one room wide. Contemporary pictorial representations, coupled with the plot sizes cited in the Liverpool newspaper advertisements and the building footprints shown in some contemporary maps for both Liverpool and Manchester, suggest that these buildings—whatever their age—also tended to be either one or two rooms deep, with some of the more modern examples in particular likely to have had additional one- or two-storey outriggers on the ground floor that were one or even two (very small) rooms deep.[42] Both single- and double-pile houses (one and two rooms deep) were built in a variety of English provincial towns during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[43] One-room houses (with a single room on each floor) seem to have been common in both London and the provinces between the late sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries, particularly for use by craftsmen or shopkeepers,[44] and some older housing in north-west towns that was still in use between 1760 and 1830 was of this type. While many smaller London houses from this period were four or more stories high above street level, in the commercial streets of north-west

[39] Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London*, 283; Neil Burton and Peter Guillery, *Behind the Façade: London House Plans 1660–1840* (Reading, 2006), 11.

[40] Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London*, 51. See also John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing 1815–1985*, 2nd edn (London and New York, 1986), 25, 77; Elizabeth McKellar, *The Birth of Modern London: The Development and Design of the City, 1660–1720* (Manchester, 1999), 138–87.

[41] Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London*, 40. John Summerson made the same point earlier in his *Georgian London* (London, 1945).

[42] Though pre-Ordnance Survey maps are not always reliable, and some caution needs to be exercised when using them for dating purposes or to reveal the outline plans of buildings: see Paul Laxton, 'The Evidence of Richard Horwood's Maps for Residential Building in London 1799–1819', *London Journal*, 24/1 (1999), 1–22.

[43] John Schofield, 'Urban Housing in England, 1400–1600', in David Gaimster and Paul Stamper (eds), *The Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture, 1400–1600* (Oxford, 1997); Roger H. Leech, 'The Prospect from Rugman's Row: The Row House in Late Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century London', *Archaeological Journal*, 153/1 (1996), 201–42; Anthony Quiney, *Town Houses of Medieval Britain* (New Haven and London, 2003).

[44] Leech, 'The Prospect from Rugman's Row', 210–13. Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London*, 40 ff.; John Schofield, *Medieval London Houses* (London, 1995); Quiney, *Town Houses of Medieval Britain*; Jane Grenville, *Medieval Housing* (London and Washington, 1997).

towns it was more common to build dwellings of one or two rooms per floor over two or three floors (excluding any cellars).[45] The six or so main rooms that would result from such an arrangement can be compared to the average of five to eight rooms found by Peter Earle in his examination of London middle-class housing a century earlier. The least wealthy in his sample tended to live in only six rooms and were not sharing their living space with commercial use in the main (though some did live over shops).[46] As we shall see in our examination of the houses of those in trade, it is likely that around a third to two-thirds of all internal space was given over predominantly or entirely to business use. This suggests generally more cramped living conditions than those described by Earle, who examined an often more wealthy 'middle class'.

In common with other English provincial regions, the north-west experienced a series of urban housing booms during the 1780s and 1790s, and again following the end of the Napoleonic Wars.[47] Many trading families occupied houses built a century or so before this, some of which would have been intended originally for rather more wealthy inhabitants. Those buildings constructed as part of the wave of new building from the 1780s, and inhabited by small business families, were largely built with such occupants in mind: though, as we shall see, there were exceptions. These newer buildings tended to follow a similar plan, with narrow street frontages and two main rooms on the ground floor, which were divided either by a central staircase that ran parallel to the street, or by a wall, with the staircase positioned towards the rear of the property (or in smaller properties, just to the side), and opposite the front door. Such a design was not unique to the north-west, and is typical of town housing of this period across Britain. Peter Guillery has noted that the central-staircase layout endured at lower social levels throughout the eighteenth century in London, especially in commercial properties or 'shophouses', though he claims that 'there is no obvious functional or cultural reason for such a link'. Yet he also notes that in smaller houses, especially those under about 18 feet wide, a rear staircase plan would make the back room 'inconveniently narrow'.[48] It may also have been the case that a central staircase in a building used as both a home and a shop/workshop provided the occupants with more separation in the back room from the business and the street,[49] while also allowing for more space at the rear of a

[45] Schofield, *Medieval London Houses*; Quiney, *Town Houses of Medieval Britain*.

[46] Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 210–12. Earle based his findings on inventories and measured wealth according to the same sources. In 1797, it was stated that two small rooms were typically all that a poorer household in Manchester could afford: F. M. Eden, *The State of the Poor*, 3 vols (London, 1797), ii. 356–7; Jacqueline Roberts, *Working Class Housing in Nineteenth-Century Manchester*, 2nd edn (Manchester, 1999), 2; Joseph Aston, *The Manchester Guide* (Manchester, 1804), 276–7.

[47] C. W. Chalkin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England: A Study of the Building Process* (London, 1974), 274–9, 292–5; Ian Goodall and Simon Taylor, 'The Shudehill and Northern Quarter Area of Manchester', English Heritage Architectural Investigation, B/066/2001 (2001); Joseph Aston, *A Picture of Manchester* (Manchester, 1816).

[48] Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London*, 64, 66. Kelsall also noted the predominance of central staircase plan in late-seventeenth-century London housing: A. F. Kelsall, 'The London House Plan in the Later 17th Century', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 8 (1974), 80–91.

[49] We are indebted to Joseph Sharples for this idea.

building. In north-west towns, both central and rear/side staircase forms appear to have been common.

Surviving examples of rear/side staircase plan houses in Manchester can be found at 31–7 Thomas Street, in what is now called the 'northern quarter' of the city centre (Figure 5.5). Number 33, home to the jewellers and pawnbrokers, Alfred Mutter Ltd, since the mid-twentieth century, is the least altered of the four dwellings. What is now 33 Thomas Street, and its immediate neighbours, were constructed in the late 1780s, seemingly with trading occupants in mind, given the form of the upper floor, though with the inclusion of the sort of ornate doorway that might hint at somewhat grander inhabitants. This combination of features was not unusual, and an advertisement in the *Manchester Mercury* in 1800 described a similarly sized 'good house and shop' on Bridge Street as 'strongly built and genteelly finished'.[50] Before 1830, number 33 was numbered 11 Thomas Street, and the row as a whole, 10–13 Thomas Street, with the Bay Horse Inn at number 15.[51] Tracing the occupants of Thomas Street through trade directories and surviving rates books between 1794 and 1820 shows a high turnover of occupants. Number 10 was home at different times to a joiner, a wireworker and pinmaker, and a cabinetmaker and upholsterer. Numbers 12 and 13 were occupied variously by a cotton throwster, a cabinetmaker, two shopkeepers, a flour dealer, a spinner, a tinplate worker, and a cabinetmaker. Number 11 Thomas Street—which was to become number 33—was the address between 1794 and 1795 of John Foden, joiner. By 1798, it was occupied by the clockmaker, Isaac Sherratt, who remained there until at least 1804. By 1811, William Sidney, broker, was in residence, though later that same year the rate books listed a Robert Whitworth occupying the house and shop. In 1815, rates for the same house and shop were paid by Richard Dagnall, whose occupation is not listed, and by 1819, James James, furniture broker, took over the tenancy.[52]

[50] *Manchester Mercury*, 11 February 1800.

[51] Eighteenth-century street numbering generally went up one side of the street and down the other: Gareth Shaw, *British Directories as Sources in Historical Geography* (Norwich, 1982). Modern numbering systems, in which odd numbers are found on one side of the street and even numbers on the other, were adopted at different dates in British cities, but in both Liverpool and Manchester this seems to have taken place during the 1830s: George T. Shaw and Isabella Shaw, *Liverpool's First Directory* (Liverpool, 1907), 18. Although quite complex rules concerning the way in which the new numbering ran were adopted in towns such as Edinburgh (Frank Gent, 'Edinburgh House Numbers', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 27 (1949), 60–6), in both Liverpool and Manchester a basic rule of thumb seems to have been—under both old and new systems—that the numbering of side streets started at the end where the street met a more major thoroughfare. When renumbering commenced in the nineteenth century, houses already numbered '1' seem to have been left unchanged, so that it is possible, using maps and taking into account changes in the number of buildings in a road, to work out the original, pre-1830 house number in the case of houses that are still extant.

[52] *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794); *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1797); *Bancks's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1800); *Pigot's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1811* (Manchester, 1811); *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory for 1815* (Manchester, 1815); *Pigot and Dean's Manchester and Salford Directory, for 1819–20* (Manchester, 1819); Manchester Local Studies Library, Manchester Poor Rating Assessments for 1795, 1798, 1800, 1804, 1811, 1815, 1820: M/9/40/2/50–85.

Figure 5.5. 33 Thomas Street, Manchester, 2013.

Number 33 Thomas Street is a three-storey building, plus cellar. On the upper floor it has the type of distinctive wide, low windows—at both front and rear—that suggest this level was intended to be used as a workshop, and that originally this floor would have housed one large room.[53] There are also signs of a bricked-up taking-in door at the rear of the property on the second floor that would support this theory.[54] The house was built with two rooms on each of its other floors (including the cellar), and a small yard to the rear. This yard led at one time to a communal privy, which could be accessed by the house's inhabitants via a ginnel, or back alleyway, at the end of the yard, which ran behind numbers 31 to 37 (and opened into neighbouring High Street to facilitate waste removal).[55] Water was almost certainly brought into the house via the yard also: either from a household rainwater butt or from a more distant shared communal pump, which would again have been accessed by the ginnel. Not many trading households were likely to boast their own pump, as did that of the Bolton milliners the Misses Fitton, whose property, as already described, was advertised in 1802.[56]

Number 33 Thomas Street in its original form (that is minus an existing outrigger, added sometime during the late twentieth century) was 28 feet deep, and 17 feet 1 inch wide (Figure 5.6). The cellar would originally have had its own entrance from the street (now paved over), and there is evidence that a front window to the cellar was also part of the original design. The existence of an oven or hearth in the front cellar room (and perhaps in the back room also, though now removed) might suggest that it could have been used as living accommodation. However, fragments of brass in the remaining ash in the hearth mean that it was probably used for brazing at one time, an interpretation strengthened by the discovery of scale beams in the cellar rooms. The cellar area could possibly also have contained a kitchen and scullery for the house, as occurred elsewhere, and as is discussed below in the case of Liverpool houses. There is also evidence of a small opening in the front wall that presumably allowed access to a store or coal hole below street level, suggesting that the cellar was used for storage.[57] Obviously, both domestic and commercial use could have occurred at different periods in the

[53] Jacqueline Roberts, 'Provision of Housing for the Working Classes in Manchester between 1780 and 1914—an Historical and Topographical Survey', *Memoirs and Proceedings of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society*, 124 (1984–5), 48–67, pp. 53–4; Burnett, *A Social History of Housing 1815–1985*, 79–82; Anthony Quiney, 'Benevolent Vernacular: Cottages and Workers' Housing', in Neil Burton (ed.), *Georgian Vernacular* (Tonbridge, 1996), 48; University of Manchester Archaeological Unit, '3 & 5 Kelvin Street: Building Survey', unpublished report; Clare Hartwell, *Manchester* (New Haven, 2001), 226–8.

[54] Gordon Browne et al., 'A Report on a Survey on the Artisan's House, 33 Thomas Street, Manchester' (Manchester Regional Industrial Archaeology Society, 2006); Geoffrey Timmins, 'Domestic Weaving Premises in Lancashire: A Contextual Analysis', in P. S. Barnwell, Marilyn Palmer, and Malcolm Airs (eds), *The Vernacular Workshop: From Craft to Industry* (York, 2004), 90–100, p. 95.

[55] Browne et al., 'A Report on a Survey on the Artisan's House, 33 Thomas Street, Manchester'; Burnett, *A Social History of Housing 1815–1985*, 77.

[56] Rosemary Sweet, *The English Town, 1680–1840: Government, Society and Culture* (Harlow, 1999), 87–8.

[57] Browne et al., 'A Report on a Survey on the Artisan's House, 33 Thomas Street, Manchester'. Similar evidence of cellar workshops was found in the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit's

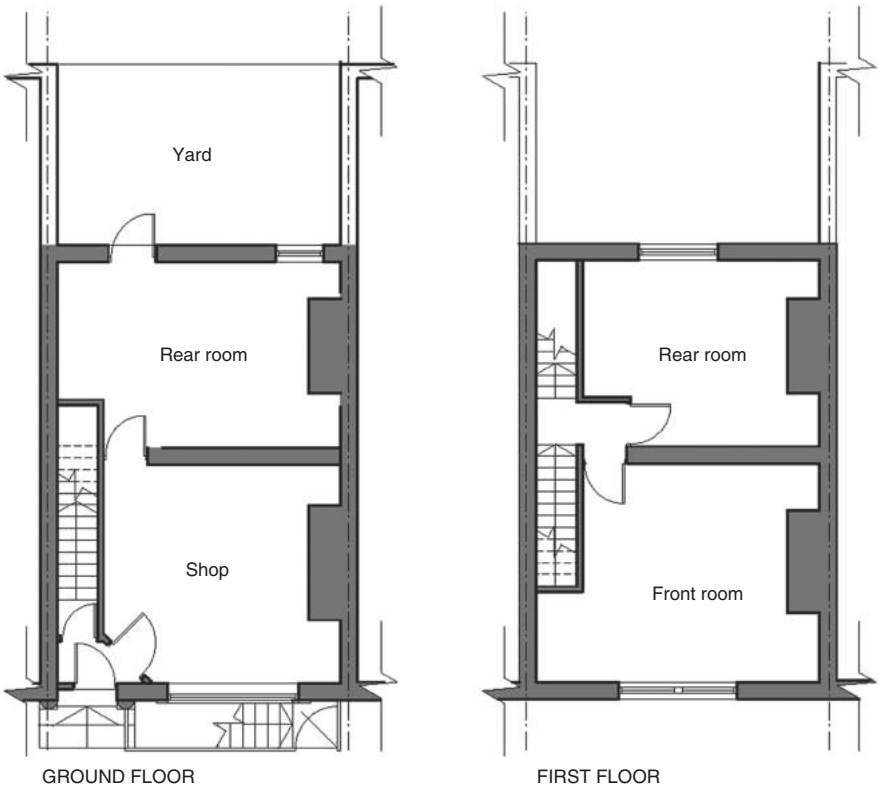

Figure 5.6. Plan of original layout of 33 Thomas Street, Manchester. Drawing by Stephen Leighton based upon a survey by the Manchester Regional Industrial Archaeology Society.

building's history as well as overlapping. There was clearly multiple occupation of the property at certain points during the mid to late nineteenth century, and Manchester, in common with Liverpool, was famous for the scale of its cellar-dwelling populations during this period.[58] Upstairs, on the ground floor, a large shop window appears to have been put in at some point during the early nineteenth century, and probably before 1811, when rates books begin to list both 'house' and 'shop', which suggests that the front room (13ft 1in x 13ft) was used as a shop from this point. The back room on the ground floor was as wide as the front room (13ft 1in.) at one end, though wider in the area behind the stairs (15ft 7in.), which are positioned towards the front of the house. The back room as a whole was less deep than the front (10ft 9in.) and was lit by a rear window (now removed). On the first floor are two rooms, with a full width front room (16ft 5in. x 13ft 1in.), and a smaller back room (12ft 3in. x 12ft 3in.). On the top floor, as has been noted, is

excavation of late-eighteenth and early nineteenth-century housing at Loom Street in Manchester: Richard Gregory, 'Loom Street, Ancoats, Manchester', unpublished report (2007), 71.

[58] Burnett, *A Social History of Housing, 1815–1985*, 58–61.

what was once almost certainly a single workshop room (16ft 5in. x 26ft 3in.), but which was subsequently converted into two rooms.

Number 33 Thomas Street appears to have been built for use as a combined dwelling and workshop, but was soon after made over to retailing as well, with the addition of a shop window on the ground floor. The conversion of residential buildings to suit commercial use was common during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and is often indicated by the presence of later architectural alterations. Bold Street in Liverpool, for example, was largely built during the 1780s and 1790s, and filled with houses larger than most under consideration here, with street frontages of around 21 feet.[59] Around 1815, a series of gothic shopfronts were added to some premises, such as that occupied by James Haddock Robinson, tailor, and illustrated on this trade card (Figure 5.7).[60]

According to James Picton, the nineteenth-century chronicler of Liverpool, while the dwellings on Bold Street were of 'a respectable class' and had been occupied by merchants

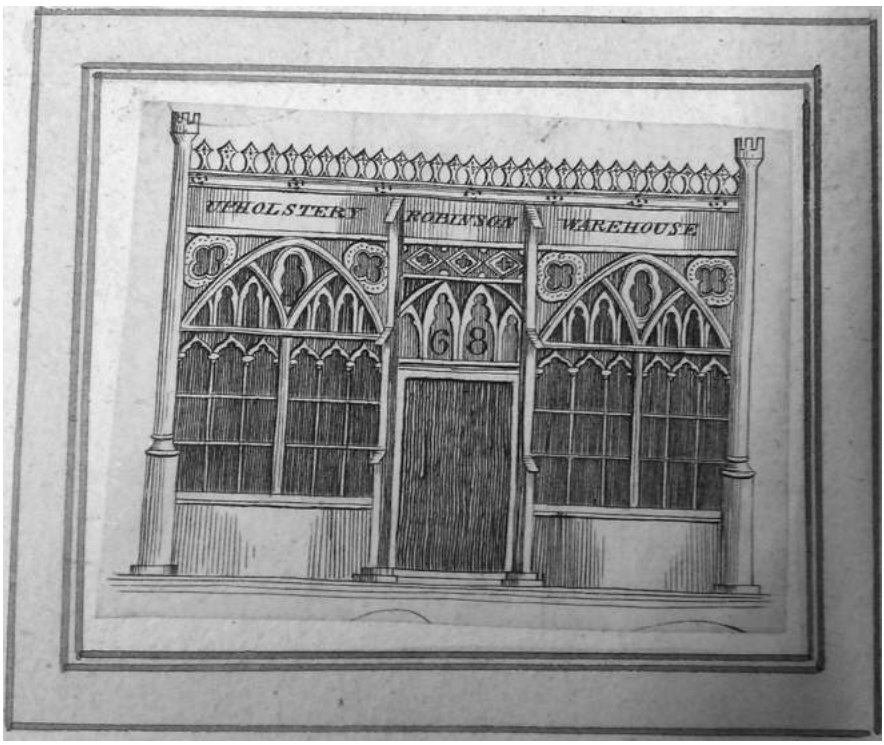

Figure 5.7. Trade card of James Haddock Robinson, tailor at 68 Bold Street, Liverpool, 1815. Liverpool Record Office, Binns Collection, vol. X.

[59] *Liverpool Advertiser*, 2 July 1822.

[60] LivRO, Binns Collection, vol. X, 'Illustrations of the County of Lancashire', fo. 128; *Gore's Liverpool Directory, with its Environs* (Liverpool, 1821).

