

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANGLO-IRISH  
TRADE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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## **Declaration**

I confirm that the following dissertation is my own work and all quotations, documentary evidence and data drawn from other sources have been duly acknowledged.

Susan Flavin

Word Count -16,500

## **Abstract**

This thesis is concerned with the development of Ireland's trade with England in the sixteenth century. This was the largest branch of Ireland's overseas trade in the period and therefore developments in this area serve as a model for overall changes in the nature of the Irish economy. The bulk of this study is concerned with an intensive examination of trade in the period 1516-17, based on a detailed analysis of a Bristol customs account from that year. This account was chosen to supplement statistics already available for 1503/04 and the 1540s which, when compared, suggest that major developments had taken place in both the size and nature of Ireland's trade with Bristol by the early 1540s.

After a brief methodology chapter, data from the account will be considered in three distinct chapters. Chapter 2 is based on statistics relating to the gross annual figures for imports and exports. These figures will be analysed to estimate the overall size of the trade and the level of growth during the period, the balance of trade between Ireland and England and the supply and movement patterns of shipping. Consideration will also be given to the activity of Irish ports to examine any changes to the internal dynamics of the trade.

Chapters 3 and 4 will involve a closer examination of the nature of Anglo-Irish trade in the early sixteenth century by looking respectively at the commodities of both the export and import trade. Commodities will be considered within groups and their total values will be compared to earlier and later accounts to establish trends in trade.

The conclusion will sum up the findings of this study and consider their wider historiographical significance in the development of Anglo-Irish trade in this period.

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

There is widespread agreement amongst historians that Ireland's trade with England had, by the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, become distinctly colonial in nature. Tudor policy towards governing the country evolved in this period. What had been, under Henry VIII, a conciliatory and gradualist strategy of assimilating the Gaelic Irish into the Tudor state, became an ambitious and aggressive strategy aimed at breaking the Old English political influence, in order to establish a new political elite and reduce the country by force.<sup>1</sup> By 1600, a significant amount of land had been transferred to the Protestant 'New English' settlers and by 1688, Catholic landowners held only about 27 per cent of profitable land, falling to 15 per cent in 1703.<sup>2</sup> During the same period, as settlers gradually took control of Irish land and resources, Ireland became increasingly integrated into and dominated by the wider British economy and became chiefly a source of raw materials for the English market.<sup>3</sup>

While historians generally agree on the nature of Ireland's commercial relationship with England from the seventeenth century until modern times, there is widespread

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<sup>1</sup> S. Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors* (London, 1998), p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> R. Gillespie, *The Transformation of the Irish Economy, 1550-1700* (Dundalk, 1991), p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> L. M. Cullen, 'Economic Trends, 1660-91', in T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin & F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland, Vol. III, Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 387-407 (p. 392).

disagreement regarding the cause of this relationship. In the early twentieth century, nationalist historians, such as Green and O' Brien, interpreted Ireland's economic backwardness as the result of a deliberate British war on Irish industry and trade, an early manifestation of English economic imperialism.<sup>4</sup> Green, for example, in her colourful account of the English subjugation of the Irish economy, blames the shortage of skilled workers in Ireland as being due to the fact that Bristol men, in an effort to further their own industry, kidnapped Irish weavers and put them to work in Bristol, later driving them out when they proved to be too threatening to Bristol weavers.<sup>5</sup>

Ada Longfield's more moderate interpretation still remains the most influential and comprehensive account of Ireland's overseas trade in the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, while she allows that definite efforts were made by the Crown to develop certain industries, she argues that ultimately English mercantilist policies in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries overrode Irish concerns, to the detriment of the Irish economy. According to Longfield, the reason for Ireland's failure to join the 'general march of economic progress' was because of the massive increase in her export of raw materials, which left her without adequate resources to industrialise. She sees this trend as being greatly facilitated by licenses from the Crown, under pressure from English merchants.<sup>6</sup> Longfield's arguments are still influential today. Ellis, for

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<sup>4</sup> V. Treadwell, 'The Irish customs administration in the sixteenth century', *Irish Historical Studies*, XX, 80 (1977), 384-417 (p. 395).

<sup>5</sup> A. S. Green, *The Making Of Ireland and its Undoing* (London, 1908), p. 144.

<sup>6</sup> A. Longfield, *Anglo-Irish Trade in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1929), pp. 86-93.

example, has suggested that contemporary mercantilist theories, political instability that led to Crown suspicion of Ireland's continental trade and debasement of the coinage, led to a steady decline in the economy, causing decay of both the towns and the shipping capacity of the ports.<sup>7</sup>

Since the 1950s, another school of thought has developed, with historians such as Kearney, Treadwell and Gillespie questioning the impact of English policies on Ireland's economic development.<sup>8</sup> Treadwell's examination of the Irish customs administration, for example, downplays the malevolent intent of the Elizabethan trade acts, suggesting that they were intended to strengthen the ports, which were, by the 1560s, in various stages of decay and to promote their well-being at the expense of 'mere Irish' and 'foreigners'.<sup>9</sup> For Gillespie, whose study is the most recent and comprehensive on the topic, Ireland's economic underdevelopment can be explained not by English policies, but by various economic factors, such as skill scarcity and the organisation of the economy around consumption rather than capital investment.<sup>10</sup>

While there is no academic consensus regarding the reasons for the economic changes that occurred in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, all such arguments share

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<sup>7</sup> Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, pp. 48-50.

<sup>8</sup> H. F. Kearney, 'Mercantilism in Ireland, 1620-40', *Historical Studies: Papers Read before the Second Irish Conference of Historians*, 1 (1958), 59-68; Treadwell, Op. Cit.; Gillespie, Op. Cit.

<sup>9</sup> Treadwell, Op. Cit., p. 395.

<sup>10</sup> Gillespie, Op. Cit., pp. 7-8.

the common perception that the economy remained in a chronically underdeveloped state throughout the sixteenth century.

Historians who have studied the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries have been more enthusiastic about the level of potential for Ireland's independent economic development, acknowledging the liberal trading conditions and extensive political and commercial privileges enjoyed by the towns in the period, that facilitated trade with both the Continent and the Gaelic Irish. Despite the relatively open nature of Ireland's trade in this period however, writers such as Carus-Wilson, Childs and Longfield have seen no evidence of changes in the nature or size of her trade. It is assumed that throughout this period, Ireland remained an importer of luxury and manufactured goods and an exporter of raw materials.<sup>11</sup> This means that whatever the rights and wrongs of the argument regarding her later developments, all existing studies agree that policies adopted in the late century merely exacerbated a problem of chronic underdevelopment but did not dramatically alter the nature of the trade in any way.

Until recently there has been no attempt to question these ideas, despite the fact that all such assumptions are based on an incredibly limited range of quantitative evidence. Longfield's study, while ground breaking in its day, is based almost entirely on one

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<sup>11</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 196.

Bristol customs account, that of 1503/04. Likewise, all later studies draw their conclusions on the early sixteenth century economy from the same data.

A recent analysis of three further Bristol customs accounts; 1541-2, 1542-3 and 1544-5, undertaken by Dr Evan Jones as part of a doctoral thesis on the Bristol shipping industry, has revealed some very surprising and significant findings regarding the size and nature of Anglo-Irish trade in this period.<sup>12</sup> These accounts show a dramatic rise in the overall size of Anglo-Irish trade between the late fifteenth century and the 1540s, with gross figures for the trade increasing by an impressive 65%. Furthermore, they show a significant increase in the percentage of the trade carried on Irish ships, which rose from 50% of total trade in 1503/04 to 75% by the 1540s. Noted also was the increasing prominence of Waterford ships on this route, the volume of trade carried by ships from this city rising by 38% in the same period, suggesting an alteration in the internal dynamics of the Irish ports from that seen by Childs and Longfield. Clearly, this was a period of dramatic expansion for the Irish economy and these figures represent a significant departure from those seen by Childs which were suggestive of an overall economic stagnation by the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>13</sup> If indeed by the 1540s, Irish ships controlled 75% of the total trade on this route, as indicated by Jones's findings, then it is likely that three quarters of the profits remained in the hands

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<sup>12</sup> E. Jones, 'The Bristol Shipping Industry in the Sixteenth Century', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> W. Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England in the Later Middle Ages', *Irish Economic and Social History*, IX (1982), 5-33 (p. 18).

of Irish merchants, which is of major significance to the potential for further independent development of the economy.

While there was very clearly a large increase in the size of Ireland's trade in the first half of the sixteenth century, the findings also indicate that the character of this trade was evolving also. Data collected by Childs and Longfield shows that between 1479 and 1504 Ireland's exports of cloth and clothing made up an average of just 10% of her total exports. Jones's figures indicate however, that by 1541, this figure had risen to 56%, the highest proportion of manufactured goods ever exported by the country until then, and a figure not achieved again until modern times. These figures suggest that between 1504 and the 1540s, a significant textile industry had developed in the south-east of Ireland, capable of producing a large surplus to local requirements, for the English market. This makes the level of Irish under-industrialisation, so frequently noted by historians, seriously questionable. These changes in the level of manufacture are in line with other changes in Irish exports and imports. Jones's figures point to an overall decline in the amount of fish exported to Bristol, this export having always before been Ireland's mainstay. There is also a decline in the amount of broadcloth imported from Bristol while on the other hand the accounts show a marked rise in the diversity and quantity of luxury items imported in comparison to earlier findings, indicating both a growing prosperity and sophistication of tastes in Ireland during the period.

It is generally agreed that trade between Bristol and Ireland was the most important part of Ireland's overseas trade in this period and that England was Ireland's principal trading partner.<sup>14</sup> These findings therefore represent a major overall development in Irish trade between the end of the fifteenth century and the mid-sixteenth century. Indeed, from these new findings, it could be hypothesised that Ireland underwent some sort of independent industrial and commercial revolution between 1504 and the 1540s. The significance of this cannot be overestimated, as if this could be substantiated, it would mean that the terms of the entire historiographical debate would need to be revised, the starting point for Ireland's later developments being very much altered.

Currently there is a vital gap in our knowledge. The thirty-eight year divide between the findings of Longfield and Jones makes any conclusions very difficult. With this in mind, this thesis will carry out an in-depth analysis of an intermediate account, 1516-17, which, although closer chronologically to the data collected by Longfield, will provide a link that enables a more complete understanding of the development of the Irish economy in this period. It is hoped that analysis of this account will open up the study and will facilitate in narrowing down the exact timing of these developments,

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<sup>14</sup> Child's, 'Ireland's Trade with England', pp. 8-10; E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol' in E. Power and M. M. Postan (eds.), *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933), pp. 183-246 (p. 192).

showing to what extent they were part of a continuous upward trend or a mere aberration in the figures.

It may seem unusual that such emphasis is placed on the use of Bristol's documents for the study of Irish economic history. There are, however, very specific reasons why this is justifiable and indeed necessary. Due to the destruction by fire of the Irish Public Records Office in 1922, primary source material is very limited. No comparable set of customs accounts have survived from Ireland, any Continental port or any other English port. No national accounts exist for Chester, for example, in this period, and the fragmentary Palatinate accounts that do survive, rarely give any detailed information, omitting the type of cargo, values and even port of origin, making even a study of shipping impossible for this route in Ireland's trade.<sup>15</sup>

As already mentioned, Bristol was the favoured port for Anglo-Irish trade in this period and Anglo-Irish trade was the main branch of Ireland's overseas trade. These accounts can therefore be used to develop a very detailed picture of Ireland's trade in the period. Fortunately, the Bristol accounts are an exceptionally detailed source, recording ship's names, masters, cargo values and quantities, merchant's names, ports of origin and destination, which allow us to build a very comprehensive picture of trends in sixteenth

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<sup>15</sup> Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 23.

century Anglo-Irish trade. Furthermore, a large number of accounts survive from the 1460s onwards, facilitating comparisons over long periods of time.

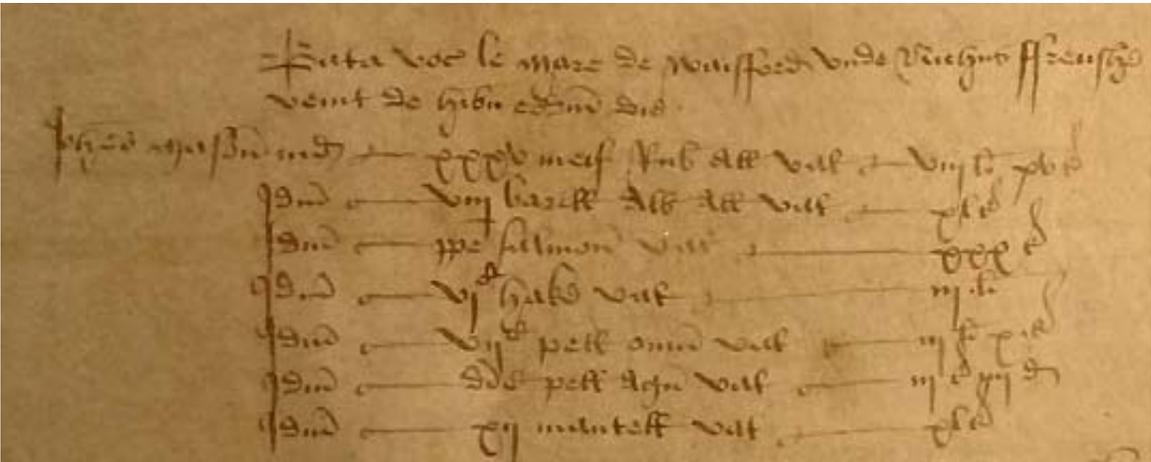
This thesis will begin with a brief methodology chapter, which will further consider the value of the accounts as a source. Data will then be considered in three distinct chapters. Chapter 2 is based on statistics relating to the gross annual figures for imports and exports. These figures will be analysed to estimate the overall size of the trade and the level of growth during the period. Data will then be further broken down to study the balance of trade between Ireland and England and this will be examined in more detail by looking closely at both the supply and movement patterns of shipping. Further analysis will include an examination of the activity of Irish ports to isolate the internal dynamics of the trade. Seasonal variations in shipping patterns and values of trade will be considered in a month -by-month breakdown of figures by port of origin for both imports and exports.

Chapters 3 and 4 will involve a closer examination of the nature of Anglo-Irish trade in the early sixteenth century by looking respectively at the commodities of both the import and export trade. Commodities will be considered within groups and their total values will be compared to earlier and later accounts to establish trends in trade. Particular consideration will be given to the level of manufactured goods exported by Ireland to facilitate further understanding of the extent and timing of Ireland's

economic development during the period. Likewise attention will be given to the nature and level of diversity of Ireland's imports which will no doubt shed light on the level of economic growth achieved. The conclusion will sum up the findings and consider their wider historiographical significance in the development of Anglo-Irish trade in this period.

**CHAPTER 1: METHODOLOGY**

P. R. O., E122 21/2, a ‘particular account’ for 1516-17, records all the declared international trade of the eastern end of the Bristol Channel for any goods entering or leaving England from the area, that were supposed to pass through, and be recorded at, the customs house in Bristol.<sup>16</sup> The account covers the full fiscal year from Michaelmas to Michaelmas. It is written in a Latin cursive script and is in reasonable condition and although some entries are damaged and faded, they remain legible. The account is approximately 90cm long and 20 cm wide and is comprised of a roll of seventeen double- sided parchment folios attached at the top. The picture below, taken from the account, shows the standardised form of a typical short entry.



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<sup>16</sup> Jones, ‘Bristol Shipping Industry’, p. 33.

Bata vocata le Mare de Waisford unde Nichus Frensh venit de *Hibernia* eodim die (9<sup>th</sup> March 1517)

Johan Mason ind.	xxxv meise rubra allecia Val. <sup>17</sup>	viii libra xv s. <sup>18</sup>
Idem	viii barell alba allecia Val.	xl s.
Idem	pipe salmon Val.	xxx s.
Idem	vic <sup>19</sup> hake Val.	iii libra
Idem	viic pell ovin Val.	iii libra x s.
Idem	di c pell agnor Val.	iii s. iiii d. <sup>20</sup>
Idem	xii mantell Val.	xl s.

