

Salisbury: The Economy of a Fifteenth-century Provincial Capital*

John Hare

Salisbury was one of the most spectacularly successful of the new towns of medieval England. It rose from a rural village before 1220 to become one of the most important provincial centres of fifteenth-century England. Its rapid rise and prominence are reflected in the national statistics. By 1377, it had become the seventh most populous town in England with a total population of about 6,500.¹ It retained this relative importance throughout the later Middle Ages, being eighth in terms of the number of taxpayers in 1524–25. This sizeable population was reflected in the city's wealth. It had been the twelfth most highly taxed town in 1334 and rose subsequently. It was the sixth largest urban contributor to a royal loan in 1397, third in 1422, and was similarly highly placed throughout the period. It was also the seventh most highly assessed town in the 1524–25 subsidy.² Whatever was happening elsewhere, this was a period of prosperity for Salisbury, and a relative continuity of population despite the general national demographic decline. The city showed many of the characteristics of the later provincial capitals. It was a major industrial centre, it possessed a vital marketing role for a large hinterland based on

* This paper represents a by-product of a larger study of conditions in Wiltshire, J.N. Hare, *A Prospering Society: Wiltshire in the later Middle Ages* (forthcoming). I am grateful to those on whose published works I have drawn and particularly to Drs. A.R. Bridbury and W.A. Harwood for allowing access to unpublished work. My treatment of the Southampton records is generally based upon those available in print.

1 It possessed a taxpaying population of 3,226 (3,373 including the suburb of Fisherton Anger), Figures from *The Victoria History of Wiltshire* (17 vols, London, 1953–) [hereafter VCH, Wilts], IV, pp. 306–7. I have used 2 as the multiplier, see C. Dyer, 'Small towns', in D.M. Palliser (ed.), *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, v. 1. 600–1540 (Cambridge 2000), p. 536

2 A. Dyer, 'Ranking lists of English medieval towns', in Palliser (ed.), *Cambridge Urban History*, pp. 55–67; A.R. Bridbury, *Economic Growth: England in the later Middle Ages* (London, 1975), p. 110.

long-distance and overseas trade, and it was a sophisticated and important social and religious centre.³

It was a city whose importance deserves more attention. In the last half century we have seen several general surveys,⁴ as well as a number of accounts that have looked at particular aspects of the city: its cloth industry, government, buildings, popular discontent and religious attitudes.⁵ The same period has seen the publication of some important texts for the city's history.⁶ These and further work among the manuscript materials, justify a further assessment of the city's economy and its relationship with its hinterland. This is not, however, an attempt to provide an all-embracing study of the city and no attempt has been made to tackle the vast collection of deeds and wills recorded in the city's so-called Domesday Books.⁷

- 3 P. Clarke and P. Slack, *English Towns in Transition* (London, 1976), p. 50. It is difficult to comment on its sophistication as a social centre and Salisbury was to decline in the course of the sixteenth century.
- 4 M.K. Dale, 'The city of New Salisbury', in VCH, Wilts, VI, pp. 104–36; K.H. Rogers, 'Salisbury', in M.D. Lobel (ed.), *Historic towns: maps and plans of towns and cities in the British Isles, with historical commentaries, from earliest times to 1800* (London, 1969), I, pp. 1–9; J. Chandler, *Endless Street: a History of Salisbury and its People* (Salisbury, 1983).
- 5 A.R. Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking: an Economic Survey* (London, 1982), especially chapter 6; D.R. Carr, 'The Problem of the Urban Patriciates: Office holders in Fifteenth-century Salisbury', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 83 (1990), 118–35, and his 'From Pollution to Prostitution: Supervising the Citizens of Fifteenth-century Salisbury', *Southern History* 19 (1997), 24–41; Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *Ancient and Historical Monuments in the City of Salisbury* (London 1980–), I [hereafter RCHM, *Salisbury*]; J.N. Hare, 'The Wiltshire Risings of 1450: Political and Economic Discontent in mid-Fifteenth century England', *Southern History* 4 (1982), 13–23; A.D. Brown, *Popular Piety in late Medieval England. The Diocese of Salisbury, 1200–1550* (Oxford, 1995).
- 6 Chandler, *Endless Street*, for the ward and aulnage lists; *The first General Entry Book of the City of Salisbury, 1387–1452*, edited by D.R. Carr, (Wiltshire Record Society, 54, 2001). There has been a steady flow of material from the city's important trading partner of Southampton, above all for the brokerage books e.g. *The Brokerage Book of Southampton, 1443–44*, edited by O. Coleman, (Southampton Record Series, 4 & 6, 1960–1) [hereafter *Brokerage Book 1443–44*]; *Southampton Brokerage Book, 1447–48*, edited by W.A. Harwood (Wessex Historical Databases) [hereafter *Brokerage Book 1447–48*]; *The Southampton Port and Brokerage Books, 1448–49*, edited by E.A. Lewis, (Southampton Record Series, 36, 1993) [hereafter *Port Book 1448–49* or *Brokerage Book 1448–49*]; *The Brokerage Books of Southampton for 1477–78 and 1527–28*, edited by K.F. Stevens and T.E. Olding, (Southampton Record Series, 28, 1985) [hereafter *Brokerage Book 1477–78* or *Brokerage Book 1527–28*]; *The local Port Book of Southampton for 1435–36*, edited by B. Foster (Southampton Record Series, 7, 1963) [hereafter *Port Book 1435–36*]; *The local Port Book of Southampton, 1439–40*, edited by H. S. Cobb, (Southampton Record Series, 5, 1961) [hereafter *Port Book 1439–40*].

II Salisbury as a centre of cloth production

Most towns produced some cloth, but this industry dominated the economy of Salisbury. It was, in Bridbury's words, 'the most important clothmaking town in England according to the fourteenth century aulnage accounts'.⁸ By the end of the fourteenth century, the city had achieved a new prominence, as a manufacturing and marketing centre for woollen cloth: one of the greatest centres of an industry that had helped to transform the medieval economy. It lay at the heart of England's transformation from a major exporter of wool to one of manufactured cloth. Between the 1350s and the 1390s national cloth exports had increased over six fold and the West Country lay at the heart of this transformation. By the 1390s, the counties of Wiltshire, Hampshire, Dorset, Somerset, and Bristol produced 54 per cent of national production, despite possessing in 1377 only 13.5 per cent of the population. Wiltshire itself was responsible for nearly 15 per cent of the national total from only 3.4 per cent of the population. Moreover, the vast majority of the county's production (89 per cent) was manufactured or marketed in Salisbury.⁹ This expansion of cloth production would have generated enormous wealth, as the city became one of the most important industrial towns of England.

Salisbury's importance in this industry can be seen from a variety of sources including the aulnage accounts, a tax on marketed cloth. Some of the later accounts in the 1470s have been shown to be fabrications, with fixed totals and even made up names, but the general reliability of the earlier accounts, as in the 1390s, have been demonstrated here as elsewhere, and they offer a valuable indication as to where cloth was marketed.¹⁰ While some cloth which was attributed to Salisbury was

7 For a summary of the city's records, see M. Rathbone, *List of Wiltshire Borough Records* (Wiltshire Record Society, 5, 1951), pp. 63–85; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on manuscripts on various collections*, 8 vols, London, 1901–13, IV: 'Muniments of the corporation of the City of Salisbury' [hereafter HMC, 'Salisbury']. They are now at the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office in Chippenham (WSRO).

8 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 66

9 The aulnage material is from H.L. Gray, 'The production and exportation of English Woollens in the fourteenth century', *English Historical Review* 29 (1924), 13–35; the poll tax material from R.B. Dobson (ed.), *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London, 1970), pp. 55–57.

