

Auctioneers in Provincial Towns in England and Wales at the End of the Eighteenth Century

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Keywords

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The study of consumer society in early modern Britain was launched more than three decades ago. The field has been ignorable thenceforth, and many studies have clarified factors and incentives leading to the rise of consumption of that period. Initially, pioneering scholars in this study area like Joan Thirsk and Maxine Berg importantly argued that revival and progress of domestic manufacture provided foundations for the extensive growth of consumption between the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. Now recent studies stress that trading and retailing also played crucial roles. In those changing situations, increasingly advancing trading skills such as advertising or displaying undoubtedly contributed to draw attention of new shoppers emerged amongst the middling ranks, along with the trend of the arrangement and creation of shopping places in the towns.¹

Trading itself may not be able to be counted as a part of consumption in the strictest sense. But it certainly played an important role not only in the simplest terms of distributing goods, but also in encouraging people's views about material ownership, broadening the range of consumers, and as such it must had a direct link to the activities of consumption. Initiated by the early studies on shopping, shop-keeping and sales strategies in eighteenth century England,² in recent years, Claire Walsh, Nancy Cox and others have carried out interesting investigations into the trading practice of that time, showing how active and creative those engaged in the distribution and service sector in the eighteenth century were in terms of their sales techniques.³ Traders' skills and tactics are important because not only they reflect traders' scope of business, but also reveal that of the market. Moreover, in the context of cultural and economic phenomena of the eighteenth century, it is significant that the traders and retailers offered chances and spaces to people in general for their social encounter. It was during this period of commercial progress that the pleasurable activity called shopping appeared and gradually obtained wider social recognition.⁴

Shopping, a new leisure, became a stimulus and even created new meaning in consumption, leading to the age of the mass production and consumption in the nineteenth century.

As has often been stressed, it was largely the increase of consumption of luxurious commodities that stimulated the advancement of domestic manufacture, thereby the progress in trading tactics. While this emphasis is true, we should also note that in this period of commercial progress, consumer demand for the necessities increased as well. In this respect, it is worth noting that the demarcation line between the luxury and the necessity was not necessarily explicit. The expansion in the variation of consumables in general accelerated the speed of circulation of goods in the market. In the period before the nineteenth century, there were more varieties in the ways of consuming goods, and it was not only fashionable retailers dealing with the brand new luxuries and semi-luxuries, but also those who were in the sale of the second-hand goods that represented the curious aspects of the early modern period.⁵

It was in this economic climate of diverse competing goods that auctions emerged. Auction, one of the public sales, has a long history of its own extending back in the ancient times. But this long-standing mode of sale gained a great popularity only in the context of the development of the market economy and rise of consumption of the eighteenth century. By the mid-eighteenth century, auctions were a commonplace for the purchase and sales of properties of various types. In this process, auctions established themselves as a distinct type of business rather than functioning merely as a mode of sale. Accordingly, they acquired a prominent position in the economic, social and cultural arenas in Britain in the eighteenth century. Towards the end of the century, two controversial ideas about auctions became apparent: auctions were useful in order to respond to the expanding markets, but they could be the ways to deceive *bona fide* traders.⁶

It is not easy to know how frequently auctions were held in the late-seventeenth and late-eighteenth centuries. Also, it is hard to point out precisely the extent to which the business of auction gained popularity in the society. This is largely due to the lack of surviving historical records. In the ESTC on CD-ROM, however, a number of auction catalogues printed and published before the sale of auction are contained. Such data as does survive suggests that, in Britain, the number of issued auction catalogues grew nearly 200 times between the

late-seventeenth and the end of the eighteenth centuries.⁷ This trend represents just one aspect of the whole of auction sales, but publication of catalogues on such a scale surely shows that the presence of auctions in the broader context of British commercialisation cannot be ignored. Even so, however, there are much to be done before the nature, roles, and the details of the practice of auctioneering during this particular period to be understood. Studies on the early modern auctions have focused on the natural nexus between auctions and works of art, illuminating on the market and consumption of the luxuries like paintings and other works of art, and the curiosities.⁸ Also, we have been encouraged in the literature to link all British auctions in some crucial way to the success stories of *Christie's* and *Sotheby's*, the world famous English auction houses: both began their business in the mid-eighteenth century and became specialist art auctioneers. This pattern is also seen in the fact that we have relied heavily on the cases of London auctions.⁹ The relation between auction sales and works of art was, however, strengthened only in a long process of a broader expansion of the markets of both the necessaries and luxuries in the nineteenth century. MacArthur and Stobart rightly pointed out that when the sales by way of auction at country houses began to increase in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the variety of items were sold and bought at those sales.¹⁰ As we will see below, during the century, it seemed to be rare for the people who carried out auctions to confine themselves only to the markets for one or two particular types of goods. Auctions increasingly became a new phenomenon in Britain during the process of commercialisation. It was perhaps through this process of commercialisation that the technique of auction acquired its modern aspects, becoming the sales method of particular rarities. However, in order to understand eighteenth century British auctions and to analyse their roles and social position more precisely in the economic structure of that period, we need to pay much closer attention to auctions and auctioneers in the provinces as well as those in the capital.

This paper will first explain the context of the introduction of the Auction Duty Act of 1777 as one foundation of the auction business and auctioneers in the modern period. Second, the paper focuses the places where the 'auctioneers' lived and carried out their business in England and Wales at the end of the eighteenth century. The paper will show the number of auctioneers in those regions, counties, and towns in the province, and point out some general traits of those areas. Third,

the paper will describe the variety in the occupational combinations that traders attracted to their role as ‘auctioneers’. In analysing the types of occupations of the provincial auctioneers, the paper also looks at the specialisation in the service industry. The survey undertaken in this paper makes good use of the *Universal British Directory* (1793-98). This is one of the earliest publications among the town directories which covers most of the counties in England and Wales, providing a lot of valuable information about economic life in both areas at the end of the eighteenth century. Yet the *Universal British Directory* does not cover the towns in Scotland and Ireland, and this is taken into account in the conclusions below. The paper aims to explain two points. First, the extent to which the auctioneers were widespread in the places other than London, settling down themselves in the fabric of economy of those provinces. Second, quite a few people who identified themselves as an auctioneer engaged in other occupation(s) besides auctioneer; this survey will help to build a new image of British auctioneers in their early days.