Figure 5.8. 85 Bold Street, Liverpool, 2013.

when they were first erected, by the early nineteenth century 'all the neighbourhood had been converted into shops' (Figure 5.8).[61] In his *Memorials of Liverpool*, Picton described 'the usual course' by which respectable streets crowded with the best families, gave way to commercial use over time, so that 'the tradesman pushes out the gentleman'.[62]

Other Liverpool streets, such as Dale Street (Figure 5.9), fared less well in commercial terms during this period. As part of the post-war house building revival of 1818–20, a row of five purpose-built shop premises with residential accommodation above was erected here. The building of what is now 87–95 Dale Street coincided with a series of improvements to the thoroughfare, including a programme of street widening.[63] *The Stranger in Liverpool* of 1823 claimed that the improvements of 1819 turned Dale Street from being 'one of the narrowest, dirtiest, and disagreeable streets in the town' into one that was 'throughout the greater part of its length, spacious, clean and respectable'.[64] However, Picton stated

[61] Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, i. 266. See also *Stranger in Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1823), 232.
[62] Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, i. 277.
[63] Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, ii. 123.
[64] *Stranger in Liverpool*, 246.

Figure 5.9. 91 Dale Street, Liverpool, 2007. Photo by Stephen Corbett.

that, soon after 1820, the opening of new streets nearby had an 'unfortunate' impact on Dale Street, as it robbed it of some of the traffic that had previously passed down and it 'never regained its original importance'.[65] What are now 87–95 Dale Street were almost certainly numbered 40–44 when first constructed. Gore's 1821 directory lists Richard Ardern, hatter, at number 41, John Jones, gunmaker, at number 43, and William Morgan, grocer, at number 44.

Now derelict, 87–95 Dale Street are some of the last remaining modest Georgian buildings in Liverpool city centre (though many remain on the outskirts).[66] From their external appearance and size, one might expect each floor of the Dale Street shop houses to be divided into two main rooms (Figure 5.10). However, while this

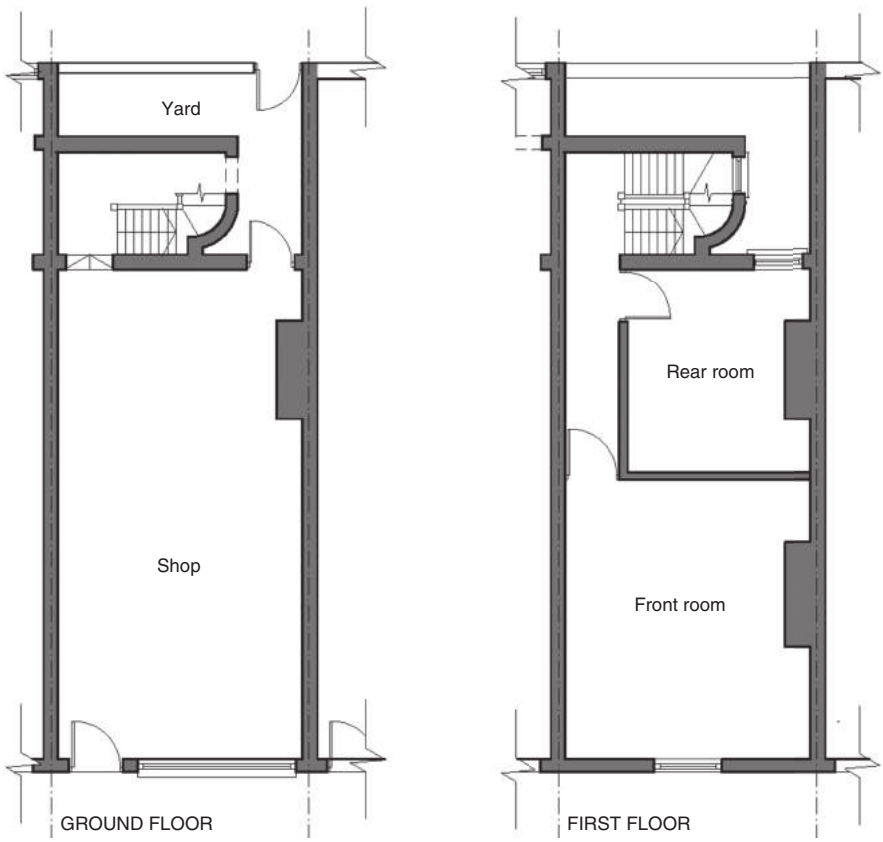

Figure 5.10. Plan of original layout of 89 (41) Dale Street, Liverpool. Drawing by Stephen Leighton, based on a survey by Stephen Corbett.

[65] Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, ii. 123.

[66] The buildings at 87–95 Dale Street were rescued from demolition in 2008 by English Heritage, which deemed them worthy of grade II listing as a rare and unusual survival outside London of modest

is the case on the first and second floors, the ground floors are almost entirely taken up by single large rooms. It is common to find small town houses that have had an internal wall removed some years after they were constructed in order to provide more space for business use, and for retailing in particular (indeed, this is the case at 33 Thomas Street, as has been noted), but in the Dale Street row the architectural evidence suggests that this was how they were originally constructed. In order to make the commercial spaces on the ground floor as large as possible, the Dale Street shop houses had stairs to the upper floors positioned in the outriggers, which is a particularly unusual arrangement. Each of the Dale Street houses had a single ground floor room (16ft 8in. x 30ft) with direct access onto the street through the front door. At the rear of each building is a small outrigger room that houses the staircase, plus a small yard. Cellars would originally have been accessed by the outrigger staircase, and there was a single light well to each cellar on Dale Street, adjacent to the coal chutes. The presence of a fireplace and range in each cellar makes it likely that these rooms were used as 'service areas' for the houses, and contained a kitchen, perhaps a scullery and/or pantry, and coal storage. This was not an unusual arrangement in smaller Liverpool houses built during the opening decades of the nineteenth century.[67] The upper floor plan (for both the first and second floors) consists of a full-width front room (16ft 8in. x 17ft) and a smaller rear room (12ft x 10ft 10in.). There is a single central window to front rooms and a single corner window to rear rooms. The first-floor windows are twice the height of those on the second floor, which makes it likely that the front room was used as some sort of parlour or living room, while other rooms on the upper floors were given over primarily to sleeping or storage.[68] Without more information than buildings alone can provide, however, the use of internal space in the Dale Street shop houses remains speculative.

ROOMS AND THEIR CONTENTS

Early modern historians have long used probate inventories to determine spatial organization, room naming, and the distribution of goods within households—though it has also been pointed out that inventories must to be used with care.[69]

early nineteenth-century 'shop houses'. I am grateful to Sarah Charlesworth of English Heritage for a copy of her listing report on 87–95 Dale Street.

[67] H. C. Morton, 'A Technical Study of Housing in Liverpool, 1760–1938', University of Liverpool M.Arch. thesis (1967), vol. B, pp. 114, 202, 402; vol. C, p. 214.

[68] This section is based on a survey by Stephen Cobbett of Liverpool City Council's Conservation Department and subsequent enquiries by a Council-commissioned team of structural engineers conducted between January 2007 and April 2008. I am grateful to Stephen Cobbett for supplying me with a copy of his report, informing me of later findings, for allowing me to reproduce his photograph of number 91 (taken prior to the long-term boarding-up of the row), and for giving me permission to produce floor plans based on his original drawings.

[69] For a summary of these surveys before 2000, see Tom Arkell, 'Interpreting Probate Inventories,' in Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans, and Nigel Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2000), 89–92.

Georgio Riello, for example, has shown some of the pitfalls of the inventory for the historical researcher, most notably the subjectivity of the inventory-maker and the frequent absence of non-valuable items from these lists.[70] Far fewer inventories survive for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as the custom of exhibiting inventories in court and retaining them in the administrative records, if not of making inventories themselves, declined from the 1720s.[71] However, inventories were often preserved in Cause papers relating to disputed wills.[72] This means that a relatively small number do survive for individuals in trade in north-west towns in the second half of the eighteenth century. While the material is too scarce for a large-scale survey, there is enough for small-scale, qualitative analysis.[73] Many inventories, focusing on what had been sold off to pay off the deceased's debts and the funeral expenses, do not in fact list spaces in the home, simply providing a list of goods. However, a smaller number of appraisers listed the goods of the deceased within certain spaces in the house, and these are more useful to us in suggesting how domestic space was ordered.

An inventory is not necessarily a reliable indicator of all spaces within a house, as only those rooms that contained goods of significant value would have been recorded.[74] However, the length of the lists of rooms in our sample, and the fact that small rooms with only one or two minor possessions are often included, suggests that we can assume that these lists often do provide a reasonable indication of the range of spatial divisions within the home. A second problem arising from the nature of the sources is that the appraisers themselves may not have been familiar with the everyday use of these rooms, and so may not have used the name the occupants used for the room, or may have misnamed the space.[75] In some cases, separate expert appraisers assessed the business stock and the household goods, and it is not clear how well these appraisers knew the household and business in question. Again, however, while it is important to bear this in mind when considering the inventory evidence, the goods placed in these rooms often give some indication of the function of the space, allowing us to draw tentative conclusions about its use.

[70] Giorgio Riello, '"Things Seen and Unseen": Inventories and the Representation of the Domestic Interior in Early Modern Europe', unpublished paper (2009), 19, 31. Quoted with the author's permission. See also Mark Overton et al., *Production and Consumption in English Households, 1600–1750* (London and New York, 2004), 14–18; John Bedell, 'Archaeology and Probate Inventories in the Study of Eighteenth-Century Life', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History,* 31/2 (2000), 223–45, pp. 239–40.

[71] Jeff Cox and Nancy Cox, 'Probate 1500–1800: A System in Transition,' in Arkell, Evans, and Goose (eds), *When Death Do Us Part*, 27; John S. Moore, 'Probate Inventories: Problems and Prospects,' in Philip Riden (ed.), *Probate Records and the Local Community* (Gloucester, 1985), 27. Riello, 'Things Seen and Unseen', 37–44.

[72] Moore, 'Probate Inventories', 17.

[73] Margaret Ponsonby, 'Ideals, Reality and Meaning: Homemaking in England in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Design History*, 16/3 (2003), 201–14, p. 204.

[74] Overton et al., *Production and Consumption in English Households, 1600–1750*, 15. Riello, 'Things Seen and Unseen', 31.

[75] Although Riello, on the basis of a sample of late-seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century London inventories, argues that the appraiser might often be local, and familiar with the social and cultural milieu of the home in question: Riello, 'Things Seen and Unseen', 21.

One final point to make about the household possessions of those in trade is that using inventories, which were of course produced at the end of an owner's life, is likely to paint a picture of relative affluence, compared to earlier on in their life cycle. The diary and memoir of the Manchester grocer George Heywood describes the relatively meagre furnishings that he and his partner possessed when they first set up in business together in 1815. Their style of living, and the comforts that they experienced at this point, were almost certainly more modest than Heywood enjoyed in later life. Heywood recounted his visits to a series of sales and auctions in 1815 to buy furniture, and detailed his organization of builders to fit grates, scour floors, and carry out repairs (all the while complaining that his partner did little to help). Though he and Roberts only had one bed between them, Heywood appears to have concentrated his efforts on buying fire grates, chairs, and a carpet. The house was clearly not luxurious, since Heywood noted that 'we have little to come to, nothing but naked walls upstairs and one bed',[76] so that the chairs and carpet seem to have been destined for downstairs. Once George decided to marry in the following year, he demonstrated renewed excitement in buying additional furniture—although in much more modest quantities than other newly weds.[77] At this point he purchased another bed and commented: 'When we get a quilt we shall want nothing more buying for the house.'[78]

It is unlikely that Heywood listed all his domestic possessions in his diary, particularly those that were less valuable than the purchases he proudly detailed, and, as his wealth increased over time (as his diary indicates it did), and his wife presumably began to influence purchasing decisions, it is almost certain that his home would have become better appointed.[79] However, in the early years of his career, Heywood appears to have lived less luxuriously than others in trade whose possessions can be found listed in inventories and wills, or being advertised for sale after their death,[80] and indeed he seems to have lived less well than most of the 'plebeian' lodgers of eighteenth-century London described by John Styles.[81] George Heywood's meagre furnishings can be explained by his position as a young man without an inheritance, who was making his own way in the world, having lived since boyhood in the houses of his employers. By contrast, those brought up in trading households might benefit from the furnishings and domestic comforts acquired by their parents. This was true for the Liverpool baker's son John Coleman, who travelled away from home as a young man on a trip to Chester in the

[76] Heywood, fo. 76.

[77] Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*: *At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 2009), 16–18.

[78] Heywood, fo. 91.

[79] Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, chs 3, 4.

[80] See, e.g., the advertisement for the sale of the furniture and shop fittings of John Garnett, listed in the 1821 directory as a linen draper and silk mercer of 101 Bold Street: *Liverpool Advertiser*, 2 July 1822.

[81] John Styles, 'Lodging at the Old Bailey: Lodgings and their Furnishings in Eighteenth-Century London', in John Styles and Amanda Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700–1830* (New Haven and London, 2006), 61–80. Though see his descriptions of the most squalid dwellings on p. 76.

early 1760s with some companions, all of whom lodged for a night with a rural Sexton in the village of Eastham. Here Coleman complained of their bedchamber being 'the miserablist room with more miserable furniture', which were both filthy and damp:

> Our beds were chaff, no hangings, a black tattered oil rug not half so pleasing to the eye as a horse-cloth, a pair of sheets, that [had] neither seen soap or water for 7 years, a chaff bolster but no pillow, two old chairs that had been decent two centuries ago but the worms had made such inroads into their whole frame as to render them hazardous of using, as proved in the sequel for one of them broke down, the instant it was sat on, to the no small entertainment of us all. We had only one chamber utensil for both beds, and that however frequent it might have been emptied, most certainly never had been rinsed with pure elemental fluid since its formation, in course, your imagination will paint to you the effluvia that arose from its use.

Indeed, Coleman claims the room became so damp once it began to rain that he and his 'bedfellow' were forced to leave for the good of their health (though this does not convincingly explain why they then had to break into the local church and ring the bells in order to play a joke on the locals). Clearly, though, the implication of his story is that his usual accommodation—sharing a house with his parents and six siblings in Liverpool—had accustomed him to much higher levels of comfort, cleanliness, and furnishing.

Coleman's and Heywood's detailed accounts of the house contents and furnishing that they experienced as young men are rare among those in trade. This means that, despite the fact that inventories show only what an individual owned at the end of his or her life, and all the caveats concerning the use of inventories linked to their production, accuracy, and the relatively small number that have survived for the eighteenth century onwards, they remain some of the most detailed sources available for the contents and the division of space within the trading home. Thus, while their limitations must be remembered when we use and analyse inventories, they are still well worth investigation. Evidence from north-west inventories show that most small business households appear to have made a distinction between spaces for work related to business, and spaces for rest, leisure, and household work within the home. Such distinctions were often a practical necessity. Small businesses that relied on passing custom needed a separate shop floor where trade could take place. Thus, even in the smallest premises, the shop was essential. For example, the two inventories we have located that apparently show the smallest homes, those of the Manchester chapman James Barlow in 1759 and the Manchester whitesmith Robert Barlow (no apparent relation) in 1772, clearly mark out a shop floor.[82] James Barlow's shop stocked a variety of goods acquired from his trade, including barrels of cider, tea, and other foodstuffs and a large quantity of china and glassware, the most expensive items on the inventory, valued at a total of

[82] LRO, WCW, Inventory of Robert Barlow, whitesmith, Manchester (1772); Inventory of James Barlow, chapman, Manchester (1759). Chapmen were not necessarily travelling tradesmen in this period, and the term could be used to denote simply one who buys and sells: *Oxford English Dictionary* <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/30593?redirectedFrom=chapman#eid> (accessed 6 July 2016).

£130. From the seventeenth century, shopkeepers invested substantial funds in shop decoration and ornament.[83] Barlow's shop was no exception, and was smartly kitted out with 'counters two glass drawers and the shelves', valued at £5, more than double the value of any single item of furniture in the rest of the house. The cellar was also stuffed full of goods and storage materials for Barlow's trade, including five casks of cider, ten packs of cider, bottles, twenty empty casks, seven empty china boxes, six wine measures, odd tubs, baskets, shelves, and scales. A few items of furniture were also listed: a broken screen, two tables, one chair, and a stool. But it is clear that the majority of the space was devoted to storing the chapman's wares, rather than everyday living.

The importance of the shop to the livelihood of these families meant that business took precedence over domesticity in terms of allocating space. Jon Stobart has recently argued that the 'squeezing' of living space to accommodate the display and storage of shop goods was a fairly common experience among retailers in the first part of the eighteenth century.[84] This seems to have continued to be the norm for small retailers in the north-west later in the century. James Barlow's home probably followed a single room plan over four storeys (including cellar). Of the four rooms listed, two were devoted to business needs, the shop and the cellar, leaving Barlow and his wife, Ann, two rooms to live in: 'the highmost chamber' and 'the large chamber'. The couples' domestic possessions and those of any children or servants were thus crammed into these two rooms. The 'highmost chamber', presumably a garret at the top of the house, where servants or children may have slept, was fairly full with two sets of bedding, one large and one small set of bedstocks, a set of drawers, and six chairs. However, it was the 'large chamber' that seems to have hosted most of the day-to-day activities of this family, as its contents suggest that it functioned as bedroom, dining room, parlour, and kitchen. The room included the most elaborate bed in the house—a set of bedstocks with hangings—but also cooking equipment, tea kettles and saucepans, five tables of different kinds, and a number of chairs and stools. The family's modest valuables were also listed here in the inventory, and comprised an empty spice box, nine pictures, a looking glass, and a clock and case, which, valued at £3 10*s*., was the most expensive item in the room.

Robert Barlow's whitesmith's shop seems to have been run by Barlow and his spinster daughter Hannah, who under Barlow's will was to receive 'my shop goods, hardware and other goods utensils and materials in my hardware business for her own proper and separate use'.[85] The Barlow whitesmith shop was well stocked with a plethora of white goods including thimbles, hinges, candlesticks, spindles, and hammers. With only three rooms, Robert Barlow's home was even smaller than James Barlow's. The house was divided into 'shop', 'house', and 'parlour', and, again, probably followed a single-room plan. The size of the house, and the need to

[83] Jon Stobart, 'Accommodating the Shop: The Commercial Use of Domestic Space in English Provincial Towns, *c*.1660–1740,' *Città e storia*, 2 (2007), 351–63, p. 354.

[84] Stobart, 'Accommodating the Shop,' 351–63.

[85] LRO, WCW, Will of Robert Barlow, whitesmith, Manchester (1772).

accommodate Robert Barlow and Hannah Barlow separately, meant that both the 'house' and the 'parlour' were used for sleeping in addition to other activities, although some efforts may have been made to separate this, as the bed in the 'house' room could have been placed behind a screen, which was also listed in the inventory as 'a partition'. Aside from the bed, which, valued at £1 3*s.*, was the most valuable piece of furniture, the 'parlour' appears to have been rather meagre, with a chest of drawers and a few chairs. The 'house', meanwhile, seems to have been the site for most household activities and contained an oven and cooking equipment, a couch, tables, and many chairs, and a looking glass, the household's sole ornament.[86] Thus, in these very small business households, we can see how the space available for domestic activities was limited by the requirements of trade.