The boat called the Mary of Wexford, under Nicholas French, arrived from Ireland the same day. (9<sup>th</sup> March 1517)

John Mason indigenous,	35 mease red herring value	£8. 15s.
Also	8 barrels white herrings value	40s.
Also	1 pipe of salmon value	30s.
Also	6 hundred hake value	£3.
Also	7 hundred sheep skins value	£3 10s.
Also	half hundred lamb skins value	3s. 4d.
Also	12 mantles value	40s.

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<sup>17</sup> Val. = value. This represents the nominal value of goods according to the customs rates book. Real values may be somewhat different to the listed value.

<sup>18</sup> S. = shilling;

<sup>19</sup> c. = 'hundred', this could be 100, 112, 120, or 124.

<sup>20</sup> d. = pence

As already discussed, the Bristol customs accounts are particularly detailed accounts. Data selected for statistical analysis, for the purpose of this study includes; date of the entry, port of origin, destination, ship's master, commodities and customs valuations for all ships coming from and going to Ireland in 1516-17. Individual merchant's names and quantities of goods have been omitted. Data selected for analysis has also excluded that relating to Bristol's continental trade, except where this is suggestive of complex Anglo- Irish-Continental trade. All the selected information, which covers 2110 individual commodities and 206 different shipments, has been inputted to a computerised data-base, from which all the statistical analysis to follow is derived. It is intended that the complete data-base will soon be made available at [www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/Sources/1516account.htm](http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/Sources/1516account.htm). A full summary of commodities however, as well as a complete list of Irish ships, is provided for reference in the Appendices.

The valuations for goods in the accounts are based on nominal values that had been set in the fifteenth century and not on current market values which, due to inflation, were probably around twice as much.<sup>21</sup> Values in the accounts are given for all commodities except woollen cloth paying custom, wine and tanned hides. In order to allow meaningful comparative analysis of data across different periods, woollen cloth

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<sup>21</sup>Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 34; Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 18.

and wine have been allocated values of £4 per tun for wine and £2 per cloth of assize. These values are the same as those adopted by Wendy Childs in her study of Anglo-Irish trade in the later middle ages. Childs suggests and Jones accepts the assumption that these values are in line with customs valuations, which rated goods at about half their market value.<sup>22</sup>

While the use of customs accounts in the analysis of trade development is a well-established historiographical method, as is the case with many primary sources, their reliability as a source is not universally accepted. The most frequent concern raised by historians is the level of under-recording in the accounts as a result of smuggling. The level at which smuggling occurred has been questioned by Professor Carus-Wilson, who argues that when the administrative machine was working at all adequately, it must have been very difficult to achieve.<sup>23</sup> A more important point has recently been raised by Jones, in relation to Bristol-Continental trade, who argues that the probable level of smuggling in particular trades can be determined by examining the economic incentives that existed to engage in it. Jones argues that when one measures the cost of customs payments against the potential cost of evasion, the risk hardly seems worthwhile. Most goods, in the early sixteenth century, carried only the standard tax of poundage, which came to 5 per cent of the nominal value of goods imported or

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 18; Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 34.

<sup>23</sup> E.M. Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages* (Bristol Record Society, 1937) p. 9.

exported. The effect of inflation had already caused real values to rise above nominal values in this period, so that in reality most goods paid tax worth approximately only 2-4 per cent of their true cost. The only exceptions to this were leather and grain exports. Leather paid a group of taxes totalling 4s. per dicker and its export, like grain, was normally prohibited, leading to the costly process of obtaining licences.<sup>24</sup> The significance of this will be considered further in chapter 3. Smuggling then was restricted to just two trades and this is reflected by the fact that, outside these areas, evidence for illicit trade in Bristol before 1558, when a new book of rates was issued, is negligible.<sup>25</sup> This argument is equally relevant to Anglo-Irish trade, as tax rates were the same for both the Irish and Continental trades.

A further point sometimes made regarding the weakness of the source is that even for periods where consecutive accounts are available, any one account, though it may cover a whole year, as E122 21/2 does, may represent an 'exceptional' year rather than a 'normal' one. Trade was of course affected by war, epidemic disease, famine, wreckage and piracy and in the case of the latter factors we do not know if the accounts accurately record which shipments did actually arrive and depart.<sup>26</sup> This point however

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<sup>24</sup> E. Jones, 'Illicit business: accounting for smuggling in mid-sixteenth-century Bristol', *Economic History Review*, LIV, 1 (2001), pp. 23-24.

<sup>25</sup> J. Vanes, *Documents illustrating the Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century* (Bristol, 1979), p. 9.

<sup>26</sup> Carus-Wilson, *Op. Cit.*, p. 8.

can be over-emphasised, and is by no means an adequate argument on which to discount the material, as it is surely impossible to define a 'normal' year in this, or for that matter, any other period.

Despite the negativity of some historians regarding the Bristol accounts as a source, their outstanding detail makes them an invaluable source for the study of sixteenth century Irish economic history. With an awareness of their limitations regarding the under recording of corn and leather, they can be used with confidence to develop a very comprehensive picture of developing trends in the economy in this period.

## ***CHAPTER 2-ANALYSIS OF GROSS FIGURES***

Prior to an examination of the specific nature of Anglo-Irish trade in the sixteenth century, this chapter will focus on the extent of that trade, based on a statistical analysis of the data extracted from the 1516-17 customs account. Consideration will be given to the overall figures of the Bristol-Ireland trade, the balance of trade, the control and supply of shipping and seasonal variations. These statistics will be considered in relation to the data already available for the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and to the as yet unpublished findings of Dr Jones for the 1540s, to examine possible trends, and their significance in the development of the Irish economy.<sup>27</sup> The detailed analysis will be followed by a brief consideration of the conditions that influenced and sustained the developments of this period, in order to situate these trends within a wider historiographical framework.

The late medieval period, according to Wendy Childs, was one of decline for Irish trade, a factor that set Ireland apart from the rest of Europe where economic growth is identifiable from the 1480s.<sup>28</sup> Childs, basing her analysis primarily on English customs

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<sup>27</sup> Child's, 'Ireland's Trade with England', pp. 17-20; Longfield, *Anglo-Irish Trade*, pp. 213-19; Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', pp. 176-182.

<sup>28</sup> W. Childs and T. O' Neill, 'Overseas Trade' in A. Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, II, Medieval Ireland* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 492-524 (p. 515).

evidence, sees trade flourishing in the late thirteenth century, dropping steeply even before the disruptions of the Black Death, perhaps stabilising at a lower level after the Black Death, but then drifting further downwards in the 1480s and 1490s. She suggests, based on Longfield's analysis of the 1503-04 account, that there was potential for expansion but is uncertain if this account is indicative of a general increase.<sup>29</sup> Analysis of the gross figures for trade in 1516-17 however, indicates that the rise in Bristol-Irish trade noted by Longfield, which saw values of imports and exports rise from £2818 in 1492 to £4954 in 1504, an increase of 76%, marks the beginning of a period of dynamic change in the fortunes of the Irish economy, rather than a temporary irregularity in the figures. The gross value of Anglo-Irish trade in 1516-17 amounts to £5866, suggesting that growth continued to accelerate from 1504. Indeed the figure achieved here exceeds the average gross figure of £5277 drawn from the 1540s data. In the absence of further statistics it is difficult to prove that there was a continuous upward trend in economic development between 1517 and 1540. Nevertheless, the most immediate conclusion to be drawn from these findings is that what may initially have appeared to be dramatic rise in Ireland's trade with Bristol in the 1540s was not new in this period.

While analysis of gross figures indicates that the early sixteenth century was a dynamic period in Ireland's economic development, an initial breakdown of the data

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 515.

highlights the continuation of certain important trends. The balance of trade, for example, remains, as in previous analyses, firmly in favour of Ireland. Irish exports to Bristol in this year were 30% higher than her imports and this substantial disparity persists in the 1540s.<sup>30</sup> The extent of this imbalance has been questioned by Childs, who has suggested that any perceived imbalance may have been partially corrected by the other ports of the Bristol Channel. The basis for this view is that while the value of Irish imports to Bristol exceeded the value of exports in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Bridgewater's exports to Ireland exceeded the value of imports most years.<sup>31</sup> Jones has recently questioned this theory having examined a range of Bridgewater accounts from 1538 to 1546. He found no conclusive evidence of a significant excess of export over import from Bridgewater sufficient to rectify any perceived imbalance.<sup>32</sup> Thus it is likely that the balance truly does reflect the genuine strength of Ireland's role in the partnership at this time.

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<sup>30</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 71.

<sup>31</sup> Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 21.

<sup>32</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', pp. 71-73.

## ***SHIPPING***

The supply of shipping in Anglo-Irish trade can be a somewhat problematic area and one in which the usefulness of customs accounts is, to a certain extent, limited. Ships are always simply referred to as either *bata* or *navicula* and it is difficult to estimate their tonnages, due largely to the highly varied nature of the Irish trade.<sup>33</sup> Further difficulty arises in trying to determine the size of the Irish merchant fleet due to the prevalence of the names *Mary*, *Patrick*, and *Katherine* in the Irish marine. A specific example of this difficulty is the arrival in Bristol from Youghal of three ships called *Patrick* on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 1517. The obvious explanation for this would be that the customs official has recorded the same shipment in three divided entries. This proved not to be the case however as each entry records a different ship's master and three *Patricks* leave Bristol on different days under the same masters.<sup>34</sup> The only conclusion to be drawn is that even a port the size of Youghal could have three ships of the same name. This certainly complicates analysis of the shipping-supply. Nevertheless, a conservative estimate of the size of the Irish fleet, as shown in appendix 2, suggests there were at least 42 different Irish ships active in Bristol/Ireland trade in 1516.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., P. 59.

<sup>34</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

The Bristol customs accounts allow a fuller analysis of the supply of shipping for Ireland's trade than any other source. In this context, the data for 1516-17 shows further continuity in trends, with the supply of shipping on this route remaining, as in the later Middle Ages, overwhelmingly Irish and British. During the fourteenth century English shipping came mainly from Bristol itself but this changed during the fifteenth century as other West Country and Welsh ports came to dominate.<sup>35</sup> The account shows that Bristol supplied ships for only 15% of the total shipping movements in 1516-17.<sup>36</sup> Of the British ports, Milford, a Welsh port, supplied the most shipping, with ships from here accounting for 17% of total movements. Cornish interest is represented by the involvement of 3 ships from St Ives.

The most interesting individual entry relating to the supply of shipping in this year is the unusual involvement of a Portuguese ship on the Bristol-Ireland route. The *Santa Maria* of Caudelars, under Ochoa de la Sona, departed Bristol for Ireland on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 1517, with a cargo of corrupt wine, broad cloth, salt and ironware valued at £106. This ship had arrived in Bristol on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March carrying wine, oil and pepper under a different Portuguese master.<sup>37</sup> Interestingly, on its journey from Portugal to Bristol, the ship carried goods for a mixture of Portuguese and British merchants. One of these was Robert Avyutre, a merchant who features very prominently as a ship's master on

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<sup>35</sup> Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 27.

<sup>36</sup> The statistics given are based on shipping movements and not numbers of ships, which would be slightly smaller as some ships occur more than once in the account.

<sup>37</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

the Bristol-Ireland route. This suggests an overlap in the personnel and probably the commodities in the Anglo-Irish-Continental trade and indicates that while, as Jones suggests, there was undoubtedly a division of specialisation by merchants on these routes, this was not absolute.<sup>38</sup> The international complexities suggested by the account are indeed reinforced by both the judicial and administrative records.<sup>39</sup> A late fifteenth century example is a Chancery petition from one William Bargayne, a merchant from Brittany, who petitioned the archbishop of York regarding a disagreement with Geoffrey Lynch, an Irish mariner. Bargayne received goods from Lynch and was bound to pay the debt after making a return voyage from Ireland to Portugal, which he claimed to have done. He left the bill however in Lynch's possession and the merchant immediately tried to recover the debt again by beginning an action before the mayor of Bristol.<sup>40</sup> This petition very effectively reinforces the open and cosmopolitan nature of Anglo-Irish trade in the period.

The supply of Irish shipping at Bristol shows the expected concentration of the six south eastern ports of Waterford, Youghal, Cork, Kinsale, Ross and Wexford. There is also a small amount of traffic in the earlier part of the year from Wicklow, probably from the small port at Arklow, which was controlled by the Gaelic Mac Murroughs up

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<sup>38</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 33.

<sup>39</sup> Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 24.

<sup>40</sup> P. R. O., C1/31/65. I am grateful to Brendan Smith for allowing me to use this calendared version of the document which will appear in the soon-to-be published *Sources for Medieval Ireland in the National Archives of the United Kingdom*, P. Dryburgh & B. Smith (eds.), p. 132.

to 1525.<sup>41</sup> Malahide and Drogheda, more northerly ports in the Dublin area are also slightly represented. Analysis of the statistics shows a marked increase in the amount of shipping supplied by these Irish ports in comparison to the late fifteenth century, when British shipping dominated the trade. In the three full-length accounts examined by Childs, shipping of Irish origin had dropped from 48% of the movements out in the late fourteenth century to 22- 30% from 1484 to 1493, and it then accounted for only 24-40% of movements in. In 1504, Irish shipping handled 32% of exports from Ireland and 44% of imports to Ireland; 37% of total shipping.<sup>42</sup> Irish shipping in 1517 makes up 49% of total ship movements: 44% of exports from Ireland and 58% of imports to Ireland. These figures indicate a considerable development in the level of Irish involvement, with Irish domination in Bristol's export trade, another pattern that persists in the 1540s. The decrease noted by Childs therefore steadily recovers during the sixteenth century.

An even more significant finding is that the percentage of Anglo-Irish trade being conducted on Irish ships rises during the period. As table 2.1 and figure 2.1 demonstrate, Irish ships in 1516-17 carried 58% of the total value of Bristol/Irish trade, despite controlling just under half of the total shipping movements. Childs also noted

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<sup>41</sup> D. B. Quinn & K. W. Nicholls, 'Ireland in 1534', in T. W. moody, F. X. Martin & F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland, Vol. III, Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 1-38 (p. 7).