The introduction of the Auction Duty Act (1777) and its effects

Although it is no doubt that auctions shared an important space with other types of trading methods during the rise and progress of British consumer society, it is not easy to know the actual scale of their significance, or to grasp the precise size of this economic transaction. This is due partly to the absence of the business organisations of auctioneers. Unlike other traditional trades, ‘auctioneers’ did not form any associations like authorised traders’ guilds or even less formal gatherings of social clubs until the end of the eighteenth century.¹¹ Also, auctioneering obtained the official status of an independent business, together with the commencement of the licensing system for auctioneers, only in 1777 with the introduction of the first Auction Duty Act. Since the seventeenth century, in the City of London, there were Outropers who were officially appointed to sell off personal properties of those deceased by way of auction.¹² Meanwhile, any ‘auctioneers’ who carried out auctions outside of the City did not have any qualification as specialist traders but also had no specialist position, nor did they have the duty or right officially to register themselves as auctioneers. Perhaps such an indistinctive character of auctioneer’s identity was one reason for not having their associations organised. In addition, purchasers

at auctions were required, in theory at least, to make payment for the goods they bought with ready money, so auctioneers did not necessarily need to keep records of payments. This may be one of the causes of lacking sufficient business records that provide us with a better account of the nature and the reality of the business of auctioneering.¹³ For the historian, conditions such as these have left unclear significant aspects of the process and development of auctioneering.

As is explicit in its title, the purpose of the Act of 1777 was to levy excise on auctions. After the long period of wars and international rivalries, at the end of 1770s the British Government seriously needed to increase their income.¹⁴ Therefore, the Act consisted of two types of excise: one was on goods sold by way of auction,¹⁵ and the other on an annual licence to be taken out by the people who would act as an auctioneer in the near future. As the resolution of the government to tax auctions itself suggests, the sales by way of auction were already quite common in the society. So, the government might have thought that auctions could be worthwhile targets. In order to achieve the need to fulfil the annual income of the state, the government stressed those duties on auctioned goods and the auctioneer's licences to be the taxes on the materials relating to the luxury consumption.¹⁶

The idea of licensing auctioneers was twofold. First, auctioneers must be taxed because they must have enjoyed wealthy economic conditions as a result of the rise of auctions. Second, some auctioneers were mischievous to fair traders therefore the business of auctioneers must be restricted by way of imposing 'fines'.¹⁷ Not all traders who worked as auctioneers at that time were well off and it was difficult to prove whether and how particular auctioneers were actually deceitful or not. What was clear is that the government intended to introduce a licencing system so that people earning an income through auctioneering contribute to the country's wealth. Those people who would carry out auctions were, therefore, required to pay the fee and be officially registered. The Act also forced auctioneers to give out their personal details at the registration. Once registered, auctioneers should issue and submit a catalogue with detailed information about the sale to be held and the lists of goods before the sales day. Although the tax on auctioneers' licence and that on goods auctioned were declared to be taxes on the luxuries, the amounts of these two taxes were not expensive compared with the duties on any other items.¹⁸ Perhaps in light of this fact alone, the Act was successfully introduced without severe oppositions.¹⁹

The Auction Duty Act of 1777 does not explain all the details of auctioneering and the status of ‘auctioneers’ in that century. It was only after the introduction of this law, however, that the tax returns appeared in the parliamentary records regularly, thereby recorded the fact that auctions were held and there were auctioneers. The introduction of the Act was important more in the contemporary context, for, it helped to promote the idea that those who carried out auctions should be traders with a legal right to engage in the business by way of this particular mode of sale. The social appreciation was necessary because it was, at that time, hard for any traders to earn a good reputation without a certificate issued by either the central government or the local corporations. The Act thus became a starting point to promote social recognition of auctioneers. Before the introduction of the Act of 1777, it was basically rare to see the expression of ‘auctioneer’ in the local town directories, despite the obvious existence of auctioneers and the increase of the frequency of organising sales by auction from the mid-century onwards. The infrequency of the entry of the term ‘auctioneer’ in early town directories suggests that eighteenth-century contemporaries might have somewhat negative view in identifying themselves by the title of auctioneer. But after the introduction of the Act, one of the directories of the town of Whitehead, for example, listed local auctioneers under a section entitled “Appraisers and Auctioneers *licensed* according to the Statutes...”, which was distinguished from the section of traders in general.²⁰ This is a minor but still crucial point which underpins certain changes in the social identification of auctioneers. After the introduction of the law, some of local excise officers also made an attempt to acclimatise them to this new system. One officer tried to record the duties on auctioned goods by drawing a table arranged according to these new duties. This was done to prevent any mistakes at his turn of the collection of the duties.²¹

Auctioneers in the Province in England and Wales

Auctioneers in different regions:

The *Universal British Directory* (5 vols.) was published in 1793-1798. This was more than a decade after the first Auction Duty Act was introduced in 1777. This directory is notably for its lists of identification auctioneers. In its volumes for provincial towns, the *Universal British Directory* lists 43 counties in England and Wales. In the section of each

county, towns with certain significance to the locality were listed. The number of towns count 666 in all, and the section of each town lists traders and professionals, usually following their town officers and other residents of importance like the nobility and gentry.

Out of 666 towns entered in the *Universal British Directory*, 210 towns list at least one auctioneer, and the number of auctioneers reaches 386. In **Table 1** the counties in England and Wales are divided into six regions (also see **Map**).²² Of those six regions, three regions are almost all equal in terms of the number (and hence the proportion) of auctioneers (Midlands [73: 18.9%], South West [63: 16.3%], and North [71: 18.39%]). The remaining three regions include two in England and one in Wales. Among two regions in England, the South East counts 145 auctioneers (37.56%), the largest number among all six regions. On the other hand, East Anglia counts 26 auctioneers (6.7%), the smallest across five regions in England. In Wales, auctioneers count only eight (2.7%) marking the smallest number in comparison with the other five English regions.

Perhaps we should not put too much emphasis on those numerical (and proportional) gaps among regions. For, the way in which England and Wales are divided into only six regions may raise some problems. First, there is an obvious difference in the size of each region and hence the number of counties included in each region varies. For example, in East Anglia (where 26 auctioneers resided) the counties included count only four, while in the Midlands, which appears to be rather huge in terms of geographical space, consists eleven counties. Second, the regional division employed here is useful to signify traditional ties in terms of culture and economics among regions,²³ but with the rapid progress in the economy, the regional ties based on this traditional demarcation seemed to weaken, and ties between individual towns beyond these long-standing boundaries were becoming more important. However, this is virtually the first attempt to draw an attention to the auctioneers' presence at national level. For this purpose, the traditional division of the regions is useful so far as it shows that in English regions, with the exception of the South East and East Anglia, the numbers of auctioneers appears to be close to each other, and hence the proportions represent no extreme differences. This leads us to one crucial view in considering eighteenth century auctioneers' material place: that even towards the end of the century, auctioneers resided and carried out their business across England and Wales.