10 For the classic critique of the later accounts, see E.M. Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (London 1967), pp. 279–91; for the more positive approach, Bridbury, *Economic Growth*, pp. 33–35; Chandler, *Endless Street*, pp. 257–72; J.N. Hare, 'Growth and Recession in the Fifteenth-century Economy: the Wiltshire Textile Industry and the Countryside', *Economic History Review* 52 (1999), 2; R.H. Britnell, *Growth and decline in Colchester, 1300–1525* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 187–88.

Table 1: Salisbury Occupations, 1381-1481

	1381	1397	1400	1421	1451	1467	1474	1481
Merchants								
Total	4 6%		20 9.2%					
Cloth production								
Weavers	24		41	112			68	
Fullers	4		16	53			30	
Dyers	3		10					
Others engaged in cloth production	1		3					
Total	34 47.8%	292	70 34.5%	165			98 38.6%	
Clothing								
Tailors	6		14		40		44	54
Total	9%		17 8.4%				17.3%	
Food								
Butcher			8				14	
Brewer	5		1					
Baker	1		3					
Fishmonger	1		6					
Cornmonger							11	
Hostiller			2				8	
Spicer*			3					
Others	1		2					
Total	8 11.9%		14 11.5%				33 13.0%	
Leather								
Total	5 7.5%		42 19.3%				39 15.4%	
Metal working								
Total	3 4.5%		10 4.6%				27 10.6%	
Building								
Total	3 4.5%		12 5.5%					
Others								
Total	4 67		22 218				13 254	

Sources: 1379: C.C. Fenwick, *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381. Part 3, Wiltshire-Yorkshire* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 123-25; 1397 & 1400: Chandler, *Endless*

Street, pp. 260–72; 1421: *General Entry Book*, pp. 100–3; 1451 & 1481: Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, pp. 113 & 127; 1474: WSRO, G23/1/2.

Notes: This table represents an attempt to collate some of the available statistics but since the sources are not strictly comparable a note must be given about each of them. 1381 provides a relatively small group of specified occupations. The aulnage accounts for 1397 and 1467 theoretically provide a list of all those engaged in the marketing of cloth. The figure for 1421 lists all those who attended a meeting held to deal with issues of direct concern to the cloth producers and provide by far and away the most complete list of weavers and fullers. The figures are those of masters not journeymen. They do not include groups such as dyers, spinners or cardmakers or those who traded in, but did not produce the cloth.

1400 About a fifth of names on the ward list are also given trades. Altogether the 203 tradesmen provide a large but not complete sample of occupations. The paucity of brewers and bakers may reflect a situation in which such items were sold by small-scale general traders rather than by those with an exclusive concentration on these goods, or by a neglect of small-scale producers.

1474 An incomplete list of crafts and their members. This is not a complete list and excludes or underplays the importance of groups such as the building and food industries.

The tailors provide additional sources from their own gild records, and attendance at particular meetings including those for 1451 and 1481

* Spicers have been included under the food section rather than the mercantile one, because they are assessed at a low rate and not at those of the mercantile classes like the grocers.

probably produced in the surrounding villages, the city's own industry was evidently important, particularly in the 1390s, when much of the west country industry was still substantially urban.¹¹ The essential reliability of these early sources is reinforced by comparison of the ward list of tax assessments for 1399–1400 and the aulnage account of 1396–97, with almost 80 per cent of the cloths aulnaged in Salisbury being attributed to names on the ward list,¹² and about a quarter of household heads being engaged in the manufacture and marketing of cloth. Later, although the 1467 aulnage account shows a considerable fall in the number of names to

11 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, pp. 64–66; J.N. Hare, 'Pensford and the Growth of the Cloth Industry in late Medieval Somerset', *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History* 147 (2003), 173–80

12 Chandler, *Endless Street*, p. 259

73 (including those at Wilton) they include a wide range of names many of which are clearly recognisable from other sources.¹³ Large-scale industrial activity is also shown in the civic records, deeds and in the repeated references to the tenter yards of the city, where the cloth was stretched after fulling.¹⁴

A variety of sources suggest that cloth production occupied between a quarter and a third of the adult male population. In 1421, a particularly well-attended mass meeting about the marketing of cloth included 108 master weavers and 208 journeymen, 53 master fullers and 27 journeymen, and some others.¹⁵ There were thus approaching 400 present from a city whose taxed population (over fourteen years) in 1377 was 3,226, which could suggest that a quarter of the male population of Salisbury over the age of fourteen was then directly engaged in cloth production, as weavers and fullers.¹⁶ But this calculation considerably under-estimates the role of cloth production, since attendance excluded significant groups, such as many engaged in related industries, like the tailors, dyers or cloth traders. Moreover, it also crucially excluded apprentices who would still count among the over-fourteens in the poll tax. All this suggests that the figure should be nearer a third than a quarter of the taxed population of 1377. In addition, even the 161 master craftsmen were substantially less than the 292 names responsible for paying aulnage in 1396–97.¹⁷ Incomplete occupational descriptions in the lists of citizens in 1399–1400 and guild members in 1474–75 also reinforce the sense of the large-scale of the industry occupying nearer a third (34.5 per cent and 38.6 per cent respectively) of those with specified occupations.¹⁸ Of course such figures do not tell us about the size of households, and the distribution of labour. John Bryggs, a former mayor who died in 1491, had three journeymen (to whom he left looms), five other servants (3 women) and four apprentices, leaving a large household dependent on the cloth industry.¹⁹ Our sources tend to ignore the wage-earners, yet in 1524 this group constituted almost half (48 per cent) of the

13 The National Archives, London [hereafter TNA], PRO E101 345/9

14 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, pp. 79–80; C. Haskins, *Ancient Guilds and Companies of Salisbury* (Salisbury, 1912), p. 83; *The Tropenell Cartulary, being the contents of an old Wiltshire muniment chest*, edited by J.S. Davies (2 vols, Devizes, 1908).

15 My figures have been calculated from, *General Entry Book*, pp. 100–3, and differ from the figures of Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 69. The differences are insignificant except for the number of master fullers.

16 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 69

17 Chandler, *Endless Street*, pp. 260–62.

18 Chandler, *Endless Street*, p. 68.

19 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 79

taxable population.²⁰ In 1421, the figures suggest that there were two skilled journeymen weavers to every master, and one journeyman to every master fuller.

Salisbury concentrated on dyed and lightly fulled cloth, medleys and rays, dying the wool before weaving and finishing the cloth with the traditional methods of foot-fulling rather than the heavy water-driven fulling and felting of broadcloth, such as was increasingly being used in the west of Wiltshire. Its citizens might take cloth to mills in the countryside, but its own mills were for corn not for fulling cloths.²¹ The large numbers of fullers also suggest traditional and not mechanical fulling, and there was a fuller for every two weavers in both 1421 and 1474.²² Some of the producers and traders operated on a large scale. In 1396–97, 10 per cent of those paying aulnage were responsible for 41 per cent of the cloth, suggesting a greater concentration in fewer hands than, for example, at Winchester.²³

Although Salisbury remained a very large-scale producer and market, it declined in relative terms compared with the rapidly growing production of west Wiltshire. In 1394–95, Salisbury had sealed 89.4 per cent of Wiltshire's cloth, in 1414–15 this had fallen to 70 per cent (73.5 per cent including Wilton), and in 1467 (together with Wilton) it sealed only 22.7 per cent of the assessed production.²⁴ This relative decline may represent a fall in real production, growth in the west Wiltshire cloth industry, or a change in Salisbury's role as a dominant marketing centre and point of exchange between foreign imports and cloth. In reality it was probably a combination of all three occurring by 1467. The early fifteenth century was a difficult time for Salisbury's rays, as the city suffered from short-term recession and regulations, and recession occurred again in the middle of the century.²⁵ The evidence of growth in the west of the county is also apparent.²⁶ Moreover, the cloth trade was increasingly focussed on

20 W.G. Hoskins, 'English provincial towns in the early sixteenth century', in P. Clark (ed.), *The Early Modern Town: a Reader* (London, 1976), p. 101.