<sup>42</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 219; Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 21.

this trend in the 1490s, when Irish ships always carried a higher proportion of goods in terms of value than their numbers implied.<sup>43</sup> Table 2.2 and figure 2.2 illustrate the growth of trade carried on Irish ships from 1504 to 1546. It is very likely that the rise noted in 1517 was part of a continuous upward trend as by the 1540s the volume of Anglo-Irish trade carried on Irish ships had risen to an impressive 75% of total trade.<sup>44</sup>

**Table 2.1 – Total Values Carried by Country of Origin, in £ Sterling: 1516-17**

Origin of Ship	Value £	% of Total Trade
Ireland	3402	58%
Bristol	1211	20%
England/Wales	1147	20%
Portugal	106	2%
<i>Total</i>	5866	100%

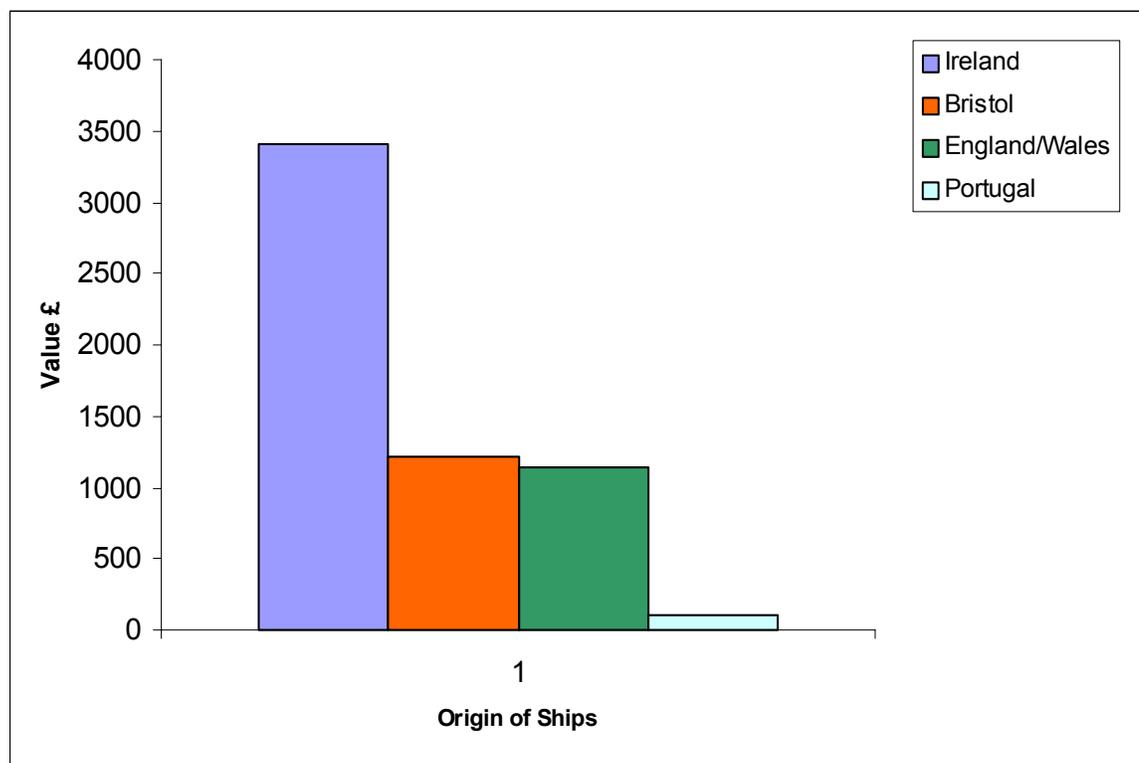
Source: P. R. O., E122 21/2.

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<sup>43</sup> Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 21.

<sup>44</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 39.

**Figure 2.1 - Total Values Carried by Country of Origin, in £ Sterling: 1516-17**

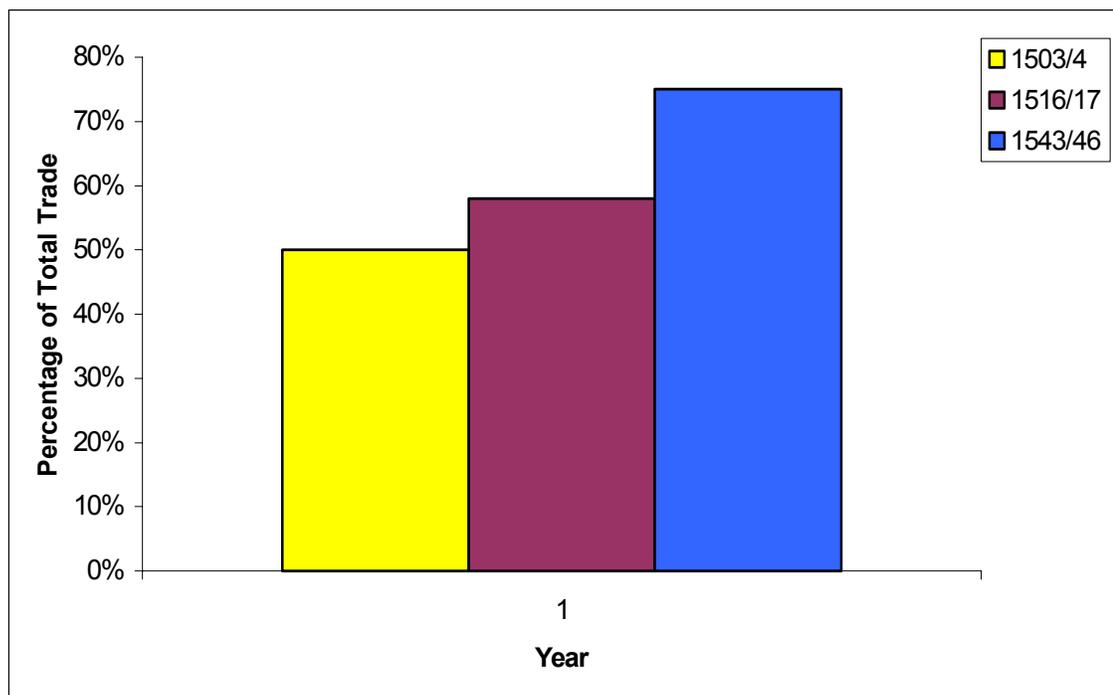


Source: P. R. O., E122 21/2.

**Table 2.2 - Percentage of Trade Carried on Irish Ships: 1503-04, 1516-17, 1543/46**

Year	% Total Trade
1503/4	50%
1516/17	58%
1543/46	75%

**Figure 2.2- Percentage of Trade Carried on Irish Ships: 1503-04, 1516-17, 1543/46**



Source: Longfield 1929, 213-19; P. R. O., E122 21/2; Jones 1998, 174-82.

It is difficult to assess the exact significance of these developments for the Irish economy and the extent to which the trade was in the hands of Irish merchants. Irish merchants were of denizen status, paying the same duties as Englishmen, and are therefore not identified separately in the accounts. While it is an inexact method,

judging nationality by surname gives some indication of the extent of Irish involvement. Distinctive heavily gaelicised Anglo-Irish family names such as Nangill, White, Walsh, Blake and Power are very common in the 1516-17 account, as are Barry and Roche, who were so highly gaelicised in this period that they employed brehons and patronised bardic poetry. The poetry contained in *The Book of Fermoy*, for example, was written for the Roche family in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>45</sup> Of great significance is the presence of a Donell from Kinsale, suggesting Gaelic Irish involvement, despite limitations on the economic activity of the Gaelic Irish families in English towns in Ireland. Although it is difficult to prove conclusively, the predominance of Irish names and the fact that Irish ships were carrying what rose to 75% of the total trade in the 1540s, suggests that a significant proportion of this trade remained in the hands of Irish merchants.

### ***IRISH PORTS***

Closer analysis of the customs data allows some insight into the internal dynamics of Irish trade and a breakdown of the data by Irish ports reveals both continuity, and change, from earlier trends. There is no doubt that Waterford continued to be the most important port in the south-east. Table 2.3 and figure 2.3 indicate that Waterford controlled 19% of the overall Bristol-Ireland trade. While this is indeed impressive it

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<sup>45</sup> Quinn & Nicholls, *Op. Cit.*, p. 10.

indicates nonetheless that there was no growth in the extent of Waterford's involvement on this route between 1503-04 and 1516-17, as the percentage for this year matches Longfield's findings.<sup>46</sup> The dramatic shift noted by Jones that sees Waterford ships carry 58% of the total trade in the 1540s has clearly not occurred by 1517 and trade is balanced more evenly between the smaller ports.<sup>47</sup> The account however raises questions about the relative importance of the other ports. According to Longfield, 'during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Cork made good use of her 'royal haven' and ranked next to Waterford in commercial importance.'<sup>48</sup> Childs reports a similar pattern in the late middle ages listing the ports in order of importance as Waterford, Cork, Kinsale, Youghal and Wexford.<sup>49</sup> Table 2.3 shows however that Cork's involvement in the trade had dropped by 1517 when she seems to have been outpaced by Kinsale, Ross and Youghal. This is in fact again evident in the 1540s, when Cork ships carried an average of only 3% of the trade,<sup>50</sup> the same figure for example as Wexford, a port widely accepted to have been relatively poor due to its inaccessibility for larger ships and its unfortunate accessibility to the Wicklow mountains, making it prey to native Irish attack.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 219.

<sup>47</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 164.

<sup>48</sup> Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 35.

<sup>49</sup> Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', p. 27.

<sup>50</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 164.

<sup>51</sup> Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 35.

While it is not conclusive, the fact that there was always a tendency for merchants to use ships of their own locality, suggests that the decrease in Cork's shipping reflects either a shift in the nature of the city's trade, for example an increase in her continental trade, or an overall decline in her fortunes.<sup>52</sup> The absence of any state or municipal records for Cork makes it difficult to pinpoint the causes of this apparent shift, but a few suggestions are possible. A likely cause is what appears to have been a very extensive trade between the native Irish, Spaniards and French off the south coast, which no doubt diminished the profits of the Cork merchants.<sup>53</sup> There is also evidence to suggest that piracy was a particular problem in Cork, which was a further barrier to her development.<sup>54</sup> Another reason may be that Kinsale, which according to Quinn was closely linked to Cork and was to some extent a sub-collecting port for the city, may have shared its shipping and the decline in Cork shipping is therefore to some extent balanced by the rise in Kinsale's activity.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> W. Childs, 'Irish merchants and seamen in late medieval England' *Irish Historical Studies* 32 (2000-01), 22-43 (p. 30).

<sup>53</sup> W. O' Sullivan, *The Economic History of Cork City from the Earliest Times to the Act of Union* (Cork, 1937), p. 70.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

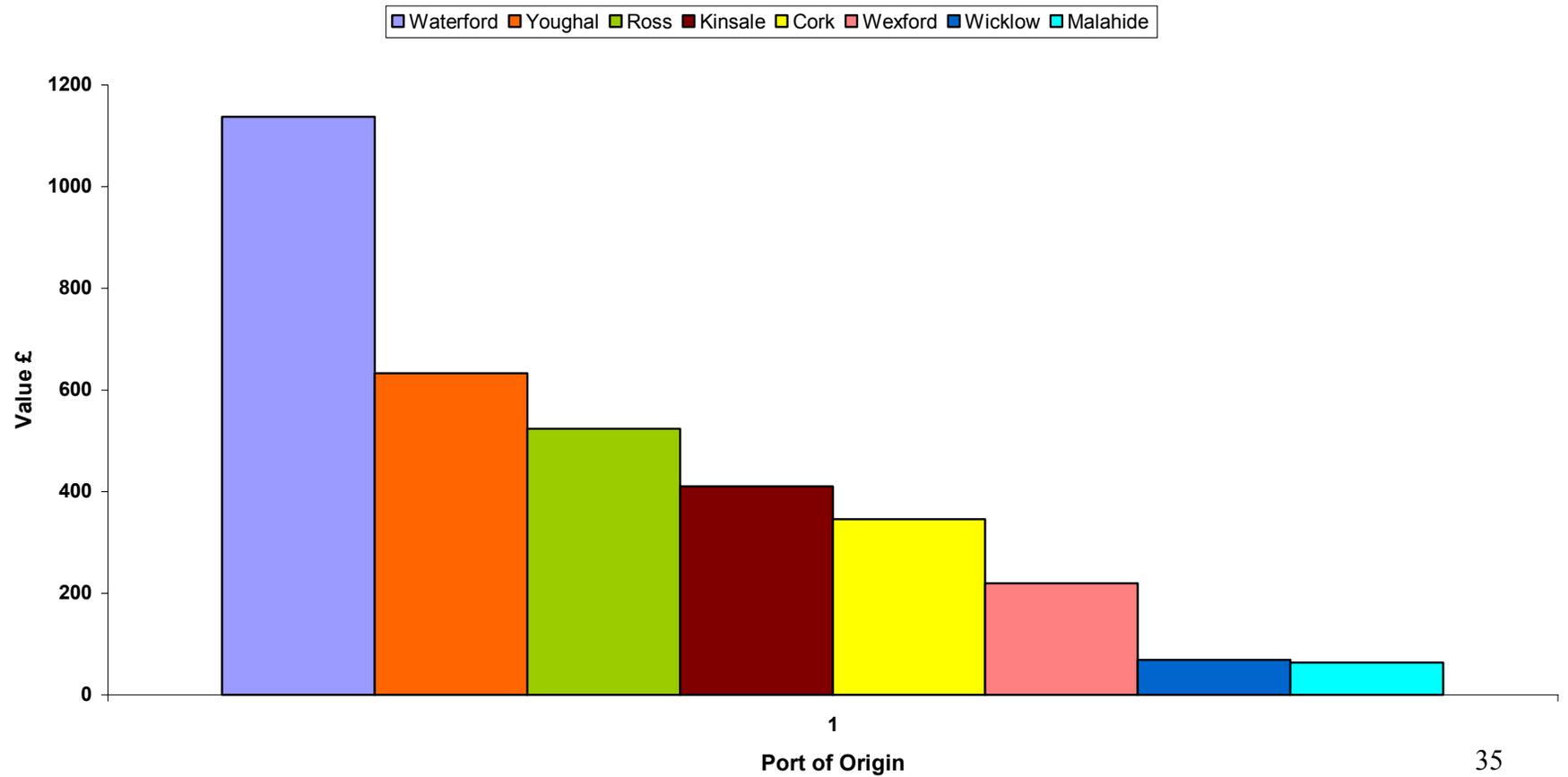
<sup>55</sup> Quinn & Nicholls, *Op. Cit.*, p. 10.

**Table 2.3 – Value of Total Bristol/Ireland Trade carried from Each Irish Port: 1516-17**

Irish Ports	Value £
Waterford	1138
Youghal	633
Ross	523
Kinsale	410
Cork	346
Wexford	220
Wicklow	69
Malahide	63
<i>Total</i>	3402

**Source: P. R. O., E122 21/2.**

**TABLE 2.3- VALUE OF TOTAL BRISTOL/IRELAND TRADE CARRIED FROM EACH IRISH PORT, 1516-17**



## ***SEASONAL VARIATIONS IN TRADING PATTERNS***

Some general comments can be made from a month by month breakdown of trade as shown in tables 2.4 and 2.5 and figures 2.4 and 2.5. These indicate that shipping and trading patterns were not even throughout the year. There are a number of reasons for this. Most importantly, Irish exports were highly seasonal in character. For example, over 90% of hake, the most important commodity in the 1516-17 account, is shipped between January and March. Likewise salmon shows two distinct seasons, with exports peaking mainly from November to March and again in July.<sup>56</sup>

Another influencing factor is the importance of Bristol's fairs on the organisation of Ireland's trade. It is clear from this account, that in 1517, merchants organised their summer schedules to coincide with St James fair in Bristol, which took place from the 25th July.<sup>57</sup> In the ten days before the fair, 9 heavily laden ships are recorded arriving in Bristol from Ireland and returning to Ireland in the ten days after the end of the fair. The most intense concentration of activity in this year however takes place in March, when 31% of the trade takes place. In fact 17% of the entire annual trade took place on one day - March 9, when 15 ships are recorded arriving at Bristol, carrying £1018 worth of goods, of which £706 was fish. A possible explanation for this is that Irish

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<sup>56</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

<sup>57</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 76.

merchants were exploiting the Lenten market, as in this period a mandate was issued each year for the abstinence of eating meat during lent.<sup>58</sup> Lent began this year however on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March and if this massive concentration of trade is related to the necessary replenishment of stocks for lent, it is surprisingly late, usually taking place in autumn.<sup>59</sup> Other possible reasons for this peak in exports are that fear of piracy forced the ships to leave enmasse for safety or bad weather caused them to wait. Unfortunately, the validity of these suggestions is impossible to prove for so specific a time frame.

**Table 2.4 - Ireland's Exports to Bristol by Ship's Origin, in £ Sterling: September 1516-October 1517**

Year & Month	Bristol	England & Wales	Ireland	Other	Unknown	Total
1516/09	0	10	0	0	0	10
1516/10	0	29	0	0	0	29
1516/11	54	133	396	0	16	599
1516/12	0	102	98	0	0	200
1517/01	43	18	29	0	0	90
1517/02	45	300	0	0	0	345
1517/03	112	101	1231	0	16	1460
1517/04	0	36	0	0	0	36
1517/05	95	42	122	0	0	259
1517/06	0	37	107	0	0	144
1517/07	54	0	545	0	8	607
1517/08	3	31	0	0	6	40
1517/09	0	0	0	0	0	0
1517/10	0	7	0	0	0	7
<i>Total</i>	406	846	2528	0	46	3826
<i>% Total</i>	11%	22%	66%	0%	1%	100%

<sup>58</sup> J. Latimer, *Sixteenth Century Bristol* (Bristol, 1908), p. 40.