Table1: Distribution of auctioneers in the regions in England and Wales (numbers and proportion)

Region (*1)	County	Auctioneer		Population (1801)
		nos	%	
East Anglia	Suffolk	14		207,148
	Norfolk	8		273,629
	Cambridgeshire	2		80,112
	Huntingdonshire	1		37,449
	Norfolk and Suffolk	1		
total		26	6.74%	598,338
Midlands	Warwickshire	21		204,651
	Leicestershire	9		130,081
	Northamptonshire	9		131,430
	Worcestershire	9		137,544
	Lincolnshire	6		197,521
	Staffordshire	6		244,851
	Nottinghamshire	4		133,727
	Shropshire	3		151,910
	Derbyshire	2		161,147
	Herefordshire	2		79,243
	Rutland	1		16,300
Staffordshire and Warwickshire	1			
total		73	18.91%	1,588,405
North	Lancashire	23		588,711
	Yorkshire (NR, ER, WR)	15		832,855
	Northumberland	13		163,468
	Durham	8		161,666
	Cheshire	7		190,086
	Cumberland	4		126,976
	Westmorland	1		42,387
total		71	18.39%	2,106,149
South East	Hampshire	25		n/e
	Sussex	18		159,311
	Essex (HC *2)	15		226,638
	Surrey (HC)	15		267,288
	Kent (HC)	14		297,225
	Oxfordshire	14		109,721
	Berkshire	13		104,248
	Middlesex	9		817,710
	Bedfordshire	8		63,398
	Buckinghamshire	8		107,444
Hertfordshire (HC)	6		96,770	
total		145	37.56%	2,249,753
South West	Devon	14		342,787
	Somerset	14		190,223
	Gloucestershire	13		228,355
	Dorset	9		113,737
	Wiltshire	8		157,270
	Cornwall	5		183,997
total		63	16.32%	1,216,369
Wales	Cardiganshire	2		42,956
	Glamorganshire	2		71,525
	Pembrokeshire	2		56,280
	Brecknockshire	1		31,633
	Monmouthshire	1		29,506
total		8	2.70%	231,900
grand total		386	99.99%	7,990,914

*1 Regional divisions employed here are those used in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain vol. II 1540-1840 Part I*, CUP (Cambridge), 2000

*2 HC=Home Counties

Map: Distribution of auctioneers in England and Wales (numbers and proportion)



Auctioneers in Provincial Towns in England and Wales at the End of the Eighteenth Century (大橋)

Auctioneers in Counties:

The above regional observations show that in the eighteenth century traders identifiable as auctioneers spread throughout England and Wales without any particular regional concentration. The next question is that in which counties did these listed auctioneers reside. Is there any concentration of auctioneers in particular counties? As shown in **Table2-①**, among 43 counties entered in the directory, it is in Hampshire (South East) where the concentration of auctioneers appears to have been the greatest (25). The second largest number of auctioneers is found in Lancashire (23). Warwickshire is the third (21) and Sussex comes to be the fourth (18). Following those four counties, Essex, Surrey, and Yorkshire rank fifth, listing 15 auctioneers each. As been clarified in **Table2-②**, the spread of quite a few auctioneers spread from south to north, indicating, again, that there is no concentration in particular region in terms of auctioneers' settlement. Among those three counties (Essex, Surrey, and Yorkshire) ranked fifth, Yorkshire shows an interesting case. This county covers a tremendous geographical space with 52 towns listed in the *Universal British Directory* more than any other county. Nevertheless, out of those 52 towns in Yorkshire the number of towns where auctioneers are shown to have resided count only nine with a total of only 15 auctioneers for the entire county. The observation over counties suggests one more interesting aspect of the relation between auctioneers and their place of residence. Somerset, located in the west of England, and Norfolk in the east, are far away from each other. However, they are the two counties with equally 23 towns each listed in the directory. The number of towns with auctioneers appears to be also close (four towns in Somerset and five in Norfolk). The county of Somerset, however, counts nearly twice the number auctioneers as Norfolk (Somerset counts 14 and Norfolk eight). Likewise, the number of auctioneers in Hampshire (25) and Lancashire (23) is close. However, again, auctioneers lived and carried out their business in only seven Lancashire towns, a half the number appearing in Hampshire (14). The result as such indicates that the counties with many towns were not necessarily where auctioneers lived (**Table2-②**).

Table3-① and **②** will show some other features of the relation between the presence of auctioneers and the economic and cultural makeup of counties. **Table3-①** compares auctioneers with total

Table2-①: The Number of Auctioneers and Towns in Counties

Ranking	Region	County	Auctioneers	Towns with auctioneers	Total nos of Towns in County	Population 1801	
1	South East	Hampshire	25	14	38	n/e	
2	North	Lancashire	23	7	19	588,711	
3	Midlands	Warwickshire	21	6	9	204,651	
4	South East	Sussex	18	9	20	159,311	
5	South East	Essex (HC)	15	8	22	226,638	
	South East	Surrey (HC)	15	9	15	267,288	
	North	Yorkshire (NR, ER, WR)	15	9	52	832,855	
6	South West	Devon	14	8	33	342,787	
	South East	Kent (HC)	14	10	31	297,225	
	South East	Oxfordshire	14	8	12	109,721	
	South West	Somerset	14	4	23	190,223	
	East Anglia	Suffolk	14	8	21	207,148	
7	South East	Berkshire	13	8	14	104,248	
	South West	Gloucestershire	13	5	29	228,355	
	North	Northumberland	13	1	10	163,468	
8	South West	Dorset	9	6	21	113,737	
	Midlands	Leicestershire	9	5	8	130,081	
	South East	Middlesex	9	6	10	817,710	
	Midlands	Northamptonshire	9	5	8	131,430	
	Midlands	Worcestershire	9	4	9	137,544	
9	South East	Bedfordshire	8	4	9	63,398	
	South East	Buckinghamshire	8	7	13	107,444	
	North	Durham	8	4	12	161,666	
	East Anglia	Norfolk	8	5	23	273,629	
	South West	Wiltshire	8	5	21	157,270	
10	North	Cheshire	7	5	15	190,086	
11	South East	Hertfordshire (HC)	6	5	15	96,770	
	Midlands	Lincolnshire	6	4	25	197,521	
	Midlands	Staffordshire	6	5	17	244,851	
12	South West	Cornwall	5	3	25	183,997	
13	North	Cumberland	4	3	12	126,976	
	Midlands	Nottinghamshire	4	2	6	133,727	
14	Midlands	Shropshire	3	3	11	151,910	
15	East Anglia	Cambridgeshire	2	2	7	80,112	
	Wales	Cardiganshire	2	1	3	42,956	
	Midlands	Derbyshire	2	1	10	161,147	
	Wales	Glamorganshire	2	2	8	71,525	
	Midlands	Herefordshire	2	1	5	79,243	
	Wales	Pembrokeshire	2	1	4	56,280	
16	Wales	Brecknockshire	1	1	1	31,633	
	East Anglia	Huntingdonshire	1	1	5	37,449	
	Wales	Monmouthshire	1	1	4	29,506	
	Midlands	Rutland	1	1	2	16,300	
	North	Westmorland	1	1	7	42,387	
	Midlands	Staffordshire and Warwickshire	1	1	1		
	East Anglia	Norfolk and Suffolk	1	1	1		
All			44	386	210	666	7,990,914