21 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, pp. 80–81. The fulling mill at Downton he referred to, was already in difficulties by 1302, *The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester*, 1301–2, ed. M. Page (Winchester, 1996), p. 62. It was eventually replaced by a corn mill, *The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester*, 1409–10, ed. M. Page, (Winchester, 1999), p. 53.

22 *General Entry Book*, pp. 100–3; WSRO, G23/1/2. There was a higher ratio for journeymen.

23 Chandler, *Endless Street*, pp. 258–59; D. Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester* (Oxford, 1985), p. 316.

24 TNA, PRO E101/345/2 ms 9 & 12, 345/4 m8, 345/9.

25 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 69.

26 Hare, 'Growth and Recession', 11–16.

London, at Westminster and Blackwell Hall. Was an increasing amount of Salisbury cloth aulnaged there? When recovery followed the mid-fifteenth century recession, it was based on trade with London, and cloth exports through Southampton remained relatively static until, the end of the century.²⁷ The aulnage accounts may exaggerate the city's production and under-estimate them in 1467.

The cloth industry formed the basis of the city's economy. Salisbury fitted into a group of medieval cloth towns where the industry also similarly occupied about a third of the male population: some in long-established towns like Colchester, Norwich, Wells, Coventry and Worcester and others in new cloth towns like Long Melford. Although most medieval towns were engaged in cloth production, this usually occupied less than 15 per cent of the male population.²⁸ Moreover, a much higher proportion of the city's citizens would have felt that their prosperity depended on the fortunes of the cloth industry, whether they were among the rich merchants of the city, the tailors who processed the manufactured cloth, the independent spinners, or those who sold ale, food and consumer goods to the wage earners within the cloth industry. Salisbury's dependence on the cloth industry went far beyond those who were directly employed in making the product.

III Salisbury as an international and regional centre

Salisbury was more than a mere manufacturing city: it was both an international centre and a regional trading capital. As the centre of the great west country cloth industry, it became a major focus of imports and exports. Cloth was exported, and in turn fine continental fabrics and luxuries, wine, Mediterranean spices and dyestuffs were imported. Its major outport was at Southampton, particularly in the middle of the fifteenth century, when the Italian fleet increasingly used the port rather than London, and when fortunately it is particularly well-documented.²⁹

27 E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, *England's Export Trade, 1275-1547* (Oxford, 1963).

28 J.F. Pound, 'The Social and Trade Structure of Norwich 1525-75', in Clarke (ed.), *The Early Modern Town*, p. 135; C. Dyer, *Making a Living* (London, 2002), p. 321; Hoskins, 'English Provincial Towns', p. 99; P.J.B. Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life Cycle in a Medieval Economy* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 46, 60.

29 On Southampton, see C. Platt, *Medieval Southampton. The Port and Trading Community, A.D. 1000-1600* (London, 1973); O. Coleman, 'Trade and Prosperity in the fifteenth century: some Aspects of the Trade of Southampton', *Economic History Review* 2nd series, 16 (1963-64), 9-22; A.A. Ruddock, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton, 1270-1600* (Southampton Records Series, 1, 1951).

But the city's trade also involved close connections with London, and an analysis of London debtors on the Common Plea rolls in c. 1400 shows that Salisbury's citizens had more debts with the merchants of the capital than did those of other places.³⁰ The capital's influence is also reflected in the accounts of bishop Mitford in 1406–7, when he was staying in his Wiltshire manor houses of Potterne and Woodford: 41 per cent of his purchases were made in London, and he spent less than £5 in Salisbury itself. For some imported luxuries, the London price could be lower and thus more attractive: liquorice cost 1d. a pound in London, 1½d. in Southampton and 2d. at Devizes.³¹ But for those who lacked the bishop's wealth and London connections, they would need to buy in Salisbury or in one of its satellite smaller towns.

The brokage books of Southampton allow us to see something of Salisbury's role in the complex of international trade at the peak of Southampton's activity. They record the carts that left Southampton, their contents and destinations, and they show how Salisbury dominated the town's trade in the 1440s, when it was responsible for about a third of all the recorded journeys. In this decade, Salisbury was by far the most important of the three major destinations for Southampton's goods, and together its rivals of Winchester and London totalled little more than Salisbury's figure, although this pre-eminence subsequently diminished [Table 2]. In Wiltshire, only Wilton and Marlborough seem to have received more than isolated carts, suggesting that the city had become the centre for distribution to other places beyond.³² Little of the county's goods did not first go through the Salisbury market, and without the latter there would have been a dearth of goods beyond the city [Table 4].

Key to our understanding of the Salisbury to Southampton trade lay the latter's importance in the early fifteenth century as an outlet for west country cloth. In the 1440s, Southampton was, after London, the most important cloth-exporting port in the country. It was also an important exporter of wool. But its trade was dominated by foreign traders, above all by the Italians. English cloth merchants brought their cloth to the port, and exchanged it for the goods the foreigners brought to sell: thus an English merchant and a Venetian exchanged cloth for wine.³³ West

30 D. Keene, 'The South-east of England', in Palliser (ed.), *Cambridge Urban History*, p. 179.

31 C. Dyer, 'The Consumer and the Market in the later Middle Ages', in his *Everyday Life in Medieval England*, pp. 260–61.

32 W.A. Harwood, 'The trade of Southampton, 1448–9', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club* 55 (2000), 145; *Brokage Book*, 1443–44, p. xxix.

33 Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, p. 154.

Table 2: Destination of goods from Southampton, according to the brokage books (%)

	1439-40 (ca)	1443-44 (j)	1447-48 (ca)	1448-49 (j)	1448-49 (ca)	1477-78 (ca)	1492-93 (ca)
Salisbury	35	36	35	29	31	23	22
Winchester	17	15	14	24	22	17	11
London		22	16	15	15	20	38
Total	1637	2420	2225	1407	1976	1216	1749

Figures are specified as a percentage of the total number of journeys (j) or carts (ca), both are given for 1448-49 as a point of comparison. The figures are largely a collation of the work of others taken from *Brokage Book*, 1439-40; *Brokage Book*, 1443-44; *Brokage Book*, 1447-48; Harwood, 'Trade of Southampton', 145; *Brokage Book* 1448-49; 1477-8 figures calculated from *Brokage Book* 1477-78; 1492-93 University of Winchester, Overland Trade Project: interim results, <http://www.winchester.ac.uk/?page=10490>, accessed August 2009. For 1440, only the Salisbury and Winchester figures were calculated by the editor.

country merchants brought their cloth and received wine, woad and other dyestuffs, which they then generally took back and sold in Salisbury. The latter served as a market for cloth for the surrounding area and for luxuries and dyestuffs brought from Southampton. This role explains those entries where goods were taken only to Salisbury but which belonged to merchants whose base was much further away. Such entries were evidently not fabrications: claims that goods were heading for a nearer and lower price destination. Thus in late October 1443, Nicholas Lange of Bristol was engaged in extensive carriage from Southampton. He sent nine carts to Salisbury loaded with alum, woad, madder and wine, but also six wagons to Bristol itself with a variety of goods: wine, raisins, black soap, alum, almonds and wax. There were evidently two distinct ways for cloth traders like Lange to realise the benefits of their cloth transactions in Southampton: selling the goods that they had received in the Salisbury market or taking them back to their own home town for sale or use.³⁴ James Touker of Bradford also used both methods of trade. He was a well-known cloth producer and merchant, and in both 1444 and 1448 he had woad to dispose of. In 1444, he would bring it to Salisbury for sale, but in

34 *Brokage Book*, 1443-44, pp. 97-101. He was also very active in 1447-48.