The separation of work and living also depended on the nature of the household business. Certain small businesses, such as chandlers and hatters, required not only a shop, but also considerable space for the production of goods. For example, the Liverpool home of the grocer and chandler Thomas Dickinson, which was appraised in 1764, was of a good size and contained eleven rooms in addition to a warehouse.[87] The majority of rooms in the house appear to have been devoted to his trades. These included a main shop for customers, the 'dipping shop', 'molding rooms', and the 'room over the grocer's parlour', which included fixtures, utensils, and 'a pair of swifts and winding wheels', presumably for candle production. A warehouse, probably part of the main house, as it appears with other rooms before the shop on the inventory, was also listed, along with 'the room at stairs head', which appears to have been used for storage. Thus, although this was a large house, only six rooms were apparently devoted to domestic activity, under half of the space in the household as a whole. In the household of Daniel Higham, a hatmaker of Stockport, whose goods were appraised in 1798, 'household goods and furniture' appear as being of minor importance within the property of the household and were confined to a single list at the end of the inventory.[88] The inventory was dominated by a list of stock and tools and listed rooms for hatmaking rather than domestic use, including the 'stuff room', 'the warehouse room', and 'due house & stiffening & shop'. The Higham house may have contained more rooms dedicated to domestic use than the inventory suggests, but it is unlikely that this household's goods, which included only two beds, two tables, six chairs, a child's chair, and a sofa, plus kitchenware, furnished more than two or three rooms. The lion's share of this home was clearly given over to the production of hats.

Separation between home and work was perhaps most unlikely when the family business was itself concerned with domestic provision. The contents of an inn kept by Jonathan Rushton and his wife Mary, in Macclesfield, were appraised shortly after Rushton's death in 1771.[89] The Rushton inn was quite a small establishment, comprising seven rooms, including a 'brew house' and a cellar, which were used to

[86] LRO, WCW, Inventory of Robert Barlow, whitesmith, Manchester (1772).
[87] LRO, WCW, Inventory of William Dickinson, grocer/chandler, Liverpool (1766).
[88] CCALS, WS, Inventory of Daniel Higham, Hatmaker, Stockport (1798).
[89] CCALS, WC, Inventory of Jonathan Rushton, innkeeper, Macclesfield (1771).

prepare and store liquor for consumption in the inn. The 'house place', which was equipped with 'one pair of barrs', quart and pint measures and eight chairs and two stools, was almost certainly used for the public consumption of liquor. The 'parlour', which boasted thirteen chairs and was nicely decorated with a looking glass, maps, and a series of tables, was probably a more genteel public space. The remaining three rooms all contained beds and bedding, including the staircase, suggesting that space within the house was stretched to its maximum, probably to accommodate paying overnight guests in addition to the master, mistress, and any servants or children. It is not clear from this inventory how the domestic life of the family was separated from the daily business of the inn, if at all. The 'room over the parlour', which included a bedstock and hangings, chest of drawers and chest, and a table and seven chairs, might have afforded some privacy for the family away from the bustle downstairs. Equally, however, this well-furnished room may have been rented out to customers, while the landlord and his wife bedded down in the stairwell.

Larger inns had more scope for separate family space. William Duckworth's inn in Manchester was appraised shortly after his death in 1798.[90] The Duckworth inn contained ten rooms, and brewing does not seem to have been conducted on site; moreover, Duckworth rented a separate warehouse room that provided additional storage. This prosperous establishment included a 'barr', 'parlour', 'house', and 'front parlour', in addition to a kitchen and liquor cellar that were used for service purposes. A number of sleeping spaces were listed, including a 'servants room', a 'front chamber', '1st lodging room', and a 'garrett' furnished with a bedstead and oak table. The appraiser's distinction of the second bedroom as the first lodging room suggests that the 'front chamber' was the territory of William Duckworth and his wife, Elizabeth. Smartly furnished, with four window curtains, a couch chair, and a cushion bed, the room may have allowed the innkeeper and his wife a separate space for family entertaining, as it included twelve chairs and four tin candlesticks. Another Macclesfield inn, belonging to John Clulow, was appraised in 1767. The inn had seven rooms: two downstairs public rooms—'first in the house' and a 'little parlour'—a brewhouse that was also used for storage, and then four rooms available to be used as bedrooms. One of these rooms, the 'room over the houseplace', was significantly better furnished than the others and included, in addition to bedstocks and bedding, fifteen chairs, and some decoration, including a map, a looking glass, and several small pictures. The concentration of goods and decoration in this space again suggests that this one room may have been set aside for the use of the landlord and his family.

The division between home and work may also have been expressed through room naming. The material surveyed here suggests that appraisers in the north-west tended to use the term 'house', 'house place', or 'house part' to describe the main living room in the house. Weatherill notes that, before 1760, house place, house part, or hall were commonly used to describe the first room in small English

[90] LRO, WCW, Inventory of William Duckworth, innkeeper, Manchester (1798).

households.[91] Sara Pennell suggests that the naming of the 'house place' was subject to regional variation, elsewhere being called a fire house, bodystead, or hearth room.[92] North-western trading families appear to have shared room-naming practices with rural households in the same area, as the term houseplace or fire house was widely used to describe the main heated room in farmhouses in the Lake District before 1750 and continued to be used after that in some northern rural areas.[93] By the second half of the eighteenth century in most regions, and in some places even earlier, the kitchen seems to have replaced the house place.[94] However, our small group of inventories suggests that the older name was still used by north-western trading households into the 1790s. This room was often listed first on an inventory, and was usually the front room on the ground floor unless the house contained a shop, but this was not always the case, suggesting that this was a space with a distinct identity, and the use of this name was not simply an indication of the position of the room in the house.

Ponsonby argues that the demise of the house place elsewhere, and its replacement with parlours and dining rooms as the main living spaces in middle-class homes, was driven by the desire to appear genteel.[95] Thus, in middle-class London homes of the period, it was common for a room to be singled out as a 'dining room'.[96] However, none of the inventories we have examined for the north-west uses this term (though, as we have seen, other sources sometimes do). Though the houses we look at are often more modest than the London examples cited, this may also be another example of the well-established indifference of Lancashire consumers to London trends.[97] However, it is difficult to establish this kind of meaning from the inventory: the repeated use of the term may simply be a quirk of the appraisers. It is tempting to speculate that house place—which overtly marks out the room as part of the household, in contrast to spaces within the house for other kinds of work such as shops, cellars, or brewing houses—was particularly apt

[91] Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660–1760* (London and New York, 1996), 10.

[92] Sara Pennell, '"Pots and Pans History": The Material Culture of the Kitchen in Early Modern England,' *Journal of Design History*, 11/3 (1998), 201–16, p. 202. Priestly and Corfield's study of Norwich houses puts the latest use of the term fire house as 1684: Ursula Priestley and Penelope Corfield, 'Rooms and Room Use in Norwich, 1580–1730', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 16 (1982), 93–123, p. 103.

[93] Susan Denyer, *Traditional Buildings and Life in the Lake District* (London, 1991), 18; Margaret Ponsonby, *Stories from Home: English Domestic Interiors, 1750–1850* (Aldershot, 2007), 105, 136.

[94] Priestley and Corfield, 'Rooms and Room Use', 106; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, 150; Ponsonby, *Stories from Home*, 105; Guillery's analysis of comparable small business homes in London, in this case the homes of affluent weavers in Spitalfields, also suggests that the term kitchen was used here: Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London*, 100. However, Stobart's analysis of shopkeeping homes in the early eighteenth century suggests that this term was still in common use in these homes: Stobart, 'Accommodating the Shop', 359, 358, 362.

[95] Ponsonby, *Stories from Home*, 13.

[96] Of a sample of forty middle-class London inventories, produced between 1740 and 1810, fourteen inventories listed dining rooms: Jane Hamlett, Geffrye Museum Report, 5, 22 (2004) (unpublished research report held by the Geffrye Museum, quoted with its permission).

[97] Amanda Vickery, 'Women and the World of Goods: A Lancashire Consumer and her Possessions 1751–81', in J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), 274–301; Ponsonby, *Stories from Home*, 30.

in these small business homes because of the need to distinguish between business and household space. Yet it is worth noting that house place is clearly used to describe public rooms in inns, and is also used in inventories of houses where work does not take place on the premises.[98]

The contents of the house place suggest that this room was not simply a northern version of the dining room. Rather, its mixed contents suggest that its use lay somewhere between the modern entrance hall, contemporary dining rooms, and the older, medieval version of the hall. Rural house places were the centre of main daytime domestic activities, and might have been the only heated room in the house.[99] Pennell argues that the fireplace located here was the structure at the centre of the early modern household.[100] Urban house places played a similar central function in the life of the household. In Elizabeth Gaskell's novel *Mary Barton*, visitors to the working-class Barton family's modest Manchester home were taken into the 'house-place', which was centred around a hearth, and was 'almost crammed with furniture', including a table and chairs, a dresser, corner table, tea caddy and tea tray, and a cupboard containing crockery and glass.[101] Eighteenth-century inventories paint a similar picture. For example, the 'house' in the home of Thomas Bate, a Warrington grocer, whose goods were appraised in 1761, included a number of practical items that were vital to the day-to-day functioning of the family, including an eight-day clock, a dresser and tables, basic cooking equipment such as a coffee pot and cheese toaster, a knife box, drinking glasses, and a cradle.[102] Similarly, the 'house' belonging to Thomas Dickinson, the grocer and chandler of Liverpool whose home was inventoried in 1764, included spits, an oak table and chairs, a smoothing iron, an eight-day clock, an oak desk, a mahogany table, a looking glass, and a pewter coffee pot.[103] The contents of these rooms suggest they were used for cooking, eating meals, and some everyday household tasks. In other words, the house place was the heart of domestic activity in these trading homes. The family clock would usually be found in the house place, suggesting that this was where most time was spent.[104] The positioning of the clock here was also, perhaps, a precursor of the grandfather clock in the modern hall, the implication being that time is measured when we enter or leave the house. As many of these small houses did not have corridors, and the house place was often on the ground floor, this would also have been the first room that a visitor would have entered.

In more upmarket homes, the 'house' was also important. While parlours were the showpieces of homes elsewhere, for trading families in the north-west the evidence from inventories suggests that more often the 'house' took centre stage, even when another room was designated as a parlour. The home of Liverpool joiner Edward Jones (d. 1765) had at least two major rooms, the 'house' and 'middle

[98] LRO, WCW, Inventory of George Cross, shipwright, Liverpool (1769).
[99] Denyer, *Traditional Buildings*, 18–19.
[100] Pennell, 'Pots and Pans History', 202.
[101] Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton*, ed. Alan Shelston (1848; London, 1966), 14–18.
[102] LRO, WCW, Inventory of Thomas Bate, grocer, Warrington (1761).
[103] LRO, WCW, Inventory of Thomas Dickinson, grocer/chandler, Liverpool (1766).
[104] Pennell also notes the high incidence of clocks in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Westmorland: Pennell, 'Pots and Pans History', 205.

room'.[105] The 'house' appears to have been used as a kitchen but was furnished impressively. Guests could pull up a 'walnut chair', at the 'walnut snap table', perhaps admiring the 'clock and case', 'looking glass', 'mahogany corner cupboard', and 'small nest of drawers'. The household's stock of decorative goods was clustered here, including a set of 'small glass pictures'. There were four major rooms—the 'house', 'parlour', 'room over parlour' and 'room over house'—in the house of Liverpool bricklayer Richard Millett, who died in 1757 and whom we first met in Chapter 3, (along with Mary Lawrenson and Richard Miller) when his daughters were battling over his estate.[106] The Millett 'house' contained kitchen goods as well as chairs and tables and a Bible. The 'house' rather than the 'parlour' appears the best-decorated room, boasting '10 small pictures and a Buck head with horns'. The home of Mary Lawrenson, who died in 1772, the widow of Thomas Lawrenson, a Liverpool engraver, had at least five rooms: a 'house', a 'kitchen', as well as three upstairs rooms that contained beds.[107] While Mary Lawrenson had a separate kitchen, again the best goods—including six oak chairs, a mahogany table, reading table, and looking glass—were all in the 'house'. The 'house' was also one of the only two rooms in the Lawrenson home to display a fashionable new 'window curtain'.[108] The inventory noted, however, that 'this was cut for Nancy for a gown', suggesting that decoration had recently been sacrificed to the household's more basic needs (the family income probably fell after the death of Thomas). The most impressive 'house' we have found was located in the home of Manchester druggist Richard Miller.[109] The Miller home was quite extensive, as it included seven rooms: a house, 'lobbey', kitchen, 'celler', front room, back room, and garret. The household apparently had enough space to devote certain rooms to sleeping—the back chamber and garret contained bedstocks, but a lack of chairs suggests that the main social spaces were elsewhere. The 'house' contained, among other things, a looking glass, an oil painting and a fire screen, a number of silver tankards, brass candlesticks and a quantity of china, as well as six cushions and window curtains (which by the 1790s were more widespread).

We have found very little evidence of particular rooms being used for both business and domestic use, and some studies have suggested that spaces for commercial and domestic use were increasingly differentiated in English housing by as early as the sixteenth century.[110] Yet the mixing of commercial and living

[105] LRO, WCW, Inventory of Edward Jones (died 1765, probate disputed 1767).

[106] LRO, Disputed will of Richard Millett (1763); Inventory of Richard Millett (1764).

[107] LRO, WCW, Inventory of Mary Lawrenson (1772).

[108] Called 'window curtains' to distinguish them from bed curtains, which was the primary meaning of the word 'curtain' in these inventories. John Gloag notes that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the term 'curtain' was used interchangeably with 'hanging': John Gloag, *John Gloag's Dictionary of Furniture* (London, 1969), 280. Weatherill suggests that before 1760 window curtains were rare. There were twice as many in London as elsewhere, although outside the capital they were more likely to be found in the homes of lesser tradesmen than yeomen: Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour,* 7–8, 50, 177.

[109] LRO, Disputed will of Richard Miller (1795); Inventory of Richard Miller (1795).

[110] Schofield, *Medieval London Houses*; Schofield, 'Urban Housing in England, 1400–1600'; Brown, 'Continuity and Change in the Urban House'.

space on the same floors, and the different ways in which space was organized and used in different houses that we did uncover, suggests that the distinction between the residential and the commercial was not necessarily clear-cut. Though practices of room naming seem to suggest that those in trade tried to distinguish between spaces for business and domestic use, practical considerations, and specifically overcrowding, may have outweighed such desires on occasion, which is probably the reason that members of the Rushton household slept on the stairwell, and is certainly why individual living spaces were so often utilized for a variety of purposes: such as sitting, eating, and sleeping. Stobart has recently noted that, in the homes of early eighteenth-century retailers, parlours and living rooms might be called upon to supply storage space for shop goods,[111] and William Stout's diary describes him bedding down in the shop as an apprentice grocer and ironmonger in late-seventeenth-century Lancaster.[112] It is likely that such practices happened on occasion in the homes that we have looked at here. Indeed, as we shall see in Chapter 6, the Liverpool apothecary's assistant Joshua Dixon used to retire in the evenings to the counting house, not to work, but as a place to sit—illustrating that mixed domestic and business use were not unheard of later in the eighteenth century, even in the house of a relatively well-off tradesman, though it is worth noting the temporal division that dictated the room's use as a place of work during the day, and a place to rest in the evenings only.

While households might have tried to keep rooms designated as either living or commercial space, little attempt appears to have been made to separate different floors of a house in the same way. An advertisement that appeared in the *Manchester Mercury* in 1802, for example, illustrates this clearly. Unusually for a property advert in a Manchester paper, the exact dimensions of each room were given, which, along with the detailed information on layout provided, gives us a good idea of the way in which 'The MESSUAGE or DWELLING HOUSE, SHOP and WAREHOUSING over the same' in Little Underbank in Stockport had been used by its previous occupant, the grocer Joel Beswick (Figure 5.11). The house, which was described as 'very eligible for a Grocer, Linen Draper, or any other Business', was not only said to be roomy, but was situated on 'one of the most public streets in Stockport . . . the great road leading through Stockport and London'. It boasted a shop, cellar, warehouses, counting house, lodging rooms, kitchen, pantry, scullery, candle house, tallow chamber, and four other (unnamed) rooms on the upper floors.[113]

What is notable about this dwelling, and the way in which it was described, is that the rooms devoted to business are found on every floor, with a shop and counting shop on the ground floor, candle house on the first floor, and tallow chamber on the second, alongside what were presumably domestic spaces on the upper two floors. At each level, the rooms devoted to commercial use were the

[111] Stobart, 'Accommodating the Shop', 358.

[112] *The Autobiography of William Stout of Lancaster, 1665–1752*, ed. J. D. Marshall (Manchester, 1967), 75, 80. See also Priestley and Corfield, 'Rooms and Room Use'; Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London', 228–9.

[113] *Manchester Mercury*, 22 June 1802.

Figure 5.11. 20 Little Underbank, Stockport, 2013. This house is likely to be of the type described in the *Manchester Mercury*, 22 June 1802, although the individual building cannot be identified. Little Underbank still consists mostly of small buildings of turn-of-the-century construction that would fit this description.

largest and appear to have been positioned at the front of the house. This fits with the assertions of historians such as Lorna Weatherill and Bob Morris that many homes used for both business and domesticity were often divided into front and back—with a public area for the pursuit of sociability and business activities at the front, and a private area for domestic work and more intimate family relations at the back,[114] though the division between 'public' and 'private' was unlikely to have

[114] Weatherill, however, does not give a clear idea of how 'front' and 'back were organized, as it is not possible to read this from inventories, although it is suggested that chambers ('backstage areas') were often found on the upper floors: Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, 11. I am grateful to Bob Morris for his information on this subject regarding Leeds. See also R. J. Morris, 'The Middle-Class and the Property Cycle during the Industrial Revolution', in T. C. Smout (ed.), *The Search for Wealth and Stability: Essays in Economic and Social History presented to M. W. Flinn* (Bristol, 1979), 91–113; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, 'The Architecture of Public and Private Life: English Middle Class Society in a Provincial Town, 1780–1850', in D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (eds), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983), 327–45, p. 331.

been so clear cut. Despite the advertisement for the Little Underbank building describing 'warehousing over' the house and shop, the detailed description of rooms provided, coupled with the survival of many turn-of-the-century houses on the street with which comparisons can be made, makes it likely that the 'warerooms' were found in the cellar.