Table2-②: Top 10 Counties in the Total Number of Towns

Region	County	<i>Nos of Towns in County</i>	<i>Auctioneers</i>	Towns with auctioneers
North	Yorkshire (NR, ER, WR)	52	15	9
South East	Hampshire	38	25	14
South West	Devon	33	14	8
South East	Kent (HC)	31	14	10
South West	Gloucestershire	29	13	5
Midlands	Lincolnshire	25	6	4
South West	Cornwall	25	5	3
South West	Somerset	23	14	4
East Anglia	Norfolk	23	8	5
South East	Essex (HC)	22	15	8
East Anglia	Suffolk	21	14	8
South West	Dorset	21	9	6
South West	Wiltshire	21	8	5
South East	Sussex	20	18	9

numbers of traders, per county, Lancashire (9,945 traders), and Warwickshire (3,695) come in with the first- and second-highest concentration of auctioneers vis-à-vis traders anywhere in the county in this period. **Table2-①** ranks counties purely according to the numbers of auctioneers: Lancashire counts second largest (23) while Warwickshire counts third largest (21). Therefore, on balance, counties with many auctioneers tend also to include many traders—with the crucial exception of Hampshire which comes in at sixth from the top (2,628 traders) in **Table3-①**. On the other hand, looked at from a cultural perspective, gentry numbers ('Gents') put Middlesex at the top (**Table3-②**), followed by, again, Lancashire and Hampshire. Also, Cheshire rose to the fifth position from the tenth of the ranking in **Table2-①**.

Table3-①: Numbers of Traders and Auctioneers per County: Traders over 1,000

Ranking in Tb2-①	County	Auctioneers	Traders	Gents
2	Lancashire	23	9,945	394
3	Warwickshire	21	3,695	170
7	Gloucestershire	13	3,524	191
5	Yorkshire (NR, ER, WR)	15	2,975	169
6	Devon	14	2,685	146
1	Hampshire	25	2,628	355
6	Kent (HC)	14	2,175	244
10	Cheshire	7	2,020	288
5	Surrey (HC)	15	1,425	300
8	Worcestershire	9	1,402	274
6	Oxfordshire	14	1,387	118
4	Sussex	18	1,347	150
6	Suffolk	14	1,265	151
6	Somerset	14	1,250	61
8	Middlesex	9	1,239	683
7	Berkshire	13	1,238	97
8	Leicestershire	9	1,222	24
9	Wiltshire	8	1,196	172
7	Northumberland	13	1,099	2
11	Staffordshire	6	1,060	75
9	Norfolk	8	1,058	107
9	Durham	8	1,009	142
11	Lincolnshire	6	981	114

Table3-②: Numbers of Gents and Auctioneers per County: Gents over 100

Ranking in Tb2-①	County	Auctioneers	Gents	Traders
8	Middlesex	9	683	1,239
2	Lancashire	23	394	9,945
1	Hampshire	25	355	2,628
5	Surrey (HC)	15	300	1,425
10	Cheshire	7	288	2,020
8	Worcestershire	9	274	1,402
6	Kent (HC)	14	244	2,175
7	Gloucestershire	13	191	3,524
9	Wiltshire	8	172	1,196
3	Warwickshire	21	170	3,695
5	Yorkshire (NR, ER, WR)	15	169	2,975
6	Suffolk	14	151	1,265
4	Sussex	18	150	1,347
6	Devon	14	146	2,685
9	Durham	8	142	1,009
6	Oxfordshire	14	118	1,387
11	Lincolnshire	6	114	981
9	Norfolk	8	107	1,058
7	Berkshire	13	97	1,238

Towns and auctioneers:

In the *Universal British Directory*, 210 towns list at least one auctioneer in the section of traders (see **Table2-①**). **Table4-①** shows among those towns, it is Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Northumberland) that counts the largest number of auctioneers i.e. 13. This was followed by 12 auctioneers in Birmingham (Warwickshire) and 10 in Bath (Somerset). Then, Liverpool (Lancashire: 9), Manchester (Lancashire: 8), and Bristol (Gloucestershire: 7) followed. Five auctioneers were counted in Bury St. Edmunds (Suffolk), Leicester (Leicestershire) and Oxford (Oxfordshire), and four auctioneers in Chichester (Sussex), Dorking (Surrey), Hull (Yorkshire), and Worcester (Worcestershire). Does this survey indicate any obvious tendency in auctioneers' choices about the place to live and carry out their business? There is no apparent concentration in geographical distribution of auctioneers' residence, except Lancashire where two towns ranked among the top five. As was the case for counties, auctioneers tended to reside in towns with large trading populations (**Table3-①**). This suggests, at least on the surface, that auctioneers seemed to have the same sort of pattern in both situation: the auctioneers tended to live and operate their businesses in the towns with many traders (the numbers of traders in the towns are: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1099; Birmingham, 2548; Bath, 763; Liverpool, 3558; Manchester, 5055; Bristol, 2983). However, the proportion of auctioneers to the total number of traders in the towns with large populations of traders appeared lower than had been expected (**Table4-②**). On the contrary, auctioneers appeared as well in the towns with small number of traders (**Table4-③**). One extreme example is the case of the town Yoxford in Suffolk. In this town, there were only four traders are listed, in which there was still one auctioneer. In Yoxford, the proportion of auctioneer to the whole traders was as high as 25%. Thus, auctioneers lived and were in business even in those towns where the population of the whole of traders were not (at all) large. Also interestingly, in the *British Universal Directory*, the towns with fairly large number of traders listed pawnbrokers as well as auctioneers, while towns with only small number of traders listed did not include any pawnbrokers.

