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Table 1. Stock held by village shops, 1660-1760

	1660-1690 (n=24)		1691-1720 (n=17)		1721-75 (n=17)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Groceries						
<i>sugar</i>	21	88	14	82	13	76
<i>tobacco</i>	11	46	13	76	13	76
<i>fruit</i>	12	50	8	47	7	41
<i>spices</i>	14	58	13	76	11	65
<i>alcohol</i>	5	21	7	41	4	24
<i>tea/coffee</i>	0	0	1	6	6	35
<i>other/unspecified</i>	19	79	15	88	13	76
Haberdashery						
<i>ribbons/thread</i>	18	75	17	100	14	82
<i>buttons</i>	7	29	13	76	7	41
<i>other/unspecified</i>	11	46	7	41	7	41
<i>clothing</i>	10	42	11	65	8	47
Textiles						
<i>woollen</i>	13	54	10	59	10	59
<i>linen</i>	16	67	11	65	10	59
<i>cotton/silk</i>	8	33	6	35	4	24
Hardware						
<i>metal</i>	11	46	44	65	8	47
<i>candles/wax</i>	8	33	8	47	9	53
<i>soap/starch</i>	14	58	9	53	6	35
<i>books/paper</i>	4	17	4	24	7	41
<i>others</i>	14	58	12	71	11	65
Mean no. of lines	9		11		10	

Source: probate inventories in Cheshire Archives and Local Studies; Cornwall Record Office, Kent Archives Service, Northamptonshire Record Office

Table 2. Ownership of livestock and crops by Cheshire shopkeepers, 1660-1760

	All retailers (n=43)		Shopkeepers (n=16)		Butchers (n=27)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
cattle	27	63	7	44	20	74
sheep	8	19	0	0	8	30
pigs	16	37	2	13	14	52
poultry	6	14	1	6	5	19
corn, hay, beans	22	51	6	38	16	59
husbandry ware	10	23	2	13	8	30
none	9	21	9	56	0	0

Source: probate records proved at Chester 1660-1760

Note: shopkeepers = mercer, drapers, ironmongers, grocers and shopkeepers.

Table 3. Number and type of village retailer-farmers in three counties in 1850s

County	No. of villages	No. of retailers	Villages with retailer-farmers		Total		butcher-farmer		Village retailer-farmer				other-farmer			
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Bucks	194	798	38	20	47	6	16	34	10	21	7	15	8	17	6	13
Gloucs	318	1241	43	14	59	5	32	54	9	15	9	15	1	2	8	14
Kent	313	1275	30	10	35	3	13	37	4	11	11	32	4	11	3	9
Total	825	3314	111	14	141	4	61	43	23	16	27	19	13	9	17	12

Source: Kelly's Post Office Directory of Berkshire, Northamptonshire, and Oxfordshire with Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Huntingdonshire (1854); Kelly's Post Office Directory of Essex, Herts, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey and Sussex (1855); Kelly's Post Office Directory of Gloucestershire, with Bath and Bristol (1856)

*Note:* Co-operative 'stores' have been included although 'societies' have not as they might not have related to retailing. Post offices are included although posting houses, typically associated with hotels and inns, are not. 'PO-farmer' includes those who are also listed as shopkeeper or grocer in addition to post office and farmer.

Table 4. Number and type of village post offices in three counties in 1850s

County	No. of village shops	Type of village post office							
		Post offices		Post office only		Post office-retailer		Post office-other	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bucks	798	61	7.6	20	33	17	28	24	39
Gloucs	1241	149	12.0	57	38	42	28	50	34
Kent	1275	187	14.7	48	26	80	43	59	31
Total	3314	397	12.0	125	31	139	35	133	34

Source: see Table 3.

Note: Posting houses, typically associated with hotels and inns, are not included. 'Post office-retailer': shopkeepers, grocers, drapers, bakers, butchers and any other retailers; 'Post office-other': craftsmen, farmers, professionals, innkeepers, carriers and those who had numerous occupations combined with a post office.