1448 he sent it back to Bradford.³⁵ The woad and other goods brought to Salisbury by merchants from the Somerset and Wiltshire cloth-producing towns like Frome, Bruton, Shepton Mallet, Mells, and Mere were a by-product of their cloth production, exports and payment in kind, but this development also emphasises the established position of Salisbury as a distributive market where people knew they could sell these imports.³⁶ This is also seen in the trade of a leading Southampton merchant Walter Fetiplace most of whose trade was with Salisbury.³⁷ In the 1440s, Salisbury was at the height of its activity as a woad market, but later in the century the merchants of these other cloth towns were more likely to take the woad back to their own town. Thus Salisbury's import of woad through Southampton fell from about 34 per cent of the latter's total in 1440s to 21 per cent in the 1460s. It was a declining proportion of a declining import as more and more foreign woad went directly to London.³⁸

Salisbury received the largest quantity or second largest quantity of woad for any place in all but two of the eighteen documented years between 1439 and 1493. Much alum and madder were also imported. The dyes were distributed from Salisbury to smaller more distant centres. Later in the century, woad was increasingly sent directly to, for example, the Somerset

Table 3: Cloth Exports

Cloth exports: 1440-9 (annual average)	cloths
London (total)	20,785
Southampton (total)	9,885
Southampton (non-Hanseatic aliens)	8,113
Southampton (denizens)	1,773
Bristol (total)	5,435
Poole (total)	1,257

Source: Calculated from Carus-Wilson and Coleman, *England's Export Trade*, 95-96.

35 *Brokage Book 1443-44*, pp. 303-5; *Brokage Book 1447-48*. On Touker, or Terumber, see Carus-Wilson, 'The Woollen Industry', in VCH Wilts, IV, pp. 134-37; Hare, *A Prospering Society* (forthcoming).

36 On cloth production in Somerset, see Hare, 'Pensford and the Growth of the Cloth Industry', 173-80.

37 B. Carpenter-Turner, 'The Brokage Books of Southampton, a Hampshire merchant and some aspects of Medieval transport', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club* 16 (1945), 176.

38 Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, p. 318.

Table 4: Salisbury as a centre of distribution from Southampton, 1447-48

Item	Total (all places)	Percentage of total to Salisbury	Percent to Wiltshire (excluding Salisbury)
Woad	2811 ballets	29.92	3.34
Alum	1159 bales	14.80*	0.09
Madder	153 bales	55.56	0.00
Herring	1844 barrels	54.18	4.72
Wine	925.3 pipes	38.22	2.55

Source: Calculated from *Brokage Book* 1447-48.

* 76.3% of alum went to London

cloth towns. But by the 1470s, Southampton had ceased to be a major importer of woad, and the trade was now largely dominated by London.

Wine was also imported on a large scale through Southampton, which was third only to London and Bristol as a wine importer, before being sold and distributed to the area around. Again much would have been linked to exchanges for cloth. In the same eighteen documented years (1439-93), Salisbury was the largest recipient of wine from Southampton in fourteen years and the second largest in the remaining four.³⁹ In the 1440s, before the temporary dislocation of the trade after the loss of English control of Gascony, 29 per cent of the wine sent inland went to Salisbury, before being traded to the towns and households beyond.⁴⁰ Salisbury's role as a market for wine for this area beyond is reflected in a more detailed analysis of the 1447-48 figures, when 38.2 per cent of the wine went to Salisbury, but only 2.6 per cent went directly to other centres in Wiltshire [see Table 4]. Most of the substantial traders of Salisbury imported wine, but some, such as Ralph Eastmere and Richard Walker in 1447-48, concentrated on this almost exclusively. By contrast John Souter, a butcher, ran a substantial sideline in wine, while Thomas Whitynge, described as a tanner and weaver, was a large-scale importer.⁴¹ Again the dominant role of the city in the wine trade needs to be emphasised. Small towns and countryside depended on the city for their provisions [Table 4], although in the north of the county Salisbury would have competed with Bristol for the wine trade. Thus the household account of bishop Mitford for 1406-7 shows that although he obtained

39 *Brokage book*, 1443-44, pp. xxvi-xxix, 322-27.

40 Calculated from *Brokage Book*, 1443-44; Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, pp. 271-72.

41 *Brokage Book* 1447-48.

wine for Woodford in south Wiltshire, from Southampton, he supplied Potterne in the centre of the county from Bristol.⁴²

Fish provided another item where the city dominated the county market. The brokage books show that Salisbury imported herring, hake, mullwell, sprats, stock fish and salmon, and in the sixteenth century Leland commented on the city's role as a fish market, stating that most types of fishes caught between the Tamar and Southampton were sent to Salisbury, while earlier Salisbury merchants had purchased fish as far off as Exeter.⁴³ By far and a way the greatest import of fish were of herring, which by this period were being gutted, salted and stored in barrels of brine.⁴⁴ In 1448, 54 per cent of the barrels of herring which went through Southampton were sent to Salisbury, while by comparison only 5 per cent went directly to other Wiltshire centres. Most of the county's fish supplies went through the Salisbury market. The barrels of fish were traded on, and ultimately the fish were sold individually.⁴⁵ Salisbury was clearly acting as a marketing centre for the area around, and fishmongers like Robert Newman, Thomas Larence, John Masyn and Southampton merchants like John Daubney, Simon Patrick and Richard Bele brought in large quantities of fish. Richard was the largest of them all in 1448, with 64 journeys of fish from Southampton.⁴⁶

Many of the goods brought to Salisbury had been imported into Southampton by foreign merchants and above all by the Italians and were then exchanged for cloth and wool. Much was then bought and sold at Salisbury, the city serving as a centre for the exchange of luxuries imported into Southampton, and for the wool and cloth collected from the surrounding area. Salisbury merchants were key figures in this exchange and distribution, acting as middlemen, collecting, trading, buying and selling both exports and imports. They also ranged more widely and some were responsible for importing goods themselves, through Southampton or Poole (which English merchants dominated and exported almost as much cloth as they did through Southampton

42 Dyer, 'The Consumer and the Market', p. 259

43 John Leland's *Itinerary*, edited by J. Chandler (Stroud, 1993), p. 492; M. Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 313, 318

44 M. Kowaleski, 'The Expansion of the South-western Fisheries in late Medieval England', *Economic History Review* 53 (2000), 449–50.

45 J.N. Hare, 'Church-building and Urban prosperity on the Eve of the Reformation: Basingstoke and its Parish Church', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club* 62 (2007), 190.

46 *Brokage Book, 1447–48*; University of Winchester, Overland Trade Project: interim results, <http://www.winchester.ac.uk/?page=10490>, map 7, accessed Aug. 2009.