It has been widely considered that British auctions were becoming an active business towards the late eighteenth century. And there has been a general thought that the demand for auctions must have been higher in economically flourishing towns like Birmingham,

Table4-①: Auctioneers in the Top 10 Towns in the Number of Traders

Town	Co	Traders	Auctioneers		Gents	Pawnbroker /broker
			nos	%		
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Northumberland	1,099	13	1.18%	2	15
Birmingham	Warwickshire	2,548	12	0.47%	40	26
Bath	Somerset	763	10	1.31%	n/c	4
Liverpool	Lancashire	3,558	9	0.25%	183	82
Manchester	Lancashire	5,055	8	0.15%	92	34
Bristol	Gloucestershire	2,983	7	0.23%	n/c	44
Hull	Yorkshire (ER)	1,336	4	0.29%	73	17
Worcester	Worcestershire	698	4	0.57%	212	3
Chester	Cheshire	863	3	0.34%	222	8
Exeter	Devon	1,057	2	0.18%	n/c	7

Table4-②: Auctioneers in the Towns with over 500 Traders

Town	Co	Traders	Auctioneers		Gents	Pawnbroker /broker
			nos	%		
Manchester	Lancashire	5,055	8	0.15%	92	34
Liverpool	Lancashire	3,558	9	0.25%	183	82
Bristol	Gloucestershire	2,983	7	0.23%	n/c	44
Birmingham	Warwickshire	2,548	12	0.47%	40	26
Hull	Yorkshire (ER)	1,336	4	0.29%	73	17
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Northumberland	1,099	13	1.18%	2	15
Exeter	Devon	1,057	2	0.18%	n/c	7
Chester	Cheshire	863	3	0.34%	222	8
Bath	Somerset	763	10	1.31%	n/c	4
Worcester	Worcestershire	698	4	0.57%	212	3
Leicester	Leicestershire	682	5	0.73%	n/c	9
Plymouth Dock	Devon	666	4	0.60%	17	7
Norwich	Norfolk	615	2	0.32%	80	15
Oxford	Oxfordshire	604	5	0.82%	40	7
Nottingham	Nottinghamshire	562	2	0.35%	58	6
Ipswich	Suffolk	533	1	0.18%	117	2
Plymouth	Devon	525	3	0.57%	72	8
Stockport	Cheshire	516	1	0.19%	19	1
Bolton-le-Moors	Lancashire	499	2	0.40%	27	[0]

Table4-③: Auctioneers in the Towns with less than 50 Traders

Town	Co	Traders	Auctioneers		Gents	Pawnbroker /broker
			nos	%		
Yoxford	Suffolk	4	1	25.00%	4	0
Colnbrook	Buckinghamshire	13	1	7.69%	n/c	0
Crickhowell	Brecknockshire	20	1	5.00%	7	0
Church Stretton	Shropshire	22	1	4.54%	8	0
Stowmarket	Suffolk	25	1	4.00%	6	0
Gray's Thurrock	Essex	30	1	3.33%	2	0
Bishop's Stortford	Hertfordshire	32	2	6.25%	5	0
Holt	Norfolk	33	1	3.03%	4	0
Skipton	Yorkshire	35	1	2.85%	3	0
Romford	Essex	37	2	5.40%	14	0
Christchurch	Hampshire	37	1	2.70%	7	0
Castle-Cary	Somerset	38	1	2.63%	14	0
Minchinhampton	Gloucestershire	40	1	2.50%	11	0
Chipping Norton	Oxfordshire	41	1	2.43%	6	0
Cliff Regis	Northamptonshire	42	1	2.38%	n/c	0
Uppingham	Rutland	45	1	2.22%	2	0
Fenny Stratford	Buckinghamshire	47	1	2.12%	3	0
Bishops Waltham	Hampshire	48	1	2.08%	n/c	0
Ampthill	Bedfordshire	52	2	3.84%	7	[1]
Brentwood	Essex	52	1	1.92%	5	0

Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol. However, the investigation into the *Universal British Directory* suggests that we should not interpret too literally the economic size and the nature of the towns, which in any case were often identified according to the economic characteristics alone.

Combination of the Occupations with ‘Auctioneers’

By the end of the eighteenth century, the market of auctions in Britain saw an enormous expansion. In the process, auctioneering gradually became a distinguishable business even outside of the metropolis, and some traders dealing in auctions came to identify themselves as specialist auctioneers. Nevertheless, how the techniques of auctioneering were inherited during the eighteenth century is not very well known. An early example of London auctioneers like Christopher Cook indicates that auctioneers took ‘pupils’, presumably privately, and taught them the art of the business.²⁴ In the cases in Britain at least, what is clear is that there was neither particular route for inheriting auctioneering skills, nor training institution for auctioneers at the official level. In the Auction Duty Act of 1777 it is suggested that people who carried out auctions and hence were called ‘auctioneers’ did not comprise the totality of auctioneers even at the time of the introduction of this law.²⁵ And hence, the Act required anyone who performed in an auctioneer place to take out a licence before carrying out their business.²⁶ This was an important difference between traditional traders and auctioneers. While in the former new recruits were required to undertake a certain period of training before entering the formal circle of occupation, in the latter they could become an auctioneer simply by applying and paying the fee required by the national law. Manuals and guide books for those who would take on the role of auctioneer were published only after the introduction of the Act of 1777. This suggests that auctioneers might consult such published instructions, if necessary, rather than acquiring requisite knowledge normally acquired through apprenticeship.²⁷