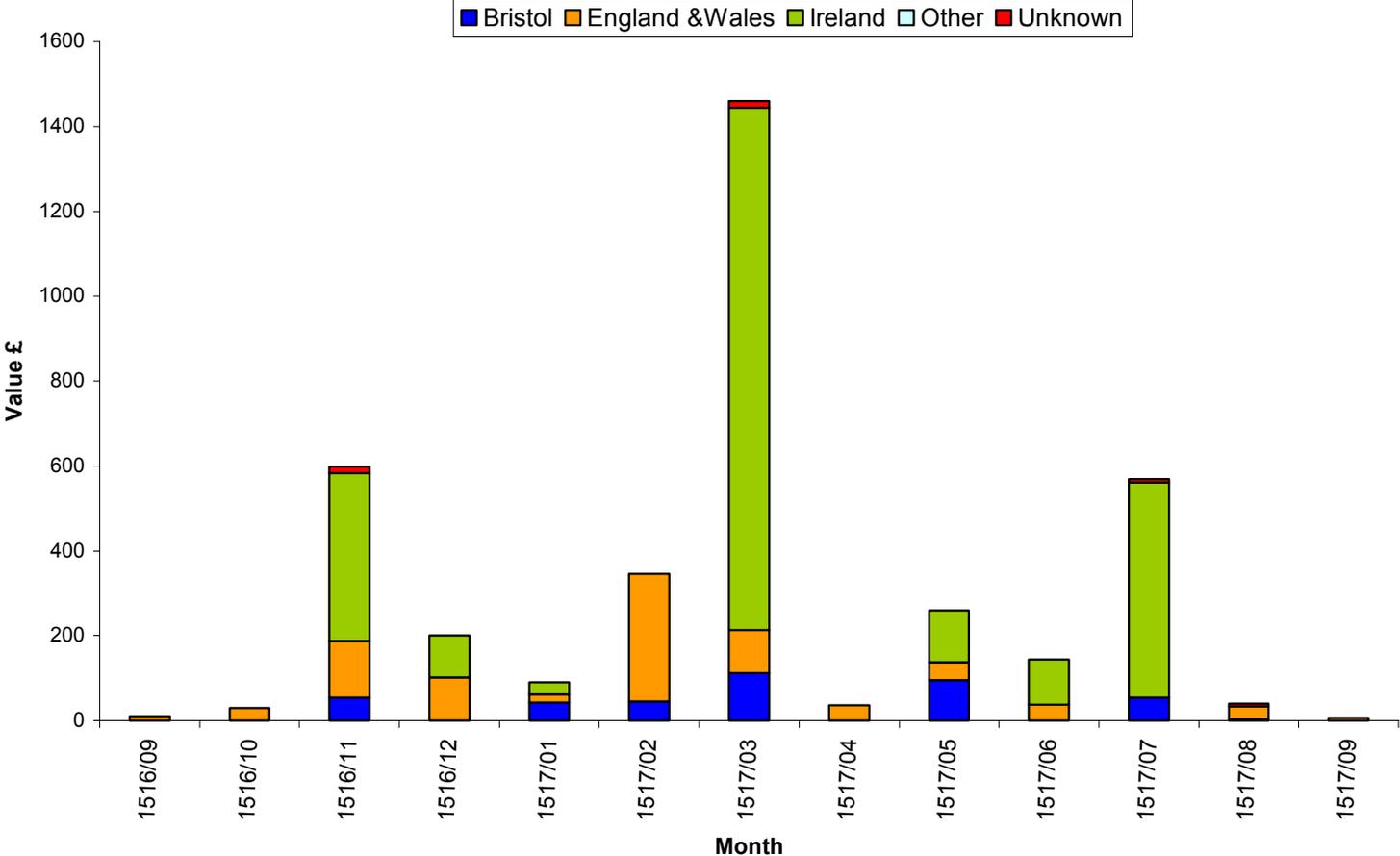
<sup>59</sup> Carus-Wilson, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol', p. 197.

**Table 2.5 - Ireland's Imports from Bristol by Ship's Origin, in £ Sterling: September 1516-August 1517**

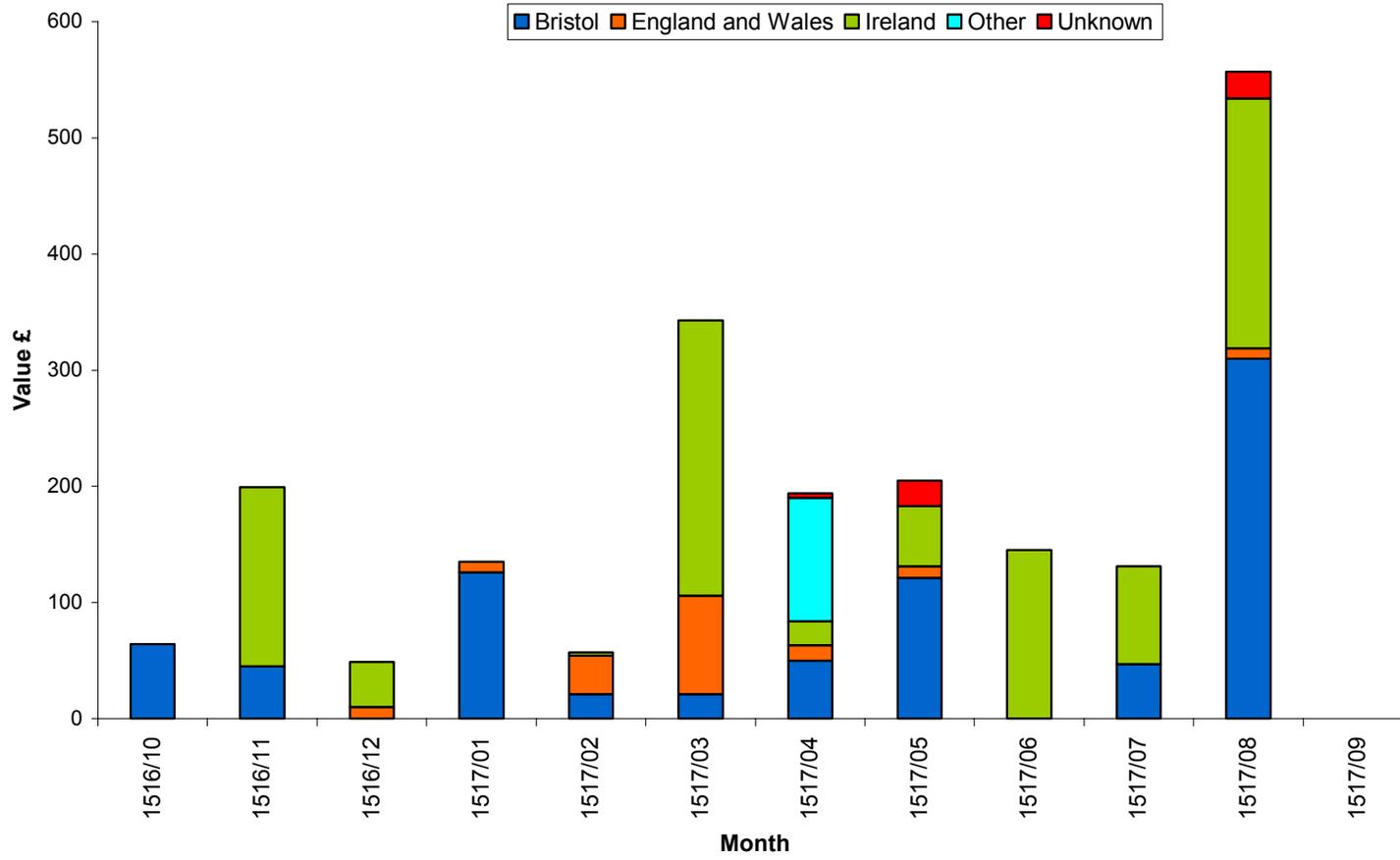
Year & Month	Bristol	England and Wales	Ireland	Other	Unknown	Total
1516/10	64	0	0	0	0	64
1516/11	45	0	154	0	0	199
1516/12	0	10	39	0	0	49
1517/01	126	9	0	0	0	135
1517/02	21	33	3	0	0	57
1517/03	21	85	237	0	0	343
1517/04	50	13	21	106	4	194
1517/05	121	10	52	0	22	205
1517/06	0	0	145	0	0	145
1517/07	47	0	84	0	0	131
1517/08	310	9	215	0	23	557
<i>Total</i>	805	169	950	106	49	2079
<i>% Total</i>	39%	8%	46%	5%	2%	100%

Source: P. R. O., E122 21/2.

**FIGURE 2.4: IRELAND'S EXPORTS TO BRISTOL BY SHIP'S ORIGIN, IN £ STERLING: SEPTEMBER 1516-SEPTEMBER 1517**



**FIGURE 2.5-IRELAND'S IMPORTS FROM BRISTOL, BY SHIP'S ORIGIN, IN £ STERLING: SEPTEMBER 1516-SEPTEMBER 1517**



The findings of this analysis provide sufficient grounds to question the widely accepted idea that the Irish economy remained underdeveloped throughout the sixteenth century. The 1516-17 statistics link an upward trend in the value of overall trade, the amount of this trade carried on Irish ships, and the level of shipping movements of the Irish marine, noted initially in the findings of Longfield and more dramatically in the 1540s. Clearly the level of expansion noted here is of considerable significance to the economy. Shipping was an expensive and high-risk activity and the level of growth shown here indicates that the returns were considerable enough to make it a worthwhile venture for Irish merchants.

Without very specific qualitative evidence (and of course the analysis of further accounts) it is not possible to reach conclusions as to the causes of this growth. It is important however to consider the conditions that perhaps helped to sustain the developments of this period, in order to situate these trends within a wider historiographical framework. That the sixteenth century was a relatively stable and prosperous period, both politically and economically is suggested not only by the above analysis, but by various other sources. Evidence from the *Great Parchment Book* and Smith's *Ancient and present state of Waterford* (1746) regarding the power structure of the city shows a very constant dynastic situation, with most of the families that dominated around the middle of the sixteenth century also figuring prominently in the

fifteenth century lists.<sup>60</sup> This stability is also identifiable in the countryside. On the Kildare manor in Maynooth, for example, analysis of surnames shows that most of the tenants that were there in 1518 were still present in 1540.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore the increasing trade seen in the accounts corresponds with an impressive period of building projects in stone throughout the country as townsmen and nobles invested their wealth. In Kilkenny for example, the four gates were rebuilt in 1500, a tholsel completed in 1507, and a new gate constructed in 1517.<sup>62</sup> The period also witnessed the flourishing of a new style of architecture, late Irish Gothic, and throughout the country belfry towers and arcades were added to Abbeys, and 40 new friaries were founded in the south and west.<sup>63</sup>

This was a self-sufficient and confident society, and underlying its potential for development were the liberties and privileges accumulated by the towns as a result of the Crown's desire to nurture the 'traditional harmonious relations with the towns in Ireland'<sup>64</sup>. Indeed, in 1592, when the *Munster Commissioners* inspected the charters of Waterford, Limerick, Kinsale, Cork and Clonmel, they found that their liberties were

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<sup>60</sup> J. Walton, 'The Merchant Community of Waterford in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries', in P. Butel and L.M. Cullen, (eds.), *Cities and Merchants: French and Irish Perspectives on Urban Development, 1500-1900* (Dublin, 1986), pp. 183-194 (p.185).

<sup>61</sup> Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p. 33.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>64</sup> S. Ellis, 'Historical Revision XIX: The Irish customs administration under the early Tudors', *Irish Historical Studies* 22 (1980-81), 271-277 (p. 271).

greater than those of most cities in England.<sup>65</sup> The importance of these privileges is perhaps illustrated by the shift in the internal dynamics of Irish trade noted above. The pre-eminence of Waterford was in a large part due to the favouritism she continued to enjoy throughout the period as a result of her loyalty during the Warbeck and Simnel campaigns in Ireland, for which she was given the title of *urbs intacta* by Henry VIII.<sup>66</sup> In contrast, Cork, whose trade, as discussed, appears to have been in decline, had to continuously agitate for further liberties, and yet two charters granted by Henry VIII and one by Edward VI contain no new privileges at all.<sup>67</sup> There is also evidence of considerable agitation from the cities of Dublin, Dundalk and Drogheda against the unfair extent of privileges enjoyed by towns on the south coast.<sup>68</sup> Waterford, for example, enjoyed the freedom to exact tolls on all fish passing the walls on its way to the market, which, given the huge quantities of fish exported, would have contributed handsomely to local rates.<sup>69</sup> The cocket of hides was another favourite source of revenue frequently allocated to towns. Henry VI for example granted Youghal its custom and cocket for forty years.<sup>70</sup> Of all the privileges, the most important however was the independent control of the customs administration by the towns. Significantly, according to Ellis, this was more efficiently managed in this period than after the

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<sup>65</sup> O'Sullivan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>66</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73 (1536), p. 17.

<sup>67</sup> O'Sullivan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>69</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 54

<sup>70</sup> V. Treadwell, 'The Irish customs administration in the sixteenth century', *Irish Historical Studies* XX, 80 (1977), 385-417 (p. 405).

Elizabethan conquest, probably because of strong local government under the governors of the lordship, who were dependant solely on the revenue to cover their administrative costs.<sup>71</sup>

As already mentioned, the role of English policies in Irish economic development is of wider historiographical significance. It is clear that the independence enjoyed by the towns in the earlier period of indirect control, combined with the relative peace and prosperity of the time, greatly facilitated the potential for the development indicated in the customs accounts. What remains unclear is the extent to which the abrogation of these privileges was responsible for the later decline. Recent revisionist historians have downplayed the impact of English policies on Ireland's economic growth. Treadwell, for example, argues that the port towns were initially not affected to any great extent by Elizabethan restrictions and continued to demand and enjoy considerable freedom, including the control of customs appointments and the appropriation of customs revenue into the early seventeenth century.<sup>72</sup> Whatever the validity of this argument in the wider sense, it is clear that the freedom and liberties enjoyed by the towns were so well established and vigorously defended by the mercantile elite, that the Crown evidently had difficulty curtailing them. The resilience and tenacity of the towns therefore should not be underestimated.

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<sup>71</sup> Ellis, 'Irish customs administration', pp. 271-277.

<sup>72</sup> Treadwell, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 405-417.

Of further great importance to the potential for development of the Irish economy and also of wider historiographical significance, is the involvement of the Gaelic Irish in Ireland's overseas trade. It is clear that Anglo-Irish merchants faced few restrictions in engaging in commerce with the Gaelic Irish in the first part of the century.<sup>73</sup> From the late fifteenth century the pattern of legalised exemptions to trade with the Irish began to increase and in 1463, Waterford Corporation, Cork, Limerick and Youghal were all empowered to trade with the Irish, followed closely by Galway and Ross.<sup>74</sup> Significantly, it was stated in the act that the profit of every market, city and town in Ireland depended on the resort of Irish people with their merchandise.<sup>75</sup>

The presence of the name Donell and the involvement of shipping from the Gaelic controlled port at Wicklow in the 1516-17 account, suggests that Gaelic merchants were indeed openly and sometimes officially involved in trade.<sup>76</sup> The supply of many of the commodities of Irish trade, depended on co-operation between the Anglo-Irish and Gaelic communities. Timber, for example, had to come from Gaelic zones due to deforestation of the areas settled by the Anglo-Irish and a large amount of hides originated in the Gaelic or gaelicised areas of the country.