[Table 3].⁴⁷ John a Port imported wine from Portugal and goods from the Netherlands, John Halle from Gascony, William Barlow imported a miscellaneous range of goods into Southampton. In 1440 he imported canvas, brass pans and wheat and in a single shipment in 1451: fish, garlic, madder, soap, onion seed, tar, hemp, steel, nails, timber, tables, brushes, points, hats, teasels and tapestry covers. William Waryn imported a collection of goods from Middelburg in 1430 including soap, dyestuffs, nails, haberdashery, hemp, teasels and Cologne threads.⁴⁸ Overseas trading activities were also reflected by the ownership of a ship or ships, as with John Halle, or with John a Port's Channel Islands connections. The city's international links also produced a sizeable element of foreigners in the city, seen in a tax on aliens in 1440 which listed ninety-six foreigners (including the Irish), whether temporary or permanent. Most (65 people or 66 per cent) were from Normandy and Brittany, a reflection of how the Lancastrian occupation of northern France had affected trade.⁴⁹ There was also a smaller but significant group of 11 from Flanders, whose trade was also reflected in the pardons to 15 aliens from the Netherlands in 1436.⁵⁰

Salisbury was above all a centre where foreign imports were exchanged for foreign exports: wine, dyestuffs and luxuries, for cloth and wool.⁵¹ Later, London took over much of Southampton's international trade, so that by the sixteenth century the range of goods taken to Salisbury from Southampton is more limited and basic: especially fish, wine and salt.⁵² This reflected the dramatic fall in the city's cloth exports through the port, so that by the later sixteenth century there were few Salisbury merchants who traded there on any substantial scale.⁵³ But this does not necessarily mean that Salisbury's role as a regional centre had changed, only that its carters now plied between Salisbury and London with their

47 On the use of Poole, see VCH, Wilts, VI, p. 126

48 *The Port Books of Southampton 1427-30*, ed. P. Studer (Southampton Record Society, 15, 1913) [hereafter *Port books 1427-30*], pp. 102-3; *Port Book, 1439-40*, p. 46; S. Thrupp, 'The Grocers of London. A Study of Distributive Trade', in E. Power and M.M. Postan (eds), *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth century* (London, 1933), p. 291. For other examples of ship ownership see VCH, Wilts, VI, p. 127.

49 TNA, PRO E179/196/100

50 *Calendar of the patent rolls... [off] Henry VI* (6 vols, London, 1901-1910), II, pp. 543-84

51 Hall was later noted for his wool trading and for a contemporary example of large quantities of woollfells belonging to Swindon men held by a Salisbury merchant John Crekemore see *Calendar of the patent rolls... [off] Henry VI*, V, p. 443

52 *Brokage Book 1527-28*.

53 G. Ramsay, *The Wiltshire Woollen Industry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth century* (London, 1965), p. 22.

cloth and their woad, rather than between Salisbury and Southampton. The city's continued role in the international trade is reflected by the lead seals found in the river, all that is left of the fine continental cottons and linens brought from places like Augsburg in southern Germany.⁵⁴

Salisbury possessed a great trading elite, although curiously we can establish more about the goods that these merchants brought to the city from Southampton, than of their exports through that town. Carr has argued that the city involved a fairly broad section of the population in its government,⁵⁵ but it was the rich who were most likely to end up at the very top. Industrialists and clothiers were less likely to become mayor than merchants. This can be seen by comparing two sources from the 1390s: the aulnage list, which shows the amount of cloth marketed by each individual, and the contemporary ward or tax list, which gives a crude indication of wealth. Of the top thirty cloth traders, some of whom worked on an enormous scale, only four were to become mayors. By contrast, sixteen of the top thirty in wealth reached this key office, of whom four at least were grocers, traders in spices and luxuries.⁵⁶ The rich merchants remained key figures in the running of the town as can be seen by comparing their activities in the brokage book and the General Entry Book of the city. Above all such merchants dominated the mayoralty in the mid century, when a few individuals held the office for many years.⁵⁷

An impression of the trading activity of the city's mercantile elite can be built up from scattered references, although these tend to underplay the evidence of their cloth exports. John a Port directly imported a miscellaneous range of goods from Middelburg in 1430 and wine from Lisbon in 1439–40, as well as purchasing in Southampton, and having contacts in Guernsey. In 1440, he sent wine to Basingstoke, Warminster and Reading as well as to Salisbury, and traded in soap, oil, apples, woad, alum and pepper. In the 1440s, he brought fruit, dyestuffs, oil, soap and tar and some wheat to the city; he also traded through Poole. He was a substantial landlord within the city.⁵⁸ Other such great mercantile figures

54 G. Egan, 'Cloth seals' in P. Saunders (ed.), *Salisbury Museum medieval catalogue. Part 3, Bone objects, glass vessels, pottery, jettons, cloth seals, bullae and other base metal objects ...* (Salisbury, 2001), pp. 70–71, although the precise dating seems unclear.

55 Carr, 'The Problem of the Urban Patriciates', 118–35.

56 Chandler, *Endless Street*, pp. 258–72; *General Entry Book*, pp. xxxiii–xxxv.

57 Between 1455 and 1470 John a Port, the younger, held it for 5 years, John Halle for 3. R. Benson and H. Hatcher, *Old and New Sarum or Salisbury* (London, 1843), p. 695.

58 *Port Books 1427–30*, pp. 102–3; *Port Book 1439–40*, p. 22; *The Brokage Book of Southampton, 1439–40*, ed. B.D.M. Bunyard, (Southampton Record Society, 40, 1941) [hereafter *Brokage Book 1439–40*]; *Brokage Book 1443–44*; *Brokage Book 1447–48*; *Brokage Book 1448–49*; VCH, Wilts, VI, p. 126; E. Nevill, 'Salisbury in 1455 (Liber Niger)', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 37 (1911), 74.

included William Lightfoot, mayor, M.P. and frequent trader in the brokage books, who invested some of his profits in a great stone house;⁵⁹ or William Hore, M.P., frequent trader through Southampton, one of the greatest cloth traders in the 1467 aulnage account, who sold wine for £3 6s. 8d. to the city in 1450, and who also acted as a notary.⁶⁰

But the two greatest merchants and leading rivals of the mid century were William Swayne and John Halle.⁶¹ In 1443–44, William Swayne controlled a quarter of the woad that went to the city, and this must have reflected the large-scale of his cloth exports. Certainly in 1467, he was probably the most important cloth trader in the aulnage accounts. This domination of the woad trade was exceptional for him but in the 1440s he regularly imported a wide range of goods from Southampton: dyestuffs, wine, fruit, wax, almonds, oil, soap, and fish.⁶² In 1448, he was involved in more journeys from Southampton than any other citizen. Swayne was three times mayor and once M.P., and the second largest landowner in the city in 1455. He left a permanent memorial in the great chapel built as part of the enlargement of St Thomas's church, and he was a leading benefactor to the tailors' guild.⁶³ His son died before him but he had also been involved in the cloth industry.⁶⁴

Swayne's great rival in politics, and probably in trade, was John Halle. He seems to have achieved economic importance in the 1440s, for he was absent from the brokage book of 1439, but was active in international trade by 1443–44, importing tar, garlic, soap, oil, herring, salmon and iron, and presumably exporting cloth. By 1448–49, he imported a wider range of products including wine, spices and woad, and he had been even more active in the previous year, when he was responsible for 89 journeys or almost 10 per cent of the city's total from Southampton. In 1450–51, he supplied Winchester College with about three-quarters of its requirements

59 *Brokage Book 1443–44*; *Brokage Book 1447–48*; *Brokage Book 1448–49*; *General Entry Book*; Benson and Hatcher, *Old and New Sarum*, p. 707; RCHM, *Salisbury*, I, pp. 73–76

60 *Brokage Book 1443–44*; *Brokage Book 1447–48*; *Brokage Book 1448–49*; Benson and Hatcher, *Old and New Sarum*, pp. 707, 97; RCHM, *Salisbury*, I, pp. 73–6; TNA, PRO/E101 345/9; WSRO, G23/1/44/2; Nevill, 'Salisbury in 1455', 84.

61 F. Street, 'The Relations of the Bishop and Citizens of Salisbury (New Sarum) between 1225 and 1612', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 39 (1916) 234–43. Both were several times mayor and also MPs for the city (*General Entry Book*, p. xxxv; Benson and Hatcher, *Old and New Sarum*, pp. 695, 707).