In the *Universal British Directory*, 111 traders (nearly one-third of traders who admitted to carrying out auctions at some level) declared themselves in the name of ‘auctioneer’ (**Table5**). The implication here is that quite a few auctioneers already found it possible to make a living by pursuing auctioneering alone at the end of the century—which is

to say, auctioneering had become an independent business. However, the remaining two-thirds of those who identified themselves in this directory as an auctioneer stated that they had further two or even more occupations besides auctioneer. In one extreme example, James and Lawrence Gomme, “appraisers” of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, declared that they in fact had six occupations. They placed the title of ‘auctioneers’ second in their list as follows: “Appraisers, Auctioneers, Carpenters, Joiners, Cabinetmakers & Undertakers”. Within this combination, it is ‘appraiser’ that requires particular attention, for the combination of appraisers and auctioneer appears about 45 times in the *Universal British Directory*. Appraisal, like brokerage, requires extensive and accurate knowledge for assessing the values of goods. Given that the valuation is an important skill for the business of auction, there is little wonder that this occupation is frequently found in combination with auctioneering in the *Directory*. Cabinet making (also listed by James and Lawrence Gomme) is another occupation commonly combined with auctioneering (approx. 56). Likewise, it was common for those working in other related business areas like upholstery and carpentry to deal as well in auctioneering (approx. 25). Cabinet makers, “upholsters [sic.]” (upholders), and carpenters usually possess special knowledge of interior designs and furnishings in addition to their understanding of the values of furniture. Therefore, not only were they in a position to give suggestions to consumers on new taste as they bought those items, but also make valuations at the auction sales after the person’s death.²⁸ This is at least one possible reason to explain the combination of occupations such as cabinet making, upholstery, and carpentry with auctioneering.

On the other hand, in the *Universal British Directory*, there are only a few cases that suggest links between auctioneering and estate agent (approx. 5). Like appraisers and brokers, it has been generally considered that estate or land agents had the tendency to combine their jobs with that of auctioneers. Or more precisely perhaps, it was thought that auctioneers carried out the job of estate and land agents in the rising process of the modern land market. The combination of those two professions only became, in any case, common in the early nineteenth century. And land/estates agents and auctioneers once cooperated to establish their own trade institution.²⁹ Even in the late eighteenth century, auctioneers, particularly in provincial towns, seemed to deal with lands and different kinds of architectural properties, together

Table5: Combination of Occupations with Auctioneer

Occupations	nos
Auctioneer	111
Cabinetmaker & Auctioneer	28
Appraiser & Auctioneer	17
Broker & Auctioneer	17
Upholsterer & Auctioneer	11
Joiner & Auctioneer	6
Auctioneer &c.	5
Upholder & Auctioneer	5
Auctioneer & Appraiser	4
Builder & Auctioneer	4
Carpenter & Auctioneer	4
House-carpenter & Auctioneer	4
Auctioneer & Carpenter	3
Carpenter/ Joiner & Auctioneer	3
Land surveyor & Auctioneer	3
Upholder/ Appraiser & Auctioneer	3
Upholsterer/ Cabinetmaker & Auctioneer	3
Auctioneer & Broker	2
Auctioneer & Innkeeper (Lion)(Swan)	2
Auctioneer & Salesman	2
Auctioneers	2
Bookseller & Auctioneer	2
Brazier & Auctioneer	2
Cabinetmaker/ Upholsterer & Auctioneer	2
Country bailiff & Auctioneer	2
Farmer & Auctioneer	2
Grocer & Auctioneer	2
Ironmonger/ Appraiser & Auctioneer	2
Joiner/ Cabinetmaker & Auctioneer	2
Upholder/ Auctioneer &c.	2
Upholsterer/ Appraiser & Auctioneer	2
Appraiser & Auctioneers	1
Appraiser/Auctioneer/Undertaker/ Broker	1
Appraisers & Auctioneers	1
Appraisers/ Auctioneers/Carpenters/ Joiners/ Cabinetmakers & Undertakers	1
Architect/ Surveyor & Auctioneer	1
Auctioneer & Agent to the Royal-Exchange Assurance-Office	1
Auctioneer & Bell-man	1
Auctioneer & Bookseller	1
Auctioneer & Clogger	1
Auctioneer & Grocer &c	1
Auctioneer & Ironmonger	1
Auctioneer & Linnen-daper	1
Auctioneer & Printer	1
Auctioneer & Sheriff's officer	1
Auctioneer & Surveyor of this Majesty's Duties	1
Auctioneer & Victualler	1
Auctioneer and Silversmith	1
Auctioneer and Victualler (Dolphin)	1
Auctioneer/ Appraiser &c	1
Auctioneer/ Bird in H&	1
Auctioneer/ Black Swan	1

Auctioneer/ Brazier/ Shopkeeper/ Dealer in Old & New Furniture & Corn Inspector	1
Auctioneer/ Broker & Victualler	1
Auctioneer/ Carpenter & Undertaker	1
Auctioneer/ Carpenter &c	1
Auctioneer/ Joiner & Hardware-man	1
Baker/ Auctioneer & Wool-stapler	1
Blue Boar Inn & Broker & Auctioneer	1
Brazier/ Broker & Auctioneer	1
Brasier & Auctioneer	1
Brazier/ Appraiser & Auctioneer	1
Brazier/ Silversmith & Auctioneer	1
Broker/ Appraiser & Auctioneer	1
Broker/ Auctioneer/ General Agent & Proprietor of the Exchange Coffee-house & Sale-rooms	1
Builders & Auctioneers	1
Cabinetmaker / Auctioneer & Sworn Appraiser	1
Cabinetmaker/ Auctioneer/Upholsterer/ Sworn Measure &c.	1
Cabinetmaker/ Joiner & Auctioneer	1
Cabinetmaker/Upholsterer & Auctioneer	1
Cabinetmakers & Auctioneer	1
Cabinetmakers/ Brokers & Auctioneers	1
Carpenter/ Joiner Appraiser & Auctioneer	1
Carpenter/ Upholsterer/ Ironmonger/ Auctioneer & Sworn Appraiser	1
Chaser/ Engraver/Auctioneer & Appraiser	1
Cooper & Auctioneer	1
Cornfactor & Auctioneer	1
Country bailiff & Auctioneer & Victualler	1
Country bailiff and Auctioneer	1
Currier/ Dealer in Spirituous Liquors & Auctioneer	1
Draper & Auctioneer	1
Draper/Auctioneer/& Commissioner for taking special Bail in the Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas	1
Drapers & Auctioneers	1
Hatter & Auctioneer	1
House-joiner & Auctioneer	1
Innholder & Auctioneer	1
Innholder (Bear) & Auctioneer	1
Innkeeper & Auctioneer	1
Innkeeper (Bear)/ Mailcoarch Proprietor & Auctioneer	1
Ironmonger & Auctioneer	1
Joiner/ Cabinetmaker/ Upholsterer & Auctioneer	1
Joiner/Cabinetmaker & Auctioneer	1
Land surveyor/ Auctioneer & Maltster	1
Land-surveyor & Auctioneer	1
Manufacturer of Snuff & Tobacco/ agent of the Sun Fire-Office & Auctioneer	1
Mercer/ Draper & Auctioneer	1
Painter & Auctioneer	1
Postmaster/ Auctioneer & Agent to the Phoenix Fire Office	1
Printer/ Stationer & Auctioneer	1
Printer/ Stationer/ Auctioneer & Swon Appraiser	1
Public Notary/ Shipbroker/ Agent to the Royal Exchange Fire office & Auctioneer	1
Sadler/ Collar maker/ Whip maker & Auctioneer	1
Schoolmaster & Auctioneer	1
Schoolmaster/ Auctioneer & Corn-inspector	1