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<sup>73</sup> C. Lennon, *Sixteenth Century Ireland, The Incomplete Conquest*, (Dublin, 1994), p. 40.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>75</sup> O' Sullivan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>76</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

The wider significance of this complex cross-cultural trade is a historiographical problem in itself. It is clear that the period of greatest prosperity coincides with a period of native resurgence. Longfield, while perhaps taking too strong a mercantilist line, argues that the move away from the conciliatory policy of Henry VII and Henry VIII towards the natives was ‘economically fatal to Ireland’. She notes that what was in the earlier period, not a denial of native energy, but merely a desire to harness it for English benefit, later becomes a constant complaint about the ‘slothfulness and idleness of the Irish’. This, she suggests, is because later policy of confiscation and plantation discouraged any independent industry on the part of the Irish, as they were not to enjoy the fruits of their labour any longer.<sup>77</sup>

The openness of the economy in this period was clearly beneficial to the growth of Irish trade, facilitating access to a greater range and quantity of goods, and ensuring a wider distribution of wealth than in the following century. One historian has indeed described the trade revival of the seventeenth century as a ‘manifestation of the hectic exploitation of low-cost investments in Irish resources’ taking place against a background of expropriation and impoverishment of the native population.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, while the benefits of trade were more widely enjoyed in this period, this was by no means a perfect or even fair system. The dynamics of the system that

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<sup>77</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>78</sup> A. Clarke, ‘The Irish Economy, 1600-60’ in T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin & F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland, Vol. III, 1534-1691* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 168-184 (p. 186).

evolved as a means of keeping up supplies for trade and consumption involved not only the merging of monetary and non-monetary economic systems, often facilitated by Anglo-Irish lords in return for large rewards, but also an organised system of forestalling activities which were obstructive to the commercial market.<sup>79</sup> Purveyance or ‘livery’ as it was known to the Gaelic Irish, cut across the market system as both governors and Gaelic chiefs requisitioned provisions for their troops from the populace at fixed prices. Similarly disruptive was ‘coign,’ a process by which soldiers or mercenaries extorted payment from the countryside on which they were quartered.<sup>80</sup> Other activities that developed as a result of the lack of central control on the economy included the exactions of ‘black rents’ by lords and chiefs to protect against their plundering of neighbouring lands. Furthermore, lack of central administration meant that magnates connived with illegal traders to so great an extent that ‘grey merchants’ evolved as agents for illegal activity with Gaelic and English rural producers. In short there developed, as Lennon describes it, a whole system of ‘protections, cuttings and spendings’, to facilitate the co-existence of competing interests at the expense of the market towns and small rural producers.<sup>81</sup>

Despite the obvious failings of so complex and *ad hoc* a system, overall the interdependency noted shows the level of adaptation and resilience of the mercantile

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<sup>79</sup> Lennon, Op. Cit., p. 37.

<sup>80</sup> Ellis, *Ireland in the age of the Tudors*, p. 27.

<sup>81</sup> Lennon, Op. Cit., p. 39.

community and their ability to manipulate prevailing conditions for economic benefit. The fact that the Irish remained both a vital part of the economy, yet always marginalized by official policy, made this system necessary. Involved in trade, the Gaelic Irish stimulated the economy and provided greater access to goods and links to an extensive Continental trade, thus increasing the cash available for investment in trade. Their activities are therefore vitally linked to the findings in the accounts.

### ***CHAPTER 3: IRELAND'S EXPORTS TO BRISTOL***

It has long been assumed that Anglo-Irish trade 'formed part of a simple colonial trading pattern in which a relatively small range of primary products was exchanged for manufactured goods, luxuries, and some essential raw materials'.<sup>82</sup> The nature of Ireland's exports has been taken to signify a chronic economic backwardness that was merely exacerbated from the late sixteenth century by restrictive colonial policies. The reasons for questioning this perceived sluggishness of the economy has already been discussed and the aim of chapters 3 and 4 is to assess the potential for and the level of development in Ireland's trade in the first half of the sixteenth century and the significance of this for the Irish economy. This will be achieved by examining trends in the nature of both her import and export trades and comparing the findings from the 1516-17 account with those from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and the 1540s. Commodities have been broken down into groups for discussion. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 are summary tables and indicate items that accounted for at least one percent of imports or exports. The full tables are provided in Appendix 1. Table 3.3 is a summary table that compares values for groups of commodities across the period. Goods have been grouped according to categories used by Wendy Childs.<sup>83</sup> This is to facilitate

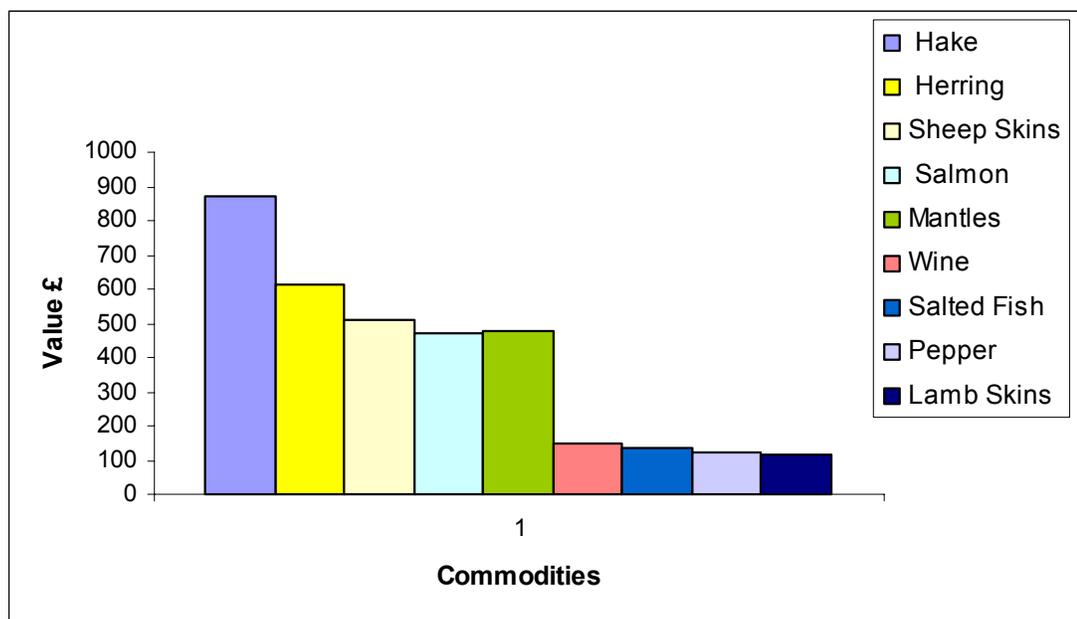
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<sup>82</sup> Clarke, *Op. Cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>83</sup> Childs, 'Ireland's Trade with England', pp. 17-20.

meaningful comparisons of data across the period. Saffron, for example, is grouped as a foodstuff in table 3.3, even though it was most likely used predominantly as a dyestuff.

**Figure 3.1- Predominant Irish Exports to Bristol: 1516-17**



Source: P. R. O., E122 21/2.

**Table 3.1 – Exports from Ireland to Bristol, in £ Sterling: 1516-17**

Summary Table	Value £	% Total
Cloth	39	1
Hake	870	23
Red Herrings	66	2
White Herrings	549	15
Salmon	472	12
Other Fish	144	4
Pepper	123	3
Lamb Skins	115	3
Salted Skins	77	2
Sheep Skins	507	13
Other Skins	52	1
Wine	146	4
Wool	46	1
Mantles	477	13
Misc.	105	3
<b><i>Total Value</i></b>	<b>3788</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: P. R. O., E122 21/2.

## ***MANUFACTURED GOODS***

As has already been mentioned, Ireland's cloth industry appears to have undergone a dramatic transformation between the late fifteenth century and the 1540s, with her export of cloth and clothing rising from 8% of total exports to 51% in the later period. The 1516-17 account was chosen for analysis in order to facilitate more accurate dating of this development in the textile industry and to test the level of growth in the interim period.

The account shows Irish exportation of three types of cloth and clothing in this year: mantles, checks and Irish linen. The woollen mantle was the most important piece of national attire and was said to have served the Irish "as a hedgehog his skin, or to a snail her shell, for a garment by day and a house by night."<sup>84</sup> The accounts indicate that the English too appreciated its usefulness, despite the fact that according to Spencer, it was 'a fitt howse for an outlaw, a meete bedd for a rebell, and an apt cloke for a theif.'<sup>85</sup> In 1517, mantles worth £477 arrived in Bristol, a slight increase on figures for 1504.<sup>86</sup> The rise noted in the 1540s Irish cloth exports does not include mantles, rather,

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<sup>84</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1588-92, p. 192.

<sup>85</sup> Carus –Wilson, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol', p. 199.

<sup>86</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2., Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 84.

this period sees the figure drop to an average of £244 per annum as the exports of check cloth increase correspondingly.

In 1541-2, Ireland exported £2044 worth of check cloth to Bristol, yet in 1516-17 this commodity contributes to just a tiny fraction of her trade, the amount making up less than 1% of her exports.<sup>87</sup> Ireland's export of manufactured goods in 1516-17 indeed shows no further development from the level seen by Longfield, cloth and clothing comprising only 14% of exports in this year. The growth of this textile industry, which was able to produce up to 125,000 yards of cloth a year for export to Bristol, can therefore be narrowed down to between 1517 and 1541.

Until further customs accounts have been analysed, it is difficult to be more specific about the dating of this apparent change in the nature of Ireland's economy and it is therefore also difficult to suggest reasons why it occurred. Legislation was enacted by the Irish Parliament in 1522 against sending wool, and wool flocks, out of the country, in order to increase the manufacture of cloth in Ireland. Evasion was a problem, however, and the Patent Rolls record plenty of examples of licences being issued to export wool to England, so much so that Parliament felt it necessary to re-enact the

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<sup>87</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping industry', p. 176; P. R. O., E122 21/2.

measures in 1537.<sup>88</sup> In any case its effects were always limited by the activities of the Gaelic Irish, who mostly operated outside the confines of such legislation, and carried on a thriving wool trade with the continent.

Perhaps more relevant, in view of the ultimate failure of such legislation to protect the industry, is evidence of individual enterprises aimed at broadening the range of manufactured exports and increasing the level of skill of Irish cloth workers. Around 1525, Piers Butler, Earl of Ossory, set up model factories in Kilkenny and brought Flemish artificers to Kilkenny Castle to teach the making of ‘diapers, tappestries, Turkey carpets, cushions and other like works’.<sup>89</sup> There is also evidence of the development of a hat making enterprise in 1559, when John Parker requested a licence to export Irish wool to England in order to be able to acquire the items he needed for this industry.<sup>90</sup> That the growth seen in the 1540s was initially sustained is suggested by a later act, passed in 1571, and aimed at further encouraging cloth production. This act gives a monopoly to the merchants of the privileged towns to transport ‘wrought goods’ just as they had previously transported unwrought goods.<sup>91</sup>

The significance of these findings to our understanding of the development of the Irish economy cannot be overemphasised. This is the first time in Ireland’s history that the

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<sup>88</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

majority of her overseas trade consisted of manufactured goods and, after the decline of the late century, this trend would not repeated again until modern times. In view of these findings, it becomes more difficult to agree entirely with the revisionist argument, that Ireland's failure to develop in the later century was primarily related to a chronic skills shortage and indifference to capital investment in industry, rather than the failure of the government to protect her economy.

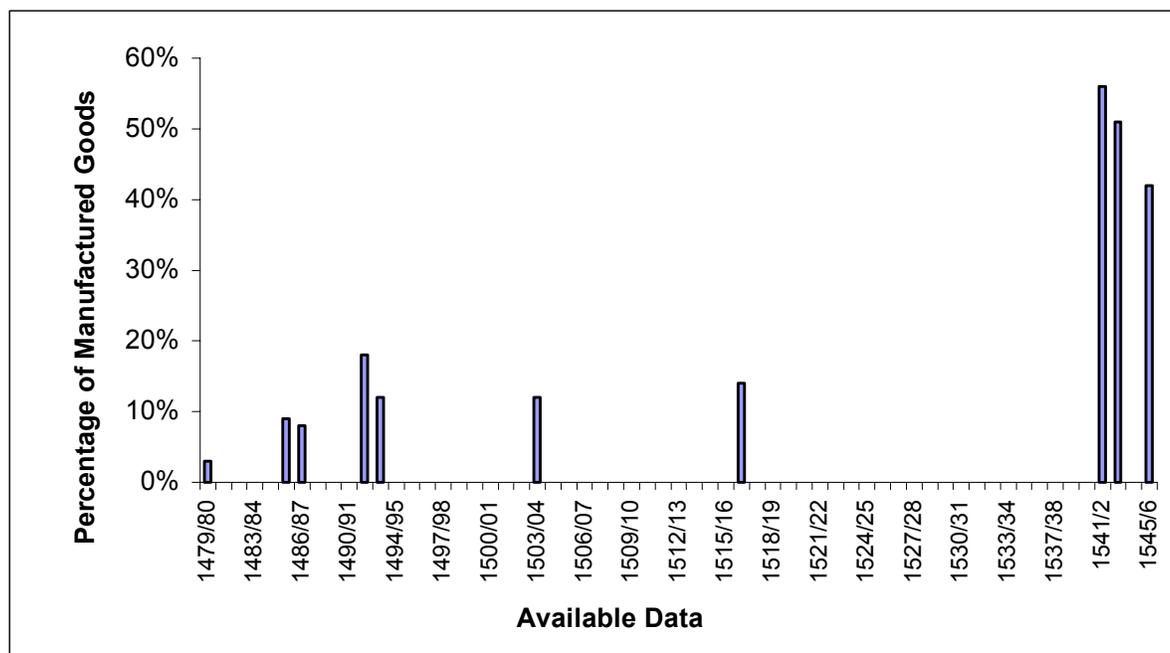
Cloth production, even that of check cloth (a type of rough frieze), was complex and labour intensive, requiring organisation and skill specialisation, a need that local entrepreneurs such as Butler clearly identified and responded to. An increase of this size in production must surely be the result of a localised yet sustained attempt to diversify and develop the Irish economy. It is interesting that this development corresponds with the well-documented decline of the Bristol cloth industry, a fact confirmed by the 1516-17 account, as will be discussed later.<sup>92</sup> Longfield's argument, that the destruction of the Irish industry in the late sixteenth century was due to the monopoly created on Irish wool by mercantilist interests who disliked the competition of Irish cloth, is perhaps not without a grain of truth.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> For detailed discussion see D. Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics in Bristol, 1500-1640, Vol. II* (New York, 1985), pp. 256-306.

<sup>93</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 80.

**Figure 3.2-Percentage of Manufactured Goods Exported to Bristol:  
1479-80 to 1545-6**



### ***SKINS AND HIDES***

Perhaps the most prosaic and also the most stable of Irish exports was the hides and skins that came to Bristol in very significant quantities throughout the period. As figure 3.1 shows, sheep skins were by far the most common type exported, in this year making up 13% of exports, followed by lamb skins at 3% and unspecified salted skins,

probably cow and calf hides, at 2%.<sup>94</sup> This is a trend common to both earlier and later findings.

The skins of wild animals contributed surprisingly little to the Irish economy, and by its nature, the trade seems to have been fairly erratic, influenced by factors such as fashion, deforestation and the fluctuating levels of social stability. This can be seen by the fact that wolf skins figure prominently in Longfield's study, and again in later accounts, and yet are entirely absent in 1516-17. Interestingly, Longfield mentions that fox skins were absent from most ports in the sixteenth century and yet it is these that make up the bulk of wild skin exports in 1516-17, with small quantities of otter, marten and coney (or rabbit), also included. There does not seem to have been any major developments in this area during the early period. Fox skins worth the same value are seen again in the 1540s account.<sup>95</sup> Decline came later as the forests were increasingly destroyed and the high prices achieved for animals such as martens meant that they were hunted to extinction.

Data extracted from the account allows analysis of the level of development of the tanning industry during the period. According to Green, the Irish showed such enterprise in the leather trade, exporting finely ornamented goods such as gloves,

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<sup>94</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>95</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 177.

shoes, belts and straps, that Elizabeth felt it necessary to check the trade in 1569 by passing laws to limit the places of tanning in the country.<sup>96</sup> Evidence of this flourishing industry is not identifiable in the accounts. It is significant that no tanned skins are listed as exports in 1516-17. Included in Ireland's imports from Bristol however are small quantities of *pelles aurei*-golden or prepared skins and *redleshe*-a type of leather used for cushions, suggesting that although by this date the country was making enough leather for home consumption, it was still dependant on importation for higher quality tanned skins.