Using the upper floors for business was not unusual, though, as we have seen in the case of workshop houses, and in an advertisement in the 1766 *Liverpool Advertiser* for 'a new house, warehouse and stable on the north side of Cable Street, of eight by 7½ yards', which was described as comprising 'a grocer's shop, parlour backwards, good kitchen, large lead cistern, cellared, two large rooms on the second floor, three on the third floor, with a warehouse over the whole premises on the fourth floor'.[115] The warehouses mentioned in property adverts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries often seemed to have been different buildings,[116] but 'warehouses' and 'warerooms' were also found under the same roof as a shop, workshop, and family dwelling. John Schofield has noted how the term 'warehouse' was used in seventeenth-century London to signify something different from a storehouse: 'It may have been a particular room required by drapers and other people of the cloth trade, literally to house their wares,' he notes, and could be found on the ground or upper floors of buildings. Cellars were also commonly used for storage in Schofield's study, which was also evident in some north-western houses.[117] In her study of shop architecture, Kathryn Morrison describes warerooms as show rooms for goods 'quite separate from the area to the front of the ground floor where sales were processed', though the examples she gives were for relatively grand establishments, and much larger than those discussed here.[118]

Although the financial needs of the business had to come first, as we have seen, those in trade did not eschew domestic possessions. During the eighteenth century the middling sort, and those of other social groups, acquired an increasing number of domestic things. Often, these goods were linked to specific social practices such as tea drinking.[119] Historians have associated the arrival of new material goods,

[115] Cited in Chalkin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England*, 210–11.

[116] See, e.g., a 1782 advert in the *Liverpool Advertiser* for the sale of properties belonging to the bankrupt grocer Isaac Bispham. Bispham appeared in both the 1766 and the 1781 trade directories running a business in Ranelagh Street (number 41 in 1781). The advert describes a 'good new erected Warehouse, on the east side of a passage leading from Ranelagh-street to Lawton-street, in Liverpool, containing to the front thereof eight yards, or thereabout, and running in depth backwards ten yards, or thereabout . . . ', in addition to 'the beneficial interest of and in the Dwellinghouse, Shop and Premises of the said Isaac Bispham, in Ranelagh-street aforesaid, and of the house adjacent thereto, now occupied by Mr Edward Myers'. See also Colum Giles and Bob Hawkins, *Warehouses of Empire: Liverpool's Historic Warehouses* (London, 2004).

[117] Schofield, *Medieval London Houses*, 73–81; Morton, 'A Technical Study of Housing in Liverpool 1760–1938', vol. C, p. 212. See, e.g., advert for shop with dry cellars in *Gore's General Advertiser*, 9 February 1792.

[118] Kathryn Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping: An Architectural History* (New Haven and London, 2003), 37.

[119] Weatherill notes that there was a rapid expansion in hot drinks utensils between 1675 and 1715: Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, 31.

such as chinaware, with the development of 'polite' sociability.[120] Decorative goods such as mirrors, chests of drawers, and upholstered furniture were also increasingly common from the early eighteenth century, although we cannot be certain that these were intended to denote gentility.[121] Of course, polite social practices cannot be read directly from a list of goods in an inventory, but we can see that some of these decorative goods were present in the homes of those in trade in the north-west. For example, the 1770 inventory of Thomas Hall of Macclesfield, a silk throwster, shows that the household of Thomas and his wife Hannah was a relatively simple one, with its goods valued at a total of £59 10*s*. 5*d*.[122] His will also indicates a modest establishment, with £100 as the largest bequest. However, a surprisingly high number of the Halls's goods were of a decorative nature, and demonstrate a significant investment in domesticity. Decoration included china cups, camblett curtains,[123] a looking glass, and a pair of pictures. Larger establishments were more elaborate. For example, the home of Thomas Bate, the Warrington grocer, inventoried in 1761, included a very smart parlour. This contained both china and silver, and teapots, suggesting an investment in polite sociability. The room also included walnut chairs, a looking glass, and a corner cupboard. Such possessions were clearly linked to a new kind of sociability, but this was not necessarily limited to the domestic life of the family. As Stobart has recently noted of business homes a century before, these were often important spaces for hosting social exchanges between businessmen and women.[124] A smart parlour or a well-furnished 'house' might serve as an attraction for business partners and customers, who were often an integral part of the family's social—as well as economic—circle.

It has been argued that by the eighteenth century a growing drive for privacy ensured that, among the middle classes at least, parlours were no longer used for sleeping in, and were rather used as spaces for family and the entertaining of visitors.[125] However, within the smaller homes that we have considered here, whether they boasted a house place, parlour, or both, it seems that there was often simply not enough space to make such distinctions. This was certainly the case in the home of the whitesmith Robert Barlow, where the need to provide separate sleeping chambers for Barlow and his daughter Hannah necessitated a bed in the 'parlour' of this three-room house. Interestingly, however, it is clear that the Barlows had some sense of a need for privacy, or the delineation of sleeping space for other reasons, such as the upholding of propriety and modesty, as the bed in the house was accompanied by 'a partition', which allowed the sleeper to be separate

[120] Lawrence E. Klein, 'Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century', *Historical Journal*, 45/4 (2002), 869–98. See also Beth Kowaleski-Wallace, 'Women, China and Consumer Culture in Eighteenth-Century England', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 29/2 (1995–6), 153–67, p. 159.

[121] H. R. French, *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England, 1600–1750* (Oxford, 2007), 146–8.

[122] CCALS, WC, Inventory of Thomas Hall of Macclesfield (1770).

[123] Camblett was a fabric made of a mixture of silk, wool, and sometimes goat's hair: Gloag, *John Gloag's Dictionary of Furniture*, 171.

[124] Stobart, 'Accommodating the Shop', 357.

[125] Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, 11.

from the rest of the house. Yet even in larger homes, such as that belonging to the grocer and chandler William Dickinson, the concern with creating a parlour as a separate space from where the family slept was not always evident. In the Dickinson inventory, the naming of the parlour is ambiguous, with one room listed as 'over the grocer's parlour', but with no room actually being specified as the parlour itself. This difference may arise from the fact that different appraisers conducted the survey, one specializing in grocery items and one in the chandler's trade. However, it seems likely that the 'room above the house' functioned as a parlour or house place, as it contained 'six walnut chairs with leather bottoms'—the grandest set of chairs in the house—a tea chest, and plate, china, and silver that clearly denoted high-status entertaining. Yet, even in so large a house, it also contained a bed. Given that there were eleven rooms in the Dickinson house, it seems likely that the family could have created a parlour and separate sleeping quarters if they had had the desire to do so. There was plenty of space to create an extra bedroom elsewhere, so it is hard to escape the conclusion that the Dickinson family—in common with other families we are examining here, and others outside the capital—simply were not bothered about London niceties, nor with more modern conceptions of privacy.[126] As we have already seen, this lack of concern with metropolitan customs did not mean that those in trade were not keenly attuned to social distinctions in their own localities, and, as Chapter 6 will demonstrate, sensitivity to hierarchy could be apparent, not just in terms of one's dealings with individuals beyond the front door, but also within households.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the buildings occupied by trading households, where the commercial and the domestic continued to coexist under the same roof throughout the period of the Industrial Revolution. It explored the numbers of individuals who might have lived and worked together in these households, the structures and internal layouts of the houses that they occupied, and the possible uses of the different rooms within them, as suggested by practices of room naming and the material objects listed in inventories. A variety of households were described: in terms of the number of people that constituted them, and the amount of physical space that they occupied. Though space requirements seem to have been linked in part to the practical demands of different trades, particularly ones that involved manufacturing, both commercial and living space appear to have been important in trading households. Not all of them had access to buildings as commodious as they might have wished, which meant that some households appear particularly cramped, with domestic and work functions taking place in the same spaces. Maintaining a differentiation between living and commercial space was

[126] Beds in parlours during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the Midlands and Yorkshire are described in Ponsonby, *Stories from Home*, 53, 105, 125; D. W. Black, I. H. Goodall, and I. R. Pattison, *Houses of the North York Moors* (London, 1987), 92–3.

something that appears to have been generally attempted, although not always realized. It also seems likely that trading households did not uphold clear distinctions about the uses of space in other respects: thus sleeping and other domestic functions, such as eating and socializing, often appear to have taken place in the same rooms. This renders notions of sharply delineated public and private space, commonly described in terms of elite and middling households, particularly problematic in the context of those in trade. But this does not mean that internal spaces were undifferentiated and that their uses went unscrutinized. As we shall see in Chapter 6, the occupants of trading households had to navigate a series of very complex issues regarding the use of internal space, and its shared use in particular.

6

Family and Household

The previous chapter examined household sizes, building types, room naming, and contents to explore interior space in trading households and the ways in which it was used and functioned. Yet a study of buildings and artefacts alone cannot provide us with a full picture of the uses and meanings of such space.[1] As the anthropologist Hannah More notes, meanings are not inherent in the organization of space, 'but must be invoked through the activities of social actors'.[2] Thus, while Chapter 5 focused on architectural evidence and inventories for the most part, in order to show us how domestic and work space appears to have been organized, this chapter will turn its attention to those primary sources that shed more light on individual experiences of space, and on those 'social actors' who provided it with its meaning, by examining the sorts of personal testimony found in diaries, letters, and court depositions. This chapter also acknowledges the agency of space itself, as described in the work of geographers such as Nigel Thrift and Edward Soja. In their analyses, space is seen as the product of social and material practices and experienced as an ongoing process of construction, rather than, as Thrift puts it, being simply 'a container in which the world proceeds'.[3] This approach reminds us to examine not just how individuals and groups provided spaces with meaning, but also how these social actors were themselves affected by the spaces in which they operated. Both approaches help us to explore the ways in which space was linked to power within households in terms of day-to-day living, in what Michel Foucault has termed the 'little tactics of the habitat',[4] and which Michel de Certeau described as the 'guileful ruses' of 'anti-discipline', in his depiction of the practices of everyday life.[5]

[1] Nathaniel W. Alcock, 'Physical Space and Social Space', in Martin Locock (ed.), *Meaningful Architecture: Social Interpretations of Buildings* (Aldershot, 1994), 207–30; J. D. Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London', University of Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (1999); Amanda Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2007), 9–13.

[2] Hannah More, *Space, Text and Gender: An Anthropological Study of the Marakwet of Kenya* (Cambridge, 1986), 8. See also Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge, 1994), 2–4.

[3] E. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London, 1989); N. Thrift, 'Space: The Fundamental Stuff of Human Geography', in S. L. Holloway, S. P. Rice, and G. Valentine (eds), *Key Concepts in Geography* (London, 2003), 95–107, p. 93.

[4] M. Foucault, 'Questions on Geography', in C. Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977* (New York, 1980), 63–7, p. 149.

[5] M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Every Day Life* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), p. xiv.

The relationship between power and space within trading households is most apparent regarding access to certain spaces, which varied both between households, and among members of the same household. In what follows we see the various spaces in which business households lived and worked used differently by individual household members, while households with the least space tended to observe fewer restrictions in terms of access to space for subordinate members. This variation can be explained in terms of differing understandings of 'the family' among those in trade, which was itself apparently affected by the amount and type of interior space available to households. There is evidence—even within the experiences of single individuals—of both the continuance of what Naomi Tadmor termed the 'household family'—defined by co-residence and submission to the authority of the head(s) of the household[6]—into the nineteenth century, as well as the existence of keenly felt gradations of status within households, which often distinguished between those who were related by blood or marriage to the head of household—their 'nuclear' or immediate family—and those who were not. These two models were not mutually exclusive, and those in a household might use the term 'family' to include all co-residents who were the dependants of the head of household, while still distinguishing between individual members. Indeed, it is more than possible that those living within a particular household felt quite differently about the constitution of their 'family', so that, while the head of household might describe all co-residents as family, those under his or her control felt excluded or marginalized in specific ways. In these situations, access to particular areas within the home, at certain times of day, and the power to control the use of space, were indicators of status within the household. Although hierarchies predictably followed individuals' relationships to both property and the means of production (meaning that heads of household were most powerful, and those who worked for them less powerful, along a gradient determined by perceived skill and indicated by rates of pay), blood relations—especially those of immediate family, such as children—fitted less easily into this model. This does not mean that those related by blood to the head of household, even very closely, might not assume subordinate positions within households.[7] Indeed, this seems to have been the fate of all children while under their parents' roof, whatever their age. Although employees and children might be treated almost equally, or indeed interchangeably, in terms of access to space in some households, in others the heads of household clearly accorded more privileges to their offspring, and reserved particular areas of the house at certain times for themselves and their immediate family. Moreover, though there is no doubt that gender was a powerful organizational concept among our trading families, generational hierarchies were often more important, and, in terms of space, both age and the nature of one's relationship to the head of household were more significant than gender in terms of both access to space and its control.

[6] Naomi Tadmor, 'The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 151 (1996), 111–40.

[7] Bridget Hill, *Servants: English Domestics in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1996), ch. 6.

Not only do trading households not fit neatly into models that depict the development or consolidation of the nuclear family in this period,[8] but, as was suggested in Chapter 5, they also contradict the picture of growing domestic privacy during the eighteenth century. This development has been charted by historians who have described how visitors and customers were increasingly kept apart from 'private' family space, while servants, employees, and lodgers were confined to separate areas within households.[9] While, in some households, rooms such as the parlour or house place were, at least at certain times, reserved for members of the householder's immediate family, this was not always the case. In other houses, restrictions on the size of living accommodation, and the fact that even the householder might have bedded down with his or her employees, made such formal distinctions of space unlikely.[10] Privacy was clearly important in small business households in terms of upholding certain standards of respectability—hence, as we shall see, the separation of the sexes to preserve modesty and to prevent inappropriate sexual relations was seen as important—but privacy does not seem necessarily to have been conceived in terms of personal space, nor the constant distancing of the immediate family from others. Among those in trade, it appears that company and physical proximity were often more highly prized than a more modern understanding of private family life. Indeed, such proximity—so long as it was conducted in a fairly harmonious manner—seems to have been crucial to both the smooth running of trading households, and the businesses that they operated, as it forged and cemented the types of bonds and understandings that were crucial to the success of joint enterprises.

But, though the family dwelling could be a place of companionship, affection, and the well-practised art of 'rubbing along' together, it was also the site of tension and struggles. This was often due to a failure to adhere to those sets of unwritten rules concerning individual conduct, which were vital in most households where

[8] See, e.g., D. E. C Eversley, P. Laslett, and E. A. Wrigley, *An Introduction to English Historical Demography from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1966); Peter Laslett and Richard Wall (eds), *Household and Family in Past Time: Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America, with Further Materials from Western Europe* (Cambridge, 1972); Lawrence Stone, 'The Rise of the Nuclear Family in Early Modern England: The Patriarchal Stage', in C. E. Rosenberg (ed.), *The Family in History* (Philadelphia, 1975), 13–57; Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York, 1975).

[9] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (London, 1977); Lawrence Stone and J. C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite? England 1540–1880* (Oxford, 1984); Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven, 1978); Ursula Priestley and Penelope Corfield, 'Rooms and Room Use in Norwich Housing, 1580–1730', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 16 (1982), 93–123; Frank Brown, 'Continuity and Change in the Urban House: Developments in Domestic Space Organisation in Seventeenth-Century London', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 28/4 (1986), 558–90; Matthew Johnson, *An Archaeology of Capitalism* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 174–7; Christoph Heyl, 'We Are not at Home: Protecting Domestic Privacy in Post-Fire Middle-Class London', *London Journal*, 27/2 (2002), 12–33.

[10] For more complicated readings of privacy in this period, see Tim Meldrum, 'Domestic Service, Privacy and Eighteenth-Century Metropolitan Household', *Urban History*, 26/1 (1999), 27–39; Amanda Vickery, 'An Englishman's Home is his Castle? Thresholds, Boundaries and Privacies in the Eighteenth-Century London House', *Past and Present*, 199/1 (2008), 147–73.

individuals of different ages, genders, and status—some of whom were not related to each other—coexisted. Though such rules were crucial to the orderly management of household relations, they could vary between households. However, there appears to have been a broad consensus concerning what constituted inappropriate relations between men and women who were not married. Furthermore, struggles over the control of resources, and access to space or power within both family and business, could have catastrophic results in terms of household unity. The domestic and the commercial were so closely intertwined among those in trade that it was very difficult for the two to exist separately. This meant that the break-up of household relations often made the continuation of joint business ventures impossible: for, as cordiality gave way to rancour within families and households, so those relationships and understandings that made small family businesses work were often fatally damaged.

THE USES AND MEANINGS OF DOMESTIC SPACE

We have seen evidence of both happy and fraught familial relations in the writings of the Liverpool baker John Coleman and of the Manchester grocer George Heywood. In common with other examples of personal testimony that will be examined in this chapter, their accounts of their home lives provides us with valuable insights into the use and organization of space within households. Both men's accounts show that they were used to sharing beds with young men to whom they were not related, which is something that neither architectural nor inventory evidence would be likely to reveal. Coleman also recorded details of the use, positioning, and naming of rooms in his household, noting that his family 'repaired into the back parlour', after dining on Sundays, where they read the Bible.[11] Although from Coleman's account it is unclear whether the front room was used as a shop or, say, a house place or front parlour, in his discussion of another building with which he was familiar—Ann Coppell's linen drapery and millinery shop on Derby Square—he does describe there being a shop in the ground floor front room and a 'back parlour' behind it, where one of his sweethearts (Maria) was able to escape the view of customers and passersby who were looking in at the door after she had been charged

[11] Coleman, fo. 30[r]. The house where John lived as both a boy and a young man was listed in town directories as being on Batchelor's Lane, off Tithebarn Street, though, in his memoir, Coleman refers to the house as being on Orange Street, which ran parallel to Batchelor Lane (or Street). Both these streets are described by Picton as having been 'opened and built on' between 1730 and 1760, and both disappeared as part of 'improvements' during the early nineteenth century: J. A. Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, 2 vols (London, 1875), ii. 81. Several years after Coleman had left the family home, both Batchelor Street and Orange Street appear, from the evidence of Horwood's map, to have been only partially filled, and to have contained both a number of empty plots and a mixture of commercial and residential buildings, some of which spanned Batchelor and Orange Streets, which might explain the confusion over the address: Richard Horwood, *Plan of the Town and Township of Liverpool Showing Every House* (1803). The footprints given by Horwood to houses on the north side of Bachelor Street and the south side of Orange Street suggest that they were of an older style of construction, since they were generally widest on the street side.

with theft. His account (like that of Joshua Dixon below) suggests that shops at the front of houses were open to the street and allowed access to anyone who wished either to enter or to look inside,[12] so that back parlours, while not necessarily 'private' spaces, were rooms where one was less likely to be disturbed by outsiders: hence their suitability for both hiding and Bible study. These accounts also indicate that a 'back parlour' did not necessarily mean the existence of a 'front' parlour. Other descriptions in Coleman's memoir of his family home suggest that the whole household slept in upper rooms, and that his parents had their own bedchamber, though it is not clear whether their children shared sleeping space with servants or other employees.