Sheriff's Officer & Auctioneer	1
Ship-Brokers & Auctioneers	1
Shopkeeper & Auctioneer	1
Shopkeeper/ Auctioneer/ Agent to the Phoenix fire-Office & Stamp-Office/ London	1
Spirit merchant & Auctioneer	1
Stonemason & Auctioneer	1
Swan Inn & Plumber/ Glazier & Auctioneer	1
Sworn Appraiser & Auctioneer	1
Tawer & Auctioneer	1
Taylor/ Auctioneer & Merchant	1
Tinplate-worker & Auctioneer	1
Toyman & Auctioneer	1
Upholders & Auctioneer	1
Upholders/ Auctioneers & Cabinet Manufactures	1
Upholster & Auctioneer	1
Victuraller & Auctioneer	1
Watch & Clock maker & Auctioneer	1
Weaver & Auctioneer	1
Wharfinger/ Ship-insurance Broker & Auctioneer	1
Wireworker & Auctioneer	1

with chattels largely at posthumous sales.³⁰ While acknowledging the obvious limitations of patterns drawn from a single source, it is still worth noting that, in the *Universal British Directory* at least, it was only possible to find out the faintest indications to suggest the links between those two job areas. More curiously, there were merely two cases of combinations of printing business and auctioneering, and only one case for that of painting and auctioneering.

In the *Universal British Directory*, the social status of people is usually suggested by the alphabet “(F.)”, meaning a freeman. Among 386 auctioneers, those who had this mark count 77 (less than a quarter of ‘all’ auctioneers of some kinds). Of those 77, only 28 listed auctioneering first in their list of occupation. Observing the whole volume, it seems that not all towns applied the same system to indicate people’s status within the community. The fact that less than half of those stated auctioneering as their primary occupation may suggest that in the provincial towns, people who identified themselves as auctioneers were still not fully involved in the heart of the elite circle of the towns, but were only gradually becoming a part of it.

Conclusions

The rise of auctions in England had begun by the 1690s. Nearly 90% of English auctions were then held in London markets. Goods sold at this early period in the history of modern auctions were commodities identified as rarities: books, artworks, and imported merchandises (tea, coffee and the like).³¹ And the dominant position of London as the chief market remained unchanged for auctions and other types of sales, irrespective of the particular identities of these goods. As urbanisation progressed and the presence and the actual roles of provincial towns emerged, potential markets for auction sales gradually expanded into the countryside. Lawrence Fontaine suggests, with the European cases in mind, that “auctioning [rather than auctioneering] was the most common method of dealing in early modern times”, because, with this method of sales people could fix and validate the price in the community. In this context, Fontaine says, anything could be auctioned.³² And in Britain, during the process of the expansion of the auction market to the nation level, urbanisation, commercialisation, and auction existed side by side. The observations through the *Universal British Directory* in this paper therefore will support the classic theory of urban renaissance, for the presence of mediators of fashionable goods like auctioneers were not only found in London or large industrial towns in Lancashire and Warwickshire, or leisure towns like Bath, but also in a small and obscure rural town like Yoxford in Suffolk.

However, the results of the occupational combinations of auctioneers and other traders encourage us as well to have a somewhat different image in the auctioneering business. In the *Universal British Directory*, the people who dealt only in auctioneering counted over one hundred. Also, there were many traders who considered the auctioneer their first occupation. But we also found that more than two-thirds of traders listed in the directory declared they had two or more occupations besides auctioneer counted. Perhaps this is not an entirely new for most of us. Professor Corfield has suggested recently, it was still common even towards the end of the eighteenth century to identify a person by several occupational descriptions.³³ However, although occupations were likely combined within relating areas of business,³⁴ in the case of auctioneers, there is only the slightest evidence that allow us to confirm the link between auctioneers and those jobs formerly considered to have strong links with auctioneers (estate agents, or

traders in printing industry, or traders in works of art).³⁵

Auctioneering has long been regarded as the specialist occupation that emerged from the wealthy end of culture of British society. There is no doubt that they were one of the important agent-traders who stimulated the progress of consumer society and the consumption of luxuries and semi-luxuries in the eighteenth century. However, the auctioneers in Britain only recently acquired their iconic position as a gentleman's occupation in the polite social life. More investigation is needed into the details of the business of auctioneers nationwide and to clarify the precise roles that those auctioneers played in earlier times, in their significant dealings with personal properties in public spaces.

Notes

- 1 For the general summary, it is best to refer to M. Berg 'Consumption in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain', in R. Floud and P. Johnson eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 2004, pp.337-387.
- 2 H. Mui and L.H. Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth-Century England*, Routledge (London), 1989; N. McKendrick, 'Commercialization and the Economy', in N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J.H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society, the Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, Indiana University Press (Bloomington), 1982, pp. 9-194.
- 3 C. Walsh, 'Shop design and the display of goods in eighteenth-century London', *J. of Design History*, 8/3, 1995; Do., 'The newness of the department store: a view from the eighteenth century', in G. Crossick and S. Jaumain eds., *Cathedrals of consumption: the European department store, 1850-1939*, Ashgate (Aldershot), 1999; N. Cox, *The Complete Tradesman: a study of retailing 1550-1820*, Ashgate (Aldershot), 2000; J. Stobart, 'Leisure and shopping in Georgian England', *Urban History*, 2005; J. Stobart and I. Van Damme eds., *Modernity and the second-hand trade: European consumption cultures and practices, 1700-1900*, Palgrave Macmillan (London), 2010.
- 4 R. Williams, *Keywords*, London, 1988 (revised edn.), pp.78-79.
- 5 On the important roles of the second-hand trade and the itinerant traders like pedlars and hawkers in early modern Europe, see L. Fontaine, *History of Pedlars in Europe*, Cambridge, 1996; I. van Damme and R. Vermoesen, 'Second-hand consumption as a way of life : public auctions in the surroundings of Alost in the late eighteenth century', *Continuity and Change* 24 (2), 2009, pp. 275-305.
- 6 The two ideas about auctions appeared, for example, in the opinions of