This is an industry for which Ireland, in this period, had very adequate natural resources to support. There was certainly no shortage of hides as the stability of the exports to Bristol show. Furthermore Ireland's forests, abundant in oak- the bark of which was used to produce tannin were still plentiful in the early sixteenth century. Exports of timber in the first half of the century are insignificant, and in 1516-17 consist only of shipboards worth £16, arriving on ships from Cork, Youghal and Kinsale.<sup>97</sup> The exploitation and decline of timber resources began in the late century and increased in the seventeenth century, as a rapid growth in the number of smelting forges worked by wood led to greater demand.<sup>98</sup> We must therefore look for other reasons for the retarded and short-lived development of this industry.

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<sup>96</sup> Green, Op. Cit., p. 56.

<sup>97</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

The impact of legislation is again difficult to interpret in this regard. A restrictive act was passed in 1569, aimed at improving the quality of the industry by limiting the places where it could take place, and appointing overseers to search the tanned goods and seize imperfect specimens. This could in large part have been motivated by a desire to raise a tax on leather, similar to that in England.<sup>99</sup> Some of the licenses issued suggest that skill shortage was a significant problem in this area. In 1576, the guild of shoemakers in Waterford were permitted to tan hides and leather, provided they produced only finished work and at reasonable rates. This was because, otherwise, there were not enough tanners to supply the demand, a similar situation to that which prevailed in Cork.<sup>100</sup> This point is frequently raised by revisionists when explaining Ireland's 'economic backwardness'. Gillespie argues, for example, that the tanning industry failed ultimately because of problems with capital and skill shortages, despite any initial success brought about by the licensing of tanners.<sup>101</sup>

Fundamentally there is a tension between the significance of the later colonial policy of Elizabethan government and the level of potential for independent development of the Irish economy. It is difficult to tell if the tanning industry would have developed without the overseers appointed by the crown, yet it is clear from its short lived

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<sup>98</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>101</sup> Gillespie, *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.

development later in sixteenth century, that skills-shortages, and investment in industry were factors that could be overcome. Ultimately the failure was due to a decline in natural resources, and it is very difficult not to see the similarities between the reasons for decline of both the cloth and tanning industries.

### ***MISCELLANEOUS GOODS/ RE EXPORTS***

Outside the major groups of commodities, 10% of Irish exports to Bristol consisted of miscellaneous goods including foodstuffs, wood and re-exports, a full list of which appears in Appendix 1.

Re-exported goods make up 8% of all exports in 1516-17 and are the most valuable commodities in this group. In total, Ireland exported 36.5 tons of wine to Bristol this year, evidence that her continental trade was extensive enough to insure a surplus of wine to her requirements. Unfortunately there are no specifics mentioned to indicate the origin of this surplus wine, such as occurs in a fragmentary Chester account for 1531, where 8 tons and 8 pipes of Gascon wine entered Chester from Ireland on a Waterford ship.<sup>102</sup> From Bristol during this year Ireland imported only “corrupt” wine. This was probably not used for drinking, but for pickling fish.<sup>103</sup> A further surprising

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<sup>102</sup> Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 128.

<sup>103</sup> Carus-Wilson, ‘The Overseas Trade of Bristol’, p. 200.

export from Ireland is pepper worth £122. This was carried on 11 different ships both of British and Irish origin to Bristol throughout the year.<sup>104</sup> There was probably a glut of pepper in Ireland this year that caused the price of the commodity to fall. Although the reason for this is entirely obscure, a shipwreck can perhaps be ruled out as the source due to the fact the exports to Bristol are staggered throughout the year.

While a lot of this produce was carried on Irish ships, it has been suggested that some merely represents goods in transit rather than genuine re-exports and as such would not have been of much benefit to Irish trade.<sup>105</sup> For example, a ship from Bristol may have sailed to the Continent, picked up a cargo and disposed of it in Ireland, arriving back to Bristol with just some residual wine or pepper for which it could not find a market in Ireland. Similarly, goods in transit are sometimes identifiable from the foreign names of the consignors and would not affect the Irish economy except in so far as they benefited the shipping industry.<sup>106</sup> This distinction becomes more important here as these products make up a sizeable percentage of Irish exports in 1516-17. This can to a limited extent be tested by checking the original destination of British ships coming back from Ireland with re-exports to see if their first destination is the Continent, rather than Ireland. The *Anthony* of Bristol for example arrived in Bristol from Ireland on the

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<sup>104</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

<sup>105</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

18<sup>th</sup> May 1517 carrying a cargo of only pepper.<sup>107</sup> The same ship had left Bristol for Ireland on the 16<sup>th</sup> April with corrupt wine and beans. This strongly suggests that the pepper brought back is, in this instance at least, not merely in transit, but a genuine Irish re-export, therefore contributing directly to the economy.

The evidence from the account suggests that Ireland was not merely a lonely outpost in European trade, but had her own strong independent links with the Continent. Of course, although free in this period of the restrictions on her overseas trade that were soon to come, Ireland's trade was not altogether unaffected by English foreign policy in this period. In 1512, for example, when relations were strained between Henry VIII and François Ier, an embargo was placed on all ships departing the ports of Dieppe and Caudebec for Ireland or England.<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that the freedom enjoyed by the country in this period greatly contributed to her capacity for independent growth and development.

## ***FISH***

It has often been suggested that the fishing industry was not in the hands of Irish merchants, but was controlled by foreign and English interests, therefore being of

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<sup>107</sup>P. R. O., E122 21/2.

<sup>108</sup>M. A. Lyons, 'Maritime Relations Between Ireland and France, 1480-1630', *Irish Economic and Social History*, XXVII (2000), 1-24 (p. 5).

limited benefit to the Irish economy.<sup>109</sup> This was possibly true in the following century but the extent to which it applies to this period is unclear.<sup>110</sup> From the point of view of English control of the industry, qualitative evidence such as statutes, evidence regarding the rental by Bristol Merchants of west coast salmon fisheries and the acquisition of licences to obtain salmon in Ireland all indicate the level of English involvement in the trade.<sup>111</sup> The customs accounts too however allow some analysis of the control of this industry. Of the fish recorded in the account for 1516-17, 84% of the total salmon exports were carried on Irish ships with the remaining 16% carried in small amounts by various English and Welsh ships. The exports of salt -water fish show that 59% of herring was exported on British ships but only 43% of hake, Irish merchants controlling the export of Ireland's most important commodity this year. Red herrings, herrings salted for twenty four hours and then hung up to smoke, comprising 11% of herring exports this year, were carried almost entirely on Irish ships. Overall this suggests that the Anglo-Irish fishing trade was actually shared fairly equally between Irish and British interests.

As figure 3.1 and table 3.1 indicate, fish remained the predominant Irish export to Bristol in 1516-17, accounting for 55% of total exports. Yet, as illustrated by table 3.3, this is a significant decrease from the earlier accounts, the average for the period 1479-

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<sup>109</sup> Childs & O'Neill, *Op. Cit.*, p.504; Gillespie, *Op. Cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>110</sup> Clarke, *Op. Cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>111</sup> Childs & O' Neill, *Op. Cit.*, p. 505.

1504 being 78%. Furthermore, this decline appears to be progressive, with figures continuing to drop markedly in the 1540s. A hint as to the reason for this reduction is a statute issued by Henry VIII to the Earl of Kildare in 1515-16, declaring that because merchants were exporting fish so abundantly to France, Brittany and other 'strange partes' there were none left for the King's subjects in Ireland and that henceforth each merchant was to 'leve within the lande the thirde part of his fishe'.<sup>112</sup>

It is clear that a massive trade existed with continental Europe. This however cannot be quantified to establish if a sixteenth century increase in this area explains the drop in Anglo-Irish trade, as the values traded by the Gaelic Irish, quantities taken directly by foreign fleets and the value of indirect trade are not recorded. It is unlikely, given the repetitive complaints and legislation in the later century regarding control of the fishing trade, that the statute had an immediate impact on Anglo-Irish trade. It is therefore likely that the decline noted here reflects the fact that continental trade was beginning to eclipse British interests.<sup>113</sup>

The significance of this for the Irish economy is difficult to assess. Anglo-Irish merchants certainly faced very direct competition from the Gaelic Irish when dealing with the export of fish to the Continent. This was to a great extent outside the control of

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<sup>112</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>113</sup> *C. S. P. Ire.* 1509-73, p. 405 (1569). The statute was revived in 1577 and 1581; Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 42; *C. S. P. Ire.* 1601-03, p. 259.

the Anglo-Irish and the Crown, who resented not only the lost customs but also the opportunities it furnished the Gaelic Irish with for arms dealing and other types of seditious intercourse. For the Gaelic Irish, the fishing industry was indeed a source of great profit. O' Sullivan, prince of Bear and Bantry, had his own fishing fleet and when an English ship seized a Spanish fishing vessel off the coast, he manned a squadron, brought both ships to Bearhaven, hanged the English captain and set the other free.<sup>114</sup> In the north of the country, O' Donnell exchanged fish with foreign merchants to such an extent, that he became known on the Continent as 'King of the Fish'.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, both Gaelic and Anglo-Irish lords derived large incomes by charging fishermen levies to use bays on the Irish coast for refitting their boats and landing their fish for salting.<sup>116</sup>

It is of course possible that the statistics for 1516-17, which show a 57% decrease in herring exports between 1504 and 1517 with a corresponding rise in hake, a trend that continues in the 1540s, represents a true decline in the amount of available herring.<sup>117</sup> Perhaps the 'free for all' attitude to the fishing industry that seems to have prevailed in the period was beginning to have a detrimental effect on the supply available for export to Bristol. The huge £1442 worth of herring exported in 1504 after all represents only a

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<sup>114</sup> Green, *Op. Cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>115</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>116</sup> Childs & O' Neill, *Op. Cit.*, p. 504.

<sup>117</sup> Jones. 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 176.

fraction of total exports and exploitation of the resource to this extent perhaps led to over-fishing of spawning fish resulting in a reduction of numbers.

A further possibility is that that shoals of herring migrated to other shores. It was indeed this phenomenon in the fifteenth century that caused Ireland to benefit from the migration of herring shoals from the North Sea and Baltic in the first place.<sup>118</sup> It is generally accepted that by the beginning of the seventeenth century a large migration of herring to Newfoundland had occurred. It certainly appears that the growth of the Newfoundland fisheries had a serious affect on Ireland's economy in the early seventeenth century, resulting in the direct loss of income from fishing but also the contraction of the profitable ancillary business of provisioning foreign fishing vessels.<sup>119</sup> Perhaps however, in view of the findings in the accounts, this migration could be dated earlier. There is indeed evidence in the customs accounts of a Kinsale ship transporting fish to Bristol from Newfoundland as early as 1537, which is very suggestive in this regard.<sup>120</sup>

The nature of the early sixteenth century fishing industry was significant to economic development. While Irish merchants shared the trade fairly equally with their English contemporaries, they were constantly in competition with the Gaelic Irish and foreign

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<sup>118</sup> Clarke, *Op. Cit.*, p, 181.

<sup>119</sup> Clarke, *OP. Cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>120</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 56.

interests for resources. The State Papers indicate that this continued in the later period. In 1569, for example, John Corbine wrote to Cecil that on the south- west coast of Ireland each year, 200 Spanish ships “fyshethe there, and caryeth away 2,000 beyffs, hydes, and tallow. No due to the Queen’s Majestie knowen”.<sup>121</sup> These challenges, in addition to what may have been a real decline in quantities of fish around the Irish coast, were probably motivating factors in the search for new markets in Newfoundland, which merchants must have had sufficient capital to undertake. Significantly, ventures like this became less likely in the following century, as Navigation Acts forbid the direct landing of certain goods from the colonies in Ireland and they had to be landed in England and then re-exported to Ireland.<sup>122</sup> A significant point however, is that the Irish response to changes in the available supply of fish, for whatever reason, was not to invest money in the industry, as later ‘New English’ settlers did, by introducing inshore netting and investing in shore-based facilities to develop the pilchard industry, but to search instead for new hunting grounds.<sup>123</sup> Overall, given the extremely healthy figures for trade seen in the accounts, it is unlikely that the noted decline in the Anglo-Irish branch of the fishing industry meant any significant losses to Irish merchants. At this stage, the open nature of the economy, and the constant collaboration between Gaelic and Anglo-Irish economic interests ensured a

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<sup>121</sup> C. S. P. Ire. 1509-73, p. 405.

<sup>122</sup> Gillespie, *Op. Cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>123</sup> Clarke, *Op. Cit.*, p. 181.

more flexible attitude to trade and losses sustained in one area could generally be recovered in another.

**Table 3.2- Summary of Ireland-Bristol trade, 1479-1545**

<b>Exports, Bristol-Ireland by value in £ sterling</b>																		
	1479		1485		1486		1492		1503		1517		1541		1542		1545	
Cloths of assize	1056	69%	778	79%	790	66%	798	59%	786	46%	859	41%	685	33%	478	29%	479	22%
Foodstuffs	411	27%	166	17%	220	18%	325	24%	519	30%	814	39%	283	14%	231	14%	388	18%
Cloth & Clothing	42	3%	14	1%	155	13%	200	15%	310	18%	306	15%	808	39%	645	40%	906	41%
Metals	25	2%	6	1%	14	1%	30	2%	53	3%	21	1%	188	9%	189	12%	265	12%
Misc.	0	0%	16	2%	0	0%	3	0%	35	2%	77	4%	93	5%	82	5%	148	7%
Illegible	1	0%	0	0%	12	1%	2	0%	0	0%	2	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1191</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1358</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1703</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2079</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2058</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1625</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2186</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Imports, Ireland-Bristol by value in £ sterling</b>																		
	1479		1485		1486		1492		1503		1517		1541		1542		1545	
Fish	2843	92%	1412	79%	1150	81%	1001	69%	2464	71%	2101	55%	1346	31%	708	26%	954	33%
Skins	136	4%	200	11%	133	9%	165	11%	446	13%	797	21%	476	11%	521	19%	595	21%
Cloth & Clothing	99	3%	159	9%	110	8%	266	18%	432	12%	524	14%	2432	56%	1404	51%	1210	42%
Misc.	11	0%	20	1%	20	1%	28	2%	147	4%	343	9%	94	2%	110	4%	113	4%
Illegible	0	0%	0	0%	15	1%	0	0%	0	0%	23	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3089</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1791</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1428</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1460</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3489</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3788</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4348</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2743</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2872</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Trade</b>	<b>4624</b>		<b>2771</b>		<b>2619</b>		<b>2818</b>		<b>4954</b>		<b>5866</b>		<b>6406</b>		<b>4368</b>		<b>5058</b>	

## ***CHAPTER 4 - IRELAND'S IMPORTS FROM BRISTOL***

### ***CLOTH OF ASSIZE***

Irish check cloth and frieze were of a course, loosely woven nature and while they were probably the main type of material used for everyday wear, it is clear from the customs accounts that the wealthier element of society desired a finer cloth. *Panni sine grano*, or English broadcloth, is the main type of cloth imported and this, including the narrower type, *panni streit sine grano*, makes up 41% of total imports in 1517. The term *sine grano* does not mean an un-dyed cloth but rather specifies that the cloth was not dyed with kermes, an extremely valuable red dye, probably of North African origin and obtained from the kermes insect.<sup>124</sup> This was used to produce the brilliant scarlet Broadmead cloth, from which the gowns of mayors and councillors were made.<sup>125</sup> In an effort to limit its usage, it was subject to customs restrictions. The reason for mentioning it here is that the 1516-17 account shows the very unusual export of this dyestuff from Ireland to Bristol on a Youghal ship in June of this year.<sup>126</sup> The fact that it was in Ireland at all, suggests that the dyeing industry was relatively advanced, capable, if not of producing, then at least dyeing, very fine quality clothing.