While Coleman's memoir indicates how one family utilized domestic space, the writings of another Liverpool resident, Joshua Dixon, offers us a further, more detailed, account of the experience of day-to-day living in a trading household, as well as revealing a great deal about the nature of relations between a co-resident employer and employee, and about the relationship between space and power. Dixon's account is of a household that appears to have been relatively spacious, and in which a clear distinction was made between the head of household's immediate family and his employees. This distinction was expressed in terms of access to certain interior spaces—something that Dixon complained about in his writing, but was powerless to do anything about. Joshua began writing letters to family and friends after travelling from Whitehaven to Liverpool in 1764 to take up a job as an apothecary's assistant with Edward Parr in Castle Street. He seems to have lived there with Mr and Mrs Parr, two servants and an apprentice. Like George Heywood, whose comments on his unsatisfactory living conditions at William Hyde's establishment opened Chapter 5, Dixon complained of working hard, and specifically of enduring long hours in the shop. He wrote to his friend William Tate on 2 November 1764 that he 'would insert more [in his letter] but 11 o'clock approaches the 1st hour after Shop releases me and Paper confines me . . . '.[13] Elsewhere, however, he noted that he rarely rose before nine o'clock (at least in the winter): 'my usual Hour of Rising . . . really the weather is so cold, the morning's so Dark, that I can not prevail upon my Inclinations to rise Earlier with Pleasure.'[14] By waking at 9 a.m., working until 10 p.m. and not going to bed until after 11 p.m., Dixon's daily routine appears to have run much later than Voth suggests was the norm in this period.[15] The diary of the grocer George Heywood provides a very different picture again: he describes starting work at 5 a.m. 'to spread candle wicks' when working for a chandler as a boy,[16] but also late shop opening times, so that one Huddersfield grocer's shut up shop at ten in the evening, while another in Manchester closed just before that time.[17] Yet, on one occasion, Heywood was reportedly rebuked (unfairly he thought) by his employer and landlord for coming home from a lecture after 9.15 in the evening (when he was clearly *not* supposed to

[12] Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London', 39.
[13] Dixon, fo. 10. [14] Dixon, fo. 74: to his aunt, 29 December 1764.
[15] Hans-Joachim Voth, *Time and Work in England, 1750–1830* (Oxford, 2000), 67, 114–17.
[16] Heywood, fo. 9. [17] Heywood, fos 22, 48.

be working), while he himself was critical of another young man who stayed out until past midnight, again, because he was involved in leisure, rather than work-related activities.[18] Bakers have traditionally worked earlier hours than most: John Coleman was offered a job as a biscuit-baker in London in 1763, working from midnight to noon each day,[19] and he regularly worked even longer hours ('from 2 o'clock in the morning, until 7–8 and often 10 o'clock at night') for his father in Liverpool, also as a baker, when they had large orders to fulfil.[20] In keeping with this pattern of night working, his father retired to bed as early as eight in the evening at other times, and forbade his son staying out after nine.[21] It is possible, however, that these young men exaggerated the length of their working hours to elicit sympathy from their readers.

When he was working, and despite his relatively late start, Joshua Dixon complained that 'I have no desirable Place of retirement . . . Not so much as a seat in the shop, excepting the step ladder, nor do I from morning till night enjoy myself seated in an agreeable situation'.[22] Once Joshua Dixon became more used to Liverpool, he cultivated a circle of friends, and wrote to William Shaw that 'I have got half a Doz genteel Houses as Evening resorts and find myself Diverted by pleasurable amusements I never thought myself Capable of'. Despite the Parr's residence being advertised for sale in 1772 as 'spacious and convenient', Dixon clearly found it darker and more cramped than he had experienced in less crowded Whitehaven, and he claimed that this lack of space meant that he left the house whenever possible because 'Our situation is so Dark & Confined that I have frequently had a Candle immediately after Dinner viz. ½ past three o'clock. This enduces me to frequent walks, and enjoyments of the refreshing air . . . '.[23] He wrote to his aunt that Parr's house 'faces a dark narrow alley and tho' Mr Parr inform'd me it stands him in 60£ p.ann. I think the situation intolerably odious'.[24] In 1772, an advert appeared in the Liverpool *General Advertiser* following Edward Parr's death four years earlier. Not surprisingly, this presented the property in rather more flattering terms, specifically as 'that spacious and convenient messuage and tenement in Castle-street, with the two ware-houses thereunto belonging, in Fenwick's Alley'.[25] According to Picton, 'by the middle of the eighteenth century Castle Street had become for the most part a street of shops, the resort of the beauty and fashion of the town'.[26] Street scenes from the 1780s suggest that rapid rebuilding programmes were taking place here, and two watercolours of Castle Street dated 1786 show brick-built buildings of three and four storeys being taken down as part of a street-widening scheme.[27] Dixon also seems to have found the

[18] Heywood, fos 36, 46. [19] Coleman, fo. 33^{r}. [20] Coleman, fo. 30^{v}.
[21] Coleman, fos 40^{v}, 31^{v}. [22] Dixon, fo. 87: to William Shaw, 21 January 1765.
[23] *General Advertiser,* 7 February 1772; Dixon, fo. 85: to William Shaw, 21 January 1765.
[24] Dixon, fo. 74: to his aunt, 29 December 1764.
[25] *General Advertiser*, 7 February 1772. [26] Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, ii. 18.
[27] LivRO, Herdman Collection, 1267A, 1268. Picton claims that the latter picture was commissioned by the antiquary Mathew Gregson, who carried on business as an upholsterer under the name of Urmson and Gregson in Castle St, on the west side near the south end: Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, ii. 16–17.

busyness of Castle Street unsettling—again, revealing his roots as a small town boy—complaining at one point: 'Nothing passes but I am aware of [the shop] being situated in a street the most publick & narrow of any in Town. Window without the least separating Wall inclose the whole Front even the Door not excepted.'[28]

But, while he whined at length about the building in which he lived, and working in the shop in particular, his main source of complaint was not his lack of a comfortable seat during the day, but his employers—and Mr Parr in particular—with whom he seems to have had mixed relations. Dixon's descriptions of their relationship often referred to incidents in the parlour, where he ate his meals with the Parrs. It was not just the treatment he received in this room that mattered to Dixon, but also his restricted access to this space: for he measured his approval from his employers according to which parts of the house he was given access, and specifically his being allowed into the parlour, while the Parrs, in turn, showed their pleasure or displeasure at his conduct in the same way. In November 1764, he confessed to one correspondent that his employer 'has something peculiarly agreeable to my Disposition',[29] and to another:

> The agreeable freedom he pleasingly treats me with gives a Relish to every trifling Action—and supplies me with Notions very much in his favour . . . a Cann or glass of ale is ordered for Mr Jo. after Dinner and in the Evening—I have put on an Air of Importance, and Exerts [*sic*] myself upon every occassion [*sic*] in an unaccustom'd manner.[30]

Here Dixon was thrilled not only to have been dining in the parlour with 'agreeable freedom', but to have been treated with drinks, a further indication that he was favoured by his employer. Yet, in January of the following year, he confessed to his mother: 'At first I thought him the most disagreeable man I ever beheld, in every Respect . . . However, I find him a good Master and shall never again inportute to bad Humr what is a natural disposition or readily judge from deceitful Appearances.'[31] Three months later, Dixon noted proudly that 'Mr Parr drank my good Health and order'd me a Glass of Ale—deferring my removal [from the parlour] to a considerable Time. A Favour never before Experienced . . . '.[32] By May, Dixon had been asked to leave, and they appear to have fallen out again, only to resume good relations subsequently.[33] Turbulent and strained relations between heads of household and their live-in employees appear not to have been uncommon, and, as we shall see, the ways in which these were described by our commentators provide significant insights into power relations in trading households and the manner in which these were expressed.

Dixon seems to have had generally good relations with Edward Parr's wife, Catherine, and in one letter to his mother he noted that 'Mrs Parr is greatly

[28] Dixon, fo. 87: to William Shaw, 21 January 1765.
[29] Dixon, fo. 8: to William Tate, 2 November 1764.
[30] Dixon, fo. 54: to his mother, 30 November 1764.
[31] Dixon, fo. 93: to his mother, 28 January 1765.
[32] Dixon, fo. 130: to his aunt, 23 April 1765.
[33] Dixon, fo. 130: to his mother, 4 May 1765.

obliging, and detained me the other Day, at Dinner, till almost four o'clock'. Though he was delighted to be allowed in the parlour for an extended period, he also noted sourly that the result of their long discussions, however, was that 'the apprentice waiting with Impatience for my Return at last went to Dinner, the consequence of wch was a brisk knocking at the shop for an halfpenniesworth [*sic*] of Salve and my immediate Quitting of the parlour'.[34] Mrs Parr's authority in this instance is important, and reminds us, as Amanda Flather has noted in her study of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that both mistresses and masters had authority over the use of domestic space, and that 'married women had a significant amount of power and control over the use and organisation of their own homes, in sharp contrast to the servants and children who lived under the same roof'.[35]

Whilst Dixon was allowed into the parlour to dine, it was not generally open to him at other times. In another letter to a friend, Joseph Pattison, Dixon appeared to contradict earlier accounts about his favourable treatment in the parlour, and noted:

> Mr Parr has a Clan of Relations and Friends without number—Yet only Two Daughters to Heir his immense Fortune. The One arriv'd lately from Chester boarding School, the other to Continue 3 yrs Longer—so that I shall never have the pleasure of seeing Her. Mr Kennedy bids me make an advantage of this my situation, but Mr Parr's strictures wth regard to Indulgences entirely forbids it: Not having spent an Hour (excepting Twice) in the Parlour—excluding I Dine there—Nor as yet Tasted Tea in his House since my Arrival.[36]

Dixon was no doubt purposefully kept separate from the Parr daughters, precisely because he might have had designs on marrying one of them, but he was also barred from the parlour when they were not at home. The Parr's parlour appears to have been restricted to immediate, blood family members of the household, except at certain times, and it was a peculiar favour for Dixon to be allowed to stay there outside mealtimes. On other occasions, Dixon sought solace in the 'compting' house, a room where he seems to have retired in the evening when he had finished work and that had 'a good Fire and every other Convenience . . . '.[37] It is not clear whether he had any company here. Certainly the apprentice does not appear to have been allowed into the parlour at any time, nor presumably were any domestic servants, except to perform their duties. The Parr household was apparently ordered according to fine gradations of status, and, while Dixon might have railed against the restrictions placed upon him, other, more junior, household members were no doubt even less privileged than he in terms of their access to particular spaces, and their inclusion in certain activities.

Other trading households were less commodious than that of the Parr family. In more cramped households, we find less evidence that access to space was governed according to hierarchies of status and power. Moreover, it appears that the ways in which family was understood often differed too in smaller houses, so that the

[34] Dixon, fo. 81: to his mother, 19 January 1765.
[35] Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England*, 14.
[36] Dixon, fo. 109: to Jos. Pattison, 9 March 1765. [37] Dixon, fo. 3.

distinction between the head of household's immediate, 'nuclear' family, and other co-resident employees, of the type that Dixon experienced, is less apparent. Instead, we find evidence of the continued meaning of family as equating to the household among those in trade into the nineteenth century. These experiences and understandings were exemplified in the writings of the grocer George Heywood. Heywood was, like Dixon, new to big city living when he arrived in Manchester from Huddersfield, though he appears to have been more excited than offended by the hustle and bustle, and noted approvingly even before he left Huddersfield that he 'thought Manchester a busy place and a good deal to be seen and learnt there'.[38] He was also probably less adverse to gloomy interiors, since he appears to have spent most—if not all—of his working life in Manchester living in older buildings with smaller windows, almost certainly dating from the seventeenth century: first, with his employer William Hyde in Market Street, then with another employer, Ann Owen, at 39 Hanging Ditch, before moving to Roylance and Jones's shop four doors up at number 43 Hanging Ditch, again employed as a journeyman. He lodged for a short period with the Bell family at an unknown address before moving into 18 Old Millgate, where he remained, as sole owner, after his partner's sudden demise in 1816, until his own death in 1843. These addresses were extremely close to each other, and could all be found in streets near to the Collegiate Church. This was where most of the dwellings of seventeenth-century Manchester were clustered, and during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries they appear to have remained largely untouched, while the area witnessed none of the sorts of large-scale building programmes that happened in the south and east of the city from the 1770s onwards.[39]

Heywood's first Manchester address, William Hyde's grocer's shop at 88 Market Street, was not only found in Ralston's series of Manchester street scenes, but also featured in another print produced around the same time (Figure 6.1).[40] Hyde's shop, with what appears to have been the original porch jutting out into the street, and possibly joined with another seventeenth-century building on the left-hand side, may have been only one room deep (based around a central hall) according to the building's footprint on Green's 1794 map.[41] A house that had almost certainly been built for a member of the local gentry a century or more earlier, it had clearly come down in the world by the early nineteenth century when William Hyde occupied it. It seems likely that, under Hyde, most, if not all, of the ground floor was given over to trade. While the upper floor of the main building would have been taken up with a long gallery in its original incarnation (as indicated by the window shape), it seems probable that this room would have been subdivided when it was turned over to mixed residential and commercial use.

[38] Heywood, fo. 11.

[39] Michael Morris, *Medieval Manchester: A Regional Study* (Manchester, 1983), 34–51; C. W. Chalkin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England: A Study of the Building Process* (London, 1974), 89–98.

[40] See also John Ralston, *Views of the Ancient Buildings in Manchester* (Manchester, 1823–5), plate 9.

[41] William Green, *Map of Manchester and Salford* (1794). Unfortunately, the building was pulled down as part of 'improvements' during the 1820s, so no comparisons with later, more detailed maps can be made.

Figure 6.1. William Hyde's shop, Manchester, *c.*1820. Chetham's Library, Manchester Scrapbook, fo. 60.

There were perhaps as few as five rooms on the upper two floors when Heywood lived there as a journeyman grocer with Hyde, his family, three apprentices, a porter, and a servant. However, Heywood's comments about the smallness of both his bedroom and the kitchen suggests that a degree of room partitioning had gone on, and that the living accommodation comprised more than five rooms, albeit some of them very small. Heywood's account implies that employees were restricted outside working hours to either their bedchambers or the kitchen at Hyde's, rather than being allowed into any parlour or house place, which was apparently restricted to Hyde's immediate family. Kitchens were not necessarily reserved solely for the preparation of food in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and, aside from food storage, dish washing, and laundry, they could also be used for dining, sitting, and circulation, particularly in smaller houses and/or where space was at a premium.[42] This was almost certainly the case at 88 Market Street, where employees were expected to share both rooms and beds.

[42] Brown, 'Continuity and Change in the Urban House', 284–5; H. C. Morton, 'A Technical Study of Housing in Liverpool, 1760–1938', vol. C, University of Liverpool M.Arch. thesis (1967), 101.

As we have seen, Heywood disapproved of the distinction that Hyde made between his 'family' and 'servants'. Here Heywood used the term 'servant' to include all those in the service of a master or mistress, though at other times he appeared to use it to refer specifically to domestic servants. Such ambiguity was not uncommon at the time.[43] Heywood's apprenticeship in Huddersfield, which he served with a Mr Robinson, appears to have been a somewhat different experience from living with Mr Hyde, for, although Heywood thought Robinson's son less than friendly towards him, he recounted with some pride the father's treatment of him on leaving, describing—in common with Joshua Dixon—treating with alcoholic drink as a particular mark of favour (though it is worth reminding ourselves that beverages that indicated approval seem to have embraced a wide range of intoxicants, as Dixon also hankered after Mr and Mrs Parr's tea). Once Heywood had given his notice he stated:

> Mr Robinson was quite friendly with me after this, more so than he had been for sometime. I [stopped] with him most of the time I was in Huddersfield, this was remarkable for when any one left him, which was very seldom, he would scarcely ever notice them again. The evening before I left him he treated the whole family with punch we all enjoyed ourselves very much they all wished me good health prosperity and success—I hope their wishes will not be lost upon me. The morning I came Mr Robinson gave me a guinea and told me whenever I came to Huddersfield to make his house my home; he would be offended if I went anywhere else. They all parted with me in the most friendly manner after we had all got breakfast together indeed Mr Robinson seemed rather affected when I shook hands with him.[44]

Heywood described Mr Robinson behaving particularly fondly towards him, in the manner of a family member, rather than an employee.

Though Heywood was subsequently unhappy at his treatment at the hands of William Hyde, he certainly found life more agreeable when he lived with his next employer, Ann Owen, at 39 Hanging Ditch, not least because the pair became lovers.[45] Even before they reached such a state of intimacy, Heywood appears to have been treated more equitably with other family members and—crucially—was allowed into the parlour or sitting room. Heywood refers at various points to there being both a 'sitting room' and a 'parlour' at Ann Owen's house. Both appear to have been downstairs, and were perhaps the same room, which he referred to by different names.[46] A reference to Owen promising on one occasion that she 'would have let me go with her into the house if she could have got the family to bed' suggests that the parlour could be used for socializing at any time, by anyone in the

[43] P. Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society, and Family Life in London, 1660–1730* (London, 1989), 213; Hill, *Servants*, 12.

[44] Heywood, fo. 12.

[45] Ann Owen appears in *Pigot's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1811* (Manchester, 1811) as 'Ann Owen, wholesale grocer and tea dealer, 39 Hanging Ditch'. She was listed at the Hanging Ditch address until 1817, when she appears to have moved to 19 Withy Grove: *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory for 1817* (Manchester, 1817).

[46] Heywood, fos 15, 22, 29.

household, and that no one slept there.[47] Heywood and Owen shared their first romantic kiss together in this room, presumably with none of her seven children present.[48] On another occasion, she appears to have locked her eldest son out of the house during the day in order to meet privately with Heywood,[49] which indicates that, while the parlour was not a sleeping room, it was easily accessible upon entering the house from outside and open to all members of the household. Heywood twice mentions looking through a parlour window to see Mrs Owen, at one time climbing through it when she refused to open the door to him after they had rowed.[50] In happier times, Heywood spent time with Mrs Owen in the 'sitting room', back yard, and the shop, as well as meeting her outside and going for walks.[51] This pattern of outdoor socializing was repeated when he courted his future wife, Betty Bowyer, and suggests that meeting sweethearts, away from the gaze of others, was most easily achieved outdoors in relatively overcrowded trading households, even when one was head of the household and thus more able to exclude subordinate members from certain rooms.[52]

Mrs Owen's dwelling was almost certainly less spacious than that of either William Hyde, or Edward and Catherine Parr. This lack of space, coupled with the positioning of the parlour and its easy access from outside—so that one would probably have had to pass through it to reach the upper rooms—meant that it was no doubt seen as impractical to restrict this room to the householder's immediate family. The relative lack of space at Mrs Owen's—with herself, seven children, at least one employee, and at least one servant—meant that individual household members would also have had to share sleeping quarters with non-relatives. It seems likely that such practices would have affected the way in which relationships between individuals were conceived, so that the sort of arrangements concerning restricted access to rooms devoted to sitting, eating, and socializing advocated by some heads of trading households would have seemed incongruous within the Owen household, as well as impractical. Less roomy buildings might therefore have resulted in households with less keenly felt gradations of status and a more informal style of familial relations (though certainly not to the extent of promoting equality between household members).