Table 5. Shop tax returns for Cheshire, 1785

Towns	Shop tax range	Total tax paid
Chester	£170	£170 10s 5d
Stockport, Macclesfield	£15-30	£43 17s 5.5d
Congleton, Nantwich, Knutsford, Altrincham, Sandbach, Northwich (inc. Witton), Great Neston, Middlewich	£1-10	£30 12s 10d
Malpas, Mottram Longdendale, Tarporley, Bollin Fee, Lymm, Chelford, Boughton, Newton, Prestbury, Sale, Timperley	5-19s	£5 12s 4d
Sutton, Tarvin, Over, Church Hulme, Halton, High Legh, Partington, Church Lawton, Handforth, Latchford, Wernith, Audlem, Marple, Bosley, Nether Alderley, Tattenhall	2-4s	£2 8s 4d
Worth, Ashton-on-Mersey, Baguley, Bartington, Budworth, Butley, Castle, Cheadle Bulkeley, Dunham Massey, Farndon, Frodsham Lordship, Handley, Hyde, Kinderton, Lostock Gralam, Northenden, Rostherne, Stayley, Warburton	<2s	£1 11s 10d

Source: The National Archives, E182/96, Shop Tax Returns, 1785

Table 6. Number of village shops and retail monopolies in three counties in 1850s

County	No. of villages/rural parishes by no. of shops												Retail monopolies		
	0	%	1	%	2-3	%	4-5	%	6-9	%	10+	%	N	%	
Bucks	194	47	24	34	18	36	19	24	12	30	15	23	12	42	22
Gloucs	318	56	18	54	17	77	24	61	19	43	14	27	8	83	26
Kent	313	50	16	46	15	91	29	41	13	54	17	31	10	79	25
Total	825	153	19	134	16	204	25	126	15	127	15	81	10	204	25

Source: see Table 3.

Note: The definition of 'retail monopoly' includes all villages where there was only one retailer as well as those where the only other retailer(s) were a totally different trade (e.g. a grocer and a butcher; or a baker and a grocer). Whilst this cannot take account of any retailing of goods beyond the primary trade, which went unrecorded in the trade directories, it does ensure that the definition of monopoly represents a maximum rather than a minimum.

Table 7. Profit margin on selected goods sold by Edward Allnatt, grocer, in Sonning, Berkshire (1863-75)

Item	Type or brand	Cost price listed	Selling price	Profit margin	Markup (%)
Cocoa	Nibs	1s per lb	1s 4d per lb	4d per lb	33
	Epps	1s 0.5d per lb	1s 4d per lb	3.5d per lb	28
	Cocoatina	1s 3d per quarter tin	1s 6d per quarter tin	3d per quarter tin	20
Potted meats	n/a	10d per tin	1s per tin	2d per tin	20
Sardines	n/a	10.5d per tin	1s per tin	1.5d per tin	14
Sugar	Loaf	3.75d per lb	4.5d per lb	0.75d per lb	20
	Demerara	3.5d per lb	4d per lb	0.5d per lb	14
Matches	Bryant & Mays	2s 9d per gross	3s 6d per gross	9d per gross	27
	Safety	7s 6d per gross	9d per dozen [9s per gross]	1s 6d per gross	20
	Nightlights	4s 9d per dozen	5s 6d per dozen	9d per dozen	16
Candles	Tallow	4s 10d per dozen	5s 6d per dozen	8d per dozen	14
	Composite	7s per dozen	8s 6d per dozen	1s 6d per dozen	21
	Economic	7s 6d per dozen	8s per dozen	6d per dozen	7
	Spermaceti: Belmont	8s 9d per dozen	10s per dozen	1s 3d per dozen	14
	Spermaceti: Gold Medal	10s per dozen	11s per dozen	1s per dozen	10
	Stearine	10s 6d per dozen	11s per dozen	6d per dozen	5
	Spermaceti: Chamber	11s 6d per dozen	12s per dozen	6d per dozen	4

Source: MERL: D86/7, Account book of 'village stores' in Sonning, Berkshire, 1863-75.