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<sup>124</sup> Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 179.

<sup>125</sup> P. Fleming, & K. Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol* (Bristol, 1998), p. 17.

<sup>126</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

As table 3.3 indicates, Irish imports of cloth of assize dropped significantly in terms of overall value between 1516 and 1545. This was in part to do with the decline of the Bristol cloth industry during the period but must also be considered in terms of the growth of Irish production. Gillespie, when discussing what he sees as the backward nature of Irish industry in the sixteenth century, mentions that one of the peculiarities of the economy was that while increasing amounts of yarn and wool were being exported, cloth imports grew to supplement local production.<sup>127</sup> What we are seeing in the earlier period is the opposite of this phenomenon, Irish imports falling as production and indeed exportation, is clearly increasing. It is impossible to say whether the increase in Irish cloth production was in some way a response to the decline in Bristol's output or whether the reduced imports are because Ireland was at this point able to supply her own needs and more. What is certain however is that these changing trends indicate the need for reassessment of the significance of later developments on Irish manufacturing industry.

### ***CLOTH AND CLOTHING***

Included in this category for discussion are cloth, clothing and items involved in the clothing industry such as dyestuff and haberdashery. Saffron, although it is treated in the comparative summary table (3.3) as a foodstuff for the sake of meaningful

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<sup>127</sup> Gillespie, *Op. Cit.*, p. 7.

comparison across the period, will be discussed here as a dyestuff, because even though it served both purposes, its primary use was for the dyeing of cloth. All other dyestuffs have been included in the figures for cloth and clothing in table 3.3.

Of the items in this category, silk is by far the most frequent, making up 8% of total imports, similar to that of 1504.<sup>128</sup> The value is Silk was always popular among both Gaelic and Anglo-Irish as evidenced by a statute in 1537 which tried to limit Anglo-Irish usage by forbidding women to “use or weare any kyrtell, or cote tucked up, or imbroydered or garnished with silke...after the Irish fashiones”.<sup>129</sup> While there is no increase in the import of this luxury item in the early century, a rise is noted in the 1540s data, when silk accounts for an average of 15% of imports.<sup>130</sup> This probably indicates developments in the varieties of the product available and an increased sophistication in consumer tastes. The 1517 account, like the 1504, only records *seric opat*, or worked silk but according to Longfield, from the middle of the century onwards there was a development in the production of half silk mixtures that increased the choices available to consumers.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 216; P. R. O., E122 21/2.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>130</sup> Jones, ‘Bristol Shipping Industry’, p. 181.

<sup>131</sup> Longfield, Op. Cit., p. 154.

*Pilior tinctus* is a frequent entry in the 1516-17 account.<sup>132</sup> If this term does indeed mean ‘dyed cloth’ then its presence in the accounts is evidence that despite what appears to be a considerable dyeing industry in Ireland, quantities of coloured cloths were still required. This particular commodity is very variable in terms of quantities imported and in 1517 only £30 worth were sent to Ireland compared to £122 worth in 1504 and an equally high figure in 1518-19.<sup>133</sup> An interesting item imported in 1516-17 is *Panni Walliae* or Welsh cloth, as its quality was similar to the Irish friezes. Its import, at a total value of £50 in this year, is suggestive that the level of production at home was still relatively low at this point. Importantly, in 1541 when cloth production seems to have increased, only £2 worth of this cloth is imported and none at all in 1542/3 or 1545/6.<sup>134</sup>

Thread, laces and stockings are included for this year in small amounts. It is instructive however to compare the overall range of goods in this category to those in the 1540s accounts. Included in the later accounts are; linen from Holland, satin, velvet, handkerchiefs, hats, needles, nightcaps made of five different types of cloth, points, pins, purses and ribbons, none of which appear in 1517. The marked increase in the range of goods noted in the 1540s suggests both a growing sophistication of tastes and

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<sup>132</sup> There is uncertainty regarding the exact meaning of the term. Carus-Wilson and Childs have interpreted it as ‘dyed hair’, possibly a reference to Cornish wool, while Longfield sees it as ‘dyed cloth’. It is normally valued in the accounts at around 4*d.* a lb.

<sup>133</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 151.

<sup>134</sup> Jones, ‘Bristol Shipping Industry’, p. 179.

increasing prosperity in Ireland but simultaneously indicates that she remained dependant on imports for everyday manufactured goods.

The account contains entries of five different types of dyestuff; saffron, orchill, alum, woad and verdigris. Saffron, used as a bright yellow dye, is a very important commodity in this year accounting for 11% of imports. Interestingly, this was the favourite colour of the native Irish along with the purple colour obtained from orchill. Longfield suggests that the larger amounts imported in the earlier century reflect the fact that there was more intercourse with the native population than later. This is also related to the later decline in the cloth industry and the increase in the range and attractiveness of other goods.<sup>135</sup> Table 3.4 illustrates the gradual increase in the import of saffron during the period. When compared to the data in table 3.3, the peak in saffron imports and in cloth exports from Ireland do not match, so it is difficult to say if the general growth in saffron was caused by the development of cloth manufacture in Ireland.

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<sup>135</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 181.

**Table 4.1 – Imports of saffron from Bristol to Ireland: 1503-04, 1516-17, 1541-42, 1542-43, 1545- 46.**

Year	Value £	% Total
1503-04	186	11%
1516-17	225	11%
1541-42	271	13%
1542-43	269	17%
1545-46	417	19%

Source: Longfield 1926, PRO E122 21/2, Jones 1998.

**Table 4.2-Imports from Bristol to Ireland in £ Sterling: 1516-17**

Summary Table	Value £	Total %
Cloth Paying Custom	859	41
Cloth Paying Poundage	81	4
Silk	168	8
Beans	318	15
Malt/Wheat/Hops	69	3
Beer	20	1
<i>Cutts</i>	23	1
Laces	24	1
Saffron	225	11
Other Dyestuff	29	2
Corrupt Wine	164	8
Spices/Salt	17	1
Iron/battry	21	1
Misc.	61	3
<b><i>Total Value</i></b>	<b>2079</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: P. R. O., E122 21/2.

## ***FOODSTUFFS***

Some Irish imports in this category are instructive by their absence. Salt, for example hardly features at all as an import from Bristol, with only £5 worth being sent in this year.<sup>136</sup> We know from a valuable note in a West Country merchant's "directions for divers trades" that a wey of salt was needed for every 1000 fish.<sup>137</sup> Given that the fishing industry was Ireland's mainstay, the country would have needed massive amounts of salt for survival and this they were clearly able to obtain from their continental trade. A chancery petition from 1473 suggests that Brittany was one source for this commodity as in this year Drogheda merchants freighted a Flanders ship with hides and horses to go to Brittany and bring back salt.<sup>138</sup> Likewise, while the account shows the re-export from Bristol to Ireland of small quantities of aniseed, cinnamon, cumin, mace, pepper, and liquorice, much of which came to Bristol overland from Southampton and London, other luxury items such as nutmeg and cloves arrived in Bristol from Ireland. This indicates the direct supply of such goods to Ireland from Spain, Portugal and Flanders. A comparison between this account and the 1540s shows much the same imports in terms of variety with a few additions such as ginger and frankincense. Similarly, the quantity of aniseed imported rises from £10 worth in 1517

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<sup>136</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

<sup>137</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>138</sup> P. R.O., C1/70/92. See note 38.

to £70 in 1542. This suggests an overall increase in the range, quantity and demand for luxury goods in Ireland during the period.

As already mentioned Ireland only imported corrupt wine from Bristol and this was probably not for consumption, given their ability to export large amounts of wine to Bristol. Interestingly, beer seems to have been imported in small quantities too, coming to less than 1% of imports.<sup>139</sup> Ireland imported more malt this year than beer and the presence also of hops, a commodity that increased significantly as an import in the 1540s accounts, is suggestive of both brewing and distilling industries in Ireland. Malt seems to have been imported on ships from all parts of the south of the country in 1517 and it is therefore not possible to identify regional specialisation in the industry. The presence of these commodities is significant to our understanding of the state of the economy. Being luxurious rather than essential imports, their presence indicates the relative prosperity of the period and is further evidence of skills specialisation and industrial organisation.

The outstanding import to Ireland in 1517 was corn, taking the term in its broadest sense to include wheat, malt, hops and beans. The figure achieved this year is higher than in any other account for the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries coming to a total of £387, a huge 19% of total imports. Of this beans are a massive import of £317. It is

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<sup>139</sup> P. R. O., E122 21/2.

almost certain however that the true figure was much higher. While grain only paid poundage like other goods, bans on food imports and exports from the fifteenth century, due both to scarcity and the developing mercantilist ideology, had led to a complex system of licensing and evasion in this area of trade. The crown frequently granted export licences to favourites and courtiers who in turn sold them on to merchants, who could then break them up and sell the shares at a higher price. The cost, even if a merchant could buy a licence from the original recipient, could add as much as 60% to the price of the goods.<sup>140</sup> This, added to the fact that the profit margins for grain were much greater than those achievable on other goods, made illicit trade in agricultural produce a large scale and highly organised business.<sup>141</sup>

Unless it can be proven then that 1516-17 was an exceptional year, in which a glut of beans in England led to a relaxation of restrictions, which is doubtful as it has been noted that it ‘rained from Whitsuntide to Michaelmas’, we must allow that shipments of corn were made that are not recorded.<sup>142</sup>

The exact significance of this very high level of food importation for the Irish economy is difficult to assess. Jones has noted that 1541-2 was a year in which import of arable

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<sup>140</sup> Jones, ‘Illicit business: accounting for smuggling in mid- sixteenth –century Bristol’, *Economic History Review*, LIV, 1 (2001), 17-38 (pp. 24-33).

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>142</sup> S. Seyer, *Memoirs historical and topographical of Bristol and its neighbourhood from the earliest period down to the present time* (Bristol, 1821) p. 212.

produce was high due to the increased demand for foodstuffs created by England's campaign in Ireland.<sup>143</sup> This is unlikely to be the case in 1517 as, after the major campaign by the earl of Kildare in Munster in 1510, there followed a relatively stable period with no other major military campaigns to speak of.<sup>144</sup> Another explanation for what was clearly a high demand must therefore be sought.

On the whole it is likely that Ireland's level of agrarian production in the early sixteenth century has been underestimated by historians. It has been argued that the fortunes of Irish agriculture declined in the fifteenth century. Until around 1437, Ireland had exported corn to Bristol and Bristol merchants had shipped corn directly from Ireland to the Continent.<sup>145</sup> By 1437, Bristol was sending corn to Ireland and in 1475, the export of corn from Ireland was forbidden. The reversal of the trend has been seen to have been caused by over-exploitation and artificial prices caused by purveyance.<sup>146</sup> Indeed some historians argue that production was always at a very low level; low crop yields the product of backward agricultural methods and an economy geared only towards consumption.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Jones, 'Bristol Shipping Industry', p. 35.

<sup>144</sup> S. Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p. 104.

<sup>145</sup> Carus Wilson, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol', p. 199.

<sup>146</sup> Down, *Op. Cit.*, p. 485

<sup>147</sup> Lyons, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4.

While undoubtedly there was some decline in production due to intermittent warfare, this was by no means a novelty in the sixteenth century. Moreover, the restrictions on the trade and the resultant smuggling, lack of qualitative evidence for the activities of the Gaelic Irish and the absence of port books on the Irish side, make claims like these difficult to substantiate. Furthermore, it is very difficult to reconcile these arguments with later evidence, such as a grant in 1545 from the English Privy Council to the “Deputie and Counsail in Irland purporting that Jeffrey Keting, yeoman of the Garde, had enformed that the Realme of Irland was so furnished of grayne as might spare thens a good quantitie, which beeng true they should suffer him to transporte into England within twoo yere foure thousand quarters”.<sup>148</sup> Likewise, there is evidence that the Gaelic Irish were producing more corn than has previously been suspected. One example from Laois shows that losses reported to the Earl of Ormond by O’ Duinn, in 1567, included 2,827 plough horses, suggesting that a considerable area was under the plough.<sup>149</sup> That significant production continued, even through the most unstable conditions towards the end of the century and despite Customs’ regulations is clear from a proclamation by the Lord Deputy in 1589, making the penalty for transportation of corn, death.<sup>150</sup> Yet, in 1592, Edmund Palmer wrote to Lord Burghley, “If you do not give order in time to the Lord Deputy of Ireland, the Irishmen will altogether feed Spain with grain.”<sup>151</sup> What appears then as a decline in Irish production of corn and

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<sup>148</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>149</sup> Gillespie, *Op. Cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>150</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

reliance on England for food is arguably a much more complex process, our understanding of which is severely limited by the nature of the source material.

This however does not fully explain why Ireland needed to import such large quantities of pulses. The key to this finding is probably a point raised by Longfield, who in her analysis, found large quantities of beans being imported in 1492, 1504 and 1518.<sup>152</sup> According to Longfield, the corn sent from Ireland to both England and abroad was mostly pure wheat corn, whereas that imported in this period was inferior types such as beans and malt. This tendency to export the better grains and use poorer quality for domestic consumption, in part a continuation of the individual manorial policy pursued in the Middle Ages, is probably what lies behind the huge imports of beans in the accounts.<sup>153</sup>

There were certainly economic incentives underlying the increase in this tendency throughout the sixteenth century. The major driving force, and one of huge significance to the economy in this period, was the burden of cess, the means by which produce was commandeered for the army at prices far below market rates and indeed sometimes without payment at all. This meant that producers were only guaranteed a fair price for their grain by shipping it abroad and substituting it with the export of inferior produce.

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., pp. 110-117, 173-177.

This, when combined with the unrecorded amounts sent by the Gaelic producers from various ‘havens’ throughout the country, meant a persistently high level of exportation throughout the period, that remained mostly outside the scope of central control, and heedless of deteriorating environmental conditions.

While in the prosperous early sixteenth century then, Irish corn exports were perhaps, as Longfield has suggested, almost luxurious in nature, the beans coming in place of better grain exports abroad, this changed as the century wore on. As the burden of cesses later became intolerable, an even greater amount of corn was probably transported out of the country. The resultant shortage was greatly worsened by the ‘scorched earth policy’ adopted in the military campaigns of the Elizabethan wars and the tendency of the Gaelic Irish rebels to retaliate in a similar fashion, which seriously affected productivity. The combination of circumstances was devastating to the agrarian economy, causing widespread famine and decay in the closing years of the sixteenth century.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> R. A. Butlin, ‘Land and People, c. 1600’ in T. W. moody, F. X. Martin & F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland, Vol. III, Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691* (Oxford, 1776), pp. 142-167 (p. 146.)

## *CONCLUSION*

This analysis has focused on Ireland's sixteenth century economic development, in terms of her trade with England, from two different perspectives. Chapter 2 has been concerned with her overall commercial development, by examining changes to the size and balance of Anglo-Irish trade during the period and developments in shipping trends. Chapters 3 and 4 have focused more specifically on the nature of the trade by examining trends in Ireland's export and import commodities.

Overall, while it is hoped that this study has helped to illuminate what is indeed a very opaque picture, the arrival at any definite conclusions about certain aspects of Anglo-Irish trade in the sixteenth century will have to await the analysis of further customs accounts. As twelve annual 'particular' accounts from Bristol survive for the period 1503-1552 and currently, including this study, only five have been examined, there is fortunately great potential for more work to be done. Nevertheless, some general observations can be made here regarding the foregoing analysis.

The statistics analysed in chapter 2 have shown beyond any doubt that Ireland was becoming more commercialised during the first half of the sixteenth century. Due to the extensive political and commercial freedom and the relative social stability enjoyed by the Anglo-Irish towns during the period, Irish traders found themselves in an excellent

position to exploit the country's obvious potential for commercial development. The resultant increase in trade and shipping during the period must have had significant implications for the development of the towns of the south of Ireland, promoting increased employment, not only for merchants, but for shopkeepers, carriers, porters, boatmen and sailors.<sup>155</sup> The evidence of this buoyant economy has been noted in the physical development of the towns with merchants investing their surplus wealth in innovative architectural developments and also in the growing range and quantity of luxury goods imported from Bristol, suggesting a continuously improving quality of life, at least for some sectors of the community. This was a golden age for Irish commercial development. During the period, Irish shipping capacity reached heights not attained again until modern times. In contrast, by 1589, the decay of the port towns was so extensive that many Irish vessels were sold to Spain and only Waterford and Wexford were able keep up their numbers at all successfully.<sup>156</sup> It can be argued then that the significance of the later sixteenth century decline of the Irish economy, for whatever reason it occurred, was much greater than has been hitherto appreciated by historians.