Hanging Ditch, where Ann Owen lived and worked, was also the site of Roylance and Jones's grocer's shop, where Heywood moved after leaving Mrs Owen, and where he lodged with one of the owners, John Jones.[53] It has not been possible to locate the positioning of either 39 or 43 Hanging Ditch with any degree of certainty. In common with Market Street, Hanging Ditch was the site of many seventeenth-century buildings in the early nineteenth century,[54] and comparisons between 1794 and 1831 maps suggest little alteration in the buildings on the street between these dates. Figure 6.2, a sketch by Thomas Barritt dated 1819,

[47] Heywood, fo. 42. [48] Heywood, fo. 43. [49] Heywood, fo. 45.
[50] Heywood, fos 22, 29. [51] Heywood, fos 15, 28, 29, 42.
[52] Heywood, fos 36, 46, 69, 77.
[53] *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory for 1815* (Manchester, 1815) lists 'Roylance and Jones, wholesale grocers and tobacconists, 43 Hanging Ditch' and as 'grocers, 18 Old Millgate'.
[54] Morris, *Medieval Manchester*, 43.

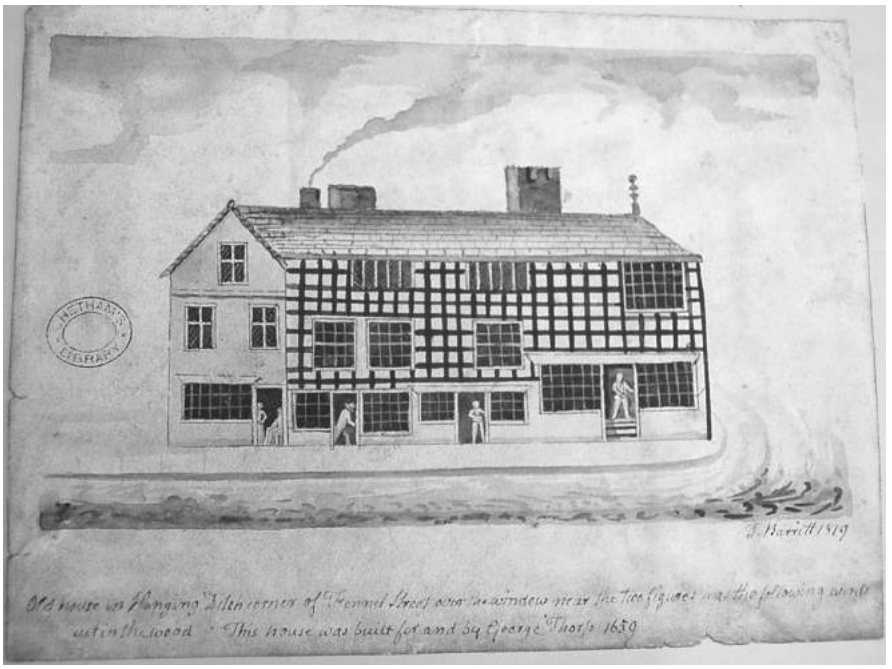

Figure 6.2. Hanging Ditch, Manchester, by Thomas Barritt, 1819. Chetham's Library, Manchester Scrapbook, fo. 33.

shows a row of small houses on Hanging Ditch that appear—from the number of chimneys—to have been built for multiple occupation. Although the row may have been constructed around the same time as Hyde's shop, it was almost certainly intended for less socially elevated occupants, and indeed these houses may originally have been built for mixed commercial and residential use, so that the shops on the ground floor were probably not new, even if some of the higher windows were.[55]

These buildings were described as being on Hanging Ditch at the corner with Fennel Street, and having been built in 1659. A later sketch from 1844 shows the same buildings still in existence,[56] and they seem likely to have been there at the end of the decade when the Ordnance Survey (OS) was conducted around 1848.[57] The buildings' footprints, as indicated by the OS map, suggest that these houses were very small indeed, and had extremely narrow frontages. They measured between around 22 feet wide (the house on the far right-hand side of Figure 6.2) and only 12 feet 6 inches wide (the two houses in the middle of the row), and were

[55] On later medieval urban buildings, esp. mixed commercial and residential use, see J. Grenville, *Medieval Housing* (London and Washington, 1997), ch. 6; Priscilla Metcalf, 'Living over the Shop in the City of London', *Architectural History*, 27 (1984), 96–103.

[56] Manchester Local Studies Library, Local Image Collection, m02211.

[57] Ordnance Survey, *Manchester* (1848).

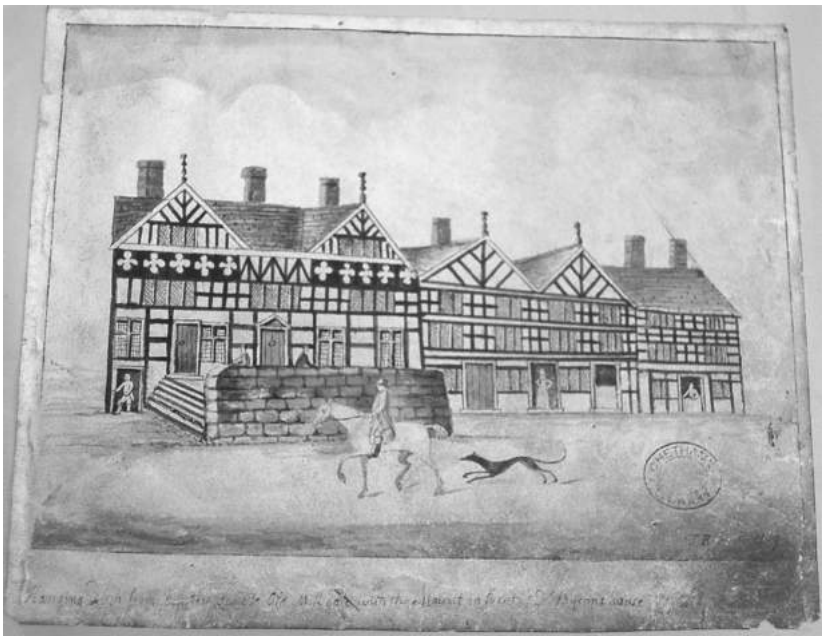

Figure 6.3. Hanging Ditch, from Hunter's Lane to Old Millgate, Manchester, by Thomas Barritt, 1819. Chetham's Library, Manchester Scrapbook, fo. 7.

all around 17 feet, and probably one room, deep. These were among the smallest buildings on the street, and others here were clearly both wider and significantly deeper.

Another sketch by Barritt, also from 1819 (Figure 6.3), shows a row of housing further along at 'Hanging Ditch from Hunter's Lane to Old Millgate'. At least a section of this row seems to have been taken down as part of a street-widening scheme between 1831 and 1848. However, the footprints of these buildings on earlier maps suggest they were larger than the row just described, and were both wider and at least two rooms deep, as well as having additional small outriggers at the rear.[58] This suggests that Mrs Owen's house was likely to have had a shop, parlour, and kitchen on the ground floor. Such building layouts were also commonly found in London, often as products of large-scale speculative building that took place following the Great Fire.[59] However, the Manchester buildings that Heywood occupied on Market Street, Hanging Ditch, and Old Millgate appear to have been of a timber-framed building form that died out in London with the

[58] Green, *Map of Manchester and Salford* (1794); *Bancks' Plan of Manchester and Salford* (1832).

[59] A. F. Kelsall, 'The London House Plan in the Later 17th Century', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 8 (1974), 80–91; J. Schofield, *Medieval London Houses* (London, 1995), 53, describes thirteenth-century examples; Roger Leech, 'The Prospect from Rugman's Row: The Row House in Late Sixteenth- And Early Seventeenth-Century London', *Archaeological Journal*, 153/1 (1996), 201–42; Metcalf, 'Living over the Shop in the City of London'.

introduction of new building regulations after 1666, but that persisted in towns elsewhere long after.

As has been noted, after leaving Ann Owen, Heywood moved four doors down along Hanging Ditch to live with John Jones and his wife Elizabeth, in what was likely to have been a house of similar proportions. This was an altogether less happy experience than at Mrs Owen's, though here too he appears to have been allowed to use the parlour with the Jones's blood relations, since the Joneses, like Ann Owen, did not appear to impose particularly strict rules about access to interior space in terms of familial hierarchies. Indeed, according to Heywood's own account, he was more welcome here than Mr and Mrs Jones's relation Humphrey Jones, since it was noted that 'Mrs Jones does not like him to go into the parlour' because 'he marks the chair that any one knows where he has sat'.[60] In contrast to Joshua Dixon's experiences with the Parr family, this suggests that standards of behaviour, rather than relationships of blood or employment status, may have governed which household members were allowed to use the parlour at the Jones's. Indeed, despite Mrs Jones's complaints, and in common with Mrs Owen's establishment, it appears that access to interior spaces such as the parlour at the Jones's house were open to all members of the household—albeit sometimes grudgingly if they were dirty—and that this was largely determined by the need to cram a large number of people into a relatively small interior space.

Mr Jones's house was likely to have consisted of six main rooms, at least one of which would have been given over to the business if the cellars were suitable for storage, and more than one if not. The ground floor probably contained a shop at the front, a parlour behind, and a kitchen in a rear outrigger. Upstairs, the three or four other rooms devoted to domestic use—whose walls were thin enough to hear conversation through them—would have had to accommodate Mr and Mrs Jones, a female servant, three adult male employees (one of whom, Humphrey, was also related to the Joneses), and at least four children between the ages of 10 and 1—the three daughters and one son of John and Elizabeth Jones—plus Mrs Jones's two daughters from her first marriage, who were in their mid- to late teens.[61] This almost certainly meant that children and employees had to share rooms for sleeping (and probably beds). Trading households such as this, where household members lived cheek-by-jowl, could not hope to carve out 'private' space for the householder's immediate family (assuming they would have wanted to do so). The manner in which individuals lived in such households also influenced the way in which family was understood. As he moved from household to household, we can see in Heywood's diary evidence both of the 'household family' in the houses of Mrs Owens and the Joneses—where all members of the household were considered as family—as well as of the existence of keenly felt gradations of status within households such as that of Hyde, where distinctions were made between individuals who were related by blood or marriage to the head of household, and those who were not.

[60] Heywood, fo. 69.

[61] I am grateful to Carole Mcloughlin, a descendant of John and Elizabeth Jones, for sharing her research into her family history.

Limitations of space would also have affected the ways in which households operated, and heightened the need to control certain types of behaviour. For example, domestic activities that demanded the segregation of the sexes—such as washing and mending intimate forms of clothing—required individual household members to be sensitive to the use of particular spaces at certain times of day. Heywood appears not to have understood a set of unwritten rules within the Jones's packed household, which were designed to uphold propriety and reduce interpersonal friction. Although he had lived in crowded conditions before, and had lodged with an employer's family at least three times prior to moving in with John and Elizabeth Jones, tensions about his conduct and his inappropriate use of space still arose. An argument that Mr Jones had with George when he lived at his house is particularly telling of the ways in which living-in was organized and the tensions that could result. Relations between the two appear to have been difficult for some time, which, according to Heywood's account, was largely the result of his attending Unitarian lectures and neglecting to go to the Methodist chapel with the Jones family. It also seems that Mrs Jones was unhappy about Heywood's diary-keeping, which she apparently viewed with suspicion. In November 1814, Heywood reported that John Jones 'attacked me . . . before we opened shop in a very unexpected manner'. His accusations are worth quoting at length because of the detail with which they reveal the complexity of living-in arrangements in the household:

> Mr Jones begun by saying that he thought I had better lodge out, I felt astonished at this and asked him why, he said he thought he should give me no reasons at present but proceeded to do it thus:
>
> 'You go rummaging up and down the house. You lose many hours about these premises that you have no need to do. It's very inconvenient at meal times. You go out every night and the consequence is Threapland [another journeyman] copies your example that he gets I cannot manage him and Humphrey will do the same. You sit up late every night and it's very unbecoming of you. Women have work which they don't wish every one to see such as mending their clothes, and you sit up every night till Betty [the domestic servant] goes to bed and frequently keep us up for an hour. I don't say its criminal, I don't say you have any bad intention but I say it is highly unbecoming and has the appearance of evil. Why can't you go to bed when the other young men go? I respect Betty as my own sister and should endeavour to put a stop to any snare which I saw laid for her. When you came here you used to go to chapel at least once a day, now you never go. You come in and out and go where you like, the others see you and they don't like to be drummed as they think to chapel. You come to wash you at unlikely times, you have so much time in a morning and have to wash you when the girls are there till I have told them when you come to come out, it is very unbecoming of you. I don't say you have any bad design upon them but it's very unbecoming I have been here 18 years and know that bad practices always begin with such like trifles. Yesterday you come to wash you near 10 o'clock a very unlikely time and you went into the bedroom when Betty was there, you ought to have left the room again immediately. There you begun to black my character, my wife heard you into our bedroom and I'll believe her before any woman, I will not suffer it any longer, that is my determination at present however.'[62]

[62] Heywood, fo. 36.

Heywood bristled at the accusations, all of which he denied as baseless, while claiming that Mrs Jones had misheard him. He noted petulantly: 'These charges are most of them false in some there is no fault, in speaking of Mr and Mrs Jones they have never deserved praising'. He denied speaking ill of the Joneses, having 'any bad design, either upon Betty or the girls', or leading Threapland astray. 'In sitting up late', he maintained, 'I don't think I ever prevented any one from working or keeping Mrs or Mr Jones up. I believe an instance of it never occurred nor have I sat up lately later than usual nor did I ever sit up to untimely hours.' Attendance at chapel with the rest of the household, he claimed, had always been voluntary, and as to his washing habits, presumably in the kitchen, using water from a butt in the yard: 'He says I come to wash me late and am there when the girls want to wash, it is not my fault. I wash myself before we open shop when it does not interfere with my work.'[63] But Mr Jones appears to have been concerned about impropriety, not the length of Heywood's working day.

Although men and women appear not to have been generally segregated in terms of daily activities during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,[64] there were clearly exceptions to this rule where sexual impropriety or modesty were concerned: hence Jones's chiding Heywood for washing when female members of the household were present, and for sitting up late in the parlour or kitchen when they wished to mend their clothes (though it was presumably acceptable for men and women to socialize in these spaces at other times).[65] Tim Meldrum has shown how some sexual segregation was usual for servants and other unmarried adult household members,[66] which is why Mr Jones appears to have been concerned that Heywood should not be alone with Betty. His anxiety appears to have been heightened by the scene of their solitary meeting—a bedroom—which suggests that these were considered less scrutinized spaces, and hence more risky meeting places. Interestingly, Jones was clear about his own relationship to Betty, whom he respected 'as my own sister', thus underlining his understanding of the 'family' in relation to the household, and his own paternal role. Later on, Mr Jones appears to have made some apology, and tried to get Heywood to stay, since it would be 'inconvenient having to send for me and sometimes me having to wait till he was ready', if he boarded out. Yet in the same conversation he reportedly told Heywood that he could not cope with so many employees living with him: '3 was more than he could do with in the house', and that 'he could not do with more than 2 on account of so many children if he had no children he could do with a dozen of us'.[67] In many ways, then, the accommodation of children and employees appears to have been interchangeable in Jones's mind. His complaints about Heywood's failure to

[63] Heywood, fo. 38.

[64] Margaret Hunt, 'Wife Beating, Domesticity and Women's Independence in Eighteenth-Century London', *Gender and History*, 4/1 (1992), 10–33; Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal*, 36/2 (1993), 383–414.

[65] See Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London', 126; Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England*, 44.

[66] Meldrum, 'Domestic Service', 33–4.

[67] Heywood, fo. 40.

join the family in their religious observance, his accusations that George was leading his other employees astray as well as preventing the female members of the household from both mending their clothes and washing in private, and his alleged concern about Heywood's designs on Betty, a servant whom Jones compared to a sister, all sound (to modern ears at least) more like a breakdown in familial, rather than employer–employee relations, as indeed does George's sulky response.

HOUSEHOLD RELATIONS

Heywood's behaviour was problematic for John Jones because of the threat that it posed to the smooth running of the household: not just in terms of his perceived challenges to Jones as head of household in terms of religious observance and staying out late, but also because his apparent lack of modesty in front of women and girls, his failure to understand their needs relating to their own modesty (to mend and wash their undergarments in private), and his discussions with an unrelated woman in an unsupervised space, all of which raised the spectre of unsanctioned sexual relations. Though Heywood might have felt himself hard done by at the Jones's, John Jones no doubt saw the threats he posed to the household, in terms of moral behaviour and reputation, as very real. It is not difficult to find other examples of cases illustrating the dangers of failing to maintain proper codes of conduct within trading households, especially when unmarried adults of both sexes lived in close proximity to one another. John Coleman's memoir presented the cautionary tale of Mrs Stanford, 'a pretty, engaging widow' who kept a milliner's shop on Castle Street in Liverpool, and had apparently taken in a ship's captain as a lodger, on the recommendation of 'a worthy and good friend'. This man was, according to Coleman, 'one of her family whilst in port during his ship's outfit, upwards of three years', but he noted ruefully:

> Being a man of a very artful insinuating address and a great flow of words, he from professions of great regard and affections promised her marriage, but before the knot was tied, he got the better of her virtue, left her to bemoan her credulity with a shameful pregnancy, which proved in the end a loss of most part of her best business. This, with a lost reputation, she could not overcome; it brought on a loss of appetite which in a few months after her delivery terminated her life. Thus fell a most amiable woman, through the artful designs of an old (as appeared afterwards) married villain.[68]

A somewhat different take on the dangers of men and women who were neither related nor married to each other living together in the same household appeared in a case brought before the Court of Exchequer in 1813. This described the very close relationships that could result from individuals living under the same roof, and the benefits and the dangers of such intimacy: both in terms of the individuals involved, and the smooth running of households. In his deposition, John Edmunds, a Liverpool furniture painter, accused Mary Evans, widow of the chapman John Evans,

[68] Coleman, fo. 44.

of obtaining a promissory note from him by blackmail. John Edmunds had lodged with Mary and John Evans from the end of 1793 until 'the latter end of the year 1798 or the beginning of the year 1799'. During these five years, Edmunds claimed that the couple 'not only fulfilled their aforesaid contract with your orator' to provide bed, board, and washing,

> but did also do many things for the benefit and comfort of your orator in respect of such board and lodging which they were not required to do . . . particularly that the said Mary Evans . . . did by direction of her said husband . . . manage and arrange her household in such manner as to render it highly conducive to the comfort and happiness of your orator in respect of his lodging and board with them.