- the merchants, traders and others in the cotton industry during the debates over the establishment of the General Hall in London 1788.
- 7 S. Ohashi, 'Auctioneering in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in *Shi'en*, 63-1 (no. 169), 2002, pp. 83-85; Do., 'The Auction Duty Act of 1777: The beginning of institutionalization of auctions in Britain', in J. Warren and A. Turpin eds., *Auctions, Agents and Dealers, The Mechanism of the Art Market 1660-1830*, Archaeopress (Oxford), 2007, pp. 21-23.
 - 8 For example, L. Lippincott, *Selling Art in Georgian London, The rise of Arthur Pond*, Yale University Press (New Haven & London), 1983; I. Pears, *The Discovery of Painting, the Growth of Interest in the Arts in England 1680-1768*, New Haven and London, 1988; N. De Marchi and H. J. Van Mirgroet, *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe, 1450-1750*, Brepols (Turnhout, Belgium), 2006. For the cases in early modern England, see particularly B. Cowan, 'Art and Connoisseurship in the Auction market of Later Seventeenth-Century London', pp.263-284, in De Marchi and Van Mirgroet, 2006.
 - 9 For example, Lippincott, 1983, Cowan, 2006, Ohashi, 2007.
 - 10 R. MacArthur and J. Stobart, 'Going for a Song? Country House Sales in Georgian England' in Stobart and Van Damme eds., *Modernity and the Second-Hand Trade, European Consumption Cultures and Practices, 1700-1900*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 175 and passim.
 - 11 Although in a style of gentlemen's club, the first association for auctioneers was said to be at the very end of the eighteenth century. See the entry of 'auction' in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (London, 1963).
 - 12 Cowan, 2006, p. 274.
 - 13 John Wright, an auctioneer in Glasgow may be an interesting exception. Wright was active between the late 1780s and the early 1790s, and kept an extensive amount of business records (c.1790-93, The National Archives of Scotland; CS96-1495-1500).
 - 14 Due to the necessity for reorganizing the tax system of Britain after the American Declaration of Independence in 1776, the British Government realized new fiscal policies in the late 1770s, which formed a turning point in the history of auction in Britain as they brought auction issues under the scrutiny of central government. See Ohashi, 2007, pp. 24-25.
 - 15 The amount of tax depends should fell in either 3d. or 6d. per pound. (Ohashi, 2007, p. 26).
 - 16 Ohashi, 2007, p. 24.
 - 17 Ohashi, 2007, p. 22.
 - 18 The proportion of the annual income from this tax will be found in 'Public Incomes and Expenditure (Appendix no.9)', *Reports From Committees of the House of Commons, Miscellaneous Subjects: 1782-99*, vol. XI (London, 1803), pp. 49, 59. See also Ohashi, 2007, p. 30.
 - 19 During the session, Charles J. Fox and George Dumpster (MP for Perth) addressed disapprovals. The latter pointed out the taxation on auction

- and auctioneers would bring a disaster to poor auctioneers. (Ohashi, 2007, p. 24).
- 20 *Newcastle Directory*, 1778.
- 21 Some records describing the reactions of excise officer in the countries after the introduction of the Auction Duty Acts are included in the At the National Archives (Kew, London): CUST43/4, 37, 38, 51, 73, 75-77, 97.
- 22 The regional divisions applied in this paper are the divisions employed in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain* (vol. II, 1540-1840, Part I), ed. by P. Clark, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 2000.
- 23 The quotation drawn by Professor P. J. Corfield in her chapter in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain* suggests that the regional division can be applied for the understanding of the economic ties as well. However, the chapter 13 (by Alan Dyer on 'Small Market Towns 1540-1700') in the part II in the same volume employed a regional division slightly differ from that used in the part I in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain* (vol. II, 1540-1840), Cambridge University Press (Cambridge),2000.
- 24 See the section for 'Christopher Cook' in *ODNB*.
- 25 Except the authorised brokers in the City of London (see 17 George III. c.50.ss.2 and 4). Those brokers received a discount on auctioneer's licence duty and were still allowed to carry out the same business as auctioneers who paid full amount.
- 26 17 George III c.50.s.3 quoted in Ohashi, 2007, p. 25.
- 27 [John Planner,] *The Town and Country Auctioneer's Guide. Containing Abstracts of all the Acts of Parliament relating to the Management and Collection of the Auction Duties. And Accurate Map, describing the Limits of the Chief Office of Excise with useful Tables, Cases, Notes, and General Remarks*, (London, 1797) is one of the earliest publications among those auctioneer's manuals.
- 28 Berg, 2004, p. 383. By this time, the traders dealing with furniture and interior furnishing in general also played a role of undertaker.
- 29 In the early nineteenth century, the manuals and handbooks for the people in the profession of valuation covered the jobs of auctioneers, valuers, appraisers, estate agents and builders, upholsterers and sometimes even of cabinet makers (joiners). For example, *The Complete Assistant for the Landed Proprietor, Estate and House Agent, Land-Steward, Proctor, Architect, Surveyor, Builder, Auctioneer, Appraiser, Upholsterer, Cabinet-Maker, &c. &c. &c...*(London, 1824). B. Learmount also pointed out the amalgamation of estate agents and auctioneers. B. Learmount, *A social history of auction*, London, 1985.
- 30 In general, the reasons for holding auctions were explained on the front cover or page of the auction catalogues. There is an impression that those reasons have come to be explicated more frequently after the

- introduction of the Auction Duty Act in 1777.
- 31 Cowan, 2006, p. 269: B. Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse*, Yale University Press (New Haven & London), 2005, pp. 132-145.
 - 32 L. Fontaine, 'Buying as a Social Agency : Bargaining, Fixing Prices, and Auctioning Goods in Early Modern Europe', the summary of paper read at the 15th World Economic History Congress, Utrecht, 2009, p. 13, <http://www.wehc-2009.org/programme.asp?day=4>.
 - 33 P. J. Corfield, 'Business leaders and town gentry in early industrial Britain; specialist occupations and share urbanism', *Urban History*, no.39, 1, 2012, p. 29.
 - 34 Corfield, 2012, p. 30.
 - 35 For considering the social stratum of auctioneers, the suggestions made by W.A. Armstrong should have certain importance. W.A. Armstrong, 'The use of information about occupation', in W.E. Wrigley ed., *Nineteenth-century society: essays in the use of quantitative methods for the study of social data*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1972, p. 206.

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