> 8 February [1759]. In the store at Parkgate, out of the Minerva Galley, John Matthews, 127 yards rich linen.

Cheese and lead will be considered together for the good reason that the cheese ships which sailed from Chester to London often, perhaps usually, took on board a cargo of lead at Parkgate. The heavy lead served as ballast for the light cheese.

Virtually all the cheese shipped out of Chester went to London because, in 1770 [53]

> The most considerable cheesemongers in London have formed themselves into a club. They are owners of about 16 ships which are employed between London, Chester and Liverpool. They employ these ships chiefly in bringing up cheese to London. They have factors in Cheshire who buy up the cheese for them and lodge it in their warehouses in Chester.

The London cheesemongers claimed that exports of cheese, as we have seen, represented nine-tenths of Chester's trade. The stranglehold that this implied was resented and it was hoped the New Cut would loosen it:[54]

> Farmers in Cheshire are obliged to sell their cheese to the factors or brokers of the cheesemongers at their own price, upon trust, with very long credit . . . One good end to be expected from this bill, will be the destroying of that monopoly.

In 1767 the Committee of Cheesemongers named five ships as Chester ships and eleven as Liverpool ships; they agreed to limit the Chester ships to one hundred tons of cheese each, to leave room for the city's goods.[55] Over the period 1740–69, forty-two cheese ships were recorded as calling at Parkgate, although for sixteen of them, only one visit was listed.[56] The loads of cheese varied greatly, between fifteen and one hundred tons.

[53] James Wimpey, *Thoughts upon several interesting Subjects* (1770), pp. 39–40, quoted by G. E. Fussell, 'The London Cheesemongers of the eighteenth century', *Economic History*, 1 (1929), p. 395.
[54] 'The Case of the Inhabitants of Chester', B.L., 357 c.1.37.
[55] *Chester Courant*, 29 Sept. 1767.
[56] Cheshire R.O., QDN 1/5

The practice of sending lead as ballast in the cheese ships began in 1711 and became common practice thereafter.[57] Lead was first recorded being shipped from Flint in 1703 when the smelting works at Gadlys were being built by the Royal Mines Copper Company, which became the London Lead Company in 1705.[58] The company had several mines in North Wales which by 1730 were concentrated within thirty miles of the works at Gadlys, close to the small port of Bagillt.[59] Bagillt was considered a hazardous place for loading,[60] and was on the wrong side of the estuary for the main stream of the river and therefore for the larger ships. The London Lead Company described their method of shipment in 1733:[61]

> . . . do now convey their lead ore, litharge and calamine to Bagillt Mark, lying upon the said river, from whence it is carried by boats and lighters to Parkgate, at present the safest harbour for ships within the said River Dee, and where the same is put aboard the cheese ships which take it in as ballast; to be conveyed to London.

They went on to say that the boatage for the three miles from Bagillt to Parkgate was *1s. 6d.* a ton. They were anxious that so heavy a commodity should not have to travel more than the shortest distance and were afraid that the River Dee Bill would cause cheese ships to deal directly with Chester, omitting Parkgate, and so increase the lead freight costs. The Bill was amended in their favour so that cheese 'brought to and put on board such ships or vessels by boats or keels' outside the Cut, paid dues at a special rate, and lead was similarly protected.[62]

The lead put on board the cheese ships at Parkgate was destined for London. Lead for other destinations might be loaded at Parkgate, Dawpool or Bagillt itself. In the years 1762–8, John Glegg's account

[57] J. N. Rhodes, 'The London Lead Company in North Wales, 1693–1792', Ph.D. thesis, Leicester University (1970), p. 316.
[58] M. Bevan-Evans, 'Gadlys and Flintshire leadmining in the 18th century', *Flintshire Historical Society Journal*, 18 (1960), p. 92.
[59] Arthur Raistrick, *Two Centuries of Industrial Welfare, the London (Quaker) Lead Company*, (1938), pp. 114–15.
[60] T. Pennant, *History of the Parishes of Whiteford and Holywell* (1796), p. 189.
[61] London Lead Company court minute book, 30 March 1737, quoted by M. Bevan-Evans, *Flintshire Historical Society Journal*, 20 (1962), p. 58.
[62] 6 Geo II c.30 (1732) clause 3.

book recorded two small vessels taking lead from Bagillt to Liverpool; two ships loading lead at Dawpool for Naples and London; one bound for Bordeaux which took on lead both at Parkgate and at Dawpool; and two ships going to Dieppe and Le Havre from Bagillt, but as these ships were recorded at Parkgate and Dawpool, perhaps only the lead came from Bagillt.[63]

During the seventeenth century, until 1664, considerable and growing numbers of Irish cattle were imported into England, and the largest numbers came into the port of Chester. In 1664, in order to protect the English fatstock market, cattle imports were prohibited between 1 August and 20 December (15 Charles II c.7). The cattle went through a variety of local ports:

> Grant to Lord Loughborough of £500 a year for 19½ years, in compensation for his surrender of the farm of duties for exporting cattle to Ireland from Chester, Neston, Liverpool and Beaumaris.

Lord Loughborough's farm was for both imports and exports.[64]

The partial ban of 1664 was replaced by a total ban in 1667, albeit by a temporary Act (19 & 20 Charles II c.12). This Act did not stop the flow of imported livestock, and enquiries into the trade in that year offer a glimpse of Parkgate's involvement. In the second quarter of 1667, three ships bearing ninety-five cattle and eighty sheep unloaded at Parkgate. In the same period, fourteen ships landed 570 cattle and 690 sheep at Flint, while smaller numbers were landed at Mostyn and Hoylake. This compares with a total of 3531 cattle and 2940 sheep landed in the Dee and Mersey during the first half of the year.[65]

A further Act to stop the loophole had to be passed in 1668 (20 Charles II c. 12). This temporary prohibition lapsed in 1679, whereupon the imports of Irish cattle and sheep resumed, with Chester more involved, at least as a landfall, than ever, accounting for many more beasts than Liverpool.[66] In 1681 a permanent ban on the import of Irish livestock was enacted (32 Charles II c.2).

[63] John Glegg's account book, 5 March 1764, 19 Aug. 1764, 14 March 1765, 2 Nov. 1765, 11 March, 1 Nov., 10 Dec. 1767.
[64] *Cal. S.P. Dom., 1663*, pp. 289, 303; *Cal. Treasury Books 1666–67*, p. 221.
[65] Cheshire R.O., QJF 95/2/39: D. M. Woodward, 'Anglo-Irish livestock trade of the 17th century', *Irish Historical Studies*, 18 (1973), p. 500.
[66] D. M. Woodward, 'Anglo-Irish livestock trade', pp. 502, 521.