62 *Brokage Book 1439–40*; *Brokage Book 1443–44*; *Brokage Book 1447–48*; *Brokage Book 1448–49*; TNA, PRO/E101 345/9

63 Nevill, 'Salisbury in 1455', 70–71; Benson and Hatcher, *Old and New Sarum*, pp. 695, 707; TNA, PRO/PROB 11/7/154–5; Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 78

64 TNA, PRO/PROB 11/7/f3.

of wax. The contents of his shop reflect the range of his trade: a variety of cloth, flax, hats, caps, bonnets and other mercery; spices, such as pepper, cloves, mace and ginger; pitch, tar, woad, madder and several sorts of wine. In addition he was involved in the wool trade and is described in 1467 as alderman and wool merchant, with a reputation as a great wool merchant that lived on into the seventeenth century when it was commented on by John Aubrey. He traded beyond Southampton, possessing at least one ship, the *James* of Poole in 1463, which produced at least three accusations of piracy, and he exported cloth to Gascony and brought back wine.⁶⁵

Halle's growing economic wealth was reflected in property, display and politics. He was the third largest property owner in the city in 1455, and he attempted to show his pre-eminence in his great new stone-built hall which still survives. He was four times mayor and four times M.P. for the city, and was a dominant force in the politics of the 1450s and 1460s, a key leader in the city's struggle for independence from the bishop, and increasingly involved in royal government outside the city. It was under him that the family reached its peak in trade. It had risen from villein origins, although his father may have been a member of the corporation and a minor office holder. But Halle's son and daughter moved into the ranks of the county gentry: the son was involved in Buckingham's revolt in 1483 and the daughter married to Sir Thomas Hungerford, the local head of what remained of that important family.⁶⁶

Such men reflected both Salisbury's role in international trade, and as a regional commercial capital. Together with Bristol, Salisbury dominated the trade of central southern England. It provided a regional centre for specialist goods and services. We should expect such a city to cater for the ecclesiastical needs of its immediate hinterland, but its market stretched

65 J.C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament Biographies of the members of the Commons House, 1439-1509* (London, 1936), pp. 407-8; 'Halle, John', in H.C.G. Matthew, B. Harrison et al (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004-) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12007?docPos=13> accessed March 2005; Neville, 'Salisbury in 1455', 88-89; *Brokage Book 1439-40*; *Brokage Book 1443-44*; *Brokage Book 1448-49*; VCH, Wilts, VI, pp. 125-26; W.A. Harwood, 'The Pattern of Consumption of Winchester College, c. 1390-1560', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Winchester, 2003, p. 309; C. Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, p. 264; J. Aubrey, *Aubrey's Natural History of Wiltshire: A Reprint of 'The Natural History of Wiltshire'*, edited by K.G. Ponting (Newton Abbot, 1969), p. 113; *Calendar of the patent rolls... [of] Edward IV : 1461-1467* (London, 1897), pp. 232, 301; *Calendar of the close rolls preserved in the Public Record Office : Edward IV* (2 vols, London, 1949-53), I, pp. 197, 209

66 'Halle, John', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, pp. 407-8; J.N. Hare, 'The Lords and their Tenants: Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-century Wiltshire', in B. Stapleton (ed.), *Conflict and Community in Southern England*, (Stroud, 1992), p. 21.

further. Winchester was a major ecclesiastical centre in its own right, but occasionally Winchester College went to Salisbury for the goods and services it needed, wax and wafers in the middle of the century, book binders or a fringe for a pall in the chapel.⁶⁷ It was also more important than Winchester as a spice market.⁶⁸ Salisbury provided church bells for the area beyond, although surviving bells suggest regional variations between Salisbury and Bristol, with the north of the county supplied from Bristol.⁶⁹ A variety of major regional households also purchased their cloth in the city, as with regular buyers like Winchester College and Netley Abbey, who used the revenues of their Wiltshire manors to buy cloth there. Other more distant householders were occasional purchasers, like King's College Cambridge in 1466–67, a draper of Shrewsbury, or a canon of Wells.⁷⁰

Salisbury's hinterland and its importance as a trading centre, is reflected in the debts, between its merchants and outsiders recorded in the Court of Common Pleas.⁷¹ Although these cases ranged to distant counties from Devon to Sussex and Yorkshire, they mainly relate to Wiltshire and its adjacent counties, and to London. The greatest concentration was in the immediate vicinity of the city, but beyond this lay the main towns of Wiltshire, each with a particularly large number of cases: at Devizes, Warminster, Marlborough, Mere and Wilton. Outside Wiltshire, the city's main contacts would seem to have been the ports of Southampton, Bristol, and Poole, and important cloth-producing centres like Winchester in Hampshire, Cranborne, Shaftesbury and Sherborne, Crosscombe, Frome, Taunton and Wells in Somerset, as well as some other smaller cloth-making centres.

IV The city as a centre of consumption

The city and its visitors required food and drink, and something over 10 per cent of the population were probably occupied in the food

67 Harwood, 'The Pattern of Consumption', pp. 308, 312, 313, 256.

68 University of Winchester, Overland Trade Project: interim results <http://www.winchester.ac.uk/?page=10490>, accessed August 2009.

69 H.B. Walters, *The Church Bells of Wiltshire* (Devizes, 1927–29), pp. 255–69; A.D. Tyson, 'John Barbor of Salisbury, Brasier', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 35 (1908), 351–69.

70 WSRO, 192/32; J.N. Hare, 'Netley abbey: Monastery, Mansion and Ruin', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club* 49 (1993), 215. E.g. Winchester College Muniments, 4651 (1421); 5386 (1408); 5406 (1413); 5413 (1420); 5429 (1427); J.S. Lee, *Cambridge and its Economic Region, 1450–1560* (Hatfield, 2005), pp. 146–47; *General Entry Book*, p. 203.

71 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 71. Dr Bridbury also kindly allowed me to look at his analysis of the material from which I have also drawn. I am very grateful for this help.

selling and processing industries.⁷² Much of this was probably small-scale, and there is an unfortunate lack of evidence about, for example, the bakers and brewers. Such marketing and processing of food was both essential for the city's survival and generated wealth and labour. The city acted as a major market, collecting the grain and meat from its immediate hinterland, while importing fish, wine and luxury foods for wider distribution. It ate and drank much of the agricultural produce of the neighbouring area, and influenced its farming. At Durrington almost 10 miles away, the lord sold grain to the city in the fourteenth century, and in the late fifteenth century the bequests in the will of a wealthy butcher show his trading patterns, including gifts to all the churches between Upavon and Salisbury, as well as those on the way westward to Tilshead, Steeple Ashton and the west Wiltshire cloth producing area. Salisbury was evidently important in his activities.⁷³ The city's role as a consumer was also reflected in its legislation, controlling the time and place where outsiders could sell their foodstuffs, forbidding them selling their goods in inns or secret places or before broad day, and restricting them to places ordained for the purpose, at one of the several market crosses within the city. Thus outsiders who brought cheese, milk, grapes, plums, apples, pears, and other fruits into the city, had to sell their produce at a particular new cross.⁷⁴

Salisbury's prosperity encouraged the growth of rural agricultural specialism in its immediate hinterland. Thus at Downton, to the south, the rural economy was dominated by barley, a result of the city's demands for ale and thus for barley malt. The relative importance of sowing for barley grew on the bishopric demesne, and by 1410, barley made up 44 per cent of the demesne sown acreage (the highest so far found in the county), and almost 63 per cent of demesne grain production. But this concentration on barley was even greater on the rest of the village lands, and in 1407–12, barley made up about three-quarters of the parish's production of grain. This concentration was even more acute on the smaller rectory demesne at Downton, where, in some years in the 1380s and first decade of the fifteenth century, arable production was almost entirely given over to barley with the addition of a few acres of oats. This

72 Chandler, *Endless Street*, p. 68.

73 J.N. Hare, 'Durrington, a Chalkland Manor in the later Middle Ages', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 74–75 (1979–80), 139; C.S. Ruddle, 'Notes on Durrington', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 31 (1901), 339–40.