In terms of the extent to which Ireland was independently becoming more industrialised during the sixteenth century, the evidence is more difficult to interpret.

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<sup>155</sup> D. M. Woodward, *The Trade of Elizabethan Chester* (Hull, 1970), p. 129.

<sup>156</sup> Longfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 211.

The data has shown that the expansion of the textile industry occurred after 1517 and until there is analysis of further accounts, there is no way to more precisely pin point the chronology of this development. Further work would also help to rule out the slight possibility that these dramatic findings are a mere glitch in the accounts, or even perhaps a short- term reaction to penal legislation re enacted in 1537, regarding wool exports.

The extent to which this apparent industrialisation was independent of Crown intervention is difficult to say and is of course part of the much wider historiographical argument relating to the affects of Crown policies on Irish development. It has however been suggested here that legislation enacted to protect against the export of wool, in order to stimulate cloth production, was of limited value. The expansion of the textile industry was most likely the result of independent local initiative and as a result its affects were probably limited to the south east of the country. Nevertheless, the presence in the accounts of very significant amounts of dyestuff and the re export of kermes to Bristol suggests that even if this industry did remain localised it was still relatively advanced in terms of skill specialisation. It must be noted that the outstanding growth in the textile industry, has not been found, in this study, to apply to any other industry. This was not an 'industrial revolution', a fact that becomes most apparent when considering the sluggish development of the tanning industry, an industry that Ireland clearly had all the natural resources to support. It is also evident in the nature of

Ireland's imports, which show that even in the 1540s as the country continued to grow in prosperity, Ireland still had to rely on outside production for all her everyday manufactured goods.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that, by 1541, the majority of Ireland's exports for the first time in her history consisted of manufactured goods. The assumption that Ireland's exports remained predominantly raw materials for the entire period in question has been the basis of all the arguments relating to Ireland's economic development to date. These findings therefore indicate the need for a considerable reappraisal of Irish economic history. In particular, it would appear that the arguments of revisionist historians regarding the reasons behind Ireland's ultimate failure to achieve economic modernisation must now be reconsidered. The fact that Ireland showed such significant potential for independent commercial and industrial growth in the sixteenth century, suggests that the emphasis placed factors such as skills shortages and lack of capital have perhaps been overstated. At the very least, since it can be confidently argued that Ireland's economic downturn from the late sixteenth century was of far greater significance than has hitherto been accepted, it is perhaps time to reopen the debate regarding the reasons for this decline.

One point remains to be considered briefly. At what level could the expansion in trade and industrial development examined here have been sustained were it not for the

disruptions of the later century? It is very difficult to say. The study of trends in the trade of specific commodities such as corn and fish have illustrated well the complex and *ad hoc* trade arrangements that evolved in this period to facilitate the co existence of two very different economic systems. While this inclusive system was no doubt behind the developments seen in terms of overall growth, an open economy facilitating access to more goods and fostering strong Continental links, paradoxically it was a limiting force on sustainable growth. The lack of a nationally integrated system meant that the economy was geared towards individual and competing interests and as a result, resources were frequently exported that the country could ill afford to spare, thus exacerbating local shortages. This is especially noticeable in the case of the fishing industry, where competing interests and lack of central control most likely caused a decline in the supply of fish from early in the century. This tendency was bound to impact also on manufacture, as there was no way of successfully controlling the export of raw materials such as linen and wool by the Gaelic Irish to the Continent. Given the nature of the existing economy then, it is unlikely that Ireland would have been able to keep pace with the industrial progress of England and the Continent. Nevertheless, there is no reason why this unique economy that flourished in the relative stability of the early sixteenth century, could not have continued to expand and develop, were it not for political and social turmoil that marked the end of the era.

***APPENDIX 1: IRELAND'S TRADE WITH BRISTOL-1516-17***

<b>Exports: Ireland to Bristol</b>		
<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Total £</i>	<i>% Total</i>
Cinnamon	0.25	0.01%
Cloth, frieze	0	0.00%
Cloth, linen	14.63	0.39%
Cloth, woolen, check	24.62	0.65%
Cloves	17.63	0.47%
Fish, eels	5.33	0.14%
Fish, hake	869.63	22.96%
Fish, herring, red	65.91	1.74%
Fish, herring, white	548.62	14.49%
Fish, salmon	472.04	12.46%
Fish, salted	135.94	3.59%
Fish, unspecified	3.23	0.09%
Items , illegible	20.26	0.53%
Items, miscellaneous	6.66	0.18%
Items , unidentifiable	3.12	0.08%
Kermes	7	0.18%
Lasts	15	0.40%
Mantles	477.47	12.61%
Mutton Fat	1.17	0.03%
Nutmeg	1.35	0.04%
Oil	7	0.18%
Pepper	122.28	3.23%
Pots	1	0.03%
Rosin	0.15	0.00%
Salt	3.33	0.09%
Skins, coney	1	0.03%
Skins, fox	6.2	0.16%
Skins, salted hides	17.05	0.45%
Skins, hides unspecified	14	0.37%
Skins, lamb	114.99	3.04%
Skins, marten	0.25	0.01%
Skins, otter	0.5	0.01%
Skins, salted	76.27	2.01%

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Total £</i>	<i>% Total</i>
Skins, sheep	507.39	13.40%
Skins, unspecified	12.19	0.32%
Skins, wild	0.53	0.01%
Tallow, rough	0.75	0.02%
Vinegar	4	0.11%
Wax	0.37	0.01%
Wine	146	3.85%
Wood, shipboards	16.17	0.43%
Wool: Irish	34.25	0.90%
Wool, flocks	11.97	0.32%
<i>Total Value</i>	3787.5	100.00%

### **Imports: Bristol to Ireland**

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Total £</i>	<i>% Total</i>
Agilstone	£ 5.00	0.24%
Alum	£ 7.44	0.36%
Aniseed	£ 9.85	0.47%
Battery	£ 9.00	0.43%
Beans	£ 317.71	15.28%
Beans/Malt	£ 13.33	0.64%
Beer	£ 20.25	0.97%
Cloth of assize	£ 851.55	40.96%
Cloth, fustian	£ 0.25	0.01%
Cloth, kersey	£ 7.00	0.34%
Cloth, silk	£ 167.73	8.07%
Cloth, welsh	£ 50.42	2.43%
Cinnamon	£ 0.13	0.01%
Cumin	£ 0.50	0.02%
<i>Cutts</i>	£ 23.48	1.13%
General	£ 44.73	2.15%
Handcards	£ 0.17	0.01%
Honey	£ 0.83	0.04%
Hops	£ 4.72	0.23%
Iron	£ 11.80	0.57%
Items, illegible	£ 1.85	0.09%
Knives	£ 0.50	0.02%
Laces	£ 23.90	1.15%
Liquorice	£ 0.79	0.04%

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Total £</i>	<i>% Total</i>
Mace	£ 0.13	0.01%
Malt	£ 32.00	1.54%
Milstone	£ 1.50	0.07%
Orchill	£ 16.31	0.78%
Penners	£ 0.25	0.01%
Pepper	£ 0.09	0.00%
<i>Pilior Tinctus</i>	£ 29.95	1.44%
Precars	£ 0.10	0.00%
Red Lash	£ 3.39	0.16%
Saffron	£ 224.67	10.81%
Salt	£ 5.19	0.25%
Skins, golden	£ 2.30	0.11%
Stockings	£ 0.60	0.03%
Thread	£ 0.62	0.03%
Verdigris	£ 0.17	0.01%
Wheat	£ 19.50	0.94%
Wine, corrupt	£ 163.93	7.89%
Woad asher	£ 5.00	0.24%
Wool, welsh	£ 0.13	0.01%
<i>Total</i>	£ 2,078.76	100.00%

## ***APPENDIX 2: IRISH SHIPPING-1516-17***

<b><i>Ship's Name</i></b>	<b><i>Port of Origin</i></b>	<b><i>Master</i></b>	<b><i>Direction</i></b>	<b><i>Date</i></b>
<i>Bonaventure</i>	Cork	Richard Solle	from Ireland	18/11/1516
<i>Bonaventure</i>	Cork	Richard Solle	to Ireland	12/12/1516
<i>Magdalen</i>	Cork	John White	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Cork	William Barry	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Cork	Robert Broder	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Magdalen</i>	Cork	John White	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Cork	Robert Barrett	to Ireland	28/03/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Cork	William Barry	to Ireland	02/04/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Cork	William Walsh	to Ireland	09/07/1517
<i>Anne</i>	Cork	Robert (?)arshe	from Ireland	16/07/1517
<i>Mary</i>	Cork	Philip Walsh	from Ireland	20/07/1517
<i>Molre</i>	Cork	Philip Walsh	to Ireland	01/08/1517
<i>Nicholas</i>	Drogheda	Nicholas Johnys	from Ireland	20/12/1516
<i>Konylagh</i>	Kinsale	Richard Donell	from Ireland	09/11/1516
<i>Trynyte</i>	Kinsale	Germyn Foran	from Ireland	09/11/1516
<i>Trinity</i>	Kinsale	Germyn Foran	to Ireland	28/11/1516
<i>Konylagh</i>	Kinsale	Richard Donell	to Ireland	28/11/1516
<i>Trinite</i>	Kinsale	John Roche	from Ireland	07/03/1517
<i>Jesus</i>	Kinsale	Jurding Roche	from Ireland	07/03/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Kinsale	William Dale	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Conylagg</i>	Kinsale	Jacob White	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Christopher</i>	Kinsale	Richard Donell	from Ireland	10/03/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Kinsale	Cornell Acon	from Ireland	12/03/1517
<i>Konylagh</i>	Kinsale	Jacob White	to Ireland	24/03/1517
<i>Christopher</i>	Kinsale	Richard Donell	to Ireland	24/03/1517
<i>Jesus</i>	Kinsale	Jurdanne Roche	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Kinsale	Cornell Maron	to Ireland	30/03/1517
<i>Konylagh</i>	Kinsale	William Dale	to Ireland	15/06/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Kinsale	Thomas Donell	from Ireland	17/06/1517
<i>Christopher</i>	Kinsale	Junys Cloke	from Ireland	26/06/1517
<i>Christopher</i>	Kinsale	Jacob Clok	to Ireland	08/07/1517
<i>Mary</i>	Malahide	Maurice Dirhin	from Ireland	19/03/1517
<i>Mary White</i>	Malahide	Mauricius Dirhin	to Ireland	02/04/1517
<i>Katryn</i>	Ross	William Blake	from Ireland	12/11/1516
<i>Kateryn</i>	Ross	Walterus Blake	to Ireland	28/11/1516

<i>Ship's Name</i>	<i>Port of Origin</i>	<i>Master</i>	<i>Direction</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Savior</i>	Ross	Thomas Shenill	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Ross	Nicholas Gregorie	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Saviour</i>	Ross	Thomas Shenill	to Ireland	20/03/1517
<i>Patrick</i>	Ross	Nicholas Gregorie	from Ireland	18/07/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Ross	Nicholas Gregory	to Ireland	01/08/1517
<i>Mary Bossher</i>	Waterford	Nicholas Power	from Ireland	09/11/1516
<i>Fawken</i>	Waterford	William Roche	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>George</i>	Waterford	Thomas Marys	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Nicholas</i>	Waterford	Robert Barry	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Mary Bosher</i>	Waterford	John Ley	from Ireland	10/03/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Waterford	Edmundus Malrony	from Ireland	11/03/1517
<i>Mary Bosher</i>	Waterford	John Ley	to Ireland	19/03/1517
<i>George</i>	Waterford	Thomas Marris	to Ireland	20/03/1517
<i>Fawcon</i>	Waterford	Nicholas Rothe	to Ireland	21/03/1517
<i>Nicholas</i>	Waterford	Robert Keny	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Waterford	Edmundus Malrony	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Waterford	John Fitzharry	from Ireland	16/05/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Waterford	Edmundus Malrony	from Ireland	22/05/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Waterford	Edmundus Malrony	to Ireland	22/05/1517
<i>George</i>	Waterford	Thomas Marry	from Ireland	04/06/1517
<i>Patrick</i>	Waterford	John Fitzharry	to Ireland	04/06/1517
<i>George</i>	Waterford	Thomas Martyn	to Ireland	25/06/1517
<i>Mary</i>	Waterford	Thomas Hewe	from Ireland	06/07/1517
<i>Fawcon</i>	Waterford	Nicholas Roche	from Ireland	15/07/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Waterford	Edward Malroney	from Ireland	17/07/1517
<i>Mary Bosher</i>	Waterford	Nicholas Power	from Ireland	17/07/1517
<i>Mary</i>	Waterford	Thomas Hewett	to Ireland	30/07/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Waterford	Edmundus Malrony	to Ireland	04/08/1517
<i>Nicholas</i>	Wexford	John Roche	from Ireland	07/03/1517
<i>Jesus</i>	Wexford	Nicholas Stafford	from Ireland	07/03/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Wexford	Nicholas Vele	from Ireland	07/03/1517
<i>Mary</i>	Wexford	Nicholas Frenshe	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>George</i>	Wexford	Robert Roche	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Makerell</i>	Wexford	John Cole	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Sonday</i>	Wexford	Nicholas Vele	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>George</i>	Wexford	R (?) Roche	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>Mary</i>	Wexford	Nicholas Frenshe	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>Jesus</i>	Wexford	Nicholas Stafford	to Ireland	26/03/1517
<i>Makerell</i>	Wexford	John Cole	to Ireland	26/03/1517

<i>Ship's Name</i>	<i>Port of Origin</i>	<i>Master</i>	<i>Direction</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Nicholas</i>	Wexford	John Roche	to Ireland	31/03/1517
<i>Clement</i>	Wexford	Thomas Caron	from Ireland	20/07/1517
<i>Fawcon</i>	Wexford	Nicholas Roche	to Ireland	01/08/1517
<i>Clement</i>	Wexford	Thomas Caron	to Ireland	01/08/1517
<i>George</i>	Wicklow	Patricius Albury	from Ireland	09/12/1516
<i>George</i>	Wicklow	Patricius Alley	to Ireland	23/12/1516
<i>Mary</i>	Youghal	David Walshe	from Ireland	20/01/1517
<i>Mary</i>	Youghal	David Walshe	to Ireland	06/02/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Youghal	Dennis Griffith	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Patrike</i>	Youghal	Maurice Heron	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Patryk</i>	Youghal	Mauricius Fynne	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Youghal	Patricus Browne	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Nicholas</i>	Youghal	John Grant	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Youghal	M (?) Russell	from Ireland	09/03/1517
<i>Patrike</i>	Youghal	Mauricius Russell	to Ireland	23/03/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Youghal	Maurice Herne	to Ireland	28/03/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Youghal	Mauricius Fynne	to Ireland	31/03/1517
<i>Nicholas</i>	Youghal	John Grant	to Ireland	01/04/1517
<i>Katerin</i>	Youghal	Dennis Griffith	from Ireland	15/05/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Youghal	Dennis Griffith	to Ireland	18/05/1517
<i>Patrick</i>	Youghal	Maurice Russell	from Ireland	04/06/1517
<i>Patrick</i>	Youghal	Maurice Russell	to Ireland	09/06/1517
<i>Kateryn</i>	Youghal	Maurice Heron	from Ireland	19/06/1517
<i>Patrik</i>	Youghal	Richard Staunton	from Ireland	13/07/1517
<i>Patrick</i>	Youghal	Richard Staunton	to Ireland	29/07/1517

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