Edmunds claimed he had been 'highly gratified at such attention', and that in response he chose to 'make presents from time to time to the said Mary Evans with the approbation of her said husband'. In addition, Edmunds asserted that he took the Evanses 'to divers places of public amusement' at his own 'considerable' expense, and lent John Evans 'divers sums of money by way of loan and at his request to a large amount'.[69]

At some point towards the end of his time lodging at the Evans household, Edmunds claimed that he began to realize that 'he had by means of the aforesaid attentions of the said John Evans and Mary his wife been led into a course of liberality to them which had proved very injurious to your orators circumstances', so much so that he was himself 'greatly indebted to divers persons', while Evans refused to repay his own loan to him. Edmunds was thus forced to leave his lodgings in order to live elsewhere 'at less expense', until he had earned the money to pay off his debts. Though Edmunds claimed he refused the Evanses entreaties to return as their lodger, he still described there existing 'a very great friendship' between the three of them, so that Edmunds was prevailed upon 'to keep up an intimacy with them', which he did, 'very frequently' visiting their house 'by their invitation', and 'very often lent and advanced to or for the use of the said John Evans small sums of money at his request which usually happened when he and your orator had been drinking'. These practices continued, according to Edmund's account, until the start of 1807, when he allegedly 'discovered that a false . . . opinion and report' was being circulated among their joint acquaintances, which claimed that Edmunds 'was in the habit of indulging an improper and criminal conversation with the said Mary Evans'. Edmunds described this accusation as 'extremely prejudicial to [his] character and repute', and promptly 'dropped' the pair.

Soon after this breaking of relations, Edmunds himself married in June 1807. Thereafter he claims he was not left alone by the couple, but was visited privately by Mary Evans, 'acting in pursuance of the commands and directions of her said husband John Evans'. At this meeting, it was said that she first tried to beguile him by reminding him of the 'divers services civilities and obligations which she pretended that she and the said John Evans had conferred upon your orator',

[69] TNA: E 112 1543/664.

then resorted to threatening that 'in as much as your orator had dropped their acquaintance her husband the said John Evans insisted that your orator should pay to him a very considerable sum of money as a recompense'. When Edmunds refused to do this, Edmunds alleged that 'the said Mary Evans informed your orator that if he refused to pay such sum of money she would acquaint your orators said wife that your orator had indulged in a criminal conversation with her the said Mary Evans and would expose your orator to his said wife'. This threat was apparently enough to persuade Edmunds to act according to his account, for, though both he and Mary Evans 'well knew that the said pretended criminal discourse between your orator and herself in fact never took place', he feared that his new wife would not believe him, so that his 'future happiness in his said marriage might thereby be destroyed'. Edmunds claimed that he agreed to pay Evans £50 over the next few months, which he guaranteed by way of a promissory note. Since then, John Evans had unsuccessfully attempted to force payment on the note at local courts on two separate occasions, before apparently finally acknowledging that Edmunds owed them nothing when threatened with a counter suit for costs. Though John Evans was said to have claimed to have burned the promissory note at this point, after his death in May 1812, his widow presented it as part of the case she brought against Edmunds at the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster.[70] Though this case was a salutary tale in either not becoming overly friendly with one's landlord, or not sleeping with the lodger or landlady (depending on whose account one believes), it does reveal the intimacy that some lodgers and landlords or landladies might experience by virtue of sharing domestic space. The dangers of sexual relations taking place between unmarried household members, and the scandal that could result, were clearly apparent to George Heywood's employer John Jones. As Heywood's relationship with Ann Owen, that of Mrs Stanford and the ship's captain, and John Edmund's alleged dalliance with Mary Evans demonstrate, such liaisons both did occur, and were believed possible, no doubt in part because of the close proximity in which household members went about their day-to-day lives.

Not long after the row between George Heywood and John Jones, George left the Jones's establishment, and moved into 18 Old Millgate with his new business partner and former fellow journeyman, Robert Roberts. At the age of 27, Heywood was a head of household for the first time in his life, and, once he had secured his shop and house on Old Millgate, he seems to have been content, and did not move until his death almost thirty years later. Number 18 Old Millgate appears in a sketch of 'Mr Howard's house and shop' by Thomas Barritt from 1819 (Figure 6.4). John Howard, grocer, was listed in trade directories at this address between 1781 and 1797, and then appears to have retired from business. Between 1797 and 1804, when the grocers Roylance and Jones appear in directories at 18 Old Millgate, it is unclear who lived there. After 1815, the premises were turned over to Heywood and Roberts (though, owing to his early death, Roberts's name

[70] TNA: E 112 1543/664.

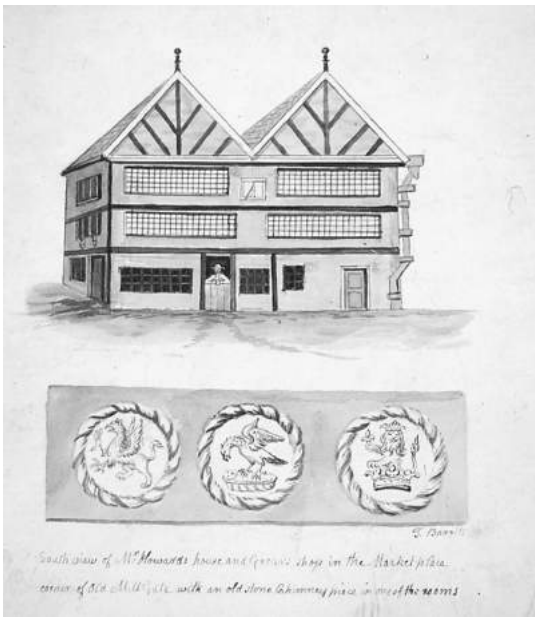

Figure 6.4. Mr Howard's house and shop, 1819. Manchester Local Studies Library, Local Image Collection, m79357.

was never listed in a Manchester directory).[71] The sketch of 'Mr Howard's house and shop' was made when Heywood had already been in residence for three years, suggesting either that it was commonly known by Howard's name long after he had gone (so that it is likely to be Heywood whom we can see leaning over the shop door), or that the artist was presenting an imagined and historic representation of the scene (in which case we can see Howard peering out at the viewer). A handwritten note under the sketch locates the house 'in the Market Place Corner of Old Millgate'.

It is likely that Old Millgate, in common with other streets surrounding it, consisted of buildings entirely, or largely, of seventeenth-century construction that survived until the mid-nineteenth century. Little seems to have been altered between Green's 1794 map and the 1848 Ordinance Survey, and a late nineteenth-century photograph of the buildings at the corner of Old Millgate and the Old Shambles (directly opposite number 18) shows another seventeenth-century timber and brick

[71] Elizabeth Raffald, *The Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781); *A Directory for the Towns of Manchester & Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788); *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794); *Scholes's Manchester & Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1797); *Bancks's Manchester and Salford Diretory* (Manchester, 1800); *Pigot's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1811* (Manchester, 1811); *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory for 1815* (Manchester, 1815); *Pigot and Dean's Manchester & Salford Directory, for 1819–20* (Manchester, 1819). John Howard also took out a Royal Exchange Fire Insurance Policy in 1782, where he insured his premises for £600: Guildhall Library, London, 1782 REX 4 007 01\09\78 JT.

building in existence as late as 1870.[72] Number 18 Old Millgate and its neighbour appear to have been jettied slightly on each floor, and were probably positioned towards the south-east corner of the thoroughfare. All the houses on this side of the street appear from both the 1848 Ordinance Survey, and earlier maps, to have been of double pile construction (two rooms deep). Heywood and Roberts, with their house adjacent to their shop, would have experienced relatively roomy living and working conditions. With at least two rooms on each floor, and three floors in total for each building, 18 Old Millgate and its neighbour offered the pair, and later just Heywood, along with his wife, their nine children, and at least one apprentice and a servant, a generous amount of space in which to house both people and business. Even if the house was used for living space, and the 'shop' building only for commercial purposes, the household would have had at least six rooms to live in. Moreover, it is possible that any apprentices or journeymen would have been lodged next door above the shop, thus providing either Heywood and Jones, or later the Heywood family, with even more space and privacy. However, as we shall see, it is not at all clear that George Heywood was desperate to have more room to himself, nor to separate himself off from those outside his immediate family—suggesting that his earlier experiences permanently influenced his approach to shared living and his understanding of family, along with that of his business partner, Robert Roberts.

Though, as we have seen, George Heywood clearly resented living in particularly cramped conditions, he does not seem to have tried to separate himself from Robert Roberts when the pair of them lived alone in what was a comparably large house: not even to the extent of sleeping apart.[73] Heywood seems to have understood the importance of maintaining good relations with his partner: in terms of both household unity and the conduct of their joint business. This meant choosing to live in very close proximity with each other, even though they had enough space in their house and shop to live apart. Though he claimed that his old landlady, Mrs Bell, had advised him that he should not sleep with Roberts, beds were expensive, and thus Heywood wrote in September 1815 that 'I cannot avoid it at present unless I stop in lodgings and I have no wish to do that nor any money at present'.[74] Despite claiming that he 'would have much to put up with from Robert's temper [since] he is of such a narrow way of thinking', Heywood seems to have tried to live with his partner as best he could, which seems to have included a form of 'sociable sleeping' with his new housemate.[75] Heywood concluded that 'to be comfortable I must not dispute anything with him, but be silent where I cannot agree' (though he noted ruefully on their nights in together that 'very dull it is sitting together without any other company').[76] When Heywood proposed marrying, and bringing his wife into the house to look after them both, Roberts was reportedly concerned

[72] Manchester Local Studies Library, Local Image Collection, m03712.

[73] Cf. Vickery's description of the English desire for 'residential independence' (Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 2009), 7).

[74] Heywood, fo. 76.

[75] Sasha Handley, 'Sociable Sleeping in Early Modern England, 1660–1760', *History*, 98/329 (2013), 79–104, pp. 101–4.

[76] Heywood, fo. 79.

that this would 'be like making us into two families', so that 'he would then be no more than another lodger', even after Heywood offered assurances that he 'hoped we should be all one family as we are and wished us to be all agreeable if it could be made so'. For both Heywood and Roberts, it appears that close physical proximity in terms of day-to-day living, and an understanding of their household as a family, had been an important element in their relationship, and had been what had made household and business relations run smoothly.

Heywood would have been sensitive to Robert's concerns, not least because of the alienation he had felt with William Hyde, but also as he had had a more recent experience of living in another household in which he had not felt part of the family. After moving out of the Jones's house, he had spent a short period lodging with the Bell family at an unknown address. Here he relished having his own bed, and especially his own bedroom, noting: 'Since I have been at Mr Bell's, I have had the advantage of generally sleeping alone and could make my observations when I retire to bed.'[77] Heywood had been attracted to lodging with the Bells not just because they appeared to 'live comfortable', but also as only Mr Bell, his wife, and daughter lived in their home, which would have made it far less cramped than the trading households to which he was used. As we saw in Chapter 4, an emotional and spiritual form of comfort was something that George craved in early adulthood. He soon discovered that the Bell family were far from being 'comfortable', though, since their home was the site of frequent quarrels between husband and wife. But he also noted that the household was poorly run, and in this instance he seems to have equated comfort also with physical amenity, so that he bemoaned the fact that 'they have no convenience even to keep meat or bread but where the mice runs over it'.[78] 'I could be more comfortable in a poorer family if they were comfortable amongst themselves', he eventually proclaimed, while conceding that 'what I am most pleased with is my bed, but this I can give up without being troubled',[79] so that he concluded that emotional comfort was more important to him than physical comfort. Heywood's status as a lodger, more so than as live-in employee at the Joneses and in other households, may well have marginalized him at the Bells, and he chafed at being left out of certain social events. When the Bells had guests during the race season in May 1815, for example, Heywood noted: 'I did not go to the Races, nor was I asked to have any ham and porter as all the other men were, I thought this rather hard that I alone should be omitted.'[80] His lack of status in the Bell's household, coupled with the lack of intimacy he felt with members of the family, certainly influenced his decision to leave and his later behaviour with his business partner.

As a result of his treatment as a lodger with the Bell family, Heywood seemed to have tried hard to make his household with Robert Roberts a united and content one. Yet, despite Roberts's complaints about becoming a lodger, when George Heywood announced his intention to marry, it appears that it was Roberts who

[77] Heywood, fo. 7. [78] Heywood, fo. 54. [79] Heywood, fo. 55.
[80] Heywood, fo. 55; Melville, 'The Use and Organisation of Domestic Space in Late Seventeenth-Century London', 19, 140–4.

decided to separate their living space, since he later reportedly told Heywood that 'he would wish to have 2 rooms to himself'. On 20 December, George noted that 'Robert Roberts had agreed to take the front room, his bedroom and closet and took what was in them'.[81] Heywood had supposedly told Roberts that 'he might have as many [rooms] as he wished as there were plenty'. As has been noted, living together as part of the same household appears to have generated strong bonds as well as tensions. This was an experience common to both Heywood and Roberts—the latter feeling so clearly slighted at their 'family' being broken up by Heywood's marriage. George also recounted how Robert fell out with a fellow employee of John Jones some time earlier, when a J. Sewell read one of his letters and told others in the household about its contents. According to Heywood, 'Robert Roberts says he shall never think well of him again that he is a mean dirty fellow, that they have slept and lodged together upwards of 4 years but now he is very willing to dissolve with him'.[82] The intimacy of their former relationship, founded on their close proximity in day-to-day living, seems to have made Sewell's subsequent betrayal particularly galling for Roberts. Any tensions that Heywood and Roberts experienced following the marriage were short-lived, however, for in September 1816, only a year after they had set up in business together, Roberts died following a short illness. George and Betty were left in charge of 18 Old Millgate, which they soon filled with their nine children, plus a variety of employees.

Robert Roberts's reported description of Heywood and himself as a family reveals the way in which the business partners viewed both their living arrangements and their relationships with each other. Heywood himself made several references throughout his diary to the constitution of 'family', and its relationship to household. It is evident that, in his view, 'family' was often used to refer to a co-resident group that Tadmor has termed the 'household-family'.[83] However, it is also clear from his comments that not everyone he lived with applied the same definition of 'family' (as was also clearly the case with Joshua Dixon's experiences with the Parrs), and we find in Heywood's account of his life opposing views and complex hierarchies within different households. His pointed criticism concerning Hyde's distinguishing between 'family' and 'servants' suggests that this practice may not have been the norm, though Heywood did hint at a similar state of affairs even with the more favoured Mr Robinson. Unlike the writings of Heywood and Dixon, John Coleman's memoir reveals the views of someone related to the head of the household in which he worked. As a young man, Coleman's 'family' consisted of his parents and siblings as well as household servants, and he notes that 'on the Sunday at ten o'clock the whole family (except the cook) was obliged to be at the chapel when the service began and continued until twelve'.[84] Elsewhere in his memoir he uses the term 'family' to refer both to those in his household, and to a wider group of relations with whom he did not reside, and specifically his sisters and their husbands.[85] The same use of family to denote blood relatives who were not

[81] Heywood, fo. 96. [82] Heywood, fo. 54.
[83] Tadmor, 'The Concept of the Household-Family'. [84] Coleman, fo. 30^{r}.
[85] Coleman, fos 55^{r}–56^{r}, 59^{r}, 60^{r}.

co-residents was also used by Heywood, suggesting that, among those in trade, 'family' could have a variety of meanings, depending on the context, right into the nineteenth century.

By his own account, George Heywood worked hard to make sure that the personal relationships he had with those he lived with ran smoothly—although we have seen that he was not always successful in this respect. Such familial cordiality was an issue of personal comfort, in terms of maintaining a degree of domestic harmony and emotional calm, as well as an economic necessity, as Heywood himself understood. As both economic and social units, household and business were so closely linked in trading households that it was very difficult to separate the two. Thus, when John Coleman ended his business connection with his mother, he also moved out of the family home. This appears to have been a symbolic as well as a practical act. The domestic and the commercial were so tightly intertwined among those in trade that it was very difficult for them to exist separately. This meant that the break-up of household relations often made the continuation of joint business ventures impossible: for, as smooth relations gave way to rancour in the domestic setting, so the form of relationships and the types of understandings—not least that of trust—that was needed to make small family businesses work disappeared. Such a process of events was evident in a case brought before the Court of Exchequer in 1778, concerning a Manchester check weaving firm owned by the Rylance family. James Rylance made a complaint against his son, Matthew. According to the father's account, Matthew had 'been bred to the trade or business of a check weaver' in Wigan. However, he travelled to London at some point in his youth to work 'in the employment and service of several persons in the capacity of clerk and warehouseman'. In this role he was reportedly able to save around £400 over time. He returned to Wigan, offering to use this money to buy into a partnership with his father in the check weaving trade, and James claims he was persuaded, since 'such saving and oeconomy' had given him 'a good opinion of the said Matthew Rylance'. Around 1763, it was reportedly agreed that Matthew would move to Manchester, where he 'took a house . . . with a view and design of establishing a partnership in that town between the said Matthew Rylance and James Rylance and Alexander Rylance two other sons of your orator'. A co-partnership was established between the brothers in a check manufacturing business, and the three of them both lived and worked together.[86]

According to his father's complaint, 'Matthew Rylance lived in the greatest harmony with his said two brothers and co-partners down to the 11th day of April 1765', when he married Mary Taylor, the daughter of a Lancaster manufacturer. Taylor allegedly brought with her a dowry of £300, to which James Rylance added £318 'as his portion and fortune and for his advancement in the world'. Soon after his marriage, Matthew Rylance brought his wife to the Manchester home that he shared with his siblings. It was at this point, according to his father, that trouble began. Though 'it was intended that she and her said husband should live in a

[86] TNA : E 112/1526/115.

family way with your orators said two other sons', it was claimed that Mary quickly revealed herself to possess 'so turbulent and imperious a Temper that the said Matthew Rylance found it impossible any longer to continue in the same house along with his said two brothers'. With them unable to live together in 'a family way', it was apparently agreed by all parties that Matthew and Mary 'should remove from the said house at Manchester and take a separate habitation', and that, while the family business was to continue running as before in the short term, with the brothers no longer living under the same roof it was felt that Matthew should set up in business on his own, and accordingly 'disengage or draw out of the said co-partnership such part of his fortune as should be sufficient to enable him to enter into a separate trade and dealing on his own account'.[87] The cessation of their joint household and its cordial family relations was thus depicted as necessarily bringing to an end the brothers' business partnership.