74 *General Entry Book*, p. 217. See also *ibid.*, pp. 141, 216, 218.

was barley monoculture, and production suffered for it in the bad barley harvests of the 1420s.⁷⁵

The city also required meat as can be seen in the regulation of the butchers, both citizens and outsiders, and in the large-scale livestock sales of nearby demesnes as at Enford or the large tenant flocks of Warminster. City butchers like John Welles leased demesnes in the countryside (in his case at Durnford) to provide the meat.⁷⁶ John Chippenham, a butcher of Butcher Row, was a figure of prominence in the community.⁷⁷ He provided the city with ox meat for a gift to lord Moleyns in 1450, he was warden of the butchers in 1474 and a leading figure in convocation by 1477. His will in 1479 was witnessed, amongst others, by two former mayors of the city. Other citizens were involved in agriculture, as with William Mercer who bequeathed 550 sheep in his will, or Nicholas Noble, a mayor of the city, who leased the demesne at Homington.⁷⁸

Salisbury was a centre of local government and justice as well as of trade and travel. Its cultural and religious attractions may have been enhanced by the cathedral chapter's high reputation in the early fifteenth century and the growing cult of St Osmund. The city was a social and legal centre, as well as a major economic one.⁷⁹ Visitors frequently stayed longer than overnight, and they required inn accommodation and services. Inns served a variety of purposes, providing accommodation for people and horses, hospitality, food, and a place of informal trade, despite the prohibitions.⁸⁰ There were at least seventeen inns in the city, apart from innumerable taverns and purely drinking establishments. This large number compares with figures of three or four for the next level of towns, in places like Warminster, Chippenham, Wilton and Bradford, or in Alton and Basingstoke (Hampshire), where accommodation was more likely to be for individual nights.⁸¹ 'The George', in the prestigious High

75 J.N. Hare, 'Lord, Tenant and the Market: some Tithe Evidence from the Wessex region', in B. Dodds and R. Britnell, *Agriculture and Rural Society after the Black Death* (Hertford, 2008), pp. 143–45.

76 Tropenell Cartulary, II, p. 281.

77 WSRO, G23/1/2, G23/1/44/2; TNA, PRO PROB 11/7/2.

78 Benson and Hatcher, *Old and New Sarum*, p. 74; King's College Muniments, Cambridge, Ledger I, ff. 61, 72, 91.

79 On the regular presence of the assizes see R.B. Pugh, 'The King's Government in the Middle Ages', in VCH, Wilts, V, p. 38.

80 *General Entry Book*, pp. 218, 216. For prohibitions elsewhere, see Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, p. 277; Hare, 'Church-building and Urban Prosperity', 190.

81 Longleat Muniments (formerly WSRO 845/Manorial/8); Hare, 'Church-building and Urban Prosperity', 187; J. Hare, 'Regional Prosperity in Fifteenth-century England: Some Evidence from Wessex', in M. Hicks (ed.), *Revolution and Consumption in late Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 113–14; Hare, *A Prospering Society* (forthcoming).

Street represented the upper end of the hotel trade, paying the high annual rent of £20 in 1418, although this subsequently fell. A six-year lease of 1474 provides details of this inn, with its thirteen guest rooms, each with between one and three beds, tables on trestles, and forms for seats, and the ability to cater for a small retinue.⁸² Such individual chambers were now expected of inns and the three known purpose-built medieval inn ranges in Salisbury all seem to have been added to existing merchants' houses.⁸³

The inn keepers were frequently men of substance within the community. Clement Furbour, who represented the hostillers' craft in 1441, brought his wine direct from Southampton and probably traded in it as well. Nine journeys were made for him in 1448 and seven in 1449, all of which were for wine, except for a barrel of white soap in 1448 and woad in 1449. He contributed substantially to royal loans, acted as a member of the city's convocation, as a collector of taxes and as steward of the main merchant guild, or brotherhood, of St George.⁸⁴ Innkeepers might also move in and out of influential roles in other trades. Stephen Hendy leased Pinnock's Inn in 1432–36, but then moved on. He had already been described as a tailor in 1435 and only a few years later in 1441 represented this craft, becoming its warden in 1448, and leaving it property at his death. He also imported wine in 1448 and to a lesser extent in 1449.⁸⁵ William Halstede was a brewer who had become an innkeeper by 1443–44 and was wealthy enough to be able to leave one of his properties to Holy Trinity Hospital in 1450.⁸⁶ Later Nicholas Hayle was both innkeeper and city chamberlain.⁸⁷

A town's prosperity depended upon its ability to cater for the consumer market, and the capacity to supply both the town and its hinterland. A list of the guilds in 1441 shows something of the occupational diversity within the city, with thirty-nine distinct crafts, divided up into nineteen groups. There were groups of rich merchants (such as the mercers, drapers and grocers); large groups of traders and manufacturers (such as the weavers), or small specialist groups (such as that made up of the combined carpenters, bowmakers, coopers, masons, tilers, limeburners and arrow-makers). There were also food crafts large enough to count by themselves such as bakers, brewers and butchers, although the cooks were also linked with the

82 C. Haskins, *The Ancient Guilds*, (Salisbury, 1912), pp. 291–94.

83 RCHM, *Salisbury*, I, p. xlvii.

84 *Brokage Book 1447–48*; *Brokage Book 1448–49*; *General Entry Book*

85 *General Entry Book*, pp. 146, 149; *Brokage Book 1447–48*; *Brokage Book 1448–49*; Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, p. 128.

86 *General Entry Book*, p. 185; *Brokage Book 1443–44*, p. 100; WSRO, 1446/66 catalogue.

87 Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*; WSRO, G23/1/44/4.

barbers.⁸⁸ Later records show different lists and groupings, suggesting a degree of flexibility about the whole system of craft guilds, a flexibility reinforced by the evidence of those individuals who changed their guilds, as with Stephen Hendy shifting from inn keeper to tailor or John Durnford from weaver to dyer, or Edward Goodyer from weaver to tailor.⁸⁹ Food and cloth-making have already been commented upon, but some of the other main manufacturing industries should be considered here.

The limited nature of the evidence, makes it difficult to deduce trends between occupations, but the tailors provide a possible exception. This became a large and increasingly important group, rising from six in 1379 and fourteen in 1400, to over 30 in 1449, 40 in 1451, 44 in 1474 and 54 in 1481. The 1474 listing does not cover all crafts, but the tailors were second only to the weavers in numbers, with about two-thirds of the latter.⁹⁰ They became one of the wealthier crafts of the city, possessing land, having a prominent role in the city's processions and catering for the fashion-conscious consumers of the city and its hinterland.⁹¹ One will in 1413 referred to a gown in the style of Walter Nandre, a large-scale cloth producer and mayor of Salisbury but whose influence on fashion was not through a specific role as a tailor. Several other wills refer to gowns of particular styles and reflect the increased concentration in this period on styled and tailored clothes.⁹² The growth in their numbers may suggest a growing specialisation and emphasis on transforming the cloth to higher value clothes rather than on the basic process of cloth production.

The leather industry was also very important, and included 14 per cent of the individuals with known occupations in 1399–1400.⁹³ It had forty-two craftsmen in the ward list and an identical number in 1474. It is a neglected industry second only to cloth in scale, but with a reputation that went beyond the city, as far as Beverley in Yorkshire.⁹⁴ The metal workers were smaller, but still substantial and the wide range of crafts included braziers, spurriers, goldsmiths, cutlers, pinner and cardmakers. In 1474, there were twenty-four smiths and three pewterers.⁹⁵ There

88 Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, pp. 60–61.

89 Brown, *Popular Piety*, pp. 146–48.

90 WSRO, G23/1/2; Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, pp. 113, 127

91 Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, pp. 98–130.