Later in the same year, Matthew and Mary were said to have left Manchester for Liverpool, having withdrawn £600 from the co-partnership, leaving £700 invested in the family firm in Manchester. Though the brothers he left behind appear to have carried on both living and trading together quite happily, Matthew and Mary had a less prosperous future ahead of them. Matthew allegedly used the cash he withdrew to furnish a new house and to enter 'into a separate trade'. But he was said to have been 'unfortunate' in his new enterprise, and to have 'met with many losses and accidents therein'. His father alleged that Matthew got into debt, including owing him a great deal of money, which he had lent him in order to help his son, since he was 'greatly alarmed at the situation and circumstances of his said son', and was 'willing and desirous to extricate him therefrom as far as your orator could without doing a material injury to your orators other children'. While Matthew ended up imprisoned for debt in Lancaster castle,[88] his allegedly increasingly bullying wife took advantage of 'the abject and dispirited state of mind to which the said Matthew Rylance was reduced as well as by his misfortunes as by her cruel and inhuman treatment', and managed 'by a course of the most violent and inhuman treatment' to compel her husband to sign over to her all his property.[89] Though Mary died in 1777, supposedly because of her 'immoderate drinking', her father-in-law James accused a number of individuals, including the executors of Mary senior's will, and his imprisoned son, of conspiring together to deprive him of the property he claimed to have been owed on account of his former loans to his son.[90] This was clearly a cautionary tale about the dangers of family feuds and of choosing the wrong spouse, in which James Rylance presented himself as loyal to both his wayward son and the couple's granddaughter, who now lived with him. But, though the legal battle ended as a dispute over property, which centred on the alleged personal failings of Mary and Matthew Rylance, the origins of this battle lay

[87] TNA: E 112/1526/115.

[88] LRO, QJB/44/1: Rylance appears on a list of prisoners held at the Castle in 1776, 'charged into custody by a suit of Daniel Skelmerdine' on 8 December. Rylance does not appear on the next extant list from 1778.

[89] TNA: E 112/1526/115.

[90] TNA: E 112/1526/115.

in the inability to run a business alongside family members with whom one was incapable of co-residing peacefully—which emphasizes, once more, the inextricable links among those in trade between household, family, and business.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between gender and space has long been a theme in histories of women and gender in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where a concentration on 'spheres' of action and influence has centred on the 'public' and the 'private'.[91] This chapter, and the one before it, have focused entirely on this latter category, but, rather than seeing domestic space as homogenous and undifferentiated—as tends to be the case when it is examined in relation to the 'public' world—it has explored the meanings and the agency of various forms of interior space. Hierarchies within trading households were often expressed in terms of access to different interior spaces. Though gender was a powerful organizational concept among those in trade, generational hierarchies were generally more important in terms of the control of space, along with the nature of one's relationship to the head of household. Variations between households were linked both to different understandings of the family, and to the physical constraints of the households concerned. This meant that, for some individuals, not being a blood relation or married to the head(s) of household meant that certain spaces were off limits, at least at particular times, while, for others, membership of the household qualified them for much freer access to shared spaces. It seems probable that this latter, less apparently hierarchical, model was more common in more cramped households, where interior space was more restricted for everybody, and where there persisted an understanding of family that was defined by household membership, rather than more narrowly by marriage and blood.

Not only do many trading households not fit easily into historical models that depict the development or consolidation of the nuclear family at the expense of the household family in this period, but they also do not sit well with descriptions of growing domestic privacy during the eighteenth century. Though the Parr family seemed keen to keep their daughters apart from Joshua Dixon, they still allowed their employee to eat with them, while the comings and goings of George Heywood suggest an absence of any 'private' family space in the households headed by Ann Owen and John Jones, if not that of William Hyde. Moreover, we saw from Heywood's relationship with his business—and bed—partner Robert Roberts that household members did not necessarily want to distance themselves from each other physically, even if space was available to do so. Privacy does not seem to have been conceived in terms of personal space—indeed, physical proximity was important to cement bonds between certain individuals—but it was clearly

[91] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London, 1987); John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven and London, 1999); Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres?'

important in small business households in terms of upholding certain standards of respectability. Ensuring this sort of privacy meant that individuals had to abide by sets of unwritten rules about behaviour and conduct. Failure to do so, or the appearance of family battles over power and/or resources, could mean that the familial dwelling switched from being a place of companionship, affection, and the well-practised art of 'rubbing along' together, to a site of tension and struggle. This could have catastrophic results in terms of household and family unity, and the break-up of household relations often made the continuation of joint business ventures impossible: for, as cordiality gave way to rancour within families and households, so those relationships and understandings that made small family businesses work were often destroyed irrevocably.

Conclusion

The lack of attention paid to tradesmen and women in the past can be explained, at least in part, by their tendency not to leave a particularly significant mark on the historical record. Sometimes the glimpses found in the archive are frustratingly brief. A portrait of Nathan Wood (Figure C.1), pattern and heel maker, inside his house is a good example. Wood has been drawn by his friend and neighbour, the saddler Thomas Barritt, sometime in the opening decade of the nineteenth century. We see Wood sitting proudly (if rather awkwardly, given Barritt's limited drawing skills) in his workshop at the front of his house on Hanging Bridge in Manchester, facing the Collegiate Church, which is visible through the window.

Figure C.1. Portrait of Nathan Wood, by Thomas Barritt, *c.*1800–5. Chetham's Library, Manchester Scrapbook, fo. 4.

Although the image is suggestive of industry, and also of the sitter's Anglican piety, it is limited in terms of what it tells us about Wood and his life. Was he successful in business? How did he view his position in the commercial and social milieux of early nineteenth-century Manchester, and how did others see him? Who else lived and worked with him? How did household and familial relations function? What was the rest of his house like, and how was living and working space organized? These things we do not know, for there seem to be few other surviving records of Wood's life, save for his listing in trade directories over a thirty-year period.[1] But, though we know little about Nathan Wood's particular experiences, this book provides some significant insights into the lives of men and women like him, and has enabled at least a partial reconstruction of the world in which they lived by piecing together evidence from a diverse set of sources, including court records, wills and inventories, paintings, maps, newspapers, business records, correspondence, diaries, and memoirs.

One thing that has been clear from this examination is that tradesmen and women were dependent on their businesses for their livelihoods. Though they sometimes had surplus income, which they invested in property or placed in a bank or leant on a mortgage to earn interest—they did not—in the main—enjoy levels of wealth that would allow them to retire or retreat from trade (presuming they had wanted to do so). This meant that, when the head of household died, family businesses were often worth most to surviving family members as going concerns. Investing in one's own firm, local building stock, and putting money in the bank may sound like a particularly conservative approach to wealth management, but they were not risk-free choices in a commercial world periodically punctuated by economic downturns, bankruptcies, and banking collapses. We also saw that, in Liverpool, at least some individuals in trade were keen to put their money into shipping in ways that seemed far removed from any security-focused model of investment that we are used to associating with the 'petit bourgeoisie' across Europe, and whom Geoffrey Crossick has described as being fixated with the ownership of real, rather than personal, property as its members sought out secure investments in the face of the 'insecurity endemic in small businesses'.[2]

[1] Nathan Wood is listed as a pattern maker—a trade allied to shoemaking—on 'Market-street Lane' in *The Manchester Directory for the Year 1772* (Manchester, 1772). In 1781 and 1788 his address changed to '7 Hanging-bridge': *The Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1781); *A Directory for the Towns of Manchester and Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788); *Lewis's Directory for the Towns of Manchester and Salford, for the Year 1788* (Manchester, 1788). In *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1794), *Scholes's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1797), and *Bancks's Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1800), he is listed as a pattern, laft, and heel maker from the same address. In *Deans & Co.'s Manchester and Salford Directory* (Manchester, 1804) his address is listed as '8 Hanging-bridge', rather than number 7. Wood can also be traced in Manchester rate books between 1771 and 1804: Manchester Local Studies Library, Manchester Poor Rating Assessments for 1771, 1794, 1796, 1798, 1804: M/9/40/2/50–85, but, while several birth, marriage, and death records can be located for Nathan Wood in Manchester, it is not possible to locate this particular individual with certainty.

[2] Geoffrey Crossick, 'Meanings of Property and the World of the Petite Bourgeoisie', in Jon Stobart and Alistair Owens (eds), *Urban Fortunes: Property and Inheritance in the Town: 1700–1900* (Aldershot, 2000), 50–78, pp. 52–3. See also F. Bechhofer and B. Elliott, 'Petty Property: The Survival

This book has demonstrated that tradesmen and women showed a sophisticated and knowledgeable approach to managing their wealth—both in terms of their consideration of immediate economic and familial contexts, and with regard to ways in which they managed the transfer of wealth between individuals and across generations. The apparent flexibility on the part of the beneficiaries of wills to vary the terms of inheritances, coupled with the use of a variety of legal instruments by those in trade, in addition to the frequency with which they took to the courts to settle disputes, also show the depth of contemporaries' legal knowledge and their adeptness in exploiting (and sometimes ignoring) the law to realize family or personal ambitions. These findings support recent research by historians such as Margot Finn and Carolyn Steedman that counter the idea of a decline in litigation in England from the early eighteenth century, and emphasize instead a continued popular awareness of the law.[3] They also remind us that what was specified in wills and laid out in court decisions did not necessarily determine what happened next.

The ways in which inheritance was managed among those in trade—almost always according to a strict hierarchy that placed spouses and children above other consanguineal family members—suggests a very tightly defined notion of the family that privileged immediate 'dependants'—those whom historians and other scholars have described as constituting the 'nuclear' family.[4] But the examination of household organization in the preceding chapters—and specifically the uses and meanings of internal space—presented a mixed picture within trading households in which the commercial and the domestic continued to coexist under the same roof throughout the period of the Industrial Revolution. In such circumstances, the understanding of family as defined by household membership—which Naomi Tadmor has termed the 'household family'—rather than more narrowly by marriage and blood, often continued well into the nineteenth century.[5] Moreover, the previous discussions have also made clear that within such households notions of sharply delineated public and private space, often described as increasingly influential during the eighteenth century, but more recently challenged by historians such as Tim Meldrum and Amanda Vickery,[6] were particularly problematic in the context of those in trade who did not necessarily aspire to separate themselves

of a Moral Economy', in F. Bechhofer and B. Elliott (eds), *The Petite Bourgeoisie: Comparative Studies of the Uneasy Stratum* (London, 1981), 182–200, p. 194.

[3] Margot Finn, *The Character of Credit: Personal Debt in English Culture, 1740–1914* (Cambridge, 2003), chs 5, 6; Margot Finn, 'Debt and Credit in Bath's Court of Requests, 1829–39', *Urban History*, 21/2 (1994), 211–36; Carolyn Steedman, *An Everyday Life of the English Working Class: Work, Self and Sociability in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2013), ch. 6.

[4] See, e.g., D. E. C. Eversley, P. Laslett, and E. A. Wrigley, *An Introduction to English Historical Demography from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1966); Peter Laslett and Richard Wall (eds), *Household and Family in Past Time: Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America, with Further Materials from Western Europe* (Cambridge, 1972); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (London, 1977).

[5] Naomi Tadmor, 'The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 151 (1996), 303–33.

[6] Tim Meldrum, 'Domestic Service, Privacy and the Eighteenth-Century Metropolitan Household', *Urban History*, 26/1 (1999), 27–39; Amanda Vickery, 'An Englishman's Home is his

physically within the home from either their employees or those to whom they were not related by blood or marriage.

This does not mean that hierarchies were not important within trading families, or in the wider social and commercial worlds that they inhabited. Though there is no doubt that gender was a powerful concept among those in trade, this study has concluded that generational hierarchies were often more important than those of gender within trading households. This is a significant point, particularly in terms of the historiography of work and gender during the period of the Industrial Revolution, where a focus on women's work and social class can obscure other forms of social differentiation. The widely shared acceptance of gerontocracy among trading families does not mean that intergenerational relations always ran smoothly, however, and the internal dynamics of family life could be turbulent, which in some instances had catastrophic results in terms of both household and family unity, which in turn impacted upon businesses. Such cases clearly complicate understandings of 'family strategy', and particularly those that assume that families necessarily act as cohesive units with shared ambitions. Though it is not always easy to unravel the tangle of emotional ties, individual and familial interests, contemporary ideas about family life and differing views about business that underpinned the ways in which trading families functioned, this book has described familial decision-making as something that was decided by consensus and compromise between individual family members, who exercised varying amounts of power, but were generally unified in their beliefs about both natural hierarchies of age and gender, and the proper conduct of family life as being governed by a sense of duty towards other family members and to God. Underlying such dutiful behaviour were the emotional bonds that existed within families, and that of love in particular. The focus on the nature of familial relations in this book makes trading families appear less as 'a knot of individual interests', in which family members were engaged in a constant process of power politicking and negotiation over resources,[7] but more as groups of individuals bound tightly to each other by both duty and emotion.

Though the preceding chapters have explored a broad social sweep of men and women in trade, the focus has been on those at the more modest end, who still remain almost stubbornly absent from historical studies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Though it has been almost forty years since Geoffrey Crossick first urged historians to examine the English lower middle class,[8] the response since then has been somewhat muted. They have not been entirely overlooked, and a steady trickle of scholarship has appeared since the 1980s, which has revealed much about aspects of lower middle-class life as diverse as occupation, status

Castle? Thresholds, Boundaries and Privacies in the Eighteenth-Century London Home', *Past and Present*, 199/1 (2008), 147–73.

[7] Peter Laslett, 'The Family as a Knot of Individual Interests', in R. McC. Netting, Richard R. Wilk, and Eric J. Arnould (eds), *Households: Comparative and Historic Studies of the Domestic Group* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), 353–81.

[8] Geoffrey Crossick (ed.), *The Lower Middle Class in Britain: 1870–1914* (London, 1977).

anxiety, religious and political affiliations, and community relations, but such work has focused on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in large part.[9] Moreover, it does not match the outpouring of recent work on more upper-middle- and working-class family and gender relations and on identities.[10] The failure of shopkeepers and small-scale manufacturers to excite subsequent scholars more interested in those obvious motors of social and economic change—the working classes and the wealthier middle classes—is perhaps not entirely surprising. Their modest life ambitions and minor adventures are not particularly heroic, while their preoccupations with home, family, business, and religion are not obviously compelling. Not all historians have dismissed those in trade, however, and Neil McKendrick asked in 1983 why fellow historians have been so eager to explore the Industrial Revolution but not the consumer revolution, and in the process had ignored the bulk of people in trade. 'Some discussion is required', he asserted,

> of why attention has centred on the great industrialists and the supply side of the supply–demand equation, and why so little attention has been given to those hordes of little men who helped to boost the demand side and who succeeded in exciting new wants, in making available new goods, and in satisfying a new consumer market of unprecedented size and buying power.[11]

Of course this book would contend that we need to pay attention to the hordes of 'little women' involved in this process too.

[9] See, e.g., Michael Winstanley, *The Shopkeeper's World: 1830–1914* (Manchester, 1983); Meta Zimmeck, 'Jobs for the Girls: The Expansion of Clerical Work for Women, 1850–1914', in Angela V. John (ed.), *Unequal Opportunities: Women's Employment in England, 1800–1918* (Oxford, 1986), 153–77; Gregory Anderson (ed.), *The White Blouse Revolution: Female Office Workers since 1870* (Manchester, 1988); Chris Hosgood, '"The Pigmies of Commerce" and the Working-Class Community: Small Shopkeepers in England, 1870–1914', *Journal of Social History*, 22/3 (1989), 439–60; Chris Hosgood, '"A Brave and Daring Folk": Shopkeepers and Associational Life in Victorian and Edwardian England', *Journal of Social History*, 26/2 (1992), 285–308; Susan Pennybacker, *A Vision for London, 1889–1914: Labour and Everyday Life and the LCC Experiment* (London, 1995). Though see Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680–1780* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996); Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760–1830* (Oxford, 2006).

[10] See, e.g., on the middle classes: Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle-Class, 1780–1850* (London, 1987); James Mangan and James Walvin, *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800–1940* (Manchester, 1987); Dror Wahrman, '"Middle Class" Domesticity Goes Public: Gender, Class and Politics from Queen Caroline to Queen Victoria', *Journal of British Studies*, 32/4 (1993), 396–432; Stana Nenadic, 'Middle-Rank Consumers and Domestic Culture in Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1720–1840', *Past and Present*, 145 (1994), 122–56; John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven and London, 1999); Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair, *Public Lives: Women, Family, and Society in Victorian Britain* (New Haven and London, 2003). And on the working classes, see Keith McClelland, 'Masculinity and the "Representative Artisan" in Britain, 1850–1880', in Michael Roper and John Tosh (eds), *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London, 1991), 74–91; Sonya O. Rose, *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in Nineteenth-Century England* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1992); Karl Ittmann, *Work, Gender and Family in Victorian England* (Basingstoke, 1994); Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995); Carol E. Morgan, *Women Workers and Gender Identities, 1835–1913: The Cotton and Metal Industries in England* (London, 2002).

[11] Neil McKendrick, 'Introduction', in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1983), 5.

Though a lack of historical source material can go some way to explaining why those in trade have tended to be overlooked by historians, other factors might also have come into play. When Virginia Woolf railed against the systematic privileging of masculine interests over feminine ones in *A Room of One's Own*, she famously complained:

> This is an important book, the critic assumes, because it deals with war. This is an insignificant book because it deals with the feelings of women in a drawing-room. A scene in a battle-field is more important than a scene in a shop—everywhere and much more subtly the difference of value persists.[12]

Woolf was writing about the literary profession, and the ways in which women's fiction was systematically undermined and ignored, but her remark that a scene in a shop is generally seen to be less important than one on a battlefield is clearly pertinent to a book on tradesmen and women, in which much of the action has taken place in, or adjacent to, the shop and the workshop.

As Arno Mayer implied, there may be a lingering 'cultural cringe' about those in trade.[13] Indeed, Virginia Woolf herself can be placed among those members of the early twentieth-century literary intelligentsia who displayed what John Carey has described as an 'anti-democratic animus', which held members of the lower middle class in particular disdain.[14] This suggests that it is not just the working classes who need rescuing from what Edward Thompson described as the 'enormous condescension of posterity'.[15] Moreover, though traders can be seen to have had a significant impact on the social and economic developments of early Industrial Revolution England, it is also the 'ordinariness' and the smaller-than-life adventures that individual tradesmen and women experienced that make them important to historians, for, in order truly to understand the past, we need to know not just about the exceptional and the heroic, but also the everyday and the commonplace.[16] As men and women of largely humble means and often limited ambitions, it is perhaps not hard to see why they have failed to capture historians' attention. Yet, without them, the urban landscape in Britain during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries would have been completely different—and the very transformations in economy and society that we associate with this period would have been profoundly affected as a result. This means that fully to understand the period of the English Industrial Revolution, in addition to exploring the lives of the Wedgwoods and the Boultons, we also need to know about the experiences and the aspirations of individuals such as George Heywood, Ann Owen, John Coleman, and James and Mary Fildes.

[12] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (London, 1929), 74.

[13] Arno Mayer, 'The Lower Middle Class as a Historical Problem', *Journal of Modern History*, 47/3 (1975), 409–36. See also Geoffrey Crossick. 'The Emergence of the Lower Middle Class in Britain: A Discussion', in Crossick, *Lower Middle Class in Britain*, 10–12; Peter Bailey, 'White Collars, Gray Lives?', *Journal of British Studies*, 38/3 (1999), 273–90; see esp. pp. 276–7.

[14] John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880–1939* (London, 1992), 5, 18–22, 46–70, 209–10.

[15] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1963), 12.

[16] Ben Highmore (ed.), *The Everyday Reader* (London and New York, 2002); Steedman, *An Everyday Life of the English Working Class*.

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