92 Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, pp. 95–130; Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, p. 76; C. Dyer, *An Age of Transition?* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 150–51; E. Crowfoot, F. Pritchard and K. Staniland, *Textiles and Clothing, c.1150–c.1450* (Woodbridge, 1972), pp. 150–98.

93 Chandler, *Endless Street*, pp. 68, 70.

94 VCH, Wilts, VI, p. 135

95 In 1474–76 some pewter goods were seized and this was followed by the enrolment of two Salisbury pewterers in the London company. J. Hatcher and T.C. Barker, *A History of British Pewter* (London, 1974), p. 74.

were enough attorneys at law for them to have their own craft. The lawyers included John Whittocksmede, the bishop's steward and William Alesandre, and again reflecting the regional role of the city.

Prosperity generated demands for building.⁹⁶ Many of the city's fine timber-framed buildings still survive, with twenty-one fourteenth-century and fifty-five fifteenth-century houses being recorded by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments.⁹⁷ Many, but not all, were probably constructed by local carpenters, although the contracts might be to outsiders.⁹⁸ There was fine quality building in stone, although many of the masons may well have been outsiders, who were resident as long as there was work. Although building work at the cathedral in the fifteenth century was not on the heroic scale of previous periods, the bishop's palace was largely rebuilt in the latter part of the century. The rebuilding and transformation of the city's churches provides a more significant indicator of civic prosperity. The two largest of the parish churches, St Thomas' and St Edmund's, were almost completely rebuilt, and the scale and lavish expenditure on the rebuilding of the former provides a fitting reminder of the wealth of the community. There was also extensive work at St Martin's in the south-east corner of the town, but nothing survives of the two friaries and any rebuilding there. A few rich merchants also lavished their wealth on stone buildings of which the hall of John Halle and parts of the building of William Lightfoot still survive.⁹⁹

V Prosperity and Recession

Historians of the late medieval town have to cope with an immense variety of individual developments. The urban experience was affected by factors such as the scale of a town; by their role (as provincial or local centres; or as pre-eminently manufacturing or trading centres); and by their location in prospering or declining areas. At the same time growth based on the market left prospering towns vulnerable to recession should conditions deteriorate. There is a clear need for us to look at short-term growth and decline and not just to look for long-term trends over the later Middle Ages as a whole, and to weigh up their fortunes in both relative

96 RCHM, *Salisbury*, I; Hare, *A Prospering Society* (forthcoming)

97 RCHM, *Salisbury*, I, pp. lxi–lxii.

98 L.F. Salzman, *Building in England down to 1540* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 516–17.

99 T. Tatton-Brown, 'The church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Salisbury', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 90 (1997), 101–9; RCHM, *Salisbury*, I, pp. 24–39, 73–6, 103–4; Brown, *Popular piety*, pp. 113–14.

Table 5: Rent Income of the City Chamberlain

	Net rent
1444-45	£42 5s. 1½d.
1449-50	£39 4s. 0d.
1453-54	£34 5s. 8½d.
1469-70	£50 6s. 0d.
1473-74	£41 16s. 0d.
1484-85	£39 3s. 8d.
1497-98	£56. 12s. ½d.
1509-10	£67 2s. 6d.

Source: calculated from WSRO G23/1/44/2-8
(Rent payments and increases less repayments,
decays and defects).

and absolute terms, at a time of demographic decline. Even classic decaying towns like Winchester saw urban development on the High Street, as well as the many vacant holdings in the streets beyond.¹⁰⁰ Such variety emphasises the need for the examination of a wide range of individual towns.¹⁰¹

Salisbury prospered over the period as a whole: its ranking remained high both by taxpayers and wealth. In A.D. Dyer's analysis of national urban population it occurs in the intermediate group, in which its growth or decline depended on which multiplier is used to convert the number of taxpayers to total population, as opposed to those which showed clear trends of growth or decline. But within this general picture, there were also periods of short-term recession, particularly reflecting the fortunes of the cloth industry. These fluctuations also need to be seen within the context of the trends in its rural hinterland.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ T.B. James and E. Roberts, 'Winchester and later Medieval Development: from Palace to Pentice', *Medieval Archaeology* 44 (2000), 182-86; E. Roberts, *Hampshire Houses* (Winchester, 2003).

¹⁰¹ For assessments of the debate, see A. Dyer, *Decline and Growth in English Towns, 1400-1640* (Basingstoke, 1991); D.M. Palliser, 'Urban Decay Revisited', in J.A.F. Thomson (ed.), *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth century* (Gloucester, 1988), pp. 1-21; A.D. Dyer, 'Urban decline in England, 1377-1525', in T.R. Slater (ed.), *Towns in Decline AD 100-1600* (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 266-88.

¹⁰² Hare, 'Growth and Recession', 1-26; Carus-Wilson and Coleman, *England's Export Trade*.

One indicator of demand for land is provided by the rental of the city chamberlain, but these need to be used with caution. They are not helpful in establishing economic growth since it is not possible to distinguish between changes in the rent total that arose from increased demand for land and those that arose from new properties bequeathed to the city, but they can provide evidence of the city's ability, or inability, to collect their rents. They are thus easier to use as evidence of recession than of economic growth.

There were economic difficulties in the early fifteenth century, both in the urban area and in some of the outlying industrial villages. General export falls, as through Southampton, were accentuated by problems generated by restrictive legislation about rays, the main type of cloth produced by the city.¹⁰³ But trade revived and cloth exports and rural rentals reached a peak in the 1440s. The mid-century recession was reflected in the concern of the city fathers about vagabondage in the 1450s, and the city's crucial role in the Wiltshire risings of 1450, when the cloth industry seems to have been a common element in much of the disturbed areas in the country.¹⁰⁴ The rent of the George Inn fell, and the city was unable to raise the full expected rent from land given to it in order to finance obits or prayers for the dead. Rent defects from this fund rose from £2.4s.6d in 1449–50 to £16.14s.8d. in 1453–54.¹⁰⁵ The city's continued difficulties in collecting these rents, led in the early 1470s to an inability to celebrate the obits and to the reorganisation of their provision. The decline of Southampton and the Southampton trade did not necessarily lead to decline in Salisbury, merely to the loss of an obvious source for much of Salisbury's trade.¹⁰⁶ But the city retained its high standing in taxation and population throughout the later Middle Ages, and kept its position as a major cloth-producing centre until much later in the sixteenth century. Its temporary difficulties in the early and middle part of the fifteenth century, do not suggest that it was anything other than a busy, bustling and prosperous city, subject to the short-term recessions and tensions that went with urban and industrial life. Those responsible for the final stage of rebuilding St Thomas' church would not have seen their city as in decline: Salisbury was still one of the greatest

103 Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, pp. 68–70; Hare, 'Growth and Recession', 7.

104 Hare, 'Wiltshire Risings of 1450', 13–23. For the mid-century recession in this area, see Hare, 'Growth and Recession', 18–22, and more widely J. Hatcher, 'The Great Slump of the mid-Fifteenth century', in R.H. Britnell and J. Hatcher (eds), *Progress and Problems in Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Edward Miller* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 236–72.

105 WSRO, G23/1/44/ 2–3.

106 HMC, 'Salisbury', p. 201; Haskins, *Ancient Guilds*, pp. 291–93; Brown, *Popular Piety*, pp. 167–68; Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*.

cities of the kingdom, and a centre of international trade and industry. Yet a century later, it is described by a recent historian of seventeenth-century Salisbury as 'this small cathedral city'.¹⁰⁷ Little would its fifteenth-century citizens have realised that the peak had been reached and that the city's future lay in the interesting but relative obscurity of a provincial market town.

107 P. Slack, 'Poverty and Politics in Salisbury, 1597-1666', in P. Clark and P. Slack (eds), *Crisis and order in English towns, 1500-1700* (London, 1972), pp. 164-65.